

The Tampa Bay Coalition of Reason

Freethought News

Volume 2 No. 8 August 2013 Jim Peterson, Editor

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Tampa Bay Coalition of Reason

Calendar

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[Jim Peterson](#)

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Mark Brandt

America's most fearless public intellectual...

Daniel Dennett on Free Will



"There is nothing we have learned from neuroscience that undercuts the foundation for both the law of contract and criminal law." It is true that we do not have "ultimate responsibility" because our choices are always in some ways the result of things we didn't choose, such as our core personalities and the values we have absorbed from our society and families. But we have enough self-control to make sense of the difference between the psychopath and the criminal murder, the person who murders unwittingly in a sleepwalk and the cold-blooded killer."

Dennett is unashamedly expansive in a way that goes against the academic grain, trying to paint the bigger picture of the biggest issues of the day. In contrast, he believes: "One of the real problems in philosophy is that people can be a little bit myopic." The nadir of this narrow insularity came while Dennett was a graduate student in the 60s. "It was comically cautious and unambitious. The very idea of trying for a large view of anything! This was miniature little piecework stuff. I thought it was dreadful."

Philosophers can come in the role of the helpful clarifier or the challenging provocateur. Dennett sees himself as the former, and is "sometimes quite taken aback that people are so provoked". His best explanation for this is that a lot of what he does is about dissolving the mysteries that surround ideas such as selfhood and consciousness. "I think the people who don't like magic tricks explained to them are also the people who don't like free will explained to them, or consciousness. 'How rude! How philistine, to explain, to even try! How dare you!'" But Dan dares, and, like what he says or not, few do so with such intelligence, insight and flair.

Dr. Dennett is scheduled to be TBCoR's keynote speaker at Darwin Day- 2014 in February.



In April of this year CoR leader, Mark Brandt persuaded the City Council of Dunedin of the importance of honoring reason as a foundational value of our country's founding. On April 18th of this year a proclamation was issued, the first in the bay area. We anticipate many more.
JP

Tampa Bay Secular Celebrants

Humanist Memorials, Weddings, Rites of Passage. Contact:

[Rick O'Keefe](#), CFI certified,

[Virginia Kohl-Lieberman](#), AHA certified



[Click to connect!](#)

Center for Inquiry–Tampa Bay – August, 2013 Calendar

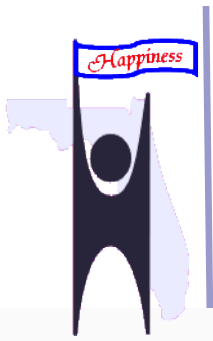
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This is produced from preliminary information. Check the individual Web sites to insure the event is being held, when and where We are not liable for changes, errors, or omissions. Compiled by Rick O'Keefe & Jim Peterson.

07-31, Wednesday, 7 PM	Clearwater UU Humanists & CFI Joint Meeting	SPECIAL EVENT! Seth Andrews, "The Thinking Atheist", book signing & social—in the Octagon. See UU Calendar : http://uuclearwater.org/newindex.htm
08-3, 1 st Saturday, 2 PM	CLEARWATER– The Humanist Society of the Suncoast	To get the details: See page 3 http://www.meetup.com/SuncoastHumanist/
08-, Thursday, 12 Noon <i>Not meeting in Aug</i>	S PINELLAS– CFI Skeptics/Humanists Social	Monthly skeptical social http://www.meetup.com/CFI-Tampa-Bay/
08-08, Thursday, 7 PM	N PINELLAS– Pinellas County Skeptics	Monthly skeptical dinner http://www.meetup.com/Pinellas-County-Skeptics/
08-11, Sunday, 1:30 PM	S TAMPA– Atheists of Florida–Tampa Chapter	Details & to RSVP : http://www.meetup.com/Atheists-of-Florida-Tampabay/
08-11, Sunday, 7 PM	BRANDON– Brandon Atheists	Skeptics in the Pub RSVP to Kathryn before Friday, May 10th, noon. http://www.meetup.com/Atheists-of-Brandon/
08-19, Monday, 6:30 PM	NW HILLSBOROUGH / CARROLLWOOD– Tampa Bay Thinkers	Lively philosophical discussion. RSVP at Web site: http://www.meetup.com/tampa-bay-thinkers/
08-17, 3 rd Saturday, 11 AM	TAMPA–Town & Country Library Tampa Humanist Association	Topic: see page 5 http://www.meetup.com/Tampa-Humanist-Association/
08-18. 3 rd Sunday, 5PM	CLEARWATER Humanist Society of the Suncoast	Social Dinner. See page 4 for details. RSVP
08-18 3 rd Sunday, 11AM	BRANDON– CFI Sunday Mixer	Lunch & discussion. Click to RSVP http://www.meetup.com/CFI-Tampa-Bay/
08-24, 4 th Saturday, 10:30 AM	NW HILLSBOROUGH / WESTCHASE– Readers Book Discussion	Book lovers meet monthly to discuss books we've all read RSVP & Details: http://www.meetup.com/CFI-Tampa-Bay/
08-30, Monday, 6 PM	OLDSMAR– CFI Skeptics/Humanists Supper	RSVP is required if you are coming. <i>Seating is limited to 20!</i> Click here before noon, Aug 28th http://www.meetup.com/CFI-Tampa-Bay/
08-TBA, see Web site	S. PINELLAS– Humanist film Meetup	Feature film TBA RSVP at: http://www.meetup.com/tampa-bay-thinkers/
09-17, Sunday, 12:30 PM	CLEARWATER– CFI, UU Humanists, & ACLU	SPECIAL EVENT! CFI presents Eddie Tabash, JD, "America was never a Christian Nation".
09-28, Saturday, 11 AM	SW TAMPA– Tampa Bay Skeptics	Tampa Bay Skeptics quarterly meeting Web site http://TampaBaySkeptics.org/
see Web site	Bradenton - Humanist Families of Tampa	Family outings and other activities. /www.facebook.com/groups/HumanistFamiliesTampa October: Disney in Orlando. https://www.facebook.com/events/188610644635424/
see Web site	SARASOTA – Humanists of Sarasota Bay Many events: Details: Web site http://sarasota.humanists.net/calendar.html	Many events: Details: Web site http://sarasota.humanists.net/calendar.html
Twice Monthly	TAMPA - Café Philo, Philosophical Discussion Group.	See Website : www.philotampa.org for all details.



