The Freethought Society News
Editors: Margaret Downey, Glen Loev, Carol Roper and Other Volunteers
Published by: The Freethought Society | http://www.FtSociety.org
Mailing address: P.O. Box 242, Pocopson, Pennsylvania 19366-0242
Phone: (610) 793-2737 | Fax: (610) 793-2569 | Email: Newsletter@FtSociety.org

May/June 2015
Volume 7, Number 3

The Freethought Society News ezine is published by The Freethought Society (FS) for the nontheist community.

Free subscriptions are available for supporters, donors and like-minded individuals upon request.

Contact FS at: newsletter@FtSociety.org

Articles on topics of interest to freethinkers are welcomed and will be considered for publication.

Submit articles (5,000 word count max) for review by the FS editorial board.

Please submit articles with a bio and photo, a suggested title, and relevant photos/clip art to:

newsletter@FtSociety.org

FS is an educational nonprofit organization.

Donations and financial support are encouraged and appreciated. For donation information, please see the last page of this newsletter.

Articles herein do not necessarily represent official positions of FS.

Tax ID Number: 23-2738574

Trying to Stop Public School BSA Recruitment Assemblies

by Margaret Downey

Should a private discriminatory youth organization be allowed to conduct recruitment assemblies in a public school, during school hours, and with the help of teachers and administration? The answer is perfectly clear to those who advocate for and support non-discrimination policies in public schools. No child attending public school should be subjected to any type of bigotry, especially prejudices that are known and can be avoided.

Thanks to alert parents who contacted the Freethought Society (FS) in September 2014, concerned citizens became aware of such a situation taking place in the Octorara public school system. For many years, representatives of the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) have been allowed to conduct recruitment assemblies during the school day. Male students are escorted by teachers (and other school officials) to a venue on school grounds to hear the pitch.

FS representatives voiced concerns to **Dr. Thomas Newcome**, the Octorara School District Superintendent about the inappropriate endorsement of BSA recruitment assemblies. The recruitment effort entangles the school in a scenario where nontheist families are targeted as unwelcome. BSA membership rules prevent nontheists from participation as youth members, volunteers and participants.

Statistically, many families in the Octorara school district are potential victims as the number of Americans who do not identify with any religion continues to grow rapidly. Approximately 1/5 of the United States' population are religiously unaffiliated. A third of adults under the age of 30 are religiously unaffiliated. That is the highest percentage ever and was revealed by 2012 Pew Research Center polling.

Within the last five years, the number of unaffiliated adults has increased from about 15 percent to around 20 percent. Those percentages include more than 13 million self-described atheists and agnostics. That is nearly 6 percent of the United States public. Overall, 33 million people declare that they have no particular religious affiliation. For complete Pew survey information, please see the following link:

http://www.pewforum.org/2012/10/09/nones-on-the-rise/

BSA also discriminates against families who happen to include gay parents. While BSA's official membership policy allows the participation of youths under the age of 18 who think they are gay, no gay adult can volunteer or participate in BSA.

In early January 2015, the American Humanist Association (AHA) joined the discussion about how to convince the Octorara School District to stop allowing BSA to conduct assemblies on school grounds, during the school day, and using the assistance of teachers and school administrators to support the recruitment efforts.

Roy Speckhardt, the executive director of AHA suggested that I send him a list of zip codes in the Octorara School District so that they could alert AHA members that their tax dollars are being spent to assist the BSA (via use of time and facility). The zip code list is as follows: 19365, 19310, 19369, 19320, and 19350.

I extended the outreach plan to find more local voices of protest to additional national nontheist organizations. Several organizations cooperated and contacted their members in the Octorara School District. FS thanks AHA, the Freedom From Religion Foundation and the Center for Inquiry for their support and assistance. Dr. Newcome received many letters as a result, but he never acknowledged them or responded. Consequently, FS called for concerned citizens to testify at the Monday, April 20, 2015 Octorara School Board meeting.

In the meantime, on March 12, 2015, the *Philadelphia Gay News* published my comments about the Octorara BSA recruitment assemblies. With permission, that article is printed below:

Activists to Attend School Board Meeting
by **Tim Cwiek**

Several members of the Freethought Society, a nontheist organization, will attend an Octorara Area School District board meeting next month to protest on-campus Boy Scouts recruitment assemblies.

School officials allow the Scouts to hold recruitment assemblies in the district's elementary school, but Freethought members oppose the assemblies because the Scouts exclude LGBT adults and nontheist youths and adults.

"The Octorara public-school district shouldn't be giving preferential treatment to the BSA," said Freethought Society president Margaret A. Downey. "It's just common sense. Several parents are extremely concerned. We look forward to attending the April 20 meeting and appealing to school board members' sense of decency. The exclusionary policies of the BSA do damage, especially to impressionable youth. The on-campus BSA recruitment assemblies must end immediately."

The school board meeting is scheduled for 7:00 PM on April 20, 2015 at the Octorara Junior High School, 228 Highland Avenue in Atglen, Pennsylvania.

On April 16, 2015, Vice-Chair of the Camp Quest National Board wrote the following letter to members of the Octorara School Board:

Dear members of the school board,
I write you today in regards to the upcoming issue of Boy Scouts of America (BSA) recruitment in district schools. This issue strikes close to my heart. As an Eagle Scout I felt the harm of discrimination in regards to the membership and employment policies of BSA. It is a long story, but it's a story that starts with a scout recruiter at at my public elementary school.

BSA claims to be a private organization, allowing them to discriminate in membership. At the same time they want to maintain public schools as a recruiting ground. In my case a Cub Scout recruiter was allowed on campus in uniform, and allowed to set up a membership drive during school hours. This included sending home flyers using school disbursement systems and even meeting space in the auditorium.

It goes without saying that the discriminatory policies of BSA were not included in the recruitment literature. Nor do I think I would of been able to understand them as an elementary school student. None of this stopped BSA from later firing me from my employment as an Aquatics Director at one of their camps. Nor did it stop them from teaching me and my fellow scouts that religious belief was an essential part of being a good scout and citizen.

BSA had a clear choice years ago to accept the benefits of being a public organization, but instead choose to forgo those benefits to gain ability to discriminate as a private organization.

When considering this issue please remember that BSA, time and again, stresses that ***they are not a public organization****. They do not cater to the public and do not welcome the entire community that your schools represents.*

In your considerations I urge you to suspend all support of BSA including recruiting, while they continue to discriminate.

Please feel free to contact me further for any clarifications or questions. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Neil Polzin

On Monday, April 20, 2015, I was joined by **Glen Loev** (the Vice-President of FS), **Tom Schottmiller**, **John Stoltzfus** and **Jason Chesnet** for the Octorara school board meeting.

During the public commentary portion of the meeting, I approached the microphone. As required and specified by the school board, I stated my name and my place of residence. The moment I said "Chester County," almost all of the 10 of the board members seemed to shout out in unison, "Out of the area. Commentary not allowed."

I said, "OK. Then I will just hand you my statement." I purposely made sure to hand out the papers to each board member even though I had to carefully step around audio/visual electrical cords. This was important because I did not want any of the board members to claim they never received my statement. In anticipation of being silenced, Loev had combined his written statement with mine. Below is what we intended to say that night:

My Written Statement:
My name is Margaret Downey. I am the founder and president of the Freethought Society (FS).

