

## **Executive Director's Summer Meeting Report**

Delivered July 13, 2021

Since catching everyone up on ins and outs of late spring in the PNBA office, a good deal of the past several weeks has been dedicated to the fall show, as we approach the author proposal deadline and are gearing up for member registration, to open right around August 1. We now have hotel event menus in hand (there's a wild weekend ahead!) and are narrowing in on some educational offerings while still drumming up ideas and recruiting participants for others. It's the zeroing in phase, from ideas to hard plans.

We are also entertaining a lot of detailed conversations, both with exhibitors new to PNBA and the show and needing guidance on their first trip through the process, and with longtime collaborators who haven't quite gotten their participation into focus or motion.

On the newby front, I've been making pitches to and corresponding with about ten sideline companies I encountered at the Handmade Gift Show, hosted out of Portland by Urban Craft Uprising last month. Two have committed so far and several additional conversations are alive.

Some pubs are still determining or altering their protocol for sending authors and staff, even on the eve of deadlines. And for those who know they won't have a traditional presence, most want to discuss the alternatives—sponsorships, ARC distribution in lack of a booth, reps on site but without official pub backing, virtual opportunities. We are doing our best to facilitate a great array of scenarios.

New memberships, stores and small presses, are a hot item, the inspiration coming from both our \$100 2021 special and interest in reconnecting with the industry. Yesterday I facilitated a renewal over the phone for a store owner lapsed since 2010! We currently have 144 stores on the member roster—the most since 2012.

Over the next week to ten days I will work with Grace on author placement for both the live show and Virtual Annex. Then I'll largely transition out of that process as Grace manages invitations and confirmations. I will turn toward the

details of education planning, sponsor support, and the specifics of Virtual Annex events, including education and a membership meeting.

I will also be turning much of my attention to the holidays catalog—finalizing the theme art, contacting regular advertisers who have not yet turned in orders, making pitches to pubs based on bookseller and rep recommendations, getting stores set up with distribution plans.

In the midst of all the planning, I'll make an August visit a new store, Canvasback Books, in Klamath Falls and meet new owners at OregonBooks, in Grants Pass in conjunction with a couple nights' camping getaway at Crater Lake. I'm looking forward to both aspects of that trip.

*Brian*