

# The Tampa Bay Coalition of Reason

# Freethought News

Vol. 3 No. 9 September 2014 Jim Peterson, Editor

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[Click to connect!](#)

Get Ready for the Annual

## Florida Humanist Conference

October 10th to the 12th in Orlando

Headliner: Dr. Lawrence Krauss



Theoretical physicist and cosmologist, Foundation Professor of the School of Earth and Space Exploration at Arizona State University. Director of the Origins Project, author of *The Physics of StarTrek* and *A Universe from Nothing*, star of *The Unbelievers*, a documentary film with Richard Dawkins.

Dr. Krauss

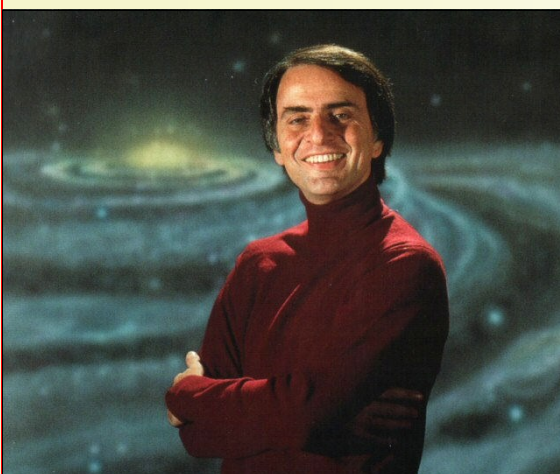
+ Dr. Ryan Cragun, Rebecca Hale, Seth Andrews, Stephanie Guttormson, Mandisa Thomas, Keith Lowell Jensen, Daniel Koster and many more.

For more information, and to get tickets, go to: <http://free-flo.org/>



Coming November 15th

## Carl Sagan Day



A special occasion at the Tampa Bay Computer Society. Mark your calendar now, and watch this space for more info.

## Invocators

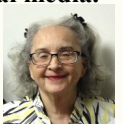


Joe Reinhardt & Dave Kovar  
(with Jim Peterson and Ed Golly in the middle)

Joe Reinhardt of AoF for the Largo City Commission on August 5th and Dave Kovar of the Humanist Society for the Clearwater city Council on August 20th. See [page 5](#) for more.

These invocations were delivered before the city councils with positive coverage by local media.

Up next; Gloria Julius of AoF will speak at the St. Petersburg Council on September 4th. 8:30 AM.



Coming September 14th...  
Be the candle in the Dark

## Skepticamp

The Tampa Bay Coalition of Reason presents an afternoon of honing critical thinking skills on Sunday September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014, from 12:30 – 4:30 pm at AoF Headquarters, 5103 S West Shore Blvd Tampa FL.

This is a free event, open to everyone. In this age of spin and deceit, we need to reduce our vulnerability to the ploys of manipulative advertisers, crafty politicians, religious true believers, the scammer and the fraudster.

Contact [EventBrite](#) to reserve limited seating. See [page 3\\*](#)



## Center for Inquiry–Tampa Bay – September, 2014 Calendar

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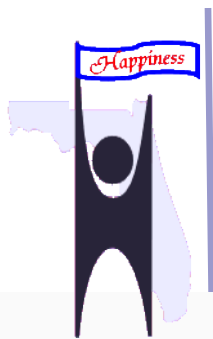
This is produced from preliminary information. Check the individual Web sites to insure the event is being held, when and where .... We are not liable for changes, errors, or omissions. Compiled by Rick O'Keefe & Jim Peterson.

09-14, See you at <b>SkeptiCamp</b>	<b>CLEARWATER</b> – Countryside Library on 580 The Humanist Society of the Suncoast	To get the details: Regular meeting - See page 3 <a href="http://www.meetup.com/SuncoastHumanist/">http://www.meetup.com/SuncoastHumanist/</a>
09-14 Sunday at 12:30 PM <b>SkeptiCamp</b>	<b>TAMPA</b> - See page 6 for details at the Atheists of Florida facility	Details: <a href="http://www.meetup.com/Atheists-of-Florida-Tampabay/">http://www.meetup.com/Atheists-of-Florida-Tampabay/</a>
09-14, 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>
09-15, Monday, 7 PM	<b>NW HILLSBOROUGH / CARROLLWOOD</b> – Tampa Bay Thinkers	Lively philosophical discussion. For topic, see page 10. <b>RSVP at Web site:</b> <a href="http://www.meetup.com/tampa-bay-thinkers/RSVP">http://www.meetup.com/tampa-bay-thinkers/RSVP</a>
09-14, <b>SkeptiCamp</b>	<b>TAMPA</b> – North Tampa Library Tampa Humanist Association	Topic: On Hiatus this month only <a href="http://www.meetup.com/Tampa-Humanist-Association/">http://www.meetup.com/Tampa-Humanist-Association/</a>
09-14 Sunday, 5 P.M <b>SkeptiCamp</b>	<b>CLEARWATER</b> - Humanist Society of the Suncoast See page 4	Sunday Social Dinner for all members, friends and others interested in conversing with Humanists
09-21, Sunday, 2 PM	<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>
09-27 4 <sup>th</sup> Saturday, 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> Details: <a href="http://www.meetup.com/CFI-Tampa-Bay">http://www.meetup.com/CFI-Tampa-Bay</a>
09-TBA, Usually, Every last Monday, 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>
09- 14 12:30 PM <b>SkeptiCamp</b>	<b>CLEARWATER</b> – UU Humanists,	<b>Regular Sunday meeting.</b> <b>See page 7 for more information</b>
09-22 4th Friday	<b>ST. PETERSBURG</b> - <b>Astronomy Club</b>	For dates, location, & and details: <a href="http://www.stpeteastronomyclub.org/index.php">http://www.stpeteastronomyclub.org/index.php</a>
09 -06 Sat., & 9-21 Fri.	<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> October: Annual Humanists at Disney in Orlando. <a href="https://www.facebook.com/events/188610644635424/">https://www.facebook.com/events/188610644635424/</a>
09-24 see <a href="#">Web site</a>	<b>SARASOTA</b> – Humanists of Sarasota Bay	Many events: Details: <a href="http://www.sarasota.humanists.net/calendar.html">Web site</a> <a href="http://www.sarasota.humanists.net/calendar.html">http://www.sarasota.humanists.net/calendar.html</a>
09-12 7:30 PM Friday Evening	<b>TAMPA</b> - M.A.R.S. Astronomy Club	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.
09- 17, 25, & 30	<b>TAMPA</b> - Humanities Institute at USF	See <a href="#">website</a> for full listing of many great events and calendar. Many fabulous speakers all in one month! See <a href="#">page 7</a> for one.



