



PANVIEWS

Newsletter of PA Nonbelievers, Inc., Affiliated with:
American Atheists, the Council for Secular Humanism, Atheist Alliance International

October, 2007

“The tragedy is that every brain cell devoted to belief in the supernatural is a brain cell one cannot use to make life richer or easier or happier.”

--Kay Nolte Smith

If the observation that belief in the supernatural diverts brain activity away from more productive and humanitarian pursuits is correct, it would certainly explain much of the rather, uh, peculiar behavior of many in the upper ranks of our military, especially the current Commander-In Chief. Perhaps those WMDs and the Iraqis who bombed us on 9/11 really do exist in a supernatural plane of existence that most of us simply are unable to experience?

At any rate, we reported last month on some outrageous behavior by a number of Jesus-crazed military officers. Since then, the Military Religious Freedom Foundation (MRFF) has filed a lawsuit against the Christian Army major who disrupted a meeting of the Military Association of Atheists and Freethinkers (MAAF) taking place in Iraq that was otherwise attended by enlisted personnel.

The lawsuit states: “During the course of the meeting, defendant...confronted the attendees, disrupted the meeting and interfered with plaintiff...and the other attendees’ rights to discuss topics of their interests.” The document further states that such behavior in effect forced the plaintiff to “submit to a religious test as a qualification to his post as a soldier in the United States Army,” which is a violation of Article VI, Clause 3 of the U. S. Constitution.

Defense Secretary Robert Gates was also named as a defendant because, as stated in the lawsuit, Gates has allowed the military to engage in “a pattern and practice of constitutionally impermissible promotions of religious beliefs within the Department of Defense and the United States military.”

Mikey Weinstein, an attorney in the Reagan administration and founder of MRFF, has promised many more such lawsuits to correct the ongoing practice of promoting Christianity in the U. S. military

Responding to another MRFF complaint, the Pentagon’s Inspector General has recommended that six officers be disciplined for misconduct for appearing to give Pentagon endorsement for a video promoting a fundamentalist Christian organization.

We think of our U. S. military as champions of our personal freedoms and a system of justice based on rational thinking rather than mere belief. That may be true with regard to the use of force, but we are all responsible in defending and championing those causes in non-violent ways.

One of the great weapons of nonbelievers is the way we learn from each other at our meetings, and our next York meeting will be at the UUCY at 925 South George Street on Saturday, October 6, from 10:00 AM to 12 noon. At this meeting we will hear reports from our members who attended the AAI conference in Washington DC over the previous weekend, and we will also make final decisions on our support of our official PAN charity, the local women’s shelters.

The shelter in Lancaster desperately needs work done in and around their building, such as removing carpets, putting in new tile or vinyl flooring and repairing their parking lot. Let us use our brain cells, and some elbow grease if needed, to make life easier or happier for the victims of domestic abuse. We need volunteers! Please come to the meeting or contact a board member if you can help out. The shelters are also in constant need of clothing for women and children as well as soap, shampoo and other bath, personal and household products used by women and children.

Please note that we will not have our usual luncheon following the October York meeting because we will be heading directly up to the PumpkinFest (see page 5) at noon to relieve the PAN members who volunteered to staff the booth during the meeting. We need volunteers for both days, and we always have a good time at this event.

Don’t miss our Harrisburg area meeting at the West Shore Plaza in Lemoyne from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM on Thursday, October 11. And we will have an info table in the State Capitol Building in Harrisburg all day on Monday, October 22. We may also once again challenge the House prayer policy at 1:00 PM on that day, so please consider attending!

Finally, even if you choose not to donate to PAN or if you have already contributed this year, please fill out and return to us your blue form, if you received one with this mailing. We do not charge a subscription fee, so returning your blue form will help us to maintain correct contact info, determine who wishes to continue receiving Panviews, and confirm eligibility to vote in our January elections.—*President’s Report*

Book Review

by *Steven Neubauer*

The Case for Christ by Lee Stroebel

(Editor's note: Eight years ago Rick, who is a Christian fundamentalist minister, sent to his childhood and Catholic school friend Steve a copy of the book, The Case for Christ by Lee Stroebel, with the request that Steve read the book and send back his comments. Rick was so convinced that the "evidence" presented in the book was decisive and unassailable that he was shocked, SHOCKED! that anyone could offer any sort of disagreeable response. Part one of Steve's somewhat disagreeable response appears this month.)

