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February 2014

Volume 13, Issue 2

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This Month's Meeting

- What: February 2014 Meeting
- Who: Jim Strayer, retired biology educator, Darwin expert
- Title: **“Charles Darwin: His Life and His Voyage of the HMS *Beagle*”**
- When: Monday, February 17, 2014, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. (doors open at 6:00)

- Where: Buckman Bridge Unitarian Church, 8447 Manresa Ave., Jacksonville, FL 32244 (Driveway located on Collins Rd., 400 feet east of Roosevelt Blvd.)

Meetings Free and Open to the Public • Plenty of Free Parking

Meet the Speaker

Jim Strayer was born and raised in Adrian, Michigan. Strayer earned a Bachelor of Science Degree from Eastern Michigan University and a Master of Science degree from the University of Michigan. Since earning these degrees, he has attended Pratt University in New York to study chemistry, Wayne State University in Detroit to study ecology, and Michigan State University to study environmental problems. He has thirty-four years of teaching experience: twelve at the high school level and twenty-two at the community college level. He was given the "Outstanding Teacher Award" at Washtenaw Community College in 1985.



He and his wife, Bobbe, have made their home in Ormond Beach, Florida since 1988. He is past president of The Humanists of Northeast Florida. He was also the liaison for the National Center for Science Education, Inc. representing central Florida. He has several publications in science and Humanist journals.

Since his retirement, he has been a guest speaker for many Unitarian, Humanist, and Freethought groups, Daytona State College, as well as scientific and teaching organizations. He was presented the Florida Humanist Lecturer of the Year Award in 1993. He spoke on the steps of the Capitol in Washington D.C. at the Godless American Rally November 2, 2002. He has been a guest on many TV and radio shows, and on February 9, 2013, he spoke before an audience of 300 at Charles Darwin Day at the Tampa Bay Coalition of Reason. As part of his research on Charles Darwin, he and his wife visited Darwin's home, Down House, in Kent, England and the Darwin Museum in London.

Our New Look

Editorial Committee

We hope you enjoy the new look of the *First Coast FreeThinker!* We have converted from creating it in Publisher and distributing an Adobe version (a .PDF FILE), to creating and distributing an HTML version. Why? Because of readers' complaints about difficulty reading the Publisher version on the computer screen, with the articles continued on distant pages, and about the nuisance and expense of printing the newsletter at home.

The advantages to you, the reader? For online-recipients, the newsletter will be readable from within your

e-mail itself, or you can click a link to view it in your browser. The readability on your computer screen should be excellent. Each article will be contiguous, the font will be clear, and the index will contain links so you can quickly jump to any article in the issue.

For hard-copy recipients, readability will be excellent, with a clear font and contiguous articles. The formatting won't be as sophisticated (as pretty) as it was in Publisher. However, we feel this is a small price to pay in light of the benefits to readers and staff. Advantages to the newsletter staff include streamlined and increased flexibility of the layout process, ease of proofreading, and considerable time saved in production.

We welcome your feedback. Enjoy!

Monthly Social

- Where: OLIVE GARDEN on Philips Highway, across from the Avenues Mall.
- When: Tuesday February 25, 2014 at 6:00 p.m. Proceed directly to our room. Social hour at 6:00. Dinner at 7:00. We order from the menu.
- RSVP: CarrieRen@att.net (or 904-268-8826) by Tuesday morning, if you plan to attend!

President's Message

Earl Coggins

In a recent president's message, I referred to one of my favorite quotes by Thomas Henry Huxley: "*Follow your reason as far as it can carry you without other considerations. It is wrong for a man to say he is certain of the objective truth of a proposition unless he can produce evidence which logically justifies that certainty.*" It applies equally well to this month's message.

February is Charles Darwin's birth month, and the First Coast Freethought Society has for many years dedicated this month to focusing on Darwin and evolutionary theory.

