

## 2015 Printers Row Lit Fest

This was our 17th year at the *Tribune's Printers Row Lit Fest*. Those serving this year included Bro. Paul and Sr. Joyce Lagno, Sr. Claudia Tosa, Bro. Richard Doctor and myself. Sr. Emilia Knapczynski and Sr. Lynn Reeland were scheduled for Sunday morning, but the weather and rain played havoc on the plan and I called them to cancel their shift. I appreciate the interest of all these brethren willing to serve.

At the end of this report is a list of 35 brethren that have served at this fair over the past 17 years.

Information from the LitFest Management (Emilee Lyons) was unusual this year. We received the space assignment the day before the event started, but it had been mailed out 2 weeks ago. Something in the mail was messed up for many vendors, but it was ok. Emilee is contracted by the Tribune to manage the event and she was easy to work with.

There was a group from Darien on Cass Avenue. They were Buddhists. Their roots went back to Taiwan. They all wore uniform outfits. As they brought literature to their booth, I noticed how the women carried the heavy boxes of material. One woman said, "*In our group the women do the work of a man... and the men do the work of a Superman!*" I understood.

The rain messed up the starting assignments on Sunday, but it is what it is. We have no control of the weather. Outdoor events in Chicago are good when it's nice out and miserable when it's not. A grandfather was walking with his 3-year-old grandson who made it a point to walk in every puddle and splash. They came by a few times and the little boy didn't miss a puddle. Even in bad weather children can find joy!

On Saturday it was good all day and the conversations were good. I had a conversation with a man that was eager to see what we had to offer until we hit the topic of the Trinity. Then, as the conversation moved along, he slowly returned the literature to where he found it. He was sure I was going to burn in hell. Nothing we said changed his view. I tried to give him the *History of the Bible Students*, but he didn't want to even look into it. He wouldn't even shake hands as we parted. It's ok, but strange. I need to find a better answer to the reference of "cults." (One of the benefits in witnessing is to become aware of topics you need to work on.) In the beginning "cult" was associated with developing a relationship with God... "cultivating" a relationship... same root. Now it is a slander, thanks to Walter Martin. In fact, it was like talking to Walter Martin (*Kingdom of the Cults*). Before Walter died, he had a talk show in the New York area and really hammered away at the brethren. Brethren would call in thinking they could defend the truth, but the talk show host has the advantage of cutting you off before you can make a point. Few brethren ever succeeded. So, things haven't changed much. Even though Walter died and is off the air, his books are still popular.

Ann stopped by. She was unhappy with her pastor who gave a sermon without quoting one Scripture. That was the final straw... she was in the hunt to find another place to worship. She lives in Mt. Prospect about 10 minutes from our house. She took down the meeting times of the Tuesday night meeting and the times and location of our Sunday meeting. Ann seemed interested in checking out what we have to offer. Everything Sr. Claudia and I described sounded good to her. We'll see.

Once in awhile people would come by who remembered us from earlier Printers Row events. I recognized some visitors and a few of the vendors, but there are always new faces. We've been in the same general location each year.

The DVDs were kept in plastic jewel cases. It allows the colorful disk to be seen and protected from the elements. This year is the first year we had all our books in plastic shrink wrap, except for one display book that people could look at or we could open and show. The shrink wrap protected our books. Our

neighbors had books damaged by rain and wind. With a mere wipe of a paper towel ours looked like new. This saved us covering the table and using a plastic drop cloth every time a passing moment of rain came or the wind blew rain drops off the trees. The literature rack that held magazines and newsletters was not used on Sunday.

It was a good effort, I thought.

