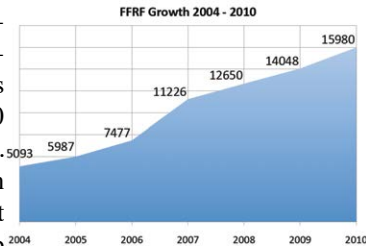


Freedom From Religion Foundation

2010: Exciting Year in Review

FFRF Tops 16,600 Supporters

FFRF has reached 15,976 members, as of November 2010, adding nearly 1,900 new members this year, with an additional 600 subscribers to Freethought Today. For many years, FFRF has been the largest explicitly freethought (atheist, agnostic) membership organization in the nation. The membership growth chart shows the rapid growth of members since 2004. The most consistent source of new members is *you* (referring others to FFRF). This year, the single largest source of new members was FFRF's stunning federal court victory in April finding the National Day of Prayer unconstitutional.



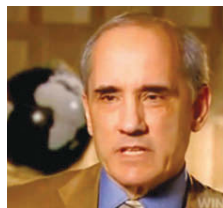
Membership survey. More than 4,000 of you responded to a late spring membership survey. The results show the typical FFRF'er is male (70%), highly educated, married, and likely first-generation freethinker. The average age is 59 and 43% are retired. A third of you are "wary of letting others know I reject religion," and a quarter say "I often feel like the only 'infidel' in my area." About a fifth reported experiencing some "social stigmatism as a nonbeliever."



On the other hand, about half "speak out freely about my lack of belief," nearly half have a spouse or companion who shares your views, and a third have children who also are nonbelievers. Fully 88% of you choose "atheist" as the appellation of choice, and 11.8% choose "agnostic." A third of you are volunteers, 9% checked LGBT, 11% checked vegetarian and 24% are military vets. More than 90% did not respond to the question about political leaning, underscoring your agreement that FFRF remain above the political fray. A majority (56%) of respondents were raised with religion (or with a part-religious home — 25.5 %) and had intellectual reasons for rejecting it. Of those: 42% were Protestant, 30% were Catholic and 27% Jewish.

FFRF Grabs Lots of Media Coverage in 2010

FFRF makes news! More than 600 bonafide news stories covering FFRF and its actions ran in daily newspapers and over TV stations so far from January – November 2010, including lots of national TV coverage of FFRF's National Day of Prayer court victory. FFRF is also all over the blogosphere, but this impressive news count (averaging more than 1 news article a day) doesn't include blogs, except for major news, such as Huffington Report or the Washington Post. An interview with Dan in studio with nation-



al Fox News in Los Angeles, which ran on Mother's Day, has had 97,000 viewers on YouTube! Annie Laurie Gaylor did many TV and other National Day of Prayer interviews as well. A cover story in Isthmus, (Madison, Wis.), a weekly, at the end of last year ("Happily God-free: Dan Barker and Annie Laurie Gaylor find fulfillment taking on religion") shows that a nonprophet nonprofit can find recognition in its own land! FFRF's letters of complaint over local state/church violations by the hardworking legal staff spurred widespread local coverage, as did FFRF's billboard and bus sign campaigns. FFRF archives media coverage at: <http://ffrf.org/news/media/>

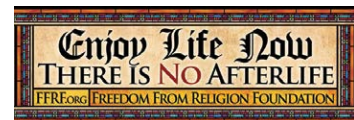
Media highlights. A truly respectful interview of Dan Barker and freethought views by 60 Minutes Australia, over the sainthood of Mary MacKillop, aired this fall, to contrast with The Daily Show's "fake interview" over FFRF's complaint of a postage stamp for a religious figure, Mother Teresa. Watch TV spots and coverage at our Video link: <http://ffrf.org/news/video/>.



Members interested in updates in between issues of Freethought Today are encouraged to sign up for FFRF's e-news, which includes a daily "FFRF in the News" e-mail, a teaser on headline news, and FFRF's news releases and action alerts. Sign up: <http://ffrf.org/signup/news/>. FFRF's substantial website covers many activities that we do not have space to include in Freethought Today. So check out what you are missing and get involved! Members are encouraged to use the FFRF Forum to meet others, exchange views and share strategies.