Rick,

I hope everything is well with you. I have finally finished reading the book you sent, *The Case for Christ* by Lee Stroebel. The book was very well written. So well written, in fact, that I can see how it might appeal to many people who are not accustomed to critical thinking. Having said that, my problems with the content of the book began before the book itself even started.

In the introduction, Stroebel mentioned his early life as an atheist and his initial examination of the "facts" pointing to Jesus as the true Messiah. "I had a strong motivation," he wrote, "to ignore them: a self-serving and immoral lifestyle that I would be compelled to abandon if I were ever to change my views and become a follower of Jesus."

(Forgive my jumping ahead for a moment, but at the end of the book Stroebel described his life as an "atheist": "I had been living a profane, drunken, self-absorbed, and immoral lifestyle...I had backstabbed my colleagues...violated legal and ethical standards...I was sacrificing my wife and children on the altar of success...I was a liar, a cheater, and a deceiver...My heart had shrunk to the point where it was rock hard toward anyone else.")

Please don't object on grounds that Stroebel was referring to only himself. His depiction of atheism is too stereotypical and his book too proselytizing in nature. Quite frankly, Rick, I am sick and tired of hearing from Christians about the evil and immorality of atheists. For one thing, it simply isn't true.

While I personally believe that people are basically good no matter what they believe about God or religion, a pretty good argument can be made that religion, Christianity in particular, has quite a negative effect on both individuals and societies. The United States has by far the highest crime rates in the industrial world, and the highest rates of church attendance. Europe has about the same percentage of Christians as the U.S., but church attendance there averages about ten percent compared with our fifty percent. Is it a coincidence that violent crime in Western Europe is a small fraction of ours? I don't think so. Japan, where Christianity is almost nonexistent, has even lower crime rates.

And American prisons are filled with Christians. Even accounting for jailhouse conversions, prison systems typically report (in the few reports available) an

excessive number of Christian convicts and few atheists. Catholics seem to be the worst, with some prisons reporting that half of their inmates are Catholic, compared with about 23 percent of the general population.

I think that a person must think irrationally to believe in the supernatural, and this irrationality is reflected in a propensity, among some people, for criminal behavior. And, of course, the Christian knows he can always evade accountability because his savior has already died for any sin he may choose to commit.

In fact, Stroebel's description of his life as an atheist pretty much describes my own early life living as a Christian. It wasn't until I fully embraced atheism and secular humanism that I truly understood the concepts of responsibility and accountability, and became a fully functional, moral adult human being.

As a child, I always thought the nuns and priests were lying to me. "Don't do this because God doesn't want you to." "Don't question anything, just do what we tell you to do." "We know what God wants, you don't." Your experience with this was no doubt different from mine, but it left me angry, fearful, and most of all, confused. Nothing seemed to make any sense. For example, I could hurt someone, even kill them, then go to confession, get hit by a truck and go straight to heaven. But if I commit the mortal sin of missing Sunday Mass and get hit by a truck, then I get tossed into Hell forever, even if I was an exemplary person.

And I am especially tired of hearing that atheists are "hardhearted." My Random House defines hardhearted as "unfeeling, unmerciful, pitiless." If I had a nickel, okay a dollar, for every time a Christian called me hardhearted in the York newspapers, I could pay off the mortgage. Hard-headed I'll admit to ("not easily moved or deceived; practical; shrewd"). But hardhearted is nothing more than a bigoted slur.

It could be that Stroebel was no more a real atheist than I was ever a true Christian. But when I read that statement in his introduction, I got the same pain in the gut that I had all through school. Stroebel said he was on a quest for the truth, and he already had a basic premise horribly wrong.

The pain only got worse.

Please keep in mind that the comments that follow will be necessarily superficial as I will not comment on everything in Stroebel's book that I disagreed with – to do so would fill at least another book. I will try to comment on something from every chapter and then on the book as a whole.

