



# AOF

Atheists and Other Freethinkers

AOF News & Views – Newsletter for February 2018

## ✧ ✧ Upcoming Events ✧ ✧

### ➤ Free Movie Nights!

**Fridays, Feb 2 & Feb 16, 2018, 7pm – 10pm**

Twice a month, Reason Center (RC) and AOF host a **Free Movie Night** under an excellent MPLC License. The License prohibits us from saying the movie titles. But we can hint.

On February 2, it's the true and sobering 2015 docudrama of how the *Boston Globe* exposed a massive scandal of child molestation and cover-up within the local Catholic Archdiocese. Stars are Mark Ruffalo, Michael Keaton and Rachel McAdams.

On February 16 we present a 2017 sf-fantasy-adventure based on a French graphic novel, about a vast space-metropolis home to species from a thousand planets. A marauding menace threatens it, and the heroes must safeguard not just the city, but the future of the universe. Stars: Dane Dean, Cara Delevingne, Clive Owen. And a *lot* of CGI.

Can't guess? Bah. Just contact Reason Center (see contact info below). They'll tell you, then you can tell anyone.

Movie Night is an informal, picnic-style family evening. The venue has a huge silver screen and a dynamic sound system. Chairs are available but maybe a bit uncomfortable for a two-hour sit, so it's OK to bring blankets, pillows, lawn chairs and your own snacks & beverage, non-alcoholic please. RC provides fluffy, buttery theatre popcorn. Children are welcome if they're cool children – and if you judge the movie appropriate for them. (Also, the taller your personal chair, the further back you will sit, keep that in mind. Really tall chairs may end up in the parking lot.)

The movies are especially for Reason Center members, but non-members are welcome too. RC *may* beg a small donation to cover costs. How can you become a member? Sign up at <http://reasoncenter.com/donate/>. Membership is a measly \$4 a month, is tax deductible if you itemize, and the perks (like this one) will fall to you like stardust.

**Contact:** Reason Center, 916-426-6416, or email <reasoncenter (at) gmail (dot) com>

**Location:** Reason Center, 1824 Tribute Rd, Suite A, Sacramento. Map: <https://goo.gl/iVQL8z>.

*Free Movie Nights occur on a Friday evening each month. Maybe two Fridays. Suggest your own fave film for next time!*



### ➤ Adopt-a-Highway Cleanup

**Saturday, Feb 3, 2018, 9am - 11am**

In July 1995, Sacramento-area freethinkers "adopted" a two-mile stretch of Highway 99 from Elkhorn Boulevard to Elverta Road. Since then we have kept it clean of litter and debris, and received recognition for our work. In fact, it is one our more successful civic efforts, showing that freethinkers can also serve the community.

So, join us! Enjoy a morning commune with nature and do a deed for the environment and local area wildlife. The refuse that we collect would otherwise ultimately be swept by the rain into tributaries and into the ocean, degrading habitat, and leading to a slow death for many sea creatures.

As usual, the stalwart activity captain will provide all safety equipment, including comfortable, natty hard-hats and gloves, stylish safety vests, collection bags, and handy trash pickers. The clean-up takes a scant two hours. Please dress for the season. It may be a good idea to bring a backpack or fanny-pack to carry 3 or 4 trash bags.

To find the site, travel north from Sacramento on I-5, past the Sleeptrain Arena. Take the "Highway 99 – Yuba/Marysville" exit. Exit at Elkhorn Boulevard less than a mile north. Turn left, cross the overpass. The park-&-ride lot will be on your left.

**Contact:** 916-447-2169 (Don Knutson), or see [Contact Page](#)

**Location:** Caltrans Park-&-Ride lot, W. Elkhorn Blvd, see [map](#).

*Notes: This is a great event for older children, but please leave smalls safe at home.*



## ➤ Sunday Morning Coffee and Community ☕

Sundays, Feb 4 & Feb 18, 2018, 9am – 11am

☞ *Not an AOF event.* Hosted by Rae Howard of the Reason Center Events Group.

Come and warm up with hot coffee, donuts and conversation with your fellow freethinkers. The first and third Sundays of the month of January and February. This is a pilot program, so if attendance is promising we will continue. Check out the library, the latest FFRF newspaper, and free donuts from Marie's (legendary in Sacramento).

Remember, you should be a monthly Reason Center Member. If you would like to become a member Sign up at <http://www.reasoncenter.org/p/donate.html> . It's just \$4 a month. This is just one of the perks.

We look forward to seeing all our RC members there!

**Location:** Reason Center, 1824 Tribute Rd, Suite A, Sacramento, [see map](#)

**Contact:** Phone 916-426-6416, or email [reasoncenter@gmail.com](mailto:reasoncenter@gmail.com).



## ➤ Darwin Day Birthday Gala

Sunday, February 11, 2018, 02:00pm - 05:00pm

*Shaping the Tree of Life: Extinction on a Changing Planet*

Once again, it's the **Darwin Day Birthday Gala**, Sacramento's go-to event of science and human reason, brought to you by area science advocates, civic groups and local nerds on too much coffee. This *21st anniversary* gala marks Charles Darwin's 209th birthday. It will occur at a new site, the [Mission Oaks Community Center](#) in Carmichael.