Darwin is a great example of what happens when we take Huxley's advice and follow reason as far as it can carry us without other considerations. For you see, when Charles Darwin, on December 27, 1831, boarded the HMS *Beagle* for its historic five-year voyage which culminated in his discovery of evolution in nature, he had other considerations. Charles Darwin was a believer in the literal truth of the Bible.

Huxley's quote gets to the essence of science. There are many inferences to be made from Huxley's quote: the quest for evidence is extremely important; disregard



presuppositions; evidence may take one in a previously unforeseen direction, or in a direction one did not want to see at all; evaluation of evidence must follow the rules of logic.

Bishop Samuel Wilberforce and Thomas Huxley by Carlo Pellegrini (1871)



Based on evidence, Charles Darwin shed his presupposition regarding any divine intervention in the evolution of life. He also lost his belief in the literal truth of the Bible. I sometimes wonder if the obnoxious religious fundamentalists' opposition to his book and its theory was the reason for his loss of religious belief, and not the evidence in the book, or religion itself.

Darwin faced many obstacles not only getting his theory of evolution out into the public square, but keeping it there. He had many friends who supported him, including Thomas Henry Huxley, Joseph Hooker, and John Lubbock, but he also had many foes.

Darwin's biggest detractor was Richard Owen, a renowned anatomist, among other titles. Owen was the epitome of the "big wig" label of well-to-do aristocracy in the British scientific community when Charles Darwin's book, *Origin of Species*, was published in 1859. Owen vehemently opposed Darwin's book. Some say it was because of jealousy; others speculate it was due to Owen's religious beliefs. I am inclined to agree with the jealousy theory. More on that in a few minutes.

It's ironic that Owen became Darwin's biggest foe. Owen was introduced to Darwin not more than a month after he returned from his five-year odyssey aboard the HMS *Beagle*. Darwin's friend, Charles Lyell, author of *Principles of Geology*, and a top-tier geologist of that time period, introduced them so that Darwin could have Owen take a look at some of the fossils he brought back from his historic voyage. Owen apparently had no peers when it came to interpreting fossils.

Owen didn't deny evolution in living things, but he did deny the engine, natural selection, which according to Darwin, guided it. Instead, Owen believed in divine guidance, i.e. a god was pulling the strings of evolution--not just "a" god, but "his" god. It is no wonder, then, that John Burdon Sanderson Haldane, aka J.B.S. Haldane, geneticist and evolutionary biologist, would remark years later that "God has an inordinate fondness for beetles." I have an inordinate fondness for another species, spelled Beatles.

Richard Owen appears (go with me on this) to have been an opportunist. At one point in his career, he believed humans had evolved from fish. He says so in his book *On the Nature of Limbs*. His book was criticized by religious fundamentalists as a denial that humans were created by god. After that, Owen appears to have flip-flopped, and intelligent design became a guiding influence in his work and his opinion of other's work.

The trouble with Richard Owen doesn't stop there. It appears Owen was so jealous of others (and opportunistic) that he went so far as to steal their work, although this behavior eventually caught up with him. Owen, in spite of his social status and position within the scientific community, was ejected from the Royal Society of London and its Zoological Society in 1846 for failure to acknowledge the work of others in his own work. It apparently did not stifle his ability to have an effect on the scientific community in London. Thirteen years later, his criticism of Darwin's book was taken very seriously.

One of the most famous debates regarding Darwin's book took place shortly after its publication and condemnation by Richard Owen in a stinging essay appearing in a scientific periodical of the times.

Darwin's friend, Thomas Henry Huxley, found himself defending the theory of evolution against Samuel Wilberforce, English Bishop in the Church of England. On the surface, nothing seems out of the ordinary. Huxley and Wilberforce—no problem, right? Not exactly. Turns out, Richard Owen was probably involved in their now-infamous confrontation. I hesitate to describe it as a debate. Both Huxley and Wilberforce were trading barbs, a trait more reminiscent of a fight or a clash. Since Owen was visiting Wilberforce the week of the debate, many people believe Wilberforce was doing the bidding of Owen.

