

Sacramento Reason

COR

Shine the Light of Reason!

Upcoming Events

July 30 Tue [Feed the Needy, Davis](#)
2 Fri [Atheist Camping Trip thru Sunday](#)
2 Fri [SAAF Monthly Meeting Stockton](#)
3 Sat [Build Free Little Library w/Brights](#)
3 Sat [Brunch and Atheism, Tracy](#)
4 Sun [Secular Family Day, Lodi](#)
7 Wed [Concert in the Park, Stockton](#)
7 Wed [New Member Meetup](#)
9 Fri [Game Night, Oakdale](#)
10 Sat [Brunch and Atheism, Stockton](#)
12 Mon [Book Club, Stockton](#)
13 Tue [Book Club, Ceres](#)
14 Wed [Concert in the Park, Stockton](#)
15 Thu [David Nolle on Free Will](#)
16 Fri [Drinking Skeptically, Stockton](#)
17 Sat [Potluck Game Night](#)
18 Sun [Blasphemy Breakfast, Rocklin](#)
18 Sun [Brunch and Atheism, Turlock](#)

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

Subscribe

Volume 1, Issue 8

Issue Theme: Sacramento Rocks!

August 2013

Sacramento “On The Air” with KLAY 1180 AM

“Sacramento is Bigger on the Inside”

Listen here: <http://askanatheist.tv/2013/07/13/sacramento-is-bigger-on-the-inside/>

The well-known radio show and podcast, heard around the world, visited Sacramento on their summer “Two Oil Change Tour” across the nation. Sacramento was their first stop. They are still on the road, taping more shows which air every Sunday at 3:00 on radio station KLAY out of Tacoma, where Sam and Becky live. You can tune in to the station over the internet at <http://askanatheist.tv/>.



Photo by Marilyn Schultz

Our local Tom Ikeman and Judy Saint took turns sitting in as third seat guest hosts during the one hour broadcast, taped in front of a lively 35-member audience.

Sacramento came out shining like a beacon of activism, opportunity and innovation, which prompted Sam Mulvey to name this episode “Sacramento is Bigger on the Inside”, an homage to Dr. Who’s TARDIS, a welcome metaphor for our hidden yet vibrant freethinking community we have here. Also for the geeks out there, references were also made to HHGG and Mad Magazine, so you know it was a great show! Click the link at the top to listen to the Sacramento episode!



New Member Meeting

New to the freethinking community? Come to this casual event for a quick overview of the community and plenty of time to just hang out and get to know each other. Great sandwiches and coffee drinks, too.

Every 1st Wednesday, 6:30p - 9:00p.

Coffee Garden, 2904 Franklin Blvd., Sacramento

[Details here.](#)



Facebook.com search for 'Sacramento Area Coalition of Reason'. 'Like' the Sac CoR 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% live in the Sacramento area. Sign up to keep informed! ([Click Here](#)) or go to <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Sacramento-Area-Coalition-of-Reason/376151155788191>



When perusing the idea that the Pope is infallible, I came across this little gem on [Catholic.com](#):

"The church *cannot* teach heresy, meaning that anything it solemnly defines for the faithful to believe is true." Check it yourself, in the last paragraph.

If this is so, then why don't they teach that the world is at peace and there is no hunger? Everything they say is true? *Really?*

Secular Coalition of Calif.

Everyone is invited to the [California Secular Coalition conference call](#).

This is the group allowed to lobby!

Dial this number on September 7, 10:00 AM to listen to all our CA news.

(530) 881-1400

When prompted, punch in participant code 978895.

"Ask The Social I.Q. Lady"

Dear Social I.Q. Lady,

It seems whenever I get into a discussion with my relatives about religion, it turns into a fight. I want to be able to visit and sometimes talk about religion without feeling like I've just returned from war. Any suggestions? -- Beverly

Dear Beverly,

Conflict can be agonizing. The kind of conflict to which you're referring is called "intergroup" conflict. The conflict rises to a higher level because it's more complicated, involves more people and includes centuries of history. It could involve warring nations just as easily as feuding families. Religion is one of those areas where groups become entrenched in their argument and often use "representatives" to help form their opinions in the matter. With religion, it can be the Pope, local minister, rabbi, or other spiritual leader. In this way, you are not only "negotiating" with one or two family members, you're also taking on their religious leader.

