



Hi James,

Happy middle of December! 2025 has whizzed by and it's hard to believe we're halfway to January (!!). This newsletter covers the last couple of months, which have been busy with all that's been going on. Which brings me to my first item, which broke late on Thursday. For those who don't know, the Arkansas Supreme Court (by unanimous decision) overturned a 74-year-old decision that said the Legislature could not amend or repeal a citizen-initiated amendment to the state constitution. This means that Arkansas lawmakers have the power to change constitutional amendments approved by voters. Read more about it [here](#).

To me, this is shocking, and something that every citizen who cares about democracy should be very concerned. The average citizen effectively has no power, especially after the citizen led ballot initiative process was gutted. Even if citizens are able to miraculously pass a ballot initiative, your elected officials can simply get together, agree they don't like it, and change the law without your consent.

I'm not sure why, but there is a "boiling frog" effect happening. I'm amazed at how few people are aware of this, and even fewer willing to speak out. But now is the time to get activated. Tell your friends, call your representatives, make a stink about this stuff. Democracy dies in silence, and we are quickly backstepping into uncharted territory.



Democracy dies in silence. We the people must act to protect our freedoms.

The Ozarks Chapter started off the first Sunday in November by using the extra Daylight Savings hour to volunteer and remove litter from a one-mile stretch of AR-12. We had a dozen members show up on a crisp morning and collected nearly 30 bags of rubbish! Our group takes pride helping to keep our community clean.

The Ozarks Chapter came together in late November for a general business meeting where end-of-year decisions were made, and the 2026 general schedule was discussed. Coincidentally, during our meeting, we were approached by two candidates running for State House on the Democratic ticket ([Mitchell Smith](#) & [Dan Holtmeyer](#)), who overheard our discussion and expressed their support for church/state separation. It is very refreshing to know their are candidates who advocate for this cause!

Our chapter was also prominently featured in the both FFRF's Freethought Today ([November Edition](#)) and the monthly AU.org newsletter "Church & State" ([November Edition](#)). The efforts of the Ozarks FFRF Chapter are being recognized at a national level!



The Ozarks Chapter of FFRF removing litter on Sunday, November 2nd, 2025 in Rogers, AR.



The Ozarks Chapter of FFRF meeting on Sunday, November 23rd, 2025 at Onyx in Rogers, AR.

Ozarks FFRF Members were in attendance at the "**ACT 573 Teach-In**" held at the University of Arkansas on November 20th. One speaker, Associate Professor Dr. Stephen Caldwell, outlined why posting the Ten Commandments in public areas is plainly unconstitutional. The Ozarks Chapter of FFRF is thrilled to have an esteemed scholar speaking out against ACT 573 and advocating for the constitutional principle of separation between church & state.



Dr. Caldwell taking a photo with members of the Ozarks Chapter of FFRF on Thursday, November 20th.

The Ozarks Chapter of FFRF continued our participation in FFRF National's Annual "Bill of Rights Nativity Display" at the state capitals. Members of our chapter traveled to the grounds of the Arkansas State Capitol in Little Rock on December 6th to set up the display, which was coordinated in conjunction with the [Arkansas Society of Freethinkers](#), who set up a similar secular display. If you're in Little Rock between now and January 3rd, stop on by and visit the display!



The Ozarks Chapter of FFRF built a "**Bill of Rights Nativity**" display on the grounds of the Arkansas State Capitol in Little Rock, AR, on December 6th, 2025. Pictured are Gail & George Naidl, LaDonna Powell and James Brazeal.

In other news, the Ozarks Chapter of FFRF was randomly selected during KUAF Giving Tuesday giveaway, and our organization will receive \$1,000 worth of underwriting messages on KUAF over the next 12 months. This means our group will be able to reach approximately 75,000 listeners across Northwest Arkansas, the Arkansas River Valley, eastern Oklahoma and Southwest Missouri. The plan is to use this advertising to create awareness about our chapter, promote our 2026 Speaker Series and connect with other like minded businesses & institutions. This is a unique opportunity that will help broaden our support. Very exciting!

Here is our Calendar of events for the next couple of months!

December 21st (Sunday) - 10:00am to 11:00am

- **Secular Sunday & Winter Solstice Observance @ Ozarks Natural Foods** (380 N College Ave, Fayetteville, AR 72701) - we're wrapping up a great 2025 so let's get together for a hot beverage & community to observe the Winter Solstice.

December 23rd (Tuesday) - 6:00pm to 8:00pm

- **Festivus Celebration** - Come join us to celebrate the 2nd Annual Festivus, back by popular demand! The event will be held at Flavors Indian Cuisine (211 SE Walton Blvd Suite # 100, Bentonville, AR 72712). If you're unfamiliar and/or want to learn more about this excellent holiday, see the [Festivus website](#) for the origin story (or watch the classic Seinfeld episode!).

January 1st (Thursday) - 1:15pm to 2:15pm

- **First Day Hike** - join volunteers and staff of the Hobbs State Park (Arkansas) as we hike the [Ozark Plateau Trail](#) (0.5 mile paved & ADA accessible). The trailhead is located next to the Main Visitor Center

(20201 East Hwy. 12, Rogers, AR 72756). Come early for S'mores and a hot beverage!

January 11th (Sunday) - 10:00am to 11:00am

- **Sunday Secular Meetup** - we will be holding our first General Meeting of 2026 at the [Meteor Cafe](#) (401 SE D St, Bentonville, AR 72712).

January 24th (Saturday) - 10:00am to 1:00pm

- **NWA Women's Shelter Thrift Store** - volunteer opportunity at the Thrift Store, supporting the NWA Women's Shelter. Consists of sorting clothes and light cleaning.

The **Ozarks Chapter of FFRF** helps bring together the secular community and advocate for separation between church and state. Your support, be it financial or simply showing up to one of our events, makes a meaningful impact and helps grow our cause. Please consider joining us at one of our events, or becoming a member of FFRF National and/or a member of the local Ozarks Chapter (us). We greatly appreciate our followers and supporters!

Finally, our website has been updated with new content, archived photos and calendar of events. Check out **OzarksFFRF.org** for the latest.

In closing, the **Ozarks Chapter of FFRF** wishes everyone a Happy Winter Solstice and Happy New Year. We hope you and your loved ones enjoy the holiday season. Our growing movement will continue to serve the secular community in 2026 and beyond. Thank you for all of your support!

Warm Regards,

Chris Sweeny

Chapter Leader - Ozarks Chapter of Freedom From Religion Foundation

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OzarksFFRF@gmail.com

www.ozarksffrf.org