

Hard CoR News

The insider bulletin of the United Coalition of Reason

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Could Your Local Group Use a Paid Professional?



In this fourth quarter of 2014, UnitedCoR is launching two exciting new initiatives, the circuit leader

program and the administrative service. One or the other may be right for your coalition or group if you've been looking to have a paid leader or staffer help you get the work done! So here are the details on each.

Circuit Leader

Do three or more groups in your geographical area have some—but not enough—funds for hiring an executive director or community leader who can handle the nuts-and-bolts work of organizational management as well give talks and provide ministerial services (such as weddings and memorials)? Well, if these groups are willing to pool their financial resources, UnitedCoR will match their funding so that a full-time professional leader-administrator can be hired. This person will primarily serve the three or more groups putting up the local funding. But residual benefits will naturally spread to other groups in the area.

Such a plan is ideal for making a local coalition into a much stronger operation. But this can be done outside the CoR structure if that proves more opportune. Moreover, to make it all happen, UnitedCoR will handle the recruiting, hiring, and supervision process for this "circuit leader." To make sure the effort is successful, UnitedCoR will also provide its matching funds for two years, allowing the new circuit leader time to get established and commence serious local fundraising so that her or his job can continue to be financially supported into the foreseeable future.

Administrative Service

In your individual group you may find that you have a number of unglamorous tasks that require a significant amount of time to do. And you need these tasks carried out regularly and reliably. Yet because it's difficult to find volunteers with sufficient time or interest, you wish you could just hire someone to do these things. Unfortunately, while you may have the money to pay for the few hours per week of staff time that you need, you aren't able to provide a significant enough job that anyone would seek, don't want to go through the legal and tax hassles of becoming an employer, and don't have the time to provide management of this staffer.

If this is your situation, the UnitedCoR office may be able to provide staff services to you remotely. That is, we want to learn the needs of your groups and develop a package of remote staff support that will help you be all you can be. The tasks we might help with include newsletter services, website posting and maintenance, bookkeeping, member and media database maintenance, and press release writing and distribution. We are open to considering other needs as well. And we think we can do all this by only charging you half of what it costs us. We will only launch this program if there is sufficient interest so let us know right away.

Learn More

To learn the full details of these new programs and discuss specifics, contact UnitedCoR National Director Fred Edwards by writing to: Fredwords@UnitedCoR.org. But hurry, opportunities to get in on these programs this year are limited. So it's important to act now.

Local/Regional Conference News



Orlando, FL (October 10-12, 2014)

The top financial sponsors of Free-Flo, the 2014 Humanists of Florida Association statewide conference, were the American Humanist Association, the United Coalition of Reason, the Center for Inquiry Community of Fort Lauderdale, and the Ra-Men Podcast. Headlining the two-day event was theoretical physicist and cosmologist Lawrence Krauss, giving the keynote address and showing his new film, *The Unbelievers*, about the effective lecture tours of Richard Dawkins and himself.

Also on the program were Black Nonbelievers President and Atlanta CoR Coordinator Mandisa Thomas, AHA President Rebecca Hale, Kelly Damerow of the Secular Coalition for America, "Thinking Atheist" Seth Andrews, University of Tampa Sociology Professor Ryan Cragun, and Richard Dawkins Foundation Operations Director Stephanie Guttormson, among others. On Sunday morning UnitedCoR National Director Fred Edwards conducted a two-hour training seminar on "Marketing Yourself and Your Group." Every seat was filled.

Sacramento, CA (October 12-13, 2014)



The annual Freethought Day, hosted by the Sacramento Coalition of Reason, commemorates the October 12, 1692, rejection of "spectral evidence" by Massachusetts Governor William Phips. This was in the wake of the hysteria that had led to the Salem witch trials. And Governor Phips was saying, "Never again."

But that downer of an origin bears no resemblance to the level of mirth and festivity that has always been

a part of this observance. And 2014 was no exception. From an entertainment-filled Supporters' Reception the night before, featuring music and a schmoozing magician, to a sunny Sunday outdoor main event with jugglers and children's programs to accompany the stellar lineup of speakers, to a Monday Secular Advocacy Day held on the steps of the state capitol and sponsored by the Secular Coalition for California, this was a celebration full of excitement and community building.

