The 2020 Tree of Knowledge Zoom Event

December 2020, under normal circumstances, would have marked the 10-year anniversary of displaying The Tree of Knowledge in the lobby of the Philadelphia Ethical Society (PES). The current Covid health crisis prevented the usual gathering at the PES building in Rittenhouse Square. Instead, Freethought Society (FS) president Margaret Downey and PES leader Hugh Taft-Morales organized a Saturday, December 12th online Winter Holiday/Tree of Knowledge Zoom event. The unique celebration included a piano concert, an array of speakers, the decorating of the Tree at the FS office, and a social hour. The three-hour-and-forty-five-minute event can be viewed on the Freethought Society YouTube channel. Here is the direct link to the recording: https://youtu.be/a_9GR_vwG2k.

Rollin Wilber’s 15-minute piano concert was filmed at the PES building at an earlier date, thus the live audience in the recording. Wilber played several Chopin pieces that included the Waltz in E minor; Polonaise in G# minor; three Mazurkas from Opus 6: C# minor, E major, E-flat minor; and Mazurka in A minor Opus 17 number 4.

Invited speakers each spoke for ten minutes about their particular book. The handmade ornament of the book they talked about was placed on the Tree of Knowledge as they spoke. FS Executive Assistant Heidi Ickes conducted the ornament placement honors and later stated, “After hearing the Tree of Knowledge authors speak, I was inspired to read two books right away. I did so and loved them both. Looking forward to reading more.”

Below is a list of the authors who attended and each book they talked about:

- **Dan Barker**: God: The Most Unpleasant Character in All Fiction
- **Rob Boston**: Why the Religious Right Is Wrong About Separation of Church & State
- **Christopher Cameron**: Black Freethinkers
- **Tom Flynn**: The Trouble with Christmas
- **Karen Garst**: Women Beyond Belief
- **Annie Laurie Gaylor**: Women Without Superstition
- **Abby Hafer**: The Not-So-Intelligent Designer
- **Bailey Harris**: My Name is Stardust
- **Elle Harris**: Elle the Humanist
- **Tom Krattenmaker**: Onward Christian Athletes
- **Hemant Mehta**: I Sold My Soul on eBay
- **Julien Musolino**: The Soul Fallacy: What Science Shows We Gain From Letting Go of Our Soul Beliefs
- **David Orenstein**: Darwin’s Apostles: The Men Who Fought to Have Evolution Accepted, Their Times, and How the Battle Continues
- **Ben Radford**: The Martians Have Landed!
- **Herb Silverman**: Candidate Without a Prayer
- **Katherine Stewart**: The Good News Club: The Christian Right’s Stealth Assault on America’s Children
- **Marlene Winell**: Leaving the Fold
After the authors spoke, Taft-Morales performed his song *If I Had a Book* (to the tune of *If I Had a Hammer*). The song kicked off the question-and-answer segment and post-event social hour.

The event was a complete success thanks to the technical help received from **Michal Steven Martin**. Below are some of the comments received from audience members:

**Mark Cagnetta:**
“Thank you very much. Very informative and enjoyable!”

**Nina Diamond:**
“Thanks to Margaret Downey and Hugh Taft-Morales for a beautiful experience.”

**Daniel Graves:**
“We should do this more than once a year. Can we do it at Easter and pin book covers on a large stuffed bunny?”

**Stan Horwitz:**
“I loved all this. So much input for the mind. Thanks for a wonderful event!”

**Christine Jones:**
“Thank you Margaret, Michael, Heidi, and everyone else! Highly recommending *Humanists in the Hood* by Sikivu Hutchinson.”