Huxley had become Darwin's defender, partly because Darwin didn't have the personality for contentious exchanges, partly because Darwin was ill a lot and unable to get out into the city, and partly because Huxley was passionately convinced of the truth of Darwin's dangerous idea. Say anything about Charles Darwin and/or the Theory of Evolution and you would most likely be hearing from Thomas Henry Huxley. He was labeled, and rightly so, "Darwin's bulldog."



**Charles Darwin
& Sir Richard Owen
by Carlo Pellegrini (1871)**

The "encounter" between Huxley and Wilberforce at Oxford in 1860 was little more than a bully (Wilberforce) being put in his place by a victim (Huxley), although the true combatants were Owen and Darwin. Wilberforce, unable to disprove evolution with solid evidence refuting the idea of humans descended from apes, resorted to the lowest form of hyperbole, asking Huxley whether the apes were on his grandfather's or grandmother's side.

My account of Huxley's retort comes from the biography written by Adrian Desmond, *Huxley: From Devil's Disciple to Evolution's High Priest*. Huxley is recounting the experience, saying he "...had listened with great attention to the Lord Bishop's speech but had been unable to discern either a new fact or a new argument in it—except indeed the question raised as to my personal predilection in the matter of ancestry. That it would not have occurred to me to bring forward such a topic as that for discussion myself, but that I

was quite ready to meet the Right Reverend prelate even on that ground. If then, said I the question is put to me would I rather have a miserable ape for a grandfather or a man highly endowed by nature and possessed of great means of influence and yet who employs these faculties and that influence for the mere purpose of introducing ridicule into a grave scientific discussion, I unhesitatingly affirm my preference for the ape."

The west room of Oxford's new Gothic Revival Museum, where the event took place, exploded in shouting and laughter. A woman is said to have fainted.

If you read the history involving early refutations regarding the theory of evolution, one thing stands out: there was no logical reasoning used to formulate a coherent counter argument to address the position Darwin advanced in his book—current life forms evolved from lower life forms. The other side stood firmly on hyperbole and a belief that a supernatural being above reproach and inquiry was responsible for creating humans.

Charles Darwin didn't publish his theory of evolution by means of natural selection for over two decades after conceiving it—mostly because of the prevailing old world attitudes and (religious) beliefs of the status quo, beliefs perpetuated by many who, like Richard Owen, used them as a political means to a political end. Unfortunately, that kind of behavior is still being practiced, right here in our very own city, by people seeking positions of power. Regrettably, old-world attitudes and beliefs yield, you guessed it—old worlds.



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:
 - March 2, 2014 - *Extreme Prejudice*, by Susan Lindauer
 - April 6, 2014 - *The Selfish Gene*, by Richard Dawkins

Link to Book Review: <http://www.amazon.com/Extreme-Prejudice-Terrifying-Story-Patriot/dp/1453642757>

What if the government decided to invent a great lie to justify a disastrous war? What would happen to the people who know the truth? *EXTREME PREJUDICE* delivers an explosive, high tension expose of the real facts surrounding the CIA's advance warning of 9/11 and an insider's look at Iraqi Pre-War Intelligence, told by one of the very few U.S. Assets covering Iraq before the War. It reveals the depths of

deception by leaders in Washington and London to promote a successful image of their terrorism policy, and the shocking brutality to suppress the truth of their failures from Americans and the world community.

For 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 Thursday of each month.
- Where: Clubhouse at a private condominium in St. Augustine (Anastasia Island).
- What: Book planned for discussion:
 - March 13, 2014 - *Radical: My Journey Out of Islamist Extremism*, by Maajid Nawaz.
 - April 10, 2014 - *Zealot: The Life and Times of Jesus of Nazareth*, by Reza Aslan (2013).

