

Freethought News

Vol. 5 No. 3 March 2016 Jim Peterson, Rick O'Keefe, Editors

What's Inside?

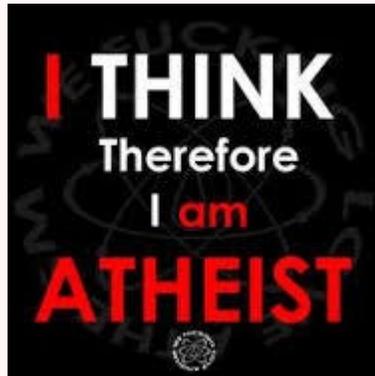
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* TB-CoR Org.

Perplexed?

Sunday Feb. 28th at 1 PM



Everything you wanted to know about Atheism, but didn't know who to ask. Come with your questions and be prepared to discuss what atheism is and is not. No matter if you've been an atheist all your life or are not sure you are an atheist, this discussion is for you. Genial **Joe Reinhardt** is your guide.

[AoF Office](#) 5004 S. Macdill Ave. Tampa, FL
([map](#))

Clearwater UU Humanists



Clearwater, Florida

Find out what's going on with our Supreme Court

Sunday, Mar 20th at 12:30 hear law professor **Michael Allen, JD.** of Eckerd College lead



a discussion of the nature of the court, and the meaning of the current political situation as it relates to the court and the fate of the country.

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.



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 is available at [Google Books](#) now. But the first [can be found here](#).

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.

Take the bus to ...

Reason

the Rally that is,

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

The Reason Rally 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. (You won't want to miss Johnny Depp!)

For more information as it develops, see

Page 13

"We are many! We are strong! We are united!"

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

ACLU Banquet on March 23rd

Get your tickets now. Page [12](#)



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

Dunedin Public Library 223 Douglas Ave, Dunedin, FL ([map](#))

Volume 24 No. 3 March, 2016

Join or renew the Humanist Society of the Suncoast

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



Let us know what you think: in depth! Reader ideas and commentary will be given very favorable consideration.

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

Ethiopia



Join us for our March 12th* meeting back in the Dunedin Public Library for a talk with **Klaus Heinburg**, who has spent years in Ethiopia and east Africa as a Peace Corp advisor, and has some surprising insights to report. Learn more about the cradle of human kind, the home of our species.

* Changed from the 5th because of scheduling conflict.



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

2:00 PM
March 12th

in

The Dunedin Public Library at 223 Douglas Ave. in Dunedin.

Many of us go to dinner afterwards at: **Marguerites Cafe**. Directly across from the Library.



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 Movable Feast:

the Humanist Society monthly social Dinner for March, is at ...the

ACROPOLE

1170 Starkey Rd, Largo, FL 33771, Largo
(Southern Extension of Keene)

We're changing our approach. Now its just open. No RSVP required. Trundle on down for the fine food and fastidiously fabulous fellowship! See [Menu](#). Be there on Sunday Mar 20th by **5 O'clock** to meet with our friends. 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 Health Care? 3-16

Wealthy Brother-in-law

A man suffered a serious heart attack and had bypass surgery. He awakened to find himself in the care of nuns at a Catholic hospital.

As he was recovering, a nun asked how he was going to pay the bill. He replied, in a raspy voice, "No health insurance."

The nun asked if he had money in the bank. He replied, "No money in the bank."

The nun asked, "Do you have a relative who could help you?"

He said, "Just a spinster sister, who is a nun."

The elderly nun, more than slightly perturbed, stands over his bed and pronounces, "Nuns are not spinsters! Nuns are married to God!"

The patient replied, "Then send the bill to my brother-in-law."

Brother Billy's Miracle

Brother Billy, a traveling evangelist, always put on a grand finale at his revival meetings. When he was to preach at a church, he would secretly hire a small boy to sit in the ceiling rafters with a dove in a cage. Toward the end of his sermon, the preacher would shout for the Holy Spirit to come down, and the boy in the rafters would dutifully release the dove.

At one revival meeting, however, nothing happened when the preacher called for the Holy Spirit to descend. He again raised his arms and exclaimed: "Come down, Holy Spirit!"

Still no sign of the dove.

Everyone then heard the anxious voice of a small boy call down from the rafters: "Brother Billy, a big black cat just ate the Holy Spirit. Shall I throw down the cat?"

