

## The May AFS Meeting AFS VP Steve Yothment on “What is Freethought?”



Steve Yothment

The May 11 AFS meeting will feature a presentation by AFS Vice President Steve Yothment on “What is Freethought?” Steve will delve into the definition and characteristics of freethought, what it is and what it is not. He will also discuss the history of freethought and current

freethought issues.

Some of the material for his presentation is from the excellent book *Freethinkers: A History of American Secularism* by Susan Jacoby. If you haven't read this book, consider buying one at the AFS bookstore. We will have several copies for sale.

Here's a trivia question for the meeting: What town in the United States was established by German freethinkers in 1854?

The meeting will start at 1:00 p.m. at Atlanta Freethought Hall. Please feel free to come as early as 12:00 for snacks and conversation with other freethinkers!

## Edwin Kagin - November 26 1940 – March 27, 2014

It is with great sadness that we note that our friend, great writer/satirist/poet/attorney/humorist and foe of the religious uptight and overbearing,



has died— apparently peacefully and in his sleep. American Atheists National Legal Director

Edwin Kagin, 73, died at his home in Kentucky.

Edwin was an outspoken and powerful advocate for atheists in and out of the courtroom. He and his late wife Helen McGregor Kagin also founded Camp Quest, the first secular summer camp in the United States for the children of secularists, atheists, agnostics, brights, skeptics, naturalists and freethinkers. Kagin also ran for the Kentucky Supreme Court in 1998 and the Kentucky State Senate in 2000.

### Calendar

5/11 AFS Board Meeting 11:00 a.m.  
 5/11 AFS General Meeting 1:00 p.m.  
 6/8 AFS General Meeting 1:00 p.m.

All events are at AF Hall unless noted and are subject to change.

Be sure to like AFS's Facebook page for updates: <https://www.facebook.com/AtlantaFreethought>

### Grounds Committee

We need help keeping the lawn mowed. With all the rain, the grass is growing very quickly.

Thanks so much!

AFS is proud of its long relationship with Kagin, most notably as the first publisher of his fine book, *Baubles of Blasphemy*. (American Atheist Press published subsequent editions.) As Tom Flynn wrote of Kagin in the Foreword of that book— “His fiery combination of a backwoods manner, feral urbanity, and an absolutely ruthless search for truth makes him an unmistakable figure on the landscape of American irreligion.”

Kagin would have been justly proud of a full-length obituary by Paul Vitello, with photo, that ran in the New York Times. See [http://www.nytimes.com/2014/04/09/us/politics/edwin-kagin-atheist-who-battled-religion-in-public-sphere-dies-at-73.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/04/09/us/politics/edwin-kagin-atheist-who-battled-religion-in-public-sphere-dies-at-73.html?_r=0).

He was an icon among freethinkers, devoting his life to the cause. His death will be an enormous loss to the freethinker community.

AFS members and supporters are asked to keep Edwin's family and legions of his friends in their thoughts.

—Ed Buckner

## Programs and Speakers

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

The views and opinions expressed by speakers at AFS do not necessarily reflect those of AFS members or its policy.



**May 11: Steve Yothment**, "What is Freethought?"

**Jun 8: Dwight Lyman** "Christian Science"

**Jul 13: Rob Boston**

**Aug 10: TBA**

**Sep 14: TBA**

## AFS Email List

The AFS Announcements email list provides subscribers with reminders and updates on AFS activities. Send an email to [AFS-Announce-subscribe@yahoo.com](mailto:AFS-Announce-subscribe@yahoo.com) to subscribe. The AFS Forum email list is a place for discussions of freethought, atheism, agnosticism, church-state separation and religion. To subscribe to this list, send an email to [AFSForum-subscribe@yahoo.com](mailto:AFSForum-subscribe@yahoo.com). The AFS Facebook page is at <http://www.facebook.com/AtlantaFreethought>. For information on other AFS email groups, visit the AFS website at <http://www.atlantafreethought.org>.