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



The Humanist Society³ of the Suncoast News

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

Volume 21 No. 8 August, 2013



Global Warming is Real, so it follows that what we need now is not a presentation about combating critics (also called "denialists") or delving into science minutia. Instead, this is a whirlwind tour of climate change now, touching on its history, coming consequences, political obstacles and possible solutions, We see what effects are being experienced now, and what scientists calculate the future will hold for the average American, and the average human being. Proposed solutions are shown to be sometimes practical, sometimes inadequate, and often just batsh*t crazy.

Finally, our speaker makes a candid calculation of how he personally will need to change to make exactly a zero contribution to global warming. Following the presentation, the group is invited to contribute their own ideas during questions and answers.



Matt Cooper

Our September meeting is again cancelled because of library activities. But for the rest of the year, and through 2014 the venue is secure.



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. There is increasing hunger here in our community. Don't forget to bring canned and boxed food or checks for:

**Tampa Bay
Harvest**

**Please join us for
our next free and
open discussion.**

**Saturday,
August 3rd.
at 2 PM:**

**Clearwater
Countryside Library
2741 State Rd. 580
Clearwater, FL 33761**

Following our meeting, many of us will dine and argue together at the **Greek City Cafe**,

Latest books from the Matt Cooper Humanist Library. Members (only) can select the number of the book you wish to borrow, and send it to Marios Psomas at: marios_psomas@hotmail.com. Then pick it up at the next meeting. Be sure to return it!

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

AUTHOR

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Jay Wallgasper
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Eric Alderman
Sam Harris
Lester Brown
Christopher Hitchens
George Soros
David Niiose
Peter Irons
Diamond-Robinson
Christopher Hitchens
Douglas Rushkoff
Stephen Hawkins
Daniel Dennett
Corliss Lamont
Jack Huberman
Alan Taylor
John Fund
Darrel Ray
Editors of Free Inquiry
David Friedman
Malcom Gladwell
Ori, Rom Brafman
Steven Pinker
Christopher Hitchens
Thomas Friedman
William Poundstone
Alexa Kckearing
David Stamos
Michael Shermer
David Snick
Warren Buffett
Sam Harris
Michael Shermer
Steven Jay Gould
Francis Fukuyama

NEW!

51. Asimov's Guide to the Bible
 52. Autobiography of Mark Twain
 53. Science Friction
 54. Genius
 55. Inevitable Illusions
 56. Sex & God
 57. Me of little Faith
- Isaac Asimov
Harriet Smith, Editor
Michael Shermer
James Gleick
Piatrelli & Palmarini
Darryl Ray
Lewis Black

And More...



*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

The Moveable Feast for August will be at:

Thai Bay Restaurant

on **Sunday, May 19th at 5:00PM**. This restaurant is located at **1300 East Bay Dr. in Largo**, near Highland st. and features many Asian style dinners in the \$10+ range. Their peanut sauce is rated as one of the best in the area.

