

The Minnesota Atheist

Justice in a Just World

Is the world we live in fair? We tell children it isn't, though we often do that just to get them to be quiet.

The idea that the world is fair is embedded in many of the world's religions. Galatians six tells us that we shall sow what we reap, that if we do good, we will receive our reward. In context, this reward is clearly supposed to arrive after we die. However, that hasn't stopped many believers and traditions from assuming God will grant them favors in this world if they are only pious enough.

The concept of karma explicitly tells us that we are rewarded or punished for our actions. Again, the consequences sometimes come to us in this life, sometimes in the next. Either way, the events of our lives are dictated by our own worthiness.

Even without religion, many of us believe that the world is somehow balanced. We let go of the gods who are supposed to make the world just, but we don't—or can't—let go of the idea that good things happen to good people and bad things happen to those who have somehow earned their problems.

Unfortunately, that idea has consequences. On October 21st, at the monthly meeting, Stephanie Zvan will tell us what those consequences are and what we can do to counter the false belief in a just world.



If You Go...

When:

Sunday, October 21, 2012

Where:

North Regional Library
1315 North Lowry Avenue
Minneapolis, 55411

Schedule:

1:00-1:15 Social Time
1:15-1:45 Business Meeting
1:45-2:00 Break
2:00-3:30 Zvan Presentation
4:00- Dinner



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**Minnesota Atheists
 practices positive,
 inclusive, active, friendly
 neighborhood atheism in
 order to:**

- Provide a community for
 atheists;
- Educate the public about
 atheism; and
- Promote separation of state
 and church.

MNA Meetup members: 1,259

Life memberships: 30

Honorary Members

- Hector Avalos, PhD
 Dan Barker
 Gerald Erickson, PhD
 Annie Laurie Gaylor
 Dick Hewetson
 Robert M. Price, PhD

Minnesota Atheists Mission Statement

Minnesota Atheists is dedicated to building a positive atheist community that actively promotes secular values through educational programs, social activities, and participation in public affairs.

President's Column: Teen Atheist



August Berkshire

The following letter to the editor was published in *the [Minneapolis] Star Tribune*, Sept. 15, 2012, p. A8.

Parent Should Embrace Daughter's Choice.

As president of Minnesota Atheists, I appreciated Carolyn Hax's advice to the mother who is concerned about her 16-year-old daughter, "Emily" ("Daughter 'comes out' as an atheist," Sept. 10). Surveys show that about 25 percent of younger Americans now hold this world view.

At this point, Emily can no more pretend she is a Christian than her mother can pretend that she herself is an atheist. The mother should honor the courage, honesty, and trust Emily had in confiding in her.

It sounds like [sic] the mother brought her daughter up with good ethical values, and there's no reason to suspect that this good behavior would suddenly disappear due to the loss of belief in an invisible sheriff. In fact, if the only reason a person acts well is

due to divine threats, it makes that person's morality suspect and shaky.

Perhaps Emily, like so many people her age, is rejecting the tribalism, sexism, homophobia, antipathy toward science and other contradictions found in many religions.

Studies of evolution reveal that for societal animals such as humans, empathy, cooperation and a sense of justice are normal. Most people, regardless of their religious beliefs or nonbeliefs, are decent, law-abiding citizens.

So let us treat each other well and with kindness. Actions speak louder than words or beliefs.

-August Berkshire, Minneapolis

FREETHOUGHT CRYPTOGRAM

BY GEORGE KANE

Bm donnvgw ya aobni, bmxympvmbvmn
 vpbsvmxv bw oukoqw wrzzvwwvs kibuv
 xymngosbxmbynw ty rmmynbxvs.

-Tygv Pbsou

(Answer on page 14.)

September Meeting Review

The Minnesota Atheists' Sunday Public Meeting featured authors from the newly released book *Atheist Voices of Minnesota*. This book is produced by Freethought House, and all net proceeds from the sale of the book go to Minnesota Atheists. Sixteen authors read from their essays, reading just a sample to make you want to read more.

One speaker ended on quite a dramatic note saying, "I became a believer, I became a cultist" – I was thinking, "but I know you're an atheist now!" This really left listeners wanting to know more. You have to read "Out of the Woods," by Justin Chase, to hear how he escaped the cult.