Link to Book Review: <https://www.kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/maajid-nawaz/radical-my-journey/>

Maajid Nawaz spent his teenage years listening to American hip-hop and learning about the radical Islamist movement spreading throughout Europe and Asia in the 1980s and 90s. At 16, he was already a ranking member in Hizb ut-Tahrir, a London-based Islamist group. He quickly rose through the ranks to become a top recruiter, a charismatic spokesman for the cause of uniting Islam's political power across the world. Nawaz was setting up satellite groups in Pakistan, Denmark, and Egypt when he was rounded up in the aftermath of 9/11 along with many other radical Muslims.

He was sent to an Egyptian prison where he was, fortuitously, jailed along with the assassins of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat. The 20 years in prison had changed the assassins' views on Islam and violence; Maajid went into prison preaching to them about the Islamist cause, but the lessons ended up going the other way. He came out of prison four years later completely changed, convinced that his entire belief system had been wrong, and determined to do something about it.

He met with activists and heads of state, built a network, and started a foundation, Quilliam, funded by the British government, to combat the rising Islamist tide in Europe and elsewhere. He began an activist group in Pakistan as well, using his intimate knowledge of recruitment tactics in order to reverse extremism and persuade Muslims that the 'narrative' used to recruit them (that the West is evil and the cause of all of Muslim suffering), is false. *Radical*, first published in the UK, is a fascinating and important look into one man's journey out of extremism and into something else entirely. (From the 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.

Retaining Family Bonds Amidst Disparate Views

Fred W. Hill

As I'm sure is true with many freethinkers, my relationship with some of my relatives is rather complicated by differences over religion and politics. My relationship with my mother is a case in point. Certainly I love her and would do nearly anything I could for her. One thing I cannot do, however, is share her deeply religious and conservative outlook. On the other hand, we have worked out an unspoken compromise not to let our opposing views so thoroughly divide us as to break our bonds of affection.

This has struck home for me this past week when, on Monday, January 27, my stepfather called me at work to tell me my mother was in the hospital again. She has been hospitalized several times over the last decade since having heart surgery at age 62, in 2005. This time it was due to intense pain throughout her body, apparently stemming from a fractured vertebra incurred, she previously told me, during her early childhood. (So presumably my brothers and I are off the hook for all the times we stepped on cracks!) Being a reasonably dutiful son, and the only one living less than an hour's drive rather than a transcontinental flight away, I've journeyed several times from the downtown region of Jacksonville where I live and work to the Orange Park Hospital where she is currently being treated.

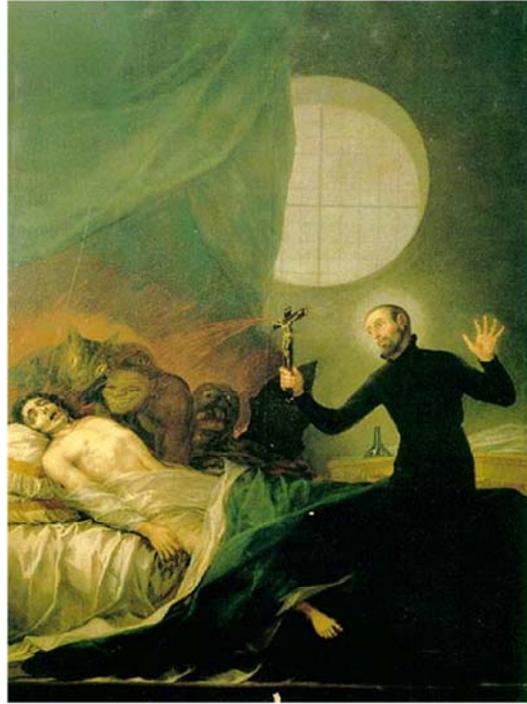


On that first Monday, she didn't seem too badly off, although understandably groggy. We watched the Newshour on PBS—it was already on that station when I arrived—after which she complained she didn't like it and wanted to watch Fox News, causing me to reflexively gag, as I regard that channel as an extreme right-wing propaganda machine rather than an honest source of information. This was, however, one of those times for me to bite my tongue rather than initiate a useless argument. Perhaps the Socratic Method of discussion would bring us to a closer meeting of the minds, and on at least a few previous instances I had the presence of mind to try it and while we couldn't agree on all hot-button issues, we found we were in accord on some. Again, however, with her mind clouded by pain and medication, this wasn't the time.

