

TO THE HONORABLE JUDGE MISSY MEDARY:

COMES NOW, Rick Milby, the Defendant in the above-numbered-and-styled cause of action, and respectfully files this Motion to Dismiss and Motion for Sanctions under Texas Citizens' Participation Act ("TCPA"), and in support of thereof shows the Court as follows:

I. INTRODUCTION

On March 8, 2016, Plaintiff Patrick Greene ("Greene"), an atheist activist, filed the above-styled lawsuit against Rick Milby, Pastor of Abundant Life Fellowship. Greene, a San Antonio resident, routinely threatens and sometimes files meritless litigation against churches, cities, and citizens across the state. He has filed suits as far away as Athens, Texas, to Van Horn, Texas. Exh. A (examples of and articles discussing Greene's history of vexatious litigation, including suits over nativity scenes, animals, and now, a cross on church property).¹

In this case, Greene asks this Court to admonish several city council members and order a church to remove a cross from church property. However, the Texas Legislature enacted the Texas Citizens' Participation Act ("TCPA") in 2011 specifically "to encourage and safeguard the constitutional rights of persons to petition, speak freely, and otherwise participate in government to the maximum extent permitted by law" Tex. Civ. Prac. & Rem. Code § 27.002; *see generally* Tex. Civ. Prac. & Rem. Code § 27.001 *et seq.* "The TCPA protects citizens from harassing litigation designed to thwart their First Amendment freedoms. "The Texas Citizens Participation Act (TCPA) protects citizens who petition or speak on matters of public concern

1. The Court may take judicial notice of Greene's long, self-proclaimed, and well-publicized history of antagonizing Texas citizens with threats of litigation and actual lawsuits. Greene has sued cities, counties, officials, citizens, and even a sitting judge. So far as counsel for Defendant is aware, Greene has never succeeded, though, in any of his many lawsuits throughout the state.

from retaliatory lawsuits that seek to intimidate or silence them.” *In re Lipsky*, 460 S.W.3d 579, 584 (Tex. 2015).

Greene’s lawsuit has no legitimate claims, and his allegations are baseless, without merit, and should be dismissed – with sanctions. Greene has sued a pastor, in his capacity as a pastor, for protected constitutional activities: namely, erecting a large cross on church property, and then informing others about it.

All of that is protected activity and requires this case to be dismissed under the TCPA. Under the TCPA, a defendant must show by a preponderance of the evidence that the plaintiff’s claim “is based on, relates to, or is in response to a party’s exercise of the right of free speech, right to petition, or right of association” Tex. Civ. Prac. & Rem. Code § 27.003.

II. AT ALL TIMES, PASTOR MILBY EXERCISED HIS RIGHTS UNDER THE TCPA, TEXAS CONSTITUTION, FEDERAL CONSTITUTION, AND TEXAS LAW

In this case, Greene complains that Pastor Milby sought to draw attention to his ministry and his religion by building a monument to Jesus Christ. Pastor Milby seeks to build a large cross—the largest in the Western Hemisphere—erected on church property. Compl., ¶ 14. He also complains that Pastor Milby promoted his cross—and his religion—by notifying various public officials about it. Compl., ¶¶ 6–14. Greene also complains that Pastor Milby gave a sermon where he mentioned his involvement in politics, and also, that Pastor Milby invited city officials to the groundbreaking for the cross.²

To begin with, Pastor Milby is a private citizen—a pastor—not a government official. Greene’s petition identifies Milby as a pastor. Compl. (caption). Moreover, Greene repeatedly

2. Greene appears to imply that Pastor Milby, through a sermon and through invitations to City officials, is somehow an accomplice to alleged constitutional violations by city council members.

cites the church's website. *See, e.g.*, Compl. ¶ 12. Greene also cites sermons which he appears to have accessed via the website. Compl. ¶ 7.

Greene fails to even allege that Milby in any way “control[led]” or “interfere[d] with” the rights of conscience of anyone at all, including himself. Greene also fails to allege that Milby even had power to do so as a private citizen is unable to wield the power of government.

Greene fails to allege a valid claim of any kind, let alone a claim against Pastor Milby. For instance, Greene complains of various commendations of the monument and attendance at the groundbreaking, but Greene fails to allege that any government official engaged in any action sufficient to generate an establishment of religion by the government, either city or state, *see* U.S. Const., Am. I., or otherwise engage in anything other than a commonplace commendation of some type of private action.³

III. THE COURT SHOULD DISMISS THIS CASE UNDER THE TCPA

Greene himself alleges that Pastor Milby acted as a pastor, citing the church's website. Compl., ¶ 12; *see also* Compl. (caption). He alleges that Milby, as a pastor, brought attention to the church's activities by informing others about it, and obtaining recognition that the church was doing something significant. *See generally* Compl.

Under the TCPA, Pastor Milby must only show by a preponderance of the evidence that Greene's claim(s) are based on, relate to, or are in response to Pastor Milby's exercise of (1) the right of free speech, (2) the right to petition, or (3) the right of association. *In re Lipsky*, 460 S.W.3d at 584; Tex. Civ. Prac. & Rem. Code § 27.005(b). Greene's own allegations establish that the claims are based on Pastor Milby's rights of speech, petition, and association, and Pastor

3. The United States Congressional Record, for instance, contains far more such commendations and acknowledgements than it does significant public policy legislation.

Milby likewise admits he was acting in his role as a pastor while seeking to build a church monument on church property.

Moreover, Greene identifies activities that are plainly protected activities: reaching out to city council members and building a cross. Importantly, the TCPA protects *the right to petition* one's government, which includes the very activities Greene complains about: that Pastor Milby made requests of city council members, and then promoted the council members' responses. *See, e.g.,* Compl., ¶¶ 7–12.

Accordingly, under the TCPA, the Court must dismiss the suit unless “clear and specific evidence” establishes Greene's *prima facie* case for each essential element of the claim in question. *In re Lipsky*, 460 S.W.3d at 584; Tex. Civ. Prac. & Rem. Code § 27.005(b), (c) (noting that the court “shall dismiss” the action if defendant meets the standard by a preponderance of the evidence).⁴ Greene has proffered no such evidence.⁵

IV. AMENDING THE PETITION TO AVOID TCPA SANCTIONS FAILS AS A MATTER OF LAW

Once Greene learned that Pastor Milby was consulting counsel, he amended the

4. In addition, upon filing of this motion, all discovery is suspended pending a ruling upon the motion. Tex. Civ. Prac. & Rem. Code § 27.003(c). A hearing must be set within 60 days of service of the motion, unless court conditions require a later hearing within 90 days after service of the motion. Tex. Civ. Prac. & Rem. Code § 27.004(a).

5. Instead, it appears Greene may have filed an amended petition that names various city council members but does not name Pastor Milby. He has filed no nonsuit or notice of nonsuit, nor has the amended complaint or any such notice been served upon Pastor Milby. *See* Tex. R. Civ. P. 162 (requiring same). To date, the claims against Milby appear to remain pending, and Milby remains a defendant until or unless a valid nonsuit is filed (and served) or the court orders otherwise. Regardless of any such pleading, though, this motion for sanctions would remain relevant and pending since it has been filed while the trial court retains plenary power over the case (and, in fact, before any notice from the court that Pastor Milby has been in any way dismissed), and the Texas Supreme Court has repeatedly held that motions for sanctions survive even a properly-filed nonsuit. *Crites v. Collins*, 284 S.W.3d 839, 842-44 (Tex. 2009) (holding that motions for sanctions survive nonsuit even when filed afterwards).

Complaint to name only various city officials as defendants, dropping Pastor Milby. However, Greene has filed no notice of nonsuit, nor has the amended complaint—or any such notice—been served upon Pastor Milby as required by Tex. R. Civ. P. 162. To date, the claims against Milby remain pending. Further, Milby remains a defendant unless and until a valid nonsuit is filed, served, and the court orders Milby’s dismissal.

