

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>

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The First Coast

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Newsletter of the First Coast Freethought Society

August 2013

Volume 12, Issue 8

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Earl Coggins

A recent presentation given to our society on the topic of environmental ethics got me to thinking (again). It got me to thinking about the overwhelming number of concerns involved in any rational discussion regarding the subject. There are a lot of terms

(labels) embedded in environmental ethics needing a high level of interpretation and analysis, the most important being anthropocentrism, biocentrism, sustainability, biosphere, biodiversity, natural environment, balance-of-nature, Gaia

principle, ecology, pollution, evolution, invasive species, over-population, carrying-capacity, moral status, intrinsic value, and environmental degradation.



During my formative years as a

teenager and young adult, I embraced the hippie culture of the late 60s. I became a teenager in 1969. It didn't take much longer for me to adopt a flower-powered notion that we, i.e., everything alive on the planet, are all

"I think [religion] is presumptuous and I think it is silly, because it makes you believe that you are less than what you can be. As long as you can blame everything on some unseen deity, you don't ever have to be responsible for your own behavior."

—Harlan Ellison

"Anthropocentrism...is the greatest form of arrogance and bigotry ever practiced by people who have adopted it as part of their worldview."

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August 2013 Meeting

Richard T. Hull, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus, Dept. of Philosophy at SUNY Buffalo; Author, Editor, Bioethicist, Humanist

"How Atheists, Freethinkers, and Humanists Deal with Death and Religious Consolations"

Monday, August 19, 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:

- September 1, 2013 - *The Good Atheist*, by Dan Barker
- October 6, 2013 - *Crooked Timber of Humanity*, by Isaiah Berlin



Link to Book Review: <http://ffrf.org/publications>

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

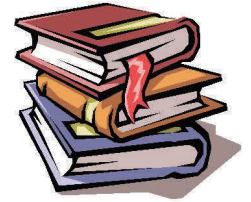
Humanist Book Discussion Group - St. Augustine

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:

- September 16, 2013 - *The Age of Reason*, by Thomas Paine
- October 14, 2013 - *Religion in the Making*, by Alfred North Whitehead



Link to Book Review: <http://www.tassos-oak.com/extras/Paine.html>

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.

September Meeting Features DAN BARKER!

Mark your calendars and plan to attend the September 9, 2013, special meeting of the First Coast Freethought Society. (Note, our Dan Barker meeting will be the second Monday in September.)

Dan Barker is one of America's most prominent activist atheists today. Dan was an evangelical Christian preacher and musician for 19 years before becoming a secular humanist and atheist. He is currently co-director of the Freedom from Religion Foundation based in Madison, Wisconsin. This organization is one of the largest and best known groups devoted to the interests of freethinkers and the separation of church and state in our country.

Dan has written *Losing Faith in Faith: From Preacher to Atheist*, *Godless: How an Evangelical Preacher Became One of America's Leading Atheists*, and *The Good Atheist: Living a Purpose-Filled Life Without God*, among others. He has also given speeches and participated in debates all over the United States and abroad.

Thanks to coordinator Gary Whittenberger of Tallahassee, the FCFS is able to participate, with several freethought groups in Tallahassee, in hosting Dan in his "North Florida Tour." Thank you, Gary!

To learn more about Dan and the Freedom from Religion Foundation, visit, <http://ffrf.org>.



(President's Message , cont'd from pg 1)

equals, and it should be obvious to anyone that we have a moral and ethical duty to respect and care for every living thing on the planet. My biocentrism, the idea that a worldview regarding environmental ethics should be life centered, not human centered, had taken hold of me at a very early age. It is a conflicted situation for me, given the fact that I eat fish and other sea creature flesh, kill mosquitoes and pesky garden insects, pull weeds from my gardens, all while simultaneously fostering a biocentric worldview towards life. It's a work in progress.

