

# The Tampa Bay Coalition of Reason

# Freethought *News*

See Pg 6

Vol. 3 No. 12 December 2014 Jim Peterson, Rick O'Keefe, Editors

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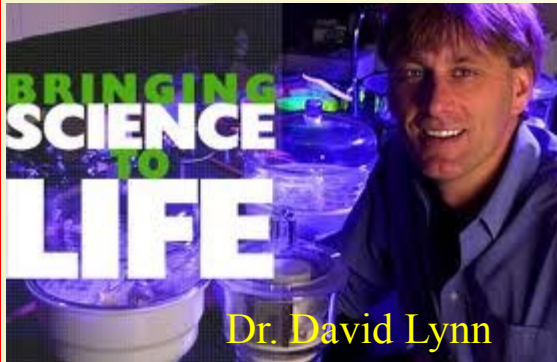
**HUMANIST CHARITIES**

[Click to connect!](#)



## Darwin Day 2015

Will be on February 7th 2015 at the Octagon of the UU Clearwater Facility.



Dr. David Lynn

Keynote speaker will be **Dr. David Lynn**, whose groundbreaking researches into the beginning of life on our planet have propelled him into the front ranks of biological science.

**Dr. Elaine Hull** from FSU will discuss her investigations into the question of whether we are intrinsically wired for religion.

Also, we will hear from **Herb Silverman**, whose notable achievements in South Carolina politics are a source of encouragement and humor. All our speakers will bring a greater and more useful understanding of the human condition.

**Tickets** are available now from our member organizations. **You'll never spend a better \$25.**

Remember, this is your chance...  
**to evolve!**

For more information, see: [www.evolutetampa.com](http://www.evolutetampa.com)

Saturday December 6th... Make plans for the

## Humanlight\*/Solstice Potluck Social

Again, this year Freethinkers from around the Bay area will gather to share their best dishes and demonstrate once again what a warm hearted and gregarious company they are.



Tables will groan beneath the weight of delicately nuanced creations of many cuisines.

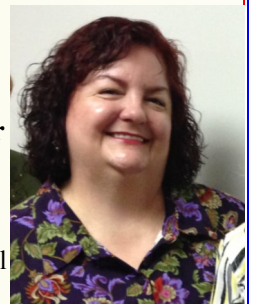
Attendees will be encouraged to bring enough to serve 8 (or to serve 12-16 for couples bringing 1 item) of the following food items by your last name alphabetically:

- A-E Dessert
- F-L Side Dishes
- M-T Main Dishes
- U-Z Appetizers

Be there at **6 PM December 6th at Clearwater UU social hall.**

Special recognition awards for outstanding leadership will also be on the menu.

Special entertainment will be provided by our freethought Chanteuse, **Tracy Thomas**.



Tracy Thomas

Entry at the door will be \$5.00 per person. \$2 will be used to fund science classes at the Pinellas Science Center.

Over 125 people attended last year's potluck. There's room for you. (and your favorite recipe.)

\* see article. page 5



# Tampa Bay CoR & CFI – December, 2014 Calendar



This is produced from preliminary information. Check the individual Web sites to insure the event is being held, when and where .... We are not liable for changes, errors, or omissions. Compiled by Rick O'Keefe & Jim Peterson.

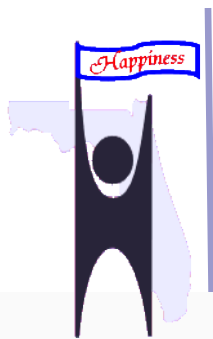
**Organizers of these events will be most grateful to all who have the courtesy to RSVP for those events that require it.**

12-09, Sunday, 1:30 PM	<b>TAMPA-</b> See page 6 for details Atheists of Florida, Inc.	Details: <a href="http://www.meetup.com/Atheists-of-Florida-Tampabay/">http://www.meetup.com/Atheists-of-Florida-Tampabay/</a>
12-14, Sunday, 7 PM	<b>BRANDON-</b> Brandon Atheists	Atheists in the Pub. <b>RSVP.</b> <a href="http://www.meetup.com/Atheists-of-Brandon/">http://www.meetup.com/Atheists-of-Brandon/</a>
12-15, Monday, 7 PM	<b>NW HILLSBOROUGH / CARROLLWOOD-</b> Tampa Bay Thinkers	Lively philosophical discussion. For topic, see page 10. RSVP at Web site: <a href="http://www.meetup.com/tampa-bay-thinkers/RSVP">http://www.meetup.com/tampa-bay-thinkers/RSVP</a>
12-20, Saturday, 11:30 PM	<b>TAMPA-</b> Tampa Humanist Association	Details: Page 5, or see our Meetup <a href="http://www.meetup.com/Tampa-Humanist-Association/">http://www.meetup.com/Tampa-Humanist-Association/</a>
12-06, Saturday, 6:00 PM Humanlight-Pot Luck See Pg. 1	<b>CLEARWATER-</b> Humanist Society of the Suncoast	Lectures & discussions. To RSVP: <a href="http://www.meetup.com/SuncoastHumanist/">http://www.meetup.com/SuncoastHumanist/</a>
12-21, Sunday, 2 PM Usually 3rd Sunday of each month	<b>BRANDON-</b> at Crispers 11019 Causeway Blvd. Brandon, FL CFI Skeptics & Humanists	Lunch & discussion. Click to <b>RSVP</b> <a href="http://www.meetup.com/CFI-Tampa-Bay/">http://www.meetup.com/CFI-Tampa-Bay/</a>
12-21, Sunday, 5 PM	Pinellis County - Humanist Society Moveable Feast	This months selection: see Page 4
12-30 10:30 AM	<b>NW HILLSBOROUGH / WESTCHASE-</b> CFI Readers Book Discussion (Limit 12)	Book lovers meet monthly to discuss books we've read. <b>RSVP</b> : <a href="http://www.meetup.com/CFI-Tampa-Bay/">http://www.meetup.com/CFI-Tampa-Bay/</a>
12-30, 6 PM	<b>N. PINELLAS AREA-</b> CFI Skeptics/Humanists Supper	<b>RSVP is required</b> if you are coming. <i>Seating is limited to 20!</i> Click here <i>before</i> midnight, Sunday. <a href="http://www.meetup.com/CFI-Tampa-Bay/">http://www.meetup.com/CFI-Tampa-Bay/</a>
12-06, Saturday, 6:00 PM Winterfest Potluck	<b>CLEARWATER-</b> UU Humanists,	For regular Sunday meeting: <a href="http://www.uuc.org/">http://www.uuc.org/</a> See page 7 for more information on UU Humanists
12-20, Saturday, 12:30 PM	<b>CLEARWATER-</b> Tampa Bay Skeptics	Skeptical activities and critical thinking. Click to <b>RSVP</b> <a href="http://www.meetup.com/Tampa-Bay-Skeptics/">http://www.meetup.com/Tampa-Bay-Skeptics/</a>
12-19, Saturday, 8:00 PM	<b>ST. PETERSBURG -</b> Astronomy Club	For dates, location, & and details: <a href="http://www.stpeteastronomyclub.org/index.php">http://www.stpeteastronomyclub.org/index.php</a>
TBA—see Facebook & Meetup	<b>BRADENTON -</b> Humanist Families of Tampa	Family outings and other activities. See page 13 <a href="http://www.facebook.com/groups/HumanistFamiliesTampa">www.facebook.com/groups/HumanistFamiliesTampa</a> <a href="http://www.meetup.com/Humanist-Families-of-Greater-Tampa-Bay/">http://www.meetup.com/Humanist-Families-of-Greater-Tampa-Bay/</a>
12-01 thru 29: see Web site for many events	<b>SARASOTA -</b> Humanists of Sarasota Bay	Many events: Details: Web site <a href="http://sarasota.humanists.net/calendar.html">http://sarasota.humanists.net/calendar.html</a>
12-08 7:00 PM	<b>TAMPA -</b> M.A.R.S. Astronomy Club at MOSI	See <b>Website</b> : <a href="http://www.meetup.com/MARS-astronomy-club-at-MOSI/">http://www.meetup.com/MARS-astronomy-club-at-MOSI/</a> for all details.
12 See Spring calendar next issue.	<b>TAMPA-</b> Humanities Institute at USF	See <b>website</b> for full listing of many great events and calendar. Many fabulous speakers all in one month! See page 7.
12-11 Thurs. @ 7 PM	<b>Central Pinellas</b> Skeptics in the Pub at the Creole Café,	Skeptical activities and critical thinking. Click <b>RSVP</b> : <a href="http://www.meetup.com/Tampa-Bay-Skeptics/">http://www.meetup.com/Tampa-Bay-Skeptics/</a>

