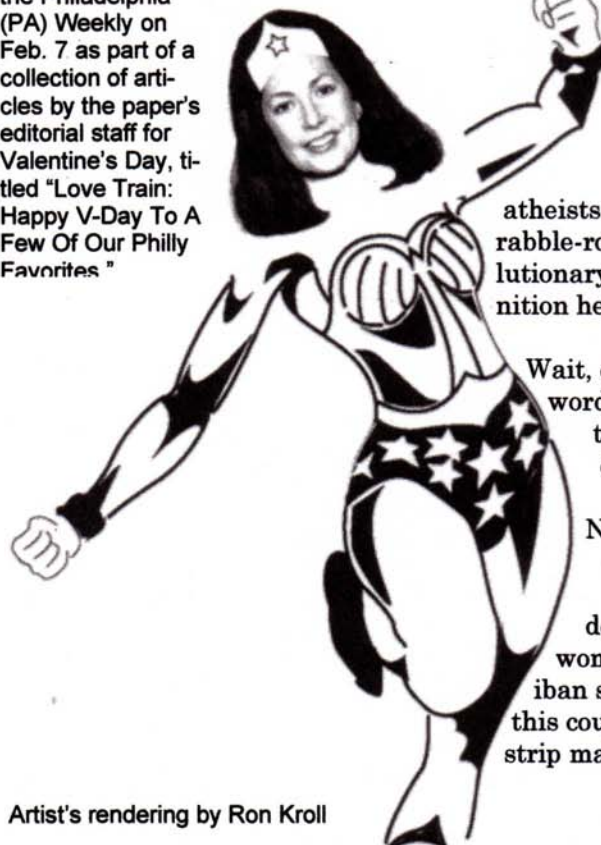


Margaret Downey, Wonder Woman

This appeared in the Philadelphia (PA) Weekly on Feb. 7 as part of a collection of articles by the paper's editorial staff for Valentine's Day, titled "Love Train: Happy V-Day To A Few Of Our Philly Favorites."



Artist's rendering by Ron Kroll

Who's that woman dressed in Colonial clobber clattering around City Hall?

It's godless she-devil Margaret Downey, the woman who once sued the Boy Scouts of America for discriminating against atheists during her crusade to win rabble-rousing Philadelphia revolutionary Thomas Paine the recognition he deserves.

Wait, crusade is totally the wrong word. When Downey was 4, she tore the head off her talking doll to learn how it worked.

Nowadays she regularly, but (alas) only metaphorically, tears the head off the freedom-hating, truth-despising, woman-loathing Christian Taliban scumbags who want to turn this country into Afghanistan with strip malls.

Flirtatious, saucy and never less than impeccably dressed, Downey is an atheist/feminist/antiracist/author/publisher/writer and all-around super-righteous wonder woman.

Visit any culture-war battlefield and you'll find her on the right side of the barricades, glammed up to the nines, taking chauvinist names and kicking bigot ass.

Atheist; freethinker; defender of the Constitution; free-speech activist; president of Atheist Alliance International; founder of the Free-thought Society of Greater Philadelphia, the Anti-Discrimination Support Network and the Thomas Paine Memorial Committee; board member of the Freedom From Religion Foundation, the Humanist Institute and the Thomas Paine National Historical Association; advisory board member of the Robert Green Ingersoll Museum and the Atheist Alliance.

Phew. Is that enough? Are you in love with Margaret Downey as much as I am? You should be. She's the best of us. (*Steven Wells*)