Chapter 1. The Eyewitness Evidence. Stroebel's expert here is Craig Blomberg, with a doctorate in New Testament and a professor of New Testament at Denver Seminary. Blomberg admits that John was revised and edited by person or persons unknown, but still insists that "the gospel is obviously based on eyewitness material, as are the other three gospels."

The early church attached names to the four gospels, but there is no real evidence that the authors were the four men that Christian tradition says they were. Blomberg's "proof" consists largely of a quote

from Irenaeus from the late second century. Irenaeus was, of course, simply repeating what had already become a century-old legend. And Blomberg conveniently neglects to mention that Irenaeus was a bishop of the church.

Blomberg concedes that Mark is the oldest gospel and explains Mark's brevity in terms of the literary and theological customs of the times. Unfortunately, while this explains Mark, it necessarily casts doubt on Matthew, Luke and John, which were obviously constructed from Mark and legends about fulfilled prophecies and supernatural events. And Blomberg's assertion that Matthew is proven to be an eyewitness account because it was copied from Mark decades after the events occurred is simply too ludicrous to take seriously.

Chapter 2. Testing the Eyewitness Evidence. Here Blomberg emphasizes one of the major failings of Stroebel's book. When the peculiar actions of biblical characters need explanations, an analogy is offered from the present, such as the recent court cases that open many chapters. But when that doesn't work, it is conveniently explained that ancient peoples did things differently from us modern folks, and we just don't understand how things really were back then. Talk about doubletalk.

Another convenient bit of doubletalk was Blomberg explaining that the ignorance and various failures of Jesus recorded in these "historical" documents can be explained by Jesus "voluntarily and consciously limiting the independent exercise of his divine attributes." In other words, any evidence proving that Jesus was actually a mere human will be twisted and contorted until it can be interpreted in such a way that it "proves" the divinity of Jesus! Come on, Rick. How much of this nonsense are you prepared to swallow?

Chapter 3. The Documentary Evidence. This chapter's expert is Bruce Metzger, who studied at Princeton Theological Seminary and who is past president of the International Society for New Testament Studies and several other similar groups.

Metzger complained that scholars consider the works of Homer to be authentic, even though we have fewer and less timely manuscripts for Homer's works than we have for the gospels. But authentic doesn't mean accurate. We don't know if any of the events in the Iliad or the Odyssey actually occurred. And accepted as authentic doesn't mean that we really believe there were giant gods that arose out of the sea to avenge their one-eyed giant children who ate passersby.

Chapter 4. The Corroborating Evidence. Another chapter, another expert. This time Edwin M. Yamauchi, Ph.D., former president of both the Institute for Biblical Research and the Conference on Faith and History. Noticing a pattern here yet?

Corroboration? What corroboration?

Roman historian Tacitus is credited by Yamauchi with "the most important reference to Jesus outside the New Testament." But Tacitus refers to Christ only as an 80 year-old legend about a man who was executed and who left followers who were reviled "not so much of the crime of firing the city (Rome), as of hatred against

mankind." Not exactly a ringing endorsement. Tacitus also commented on the gap between the death of Jesus and the activity of the Christians. And it is interesting that the "break out" of this "mischievous superstition" occurred before the burning of Rome in A.D. 64, or well before the earliest manuscripts of the gospels.

More importantly, Tacitus does not mention a resurrection or miracles, or make reference at all to any supernatural occurrences. For anyone to take this reference by Tacitus and twist it into some sort of "proof" for a resurrected Christ strikes me as the height of intellectual dishonesty.

On another issue, Yamauchi concluded, "So there is, as Paul Maier points out, non-biblical attestation of the darkness that occurred at the time of Jesus' crucifixion." This is a reckless, one is tempted to say idiotic, statement from someone who doesn't know when Jesus was crucified. Third-hand accounts of an eclipse that may have occurred in 33 A.D. do not corroborate anything.

Read this chapter again if you must, but it doesn't really corroborate anything except the legends that were in place years after the alleged events occurred.

Chapter 5. The Scientific Evidence. This chapter's expert is John McRay, Ph.D., who studied at Hebrew University and Vanderbilt University Divinity School, professor of New Testament and archaeology, and author of the textbook, *Archaeology and the New Testament*.

