



TEXAS
FREEDOM
NETWORK

NETWORK NEWS

A MAINSTREAM VOICE TO COUNTER THE RELIGIOUS RIGHT · WWW.TFN.ORG · FALL 2006

Report Exposes Religious Agenda in Public Schools

The Texas Freedom Network Education Fund ignited a media firestorm last year with a report about the National Council on Bible Curriculum in Public Schools, an organization marketing a blatantly sectarian curriculum to public schools across the country. This year the TFNEF has examined what Texas public schools teach about the Bible.

The news isn't good.

The new report, *Reading, Writing & Religion: Teaching the Bible in Texas Public Schools*, reveals that most Bible classes fail to meet even minimal academic standards. Even worse, most courses undermine religious freedom in public schools. Most students simply learn about the religious beliefs of the teachers and ministers who lead the classes, while minority faiths are ignored, or worse, belittled. In fact, a majority of the courses promote a fundamentalist Protestant interpretation of the Bible.

So what are kids learning about the Bible in Texas public schools?

- The Bible story of Adam and Eve proves God ordained an inferior role for women in society.
- Dinosaurs and humans once roamed the earth together in a world that today is just 6,000 years old.
- The “real” Bible is the Protestant Bible.
- The “end of days” and the return of Jesus Christ are imminent.
- Judaism is an incomplete faith that was “superseded” by Christianity.
- America is a distinctly Christian nation established on Christian Biblical principles. Separation of church and state – what’s that?

Dr. Mark Chancey, a biblical scholar at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, wrote both the new and the 2005 TFNEF reports. This year’s report is based on an unprecedented survey of every public school district in Texas – more than 1,000 in all. Even



Dr. Mark Chancey, author of TFNEF’s new report on Bible curricula in Texas public schools, speaks at a press conference releasing the report. Other speakers at the press conference (not pictured) include TFN President Kathy Miller, Rabbi Neal Katz of Congregation Beth El in Tyler, Rev. Dr. Roger Paynter of First Baptist Church in Austin and Margie Medrano, parent of an Austin public school student.

the Texas Education Agency has never investigated what the state’s public schools teach about the Bible.

In the predictably vicious backlash from religious extremists, truth has been in short supply. For example, The National Council on Bible Curriculum in Public Schools – the focus of the 2005 report – charges that TFN is a “radical leftist organization.” Kelly Shackelford of the radical-right Free Market Foundation claims that TFN opposes all Bible courses. Of course, such attacks ignore the report’s praise for three school districts that teach academically sound and objective Bible classes. (See page 3 for TFN’s recommendations for teaching Bible courses that respect the faiths of all students.)

Read the new report at www.tfn.org/religiousfreedom/biblecurriculum/texascourses/.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

State Board of Education, p. 3
11th Anniversary Gala, pp. 4-5
TFN Student Chapter, p. 7

A note from President Kathy Miller

With Election Day behind us, the Texas Freedom Network staff is deep in preparation for the 2007 legislative session. The March party primaries brought important victories for supporters of neighborhood public schools. As I write this column, however, we don't know how the general election will turn out. Many critical issues are at stake, including the future of public education, stem cell research, government funding for faith-based programs and textbook censorship.



Whether or not right-wing extremists maintain their grip on the Legislature and the State Board of Education, they are marshaling their forces in pursuit of an agenda that ignores mainstream values and issues. House and Senate committees have already held hearings on stem cell research, for example, with few supporters of this promising form of medical research at the table. Additionally, the Senate Education Committee has held hearings on private school vouchers and textbooks. While I was invited by the Senate Education Committee to testify at those hearings, many other invited speakers were supporters of vouchers and efforts by religious extremists to censor our children's textbooks.

And earlier this year, James Leininger, the biggest funder of pro-voucher candidates for the Texas Legislature, began pouring hundreds of thousands of dollars into a new public relations campaign. Billboards and radio spots by his public relations team are designed to persuade African-American and Latino Texans to support private school vouchers.

The effect of these efforts and the elections won't be known until next year, but it is clear that we will all have to work tirelessly to stop the onslaught of radical-right legislation. TFN will be calling on each of you soon to join our Legislative Action Teams and pledge to take action during the legislative session to promote the values of religious freedom, individual liberties and strong public education. I hope you will join at least one Action Team this year and help TFN ensure the voices of mainstream Texans are heard loud and clear. Look for information on Action Teams in your mailboxes soon.