Here are some Practical Tips to maintain your cool during conflict:

1. Pick your battles. Don't argue over everything.
2. Develop a reputation as someone who admits when you are wrong.
3. Provide an alternative for ideas you oppose. Don't knock down the ideas of others without having something else to suggest.
4. Let the other person speak first. This will encourage the other person to listen better. You will also gain insight into what it takes to satisfy him or her.
5. Base your statements on facts. Avoid exaggeration.
6. Don't lose your temper.
7. Avoid sarcasm, disbelief, and caustic humor.
8. Develop a win-win mentality. Aim to meet both your needs and the other person's. Avoid simply trying to defend your position. Never try to win by destroying the other person.

Not many ever changed their mind about religion from being berated. Hope this helps!

Andrea Griffith is a Social Intelligence expert. Learn what to say and do to get the results you want.

New Skeptic Book Club in Grass Valley

Welcome to the GVSBC. I think we will have many interesting discussions. There are very many thinking people in this area - a surprisingly intellectually vibrant city for its size. Let's get together and share our thoughts. It will be fun and interesting. Join the club! Aug. 4. [More info.](#)





Tuesday July 30 - Davis Community Meal - Feed the Needy The Davis Community Meals team will perform all food prep and kitchen work. Our job: simply to set up chairs & tables, serve, put things away at the end, and clean a bit. Martin's Episcopal Church, 640 Hawthorne Lane, 4:30p - 7:00p. [Map here.](#)

Book Clubs

Sacramento

The Demon-Haunted World: Science as a Candle in the Dark. Our [2013 book list is here](#). Open to everyone, [Coffee Garden, 2904 Franklin Blvd.](#) Aug. 19, 6:30PM.

Stockton

The Violinist's Thumb Genetics-based tales of loss. Open to everyone. [Dante's Pizza & Cafe, 9305 Thornton Rd.](#) [Stockton.](#) July 12.

Ceres

The Violinist's Thumb Genetics-based tales of loss. [See website](#) for location. July 13.

Grass Valley

Global Warming article. Join Meetup to see article link and [meeting location](#). Aug. 4, 2 PM.

Finally!

The Skeptic's Annotated Bible is in Print!
[Buy it here.](#)

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Our David Diskin Speaking in Chico

Chico's non-religious residents have stood by while the religious propagated their beliefs into the city government, violating the Establishment Clause of our Constitution. Prayers at meetings? A cross on government property?

Speaker [David Diskin will present](#) us with his experience in Lodi, CA when city council meetings were led with predominantly-Christian invocations. He'll discuss the founding of Lodi United which exploded into a 100+ member group that successfully changed Lodi's ordinance on invocations.

David will share with us his successes and mistakes made along the way, and ask us Chico residents to join together and make a peaceful stand to restore the Constitution to our city. Sponsored by Atheists of Butte County.

Monday, August 12 - 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM

Chico Library | 108 Sherman Ave, Chico [\(map here\)](#)



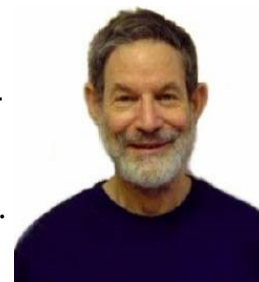
Blaspheming With Food Every '3rd Sunday' Morning!



Such a pleasant group of happy heathens on a fine Sunday morning! Every 3rd Sunday of the month, in various locations around Sacramento, come sit down to breakfast or brunch with us. Everyone is welcome! It's a nice way to meet like-minded friends. No topics, just have fun. [See the calendar](#) for all locations.

Herb Silverman Coming

AOF Speaker Series presents Herb Silverman, President Emeritus of the Secular Coalition for America, Board member with AHA, SSA, and blogger for *The Washington Post*. Save the date: September 26, Curtis Hall at Sierra 2 Community Center, 7PM. [Details here.](#)



Some popular 'Meet, Eat n Drink' Addresses and Maps:

Aug 7 6:30 pm New Member Orientation and Coffee, Coffee Garden [Map here](#)

Aug. 10 10:00 am Brunch and Atheism: Panera Bread 10718 Trinity Pkwy Stockton [Map here](#)

Aug. 22 6:15 pm Freethought Dinner: Centro Cocina Mexicana [Map here](#)

Aug. 18 11:00 am Blasphemy Brunch: Mel's Diner 565 Howe Ave [Map here](#)

Secular Family Day

Bring the whole family to [World of Wonders Science Museum](#), 2 N Sacramento St, Lodi, on Sunday, Aug. 4 at 10:00 AM.

Each month, the first Sunday is "Secular Family Day" -- a day for the whole family to get out and meet other secular families in a fun place somewhere in the Central Valley.

Chico Prayers

The City of Chico has received a firm letter from Freedom From Religion Foundation attorney Andrew Seidel regarding their prayers held before City Council meetings. Thanks to an alert citizen for this complaint. Don't be afraid to step up if you see issues. Keeping gov't and church apart is the more patriotic attitude.

