

## Upcoming Events

- Oct 26 [Light the Night Walk for LLS](#)
- Oct 26 [Potluck Game Night, Sac](#)
- Oct 27 [Coffee Church, Sac](#)
- Oct 27 [Freethought Movie Night, Lodi](#)
- Oct 29 [Feed the Needy, Davis](#)
- Oct 31 [Bay Area Science Halloween](#)
- Oct 31 [Evil Dead Movie, Modesto](#)
- Nov 1 [SAAF Meeting](#)
- 2 [Brunch and Atheism, Tracy](#)
- 3 [Secular Family Day, Boomer's Modesto](#)
- 5 [Book Club Ceres](#)
- 6 [Film 'God Loves Uganda'](#)
- 8 [Game Night, Oakdale](#)
- 8 [Sexy Violence & Violent Sex, Sac](#)
- 9 [Brunch and Atheism, Stockton](#)
- 10 [Vegan Heathens](#)
- 15 [Drinking Skeptically, Stockton](#)
- 17 [Blasphemy Breakfast, Rocklin](#)
- 17 [Brunch and Atheism, Turlock](#)

Continued on Pg. 5

Sac Coalition of Reason Calendar: [sacramento.unitedcor.org/sacramento/page/events](http://sacramento.unitedcor.org/sacramento/page/events)

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Volume 1, Issue 11

Issue Theme: Secular Life Events

November 2013

## God Loves Uganda - Important Movie Nov. 6 - FREE!

The film follows Evangelical leaders in America and Uganda, as well as politicians, as they attempt the radical task of eliminating "sexual sin" and converting Ugandans to fundamentalist Christianity. Interviews and hidden camera footage give unprecedented access into the rising influence of the evangelical movement in Uganda and the dangerous repercussions of intolerance. The film is a powerful exploration of a campaign to change African culture with values from America's Christian Right. The notorious Ugandan 'Kill the Gays' bill, largely American influenced, seeks to harshen the punishment and criminalization of homosexuality.

Our Sacramento chapter of AU will host a FREE screening of the film, *God Loves Uganda* on Wednesday, November 6th, at the Crocker Art Museum, 216 O Street, Sacramento, 95814. The program begins at 7:00 PM. NOTE: Doors open at 6:00 PM for reserved seats; unclaimed seats will be released at 6:45 PM and filled on a first-come, first-seated basis.

**Senator Darrell Steinberg**, Senate President pro Tem, will address the audience and lead an interactive discussion about this powerful documentary.

Please use this link to RSVP for your seat(s) and parking information: [ausac-godlovesuganda.eventbrite.com](http://ausac-godlovesuganda.eventbrite.com). You can watch the trailer: [click here](#).

We hope you are able to join us. Please [contact Carol Velarde](#) if you have any questions or comments.

Sponsored by Americans United for Separation of Church and State.





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## Really?



In honor of being born, we have certain ceremonial parties, naming ceremonies, gathering of relatives, some cultures hold the baby toward the sky (remember the TV series *Roots*?) In this day and age, though, actually cutting part of the baby off and throwing that part away is a bit barbaric. When asked why the world over is doing this old Jewish rite, people generally reply it's healthy. *REALLY?*

## Calling AHA Members in Modesto

Some residents living in and near Modesto would like to start an AHA Chapter there. They need five AHA members to apply. If interested, please [email Troy Spears](#) (he's nice - I can vouch for him). He and others have contacted AHA and eagerly await your [email](#).

### "Ask The Social I.Q. Lady"

Dear Social IQ Lady,  
I've been invited to a ceremony taking place in a Christian church. The person involved in the ceremony is a good friend and really wants me there, but I don't want to go. How can I maintain the relationship without compromising on my personal ethics? -- Jessi

Dear Jessi,  
There are two things to consider when you're faced with these types of decisions: the issue and the relationship. If it's very important for you to stay clear of religious services and the relationship is not that important to you, then by all means stay home or do something else. You tell your friend, "I'm sorry, but I can't make it." If the issue isn't really that important to you but the relationship is, then you go for the sake of the relationship.

