



Dear ARIA friends and Members,

I hope you have all safely dug out from this major snowstorm. With respects to Regional Events Committee (REC), I have much to tell you about:

1. Undoubtedly, you've seen a few of the emails sent out about the recent Tower Brewery Book Signing event. There are a few important things to add. REC Coordinator Bob Stone put together an excellent event at a first-class facility. There were ten authors in all and 39 books were sold (this includes the effort of Pat Mitchell, who sold two anthologies. This is an impressive haul! By agreement with the Brewery management, this first event featured authors from the local area.

Future Tower Brewery events will be open to all ARIA members in good standing (meaning your annual dues have been paid). And there will be upcoming events, Bob is hard at work on scheduling future events. Speaking of future events. Bob has identified five additional sites for author events. As soon as the weather improves he and I will be evaluating these potential additional locations.

2. Not to be outdone, brand new REC Coordinator, David Schoorens has located another great Book Signing location. That is Ragged Island Brewery in Portsmouth. This is a very impressive 37-acre property with a botanical garden in an enclosed green house with a wide array of tropical plants. There is space within the green house for three authors at a time with their own advertising (within reason). There is a substantial walk-in crowd that visits this brewery during all seasons of the year.

David is currently working on scheduling. He also has another location in Bristol that he is working on.

3. REC Coordinator Cynthia Elomaa is currently reviewing locations for children's authors. We are also considering a variety of new formats. The two locations of primary interest are Ocean State Souvenirs on Post Road across from TF Green Airport and C & B Plants and Gifts in Riverside. I will discuss each one in turn:



I visited Ocean State Souvenirs back on the 19th. The shop is rather nondescript but appears to have a substantial following. Genre choice will be a key element here. When I spoke to the owner, Richard Cabral, we came to agree that books about Rhode Island or set in Rhode Island have the best chance of selling at this location. Another tier would simply be books written by RI authors. Cynthia felt that some children's books might sell well there, but the local theme would need to be in the story line. Placement at Ocean State Souvenirs would be by consignment and the payout rate would be a matter of negotiation with the shop owner. I will have further updates on this offer by the middle of next month. As a further note, arts and crafts created by ARIA members would do well here.

C & B Plants and Gifts is owned by ARIA member Candace Breen. What she is proposing has four specific elements to it. There will be opportunities for children's authors, readings and a book group geared for children's reading groups. Cynthia is working on the scheduling and arrangements for these activities right now.

Likewise, I am working on three distinct elements for adults. First is a more traditional book signing program in the evening. C& B has attractive plant arrangements throughout and is set up to move plant stands as necessary to accommodate seating for 20 -25 persons. Second is a book group program utilizing C & B's contact database to advertise for participation in book groups arranged by genre (so far we are looking at suspense, Rhode Island stories, fantasy and women's literature). This would be a unique structure that would be coordinated with ARIA so that the members of these book clubs would become accessible to ARIA. Also, author presentations would be geared toward book group members after they have read the book. Presentations would be done live and on Zoom. Lastly, C & B currently has space for up to seven authors for books on consignment. We will be working on developing a range of books and genres for placement.

All of these opportunities point to a need to have an internal database where our authors have provided all their basic information (name, address, phone number, genre, book titles, etc.) in one place. That way when these opportunities are posted you can respond with little more than name and phone number in order to be put on the list. Our current practice is too cumbersome and repetitive). I will work with Rob to streamline this process. The goal will be to make our application process more streamlined.



I am sure I've forgotten something important. The entire committee has been hard at work ensuring that ARIA has a banner year. Please don't forget to get your dues payments in so we can consider you for these new events.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Best wishes,
K. Eric Crook