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Ask an Atheist at Family Science Picnic

Sunday, August 18, 3:00 - 5:00

Explorit Science Center, 3141 Fifth St., Davis

Be a role model of "Good Without God" as we mix among young families celebrating the joy of discovery, exploration and science with their children. Wear your "Ask an Atheist" shirt August 18 for Explorit Science Center's Final Blast: Family Fun Science Show fundraiser. These science-loving families are our most important audience yet!

Bring your picnic blanket and some munchies and settle in for a spectacular demonstration of chemical genius by UCD faculty at 3:30. See a bit of outer space up close and experiment with art in our Beautiful World: Science and Art exhibition. Take one of Peter Wagner's Whymcycles for a spin around the park and cool off with a smoothie from Jamba Juice.

Buy your own AaA shirt from Judy, \$10, or just join the fun in your civvies!



Attend FACTS Church... for Atheists!

Michael Newdow dons his church apparel as another service begins. Held on the Monday (moon-day) nearest the full moon, congregants sing herms from the Hermnal, participate in a moment of science, hear an inspirational and informative sermon, and of course, all wear hats because, as we know, religions are all about the hats. The proverbial plate is passed around, but being atheists, any money proselytizing a God cannot be used. The plate typically comes up empty. And that is the harm done to this church, which allows Michael Newdow to establish standing so he can fight the phrase "In God We Trust" on our money before the Supreme Court. Now you know the rest of the story. *(In the photo below, Robert Poeschel, Michael Newdow and Rachael Harrington [attend a service.](#))*



Freethought Dinner—Aug 22, 6:00 pm

A fun dinner social for friends and members of the local community of reason. Feed your mind and feed your body, join your freethinking pals at the **Chicago Firehouse Restaurant**, 2416 J Street, for good food, good drink and sparkling conversation about all things freethoughty! Chicago Fire is best known for pizza! [Map here](#). [Details here](#).



Calendar cont'd.

18 Sun [Blasphemy Brunch, Sacramento](#)

18 Sun [Ancient Christian Study Grp](#)

18 Sun [Ask an Atheist at Family Science Blast](#)

19 Mon [Book Club at Coffee Garden](#)

20 Tue [Freethought Roundtable](#)

21 Wed [Concert in the Park, Stockton](#)

22 Thu [Freethought Dinner Social](#)

22 Thu [How To Discuss Atheism wkshop](#)

23 Fri [Sac Skeptics in the Pub](#)

23 Fri [Godless Game Night, Lodi](#)

25 Sun [Paint Free Little Library](#)

25 Sun [Freethought Movie Night, Lodi](#)

Save the Date

Sep 7 [Secular Coalition Call \(see pg 2\)](#)

Sep 26 [Herb Silverman Speaking](#)

Oct 12 [Freethought Day](#)

AOF New

AOF has a new phone number. Leave your voicemail at 916-304-3796 with all your questions.

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Dr. Noelle Speaking on Free Will

Modern cognitive neuroscience is increasingly uncovering how your choices arise from the structure and function of your brain. Since the structure and function of your brain has been determined by factors beyond your control, ranging from your genetic inheritance to your developmental experiences, it is hard to understand how you can be reasonably held responsible for the choices that emerge. No cell has a choice; do you?

This is the philosophical problem of "free will". When our choices are the result of the physical laws that govern the development and activity of our brains, in what sense can we be said to be in control of our own decisions?

Thursday, August 15 - 6:30 PM to 8:00 PM

CSU Stanislaus Naraghi Hall of Science, Room 101, Turlock ([map here](#))



How To Discuss Atheism - Workshop #5 (Last One!)



Whether you plan to talk with peers, relatives, or others about atheism, or simply want to learn more about how to discuss the subject, come join us as we learn the 'talking points' of being atheist. Too often we are caught off-guard when someone brings up religion or atheism. In this supportive, friendly atmosphere of like-minded people, we will learn the tools of talking atheism. **Arcade Library 6:30 pm, August 22.** [Details here.](#)

Freethought Roundtable - 3rd Tuesdays - Aug. 20

The Freethought Roundtable is an open forum for the discussion of the diverse and often contentious topics of God(s), Religion, and Disbelief. These issues are inextricably linked to philosophy, history, society and the human condition generally. And, as such, make for profoundly important and interesting discussions.

