

# AOF News & Views

Sacramento, California

March 2011

*Sunday, March 13, 1:30-4:00 p.m.*

## **Darien De Lu and Ellen Schwartz from Sac-WILPF**

### **Special Points of Interest**

*Darien De Lu and Ellen Schwartz from Sac-WILPF (page 1)*

*AOF in April—Social Intelligence and Atheism (page 1)*

*Darwin Day 2010 Recap, by David Flanders (page 3)*

*AOF Adopt-A-Highway Event Recap, by Don Knutson (pages 3, 7)*

*AOF Financial Report, 2010, by Ken Nahigian (pages 4-5)*

**Please note: this months General Meeting will be in Room 9 of the Sierra 2 Center, not the usual Room 10. The rooms are close, so no one should get lost. Just walk up to the door to Room 10 and turn around. Voilà.**

In commemoration of International Women's Day, AOF proudly presents Darien DeLu and colleague Ellen Schwartz from Sac-WILPF, the Sacramento-valley branch of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. Darien and Ellen will inform & engage us about women's votes in today's political environment.



*Darien DeLu (right) will speak in March*

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## **AOF in April: Social Intelligence and Atheism**

What should you say when someone offers to "bless you" after a sneeze? How should you respond when a theist argues we are a Christian nation? When a family member tries to push their beliefs on your children, how can you keep the peace? Is there a polite way to tell someone they're wrong? How should you respond when asked to say grace at someone else's home?

[Andrea Griffith, the Social I.Q. Lady](#), teaches us to use Social Intelligence to manage our relationships with believers. Whether those relationships are personal, business or political one can learn how to combat



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## President's Message

### By Jerry Sloan

I want to send a BIG thank you to the Darwin Day Committee and the volunteers who staffed the event. I thought it was one of the best we have had in years.

Dr. Barbara Forrest of Southern Louisiana University gave us a chilling picture of what is happening in Louisiana due to the influence of the Radical Religious Right (RRR) on the Louisiana legislature.

There are several states in the South where the RRR is making inroads to getting some form of Intelligent Design (ID) to be taught in public schools.

Across the country the RRR is making progress on is-

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understanding and acceptance of  
atheism in our community.**

sues of ID, abortion and gay rights. They have done this by toning down their rhetoric and appealing as in the case of ID by asking what is wrong with teaching all sides of the issue.

This argument sound reasonable until someone suggests that we should also teach the world is standing on the backs of several elephants.

The RRR is introducing legislation in several states to allow merchants, doctors and pharmacists to discriminate against clients/customers on the basis of religious convictions. Under these laws a pharmacist would not have to sell a woman birth control pills on the basis of his/her religious beliefs.

For the time being I think we in California are safe from such things being passed in our legislature but we need to be vigilant and ready to speak out should it arise.

Let's look forward to the General Meeting on March 13 and the lecture saluting International Women's Day, AOF proudly presents Darien DeLu and compatriot Ellen Schwartz from Sac-WILPF, the Sacramento-valley branch of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom2.

See you there!

## AOF Board (2011)

**President:** Jerry Sloan

**Vice President:** Mynga Futrell

**Secretary:** Jillian Stanley

**Treasurer:** Ken Nahigian

**Directors at large:** Kristi Craven, Mynga Futrell, Peggy Lucas, Mario Sandri, Jerry Sloan, Jillian Stanley, Vincent Wales

## AOF Standing Committees

All AOF members are urged to volunteer in the organization. There are openings in every committee listed here. Please contact the chair or coordinator of any area of interest to you to learn details of getting involved. We would love to have your participation! Phone AOF 916-447-3589 or e-mail [aofboard@aofonline.org](mailto:aofboard@aofonline.org) for direct contact to relevant personnel.

### Programs and Events Committee

Program Planning (Team Coordinator, *Open*)

Meeting Matters / Logistics (Team Coordinator, *Open*)

Social Activities (Team Coordinator, *Open*)

### Membership Committee

Members Tracking (Team Coordinator, Ken Nahigian)

"Freethought Friends" (Team Coordinator, Jillian Stanley)

Outreach / Recruiting (Team Coordinator, Steve Campbell)

### Communications Committee

Beverly Church, Chair

AOF News Team (newsletter editor, events editor, public editor, postmaster, webmaster)

### Education, Activism and Service Committee

Service Projects Coordinator: Don Knutson

Education/Action Coordinator: Mynga Futrell

### Building / Reason House Committee

Beverly Church, Chair

Paul Geisert, Mynga Futrell, Mario Sandri

### Freethought Day 2011: Date to-be-announced

Beverly Church, Chair. (Save the date! – It's a celebration of reason and church/state separation)

