

First Coast

# FreeThinker



The Newsletter of the First Coast Freethought Society

July 2008

Volume 6, Issue 7

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## NPR Corporate Sponsorship Fund Drive: an Overwhelming Success

**Earl Coggins**

**I**n May, I asked FCFS members and friends to join together for our annual fundraising campaign to finance the purchase of FCFS announcements on National Public Radio (NPR) member station, WJCT (89.9 FM) for the second half of 2008. That call was answered, and the fund drive has been an overwhelming success. We exceeded our financial goal of \$4,100 to keep our NPR announcements alive for the next six months.

I want to personally

thank everyone who made our NPR Corporate Sponsorship fund drive a success. It is a worthy cause. As I stated in my May president's message, the NPR announcement is broad-

*The best way, I feel, to educate the public about freethinkers and the freethought movement is through positive versus negative tactics.*

casting compelling and persuasive memes to the listening area.

The word "meme" is merely a term for information, be it an idea, a grocery list, a set of

house plans, or a concept such as skepticism, mysticism, freethought, humanism, agnosticism, or religious beliefs. A meme could also be the most up-to-date scientific principles related to cosmology, the latest novel by Michael Crichton, or even a new song.

Richard Dawkins coined the term in his book, *The Selfish Gene*, published in 1976. It was meant as a way to express a system of con-

*(Continued on page 3)*



*"Peace is not the absence of conflict but the presence of creative alternatives for responding to conflict—alternatives to passive or aggressive responses, alternatives to violence."*

—Dorothy Thompson  
American Journalist

## July 2008 Meeting

Casey Welch, Ph.D., Department of Sociology & Anthropology, UNF

### "Conflict Transformation"

Monday, July 21, 2008, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

(Upstairs in the Sanctuary • Doors open at 6:00)

Unitarian Universalist Church • 7405 Arlington Expressway • Jacksonville, FL

## HUMANIST BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

- When:** 2:00 p.m., the third Sunday of each month.
- Where:** Borders Books, 8801 Southside Blvd., 519-6500, books are usually in stock.
- What:** Books/magazines planned for discussion:



- July 20, 2008 - Book of your choice
- August 17, 2008 - *The Atheist Bible: An Illustrious Collection of Irreverent Thoughts*, edited by Joan Konner (\$16.95)

*The Atheist's Bible* aims to be a *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations* of unbelief. The entire contents are quotes, usually from atheists or agnostics, but also from critics of organized religion, no matter what their belief system. Therefore, while you'll find many of the "usual suspects" of modern atheism represented here (Richard Dawkins, Sam Harris, Christopher Hitchens), you'll also come across vintage sayings by deists like Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, and Thomas Paine. Here is a sample quotation from philosopher David Hume:

"The Christian religion was not only at first attended with miracles, but even at this day cannot be believed by any reasonable person without one." (David Hume, page 32)

For more information, contact moderator Jewell Kross at [JKross@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org](mailto:JKross@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org) or call 904-996-1553. (NOTE: If you purchase books from Amazon, please go to our website FIRST and then click the link to Amazon.com. [firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org](http://firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org) Thank you!)

**First Coast  
FreeThinker**

The *First Coast FreeThinker* is published for members of the First Coast Freethought Society, other freethinkers, and potential freethinkers. We exchange newsletters with other freethought groups and obtain information from many diverse sources.

Readers are invited and encouraged to reprint our original materials provided they give credit to this publication.

The officials of the FCFS are not responsible for opinions or other statements expressed in this newsletter. It is intended to convey ideas to stimulate discussion on a variety of subjects.

### Newsletter Staff

Editor:	Hugo Borresen	779-6883
	<a href="mailto:HBorresen@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org">HBorresen@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org</a>	
Layout:	Curtis Wolf	573-3847
	<a href="mailto:CWolf@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org">CWolf@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org</a>	
Staff writer:	Fred Hill	358-3610
	<a href="mailto:FHill@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org">FHill@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org</a>	
Proofreader:	Wilhelmina Walton	642-8798
	<a href="mailto:WWalton@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org">WWalton@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org</a>	
Proofreader:	Carrie Renwick	268-8826
	<a href="mailto:CRenwick@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org">CRenwick@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org</a>	

We welcome submissions. The deadline is the **FOURTH SATURDAY** of each month for the following month's issue. Submit contributions by e-mail to Hugo (see above), or U.S. Mail to Hugo Borresen, 8831 Taurus Circle South, Jacksonville, FL 32222. Submit website contributions to Carrie Renwick at the e-mail address above.

