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The First Coast

FreeThinker



Newsletter of the First Coast Freethought Society

March 2015

Volume 14, Issue 3

Table of Contents

- [March 2015 Meeting](#)
- [March President's Message - Freedom or Safety?](#)
- [March 2015 Olive Garden Social](#)
- [Free Speech Panel Discussion - Coming Soon!](#)
- [Local AU Update](#)
- [Humanist Book Discussion Group - Jacksonville](#)
- [Humanist Book Discussion Group - St. Augustine](#)
- [Dignity U Wear Volunteer Opportunity - Update](#)
- [And Now, from our Correspondent in Thailand...](#)
- [Chalupa! Brief Update](#)
- [When Free Speech and Other Rights Conflict](#)
- [NPR Corporate Sponsorship](#)
- [About our newsletter, the First Coast FreeThinker](#)
- [Why I Am an Atheist - Humanist - Freethinker](#)
- [About the First Coast Freethought Society](#)
- [April 2015 Meeting](#)
- [Northeast Florida Coalition of Reason](#)
- [Freethought Events on the First Coast](#)
- [Directions to Monthly Meeting at BBUUC](#)
- [Membership Application](#)

March 2015 Meeting

- **What:** FCFS Monthly Meeting

- **Who:** David R. Simon, Ph.D., Sociologist; past Postdoctoral Fellow, UC Berkeley School of Public Health; past Research Fellow, Institute of Public and International Policy, University of North Florida
- **Title:** “**The United States of Insanity**”
- **When:** Monday, March 16, 2015, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. (doors open at 6:00)
- **Where:** Buckman Bridge Unitarian Church, 8447 Manresa Ave., Jacksonville, FL 32244 (From the I-295 Roosevelt exit, go north to the first traffic light, Collins Rd. Turn right on Collins. Go 400 ft. The church driveway will be on your right.)

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

Meeting Description

Within the last few years, several respected authors have claimed that the United States has become a dysfunctional society. The problem with this assertion is that very few scholars have ever tried to measure this claim empirically. Is there a paradigm that would aid us in measuring the degree of dysfunction necessary to label a society dysfunctional? Is there a paradigm we could utilize in measuring this quest? Dysfunction is a term usually attributed to individuals, but how would one measure societal dysfunction?

In order to aid in our quest, we will employ a paradigm that makes a distinction between private troubles (individual mental problems) and socially-patterned conditions (contradictions) that cause large numbers of individuals, as well as social institutions, to become dysfunctional.



About the Speaker

David R. Simon holds a Ph.D. from Rutgers University in sociology and was a Postdoctoral Fellow in public health at UC Berkeley. He has recently completed a Postdoctoral Fellowship at the Institute of Public Policy, University of North Florida. He is the author of nine books, the latest of which is the tenth edition of *Elite Deviance*, which is celebrating its 30th anniversary as the oldest white collar crime text in the field. Dr. Simon is also the author of some 57 academic articles, review essays, and book reviews. His current research focuses on societal insanity.

March President's Message - Freedom or Safety?

Earl Coggins

Thirty-five years ago Prometheus Books published a little booklet. It was a mere 29 pages, something you could read in an hour if you took your time. Written by Paul Kurtz and endorsed by 58 prominent scholars and writers, the contents were anything but little and mere. That booklet, *A Secular Humanist Declaration*, is as profound today as it was in 1980. It was a shot across the bow of fundamentalist and ideological religion. That same year the first edition of *Free Inquiry* magazine appeared. It was dedicated to secular humanism from a freethinking perspective.

