

# Mid Ohio *A*theists

## A Newsletter for Atheists in the Mansfield Area

Fourteenth Issue

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Mid Ohio Atheists' July monthly meeting will be the annual picnic, dubbed 'Atheists in the Park'. The picnic will be at the Mohican State Park, in the picnic area next to the covered bridge. This will be on Sunday July 17th at noon. We met at the same place the last two year and we all had a great time.

### Contest

This year we'll have a contest that will benefit Harmony House, a domestic violence shelter in Mansfield. A representative of Harmony House said what they need the most, and what most people don't think to donate, is toilet paper, trash bags, and paper towels. So, the contest winner will be the one that brings the most of those three items. You can donate other things as well, but the contest will be decided on only the amount of toilet paper, trash bags, and paper towels that you bring.

The first place prize will be a 3 day pass (\$130 value) to the Secular Student Alliance convention on the OSU campus in Columbus on July 29-31 and a Mid Ohio Atheists tee-shirt. Second place prize will be a Mid Ohio Atheists tee-shirt.



### Annual Picnic Coming Soon

This is for a good cause and I hope we can collect lots of these items for Harmony House.

### Games & Activities

We will have access to the Mohican river right beside the picnic area and many people like to just have fun in the water. We will also have several activities for children and adults, including corn hole and ladder ball.

### Good Food

What would a picnic be without good food. We have already started the list of what foods people have volunteered to bring. You can see the list at our website. Send an email to [info@midohioatheists.org](mailto:info@midohioatheists.org) with the food(s) you will bring and it will be added to the list. Feel free to bring anything you like even if it isn't on the list,

or someone else already volunteered that item.

### Good Conversation

The main reason to go to the picnic is for the company. It is hoped that all of our members will attend, ones that come to the meetings regularly and also those who haven't come around in a while. We also hope to see new people at the picnic and ones that we met in our interactions with other groups. It's great to talk with like minded people and so refreshing to have conversations that aren't stuck at the 'does god exist' level. ♦

We are on Facebook  
[www.facebook.com/  
midohioatheists](http://www.facebook.com/midohioatheists)

### Last Month's Meeting

We met at the South Park pavilion in Mansfield for our June meeting. There were twelve people at the meeting, 3 people were attending for the first time.

Free cookies, chips and pop were available thanks to the generosity of some of our great members.

The park pavilion was a wonderful place to meet, there was plenty of room inside the pavilion and lots for the children to do in the park while the parents were having the meeting. I'm sure we'll be meeting there again.

After the meeting, two new members took the June newsletter to Cici's Pizza to see if they would accept it for their church bulletin promotion for a free drink with a meal. After a consultation with the manager, the cashier accepted it. ♦

### Atheist Quote

Perhaps the whole root of our trouble, the human trouble, is that we will sacrifice all the beauty of our lives, will imprison ourselves in totems, taboos, crosses, blood sacrifices, steeples, mosques, races, armies, flags, nations, in order to deny the fact of death, which is the only fact we have. — James Baldwin (1924-1987), Writer

# The Revised American History

By Michael Adams

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights"

What I always find interesting is Christians will point to the opening of the Declaration of Independence to 'prove' that the nations founders were Christian. At best this proves they were Deists. It says 'endowed by their Creator' which gives the population as a whole the ability to identify their 'Creator' that 'endowed' them as anyone or anything they would like.

Personally my Creator is Evolution, by means of Natural Selection, and if that 'endows' me with 'certain unalienable Rights' then good, however I repeatedly see attempts to infringe on those Rights in respect to myself and people who share my world view.

"that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

Life. Christians are quick to remind me that they don't stone Heretics to death anymore. However I can't help but find it uncomfortable that the book they hold as the word of the Creator of everything gives explicit orders to kill people who think as I do. It would be like the Klu Klux Klan, a Christian Group by the way, using the defense they haven't lynched a black man since the 70's. I think any Black person would still have good right to be unsettled around a group of Klan members, as I still get edgy around the Fundamentalist Christians.

Liberty. The right and power to act, believe, or express oneself in a manner of

one's own choosing. Which is ok with Christians, as long as your belief is in the same god they believe in, and the manner you choose to express yourself does not challenge their personal beliefs in anyway or is not contrary to the teachings of the Bible they still choose to follow (unlike those sections about killing heretics). If they do, then somehow you become a Socialist, Liberal, which is somehow un-American and bad.

And the pursuit of Happiness. Which for me is expressing my dissatisfaction with Religion. Challenging peoples preconceptions and beliefs makes me happy. Mostly because I like to try and make people think, and do a fairly good job of it when they are willing to actually discuss why they believe what they believe-- which most Christians won't, they simply want to cite scripture and relegate it to personal experience and faith.

"the Year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and Eighty seven."

Despite the secular nature of our national government, there is one unambiguous reference to Christ in the Constitution. Article VII dates the Constitution in "the Year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and Eighty seven." But what does this mean for the principle of religious liberty?

The answer to this is simple, because really everything is still dated that way, technically.

There are two dating formats we are all familiar with, or should be familiar with

from grade School. Currently we are in the year 2011 AD. We don't write the AD all the time as a general rule, because its not necessary in regular business. It is just generally assumed that when you write a date your writing AD and not BC/BCE. .

A.D. From the Latin *annō Domini* "in the year of the Lord" from the word *annō* "in the year" the ablative of *annus* "year" + *Domini* "of the Lord" the genitive of *Dominus* "the Lord".

B.C./B.C.E. Before the Common Era, or often thought of as Before the Christian Era.

The fact that the people penning the Constitution choose to write out the English translation of the Latin *annō Domini*,

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as was common practice in that era on Legal documents provides proof of nothing more than their adherence to a cultural tradition.

