

The Tampa Bay Coalition of Reason



Freethought News

Vol. 5 No. 2 February 2016 Jim Peterson, Rick O'Keefe, Editors

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* TB-CoR Org.

Recent Court decision brings AofF and the entire freethought community back together

A recent court decision recognizes Atheists of Florida (AOF), as it currently exists, as the legal organization. By ordering the return of our assets, the court ensures that we can begin to really build the type of organization that Tampa Bay deserves. Our energy can be focused on the activities needed to educate the public about atheism and the establishment clause, to ensure government entities, like local school boards, are doing due diligence in protecting the rights of all students, and that education focuses on real science,

We will help the larger community understand that moral and ethical people need no deity. We invite all who have been sidelined over the past few years to re-join us and help us move forward. With your help we can ensure that Florida continues as a secular state, and the United States as a secular country.

Judy Adkins

President - **Atheists of Florida**

Board: Ed Golly, Tracy Thomas, Eileen Stafford, Al Hann, Chris Brown, Galen Matson, Jim Peterson

Take the bus to ...

Reason

the Rally that is,

in Washington D.C.
June 2nd to the 5th 2016.

TB-CoR and its member organizations are organizing a bus trip to bring Tampa Bay folks to the rally that is promised to be a major event on the national scene.

For more information as it develops, go to www.evolvetampa.com

***"We are many! We are strong! We are united!
And we are here!"***

Looking for a copy of *Brief Candle in the Dark* by Richard Dawkins? See information on page 13.

Darwin Day 2016 Saturday,

February 6th 2016

Frans DeWaal & Deby Cassill



In the Octagon at UU Clearwater.
2470 Nursery Road
Clearwater, FL 33764
more at:
www.evolvetampa.com

In 2007 Time magazine listed **Frans DeWaal** as one of the world's 100 most influential people. His insights into the origins of human behavior gained from his investigations into the origin and placement of humans in the biosphere mark him as a scientist uniquely able to help us fully appreciate the meaning of being human.

Precursors of Humanity



Deby Cassill earned her doctorate in the study of ant behavior, and finding in it some unique connections to the underlying social life of humans and other cooperative forms of life.



Get your tickets now through your Coalition of Reason local event page, www.evolve-tampa.com. Check for possible rebate for certain organization members. Each will give a lecture on their topic and then there will be a panel discussion, with questions from the audience. Afterwards there will be a reception, with light refreshments, during which attendees can interact with the speakers and each other. More on page 2.

Directory

**Tampa Bay
Coalition of Reason**

Calendar

[Rick O'Keefe](#)

Web site

Jim Peterson

Newsletter

[Jim Peterson](#)

Special Projects

Mark Brandt, Judy Adkins,
& Bill Norsworthy

See our event website at:

www.evolvetampa.com

See the full roster of the
Leadership board on
Page 5.

Happiness

Our 29th Year

The Humanist Society² of the Suncoast News

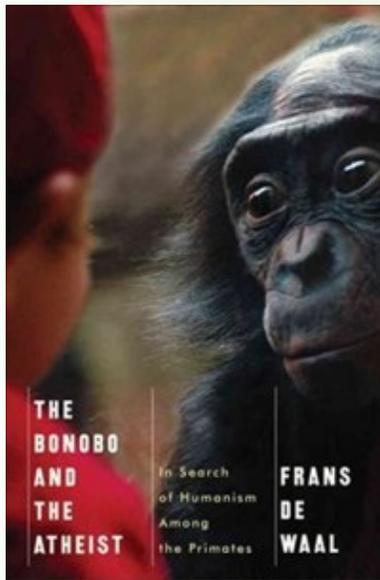
An Epicurean society dedicated to the proposition that the fully examined life is worth living well.
Associate organization of the Humanists of Florida, the AHA, COR, and CSH Find us at www.suncoasthumanist.com

Volume 24 No. 2 February, 2016

December & January are renewal months for the Humanist Society of the Suncoast

Precursors of Humanity

is our Darwin Day theme this year. In our time when we seem more separated from the natural world than ever, it is all too easy to forget that the basis of our own uniqueness as human beings lies deep within the evolutionary path taken by our ancestors. Our two scholars are exciting and interesting people who will be bringing us valuable insights into understanding the nature of who we are, how we got to be this way, and what this might mean for our future.



If you want to know where our potential lies and how we can begin to work on some of our most pressing problems in a world wracked by violence, exploitation, and inequality, where what we have done is a fact that must be faced, Then this will be valuable information indeed. See you, Feb. 6th.

Get your tickets at www.evolutetampa.com JP

Join us for our March 5th meeting back in the Dunedin Public Library for a talk with **Klaus Heinburg**, who has spent years in Ethiopia and east Africa, and has some surprising insights to report.



Tampa Bay Harvest

Food: the first kindness and the measure of our Hospitality Humanists aspire to true friendship with our fellow human beings. Money is more effective than cans to get the most benefit to the greatest number of people. Thanks to **Glenn Paul**, chair. Ed Note: Glenn needs assistance. **We need volunteers!** See a board member. Or write to jim@suncoasthumanist.com Thanx.

Please join us at

12:30 PM
February 6th
in
The Octagon at
UU Clearwater

2470 Nursery Road
Clearwater, FL
33764

Admission \$30. for
this TB-C0R
presentation.

Annual Dues.

- Trial –3 month– free news
- **Regular -\$25**
- Reg. Couple -\$30.
- **Supporter -\$35/45 (W/ pin above)**
- Life -\$200.
- Life Couple -\$250.
- Associate -\$10



Your membership helps keep Humanism alive and growing in the Tampa Bay area. A small part of your dues allows us to participate fully as a member organization of the Tampa Bay Coalition of Reason and enables us to support larger and more exciting programs.

If you have questions concerning your dues or status, contact our treasurer, marios_psomas@hotmail.com

If new, please fill out the form; if renewing just indicate your name and any changes from our previous information. Thanks!

Name: _____

Address –if new : _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone: * _____

E-mail: _____

(Privacy respected)

Send tax deductible (501c3) check made out to:
"Marios Psomas"

Humanist Society of the Suncoast, AHA
1013 Connecticut Rd
Tarpon Springs, FL 34689

*= optional



Got a letter, comment, suggestion or editorial contribution? Write to us at: tbcor@metrodirect.net



Humanists work to build a world in which happiness is the enduring criterion of all policy.

What is the Humanist Way?

