

PENNSYLVANIA BIBLE SOCIETY

Good Tidings – Celebrating 200 Years of Fulfilling Scripture Needs

December 12, 2007

Bicentennial of America's First Bible Society

With this newsletter, one year before our bicentennial celebration, we launch our 200th year of fulfilling our mission of Scripture distribution. The series of newsletters over the next year will inform you of bicentennial plans, report on current news, and include articles on the history of PBS. Topics will cover: why our founders came together in 1808 to establish the 1st Bible Society in America, why PBS still exists today, and the many stories of the years in between.

The thread woven throughout our past, present, and future is the need for affordable Bibles in a language or version that people understand. We are often asked which is the “best” version of the Bible. While we may have our favorite, the answer to that question is easy. The “best” version is the one that is read. We strive to place Holy Scripture not only in the hands, but also in the hearts and minds of all God’s people hungering for the Good News of God’s love and salvation.

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Bicentennial Committee Formed

Jack C. Briscoe, Esq., President Emeritus and long-time Board member accepted the nomination to be chairman of the Bicentennial Committee. He was elected unanimously and has been working diligently with his committee on plans for the Bicentennial celebration on December 12, 2008. The committee is comprised of several Board members, members of the Community, and an Honorary Bicentennial Board.

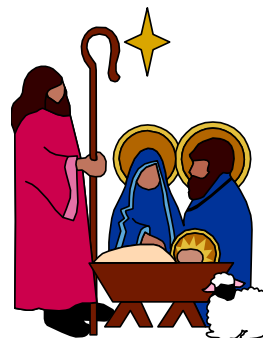
Appreciation is extended to all who are working in the preliminary stages, but a special thanks to William Leonard for his dedication to this project.

Mr. Briscoe invites others to join in preparation for this special occasion. If you are interested in assisting with Scripture distribution, publicity, or fund-raising please phone Beverley Al-Greene at the PBS office – 215-922-6780 or email us at pbs200@pabible.org.

Christmas Scripture Gift Program

Once again we depend on your generosity to reach more individuals and ministries in need during this blessed season.

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For a child is born to us, a son is given us...They name him Wonder-Counselor...Prince of Peace.
Isaiah 9: 6

IN MEMORIAM: JOHN J. BURNS

John Burns, Secretary of the Board of Directors and former Executive Director, passed away on October 26, 2007. He had served the Pennsylvania Bible Society since 1990.

John was born in Philadelphia in 1923. A very proud Philadelphian, he liked to tell new acquaintances that he still lived in the same house where he was raised and sleeps in the same room in which he was born.

John served in the U.S. Navy, aboard the U.S.S. Appalachian, the first amphibious command ship in the South Pacific. He participated in invasion of Marshall Islands, Guam, Leyte Gulf and Lingayen Gulf and ended his Naval duties with occupation forces in Japan, September 1945 to April 1946.

When John returned to the States he received a BA in English Literature and then a Master of Fine Arts Degree in Speech and Drama. After touring the U.S. and Canada as a member of the national Shakespearean Repertoire Company, Player's Inc., he turned to more business-oriented employment. He was Director of Business and Industry, SE Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Red Cross; Director of Development, Villanova University; and President of Burns Associates, a fund raising consulting firm which served numerous non-profit organizations.

An avid lifelong boater, he and his wife Susan cruised the Jersey shore and the Chesapeake Bay. He was a Coast Guard licensed pilot and with his wife operated two license prep centers to prepare students for the Coast Guard licensing exams.

John brought this varied background to his service to the Bible Society in 1990. His wife participated in Bible Society programs until she succumbed to a long illness in 1998. Susan was buried in Stevensville, Maryland near the marina where their boat the Greyhound was docked. Susan's death gave John an even deeper spirituality and dedication to the Bible Society's mission. We were blessed to have him with us for another nine years.

On December 1, 2007 a moving interment service was held in Stevensville, Maryland for "**a gentleman & scholar, a true Christian & friend.**" Family members and friends read some of John's favorite Scripture passages and spoke of their beloved Uncle Jack, brother-in-law and friend, John.