In *A Secular Humanist Declaration*, Kurtz wrote what has become a recurring theme since: *Regrettably, we are today faced with a variety of anti-secularist trends: fundamentalist, literalist, and doctrinaire Christianity; a rapidly growing and uncompromising Moslem clericalism in the Middle East and Asia.*



A few pages later, Kurtz tells the world what is at stake in the war against the Muslim fundamentalist clerics of the Middle East and the fundamentalist Christian leaders in America:

Free Inquiry entails recognition of civil liberties as integral to its pursuit, that is, a free press, freedom of communication, the right to organize opposition parties and to join voluntary associations, and freedom to cultivate and publish the fruits of scientific, philosophical, artistic, literary, moral and religious freedom. Free inquiry requires that we tolerate diversity of opinion and that we respect the right of individuals to express their beliefs, however unpopular they may be, without social or legal prohibition or fear of sanctions. Though we may tolerate contrasting points of view, this does not mean that they are immune to critical scrutiny. The guiding premise of those who believe in free inquiry is that truth is more likely to be discovered if the opportunity exists for the free exchange of opposing opinions; the process of interchange is frequently as important as the result. This applies not only to science and to everyday life, but to politics, economics, morality, and religion. See: <https://www.secularhumanism.org/index.php/11>

**Paul Kurtz, known as
"the father of secular
humanism" (1925-
2012)**



Kurtz's very own *Free Inquiry* magazine would feel the sting of oppression and censorship when in 2006 the Borders and Waldenbooks bookstores refused to carry the April-May issue of *Free Inquiry* magazine. In the April-May issue, *Free Inquiry* published four controversial cartoons that had been printed initially in *Jyllands-Posten*, a Danish daily newspaper. These cartoons had ignited violent protests worldwide by radical and militant Muslims who said the newspaper had misused freedom of speech. One of the cartoons depicted Muhammed with a bomb in his turban.

The bookstore owners, Borders Group, cited the cartoons as their reason for pulling *Free Inquiry* off their shelves. The bookstores said sensitivity to religion had nothing to do with their decision—it was fear of violence. Kurtz responded to the censorship poignantly and succinctly: "What is at stake is the precious right of freedom of expression."

The cartoons published by *Jyllands-Posten* ignited more than protests. Two years later, three men were arrested for allegedly conspiring to kill one of the cartoonists at the *Jyllands-Posten* newspaper. The paper responded by republishing one of the cartoons. Sixteen other Danish newspapers also published the cartoon, all to show their commitment to freedom of speech.

The republishing of the cartoon created still more resentment. In 2010 there were three foiled plots and arrests of men planning to murder employees at *Jyllands-Posten*. *Charlie Hebdo* was not the first newspaper targeted by radical extremists.

With a weekday circulation of approximately 120,000 copies, "JP" is among the largest-selling newspapers in Denmark.



Here we are in 2015, facing the same problems Kurtz spoke about in 1980, with the *Charlie Hebdo* terrorist attacks and the recent murder of opposition leader Boris Nemtsov in Russia.

The recent *Charlie Hebdo* terrorist attacks have people here at home questioning freedom of the press, some saying *Charlie Hebdo* had it coming for their blatantly anti-religious depictions, while others are calling for restrictions on free speech. There are people in the City of Jacksonville asking: Is there a line of decency and respect that a journalist should not be allowed to cross; are there words used in public that might cross some line of decency and respect; is there any cause for which the freedom of assembly and the right to petition should be denied? Most of the cries for censorship are rooted in a concern for public safety.

As freethinkers, all of us should be speaking out in support of freedom, especially freedom of speech. I think one of our most revered founders of this country, Ben Franklin, sums up this situation affectingly: *Those who would give up essential liberty, to purchase a little temporary safety, deserve neither liberty nor safety.*

March 2015 Olive Garden Social

- **Where:** **OLIVE GARDEN** on Philips Highway, across from the Avenues Mall. The hostesses will know where we are seated. Proceed directly to our room.
- **When:** Tuesday, **MARCH 24**, 2015, at 6:00 p.m. Social hour at 6:00. Dinner at 7:00. We order from the menu.
- **RSVP:** E-mail CarrieRen@att.net (or call 904-268-8826) by Tuesday morning, if you plan to attend!

Free Speech Panel Discussion - Coming Soon!

