

Atlanta Freethought News

Dare to Think for Yourself.

An AFS Publication • Volume 16 Number 4 • April 2010

The April AFS Meeting

The April 11 AFS meeting will feature **The Atheist Evangelist, Brother Sam Singleton**, speaking on "Too Big for God: A Boy's Triumph Over Fear." Brother Sam is actually Roger Scott Jackson, a traveling comedian with several things to say about religion and atheism. The program is free and is for all ages. See more about Brother Sam at <http://www.samsingleton.com>.

The meeting will be at 1:00 at Atlanta Freethought Hall, but please feel free to arrive early for refreshments and conversation with other freethinkers.

Atlanta Freethought Hall is located at 4745 N. Church Lane SE, in Smyrna, GA. To get there, take I-285 (the perimeter road around Atlanta) to Exit 16 (Atlanta Road). Turn toward Atlanta. Go ½ mile and then turn right onto N. Church Lane. Atlanta Freethought Hall is on the left.

AFS Meetings and Activities

Apr 11: AFS Board Meeting, AF Hall, 11:00 AM.
Apr 11: AFS General Meeting, AF Hall, 1:00 PM.
Apr 17: AFS Social, a Potluck Lunch, AF Hall, 2:00 PM.

The AFS Social

The next **AFS Social** will be a Potluck Lunch on Saturday, April 17, at 2:00 at the AF Hall Pavilion. Join AFS members and guests for some good food and great socializing. Please bring food according to the first letter of your last name as follows:

A-G: Bring a main dish;

H-P: Bring a dessert;

Q-Z: Bring a side dish.

AFS will provide drinks, plates and silverware.

An AFS Yard Sale

The Atlanta Freethought Society will have a **Yard Sale** on the first Saturday in June (June 5) at the AF Hall Pavilion. It will start at 10:00AM, and will probably be over by 2:00PM. We are looking for lots of things to sell, so please bring any unneeded items that you have been looking to get rid of anyway! Bring your items to the May AFS meeting and we can store it in our building until the Yard Sale.

We also need helpers for the Yard Sale. Please contact Steve if you would like to help.

We expect this to be a nice fundraiser for our group, and it's always nice to meet our neighbors in a setting like this.

Other Meetings of Interest

The **Fellowship of Reason** meets on the first Sunday of every month at 10:30 PM at AF Hall. They also have meetings for book discussion, philosophy, a classic film course, and other events. See <http://www.fellowshipofreason.com>.

The **Humanists of Georgia** will not meet in April, but may have a lunch. See <http://humanistsofga.esmartdesign.com>.

The **Fayette Freethinkers** host a lunch that is open to the public at El Reposo Restaurant in Peachtree City, GA, on every first and third Saturday at 12:00 noon. For details, visit their website at <http://www.fayetrefreethinkers.org>.

The **Fayette Freethought Society** meets on the first and third Thursday of each month at 7:00 PM at the Mellow Mushroom on Hwy 74 in Peachtree City, GA. For details, send an email to fayfreethinkers@gmail.com.

GUST (Gwinnett: Understanding Secular Truths) will meet at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Gwinnett (12 Bethesda Church Road, in Lawrenceville) on Monday, Apr. 12, 7:00PM. (<http://brights.meetup.com/295/calendar/12849405/>)

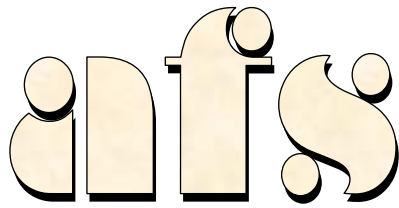
The **Atlanta Science Tavern** meetup will be at 6:00 PM on Saturday, April 17, at Manuel's Tavern, 602 N. Highland Ave NE, in Atlanta. Dr. Jeremy Diem of GSU and Dr. Greg Huey of Georgia Tech will each give a presentation on the science behind climate change. For more information, see <http://www.meetup.com/AtlantaScienceTavern/>.

The Atlanta Skeptics will have their **Skeptics In the Pub** meeting on Saturday, April 17, at 8:30 PM at Manuel's Tavern, 602 N. Highland Ave., in Atlanta. Paul Daigle will talk about how skeptics can create a more positive impression on others without compromise or accommodation.

There will be a **meetup** for Atlanta atheists on Sunday, April 11, at 6:00 PM at Thinking Man Tavern, 537 W. Howard Ave, in Decatur, GA. (<http://www.meetup.com/>)

And another **meetup** for Atlanta atheists is scheduled for Sunday, April 25, at 4:00 PM at Five Seasons Brewery, 5600 Roswell Rd, in Atlanta. (<http://www.meetup.com/>)

Author **Dale McGowan** will present an informative talk followed by an open discussion on the rewards and challenges of secular parenting at the Peachtree City Community Room on Saturday, April 24 from 1:00 to 3:00PM. For details, see p.4.



