



A Bustling Beginning to the Fall Bookselling Season

As I sit here writing this note, there is a sense of calm over our store for the first time in weeks as we wind down from the past month or so of madness. As a campus bookseller, our holiday season has come to an end, and it's been a busy one. We certainly hoped it would be—if you miss September, you miss the year, and since the economy didn't really collapse last year until we were out of our busy time, we were unsure of what to expect this August and September.

This year saw a number of changes and challenges in our operation. In August we began charging five cents for plastic bags in a continued effort to reduce our bag use, and we encouraged students to use reusable bags by giving out 5,000 of our own cloth bags in front of the store. We also sold a record number of digital access codes this year, as some of the biggest courses on campus incorporated a digital component; a hint of the future perhaps?

We also sold books. Both textbooks and trade books, and I think I can say at this point we are pleasantly surprised with what we call "rush." I share this in hopes that all of you will be similarly pleasantly surprised when the real holiday season rolls around in the next few months. There has been some good news about the economy in the media and we have an all-star lineup this fall, in just fiction alone: Margaret Atwood, Alice Munro, John Irving, Douglas Coupland, Diana Gableton, Dan Brown and Stephen King. Of course there are always sleepers, and surprise bestsellers (see below), but it looks like the stars are aligned for the book-selling season—cross your fingers.

Independents' Day

I hope you all had a successful Independents' Day on October 17. It is a day when independent booksellers across the country celebrate being an Independent bookstore—a day designed to promote the importance of locally owned businesses to lively communities, a

day which serves as the official launch date for CBA's Independents Matter campaign. We had a great session at the Summer Conference with *Suzanne Brooks* of Gulliver's Quality Books & Toys in North Bay, Ontario; Susan Chamberlain from The Book Keeper in Sarnia, Ontario; Lee Trentadue from Galiano Island Books; and moderated by Christopher Smith from Collected Works in Ottawa. The panel shared ideas on how they incorporated the Shop Local / Independents Matter theme into their Independents' Day activities.

Here at CBA, the Board has been very

to break a title and have started on a smaller level with our Independent Handsellers List each month. But it would be great to see something bigger. Please keep the picks and ideas coming

For my two cents I'll mention two great books I've read recently:

The Day the Falls Stood Still by Cathy Marie Buchanan looks at the life of a young girl and her family in Niagara Falls during World War I. It is an accomplished first novel with strong characters and rich detailed history, and it deserves to be mentioned in award circles this Fall.

Two committees have been struck, one to plan the 2010 National Conference and one to visit one-on-one, face-to-face with publishers to explore how we can work together better and keep the momentum going with a successful conference next year.

busy on a number of initiatives since June. Two committees have been struck, one to plan the 2010 National Conference and one to visit one-on-one, face-to-face with publishers to explore how we can work together better and keep the momentum going with a successful conference next year. So far the meetings have been very positive and we look forward to strengthening our partnerships and sharing ideas.

One question that keeps coming up is how do we find a way to capitalize on what we are selling in our stores on an individual basis and bring that information together at a national level. In the US, the ABA's IndieBound / Indie Next List has become a powerful tool compiling bookseller recommendations in a weekly Indie Bestseller List that highlights what's selling in independent bookstores around the United States. We certainly have the power

I also read *It Feels So Good When I Stop* by Joe Pernice. Pernice is the genius behind the amazing indie pop band The Pernice Brothers, and this is his first novel. Centered around a twenty-something slacker in Massachusetts in the late 90s, the novel is rife with music references and interesting characters; think *Garden State* or *Juno*, because I'm sure the film adaptation will be right around the corner. I've heard Pernice has put together a soundtrack that will be out soon.

Lastly, I am very pleased to mention that we have had some success in keeping Susan Dayus, our fearless Executive Director, in the fold. Susan had planned on retiring, but we just keep finding reasons for her to stay. Stay tuned for more details.

Have a great holiday season,
Stephen 