



August 2008

Volume 6, Issue 8

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## August 2008 President's Message

**Earl Coggins**

**L**ast month, I spoke about the importance of memes, information which is passed from one human to another and has a tendency to proliferate, given the correct environment.

I want to follow-up on an equally important and related topic—perception.

While recently reading quotes from Plato's *The Simile of the Cave*, sometimes referred to as *The Allegory of the Cave* or *The Myth of the Cave*, I was inspired to read the entire allegory.

*The Simile of the Cave* is a fictional dialogue between Plato's oldest brother, Glaucon, and Socrates, Plato's teacher. The dialogue is timeless—its ideas in all probability independently revisited through-

***Many of the goals of our movement are similar to the goals of some religious organizations and denominations...***

out the thousands of years that have transpired between the time of its writing and present day society.

The story has been interpreted a different way for everyday the story has existed. I

have heard some free-thinkers interpret Plato's story as being a description of the evolutionary process from theism to atheism.

This interpretation finds the cave's residents as very religious, living in the bowels of deception, to be saved only after escaping and seeing the true light, or nonreligious, atheistic/agnostic worldview of skepticism and rationalism. This was my interpretation for a long

*(Continued on page 3)*



*"The alleged shortcut to knowledge, which is faith, is only a short circuit destroying the mind."*

—Ayn Rand  
philosopher and author

## August 2008 Meeting

Mel Lipman, President, American Humanist Association

### "Flavors of Freethought"

Monday, August 18, 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:

- August 17, 2008 - *The Atheist Bible: An Illustrious Collection of Irreverent Thoughts*, edited by Joan Konner
- September 21, 2008 - *The Botany of Desire*, by Michael Pollan



**E**rudite, engaging, and highly original, *The Botany of Desire* is a humanistic book with an unusual twist. Pollan's account of four everyday plants and their coevolution with human society challenges traditional views about humans and nature. You might say that his thesis is evolution from the plant's point of view. Using the histories of apples, tulips, potatoes, and cannabis to illustrate the complex, reciprocal relationship between humans and the natural world, he shows how these species have successfully exploited human desires to flourish. Pollan's style enlivens even his most scientific material, and his wide-ranging references and charming manner do much to support his basic contention that man and nature are and will always be "in this boat together." (\$15)

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, firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org](http://FIRST.firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org) and THEN click the link to Amazon.com. Thank you!)

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### First Coast FreeThinker

The *First Coast FreeThinker* is published for FCFS members, other freethinkers, and potential freethinkers. Nonmembers may receive three issues for free, after which they must join the FCFS to continue to receive hard copy.

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. The *FreeThinker* is intended to convey ideas to stimulate thought and discussion on a variety of subjects.

We welcome submissions. The deadline is the **FOURTH SATURDAY** of each month for the

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following month's issue. Submit contributions to the newsletter by e-mail to Hugo (see above), or by U.S. mail to Hugo Borresen, 8831 Taurus Circle South, Jacksonville, FL 32222.

## August 2008 President's Message

(Continued from page 1)

time. However, I can no longer hold that viewpoint.

This interpretation could be looked upon as arrogantly portraying atheists as intellectually superior to theists. Whether atheism is or is not an intellectually superior position to theism is not the topic of this message, nor does it have anything to do with whether theists or atheists are more intelligent. The topic is perception. I don't think it's in the best interest of the FCFS or the freethought movement to be perceived as thinking we're intellectually superior to anyone, theists included.

After rereading *The Simile of the Cave*, I feel that Plato thought we (humans) are all inhabitants of this cave. He said once we leave it, we find what he called "the good." I think that Plato's "good" is not concerned with theism vs. atheism.

There are many freethinkers, and not just those in the FCFS, who were at one time in their lives, theists. Does that make them unintelligent? Intellectually inferior? No. There are many theists who do have questionable intellect, intelligence, and perhaps character. Pat Robertson stands out as the poster child for intellectually inferior and dishonest theists.

I mentioned Barry Lynn in a previous message as an example of a theist who is the antithesis of theists such as Robertson.

Lynn is progressive, liberal, and working to achieve goals similar to those of the freethought movement.

Another example of a theist who cannot be labeled as intellectually inferior or unintelligent would be Bishop John Shelby Spong. His career is stellar. He was the Episcopal Bishop of Newark, New Jersey, until retiring. He has written dozens of books. He wrote a fascinating book in 1998 called *Why Christianity Must Change or Die*.

