



# The Tampa Bay Coalition of Reason

# Freethought News

Volume 1 No. 7 Dec. 2012 Jim Peterson, Editor

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### Tampa Bay Coalition of Reason

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Rick O'Keefe

#### Web site

Jim Peterson

#### Newsletter

[Jim Peterson](mailto:Jim.Peterson@metrodirect.net)

#### Special Projects

Mark Brandt

## Be Included!

Group Leaders are invited to send items for this Newsletter. Please send them to:

[Jamestp@metrodirect.net](mailto:Jamestp@metrodirect.net)

For calendar items, include as much info as possible.

## Winterfest

### Join us for a time of renewal

Jack Frost, Mithra, Mr. Cringle, the Snow Maiden, Jesus, and other traditional personalities associated with Saturnalia likely won't be showing up when Tampa Bay's free thinkers get together to share their own festive take on the calendar renewal known as Winterfest. We plan to do this thing at **7 PM at the UUC social hall on Saturday, January 19th.**

The idea is to get together to renew old friendships, form new ones, share ideas and experiences, and get ready for another year of expanding the free community.

Such activities require the supplementation of suitable food and drink (BYOAB) to get the juices flowing. And for that, we are asking everyone to bring some of their best and biggest gourmet pot luck specialties. What ever you make or bring should provide portions for at least 10 people.

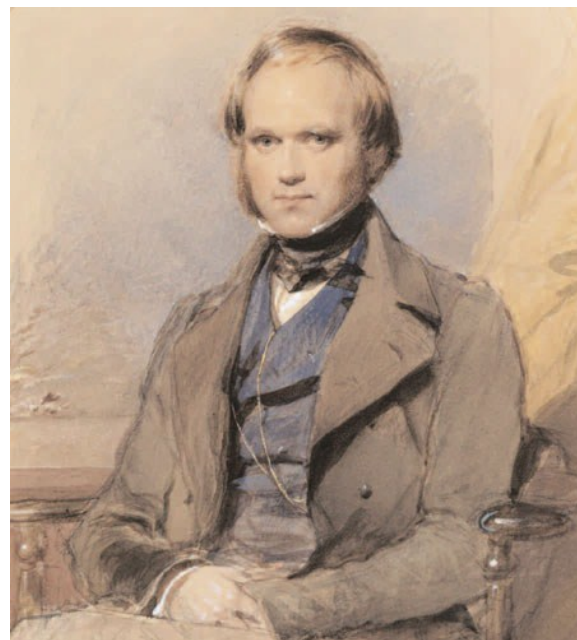
Remember, Humanism is thought to have its start with the first person to ask, "Why?" But more formally, with the thoughts of the Greek philosopher, Epicurus of Samos about 3000 years ago.

He advised that the point of human life was enjoyment and pleasure, and the highest among the virtues that produced that end was friendship.

This will be our principle end also. But while Epicurus strongly felt that this greatest pleasure derived from the reduction of desire for mere acquisition, and obtained by philosophical contemplation, he was also quoted as saying, "The beginning and root of all good is to make the stomach happy: wisdom and learning are founded on that." And while he was said to be quite content with a piece of cheese, we are not bound to be limited to that commodity only.

On this basis, we seek to promote friendship through good eats, and good conversation with good company.

Thus, you are invited to share this experience with us. To let us know what treat you plan to contribute; call Mark at (727) 733-7855.



### CHARLES DARWIN DAY - A DAY OF SCIENCE

Darwin Day is more than the celebration of a great scientist's contribution to biology; it marks the signal accomplishment that fairly began the great expansion of human knowledge in our time that we call science.

This is important to recognize, since the scientific enterprise has become the subject of political manipulation and religious intolerance. Though this seems absurd in the twenty first century, it is nonetheless a fact of life, and a struggle humanists shall engage as the century unfolds.

To set a context and a course from here, the Tampa Bay Coalition of Reason will Present,

## Darwin's Gift

**A half day exploration of the meaning and potential of Science.**

**Saturday, February 9th 2013**

Among our expert speakers will be:

\***Sean Faircloth**, of the Dawkins Institute

\***Jim Strayer**, Biologist, Univ. Michigan

\***Ryan Gragun**, Ph. D. Univ. Tampa

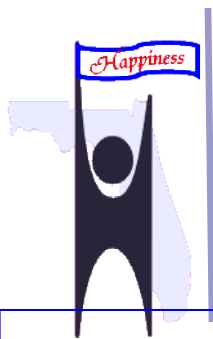
# TAMPA BAY COALITION OF REASON – DECEMBER 2012 CALENDAR

This is produced from preliminary information. Check to insure the event is being held, when and where ....

We are not liable for errors or omissions. Compiled by *Rick O'Keefe*, with *Dale Friedley & Jim Peterson*.

