### The January AFS Meeting

### Bill Osinski on Dwight "Malichi" York

On Sunday, January 8, Atlanta Freethought Society is fortunate to welcome investigative writer



Bill Osinski

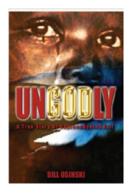
Bill Osinski, who wrote the book Ungodly about the tragic story of the Nuwaubians and their cult leader Dwight "Malichi" York, convicted in the largest child molestation case in the USA.

This is the strange, shameful story of how

a street kid declared himself a god and was thus granted immunity for a long career of crime.

Dwight York, aka Imam Isa, Dr. Malachi Z. York, and Baba, among others, was so adept at playing the race and religion cards that, for 35 years he successfully trumped a series of politicians,

prosecutors, police and school officials, academicians and journalists who might have, or should have, stopped him. So this is also the shameful story of how the fear of being politically incorrect, of being accused of practicing discrimination based on race and religion, silenced the majority and allowed the abuses to continue unabated, while young lives were destroyed.



### The January Potluck

Before the January 8th meeting we will have a Potluck Lunch, starting at noon. Join AFS members and guests for some good food and great socializing. Please bring food according to the first letter of your last name:

A-G: Bring a main dish H-P: Bring a dessert Q-Z: Bring a side dish

AFS will provide drinks, plates and silverware.

### Calendar

I/8 Potluck Lunch 12:00 noon
I/8 AFS General Meeting I:00 pm
I/8 Games at AF Hall! 2:30 pm
I/14 AFS Board Meeting (Bylaws) II:00 am
I/27 Games at AF Hall! 7:00-ish pm
2/12 AFS Board Meeting II:00 am
2/12 AFS General Meeting I:00 pm
2/24 Games at AF Hall! 7:00-ish pm

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

Be sure to like AFS's Facebook page: www.facebook.com/AtlantaFreethought

### a better life

There is no God. Now what? If this is the only life we have, how does that affect how we live our lives, how we treat each other, and cope with death? As a follow-up to one of Kickstarter's most successful publishing projects, photographer and filmmaker Chris Johnson introduces us to some of the many voices from his book. In this fascinating documentary learn the stories behind the book in interviews with some of our greatest thinkers. Join Chris as he explores issues of joy & meaning and travels around the globe meeting people from all walks of life and backgrounds who challenge the false stereotypes of atheists as immoral and evil. From Daniel Dennett and A.C. Grayling, to Julia Sweeney and Robert Llewellyn learn the various ways many atheists have left religion to a better life filled with love, compassion, hope, and wonder.

Come to a viewing of this film on Sat, Jan 21, 6 PM - 8:30 PM at Cinéfest, 66 Courtland St SE #240, Atlanta, which will be followed by a Q&A session with the filmmaker. There will be a suggested donation of \$5 at the door, though no one will be turned away for lack of funds.

For the latest in upcoming AFS events, join our Meetup group! meetup.com/Atlanta-Freethought-Society

### **Programs and Speakers**

All programs are on the second Sunday of each month at AF Hall, 4775 N. Church Lane SE, Atlanta, GA, 30339 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.

**Jan 8: Bill Osinski:** On his book and screenplay about Dwight "Malichi" York, a religious leader who got into legal trouble

Feb 12: TBD Mar 12: TBD Apr 9: TBD

### **AFS Email List**

The AFS Announcements email list provides subscribers with reminders and updates on AFS activities. Send an email to <u>AFS-Announce-subscribe@yahoogroups.com</u> 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 <u>AFSForum-subscribe@yahoogroups.com</u>. The AFS Facebook page is at <u>facebook.com/AtlantaFreethought</u>. For calender information on AFS activities, please join the <u>Meetup group</u>. The AFS website is <u>www.atlantafreethought.org</u>.

To keep up to date on the Atlanta Freethought Society calendar of upcoming events, please join our Meetup group: <a href="meetup.com/Atlanta-Freethought-Society">meetup.com/Atlanta-Freethought-Society</a>.

