

FIRST COAST FREETHOUGHT SOCIETY, INC.

An organization of freethinkers and secular humanists supporting free inquiry, education, and community in the Northeast Florida area

Our Motto: “To Question is the Answer.”

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2012 NPR FUND DRIVE UPDATE


As of yesterday, we are ONE-QUARTER of the way there.

For details, see page 14 of this newsletter. But the bottom line is that as of yesterday, June 9, we have received \$965 thus far. Our goal is \$4,095, so we still need \$3,130. So, your help is still very much needed!

To provide support on line, click here: <http://firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org/cms/support> to go to the FCFS website and use your credit card or PayPal account.

If you prefer to mail a check, print this page and use the “card” (below) to indicate your choices. To print this page, put your cursor anywhere on this page. Click Print. Then select “Current Page” and click the “OK” button.

Mail your check to the FCFS, P.O. Box 550591, Jacksonville, FL 32255-0591. Thank you!

	The First Coast Freethought Society, Inc. Post Office Box 550591 Jacksonville, Florida 32255-0591 http://firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org/cms/support
I wish to make a tax-deductible contribution to:	
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Enclosed is my contribution for (please check one):	
<input type="checkbox"/> \$25 <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 <input type="checkbox"/> \$75 <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> I authorize the FCFS to include my name in a forthcoming issue of the <i>First Coast FreeThinker</i> recognizing my support.	
Name: _____	
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ManyThanks for Your Support!

The First Coast

FreeThinker



Newsletter of the First Coast Freethought Society

June 2012

Volume 11, Issue 6

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"You can't convince a believer of anything; for their belief is not based on evidence, it's based on a deep-seated need to believe."

—Carl Sagan

Earl Coggins

I participated in the "10 Commandments" protest at the Bradford County Courthouse in Starke, FL. The protest was held Saturday May 19, 2012, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and was sponsored by American Atheists. A friend who is also a member of the First Coast Freethought Society and I made the trip over to Starke in an hour.

The protest was slated to be a handful of sign-waving citizens of

Florida concerned with a blatant violation of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution which, in this case, is a stone monument with the biblical 10 commandments carved on both sides, displayed on the front lawn of the Bradford County Courthouse.

"There were many counter protesters willing to engage in civilized dialogue as opposed to two monologues where listening to the other person in the conversation is not a requirement."

The route we took to Starke meant we would have to drive right by the monument prior to turning into the court-

house parking lot. As we drove by, I was shocked, but pleasantly surprised, to see what looked to be a hundred people milling about the Courthouse lawn. I was thinking, "Wow, whoever advertised this did a great job!" My exuberance was quickly quashed when one of the people milling about turned around, and I was able

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June 2012 Meeting

"What Would Socrates Ask?"

Karla Pierce, M.A., Adjunct Philosophy Instructor, Florida State College at Jacksonville, Jacksonville University

Monday, June 18, 2012, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

**In the Sanctuary, upper parking lot level • Doors open at 6:00
Unitarian Universalist Church • 7405 Arlington Expressway • Jacksonville, FL**

Humanist Book Discussion Group



When: 2:00 p.m., the first Sunday of each month

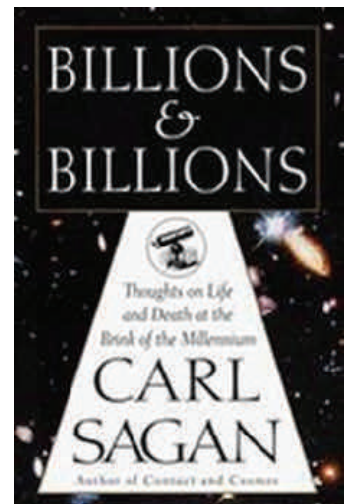
Where: Books-A-Million, 9400 Atlantic Boulevard, Jacksonville, FL 32225

What: Books planned for discussion:

- July 1, 2012 - *Billions & Billions*, by Carl Sagan
- August 4, 2012 - *The Men Who Stare at Goats*, by Jon Ronson

Books may be found in the library, purchased from local book stores, or purchased online. The First Coast Freethought Society will receive a small remuneration from your purchase (at no additional cost to you) if you first go to <http://firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org> and then click the link to Amazon.com for your purchase.

July's selection is *Billions & Billions: Thoughts on Life and Death at the Brink of the Millennium*. "In the final book of his astonishing career, Carl Sagan brilliantly examines the burning questions of our lives, our world, and the universe around us. These luminous, entertaining essays travel both the vastness of the cosmos and the intimacy of the human mind, posing such fascinating questions as how did the universe originate and how will it end, and how can we meld science and compassion to meet the challenges of the coming century? Here, too, is a rare, private glimpse of Sagan's thoughts about love, death, and God, as he struggled with a fatal disease. Ever forward-looking and vibrant with the sparkle of his unquenchable curiosity, *Billions & Billions* is a testament to one of the great scientific minds of our day." (Description from Amazon.com)



For more information, contact Herb Gerson at 904-363-6446, or herbge@bellsouth.net.

