

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

12 March 2009

### Sam Weller's Books Announces Plans to Leave Main Street Location

Sam Weller's Books, also known as Zion Bookstore, is planning to leave its location at 254 South Main Street, in the David Keith Building, where it has operated since 1961.

We are very enthusiastic about the possibilities of a newly conceived bookstore in a better location. It is our intent to remain somewhere in the downtown area, and to maintain the mix of new, used and rare books that readers have found at Weller's books for years. We are considering numerous exciting ideas that will constitute the bookstore of the millennium. Though most are too young to remember, this *is* the fourth location of our family-owned bookstore. It is the fifth, if one includes the temporary space we occupied while this location was being restored following the four-alarm fire of 1972.

We have considered the evolution of our culture and the prospects for bookstores carefully, and we are entering a new paradigm of bookselling, one that we think will serve the evolving interests of contemporary readers. We have begun discussions with our building partners about selling the building in which we operate and we are in the early stages of a search for a new site.

Our bookstore occupies a lot of space and we are overflowing with books. To thin stock for the move, beginning on Monday, March 16<sup>th</sup>, we will begin discounting books in a moving sale that will continue until a new location is secured. To begin, we are offering all used books and most rare books at 25% off. Discounts will deepen as the move approaches but smart shoppers will get here early to get the best of our offerings. During this time we will continue to stock carefully selected new books.

The recent economic downturn is the last of numerous circumstances that have led Catherine and Tony Weller, the third generation owners of the business founded in 1929, to begin a search for a new location. Booksellers and publishers struggle today because of the market imbalance that occurred in the 1990's as large corporations battled for market dominance. Also, the new electronic media has caused notable declines in readership and buying habits. At the same time, suburban malls have proliferated, and internet sellers and big box discounters have taken ever-larger shares of the book trade. There was a time when giant bookstores like ours were magnets for book lovers who wanted to browse large selections of books. While many readers still appreciate real-world, physical browsing, enough shoppers are content browsing data on computer screens to have rendered our business model, which has been based on abundance of books, no longer sustainable.

Our moving plans will be announced as soon as the right location is found. Meanwhile, please take advantage of our moving sale as we winnow down stock to facilitate this historic move. We are confident, despite current economic circumstances and challenging factors in the book industry, that our new bookstore and will become a nexus of downtown community and culture.

Catherine and Tony Weller