

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.”

Post Office Box 550591, Jacksonville, FL 32255-0591

Website: <http://FirstCoastFreethoughtSociety.org>

Telephone: 904-419-8826

E-mail: CarrieRen@att.net



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The First Coast Freethought Society, Inc.

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Jacksonville, Florida 32255-0591

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The First Coast

FreeThinker



Newsletter of the First Coast Freethought Society

April 2013

Volume 12, Issue 4

Inside this issue: **Easter, Osiris, and Eostra**

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Fred W. Hill

When I was a child, my family routinely celebrated Easter—my mother, brothers, and I colored eggs the night before, and on Easter morning, our father hid the eggs so the kids could search for them to

add to our baskets filled with chocolate bunnies and other goodies. A few

times I'm sure we went to church, but if so, that happened so rarely and when I was so young that it hasn't stuck in my memory. My parents were religious but not extremely so, and they never extolled the wonders of heavenly reward for adopting a particular

creed or the cruelties of eternal damnation for failing to believe in the literal truth of any particular holy book. My brother Terry and I were sent to



Sunday school for a year or two, so we were exposed to the Christian bible as youngsters, but our parents had the integrity to let us think things out for ourselves.

Thus Easter

Sunday was a day of fun and feasting, rejoicing in the early spring rather than contemplating the supposed crucifixion and return to life of the reputed son of God nearly two millennia ago.

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“A long and wicked life followed by five minutes of perfect grace gets you into Heaven. An equally long life of decent living and good works followed by one outburst of taking the name of the Lord in vain, then have a heart attack at that moment and be damned for eternity. Is that the system?”

—Robert A. Heinlein

“...[P]art of the reason the Jesus story has survived is that many other, older tales were cleverly folded into his, and for well over a thousand years Christian authorities made it a capital offense to dispute it.”

April 2013 Meeting

“From Nundom to Freedom”

Liz Murad, Former Catholic Nun, current Secular Humanist

Monday, April 15, 2013, 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 - Jacksonville

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:

- May 5, 2013 - Any magazine article or book written by Chris Hedges
- June 2, 2013 - *The Great Agnostic, Robert Ingersoll and American Freethought*, by Susan Jacoby



Link to Book Review: Here you will find a review on a Hedges book, *When Atheism Becomes Religion: America's New Fundamentalists*: <http://www.lifeongoldplates.com/2010/02/review-chris-hedges-when-atheism.html>

For more info, contact: Herb Gerson at 904-363-6446, or 12herbert30gerson@bellsouth.net.

NOTE TO ALL! Books may be found in the library, purchased from local book stores or 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.

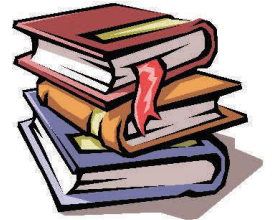
Humanist Book Discussion Group - St. Augustine

When: 7:00 p.m., Monday, usually 8 days after the Jax group meets.

Where: Currently meets in a private residence (condo). Contact coordinator Bill Stroop for address, directions, and gate code.

What: Books planned for discussion:

- May 13, 2013 - *When Atheism Becomes Religion: America's New Fundamentalists*, by Chris Hedges
- June 10, 2013 - *The Great Agnostic, Robert Ingersoll and American Freethought*, by Susan Jacoby



Link to Book Review: <http://www.lifeongoldplates.com/2010/02/review-chris-hedges-when-atheism.html>

For more info, contact: Bill Stroop at bill@strooplaw.com

Monthly Social

Where: OLIVE GARDEN on Philips Highway, across from the Avenues Mall.

When: Tuesday April 23, 2013 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!

New Humanist Book Discussion Group in St. Augustine!

Bill Stroop

Wanted: A few good freethinkers (or secular humanists, atheists, agnostics, or skeptics) to participate in what will hopefully be a fun, interesting, and rewarding book discussion group. As a member of the FCFS, you probably participate in or are aware of the outstanding opportunity offered by the FCFS Humanist Book Discussion Group which meets at 2:00 p.m. the first Sunday of each month in Jacksonville. Started by Jewel Kross, the group is currently under the admirable leadership of Herb Gerson. Since 2004 (see the book list on the FCFS website), the group has read a very impressive list of works by some brilliant minds.