1. To extend a human centered approach to the critical problems of life and society.
2. To encourage attitudes of kindness, compassion, tolerance and a loving generosity in human relationships, and in our treatment of all life. These attitudes help us to see ourselves in the lives of others, and encourage appreciation for the remarkable diversity of human culture and experience.
3. To develop and popularize the skills of creative and critical thinking that empower people to challenge prejudice, superstition and irrationality in every area of life. Such empowerment enables the individual to reach the highest levels of achievement.
4. To exalt those artistic and imaginative expressions of life which have been the source of the greatest pleasure and enlightenment, and which reflect compelling human truths. Through music, literature, art, dance, and other expressions, we embrace the essence of what it means to be human.
5. To explore the grounds of ethics and morality within the unfolding history of our evolving culture. Such knowledge will enable us to become effective protagonists for the happiness of the individual person. JP

The (not so) Movable Feast:
the Humanist Society monthly social Dinner
for February, is at ...

Kumba Island

1800 Gulf-To-Bay Blvd Clearwater
(N.E. Corner of G-T-B & Keene)

We're changing our approach. Now its just open. No RSVP required. Trundle on down for the fine food and fastidiously fabulous fellowship!

Be there on Sunday Feb 21st by **5 O'clock** for Early bird specials. As always, this is a self treated dinner. Ask to be seated with "the humanists." We need a coordinator for this!... Maybe you?

~ Only the best people eat here when we do. ~

Laugh Lines Late Discoveries 2-16

1. I started out with nothing, and I still have most of it.
2. My wild oats have turned into prunes and all-bran.
3. I finally got my head together, and now my body is falling apart.
4. Funny, I don't remember being absent-minded.
5. Funny, I don't remember being absent-minded.
6. If all is not lost, where is it?
7. It is easier to get older than it is to get wiser.
8. Some days, you're the dog; some days you're the hydrant.
9. I wish the buck stopped here; I sure could use a few.
10. Kids in the back seat cause accidents.
11. Accidents in the back seat cause kids.
12. It's hard to make a comeback when you haven't been anywhere.
13. The only time the world beats a path to your door is when you're in the bathroom.
14. If I am supposed to be able to touch my toes, why aren't they on my knees.
15. When I'm finally holding all the cards, why does everyone want to play chess?
16. It's not hard to meet expenses—they're everywhere.
17. The only difference between a rut and a grave is the depth.
18. These days, I spend a lot of time thinking about the hereafter—I go somewhere to get something, and then wonder what I'm hereafter.

Thanks to R. O'Keefe

HUMANIST SOCIETY OF THE SUNCOAST

A chapter of the American Humanist Assoc.
The Association of Secular Humanist Societies

Board of Directors.

Meets Sept., December, April

Jay Alexander,
Steve Brown,
Lois Fries, Secretary
Dave Kovar, Vice President
Beth Maxie,
Jim Peterson, President
Frank Pahl,
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Mark Winterbottom, Sidney Goetz
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Acenbrack Dec., Rob Byrch, Dec. Jackie
Jordan, Brent Yaciw, Mike Hubbard,
Matt Cooper Dec, Jim Butler

~*~*~*~*~*~*~*~*~*

Jordan Williams, mail Publisher

Jim Peterson, Editor

E-Mail us at:

jim@suncoasthumanist.com

Need Psychological Counseling?

For a secular therapist, click:

Cognitive Neurosciences Inc.

or, **The Therapist Project,**

or, **Lynda Gurvitz,**
(727) 725-8820

or, **Patricia Walters,**
(813) 452-6547



Tampa Humanist Association

Meets every third Saturday at, 11:00 AM in
The North Tampa Public Library
8916 North Blvd. Tampa, FL 33604 [Map](#)



February 20th, 11 AM

What can we do to make a difference in the lives of those around us?

As Humanists, advocates for the greater good of our species, we are morally obliged to help the progress of our society. This means two things; first, the prevention of antithetical social and political influences with their concurrent negative effects on human development, and second, advocacy for ideas, insights and innovations that will advance the culture to more efficiently adapt to new conditions.

What factors lend themselves to this project? What can each of us do to propel these ideas forward in a society that resists change and insists on ignorance and reactionary policies that benefit only a few? Join us for a roundtable discussion of reason. JP

Learn more about the association at: <http://tampahumanist.com/>



Show off your commitment to Science and Reason!



Tampa CFI is offering these elegant license plate surrounds. Legal, sturdy, fits all US plates - easy to install. Now only \$12.
Order from [Rick O'Keefe](#)

More [Seasonings](#) by CFI & Humanist Society member and journalist- poet, **Lula J. Dovi**. She has completed a second illustrated chapbook of poetry reflecting on her 92 years of adventures. It will be available soon, but the first [can be found here](#).



Tampa Bay CoR
TAMPA BAY COALITION OF REASON

Tampa Bay CoR
9654 W. Linebaugh Ave. PMB #110
Tampa, FL 33626

Promoting Action & Unity in the Tampa Bay Area

Join the Freethought Organizations of the Tampa Bay Area: Center for Inquiry-TampaBay, Tampa Humanist Association, Institute for Science and Human Values, Humanist Society of the Suncoast, UU Humanists Clearwater, Atheists of Florida, UU Humanists Tampa,* Freethinkers @ USF,* Plus numerous Meetup organizations that promote serious secular discussion and activity about important issues in our area and beyond.

Thus substantive and exciting new activities are offered to the Tampa Bay area that were not possible for most organizations before.

We are especially grateful to the national office of the United Coalition of Reason and its director, Jason Heap. You may recall that UCoR was the major impetus to getting a large number of billboards erected in Tampa Bay and across the nation with such messages as "You can be good without God. Millions are!"

TBCoR is an alliance of groups identified with the freethought /Humanist /Atheist movement .

As this momentum continues to grow, we will keep you informed of developments . JP
Contact: tbcor@metrodirect.net: <http://unitedcor.org/coalition-of-reason/tampa-bay/>



The mission of the [Secular Coalition for Florida](#) is to increase the visibility of and respect for non-theistic viewpoints in the State, and to protect and strengthen the secular character of our government as the best guarantee of freedom for all.

Please sign up [here](#). Volunteer activists are wanted, needed, and appreciated!

Congratulations!



To TB-CoR leader, **Bill Norsworthy** on being named to the national board of the Secular Coalition as **Florida representative**.

A Humanist Discussion group in east Tampa !

UU Humanists of Tampa

Public Discussion, 2nd Wed. eve from 7 -9 PM
and on the 4th Sun. Morning 9:45 - 10:45.

Unitarian Universalist Church of Tampa
11400 Morris Bridge Rd. Tampa, FL 33637
More information can be found at :

<http://uutampa.org/unitarian-universalist-humanist-of-tampa/>

Humanist Quotes

" We keep on being told that religion, whatever its imperfections, at least instills morality. On every side, there is conclusive evidence that the contrary is the case and that faith causes people to be more mean, more selfish, and perhaps above all, more stupid."

Christopher Hitchens 1-16



An autonomous project of the Humanist Society. Affiliate of [PCI](#)

Paris is over. Now it's back to the hard work of fighting for, and implementing, the energy transition.