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.

Views, opinions, positions or strategies expressed by authors are theirs alone and do not necessarily reflect the views, opinions, positions or strategies of the Atlanta Freethought Society or any member thereof. The editors of Atlanta Freethought News reserve the right to edit or alter in any manner it sees fit any articles deemed to be obscene, offensive, defamatory, threatening, in violation of trademark, copyright or other laws, or is otherwise unacceptable; and also to correct grammar and to conserve space.

### Atlanta Freethought News An AFS Publication

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### **Atlanta Freethought News**

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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

(or Paypal to afs@atlantafreethought.org)

Visit our Meetup page at meetup.com/Atlanta-Freethought-Society/

See AFS events and member views at: facebook.com/AtlantaFreethought.

Send E-mail to

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AFS Wordpress specialist: Dwight Lyman
AFS Facebook page: Laura Ross





### Congratulations??? to our own Ed Buckner for being a thorn in the side to the Marietta Daily News in 2016 (Dec. 23, 2016)

Dear Editor/Around Town,

In re--

WHO'S NAUGHTY AND WHO'S NICE this holiday season? Well, Kris Kringle was kind enough to leak Around Town a copy of his list. He's bringing ...

- The Marietta school board: bottles of Dom Perignon for hiring a terrific new superintendent in **Grant Rivera**.
- Retiring Marietta Schools Superintendent Emily Lembeck: an alarm clock that never rings.
- Outgoing County Chairman Tim Lee: never having to hear from Rich Pellegrino, Tom Cheek and other critics ever again.
- **Kellie Brownlow**, Tim Lee's deputy chief: a new elected official to hide from the press and public.
- Bob Weatherford: a trip to Buford Highway, where he can see what his northwest Cobb district will turn into if developers keep getting the greenlight at zoning meetings.
- Commissioner **Bob Ott**: a cake, given his love for having one and eating it, too.
- Commissioner Lisa Cupid, who has pushed the county to spend more in her district: a punching bag, which she can wear out when frustrated with the fiscal conservativism of incoming County Chairman Mike Boyce.
- County Chairman-elect **Mike Boyce**: a flak jacket if his allies turn against him for voting his conscience.
- Commissioner JoAnn Birrell, who recently complained to lawmakers that they had drawn out all passive parks in her district: a Chia Pet, so she can remember what a bit of greenery looks like. Ch-ch-chia!
- Atlanta Braves: a miracle, as that's the only thing that's going to save their yet-to-be released traffic plan for SunTrust Park.
- KSU President Sam Olens, who is complaining about the lack of women on KSU's Marietta campus: the cellphone of Gloria Steinem.
- Santa made arrangements with Rome to send over an exorcist for Cobb Schools Superintendent Chris Ragsdale, who finds himself facing a request by the Satanic Temple, of all things, to open an after-school club at Still Elementary School.
- Cobb Superior Court Judge Robert Flournoy, who

- dismissed all charges against former Cobb EMC CEO **Dwight Brown:** a visit from Jiminy Cricket. (Give a little whistle!)
- Marietta Mayor Steve Tumlin and Councilman Philip Goldstein: use of Camp David to reach an accord over what to build in the Goldstein Gap on Marietta Square.
   Santa has suggested, however, that such a powwow will be about as successful as the one held by Bill Clinton, Ehud Barak and Yasser Arafat.
- State Sen. Judson Hill, R-east Cobb: a new job, given
  politicos expect him to lose his race to replace U.S. Rep.
  Tom Price, R-east Cobb, should former Secretary of State
  Karen Handel enter the race, as she is expected to do.
- Sterling Wharton, who spearheaded last year's New Year's Eve celebration and "ball drop" on Marietta Square: a pair of gold tights. What comes around goes around, Sterling.
- Noted atheist and persistent MDJ letter to the editor writer Ed Buckner: nothing because Santa doesn't believe in him.
- Marietta City Councilman Andy Morris: a copy of the TV show "Shameless" to accompany his pursuit of taxpayerfunded perks.
- Justice Harris Hines: a new gavel for his new position as chief justice of the Georgia Supreme Court. He'll need a big one to keep an expanded court of nine justices in line.
- Judge Mary Staley Clark, D.A. Vic Reynolds, Court Administrator Tom Charron, et al, after spending much of the tail end of the year out of town in Brunswick for a change-of-venue trial: being home for the holidays.
- The Marietta and Cobb schools districts: a sunny day on March 21, 2017, when voters will go to the polls to vote on a penny sales tax to benefit the schools.
- U.S. Rep. Tom Price: a sense of urgency on the part of the Senate to approve his nomination as secretary of Health and Human Services and let him get to work. He has a long to-do list.
- Cobb and Marietta school board attorney Clem Doyle: given the amount of legal fees he receives from the school systems, Santa is letting him purchase his own presents.
- Sheriff Neil Warren and all officers and deputies: our gratitude for keeping us safe.

