Call for Articles

Editor

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Rumors
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— and the Authors Registry, the new royalty collection and licensing agency endorsed by more than 30 writers’ groups and 95 literary agencies. At issue is a case in which Princeton University Press, Macmillan and St. Martin’s Press sued Michigan Document Services, a copyslop specializing in coursepacks — professors’ custom-ordered anthologies of excerpts from published works, which are increasingly taking the place of textbooks for college courses. Copyslops regularly obtain permissions and pay fees to reproduce copyrighted works, but the Michigan shop boasted to professors that it would make coursepacks with “No Delays Waiting for Permission.” The appeals court majority, reversing a lower court ruling, declared the permissionless photocopying illegal. The “friend of the court” brief, prepared by Authors Guild attorneys, assured the court that compensation is indeed an incentive to writers, and that depriving publishers of their share of permissions income would also hurt writers by leading to fewer published works. The authors’ groups pointed to their long efforts to stop uncompensated photocopying and asked the court, “What else could account for the immediate impact of the Authors Registry, in which over 50,000 authors are registered for collection, accounting and payment of royalties and fees?” A decision on reviewing the case is expected shortly. Contacts: Authors Guild — Kay Murray, 212-563-5904; ASIA — Dan Carlinsky, 212-861-2526.

Carolyn Wall, Cowles Business Media (CBM) President and CEO, has announced CBM’s completion of its acquisition of SIMBA Information Inc. in January. CBM is a unit of Cowles Media Company, Minneapolis, Minn. Chris Elwell, SIMBA vice-president and publisher, will take on the additional responsibility of managing the entire SIMBA operation during a transition period in which a search is conducted for a permanent replacement for Alan Brighish, SIMBA president. Brighish, 53, founded SIMBA in 1989 and Cowles acquired an initial interest in 1992. With Cowles acquiring his remaining interest in the company, Brighish has stepped down as president and agreed to remain as a strategic consultant to Cowles Business Media. Terms were not disclosed. SIMBA Information publishes a wide range of reports and newsletters on the business of online services, computer publishing and advertising, interactive television, yellow pages, book and education publishing, intellectual property law and telecommunications advertising. SIMBA <http://www.simbanet.com> is also a leading provider of news analysis and market research reports about the media and information industry. Cowles Business Media provides strategic information for professionals in the magazine publishing, media, direct marketing, database marketing, cable TV, travel, and portable computing and communications communities. It produces 10 magazines, 19 newsletters, three web sites on the Internet, more than 60 research reports and nearly two dozen business shows and conferences. CBM employs about 300 people and is based in Stamford, Conn., with operations in New York, Colorado, California and Texas. For more information, contact Mike Hayes (Simba) <mike.hayes@SimbaNet.com>.

Heard from Patrick Jeffery (NewsBank, Inc.) cjjeffery@ccgate.NewsBank.com> about the wonderful Marketing to Libraries column which Vikki Medaglia did in the November issue of ATG (see page 76, v.7#5). Unfortunately, Vikki is leaving Bates College for cataloging environs at Babson College and so is giving up the Marketing to Libraries column! Sob! Is there anyone out there who is interested in taking up her mantle?

If he’s not going one place, he’s another. Buzzy Basch is always on the move! He sent a write up on his recent Serials Cancellation Seminar in Japan and, you know what, it was in Japanese! But at least Buzzy’s picture was eye-readable! The last time we spoke, Buzzy had just returned from his first seminar for publishers which was attended by 35 people. Barry Lee had promised to write this up. Do we have his report in this issue? Check page 63.

There’s more. Buzzy Basch has formed a subscription service, Basch Subscriptions, targeted at special and corporate libraries. The address is 27 Perley St., Concord, NH 03301, phone or fax 603-225-5109.

And here’s news about a “travelin’ woman”. Barbara Stewart (ISI) just had a poem selected by the National Library of Poetry! The poem, Aftermath, was published in the NLP annual volume of verse, The Voice Within, in January, 1996. Aftermath was also one of only 11 poems selected by the NLP Editors as possessing a “wonderfully expressive quality if read by a professional reader.” Accordingly, it will be presented on The Sound of Poetry, a cassette tape accompanied by Baroque music. Congratulations, Barbara! Don’t know if you all know that Barbara has been writing poems, song lyrics, and celebratory humorous verses since she was a small tike of 7!

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CALL FOR ARTICLES

Against the Grain used to be published five times a year. The editors are always working on an issue! Readers have asked for a sixth issue, however, so in response to those requests, we are going to publish a **sixth** issue this year.

The focus of the sixth issue will be on the year’s work. We need writers to provide their own recapitulations of 1996. We need viewpoints from publishers, book jobbers, subscription agents, librarians, consultants, retired persons, any of us in the ever-expanding information industry. What were the issues of 1996? What were the trends? What conferences did you attend and what did you learn from them, about them? Which of our colleagues have contributed to our world, making it better, more provocative, happier? 1996 is still a new year. By announcing our intentions early, we know that you will have much food for thought all year long!

Tom Leonard has agreed to edit the sixth issue of Against the Grain — but we all need your help. Ideas, submissions, whatever should be sent to Tom at tcom@libadm.lib.uknown.edu; fax (405)325-7550; USPS: University of Oklahoma, Bizzell Memorial Library, 401 W. Brooks, Norman, OK 73019-0528. Or you can even send them to Katina <strauchk@cofc.edu>; fax (803)723-3536, USPS: 171 Moultrie St., Citadell Station, Charleston, SC 29409. You will be reminded in each 1996 issue of ATG that your contributions are needed. We expect our usual columnists to provide material, preferably with this 1996 wrap-up spin on the text, but the main thing is to submit something. For those of you who have been quiet, now’s your time to speak up!

If this works — and it will! — you will have one more good ATG to read a year, and it will spur us to be more reflective about what we do during the year. Where are we going? What is happening all around us? Writing is a great exercise. Studies show that using our brains actually causes them to grow. And remember, publishers and editors may add value to a publication, but the intrinsic worth of any magazine comes from the writers. Please contribute no matter how much you may have given at the office.

Thank you. 

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