

THE *(book)* WORM

Down-to-earth communication among members
of the Episcopal Booksellers Association

July 2013

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Carrie Graves
President

Jodi Calabrese
Vice-President

Melene Hatcher
Secretary

Bill Hunter
Treasurer

Tom Goeller

Doug Spurlin

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Debbie Whittemore
Email: execdirec@episcopalbooksellers.org

OFFICE HOURS

Monday: 11 AM-3 PM
Friday: 11 AM-3 PM

888.589.8020

www.EpiscopalBooksellers.com

Episcopal Booksellers Association is a community of gift and booksellers who are committed to ensuring the health of book stores serving the Episcopal market by being an effective voice in the book, gift, and publishing industries.

Welcome

EBA members, to the newest edition of our newsletter. It's back!

I was elected EBA president at our annual meeting held last September at the Christian Products Expo in Nashville. The months since then have been filled with much learning about EBA and many changes. As you know, Henrietta Speaks retired as EBA's executive director in April of this year after years of dedicated service and great accomplishments. Cindy Funderburk has retired as our bookkeeper after many years of generously giving of her time and talent. Debbie Whittemore has been working hard as our new executive director since then and Anne Runge has signed on as our new bookkeeper.



I am thoroughly enjoying working with Debbie to carry EBA forward into the future. We feel that we have set out on a new odyssey and we want you to join us. Having a trade organization that connects and supports us in what we do is invaluable. As we move forward this year, our goal is to increase communication through the web, phone calls, and in person. We hope to build connections among ourselves so that when two or three are gathered together (at the Atlanta gift show, the New York gift market, or your regional trade booksellers association show) we will be aware that other EBA members might be there and find time to connect.

Most importantly, I hope you will consider coming to our annual meeting in Nashville in September. Included in this newsletter is an article by Nancy Marshall of the Episcopal Bookstore in Seattle describing the positive experience she had at CPE last year. Please take time to read it. It is very well done. Last year's annual meeting was the first time I met EBA members in person. We had a wonderful time being together, sharing tips and stories, and giving each other great advice. I even found out I was related by marriage to another bookseller! I hope to meet many more of you this year.

As we move along in this new fiscal year for EBA, I, Debbie, and other board members will be contacting you to say hello, collect helpful information regarding communication, and to listen to your needs and concerns. We want your input. We want to know what books or gifts you are selling best, what marketing tips work for you that might work for others, what volunteer programs are most effective for you, and more. EBA is a mutually beneficial organization - we help you and you help us. We support each other.

In September we will elect six new board members. Serving on the board is a fantastic opportunity. It's a chance to have your voice heard and to be an advocate for your own store and others. You will make contacts nationwide that will benefit your store and will feel connected to your ministry on a larger scale. Please consider nominating yourself or someone else to serve on the EBA Board.

---continued on page 5



From the Executive Director

Welcome to my first monthly newsletter column. I am delighted to join the EBA. I look forward to meeting all of you and working with Carrie Graves and the Board of Directors.

I want to take this time and space to get to know the association's members, encourage you to become active members, and to find ways to grow the EBA.

The Episcopal Booksellers Association has a four-part vision statement. The first one, increasing communication among booksellers, is right on topic for my column.

Our members are scattered throughout the country. It is not geographically possible for us to meet in person. We have technology at our fingertips, though, to meet and greet through all types of social media, including the EBA website. I hope to talk to all of you on the phone, too. The EBA president and I will be calling stores to say hello and to ask you what we can do to make the EBA a visible and formidable organization.

To increase communication among all of you, I am bouncing ideas around that include social media, surveys, newsletter ideas and book reviews done by bookstore owners/managers, their staff, and EBA Board members. I would like you to start sending me a calendar of events from your bookstores.

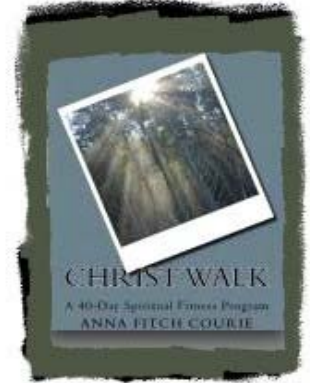
The EBA has a Facebook page and I urge you to send me items that can be posted. EBA has a Pinterest Board, also. The main objective for that social media is to post books from the EBA Best Seller List and recommendations from you and your staff. EBA will be tweeting soon, too.