**Amy Kohl:**
“This was great! I already bought a couple of holiday books. Recommending *Sapiens* by Yuval Noah Harari.”

**Brian Lofgren:**
“Thanks so much everyone. This was a wonderful celebration of secular knowledge!”

**Larry Paris:**
“This was a very, very nice event. Many thanks to the Freethought Society for hosting this.”

**Charles Shore:**
“Thanks Margaret et al for this fantastic event!”

We hope readers of this article will participate in the FS book cover scan project. Sending us a scan of the front cover of your favorite book will help us build the **FS recommended book list** and **The Tree of Knowledge** ornaments collection. Send your scans to: TreeofKnowledge@FtSociety.org

Pictured above is **Hugh Taft-Morales**, Leader of the Philadelphia Ethical Society and a co-host of the 2020 *Tree of Knowledge* Winter Holiday event. Taft-Morales played his guitar and sang *If I Had a Book* (based on the Lee Hays and Pete Seeger song *If I Had a Hammer*).

Pictured below next to the 2020 *Tree of Knowledge* are **Margaret Downey** (left), president of the Freethought Society, and her assistant **Heidi Ickes** (right). Downey served as a co-host, and Ickes placed the book ornaments on *The Tree of Knowledge* as the speakers talked about their books.

Pictured left is **Michael Steven Martin**. He is the Freethought Society Zoom Technician, coordinating everything from his Southern California residence. Martin’s Zoom experience and expertise are invaluable.
Dear Director Rice,

As a coalition of 19 nationally recognized advocacy organizations, who advocate on behalf of Americans who are nonreligious and religiously unaffiliated, we would like to congratulate the new administration — the most diverse and trailblazing in history — on the swearing in of President Biden and Vice-President Harris. It is a remarkable and historic achievement, and we look forward to working with the new leadership.

We are heartened to see that President Biden is emphasizing the importance of equity and diversity and is committed to reckoning with the barriers that limit access to federal programs, and we thank you for leading this interagency process. Our coalition stands ready to support these initiatives and would like to offer our input to ensure that all Americans are represented, including those who are nonreligious.

Religiously unaffiliated people (sometimes referred to as Nones) make up approximately 26 percent of the population,¹ and while there is not clear data on what percentage of the population identifies as nonreligious, estimates place the number at approximately one in ten Americans.² This points to one of the most significant issues our community faces: Nonreligious people, like other religious minorities can be invisible to federal decision making because there are no federal population surveys that collect data on religious affiliation and disparities in areas like education, health, behavioral health, or the workplace. There are historical reasons for this absence of data, but without this information, it is challenging to assess and respond to the needs of nonreligious people and other religious minority groups such as Hindus, Jews, Sikhs, and Muslims.

The data that we do have, derived from organizational population research and community-based surveys, reveals a great disparity between how nonreligious people are treated in very religious areas, such as states like Utah and Mississippi, compared to more religiously tolerant areas such as Washington, DC. Unfortunately, especially in very religious areas, nonreligious people continue to face a great deal of religious oppression, experiencing shocking rates of discrimination in education, in the workplace, in healthcare, and many other areas.³ In addition to its direct impact, discrimination results in loneliness and social isolation, depression, and other negative health and education outcomes.

This is why we were so frustrated by the Trump administration’s blithe disregard for religious equality and its mean-spirited attempts to roll back civil rights protections and accessibility for social services, both for our community and many others. Our community firmly believes that separation of religion and government is the bedrock that makes religious freedom possible. While the previous administration did everything possible to undermine these important principles to favor specific, politically well-connected religious viewpoints, we are confident that you and President Biden will take action to restore a more balanced understanding of religious freedom.

As our nation recovers from the past four years, and work is done to repair the damage, we respectfully request that you consider us as a resource and bridge to those Americans who are nonreligious or religiously unaffiliated. Under the leadership of a new administration and Congress, we are as optimistic as ever regarding the future of our nation and look forward to doing our part.

Leadership from our coalition would value and appreciate the opportunity to sit down with you and members of your staff at your earliest convenience to discuss how we might be able to further this vital interagency initiative. In the meantime, please feel free to reach out to our coalition should you have any questions, or simply would like to learn more about the communities we represent.