However, even if Plaintiff perfected service or otherwise removed Milby as a defendant, this motion for sanctions under the TCPA would remain relevant and pending since it has been filed while the trial court retains plenary power over the case—and, in fact, before any notice from the court that Pastor Milby has been in any way dismissed. The Texas Supreme Court has repeatedly determined that motions for sanctions survive even a properly-filed nonsuit. *See, e.g., Crites v. Collins*, 284 S.W.3d 839, 842-44 (Tex. 2009) (holding same and citing longstanding Texas Supreme Court precedent concluding the same).

In short, the TCPA was drafted to “encourage and safeguard the constitutional rights” of individuals, like Pastor Milby, to engage in protected activity “to the maximum extent permitted by law[.]” Tex. Civ. Prac. & Rem. Code § 27.002. Greene’s lawsuit against Pastor Milby is neither meritorious, nor is any injury demonstrable. (Greene never even alleges any injury.) The TCPA has struck the balance, in this instance, in favor of protecting Pastor Milby against lawsuits lacking merit without injury. Merely amending a complaint cannot overcome the TCPA’s protections or this Court’s inherent power to award appropriate sanctions.

V. THE COURT MUST AWARD SANCTIONS UNDER THE TCPA

Under the TCPA, a court must rule on the motion, and the court “shall award to the moving party”:

court costs, reasonable attorney’s fees, and other expenses incurred in defending against the legal action as justice and equity may require; *and* sanctions against the party who brought the legal action as the court determines sufficient to deter the party who brought the legal action from bringing similar actions described in this chapter.

Tex. Civ. Prac. & Rem. Code § 27.009(a). The TCPA leaves no discretion to the court to fail to order such an award.

In this case, Greene has a long history of litigation threats, vexatious litigation, and using litigation as a tool to harass both city officials as well as private citizens throughout the state. Exh. A. However, Pastor Milby seeks only to deter Greene from any such future actions, rather than seek monetary gain for himself, and asks the court to consider a sanction against Greene sufficient to deter him from future meritless litigation throughout the state.

Accordingly, Pastor Milby will voluntarily forego any request for attorneys’ fees, and requests that the Court order a sanction of \$100 against Greene, payable to the Court, as well as an order barring Greene from:

- (1) filing further actions against Abundant Life or Pastor Milby, or from re-naming him to the present litigation or future litigation involving these facts;
- (2) filing further lawsuits in Texas that violate the TCPA, with sanctions to include an award of \$5,000 for each such further suit filed, and further orders designed to “deter the party who brought the legal action from bringing similar actions” in the future.
- (3) finding that this litigation constitutes vexatious litigation, as described in Tex.

Civ. Prac. & Rem. Code 11.054, by a litigant with a history of filing meritless and unsuccessful lawsuits.

Pastor Milby requests this sanction in order to deter future litigation by Greene against himself or other churches, city officials, and religious citizens of the State of Texas.

VI. PRAYER

WHEREFORE, PREMISES CONSIDERED, Defendant Rick Milby respectfully requests that this Honorable Court, after notice and hearing, grant this the Defendant's Motion to Dismiss and Motion for Sanctions under the TCPA as requested herein, and grant Defendant sanctions, as well as all other and further relief to which Defendant is entitled.

Respectfully Submitted,

/s/ Cleve W. Doty

JEREMIAH G. DYS

State Bar No. 24096415

Email: [REDACTED]

JUSTIN E. BUTTERFIELD

State Bar No. 24062642

Email: [REDACTED]

CLEVE W. DOTY

State Bar No. 24069627

Email: [REDACTED]

FIRST LIBERTY INSTITUTE

2001 W. Plano Pkwy., Suite 1600

Plano, Texas 75075

Telephone: (972) 941-4444

Fax: (972) 941-4457

ATTORNEYS FOR DEFENDANT

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that a true and correct copy of this document was served in accordance with the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure 21(a) on this the 22nd day of March, 2016, to the following person(s):

Mr. Patrick Greene, *pro se*

[REDACTED]

Via email

[REDACTED]

and

Mr. Patrick Greene, *pro se*

[REDACTED]

Via certified mail – return receipt requested
CMRRR # 7015 1520 0001 0679 3117

/s/ Cleve W. Doty
Cleve W. Doty

EXHIBIT A

Atheist had conversion — albeit a brief one

By **Abe Levy** Updated 12:59 am, Thursday, May 3, 2012



Patrick Greene, showered with kindness by an East Texas church, briefly declared faith in Jesus Christ.

Patrick Greene has caused many evangelical Christians to think hard about the **Golden Rule**.

An atheist, he has filed complaints and lawsuits for 30-plus years accusing government officials of unconstitutionally endorsing Christianity both here and in his native California.

But for a brief time last month, he switched teams.

A church in East Texas showered him with kindness and Greene, 63, declared faith in **Jesus Christ**. Then he thought better of it.

He's back to his old self and sued Mayor **Julián Castro** on Monday for his plans to participate in the National Day of Prayer event on City Hall steps today.

"I got all caught up in the excitement," Greene, a retired cab driver, said of his brief conversion. "It's easy to do when you get ostracized and treated like garbage. When you're an atheist, you're public enemy No. 1."

Since moving to San Antonio in 2005, Greene has tried to dismantle the Day of Prayer tradition of the mayor reading a proclamation to honor prayer's role in the nation's and city's history.

The lawsuit argues that because evangelical Christians organize the event, it is sectarian and therefore unconstitutional for a mayor to engage in.

"We respect people of faith and those who choose not to believe," Castro said through a spokesman.

Greene's previous suits here were dismissed, but he had some success in California, getting non-Christians added to a city council's prayer guest list and shutting down a Nativity display on public land.

"Someone called me up once and asked, 'Why are you destroying Christmas?'" he said of the Nativity battle. "I told him, 'I don't give a damn about you celebrating Christmas. Just don't do it with my money.'" They said, 'It's a 40-year tradition. You're doing it because you're an atheist.' I said, no. If I was a Christian, I'd still do it. The issue is unconstitutional funding."

With his wife Karen, a fellow atheist, Greene lives in a one-bedroom apartment on the Northwest Side. It has little furniture: a bed, a couple of chairs and a desk for his computer where he researches and prepares lawsuits, typically filing for a waiver of fees and representing himself.

He grew up in a large Catholic family in Los Angeles and even eyed the priesthood as a teen. But he questioned the Bible, religious structures and social mores.

Greene said he and his family are now "in two completely different worlds," and his sister confirmed the estrangement, declining further comment. A brother wouldn't comment at all.

Movies taught him morals, Greene said, especially the line in "From Here to Eternity," the 1953 classic: "(If) a man don't go his own way, he's nothing."

"It's been my moral code my entire life," he said. "I told people in my cab, if you do things because your friends expect it, you're an idiot," he said.

After eight years in the Air Force, he drove cabs and trucks in California, North Carolina and New York City.

One of his lawsuits after moving to San Antonio was against Suzanne Dollar, a National Day of Prayer coordinator.

"We have nothing but love and compassion for him," Dollar said. "Our response would be to pray for him. ... We have the freedom to worship. The battle is the Lord's. It's not one for me to fight."

Last year, Greene set his sights on Henderson County and its courthouse Nativity display but dropped the effort after discovering he had a detached retina. He retired from cab driving in March.

Sand Springs Baptist Church in Athens learned he was living on **Social Security** and had no medical insurance. It started a fund in the area for him and has sent about \$3,000 so far.

"We will be forever grateful to them," he said. "It brought us out of a hole."

Donations are still arriving, church leaders said. A woman named **Jessica Crye** came up with the idea, and in talks with her Greene began to warm up to the Christian faith. He enrolled in two online Bible courses. He considered moving to Athens and began to email and talk to the pastor, **Erick Graham**.