Carrie Renwick

Plans are afoot to present a panel discussion on free speech issues to take place at the UNF University Center, on a Tuesday evening, at the end of March or in early April. The date depends on availability of the panelists. Local experts will expound on the ramifications of the *Charlie Hebdo* tragedy and the crucial role free speech plays, especially freedom of the press, in an open and pluralistic society. Further details will be forthcoming via e-mail bulletins, along with UNF publicity and publicity throughout the community as soon as details are available!





Local AU Update

In this regular feature, you will be kept apprised of the actions of the local AU chapters which include the AU of Northeast Florida (Jacksonville) and the Clay County Chapter. If separation of church and state issues are important to you, we encourage you to join Americans United on the local and national levels.

The Northeast Florida Chapter (Jacksonville) of Americans United for Separation of Church and State continues to develop strategies to encourage the Jacksonville City Council to respect the diversity of all Jacksonville citizens and discontinue their divisive practice of offering exclusively Christian prayers at City Council Meetings.

To Join AU

Local: <http://www.meetup.com/AU-Americans-United-for-Separation-of-Church-and-State/>

National: <https://support.au.org/donate>



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:
 - April 5, 2015 - *Six Amendments: How and Why We Should Change the Constitution*, by Justice John Paul Stevens
 - May 3, 2015 - to be determined

By the time of his retirement in June 2010, John Paul Stevens had become the second longest serving Justice in the history of the Supreme Court. Now he draws upon his more than three decades on the

Court, during which he was involved with many of the defining decisions of the modern era, to offer a book like none other. *Six Amendments* is an absolutely unprecedented call to arms, detailing six specific ways in which the Constitution should be amended in order to protect our democracy and the safety and well-being of American citizens.

Written with the same precision and elegance that made Stevens's own Court opinions legendary for their clarity as well as logic, *Six Amendments* is a remarkable work, both because of its unprecedented nature and, in an age of partisan ferocity, its inarguable common sense.

Link to Book Review:

<http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2014/jun/05/justice-stevens-refounding-father/>



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

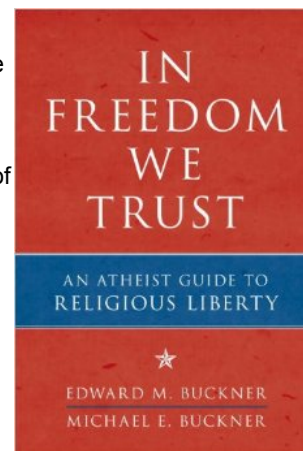
Humanist Book Discussion Group - St. Augustine

- **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:** Books planned for discussion:
 - April 9, 2015 - *In Freedom We Trust: An Atheist Guide to Religious Liberty* by Edward M. and Michael E. Buckner.
 - May 14, 2015 - *Moral Man and Immoral Society: A Study in Ethics and Politics* by Reinhold Niebuhr.

Opponents attack the president of the United States for not being a real Christian. Bitter arguments erupt over whether the United States is or should be a Christian nation. Sound familiar?

These contentious issues are not just recent developments but were also the topics of fierce debate in the late eighteenth century. Like President Obama today, President Thomas Jefferson had to contend with accusations that his religious convictions were questionable. Against complaints that the writers of the Constitution did not invoke God, John Adams replied, "It will never be pretended that any persons employed in that service had interviews with the gods."

This book covers these and other related issues from the two-centuries-long debate over religion and secularism in America. Taking an unabashedly atheistic point of view, the father-and-son authors argue that everyone--from evangelical Christian to ardent atheist--needs a secular America and separation of church and state. They examine the decidedly unchristian roots of the Fourth of July, the important difference between "tolerance" and "toleration," the misleading confusions related to the difference between "public" and "governmental," the value of secular schooling, the erroneous contention



that atheism is equivalent to immorality and therefore dangerous, and a host of other contemporary and historical topics.

With a list of key dates related to the history of secular America, notes, bibliography, and glossary, *In Freedom We Trust* offers important facts and arguments for secular humanists and anyone with an interest in freedom of conscience.

Link to Book Review: http://www.prometheusbooks.com/index.php?main_page=product_info&cPath=57_139&products_id=2145

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.