Thanks to Jan Eisler for passing these on.

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

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Steve Brown,
Lois Fries, Secretary
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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](#)

March 19th, 11 AM

Video Documentary Presentation

The documentary focuses on the question the existence of Jesus. It looks at evidence that supports the messiah myth against the existence of a historical figure. Other aspects of the origin of this popular religion are also examined. Runs for an hour.

Join us for a full discussion afterward.

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 \$10.

Order from [Rick O'Keefe](#)

Tampa Bay CoR
TAMPA BAY COALITION OF REASON

Tampa Bay CoR

9654 W. Linebaugh Ave. PMB #110

Tampa, FL 33626

E-mail: tbcor@metrodirect.net

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/>



Member, TB-CoR



4

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.



Congratulations! Bill Norsworthy on being named to the national board of the Secular Coalition as **Florida representative**. Please sign up [here](#). Volunteer activists are wanted, needed, and appreciated!

A Humanist Discussion group in east Tampa !

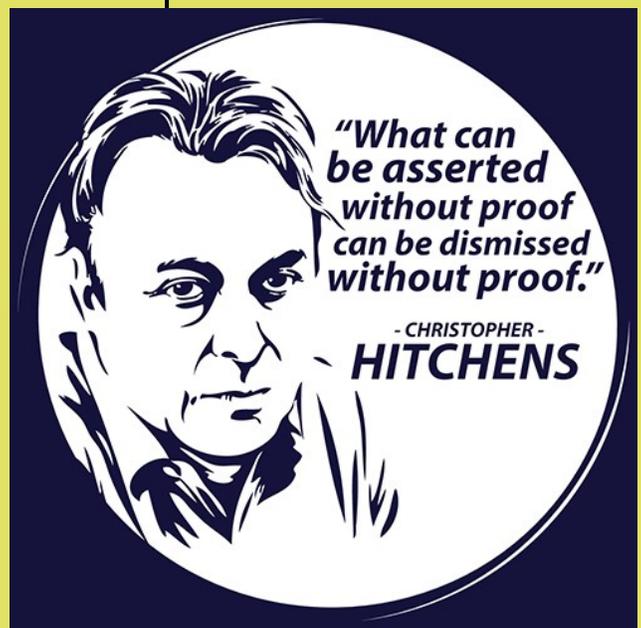
UU Humanists of Tampa

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/>





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

Sustainability

The essence of the term *sustainable* is simple enough: “that which can be maintained over time.” We want our culture, our institutions, and our society to be durable rather than fragile. A society that is sustainable is built to last, while one that is unsustainable will fail sooner or later.

Of course, no society can be maintained forever: astronomers assure us that in several billion years the Sun will have heated to the point that Earth’s oceans will have boiled away and life on our planet will have come to an end. Thus *sustainability* is a relative term. It seems reasonable to use previous civilizations as a yardstick; their lifetimes ranged from several hundred to several thousand years. A sustainable society, then, would be one capable of maintaining itself for many millennia.

The word *sustainable* is often used, in a general and vague way, merely to refer to consumer products reputed to be more environmentally benign than others. But sustainability has a life-or-death importance for us in an era of rapid population growth, resource depletion, widespread species extinctions, and catastrophic climate change. The term is key to understanding humanity’s current ecological dilemma, and to finding a way toward a future in which we live happily within nature’s limits.

Finish online at: www.postcarbon.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, TBPCC Al Hann AoF ~



The attack on Florida women’s reproductive freedom is real.

Soon, the Florida House will vote on an overarching bill, HB 1411, craftily aimed at shutting down health clinics that provide abortions, as well as other healthcare.

- [Tell your state representative to stop endangering women’s health in Florida!](#)

Specifically, HB 1411 would do the following:

- Require medically unnecessary admitting privileges for doctors;
- Bar the donation of fetal tissue to research in Florida;
- Require anyone who refers women to abortion clinics to register with the state;
- Significantly raise state inspection of facilities and patient records, and increase the fees on clinics to cover the costs;
- Prohibit Planned Parenthood from receiving Medicaid funding.

