

normal fires, so how could microspheres have possibly been formed on 9/11?" is simply that *very small metal particles have much lower melting points than their bulk material counterparts* (around 900° C for iron nanoparticles, as opposed to 1535° C for bulk iron). This is called the "thermodynamic size effect." The towers contained thousands of computers and electric gadgets. Wires and filaments and meshes from electronics, as well as thin rust flakes and other small iron particles, could all have easily been made into microspheres during the WTC conflagration. To see a vivid demonstration of this phenomenon, watch the video³ on the New Mexicans for Science and Reason's YouTube channel, "theNMSR," in which a normal lighter is used to burn steel wool, creating numerous iron microspheres without any thermite at all!

For now, two principal claims of

the 9/11 Truth movement—that scientists found thermite residues in WTC dust and that iron microspheres in WTC dust prove that thermite was used—have both been found to have no basis in fact.

Notes

1. Millette study online: http://dl.dropbox.com/u/64959841/9119ProgressReport022912_rev1_030112webHiRes.pdf.
2. R. J. Lee letter online: <http://forums.randi.org/showpost.php?p=8013472&postcount=1329>.
3. Dave Thomas "Microspheres from Steel Wool" video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jZ9wSD4Hcys>.

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Placebo Bands Help Fund Grassroots Skepticism

GURMUKH MONGIA

The skeptical movement is, at its heart, a system of small grassroots organizations. While there are a few large players, most activity comes from small groups of friends acting at the local level, or even individuals acting on their own, to encourage skepticism and critical thinking.

It should come as no surprise that small organizations may experience difficulty raising the funds needed to engage in certain forms of skeptical activism. Even professional-looking flyers can be a little difficult to come by, especially in a time when economic instability creates tight budgets and strict priorities.

Two skeptical entrepreneurs have taken steps to address this lack of funding in grassroots skepticism. Christo-

Measles Cases Up Sharply in U.S.



Measles cases in the United States hit a fifteen-year high in 2011, with 90 percent of the cases traced to other countries that have lower immunization rates, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report in April.

Between 2001 and 2010 there had been only about sixty cases of measles per year, but in 2011 the U.S. experienced 222 cases. No one has died of measles in the United States, but about twenty million people contract the measles virus each year worldwide, and about 164,000 die from it, said Anne Schuchat, MD, director of the CDC's National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Disease.

All but twenty-two of the 222 cases last year involved patients who had been infected overseas or caught the virus from someone who had been abroad, the CDC said. The source of the other twenty-two cases could not be determined.

Many of the cases were traced to Europe, where in some countries immunization rates are lower than in the United

States. Europe suffered an outbreak of the disease in 2011, reporting more than 37,000 measles cases. France, Italy, and Spain, popular destinations for U.S. tourists, were among the hardest hit.

More than 90 percent of U.S. children have been vaccinated against measles, the CDC said.

"We don't have to have this much measles," Schuchat said. "Measles is preventable. Unvaccinated people put themselves and other people at risk for measles and its complications."

The World Health Organization (WHO) launched a week of vaccination campaigns and public education touting the value of immunizations. It said that with increased immunizations worldwide, global measles mortality has declined by 78 percent from 733,000 deaths in 2000 to 164,000 deaths in 2008. Nevertheless, WHO estimated that 19.3 million children under the age of one—more than half of them in Africa and Southeast Asia—did not receive the diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis (DTP3) vaccine.