### ***NPR Corporate Sponsorship Fund Drive: An Overwhelming Success***

*(Continued from page 1)*

veying ideas from one person to another. A meme is a replicator, but I see semantic errors with this definition. A meme is a replicate, whether it is a photocopy of a diagram or the memory of a past conversation.

Memes compete for space in our memories. It is therefore imperative that we, as freethinkers, do everything we can to improve the replication of free-thought memes from one host to another. With brain space a finite commodity, memes must meet certain criteria in order to be allowed a place at the cerebral table. What causes a meme to be accepted or rejected? I think Dawkins wanted a term that would explain the proliferation of information. “Memetics” (i.e., the study of memes) accomplishes that task beautifully.

Why is this important? It is important because the information highway is changing daily. Memes first traveled by word of mouth. As technology improved, they were written on things such as stone, then papyrus. As cultures intermingled, these memes were translated into different languages. Papyrus evolved to paper and other media, but replication errors were widespread and went unchecked. The Bible is a prime example.

Electricity and radio enabled memes to be broadcast through the air so they could be heard in

faraway places, but replication errors were still a problem. Computers minimized replication errors, and then the internet enabled memes to travel the world practically error free. We can now transmit a meme to the other side of the globe and print it out with very few, if any, errors.

Now to my point. With error-free meme replication, the freethought community, especially its speakers and writers, must express a point of view both explicitly and specifically. A good example would be to label people from a specific religion as dog-



matic when, in fact, it is theoretically possible for a majority of its adherents to be progressive, open-minded individuals. We cannot pigeon hole religions when, in fact, there are thousands of Christian, Muslim, and Jewish sects around the world, all extremely different in how they interpret their doctrines, many of whose adherents have exceptionally rational, progressive minds. The Reverend Barry Lynn, Executive Director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, is a great example.

I bring this up because of the meme/gene analogy regarding the “fitness” to replicate. Genes and memes spread only when they “fit” into an environment.

Memes inhabit a complicated environment—the human brain—which has many quirky ways of deciding what’s right and wrong, or good and bad. Why do some people watch CNN while others watch Fox News? Knowing the answer to this question may help us understand how to construct a meme fit for replication.

The best way, I feel, to educate the public about freethinkers and the freethought movement is through positive versus negative tactics. Instead of arguing that religion is bad, I think we should eliminate the negative labels altogether and create memes with affirmative descriptions. We must promote the positive aspects of free-thought using examples such as our “Affirmations of Humanism” (see [http://www.firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org/statement\\_of\\_principles.htm](http://www.firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org/statement_of_principles.htm)).

If we can’t convince the public at large of our worth through our merits, our movement will become static. I feel that our movement has indeed been static for many centuries, because we have a history of attacking too frequently, and our views are subsequently dismissed as overly aggressive. Our movement cannot succeed until we are able to communicate in a way that is appealing to the public. The public wants a little seasoning in their food, especially their food for thought. Once we learn what seasoning to add, our memes will be palatable and easy to digest or, from an evolutionary standpoint, “fit” for replication.

# Jesus Christ

Terry Loucks

Some of my religious friends must think that I am an idiot for not believing in Jesus Christ, since nearly everyone else in America does. Heaven only knows, I have tried, but for some reason I just don't have what it takes.

The benefits are certainly obvious, even to me. If the stories are true that Jesus died on the cross for the sins we inherited from Adam and Eve, and that he waits for us on the right hand of the Creator, then only those enamored with our problematic human life would believe otherwise. As incredible as the story might sound to an outsider, it has the promise of life eternal.

It turns out to be a big "if," however, as I was sad to learn from my own extensive research. There is really no scientific or historical support for the stories, a secret well known to most divinity students. In fact, the stories are merely myths that have miraculously survived to our times from nomads who lived thousands of years ago, in Palestine.

I was not inclined to believe this myself, in spite of the impressive credentials of the linguists in the Jesus Seminar (a great reference is *The Five Gospels* by Robert Funk). If the stories have been fabricated, like the earnings at Enron, then why are there millions of churches,

each of a different flavor, vying for our souls on nearly every corner of America? Could that many people be completely misinformed and never have questioned what they have been told?

