

The Tampa Bay Coalition of Reason

Freethought NEWS

Vol. 3 No. 4 April 2014 Jim Peterson, Editor

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**HUMANIST
CHARITIES**

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Carl Sagan *Varieties of Scientific Experience*: A review

Ed. from Asterix98 2012



Carl Sagan

This book is a compilation of Sagan's Gifford lectures on natural theology. As Sagan notes, natural theology is "...everything about the world not supplied by "revelation". You can order the 2006 book edited by Ann Druyan, [here](#).

The lectures are organized as chapters. It begins with a chapter titled Nature and Wonder: a Reconnaissance of Heaven. It is a beautiful tour of what was then known about the cosmos. Sagan introduces us to the vastness of the universe and gives us a sense of scale and our relative position in the scheme of the universe.

In the next chapter - The Retreat from Copernicus – Loss of Nerve, Sagan takes on creationism, the anthropic principle [interpreting the world in human metaphors], and also gives us a sense of what the lack of centrality of the Earth in the cosmic order really means.

Organic Universe is a brilliant discussion on chemical composition, universal laws and physics. We can see a sample of his wit here "... so as science advances, there seems to be less and less for god to do. Of course it's a big universe, so He, She or It can be gainfully employed in other parts" Here we find the notion of the "God of the Gaps", i.e., whatever we cannot explain, is attributed to a god.

The next lecture makes a case for why extraterrestrial intelligence may exist. Sagan notes that whether it exists or not, it is still hugely informative because it says something about our loneliness in the sheer vastness of the universe. This is followed by a thorough debunking of "extraterrestrial folklore", the claims of UFO sightings and visitations from aliens that have been reported in the media over the years.

In the God Hypothesis discussion, Sagan provides an operational definition of God; takes us on a quick tour of the world religions and their claims and postulates. With scintillating wit (of which there are many examples throughout), he systematically deconstructs these ideas. He also puts forth arguments on why the idea of God as an OmniX being is not logical or internally consistent.

In the Religious Experience – he questions miracles, the efficacy of prayers, discusses the influence of hormones on human behavior, and proposes a (tongue in cheek) God molecule – "theotoxin".

In the next chapter, Crimes against Creation, he is very concerned with the possibility of a nuclear winter, but in general, it can be interpreted as a concern for the earth and its inhabitants. Elsewhere, he pleads, "... if you disagree with another human, let him live. There is nowhere in the hundred billion galaxies you will find another..."

The last chapter, Search – argues that the world is not a flat state of affairs. We started as hunter gatherers in small groups, grown into nation states, and now technology, communications, and transport have blurred geo-political boundaries even further. In short, we have to think of ourselves as world citizens. Sagan urges us to think critically on all matters, and have compassion for our fellow world travelers. He asks why there is no equivalent of an 11th commandment – thou shalt learn!

This compilation of Sagan's Gifford lectures is pure cognitive pleasure. Well worthy of earning a prominent place on your bookshelf. Sagan, like an explosives expert, places his bombs strategically through beautiful, calm, cogent, and brilliant arguments, on the edifice of organized religion. The demolition of tall skyscrapers of absurdity crumble in a heap with little or no collateral damage.

Center for Inquiry–Tampa Bay – April, 2014 Calendar

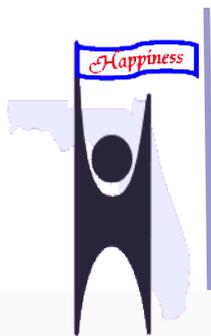
This is produced from preliminary information. Check the individual Web sites to insure the event is being held, when and where We are not liable for changes, errors, or omissions. Compiled by Rick O'Keefe & Jim Peterson.

