The October AFS Meeting

Konrad Hayashi "Public Health in the USA"

We are very pleased to have **Dr. Konrad Hayashi** speaking to AFS on Sunday, October 9 about pub-



Konrad Hayashi

lic health. Hayashi as a Public Health physician, retired Navy, graduate of Tulane, with global experience on Ebola, cholera, Zika, malaria, and other diseases.

He was Health Promotions Communications Coordinator of the Health Promotions

West Africa Ebola response team and worked in Liberia on the Ebola outbreak. His assignment was a collaboration of efforts from various organizations: UNICEF, WHO, CDC, Carter Center, and Doctors Without Borders. During July to September 2014, Dr. Hayashi worked with local Chiefs, community leaders, and telecommunication companies in educational programs to inform the public on health practices to help in the containment of the virus.

He currently is a representative to the Republic of the Marshall Islands and Epidemiology Lead - Zika Response, where he provides daily consultation in the Ministry of Health on Zika virus testing, pregnancy, surveillance, Emergency Operations Center (EOC) operations, standing up MOH Environmental Health Unit (EHU), assessment of Aedes species mosquito challenges, providing GIS tools, daily situation reports (SITREPS) for the Ministry, CDC, Department of Defense, Pacific Islands Health Officer Association (PIHOA), and other response partners. He also established standardized, online, monitoring and reporting system for the MOH, provided data for CDC's ArboNET, zoonotic reports and the Zika Virus Pregnancy Registry. He developed legislation, including an ordinance for reducing used tire burden and covering with mosquito netting of water catchments/cisterns. Both are major mosquito breeding sources. He also proposed a supplementary emergency public health response fund, enabling more flexible use of funds.

Calendar

10/9 AFS Board meeting 11:00 am 10/9 AFS General meeting 1:00 pm 11/13 Potluck Lunch 12:00 noon 11/13 AFS General meeting 1:00 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

This and That:

The AFS bylaws require nomination of officers and board members for each year at the October meeting. Please think about whom you would like to nominate. (Current officers and board members are listed on page 2.). Serving board members must have paid their dues for years they serve. Voting can only be done by paid membership and will take place in December.

Officers have I-year terms; board members have 2-year terms.



Thanks to Steve Yothment and Mark Banks for grounds work: watering, trimming, and mowing. Atlanta Freethought Hall looks great!

If anyone has any spring flower bulbs they'd like to donate, send them our way. We'd like to add some color!



Speaking of color, next month the art show currently on the walls is going to be coming down. If you'd like to make a purchase and support our AFS artists as well as AFS, let us know! Everything is for sale.

Also, if you would like to hang your own work, let us know about that as well. The application is on page 7 next to the membership form.

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.

Oct 9: Konrad Hayashi "Public Health in the USA"

Nov 3: TBD Dec II: TBD Jan 8: 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: meetup.com/Atlanta-Freethought-Society.

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.

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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.)

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Responses to Dick Yarbrough's humor column "Current drought may require another Divine solution" in the Marietta Daily Journal

Dick Yarbrough's 9/21 column as follows:

Uh oh. Here we go again. I have been told that we are beginning to experience drought conditions in the state. Somebody needs to alert Dr. Gil Watson, the World's Greatest Preacher. There is no question he can soon have some serious raindrops falling on our heads.

You may remember that the last time we were in a severe drought in Georgia, then-Gov. George E. Perdue had a prayer session at the state Capital and invited Dr. Gil to come pray for rain. I'm not sure why Dr. Gil was selected, but it may have had something to do with the governor's innovative "Go Fish, Georgia," program, a \$23 million initiative initiative and was designed to make Georgia competitive in the 21st century global marketplace.

I'm a little hazy on the details today, but as near as I can recall, the idea was that while India and China were busy turning out engineers and scientists, Georgia would be teaching our next generation of leaders how to catch fish instead.

By teaching a child to fish, we wouldn't have to teach them anything else and we could lay off public school teachers, which would more than pay for the concrete boat ramps for the ponds. The idea was so cutting-edge, not even India or China could figure out why we were doing this. Neither could I.

