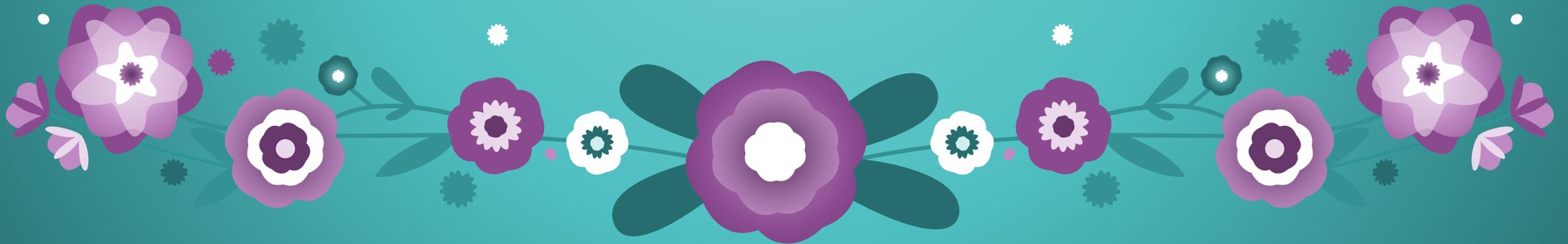


Tribute to Anne Nicol Gaylor

October 29, 2004





Delivered by Annie Laurie Gaylor, with music provided by Dan Barker, on Oct. 29, 2004, at the 27th annual national convention of the Freedom From Religion Foundation in Madison, Wisconsin.

Anne Gaylor, the founder and president of the Freedom From Religion Foundation, is stepping down from the presidency after this convention. She has been president 26 years officially, but 28 years in reality. She is not necessarily retiring — she will be involved as an on-call consultant with the office, and is still deciding where she will direct her considerable energies in the future.

I was hoping she'd out-Reagan Reagan (not to put him in her company). Reagan was 78 when he left his presidency, Anne will be 78 on Nov. 25. She still works harder than the rest of us — people one half to one third of her age.

She is stepping down only because her eyesight has diminished — due to macular degeneration and glaucoma. She may be losing her eyesight, but she is not losing her vision.



Dan Barker has written a song in her honor to begin this tribute:

MODERN MAJOR ACTIVIST - (lyrics 2004 by Dan Barker)

(Sung to Gilbert & Sullivan's "Modern Major General")

Anne is the very model of a Modern Major Activist.

She studies every issue and she gathers every fact of it.

She has a thorough expertise in all things institutional.

She even knows precisely what is meant by Constitutional.

In dealing with the public she's a true encyclopedia.

She understands exactly how to give it to the media.

In short, in all things feminist and humanist and atheist,

She is the very model of a Modern Major Activist.

Respecting human values, she's a tender-hearted atheist,

An "action-over-prayer" and a "reason-over-faith"-eist.

She never wilts from laboring to keep the country secular.

And all her major victories are really quite spec-tec-ular.

Although a gentle woman, she can protest energetically.

She handles all apologists quite unapologetically.

She's not afraid to say a politician is a criminal.

She's practically rewritten every lyric in the hym-i-nal.

A battle-tested feminist, she's plucky and adventury,

And just like Margaret Sanger, she's a "Woman of the Century."

And so, in all things feminist and humanist and atheist,

She is the very model of a Modern Major Activist.





Anne was born in 1926 on a farm near Tomah, Wisconsin. Her mother, Lucy Sowle Nicol, died when Anne was 2. Anne is descended on her mother's side of the family from George Sowle, a passenger of the Mayflower, an apprentice, NOT A PILGRIM, mind you, a proven lineage.

When religionists have told Anne to “go back where she came from,” she has occasionally pointed out her ancient-for-this-country family tree.

Anne's father, Jason Nicol, was not religious. He regarded religious belief as embarrassing. Anne entered first grade at her one-room school at age 4, became a voracious reader, and is still grateful to freethinker Andrew Carnegie for endowing the Tomah, Wis. public library. (I bet Anne doesn't know that she and Andrew Carnegie were born on the same day. But not the same year.)

age 4



age 7



Schoolgirl
age 11

Anne at 19

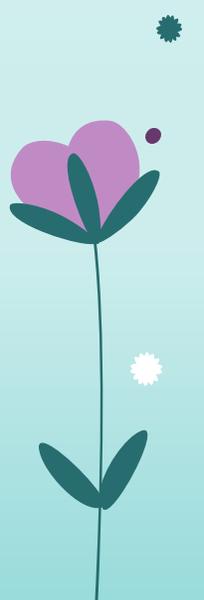
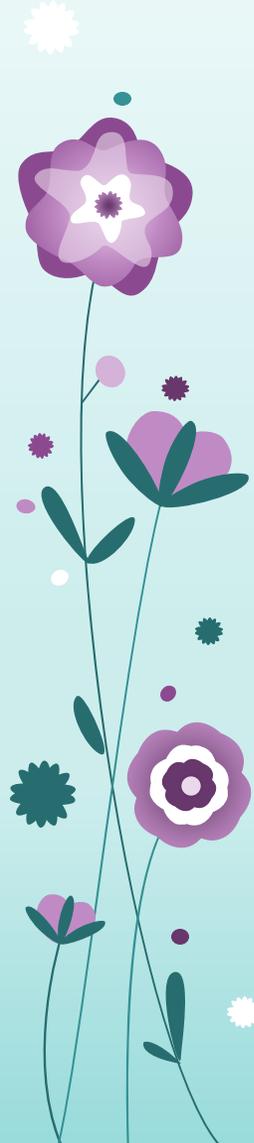


College student





Anne has always worked. She took over housework and cooking for her father and 3 brothers when she was 12. She graduated from high school at 16, worked for room and board and waitressed to pay for college, and graduated with an English degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1949.





That year she married my father, Paul Joseph Gaylor, and they had four children.



Andy, Jamie, Annie Laurie, Ian



Twins Ian and Annie Laurie



Andy, Annie Laurie, Ian, Paul, Jamie and Anne Gaylor.



She worked throughout her early marriage and pregnancies. In 1958, she started the first temporary office help service in Madison. In 1959, with a partner, she opened the first private employment agency in town. She sold the successful business in 1966.



When she and my father purchased the Middleton Times Tribune, she edited it from 1967-1970 and turned it into an award-winning weekly. It was when she wrote the first editorial in the state, one of the first such editorials anywhere in the nation, in 1967, calling for legalization of abortion, that the next phase of her life began.



Desperate women began to phone her, asking where they could go for safe abortions. She launched into activism, abortion rights, feminist groups and Zero Population Growth. She founded the ZPG Abortion Referral Service in 1970. Between 1970 and 1975, she made more than than 20,000 referrals. She took calls at home day and night, especially after her number was published without her permission, in Playboy!



Because our home number was used for so many of my mother's groups, we were instructed as teenagers to answer our home phone: "This is (238-XXXX)." The joke around our house was that on her tombstone would surely one day be inscribed: "Here lies 238-XXXX." For years, most pictures of my mother would show her on the phone.



In 1972, aware of the difficulty in raising funds to pay for abortion, Anne co-founded the Women's Medical Fund, to help low-income women in tragic circumstances. These phone calls still come in day and night. Anne has run the Women's Medical Fund charity as a volunteer for THIRTY-TWO years!



As a feminist activist, Anne awarding a “male chauvinist pig” award to a newspaper (the reporter, who entered into the spirit, was very obviously not an MCP!). In 1975, she wrote the book, **Abortion Is a Blessing**, about the battle to legalize abortion and contraception in Wisconsin.



FFRF FOUNDED

My mother and I and a Milwaukee gentlemen first founded the Freedom From Religion Foundation as a regional group when I was a college student in 1976. The impetus for the group was our somehow becoming aware they were opening county board meetings with prayer.

We went down to ask them to stop this unconstitutional practice, and thought we would sound more powerful if we called ourselves a group. So we made up a name—and the rest is history!

Group wants God out of government

By Lisa C. Berman
Associated Press Writer

The 1962 U.S. Supreme Court decision banning prayer from the public schools only solved part of the problem for Madison's Anne Gaylor, who contends government should be Godless.

She has founded the Freedom from Religion Foundation to seek the complete elimination of religious influence from Wisconsin government.

Mrs. Gaylor, 48, who prefers that title, predicts that more such organizations will be founded.

"I expect to see more of it coming," Ms. Gaylor said. "Jimmy Carter is going to bring the atheists out of their closets. This idea that all truth rests in Christ is a little hard for some people to swallow."

She added that Carter, the 1976 Democratic presidential nominee, has her concerns.

"Jimmy Carter worries me — talking

to God and making a decision on that basis," she said.

The foundation, however, is focusing on separating local and state levels of government from religious influence. It has been taking shape over the past few weeks and already counts among its ranks 38 members, plus a student group founded at the University of Wisconsin-Madison by Annie Laurie Gaylor, Ms. Gaylor's daughter, aimed at secularizing UW commencement exercises.

It is affiliated on the national level with the Society of Separationists in Austin, Tex., headed by the well-known atheist, Madalyn Murray O'Hair.

"The only proper attitude of government toward religion is neutral," said Ms. Gaylor. "We do not have neutrality if we have prayer. The Constitution was a Godless document and was purposefully written to be a Godless document."

"The reason we have so much trouble in this state is because of the church and state entanglement," she noted, citing the appearances by religious groups before governmental bodies in opposition to birth control and abortion legislation.

Immediate goals of the new organization include eliminating the first order of business of most governmental meetings: the prayer.

Over the long term, Ms. Gaylor says she would like to see churches pay income and property taxes and would like to bring an end to discrimination against atheists and agnostics by religious groups.

Some of Ms. Gaylor's ideas for promoting her cause include an essay contest in which high school and college students would be asked to describe the text of the Bible they think has done the most harm.



Anne Gaylor

—State Journal photo

"The Bible is always talked about as a good book," she noted. "Well, there are those of us who think it is a pretty bad book; there are texts that have done

unaided harm."

She also hopes to picket a Catholic church to protest that faith's opposition to abortion and birth control.

Early headline.



Anne and Annie Laurie, 1976, after founding the Freedom From Religion Foundation.



After the Freedom From Religion Foundation went national, Phil Donahue of Roman Catholic background invited her to be a guest on his widely-watched TV program, but refused to introduce Anne as the author of such a book. He said the title, "Abortion is a Blessing," would create shockwaves around the nation. During the live show, Anne exposed his censorship to prove the suppressive effect religion has on the media. A red-faced Donahue ran down the aisle showing Anne's book to the nation. After that show, Anne & FFRF received 1,000 letters, 3 out of 4 supportive.



President Carter effigy will go to abortion conference.

mates she's counseled and referred as many as 11,000 women seeking abortions.

Ran into opposition

"When I say 'abortion is a blessing,'" she said, referring to the title of her 1975 book, "I mean it. I'm an expert." She told of a woman who was denied an operation for removal of her cancerous uterus because a routine pregnancy test was positive, and the community hospital would not perform abortions. Another woman, she said, was forced to carry a brainless fetus to term because she was a Medical Assistance patient, and the state Legislature has blocked the use of public money for abortions.

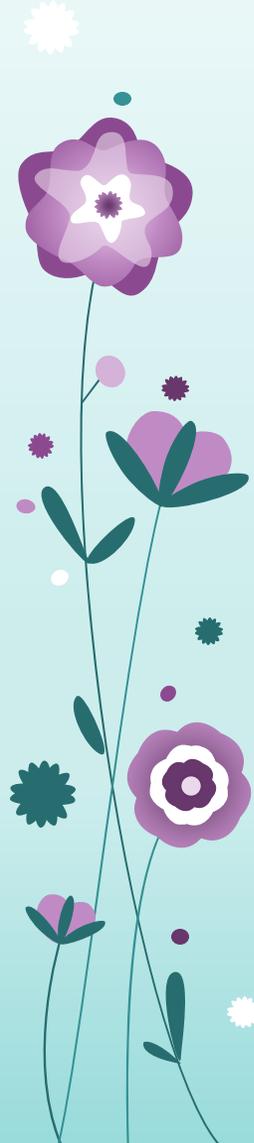
"These are horror stories that should be in the newspaper, but they never are," she said. Still, how does she reconcile her pro-abortion stance with her own motherhood of four children? "Obviously, I'm talking about the quality of life, not the quantity. Women aren't breeding machines or incubators. A woman produces 400 eggs during her lifetime, but obviously, she can't have 400 children."

Because of her pro-abortion work, she ran into a lot of opposition from organized religion — and the opposition forced her to reexamine her stand on religion.

"All religions oppress women," she said flatly. "Some religions are kinder than Christianity, Buddhism for example, but we can get along quite nicely without any of them."

"Religion is the arch enemy of women's freedom. It's really more freedom than equality we're fighting for — we can't be equal because we're dif-

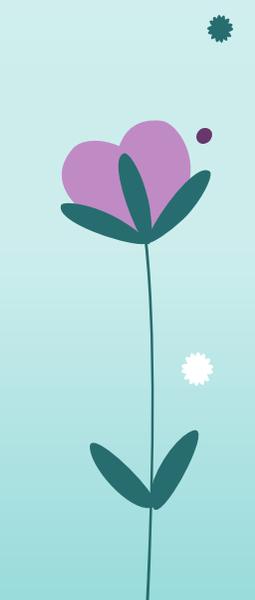
Turn to Page 3



LEAD US NOT INTO PENN STATION

provocative pieces
by Anne Nicol Gaylor

Anne wrote about that experience and many other freethought essays in the just-republished edition of her book, *Lead Us Not Into Penn Station*.





Wisconsin State Journal

Sunday, April 22, 1979, Section 3

Supporting a cause a la Anne Gaylor

By Sunny Schubert
Of The State Journal

In a small rocking chair near the fireplace rests a startling effigy: a visibly pregnant Jimmy Carter, tears covering down his cardboard cheeks, holding a picket sign that reads "Life is Unfair."

"Isn't he marvelous?" says Anne Gaylor — referring to the effigy, not the president, who made the "life is unfair" statement about the cut-off of federal abortion funds. "I've got to figure out how to pack him — we're taking him to Washington for the National Abortion Rights conference this week."

The effigy was made by Ms. Gay-

ler. Her mother died when Anne was still a baby, and she was brought up near Tomah by a free thinking father who was "embarrassed" by organized religion.

"He was embarrassed for people who believed in the Bible. Believing in the Bible is like believing in 'Alice in Wonderland' or 'Jack and the Beanstalk,'" she explained, then added her own corollary: "except the Bible is much more dangerous than 'Alice.'"

She came to Madison to attend the University of Wisconsin, where she earned a degree in English. During her college years, she said, she tried to re-read the Bible from an adult perspective, but found it no less confus-

ing. She asked, gesturing angrily. "Look at Jim Jones and the Guyana massacre — that's a perfect example of what organized religion has been doing throughout the ages. It really annoys me — he was an ordained minister in a mainline Christian church (Disciples of Christ), but the media keeps downplaying the religious aspect. They try to make him out as a communist or a socialist, but what he did was religious — that's how he accumulated all that money — under the guise of religion."

"Church is amazing," she added. "The symbolism of closing your eyes and bowing your head — it's a great way to put something over on people when they're not looking. But it's such a social thing. I think that's one reason some people have a hard time kicking

Two early abortion rights activists my mother worked with have sent testimonials. The first, Larry Lader, wrote the influential book *Abortion* in 1961. His book galvanized the nascent abortion rights movement. Larry is still working today for Abortion Rights Mobilization (ARM), and is particularly concerned about Vatican intrusion into U.S. politics.



Paul and Anne Gaylor in the 1970s



LARRY LADER'S LETTER

“Anne Gaylor is a unique figure. She combines deep insight into the problems of society with a fervent determination to do something about them.

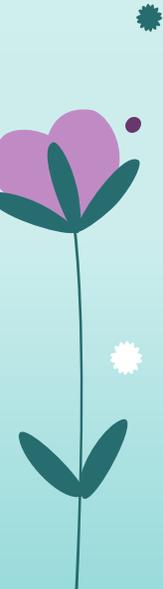
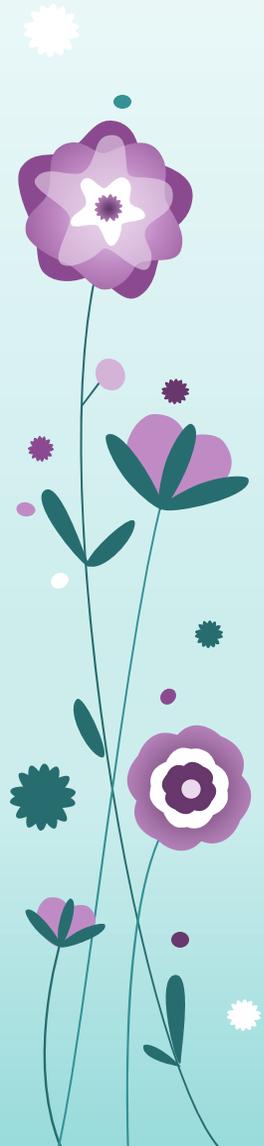
“Separation of church and state dominates the country’s tensions more than ever. Anne has worked ceaselessly to preserve this critical constitutional principle. She is an expert at keeping it before the public and developing the strategies to implement the struggle.

“From the start, she recognized the importance of abortion rights in the framework of social needs. She was one of the founders of the movement, and a leader in the National Abortion Rights Action League, originally the National Association for the Repeal of All Abortion Laws. Her Women’s Medical Fund made a lasting contribution.

“With all her militancy, Anne was always a dear friend to me. I loved phoning her just to hear her cheery voice. No one accepts her retirement. She is just taking a breather.” – Larry Lader



I have a letter from another Anne, Anne Treseder, a member of the Foundation almost since its inception, who works today as an attorney in San Francisco. To quote Anne Treseder:
“Most of you probably know Anne Gaylor as a leader in the fight to separate Church and State. You may not know that before she took up this cause, she was a pioneer in the efforts to get both Church and State out of women’s reproductive lives.
“Her phone number became a lifeline for thousands of women. Anne was the sweet, calming voice at the other end of the line.





“In those early days, those of us in the U.S. who were campaigning for safe, legal abortion knew or knew of, each other—there weren’t that many of us!
“I functioned as Anne’s sidekick as we lobbied at the State Legislature against Wisconsin’s law banning the sale of contraceptives to unmarried people.”



“We debated the issue on radio & TV every chance we could. Anne was a genius at requesting ‘equal time’ and getting us ‘gigs.’ We served together on the NARAL Board of Directors, and were instrumental in changing that organization’s emphasis from litigation to lobbying and public education.”



Anne Treseder notes:

“Soon after I moved back to San Francisco, I received a letter from Anne. She told me that after much soul-searching she had concluded that a woman’s right to reproductive freedom, and to basic civil rights, would never be realized as long as religious dogma played such a huge role in government policy. She said that she had decided to devote the next portion of her life to addressing this underlying problem.”

Gaylor: Religion is sexist

But religious workers say charges don't apply

by Eric Norgard

The President and Congress are being sued to stop their proclamation of 1983 as the "Year of the Bible."

Anne Gaylor, president of the Madison-based Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF), filed suit in federal court last month, saying such an official government proclamation is unconstitutional, violating the First Amendment guarantee of separation of church and state.

This suit has drawn the conflict of anti-religious groups with organized religion to public attention.

FFRF is a national organization that works zealously for the inclusion of freedom from religion in the constitutional concept of freedom of religion. It also opposes any link between the government and religious observances. Its proud accomplishments include persuading the state of Wisconsin to remove a cross from one of its parks. A special concern, however, is the belief "that religion is the major institution working against women's political, social, and economic rights," as its literature states.