The answer, I fear, is that we are so terrified by our own mortality and the human plight that any port will do in a storm. Americans believe the Jesus story, while millions of their counterparts in Asia believe the Vishnu or Buddha stories. The Muslims, the Mormons, the Christian Scientists, and many others believe the version of the story proffered by their own visionaries.

***But there is no evidence for the supernatural, which relegates religious thought to the confines of our minds.***

From the common thread of world religions, at one point I entertained the possibility that there might be a loving God, but that she appears differently to us in our many diverse cultures. But that boat did not float because everyone would be praying to the same God to win both wars and sporting events, and that would require of her more than the Wisdom of Solomon.

This personal God was also inconsistent with everything I had learned about the universe

from physics and the other sciences. There is no debate among scientists that we are merely



one of many evolving life forms in an expanding and indifferent universe that is gradually yielding its secrets to rational thought. But there is no evidence for the supernatural, which relegates religious thought to the confines of our minds. The inner voice has all the answers, as it must, for us to face a confounding world.

Is it any wonder that we grade easy when it comes to eternal life? We are so terrified by the loss of loved ones and the prospects of our own demise that we keep score only when our prayers are answered. Our occasional good fortune is proof that our "personal God" is alive and well—and working on our behalf. We are quick to ignore our own bad luck and that of others because it confirms the chaotic nature of life.

I am now resigned to reality, namely, that whatever is responsible for the laws of physics which underlie the genetic code and the periodic table of the chemical elements, has not yet revealed to science the purpose of the universe, if one exists. Consequently, I feel that it is in our best interest to understand our situation, here

in this life, and as quickly as possible in order to improve the human condition and increase the odds of our survival as a species.

The time and resources that we devote to the supernatural would be better invested in the sciences and the humanities. We should be tithing not to the

unknown but to the known, and at the top of our list should be the end of hunger and disease.



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## Americans Say that There Are Many Paths to Truth

**A**ccording to a poll commissioned by Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, despite an overwhelming belief in God or some kind of supernatural being, most Americans do not believe that there is one religion that leads to

salvation and one way to eternal life. The poll also reveals a great deal of diversity of religious belief among Americans, even among members of the same faith. For example, only six in ten Hindus believe in reincarnation, even though that concept is one of the central

beliefs in Hinduism.

Interestingly, one in five of those claiming to be atheists also said that they believe in God; and one in ten said that they pray at least once a week. God is obviously a hard habit for some to give up.



### Ongoing FCFS Activities

#### Dinners for Doubters

Sign up to attend or host a dinner yourself. Sign-up sheets will be at the back table at the monthly meetings. For further details on how this works, see page 7 of this *Freethinker*, "Dinners for Doubters—Re-activated" or ask at the back table.

#### Secular Sunday Morning in the Park (or Atheist Sunday Morning)

Freethinkers... let's get acquainted and enjoy intelligent conversation every 4th Sunday of the month (unless inclement weather prevails) at 10 a.m. 'til ? at the pavilion at Losco Park, 10851 Hood Rd., S., Jacksonville 32257, between Shad and Losco Roads. Need directions? Call Beth Perry at 733-5489 or Google the address to get a map and directions. Bring your own cup, breakfast snack and a chair. Most of the time coffee is furnished. Mark your calendar and we hope to see you there!

#### No Atheist Left Behind (or Are You Going My Way?)

If you are seeking a ride to an FCFS event, contact **Hugo Borresen** at [HBorresen@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org](mailto:HBorresen@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org) or call 904-779-6883.

#### Caring Tree

If a telephone call to a member is in order, or if a sympathy card, flowers, or some form of support is needed, please contact **Nita Pitts** at 904-996-0879 or e-mail her at [pitrymnd@comcast.net](mailto:pitrymnd@comcast.net). If you prefer, leave a notation on the sign-in sheet at the back table at one of our monthly meetings.

## A Case of Family Spamming

Sigrun Buckley

**S**omebody sent me a bunch of beautiful e-flowers, although it was not yet my birthday.

*“Stop and smell the roses.  
Happiness keeps you Sweet,  
Trials keep you Strong,  
Sorrows keep you Human,  
Failures keep you Humble,  
Success keeps you Glowing.”*

So far so good, and then bingo—here it goes again:

*“But Only God Keeps You Going!”*

...And I thought it was the now \$4-plus-per-gallon gasoline.