In solidarity,

American Atheists
Atheist Alliance of America
American Humanist Association
Black Nonbelievers, Inc.
Camp Quest
Center For Inquiry
Cultural and Secular Jewish Organization
Ex-Muslims of North America
Hispanic American Freethinkers, Inc.
Foundation Beyond Belief
Freedom From Religion Foundation
Freethought Society
Recovering from Religion
Secular Coalition for America
Secular Student Alliance
Society for Humanistic Judaism
Unitarian Universalist Humanist Association


How do we differ from religious people in this pandemic era, when as of this writing over half a million Americans have lost their lives to Covid? Since you are reading this, you haven’t died from the virus, perhaps because you listened to science rather than to unfounded conspiracy theories.

In dealing with death, we know that human life is a sexually transmitted disease with a 100% mortality rate. Yes, we are all going to die someday. We are fragile creatures who have been dying from the moment we were born into a universe that has no purpose. I feel “blessed” that I’ve been alive for 78 years. I have no memories of the other 13.8 billion years the universe existed without me. The same will be true when I die, hopefully not for many years. I was not in distress before I was born, and won’t be in distress when I’m dead.

There is no purpose of life, so we all need to find purposes in life. Regarding purpose, I am guided by a quote from Robert Green Ingersoll:

“Happiness is the only good.
The time to be happy is now.
The place to be happy is here.
The way to be happy is to make others so.”

We don’t delude ourselves into thinking we will have an afterlife, so we ought to decide what we want to accomplish in this, our one and only life. I am comforted in knowing that I can contribute something useful in the world. Sometimes our choices and their repercussions live longer than we do, impacting on family, friends, people we don’t know, and future generations. I’ve made plans to go to medical school when I die, just like my Jewish mother always wanted me to do. I expect to use my body parts to their fullest while I’m alive, but I hope others will be able to make good use of them when I’m dead.

Something I didn’t do when I was young, but do now, is read the obituaries in my local newspaper. Too often I see that a friend or acquaintance has died, usually someone who was younger than I am. While I’m sad when I read of those deaths, I’m ever more grateful to be alive. Staying alive is better than the alternative, and both young and old should take the time to appreciate being alive.

Since we don’t know when our time will be up, planning for end-of-life care in the form of advance directives is not just for the elderly. For me, regardless of age, what’s important is quality of life, not just length of life. I think I would like to stay alive as long as I am able to communicate effectively, but if I develop some form of dementia like Alzheimers, I might not be competent to request a peaceful death. I told my wife, Sharon Fratepietro, that one sign to pull the plug on me would be if I said I believed in God.

Sometimes we need to communicate with religious family members or friends whose loved ones have recently died. I understand the appeal of religion. Fear of death can lead to a longing for an afterlife, where we can be united forever with our loved ones in eternal bliss. Or perhaps we could come back reincarnated as a better person. Religions might have been created by humans as a means to cope with their own mortality, but it’s important to distinguish between the world as we know it and the world as we’d like it to be. For those imagining they will have some sort of afterlife, this life may not seem as precious.

Believing in God can help some people better cope with death and dying. Sharon was a volunteer for hospice, established for people with terminal diseases who are approaching the end of their lives. Some of the people Sharon consoled would say things like, “I’m at peace knowing that I’ll soon be with God.” Sharon, an atheist, did not say what she was thinking, “No, you won’t.” Instead, she would say something like, “I know that this belief comforts you a lot.” As humanists, I think we should go out of our way to comfort and show compassion to the bereaved. Using rationality and logic may help process the loss of a loved one when the survivor is an atheist, but not so much for a religious person. The question arises about whether to lie. I have trouble doing so, but I can understand the justification. If someone in dire straits asks me to pray with him/her, I might go through the motions because it makes the other person feel better, even though the prayers are meaningless to me. Praying with others might relieve their pain, and knowing that our prayers are only heard by human beings makes them completely harmless. If someone says to me, “I’ll pray for you,” I thank them and resist giving a snarky response like, “OK, I’ll think for both of us.”

I’ve never understood why people look down when they pray. Isn’t that where Satan is supposed to be? Why not look up to the “heavens,” where God is supposed to be? I’ve been at public meetings, like City Council, where they start with a prayer. I always look around to see if there are other people who don’t bow their heads. That’s a good way to meet other atheists.