Dignity U Wear Volunteer Opportunity - Update

Carrie Renwick

Dignity U Wear
136 North Myrtle Avenue
Jacksonville, FL 32204

Phone: (904) 636-9455
Toll-Free: (888) 364-1305
Fax: (904) 636-8649
www.DignityUWear.org



The next DUW is April 18, 2015, 9:00 a.m.

In case you are new to the First Coast Freethought Society, you need to know about a really great volunteer opportunity that is currently scheduled on a monthly basis at Dignity U Wear in Jacksonville.

In Brief

On the third Saturday of each month from April to December of 2015, from 9:00 a.m. until noon, FCFS members and friends, together with the Jacksonville Atheist Meetup group (JAM), gather to volunteer at the Dignity U Wear (DUW) environmentally-controlled warehouse. Come to 136 North Myrtle Ave., Jacksonville, FL 32204. Sign in at the door with your name and group. In air-conditioned comfort, sort and fold new clothing to assist those in need. (Closed-toed shoes are required, as this is a working warehouse.) Here are the 2015 dates. They also appear on the website and will be posted in the newsletter calendars and in e-mail reminders.

Dates for 2015

April 18, 2015.

May 16, 2015

June 20, 2015

July 18, 2015

August 15, 2015

September 19, 2015

October 17, 2015

November 21, 2015

December 19, 2015

More Details

We work in comfortable conditions, warm in winter and cool in summer. The donated clothing is all brand new, but it must be sorted by gender, size, and color, folded, and placed into boxes. That's where we come in! We sit at large tables, sort, fold, and catch up with each other. Volunteers who wish, wear First Coast Freethought Society T-shirts and/or pins (provided free to volunteers) with the hope that other people will view freethinkers and atheists in a positive light, doing good work for the community. Children over 16 years of age may participate unaccompanied by an adult. We encourage FCFS members and friend to find a seat at the table and fold clothing to assist those in need.

Ominous Trend - But Still Not Too Late!

After an initially enthusiastic response, however, volunteer attendance has gradually dropped off. For several recent months, there have been no attendees at all. Happily in February, seven folks attended, and a good time was had by all. DUW reserves one table per group. Tables seat 9 to 12. If a table is not filled, those slots are wasted and work is not done. Right now, we still have our FCFS table reserved from April through December. But be advised, the Dignity U Wear management has informed us that if we do not regularly have volunteers, they will give our table to another group. **It is still not too late!** But if we are to keep our table at DUW, then we must show better attendance.

We Need Your Thoughts

If you'd like to see DUW continue, start attending on the third Saturday mornings, or let me (or Celia) know. On the other hand, if you don't want to see it continue, we need to know that, as well. There is no wrong answer, here! Volunteers, what would you prefer? DUW got many votes on our Community Outreach Survey, so we chose it. But are you are ready for a change? ...want something else? ...nothing else? Let us hear from you, and thanks very much in advance.

Contact Community Outreach Chair, Celia Abbruzzese, at catrn1957@yahoo.com or 904-982-8431 should you have any questions.

And Now, from our Correspondent in Thailand...

Lance Stoll

(Sociologist Lance Stoll, long-time member and friend of the First Coast Freethought Society has accepted a teaching position in Thailand, which is leading him on a totally new and remarkable life adventure. Lance currently resides in Chonburi, Thailand, and is teaching English at the Chonburi Technological College. This is a private school which has students from kindergarten to college, like an associate degree institution in America. Lance teaches six kindergarten classes on Friday mornings, one second-grade class on Wednesday afternoon, and a fourth-grade class on Friday afternoons. He also teaches six college classes throughout the week.



When asked if he would be willing to share his "Thailand experience" with his freethinker friends back here in Cowford (the original name of Jacksonville), Lance said, "I'd be proud to be your Thai or offshore commentator! I find that my perspective on America is quite clear from this far away and that my concept of the "Christian Taliban" destroying America is quite accurate! Religion is destroying America and the image of America in the rest of the world." --Ed note.)