Junk e-mails, jokes, or whatever people deem funny, flood our inboxes. Sorting the wheat from the chaff, you can often tell by the sender’s name into what category they belong. My pet hate is chain e-mail that you are not to interrupt for fear of breaking the magic or a miracle in waiting. You know them: “Now, send this to 11 people within the next 5 minutes, or else...” Some start innocently enough with beautiful pictures of art, babies, or nature. “If you pass this on, you will receive a miracle. I am passing this on because I thought it was really pretty, and besides, who couldn’t use a miracle?”

The call for a product embargo against Pepsi got me fuming. Pepsi has a new “patriotic” can coming out with pictures of the Empire State Building and

the Pledge of Allegiance on them. However, Pepsi left out two little words of the pledge, “Under God.” Pepsi said they didn’t want to offend anyone. So if we don’t buy any Pepsi product (so the boycott call goes), they will not be offended when they don’t receive our money that has the words “In God We Trust” on it. Not that I buy Pepsi anyway.

I haven’t found a way to tell somebody not to pray for me. (And hey, I probably need it.) What is witty to a nonreligious person offends the others, “Fine, you pray for us, and I’ll do the thinking for the both of us.” I

***Please pass this back up the chain that sent it, and tell them there are no miracles, God is a silly superstition, and a pox on you goofy spammers!***

recently lost a friend when I objected to her continued incoming blessings.

A real quandary arises when you want to object to religious e-mails coming from your family. When I see e-mails coming from a certain culprit in our clan, I’m often inclined just to hit DELETE. This looks preferable to causing a family schism. It’s accompanied by a lot of tongue biting.

Often times, these e-mails have been forwarded to the nth

degree. Some e-mail junkies either don’t know how to (or are too lazy to delete previous recipients) and

just forward the body text. It used to infuriate me. Now I see it as an opportunity. At the last FCFS dinner, a fellow free-thinker admitted he used the whole address list involved to spread free thoughts to people he couldn’t reach otherwise. Now is the time to be proactive using the power of Internet connections, he said.

This must be what coming out feels like. So how do you tell a close family member? And what if they know darn well that you are not religious, but keep sending them just the same? Why expect religious beliefs to be respected when the beliefs of the nonreligious are ignored or found offensive?

I’m still working on a retort e-mail. So far I’ve gotten as far as, “I’m happy your faith brings you comfort and inspiration. And I know you have warm feelings for me even knowing I do not believe in anything supernatural. You’re welcome to pass on to me what you like about this life.”

My husband would put it more bluntly: “Please pass this back up the chain that sent it, and tell them there are no miracles, God is a silly superstition,



and a pox on you goofy spammers! No offense intended.”

My freethinking mind has visions of proselytizing... or

would that be beating a dead horse?



## More from the Mouths of Babes

### Unanswered Prayer?

**T**he preacher's five-year-old daughter noticed that her father always paused and bowed his head for a moment before starting his sermon. One day, she asked him why. "Well, honey," he began, proud that his daughter was so observant of his messages. "I'm asking the Lord to help me preach a good sermon." She paused for a second and then asked, "How come he doesn't write it himself?"

### Untimely Answered Prayer

During the minister's prayer

one Sunday, there was a loud whistle from one of the back pews. Tommy's mother was horrified. She pinched him into silence and after church asked, "Tommy, whatever made you do such a thing?" Tommy answered soberly, "I asked God to teach me to whistle, and he did it just then!"

### Time To Pray

A pastor asked a little boy if he said his prayers every night. "Yes, sir," the boy replied. "And do you always say them in the morning, too?" the pastor asked. "No sir," the boy replied. "I ain't scared in the daytime."

### All Men / All Girls?

When my daughter, Kelli, said her bedtime prayers, she would bless every family member, every friend, and every animal (current and past). For several weeks, after we had finished the nightly prayer, Kelli would say, "And all girls."

As this soon became part of her nightly routine, to include this at the end, my curiosity finally got the best of me and I asked her, "Kelli, why do you always add the part about all girls?" Her response, "Because we always finish our prayers by saying All Men!"



## Dinners for Doubters—Re-Activated

**O**ur concept of "Dinners for Atheists" (and agnostics, humanists, skeptics and freethinkers, of course) has been rejuvenated, re-activated, and renamed: Dinners for Doubters!