If a person has been in agony for a long time before dying, I can even agree with someone who says, “He’s in a better place now.” Atheists can understand and accept suffering that can only be relieved by death.

There are honest ways to comfort someone (atheist or not) who has lost a loved one. If someone has lost a father or mother we can say something like:

“Grief is difficult, how may I help?”
“Your father is alive through you because you are carrying his genes and have many of his positive attributes, including his looks and personality traits.”

“I am so sorry to hear the news. I extend to you my sincerest condolences.”

“You are in our hearts and on our minds because you mean so much to us. Please know that you are in our thoughts.”

“I wish you the strength and resolve to cope with your loss.”

It helps to mention something good you remember about the deceased. Mourn his or her death, but also celebrate the life that he/she helped give you. That’s what a person would have wanted. When I die, I hope my memorial will consist of people sitting around telling funny stories about me.

Though you will grieve with the loss of a loved one, you can also smile when you think about the good times you had together and some of the fond memories. We mourn, but the pain will likely eventually subside. Remember that the loss is ours, not the deceased who no longer feels any pain.

Some will find solace in their beliefs, their religion, and their religious community. Others of us will find solace through close friends, family, and loved ones. We take comfort from our loved ones and comfort them in turn.

Whether we are religious or atheists, we grieve and life goes on.

Herb Silverman is a regular contributor to the Freethought Society ezine. Silverman is the author of two books, Candidate Without a Prayer and An Atheist Stranger in a Strange Religious Land. Both books are available through Amazon.com.

Designating “The Freethought Society” as your AmazonSmile benefits recipient automatically increases the organization’s funds.

A Look at the Christian Science Religion
by Margaret Downey

I married into a family and later discovered that the family’s religious background included a one-time adherence to the Christian Science religion. I decided to learn a bit more about it and today I’m sharing a few Christian Science facts with readers of The Freethought Society News.

The Church of Christ, Scientist was founded in 1879 by Mary Baker Eddy. She was an author and teacher who believed in spiritual healing. Her beliefs included the premises that:

* Matter does not exist
* Only a God-created spirit is real
* Illness does not exist since humans are a reflection of God
* Illness is a result of sin, fear or ignorance of God’s true nature
* Illness can be healed with prayer and devoted spirituality

According to Eddy the purpose of life is to understand God’s infinite goodness, and to destroy sin, sickness, and death. The key texts of this religious sect are the Bible and Eddy’s book, Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures. Adherents are expected to take Bible lessons and learn core passages from the book.

Adherents also follow Eddy’s bylaws for the religion entitled Manual of the Mother Church and faithfully read the church’s newspaper the Christian Science Monitor.

The activities of the church include Wednesday night testimonial meetings, where people share prayer-healing stories. Attendance at Sunday services is also required to help followers continue to find strength using “divine science” to help with all life issues.

One of the best written criticisms of the Christian Science religion was written by Mark Twain/Samuel Clemens. His book Christian Science was written in 1907. It is a collection of essays beginning with an article that was published in Cosmopolitan in 1899. Clemens declares, “There is nothing to Christian Science; there is nothing about it that appeals to the intellect; its market will be restricted to the unintelligent, the mentally inferior, the people who do not think.”

The church has opened many Christian Science reading rooms in order to encourage followers, and the curious, to study religious texts that are found to be divinely inspired. The reading rooms can be found worldwide.

Many Christian Science followers do not feel the need to pay for health insurance. Prayer heals so there is no need to see a doctor or stay in a hospital. It is perfectly all right, however, to visit dentists, optometrists, obstetricians, and physicians for broken bones.

If illness persists, a Christian Science practitioner can be called in to strengthen the prayer healing. Many cases of excruciating death, especially involving helpless children, have been reported when prayer is the chosen course of action, however. No HMO will cover visits of Christian Science practitioners. They truly believe that prayer used in conjunction with modern medicine can worsen an unhealthy condition. You will not likely find Christian Science doctors. Well, maybe a doctor who no longer practices medicine due to converting to the Christian Science religion!