The very next day, my mother went into convulsions, thrashing in her bed, waving her legs and arms wildly, bobbing her head back with her eyes rolled back, and her mouth, with only two remaining teeth, open wide, emitting moans and cries of, "Oh, God, help me, help me," when she was not babbling incoherently. It began at 4 a.m. and when I arrived about 15 hours later, although hampered by restraints then, she still thrashed and attempted to get out of her bed. When she was semi-lucid, she asked me

repeatedly how to open the door on the ceiling (there was, of course, no such door). At one point she did have enough presence of mind to confess, "I must look terrifying."

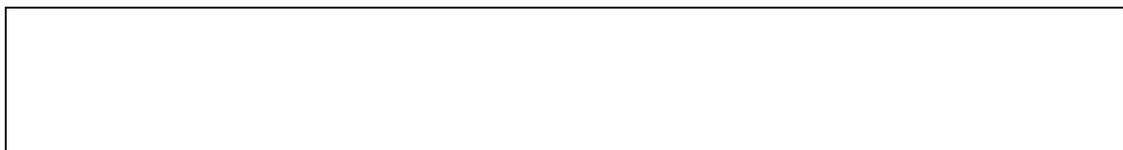
St. Francis Borgia Exorcising by Francisco de Goya, 1788



In truth, she did and I know part of the terror for me was remembering her as the beautiful and vivacious young mother I recall from my childhood, who encouraged my curiosity, eagerness to learn, and love of reading a variety of books. Her father had been a Baptist minister but he died when she was only ten, and for much of her early adulthood she was not particularly religious. But at the age of 55, she converted to Catholicism and increasingly took to heart many of the conservative tenets of the Church, as well as those of Fox News.

That Tuesday, a priest from her church also came to visit. I couldn't help but think that my mother's convulsions would once have been taken as signs of demonic possession and that the priest would have come not to provide some form of holy consolation but instead to attempt an exorcism. As a 30-year-old when *The Exorcist* was a hit film and bestselling novel, my mother may have questioned the veracity of demonic possession. But as an elderly Catholic, she's expressed belief that demons must be responsible for the horrific crimes committed by the likes of Hitler, Stalin, Manson, and Dahmer. Church doctrine is that it's possible, so it must be so.

As her wayward child, however, I question Church doctrine and tenets to the extent of regarding them as predominantly absurd. But as part of our silent pact she won't try to convert me and I won't mock her beliefs. At times, I will gently question them. We can still politely disagree, after all. She is doing better now, although due to have back surgery soon. I can't pray for her but I can hope for her full recovery and that we will have many more years to disagree and yet still love one another.



About the *First Coast* *FreeThinker*

The First Coast FreeThinker is published for all freethinkers and potential freethinkers. Nonmembers and members 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. Members are entitled to receive hard-copy should they prefer. The e-mail version is encouraged.

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

Prayer and the City Council

Susan Ert-Ker

This is in response to the article about prayer written by Earl Coggins, appearing in the January 2014 issue of the *FreeThinker*. You can find that article at this link:

<http://firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org/cms/images/stories/newsletter/201401.pdf> .

All people aren't the same. Do you agree, or do I need to provide scientific studies to prove that to you? Some people flourish with more alone time. Some people flourish with more interactions with other people. Prayer might help both types if used properly. Perhaps you are asking, "*how can delusion ever help?*" If you are sitting on your laurels thinking some outside power is going to do



the work for you, then I agree that delusion can be harmful. It might prevent you from taking action, yourself. Don't get me wrong. I am not suggesting that you pray to a god in whom you don't believe. I am merely suggesting that others might gain strength from their prayers. I am **not** talking about prayers similar to the words in Janis Joplin's song: "Oh Lord, won't you buy me a Mercedes Benz. My friends all drive Porches..."