Thailand is amazing, really. The culture is accepting and the people are happy and kind. Buddhism is strong here, but not at all in the way that Christianity is in America. Buddhist traditions here support freedom, independent thought, and science. While the Buddhist traditions are everywhere, Buddhism is not intrusive and inflicted on others. No one knocks on your door to tell you the good news of the Buddha! The other thing that they get from Buddhist ideas is the fact that we are here to experience happiness. Thai people love life, seek love, and enjoy laughter and having fun. Christianity has lost any joy that it ever had, focuses on the next life in the sky, and has decided that one should be miserable in this life and make everyone else miserable, too. The life of the Christ is seen as suffering and misery, and all the uplifting messages of the life of Jesus are ignored in favor of the torment on the cross. This burden was lifted from me when I got out of that idiotic Christian-dominated nation!

**Chonburi
Technological College
English Department**



Thai people are quite competitive about everything, but they are kind about it, and after the competition is completed, they are finished with it. In American culture we are taught to do anything to win and then demean and humiliate the defeated. This happens in American sport and American wars. Thai people compete hard and afterward shake hands, laugh and move on with life. I find it amazingly refreshing and a much better way to live. America lives in hate, mistrust, ethnocentrism, and a sense of superiority. Thai people love their culture and treasure it but do not see themselves as better than others. Racism isn't so much an issue here, but class surely is. When I hear Americans complain about such things in Thailand, I am always reminded of the top 1% who control ALL of America and the 25% of American children who go to bed hungry every night. Thai children are well fed and most are happy and being educated. Of course there are problems here, but there are bigger problems in the greedy Christian country. I've been in both places and have studied the sociology of both.

**Lance with a new friend at the
Tiger Zoo in Chonburi, Thailand
Lance observes, "It was
amazing holding him!"**



Thanks for allowing me to be in touch with you folks on a small island of intelligence amidst the vast wasteland of ignorance there. --Lance

Chalupa! Brief Update

Fred Lane & Carrie Renwick

In follow up to "St. Augustine History and Chalupas," the brief article appearing in last month's (February) *Free Thinker*, construction of the St. Augustine Maritime Heritage Foundation (SAMHF) historic chalupa replica is now complete. The convocation for the boat's naming, christening, and launching will take place at The Fountain of Youth boatyard in St Augustine on March 22, 2015, at 3 pm. Members of the FCFS are invited to attend this auspicious event! If you are interested, please contact Fred Lane directly at lanef33@yahoo.com or call 561-376-4975.

When Free Speech and Other Rights Conflict

Susan Ert-Ker

James A. Lee wrote an article in the February 2015 issue of the *Mandarin NewsLine* titled, "E Pluribus Unum: Civics for One and All" (see http://mandarinnewsline.com/Archive_PDF%27s/2015_Feb_MNL.pdf, scroll down to page 6). His questions are thought provoking and discussion prompting. His questions are about free speech.

I find it difficult to feel unequivocally confident about an answer when (on the surface) it appears that one person's rights are being sacrificed to honor another person's rights. How does the law decide? How does the community decide?

There is a case before the Supreme Court (*Elonis v. United States*) weighing the rights of a woman against the free speech rights of her ex-lover who was posting awful things on Facebook about her. The Supreme Court is deciding if his free speech rights were infringed upon when the courts asked him to quit writing threatening things about his ex-lover.

Of course, I understand that we might debate the definition of "rights." Do we always have the right to say whatever we want? Do we have the right to live in a community where we're not bullied?

I want to believe that all Americans love the First Amendment. We are proud of our Bill of Rights. BUT we also pass laws that restrict bullying.

Please Get Out and Vote

I hope my community makes decisions based on love and respect, not hate. Certainly I don't want laws for every little thing BUT I would like for people to willingly and joyfully behave with respect to the others in our community. I hope the community will vote for people (for the City Council spots) who will vote YES for the human rights ordinance. **Early voting starts March 9. Election Day is March 24.** It is "unitary primary" meaning you can vote for anyone in any party. Please get out and vote.