We all know that the transition away from fossil fuels is key to maintaining a livable planet. Several organizations have formulated proposals for transitioning to 100 percent renewable energy; some of those proposals focus on the national level, some the state level, while a few look at the global challenge. David Fridley (staff scientist of the energy analysis program at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory) and I have been working for the past few months to analyze and assess many of those proposals, and to dig deeper into energy transition issues— particularly how our use of energy will need to adapt in a ~100 percent renewable future. We have a book in the works, titled *Our Renewable Future*, that examines the adjustments society will have to make in the transition to new energy sources. We started this project with some general understanding of the likely constraints and opportunities in this transition; nevertheless, researching and writing *Our Renewable Future* has been a journey of discovery. Along the way, we identified not only technical issues requiring more attention, but also important implications for advocacy and policy. What follows is a short summary—tailored mostly to the United States—of what we've learned, along with some recommendations. We really need a plan; no, lots of them. Germany has arguably accomplished more toward the transition than any other nation largely because it has a plan—the Energiewende. This plan targets a 60 percent reduction in all fossil fuel use (not just in the electricity sector) by 2050, achieving a 50 percent cut in overall energy use through efficiency in power generation (fossil fueled power plants entail huge losses), buildings, and transport. It's not a perfect plan, in that it really should aim higher than 60 percent. But it's better than nothing, and the effort is off to a good start. Although the United States has a stated goal of generating 20 percent of its electricity from renewable sources by 2030, it does not have an equivalent official plan. Without it, we are at a significant disadvantage. What would a plan do? It would identify the low-hanging fruit, show how resources need to be allocated, and identify needed policies. We would of course need to revise the plan frequently as we gained practical experience (as Germany is doing). Finish online at: www.postcarbon.org

The St. Petersburg Astronomy Club, Inc. (SPAC), has been meeting continuously since 1927. It was incorporated in 1979 as a nonprofit, tax deductible organization. For almost 50 years SPAC has provided free educational programs for its members and the public. For additional information send your emails to: spaceaminer@gmail.com



Meetings are normally held on the fourth Friday of each month (except November and December when it is on the third Friday) at the Science Center of Pinellas County, 7701 22nd Avenue North, St. Petersburg, FL., at 8:00 P.M. Meetings are open to the public.

Clearwater UU Humanists

We are a group of Unitarian Universalists committed to a humanistic and non-theistic worldview. Currently, meetings are scheduled once a month and are usually held on the third Sunday of most months from 12:30 pm to 1:30 pm, after UU services.

The UU Humanists are open to all aspects of humanism, including investigation of religious humanism. However, the focus of the group is on the secular aspects of humanism. This month, we'll see you at Darwin Day Feb. 6th.



Clearwater, Florida



Earlier this year, the state legislature succeeded in passing a 24-hour waiting period for women seeking an abortion. On behalf of our clients Gainesville Woman Care and Medical Students for Choice, we immediately filed suit that has prevented the implementation of this harmful law. But another legislative session is about to begin, and the attacks on women's access to healthcare have already started.

Two bills, HB 233 and HB 1/SB 602, are now aimed at shutting down abortion providers by imposing medically unnecessary regulations on doctors and facilities that no other medical facility would be required to have.

Stop these medically unnecessary bills: urge your state legislators to reject HB 233 and HB 1/SB 602.

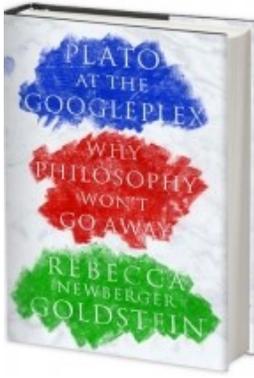
Not only are these bills unconstitutional, but these bills are bad for women's health. The decision about whether to carry a pregnancy to term is a private medical decision. By threatening to close clinics, these bills jeopardize a woman's health, safety and her ability to access comprehensive care. <https://aclufl.org>



TBCoR Leadership Team 2015

- Toni Van Pelt*
~ ISHV
- Bill Norsworthy*
UUCH
- Beth Maxi*
HoTA
- Mark Brandt,*
UUCH
- Chris Brown,*
MAF
- Jenn Hancock,*
TBHF
- Rick O'Keefe,*
CFI, TBS
- Jim Peterson,*
HSS, TBPC
- Al Hann*
AoF ~

Meaningful Books

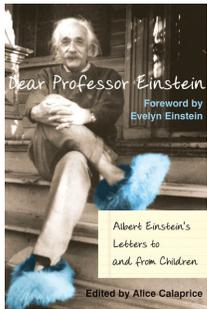
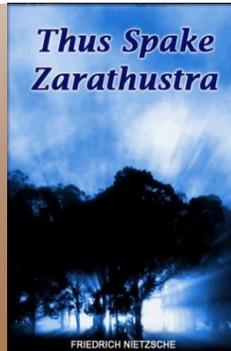


At the heart of the latest work from acclaimed philosopher and novelist Rebecca Newberger Goldstein lies one question: is philosophy obsolete? In *PLATO AT THE GOOGLEPLEX*, Goldstein proves why philosophy is here to stay – and in fact more relevant today than ever before – by revealing its hidden (though essential) role in today's debates on religion, morality, politics, and science.

<http://bit.ly/1PdEAdd>

In this masterpiece of philosophical literature Friedrich Nietzsche utters the famous phrase "God is dead!" This powerful book spells out Nietzsche's belief in the will to power, and serves as an introduction to his doctrine of eternal return. One of the most influential books of philosophy ever written. Nietzsche writes with style, power, and conviction. A Thrifty Book is a well designed, easy to read book at an unbeatable price.

<http://amzn.to/1PdFC94>

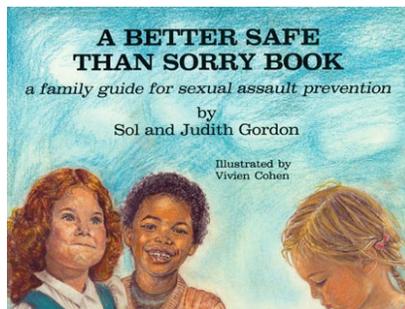


Obviously, Einstein led a busy life, and so he could not answer every letter sent to him. Nonetheless, he made time to respond to those that touched him in some way. To Monique from New York, who asked about the age of the Earth and when it will come to an end, he patiently responded that it is a little more than a billion years old, and, "As for the question of the end of it I advise: Wait and see!"

<http://bit.ly/1PdGD0t>

Written for children as well as for parents and professionals, a traditionally uncomfortable topic is discussed in a manner designed to help children feel good about themselves.