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### To save court — 'Time to roll up our sleeves and fight back'

### By Annie Laurie Gaylor Co-President Freedom From Religion Foundation

ffrf.org/news

The Washington Post had a chilling report on Christmas Day revealing that Donald Trump will inherit more than 100 judicial vacancies when he becomes president.

Even if Trump's presidency is short-lived, the effects of decisions by Trump's lifetime appointees could linger on for generations. These judges will decide on access to abortion and contraception, on immigration and voter rights, anti-discrimination policies, gun control — not to mention the ever-controversial principle of separation between state and church.

Since 2015 when they seized control of the Senate, Republican senators have obstructed **Obama** nominations. No floor votes were scheduled on 25

of Obama's recent court nominees, even though they'd been approved out of committee with bipartisan support.

Then came the shameful, shameful

Then came the shameful, shameful decision by Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and Sen. Charles Grassley, chair of the Judiciary Committee, to ignore Obama's nomination to replace the late Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia. Sen. Patrick Leahy of Vermont, the ranking

Democrat on the Judiciary Committee, has denounced the blocking of that solid and centrist nomination — Merrick Garland, chief justice of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia — as "the most outrageous act of obstruction and irresponsibility" witnessed in his 42 years in the Senate.

Despite the GOP stonewalling, Obama did manage 329 judicial appointments, naming more female, minority and gay or lesbian judges than any other president. Democrats currently make up 51 percent of circuit court judges. Unfortunately, according to the Brookings Institution, that is expect-

ed to drop to 43 percent by 2020 under Trump, while Republican appointees, currently about 34 percent of district judgeships, are projected to rise to about 50 percent. The Brookings Institution notes one silver lining: Many to-be-departing judges are Republican appointments, meaning Trump replacements may not significantly shift the balance of power. Also hopeful is the fact that the Senate tradition is to consider nominees only if supported by both senators from the nominee's home state — and more than half the states are represented by at least one Democratic senator.

Meanwhile, here are some of the chilling possibilities deemed to be on the short list as Scalia's replacement, according to NPR's court-watcher Nina Totenberg:

• William Pryor, former attorney general of Alabama, who was appointed to the 11th Circuit by President George W. Bush while Congress was in recess. As Totenberg notes, "Judge Pryor is an outspoken critic of the Supreme Court's decisions

on abortion, homosexuality and the so-called Miranda warning."

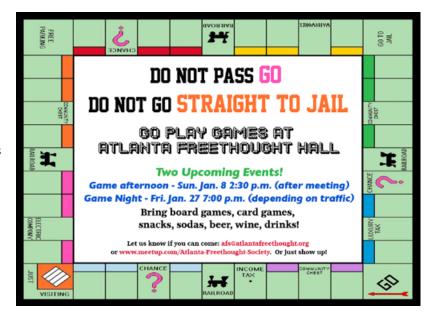
- Diane Sykes of Wisconsin, an arch-conservative appointed by Bush to the 7th Circuit. Totenberg notes, "She authored an opinion expanding the rights of employers to limit their workers access to contraceptives on religious grounds . . . [and] mandating state subsidies for anti-gay religious groups on college campuses, a position subsequently reversed by the Supreme Court"
- Judge Raymond Gruender of Missouri, who, Totenberg relates, "wrote a decision upholding state-mandated suicide warnings before abortions."

