

Upcoming Events

AOF dates in black

- **Sat Dec 1** [Loomis church/state violation event monitoring](#)
- **Mon Dec 3** [Americans United Sep Church/State Chapter Meeting](#)
- **Wed Dec 5** [Gospel of Jesus' Wife at UOP](#)
- **Wed Dec 5** [Coffee and Atheism](#)
- **Sun Dec 9** [Ancient Christian Study Group](#)
- **Mon Dec 10** [International Human Rights Day](#)
- **Thu Dec 13** [Free-thought Dinner Social](#)
- **Sat Dec 15** [Adopt-a-Highway Cleanup](#)
- **Sat Dec 15** [Potluck Game Night](#)
- **Sat Dec 15** [Heathen Holiday in Stockton](#)
- **Sun Dec 16** [Blasphemy Brunch Roseville](#)
- **Thu Dec 20** [Solstice](#)
- **Fri Dec 21** [End of the World Party](#)
- **Fri Dec 21** [Skeptics in the Pub](#)
- **Sun Dec 23** 11:30 am [Humanlight Party](#)
- **Fri Dec 28** [Skeptics in the Pub](#)
- **Sat Dec 29** [Community Center for Atheists development forum](#)
- **Sun Dec 30** [Ancient Christian Study Group](#)

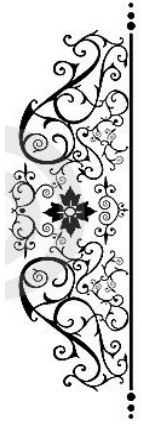
AOF Calendar:
aofonline.org/calendar-of-events

SacFAN Calendar:
meetup.com/SacFAN/#calendar

Sac Coalition of Reason Calendar: sacramento.unitedcor.org/sacramento/page/events

AOF News & Views

December 2012



This is how I put it in the neighborhood newsletter I sent out for December:

"Did you know Christmas was once outlawed in this country? As those bumper stickers suggest, we certainly do coexist much better now than when we started this country. Not until Charles Dickens wrote *A Christmas Carol* was the season accepted with open hearts as so many do today. That book gave the holiday a new outlook of giving, helping those in need, forgiveness of wayward family members, and all those other virtues from the tale. That's why American traditional holiday scenes are visions of mid-1800s, the time of the book. These are the wonderful virtues of the season that can be celebrated by all, not necessarily only those with a particular religious affiliation, but these virtues can be celebrated by every sentimental and caring citizen, of different faiths and also by those who hold no religious affiliation. The spirit of love, giving and forgiveness of this season can be credited in this country to Charles Dickens, who helped bring opposing views into a single, beautiful meaning for this country at this time. So, 27 years after its enormously successful publication in 1843, America made Dec. 25 a secular federal holiday in 1870, giving it no name, just the date. Let's also remember that these caring virtues are celebrated differently by people in our neighborhood who are of different faiths and by those who are not of a religious faith at all. Everyone can, and does, celebrate beautiful human virtues of caring, giving and forgiveness in different ways, sometimes on different dates, with different names, and with different customs, and sometimes just as a way of life every day. Love is always good. 'Coexist' is what this country is all about. Thank you for appreciating our neighborhood diversity of ways we all celebrate love in general."

Let this example be an encouragement to all you freethinkers out there that we all must seek public office of any sort - for me it's the local neighborhood Board and newsletter. Every time we take on any public office, no matter how small, even dogcatcher, we can make a difference. You might not know how right now, but there will be opportunities to shirk the old ways in favor of new ways, and if you're not there to represent us, no one will be. Thanks to all of you who are already in some sort of public position, even if it's just putting out a neighborhood newsletter, and encouragement to the rest of you to consider it as our new year approaches. Take on a volunteer or elected position. Represent the nonbeliever. Let the nonbeliever voice be heard. (—ed.)



Facebook.com search for 'Sacramento Area Coalition of Reason'. AOF participates in the SacCoR Facebook page, where you will find a daily variety of news, humor, insights and tools for every person of reason. Our readers represent 20 countries. 40% are in Sacto. Sign up to keep informed! ([Click Here](#)) or go to <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Sacramento-Area-Coalition-of-Reason/376151155788191>

No Good? Really?

From Jeremiah 10:
Learn not the way of the heathen. For the customs of the people are vain: for one cutteth a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the axe. They deck it with silver and with gold; they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not. Be not afraid of them; for they cannot do evil, neither also is it in them to do good. (No good? Really?)