If our lakes dried up, it stood to reason that the fish would get upset and not even a visionary like George E. Purdue would be able to coax them into voluntarily biting a sharp barbed hook. Unlike engineers and scientists, fish can be very temperamental.

So Gov. Perdue invited Dr. Gil to come to the Capital and pray for rain and thereby keep "Go Fish, Georgia" afloat. That was a smart move. It is a known fact that God likes Dr. Gill a lot and is inclined to do whatever he asks. God also likes women preachers and doesn't like us carrying guns to church, but that is a subject for another day.

A gaggle of atheists got their politically-correct shorts in a wad and protested the fact that someone was going to (gasp!)

pray on government property. They shouldn't have bothered. Another known fact is that God doesn't pay them any more attention than do the rest of us.

It should come as no surprise that once Dr. Gil Watson, the World's Greatest Preacher, got through praying, it started raining and soon our lakes and rivers and even Gov. George E. Perdue's fish ponds were replenished. The farmers were happy. Recreationists were happy. The governor was happy. Even the fish were happy and I told you how temperamental they can be. The only ones who weren't happy were the atheists. That is because their politically-correct shorts got seriously mildewed. That made God happy.

Now, it looks like we could be facing another dry spell in Georgia. The decision on what to do about it is now in the hands of Gov. Nathan Deal. Gov. Deal is a devout Baptist but I wouldn't be surprised if he hasn't already put Dr. Gil Watson, a card-carrying Methodist, on his speed-dial so he can get this drought over and done with.

That would give the governor more time to concentrate on other matters, such as the upcoming constitutional amending on Opportunity School Districts. If the amendment is approved by Georgia voters in November, it would allow the state to take control of low-performing schools, which Gov. Deals favors and which almost everybody involved in public education doesn't. The governor's argument is that the status quo isn't working and something different needs to be done. The opposition's argument is that if the state would spend more time trying to fix the things that are wrong with our society, that would likely fix the things that are wrong with our schools and then we wouldn't need a Constitutional amendment. I think God is going to let us work this one out of ourselves.

If the earthly powers-that-be want a divine solution on how to break this drought, they had better get hold of Dr. Gil Watson, the World's Greatest Preacher, sooner rather than later. The man has a lot on his plate. For one thing, he is currently spending every waking hours and a few sleepless nights trying to figure out how to make me a kinder and gentler soul. God knows, even the atheists would consider that a miracle.

Government's job is to govern, not to proselytize

Dear Editor:

To begin his column (Divine solution) for Sept. 21, Dick Yarbrough refers to the "rain dance" ordered by then Gov. Perdue.

What was wrong with that, you may ask? For one thing, Yarbrough mentions God a half dozen times in the column, but the word "God" does not appear anywhere in two of our three most precious documents—the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. It is to be remembered that it takes even the least of us to make a government.

Therefore, the government cannot give to one without giving to all. Regarding the government-sponsored "rain dance," when it was announced, I

referred to weather forecasts and discovered that the next rain was forecast for 12 days later—conveniently the day scheduled for the "rain dance."

I was there and it didn't rain. A very light sprinkle passed over Atlanta, but it was no drought breaker. What really got my knickers twisted was to see all the government employees still on government time, using government transportation, using government property to promote what was

Continued page 4

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clearly a religious industry function.

Every taxpaying citizen should have been there protesting. The government's job it to govern—not to proselytize.

Mr. Yarbrough alludes to many "facts" to support his diving creations. He would do well to heed the advice of 18th century lexicographer, Samuel Johnson, "Truth, without contemporary evidence, is romance."

Jack McKinney Kennesaw

Humor columnist violates his code

Dear Editor:

The Marietta Daily Journal regularly carries the efforts at humor of one Dick Yarbrough and sometimes those efforts work. But this time ("Current drought may require another Divine Solution," 9/21/2016), he went too far, violating at least the letter of his craft's code.