### Darwin Day 2012: Date to-be-announced

Mynga Futrell and Bronda Silva, Co-Chairs

(Save the date! – It's a celebration of science and humanity)

## AOF Voluntariat

### Affiliation Liaisons

Mynga Futrell, Atheists Alliance International (AAI), <http://atheistalliance.org/>

Jerry Sloan, American Atheists (AA), <http://atheists.org/>

Jerry Sloan, American Humanist Association (AHA), <http://americanhumanist.org/>

Jerry Sloan, Council for Secular Humanism (CSH), <http://secularhumanism.org/>

### AOF News Team

Newsletter Editor: Kevin Schultz

Postmaster: Jerry Sloan

Webpeoples: Pat Kelley, Robert Poeschel (Openings for Events Editor and Public Editor)

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*Happy Birthday, Charlie!*

## February Darwin Day Speaker Recap

By David Flanders

The speaker for the 2011 Darwin Day event was activist Dr. Barbara Forrest. Barbara Forrest and Paul Gross wrote the book "Creationism's Trojan Horse". In the book they describe the creationist aggressive political and public relations campaign to get creationism taught in public schools. The book says the ultimate goal of the creationist is to establish a theocracy in America. Thus far, the Discovery Institute--which hasn't discovered anything scientific--continues to receive millions of dollars to promote creationism in public schools.

Barbara spoke about combating creationism in its various guises in the state of Louisiana. She found to fight effectively, one must know the enemy. And that enemy can be like a chameleon, changing "color" to promote its agenda. Some considered Louisiana Senate Bill 733 to be a veiled attempt to add religion to science classes. Proponents offer deceptive arguments about encouraging students to think critically. But the real intent is to introduce classroom materials that raise misleading objections to the well-documented science of evolution and offer a religious idea called intelligent design as a supposed alternative that would leave students confused about science and unprepared to excel in the modern workforce.

In 2008, Governor Bobby Jindal signed into law the teaching of creationism. The discovery institute celebrated their victory. Some fear the law will provide much work for the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). The discovery institute continues its quest to have other states teach creationism.

Barbara encouraged the audience to be activist in making sure that real science be taught in schools. The evidence is that evolution is true. And truth does matter.

*Sacramento Coalition of Reason*

## AOF Adopt-A-Highway Cleanup Event Recap

By Don Knutson

On Charles Darwin's **202nd Birthday**, February 12, five AOF volunteers hit the highway to clean it up and to make it look better. All told, over a two-hour period, **14 bags of trash**, principally discarded plastic cups and other beverage containers, were collected. Newcomer **Peter D. Henan-White** was joined by old time veterans, **Joe Fiffick, Don Knutson, Ken Nahigian and John Reiger**. Ken did make history on this day. He was the first in the 15-year recorded history of our cleanup to have found a **sex toy**. When he turned it over to me, I immediately inspected and it was indeed broken. Our state legislature has moved swiftly to ban hand-held **cell phone** use while driving as well as texting, but it is clear from this discovery that there are **other items in use** we should be worrying about on our high

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### Atheists and Other Freethinkers



AOF is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit educational organization. It is one of 50 member societies of the **Atheist Alliance International** ("a positive voice for atheism"). AOF also maintains affiliations with the

Council for Secular Humanism, American Atheists, and the American Humanist Association.

### AOF's Statement of Purpose

*The purpose of the association, Atheists and Other Freethinkers, is to promote the civic understanding of atheism and the acceptance of atheists in our community. Through educational programs, projects, and publications, AOF will extend secular perspectives, including the separation of religion and government and the right to think and speak freely on these perspectives.*

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*Print subscription \$12 per year, e-mail subscription free to all on request.*

Reprinting of original material in this newsletter is granted to atheist, freethought, rationalist, skeptical, and secular humanist groups as long as acknowledgment is given. Exchange of newsletters with aforementioned organizations is solicited.

