



THE VOICE OF REASON

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"Are you good without God? Millions are."

So read a billboard erected along Interstate 44 in December of 2009 and sponsored, in part, by Atheist Community of Tulsa. And with this assertion comes a responsibility to ACT. Because of this, we strive to demonstrate that we can live up to the assertion worthy of being advertised on a billboard; to show that two hands working can do more than a thousand clasped in prayer. And not only do we prove everyday we are good without God, our members prove to be one in a million.

Our involvement with community service began less than a year after the placement of the billboard. On September 10, 2010, we partnered with the Oklahoma Department of Transportation to beautify a two-mile stretch of road on the northbound direction of Highway 169 from East Admiral Place to East 21st Street. A sign recognizing ACT still stands within the stretch beginning at East 21st Street as we have continued the removal of litter every year since.



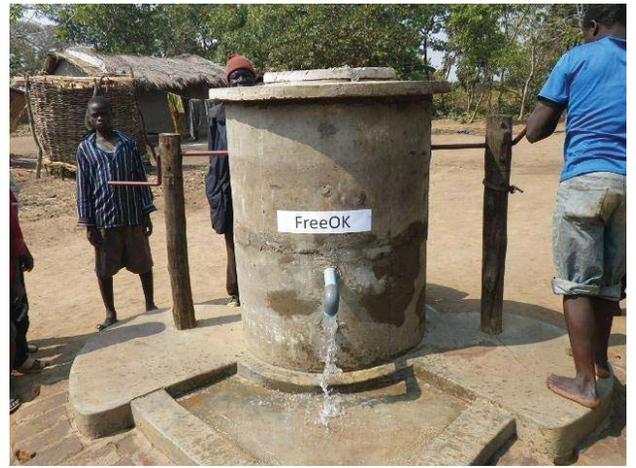
MELISSA in MEXICO

Another endeavor we have continued since its founding was the annual National Day of Reason blood and food drive. The National Day of Reason is a secular celebration for humanists, atheists, secularists, and freethinkers in response to the National Day of Prayer, a legal holiday in the United States, which is celebrated on the first Thursday in May of every year and considered unconstitutional by many atheist and secular groups. Since 2011, a total of 64 units of blood and over 1,000 pounds of food have been donated to Oklahoma Blood Institute and Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma, respectively. Due to the amount of support ACT has received from its members, both ACT and AOK have scheduled a blood drive with Oklahoma Blood Institute on November 16th of this year, and ACT will continue accepting food donations throughout the year.

In July of 2011, FreeOK, sponsored and presented by ACT, partnered with Charity: Water and raised \$5,077. That money was invested with their local partners, Relief Society of Tigray and Action Against Hunger in Ethiopia and Pump Aid in Malawi, to build and rehabilitate freshwater wells and spring protections for people in need. Earlier this month, the water well in Masanjika, Malawi was completed after two years of development. Thanks to ACT, FreeOK, and their donors, this village of

GOOD WITHOUT GOD, con't

148 in Masanjika now has access to clean and safe drinking water. They have also been trained by Pump Aid on safe hygiene practices and basic maintenance of their water project. Each family using the new water source contributed toward their project's construction — a small fee, but one that helps instill a sense of personal ownership for the project. Each family will continue to pay a small amount to use the water; the community will save this money for any necessary maintenance and repairs. The people in Masanjika, Malawi, especially women and children, used to walk up to two hours to collect water for their families. Even then, each family member had to make do with just five liters of water per day for drinking, bathing, cooking and their other needs. The water was not safe to drink and often made people sick. Now, they are walking significantly less every day to collect water. This means each family now can use up to 15 liters per person per day! Most importantly, the water they bring home each day is safe enough to drink.



SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Official Meeting

Sept. 8, 3:00pm
Guthrie Green

Day Center Meal

Sept. 8, 5:30pm
Tulsa Day Center
415 W. Archer

DWA - Kilkenny's

Sept. 14, 7:30pm
1314 E. 15th, Cherry Street

Social Dinner

Sept. 18, 7:00pm
Phat Philly's
1305 S. Peoria

Woman of ACT Brunch

Sept. 21, 11:30am
In the Raw South
6151 S. Sheridan

Tulsa Mini Maker Faire

Sept. 28, 11am-7pm
Guthrie Green

DWA South

Sept. 28, 7:30pm
McNellie's South City
7031 S. Zurich

Holy Rollers Bowling

Sept. 29, 7:00pm
Sheridan Lanes
31st & Sheridan

Quiet Company

Oct. 3, 7:00pm
The Vanguard
222 N. Main

In memory of the late atheist activist, Christopher Hitchens, who passed away in 2011 due to complications of cancer, ACT raised \$580 for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society by participating in the Light the Night walks on October 13, 2012 at the Oklahoma Aquarium. The goal of the walk was to build awareness of blood cancers as well as raise money for research and support of patients and their families. Various walkers carried illuminated balloons and lanterns of different colors. White balloons were carried by survivors, red by supporters, and gold balloons were carried by those walking in memory of a loved one they lost.

And when Oklahoma saw a devastating tornado outbreak in which 25 people lost their lives, 390 were injured, an estimated 1,200 homes were destroyed, and caused an estimated \$2 billion dollars in damage, ACT and FreeOK stepped up to the challenge; Through the "Actually, I'm an atheist" tee shirt campaign, FreeOK raised \$15,000 for fellow atheist, Rebecca Vitsmun, in Oklahoma City to rebuild the home she lost during the storm. Additionally, members of ACT worked various disaster relief efforts throughout Oklahoma clearing debris, providing resources, and food. And when winds ripped through Tulsa at speeds of up to 77 miles per hour damaging properties, uprooting trees, and knocking out power of many Tulsa residents during the night of July 23, our members were in the thick of it again helping our fellow members clear debris and collecting non-perishable food items. As a consequence of the food collection, the ACT Pantry was born. The ACT Pantry is the storage of frozen and non-perishable food items collected by and for our fellow members in their time of need. ACT requests all food products to be delivered and collected at any ACT event.



Moving forward, we will increase our efforts in helping our community and need your full support whether it's through paying dues, cleaning up roadways, donating blood to OBI or food to the ACT Pantry, or for FreeOK. It is not enough to simply put up a billboard declaring our morality. We must prove it by our actions. And that is what we mean by a responsibility to ACT.

ACT is not just an acronym. It is a verb. It is who we are. It is what we do.

BE SURE AND KEEP YOUR
EYE ON MEETUP AND THE
FACEBOOK EVENTS PAGES
FOR MORE INFORMATION

NOTES FROM MEXICO

by MELISSA MILLER

Unbeknownst to many of you, one of your fellow heathens and ACT members spent this summer in Mexico, missing out on DWAs and Family Days to cuddle up with bedtime spiders and get really really dirty. By get really really dirty, I mean I'm an archaeologist, and I was on an archaeological dig.

It lasted from June 11 to August 9. We worked in the Chihuahua Desert area near the ancient city of Paquime, the largest and most complex archaeological site between the Central Valley of Mexico and the Pueblos of the American Southwest. (Google "Teotihuacan" and "Anasazi", and then "Paquime".) We excavated three sites outside the city, testing a hypothesis that I'll tell you about some day over a beer.

Archaeological digs are pretty much what you'd expect. We move a lot of dirt, get filthy, injure ourselves, and proudly carry some muddy bags of broken pottery back to the lab. Occasionally we find a giant oven/portal to the underworld, which...I'll tell you about some day over a beer.

The discomfort is worth it in the name of science, of course. If there's a moral to this story, it's that the front lines of scientific discovery are often hot, frequently boring, and really really filthy, but we all love it and wouldn't trade it for anything.

Especially when those indigenous festival nights come around and all the archaeologists get drunk and follow a donkey through the village streets. Those are the good nights.



QUIET COMPANY RETURNS

Formed in 2005 Quiet Company have spent the last year playing late night talk shows (Carson Daly), performing at the Austin City Limits Festival, setting a record crowd for radio station KGSR's Blues On The Green outdoor concert series, recording a session in the original studio of the iconic "Austin City Limits" television show, winning a record-shattering 10 Austin Music Awards, played SXSW 2103, Canadian Music Festival 2013, Tulsa's Center of the Universe Festival, American Atheist's 50th Anniversary Convention and receiving glowing reviews for the late-2011 release *We Are All Where We Belong*.