**C.o.R. presents: **SkeptiCamp** this month, A Carl Sagan celebration in November, Soltice\Humanlight potluck in December, and Darwin Day next February.**

**"...being a Humanist means trying to behave decently without expectation of rewards or punishment after you are dead."** *Kurt Vonnegut*  
Writer and past president of the American Humanist Association



# 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)

September 2014

Volume 22 No. 9 September, 2014

## This Month only:

Our regular meeting is temporarily supplanted by this month's presentation of SkeptiCamp as described on page 1. The available 60 seats were filled quickly with a large waiting list, and many of you may miss out on what promises to be a very good thing.

But wait!... There is hope in the form of

## \*SkeptiCamp II

For all of you who were not able to get a seat in this month's presentation, we will have an opportunity to sample the goods at the Carl Sagan celebration in November. We will have more on **Carl Sagan Day** in the next issue. But in the meantime sign up to get on the waiting list, as space is short here too.

Contact [EventBrite](#) to reserve limited seating now.

Now is the Time to

~ Join ~

## The 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.



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



\*= optional



## Dr. Neil DeGrasse Tyson

Will appear at the Van Wezel Performing Arts Center in Sarasota on 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 is having to retire from this position. **We need volunteers!** See a board member. Or write to [jim@suncoasthumanist.com](mailto:jim@suncoasthumanist.com) Thx.

Please join us at  
**Skepticamp**

on

**Saturday,  
Sept. 14, 2014**

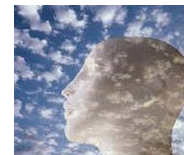
See page 1 for  
Time & location.

We will meet at  
the Library  
again in October.

## Need Psychological Counseling?

For a secular therapist, click:  
[Cognitive Neurosciences Inc.](#) or, [The Therapist Project](#), or, [Linda Gurvitz](#), or [Patricia Walters](#).

For Addiction Problems,  
see: [Life Ring Secular Recovery](#)



A Special Interest Group of the  
**CENTER FOR INQUIRY  
TAMPA BAY**



*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

# Roosterfish Grill

**on Sunday September 14th at 5:00 PM**  
the Roosterfish Grill is located at 776 Missouri Av - just about a mile north of Bay in Largo. Lots of early bird specials costing \$8-12 with beer and wine at fair prices.

Please reserve with Glenn Paul at 727-595-3347 or email reply by Saturday September 13th. For more info, see: [www.Roosterfishgrill.com](http://www.Roosterfishgrill.com) .

### Laugh Lines

### Failed Exams

9-14

**Q1. In which battle did Napoleon die?**

**His last battle** (Actually not true; he died in exile on an island)

**Q2. Where was the Declaration of Independence signed?**

**At the bottom of the page**

**Q3. River Ravi flows in which state?**

**Liquid**

**Q4. What is the main reason for divorce?**

**Marriage**

**Q5. What is the main reason for failure?**

**Exams**

**Q6. What can you never eat for breakfast?**

**Lunch & Dinner**

**Q7. What looks like half an apple?**

**The other half**

**Q8. If you throw a red stone into the blue sea what will it become?**

**Wet**

**Q9. How can a man go eight days without sleeping?**

**No problem. He sleeps at night.**

**Q10. How can you lift an elephant with one hand?**

**You will never find an elephant that has one hand.**

9/14

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)



The Kochhar Humanist Education Center hopes to impact the level of community activism among chapters and affiliates of the American Humanist Association by providing case studies and citizen action guides; they bring to light issues on minority religions and ethnicities that humanist chapter members may not have considered before. It will also expand existing efforts like Essays in the Philosophy of Humanism and utilize other resources in working to eliminate the pernicious effects of ignorance and discrimination.