This bill, packaged as a measure to protect women’s health, would actually do the opposite. Abortion is one of the safest medical procedures in modern medicine. The Centers for Disease Control state that abortion is 99% safe. The increased regulations of abortion providers outlined in this bill are medically unnecessary, and place financial burdens on these clinics that could ultimately shut them down. <https://aclufl.org>



Connect with the [ACLU of Florida](#)

BECAUSE FREEDOM CAN’T PROTECT ITSELF JOIN THE ACLU

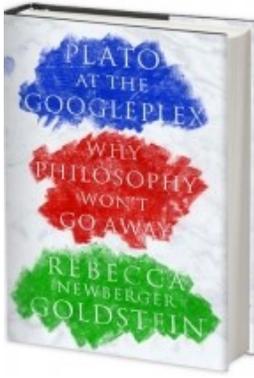
The St. Petersburg Astronomy Club, Inc.

(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.

Meaningful Books

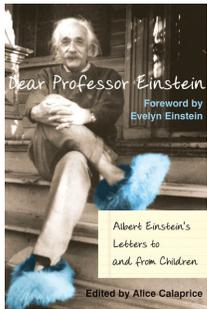
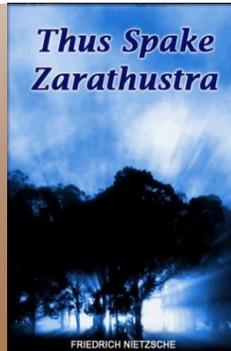


At the heart of the latest work from acclaimed philosopher and novelist Rebecca Newberger Goldstein lies one question: is philosophy obsolete? In *PLATO AT THE GOOGLEPLEX*, Goldstein proves why philosophy is here to stay – and in fact more relevant today than ever before – by revealing its hidden (though 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>

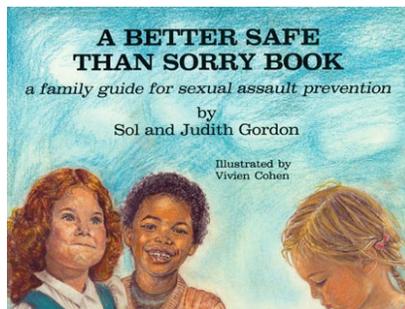


Obviously, Einstein led a busy life, and so he could not answer every letter sent to him. Nonetheless, he made time to respond to those that touched him in some way. To Monique from New York, who asked about the age of the Earth and when it will come to an end, he patiently responded that it is a little 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, 12 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

#	TITLE	AUTHOR
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](http://aof.meetup.com) for details
Website: <http://aof.ngo>

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

March 2016 - 5004 S. MacDill Ave Tampa Fl.

Are you concerned about the upcoming school board elections?

Help Atheists of Florida research candidates running for school board across the state of Florida. We will survey them on their views of state-church separation and the teaching of science, then publish the results so voters can have a better understanding before voting (we will not be endorsing any candidate). This can be done from your home, no need to go anywhere. The first elections are in August, so we need to get started very soon. Just send an email to elections@aof.ngo to volunteer.

Are you going to the Reason Rally?

We are planning on an event the weekend after the Reason Rally – the Reason Revival. If you attended the reason rally, come and share your experiences with us. We will have speakers about reason and critical thinking and snacks of course. Look for info on our meetup site or email us at aof@aof.ngo.

Did you know that this year is the 225th anniversary of the ratification of the Bill of Rights?

We will be having an event in December to observe this anniversary, especially as it relates to the establishment clause. If you would like to help organize this event, please send an e-mail to aof@aof.ngo about your concerns, ideas, etc. and we will discuss them.

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 redoubtable Florida 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.

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*.

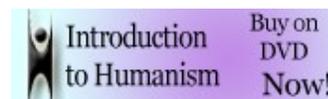


Humanist Families organizes social outings every month. These are opportunities to do something fun, socialize and enjoy each other's company. Sometimes we go to a park, sometimes a museum, sometimes we go swimming. Our group has grown over the past year to the point we now organize Tampa area outings 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](#). See more at: <http://www.Jen-Hancock.com>.

Thank you! **Jennifer Hancock**



Tampa Bay Thinkers



Thinking deep thoughts about serious matters since 2008. Carrollwood Cultural Center, Tampa, every 3rd Monday, monthly at 7 PM.

March 21: Topic:
Jeremy Rifkin's ideas on Energy, Economics & Climate

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



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.

