

FREEDOM FROM RELIGION *foundation*

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Winter Solstice 2010/New Year 2011

Dear FFRF Member:

It's time for "Reason's Greetings" — and FFRF's annual Winter Solstice/New Year membership appeal! We thank you for your valued support and ask now for your continuing investment in FFRF and its much-needed projects below:

HELP US RAISE THE ROOF. Literally! FFRF seeks your immediate help in adding an urgently-needed 3rd floor to Freethought Hall, our historic offices in downtown Madison, Wis. After a suspenseful process, the City just approved FFRF's plan to increase our offices by 900 square feet, transforming an inaccessible attic to a third floor. This project is dear to our hearts. FFRF's membership has grown rapidly to about 16,000. FFRF's modest staff has likewise grown from 3 or 4 workers a few years ago to 10 permanent staff today and more anticipated. With the addition of regular volunteers, interns and part-time student workers, our office is humming with productive activity! But our lovely 2-story Italianate sandstone-stucco building, which dates to 1855, is overcrowded and has reached capacity. Adding on is cheaper than moving to larger digs, and ensures FFRF keeps its prime location, location, location, two blocks from the Wisconsin State Capitol — with the almost unheard-of perk in downtown Madison, of parking (for about 8 cars).



The expansion will move FFRF's valuable 2,700-volume library to the 3rd floor, add office space and a desperately-needed third washroom. The freed-up 2nd floor will house a large legal hub, with office space for future staff growth. The architect's plan includes the charming restoration of the building's original cupola, affording a unique view of the State Capitol Building for visitors, and practical enough to use for small meetings and lunch breaks. Renderings of the addition are pictured in the Year in Review (enclosed). We proceed full steam ahead this winter (snow is better than rain for this construction). Estimates are coming in at about \$250,000 - \$275,000. Names of all contributors will be published in Freethought Today (unless anonymity is requested) and recorded in a displayed donor book. Names of major donors \$5,000 and up will be inscribed on a plaque. "Naming rights" for the new library, cupola and third floor are up for grabs! Please invest now in FFRF's future so we can start off 2011 in a truly "groundbreaking" manner!

JOIN FFRF's OUT OF THE CLOSET CAMPAIGN. The New York Times called FFRF's innovative "Out of the Closet" campaign "punchy, personal" and a "more appealing approach." Help FFRF seize the opportunity to take our unique new ad campaign across the nation, on buses, in periodicals, on billboards or in TV ads. The campaign showcases FFRF's greatest asset, our membership — your face, your statement and your identification as a contributing community member — in a colorful and eye-catching design.



FFRF's trailblazing "Out of the Closet" campaign directly counteracts the fact that many Americans have never *knowingly* met a real nontheist. We still hear regularly from people saying, "I'm the only atheist in Fill-in-the-State." Atheists and agnostics, studies show, remain at the bottom of the totem pole in social acceptance. What we call our "Out of the Closet" campaign counteracts the stigma by shining a positive light
Over, please

on “friendly neighborhood atheists and agnostics,” explaining in our own words why we are freethinkers. It’s about time!

FFRF’s ad fund is currently depleted. FFRF doesn’t have one single big donor bankrolling this. We are depending on you, and will gratefully pool donations from many individuals to underwrite this exciting project. It would require half a million to accommodate the outpouring of requests by local members and groups wanting to host the “Out of the Closet” campaign in their communities! FFRF will use whatever we raise to take this myth-dispelling and educational campaign as frugally as possible to enlighten as many regions as we can. Every donation means a lot.

HELP DEFEND FFRF’S NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER WIN. Gifts to FFRF’s Legal Fund make a big difference, as demonstrated when a federal court surprised the nation in April by agreeing with us that a Congressionally-mandated presidential prayer proclamation is indeed unconstitutional. FFRF’s huge National Day of Prayer win not only dominated headlines but our entire spring. Staff busily processed 1,000 new members in one month as our office saw a great outpouring of support. FFRF and the judge exposed the fact that the 1952 prayer law was based on bad history: the lie that our founders prayed during the Constitutional Convention. Whatever happens in the Obama administration appeal of our case, now before the 7th Circuit Court of Appeals, we’re gratified and proud that Judge Barbara Crabb’s eloquent 66-page ruling sets the record straight that our nation’s history is *not* predicated on a god or prayer!



Ironically, theocratic groups are raising more money over FFRF’s National Day of Prayer case than we are! Three or four well-heeled Christian-right legal groups are shamelessly invoking FFRF’s lawsuit to fundraise, including using robo-calls. FFRF’s legal expenses for litigation are over \$165,179.50 for the first 9 months of the year alone, while donations to the Legal Fund this year to date are at \$79,087.95. The Year in Review report (enclosed) details more about FFRF’s current litigation. This past year, FFRF’s staff attorneys sent out more than 200 formal letters of complaint over state/church entanglements. *No other freethought group provides this kind of practical and meaningful service to freethinkers or to the public at large to solve state/church violations.* We don’t just complain about the inroads of the religious-right; FFRF works diligently to keep religion out of government, ending many violations without going to court. You can see your money at work when given to our Legal Fund.

KEEP SENDING DAN BARKER BACK TO SCHOOL! FFRF offers campus groups the talents of Co-President Dan Barker, author of *Godless* and *Losing Faith in Faith: From Preacher to Atheist*, for campus events, debates and speeches. With membership help, we send Dan “back to school” at no required cost to college student groups. From December 2009-December 2010, Dan spoke at 24 college campuses, including 6 debates, such as the sell-out campus debate with Dinesh D’Souza attracting more than 1,400 in attendance. FFRF sponsors three student essay scholarship programs and two youth activist awards. Help keep this special partnership with student groups afloat.

GENERAL FUND. Your donation now to any of our four very special projects or to our General Fund is deductible for income-tax purposes and will go straight to work furthering freethought, FFRF’s growth and the First Amendment’s prohibition of religion in government. Use the handy slip and self-addressed envelope enclosed, or contribute online at: <http://ffrf.org/get-involved/donate/>

Warmly

Dan Barker & Annie Laurie Gaylor
FFRF Co-Presidents