## Historical "Figures" Series

# AOF Financial Report, 2010

By Ken Nahigian

For loyal members, supporters and all readers of this newsletter, we present the AOF financial report for calendar year 2010. Despite outreach and recruitment efforts, AOF has suffered some continued attrition of membership. As of January a year ago, our voting membership was 92; by the most recent tally, it was 81. The General Fund also diminished sharply, but for good reason: buoyed by a generous donation from a charter member, in March, the Board of Directors voted to set aside \$47,500 of the Fund as seed-money for "Reason House," a proposed meeting hall to be owned and shared equally by all contributing groups within the Sacramento Community of Reason. Therefore we ended the year with "only" a bit under \$7,000 in the General Fund. But we now safeguard the "Reason House Fund" in a separate account, and a refreshed Reason Hall Committee continues to review properties for acquisition. If you have ideas, or would like to help with this, please contact AOF president Jerry Sloan via the Contact Form on the AOF website, or call **916-447-3589** (AOF voicemail).

Meanwhile, donations continue to be generous. Many thanks to supporters who remember AOF with annual gifts or via the United Way giving program.

## AOF Cash Flow Report for Calendar Year 2010

AOF holds its funds in three accounts: a bank account (US Bank), a Money Market fund (Scudder Inc.), and an investment account (Fidelity Funds).

### Beginning Bank Balance (1 Jan 2010): \$612.65

*[numbered line items refer to pie-charts on following page]*

#### Revenue/Income:

Memberships & Subscriptions: \$1,559.04 [1]  
 Donations: \$2,841.59 [2]  
 Raffle Revenue: \$18.00 [3]  
 Transfers in from other accounts: \$2,499.00 [4]  
**Total in: \$6,917.63**

#### Expense/Outgo:

Newsletter Expense: \$753.10 [1]  
 Telephone/Voicemail Expense: \$339.47 [2]  
 Speaker Expense & Gifts: \$174.83 [3]  
 Charitable Donations & Grants: \$150.00 [4]  
 Merchandise for Sales: \$172.30 [5]  
 Tabling and Outreach: \$100.00 [6]  
 Meeting Room Rent: \$1,635.00 [7]  
 Post Office Box Rent: \$56.00 [8]  
 Website Expense: \$2,000.00 [9]  
 Transfers out to other accounts: \$1,000 [10]  
 Administrative Costs: \$58.01 [11]  
 Taxes & fees: \$49.00 [12]  
**Total out: \$4,116.71**

**Ending Bank Balance (31 Dec 2010): \$1,059.57**

#### Money Market Account:

Beginning Balance: \$6,687.95  
 Dividends received: \$0.86  
**Ending Balance: \$6,688.81**

#### Investment Account:

Beginning Balance: \$47,577.54  
 Interest & Dividends: \$779.60  
 Deposits & Transfers In: \$1,000.00  
 Withdrawals & Transfers Out: \$2,000.00  
**Ending Balance: \$46,603.49**

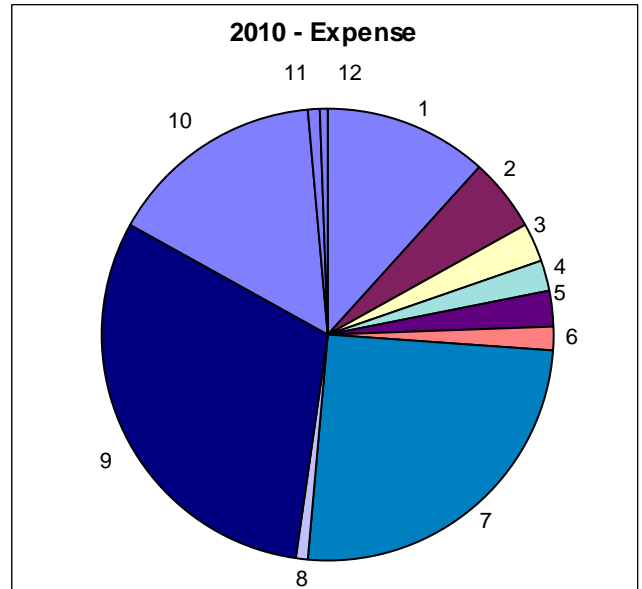
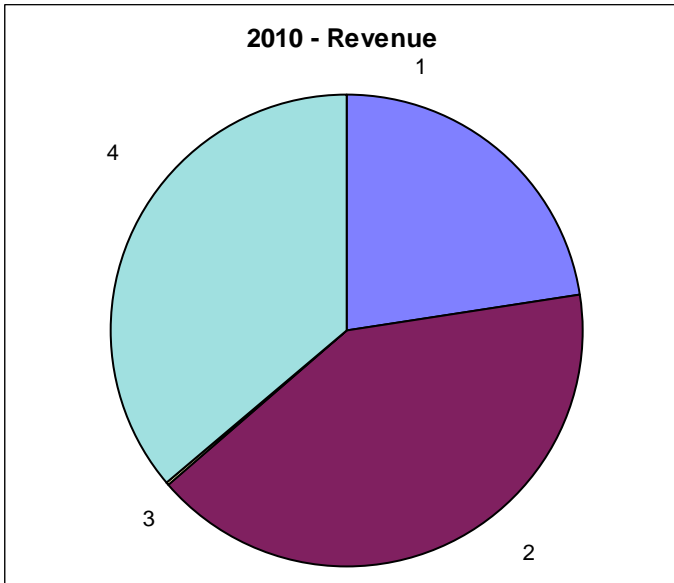