Greene told Christian media he had converted, and the news spread. Graham said he was welcoming but skeptical, and Greene questioned himself, too. A few days of reading Genesis and he returned to atheism, he said.

"The more I read the Bible, the more I realized, this is such a crock," he said.

Critics questioned whether it had all been a publicity stunt. Greene calls it a temporary lapse. He had also been angry at the pastor for praying for Greene's wife, whose atheism had not wavered, at a church service.

He and Graham don't correspond like they used to.

"He is a very complex character," Graham said. "I've struggled with exactly how to deal with him. It was work. But I believe it was God-ordained. People nationwide saw how Christians ought to react to these situations."

alevy@express-news.net

© 2016 Hearst Communications, Inc.

H E A R S T

Henderson County Now

Sponsored by Weinstein Law/Keller Williams Weinstein Team Realty

[Home](#) / [Categories](#) ▼ / [HCN Radio](#) / [Contact Us](#) / [Help Wanted](#) / [Church Directory](#)

Greene Files Third Nativity Lawsuit

BY [ADMIN](#) / ON [MARCH 11, 2014](#) / IN [UNCATEGORIZED](#)

He's back.

San Antonio atheist Patrick Greene has turned his sights back to the annual nativity scene displayed on the Henderson County Courthouse lawn each December.



Greene says he filed a lawsuit against County Judge Richard Sanders yesterday in Bexar County to have the nativity scene removed to private property. While aware of Greene's claims, county officials today said they have not been served nor had any official notification of the lawsuit.

County officials had no comment on the lawsuit at this time.

Greene said he believes his current effort is patriotic.

GET ALL OUR POSTS VIA EMAIL

Enter your email address to subscribe to this blog and receive notifications of new posts by email.

Join Our News Email

The news every day in your inbox.

SEARCH



LISTEN IN

“I have done only two things for my country in my life,” he wrote in an email. “I served in the Air Force for eight and a half years from 1968-77, then I filed the lawsuit in 1999 against the city of Ontario for their 12 nativity scenes and won that one. And since I am now a senior citizen, I wanted to do one last thing for my country before I am too old to do anything else.”

Henderson County residents were still rebounding from the Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) nativity scene controversy when they first heard the name Patrick Greene in February 2012.

The San Antonio atheist, who is not part of the FFRF, became interested in Henderson County after watching video of a Christian nativity rally held on the courthouse square. He sent a letter to Commissioners’ Court threatening a lawsuit if the nativity scene was not moved to private property.

Then things got weird. Greene changed his mind because he believed he was going blind. He didn’t go blind and he now says he was experiencing “old age eye problems that were normal.”

A group, led by Sand Springs Baptist Church, collected \$400 and sent it to the struggling Greene and his wife to help with expenses. Greene responded by flirting with converting to Christianity, although he reverted back to being an atheist fairly quickly. Still, the atheist-helped-by-Christians story went viral, garnering the county national attention.

Greene was then quiet for nearly eight months, before bursting back onto the scene in December 2013 with a lawsuit against the City of Athens.

He said he filed against the city because the city pays Keep Athens Beautiful \$10,000 annually. The lawsuit read: “These funds were partly used for the upkeep of a life size Christian Nativity display, thereby violating Article 1, Sections 6 and 7 of the Texas Constitution.”

Greene withdrew that lawsuit less than a week after it was filed because he believed Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott asked the Bexar County District Clerk for a copy. Greene also said he was afraid of Christian violence. Now he says the city was the wrong defendant.

But to prove that you can never be sure of what Greene will do next,



FACEBOOK



FOLLOW US ON TWITTER

he closed out the year by filing another lawsuit, this time against County Judge Richard Sanders.

In that lawsuit, filed Dec. 28, Greene claims Sanders, “abused his position as judicial head of Henderson County, by giving official governmental permission to private citizens to display this Christian Nativity scene. This also violated Article 1, Section 6 of the Texas Constitution; ‘No human authority ought, in any case whatever, to control or interfere with the rights of conscience in matters of religion, and no preference shall ever be given by lay to any religious society or mode of worship.’”

Greene said he wanted the nativity scene moved to private property.

Greene dropped that lawsuit in January 2013 “because something far more important has come up,” he said. “I discovered a woman who is in prison who got there without due process, and I am going to try to get her out.”

Greene has a history of atheist activism going back to at least 1998, when he challenged – and changed – the way the city of Ontario, California stored and cared for a series of nativity scenes. He has also twice filed lawsuits against the San Antonio mayor’s office for prayer-related reasons, and has pursued legal action against other entities.

Share this:



Related



Greene drops nativity lawsuit
In "County"



Atheist files lawsuit against County Judge
In "County"



Top Story No. 3: Nativity Scene
In "Government"

Tweets by @hctxnow

HC Now @hctxnow
2016 Henderson County Master Gardener Spring Conference.
fb.me/7IJRsg8g4

44m

HC Now @hctxnow
Don't forget! fb.me/2NdJuFJAS

1h

HC Now @hctxnow
Dog Missing fb.me/2vqZfSiX9

1h

HC Now @hctxnow
The 4th Annual Warriors Car Show is scheduled for Saturday, April 16, from 10-3, in the TVCC parking lot. Come...
fb.me/3twLMP7jP

3h

HC Now @hctxnow
Athens High School invites the public to a wonderful choir concert on Monday at the AHS annex auditorium,...
fb.me/2aB2UHP6F

4h

HC Now @hctxnow
Still missing ... reward added.
fb.me/4tkRtyxE5

5h

PREVIOUS

Buckle Shootout this Saturday

NEXT

Obituary: David Duran

Atheist Activist Becomes Christian After Believers Show Him Compassion



(Photo: Patrick Greene)

Patrick Greene and his cat, Big Boy, pose for the camera. Greene is an atheist activist who had to back off of his threat to sue Henderson County, Texas over a nativity scene a few months ago after he rapidly began losing his sight.

By [Jeff Schapiro](#), Christian Post Reporter

April 4, 2012 | 2:31 pm

A few months ago Patrick Greene was an atheist who was threatening to sue Henderson County, Texas, if the county didn't remove a Nativity scene from its courthouse lawn. Today he is a believer in Christ who underwent a radical change of heart that was catalyzed by the compassion of one Christian woman.

In late 2011, Greene joined the fight against a Nativity scene that had been set up outside the courthouse in the town of Athens, Texas, threatening to file a lawsuit over it. Shortly after he made his threat, however, he discovered that his ability to see was rapidly deteriorating and he would soon be blind, so he withdrew his threats and left the Nativity alone.

That's when Jessica Crye, a Christian woman from Athens, asked her pastor, Erick Graham of Sand Springs Baptist Church, if they could help Greene. As a result of her kindness, thousands of dollars in donations have gone toward helping Greene, who has reconsidered his view of God as a result.

"There's been one lingering thought in the back of my head my entire life, and it's one thought that I've never been able to reconcile, and that is the vast difference between all the animals and us," Greene told The Christian Post on Tuesday, as he began to explain his recent transformation from atheist to Christian. The theory of evolution didn't answer his questions, he says, so he just set those questions aside and didn't think about them anymore.

But when the Christians in a town that had reason to be angry with him showed him a gesture of love, he began reconsidering his beliefs altogether. He eventually began to realize that evolution would never have the answer to his questions, he says, and it was at that time he began to believe in God.

"I kind of realized that the questions I [was] asking you just had to accept on faith without doubting every period and every comma," he said. He later began studying the Bible, both the Old Testament and the Gospels, and also discovered his belief that Jesus is the Son of God.

Now this former atheist says he's not only a Christian, but he also wants to become a pastor.