Br. Mark Kandel

**It was an honor to have shared the day with you as well. We appreciate your sacrifice - you make it very easy to let our light shine.**

**We had many and varied experiences on the first shift for PRLF. It was a beautiful day and there were many people who stopped or took literature.**

**We had a Chinese couple that purchased the first volume in Chinese and an Israel video. The man had recently visited Israel. There were at least three men who stopped by and remarked they remembered the Chicago Bible Students from past years, had purchased and were using the Studies in the Scriptures and had sent for other material from the website. We had several good conversations about the 'app card.' It seems like people were eager to check out the websites from their smart phones. One gentleman 'JJ' spent considerable time at the table discussing the differences between Bible Students and Jehovah's Witnesses. He had many family members who were current and former JWs. A lot of interest was shown for the 'God's Plan for Everybody' book. We sold two copies. At least 15 people stopped to peruse the paper articles in the rotating holder. That is a particularly good item to have. We also got to know the Kabbalah/Torah people from the booth next door and had several great but short conversations especially with a man who was born and raised in Israel. We were impressed by the total number of people who were attending the 'LitFest' and we had a great time talking to people and sharing the Truth.**

**Br. Paul & Sr. Joyce Lagno**

*I was impressed by the fact that a few of the people who stopped by said that they remember us from the past or they already have books from us. It would be nice to continue our presence there. A will just mention a few of the special encounters that come to mind. One lady took a bunch of materials and said she plans to give them out to people. Another one bought the children's book God's Plan for Everybody to read to her granddaughter when she comes to visit her - I hope she will enjoy the book herself as well! Yet another nice middle aged woman asked us a lot of questions and said she is interested to come to our meetings - her name is Ann. Overall it was a very blessed experience to make the water of life available to those who thirst for it. Thank you for supporting this effort!*

*Sr. Claudia Tosa*

The LitFest is a largely open-air set up in the historic "Printers Row" directly south of downtown Chicago. That means rainy weather will have a major impact on attendance. The heavy rains in the morning were not promising and there were continuing threats of rain and winds in the afternoon when I served the 4-hour shift with Bro. Mark. Bro. Mark's tireless efforts are deeply appreciated.

The LitFest draws on a demographic that loves books, so typically you may expect well-read and thoughtful interactions. That is good. At the same time, by its nature in being open to small presses, LitFest draws a mix of the curious and the attitudes of those who studiously avoided coming near our

table are reminiscent of the experiences of the Apostle Paul on Mars Hill. A few are open to Christianity, but if you want to find books on fringe beliefs such as the mankind's hopes in "Urantia," every color of the "rainbow" in personal relationships, and even a new large tent area for those who "Y Mohamed" this is your festival. The table to our right was pushing materials on how to study the Kabbalah; and the table to our left was a pacifist group that sold novels on the subject. Thankfully, this year the "Heaven is real—and so is Hell" table was not back. Last year, one troubled young woman from this group was so upset about our beliefs that she gave me a free copy of their hardback book describing a trip through heaven and hell by a latter day Dante Alighieri.

Having said this, I prefer taking more time for interactions at this fair than I would at the very rural Sandwich Co. Fair, where I feel very uncomfortable. Two 1<sup>st</sup> volumes were sold during the shift, and 5 Charts of the Ages, a DVD on Israel and a lot of free "How to Study the Bible..." Some interactions:

David (mid-50s in age) is seeking and even hoping to go into Christian missionary work. He is a writer. His thoughtful and friendly tone was demonstrated in his questions and he said he believed in the Bible, but he seemed less than familiar with it. He also wondered whether we were open to him submitting manuscripts! He bought some materials.

Sarah (~21 years old) was an energetic young lady from Columbus, Ohio, who recently had spent five weeks on a missionary trip to Japan with an Evangelical Christian group and was delighted that five Japanese had "Come to Christ." She has spent the last two years studying Japanese so that she can return. We discussed what it was like to live and witness in Japan, since I had lived in Japan for 6 months as part of a witness effort about twenty years before she was born. She admitted to having some misgivings about how to bridge the cultural divide and ultimately she was too nervous to take anything but free literature.