Ongoing FCFS Activities

Dinners for Doubters: Sign up to attend or to host a dinner yourself. If a dinner is scheduled, sign-up sheets will be found at the back table at the monthly meetings. For details, **see the website**, <http://firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org>, or **ask a greeter** at the back table, at a meeting.

Second Harvest Second Saturday: On the **2nd Saturday of every month**, 10:00 a.m. to noon, join FCFS members and JAM (Jacksonville Atheist Meetup) group members, to volunteer at the Second Harvest North Florida food bank warehouse, 1502 Jessie Street, to help distribute food to the less fortunate in North FL. See <http://firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org> or call Fed Hill, 904-358-3610.

Secular Sunday Morning in the Park: Freethinkers, let's get acquainted and enjoy intelligent conversation the **4th Sunday of every month** (unless inclement weather prevails) at 10 a.m. until ? under the pavilion at Losco Park, 10851 Hood Rd., S., Jacksonville 32257, between Shad and Losco Roads. For directions, call Beth Perry at 904-733-5489 or Google the address. We generally provide coffee. Bring a breakfast snack and **a chair or two**. Note, if it's too hot under the pavilion, we take our chairs to some trees with a nice breeze. Mark your calendar. We hope to see you there!

Caring Tree: If a telephone call, flowers, or a sympathy card to a member is in order, please contact **Judy Hankins** at 904-724-8188, or e-mail her at info@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org.

(President's Message, continued from page 1)

to read her pink sign, handwritten and exclaiming to anyone who would read it, "Honk for Jesus."

It was then that the feeling sunk in. The entire courthouse property was filled with counter protesters. The real protesters were still in the parking lot getting signs out of their cars and making preparations to round the corner and commence their protest, outnumbered by a ratio of at least 4 or 5 to 1.

As I made my way from the parking lot on the north end of the courthouse property to the front lawn, a segment of the counter protesters had formed a circle on some grass near the parking lot. I could hear the faint voice of a man, his speech fading in and out "...father...in Jesus...forgive them...give us strength."

My friend and I walked by quietly. I kept wondering how our protest got interrupted by so many counter protesters. One of the counter protesters was walking back and forth along the sidewalk asking the protesters to please refrain from blocking the sidewalk. That prompted me to ask the event organizer whether or not she had obtained a permit for the protest. She

said she called the City of Starke about a permit but was told it would not be necessary. Could it be possible that employees with the City of Starke, or perhaps an officer of the Starke Police Department, had tipped off local fundamentalist churches of the upcoming protest? Who knows? All I know for sure is that the counter protesters knew in advance of the pro-

questions.

The questions being asked and statements presented by the counter protesters were predictable: Why are you picking on Starke? This is an issue between the citizens of Starke. The First Amendment to the Constitution does not say anything about the separation of state and church. Why do you reject Christianity? Where do you get your morals?



10 Commandments Monument Protesters and Counter Protesters at the Bradford County Courthouse

test.

Over the course of the next 90 minutes, the protesters had to tolerate loud chants (shouting, actually) from the crowd and the loud screaming and gyrations of an over-the-top preacher who acted as though he had forgotten that his god is omniscient and in no need of amplified speech since he already knows what the preacher has to say. Some of the counter protesters were mingling with the protesters, engaging them in conversation, but primarily asking

I have tried in the past few years to avoid arguing with protesters, bystanders, co-workers, acquaintances, etc., about issues regarding differences of opinion. Discussions I will gladly enter into, but arguing in my humble opinion is counter-

productive and time wasted. Conversations I will readily do, but arguing, the kind where the dialogue is clearly antagonistic, unfriendly, unreceptive, and disrespectful, I attempt to avoid.

My goal was to be seen and not heard, to carry my sign, bring attention and public awareness to the protest, but avoid engaging with counter protesters. Several other protesters and I did it anyway, and some of the conversation was good.

(Continued on page 5)

The Sky According to J. R. R. Tolkien

Roger Curry

I recently finished a long, slow read of J. R. R. Tolkien's trilogy, *The Lord of the Rings*, the film adaptation of which was epic and seen by millions of people who never read the books.

Occasionally, in the books, I came upon descriptions of celestial events—some accurate and some not so accurate. It is hard for me to conclude whether Tolkien had a good understanding of the sky or not. Here are some notes that I made. The page numbers reference the paperback edition published by Houghton Mifflin Co., New York, NY.

"Away high in the East swung Remmirath, the Netted Stars, and slowly above the mists red Borgil rose, glowing like a jewel of fire. Then, by some shift of airs all the mist was drawn away like a veil, and there leaned up, as he climbed over the rim of the world, the Swordsman of the Sky, Menelvagor with his shining belt."