As leader of FFRF, Gaylor has charged

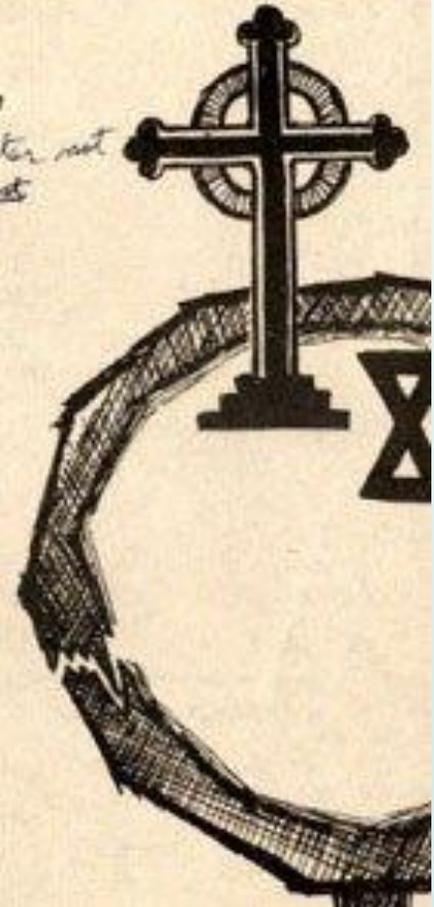
Sister Elizabeth Galbraith, chaplain at St. Paul's Catholic Center on State Street, is a woman with a voice in the Catholic church. She describes herself as a Christian feminist, and leads a study group on Christian feminism.

"It's important for everyone to be whole — both men and women," said Galbraith.

"I would agree with Gaylor's statement if it had been made a hundred years ago," said Rabbi Ken Roseman of Temple Beth El in Madison of the FFRF charge of oppression against women. "But now a substantial part of the seminary classes are women. In reformed Judaism, one third of the classes are women," he said.

In addition to its concern about the oppression of women, the FFRF has charged that there is "an on-going campaign against civil rights for homosexuals led by the churches and religion's lobbyists." This is not proven by the actions of clergy of the Episcopal, Catholic, Methodist, Presbyterian, and Lutheran churches who have led communion serv-

← sister not Priest



"Whenever I hear people suggest that if there were no 'religion,' and no fear of God's wrath, there would be no morality, I wish they could meet Anne Gaylor, her family, her many colleagues in this organization, and the countless other 'non-believers' who are working every day to repair the world." —Anne Treseder

There were those in the feminist movement Anne was heavily involved in, who told her that her atheist activism was "hurting the cause." Ironically, there were a few in the freethought movement who told her that her feminist activism was "hurting the cause"!

Mother, daughter still fight for

By Linda Fibich
Journal Madison Bureau

MADISON, WIS. — It seems obvious at first glance that they are mother and daughter, and the impression grows stronger as they speak.

Anne Nicol Gaylor, Madison feminist and critic of religion, had four children. But it was the only girl among them, Annie Laurie, who became an activist after her mother's fashion.

Anne Nicol Gaylor, 58, made a name for herself in the state in the early 1970s, after Wisconsin's abortion law was struck down, by referring thousands of Wisconsin women to doctors willing to perform the surgery.

More than a decade later, she is known nationally for her advocacy of Freedom from Religion, as she called the foundation she began in 1978.

Newspaper begins

Annie Laurie Gaylor, 28, left the University of Wisconsin — Madison with a journalism degree in 1960. She immediately did what she'd told her classmates she'd intended to: began a monthly newspaper to chronicle the women's movement in the Midwest.

"I sold \$2,000-worth of advertising in a month's time, and put out a 20-page paper that was very well-received, with a circulation of 15,000," she said of the first issue.

"And my first subscriber was Gloria Steinem, who happened to be in town."

The paper, the Feminist Connection, "disconnected," as the younger Gaylor put it, last month. Although she brought it to the point of paying for itself, it never supported her adequately.

Now she will work closely with her mother, editing a newsletter for the Freedom from Religion Foundation.

The idea continues

But she has not abandoned the Feminist Connection. She is in the process of establishing a non-profit organization in the paper's name, to come up with the capital it always needed but had never obtained. Her goal is to raise \$30,000.

She and her mother talked about the pursuits they had in common on a recent afternoon in the foundation's offices. The two are soft-spoken, with voices alike enough to be mistaken for one another's on the telephone.

That, both say, is something that surprises those meeting them for the first time. People expect them to be more strident.

Anne Nicol Gaylor worked for women's rights as early as the 1950s, when she undertook a letter-writing campaign to state newspapers on behalf of better access to birth control.



Activism remains a way of life for Anne (seated) and Annie Laurie Gaylor

"I started referring people for abortion as soon as we had a doctor; it was a three-hour wait that

in her teens. She'd already canvassed door-to-door for women candidates for public office. She'd been on her

Her friends, she said, were envious. "They all would make a life out of

We got terrific press coverage on this and virtually every other early action, due to my mother's inspired press releases and pithy remarks. She was doing "sound bites" before there was such a term.



In 1978, Anne was asked to go national with the Freedom From Religion Foundation, in part because of the Foundation's early major successes: Anne had stopped prayers in public schools and at federally funded senior citizen programs.

Religion a crutch, free thinker says

By Tim Cuprisin

Of the Press-Gazette

Anne Gaylor admits that if her organization had started in Green Bay, she would have been run out of town.

She is president and one of the founders of the Freedom From Religion Foundation based in Madison. Her goal is to educate the public on what she calls "free thought."

"We are not a popular cause," she admitted, defining free thought as freedom from religious dogma.

In an interview today, Gaylor defined her own beliefs as "non-theist," which she said is the same as atheism.

"Psychologically, I find that when I say I'm a non-theist, people are more accepting than if I said I'm an atheist," she said.

Her beliefs, or lack of beliefs, are rooted in her family life. "I grew up regarding the Bible as a book of myths and fables," she said.

Gaylor has nothing but criticism for religion, singling out Mormons, fundamentalists and

She describes religion as a "crutch" and a "flight from reality."

"There was a time when religion ruled the world," she said. "It's known as the Dark Ages."

She said the United States has a history of "free thought," but that history is generally forgotten. "It took free-thinking people to write our Constitution," she said.

Her activism began after years of fighting for birth control and abortion rights. She said her moves were opposed by the churches.

"We saw who the enemy was," she said. "The enemy was religion."

An ardent feminist, Gaylor said she was pleased by the choice of U.S. Rep. Geraldine Ferraro, D-N.Y., as Walter Mondale's running mate.

"Her feminist credentials are sound. She's a very appealing person and her directness is appreciated."

"Women will get out and work for this ticket," she said.

But Gaylor doesn't automatically support the Democratic



Anne Gaylor

Advocates 'free thought'

in his actions as president.

"Had Jimmy Carter not been religious, with the limits that put on his mind, he probably would have been more successful," she said.

The mention of Ronald Reagan brings anger from the soft-spoken Gaylor.

"He's the worst president we've ever had. He's an old fogey. He belongs back in the 1940s," she said.

She was especially critical of his conservative stand on women's issues.

Anne's complaints stopped public school sponsorship and financing of the annual nativity pageant at the Wisconsin capitol.

Anti-religion foundation threatens court action

By GARY ACHTERBERG
Of the Tribune staff

The Freedom From Religion Foundation will probably take the city to court if the Common Council refuses to remove a marker bearing the Ten Commandments from a city park.

"I think it would be highly likely that we would do that," Anne Gaylor, president of the Madison-based group, said on Monday.

"If they refuse to do it (remove the marker), then they leave us no option," she said.

Gaylor — who sparked the controversy over the marker in Cameron Park by asking for its removal in a letter to the Common Council — does

not plan to attend tonight's meeting of the Judiciary and Administration Committee.

She said she will be represented at the meeting by Phyllis Grams, 1126 Grandad Terrace.

The La Crosse chapter of the Eagles Club donated the marker to the city in 1965. There was no opposition to it at the time.

The Eagles donated the markers to many cities across the country during the 1960s. Another marker is in Lake Park in Winona, Minn.

"If we went to federal court we could get rid of them wherever they are," Gaylor said.

She said she believes the foundation would have a very strong case in court. She added that

See TEN, page 8

■ Ten Commandments

Continued from page 1

she expects the city attorney will tell members of the Common Council the same thing.

"There is no way the Ten Commandments can be described as anything but the promotion of religion," she said.

The city attorney's office was still researching

Meanwhile, a local clergy group had collected an estimated 500 signatures by Monday on petitions urging the city to keep the marker where it is.

The petitions were being reviewed in the City Clerk's office before they are presented to committee members tonight.

I, as part of the early group, had stopped prayers at the University of Wisconsin-Madison graduations, ending a 122-year abuse. Anne as plaintiff had already filed her first successful lawsuit.

July 10, 1985

state/local

Atheist's complaint filed

By GARY ACHTERBERG
Of the Tribune staff

The La Crosse Common Council acted quickly Tuesday as it disposed of a complaint about a plaque bearing the Ten Commandments in Cameron Park.

Meeting as the Committee of the Whole, members did not discuss the matter or ask for the opinion of the city attorney before voting 18 to 0 to file — thereby ignoring — the complaint from Anne Gaylor, president of the Madison-based Freedom from Religion Foundation.

Two council members privately told the La Crosse Tribune that Mayor Patrick Zielke suggested that council members not discuss the issue on the council floor.

One of those members said Zielke advised members against commenting "because anything said could potentially be used against the city in court."

When asked if he told members not to discuss the issue, Zielke declined to comment.

Several minutes later, he said, "This council, nobody directs them how to think or act — they're very free and independent people."

City Attorney Patrick Houlihan also declined comment when he was asked if members were advised not to publicly discuss the matter.

Houlihan said his office researched related Supreme Court decisions on the issue of separation of church and state, including the recent dispute over a nativity scene placed on public property.

He said he did not offer his opinion to the council

Administration Committee also voted unanimously — and without comment — to file Gaylor's request.

Gaylor, an atheist, said in a telephone interview earlier this month that "it would be highly likely" that her organization will challenge the city in court if it doesn't remove the plaque.

"If they refuse to do it, then they leave us no option," she said.

Before rejecting Gaylor's complaint on Tuesday, council members heard members of the public argue both sides of the issue.

The plaque was donated to the city in 1965 by the Eagles Club. Until now, there has been no opposition to the plaque. There are similar Ten Commandments plaques in other city parks around the country, including Winona, Minn. They were also donated by local Eagles Clubs.

In another matter, the committee approved a barge loading and unloading facility on the Black River.

Members approved the request of George Jolivet of Jolivet Inc. in a 13-to-5 vote.

One council member said 2,000 people signed petitions opposing barge facilities on the Black River had been signed by more than 2,000 people. However, nobody spoke against the matter.

Council members also gave a green light to plans to restrict parking on some downtown streets to one hour.

The area that would be affected by the change is basically bounded by Jan. State, Second and First

One downtown lawyer, however, spoke against the change.

Helen Kelly, who has her office in the Exchange Building, 205 Fifth Ave. S., presented a petition with the signatures of 106 business and professional people who work downtown. She said they believe two-hour parking is needed to accommodate their customers and clients.

One council member agreed. Paul Schneider (10th Dist.) said he believes the Downtown La Crosse Business Association will only hurt its members with its request.

Schneider said he does not believe an hour is long enough for someone to park their car and do business at two or three places.

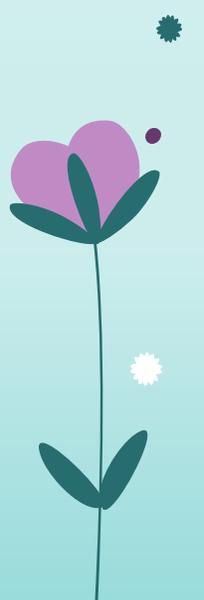
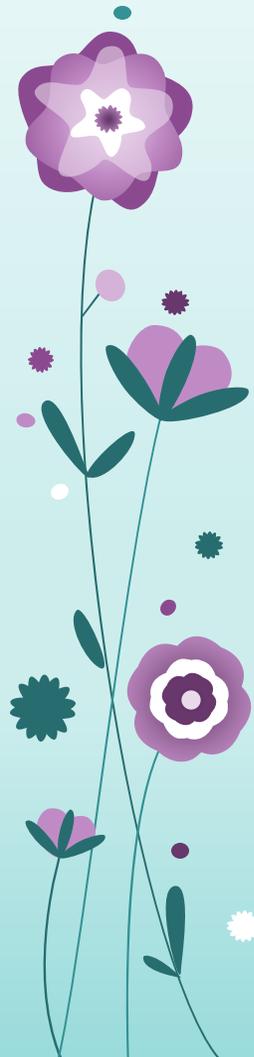
The committee also approved paying Onalaska Municipal Judge Gary Ostad \$27.50 an hour to hear La Crosse's municipal court cases from Aug. 1 to Aug. 31 — the first month after John Perlich leaves the city post to become a circuit court judge.

After that month, the cases will be heard in circuit court until a new municipal judge takes office on May 1, 1986.

The committee also refused to transfer the lease for Viking Aviation, a service company at the La Crosse Municipal Airport, to a new business called Astec Aviation, which would be run by the same people.

A foreclosure lawsuit is pending against Viking. The city has also started eviction proceedings

We were proud of the fact that in December 1976, we even inspired a group of 1,000 fundamentalists and Catholics to pray for us!





All of this had been accomplished on \$621.17, a quarter of that for legal fees! Can you imagine?



Setting up educational tables

EDUCATIONAL EFFORTS



Establishing a freethought collection
at the University of Wisconsin
Memorial Library

MEDIA APPEARANCES



National reporter in FFRF's first office



Friendly media



National reporter in FFRF's first office



A frequent radio guest



The Foundation was incorporated in April 1978, after a meeting held in Indiana with about 16 co-founding members (above). You'll remember we started with just 3 members in 1976. Today we number over 18,000 with members from every state.



There were invitations for Anne to appear on Tom Snyder's late-night NBC program . . .

THE PLANEET

Freedom from Religion Foundation Swells

Movement Mounts to Fight Religion's Take-Over of Media

MADISON, WISCONSIN—The Freedom from Religion Foundation (FFRF) is a quickly growing, nationwide movement of people (agnostics, atheists and even true believers) who perceive the colossal political and economic power wielded by religious outfits in this country as a very real threat to democratic freedoms.

According to the Association of Religious Broadcasters, one new radio station devoted entirely to religious broadcasting opens somewhere in the U.S. every week, and religious television stations open at the rate of one per month. "These are frightening statistics," says FFRF national president Anne Gaylor, of Madison. "We must wake up and recognize what is happening to our airwaves. These stations stifle free speech; they are little religious empires that offer no opportunity for opposing views to be heard."

Under federal law, Gaylor points out, the airwaves in the U.S. are regarded as public property and are supposedly leased by the Federal Communications Commission only to groups responsible and responsive to the public. Yet some of the religions operating TV or radio stations allows views opposed to their own dogmas to be aired, she charges; and most of them draw in huge profits from their preachers' supposedly special abilities to save people's souls from "sin," "death," "hell" or whatnot—advertising claims that

mail from Oral Roberts, and they would put them on their radios while he spoke. Then they'd apply the pieces of cloth to whatever afflicted parts were bothering them."



FFRF president Anne Gaylor: fighting the "religious empires" inundating the airwaves.

Also many handicapped persons who believe they're going to be "cured" by these quacks often develop serious emotional problems when the cures don't happen.

Handicapped children are particularly vulnerable to this trauma, a handicapped woman told Gaylor. "They blame themselves. The TV tells them, 'Have faith and you will be healed,' and they think when nothing happens the fault is theirs. The children think they must be being punished, that they are too sinful."

Neither the government nor national medical societies shows any interest in stemming such harmful frauds, the FFRF observes. "It is time for the public to take back the airwaves," demands Gaylor. The local Madison CBS affiliate, WISC-TV, has lately been running FFRF ad spots denouncing the antiwoman and antiabortion aspects of many powerful and highly organized religions—but the station charges FFRF for the airtime, whereas it devotes hours every week to religions for free.

Last year's religious holocaust in Georgetown, Guyana, was greatly instrumental in getting new support for the Freedom from Religion Foundation, especially in the Midwest, where Jim Jones had been a notorious faith-healing evangelist for years. Jones, it's known, regularly and purposefully deluded his audiences by pretending to per-

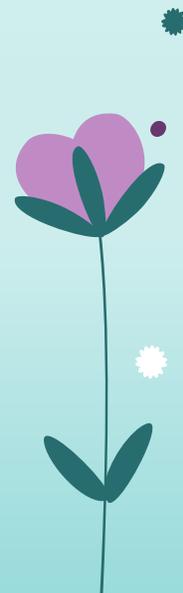
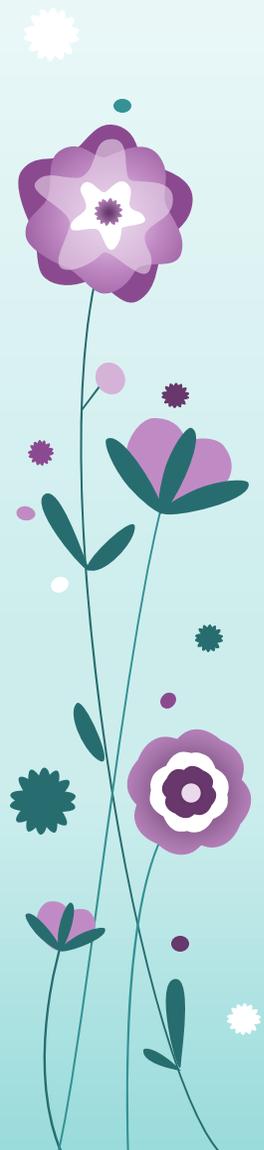
... on the Phil Donahue Show. Anne was even in "High Times."



Anne did the talkshow circuit: Crossfire, the Kup Show, ABC Nightly News, Oprah Winfrey's Chicago AM program, the original Larry King radio show and many other regional TV, newspaper and radio interviews.



When a national reporter covering the Foundation's creation wondered if the name "Freedom From Religion Foundation" might just be a bit too radical, Anne told him: "More people have been killed in the name of religion than for any other reason. I think the world is ready for us."



Local atheists air anti-religion TV spots

By KAYE SCHULTZ
Of The Capital Times Staff

From early morning until sign-off time, there is no lack of religious programming on commercial television. More than a few stations kick off their day with "The 700 Club" in the morning and end with a sermon at midnight, with Oral Roberts, The Christophers and Rex Humbard in between.

Going on Thomas Edison's theory that "Religion is all bunk," a Madison-based group is taking its turn on the airwaves with an opposite message.

"Have you ever wondered why churches do not pay their fair share of property taxes? Are you aware of the increasing ownership of the airwaves by religion?" So begins a commercial of the Freedom From Religion foundation which will begin running on WISC-TV Channel 3 in Madison tonight.

The paid ad, which will run between 5 and 5:30 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday, is the first atheist commercial produced in the country. Anne Gaylor, founder and president of the foundation, said the commercial emphasizes church-state separation favored by members of the group.



Anne Gaylor

Gaylor said station officials were first reluctant to sell time to the group, "but I did point out when they give great gobs of time to religion, how could they not sell us a minute?"

A minute is what they got, and Gaylor said the commercials produced at the Channel 3 studios will be distributed to foundation members in 37 other states for possible rebroadcast.

Gaylor is still awaiting a decision on an application for two "public service" TV spots, which would be run by the station without charge. She said the commercials were prepared and submitted at the same time, but the



Sheila Thompson

station has not given word on whether it will run them or not.

Also one-minute spots, the public service messages emphasize organized religion's opposition to the Equal Rights Amendment and women's rights ("One of the most sexist books ever written is the Bible," according to one), and identify famous atheists in history, including Thomas Jefferson, Mark Twain and Clarence Darrow. All three messages are narrated by Sheila Thompson, a teacher and member of the foundation.

Station manager Steve Hering was

not available for comment early this morning, but Art Radke, program services director for Channel 3, said decisions on public service messages are made "on a case-by-case basis."