The bottom line is to make the EBA a caring and sustainable organization that will benefit the bookstores, the booksellers, and your customers.

Thank you,
Debbie Whittemore
ExecDirec@episcopalbooksellers.org
888-589-8020

Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement.
Nothing can be done without hope and confidence.
- Helen Keller

Welcome to
our newest
EBA
Supporting
Vendor,
**Christ
Walk!**



Anna Fitch Courie is the author of Christ Walk: A 40-Day Spiritual Fitness Journey. Anna was inspired by her journey through the Education for Ministry program to write a book leading people to live more healthy lives in Christ.

Anna's message has been so well received nationwide that she has more than 10,000 Facebook Fans! You can find her program on Facebook by searching for Christ Walk. We often forget that living a fulfilled and healthy life in Christ includes caring not only for our spirits and the needs of others, but also for our bodies. They are an essential element in the humanness God created us to be.

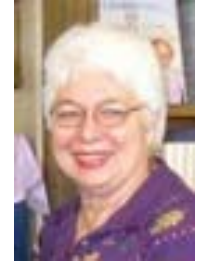
Read about out how you can take a pilgrimage in your own neighborhood, tracking the miles that Christ himself walked while moving from city to city. Start a group at your church or walk your individual journey. Come to CPE this September in Nashville to meet Anna and learn about her program. Talk with her about having a signing at your store.

I believe that all of us have opportunities to improve our health and transform ourselves through Christ to the amazing and extraordinary. Christ Walk is a program towards a healthy, Christ-centered life. We use the grace of God and the Strength of Jesus to improve our health- mind, body, and spirit.

--from the Introduction

Why You Should Attend CPE

from Nancy Marshall, co-owner, The Episcopal Bookstore, Seattle



Should you come to the Christian Product Expo (CPE) in September along with other Episcopal bookstore people? Yes, yes, yes! There is nothing you can do all year to help yourself and your ministry as much as spending 2 to 3 days with the people that do what you do.

Last year was the first time EBA came together at this show and change is always hard for me. I was so impressed with CPE and the Munce Group that run the show. It was more organized than I could believe was possible. We were accepted by the other attendees with such graciousness. I was able to order more than I thought I would at a show held in September.

I knew that I would have ordered just about everything I needed for the fall, Advent and Christmas so I was puzzled about what I could order, especially since I was curious about the reimbursement incentives that were offered. By the time of the show I found that I could take orders with me from my back list titles and I often found some titles that I had overlooked to add to the order. Some of these orders were quite small, but they all counted towards the reimbursements.

Also, I found some new vendors which is always fun. The vendors always have some sort of incentives themselves to help you place orders, such as higher discounts and/or offers of free freight. I always take the free freight since we are on the west coast!

When it was all over, I had qualified for the maximum reimbursements and my reimbursement check arrived by mid-October. The amount reimbursed did not make the show free but it did cover almost half of my expenses. I live in Seattle WA which is a lot farther away from Tennessee than most of you. My airfare was higher and I needed to arrive on Saturday and not leave until Wednesday morning so I stayed at the Empress Suites for four nights. Many of you could probably drive in Sunday and maybe even drive home on Tuesday which would mean only two nights at the hotel.

The other half of this time away is being part of the Episcopal Booksellers Association. EBA will have their own schedule of events with time divided between just us together and merging with everyone at the show for a meal or two and entertainment. Our president, Carrie Graves, and the board members will be planning our time away from the buying floor to give us time to talk, to get acquainted, socialize, hold an Annual Meeting and problem solve.

Sharing together really is the meat of the time together. You will get new ideas, new perspectives on old problems and make new friends! Could it be any better?

Please make sure you register by September 9th. Click [here](#) to access registration forms.

Good Business Practices: **ADAPTING TO CHANGE**

Being good at change is important to the survival of any industry, large or small. Failure to adapt to change will impede many great opportunities in life and business. EBA membership can offer ideas, connections and training and development opportunities to help you run a better business.