In order to serve folks in the southern sphere of FCFS

influence or those who might have a conflict with the Jax book discussion group's meeting schedule, I have offered to host a second Book Discussion Group in St. Augustine once a month on Monday evenings from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. Initially, this group will be limited to 8 to 10 participants so that we can meet in my condo on the southern end of Anastasia Island. If you will send an email (bill@strooplaw.com), I will provide the address, directions, and gate code. My initial plan is to read the same books as the Jax group and to meet on either the first or second Monday after the first Sunday of the month (1 or 8 days later so as not to conflict with the general meeting) and so that the hard-core readers among us can attend both book groups. **The first meeting will be May 13, 2013.**

I encourage participants to read the selection so that we, as a group, can consider, among other things, whether the ideas presented by the author advance the cause of the freethinking community. I am hopeful that every participant will have the opportunity to share his/her favorite passage from the book under discussion and to share his/her thoughts or comments. My personal goals include learning more about freethinking (aka secular humanism, etc.) and enjoying the company of others who are similarly inclined. Please email me if you have questions, suggestions, or concerns at bill@strooplaw.com



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 - April 2013

Earl Coggins

Last month I wrote a piece about Voltaire. What I said barely scratched the surface of his life and his contribution to the freethought movement. He lived in a time known as The Enlightenment, also called the Age of Reason. My interest in reading about Voltaire started with an interest in going back and reading about the Enlightenment, i.e. looking again at the “who, what, when, where, and why” of this famous era in human history. It is fascinating reading.

Depending upon whom you ask, The Enlightenment was a century to a century and a half in duration, with the 18th century getting the nod as the age of enlightenment. Its most famous thinkers were Voltaire, Rousseau, Montesquieu, Diderot, Burke, Hume, Goethe, Berkeley, Kant, and the sweetheart of the American Revolution, Thomas Paine. There were many more thinkers of The Enlightenment, but these names are the most famous, many of which could be called the heroes of that period in history.

The Enlightenment was an “enlightening” period in

history, because it is credited for continuing to spread the scientific age of Newtonian science and creating and disseminating liberal, progressive, and rational ideas. It was a period in history of rapid attempts at reform, especially attempts to challenge and reform ecclesiastical and traditional customs of society.

Of the “who, what, when, where, and why” of The Enlightenment, the “why” intrigues me the most. What caused The Enlightenment?

“Wollstonecraft [wrote] a feminist manifesto: Vindication of the Rights of Woman (1792)...a feminist declaration of independence. She persistently argued that ‘mind has no sex,’ and, therefore, human and civil rights should not be determined by a person’s gender.”

No one person or thing can take credit, since the causes stretch across economic, political, social, philosophic, and scholastic boundaries. I like to think the pursuit of truth and fairness as the big guns of The Enlightenment.

Similar to sports, where you only hear about the players who score the most points or take their teams to a championship, the Enlightenment had its super heroes mentioned above. But just like sports, it also had the tireless, fearless players in the trenches whose contribu-

tions, had they been absent, would have greatly diminished, or at the very least, stalled the greatness achieved by the so-called heroes.



One such person was Mary Wollstonecraft. Walking parallel with Thomas Paine, Wollstonecraft fought for and promoted basic human rights, along with education as a means for a better way of life. The difference between Wollstonecraft and the heroes of The Enlightenment mentioned above should be obvious: gender. She’s a woman and they are ALL men.

Mary Wollstonecraft’s contribution to The Enlightenment was gender specific. She was a feminist. She is famous for writing about and promoting equal rights for women, something even the most enlightened men of her time were, sadly, not ready to deal with.

Wollstonecraft’s contribution to The Enlightenment is, in my opinion, phenomenal. I truly believe she is one of the greatest thinkers of her time, although I have a feeling most women living while Wollstonecraft was alive felt

as she felt—that women were second class citizens being treated poorly in a male dominated culture.

What distinguishes Wollstonecraft from most women of her time was her ability to act on her feelings. She had the means, i.e. education, money, courage, etc., to do what other women of her time could not or would dare not do: apply to women the concerns of The Enlightenment, especially the liberal doctrine of inalienable human rights.