Good friends should know what we will and will not tolerate. Many atheists refuse to attend any religious ceremonies simply because they don't want to participate in systems that subjugate women, promote hatred and bigotry toward homosexuals, indoctrinate children, lie to their parishioners, sponsor legislation that reflects their religious agenda, and most importantly fertilize deception. Tolerance isn't about being a part of someone else's celebration; it's about allowing everyone to have their celebrations freely. This is something that religious institutions aren't willing to do for the non-religious.

If this friend is a good friend like you say, then that friend will understand why you're not going.

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

### LOBBY DAY REVIEW

About 20 of us trained under expert leadership here from Washington, DC, learning how to approach legislators and their staff, what to say, and how to present our message effectively. We then set out in groups of 3 to visit our own legislators, let them know non-believers in California now have an organized 501c4 lobby group, and what our concerns are. My group visited 4 offices. Two were wholly interested, two less so. It's a start! Now they know we're here, and that we represent a large and growing body of voters. Contact [Secular Coalition of California](#) for details.





## Freethought Movie Night - Lodi

**November Movie: The Seventh Seal** A man seeks answers about life, death, and the existence of God as he plays chess against the Grim Reaper during the Black Plague. We'll order pizza or something. Appx 5 - 8:30 pm. [Location and more details found here.](#)

### Apply Now to Be on a Billboard in Sacramento!

The Freedom From Religion Foundation is bringing their "Out of the Closet" advertising campaign to Sacramento. This is a unique, eye-catching and myth-dispelling billboard campaign featuring you — freethinkers of Sacramento, regardless of which groups you might belong to. Our "meet your friendly neighborhood atheist" campaign will showcase and introduce local atheists and other people of reason to your community, using your face, your statement, your name and a description of you. Billboards will go up early December, and remain up through the holiday season!

#### HOW TO PARTICIPATE

Please fill in the "Out of the Closet" form link here: [http://ffrf.org/index.php?option=com\\_rsform&formId=10](http://ffrf.org/index.php?option=com_rsform&formId=10)

Your brief statement should be simple, personal — not too heavy. We are more interested in "I" statements than impersonal slogans. See [more samples here](#) (scroll past the first ones.)

#### DEADLINE OCTOBER 28

Just think of your slogan, plus maybe some alternate slogans, and you're under way!

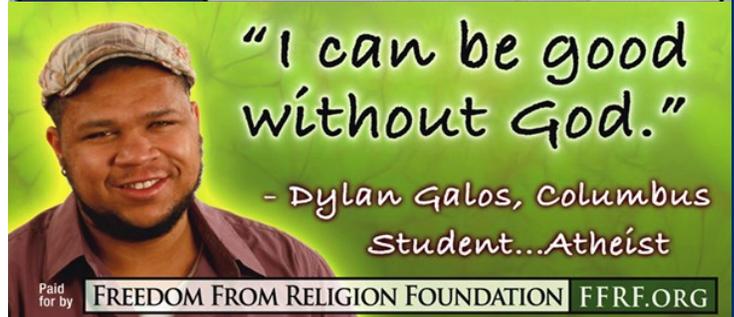
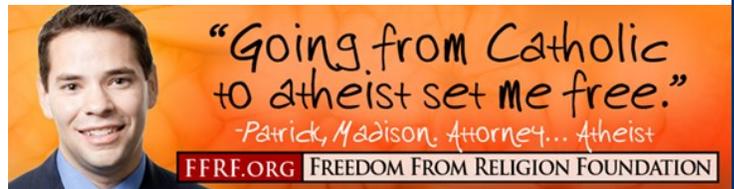
We are seeking diversity in race, age, background, profession, etc. We need everyone interested to fill out the online application ASAP! We have very few names so far!

We need all local freethinkers to step up for this! We expect to cover at least 20-30 small street billboards!

[Apply here \(no photo needed\).](#) Our local photographer and fellow atheist, Matt Martin, will take your (free) portrait for this later. You will be contacted for an appointment window.

FFRF is so grateful for contributions from participants. Your [gift](#) helps us fight the good fight!

Let's roll this out in numbers!



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

Nov 9 10:00 am Brunch and Atheism, Panera Bread, 10718 Trinity Pkwy, Stockton [Map here](#)

Nov 17 9:30 am Blasphemy Breakfast, Mels Diner, 6708 Lonetree Blvd [Map here](#)

Nov 17 11:00 am Blasphemy Brunch, Mel's Diner 565 Howe Ave [Map here](#)



### Blaspheming With Food Every '3rd Sunday'!

Happy heathens on a fine Sunday morning! Every 3rd Sunday of the month, in various locations, 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.

