

May Fundraiser and Booksigning

By DeAnna Knippling

I wasn't sure what to expect at the May 30–31 bookfair and signing at the Briargate Barnes and Noble store, it being my first time on the other side of the signing table, so to speak. To be honest, I have a hard time talking to strangers, so I was hoping for a mind-control device we could use to summon readers.

Day one: Beth Groundwater turned the signing table into a rhapsody in blue for the release of *To Hell in a Handbasket*, with blue tablecloth, blue book covers, blue balloons, and blue cookies. She even brought along a miniature, complete with trees, a handbasket with a gun and other goodies, and tiny copies of her books, built by Margaret Grace (author of the *Miniature Mysteries* series).

As it turns out, cookies make great mindcontrol devices.

I had a second table with Pikes Peak Writers membership materials, including copies of the *NewsMagazine* and flyers for the summer *Write Brains*. I learned more people are interested in buying books than writing them. On the one hand, this is encouraging for sales; on the other, by the end of the day I was nearly desperate enough to ask people if they didn't have 17 cousins, twice removed, who might be interested in writing something. Anything. Like a grocery list.

I did speak to several people who were interested in the summer *Write Brains*, including several younger authors (from eight to fourteen). Fortunately, we have a great summer *Write Brain* program lined up, and I was able to entice them with flyers. Just say "Hi" if you see any new faces; I kept telling people we were "really nice and hardly critiqued each other at all."

Day two: Laura Reeve and Barbara (Samuel) O'Neal signed copies of *Peacekeeper* and *The Lost Recipe for Happiness*, respectively, which gave us a one-two punch of science and women's fiction. I was lucky to be a fly on the wall as the two women discussed the publishing industry, sales, etc.*

Chris Mandeville and Ruh helped draw in readers, too. While a few people seemed startled to see Ruh in front of the writers' table, most people gravitated toward him like ball bearings to a thousand-watt electromagnet. We should have a contest at the next booksigning that Ruh attends—"Guess whatkind of dog Ruh is** and win a free copy of the book!" From the guesses we heard, we'd be way ahead of the game.

In the end, while none of the authors sold out, we did make a tidy amount at the bookfair, generating \$1,369.30 in sales and raising \$136.93 in funds for PPW. Thanks to Barbara, Beth, and Laura, and to all PPW members and friends who attended. It was great seeing you all!

*They tell me Target is a stellar market for women's fiction. Who knew? I think it's all those endcaps.

**He's actually an Anatolian Shepherd. Definitely not a pony.

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