

# 2009 Sisters in Crime Summit

## Enthusiasm, Optimism, and a Serving of Reality

*Minneapolis, Chicago, Nashville...most likely not the cities that come to mind when you think of the publishing industry. New York City? Definitely higher on the radar. So, you may wonder, why did the 2009 SinC Summit Team choose to go to the Midwest this year? And what exactly is the Summit Team?*

Let me explain...

In 2007 the SinC board decided to send an envoy to speak with publishers on behalf of SinC members to find out what was going on in the industry and to serve as a liaison between the New York publishers and the Sisters in Crime membership. Four board members made the trip. Last year a second group traveled to New York City and reported back (for that information check out the May, 2008 archives of the SinC blog). This year we had to consider... with the industry in such dire straits, with publishing folks changing houses almost daily, with editors' lists being limited, if not terminated...was NYC really the place to go? Where is the stability in our indus-

try? Where could we find out the nuts and bolts of what's really going on? It soon became clear. Who are the people who put our books in the stores? Who champions for them, and who sees what people are buying and why? Distributors and wholesalers.

What, you may ask, are those? Later in this newsletter Jim Huang will take you through it all, and explain the role these very important partners in publishing play. You will also hear reports on the individual distributors and wholesalers we visited, as well as our visits to Booklist, Browne & Miller Literary Associates, several mystery bookstores, Midnight Ink, and the Minnesota Crime Wave.

As our team looked back on the week, and even as the week transpired, we talked about what we were hearing. What was surprising us? What were the messages we expected? What had we never even considered before? Several things began to stand out. I will mention them briefly here, and we will give you more informa-

tion within the newsletter.

- While authors are definitely a partner in their book's success through marketing, there are certain places in the supply chain where they are a hindrance rather than a help. It's good for authors to know the difference.
- Yes, the Kindle is a new part of our industry, but it is not going to change the world in a day.
- While the economy has definitely affected the publishing industry, mystery as a genre is still strong.
- Never underestimate the importance of libraries.

The Midwest treated us well. We were met with optimism and enthusiasm, as well as a dose of reality. We are excited to bring you this report, and welcome your questions and comments. Our wish is for you to take this information and use it to help your career – and our beloved genre – to survive and thrive.

## Three Cities and Ten Stops in Three Days:

### Monday, June 8; Minneapolis:

Consortium Booksales and Distribution  
Midnight Ink, Mystery Publishers  
Minnesota Crime Wave  
Jeff Hatfield of Uncle Edgar's bookshop  
Gary Schulze and Pat Frovarp of Once Upon a Crime bookshop

### Tuesday, June 9: Chicago:

Booklist  
Danielle Egan-Miller, of Browne & Miller Literary Associates  
Independent Publishers Group  
Follett Library Services  
Augie Aleksy at Centuries and Sleuths bookstore

### Wednesday, June 10: Nashville:

Ingram's/Lightning Source  
Mary and Greg Bruss, from Mysteries and More