Among the leading speakers were Rebecca Watson of the Skepchick blog; Phil Zuckerman, author of *Living the Secular Life*; Dan Arel, author of *Parenting without God*; atheist blogger Greta Christina; and philosopher Richard Carrier.

And just to show how well-organized the organizers are they already have their schedule blocked out for next year! Next year's Sacramento Freethought Day is set for October 8-12, 2015:

- Saturday, October 10: Supporters' Reception
- Sunday, October 11: Freethought Day 2015
- Monday, October 12: Secular Advocacy Day

More information can be found [HERE](#).

CoR of the Month



UnitedCoR has begun featuring a local “CoR of the Month” in the slideshow on our home page. In September we featured San Diego CoR, in October we featured Butte County CoR, and this month we are featuring Dallas–Fort Worth CoR. We would like to feature your CoR in the future. We are asking each coalition coordinator (or someone representing your CoR) to send us the story of your CoR and any images you might have to help tell it. Group shots of members of your CoR (possibly taken in front of your billboard) will also help (but please be sure no one in the pictures minds having their image online).

To read about the CoRs featured so far—and to see the type of thing we are looking for—please see the page featuring San Diego CoR [HERE](#), the page featuring Butte County CoR [HERE](#), and the page featuring Dallas–Fort Worth CoR [HERE](#)

Send your CoR’s story and pictures to Joseph at Joseph-Stewart@live.com.

CoR People

Joseph Stewart

Joseph Stewart has worked behind the scenes with UnitedCoR since the Fall of 2009 as our webmaster. Joseph also helps local CoR site administrators as needed and provides the initial training for them to manage their sites. In addition, he is involved in 10 freethought organizations on national, state, and local



levels (founding or co-founding 3 of them) and is the webmaster/site administrator for over ten freethought and civil liberties websites. He is currently a full-time activist.

Joseph majored in philosophy and religion at UNC-Wilmington in the 1970s, studied computer programming at Cape Fear Community College in the 1980s, received a Diamonds Certificate from the Gemological Institute of America in the 1990s, and taught himself how to build websites in the early 2000s. During most of his life after college, he was engaged in a career in business management (helping to start two businesses still in operation).

He was politically active during the George W. Bush Administration, organizing his precinct and representing it in city, district, and state conventions. He helped organize what became the largest MoveOn-associated group in the country, built and ran two political websites, and wrote articles on national politics for a regional monthly progressive magazine as well as speeches for local candidates and protesters.

He became increasingly active in the freethought movement after meeting Jan Meshon in 2003. Together they formed FreeThoughtAction, whose initial billboard campaign "Don't Believe In God? You Are Not Alone" inspired the billboards some national nontheist organizations are engaged in now. In 2010, he organized many of the secular organizations in North Carolina to conduct a state-wide "One Nation Indivisible" billboard campaign with 6 billboard in 6 cities over the 4th of July holiday.

Raised in a Southern Baptist home, Joseph's reading of the Bible and studying other religions ultimately caused him to become an open atheist by 8th or 9th grade. Since then, he enjoys writing, reading and researching, listening to music and collecting books and songs of many different genres and interests.

Joseph has also lived in five states during his lifetime, and he currently lives in Charlotte, NC.

Joseph's commitment to the secular movement has been honored with a "Powerhouse" award from the Charlotte Atheists & Agnostics in 2013 and most recently, he was presented with the "Carolinas Freethinker of the Year" award in 2014.

Whispers in the CoRner

Jase's phone campaign is almost drawing to a close. Here's one more chance to eavesdrop on some of these conversations and see if they give you more ideas for your CoR:



"We didn't know it was possible for our local CoR to rent the county courthouse's lawn to hold an event. A few paperwork chases and a nominal fee, and we were in."

"One of the local college professors came and spoke to our CoR not too long ago. He also brought some birds with him for everyone to see, and that was really cool."

"We've got a huge birthday party planned to remember Carl Sagan's birth on November 9th. Darwin Day is going to be our next big bash in February 2015 and we've already started to plan for it now."