Here, under the heading "Digging For the Truth," Stroebel pauses to explain how investigative journalists verify a story by checking out the small details. Allow me to add an element to the story Stroebel provides to make it more applicable to the questions at hand.

Consider a story a man told about a plane trip he had taken from St. Louis to Chicago. The man claimed that while on the plane, he saw (to borrow from Rod Serling) an ape-like creature jumping around on the wing of the plane and trying to sabotage one of the engines. After the flight he related how he stopped in Springfield, Illinois to see the movie "Titanic" at the Odeon Theater where he had eaten a large Clark bar that he had bought at the concession stand. Now, even if investigators confirm that such a theater exists, and was showing "Titanic" at the stated time, and sells large Clark bars, does that in any way enhance the believability of the man's story about the flying ape?

Obviously not. But that is exactly what Stroebel insists we should do.

Stroebel then tossed McRay a real softball. The gospel of Luke says Jesus was walking into Jericho when he healed the blind man, which is apparently contradicted by the gospel of Mark, which says Jesus was walking out of Jericho. McKay gave the unlikely explanation that since Jericho moved around a lot, both Mark and Luke were right! "Again," gushed Stroebel, "archaeology had answered another challenge to Luke." And "Luke has been established to be a scrupulously accurate historian, even in the smallest details."

If this is how the historical details in the Bible are "verified," count me among the confirmed skeptics.

Speaking of the question of whether or not the tiny

village of Nazareth even existed in Jesus' time, McRay said, "The burden of proof ought to be on those who dispute its existence." Anyone with even a casual knowledge of science knows it is impossible to prove that something does not exist or that it did not exist 2000 years ago. McRay's musings on "science" might therefore all be dismissed as the remarks of a religious zealot manipulating the available facts to fit his theology.

Chapter 6. The Rebuttal Evidence. Ah, finally, I thought. After all of these witnesses with an agenda for Jesus, now we hear from the other side, or at least some impartial witnesses. Nope. We get a few paragraphs about the Jesus Seminar and an expert "witness," Gregory A. Boyd, with a doctorate in Divinity and a book about how he converted his skeptic father.

Boyd's life seems to revolve around the rather bizarre idea that anything that cannot be explained in physical terms must be not only proof of the supernatural, but also proof that Jesus was really resurrected. I could write an entire book just on Boyd's dishonest attitude and methodology, but I don't wish to waste time on this nonsense. However, some remarks at the end of the chapter said a lot.

Stroebel referred to *The Real Jesus* by Roman Catholic monk and scholar Dr. Luke Timothy Johnson, in which Johnson wrote that the Jesus Seminar follows a process that is "biased against the authenticity of the gospel traditions," and its results were "already determined ahead of time." Johnson concluded, "This is not responsible, or even critical, scholarship. It is a self-indulgent charade."

One might say the exact same thing about Stroebel and his parade of experts who are obviously biased in favor of the authenticity of the gospels. From the beginning, I never doubted the conclusions that would be reached at the end of Stroebel's book, "it was already determined ahead of time." And I don't see how anyone could read the irresponsible "scholarship" that Stroebel is trying to pass off as real data and not conclude that it is indeed an irresponsible, "self-indulgent charade."

To be continued.

Join PA Nonbelievers in the PA State Capitol Building in Harrisburg on Monday, October 22! We will have an information table set up all day in the common area during normal business hours.

We may also once again challenge the House requirement that all people in the visitors gallery stand for the prayer to open the House session! So join us for a day of official rejection, dirty looks from lawmakers, outright scorn and, if we are really lucky, brutal beatings and humiliating arrests!

Change of time notice!

**Our October 28 BOD meeting will be at 11:00 AM
Followed by newsletter meeting at 12:00 noon
Stop in and help out!**

Mark your calendars!

**PAN Tenth Annual Winter Solstice Party
will be held in York on Saturday, December 22!**

ASK EDNA

Edna answers questions from her posh headquarters at Atheist Station in Gallitzen, PA.

Dear Edna:

So many questions, so little time! Ben Bunion from Lonesome Buzzard, Idaho asks:

IF MEN'S ROOM STALLS ARE SO NARROW AT MINNEAPOLIS INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, WHY DOESN'T SENATOR LARRY CRAIG CHANGE PLANES AT KANSAS CITY WHERE STALLS ARE WIDER (TO ACCOMMODATE TEXANS)?