FS is a watchdog nonprofit organization concerned with maintaining a wall of separation between religion and government and protecting nontheists from discrimination. We also advocate an end to negative stereotyping of the nontheist community.

I am here tonight representing FS members in the Octorara School District who are too frightened to address you in person. They fear losing their jobs and being subjected to community shunning — both of which are frequent consequences suffered by nontheists who dare to disclose their naturalistic worldview. These parents informed us in September 2014 that a private discriminatory youth organization, the Boy Scouts of America (BSA), are allowed to conduct recruitment assemblies in the Octorara School District.

The assemblies take place on the grounds of the public school, during school hours and school officials assist by bringing young and impressionable male students into the meeting venue. The reasons we object to the Octorara School District allowing BSA recruitment assemblies are:

** BSA is a private youth organization.*

** The organization has biased membership rules that prevent the participation of gays over the age of 18 and nontheists as either youth members or adult volunteers.*

** Local groups must abide by the Boy Scouts of America's national standards and are subject to losing their charters if membership rules are ignored.*

No child attending a public school should be subjected to any type of bigotry or discrimination, especially prejudices that are known and can easily be avoided. The Octorara School District has a sound non-discrimination policy in place, but allowing BSA recruitment assemblies to take place violates that policy.

By allowing BSA to stage recruitment assemblies on school grounds and during school hours, the Octorara School District is involved in an unethical scenario where nontheist families are targeted as unwelcome members of society.

To be clear, BSA's national policy and membership rules specifically prevent nontheists from participation as youth members, volunteers and participants. BSA also discriminates against families who happen to include gays, but another FS representative will be addressing that issue.

I am here to voice concern about protecting nontheists in particular. Based on recent statistics, many families in the Octorara school district are potential victims of discrimination by BSA.

The number of Americans who do not identify with any religion is growing rapidly. Approximately 1/5 of the public in the United States are religiously unaffiliated and a third of adults under the age of 30 are religiously un-affiliated. That is the highest percentage ever and was revealed in the polling data in 2012 by the Pew Research Center.

Within the last five years, the number of religiously unaffiliated adults has increased from about 15 percent to around 20 percent. Those percentages include more than 13 million self-described atheists and agnostics, or nearly 6 percent of the United States public.

Overall, 33 million people declare that they have no particular religious affiliation, but regardless of the statistics, no child should be targeted or made to feel like a second-class citizen.

If you are having difficulty sympathizing with discrimination against nontheists, imagine how you would feel if BSA rejected your son on the basis of the family's religious faith. When you think of us as your friends, neighbors and as equal citizens, you will see how harmful discrimination at the hands of BSA can be to your community.

Tonight, on behalf of those nontheists who do not feel safe identifying themselves as your fellow citizens, we formally request that the Octorara School Board cease their implicit promotion of BSA and no longer allow recruitment assemblies on school grounds, during school hours, aided by school personnel.

Statement by Glen Loev:

My name is Dr. Glen Loev. I am Vice President of the Freethought Society (FS) and appreciate the opportunity to make some brief comments about the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) being allowed to promote their organization to public school students during the school day.

I am speaking for parents and teachers from the Octorara School district who have contacted our organization, but are apprehensive about addressing the issue in public.

You are no doubt aware that in 2013 BSA changed their policy vis-a-vis gay Scouts. Troops are now permitted to accept openly gay members, but only until Scouts reach the age of 18, at which time, regardless of their individual circumstances, they are forced out simply for being gay.

You might think that since public school students are almost all under the age of 18, there's no problem with promoting BSA in public schools from the perspective of "the gay issue." That's not the case.

BSA's official current policy forbids gay and lesbian parents of Scouts from participating in the organization. The BSA position has not changed since they announced it in a press release on June 7, 2012:

"While the Boy Scouts of America does not proactively inquire about the sexual orientation of employees, volunteers, or members, we do not grant membership to individuals who are open or avowed homosexuals…"

Imagine how you would feel if you were a young boy in Octorara Junior High School, and found out that your mom or dad would not be allowed to volunteer with your troop if the national organization found out that your mom or dad was gay.

It should be obvious that all parents of Scouts who would like to volunteer to help with their children's troop activities should be allowed to do so.

My son, Noah, is a junior at Harriton High school in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. When he was in 6th grade, he came home with brochures and an application form from BSA that had been handed out in school. He was excited about it, since some of his friends were planning to join.

It was difficult and painful for my husband and me to explain to Noah that BSA would not accept him since he's from a nontheist family. Also, BSA would not allow us, his parents, to participate because we are a gay couple, even though we have been together for over 30 years, have raised two children and are legally married.

It is highly likely that there are students in the Octorara School District who are from nontheist families, and/or have gay parents. Do not send a message to these students that their parents, their families are inferior, and that it is OK to discriminate against them.

Allowing BSA to hold promotional meetings in public school during school hours, with the assistance of teachers, puts an official stamp of approval on BSA polices and rules — the positive things that they do and stand for, but also their hurtful, discriminatory policies. Not intentionally, but effectively, you are condoning discrimination against gay people.

We urge you not to support any group, including BSA, that discriminates against nontheists, gays, or any category of people. Until BSA changes its membership policies, please do not allow them to hold promotional assemblies in the Octorara public schools during school hours.

By taking this principled stand, you will be sending a message to BSA that could help them to change their policies, and be welcoming to all boys, and their families, who would like to participate in scouting.

Statement by John Stoltzfus:
I am proud to have received my diploma here at Octorara. I feel this has been a great place to earn my education, and I believe it is an honorable institution, which is why I'm frankly baffled that Octorara continues to go against the First Amendment of the United States by allowing Boy Scouts of America (BSA) assemblies that are discriminatory, especially since, if I'm not mistaken, the issue has been brought to the attention of the Board before.

In many respects BSA is an admirable organization, but it does clearly discriminate against those who do not share the belief that a god exists. One cannot become a member unless they swear an oath to a god.

Whether you share that belief or not, it is clear that the BSA is exclusive and has no place on public school grounds that are here to accommodate everybody: students from diverse backgrounds with differing beliefs.

As an atheist I often hear from people that I cannot be moral without the unsubstantiated belief in the existence of a deity. This is a nonsensical, false notion that I have struggled with particularly as a young man. For Octorara to promote a private organization that shares in this prejudicial view and disseminates it to the young men of this generation is dishonorable.

The problem is easily resolved by simply not allowing the BSA to have assemblies here. Let BSA recruit elsewhere, not in a public school like ours.

After Stoltzfus spoke, several residents addressed the school-sponsored BSA recruitment assembly issue. A recording of the statements was not available at the time I wrote this article. To be accurate, an article specifically about the commentary will be published in the next newsletter (July/August 2015 issue).

All community speakers, including school board members, were in favor of allowing BSA to continue conducting recruitment assemblies on school grounds, during the school day and using the assistance of teachers and school personnel. We anticipated such a reaction, but our goal of establishing a public record of our concerns was accomplished. Until that night, school board members and the superintendent had refused to acknowledge correspondence and have not responded to any questions or even media interviews.