Serving the Hungry

Davis Community Meals prepares the food. St. Martin's Episcopal Church loans facilities. And atheists help serve,



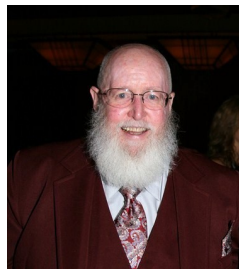
December 2012

Farewell Board 2012! Long Live Board 2013!

Vince's outgoing message of moving forward and inspiration: One of the grand injustices in life is that the older you become, the faster time seems to go. It seems only yesterday I was composing my introductory message as president of this fine organization, and now it's time to say goodbye.

As of January 1, I'll be stepping down from the Board in order to devote more time to personal projects. But I wanted to take a moment to thank everyone for their support this past year and to wish you all a wonderful holiday season and a prosperous 2013.

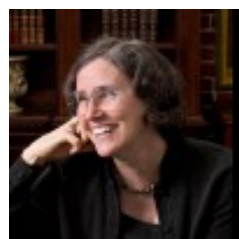
The coming year will be another interesting one for AOF, as we continue to refine our place in the secular spectrum of organizations in the region. With all of your support, I know it will be a great year.



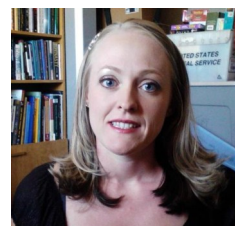
Jerry Sloan



Ken Nahigian



Mynga Futrell



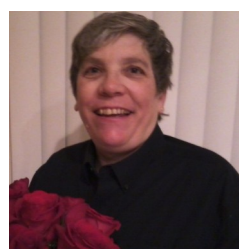
Lindsey Campbell



Dave Flanders



Judy Saint



Kathy Johnson

**Your New Board
says 'Hi!'**

"Potluck and Politics" Review

Many of us gathered at Sierra 2 Center last month to discuss politics, separation of church and state, or whatever ran through our minds. We formed a large circle and had great discussion without a microphone. Everyone participated, and seemed comfortable sharing their views. We are sorry a few who had to leave early. It was a breath of fresh air 'n yummy eats!



Visible Atheist

Regular Feature



FSM Ornament
Buy this Holiday Ornament, \$8. Start a conversation in your home as your friends and neighbors ask about this special holiday ornament hanging on your tree. Buy at <http://www.evolvefish.com/fish/fsm.html#5636>

Atheist Christmas Carol Song



Expressing (ala Enya) how people need Xmas: "It's the season of possible miracle cures Where hope is currency and death is not the last unknown ...It's the season of scars and of wounds in the heart Of feeling the full weight of our burdens It's the season of bowing our heads in the wind And knowing we are not alone in fear. Not alone in the dark"

\$0.99 for the MP3

[Amazon Purchase Here.](#)

December 2012

HUMANLIGHT PARTY December 23 2012, 11:30am - 3:30pm

When: Sunday, Dec. 23, 11:30—3:30

Location: Curtis Hall, Sierra 2 Community Center, 2791 24th Street, Sacramento

Contact: 916-447-3589

"HL" is an oasis in the wasteland of sugar-dusted mysticism, an escape from the incessant thrumming of the little drummer boy, and an opportunity to celebrate reason, common values, and the simple warmth of human friendship.



The Dinner. Bring something tasty to share, prepared, well-presented, ready to serve, with your own favorite beverage. Note, the hall kitchen has a microwave, sink and refrigerator, but no oven, no stove. We will provide plates, bowls, utensils, napkins and cups.

People & Pet Charity Food Drive. We will collect food for two food banks, one human (the River City Food Bank) and one animal (the Sacramento Pet Food Bank, aka Titanic's Pantry). Both are secular charities not associated with any church. So if you will, if you could, please bring a canned or packaged food item for either or both.



Entertainment. The event team has scheduled exemplary entertainment to keep you amused and bemused. The Mockingbirds, Sacramento's first-ever Atheist choir, will perform an array of new secular songs. Professional dancers Roger Zabkie and Pam Rivera will demonstrate eye-popping dance moves. A secular trivia game will be open to all, with questions about science, current events, popular entertainment, and key moments in the secular history (the winner will receive a special prize). Activity for children. And more. Wait & see!

[Click here for more info](#)



THE THINKING ATHEIST Christmas Video Online

7 minutes

"Merry Christmas! People would be amazed that 1) many non-Christians celebrate the holiday season and 2) many Christians unknowingly implement pagan traditions into their commemoration of the baby Jesus.