Edna's note: I chose to cover this question over the one about Mother Teresa, which I'll put off 'til next time.

My dear Ben, this was a very difficult question for me to investigate since I am a woman and normally barred from entering men's rooms. I don't travel much anymore anyway, so I had to rely heavily on first hand experience from other mid-western senators. I sent out questionnaires to twenty-four senators of which only five were returned (two were smeared with sheep dip – I wonder what that means?).

At first blush, I was astounded by the pictures that were sent back, along with the partially filled out queries. I would have never guessed at the depths of depravity that occur in America's heartland public restrooms (My own personal experience is limited to scenes from *Planes, Trains, and Automobiles*). My guess is, these righteous politicians from the Bible-belt are not washing their ears before attending Sunday school or church -- for their Bible warns against such behavior.

I extended my investigation to interview the renowned psychologist, Dr. Fred Fingerflicker of the Kansas State Normal Hospital in Sourmilk Falls. It is his belief that politicians, and other men as well, suffer an affinity for other men while denying their craving, because their wives have denied them access-in-the-boudoir, also known as AITB (Ass-In-The-Boudoir). Dr. Fingerflicker says this is most prevalent among Republican men whose wives are unsure and afraid of what sex drive is all about. It seems that these women (having very, very clean ears) are influenced by what they are taught in church and Sunday school.

So you see, B.B., this is a very complex conundrum about Congressmen and the Kosher use of condoms in close quarters – concomitant capers contingent on culinary, as well as, cufflink-quality condition. In other words, unsavory sex sucks. Of course, this condition can be significantly mitigated by landing at airports at or near the East or West Coasts where most politicians put the make on persons of the opposite sex in larger public spaces, much to the disgust of Republicans of any gender – just ask Bill Clinton.

In closing, I can only say that the GOP has a problem, the root of which is in their family life being way out of focus.

NEWSPAPER FORUM

Letter to the editor by *Janet Factor* published in the Springfield IL Journal-Register on September 11, 2007:

Let me see if I have this straight. In his letter Bob Ruble claims that the Christian version of the human condition goes like this:

From before birth we are contaminated with evil. Though God created us, he bears no responsibility for this, and rejects us from the moment we are born because of it.

Being perfect himself, he demands that we be perfect or be punished. We are by nature incapable of achieving this standard. Therefore God withdraws his love from us.

There is no help in this world. Other humans are as vile as ourselves. In fact, we are so vile that even when we constantly consult our conscience and obey its guide, we still fail, offending God even when we are trying our best not to do so.

Therefore, we must constantly confess our unworthiness and beg for God's forgiveness, which can only be obtained through the intervention of Jesus, his firstborn, who is perfect. If we willingly abase ourselves in this manner, we can hope that after death releases us from suffering we will finally be granted the love of God that we have so desperately sought after our entire lives.

Have I got that right?

This is not an adult philosophy of life. It is a perfect portrait of the psychology of a chronically abused child.

That's no way to get to heaven; it's a way to live in hell.

Letter to the editor by *Ron Stauffer* sent to the Altoona Mirror on August 27, 2007:

With religion one never knows where to begin. Let's start with 'Coins come up short', page A6, 8-23-07. It's not enough that the religious fundamentalists got their foot in the door, getting "In God We Trust" on our money--now, they would like to dictate its location on the coin itself. Perhaps above Washington's or Jefferson's head (maybe a halo would suffice). Why stop there! Perhaps all credit cards should have that elitist phrase stamped on them--you know--to lessen the devil's influence (who, by the way, is also mythical).

In Friday's paper (8-24-07), there's the front-page story of a couple celebrating their 70th anniversary. Good for them, and congratulations are certainly in order. Even their profession of faith is appropriate. But I will remind the good Penn State professor, David Eggebun, what George Bernard Shaw once penned: "The fact that a believer is happier than a skeptic, is no more to the point than the fact that a drunken man is happier than a sober one." I'm sure his studies show that anyone who is content with their philosophy of life, religious or not, is a happier person for it.