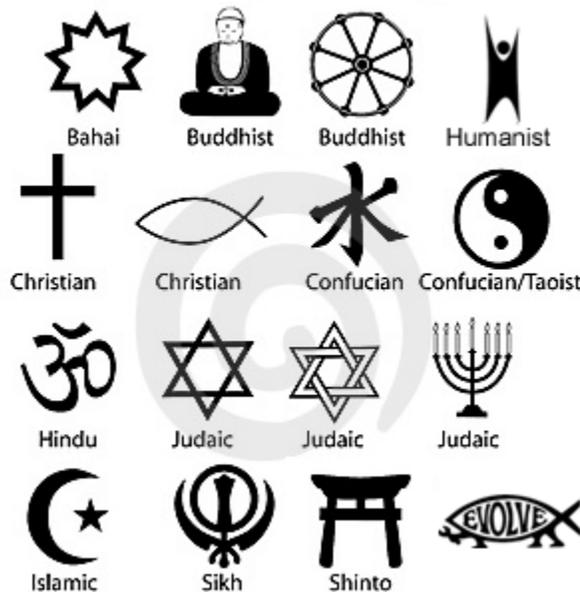
But think of someone like Martin Luther King Jr. You can find a review of a book of his prayers at this link: <http://nronline.org/blogs/road-peace/prayers-martin-luther-king-jr>.

Quote from above link:

"This is what I hear in Dr. King's prayer—a cry for strength to carry on the work of peace and justice; for courage to be nonviolent, come what may; for blessings on the movements for civil rights, justice and peace; for healing for the oppressed and the oppressors; and for..."

Those types of prayer are designed to inspire. Another type of prayer might comfort. Here is a quote about prayer from Alain De Botton's book, [Religion for Atheists: A Non-Believer's Guide to the Uses of Religion](#):

"...in these sanctuaries the desperate will glance up at the Virgin, light candles, say prayers... The apposite point is not whether the virgin exists, but what it tells us about human nature... Our focus should be on what the Virgin Mary reveals about our emotional requirements. ...to be held and reassured... Though such longings go largely unmentioned in adult society, it has been the achievement of religions to know how to reanimate and legitimate them."



It doesn't bother me so much that prayers are given before City Council meetings. I know eliminating prayer in government meetings is the position of many who offered briefs in the Greece vs. Galloway case before the Supreme Court. I see their point about the problem with the rotation scheme. For efficiency, it does seem that prayer and other matters not specifically related to City Council business should be eliminated from the meeting, or at least held to the very end after the official meeting is over. I watched one video of the City Council meeting in December that started with a group of school children singing Christmas songs. I would have been in agony if I had to sit through that in order to be present when City Council business began. Luckily, I was just

watching the video so I could turn it off.

The First Amendment in the *Bill of Rights* mentions free speech in addition to freedom of/from religion. John Stuart Mill writes about free speech. I think it is scariest when you try to shut people up.

What bothers me the most about the prayers at the City Council meetings is the lack of diversity. We are a diverse community. Why isn't there a plan to include ALL the groups in Jacksonville? There should be a published list that shows the efforts at diversity. The list for the upcoming 24 meetings should include a Humanist because there is a large group in Jacksonville that doesn't believe in any of the gods. Please write Cheryl Brown demanding that she include a Humanist in the upcoming months. If enough people write, then they will know we are here. Perhaps the Humanist will invoke the spirit of the good in humanity. Or perhaps the Humanist would prefer to call her talk an inspirational talk, rather than an invocation. That is just semantics. A Humanist should be included in the rotation scheme.