Greene plans to either join a nearby liberal congregation or may even start his own chapter of the Rainbow Baptists, an outreach ministry of The Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptists that supports the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community. He says he feels strongly that homosexuality is acceptable in Christianity, and claims the Bible's original approach to issues of homosexuality has been altered over the last 2,000 years.

Greene says his wife of nearly 34 years, who is still an atheist, was "surprised" at his conversion but understands him. Even though they disagree on the issue, they haven't argued over it.

"We don't interfere with each other's differences, we don't put each other down because of it," he said.

As a symbol of his appreciation to the Christian community both in and around Athens, Greene has purchased a star for the top of the tree that is part of the Christmas display he once railed against. He has also written a letter to the Freedom From Religion Foundation, an organization that said the Nativity display was unconstitutional, to explain why their legal arguments against the Nativity are not valid.

Formerly a self-employed taxi cab driver, Greene was forced to give up his career after being diagnosed with cataracts and discovering symptoms of a detached retina and glaucoma. Although he says blindness is inevitable, he is still pursuing a second opinion of his diagnosis.

Greene says he was able to pay for his rent, bills, groceries and money owed from taxes thanks to the generous donations made by both Christians and atheists alike. In addition to receiving money from Sand Springs Baptist Church, he also received funds through two [Go Fund Me fundraising accounts](#) he set up for himself.

He hopes to eventually use some of the donation money to move out of his San Antonio apartment and get his wife the "dream" mobile home that she has always wanted. Once he purchases the mobile home, any leftover money that was donated to him will go to the Humane Society in order to help the fight against animal cruelty and abuse.

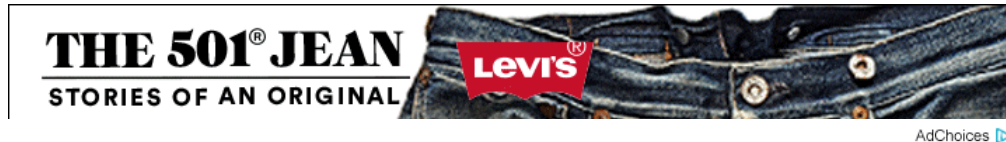
Greene was raised in a Catholic family, and says he read the Bible frequently during his teenage years. As a new Christian, he says he finds it "shameful" for someone to say they are a Christian but not make it a habit of reading the Scriptures.

"What has always bugged me, which I want to make a change to ...is the vast amount of Christians in this country don't read the Bible regularly or don't read it at all," he said.

Source URL : <http://www.christianpost.com/news/atheist-activist-becomes-christian-after-believers-show-him-compassion-72655/>

Atheists are proud when they know more about the Bible than Christians do, he says, and he hopes to get people to read it so regularly that it becomes "just like waking up and brushing their teeth."

[READ ONE APOLOGIST'S PLEA TO CHRISTIANS TO BE BETTER NEIGHBORS TO ATHEISTS](#)



Patrick Greene, Longtime Atheist Activist, Announces Conversion To Christianity

🕒 04/04/2012 06:32 pm ET | Updated Apr 06, 2012

3.9 K



Two months after he threatened to sue a Texas county for allowing a Nativity scene on public property, longtime atheist Patrick Greene has announced that [he is not only converting to Christianity, but also plans to become a pastor](#), the *Christian Post* reports.

Greene, an Air Force veteran from San Antonio who has a [history of activism, threatened in February to file a lawsuit against Henderson County, Texas](#), if they did not remove a Nativity scene in front of the courthouse, *Malakoff News* reported.

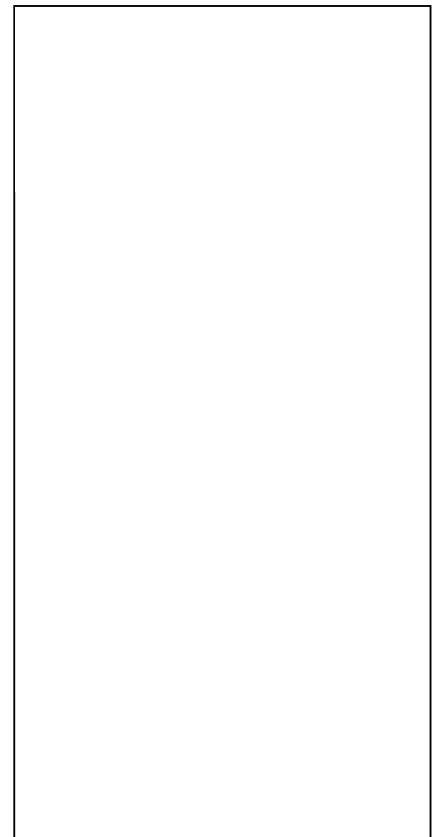
But he was forced to drop the lawsuit after doctors told him that [he had developed eye cataracts and was in danger of losing his vision](#), according to the *Houston Chronicle*. Shortly thereafter, Greene's failing vision forced him to quit his job as a taxi driver and he was left with the challenge of supporting himself and his wife of 33 years.

That's when Jessica Crye, a Christian woman who read about Greene's troubles in the paper, went to members of her church and asked if they would be willing to donate money to help Greene. They ended up [raising \\$400 in donations for Greene](#), which left him "flabbergasted that Christians would help atheists," the *Athens Review* reported at the time.

Both Christians and atheists alike ended up donating to Greene through a fundraising account he set up on the site [GoFundMe.com](#).

It's that compassion that Greene says compelled him to start rethinking his religious beliefs. He told the *Christian Post* that [after thinking deeply about Christianity and reexamining his views on evolution and animals](#), he decided to start practicing the religion.

"There's been one lingering thought in the back of my head my entire life, and it's one thought that I've never been able to reconcile, and that is the vast difference between all the animals and us," [Greene told the Post](#).



AdChoices ▶

FOLLOW HUFFPOST



He added later, “I kind of realized that the questions I [was] asking you just had to accept on faith without doubting every period and every comma.”

Now Greene says he plans to use some of the money he received from good samaritans to move out of San Antonio and buy his wife her “dream” mobile home, according to the *Christian Post*. He’s also planning to write a [book about the donations he received](#) that he’s tentatively titled “The Real Christians of Henderson County.”

Clarification: Language previously used in the article has been updated to more clearly note the distinction between atheist causes and first amendment issues.

Check out Fox News’ earlier report on Greene below:

HuffPost

Like 6.5M

Religion

Like 352K

HUFFPOST NEWSLETTERS

Get top stories and blog posts emailed to me each day.
Newsletters may offer personalized content or advertisements. [Learn More](#)

[address@email.com](#)

Subscribe!

SUGGESTED FOR YOU

More: [Atheism](#) [Religious Conversion](#)

FOLLOW RELIGION

[Suggest a correction](#)



GET THE NEWSLETTER

[address@email.com](#)

Subscribe!

YOU MAY LIKE

Sponsored Links by Taboola

Transferring Your Credit Card Balance To a 21-month 0% APR Is Ingenious

NextAdvisor

Learn If You'll Pre-Qualify For A Citi Card Before Applying

Citi

Drivers from Plano Are In For a Big Surprise

US-Quote.com

Homeowners Who Have Not Missed A Payment in 3 Years Are In For A Big Surprise

Comparisons.org

Atheist Activist Who Became Christian Returns to Atheism



(Photo: Patrick Greene)

Patrick Greene and his cat, Big Boy, pose for the camera. Greene is an atheist activist who had to back off of his threat to sue Henderson County, Texas over a nativity scene a few months ago after he rapidly began losing his sight.

By [Anugrah Kumar](#) , Christian Post Contributor

May 5, 2012 | 10:16 am

Patrick Greene, an atheist activist in Texas who said last month he had become a believer in Christ after a Christian woman showed compassion to him, now says his conversion was merely out of excitement.