*The Atlanta Freethought Society is a member-run organization dedicated to advancing freethought and protecting the rights and reputation of freethinkers, 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: Laura Ross  
Assistant Editor: Steve Yothment

### How to Contact the Editor

Send correspondence to AFS at:  
4775 N. Church Lane SE,  
Smyrna, GA 30080-7224,  
phone Laura at 404-634-1005, or send  
e-mail to [Laura@LauraRossDesign.com](mailto:Laura@LauraRossDesign.com)

### Atlanta Freethought Society President

Rick Pace – 770-912-6974

### VP for Internal Communication

Steve Yothment – 678-364-8703

### VP for External Communication

Paul Broman – 678-237-2645

### Secretary

Laura Ross – 404-634-1005

### Treasurer

Diane Buckner – 770-432-3049

### Board of Directors

Mark Banks – 770-354-1546

Mike Bucki – 404-550-0596

Michael Buckner – 404-633-2486

Bob Glassley – 678-488-9621

Bob Konopelski – 404-352-1230

Judy Thompson – 404-296-2020

### Atlanta Freethought News

Vol. 20, Number 5, May 2014

Copyright © 2014 by the Atlanta Freethought Society, Inc. Signed articles are all copyright © 2014 by their respective authors.

Membership in AFS is \$50/year per person,  
\$20 for low income.

Membership includes AFNews by email or mail.  
(Tell us which one you want.)

Sustaining Membership is \$100.

Life Membership is \$1000.

Subscriptions only are \$30 for 12 issues.

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

Visit our website at  
<http://www.AtlantaFreethought.org>.

See AFS events and member views at:  
[facebook.com/AtlantaFreethought](https://www.facebook.com/AtlantaFreethought).

Send E-mail to  
[afs@atlantafreethought.org](mailto:afs@atlantafreethought.org).

AFS Webmaster: Paul Broman  
AFS Facebook Site: Laura Ross & Rick Pace

# In the Bible Belt, Atheists Take on the National Day of Prayer

By James Swift

<http://uncommonjournalism.blogspot.com/2014/05/in-bible-belt-atheists-take-on-national.html>

Atlanta Freethought Society President Rick Pace offers a simple explanation as to why his organization chose Acworth, Ga., as the site of their 2014 National Day of Prayer protest.

“Because they got the most Cobb County coverage last year,” he said. “That’s precisely why I picked Acworth.”

Pace is obviously upset by this year’s festivities, however. While close to a hundred or so individuals attended the celebration—staged outside Acworth City Hall—Pace was expecting a much larger crowd. Even so, the number of attendees dwarves Pace and his fellow protesters, whose number, including himself, is just half a dozen.

The Atlanta Freethought Society (AFS) demonstration is restricted to a small circle adjacent to the official City Hall event. A two lane road serves as a literal wedge between the two crowds; one may argue about the blurred boundaries of church and state, but today, there is most certainly a clear, physical separation between the “true believers” and the irreligious.

Rep. Ed Setzler, a Republican representing Georgia’s 35th district, was one of several speakers and prayer leaders at the event. “Some of the terrible, terrible, terrible fights we’ve had as a nation amongst ourselves, some of the most bitter conflicts we’ve had,” Rep. Setzler said, “I believe there’s only one thing that’s kept this nation in one piece: and that’s like-mindedness in Christ.”

He then speaks about the recent plights of Eastern and Central European nations, whom he says does not share the same “truth” that Americans share. He recounts his experiences as a U.S. Army Officer in Bosnia. “We drove by a building where one faction had loaded 1,500 men and boys in, and set the building on fire,” he said, “because they don’t share the same truth that we have.”

The AFS demonstrators, obviously, beg to differ. Pace brings up how Christianity was a similar “truth” for the Ku Klux Klan and slaveholders. His sign reads “Hypocrites! Matthew 6:5-6.”

“And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites,” the New International Version interpretation of the passage reads, “for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others.”

Several prayer sessions and musical performances follow. A dancer carrying a flag with the word “freedom” emblazoned upon it did a routine, which was followed up with a speech by Acworth Police Department Chaplain Lee Gambrell. On the heels of the nationally publicized FedEx warehouse mass shooting in neighboring Kennesaw, Gambrell asks attendees to pray for not only the families of the shooting victims, but for the family of the shooter himself.

