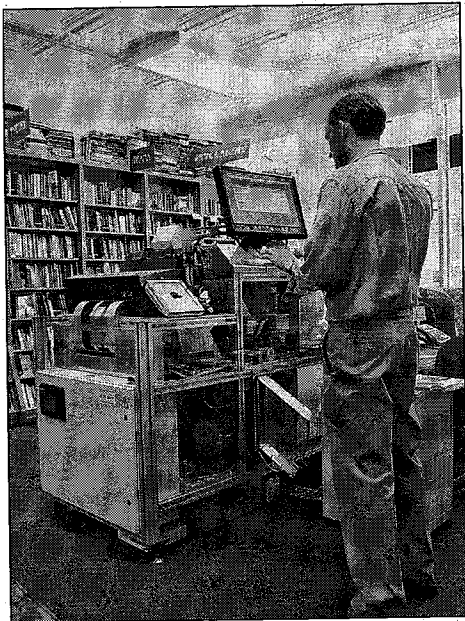


THE NORTHWEST CURRENT



Bill Petros/The Current

Printing press "Opus," above, is one of 20 machines of its kind in the world.

Politics and Prose presses print-on-demand technology

By **DEIRDRE BANNON**
Current Correspondent

For those who still prefer to hold a book rather than an e-reader, Politics and Prose bookstore is tonight unveiling an unusual yet-modern printing press that prepares books on demand.

Known in the publishing industry as the Espresso Book Machine, this new contraption allows customers to download and print rare or out-of-print books that are difficult to find elsewhere.

In about the time it takes to make a cup of coffee, the press will print, bind and trim paperback books, complete with full-color cover art.

What's more, authors looking to self-publish can upload their manuscripts to the press and create an unlimited number of professionally bound copies. As a bonus, self-published works can also be uploaded to an online database of books, which then allows

readers to purchase them from anywhere in the world.

"We see it as a real service to the community, and we hope people will be as excited by this as we are," said Shannon O'Neill, the shop's marketing manager. She noted that the store anticipates authors looking to self-publish will be the primary users of the press. "No project is too big or too small, and as is the case with our bookstore, we have knowledgeable staff on hand to help people publish their own work."

In keeping with that theme, the staff nicknamed the press "Opus."

"We tossed around a few ideas, wanting to come up with something fun but literary," said O'Neill. "Opus seemed authentic to what the machine is trying to do — authors can start their own opus; it can be the beginning of their publishing career."

Politics and Prose is also looking at the possibility of selling the self-published books at the store, perhaps by devoting a

section of the shop to "Opus" books written by local authors.

"We hope to be able to offer our customers exposure to self-published titles coming from the community," said O'Neill.

For rare and out-of-print books, the machine draws from a large online database that includes thousands of titles recently added by Harper Collins Publishers. The database includes a wide range of books, from adult and children's titles to rare monographs, and the price is similar to a paperback book one could pick up off a shelf at the bookstore.

Because the books are printed on demand, "Opus" offers an eco-friendly alternative to the typical publishing process.

"It's a green technology because it only prints books that are being requested, so it's not like lots of excess copies of a book are being created and half of them end up being returned or getting pulped," said O'Neill.

See **Press**/Page 38

PRESS

From Page 15

"Only copies of books that people want are sold, so that does away with the impact of a lot of shipping and returning and pulping of books that aren't purchased."

There are only 20 of these press-

es in the world, and Politics and Prose has the only one in the mid-Atlantic region. The machine is produced by On Demand Books; last year the company partnered with Xerox to help market and service the machines worldwide.

Politics and Prose is hosting an open house event tonight at 7 for anyone who would like to get a

closer look at the new press. One of the founders of On-Demand Books, Thor Sigvaldason, will be on hand to answer questions, as will store owners Bradley Graham and Lissa Muscatine, along with fellow staff members. The store is located at 5015 Connecticut Ave. NW, and the press sits in the fiction room on the main level.

THE CURRENT

Delivered weekly to homes and businesses in Northwest Washington

Publisher & Editor Davis Kennedy
Managing Editor Chris Kain
Assistant Managing Editor Beth Cope
Advertising Director Gary Socha
Account Executive Shanti Madden
Account Executive Richa Marwah
Account Executive George Steinbraker
Account Executive Mary Kay Williams

Advertising Standards
Advertising published in The Current Newspapers is accepted on the premise that the merchandise and services as offered are accurately described and are available to customers at the advertised price. Advertising that does not conform to these standards, or that is deceptive or misleading, is never knowingly accepted. If any Current Newspapers reader encounters non-compliance with these standards, we ask that you inform us.

All advertising and editorial matter is fully protected and may not be reproduced in any manner without permission from the publisher.
Subscription by mail — \$62 per year

Telephone: 202-244-7223

Email Address: newsdesk@currentnewspapers.com
Street Address: 5185 MacArthur Blvd. NW, Suite 102
Mailing Address: Post Office Box 40400
Washington, D.C. 20016-0400

