



Making Information Pay 2006 BEYOND THE BESTSELLERS

**April 27, 2006
8:00 AM – 12:00 PM**

Welcome

Joe Gonnella, Chair
Book Industry Study Group Board of Directors

“Good morning and welcome everyone. I’m Joe Gonnella, chair of the Book Industry Study Group. I am standing here because the person who had the honor of welcoming you last year, one of my heroes, an industry living treasure in my opinion, Jeff Abraham, has gone on to new challenges at Random House after doing an outstanding job as Executive Director of BISG for the preceding three years.

Jeff, can I ask you to stand?

Have you been seduced by the charms of the for-profit world, or do you want your real job back?”

Jeff Abraham: “No!”

“Well then, all I can say is we miss you and many, many thanks for doing an extraordinary job of helping to get BISG where it is today.

May I have another round of applause everyone?

Thank you, Jeff, and thanks to Random House for keeping you in our industry.

To update you all, having suspected that Jeff’s answer to my question would be “no,” the Board has appointed a search committee chaired by Andrew Weber of Random House and consisting of David Walker of the American Booksellers Association, Jan Nathan of the Publishers Marketing Association, Deborah Wiley of John Wiley and Sons, Dominique Raccach of Source Books and myself. With the Board’s approval, the Executive Search Committee has engaged Phillips Oppenheim, an executive search firm that specializes in not-for-profit placements with a proven track record in our industry. I can tell you we are well along in the process with a robust slate of candidates, and we hope to announce word of the irreplaceable Jeff’s successor by late spring or early summer.

If anyone in the room wants to throw their name in the ring, there is still time to do so.

Now a brief commercial. I know that 70% of you are members, and for that I thank you. And I know I have no need, in your case, to prove the indispensable nature of the value you receive from that membership. Our mission statement is on the screen behind me for all to see. Now you other 30%, you with green color badges on, feel free to talk to me or our staff members, Angela Bole and Sara Raffel. Take a look at the membership information within your blue folder or better yet, talk to anyone with a blue colored member's badge on, and I'm certain they'll give you good reasons to join our cause.

Those of you who attended our membership meeting last September know I confessed to being a supply chain geek cursed with a love of poetry. And I am going to subject you all to another brief poem. I debated this one, because there is some rough language in it, but the poet, Robert Creeley, who died last year, brought a sacred rigor to his craft and used no word in vain – so here goes:

I Know a Man

As I sd to my
friend, because I am
always talking, - John, I

sd, which was not his
name, the darkness sur-
rounds us, what

can we do against
it, or else, shall we &
why not, buy a goddamn big car,

drive, he sd, for
christ's sake, look
out where yr going.

This poem is quintessentially American to me – just give me a bigger, shinier, faster asset and life will be better, “all I need is a bestseller.” But the voice at the end of the poem abruptly reminds us neither the fastest driver nor the slowest pedestrian is going to be happier if they don't follow the commonly accepted standard rules of the road.

Taking stock of where we have been, mindful of the road signs, turn on your headlights and careen with us down the road ahead.

Let me turn the podium over to our moderator, Ted Hill, of THA Consulting, and member in good standing of BISG, who has been diligently working with our illustrious speakers to offer you a thought-provoking, eye-opening morning of presentations.

Ted, tell us where we are going!”