"A church in the middle of town was drawing in the crowds with their 'sacred cinema' program, so we started to offer 'secular cinema' as an alternative. We paired this up with our 'Drinking Sceptically' group, and we started to draw in the crowd after this."

"We heard about the Secular Day of the Dead celebration from the FreethoughtSociety. We're making plans to do this next year."

"Thanks for the media advisory you helped us to write for our local papers and radio. We received a lot more coverage than before!"

"We were the first one to get our Tree of Knowledge ornaments. Wait until we put those out on the courthouse lawn in December."

Local CoR Social Media

Thank you to everyone who has linked your local CoR social media to UnitedCoR: facebook.com/CoalitionOfReason for Facebook and @UnitedCoR for [Twitter](#), as well as the [Secular Directory's Facebook page](#)! Many local CoRs have linked-in to each other's Meetup pages to get some ideas for events they could adapt for their local areas: great idea!

Kentucky Coalitions of Reason Help End \$18.25 Million Tax Incentives For Noah's Ark Theme Park!!

Members of the [Bluegrass Coalition of Reason](#) and the [Louisville Coalition of Reason](#) have been successful in preventing approval of \$18.25 million in sales tax rebates to [Ark Encounter](#) for the purpose of reconstructing Noah's Ark as part of a theme park in Williamstown, Kentucky. Ark Encounter is registered as a public for-profit company, but it is wholly owned by [Answers in Genesis](#) (AIG), a non-profit ministry that runs the [Creation Museum](#) in Petersburg Kentucky. Although there are many legal problems with this issue, the state decided not to permit any further approval of the application for sales tax rebates after it was revealed that Ark Encounter would practice religious discrimination in employment.

Dan Phelps is a member of the Humanist Forum of Central Kentucky and the Bluegrass CoR who has been fighting both the Creation Museum and Ark Encounter since AIG moved to Kentucky in 1994. He spoke at a zoning hearing in which AIG was denied permission to build the Creation Museum near Big Bone Lick State Park. Dan helped prevent a promotional partnership between the Cincinnati Zoo and the Creation Museum and attended numerous other public hearings and even some Ark Encounter fundraisers. He has been interviewed on the radio numerous times and has also written numerous press releases and newspaper opinions. He pointed out that the man who donated an Allosaurus fossil to AIG, Michael Peroutka, was a member of a white supremacy secessionist group, [The League of South](#). Although the press largely ignored this release, his next press release would reap benefits.

Ed and Mikel Hensley are members of the [Louisville Atheists and Freethinkers](#) and the Louisville Coalition of Reason who have battled the Creation Museum and Ark Encounter. Mikel attended the Rally for Reason, protesting the opening of the Creation Museum and Ed blogged about problems at the Creation Museum and was interviewed by Cincinnati radio stations regarding Ark Encounter. Ed and Mikel quietly gathered information on the companies behind Ark Encounter and forwarding these documents to the Freedom from Religion Foundation (FFRF). AIG is a non-profit ministry that owns both the non-profit ministry, [Crosswater Canyon](#), and the for-profit ministry Ark Encounter. State documents list the non-profit Crosswater Canyon as manager of the for-profit Ark Encounter, all three organizations share the same address, and documents of all three organizations share common signees. Multiple documents and websites show that AIG is soliciting tax deductible donations for the for-profit Ark Encounter, despite the Ark Encounter website stating it is a for-profit company so it can receive tax incentives. This confusing mess of organizations were conning the state of Kentucky with a dishonest shell game, acting as a for-profit in order to get tax rebates and acting as a non-profit in order to tax deductible donations. Ed and Mikel informed a multitude of secular Facebook and Meetup groups regarding these issues and asked these members to write the Tourism Cabinet and to the Governor. There was also a petition drive that started at a Kentucky State Fair booth and included participation from numerous secular groups in the state.