**Total, all accounts: \$54,351.87** (Total on Hand)

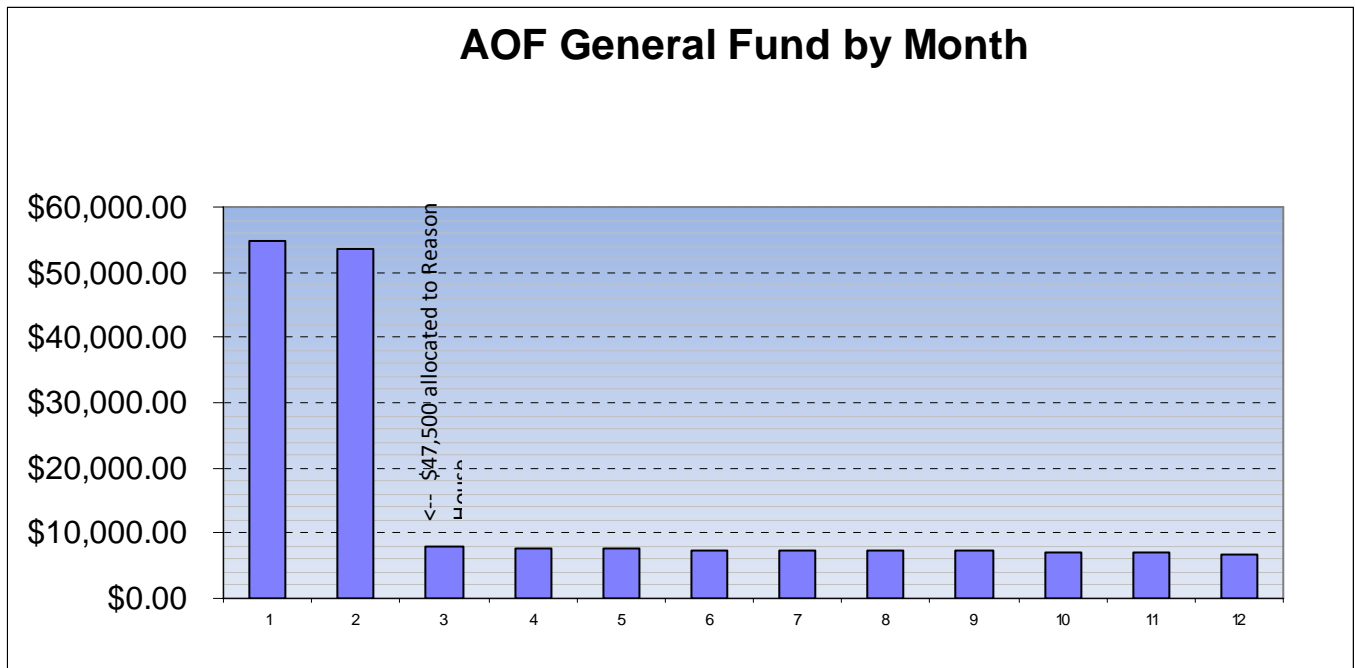
**Allocated for Reason House Fund: \$47,500.00**

**Allocated for Sound System Fund: \$13.05**

**AOF General Fund: \$6,838.82** (Available at end of 2010)



Notes: Revenue/Expense pie charts refer to Bank Account only. Pie chart numbers correspond to line-item numbers on the previous page.