As the National Day of Prayer events continue, the AFS demonstrators discuss a litany of subjects, from Brunei’s recent decision to implement Sharia law to the still lingering aftereffects of Ronald Reagan’s presidency and the Moral Majority. They discuss the provisions laid out in Leviticus while munching on cookies given to them by locals—with the exception of AFS member Laura Ross, who abstains from the foodstuffs due to her vegan diet. After a musical interlude, Pace jokingly requests “Judith” by the heavy metal



By James Swift

band A Perfect Circle be played.

Towards the end of the hour-long event, Acworth Mayor Tommy Allgood takes the podium. He gives a brief history of the National Day of Prayer, from Harry Truman signing a bill establishing an unfixed annual date for the event in 1952 up to a 1988 amendment that solidified the first Thursday in May as the official observation date each year.

“God has blessed this community in a special way,” Allgood said. “We are the most loving, the most giving community in America, right here in Acworth, Ga.”

“Now, how do you think that happens?” he continued. “Well, I think God has brought those people to our city.”

He said that he thinks it’s “pretty neat” to be able to stand outside City Hall “and celebrate God and thank Jesus for all the blessings that we have.”

Across the road, the protesters silently look on. From several feet away, the look of dismay on their faces is unmistakable.

## Crusaders of An Entirely Different Sort

On their official website, the Atlanta Freethought Society (AFS) states that it wishes to “enrich and empower our membership through education and activism” as well as “educate the public on the benefits and realities of living life without religion.”

“Last year we did four volunteer activities for charity, we did two outdoor festivals and we did two protests,” Pace told Uncommon Journalism. “And then we have our monthly meetings... they’re open to the public, but they’re at our facility.” Ironically enough, that facility—“The Atlanta Freethought Hall,” located in Smyrna, Ga.—is housed in a renovated building that, years earlier, was once a Baptist church.

Founded in 1985, the AFS is currently home to around 100 members. According to Pace, who has been president of the 501(c)3 organization since 2012, many more people participate in AFS events and make donations, yet are hesitant to become official members.

“Several people are afraid to be known members because they fear job security and some of them fear their families disowning them,” he said. “They might donate their time or something like that at an event, or give some money to us, and that’s fine, but they still choose to not be a member because of the possible ramifications.”

Dr. Ed Buckner, AFS Activism Task Force Chair,



said the organization isn't exclusively populated by atheists—indeed, he said that there are quite a few members that self-identify as naturalists, or even theists themselves.

“We base our conclusions not on authority, but on thinking freely and considering evidence,” he described the AFS mantra. “We have protested National Day of Prayer events for quite a few years in a row...if we had enough manpower, we'd protest all of them.”

### **The Age-Old Debate on Separation of Church and State**

“Prayer doesn't offend us, or me, per se, it's the guise of the way they're doing it,” Pace said. “It's not everyone, but local affiliations like this—they're having it at Acworth City Hall or Roswell City Hall—they're perpetuating it as if it's a state-funded prayer service.”

Events of the like, Pace said, are not only violations of the United States Constitution, but violations of the Georgia State Constitution, which explicitly prohibits the direct or indirect use of public funds to “aid of any church, sect, cult or religious denomination or of any sectarian institution.”

However, City Manager Brian Bulthuis told *Uncommon Journalism* the Acworth event wasn't funded by city resources. “It is sponsored by some of the local churches and citizens,” he stated in an e-mail. “There is no budget for this event or expenses the city has other than staff time and those employees are already scheduled to work.”

In the past, Pace said the National Day of Prayer events his organization has protested have largely skewed towards Protestant crowds, with hardly any presence from non-Christian attendees. Pace said his organization once called the planners of a similar event, asking if Muslim or Jewish participants could be included. “We were told flat out,” he said, “no this is for Protestant Christians, you can go find your own thing.”

“The problem with that is not necessarily that people are praying,” Buckner said. “The ones that get to us the worst, that we think deserve to be given attention the most, either are or appear to be completely entangled in government.”

While Buckner said he and most AFS members believe in religious liberty, the Acworth festivities obfuscate the separation of church and state, toeing a dangerous line between constitutionality and unconstitutional religious endorsement.

“We believe people have a right to pray, if they want to,” he said. “What they don't have a right to do is do it on public property, and give the appearance of speaking on behalf of everyone who is not a Protestant Christian.”