"This video takes a quick glance at just a few beloved Christmas traditions and some of their origins." (Click graphic or see <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rLjHAzqqOm0>)

2,000 years or so ago... by Pat Kelley

Two aliens cruising the spacelanes on holiday spied a tiny ball of blue in the maze of starry skies. Thinking it might be one of the colonies, they decided to stop in for a bite. A quaint, little town in the desert clime seemed a fine place that might remind them for a while of home so many light years away.

It was a silent, aphotic night and the ship shot silently through the atmosphere like a shining golden orb of fire. They landed in an unpopulated side of the valley near an old graveyard to minimize impact to the inhabitants. It was quite courteous of the aliens to do so as the heat and fire of the landing blew like a sandblaster, turning sand into glass. The shock wave blasted rocks, overturned grave stones and blew crypt door agape.

After most of the dust settled the aliens opened the hatch. The lights from within the ship beamed with blinding light to surround the alien with an eerie silhouette distorted into the form of a tall human form with shadowy long fingers and slender, elongated limbs. The alien's helmet formed an odd rounded head narrower at the chin. The goggles seemed blacker than coal in a million year old coal mine, yet glimmered in the lights with a greenish sheen.

The alien peered into the darkness hoping to see a familiar cafe or colonial saloon. The earth below seemed to writhe in the dusty air. As the breeze cleared the air the creatures appeared, moaning, supplicating, whipping of flesh, homes and building ablaze in the distance, screaming in the distance, killing of animals and small children that were placed in the crater as offerings of obedience, or food.

The alien provided his most official first contact greeting position as written in colony administrative regulations. Stand with feet firmly together, legs straight and arms out with palms showing. The breathing tubes on the helmet shone like golden rainbows.

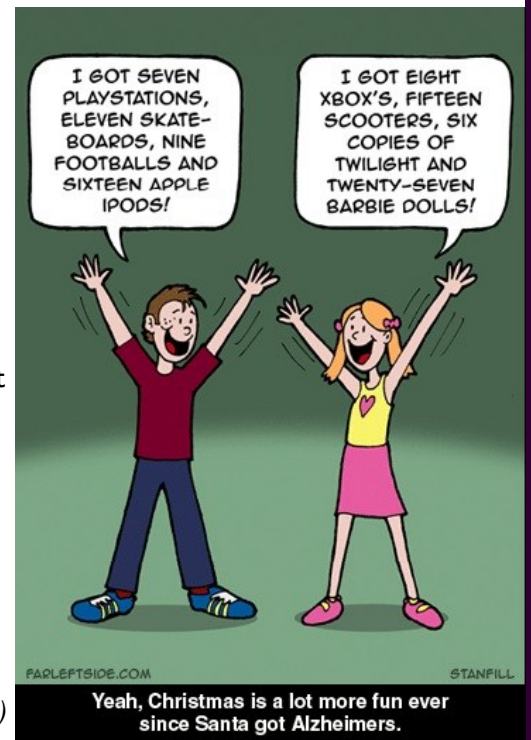
"Greetings. Can anyone tell me on which colony have we landed?"

Only, the sound amplifier had not been re-set from the last stop on a dense air planetoid so the question just blew the first few rows of creatures onto their backsides and caused great consternation of earsplitting agony among the rest.

Alien shrugged his shoulders, turned back into the ship and slammed the hatch shut. The alien says to the co-pilot, "We should have taken that last left turn."

The ship shot into the air with a fiery blast and flew up to the stars as though a golden chariot pulled by winged, flying beasts bellowing beastly blasts of blusterous babble and bewailing as they faded from view with glistening, shimmering specters in flight, never to return. Shortly thereafter, there fell a silence in the air, as the ship disappeared like a glimmering star, came the small wailing of a newborn baby in a nearby farmer's manger.

(And now you know "The Rest of the Story" -- ed.)



FREE Printable Child Crafts from member Pat Kelley

I know you guys have families with children whose parents are in need of **good, wholesome crafts to keep the little darlings busy** and out from under the cook's feet. These sites are my contribution to the holidays and any-days. Please share these links freely.

Free, Printable Child Crafts <http://www.scissorcraft.com>, <http://www.colorbookmasks.com>, and many others! See either of these sites for many, many more! From Pat Kelley, charter member, AOF.