4-05, 1 st Saturday, 2:00 PM	CLEARWATER – Countryside Library on 580 The Humanist Society of the Suncoast	To get the details: Regular meeting - See page 3 http://www.meetup.com/SuncoastHumanist/
4-13, 2nd Sunday, 10:30 AM	Tampa See page 6 for details Atheists of Florida	Details & to RSVP : http://www.meetup.com/Atheists-of-Florida-Tampabay/
4-13, Sunday, 7 PM	BRANDON – Brandon Atheists	Skeptics in the Pub. RSVP . http://www.meetup.com/Atheists-of-Brandon/
4-21, Monday, 7 PM	NW HILLSBOROUGH / CARROLLWOOD – Tampa Bay Thinkers	Lively philosophical discussion. RSVP at Web site: http://www.meetup.com/tampa-bay-thinkers/ RSVP
4-19, 3 rd Saturday, 11:00 AM	TAMPA – North Tampa Library Tampa Humanist Association	Topic:: http://www.meetup.com/Tampa-Humanist-Association/
4-13 Sunday, 5 P.M	CLEARWATER Humanist Society of the Suncoast See page 4	Sunday Social Dinner for all members, friends and others interested in conversing with Humanists
4-20, 3 rd Sunday, 3 PM	BRANDON CFI Skeptics in the Pub	Lunch & discussion. Click to RSVP http://www.meetup.com/CFI-Tampa-Bay/
4-26, 4 th Saturday, 12 noon	NW HILLSBOROUGH / WESTCHASE – CFI Readers Book Discussion (Limit 12)	Book lovers meet monthly to discuss books we've read. RSVP Details: http://www.meetup.com/CFI-Tampa-Bay/
4-28, Usually, Every last Monday, 6 PM	N. Pinellas Area CFI Skeptics/Humanists Supper	RSVP is required if you are coming. <i>Seating is limited to 20!</i> Click here <i>before</i> midnight, January 25th. http://www.meetup.com/CFI-Tampa-Bay/
4 - TBA, see Web site	S. PINELLAS – Humanist film Meetup	Feature film TBA RSVP at: http://www.meetup.com/tampa-bay-thinkers/
4 - 27, Sunday, 12:30 AM	CLEARWATER – UU Humanists,	Regular Sunday meeting. See page 7 for more information
4-TBA, Saturday, 7 PM	St. Petersburg Astronomy Club	Details, location, & and RSVP to: www.meetup.com/st-petersburg-astronomy-club
4-20 Sunday, 10AM	Thonotosassa - Tour Fort Foster Humanist Families of Tampa	Family outings and other activities. See page 13 /www.facebook.com/groups/HumanistFamiliesTampa October: Annual Humanists at Disney in Orlando. https://www.facebook.com/events/188610644635424/
4-00 TBA see Web site	SARASOTA – Humanists of Sarasota Bay	Many events: Details: Web site http://sarasota.humanists.net/calendar.html
4-05 & 11 Friday & Saturday Evening	TAMPA - M.A.R.S. Astronomy Club	See Website : www.meetup.com/MARS-astronomy-club-mosi for all details.
4- 01, 03, 04, & 21	TAMPA Humanities Institute at USF - Poetry Month	See website for full listing of many events and calendar.



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

**Watch for major COR events
scheduled throughout the year !**



The Humanist Society³ of the Suncoast News

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

April 5th 2014

Volume 22 No. 4 April, 2014

Now is the Time to

~ **Join or Renew** ~

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 (See [pg. 5](#))**



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 : _____

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



*= optional

Make ‘em Pay: Taxing Churches

It was the fervent hope of the founders of our great nation that its government would not trespass on the province of religion, and that religion would find neither refuge nor condemnation from a secular government. The founders' commitment to this idea was unequivocal. The very first words of the Bill of Rights read:

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.

Regardless of how you interpret that statement , exempting religious organizations from paying taxes is a clear case of our government "respecting an establishment of religion," precisely what the framers intended to prohibit.

For one thing, any religious organization that lives up to its commitments to its congregation and community would have nothing to fear from filing a tax return, *just like every other non-profit*. For another, when these institutions pay taxes *like every other non-profit*, each citizen's tax burden is significantly lessened and consequently he or she may better endow a worthy institution with the support that arises from individual choice. With our current income inequality, now could be the time to start to... make ‘em pay!

The case ‘for’ will be argued by distinguished AoF members:



Joe Reinhardt & Frank Prah



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

An important measure of this concern is care for the physical well being of others. As reactionaries in congress vote to cut the budget for food stamps and other key supports, there is increasing hunger here in our community. Don't forget to bring canned and boxed food (before the expiration dates) or checks for TBH. Thanks to *Glenn Paul*, chair

Please join us for
this free and open
discussion.

**Saturday,
April 5th.
2014
at 2 PM
at**

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

**Many members go to
dinner afterwards.**

Need Psychological Counseling?

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

For Addiction Problems, see:
[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 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

Acropol Family Restaurant

Join us on April 13th, 2014. at 5 PM.
This restaurant is located at 1170 Starkey Rd. in Largo about half way between Ulmerton and West Bay.
They serve a variety of Greek & American food in the \$8-12 range with beer and wine available at reasonable prices.

Please reserve with Glenn Paul
at kpaul29@tampabay.rr.com or call 727-595-3347
by Saturday April 12th.

Laugh Lines Why did Chicken Cross Road ?