Check for more events + details on the Coalition of Reason Web site at: <http://tampabay.unitedcor.org/tampabay/>

12-01, Saturday, 2 PM		<b>CLEARWATER– The Humanist Society of the Suncoast</b>	Countryside Library 2741 S.R 580 Clearwater, FL <a href="#">Map</a>	Program: See <a href="#">page 3</a>
12-06 Thursday, 6 PM		<b>St. Petersburg ACLU</b>	Hilton Hotel Bayfront. 333 1st St. S. St. Petersburg	<b>Annual Civil Liberties Dinner Honoring the Holocaust Museum &amp; Politifact</b> See <a href="#">page 7</a> for details.
12-09, Sunday, 7 PM		<b>BRANDON– Joint CFI &amp; Brandon Atheists</b>	The Brass Tap 775 Brandon Town Center Brandon, FL <a href="#">map</a>	<a href="#">RSVP</a> to Kathryn before Friday, Nov. 10th, noon. Ask the host for the Brandon Atheists table.
2012-12-09, Sunday, 1:30 PM		<b>TAMPA– Atheists of Florida–Tampa Chapter</b>	Atheists of Florida Office 5103 South Westshore Blvd Tampa, FL (just four blocks south of Gandy Blvd., west side.)	<b>RSVP</b> Website (legal & official): <a href="http://aofla.wordpress.com/">http://aofla.wordpress.com/</a>
12-13, Thursday, 7 PM		<b>S. PINELLAS– Pinellas County Skeptics</b>	To be determined. See the <a href="#">website</a> .	Monthly skeptical dinner
12-15, Saturday, Time to be determined		<b>TAMPA– Tampa Humanist Association</b>	Jimmie B. Keele Library 2902 W. Bearss Ave Tampa, FL <a href="#">MAP</a>	See below. <a href="http://www.meetup.com/Tampa-Humanist-Association/">http://www.meetup.com/Tampa-Humanist-Association/</a>
12-15, Saturday, 11 AM		<b>NEW TAMPA– Art Film Meetup</b>	Jimmie B. Keele Library 2902 W. Bearss Avenue Tampa, FL <a href="#">map</a>	Dale Friedly hosts a film & discussion of <b><i>Humanism in Film</i></b> <a href="mailto:DaleFried@aol.com">RSVP: DaleFried@aol.com</a>
12-16, Sunday 3:30 PM		<b>BRANDON– CFI Skeptic/Humanist Mixer</b>	Genghis Grill 910 Providence Ave Brandon FL <a href="#">map</a>	<b>Details:</b> <a href="http://www.meetup.com/CFI-Tampa-Bay/">http://www.meetup.com/CFI-Tampa-Bay/</a> <b>RSVP</b> to Carl at (813) 661-0633
12-18, Sunday 12:30 PM		<b>CLEARWATER– UU Congregation Humanists ,</b>	Unitarian-Universalist Congregation of Clearwater 2470 Nursery Road Clearwater, FL 33764 <a href="#">map</a>	The presentation will be announced. A discussion will follow. For information, contact Bill Norsworthy (687-9867) or Mark Brandt (560- 0971) or <a href="mailto:mwbrandt@mail.usf.edu">mwbrandt@mail.usf.edu</a> . All welcome.
None for December.		<b>DUNEDIN– CFI Skeptics/Humanists Social</b>	TBA	<b>RSVP is required</b> if you are coming. <i>Seating is limited to 12!</i> <a href="#">Click here</a> before noon, xxx (Sunday). <a href="#">Map</a> , <a href="#">menu</a> , etc.
See the website for any listing.		<b>CARROLLWOOD– Tampa Bay Thinkers Discussion Group</b>	Carrollwood Cultural Center 4537 Lowell Rd, Carrollwood, FL 33618 (NW Tampa) <a href="#">MAP</a>	None scheduled for December. <b>RSVP at Web site.</b>
See the website for any listing.		<b>Humanist Families of Tampa</b>	Venues change.	Family outings and other activities are ongoing. For more information, see our Facebook page <a href="#">Here</a>
Annual meeting in March.		<b>Americans United for Separation of Church &amp; State</b>	TBA	<b>Details forthcoming</b>



# The Humanist Society 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](http://www.suncoasthumanist.com)

Volume 20 No. 11

December, 2012

## Florida Consumer Action Network

### Budget Showdown. What is at stake and what can we do to help.

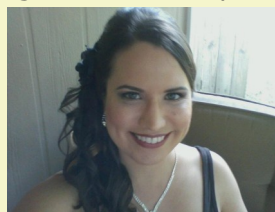
The 2012 elections are over, and the mandate was clear: **“We’re all in this together. Defeated, You’re on your own.”** Now, in the looming fiscal showdown, we must make certain Congress gets the message.

Congress needs to act by early next year to avoid a automatic cuts that would trigger a double-dip recession and millions more out of work This will be a showdown between two visions: prosperity for working families and the middle-class or more for millionaires and CEOs. With so much at stake, we need to send a unified message to our members of congress to pick prosperity for all. Here are resources to learn more about what’s at stake and to take action.

FCAN is committed to building coalitions of diverse organizations, community leaders, and concerned citizens to build a unified and powerful progressive movement. We must work together, network and discover where our interests intersect, and fight for a more equal and just Florida. For more information, go to [www.fcan.org](http://www.fcan.org)

### Debbie King, Development Director, FCAN

Debbie earned a Bachelor's of Science degree from the University of South Florida in 2004 and has been with FCAN in multiple paid and volunteer capacities since 2005. Debbie believes the greatest most urgent, and far reaching challenge we currently face is organizing for both national and international commitments to address climate change. As a community organizer, she is is determined to fight for environmental and economic justice in partnership with fellow progressives who share the same values. Debbie has lived in Florida for over 30 years, enjoys growing her own food, and currently resides in North Tampa with her daughter, 2 dogs and 2 cats.