Atlanta Freethought Society

Programs and Speakers

All programs are on the second Sunday of each month at the AF Hall, 4775 N. Church Lane SE, Smyrna, GA, unless otherwise noted. Programs start at 1:00 PM, but feel free to arrive at 12:00 for socializing. Visitors are always welcome.

Apr 11: Sam Singleton, the Atheist Evangelist, will have a show for us.
(See <http://www.samsingleton.com/>.)

May 9: Dr. Scott Lilienfeld will give a talk.

Jun 13: Mike Ledo will tell us about his new book, *On Earth As It Is In Heaven: The Cosmic Roots of the Bible*

July 11: TBD

Aug 8: John Snyder and David Driscoll of AmericanFreethought.org will speak.

AFS Email Lists

The **AFS eNews** Announcement list provides subscribers with reminders and updates on AFS activities and news. The **AFS Forum** is a place for discussions of freethought, atheism, agnosticism, church-state separation, and religion. Visit the AFS website at <http://www.atlantafreethought.org> for more info or to subscribe.

The Atlanta Freethought Society is a member-run organization dedicated to advancing freethought and protecting the rights and reputation of free-thinkers, agnostics, atheists and humanists.

We welcome anyone who is interested in learning about living a good life free from religion through attending AFS speeches, debates, and discussions. We employ protests, letters to the editor, broadcast appearances, and any other reasonable and civil means available to achieve our mission.

We define *freethought* as "the forming of opinions about life in general and religion in particular on the basis of reason and the evidence of our senses, independently of tradition, authority, or established belief."

We actively support a strict separation of church and state as the best means to guarantee liberty for all, regardless of religious belief or lack of belief.

We seek to educate ourselves on many topics but especially on religion and non-religion. We do this through a series of thought-provoking speakers and programs, and by maintaining a web forum and an extensive library of freethought, religious, and related books, pamphlets, videotapes, and audiotapes.

We provide an organization where freethinkers and non-theists can develop friendships, talk freely, socialize and enjoy each other's company. We do not discriminate against anyone on such irrelevant grounds as race, sexual orientation, age, gender, class, or physical disability. We welcome members and leaders of all political parties and preferences.

Because we are designated by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) educational organization, contributions to AFS are tax deductible.

Any who are like-minded are welcome to join us.

Atlanta Freethought News an AFS publication

Editor

Steve Yothment

How to Contact the Editor

Send correspondence to AFS at:
4775 N. Church Lane SE
Smyrna, GA 30080-7224
or phone Steve at 678-364-8703
or send e-mail to SteveYoth@aol.com.

Atlanta Freethought Society

President

Steve Yothment – 678-364-8703

VP for Internal Communication

Judy Thompson – 404-296-2020

VP for External Communication

Freya Harris – 404-845-2276

Secretary

Dennis Martin – 404-817-0413

Treasurer

Diane Buckner – 770-432-3049

Board of Directors

Mark Banks – 770-354-1546

Michael Buckner – 404-633-2486

Steven Fant – 678-793-5662

Doug Hattersley – 770-971-1562

Tony King – 706-886-9224

Lew Southern – 770-509-8272

Atlanta Freethought News

Vol. 16, Number 4, April 2010

Copyright © 2010 by the
Atlanta Freethought Society, Inc.
Signed articles are all copyright ©
2009 by their respective authors.

Membership in AFS is \$25/year for
individuals, \$35 for households, and
\$10 for students/low income/under 21.
Membership includes AFNews by email.

Add \$15 to receive AFNews by mail,

\$20 to Canada/Mexico, \$25 elsewhere.

Sustaining Members (individual) \$100.

Sustaining Members (households) \$125.

Life Membership is \$1000.

Subscriptions only are \$10 for 12 issues.

Please make checks and money orders
payable to Atlanta Freethought Society.

Visit our World Wide Web site at

www.atlantafreethought.org.

Send E-mail to

afs@atlantafreethought.org.

AFS Webmaster: Freya Harris

What Did He Know and When Did He Know It?

By Herb Silverman, Founder and President of the Secular Coalition for America,
from the “On Faith” section of the March 27 Washington Post

Q: Should Pope Benedict XVI be held responsible for the escalating scandals over clerical sexual abuse in Europe? Should he be investigated for cases of abuse that occurred under his watch as archbishop of Munich or as the Vatican’s chief doctrinal enforcer? Should the pope resign?

This question was more consequential when asked of President Nixon at his impeachment hearings than when asked now of Pope Benedict XVI. A secular United States has checks and balances to allow for the removal of a leader guilty of flagrant abuses. The Vatican has none. According to church law, the pope “possesses supreme, full, immediate, and universal ordinary power in the Church.” Rev. Thomas Doyle said, “The only person who can fire him is God.” To this I add, “Then nobody who exists can fire the pope.”