<http://bit.ly/1PdGXwK>



A big Thanks to our philanthropist benefactor, **Joe Reinhardt**, who contributed a first edition, eleven volume set of the works of the great American Orator and agnostic, **Col. Robert Ingersoll**.

Joe is pictured at left delivering a secular invocation at the Largo City Commission in 2015.



Evolve Fish is a good source for your freethought goodies:

Pins, jewelry, posters, buttons, bumper stickers, t-shirts, etc

<http://evolvefish.com/>

The Matt Cooper

Memorial Humanist Lending Library

Humanist Society members (only) can select the number of the book you wish to borrow, and send it to Marios Psomas at: marios_psomas@hotmail.com Then pick it up at the next meeting **Be sure to return it!** Donations appreciated.

TITLE

1. The Expanding Circle	Peter Singer
2. In Gods we Trust	Scott Atran
3. Why Evolution is True	Jerry Coyne
4. The Second World	Panag Khanna
5. Denialism	Michael Specter
6. The Selfish Gene	Richard Dawkins
7. Democracy Incorporated	Sheldon Wolin
8. The Upside Irrationality	Dan Ariely
9. The End of Growth	Richard Heinberg
10. The God Delusion	Richard Dawkins
11. All That We Share	Jay Wallgasper
12. Sex, Time, and Power	Leonard Shlain
13. Sex at Dawn	C. Ryan, & C. Jetha
14. What liberal Media	Eric Alderman
15. The End of Faith	Sam Harris
16. Plan B	Lester Brown
17. The Portable Atheist	Christopher Hitchens
18. Open Society	George Soros
19. Non Believer Nation	David Niose
20. God on Trial	Peter Irons
21. Natural Experiments of History	Diamond-Robinson
22. The Missionary Position	Christopher Hitchens
23. Life Inc	Douglas Rushkoff
24. A brief History of Time	Stephen Hawkins
25. Breaking the Spell	Daniel Dennett
26. The Philosophy of Humanism	Corliss Lamont
27. The Quotable Atheist	Jack Huberman
28. 50 Reasons People Give for Believing In God.	G. Harrison
29. Mathematics and Politics	Alan Taylor
30. Stealing Elections	John Fund
31. The God Virus	Darrel Ray
32. What Every American Should Know About World	Rossi
33. Imagine There's no Heaven	Editors of Free Inquiry
34. Hidden Order	David Friedman
35. What the Dog Saw	Malcom Gladwell
36. Sway	Ori, Rom Brafman
37. The Better Angels of our Nature	Steven Pinker
38. Letter to a Young Contrarian	Christopher Hitchens
39. Hot, Flat, and Crowded	Thomas Friedman
40. Gaming the Vote	William Poundstone
41. Subversion Fable	Alexa Kckearing
43. Evolution and the Big Question	David Stamos
44. Why People Believe Weird Things	Michael Shermer
45. The World is Curved	David Snick
46. The Snow Ball	Warren Buffett
47. The Moral Landscape	Sam Harris
48. How We Believe	Michael Shermer
49. Full House	Steven Jay Gould
50. The Origins of Political Order	Francis Fukuyama
51. Asimov's Guide to the Bible	Isaac Asimov
52. Autobiography of Mark Twain	Harriet Smith, Editor
53. Science Friction	Michael Shermer
54. Genius	James Gleick
55. Inevitable Illusions	Piatrelli & Palmarini
56. Sex & God	Darryl Ray
57. Being Right Is Not Enough	Paul Waldman
58. Loser Takes All	Mark Crispin Miller
59. Taking Back Politics	Cathy Allen
60. What Happened in Ohio?	Fittrakis, Rosenfeld & Wasserman
61. Autobiography of Mark Twain	Ed. Harriet Elinor Smith
62. The Skeptics Annotated Bible	
63. Database Systems (Complete Ver.)	Kifer, Bernstein, & Lewis
64. Reluctant Database Administrators	Josef Finsel
65. Asimov's Guide to the Bible	Isaac Asimov
66. Inevitable Illusions	M. Piattelli-Palmarini
67. Ain't Nobody's business If You Do	Peter McWilliams
69. Bonk	Mary Roach
70. What Money Can't Buy	Michael J. Sandel
71. Financial Shenanigans	Howard Shilit
72. Sex & God	Darrel Ray, ED.D
73. Best American Non required Reading	Dave Eagers
74. Reporting at Wit's End	St. Clair McKelway
75. Corporations are not People	Clements
76. Could I Vote Mormon for president?	Cragun – Phillips
77. Culture of Honor	Nisbett – Cohen
78. Rot on the Vine	Stenesh
79. Thoughts of a Freethinker	Kaye

For even more access to Freethought history and perspectives, you may wish to check out Frank Prahl's Freethought Library. Contact fpahl@verizon.net

Florida Atheists



Chair, Tracy Thomas, President, Judy Adkins



Join members of our Tampa chapter at our new headquarters / Studio Building

see [AoF Meetup](#) for details.

AoF is a comfortable and safe place in which to find rewarding new friendships, to discover hidden potentials, and make a positive contribution to your own humanity as well as that of others. We are pleased to offer legal assistance with church state separation issues as an important focus. For many people, atheism represents the most focused and powerful criticism of the philosophical worldview with which most of us were raised. It is liberating for the same reason it attracts the enmity of those who are committed to the closed and changeless narrative of unexamined traditional beliefs. JP

February 2016 - 5004 S. MacDill Ave Tampa Fl.

Annual Meeting - 10:30am on February 14th
members are invited to meet with the board of directors to discuss the focus of the group for the next 12 months. Come with ideas, questions, and suggestions. The Board of Directors meeting starts at 11:30am and all paid members are welcome to observe the meeting. It will probably go on until 3 or 4 in the afternoon. You can stay as long as you wish.

Thursdays

Office "Party" **2pm – 5pm**, where we organize the office, update the list of books for sale on Amazon, ship out items that have been ordered, and do other organizational tasks that need to be done. Of course, we can't help ourselves, we chat about anything and everything, so it's a casual social environment as well. Atheist Forum Production **7pm – 9pm**. Ever wanted to learn how to operate a camera, run a sound board, or learn other areas of webcasting? This is your opportunity. Learn with the rest of us as we produce a webcast weekly. Topic suggestions and show ideas are welcome.

Atheism 101 - 1-4pm, February 28th.

Joe Reinhardt is going to offer a class on Atheism 101 – Everything you wanted to know about Atheism but didn't know who to ask. Come with your questions,

St Pete Atheists // Freethought Group

Moderated by: Gary Thompson
Wednesday, February 17, 2016 7:00 PM
Contact: easy8@tampabay.rr.com
On the web: <http://atheists.meetup.com/209>

- * Provide intellectual and emotional support to each other and to others in our community who share our philosophy.
- * Foster humanistic moral values and ethical behaviors.
- * Promote a naturalistic worldview wherein beliefs must be verified by a scientific examination of evidence.
- * Defend the separation of church and state at all levels of government as guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States of America.
- * "To Smell the Roses Along the Way"

Questionable Legislation in Florida, 2016.