More sophisticated readers may well be aware of the known fact that the First Amendment to the Humor Columnists' Code of Ethics (FAHCC, passed only the year before last) firmly declares that "There shall forever be a complete separation between facts and humor" (Ibid, op cit 243.7, ad infinitum, in elcelsis whee-o).

As the co-Head Gaggler (with Jack McKinney) of the Atlanta Freethought Society protestors, I acknowledge that Yarbrough successfully ignored the facts of the 2007 rain praying, since — as is well known — the drought persisted for years post-praying. In the old, pre-FAHCC days, Mark Twain might have been attended to had he advised Governor Sonny and Pastor Gil to "check the weather report before you pray for rain."

If there is a God, is it possible that the reason He ignored the November 2007 prayers was because Sonny and Gil, instead of praying away in their closets as commanded, pretended to be speaking for atheist Georgians, too. Could be that's the sort of thing that would offend an all-knowing deity.

Yarbrough's failing this time, though, was to nearly let slip in a fact, one that may upset too many of his readers. He wrote: "Another known fact is that God doesn't pay them (atheists) any more attention that to the rest of us." If he'd written instead, "Another known fact is that God doesn't pay them (atheists) any more attention than 'He' does to any of the rest of us," this would be both true and funny to atheists like me—but not everyone would agree.

Ed Buckner Smyrna

No Moore Embarrassment: Good Riddance To Alabama's Disgrace

9/30/16 by Rob Boston in Wall of Separation http://au.org/blogs/wall-of-separation

Good news from Alabama: Supreme Court Chief Justice Roy Moore has been suspended from the court without pay for the remainder of his term.

Technically, Moore has not been removed from office, but today's decision by the Alabama Court of the Judiciary has that effect. He has been suspended for the rest of his term, and he can't run again because Alabama law prohibits anyone older than 70 from being appointed to or elected to the bench. (Moore will turn 70 in February.)

Moore, you'll recall, took several actions to block marriage equality in the state even after the U.S. Supreme Court made it clear in 2015's *Obergefell v. Hodges* ruling that state laws and constitutional amendments that limited marriage to heterosexual couples were unconstitutional.

A slew of complaints was filed against Moore before Alabama's Judicial Inquiry Commission. That body investigated the matter and recommended that Moore face trial. Yesterday Moore, aided by his attorney, Mat Staver of Liberty Counsel, went before the Alabama Court of the Judiciary. Today that body issued a 50-page ruling, finding Moore guilty on six counts.

Moore's problems stem from a Jan. 6, 2016, "administrative order" he issued to Alabama probate judges instructing them not to perform marriages for same-sex couples. This order – issued six months after the Obergefell



ruling – was clearly designed to sow confusion and lead some probate judges to stop honoring marriage equality. Many of the judges ignored it, but a few chose to listen to Moore. As a result, some same-sex couples were denied their rights.

To rectify that, Americans United and allied groups had to intervene. We secured a federal order that permanently prevents the state from enforcing its old marriage equality ban.

According to the Court of the

Judiciary, Moore's brazen administrative order represented "a failure to follow clear law and a failure to uphold the integrity and independence of the judiciary."

The Court of the Judiciary found that Moore interpreted the law in a manner that was "incomplete, misleading and manipulative." The court also said Moore "substituted his judgment for the judgment of the entire Alabama Supreme Court on a substantive legal issue in a case pending in that Court..."

If all of this sounds familiar, there's a reason. This is the second time Moore has been sanctioned by the Court of the Judiciary. In 2003, he was removed from the court after he defied a federal court order to remove a Ten Commandments monument from the state Judicial Building in Montgomery.

Americans United knows a lot about that case. We brought the challenge to the government-sponsored Decalogue along with the American Civil Liberties Union and the Southern Poverty Law Center.