DR. PHIL.: The problem we have here is that this chicken won't realize that he must first deal with the problem on this side of the road before it goes after the problem on the other side of the road. What we need to do is help him realize how stupid he is acting by not taking on his current problems before adding any new problems.

OPRAH.: Well, I understand that the chicken is having problems, which is why he wants to cross the road so badly. So instead of having the chicken learn from his mistakes and take falls, which is a part of life, I'm going to give this chicken a NEW CAR so that he can just drive across the road and not live his life like the rest of the chickens.

ANDERSON COOPER.: We have reason to believe there is a chicken, but we have not yet been allowed to have access to the other side of the road.

NANCY GRACE.: That chicken crossed the road because he's guilty! You can see it in his eyes and the way he walks.

PAT BUCHANAN.: To steal the job of a decent, hardworking American.

MARTHA STEWART.: No one called me to warn me which way the chicken was going. I had a standing order at the Farmer's Market to sell my eggs when the price dropped to a certain level. No little bird gave me any insider information.

DR SEUSS.: Did the chicken cross the road? Did he cross it with a toad? Yes, the chicken crossed the road, but why it crossed I've not been told.

ERNEST HEMINGWAY.: To die in the rain, alone.

JERRY FALWELL.: Because the chicken was gay!

ARISTOTLE.: It is the nature of chickens to cross the road.

ALBERT EINSTEIN.: Did the chicken really cross the road, or did the road move beneath the chicken?

COLONEL SANDERS.: Did I miss one?

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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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.

Tampa Humanist Association

Tentative next meeting:

Saturday, **April 19th**, 2014, 11:00 AM

Look for the Tampa Humanist Assoc. sign in the lobby.

We will be trying out our **new venue** at:



The North Tampa Public Library

8916 North Blvd. Tampa, FL 33604 [Map](#)

We will have an interesting and convivial discussion around the topic: **What does it mean to be Free? ***
Jim Peterson will lead the talk.

* or at least not too expensive.



A Progressive Headquarters for The Tampa Bay area

It has long been a dream for those of us who have struggled to advance the cause of Humanism, critical thinking, environmental awareness, compassionate social policies, and a defense of art, music, and science, to have a real building; a central office in our area.

With AoF staying in it's current location, comes a renewed opportunity for our organizations to organize a new cooperative, based on the Coalition of Reason, and dedicated to providing a foundation for a more powerful response to the problems of our world.

This current AoF facility houses a complete production control room and equipment for the creation of television/ web programming, albeit with presently limited access.

All organized secular groups in the Bay area would benefit from having such resources available. Though what AoF has can be viewed as a beginning, it need not be the end.

To make this dream come true, we need organizational subscriptions and a team of local individual supporters willing to make a small or large pledge. Contact your CoR representative and share your ideas with them.

Humanism is a way of life, and a commitment to the success of our species. We need concrete institutions to create a sustainable base for the realization of our aspirations.

This is an idea still in the early stages of discussion. If you would like to contribute in any way; whether ideas or financing, please let us know. JP

Laurel & Hardy Fans?

Our local Clearwater Chapter of the Sons of the Desert, a film preservation society, is as active as ever, and in need of new recruits as well as the return of old ones.

Wednesday April 19th is the next get together at the Pinellas Park Library at 7. See the web site for more: <http://www.metrodirect.net/Laurel&hardy/>



Life Ring Secular Recovery

This group meets every Monday evening at 8 p.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. Or see the website at: <http://www.liferingtampabay.com/meetings.htm>

HUMANISTS CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE FOR A CHILD

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

YOU can give a child a much-needed hour of personal attention that will encourage reading and just might help them to move forward while improving their self-esteem. In two 1-hour sessions, I have encountered children, some of whom have already had to repeat kindergarten, that barely recognize or are able to say the alphabet or the sound of the letter.

Teachers struggle with discipline issues and preparing the children for FCAT testing. With patience and intensive learning, you can help the children grow into their potential.

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

Gale Barron
gfbshb@aol.com

Humanist Quotes

“ Give to every human being every right that you claim for yourself. ”

— Robert Green Ingersoll, 1879

Florida Atheists



Atheism sprinting into the future!

Chair, Tracy Thomas, President, Judy Adkins

Join us on **Sunday, April 13th at 1:30 PM, at our quarterly pot luck.** For time and location information (for members only), see the **Meetup information.**

AoF outreach programs can be found at our **Meetup** site. Current newsletters are **available**; write **Athaifle@aol.com**. AoF's outreach also includes a full scale studio for the production of TV, web, and podcast programs. Your ideas are always welcome to help guide us in such creation.

