

THE ATHEIST

Newsletter of the Atheist Community of Austin, a Nonprophet Organization

P.O. Box 3798, Austin, Texas 78764

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www.atheist-community.org

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Volume 3 No. 2

The Atheist Experience



An evolution show. Photo by Lauren Rhoades.

I showed up at the Austin cable access studio twenty minutes before the live call-in show The Atheist Experience was to go on the air. As a guest, I was scheduled to discuss evolution. Every other appearance I made seemed to have been plagued by technical difficulties. One time, the crew could not get the sound from the callers into the studio. The floor manager had to copy down the questions on a dry erase board and hold them up for us to read.

Things seemed very different this time. Everyone was calm and organized. Everything worked. It has taken a lot of hard work by some very dedicated atheists to pull off what no one else in the country has done. Let's hear it direct from the people that make it all possible; the hosts and crew of The Atheist Experience.

~John Koonz, editor *The Atheist*

TA: What was involved in getting the show started?

Kellen: Three people who were convinced that this was the greatest idea for giving atheists a voice, Sharon, Ray and myself. Ray insisted on doing a live call-in show. Sharon and I thought he was crazy. We were convinced that it would just be a bunch of idiot Christian callers repeating the same drivel, and accomplishing nothing. But he stuck to his guns and said that he would commit himself to one year of showing up and doing the show. We agreed to back him for one year. Joe Zamecki, who had been asking for a show since the day he walked into the group, committed to being his co-host for one year. We were on. We took several months of classes (spending a lot of money, as well as many nights and weekends), worked our way up to the mini studio classification, filled out the application and crossed our fingers. And the rest is history...

Keith: It was thanks to Kellen for putting up a lot of her personal funds to get the extra tapes we needed to tape our shows with. Without her help, we would have never been able to get started. She has done much more than any of us will ever know from her own resources to get a lot of projects off the ground. Amazingly, she keeps what she has done to herself. Amazing indeed!

"[Kellen] has done much more than any of us will ever know, from her own resources, to get a lot of projects off the ground."

TA: How has the show changed over the past year?

Kellen: Sharon left, Joe moved to New Jersey and the three people who slugged it out at 6 am every Sunday morning grew to an entire cast and crew

complete with weekly guests, our own sound man, several camera folks and several control booth people.

Jeff: Every show seems, at least to those of us in the studio, to be more fun and better organized than the last. Which, I guess, is only to be expected when you have a group of people working together on something for so long.

Arlo: Many new viewers, callers, more introductions, more music, and many more sound effects



Kellen Von Houser at the controls.
Photo by Rodney Florence

TA: How can ACA members get involved in helping with the show?

Jeff: Call in and make intelligent, friendly, and level headed comments. After all, putting a good face on atheism is what the show is for!

Arlo: ACA members should think of a favorite topic they can talk about and be on the show, or at least give input as to what they want to see and hear.

Ray: We are always looking for talent to showcase, such as songs, art, or poetry. I would really like to have an original opening theme song, but I don't have any musical talent

TA: What questions are asked by callers most often?

Jeff: The most common questions from theist callers are "so, you all don't believe in God"? and "why do you spend so much time and effort talking about what you don't believe?" The most common questions from agnostic callers are "isn't it just as irrational to believe in God's non-existence as it is to believe in his existence", and "what's wrong with agnosticism?" I can't think of any one question most commonly asked by atheists, unless it's "what is wrong with these people?"

Arlo: "Why don't you believe in god?"

Ray: Why are we here? They think their existence somehow proves that there is a god.

TA: I have always been impressed by some of the questions asked. Do you feel there are a lot of intelligent callers?

Jeff: Yes. But personally, I refuse to label anybody "unintelligent". More often than not, native intelligence or lack thereof is not the problem. The problem is that most people have never been trained in basic critical thinking skills. Even the most fanatical theists who call in are pretty clever, the way they evade direct questions and rationalize their own beliefs. If they could just be equipped with good thinking *skills*, and the desire to use those skills, they'd be valuable allies.

This is the best way to reach the community in a positive way.

TA: What are the frustrations of working on the TV show?

Jeff: For me, it's not having enough time. Going from an hour to an hour and a half helped a lot, but I always come away wishing we'd had more time to spend on some subject or another.