This is a very nice description of the Pleiades (the netted stars), Aldebaran (Borgil), and Orion (Menelvagor). My reading of it implies a view from the northern hemisphere, since in the mid-southern latitudes, the Pleiades, Aldebaran, and Orion all rise simultaneously, and Orion would rise upside down. Page 80.

"In the dead night, Frodo lay in a dream without light. Then he saw the young moon rising;

under its thin light there loomed before him a black wall of rock, pierced by a dark arch like a great gate."

Unless he is confusing the young Moon with the old, the young Moon rises during the day, soon after the Sun, and sets early in the evening. Page 125.

"In the midst of it there stood a single stone, standing tall under the sun above, and at this hour casting no shadow."

"I enjoy looking for astronomical clues in literature and testing them for plausibility."

Unless the location is in the tropics, all objects in the sunlight will cast a shadow. If within the tropics the Sun would pass overhead, so that vertical objects do not cast a shadow, only on two days of the year. Many other references speak of snowfall, changing leaves, cold winters, all of which would indicate a temperate zone. A stone at an angle (like a gnomon) would cast no shadow (again, twice each year), but the "standing tall" implies a vertical placement. Page 134.

"The Sickel (the Hobbits' name for the Plough or Great Bear) was swinging bright above the shoulders of Bree-hill."

This is another strong hint that the location is set in the northern hemisphere. Page 171.

"Suddenly, a pale light ap-

peared over the crown of Weather-top behind him. The waxing moon was climbing slowly above the hill that overshadowed them, and the stars above the hill-top faded."



A waxing Moon always rises in the daytime. He got the part about the Moon causing the stars to fade right, though. Page 190.

"I have crossed many mountains and many rivers, and trodden many plains, even into the far countries of Rhun and Harad where the stars are strange."

This is more evidence that the setting is in a temperate zone; traveling south in the northern hemisphere or north in the southern hemisphere will bring "strange" stars into view. From a tropical location, you would have to travel to polar regions to see "strange stars." Page 242.

"The evening star had risen and was shining with white fire above the western woods."

There seems to be some confusion here. If the "evening star" (probably Venus) was rising, it would be in the east and would be the "morning star." To be the evening star, this "star" would have risen during the day. The implication of the passage is that the "star" rose in the west. Page 352.

(Continued on page 5)

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Sometime around this point, I stopped underlining passages until much later. There were many more references to the Moon and stars, including a full “Hunter’s” Moon which occurs in the autumn.

The final passage that I marked is found on page 770. It does not really apply to the movement of the sky as much as it retells a common misconception.

“So deep and narrow was the chasm that the sky was dark, and in it small stars glinted. Yet as Gimli after learned it was still two hours ere sunset of the day on which they had set out from Dunharrow.”

In fact, if you were at the bottom of a deeply shaded canyon or ravine, the sky would appear brighter to you, rather like looking at a flashlight at night.

Many people believe that you can see stars in the daytime by standing inside a chimney or at the bottom of a well. The brightness of the sky does fall off if

smaller and small sections of it are looked at, which is why it is possible to see stars in a telescope in the daytime. It has been computed that to see stars in the daytime, you would have to reduce the area of the sky you are looking at to a few arc-minutes in diameter, much smaller than the size that the Moon appears. If you were lucky enough to see one star, it is very doubtful that you would see two in such a tiny space. See this article on the web for an interesting discussion: www.wonderquest.com/daylight-stars.htm



Interestingly, visual sightings of the brightest planets (Venus and Jupiter) have been made in the daytime, but it is only from extremely high locations, like the Himalayas, where you are above so much of the atmosphere that there is less light scattered by it, that the brightest stars have been spotted in the daytime sky.

This is simulated during solar eclipses. Venus pops out about 10 minutes or so before totality. During totality, most of the planets are visible if they are anywhere near the Sun. Even then, the sky does not become dark as it does after sunset.

I enjoy looking for astronomical clues in literature and testing them for plausibility. There were a few passages in Victor Hugo’s *Les Miserables* that make me believe he was familiar with the sky. In *Moby Dick*, Melville mentions Aldebaran on the first page. It has been many years since I

read that wonderful book, and a re-reading may reveal other passages.

If anyone else has made similar “observations” in literature, I would enjoy hearing from them and perhaps doing another article like this one. www.nefas.org

roger.curry@comcast.net

(Roger is a 20+ year member and past president of the Northeast Florida Astronomical Society)



(President’s Message, Continued from page 3)

There were many counter protesters willing to engage in civilized dialogue as opposed to two monologues where listening to the other person in the conversation is not a requirement. I enjoyed it. One tall skinny protester was especially gifted, with a tempered personality that could calm a raging a bull. I

stood next to him listening and watching as he was able to speak calmly and intelligently, with a cogent argument full of practical examples to support his position.