The dismaying list of the remaining 21 Heritage Foundation and Federalist Society-stamped nominees goes on and on. But whomever Trump appoints to replace Scalia at least will not change the partisan balance on the Supreme Court, which was already a 5-4 swing to the Republican side.

Let's toast the health of our elderly liberal justices on the highest bench!

And a toast to the opposition, such as South Carolina's Democratic Party head Jaime Harrison, who won't forget how the GOP treated Obama's nomination and has urged: "It's time to roll up our sleeves and fight back."

It's long past time, actually.



### Will Donald Trump Give Some Late Gifts To The Religious Right?

By Liz Hayes in Wall of Separation

www.au.org/blogs/wall-of-separation

It hasn't been a secret what members of the Religious Right sought under their Christmas trees this year, and voters playing the role of Santa Claus delivered: **Donald Trump** for president.

Even though his own advisors have indicated you can't take what Trump says literally, his voiced support for issues dear to the hearts of far-right evangelicals was enough for them to overlook the reality television star's three marriages, permissive attitude on adultery and boasts about sexually assaulting women.

Exit polling showed 81 percent of white, evangelical Christian voters cast their ballots for Trump.



Family Research Council President Tony Perkins noted the "bridge between Donald Trump and Christian conservatives" was the candidate's pledge to appoint conservative judges on the U.S. Supreme Court and other federal benches. (As *The Washington Post* reports this morning, there are more than 100 vacancies on the federal bench, meaning Trump is well poised to deliver on this promise.)

Perkins said other decisive issues included Trump's backing of efforts to allow businesses

to discriminate against LGBTQ citizens and his vow to repeal the Johnson Amendment, a provision in federal law that prohibits non-profits, including houses of worship, from endorsing or opposing political candidates.

Perkins was involved in developing the Republican Party's 2016 platform, which espoused conservative social priorities. It echoed Trump in supporting another issue of concern to Americans United: the expansion of private school voucher plans that would direct tax dollars to religious schools.

Trump also had an "evangelical advisory board" full of far-right voices willing to overlook the candidate's less-than-righteous past in exchange for a potential ally in the White House.

Some of those advisors included:

James Dobson, founder of the Family Research Council, Focus on the Family and Family Talk, who referenced the election as a "single-issue" race revolving around the appointment of at least one Supreme Court justice. He called Trump's list of proposed conservative justices "stellar" and also was encouraged by Trump's running mate selection of Indiana Gov. Mike Pence, who has deep ties to the Religious Right.

Jerry Falwell Jr., president of the fundamentalist Liberty University, was one of Trump's early Religious Right endorsers. "In my opinion, Donald Trump lives a life of loving and helping others as Jesus taught in the great commandment," Falwell said as he introduced Trump at the Virginia university in January 2015. After the election, Falwell said he was offered but declined the role of secretary of the U.S. Department of Education.

Ralph Reed, founder and chairman of the Faith & Freedom Coalition, told The Washington Post that "people of faith are voting on issues like who will protect unborn life, defend religious freedom, grow the economy, appoint conservative judges and oppose the Iran nuclear deal." He added that the taped

conversation featuring Trump's comments about groping women ranked "pretty low on [evangelical voters'] hierarchy of their concerns."

Apparently, those same voters' concerns have changed since 1998, when Reed, then running the Christian Coalition, referenced then-President Bill Clinton to The New York Times: "We care about the conduct of our leaders, and we will not rest until we have leaders of good moral character."

It remains to be seen whether Trump will try to fulfill his promises, or if this is a gift Christian conservatives will wish they could exchange. I suspect the former. Trump doesn't have to sincerely believe in the Religious Right's agenda to attempt to deliver on it, and since he wants the Religious Right's ongoing support, why wouldn't he try to keep its leaders and members happy? Trump is already doing that. Just look at his cabinet appointees.