### **Are Nonbelievers Being Discriminated Against?**

In the South, Buckner said that both atheism and acceptance of atheism has grown over the last few years. However, he still believes “irrational prejudices” exist, and that irreligious Southerners are often saddled with social stigmas.

“The biggest part of that stigma is probably connected to the notion that religiosity and morality are somehow causally related,” he said. Yet having associated with atheists and theists, of all faiths and denominations, Buckner believes morality and religious belief are hardly inseparable notions. “The incidence of moral behavior, how you look at your fellow human beings,” he said, “is pretty much the same within all of these groups.”

Born to an Episcopalian clergyman in Fitzgerald, Ga., Buckner served as the president of American Atheists, the nonprofit founded by Madalyn Murray

O'Hair, from 2008 until 2010.

“My guess, and this is just an impression, in the metro-Atlanta area, the incidents of discrimination against atheists and non-believers has eased off, maybe eased off considerably,” Buckner said. “If you get outside the metro area, even just to the town of Acworth for instance...you could face some very serious discrimination, even what may reasonably be called ‘persecution.’”

He recalled how locals reacted when, in 1984, Kenneth Saladin took the city of Milledgeville to court over its official seal, which included the word “Christianity.” <http://www.nytimes.com/1984/06/01/us/town-rooted-in-tradition-defends-its-christian-seal.html> A few years later, he said a Douglas County student “caught hell” for filing a suit which ultimately led to the barring of organized prayer before high school football games. <http://www.nytimes.com/1989/09/02/us/football-prayer-ban-stirring-anger-in-south.html> While such fiery reactions may have since simmered down, Buckner said Bible Belt atheists remain frequent targets of social discrimination today.

He said he's known individuals who have been threatened for their stances on the separation of church and state, and some who have lost their jobs for being “outed” as nonbelievers. The stigma of atheism in the region is so severe, he added, that he suspects many elected officials in the Bible Belt are likely feigning religiosity to avoid a public backlash.

“Less than half the people in Cobb County are members of any church, mosque or temple,” he said. “I am convinced there are people in any church service, on any given Sunday morning, that there is significant percentage of people there who—for social respectability or to sell life insurance or whatever—don't actually believe in that stuff.”

Pace said the predicaments of Southern Atheists parallels the predicaments of the gay community, with some irreligious individuals in the region fearing a loss of friends and extreme ostracism. “You look at ridiculous questions like, ‘do you people worship Satan’ or something like that, and they have no idea what it means to be an atheist,” he said.

He notes how, to this day, the South Carolina State Constitution includes a provision barring anyone “who denies the existence of a Supreme Being” from holding public office. Although overturned, the wording, which remains embedded on the state's books, is indicative of anti-atheist sentiments in the region, he believes.

“That's point blank persecution right there,” Pace said.

If atheists and agnostics publicized their

**Atlanta Freethought News**



By Ed Buckner

irreligiousness, however, Buckner believes much of the social stigma they face would fade away. Furthermore, by remaining silent on separation of church and state issues, he said irreligious Americans may be enabling and emboldening those in power who may use religion for political leverage.

"If you're a politician and you end every speech with 'God Bless America,' and the only people that comment on it are the people that are glad you do it," Buckner concluded, "you keep doing it."

### **Come Ye Men (and Women) of Faith**

Since 2000, Beth Watson has coordinated National Day of Prayer ceremonies in Acworth. The idea struck her while she was driving to neighboring Cartersville, Ga. for an event nearly a decade and a half ago.

"Why can't we have it right here in Acworth?" she recalled the moment. "It was like the Lord spoke to my heart, and he said 'yes, that's what I want you to do.'"

The festivities, Watson said, pay homage to "biblical principles the country was established on."

"It's important we come together, as a community," she told *Uncommon Journalism*, "and just calling out to God for his hand on America."

Watson said the National Day of Prayer does not violate church and state separation statutes. Furthermore, she said critics of the event are "misinterpreting" the United States Constitution. "When you came from England, if you weren't a Catholic, it was off with your head," she said. "So when this country was established, and became 'nobody is going to force you to be a Catholic, and take your head off'...I just think it's gotten all misrepresented through all the years."