"We try to determine if we feel there's a need, and whether or not in fact it is a public service. Something such as these reading courses offered by Evelyn Wood are not a public service, although they have tried to convince us they are," he said.

Radke said public affairs and other "non-commercial" material makes up about 10 percent of a week's programming time, while religious programming is up to 10 hours a week plus area clergymen's devotions at sign-off time.

Radke said he had not seen the texts of the proposed public service messages and could not comment on whether or not they or the paid commercials may elicit strong reactions from viewers.

"Virtually anything we run, at one time or another we get a reaction to. I can't say how much we'd get or whether it would be good or bad. Sometimes the things you really expect to get a lot of comment on don't generate much," he said.

Anne produced the first TV spots and first nontheist commercials ever produced . . .



... and the Foundation's first film, "A Second Look at Religion."



A cable TV show FFRF produced locally for several years.

Gaylor attacks columnist's claim that the Bible 'limits vengeance'

By ANNE GAYLOR

APOLOGISTS FOR the Bible, whether Christians or Jews, get away with the most outrageous statements because so few people really read the Bible. Steven Levine's column in The Capital Times (Jan. 28, 1965) is a case in point. Levine actually wrote: "Biblical law attempts to limit vengeance and brutality by limiting punishment to the person responsible for wrongdoing."

Quite the opposite is true, of course; sapping the innocent is a major theme of the Bible and of Mosaic law.

Levine gave us one example to support his contention: "The fathers shall not be put to death for the children; neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers. Every man shall be put to death for his own sin." (Deut. 24:16). While capital punishment fans rejoice and Levine blithely accepts his deadly dictum, the "Lord's" unfair and brutal com-



Anne Gaylor

third and fourth generation" of those who do not bow down.

"A bastard shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord, even to his 10th generation." So much for limiting punishment to those responsible for the wrongdoing.

But don't settle for a few examples of the unfairness of biblical law or the

they shall surely be put to death: cursing a parent, striking a parent, adultery, incest and homosexuality, to name a few.

CONSIDER DAVID, a favorite of God. David's sexual misconduct is punished in this way: "Thus saith the Lord, behold I will take thy wives before thine eyes and give them unto thy neighbor and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of the sun." Just who is being punished?

Again, when David's son Absalom sexually uses David's concubines (the Bible does not frown on concubines, of course), God's punishment is directed at the concubines, who are imprisoned for life.

One of the reasons our country fought a terrible Civil War is because the Bible mandates slavery — slaveholders could turn to the Bible for justification, and they did. "Slavery," proclaimed the clergy, "is a trust from God." And note that Jesus left the biblical laws of slavery exactly as

Gaylor 'celebrates' Christmas

Madison atheist making headway

By HARRIET LEEDS
United Press International



Anne Gaylor

A wreath is on the front door and Christmas gifts are on the piano bench, but the birthday of Jesus Christ is not celebrated in the Gaylor home in Madison.

Professed atheist Anne Gaylor is founder of the Freedom From Religion Foundation, Inc., a national organization formed to promote the separation of state and church.

"Of course we celebrate Christmas," the mother of four said. "It's a natural holiday. It's seasonal and cultural. It's the winter season, you know. It was a holiday for the pagans and Romans before the Christians took it over."

"We have a tree and decorate it but no angels on top or figures under it." A bumper sticker on the car in the driveway reads, "I don't necessarily see" and Gaylor refers to the Bible as "that dirty book."

She has appeared nationally on television — most recently on the Phil Donahue and Tom Snyder talk shows. She is a petite woman in her early 50s with dark, shoulder-length hair touched with gray who isn't afraid to take on powerful foes.

Gaylor said she started the Freedom From Religion Foundation in October, 1955, "to promote the constitutional principle of separation of state and church and to educate people on matters relating to non-theistic belief."

She said the group has grown to

about 500 people in 38 states. The foundation, she said, has:

- Stopped prayers in the Janesville public schools.
- Ended prayers at a federally funded senior citizens meal program after a man complained his food grew mold while the prayers were said.
- Persuaded University of Wisconsin officials to end religious exercises that had spread and closed U-W commencement for 120 years.
- Blocked the Postal Service's use of a commemorative stamp honoring a Catholic group, a violation of its own regulations.
- Stopped public school sponsorship and financing of an annual Nativity

rites to conduct daily prayers of the Wisconsin Legislature, and a protest against prayers in public schools in Arkansas.

Gaylor's own background is non-religious. She said her father compared religion to fairy tales, not to be taken seriously.

"I find it embarrassing when someone says they couldn't live without their religion," she said. "I mean, they're keep breathing unless they pull a Gaylor."

"Many people have been killed in the name of religion than any other cause. I think the world is ready for us."

Gaylor pointed to the mass murder of followers of Rev. Jim Jones in Guyana last month and claimed, "Christianity has gone a little bit berserk."

"It was a clergyman ordained in a mainline, mainstream church. It was a religious tragedy and the press is trying to make it political, talking about his opinions."

"Guyana would never have survived if churches had to pay taxes. They could never have built up this little empire tax-free. If there really was a separation of state and church there would be a greater awareness of the power of religion."

Gaylor has operated an abortion referral service from her home since the early 1970s and has maintained a fund for poor women unable to get publicly funded abortions since severe restrictions on the funding were adopted.

"People don't realize the tragedies created when they eat public funding

Gaylor said her foundation is dedicated to "dismantling" what it feels are the state-church separations guaranteed under the Bill of Rights.

Her foundation means Americans have the right not only to worship or not worship as they see fit, but also to be secure against having the religious beliefs of others thrust on them, or being required to help support the beliefs of others, she said.

"Someone should explain it to Jimmy Carter. The word 'God' doesn't appear in the Constitution."

In the 1976 presidential election there was only a choice "between two born-again trying to outdo each other on how pious they are," she said. "This shows the need for a group like ours."

This United Press International feature story ran in several editions around the country about the end of the Winter Solstice.

It resulted in radio invitations from Texas, Ohio and Pennsylvania (the easy part that you can do via long distance phone hooking) and many phone letter inquiries.

This clipping is from th

Anne continued to make headlines . . .

Her text: Bible is bad Preaching an unholy gospel

As president of the Freedom From Religion Foundation, Anne Gaylor naturally does not believe in God.

But she goes a little further, Gaylor says that belief in the Bible "is resulting in suicides, killings, maimings" and other unpleasant things.

Gaylor says that newspapers don't like to carry her views because they are unpopular. Newspapers regularly carry news about religion, but hardly ever carry news on anti-religion.

I thought about that. I have done many stories in the past on evangelical Christians and other religious groups. I have quoted people at some length about their belief in God and what a comfort that was. But I cannot remember ever writing about someone who believes that religion is a definite evil.

SO, TODAY, Anne Gaylor gets her say. I present her views not because I want you to agree with them, because much of what she says I don't agree with myself. But Gaylor's beliefs represent a minority point of view and presenting such things are part of what newspapers are about.

"Much of religion is just embarrassing," she says. "The belief in the Bible is embarrassing. You just can't believe it. It's like Foul Doyan or Mother Goose or something like that.

"And in church, I find it embarrassing for people to bow their heads. What a perfect way to put something over on someone! I think people would be better off with their heads up and eyes open."

GAYLOR'S PHILOSOPHY obviously is not designed to make her popular. She says, however, that she has never been pelted with rotten eggs when she gives speeches, because when "people listen to me, they realize what I'm saying is true.

Roger Simon



Gaylor, 51, has spent much of her life doing volunteer work in the field of women's rights, and ran an abortion referral service for many years in Madison, Wis. "I graduated from a one-room schoolhouse in Tumb, Wis. My mother died when I was a baby, but my father was not a religious man. Religion embarrassed him. He made small jokes about religion.

"I consider that a very honest reaction."

THE FREEDOM From Religion Foundation, which Gaylor heads, is a national organization based in Madison, and claims a membership of about 200. "I realize that's small," she says. "But we are new and growing."

The purpose of the group is to make sure that church and state stay separate in America, and to advise people of its view that belief in the Bible is extremely dangerous to life and limb.

Gaylor quotes three recent examples:

• In July, an 18-month-old boy died in Santa Rosa, Calif., after being beaten by his parents and a family friend. The assailants were quoted in the San Francisco Chronicle as saying they were responding to a Biblical prescription: "A rod to the back of a fool" and "blowings of wounds cleanses the soul."

and foot and gouged out his right eye. According to the Associated Press, his sister told police that her brother read the Bible constantly and "he thought he done it to get to heaven, that he had the demon in him."

• In Salt Lake City recently, a woman and six children committed suicide because, according to Gaylor, "of a belief in an afterlife for which there is no evidence."

"If people were carelessly dying and maiming themselves for some other reason," she says, "there would be a hue and cry of alarm comparable to the Legionnaire's disease alarm or that over Russian Dis."

"Belief in the Bible is killing more people than those much-publicized elusive viruses, yet no one is saying a word. This threat to human life and health is every bit as real, but because religion is involved, no one will wear an ermine."

"To those who say these people are obviously deranged, I would point out that belief in religion has obviously deranged them."

GAYLOR SAYS the problem is widespread and quotes a 1978 Gallup poll saying that 39 per cent of the adults in the United States believe that "everything in the Bible is literally true, word for word."

"Literal belief in the Bible demonstrably can be harmful to one's health," Gaylor says, "and if clergypersons had integrity, they would be saying it. We wouldn't have to."

I called an editor at a local newspaper in Madison to get an idea of what kind of person Gaylor is. "She's quite well known around here," he said. "She's always petitioning to end prayers at the beginning of the legislative session and to do away with the Christmas pageant at the state capitol. This year she has about 40 followers in



ANNE GAYLOR. "She just believes in what she says."

just believes in what she says."

Gaylor recently appeared on national television on the Phil Donahue show and the studio audience divided up when she was done, some supporting her and some attacking her.

SHE OBVIOUSLY represents a small minority in this country. And some people probably would rather not see Gaylor's views expressed either on television or in a newspaper.

But freedom of religion would be meaningless unless we also let people be free from religion.

Personally, I doubt that religion deranges people. There are obviously deranged people, and they may quote the Bible in carrying out deranged acts. But I think the problems of such people stem from their minds and not from their religion.

Gaylor says that the U.S. Constitution makes no mention of God, and she is right about that. But America is fundamentally a God-fearing country even if it is not especially a churchgoing one.

Our money bears the motto "In God We Trust" and to many Americans, that is about the only thing they are true to these

Roger Simon of the Chicago Sun-Times ran an interview of Anne in August 1978, in which she said: "I find it embarrassing for people to bow their heads [to pray]. What a perfect way to put something over on someone! I think people would be better off with their heads up and eyes open."



That Chicago story, carried around the country, brought us a new member: Ruth Hurmence Green, who became a dear friend. Anne raised money to publish Ruth's wonderfully useful book, *The Born Again Skeptic's Guide to the Bible*, in 1979. In July 1981, Ruth, suffering from round 3 of cancer, this one terminal, took control of her own death with painkillers.

Ruth sent many of her friends goodbye letters, including a very touching letter to my mother, telling her: "Freedom From must grow and prosper. Freedom depends on freethinkers." You'll find that motto up on our website.



Anne worked fulltime for nearly 5 years before taking a very modest salary. She moved us from a dining-room table operation . . .



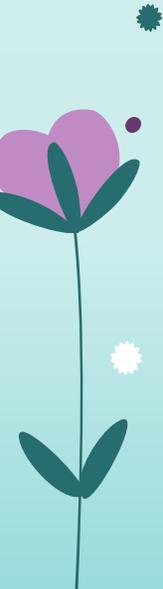
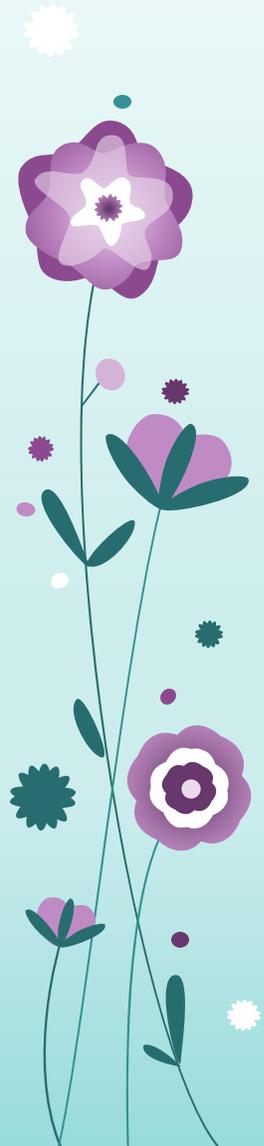
... to rented offices ...



Moving into first offices on Capitol Square, Madison, Wis. . . .



Open House. Anne with feminist colleague and “unabashed atheist” Connie Threinen.





FFRF's cramped rental space. The need to own our own office building became obvious as the Foundation grew.



. . . and finally we moved into our lovely downtown building, paid for with cash in 1991, because Anne has strict notions on nonprofits not going into debt.



Anne in the Foundation's Elizabeth Elliott Library.



MEMORABLE MOMENTS

The smelly fish sent through the Post Office to my parents' home when Anne complained about an underwater Jesus in a publicly-owned underwater park in Florida. (no kidding!)

The toilet left on their front lawn covered with religious graffiti . . .

MILWAUKEE SENTINEL

42 Pages, 4 Parts

Saturday morning, October 5, 1985

• • Edition

Gaylor takes offensive on blocking football prayer

By Susan Trebach

Sentinel Madison Bureau

Madison — Optimists say the University of Wisconsin Badgers don't have a prayer in Monday's football game against the University of Michigan Wolverines. Anne Gaylor would like to keep it that way.

Gaylor, president of the Freedom From Religion Foundation, said Friday she had asked the university to stop Badger Head Football Coach Dave McClain from leading prayers before games.

"It seems ridiculous that grown men would pray about a game," Gaylor said. "Even if you believe in prayer, where are your priorities?"

Gaylor, who frequently preaches on the merits of separating church and state, said her group regards pre-game praying as "totally unsuitable activity for a publicly supported institution."

Gaylor said she lodged her complaint with UW Chancellor Irving Mainz after a local televi-

sions program aired Sept. 28 showing McClain leading his team in personal prayer and in the Lord's Prayer.

"McClain should be told that this is not Jesus' University or Fairwell's Liberty College or Central Bible School," Gaylor said.

Prayers

Turn to Page 4



October 10, 1985

Badger Herald

Page Seven

Anne Gaylor (who else?) battles pregame prayer

By JOHN M. WIRTH
Special Editorial Writer

It is time to take action. Burn your season football tickets. Boycott the games. Wear the almanac. Picket Coach McClain's office. There is no time to lose.

You should know that there is a museum in our athletic department. This one goes beyond recruiting violations, bad administration and Butch's raffle. One of the great protectors of the American Way wants us to know that McClain has been violating our First Amendment rights. He has been "establishing religion."

You say you have never met Dave McClain? You say that he has never denied you any of your rights? He never told you that you had to go to church, or which church to go to? Well, thank God — excuse me, I mean Anne Gaylor — that you can find out how wrong you have been.

Gaylor is the spokeswoman for the Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF). They are the ones who do not want us to sing "God Bless America," pray "In God We Trust," or our saints or get Christmas trees on the White House

lawn. They feel that we are held captive by religion and that they are just the people to free us.

It seems that the good coach practices that ultimate relinquishment in our civil liberties — public prayer. Where yet, he does it with some of his players and he doesn't even have the decency to hide it.

A recent television program about the Badgers' pregame preparations showed the coach and some of the players kneeling and asking God to help them to give their best effort, and to protect them from injury. According to Gaylor, that is where McClain broke the law and she wants the university to stop him from doing this in the future.

Libertarians and other First Amendment fanatics will probably applaud Gaylor's protest. Those who believe that their constitutional rights must be protected at all costs will undoubtedly agree that McClain was wrong.

But by forcing McClain to stop pregame prayers, whose rights would be protected? Certainly not those of the general public. They do not "establish religion." After all, one man's practice cannot constitute an establishment. His prayers do not

control the rest of society to practice or affirm his faith in any way.

Does his prayer infringe upon Gaylor's rights? Hardly. She is still free to practice her God-baiting in any way she desires.

How about the rights of players? Is this somehow comparable to school prayer? Definitely not. It is ridiculous to compare second graders to 20-year-olds. One can argue that school prayers offend children who believe that they offend their family members. However, a college student, is, certainly, not an impressionable.

It would be wrong for McClain to make pregame prayer a prerequisite

for playing on his team. However, he does not require anyone to participate and, in fact, many do not, yet they still play.

If pregame prayer was an infringement upon players' rights, we would have heard about it long ago. Hundreds of young men have played for McClain and not one has complained. Not one player has quit the team because he was offended by prayer. Not one graduate has evaded the football program negatively because of prayer.

Pregame prayers do not violate anyone's rights. Banning them does. The Constitution condones any law

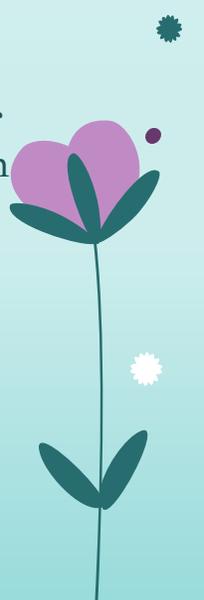
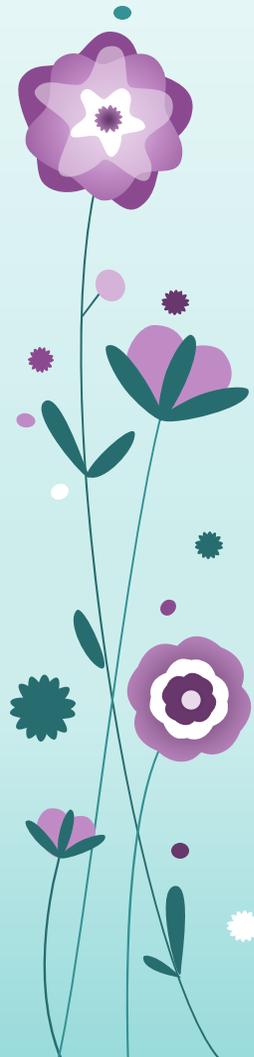
that "prohibits the free exercise" of religion. By telling these players and coaches that they cannot pray together, the university would be denying them their rights. Furthermore, it would be "establishing religion" by making atheism the only acceptable faith on campus.

Gaylor has long attempted to bully the public into accepting her warped beliefs. She is prejudiced against the religious and offended by their faith. She practices the worst form of religious bigotry, she wants to establish her beliefs as the official state religion and she will trample upon anyone's rights to do it.

MORE MEMORABLE MOMENTS

The belches and burps that accompanied late-night phone calls by religious jocks after she complained about prayer at UW-Madison sports events.

The rudest audience Anne ever encountered, when she was invited to speak to a Men's Club in Sauk City, Wis. The hostile audience interrupted, then adjourned the meeting so she couldn't speak.





Anne Gaylor

Group wants book closed on Badger prayer

Prayers From Page 1

"This is a fan-supported, public initiative and prayers come from diverse backgrounds. McClain should not be limiting prayers on them."

"A coach is regarded as a teacher, a member of the faculty, and here he is teaching prayers. Certainly, faculty in other departments would not be allowed to do it."

McClain was traveling to Ann Arbor with the football team Friday afternoon in preparation for Saturday's game, and was unavailable for comment.

In an Oct. 2 letter to Shain, Gaylor said: "Please regard this as our formal request of the University of Wisconsin and its physical education department to cease this unconstitutional practice."

As of Friday afternoon she had received no reply.

Arthur Howe, assistant to Shain, said the university administration had asked for information and recommendations on the matter from Athletic Director Erny Strack and the Athletic Board.

"It is not appropriate for us to make judgments until we find out what is happening," Howe said.