Educational Advertising – Taking Freethought Out of the Closet

FFRF literally placed over a hundred eye-catching, educational billboards in 2010, doing a "mini-blink" in the Southeast with 50 varied billboards in Atlanta, 20 in Tampa and Louisville, 5 in New Orleans, then 19 in Trenton, N.J., and 10 in Flint, Mich. The media went crazy in Atlanta and Tampa over our signs! Chicago and national media covered FFRF's placement of 75 "Sleep in on Sunday" exterior "king" ads (and 200 provocative interior quotes, including Butterfly McQueen's statement, "As my ancestors are free from slavery, I am free from the slavery of religion"). An octogenarian farmer paid to erect his own favorite message, "There Is No Afterlife — Enjoy Life Now," as a gift to his grandchildren, which, after being defaced, was returned for its full 6-week run in rural Wisconsin. A popular "secular founding fathers" theme debuted on buses in Madison, Wis., to celebrate FFRF's National Day of Prayer victory. FFRF unveiled an effective new ad,



“In Reason We Trust” depicted on a shiny penny, to add to its other messages.

FFRF launched the prototype of its “Out of the Closet” campaign in Madison, Wis., this fall, timed to coincide with the annual convention, using the faces of real FFRF members explaining in their own words their viewpoint. This campaign is perfect for rotating digital displays. We also utilized bus kings and plan to air TV commercials. All of FFRF’s advertising is aimed at provoking thought, educating, and affirming freethought. The “Out of the Closet” campaign goes one step further, by personalizing and desigmatizing. This unique campaign has great promise.



Student Scholarships



Brian

Three scholarship competitions. FFRF added a third student essay competition to its two ongoing scholarship programs, thanks to longtime member Prof. Brian Bolton, who is underwriting, with membership help, an essay competition geared to graduate students and students 25 and older. FFRF awarded \$5,000 to graduate/mature students (receiving many exceptional entries) in 2010 in that debut. Thanks to the generosity of Herbert “Harry” Bushong, FFRF gave \$5,000 to high school seniors college-bound this fall. And \$5,850 was awarded via the Michael Hakeem Memorial to currently-enrolled college students. Additional contributions from two sets of kind donors upped the level of support for honorable mention students once again this year.



Harry



Mike

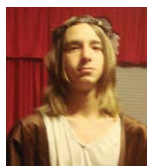
The competitions, in this economy, are obviously meaningful, particularly when blind faith is amply rewarded, with umpteen scholarship programs for religious students. But the importance of FFRF’s scholarship programs was brought home to us this fall when a successful opera singer dropped by our Madison offices, to tell us how much the competition meant to her as a college student in 1998 struggling out of Pentecostalism: “It was so freeing just to write the essay.” Winning a prize was the icing on the cake, and something she never forgot, Melody Moore told us. (Listen to her interview on the Nov. 6 Freethought Radio show, <http://ffrf.org/news/radio/shows/>.)



Eric

Two activist scholarships. The Thomas Jefferson Youth Activist Award, endowed by a kind West Coast couple for \$1,000 a year, went to Eric Workman, an Indiana high school senior who sued and stopped commencement prayers at his high school. His award convention speech is reprinted in the November Freethought Today. Winning the Catherine Fahringer

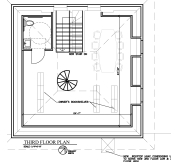
Memorial Student Activist Award of \$1,000 is Sawyer Frey, an Ohio high school junior who made waves and was disciplined when he decided, for Fictional Character Day, to dress up like Jesus! Both young men were interviewed this fall on Freethought Radio. Sawyer’s account runs in the December issue.



Sawyer

Office Updates

New landscaping. At Madison Police Department’s urging, FFRF removed old landscaping dating to the 1970s, obscuring the front entrance. Now Freethought Hall boasts seasonal “Knock-Out” roses, a Japanese maple, a blue spruce “bush” and two dwarf apple trees, among other pleasing plants, for a very pretty new look that is also much safer.



Raising the roof – Freethought Hall to add 3rd floor! The big news is the City’s approval in late November of plans to turn the attic into 900 square feet of usable space, to give FFRF more much-needed office space and room to expand. The 2nd floor library limiting office use of that space will move to the new floor, which will contain plenty of office space, another much-needed toilet and sink, and a spiffy and useable cupola! The bidding process is on, and it is expected that construction, with membership help, will begin the first week in January. Since we have outgrown current space and winter is the best time for this construction, we’re in a hurry to make this major improvement.