Nor does she think the celebration discriminates against atheists. "I just see our exercising our right as Americans, and they have a right, as Americans, the atheists, to do what they're doing," she said. "We have a right, and they have a right, because this is America. That's what's so good about it."

As for the AFS demonstrators, Watson said she's praying for their conversions.

"I pray for them, and I know that God is real because he lives in my heart," she said. "And I would love it if they would allow Him to come to their heart, and to worship the one and true god."

Mayor Allgood told *Uncommon Journalism* the event was an opportunity for community members to thank God for their good fortunes.

"Fifteen years ago, as a community, we wanted to make sure that we were being faithful," he said. "It's probably more just faithfulness of making sure we give God credit for all of our blessings."

The separation of church and state, Allgood said, was a matter of "philosophical differences."

"In the formation of our country, I think the desire was that we would not have a government that dictates what kind of religion we had to follow," he said. "Certainly, to have the opportunity to be able to worship, for everybody to worship...giving everybody the right to celebrate and worship the way they want to worship is really important."



*By Laura Ross* To those who believe the National Day of Prayer is discriminatory against atheists and non-Christians, Allgood offered a succinct response. "Well," he said, "that's too bad if people think that."

### **The Last Woman Standing**

By one o'clock, a majority of the National Day of Prayer attendees -- mostly, a scattering of elder men and women, with a sizable minority of young children and bused-in teenagers—had dispersed from Acworth City Hall. What had been an hour ago the scene of a miniature revival—complete with choirs and red, white and blue balloons—had returned to its quaint, almost static routine.

While her fellow protesters seemed to drift off as soon as the event concluded, Laura Ross, an AFS member since 2008, remained on the backstreets of "Lake City."

"I knew there weren't going to be a whole lot of people here," she reflected on the demonstration. "So I knew we needed as many warm bodies as possible."

In the background, political hopefuls dash in for last minute photo ops. Earlier in the day, Ross carried several poster boards; "don't pray with our tax dollars," one of her signs read.

"I don't have any problems with them doing it," she said, the sound of a large truck's rumbling engine almost drowning out her voice. "I just have problems with the fact that they're giving it the appearance that the city is sponsoring this." The mayor's participation, in particular, bothered her a great deal.

Alas, as a private event, she didn't necessarily consider the event "discriminatory." She thinks Acworth is a beautiful city, and considers its inhabitants to be nice people. The scent of seafood—fittingly enough, off-limits to Ross herself—begins to waft overhead.

"I'm sure that we would be welcome to come here," she said, "but they sure would work on us."

However, if Ross could've taken to the podium today, what would she have said to the National Day of Prayer attendees?

"I would just explain that I thought they were violating church and state by meeting here in the City Hall," she said. "That's real bothersome. I don't think they should be using public property for this, because its not..."

She searches for an answer for a few seconds, as a strong gust of wind picks up.

"...American," she concludes with a soft chuckle.

# Other Meetings of Interest in Metro Atlanta

**Atlanta Astronomy Club** will have its May 17 general meeting from 3-5 at Fernbank Science Center, 156 Heaton Park Drive, Atlanta, GA 30307. (<http://www.atlantaastronomy.org>)

**The Fellowship of Reason** meets on the first Sunday of every month at 10:30 AM at AF Hall. There are meetings for book discussion, philosophy, a classic film course, and other events. (<http://www.fellowshipofreason.com>.)

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

Another **meetup for Atlanta atheists** is scheduled for Sun., May 25 at 4:00 p.m. at Five Seasons Brewery, 5600 Roswell Rd, in Sandy Springs. (<http://www.meetup.com/Atlanta-Atheists>)

**The Fayette Freethought Society** hosts lunches, dinners, book discussions, civic activities and more. (<http://www.meetup.com/Fayette-Freethought-Society/>)

**The Peachtree City Humanists** meet often for discussions at Starbucks, lunch, dinner at She's Bistro, and more. Several upcoming events in May. (<http://www.meetup.com/Peachtree-City-Humanists-PTCH/>.)

