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Hell yeah!! This month's newsletter starts with good news about Arkansas Act 573, which has been permanently blocked, with Judge Timothy Brooks declaring it unconstitutional because it violates the First Amendment's Establishment Clause and Free Exercise Clause. I highly encourage you to read the judge's decision in full ([here](#)). The arguments made by the State were so weak that the judge required them to hire a historical expert. Even then, the historical expert could not point to any clear evidence of the Ten Commandments as foundational to US history.

The Ozarks Chapter of the Freedom From Religion Foundation is pleased with the court ruling that unequivocally affirms the unconstitutionality of Arkansas Act 573. This judgment represents an important reaffirmation of the constitutional principle that government must remain neutral on matters of religion.

However, we remain concerned that the State continues to defend this law and has announced plans to appeal the decision. Pursuing further litigation will only expend additional public resources in defense of a measure that the court has already determined violates constitutional protections.


We urge state officials to respect the court's ruling and the constitutional rights it protects, rather than prolonging a costly and unnecessary legal battle. Our organization remains committed to protecting the separation of church and state and ensuring that the rights of all Arkansans—regardless of their religious beliefs or nonbelief—are respected.



Nothing could possibly justify hanging the Ten Commandments—with or without historical context—in a calculus, chemistry, French, or woodworking class, to name a few. And the words “curriculum,” “school board,” “teacher,” or “educate” don’t appear anywhere in Act 573. Accordingly, there is no need to strain our minds to imagine a constitutional display mandated by Act 573.

**One doesn’t exist.**

**U.S. DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF ARKANSAS**  
*March 16, 2026*  
*Order Granting Motion for Summary Judgment*



Judge Timothy Brooks in explaining why Act 573 is unconstitutional.

In other interesting news, and only a few days after Erika Kirk and Arkansas Governor Sanders got together in Little Rock promoting TPUSA, the Turning Point Chapter at the University of Arkansas disaffiliated with the national organization. Turning Point has long pushed a Christian Nationalist agenda, so seeing this organization uprooted from Northwest Arkansas is a welcome development.



After discussion with my executive board, we have come to the unanimous decision to dissolve our affiliation with Turning Point USA and rebrand our registered student organization under our own label - Young American Revival at the University of Arkansas. This decision was not made lightly. We discussed this for some time, weighing the pros and cons and seeking spiritual discernment. We have many grievances with Turning Point USA, which we will shortly make known to them in private, but I will share only one. We are generally put off by how Charlie Kirk has been used by TPUSA since his assassination. Statements like “Charlie would have said...” and “Charlie would have wanted...” have felt in many instances disingenuous and manipulative. Charlie Kirk cannot speak for himself anymore, and we do not recognize the way others have attempted to speak for him. Though, the one thing I always took away from my interactions with Charlie was the importance of being your own man or woman. Sometimes that means making tough decisions, just like this one.

We expect many non-members looking in from the outside will not fully understand our decision, but we also believe many long-time student members will recognize why we came to this conclusion. We do not want to start this next chapter of our journey in conflict, so we will not make any more public statements on Turning Point USA going forward. Instead, we will remain solely focused on our mission as it was always intended to be: Advocating for Christian Conservative values and policy and, now unburdened by 501(c)(3) status, supporting grassroots conservative candidates.

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**Turning Point USA Chapter of University of Arkansas disaffiliates with TPUSA on March 16, 2026.**

Turning to our activities, the warmer weather helps keep us busy! The Ozarks Chapter came together to see **Seth Andrews**, **Erika "Gutsick Gibbon,"** and **Forrest Valkai** on March 7th for three hours of lively audience interaction at a freethought event held at OU Schusterman Learning Center - Perkins Auditorium in Tulsa, OK. Over a dozen Arkansans made the 2+ hour drive, and several of us connected with members of the Atheist Community of Tulsa afterward to collaborate on future opportunities.

The new (and very cozy) Onyx coffee shop in the heart of Springdale on Emma Street was the venue for our monthly business meeting on March 15th. Having set the bar high in previous years, our meetings are productive and help guide the direction of our chapter. We'd love to see you at one of our future meetings!



Ozarks Chapter of FFRF in front of the OU Schusterman - Perkins Auditorium in Tulsa, OK, on March 7, 2026.

As a reminder, there are numerous ways to connect with secular folks here in Northwest Arkansas! We've touched on the different groups in this area, including [Recovering From Religion \(RFR\)](#), [NWA Freethought](#) and [Atheist Community of NWA](#). These groups plan separate activities that may be of interest to people, and we encourage our members to research & explore these likeminded organizations. For example, NWA Freethought has a monthly "[Final Friday](#)" meetup, which takes place on Friday, March 27th (tomorrow) at South Yard in Fayetteville. On Saturday, March 28th, [Indivisible NWA](#) is hosting a NO KINGS rally from 9:30am to 1:00pm at 6 W Dickson St (the intersection of Dickson Street and East Ave.) in Fayetteville. Finally, this Sunday, March 29th, the Ozarks Chapter of FFRF in collaboration with NWA Freethought will be cleaning a 1 mile stretch of AR Highway 12. We would love to see the secular community come out to help keep Arkansas beautiful!