If you are aware of others we need to watch, please send an email to President@AOF.NGO

The republican dominated legislature has begun its annual work, and citizens must become vigilant as ever more intrusive violations of our personal rights are discussed and submitted for passage.

HB 43, SB 110

Churches or Religious Organizations: Provides that churches or religious organizations, related organizations, or certain individuals may not be required to solemnize any marriage or provide services, accommodations, facilities, goods, or privileges for related purposes if such action would violate sincerely held religious belief; prohibits certain legal actions, penalties, or governmental sanctions against such individuals or entities.

HB 45 & SB 120

Creating the "Florida Competitive Workforce Act"; revising provisions to include sexual orientation and gender identity or expression and the perception of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, handicap, or marital status as impermissible grounds for discrimination; providing an exception for constitutionally protected free exercise of religion, etc.

HB401

Protection of Religious Freedom: Provides immunity from liability for health care facility, health care provider, person, closely held organization, religious institution, business owned or operated by religious institution, or private child-placing agency that refuses to perform certain actions that would be contrary to religious or moral convictions or policies.

HB 899

Instructional Materials for K-12 Public Education: Requiring instructional materials to meet certain standards; requiring each district school board to adopt a process allowing a taxpayer to object to the use of specific instructional materials based on specified criteria; revising the requirement that the district school superintendent certify that all instructional materials used by the district for core courses meet certain standards, etc.

These and other innocuous sounding titles can be found and analyzed on our website.

Tampa Bay Thinkers



Thinking deep thoughts about serious matters since 2008. Carrollwood Cultural Center, Tampa, every 3rd Monday, monthly at 7 PM. February 15th: Topic: TBA

See our Meetup site: www.meetup.com/tampa-bay-thinkers/ for more information

The Military Association of Atheists and Freethinkers



Nontheistic service members serve honorably throughout the world—always have; always will. However, nontheists are the last unprotected minority. The nontheistic, whether an atheist, humanist, agnostic, freethinker, or other secular minority, have a strong community.

Jason Torpy, a West Point graduate, serves as president of MAAF. He also holds seats on the boards of the Secular Coalition for America and the American Humanist Assoc.

On the web at: www.maaf.info

Contact: Chris (christbrown@yahoo.com) MSgt, USAF (Retired)

Co-Organizer:

MacDill Atheists & Secular Humanists (MASH) MacDill AFB, FL

Humanist Families of Greater Tampa

Jennifer Hancock started this organization several years ago. It uniquely serves Humanist families with a variety of wonderful programs throughout the year. There is a strong emphasis on creative childrearing. Here, you can make connection with other families dealing with the problems of living in a society that is still hostile to an explicitly Humanist Way of life. Jennifer is author of several books including: *The Humanist Handbook*, *The Humanist Approach to Happiness*, and her latest book, *The Bully Vaccine*.

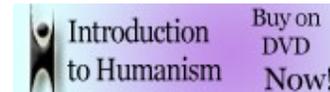


Humanist Families organizes social outings every month. These are opportunities to do something fun, socialize and enjoy each other's company. Sometimes we go to a park, sometimes a museum, sometimes we go swimming. Our group has grown over the past year to the point we now organize Tampa area outings and Manatee/Sarasota area outings every month.

Throughout the year we host parties like Darwin Day in February, World Humanist Day in June, Freethought Day at Disney in October and Carl Sagan Day in November.

Among our spin off groups, is a Parenting Beyond Belief group which gets together to discuss the challenges of raising children without religion. We are on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/). See more at: <http://www.Jen-Hancock.com>.

Thank you! **Jennifer Hancock**



Freethinkers@USF is a multi-cultural, interdisciplinary student society which welcomes USF students who describe themselves as atheists, agnostics, skeptics, freethinkers, humanists, or religiously open-minded

who seek to promote reason, compassion, tolerance, and free inquiry on campus. We hope to contribute opportunity for interdisciplinary dialog to the USF community, and build scientific literacy for all to enable objective and rational interpretations of issues affecting our lives.

The organization is open to anyone of any religious persuasion or personal beliefs.

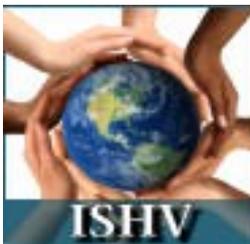
Write **Rodrick Colbert** at: freethinkersusf@gmail.com.



Tampa Bay Computer Society & Doc's Café

Lectures, discussions, and hands-on demonstrations of the humane use of technology. Visit our *new* facility on 300 S Duncan Ave Suite 275, Clearwater, FL 33755. [Map](#) Dave 'Doc' Dockery, President. Check out *Doc's Café* to discuss serious ideas and issues. Find us at: www.tampabay.org

We repair our member's computers Free!



The Institute for Science and Human Values

Various presentations throughout the year in the Tampa Bay area on significant matters of human concern. Watch this space for future announcements.

Toni Van Pelt President and Public Policy Director

Institute for Science and Human Values, Inc. Mailing address: 11280 Freedom Ct., Seminole, FL 33772 Email: tvanpelt@ishv.net Web: www.ishv.net



Rick O'Keefe

Richard Dawkins Foundation to Merge with Center For Inquiry; RDF President Robyn Blumner Named CEO

January 21, 2016 by [Hemant Mehta](#)

Back in March, the Center For Inquiry's CEO **Ron Lindsay** announced that [he'd be retiring](#) at the end of the year, voluntarily stepping down as head of one of the largest Humanist organizations in the world. There was no hint of who would take his place or what big changes would occur after he left.

But that's changing today. CFI [just announced](#) that it will be merging with the [Richard Dawkins Foundation for Reason & Science](#) at the end of the month. Current RDF President [Robyn Blumner](#) (below) will become CEO of the newly combined group, which will retain the CFI name. With a multi-million dollar budget and a staff of several dozen employees, that will make Blumner one of the most Powerful Women in the World of Organized Atheism.

To be fair, that's kind of like being the highest rated show on Fusion. It's worth celebrating, but most people outside the community won't care. (While women run a number of atheist organizations, only **Annie Laurie Gaylor**, Co-President of the [Freedom From Religion Foundation](#), has a budget and staff in the same stratosphere.)

Blumner was named the President of RDF [two years ago](#). Before that, she wrote for the *Tampa Bay Times* and led two state affiliates of the ACLU. My interactions with her over the past years have been incredibly positive.