### Book Clubs

#### Sacramento

Be thinking of which books you would like to suggest for the 2014 series. [Add your suggestions here.](#)

#### Ceres

*Greatest Show on Earth* [See website](#) for location. Nov. 5

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Sacramento Reason

## Flying Spaghetti Monster Prayer Opens City Council

[Sac Bee Article here.](#)

[See Channel 13's News Segment here.](#)

[See The Friendly Atheist's Blog here.](#)

[See City Council recording here.](#)

With the brilliant brainstorm of this one man, we attracted the press for the Rancho Cordova City Council opening prayer given by the Church of the Flying Spaghetti Monster! Media attention is the best tool



we have to educate the public that prayer is not appropriate mixed with government. Way to go, Steven! What's next?

"I felt like it went well. I'm not the best public speaker, but I hope that it spoke to peoples' conscience. Not that they'll stop city prayer, they won't. However, that is all the more reason I hope others will volunteer to pray. I

learned in this process two things: 1) there are no requirements for who can pray (i.e. I didn't need to be a minister, or in a church), and 2) the city reaches out to churches they choose asking people to pray. So, if we got atheists, pagans, Scientologists, and all the people who don't fit the city's mold to flood them with volunteer prayers... I'm have a feeling they would stop the prayer practice pretty quick once their calendar was filled with non-Christian prayers.



"Yeah, was neat to see some folks come out. I think that looked better on the news that I am just not a lone kook and lots of people think church should be outside government," Steven Vincent emailed afterward.

When I asked Steve if he could send this newsletter his written speech he replied, "I just scribbled thoughts on a post-it that I don't have anymore." Spoken like a true activist. Winging it with the confidence of a true non-believer.

"We celebrate all religious holiday fun activities with our kids in a no religion way, my Christian friends hate it but we celebrate Greek mythology plus American mythology, and pop culture, plus Darwin Day is huge in my house. We celebrate with presents and we wish everyone we meet a Happy Darwin Day, and color pictures the whole 2 weeks before getting ampted up. I need to come up with jingles. Celebrations, charity, goodwill, etc., are not for just Christians." Alexandra Chandler-Elliott via Facebook

## Upcoming Events cont'd from pg 1

[17 Blasphemy Brunch](#)  
[Arden/Arcade](#)

[17 Ancient Christian](#)  
[Study Group](#)

[22 Sacramento](#)  
[Skeptics in the Pub](#)

[22 Godless Game](#)  
[Night, Lodi](#)

[22 Karaoke at](#)  
[Torii's, Modesto](#)

[23 Zombie Fest,](#)  
[Stockton](#)

[24 Freethought](#)  
[Movie Night, Lodi](#)

## Save the Date

**Dec 22** [HumanLight](#)  
[Winter Solstice Party](#)



## Feed the Needy

Oct. 29  
4:30 - 7:00 pm  
St. Martin's Church  
640 Hawthorn  
Lane, Davis  
[Map here](#)

Join us as we assist  
Davis Community  
Meals in feeding the  
homeless and indi-  
gent of Davis.  
[Details here.](#)

## HumanLight Party - Dec. 22

**Dec. 22, 11:30 am - 3:30 pm**

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

[HumanLight](#) provides an opportunity for free-  
thinkers to have their own time to be festive  
and celebrate reason, common values, and  
friendship at the Winter Solstice.

The Humanist Association of the Greater Sacramento Area (HAGSA) and  
Atheists and Other Freethinkers (AOF) have joined together to hold this  
year's HumanLight/Winter Solstice Party. We'll have a potluck, entertain-  
ment, raffle, and people-and-pet food charity drives.

There is no charge to attend this event. Even parking is free! Just bring  
something to share for the potluck, your appetite, and a smile.

The Mockingbirds, Sacramento's First-ever Atheist choir, will perform an  
array of secular songs. Sing along to some popular tunes, slightly reword-  
ed! Professional dancers Roger Zabkie and Pam Rivera will demonstrate eye-  
popping dance moves. We'll play Trivia and other games and activities - all  
decent, wholesome and secular! Raffle prizes so far include two tickets to  
the 2014 Oregon Shakespeare Festival (valued at \$100), a gift card to Hoppy  
Brewing Company restaurant, freethought books, and other fun prizes.