**GUST (Gwinnett: Understanding Secular Truths)** normally meets on the 2nd Monday of every month at Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Gwinnett, 12 Bethesda Church Road, Lawrenceville, GA, however, *this month they met on the first Monday*. Their next meeting is at 7:00, Mon. Jun. 9th. (<http://www.meetup.com/brights-295/>.)

**IIG Atlanta** will probably not meet this month due to Skepticamp on May 4th. Independent Investigations Group Atlanta is affiliated with IIG-West and Center for Inquiry, and promotes critical thinking about the paranormal, supernatural and unexplained. *It offers \$100,000 for anyone who can demonstrate evidence of the occult or paranormal under properly controlled conditions.* Questions? Visit [IIGAtlanta.com](http://IIGAtlanta.com) or contact Shaune Beattie by email: [shaune.beattie@gmail.com](mailto:shaune.beattie@gmail.com). (<http://www.meetup.com/IIG-Atlanta/>.)

**The Atlanta Skeptics** does not have any meeting listed for later this month, due to Skepticamp on May 4th. However, be sure to check Meetup for more information. (<http://www.meetup.com/AtlantaSkeptics/>.)

**Sunday Assembly Atlanta** will meet on Sun. May 18, 11:00 a.m. at SAA Venue, 3580 Pierce Dr., Suite 160, Chamblee. After the Assembly, there will be a potluck. And as always, childcare will be provided during the service, and the venue is wheelchair accessible. Everyone is welcome! For more about the global movement, check out: <http://sundayassembly.com/about/> (<http://www.meetup.com/Sunday-Assembly/>)

**Recovery from Religion - Morrow Chapter** is having the May meeting at Barnes & Noble Booksellers Southlake, 1939 Mount Zion Road, on Sat. May 10 at 1:00 pm.

If you are one of the many people who have determined that religion no longer has a place in their life, but are dealing with the after-effects in some way or another, Recovering From Religion (RR) may be just the right spot for you. We welcome everyone, from doubting theist to ardent atheist, and our goal is to assist you in dealing with the negative impact of religion in your life. We are honored to be a part of your journey to be free from faith!

The RR Morrow Chapter is affiliated with the National organization, and is dedicated to helping former believers live happier and healthier lives. For more information and resources, please visit [www.recoveringfromreligion.org](http://www.recoveringfromreligion.org). (<http://www.meetup.com/Recovering-From-Religion-Morrow-Chapter/>)

**The Atlanta Science Tavern** is meeting at Manuel's Tavern, Sat., May 24, 7:00 pm, \$3.00 for non-students. **Dr. Maria Nagy** of Department of Applied and Environmental Microbiology at Georgia State University will speak about "The Secret Life of Bacteria - Communities, Languages and Even Sex." Did you know that bacteria live in

intricate communities? That they communicate using chemical signals? That they produce elaborate weaponry? When bacteria attack a host, they attack as an army using a complex arsenal of toxins and defense mechanisms. They tend live in bacterial cities. Lastly, even though bacteria go through asexual reproduction, they also engage in conjugation. (<http://www.meetup.com/AtlantaScienceTavern>)

**Black Nonbelievers** is having a Mother's Day Brunch at 57th Fighter Group Restaurant, 3829 Clairmont Road, Atlanta, GA at

11:00 as well as their BN annual barbecue/potluck in the park at Starr Park, 803 Forest Pkwy, Forest Park on Mon. May 26 at 1:00.

BN will also have their May general meeting at Atlanta Public Library, Main Downtown Branch, 1 Margaret Mitchell Square on May 18 at 2:00 p.m. The topic is "Trying to Turn us Back to God." (<http://www.meetup.com/Black-Nonbelievers/>)

**The SOS (Secular Organizations for Sobriety)** meets on Tuesdays at 7:30 p.m. in

Roswell. For more information, send an email to [donnaigore@yahoo.com](mailto:donnaigore@yahoo.com).

Check out Atlanta Secular Directory (<http://AtlantaSecularDirectory.com>) for more Science/Skeptical/Secular events in the metro Atlanta area, or contact Laura Ross ([laura@laurarossdesign.com](mailto:laura@laurarossdesign.com)) to suggest events or groups to add to the calendar—volunteers desperately needed to help with this project.