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**.

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

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

For most people, atheism represents the most focused and powerful criticism of the philosophical worldview with which most of us were raised. It is liberating precisely because it attracts the enmity of those who are committed to the closed and changeless narrative of unexamined traditional beliefs. Because it is such a foundational and wrenching break with the past and because it leads the way in recognizing a broad range of possibilities for both scientific and social progress, atheism is an essential pillar for all other humanist and freethought philosophies. We join our coalition organizations to provide part of the unique spectra of thought and activity that is vital to human progress. It is a springboard for freedom.

From a personal standpoint, we bring a human centered ethic to bear in serving our fellow human beings as they struggle to overcome the delusional psychology of years of religious conditioning. JP



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



National Secular Movement Update:

Religious Exemption to Healthcare Individual Mandate - Advocates for religious privileging show once again that they believe they are above the rules. A religious exemption bill that was never considered by committee is scheduled to hit the House floor for a vote this week. [HR 1814](#) exempts from mandatory health coverage, and the penalties of not obtaining coverage, anyone with a religious objection to anything covered! We need your help quickly to fight this sneaky attempt to add more religious exemptions to our laws. Tell your Representative that making an individual's obligation to obey the law dependent on the law agreeing with their religious beliefs contradicts both constitutional tradition and common sense. Our [Action Alert](#) makes it easy to contact your Representative by email, phone, or even Tweet at them!

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>

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



Clearwater, Florida

UU Humanists will be meeting on **Sunday, April 27**, at 12:30 pm. **Parag Parikh, MD.** will be speaking on,

The Evolution of War:

Etiology, Consequences, and possible Solutions.



Florida Now

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

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

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

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

"...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

FLORIDA REPORT

Civil liberties news in the Sunshine State



We have some big news. Last month, on behalf of eight Florida couples from Pensacola to Miami and SAVE, we announced a federal lawsuit to bring an end to Florida's refusal to recognize the marriages of same-sex couples that were performed out of state.

These eight couples come from all walks of life - they include military veterans, a firefighter, public school teachers, and a ministry director.

Despite their marriages being recognized elsewhere, in Florida they are legally strangers. The harm this cause ranges from having to provide extra documentation when taking a sick child to the doctor, to not knowing whether your pension or survivors' benefits will take care of your family, to having to look their child in the eye and explain that, yes, we really are a married family.

The promises that couples make to one another in marriage - to take care of one another and to protect your family - shouldn't be weakened in the eyes of the law based on where you live.

No couple should have to choose between the protections of marriage and staying in the place you call home. A victory on behalf of these couples will mean that married same-sex couples in Florida won't have to make that choice anymore.

This ACLU lawsuit is an important step in our fight for full equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Floridians. Thank you for standing with us in support of freedom for all Floridians.

4/14

People
Over Politics



The Humanities Institute of USF

As a highlight of National Poetry Month, we welcome distinguished poet and memoirist Li-Young Lee, who will visit March 31- April 4.

Lee was born in Jakarta, Indonesia, to Chinese parents. In 1959, the Lee family fled Indonesia to escape the anti-Chinese sentiment that later exploded in the 1965 genocides; his family settled in the United States in 1964. Lee's poetry explores the joys and sorrows of family, home, loss, exile, and love; he is author of four critically acclaimed books of poetry, including *Behind My Eyes*; *Book of My Nights*; *Rose* (winner of the Delmore Schwartz Memorial Award); *The City in Which I Love You* (the 1990 Lamont Poetry Selection); and a memoir, *The Winged Seed: A Remembrance*, which received an American Book Award. His many other honors include fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, The Lannan Foundation, and the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation.

According to a recent review of his work, "Lee is not only one of our best contemporary poets of the sacred, he is an authentic mystic ... Confounding dichotomy, Lee calls into question the division between beginning/end, birth/death, past/future, man/woman, body/mind. Borders melt; language opens. These poems approach the very edge of the ineffable, that which cannot be articulated."

[Hear Lee read and talk about his poem, "This Room & Everything in It."](#)

Continuing our tradition started last year, Lee will present awards in the HI Poetry Competition, visit several classes, and will read and speak on April 1 and April 3.

Tuesday, Apr. 1
Patel Center Auditorium
6:00pm, reception to follow

Thursday, Apr. 3
Patel Center Auditorium
6:00pm, reception to follow

Poetry Reading

Interview and Audience

[Click here for Our 2014 schedule](#)

4/14

Freedom of Thought for Our World, and Our Future



Tampa Bay CoR
TAMPA BAY COALITION OF REASON

TBPCC is an autonomous project of the Humanist Society.