For additional details see the [SacFAN Meetup calendar](#) for Dec. 22.



## Secular Family Day! Bring the kids!

### [Boomers](#)

Sunday, Nov. 3, 10:00 am  
4215 Bangs Ave, Modesto, CA [map here](#)

Thrill Rides! Go Karts! Bumper Boats! Laser Tag!  
Putt Putt Golf! Rock Wall! Batting Cages! Game  
Room! Kiddie Playland! Try the Flame Thrower  
Ride and Lil' Thunder Road!



*Each first Sunday is "Secular Family Day" – a day for the whole family to get out and  
meet other secular families in fun places all over the Central Valley.*

## Game Nights

Atheists and theists are all welcome. Bring a friend, roommate or honeypie. Chatting, eating, playing, laughing. Sound good? Three to choose from. Be sure to check the calendar for updates.

[Sacramento Nov 16 at 6:00 pm](#), or [Lodi Nov. 22 at 7:00 pm](#), or [Oakdale Nov. 8 at 7:00 pm](#)

## Sexy Violence & Violent Sex

**Nov 8, 6:00 pm**

**Sac State, Union  
1st floor, Hinde  
Auditorium**

The Secular Student Alliance at Sacramento State is hosting a FREE event featuring David Fitzgerald and Kilt Kilpatrick w/ Special Guest Hannah Jenks for a night of sexy violence and violent sex..

["Sexy Violence! Violent Sex! The Weird-Ass Morality of the Bible"](#) with David Fitzgerald. IS every sperm sacred? Was Paul gay? Where are MY concubines?

A fun and twisted romp through the troubled evolution of Biblical morality. AND "Godless Perverts Story Hour" with Kilt Kilpatrick Freelance Heretic/ Erotica Writer Kilt Kilpatrick reads steamy excerpts from his sexy stories!

Don't miss it!

[Details here.](#)

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Sacramento Reason

### Activist Corner By Julie Wedge

I am getting married. I am planning a funeral for my dear friend or loved one. I want to celebrate my baby's entrance into this crazy world. I want these services to be reflective of my life as an atheist or reflective of the life of another humanist. It is difficult for me to assure the person charged with officiating won't bring his or her own particular religious or spiritual ideals to the service.

If you ever need a reliable non-theist, it is during the most important days of your life, or during the remembrance of a loved one's secular life. We are truly vulnerable in these situations and placing our ceremonies in the hands of the spiritual generally leads to some mention of their imaginary superhero in the sky. So what should we do? How do we know the person handling our delicate situation is going to respect our non-theism?

Fear not, there are secular officiates! That's right, if you or a loved one is in need of someone who will leave the faith out of the service, we have resources. I know for many years now I have thought about the importance of secular ceremonies. When my amazing husband and I got married we were living in Nevada. We were married in California because our dear friend and fellow non-theist could get a Deputy Commissioner's license and perform our ceremony. Not everyone is lucky enough to live in or close to a state that will allow for this. I have thought about becoming a secular officiate as well. If you have thought about it you should do it! Resources for you to become an officiate, even if just to perform one wedding:

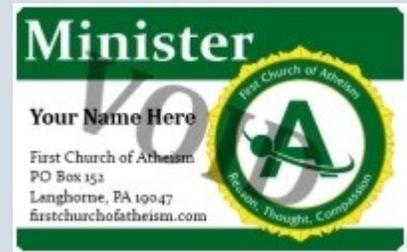
**Sacramento County:** <http://www.ccr.saccounty.net/Documents/OneTimeDCCMAApplication.pdf>

**Placer County:** <http://www.placer.ca.gov/departments/recorder/deputy%20marriage%20commissioner>

**Become a Humanist Celebrant:** <http://humanist-society.org/become-a-celebrant/>

**Humanist Celebrant Handbook:** [http://humanist-society.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/20130806\\_Celebrant\\_Handbook.pdf](http://humanist-society.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/20130806_Celebrant_Handbook.pdf)