The life of a Christian Science adherent is not completely free of stress, even though they contend that “all problems are illusory.” Church members are expected to battle public school regulations that demand the immunization of children. Even though the word “science” appears in the name of this cult, don’t expect too many Christian Science members to get the Covid vaccine!
Charlie Hebdo, Six Years Later
by Glen Loev

On January 7, 2015, brothers Saïd Kouachi and Chérif Kouachi forced their way into the offices of the French satirical weekly newspaper Charlie Hebdo in Paris. Armed with rifles and other weapons, they murdered 12 people and injured 11 others. The gunmen identified themselves as belonging to the Islamic terrorist group al-Qaeda on the Arabian Peninsula, which took responsibility for the attack. Over the next two days, more related attacks followed, including a siege on the Hypercacher kosher supermarket, where Amedy Coulibaly held 19 hostages, murdering four of them, all of whom were Jews.

The wheels of justice sometimes grind slowly indeed. On Dec. 16, 2020, almost six years after those jihadist terror attacks, a court in Paris convicted Ali Riza Polat, a 35-year-old French citizen of Turkish descent, as an accessory to murder. Polat was sentenced to 30 years in prison. Three other men received sentences ranging from 13-20 years for being a part of a terrorist enterprise and providing the Kouachi brothers and Coulibaly (who were killed by police at the time of the murders) with weapons, equipment or intelligence to carry out the attacks. Six other defendants were convicted of lesser charges of belonging to a criminal enterprise, and three accomplices have yet to be apprehended.

Why did those jihadists kill so many people? What crime had their victims committed that was so egregious that they “deserved” to be murdered? For four of the victims, their “crime” was that they were Jewish. That was enough for these Muslim fanatics. And the other twelve? They worked for a political satire magazine. What specifically enraged the terrorists to justify mass murder? Irreverent drawings of their prophet Mohammed.

Almost all religious extremism is repugnant to those who value universal human rights. In response to these particular horrific crimes, many proclaimed their opposition to the warped ideology that spawned those atrocities in Paris by posting “Je suis Charlie” on their webpages, printing the slogan on clothing, marching with banners.

Many major publications around the world were brave enough to republish some of the cartoons that so incensed the terrorists, but many did not, likely out of (understandable) fear of reprisals.

The governments of most — but not all — Muslim majority nations condemned the attack, and most — but not all — Muslim organizations and leaders did as well. Unfortunately, a very significant percentage of Muslims worldwide support the death penalty for those who violate core principles of Islam, such as blasphemy and apostasy, and many Muslim majority nations include the death penalty for such “offenses.” There are, of course, many more instances of Islamist terrorism — and the threat has not abated.

The Board of Directors of the Freethought Society (FS) considered a memorial of the 6th anniversary of the terrorist attacks at the Charlie Hebdo magazine office. With the conviction that no one, and no business or organization, should have to self-censor out of fear of violence for offending religious sensibilities, I suggested that we consider sponsoring a contest. I imagined calling for submissions of original political cartoons critical of religion — religion in general or tenets of any religion, including, of course, Islam. The idea was to show solidarity and support for our right to express views critical of religion, and to show that the terrorists did not succeed in “shutting us down.”

After much discussion, FS board members came to the conclusion that sponsoring such a contest could realistically put people in risk of physical danger. Of significant note, members of the FS board were not unanimous in finding such a contest appropriate for other reasons. There is a difference between wanting to have the right to do something and actually doing it. FS clearly stands for freedom of expression — but it is very disturbing that we do not feel it safe to publish examples of perceived blasphemy. The decision was, effectively, taken away from us and so the question of whether or not such a contest is appropriate for FS was moot.

The past four years have shown us the fragility of our rights as Americans that we no longer have the privilege of taking for granted. There is plenty of work ahead of us. Just keeping the freedoms we all have takes effort, not to mention trying to expand freedoms and equality for nontheists.

I look forward to a time when the FS board can have a spirited discussion about whether or not publishing “blasphemous” cartoons is appropriate for the organization, because we would be free from the fear of physical danger for doing so.