"T" a thoughtful young man (African American, ~30 years old) purchased a 1<sup>st</sup> volume and hopes to use it for serious Bible study – so do I. He was intrigued by the Chart of the Ages. One African American lady (mid-40s) wanted to discuss race relations and the current ills of society. She took some literature and bought a Chart. A middle-aged couple were interested in the Children's Book "God's Plan for Everyone," but the sale did not go through when the wife asked, "Where do you talk about the rapture?" There were three "rapture" questions that afternoon.

All told, I like LitFest and thought the opportunities to witness were a special blessing.

Bro. Richard Doctor

### Printer's Row Lit Fest Schedule

<b>Saturday</b>  <b>June 6</b>	8:30	SET UP – MARK K 847.834.1774
	10:00-2:00	PAUL L. JOYCE L.
	2:00-6:00	MARK K. CLAUDIA T.
	SECURE FOR NIGHT	
<b>Sunday</b>  <b>June 8</b>	9:30	OPEN MARK K.
	10:00-2:00	CNX DUE TO BAD WEATHER EMILIA K. LYNN R.
	2:00-6:00	RICHARD D. MARK K.
	6:00	TEAR DOWN

## PRLF Literature List

	LITERATURE	2015	2014	2013
10	7-IN-1		5	-
18	6 VOLUME SET	2	-	-
1.5	DPA ENGLISH	11	1	9
	DPA SPANISH		-	2
	DPA POLISH		1	1
5	DPA CHINESE	1	3	-
	DPA ROMANIAN		-	-
.30	HTSB W/APP CARDS - ENG	110	75	68
11.5	GOD'S PLAN FOR EVERYBODY	3	-	-
	CHART OF THE AGES (NWIBS)	36	7	5
	FTC-DVD-E		-	1
	CREATION VS EVOLUTION-DVD		2	
	CAN THESE BONES LIVE-DVD		-	-
	911-DVD		2	-
2	AFTER ARMAGEDDON-DVD	1	3	-
	BEREAN BIBLE STUDIES-CD		1	-
1.3	GOD'S KINGDOM-DVD	1	2	3
	GREAT PYRAMID-DVD		2	1
	TRUTH ABOUT HELL-DVD		1	2
	BLINDNESS IN PART... TO ISRAEL-DVD		1	-
	SABBATH		1	-
	FTC-DVD-SP		-	1
	FTC/HTSB-DVD-SP		-	1
	DAY OF JUDGEMENT-DVD-SP		-	1
	FTC-DVD-POLISH		-	-
	APOINTMENT WITH DESTINY-NB -DVD		1	1

## Expenses

ITEM	COST
BOOTH SPACE	350.00
LITERATURE COST	94.60
PARKING	60.00
MISC. ESTIMATE (HIGHLIGHTERS, APP CARDS, NEWSLETTERS, LIT PACKS)	13.00
<b>Expense Sub-total</b>	<b>517.60</b>
LITERATURE SALES	-54.00
CBS PAYMENT OF SPACE	-350.00
PRIVATE DONATIONS	-133.60
<b>Balance</b>	<b>0.00</b>

## 17 YEARS AT PRINTERS ROW...

*"It was worth it. We have to go back next year!" - Sr. Noemie Brychcy (2001)*

1999 - 2015	Jay, Wanda	Owens, Pearl
Brychcy, Noemie	Kalinski, Erwin	Pop, Avram
Bushlus, Ed	Kandel, Mark	Reeland, Lynn
Bushlus, Rachel	Knapczynski, Emilia	Ruggirello, Tom
Doctor, Richard	Knapczynski, Sebastian	Sandler, Gretchen
Doctor, Sue	Knox, Joanna	Schneider, Alys
Filicky, Cristina	Kotoulas, Dorchen	Sheppard, Evelyn (Kliss)
Filicky, Jake	Larson, Dan	Tabac, Mark
Filicky, Tom	LeBlanc, Gerry	Tabac, Roberta
Giovannoni, Bob	Maly, Chuck	Torluemke, Dan
Hagensick, Carl	Mezera, Estera	Torluemke, Donna
Haig, Joanne	Mezera, Jeff	Tosa, Claudia