

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
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Telephone: 904-419-8826
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The First Coast

FreeThinker



Newsletter of the First Coast Freethought Society

July 2013

Volume 12, Issue 7

Inside this issue: **Stark(e) Contrasts: Competing Monuments and Dealing with Religious Bigotry**

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"I tell Christians, If you had two children and one had to be bribed (heaven) and threatened (hell) to do what he was supposed to do, and the other one just did it because that's what he knew was the right thing to do, which would you consider the better person?"

—Greg Irwin

Fred W. Hill

A few months ago I got word that a member of the Jacksonville Atheist & Agnostic Meetup Group (JAM) who had been very involved in the group, even hosting many JAM parties at her home and business, providing lavish feasts as well, had been "outed."

The details remain a mystery to me, but essentially someone spread the word to her predominantly religious clientele about her atheism and consequently she felt she had to distance herself from her freethinking friends for fear of a significant loss of business that she could not afford. Let's be clear – she wasn't afraid of any-

thing any government would do – she was afraid, with good reason, that widespread knowledge about her lack of religious belief and association with other atheists among her potential customer base would destroy her business. Businesses are legally



prohibited from refusing to serve customers on the basis of race, ethnicity or religion, but no one can be forced to purchase products or commercial services from

"...[I]t would be much better if there was no religious monument in any of our public spaces and thus no need to respond by putting up an atheist monument."

someone they are for any reason prejudiced against.

I'm sure many readers know who

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July 2013 Meeting

"The Tin Man, Scarecrow, Lion, and Dorothy: Finding Community on the Yellow Brick Road"

Teresa MacBain, Executive Director, Humanists of Florida Association

Monday, July 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 - 3:30 p.m., the first Sunday of each month.

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

What: Books planned for discussion:

- August 4, 2013 - *Godless*, by Dan Barker
- September 1, 2013 - *The Good Atheist*, by Dan Barker

More info: Contact Herb Gerson at 904-363-6446, or 12herbert30gerson@bellsouth.net.



Humanist Book Discussion Group - St. Augustine

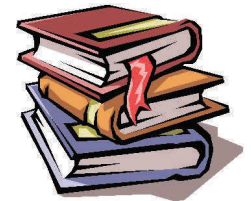
When: 7:00 - 8:30 p.m., the second Monday of each month.

Where: Clubhouse at a private condominium in St. Augustine (Anastasia Island).

What: Books planned for discussion:

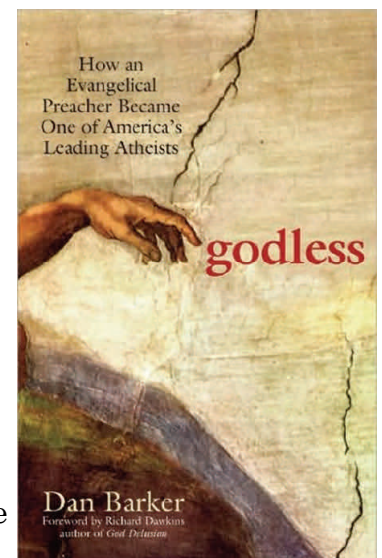
- August 12, 2013 - *Godless*, by Dan Barker
- September 16, 2013 - *The Age of Reason*, by Thomas Paine

More info: Contact Bill Stroop at bill@strooplaw.com for address, directions, and gate code.



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.

After 19 years as an evangelical preacher, missionary, and Christian songwriter, Dan Barker “threw out the bathwater and discovered there is no baby there.” Barker, who is now co-president of the Freedom From Religion Foundation (America's largest organization of atheists and agnostics), describes the intellectual and psychological path he followed in moving from fundamentalism to freethought. The four sections in *Godless*--Rejecting God, Why I Am An Atheist, What's Wrong With Christianity, and Life is Good!--include chapters on bible problems, the historicity of Jesus, morality, the Kalam Cosmological argument, the unbelievable resurrection, and much more. Barker relates the positive benefits from trusting in reason and human kindness instead of living in fear of false judgment and moral condemnation. *Godless* expands the story told in Dan's 1992 book, *Losing Faith in Faith*--the two books overlap about 20%--but a lot has happened in 16 years, and Dan updates the story with four new chapters, including 'The New Call' (lessons from the debate circuit), 'Adventures in Atheism,' and 'We Go To Washington' (FFRF's Supreme Court lawsuit, in which Dan was a plaintiff). (From GoodReads Overview)



(Stark(e) Contrasts , cont'd from pg 1)

I'm talking about, and a few may know more than I do about her situation, but I shall refrain from naming her. I bring this up, however, because her fears reflect those many in the freethought movement have felt and the reason many of us have become active members of the movement, striving to change a broad culture where we are legally free to believe whatever we want but may face social and even financial penalties if we dare to exercise that freedom.