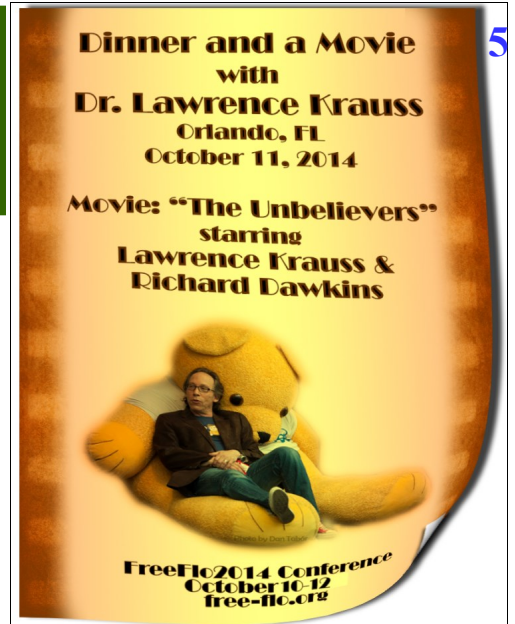
# Tampa Humanist Association

## September 14th

### See you at SkeptiCamp Page 1



Joe Rienhardt of Atheists of Florida at the dias of the Largo Commission.



## Invocations around the Bay

Dave Kovar of the Humanist Society of the Suncoast at the Clearwater city council.



Texts of all three invocations will be published here next month.



Order this important new book now from [Amazon](#)  
By local Humanistic Counselor, **Linda Faulkner**

**Dangerous Wishcraft**, By Linda Faulkner is a must read for anyone who has ever questioned the truth of religious beliefs, explores the dangers of relying on prayer ~wishcraft~ rather than using rational thinking skills, and the often tragic mental, emotional, and physical consequences that can result. Religion, which may have originated as a way to explain the world, has now become an anchor in the fight against scientific knowledge. Modern evangelical religions are attempting to drag the world back into the Dark Ages. This book shines a light, through stories of clients scarred by religion combined with scientific research, on the damage religious fanaticism can inflict on both individual and global levels, and also presents potential strategies for protection from the dangerous practice of wishcraft.

## Humanists Support Science

Rep. Rush Holt has reintroduced the Darwin Day resolution, which recognizes February 12th as Darwin Day, commends scientists for improving humanity's quality of life through scientific discovery, and opposes the teaching of creationism.

**Please help us honor Charles Darwin and support science by using the AHA's action alert system to:**

- Send an email to your Representative and ask him or her to support the Darwin Day resolution. We've even written the message for you to make it easy and quick to send.
- Get your Representative's phone number and call to say "I urge you to cosponsor [H. Res. 467](#), also known as the Darwin Day resolution. Creationism is being taught in schools nationwide, and we need Congress to stand up for real science."

## Humanist Quotes

"Since Humanism as a functioning credo is so closely bound up with the methods of reason and science, plainly free speech and democracy are its very lifeblood. For reason and scientific method can flourish only in an atmosphere of civil liberties. "

*Corliss Lamont*

## 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

# Florida Atheists



***Atheism sprinting into the future!***

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

Join our Tampa chapter on **Sunday, Sept 14th** as we **play host to SkeptiCamp** at our headquarters building. See [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

<http://bankofwisdom.com>

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*Electronic publishing to make the world better*

## ***The Skeptical Life: Case in Point***

6

Recently, the Senate Subcommittee on Consumer Protection convened a hearing on "Protecting Consumers from False and Deceptive Advertising of Weight-Loss Products." In attendance was Dr. Mehmet Oz, the famous "Dr. Oz" of daytime television, whom Senator Claire McCaskill (D-MO) grilled on his larger-than-life claims about the many questionable weight loss "miracle" cures he has peddled on his show over the years.

McCaskill reproached Oz for the false hope he gives viewers when he employs what she called "flowery rhetoric" and stated, quite bluntly, "the scientific community is almost monolithic against you in terms of the efficacy of those three products that you called miracles."

McCaskill isn't exaggerating. Oz has frequently employed the words "miracle," "magic," or "revolutionary" when promoting weight loss methods. Medical experts would never employ these words in a scientific paper, and we humanists know as well as anyone that claiming something is miraculous is little more than a ploy to grab the attention of the gullible, like a preacher selling salvation. And yet, Oz commands a massive amount of authority and respect, which Senator McCaskill acknowledged in her plea for him to be more responsible. One recent study showed that poor women are more likely to get their medical advice from television as opposed to physicians or the Internet, showing the disproportionate influence Oz has over already disenfranchised populations.

Oz conceded that, in reference to green coffee extract, one of the many weight loss scams he peddles, "I'm not going to argue it would pass FDA muster if it were a drug seeking approval," and "I recognize oftentimes they don't have the scientific muster to present as fact." Dr. Oz is no dummy; he holds degrees from two Ivy League schools and has a professorship at Columbia. And yet, he lends his support to these drugs all the while understanding that they simply do not stand up to scientific scrutiny.

Oz defended himself by saying that he feels his job on *The Dr. Oz Show* "is to be a cheerleader for the audience," which McCaskill rightly shot down as merely giving the audience "false hope." Despite our increasing knowledge of the placebo effect and the way our psychology affects our immune system, it's fair to say that hope alone doesn't cure diseases. Oz even went so far as to compare his miracle cures to prayer, another kind of snake oil, while also conceding that he "can't prove that prayer helps people survive an illness." Duh. Senator McCaskill retorted that at least "prayer is free." But Oz's power is no laughing matter. Frauds and con-artists are well aware of the surge in popularity of the products Oz endorses and so covet his endorsements in order to scam well-meaning but misinformed people out of their hard-earned money, a phenomenon that has come to be known as "the Oz effect."

