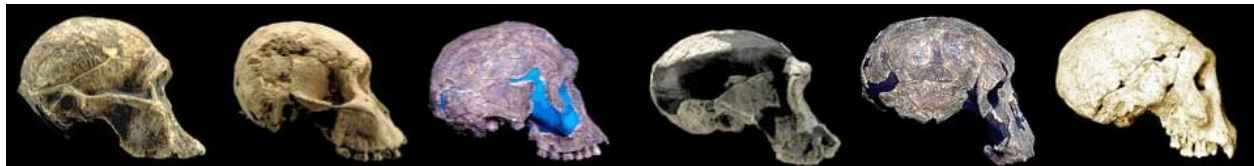


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Getting into the Spirit of Darwin Day

February 12 is Darwin Day, which this year falls on a Friday, and the Tulsa Coalition of Reason in Oklahoma has really gotten into the spirit! If you log onto their website at www.TulsaCoR.org you'll see how they've placed the observance right up front on their homepage. Tulsa CoR's Darwin house party is being hosted by the Humanist Association of Tulsa.

Other CoRs around the country are also marking Darwin Day, either on that Friday or during the weekend. Some observances are public events; others are good times with good friends. To help with *your* CoR's Darwin Day activity, you'll find program ideas readily available online at www.darwinday.org. This annual observance offers excellent opportunities for local media events or gatherings of all the local groups.



After Darwin Day comes Earth Day on Thursday, April 22. Local CoRs are encouraged to develop environment-related activities for that date or the weekend.

San Diego CoR to Host Victor Stenger

At the first public lecture organized by the San Diego Coalition of Reason, Dr. Victor J. Stenger will speak on "What Can Science Say about God and the Afterlife?" Stenger is the author of two books, *God: the Failed Hypothesis* and *The New Atheism*. The event will be held in the Multipurpose Room of the Student Services Center at the University of California at San Diego on February 20, beginning at 3:00 PM. This program was made possible through generous assistance from CFI-Los Angeles.

Raise Funds Recycling Your Billboards!

Did you ever wonder what became of the vinyl billboard that your CoR had on public display for four weeks? And if your billboard is still up, do you now wonder what will become of that vinyl once the campaign is over? There's a good chance that the billboard company is or will be storing it for awhile, just in case you want to have it put up again. All they have to do is roll it up

and tuck it away in their warehouse. But they won't store it forever. And this is a new year, so you'll probably want to act now if your billboard went up in 2009. Because that billboard vinyl can be yours if you want to claim it.

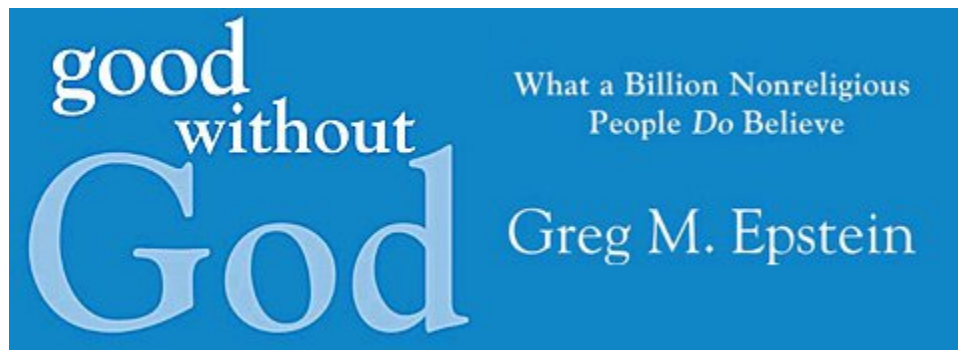
But why would you want it? What can you use it for? How can you recycle or raise money with it? The vinyl from a typical billboard can weigh 65 pounds or more, so where can you store it?

Well, the Dallas-Fort Worth Coalition of Reason has all the answers! They've developed a way to convert billboards into vinyl tote bags. And they've prepared illustrated, step-by-step instructions to show you how it's done. This includes not only how to make the totes but also how to market them. They were selling billboard totes like crazy during the November 2009 Texas Freethought Convention, raising funds while recycling.

There are other advantages, too. Margaret Downey notes:

This use of vinyl can be excellent PR as it shows that atheists recycle and are concerned about the environment. People who purchase the tote bags can use them for their grocery shopping—saving plastic and paper bags from ending up in a dump. This makes it known that atheists do "good" things for the one and only world in which we live.