Back to Thursday's paper, because it's about economics. Cal Thomas' column talks about money like there are two kinds of the stuff: The kind thrown around in Iraq, and the more rare kind that "trickles-down" into this nation's infrastructure. He has the cheek--after witnessing the last six years of pork, pork, war, war--to say the Democrats can even do worse! If we don't have a super-state now, with government ever so large, our armed forces flung so wide, and freedoms more

proscribed, then I can see why he would be happy to have four more years of Bush-like policies.

Letter to the editor by *Bill Walker* sent to the Centre Daily Times on August 29, 2007:

If ever a contest was to be held to determine the most stupid one sentence social comment ever uttered, my entry would be: "There are no atheists in foxhole."

This incredibly false statement, I believe, was originally coined by a fundamentalist preacher afflicted with a cool room temperature I.Q.

This phrase has since been parroted countless times by zealots and other persons similarly afflicted.

Anyone giving the matter even a fleeting thought must realize that just in WWII, the combined number of combatants exceeded forty million. This includes Russian, German, Japanese, U.S., England, Canada, Australia etc. forces.

The number of atheist combatants probably runs in the hundreds of thousands in foxholes, cockpits, on ships and submarines all over the world.

If ever there was a platitude that deserved to be put to rest permanently, this one deserves this dubious distinction.

The American Atheist publication, in every issue, includes a foxhole atheist article by highly decorated veterans including those with purple hearts.

Letter by *Carl Silverman* to Jo Bratton of the Associated Press sent on September 24, 2007:

Dear Ms. Bratton,

While I appreciate your coverage of Ernie Chambers and his lawsuit against God, I'm a bit disturbed about the way you (and many others) describe him and others like him as "self-proclaimed" agnostics.

Why is it we never hear "self-proclaimed" Christian, "self-proclaimed" Jew, or "self-proclaimed" Muslim? How about a "self-proclaimed" Unitarian or Mormon?

I think the reason why reporters do this is that they consider "atheist" and "agnostic" offensive or derogatory words, and they don't want to be accused of calling people bad names.

I don't know of any atheist or agnostic who is offended by simply being identified as an "atheist" or "agnostic"--no self-proclamation necessary.

(Editors note: Ms. Bratton responded by saying she understood Carl's point and would "take it into account" in future stories.)

Join PA Nonbelievers at the

2007 East Pennsboro PumpkinFest

Saturday, October 6, 9:30 AM to 5:00 PM

Sunday, October 7, 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM

We will have our booth # 173 again this year at the PumpkinFest at Adams Ricci Community Park in Enola, PA (West Shore Harrisburg area).

We will need help to staff the booth during the fair hours and also with set up (8:30 AM Saturday) and tear down (5:00 PM Sunday).

Please contact Steve if you will be available at any time during either day to help or if there is any question about cancellation on either day due to weather.

One Nation, Under God

by *Steven Neubauer*

“Daddy, what do people do when they lay together to make babies?”

Chester B. Goodheart gagged and sprayed a mouthful of coffee across the table. He made some gurgling noises, then managed to refocus his eyes and look nervously around the room—you could never tell when the Womb Police might be watching or listening.

“Um...uh...well...” Goodheart momentarily struggled to gain control, then continued in a clear, steady voice. “Why don’t you get out our fine old family Bible, Jaala? As you know very well, Jaala, the Good Book is the only source we true Americans ever need to consult on such matters. Heh, heh.”

“Oh yes, Daddy, everyone knows that! Daddy, did you know that God’s Law in the Bible says that a baby isn’t a real person until after it is actually born and takes its first breath?”

“Perhaps it’s better not to speak of such things, Jaala.” Goodheart leafed uneasily through the thick book and said loudly, “You’ve obviously been studying the Bible, Jaala. You know very well that you must be married before you can lay with a man and make babies.”

“Is that what you and Maria were doing the other night? Making a brother for me to marry so we could lay together and make babies just like Abraham and Sarah?”