Outside food and drinks aren't permitted, but they have a great menu so order something on your way in. **Coffee Garden, 2904 Franklin Blvd , 7:00 PM.** [Map here.](#)

Game Nights

Atheists and theists are all welcome. Bring a friend, roommate or honeypie. Chatting, eating, playing, laughing. Sound good? Three to choose from:

Sacramento third Saturday 6:00 pm, or Lodi Aug. 23 at 7:00 pm, or Oakdale Aug. 9 at 7:00 pm



Ancient Christian Study Group

Sunday, Aug. 18 at noon. Meet at the Shine Cafe, 1400 E St, Sacramento.

Review the history of Rome, religions of the Roman empire, Gnosticism, Mystery cults, Christian persecutions, biographies, the Bible and other related topics. If you ever wanted to sort out Eusebius from Clement, or Constantine from Diocletian, or if you want a new perspective on the old ways, then this group is for you.

Previous biblical knowledge is not required to participate.

We will be meeting every third Sunday. Each meeting a specific topic will be covered. [Details here.](#)

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Activist Corner By Julie Wedge

NEW REGULAR FEATURE!

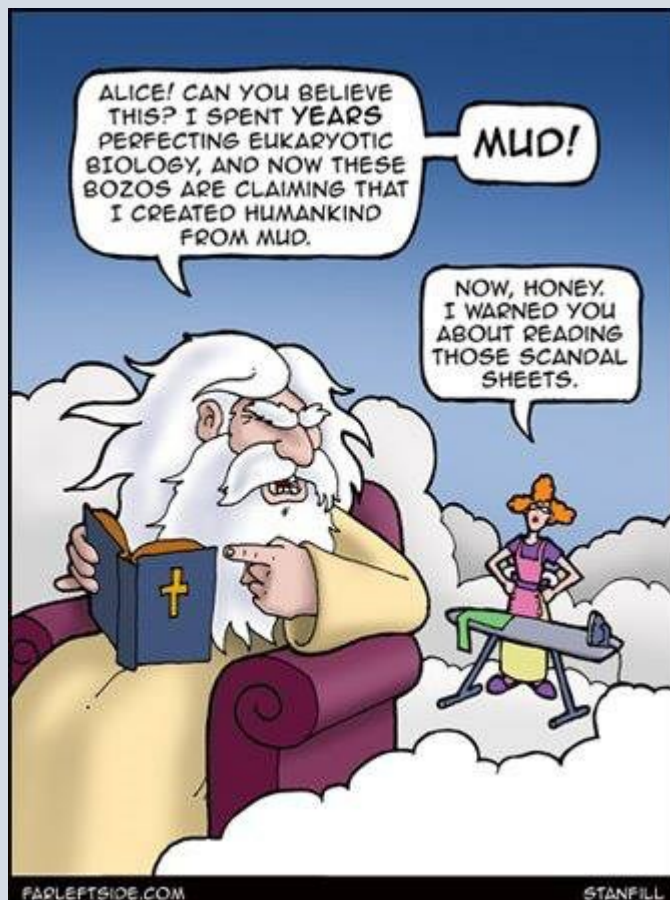
When you think of the word activism what comes to mind? Responding to an online plea for signatures? Writing to your Representative on an issue? To be certain, there are many ways to be a community activist, but we oftentimes forget the easiest way to express activism – talking to our friends and families.

We forget when we are talking to those closest to us; we are educating and empowering others to live authentically. And we, too, benefit from these close conversations. If we know we are facing a family gathering where others will be espousing beliefs that do not jive with our own, we need to make sure we support everyone's individuality but at the same time remain true to our own core values.

We also need to be supported within our own community of freethinkers. This column will delve into communication styles, give suggestions about how to handle that uncomfortable religious family gathering, inform when we can step up as a community civically, where we can donate some time or resources, and just have a generally good time letting our inner activism come out and play.

We invite you to this column to learn what is happening locally, on the state level and even federally around issues that matter to our community. We also invite you to participate. If there are issues you would like to see covered, or if there is a local action we can organize or participate in please let us know. We have some great people who like to do some research, so even if you just have an idea we can probably find someone to make that a reality.

Welcome to the Activist Corner. We look forward to learning together and creating a community of engaged, empowered and aware humans.