PZ Myers was a notable speaker, as always, speaking from his story "It's the Little Things, or How the Space Program Made Me an Atheist." He got some good laughs as he dynamically told his story of how the seed of doubt was planted as he was unexpectedly presented science and religion side-by-side. Seeing them together made him realize that religion is drivel when compared to science.

I think this book does a good job at giving perspectives from atheists across the spectrum. I'm the type of atheist who cringes at the use of the word "faith" as a secular term, but the story "Keeping the Faith: Lessons on Raising an Atheist" did just that. Kori Hennessy did a great job speaking, playing the roles of herself and her four-year-old boy, and there

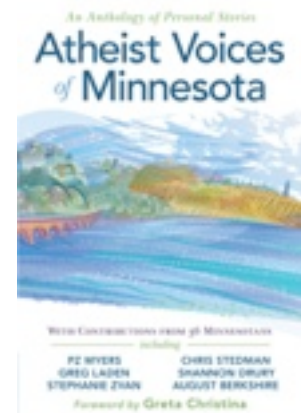
was no doubt that she is an atheist as she describes her surprise in herself as she bluntly tells her son "There is no God."

At the end of the meeting, the authors lined up along some tables to sign listeners' copies of *Atheist Voices of Minnesota* and answer any questions. I was thrilled to get the signatures from all these authors!

If you missed this event and would like to buy a copy of this book or see some of these authors at an upcoming event, check out freethoughthouse.com. There you can find options to purchase the book for yourself and view upcoming events such as promotions at bookstores.



Heather Hegi



Promotional Opportunities

by Jill Carlson and Bill Lehto

Did you enjoy reading *Atheist Voices of Minnesota*? Will you help us promote the book? Here are a few easy ways you can help get *Atheist Voices* to as many people as possible, and raise money for Minnesota Atheists at the same time:

1. If you don't own a copy yet, buy one for yourself. It's available in paperback and eBook.
2. Request the book at your local library; check out your library website for details.
3. Write a positive review of the book on Amazon.com, BarnesandNoble.com or Goodreads.com.
4. Include a plug for *Atheist Voices* in your blog.
5. Post about *Atheist Voices* on your Facebook page and include a link to the store page on Minnesota Atheist's website for details on how to buy it.
6. Purchase extra copies of *Atheist Voices* for your curious friends and family, religious or otherwise. What a great gift!
7. If you are part of a book club, suggest *Atheist Voices* as a selection for future gatherings.
8. Donate copies of *Atheist Voices* to the Women's Prison Book Project www.wpbp.org, or another charity accepting book donations.
9. Leave a copy of *Atheist Voices* in a Little Free Library (see www.littlefreelibrary.org).
10. If you have a promotion idea of your own, we'd love to hear about it. Email info@freethoughthouse.com.

News and Notes

I never expected God to be an issue at the Democratic National Convention. Christian conservatives are obviously a core constituency of the Republicans, and their stamp was unmistakable on everything that transpired at the Republican National Convention a week earlier. I expected the Democrats to make routine obeisance to religion that should infuriate everyone who values the separation of church and state, which would, however, attract no particular notice.

To my surprise, on Wednesday morning the networks reported that the platform had been released with no reference to God or to Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. This became the exclusive focus of the *Jay Sekulow Live* radio program that morning, and Republicans were quick to spin it as proof that Democrats were out of touch with the America's religious core. It was a tempest in a tea pot, as party platforms are nothing more than appeals to special interest groups. That no platform ever mentions the separation of church and state, or expresses respect for atheists, only proves our political insignificance.

The platform committee had dropped language from the 2008 edition that acknowledged God. Fabulous! That certainly made the platform more inclusive, deleting a gratuitous dismissal of atheists.