**Become a Minister with Athiest Church:** <http://firstchurchofatheism.com/become-ordained/>



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

## The Great Debate - Review

Phil Zuckerman, from So Cal, had never debated before, but was pitted against a seasoned Christian at the huge Adventure Church in Roseville. "Is Secular Humanism or Christianity better for civil society?" Phil smoked the other side. They had nothin'. Only after our local activists created an internet hailstorm did the church finally release the video, though they disabled comments, of course. Hooray for the hailstorm! [Watch the debate.](#)

### "Tradition!"



Traditions have a place, they let you know who you are, according to Fiddler on the Roof, but others say traditions are to be broken. It's so nice that our laws and morality are capable of evolving. Pity those old books, stuck with all that old writing. There's no way ancient books can possibly adjust to modern times. As I always say, "Religion is so 200 years ago."

### Finally!

*The Skeptic's Annotated Bible* is in Print!

[Buy it here.](#)

## More Than Two Parents Now Legal in California

Children in California can now have [more than two legal parents](#) after Governor Jerry Brown signed legislation aimed to reflect modern "changes in family structure."



The legislation was inspired by a 2011 court decision where the child of a lesbian couple was left stranded after one of her mothers was hospitalized and the other was jailed. Because a court found that the child's biological father did not have parenting rights, the child was sent to foster care.

"It is critical that judges have the ability to recognize the roles of all parents so that no child has to endure separation from one of the adults he or she has always known as a parent," state Sen. Mark Leno told the *LA Times*.

The bill, SB 274, was strongly opposed by "traditional family" advocates, who say the shifting definition of parent will complicate court proceedings. Fans of "Three Men and a Baby", however, are thrilled.

### Legal Watch

By Arash Khosrowshahi

### New Regular Feature!

California's new law which allows children to have more than two parents has drawn the ire of "traditional family" advocates. They object that the law threatens the structure of the nuclear family, especially when such relationships do not foster heterosexual parental roles.

There may be problems with the law, such as how to distribute inheritances or child support. But rational criticism is discarded for the same "harm-to-the-children" lingo that masks the real grievance these objectors have: their religious values are not being imposed on others.

While this law does not directly affect Freethinkers, it is important to be aware of how religion mixed with the public sphere can affect the lives of people, even when it comes to private family relations. That is why Freethinkers must combat such religious encroachments. We should unite our efforts as a coalition, and bring others into the fold.



NATIONAL SECULAR NEWS - EVERY WEEK

Call (559) 726-1300 every Thursday at 9:00 AM Enter Code: 953064. Or, if you prefer getting your national secular updates by email, then [sign up here](#).

## Amador Authors' Books Out

Two titles from Amador Publishers, [Feeling the Unthinkable: Essays on Social Justice](#) by Donald Gutierrez, and [From Fear to Love: My Journey Beyond Christianity](#) by Harry Willson, are finalists in the 2013 New Mexico-Arizona Book Awards.

Gutierrez's essays on social inequality and government abuses are a galvanizing call to change. His collection lifts the veil on the unthinkable acts committed by governments including our own, and the willful ignorance that enables them.

Willson's self-examination provides us with an insider's perspective on organized religions from this post-Christian philosopher.

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Issue Theme: Secular Life Events

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## "Living Without Religion" New Campaign by CFI

New Website: [http://](http://www.livingwithoutreligion.org/)

[www.livingwithoutreligion.org/](http://www.livingwithoutreligion.org/)

Youtube: <http://youtu.be/UofO0ezfvq4>

We are part of the natural world. We marvel at the vastness of the cosmos, and we relish our place within it. We experience the universe as an *active* part of it, fascinated—and *inspired*—because we're made of the same ingredients as butterflies and blue whales, Giant Sequoias and spiral galaxies.

We see each other through humanist eyes—as fellow human beings—as *cousins*—equal in dignity and deserving of compassion and respect.

We cherish our loved ones and treasure our short time in the world, so we tackle problems

using the most successful methods ever devised—science, reason, and free inquiry—to improve our lives and enhance the well-being of *everyone*.

We do not fear the unknown but rather take courage from the wondrous discoveries that have already been made.

We accept that our lives will end, but we find hope and take great joy in knowing that **life keeps going**.

We see ourselves as one tale among millions in the magnificent and ever-evolving story of life—and *we are thrilled to be here*.