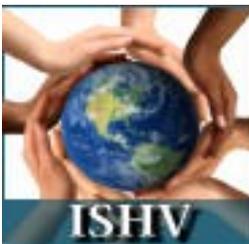
Write **Rodrick Colbert** at: freethinkersusf@gmail.com.



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

Florida Judge Rejects CFI Suit against Taxpayer Funded Christian Rehab

“Gobsmacked.” “Baffled.” “Flummoxed.” Words like these accurately describe the reaction of CFI staff to [a ruling by a Florida judge](#) on CFI’s lawsuit to stop the taxpayer funding of sectarian rehabilitation programs.

Since 2007, CFI and Florida taxpayers Richard and Elaine Hull have been waging a legal battle to put a stop to a blatant violation of both the Florida and U.S. Constitutions, in which two explicitly Christian organizations, Prisoners of Christ and Lamb of God, have been subsidized by the state of Florida to provide substance abuse rehabilitation services to former prison inmates. Both organizations are self-described ministries and openly acknowledge that their treatment methods are based on biblical principles and on the need to give one’s life to Jesus Christ.

In 2015, CFI filed for summary judgment on this case, given that the facts were so abundantly clear: two churches that provided a Christian recovery service were being funded by Florida taxpayers, which flies in the face of the state constitution, which unambiguously states that “no revenue of the state or any political subdivision or agency thereof shall ever be taken from the public treasury directly or indirectly in aid of any church, sect, or religious denomination or in aid of any sectarian institution.”

Despite these compelling facts, a Leon County circuit court judge ruled that the state’s funding of these religious programs was indeed constitutional, inexplicably claiming that these Christian substance abuse programs did not promote Christianity nor were the services performed “significantly sectarian.”

“A key flaw in the court’s reasoning is that because participation in these indisputably faith-based programs is voluntary, the state isn’t aiding religious activities,” [Ron Lindsay explained to Friendly Atheist](#). “That’s like saying a state could fund a church and minister and defend that practice by saying no one is forced to go to church.”

The Center for Inquiry is evaluating the decision and the current legal landscape in Florida to determine whether it should appeal. One problem is that the intermediate appellate court with jurisdiction over the case has been stacked in recent years with Rick Scott appointees.

CFI to Merge with the Richard Dawkins Foundation for Reason & Science

The Center for Inquiry began an exciting new chapter in its history last week, as CFI announced it will [merge with the Richard Dawkins Foundation for Reason & Science](#), and that its chief executive, **Robyn Blumner**, would also become CEO of CFI.

In March of 2015, [Ronald A. Lindsay announced](#) that he would aim to step down as president and CEO by the end of the year. Having led CFI since 2008, Ron explained that he sought to ensure that no one figure would come to represent all that CFI is. In a Free Thinking blog post, Ron wrote:

I think it is a good idea for leadership of organizations, whether it’s a for-profit or a nonprofit corporation, to change every so often. Static leadership can produce static ideas. Plus, the longer one stays in a leadership position, the more likely it is that the organization will become identified with that person, which, on the whole, I do not believe to be a desirable outcome. Secular organizations in particular should be wary of fostering a cult of personality or of acquiescing in lifetime tenure for leaders. Too often we’re in danger of being mistaken for religions; no need to compound that problem by emulating the leadership practices of religious sects.

And so a thorough search began for a new CEO for the Center for Inquiry. That search led to Robyn Blumner, the president and CEO of the Richard Dawkins Foundation for Reason & Science, an organization whose mission mirrors CFI’s, and with whom CFI had often partnered on various projects and initiatives. The idea to bring Robyn on board along with combining the talent and resources of these two organizations was sparked, and the ball got rolling on the merger of the Center for Inquiry with the Richard Dawkins Foundation

What was decided was that CFI and RDFRS would join together as equals (neither organization was “taking over” the other) under the name of the Center for Inquiry, and RDFRS would become a division of CFI. Robyn Blumner would become CEO of the new organization, with Ron Lindsay temporarily remaining as president during the leadership transition. Robyn officially became CEO of the new Center for Inquiry on January 25.

Support CFI–Tampa Bay, Join now to keep informed about our activities, participate in our programs, and become a member!