Arlo: It is frustrating to speak to an unintelligent creationists who use technical words to trick many less educated people into thinking they know what they are talking about.

Keith: We need for more of our members to donate money for 1 inch tapes that can be used to make copies of our best shows. We can have these aired at times other than our regular time slot. They cost about \$20.00 each. If you want, just slip a check into the donation cup at the Sunday meeting specifying that it is for TV tapes and productions.

Ray: When we get bumped from the main studio. Also, the equipment doesn't always work well.

TA: How are the topics decided on?

Jeff: In general, we try to find out what the guest wants to talk about. Sometimes they have a very specific topic in mind, sometimes not. If not, we'll often turn to the news clippings we've collected to pick out some common thread. If all else fails, Ray still always seems to be able to think of something.

Ray: I try to let the guest pick the topic, but the callers don't stay on the topic well

TA: What plans do you have for the show in the coming year?

Jeff: Once I finish up with the basic rules of critical thinking, I'd like to go into basic concepts in science like, for example, the practical value of materialism, the need for (and limitations of) objectivity, and so on.

Arlo: I am constantly searching for new visual/audio material to add.

Keith: Edited versions of the "Best of the Atheist Experience" will be made and aired at times when they can be seen by people who ordinarily don't see them. These



The "Every Atheist is On" episode celebrating the winter solstice.

shows will most likely be available for other Atheist groups to order as training programs. Many more guest host from the Atheist Community of Austin will be on the show. Exciting guest from our lecture series at Furrs will come on the show. Special news reports of ACA activities will be edited for viewing on some of our shows.

Ray: I would like to work in more humor and try to differentiate us from all the other call-in talk shows.



Olga, David and Keith work hard behind the scenes to make the shows possible. Photo by Lauren Rhoades

TA: Some ACA members have told me that they are too shy or too nervous to want to go on the air. Have you ever felt this way, and if so, how have you dealt with it?

Jeff: I felt that way the first time they invited me to appear as a guest. I found that it evaporated as soon as the cameras got rolling, and I stopped getting it even before the show after two or three appearances. My advice is: force yourself! It's absolutely the second most fun thing I've ever done.

Arlo: All my life I have been very shy about everything, yet ever since I threw myself in front of the camera I have become only less nervous every time I participate. I recommend this for everyone to try.

Keith: Yes I have. The best way to get over this is to come and sit in as a part of a background group of atheists sitting behind the regular host, co-host and guest host as they answer questions. Or if you don't want to be on the show at all, just come to the studio and watch from behind the camera's. Sooner or later you will probably get the bug! If nothing else, you will have a lot of fun getting to know everyone on the TV committee in person and your input to us about topics is always good to hear.

TA: What questions do you find hardest to answer?

Arlo: Questions I have no answer for. But a big responsibility for me as an atheist is to admit when I don't know something, and acquire more data.

TA: How do you think the show is received by believers?

Jeff: I don't really know, but I'd love to find out what they're saying to each other about it!

Arlo: I think most believers who watch the show, enjoy it! But the type who wouldn't enjoy it are the type who are so afraid to question their belief that they won't allow themselves to watch it. More than half the people I know are like this.

Keith: Many of them like it and have called in to the show to tell us that they do. Actually I am not sure they are really fully convinced believers.

TA: Do you think the show has ever convinced anyone to become an atheist?

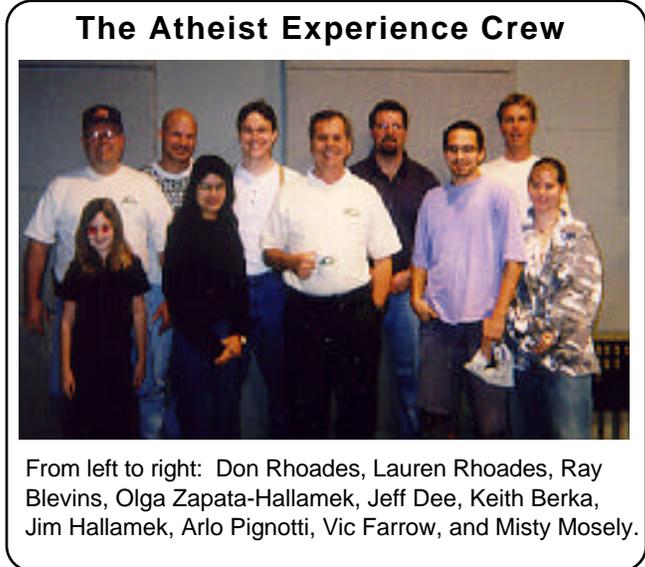
Kellen: No. I think people who are considering it already, new atheists, agnostics, etc. find validation for their point of view. People who are staunch believers will probably not be swayed. As above, they will watch until they chicken out, then they'll turn the channel.