It sounds like a win-win for both sides. CFI gets the Dawkins stamp-of-approval along with a way to tap into his large fan base and web presence for events, disaster relief efforts, and donor drives. The Dawkins Foundation gets the stability that comes with a greater budget, larger staff, and physical branches around the country, not to mention the opportunity to piggyback on top of a much larger organization in order to further its own agenda of teaching science and advancing secularism.

And who knows? If this works, maybe other groups will consider merging in the future, too. There's no shortage of niche groups in our movement — serving women, African-Americans, Ex-Muslims, etc. — that could benefit from the direct support of larger organizations.

(On a philosophical note, CFI has historically been known for its promotion of Secular Humanism while Dawkins is obviously Mr. Atheism. While that's a distinction without a difference for most people, I wonder if any CFI loyalists will be upset.) The merger should be finalized (on paper) by this spring.

The principle figures said the following in a press release: "I am absolutely delighted that I'm closing out my tenure at CFI by helping to bring about a merger between RDFRS and CFI," said Ronald Lindsay. "Both organizations share a vital common mission, and together we can accomplish much more. And, of course, **CFI looks forward to the benefit of close collaboration with Richard Dawkins, indisputably one of the preeminent public intellectuals of our time.**"

Robyn Blumner observed, "**Secularism is on the ascendency in the United States and beyond. Science has proven to be the engine of human progress. Bringing more resources and ambition to promoting these forces**

of reason is what this merger is about. I am thrilled to be tapped to lead this joint effort and expand on what Ron Lindsay has built."

"I am very pleased that my foundation is about to join forces with the Center for Inquiry," said Richard Dawkins. "CFI is the biggest player in the secular / non-religious / skeptical world, and I like to hope that RDFRS will have something to add to its already flourishing enterprise. In turn, among our projects which will benefit from a larger team of professionals are Openly Secular and the Teacher Institute for Evolutionary Science (TIES)."

Update: There's an FAQ about the merger [here](#).

Support [CFI-Tampa Bay](#), Join now to keep informed about our activities, participate in our programs, and become a member!



From the national Council for Science Education

Darwin Day resolution in the U. S. Senate

December 18th, 2015

[Senate Resolution 337](#), introduced in the United States Senate on December 17, 2015, would, if passed, express the Senate's support of designating February 12, 2016, as "Darwin Day, and its recognition of Charles Darwin" as a worthy symbol on which to celebrate the achievements of reason, science, and the advancement of human knowledge



Introduced by **Senator Richard Blumenthal (D-Connecticut)**, S. Res. 337 is the second Darwin Day resolution ever to appear in the Senate. A string of similar bills have been introduced in the House of Representatives, the most recent of which — H. Res. 548 — was [introduced](#) by Representative Jim Himes (D-Connecticut) on December 3, 2015.

In a December 18, 2015, press release from the Secular Coalition of America, which worked with Blumenthal on the resolution, Kelly Damerow, the organization's interim executive director, [commented](#), "This resolution celebrates the intellectual bravery and scientific discovery that contribute to the well-being of all people."

Times Letter of the Month Winner - January

Estate tax rate is fair

The letter writer thinks estate or inheritance taxes punish small business owners, farmers and others. As an estate planning attorney, I disagree. The profit that accrues to those in the upper economic stratosphere needs to be taxed. The next generation has little to nothing to do with the "hard work" of their parents. If the effective tax rate is 20 percent or even more, it is eminently fair that the succeeding generation pay that tax, through loans if necessary, so that they have some burden for the wealth they are inheriting.

To say that the succeeding generation has no responsibility for their inherited wealth is just unfair and violates a basic concept of our economic system: that we are a meritocracy where all deserve at least a simulacrum of an equal chance in society.

This tax is fair also because our system has provided many benefits to that hardworking couple who built a small business or a profitable farm. It's also just because the next generation of the wealthy usually receives lots of advantages from their parents during the parents' lifetimes. The estate tax is one of the fairest taxes of all, and the argument that it amounts to double taxation is a red herring.

Mark Brandt, Dunedin Jan. 2015

ASK AN ATHEIST

Too embarrassed to ask something you really, really want to know?

Have an idea you'd like to share, but don't want anyone to know from whom it came?

Have an opinion that's out of the norm for your group?

Well, here's your chance to share any or all of those in complete anonymity.

Just go to Aof's [Ask An Atheist](#) page. We do not track any information about you, who you are, your IP address, or anything else. Of course, you will have to check back on the site to see any responses.

Ever wonder what other Florida Freethought groups are doing?



Now you can easily know. Atheists of Florida have a new Calendar: <http://atheistsoffloridainc.org/calendar/> which enables everyone to know what's going on around the entire state.

Florida's provisions imposing flat bans on financial aid to religious institutions is now on shaky ground.

According to Lyle Denniston, the National Constitution Center's constitutional literacy adviser, the Supreme Court has agreed to decide "Does the First Amendment's guarantee of the 'free exercise of religion' actually require states to provide aid to religious institutions, if the aid has nothing to do with promoting religious beliefs or practices?"

The court has chosen the case of Trinity Lutheran Church of Columbia v. Pauley. Missouri has a program of turning used tires into rubber surfacing material for playgrounds. Trinity Lutheran church applied for a grant for this program to replace "pea gravel" in the playground it has for the daycare center for children it runs. The state turned down Trinity's application because of the Missouri constitution's prohibits the use of funds from the public treasury to aid any church, sect, or denomination or religion. Florida has a very similar prohibition in its constitution.

Combined with the Justices review to the latest challenge of the Affordable Care Act, in which religious non-profits institutions that do want any role in the provision of free contraceptive devices and counseling to women employees and students, it makes this term of the Supreme Court extremely important to the constitutional debate.

Bank of Wisdom
Electronic publishing to make the world better

Make digital withdrawals from the bank, free! See Humanist Society Librarian, Marios Psomas for details.

If you think our numbers aren't swelling..... (but where are the organized nones?)

From the City Data Statistical Base Hillsborough County

Online at: <http://www.city-data.com/county/religion/Hillsborough-County-FL.html> * Emphasis added

Religion*	Adherents			Congregations		
	2010	2000	Change	2010	2000	Change
None	740,327 (60.2%) !	481,556 (48.2%)	+54%	-	-	-
Catholic	130,973 (10.7%)	166,122 (16.6%)	-21%	28	25	+12%
Evangelical Protestant	224,054 (18.2%)	159,428 (16.0%)	+41%	695	454	+53%
Mainline Protestant	59,348 (4.8%)	61,603 (6.2%)	-4%	106	111	-5%
Other	50,901 (4.1%)	29,243 (2.9%)	+74%	105	36	+192%
Orthodox	2,463 (0.2%)	1,029 (0.1%)	+139%	9	6	+50%
Black Protestant	21,160 (1.7%)	-	-	62	-	-
Total Adherents	488,899 (39.8%)	517,392 (51.8%)	-6%	1,005	632	+59%

Read more: <http://www.city-data.com/county/religion/Hillsborough-County-FL.html#ixzz3x9CXfQPh>



A Special Interest Group of the
CENTER FOR INQUIRY
TAMPA BAY

We live in the age of information, which means that we also live in the age of misinformation. Indeed, you have likely come across more bullshit so far this week than a normal person living 1,000 years ago would in their entire lifetime. If we were to add up every word in every scholarly piece of work published prior to the Enlightenment, this number would still pale in comparison with the number of words used to promulgate bullshit on the internet in the 21st century alone. If you find your head nodding, start shaking it. I'm bullshitting you.