I hate to say it, but the first time I heard the word humanism, I scratched my head. The label humanism had a very human centered, i.e., anthropocentric, sound to it. Delving further into humanism convinced me otherwise, but my first encounter with the label was perplexing.

I remember the first time I heard the Hippocratic Oath. One portion of the oath instructs medical practitioners

“...to abstain from doing harm.” I scratched my head for a second time. The oath, I thought, should be applied everywhere, not just to the field of medicine. Actually, in my humble opinion, the people of earth should all live by the creed *Primum non nocere* — first, do no harm.

Anthropocentrism is a human-centered approach and attitude towards plants, animals, soil, water, and air, i.e



From “Pogo” by Walt Kelly, 1971

the natural environment. It is the root-cause of much pollution and environmental degradation and disaster. Anthropocentrism, in my humble opinion, is the greatest form of arrogance and bigotry ever practiced by people who have adopted it as part of their worldview. It is a worldview detrimental to humanity. It is a worldview detrimental to all life.

The anthropocentric view of nature is a worldview of environmental slavery where serving human interests is the single most important role of all of nature. Plants, animals, soil, air, and water are all subservient to human beings.

Combating an anthropocentric view of nature requires a self-examination of our place in nature. Where do humans fit into nature? Are

we superior or equal to plants and animals? Do plants deserve an undisturbed place in nature? Is there intrinsic value in nature and if so, would it give nature moral status? Can non-human animals have feelings? Do they feel pain and other sensations? If they do have feelings, would they deserve some type of rights, respect, or ethical consideration?

We, i.e., plants, animals, and humans, are all competing for food, water, land, and shelter. Should humans take everything, ignoring the needs of other life forms, simply because we can?

How can we know if there is intrinsic value in the non-human portion of the natural world? One answer comes

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from Richard Routley. If you Google his name, it will be re-directed to Richard Sylvan. Routley was a 20th century philosopher, logician, and environmentalist. In 1983 he married Louise Sylvan and took her last name because it meant “of the forest.” He took her last name because he thought it would reflect deep commitment to environmentalism and his love of the forest. I bring up Routley because his answer to the above question is an intriguing thought experiment. It goes like this:

Suppose you are the last human alive after a global catastrophe — it makes no difference

whether the catastrophe is a natural disaster or is the result of human interference with nature gone horribly wrong. You are the lone human survivor. You have the power to destroy all that remains of nature; i.e., every plant, animal, mold, mildew, microbe, as well as the air, soil, and water. You have the power to obliterate nature so that life will never reform on earth ever again or at least for a very, very, long time. You are aware that no other person would ever be affected by your decision to destroy nature because everyone is

gone and humankind will cease to exist as soon as you die.

Routley argued that no sane person would choose to destroy nature, thus giving it intrinsic value. Having said that, when humans destroy the only usable habitat of a plant species or hunt and kill another animal species to the



Paddling a boat on a river of trash in Manila.

brink of extinction, then cease the killing and destruction at the 11th hour to set up an “endangered species” alert, how is that the behavior of a sane species?

Placing intrinsic value on plants, non-human animals, soil, air, and water opens up a Pandora’s box full of dilemmas, because now we have to define the parameters of nature’s intrinsic value. Is it the smell of a flower or the flower itself? Will the rights and value of a domestic cat or dog be greater than those of an earth worm? A bee? A snake? Does a forest have more value

than a desert? Are humans more important than any other life form on the earth? Who will make the decisions? Would religious doctrine play a role in defining intrinsic value in nature? How will violations of plant and animals rights be addressed?

We (humans) set aside property for local, state, and national parks with the idea that preserving a property’s natural (undeveloped) essence is an important and necessary accomplishment. Yet the idea that places in nature deserve moral status and intrinsic value seems obscure to many people. Add to this conversation the fact that these

same people have and do refer to some pieces of property as sacred ground and you have in my humble opinion a serious conflict.