[Darwin Day](#) is a science-rush like no other, an annual celebration of scientific inquiry honoring of the life and work of the great Charles Darwin (b. 12 February 1809), sponsored worldwide by community and educational groups. AOF and [HAGSA](#) worked together to establish the local event and supports it and commends it to all our friends in the Sacramento community of reason. Because, science! And what's science but reason in the trenches?



Doors will open at 2 o'clock *post meridiem*, the main program to begin at 2:30. Arrive early, tour the display tables, visit the vendors, grab some science swag, then find a cozy seat. Relax and enjoy the opening entertainment. Then get ready for the speaker: [Dr. Erica Bree Rosenblum](#), Associate Professor of Global Change Biology at UC Berkeley. Her topic will be **Shaping the Tree of Life: Extinction on a Changing Planet**.

Dr. Rosenblum (see pic) directs the Rosenblum lab, which studies the processes that generate and impact biological diversity, particularly speciation, extinction and the mechanisms of rapid adaptation to changing environments. For a sample presentation, visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bh-9O7xJdho>.



Dr Erica Rosenbaum

Rounding the event will be more entertainment, snacks, and of course, yummy Darwin Birthday Cake. (It *is* a birthday party, after all.)

Admission just \$15 at the door, or \$5 with a current Student ID. For details click to the main event website, <http://sacdarwinday.info/>.

**Location:** Mission Oaks Community Center, 4701 Gibbons Drive, Carmichael. Map: <https://goo.gl/maps/mMxJYjHb1VL2>.

**Contact:** Bill, ph. 916-514-9974, or email [president@hagsa.org](mailto:president@hagsa.org)

*With entertainment, vendor tables, educational displays, and refreshments!*

## ➤ Philosopher's Table: Is Heresy Safe for Younger People

Sunday, February 25, 2018, 12:00pm - 01:00pm

*Is heresy safe for younger people?*

That wise old wiseguy, Voltaire, said: "It is dangerous to be right in matters on which the established authorities are wrong." Hmm, yes. So when you're young, a bit unsteady in the world, is it really a good idea to declare doubt about religion? Will friends turn away, will elders frown, will family kick you out? What if you're in the job market?

Many 20-somethings say they've never felt any anti-atheist bias. But many 50-somethings (and older) still remember unpleasant blacklashes for speaking openly about their non-theism.



Even now the landscape is shifting. Harsh fundamentalism strengthens its presence in government, and we never know who might want to make our lives difficult. A hiring manager, a college admissions clerk, a police officer, a neighbor? Emergency medical personnel? Bias happens, and happens every day.

So what do *you* advise? Would it depend on the company you keep? Let's philosophize about this.

**Location:** Reason Center, 1824 Tribute Rd, Suite A, Sacramento. Map: <https://goo.gl/iVQL8z>.

**Contact:** AOF at 916-304-3796, or see <http://www.aofonline.org/contact.html>.

*AOF Philosophers' Tables are roundtable discussions (the table isn't really round, that's just an expression). They're open to all, believers and un, friends and non, even wafflers. Come share your thoughts, or just listen*



## Secret Recipe for **Don Knutson's Fabulous Vegan Fair-trade Banana Chocolate Muffins**, wow

### Ingredients:

- 2 Cups flour ("I use one cup garbanzo bean flour and one cup oat flour along with two tsp of xanthum gum as a bonding agent" – Don)
- 1-1/2 tsp baking soda
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 3/4 cup apple sauce
- 1 cup turbinado sugar
- 3 good-sized bananas
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1 cup Fair Trade chocolate chips
- 1 cup coarsely chopped walnuts



Don Knutson  
(Muffins should not look like this)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

In a bowl, mix flour, baking soda and salt. Mix well and set aside.

In another bowl, mix together apple sauce & sugar.

Peel & mash bananas, add to applesauce mixture.

Add vanilla, mix well.

Combine ingredients of both bowls.

Add chocolate chips and chopped walnuts.

Mix well.

"I use an ice cream scoop to fill a muffin pan to about 3/4 of the way up." – Don again

Bake for a half hour. And enjoy!

Warning: Use *Fair Trade* chocolate or muffin dough will *explode!*



## Support Reason Center

Reason Center opened in July 2014. Since opening it has hosted well over 200 freethought events. Currently the Center has twelve partner organizations.

Its mission is to support a social and intellectual community for freethinkers, contribute to society through education and community service, advance the civic understanding and acceptance of freethinkers, and uphold the separation of religion and government.

To continue this work, the Reason Center relies on continued support for its members and donors. Please consider making a contribution to the Reason Center. To set up a monthly, or one-time donation visit ReasonCenter.org.



## When you donate blood...

Please consider donating blood at the BloodSource, and if you do, use AOF BloodSource ID# **4857**.

Numerous BloodSource Donation Centers exist -- find them listed at: <http://www.bloodsource.org/Locations>.

AOF gets no perks when members donate, but it saves lives, and is good for public relations. And what can be more humanistic than donating blood?