A more interesting question for me is whether legal action can be taken against a pope. Unfortunately, not only is the pope immune from prosecution under Vatican law, it appears that he also enjoys diplomatic immunity from prosecution under international law as a head of state. Such is the result when church and state meld. I’m reminded of the words of Lord Acton, “Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.”

There seems to be some evidence that Benedict, like Nixon, may be guilty of at least a cover-up. In fact, covering up the Watergate break-in seems rather mild compared with covering up sex crimes involving minors. For years, bishops have not only covered up such evidence, but transferred to other parishes some of the priests who raped and abused trusting children. Yet Pope Benedict XVI has refused to discipline any bishops or ask them to resign, perhaps because these steps might ultimately re-

quire the pope to ask for his own resignation.

White House aide John Dean famously told Richard Nixon that the Watergate cover-up was becoming “a cancer on the presidency.” That metaphor was not quite accurate; there was only a cancer on Nixon’s presidency, and that of his administration. However, the decades-long cover-ups by popes, bishops, and priests really are a cancer on the Catholic Church. Even worse than a cancer, confined to an individual, has been the appalling and lifelong harm to children. Clearly, church leaders have placed a higher priority on preserving the image of the Church than on protecting children from being molested. Could self-proclaimed moral authorities act more immorally than that?

Why is the Catholic Church almost always on the wrong side of sexual issues? It condemns masturbation, condom use to prevent AIDS, all forms of birth control, a woman’s right to choose, and homosexuality. It requires celibacy for priests and nuns, and encourages poor married women to have as many babies as they can.

I don’t believe popes or anyone else can speak from a position of infallibility. However, within the Church, the pope can make any law he wants. Pope Benedict XVI can and should declare that any allegation of child abuse by priests, past, present, and future, must be reported immediately to civil authorities, with suspension of the priests from all duties until the matter is settled.

A Church that delayed its apology to Galileo for more than 350 years must now act quickly to end current abuses. If this pope is incapable of making such a universal and unambiguous declaration, here’s an alternate plan that might at least slow the spreading cancer on his Church. Popes sometimes choose the name of a previous pope whose reign they

wish to emulate. Whether coincidental or not, Pope Benedict XVI can take the same action as a morally challenged namesake. In 1045, Pope Benedict IX resigned.

[See all of Herb Silverman’s articles at http://newsweek.washingtonpost.com/onfaith/panelists/herb_silverman/.]

On March 28, Richard Dawkins had the following things to say in the On Faith section of the Washington Post:

RATZINGER IS THE PERFECT POPE

“Should Pope Benedict XVI be held responsible for the escalating scandals over clerical sexual abuse in Europe?”

Yes he should, and it’s going to escalate a lot further, as more and more victims break through the guilt of their childhood indoctrination and come forward.

“Should he be investigated for how cases of abuse were handled under his watch as archbishop of Munich or as the Vatican’s chief doctrinal enforcer?”

Yes, of course he should. He should be arrested the moment he dares to set foot outside his tinpot fiefdom of the Vatican, and he should be tried in an appropriate civil—not ecclesiastical—court. That’s what should happen. Sadly, we all know our faith-befuddled governments will be too craven to do it.

“Should the pope resign?”

No. As the College of Cardinals must have recognized when they elected him, he is perfectly—ideally—qualified to lead the Roman Catholic Church. A man who believes he is infallible and acts the part; a man whose preaching of scientific falsehood is responsible for the deaths of countless AIDS victims in Africa; a man whose first instinct when his priests are caught with their pants down is to cover up the scandal and damn the young victims to silence: in short, exactly the right man for the job. He should not resign, moreover, because he is perfectly positioned to accelerate

the downfall of the evil, corrupt organization whose character he fits like a glove, and of which he is the absolute and historically appropriate monarch.

No, Pope Ratzinger should not re-

sign. He should remain in charge of the whole rotten edifice—the whole profiteering, woman-fearing, guilt-gorging, truth-hating, child-raping institution—while it tumbles, amid a stench of incense and a rain of tourist-

-kitsch sacred hearts and preposterously crowned virgins, about his ears.

[See all of Richard Dawkins' articles at [http://newsweek.washingtonpost.com/onfaith/panelists/richard_dawkins/.](http://newsweek.washingtonpost.com/onfaith/panelists/richard_dawkins/)]

IRS Should Investigate Florida Church For Opposing Mayoral Candidate, Says Americans United

“No Homo Mayor” Sign Is Illegal Intervention In Election, Says Watchdog Group

Americans United for Separation of Church and State asked the Internal Revenue Service on March 26 to investigate a church in Gainesville, Fla. that posted a sign opposing a mayoral candidate.