Several encounters between protesters and counter protesters were heated, with both participants yelling. I mentioned to one protester after he had just finished yelling at a counter protester that yelling at people does

not further the freethought movement. He said it was fun yelling at religious fundamentalists and that he actually enjoyed it. It didn’t look fun to me.

I kept thinking of that old proverb attributed to Mark Twain: “Never argue with a fool. Onlookers may not be able to tell the difference.”



Editor's Note: Unsurprisingly, we received critical responses to Joque Soskis's article on The Individual Health Insurance Mandate from last month's FreeThinker—unsurprising due to the controversial nature of the topic over which freethinkers may differ depending on whether they hold a progressive humanist or a more fiscally conservative libertarian perspective, or fall somewhere in-between. The FreeThinker welcomes responses from all regarding any of our articles, although we may not be able to publish all of them. Forthwith are responses from attorney Richard C. Keene and past FreeThinker editor Curtis Wolf. —Fred W. Hill, Editor

Another View on the Healthcare Debate

Richard C. Keene

As much as I respect and enjoy Joque Soskis's presentations, discussions, discourses, and columns, I must respectfully disagree with his bottom line support of "The Individual Health Insurance Mandate" expressed in the May 2012 *FreeThinker*.

Everything that he says in support of the mandate is essentially correct. Every reason cited in his analytical assessment of the need for a healthcare reformation is spot-on. Every argument that he makes for some form of government insurance program is correct. The major flaw—in both the argument and the program itself—is in the structure of the actual program that finally evolved and has been implemented.

One small practical flaw with the mandate program is that after the mandate is in effect, employers will—to protect their own almighty bottom line profits—drop or drastically reduce their employee coverages, resulting in more and more persons required to make the private purchase to recoup what

they might have had under their former employee benefit programs. I spent 24 years as an in-house attorney with a Fortune 500 company, and I can guarantee that such will occur. Whether an employee is "happy with his/her employment coverage" and/or "wants to retain it" as alleged by the current administration, will not be relevant. Bottom-line profits for the em-

ployer-suppliers will prevail. And bottom-line profits for Aetna, Cigna, United, Humana, Wellpoint, et al., are what drove the mandate initially. That, however, is not the major flaw in the administration's "compromise" program.

Bottom-line profits for the employer-suppliers will prevail. And bottom-line profits for Aetna, Cigna, United, Humana, Wellpoint, et al., are what drove the mandate initially. That, however, is not the major flaw in the administration's "compromise" program. I (as well as an expected majority of the U.S. Supreme Court) believe that the mandated purchase of insurance by individual citizens, in the face of a fine/penalty for failure to do so, is an unconstitutional extension (or usurpation) of power by a Congress that is limited by Article 1, Section 8, and Article 10, to provide for the general welfare of the citizenry. Had Congress enacted a "Medicaid Extension Program" (otherwise known as a "Universal Single Payer" program) for all, as part of a uniform tax/trust program (similar to FICA, SSI, etc.), the provision would fall within the same Congressional constitutional authority as do the Social Security and Income Tax programs, and would be unassailable. Single Payer would reduce drug costs, reduce coverage costs, still allow free choice of medical care, and be paid for by all.

Single Payer is the system that should have been adopted and might have had a chance to pass if Sen. Harry Reid had only had the intelligent foresight to call for a senatorial rule change on January 5, 2009, when the new session of Congress was sworn in (since Senate rule changes required only a simple 50-plus % vote), and gotten rid



"Single Payer is the system that should have been adopted and might have had a chance to pass if Sen. Harry Reid had ... the intelligent foresight to call for a senatorial rule change on January 5, 2009"

I (as well as an expected majority of the U.S. Supreme Court) believe that the mandated purchase of insurance by individual citizens, in the face of a fine/penalty for failure to do so, is an unconstitutional extension

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of the (again, in my opinion, unconstitutional) 60 vote supermajority/filibuster rule.

Further, let's look at the history and roots of the current "Affordable Healthcare Act," sometimes called "Obamacare," allegedly a Democratic conspiratorial plan hatched by the President, Then-Speaker Pelosi, and Senate Majority Leader Reid.

It was created upon a model based upon the Massachusetts Patient Healthcare Act, established, advocated and enforced by a Republican Governor, Mitt Romney (who now denies the fatherhood of his bastard child).

Then it was modified, reformed, and adopted, with five specific goals promulgated and promoted by the

insurance industry: (A) Keep any single-payer plan off the table; (B) Ensure that any final plan adopted contained a clause requiring all Americans not otherwise eligible for another existing program to buy coverage from a private insurance company; (C) Prevent any adopted plan from creating any government-run plan (i.e., the "public option") which would compete with such private insurers; (D) Make the healthcare reform implementation primarily at the state level, thereby decreasing

extensive federal government oversight of private insurers' business practices; (E) Keep any new regulations and consumer protections at a minimum.

