

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 Freethought Society, Inc.

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FreeThinker



Newsletter of the First Coast Freethought Society

October 2013

Volume 12, Issue 10

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"I don't know if God exists, but it would be better for His reputation if He didn't."

—Jules Renard

Earl Coggins

I have been thinking about thinking (yet) again. Does the word freethinker have any baggage attached to it? Connotations perhaps? Of course. Freethinkers think differently compared with the status quo, or so it goes. Really? Are freethinkers somehow outside looking in to the way in which humans think and more importantly, how humans make decisions, especially moral decisions? I'm reading a new

"...[A]nother hypothesis: cognitive processes (thinking rationally) are prone to utilitarian, or consequentialist ethics, while emotional processes (gut reactions) are prone to deontology, or rule-based judgment."

book by Massimo Pigliucci, and I highly recommend it.

In *Answers for Aristotle: How Science and Philosophy Can Lead Us to a More Meaningful Life*, Massimo Pigliucci offers readers ex-

planations for the way in which most of us make moral decisions.

In part one of the book, Pigliucci dusts off the old trolley car dilemma. For

those of you who haven't heard it, it

(Continued on page 3)



October 2013 Meeting

Joque H. Soskis, retired UNF faculty member, retired Florida Bar member, teacher & author

"The Jobs Are Coming Back, But They're Just Visiting: The Welfare State, the Singularity, and the Automation of Production"

Monday, October 21, 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:

- November 3, 2013 - *The Wisdom of Psychopaths: What Saints, Spies, and Serial Killers Can Teach Us About Success*, by Kevin Dutton
- December 1, 2013 - *American Fascists*, by Christopher Hedges



Link to Book Review: <http://www.amazon.com/Wisdom-Psychopaths-Saints-Killers-Success/dp/0374291357>

In this engrossing journey into the lives of psychopaths and their infamously crafty behaviors, the renowned psychologist Kevin Dutton reveals that there is a scale of “madness” along which we all sit. Incorporating the latest advances in brain scanning and neuroscience, Dutton demonstrates that the brilliant neurosurgeon who lacks empathy has more in common with a Ted Bundy who kills for pleasure than we may wish to admit, and that a mugger in a dimly lit parking lot may well, in fact, have the same nerveless poise as a titan of industry.

Dutton argues that there are indeed “functional psychopaths” among us—different from their murderous counterparts—who use their detached, unflinching, and charismatic personalities to succeed in mainstream society, and that shockingly, in some fields, the more “psychopathic” people are, the more likely they are to succeed. (Excerpt from book description on Amazon.com)

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

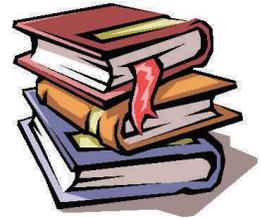
Humanist Book Discussion Group - St. Augustine

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:

- November 11, 2013 - *Touching a Nerve: The Self as Brain*, by Patricia H. Churchland
- December 9, 2013 - *The Bonobo and the Atheist: In Search of Humanism Among the Primates*, by Frans de Waal (2013)



Link to Book Review: <http://www.amazon.com/Touching-Nerve-The-Self-Brain/dp/0393058328>

What happens when we accept that everything we feel and think stems not from an immaterial spirit but from electrical and chemical activity in our brains? In this thought-provoking narrative—drawn from professional expertise as well as personal life experiences—trailblazing neurophilosopher Patricia S. Churchland grounds the philosophy of mind in the essential ingredients of biology. She reflects with humor on how she came to harmonize science and philosophy, the mind and the brain, abstract ideals and daily life. (Excerpt from book description on Amazon.com)