Howe said he thought the board would seek legal advice on the constitutional question.

Gaylor said she knew her position on this issue might not be a popular one. "If I were concerned about pleasing everyone, I wouldn't be working for this team," she said.

Weekender

The Weekend of
Oct. 5, 1985

THE CAPITAL TIMES, Madison, Wis., Weekend of Oct. 5, 1985

Wisconsin State Journal, Saturday, October 5, 1985

Sports

Sports digest

Gaylor rips team prayer

Associated Press

A Madison-based ethical organization has demanded that University of Wisconsin football coach Dave McClain stop leading his players in prayer before their games.

"Praying before battle is a barbarian custom," said Anne Gaylor, president of the Freedom From Religion Foundation, in a letter to LW Madison.

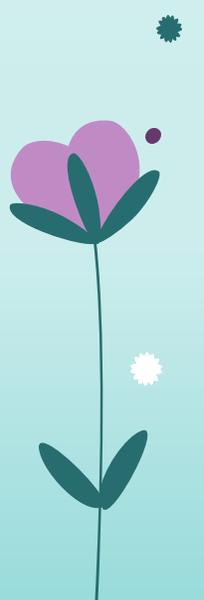
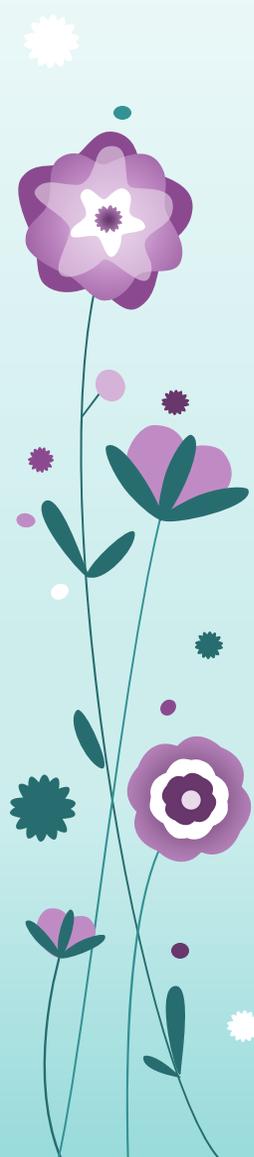
Anne Gaylor: Bucky shouldn't have a prayer

By JOHN PATRICK WINTER
Capital Times Associate Editor

The Wisconsin Badgers may not think they need divine support as they open their Big Ten schedule today against the No. 2-ranked Michigan Wolverines — but they'd better not let Anne Gaylor catch them praying for

success after she received phone calls and correspondence from Madison residents who had watched a recent Dave McClain show on a local television station.

During a videotaped segment, McClain, the LW Madison head football coach, was shown talking to the players, then leading them in a formal prayer. Gaylor quoted

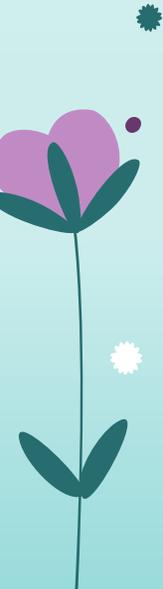
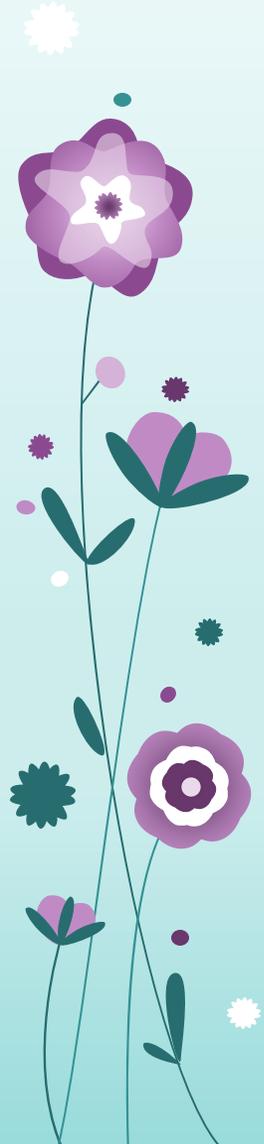




The large-set Roman Catholic woman who came up from the audience after Anne appeared on a Philadelphia TV talk show in 1983, who grabbed my mother from behind, and choked her and wouldn't let go. My Dad, who fortunately was with her, couldn't budge the assailant until he used his crutches! The attack made the Philly newspapers.

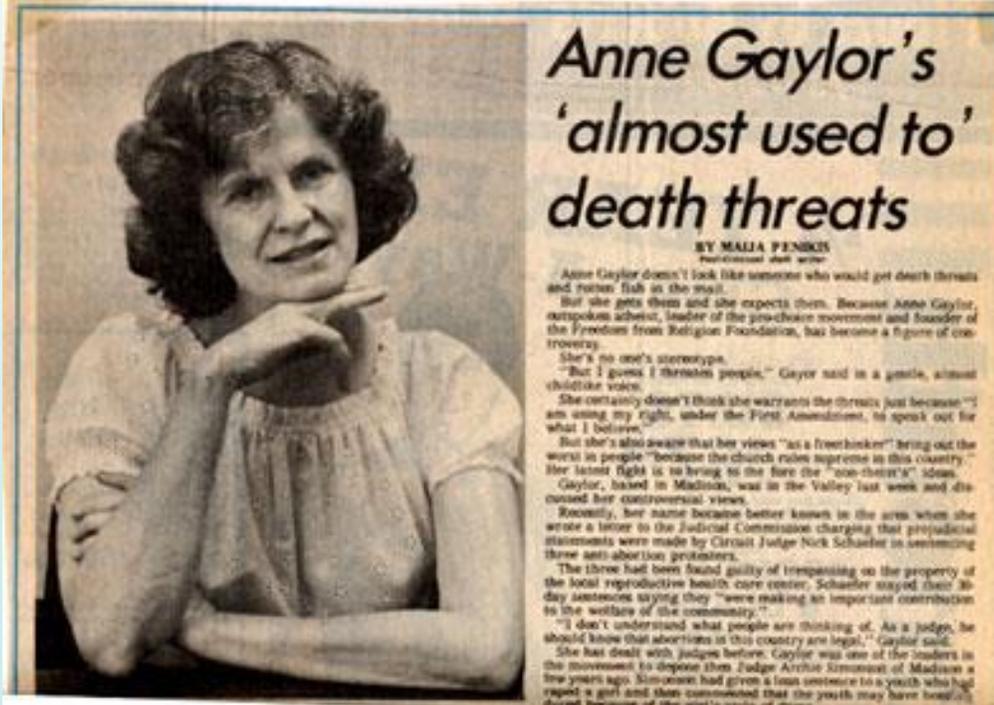


A serene moment on the road visiting with a kitten.



Post-Crescent

280 Pages ■ Appleton-Neenah-Menasha, Wisconsin ■ Sunday, July 22, 1984 ■ \$1.00



The strange young man who came up to both of us after we had appeared on another east coast TV show, and announced to us: "All atheists should be killed."
The man who phoned our office after a local complaint in the 1990s and told Anne when she picked up the phone: "You should be shot" (one of several death threats over the years).

Atheist says Bible violent book

MADISON, Wis. (AP) — Anne Gaylor, atheist, wants you to read the Bible. Then she wants you to wash your hands of religion.

"Anyone who handles a Bible has bloody hands," she told members of the American Humanist Association as she accepted the 1985 Humanist Heroine Award in March. "The texts that teach hatred and murder are hard to count and the descriptions of acts of vengeance and torture that dominate much of the Bible cannot be matched for ferocity in all of literature."

Gaylor, 58, is the founder and president of the Freedom From Religion Foundation, a Madison-based organization that promotes atheism, humanism and secularism under the umbrella label of "freethought."

She claims the foundation's membership has grown from three in 1976 to 2,000 today. And while she said most of the foundation's 12 state chapters are basically social clubs, Gaylor is an activist who frequently takes the offensive in battles over church-state separation.

She has won more than a few of those fights. For example:

- In 1978, the foundation convinced the Janesville school board to order a halt to the practice of having kindergartners say a prayer over their milk and cookies.
- That same year, the foundation succeeded in getting a prayer removed from University of Wisconsin-Madison commencement ceremonies.
- In 1979, the foundation got the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to remove a large white cross from a state park near Sheboygan.
- In 1983, at Gaylor's insistence, signs reading "Keep Christ in Christmas" were removed from public transit buses in Madison.
- Just last month, the state DNR stopped distributing a poster depicting Wisconsin birds after Gaylor complained that a tiny drawing of a fish and the letters "PTL" beneath the artist's signature were "a commercial for Christianity."
- The foundation also sponsors an annual essay contest with a \$1,000 prize for college students (this year's topic: "What's wrong with fundamentalism?"). And foundation members are encouraged to use guerrilla tactics, such as placing bright yellow stickers reading "Warning: Literal belief in this book may endanger your health and life!" in motel- and hotel-room Bibles.

Gaylor savors her victories, but freeing the world from religion is not an easy job. She said she was nearly strangled in Philadelphia by a woman who wanted to drink the devil out of her and she once received a dead fish in the mail from a Floridian who objected to the foundation's efforts to have a submerged statue of Christ removed from a state park for scuba divers.

"It's probably the country's least popular cause," Gaylor said of her work. "There are so many people who turn pale at the word atheist."

Gaylor said she was raised in a freethought home near Tonaw. Her mother died when she was a baby and her father, a farmer who died when she was 18, found religion "embarrassing."

"He felt it was embarrassing to have people talking about a personal relationship with a mythical figure," she said. "If you ran into somebody who talked about Paul Bunyan as being a real person and about having a personal relationship with him, you might think it was a little strange."

Gaylor, who is married and has four children, said her upbringing also shaped her strong feminist views.

As a girl, she said, she found the Bible boring. But when she read it as literature while majoring in English at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in the mid-1960s, she saw a connection between the Scriptures and women's oppression.

See BIBLE, page 18

La Crosse Tribune, June 3, 1985, Front Page.



Godless woman: The Good Book's hazardous to your health

BIBLE OUTRAGE!

By JACK ALEXANDER

Atheist Anne Gaylor says the Bible teaches people to hate, maim and kill and demands it be labeled with a WARNING: Dangerous to Life and Health.

Her shocking request was sent to Pennsylvania's top consumer agency and outraged spokesman Robert Gentzel.

"Her off-the-wall request is absurd and ridiculous," he said. "The thought of government putting warning labels on any publication is so outlandish, it isn't even worth talking about."

But Miss Gaylor, who heads the Freedom From Religion Foundation in Madison, Wis., is deadly serious.

"The Bible is a book of myths and fables and legends sprinkled with a little history and teaching of morality," she said. "It is a uniquely dangerous book that teaches people to hate, kill, maim and beat. It is a mean, wicked book that has an expiration back thousands of years."

"A 1978 Gallup poll had 80 percent of the people in America about they believe the Bible 'went for ward,' she said. "That's dangerous for those of us who are people. We're becoming a nation of Bible thumpers."

at better for them to enter into Bible is dangerous and depicts sin, hate or sinners, rather than love.

"She has a right to feel open he cast into everlasting fire," said as a member of a firm.



ATHEIST Anne Gaylor sees the Bible as a pack of lies that cause trouble.

Government says atheist's idea to label the Scriptures just like cigarettes is . . .

... ABSURD!



The letter from a man in Michigan telling her a couple of years ago: "My rifle is loaded." Being able to pre-empt 15 minutes of the PTL Club on Madison's CBS network, so she and the Foundation could make an Equal Time response to Pat Robertson! (Before Reagan croaked Equal Time.)

THE CAPITAL TIMES

February 13, 1984

Madison, Wisconsin

Phone 252-6400 30¢
Subscriber service 252-6363

A woman who inspires respect, anger

By **LINDA THOMSON**
Capital Times Staff Writer

If there's anybody who really winds people up, it's atheist and feminist Anne Gaylor.

Just mention her name anywhere in southern Wisconsin in virtually any company and listen to the jeers — or cheers.

Lately, she has prompted more letters to the editor of The Capital Times than the issue of nuclear weapons, and if a poll were taken, she'd probably get more name recognition than the mayor of Madison.

For somebody who generates all that

controversy, she doesn't look like a fighter. Silvery voiced and delicate, the 37-year-old Gaylor is given to ruffles and curls and looks for all the world like a very traditional woman.

But traditional she's not.

Take her stand on the Catholic Church, for instance.

"I really don't see how anyone could belong to a church like that anymore than they could belong to the Ku Klux Klan," she says slyly.

"Look at the history of the Christian church, which for a long time was Catholic. Look at the bloody crusades, the Inquis-

tion, the fight against scientific progress and human rights. They (all the churches) come out of that history."

Additionally, Gaylor says, "The Catholic Church has committed a great many crimes against women."

Among them she lists the torture and killing of millions of women centuries ago who were branded as witches. She also points to the church's continuing hard line on birth control, abortion and sterilization, which she says denies millions of modern women control over their bodies, and in some cases, threatens their lives.

(See GAYLOR, Page 11)



DAVID SAMOUELL/The Capital Times
Anne Gaylor

The page 1 story above the fold in the Capital Times headlined: "A woman who inspires respect, anger." The reporter wrote that Anne had "prompted more letters to the editor" than any other issue, "and if a poll were taken, she'd probably get more name recognition than the mayor of Madison."

Thursday
December 29, 1988
Madison, Wisconsin



Wisconsin State Journal

Anti-Bible ads to ride city buses

By Doug Meil
City government reporter

The Freedom from Religion Foundation has paid for advertisements to be posted in 40 Madison Metro buses, starting today, criticizing the Bible "a grim fairy tale."

The advertisements are in response to paid advertisements from the Catholic Knights of Columbus during December asking riders to "Keep Christ in Christmas."

Both groups paid \$225 for their month-long advertising campaign, according to Warren Somerfeld, city transportation director.

Anne Gaylor, president of the Madison-based foundation, said the signs claim the Bible is "a book that condones violence and sexism" and "should not be revered."

"Obviously we know our signs will be objectionable to some people in the same manner that religious signs are objectionable to

we be prepared to live in it."

Somerfeld said the Knights of Columbus had asked for free advertising on city buses during the holiday season. The group had received permission for free advertising last year but the ads were taken down after Ms. Gaylor protested, he said.

Because of a U.S. Supreme Court decision about spending public money for a Nativity scene, the city said the Knights of Columbus would have to pay for the advertisements, Somerfeld said.

Somerfeld said Ms. Gaylor called about the second week of December, asking how to place the advertisements. Because the city is changing advertising companies, she was told, it would be hard to get the advertisements placed before Jan. 1.

"There was considerable stonewalling" from the city about the advertisements, Ms. Gaylor said.

"There was no stonewall intended,"



Anne Gaylor

night (Wednesday). They will be on the street tomorrow.

While Somerfeld said the advertisements are "certainly unusual," they don't contain anything that would cause the city out to put them on buses.

"I don't have any problem" with the advertisements, he said. "I don't particularly find the message offensive in the sense of the type of language" that is used.

"If a person has a right to advertise in the area of Christianity, why doesn't a person have a right to advertise (for)... atheism?" Somerfeld asked. "Who am I to stifle the particular views or messages of people as

'Fairy tale' Bible hit in bus signs

By Linda Keegan
Special to The Journal

Madison, Wis. — Bus riders here got a start Thursday when they noticed pink and black signs proclaiming the Bible "a grim fairy tale."

The 40 signs, some of which were installed overnight, say the Bible "condones violence and sexism" and that it "should not be revered."

The signs are the work of the Freedom From Religion Foundation, an association that claims about 1,500 members nationwide. It is based here and run by Anne Gaylor, an activist whose cause is the separation of church and state.

A year ago, Gaylor had objected to the posting of "Keep Christ in Christmas" signs on the Madison Metro buses. Those signs were placed by the Knights of Columbus, and the space for them was donated by the city-owned bus company.

Warren Somerfeld, city transportation director, said free space was allowed as a matter of policy when non-profit messages were submitted by groups with federal or state tax-exempt status. He said the Knights had met this criterion.

He said the signs were taken down a year ago after Gaylor complained to the city attorney.

This year, the Knights paid for the space and their signs went back into the buses. So Gaylor's group put down \$225 for its own 12-inch by 28-inch signs to run 30 days.

"Religious messages aren't allowed in buses," Gaylor said. "But if



Anne Gaylor



FFRF scrapbooks are full of stories and memorable headlines. One of my favorites: the news story reporting Anne was putting anti-bible ads in Madison buses to counter religious ads . . .

Anti-Bible ads annoy clergymen

By William H. Wineke
and Doug Mell
Of The State Journal

The anti-Bible advertisements the Freedom From Religion Foundation placed in Madison buses apparently have elicited more frustration than outrage from Madison clergy.

The ads, which appeared in buses Thursday, call the Bible a "grim fairy tale" and accuse the Bible of condoning sexism and violence.

The Freedom From Religion Foundation is a national organization based in Madison and headed by Anne Gaylor, who placed the ads.

Clergy, in general, believe Mrs. Gaylor had the legal right to place the advertisements, but they still don't like them.

"Legally, the ad is protected by free speech, I suppose," said Bishop



Bishop George Wirz

George Wirz, auxiliary bishop of the Madison Catholic Diocese and pastor of St. Bernard's Catholic Church.

"Morally, any attack on the scriptures is of concern to me, especially an attack, like this one, which is inaccurate and based on a poor under-

standing. But I do hope it will provide an incentive to religious people to pay more attention to the Bible."

The Rev. Richard Pritchard, pastor of Heritage Congregational Christian Church, took issue with Mrs. Gaylor's contention the Bible is sexist.

"The Bible, through the centuries, has been a strong source of hope and comfort and daily strength to countless millions of men and women," Pritchard said. "In cultures where the Bible has had an influence, the status of every person — including women — has been far above that in other societies."

The Rev. David Hamilton, pastor of Memorial Baptist Church, Verona, defended Mrs. Gaylor's right to place the ad.

"I think she's got every right in the world to do it," Hamilton said. "That

is the genius we have here in the United States. I think she's foolish, but she has the right to be foolish. The same right that allows us to exist allows her to exist."

The Rev. Wells B. Grogan, pastor of the First Congregational Church, also affirmed Mrs. Gaylor's right to place the ad.

On the other hand, he said, "the statement that the Bible is a grim fairy tale is about as stupid a remark as I can imagine."

Warren Somerfeld, city transportation director, said one person called the department Thursday to ask how to "buy ads to counter this (anti-Bible advertisements)."

Somerfeld, who would not identify the person making the inquiry, said it appeared the person was intent on

Turn to Page 2, Col. 1

Wisconsin State Journal, Friday, December 30, 1983

Anti-Bible ads irritate

Continued from Page 1

placing pro-Bible advertisements.

Somerfeld is working on a new policy for what type of advertisements the city will accept on buses. He said he wants to preclude critical advertisements.

"There is a very fine line to define what we mean by 'anti,'" Somerfeld

As of late afternoon Thursday, Somerfeld said he had received seven phone calls about the anti-Bible advertisements. Madison Metro had received seven calls and the office of Mayor Joseph Sersenbrenner had received five.

Somerfeld said one of his callers supported the city in allowing the advertisements on buses.

Anti-religious ads on buses upsets Madison, Wis., clergy

MADISON, Wis. (AP) — Clergymen are complaining that advertisements on city buses sponsored by an anti-

... followed by the stories reprinted around the country reporting that "clergy were annoyed" by those ads!

Here's to 1983's boors, dolts, sleazes

By DAVID ELASKA
Capital Times Staff Writer

It has been a very good year, 1983. Any year the human race survives as a species is a good year.

As always, however, the march of human progress is slowed by the lapses of its members. Just as Adam learned from his fall, so must we all.

Herewith are memorialized the strivers among us who stumble in the stretch, the guests who upchuck at Julia Child dinner parties, the fallen angels with clip-on wings.