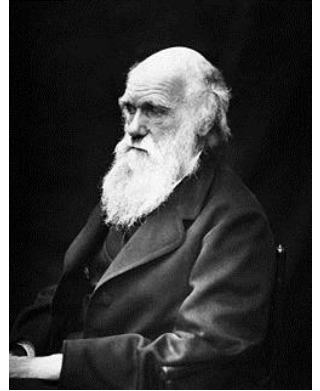
## ➤ Darwin Day (*not the Event, the Day*)

**Monday, February 12, 2018**

[Darwin Day](#) celebrates the life and work of Charles Darwin. It is a secular holiday widely celebrated within the global community, with participation from all sectors of society. Even mainline churches have participated, celebrating it as [Evolution Sunday](#) or [Evolution Weekend](#).

Under any of these names, this day celebrates the wonder and beauty of both science and humanity, and serve to recognize and celebrate the achievements of a man who cast a bright, explanatory light on reality, our self-knowledge, and on the world of which we are part.

Charles Darwin contributed to our understanding at the deepest level, forever changed how we see ourselves within this vast, impersonal universe, and brought us a paradigm shift of seismic proportions. He symbolizes the brave, human enterprise of science in confronting the mystery of existence. His life and work exemplify the spirit of wonder, curiosity and adventure along with the excitement that the quest for knowledge and understanding can provide.



[The Darwin Day Program](#), an educational non-profit organization, encourages interested groups and individuals throughout the world to participate in the annual celebration of Darwin Day by coordinating events and activities in their area on or around February 12. The program also offers a year-round educational outreach project to help in reaching the goal of improving the public's understanding of science and foster an appreciation for our shared humanity.

Darwin Day, Evolution Sunday and Evolution Weekend encourage us to come together to champion science and humanity throughout our global community. They offer an opportunity to celebrate the astonishing engagement of our common intelligence with the wonder and excitement of life in the universe. If you agree, visit the [National Darwin Day](#) website, and sign the petition calling for national recognition of this day.



## ✧ ✧ **Book Review by Roger Zabkie** ✧ ✧

***Devil's Bargain: Steve Bannon, Donald Trump, and the Storming of the Presidency*, by Joshua Green**

“Honey badger don’t give a shit.” This ungrammatical bit of scatology, which would normally be avoided in a serious work such as Joshua Green’s *Devil’s Bargain*, is too important to ignore, given what it says about Steve Bannon’s character. According to Wikipedia, the honey badger is such a fearsome beast that even lions avoid tangling with it. It is vicious, tenacious, and possesses limitless energy in a fight.

Which is why Steve Bannon often repeats the phrase, and indeed has made the beast his mascot in his drive to destroy the United States Government as we know it.

In this book Joshua Green manages to come across for the most part, as an objective reporter on the events of 2016 that gave us President Trump. He reveals Bannon’s history, from his Catholic upbringing, through his stint as a US Navy officer, the time spent on Wall Street that made him a millionaire, to the pinnacle of his career as President Trump’s strategic advisor. He tells us how along the way Bannon came to hate the Clintons so vehemently that he used his position at Breitbart News and his relationship with Hollywood to undermine them in every way. In fact, Bannon had been gunning for Hillary long before she ran for president, which made him an extremely valuable asset for Trump.

No single incident in the Trump campaign is more illustrative of Bannon’s influence than what happened after the revelation of the Access Hollywood tape. Remember that in the very next debate between Trump and Clinton, several women who had accused Bill Clinton of abuse appeared not only at the debate but also in a pre-debate interview. This was pure Bannon. While lesser advisors were telling Trump to drop out of the race, Bannon insisted on a counter-punch – which ultimately worked.

The honey badger won the day and brought us the Trump presidency. Read this book; it’s fascinating!



“The problem is, people only think for themselves if you tell them to.”

— Terry Pratchett, *Men at Arms*

## Not a member of Atheists and Other Freethinkers? Why not? Join us!

AOF is a 501(c)(3) non-profit association, FEIN 68-0325762. General Meetings are free and open to the public. AOF also hosts civic service projects, dinners, movie outings, parties! To see what awaits you, visit the website, [www.aofonline.org](http://www.aofonline.org); or contact AOF at our 24/7 voice-mail: 916-304-3796; or write to PO Box 15182, Sacramento, CA 95851-0182. Or ... candygram?  
AOF President: Fran Evanisko. Vice-president: Mynga Futrell. Editor: Fran Evanisko. And all the rest of us, millions of us.

The purpose of Atheists and Other Freethinkers (AOF) 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.

## 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!) \_\_\_\_\_

*E-mail is required for newsletter delivery.*

Questions, concerns? Call AOF, 916-304-3796.

### Your Membership Level (annual, please circle):

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

Basic Dues : \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Please check here if you do NOT want your name on lists occasionally provided to groups similar to AOF.

Please check here if you DO want to be an AOF Activist (e-mail address required).

*AOF is a 501(c)(3) Educational Association, EIN 68-0325762. Dues & Donations are tax-deductable as permitted by law. Non-members may receive the AOF Newsletter for free on request (email only).*



Professor Thompson proves once and for all that God does exist.

(Thanks, [smbc-comics.com](http://smbc-comics.com))