Insurers achieved proposals (A) through (D) and are attempting to further enact—through "friendly" Congressional legislators—provision (E).

Note that Provision (B) is the heart of the current litigation before the Supreme Court, the "individual mandate."

ing policies and keep them alive and available..." on state-wide bases, having been unable to foist them onto the national legislature.

ALEC's model legislation proposals reflect long-term goals of downsizing [federal] government, removing regulations on corporations, making it harder to hold the economically and the politically powerful to account, and destroying unions; in essence to completely repeal the Roosevelt Era New Deal and re-

turn the U.S. to pre-Depression autocracy.

ALEC's priorities for 2010 - 2011 included bills to privatize education, break unions, deregulate major industries, pass voter ID limits, as well as modify any healthcare act. Do any of these sound familiar?



However, where did all these provisions originate? From a little-known but huge (in fact, the largest) individual public-private membership association of state legislators, called the *American Legislative Exchange Council* (or "ALEC"), allegedly a "nonpartisan" group. However, ALEC was founded in 1973 by Paul Weyrich and other conservative Republican activists, including Milton Friedman, as a critical arm of their right-wing network of policy shops, to "...develop alternatives to exist-

ALEC apparently succeeded in the federal healthcare limitations, and what resulted from the "compromise" between President Obama, Senate Majority Leader Reid, and Then-House Speaker Boehner, is what we now have. Since its origins (the major provisions of which are now being constitutionally challenged) resulted from this truly Republican genesis, it should really be re-named "GOPCare." Let its requiem so state.



The False Promise of the Individual Health Insurance Mandate

Curtis Wolf

In the May 2012 *FreeThinker* article titled, “The Individual Health Insurance Mandate,” Joque Soskis argued that the individual health insurance mandate required of all U.S. citizens by Obamacare in 2014 is the answer to the problem of uncompensated healthcare provided by hospitals. Uncompensated healthcare is a serious problem for hospitals to the tune of \$39.3 billion in 2010, according to the American Hospital Association. (<http://www.aha.org/content/12/11-uncompensated-care-fact-sheet.pdf>) But is the individual mandate really the answer to this problem? I say no.

Joque fixated on the irresponsibility of higher-income individuals who do not purchase health insurance. However, those individuals make up a relatively small percentage of the uninsured. According to a 2010 study by the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, the vast majority (77.8%) of the uninsured have annual incomes below 250% of the federal poverty level (<http://www.kff.org/uninsured/upload/7451-07.pdf>). Add to that the fact that higher-income individuals (which include young professionals whose youth guarantees that they use minimal medical services) tend to be healthier overall and therefore less likely to need medical care. Add further to that, the fact that these individuals can afford higher out-of-pocket medical expenses, and

the impact of health insurance freeloaders on the problem of uncompensated medical care is not substantial at all.

Former director of the Congressional Budget Office, Douglas Holtz-Eakin, and 2002 Nobel Laureate in Economics, Vernon Smith, make a similar observation in a *Wall Street Journal* op-ed: (<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304459804577285991632128670.html>)

“... I would support solutions that add competition and entrepreneurial innovation to our healthcare system”

In reality, the mandate has almost nothing to do with cost-shifting. The targeted population—the young, healthy, and not poor, who choose to forego coverage—has a minimal role in the \$43 billion of uncompensated healthcare costs. In 2008, for example (the latest figures available), the Department of Health and Human Services’ Medical Expenditure Panel Survey showed that the uncompensated care of the mandate’s targeted population was no more than \$12.8 billion—a tiny one-half of 1% of the nation’s \$2.4 trillion in overall healthcare costs. The insurance mandate cannot reasonably be justified on the ground that it remedies costs imposed on the system by the voluntarily uninsured.

So, the vast majority of the uninsured will need subsidized

healthcare whether there is an individual mandate or not, since most of the uninsured are low-income individuals and cannot afford health insurance at its current cost (at least until the government policies that keep it



so expensive are changed). For those with more substantial resources, who choose not to purchase healthcare, a little tough love is needed to convince them to pay their medical bills. This could include liens on property, wage garnishment, and as harsh as it sounds, cutting them off from hospital services, after appropriate warnings have been given that choosing to take the risks involved in not at least having catastrophic medical insurance does not guarantee them a free visit to the local hospital. I guarantee that the limited number of freeloaders will change their tune once their bluffs are called.

Does this mean that there is nothing wrong with our current healthcare system? Far from it! Our current healthcare system is too expensive, and this has much to do with why we have so many uninsured. Why is our healthcare system so expensive? Keep in mind that whole books have been written on the economics of healthcare, so any-

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thing that I write in the next few sentences is an oversimplification of the more nuanced analyses of the subject found in these books. The “Readers Digest version” is that much of our healthcare is paid for by third parties, either government programs or private insurance companies, where most of the premiums are paid for by our employers, thanks to the U.S. tax code. This takes the health consumer (that would be you) out of the cost-cutting business, since you pay so little out of pocket and therefore have little incentive to seek the most cost effective medical treatment. Combine that with the fact that we have world class hospitals to which rich foreigners like Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi come for heart surgery and the fact that we are more reliant on expensive technology and blockbuster drugs than other developed countries,

and so it is not surprising that our healthcare system is so expensive.