Find the full 2010 financial report on the AOF web site:  
<http://www.aofonline.org/legal-documents/financial-reports.html>

# AOF Subscription / Membership Form

**Mail to: AOF, PO Box 15182, Sacramento CA 95851-0182 (Attn: Membership)**

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Street \_\_\_\_\_ Apt. # \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP + 4 \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-mail address (please print!) \_\_\_\_\_

## Membership Level (please circle one):

Patron (\$50)    Family (\$30)    Individual (\$20)    Low-income (\$10)

**Note: Membership does not include a newsletter subscription**

## Newsletter subscription:

- Send my printed newsletter by postal mail (\$12 extra)  
 Send my newsletter by email (*Free!*) – my email address is above

**Additional Donation:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Total enclosed:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*AOF is a 501(c)(3) Educational Association – Dues & Donations are tax-deductible as permitted by law. Non-members may receive the AOF Newsletter (same rate - \$12 printed, free via email).*

## News from here and there...

### AOF Family News

#### **Kay Dickey, former AOF President, writes to us from Oregon:**

"I was in Portland on Sunday—Pioneer Square—and lo and behold, there was a group of Humanists there with a booth, serving birthday cake (three HUGE sheet cakes with frosting dinosaurs) to the public. It was great to see them there, but it made me (sniff, sniff) miss my Sacramento freethought buddies. Glad to hear that you guys had a good D'Day celebration."

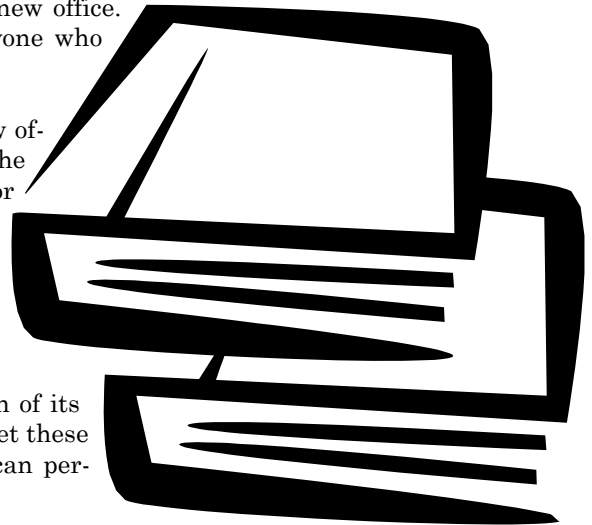
#### **Mynga Futrell, former AOF President, writes:**

"I am happy to report the conclusion of the recent move of "Brights Central" to a new office location. BC is now at 3001 J ("Jay") Street, across the street from Lyon's restaurant and just a block away from the previous Alhambra and J location.

With most moving boxes unpacked and computers reconnected and the heat turned on, the new hub of the international Internet constituency of Brights is now operating out of the new office. (Phone ahead to arrange a time if you plan to visit, because everyone who works at "BC" is part-time only.)

I have taken note of the fact that there's a bit more space at the new office [of The Brights' Net], and so I have offered to make a portion of the space available to shelve the "AOF library" of donated books that for the past few years has been residing in boxes in **Bev Church's** garage. **Dave Flanders** recently helped out with his truck, moving the boxes of books to the Brights' office and also accompanying Mynga to Ruland's Used Office Furniture to pick up bookcases that Mynga and Paul recently purchased for the office.

The new AOF Board of Directors is designating Mynga as custodian of its "Pengelley" and "Massen" collections and hoping she will be able to get these books onto shelves sometime in the near future so AOF members can perhaps have a look at them."



(Continued from page 1)

With the centennial of women winning the right to vote in California fast upon us, what is the value of voting in today's political world—especially after the recent Citizens United Supreme Court decision, which cut limits on campaign donations from corporations and other groups? What is the role of today's voter? Furthermore, women's votes in the US have consistently shown striking differences from men's votes—what might explain these differences? How have women's votes changed the political landscape in the US?

Darien De Lu grew up in Sacramento and continues to return to the City of the Confluence after various sojourns in other US cities and wide-ranging global travels. For most of her life she has been an activist for numerous peace, justice, and environmental issues. She has been arrested for civil disobedience actions and helped organize nonviolence "monitors" for such actions. Many who have never met her rely on "Darien's Ballot Guide" to the California ballot measures, which she researches, writes, and publishes for each election. Darien is also a long-time member of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF). In 1995 she traveled with some 200 other WILPFers on a chartered train from Helsinki, Finland to Beijing, China for the United Nations Women's Conference. She later served for nearly ten years on the U.S. WILPF national board - including as UIS. Co-president.

The WILPF is an international activist organization which works through over 20 "sections" in countries around the world and in the United Nations as a recognized non-governmental organization. WILPF emphasizes analysis and strategic activism. WILPF seeks to find, point out and address the connections among organizations, structures, and issues, to get at - and eliminate - the root causes of war.