JAM, like most other Meetup groups, is primarily a means for like-minded people to socialize and have fun in an informal setting and, as stated on its homepage, is "devoted to bringing atheists, agnostics, humanists, freethinkers, and everyone else together for camaraderie and support." The more formally structured First Coast Freethought Society serves a similar purpose but is also dedicated to promoting education via our monthly lectures and being a local advocate of reason and science over dogma and superstition. Larger organizations such as Americans United for the Separation of

Church and State, American Atheists, and the Center for Inquiry work on the even larger national scale to promote a secular society. All these groups seek to make our nation adhere and live up to its best ideals as enshrined in its Constitution, including the rights of free speech and freedom of religion, which naturally includes the right not to adhere to any religious belief whatsoever. A further goal is to overcome irrational prejudices against free-thinkers by

us and that the vast majority of us are honest, hardworking people (aside from those enjoying retirement) who do our part to maintain a civil society where all are free to hold any religious belief, as well as not to have any religious belief imposed on us. Admittedly, there are theists who see all freethinkers as a threat simply because in their minds mere exposure to secularist ideas may erode religious belief, leading to eternal damnation for all who disbelieve in their god. Or, more damnable in the eyes of pious hucksters, the spread of freethinking might just dam the influx of wealth to their coffers from devotees whom they'd much prefer remain ignorant and gullible.

Such religious extremists

were unsurprisingly aghast when, as part of a settlement brought against Bradford County for allowing a 10 Commandments monument to be placed on the grounds of the county courthouse in the city of Starke, Florida, American Atheists were permitted to place a monument of their own on the same public grounds, mere feet away from the Decalogue and engraved with state-



Yours truly hiding in plain sight in the crowd at the Dedication of the Atheist Monument in Bradford County

those who fear or even hate us simply because we do not share their faith. Ignorance feeds their bigotry because they think they don't know any of us and have been taught that we are utterly amoral and intend to destroy their churches, outlaw belief in God, and make murder, rape and theft the order of the day. They don't realize or purposely ignore the fact that they already do know many of

(Continued on page 7)

President's Message July 2013

Earl Coggins

I overheard someone finish a sentence with "...there's no doubt in my mind." The person was conversing with someone about a particular incident or subject—I'm not sure what, and it doesn't matter. I bring it up because hearing the phrase "there's no doubt in my mind" got me thinking (yet again) about doubt. Specifically, it got me thinking about the importance of doubt in a world of perceived certainty.

That catchy little phrase hit me with an epiphany: It is probably always healthy to carry at least a minimum level of doubt with you wherever you go, especially in realms where you yourself feel a great level of certainty. In other words, perhaps we should all be skeptical about anything labeled as certain, given the human propensity for error.

Famous stories of doubt abound throughout history. One such story has been around for nearly two thousand years and comes from the Judeo-Christian bible, John 20: 24–29. It is the doubting Thomas story. In it, Thomas, a disciple of Jesus, is busy doing something, running errands perhaps—verse 24 says nothing of his whereabouts—while the other disciples witness the return of Jesus after being resurrected

from the dead. When Thomas is back with his fellow disciples—we still don't know what he was doing—they relate to him their amazing story. Thomas has some serious doubts about a human coming back to life after being dead for three days. Imagine that! His doubt is strong enough for him to actually say he would need evidence, i.e. he would need to "...see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side."

"The Age of Reason was a period where doubt, no longer fully restrained by the Dark Ages, was able to challenge beliefs grounded in political power, faith, and tradition."

Very understandable reaction to the story his buddies have presented to him. I propose that Thomas missed the resurrection because he was busy renewing his subscription to *Skeptic Magazine*.

Socrates, one of the most famous philosophers of recorded history, expressed his doubt by questioning everything. The First Coast Freethought Society's motto, "To Question is the Answer," is a tribute to Socrates and, in my opinion, a call to doubt.