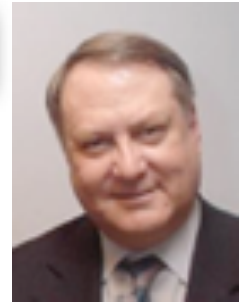
Predictably, as soon as the Republicans crowed about the deletion, the Democrats bleated abject apologies. As soon as the convention opened on Wednesday, the platform chair, Ohio Governor Ted Strickland rose to correct the omission of the reference to God. "I am here to attest and affirm that our faith and belief in God is central to the American story and informs the values we've expressed in our party's platform. In addition, President Obama recognizes Jerusalem

as the capital of Israel and our party's platform should as well."

He did not read the two proposed insertions from the 2008 platform, because they were projected onto a large screen. The first read: "We need a government that stands up for the hopes, values, and interests of working people, and gives everyone willing to work hard the chance to make the most of their God-given potential." The second was "Jerusalem is and will remain the capital of Israel. The parties have agreed that Jerusalem is a matter for final status negotiations. It should remain an undivided city accessible to people of all faiths."

Party brass apparently expected perfunctory approval for these insertions. I find it astonishing that the convention parliamentarian had not required them to be separated into distinct votes. National Convention Chairman Antonio Villaraigosa, the mayor of Los Angeles, called for the vote, which required a two-thirds majority to pass.

The video of this tableau is posted to YouTube, so you can still view it. The "No" votes were louder than the "Ayes," clearly discomfiting Villaraigosa. Reading his script from the teleprompter, he started to move forward with the proceedings, but then decided to retake the vote. This time the "Aye" vote was louder than before, but again it did not match the "No" votes. Signaling clearly that the vote was unacceptable, Villaraigosa tried a third time. The "Aye" vote was even louder than before, but again the "No" vote was louder and more enthusiastic.



George Kane

News and Notes continued on page 13.

Vote No... Twice

by Eric Jayne

Editorial. The opinions expressed herein are solely those of Eric Jayne and are not necessarily those of Minnesota Atheists. Disagreeing readers are welcome to submit replies.

Voters will be going to their polling place in a few short weeks. Besides voting for state legislators, U.S. legislators, and president, Minnesotans will also be voting on two constitutional amendments. One of the amendments is unfairly restrictive and based on mythical beliefs that breeds—and stems from—irrational fear. The other amendment would constitutionally ban same sex marriage.

Of course, the anti-marriage amendment is horribly restrictive and has its own myth-based, fear-mongered roots but the atheist case against it appears more obvious. That's why I want to take a moment to discuss the proposed voter restriction amendment from the critically thinking atheist perspective. My feeling is that the voter restriction amendment conflicts with the skeptical point of view and humanistic values.

Before I make my case, allow me to first explain that as with the anti-marriage amendment, the voter restriction amendment is officially a non-partisan issue. Even though tax-exempt 501 (c)3 non-profits can legally take positions on voter restriction, Minnesota Atheists has not. They have, however, taken a position that opposes the anti-marriage amendment and it's celebrated on this year's popular t-shirt design that proclaims "Minnesota Atheists supports Marriage Equality".

The other thing I want to make clear is that I am speaking only for myself and my views do not necessarily reflect an official position of the Minnesota Atheists. Now, let's get on with it...

The three biggest issues with the voter restriction amendment are:

- 1) It's spending a lot of money to solve an insignificant problem.
- 2) The language of the proposed amendment is vague and unclear.
- 3) It could likely disenfranchise tens of thousands of voters.

Beginning with the first issue, you might remember the 2008 senatorial and 2010 gubernatorial statewide elections. Both of these elections led to exhaustive, litigious recounts where thousands of ballots and voter rolls were scrutinized. One of the

recurring claims made by voter ID proponents is that thousands of felons voted illegally and Minnesota leads the nation in voter fraud. As skeptics, we should be asking, what and where is the good evidence for this?

There is evidence, but it's bad and poorly extrapolated. It's based on matching the names of felons on one list to the names on the voter rolls. So if the name "John Smith" appears on the felon list and the name "John Smith" appears on the voter rolls: Voila! That's a *possible* felon who voted. Not only was it uncertain that the correct John Smiths were being matched, but it was also unknown which felons had reduced probations that would have restored their voting rights.