"The Senators and Representatives before mentioned, and the Members of the several State Legislatures, and all executive and judicial Officers, both of the United States and of the several States, shall be bound by Oath or Affirmation, to support this Constitution; but no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States."

So regardless of the personal beliefs of any of the founders of our nation, this

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**What some  
believe**

I will cast **terror** into the hearts of those who disbelieve. Therefore strike off their heads and strike off every fingertip of them."

QUR'AN (8:12)

**What humanists  
think**

"The American Humanist Association, in support of the creation of a global **community**, affirms the aim of avoiding the use and distortion of creeds, beliefs, ideologies, and worldviews as a justification for violence (or even for the threat of violence) in pursuit of a goal"

AHA RESOLUTION ON GLOBAL COMMUNITY AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, 2008

[WWW.CONSIDERHUMANISM.ORG](http://WWW.CONSIDERHUMANISM.ORG)

# The Revised American History

By Michael Adams (from page 2)

clause, which is found in Article VI, paragraph 3, is explicit that regardless of any ones religious beliefs or lack of they can serve this country. If the intention had been build this country as a wholly Christian Nation as some say why would they make a provision allowing anyone to hold office.

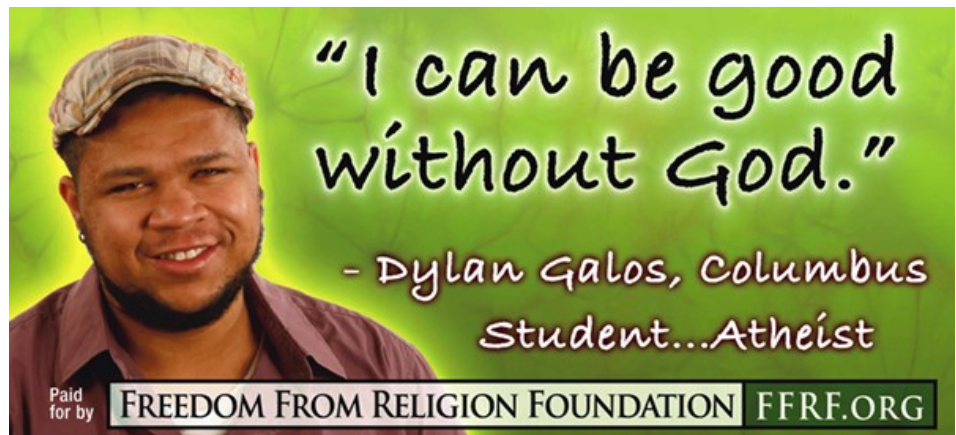
Religious tests were very common in 17th and 18th century England. In part this was done to keep the Church of England in political control while keeping Catholics and 'nonconforming' Protestants in their place. Anyone holding elected office was required to swear the Oath of Supremacy- which stated that the monarch of England was the head of the Church and they held no foreign loyalties, such as the Pope. As time progressed the oaths became more about religious belief and less about loyalties to the King, requiring elected officials to disavow transubstantiation and the veneration of saints. It was the royal government's religious favoritism that in part encourage people to leave England for the Colonies, and it was memory of such mistreatment by the Christian Nation they had left that encouraged our Founding father to prevent the return of Test Acts by adding this provision to the Constitution.

So what does this all mean? It means if the intent really was to create a Christian Nation, then they had that Blueprint already. England was a Christian Nation, the Pope, Gods Emissary on this mortal plain, and the King of England was King only because God had bestowed earthly power on the king, just as God had given spiritual power and authority to the Church. So had that been their intent why would as Jefferson so eloquently put it would they think "all men are created equal" Shouldn't that have read, all Christians are created equal, but it does not. In fact no where does it mention the Christian Religion, and the only time Religion is mentioned it is to say it can not be used to exclude who can serve

their country and to prohibit the making of any law "respecting an establishment of religion". If promotion of Christianity had been their goal should this not have read. "respecting an establishment of Non-Christian religion"? However, it does not.

"As the Government of the United States of America is not, in any sense, founded on the Christian religion" Treaty of Tripoli November 4th 1796

Whenever I point out this line to Christians I am told "sure pull out the only place it says this." At least I have a place where it says it directly. Some will also say they were simply pandering to the Muslims to avoid war. Of course again there is nothing to support this position other than wishful thinking. ♦



## Business Meeting

A business meeting was held on Sunday, June 29th to discuss Mid Ohio Atheists becoming incorporated and then applying for nonprofit status. It was decided that, due to the complexity, cost, and effort to become a nonprofit compared to the size of our group, right now is not the best time to go down that road.

We can do the things we have planned right now as individuals contributing to a common effort. The group will remain an unincorporated association for now. This decision can be revisited

## Out of the Closet Campaign hits Columbus

The Freedom From Religion Foundation's Out of the Closet campaign has come to the Buckeye State's capital in a big way.

FFRF paid for seven billboards to be placed in Columbus, the billboards feature out of the closet atheists.

One church couldn't take the heat and insisted that the billboard of student Dylan Galos saying "I can be good without God." be removed.

Christ Cathedral Church owns the land on which the billboard sits and Rev. Waymon Malone ordered it removed. Malone was unavailable for comment but his mother-in-law, Carolyn Kelley, said "It upset him because of what it said. It said we don't need God, and we're at church, so we do need God." ♦

sometime in the future.

It was decided that we should start being a little more formal in the way the group operates by creating a set of by-laws. This will be based off of the by-laws of other groups that have already become nonprofits since we want to keep that option open to us.

We will vote at our monthly meeting in October on the by-laws and to elect leaders for the coming year. Details on what will be in the by-laws and the method of voting will be discussed at the August and September monthly meetings.