Please reserve by August 18th with Glenn Paul at 727-595-3347 or by email at kpaul29@tampabay.rr.com

Laugh Lines Medical Moments

A man comes into the ER and yells 'My wife's going to have her baby in the cab.' I grabbed my stuff, rushed out to the cab, lifted the lady's dress and began to take off her underwear. Suddenly I noticed that there were several cabs - - - and I was in the wrong one.
Submitted by Dr. Mark MacDonald ,
San Francisco

At the beginning of my shift I placed a stethoscope on an elderly and slightly deaf female patient's anterior chest wall. 'Big breaths,' . . . I instructed. 'Yes, they used to be,' . . . replied the patient.
Submitted by a Doctor in Seattle , WA

One day I had to be the bearer of bad news when I told a wife that her husband had died of a massive myocardial infarct. Not more than five minutes later, I heard her reporting to the rest of the family that he had died of a ' massive internal fart. '
Submitted by Dr. Susan Steinberg

During a patient's two week follow-up appointment with his cardiologist, he informed me, his doctor, that he was having trouble with One of his medications. 'Which one?' . . . I asked. ' The patch... The Nurse told me to put on a new one every six hours and now I ' m running out of places to put it! '
I had him quickly undress and discovered what I hoped I wouldn't see. Yes, the man had over fifty patches on his body! Now, the instructions include removal of the old patch before applying a new one.
Submitted by a Doctor in Norfolk , VA

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

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Beth Maxie
Jim Peterson, President
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Sidney Goetz Dec. Bob Collette, Glenn
Paul, Don Acenbrach Dec., Jackie
Jordan, Brent Yaciw, Mike Hubbard,
Matt Cooper, Jim Butler

~*~*~*~*~*

Jordan Williams, Publisher.

Jim Peterson, Editor

E-Mail us at:

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.

7606 Paula Dr., Suite 120
Tampa, FL 33615-4116
813-273-3652

Tampa Humanist Association

Saturday, **August 17th**, 2013, 11:00 PM

Look for the Tampa Humanist Assoc. sign.



Because the space at the Jimmie B. Keele Library is unavailable due to construction for the next 8 months or so, we will meet at the

Town & Country Library on, August 20th at 10:30 til 12:30. We will be in Community Room A on the first floor next to the bookstore. The library is at 7606 Paula Dr., Suite 120 Tampa, FL 33615-4116 PH. 813-273-3652

[MAP](#)

Our topic:

Racism: America's endemic dis - ease

How does a humanist encounter and overcome this barrier?

A panel discussion will examine this long standing, multifaceted problem from the standpoint of a humanist philosophy having as a goal the embrace of all mankind in the bonds of universal friendship.



The Tampa Humanist Association is the only AHA Humanist group in Hillsborough County. This is a county of more than 1 million people. If statistical averages are correct, than at least 150,000 of those people do not support conventional institutions of religion. Currently, our roles do not number more than 20. I think we can agree that there is room for growth.

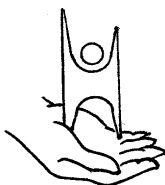
We experienced a major setback with the death of president and cofounder Rob Byrch, but with still enthusiastic members and board, and support from our sister organization, the Humanist Society of the Suncoast, we continue to offer the people of Tampa, a local Humanist option.

Join today, or renew your dues. Only \$25/ year or \$35 with the Happy Humanist pin. \$5 more includes spouse + 2 pins.

A Humanist Helping Hand

Several members have formed a caring response team to help members of our Humanist family who may need supportive practical help. This is an independent group, not affiliated directly with the Humanist Society. But their efforts are wholly consistent with the Humanist outlook. Contact a helper below if you or another member needs help or wishes to participate.

- ◆ Terri Eckstien (813) 891-9399
- ◆ Jerry Moore (727) 455-4973
- ◆ Nan Owens (727) 424-2558



~ **Time to Renew** ~ ⁵

*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.

_ Contribution for growth

New!



*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 to:

**Glenn Paul, Asst. Treasurer
Humanist Society of the Suncoast
2507 First St. #E
Indian Rocks Beach
33785-3010**

Humanist Quotes

“The value of life lies not in its length,
but in the use we make of it.”

– Michel de Montaigne (1533-
92), *Essays*

8/13



Atheists of Florida



Atheism sprinting into the future!

Chair, Tracy Thomas, President, Ed Golly
Vice President, Frank Prahl, Treasurer, Nan Owens

AoF outreach programs can be found at our [Meetup](#) site. Current newsletters are **available**: Write Athaiflc@aol.com. 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](#).

Jonathan Smith is scheduled for August 11th 1:30 PM at 5103 S. Westshore Blvd. in Tampa. He'll discuss

“Are Science and Religion Compatible?”

Dr. Smith is vice president of Florida Citizens for Science. Our first meeting of every quarter (Jan., April, July, October) is a potluck; the address information is available only to members of our [Meetup](#) since it is usually in a private home.

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.

Look for exciting new programs and internet webcasts (audio & video) in the offing very soon. 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. At the same time, 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.

We may have only one issue, but it is undoubtedly the most consequential one in the life of every individual person.

As an institution committed to bring the enormously prolific benefits of the atheist proposition to ever larger numbers of our citizens, we desire to enable an enlightened majority of truly free people to turn their intelligence toward the real problems we all must face.