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

Ed. Note. The subject of the interactions of humanity with its environment is very complex, and requires some concentrated attention before the issues are fully understood. The consequences of not paying attention, indifference, or hostility may be quite grave for all of us, however. The Post Carbon Institute has become increasingly important as a central resource for this information. But any web search under "climate, Resource Depletion, environmental stability, or social adaptation to environmental change" will yield good insights and are well worth your while to explore.

Nothing less than the fate of our species depends on the decisions we make now.

From a Recent interview with Richard Heinberg,
Senior fellow of the Post Carbon Institute.

Chris Martenson:

"Today, it is especially difficult for most people to understand our perilous global energy situation precisely because it has never been more important to do so." What do you mean?

Richard Heinberg: [Laugh] Yeah. Well, that is from an essay where I sort of take apart the politics of energy. You know, energy has never been more important—it has always been incredibly important because it is the basis of life, it is the basis of the economy. But it is even more important right now because we are faced with a requirement for an energy transition both because of climate change and because of the depletion of the energy sources we have been relying on, all the things we have just been talking about.

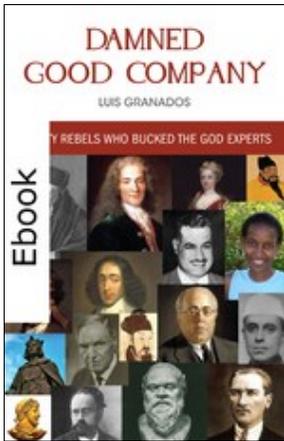
So we know we have to get off of fossil fuels and this is going to be a huge job. It is going to require trillions of investment and decades of work and so on. But nothing is happening. Why? Because it is totally politicized. Climate change is completely politicized. On one hand, you have Democrats who say, "Oh, look at the science. You know, it is clear this is an important thing. We have got to do something about. We do not know what but we have got to do something about it." And then the other political party says, "No, it is not happening. No, no, it is all just a conspiracy theory. There is no climate change." [Laugh] "And if the weather is changing a little bit, it is not because of fossil fuels. You know, that cow farts or I do not know, we do not know." [Laugh]

So as a result, nothing happens, you know, nothing happens with climate—depletion is not acknowledged. All of the things we have been talking about with the problems of the oil majors and capex, none of that is talked about by politicians because it would actually require them to do something.

So it has never been more important for the average person to understand energy issues than it is right now. But I doubt if there has ever been a time when energy issues have been so deliberately confused by the people who should be explaining it to us.

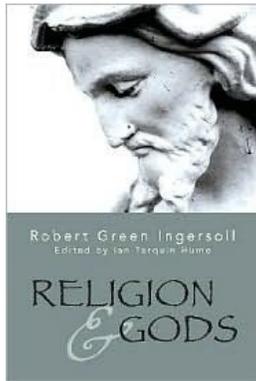
Click www.tampabaypostcarbon.com for more. 3/14 JP

The Humanist Press



Damned Good Company By Luis Granados

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



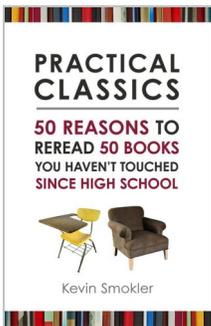
Amid the 21st century's escalating religious tensions, Robert Green Ingersoll's views on the substance of religion and gods offer a firm foundation of logic and independent thought leading to a life examined and a life of happiness free of the shackles of religion. **Prometheus** Pins buttons, stickers, etc. can be ordered

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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!

Prometheus Press



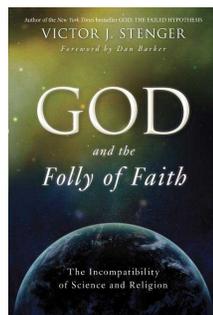
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The Matt Cooper

Memorial Humanist Library.

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

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5. Denialism
6. The Selfish Gene
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8. The Upside Irrationality
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15. The End of Faith
16. Plan B
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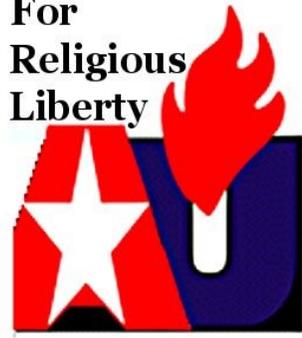
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Americans United for Separation of
Church & State
~ Pinellas County Chapter ~

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.