This is all, of course, just the beginning. There is much to be done and planned, and the challenges faced by the proponents of science and reason are as daunting as ever. But now the Center for Inquiry can aim higher and dream bigger in pursuit of its mission. CFI extends the warmest of welcomes to the staff, board, volunteers, and supporters of the Richard Dawkins Foundation for Reason & Science, as we continue to count on all of you to help us do more good than ever before.

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."

Tell Congress: Urge Bangladesh to Protect Fundamental Human Rights

One year ago today, machete-wielding Islamic extremists murdered Bangladeshi-American author Avijit Roy as he was leaving a book fair in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Roy's wife, writer and activist Bonya Ahmed, was seriously injured in the attack.

Roy had been a strong ally of the Center for Inquiry, partnering with us to free jailed bloggers in Bangladesh, and writing for our magazine *Free Inquiry*.

Sadly, Roy's death was just the first in a string of five gruesome murders of secularist writers and publishers in Bangladesh. To make matters worse, extremists have also threatened Christian priests and, just last week, murdered a leading Hindu priest. Further, police have uncovered plans to attack more secularist writers.

CFI has been working tirelessly to defend threatened secularists and religious minorities, and promote human rights in Bangladesh. But today, we need your help.

We urge you to take a moment to contact your U.S. representative and tell them to co-sponsor the Bangladesh human rights resolution.

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.



Compassion & Choices
Choice & Care at the End of Life.



The Center for Inquiry isn't just a think tank—we're a world-wide movement of humanists, skeptics, freethinkers, and atheists, all working together at the grassroots level to advance scientific and secular values **where we live**.

From social events to educational lectures, community volunteering to national advocacy, CFI members are living proof that there are good, ethical alternatives to religious and paranormal worldviews.

Whether we identify as atheists, freethinkers, humanists, secularists, or skeptics, we all share basic values rooted in inquiry, naturalism, and the scientific method—values that urgently need to be demonstrated and advanced in the broader culture.

There must be a system that can unite all of our voices when success requires our voice to be strong. That system is the new [CFI Network](#)

From weekly book clubs and dinner socials to major lectures with prominent speakers, CFI's grassroots groups host dozens of activities every month. For monthly branch activities, look for a group near you in these lists of [U.S.](#) and [international](#) CFI Branches, and then check out their individual event calendars.

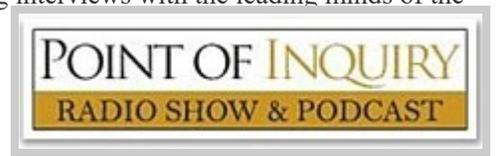
We know it's not always possible to make it to a CFI event, but that doesn't mean you have to miss out! CFI has a thriving online community where the freethinking never stops.

CFI's YouTube Channel

CFI has been granted a coveted YouTube nonprofit channel which allows us to make available hundreds of hours of CFI programming for FREE without the standard 10-minute-content-limit reloading frustrations. You'll find this programming on our [CFI YouTube channel](#). If you'd like, you can subscribe to the CFI channel and you'll be notified every time we add a new program to the list.

CFI's Podcasts:

[Point of Inquiry](#) is the premiere radio show and podcast of the Center for Inquiry featuring interviews with the leading minds of the day, including Nobel Prize-winning scientists, public intellectuals, social critics, and renowned entertainers. You can listen to the episodes on your computer, copy them to a CD for your car or home stereo, or download them to your iPod or MP3 player, in addition to hearing the show on a few dozen campus and community radio stations across North America.



This week on Point of Inquiry: ["Pro-Choice Without Apology" with Katha Pollitt](#) **[Center Stage](#)** is the weekly podcast and radio series that brings you stimulating lectures and events from the CFI stages at its headquarters in Amherst, NY, and branches in New York City, Washington D.C., Los Angeles, and elsewhere. There's always something thought-provoking and controversial on stage at *some* CFI location!

This week on Center Stage: [Episode 229: "Uses and Abuses of Brain Imaging" with Scott O. Lilienfeld](#)

[The Human Bible](#): The Bible is a book cobbled together long ago over the course of many centuries by regular, flawed human beings, and yet its contents are considered sacrosanct by billions of people. But even those who consider it an infallible guide cannot agree on its meaning! Surely, there must be someone who can help us come to terms with this weighty, daunting tome! Enter Dr. Robert M. Price; biblical scholar, atheist, and former Baptist pastor. In *The Human Bible*, Price deconstructs and demystifies this foundational book, all from a rational, secular, and non-ideological perspective—and all with a good dose of humor.