**New!**



**C.o.R. presents:  
A Soltice\Humanlight potluck in December,  
and Darwin Day next February.**



# The Humanist Society<sup>3</sup> of the Suncoast News

An Epicurean society dedicated to the proposition that the fully examined life is worth living well.  
Associate organization of the [Humanists of Florida](#), the [AHA](#), [COR](#), and [CSH](#). Find us at [www.suncoasthumanist.com](http://www.suncoasthumanist.com)

October 2014

Volume 22 No. 12 December, 2014

December and January  
mark the Time to

~ **Join or Renew** ~

Your Humanist Society of the Suncoast  
Annual Dues.

- \_ Trial -3 month- free news
- \_ **Regular -\$25.**
- \_ Reg. Couple -\$30.
- \_ **Supporter -\$35/45 (W/ pin)**
- \_ Life -\$200.
- \_ Life Couple -\$250.
- \_ Associate -\$10.



Your membership helps keep Humanism alive and growing in the Tampa Bay area. A small part of your dues allows us to participate fully as a member organization of the Tampa Bay Coalition of Reason and enables us to support larger and more exciting programs.

If you have questions concerning your dues or status, contact our treasurer, [marios\\_psomas@hotmail.com](mailto:marios_psomas@hotmail.com)

If new, please fill out the form;  
if renewing just indicate your name and any changes from our previous information. Thanks!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address -if new : \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone:\* \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

(Privacy respected)

Send tax deductible (501c3) dues to:

Marios Psomas, Treasurer  
Humanist Society of the Suncoast, AHA  
1013 Connecticut Rd  
Tarpon Springs, FL 34689

Our Humanlight Potluck will be held on December 6th as specified on the front page. The **library** will be the site of our January meeting, the details of which will be announced in the next issue..

## Side Notes

Our **annual elections** have been delayed several times by library closings, but are now scheduled for the January meeting. If you would like to participate in the governance of our little group, just be nominated, or nominate yourself. You have to be a paid member for at least a year. The board regularly meets three times a year, and serves without pay.

As of this writing, our **web sites** are now available and our stolen domain names have been recovered. More good news: the state has formally recognized our group as not requiring to register as a fund raising agency.

Kudos go to VP, Dave Kovar whose oration on behalf of our Tampa Bay Post Carbon Council was warmly greeted by the Pinellas County Commission.



## Dr. Neil DeGrasse Tyson

Will appear at the Van Wezel Performing Arts Center in **Sarasota, Monday, March 23rd, 2015**

- Host of Cosmos, an international, National Geographic and Fox television series
  - Astrophysicist and Director of the Hayden Planetarium
  - AHA Humanist Science Award Recipient 2013
- Sponsored by the Ringling College Library Assoc.



**Food: the first kindness. Humanists aspire to true friendship with our fellow human beings.**

An important measure of this concern is care for the physical well being of others. As reactionaries in congress vote to cut the budget for food stamps and other key supports, there is increasing hunger here in our community. Thanks to *Glenn Paul*, chair. Ed Note: Glenn needs assistance.

**We need volunteers!** See a board member. Or write to [jim@suncoasthumanist.com](mailto:jim@suncoasthumanist.com) Thanx.

Please join us for Humanlight on **December 6th at 6 PM** at the **Clearwater UU Social Hall.** See the front page for specifics.

We will be back at the **Countryside Library** for our January meeting.





*Humanists work to build a world  
in which happiness is the  
enduring criterion of social policy.*

## What is the Humanist Way?

1. To extend a human centered approach to the critical problems of life and society.
2. To encourage attitudes of kindness, compassion, tolerance and a loving generosity in human relationships, and in our treatment of all life. These attitudes help us to see ourselves in the lives of others and encourage appreciation for the remarkable diversity of human culture and experience.
3. To develop and popularize the skills of creative and critical thinking that empower people to challenge prejudice, superstition and irrationality in every area of life. Such empowerment enables the individual to reach the highest levels of achievement.
4. To exalt those artistic and imaginative expressions of life which have been the source of the greatest pleasure and enlightenment, and which reflect compelling human truths. Through music, literature, art, dance, and other expressions, we embrace the essence of what it means to be human.
5. To explore the grounds of ethics and morality within the unfolding history of our evolving culture. Such knowledge will enable us to become effective protagonists for the happiness of the individual person. JP

## The Movable Feast: the Humanist Society monthly social Dinner

# Cheddars

A modestly priced, but well appointed, and well served full menu eatery. Range of Cocktails.

Sunday afternoon at **5PM on December 13th**

### Address:

2655 Roosevelt Blvd, Clearwater, FL 33760

### RSVP!

Please respond by December 12th to CAROLYN FRASE at 727-533-2279 or [frasec@aol.com](mailto:frasec@aol.com)

## *Laugh Lines*    *Funnier parts of Wisdom* 12-14

Knowledge is knowing a tomato is a fruit.  
Wisdom is not using it in a fruit salad.

Sometimes, when I look at my children, I say to myself,  
Lillian, you should have remained a virgin..'  
- *Lillian Carter (mother of Jimmy Carter)*

Last week, I stated this woman was the ugliest woman I had ever seen. I have since been visited by her sister, and now wish to withdraw that statement..  
- *Mark Twain*

The secret of a good sermon is to have a good beginning and a good ending; and to have the two as close together as possible  
- *George Burns*

Santa Claus has the right idea. Visit people only once a year.  
- *Victor Borge*

Be careful about reading health books. You may die of a misprint.  
- *Mark Twain*

By all means, marry. If you get a good wife, you'll become happy; if you get a bad one, you'll become a philosopher.  
- *Socrates*

I was married by a judge. I should have asked for a jury.  
- *Groucho Marx*

My wife has a slight impediment in her speech. Every now and then she stops to breathe.  
- *Jimmy Durante*

Thanks to Connie Purdum

## HUMANIST SOCIETY OF THE SUNCOAST

A chapter of the American Humanist Assoc.  
The Association of Secular Humanist Societies

### Board of Directors

Meets Sept., December, April

**Lois Fries, Secretary**  
**Anita Garcia**  
**Dave Kovar, Vice President**  
**Beth Maxie**  
**Jim Peterson, President**  
**Frank Prah**  
**Marios Psomas, treasurer**  
**Jordan Williams**