John is missed immensely as we prepare this newsletter and launch our bicentennial year. He was an integral part of the redirection of PBS in the last decade and an important part of the Bicentennial Committee. No one can replace him, but we trust that what he has given to the Society: dedication to the mission, vision, creativity and numerous financial gifts, will enable those of us still laboring in the vineyard to be up to the task.

John J. Burns Award Recipients

In September 2005 the Board of Directors instituted an award (named to honor John on his retirement after eleven years as Executive Director) to recognize outstanding service to PBS. It is fitting that **Rev. Dr. Kenneth A Hammonds**, President Emeritus, was the first recipient of this award. John wrote, "Ken Hammonds stands out as one of the real heroes of PBS."

Newest Awardee Announced

At the September 25, 2007 Board meeting the second recipient was announced. **Franklin C. Eden** was selected in recognition of his many years of dedicated service as a PBS Board member and his tireless devotion to Scripture. Mr. Eden passed away in 1994 but his gifts are still bearing fruit in the Bible Society.

A Piece of PBS History - May 1811

The following excerpt from the Third Annual Report of the Bible Society appropriately illustrates meeting the need for Scripture.

"One of the managers was directed to write to Germany for a certain number of copies of the bible, in the German language. He did so but the order was detained on its passage till it believed to be lost; then a second, and third order, intended as copies of the first, were given; which were long in getting to the place of their destination. Ultimately, however, all the orders were received, and each was supposed to demand a separate answer. Accordingly three times the number of bibles expected were sent, and all were delivered in this city, at the same time. Then it was discovered that the demand for the whole of these bibles was exceedingly urgent; so that though the funds of the society did not admit of paying for more than the third originally ordered, yet the others were readily purchased, and furnished a most seasonable supply to those who could not otherwise have obtained them."



Christmas Season 2007

Look up at the night sky: the evening Star shines brightly, the same light that guided the Wise Men to the crib of the infant Savior. This is the origin of our Christmas: sharing our worldly blessings with others - the old, the poor, the lonely, children and prisoners.

As ever, the need for sharing goes on and on, be it food, clothing or shelter. But, there is another need, the need for sharing the Word of the one whose birth we celebrate every December 25th. This year, you can help bring the real meaning of Christmas to the less fortunate by providing them with a copy of the Word of God - to keep with them long after the holidays have passed. It will provide hope for facing the year ahead.

Your gift can provide Scripture to our neighbors in need, who cannot afford to purchase a Bible to call their own. Your Christmas gift to these persons can truly be a gift of salvation. Won't you use the enclosed envelope today to bring Christ's word to them? You will have the thanks and prayers of many persons. On their behalf, I am

Yours, in Christ

Beverley Al-Greene, Executive Director

Enclosed is my Christmas Gift to the Pennsylvania Bible Society:

Contribution Amount: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Please send me _____ 2008 Daily Bible Reading Guides

Please send me _____ 2008 Scripture Calendars

I am interested in plans for the Bicentennial

_____ Scripture Distribution

_____ Publicity

_____ Fund-raising

_____ Volunteering in the Resource Center

PBS



(Founded 1808 AD)

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www.pabible.org

Pennsylvania Bible Society

Scripture Resource Center

701 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106 ~ 215-922-6779

E-mail: pbsmgr@aol.com ~ FAX: 215-922-1825

10:30 to 3:30 – Tuesday through Friday

We cordially invite you to visit our Scripture Resource Center located on the street floor of the Bible House. Here you can browse through various editions and translations of the Bible. Our professional staff will help you locate the particular items you need. They can also direct you to gift items suitable for religious holidays or other occasions.

Of Timely Interest

2008 Daily Bible Reading Guides are now available. Contact us to receive the quantity you need. There is no charge for the guides. PBS appreciates reimbursement for shipping or you can pick them up at the Resource Center.

Shepherd Seeks the Meaning of Life – Helen C. Eden

Directly from the Gospels, a narrative of the life and teachings of Jesus #24009 (\$11.50)

2008 Scripture Wall Calendars – first one complimentary to PBS supporters. Additional calendars are \$2.00 at the Resource Center and \$3.25 by mail.

Seasons of Reflection – New International Version Devotional Bible #140161 (\$6.50)

Praying you have a Blessed Christmas and Happy New Year