Local Groups to Visit or Join

Name	Emphasis		Tax Ded		Website
Agnostic & Atheist Student Association (AgASA)	UC Davis student group Meets Tuesdays, 6:10 great topics	Y		Y	agasadavis.wordpress.com
Americans United for Sep of Church and State (Sac Chapter)	Promotes individual activism, confronts violations	N	Y	National only	au-sac.org
Atheist Student Organization (ASO)	CSUS student group Meets Fridays at noon.	Y		Y	csusaso.wordpress.com
Atheists and Other Freethinkers (AOF)	Events both social and presented, for growth and fun.	Y	Y	N	aofonline.org
Brights Action	Translate our naturalistic worldviews into constructive actions for school/library/media	Y	Y	Internat'l only	the-brights.net/
FACTS Church	Church-like hymns, rituals, all the trappings in secular form.	Y	Y	N	factschurch.com
Greater Sacramento Chapter of Freedom From Religion Foundation	Protecting the constitutional principle of separation of state and church.	Y	Y	N	sacffrf@gmail.com
Humanist Association of the Greater Sac Area (HAGSA)	Humanist events, speakers, focus is on doing good.	Y	Y	National only	hagsa.org
Sacramento Area Coalition of Reason	Directing the community to the various groups of reason.	Y	N	Y	SacramentoCoR.org
Sac Area Skeptics (SAS)	Promotion of skeptical thinking, awareness of reality, logical skills.	Y	Y	Y	sacskeptics.org
Sac City Freethinkers	Sac City College student group Meets every other Wednesday.	Y		Y	saccityfreethinkers.wordpress.com
Sac Freethinkers, Atheists and Nonbelievers (SacFAN)	Meetup for variety of fun, learning, singing, projects, games, activism.	Y	N	Y	SacFAN.org
Sac Organization for Rational Thinking (SORT)	Discussions of rational thinking and science over mysticism and anti-rationalism.	Y	N	N	home.comcast.net/~kitray2/site/?/home
Sac Think Atheist	Events, podcast, and forum to fight anti-atheism and gain tools.	N		N	thinkatheist.com/group/sacramentocalifatheists
Secular Coalition for California	Train to engage media and lobby state politicians. Activist resource.	N	N	Y	Secular.org/states/chapters/california
Secular Student Alliance or Freethinkers of Sierra	Sierra College student group Meets Thursdays at 1:00.	Y		Y	secularstudents.org/sierra
Stockton Area Atheists and Freethinkers (SAAF)	Meetup events, variety	Y		Y	StocktonAAF.org
Sun City Roseville Humanists	Humanist opportunities for our Sun City residents. Meets 1st Sundays from 1:00 to 3:00.	N	N	N	scred.org/sub_category_list.asp?category=98

New Reporter Contact Project

Sacramento Area Coalition of Reason, which advocates all our local freethinking groups, is now issuing Contact Cards, (business cards), to local reporters, both broadcast and print. These cards help ensure the media knows exactly how to contact local atheists for the quick reactions they often need when a church/state issue arises. If they know we're here, they'll be more likely to get our point of view. Our experienced and well-spoken local activists, David Diskin and Tom Ikelman have volunteered to be the quick-contact spokespeople for our interests. These cards with phone numbers will be sent out to reporters every six months to remind them that we are here, our opinions should be heard, and how to quickly contact us. The main phone is (916) 572-7020, right there on the card. Yesss!

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SSA Leadership Trip to Las Vegas By Marcie Torres

Early Friday morning, stepping into a van filled with my club members from the Secular Student Alliance at Sacramento State University, I had no idea of what was to come on our long trip to the SSA 2013 Annual Conference in Las Vegas. This was my first time attending one of these conferences, so I was excited to see what it would be about.



After that 13 hour-long ride, I wasn't too pumped up for the conference. However, the evening opened with Steve Hill, an atheist comedian whose act energized the crowd. He was hilarious; listening to his jokes instantly woke me up! Hill was followed by David Fitzgerald, whose lecture "Sexy Violence! Violent Sex! The Weird-ass Morali-

ty of the Bible" featured Greta Christina reading excerpts of Solomon's Song. The act came complete with Fitzgerald's vocalized sound effects. The oral presentation was a superb way to open the weekend.

For the next two days, we were given many talks from which to choose. The topics ranged from leadership and group starting to advisor, and workshops. These talks were so good it was sometimes hard to choose one over the other. At the talks it was interesting to hear people's experiences in the club and ideas as to how to set up events as well as ways to improve the club.

As a first time attendee, I fell in love with this conference. The speakers were great as well as the hosts and attendees. I met a lot of nice people whom I could really relate to. And listening to their stories was touching. In addition, the whole experience allowed my club members to become closer and bond, helping us discover new ideas on improving our club: How to reach out as a group by getting involved in the community, how to engage in discourse with people of differing worldviews, and how to be an activist by changing the world. This conference was not just about how to function as a secular student, but how to live as a better person.

And this person is definitely looking forward to the SSA conference of 2014.

Rancho Cordova Removes Logo

Hurray for Rancho Cordova, celebrating its 10 year anniversary! Congratulations!