### Humanistic Psychology

During the 1950s, humanistic psychology began as a reaction to psychoanalysis and behaviorism, which dominated psychology at the time. Psychoanalysis was focused on understanding the unconscious motivations that drive behavior while behaviorism studied the conditioning processes that produce behavior. Humanist thinkers felt that both psycho-analysis and behaviorism were too pessimistic, either focusing on the most tragic of emotions or failing to take into account the role of personal choice.

Humanistic psychology has instead focused on each individual's potential and stressed the importance of growth and self-actualization. The fundamental premise of humanistic psychology is that people are innately good and that mental and social problems result from deviations from this natural tendency.



### Find us ....

in the **Countryside Library** at  
2741 State Rd. 580 in Clearwater



**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 this free and  
open discussion.**

**On Saturday,  
December.  
1st.  
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,**

## Don't forget!

January is dues renewal month. See page 6 for more info. Your contributions will help Humanism become the living philosophy of the majority.

### Need Psychological Counseling?

For a secular therapist, click:  
**Cognitive Neurosciences  
Inc.** or,  
**The Therapist Project.**  
For Addiction Problems, see:  
**Lifering Secular Recovery**



*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 the human spirit.
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

## Our monthly social dinner,

The Moveable Feast for December will be at:

In lieu of our regular monthly social dinner, we will have our **Humanlight /Solstice Party** on **Sunday December 23rd** at Lois Fries' home this year. Her address is **1915 Cove Dr.in Largo, FL**. Lois' house is located just off Indian Rocks Rd on a street running directly west of the Cat Hospital on Indian Rocks Rd. about half way between W.Bay and Walsingham Rd. in Largo. This will be a **covered dish/pot luck affair**.

**Anita Garcia [727-381- 3933] will be coordinating food selections to bring.**

This is a BYOB/soda Party which will begin about **2:30PM** and finish about 6:00PM. Hope to see many of you there for fun, philosophy and frivolity. Glenn

## Laugh Lines British Humour!

These are classified ads, which were actually placed in U.K. Newspapers:

**FREE YORKSHIRE TERRIER.**  
8 years old, Hateful little bastard. Bites!

**FREE PUPPIES**  
1/2 Cocker Spaniel, 1/2 sneaky neighbor's dog.

**FREE PUPPIES. Mother is a Kennel Club registered German Shepherd. Father is a Super Dog, able to leap tall fences in a single bound.**

**COWS, CALVES: NEVER BRED. Also 1 gay bull for sale.**

**WEDDING DRESS FOR SALE .**  
Worn once by mistake. Call Stephanie.

**Thought from the Greatest Living Scottish Thinker--Billy Connolly.**  
"If women are so bloody perfect at multitasking, How come they can't have a headache and sex at the same time?"

**Children Are Quick**  
**TEACHER: Why are you late?**  
**STUDENT: Class started before I got here.**

**TEACHER: John, why are you doing your math multiplication on the floor?**  
**JOHN: You told me to do it without using tables.**

**TEACHER: Glenn, how do you spell 'crocodile?'** **GLENN: K-R-O-K-O-D-I-A-L'** **TEACHER: No, that's wrong**  
**GLENN: Maybe it is wrong, but you asked me how I spell it.**

12/12

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

**Steve Brown, VP**

**Jim Butler**

**Terry Eckstien**

**Lois Fries, Secretary**

**Jon Green**

**Jim Peterson, President**

**Frank Prah**

**Marios Psomas, treasurer**

**Emeritus members:** Anita Garcia,  
Mark Kligman, Jerry Moore, Mark  
Winterbottom, Bob Collette, Glenn  
Paul, Don Acenbrach, Jackie Jordan,  
Brent Yaciw, Mike Hubbard, Matt  
Cooper

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

**Jim Butler Publisher.**

**Jim Peterson, Editor**

E-Mail us at:

[jim@suncoasthumanist.com](mailto:jim@suncoasthumanist.com)

## How you can Help

I hope these general notes are helpful.

**Contribute** to the welfare of our own local chapter by leading efforts to bridge gaps, bring tolerance and social unity, and exercise kindness everywhere. A little financial help is always appreciated as well. **Start by renewing your membership!**

At a recent board meeting, we made plans to participate with an **information table** at a major public event in the coming year.

We are putting together a **Speakers Bureau** for outreach. You can help in many ways.

And we need help in setting up our meetings: chairs, electronic components when needed, literature and food collection tables. **See a Board member** to offer your help. **JP**

## 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 (813) 662-6612



## FLORIDA REPORT

Civil liberties news in the Sunshine State



Dear ACLU supporter,

Floridians had to wait in line for hours -- in some places, seven hours -- to make their voices heard and cast a vote in this year's election. It was so bad that on Election Night, the president mentioned it in his acceptance speech, telling the country that "we have to fix" the long lines.

He was right, we have to fix it. [And we can.](#)

We had warned that problems would occur back when the legislature passed and Governor Scott signed a law reducing the number of early voting days, and then fought in federal court to keep them shorter. As it became abundantly clear to the country that the lines were a problem in Florida, Governor Scott still rejected calls to extend early voting to help alleviate long lines at the polls.

