

2002 Printer's Row Book Fair

Over the weekend of June 1 and 2, 2002, the class sponsored a space at the Printer's Row Book Fair. 10 First Volumes, 7 videos and 2 Bible Study Kits were placed in addition to free booklet packets which were given out in English, Spanish and Polish.

In the past we had high winds and rain to deal with, but this weekend the weather was relatively good right up to 5:00 Sunday, when the rains finally came...an hour before regular closing time of the fair. There was a brief moment of excitement when the dumpster near us became engulfed in flames and the Chicago Fire Department came out and put it out. Nothing like smoking rubbish to fill the air and blend with the aroma of charcoal pits, hamburgers, popcorn and Starbucks coffee!

The conversations were a little more scattered apart, but still worthy of the effort. One of the men assigned to cleaning up and looked over the material. He asked some questions and walked away. He returned later with a handful of change...probably 65 cents or less and wanted an extra free booklet packet, giving the change as a donation. When asked if he would like the DPA book, he said yes, but he only had the change in his hand. We gave him the book for the change in his hand and he was so pleased. I noticed him reading it when I saw him later down the block. (I learned a lesson from Br. Rick Cunningham at the Oakland County Fair. When people would say they didn't have enough money for the book, he'd reply that he'd sell them the book for the change that was in their pocket. He often placed a volume for 25-75 cents, but the recipient was usually so tickled pink to have the book they were willing to give their last amount of change...even their bus fare home...to buy the book. It was like the widow's mite and it is still a good lesson in today's witness efforts.)

A young woman came in search of a better understanding of the Bible. Her interest had just recently been rekindled and she didn't know where to start in her search of understanding. She seemed to appreciate the layout of the First Volume and listened with attention and was glad to buy it.

A lawyer came by and bought a kit for a friend. A man with a video camera wanted to video tape our conversation re the history of the Bible Student movement and the transition after Brother Russell's death. He seemed aware of the differences between us and the Jehovah Witnesses. Another man recognized the literature and said he had the volumes, but they were called Millennial Dawns. He wanted our card so he could get more information on literature that is available. A woman from a concession two spaces away stopped and bought a volume. A man came and bought one of each video to give as gifts. One man leaned against the tree at the end of the table and moved one of our signs. I said, "Now you've done it! You'll just have to buy a book!" We explained the book and he bought one!

We don't know which may have benefited most from our being there. Possibly it was the young woman who picked up a Polish free booklet packet for her mother-in-law at home who only spoke Polish who would benefit from the message of Truth. I'm glad we were there and look forward to doing it again.

In Him,
Br. Mark Kandel

The Saturday afternoon shift from 2-6 pm was begun by the outgoing shift placing a Bible Study Kit to a young lady who bought it as a gift for her father.

Three memorable discussions were:

- 1) An elderly man who was especially interested in the chart and "Why God Permits Evil"...bought Volume 1.
- 2) A young man from Detroit very enthusiastic about Israel and Christ's 2nd Presence bought a "*For This Cause*" video.
- 3) Just before closing, a young couple approached asking if we could recommend something for a public speech the lady could give. Our lively discussion covered areas of possible topics. They settled on a "*For This Cause*" pamphlet.

The Book Fair was pleasant and many people and other vendors came to our table and listened or looked at what we had and took free packets. I would definitely recommend a repeat next year if the Lord permits. I believe the Book Fair is better than the mall kiosk experience because there is heavier traffic and many more people coming to our booth.

Sr. Alys Schneider

What would this day bring? It was special, picture perfect with a tree shading our display table of Bible fare. Our first day at Publishers' Row. Not many stopped, but those who did seemed genuinely interested in our Truth literature, and then a young woman bought a First Volume! Later, four in the same family stopped and as our eyes locked, I realized the "free gift" was their desire. They walked away with a smile content with their "freebie."

Just before the end of our scheduled sting another young woman stopped and stared at our Bible Study Kit. I rose to aid her and in the background Mark greeted another, "Are you a Christian? Do you like to study the Bible?" And so, we spoke the Lord's Word. The young woman interrupted, "I want to buy a gift for my father. He's a teacher." Two thoughts erupted: 1) A teacher—the Kit has many tools with which to teach and 2) This was a perfect Father's Day gift. She smiled when I explained and then replied, "I'll buy it. \$15.00 did you say?" As she searched her purse for the money she stopped and said, "I don't have the money, but see those windows across the street? That's my apartment. I'll run across and be right back."

Mark already had bagged the kit. “Sure,” I replied. She departed and as I turned back to the table, I heard her voice, “Hi! My boyfriend had some money so here is the \$15.00.” We do the seeding, but the Lord does the increase.

A gentleman who previously passed our table thrust his hand out to Mark and said, “Here are some coins as a donation.” Mark explained that donations are not necessary and then he remembered the gentleman was interested in purchasing the First Volume, but didn’t have the \$1.50. Mark took the coins (68 cents) and said, “Here, take this First Volume.” The man’s face broke into a smile. He received a treasure.

Yes, it was a special day—witnessing for the Lord. Phil. 4:4

Sr. Wanda Jay

I want to express my appreciation to Br. Mark and Sr. Roberta Tabac for their encouragement and assistance in manning and taking care of closing the fair booth site the last day.

Br. Mark Kandel