However, one thing the city didn't count on was a firm demand from Freedom From Religion Foundation as well as Americans United for Separation of Church and State attorneys landing on their desks.

Part of their city-led festivities was a "Celebration of Faith" involving local Christian churches, and a led prayer held in the park.

The city did remove its logo from much of the online material, though a few links remained.

Let's keep an eye out next year! Thanks to those who brought this forward!

New Motorcycle Club - You Know You Want To Ride!

Get Your Reason Rider Patch!



Let's ride! Come show the world that we, as atheists, agnostics and non-believers of all types occupy all facets of life. I am starting this club to show that we enjoy fun, the outdoors, adventure and riding just like other people do, but without Hell or Angels or skulls blazing across our backs.

Let's come together as a group and ride down the coastline or ride out to Reno or wherever we as a collective decide to go. I feel it's necessary to show that freethinkers aren't just a bunch of angry people sitting around plotting to somehow overthrow religion. I look forward to riding with my fellow like-minded bikers.

If anyone outside of this general area would like to be a part of Reason Riders in their own location, they are free to use the Reason Riders emblem. Anyone can [get the patches through me](#), and if you ride with us, all the better! We'll keep track of the numbers wearing the patch, wherever they ride. Let's do this.

Submitted by Pierino Walker



Camp Quest in the West is Best! By David Diskin

Camp Quest West recently finished another successful week, entertaining and educating 84 campers just north of Grass Valley. Inspired by recent high school activists like Jessica Ahlquist and Zack Copplin, their theme this summer was "Taking the Reins". Mixed in with traditional camp activities, campers learned about the environment and sustainability, leadership, peaceful protests, and communication skills.

Camp Quest is a week-long summer camp for children in non-religious families. The curriculum focuses on science, skepticism, Humanism, teamwork, and nature. Children are taught how to think critically about the world around them. It is also a safe place for children, free of proselytizing and bullying from others and welcoming to exploration and critical thought.

"Every year, I leave camp with more friends that I can be myself around and the counselors are super funny," wrote Sammi, a Sacramento camper.

Many of our own were at camp this summer as campers and counselors. Program Staff included Sac State's SSA president Dan Pemberton and SacFAN's game night host Laura Hitchings. Freethought Day lead organizer David Diskin and SacFAN member Dianna Speer were both supervising cabins of delightful campers.

Parents and SacFAN members Matt and Kim Martin told us, "We love how empowered our daughter becomes at Camp Quest. It has definitely helped her become more confident with her own thoughts and ideas. She really feels a sense of belonging with the friends she makes."

Camp Quest is looking forward to next year. Interested families may subscribe to its newsletter at www.CampQuestWest.org. Donations and scholarships are also encouraged.



Vince's New Book Due Out in September!

Download the first chapter now!

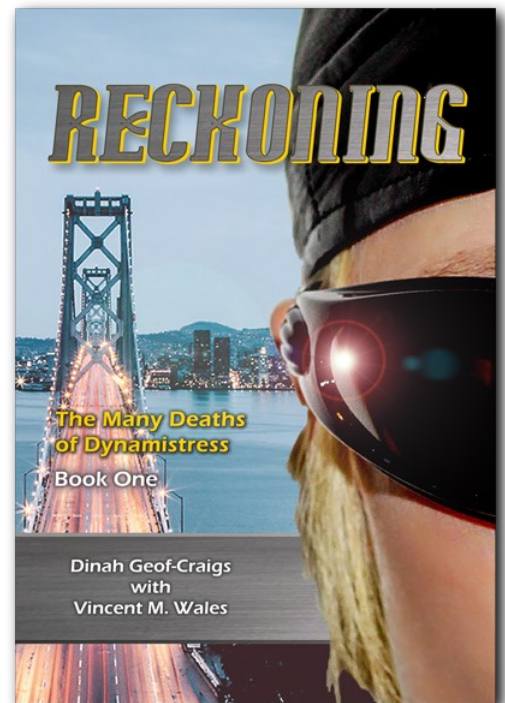
<http://www.vincentmwales.com/reck.html>

The only thing young Dinah Geof-Craigs wanted to be when she grew up was a super-powered "meta," like her older brother. But puberty came and went, giving her no genetic surprises. So she determined to correct Mother Nature's "oversight." Even if it killed her.

Follow the countdown to Sacramento's own Vincent Wales' new book release, coming in September!

Vince has also written two other books, both available right now on Amazon.com.

[Wish You Were Here](#)
[One Nation Under God](#)



Don't Pack Your Bags Just Yet, Edwina.

What's up with this Pope? Might he actually meet with Secular Coalition? Twice he's spoken well of us. (I love how she turned his phrase: "Catholics can be seen as good people as long as they do good." heh heh!)