FS representatives are on record as sending a warning about possible school entanglement with BSA bias membership rules. If they continue to ignore their own anti-discrimination policy and do nothing to prevent a family from harm, a lawsuit is sure to result. The board is more liable in such a situation because they had every opportunity to prevent a harmful situation. FS warnings are intended to encourage the Octorara school board to do everything possible to avoid prejudicial situations and to, of course, avoid any legal actions. Board members have a fiscal responsibility to taxpayers. Wasting public school money on attorney fees is a disservice to taxpayers, students and teachers. Taxpayer money should be spent on teacher salaries, books, maintenance, educational programs and so many other services that provide equal opportunities for all students and personnel.

The day after the April 20th board meeting, I spoke to a well-respected business man who lives in the Octorara school district. He conveyed support for what FS is doing and said that we need to continue our objection to the BSA recruitment assemblies. If this person goes public, his business would surely suffer, as evidenced by the reactions of the board members and commentary on local blogs. The discrimination issue must be addressed by willing members of the community as FS representatives are considered "outsiders."

FS seeks more commentary from the public. Those who want to send an email to the school board and superintendent can do so at the following addresses:

Nelson Stoltzfus
nstoltzfus@octorara.org
Leon Lapp Jr.
llapp@octorara.org
Timothy Alexander
talexander@octorara.org
Hank Oleyniczak
holeyniczak@octorara.org
Samuel Ganow
sganow@octorara.org
Lisa Bowman
lbowman@octorara.org
Brian Norris
bnorris@octorara.org
Shawna Johnson
sjohnson@octorara.org
Sheri Melton
smelton@octorara.org
Dr. Thomas Newcome
tnewcome@octorara.org

Pictured below from left to right are **Margaret Downey**, **Jason Chesnet**, **John Stoltzfus**, **Tom Schottmiller**, and **Glen Loev**. The group held up signs after not being allowed to speak at the Octorara school board meeting. Only Stolzfus was allowed to address the issue.

Downey made two attempts to speak, stating that she was representing those who feared retaliation for being sympathetic to nontheists and gays. Downey was told that the persons who contacted the Freethought Society should feel free to voice the concerns in person and have a confidential conversation with **Dr. Thomas Newcome**, the school superintendent. It is well known that the school superintendent is a leading figure in local Christian men's groups. The fact is that one of the persons who secretly objects to the Boy Scouts of America assemblies is a teacher. The fear of prejudice and the possibility of losing her job from such a disclosure is of great concern. Such a conversation is not possible given the scenario of work-related biases.

An eye injury caused Downey to wear an eye patch that night.

The Camp Quest 2020 Envision Campaign

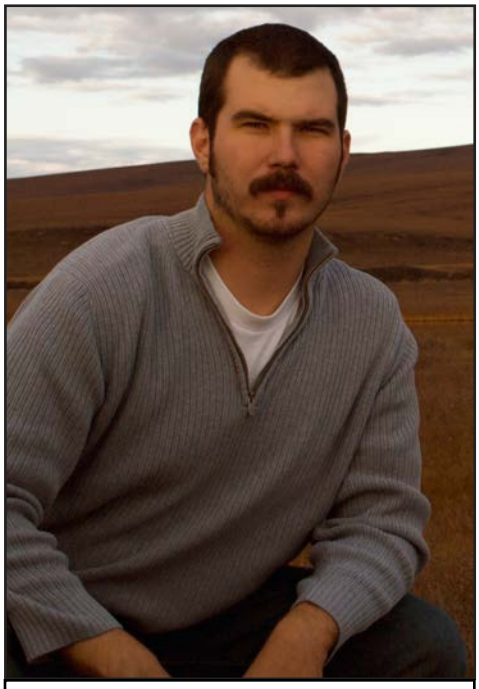
by Amanda Metskas

Camp Quest is a summer camp serving youth from nonreligious families. It is now being led by two Eagle Scouts, **Shawn Jeffers** (Chair) and **Neil Polzin** (Vice Chair).

As former Boy Scouts of America (BSA) leaders, both men were eventually deemed unworthy of association by the organization, simply because Polzin and Jeffers are atheists.

Having a place to continue to practice what they learned in BSA and passing on their love of the outdoors motivated Jeffers' and Polzin's involvement with Camp Quest.

"Camp Quest is a place where kids develop independence, have fun, and make friends. They learn critical thinking skills alongside traditional camp-craft. It combines the best of what I got from being in the Boy Scouts with inclusive policies promoting empathy, open questioning, and integrity," Polzin said.



Neil Polzin

Over the last two decades many atheist Scouts, like **Darrell Lambert**, have been faced with the choice of feigning belief in God to stay in the organization, or being honest, which led to their expulsion. As Lambert explained in an interview with *The Kitsap Sun*, lying about his beliefs wouldn't be true to the values he learned in Scouting.

"The Boy Scouts of America's continued discrimination against gays and atheists is detestable, but certainly in the case of Jeffers and Polzin, their loss is Camp Quest's gain," said **Amanda Metskas**, Camp Quest Executive Director.

Polzin lost his job as a waterfront director at a BSA camp in 2009 when his activism in the secular community was discovered by BSA officials. At the time Polzin worked with a Secular Student Alliance chapter as an undergraduate at Cal Poly Pomona. Polzin has been involved with Camp Quest since 2008 serving in many roles at Camp Quest West's two California locations. He was a Camp Director.

2015 marks Polzin's second year on the Camp Quest National Board, and his first assignment as Vice Chair.

Jeffers has been involved with Camp Quest since 2003. He has served on the Camp Quest National Board since 2012 as Treasurer, and took on the role of Chair this year.

Jeffers left BSA in 2002 after coming out as gay and as an atheist.

Shawn Jeffers

Although BSA has ended their policy banning gay youth, they still ban gay adult leaders in addition to banning atheist youth and adults.

Over the past decade, membership in BSA has been in decline, including a 7 percent drop in 2014. During that same time period Camp Quest expanded from serving approximately 50 campers to serving more than 1,000.

"Although many factors likely contribute to both the decline of BSA membership and Camp Quest's growth, it seems fair to say that, as the percentage of nonreligious Americans grows and the cause of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered equality advances, BSA policies are becoming increasingly out of step with real American values. Camp Quest fills that gap for more and more families," Jeffers said.

This year marks Camp Quest's 20 year anniversary, and organizers are preparing for a summer season featuring 18 weeks of camp across the United States. Camp Quest is planning an expansion campaign to serve more than 2,000 campers in 2020. Learn more at:

www.campquest.org

Do you know a child or teen ages 8-17 who would like to attend Camp Quest? Summer 2015 registration is now open around the country. Many of these sessions have had waiting lists for registration for the past several summers. Adults can get involved by applying to volunteer as camp counselors and by donating to support our expansion.

As Camp Quest embarks on its ambitious Envision 2020 Campaign, we hope to double camper participants by 2020. We are proud to be led by two former Eagle Scouts. Please support the Camp Quest expansion.