The criteria: They must be local or Wisconsin individuals who have insulted the collective wisdom or offended the keen sensibilities of Capital Times readers during 1983.

Actual violators of the criminal code have been referred to the mercies of the criminal justice system.

No, the dollish two dozen named herein are guilty of nothing more than an advanced case of bad form,chutzpah, general tackiness, egotistical bad taste, premeditated prevarication, blinding stupidity, boorishness and sleaze. They are not rotten to the core, just a little rancid around the edges.

Nonetheless, as Michael Corleone would say, this is where we settle all accounts. Drums roll, please:

1. Douglas Quinn-Gruber and Ted Keyes: two swashbuckling freedom fighters who sued the state for sex discrimination because they weren't considered for Alice in Dairyland. Ganzzz, step aside! Both guys subsequently admitted they didn't really

(See DOLTS, Page 10)



Who's who? For the key to this chart of '83 anti-heroes, turn to Page 10!

Anne has been constantly blasted in the media, in editorials and in letters. Whole editorial pages have been turned over to letters about her activism.

Anne Gaylor: lightning

Gaylor keeps Christians on their toes: Brown

MADISON — I found Linda Thomson's Feb. 13 article on Anne Gaylor to be surprisingly balanced, even if inappropriate as a headline story.

As a Christian, I can honestly say I am thankful for Anne Gaylor. She has served to awaken from lethargy those of us who oppose her viewpoint and she inspires us to define and facilitate our own beliefs.

She has forced us to realize that our religious values are in jeopardy and could even be outlawed unless we take a stand to preserve the principles upon which this country was founded.

The Declaration of Independence included God. It begins: "All men are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights," and it ends "with a firm reliance on the protection of divine providence."

The Constitution guarantees freedom of religion, not freedom from religion. — Ann Brown

Kelly: Don't spread Gaylor's 'demonic' views

MADISON — In all the years that The Capital Times has been publishing, has it suddenly run out of important front-page news? I couldn't believe my eyes when I read the article about Anne Gaylor, accompanied by color picture.

Anyone who openly speaks against the Bible and puts up posters (against the Bible) in public, ends prayers in a school and in senior citizen meal programs . . . should not be on the front page.

Gaylor's demonic influence should not be given such coverage. — Mrs. John Kelly

Gaylor will eventually find faith: Wilhelm

did Paul almost 2,000 years ago, and as it did Whittaker Chambers, Malcolm Muggeridge, Claire Booth Luce and many other unbelievers who were also intellectuals, she will, as they did, become a strong disciple for the faith.

We welcome Gaylor because we need people with the powerful spirit she displays. She can be assured of our continued prayers for her conversion. — Louis A. Wilhelm

Don't inflame hate, controversy, Fay pleads

MADISON — Why give Anne Gaylor the publicity she seeks? Why inflame controversy and hate? Isn't it obvious that our community is torn apart by such stories?

Please, enough. — Jim Fay

Atheists can't be U.S. citizens: Gisvold

MARSHFIELD — There is apparently significant reward in unadmitted ignorance, as is the case with Anne Gaylor. Her calling the Catholic Church the "enemy" is but one example of this ignorance . . .

An atheist cannot be a citizen of this nation. The last sentence of the Declaration of Independence notes: " . . . with a firm reliance on the protection of divine providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor."

Where is the honor of the Anne Gaylor of this nation? Where is the honor in the promotion of death, or bigotry and hatred? The atheist is without honor, as defined by the Declaration of Independence . . . — Thomas G. Gisvold

Gaylor cuts through right-wing 'smog': Taylor

BLOOMER — Anne Gaylor deserves the highest praise. People who



Anne Gaylor

are true heroes of our times.

One can only hope that some day all citizens will be taught the facts about the separation of church and state. Then obscenities like Ronald Reagan's "Year of the Bible" will be only a bad memory. — Karla Taylor

Gaylor endangers her own freedom, Kessler says

VERONA — I find it infinitely easier to believe that an all-powerful God can make a mule speak than to believe that the intention of the First Amendment is, as Anne Gaylor says, to "keep religion out of the public sector."

It seems Gaylor has forgotten that our system of government guarantees the right of all groups, including unpopular ones such as hers, to free and public expression. If she were as familiar with history as she claims, she would realize that by attempting to silence those with whom she disagrees, she is endangering the very freedom she is supposedly trying to uphold.

Her comments reveal not only her extreme prejudice against anyone with differing views but also her igno-

A typical headline: "Anne Gaylor, Lightning Rod."

Gaylor draws wrath of Christians

I read the article on the removal of the Christmas posters in the Metro buses requested by Anne Gaylor. I was very disturbed and surprised.

Such an action would only have to be done in Hitler's time or in a communist country — not here. Why should one woman dominate our way of thinking and get her way? Maybe it will make us united and stronger.

Why should she demand removal of religious posters and things that have to do with religion. If she gets her way, then it is one-sided and in favor of her and atheism. Why shouldn't we protest then? — Mrs. John Kelly, Madison



Anne Gaylor

With Madison Metro's taking down the "Keep Christ in Christmas" posters at the request of Anne Gaylor, we are at the stage where religious intolerance is hardly acceptable any longer. There is a vast difference between liberty and intolerance.

I wonder what some of those early settlers and statesmen would say about the current freedom this country has when compared to what they had in mind? — Ronald A. Dubois, Madison

Jesus loves her

We heard that the signs on the buses were removed because Anne Gaylor objected to the sign, "Keep Christ in Christmas."

How wonderful that Christmas is celebrated because of Christ, and that won't change in spite of what some heathen say! Thank, Christ, love and rejoice today and love Anne Gaylor! — Mr. and Mrs. Walter DeYoung, Pleasant

Liberty eroded

Several hundred years ago, as I was taught in my history class, religious groups left their homes, lands and families to find religious liberty

the minority gets its wish in most everything. What happened in the old saying, "The majority rules."

I feel as a Christian — more specifically a Catholic — my rights should be honored, too. — Kaddy Decker, Madison

Bigoted spite

Once again the madless and rabid hatred of Anne Gaylor and the Freedom From Religion Foundation has hit the printed page.

First, it was Gaylor's false and ludicrous claim that the Bible promotes racism and hatred, now it is the equally laughable claim of her lawyer, Julie Melton, that "the Bible states clearly that non-believers should be punished by death."

Because the terms "believer" and "non-believer" do not appear or have a function in the Old Testament, and since Christians are not to follow the Old Testament law (Acts 15:1-29, Romans 10:4), Melton must be referring to the New Testament.

So where in the New Testament is there anything resembling Melton's statement?

The idea of the so-called "free thinking" that Gaylor and the members of the Freedom From Religion Foundation hold to is evidently that one should act not on the basis of intelligent thought but rather on the basis of bigoted and emotional spite. — Adam Korbill, Monona

For the record

May I set the record straight? The media have been quoting Anne Gaylor for an inking credit for removing the "Keep Christ in Christmas" posters from the Madison buses.

Actually, as I learned from meeting with the top officials involved, these posters — and also several others for worthwhile charitable organizations with which she has no quarrel — were instantaneously withdrawn just before Christmas only because her complaint called to the attention of the advertising agency handling it that, inadvertently, someone in the Madison Metro system had neglected to go through channels.

Over and over again, she has been wanting to deny to others the freedom of speech she claims for herself and which — thank God — are still guaranteed for us all by our Constitution. — Richard K. Peterson, Madison

Heartwarming story

It was heartwarming to see the Christmas story on the front page of The Wisconsin State Journal.

Thanks to you for keeping Christ in Christmas and others in Madison Metro for bowing to demands by Freedom From Religion's Anne Gaylor and removing "Keep Christ in Christmas" signs. — Juliette Newell, Monona

Anne Gaylor, C-T's Blaska stir readers up

'Shocked' Heine wants apology for Blaska's blasts

MADISON — After reading David Blaska's Dec. 23 article, I need to be reassured that The Capital Times is simply four months ahead of schedule and that this article was really intended as an April Fool's joke.

I was both shocked and disappointed at the type of journalism that puts anti-religious activists, the Take Back the Night searchers and the Progressive magazine on the same level as a convicted criminal and the worst landlord Madison has ever had to deal with.

An explanation, if not an outright apology, is in order. — Lea Heine

Ris offended by Blaska's 'gross, brutal' article

MADISON — As one who has lived in this community for the past 21 years and has been your subscriber for that length of time, I was shocked beyond description by David Blaska's Dec. 23 article, "Here's to 1983's bores, dolls, steams" belatedly highlighted the issue.

Blaska's other choices struck resistant chords as well. He is going to take a beating for this, but damn it, that is what we are lacking today: people with the acuity to be genuinely nasty. — Matt Joseph

Blaska's other choices struck resistant chords as well. He is going to take a beating for this, but damn it, that is what we are lacking today: people with the acuity to be genuinely nasty. — Matt Joseph

Indeed, Blaska has done precisely that — by brutally attacking a main-

tenance of church and state.

In order to make the article palatable to the liberal community, Blaska included a few ultra-conservatives in his list. (That) this article is gross, if festive and brutal and should not have been part of a responsible newspaper. It should never have passed editorial scrutiny. It is clearly an insult to the Madison progressive community by a newspaper that considers itself a pillar of liberalism. — Randa W. RN, M.D.

Joseph applauds Blaska's 'genuinely nasty' touch

CROSS PLAINS — I thought that the little problems of conflict of interest in radio station WORT's coverage of (the MATC controversy) had been completely overlooked by a justifiably yawning public. Then, Dave Blaska's delightful "Here's to 1983's bores, dolls, steams" belatedly highlighted the issue.

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Tooney said it first, he reminds us

MADISON — Thanks to Dave Blaska for delivering some well-deserved (and funny) jabs to some of Madison's own. I was especially interested in his No. 11 ranking to rub-the-nose-in Anne Gaylor and her Freedom From Religion Foundation.

I couldn't have said it better myself, though I may have said it before. In an Aug. 25 letter to The Capital Times, I responded to one of Gaylor's publicity stunts (her blaming of Christianity, the Bible and Ronald Reagan for child abuse) by warning of atheism's danger to free societies.

I also called for a Freedom from Anne Gaylor Foundation, which Blaska formally announced in his article. How about it, Madison? — Robert J. Tooney

Indeed, Blaska has done precisely that — by brutally attacking a main-

tenance of church and state.

of Christ. How can anyone be offended by a message saying, "Keep Christ in Christmas"? Without Christ, there is no Christmas.

We cannot understand how she can shove her weight around the way she does. Her signs on city buses are an insult to all intelligent people, Christian or not. . . . We don't know if she is salvageable, but wouldn't it be a wonderful miracle if she were converted to Christianity? — Jim and Betty Virsik

Asking people to keep Christ in Christmas is harmless, and is actually a needed reminder. Stammering the word of God, the Bible, by stating dogmatically and publicly that "The Bible is a grim fairy tale," is neither harmless nor true.

If we condone anti-God, anti-Bible messages on our city buses, what will come next? Billboards? Ads in the city newspapers? May God have mercy on the Madison Metro officials who saw fit to serve Satan by allowing the use of their buses as vehicles of blasphemy. — Mrs. E. Freitag

Donlin suggests a 'prayer a day' for Gaylor

BELLEVILLE — Jesus and the Bible teach us to love our enemies. All people who believe in God, the Bible and the Torah should have an

Anne "drew wrath" . . .

Editorial Page

THE CAPITAL TIMES
Madison, Wisconsin
Saturday, Jan. 15, 1983

Another chapter in Bible, 1st Amendment flap

Nordlander no tax 88 for religious propaganda

MENASHA — Your Dec. 28 editorial, "A case of oversteering," which sought to denigrate Anne Gaylor's efforts to remove the Knights of Columbus' "Keep Christ in Your Christmas" graphic from buses operated by Madison Metro, failed to recognize that the law company is sanctioned by the taxpayer.

The enterprise supported by taxpayer funds has any right to propagate religious propaganda, Madison Metro, which receiving the dollars of Christian taxpayers, also receives the tax dollars of people who have no interest in promoting Christianity whatsoever.

"That the Freedom From Religion Foundation could successfully have obtained an injunction preventing the Knights of Columbus' graphic as any given bus may be used, in fact, but it would have been equally wrong from the standpoint of the principle of church-state separation.

If church-state separation means anything at all, it means that government should be neutral as regards religion. It means that government

shall neither promote nor denigrate religion.

Anne Gaylor deserves a salute from all patriotic Americans for her work to keep the glory funds of government away from our most precious constitutional liberty, the separation of church and state. — Robert E. Nordlander, president, Fox Valley Chapter, American United For Separation of Church and State

Religious messages don't belong on buses: His

MADISON — I was not only amused but deeply disappointed that The Capital Times, which prides itself on being a bastion of objectivity and a defender of the Constitution, found it necessary to attack Anne Gaylor for her successful effort to remove from the Madison buses the posters that proclaimed "Keep Christ in Your Christmas."

This advertisement was placed in violation of the basic law of change at the request of the Knights of Columbus. This was strictly a religious message that did not belong on the buses of a city owned by the citizens of

Voice of the people

separation of church and state.

To repeat this message with great emphasis to Planned Parenthood is not only erroneous but also insulting, since Planned Parenthood often would have us believe that if we present churches and other religious organizations from advertising their beliefs in newspapers or other mass property (public or private), we are somehow upholding the First Amendment.

The State of Wisconsin and the nation owe Gaylor immense gratitude for revealing constitutional transgressions and for defending the principle of separation of church and state. — Maria W. Elz, M.D.

Wynnet 1st Amendment also grants free speech

MIDDLETON — Anne Gaylor is incorrect in her insistence that the Knights of Columbus should not be allowed to use advertising space on

Madison Metro buses. The attempt to suggest her argument by saying that she pays taxes and I'm willing to wager that members of the Knights of Columbus do, too. Furthermore, no one has the right to censor what people read by discriminating against legitimate advertisers. Gaylor would have us believe that if we prevent churches and other religious organizations from advertising their beliefs in newspapers or other mass property (public or private), we are somehow upholding the First Amendment.

The First Amendment made no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peacefully to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

Nowhere does the amendment say

writing that can be construed as meaning the Knights of Columbus or anyone else cannot rent a space in public property and advertise their opinions. Moreover, to prevent, or attempt to prevent, people from doing as is clearly a violation of their First Amendment right to free speech. — Kenneth Wynne

Hoagland distressed by CT stand on bus posters

MADISON — For a week I agonized over the Dec. 30 editorial (criticizing Anne Gaylor's demand that Madison Metro remove "Keep Christ in Your Christmas" signs from city buses). To previous editor of The Capital Times would have written such a distortion of the First Amendment.

And the Rev. Richard Pritchard sounds me. Within the framework of his theology he is always ready (they

who hat Anne Gaylor ever denied freedom of speech is anyone? — Richard S. Hoagland

Tschudy wonders about guidance in Bible

NEW GLARUS — Recently, in a letter to The Capital Times, the Rev. Richard Pritchard exhorted the editors of the Bible and pointed out that the book's principles were an amazing guide for religious persons.

The Lutheran Standard of January 1981 reviewed the results of a 22-year survey of attitudes toward war, Christianity of the United States, Canada and West Germany, the survey said. "... tend to look upon war more favorably than do non-Christians."

Did Pritchard mention the Bible with the Manual of Arise? — Richard Tschudy

THE CAPITAL TIMES, Tuesday, Aug. 30, 1983

31-84

Gaylor versus the Bible: Chapter II

Geyer: Gaylor is misinterpreting the Bible

MADISON — In regard to Anne Gaylor's Aug. 22 letter asking the Bible to read above:

Voice of the people

It's astounding that the Freedom From Religion Foundation is an organization about biblical principles that it blames those who are promoting what when Anne Gaylor ever denied freedom of speech is anyone? — Richard S. Hoagland

What's more, however, is that these new champions of children's rights wholeheartedly advocate abortion — the annual disclosure of 1.5 million

permitted by the Constitution, as are Anne Gaylor's, and every newspaper's. It is Treasury's use of government to jam the Christians down the throats of people who don't want it that makes organizations like the Freedom From Religion Foundation necessary and inevitable. — Robert E. Nordlander

Atheism is not a belief, Russell advises

MADISON — In the Aug. 22 issue of the People reader Robert J. Trueman asserts that "Atheism, since it is a belief, should also fall under our Constitution's warning against an establishment of religion." This is incorrect. — Richard S. Russell

doesn't make it a religion. For example, I could state, "I believe that 2 plus 2 equals 4" or "I believe that the sun rises in the east," without being accused of establishing a religion.

The same is true of atheism, and its leading cousin, humanism (which really is a belief system). Neither of them has any of the common characteristics of religion, churches, clergy, events, rituals, regular meetings, etc.

Perhaps most notably, neither atheism nor humanism has the institutional power or social cohesion, in any setting of the history — to try to force its opinions off on other people. This alone should adequately serve to distinguish them from religions. — Richard S. Russell

The Great Bible Debate continues

Gangstad traces roots of Christian heritage

MADISON — An Aug. 16 letter signed "Name withheld" asks: "If this nation was founded on the principles of Christianity... what are those principles and who founded them?"

The Mayflower Compact, signed in 1620, is regarded by some historians as "marking the beginning of democracy in America," according to the World Almanac and Book of Facts. The Mayflower Compact states that the signers of the compact to grant a

Gordon slams Gaylor's critics for 'viciousness'

MIDDLETON — The hatred shown toward Anne Gaylor, president of the Freedom From Religion Foundation, in the Voice of the People volume recently, certainly does not follow those who call themselves Christians.

If Christianity teaches love, as they profess, they have not caught on to the teaching. They are good examples of what Anne Gaylor talks about — viciousness, an attitude in many parts of the Bible.

Landsberg admires Gaylor's 'courage'

MADISON — While I don't know Anne Gaylor, except through The Capital Times' Voice of the People volume, I feel I must write to her before other all the verbal abuse she has taken on this page recently.

Her critics claim Gaylor does not know the Bible. I think the reverse is true. I have found that Christians as a rule get out of their Bible what they

believe it says. — Art Gordon

Russell: Small change makes big difference
MADISON — Your letters policy states quite clearly that letters are subject to editing, so I have no editorial comments for consideration.

'It's a girl!'

Madison gets a different view of holiday

By Linda Fitch
Special Madison Bureau

Madison, Wis. — Joanne Gomoll's self-designed Christmas card has turned into the centerpiece of this year's skirmish in the now-annual holiday sign battle on Madison buses.

Gomoll's card is a cartoon of the faded three wise men at a stable door being met by a woman with the message, "It's a girl!"

Gomoll said Wednesday that her parents "kind of patted their lips" when she started sending her card a couple of years ago.

But among the company she keeps in Madison, the greeting card produced just the wry sort of smiles and other reactions that she had aimed for. "It was just a very innocuous little joke," Gomoll said.

But this year, Gomoll won't be the only one sending the card. The Freedom From Religion Foundation, Madison's monthly women's newspaper, is selling it in lots of 25. Anyone willing to contribute the suggested \$6 can get the wares for less — or, herself.

A different view of Christmas will appear on placards in Madison buses

Christmas card placed on buses

Drawing from Metro Page

This year, the signs have a decidedly lighter touch. Unlike Gomoll's work, they urge the reader to have a happy winter season, and describe the foundation as "working to promote free thought."