Our culture is more saturated than ever with quacks like Dr. Oz, and in an environment like this the humanist mindset is particularly useful: a healthy dose of skepticism about the newest health fad. The recognition that a celebrity doctor promising effortless results is not so different from a preacher promising salvation. An affirmation that getting healthy is the result of human understanding, hard work, discipline, and determination, not simply a "miracle in a bottle." The understanding that the scientific method gets results, and so medicine should be based on science, along with advocating for science education, so that people can see through the pseudo-science that permeates the media. These are just some of the ways humanism helps us evaluate our culture in a rational way while promoting our own wellbeing. Hopefully this hearing will, indeed, cause people to start paying attention to that man behind the curtain and, coincidentally, like the titular character from *The Wizard of Oz*, pose him for the fraud he is. **Joshua Myers** • 23 June 2014 AHA

## 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)



UU Humanists will be meeting next in September Please mark your calendar! **Sunday, September 14** is the date of SkeptiCamp, a free half-day conference in [Tampa](#) that will both educate and entertain you. Be sure to check us out during the rest of the year, as we have some extraordinary programs and truly wonderful speakers. See page 1 on how to sign up for the waiting list, and see page 3 for Skep II. 9/14



**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 individual help. 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



Get more involved. **Run for a seat on your local ACLU board!**

### Just hours ago, a federal judge stated that Florida's ban on marriages for same-sex couples cannot be constitutionally enforced.

In his decision U.S. District Judge Robert L. Hinkle held that by denying the plaintiffs' fundamental right to marry, Florida's marriage ban violated the due process and equal protection clauses of the U.S. Constitution.

As Judge Hinkle put it: "**Liberty, tolerance, and respect are not zero-sum concepts.** Those who enter opposite-sex marriages are harmed not at all when others, including these plaintiffs, are given the liberty to choose their own life partners and are shown the respect that comes with formal marriage." The judge's order comes as the result of two lawsuits, one of which was filed by the ACLU of Florida representing 8 couples, South Florida's largest LGBT rights organization SAVE, and a Ft. Myers woman who lost her wife the day we announced our case.

"We are so thrilled that these loving and committed couples may soon have the same protections and security for their families that any other married couple would have," stated Daniel Tilley, the ACLU of Florida's staff attorney for LGBT rights. For more: <http://acluf.org/>

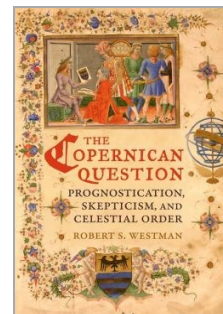
**BECAUSE FREEDOM CAN'T PROTECT ITSELF JOIN THE ACLU**

9/14



## The Humanities Institute of USF

***Copernicus and the Astrologers* with Robert Westman**  
**Wednesday, Sept. 17**  
**CWY 206 6:00pm,**  
**reception to follow**



In 1543, Nicolaus Copernicus publicly defended his hypothesis that the earth is a planet revolving together with five other planets around a stationary sun. Historians often describe Copernicus's proposal as the beginning of the Scientific Revolution.

But why did Copernicus make this bold proposal? Historian Robert Westman reframes this pivotal moment by centering the story on a conflict over the credibility of astrology that erupted in Italy just as Copernicus arrived in 1496 – even though not a single word about astrology exists in any of Copernicus's extant writings.

[Click here for more great presentations 2014 schedule](#) 9/14

# 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



It's time for humanity to get out a pen to make out its annual IOU to the Earth. That's because Tuesday marks Earth Overshoot Day, the day humanity has used up the carbon storing abilities and all the planet's natural resources that Earth can provide in the year.

Tracking this somber milestone is the nonprofit organization [Global Footprint Network](#), which notes that "in the mid-1970s, we crossed a critical threshold: Human consumption began outstripping what the planet could reproduce." We would now need 1.5 Earths to meet our resource demands.

This "ecological debt" marker is a date the world has been reaching sooner each year for more than a decade, the organization states. Compared to this year's August milestone, Overshoot Day came in early October in 2000.

"It is both an ecological and an economic problem," stated Mathis Wackernagel, president of Global Footprint Network and the co-creator, along with William Rees, of the Footprint metric.

Humanity reaps the effects of this overshoot in rising CO2 emissions fueling climate change, as well as declines in biodiversity, deforestation and collapse of some ecosystems. Additionally, the resource debt "contributes to resource conflicts and wars, mass migrations, famine, disease and other human tragedies—and tends to have a disproportionate impact on the poor, who cannot buy their way out of the problem by getting resources from somewhere else," Global Footprint Network states.

Yet "even high-income countries that have had the financial advantage to shield themselves from the most direct impacts of resource dependence need to realize that a long-term solution requires addressing such dependencies before they turn into a significant economic stress," Wackernagel stated.

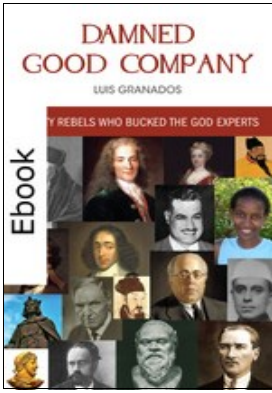
Reining in the problem means, foremost, awareness of the ecological limits we face, and using that awareness to find new ways to live--both individually and collectively--the group states.