Dinners for Doubters is a convenient, easy way to create an instant dinner party, get to know other freethinkers, and make new friends in intimate surroundings.

It works like this: Someone decides to host a Dinner for Doubters. The host or hostess picks a date and decides how many people he or she would like to invite. A party totaling eight seems to work well, but this is

entirely up to you. You may want only four! We then put a sign-up sheet at the back table, and guests sign up to attend.



When the guest list is filled, the host or hostess contacts each guest to arrange the menu and

who will bring what. Often, the host or hostess provides the entrée, and the guests provide a salad, beverage, vegetable, dessert, etc. But again, who brings what is entirely up to the participants.

In fact, if a person whose house is very small wanted to host a dinner, they could pick a restaurant and all go Dutch. The goal of Dinners for Doubters is to allow mixing and mingling, getting to know new and different people, and to allow freethinker friendships to flourish. Consider hosting a dinner. Be watching for a Dinners for Doubters sign-in sheet at the back table!



## A Fractured Science Fairy Tale

Fred W. Hill

Once upon a time, there was a little dictator who ruled a large land. The dictator was certain he was right about everything and hated to be contradicted. Now this little dictator, who insisted he be referred to by the sobriquet “Steel,” had a pet biologist named Trofim who earned prominent positions because he told Steel what he wanted to hear, even if it was not strictly true. Other biologists disagreed with Trofim’s ideas. “He doesn’t know what he’s talking about!” they said. “His ideas and claims are not supported by facts, and the fantastic results he boasts of cannot be replicated.”

“You blockheads,” Steel fumed. “Trofim is a genius, a man of the people! You are just jealous of him. How dare you belittle my Trofim? How dare you contradict what I know to be true with your silly facts! Now get out and find facts that agree with me and my pet, or I shall knock off your heads!”

And so the scientists throughout the land were filled with fear. Still, many defied Steel and Trofim and were severely punished for it. Others praised Trofim, heaping lavish awards on him for the avowed astounding agricultural output of his techniques. Few dared point out loud that Trofim was lying; his techniques, failures. Even after Steel died, his pet was adopted by other little dictators at home and in a vast neighboring land. Trofim’s pow-

erful admirers enforced his doctrines and eliminated anyone who used mere facts to dispute with him.

Yet, the facts would not go away. Even the little dictators couldn’t make them go away. Finally, the obnoxious facts could not be ignored anymore and Trofim was knocked off his pedestal. He was berated because he had never been a very good scientist at all. The book was closed on the little pet, Trofim Denisovich Lysenko in full, but he was allowed to retire in relative comfort—unlike the

*... favoring fractured dogmatic fairy tales masquerading as science, over facts supported by genuine scientific methodology, can have risky—even catastrophic—consequences.*

hundreds of more honest and capable scientists who suffered and were executed because they contradicted him, and unlike the millions of rural poor in the Soviet Union and China who starved to death because they could not survive on the meager fruits of Trofim’s unsound scientific techniques.

Regrettably, despite my poetic license above, Lysenko’s story is no fairy tale. Rather, it is yet another tragic chapter in the history of civilization and the ancient ongoing conflict between free inquiry and dogmatism.

Lysenko came into prominence primarily by promising

fast and significant results without all the expensive, time-consuming laboratory experimentation that other scientists asserted was

necessary to substantiate hypotheses. Moreover, Lysenko was of peasant stock and had no formal academic training, and the Soviet leaders were eager to tout him as a “hero of the common people” in order to convince the peasant masses to return to farming, an occupation aban-

doned by many after the confiscation of their land during the period of forced collectivization as the nascent Communist regime consolidated its power.

As Lysenko came to Stalin’s notice and favor, he threw himself into an ongoing scientific debate among scientists in the Soviet Union

over whether evolution worked through Mendelian genetics, derived from the experiments and published works of Gregor Mendel and holding that living organisms biologically inherit characteristics from their ancestors through genes, versus the notion made most famous by Jean-Baptiste Lamarck in the late 18th century holding that characteristics were acquired by organisms during their lifetimes and then passed on to their offspring. A growing majority of biologists throughout the international scientific community, including Russia’s most prominent botanist of the time, Niko-





lai Vavilov, found that the preponderance of experimental evidence supported the validity of genetics.

