

## **2018 PNBA Executive Director's Report**

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Board of Directors Retreat

Olympia, WA

The second year of my tenure as PNBA Executive Director truly felt as if I'd been there from the original 11-point pre-race inspection, all the way through the finish line. It was fast, and fun and the training wheels were off! I actually noticed at Winter Institute that I could introduce myself including my title without feeling a total wash of self-consciousness.

My internal PNBA calendar has begun to settle into place, more second nature, with fewer flashes of panic about things I almost forgot needed doing—and often needed me to do them. I'll guess Larry's nudges decreased by half this year.

In looking back at 2017, I see big brainstorms, new things tried, chances taken, big efforts, near misses and major accomplishments. We took on diversity and inclusion—not as a one-time line item, but as a constant cause. Ignited at Wi12, this is now a steady burn for PNBA and the industry at large. You'll notice it's back on the retreat agenda (not just the product of poor editing from last year's template).

With the help of some of my favorite thinkers in the PNBA family, we completed a Code of Conduct that makes it very clear where PNBA stands when it comes to acceptance and inclusion. The COC will be posted on PNBA's website and present at registration at our shows.

Our membership is up, stores and—for reasons we haven't quite figured out—authors too. And most of you are happy and doing well. I visited many on travels in the spring and summer and have this summer's tour roughed out for July. So far, nobody has looked at me sideways or lobbed a complaint and I've loved every visit and the variety of bookstore experience they've delivered.

We delivered another successful holiday catalog campaign, meeting ad sales goals, increasing store participation, and adding a shoppable IndieCommerce component to the mix. Through that process, ABA is actually interested in looking into our ideas for improving their capabilities in hosting the e-version of the indie industry's finest paper catalog. We want it to look as good on the screen as it does opened in a lap or on a breakfast table and they finally seem to grok it!

Though it wasn't gut-wrenching to abandon our previous Portland Tradeshow location, it was also not without worry to take such a large event to a new venue. We laid a lot of groundwork with multiple visits for meetings and by coattailing ABA for their Children's Institute test drive. All things considered, the show was a phenomenal success. We filled the exhibit floor, we delivered our second largest lineup of authors, we shook up the schedule and broke Education attendance records, expenses were down, revenue was up! They loved us, and we expect agreements for a bigger room block and extended coffee bar and lounge hours to be guaranteed before 2019. They've already asked us to re-up for 2021, as well.

Overall, PNBA's year was so successful that we were able to be generous when it counted. I cannot tell you how many times the Binc staff have thanked me for PNBA's timely gift. We got a shout out at

their hosted dinner in Memphis. The need for bookseller assistance exploded this year and so did awareness of and contribution to Binc's mission.

We were also able to give stores back more than advertised in support of holiday catalog efforts. We waived more \$2,500 in imprint plate fees and increased reimbursement credit by 25%. And we are still flush!

I have really appreciated this Board allowing me the time and room to grow into the job and your partnership in supporting efforts to continually evolve the Association. Let's get down to business and see what we can come up with for 2018!

*Brian*