Dove World Outreach Center erected a sign on its property reading, “No Homo Mayor.” The reference is to Craig Lowe, a mayoral candidate who is gay.

Contacted about the matter by the Gainesville Sun, a top church official admitted that the church had erected the sign.

“We don’t feel as though the city should be represented by a homosexual,” said Terry Jones, senior pastor at Dove World Outreach Center.

The Rev. Barry W. Lynn, Americans

United executive director, called the church’s actions a blatant example of illegal politicking by a tax-exempt group.

“This is an open-and-shut case,” Lynn said. “The church freely admits that it intended to intervene in the election in violation of federal tax law. I urge the IRS to act promptly.”

Americans United sent a letter¹ to IRS officials on March 26, asking them to investigate the matter.

Jones told the Sun he believes the church is acting within its constitutional rights. But as Americans United pointed out in its letter to the IRS, groups that accept tax exemptions must meet certain conditions, including refraining from endorsing or opposing candidates.

AU also noted that the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit rejected the free speech defense in a 2000 ruling in the case *Branch Ministries v. Rosotti*.

The Alachua County property appraiser is investigating the church’s exempt status when it comes to property taxes, but for other reasons. Church leaders, including Senior Pastor Jones, operate the for-profit TS and Company, which sells furniture through eBay, on the church’s 20-acre property. According to state law, property, regardless of who owns it, is only exempt if it’s used for exempt purposes like holding church services.

[From a March 26 Americans United press release and a March 29 article in the Gainesville Sun.]

¹ See the letter at <http://www.au.org/media/press-releases/archives/2010/03/au-letter-to-irs-re-dove.pdf>

Parenting Beyond Belief and Raising Freethinkers

Author Dale McGowan will be presenting an informative talk followed by an open discussion on the rewards and challenges of secular parenting.

Location: Peachtree City, GA (Community Room)
Date/Time: Saturday, April 24th from 1:00-3:00 PM

For more information, or to register, please go to www.meetup.com/Fayette-Freethought-Society/



Texas Conservatives Win Curriculum Change

Textbooks Will Have a Conservative Slant

After three days of turbulent meetings, the Texas Board of Education approved a social studies curriculum on March 12 that will put a conservative stamp on history and economics textbooks, stressing the superiority of American capitalism, questioning the Founding Fathers' commitment to a purely secular government and presenting Republican political philosophies in a more positive light.

The board, whose members are elected, has influence beyond Texas because the state is one of the largest buyers of textbooks. In the digital age, however, that influence has diminished as technological advances have made it possible for publishers to tailor books to individual states.

In recent years, board members have been locked in an ideological battle between a bloc of conservatives who question Darwin's Theory of Evolution and believe the Founding Fathers were guided by Christian principles, and a handful of others who have fought to preserve the teaching of Evolution and the separation of church and state.

Since January, conservatives on the board have passed more than 100 amendments to the 120-page curriculum standards affecting history, sociology and economics courses from elementary to high school. The standards were proposed by a panel of teachers.

"We are adding balance," said Dr. Don McLeroy, the leader of the conservative faction on the board, after the vote. "History has already been skewed. Academia is skewed too far to the left."

Battles over what to put in science and history books have taken place for years in the 20 states where state boards must adopt textbooks, most notably in California and Texas. But rarely in recent history has a group of conservative board members left such a mark on a social studies curriculum.

Efforts by Hispanic board members to include more Latino figures as role models for the state's large Hispanic population were consistently defeated, prompting one member, Mary Helen Berlanga, to storm out of a meeting, saying, "They can just pretend this is a white America and Hispanics don't exist."

"They are going overboard, they are not experts, they are not historians," she said. "They are rewriting history, not only of Texas but of the United States and the world."

The curriculum standards will now be published in a state register, opening them up for 30 days of public comment. A final vote will be taken in May, but given the conservative dominance of the board, it is unlikely that many changes will be made.

The standards, reviewed every decade, serve as a template for textbook publishers, who must come before the board next year with drafts of their books. The board's makeup will have changed by then because Dr. McLeroy lost in a primary this month to a more moderate candidate, and two others announced they were not seeking reelection.

There are seven members of the conservative bloc on the board, but they are often joined by one of the other three Republicans on crucial votes. There were no historians, sociologists or economists consulted at the meetings, though some members of the conservative bloc held themselves out as experts on certain topics.

The conservative members maintain that they are trying to correct what they see as a liberal bias among the teachers who proposed the curriculum. To that end, they made dozens of minor changes aimed at calling into question, among other things, concepts like the separation of church and state and the secular nature of the American Revolution.

"I reject the notion by the left of a constitutional separation of church

and state," said David Bradley, a conservative from Beaumont who works in real estate. "I have \$1,000 for the charity of your choice if you can find it in the Constitution."