Doubt has an interesting

history. It has been both celebrated and cursed throughout recorded history. At the end of the doubting Thomas story, Jesus tells Thomas, "...because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." In a nutshell, Jesus is condoning belief without evidence, essentially saying there is no difference between evidence-based belief and belief originating from guesswork or unsubstantiated claims.

In her book *Doubt: A History*, Jennifer Hecht describes her study of religious doubt this way: *Great believers and great doubters seem like opposites, but they are more similar to each other than to the mass of relatively disinterested or acquiescent men and women. This is because they are awake to the fact that we live between two divergent realities: On one side, there is a world in our heads — and in our lives, so long as we are not contradicted by death and disaster — and that is a world of reason and plans, love, and purpose. On the other side, there is the world beyond human life — an equally real world in which there is no sign of caring or value, planning or judgment, love, or joy. We live in a meaning-rupture because we are*



(President's Message, continued from page 4)
human and the universe is not.

In his book *Doubt and Certainty*, co-written with George Sudarshan, Tony Rothman touches on the same dilemma above: A decade ago, in his *Closing of the American Mind*, Allan Bloom wrote: "All that is human, all that is of concern to us, lies outside of natural science." For those of us schooled in the scientific outlook, it is a harsh judgment, but Bloom's discontent—or similar ones—seems rife with the public. To our nonscientist friends, the rules of science evidently appear arbitrary, merely the general consensus of a fraternity of dead white European males. In that case the rules aren't to be taken too seriously. And so a large number of people have come to regard science as just another belief system, neither more nor less sound than astrology, alchemy or ESP. The

problem has been compounded over the years by repeatedly exaggerated claims on the part of scientists for what science can deliver in the way of ultimate understanding or happiness.



"Yep, that's a nasty gash, Jesus. A good doctor can stitch that up for you. However, no one can fix those holes in that wild yarn about you coming back from the dead and being the son of god."

As a result, the public has become largely agnostic about science."

My point in sharing these two quotes is to reveal how difficult it is for many people when they try to establish a fixed point on their horizon prior to starting a journey

towards truth and certainty.

To say there is "no doubt in my mind" is to counter the very essence of Enlightenment thinking. The Age of Reason was a period where doubt, no longer fully restrained by the Dark Ages, was able to challenge beliefs grounded in political power, faith, and tradition. Having said that, how am I or any other person supposed to know when to doubt and when to believe? That is what humans have been trying to sort out all through recorded history and probably prior to it.

There is one puzzling, perhaps troubling aspect to carrying doubt with you wherever you go – I sometimes feel there's no doubt in my mind that I have my doubts about many things. And there's the rub.



Monthly Social

Where: OLIVE GARDEN on Philips Highway, across from the Avenues Mall.
When: **Tuesday July 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!

God - A Poem by James Fenton

A nasty surprise in a sandwich,
A drawing-pin caught in your sock,
The limpest of shakes from a hand which
You'd thought would be firm as a rock.

A serious mistake in a nightie,
A grave disappointment all round
Is all that you'll get from th' Almighty
Is all that you'll get underground.

Oh he *said*: "If you lay off the crumpet
I'll see you alright in the end.
Just hang on until the last trumpet.
Have faith in me, chum -- I'm your friend."

But if you remind him, he'll tell you:
"I'm sorry, I must have been pissed --
Though your name rings a sort of a bell. You
Should have guessed that I do not exist.

"I didn't exist at Creation,
I didn't exist at the Flood,
And I won't be around for Salvation
To sort out the sheep from the cud"



From *The Memory of War*, 1982

Submitted by Caroline Peppiatt



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.