This week on The Human Bible: [Episode 035: Revelations based on real visions? What does "lord" mean anyway? And women "saved" by having babies?](#) CFI's Blog: "[Free Thinking](#)"

Check out our blog, [Free Thinking](#). Regular contributors include Ronald A. Lindsay (CFI's President & CEO), Debbie Goddard (Director of African Americans for Humanism and CFI On Campus), Joe Nickell and Ben Radford (CSI Investigators Extraordinaire), and many others.



CFI's Discussion Forum

If you're looking for more of a two-way discussion, the [CFI Forum](#) is the place for you. You'll find lots of different topics where you can jump right in and join the freethinking and debating. Meet other people from all over the world who share your values and participate in CFI's "virtual community" online. **CFI products** give you a great opportunity to show others that science, reason, and secular values are important to you. Proceeds are used to help support CFI programming—and they're great conversation-starters, too! Visit the [CFI Online Store](#) to see what's available today.

The Humanities Institute at USF

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

Wednesday, Mar. 9

CWY 109

6:00pm, reception to follow

POETRY READING BY DISTINGUISHED
SCHOLAR-IN-RESIDENCE,

TERRANCE HAYES



Terrance Hayes, a MacArthur “genius” fellow and professor of English at the University of Pittsburgh, has become one of the country’s most celebrated poets, addressing themes of popular culture, race, music, and masculinity. His poetry collections include *Lighthouse* (2010), which won the National Book Award, and was also a finalist for a National Book Critics Circle Award. Earlier collections were *Wind in a Box* (2006); *Hip Logic* (2002), a finalist for an *LA Times* Book Award and an Academy of American Poets James Laughlin Award; and *Muscular Music* (1999), which won a Kate Tufts Discovery Award. His most recent collection (2015) is *How to Be Drawn*, and a finalist for the National Book Award.



Pinellas County chapter

Bill of Rights Banquet Join us Wednesday Evening,

March 23, 2016

Banquet Masters

13355 49th Street N.
Clearwater, FL 33762

Order of Events

6-7 p.m. Registration, Social Hour – Music & Cash Bar 7 p.m.

Opening Remarks, Board Elections, Program, and Buffet Dinner

Reservations required, \$30 per person, cash or check only. R.S.V.P. at 727-347-4266 or email mbuu@earthlink.net.

The Gardner W. Beckett Jr. Civil Liberties Award Recipient:
League of Women Voters, North and South Pinellas County Chapters

The Irene Miller Vigilance in Journalism Award Recipient:
Investigative Team for “Failure Factories,” Tampa Bay Times

Fighting Religious Privilege at the Supreme Court after the Death of Scalia

All eyes are on the Supreme Court following the death on February 13 of **Justice Antonin Scalia**, a deeply religious and conservative jurist if ever there was one. His absence on the court, as well as the utter deadlock over replacing him, will have enormous implications for many of the issues of great importance to the freethought community, most immediately on the issue of reproductive rights (more on that in a moment).

CFI President **Ronald A. Lindsay** considers the overarching judicial philosophy of Scalia, “originalism,” and hopes that it is “laid to rest” along with the late justice. [Writing at Huffington Post](#), Ron says, “The more fundamental flaw [with originalism] is to assume that the Founders wanted us to use detailed historical research, or perhaps necromancy, to discern the specific things they were thinking of at the time they wrote the Constitution.” CFI’s Council for Secular Humanism also republished a [2014 piece by Michael B. Paulkovich](#) from *The American Rationalist* on Scalia’s “Bible-based agenda.”

Days after the death of Justice Scalia, the Center for Inquiry joined with American Atheists to [file an amicus brief](#) with the Supreme Court on the case of *Zubik v. Burwell*. A sort of *Hobby Lobby-ad absurdum*, religious nonprofits are claiming that *the mere act of declaring their intention to opt out* of the contraceptive mandate of the Affordable Care Act constitutes a violation of their religious freedom. Simply signing a paper would be an offense against their conscience.