One thing's for sure: Americans United will have its hands full next year. We're going to need your help, so if you're not a card-carrying member, now is the time to sign up.

### Frank R. Wolf International Religious Freedom Act Signed into Law

americanhumanist.org

(Washington, DC, Dec. 19, 2016)—President Obama has signed H.R. 1150, the Frank R. Wolf International Religious Freedom Act, the first piece of legislation to specifically mention and include protection for "non-theists," into law.

Upon learning of the Act's passage, American Humanist Association Executive Director Roy Speckhardt said, "The American Humanist Association is proud to see this historic legislation signed into law and looks forward to working with the US Department of State to ensure religious liberty for non-theists and religious minorities abroad. That non-theists are now recognized as a protected class is a significant step toward full acceptance and inclusion for non-religious individuals, who are still far too often stigmatized and persecuted around the world."

You can read the full text of the Act online at https://www.congress.gov/114/bills/hr1150/BILLS-114hr1150enr.xml

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### Other Meetings of Interest in Metro Atlanta

The SOS (Secular Organizations for Sobriety) meets on Tuesdays at 7:30 p.m. in Roswell. For more information, send an email to donnajgore@yahoo.com.

We Agnostics Atlanta meets on Tuesdays at 7:30 p.m. at the Galano Club, 585 Dutch Valley Rd NE, Atlanta, GA 30324. Clubhouse phone number: (404) 881-9188. This is like an Alcoholics Anonymous group.

Marietta Skeptic/Humanist Meetup has various gettogethers and discussion groups. Several upcoming events. (www.meetup.com/Marietta-Atheists-Meetup)

The Peachtree City Humanists meet often for discussions at Starbucks, lunch, dinner at She's Bistro, and more. Several upcoming events each month. (www.meetup.com/ Peachtree-City-Humanists-PTCH)

The Southern Crescent Freethinkers sponsor Navigators, Owl & Ibis: A Confluence of Minds, and meet for dinner, etc. Several upcoming events each month. (www.meetup.com/ Southern-Crescent-Freethinkers)

### N. Georgia Freethinkers Secularists & Humanists

Non-religious freethinking adults who, at times, feel somewhat isolated in this little corner of Georgia to forge friendships, meet for drinks, have dinner parties, chat over coffee, practice debating skills, laugh, hold game nights, etc. (www.meetup. com/North-Gwinnett-Freethinkers-Atheist-Agnostic-Meetup)

Tavern has several meetings planned. Please check meetup page for more information. (www.meetup.com/ AtlantaScienceTavern)

The Atlanta Science

There will be a meetup for Atlanta Atheists Sun., Jan. 8 at 6:00 p.m. at Thinking Man Decatur. (www.meetup.com/

Tavern, 537 W. Howard Ave, in Atlanta-Atheists)

**GUST (Gwinnett: Understanding Secular Truths)** meets on the Mon Jan. 9 at 7:00 pm at UUCG, 12 Bethesda Church Road, Lawrenceville, unless otherwise indicated.

Check Facebook/Meetup pages for more information. (www. meetup.com/brights-295)

Sunday Assembly Atlanta will have a general meeting on Sun Jan 15 at 6 p.m. at First Existentialist Congregation, 470 Candler Park Dr NE. Atlanta.

Assemblies, and the potlucks afterward, are open to the public and free to attend! They are an extremely active community with a large number of upcoming events including rock chorus, secular support, mindfulness meditation, wonder club, urban wonder, book club, makers night out, volunteering, queer beyond belief group, public speaking series, trivia nights, etc. (www.meetup.com/Sunday-Assembly)

Atlanta Astronomy Club is having a general meeting Sat, Jan. 21, 3-5 at Fernbank Science Center, 156 Heaton Park Dr, Atlanta. (www.atlantaastronomy.org)