Jeff: It's possible, but I've never heard anyone say so. I think it's more helpful as a way of helping people who are already atheists come out of the closet.

Arlo: I imagine there must be some people out there that lean toward atheism because of our show. If not, that is just fine because that is not our goal.

Keith: No, just convinced them that it is worthwhile and acceptable to be an atheist and that there is an Austin home grown Atheist community that is alive and is permanent. Many know that the Atheist Community can be and will be a vibrant valued and contributing asset to the culture of Austin, and that the group is available for them to be a part of if they choose!

Ray: Not really.



From left to right: Don Rhoades, Lauren Rhoades, Ray Blevins, Olga Zapata-Hallamek, Jeff Dee, Keith Berka, Jim Hallamek, Arlo Pignotti, Vic Farrow, and Misty Mosely.

The Atheist Experience airs live every Sunday from 9:00 to 10:30 on Austin Cable channel 16.

TA: Are the calls screened? If so, how is that done?

Kellen: The callers are asked for a name by which we can identify them on the air, and maybe what they called about. If they start screaming obscenities, or don't know what they called about we hang up (obsценities) or ask more questions (don't know). That's it. I've had people call in and very reluctantly and sheepishly say that

they were Christians and ask if we would still let them ask a question. The Mexicans have a saying, "The lion believes that all are like him". It's always interesting to me that Christians expect us to be as narrow-minded and intolerant as they are. Being Christian never got anyone blocked from the show. If you don't believe, just watch it.

TA: Has Austin Community Access been cooperative with your efforts to put on an atheist show?

Kellen: Extremely. They were always there with an answer to a question, always forgiving and accomodating when we made a mistake, and even went out of their way to accomodate the day and time which we had asked for. I've had them approach me with information about a class which I might want to take, and offer helpful suggestions about how to improve the show. I wish I was treated that well every where I go.

Ray: Very much so, but look at the kooks and weirdos we share the channel with.

TA: Why has ACA gone to all the trouble of producing TheAtheist Experience? Has it been worth it?

Kellen: To let other atheists know that they are not alone. To educate the public about what an atheist *really* is. To educate the public.

Arlo: This is the best way to reach the community in a positive way.

Keith: It has been one of the most rewarding groups I have ever been involved with. Well worth it!

Ray: I would say yes. 

Meet The Hosts of The Atheist Experience

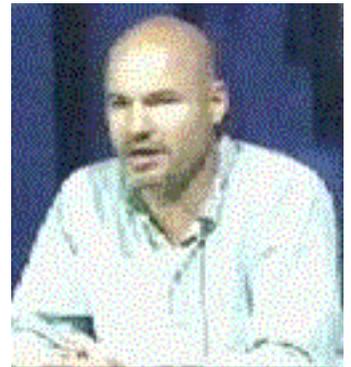


Being appointed co-host has been a major thrill for me! I'm hoping to bring what I call my "hard line rationalist" perspective to the show. There are certainly social and personal emotional issues inherent in being an atheist, and I think the show already does an admirable job of addressing those. I'd like to use my time on TAE helping to promote good critical thinking skills. Not only to support the case for atheism, but because good thinking skills are (in my opinion) our best means of out-competing the "magical thinkers". The Atheist Experience may be able to help arm our viewers with reliable techniques for weeding out sense from the non-sense. Anyway, that's what I plan to try!

~Jeff Dee

Hi, I'm Ray Blevins, your host for The Atheist Experience. I'm a founding member of ACA and I'm on the board of directors. I've been an Atheist for approximately five years and before that, an agnostic for 20 years. My hope is that The Atheist Experience will show Austin a positive perspective on atheism. Please feel free to call the show with any of your questions and comments.

~Ray Blevins



Happy Darwin's Birthday!