Photo: Timothy Hughes



Office staff. FFRF added two new permanent staff members in mid-2010: Patrick Elliott, a 2009 University of Wisconsin law school grad as junior staff attorney assisting lead staff attorney Rebecca Markert in nonlitigation work, and Melanie Knier, a new college grad doing office work. FFRF now totals 10 fulltime permanent staff. FFRF also employs part-time students as needed.

Interns. We enjoyed working with four legal interns this year, plus a library intern. FFRF welcomed back Stephanie Schmitt, our 2009 summer legal clerk, who has just passed the bar, who is working part-time. Last year’s wonderful law clerk, working through spring 2010, was Megan Roughen. Sam Grover, of Boston University, located his own resources to clerk for FFRF this summer, and his productivity will go down in office legends! This semester we have enjoyed working with two bright UW Law School students, Jayme Lawson Durkee and Jane Kleven.



Sam



Stephanie

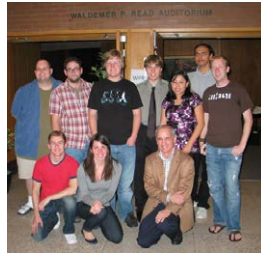
Photo: Brent Nicastro

Volunteers. Regular volunteers include Phyllis Rose, an FFRF officer and retired librarian assistant who has worked three afternoons a week since 2000! Wendy Goldberg, a retired attorney, works Tuesdays, then then takes home legal archives to organize! Kendra Haight, a nursing student, drops in once a week between her many classes to lend a clerical hand. Our newest volunteer is Merilee Harrison, working one afternoon a week.

Major Outreach to Campuses & Others

Foundation Co-President Dan Barker, who serves as director of

public relations, is in demand and had 37 speaking engagements from December 2009 through November 2010. This included 24 college campuses (mostly affiliated with the Secular Student Alliance) in 12 states and two other countries, plus 6 debates. All told, he spoke to an estimated 8,000+ people. He also spoke to student groups in Australia (including a debate with Cardinal George Pell in Sydney and 4 student groups), Denmark, Canada and Mexico. Among his debaters: Dinesh D'Souza and Mat Staver, Dean of Liberty University. Annie Laurie made several appearances, and received a Humanist Heroine Award at the national conference of the American Humanist Association. Dan and Annie Laurie both enjoyed meeting with De Paul Alliance for Free Thought ("D.A.F.T" for a joke) in Chicago, the first-ever nontheist club at DePaul University, the nation's largest Roman Catholic University! Now that shows freethought making inroads.



FFRF Litigation

Photo: Timothy Hughes



National Day of Prayer Win. FFRF is still savoring its historic court victory of April 15, when U.S. District Judge Barbara G. Crabb ruled in FFRF's favor that the National Day of Prayer is unconstitutional. It is not every day that the President is enjoined by a court from doing something! Besides processing 1,000 new members who contacted FFRF after the significant win, FFRF went into high action. FFRF contacted all the governors and more than 1,000 mayors, asking them to refrain from issuing a National Day of Prayer proclamation, or participating, in their official capacity, in prayer and religious events. In time for the National Day of Prayer (the first Thursday in May), we placed a prominent red-white-and-blue billboard in Colorado Springs, Colo., saying "God & Government a Dangerous Mix: Keep Religion Out of Government." Colorado Springs is home to the National Day of Prayer Task Force, operated under the wing of Focus on the Family. This made a buzz. FFRF designed and placed a new "founding fathers" bus sign campaign showing America's secular nation roots. And we ran a full-page ad in the New York Times on the National Day of Prayer, applauding Judge Crabb, signed by generous member donors and notables such as Ursula K. Le Guin and Ron Reagan.

