Wonder if there are any Scholarships available for booksellers?

Check the NEIBA web site!

We will add to it and update deadlines, etc. as we hear of new scholarships. In August we'll add the various Fall Conference Scholarships that will be available too!

Notes From the NEIBA Advisory Council

Keeping a Sense of Humor in the Book Store (Special Orders Edition)

Everything has limits, but for our store the shelf space, coupled with no storage, restricts our available inventory to about 18,000 books. Obviously we cannot stock every book that might be desired by a random customer visiting or calling the store. However, five days a week we place two electronic orders for overnight delivery (when everything goes well). To accommodate the customers who would like a title not stocked or temporarily out of stock we place a "special order" with the promise to provide the book the next day in most cases. Our mantra is "We're faster than Amazon, and we don't lie."

How we keep track of special orders proceeds on two paths. Our POS system (Anthology) provides a method for entering the details of the special
Fill Out the ABACUS Survey to Earn an Extra Spot at Winter Institute

Friday, June 15 is the deadline to participate in the annual ABACUS financial independent bookstore survey.

Bookstores that have never submitted to ABACUS that participate in ABACUS-17 will this year have the option of registering an additional staff person for the upcoming Winter Institute, set for January 2019 in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

ABA member bookstores can begin the submission process by going to www.ABACUSbenchmarking.com.

However, not entirely trusting all to technology, we have a redundant system to track the special order known as the "yellow slip." These analog devices (pieces of colored paper—imagine! Yellow—upon which the staff writes the information for the "special order") shadow the order from its placement, to the receipt of the book and then are inserted into the "special" books on a dedicated shelf near the register, awaiting customer pick-up.

We are very happy to accommodate our customers’ needs by placing special orders since one of the goals and satisfying aspects of our enterprise is to unite readers with the books they want. However, it is somewhat annoying when, after this effort has been made, the customer does not wish to purchase the book that we have so diligently tracked down and produced for them.

I have been known to show my annoyance at this form of rejection from time to time when the reason for rejection seemed lame or if I focused too much on the additional work required to return the unwanted item. One day I happened to see on the return shelf a copy of The Book of Common Prayer which I had recently (and skeptically) ordered for a customer, not an item that could be put on the shelf in our shop in the hopes of attracting another buyer. Of course I groaned until I saw the annotated "yellow slip" shown below.

Is it possible that the customer had a vision or a change of heart over the weekend and lost her faith? Or was it just an attempt on the part of the staff to stifle my groan of rejection? It doesn’t matter—it still makes me laugh and sometimes recalling this one helps me to get over my annoyance with those "not wanted" special orders.