Eusthenopteron was an early rhipidistian lobe-finned fish that lived during the Devonian 365mya. These .5m long predators represent an important transitional form between fish and amphibians. Evidence for this comes from their amphibian-like structures, including bones and muscle attachments in the paired fins. This organism could quite possibly be the model for the famous Darwin Fish bumper sticker. This model has been reduced to fit in the available space.

Instructions:

1. For best results, copy onto card stock.
2. Color the model before cutting the parts out. Although color has not been preserved in the fossil record, modern predatory fish often have dark dorsal surfaces and silvery ventral surfaces.
3. Cut along the solid lines.
4. When gluing, align part edges to dotted lines.
5. Roll the body parts to shape.
6. Fold, glue and attach fins to correct letter.

The Burden of Proof

I am very concerned at the current path our debates with the various religious communities seem to always go down. We always seem (and I am very guilty of this myself) to allow ourselves to be put on the defensive. It seems as though we are always defending atheism and "proving" it. Admittedly, this is not impossible, but it places us in the position of having to bear the burden of proof. I'd like to take this opportunity to remind everyone that the burden of proof is not on us at all. It is on anyone who wishes us to accept or acknowledge their beliefs as being factual. To aid in this I would like to draw on a few examples to help illustrate my point. If any two (or more) of us were to walk into an empty room and I said "Hmm..empty" and some one (or everyone) else replied "No it's not. A big, purple, hairy, fanged whosawhatsit from dimension X is in the room. Only it coexists on both it's home plane and ours so it's invisible to anyone who isn't trained to recognize the presence of this creature." I'm quite certain that almost everyone would agree that the person making this statement would actually have to produce such a creature before being taken seriously. Remember, there is a remote chance that such a creature really could exist and be present in the room. True, the chance is so small as to be laughable but the chance does exist. It would not matter how many people testified they had seen the creature, until it was produced it would not be taken for a fact. When we apply the same to the likely hood of the existence of a being who is all knowing, all seeing, and all powerful the chance that such a being exists becomes even more remote.

This brings me to my next point. How in the world can we have an intelligent discussion on any religious belief when not one piece of definitive evidence exists to support the existence of any deity? It would be the same as trying to have an intelligent discussion about the physiological differences between an iguana and puff the magic dragon. It simply doesn't work. And any attempt to have a discussion or a debate is an exercise in futility. Even Christians would agree that trying to hold such a debate (iguana vs puff, which is the better lizard) is a ridiculous idea and yet we are constantly drawn into just such absurd situations. I must admit I see no way for us to win an argument of this sort except to demand that the same standards to which all people hold everything else is applied to religion.

Lets be a little more demanding. Our position is the strongest of all because ours is the ONLY one which is supported by factual, verifiable, evidence. The moment we allow religion to lower that standard (ok, so all religions want all standards to be removed just for them) we have lost the battle and we all might as well go out and buy asbestos underwear and practice holding our breath because the inquisitions will start all over again.

ACA

~Jon Pool

Two Short Book Reviews

1 In the introduction to *An Uppity Old Atheist Woman's Dictionary* Carol Faulkenberry describes herself as both an atheist and a feminist. Indeed, many of her definitions may irritate those atheists who do not also consider themselves to be feminists. For example: "**Breasts**: Mounds of fat on a woman's chest. Highly esteemed by infants who see them as sources of nourishment and by men who still want mommies to comfort them."

For those who can take a joke, however, Faulkenberry's collection of atheistic definitions are sure to delight. She certainly provides a humorous defense of truth (**Quest for truth**: An intellectual journey that will ultimately lead to atheism.) justice, (**Prison**: A place we put criminals who have neither money nor political influence.), and the American Way (**Non-voter**: Willing victim of the system, rather like the rape victim who, instead of fighting back or calling the cops, smiles up at the scumbag who attacked her and says, "Do it again, sweetheart.".)

An Uppity Old Atheist Woman's Dictionary by Carol C. Faulkenberry was published by the Atlanta Freethought Society (<http://www.concentric.net/~theafs>)

~Reviewed by John Koonz

2 The recently revised edition of *Thinking Straight* includes references to more topical controversies. There are a couple of important strengths to this book. Rather than relying on tired old textbook examples reasoning flaws, Flew has used much more interesting ones. For example, in chapter two, he goes straight for the throat and questions the existence of god. Flew also provided an extensive bibliography, an index to the many important people he quotes and an index of critical thinking ideas.