Heather Alden

Goodbye, Heather and William!

After serving four years as TFN's outreach director, **Heather Alden** has moved to the LBJ School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas. She is now the program coordinator for a competition that encourages students to develop innovative plans that work for the public good. Heather made countless grassroots contacts for TFN and mobilized hundreds of Texans to fight religious extremism on the State Board of Education. She will be dearly missed!



William O. Pate III

TFN also says goodbye to **William O. Pate III**, who graduated in May with his bachelor's degree in creative writing from St. Edward's University. William worked as TFN's legislative research fellow and compiled TFN News Clips for four years. William left TFN to work as the communications coordinator at The Arc of Texas. William is now advocating for services and support for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Good luck, William!

Hello, Stephen!

Stephen Rushin joins TFN as the first intern from the newly formed TFN Student Chapter. Stephen has first-hand experience advocating for TFN issues on his high school's debate team in Plano. He is a junior at UT, majoring in government. He is also serving as the vice president of TFN's new Student Chapter. Welcome to TFN, Stephen!



Stephen Rushin

A GIFT HAS BEEN GIVEN...

IN MEMORIAM AND CELEBRATION
OF THE LIFE OF
ANN RICHARDS

by Michael G. Fulcher,
Marion and Henry Bernstein,
and an Anonymous Donor



T E X A S
F R E E D O M
N E T W O R K

P.O. Box 1624 / Austin, TX 78767
Phone: 512/322-0545
Fax: 512/322-0550
tfn@tfn.org / www.tfn.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Diane Ireson, Chair
Robert Kendrick, Vice Chair
Dale Linebarger, Treasurer
Paula Arnold, Secretary
James Aldrete
Rev. Dr. Larry Bethune
Rev. Valda Jean Combs
James Douglas
Phyllis Dunham
Phil Durst
Rhonda Gerson
Marguerite Hoffman
Hon. Donna Howard
Laura Ruth Jacks
Marcia Johnson
Jesse H. Jones II
Audrey Kaplan
Terry Kenyon
Neal Manne
Dr. Lynn Markle
Deedee Ostfeld
Ann Parrish
Cecile Richards
Rev. Dr. Jim Rigby
Tanya Voss
Tom Weber

President: Kathy Miller

Outreach Coordinator: Ian Davis

Major Gifts Officer: Rachel Glast

Annual Fund Officer: Rebecca Leal

Communications Director: Dan Quinn

Office Manager: Bryan Treat

Faith Network Director: Ryan Valentine

Interns: Rachel Strong Mahler,

Judie Niskala, Stephen Rushin,

Naveen Shakir, Sara Struckman

Newsletter Design: Julia Austin

Network News is the official newsletter of the
Texas Freedom Network.

Texas AG Squashes SBOE Power Grab

Religious extremists on the State Board of Education have failed once again to overturn a 1995 law limiting their ability to censor schoolchildren's textbooks. An opinion by Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott in September retains most of those limits, which the Legislature passed in response to the board's tendency to promote personal and political agendas through textbooks.

The **Texas Freedom Network** has long opposed textbook censorship by radical SBOE members. Last spring TFN signed on to a legal brief supporting the 1995 law.

The new AG opinion mostly confirms the law's requirement that the SBOE approve textbooks that meet curriculum standards, are free of factual errors and meet manufacturing requirements. In two areas, however, the opinion opens the door for far-right extremists on the board to abuse their power.

First, the opinion allows the SBOE to review instructional materials in addition to the student and teacher textbooks. That means religious extremists will begin targeting content they don't like in workbooks and other learning materials. Second, the AG says board members must make certain that students continue to learn about U.S. and Texas history and the free enterprise system.

The new opinion and state law, however, **do not** grant SBOE members the authority to replace facts about history and the free enterprise system with their own personal and political agendas. But the board's far-right extremists are already claiming that authority. Terri Leo, R-Spring, has twisted the opinion and asserts that it gives board members a "green light" to control editorial content in textbooks.