"I got all caught up in the excitement," Greene, a retired cab driver who lives in East Texas since 2005, told San Antonio Express-News.

In an apparent attempt to play a victim, the 63-year-old resident of San Antonio said, "It's easy to do when you get ostracized and treated like garbage. When you're an atheist, you're public enemy No. 1."

Having gone back to atheism, Greene is opposing Christians once again. He fought against Mayor Julián Castro's participation in the National Day of Prayer event on City Hall Thursday. In a lawsuit, he argued that the event was organized by evangelical Christians, was sectarian and therefore unconstitutional for a mayor to engage in.

Greene had told The Christian Post early last month that the theory of evolution had not been able to provide answers to his questions about human life. He claimed he had not only converted to Christianity but also wanted to become a pastor.

Greene claimed he had converted to Christianity while fighting against a Nativity scene that had been set up outside the courthouse in the town of Athens, Texas. Shortly after he threatened to sue over it, he discovered that his ability to see was rapidly deteriorating and he would soon be blind. He withdrew his threats and left the Nativity alone. That's when Jessica Crye, a Christian woman from Athens, asked her pastor, Erick Graham of Sand Springs Baptist Church, if they could help Greene. As a result of her kindness, thousands of dollars in donations went toward helping Greene. That gesture of compassion led him to reconsider his view of God.

"There's been one lingering thought in the back of my head my entire life, and it's one thought that I've never been able to reconcile, and that is the vast difference between all the animals and us," Greene told The Christian Post last month. The theory of evolution didn't answer his questions, he said, so he just set those questions aside and didn't think about them anymore. But after Crye showed compassion, Greene "kind of realized that the questions I [was] asking you just had to accept on faith without doubting every period and every comma."

To show his appreciation to the Christian community both in and around Athens, Greene purchased a star for the top of the tree that was part of the Christmas display he once railed against. He also wrote a letter to the Freedom From Religion Foundation to explain why their legal arguments against the Nativity were not valid.

After his conversion, however, Greene was hit with a barrage of criticism from atheists who accused him of not having really been an atheist.

Pastor Graham says Greene is a "very complex character." "I've struggled with exactly how to deal with him. It was work. But I believe it was God-ordained. People nationwide saw how Christians ought to react to these situations," he was quoted as saying.



62°
Clear
Palestine, TX

ETMC
FULL FORECAST

Search

LIVE: STATEMENTS BY PRESIDENT OBAMA, RAUL CASTRO

Atheist who provided ETX Nativity star plans another lawsuit

Published: Monday, November 19th 2012, 8:39 pm CDT

Updated: Tuesday, November 20th 2012, 11:10 am CDT

HENDERSON COUNTY, TX (KLTV) - The Henderson County Nativity Scene isn't even up yet and a Texas man is, once again, threatening to file a lawsuit to get it taken down.

Earlier this year, Patrick Greene, of San Antonio, said the Nativity scene on the courthouse lawn was unconstitutional. However, after Greene ran into medical problems, he decided not to file his lawsuit after all. Christians in Athens sent Greene and his family money to combat medical expenses. In return, he used some of that money to buy the community a star for the Nativity scene he'd come to accept.

Now, Greene is back and ready to file a lawsuit if the county doesn't follow the stipulations he's adding to the gift.

Last March, the Nativity Star was seen as an olive branch. A community of Christians and two atheists were taken aback by each other's generosity.

But, now that Nativity Star comes with a homemade sign that reads, "This star was a gift from 2 Texas Atheists. Merry Christmas!" That sign makes sure everyone who passes by the star knows it wouldn't be there if not for Patrick Greene and his wife.

"Add the sign, too, because it's an integral part of the entire season. It's goodwill between people. If they say no, we are ready to go legally for religious discrimination," says Greene.

Greene says his sign deserves to be displayed, unlike the freedom from religion foundation's sign which he called insulting. Greene says his sign has a positive message.

"What's a big thing out of a sign telling people the truth? Because the truth is, two atheists that were very appreciative of your generosity gave you the star," he says.

The Keep Athens Beautiful Committee says they had plans to use the star in their decorations on the square this year, however, now they're not sure if they'll still use it or if they'll just end up giving it back. That's a decision the committee plans to make.

"We work all year to make some changes and we spent all last week getting the wreaths ready and they're out, and now we have this gentleman who wants to put a dark shadow on it. I feel really feel bad for him," says Carol Morton, the executive director of Keep Athens Beautiful.

Each year, the county approves lawn decorations presented by Carol Morton and many members of KAB.

"We control what gets placed on our courthouse square, which has always been the case," says Henderson County Attorney Clint Davis.

Davis says decorating the square is a very organized process, not just for Christmas, but all year long. He says not just anyone can put up anything they'd like.

County judge Richard Sanders says the county has no intention to approve any signs or banners on the square.

Patrick Greene says he now believes that the money Christians in Athens gave him was just to buy him off in an effort to stop the lawsuit earlier this year. He says he plans to file his lawsuit against Henderson County on Monday.

Related Stories:

- [**East Texas Christians and atheist fighting their Nativity Scene make peace**](#)
- [**Freedom From Religion Found. places sign on courthouse lawn**](#)
- [**Group demands ETX county remove nativity scene**](#)
- [**Nativity scene controversy sparks heated debate**](#)

Copyright 2012 [KLTV](#). All rights reserved.

RECOMMENDED STORIES

Recommended by

Atheist Calls Jesus 'Psychologically Disturbed' & Pledges Lawsuit Against TX Nativity Unless Christians Post This Sign

Nov. 21, 2012 5:15pm [Billy Hallowell](#)

289

1.6M
429K
31.8K
15.8K

Shares

Share This

Tweet This

[Email this story to a friend](#) Your Name Your Email Address Friend's Name Friend's Email Address
 Your Message 

Patrick Greene (The Athens Review)

Atheist activist Patrick Greene's story has been a curious one. Last December, he made headlines [after threatening to sue](#) over a well-known nativity display on the Henderson County courthouse lawn in Athens, Texas.

If you'll recall, Greene became ill and, despite his vocal opposition to the Christian symbol, local believers donated money to help him and his wife afford groceries. He was so moved that he subsequently converted to Christianity, leading to an uplifting and inspirational story that was widely reported by media.

However, the tale didn't end there. [We reported in April 2012](#) that Greene not only left atheism behind, but that he was also considering entering ministry. These aspirations were short-lived, though, as [he sent an e-mail](#) to TheBlaze just one month later in May, claiming that his conversion lasted one week before he, once again, became an atheist.

"The story you wrote last month about me, I thought you'd interested in knowing that my 'conversion' was temporary. It lasted less than a week," he wrote earlier this year. "I came to realize, after reading just the first half of the first chapter of Genesis, that I didn't believe a word of it. I felt like I was insulting my own intellect."

In a follow-up phone interview this week, Greene explained that it was the Bible that made him a non-believer in the first place, as it showed a God that he believes is anything but loving. When he began exploring his faith again earlier this year, he realized that Jesus Christ was also, in his eyes, an unlikeable character.

"I enrolled in a couple of Bible courses...the story of Noah and the story of the life of Jesus and I realized that neither story — they did not indicate to me anything other than *Jesus was psychologically disturbed*," he explained.

In addition to being insane, Greene believes that the Bible shows Jesus to be "callous and incredibly arrogant."

Now, you're likely wondering why we're revisiting this story. See, Greene, empowered by his non-belief, is, once again, considering filing a lawsuit against the Henderson County nativity scene. If you'll recall, after the atheist experienced his brief stint as a Christian, he was so moved by the generosity of believers to help him that he went out and purchased a star for the nativity. That star is now the centerpiece of his pending legal complaint.

Now that he's a secularist again, the gift that he gave Christians comes with a price tag. He [wants a sign attached to the nativity component](#) that reads, "This star was a gift from 2 Texas Atheists. Merry Christmas!" His goal? To ensure that everyone knows that non-believers donated it. If the Christian community refuses to place the sign up with the star, he promises to sue over religious discrimination.