How could I possibly know how much bullshit you have come across this week? What if you're reading this on a Sunday? Who is a 'normal' person living 1,000 years ago? And how could I know how much bullshit they had to deal with?

It was very easy to construct this bullshit. Once I set out

to impress rather than inform, a burden was lifted from my shoulders and placed onto yours. My opening statements could very well be true, but we have no way of knowing. Their truth or falsity were irrelevant to me, the bullshitter.

According to the philosopher Harry Frankfurt, emeritus professor at Princeton University, bullshit is something that is constructed absent of any concern for the truth. This is quite different from lying, which implies a deep concern for the truth (namely, its subversion). Bullshit is particularly pernicious since the bullshitter adopts an epistemic stance that allows for a great deal of agility. For the bullshitter, it doesn't really matter if he is right or wrong. What matters is that you're paying attention.

How might we go about investigating bullshit empirically? Let's take the famed alternative medicine advocate and spiritualist Deepak Chopra as an [example](#). Read these examples of his tweets:

<http://bit.ly/1RokzmC>



Hospices in Hillsborough County: <https://www.caring.com/local/hospices-in-hillsborough-county-florida>

Pinellas: <https://www.caring.com/local/hospices-in-pinellas-county-florida>

Pasco: <https://www.caring.com/local/hospices-in-pasco-county-florida>



The Humanities Institute at USF

<http://humanities-institute.usf.edu>

Wednesday, Jan. 27

CWY 206

6:00pm, reception to follow



Frenemies: The Curious Relationship between the Sciences and the Humanities,

with *Rebecca Newberger Goldstein*

In an era that values STEM over other fields of inquiry, we're delighted to welcome a renowned scholar who shows the importance of connecting sciences and humanities in "Frenemies: The Curious Relationship between the Sciences and the Humanities."



Novelist and philosopher of science Rebecca Newberger Goldstein, a MacArthur "genius" recipient, was awarded the 2014 National Humanities Medal, in recognition of her success in "bringing philosophy into conversation with culture."

Dear Friend Of ACLU,

We're publishing a report today that shows across Florida, Black people are stopped and issued seatbelt citations far out of proportion to the number of Black drivers in Florida. In 2014, Florida law enforcement officers stopped and ticketed Black Floridians for seatbelt violations nearly twice as often as the white population.

[Learn more from our new report, Racial Disparities in Florida Safety Belt Law Enforcement.](#)

Since 2005, the Florida Safety Belt Law has required that every Florida law enforcement agency annually report the race and ethnicity of seatbelt citation recipients to the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (FDHSMV) to help the public identify instances of racial profiling.

Our investigation found that not only are many police departments not complying with the reporting requirements, but the ones that do paint a picture of a state where a black driver is far more likely to be cited for the same minor infraction than a white driver. And as several recent high-profile cases have shown us (Walter Scott and Samuel Dubose, killed by police officers following traffic stops for minor infractions; Sandra Bland, who died in a jail cell in Texas), even routine stops for minor infractions can escalate to deadly situations — especially for Black drivers. specific counties saw even greater disparities. Black drivers were stopped and cited:

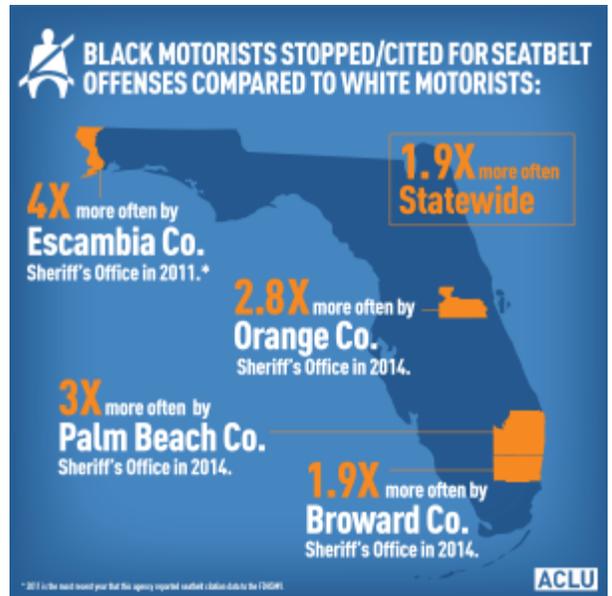
- * 3 times more often than white drivers by the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office in 20142.
- * 8 times more often than white drivers by the Orange County Sheriff's Office in 20141.
- * 9 times more often than white drivers by the Broward County Sheriff's Office in 2014

Florida legislators and law enforcement agencies need to study these findings and find ways to ensure that the law is being applied fairly to everyone, and not used as a tool to target some drivers based on race.



Reason Talks

Captivating talks on science, humanism, skepticism, and other smart stuff.



[Download the report here.](#)



Florida NOW

<http://www.flnow.org/>

NOW is a multi-issue political organization. NOW's self-defined role has been to initiate change for the benefit of the greatest number of people, to affect the legal and institutional structures of the society in a way that systematically expands the choices and possibilities available to all women. In this way, NOW takes action to bring women, as a class, into the mainstream of society, rather than offering aid to individual women in achieving personal solutions or temporary relief from oppression.

It's here. A new epoch—the Anthropocene—has begun.

So says an international group of geoscientists, in a [paper published](#) in January in the journal *Science*. They point to waste disposal, fossil fuel combustion, increased fertilizer use, the testing and dropping of nuclear weapons, deforestation, and more as evidence that human activity has pushed the Earth into the new age that takes its name from the Greek *anthropos*, or human. Some [argue](#) the new era began in the 1950s, the decade that marks the beginning of the so-called "Great Acceleration," when human population and its consumption patterns suddenly speeded up, and nuclear weapons tests dispersed radioactive elements across the globe.

Formalizing the Anthropocene era—a designation that must come officially from a separate body known as the International Commission on Stratigraphy—they write, "expresses the extent to which humanity is driving rapid and widespread changes to the Earth system that will variously persist and potentially intensify into the future." The scientists are likely to present their findings to the Commission later this year. "What this paper does is to say the changes are as big as those that happened at the end of the last ice age," Colin Waters, principal geologist at the British Geological Survey and an author of the study, [told the Guardian](#). "This is a big deal."