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

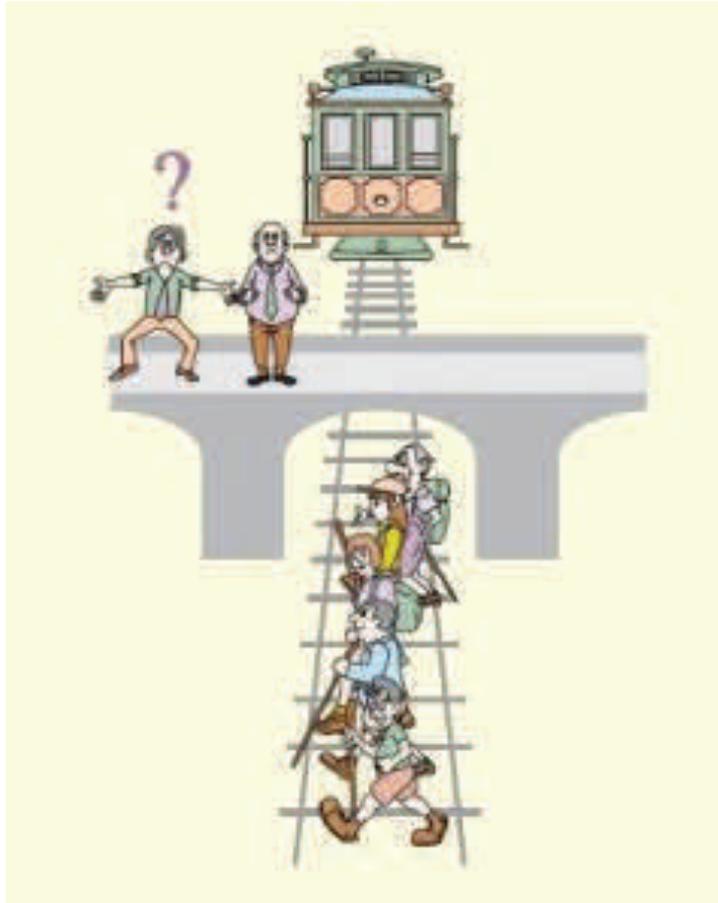
NOTE TO ALL!: Books may be found in the library, purchased from local book stores or online. The First Coast Freethought Society will receive a small remuneration from your purchase (at no additional cost to you) if you first go to <http://firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org> and then click the link to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

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

goes like this: Researchers pose an ethical quandary to a group of research subjects. You are piloting a trolley car — one of those funny looking vehicles roaming the streets of San Francisco that looks as if it is the caboose of a train — without the train. Everything is fine until a family of five steps into the path of your trolley. Of course in this thought experiment, neither the horn nor the brakes are working and you have 2 seconds to make a decision before you plow into these people, almost assuredly killing them all. With 2 seconds before impact, you have only enough time to pull a lever and switch the trolley to another track which will result in a collision and the subsequent death of a lone pedestrian, or you simply stay on course and wipe out an entire family — mom, dad, three kids and the family dog. What do you do? When presented with this dilemma, most people say (reluctantly) that they would pull the lever and switch the trolley to the other track, killing the lone pedestrian. The logic behind the decision is unanimous across most social, cultural, and economic backgrounds: 'tis better to kill one

person as opposed to five, especially an entire family of five.

Philosophers classify the logic behind the choice to pull the lever and switch the trol-



Another Trolley Car Dilemma: “To push or not to push, to take arms and let one be sacrificed to perchance save five but thereby become a murderer, or to be idle and let them be crushed by the wheels of fate and a runaway trolley, aye, there’s the rub” (with apologies to W. Shakespeare)

ley to the other track as utilitarian, or consequentialist moral decision making.

It seems cut and dry until you hear the next step in the experiment — and you thought it was over.

The next step blew a lot of

researchers’ minds. It involved changing the way in which the lone pedestrian is sacrificed in order to save the family of five. The next stage has you as an observer. You are walking across a bridge overlook-

ing — you guessed it — a trolley car rolling along on its track. As you glance over at the passing trolley, you notice it is headed straight for that same family of five and their dog. You can save them if you grab a large male pedestrian standing on the bridge nearby and throw him off the bridge and into the path of the trolley. Your weight is not sufficient enough to stop the trolley, so forget about valiantly hurtling yourself off the bridge and sacrificing your own life to save the family of five. You can also forget about what appears to be the impossible task of picking up someone who weighs

three times as much as you. Your adrenaline will make it happen. The point here is that you have to be personally responsible for the death of the lone pedestrian in order to save the family of five. You have to throw the

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(Pres. Msg, Continued from page 3)
pedestrian off the bridge into the path of the trolley, or do nothing and watch as the entire family is killed.