We are proud to announce a record-breaking incentive, the first $50,000 raised in this campaign effort will be generously matched by the Stiefel Freethought Foundation. Don't delay. Send your financial support today. Donations are processed through the website mentioned above or can be sent to:

Camp Quest
P.O. Box 2552
Columbus, OH 43216

The History of "In God We Trust"

As Found on the United States Department of the Treasury Website

The motto IN GOD WE TRUST was placed on United States coins largely because of the increased religious sentiment existing during the Civil War. Secretary of the Treasury Salmon P. Chase received many appeals from devout persons throughout the country, urging that the United States recognize the deity on United States coins.

From Treasury Department records, it appears that the first such appeal came in a letter dated November 13, 1861. It was written to Secretary Chase by **Reverend M. R. Watkinson**, Minister of the Gospel from Ridleyville, Pennsylvania, and stated:

Dear Sir:

You are about to submit your annual report to the Congress respecting the affairs of the national finances.

One fact touching our currency has hitherto been seriously overlooked. I mean the recognition of the Almighty God in some form on our coins.

You are probably a Christian. What if our Republic were not shattered beyond reconstruction? Would not the antiquaries of succeeding centuries rightly reason from our past that we were a heathen nation? What I propose is that instead of the goddess of liberty we shall have next inside the 13 stars a ring inscribed with the words PERPETUAL UNION; within the ring the allseeing eye, crowned with a halo; beneath this eye the American flag, bearing in its field stars equal to the number of the States united; in the folds of the bars the words GOD, LIBERTY, LAW.

This would make a beautiful coin, to which no possible citizen could object. This would relieve us from the ignominy of heathenism. This would place us openly under the Divine protection we have personally claimed. From my hearth I have felt our national shame in disowning God as not the least of our present national disasters.

To you first I address a subject that must be agitated.

As a result, Secretary **Salmon P Chase** instructed **James Pollock**, Director of the Mint at Philadelphia, to prepare a motto, in a letter dated November 20, 1861:

Dear Sir:

No nation can be strong except in the strength of God, or safe except in His defense. The trust of our people in God should be declared on our national coins.

You will cause a device to be prepared without unnecessary delay with a motto expressing in the fewest and tersest words possible this national recognition.

It was found that the Act of Congress dated January 18, 1837, prescribed the mottoes and devices that should be placed upon the coins of the United States. This meant that the mint could make no changes without the enactment of additional legislation by the Congress.

In December 1863, the Director of the Mint submitted designs for new one-cent coin, two-cent coin, and three-cent coin to Secretary Chase for approval. He proposed that either OUR COUNTRY; OUR GOD or GOD, OUR TRUST should appear as a motto on the coins. In a letter to the Mint Director on December 9, 1863, Secretary Chase stated:

I approve your mottoes, only suggesting that on that with the Washington obverse the motto should begin with the word OUR, so as to read OUR GOD AND OUR COUNTRY. And on that with the shield, it should be changed so as to read: IN GOD WE TRUST.

The Congress passed the Act on April 22, 1864. This legislation changed the composition of the one-cent coin and authorized the minting of the two-cent coin. The Mint Director was directed to develop designs for these coins for final approval of the Secretary. IN GOD WE TRUST first appeared on the 1864 two-cent coin.

Another Act of Congress passed on March 3, 1865. It allowed the Mint Director, with the Secretary's approval, to place the motto on all gold and silver coins that "shall admit the inscription thereon." Under the Act, the motto was placed on the gold double-eagle coin, the gold eagle coin, and the gold half-eagle coin. It was also placed on the silver dollar coin, the half-dollar coin and the quarter-dollar coin, and on the nickel composition three-cent coin beginning in 1866. Later, Congress passed the Coinage Act of February 12, 1873. It also said that the Secretary "may cause the motto IN GOD WE TRUST to be inscribed on such coins as shall admit of such motto."

The use of IN GOD WE TRUST has not been uninterrupted. The motto disappeared from the five-cent coin in 1883, and did not reappear until production of the Jefferson nickel began in 1938. Since 1938, all United States coins bear the inscription. Later, the motto was found missing from the new design of the double-eagle gold coin and the eagle gold coin shortly after they appeared in 1907. In response to a general demand, Congress ordered it restored, and the Act of May 18, 1908, made it mandatory on all coins upon which it had previously appeared. IN GOD WE TRUST was not mandatory on the one-cent coin and five-cent coin. It could be placed on them by the Secretary or the Mint Director with the Secretary's approval.

The motto has been in continuous use on the one-cent coin since 1909, and on the ten-cent coin since 1916. It also has appeared on all gold coins and silver dollar coins, half-dollar coins, and quarter-dollar coins struck since July 1, 1908.

A law passed by the 84th Congress (P.L. 84-140) and approved by the President on July 30, 1956, the President approved a Joint Resolution of the 84th Congress, declaring IN GOD WE TRUST the national motto of the United States. IN GOD WE TRUST was first used on paper money in 1957,

when it appeared on the one-dollar silver certificate. The first paper currency bearing the motto entered circulation on October 1, 1957. The Bureau of Engraving and Printing (BEP) was converting to the dry intaglio printing process. During this conversion, it gradually included IN GOD WE TRUST in the back design of all classes and denominations of currency.

As part of a comprehensive modernization program the BEP successfully developed and installed new high-speed rotary intaglio printing presses in 1957. These allowed BEP to print currency by the dry intaglio process, 32 notes to the sheet. One-dollar silver certificates were the first denomination printed on the new high-speed presses. They included IN GOD WE TRUST as part of the reverse design as BEP adopted new dies according to the law. The motto also appeared on one-dollar silver certificates of the 1957-A and 1957-B series.

BEP prints United States paper currency by an intaglio process from engraved plates. It was necessary, therefore, to engrave the motto into the printing plates as a part of the basic engraved design to give it the prominence it deserved.

One-dollar silver certificates series 1935, 1935-A, 1935-B, 1935-C, 1935-D, 1935-E, 1935-F, 1935-G, and 1935-H were all printed on the older flat-bed presses by the wet intaglio process. P.L. 84-140 recognized that an enormous expense would be associated with immediately replacing the costly printing plates. The law allowed BEP to gradually convert to the inclusion of IN GOD WE TRUST on the currency. Accordingly, the motto is not found on series 1935-E and 1935-F one-dollar notes. By September 1961, IN GOD WE TRUST had been added to the back design of the Series 1935-G notes. Some early printings of this series do not bear the motto. IN GOD WE TRUST appears on all series 1935-H one-dollar silver certificates.

Below is a listing by denomination of the first production and delivery dates for currency bearing IN GOD WE TRUST:

$1 Federal Reserve Note
Production: February 12, 1964,
Delivery: March 11, 1964

$5 United States Note
Production: January 23, 1964,
Delivery: March 2, 1964

$5 Federal Reserve Note
Production: July 31, 1964,
Delivery: September 16, 1964

$10 Federal Reserve Note
Production: February 24, 1964,
Delivery: April 24, 1964

$20 Federal Reserve Note
Production: October 7, 1964,
Delivery: October 7, 1964

$50 Federal Reserve Note
Production: August 24, 1966,
Deliver: September 28, 1966

$100 Federal Reserve Note
Production: August 18, 1966,
Delivery: September 27, 1966

In Legal Action We Trust

by Michael Newdow

There have now been three Supreme Court cases dealing with the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) as it pertains to federal laws. Two of these cases were decided in the just the past two years. In each, the justices have been unanimous in finding that (absent a compelling interest) the federal government may not place individuals in a position where they are essentially forced to act in a manner that violates their religious beliefs. Thus, for those who feel their religious beliefs are violated when they personally carry, distribute and propagate the message "In God We Trust," the time is ripe to challenge the federal statutes that place this burden upon them.