Freethought Dinner Social—Dec. 13, 6:15 pm

A fun dinner social for friends and members of the local community of reason. Feed your mind and feed your body, join your free-thinking pals at the **Greek Village Inn** for fine food, good drink and sparkling conversation about all things free-thoughty! Reviews & menu: click [here](#). Greek Village Inn, 65 University Avenue, Sacramento, ph. 916-922-6334 .. **Contact : 916-447-3589**



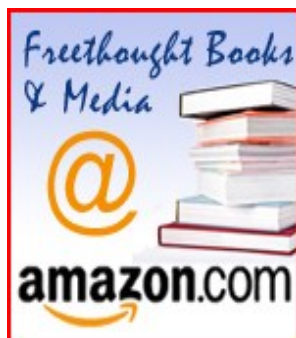
Highway Cleanup Dec. 15, 9 AM

Travel north from Sacramento on I-5, past Arco Arena. Follow the "Highway 99 - Yuba City/ Marysville" split. Exit at Elkhorn Boulevard less than a mile north. Turn left, cross the overpass, and the park-&-ride lot will be on your left.

Contact : 916-447-3589 or 916-447-2169 (Don Knutson)

Of course, wet conditions cancel.

Support AOF:
Click here to buy
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December 2012

In Memory—Marjorie Rose Bachman

Marjorie was the wife of Jerry Bachman, long-time member, supporter and friend of our community of reason. Jerry was a ladybug-harvester by trade; for many years he was a fixture at Sac Freethought Day, delighting us with little gift-canisters of live ladybugs to bring home and release in our gardens. Margie and her loving husband Jerry enjoyed hiking, swimming, rafting, ocean, forest, parks, museums, films, family, home and just spending intimate time together. Though Marjorie was strongly religious and Jerry a skeptic, it was touching how they loved each other, proving such barriers are not as important as we sometimes pretend. She died too young. Let us acknowledge the loss, and extend condolences to Jerry, who will be healing for a long time.



Opportunities

Scholarship: <http://www.atheists.org/2013scholarship> Deadline: February 1, 2013

Camp Quest needs blogger/writer for the occasional blog entry or Facebook post . [Let newsletter editors know if you are interested.](#)

FREE online 12 wk course, at your leisure, 'How to Reason and Argue'
<https://www.coursera.org/course/thinkagain>

Course "Humanism, Atheism and Social Justice" online, at your leisure, \$20 - \$60, [http:// action.centerforinquiry.net/site/Calendar?id=103161&view=Detail](http://action.centerforinquiry.net/site/Calendar?id=103161&view=Detail)