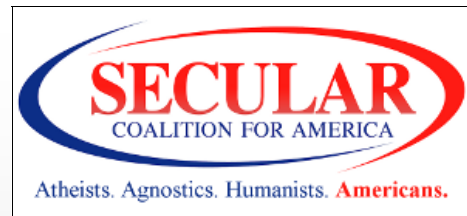


Bank of Wisdom
Electronic publishing to make the world better

6

These Rare Books are Amazing, and only a penny a page. Bank of Wisdom is listing thousands of Rare and Suppressed books in PDF format. These eBooks have a picture of every page so exact reliability is maintained. Yet these eBooks can be Searched and the Cut-and-Paste feature is active, these books can be used for scholarly research, and quoted by page and paragraph, just like the actual book. And for the casual reader there is no end of amazing and interesting facts and ideas that will enlighten, educate, astound, and elevate your view of History and the World. Most important we specialize in books to un-brainwash. The cost of most PDF instant downloads is \$.01 per page. (\$1.00 per hundred page book.) Set up your account here:

<http://bankofwisdom.com>



**National Secular Movement Update
Newsletter and Call**

**Call Every Thursday from 12PM - 12:30PM (ET)
Phone Number: 559-726-1300 Code: 199568**

<http://secular.org/>



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 student organization is open to anyone of any religious persuasion or personal beliefs. Write Rodrick Colbert or freethinkersusf@gmail.com for details.

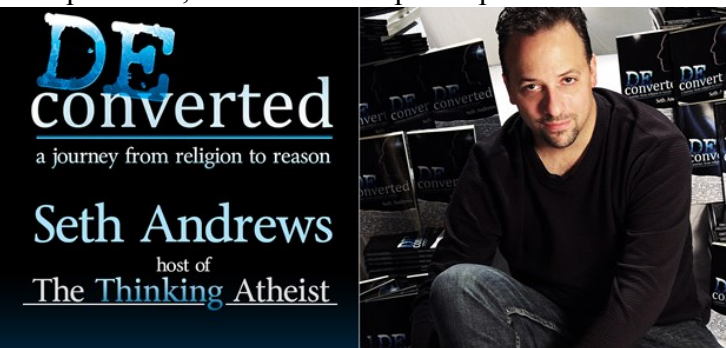
Clearwater UU Humanists

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 Mark Brandt mwbrandt@mail.usf.edu Web site: www.uuclearwater.org

UU Humanists will have their monthly meeting on September 15, Sunday at 12:30 PM: Ryan Cragan's presentation is based on his book, *What You Don't Know About Religion (but should)*, Clearwater, Florida and will be held at the UU Clearwater Octagon. He has a PhD in Sociology and is an Associate Professor of Sociology at the University of Tampa. Also, check out this special presentation:



WHAT: Presentation / Book Signing / Meet & Greet
WHERE: CLEARWATER, FLORIDA
Unitarian Universalists of Clearwater
"The Octagon" 2470 Nursery Road Clearwater, FL 33764
WHEN: WEDNESDAY JULY 31, 2013 7PM

Free and open to the public.
Presented by UU Humanists and Center for Inquiry
Details at: www.thethinkingatheist.com/tour

Life Ring Secular Recovery group meets every Monday evening at 8p.m., at Sylvan Abbey United Methodist Church at 2817 Sunset Point Road, Clearwater. The meeting takes place in a modular building at the back of the parking lot. This is a recovery support group for alcoholics and drug addicts who do not believe in, or feel comfortable with, the idea of a higher power as strongly encouraged in Alcoholics Anonymous. If you have any questions, feel free to call 727-772-3360.

Advertisement... Housekeeper/cleaning person wanted about three times a month on Saturdays. Just the usual: bed linen changing, wash, vacuum, dust, cleaning bath and kitchen sort of things, also some driving for errands. A primary requirement is that this person live in the North Tampa area. The pay will be negotiable. See: [P. Walters](mailto:P.Walters) (813) 988-5977



Clearwater, Florida

FLORIDA REPORT

Civil liberties news in the Sunshine State



Dear ACLU Supporter,

Is your school district following federal guidelines stating that Social Security numbers are not required for enrollment?

Last year, the ACLU of Florida discovered half of Florida school districts were not in compliance with the federal standards. We updated the report card for 2013, and although not every low scoring district from last year improved, there is reason for optimism.

[Find out how your school district did in our 2013 Social Security Number Privacy Report Card.](#)

Besides being a violation of privacy, requesting Social Security numbers for enrollment has long been a barrier for immigrant children and their families who fear a review of immigration status. However, the Supreme Court says that undocumented children living in the United States cannot be barred from public elementary or secondary schools based on immigration status.

Based on that ruling, the Department of Justice and the Department of Education advised school districts: "A district may not deny enrollment to a student if he or she (or his or her parent or guardian) chooses not to provide a social security number."