**Emeritus members:** Terry Eckstein,  
Steve Brown, Jon Green, Mark Kligman,  
Jerry Moore, Mark Winterbottom,  
Sidney Goetz Dec. Bob Collette, Glenn  
Paul, Don Acenbrack Dec., Rob Byrch,  
Dec. Jackie Jordan, Brent Yaciw, Mike  
Hubbard, Matt Cooper Dec, Jim Butler

~\*~\*~\*~\*~\*~\*~\*~\*~\*

Jordan Williams, mail Publisher

**Jim Peterson, Editor**  
E-Mail us at:  
[jim@suncoasthumanist.com](mailto:jim@suncoasthumanist.com)

## Need Psychological Counseling?

For a secular therapist,  
click:  
[Cognitive Neurosciences  
Inc.](#) or,  
[The Therapist Project](#),  
or,  
[Lynda Gurvitz](#), or  
[Patricia Walters](#),  
(813) 988-5977

**Also**, For Addiction  
Problems, see: [Life Ring  
Secular Recovery Meetings](#)  
11485 Oakhurst Road  
Waters Edge Club House  
Largo, Florida



# Tampa Humanist Association



Meets every third Saturday at, 11:00 AM in  
**The North Tampa Public Library**  
8916 North Blvd. Tampa, FL 33604 [Map](#)

**Meets December 20th**

We will share a new movie,

## THE UNBELIEVERS

The film shows [Richard Dawkins](#) and [Larry Krauss](#) sometimes apart and sometimes together speaking around the United States and internationally, in TV appearances and in small and large venues acting as spokesmen for reason. Their lively talks focus on issues related to the freethought movement, terrestrial and universal evolution, the purpose of the universe (there isn't one) and the meaning and value of life (it is ours to subjectively create, define and live).

The film provides some nice shots of the [2012 Reason Rally](#) at which both Dawkins and Krauss spoke. While the movie gives little insight into the private lives of these two men, it does earnestly show them being interviewed in filled auditoriums and stadiums, speaking about the importance of rationality and science.

It also shows them talking thoughtfully about the importance of skepticism, the value of the scientific method, the urgency for humanity to leave religious delusion and theology outside of life and certainly outside of politics. The pair also bolster the notion that the freethought movement is growing, becoming more substantial, and that non-theists and their ilk needn't hide or feel embarrassed for their non-belief in the spiritual, metaphysical or supernatural.

The film begins and ends with celebrity interviews on what it means to live a freethought life. Those in Hollywood and the media who aren't afraid to be on camera to share their non-belief are many. These cameos include directors **Woody Allen** and **Werner Herzog**; and actors **Bill Pullman**, **Ricky Gervais**, **Sarah Silverman** and **Cameron Diaz**, are each fun to watch and gives us insight into the common and popular beliefs all freethinkers share. Cameron Diaz, who has come off more "spiritual" in some interviews is actually very eloquent in sharing her non-belief and wonder about the universe.

The most powerful parts of the film to me occur when Dawkins and Krauss are each given the opportunity to speak privately about their ideas concerning the value of critical and rational thinking. But basically the pair are portrayed as the rock stars of the freethought movement. And for what they've given us in their individual and collective writings, interviews, speeches and general support, they wear this honor and label very well.

It should be noted that other personalities within the freethought movement are also seen in the film. **Sam Harris** and **Daniel Dennett**, as well as **A.C. Grayling** and **David Silverman** each make the final cut. So do many activists and entertainers who appeared at the Reason Rally. Their ideas and speeches also make the film richer and also show that the movement isn't owned by two people, but really that it is owned by all of us who care to come out as non-believers, or as the film's title calls Dawkins and Krauss, *Unbelievers*.

We will have a discussion afterward.



We don't have to blindly follow holiday traditions that are based on supernatural religious beliefs which we don't accept, just because "that's how we were raised." We can decide for ourselves what traditions we want to follow, or create anew. An important aspect of the humanist philosophy of life is that we have the right and responsibility to create our own purpose and meaning for our lives, not just accept what's handed down in ancient books.

**HumanLight** is a secular holiday, on December 23<sup>rd</sup>, celebrated around the world since 2001. Celebrating HumanLight can be an occasion for many who are non-religious, freethinkers, atheists, and humanists to create their own meaningful traditions and to help express the positive human values, hopes, and ideals that we share. It's never too late to create new traditions!

Because humanists and free-thinkers tend to avoid dogma and rigid rituals, the specific activities involved in any HumanLight celebration are open to invention and creativity, and will differ from place to place. Celebrations I've attended often include social gatherings with components such as: food, drinks, music, dance, candles, decorations, entertainment, short talks/readings, and fun activities for kids.

Charitable giving is also a common feature of many celebrations. No matter how one chooses to celebrate, either at home or in a public event, it is strongly recommended that celebrations should express our values in a positive way, while avoiding negative criticism of religion and religious holidays. That's a central concept of HumanLight.

HumanLight is an upbeat, festive holiday, with a vibrant, positive and authentic meaning for the non-religious community.

**Happy HumanLight!**

*Patrick Colucci, a volunteer activist in the humanist movement, is vice-chair of The [HumanLight Committee](#)*

## Humanist Quotes

*"Take the risk of thinking for yourself, much more happiness, truth, beauty, and wisdom will come to you that way."*

*Christopher Hitchens*

[Read more](#)

## HUMANISTS CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE FOR A CHILD

The need is great. All it takes is about an hour out of a day and the commitment to show up once a week. The feeling of having helped is most gratifying. How can we as Humanists not act to impact a child in the inner city in a positive manner?

YOU can give a child a much-needed hour of personal attention that will encourage reading and just might help them to move forward while improving their self-esteem.

In Hillsborough County, contact: **Debra L. Blossom**,  
Program Manager Training and Volunteer Management  
[debra.blossom@sdhc.k12.fl.us](mailto:debra.blossom@sdhc.k12.fl.us) 813.872-5254

*Gale Barron*

# Freedom of Thought for Our World, and Our Future

**Tampa Bay CoR**  
TAMPA BAY COALITION OF REASON

## Promoting Action & Unity in the Tampa Bay Area

Join the Freethought Organizations in the Tampa Bay Area: Tampa Humanist Association, Humanist Society of the Suncoast, Center for Inquiry, UU Humanists Clearwater, UU Humanists Tampa,\* Secular Student Alliance USF,\* Atheists of Florida, Plus numerous Meetup organizations that promote what are essentially Freethought ideas and principles.

(\*= not currently members of the Coalition)

Member organizations and agencies should contact the following CoR representatives about the matters indicated:

**Calendar:**  
Rick O'Keefe

**Newsletter:**  
Jim Peterson

**Web site:**  
Jim Peterson

**Special Projects**  
Mark Brandt

For several years now, various leaders of the Freethought community in the bay area have been meeting informally to share experiences, and occasionally to coordinate plans. But recently, changing circumstances have brought additional pressure to cooperate in bringing programs and members services to an expanding movement.

At this point leaders continue to meet, and together with the various boards of directors and committees, try to develop policies that will enable every group to enhance its unique role in serving its members.

There appears to be general agreement on developing several community wide programs over the year that will allow significant speakers to be presented in our area. The costs of these programs will be shared among the organizations proportionally.