Click [www.tampabaypostcarbon.com](http://www.tampabaypostcarbon.com) for more. 9/14

\*According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, May and June of this year were the hottest months ever measured, and continue the trend of 352 consecutive months of temperatures over the 20th century average. **Global warming, anyone?**

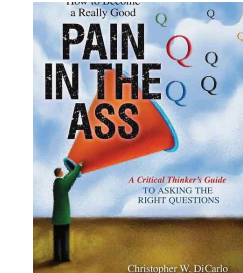


# The Humanist Press



**Damned Good Company**  
By Luis Granados

In *Damned Good Company: Twenty Rebels Who Bucked the God Experts*, author Luis Granados explores twenty cases, from Socrates to Ayaan Hirsi Ali, of brave challenges against those claiming a special authority from God. The author was recently the guest of the Tampa Humanists and delivered a memorable lecture. Paperback \$15.00 378 Pages, [Order here.](#)



In this witty, incisive guide to critical thinking DiCarlo provides you with the tools to allow you to question beliefs and assumptions held by those who claim to know what they're talking about. Order from : [Prometheus](#) \$19.00

Pins buttons, stickers, etc. can be ordered

from: [Evolve Fish](http://evolvefish.com/) <http://evolvefish.com/>

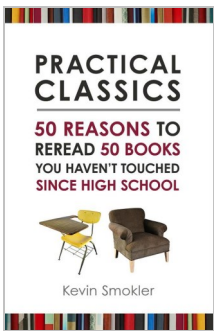
**Read Humanist Periodicals:** The world's leading minds can be read at: [The Humanist](#), [Free Inquiry](#), [Free Mind](#), [Humanist Perspectives](#), [Skeptical Inquirer](#), [Secular Humanist Bulletin](#), [The Florida Humanist Journal](#), [Skeptic](#), [Essays in Humanism](#), and many others.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

## *The Magic of Reality*

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



## Prometheus Press



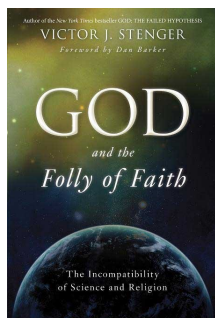
**Practical Classics: 50 Reasons to Reread 50 Books You Haven't Touched Since High School.**

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**God and the Folly of Faith: The Incompatibility of Science and Religion**  
By Victor Stenger, Ph.D.

The story of the fight against superstition has been told before, but never like this. Victor Stenger confronts the battle between religious superstition and science with the eye of a trained physicist and the practicality of a superb teacher. 409 pages, Paperback, \$20.00 [Order here](#)

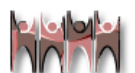


# The Matt Cooper

## 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	AUTHOR
1.	The Expanding Circle	Peter Singer
2.	In Gods we Trust	Scott Atran
3.	Why Evolution is True	Jerry Coyne
4.	The Second World	Panag Khanna
5.	Denialism	Michael Specter
6.	The Selfish Gene	Richard Dawkins
7.	Democracy Incorporated	Sheldon Wolin
8.	The Upside Irrationality	Dan Ariely
9.	The End of Growth	Richard Heinberg
10.	The God Delusion	Richard Dawkins
11.	All That We Share	Jay Wallgasper
12.	Sex, Time, and Power	Leonard Shlain
13.	Sex at Dawn	C. Ryan, & C. Jetha
14.	What liberal Media	Eric Alderman
15.	The End of Faith	Sam Harris
16.	Plan B	Lester Brown
17.	The Portable Atheist	Christopher Hitchens
18.	Open Society	George Soros
19.	Non Believer Nation	David Niose
20.	God on Trial	Peter Irons
21.	Natural Experiments of History	Diamond-Robinson
22.	The Missionary Position	Christopher Hitchens
23.	Life Inc.	Douglas Rushkoff
24.	A brief History of Time	Stephen Hawkins
25.	Breaking the Spell	Daniel Dennett
26.	The Philosophy of Humanism	Corliss Lamont
27.	The Quotable Atheist	Jack Huberman
28.	50 Reasons People Give for Believing In a God.	G. Harrison
29.	Mathematics and Politics	Alan Taylor
30.	Stealing Elections	John Fund
31.	The God Virus	Darrel Ray
32.	What Every American Should Know About Rest of World.	Rossi
33.	Imagine There's no Heaven	Editors of Free Inquiry
34.	Hidden Order	David Friedman
35.	What the Dog Saw	Malcom Gladwell
36.	Sway	Ori, Rom Brafman
37.	The Better Angels of our Nature	Steven Pinker
38.	Letter to a Young Contrarian	Christopher Hitchens
39.	Hot, Flat, and Crowded	Thomas Friedman
40.	Gaming the Vote	William Poundstone
41.	Subversion Fable	Alexa Kckearing
43.	Evolution and the Big Question	David Stamos
44.	Why People Believe Weird Things	Michael Shermer
45.	The World is Curved	David Snick
46.	The Snow Ball	Warren Buffett
47.	The Moral Landscape	Sam Harris
48.	How We Believe	Michael Shermer
49.	Full House	Steven Jay Gould
50.	The Origins of Political Order	Francis Fukuyama
51.	Asimov's Guide to the Bible	Isaac Asimov
52.	Autobiography of Mark Twain	Harriet Smith, Editor
53.	Science Friction	Michael Shermer
54.	Genius	James Gleick
55.	Inevitable Illusions	Piatrelli & Palmarini
56.	Sex & God	Darryl Ray
57.	Being Right Is Not Enough	Paul Waldman
58.	Loser Takes All	Mark Crispin Miller
59.	Taking Back Politics	Cathy Allen
60.	What Happened in Ohio?	Fitrikas, Rosenfeld & Wasserman
61.	Autobiography of Mark Twain	Ed. Harriet Elinor Smith
62.	The Skeptics Annotated Bible	
63.	Database Systems (Complete Ver.)	Kifer, Bernstein, & Lewis
64.	Reluctant Database Administrators	Josef Finsel
65.	Asimov's Guide to the Bible	Isaac Asimov
66.	Inevitable Illusions	M. Piattelli-Palmarini
67.	Ain't Nobody's business If You Do	Peter McWilliams
69.	Bonk	Mary Roach
70.	What Money Can't Buy	Michael J. Sandel
71.	Financial Shenanigans	Howard Shilit
72.	Sex & God	Darrel Ray, ED.D
73.	Best American Non required Reading	Dave Eagers
74.	Reporting at Wit's End	St. Clair McKelway
75.	Corporations are not People	Clements
76.	Could I Vote Mormon for president?	Cragun - Phillips
77.	Culture of Honor	Nisbett - Cohen
78.	Rot on the Vine	Stenesh