These rules help make sure no kid is kept out of school just because of privacy concerns or their or a family member's immigration status. Last year, too many Florida school districts weren't being honest with parents about what the law requires they give to enroll their kids in school. This year, many schools improved their scores. Was yours one of them?

[See just how much Florida's school districts have improved over the past year — and if yours didn't.](#)



**People
Over Politics**



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.

Freedom of Thought for Our World, and Our Future

Tampa Bay CoR
TAMPA BAY COALITION OF REASON



TBPCC is an autonomous adjunct to the Humanist Society.
Click www.tampabaypostcarbon.com for more. 06/13

Promoting Action & Unity in the Tampa Bay Area

Freethought Organizations in the Tampa Bay Area:
Americans United,* 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 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



A new book by Post Carbon Institute fellow, **Richard Heinberg** is now available from Amazon.

The rapid spread of hydraulic fracturing ("fracking") has temporarily boosted US natural gas and oil production...and sparked a massive environmental backlash in communities across the country. The fossil fuel industry is trying to sell fracking as the biggest energy development of the century, with slick promises of American energy independence and benefits to local economies.

SNAKE OIL casts a critical eye on the oil industry hype that has hijacked America's energy conversation. This is the first book to look at fracking from both economic and environmental perspectives, informed by the most thorough analysis of shale gas and oil drilling data ever undertaken. Is fracking the miracle cure-all to our energy ills, or a costly distraction from the necessary work of reducing our fossil fuel dependence?

This is the first book to look at fracking from both economic and environmental perspectives, informed by the most thorough analysis of shale gas and oil drilling data ever undertaken. Is fracking the miracle cure-all to our energy ills, or a costly distraction from the necessary work of reducing our fossil fuel dependence?

A copy can be found on Amazon by [clicking here](#).

The Humanist Press



Does Religion Really Make Us Better People?

Cheating or Leveling the Playing Field? Rethinking How We Ask Questions about Religion in the United States

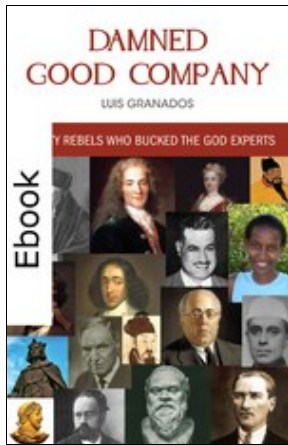
Ryan T. Cragun and Barry A. Kosmin

Reprinted from the current *Free Inquiry* magazine

Here's a question you won't find on a Gallup or Pew survey: "How much do you *hate* religious proselytizing?" Wouldn't it be nice to know how Americans really feel about being evangelized? Don't expect the answer soon! The problem is that neither major polling organizations nor such major funders of research as the Templeton and Lilly foundations are likely to sponsor a questionnaire that is biased against religion.¹ They have reputations to protect, after all. But this does not serve science well. By not asking such questions, major polling organizations and funders—several of which have close ties to conservative Christianity—are actively supporting a cultural bias in the United States that favors religion.² The questions asked by researchers and academics about religion are almost universally geared toward evaluating *how religious people are*, which means that we do not know the extent to which Americans dislike or hold negative opinions about religion.

Another factor that limits our ability to measure religiosity and attitudes toward religion accurately is the structure of the questions used. Many questions asked in national opinion polls are either poorly worded or intentionally framed to make it seem as though people are more religious than they really are. A good example is the recent WIN-Gallup *International Global Index of Religiosity and Atheism*, which received widespread media attention.³ The question that it asked of thousands of people around the world was, "Irrespective of whether you attend a place of worship or not, would you say you are a religious person, not a religious person, or a convinced atheist?" This isn't the worst question we've ever seen, but it's pretty bad. First, the three options are presented as mutually exclusive, when they are not. Almost all convinced atheists are also not religious. What was the intention of the survey researchers in forcing people to choose between "not a religious person" and "a convinced atheist" when most atheists are both? What's more, the addition of one word in that question—*convinced*—undermines the reliability of the entire survey. What is a "convinced atheist" convinced of? How are convinced atheists different from unconvinced or semi-convinced atheists? It seems as though the word *convinced* was added in order to reduce the number of people who report that they are atheists. It adds an additional criterion to the choice "atheist" such that some atheists may believe it does not apply to them. We think it perfectly reasonable to call into question the addition of "convinced" to "atheist" when no such qualifier was added to "religious person." Why weren't the researchers who conducted this survey interested in "convinced" religious people?