Here is a clip from a *New York Times* article explaining the unitary primary: *Jacksonville is one of the few cities with nonpartisan elections where candidates list their party affiliation. The election system in Jacksonville now consists of two rounds of elections, replacing a system of a party primary followed by a general election. In the first election, anyone, regardless of party affiliation, can run. The two candidates with the highest votes then face off in a general election.*

NPR Corporate Sponsorship

Carrie Renwick, Fundraising Chair

We would love to see NPR contributions come in throughout the year!

To Donate on a Monthly Basis

1. Go to the FCFS website home page, <http://firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org>, where you will find a PayPal button to make an automatic monthly donation to our NPR fund. Automatic monthly donations via PayPal require you to have a PayPal account.
2. Set it up through your online banking system.

To Donate on a One-Time Basis

1. Visit the website, <http://firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org>, where you will find the opportunity to contribute on our homepage. You can pay via PayPal or with any major credit card (via PayPal).
2. Mail a check payable to the FCFS to PO Box 550591, Jacksonville, FL 32255.
3. Bring your contribution to a meeting or another FCFS event and give it to a board member.

Whichever method you select, you will receive a letter from the treasurer, suitable for your IRS records, acknowledging your tax-deductible contribution.

Thank you!

About our newsletter, the *First Coast FreeThinker* Information for Readers

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, as the newsletter is optimized for on-screen reading.

Readers are invited and encouraged to share 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, poetry, etc. should be e-mailed to

Editor@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org. Material may be submitted only ELECTRONICALLY.

Submissions may be formatted in MS Word, in a text file, or cut and pasted into an e-mail.

The deadline for time-sensitive material is the THIRD SATURDAY of each month for the following month's issue, but submissions are welcome anytime.

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: A Statement of Principles](#) (found on our website). All accepted submissions are subject to editorial modification.

Our style guide is *The Chicago Manual of Style*. Authors (not the First Coast Freethought Society) are responsible for the accuracy of all quotations and for supplying complete references where applicable.

Why I Am an Atheist - Humanist - Freethinker See Your Name Here!

The Editorial Committee has long observed that stories of previously-religious folks becoming nonreligious and subsequently "coming out of the closet" are always well received and garner positive feedback. The Editorial Committee hereby invites you to tell us YOUR story, and we'll publish it here, in what we'd like to see become a regular feature of our newsletter: "Why I am an atheist, humanist, freethinker... whatever fits you. Submit your story to Editor@firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org.

Don't be shy! Each of us has a story to tell. If we are involved with the FCFS, there is a story behind our evolution to freethought. Some stories may be similar, some may have significant differences. But all are interesting! If you don't consider yourself a writer, maybe you should give it a shot, anyway. Someone would be happy to give you a hand with it, if you like, just ask Fred or Carrie. —The Editorial Committee

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.

Membership

If you share our world view and would like to be a part of the FCFS, we encourage you to join. If you are new, or if you are renewing and your contact info has changed, you can pick up an application or a brochure at a meeting, or you can download and print an application on our website: <http://firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org/cms/app> and mail it in.

- You can join online: <http://firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org/cms/support>
- You can join by mail: Send your application and check, payable to the FCFS, to PO Box 550591, Jacksonville, FL 32255-0591.

Meetings

The FCFS meets the THIRD Monday of each month at the Buckman Bridge Unitarian Universalist Church, 8447 Manresa Ave., Jacksonville, FL 32244.

Directions: From the I-295 Roosevelt exit, go north to the first traffic light, Collins Rd. Turn right. Go 400 feet. The church driveway will be on your right.