Gaylor isn't certain that the new placards will remain in place as long

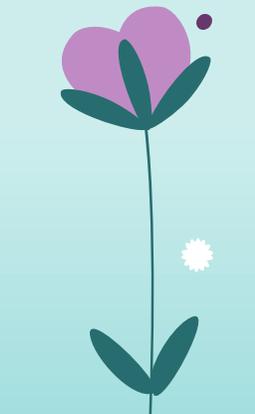
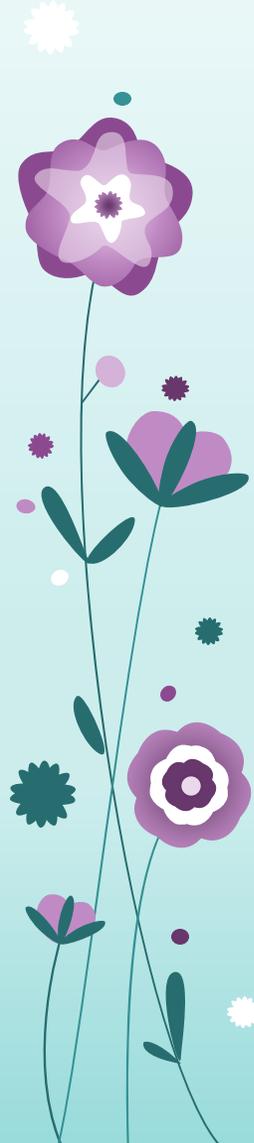
greater numbers than last year's posters.

"Never try to outpace a Christian," she said.

Gomoll, 23, works as an artist for the State Department of Natural Resources. She also draws in her spare time for Aurora, a local science fiction magazine with a feminist bent.

INSIDE TODAY
MADISON — A different view on Christmas
METRO PG
Arrangements column 5 L/10/Style pg 8 in 2

Anne educated . . .



Today's mail

Gaylor defended

I was appalled at several letters in last Saturday's paper regarding Anne Gaylor and the Christmas signs on Metro buses.

One letter compared Ms. Gaylor's action to Hitler's time. Did the writer know Hitler was a Catholic? How can the writer say Ms. Gaylor dominates our way of thinking? I never saw any signs that said "Keep Gaylor in Christmas."

Another writer was concerned with what the early settlers would say about Ms. Gaylor's action. I'm sure they would applaud her. Many settlers fled their countries because of religious domination. It worries me to think Christians are dominating a country that is a melting pot for all religions.

"Majority rules," was the title of one letter. Majority rules at the expense of an oppressed minority. Whatever happened to "all men created equal?"

The only fair way to deal with religious posters in city buses would be to have all religions represented, including atheism. This would be ridiculous because there wouldn't be any room for the passengers. — Dan Collieran, Madison

Where is love?

It seems the Christians who had their letters printed in Saturday's Wisconsin State Journal forgot to "love thy neighbor" when they attacked Anne Gaylor.

Ms. Gaylor did not request that non-religious signs be placed on the city's buses. She did not infringe on anyone's freedom. Instead, certain Christians did that.

Why do so many people fail to



Anne Gaylor

No government support

Although Anne Gaylor is more than articulate enough to defend herself, we feel it necessary to respond to the opinions expressed in The Wisconsin State Journal on Jan. 8.

The essence of church/state separation is that no unit of government (city, county, state or federal) may do anything that supports one religious view over another, religion over atheism or atheism over religion.

That principle is supportive of freedom of speech and thought, and it is what enables individuals to choose one religion over another, or to choose no religion at all.

No unit of government has the right to show support for any of these choices, regardless of what the majority of individuals may choose. — R. and J. Miller, Madison

Other options available

I do not understand why some

... and drew support as well.



ACHIEVEMENTS

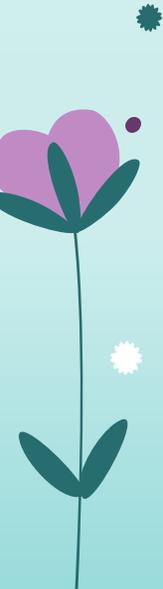
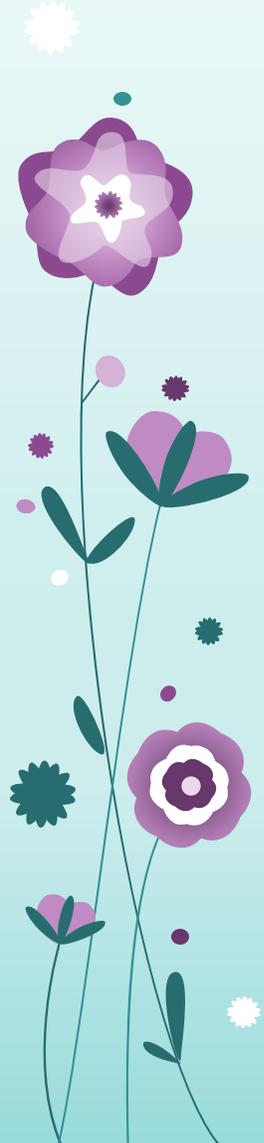
On the nice side, Anne has received national, state and local awards . . .



. . . among them a Recognition award
presented in person by Dr. Paul Erhlich in
1983 from ZPG . . .



... a Humanist Heroine Award in 1985 by
the American Humanist Association ...





... and "Feminist of the Year" by the Wisconsin National Organization for Women in 1994.



State Rep. Rebecca Young said at that gathering: “It is the Anne Gaylors who move us on the road to women’s equality.”



Anne by her secular solstice message at the Wisconsin State Capitol. Photo by Brent Nicastro.

Anne is fondest of being named “Madison’s favorite religious leader” by the Isthmus weekly in 1989, which reported:

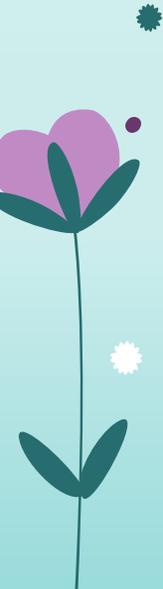
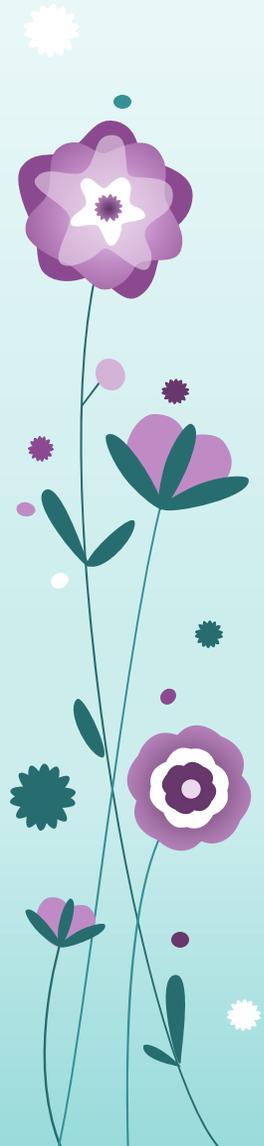
“You named more than 940 religious leaders from every sect imaginable, from street preachers and born-again revivalists to priests, pastors, chaplains, rabbis and bishops, clear to the Pope Himself. But after all the ecclesiastical dust had settled, you decided to go with Freedom From Religion leader Anne Gaylor.”



Mostly, though, Anne has given out the awards. Here she hands Ellie Smeal of Feminist Majority a “Freethought Heroine” plaque.



With Nobel Laureate Steven Weinberg, recipient of the premiere “Emperor Has No Clothes” award, in 1999.



Tomah area native crusades against religion

By GEORGE W. CORNELL
AP Religion Writer
and SUSAN T. HESSLE
Of The Tribune staff



Anne Gaylor

Once, after atheist leader Anne Gaylor had appeared on a TV talk show, a woman came up behind her, seized her by the neck and began choking her, saying, "I'm going to drive the devil out of you."

On another occasion, an atheist young man angrily told her, "All atheists should be killed." Another time a man so harshly gripped her hand, in a mock hand shake, that she winced in pain.

There also are the frequent threatening telephone calls.

"It makes me feel uneasy," she said, "but I'm not paranoid about it."

The threats, resentment and animosity are customary fare for Mrs. Gaylor, a native of rural Tomah, and founder and president of the Madison-based Freedom from Religion Foundation.

"The reason that there are so many religious nuts out there," she said, "is because religion itself is intrinsically nutsy."

Mrs. Gaylor's interest in what she calls the free-thought movement came out of her belief that women have the right to free choice in use of contraception and in having abortions. "I saw the movie there and the country was religious," she said.

A graduate of a two-room elementary school in Monroe County and Tomah High School, Ms. Gaylor and her still-living family in Monroe County, although her immediate relatives are scattered.

Her immediate family is supportive of her ideas, she said, although she has some relatives who are religious. "We just don't talk about these things."

A self-proclaimed, gently-mannered woman of 56, she

said in an interview that "the world would be better off without religion. It has done more harm than good."

"During past injustices committed in the name of religion — such as the Crusades of the Middle Ages, witch-burnings, persecution of non-believers and biblical texts subordinating women — she added vehemently.

"That's why I'm outraged as many other women are outraged. The Bible tells them to keep silent and otherwise denigrate them; I can see how they feel rage at anyone who promotes a book like that."

The Bible, she said, "is a mean and awful book."

The organization she leads counts about 1,000 members across the nation. It carries on a diversified campaign against religion, including a monthly newspaper, a contest for essays debunking the Bible, distribution of a half-hour TV film, lectures, broadcast appearances and buttons, T-shirts and bumper stickers that declare "I'm Proud To Be An Atheist."

Her group also works to eliminate religion from public institutions on the premise of keeping church and state separate. She brought a court challenge to President Reagan's proclamation of 1982 as the "Year of the Bible" and won a lawsuit halting prayer at University of Wisconsin commencement services, a practice for 122 years.

Mrs. Gaylor said efforts are being made to "take this country into a theocracy controlled by the Moral Majority. It can happen here. It's happening."

"We're bombarded with religion in this country. You see it on the air 24 hours a day. But you don't hear our point of view, of non-belief, of atheism. Just the Bible thumpers. People are afraid of anything else."

Asked if atheism is not also a belief that could not exist without projecting some kind of god in which not to believe, she said,

"We are reacting. I don't believe in a god that wants to put everybody in sight. I don't believe in the after-

natural. I don't believe in Mother Goose."

Asked if she believed in such intangible concepts as truth, love, beauty and justice, sometimes used as Judeo-Christian names of God, she said,

"I believe in all those. But I don't believe in God. I don't believe in a God who cares. Look at the universe. The universe doesn't care — the tornadoes and volcanoes. We're dependent on the universe, but it's not a caring universe."

But she said she does believe in caring values of kindness and reasonableness. "I think kindness and reasonableness cover a great deal of territory," she said.

Asked if she recognized mysteries about reality, she said she preferred to call them "unknowns."

"There are all kinds of things we don't know," she said, "but it's going to come through science and investigation."

"Everything is knowable. What some call mysteries are simply realities all around us, the knowledge hidden in nature. We're students of reality."

Born in a non-religious family and a graduate of the University of Wisconsin, she said she never had studied religion at a theological institution. "I don't think I could stand it," she said.

She said that although from youth she generally had felt an aversion to the Bible, she has since studied it in detail on her own and thinks that anyone who believes it "is either very ignorant or very disturbed."

But she suggests more Bible reading. "Judge it on its merits like any other book. There's no quicker path to free thought."

Married and the mother of four children, she founded her anti-religion organization in 1978 with only three members. It has grown swiftly since.

"I see free thinking returning in this country," she said.

La Crosse Tribune, Feb. 25, 1984

Action, not plaudits, is what my mother is interested in. Over the years, her assessment of her achievements has varied. The Wisconsin State Journal, which carried an indepth profile in 1979, included the line:

"Anne Gaylor: a woman who successfully battled Wisconsin's anticontraception law, yet lists among her paramount achievements: the breastfeeding of twins."

Religion

For her, it's onward atheist soldiers against religion

By GEORGE W. CORNELL
AP Religion Writer

Once, after atheist leader Anne Gaylor had appeared on a TV talk show, a woman came up behind her, seized her by the neck and began choking her, saying, "I'm going to drive the devil out of you."

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The threats, resentment and animosity are customary fare for Gaylor, founder and president of the Freedom from Religion Foundation, based in Madison, Wis.

"The reason that there are so many religious nuts out there," she says, "is because religion itself is intrinsically nutty."

A soft-spoken, gentle-mannered woman of 56, she said in an interview that "the world would be better off without religion. It has done more harm than good."

Citing past injustices committed in the name of religion — such as the Crusades of the Middle Ages, witch-burnings, persecution of non-believers and biblical texts subordinating women — she added vehemently:

"That's why I'm outraged as many other women are outraged. The Bible tells them to keep silent and otherwise demean them. I can see how they feel rage at anyone who promotes a book like that."

The Bible, she said, "is a mean and sordid book."

The organization she heads counts

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Gaylor said efforts are being made to "turn this country into a theocracy controlled by the Moral Majority. It can happen here. It's happening."

"We're bombarded with religion in this country. You hear it on the air 24

hours a day. But you don't hear our point of view, of non-belief, of atheism. Just the Bible thumpers. People are afraid of anything else."

An ardent feminist, she was an early advocate of the right to abortion. Prior to it being legalized by the Supreme

'The reason that there are so many religious nuts out there is because religion itself is intrinsically nutty.'

Court, she launched a service that helped women obtain abortions.

"I saw who the enemy was — religion!" she said. "Religion is the root cause of a devastating attitude that held women in contempt, as mere property."

Asked if atheism is not also a belief that could not exist without projecting some kind of god in which not to believe, she said:

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Atheist leader raps 'religious nuts'

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Anne Gaylor

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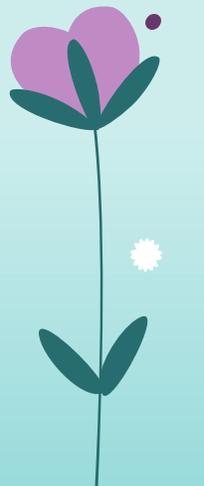
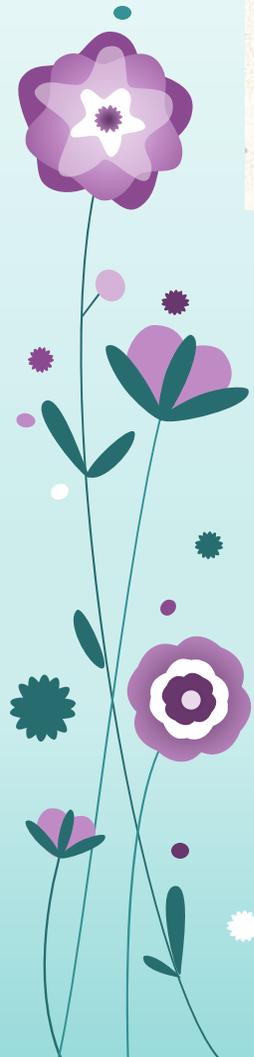
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But she suggests more Bible reading. "Judge it on its merits like any other book. There's no quicker path to free thought."

Married and the mother of four children, she founded her anti-religious organization in 1976 with only

Through it all, Anne continued to make headlines.

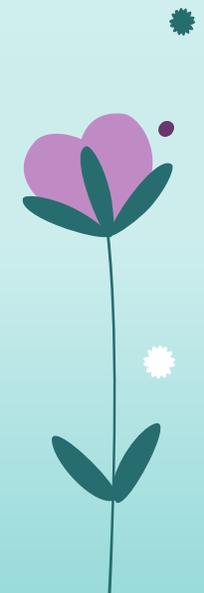
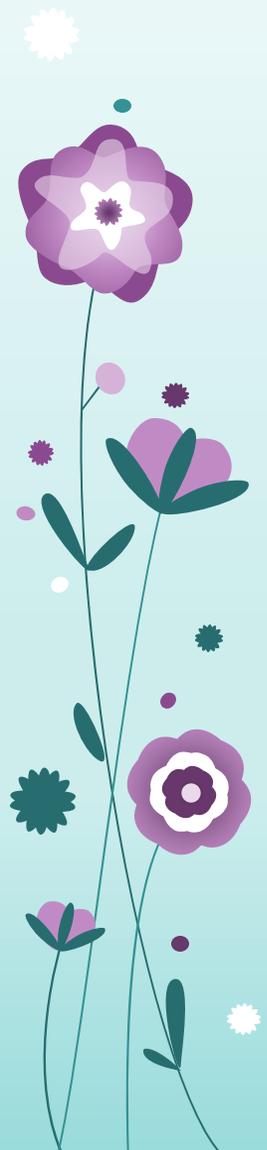




Her unusual formal resume lists accomplishments such as issuing the first news release calling for the recall of Dane County Judge Archie Simonson, for labeling rape a “normal reaction” in 1977. He was successfully recalled from office—the first such recall since the 1940s.



In 1990, Anne successfully proposed a boycott of Idaho potatoes if Gov. Cecil Andrus signed a bill to outlaw abortions there. She was interviewed on CNN, the story went national, Andrus vetoed the bill.





In 1995, Anne got in the petition-writing business again, to save “Miss Forward” (embodying Wisconsin’s state motto, “Forward!”) one of the few public pieces of sculpture of, by and for women, on the grounds of the Wisconsin State Capitol. With State Sen. Fred Risser sounding the alarm, we spearheaded a successful petition drive with a coalition of feminists and preservationists. Today you can see Forward in front of State Street, moved from her original perch, but recast for posterity.



One of Anne's proudest accomplishments in the mid-1990s was, quote: "picketing our anti-woman governor for an hour during a temperature of ten below zero and not having to take a break to warm up." Anne, at left.



One of Anne's most impressive accomplishments has been helping 14,000 low-income women exercise their rights to Roe v. Wade through the Women's Medical Fund. When you hear the myth that atheists don't start or run charities, tell them about Anne.



Anne with colleagues at the 1992 prochoice March for Women's Lives in D.C.



Photo by Brent Nicastro

As Foundation president, she has conscientiously nurtured FFRF, always considering it a privilege to work for a nonprofit. She never gives up in her goal to keep church and state separate. She is a lightbulb-over-the-head-kind of person, never still except to take phone calls. A true activist, she moves swiftly: to organize protests, file lawsuits, and write erring officials. She rarely took vacations or even sick days. She has come into work most weekends for 20-some years, and is usually the last to leave the office. She has chosen the lawsuits we take and counts many of them as her most significant achievements.



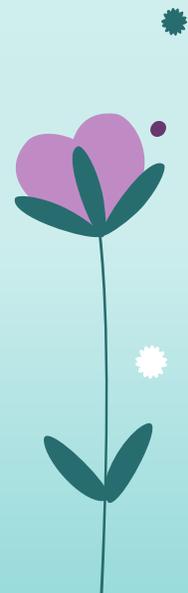
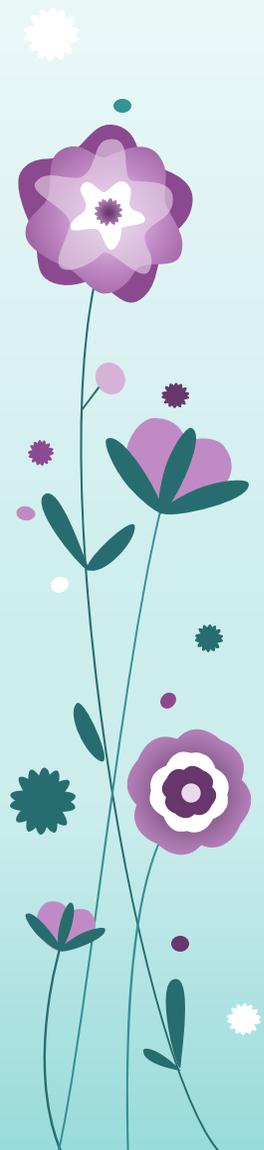
There's only time to excerpt just a few of the notes we've been receiving about Anne's retirement. Nothing is more sincere than the unsolicited opinion of a former employee. Adrienne Keith, now an attorney who worked with us as a bright college student, emailed me:
"It's sad to hear that Anne is retiring. She ran the Foundation with dignity, grace and compassion."



With Lucille Zarse, Ind., and Supreme Court litigant Vashti McCollum, Ill.



Clara Carlson, one of our oldest members at age 97,
wrote Anne:
“The structure of the legacy you leave is one to be very
proud of and the rest of us to be grateful for.”