Atlanta Coalition of Reason is presenting the documentary "A Better Life: Joy and Meaning in a World Without God" on Sat Jan 21 6-8:30 at Cinéfest, 66 Courtland St #240 Atlanta, suggested donation \$5. Discussion with filmmaker Chris Johnson afterwards. See pg. I for more info. (www.meetup.com/ Atlanta-Coalition-of-Reason-ATL-CoR)

Another **meetup for Atlanta Atheists** is scheduled for Sun., Jan 22 at 4:00 p.m. at Five Seasons Brewing, 5600 Roswell Rd, Sandy Springs. (www.meetup.com/Atlanta-Atheists)

**Black Nonbelievers** will participate in the Fifth Tuesday Series on WRFG with Charone Pagett Jan. 31 from 6-7 p.m. and Mandisa Thomas will hang out afterwards with anyone who wants to come. The address is WRFG 89.3 FM Com-

> munity Radio, 1083 Austin Ave, Atlanta. (www.meetup.com/ Black-Nonbelievers)

### Atlanta Skeptics has

"Drinking Skeptically" on the first Friday of each month. 5 Seasons Brewing, 5600 Roswell Rd, Sandy Springs. (www. meetup.com/AtlantaSkeptics)

Atlanta Atheists has first Sunday meetups each month: the place varies. Check Meetup for info on the get-together. (www. meetup.com/Atlanta-Atheists)

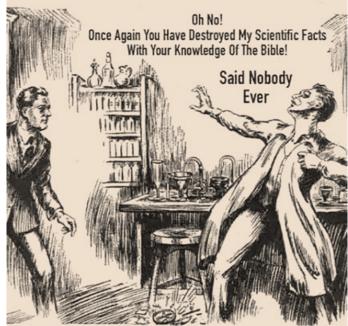
Fellowship of Reason meets on the first Sunday of every month at 10:30 AM at AF Hall. There are meetings for book discussion, philosophy, a classic film course, and other events. (www.fellowshipofreason.com)



ligion Foundation of Georgia often meets on the first Sunday of every month at 2:00 at AF Hall, with a lively meet and greet starting at 1:30 pm. Not every monthplease check Meetup or Facebook. (www.meetup.com/ Freedom-From-Religion-Foundation-of-Georgia)

Recovery from Religion - Morrow Chapter

meets on Sat, Feb II at I p.m. at Barnes & Noble Booksellers Southlake, 1939 Mount Zion Road, Morrow, GA. There is no proselytizing of any kind allowed at these meetings. For more information and resources, please visit www.recoveringfromreligion.org. (www.meetup.com/ Recovering-From-Religion-Morrow-Chapter)



# Become a Member!

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

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

**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.

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

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

## Annual dues are:

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## **AFS Art Display Program**

www.atlantafreethought.org 4775 N. Church Lane SE Atlanta, GA 30339 afs@atlantafreethought.org

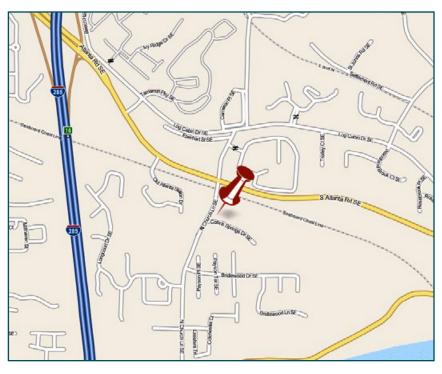
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Description of artwork (subject, color, dimensions, weight, frame, price, materials, other info — list on separate page if necessary)
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s artwork for sale? Yes / No \$Upon sale wner agrees to pay AFS a 33.3% fee.
erms: All artwork displays will be submitted to Atlanta reethought Society art committee for approval (afs@atlantafethought.org). Installation & removal will be done by artist/wner overseen by AFS art committee. Damage to building will be repaired by artist/owner. The owner assumes all risk for artwork at all times. AFS will not be responsible for any damage r loss while artwork is in our posession.
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January 8th meeting I:00 at AF Hall, 4775 N. Church Lane SE Atlanta, GA 30339

### **Bill Osinski**



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