"When we gave them the star I thought that they would, on their own, acknowledge us," Greene told TheBlaze earlier this week.

As far as the symbol goes, he has no problem allowing the Christians to use it, but he demands that the sign go along with it. His initial motivation for purchasing and donating the star stemmed from the Freedom From Religion Foundation, a non-theist group based in Madison, Wisconsin, and its efforts last year to have an anti-religion sign planed next to the nativity — an effort that Greene felt was inappropriate.

The star, he believes, is a welcome gesture that shows Christians that, despite disagreeing over theology, not all atheists are evil. He told TheBlaze that the FFRF's tactics are unpalatable.

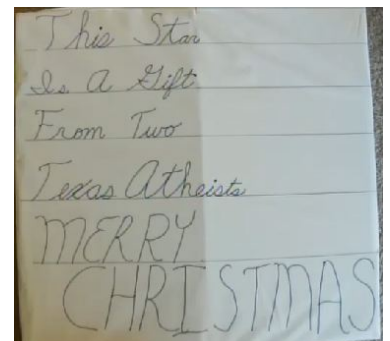


Photo Credit: KLTW-TV

[KLTV.com-Tyler, Longview, Jacksonville, Texas | ETX News](#)

"The wording itself is insulting," he said of the FFRF sign, which proclaimed that "there are no Gods" and that religion "is but myth." "It gives atheists a bad name to have this stuff forced on people."

Despite his disagreement with an organization that technically corroborates his faith views, Greene is also angry with local Christians, claiming that he is being ignored and that the refusal to post the sign with the star is a result of his non-belief.

"I think the money that was given to us by the church and Christians — what we thought was goodwill and brotherly love — was actually payoff money," he concluded. "Maybe their seemingly good intentions was a way to...try to convert me."



Photo Credit: KLTV-TV

Green argues that, despite being privately owned, the nativity scene's presence on public land stands in violation of the Texas state constitution. In the atheist's eyes, the government is giving preference to Christianity by allowing the nativity to stand on its grounds.

"If they put a menorah right with it, showing inclusions of other religions, that would be totally in compliance with the Texas constitution," Greene told TheBlaze.

The constitution reads, [in part](#), "No human authority ought, in any case whatever, to control or interfere with the rights of conscience in matters of religion, and no preference shall ever be given by law to any religious society or mode of worship."

While he maintains that the "good old boys network" probably will prevent his lawsuit from going through, he's still forging on. Local media reports claim that, in the wake of drama with Greene, the church has not yet decided if it will use the star.

—

Related:

[Atheist Who Converted to Christianity After Threatening TX Nativity Lawsuit Emails to Say He's Once Again an Atheist](#)

The Dancing Donkey

MONDAY, JUNE 18, 2012

We Aren't Done Yet

The Van Horn, Texas rodeo is coming up this weekend on the 23rd. I think we still have a good chance of stopping the donkey roping part of this event, but we need to keep up the pressure. **Morning Bray farm** passed this info to me and I thought it worth sharing (please remember to be polite, we lose all credibility if we use abuse to try stopping abuse)....

The Van Horn City Council meets every 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month at 7:00 pm. TOMORROW (June 19) is the 3rd Tuesday of June.

SEARCH THIS BLOG

TWITTER

Follow @aDancingDonkey

FOLLOW BY EMAIL



BLOG ARCHIVE

- ▶ 2016 (48)
- ▶ 2015 (246)
- ▶ 2014 (235)
- ▶ 2013 (281)
- ▼ 2012 (309)
 - ▶ December (24)
 - ▶ November (31)
 - ▶ October (26)
 - ▶ September (23)
 - ▶ August (23)
 - ▶ July (29)
 - ▼ June (26)
 - The Great White Snout
 - Donkey at the door
 - June Visitors
 - Shaken and Stirred
 - Sunday Stills - Brown
 - Peek-a-Boo
 - Go Do What Donkeys Do
 - Let Sleeping Donkeys Lie
 - One Small Step for Man, One Giant Leap for Donkeyk...
 - We Aren't Done Yet
 - Updates, due dates and baby pools
 - How To Spend a Saturday
 - A couple questions
 - Stirring Things Up
 - Up on my soapbox
 - The Best Weed-Eater
 - Donkey Roping
 - June Skies
 - The Weekly Belly 6/8/12
 - Sometimes, it's hard to be short...
 - War Of The Weeds
 - Framed
 - Sunday Stills - Blue
 - Good news and frustrating news

Here is a listing of the Van Horn City Officials and email:

...

Mayor: Okey D. Lucas - okeyd1@windstream.net

Mayor Pro Tem: Gilda Morales - txmxdc45@aol.com

Aldersperson: Mingo Corrales - domingocorrales@vanhorncityhall.com

Aldersperson: Nuny Morriss - nunymorriss@vanhorncityhall.com

Aldersperson: Pam Young - pamyoung@vanhorncityhall.com

City Administrator: Fran Malafronte - franmalafronte@vanhorntexas.org

Please email them and ask them (civilly) to please cancel the donkey roping competition in this Saturday's Van Horn Rodeo.

Remind them that that Peaceful Valley Donkey Rescue; America's largest donkey rescue, is ready, willing and able to take in all the Van Horn roping donkeys.gml.com

On behalf of the donkeys, thank you

Me again....

For more info on Peaceful Valley Donkey Rescue copy this link:

<http://donkeyrescue.donordrive.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=donorDrive.eventDetails&eventID=534>

Peaceful Valley took in over one thousand abandoned donkeys last year and are likely to match that again this year. They could use any help you can give them.

Next, is an iReport submitted to CNN. If it gets enough support CNN will run it. I don't think I need to tell you how much pressure a report on CNN could bring (I don't even own a television, but even I know who CNN is:) Please follow this link and at the bottom of the page, click on the green button.

<http://ireport.cnn.com/docs/DOC-804321>

And last, but most definitely not least, Emma and Tessa would like to offer an example of proper inter-species relations involving donkeys....

Posted by The Dancing Donkey at 10:20 PM



Recommend this on Google

Labels: [donkey roping](#), [Emma and Tessa](#)

16 comments:

Virginia June 19, 2012 at 7:07 AM



Which it's "the screen name" they ask to sing in CNN. I just wanted to singed it...

[Reply](#)

[Replies](#)



The Dancing Donkey June 19, 2012 at 7:52 AM

I just tried this from this link, they are asking you to sign up on CNN in order to vote. The screen name is something you make up yourself.

[Reply](#)



Virginia June 19, 2012 at 7:13 AM

Can't see the video :(it's says it's private.

[Reply](#)

[Replies](#)



The Dancing Donkey June 19, 2012 at 7:48 AM

I fixed this, thanks for letting me know.

[Reply](#)



the7msn June 19, 2012 at 8:35 AM

Thanks, Kris. We've heard that folks are having trouble with three of the email addresses because of the "mailto:" in front of them. If you have a minute to fix those, the email links will work. Love the video! They know exactly how to position themselves to tell each other where they want to be scratched, (although I'll bet Tessa is wishing Emma had a stepstool).

[Reply](#)

[Replies](#)



The Dancing Donkey June 19, 2012 at 12:04 PM

Thank you for pointing that out. The "mailto" doesn't show up in the editor and I stared at those 3 emails until I thought my eyes would bleed trying to figure out what was wrong with them. They worked for me when I copy and pasted them in my emails. That's where sleep deprivation and too much juggling will get you:)

You are right about Tessa wishing for the step-stool as well. I thought about titling the video, "You scratch my back, I'll scratch as high as I can reach" but it just didn't sound right.