The placement or lack of placement of intrinsic value on non-human life is unfortunately not the biggest problem to be analyzed in the field of environmental ethics. The intrinsic value of humans will soon be a subject of interest, given the staggering rate of human population growth and its effects. The breakdown and non-sustainability of our massive population is

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no longer a question of “if” it could happen. It is now a question of “when” it will happen.

Overpopulation was not discussed very thoroughly at a recent FCFS meeting dedicated to the discussion of environmental ethics. I believe it to be the root cause of much of the environmental degradation plaguing nature. If the human population were half what it is today, would humanity need the number of power plants we have today? Factories? Malls? Infrastructure? Waste treatment facilities? Nuclear anything?

Sustainability is an environment’s capacity to endure demands for its resources put upon it by its inhabitants. By environment I mean the physical as well as the social aspects of an ecosystem. Capacity is an important word in the sustainability conversation — especially carrying capacity. Carrying capacity usually refers to limitations on the indefinite sustainability of a specific biological species in a specific environment. In a nutshell, this means there is a threshold where the population of a

species can outgrow an environment’s available resources, which brings us to the earth’s ability to indefinitely sustain the human species.

Can the earth support as many humans as we can throw at, or is there a human carrying capacity in nature

natures the dependence humans have with other species and with the non-living portion of nature.

The interdependence of life on earth is known as a balance of nature. Sustainability is a balancing act maintained by an awareness of the needs of all living

things, not just humans. There are many earth scientists pointing this out strongly by reminding us of the potential benefits the rain forests of the earth hold with many yet undiscovered plant species that will be instrumental in curing debilitating diseases. If we

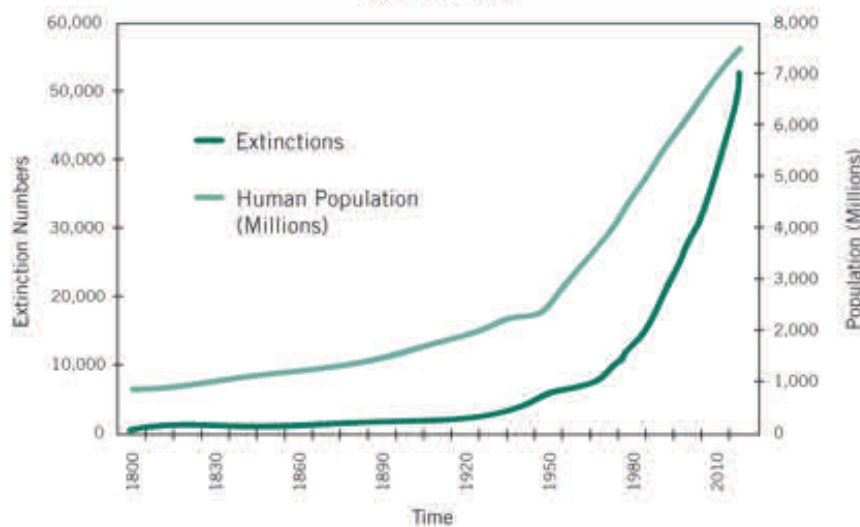
destroy the rain forests, we destroy opportunities for discovery. It sounds anthropocentric at first glance, until you realize that saving the rainforests saves a lot of insect, animal, and plant life that can live in no other environment.

The relationship, or interdependence existing between all living and non-living things has many names. The one I remember from my

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Species Extinction and Human Population

Graph source: USGS



with a threshold that we exceed only at our peril? We already know humans are affecting the planet in adverse ways. Have we exceeded the number of humans the earth can indefinitely sustain? Some say we have exceeded human carrying capacity by several billion people. The argument against such a contention often relies on the fact that the earth still has plenty of unoccupied space available for many more (billions of) humans. This argument ig-

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early adult life is the Gaia Hypothesis. The brain child of James Lovelock, the Gaia Hypothesis contends that organisms co-evolve with their environment and influence the abiotic environment, i.e., light, soil, water, temperature, radiation, and atmospheric gases. The hypothesis describes the earth as a self-regulating, complex system, but also a planetary being — Gaia. All life forms on earth are a single component of Gaia.