(Stark(e) Contrasts , cont'd from pg 3)

ments supporting civil laws, written by men and women, over religious laws supposedly imposed by God. Those of us, including myself and FCFS President Earl Coggins, Susan Ert-Ker, John Ruskuski, and other members of FCFS and JAM, who attended the dedication of the Atheist Monument at the Bradford County Courthouse in Starke, Florida, last June 29, experienced firsthand some of the vitriol religious extremists have for freethinkers. The courthouse grounds had been declared a free-speech zone by Bradford County officials, where potentially any religious or irreligious group, even Scientologists or Satanists, could put up their own monument if they were inclined. About two hundred freethought supporters and a few dozen opponents, some waving Confederate flags, converged there last June 29 for the dedication of the Atheist monument, which is in the form of a granite bench upon which anyone can sit to relax and reflect. Religious zealots expressed their opposition to freethought and free speech by attempting to drown out the official speakers at the dedication by playing horrid hymns at full blast from a van across the street. Eric Hovind, of the

young Earth creationist movement and son of Kent Hovind, who built Dinosaur Adventure Land, a creationist theme park in Pensacola, and who is currently serving a 10-year sentence in a federal prison for tax evasion, was also on hand, jumping up on the atheist monument as soon as he had an opportunity to berate



David Silverman and friend, putting the atheist monument to utilitarian use.

the nonbelievers and assure us we'd be sentenced to an eternity in Hell if we didn't acknowledge Christ as our lord and savior, but, I'd wager, only convincing us that any time spent in his company would seem like everlasting torment.

Fortunately, we also experienced the spirit of community among freethinkers and even those theists who likewise support the separation of church and state. Among the speakers was Daniel Cooney, a resident of Bradford County and plaintiff in the lawsuit whose own grandfather, Harry

Cooney, had been part of the group responsible for putting the 10 Commandments monument in place. Bridget Gaudette, another speaker and plaintiff, was forthright about her experiences in losing faith while part of a very religious subculture as both a black woman and a former Jehovah's Witness, but also de-

scribed how many theists she knew expressed surprise that an atheist could be so "nice." Ellenbeth Wachs, an experienced atheist activist, avowed that we will not be ignored as we stand up for our constitutional rights. Jeanette Madea, a senior professor of Natural History at Broward Community College, noted that the particular 10 Commandments

chiseled into that other monument "were not the same ten commandments I grew up with," highlighting that there are actually several variations of the laws allegedly handed down by a perfect deity. American Atheists' President David Silverman further pointed out that the U.S. was not founded upon religious law and asserted that if more Christians read their bibles from cover to cover they would realize "how flawed it really is."

A few days after the event,

(Continued on page 9)

Oh, Ye Bishops!

Elizabeth Murad

Oh, Ye Bishops!

You counsel your priests when they molest children!

You claim it's under control.

Since you can no longer deny it exists, you say "it's being handled"; so were those children!

You cover for those pedophile priests, protect them, make excuses for them.



Oh, Ye Bishops!

You old (celibate?) men in the Vatican, You denounce women who desire to be ordained.

You dare compare their "sin" to the pedophile priests, and these women came out second best.

Oh, Ye Bishops!

You censure nuns who have dedicated their lives to your god.

You do so because they choose to spend their efforts to help the poor, the disenfranchised, instead of joining your marches for anti-contraception.

Oh, Ye Bishops!

For shame! You speak of the "evil" of killing fetuses; the "evil" of preventing pregnancies; the "evil" of protecting against AIDS by using a condom.

Oh, Ye Bishops!

You tell women "leave it to god" as to whether she becomes pregnant.

You tell her after she's been raped that "god has a plan for that baby."

You threaten an eternal hell if she does not agree.

Oh, Ye Bishops!

You stand there, garbed in purple and lace and gold thread, flaunting your "kissing ring."

You wield your crozier as a cudgel to "shepherd" the flock.

You wear your miter as a crown on your head as if you were kings.

Oh, Ye Bishops!

We are Americans, living in a country whose founding fathers foresaw such situations;

Who knew by bitter experience the poisonous, incestuous relationship of church and state.

They chose a secular government to protect your "flocks" from persecution and to protect us from you.

Oh, Ye Bishops!

Go preach that women have no right to protect themselves;

Forbid them any control even over their own bodies.

But do not force your inane, insane views on the rest of us.

(By the way, 98% of catholic women do use birth control—but don't worry—they'll burn in hell, while you strum your harps!)

Oh, Ye Bishops!

You rant and rave about "freedom of religion"; yet press your views on the rest of us

Go practice your religion in your churches and cathedrals rampant with gold, silver and precious gems.

(Continued from page 8)

Oh, Ye Bishops!

You tell your poor and elderly to contribute their last pennies to raise more cathedrals—
Ad majorem dei gloriam.

You tell them to give to "Peter's Pence" so that the Vatican can become even more rich and powerful.