Dan and Ed noticed that their efforts overlapped and decided to keep each other informed. It appeared at

one point that there might be a hearing prior to final approval of the tax rebates. They discussed what to say at the hearing. Ed obtained attorney Dan Canon to speak at the hearing. Canon is best known as [the attorney who forced Kentucky to recognize gay marriages](#) performed in other states. Canon has twice defeated Kentucky Governor Steve Beshear in Court. Dan and Ed were fully prepared for the hearing, but events led to that hearing never occurring. Dan shared documents obtained via the Kentucky Open Records Act and Ed shared documents obtained via the Secretary of State with each other and with both the FFRF and AU. In addition to working with each other, Dan and Ed also obtained valuable assistance from the [Baltimore Coalition of Reason](#) in recording speeches by Ken Ham at Severn, Maryland.

AIG had advertised an open position at Ark Encounter for a Computer Aided Design Programmer. This position required applicants to agree with the AIG statement of faith, provide a salvation testimony, and adhere to other demands only fundamentalist Christians could comply with. Dan wrote a [press release](#) that was published in the Kentucky Herald-Leader. The state replied to this press release with a form letter, but Americans United for Separation of Church and State sent a letter of protest to the Kentucky Tourism Cabinet using information from Dan. The State of Kentucky then sent a letter to Ark Encounter asking them to sign a "covenant" that they would not discriminate religiously in employment. Ark Encounter has refused to do so, claiming that Kentucky is violating their religious right to practices religious discrimination, and they are making noises as if they might sue Kentucky.

This issue is far from being over. National secular organizations are cautiously considering additional action. It is unknown what action will be pursued by Ark Encounter. However, as of this moment it appears that Kentucky will not award \$18.25 million in tax rebates in order to build a replica of Noah's Ark.

-Ed Hensley
Louisville CoR Coordinator

Support for Your CoRrespondence

A remarkable FREE offer is now available to all CoR groups! This might be just what you've waited for -- **FREE** newsletter help!

If your local CoR has wanted its own newsletter, but you haven't had the time, or you would like some help with your existing newsletter, Judy Saint, with SacramentoCoR, and her dedicated team of volunteers have kindly offered to not only help your CoR create your own regional newsletter, but they will also provide you with a professional template with tips, and provide regular, fresh content each month to reduce your load. Just add your own local events or other material, no matter how small, and you're ready to go with an impressive publication with your name on it! Each month has a different theme, too! (Good for either email or print newsletters.)

In addition to offering your CoR an expandable skeletal format that you can use--a blank format of a few template pages--one of the main items you will surely enjoy is free access to the ten well-written columns you can include in each issue. Not only is Judy offering a ready-made format to help your CoR start your newsletter, she is also offering a variety of pre-written, edited, freethinking columns that your readers will look forward to each month. There's a column for everybody (see below for a list). You'll want to include them all!

The format alone is just a one-time download, but the columns, which are free even if you already have a newsletter, can give your publication a little heft and dedicated readership from the very first edition. Each columnist generates a devoted following; readers soon discover their favorites. As an added benefit, it keeps your CoR's newsletter fresh each month – a reason to keep your readers and members coming back.

Judy's team is also offering "How To" tips to help you to better understand what makes a good newsletter, included in the template itself just where you need to see them! (Judy's other newsletter that she might tell you about sometime, just won a national award! You'll want to see these short "How To" tips of hers!)

You are invited to use all ten of the regular columns listed below, or pick and choose from all ten for your newsletter. Each is written with personality and often humor. Most have their own associated eye-catching graphic (included) so readers can quickly spot their favorite columns. (Judy recommends using all ten, since each addresses a different audience.)

Ask the Social IQ Lady - Polite etiquette to help deal with believers in rough personal situations.

Coming Out - Stories and encouragement about coming out as non-theistic.

Little Activisms - Suggestions that everyone can do to help the cause in simple ways in our everyday lives.

Family Time - Resources and advice raising children to deal with a religious culture at home and at school.

< 30 - Specially written by and for our youth under the age of 30.

Forgetting God - Helping us all see the blinders left over from our earlier religious upbringing and how to shed them.

Listen Up! - Advice and insights from someone who has held national positions, written for prominent publications and committed civil disobedience many times over her 80-plus years on this earth.

