

The Hoosier Humanist

Herald

FreeThought Fort Wayne, Inc. Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 9

Message from the President

Banned Books Week is September 23-29 this year. The list is posted by the American Library Association's Office for Intellectual Freedom and refers to books/materials that have been banned in some libraries, schools, and universities. Among the top ten books banned in 2017 was Harper Lee's "To Kill a Mockingbird," published in 1960! Many of the books on the list have been banned due to topics such as suicide, profanity, gender identity, sex education, and in the case of "To Kill a Mockingbird," violence and racial slurs. Anyone who has read and studied the book knows that the violence and racial slurs are purposefully included to show what racism looks/sounds like and to illustrate the horror of such acts as part of America's history.

In thinking about banned books in America, my thoughts moved to the many current challenges to our Constitution. Challenges such as freedom of speech are apparent in cases where institutions ban books; NFL players silently demonstrate to protest the, sometimes brutal, force used by some police officers toward members of the black community; our current POTUS punitively silences anyone who criticizes him, or prevents immigrants seeking asylum from having their day in court, or assaults the news media with claims of "fake" news just because he doesn't like the news being reported.

If Americans wish to keep their civil liberties of freedom of religion, speech, and the press, as well as the rights of assembly and petition, we must raise our voices when we witness the abuse of these freedoms by any individual, group, or government representative. If Americans do not stand up for these rights, they may be lost and so, too, our nation.

Karen Mizner, President of FTFW

FTFW CafePress Shop

The [CafePress storefront](#) for getting your own piece of FTFW merchandise is now open! We have a number of shirts/hoodies and stickers/buttons/magnets/signs currently available, with more products to come! FTFW gets a small commission from each purchase, so we greatly appreciate your contribution!

Karen's Corner

**Demand money with the
threat of violence and
you'll get arrested.**

**Do it with the threat
of Eternal Damnation
and it's tax deductible.**

Steve Hofstetter



Karen Mizner, President of FTFW

The Rise of Unbelief in America

For more than 20 years, I was what many of you would likely consider to be a fundamentalist Christian. But, in reconsidering my faith, I am certainly not alone.

In a 2014 article by the Pew Research Center entitled, “America’s Changing Religious Landscape,” we read that the rise of America’s religiously unaffiliated rose from 16.1% in 2007 to 22.8% in 2014. But why is it that these religiously unaffiliated, referred to in the article as “Nones,” appear to be increasing in number?

In 2016, the Pew Research Center published another article entitled, “Why America’s ‘Nones’ Left Religion Behind.” This article provided some statistics explaining this change:

- About half claimed to be disenchanted with religion in general, felt they do not need religion, their views evolved, or they went through a crisis of faith.
- 20% claimed to be disenchanted with organized religion.
- Just under 20% self-identified as being undecided on issues of faith, or that they are spiritual, but not religious.
- 10% said they do have some religious views, but that they are unable, or unwilling, to be more committed to them.

There are other attempts to explain why unbelief appears to be on the rise in America. The Templeton Foundation is an organization that seeks to unite science and religion. Their position regarding many of these apparent unbelievers, citing research from North Dakota State psychologist, Clay Routledge, is that many of them “...secretly make room for the supernatural,” despite how they self-identify. I am less likely to agree with this explanation because it requires me to doubt the sincerity, self-knowledge, or intellectual capacities of millions of people I have not met and will likely never meet.

Why are the number of religiously unaffiliated on the rise in America? Is it because of a general disenchantment with religion, or, as the Templeton Foundation claims, are these religiously unaffiliated holding secret beliefs in the supernatural, making this apparent rise without substance? Regardless of the underlying reason(s) for this growth, or of how skeptical we are concerning the self-awareness of others, unbelief is undoubtedly on the rise in America.

J. Steven, Member of FTFW

Letter to the Editor

Here's your chance! Have an idea for our group? Have a question for us? Have you experienced frustrations as a non-believer? Do people question you about what Humanism means? Just want to vent a bit? Have a funny story to share? Have a question for our Celebrant, Victoria Gipson? The Hoosier Humanist Herald committee will do its best to respond to your concerns. Submit your letter via e-mail to fortwayneaha@gmail.com with the subject line of "Letter to the Editor" or "Ask a Celebrant," then watch for a response in our next month's newsletter! Please note that letters may be edited for clarity and space.

Upcoming Events

We Are Atheists Live Call-In Show

September 4, 2018 (Tuesday): 7:00-8:00 pm

FTFW hosts a semi-monthly local access TV show called We Are Atheists through the Allen County Public Library's channel, Access 2 (also broadcast on Comcast 57 and Frontier 27). You can [view it live](#) and/or call in (260-422-3902) with any questions, thoughts, or concerns that you might have for the hosts. You may also leave comments through [Facebook](#), [Discord](#), or email (WeAreAtheistsTV@gmail.com).