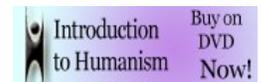
Jennifer is author of several books including; The *Humanist Handbook*, *The Humanist Approach to Happiness*, and her latest book, *The Bully Vaccine* (illustration below). - JP

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



This is Humanism

The British Humanist Association has created a new video campaign - This is Humanism. It is narrated by Stephen Fry. It's wonderful. Here are two of the videos:

How do we know what is true? - <http://youtu.be/Yk5IWzTfWeM>

How to be Happy - <http://youtu.be/Tvz0mmF6NW4>

I love these videos not only because listening to Stephen Fry describe the Humanist approach to life and to thinking and problem solving is such a joy, but also because they are really well done.

They don't focus on the is there or is there not a god debate - which is so incredibly boring. Instead, they focus on how a Humanist approaches living life fully and how we figure out what is true or not.

To me, Humanism is a way of approaching life. It's a really good way. We shouldn't be hiding behind the atheists as if the only thing of value about our philosophy is that it is secular. It's so much more than that. This article from Psychology today does a great job of explaining why being secular isn't enough - <http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/our-humanity-naturally/201403/secular-progressive-youre-probably-humanist>

So kudos to the British Humanist Association for focusing on - For the One Life We Live!

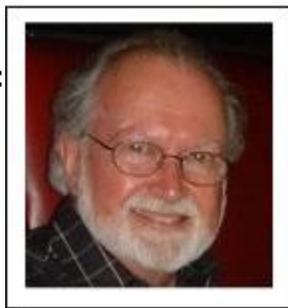
Jennifer Hancock

4-14

Institute for Rational Living

is the official psychoanalytical representative of Center for Inquiry:

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



Vincent Parr, PhD
Clinical Psychologist at Institute for Advanced Study MRL
President at Institute for Rational Living

Dr. Parr is a licensed Clinical Psychologist with over 40 years experience in Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) and Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT). He also has 23 + years of experience in Mindfulness and Zen. He uses these two very powerful approaches to help people reach freedom -- that is, the freedom that comes from maximally eliminating suffering (often defined as chronic disappointment and frustration) and disturbance (Anger, Anxiety, Depression, and Guilt).

Dr. Parr has been a consultant to the United States Air Force, Hayatt International, Bic Pen Corporation, the City of St. Petersburg, the St. Petersburg Police Department, the Institute for Rational Living, the Institute for Advanced study in Rational Psychotherapy, and was an adjunct professor at the University of Tampa for nine years. In addition, he sits on the national Board of Directors for the Institute for Science and Human Values.



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

2013 Report From the ISHV Office of Public Policy

Toni Van Pelt, Director



As you may know from following the work of ISHV, we lobby on many issues of interest of the progressive secular humanist movement. An important way we do this is to work in coalition with other groups and organizations. We participate by helping to write and sign onto letters, sending out alerts asking you to contact your representatives, lobbying Congressional members directly, traveling around the country to do civic trainings and participating in dialogues with U.S. and international leaders on how best to advance the movement. In addition we work on the international stage to aid and provide a safe place for those who suffer persecution from radical religionists.

Charitable Choice and the Presidential Faith Based Office

Since its inception in 2010 ISHV has been actively working to end religious preference in law and public policy. Today ISHV lobbies against the onslaught of religious amendments, acts, resolutions and offices brought on by Congressional members, federal offices and the White House.

[Read more >>>](#)



[Lawsuit Demands Removal of 40-Foot Christian Cross from Government Property](#)

February 25, 2014 – The AHLC files a suit on behalf of three plaintiffs demanding the removal of a 40-foot Christian cross on government property in Bladensburg, MD.

[Minnesota Public School Told to End Field Trips to Christian Church](#)

February 3, 2014 – The AHLC has warned school administrators in Golden Valley, MN to stop sending students on field trips to a nearby Christian church to create “manna” packages” for a Christian nonprofit group.

[Federal Appeal Filed to End Religious Elements in South Carolina Public School's Graduation Ceremonies](#)

January 27, 2014 – The AHLC is challenging a district court's failure to stop a South Carolina public elementary school from continuing to include religious elements during graduation ceremonies.

[End Unconstitutional Graduation Prayers, Humanist Legal Center Tells Illinois High School](#)

January 22, 2014 – The AHLC is demanding that public high school administrators in Norris City, IL end prayer services during graduation ceremonies.

