

NAIBAhood News

Below is another idea from NAIBA President, Joe Drabiyak, for a store display that will amuse and inspire your customers. Joe will attest to the fact that these fun displays sell hundreds of copies that might languish on shelves in their respective sections.

The NAIBA Fall Conference is all about the creative ways to market books. I hope you've made your plans to join us in Baltimore, where you will get a folder full of ideas you can use in your store all year. Don't think of the NAIBA Fall Conference as a "daunting task" but one that will inspire, amuse and educate you.

Display idea: Daunting Tasks

by Joe Drabiyak, Chester County Book & Music Co.

Like many I frequently set goals for myself and make all sorts of resolutions. And while the spirit is willing, the flesh is weak. Sometimes I'm exhausted simply by the task of creating a "TO DO LIST."

Once during the Race Across America, an ultra-endurance bicycle race, I was asked to escort competitor Jonathan Boyer, the first American ever to participate in the Tour de France, around some detours along the race route. At that point in my life I was an avid cyclist and trained extensively. Mr. Boyer, the current race leader, had been peddling almost continuously for eight days at this stage of the competition. When we met, Jonathan was cruising along at about 22 mph, calmly eating a plate of spaghetti. It took everything I had to stay with him over a distance of a mere six miles. We parted company after the section of detours and Jonathan went on to win the event. I went home and napped for the better part of a year. It was then that I decided that I'd rather READ about the achievement of others than actually participate myself. This was partly the inspiration for THE DAUNTING TASK display (and a nifty topical area for a reading group to explore). I'm a sucker for anyone who takes on a quixotic adventure or daunting task and then documents their experience. Here are some of my favorite volumes featured in this display:

How Tough Could It Be? The Trials and Errors of a Sportswriter Turned Stay-at-Home Dad, by Austin Murphy

After nineteen years as a writer for SPORTS ILLUSTRATED, Austin Murphy should have had it made. Instead, he'd had it with life as an absentee husband and father. So he decided to trade it in for a new life: that of his wife, Laura. Sublimely ignorant of everything from grocery shopping to housecleaning to the need to trim his children's nails

more than, say, semiannually, Murphy embarks on his journey like Shackleton taking on the Southern Ocean: spectacularly ill-equipped to survive it.

A Walk in the Woods: Rediscovering America on the Appalachian Trail, by Bill Bryson

Back in America after twenty years in Britain, Bill Bryson decided to reacquaint himself with his native country by walking the 2,100-mile Appalachian Trail, which stretches from Georgia to Maine. The AT offers an astonishing landscape of silent forests and sparkling lakes - and to a writer with the comic genius of Bill Bryson, it also provides endless opportunities to witness the majestic silliness of his fellow human beings. Bryson sets off on his adventure accompanied by Stephen Katz, a gloriously out-of-shape buddy from Iowa, and about eighty pounds of canned soft drinks and ring boloney. An adventure, a comedy, and a celebration, this volume is a modern classic of travel literature.

Heft on Wheels: A Field Guide to Doing a 180, by Mike Magnuson

Take one very large guy. Add booze, cigarettes, and an extreme amount of junk food. Mix in a wry, self-effacing wit. Throw in a bike. The result? HEFT ON WHEELS, a potentially funny look at turning your life around, one insanely unrealistic goal at a time. Not that long ago, Mike Magnuson was a self-described lummock with a bicycle. In the space of three months, he lost seventy-five pounds, quit smoking, stopped drinking, and morphed from the big guy at the back of the pack into a lean, mean cycling machine. This irreverent and inspiring memoir charts every hilarious detail of his transformation, from the horrors of skin-tight XXL biking shorts to the miseries of nicotine withdrawal.

French Revolutions: Cycling the Tour de France, by Tim Moore

Cycling's Tour de France is perhaps one of the most physically challenging competitions ever conceived by man. If ever there was an athletic exploit specifically not for the faint of heart and feeble of limb, this is it. So you might ask, what is Tim Moore doing cycling it? Ignoring the pleading dictates of reason and common sense, Moore - a dedicated couch potato whose idea of carbo-loading is lots of pizza and beer - decides to ride the route - all 2,256 miles of it - in the weeks prior to the actual competition. This decision was one he would regret for nearly its entire length. This volume gives us a hilariously unforgettable account of Moore's attempt to conquer the Tour de France. "Conquer" may not be quite the right word. He cheats when he can, pops the occasional hay-fever pill for an ephedrine rush (a fine old Tour tradition), sips cheap wine from his water bottle, and occasionally weeps on the phone to his wife. But along the way he gives readers an account of the race's colorful history and greatest heroes.

