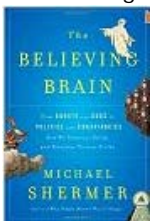




Freethought Oasis Newsletter August 2011

What's Happening at FTO

- The protest of "The Response" is coming this Saturday, August 6th, and at least one of our members will be attending. If you plan to go, please take lots of photos for the newsletter!
- **All Fixed!** Our website has now been successfully moved to its new server, Green Geeks, and our pages are loading quickly now. No more baking a cake while you wait on your page.
- **For voting members:** We're seeing the end of our first year as a dues collecting organization, and so have only recently set a policy for expiring memberships. With our new policy, we'll send you a reminder email two weeks before the expiration, and then a second email once your membership expires. You'll have a one month grace period in which you can still vote. If you're not a voting member and would like to become one, you can register through our website with Paypal or snail mail at <http://freethoughtoasis.org/membership-info>, or catch Tracy Black at one of the Sunday meetings.
- **Caprock High School** has been nominated as the next recipient of the FTO book donation project. We'll be contacting them this month and, if all goes well, will be donating in September. Our current list of books for the project is:
 - *The New Humanists: Science at the Edge* by John Brockman
 - *The God Delusion* by Richard Dawkins
 - *Freethinkers* by Susan Jacoby
 - *Letter to a Christian Nation* by Sam Harris
 - *Infidel* by Ayaan Hirsi Ali
 - *Why People Believe Weird Things* by Michael Shermer
 - *Demon Haunted World* by Carl Sagan
 - *Misquoting Jesus* by Bart Ehrman
 - *Jesus Interrupted* by Bart Ehrman
 - *Good Without God* by Greg Epstein
 - *The Evolution of God* by Robert Wright
- To nominate a library or book for the project, please contact Tracy Black at tracyb@freethoughtoasis.org.
- This summer has seen a huge increase in the number of people volunteering their time to help our organization, whether it be organizing events, designing logos, writing letters, or doing paper work. We'd like to give a heart-felt thank you to everyone involved. You guys know who you are!
- **Book Club:** August's book will be *The Believing Brain* by Michael Shermer



FTO Editorial

Are We There Yet?

How many times have you said that phrase or heard your kids say it over and over again? Most of us have had the experience of anxiously anticipating some future event. When will we get there? I expect a raise at my next evaluation; When will I find the perfect mate; Will the kids move out to attend college; I am passed 60 but still do childish things - Will I ever be an adult? I have experienced all of these events and thinking back on them brings back fond memories. But let us turn our attention to a magnanimous event that hundreds of millions of people have been anticipating for a very long time.

This anxiously anticipated event just happens to be the second coming of Jesus Christ.

Now there have been many predictions about a forth coming rapture but they have all missed their mark and many people are still anxiously awaiting the promised return. Other religions besides Christianity are waiting a future "universe altering" event as well. Why is it taking so long? Please, ask your god - why after thousands of years have they been unable to capture the attention of the entire planet? After you get no reply, please ask the thousands of other gods of other religions the same question. How can omnipotent gods be so incompetent? Come on - 2,000 years and no religious organization is even slightly close to converting the world's population and today the religious segments of society are more divided than ever. Why isn't the entire planet all on the same page if there was an omnipotent god in charge? Zeus along with his court of Greek gods probably had a larger percentage of the Greek population of yesteryear than any of today's modern religions.

The gods and/or church leaders of our world have commissioned billions of people to sell their beliefs and there have been billions of books sold and billions of worship sessions and countless millions of slaughtered men, women, and children of rival religions and all that praying and all that promising and predicting that salvation is just around the next corner. And yet, here we are after thousands of years, with thousands of religions, and with thousands of gods and angels and demons and there is still no sign of the end. Are we there yet? Will we ever get there?

Rodney Hinds
August 1, 2011
edited by John Willimon

Quote of the Month

Don't appeal to mercy to God the Father up in the sky, little man, because he's not at home and never was at home, and couldn't care less. What you do with yourself, whether you are happy or unhappy-- live or die-- is strictly your business and the universe doesn't care. In fact you may be the universe and the only cause of all your troubles. But, at best, the most you can hope for is comradeship with comrades no more divine (or just as divine) as you are. So quit sniveling and face up to it-- 'Thou art God!'

-Robert Heinlein

July in Review

July 1-
We watched "The Tillman Story" for movie night.

July 3-
Local News- Amarillo Globe News article on "the religious litmus test" that candidates undergo when running for office.
<http://amarillo.com/opinion/opinion-columnist/2011-07-03/kanelis-religious-litmus-test>

July 7-

We had dinner at Kabob restaurant.

July 16-

We volunteered with the High Plains Food Bank Community Garden.

July 28-

Local News-FFRF co-president Annie Laurie Gaylor writes a superb letter to the local Amarillo Globe News.

<http://amarillo.com/opinion/letters-editor/2011-07-27/rally-unconstitutional>

July 30-

We discussed *The Jesus Puzzle* for our rescheduled book club meeting.

July 31-

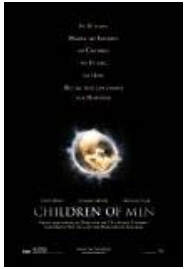
Local News-A second article on Gov. Perry's prayer event. <http://amarillo.com/opinion/2011-07-31/perry-plans-misguided-prayer-day>

Upcoming Events

August 5 from 7:00pm to 10:00pm-

Movie Night: We'll be watching *Children of Men*, a dystopian science fiction film about a world in which global infertility has left humanity with less than a century to exist. This event is at a private residence. For an address, contact Barrett at

webmaster@freethoughtoasis.org.



August 5-6-

Protest of "The Response": Help Texas preserve the separation of church and state. <http://www.facebook.com/event.php?eid=177641222294542>. Our group will be leaving for Houston at 8:00am Friday morning and returning Saturday night. The protest will begin at 8:00am on Saturday. If you're interested in going, contact Rodney at rhinds@freethoughtoasis.org.

August 8 at 7:00pm-

Amarillo Sox Baseball Game-3303 E. 3rd Ave at the Amarillo National Bank Sox Stadium. General Admission Tickets are \$5. We'll try to sit between third and home plate. If you have one, wear your FTO t-shirts so we can find each other.

August 11 from 6:00pm to 7:30pm-

Dinner at Jason's Deli-7406 SW 34 St. For dinner and conversation.

August 21 from 11:00am to 1:00pm-

Business meeting-In the party room at Western Bowl, 5120 Canyon Dr.

August 27 from 4:00pm to 6:00pm-

Book Club meeting in the downtown library. This month we'll be reading *The Believing Brain* by Michael Shermer.

August 7, 14, & 28 from 11:00am to 1:00pm-

Our regular Sunday meetings at Roasters Coffee Shop.

For event details, please visit our website at www.freethoughtoasis.org

About Us

Freethought Oasis provides community and connection for agnostics, atheists, skeptics, secularists, and freethinkers in Amarillo, the Texas panhandle, and the surrounding area.

Please submit an article, rant or ideas for the newsletter to admin@freethoughtoasis.org
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