They also included a plank to ensure that students learn about "the conservative resurgence of the 1980s and 1990s, including Phyllis Schlafly, the Contract With America, the Heritage Foundation, the Moral Majority and the National Rifle Association."

Dr. McLeroy, a dentist by training, pushed through a change to the teaching of the civil rights movement to ensure that students study the violent philosophy of the Black Panthers in addition to the nonviolent approach of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. He also made sure that textbooks would mention the votes in Congress on civil rights legislation which Republicans supported.

"Republicans need a little credit for that," he said. "I think it's going to surprise some students."

Mr. Bradley won approval for an amendment saying students should study "the unintended consequences" of the Great Society legislation, affirmative action and Title IX legislation. He also won approval for an amendment stressing that Germans and Italians as well as Japanese were interned in the United States during World War II, to counter the idea that the internment of Japanese was motivated by racism.

Other changes seem aimed at tamping down criticism of the right. Conservatives passed one amendment, for instance, requiring that the history of McCarthyism include "how the later release of the Venona papers confirmed suspicions of communist infiltration in U.S. government." The Venona papers were transcripts of some 3,000 communications between the Soviet Union and its agents in the United States.

Mavis B. Knight, from Dallas, introduced an amendment requiring that

students study the reasons “the founding fathers protected religious freedom in America by barring the government from promoting or disfavoring any particular religion above all others.”

It was defeated on a party-line vote.

After the vote, Ms. Knight said, “The social conservatives have perverted accurate history to fulfill their own agenda.”

In economics, the revisions add Milton Friedman and Friedrich von Hayek, two champions of free-market economic theory, among the usual list of economists to be studied, like Adam Smith, Karl Marx and John Maynard Keynes. They also replaced the word “capitalism” throughout

their texts with the “free-enterprise system.” “Let’s face it, capitalism does have a negative connotation,” said one conservative member, Terri Leo. “You know, ‘capitalist pig!’ ”

In the field of sociology, another conservative member, Barbara Cargill, won passage of an amendment requiring the teaching of “the importance of personal responsibility for life choices” in a section on teenage suicide, dating violence, sexuality, drug use and eating disorders.

“The topic of sociology tends to blame society for everything,” Ms. Cargill said.

Even the course on world history did not escape the board’s scalpel.

Cynthia Dunbar, a lawyer from

Richmond who is a strict constitutionalist and thinks the nation was founded on Christian beliefs, managed to cut Thomas Jefferson from a list of figures whose writings inspired revolutions in the late 18th century and 19th century, replacing him with St. Thomas Aquinas, John Calvin and William Blackstone. (Jefferson is not well liked among conservatives on the board because he coined the term “separation between church and state.”)

“The Enlightenment was not the only philosophy on which these revolutions were based,” Ms. Dunbar said.

[Condensed from an article by James C. McKinley in the March 13 New York Times.]

Interesting new Videos and Links on the Internet:

Pat Condell on “Is Satan a Catholic?:" <http://www.youtube.com/user/philhellenes#p/a/f/2/LKg4HLsu5gE>

Sam Harris at TED 2010 talks about Why to Ditch Religion:

<http://www.cnn.com/video/data/2.0/video/living/2010/03/25/sam.harris.ted2010.cnn.html>

Sam Harris at TED 2010: Science can answer moral questions:

http://www.ted.com/talks/sam_harris_science_can_show_what_s_right.html

In a speech at Sydney Opera House, Richard Dawkins explains why evolution is “The Greatest Show on Earth.”

<http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/dawkins-delivers-the-sermon-they-came-to-hear-20100314-q63g.html?autostart=1>

The Purpose of Purpose, by Richard Dawkins: (A newly released video from a talk given in March of 2009.)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mT4EWCRfdUg>

Christopher Hitchens: The New Commandments: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l_IM61aDyPg

A video on “Morality Without God:” <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hCovYF51qHE>

A video of Hannity on Atheism: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NUjvxOFHUHY>

The Symphony of Science: The Poetry of Reality (An Anthem for Science): <http://www.symphonyofscience.com/>

See a recent PBS Program online: The Bible’s Buried Secrets: <http://www.pbs.org/wqgbh/nova/bible/program.html>

How to deal with Fred Phelps and the Westboro Baptist Church: <http://www.milkandcookies.com/link/197652/detail/>

The Nightline Face-Off: Does God Have a Future?: (March 23, 2010) <http://bit.ly/97MO9G>

Michael Shermer on “Would I Ever Pray for a Miracle?": <http://trueslant.com/michaelshermer/>

Atheism is ‘personal rebellion’ against God, says philosopher: (April 3, 2010)

<http://www.christiantoday.com/article/atheism.is.personal.rebellion.against.god.says.philosopher/25529.htm>

The Fayette Freethinkers celebrate Darwin Day 2010:

<http://cid-281ed497ec30acd2.skydrive.live.com/browse.aspx/Darwin%20Day%202010>

Creationists seek to stop the teaching of global warming:

<http://www.mnn.com/family/education-activities/stories/creationists-seek-to-stop-the-teaching-of-global-warming>.