It sounds like a no-brainer. After all, in the first experiment, you sacrificed (killed) one person in order to save five people. What's the problem? Well, as it turns out, there is a problem. The research subjects would have no part of it. If it meant getting personally involved and pushing or throwing someone to their death, most people said no, even though in the first experiment they were more than willing to pull the lever and switch the trolley onto a track that would kill a lone pedestrian. The interesting turn of events boils down to the research subjects being personally or impersonally involved, and thus able to switch from one moral modality to another — utilitarianism, or consequentialism, to deontology, or rule-based ethics. The results of the second scenario of the trolley car dilemma are a colossal contradiction to the thinking and decision making process of how the research subjects handled the first scenario, something many researchers had not anticipated.

If you think that's it, you're wrong. It's not over un-

til the brain-damaged lady sings. In yet a third version of the trolley car dilemma, researchers performed a neurobiological experiment to throw a real proverbial wrench into the mix. They compared the results of the subjects used in the above two versions of the trolley car dilemma with the



Phineas Gage holding the spike that went through his skull, changing his disposition for the worse.

views of new subjects — subjects with brain damage to the ventromedial prefrontal cortex. The results were intriguing. In the first scenario where an impersonal lever was pulled to change the direction of the trolley car and kill one person instead of five people, both groups of research subjects, normal brain and brain damaged, chose pulling the lever. In the second scenario where it got per-

sonal, i.e. you had to grab someone and throw them into the path of the oncoming trolley car, twice as many people with damaged ventromedial prefrontal cortexes had no problem throwing the pedestrian into the path of the trolley. To them, it was a no-brainer (no pun intended) — sacrificing one human for five was the logical choice. The findings have given rise to an interesting hypothesis: the brain damaged research subjects had their emotional circuits immobilized.

It has given rise to yet another hypothesis: cognitive processes (thinking rationally) are prone to utilitarian, or consequentialist ethics, while emotional processes (gut reactions) are prone to deontology, or rule-based judgment—rules being the “laws of the land” or the 10 commandments, or perhaps the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights, or whatever default programming you were exposed to during your “programming” phase of life.

The book gives readers many interesting cases of brain function and its relationship to thought processes, along with many examples of subtle influences that get stacked on top of either a deontology or utilitarian ethical modality — how the air smells

(Continued on page 5)

(Pres. Msg, Continued from page 4)
at the moment you make an ethical decision, or how clean the room might be during that time period, and many others. Interesting stuff for those who believe humans have total free will.

Early compelling evidence that brain function can improve or diminish human ability to function rationally is presented in the extraordinary case of Phineas Gage, a railroad worker grossly injured while using explosives to “blow away” a section of land to create a cut-through where railroad tracks could be

laid down. Gage had a long steel spike shoot upwards through his head at or near his left eye and continue on through the front of his brain directly behind his forehead and exit out the top of his skull. He didn’t die, even though he lost a small portion of his brain. The loss of the damaged portion of his brain caused his behavior and personality to change in an aggressive manner, which was the beginning of a new way of thinking regarding thinking and behavior. I’ve left a lot out so you’ll have to read the book.

It brings to mind a third hypothesis: Are humans, depending upon which section of the brain happens to be functioning at peak performance at any given moment, no more than right or left wing, emotional or rational automatons? Should we be a little more sympathetic to irrational behavior, given the fact that our behavior might be a direct result of factors we can’t control? And if so, where’s the humanity in that scenario? Are we Philip K. Dick’s androids who dream of electric sheep?



***Amán Amán!* A Literary/Philosophical Memoir by Dr. Peter Joannides**

Fred W. Hill

Dr. Peter Joannides, a member of FCFS for many years now, has published a three volume work, *Amán Amán!*, described on Amazon.com as, “A fusion of literature, philosophy, memoir, and autobiography, spanning over half a century. If there is a hallmark of this work, it is that it is presented to the reader as one indivisible unit, in which all parts are internally related to all other parts. It is probably as unaspectual and unfragmented a work as has ever been written. In keeping with this spirit, there is no ‘Table of Contents.’ Each of 33 sections is simply preceded by a Roman numeral and nothing more. (However, the titles of the Prefaces remain and are the only titled

units in the work.) Owing to the length of time (approximately 32 years) it took for its execution, the work includes within itself time’s passage.



Peter Joannides

Thus, in addition to its being partly a literary effort, partly a philosophical excursion, partly a memoir, and partly an autobiography, it is also a kind of

diary.”