Thus substantive and exciting new activities will be offered to the Tampa Bay area that were not possible for most organizations before.

We are especially grateful to the national office of the United Coalition of Reason and its director, Fred Edwards. You may recall that UCoR was the major impetus to getting a large number of billboards erected in Tampa Bay and across the nation with such messages as "You can be good without God. Millions are!"

*TBCoR is an alliance of groups identified with the freethought / Humanist /Atheist movement.*

As this momentum continues to grow, we will keep you informed of developments. JP  
Contact: [tbcor@metrodirect.net](mailto:tbcor@metrodirect.net)



An autonomous project of the Humanist Society. Affiliate of [PCI](#)

## Can Earth Support our present Economy?

The human economy is currently too big to be sustainable. We know this because Global Footprint Network, which methodically tracks the relevant data, informs us that [humanity is now using 1.5 Earths' worth of resources](#).

We can temporarily use resources faster than Earth regenerates them only by borrowing from the future productivity of the planet, leaving less for our descendants. But we cannot do this for long. One way or another, the economy (and here we are talking mostly about the economies of industrial nations) must shrink until it subsists on what Earth can provide long-term.



Saying "one way or another" implies that this process can occur either a dvertently or inadvertently: that is, if we do not shrink the economy deliberately, it will contract of its own

accord after reaching non-negotiable limits. As I explained in my book *The End of Growth*, there are reasons to think that such limits are already starting to bite. Indeed, most industrial economies are either slowing or finding it difficult to grow at rates customary during the second half of the last century. Modern economies have been constructed to require growth, so that shrinkage causes defaults and layoffs; mere lack of growth is perceived as a serious problem requiring immediate application of economic stimulus. If nothing is done deliberately to reverse growth or pre-adapt to inevitable economic stagnation and contraction, the likely result will be an episodic, protracted, and chaotic process of collapse continuing for many decades or perhaps centuries, with innumerable human and non-human casualties. This may in fact be the most likely path forward.

Is it possible, at least in principle, to manage the process of economic contraction so as to avert chaotic collapse? Such a course of action would face daunting obstacles. Business, labor, and government all want more growth in order to expand tax revenues, create more jobs, and provide returns on investments. There is no significant constituency within society advocating a deliberate, policy-led process of degrowth, while there are powerful interests seeking to maintain growth and to deny evidence that expansion is no longer feasible.

Nevertheless, managed contraction would almost certainly yield better outcomes than chaotic collapse—for everyone, elites included. If there is a theoretical pathway to a significantly smaller economy that does not pass through the harrowing wasteland of conflict, decay, and dissolution, we should try to identify it. **Richard Heinberg 11/14**  
Click [www.tampabaypostcarbon.com](http://www.tampabaypostcarbon.com) for more. 12/14

## Clearwater UU Humanists

We are a group of Unitarian Universalists committed to a humanistic and non-theistic worldview. Currently, meetings are scheduled once a month and are usually held on the third Sunday of most months from 12:30 pm to 1:30 pm, after UU services.

The UU Humanists are open to all aspects of humanism, including investigation of religious humanism. However, the focus of the group is on secular aspects of humanism.

Programs have been well received with attendance between 50 and 75. To learn more, please contact: co-facilitators: Bill Norsworthy [bnorsworthy@verizon.net](mailto:bnorsworthy@verizon.net) Mark Brandt [mwbrandt@mail.usf.edu](mailto:mwbrandt@mail.usf.edu) Web site: [www.uuclearwater.org](http://www.uuclearwater.org)



Clearwater, Florida

UU Humanists will be meeting next in The social hall where we will share in the Winterfest-Humanlight Potluck on December 6th at 6. See the front page for details

**Mark your calendar!**

Be sure to check us out during the next year, as we have some extraordinary programs and truly wonderful speakers. See page 1 for Darwin Day! 12/14



## Florida NOW

<http://www.flnow.org/>

NOW is a multi-issue political organization. NOW's self-defined role has been to initiate change for the benefit of the greatest number of people, to affect the legal and institutional structures of the society in a way that systematically expands the choices and possibilities available to all women. In this way, NOW takes action to bring women, as a class, into the mainstream of society, rather than offering aid to individual women in achieving personal solutions or temporary relief from oppression.

The Florida National Organization for Women is a group dedicated to taking action to bring ALL women into full equality and participation through changing policy, law and culture. This mission attracts women and men of diverse backgrounds and gives us the ability to look at the systemic oppression in our lives and determine actions that will bring about change for all women.

Often, we are contacted by women and men who are facing "legal" situations, or in need of help for a group or individual. Unfortunately, we do not have the resources to provide direct services, and for legal reasons we can not provide referrals for lawyers or other services. If you need these services, please consider doing an internet search for local attorneys, referral services, legal aide, domestic violence shelters, or other terms that are appropriate for your individual situation. Good luck.

## FLORIDA REPORT

Civil liberties news in the Sunshine State



More than a year after thousands of documents revealed the extent of US government spying on Americans, we are closer than ever to passing meaningful reform to end rampant surveillance on innocent Americans.

The **USA Freedom Act** is a first step toward reining in government surveillance powers and reclaiming your privacy, and the Senate is scheduled to vote on whether they will debate this bill on Tuesday, November 18.

**[Tell Senators Nelson and Rubio to support the USA Freedom Act as written.](#)**

The bill would protect privacy by:

- Ending bulk surveillance and limiting the government's ability to sweep up the communications of millions of innocent Americans.
- Enhancing transparency and reporting about the scope of government surveillance.
- Creating a special advocate to participate in the secret surveillance court proceedings to represent privacy interests. There's a 60 vote threshold needed to bring any bill to vote on the floor of the Senate. Florida Senators Nelson and Rubio are key to helping us pass this threshold so this bill can begin the process towards becoming law. This is our chance to protect privacy for all Americans.

The USA Freedom Act is critical for scaling back the massive surveillance state. **[Call Senators Nelson and Rubio now and tell them to stand for Floridians' privacy.](#)**

BECAUSE FREEDOM CAN'T PROTECT ITSELF JOIN THE ACLU



[Enter your poem...](#)

## The Humanities Institute of USF

### National Poetry Month ; April 2015

Every April the Humanities Institute participates in National Poetry Month--an initiative started by the Academy of American Poets in 1996 to "celebrate poetry and its vital place in American culture." NPM has become a Humanities Institute tradition and this year's calendar is packed with exciting readings and events. Here you can find the complete list of events, biographies for each of the guest poets, and read all the submissions for Poetry Matters at USF.

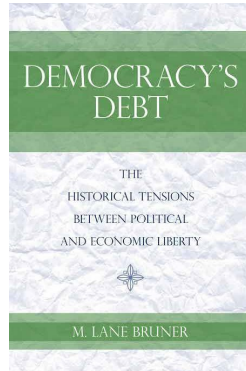
[Click here for more great presentations 2014 schedule](#) 12/14

## Prometheus Press



Democracy's Debt: The Historical Tensions between Political and Economic Liberty

“It is an undeniable fact that economic circumstances can directly impact political affairs, that wealth is easily translated into political...”



GENDER  
in a Globalized World  
IDENTITIES



EDITED BY  
ANA MARTA GONZÁLEZ  
VICTOR J. SHIDLER

“This cross-disciplinary collection of essays focuses on gender from multiple perspectives, touching on a variety of aspects ranging from ...”