How do we fix these problems? Anyone who knows me knows that I am pro free-



market, so I would support solutions that add competition and entrepreneurial innovation to our healthcare system. Unfortunately, this will be next to impossible if we continue to rely on third party payments for most of our healthcare. More reliance on health savings accounts and

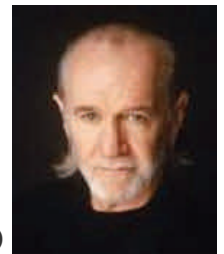
high deductible insurance would be one possible solution to bring the consumer back into the healthcare market. Healthcare insurance needs to be more about reducing the risk of a catastrophic illness leading to bankruptcy and less about paying for every imaginable healthcare need. Think about it. If your auto insurance paid for most car maintenance costs or your home insurance paid for additions to your house, they would be a lot more expensive than they currently are.

Whatever the solution is, it should not be applied in a top-down fashion such as the imposing of Obamacare on all of us by Congress. Instead, it should be applied in a bottom-up approach which tries innovative ideas on a small scale and then propagates the idea throughout the healthcare market as it provides benefits to the delivery of healthcare in this country.



“Religion convinced the world that there’s an invisible man in the sky who watches everything you do. And there’s 10 things he doesn’t want you to do or else you’ll go to a burning place with a lake of fire until the end of eternity. But he loves you! ...And he needs money! He’s all powerful, but he can’t handle money!”

—George Carlin (1937-2008)



Monthly Social

- Where:** OLIVE GARDEN on Philips Highway, near the Avenues Mall.
- When:** Tuesday June 26, 2012 at 6:00 p.m. Proceed directly to our room.
Drinks at 6:00. Dinner at 7:00. (Order from the menu.)
- RSVP:** CarrieRen@att.net (or 268-8826) by Tues. a.m., if you plan to go!

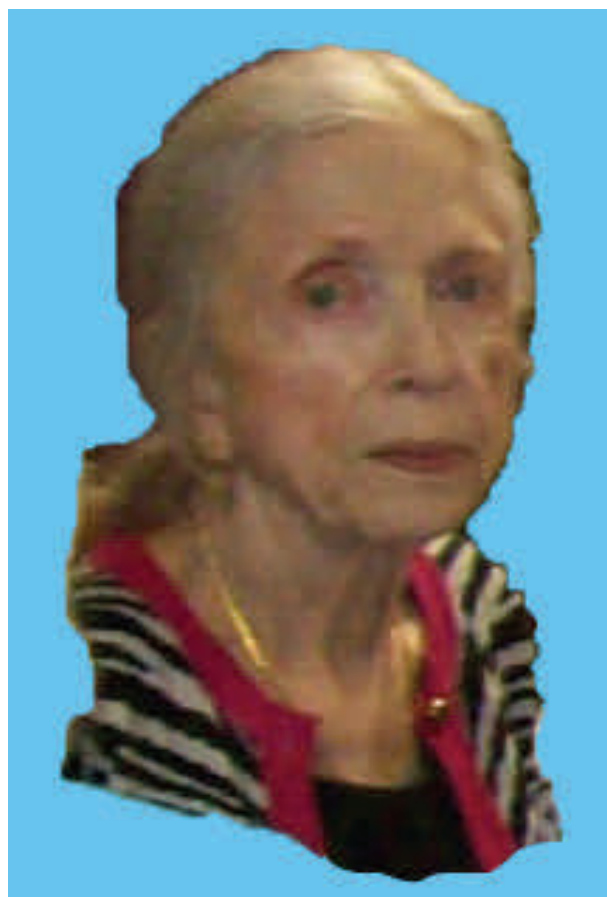
Remembering MILLIE TAYLOR, Freethinker, FCFS Member and Supporter, and Friend

Janet R. Taylor, Daughter

Renaissance woman, artist, author and poet, gourmet cook, and sports car enthusiast, “Millie” Taylor died Monday, March 19, 2012 after a brief and unexpected hospitalization, never losing her amazing intelligence and zest for life. A woman well ahead of her time, she was a lifelong student of the arts and was a perfectionist, striving to master any subject or project that drew her interest.