There are seven federal circuits that have never ruled on whether the monetary "In God We Trust" inscriptions are permissible. If you want to serve as a plaintiff in an upcoming legal action, please email your phone number, street address, city and state of residence to NoMoreIGWT@gmail.com as soon as possible.

Because the United States Supreme Court has indicated that it is more concerned about constitutional guarantees when children are involved, those who wish to protect their minor children from the government's religious transgressions are especially encouraged to write. Please be assured that we will move for a court order to keep the names of families with children under seal. To date, those motions have always been granted, and — as far as I know — the families' names have always remained undisclosed.

I look forward to working with anyone who is interested in joining me in this important legal action.

Additional Note from Margaret Downey:

I always carry a motto free (pre-1954) dollar bill in my wallet because many times, the "In God We Trust" wording is used by religionists as proof that the United States is a Christian nation. I have been told that I should leave this country if I don't believe in God. I have also been told that the use of the phrase on currency is proof positive that nontheists are not welcomed as citizens. It is unfortunate that the United States government is showing support of, favoritism to and endorsement of religion with the use of this overtly religious motto. Please join Newdow and me in this important legal action.

The West Coast Anti-Superstition Bash and Friggatriskaidekaphobia Treatment Center

by Margaret Downey

Every other year since 1996, The Freethought Society (FS) has hosted anti-superstition themed events on the East Coast. On Friday, February 13, 2015, the very first West Coast Anti-Superstition Bash and Friggatriskaidekaphobia Treatment Center was hosted by FS and the Backyard Skeptics. A West Coast team of volunteers worked together for nine months to create one of the best events, ever!

The team met often and each member took on important pre-event jobs. We thank the following people for making the Bash a huge success:

Debbie Benner
(Registration desk and on-site ticket sales)

Buck Bowen
(Music Coordinator, Entertainer and Master of Ceremonies)

Liz Bujan
(Registration desk on-site reservation list)

Chong-Ren Chien
(Dessert purchases and set-up)

Victoria de la Torre
(Gypsy Drink Purveyor, dessert purchase and set-up)

Bruce Gleason
(Event Assistant, Spokesperson, Sound Coordinator and Hotel Coordinator)

Christine Jones
(Singer and nurse)

Michael Martin
(Doctor)

Katie McKibben
(Nurse)

Tammy Michelson
(Floater and talent wrangler)

Lisa Pedersen
(Doctor and Green Room food purchases and set-up)

Dave Richards
(Green Room drinks and ice purchases)

Heather Snow
(Miss Fortune Teller)

J. Patrick Stewart
(Registration desk on-site ticket sales)

Omar Young
(Registration and tickets)

I was warned by the West Coast Anti-Superstition Bash committee that it is very difficult to get the attention of the press in Southern California.

The fact is that news about any celebrity overshadows all other activities in the area. We were thrilled, however to get front page coverage in *The Orange County Register* on the day of the Bash. The article is reprinted with permission below the photo on the upper right column:

Master of Ceremonies **Buck Bowen** gave me an encouraging shoulder hug as the Bash began on Friday, February 13, 2015. He also acted as the event DJ.

Are you frightened of Friday the 13th?
Then you might have friggatriskaidekaphobia.
by **Theresa Walker**

Feeling unlucky today?

Avoiding places like, oh, the inside of an airplane, a wedding chapel, the stock market, or even your desk at work?

Putting off making big purchases or big decisions until tomorrow?

If your answer is yes to any of these questions and the reason has to do with the calendar, then you just might be suffering from friggatriskaidekaphobia.

The word is a mouthful — and takes some practice to pronounce without a hitch — but it means this: fear of Friday the 13th.

Maybe paraskevidekatriaphobia is easier to say? It means the same thing.

By either name, superstition de-bunkers and skeptics want you to know this: There is nothing to fear about Friday the 13th.

"Honestly, it's just another day," says ***Joe Nickell*** *of the Center for Inquiry in Amherst, New York, where he is a senior research fellow with the Committee for Skeptical Inquiry and writes for* Skeptical Inquirer *magazine.*

"Good luck and bad luck are pretty evenly distributed."

FUZZY ORIGINS

Nickell considers Friday the 13th a "frivolous" concern compared with the more serious work he does as a self-described "science-based paranormal investigator."

The one-time private detective and magician has appeared on TV shows from Oprah *to* National Geographic *and is a recognized expert who has traveled the world investigating haunted houses, flying saucers, Yeti and the Loch Ness monster.*

Still, there's no denying the attention paid to Fridays that happen to fall on the 13th day of the month.

"It is spread through the media, of course," says Nickell.

"But I look at such things as an opportunity to talk about critical thinking."

Friday the 13th signified bad luck long before scribes were referred to as media.

Take your pick as to where that reputation began: the ancient Norsemen, the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, the persecution of the Knights Templar in 12th century France.

Or, as Nickell says, "people just make up stuff."

But the impact is real.

One often-cited figure on the bite that Friday the 13th takes out of the U.S. economy comes from a 2004 National Geographic report quoting folklore historian ***Donald Dossey****, founder of the Stress Management Center and Phobia Institute in Asheville, North Carolina: an estimated $800 million to $900 million in lost business.*

While modern advances such as education and science serve as strong counterpoints to superstition, Friday the 13th resonated just a few years ago as an ominous specter for about one-third of respondents to an unscientific survey from About.com's Urban Legends.

True, 60 percent said they weren't at all freaked about the day. But 11 percent responded "very much so," and another 27 percent admitted to "a little bit, maybe."

TWICE BITTEN

Friday the 13th carries a double whammy because of both the day and the date.

In some circles, Friday — the "frigga" reference in that 23-letter word, taken from the Old English "Frige's Day" — is considered the most unfortunate day of the week.

Friday is supposedly the day when Eve handed Adam that apple. When Noah and his minions hunkered down against the Great Flood. When the Romans held executions.

"Never mind that these days, Friday is payday for many of us, or at least the end of the workweek. Both good things," says Nickell.

And then there's that number, the "triskaideka" in that word that is as hard to spell as it is to pronounce.

Dare we tempt fate by writing it again? Yes, good journalism demands it: 13.

You won't find 13 among house numbers in Florence, Italy. They go from 12 to 121/2 to 14. You typically won't find a 13th floor marked in high-rise elevators. Although, as Nickell points out, there still is a 13th floor even if it is not called that. Math demands it. You won't find a 13th gate at airports.

"This kind of bashing of the Number 13 ignores some of its good connotations," Nickell says.

How about a baker's dozen?

"I don't know of anybody who said they broke a tooth on the 13th doughnut or died because they ate the 13th roll."

For some folks, Friday the 13th is an excuse to party.

Tonight in Fullerton, a couple hundred people are expected to celebrate the 13th and poke fun at superstitions of all sorts at the "Anti-Superstition Bash."

