

STA OUTREACH REPORT FOR 9-3-15

FROM BOB:

A beautiful day of blue skies and mild sunshine plus a major nearby festive event, "Pigout in the Park", did not mean fewer persons in and around the bus Plaza. Nor did it mean the free parking a half mile away was blocked off as it has been in past years. Hooray on both counts!

During my shift about eleven S&H's were gifted to a typical mix of men and women. One intense young man who made it all worthwhile again today mentioned how he was in distress. He'd been shot through the neck a month or so ago and had a survivor's guilt on the one hand, and a wonderment about some nebulous idea of God saving him for some purpose, on the other. These seemed to combine to tempt him to revert to his fallback position---drug addiction. I was able to tell him of my own similar experience during the war in Vietnam and shared how our CS definition of both God and man combined to make sense of his/my experience by removing it from the old theology---a gray-haired old man in the sky and his sinners/do-gooders below. The young man left with a better look on his face.

Another highlight was the youngish man who came over to tell me how "awesome" the book *The Ultimate Freedom* was (which we gave him along with a S&H several weeks ago). He was inspired by *Freedom* to read S&H and then go to the nearby Reading Room to buy another copy of S&H for his boss, to whom he recently gave *Freedom*. Our guy was so impressed by how John Wyndham used the concepts in S&H that he had to know more and even share it with others. He took another copy of each book today to share with others. That's what it's all about.

FROM TINA:

Tagging along...

First, I would like to thank our team member, Theodora, for e-publishing our weekly reports. She is deeply appreciated!

I forgot to mention in last week's report the numerous requests for Bibles I received.

When Bob set up the table for today's outreach he displayed the CSPA pamphlets we have which are translations in several languages. Later, when I assumed my shift, a woman was drawn to the table and as we began speaking her cell phone rang and she spoke in a language that flowed like melted butter...I was intrigued and asked her, when she finished speaking to the caller, what her language was. She replied that it is called "Marshallese" -

she has been living in the USA for two years and could barely speak English when she arrived from the Marshall Islands. I asked her if she was interested in a book which drew its inspiration from the Bible and she said she was not a Christian, but was marrying into a Christian family and would appreciate learning more about Christianity. She accepted a copy. (I don't think Marshallese is among the translations included in CS literature - at least not among the pamphlets we have.)

A few moments later a fellow stopped by the table - our custodian, at my side, was telling me about something which deeply affected her, yet I knew she would understand if I interrupted our conversation to speak to the visitor. I told him what the book was about and he said he would really like to read it. Off he went and I turned back to Liz. The dear woman has to look busy on her job all the time or she will get in trouble. As she left she said she better get on with her work so she "wouldn't get me in trouble." I appreciated her concern and was inwardly glad I am a volunteer because I want to do this outreach and that there is no one I am beholden to except "I AM." The hours are good, the 'pay' is more than enough, the clientele is receptive, the boss is, well, the Boss.

A lady seemed interested in the books in the display rack until I told her the author's name. She said, "Oh, I've had her writings before...I am just not interested."

A young man carrying six full plastic grocery bags stopped by. He said he loved to read. I told him about Science and Health and he said he would like to have it...then he noticed the Spanish translation and asked if he could have it instead. Of course. He said he was heading out on a long camping hike in the Bob Marshall Wilderness in Montana and would now have something to read. I told him about The Ultimate Freedom book...a prisoner of war account which explained how the author utilized the inspiration in Science and Health to survive horrendous conditions (and later became a CS teacher and lecturer.) We had a Spanish translation and he took it. He seemed so genuinely excited about having good things to read on his trip.

A fairly young man walking with the support of a cane approached the table. I told him about S&H and its healing message. Speaking was very difficult for him but he managed to explain that he had had a stroke. He thought he could read the book if he took it slowly. I helped him tuck a copy in his backpack. The 'thank you' he gave me was very touching. It was so natural to reply, "Let it bless you."