Worse yet, the religious right may have an 8-7 majority on the board after the November elections. As a result, publishers are likely to come under intense pressure to rewrite their textbooks so that they promote a far-right ideology instead of real facts. TFN will continue to oppose extremists on the SBOE. Stay informed by signing up for TFN News Clips and Action Alerts at www.tfn.org



TFN's Recommendations for Public Schools Considering Bible Courses

Based on the study of what Texas public schools are teaching their students about the Bible, the new **Texas Freedom Network Education Fund**

report offers the following recommendations for how public schools might teach about the Bible in a respectful, legal and academically sound manner:

1. **School districts should adhere to guidelines proposed by the First Amendment Center.**
2. **The process by which local school boards choose curricula should be open and transparent and invite the participation of the community.**
3. **School districts should ensure teachers have the appropriate academic background and sufficient training on pertinent legal issues.**
4. **Classes should avoid relying primarily on sectarian resources for student readings, teacher preparation and other course components.**
5. **School officials should regularly monitor Bible courses to guarantee that they are academically sound and legally appropriate.**



Steve and Gay Jenkins

TFN HONORS ODESSA EDUCATOR

Two years ago the Texas Freedom Network created the annual Samantha Smoot Activist Award to honor an individual who exemplifies our mission and work to change the political landscape through grassroots advocacy.

This year's recipient has shown tremendous courage by speaking out in his conservative West Texas community of Odessa. Dr. Steve Jenkins has worked diligently to fight for religious freedom by opposing a highly flawed Bible course that promotes the religious views of some over all others in Odessa's public schools. Steve's activism on this controversial issue has helped to safeguard a value that is dear to us all.

The Texas Freedom Network has been honored to work with Steve over the past year and was proud to present him with this year's Samantha Smoot Activist Award at our 11th anniversary celebration in September.

Texas Freedom Network's 11th Anniversary Celebration a Huge Success!

On September 30 more than 800 supporters joined the Texas Freedom Network board and staff at the Austin Music Hall to stay true to their roots and celebrate religious freedom and individual liberties.

Highlights of the evening included performances by the soulful crooner Carolyn Wonderland and the musical genius Guy Forsyth. Lucky supporters bid on four amazing live auction packages, and enjoyed the largest silent auction in TFN's history!

It was a time to celebrate our accomplishments with good friends, delicious food and entertaining musical performances. Thank you to all the TFN supporters who attended the event and to all the volunteers who helped make it a success.

A special thanks to the event committee:

Barbara Anderson, Joy Anderson, Sarah Eckhardt, Jodie Eldridge, Diane Ireson, Laura Ruth Jacks, Donna Rene Johnston, Judy MacKenzie, Becky Pastner, Tanya Voss, Colleen Sommers and last, but not least, Suzee Brooks – our incredible committee chair – who dedicated so much time and so many Twizzlers to make this year's event a raging success.



Guy Forsyth performs while TFN supporters dance in their boots.

Thank you to the Austin event sponsors and the live auction, silent auction and food donors.

Underwriters

Anne Willis Glickman
Diane Ireson & Rowland Cook
Robert Kendrick
Hon. Libby & Dale Linebarger
Ann Parrish
John McAllen Scanlan
Peggy & Matt Winkler
Edith & Bob Zinn

Benefactors

Paula Arnold
John Swinton Brown, Jr.
Christine & Phil Dial
Environmental Survey Consulting Inc.
Rhonda & Paul Gerson
i2i Group
Laura & Tommy Jacks
Audrey & Norman Kaplan
Lisa & Peter Kraus
Richard Linklater
Lynn Markle
Deedee & David Ostfeld
Janis & Joe Pinnelli
Texas State Teachers Association

Patrons

AlphaGraphics
Renee & Russ Graham
Kitty & Terry Kenyon
Susan Moffat & Nick Barbaro
Nan & Carl Richie
Texas Federation of Teachers

Sponsors

Elma & James Aldrete
Atticus Circle
Robbie & Tom Ausley
Melanie & Ben Barnes
Janice & Don Boyd
Rev. Valda Jean Combs
Allene Evans & Tom Herod
Lowerre & Frederick
Don Henley
Bette & Mike John

Marcia & Lockett Johnson
Janey & Melvin Lack
Debbie Martin & Robert Sullivan
Timothy Price
Syd Sharples
Melba & Ted Whatley
Sarah Woelk & Phil Durst