Peter taught for the Overseas Division of the University of Maryland in several countries in Asia, Africa and Europe, before accepting a position as a professor of philosophy at Jacksonville University from 1967 to 1985. You may contact Peter at petroulisi@gmail.com. The book may be ordered at http://www.amazon.com/Am%C3%A1n-Volume-1-Peter-Joannides/dp/0989253600/ref=pd_sim_sbs_b_1

The title, *Amán Amán!*, by the way, is a Greco-Turkish exclamation of feeling with no exact English translation and different meanings depending on context, but similar to cries of, “oh my” or “goodness gracious!”



No, You're Not Entitled to Your Opinion

Patrick Stokes

Every year, I try to do at least two things with my students at least once. First, I make a point of addressing them as “philosophers”—a bit cheesy, but hopefully it [encourages active learning](#).

Secondly, I say something like this: “I’m sure you’ve heard the expression ‘everyone is entitled to their opinion.’ Perhaps you’ve even said it yourself, maybe to head off an argument or bring one to a close. Well, as soon as you walk into this room, it’s no longer true. You are not entitled to your opinion. You are only entitled to what you can argue for.”

A bit harsh? Perhaps, but philosophy teachers owe it to our students to teach them how to construct and defend an argument – and to recognize when a belief has become indefensible.

The problem with “I’m entitled to my opinion” is that, all too often, it’s used to shelter beliefs that should have been abandoned. It becomes shorthand for “I can say or think whatever I like”—and by extension, continuing to argue is somehow disrespectful. And this attitude feeds, I suggest, into the false equivalence between experts and non-experts that is an increasingly pernicious feature of our public discourse.

Firstly, what’s an opinion?

Plato distinguished between opinion or common belief (doxa) and certain knowledge, and that’s still a workable distinction today: unlike “1+1=2” or “there are no square circles,” an opinion has a degree of subjectivity and uncertainty to it. But “opinion” ranges from tastes or preferences, through views about questions that concern most people such as prudence or politics, to views grounded in technical expertise, such as legal or scientific opinions.

“...[P]hilosophy teachers owe it to our students to teach them how to construct and defend an argument—and to recognize when a belief has become indefensible.”

You can’t really argue about the first kind of opinion. I’d be silly to insist that you’re wrong to think strawberry ice cream is better than chocolate. The problem is that sometimes we implicitly seem to take opinions of the second and even the third sort to be unarguable in the way questions of taste are. Perhaps that’s one reason (no doubt there are others) why enthusiastic amateurs think they’re entitled to disagree with climate scientists and immunologists and have their views “respected.”

Meryl Dorey is the leader

of the Australian Vaccination Network, which despite the name is vehemently anti-vaccine. Ms. Dorey has no medical qualifications, but [argues](#) that if Bob Brown is allowed to comment on nuclear power despite not being a scientist, she should be allowed to comment on vaccines. But no-one assumes Dr. Brown is an authority on the physics of nuclear fission; his job is to comment on the policy



responses to the science, not the science itself.

So what does it mean to be “entitled” to an opinion?

If “Everyone’s entitled to their opinion” just means no-one has the right to stop people thinking and saying whatever they want, then the statement is true, but fairly trivial. No one can stop you saying that vaccines cause autism, no matter how many times that claim has been disproven.

But if “entitled to an opinion” means “entitled to have your views treated as serious candidates for the truth” then it’s pretty clearly false. And this too is a distinction that tends to get blurred.

On Monday, the ABC’s Mediawatch program took WIN-TV Wollongong to task for

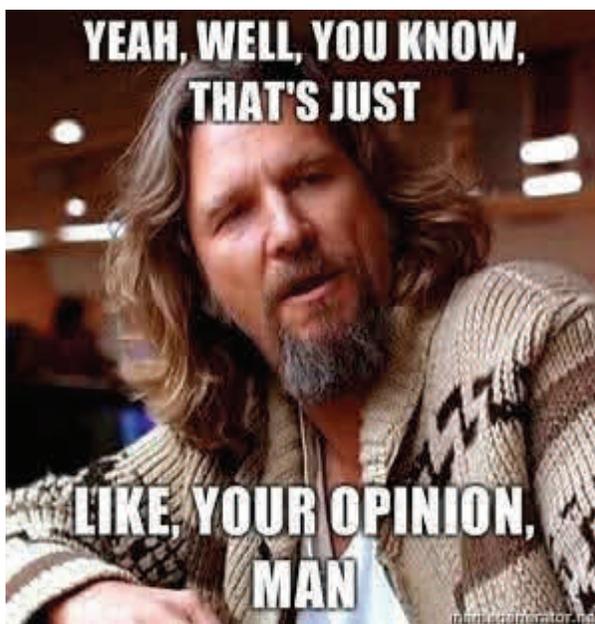
(Continued on page 7)