While this survey was probably well-intentioned (and appreciated by those of us who do research on atheism and the nonreligious), we're very skeptical of the *Global Index of Religiosity and Atheism*, as it likely underestimates the number of atheists around the world. Another example of the subtle asymmetry in question wording that favors religion occurred in the much-quoted *National Study of Youth and Religion* by Christian Smith of Notre Dame University. For example, religious youth were asked, "In the last year, how much, if at all, have you had doubts about whether your religious beliefs *are true*?" But the same question was not asked of nonreligious youth. "For the rest of the article and the charts, visit http://www.secularhumanism.org/index.php?section=fi&page=cragun_kosmin_33_4

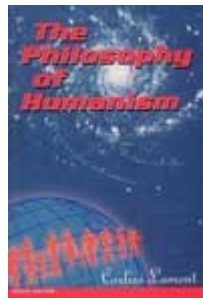


Damned Good Company
By Luis Granados

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.](#)

The Philosophy of Humanism - Dr. Corliss Lamont

In a work that is a standard text and reference in the ongoing international discussion around secular humanism, Lamont offers an argument for a philosophy that advocates for happiness in this life rather than hope for an undefined afterlife. Paperback, 371 pages. \$16.95

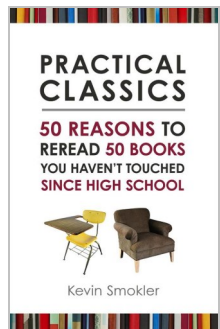


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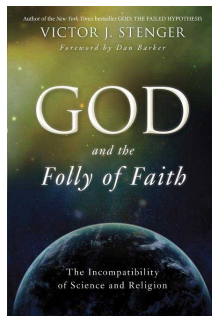
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God and the Folly of Faith: The Incompatibility of Science and Religion

By Victor Stenger, Ph.D.

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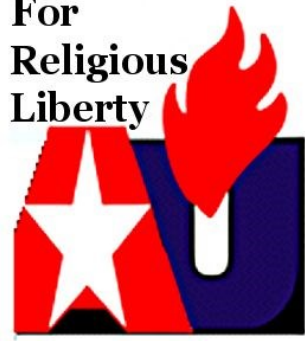
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Read Humanist Periodicals: The world's leading minds can be read at: [The Humanist](#), [Free Inquiry](#), [Free Mind](#), [Humanist Perspectives](#), [Skeptical Inquirer](#), [Secular Humanist Bulletin](#), [The Florida Humanist Journal](#), [Skeptic](#),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

A Tradition of Advocacy

**For
Religious
Liberty**



**Americans United for Separation of
Church & State**
~ Pinellas County Chapter ~

We regret to note that the chapter has now closed. But there is still a need for an active chapter of this outstanding organization in the Tampa Bay area. If you want to help build one, Email [AU national](mailto:AU.national), or check the web at <http://www.au.org/> Let us know if help needed.



Compassion & Choices
Choice & Care at the End of Life.

**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

Contact: Chris
(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,

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 at: <http://www.facebook.com/groups/HumanistFamiliesTampa/>

Today's topic is:

Freedom and Responsibility

I hope your summer is treating you well. As you know, America just celebrated Independence day. I wrote a column for my local paper about Freedom and Responsibility - see here: <http://www.bradenton.com/2013/07/06/4597623/commentary-thoughts-on-freedom.html>

For a Humanist, the concepts of Freedom and Responsibility are intertwined. We understand that we are autonomous individuals and we thrive on that. But it is a socially embedded autonomy. We understand that our actions impact, not only ourselves, but others as well. So while we can act however we want, our actions have consequences in the real world and we will have to live with those consequences. Hence, our emphasis on personal responsibility.

Freedom without responsibility is a form of hedonism. And hedonism isn't Humanism.

What's Been Going On?

I got to speak at the American Humanist Association. Got my photo taken with Richard Dawkins even. It was a wonderful opportunity to meet and hang out with my fellow Humanists. One of the people I met was Jane Roberts who runs 34 Million Friends. They raise money to support women's reproductive health care access around the world. I am seriously impressed with her and made a donation. I encourage you to do the same - <http://www.34millionfriends.org/>

I wanted to share with you a link to an article about Dr Who as a Humanist parable. I am a huge fan of Dr Who and one of the reasons is because the story lines are humanistic - enjoy - <http://whatculture.com/tv/why-doctor-who-season-7-is-a-humanist-parable.php>

Jennifer Hancock

No Local chapters. See <http://www.instituteforscienceandhumanvalues.net/>



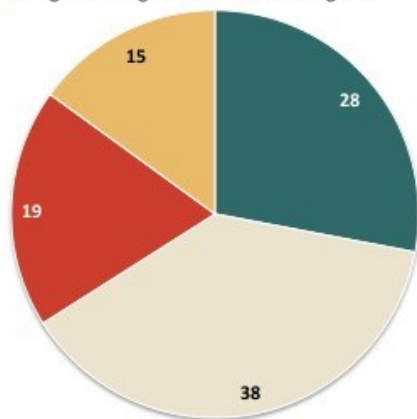
“There is an urgent need to connect the leading ideas of secular humanism and the spirit of pragmatism to the broader culture, not only in the United States but throughout the world. ISHV has responded to that need. Following in the tradition begun by Paul Kurtz, it

contemporary world by framing them in terms of perennial ethical concerns. Attempting to comprehend the human condition, and, on that basis, to improve human lives is a central task for our times. ISHV has taken up that task by advancing the positive understanding of scientific inquiry and of secular humanism, and I wholeheartedly endorse its important work.”