TFN President Kathy Miller and Congressman Lloyd Doggett

Donors

Lew Aldridge
Marie Allen
Patricia Ayres
Karen Bartoletti
Heidi Bloch & Zoe King
Suzanne Bryant & Sarah Goodfriend
Deborah & Dan Bullock
Luanne Cullen
Ann Daughety
Liz Dunlap & Mike Murff
Nancy & William Fitzgerald
Richard Hartgrove & Gary Cooper
Joan & David Hilgers
Hon. Donna & Derek Howard
Kathleen Kerr & Danny Roth
Cathy Kyle & Mark Nixon
Claudette & Hugh Lowe
Julia & Halsey Marsden
Kathy Miller
Planned Parenthood of the Texas Capital Region

Eddie Safady
Andrew Schlosser
Chula Sims & Richard Lavine
David C. Smith
Samantha Smoot
Trish & Jim Stoker
Delane & Tom Weber
Stephanie & Bill Whitehurst
Women Partners in Health

Friends

Linda Aaker & Bob Armstrong
Mattie Adams & Frederick Graber
Alex Albright
Anne Alexander & David Kessler
Austin Title-Midtown
Sara Barker & Kathy Murphy
John Bender
Maria Elena Cigarroa & Pete Kennedy
Brady Coleman
Lydia & Craig Deats
Libby & Hon. Lloyd Doggett
Sarah Eckhardt
Carol Fredericks
Barbara & David Gamble
Ann Graham & Arlen Johnson
Gray & Becker, P.C.
Charlotte & Bill Hale
Mark Hester
Darlene & John Hicks
Joan & Paul Hudson

Lisa & Barry Katz
Lizbeth Kelley & Harry Swinney
Valerie Kirk
May & Jack Latson
Cynthia Lee
Cynthia & Sanford Levinson
Rebecca Lightsey
Laurie Limbacher & Alfred Godfrey
Karen & Jon Loehman
Chris Long
Annette LoVoi & Jim Marston
Basset Maguire
Ed Martin
Catherine McCoy & Jim Haws
McMahon Insurance Group
Janis Monger & Thomas Mason
Mary & Adrian Moore
Ken Oden
Marilyn Orton & Rosalyn Clifton
Carrin & Bill Patman
Martha & Wayne Rogers
Mary Sanger
Patti & Greg Schaub
Jody Scheske
Ciciy Simms & Paul Balmuth
Julia & Evan Smith
Dale & Stephen Sonnenberg
Helen Spear
Liz & Duff Stewart
Pamela Tackett
Vickie Tatum & Kenneth Manning



TFN supporters mingle and browse the incredible silent auction.



Eric Perlmutter with TFN staff Ian Davis and Ryan Valentine

Ingrid & James Taylor
Edward Tuddenham
Kristie & Ryan Valentine
Jennifer Vickers & Lee Walker
Tanya Voss & Sue Marriott
Diana Weihs & James Tai

Supporters

Andrea Abel & John Robinson
Barbara Anderson & Jim Furgeson
Kathy & Richard Armenta
Jim Arth
Caroline Badinelli & Scott Garrison
Bonnie Bain
Mary Lou & John Bell
Rosalie & Jim Boldin
Leslie Bonnell & Ron Marks
Margot Booth & Russell Pinkston
Peggy Bradley
Nettie Ruth & Morris Bratton
Claire & Richard Brooks
Elizabeth Brooks
Suzee & Greg Brooks
Robert Bryant
Jeanne L. Bunker
David Butts
Tony Choban & Pat McCray
Michael Churgin
Fred & Kim Coogan
Ann & Jan Costilow
Don Crowell
Diana Daniels & David Wiley



Robbie & Tom Ausley with Tim & Gail Sulak

Matthew de Ferranti
Sally Dinsmore & Michael Charlesworth
Jocelyn Doherty
Anne & John Donovan
Genevieve Duncan & Keith Snodgrass
Phyllis Dunham
Laura & Mike Eisenberg
Mary Margaret Farabee
Edmund & Jo Ann Farrell
Shudde Fath
Lulu Flores & Scott Hendler
Jimmie Sue & Dick Francis
Martha Frede
Lora Ann & Steve Gerson
Myra Goepf