Here is a brief excerpt from that book:

*"The opening phrase of the Apostles' Creed speaks first of God as the "Father Almighty." Both of these words offend me deeply. Here the mystery that I treasure in God begins to be filled with limiting cultural definitions. The word Father is such a human word – so male, so dated. It elicits the traditional God images of the old man who lives just beyond the sky. It shouts of the masculinity of the deity, a concept that has been used for thousands of years to justify the oppression of women by religious institutions. That history and that practice repel me today. The Christian Church at times has gone so far as to debate whether women actually had souls and whether girl babies ought to be baptized. That Church universally relegated women to clearly defined secondary roles until the latter years of the twentieth century, when that sexist prejudice began to dissipate. The Church dedicated to the worship of a God who was called "Father" has consistently justified its rampant discriminations against women as the will of this patriarchal deity or, at the very least, as something idolatrously called the "unchanging sacred traditions of the Church." I do not care to worship a God defined by masculinity.*

*I am no longer tolerant of gatherings where all the participants are men, sitting in a solemn assembly, clothed in their ecclesiastical dress, and acting as if they can determine what a woman may do morally with her own body. I have no interest in being part of an institution that is so deeply biased against women and intends to stay that way."*

—John Shelby Spong

I said in the July *FreeThinker*, the best way to educate the public about freethinkers and the freethought movement is through positive vs. negative tactics. Many of the goals of our movement are similar to the goals of some religious organizations and denominations—especially denominations with progressive leaders like John Shelby Spong. We need to work with progressive, liberal theists, not against them. By depicting them as being the only inhabitants of Plato's cave, we are effectively shutting them out.

Plato thought we (humans) were all inhabitants of the cave. Our movement depends on first, the realization that we are all in the cave, and second, we must work in concert with other like-minded organizations to free ourselves from it.

The freethought movement, as well as the First Coast Freethought Society, needs all the allies we can muster. It is therefore imperative that we lay aside our theological differences and work with progressive liberal religious organizations whose goals are parallel with our own.



## In Every Man's Life

Terry Loucks

There comes a time in every man's life when his values are put to the test, and he must decide whether to defend them or acquiesce. I've weighed my decision carefully and decided to fight against the attack from the religious right on our constitution and on the scientific method. It is impossible for me to sit by and watch the unraveling of America's two hundred year experiment with the separation of church and state, an experiment that resulted in a bounty of scientific advances and economic growth.

The timing for this attack on science by fundamentalists could not have come at a worse time for America. The availability of cheap labor around the world forces us to pursue scientific research as our competitive advantage. We are benefiting economically today from decades old science, but the well will run dry if we revert to so-called Biblical science at this crucial moment in our history.

The attack is obviously a diversionary tactic by the fundamentalists. New Testament scholars have found not one thread of evidence to support the claims of Christianity. The gospels are "synoptic" because they all copied St. Mark, itself a collection of oral accounts from dozens of unknown authors. Like

other major religions around the world, Christianity is without foundation, as documented repeatedly by both the Jesus Seminar and Robert Funk.

The last thing we need in America is a theocracy, which is exactly what recent God billboards call for: "One Nation Under Me, signed God." Why should we be exporting democracy to Muslim countries if we want to revert to a theocracy here at home? Our founders fled failed theocracies throughout Europe, with all the blood shed over which church should rule. They also saw the same thing happening again in the colonies with a host of different religions.

***Visiting the stars is not merely our destiny as humans; it is the only chance for the survival of our species.***

Since the experiment began 200 years ago, we have proven that people make better laws than do pulpits or thrones. Do we really want to go back to Inquisitions and Hundred Year wars? My answer is a resounding no, because our economy and our scientific accomplishments would then sink to the low level of Catholic and Muslim countries.

Pulling out of such a tailspin would be all but impossible, be-

cause science, like goldfish, must be fed every day. If we let it die, as they did in China's popular uprising, it would take decades, if not centuries, to rebuild.



Science is our only hope in many fields. Genetics research, based on last century's chemistry and physics, has and will continue to find cures for devastating diseases and to engineer advanced foods for our burgeoning population. Physics will hopefully invent renewable sources of energy beyond petroleum, sources that will not tip the fragile balance of our ecology. Physicists will also improve our understanding of the universe, including our own solar system; and they will also lead the way to new suns and habitable planets.

Visiting the stars is not merely our destiny as humans; it is the only chance for the survival of our species. We now know that our Sun's life is half gone and that we must someday move to a younger one. Can mankind find these answers in the Bible or other sacred manuscripts around the world? The answers, if they are to come at all, will come only through an increasing dedication to the scientific method and to continued scientific research.