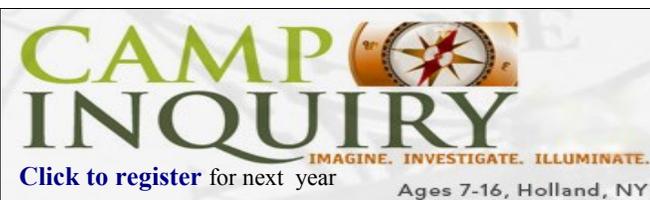
[Humanist Group to Missouri County Government: Stop Erecting Christian Nativity Scenes](#)

January 10, 2014 – The AHLC demands the Oregon County, MO courthouse remove a Christian nativity display from its grounds.

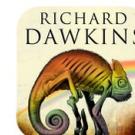
Find out more about end of life issues.

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> or
www.compassionandchoices.org



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



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THE HUMAN Bible
WITH ROBERT M. PRICE

It is a book cobbled together long ago over the course of many centuries by regular, flawed human beings, and yet its contents are considered sacrosanct by billions of people. But even those who consider it an infallible guide cannot agree on its meaning! And for believer and nonbeliever alike, many passages are difficult to understand, with maddeningly obscure references. (Who, or what, are the Nephilim anyway?) Surely, there must be someone who can help us come to terms with this weighty, daunting tome!

Enter Dr. **Robert M. Price**; biblical scholar, atheist, and former Baptist pastor. In *The Human Bible*, Price will deconstruct and demystify this foundational book, all from a rational, secular, and non-ideological perspective—and all with a good dose of humor. For fans of history, religious studies, or

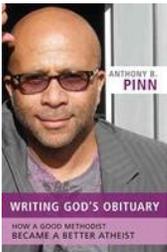
literature—or of charismatic professorial types—*The Human Bible* podcast is a trove of entertainment and enlightenment. Born in Jackson, Mississippi, in 1954, **Robert Price** moved to New Jersey in 1965. At Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary he took an MTS degree in New Testament (1978), then, at Drew University, a PhD in Systematic Theology (1981) and a second PhD in New Testament (1993). He has served as Professor of Religion at Mount Olive College, North Carolina, pastor of First Baptist Church, Montclair, NJ, and Director of the Metro NY Center for Inquiry. He founded and edited the Journal of Higher Criticism and has authored scores of articles on the Bible and religion. His books include *Beyond Born Again*, *The Widow Traditions in Luke-Acts*, *Deconstructing Jesus*, *The Incredible Shrinking Son of Man*, *The Da Vinci Fraud*, *The Reason-Driven Life*, *The Pre-Nicene New Testament*, *Jesus Is Dead*, and *The Paperback Apocalypse*. Price is a Fellow of the Jesus Seminar. He serves as Professor of Theology and Scriptural Studies at Johnnie Colemon Theological Seminary and Professor of Biblical Criticism for the Center for Inquiry Institute in Amherst, NY. He and his wife Carol and daughters Victoria and Veronica live in Selma, NC.

In *The Human Bible* podcast, Price deconstructs and demystifies this foundational book, all from a rational, secular, and non-ideological perspective—and all with a good dose of humor. For fans of history, religious studies, or literature—or of charismatic professorial types—*The Human Bible* is a trove of entertainment and enlightenment.

The Human Bible is produced at the Center for Inquiry in Amherst, N.Y.

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Books to wrap your brain around ...

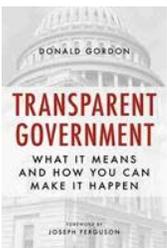
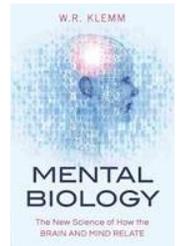


Writing God's Obituary: How a Good Methodist Became a Better Atheist

“Writing God’s Obituary is a story of liberation and redemption but not of the customary kind.”

Mental Biology: The New Science of How the Brain and Mind Relate

“A fresh perspective on the mind-body problem and the nature of consciousness. Building on evidence from modern neuroscience”

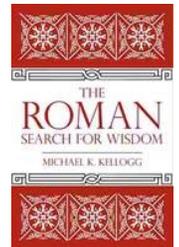


Transparent Government: What It Means and How You Can Make It Happen

Foreword by Joseph Ferguson, Chicago Inspector General “This is a critical book that anyone who cares if government works well needs to read.”

The Roman Search for Wisdom

“Michael Kellogg’s abundantly informative new book fills in a great gap in most educated people’s historical and cultural knowledge — ancient Rome.”



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Tampa Bay Secular Celebrants

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Virginia Kohl-Lieberman, AHA certified

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The Secular Humanist Viewpoint Matters.

