

Books Through Bars

2008 Pack-a-thon

Sunday, May 18, 2008 9am – 9pm

A-Space, 4722 Baltimore Ave., Philadelphia PA

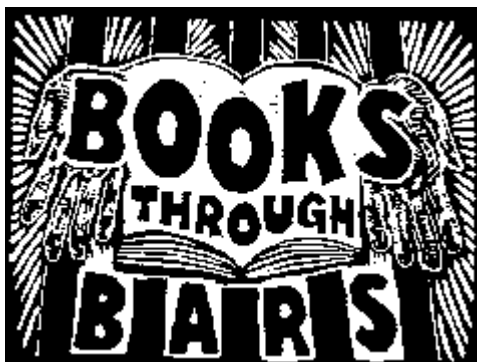
Pack-a-thon Participant Information

Books Through Bars is an all-volunteer, nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting prisoner education. Volunteers gather several times each month to send free books to prisoners that request them. Each year, we host a special event where we spend a whole day sending as many book packages as we can— we call it a *Pack-a-thon*. Participants collect pledges (at least \$10 per hour of participation) to offset the costs of mailing the packages.

- 📖 Share our fact sheet and your personal experiences volunteering with BTB with the friends, family, and co-workers you'll be asking for pledges.
- 📖 If you're new to fundraising, reading the tip sheet "The Ten Most Important Things You Can Know About Fundraising" can be helpful. You can find a link to this great resource at <http://www.grassrootsfundraising.org/howto/index.html>
- 📖 Donors can choose make hourly pledges for the amount of time you'll work (i.e., \$2 per hour x 8 hours = \$16) or give a flat amount.
- 📖 We ask you to raise at least \$10 per hour you'll be working, so that we can cover all the postage costs for the day. This is important, **because the postage and supply costs for the pack-a-thon will be over \$1,000**. Donors can choose to make an hourly pledge for the amount of time you'll work (i.e. \$2 per hour x 8 hours = \$16) or give a flat amount.
- 📖 Donations to BTB are tax deductible. Make checks payable to Books Through Bars. Cash is okay too! **Please have as many pledges as possible collected by the day of the pack-a-thon, and bring donations with you!** Fill out your pledge form as completely as possible. Make sure you bring it with you on the day of the pack-a-thon, so that you can take a break from sending books to send your donors a thank-you card!
- 📖 Meals and snacks are provided. Bring CDs and tapes.
- 📖 If you or your pledgers would like to make a book donation on the day of the pack-a-thon, please do so! The list of books we need can be found at <http://www.booksthroughbars.org/get-involved/donate-books>
- 📖 If your potential donors want more information about BTB, you can direct them to our website (www.booksthroughbars.org) or contact our office by phone or email.

Here's a brief script that you can use to help you ask for pledges – feel free to make changes, or just do what works for you!

Books Through Bars is an all-volunteer group that sends books to people in prison, many of whom don't have access to quality educational materials. I'm participating in their annual pack-a-thon and wanted to let you know more about it, because I thought you might be interested in contributing. I'll be reading requests from prisoners who need educational materials, such as GED prep manuals, college textbooks, and self-help books on skills like art, meditation, or recovery from addiction. I will be picking out books for them, and packing them up for mailing. I am raising money to help cover the postage for all those packages! Would you consider sponsoring me? You can pledge a flat donation or a certain amount per hour that I'll be working (I plan to work for --- hours).



Books Through Bars

2008 Pack-a-thon Pledge Form

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Your Name: _____

Pledger's Name, Address, and e-mail	Amount Pledged	Add to Mailing List? (Y/N)	Pledge Collected? (✓)

Volunteers: Please include your contact info (phone or email) here _____

Some facts about Books Through Bars

Mission Statement: Books Through Bars sends free educational materials to prisoners and encourages creative dialogue on the criminal justice system, thereby educating those living inside and outside of prison walls.

Historical Context: Prisoners writing to BTB tell us that they have access to few educational opportunities. Most prisons provide GED programming, but many prisoners remain on waiting lists for several years before they can enroll. Prisoners housed in segregation units are unable to participate in any classes or programs. Prison libraries tend to be badly under-funded, lacking in educational books or containing mostly books that are decades old. Prisons won't allow individuals to send book packages—so concerned citizens have started all-volunteer organizations to collect used books and send them to prisoners that request them.



Organization Facts:

- We send about 600 packages of books to individual prisoners, and several larger donations to prison libraries, every month.
- We're an all-volunteer organization that sends books that are donated to us—but we still have to raise a lot of money. A huge portion of our budget pays for postage. The average package costs close to \$3.00 to mail.
- We send packages of books to state and federal prisoners in the Mid-Atlantic region and a to few other prisons, outside of our region, that are most lacking in educational and library resources.
- Black history, Mexican history and GED study guides are among the most popularly requested book topics. The most requested book overall is a dictionary.
- We train approximately 500 new volunteers each year. This number includes individuals that drop-in on Tuesday nights as well as large volunteer groups that coordinate special activities with us.
- You can learn more about our work at our website:
www.booksthroughbars.org

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