[Reply](#)

Cathy R June 19, 2012 at 9:36 AM

Thanks for sharing the video. It made me smile! I wonder how they know where each other's "itchy" spots are?

[Reply](#)



Linda Wildenstein June 19, 2012 at 11:13 AM

First thanks for the lovely respite in the video. Makes my heart feel great. All the typing, calling and typing again has been hectic. I appreciate this post and thank you for your efforts in this fight, and that is what it is. Money vs the right thing to do. 2nd thanks for including the link to my CNN article. I hope we get enough interest that they actually will air something about Van Horn. And here's one more idea. If you'd like to contact real ordinary folks in Van Horn and let them know how ugly all of this looks to the world there is a business directory for Van Horn right on your browser search....just type in business Van Horn

[Hummers](#)

[Trusting Emma](#)

► [May](#) (28)

► [April](#) (25)


► [March](#) (24)

► [February](#) (24)

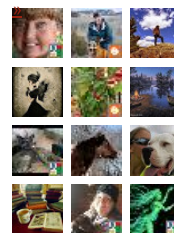
► [January](#) (26)

► [2011](#) (69)

FOLLOWERS

Join this site 
with Google Friend Connect

Members (129) [More](#)



Already a member? [Sign in](#)

NETWORKED BLOGS




[Follow this blog](#)

SUBSCRIBE TO

 [Posts](#) ▼

 [Comments](#) ▼

MY BLOG LIST

 **Forever Home Donkey Rescue**
CASPER IS OUT.....!!!
17 minutes ago

 **Boulderneigh**
Signs of spring
1 hour ago

Texas....churches, restaurants, gas stations etc. It could help, who knows.
I sure hope that it does. Oma Linda

Reply

Replies



The Dancing Donkey June 19, 2012 at 12:08 PM

I am glad to do it, I just hope it all helps. Glad too that you enjoyed the video.

Anonymous June 21, 2012 at 2:58 PM

U ppl are completely misinformed. This guy takes great care of his animals! The picture u posted of that donkey isn't even his! The donkeys are in great hands and u ppl have nothing better to do with ur time than make others lives miserable! He saved those animals from slaughter and are in much better shape than when he got them! Van horn is a town of cowboys and ranchers who care about their animals. What good is a mangled up animal to them? He uses the donkeys to help train his younger horses and only includes them in rodeos to help pay for feed and anything else they need! Van horn has never done donkey roping before so don't make us out as donkey abusing monsters! U should have a talk with the van horn supporters on ur side about how donkey roping was bad but they didn't bat an eye when they played donkey basketball! Sounds a little more inhumane to me than a 30 second run and lasso! Talk to the KGGF about that one! They threw this poor guy and organization under the bus just because they wanted to protect their image!

Reply



mrscravitz June 19, 2012 at 2:04 PM

I hope they do not do the donkey roping....I AM PRAYING very hard....The video of Emma and Tessa was just adorable! I chuckled when Emma turned her behind to Tessa! Star does that to me...and Buddy too...they love their behinds scritchd on! :))

Reply



Denise at Autumn Sky June 19, 2012 at 2:49 PM

I have sent Emails. I hope they do the right thing. This is so cruel, my heart breaks for those little sweet donkeys.

Reply



Gale June 19, 2012 at 6:46 PM

The town has cancelled the donkey roping event!!!!

Reply

Anonymous June 21, 2012 at 3:14 PM

I'm one of few residents in this town and I support you and thank you.

Reply



Patrick June 23, 2012 at 6:10 PM

To Alderperson Morris and Alderperson Young,
On Monday or Tuesday June 25th or 26th you will be receiving in the mail a certified letter from me, with a request for an agenda item for the next council meeting on July 10, 2012.
It is the filled out form, in compliance with your own city code requirement, for the city of Van Horn to prohibit all donkey roping events.
This is a city requirement before any lawsuit is filed against the city.
There are hundreds of thousands of people all over the country who are extremely appreciative that you told Mr. Jason Owen to cancel the event.

My Shetland

Daisy rides Taktur
2 hours ago



Journey with a Dancing Horse
Meeting Expectations
3 hours ago



Mulewings
Still Life week 8
3 hours ago



News from Oak Creek Ranch
In Sync
3 hours ago



e-i-e-i-omg!
Monday Musings 77-98
4 hours ago



In Omnia Paratus
Seconds
5 hours ago



Horses | AnnaBlakeBlog | Equestrian
Weekly Photo Challenge: Dance
8 hours ago



The 7MSN Ranch
A slightly unorthodox way to blow out eggs
10 hours ago



At The Farm...
Colors
11 hours ago



Far Side of Fifty
Fowl
12 hours ago



Bee Haven Acres
It's Spring!!!!
12 hours ago



5 Acres & A Dream
Honeybee Delivery Postponed
16 hours ago



THE SKOOG FARM JOURNAL
What A Great Dinner
17 hours ago



Punkin's Patch
Under The Burled Arch...Sort Of
18 hours ago



Knee Deep in Sheep
Let's Get This Party Started
18 hours ago



A Collection of Madcap Escapades
Riding Ozzy
21 hours ago



The Meadow View
Awfully Quiet
22 hours ago

However, I feel that, if you had been caring and respectful of the animals, you would have not allowed the donkey roping event to be put on in the first place.

There are, I believe, enough attachments to the request, to give me adequate legal grounds to sustain a "yes" vote from the council.

Of course, because I live in San Antonio, I am physically unable to be present at the meeting. However, your ordinance did not state that a requester must be a resident of the City of

Van Horn. It also does not have a requirement that the requester must be present at the meeting to be heard.

You may ask yourselves what does a private citizen living hundreds of miles away care about the laws of your city.

That is a very easy answer. Reverend Tony McCleery of First Baptist Church of Van Horn, and I, have been in extensive conversations together. He and Jason Owen are very good friends.

Mr. Owen mistakenly believes himself to be a cowboy. Yet the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association does not condone such treatment of donkeys.

Rev. McCleery has told me that these donkeys are wild. Therefore it is my responsibility as a citizen of Texas to act on my responsibility and insure all animals are treated humanely.

Donkey Roping, as thousands of people all over the country have informed you, is not humane.

I trust that if there is anything missing from my attachments to you, you will inform me of this matter.

Sincerely,

Patrick Greene

greenep7@gmail.com

[Reply](#)

Patrick June 23, 2012 at 6:17 PM

I challenge all people in Van Horn to contact me before I file the lawsuit against the city, so a judge will order the city to never sponsor an event of this nature, to any animal again.

contact me, Patrick Greene in San Antonio.

greenep7@gmail.com

[Reply](#)

Enter your comment...

Comment as: Unknown (Goo ▾)

[Sign out](#)

[Publish](#)

[Preview](#)

☐ Notify me

Links to this post


[Create a Link](#)


[Newer Post](#)


[Home](#)


[Older Post](#)


Subscribe to: [Post Comments \(Atom\)](#)

 **Ride a Good Horse**
Sunday Stills- Joy
1 day ago


 **4R Ranch**
Just Kit #100
1 day ago

 **North Wapiti Blog**
My Sheepy Camp
Project -Twig
1 day ago


 **Life on an Acreage**
Change of Season
1 day ago

 **Calamity Acres**
Hobby Farm
Seen on Our Walks
2 days ago


She Moved to Texas
Got 99 Problems But a
Bridle Aint One
3 days ago

 **Mustang Saga**
3 days ago

 **Rockley Farm**
Back, back, back!
3 days ago


 **Dances With Horses**
Another beautiful day
dawns
3 days ago


Seaside donkey
Chatting to Alastair
Humphreys
4 days ago

 **Henny Penny Lane**
My aching back!
4 days ago

 **Tails From**
Provençe
Tak tak tak
5 days ago

 **equine expressions**
sunshine & butterflies
~ part two
6 days ago

 **Our Forest Haven**
One day at a time
1 week ago

 **Throwback at**
Trapper Creek
Garden Notes March
13, 2016
1 week ago

 **My Miniature**
Donkeys
Dudley's Moment to
Shine
1 week ago

 **The Equestrian**
Vagabond
Don't Eat My Cats
1 week ago

 **Tales from a Bad**

THE NEWS

Serving Athens and Malakoff



1 2 3

TVCC basketball teams enter March Madness

the news Photo/Ryan Moulds TVCC basketball coach Kris Baumann talks to reporters during TVCC's media day March 9. Baumann has led the Cardinals to a 32-1 record and the number one seed in that National Tournament. The Cardinals are seeking their first ever National Championship. By Ryan Moulds The News Staff Writer ATHENS--The TVCC Cardinals [...]