Another label with a similar meaning to Gaia is ecosystem. Eduard Suess, Professor of geology at the University of Vienna in the early and mid-19th century, coined the term in his book, *The Face of the Earth*. He called an ecosystem “the place on earth’s surface where life dwells.” Suess is considered one of the early practitioners of ecology, and the Suess crater on the earth’s moon is named after him.

Ecology is the scientific study of interactions between organisms and their environments. Habitat destruction is a primary concern in ecology

and sustainability arguments. One way in which habitats are destroyed is through the introduction of invasive species. An invasive species is a species that adversely affects its habitat ecologically, environmentally, or economically, whether it is an invaded or a native habitat.

The primary criteria used to identify an invasive species are: high dispersal ability, fast growth, rapid reproduction, ability to survive off of a wide variety of food types, tolerance of a wide range of environmental conditions, phenotypic plasticity, and prior successful invasions.

There are many examples of invasive species. Japanese Kudzu vine has taken over habitats in the southeast regions of the United States. The invasion of the brown tree snake in Guam devastated its native bird population.

Humans originated on one continent and spread to every other continent (high dispersal ability, ability to live off of a wide range of food types, and fast growth); populated or explored practically every region of every continent (rapid

reproduction, tolerance of a wide range of environmental conditions); adapted to specific environments (phenotypic plasticity); and survived plagues and natural disasters (prior successful invasions). Is it a mere coincidence or evidence of an invasive species?

Invasive species take over a habitat, deplete resources, and often cause the extinction of indigenous species. Because of their high dispersal ability, fast growth, and resource depletion, invasive species tilt the balance of nature and ultimately create an environment no longer suitable as a habitat.

Humans have greatly affected the ecology and environmental quality of the earth’s land, air, and water, as well as the lives of many of the life forms populating our planet in a manner synonymous with that of an invasive species. That (very) old edict (you know where it came from) mandating that humans be fruitful and multiply hasn’t been a very good friend to environmental sustainability. And there’s the rub.



Monthly Social

Where: OLIVE GARDEN on Philips Highway, across from the Avenues Mall.
When: Tuesday August 27, 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!

The Blue Dress

Caroline Peppiatt

You don't know what communion is?" Peggy shrieked in disbelief.

I hung my head. In the six months I'd lived in this tiny Georgia town I had mastered a perfect Southern drawl. My look was completely native. But I was still asking too many dumb refugee questions. "It's what you do in second grade," Peggy explained. "You go for Bible study with Brother Wilson and your mommy buys you a new dress to wear to your first communion which is supposed to be wine but it's only grape juice."

None of it made sense except for the new dress. I got that part, loud and clear. I was the youngest in my family and had made do with hand-me-downs all my life. I would study ten Bibles for a brand new dress, all my own, never worn by anybody before, ever. I could see the dress already. It was blue. It had ruffles at the hem and at the neck and even at the sleeves. There was a blue ribbon to tie in a bow at my waist. The dress would be starched and crisp and have that new dress smell that lets everyone know, right off, it was bought in a store, just for me. So, when school let out that day I followed Peggy and five other girls from our class down the street to the First Methodist Church.

Brother Wilson was small for a grown-up and he had a pointy face that reminded me of the mice my brother trapped under the house and fed to his pet snakes. As he handed a book out to each of us—BIBLE STORIES FOR CHRISTIAN GIRLS—he said, "This is the most important book that you will ever read." He had us write our names on the inside front cover. We settled down on our little Sunday School chairs, arranged in a circle,

"Over the next few months I asked more and more questions in Bible study class. At first Brother Wilson encouraged me, but soon my questions began to annoy him."

and Brother Wilson began reading to us. It was about how God created everything out of nothing because that's how powerful he was. When Brother Wilson finished he asked if there were any questions. There was a long silence. Brother Wilson's eyes darted about, then landed on me. "Caroline? Any questions?" I could feel my face blazing with embarrassment. What if I asked another dumb refugee question? I'd already asked one that day. Brother Wilson's eyes bored into mine. There was no escape.