If we parse through the slop of bad information and pull out the facts, we will understand that 156 convicted felons (not thousands) have been prosecuted since 2008 for illegally registering to vote. Before we start mandating voter restriction laws that would prevent tens of thousands of residents from voting, it would do us good to understand that there were about 5 million votes cast since 2008. That means that the number of felons voting illegally is about 0.003 percent—or 3 out of every 100,000.

According to a recent billboard near Albertville that depicted a large foam hand with an extended index finger, the state of Minnesota is "#1 in Voter Fraud." How did the voter ID supporters come up with that claim? They used the results from the aforementioned recount investigations. One rather significant detail that doesn't get mentioned is that there is no other study or investigation from any other state to compare findings with because no other state has had two recent statewide recounts. This is like me



Vote No continued on page 7.

Vote No... Twice (continued)

saying that I'm number one in chess because I routinely beat my 9-year-old son at the game. I haven't compared and tested my skills against anyone else but I remain undefeated. The burden is bogusly placed on others to prove the claim wrong. Without having a similar study to compare with, the billboard may as well have said, "Minnesota is #1 in Coldest Snow." The reasons for the voter restriction amendment are based on a myth; or at the very least they're based on overstated, unproven hyperbole. It's important to note that the voter restriction amendment would do nothing to stop ineligible felons from voting and, furthermore, there hasn't been a single prosecution of voter impersonation in Minnesota.

In regards to the language of the proposed amendment, it's incredibly vague and short on specifics. For example, voters are asked to approve a requirement mandating that voters present a valid, government issued ID. This appears to mean that students attending private colleges wouldn't be able to use their school IDs as they can now; and, if you recently moved, your picture ID could be invalid if it hasn't been updated with your current address. Many of our elderly neighbors living in nursing homes

would need to take on the burdensome and expensive task of tracking down their birth certificates and other documents in order to get an updated, valid government-issued picture ID. Furthermore, the language doesn't specify what, exactly, will be determined as "valid" and there's no mention of how it will affect absentee voting. Policy makers tell us to trust them to flesh out the details next year—AFTER the election. It seems unreasonable to my skeptical senses to ask voters to tweak the state constitution without knowing these important details first.

One of the greatest features of the Minnesota Atheists is that it is a very open and transparent group that encourages all of our members to vote, share ideas, and serve on the board or at some other leadership capacity. We encourage active citizenship and celebrate diversity in and out of our organization. As with the Minnesota Atheists organization, our nation's governance works best when participation is not subjected to unnecessary, repressive restrictions due to superstitious and paranoid beliefs.

For these reasons I will vote NO on both restrictive amendments in November.

Pridefest in St. Cloud

Brooke Ernst, pictured at right, and other members of Central Minnesota Freethinkers helped staff a joint Minnesota Atheists / Central Minnesota Freethinkers booth at the St. Cloud Pridefest on Saturday, September twenty-second.



Highway Cleanup and Lunch

by Steve Petersen

Many thanks to those who helped out with our recent highway clean-up in Rice. In the photo from left to right are: Steve Petersen, Richard Trombley, Tom Stavros, Morg Christian, Deb Doucette, Rachel Wilson, August Berkshire, Decker Alsop, Breonna, Rob Taylor, Sarah, and Scott Forschler. Photo at right by Clint Buhs, all others courtesy of Richard Trombley..



Atheists Cook Dinner for Homeless Families in St. Paul

by Eric Jayne

Homelessness is a tragic reality. It exists in Minneapolis, St. Paul, Bloomington, and just about every city, suburb, and community throughout Minnesota. With rising rent, low apartment vacancy rates, foreclosures, and scarce housing resources, low-income families have faced extraordinary devastation. Perhaps even more devastating is that children and youth account for nearly half of all the homeless people in Minnesota. The average age of that half is 6 years old (Wilder Research – April 2010).

In Ramsey County, the first point of contact for all homeless families is the Family Place which is a secular nonprofit in downtown St. Paul. They provide youth enrichment, employment counseling, housing advocacy, and they directly arrange shelter for homeless families.

On Saturday, September 15th fourteen atheists gathered at the Family Place to cook and serve dinner to about 40 guests, half of which were children. Minnesota Atheists member Jill Carlson was our kitchen leader and developed the menu that featured chili, garden salad, corn bread, fresh fruit salad, chocolate chip cookies, milk, and lemonade. A couple members brought fresh veggies from their own personal gardens to contribute to the salad.