***We created god in our own image and likeness! —George Carlin (1937 – 2008)***

## Nice to Be Lumped In With the Sexual Deviants and Criminals!

**C**ity Council staffers will not be able to view websites about atheism at their desks due to rules introduced by the Birmingham, UK, City Council. These rules are implemented by the Bluecoat WebFilter computer system.

If you want to view websites about Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, and other religions, that is OK. But viewing websites about witchcraft, the paranor-

mal, sexual deviancy, criminal activity, and yes, atheism, is taboo. Nice company we keep!

This immediately drew the ire of National Secular Society president Terry Sanderson who threatened legal action if the policy was not changed. Under the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003, it is unlawful to discriminate against workers on the basis of religion or belief, which includes atheism. (For details,

see <http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2003/20031660.htm>.)

Whether this regulation applies to internet usage at work, when employees are supposed to be working instead of surfing the web, is an issue to be decided in the courts. What is more important is what it says about how atheists are viewed within the larger culture.

(For details, see <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/7530519.stm>.)



### Ongoing FCFS Activities

#### Dinners for Doubters

Sign up to attend or to host a dinner yourself. Sign-up sheets will be at the back table at the monthly meetings. For details on how this works, see **page 7 of the August 2008 *FreeThinker*** (available on website) or ask a greeter 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. until ? 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. We generally provide coffee. Bring breakfast snack and a **chair**. 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.

## Living Without a Safety Net - And No Chance of Not Falling

Sigrun Buckley

I do envy people who believe that in the end it will all work out.

At a recent luncheon, a young woman from former Yugoslavia assured me of that fact. Her faith and her trust in God helped her through the terrible turmoil (genocide) that befell the Balkans in the 1990s. She's now here, married to an American; grateful she even did her stints in Iraq.

Listening to her, I remembered the Bosnian Muslim girl, a refugee in Ireland who was sitting in my language class after what was called the first Balkan war. The story of her sufferings was incomprehensible to her classmates, typical fun-loving, partying, Guinness-sloshing freshmen. She was now in a free country, pursuing her studies, having been brutalized, and some of her family killed. So I guess it did work out for her, as well.

How their faiths, one Christian (I guess), one Muslim (I know) could possibly give them comfort is beyond my comprehension, although my life is working out for me—in comparison, anyway.

Growing up in a family that was indifferent to religion but went through the prevailing cultural motions, I was brought up to be curious, ask questions, and question authority. My quest for answers that teenagers typically

go through, led me to a university degree course in Divinity. I believed I would find the truth. Unfortunately, over four years of Old and New Testament's exegesis, church history, dogmatics, fundamental theology, and moral theology failed to secure what little belief had been instilled in my formative years.

A scientific approach was applied at my alma mater, but findings were put aside as not relevant if they contradicted the church teachings. The killer argument was usually that biblical writers were inspired by God himself. And who is to question that?

*... I was brought up to be curious, ask questions, and question authority.*

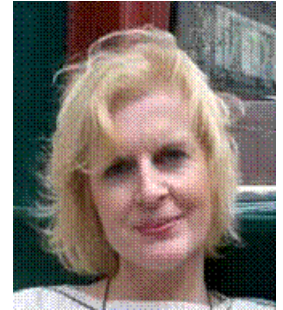
I spent a whole semester digging through the historicity of a single Bible story, unearthing layer upon layer written over the century that followed Jesus's life on earth by people who never even met him; a story rewritten and edited by several generations, then compiled into what is now the Bible, sanctioned by the early church fathers in the fourth century. Provenance and authorship could not be established. Translations from Aramaic to Greek showed editorial notes of various scribes involved. Each one claimed to be right with an authoritative voice in spite of blatant discrepancies.

Bottom line: Many sayings attributed to Jesus in the Gospels were ascribed to him to provide the scriptures with more authority than they carried by their real, anonymous authors.

Some Biblical scholars concede that the Holy Scriptures contain forgeries, (e.g., 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus). But that's for another article.

While the Catholic Church of the '70s and '80s bothered to parse the Bible and unearth these findings, it was made clear to us students that the scriptures needed to be understood in their "figurative sense," giving meaning to uneducated people who knew nothing about the universe and its mechanics—not unlike a good fairytale that contains a deep moral for children, or mythologies that were created way back at the dawn of the human species. While that may have been true or possible in ancient times, it just doesn't hold water anymore.

As a consequence, the real truth that I had been looking for and whatever real facts were revealed, were not to be taught from the lectern or front of a classroom. All very disappointing for an inquisitive mind looking for the truth upon which to build her life!