--**Philip Kitcher**, John Dewey Professor of Philosophy at Columbia University and author of many books, including *Living with Darwin*, *The Ethical Project*, and *Science in a Democratic Society*.

Religious Orientation Scale

■ Religious Conservative ■ Religious Moderate
■ Religious Progressive ■ Nonreligious



An article from the [Religion News Service](#) about recent social research, seems to strongly suggest that religion is about as dynamic a social phenomenon as any other. Indeed, the pie chart above shows that only 28 percent of responding adults thought of themselves as conservative in their religious views.

Knowledge and decaying traditions continue to erode the popularity of orthodoxy. The question yet remains of what will become of our species as the hand of the past slowly releases its grip on our political and social institutions. This is where we come in. JP

AHLC News

Secular Recovery Programs to Be Approved by Massachusetts Medical Officials

July 1, 2013 – The AHLC has received confirmation that MA medical officials will clarify language making it clear that secular addiction treatment programs are available to health professionals under scrutiny.

• Federal Judge Grants American Humanist Association Motion to Stop Lake Elsinore Religious War Memorial

July 16, 2013 – As part of an AHLC lawsuit, a federal judge has blocked the City of Lake Elsinore, CA, from erecting on public property a monument depicting a soldier kneeling in prayer before a Christian cross.

Find out more about end of life issues. Everyone has to face this final question. But there are choices not provided by conventional institutions. For more information see: <http://hemlockflorida.org/index.htm> & www.compassionandchoices.org




CAMP INQUIRY
IMAGINE. INVESTIGATE. ILLUMINATE.

Click to register for this year Ages 7-16, Holland, NY



Compassion & Choices
Choice & Care at the End of Life.

Join CFI's Humanist book club, a monthly discussion. Contact [David Vangsness](#) for details. [CLICK here for National Events](#) To become part of our important work; to make a difference, become a [Member](#).



Rick O'Keefe

Announcing a new opportunity for your atheist, freethought, humanist, secular, or skeptic group

BECOME PART OF THE CFI NETWORK

The Center for Inquiry has a broad mandate to promote and defend science, reason, and secular values. The CFI tent is big, so the CFI Network links together new and existing independent groups of *many* varieties—atheists, freethinkers, humanists, secularists, *and* skeptics—in order to **maximize cultural and political impact**.

The CFI Network is also a way for us to share the benefits of our international leadership and structure with local groups, while allowing those groups to remain independent and true to their individual interests. At the same time, it creates an opportunity for local groups to coalesce their grassroots energy and efforts behind national and even international campaigns.

The CFI Network is open to local and independent groups from anywhere. There is no fee to become part of the CFI Network, and it's easy to apply. To begin, read the program details below and discuss them with your group's leadership and members. If the CFI Network program aligns with the mission and purpose of your group, [submit your information via this link to start the application process](#).

Whether the focus has been atheism, freethought, humanism, secularism, or skepticism, local groups and large national nonprofit organizations have worked for decades to bring people together to unite behind their specific causes. After all, we realize that if we are to make an impact on our cultural and political landscapes, we need to combine the voices—and organize the efforts!—of thousands and thousands of people.

Historically, organizing the work of so many different people and groups has proven to be very difficult. As a result, our combined impact isn't actually combined—it's sectional, which of course means that it's not as powerful as it could be. As we all witness every day, it's certainly not as powerful as it *needs* to be.

There must be a system that can bring together all the members of the "reality-based" community. Whether we identify as atheists, freethinkers, humanists, secularists, or skeptics, we all share basic values rooted in inquiry, naturalism, and the scientific method—values that urgently need to be demonstrated and advanced in the broader culture.

There must be a system that can unite all of our voices when success requires our voice to be strong.

Benefits for CFI Network groups include:

Association with an internationally recognized organization and brand, an association that provides the opportunity to expand your group's reputation and influence at the local level, in the broader movement, and, importantly, beyond the movement.

Access to the comprehensive CFI Outreach Grassroots Organizing Guide, with over 150 pages of helpful tips and tricks about local group organizing. The guide also includes dozens of sample event signs and advertisements, press releases, and volunteer organizing materials. It will be updated on a regular basis.

Access to new CFI Event Kits produced every quarter to help groups celebrate some of the most important occasions in the atheist/humanist/skeptic calendar, including Carl Sagan Day, Darwin Day, International Blasphemy Rights Day, and Ten Amendments Day. Event Kits will also give instructions on how to host major events such as solstice parties, superstition bashes, "Ask an Atheist" panels, and Ingersoll oratory contests. Event kits include posters/flyers that can be customized with a group's event details, sample press releases, educational materials and background information for each event, suggested activities, basic logos and imagery for promotional items, etc. CFI Network groups may also purchase event-themed products from CFI (available at cost), which they can then sell to raise funds to support their groups.