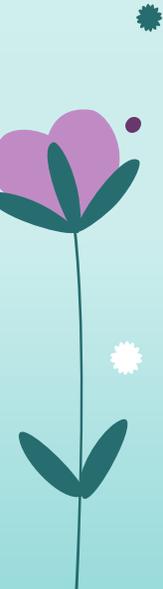
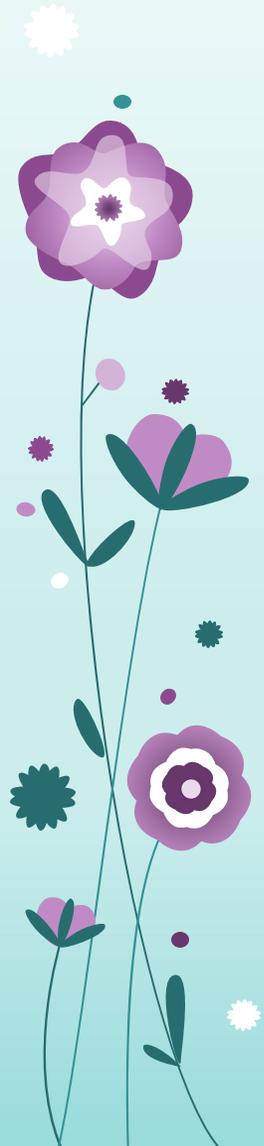




Planned Parenthood of Appleton Wis., wrote Anne: “You have been a beacon of light to thousands of women. You can retire with the satisfaction that you have consciously made a difference to these women and their reproductive rights. Congratulations.”



One of our longest-time members, Hulda Pelzl, a Life Member from Illinois, sent Anne a note: “I don’t want to ever see FFRF’ come to an end. It’s the best ever organization for Religious Freedom and from it.”





Connie Threinen
Photo by Brent Nicastro

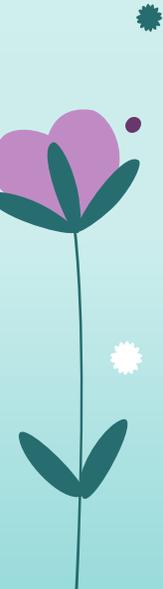
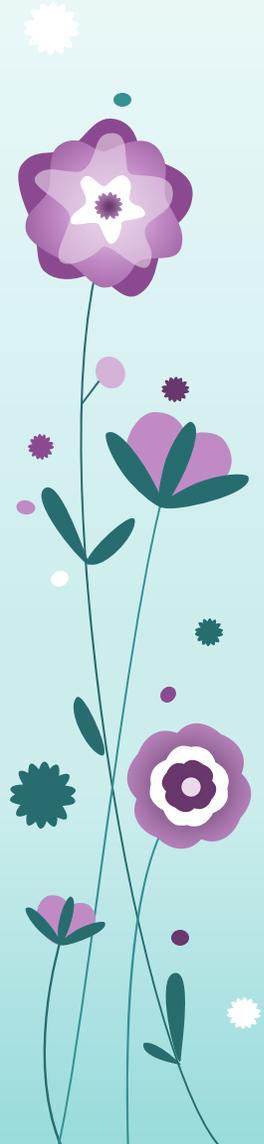
Now we have some kind friends here in person to say a few words about Anne.

CONNIE THREINEN is a longtime feminist-atheist, the great grand niece of Margaret Fuller, chaired the Wisconsin Women's Network for many years and today is chair of the Madison Institute.



Photo by Brent Nicastro

KEN TAUBERT our longtime
volunteer treasurer, volunteer,
and friend.





Anne, Catherine Fahringer, and Annie Laurie Gaylor

CATHERINE FAHRINGER. Foundation officer and San Antonio activist who told me nothing would stop her from coming to this tribute and we're so glad nothing did!

Anne and Paul Gaylor
Photo by Brent Nicaastro



CITATION FROM Wisconsin State ASSEMBLY, made possible by State Rep. Terese Berceau.

Citation reads:

The State of Wisconsin

Citation by the Assembly

KNOW YOU BY THESE PRESENTS:

WHEREAS, Anne Nicol Gaylor was born near Tomah, Wisconsin, graduated from Tomah High School, worked her way through UW – Madison, graduated with a degree in English, and embarked on a successful business career, including opening the first private employment agency in Madison, Wisconsin, and serving as editor of the award-winning Middleton Times Tribune newspaper; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Gaylor has been extremely active in the ongoing struggle for women’s rights and equality, through her efforts to create the Women’s Medical Fund, her work with groups such as Wisconsin Citizens for Family Planning and Wisconsin NOW, as a founding member of the Dane County Women’s Political Caucus, and as author of the petition to save “Miss Forward”, one of the few public pieces of sculpture of, by, and for women, on the grounds of the Wisconsin Capitol; and

WHEREAS, as founder and president of the national Freedom From Religion Foundation, Ms. Gaylor has successfully protested numerous violations of the Establishment Clause of the Constitution and initiated awards and scholarships to encourage First Amendment and student activism; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Gaylor has received numerous accolades for her work, including Wisconsin NOW Feminist of the Year, the Service and Commitment Award from the WI Chapter of the National Women’s Political Caucus, and Humanist Heroine of the Year from the American Humanist Association; now, therefore,

Representative Terese Berceau, on behalf of the Wisconsin State Assembly, under Assembly Rule 97, hereby commends Anne Nicol Gaylor on her decades of service to women and congratulates her on her retirement as president of the Freedom From Religion Foundation and as administrator of the Women’s Medical Fund.

Representative Terese Berceau

76th Assembly District

Representative John G. Gard

Speaker of the Assembly

Representative Stephen J. Freese

Speaker Pro Tempore

STATE CAPITOL

MADISON, WISCONSIN

Friday , October 29, 2004

Wis. Sen. Fred Risser and Anne Gaylor
Photo by Brent Nicastro



State Sen. Fred Risser has been a stalwart at the Wisconsin State Capitol, would have made a wonderful governor and has been a wonderful friend to our district. We are honored that he has attended in person to deliver a citation/plaque from the Wisconsin State Senate. Citation reads:

State of Wisconsin
Citation by the Senate

KNOW YOU BY THESE PRESENTS:

WHEREAS, Anne Nicol Gaylor will retire as president of Freedom From Religion Foundation and from the day-to-day administration of the Women's Medical Fund in November; and
WHEREAS, While Anne is most known for her tireless work for Freedom From Religion Foundation and the Women's Medical Fund, she began her career as a businesswoman. In 1958, Anne started Madison's first temporary help agency, and in 1959, she started an employment agency for those seeking permanent work;
and
WHEREAS, From 1966 to 1970, Anne and her husband Paul owned the Middleton Times Tribune. It was during this time that Anne found herself at the forefront of the debate on abortion rights in Wisconsin. In 1967, she wrote the first editorial calling for the legalization of abortion in Wisconsin. The editorial brought many phone inquiries from women looking for access to abortion and contraceptive services. In 1968, Anne founded a Madison Branch of the Wisconsin Committee to Legalize Abortion. In 1972, Anne established a volunteer referral service for the women in need of abortion, contraceptive and sterilization services. That same year, she co-founded the Women's Medical Fund to help low-income women gain greater access to health and reproductive services; and

WHEREAS, As a leading activist for women, Anne realized that the real enemy to women was the wide-ranging religious influence on government. In 1976, Anne founded the Freedom From Religion Foundation, which became a national tax-exempt educational group in 1978; and
WHEREAS, Since the founding of the Freedom From Religion Foundation, Anne has been involved in numerous lawsuits against all levels of government, successfully protesting violations of the Establishment Clause of the United States Constitution from Postal Service cancellation marks to government funding of "faith based" organizations; and
WHEREAS, Anne's activism on behalf of two controversial causes—abortion rights for the poor and the right to freedom from religion—has never wavered and even in retirement, she will still remain a presence in fighting against the no-holds-barred attacks for the right; now
THEREFORE, the members of the Wisconsin Senate on the motion of Senator Fred A. Risser do congratulate ANNE NICOL GAYLOR on the occasion of her retirement and thank her for her longtime activism on behalf of many liberal causes.

FRED A. RISSER
State Senator
ALAN LASEE
President of the Senate
ROBERT J. MARCHANT
Chief Clerk of the Senate
October 29, 2004

State Senate quietly stops opening prayer

By Arthur Srb
Associated Press

Quietly ending a long tradition, Wisconsin senators have abandoned prayer as a part of the formal ceremony opening their work days in Madison.

Instead of an invocation, senators now are called upon to take part in a moment of "silent meditation" following the daily roll call and pledge of allegiance.

Ironically, the Senate's action came nearly two years after federal court decisions handed defeats to critics who maintained the invocations represented a Constitutional violation of separation of church and state.

In 1983, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the right of the Nebraska Legislature to employ a chaplain and open each session with a sectarian prayer.

"I'm delighted," said Anne Gaylor, a prominent Madison activist for separation of church and state. "I can only view it as a step forward. I am very pleased."



Sen. Risser

"This has nothing to do with Anne Gaylor," Risser insisted.

Ms. Gaylor filed a lawsuit against Risser and other legislators in U.S. District Court in 1978, seeking an in-

take part.

Risser said the decision to drop the prayer met with some objections in the caucus, but most lawmakers seem happy.

"It's working very well," Risser said. "It accomplishes the purpose of giving members a moment to think about what the day has in store."

Some Democrats wanted to "cut out the pledge of allegiance but so many objected that we decided to keep it rather than fight it out," Risser said.

There is no statutory provision for a prayer to open sessions in either house of the Legislature. Senate rules provide the "first order of business after the roll call shall be the pledge of allegiance and prayer, if any."

Assembly Democratic Majority Leader Dismas Becker of Milwaukee, a former Catholic priest, said he would not object strongly to the elimination of the opening prayer in the

(And it was especially gracious of Sen. Risser to overlook the fact that Anne once even sued him!)

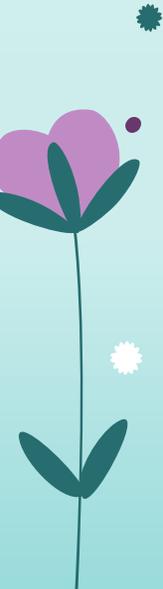
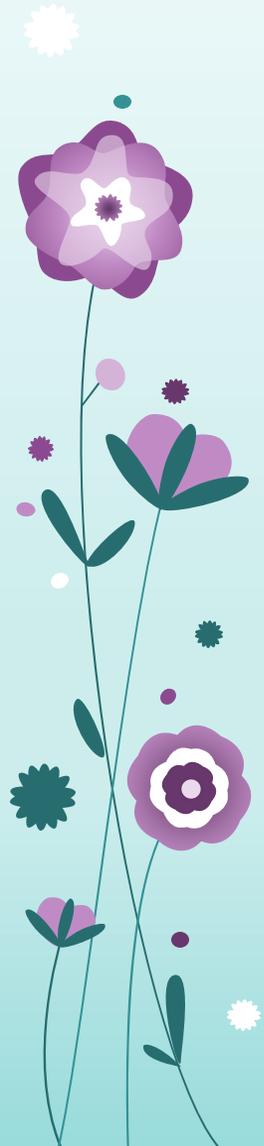


Mike and Helen Hakeem
Photo by Brent Nicastro

MIKE HAKEEM. Michael Hakeem, professor of sociology emeritus, at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, served on the governing board of the Executive Council and was its chairperson for many years. He was also hands-on volunteer for a decade. Today he is 88 and confined to a wheelchair in a nursing home.



Anne Gaylor with attorney Jody Helms filing an early lawsuit. Mike Hakeem's tribute featured many of the Foundation's legal actions under Anne's direction.



Gaylor fights 'Year of Bible'

By Dorothy Austin

Madison — Anne Gaylor describes herself as a "reborn secularist."

Last year, Gaylor, director of the Freedom From Religion Foundation, was unsuccessful in a federal court effort to stop President Reagan from proclaiming 1983 as the "Year of the Bible." After he designated the "Year of the Bible" in February, Gaylor vowed to renew her court fight against the proclamation.

It was a bold move from a soft-spoken feminist and freethinker whose anti-religion crusade has taken her all over the country.

Gaylor, 56, appears regularly on television and radio talk shows from San Francisco to Boston, from Chicago to Washington, D.C., raising \$70,000 a year to promote her cause.

In raising funds for the foundation publications, films, buttons and bumper stickers proclaiming "The Bible is a Grim Fairy Tale," she also raises money for her \$12,000 annual salary.

She traced the development of her ideas on religion in a recent interview.

Born and brought up in Tomah, she attended a one-room country school. She worked her way through the University of Wisconsin — Madison, where she majored in English and graduated in 1949.

Her father was a farmer who graduated from UW with a degree in agriculture and her mother, also a college graduate, was a teacher.

In her family, she recalled, those who believed in the Bible were not regarded as "true intellectuals."

"It was understood in our family that the Bible was a book of myths and fables and was not to be taken seriously," she said.

After graduating, she held many jobs. She started the first temporary employment service in Madison in 1957, she said. Later, when her children were young, she started a private employment agency with a partner.



Anne Gaylor

that she began to challenge organized religion publicly.

"I like to go to the root of a problem and it seemed to me the root of a great many of our problems and especially of women's problems was organized religion," she said.

In her television and radio work, she enjoys citing chapter and verse from the Bible in her soft, feminine voice.

"From Timothy, Chapter Two: 'Let the woman learn in silence, with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.'"

Her translation: "Put the blame on Mame."

Gaylor also quotes from Corinthians 1:14.

"Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they

For three years, she has taken her unpopular position publicly, standing up against an overwhelming majority view. How?

"Well, you just simply get used to taking flak and then you dish it out," she said.

"I feel that if I were criticizing religion off the top of my head, I wouldn't feel comfortable about it, but I am someone who has read the Bible and I have observed for many years, and kept my eyes open and mouth shut and made observations and studied religion and now I have something to say."

"I know that we are a nation of Bible illiterates," she said.

Few of those who love the Bible have read the Bible, and if they had, they might feel differently about it, she maintained.

"When someone says the Bible is a beautiful book, that the Song of Solomon is beautiful, for example, I say that it is sexist, that the Song of Solomon makes a woman a sex object."

She also maintains that the Bible is full of violence approved by a deity — mass murders, sex, incest, endorsement of child abuse.

This year the Freedom from Religion Foundation is offering \$1,000 in cash prizes for essays on the Bible. Among the suggested essay titles are "Cruelties in the Bible."

When she's on the road, appearing on call-in shows, the hostility is thick.

"It is clear that some people would do me in if they could," she said.

"However, people think we are being inundated with hate mail, and that is not true. Most of our mail is positive," she said.

One of her more unnerving incidents came after a television talk show in Philadelphia when a young man who seemed to be very agitated approached her, looked her in the face and said, "All atheists should be killed."

She wondered what it was about religion that made people intolerant.

Views such as that are enough to make any freethinking person a "reborn secularist," she con-

Michael Hakeem: "One memorable early lawsuit was Gaylor v. Reagan, in which FFRF challenged a resolution by Congress to declare 1983 to be "the Year of the Bible." Although the lawsuit was declared moot after Reagan signed the proclamation, it delayed his signing of the bill several months, and modified the language. Most importantly, the lawsuit engendered publicity around the nation on the pitfalls of the bible."



Anne with attorney Alice Schultz filing a lawsuit.



Michael Hakeem:

“As administrator of the Women’s Medical Fund, she soundly won *Gaylor v. Hanaway*. In 1989, then-Wis. Attorney General Donald Hanaway unlawfully signed the State of Wisconsin to a friend of the court brief before the Supreme Court in support of overturning *Roe v. Wade*. Hanaway was forced to withdraw the brief. It was a politically important victory.”



Dan Barker and Anne Gaylor in Denver at the site of one of the Foundation's challenges of Ten Commandments on public property.

Attorney Robert Tiernan, who brought the Colorado challenge and several others for the Foundation, sent this note:

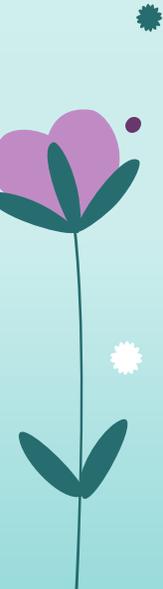
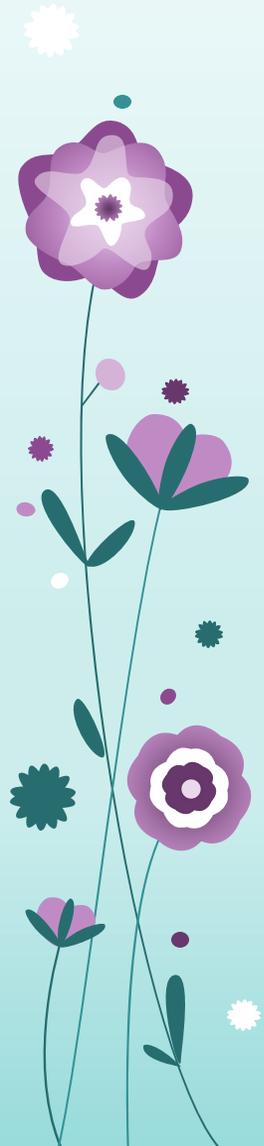
“To Anne Nicol Gaylor: The most thoughtful, supportive, understanding and best client I have ever represented in my 45 years of practicing law. It has been a wonderful experience.”



Plaintiffs line up after filing a lawsuit which ended a violation at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. The campus had shared student names and addresses with campus proselytizers.



Plaintiffs Dan Barker, Anne Gaylor, Ken Taubert, Connie Threinen and Prof. Michael Hakeem in a court challenge in the 1980s.





Good Friday plaintiffs: FFRF staffer Dan Barker, state employee Prof. Michael Hakeem, state employee Richard Uttke, FFRF staffer Annie Laurie Gaylor, Anne Gaylor, and state employees Sam and Jennifer Essak. Michael Hakeem: “FFRF won its challenge of Wisconsin’s Good Friday state holiday in 1996. Our lawsuit overturned a 1945 law mandating worship and closure of public offices on Good Friday.”



Plaintiffs Dan Barker, Annie Laurie Gaylor,
Anne Gaylor, Rev. Charles Wolfe

Michael Hakeem: “FFRF won a nationally watched lawsuit declaring Wisconsin’s creation of a post to ‘assist clergy’ unconstitutional, the so-called ‘Marriage Savers’ case, 2000.”

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Freethinking Celebrities

That's "Saturday Night Live" alumna Julia Sweeney with Darrell Lambert, who made headlines in November when he was kicked out of the Boy Scouts as an atheist. The kindred non-spirit both appeared at the twenty-fifth annual national convention of the Freedom From Religion Foundation in San Diego in November. Turn to pages 6-8 for a convention photo album.

Three Groups Join Foundation Faith Works Fight

Three groups have filed a friend-of-the-court brief on behalf of the Freedom From Religion Foundation's appeal challenging indirect public funding of an openly religious social services group.

The American Jewish Congress, the Anti-Defamation League and Americans United for the Separation of Church and State filed the brief on Nov. 29, in support of the Foundation's appeal of its Faith Works case before the 7th U.S. Circuit Court of

Appeals. The brief asks the court to order \$750,000 in work with men on parole or probation.

The Foundation has appealed the second part of Crabb's decision, which she based on the recent Supreme Court case approving tax-paid vouchers for use at parochial schools. Crabb said government aid to religious institutions is constitutional if it is a result of "genuine and independent private choice."

The friend of the court brief agrees with the Foundation that men in case

Michael Hakeem:

“FFRF won a decision at the 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruling direct subsidy to parochial schools unconstitutional in 2000.”

“FFRF took and won the first fully adjudicated federal lawsuit challenging direct funding of a faith-based agency, Faith Works of Milwaukee, in 2002.”



Dan Barker at the Tennessee school that was teaching bible classes.