**Evolve Fish is a good source for your freethought goodies:**

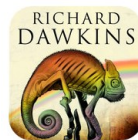
Pins, posters, buttons, bumper stickers, etc.

<http://evolvefish.com/>

**Read Humanist Periodicals:** The world's leading minds can be read at: [The Humanist](#), [Free Inquiry](#), [Free Mind](#), [Humanist Perspectives](#), [Skeptical Inquirer](#), [Secular Humanist Bulletin](#), [The Florida Humanist Journal](#), [Skeptic](#), [Essays in Humanism](#), and many others. Look 'em up!

*The Magic of Reality*

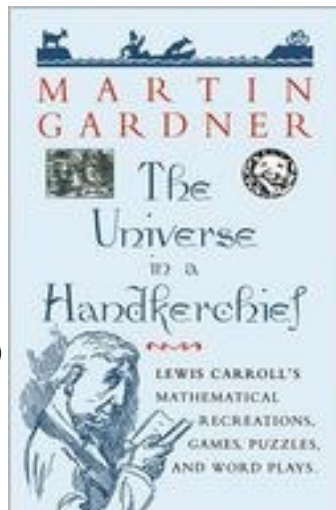
Download it to your I-pad to experience this award winning multi media book.



## Martin Gardner

In celebrating this brilliant and humorous skeptic and humanist, find a compendium of information, including his many writings, [here](#).

For hours of pleasurable mental exercise: *The Universe in a Handkerchief: Lewis Carroll's Mathematical Recreations, Games, Puzzles, and Word Plays* (Copernicus/Springer-Verlag, 1996, 10 + 158 pages) indicated by its title in the chapters Fiction and Verse, The Diaries, Letters, Books and Articles, Miscellaneous Amusements, Doublets, and Pamphlets on Games.



## The Matt Cooper

### Memorial Humanist Library.

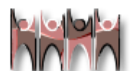
Humanist Society members (only) can select the number of the book you wish to borrow, and send it to Marios Psomas at: [marios\\_psomas@hotmail.com](mailto:marios_psomas@hotmail.com). Then pick it up at the next meeting. **Be sure to return it!** Donations appreciated.

#### # TITLE

1. The Expanding Circle
2. In Gods we Trust
3. Why Evolution is True
4. The Second World
5. Denialism
6. The Selfish Gene
7. Democracy Incorporated
8. The Upside Irrationality
9. The End of Growth
10. The God Delusion
11. All That We Share
12. Sex, Time, and Power
13. Sex at Dawn
14. What liberal Media
15. The End of Faith
16. Plan B
17. The Portable Atheist
18. Open Society
19. Non Believer Nation
20. God on Trial
21. Natural Experiments of History
22. The Missionary Position
23. Life Inc.
24. A brief History of Time
25. Breaking the Spell
26. The Philosophy of Humanism
27. The Quotable Atheist
28. 50 Reasons People Give for Believing In a God. G. Harrison
29. Mathematics and Politics
30. Stealing Elections
31. The God Virus
32. What Every American Should Know About Rest of World. Rossi
33. Imagine There's no Heaven
34. Hidden Order
35. What the Dog Saw
36. Sway
37. The Better Angels of our Nature
38. Letter to a Young Contrarian
39. Hot, Flat, and Crowded
40. Gaming the Vote
41. Subversion Fable
43. Evolution and the Big Question
44. Why People Believe Weird Things
45. The World is Curved
46. The Snow Ball
47. The Moral Landscape
48. How We Believe
49. Full House
50. The Origins of Political Order
51. Asimov's Guide to the Bible
52. Autobiography of Mark Twain
53. Science Friction
54. Genius
55. Inevitable Illusions
56. Sex & God
57. Being Right Is Not Enough
58. Loser Takes All
59. Taking Back Politics
60. What Happened in Ohio?
61. Autobiography of Mark Twain
62. The Skeptics Annotated Bible
63. Database Systems (Complete Ver.)
64. Reluctant Database Administrators
65. Asimov's Guide to the Bible
66. Inevitable Illusions
67. Ain't Nobody's business If You Do
69. Bonk
70. What Money Can't Buy
71. Financial Shenanigans
72. Sex & God
73. Best American Non required Reading
74. Reporting at Wit's End
75. Corporations are not People
76. Could I Vote Mormon for president?
77. Culture of Honor
78. Rot on the Vine

#### AUTHOR

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Jerry Coyne  
Panag Khanna  
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Stenesh





# Florida Atheists



**Chair, Tracy Thomas, President, Judy Adkins**

Join our Tampa chapter on **Sunday, December 14th at our headquarters building. A holiday potluck is scheduled. See the [AoF Meetup](#) for more information.**

JOIN US - AoF meeting information can be found at our Meetup site and more information about the organization can be found on our [website](#) and on our [Facebook page](#).

**Soon you will be able to subscribe to AoF's news service, keeping you informed of matters of importance to the freethought, secular community.**

AoF is a comfortable and safe place in which to find rewarding new friendships, to discover hidden potentials, and make a positive contribution to your own humanity as well as that of others. We are pleased to offer legal assistance with church state separation issues as an important focus.

Look for exciting new programs and internet webcasts (audio & video). Let us know if you wish to participate. We are a resource for those with questions and doubts about the standard religious narrative of life.

For many people, atheism represents the most focused and powerful criticism of the philosophical worldview with which most of us were raised. It is liberating for the same reason it attracts the enmity of those who are committed to the closed and changeless narrative of unexamined traditional beliefs.

Because it is such a foundational and wrenching break with the past and because it leads the way in recognizing a broad range of possibilities for both scientific and social progress, atheism is an essential pillar for all other humanist and freethought philosophies. We join our coalition organizations to provide an essential part of the unique spectra of thought and activity that is vital to human progress. From a personal standpoint, we bring a human centered ethic to bear in serving our fellow human beings as they struggle to overcome the delusional psychology of years of religious conditioning. JP

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Freethought Opinions.....

9

## Dems need to speak out more about caring

One issue saturation campaigning worked again for the Republicans. Democrats need to change their approach if they want to win in 2016. We Democrats need to do a better job of explaining the many ways we care about people by painting the government as a caring, helpful entity that keeps civilization civilized. Government controlled by corporate interests is fascism, which is nearly what our government has degraded to, thanks to the Citizens United decision. Anarchy, being pushed by Libertarians, would take us back to "law of the jungle" mentality.

Socialism is not a bad word! There are various degrees of socialism in any viable civilization. Too little breeds extreme greed and corruption by the "haves" and crime by the "have nots." Too much removes individual incentive to attempt to improve one's self.

Liberalism is not a bad word either! To be liberal is to acknowledge other's rights to follow their desires, as long as it does no harm to others. Liberals want change that will benefit the most people. Liberals gave us freedom from England; ended slavery, gave women the right to vote; ended institutionalized Jim Crow laws; encourages government supported general education and even bucking religious fundamentalist's efforts to prevent Gay people from having the same legal rights of marriage as they now enjoy.

Of course, these all called for a change in the local culture. Remember, politics is first of all, **local**. To change the culture, we must be able to get our message to conservatives who seldom read or listen to liberal views. It's called "self censorship." Censorship is most effective when self imposed! We need to speak and have more discussions with conservatives to broaden their perspectives.

For instance, David Jolly, U.S. Rep. From District 13, is an active member of the fundamentalist First Baptist Church of Largo and is pushing their religious agenda in Congress. I believe that many members of that, and similar churches, are much more liberal than Rep. Jolly, and can be persuaded to vote more liberal, at least on some issues. Another season of one-issue campaigning, controlled by the Republicans, will only continue the 2014 disaster.