### **2026 Secular Speaker Series!**

We are excited to announce that we have **Hemant Mehta**, best known as [The Friendly Atheist](#), as our first confirmed speaker of the **2026 Secular Speaker Series**. Hemant will be visiting with our chapter the weekend of August 22-23, so please save the date. Details on times & locations to be determined.

We also are close to securing another speaker for the weekend of September 26-27, so stay tuned to next month's newsletter for the official announcement. We have at least two other speakers on the radar!



Hemant Mehta, best known as The Friendly Atheist, will be traveling to NWA on August 22-23, 2026.

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

**March 29th (Sunday) - 7:30am to 10:00am**

- **Adopt-A-Highway Road Cleanup** - Our first road cleanup of 2026 will start at **Onyx Coffee** (101 E Walnut Ave, Rogers, AR 72756) at **7:30am**. We will carpool from downtown Rogers at 8:00am. The 1 mile section of road takes approximately 90 minutes to clean, and we anticipate returning to Rogers by 10:00am. Orange vests and trash bags will be provided by Benton County. For those able to join us, we recommend wearing long pants, gloves and hat (sunscreen and bug spray, if needed). We have plenty of

"grabber tools" to borrow of these can be purchased online separately. Please come support the Ozarks Chapter of FFRF by doing good in our local community!

#### **April 11th (Saturday) - 7:30am to 12:30pm**

- **Bentonville Farmers Market** - our first Farmers Market event of 2026 takes place in Bentonville. The Ozarks Chapter of FFRF will be set up somewhere near the square. Come join us for an hour or two as we engage the community.

#### **April 19th (Sunday) - 10:00am to 11:00am**

- **Secular Sunday Meeting @ Onyx Coffee Lab** inside **The Momentary** (507 SE E St, Bentonville, AR 72712) - join us as for our monthly get together as we talk business and get together for a quick tour of the museum after our meeting. Take note of the new location!

#### **April 25th (Saturday) - 7:30am to 12:30pm**

- **Fayetteville Farmers Market** - The Ozarks Chapter of FFRF returns to the Fayetteville Farmers Market for the first time in 2026! Come meet likeminded freethinkers and spend time chatting with fellow citizens of the Ozarks.

#### **\*\*NEW\*\* April 26th (Sunday) - 2:00pm to 4:00pm**

- **Neighbors for a Better Arkansas @ GoatLab Brewery (Lowell, AR)** - This "Meet the Candidates" event will bring citizens together where attendees can hear what the candidates have to say in their run for US Senate and House of Representatives. Hallie Shoffner and Robb Ryerse are both confirmed to speak at this event, and Ozarks FFRF will have a table.

#### **\*\*TENTATIVE\*\* May 2nd (Saturday) - 10:00am to 2:00pm**

- **Donation Drive @ Northwest Arkansas Women's Shelter (Rogers, AR)** - As part of the [American Humanists Empathy](#) project, the Ozarks Chapter of FFRF applied to host a donation drive for the Northwest Arkansas Women's Shelter. If our application is approved, we will know by April 1st and would love the support of our secular community. More details to come!!

#### **May 9th (Saturday) - 7:30am to 12:30pm**

- **Bentonville Farmers Market** - Come join us as we engage the community on secular values.

#### **May 17th (Sunday) - 10:00am to 11:00am**

- **Secular Sunday Meeting @ Ozarks Natural Foods** (380 N College Ave, Fayetteville, AR 72701) - with the summer season nearly in full swing, we'll have a lot to discuss for planning purposes.

#### **May 23rd (Saturday) - 7:30am to 12:30pm**

- **Fayetteville Farmers Market** - The Ozarks Chapter of FFRF will be at the Fayetteville Farmers Market! Come meet likeminded freethinkers and spend time chatting with fellow citizens of the Ozarks.

#### **June 27th (Saturday) - 11:00am to 6:00pm**

- **[NWA Pride Festival 2026](#)** (W. Dickson Street) - The Ozarks Chapter of FFRF will be tabling & walking in the NWA Pride Festival on West Dickson Street for the third consecutive year. Save the Date!

More good stuff to come! We'll have additional events on the calendar as the Spring & Summer months get closer. Check out **OzarksFFRF.org** for more information. We look forward to seeing you outdoors soon!