Glenn Beck issues guidelines to help you know if your church has been infiltrated by Marxists:

http://www.newshounds.us/2010/03/24/glenn_beck_issues_guidelines_to_help_you_know_if_your_church_has_been_infiltrated_by_marxists.php

Richard Dawkins celebrates the miracle of life – with or without God:

<http://www.smh.com.au/national/dawkins-celebrates-the-miracle-of-life-x2013-with-or-without-god-20100308-pgs1.html?autostart=1>

Letters to the Editor by AFS Members

Congratulations to Ed Buckner, whose letter was published in the *Marietta Daily Journal* on March 25.

'Rest of story' offered on Price column

Nelson Price's March 21 column, "Muslims nearly overran Europe during Middle Ages," revealed more by what he omitted than by what he included. He attacked a religion he does not accept but ignored the need to keep his own religion out of war and government.

He noted that some Muslims support political and military actions based on their interpretations of their sacred text, but he dismissed the thousands of years of history of Christians doing the same thing as "not Christian." And he ignored the fact that the violent history associated with Christianity persists today in many parts of the world.

Price claimed horrific deeds by Muslims are supported by their holy book, but he distorted or omitted horrific deeds described in the Judeo-Christian Bible as directly commanded by God himself—including, for example, a directive, through Moses, to kill all the warriors and civilians of an enemy, the Midianites, except for the virgin girls, who the warriors are urged, in Numbers 31, to "keep alive for yourselves." Hundreds of thousands of Is-

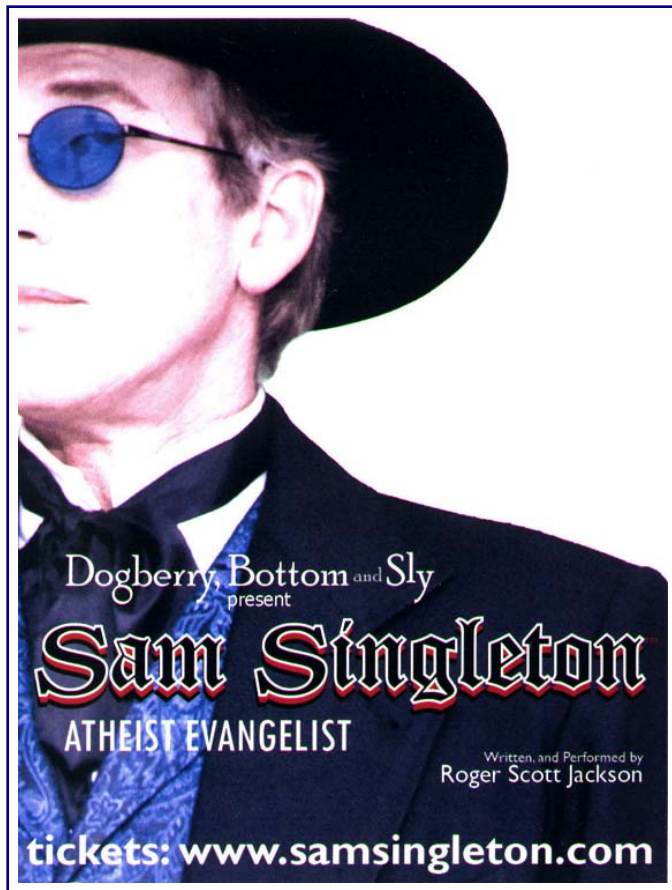
lamic believers, including civilians, lost their lives in the "Crusades" to Christians inspired by words like these.

Price described the war that America fought against Barbary pirates, who were spurred on in part by Islamic ideology, though he skewed the timeline. But he failed entirely to note that one interim outcome of that long war was a treaty from 1796-97 with Tripoli that declared that religion should not be grounds for war with an Islamic nation, that in plain words noted that "the government of the United States is not in any sense founded on the Christian religion."

Price is determined to stir up distrust of Islam, hypocritically pretending that Christianity is non-military, non-political and benign. But he missed a larger point: our founders had a strong commitment to a secular nation, one that deprives all religions of political power.

Ed Buckner
President, American Atheists
Smyrna

Don't miss this Sunday's show with Sam Singleton, the Atheist Evangelist!



The Atlanta Freethought Society

invites you to be their guest for a
free all-ages presentation by

Sam Singleton™

ATHEIST EVANGELIST

in the comical reminiscence

**Too Big for God:
A Boy's Triumph Over Fear**

**Sunday, April 11, 2010
1 pm**

The 60 minute presentation will be
followed by questions and book signing.