"If God could make everything out of nothing," I stammered, "how come he had to make Eve out of Adam's rib?"

"Excellent!" Brother Wilson said. He began circling our group, expounding about how women were nothing but little pieces of men and had to be beholden. That didn't really answer my question, but I kept mum, relieved I hadn't made a fool of myself.

That night I showed my parents the Bible Stories and told them about communion and the grape juice and, of course, the dress.

"And is Brother Wilson going to give you the dress, too?" my mother said.

"No, mommies are supposed to do that part."

"I see," she said.

"Go brush your teeth," my father said.

Over the next few months I asked more and more questions in Bible study class. At first Brother Wilson encouraged me, but soon my questions began to annoy him. The more annoyed he became, the more unsatisfied I was with his bombastic answers, the more questions I asked. I developed an intense dislike of Brother Wilson. The feeling was clearly mutual.

If it weren't for the dress, I would have dropped out of the program fairly early on. I got

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(Blue Dress, Continued from page 7)
no encouragement at home to stay in the course, though my parents didn't discourage me, either. Both my brother and sister had developed severe cases of asthma and needed to be rushed to the town clinic on a regular basis. I knew my parents didn't have time to worry about the war simmering between Brother Wilson and me. In the meantime, I drew pictures of my blue communion dress and tacked them up on the wall beside my bed. Sometimes the hem was above my knees, sometimes almost down to my ankles. Some versions had lots of lace and others had satin trim while others had both lace and satin trim. Eventually, I filled the entire wall with drawings of blue dresses.

As Communion Sunday drew near, I began to fear that my mother had forgotten about the dress. My brother's last asthma attack was so bad that they had to rush him all the way to Augusta Hospital. My parents spent every spare moment staying with him. On the Saturday morning before Communion Sunday my mother woke me early, saying, "Let's go visit your brother and before we come home we'll stop at the department store and get you your dress."

In Augusta my brother was sitting up and out of the oxygen tent. Clearly, he'd be coming home soon. My mother was humming as we left the hospital. I'd never seen so many dresses as they had in

the department store. I ran up to the rack that the saleslady pointed to and the perfect bright blue dress jumped right out at me. "That's the one!" I cried, snatching the dress from it's hanger.

"Don't you want to shop around?" my mother said.

"No!" I said, hugging the dress tightly.



Too blue for Church?

"All right, then. Let's go see if it fits."

"No! It'll fit! It'll fit!" The color was so perfect that it just had to fit. There was nothing on any of the racks nearly half as bright and supremely ruffled. I was not giving it up for anything. I clutched the dress with all my might until my mother bought it for me.

The communion girls were supposed to meet early in the Sunday School room. I timed it to come a bit late so that I could make a grand entrance

in my spectacular dress.

"Blue?" Brother Wilson screeched. "You can't wear blue to your First Holy Communion!"

I saw that all the other girls were in white. "How come?" I said.

"Because you are supposed to be PURE! VIRGINAL! WHITE! Everybody knows that! Haven't you heard a word I've been teaching you all these months. First Holy Communion is all about virginity!"

Being only eight, I didn't really know anything about virginity, or care. "But what's wrong with blue?" I demanded weakly, struggling to hold back tears.

"Purity!" he shouted. "Purity can only be white!" Just then the piano in the sanctuary began to play, signaling the start of the service. Brother Wilson rolled his eyes, muttering, "Foreigners! Lord give me strength."