The party is put on by the (here comes that word again) Friggatriskaidekaphobia Treatment Center, the brainchild of ***Margaret Downey****, the self-described Friggatriskaidekaphobia Treatment Center nurse and event coordinator.*

Disclaimer: The treatment center is not a real health facility, and Downey, who divides her time between Newport Beach and Philadelphia, is not a real nurse.

But there are those who do get confused, says the 64-year-old grandmother, who founded the Pennsylvania-based Freethought Society and gives school presentations on Thomas Paine and topics such as how women got the vote.

Her anti-friggatriskaidekaphobia efforts include dressing up in a '40s-era, puffy-sleeved nurse's dress complete with white stockings and cap, and red lipstick.

"I don't hold myself out as a professional," she says, "but I have received calls from desperate people who don't want to go to work. I say this is a pretend character. You need to open your phone book and find a psychologist.

"But if you want to come and have fun at a party, come."

Downey has been holding these Friday the 13th gatherings since 1996, mostly in Pennsylvania. This is her first "Anti-Superstition Bash" out here. It's open to all ages.

There's a serious side: The ballroom will be peppered with information and displays aimed at dispelling various superstitions. A representative from a local kitten rescue group will prevail on behalf of black cats.

"Whenever I see an opportunity to talk about the harm superstitions cause," Downey says, "I do so."

But ultimately, the bash is a party.

Besides games like Ladder Limbo, where limbo-ers pass beneath an open ladder, the lineup includes dancing to such songs as "Knock on Wood," a misfortuneteller, and souvenir fake rabbit's feet that Downey will toss out to the crowd.

A Love Potion #9 drink will cost $13.

"Too bad the number 25 isn't considered unlucky," Downey jokes. "Think of all the money we could make."

The Bash was well-attended and according to post-event blogs and Facebook commentary, the crowd had a terrific time. We were proud to present live performances, games with prizes, and music for dancing.

The entertainers performed fantastically and all of them donated their time to help offset the financial burdens of putting on such an event. We thank band members; **Jim Underdown**, **Craig Else**, and **Niki Smart**, comedian **Ian Harris**; and performer **Dave DeLuca**.

A video report was produced by reporters **Matt Kollar** and **Colin Walker**. The humorous and informative video appeared online through *The Orange County Weekly*. It can be seen at:

http://video.ocweekly.com/getting-lucky-at-a-friday-the-13th-anti-superstition-party-42133892

Channel 7 News sent a camera technician and the Bash was highlighted on the 10:00 PM report. This is unusual for a Southern California news report which typically covers the latest celebrity shenanigans.

The West Coast team of volunteers are already planning the second Friggatriskaidekaphobia Treatment Center/Anti-Superstition Bash which will take place on Friday, January 13, 2017, but watch for details about a possible East Coast event on Friday, May 13, 2016.

Sign up to be a Friday the 13th Friggatriskaidekaphobia Treatment Center and Anti-Superstition Bash volunteer at:

volunteers@FtSociety.org

Photos of the West Coast Anti-Superstition Bash and Friggatriskaidekaphobia Treatment Center

Pictured left is the Friggatriskaidekaphobia Treatment Nurses Team composed of (left to right) **Katie McKibben**, **Margaret Downey** and **Christine Jones**. The team put Bash attendees through an easy anti-superstition obstacle course that included the spilling of salt, walking under a ladder, signing up for games, and dancing with an open umbrella.

Below left are **Victoria de la Torre** (left) who acted as the Gypsy Drink Purveyor selling $13 tickets for a special "Love Potion #9" party drink and **Heather Snow,** (right) who entertained attendees as the Miss Fortune Teller.

Below is caricature artist extraordinaire **Celestia Ward**. Ward donated all art proceeds to help offset event expenses.

Pictured above are **Michael Martin** and **Lisa Pedersen**. They acted as Treatment Center doctors, qualifying attendees to receive a souvenir "Clean Bill of Mental Health."

Below is a Bash attendee getting ready to Ladder Limbo. He was a hotel guest and saw the activities taking place in the ballroom. He purchased a ticket and joined in the fun.

Picture top left are the volunteers who worked the on-site ticket sales and welcome table. Left to right are **J. Patrick Stewart**, **Jeff Magy**, **Debbie Benner**, **Omar Young**, and **Liz Bujan**.

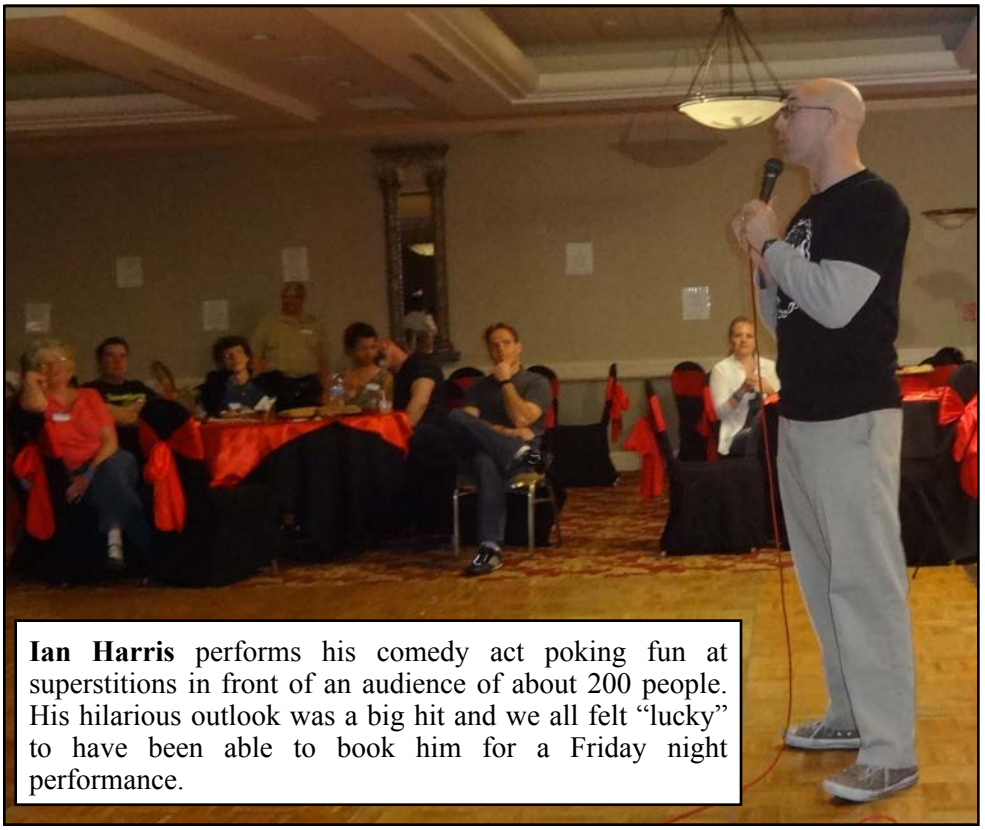
The Ticket Sales Committee was chaired by Bujan. Members of the committee are wearing the custom Anti-Superstition T-shirt designed by caricature artist **Celestia Ward**. The T-shirt is sold out, but will be available again. Watch for details about another West Coast Anti-Superstition Bash/ Friggatriskaidekaphobia Treatment Center being planned for the date of Friday, January 13, 2017.