## 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.

Come cogitate with us!

**Sept. 15th: "Do we Value Work?"**



## 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.

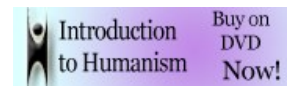
There is a strong emphasis on creative childrearing. Here, you can make connection with other families dealing with the problems of living in a society that is still hostile to an explicitly Humanist Way of life.

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](https://www.facebook.com/).

## The natural approach to life and death is actually really comforting.

We Humanists hear it a lot. Aren't you afraid of dying. Aren't you afraid of not existing anymore. And the answer is no. Not really. Don't get me wrong, I totally enjoy life. I want as much of it as I can get, despite how hard it is at times.

I don't want to die. But I am ok with the fact that at some point I will. At some point, I won't exist anymore. And that's actually ok. It's not something to be scared about because - well, it won't hurt, will it. I just won't be. It's a hard thing to get your head around.

I came across this really cool interview with Bob Geldof. ([see it here](#)) It's a meandering theological discussion (Geldof is a Humanist by the way), and at some point, he's asked about the life after death thing, and he responds - no - there isn't anything after you die and thank goodness. It's a great comfort really.

And I agree. I watch Doctor Who. I've contemplated immortality - and I have decided, as much as I like being alive, I don't want to be alive for millions or billions or years. That is way too long. Maybe a few hundred or even a few thousand years, but I don't want to be here for the explosion of our sun and I don't want to be around when the lights of the universe all go out. Knowing that I will simply not be is a great comfort.

But this naturalist approach provides a Humanist, not just with comfort that when we die we cease to be, but it also provides us with the motivation to make the most of the time we have, here and now.

I admit, it seems a bit paradoxical that on the one hand, we don't fear death, we actually think the idea of not existing is quite comforting AND we experience the knowledge of our mortality as something that inspires motivation to live life fully.

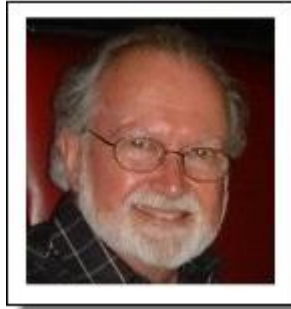
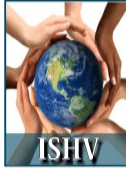
But this is what accepting reality does. People fear what reality might mean. But if they just accepted it - they would find, not only is it not scary - it's comforting and inspiring.

I feel the same way about the medical issues I have had. The fact that I am a statistic sucks, but it's also a great comfort. I am not special. I'm human. And that's actually pretty amazing

*Jennifer Hancock* 9-14

# 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. Dr. Vincent Parr, PH.D., a clinical psychologist, post doctorate at the Albert Ellis Institute, has over 40 years experience in Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT), Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT) and 23 years experience in Zen and Vipassana meditation. There are, however, basically two types of wisdom; wisdom that comes from words and concepts that are essentially left brain processes; and wisdom that comes from right brain processes, i.e., without words and concepts. Dr. Parr will use both of these areas to answer your questions and guide you to the dual goal of minimizing your problems and finding true contentment. Doc will answer as many questions as time permits that are submitted to [dparr11@verizon.net](mailto:dparr11@verizon.net). Find Doc on Facebook, or go to his section on the ISHV [website](http://www.ishv.net).

## 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!

## AH Appignani Humanist LC Legal Center

### Atheist Lawsuit Against Pittsburgh's Port Authority Settled

July 3, 2014 – UnitedCoR & AHLC victorious in suit over Port Authority's refusal to run bus ads for the Pittsburgh Coalition of Reason.

### AHLC Files Motion of Contempt Against Public School for Prayer

May 7, 2014 – Rankin County School District in Mississippi includes formal Christian prayer in student awards ceremony.

### American Humanist Association Wins Lawsuit Against Cross Monument in Lake Elsinore, California

April 23, 2014 – City officials decline to appeal ruling of federal judge

### Humanists File Lawsuit Against "Under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance in New Jersey

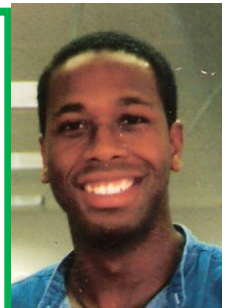
April 21, 2014 – School-sponsored Pledge violates state constitution's equal protection law

### AHA Sues for Equal Treatment of Humanist Inmates in Federal Prisons

April 8, 2014 – Lawsuit filed against correctional officials at the Federal Bureau of Prisons.