Hon. Sherri Greenberg & Cary Ferchill
Elizabeth & Michael Hall
Karen & Walter Hall
Susan Harry
John Hildreth
Jan Hill
Richard Holt & Michael Garcia
Sharon Horowitz
Laurie & Tom Hunt
Ellen & James Hurst
Elisabeth Ireson
Lea Isgur
Veronica Johnson
Rev. Bobbi Kaye Jones & Rev. David Gilliam
Shirlene & David Justice
Linda Komm
Karen Kuykendall
Alice & Desmond Lawler
Alaire & Tom Lowry
Anne & Bill McAfee
Patsy & Lou McCreary
Trish & Rev. Chuck Merrill
Deena Mersky
Lisa Mersky
Carol & Ted Middelberg
Hillary Miller & Neena Husid
Nancy Mims & Rodney Gibbs
Sue & John Murphy
Hon. Elliott Naishtat
Bettie Naylor
Elizabeth & Robert Newell
Jane Newth

Randy Newth
Dr. Nona Niland
Martha Owen & Paul Forderhase
Peggy Pickle & Don Cook
Ruth & Keith Pool
Frances & Rev. George Ricker
Jim Rodman
Hon. Eddie Rodriguez
Ethyl & Manny Rosenblatt
Dale Rudin
Rochelle Satterfield
Nancy Scanlan
Kelly & Jeremy Schaub
Frances & Pete Schenkkan
Marilyn & Hon. Babe Schwartz
David Sergi
Glenda Smith
Jan Soifer & Patrick O'Connell
David Stackhouse
Anne Stevenson & Marcus Ollington

Lucina Suarez & Thomas Shipley
Carolyn & Steve Swinnea
Holly Taylor & John Adair
Kathi Thomas & Mark Hastings
Melba Vasquez & Jim Miller
Shirley & Fred Viehweg
Vicki & David Vogel
Scheleen & Jim Walker
Lisa Webb & Susan Bailes
Chris White & David Marks
Lynn Whitten & Jim Butler
Sara Wilder & Colin Clark
Pat & Curt Wyman
John Yeaman
Dr. Pamela Yu

Live Auction Donors

Capra & Cavelli
Mat Clouser
Miles Compton III
Guy Forsyth
Kristen Grulke
Laura & Tommy Jacks
Sylvia & Chris Mackey
Johnstone Made to Measure
Amie Rodnick
Uchi

Silent Auction and Food Donors

34th Street Café
ACE Custom Tailors
Alamo Drafthouse Cinema
Amuse Bouche
Amy's Ice Cream
Art on 5th
Asleep at the Wheel
Aunt Tilly's Island Café and Bar
Austin Film Society
Austin Museum of Art
Austin Pet Portraits
Austin Playhouse Theater
Austin Rock Gym
Ballet Austin
Barton Springs Nurseries
Blue Trout Catering
Ave Bonar



Becky Pastner and State Representative Elliott Naishtat

Book Woman
Brian Mikeska, Goldsmith & Designer
Bruce Kirkland Optometry
Marianne & Gil Bruvel
Dan Bullock
Amy Bumpus
Chez Nous
Chez Zee
Ann Clark
Clay Pit
Climb On! Products
The County Line
The Crossings
Daya Day Spa & Salon
Camille Donoghue
Eastside Café
Edible Arrangements
El Interior
El Sol y La Luna
Epoch Coffee
Fingertek Web Design
Fire Island Hot Glass
Fresh Aesthetics
Naomi Lyons Friedman
& Dr. David Friedman
Peter Gatti
Glitzkrieg
Greenling Organic Delivery
Guero's Taco Bar
Ann Hartley
The Hills Fitness Center
Walter Hinojosa
Lisa Huggins
Aralyn Hughes & Houlihan's
Hut's Hamburgers

Hyde Park Bar & Grill
IF&D
Iguana Grill
Innu Salon
Interior Elements
Jeffrey's Restaurant & Bar
Leora's Skin Care
Live Oak Brewery
Lone Star Riverboat
Lundquest Computer Support
Magnolia Café
Thomas Mahler
Mangia Pizza
Mary Louise Butters Brownies
Craig E. Matthews, Massage Therapy
Maudie's Tex-Mex
Jim McKinnis
Miles of Chocolate
Mirabelle
Hon. Elliott Naishtat
The Natural Gardener
Randy Newth
The Oasis
Orchid Arts
O's Campus Café
Sorja O'Sullivan
Paramount Theater
Phil's Hardwood Boxes
Nancy Pierson
Positive Images
Premiere Lady Fitness
Quinn Interiors
R Salon
Lyova Rosanoff
Ruby's Barbecue
Marina Rusch
Save Our Springs Alliance
Shag Salon
Star of Texas Inn
Leora & Robin Strong
Sweetish Hill Bakery
Tesoros Trading Company
Tex Style Two
The Texas Observer
Threadgill's
Tom Herod Films
Trudy's
Turquoise Door
The University of Texas Performing Arts Center
Vortex Repertory Company
West End Grooming
Stephanie & Bill Whitehurst
Steve Williams
Women & Their Work