As *Smithsonian* magazine [notes](#), "The new study is not the first to propose a formal establishment of an Anthropocene epoch—Simon Lewis and Mark Maslin of the University of College London [made a similar recommendation](#) last year—but it is one of the most comprehensive to date."

Among the tell-tale signs that the Anthropocene has started, according to reporting on the study:

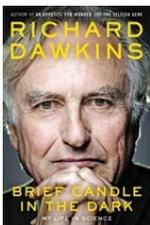
- **Über-industrialization.** "More than half the earth's surface has been transformed into settlements and cities, agricultural land, mines, waste dumps, baseball diamonds, and beyond," [writes](#) journalist Eric Roston at *Bloomberg*. What's more, he adds, "Mineral mining moves three times more sediment every year than all the world's rivers."
- **Plastics everywhere.** "Even most mud samples taken from remote ocean beds now [contain plastic fragments](#)," academics Mark Williams and Jan A. Zalasiewicz [write](#) for *The Conversation*. "Buried in sediment, these materials may be preserved over geological timescales, forming [new rocks](#) and rapidly-evolving 'technofossils' for our descendants to marvel at."
- **Biologic changes.** "We've pushed extinction rates of flora and fauna far above the long-term average," *The Guardian* reports. "The Earth is now on course for a sixth mass extinction which would see 75% of species extinct in the next few centuries if current trends continue."
- **Nuclear fallout.** "Our war efforts have left their mark on geology," [notes](#) *New Scientist*. "When the first nuclear weapon was detonated on 16 July 1945 in New Mexico, it deposited radionuclides—atoms with excess nuclear energy—across a wide area. Since 1952, more explosive thermonuclear weapons have been tested, leaving a global signature of isotopes such as carbon-14 and plutonium-239."
- **Greenhouse gas levels.** As *Common Dreams* has [reported extensively](#), and the geoscientists point out, atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide and methane are higher than they've ever been. "Depending on the trajectory of future anthropogenic forcing, these trends may reach or exceed the envelope of Quaternary interglacial conditions," the study authors write—in other words, conditions could become more extreme than in previous ice ages.

Still, as damning as this evidence is, observers have cautioned against a simplistic view of geologic shifts. "Anthropocene is...suspect because—to the extent that 'we' wish to name the new epoch after a force, it generically identifies that force as humanity as a whole, rather than the identifiable power structures most responsible for the geological Anthropocene traces," [wrote](#) Kieran Suckling, founding director of the Center for Biological Diversity, in 2015.

Indeed, Ian Angus, editor of the ecosocialist journal *Climate and Capitalism*, [argued](#) last year: "An ecosocialist analysis of the Great Acceleration will build on the decisive issues of class and power that are shaping the Anthropocene and will ultimately determine humanity's future."

D. Fulton

© [Common Dreams](#) Jan 8, 2016



Looking for a copy of Richard Dawkins' book?

Exclusive autographed copy, including our program brochure, and bookmark for only \$16.95 plus S&H. Go to:

www.evolvetampa.com



[Appignani Humanist Legal Center](#)

provides legal assistance to defend the constitutional rights of religious and secular minorities by directly challenging clear violations of the Establishment Clause and seeking equal rights for humanists, atheists and other freethinkers. A service of AHA.



Tampa Bay Coalition – February, 2016 Calendar of Reason

This is produced from preliminary information. Check the individual Web sites to insure the event is being held, when and where We are not liable for changes, errors, or omissions. Compiled by Rick O'Keefe & Jim Peterson.

Organizers of these events will be most grateful to all who have the courtesy to RSVP for those events that require it.

Check for more events + details on the Coalition of Reason Web site at: <http://tampabay.unitedcor.org/tampabay/>



21- Sunday, 5 PM	PINELLAS–Suncoast Humanist Dinner	http://bit.ly/Suncoast-Humanists See page 3
02-TBA, Monday, 7 PM	NW HILLSBOROUGH–Tampa Bay Thinkers	Lively discussions. RSVP here: http://bit.ly/TPA-Bay_Thinkers
02-13, 27 & 28	BRADENTON/SARASOTA – Humanist Families	RSVP here: Family outings and other activities. Details & RSVP: http://bit.ly/1Ps9MaN
Every 4 th Friday, 8 PM general meeting	ST. PETERSBURG–Astronomy Club	For several dates, locations, & details: http://bit.ly/StPete-Astronomy-Home http://bit.ly/StPete-Astronomy-Calendar
02-TBA, Monday, 6 PM	N. PINELLAS AREA–CFI Freethought Supper	RSVP is required. Seating is limited to 25! For CFI & TBS paid members. http://bit.ly/CFI-TB_Meetup
See the Web site	TEMPLE TERRACE–UU Tampa Humanists	Details: http://bit.ly/UU-TPA_Humanists-Calendar
02-01, 17 & 24 Lectures	E. TAMPA–Humanities Inst. at USF	See Web site for full listing of many great events and calendar. http://bit.ly/USF-Humanities Locations vary!
02-06 & 14;	CLEARWATER & S TAMPA– Atheists of Florida, Inc.	Details & RSVP : http://bit.ly/AOF-Meetup Office "Party" every Thursday
02-06, Saturday, 1 PM	CLEARWATER – Center for Inquiry	Details & RSVP http://bit.ly/CFI-TB_Meetup
02-06, Saturday, 12:30 PM	CLEARWATER & DUNEDIN–Humanist Soc. of the Suncoast	Details & RSVP http://bit.ly/Suncoast-Humanists
02-06, Sunday, 12:30 PM	E. CLEARWATER–UU Humanists	Details: http://bit.ly/UUC-Humanists
02-12 & 20 at MOSI	E. TAMPA– Museum Astronomical Resource Society (MARS) at MOSI	Details & RSVP : http://bit.ly/1Psc2Pi Other events: http://bit.ly/MARS-home
02-20, Saturday, 11 AM	NE TAMPA – Tampa Humanist Assoc.	Details & RSVP : http://bit.ly/TPA-Humanists
02-21 Sunday, 2 PM	BRANDON–CFI Sunday Social, & Tampa Bay Skeptics	Skeptical interests with critical thinkers. Click to RSVP : http://bit.ly/CFI-TB_Meetup
02-27, Saturday, 10:30 AM; <i>Must have read the book to attend</i>	NW HILLSBOROUGH–CFI Readers Book Discussion	Limited to 12 <i>paid-up CFI members</i> . RSVP is required. http://bit.ly/CFI-TB_Meetup



[I know a lot about cars. I can look at a car's headlights and tell you exactly which way it's coming.](#)

Mitch Hedberg 2001