**Help us fix elections in our state: [Tell the legislature and Governor Scott how long you had to wait to vote.](#)**

Public officials should work make voting easy for every citizen, and not work to put up barriers that make it harder. As we push lawmakers to restore the early voting days, we want to let them know exactly how many hours Floridians had to spend waiting in line and how many Floridians are outraged about it.

**Even if your wait was short, [sign the petition to stand in solidarity with those who waited hours.](#)**

Having your voice counted in a free and fair election is the most basic right in our democracy. Nobody should have to wait seven hours to do that. Let's fix it by restoring the early voting period.

ACLU of Florida  
[www.aclufl.org](http://www.aclufl.org)



**People  
Over Politics**

~ **Time to Renew** ~ <sup>5</sup>

*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:*

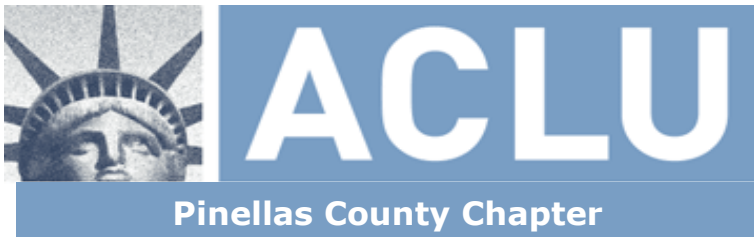
**Glenn Paul, Asst. Treasurer  
Humanist Society of the Suncoast  
2507 First St. #E  
Indian Rocks Beach  
33785-3010**

## Humanist Quotes

"Humanism involves far more than the negation of supernaturalism. It requires an affirmative philosophy...translated into a life devoted to one's own improvement and the service of all mankind."

**Corliss Lamont,**  
1902-1995, philosopher





Cordially invites you to join us in celebration of two great institutional advocates for civil liberty,

*The Holocaust Museum & PolitiFact*

Join us on Thursday Evening,

**December 6 2012** **Hilton**

St. Petersburg Bayfront  
333 1st St. S, St. Petersburg, FL, 33701

Read our newsletter at:

[www.clip-pinellas.org](http://www.clip-pinellas.org)



**|| Our Program ||**

6 to 7 PM REGISTRATION, SOCIAL HOUR, & CASH BAR  
7 PM OPENING REMARKS, BOARD ELECTIONS AND DINNER

*Choose your entrée from The Evening's Menu*

**Beef** - London Broil Marsala, or **Chicken** Marsala, or **Vegetable** Moussaka. All with suitable accompaniments,

Please RSVP\* as soon as you can. Hurry, space is limited - Interest is high!

\$45 per person, (\$30 if limited income). Place your reservation by: November 30th, 2012

- • • CHECK: Send it with this filled-out coupon to: ACLU Dinner P. O. Box 12372 St. Petersburg, FL 33733
- • • PHONE: Call (727) 347-4266 (Leave message)
- • • E-MAIL: (To reserve and pay at the door\*) [mbuu@earthlink.net](mailto:mbuu@earthlink.net)  
Sorry, no credit cards.

\*Your RSVP is a commitment on which our costs are based. Payment is therefore required for every reservation regardless of attendance.

Make your check out to: **ACLU Annual Dinner**

(circle a menu selection for each name. Print more coupons to register more names)

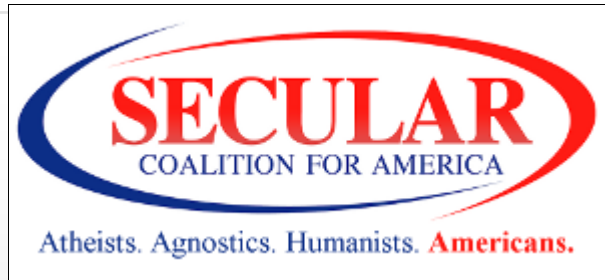
NAME _____	Beef	Chicken	Vegetable
\$ _____			
NAME _____	Beef	Chicken	Vegetable
\$ _____			
NAME _____	Beef	Chicken	Vegetable
\$ _____			
NAME _____	Beef	Chicken	Vegetable
\$ _____			
PHONE _____	E-MAIL _____		
TOTAL \$ _____			

Join with community leaders Thursday, December 6th to honor our Heritage of Freedom!

**Bank of Wisdom**  
*Electronic publishing to make the world better*

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](mailto: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](mailto:bnorsworthy@verizon.net) Mark Brandt [mwbrandt@mail.usf.edu](mailto:mwbrandt@mail.usf.edu) Web site: [www.uuclearwater.org](http://www.uuclearwater.org)



Clearwater, Florida

UU Humanists will be meeting on Sunday, December 18, at 12:30, for it's regular monthly meeting at Unitarian-Universalist Clearwater. The presentation topic will be announced later. The expected and usually lively discussion will follow the presentation. All are welcome.

See the announcement on page 1 about the first annual Bay Area Freethinkers Winterfest coming in January!



**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 (NOW) is in strong opposition to the Personhood Amendment ballot initiative for which the organization Personhood Florida is currently collecting signatures, according to Florida NOW president Donna Slutiak. "This amendment is ridiculous and an insult to women," Slutiak said. "The issue of Personhood would have very far reaching results, and would do more than criminalize abortion; it would also make birth control pills and the IUD illegal in the state of Florida. The amendment states that human life begins at the time when an egg is fertilized, which will also impact in-vitro-fertilization clinics. How would you like your mother's fertilized eggs that are sitting in a clinic freezer to have inheritance rights?"