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running a story on a measles outbreak which included comment from – you guessed it – Meryl Dorey. In a response to a viewer complaint, WIN said that the story was “accurate, fair and balanced and presented the views of the medical practitioners and of the choice groups.” But this implies an equal right to be heard on a matter in which only one of the two parties has the relevant expertise. Again, if this was about policy responses to science, this would be reasonable. But the so-called “debate” here is about the science itself, and the “choice groups” simply don’t have a claim on air time if that’s where the disagreement is supposed to lie.

Mediawatch host Jonathan Holmes was considerably more

blunt: “there’s evidence, and there’s bulldust,” and it’s no part of a reporter’s job to give bulldust equal time with serious expertise.



Jeff Bridges as “The Dude” expresses his opinion in “The Great Lebowski”

The response from anti-vaccination voices was predictable. On the Mediawatch site,

Ms. Dorey accused the ABC of “openly calling for censorship of a scientific debate.” This response confuses not having your views taken seriously with not being allowed to hold or express those views at all – or to borrow a phrase from Andrew Brown, it “confuses losing an argument with losing the right to argue.” Again, two senses of “entitlement” to an opinion are being conflated here.

So, next time you hear someone declare they’re entitled to their opinion, ask them why they think that. Chances are, if nothing else, you’ll end up having a more enjoyable conversation that way.



—Courtesy of *The Conversation*, an online magazine. See

<https://theconversation.com/no-youre-not-entitled-to-your-opinion-9978>

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.

A Good Atheist

Joe Varon

It was a conversation at a local diner with some “Theist” friends who are very open-minded and inclusive. I had mentioned that I’m a member of an Atheist organization but only go to 15 percent or so of their monthly meetings. I blurted out, “I’m not even a good atheist!”

It made me think – just what is a “good” Atheist? Most of the times, I skip the meetings and other social events because I either have something else to do or because the topics don’t really connect with me. My convictions are very solid and I don’t think I need much input to reinforce my (dis)beliefs. I’ve contributed some writings (like this) to the FCFS newsletter; but they’re my random thoughts. I haven’t studied Atheism and I don’t write scholarly papers based on researching its philosophical principles or proponents. I may discuss the forbidden topic of religion with open-minded people whose beliefs are different from mine—but I don’t proselytize. I’m not

out there campaigning or recruiting for our point of view.

So, what makes a good Atheist? I pay my dues and drop a few bucks into the basket to help pay the UU’s for the use of their facility (I am, after all a UU, too). And, I’ll state clearly, but not arrogantly, that I am an Atheist in “mixed” company. I vote for the most liberal and inclusive candidates available.

“...Atheists are good people – people whose morality is not defined by absolute celestial rules, but by their own innate sense of humanity.”

It’s pretty clear what it means to be a “good” member of most religions—tithe, attend services regularly, obey dietary and behavioral rules and, above all, have faith in the teachings of that particular church and their leaders—clear goals and clear rewards (heaven, of course).

I’ve often considered that one of the negatives of Atheism is that it is, by definition, a negative belief system, gen-

erally based on the disbelief in a supreme being. I do realize that we do believe in a lot of things—gravity, science, love. But the core, the definition, of Atheism is “not believing” in any divinity or all the miracles and rules that are so embedded in most religions.

I do believe that, in general, Atheists are good people—people whose morality is not defined by absolute celestial rules, but by their own innate sense of humanity. So to answer my own question, to be a good Atheist is not something we have to prove with money or participation or conformity. It resides within us; it is our own comfort level with our own personal belief structure. I guess that makes me a “good” Atheist because I’m contented with what I believe.



Monthly Social

Where: OLIVE GARDEN on Philips Highway, across from the Avenues Mall.
When: **Tuesday October 22, 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!