University of South Florida



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.

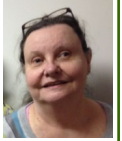
Write Rodrick Colbert or [freethinkersusf@gmail.com](mailto:freethinkersusf@gmail.com).

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# Unwarranted Privilege

By *Judy M. Adkins*



## The Hobby Lobby Decision and the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA)

There are so many items in this decision with which to disagree it has been difficult to choose which one to focus on. There is the belief overrides science, abortion is wrong, the religious views of the owners override the views of the employees, that a corporation can have a religious view, etc. But for me the most important aspect of it is the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA).

### Background

The RFRA was enacted in 1993 by Congress as a response to an earlier Supreme Court decision “holding that an individual’s religious beliefs do not excuse him from having to follow a law that applies to everyone”. The case in question was a state law prohibiting the use of the hallucinogenic drug peyote.

So congress acted, trying to prevent Native American religions from being burdened by increasing expansion of government projects onto, what was considered by them, as “sacred” land. There had already been the American Indian Religious Freedom Act, which was intended to protect the freedoms of tribal religions, but was lacking any enforcement provisions. Several tribes came together to prevent a road from being built through “sacred” land. The Supreme Court ruled that this was not an adequate legal burden because the government was not coercing or punishing them for their religious beliefs. Another case arose from Oregon’s refusal to give unemployment benefits to two Native Americans fired for testing positive for mescaline, after using peyote cactus in a religious ceremony. In reaction to these cases, many groups, including the American Civil Liberties Union, came together to support RFRA, which would reinstate the Sherbert Test (a member of the Seventh Day Adventist church was denied unemployment benefits after being fired for refusing to work on Saturday. The court ruled that disqualifying a person for government benefits, solely because of religious beliefs, is unconstitutional), overturning laws if they burden a religion.

Interestingly enough, in 1997, part of the RFRA, with respect to its applicability to States, was overturned by the Supreme Court, stating that Congress had exceeded its power of enforcement provided in the Fourteenth Amendment. So Congress passed another law which grants special privileges to religious land owners. This was done based on a case from Florida. The city of Hialeah had passed a ban on animal slaughter, which was a “religious” practice of a Santeria congregation in their city.

### How does this affect us?

In 1998 Florida passed its own RFRA in response to the Courts overturn of the federal RFRA as applicable to states. A deputy in the Attorney General’s office expressed concern at the time that “RFRA might give prisoners too much freedom to file harassing lawsuits.” According to Marty Moore, as reported on the ReligiousTolerance.org site, “What we have seen from the federal RFRA is a rise in requests by organized hate groups and groups with a propensity for violence to obtain religious exemptions.”

Professor Marci A. Hamilton asserts that “The United States’ successful, long-honored balance between religious freedom and the rule of law was displaced by RFRA, which invites religious adherents to demand a right not only to believe and practice but also to impose their beliefs on others.” As stated by Justice Stevens, “Because the RFRA allows for specific religions to obtain rights beyond the rights given to regular citizens, he concludes the act must consequently go beyond simple freedom of religion, since it establishes special provisions for religious groups.”

I believe Justice Ginsberg, in her dissent of the Hobby Lobby decision, was correct, this decision is of “startling breadth”. This may allow “employers with religiously grounded objections to blood transfusions (Jehovah’s Witnesses); antidepressants (Scientologists); medications derived from pigs, including anesthesia, intravenous fluids, and pills coated with gelatin (certain Muslims, Jews, and Hindus); and vaccinations (Christian Scientists, among others).”

What about the establishment clause of the first amendment? This clause not only forbids the government from establishing an official religion, but also prohibits government actions that favor one religion over another. It also prohibits the government from unduly preferring religion over non-religion, or non-religion over religion. The Court’s decision for Hobby Lobby seems to have left out this consideration, since not all employees of Hobby Lobby are members of the owners’ church, or members of any church. In an article title “The Unestablished Constitutionality of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act” by Leslie C. Griffin, Ms. Griffin argues that RFRA clearly prefers religion to non-religion. She points out that “churches whose members use hallucinogenic drugs in their religious rituals was exempted from the Controlled Substances Act. In contrast, cancer patients desiring to use medical marijuana enjoy no such exemption from the drug laws, and marijuana churches claiming RFRA’s protection are usually rejected as insincere. As Professor Hamilton argued in her Boerne briefs, such outcomes unconstitutionally “privilege religion over all other expressions of conscience.”

Does RFRA give a legal weapon to religious organizations, or even for-profit corporations, which is not available to atheists?

### So what do we do?

We act together to demand the repeal of RFRA, both in Florida and the federal law, before the “religious liberty” demands restricts the liberty of anyone who do not follow their particular religion.

1. Vote in the elections this fall to elect officials who follow science and want to protect the First amendment establishment clause.
2. Write letters to your congress person, to the newspapers, to everyone you know, encouraging people to object to the imposition of the owner’s beliefs on their employees
3. Join organizations that fight for equal rights for atheists. We know that 2 hands working together can accomplish more than a 1000 hands clasped in prayer.

*Judy M. Adkins, President, Atheists of Florida* 9-14

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.