Do you want to have to go underground to get your birth control pills?" Florida NOW expects all intelligent people to pledge not to sign this initiative, and to vote against it, if by some fluke it does get on the ballot. Personhood is bad for womanhood."

## Tampa Humanist Association

Saturday December 15th, 2012 at 11.00 am

Jimmie B. Keele Library, [MAP](#)  
2902 W. Bearss Avenue, Tampa, FL.

Look for the Tampa Humanist Association sign.

Topic:



Prior to the loss of our great humanist friend Robert Byrch, I had talked about facilitating a meeting where we discuss the possibilities of humanism in film. It would be based on an introduction where I would provide a framework to consider whether a film expresses basic humanist notions and offers a way to consider the aesthetic merit of the film to be centered in these notions.

Since Robert had not set up a theme for the meeting in September and in our planning for the Tampa Humanists I will in part be helping plan the discussions for the meetings, I got agreement to move forward with my humanism and film discussion for December.

The basic consideration for whether a film touches humanism or has humanism as a centerpiece in its themes and power, we will look at the elements of the Humanist Manifesto III. This document offers six notions that can be organizing principles for our discussion.

1. Knowledge of the world is derived by observation, experimentation and rational analysis
2. Humans are an integral part of nature, the result of unguided evolutionary change.
3. Ethical values are derived from human need and interest as tested by experience.
4. Life's fulfillment emerges from individual participation in the service of humane ideals
5. Humans are social by nature and find meaning in relationships
6. Working to benefit society maximizes individual happiness

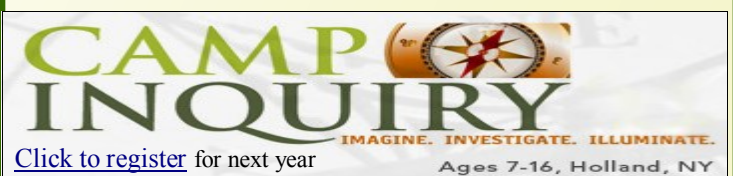
With these notions in mind, any film can be judged as to whether it carries one or more of these themes, whether these themes are somewhat profound and whether the artistic power in the film comes from the presentation of the humanist themes.

Materials will be provided to facilitate the discussion and offer a fairly useful list of films for you to add to your Netflix piles. Several of the films from the list will be discussed in slightly more detail to offer insights into how the ideas can be applied generally for any film you may see in the future.

The original intent of the session was that it would encompass two months, the introduction which this session will be and another several months later where some experiences from those in the Meetup group can clarify whether the ideas offered were helpful.

So take the bait and please come on December 15th. Robert would have wanted you to.

**Dale Friedley**  
Humanist Art Film Freak



# Freedom of Thought for Our World, and Our Future



## 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



TBPC is an autonomous adjunct to the Humanist Society.

## Increasingly, My Home Supports Me. Does Yours?

By John Robb

I think every home *should* be a productive asset. An asset that helps you succeed in life and supports you as you get older.

Unfortunately, most people don't see it that way.

They see a home as an empty shell.

Their perfect home doesn't produce. In fact, it *costs* money. Their homes only generate a return if you are lucky enough to sell it for more than you bought it.

That doesn't cut it for me. Particularly when there are a great many low cost -- in time, effort, and money -- things that can be done to increase your homes ability to produce. Simple things people can do to avoid wasting money and making themselves vulnerable to adversity. The best way to do start is to take a modular approach.

### A Modular Approach to Rainwater Harvesting

I'll use rainwater harvesting to demonstrate a modular approach. Why would you harvest rainwater?

Simply, a home that *produces* water can support you during the intense heat, flooding rains, high priced water, contaminated water, and water bans that are guaranteed to be in our future. So, what would be the first module?

If you have a gutter, all you need to get started is a **rain barrel**.

Want more? You can add a second barrel. Want more functionality? Add a feature like an irrigation hose. Need even more functionality? Put the rain barrel higher up, so you can use gravity to generate pressure for irrigation, plumbing, or a sprinkler. Need a bigger system? Add a 500 gallon container. Want cleaner water? Add a downspout filter. The list goes on and on. Each step is a small cost. Each step adds to the resilience of your home and the ability of your home to support you.

So, there's no reason to put this off. Take the first step.

Resiliently Yours,

JOHN ROBB

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



# Humanist Books

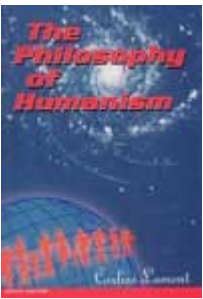


## One Planet One People by Carl Coon \$22.



Former Ambassador to Nepal, Carl Coon provides a highly readable overview of the evolution of human society, arguing that the 21st century will witness a crucially important and difficult transition for the human race. Blending the disciplines of anthropology and evolutionary psychology with over thirty years of experience in the diplomatic corps, Coon traces the evolution of the human tendency to divide others into two groups, "us versus them." Today, he argues, we have reached a stage where the whole world must be viewed as "us," if we are to overcome the global challenges we face. Hardcover 149 pp.

## The Philosophy of Humanism - Dr. Corliss Lamont \$16.95



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.