Michael Hakeem:

“FFRF won “Scopes II,” before the 6th Circuit Court of Appeals, halting 51 years of unlawful bible instruction in Rhea Co. (Dayton, Tenn.) schools, this summer.

“Just this October, FFRF won its federal lawsuit in Montana in which faith-based nursing through the ‘Montana Faith-Health Cooperative’ was funded and merged with two Montana state offices!

“This summer the Foundation also filed suit against George Bush’s creation of the White House Office of Faith-based initiatives and similar cabinet level posts, another nationally watched case.

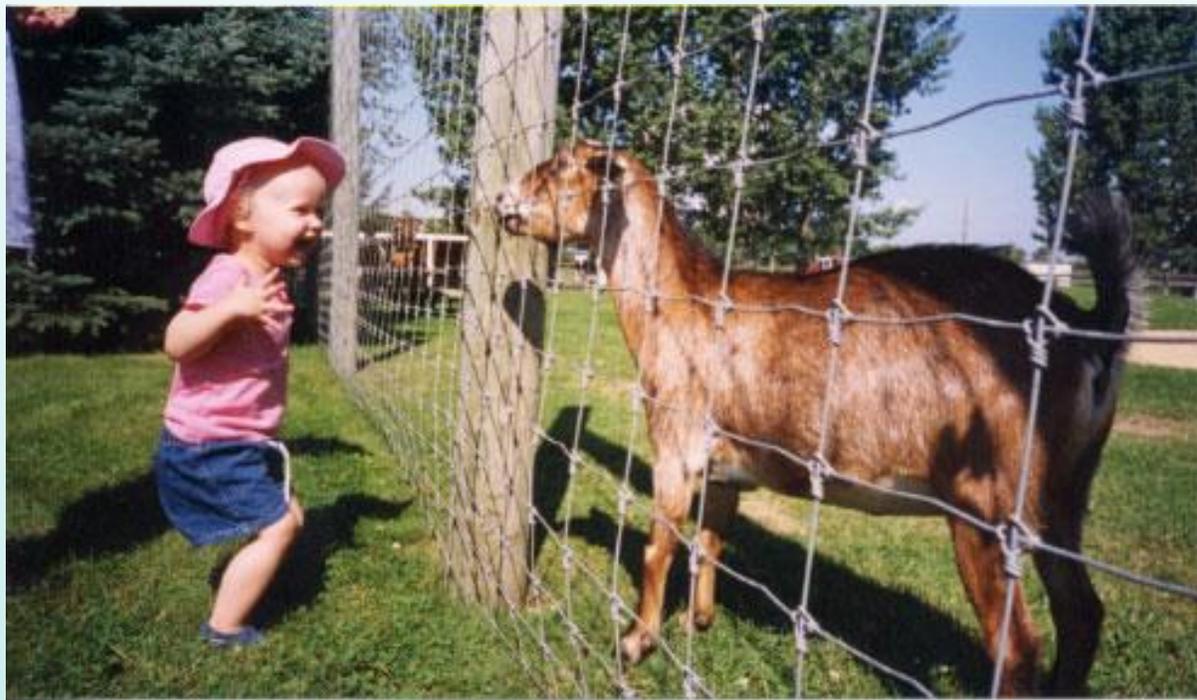
“Anne leaves behind her a great record of accomplishments in doing what she sought to do.

“But it is not all litigation. Those who read Freethought Today will recall seeing the exchange of correspondence between FFRF and violators of the First Amendment, under the title, ‘It pays to complain.’ Sometimes a gentle polite letter reminding officials that they are violating the First Amendment, a longtime principle of American democracy, will result in compliance.

“Anne — I’m sure that I speak for all of us when I wish you a happy and comfortable retirement. You have done a great service for our society, so vigorously defending the constitutional edict to keep church and state separate.”



Family members introduced at the tribute were Anne's son, Andy, co-owner of Frugal Muse used bookstore chains, Lisa Strand, his wife, executive director of the Wisconsin Library Association.



... and their daughter Lily Anne Gaylor, age three.



You've met Dan and me. We were married in 1987.



Dan, Annie Laurie, Anne and friend Andrea Spuhler



Our daughter, Anne's first grandchild, is 15.



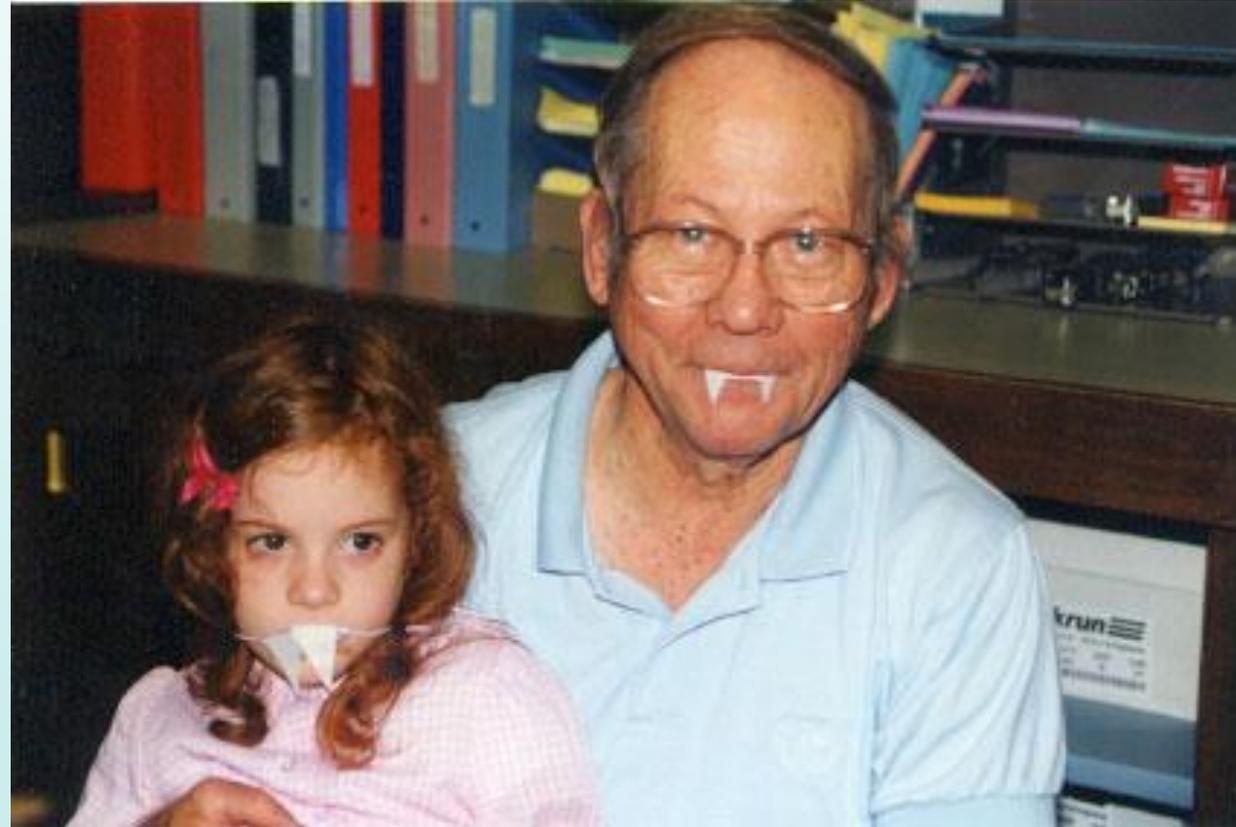
Anne with Sabrina as baby



Anne's son Ian, Annie Laurie's twin brother, teaches fifth grade. His wife Nancy McClements is head of Reference, UW-Madison Memorial Library. (They are Scottish dancers as you can see from the photograph.)



Twins Ian and Annie Laurie at our 96th birthday party.



PAUL GAYLOR: My father has worked as a volunteer for the Foundation for 28 years. His volunteerism has been extensive.



DAVID SANDILL/The Capital Times

Anne and Paul Gaylor: "We're definitely a 'we.'"

Gaylor's' two different careers merge into a solid partnership

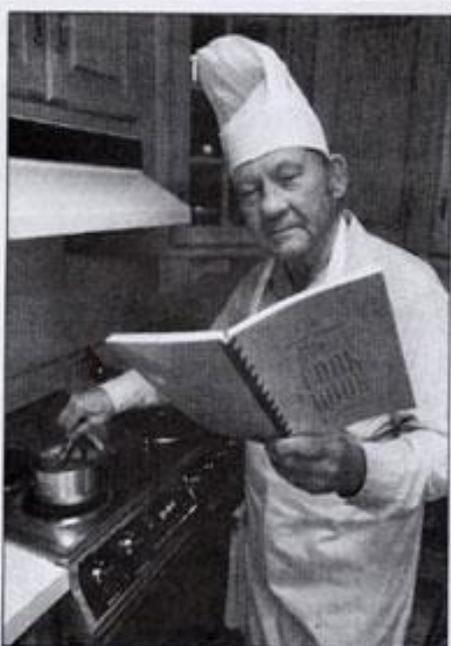
It's easy to tell which is the Gaylor house. It's the one with the little hatchback parked out front with bumper stickers reading "Iran: One Nation Under God," "It Ain't Necessarily So," and "Freedom From Religion." It's the one with the barely visible egg stains on the frame facade.

daughter) has "probably had to go without some luxuries, it hasn't been a deprivation." For a simple reason — Paul believes entirely in what Anne is doing.

"I'm not saying the work I do is unimportant — it isn't, but if I wasn't doing it, somebody else would," he says. "What Anne is doing is something that has already

In a 1979 piece about “power couples” in the Madison area which included an interview with my parents, my Dad, who was a contractor at that time, told the newspaper:

“I’m not saying the work I do is unimportant—it isn’t, but if I wasn’t doing it, somebody else would. What Anne is doing is something that has already changed the world in some small way—it is something which will last.” Today, he calls his wife, correctly, a “national treasure.”



Paul Gaylor, husband of Freedom From Religion Foundation President Anne Gaylor, stirs his chocolate icing while keeping an eye peeled to the recipe in "The World Famous Atheist Cookbook."

An ungodly good cookbook for all the nonbelievers

By Kathy Foster

The Capital Times

"Even atheists have to eat," says Anne Gaylor with a laugh. "And we can cook, too."

Cookbook

Continued from Page 1E

"This is my way of demonstrating that atheists are people, too — and good cooks," she says.

Gaylor says the introduction should let people know it's done with levity.

It starts: "If atheists were to approach the Wizard of Oz with their story of lack of social acceptance in certain quarters because of their intellectual views, the Wizard would have a solution.

"You atheists," he would say, "have so much going for you — intelligence, integrity, courage, erudition. But what you don't have, what you should have, what so many other groups possess, is a cookbook!"

Gaylor agrees. "Every church has a cookbook, so why shouldn't we?"

The recipes come from foundation members, or are old Gaylor family recipes.

The 162-page cookbook — a fund-raiser — is available from the organization. Write: PO Box 750, Madison, WI 53701. It costs \$15, plus tax, and \$2.00 for postage and handling.

There are recipes for "Backsliders' Black Skillet Cornbread," "Unbeliever's Beer Bread," "Blasphemous Bran Waffles," "Nothing is Forever Bran Muffins," "Pagan Pecan Pie" and "Huckleberry Go-To-Hell Pudding."

"They are all solid recipes," Gaylor says, tying her husband Paul's apron. "And they are all quite good."

As she spoke, Paul starts clanging around in the kitchen, readying to frost a two-layer cake and a dozen or so chocolate cupcakes.

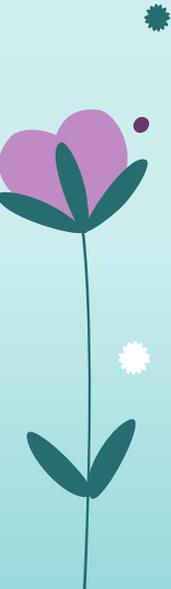
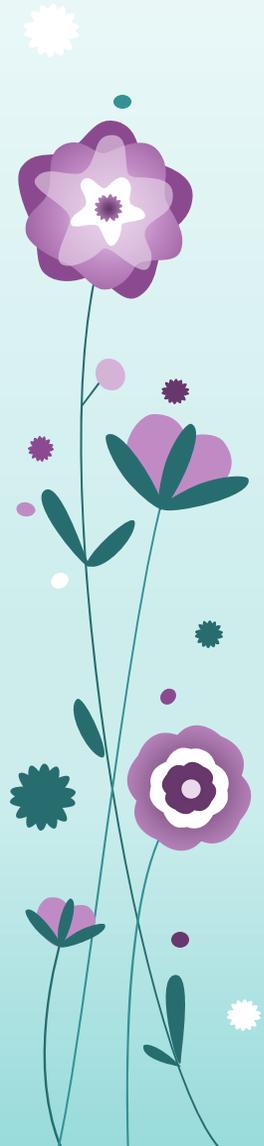
He says he enjoys cooking and baking. "Anne is cooked out," he says of his wife of 49 years. "Her mom died when she was a young girl. She was brought up in a farm family with three older brothers and a father. She cooked a lot."

As a result, Paul is the head chef in the Gaylor family. He says one of his favorite recipes in the cookbook is the "Hareetash."

In the old days, before there was a paid staff, Paul picked up the mail, opened and sorted it, and filled the orders for books and bumperstickers. He was on our executive Council, has been my mother's chauffeur, and done countless important errands to free the rest of the staff.



He has cleaned washrooms, vacuumed, and bundled hundreds of thousands of issues of Freethought Today. This summer when Dan had a virus, my father came in and worked 8 hours during the weekend to tie up newspapers for our mailing of Freethought Today to spare Dan the exertion. Every workday starts with his expertly brewed tea to order drunk by my mother and me and offered to the staff. He brews the tea — my mother serves it. We've been utterly spoiled. It's a gracious way to start the workday.





We will really miss Jody, too, his dependability, willingness to do anything, and constant support.



Photo by Brent Nicastro

When a valued employee departs after 28 years of diligent work, it is customary to give such an employee a gold watch. We have one engraved, with thanks, for all of Jody's years of labor and commitment.



KNOW YOUR MADISONIAN

Activism is her business

By William R. Wineke
Wisconsin State Journal

If you're not a friend of Anne Nicol Gaylor, chances are most of what you know about her is based on stereotype.

Gaylor, founder and president of the national Freedom From Religion Foundation, is frequently in the news as she challenges one government policy or another that she feels provides illegal support for organized religion.

She also is an outspoken proponent of abortion rights and founded the Women's Medical Fund, which has raised money to help more than 5,000 low-income women obtain abortions.

Those things you probably know about her.

However, there are other things in Anne Gaylor's resume that most of us don't know.

Here are some details:

Gaylor, 66, was born on a farm near Tomah and attended a one-room country school. Her father managed a feed-and-grain cooperative in Tomah.

She is a 1949 graduate of UW-Madison and was an English major.

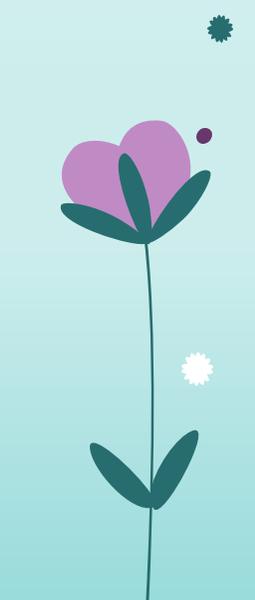
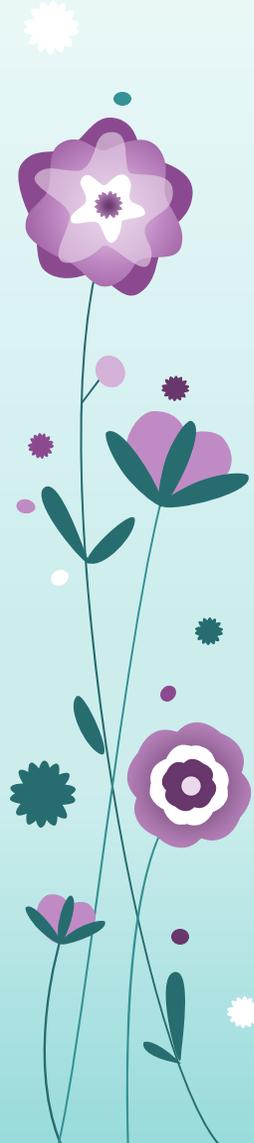
Most of her career was spent not as an activist, but as a businesswoman.

"I grew up in a family of entrepreneurs," Gaylor said. "We had lots of people in our family who were in business for themselves."

She started Madison's first temporary-help service, and a few years later, started the city's first



It was difficult to think of a token for Anne—she doesn't wear a watch!





Anne receiving her “Emperor Has No Clothes” award. (Photo by Brent Nicastro)

We have a special award at the Foundation. We’re not spendthrifts with it. It’s very hard to earn. Anne is really a a co-creator of this award. But it took Anne nearly 2 years of trial and error, very difficult, 3 different versions, to find someone who could make the award to our specifications and finally found the company that produces the Oscars to make it for us.

Although no one has done more to earn it than my mother, the real reason we’re awarding “The Emperor Has No Clothes” award to Anne now is because we know she will miss him. It’s on display at the top of our staircase at work, and we enjoy seeing him every day. It won’t take up much space, Mom. This Emperor belongs with you!



Before Anne comes up to claim her Emperor Has No Clothes Award, two long distance friends, Philip and Marjorie Appleman, have also written a song for Anne that Dan will play. Phil, the poet laureate of the Freethought movement, and Margie, a playwright, wrote this poem for Anne, fittingly set to the tune of “Margie”

FOR ANNE GAYLOR

(to the melody of “Margie, I’m always thinking of you, Margie”)

By Marjorie & Philip Appleman

Anne Gaylor, we’ll always think of you, Anne Gaylor,

We’ll tell the world we love you,

Won’t forget the good you have done

For F-F-R-F, atheists, and everyone,

Anne Gaylor, you’ve been our inspiration

Smiling, tried-and-true.

After all is said and done,

There is really only one,

Anne Gaylor, Anne Gaylor, it’s you!

Dane County

Wisconsin State Journal Sunday, June 9, 1985, Section 4 •

Activist atheist fights hard, wins

By David Dishneau
Associated Press

Anne Gaylor, atheist, wants you to read the Bible.

Then she wants you to wash your hands of religion.

"Anyone who handles a Bible has bloody hands," she told members of the American Humanist Association as she accepted the 1985 Humanist Heroine Award in March.

"The texts that teach hatred and murder are hard to count and the descriptions of acts of vengeance and torture that dominate much of the Bible cannot be matched for ferocity in all of literature."

Ms. Gaylor, 58, is the founder and president of the Freedom From Religion Foundation, a Madison-based organization that promotes atheism, humanism and secularism under the umbrella label of



Anne Gaylor

The foundation also sponsors an annual essay contest with a \$1,000 prize for college students (this year's topic: What's wrong with fundamentalism)? And foundation members are encouraged to use guerrilla tactics, such as placing bright yellow stickers reading, "Warning! Literal belief in this book may endanger your health and life!" in motel-room Bibles.

Ms. Gaylor savors her victories, but freeing the world from religion is not an easy job. She said she was nearly strangled in Philadelphia by a woman who wanted to drive the devil out of her and she once received a dead fish in the mail from a Floridian who objected to the foundation's efforts to have a submerged statue of Christ removed from a state park for scuba divers.

"It's probably the country's least popular cause," Ms. Gaylor said of her work. "There are so many people who turn pale at the word atheist."

Ms. Gaylor, who is married with four children, said she was raised in a free-thought home near Tomah. Her mother died when she was a baby and her father, a farmer who died when she was 19, found religion "embarrassing."

"He felt it was embarrassing to have people talking about a personal relationship with a mythical fi-

It's been a privilege for Dan and me to work alongside you all these years.

This headline says it all.

END