For more interesting and important information about these topics, please check out the following:

Laws criminalizing apostasy:

https://www.loc.gov/law/help/apostasy/index.php

Charlie Hebdo attacks:


Muslim beliefs about Sharia Law (2013 Pew Research):

https://www.pewforum.org/2013/04/30/the-worlds-muslims-religion-politics-society-beliefs-about-sharia/
March 13

The Freethought Society (FS) is pleased to host standup comedian and author Leighann Lord on Saturday, March 13, 2021. The Zoom event starts with a pre-event chat session at 11:45 AM PST/2:45 PM EST. The formal presentation begins at Noon PST/3:00 PM EST.

The title of Lord’s presentation is “I’m not funny. What I am is Brave!” In an interview-style format, she will be talking about her career as a professional standup comedian who happens to be a secularist and a skeptic. After the interview session, Lord will be taking questions. After a break, plan to stay for a post-event happy hour/social.

Lord was the 2013 New York City face of the African Americans for Humanism outreach campaign sponsored by the Center for Inquiry (CFI) and its “Millions Living Happily Without Religion” campaign. Lord is a former co-host of the Emmy-nominated StarTalk with Neil de Grasse Tyson and has been the emcee for several Committee for Skeptical Inquiry (CFI’s skeptic arm) conferences. She is the author of Diet Jokes and Real Women Do It Standing Up.

Please refer to the Meetup link information under the headline of this page to learn how to obtain the Zoom link to participate in this event.

April 24

FS is pleased to host Bob Nygaard as a Zoom speaker on Saturday, April 24, 2021. The event starts with a pre-event chat session at 11:45 AM PST/2:45 PM EST. The formal presentation begins at Noon PST/3:00 PM EST.

Nygaard’s speech is entitled “Combating Fortunetelling Fraud.” He will tell us how he builds criminal cases against so-called “psychics” who commit fortunetelling fraud. Nygaard’s efforts protect society and he has successfully made victims financially whole again.

Nygaard is a retired New York police officer turned private investigator and he has recovered millions of dollars for fraud victims around the world. His many television appearances include ABCs 20/20, the syndicated Crime Watch Daily, and Nancy Grace shows — just to name a few.

After a break, plan to stay for a post-event happy hour/social.

Please refer to the Meetup link information under the headline of this page to learn how to obtain the Zoom link to participate in this event.

May 6

On Thursday, May 6, 2021, please join FS, Recovering From Religion, the Freedom From Religion Foundation, the Secular Student Alliance and the Secular Coalition for America as we celebrate The National Day of Reason by hosting a Zoom entertainment extravaganza entitled “Mayday for Humanity.” The event will begin with a 4:00 PM PST/7:00 PM EST Happy Hour.

Comedians Leighann Lord and Ian Harris will co-host this 3-hour event. They will usher in an array of comedians, poets, and musical performers. Donations will be accepted via the FS website, Facebook page, and Meetup page (PayPal, Venmo, and earmarked checks). All proceeds will benefit homeless shelters and food banks selected by the co-sponsors. Beneficiary organizations operate in a non-discriminatory and secular manner.

The program will be interspersed with messages from co-sponsors, celebrity supporters, and people who are conducting grassroots community service projects during the 2021 Secular Week of Action (April 30 - May 9).

Visit the FS website and Facebook page for more information about the sponsors, a list of entertainers, and to learn how to bid on the fantastic online auction items.

Please refer to the Meetup link information under the headline of this page to learn how to obtain the Zoom link to participate in this event.

June 8

Join FS, the Thomas Paine National Historical Association (TPNHA), the Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF), the Center for Inquiry (CFI), and the American Humanist Association (AHA) as we celebrate the 2021 Thomas Paine Day via Zoom on Tuesday, June 8, 2021. Register for the event by clicking: Thomas Paine Day Celebration.

The program begins at 3:45 PM PST/6:45 PM EST with a 15-minute Thomas Paine-themed concert by songwriter and recording artist James Klueh. BYOB to participate in toasts throughout the event. Melissa Myers (representing CFI) and Margaret Downey (representing FS) are the event co-hosts.