The two years of Catholic teachers' training college that followed my bachelor's degree were responsible for the worst headaches and tummy pains. Short of developing a split personality, I developed a classroom persona acting under the supervision of my tutors. Outside the classroom, I strayed from Catholicism. Maybe to save my sanity, I got married to an atheist who shared my newly-found views: If there is a God in the sky who is watching all the suf-

fering on earth and death of his creatures with their alleged free will, he must be a sadist. My ex would rather have no dealings with him, since it reminded him of a voyeur or someone enjoying a really nasty movie.

Which brings me back to the two Yugoslavian women. I'm not complaining about my own fate, but what about the starving, tortured, displaced, and violated millions in Rwanda, Darfur, Myanmar, and the slums of God knows what? Too simplistic a

worldview? Not if there is no shred of evidence as to the opposite.

One fact we can be sure of is the end of our physical life without the comfort of faith. There they leave us in the dust. But I may want to keep my options open and change my mind on my deathbed. You can't lose—the only problem is that you never know when he cometh (i.e., the grim reaper). As I said, I do envy believers.



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## Staring at the Sun and Other Things Your Mother Told You to Avoid

**S**taring at the sun will make you go blind. That is what your mother always told you.

Some people in India forgot about this wise motherly advice and irreparably damaged their eyesight by inexplicably staring right at the sun. Why were they risking photochemical burns on their retinas? You guessed it—to see the Virgin Mary.

Apparently, there were rumors of a Virgin Mary apparition floating above a hotelier's home. The hotelier stimulated the rumors by claiming that statues of the Virgin Mary in his house have been crying honey and bleeding oils and perfumes.

This was all despite the warnings against staring into direct sunlight by health authorities in India's Kottayam district. Apparently, faith trumped scientifically-verified facts because the faithful contin-

ued to stare up into the sky looking for the Virgin Mary.

This is one of many alleged sightings of the Virgin Mary that pop up over the globe. According to WMAQ in Chicago, in 2005,



thousands of people flocked to the Fullerton Avenue underpass on the Kennedy Expressway to see what some believed to be an image of the Virgin Mary, but

was instead found by city officials to be a salt stain. Fortunately, there were no reports of people getting run over as they stared up at the image. (<http://www.nbc5.com/news/8275936/detail.html>)

Add to this weeping statues (see the picture to the left) and claims of miracles at holy shrines frequented by the mother of Jesus, such as Fatima, and you have a whole cottage industry built around the Virgin Mary. Normally, we just shake our heads at peoples' willingness to believe without evidence, but this clearly shows that religion and pseudoscience can be dangerous if they lead people to do stupid things like replacing medical treatment with prayer and staring at the sun!

(For details, see <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/1581424/Dozens-blinded-in-India-looking-for-Virgin-Mary.html>.)



# Heaven?

Fred W. Hill

Who wants to go to Heaven? Everyone, it seems, though no one really knows what it's like. Multitudes of theologians have studied the sacred texts for decades, or at least a good half hour, and have helpfully described Heaven and what we have to do to get there, aside from dying. That even those reading from the same bible agree on little, except that Heaven is a very nice place, does not lend much credence to their claims, at least to this free-thinker.

Not that my views would perturb them at all. Despite a few gentle-natured theists who feel that at least we nicer atheists will get to go to Heaven, along with good dogs and horses, the more fanatically religious assure us that anyone who doesn't share their beliefs and behave as they insist God demands, will be not merely barred from Heaven but thrown into that other, not quite so pleasant, place to suffer for all time.

In popular parlance, that other place is somewhere "down," while Heaven is somewhere "up." The word Heaven is derived from a Middle Low German term for sky, "heven" (which morphed into "himmel" in modern German). Clear or cloudy, the sky has a long association with the mythical shapers of reality. In pre-monotheist Levantine mythology, the sky was perceived as an androgynous deity, Shamayim, who, ac-

ording to the Wikipedia entry, was alternately the "God most high" and the home of the family of El, supreme deity of ancient Semites, making a deified sandcastle in the sky out of the old god.

Such belief makes the story of the Tower of Babel more coherent, as far as such fanciful tales go. Otherwise, why would the Hebrew god have bothered to throw a temper tantrum, knock down the tower, disburse its builders, and make them speak different languages, if he wasn't afraid that the would-be skyscraper might get too close to his aerial sanctuary?