Born in Rochester, Minnesota, Millie went on to live in several states. She grew up in the San Diego, CA, area during the Great Depression and spent summers on the family farm in Sleepy Eye, Minnesota, where she retold the story of her horror of having to kill and pluck chickens. Yet, there, she learned the skills of baking and cooking that led her to become a talented chef and, later, the author of a newspaper cooking column. After high school in California, Millie went on to attend the University of Minnesota at Minneapolis-St. Paul, before moving to Milwaukee, where she met her future husband of 43 years, John S. Taylor. They were a golden couple and enjoyed sailing together,

and later shared a passion for sports car rallies and racing. They also shared a humorous addiction to Irish Limericks and boisterous pub songs. They were married in 1950, then lived on



Mildred (“Millie”) G. Taylor

11/17/1926 - 3/19/2012

the Taylor family estate in Milwaukee, known at the time as “The Hummocks,” before starting a family. Her eldest son, Dr. Peter B. Taylor, and only daughter, Janet R. Taylor, were born in Milwaukee before the family moved to Jacksonville, Florida in 1960.

In Florida, Millie and John continued with SCCA rallies and races, until the birth of two other sons, John S. Taylor, Jr., who died in 2011, and her youngest son, Dr. Louis R. Taylor. They first settled into a home in the Lakewood area of Jacksonville, before moving to the family’s long-time home at the corner of Arbor Lane and River Road in San Marco. In those days, she was an unusual figure on the racing scene, when women were not allowed to race their own cars, so she acted as navigator during rallies and as pit crew at SCCA races, including Daytona, taking son Peter along, while John raced his Porsche or her 1957 Triumph TR3. The TR3, named “Millie,” is now owned and raced by Tim Suddard, publisher of *Classic Motorsports Magazine*.

In the 1960s and 70s, she and John hosted many cocktail parties and elegant dinners, showcasing her culinary skills, with the help of her daughter in the kitchen. Flowers from her garden filled her home, including blooms from her huge rose garden. She would create “stained glass” masterpieces on the windows

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during Easter and mastered sculpting and sewing elaborate dresses and costumes for Halloween. One year, she won first prize for her charming costumes, based on the characters from *Ferdinand the Bull*.

She was also active in community service, was a long-time member of the Junior League of Jacksonville, and an active volunteer for the libraries. She was gifted at writing but was also gifted in math, which led to her interest in the stock market. She became a Day Trader, yet never became a stock broker, even with urging of others, preferring to work from home. She also was a talented artist and exhibited art in juried museum shows, along with her daughter, Jan. She also went on to publish stories and poetry in literary journals and was an active, devoted member of the Jackson-

ville Branch of the National League of American Pen Women for many years, until her recent move to Texas in 2011, following the death of her son, John Jr.

Ahead of her time, Millie also was an original advocate of what is now known as Locavor cooking; and a devotee of grilled, baked, and broiled foods, giving up her deep fat fryer and adjusting her own recipes, and her favorite Julia Child recipes, to champion the benefits of “color” on the plate, many decades before mainstream acceptance.

Her low fat, healthful diet and progressive ideas about nutrition helped her conquer lung cancer for almost two decades, at a time when most doctors gave her a grim prognosis, yet she convinced them to change protocol and became an unusual success story in treating her type of lung cancer. She went on to write a book, during the

past several years, about her journey with lung cancer, which is due to be published. Perhaps her greatest triumph was her passion in defeating her enemy cancer, which did not take her from us, and she would rejoice in that.

She is survived by eldest son Dr. Peter B. Taylor of Fond du Lac, WI; daughter Janet Taylor Meyer, Cape Cod, MA; son Dr. Louis R. Taylor of Round Rock, TX; granddaughters, Brianne Coayonan of Milwaukee, WI, and Whitney Taylor Meyer of Cape Cod, MA; Nephew Robert J. Grundmeyer of La Jolla, CA, and his children Tyler, Kyle, and Kaylie. She was laid to rest with generations of the Taylor family at the Forest Home Cemetery in Milwaukee, WI.

This article was provided courtesy of Sigrun Buckley, in loving memory of her fgood riend.

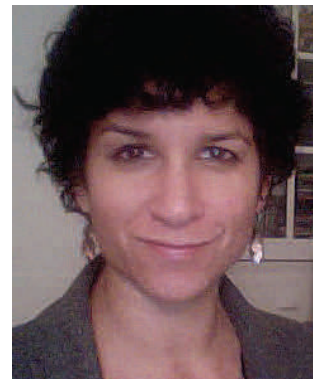


Meet Our June Speaker - Karla Pierce, M.A.

Carrie Renwick

Karla Pierce teaches philosophy courses at Florida State College at Jacksonville and at Jacksonville University. She also leads faculty development, continuing education, and professional development workshops in various institutions. Her topics include applied ethics, critical thinking, critical questioning, and more. In 2011 she organized a nine-part Public Philosophy Workshops series. Each session featured a different philosopher leading an active discussion on a topic of his or her choice. You can view Karla’s materials on her website, www.Purplebike.com.