Wollstonecraft was a writer, although she went through a few years of disappointing employment opportunities prior to embarking on a career in writing. She left a struggling home life at 18 years of age, striking out practically alone. With help from friends, she was able to get and stay employed, but I suspect, based on her later life, that her rebellious attitude caused her to set a new course in her life. At 24 years of age, she co-founded a school for girls because she believed education was a key factor in giving women a better quality of life.

At 28 years of age Mary Wollstonecraft wrote to her sister describing advice from a very liberal, progressive editor and her new course in life: *“Mr. Johnson assures me that if I exert my talents in writing, I may support myself in a comfortable way. I am*

then going to be the first of a new genus—I tremble at the attempt.”

The “Mr. Johnson” in Wollstonecraft’s letter to her sister was Joseph Johnson, a radical and progressive publisher and book seller during The Enlightenment. He published the works of some very



Mary Wollstonecraft (1759—1797)

Painting by John Opie, 1790-91

famous authors, the most famous being Thomas Malthus. Johnson was a radical publisher, spending time in prison for publishing writing the state deemed seditious.

Wollstonecraft benefited from her friendship with Joseph Johnson in part because he published her writing, but also because of the people she was able to meet through him—radical intellectuals and liberal progressive thinkers—my kind of people.

Wollstonecraft learned French and German and translated texts and wrote book reviews. She wrote a children’s novel, among other novels. The reading required for writing the book reviews, along with her new friendships at the publishing house of Joseph Johnson, helped expand her mind.

Wollstonecraft went on to write a feminist manifesto: *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792). It was a feminist declaration of independence. She persistently argued that “mind has no sex,” and, therefore, human and civil rights should not be determined by a person’s gender.

It is ironic that Mary Wollstonecraft spent a portion of her life fighting the monsters of society gainfully employed in the subjugation of women, and then gave birth on the eve of her death to the creator of one of the most famous fictional monsters in literary history.

On August 30, 1797, Mary gave birth to her second child and named her Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin, after both her and her husband, William Godwin. Wollstonecraft died about 10 days later from septicaemia. Her daughter would later marry Percy Bysshe Shelley, becoming Mary Shelley and writing *Frankenstein*.



Scale

Opinion by Joe Varon

Years ago a friend of mine, who had served in the Navy, was describing how it felt to be underwater for six months at a time on a nuclear submarine. He said that you had to concentrate on the inside of the sub—the gear, the people, the duties. Considering the gigantic scale of the ocean relative to the size of the submarine, the tiny boat felt like an insignificant speck. And, if you let your mind wallow in that scene too long, it could drive you crazy.

It strikes me that, in the face of any enormity, humans have a need to concentrate on a kind of egocentricity—focusing on how it relates to one’s self and one’s immediate surroundings. I believe most humans have an

innate need to mitigate the immensity of things by concentrating on the affect that any amazingly large entity has on themselves. Consider the prevalent concept of god, an entity endowed with limitless power over the entire universe,

to deal with that implausible god/human relationship. But I contend that we



have other equally awesome, natural, scientific enormities that we have to regularly reconcile with the scale of our individual limited humanity.

For starters, consider our home, planet Earth. Each of us is

a speck on an eggshell-thick, broken crust of the Earth, floating on a core of red hot, molten lava. This could be an uneasy reality.

Now, consider the size of the universe. Individually, we are but a pinpoint on this planet, that occupies a miniscule amount of space in a solar system which re-

“Individually, we are but a pinpoint on this planet, that occupies a miniscule amount of space in a solar system which resides in an insignificant corner of a galaxy that swirls among billions of others.”

creator of everything and manager of all that has occurred and will ever occur. Yet so many people (in all their “humility?”) believe that their god is listening to their individual prayers, responsible for their individual lives and is the loving source of their individual self-esteem.

Without god, we atheists typically don’t have

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sides in an insignificant corner of a galaxy that swirls among billions of others. We are “extremely trivial” raised to the fourth or fifth power.

Now consider that we have learned that everything, including us, is composed of atoms, and they only contain an infinitesimally small proportion of “solid matter” to empty space. We’re basically, mostly nothing but energy.

So, if all these examples of scalar extremes are part of our science-based world, how do we atheists deal with them, without consigning them to some all powerful, yet personal god?