Training and development opportunities are a must. Engaged, motivated volunteers are more likely to love and stay in their jobs, and reduction in volunteer turnover boosts the bottom line.

It is essential to analyze what skills staff and volunteers are lacking and what business results you desire. One way to keep your store up to speed with current business issues is to ask for volunteer help from your parish. You already have wonderful help from volunteers to man the store, but what about asking for talent from the parish in areas of graphic design, accounting, retail management, marketing and other areas where young professionals are better able to offer their time. College students majoring in these areas may be able to earn community service hours or do work for your store for their school portfolios.

Ongoing training allows employees and volunteers to understand their jobs and to stay up to date on church policies and technology. You and your trained volunteers can help educate the vestry and finance committee. When your vestry and finance committee understand how changes in the marketplace will affect the way your specific church store turns a profit, they will be more willing to approve the use of new technologies or help find more volunteers with relevant skills to offer.

A store can measure its training program by whatever factors it wishes to improve: customer satisfaction,

quality, productivity, employee satisfaction, sales or revenue, retention, or overall profitability.

Who should do the training? In smaller organizations, you may have to rely on the manager and/or the

employee who has the most diverse knowledge. It should be the person who knows all aspects of the business, or a committee of talented parishioners or vestry members with different business skills. Take into consideration people who might understand analysis, setting measurable objectives, designing and performing the training, and evaluating the result(s).

You might want to consider constructing a "bookstore advisory team" comprised of church staff and parishioners who have career knowledge in the areas mentioned above. They can work as a team to train your volunteers and staff on the specific components of making a retail business successful, as well as educating them on the big picture and ongoing goals of the ministry.

Training and development is what keeps a church and its employees from stagnating. Managers are able to focus on other areas of concern, especially profitability and reaching out to the community, when the volunteer staff is fully trained.

We will be updating about training opportunities as we learn about them. Please let us know what areas of improvement you see a need for in your store. We can submit these suggestions for education events at CPE or work out special training events for EBA in your geographical area. If you have had success working with business professionals from your parish, please share your success stories with EBA so that we can feature your store in a future newsletter.

Start a Book Club in Your Store

Have you wanted to start a book club in your store, but haven't been able to make the first step? A book club is a great way to attract new customers from the community and other churches into your store and keep regular customers coming back.

Start by asking your customers if they would participate in a book club. Do you keep in touch with your customers through email or an electronic newsletter? If you are not keeping up with them by some electronic means, perhaps you could make up a small form and have them fill in their names, contact information, and whether they would be interested in founding a book club.

Or, perhaps, you have a core group of regular customers that have indicated an interest in a book club. Talk with them and let them know that you would like to see this happen. Offer your services as an advisor.

Once you have a core group, let them make the decisions on number of members and perhaps the titles that will be discussed in the first 6 meetings.

As the bookstore manager, though, you will have the final say in setting a regular meeting time and date for your book club with your core group. By setting the time before advertising the book club, you avoid playing favorites when working around schedules and are up-front about what commitment is required.

You will want to limit the number of members to a manageable size. A good starting place is 10-15 members. There should be enough members to make a lively discussion group, but not so many that the discussion over your time frame.

A church bookstore can choose from many genres for book club selections, not just theology and Bible study. Some great themes for church bookstore book clubs are Faith & Fiction (literature), History (so much of English history, for example, relates to the church), and Historical Fiction and Mysteries involving church history.

Next newsletter: Advertising the book club and buying the books

From the President,

continued from Page 1

We are looking for dynamic book and gift sellers who will bind us together in what we do. Together, we are more than the sum of our parts. We are a viable force that looks out for the best interests of our ministries in the industry.

Thank you all for your ministries. You bring hospitality, knowledge, resources and wisdom to seekers. You create community and bonds over shared learning and breed compassion and love by helping parishioners and customers choose inspirational and thoughtful gifts for those they love. You create fun by providing Episcopal paraphernalia, as well as that of your own church, store, or conference center, that makes us feel we're a team in our communities.

Let's get together and talk about it!
See you at CPE!

Sincerely,
Carrie Graves, President
president@episcopalbooksellers.org
888-589-8020