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Pete Stark
Todd Stiefel
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Pope Francis
Apostolic Palace
00120 Vatican City

July 23, 2013

Dear His Holiness, Pope Francis:

As the Executive Director of the Secular Coalition for America (SCA), I am given the responsibility of representing all nontheists in America, which includes atheists. Our numbers are very much on the rise and those not affiliated with religion now constitute 20% of America's population and nearly 40% for those under 30 years old. The SCA looks to unify this community and facilitate coordination between all the national nontheist groups (atheist, agnostics, freethinkers, etc.). As such, I was delighted to read your recent comments about atheists. You were reported to have said in mid-July that: "[a]theists can be seen as good people as long as they do good" and "[j]ust do good and we'll find a meeting point."

I am greatly encouraged by your kind words about the nontheistic community. I agree wholeheartedly with you on this and, for my part, maintain that "Catholics can be seen as good people as long as they do good" and "[j]ust do good and we will find a meeting point."

In that spirit, I offer to meet with you, Pope Francis. When we meet, I hope we can start a dialogue based on tolerance and respect for both Catholics and atheists. For my part, I would like to discuss with you how Catholics and atheists can be respectful of each other, with neither side trying to force the other side to abide by its positions on matters of conscience. Perhaps you have particular items you would like to discuss as well.

Please let me know what date, time, and place you would like to meet. I look forward to meeting with you, Pope Francis, at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Edwina Rogers". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Edwina Rogers
Executive Director
Secular Coalition of America

Sacramento Competes for “Nation’s Best Secular City”!

A writer for *American Atheist Magazine* gave certain freethought group leaders a chance to give their city their best shot at being featured in an upcoming article for the fall issue titled, “The Nation’s Ten Best Secular Cities”. Of course, it’s all for fun. We’re all helping each other, not competing, but holding up notable communities does help energize those in those communities as well as showcase good practices for other cities to follow. So, in all fun and spirit of friendly “competition”, here is the bullet point list submitted on behalf of Sacramento:

Why Sacramento Should Be America’s Best Secular Community!

SEPARATION AND LOBBY CENTRAL

- Recent successes in stopping local separation infringements, with 80+ official “monitors” in one group alone watching; people know where to report, and they do.
- Healthy local contingent of Secular Coalition For America helping to form a new state chapter, getting ready to lobby in the world’s most focused point of progress – the capitol of California
- Several separation-emphasis organization local chapters notify each other and work together

ACTIVE DESTINATION FOR FREETHINKERS

- 18 groups, each one unique, each one professional, courteous, positive, tolerant
- Cooperation among groups, leaders, projects, speakers, resources (even cosponsored events between public groups and SSA). One of our Meetups has over 1,250 members, and growing.
- Shared common calendar, weekly events are posted every Friday on social media [Average of 12 weekly events in the general area (social, activist, educational, public service, etc.)]
- Decades-long history of freethinking groups that still function today
- Freethought Day, Camp Quest, Darwin Day, NDOR, FSM party, HumanLight, and other participation in nationwide celebrations are well attended
- Lends itself well to attend prime destination conferences, near San Francisco, Berkeley, Lake Tahoe, Giant Redwoods, national forests, Silicon Valley, Asilomar, oceanfront seminars, many prominent valley communities within a quick drive. Hub location. Example: SkeptiCal, SF Atheist Film Festival.

COORDINATED VISIBILITY AND MEDIA SUPPORT

- Multiple billboard campaigns getting media attention, with yet another FFRF “Out Campaign” 12-billboard project in the making right now
- Business cards with two key media contacts are presented to all prominent local media every six months (so the atheist point of view is always available for quick comment on breaking news)
- We have possibly the only all-encompassing area freethinking newsletter, with a different theme each month, sent to thousands of members of all our various local groups

NOTABLE LOCALS

- Our local Michael Newdow is pursuing a SCOTUS suit to take “In God We Trust” off our money (nationally visible effort, based here)...
- Local chapters of multiple national organizations (AU, FFRF, AHA, CoR...)
- Home of many nationally recognized leaders, past and present
- Founding and current location of internationally-known Brights
- Reasonist Products, notably clever atheist t-shirts, is based here
- One of our locals has initiated a new NDOR national visibility movement for the whole country, for the first time ever. All the planning comes from here for NDOR 2014.