*Rick O'Keefe*

## The Right to Examine and Speak about Religion

International Blasphemy Rights Day, held each year on September 30, is a day to promote the rights to freedom of belief and expression and stand up in a show of solidarity for the liberty to challenge reigning religious beliefs without fear of murder, litigation, or reprisal. The event is administered by the Center for Inquiry as part of its Campaign for Free Expression.

Free speech is the foundation on which all other liberties rest. Without having the right to express our opinions, however unpopular, those willing to use political clout, violence, and threats will stifle dissent -- and we will all suffer the consequences of this.

International Blasphemy Rights Day takes place September 30 to commemorate the publishing of the Jyllands-Posten Muhammad cartoons. The purpose of Blasphemy Rights Day is not to promote hate or violence; it is to support freedom of belief and expression, support the right to criticize religion, and to oppose any resolutions or laws, binding or otherwise, that discourage or inhibit freedom of speech of any kind.

While many perceive blasphemy as insulting and offensive, this event is not about getting enjoyment out of ridiculing and insulting others. Rather, it was created as a reaction against those who would seek to take away the right to satirize and criticize a particular set of beliefs given a privileged status over other beliefs. Criticism and dissent towards opposing views is the only way in which any nation with any modicum of freedom can exist. Without this essential liberty, those in power who are those best able to manipulate others will suppress and silence dissent by labeling it "defamation" or "blasphemy" or whatever other bogey words they can use to stifle opposition by turning popular sentiment against it. Please, do not let them do this.

If you support free speech, and the rights of those who disagree with religious views to voice their opinions peacefully, join the cause and support International Blasphemy Rights Day! Here is a link: <https://www.facebook.com/blasphemyday/timeline>

And here is a link to The Campaign for Free Expression: <http://www.centerforinquiry.net/cfe>

## CFI Addresses the Crisis in Ferguson, Missouri

On August 14, we at CFI [weighed in on the days-long conflict in Ferguson, Missouri](#) between police and protesters. What was a secular humanist and skeptic organization doing talking about an event like this? One of our core missions is to defend free expression wherever it is threatened or stifled. "Given that the demonstrations in Ferguson have thus far been largely peaceful," we wrote in our statement, "available evidence indicates that the severity of the police department's actions – which includes a massive display of military-grade weaponry, the detention of journalists without charge, and damage to people's homes – outweighs any threat posed by protesters."

Our president and CEO, **Ronald Lindsay**, expanded on our official statement to put forward [some of his personal observations](#), including concerns about the way the U.S. arms its local police forces and the way our own community should exercise critical thinking when dealing with this issue. "As persons who pride themselves on basing claims on evidence," writes Ron, "I believe statements by skeptics and humanists about this tragic killing should be measured and should not indulge in characterizations that, at this stage, lack sufficient evidentiary support."



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

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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 main events:

Sept 24:

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

[more details»](#)

For more detailed information, see the HusBay [website](#):



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

## Practical Freethought

Thousands of your friends and neighbors in the Tampa Bay area feel the same as you. The Tampa Bay Coalition of Reason is a group of local organizations joined together to increase the growth, visibility and acceptance of nontheists throughout the area.

All of these groups share common ground, while each has its own particular emphasis and atmosphere. Some are focused on scientific inquiry and education. Others are focused on ethics and community, activism or the arts. Others monitor state/church separation and fight for your civil rights. All alike are committed to promoting the wider acceptance of a more rational and contemporary view of humanity and the universe we live in.

[TampaBayCoR.org](http://TampaBayCoR.org) is where secular people in the Tampa Bay area can discover groups to join, activities in which to participate, events to attend and like-minded people with which to socialize. In short, we want to help those who have grown beyond religious belief to find their philosophical home.

Those nonbelievers who are not ready, or who are unable, to “come out” can take comfort in knowing that they are not the only ones who accept the reality of a 100% natural world.

For the religious community, we want them to realize that, although non-theists reject the supernatural, we share with them compassionate human values that most religious believers embrace. In most ways, we are like them; hard working, taxpaying, moral citizens who care deeply about our families, our communities, our state and our country.

Non-theists are a large minority, larger than many minorities having much more political and cultural influence than we do. Based on the US Census Bureau estimate of Florida’s 2008 population and several polls, we estimate our statewide constituency at about 2,800,000 residents (more than 400,000 in the Tampa Bay quad-county area). TampaBayCoR has organized to increase our standing in the marketplace of ideas and to take our rightful place at the table of acceptance and equal rights. We invite all nontheists to support us in our efforts by joining and actively participating in one of TBCoR’s constituent groups.

Even if you never join a group or attend a meeting you can help Florida move forward by contributing to local or national participating organizations. And you can always help to further the nontheistic community just by standing up proudly for your reality-based life among your friends and family. It’s OK to not believe in gods. And, yes—not only can you be good without a god or religion, but in most cases, far better off. Millions of us are.

R.O.

## Holidays of Special Interest

- **2014** is the UN International Year of Family Farming
- September** is Classical Music Month
- BANNED BOOKS WEEK 2014: Sept. 21-27**
- 1st Labor Day
- 6th Fight Procrastination day
- 13th Defy Superstition Day
- 16th Mexican Independence Day
- 19th National Talk like a Pirate Day
- 26th Native American Day
- 28th Ask a Stupid Question Day
- 30th Blasphemy Rights 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

Editorial E-Mail: [tbcor@metrodirect.net](mailto:tbcor@metrodirect.net)

### 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.