**Location** : Sierra 2 Community Center, Room 9, 2791 24th Street, Sacramento

**Contact** : 916-447-3589

Help make it a fun meeting! Bring something light & edible for the snack table if you can: finger foods, fruit juice or soda pop. (Nothing needing utensils, please.)

(Continued from page 1)

superstition, religion and ignorance with grace, style and information.

Learn how Andrea went from die-hard Christian to staunch atheist. Be prepared to laugh, cry, and think as she tells her personal story of struggle, divorce, and rejection of a lie. Andrea will draw you in with her tale of hope and will help you discover your Socially Intelligent Atheist inside.

Andrea Griffith resides in Folsom with her husband and two of her sons, Sean and Ryan. Her oldest son Ben lives in the Los Angeles area and is a wonderful father to her grandson Owen. Her best-selling book, *The Fruits and Greens Diet*, is based on a naturalistic approach to dietary needs. Andrea's latest book on *Atheist Etiquette* is due out later this year. Meanwhile, you can read her brilliant blog at [http://www.rawtada.com/Home\\_Page.html](http://www.rawtada.com/Home_Page.html).

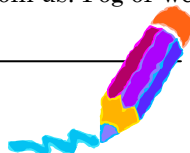
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ways! Though the highway looked much better after we were done, there was much debris left behind particularly on the southbound lane side.

Five volunteers cannot be expected to do as thorough of a cleaning as the highway deserves. So, we will return in celebration of the **first day of Spring, Sunday, March 20 @ 9:00 a.m.** to resume cleaning. Please join us! Fog or wet conditions cancel.

**Want to send a letter to the Editor?**

**E-mail [newsletter@aofonline.org](mailto:newsletter@aofonline.org)**



### Newsletter Submissions

Submit your newsletter items to the N&V submissions editor at this e-mail address:

**[newsletter@aofonline.org](mailto:newsletter@aofonline.org)**

or mail item to the AOF mailbox: PO Box 15182, Sacramento, CA 95851-0182.

Preference is given to material in a word processing format. (To submit, attach your file to the e-mail and send.)

AOF welcomes succinct and substantive letters to the editor. Note: All letters are prioritized by AOF 's publishing criteria deriving from the organization's Statement of Purpose.

### Newsletter Freebie Policy

*This newsletter is free by e-mail to everyone. Just send your e-mail address. If you prefer printed copy by postal mail, AOF will send one free issue on your request; after that, please subscribe at \$12 per year. For details, see the signup form on page six.*



P.O. Box 15182  
Sacramento, CA 95851-0182

*We're on the Web!*  
**aofonline.org**

## March/April Calendar of Events

SacCOR Dinner Social: <b>Thai Palace</b> , 3262 "J" Street; Contact: Suzanne @ 419-2105 or <a href="mailto:shastaseer@sbcglobal.net">shastaseer@sbcglobal.net</a>	Thu, Mar 3, 6:30 p.m.
<b>AOF General Meeting in March: Darien De Lu and Sac WILPF</b>	Sun, Mar 13, 1:30 p.m.
<b>AOF Adopt-A-Highway Cleanup Event</b>	Sun, Mar 20, 9:00-11:00 a.m.
<b>AOF Davis Community Meals Event</b>	Tue, Mar 29, 4:00-7:00 p.m.
<b>AOF General Meeting in April: Social Intelligence and Atheism</b>	Sun, Apr 10, 1:30 p.m.
Flying Spaghetti Monster Party; Location TBD; Contact: Rachael Harrington @ <a href="mailto:rachaelkharrington@gmail.com">rachaelkharrington@gmail.com</a>	Sun, Apr 24, 2:00 p.m.

*AOF meetings are open to the public and are generally held on the second Sunday of the month, from 1:30 - 4 PM at the Sierra 2 Community Center, Room 10. Note: The months of February and October are exceptions, since AOF co-produces two public education events: (1) an outdoor fair in October - "Sacramento's Freethought Day" (Oct 2011), and (2) a science and humanity celebration - Sacramento's "Darwin Day Educational Gala" (Feb 2012). Watch the newsletter for details.*

### Directions to AOF's General Meetings

The Sierra 2 Center is located at 2791 24th Street in Sacramento, just south of Broadway and the Department of Motor Vehicles. Visitors are welcome. Parking is available on the street or in the rear, off 4th Avenue. AOF Board meetings are held at alternating sites, so please inquire about the location. For AOF's 24-hour recorder, call 447-3589. Leave your name and a number (repeat for clarity) and someone will phone back to answer your questions about AOF.