These books and a great many more, plus pins buttons, stickers, etc. can be ordered

from:

## Evolve Fish

<http://evolvefish.com/fish/HumanistPress.html>

**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 Foundation Beyond Belief is sponsoring a local "light up the night Walk" on behalf of The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (LLS). This is a walk, not a run or jog, and there will be assistance along the trail. For more information see:

<http://pages.lightthenight.org/2012/>

Endorsed by the American Humanist Association, Center For Inquiry, Harvard Humanist Chaplaincy & Alumni, Secular Student Alliance, and United Coalition of Reason, and nearly every national association. The Steifel Family has promised to match every dollar up to \$500,000. **A short walk for a great cause!**

**"...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

## Humanism, Atheism and Social Justice" (SEC 235-1212)

*December 1 – December 31, 2012*

**Instructor:** Jennifer Hancock, humanist activist, author, speaker, and journalist

**Instructor:** John Shook, PhD, CFI director of education and AHA education coordinator

**This one-month, four-module course will discuss how humanists, atheists and freethinkers have historically been at the forefront of social justice movements. What is it about freethought, humanism and atheism that leads people to take progressive stances on social justice issues? With gains in social justice being threatened and with the recent conflicts within our movement about whether to engage in social justice work and if so, how much, and more importantly, how we can be inclusive as a movement, it is important that we take the time to consider where we have been so that we can better understand what we might be able to accomplish if we embrace our social justice heritage.**

### Course Topics:

Introduction to the philosophy of humanism and its history  
 Freethought and Feminism: how the freethought and feminist movements co-evolved. Beating Bigotry: how to identify and deal with different types of bigotry.  
 Humanism and Human Rights: How humanism has informed a global awareness of the importance of human rights.  
 Atheism and Empowerment: Why explicitly rejecting religious dogma helps empower people in other areas of their lives.  
**Readings:** Students will get access to Jennifer's book, [Jen Hancock's Handy Humanism Handbook](#). Students may purchase her other book, [The Humanist Approach to Happiness: Practical Wisdom](#), at a discount. Students can also purchase a strongly recommended book: [Benign Bigotry: The Psychology of Subtle Prejudice](#) by [Kristin Anderson](#). Additional writings will be available online at no extra cost.

### Your Instructors:

**Jennifer Hancock** is the author of [The Humanist Approach to Happiness: Practical Wisdom](#) and [Jen Hancock's Handy Humanism Handbook](#). She is one of the few people in America who was actually raised as a Humanist, serving formerly as Executive Director for the [Humanists of Florida](#). Jen is the [Tampa Humanism and Freethought Examiner for Examiner.com](#) and also writes a monthly freelance column about Humanism for the [Bradenton Herald](#). (See page 10 for more of Jen's Bio.)

**John Shook, PhD**, is Director of Education and Senior Research Fellow at the [Center for Inquiry](#) and Education Coordinator for the [American Humanist Association](#). He also serves as visiting assistant professor of science education at the University at Buffalo, teaching for the joint CFI-UB Science and the Public online masters program. From 2000 to 2006 John was professor of philosophy at Oklahoma State University. Shook publishes on philosophical topics regarding science, the mind, humanist ethics, democracy, secularism, and religion, and has debated the existence of God with leading theologians, including William Lane Craig. His most recent books are [The God Debates](#), and as editor, [The Essential William James](#).

*A Tradition of Advocacy*

**For  
Religious  
Liberty**



**Americans United  
for Separation of Church & State**

~ Pinellas County Chapter ~

For more information, see: <http://www.au.org/>  
The Chapter meets at Good Samaritan Church located at 6085 Park Blvd, Pinellas Park (61st St.). The next meeting will be the annual meeting in next March. We are working for the defeat of Amendment 8, the so called Freedom of Religion Amendment. It allows tax payer funds to support religious schools & organizations. Also, we will be contacting local churches to remind them of the legal dos and don'ts concerning pulpit

## 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

**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/>

Part of my practice as a Humanist is to actively be grateful to the people in my life that make living such a joy. I know that my time here on earth is limited. In the grand scheme things, my actions are insignificant. That doesn't deter me from being the best most ethical person I can be though. Why? Because, even though my actions may not matter in the grand scheme of things, my actions most definitely matter here and now to the people I interact with.

And yes, this is enough for me. My actions do matter to the people I meet. I can either do my best to help make our collective lives easier or I can abandon my responsibilities to existential despair. To me, this gets to the core of why I choose to be a Humanist. I choose to live life fully and to do my best to be my best despite it all.

I am grateful that I am alive. I am grateful for the amazing people I have in my life to love and who love me in return. And I am grateful that I have the opportunity to share my ideas of how to live life fully with you. Have a great Month!

**What's Been Going On?**

It has been a busy month - I was just interviewed by the John Tesh radio network for two segments. One about bullying and the other about dealing with religious differences during the holidays. I will share those when they are posted. I also had a lovely interview with George Lewis at the Spiritual Broadcasting Network about Bullying - <http://youtu.be/M7vQ7Un6XPc> I also had several guest posts in everything from Breezy Mama (which was covered by People Magazine) and Parenting Hub. (You can check out all off my media placements at: <https://www.google.com/fusiontables/DataSource?docid=1VJmYAUBSQLaXq5boM41270tczoLLGvfezQyTcLI>)

The thing I am most excited about though is that I was asked to teach another online course for Center for Inquiry Online at the AHA as a joint program. The program starts Dec 1st and is titled Humanism, Atheism and Social Justice. Putting together the materials for this course has been a lot of fun and very enlightening for me as well. Course information and registration details at: <http://action.centerforinquiry.net/site/Calendar?id=103161&view=Detail> See Page 10 for more details.