***Theists with any pretensions of intellectual integrity had to abandon the notion that Heaven is anywhere "up there..."***

Similarly Uranus, the Greco-Roman sky god, was considered at once an ancestor and an alternative home to the Olympian cohorts of Zeus, a.k.a. Jupiter. The Germanic-Scandinavian peoples of Northern Europe believed their chief gods, the Aesir, dwelled in Asgard, located on the far side of a rainbow bridge, perhaps over Oz. Snorri Sturluson was a 13th century compiler of Norse myths his father believed, but which he abandoned for Christianity. Sturluson placed Asgard in Troy, on the distant coast of Asia Minor, influenced perhaps by tales of Aeneas and Brutus, mythic survivors of Troy's destruction and forefa-

thers of the Romans and British, respectively. Clearly, Sturluson wanted to drag his father's gods down to Earth to make room in the heavens for his new holy troika, while also apparently making too much of the homophonous similarity between "Aesir" and "Asia."

Modern science, however, has displaced the modern gods from the sky as well. Mothers continue to tell their children that thunder is merely the sound of God moving his furniture around, but telescopes enable us to see details of other planets well beyond the skies of our own; rockets enable a select few to travel to the moon; and airplanes routinely enable millions of mortals to fly over clouds and see for themselves that there are no angels flying about or dead people playing harps for the amusement of a tall, heavily bearded, white-robed deity.

Theists with any pretensions of intellectual integrity had to abandon the notion that Heaven is anywhere "up there," although pious charlatans such as Timothy LeHay still milk fortunes from pious masses with fantasies of good Christians raptured skyward to bask in the presence of the lord and enjoy watching the follies of the poor doomed disbelievers trapped on Earth; Heaven, of course, having excellent satellite services that can monitor everything down below.





Somewhat more rational theists place Heaven in some sort of other dimension, either a realm of disembodied spirits, or a magical place where the bodies of the saved are, or will be, resurrected to enjoy all the pleasures of living without any mortal suffering.

Expressing a common theological viewpoint that this mortal coil is merely a testing

ground, Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf, founder of the American Society for Muslim Advancement, told television newswoman Barbara Walters, "The real life is the next life ... and based upon how we live this life, it determines where we shall be in the next. We are told we will be in comfortable homes, reclining on silk couches ... so we're given the delights of

sex, the delights of wine, the delights of food with all of their positive things without their negative aspects." (See <http://abcnews.go.com/International/Beliefs/story?id=1374010>.)

All of which sounds nifty to me, although other theologians differ as to the actual delights of Heaven and the qualifications for experiencing them.

Most agree that at the very

least, you have to believe in god. (Ah, well, who needs that silk couch?) Beyond that, however, theists have been battling it out for millennia, with words, swords, and bombs. Judaism, Christianity, and Islam have each divided into combative sects again and again. The Catholic Church demanded adherence to its official creed, as well as good behavior, although



priests saw nothing wrong with filling church coffers by selling indulgences to repentant sinners, promising to thereby assuage god's ire.

Martin Luther famously disagreed, initiated the Protestant movement, and insisted that faith alone is the ticket to Heaven. Faith, that is, in his interpretation of his particular bible, faith in anything else be-

ing a damnable offense. And so it has gone, even to the present.

Happily, Anglican Bishop N. T. Wright has ascertained through his own biblical studies that, "Christ is coming here, to join the heavens and the Earth in an act of new creation." (See <http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1710844,00.html>.)

Thus everyone gets to come back to life and enjoy heavenly delights right here on Earth. So I may yet get to eat heartily, drink fine wine, and enjoy amorous caresses on that silken couch. Or maybe not. The veracity of Bishop Wright's source is rather tenuous, after all.

Hence for me, Heaven remains naught. Merely a human fantasy. This does arouse some consternation in my mother, a Catholic who takes comfort in the prospect of meeting deceased loved ones and learning

the answers to all of life's mysteries. Personally, I suspect that even if Heaven did exist, its inhabitants must all be mildly anesthetized to get along. I try not to antagonize my mother too much with my skepticism, however, as I do love her; and while I won't pretend to share her Bible dreams, I'd rather enjoy some peace on Earth than argue about a mythical utopia.



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### 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.

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**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)

## August Social

**Where:** OLIVE GARDEN on Philips Highway, near the Avenues Mall.

**When:** Tuesday Aug. 26, 2008 at 6:00 p.m. Proceed directly to our room.  
**Drinks at 6:00. Dinner at 7:00.** (Order from the 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.

# FCFS August 2008 Activities

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16 Dinners for Doubters
17 Book Group	18 Monthly Meeting	19	20	21	22	23 Newsletter Deadline
24 Secular Sunday	25	26 Olive Garden	27	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  
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and help the FCFS!  
[firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org](http://www.firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org)

Return service requested



First Coast Freethought Society, Inc.  
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Jacksonville, Florida 32257