Mixed by legendary engineer Tim Palmer (Pearl Jam, U2, The Cure), *We Are All Where We Belong* is a startlingly personal album that finds the band growing up and questioning the religious beliefs that underpinned the band's early work. The album's gut-punch honesty is presented on a foundation of expansive arrangements that build to anthemic choruses; songs that shift from moments of hushed intimacy to full-on explosions.

"It is easily the most personal thing I've ever written," Muse said. "It is, essentially, a break up record, only the romance that's ending was between myself and religion."

Quiet Company returns to Tulsa on October 3rd at the Vanguard Music Hall.

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

Online board motions and August 4th board meeting notes

An online motion to have a Community Aid Committee was approved, and Stephanie Fitch was appointed committee chair. ACT members interested in helping should send her a message.

On Thursday, August 1st, ACT Board Trustee Leah Havlik regrettably stepped down from her position as board trustee due to time conflicts. Mellissa Miller was appointed unanimously to fill the position. Our thanks go out to Leah for all she has done for us!

An ACT Movie Night/Film Festival was discussed and board members are looking for a possible venue and date, as well as movie suggestions.

Tom agreed to chair the Governance Committee until year-end (with the ongoing goal of reviewing and annually revising the Bylaws to bring them in line with the needs of ACT). Ideas and a charter for a Publicity Committee will be discussed further online. Committee appointments will be worked out, and then approved by a vote at the next board meeting.

A new email address has been set up at comments@actok.org to solicit input from members. All comments to this address will go to the Unholy Trinity (Eric, Justin and Stephanie) for discussion.

THE BATTLE OF PORUM...OK, NOT REALLY. BUT WE STILL WON.

On July 23rd, a member of Atheist Community of Tulsa and resident of Porum, Oklahoma expressed a concern regarding The Christian Flag, which has a white field and a red Latin cross inside a blue canton representing all of Christianity and Christendom, being flown on Porum Public Schools' grounds and provided photographic evidence of the aforementioned First Amendment violation on ACT's Facebook Group.

Within hours, American Atheists Regional Director, William Poire, initiated a dialogue by email with Porum Public Schools utilizing the contact form on their website. In the email, William iterated the concern and referenced the Lemon Test so established by the Supreme Court of the United States which details the requirements for legislation concerning religion. Consisting of three prongs, if any one or more are violated, the government's action is deemed unconstitutional under the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution.

The three prongs are:

1. The government's action must have a secular legislative purpose;
2. The government's action must not have the primary effect of either advancing or inhibiting religion;
3. The government's action must not result in an "excessive government entanglement" with religion.

William opined, "The Christian Flag being flown on Porum Public Schools' grounds respects the Christian religion" and thus "results in an excessive government entanglement with religion" and requested that they "remove The Christian Flag from Porum Public Schools' grounds as it violates the United States Constitution."

Additionally, American Atheists State Director of Oklahoma, Ron Pittser, contacted Oklahoma State School Boards Association to protest the flag and seek a resolution.

On July 31st, William received a telephone call from an individual identifying himself as Brent, a Porum Public Schools' administrator. He explained that the flag in question was raised by a local church who rented the grounds months prior and was simply "never removed". William was unable to corroborate Brent's story, but responded that upon the completion of the rental, the flag legally should have been removed by either the tenant or renter so as to not reasonably inform the perception of "respecting an establishment of religion" to the public as the flag being left in place did. Both parties agreed an inclusive atmosphere wherein either all religions (an impossible feat) or none are favored is the best learning environment for their students. Brent agreed to have The Christian Flag removed within the week.

On August 6th, the aforementioned resident contacted William to advise that The Christian Flag had been removed as per the agreement between the school administrator and regional director acting on behalf of Porum Public Schools and American Atheists, respectively.



Contacts and Links:

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Terry@actok.org
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General Questions:
Info@actok.org

Please visit the Atheist Community of Tulsa on:
Facebook
Meetup
www.actok.org

Other website for this issue:
<http://actok.org>
<http://www.charitywater.org>
<http://www.quietcompanymusic.com>