TFN Communications Director Dan Quinn, Event Chair Suzee Brooks and TFN Board Chair Diane Ireson

Special Thanks

Alpha Graphics
i2i Group
Native Texas Nursery
Big Red Sun

Celebrate with TFN in San Antonio and Fort Worth!

The Texas Freedom Network is headed to San Antonio for the city's annual members' reception on November 30. Susan and Tommy Smith have offered their home for what is sure to be a great party!

TFN is proud to announce its first annual Fort Worth members' reception on December 5. Longtime supporters Meralen and Gerry Tyson have graciously agreed to host this event.



Please make plans to join us for these two exciting events. Look for information on location and times in your mailbox and at www.tfn.org.

Save the Date for TFN's Holiday Party!

Without its valued volunteers, members and donors, the Texas Freedom Network would not be able to mobilize Texans and influence public policy on education, religious freedom and civil and equal rights. Please join us as we recognize our amazing supporters at our annual Volunteer Recognition Party!

Wednesday, December 13, 5:30-7:30 p.m.

TFN headquarters - contact TFN for directions

Help us celebrate all our hard work and another successful year at TFN!



Volunteers helped make TFN's 11th anniversary celebration a huge success.

Many Thanks to TFN Volunteers!

Craig Adair · Joe Albright · Ashli Alejandro · Marie Allen · Barbara Anderson · Joy Anderson · Katy Andre · Will Angst · Jan Austin · Bruce Barrick
 Jane Bedford · Mary Lou Bell · Dan Berwick · Bill Beuche · Laura Beuhler · Rosa Lee Boldin · Margot Booth · Pamela Bowie · Janice & Don Boyd
 Margaret Bradford · Carol & Jim Brady · Nettie Ruth Bratton · Suzee Brooks · Elliot Brown · Tom Brucia · Helen Burnette · Robin Casey
 Jessica Cassidy · Elizabeth Chalmers · Nick Chu · Rowland Cook · Rick Cox · Kate Crawford · Andrea Dalhouse · Katy Davis · Nancy Dawson
 Caroline Deats · Sally Dinsmore · Liz Dunlap · Lizzy Dupont · Brian Dupré · Drew Dupuy · Phil Durst · Matt Earhart · Sarah Eckhardt
 Laura Eisenberg · Jodie Eldridge · Ruth Epstein · Jessica Evans · Amy Everhart · Jamie Everhart · Parisa Fatehi · Laurie Felker-Jones · Ken Flippin
 Katie Forde · Naomi Freireich · Al Giles · Shanna Ginsberg · Leah Glossbrenner · John Grube · Kristen Brock Grulke · Rebeca Guerrero · Austin Haller
 Gale Hathcock · Stephanie Hebert · Sandy Hellums · Robin Herskowitz · Mark Hester · Darlene & John Hicks · Marsha Hogan · Lisa Huggins
 Diane Ireson · Laura Ruth Jacks · Neily Jennings · Donna Rene Johnston · Barbara Jones · Damon Jones · Louanne Jones · Marguerite Jones
 Cristina Juarez · Kacia & Ed Jurdi · Brian Keeper · Bob Kendrick · Kay Killough · David Kobierowski · Amy Lambert · Sue & Larry Laurent
 Amy Loar · Nancy & Jim Lomax · Alaire Lowry · Naomi Lyons Friedman · Judy MacKenzie · David Mahler · Thomas Mahler · Sharon & Joe Majors
 Cema Mastroleo · Alissa & Ron McCain · Dr. James McGuffee · Helen Melinger · Lisa Mersky · Linda Messing · Kathleen Miller · Susan Moffat
 Nancy Neavel · Randy Newth · Linda Norelli · Marcus Ollington · Greg Ormiston · Peggy O'Shea · Sonja O'Sullivan · Kitty Page · Kathy Panton
 DJ Pargas · Amy Parham · Becky Pastner · William Pate · Lindsay Pearlmutter · Jo Reichler · Eve Richter · Kathy Rider Kerry · Anne Ridley
 Andrew Riggsby · Pam Robers · Jess Robinson · John Robinson · Martha & Wayne Rogers · Ethyl & Manny Rosenblatt · Dale Rudin · Stephen Rushin
 Sonia Santana · Patti Schaub · Larry Schooler · Kathy & Don Sinclair · Ray Skidmore · Jerry Smolinsky · Kathy Sokolic · Colleen Sommers
 Dale Sonnenberg · Robin Strong · Jack Tackaberry · Doug Taylor · Kenny Thompson · Connor Timmons · Kedron Touvell · Helene Treat
 Rex Uberman · Tanya Voss · Jonathan Weldon · Christopher White · Tony Wilson · Lindsay Wolin · Elizabeth Woodburn · Megan Woodburn