We are secular humanists, and we are living happily without religion.

I am one of millions living happily without religion.

[LivingWithoutReligion.org](http://LivingWithoutReligion.org) 

Be counted among the millions!

Get a FREE STICKER and let people know you are living *happily* without religion.

[Count Me In!](#)



## Secular Wedding “Non-Vows”



*Photo from Ring Exchange Ceremony in 2010 when it was illegal for us to marry.*

These are some of the words I spoke to my new bride, Kathy Johnson, at our wedding in Roseville October 24. Care was taken to credit reality with the source of our hope, while reminding us that's where strength comes from when we really need it. Thought I'd share, so you could see how this atheist made her humanist reliance very clear.

Couples often recite vows at this point. I don't believe in vows. They don't hold water when you need strength or courage. I'd like to instead cite from the good books, which do hold water when we need it.

Not the books of superstition, but Shakespeare, who reminds me to stay true to myself so I cannot be false to you.

Not old tales of killings and slavery, but Aesop's fables, that tell me to appreciate what I have and strive to understand people rather than judge them.

Douglas Adams, who gives me delight in embracing the improbable. Gene Roddenberry, who shows me how to honor diversity and find universal good.

Miguel de Cervantes, who teaches me to fight windmills valiantly, even if I'm the only one.

Those are the good books I mean, and the values I bring to this marriage. These intrinsic qualities are what give us purpose and meaning in life; values that actually work when it matters.

For example, I value reality; therefore I know the real joy of kinship, laughter, and giving.

I value music and artistic expression, because it reflects our inner rebellion and consequent resolution.

I value the unknown, because not knowing is so much more delicious than not looking.

And I value you, because you share those yearnings, to learn, to improve, to help others, to be honest, even in the face of what you'd rather believe. You know what will work in the end, and it's the honesty of the examined life. I love you, and I love all those values we both hold dear.

So while vows won't hold water when we need it, and there is no supernatural caretaker to do the hard work for us when we experience hard times together, our learned integrity will see us through. It's all we have, and it's all we need, so that's what I have to offer – the crux of my being, those matters of character that make up who I am. That's what I stand on, and that's what you can stand on when we need it, and when we don't. You can depend on my sense of humor, my appreciation of life and our shared joy of supporting others. You can depend on my strength, my weakness and my ready perspective.

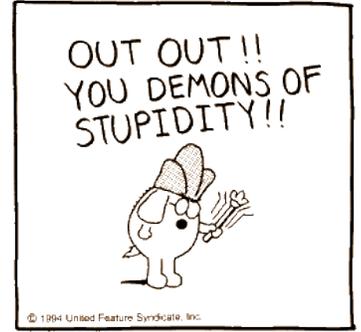
I know you well enough, now, to know I can count on those features in you, as well. That's what I'm proud to say we stand on. Not vows or silly superstitions or magic words or even good intentions, but this world, this community of loving friends and family, our love of empathy and learning, and of course, each other. We're all we've got, and that's where the real joy and hope come from, when we come through for each other. I look forward to years and years of that joy and hope with you.



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".

### Secular Life Events

This month's newsletter theme, in honor of my own wedding just days ago, is "Secular Life Events". We owe it to our society to change tradition when tradition becomes toxic, and that's just what religion has done to so many of our life events, such as birth, death and marriage. Embrace change. Come out as a freethinker. Break the mold.



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



### Mother's Death Made Worse by Religious Relatives

My wife's mother died recently. Having to be around all her religious relatives only hurt my wife and I further. "We must suffer" was preached. "We are sinners" was waggled at us. "She's with God now" kept us from going through a healthy mourning we could have otherwise dealt with naturally. We found the preachers, who did not know the deceased, had plenty to say, particularly about the need for their faith and their church.

As a bright contrast, when my mother was about to die, she instructed us to celebrate her life. We never had a funeral. Never had a wake or party or even a gathering, but instead we have each other and her memory. I frequently comment about something my mother taught me, or find myself instructing my own children about life as she would have. But rituals for the sake of rituals, in this secular family, aren't here to berate or punish us.

My wife's family still shuns her for her atheism, but we think our lives are all the richer and happier for it, including how we embrace death.

### 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>



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