# Become a Member!

**(Or renew your membership with this form or online at [www.AtlantaFreethought.org](http://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 \$50 per year.

**Sustaining memberships:** One person can become a sustaining member for \$100 per year.

**Life memberships:** Avoid the hassle of renewing every year. A life membership lasts a lifetime.

**Paper newsletter:** We encourage members to receive the newsletter by email. This avoids the printing and mailing expenses. But if you really want the paper version of the newsletter, just let us know and we will send it to you at no additional charge. (You can also pick up a paper newsletter at any AFS meeting.)

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

Annual dues are:

## Membership Dues# of mems Total

Individual \$50 \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Low Income \$20 \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Sustaining \$100 \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: H \_\_\_\_\_ W \_\_\_\_\_  
Member \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Life Member \$1000 \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Any other things you'd like to tell us?  
Subscription only \$30 \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Books \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Shipping and handling for Books \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Extra donation (Thank you!) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Receive newsletter by email

(No charge for members)

Receive paper newsletter by mail

(No charge for members)

Save time and postage

by making a payment via **Paypal** to:

**[afs@atlantafreethought.org](mailto:afs@atlantafreethought.org)**

## Atlanta Freethought Society

4775 N. Church Lane SE Atlanta, GA 30080-7224  
[www.atlantafreethought.org](http://www.atlantafreethought.org) [afs@atlantafreethought.org](mailto:afs@atlantafreethought.org)

*"Religious bondage shackles and debilitates the mind and unfits it for every noble enterprise, every expanded prospect."*

—James Madison, 1774

**We still have these great books for sale:**

### 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 Faulken-berry); 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:

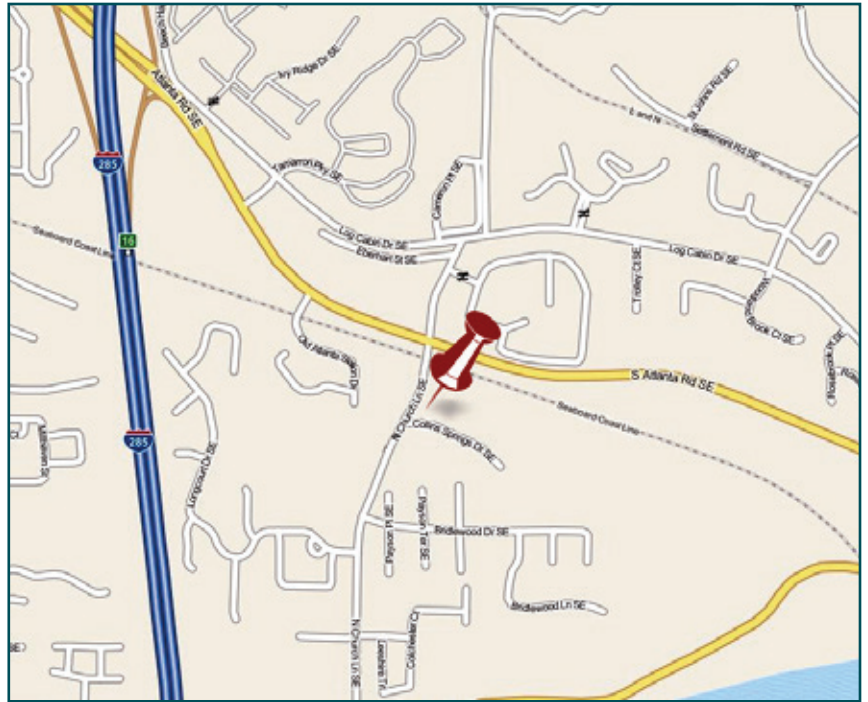
**ATLANTA FREETHOUGHT SOCIETY**  
4775 N. Church Lane SE, Smyrna, GA 30080-7224

*Dare To Think  
For Yourself!*



**The May 11th  
Meeting:  
1:00 at AF Hall,  
4775 N. Church Lane SE  
Atlanta, GA**

**This Month's Speaker:  
Steve Yothment**



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 "12 2014" or earlier, please renew. Thanks.*

Atlanta Freethought News  
Atlanta Freethought Society  
4775 N Church Lane SE  
Smymna GA 30080-7224