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

Other Activities

- Two monthly humanist book discussion groups, one in Jacksonville and one in St. Augustine. Current books are listed in each newsletter. For further details, visit <http://firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org/cms/bdg>.
- A monthly social and dinner at the Olive Garden. See details in each newsletter.
- Coffee and conversation in the fresh air on a monthly basis at Secular Sunday in the Park. We meet the fourth Sunday of each month, 10:00 a.m. to noon, at Losco Regional Park, 10851 Hood Road South, Jax, 32257. See Activities section of the FCFS home page: <http://firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org/cms/>.
- Dinners for Doubters (when scheduled).
- Volunteer opportunity on a monthly basis at Dignity U Wear. Visit <http://firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org/cms/component/content/article/50/150>, currently scheduled for the third Saturday morning of each month, through December 2015.
- A freethought Yahoo! Group. To subscribe, send a blank message to jaxfreethought-subscribe@yahoogleroups.com).

For information on all these activities, please visit <http://firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org>, or see the calendar of events at the end of each newsletter and on the website. You need not be a member to attend these activities!

FCFS 2015 Board Members

President - Earl Coggins: 904-521-5039

Vice President - Carrie Renwick: 904-268-8826

Secretary - Liz DuClose: 352-260-2880

Treasurer - Stephen Peek: 904-742-5390

At-Large - Herb Gerson: 904-363-6446

At-Large - Fred Hill: 904-358-3610

At Large - John Ruskuski: 904-419-8826

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 - Celia Abbruzzese: 904-982-8431

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

April 2015 Meeting

Carrie Renwick, Program Chair

For our April 20, 2015 meeting, Middle-East expert, David Schwam-Baird, Ph.D., Department of Political Science and Public Administration, University of North Florida, will be our speaker. His talk is titled, "ISIS Under Your Bed! What Are the Threats of the Current Mid-East Mess?"

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, PO 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>
- Secular Saint Augustine (SSA): <http://meetup.com/Secular-Saint-Augustine>

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

Freethought Events on the First Coast

- Monday, March 9 - JAM Session, 6:30 p.m. (See <http://www.meetup.com/jaxatheists/> for details.)
- Monday, March 16 - FCFS Monthly Meeting at Buckman Bridge Unitarian Church - 6:30 p.m.
- Friday, March 20 - [Secular St. Augustine Meetup](#) - St. Augustine, 7:00 p.m. (Meetups are generally the third Friday, but you need to visit the website to RSVP and for meeting details.)
- Sunday, March 22 - FCFS Secular Sunday in the Park, Jacksonville, 10:00 a.m.
- Tuesday, March 24 - FCFS Monthly Social at Olive Garden, Jacksonville, 6:00 p.m.
- Saturday, March 28 - FCFS January 2015 Newsletter Deadline
- Sunday, April 5 - Humanist Book Discussion Group - Jacksonville, 2:00 p.m.
- Thursday, April 9 - Humanist Book Discussion Group - St. Augustine, Anastasia Island, 7:00 p.m.
- Monday, April 20 - FCFS Monthly Meeting at Buckman Bridge Unitarian Church - 6:30 p.m.

Directions to Monthly Meeting at BBUUC

Our monthly meetings are held at the **Buckman Bridge Unitarian Universalist Church (BBUUC)**, 8447 Manresa Ave., Jacksonville, FL 32244. The address is Manresa, but the main entrance to the church is located on Collins Rd..

- From I-295, take the Roosevelt exit. Go north on Roosevelt Blvd. to the first traffic light which is Collins Rd. Turn right onto Collins. Go 400 feet. The main entrance to the church is located on Collins Rd., on the right.
- Going south on Roosevelt, look for Atlantic Self-Storage on the left. This is the Collins Rd. intersection. Turn left onto Collins. Go 400 feet. The main entrance to the church is on Collins Rd., on the right. (If you come to I-295, you've gone too far, turn around, and you will turn right onto Collins Rd.)

MAP ON FCFS WEBSITE

See accurate map at this link: http://firstcoastfreethoughtsociety.org/cms/lib/fcfs_bbuuc_map.gif (Please note, Google Maps, as well as other maps, may not be consistent with the actual street signs.)

Membership Application



Use this PDF form

to print the application and mail it in with your check, or join on our [website](#).

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