After a couple of hours in the kitchen the 14 of us brought the food out to the dining area. We then had the unique experience of sitting with the families and dining with them family style. After dinner we cleaned up the dining area and kitchen. Then about half of our group followed up with a couple of tasty cocktails at the Bulldog Restaurant a couple blocks away in Lowertown St. Paul.

If you are interested, we will be doing another cooking and dining at the Family Place on November 24 which is the Saturday after Thanksgiving. Space is limited to 14 people so be sure to check out our Meetup site to RSVP.



Marriage Amendment

The following letter to the editor was published in *The [New Ulm] Journal*, Sept. 11, 2012, by Minnesota Atheists' member Vanita Mishra.

Homosexuality is an enduring pattern or disposition of attraction to the same sex, and falls entirely within the normal spectrum of human sexuality. It would be akin to the color of one's eyes or skin, and just as impossible to change. And: A marriage is, and has always been, a legal/contractual agreement. Anyone who has decided to vote "Yes" on the marriage amendment should consider the following:

1. The current existing Minnesota Statute still holds that marriage is between one man and one woman. A "Yes" vote does not change that, and is therefore not necessary.

2. Since a marriage is a legal contract, it has no place on a ballot. This legal contract automatically gives a couple several important rights, involving ownership of property, inheritance, adoption, and the right to be legal next of kin in medical decision making.

3. Objection to same-sex is almost always based on ignorance, and religious bigotry. Many fallacious "arguments" are put forth, such as:

"A marriage is meant to produce children, and this is not possible in a same sex union." If this were the case, the marriage of a heterosexual couple that chose not to or cannot have children should not be recognized. A man and a woman who want to marry should be forced to have tests to prove they are fertile before a marriage license is issued, and a death row inmate who has no chance of consummating his or her marriage should not be allowed to marry.

"Once we allow gay marriage, we will be on the slippery slope to polygamy/people wanting to marry their pets, etc." The issue at hand is, and has always been, the union of two consenting adults who love each other and want equal legal rights. Rational people can agree that one's parakeet or Fido would not qualify.

"Families/the children will suffer." There is absolutely no evidence that children raised by a same-sex couple fare worse than those raised by a heterosexual couple. There is no evidence that heterosexuals are leaving their marriages

in droves and entering same-sex marriages in states where same-sex marriages have been legalized.

4. Discrimination against gays, lesbians, and bisexuals, which includes attempts to deny them their same legal rights as other citizens, is anti-humanity and anti-family, and un-American. It puts tremendous amounts of totally unnecessary stress on these individuals, and increases the risk of mental health problems, and even suicide attempts. It tears families apart.

While the exact percentage is not known, it is possible that anywhere from 2 to 10 percent of the US population falls in the LGBT category. And that is quite a few people right here in New Ulm.

It is easy to sustain anti-gay bigotry by painting a parody of a "gay lifestyle". The reality is that gays, lesbians and bisexuals are people you meet and interact with every day. They are your coworkers, your local business owners and your health-care providers. They may be your siblings, children, grandchildren, or future generations. They may be that tormented child who is already being bullied in school about his or her sexuality, and who is now wondering why those nice neighbors who hand out candy every Halloween have that "Yes" sign on their lawn. Discrimination against gays, lesbians, and bisexuals produces real suffering.

5. Besmirching gays, lesbians and bisexuals as "sinners" and pedophiles is false and ridiculous. There is really no good secular and fair argument against same-sex marriage.

6. People who oppose same-sex marriage also need to be aware that one of the most prominent supporters of this issue is the US Military.

Nowhere in Ms. Ringhofer's letter did I read that she was questioning the right of anyone to post a "Yes" lawn sign, or even to vote "Yes" on the Marriage Amendment. She was simply pointing out the bigoted and painful nature of the message. And she is right.

-Vanita Mishra, New Ulm

See: [\[http://www.nujournal.com/page/content_detail/id/531131/Marriage-Amendment.html\]](http://www.nujournal.com/page/content_detail/id/531131/Marriage-Amendment.html) for original letter.

