In Memory of Mike Arnold

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In Memory of Mike Arnold
by Bob Schatz (BioMed Central)

As I write this, I am just days away from receiving the news that Mike Arnold died. I knew Mike had been battling cancer, but the last time we talked, which was not nearly as recent as I would have liked, Mike thought he and his doctors had the upper hand on his disease. Obviously, this did not prove to be the case.

Mike and I worked together for twenty years. He started at Scholarly Book Center at about the same time I started at its sister company, Academic Book Center. When the offices merged, Mike ended up working for me as part of the national sales team. When I say “working for me” I use the term loosely. Mike was part of a sales team that knew its job well and needed very little input from me to do its work effectively. In a group of strong and capable reps, Mike was the most senior in terms of tenure and the leadership role he played. Among booksellers in general, Mike was the dean of the corps, reminding the rest of us how to effectively do our jobs, especially when it came to taking care of customers. There was, and remains, no one better in the business when it came to taking care of customers. Mike was always the first to listen and the last to judge.

Outside of work, during a long drive across the Midwest flatlands or at the hotel bar that evening, Mike and I would talk. Sometimes we got into the deeper stuff, but most of the time it was just banter about the latest problem our wives are causing. Personally, whether professionally, dependent on each other and benefiting by each other’s competence, then Mike Arnold was emblematic of that concept.

Rumors from page 6
advancing the cause of diversity and inclusion in academic and research libraries. Since 2005, Dean Mullins and the Purdue Libraries have hosted IRDW Diversity Scholars at an annual “research library visit” designed to provide an inside look at operations in a major research library in the Midwest. During the closing reception for the eighth visit, held at the Purdue Black Cultural Center, Dean Mullins was presented an engraved trophy in recognition of this continued dedication to hosting the site visit. http://www.arl.org/news/pr/Mullins-11may12.shtml

Speaking of which, Purdue University Press is publishing the Proceedings of Charleston Conferences! And Charles Watkinson, (without the beard) is the son of Anthony Watkinson and the Director of Purdue University Press! See this issue, p.85 for more news!

Speaking of the Charleston Conference, have y’all followed the interviews that we did during the 31st Charleston Conference. The interviews are part of the Against the Grain series of video interviews, “Views from the Penthouse Suite,” and are being mounted on the ATG NewsChannel Website, the continued on page 16

Remembering Mike Arnold
by Barry Fast <barryfast@gmail.com>

I was in the locker room at my gym, about to change into street clothes, when I got the mail and saw in the subject line “Mike Arnold.” I know what it means, before I tap the screen, when I see an old friend’s name there. I’ve seen it twice within a hundred miles of Chicago wouldn’t have an opinion on the Cubbies or the Sox. But Eileen was never the object of humorous ridicule. I think he loved and revered her too much to use her as a prop. Saying something demeaning about his wife, even in jest, was beneath him.

He was a dignified man, a word we hardly use anymore because there are so few of them around. I don’t mean he was pretentious or decorous — those adjectives describe the opposite of Mike. Because dignity is such a rarity we conjugate up all sorts of inadequate synonyms. None work. If you didn’t know him well you’ll just have to take my word on this. He had dignity, and he made all of us feel good when he was in the room. And now, sadly, he’s gone.