FTFW Monthly Board Planning Meeting

September 9, 2018 (Sunday): 1:00-3:00 pm at Tim Horton's (4210 Crescent Ave.)

Paid members are welcome to join the FTFW board of directors at their monthly planning meeting. Details will be revealed on Facebook and on the website calendar.

Game & Science of Formulating & Testing Hypotheses

September 13, 2018 (Thursday): 7:00-8:30 pm at the Allen County Public Library (main branch), Room A

FTFW is pleased to host this presentation by David P. Maloney, PhD., Professor of Physics, which will start with attendees engaging in an activity using an abstract

strategy game. That will be followed by comparing and contrasting the reasoning in the game activity with an example of similar reasoning about a scientific topic. The focus of the session will be on showing that scientific reasoning is not something unique or uncommon. Please join us for this free, fun, and educational presentation. Light snacks will be provided.

Meeting of the Minds

September 19, 2018 (Wednesday): 6:00-8:30 pm at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fort Wayne

This is a recurring event for FTFW every month on the third Wednesday, whereby folks get together for an open discussion on a particular topic of interest. Be sure to bring your suggested discussion topic ideas and we will vote as a group on which one(s) to talk about.

We Are Atheists Live Call-In Show

September 20, 2018 (Tuesday): 7:00-8:00 pm

FTFW hosts a semi-monthly local access TV show called We Are Atheists through the Allen County Public Library's channel, Access 2 (also broadcast on Comcast 57 and Frontier 27). You can [view it live](#) and/or call in (260-422-3902) with any questions, thoughts, or concerns that you might have for the hosts. You may also leave comments through [Facebook](#), [Discord](#), or email (WeAreAtheistsTV@gmail.com).

Banned Books Week

September 23-29, 2018

Banned Books Week 2018 will be held September 23 – 29. The 2018 theme, “Banning Books Silences Stories,” is a reminder that everyone needs to speak out against the tide of censorship. Banned Books Week is an annual event celebrating the freedom to read. Banned Books Week was launched in 1982 in response to a sudden surge in the number of challenges to books in schools, bookstores and libraries. Typically held during the last week of September, it highlights the value of free and open access to information. Banned Books Week brings together the entire book community — librarians, booksellers, publishers, journalists, teachers, and readers of all types — in shared support of the freedom to seek and to express ideas, even those some consider unorthodox or unpopular. See [here](#) for the source of this event description.

FTFW Monthly Board Meeting

September 24, 2018 (Monday): 6:30-8:30 pm at the Allen County Public Library (main branch), Business & Technology meeting room

Paid members are welcome to join the FTFW board of directors at their monthly meeting. Details will be revealed on Facebook and on the website calendar.

Civil Liberties ACLU Presentation

September 26, 2018 (Sunday): 6:30-8:00 pm at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fort Wayne, Social Hall

FTFW is proud to host this presentation by the ACLU at the UUCFW. This 7-point civil liberties presentation will be followed by a Q&A session.

Community Harvest Food Bank Volunteering

November 10, 2018 (Saturday): 8:30-11:30 am at Community Harvest Food Bank

FTFW will be helping hand out food to the needy at the Community Harvest Food Bank. We accept non-perishable foods all year long and will deliver them that day. Please keep in mind that only those who are 14+ years old can hand out food, while children 5-13 can work in the grocery store area. The first 30 minutes will be a safety talk, followed by handing out or organizing food. Please wear comfortable clothing that is weather-appropriate, including closed-toe shoes. Plastic gloves will be issued to all participants. If you own a [FTFW shirt](#), please wear it to volunteer. Please [register](#) beforehand if you wish to volunteer.

Festivus for the Rest of Us

December 8, 2018 (Saturday): 6:00-8:30 pm at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fort Wayne

This FTFW annual event is going to be different from previous years, as we are not holding it at a restaurant. What we are asking of you this year is to bring a side dish to complement the main entree, which will be provided by FTFW. If you are a vegetarian, then you may want to bring a corresponding side dish, as the main entree will be some kind of meat. We are also looking into designing a special shirt to help celebrate this annual event by FTFW. The event, itself, is designed to be a nice dinner among friends, so please dress/plan accordingly. Details to come.

Festivus is a secular holiday celebrated on December 23 as an alternative to the pressures and commercialism of the Christmas season. Festivus entered popular culture after it was made the focus of the 1997 episode "The Strike." The event includes a Festivus dinner, an unadorned aluminum Festivus pole, practices such as the "Airing of Grievances" and "Feats of Strength," and the labeling of easily explainable events as "Festivus miracles." The episode refers to it as "a Festivus for the rest of us." See [here](#) for the source of this event description.



Copyright © 2018 FreeThought Fort Wayne, Inc., All rights reserved.

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).