Cork Boat: A True Story of the Unlikeliest Boat Ever Built, by John Pollack

Most people have childhood dreams; few ever pursue them. At the age of 34, John Pollack quit a prestigious speechwriting job on Capitol Hill to pursue an idea he had harbored since the age of six: to build a boat out of wine corks and take it on an epic journey. CORK BOAT is a buoyant tale of camaraderie, determination, and the power of imagination.

The Big Year: A Tale of Man, Nature, and Fowl Obsession, by Mark Obmascik

Every January 1, a quirky crowd storms out across North America for a spectacularly competitive event called a Big Year - a grand, expensive, and occasionally vicious 365-day

marathon of birdwatching. For three men in particular, 1998 would become a grueling battle for a new North American birding record. Bouncing from coast to coast on frenetic pilgrimages for once-in-a-lifetime rarities, they brave broiling deserts, bug-infested swamps, and some of the lumpiest motel mattresses known to man. This unprecedented year of beat-the-clock adventures ultimately leads one man to a record so gigantic that it is unlikely ever to be bested.

The Know-It-All: One Man's Humble Quest to Become the Smartest Person in the World, by A.J. Jacobs

Part memoir and part education (or lack thereof), THE KNOW-IT-ALL chronicles A.J. Jacobs's hilarious, enlightening, and seemingly impossible quest to read the ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA from A to Z.

The Year of Living Biblically: One Man's Humble Quest to Follow the Bible As Literally As Possible, by A.J. Jacobs

Raised in a secular family but increasingly interested in the relevance of faith in our modern world, A.J. Jacobs decides to dive in headfirst and attempt to obey the Bible as literally as possible for one full year. He vows to follow the Ten Commandments. To be fruitful and multiply. To love his neighbor. But also to obey the hundreds of less publicized rules: to avoid wearing clothes made of mixed fibers; to play a ten-string harp; to stone adulterers.

The resulting spiritual journey is at once funny and profound, reverent and irreverent, personal and universal and will make you see history's most influential book with new eyes.

Julie and Julia: My Year of Cooking Dangerously, by Julie Powell

I'm consumed by any book that concerns tasty foods or a daunting task! This simply delicious and droll volume recounts how the author escaped the pressures of a disheartening government job and the limitations of a Long Island City apartment by setting for herself the specific goal of preparing every recipe in Julia Child's 1961 classic, *Mastering the Art of French Cooking*, within a single year.

The Perfect Mile, by Neal Bascomb

There was a time when running the mile in four minutes was believed to be entirely beyond the limits of human foot speed. And in all of sport it was the elusive Holy Grail. In 1952, after suffering defeat at the Helsinki Olympics, three world-class runners set out individually to break this formidable barrier. In this age of big money commercial endorsements by star athletes, salary caps, drug scandals, and criminal proceedings against sport celebrities, it was a pleasure to run across this winning account of the assault on the four-minute-mile by John Landy, Wes Santee, and Roger Bannister. Word for word - and stride for stride - this is one of the finest competitive histories that I have ever encountered. Bascomb's considerable narrative skill will leave you longing for that golden age of sport and sportsmanship.

The Radioactive Boy Scout: The Frightening True Story of a Whiz Kid and His

Homemade Nuclear Reactor, by Ken Silverstein

Young David Hahn was fascinated by science. While he was working on his Atomic Energy badge for the Boy Scouts, David's obsessive attention turned to nuclear energy. Throwing caution to the wind, he plunged into a new project: building a model nuclear reactor in his backyard garden shed. Posing as a physics professor, David solicited information on reactor design from the U.S. government and from industry experts. Following blueprints he found in an outdated physics textbook, David cobbled together a crude device that threw off toxic levels of radiation. His wholly unsupervised project finally sparked an environmental emergency that put his town's forty thousand suburbanites at risk. The EPA ended up burying his lab at a radioactive dumpsite in Utah. This offbeat account of ambition and, ultimately, hubris has the narrative energy of a first-rate thriller.

The Ascent of Rum Doodle, by W. E. Bowman

First published in 1956, this comic novel quickly became established as a mountaineering classic. As an outrageously funny spoof about the ascent of a 40,000-and-half-foot peak, many thought it was inspired by the 1953 conquest of Everest. The expeditionary group is composed of guide Humphrey Jungle (a gentleman who constantly gets lost even in the most familiar surroundings), linguistic expert Lancelot Constant (who has no command of the local dialect and causes the porters to riot), a team doctor (who is fully incapacitated by parade of exotic ailments), and other intrepid, but woefully inept, adventurers.

It's no great effort to peruse your inventory and gather up books for a theme display on DAUNTING TASKS. You will find appropriate volumes in fitness, health, sports, nature, recreation, science, business, and so on. And don't forget to include those copies of the GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS 2008!

Now get busy, Sisyphus, and create a display!