Judge Crabb ruled: "The same law that prohibits the government from declaring a National Day of Prayer also prohibits it from declaring a National Day of Blasphemy." She wrote: "In this instance, the government has taken sides on a matter that must be left to individual conscience. When the government associates one set of religious beliefs with the state and identifies nonadherents as outsiders, it encroaches upon the individual's decision about whether and how to worship." If you have not had a chance to read her beautiful ruling, you can find it here: <http://ffrf.org/uploads/legal/Summary-JudgementNDP.PDF>

It was disappointing that the Obama Administration waited only two days to announce its intent to appeal. Oral arguments before the 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals were held in Chicago on Dec. 2 and a decision is expected by next summer. Even before the federal victory, FFRF's challenge had made the government more care-

ful in its partnership with the religious evangelical groups, which created the law and use it for their own proselytizing purposes. Even the National Day of Prayer Task Force has backed off a bit. That case was one of attorney Rich Bolton's many wins for FFRF.



Other Litigation: FFRF has just appealed a ruling against its state challenge of the National Day of Prayer proclamation by the governor of Colorado. It will be appealing or taking into state court the 1st Circuit Court of Appeal's November ruling against its challenge on behalf of a New Hampshire FFRF family of "under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance. Thanks to Mike Newdow for pro bono attorney representation on that case. Pro bono attorney George Daly is just "putting to bed" a federal lawsuit challenging the granting of academic credit for release-time religious instruction in public schools in Spartanburg, S.C.

Watch for news next year on FFRF's "sleeper" challenge, taken by Rich Bolton, of the parish exemption — whereby clergy, who are often paid partly or fully by "housing allowances," are permitted to deduct that from taxable income. The case will move to center stage in Sacramento federal court. The challenge is bound for the 9th Circuit, which has previously indicated its view that the 1952 law, passed to reward clergy for fighting a "godless and antireligious world movement," is constitutionally suspect.

FFRF's Other Legal Work

Photo: Brent Nicastro



Nearly 300 state/church complaints sent out this year! FFRF's staff attorneys and interns, from November 2009 through October 2010, sent a whopping 291 formal letters of complaint over state/church violations! This does not include research and innumerable personal responses to complainants. A majority (130) of letters concerned violations in schools. Other common violations: prayers at government meetings and the National Day of Prayer proclamations. FFRF's lead staff attorney Rebecca Markert, joined by Patrick Elliott in July, confronted religion in public libraries, in the military, in parks, post offices, oaths, prisons, elections, public housing and even at public highway rest stops!

Photo: Brent Nicastro



Clay Bennett. All rights reserved.



Many victories were achieved without having to go to court. Although FFRF was prepared to sue, the Lake Local School district, Ohio, removed "Belief in God" from the public school district's mission statement. Rebecca's complaint also removed

the phrase "faith in God as a cornerstone of our community" from a school district statement in Mississippi. After years of previous FFRF complaints, Patrick got a school in Garfield Heights, Ohio, to cancel a "field trip" to a church. FFRF sent a letter that discouraged Madison County, Fla., from installing a Ten Commandments monument. FFRF got the Missoula County Fair, Mont., to drop free admission for church service attendees. The church even moved worship services where they belong, to private property. The State of Tennessee seemingly did nothing in October but discuss Rebecca's successful letter of complaint getting Soddy Daisy High School near

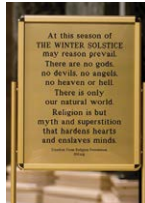
Chattanooga to drop prayer over loudspeakers. FFRF is pursuing other Tennessee violations. Patrick's correspondence with a public school in Janesville, Wis., got Alcoholics Anonymous dropped from the curriculum of a public charter school. Zaxby's Restaurants, a chain with more than 450 locations, ended advertising of a church bulletin discount on its website. The Chesterfield Juvenile Detention, Va., instituted a new policy that ensured participation in Christian worship services is completely voluntary. These are just a few of FFRF's victories.

Government shouldn't have a prayer. Prayer by government bodies is one of your least favorite violations. FFRF, at membership complaint, has contacted more than 60 local government bodies objecting to prayer in the past two years. Two government bodies have either dropped or not instituted prayer, and many have at least backed away from 100% sectarian (prayers to Jesus) rituals. Other city governments are still laboriously debating FFRF's request that they drop prayer, or at minimum, conform to Supreme Court guidelines. (See map) A round of applause to FFRF's legal staff and interns for dedicated persistence!



Harvard Law School project. A student organization, the Harvard Society for the Separation of Church and State, has spent the semester researching state constitution religious clauses for FFRF, to be compiled in a new FFRF legal manual.