Atheists Talk: September Radio Report

Atheists Talk is produced by Minnesota Atheists and directed by Carl Hancock. Stephanie and Brianne upload the podcasts to the web site. The radio program is live every Sunday morning from 9:00 to 10:00 at KTNF studios in Eden Prairie, MN. Live streaming can be done through our web page www.mnatheists.org. Original music was composed, played, and recorded by Brent Michael Davids. The six month cost is \$5,320.00. Each donation to support the program is greatly appreciated. To donate just send in a donation to our POB or online at <http://minnesotaatheists.org/join-and-donate/radio-fund>

All past programs can be accessed via MNA web page <http://minnesotaatheists.org/news-and-media/podcast>. If you are interested in helping on the radio program please send a note to radio@mnatheists.org

Atheists Talk #183, Sunday, September 2nd. Interviewer Carl Hancock, host Brianne Bilyue.

Former pastor Teresa MacBain doesn't appear to have ever done anything the easy way. When she felt called to preach, she had to leave her preacher father's conservative denomination, which would not allow a woman to preach. She became a pastor in a denomination that welcomed women in the priesthood but did not actually support them.

Then MacBain began to have doubts. She discussed her journey from preacher to atheist in today's program.

Atheists Talk #184, Sunday, September 9th. Interviewer Scott Lohman, host Stephanie Zvan.

These days, Herb Silverman is largely known as the president and founder of the Secular Coalition of

by Steve Petersen

America. Before he reached that point, however, he already had a storied past. In Silverman's recent book, *Candidate Without a Prayer: An Autobiography of a Jewish Atheist*, he shares his story and today he appeared on our show to talk about his book.

Atheists Talk #185, Sunday, September 16th. Interviewer Carl Hancock, host Brianne Bilyue.

Can we prove that no god exists? According to one school of thought, the answer is "no" because we can't absolutely prove a negative. Philosopher Matthew McCormick, however, considers this standard to be unrealistic. It isn't the standard we apply for any other question that influences how we live our lives. Why should we treat it as the standard for accepting atheism?

In his soon-to-be-released book, McCormick lays out the case for atheism along multiple lines of argument.

Atheists Talk #186, Sunday, September 23, Interviewer David Pacheco, host Stephanie Zvan.

When journalist and teacher Guy P. Harrison writes about irrational certainties, he tries to do so in a way that respects the believer but challenges the belief. When he takes away a comforting or fascinating idea, he tries to leave some of the wonder of science in its place. He brought both these approaches to bear in his most recent book, *50 Popular Beliefs That People Think Are True*.



Pridefest in Mankato

Jeremy Jackson, a member of Campus Atheists and Agnostics (CAA) at Minnesota State University in Mankato, helped August Berkshire staff a Minnesota Atheists booth at the South Central Minnesota Pridefest in Mankato on September 8th.



Minnesota Atheists Light the Night for Cancer Research

The Minnesota Atheists raised \$700 for blood cancer research and participated in the Leukemia & Lymphoma Light the Night Walk on Sunday, September 23rd.

Special thanks to Bill Lehto, Caroline Brunner, Phil Cunliffe, Chris Pederson, Norman Barrett Wiik, and Eric Jayne who raised the money and participated in the walk festivities.

As part of the Foundation Beyond Belief team consisting of about 100 other partner organizations, we contributed to the \$155,000 total that Foundation Beyond Belief collected for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society.



Above: Rod Carew speaks on behalf of Light the Night.



September Treasury Report

Compiled by Chris Matthews

Radio Fund	
Susan Christiansen	\$25
Total Radio Fund	\$25
General/Visibility Fund	
Kristin Meyer	\$40
Meghan Kosowski	\$10
Total General/Visibility Fund	\$50
"River of Reason" limited edition print fundraiser	
anonymous	\$300
Total print fund	\$300
Total Income:	\$375
Current Building Fund Total	\$130,489
Radio Show Fundraising Goal	\$8,215
(for 2012)	
Amount Raised thru Sept 15:	\$4,976
(61%)	
Amount Remaining to Reach Goal:	\$3,239
(71%)	
Top Expenses for July/August	
Radio Show	\$1,025
Newsletter Printing	\$612
Storage	\$152



News and Notes (continued)

Realizing that the convention was not going to follow his script, Villaraigosa overruled the delegates, announcing that “In the opinion of the chair, two-thirds have voted, the motion is adopted and the platform has been amended as shown on the screen.”