Breaking News at Press Time *submitted by Mark Craig*

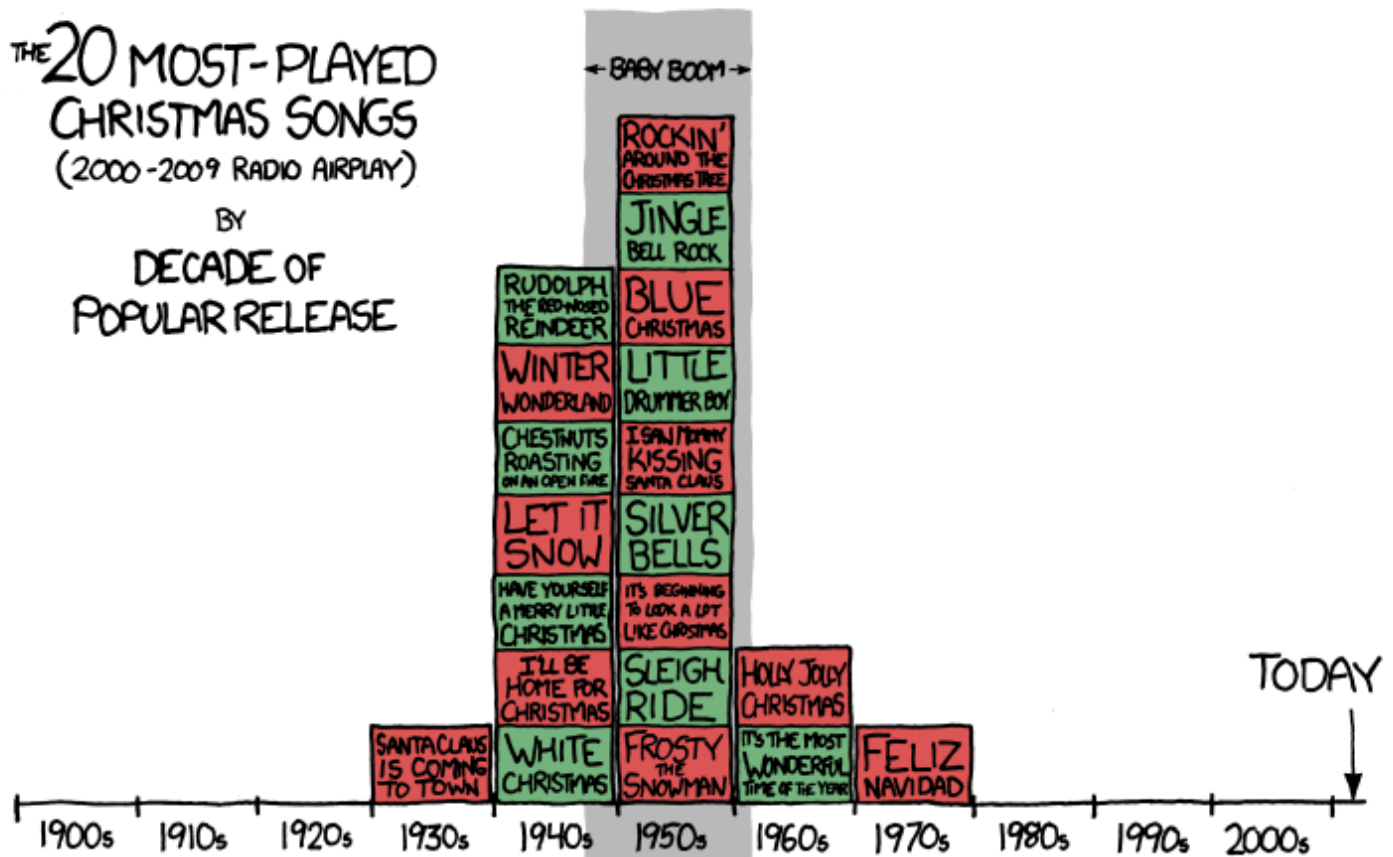
A story at the BBC explains how the UK government has put an extra clause into a funding bill to ensure that any new 'free schools' (independent schools run by groups of parents or organizations, but publicly-funded) must teach evolution rather than creationism or potentially lose their funding. The new rules state that from 2013, all free schools in England must teach evolution as a 'comprehensive and coherent scientific theory.' The move follows scientists' concerns that free schools run by creationists might avoid teaching evolution. Sir Paul Nurse, president of the Royal Society, said the Society was 'delighted'. Sir Paul told BBC News the previous rules on free schools and the teaching of evolution versus creationism had been 'not tight enough'. Yessssss!

New Expanded Newsletter Coming!

A new, expanded version of your Newsletter is coming soon! We look forward to seeing our new title **Sacramento Reason**, with all your familiar regular features, AOF events and updates, plus more content from other related groups from all over the greater Sacramento Area! It's our gift to you to bring you more of what we know you like!

THE 20 MOST-PLAYED CHRISTMAS SONGS (2000-2009 RADIO AIRPLAY)

BY
DECADE OF
POPULAR RELEASE



SOURCE: ASCAP

EVERY YEAR, AMERICAN CULTURE EMBARKS ON A MASSIVE PROJECT TO CAREFULLY RECREATE THE CHRISTMASSES OF BABY BOOMERS' CHILDHOODS.

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AOF meetings are open to the public. Feel free to join us for a meal, join a Board Meeting, help us volunteer, or anything from the calendar on page 1. We'd love to see you.

AOF [Board Meeting Sunday Jan 13, 2:00](http://www.aofonline.org/BoardMeetingSundayJan132000).

Membership Form: <http://www.aofonline.org/images/PDFs/aof-membership-app.pdf>

AOF website: <http://aofonline.org>

LIKE our Facebook Page "[Sacramento Area Coalition of Reason](https://www.facebook.com/SacramentoAreaCoalitionofReason)"

Audio of meetings can still be heard at: <http://aofonline.org/av-scrapbook.html>

AOF EIN for tax write-off: 68-0325762

DONATE with PayPal: [Click Here](#)

AOF 2012 Officers

President: Vincent Wales

Vice President: Mynga Futrell

Secretary: Jillian Stanley

Treasurer: Ken Nahigian

Newsletter Editor: Lindsey Campbell

Newsletter Co-editor: Judy Saint

AOF 2012 Board of Directors : Kristi Craven, David Flanders, Mynga Futrell, Ken Nahigian, Mario Sandri, Jerry Sloan, Vincent Wales

The purpose of this organization, AOF, is to promote civic understanding and acceptance of atheists in our community.