So, to get the full details on how you can claim your vinyl, be good without God, and raise funds all at the same time, contact Terry McDonald, coordinator of DFW CoR, at 817-421-3879, coordinator@metroplexatheists.org.



***Good without God* Makes *New York Times* Best Seller List**

On January 11 Greg Epstein, coordinator for Boston CoR, announced that his new book, *Good without God*, had made the *New York Times* Best Seller List in the nonfiction category. The book is also going into its fourth printing. "This is proof that people are beginning to recognize our work, hear our voices, and pay attention to our message that of course we can be good without God," Epstein said, "and we are best in communities like ours." Epstein wished to express his thanks to all who made this possible, including those local CoRs that hosted *Good without God* book tour events last year in connection with their ad/media campaigns.

For further information on the book, go to www.amazon.com/Good-Without-God-Billion-Nonreligious/dp/0061670111 .

Two CoRs Launch Campaigns in January

On January 12, the Northwest Freethought Coalition (NWFC) publicly announced its billboard. The result was not only media attention but greater camaraderie, as the photo below can attest.



Public reaction was generally positive, one area resident writing:

I just wanted to thank you for your great billboard on Lake City. It is so encouraging to see godlessness and rational freethinking entering the mainstream debate. Your billboard goes a long way toward this. It's about time! Thank you, thank you, thank you!

-- Jennifer K

As a coalition, NWFC predates United CoR. But it officially joined the United CoR network in October 2009 and began preparing its billboard campaign after that.

On January 26 a new coalition, Tampa Bay CoR, had its public launch with two billboards: one on either side of Tampa Bay in Florida. Both billboards feature the slogan: "Are you good without God? Millions are." Two television stations covered the story right away and now print and Internet media are catching up. Meanwhile the coalition, coordinated by Rick O'Keefe of CFI Tampa Bay, is organizing a group photo on Darwin Day weekend.

For further details on both campaigns, visit the United CoR website at www.UnitedCoR.org and click on the links for Tampa Bay and Seattle.

New Coalitions Forming

On New Year's Day 2010, United CoR National Director Fred Edwards boarded a plane for a trip to organize yet another local CoR. This time it was in Austin, Texas. And the CoR formed the very next day, with Don Rhoades as coordinator. The local groups were enthusiastic after witnessing the impact of earlier Texas CoRs—in Dallas-Fort Worth and Houston—on attendance at the annual Texas Freethought Convention. The number of participants there doubled from 2008 to 2009, and CoR activity in the state was credited as a major cause. Now an organizer in San Antonio wants to start a coalition in his city, as well.

While in town Edwards addressed the Austin Ethical Society and the Atheist Community of Austin, giving the history of billboard and bus campaigns in the United States and abroad. Video and audio of the latter lecture-slide presentation are accessible online on the Atheist Experience blog at www.atheistexperience.blogspot.com/2010/01/fred-edwards-sailing-rising-tide-of.html .

Tucson, Arizona, was next on the travel itinerary, where Southern Arizona CoR formed January 16. Steve Uhl is coordinator. Then it was on to Louisville, Kentucky, where on January 23 two CoRs were initiated at the same luncheon. They are Louisville CoR, with Ed Hensley as coordinator, and a still-to-be-named CoR in Lexington that will serve central Kentucky.

Possibilities for further local coalitions were discussed among national leaders gathered at the annual Heads meeting in Washington DC on January 9. These meetings bring together representatives from all the national organizations in the larger community of reason.

Sing Happy Birthday to United CoR

United Coalition of Reason Inc. was incorporated on February 13, 2009. So on that date this month United CoR will be one year old.

But that isn't the beginning of the story. A year earlier the leaders of all the local nontheistic groups in the greater Philadelphia area had met together and agreed to form a local coalition. This was followed by the public launch of the Greater Philadelphia Coalition of Reason, or PhillyCoR—accompanied by a high-profile billboard on Interstate 95—on May 1, 2008.

In the wake of the publicity that followed, some of those involved decided to “export their revolution” all across the United States through the formation of a national United CoR. So United CoR had its own public launch on March 30, 2009, with that of the Dallas-Fort Worth Coalition of Reason. The rest, they say, is history.

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E-mail news items to Fredwords@UnitedCoR.org – visit the website at www.UnitedCoR.org .