Legal Watch - A deeper look at one legal issue each month currently in the news.

Dept. of Bad Bills - This lists synopses of proposed legislation in your state. You can follow the pattern to enter information for your state.

Arts Review - Suggestions and reviews of freethinking arts (movies, paintings, fiction, music, and so on).

With these regular columns plus your own announcements, in a professionally designed template, your CoR's newsletter is sure to gain a dedicated audience very quickly, and help your CoR establish instant credibility and professionalism. Each month you will also receive the actual Sacramento Reason, to see how Judy uses the template and columns for her own area, to give you additional ideas.

Everything you need to create your first newsletter is available right now! Email Judy Saint at: admin@sacramentoreason.org. She's ready to help get you started. It's easy. It's free—what can you lose?

Judy Saint founded and edits Sacramento Reason (find previous issues [here](#)), is the founder and president of the Greater Sacramento Chapter of Freedom From Religion Foundation which put up 55 atheist billboards last holiday season, organizes National Day of Reason for American Humanist Association, sits on the local boards of Atheists and Other Freethinkers and Humanist Association of the Greater Sacramento Area, admins Facebook and Meetup pages, organizes "Ask an Atheist" mall walks, and founded the first Freethinkers Class at Sacramento's Juvenile Hall, among other things. She says to put a smiley face here.

Read what Hemant Mehta (The Friendly Atheist) wrote about *Sacramento Reason* at this [link](#). He wonders why all regions don't have a comprehensive newsletter like this. Now we can! And it's easier than ever. Be sure to ask Judy whatever questions you have. She's ready to help "as always," she says...and then quickly adds, "We're in this together."

Leadership Needs

Are you an interested volunteer able to help one of these local CoRs? Learn what's needed and how you can help.

[Detroit CoR](#) (Coordinator)

[New Mexico CoR](#) (Coordinator)

[San Francisco / Oakland CoR](#) (Coordinator)

[Arizona CoR](#) (Site Administrator)

[Oklahoma City CoR](#) (Site Administrator)

If you are interested, please contact UnitedCoR for more information and for help with leading a local CoR.

CoRrelated Groups



Indiana University at Creation Museum

Last month's CorRelated Group focus was [military outreach](#) to our troops; this month's focus is student groups. The [Secular Student Alliance](#) and [Center for Inquiry On Campus](#) have resources available to you to help expand your CoR's outreach. Not only do the student groups help to bring new ideas through their studies into your CoR, there may be some budding talent for non-theistic interns and future employees.

In support of non-theistic students in their local area, [Tampa Bay CoR](#) has created an essay competition, complete with cash prize! They asked their contestants, In 500 words or less, describe a time you experienced or witnessed intolerance. Described how you reacted and how it affected you. (Disclaimer: All essay submissions will be deemed as granting permission and authorization of republication rights for TBCoR (and United CoR) and their affiliated member groups of said essay submissions). There were two contestant brackets, one for middle school and one for high school students. A monetary prize of \$50 was awarded to each bracket, and Tampa Bay CoR plans to increase the awards each year with future donations to this project.

Contact the Center for Inquiry On Campus at (716) 636-4869 (Eastern), info@centerforinquiry.net and the Secular Student Alliance (614) 441-9588 (Eastern), ssa@secularstudents.org for further information on starting student chapters at universities near you, or for help with your CoR linking with an existing chapter.

Online Resource to Help Grow Your Local CoR

<https://www.udemy.com> This website is a hub for continued training and development that can be done online at a time or place of your convenience. There are currently 100 free courses on udemy addressing topics such as “Zero Cost Marketing Strategies” or “Project Management,” which may be beneficial to how your local CoR is advertised through social media and local media. **Estimated time to complete a**

udemy course: varies.

From the Heap



As a Humanist celebrant, I am always aware that a phone call from someone requesting to talk to me as a celebrant can be for many reasons. I especially enjoy it when someone reaches out to me to talk about issues that concern them, such as working through their own experiences in life, or wanting a friendly voice to talk with regarding issues of ethics and values decision-making. Sometimes, you get those wonderful phone calls when a couple wants you to perform a special ceremony such as a wedding, a public renewal of commitment, welcoming a new family member through immigration, or perhaps baby-naming. Yet, there is also the "phone

call" when a bereaved family asks you to lead a ceremony of respect and memory for someone special in their lives. No matter how many funeral services I have conducted over the years, it is never simple or easy, because of the loss that others feel towards someone special in their lives.