Improved outreach: in addition to listing CFI Network groups and contact information on its website, CFI will promote to its contacts any major regional events hosted by CFI Network groups.

Improved advocacy: by working with CFI headquarters, CFI Network groups will be able to utilize CFI's online advocacy platform to lead regional public policy and awareness campaigns—for example lobbying a local school board to adopt an evidence-based science curriculum or petitioning a governor to remove a Ten Commandments monument from the statehouse. Members of CFI Network groups will also be activated to participate in CFI's broader public policy initiatives, making it possible for them to impact national policy and even international issues via CFI's NGO status at the United Nations.

Educational resources, including complimentary copies of CFI's publications/magazines and related discussion guides, mission-related brochures, and sample reading materials.

In exchange for the above benefits—indeed, in order to get the most out of these benefits—groups in the CFI Network are expected to: Clearly acknowledge the group's participation in the CFI Network, both in event promotion and activism and if/when local media is involved. For example, groups should include the CFI Network logo on certain promotional materials and on their websites or, when giving the group's name, spokespersons should add the suffix, "part of the CFI Network" when appropriate. (E.g.: "Carl Sagan Day is sponsored by Freethought Arizona, part of the CFI Network.")

Encourage local group members to become members of CFI. Encourage local group members to sign up to receive email notices about CFI news and events and to participate in CFI activism campaigns. If your local group would like to increase its regi effectiveness while also contributing to national and international efforts promoting science, reason, and secular values,

Coming to Orlando in September...

Neil deGrasse Tyson

This just in:
Latest Discoveries in the Universe

September 12, 2013 7:30PM

Warden Arena, Alford Sports Center
Rollins College in Winter Park, FL

WPI Events are free and open to the public.
No tickets or reservations required.



Tips on writing letters to your local editor:

Know the policy of the paper regarding publishing letters to the editor. Some papers have specific requirements about the length of letters, whether they are typed or handwritten, and will not publish a letter if you do not include your full name, address, and phone number (although your address and phone number would never be printed).

Be timely. A letter to the editor has the best chance of being printed if it is in response to a recent article, op-ed, or editorial (If the letter is a response, be sure to mention the name and date of the article in the first line of your letter.). You can also capitalize on recent news, events, or anniversaries. For example, the anniversary of an Act or other landmark legislation, the introduction of new related legislation, or the release of a new report that has implications on the issue provide good hooks for writing a letter to the editor.

Stay on message. Be sure your letters are concise, informative, and to the point. Focus on one subject. Keep the length to no more than three or four paragraphs. Make your first line short and compelling, and do not be afraid to be controversial.

Get personal. When it comes to local or regional publications, community is an especially big focus for newspapers. Editors often prefer, and thus print, letters that demonstrate local relevance. Also, by showing the importance of your message to local issues, it will likely have a greater impact on readers.

- Use local statistics. Use personal stories. * Use names of legislators or other public officials where relevant. * Use your credentials.
 - * If you have expertise in the area you are writing about, state it. * **Follow up:** Do not be discouraged if your letter is not printed.
 - * You can send a revised letter with a different angle at a later date.



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

And always, there is the occasional random act of Kindness.

Visit our facility on 1510 Barry Rd. in Clearwater: Map: <http://tampa-bay.org/map.html> **Doc (Dave Dockery)** President, Find us at: www.tampa-bay.org
We repair our members computers!



What is Tampa Bay Skeptics?

Founded in 1988, Tampa Bay Skeptics is a nonprofit educational and scientific organization devoted to the critical examination of **paranormal** and **fringe-science** claims, and the dissemination of factual information about such claims. In 2004, TBS became a Special Interest Group of the **Center For Inquiry–Tampa Bay**.

We encourage those who wish to help further the cause of skepticism to join TBS! Annual membership includes four issues of *Tampa Bay Skeptics Report*, each snail mailed to you in advance of our quarterly meetings (last Saturday of every March, June, September, and December). Members also receive a 30% discount on any **Prometheus Books** purchased through TBS. Make your \$15 check payable to "Tampa Bay Skeptics" and mail to:

CFI c/o O'Keefe, 4011 S. Manhattan Ave., Box 139, Tampa, FL 33611-1277
Or click to simply join our **TBS e-mail list(s)?** Or order **TBS T-shirts?**



<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 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

- **2013** International Year of Water Cooperation (UN)
- **August** is National Eye Exam Month
- **2nd** Ice Cream Sandwich Day
- **4th.** Friendship Day
- **6th.** Wiggle Your Toes Day
- **12th** Middle Child’s Day
- **14th** [National Creamsicle Day](#)
- **15th** Relaxation Day
- **27th** Global Forgiveness Day



TBCoR Leadership Team 2013

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

Be Included!

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