After a welcome from the co-sponsors, a summary of the life and work of Paine will be presented in sections by co-sponsor representatives:

- Mandisa Thomas (AHA)
- Tom Flynn (CFI)
- Andrew Seidel (FFRF)
- Margaret Downey (FS)
- Gary Berton (TPNHA)

Sculptor Zenos Frudakis will show the progress of the Thomas Paine statue project and Dan Barker, co-president of FFRF, will perform his original song The World is My Country. After a short break the question-and-answer portion of the event will begin. Toasts and favorite Paine quotations are welcome.
The Freethought Society (FS) promotes freedom of thought, expression, and choice. FS also advocates separation of religion and government. We assist nontheists, educate the public about nontheism, and provide social opportunities where like-minded individuals can meet, socialize and share ideas.

FS publishes *The Freethought Society News* every other month. The publication is delivered as an ezine via email and is complimentary to supporters, donors, like-minded individuals and those who are interested in learning more about freedom of thought.

Monthly events take place in locations across the United States via Zoom or in-person if possible. FS activities and services depend on financial contributions from supporters. Funds may be sent using this form or via the FS website ([www.FtSociety.org/donate/](http://www.FtSociety.org/donate/)). All contributions to FS are tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law (Tax ID Number: 23-2738574). Please donate generously.

Yes! I would like to:

( ) become a supporter / renew support of FS (Please enclose checks payable to the Freethought Society):

- $30 Individual Supporter
- $40 Family Supporter
- $20 Student
- $1,000 Supporter for a Lifetime

( ) become a “Freethought Star” by setting up an automatic monthly donation to FS from my bank or through PayPal in the amount of (circle one): $5 $10 $15 $20 $25 $30 $35 $40 $45 $50 $55 $___ other (per month)

( ) earmark a donation to (insert project, event or committee name): ____________________________________________________________

Name: ________________________________________________________________________________________________

Street Address: __________________________________________________________________________________________

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Phone: ___________________________________________ Cell: _________________________________________________

( ) Check here if you prefer your sponsorship to remain anonymous.

FS will send a complimentary ezine to potential supporters. Please provide contact information for anyone who might be interested in receiving an FS publication.

Name: ___________________________________________________________ Email: ________________________________

Mail this form to: Freethought Society, P.O. Box 242, Pocopson, PA 19366 or scan and email this form to: Ezine@FtSociety.org

**Volunteer Opportunities Through the Freethought Society**

Supporters of FS often want to do more than just make a financial contribution. Listed below are committees designed to fulfill the mission, goals, and vision of FS. Volunteers are needed in all committees listed. Please contact FS to volunteer at: volunteers@FtSociety.org.

- **Anti-Discrimination Educational Committee**  
  (nonthecism explained in classroom settings)

- **Anti-Discrimination Support Network**  
  (assist Secular Coalition for America gathering reports)

- **Community Outreach**  
  (locate tabling opportunities)

- **Diversity Outreach Committee**  
  (brainstorming about and developing programs to appeal to minorities)

- **Free Speech Zone Committee**  
  (research and implement displays in public venues)

- **Helping Hands**  
  (provides helpers to seniors in emergency situations)

- **Jump into the Jean Pool**  
  (collection of jeans for donations)

- **Literature Placement for Prisoners**  
  (providing literature to prison libraries)

- **Meetup Committee**  
  (planning events)

- **Monthly Meeting Coordinators**  
  (schedule, manage speakers, and venues)

- **Secular Celebrations**  
  (develop, organize, and implement new nonheist celebrations)

- **Speakers Bureau**  
  (provide FS a resume, photo, and speech subjects/titles)

- **Special Events**  
  (coordinate unique events of interest to nontheists)

- **Sole Searching**  
  (collection of athletic shoes for donations)

- **Thomas Paine Memorial Committee**  
  (work on themed events)

- **Tree of Knowledge/Winter Display Committee**  
  (promote and support the concept nationwide)