This book is quite thorough in it's treatment of critical thinking. It is fairly easy to read, although in a few sections I bogged down when the author 'over explained' certain concepts. I highly recommend this book to anyone who would like to sharpen his critical thinking skills.

How to Think Straight; An Introduction to Critical Reasoning by Antony Flew was published by Prometheus Books.

~Reviewed by John Koonz

And The Survey Says:

Q. Why are you an Atheist?:

A. I got smart. I was real suspicious as a teenager, but when I went to college, I was educated very quickly to the fact that man created god out of fear of the unknown (ignorance). In our society, church is nothing but a social club. Belong or you're out.

So, You Want to Belong to Something?

This is an invitation to join ACA, and is directed primarily to those who have been getting the ACA newsletter, The Atheist for a while. If you have only recently found us, then it would be understandable to withhold commitment until you see what kind of group we are. And if you have already paid your dues for 1999-2000, THANK YOU!

Last year ACA decided to have memberships run from March 1 through the end of February, so 1998-99 memberships are about to expire. What do you think? Would you consider being a member, or continuing your membership?

ACA doesn't do everything; we don't fight court battles over church/state Separation issues. We don't do slick, expensive public relations stuff, and we are not allowed to endorse candidates for public office. We have no paid staff, and a volunteer does everything that gets done. And we do quite a bit.

We have weekly meetings, guest speakers once per month, and fairly regular parties and other gatherings. Those who want to converse and socialize with other atheists certainly have the opportunity to do so through ACA. These events are free, and membership is not required. In fact, we have done our best to extend every benefit and opportunity to anyone who asks, without requiring membership.

ACA can be said to have two goals; to bring non-theists together into a supportive community, and to educate ourselves and our fellow citizens about atheism and atheist perspectives. Many of our activities support both objectives. For example, our website is both a way to get connected with us, and also a source for atheist writings, news, and humor. The ad we ran in The Austin Chronicle contained both contact information as well as the names of dozens of famous people known to be atheist or non-religious. And our TV show, which brought many of you to ACA, has helped many in Austin to better understand the atheist point of view. How would you say we are doing on our twin objectives?

There are costs involved; we pay producer fees for the TV show, monthly charges for the voice mail and website, stamps and printing costs to send The Atheist by snail mail to our growing list of folks not online. The collection of membership fees is one way ACA pays its bills. Of course, you are also welcome to make tax-deductible contributions to either ACA's general fund or our small but growing building fund. The more you help, the more we can do.

By becoming a member, you also gain the right to vote. This year's election of officers will be important, as we will be selecting two (new) co-chairs and the entire board of directors. Other important decisions, such as amending our constitution and bylaws, are put to a vote of the membership as the need arises or when our constitution requires it.

We invite you to take this opportunity to become a member of the Atheist Community of Austin. 

~~Don Rhoades

From the Editor

I hope you enjoyed this months edition of The Atheist. I have changed computer programs to one that allows me to insert photos more easily. I also hope you enjoy the model I have included. This fish represents an important development in the history of life on earth. Consider it a present in honor of Charles Darwin's birthday. For best results, run the model off on cardstock, and follow the instructions provided. Cardstock modeling is a great hobby. For me, it is also a business. If you are interested in learning more about card models, visit my Geoblox website at www.geoblox.com.

I would like to thank the entire crew of The Atheist Experience for their help with this months feature story. I would also like to thank everyone who has submitted articles, reviews and stories to The Atheist. As I have said before, this newsletter belongs to all of us in the Atheist Community of Austin. I am always looking for articles that would be of interest to the members of our group. If you have any comments, suggestions, or news, please feel free to contact me. This issue of The Atheist Has beenprinted on partially recycled paper. 

~John Koonz, Editor jknz@hotmail.com

1999 Freethought Roundup!

On Easter weekend, (April 2-4, 1999), all atheists and other freethinkers are invited to Austin, Texas for the 1999 Freethought Roundup!, the national convention of the Atheist Alliance. The Atheist Community of Austin, host for the event, is working hard to make this a thoroughly enjoyable and informative gathering of non-theists. Convention speakers will include some of the best known and most influential thinkers in atheism today.