(continued from previous page)

NOTABLE PROJECTS

- Reason House project with substantial funding already, will create a physical facility for all local groups to have offices and meetings. Under way.
- “Ask an Atheist” visibility project every month, see outatheist.info about the project. We wear bright blue t-shirts in public places, walking in pairs, to be visible and available.
- Our own secular singing group, The Mockingbirds, are in high demand at many events (humorous secular and science lyrics)
- Atheist church called FACTS; all the trappings of church without the magic
- Workshop “How To Discuss Atheism” is well attended (part of dedication to on-going training)
- Monthly “Ancient Christian Study Group” has met for years.
- The very popular Earth Timeline, for a realistic perspective in science classrooms, comes from Brights Action, here in Sacramento

RECOGNITION OF SACRAMENTO’S SECULAR LEADERSHIP

- Hemant Mehta, The Friendly Atheist, says “Every major city with multiple freethought groups should put together something like this” referring to our one-of-a-kind area newsletter. Link to blogpost here: <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/friendlyatheist/2013/01/07/a-handy-guide-to-sacramentos-freethought-groups/>
- Sean Faircloth told our Sac group, with a hand on the shoulder of one of our members, “If Sacramento was all across this country, we’d have won.”
- Author of the book “The Good News Club” remembers her trip to Sacramento quite vividly. In a discussion, she remarked, “Oh, Sacramento! Lots of different groups all showed up. They had many very good questions, too.” Our great inter-group cooperation makes a notable difference.
- KLAY radio show “Ask an Atheist” requested a show from Sacramento so they could showcase our community.
- Our Coalition Facebook page has hundreds of followers from all around the world – including many from religiously suppressive countries. Seen as a resource, a toolbox, for freethinking everywhere.



Sacramento has seen several billboard campaigns over the years. This is from the Sac Coalition of Reason campaign. You can look for another set of 12 billboards to go up in the next year or so, thanks to Freedom From Religion Foundation, which is asking anyone with a quote and family or individual photo to submit them to sacffrf@gmail.com to be considered for the signs! Your face and quote can tell the whole city how you feel. Need not be a great photo for the initial submission.

Presenting Sacramento's 12th Annual
Freethought Day
A Festival of Reason, Freethought, and Church-State Separation



Live Music and Comedy · Family Friendly Afternoon
Outstanding Speakers · Authors' Panel
Community Groups and Organizations
Contests · Door Prizes · Fundraising Reception

Free Admission · Free Parking · Register Online for Door Prizes
\$20 Suggested Donation

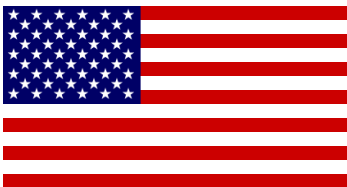
Saturday, October 12, 2013

Location to Be Announced · Sacramento, CA

10am - 7pm · Rain or Shine
Seeking Authors, Donations, and Sponsors

FreethoughtDay.org

**PRESENTED BY THE
SACRAMENTO COR**



We firmly support the United States Constitution and Bill of Rights, including the First Amendment: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion" and Article Six "no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States".



Can I make tax deductible donations?
Yes! Many freethinking groups are 501c3.
See Page 7 for details.

We're on the Web!
SacramentoCoR.org



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Subscribe

This Month's Theme: Sacramento Rocks!

Sacramento does rock. The bullet list on pages 12 and 13 were drawn up quickly to meet a deadline for the magazine article, but still shows how vibrant our freethinking community is. As I listen to the Ask an Atheist radio show in subsequent weeks following their broadcast of the Sacramento episode, I hear them still referring to Sacramento for its ground swell of action and involvement.

Coming in a few months we will feature all our local groups; their leadership, their success stories, and most important, how you can become a leader of these groups, yourself.

Carry on!



Ricky Gervais
@rickygervais



"Why don't you pray just in case there is a god?"
For the same reason you don't cover your doorways in garlic in case there are vampires?

6:58am - 22 Jul 13

Sign Up to Receive Richard Dawkins' Newsletters

The Richard Dawkins Foundation Newsletter provides a different and more direct connection with supporters. In addition to news about the activities of the US and UK foundations, the Newsletter will carry occasional "Calls to Action". A champion of science and atheism, we recommend this valuable resource. [Sign up at this link.](#)

Sacramento's Freethinking Calendar

Sacramento has its own event calendar for atheists, skeptics, humanists, and all other freethinkers. Sacramento Area groups love to cooperate and mingle, all supporting each other in these times of religious zeal. The Sac Coalition of Reason, which maintains this automatically-updated calendar, is not a club or group with a Board, or rules, but is a resource directing anyone interested to find local freethinking groups that suit them. Bookmark this calendar on your devices. It's a handy one-stop reference for almost everything going on up and down the valley.

<http://unitedcor.org/sacramento/page/events>