In Memoriam: Margaret June Applen

Carrie Renwick

If you attended the regular monthly meetings of the First Coast Freethought Society during the years of 2006 and 2007, you will remember seeing June Applen's smiling face as she loyally set up the greeting table and staffed it without fail for the two years I served as president. She served on the Board as secretary in 2008 and 2009, and to my knowledge, she never missed a single meeting.

Margaret June Applen, 80, died Sunday morning, September 1, 2013, after a long bout with cancer. June, as she was known to friends and family, was born June 11, 1933 in Montreal, Canada, to parents Dorothy and Allan Palmer. In the 1950s June and her mother moved to Jacksonville. She spent some years in Colorado and

Nebraska, and during that period she became eligible for naturalization and took pride in her U.S. citizenship. Back in Jacksonville,



June 11, 1933 - September 1, 2013

she attained her MA degree in counseling and worked several years as a Mental Health counselor. She had

strong liberal leanings and opinions, combined with an active, up-to-date knowledge of world events and politics. She supported the Peace and Justice Coalition, the Religious Society of Friends in Jacksonville, and the First Coast Freethought Society.

Earlier this year she was interviewed by T-U writer, Mark Woods, and honored by a moving write-up of her history, of her acceptance of the disease, and her determination to experience life to the full in the time she had left. She is survived by her life partner, Alfred Geiger, her son John Abernethy Applen, her sister, Suzanne Hicken, her nieces Laura

Inman, Sally Galarneau, and JoAnn Forest, and many other relatives and friends.



Call for Nominations for 2014 FCFS Board!

Would you like to help shape the future of the First Coast Freethought Society, share your bright ideas, and keep us going strong? You may nominate yourself or someone else for a leadership position. If you nominate someone else, please provide in writing (e-mail is fine) the person's willingness and agreement to run. If interested, please contact Nominating Committee Chair Bobbie Nord at bobbienord@gmail.com or call 904-591-7636).



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 P.O. Box 550591
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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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E-mail Secretary	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.

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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	October 21	FCFS Monthly Meeting Jacksonville - 6:30 p.m.
Tuesday	October 22	FCFS Monthly Social at Olive Garden, Jacksonville - 6:00 p.m.
Sunday	October 27	FCFS Secular Sunday in the Park, Jacksonville - 10:00 a.m.
Friday	October 25	Secular St. Augustine Meetup at Applebee's - 7:00 p.m.*
Sunday	Nov. 3	Humanist Book Discussion Group - Jacksonville - 2:00 p.m.
Saturday	Nov. 9	North Florida Atheists Meetup at Orange Park Library - 5:30 p.m.
Sunday	Nov. 10	JAM Meetup at San Marco European Street Café - 1:30 p.m.**
Monday	Nov. 11	Humanist Book Discussion Group - St. Augustine - 7:00 p.m.
Saturday	Nov. 16	Deadline to submit articles for December 2013 <i>FreeThinker</i>
Monday	Nov. 18	FCFS Monthly Meeting, Jacksonville - 6:30 p.m.

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

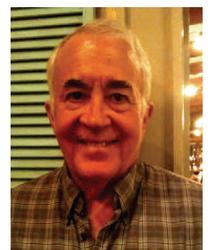
** See <http://www.meetup.com/jaxatheists/> for details

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 October Speaker: Joque Soskis

This month longtime FCFS member Joque Soskis returns from his annual sojourn abroad to discuss the approaching singularity in artificial intelligence. This singularity is producing a total revolution in the automation of production, the early stages of which are clearly discernible even now and must necessarily stand the conventional economic theories of supply and demand entirely on their heads. Depending upon the choices we make, beginning in the very near future, a world will emerge which will come to resemble either paradise or a post-apocalyptic nightmare the likes of which Hollywood has not been able to imagine.



Joque is an author, a past member and official of the Florida State University System, a retired professor and attorney, but still active freethinker and thought-provoking speaker. Be sure to join us for a stimulating lecture and discussion on the singularity and what it might mean for everyone. Lively Q&A sure to follow!



Attractive, high-quality FCFS T-SHIRTS now available! Get yours at our next meeting. (Suggested donation \$15 for one, \$25 for two.) Also, FCFS BUTTONS now available at \$2 each.