Excerpt from email I received from City Council President Gulliford: *"You are welcome to forward any suggestions you might have or anyone else can do the same. Ms. Cheryl Brown, council secretary, will accept those."*

Cheryl Brown's email address: CLBROWN@coi.net

About the First Coast Freethought Society

First Coast Freethought Society, Inc.

P.O. Box 550591

Jacksonville, FL 32255-0591

904-419-8826

<http://firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org>

Statement of Purpose

The First Coast Freethought Society, Inc. is an educational, nonprofit, 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization dedicated to supporting nonreligious persons in the Northeast Florida area and promoting a nontheistic approach to everyday life.

Meetings

The FCFS meets the THIRD Monday of each month at the Buckman Bridge Unitarian Universalist Church, 8447 Manresa Ave., Jacksonville, FL 32244. (Driveway located on Collins Rd., 400 ft. east of Roosevelt Blvd.)

Meeting time: 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Doors open at 6:00 p.m. Meetings are free and open to the public.

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

FCFS 2014 Board Members

President - Earl Coggins: 904-521-5039

Vice President - Carrie Renwick: 904-268-8826

Secretary - Don DuClose: 904-388-3125
Treasurer - Stephen Peek: 904-742-5390
At-Large - Herb Gerson: 904-363-6446
At-Large - Fred Hill: 904-358-3610
At Large - Richard Keene: 904-386-1121

Other Appointments

Parliamentarian - Mark Renwick: 904-616-2896
E-mail Secretary - Carrie Renwick: 904-268-8826

Committees and Chairs

Editorial - Fred Hill: 904-358-3610
Community Outreach: To Be Announced
Finance - Stephen Peek: 904-742-5390
Fundraising - Carrie Renwick: 904-268-8826
Membership - Judy Hankins: 904-724-8188
Publicity - Carrie Renwick: 904-268-8826
Website - Mark Renwick: 904-616-2896

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

Membership Application



Use this PDF form

or join on our [website](#).

Ongoing FCFS Activities

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.

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 Fred Hill, 904-358-3610.

Bequests

*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 can provide the appropriate wording to you and your attorney, depending upon your wishes. Or, just talk to your attorney. Our EIN is 20-1462737.

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.

Northeast Florida Coalition of Reason

- First Coast Freethought Society: <http://firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org>
- Jacksonville Atheist, Agnostic, Secular Meetup Group (JAM): <http://jaxatheists.com>
- Northeast Florida Atheists: <http://meetup.com/North-Florida-Atheists>

- Secular Saint Augustine: <http://meetup.com/Secular-Saint-Augustine>

The FCFS is a proud member of the [Florida Humanist Association](#) (formerly the Humanists of Florida Association).

Freethought Calendar of Events on the First Coast

- Saturday, February 15 - Deadline to submit articles for March 2014 *FreeThinker*
- Monday, February 17 - FCFS Monthly Meeting, Jacksonville - 6:30 p.m.
- Friday, February 21 - [Secular St. Augustine Meetup](#) at Applebee's - 7:00 p.m.
- Sunday, February 23 - FCFS Secular Sunday in the Park, Jacksonville - 10:00 a.m.
- Tuesday, February 25 - FCFS Monthly Social at Olive Garden, Jacksonville - 6:00 p.m.
- Sunday, March 2 - Humanist Book Discussion Group - Jacksonville - 2:00 p.m.
- Monday, March 10 - [JAM Meetup](#) at European Street Café in San Marco - 6:30 p.m.
- Thursday, March 13 - Humanist Book Discussion Group - St. Augustine - 7:00 p.m.
- Monday, March 21 - FCFS Monthly Meeting, Jacksonville - 6:30 p.m.

FCFS Month-at-a Glance

Monday, February 17 – Monthly Meeting
Sunday, February 23 – Secular Sunday in the Park
Tuesday, February 25 – Olive Garden Social
Sunday, March 2 – Book Group – Jacksonville
Thursday, March 13 – Book Group – St. Augustine

Details in newsletter, e-mail reminders, and on website.

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