**Frank Prahl** 12/14

## BS

At the book discussion today at Westchase, we discussed "Plato at the Googleplex, by Rebecca Goldstein, a recommendation from Bill. We had a very good discussion, as usual.

"The term "bullshit" has been usefully incorporated into polite philosophical parlance through the work of the contemporary American philosopher Harry Frankfurt, who published a little philosophical tract called *On Bullshit* in 2005.

Upon further clarification of the concept of bullshit, Frankfurt ventures the normative conclusion that bullshitting is more pernicious than lying. Acts of lying are, in the typical (non-pathological) liar, localized events; whereas a tendency to bullshit affects a person globally. Frankfurt closes his essay with this judgment:

Both in lying and in telling the truth people are guided by their beliefs concerning the way things are. These guide them as they endeavor either to describe the world correctly or to describe it deceitfully. For this reason, telling lies does not tend to unfit a person for telling the truth in the same way that bullshitting tends to... The bullshitter ignores these demands altogether. He does not reject the authority of the truth, as the liar does, and oppose himself to it. He pays no attention to it at all. By virtue of this, bullshit is a greater enemy of the truth than lies are.

Surveying the history of Western philosophy, the impression is that not all philosophers have shared Frankfurt's moral repugnance to bullshit. But it is undeniable that many have, and Socrates was one. In fact, it is surprising that it has taken philosophers so long to get around to analyzing the concept, given that the offended reaction to bullshit helped to fertilize the original grounds for the field. Socrates, as he comes across in the Apology, would have loved Frankfurt's essay, right down to the normative conclusion that bullshit is a greater offense to truth than lies are." (Page 323 of "Plato at the Googleplex.")

**Toni Beach** 12/14

## Tampa Bay Thinkers



Thinking deep thoughts about serious matters since 2008 at the Carrollwood Cultural Center. in Tampa, every third Monday of the month at 7 PM. [Dec 15th](#): Come cogitate with us!

“Surprises in 2014 and Challenges in 2015”



**The Military Association of Atheists and Freethinkers**



Nontheistic service members serve honorably throughout the world—always have; always will. However, nontheists are the last unprotected minority. The nontheistic, whether an atheist, humanist, agnostic, freethinker, or other secular minority, have a strong community.

Jason Torpy, a West Point graduate, serves as president of MAAF. He also holds seats on the boards of the Secular Coalition for America and the American Humanist Assoc.

**On the web at:** [www.maaf.info](http://www.maaf.info)

Contact: Chris

[christbrown@yahoo.com](mailto:christbrown@yahoo.com)

MSgt, USAF (Retired) Co-Organizer:  
MacDill Atheists & Secular Humanists  
(MASH) MacDill AFB, FL

## Humanist Families of Greater Tampa



**Jennifer Hancock** started this organization several years ago. It uniquely serves Humanist families with a variety of wonderful programs throughout the year.

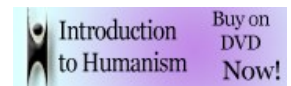
There is a strong emphasis on creative childrearing. Here, you can make connection with other families dealing with the problems of living in a society that is still hostile to an explicitly Humanist Way of life.

Jennifer is author of several books including; *The Humanist Handbook*, *The Humanist Approach to Happiness*, and her latest book, *The Bully Vaccine* (illustration below). - JP

See much more at: [www.Jen-Hancock.com](http://www.Jen-Hancock.com).

**Humanist Families** organizes social outings every month. These are opportunities to do something fun, socialize and enjoy each other's company. Sometimes we go to a park, sometimes a museum, sometimes we go swimming. Our group has grown over the past year to the point we now organize Tampa area outings and Manatee/Sarasota area outings every month.

Throughout the year we host parties like Darwin Day in February, World Humanist Day in June, Freethought Day at Disney in October and Carl Sagan Day in November.



Among our spin off groups, is a Parenting Beyond Belief group which gets together to discuss the challenges of raising children without religion. We are on [Facebook](#).

Thank you!

## It's a good time to reflect on what we are all thankful for!

With thanksgiving coming up in just one week - I have already started thinking about what I am thankful for.

I am thankful for my family. My husband and I just hosted both sets of parents this past week for a weekend of love, music, opera and family. So I am feeling REALLY happily mushy right now.

I am thankful for our friends and the fact we live in a nice neighborhood with nice kids my son can play with. I am thankful that my son's school supports him as well as they do.

I am thankful that my husband has a job that helps us pay our bills and be able to, you know, eat. And I am thankful for you. You have subscribed to my newsletter and supported my work and helped me feel like what I am doing is worthwhile and important. Not just to me, but to others as well. Your support keeps me going at times when I wonder whether it is even worth it.

I happen to think Humanism is important and that teaching people how to live life more humanistically can have a tremendous impact on our world. Your support for my work, helps me keep doing what I do.

To thank you I want to offer 25% off my Humanist life skills course, Living Made Simpler. <http://humanisthappiness.com/>

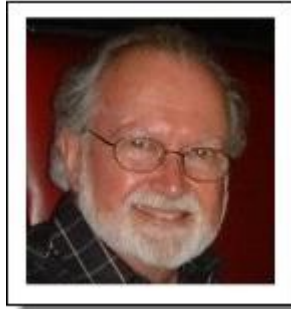
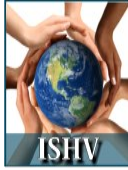
This discount is good for all formats of the course. Whether you take the online version, or download it or buy the audio course, you can get 25% off through the end of the month.

So, if you've been meaning to take the course, or know someone who should, now is the time. Just type in "thankful" as your discount code and get ready to learn.

*Jennifer Hancock*

# Institute for Rational Living

Institute for Rational Living  
2502 N Rocky Point Dr, Suite 1010  
Tampa, FL 33607-1406  
Office Phone: 1-727-278-8446  
Office Fax: 1-727-391-8459  
[vparr@ishv.net](mailto:vparr@ishv.net)



## Vincent Parr, PhD

Clinical Psychologist at  
Institute for Advanced Study MRL  
President at Institute for Rational Living  
Doc, Can You Help? is a unique service to the secular humanist community.  
A secular advice column, authored by Dr. Vincent Parr, it deals with  
all aspects of human problems ranging from disappointment to stress and  
suffering. 8/14

## AH Appignani Humanist LC Legal Center

### Colorado School District Promotes Christianity, Humanist Group Files Lawsuit

October 22, 2014 – The Appignani Humanist Legal Center challenges a public school's practices of supporting Christianity.

### School Officials Enforce Dress Code by Requiring Students to Stand for Pledge of Allegiance

October 21, 2014 – American Humanist Association objects to this violation of students' constitutional rights.

### Christian Scripture on School Monument Will Be Removed, Says Georgia School Board

October 15, 2014 – In response to a letter from the Appignani Humanist Legal Center, a public school will uphold church/state separation.

### Public Elementary School Distributes Gideon Bibles to Students

October 14, 2014 – The Rankin County School District violates the First Amendment and a consent decree.

### Letter from Humanist Group Prompts High School to Remove Religious Materials from Classroom

October 14, 2014 – At the urging of the Appignani Humanist Legal Center, a public school teacher takes down a religious calendar.