Dan Barker, Public Relations Director of the Freedom From Religion Foundation, tells a fascinating personal story in his book *Losing Faith in Faith*. As a former fundamentalist minister and evangelist converted to atheism, he has truly seen both sides. He has appeared several times on national TV and represents atheism with a sincere positive attitude and fine sense of humor. Also a talented musician and singer, Dan has promised to perform a "Freethought Concert" for the convention.

Douglas E. Krueger, author of a wonderful work entitled *What is Atheism; A Short Introduction*, will speak on his experience of atheism. Convention-goers will also hear from prolific writer Dr. Arthur F. Ide, author of hundreds of titles including *Tomorrow's Tyrants : The Radical Right & the Politics of Hate*, *Unholy Rollers : Televangelism and the Selling of Jesus*, and *Unzipped : The Popes Bare All : A Frank Study of Sex and Corruption in the Vatican*.

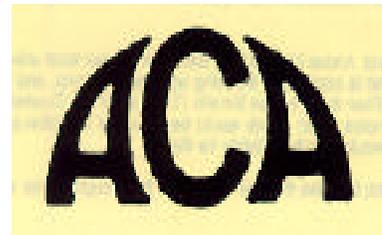
Journalist and author James A Haught will speak on "The Trillion Dollar Fraud", and Ben Akerley, author of *The X-Rated Bible*, will discuss "The Bible in the Bedroom", a look at how biblical ideas have influenced our current sensibilities. Those who attended last year's convention in St. Louis and enjoyed Ray Romano's "Judas" will be happy to hear that he will treat us to another dramatic performance this year. Something by Twain, perhaps? Adam Butler, FFRF's 1998 Student Activist of the Year, will tell us of his experiences as an Alabama Freethinker, and atheist schoolteacher John Koonz will talk about "Teaching Evolution to a Hostile Audience".

Workshops and panel discussions will seek to stimulate, entertain, and educate. The folks from OABITAR (Objectivity and Balance in Teaching About Religion) will give a presentation on teaching about atheism in those public schools where overview classes "about religion" are taught -- classes which frequently leave out the contributions of freethinkers. Richard Russell will teach us about "Parliamentary Procedure for Small Groups", and is also organizing a dramatic reading of a work by noted atheist author Harlan Ellison. A panel discussion on Sunday will cover issues related to "Positive Atheism." A lunch has been planned for Saturday and a banquet for Saturday evening. Both meals will feature the flavorful fare for which Austin is widely known. Plans are also being made for a Friday night visit to Esther's Follies for some irreverent hilarity. Expect the weather to be fair and the wildflowers to be in bloom.

The 1999 Freethought Roundup will be held at Austin's Downtown OMNI Hotel at 700 San Jacinto. The OMNI is built on the site once occupied by the official residence of the President of the Republic of Texas, and is only a block away from 6th Street's collection of restaurants, live music venues, and the hottest night life in Texas. The Capitol Building is only a short walk away, and most of Austin can be seen from the OMNI's rooftop pool. For hotel reservations, please contact the Omni Hotel at (512) 476-3700 or 1-800-THE OMNI or on the web at www.omnihotels.com. Please tell them you are with the 1999 Freethought Roundup! (or Atheist Alliance Convention) to get the special room rate of \$73, single or double.

Convention Registration:

Regular Registration(s) @ \$50 per person.... \$ _____
(No registration fee for minor children accompanied by a parent or guardian.)
 Student Registration(s) @ \$25 per person..... \$ _____
(Include Photocopy of Student ID)
 Saturday luncheon(s) @ \$25 per person..... \$ _____
 Saturday night banquet(s) @ \$35 per person..... \$ _____
 Vegetarian meals, please!
 Friday night "Esther's Follies" @ \$16 per person. \$ _____
Total..... \$ _____



Name _____ Address.. _____
City/State/Zip..... _____
Contact Phone Number or E-mail Address..... _____

- Please copy this form, fill it out completely, and send it along with check or money order (no cash please) to:
Roundup Registration P.O. Box 3798 Austin, TX 78764
- Please include the names of all persons in your party so that we may make name tags. Print plainly and use an extra sheet if necessary.
- Make checks payable to "Freethought Roundup Committee". 