Lysenko, however, became the champion of his own interpretation of Lamarckism, denouncing genetics as “bourgeois pseudoscience.” As Lysenko disdained standard scientific methods and had the support of the Communist Party, despite never becoming a member, he found it easy to magnify his few successes. “His habit was to report only successes,” notes Professor Helena Sheehan of Dublin University. “His results were based on extremely small samples, inaccurate records, and the almost total absence of control groups. An early mistake in calculation, which caused comment among other specialists, made him extremely negative toward the use of mathematics in science.”

(<http://webpages.dcu.ie/~sheehanh/lysenko.htm>, excerpt from *Sheehan, Marxism and the Philosophy of Science*, 2nd Ed., 1993)

Stalin, who naturally favored political expediency and what he considered to be practical results over adherence to valid scientific method, was impressed with Lysenko, who was appointed as the director of the USSR’s Academy of Science in 1940. Vavilov was arrested that year for criticizing Lysenko and died of malnutrition in prison in 1943, just one of millions of victims of Stalin’s despotism. Criticism of Lysenkoism was officially outlawed in the Soviet Union in 1948 and remained so until Lysenko lost political support

following the ouster of Nikita Khrushchev as the Soviet leader in 1964.

Lysenko’s dominance of biology in the U.S.S.R., as well as Maoist China, over several decades resulted in mass starvation in both nations as his methods failed to yield sufficient crops, while it was illegal and even dangerous to advocate more viable techniques that had proven effective in other countries. Thus, even as the Soviet Union was stunning the world with its



***Lysenko speaking at the Kremlin in 1935. At the back (left to right) are Stanislav Kosior, Anastas Mikoyan, Andrei Andreev, and the Soviet leader Joseph Stalin.***

technological achievements in rocketry and nuclear weapons, it lagged far behind the rest of the industrialized world in all biology fields due entirely to ideology-based restrictions imposed by the state.

Of course, government interference in the acquisition, dissemination, and application of knowledge is not unique to communist dictatorships. Some restrictions on scientific inquiry are understandably required for clearly ethical reasons, such as experiments that may potentially cause great unnecessary suffering to human subjects.

Historically, however, most

restrictions have been imposed due to purely political or religious dogmatism, as exemplified every time a U.S. school board or state legislature has attempted to outlaw the teaching of evolution or require that it be taught alongside the discredited notions of intelligent design. Our current head of state has a reputation of antagonism towards science, or any sort of knowledge that doesn’t support his worldview, as exemplified by an article written by Andrew Revkin

near the end of his first term, reporting that his administration “has selected or suppressed research findings to suit preset policies, skewed advisory panels or ignored unwelcome advice, and quashed discussion within federal research agencies.” ([www.nytimes.com/2004/10/19/science/19poli.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2004/10/19/science/19poli.html)).

Fortunately, no American President or other elected or appointed official has had quite the same dictatorial power that Stalin and

Lysenko had over the U.S.S.R. Presidents have no legal authority to silence even their most cantankerous critics merely for speaking out, even if several of our chief executives have overstepped their bounds of power to do just that, most often during wars or other national crises.

Nevertheless, even in a free society, especially one as large and powerful as the U.S., favoring fractured dogmatic fairy tales masquerading as science, over facts supported by genuine scientific methodology, can have risky—even catastrophic—consequences.



First Coast Freethought Society, Inc.  
P.O. Box 550591  
Jacksonville, FL 32255-0591  
(904) 288-6291  
<http://firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org>

### Statement of Purpose

The First Coast Freethought Society, Inc. is an educational, nonprofit, 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization dedicated to supporting nonreligious persons in the Northeast Florida area and promoting a nontheistic approach to everyday life.

### Meetings

The FCFS meets the THIRD Monday of each month at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Jacksonville, upstairs in the sanctuary, 7405 Arlington Expressway, Jacksonville, Florida 32211, (904) 725-8133. Meeting time: 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Meetings are free and open to the public. Doors open at 6:00 p.m.