Pictured right is the Hill family. Left to right are **Anna Jacinto Hill**, **Steve Hill**, **Stevieann Hill**, and **Melina Hill**. The young ladies assisted the Treatment Center nurses and doctors by giving "Cat Scans" as needed.

Below performing an original rap entitled "Zodiacrobat" is **Buck Bowen**. The lyrics convey the frustration he had dating a woman who made all her life decisions based on her zodiac sign and horoscope predictions.

Below right are (left to right) **Shawn Frilot**, **Brian Dalton** (also known as "Mr. Deity") and **Tammy Michelson**.

More Photos of the West Coast Anti-Superstition Bash and Friggatriskaidekaphobia Treatment Center



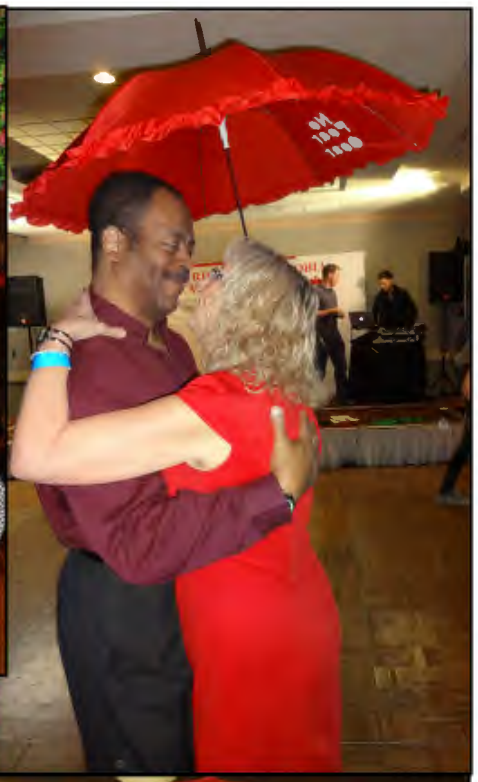
Ian Harris performs his comedy act poking fun at superstitions in front of an audience of about 200 people. His hilarious outlook was a big hit and we all felt "lucky" to have been able to book him for a Friday night performance.

Pictured above left are **Margaret Downey** and performer **Dave DeLuca**. He sang two songs that fit into the theme of the Bash — "Luck Be A Lady Tonight" and "Witchcraft." DeLuca usually performs as a comedian, but as a special favor to the Freethought Society, DeLuca sang as well as **Frank Sinatra**. DeLuca has many talents as an entertainer.

Below left are (left to right) **Craig Else**, **Jim Underdown** and **Niki Smart**. They comprise the band known as "The Heathens." Their 30 minute performance was the opening act at the Bash and they rocked the house!

Above is a photo of the best shoes worn to the party. They are on the feet of **Morgan Freeman**.

Also above is a photo of the black cats that were up for adoption at the event. Please contact your local shelter to offer a home to a black cat. The silly association of "bad luck" makes it difficult to find homes for these sweet innocent animals.



No Fear Gear

Two Movie Recommendations

by Dennis Middlebrooks

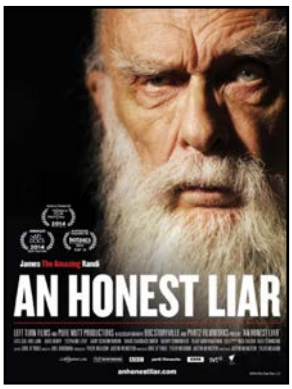
Movie One:

I recently saw the award winning film *An Honest Liar*. This is an engrossing documentary on the career of **James** "The Amazing" **Randi**. He is a world-famous professional magician and debunker of paranormal claims. The title of the film reflects Randi's honesty in explaining his remarkable talents of deception. In contrast to other conjurers such as **Uri Geller**, who claim that their feats are due to extraordinary psychic powers (e.g. spoon and key bending), Randi admits that what he does is simply based on sleight of hand and the art of distraction, perfected by many years of practice.

In addition to interesting biographical data on Randi's childhood years in Canada, the film covers highlights of his professional life, including his Houdini-like escape from a safe on a black and white 1950s television show. Also highlighted is Randi's famous *Tonight Show* exposé of **Peter Popof**, the unethical evangelical "faith healer" who received information on audience members from his wife via a radio transmitter tucked into his ear. Another segment of the movie showed **Johnny Carson**, himself an amateur magician and skeptic, humiliating Geller on the *Tonight Show* based on advice from Randi on how to get around Geller's trickery.

The documentary contains fascinating interviews with Randi in his Florida home, where he lives with his longtime lover, the artist **Jose Alvarez**.

In another movie segment, Randi hilariously passes off Alvarez as a world famous psychic on a trip to Australia, duping the entire country despite dropping clues right and left that Alvarez was a complete fake. This part of the film underscored the gullibility of both the general public and the media regarding dubious paranormal claims that could easily be explained or refuted.



Randi was candid as to his hesitancy in "coming out" until a few years back. Now much less active in his 80s and in a more enlightened era, he feels comfortable in discussing his sexual orientation.

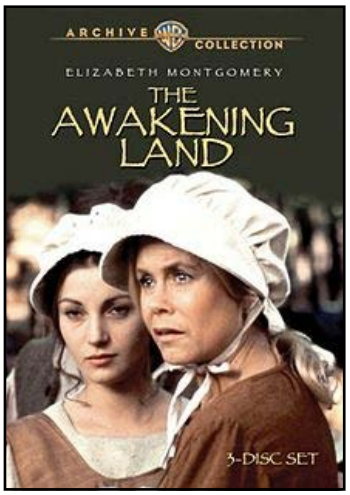
In this regard, the documentary takes a very surprising twist when it is disclosed that during the filming Alvarez was seized by immigration authorities at Randi's home.

It turns out that Alvarez is not his legal name and that he is a Venezuelan who entered the United States of America illegally as a gay teenager. He did so to escape the homophobic attitudes that prevail in Venezuela — a country in which he felt menaced. He eventually met Randi, who took him in and assisted him in obtaining documentation under his new name.

The film shows Alvarez's effort to avoid deportation with Randi covering his legal costs. There is a happy ending as Alvarez is permitted to remain in the United States, to Randi's tearful joy.

This documentary about a great skeptic and atheist is a must see.

A Classic Movie:



The 1978 three-part made-for-television film *The Awakening Land* is well worth watching if you can find it.

The film is an adaptation of **Conrad Richter**'s Pulitzer Prize-winning novel. It stars the beautiful and very talented actress, **Elizabeth Montgomery** who plays **Sayward Luckett**, the daughter of late 18th century pioneers. The family settle in a wilderness area in present-day Illinois .

Montgomery portrays Luckett first as a young woman, then as the years go by as a middle-aged and elderly woman via the magic of make-up. This film is a very realistic portrayal of the harshness of frontier life. Luckett's younger sister Sukie disappears one day without a trace in the woods near her home, apparently abducted or killed by Indians. Sukie is never to be seen or heard from again.

After Luckett's mother dies and her father disappears in a forlorn search for Sukie, Luckett is burdened with the care of her three younger sisters. She becomes acquainted with an educated and intelligent man named **Portius Wheeler**, played by **Hal Holbrook**.