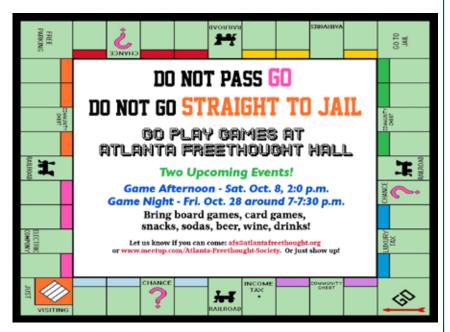
In short, Moore has a track record of defying federal courts. He seems to

think he can make the law say whatever he wants it to. He's wrong.

We thought we were shed of Moore in 2003. But Alabama voters, for some reason, re-elected him to the state high court in 2012. This time, he really is through – as a judge, at least. He could still run for governor or some other office.

That's something to worry about later. Today we celebrate. Roy Moore has done all the damage he can to Alabama's courts. He's an embarrassment, a theocrat whose legal views are anchored in the fever swamps of long-discredited, pre-Civil War legal theories of "states' rights."

Moore, who has only himself to blame for his predicament, has disgraced the state of Alabama long enough. We're happy to see him go.



A Brief Recap Of The Ignominious Career Of Roy Moore

9/29/16 by Simon Brown in Wall of Separation http://au.org/blogs/wall-of-separation

Moore, who heads Alabama's highest court, is charged with trying to block enforcement of the 2015 U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Obergefell v. Hodges*, which legalized marriage equality nationwide. After a federal judge struck down an Alabama law barring marriage between same-sex couples in 2014, Moore sent a letter to Alabama Gov. Robert Bentley (R) questioning the authority of the federal courts to nullify Alabama laws. It was an old (and false) argument from the Civil War era.

Six months after the U.S. Supreme Court's decision, Moore issued an odd "administrative order" to probate judges in the state insisting that marriage equality was still not legal in Alabama. The order was clearly designed to dissuade the judges from issuing marriage licenses to couples of the same sex.

As a result, couples in multiple counties were stopped from getting licenses. So Americans United stepped in, and together with allied groups, eventually secured a federal order that permanently prevents the state from enforcing its old marriage equality ban.

But that wasn't the end of the matter. A number of individuals and groups filed complaints against Moore, and the state's Judicial Inquiry Commission began investigating the matter. That body eventually recommended Moore face trial.

Yesterday, Moore attempted to defend his actions before the Alabama Court of the Judiciary. He claimed on the witness stand that he "would not defy a federal court. I don't defy federal courts within the law."

Moore is playing word games here. He says he obeys federal courts within the law. The problem is that he believes he has the right to ignore those courts when he concludes they aren't operating within the law – that is, whenever a federal court hands down a ruling that Moore does not agree with.

This isn't Moore's first time before the Alabama Court of the Judiciary, and the last time he faced trial before that body he was convicted – of defying a federal court order.

Back in 2003, Moore was kicked off the Alabama Supreme Court for ignoring an order to remove a Ten Commandments monument from the Judicial Building in Montgomery. Americans United, the American Civil Liberties Union and the Southern Poverty Law Center sued Moore over that display in 2001. Moore was found to have violated the Constitution when he put up the display, yet he refused to take it down. That cost him his job. (Unfortunately, he was reelected to his old post in 2012).

Moore was defended this time by Mat Staver of the anti-gay Liberty Counsel, a Religious Right legal group. (Staver also represents Kentucky clerk Kim Davis). Staver offered a pretty weak defense of his client. The New York Times reported that Staver offered a bizarre theory – that Moore didn't do anything wrong because, well, the Supreme Court's marriage equality decision didn't apply to Alabama since the case involved an Ohio couple. He also opined that marriage equality remains an open question in the United States and Moore was only issuing guidance to probate judges who may have been confused by the allegedly unclear nature of the ruling.

Of course that is all ridiculous. The Supreme Court, which is the highest court in the land, sets precedent for all other courts in the nation. There is nothing unclear about that. Staver and his hack legal theories simply do not hold up.

It seems obvious that Moore has no respect for the Constitution and is more interested in grandstanding and making up his own rules than enforcing the laws of this nation.