Atlanta Freethought Society

**4775 N. Church Lane SE
Smyrna, GA**

For information call 404-284-3478

The Symphony of Science – The Poetry of Reality (Anthem to Science)

(See the new video with these lyrics at www.symphonyofscience.com.)

[Michael Shermer]

Science is the best tool ever devised
For understanding how the world works

[Jacob Bronowski]

Science is a very human form of knowledge
We are always at the brink of the known

[Carl Sagan]

Science is a collaborative enterprise
Spanning the generations
We remember those who prepared the way
Seeing for them also

[Neil deGrasse Tyson]

If you're scientifically literate,
The world looks very different to you
And that understanding empowers you

Refrain:

[Richard Dawkins]

There's real poetry in the real world
Science is the poetry of reality

[Sagan]

We can do science
And with it, we can improve our lives

[Richard Dawkins]

There's real poetry in the real world
Science is the poetry of reality

[Jill Tarter]

The story of humans is the story of ideas
That shine light into dark corners

[Lawrence Krauss]

Scientists love mysteries
They love not knowing

[Richard Feynman]

I don't feel frightened by not knowing things
I think it's much more interesting

[Brian Greene]

There's a larger universal reality
of which we are all a part

[Stephen Hawking]

The further we probe into the universe
The more remarkable are the discoveries we make

[Carolyn Porco]

The quest for the truth, in and of itself,
Is a story that's filled with insights

Refrain:

[Richard Dawkins]

There's real poetry in the real world
Science is the poetry of reality

[Sagan]

We can do science
And with it, we can improve our lives

[Richard Dawkins]

There's real poetry in the real world
Science is the poetry of reality

[Jill Tarter]

The story of humans is the story of ideas
That shine light into dark corners

[Greene]

From our lonely point in the cosmos
We have through the power of thought
Been able to peer back to a brief moment
After the beginning of the universe

[PZ Myers]

I think that science changes the way your mind works
To think a little more deeply about things

[Dawkins]

Science replaces private prejudice
With publicly verifiable evidence

Refrain:

[Richard Dawkins]

There's real poetry in the real world
Science is the poetry of reality

[Sagan]

We can do science
And with it, we can improve our lives

Camp Quest Is Looking for Campers and Counselors

Camp Quest of the Smoky Mountains is accepting applications from campers, boys and girls of ages 8-17, and counselors for its summer 2010 camp, July 25-August 1, in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

Camp Quest is a secular humanist camp for children of humanists, agnostics, atheists, Brights, and all free-thought parents, a camp where it's OK not to believe in a God.

At Camp Quest we subscribe to the Statement of Humanist Principles, but do not promote a particular world view, encouraging thoughtful skepticism and reason through group discussions. Campers participate in usual camping activities including hiking, campfires, games, arts and crafts, swimming, nature and science studies, canoeing, horseback riding, Socrates Cafe, overnight wilderness camp-

ing, orienteering, fishing skills, and other activities, in the company of others like themselves.

For more details, see our website at <http://smokymountains.camp-quest.org>, or contact the camp director, Jonas Holdeman, j.t.holdeman@charter.net, or call (865) 966-6478. Information about other Camp Quests can be found on our web site or at <http://camp-quest.org>. It's beyond belief!

Become a Member!



(Or renew your membership with this form or online at www.AtlantaFreethought.org!)

If you've enjoyed what you've read, we enthusiastically invite you to join the Atlanta Freethought Society. Every month you will get our acclaimed monthly newsletter, the *Atlanta Freethought News*, voting rights in the organization—and enjoyment of the superb speakers we have coming up, as well as the social and activist events that we sponsor!

Individual memberships: One person can become a member for \$25 per year.

Household memberships: A household is defined as two members sharing one newsletter, and is available for \$35 per year. Since some of our households have additional members, there will be a \$5 per year charge for each additional voting household member.

Paper Newsletters: Due to printing and mailing expense, we add a surcharge of \$15 for members to receive a paper newsletter in the mail rather than our email version newsletter. We encourage all members to receive the newsletter by email to save on paper, postage and printing expenses.

International members: Because of international postage rates and special handling, we have been forced to add a surcharge of \$5 for members in Canada or Mexico, and \$10 for other foreign addresses for members who receive the paper newsletter.

Thank you for all your support! We look forward to your being with us in the coming months!