Announcements

- **New Board Members** At the January 10th ACA Board Meeting meeting, David Kent and Vic Farrow were selected by the board to fill the seats vacated by Ralph Shirley and Joe Zamecki. At the meeting at the Bagelry, on February 14th, members confirmed their appointments. ACA Board meetings are on the second Sunday of the month at 12:00. Board meetings are open to all members.
- On March 7th, our **Lecture Series** will continue with Paul Wilson who will discuss the “Philosophical arguments for the existence of god.” Lectures are held at Furr's Cafeteria in Northcross Mall, 11:00 am.
- All atheists are invited to be on The Atheist Experience on March 21. This **“Every Atheist Is On” episode** will be similar to the Winter Solstice show. Come on down to the ACAC studio and be part of the fun!
- ACA members will be participating in the **March for our Families** on Sunday March 21st at the municipal auditorium. This event is in protest of proposed legislation that would prevent homosexuals from adopting children in Texas. The march is endorsed by a number of groups interested in civil liberties. See Rodney Florence for details.
- Our next Blood Drive is on Saturday April 10th at the Texas Regional Blood Center, North Lamar. They're open 8am-2pm. Please consider donating, especially if you have a rare blood type .
- **Products** There are some t-shirts left. Our ACA t-shirts come in two types. One lists a number of famous atheists, the other lists 10 reasons why beer is better than jeezuss. Godless dollars are also available for \$1.50. See Sue Osborne for more information on these and other exciting atheist products.
- **Randalls Donations** Randalls will donate a percentage of the money you spend there to the Atheist Community of Austin. To take advantage of this offer, contact the customer service department of your nearest Randalls. The ACA number is 5158.
- **Weekly Meetings Sunday Mornings** at Hot Jumbo Bagelry, 307 West 5th Street at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday mornings when lectures are not scheduled at Furr's Cafeteria.

For more information about any of these coming events, call (512) 371-2911 or e-mail kellenvh@earthlink.net

Your ACA board of directors:

Co-chairs:

Don Rhoades
Kellen Von Houser

Treasurer:

Ray Blevins

Secretary:

Ray Blevins

Board members:

Keith Berka
Sue Osborne
Rodney Florence
Jim Hallamek
John Koonz
Arval Bohn
Arlo Pignotti
Vic Farrow
David Kent

Cartoon

Paul Koonz © 1998

A Quote to put on your refrigerator

“It is an established maxim and moral that he who makes an assertion without knowing whether it is true or false is guilty of falsehood, and the accidental truth of the assertion does not justify or excuse him.”

Abraham Lincoln

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FOR THE ATHEIST COMMUNITY OF AUSTIN, INC.

Last name: _____ First name: _____

Companion's name (if family or couple membership)

Last name: _____ First name: _____

Address: _____ City/State/Zip: _____

Telephone : (_____) _____ e-mail address: _____

This is to certify that I am a non-theist, that I have read the "Purpose" of the Atheist Community of Austin, Inc. as stated in the Constitution (below), and that I am in agreement with the principles stated herein. I understand that membership is open only to non-theists.

Purpose

The Atheist Community of Austin is organized as a nonprofit educational corporation to develop and support atheist community; to provide opportunities for socializing and friendship, to promote atheist viewpoints, to encourage positive atheist culture, to defend the First Amendment principle of state/church separation, to oppose discrimination against atheists, and to work with other organizations in pursuit of common goals.

This organization shall operate in an open, democratic manner, without discrimination as to gender, race, age, sexual orientation, ethnic origin, nationality, or disability.

The Bylaws to this Constitution are intended to further define and explain the operating procedure of this organization. Changes may be made to the Bylaws when necessary to improve the operation of this organization. Changes to the Bylaws shall not alter the purpose of this organization as set forth in its Constitution.

Check all that apply

I wish to become a member of the Atheist Community of Austin, Inc. Membership fees are \$24.00 per year, but our membership year does not begin until the 1st of March. My prorated membership fee, at \$2.00 per month u n t i l next March, is enclosed.

- I wish to make a tax exempt donation to ACA .
- I only wish to participate in the e-mail group. My e-mail address is above. No fee is required.
- I wish to help ACA save money by receiving The Atheist by e-mail. No fee is required.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please return this form to: Atheist Community of Austin, Inc., P.O. Box 3798, Austin, Texas 78764