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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)

The Atlanta Science Tavern has many meetings scheduled this month. Please check meetup page for more information. (www.meetup.com/AtlantaScienceTavern)

Atlanta Astronomy Club is participating in Out of This World Day at Fernbank Museum on Sat. Oct. 8, 10am-2pm at Fernbank Museum, 767 Clifton Rd NE, Atlanta, GA 30307. This will feature astronomy and outer space-themed demonstrations, games, activities, crafts and more. More events are available at AAC; check out website (www.atlantaastronomy.org)

Recovery from Religion - Morrow Chapter meets on Sat, Oct. 8 at 1 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)

There will be a **meetup for Atlanta Atheists** Sun., Oct. 9, at 6:00 p.m. at Thinking Man Tavern, 537 W. Howard Ave, in Decatur. (www.meetup.com/Atlanta-Atheists)

GUST (Gwinnett: Understanding Secular Truths) meets on the second Monday of every month at 7:00 pm at UUCG, 12 Bethesda Church Road, Lawrenceville, unless otherwise indicated. Check the meetup page for more information. (www.meetup.com/brights-295)

Atlanta Skeptics is having a meeting about "psychic" John Edward at Manuel's Tavern, 602 N Highland Ave, Atlanta on Sat. Oct. 15 from 7-9. The meeting will be held in the Eagle's Nest area. (www.meetup.com/AtlantaSkeptics)

Black Nonbelievers is proud to welcome Civil Rights Legend Annie Pearl Avery on Sun, Oct 16, 3 pm at the Metropolitan Branch of the Atlanta-Fulton Co Library System, 1332 Metropolitan Pkwy, Atlanta. Born in Birmingham, AL in 1943, Mrs. Avery's roots in the Civil Rights Movement began as a member of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). She was one of the first to be arrested in the 1965 attempt to march from Selma to Montgomery, now notoriously known as "Bloody Sunday." Mrs. Avery was honored at the 2015 50th anniversary of this tragic event, and was inducted in

the Smithsonian's National African American History Museum in September 2016. (www.meetup.com/Black-Nonbelievers)

There will be a **third Sunday meetup for Atlanta Atheists** Sun., Oct. 16 at 2pm at Hearth Pizza Tavern, 5992 Roswell Rd, Atlanta. It's also World Food Day and National Feral Cat Day. So, how can we combine food, atheism and cats? Donate food to atheist cats? (Hey, all cats are atheists, so that's redundant.) Heck, let's just have fun. (www.meetup.com/Atlanta-Atheists)

Sunday Assembly Atlanta will have a general meeting on Sunday Oct 16 at 6 p.m. at The Phillip Rush Center Meeting Annex, 328 Mell Ave NE, Atlanta. At

press time, the meeting is still in the planning stages, so be sure to check back.

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)

Another **meetup for Atlanta Atheists** is scheduled for Sun., Oct 23 at 4:00 p.m. at Five Seasons Brewing, 5600 Roswell Rd, Sandy Springs. (www.meetup.com/Atlanta-Atheists)

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)

Freedom From Religion Foundation of Georgia 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. (www.meetup.com/Freedom-From-Religion-Foundation-of-Georgia)



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

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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!

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AFS Art Display Program

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

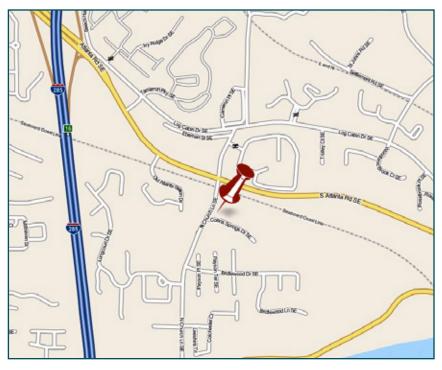
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erms: All artwork displays will be submitted to Atlanta reethought Society art committee for approval (afs@atlantafethought.org). Installation & removal will be done by artist/wner overseen by AFS art committee. Damage to building will be repaired 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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September 11th meeting 1:00 at AF Hall, 4775 N. Church Lane SE Atlanta, GA 30339

Konrad Hayashi



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