I will gladly admit to each of you that the hardest experiences are those when conducting a memorial service for someone that you knew, respected, and honored. I felt that way in January of this year when I was called-upon to conduct the funeral of someone whom I deeply loved and had the utmost admiration and awe for. In this month where we give thanks and remembrance to the women, men and their families within US armed forces, I would like to take a moment to celebrate the life of my friend and to honor his service to American armed forces as one of her Allies during World War 2.

Leonard "Len" W. Arnold was born in Liverpool in February, 1925 and spent his childhood and teenage years in the city of his birth—a city that he was highly proud of and loved. Following the Luftwaffe blitz on Liverpool from 1940-1941, Len "took the King's shilling" and enlisted in HM Royal Air Force (RAF), and took his basic training at Lord's Cricket Ground in London before eventually being assigned to No. 28 squadron and being transferred to combat operations for the defense of Burma. Len was a trained pilot, a pilot trainer, and knew just about detail possible about the RAF's Dakota bombers as well as his favorite: the Supermarine Spitfire.



(Len is second from the left, on parade with his Dakota bomber squad)

As soon as the war was over, and as quickly as Len could return to his beloved Liverpool, he was married to his sweetheart, Majorie (also of Liverpool). Len and Marjorie had 3 children together, and stayed united as a couple until her untimely early death when she was barely 50. When I had the fortune of spending time with Len, he would tell me "Marjorie...oh, she was a cracker!" and would recall the love he had for his partner and how much he missed her, despite the span of nearly 40 years since her death.



Len was a self-taught engineer, too. Like most men in Britain at the time, he finished school before age 16 (it was actually raised to 15 in 1947), and with the benefits of employment and service in the RAF, he came away with skills and training that helped him gain employment. Len became a sales representative for a Liverpool chemical company after World War 2, and then eventually learned how to fix twin-tub washing machines, thanks to his son who had taken special courses in the UK's equivalent of a trade school. With this new training, Len became self-sufficient and started his own business repairing and leasing refurbished appliances, and this carried him through to his retirement.

Len took courses in electrical and metal engineering, and built over 20 fully-functioning electric train engines from pieces of scrap metal, using only

photographs of British steam engines and his own measurements and calculations. He was an avid reader of history, religion, political science, all things Liverpool, even-more-than-all-things related to British steam trains and ships, science, nature, and music. Len played piano and was captivated by the works of Gilbert & Sullivan, but was known for his love of "classical" music and could quickly recognize even the most obscure composers within a few bars of a piece being played. He was generous with his money to charitable causes and made sure that he provided for his family and that they were comfortable.



In his final days and moments, I was with Len and his family.

Despite being nearly 90 years old and incurably ill, he still was more concerned about tending the goldfish in his back yard's hand-built pond or trimming his hedges than was about the cancer that had taken over his body. But he could no longer fight, and he died as peacefully as one could hope for in the presence of people who loved him and missed him—including me, a young man who stood in awe and wonder at the talent within this unique man that I had only met 6 years previously. And so, in January 2014, we bid farewell to the Non-theist in the Cockpit, and toasted the memory of his lifetime's contributions at one of his favorite local pubs with people who had worn the dusty war medals (earned from honorable service) in his honor, alongside people who had only just met him.

Last month, I wrote about opportunities for your local CoR to extend its outreach to local chapters of the Military Religious Freedom Foundation and the Military Association of Atheists and Freethinkers. During this year's Veterans' Day, I would like to ask a special request of each of you to take a moment to find out who, in your local CoR, is a veteran or a family member of a veteran of America's armed forces. Please honor the memories of those who are no longer with us, celebrate those who are currently serving, and acknowledge the sacrifices that they have made that have helped us to have the lives and opportunities that we enjoy today.

- Jason Heap