### Committees and Chairs

**Program** Carrie Renwick 268-8826  
[CRenwick@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org](mailto:CRenwick@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org)  
**Audit** Roger Wenner 288-6291  
[RWenner@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org](mailto:RWenner@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org)  
**Newsletter** Hugo Borresen 779-6883  
[HBorresen@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org](mailto:HBorresen@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org)  
**Membership** Carrie Renwick 268-8826  
[CRenwick@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org](mailto:CRenwick@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org)  
**Telephone** Nita Pitts 996-0879  
[NPitts@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org](mailto:NPitts@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org)

### FCFS Officers

**President** Earl Coggins 519-1809  
[ECoggins@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org](mailto:ECoggins@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org)  
**Vice President** Carrie Renwick 268-8826  
[CRenwick@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org](mailto:CRenwick@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org)  
**Secretary** June Applen 762-0627  
[JApplen@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org](mailto:JApplen@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org)  
**Treasurer** Mark Renwick 268-8826  
[MRenwick@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org](mailto:MRenwick@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org)  
**At-Large** Steve Peek 742-5390  
[S.Peek@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org](mailto:S.Peek@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org)

### Other FCFS Appointments

**Parliamentarian** Wilhelmina Walton 642-8798  
[WWalton@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org](mailto:WWalton@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org)  
**E-mail Secretary** Carrie Renwick 268-8826  
[CRenwick@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org](mailto:CRenwick@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org)

**Finance** Mark Renwick 268-8826  
[MRenwick@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org](mailto:MRenwick@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org)  
**Publicity** Carrie Renwick 268-8826  
[CRenwick@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org](mailto:CRenwick@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org)  
**Website** Mark Renwick 268-8826  
[MRenwick@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org](mailto:MRenwick@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org)  
**Hospitality** Alice Ricker 745-1840  
[ARicker@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org](mailto:ARicker@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org)  
**Long-Range Planning** Curtis Wolf 573-3847  
[CWolf@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org](mailto:CWolf@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org)

## July Social

**Where:** OLIVE GARDEN on Philips Highway, near the Avenues Mall.  
**When:** Tuesday July 22, 2008 at 6:00 p.m., proceed directly to our room.  
**Drinks at 6:00. Dinner at 7:00.** (Order from menu, as usual.)  
**RSVP:** [CarrieRen@att.net](mailto:CarrieRen@att.net) (or 268-8826) by Tues. a.m., if you plan to go!

First Coast Freethought Society, Inc.  
P.O. Box 550591, Jacksonville, FL 32255-0591 • (904) 288-6291  
2008 Membership Application



Name		Date	
Home address	City	State	Zip Code
E-mail address	Home phone	Business phone	
Occupation	Areas of interest and/or expertise		

How did you hear about us? \_\_\_\_\_

Membership level (please select one):

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regular (\$30/yr.)      | <input type="checkbox"/> Carl Sagan (\$50/yr.)       | <input type="checkbox"/> Charles Darwin (\$200/yr.)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student (\$15/yr.)      | <input type="checkbox"/> Bertrand Russell (\$75/yr.) | <input type="checkbox"/> Robert Ingersoll (\$500/yr.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior - 65+ (\$15/yr.) | <input type="checkbox"/> Thomas Paine (\$100/yr.)    | <input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime (\$1,000)           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family (\$45/yr.)       |  |   |

I'm interested in getting involved in the FCFS as a(n):

- General member    Committee member    Officer    Financial supporter

Do you object to your name appearing on our membership list, which is only distributed to other members? YES

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

***You can make a lasting impact on the future of  
freethought and secular humanism in this community  
...if you provide for the First Coast Freethought Society in your Will.***

Your bequest will ensure that the FCFS continues to be a beacon for freethinkers on the First Coast and to remain a vital Voice of Reason in the Northeast Florida area. Several options are available for establishing a bequest (specific, percentage, residual, or contingent). We will be happy to provide the appropriate wording to you and your attorney, depending upon your wishes.

For further information, contact  
Carrie Renwick, P.O. Box 550591, Jacksonville, FL 32255-0591 or  
904-288-6291 • [CarrieRen@att.net](mailto:CarrieRen@att.net) • <http://www.firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org/>  
All inquiries are held in the strictest confidence.

# July 2008 FCFS Activities

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20 Book Group	21 Monthly Meeting	22 Olive Garden	23	24	25	26 Newsletter Deadline
27 Secular Sunday	28	29	30	31		

Visit our website at <http://www.firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org/>.

(In the Adobe version, the links are *LIVE!* Ctrl & Click will take you there.)

Start your AMAZON.COM purchases from the link on the FCFS Website and help the FCFS!  
[firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org](http://www.firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org)

Return service requested



First Coast Freethought Society, Inc.  
 10653 Hearstone Drive  
 Jacksonville, Florida 32257