Wheeler is a reclusive lawyer from Massachusetts whose career prospects were thwarted by the fact that he is an open, unapologetic atheist as well as an abolitionist. This does not stop the illiterate Luckett from falling in love with Wheeler and luring him into marriage. Tying the knot with the lovely and intelligent Luckett does not seem like such a great sacrifice on Wheeler's part.

Luckett recognizes him as the upright, decent man that he is and does not care about his freethinking views on religion. The Wheeler character is one of the first, if not *the first*, positive atheist to appear on network television. It is also pretty clear from the film that Luckett probably shares his views. This would be consistent with Montgomery's own skeptical views on religion, as I learned in her biography *Twitch Upon A Star*.

Luckett and Wheeler have five children, four of whom survive. Despite his atheism, Wheeler is eventually accepted and respected by members of the growing and thriving community of New Salem and becomes a prominent elected official. There was no Religious Right in those days to denounce him for not believing in God. Luckett's aged father emerges from the past, never having found Sukie. Luckett grows old and wise and is a wealthy widow at the end of her life.

Both Montgomery and Holbrook give strong performances, and there is an interesting and tragic sub-plot involving Luckett's young son, who discovers that the pretty girl who likes him is actually "kin." *The Awakening Land* is without doubt one of the finest made-for-television movies of all time. Look for it in your local public library.

The Freethought Society's 2015 Three-Month Activities Calendar and Conference Recommendations

May 18

The Freethought Society (FS) is very pleased to host Barry Lynn, the executive director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State (AU).

In his presentation "Separation Anxiety: The First Amendment at Risk" Lynn will provide updates about the newest events in church-state separation. Some of the topics he will are same-gender marriage license refusals, upcoming Supreme Court cases, memorials on public grounds, and, of course, his interactions with the Religious Right.

Please plan to attend this informative presentation on Monday, May 18, 2015 at the **Ludington Library** (**5 South Bryn Mawr Avenue, Bryn Mawr, PA**). The event begins promptly at **7:00 PM**. A SEPTA stop is located across the street from the library.

May 31

FS joins with the Humanist Association of Greater Philadelphia and Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia (EHSP) to host **Paul H. Halpern** as a speaker on **Sunday**, **May 31, 2015** at **4:00 PM**.

Halpren's presentation is entitled "Einstein's Dice and Schrödinger's Cat: How Two Great Minds Battled Quantum Randomness to Create a Unified Theory of Physics."

The presentation will take place at **1906 South Rittenhouse Square Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103** (EHSP Building) and is based on Halpren's new book of the same name. Books will be available for purchase.

Albert Einstein dedicated the final decades of his life to a fruitless search for unification. Even on his deathbed he asked for pencil and paper in a vain attempt to complete his calculations. Less familiar, but similarly intriguing, are the efforts of Austrian physicist Erwin Schrödinger to solve the same riddle and beat Einstein, with whom he had collaborated, to the answer. The relationship between the two extraordinary physicists offers a riveting tale about a deep friendship challenged by the temptations of scientific glory.

Halpern is Professor of Physics at the University of the Sciences in Philadelphia. A prolific author, he has written more than a dozen science books and numerous articles.

June 11-15

Looking for a summer get-away and an educational event all rolled up into one? The Center For Inquiry's **June 11-15, 2015** "Reason for Change" conference is highly recommended.

The conference will be an invaluable opportunity to connect and collaborate with thinkers, activists, researchers, and other luminaries from around the world. It will honor the individuals who have made transformative contributions to the advancement of science, reason, and free inquiry while also highlighting the next wave of up-and-coming activists.

The conference will also be a chance to be enriched by all that **Western New York** has to offer, from the jaw-dropping natural spectacle of Niagara Falls to the architectural treasures of historic Buffalo to our movement's deep historical roots found on the Freethought Trail. Plus, early attendees will have the opportunity to be trained as CFI Secular Celebrants!

For almost four decades, CFI has been pushing back against the forces of dogma and superstition that pollute public policy, obstruct progress, and suppress free expression and dissent. Together, we can build upon our achievements and make a better world for all of us. We certainly have a "reason for change." Visit the following website for more conference details, including speaker line-up, costs and hotel information :

http://reasonforchange.centerforinquiry.net

July 16-19

FS highly recommends attending The Amaz!ng Meeting (TAM) 2015: "A Celebration of a Reasoned Life" sponsored by the James Randi Educational Foundation (JREF). The conference is taking place at the **Tropicana Hotel and Casino** in **Las Vegas**, **Nevada**, **July 16- 19, 2015**.

The meeting will feature a dynamic line up of speakers by day and special entertainment by night, including movie screenings, a theatrical/comedy production called "Festival of the Spoken Nerd," and maybe even a magician or two. The centerpiece of the conference will be a tribute to James "The Amazing" Randi, who retired earlier this year and is expected to somewhat slow the pace of his public appearances.

There are several meeting registration packages to choose from, ranging from the basic no frills registration to the all-inclusive TAM Experience. For more details see:

www.amazingmeeting.com

The mission of JREF is to promote the use of science-based evidence and critical thinking to evaluate questionable or supernatural claims. They provide information and educational tools to enable better evaluation of claims, from the ordinary to the extraordinary. The Foundation aims to inspire an investigative spirit in a new generation of critical thinkers.

The Freethought Society (FS) promotes freedom of thought, expression and choice. FS also advocates separation of religion and government. FS publishes *The Freethought Society News* every other month.The newsletter 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 many locations across the United States, with emphasis in the tri-state area of Pennsylvania, Delaware and New Jersey. FS activities and services depend on the financial contributions of supporters. Funds may be sent using this form or via the FS website (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 want to:

( ) become a supporter / renew support of FS (Please enclose checks payable to the Freethought Society):
$30 Individual Supporter **$35** 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** $_____(other per month)

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

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State and Zip: _____

Email Address: _____

Phone: _____Cell: _____

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

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

Name: _____

Email: _____

Volunteer Opportunities Through the Freethought Society

Supporters of the Freethought Society (FS) often want to do more than just donate. Listed below are various committees organized by FS. The committees were designed to fulfill the mission, goals and vision of FS. We seek to be of assistance to nontheists, educate the public about nontheism, and provide social opportunities where like-minded individuals can meet, socialize and share ideas. Please see the FS website or contact FS to volunteer at: volunteers@FtSociety.org.

Anti-Discrimination Educational Committee
(nontheism explained in classroom settings)

Anti-Discrimination Support Network
(assist Openly Secular 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 and in emergency situations)

Media Outreach Committee
(press coordination and writing press releases)

Membership Committee
(watching for and connecting with possible supporters)

Monthly Meeting Coordinators
(schedule and manage speakers and venues)

Secular Celebrations
(develop and implement new nontheist celebrations)

Speakers Bureau
(provide FS a CV, photo and list of subjects to participate)

Special Events
(coordinate interesting and unique nontheist events)

Thomas Paine Memorial Committee
(assist with assemblies and work on themed events)

***Tree of Knowledge*/Winter Display Committee**
(make ornaments, find venues, write articles, and support the winter symbol concept nationwide)