We too are ego-centric

and realize that our own thoughts and needs are the center of our own world. But when faced with monumental issues and questions, we



Sitting on a yellow submarine contemplating the vastness of the sea of blue

are not tempted to create an answer that revolves around our personal needs—we seek knowledge and truth; and until we determine the truth, we are able to live comfortably with unanswered questions,

allowing science the time (and latitude) to search for answers, wherever those answers may lead us.

For me, science has discovered the best and most credible set of answers to some of the mysteries of life—yet with every answer, new and deeper questions arise. And that’s OK. Will we ever have absolute answers to the origin of life, the nature of our “soul,” the details of other planets in other gal-

axies? I don’t know, but I’d rather live with the scale of the unanswered questions much more than accepting the convenient alternative.



(“Easter, Osiris, and Eostra”, cont’d from page 1)

Of course, once I was old enough to seriously contemplate the story that this miracle-dealing Son O’ God died for the sins of everyone who has ever lived but came back to life only three days later only to float off to Heaven, promising to return someday “soon,” my reaction was not reverent awe but awe that anyone could possibly take such malarkey seriously! The story was clearly myth and not even an original one but a variant that has lasted into the modern era when most other myths have long since been abandoned. Of course, part of the reason the Jesus story has survived is that many other, older tales were cleverly folded into his, and for well over a thousand years Christian authorities made it a capital offense to dispute it.

Resurrection myths are among the oldest recorded stories, the most ancient one to survive being that of the Egyptian deity Asar, better known as Osiris, references to which have been found on wall and sarcophagi carvings dated to well over 4,000 years ago within Egyptian pyramids. Osiris, a god of regeneration and rebirth, suffered a much bloodier death than Jesus, having been chopped into 14 pieces by his brother Set, sibling rivalry being yet another popular mythic theme of ancient vintage.

Unlike Abel but much like Jesus, however, Osiris was resurrected and put in charge of the afterlife. Variations of the resurrection myth were likely already ancient when the Egyptians built their first pyramid and remain popular in modern pop fiction. From demi-gods of antiquity such as Herakles and Dinonysius,



Osiris, who knew a thing or two about dying and resurrection a few millennia before that other guy

to Victorian detectives, Cold War super-spies, and comic-book superheroes of today, such as Superman and Captain America, heroic figures are routinely killed off and brought back to life. The details change, but the gist remains the same – a popular hero, or villain for that matter, can’t be kept down for long no matter how devoid of life he appeared at the end of the last chapter.

Well, except if the hero happened to have been an actual living person who

really died. No amount of popularity will bring Abraham Lincoln, Elvis Presley or Dale Earnhardt, Sr., back to life, outside of *The Weekly World News* and other absurdist fantasy entertainment. Yet myths abound of once very real people long after their deaths, especially if there is any hint of mystery about their deaths or what happened to their bodies. Did Jim Morrison really die of a drug-induced heart attack in a bath tub in Paris, or did he fake his death to escape fame and write poetry in obscurity? Did Hitler really commit suicide in his Berlin bunker as the Russians closed in on him, or did he escape to South America to plot his next attempt to take over the world? Is Elvis singing about a Blue Christmas on the moon? More seriously, in Greek Orthodox legend, Constantine XI Palaiologos, the last emperor of the last fragment of the Roman Empire who died in battle against the Ottomans when they conquered Constantinople in 1453, was turned into marble by an angel and secreted into an underground cave near the city’s Golden Gate from where he will one day rise to take back his city for the one true faith and re-establish the old empire. How much credence even devout Greeks give that tale 560 years later I can’t tell, but before I was transferred

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to Greece in 1995 during my Navy career, I was instructed not to bring up the subject of Turks or Istanbul in conversation with Greeks, as to many of them that city is still Constantinople, the home of their real capitol. The Turks, naturally, have a different outlook, and a marble king is no more likely to restore the Byzantium Empire than a Ghost Dance is to make American Indians dominant in North America again.

Nor, despite the insistence of Christians around the world, is Jesus likely to ever make his fabled Second Coming, even if they wait and pray another million years. In eastern European nations where Orthodox Christianity is dominant, Easter is known as Pacha, a Greek derivation of the Hebrew word for Passover, and a traditional Paschal greeting and response is, "Christ is risen," "Truly, He is risen." A means of enforcing belief that Jesus really lived, died, came back to life and will eventually return from his ivory throne in the clouds to reward the faithful and punish unbelievers. In pious thought, unbelievers are far worse than any murderers, rapists, thieves, or used car salesmen, because we sow seeds of doubt that may destroy their very souls, while

those other miscreants can only damage their bodies or finances. They are deathly afraid to think too much about their beliefs.