*Rodrick Colbert*

**Freethinkers@USF** is a multicultural, interdisciplinary student society which welcomes USF students who describe themselves as atheists, agnostics, skeptics, freethinkers, humanists, or religiously open-minded who seek to promote reason, compassion, tolerance, and free inquiry on campus. We hope to contribute opportunity for interdisciplinary dialog to the USF community, and build scientific literacy for all to enable objective and rational interpretations of issues affecting our lives. The organization is open to anyone of any religious persuasion or personal beliefs.

Write Rodrick Colbert or [freethinkersusf@gmail.com](mailto:freethinkersusf@gmail.com).

the Institute for Science and Human Values  
Presents  
Perspectives on Death and Dying Symposium  
**Dying Without Deity**  
April 10 & 11, 2015  
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## Prepare for 2nd Annual Freethought Cruise

Come and escape to Cozumel next winter on a Caribbean cruise with David Silverman, President of American Atheists! Join dozens of other freethinkers on the second annual Freethought Cruise.

We set sail from Tampa, Florida Thursday afternoon, January 29th and visit Cozumel, Mexico returning to Tampa on Monday morning, February 2nd. During both days at sea David Silverman will speak to the group about his work for American Atheists, state/church separation, and his forthcoming book "I, Atheist". Of course, since David is vacationing with us for the weekend there will be plenty of opportunities for you to chat with him one on one.

Cozumel is one of the top diving and snorkeling destinations in the world for its bright coral reefs and beautiful beaches. Shore excursions will also take you to Mayan ruins and many other adventures listed below. Be sure to check out all of them before deciding.

We cruise on the Carnival Paradise which has plenty to do on board. There is Camp Carnival for the kids, several pools, hot tubs, and sun decks and first-rate entertainment. The ship even has dedicated teen and pre-teen clubs AND an adult only sun deck so bring the whole family if you like so everyone can enjoy themselves!

With a \$150 deposit, per person, you can select the cabin of your choice now. The total cost of the cruise is \$330 per passenger for an interior stateroom or \$370 for an ocean view. These prices are based on double occupancy, and includes all taxes and fees. Plus you will get \$50 on board credit per cabin for drinks or other on board expenses. Shore excursion prices are listed below or you can book these on your own if you choose.

After your initial deposit, you will be contacted to determine how you want to handle future payments (such as monthly or in one final payment).

If you seek a wonderful opportunity to have a fun weekend and hang out with fellow freethinkers, don't miss this one!

If you are interested, you may sign up directly through this link:  
<http://www.expertvacationstation.com/rw/view/3516>



Travel Specialist for our group:  
Jaine Nelson, Cruise Planners/American Express  
[jainenelson@cruiseplanners.com](mailto:jainenelson@cruiseplanners.com) Ph. 612-802-8810 or 651-785-5157

**Check with CFI, AHA, and other groups for more Freethought Cruises!**

# A Humanist Christmas Thoughts for the season...

We're often asked what Humanists do at Christmas. It's generally assumed that the festival based on [the winter solstice](#) (the shortest day) is Jesus's birthday. That's what a lot of people refer to as "the real meaning of Christmas". What they may not realise is that:

- It's highly unlikely that Jesus was born on 25 December;

The Christian nativity story is very similar to [other stories of baby deities born to virgin mothers](#); it's not unique.

- The Christian Church didn't celebrate Christmas until the 4<sup>th</sup> century, as it took a dim view of all hedonistic hoo-ha enjoyed by the pagans at that time of year; There's been a midwinter festival of one sort or another in Europe, Scandinavia and the Middle East for thousands of years, since long before the Christians claimed it; "Traditions" like Christmas trees, cards, gifts and turkeys are all fairly recent. The Victorians, particularly Prince Albert, had a lot to do with their introduction.

Some Humanists regard the festival as a time to enjoy good food and drink with family and friends, but without going OTT because they regard the commercialisation of the season as irritating and wasteful. Others prefer to ignore the whole thing, which is difficult. There used to be special get-away-from-Christmas holidays for Humanists, who'd go and stay somewhere Christmas-free – I don't know if they still happen.

The artificiality of the "festive season" has little relevance to the original mid-winter solstice festival. For me, as a non-believer, it has no religious significance. Peel away all the layers of "tradition", which means different things to different people, and what are we left with?

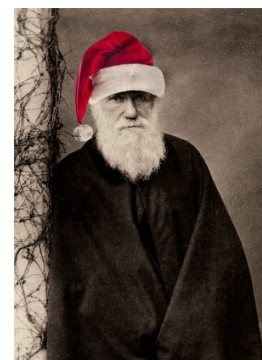
The mid-winter festival has been divided into two parts, Christmas and New Year, but used to be all-in-one, around the time of the shortest day, when humankind's precarious survival depended on the vagaries of nature and their own resourcefulness more than at any other time.

For thousands of years, in Europe, Scandinavia and around the Mediterranean, communities have celebrated life, and their survival, in the depths of winter, with eating, drinking and other fundamental pleasures. There was nothing contrived, nothing artificial about it, just sheer enjoyment.

I wouldn't want to go back to living without the comforts of the 1990s. Being a member of one of the simple communities that celebrated the winter solstice thousands of years ago mattered; if you weren't part of a community, your chances of survival were limited.

The same can be true today, yet we have the means to create a sense of inclusive community and with it freedom from want and hunger, so that everyone has something to celebrate. I sense an increasing disillusionment with Christmas as an over-extended, expensive event that fails to meet unrealistic expectations. Is anyone interested in devising a new version?

\*\*\*\*\*



*Chuck Darwin*

Whatever you do, midwinter needn't be stressful or complicated. Bear in mind –

Christmas isn't compulsory; if you don't join in the festivities you needn't apologize for it, but try not to spoil other people's enjoyment.

If children learn to have reasonable expectations from an early age, you're far less likely to have problems as they grow older.

It's more important to spend time with your children than to spend money on them, at Christmas or at any other time.

Story-telling, whether they're your own stories or read from books, is a great way to spend winter evenings. Telling ghost stories that send a shiver up your spine is one Christmas tradition that most can enjoy. Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" is only one of many.

There's nothing wrong with giving young children second-hand gifts, as long as they're in good condition.

You can treat people by doing things for them, as well as giving them presents. It's nice to feel spoiled.

The divorce and suicide rates go up over the Christmas holiday, when expectations clash with reality. Be realistic and sensible, and accept that people are just as likely to be ill, irritable and tired as at any other time of year; more so, if they've been working hard in the build-up to Christmas. Make allowances for this.

Rather than spending huge amounts of money on presents for people who already have lots of stuff, come to an agreement with family members about the maximum you'll spend on each other.

For ethical gifts, most leading secular charities have gift catalogues.

*Ho, ho, ho, ho, ho, ho, ho, ho, ho, ho, .....ho.*

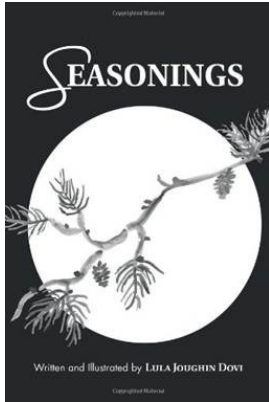


At the **Center for Inquiry**, we believe that evidence-based reasoning, in which humans work together to address common concerns, is critical for modern world civilization. Moreover, unlike many other institutions, we maintain that scientific methods and reasoning should be utilized in examining the claims of both pseudoscience and religion. We reject mysticism and blind faith. No topic should be placed off limits to scrutiny—certainly not fringe science and religion, which have an enormous influence on beliefs and conduct.