[Home](#) / [County, Government, Police/Legal](#) / Atheist threatens county with lawsuit

Feb
17

Atheist threatens county with lawsuit

Posted by : [admin](#) | On : [February 17, 2012](#)

Category: County, Government, Police/Legal
Tags: Nativity Scene

By Michael V. Hannigan

A San Antonio atheist recently became the newest participant in Henderson County's apparently-not-confined-to-Christmas nativity scene controversy.

Patrick Greene this week emailed a letter to all members of Commissioners' Court threatening a lawsuit if the nativity scene is not moved to private property. In an email interview with The Malakoff News, Greene said, "... If they do not respond to my email by ... Monday, February 20, 2012, I will assume that they have no intention of responding at all. In which case I will begin filling out the necessary forms, and file the lawsuit on the day they put up the nativity display."

When asked his reasons for becoming involved, Greene said "to show that Christianity does not rule my state of Texas, the Constitution does. Christianity is only one of the many faiths represented in this state."

This is not the first time Greene has taken such a stance on a church-state issue and, if it goes that far, it wouldn't be the first time he's filed a lawsuit based on his beliefs. Greene has a history of activism going back to at least 1998, when he challenged – and changed – the way the city of Ontario, California stored and cared for a series of nativity scenes. He has also twice filed lawsuits against the San Antonio mayor's office for prayer-related reasons, and has pursued legal action against other entities.

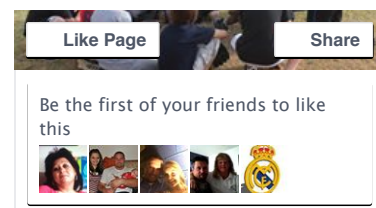
County officials are taking Greene seriously and declined to comment this week because of the threatened lawsuit. The county still believes its position regarding



Contact Information

PO Box 48
Mabank, TX 75147
Office - (903) 887-4511
Fax - 903-887-4510
Email -
thenews.hendersonco@yahoo.com

Like us



Recent Posts

the nativity is correct, however.

The local controversy began in December when the Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) first demanded the county remove a nativity scene from the Christmas decorations on the courthouse lawn. The group later shifted its focus to getting an atheist banner displayed alongside the nativity, an effort that is expected to continue in March or April. (Greene is not a member of the FFRF.)

The county declined to remove the nativity, with County Attorney Clint Davis writing, "Henderson County believes that it is in complete compliance with the requirements of the Constitution and acting very much in accord with prior U.S. Supreme Court rulings."

The reaction from some area Christians pushed First Baptist Church of Malakoff Pastor Dr. Nathan Lorick and County Judge Richard Sanders onto the national stage and prompted a local rally which drew an estimated 5,000 to the courthouse.

That rally is what caught Greene's attention when he came across the story last week.

"I saw an article referring to the scene, and read all I could find, including the entire six-part video on Youtube about the rally," he said. "I was stunned to see the flagrant way that the Constitution was being totally ignored by all these people. It was as if the Constitution was being trampled on with sheer glee.... I felt that I had to step into this matter with both feet."

Greene's original plan was to have an anti-nativity rally on Dec. 21, which he announced last week in a letter to the editor (see Page 2A). He will have to go through the county to reserve the courthouse lawn, but officials said it is too early to hear that request. The county usually hears those type of items about 90 days before an event.

Greene is still planning to hold the rally, but said he raised the ante this week with the lawsuit because of Commissioner Joe Hall.

In addition to being Pct. 1 commissioner, Hall is a Baptist pastor. He is outspoken about his Christianity, and not only in connection with the nativity scene. Hall consistently votes no on any alcohol election issue which comes before Commissioners' Court based on his faith, despite the fact commissioners have no power to stop alcohol elections.

The commissioner definitely irked Greene, who calls himself an American Atheist. In an email to Hall, Greene wrote, "You stated that this is a 'Christian' country. I do not understand how a government official could take sides like that."

When thinking about the issue, Greene told The Malakoff News, "(Hall) was by far the worst, because he was a county government official, whose job is to never take sides in matters of religion."

For his part, Hall said this week he was only one commissioner and did not have the authority to speak for the entire Commissioners' Court, so what he said cannot be construed as an official statement. He also said he was a Christian before he became commissioner, he'll be a Christian afterward, and that is what comes first for him.

Greene also said he will not be satisfied if the FFRF gets to display its banner. "I think they (the FFRF) are copping out of their responsibility to the Constitution," he said. "Even if they do get permission to put up their banner, what is going to keep someone from damaging it, or spraying graffiti on it, or covering up the banner. I saw everyone in the rally on Youtube; they would rather burn the

Brown trout coming back to Texas this year

TVCC basketball teams enter March Madness

Intoxicated Athens man kills Odessa driver

Hensarling staff offering help with federal agencies

AHS powerlifters qualify for state



banner than allow an atheist sign to be put up.”

Greene did not confine his letters to just county officials. He has also emailed Keep Athens Beautiful, the Athens Chamber of Commerce, several area pastors, and area newspapers.

Share this:



Comments (33)

Atheist Patrick Greene, Who Threatened To Sue Over Courthouse Nativity Scene, Sparks New Controversy | Bay Area Property Insights said on 23-11-2012

November 23, 2012 at 7:36 am

[...] atheist who threatened to sue Henderson County, Texas, over a nativity scene displayed on its courthouse steps last winter is sparking controversy once again. But this time, [...]

Reply

Atheist Patrick Greene, Who Threatened To Sue Over Courthouse Nativity Scene, Sparks New Controversy | Home Loans CA said on 21-11-2012

November 21, 2012 at 5:19 pm

[...] Scene, Sparks New Controversy November 21, 2012 11:18 pm 0 commentsFiled under: NewsAn atheist who threatened to sue Henderson County, Texas, over a nativity scene displayed on its courthouse steps last winter is sparking controversy once again. But this time, [...]

Reply

Atheist Patrick Greene, Who Threatened To Sue Over Courthouse Nativity Scene, Sparks New Controversy | Santa Cruz Real Estate said on 21-11-2012

November 21, 2012 at 3:37 pm

[...] atheist who threatened to sue Henderson County, Texas, over a nativity scene displayed on its courthouse steps last winter is sparking controversy once again. But this time, [...]

Reply

Atheist Patrick Greene, Who Threatened To Sue Over Courthouse Nativity Scene, Sparks New Controversy | YourRealEstateCourse.Com said on 21-11-2012

November 21, 2012 at 1:30 pm

[...] atheist who threatened to sue Henderson County, Texas, over a nativity scene displayed on its courthouse steps last winter is sparking controversy once again. But this time, [...]

Reply

Patrick Greene, Longtime Atheist Activist, Announces Conversion To Christianity « Hill Politics said on 06-06-2012

June 6, 2012 at 2:13 pm

[...] an Air Force veteran from San Antonio who has a history of activism related to atheist causes, threatened in February to file a lawsuit against Henderson County, Texas, if they did not remove a Nativity scene in front of the courthouse, Malakoff News [...]

Reply