When is the last time YOU asked a question—a critical thinking question? Come polish those critical questioning skills on Monday night, June 18, as local philosophy educator, Karla Pierce, leads her audience through her educational, interactive, workshop. First Karla will roll out some questions, and then she’ll guide her audience in applying those questions in a lively discussion of a contemporary issue. Karla guarantees it will be fun!



First Coast Freethought Society, Inc.
P.O. Box 550591
Jacksonville, FL 32255-0591
904-419-8826
<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.

For other activities besides monthly meetings, please see the website, brochure, or newsletter!

FCFS 2012 Board Members

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All FCFS personnel may be reached via e-mail at info@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org

First Coast FreeThinker

The *First Coast FreeThinker* is published for all freethinkers and potential freethinkers. Nonmembers may receive the e-mail version indefinitely. Nonmembers may receive three hard-copy issues 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 that stimulate thought and promote discussion on a variety of subjects.

Information for Contributors

We welcome submissions. Articles for consideration should be submitted via e-mail to the e-mail address shown below. Contributors who cannot submit manuscripts electronically may send them to Fred

Hill, 1817 Egner St., Jacksonville, FL 32206. The deadline for time-sensitive submissions is the THIRD SATURDAY of each month for the following month's issue.

We prefer articles no longer than 1,000 words. Longer articles will be evaluated in terms of whether their importance and degree of interest to our readers warrant publication.

All accepted manuscripts are subject to editorial modification. Our style guide is *The Chicago Manual of Style*. Manuscript submissions cannot be returned. Authors are responsible for the accuracy of all quotations and for supplying complete references where applicable.

E-mail Address for Submissions
Editor@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org

ADVERTISING RATES: Eighth-page (business card size) \$25.00, quarter-page \$50.00, half-page \$75.00, and whole page \$100.

To advertise, contact Fred Hill at 904-3610, or Editor@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org

First Coast Freethought Society, Inc.

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2012 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? Comments? _____			

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.) | | |

Do you object to your name appearing on our membership list, distributed to other members? Yes No

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

- General member Committee member Officer Financial supporter

- Annual dues cover the period of **January 1 through December 31**.
- The initial dues for new members joining in **July through September** are half the regular rates. Membership extends to the end of the current calendar year.
- The initial dues for new members joining in **October through December** are the full, regular rates. Membership extends to the end of the following calendar year.

***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
904-419-8826 • CarrieRen@att.net • <http://firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org>
All inquiries are held in the strictest confidence.

Upcoming Freethought Events of Interest on the First Coast

Saturday	June 17	FCFS Deadline to submit articles for July 2012 <i>FreeThinker</i>
Monday	June 18	FCFS Monthly Meeting, Jacksonville - 6:30 p.m.
Sunday	June 24	FCFS Secular Sunday in the Park, Jacksonville - 10:00 a.m.
Tuesday	June 26	FCFS Monthly Social at Olive Garden, Jacksonville - 6:00 p.m.
Sunday	July 1	FCFS Humanist Book Discussion Group, Jacksonville - 2:00 p.m.
Monday	July 9	JAM Meetup at European Street Café in San Marco - 6:30 p.m.
Saturday	July 14	JAM/FCFS Volunteer at Second Harvest - 10:00 p.m.
Monday	July 16	FCFS Monthly Meeting, Jacksonville - 6:30 p.m.

First Coast Freethought Society (FCFS) • <http://www.firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org/>
Jacksonville Atheist, Agnostic, Secular Meetup Group (JAM) • <http://www.jaxatheists.com/>
Northeast Florida Coalition of Reason (NeFCoR) • <http://NorthEastFloridaCoR.org/>

The FCFS is a proud member of the Humanists of Florida Association
and the Northeast Florida Coalition of Reason.

2012 NPR Corporate Sponsorship Fund Drive Update

Carrie Renwick, Fundraising Committee Chair

We are just over one-quarter of the way through our annual fund drive, and we are just short of being one-quarter of the way there (23.6% to be exact). So, if you are planning to contribute to our 2012 NPR Corporate Sponsorship Fund Drive but have not yet gotten around to doing so, now is the time! Our freethought message broadcast on National Public Radio (NPR) member station WJCT 89.9 FM, covering the Northeast Florida and Southeast Georgia area, will be able to continue, but it will take more of us. As of today, Saturday, June 9, we still need just over \$3,000.

Thanks to those of you who have contributed thus far, the NPR Fund has \$965. Specifically, subtracting \$965 from our goal of \$4,095 gives a balance of \$3,130. We are confident that you will rise to the occasion once again this year, as you have in the past, and insure that we keep our Voice of Reason alive on Florida's First Coast.

To donate via the FCFS website, click on this link:

<http://firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org> where you will find convenient options on how to donate, on our home page. If you prefer to send a check, please mail it to the FCFS, Post Office Box 550591, Jacksonville, FL 32255-0591. Thank you!

NPR-o-Meter