We also maintain that values are properly the subject of study and discussion as much as empirical claims. The Center for Inquiry studies and promotes human values based on a naturalistic outlook. Ideological doctrine and religious dogma have no more right to dictate our moral norms than they do to influence scientific research. *You can help:* [Membership/Renewals/Donations](#)



Rick O'Keefe



Humanist Society member and journalist-poet, **Lula J. Dovi** has completed an illustrated chapbook of poetry reflecting on her 92 years and adventures. It is [available here](#) at Amazon.

**Cause & Effect** is the biweekly newsletter of the Center for Inquiry community, covering the wide range of work that you help make possible.

The November/December issue of **Skeptical Inquirer** is out, and it features a handy and unvarnished rebuttal of common attacks on doctors and “Western medicine” made by the proponents of alt-med.

Fortnightly CFI updates not enough? Of course they're not! • Follow CFI on [Twitter](#); • Like us on [Facebook](#); • Encircle us on [Google+](#); • Subscribe to our [YouTube](#) channel.

### Seasonal Greetings from CFI

Through the centuries, any number of Christian sects, uncomfortable with the pagan origins of Christmas, have sought to ban the holiday. Puritans in early America fined anyone caught celebrating Christmas, and the holiday remained forbidden in much of New England until the mid-nineteenth century. Cromwell's England actually tried to ban Christmas from that nation by an act of Parliament.

Regardless of its non-Christian genesis, Christmas will always be exalted as the birth of the Christian savior, a truth that brings us back to the matter of why a humanist such as myself has no reservations in joining with my Christian friends to celebrate Christmas. How do I find meaning in this Christian holy day?

For me, this beautiful season is a joyous paean to life and love, a time that reminds us that, beneath the veneer of race, religion, and nationality, we are all members of a universal family.



I celebrate Christmas as the victory of light over darkness, not merely the defeat of the winter darkness by the waxing sun, but the triumph every person of good will feels when our innate warmth and compassion rout our tendencies toward selfishness and malice. I celebrate Christmas as the resurgence of that sacred flame that dwells within every woman and man. I celebrate Christmas not so much as the recognition of a divine child's birth but as the recognition of a divine essence in all of us.

Not celebrate Christmas because I am a humanist? I celebrate it *because* I am a humanist.

*John Dunphy is a writer and bookstore owner. His essay "A Religion for a New Age" was the basis for the Religious Right's charge that secular humanism was invading public education. This essay was originally published in The (Alton, Illinois) Telegraph on December 24, 1995. (Courtesy, Council for Secular Humanism © 2007)*

**THERE'S DEFINITELY  
A SANTA  
SO EAT, DRINK  
AND BE MERRY**



**Humanists of Sarasota Bay, Inc.**  
Sarasota, Florida

Lectures, discussions, and hands-on demonstrations of the Humane use of technology.

Visit our facility on 1510 Barry Rd. in Clearwater: Map: <http://tampa-bay.org/map.html>  
**Dave 'Doc' Dockery** President,

Find us at: [www.tampa-bay.org](http://www.tampa-bay.org)  
**We repair our members computers!**

### Calendar of Upcoming events:

Dec 24:

12: PM **lunch**, 1:45 PM **Current Affairs discussion group.**  
New Dynasty Restaurant, 6131 South Tamiami Trail, Sarasota ([map](#))  
[more details»](#)

For much more information and other events, see the HusBay [website](#):  
<http://husbay.org/index.htm> .



<http://tampabay.unitedcor.org/tampabay/>

## Practical Freethought

*We need the support of freethinkers in the bay area to help us provide the many activities that a handful of us work to give you, so please do your part: TBCoR is not a membership organization, so pay for membership in one of our member associations, then join in, volunteer, don't hide your beliefs.*

The **United Coalition of Reason** is a national organization, of which **Tampa Bay Coalition of Reason (TBCoR)** is part. CoR is a vigorous organization. Fred Edwards, experienced and successful marketer and non-profit executive, gave two talks on successful PR and marketing at the recent Florida Humanists Association statewide conference. Those of you who are willing to make your favorite local freethought group more successful through marketing and publicity need to let your group's leadership know that you volunteer! You can make use of Fred's tried-&-true tip sheets.

Who is Fred Edwards? His CoR bio follows. Currently, Fred is National Director of CoR, [E-mail: fredwards@unitedcor.org](mailto:fredwards@unitedcor.org).

He is a leading voice for humanism in the United States and abroad. Fred Edwards is recognized as an outstanding lecturer, debater, and teacher on human rights, humanist philosophical issues, and effective outreach techniques for organizations in the community of reason. He has appeared on national and local television in the United States and Canada, has been interviewed on radio and for newspapers around the world, and has lectured in North America, Europe, and India. He has also written for several publications in the United States and elsewhere.

Fred Edwards began his humanist activism in 1977 as vice president of the Humanist Association of San Diego. He became president the next year, expanded his reach as American Humanist

Association West Coast regional coordinator in 1979, and became national administrator for the organization in 1980. He then served for fifteen years as AHA executive director (1984-1999) and twelve years as editor of the *Humanist* magazine (1994-2006). Edwards subsequently shifted his attention to bringing humanism to a wider public as AHA director of communications. Today he serves as a management and PR consultant to the AHA while heading up the United Coalition of Reason, bringing local group leaders together in cities across the United States and training them in public relations and effective use of the media.

Fred Edwards is also seen as a leader in the broader community of reason. He was the first president (2002-2005) of Camp Quest, Inc., a summer camp for freethinking children, and served in various leadership roles on the staff of the Ohio camp from 1998 to 2008. He has also served on the boards of the International Humanist and Ethical Union and the National Center for Science Education, served as vice president of the North American Committee for Humanism, and is currently a member of the Broader Social Impacts Committee for the Hall of Human Origins at the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History in Washington DC. In 1980 he was the founding editor of the *Creation/Evolution* journal—the only publication dedicated to answering the pseudoscientific, philosophical, educational, and legal arguments of creationists—serving as its editor for eleven years. For such work Edwards was recognized in the mid-1980s as Rationalist of the Year by the American Rationalist Federation and as a Humanist Pioneer by the American Humanist Association. He continues as an advisor to the Secular Student Alliance, as a humanist celebrant in the Humanist Society, and as national director of the International Darwin Day Foundation.

Our local freethought associations are rightfully thankful for Fred's support, guidance, humor, and humanist *joie de vivre*.

## Holidays of Special Interest

- **2014** is the UN International Year of Family Farming
- December** is Write-a-Friend Month

- 1st World Aids Awareness Day
- 5th Repeal (Prohibition) day
- 12th National Ding-a-ling Day
- 16th National Chocolate Covered Day
- 20th Absurdity Day
- 21st Humbug Day
- 23rd Festivus (You know,.. for the rest of us)
- 30th Make up your Mind Day



### TBCoR Leadership Team 2014

Mark Brandt, Chris Brown, Jennifer Hancock, Rick O'Keefe, Jim Peterson, Tracy Thomas  
 UUCH MAF TBHF CFI HSS, TBPCC AoF

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### Be Included!

Group Leaders are invited to send items for this Newsletter. Please send them to: [tbcornews@metrodirect.net](mailto:tbcornews@metrodirect.net)  
 For calendar items, include as much info as possible.