[In our press release](#) about the brief, CFI Legal Director **Nick Little** says, “This ludicrous case is a transparent attempt to legislate from the pulpit. It showcases the intolerable consequences of RFRA, a bad law that has predictably been twisted into a scattershot weapon used by those who want to see their narrow religious beliefs imposed on everyone else. It is religious privilege at its worst.” CFI’s new CEO **Robyn Blumner** gets to the heart of the matter, saying, “This is about religious employers unconstitutionally inflicting their faith tenets on female employees.”

In January, CFI assembled a coalition of prominent scientists and scholars to weigh in on the deeply controversial Texas abortion case of *Whole Woman’s Health v. Cole*. [CFI argues](#) that the so-called “experts” who had been brought in during the trial of the case to give testimony in favor of the draconian over-regulation of abortion providers were peddling pseudoscience and outright falsehoods and that Supreme Court justices should not uphold regulations based on partisan ideology masquerading as science.

How the death of Justice Scalia will impact these cases is yet to be known



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.

THERE'S
**ROOM
 FOR YOU**
 ON THE
**REASON
 BUS**




JUNE 4, 2016
 WASHINGTON, D.C.

THE
REASON ★ **RALLY**

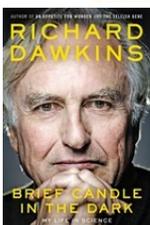
JOIN US FOR THE LARGEST GATHERING OF THE SECULAR MOVEMENT IN WORLD HISTORY.

BUY YOUR BUS TICKETS NOW AND RIDE CAREFREE TO DC

PRIVATE, COMFORTABLE TRANSPORTATION ★ SAME DAY ROUND TRIP ★ SAVE ON GAS, TOLLS, & PARKING

The Freethought Society is in need of finding "Bus Captains" to help before and during the bus trip. Please volunteer as soon as possible by calling Margaret Downey at: (610) 793-2737

Tickets can be purchased at <http://rallybus.net/reason-rally>



Looking for a copy of Richard Dawkins' book?

Exclusive autographed copy, including our program brochure, and bookmark for only \$46.95 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 – March, 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/>



03-05- Sunday, 2 PM	CLEARWATER & DUNEDIN– Humanist Soc. of the Suncoast	RSVP http://bit.ly/Suncoast-Humanists See Page 2
03-21 , Monday, 7 PM	NW HILLSBOROUGH– Tampa Bay Thinkers	Lively discussions. RSVP here: http://bit.ly/TPA-Bay_Thinkers At Carrollwood Cultural Center, Tampa
03-TBA	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
03-TBA, Monday, 6 PM	N. PINELLAS AREA– CFI Freethought Supper	RSVP is required. Seating is limited to 25! <i>For CFI & TBS paid members.</i> http://bit.ly/CFI-TB_Meetup
See the Web site	TEMPLE TERRACE– UU Tampa Humanists	Details: http://bit.ly/UU-TPA_Humanists-Calendar
03-09 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! See Page 12
03-13 Sunday	CLEARWATER & S TAMPA– Atheists of Florida, Inc.	Details & RSVP : http://bit.ly/AOF-Meetup Family Fun Day Also, don't forget Office "Party" every Thursday 3 PM
03-TBA Saturday, 1 PM	CLEARWATER – Center for Inquiry	Details & RSVP http://bit.ly/CFI-TB_Meetup
03-21, Sunday, 5:00 PM	Clearwater, Largo Suncoast Humanist Society	http://bit.ly/Suncoast-Humanists at the Acropole in Largo See page 3Details PINELLAS–Suncoast Humanist Dinner
03-20, Sunday, 12:30 PM	E. CLEARWATER– UU Humanists	Details: http://bit.ly/UUC-Humanists See Page 1
03-11 & 19 at MOSI	E. TAMPA– Museum Astronomical Resource Society (MARS) at MOSI	Details & RSVP : http://bit.ly/1Psc2Pi Other events: http://bit.ly/MARS-home
03-19, Saturday, 11 AM	NE TAMPA – Tampa Humanist Assoc.	Details & RSVP : http://bit.ly/TPA-Humanists
03-20 Sunday, 2 PM	BRANDON–CFI Sunday Social, & Tampa Bay Skeptics	Skeptical interests with critical thinkers. Click to RSVP : http://bit.ly/CFI-TB_Meetup
03-26, 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



“Life has no meaning a priori... It is up to you to give it a meaning, and value is nothing but the meaning that you choose.” — Jean-Paul Sartre