To be taken seriously in the political arena, humanism must become known for its grassroots organizing. Local groups will bring acclaim to the movement as they are recognized by the media and government officials as participants in the democratic process. Join us April 19th at 11:30 am

There are ways we are able to influence outcomes. The aim is to imprint humanistic values on humankind by advancing and maintaining a secular government and a civil society, a culture that is neutral when it comes to religion. Religion has been and continues to be infused within the government at a very rapid rate. It is like an ivy vine winding its way up and around each branch of government choking off science and reason.

Are you ready to join us in making a difference? Volunteer by letting Rick know. [CFI-Tampa Bay](#) will continue contacting local, state and national politicians ... of our concerns. Yes, you can help.



Rick O'Keefe



Toni Van Pelt

Toni Van Pelt is co-founder, the public policy director and congressional lobbyist for the Institute for Science and Human Values. As former vice president and public policy director of the Center for Inquiry she organized and directed one of the first public policy offices of the secular humanist movement in Washington, DC focusing on the importance of science, separation of church and state, women's and LGBTi rights. She continues this work with the Institute. Toni is a host of Eupraxsophy on Air, ISHV's radio show/podcast.

She currently serves on the board of the National Organization for Women as the Southeast Regional Director. She has recently be elected to the board of directors of the Institute for Humanist Studies.

Please bring non-perishable food for Tampa Bay Harvest, our Tampa Bay Coalition of Reason food program.

The Center for Inquiry values full participation at all of its events, including participation from individuals with disabilities. Requests for reasonable accommodation may be made by contacting the library one week before the event.

Upper Tampa Bay Regional Public Library 11211 Countryway Blvd. Tampa, FL 33626-2624

813-273-3652 [Get Directions / View Google Map](#) <http://www.hcplc.org/hcplc/locations/utb/>



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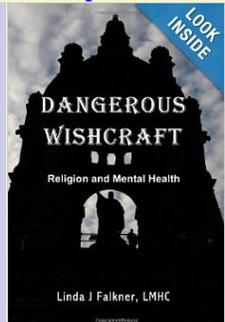
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By local Humanistic Counselor,
Linda Faulkner



Humanists of Sarasota Bay, Inc.

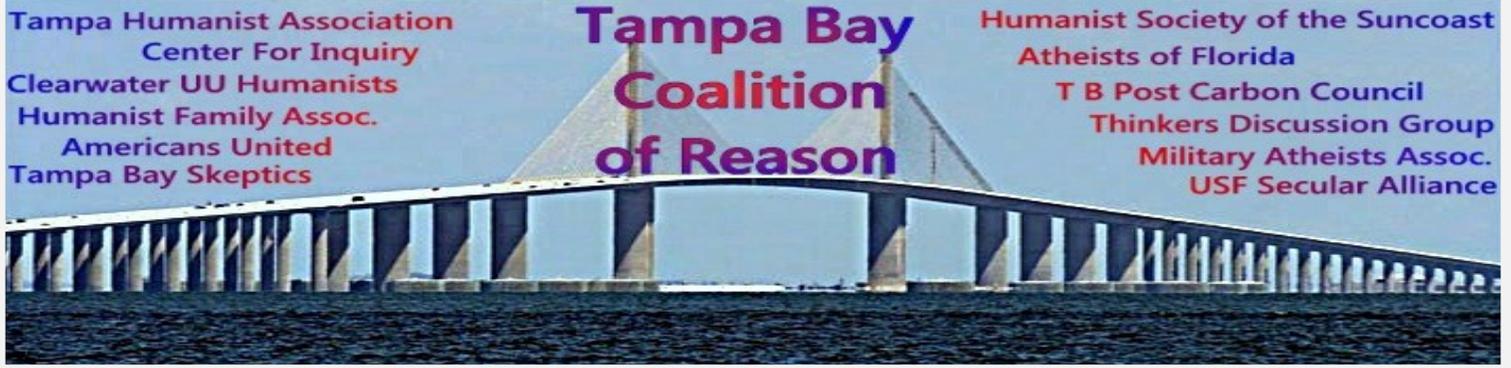
Sarasota, Florida

Calendar of Upcoming main events:

April 7: Humanist Panel—Composed of members from HUSBAY regarding the Nature of Humanism.

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

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



<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

- **2014** is the UN International Year of Family Farming

April is National Poetry Month

- 2nd Reconciliation Day
- 7th World Health Day
- 12th Big Wind Day
- 14th International Moment of Laughter Day
- 17th Blah, blah, blah Day
- 20th Volunteer Recognition Day
- 28th International Astronomy Day



TBCoR Leadership Team 2014

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

Editorial E-Mail: tbcor@metrodirect.net

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.