Annual dues are:

Membership	Dues	# of mems	Total	
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$25	_____	\$_____	Name _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Household (2 members)	\$35	_____	\$_____	Address _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Additional household mems	\$5	_____	\$_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Low Income/ Student/under 21	\$10	_____	\$_____	Phone H: _____ W: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Paper version of newsletter	\$15	_____	\$_____	Email addr: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Subscription only	\$10	_____	\$_____	Please list names of additional household members: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining Member	\$100	_____	\$_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining Household	\$125	_____	\$_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Life Member	\$1000	_____	\$_____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Postage for Canada/Mexico	\$5	_____	\$_____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Postage for other foreign addresses	\$10	_____	\$_____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Extra donation (thank you!)		_____	\$_____	
TOTAL:			\$_____	

Please send this form with payment to:

Atlanta Freethought Society
4775 N. Church Lane SE
Smyrna, GA 30080-7224

Atlanta Freethought Society

4775 N. Church Lane SE Smyrna, GA 30080-7224

www.atlantafreethought.org afs@atlantafreethought.org

“Religious bondage shackles and debilitates the mind and unfits it for every noble enterprise, every expanded prospect.” —James Madison, 1774

Why I Am Not A Christian — \$8

Lucid, comprehensive, engaging answer to Christian apologists by **Keith Parsons**. Respectful but devastating to all Christian claims. A wonderful follow-up to Bertrand Russell's great essay with the same title.

An Uppity Old Atheist Woman's Dictionary — \$8

By the late, great **Carol Faulkenberry** (illustrated by Amanda Faulkenberry); like Ambrose Bierce's *Devil's Dictionary* —but better: more biting, funnier. Guaranteed to make you laugh out loud and to challenge at least one idea you hold.

Quotations That Support the Separation of State and Church (2nd edition) — \$11

Compiled by **Edward M. Buckner** and **Michael E. Buckner**; ammunition against Christian-nation mythologists. Quotes from America's revolutionaries, constitution framers, Presidents, court decisions. Sources carefully documented; extensive index. Comb-bound—lies flat for easy copying.

Please add:

\$4 TOTAL S&H Charge for up to 2 books.

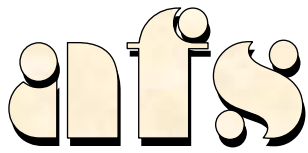
\$1.50 EACH S&H Charge for 3 to 9 books.

No S&H Charge for 10 Books or more.

(All Merchandise will be shipped USPS Priority Mail)

Send check or money order to:

ATLANTA FREETHOUGHT SOCIETY
4775 N. Church Lane SE Smyrna, GA 30080-7224



Atlanta
Freethought
Society

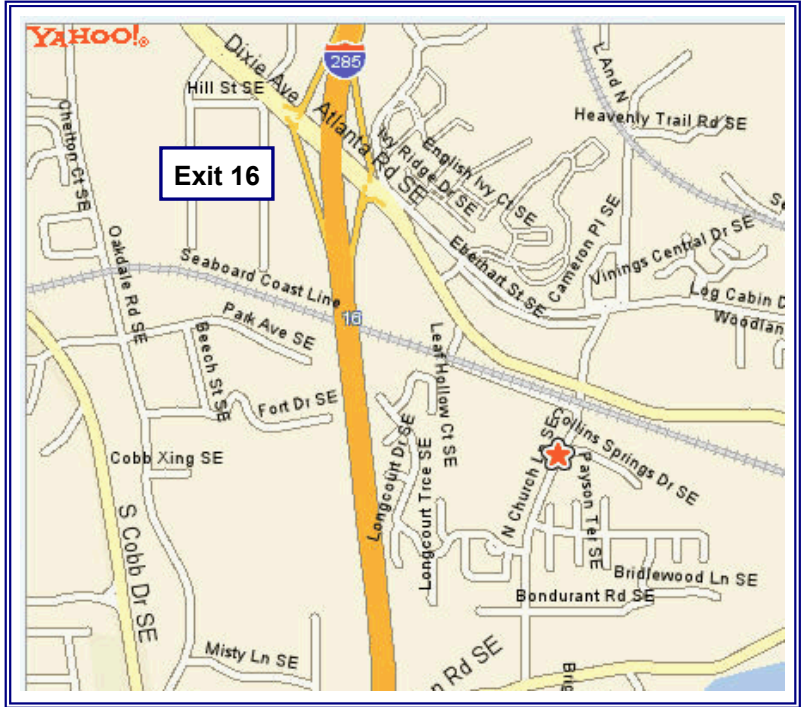
The April 11 Meeting:

1:00 at AF Hall

**4775 N. Church Lane SE
Smyrna, GA**

This Month's Speaker:

Sam Singleton



Atlanta Freethought News is produced by the Atlanta Freethought Society, Inc., a 501(c)(3) non-profit, member-run, educational organization created to advance freethought and protect freethinkers. Any freethought, atheist, secular humanist, agnostic, or rationalist group is granted permission to reproduce anything from our newsletter not expressly labeled otherwise (acknowledgement of AFS and author appreciated).

Articles published represent the official opinion of AFS only when that is clearly stated; all other opinion is that of the individual author.



If your label indicates "4 2010" or earlier, please renew. Thanks.

Atlanta Freethought News
Atlanta Freethought Society
4775 N. Church Lane SE
Smyrna, GA 30080-7224