## 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 (Active) Co-Organizer:  
MacDill Atheists & Secular Humanists  
(MASH) MacDill AFB, FL

# Atheists of Florida



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

**AoF outreach programs** can be found at our [Meetup](#) site. The next meeting is on Nov. 11th at 1:30 at the new meeting hall on 5103 South Westshore Blvd. in Tampa. A copy of the current 2012 newsletters are available by writing to: [AthAIFLE@aol.com](mailto:AthAIFLE@aol.com).

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. We affirm the positive values of a rigorously logical and scientific approach to the problems 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.

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.

AoF has been a leader in the effort to preserve church state separation. We look forward to serving a growing constituency.



## Institute for Science and Human Values

*Inspired by Empathy, Creativity and guided by Reason*

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

### Religious Freedom Day

Monday, January 16, 2013, marks the celebration of the birthday of Martin Luther King. However, it also marks the celebration of Religious Freedom Day. This special day honors the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom passed by the Virginia General Assembly on January 16, 1786. (Thomas Jefferson wrote the law in 1777, and it was introduced to the Assembly in 1779.)

The law defends freedom of thought, freedom of conscience, and the separation of church and state. It was the predecessor to the First Amendment right of religious freedom. It regards religious freedom as a natural right, and maintains that no one may be forced to attend church or to support a place of worship with taxes.

In this day, it is especially important that Americans celebrate this special day. Threats to religious liberty have never been greater. Conservative Christians are attempting to prevent Muslims from building mosques.

In several U.S. states Conservative Christian politicians are attempting to pass laws against Sharia law, even though it poses no threat to the nation. Indeed, the 10<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals recently ruled against Oklahoma's proposed anti-Sharia law, finding that Sharia was no threat to the state. Influential politicians such as Newt Gingrich have led such efforts that discourage the growth of Islam and, at least inadvertently, promote Christianity.

Please join the Institute for Science and Human Values by contacting President Obama and your U.S. senators and representatives and local politicians to ask for their support in keeping church and state separate.

11/12

### Freethought Film Festival

*Promoting Reason through Film*

The International Freethought Film Festival is a home for Independent films from around the globe that critically examine truth-claims. The International Freethought Film Festival tagline, "Going there!!!", is a reflection of this.

### **Tampa Bay Secular Celebrants**

Humanist Memorials, Weddings, Rites of Passage. Contact:

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

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

### **Our Humanist Traveling Library** **Has a new Librarian - Marios Psomas!**

We have a wonderful library of current books. This is a circulating library that depends on the integrity (and memory) of members to return and keep circulated, the many volumes in this fine unique collection.

Thanks once again to the great and generous efforts of **Matt Cooper**, Matt has "paid it forward", now it's our turn.





By Rick O'Keefe

CFI branches and campus affiliates are groups of freethinkers, rationalists, skeptics, secular humanists, atheists, and agnostics who come together for many reasons.

First and foremost, CFI groups offer support, educational programming, and social activities for nonreligious and skeptical people. (Religious people are welcome, too, of course.)

Second, CFI groups are part of the Center for Inquiry's broader educational and outreach initiatives. To this end, CFI groups host numerous local events, discussion groups, lectures, and educational programs relating to CFI's primary research areas: Religion, Ethics, and Society; Paranormal and Pseudoscience Claims; and Medicine and Health.

Third, CFI groups offer nonbelievers and skeptics an opportunity to put their principles into practice by joining with other "reality-based" individuals to bring about positive changes in society. CFI members volunteer within their broader community, participate in local activism campaigns, assist with regional campus outreach, monitor church/state separation issues, advocate for sound science education, and work to promote science and the secular outlook in their state, county, town, and schools.

CFI groups draw upon volunteers and Center for Inquiry Friends and supporters who are enthusiastic about the CFI agenda and wish to take part in our movement. Our members are living proof that there are good, ethical alternatives to religious and paranormal worldviews. If you would like to get involved with CFI's movement defending science, reason, and humanist values, start by becoming a Friend of the Center [through this link](#) or by calling 1-800-818-7071. Then, become active at our CFI branch or the CFI campus group at your school.

### Local Events

CFI is co-sponsoring The Humanist Society of the Suncoast lecture, December 01, in Clearwater <http://www.meetup.com/SuncoastHumanist/events/>. Click for our [Calendar](http://www.centerforinquiry.net/tampa/events/calendar/2012/12/): <http://www.centerforinquiry.net/tampa/events/calendar/2012/12/>

National Events: May 17-29, 2013--Women in Secularism

### **Some of our divisions:**

- **[African Americans for Humanism](#)**
- **[Tampa Bay Skeptics](#)** – Central Florida's famous Skeptics assoc. See page 14.
- **[The Committee for Skeptical Inquiry](#)** – world-wide assoc. of Skeptics and scientific investigations.
- **[Cognitive Neuro Sciences, Inc.](#)** – Science-of-the-brain secular humanist oriented counseling/therapy center. Ideal for those wanting to avoid religious-oriented groups like AA.