The dissent may have been primarily from supporters of Palestine, who opposed recognizing Jerusalem as part of Israel. Since the vote on the two insertions was combined, we cannot know for sure. The Democratic Party

depends on the support of Jews much more than the support of Palestinians, however, so this seems unlikely. I think that it is quite likely that the true reason for the revolt was a matter of pride. The delegates were upset with the party leaders for jumping in response to every tortured grievance from the religious right. The amendments amounted to an apology that surely rankled them.

September Atheists Talk Television Show Report

by Steve Petersen

The September cable taping featured local musician Jason Tuthill discussing his intense religious upbringing. Jason talked about his doubts about the his church's teachings, particularly regarding dinosaurs and a supposedly loving god. Jason said he was upset that the god of the bible



purportedly used the man Job - by killing his children and making him sick - just to prove a point. In shedding his religion, Jason's relationship with his family has strained, but he has channeled his experiences into a music career. Jason discussed his recordings and local shows, and performed his song "Why Do You Play God?" live in studio. His music will be available soon at viarockviaroll.com. James Zimmerman hosted.

If you have an interest in being on a program or would like to sponsor the program on your local cable access station please contact Steve Petersen at 651-484-9277 or spetersen175@comcast.net.

All episodes can be viewed on the following cable stations, via iTunes, or YouTube, thanks to Grant Hermanson.

Cable Crew: George Kane, Brett Stembridge, Shirley Moll, Steve Petersen, Wendy Steinberg, and Grant Hermanson.

Podcasts: MinnesotaAtheists.org. Available via iTunes. Made possible by Grant Hermanson.

Television Schedule:

Burnsville/Eagan Community Television: Channel 14. Check their web site www.bect.tv for day and times. Sponsor: Kevin Hardisty.

Bloomington: Channel 16. Sunday 11:00 pm. Sponsors: David and Joanne Beardsley.

Minneapolis: Channel 17. Saturday 8:30 pm. Sponsor: Steve Petersen.

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Roseville, Shoreview, Arden Hills, North Oaks, Little Canada, Falcon Heights, Lauderdale, Moundsview/New Brighton: Channel 14. Wednesday 10:30 pm. Sponsor: Shirley Moll.

St. Cloud: Channel 12. Thursday 8:30 to 9:00 pm. Sponsor Tom Stavros.

St. Paul: Channel 15. Wednesday 5:00 pm. Sponsor: Jim Wright.

Stillwater: Channel 16. Tuesday 7:00 p.m. and Wednesday 9:00 a.m. Sponsor: Lee Salisbury.

White Bear Lake, Hugo, Lake Elmo, Mahtomedi, Maplewood, North St. Paul,

Oakdale, Vadnais Heights: Channel 15. Saturday 7:30 p.m. Sponsor: Michael Seliga.



CRYPTOGRAM ANSWER

In matters of faith, inconvenient evidence is always suppressed while contradictions go unnoticed. -Gore Vidal



www.mnatheists.org

P.O. Box 120304, New Brighton, MN 55112

CHECK THE WAYS YOU WANT TO HELP ATHEISM GROW

Minnesota Atheists has IRS 501(c)(3) status. All contributions are tax-deductible.

JOIN OR RENEW MEMBERSHIP

_____ \$35 - Individual Membership
 _____ \$90 - 3 years for Individual

_____ \$45 - Household Membership
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_____ \$10 - Student (newsletter by email; send copy of fee statement or school ID

_____ \$600 - Life Membership

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Other than students, please let us know if you wish to receive your newsletter by e-mail or regular mail. If you prefer e-mail, please add your e-mail address. _____

Check (enclosed) for \$ _____, payable to **Minnesota Atheists**.