Goodheart’s jaw dropped as he paged quickly through the book. Didn’t the damn thing have an index or something? “Yes, Jaala, you may very well have a brother when your new mommy gets out of jail.” The Vatican-Scalia-Alito Fetal Citizenship Act of 2012 had, among other things, abolished all sex education and established once and for all that personhood began at the moment of conception. Maria Goodheart, Jaala’s stepmother, had willfully and maliciously committed assault with a deadly weapon by lighting a cigarette five minutes into her pregnancy.

“Daddy, before you sell me into marriage, aren’t you going to offer me to all the men in town for a night or two? Lot did that with his daughters to keep the men from doing those evil homosexual things.”

Goodheart was by now frantically reading page after page. “Yes, Jaala, and I’ll bet God was pretty upset with Lot, wasn’t He?”

“Oh, no, Daddy. God was so pleased with Lot and his daughters that He saved them when he destroyed everyone else for doing bad things. And do you know what else, Daddy? Lot lost his wife, so his daughters laid with him and had his babies. Since I can’t get a Lot like those girls in the Bible did, maybe I should just lay with you, Daddy, and have your babies. After all, you don’t have Maria anymore.”

Goodheart shrieked and grabbed up his daughter, clamping his hand tightly over her mouth. Too late! Heavily armed men burst through the doors and windows. “Womb Police!” they shouted. “Jaala Goodheart, you are under arrest! Assume the position!”

“But officers,” pleaded Goodheart, “you can’t arrest Jaala! She learned everything she knows about sex from the Bible! Honest she did!”

Officer Haggard winked and said, “So did we, Mr. Goodheart, so did we.”

Officer Vitter unrolled a large, official looking document and announced, “By authority of the Cardinal Law of our great nation, Goodheart, Chester, is hereby convicted of permitting Bible interpretations, unauthorized. Sentenced to three years at John Roberts Re-education Retreat.” He paused to clear his throat and unroll another warrant. “Goodheart, Jaala, is hereby convicted of having thoughts, unauthorized and impure. Sentenced to five years in service to Our Lord, followed by a period of probation of five years of winning souls to Jesus in Iran. Now, Jaala,” he smiled and licked his lips, “we aren’t going to tell you again! Assume the position, missionary!”

Calendar of Events

Saturday, October 6, 2007 – PA Nonbelievers meeting at the UUCY in York from 10:00AM to 12:00 Noon. There will be no informal luncheon today due to the PumpkinFest.

Saturday, October 6 & Sunday October 7, 2007 – East Pennsboro PumpkinFest at Adams-Ricci Park in Enola, PA.

Thursday, October 11, 2007 – PA Nonbelievers Harrisburg area meeting at 7:00PM at the West Shore Plaza in Lemoyne PA. Food & drink available.

Monday, Oct. 22, 2007 – Info day at State Capitol Building.

Tuesday, Oct. 23, 2007 – *The Free Thought Forum* live call-in show, 6 to 7 PM on WRCT, Comcast York channel 16.

Sunday, October 28, 2007 – Newsletter assembly at the home of Steve & Yolanda at 12:00 noon. BOD at 11:00 AM.

Sunday, October 28, 2007 – York Halloween Parade, 3 PM.

Saturday, November 3, 2007 – PA Nonbelievers meeting at UUCY in York from 10:00AM to 12:00 Noon & luncheon.

Tuesday, November 6, 2007 – FSGP meeting at 7:00PM in the Ludington Library in Bryn Mawr. Info: www.fsgp.org.

Thursday, November 8, 2007 – PA Nonbelievers Harrisburg area meeting at 7:00PM in Lemoyne PA.

Sunday, November 25, 2007 – Newsletter assembly at the home of Steve & Yolanda at 2:00 PM. BOD at 1:00 PM.

Tuesday, Nov. 27, 2007 – *The Free Thought Forum* live call-in show, 6 to 7 PM on WRCT, Comcast York channel 16.

Saturday, December 1, 2007 – PA Nonbelievers meeting at UUCY at in York, 10:00AM to 12:00 Noon, plus luncheon.

Thursday, December 13, 2007 – PA Nonbelievers Harrisburg area meeting in West Shore Plaza in Lemoyne.

Saturday, December 22, 2007 – PAN Winter Solstice party.

Listen to atheist music on “The Pagan Station” from our friends Down Under in New Zealand:
www.freewebs.com/paganstation

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