Amicus briefs. FFRF participated in three amicus briefs in 2010. After FFRF persuaded Macomb County, Mich., to remove a nativity display on a median right of way in Warren, the owner sued the county. FFRF, with the wonderful help of FFRF member Danielle Hessell's law firm, submitted an amicus brief in this case, which is still pending. FFRF also signed onto two briefs with the American Humanist Association and other signers. In one case, our party prevailed, with the Supreme Court ruling in favor of Hastings College of Law's nondiscrimination policy, which refused the Christian Legal Society as a student club because its statement of faith excludes atheists and gays. The other amicus is in the closely watched case over whether taxpayers have standing to sue over taxpayer-subsidized religious instruction in Arizona, and whether the tax credit violates the Establishment Clause.



In another action, an Illinois minor candidate who sued the State of Illinois for permitting FFRF to place its Winter Solstice message in the Capitol (in response to a huge nativity scene), lost his case. Isn't that nice? A

Freethought Radio Expands to over 40 Markets!

Freethought Radio, FFRF's weekly radio show, which began airing in 2006 in Madison, Wis., is adding 35 markets in December. Freethought Radio was part of Air America's weekend lineup for two and a half years, airing in about 25 markets, until the network folded. Since then it has been airing in Madison, Anchorage, Atlanta, Monterey and Grand Rapids, Mich. Addition-



ally, there are more than 10,000 regular podcast listeners. FFRF's goal for its radio program has always been to do more than "preach to the deconverted." Our goal has been to offer a counterbalance to the 24/7 preaching over the public airwaves, so that we are not just showcasing freethought talent to other freethinkers, but educating the public about nontheism, one of our two explicit purposes. Dan and Annie Laurie love the opportunity to offer timely commentary on developments, and to interview not only well-known newsmakers and freethought authors, but local activists who are making a difference in their own communities. Find out whether you can now tune in Freethought Radio in your community (or just listen to archives of past shows) at: <http://ffrf.org/news/radio/>

FFRF Adds 3 New Active Chapters

FFRF welcomes three new chapters: the **Sun Valley chapter of FFRF (Phoenix, Ariz.)**, the **Albuquerque FFRF Meet-Up** and the **Lake Superior Freethinkers (Duluth, Minn.)**. These join ongoing chapters in Alabama, Colorado Springs, Philadelphia, Raleigh, N.D., Spokane and Tulsa. The Alabama Freethought Association held its 21st annual July 4 weekend convention at FFRF's Lake Hypatia Freethought Hall (in the buckle of the bible belt). The Tulsa chapter offered a unique billboard campaign, suggested by Bill Dusenberry, calling attention to the fact that Oklahoma had the nation's first nontheistic member of Congress in the form of Senator Thomas Gore, the grandfather of Gore Vidal. The chapter and FFRF hosted a billboard saying: "Atheism is OK in Oklahoma: Saluting Gore – First Atheist Senator." The billboard stirred up lots and lots of news and TV coverage. One of the funnier remarks: A local woman's indignant comment was quoted over the air complaining to the effect: "Tulsa is supposed to be in the bible belt. How can this happen here?" The Duluth chapter also hosted a billboard, and Raleigh is hosting a large "Reason's Greetings" billboard in December. Albuquerque designed an ad to counter all those theocratic Hobby Lobby ads. View it at: <http://ffrf.org/news/timely-topics/founding-fathers-ad/>



Chapter contact info: <http://ffrf.org/about/ffrf-chapters/>

700 Attend Annual Convention

FFRF's 33rd annual national convention in Madison, Wis., over Halloween, was a memorable and exciting weekend. FFRF members came from more than 41 states and Canada, and two visitors flew from London just to attend the convention! Honorees included two former Muslims who received Emperor Has No Clothes Awards, brave Ayaan Hirsi Ali, atheist author of the bestseller *Infidel*, and Cenk Uygur, MSNBC's new talent who is an outspoken agnostic. Find out how to view Wisconsin Eye videotapes and FFRF's convention slideshow: <http://ffrf.org/outreach/convention/>. Speeches will be transcribed and audios placed online for all to enjoy.



Photo: Brent Nicastro

Mark calendar now! Next year's convention takes place the weekend of Oct. 7-9, 2011 at the Marriott Hartford Downtown, Hartford, Conn. Tours to Mark Twain's famed home and museum will be offered. See you there!