The other girls lined up, tallest to smallest, as we'd rehearsed. I scurried to get into my place behind Peggy. Brother Wilson grabbed my arm and shoved me into last place behind tiny, stupid little Betty Ruth Cox. We marched into the sanctuary and knelt at the altar. Brother Wilson moved a potted plant over with his foot to hide me from the congregation. Brother Wilson came down the line, asking each girl, "Do you take Jesus Christ as your lord and sav-

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New Meetup Group - "Secular Saint Augustine"

Founded by Imelda Foley on February 12, 2013, "Secular Saint Augustine" is a community for all those who see reason, not revelation, as the path to knowledge: atheists, secular humanists, and other nontheists. We get together monthly for rational and challenging discussions on any number of topics, including science, ethics, and issues of current importance.

Our next gathering will be **Friday, August 30, at 7:00 p.m. in Applebee's meeting room, 225 SR 13, just east of US 1.**

To join the Secular Saint Augustine Meetup Group and to learn more about the group, visit: <http://www.meetup.com/Secular-Saint-Augustine/>

If you are reading the snail-mail version of this newsletter, you are still invited to attend the meeting on August 30! As the group grows, in addition to discussions, we will plan other social and community service activities, as well.



(Blue Dress, Continued from page 8)
ior?" My humiliation turned to rage. When at last he asked me if I took Jesus Christ as my lord and savior, I was boiling over.

"No," I said.

Brother Wilson's face turned bluer than my dress. He shuffled from one foot to

the other. Finally, he leaned down and hissed into my face, "The answer is yessss!"

"No," I repeated, louder.

Speechless, Brother Wilson kept his blue face right down in mine. I kept my eyes on my shoes. The whole world froze in place. I felt a hand on my shoulder. I turned around. It

was my father, smiling as I hadn't seen him smile since we'd moved to this town. He took my hand and walked me up the aisle and out the door.

"I am so proud of you my little one," he said. "So very, very proud!"



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.

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 P.O. Box 550591
 Jacksonville, FL 32255-0591
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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!

FCFS 2013 Board Members

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At Large	Richard Keene	386-1121

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E-mail Secretary	Carrie Renwick	268-8826

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Membership	Judy Hankins	724-8188
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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

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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.) |
| <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	August 19	FCFS Monthly Meeting, Jacksonville - 6:30 p.m.
Sunday	August 25	FCFS Secular Sunday in the Park, Jacksonville - 10:00 a.m.
Tuesday	August 27	FCFS Monthly Social at Olive Garden, Jacksonville - 6:00 p.m.
Friday	August 30	Secular St. Augustine Meetup at Applebee's - 7:00 p.m.*
Sunday	Sept. 1	Humanist Book Discussion Group - Jacksonville - 2:00 p.m.
Monday	Sept. 9	FCFS Monthly Meeting (DAN BARKER) Jacksonville - 6:30 p.m.
Monday	Sept. 16	Humanist Book Discussion Group - St. Augustine - 7:00 p.m.
Saturday	Sept. 21	FCFS Deadline to submit articles for October 2013 <i>FreeThinker</i>
Sunday	Sept. 22	JAM Meetup (check website for location) - 1:30 p.m.**

* See <http://www.meetup.com/Secular-Saint-Augustine/> to sign up

** See <http://www.meetup.com/jaxatheists/> for 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.

Meet Our August Speaker: Richard T. Hull, Ph.D.

During his distinguished career, Professor Hull served 30 years in the Philosophy Department at the State University in Buffalo, New York; was Executive Director of the Texas Council for the Humanities; and founded and was President of the Center for Inquiry-Tallahassee. Currently, he is acting President of the Humanists of Florida Association. His credits include 22 books (including multiple editions of *Ethical Issues of the New Reproductive Technologies*), two journal symposia, seven pamphlets, 133 articles and blog entries, 33 chapters in books, introductions to eight books, and 25 book reviews. He directed 14 MA theses and 15 doctoral dissertations. He was honored with two Festschriften upon his retirement and has delivered four endowed lectures. He received the SUNY Chancellors Award for Excellence in Teaching, 1994. He currently lives in Tallahassee with his wife of 51 years, Elaine M. Hull, professor of psychology and neuroscience at Florida State University.

