

Cooper Square Acquires Northland Publishing

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On Friday Cooper Square acquired the assets of Northland Publishing, headquartered in Flagstaff, Ariz. It is the second purchase made by Cooper Square, the joint venture of the Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group and a private equity firm.

The terms of the deal were not disclosed but R&L president Jed Lyons said the acquisition involved about 150 titles and included Northland's Rising Moon and Luna Rising children's imprints. National Book Network, is a sister company of R&L, will take over distribution of Northland titles as part of the acquisition.

"A great opportunity came up and I have some health issues," said Brian Billideau, the majority owner of Northland and owner of book wholesaler Canyonland Publications. He said the press is doing well financially.

"We've been riding under the radar for years and then we've done really well the last seven or eight years," said David Jenney, Northland publisher. "This is not a garage sale."

The private company does not release sales figures, but since 2000 Northland reported to have begun to penetrate into the chain stores, had increased sales in its Rising Moon imprint "twofold" between 2003-2006, and introduced Luna Rising, its Spanish-language line for children. Last year *Dances with Wolves* author Michael Blake chose Northland to publish his *Indian Yell*.

Northland's 15-person staff was laid off in Flagstaff, although some are working through the transition period. "It is what it is and we are trying to make the best of it," said Jenney. "We've been having discussions internally and with Jed about possible licensing agreements, or maybe we'll come up with something new. I'm not done."

In Cooper Square's acquisitions model a company's assets are acquired but Lyons has said if a publisher wished to continue publishing, R&L would work with them. While it is still too early to tell what will happen, Lyons, Billideau and Jenney said they did not rule out the possibility of new publishing coming out of the old Northland team.