To become part of our important work, and to make a difference, become a [member](#):

[http://www.centerforinquiry.net/support/donate\\_now/](http://www.centerforinquiry.net/support/donate_now/)

*CFI's Free Inquirers Club, a monthly discussion.*

Contact David Vangness for details: [CLICK here](#).



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, Tampa Bay Computer Society

[www.tampa-bay.org](http://www.tampa-bay.org)

*"We repair our members' computers for free!"*

### ***Darwin's Gift...***

*(Continued from page 1)*

This will be at the Clearwater UU Octagon Center at 2470 Nursery Road in Clearwater. The Cost for tickets is \$15/person if purchased by January 31st, or \$20 at the door.

Price includes a box lunch.

Tickets may be purchased from CoR Organizations, or be ordered from Facilitator, Rick O'Keefe. Mail check made to TBCoR or credit card#, exp., and full name on card to: **TBCoR c/o O'Keefe, 401 S Manhattan Ave Box 139, Tampa, FL 33611.**


There will be exhibits and displays from various scientific groups, and those supporting science, and a range of freethought groups.

We are anticipating a good response to this event; get your tickets early.

This will be your opportunity to ask nationally recognized experts about some of the central ideas and current issues that will shape our future. Be there!





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



"I came 3800 light years to join"



### Breaking news....

On November 10, members of the Tampa Bay Skeptics, Suncoast Skeptics, and Pinellas County Skeptics met to discuss plans for developing an Independent Investigations Group (IIG) affiliate in Florida. IIG is affiliated with the Center for Inquiry (CFI) and its purpose is to promote more critical thinking and skeptical investigations into the areas of the paranormal. A \$50,000 prize is offered to anyone who can demonstrate paranormal abilities. The prize money is backed by CFI and allows local affiliates to offer a large award.

Currently, local skeptic groups are asking for any members interested in being part of this new organization to contact their group leaders. If enough interest is identified, we may move forward with developing this exciting new group in Florida. See below for TBS contacts.



### 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**.

Particular areas of interest to TBS include **UFOs**, **"psychic" power**, **astrology**, **fringe science & medicine**, purported **miracles** and other **New Age** claims. Our interest in religion is restricted to claims that can be objectively tested and potentially verified, such as "weeping icons" or miraculous healings.

TBS conducts its own investigations, follows the activities of other skeptics groups, monitors the press coverage of the paranormal, and publishes a quarterly newsletter, **Tampa Bay Skeptics Report**, which is also distributed gratis to members of the press and to many other skeptics groups around the world. TBS also makes its representatives available to local and national media to provide a skeptical voice as a counterweight to the irrationalism and superstition that is increasingly prevalent in the television and print media. We have been instrumental in examining and reporting upon the Tarpon Springs "weeping icon," hypnosis, (in)famous psychics, local astrologers, etc.

TBS does not reject claims out of hand, but rather is committed to objective and critical inquiry. In this vein, we share the philosophy of the Committee for Skeptical Inquiry (CSI) -- publisher of **Skeptical Inquirer** magazine, an international organization that has nurtured the growth of local skeptics groups (such as ours) all over the world.

### Membership in TBS

We encourage those who wish to help further the cause of skepticism to join TBS! You can take your first step, and make a statement about irrationality and superstition at the same time, by writing a check for \$15 to cover your first year's dues. Annual membership includes four issues of **Tampa Bay Skeptics Report**, each snailmailed 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](#)? Or join [CFI–Tampa Bay](#)?**

## HUMAN RIGHTS CONFERENCE

# *THE UNITED NATIONS & YOU*

Creating a Just  
Peaceful & Sustainable Future

You will not want to miss this educational, interactive and informative conference.

### Keynote Speaker:

Peter Yeo, V.P. of Public Policy at the United Nations Foundation.

### International Speaker:

Patras Dewan, Director of Pakistan Global Healing

### Networking

Come meet UNA chapter leaders and members from across the state of Florida.

UNA Human Rights Conference

Food & Snacks provided

Workshops and sessions from experts on Human Rights

### Conference

**SATURDAY 12/8**

**USF, Patel Center for Global Solutions**

9:00 am - 8:00 pm

### Admission

**Students- \$20 | UNA Members- \$30 |**

**Non-Members- \$35**

### Networking Event

**FRIDAY 12/7**

**Embassy Suites at USF**

7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

**Admission \$5**

Register online at: [UNAFloida.com](http://UNAFloida.com)

For more information:

[UNATampa.org](http://UNATampa.org)

[Facebook.com/UNATampaBay](https://www.facebook.com/UNATampaBay)

Email: [UNATampaBay@gmail.com](mailto:UNATampaBay@gmail.com)



UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION  
of the United States of America  
A PROGRAM OF THE UNITED NATIONS FOUNDATION



<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 nontheists 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.

Nontheists 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 to Freethinkers

- **Dec. 1st** World aids Day
- **Dec. 10th** Human Rights Day
- **Dec. 17th** Wright Brothers Day
- **Dec. 23rd** Humanlight
- **2012 International Year of Sustainable Energy for All (UN)**



### CoR Leadership Team 2012

*Jim Peterson, Mark Brandt, Rick O’Keefe, Ed Golly,*  
*Inset.- Jennifer Hancock*

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