Name: _____ Phone: _____

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Things to Do, Places to Go: A Calendar for Atheists

In addition to these regularly scheduled events, there are many more events every month. Please subscribe to Atheist Weekly e-mail on our web site, mnatheists.org, and join our Meetup group.

Sundays, 9:00am-10:00am *Atheists Talk* Radio. AM 950 KTNF in the Twin Cities or stream live at <http://www.am950ktnf.com>. Contact us during the show with questions or comments at (952) 946-6205 or radio@mnatheists.org.

Sundays, 6:00pm-7:00pm Atheist/Agnostic Alcoholics Anonymous. Men's Center, 3249 Hennepin Avenue South Suite # 55, Minneapolis Meet in the basement. Open to all genders.

2nd Sundays, 1:00pm Minnesota Atheists Little Canada Book Club, Caribou Coffee 3354 Rice St, Little Canada, MN 55126

3rd Sundays, September through May, 1:00pm-4:00pm. Minnesota Atheists Public Meeting. Various libraries. Business meeting, educational program and dinner afterwards at a nearby restaurant.

5th Sundays, 5:00pm (July, September, December). Flying Spaghetti Monster Dinner. Old Spaghetti Factory, 233 Park Ave., Minneapolis. Get together for drinks and pasta.

1st & 3rd Mondays 6:00pm Freethought Toastmasters. Larpenteur Estates Party Room, 1276 Larpenteur Ave. W, St. Paul 55113. George Kane, dir2@mnatheists.org.

2nd and 4th Mondays, 5:00pm-7:00pm Freethought Dinner Social. Davanni's, 8605 Lyndale Avenue South, Bloomington, MN. For more information call Bob or Marilyn Neinkerk at 612-866-6200.

1st Tuesdays, 11:30am-1:00pm Freethought Lunch. Old Country Buffet, County Road B2 between Fairview and Snelling. Bob or Marilyn Nienkirk at 612-866-6200.

4th Tuesdays, 7:00pm Maple Grove Book Club. Byerly's Meeting Room - 12880 Elm Creek Blvd N Maple Grove, MN 55369

Every other Tuesday, 7:00pm Secular Bible Study. Various locations. See the Meetup page <http://www.meetup.com/Secular-Bible-Study/>.

1st Wednesdays, 7:00pm Minnesota Atheists Burnsville Book Club. Davanni's, 14639 County Road 11, Burnsville MN 55337. Meet in the Party Room.

3rd Wednesdays, 11:30am-2pm Lunch at Dragon House Restaurant. Dragon House Restaurant 3970 Central Avenue Columbia Heights. Private room reserved. Bill Volna 612-781-1420

3rd Wednesdays, 6:30pm Minnesota Atheists Monthly Board Meeting. Party Room, 1276 Larpenteur Avenue, St. Paul, 55113. Open to all members. George Kane, dir2@mnatheists.org.

1st Thursdays, 6:00pm-9:00pm *Atheists Talk* television show. MTN Studio A, 125 SE Main Street, Minneapolis. Steve Petersen at 651-484-9277.

To sign up for the Atheists' Weekly Email (AWE), send a request to awe@mnatheists.org.

To sign up for Minnesota Atheists Meetups, visit atheists.meetup.com/493.



Solstice Celebration

This year is our joint Winter Solstice Celebration which will be on Sunday, December 16 from 5:00pm to 9:00pm, with the Humanists of Minnesota and Minnesota Atheists. We are moving the event to a new location, Jimmy's Event Center, 3565 Labore Road, Vadnais Heights, which is just off of 35E and County Road E. Our special guest will be Dan Barker, who will perform his Freethought music solo and with the Freethought Band for a night of a memorable musical entertainment. Keeping with our past tradition, we are planning on two Follies skits. For more information, please contact Steve Petersen at spetersen175@comcast.net.

“We don’t need fantasy to live lives of wonder. We need not seek refuge from uncertainty in the false embrace of a higher power. By questioning what we don’t understand, we give our lives a Higher Purpose.”

-Anthony Faust, from his essay “Higher Purpose versus Higher Power” which appears in *Atheist Voices of Minnesota*

**Check us out on the radio!
AM 950 KTFN**