Maybe even have a third collection for yourselves—humble servants of the church—to protect you from the fiendish prosecutors who dare to value a child's right to his own body over the "holy" desires of priests.

Oh, Ye Bishops!

You fume and foam at the mouth at those who dare to reject your teachings.

Don't you just hate it that you can't burn us at the stake?

Someday, even you will have to accede to human needs.

Even you will accord all the rights due a human being.

You had to apologize to Galileo—will you apologize to us?

Oh, Ye Bishops!

Your precious Jesus spoke of you!

He called you hypocrites and a brood of vipers!

So--- hiss away! We no longer listen!

Signed,

The Women and Children of Earth



(Stark(e) Contrasts , cont'd from pg 7)

I read an article about it in the New York Times and posted it on my Facebook page. Later, I saw that one of my cousins, a very religious woman whom I've not seen in nearly 40 years, commented negatively, asserting that the U.S. is a Christian nation and that our laws were based on "the bible" (never mind which particular bible) and engaged in an argument with a friend from JAM who pointed out the historical flaws in her argument. Unlike the former JAM member I mentioned in

my opening paragraph, I haven't felt a great need to hide my atheism from my religious friends, family or co-workers, although I don't go out of my way to advertise it either. Among several, religion, along with politics, remain taboo topics if unpleasantness is to be avoided. On the other hand, I feel secure enough in my own job as a supervisor at the Duval County courthouse that I don't fear repercussions if photos of my participation in support of the atheist monument at that other courthouse were to be seen by my superi-

ors in upper management.

Of course, it would be much better if there was no religious monument in any of our public spaces and thus no need to respond by putting up our own monument. And admitting the reality that superstitious beliefs will likely long persist, I still like to imagine that at least in the near future no atheist will feel it necessary to hide their disbelief, will not fear alienating family or potential clients. I may be a dreamer, but as John Lennon put it, "I'm not the only one."



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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 2013 Board Members

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E-mail Secretary	Carrie Renwick	268-8826

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Membership	Judy Hankins	724-8188
Publicity	Carrie Renwick	268-8826
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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.
 P.O. Box 550591, Jacksonville, FL 32255-0591 • (904) 419-8826
 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.) |
| <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

Monday	July 15	FCFS Monthly Meeting, Jacksonville - 6:30 p.m.
Tuesday	July 23	FCFS Monthly Social at Olive Garden, Jacksonville - 6:00 p.m.
Sunday	July 28	FCFS Secular Sunday in the Park, Jacksonville - 10:00 a.m.
Sunday	August 4	Humanist Book Discussion Group - Jacksonville - 2:00 p.m.
Monday	August 12	JAM Meetup at European Street Café in San Marco - 6:30 p.m.
Monday	August 12	Humanist Book Discussion Group, St. Augustine - 7:00 p.m.
Saturday	August 17	FCFS Deadline to submit articles for August 2013 <i>FreeThinker</i>
Monday	August 19	FCFS Monthly Meeting, Jacksonville - 6:30 p.m.

* See <http://www.meetup.com/North-Florida-Atheists> for more details

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.

NPR Corporate Sponsorship Fund - Success!!

We are pleased to report that as of Sunday, July 7, 2013, we have raised \$6,064 toward our goal of \$6,300. We, therefore, declare the 2013 fund drive a success! THANK YOU to all contributors!

Meet Our July Speaker: Teresa MacBain

Teresa holds the distinction of being the first female graduate of The Clergy Project, a private, invitation-only “safe house” community of current and former ministers who no longer hold the supernatural beliefs of their religious traditions. Teresa has been featured by CNN, NPR's “All Things Considered,” “Talk of the Nation,” *USA Today*, “The O'Reilly Factor,” the *Huffington Post*, and many other TV and print outlets. She was recently awarded the 2012 “Atheist of the Year Award” at the 50th Anniversary American Atheists Convention for her work within the freethought community and the Clergy Project.



As a former minister, Teresa brings a broad understanding of the religious lifestyle, and its effects on personal well-being, to the non-theist movement. She's a dynamic and entertaining public speaker with a heartfelt compassion for those struggling to completely free themselves from their religion. Teresa was formerly the Public Relations Director for American Atheists and is currently the Executive Director for the Humanists of Florida Association.