TFN Expands to Campus with New Student Chapter

The **Texas Freedom Network** has extended its reach to the University of Texas at Austin campus by establishing a student chapter. TFN is excited to capture the energy of student activists for new and creative ways to work on our issues and to involve more young people in our grassroots efforts.

The TFN Student Chapter is slated to sponsor campus debates and coordinate with other student organizations that are focused on similar issues. In addition, the student group will have access to TFN staff, resources and the TFN office, conveniently located two blocks west of campus.

Although the TFN Student Chapter is currently in its preliminary stages of development, it has already seen a strong response from students. In September the chapter co-sponsored a Welcome Back to School event at the TFN office with the Campus Alliance for Progress. Additionally, TFN student leaders courted prospective members at two organizational fairs on campus. The chapter held its first official organizational meeting in October, with Jonathan Weldon elected president and Stephen Rushin vice president.

Jonathan is an Austin native and a graduate of McCallum High School. After graduating from Trinity University with a bachelor's degree in business administration, he split his time working in corporate America, volunteering on various political campaigns and serving a year as an AmeriCorps volunteer. He is currently a first-year graduate student at the LBJ School of Public Affairs.

Stephen is also a student intern at TFN. TFN welcomes Stephen to the organization on page 2.



TFN Student Chapter President Jonathan Weldon and TFN interns Naveen Shakir and Judie Niskala distribute information about TFN and the TFN Student Chapter on the UT campus in September.

Legislative Academy

The **Texas Freedom Network** is pleased to announce the creation of the Legislative Academy internship program. The program is designed to attract the best and brightest young people to work with TFN during the legislative session.

The Legislative Academy is a unique opportunity for college students to gain first-hand experience in the nonprofit sector, learn the nuts and bolts of grassroots advocacy and play a role in the public policy process. The Legislative Academy will ensure that every intern has a rewarding and challenging experience while helping TFN achieve its legislative goals.

Interns will take part in a wide range of social action activities, including researching issues, monitoring legislative activity, developing programs, coordinating special events, creating educational materials, organizing student activities and mobilizing grassroots supporters. Not only is this a chance for young people to become involved in the public policy process, but it will develop the next generation of leaders to fight for the mainstream values of religious freedom and individual liberties.

Keep an eye on www.tfn.org for more information about TFN's spring Legislative Academy.

TFN's 2006 Essay Contest Students Urged to Write About Religion, Science, and Public Policy

The **Texas Freedom Network** is encouraging students to work and think about our issues through a student essay contest. College students are asked to submit essays that address how elected officials should approach public policy debates that involve science and religious beliefs. The contest is open to undergraduate and graduate students at any Texas college or university. The deadline for submissions is January 31, 2007. For more information about the essay contest, contact Ian Davis, outreach coordinator, at ian@tfn.org.

Look for the winning essay in a coming edition of *Network News!*



T E X A S
F R E E D O M
N E T W O R K

P.O. BOX 1624
AUSTIN TX 78767

NON PROFIT
US POSTAGE

PAID

PERMIT NO. 1943
AUSTIN, TX

Honoring a Texas Champion

The **Texas Freedom Network** joins all Texans in remembering the wonderful legacy of former Gov. Ann Richards. TFN owes a lot to this great woman. Of course, she was the mother of our founder and board member, Cecile. She was also tremendously supportive of our work – not only during Cecile’s tenure, but throughout TFN’s history. As we keep Ann’s family in our hearts and prayers, we remember the energy, humor, intelligence and leadership of a great Texas woman.