Easter is a moveable feast, as in keeping with tradition it must correlate with the Jewish Passover, a holiday scheduled according to a lunar rather than a solar cal-



endar commemorating one of the plagues God inflicted on the Egyptians in order to free the enslaved Jews. Rather than just showing up in all his glory and telling the Pharaoh to let the Israelites go like a rational omnipotent deity would have done, God murdered every first born child in Egypt, save those his

spirit knew to spare because the Jewish inhabitants had marked their doorposts with the blood of a freshly killed spring lamb. Somehow this story fails to move me to either believe in God or believe that he deserves to be worshipped.

Among cultures influenced by ancient German traditions, at least according to the chronicles of the 8th century monk known as the Venerable Bede, the Christian observance of Easter transposed the older pagan festivities honoring Eostre, a German fertility goddess associated with the dawn. Really, just an excuse to celebrate the spring equinox, when the winter snows melt, green leaves grow back on trees, colorful flowers open up, and fruits, grains, and vegetables start to grow again. When the apparently dead earth really appears to spring with life again. Colorful eggs and famously fecund rabbits are natural symbols of life and fertility, even if hard-boiled eggs and chocolate

bunnies are as dead as door-knobs. I cannot bring myself to believe in or honor a blood-thirsty, brain-dead god or his alleged son, nor can I throw away my reason to worship a more attractive goddess.

Yet, still, I can feel more passion for the spirit of Eostre than for Pascha or Jesus.



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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.

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

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**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.

Subject matter must tie in with freethought or with the Affirmations of Humanism (found on our website). 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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2013 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.) |
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| <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

Monday	April 15	FCFS Monthly Meeting, Jacksonville - 6:30 p.m.
Tuesday	April 23	FCFS Monthly Social at Olive Garden, Jacksonville - 6:00 p.m.
Sunday	April 28	FCFS Secular Sunday in the Park, Jacksonville - 10:00 a.m.
Sunday	May 5	Humanist Book Discussion Group, Jacksonville - 2:00 p.m.
Saturday	May 11	FCFS/JAM Volunteer at Second Harvest - 10 a.m.
Monday	May 13	JAM Meetup at European Street Café in San Marco - 6:30 p.m.
Monday	May 13	Humanist Book Discussion Group, St. Augustine - 7:00 p.m.*
Saturday	May 18	FCFS Deadline to submit articles for June 2013 <i>FreeThinker</i>
Monday	May 20	FCFS Monthly Meeting, Jacksonville - 6:30 p.m.

* See announcement and article on pages 2 and 3 for more information.

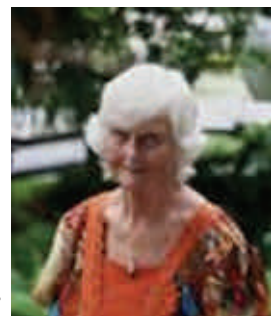
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The FCFS is a proud member of the Humanists of Florida Association
and the Northeast Florida Coalition of Reason.

Meet Our April Speaker: Liz Murad



Join us as Liz Murad, a former Catholic nun, now a freethinker and humanist, shares the remarkable story of her mental, emotional, and philosophical journey from faith in the unbelievable to life based in reality, and all the stops in between.



Liz was born—as we all are—an atheist, was raised a Catholic, and has returned to her birthright as a non-theist. Liz is a native of New Jersey, the oldest of six. She entered religious life at age 16 and, spent most of her early adulthood teaching in Catholic schools. She left the convent in her early 30s and moved to Florida a few years later, where she met and married Jim Murad, the man of her dreams. Jim introduced Liz to humanism. They developed a private practice of biofeedback and psychotherapy. (Jim was a PhD and Liz has a masters in clinical social work.) Liz is now widowed and retired, living with her best friend, Marann, their 2 dogs, and 2 cats in Ft Pierce, Fl. Liz writes extensively and shares her remarkable story frequently.

