

Video of Recent Online Meeting

The April 25 presentation by [Dr. Gleb Tsipursky](#), "Why Smart People Fall for Fake News", is available for viewing or reviewing at this link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t_eoql_vCas. It's about an hour long. At about the 50:00 mark is a lively discussion and Q&A. Thanks to all who participated.

✧ ✧ Upcoming AOF Events ✧ ✧

➤ Free Movies

Fridays, May 7 and May 21, 7pm – 10pm

Twice a month, [Reason Center](#) (RC) and AOF host a **Free Movie Night** under an excellent [MPLC License](#). We can't tell you the movie titles, but sometimes we can hint.

The first will be a turbulent 2021 teenage love/hate film about Sacramento, a coming-of-age memoir that won 5 Academy Award Nominations. "My love letter to Sacramento," said writer/director Greta Gerwig. It features lots of local landmarks, and some tear-pulling moments. (The second movie is still undecided.)

To attend, you'll need a personal Netflix account + a laptop or desktop computer with the [Google Chrome web browser](#). If you don't have these we apologize -- please be patient until Reason Center can reopen. Else, here's how to join us:

1. Open your Chrome web browser right now and install the Netflix Tele party Extension. Get it at: <https://www.netflixparty.com/>. (Really, do it *now*, don't wait till movie night!)
2. Just before show time, fire up the Chrome browser again and go to the very special Netflix Movie TeleParty link, which will appear on the AOF Website about a half hour before show time.
3. **Click that link.** The Movie TeleParty page will open. Log into Netflix (if not logged in already). At the top right of the browser frame check your "Extensions" list. Find the letters **TP** in red. You may need to click on the letters.
4. The movie party should begin. You'll be watching it along with the rest of us. As it plays we can chat on the side of the screen and make silly, snarky comments.

Free Movie Night was made for Reason Center members, but non-members are welcome too. RC *may* beg a small (voluntary) donation to cover costs. To become a Reason Center member, sign up at <http://reasoncenter.com/donate/>. A measly \$5 a month, Membership is tax deductible if you itemize. And the perks (like this one) are like a love letter.

Location: A Netflix tele party link, see above.

Contact: See <http://reasoncenter.com/contact/>, or <https://www.meetup.com/SacFAN/events/kgcvgsycchbkb/>.

Free Movie Nights generally occur two Friday evenings each month. You can always suggest your own fave flick for next time, how cool is that?



➤ Adopt-a-Highway Cleanup

Saturday, May 8, 2021, 9am - 11am

A tidy stretch of Highway 99 runs two miles from Elkhorn Boulevard to Elverta Road – *our* stretch. Sac-area freethinkers "adopted" it in July 1995. It's tidy because we have cared for it, nurtured it, rescued it from litter and debris, and received recognition for our work. Our most successful civic effort, it proves freethinkers can serve the community.

So join us, please! Enjoy a morning commune with nature, and do a deed for the environment and local area wildlife. The refuse 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 cleanup 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 get there, travel north from Sacramento on I-5, past the old Arena. Take the "Highway 99 - Yuba City, Marysville" exit. Exit at Elkhorn Boulevard less than a mile north. Turn left, cross the overpass. Park in the park-&-ride lot or near it.



Location: Near W. Elkhorn Blvd & Hwy 99, see map at <https://goo.gl/maps/zw3Rwct9yR52>.

Contact: 916-447-2169 (Don Knutson), or email "dkvegdon (at) gmail (dot) com".

Notes: *This is a great event for older children, put please leave smalls safe at home. In case of rain, excessive mud, rapture or locust plague, the Cleanup will be rescheduled. If unsure, call the Activity Captain (Don).*
Also, please review the CalTrans Highway Cleanup guidelines at <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/maintenance/adopt-ahighway/covid19>.

➤ Board of Directors Meeting

Tuesday, May 11, 2021, 7pm – 9pm

It's an AOF planning meeting, mainly for AOF directors & officers but open to all. These happen as required, and are a lot more fun than they sound. Honest.

Join us, meet the Board, keep an eye on the shenanigans. We love visitors. And maybe you'll have some good ideas!

Note, this Board meeting will be by **online Teleconference**. Which means you can attend from home in your cozy jammies & bunny slippers and with the comforting proximity of your pantry, using your computer or smartphone. How does it work? At the meeting time, simply click this link:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87475973566?pwd=Yi9xWkVWT0IENE1rTINoOHQ1aE9wQT09>.

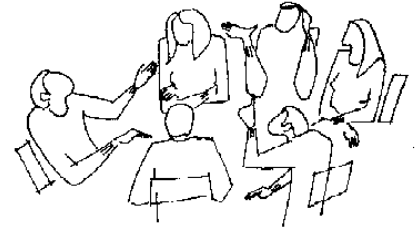
Your clever and capable web browser will take it from there. If you haven't teleconferenced before it may need some trial and error, but you're a smart cookie, you'll muddle through it.

Or you can attend by phone: **669-900-6833**, Meeting ID **874 7597 3566**, Passcode: **805953**.

Location: An online Videoconference via Zoom - see link above.

Contact: See our [Contact Page](#)

Bring your ideas for AOF, your strategies, your suggestions for events and activities -- most of all, your volunteerism. Helping hands are wonderful.



➤ The Many Facets of Steve Hill

Sunday, May 30, 2021, 2pm – 4pm

Steve Hill, that jolly Satanist, is back to put some devil into us.

You remember Steve. Bit by a radioactive stand-up artist, he now uses comedic super powers to explore the hollow, despairing pantomime of current events, from "Lil' Nas X" to Myanmar.

Like real estate prices, where will they go? (Steve is an L.A. appraiser.) What of the George Floyd case? What's being done to mitigate the fallout of mass incarceration? (Steve is also a former corrections officer, a.k.a. prison guard.) Is QAnon in touch with reality, or just in touch with Rep. Matt Gaetz? What about Fox Nudes? Does Mitch McConnell commune with turtles daily or just monthly? Most of all, how did we get in this dumpster, and why is it on fire? You'll find out: just join the free teleconference before Steve vanishes back into the witness protection program.

Alert folk will remember 2016, when Mr. Hill ran for California State Senate District 21 and garnered 12% of the vote (over 13,000 votes) -- remarkable considering a well-advertised membership in The Satanic Temple. He ran again in 2020 in a more crowded field and pulled a cool 10,863, showing an ability to tap into the public's attention and earn respect. Or dissociative mind control, that may be it. But trust us, Steve is a good man.

Another outstanding event of the AOF Speaker Series. We rub our hands and chortle in a worrisome way.

How to attend:

Any time before the event: Go to <https://zoom.us/download>. Download & install the "Zoom videoconference tool" if you haven't already. (Do it just once; it will be good for all future online Zoom meetings.) (Note, downloading is optional -- it just makes the teleconference a bit easier.)

Moments before the meeting: visit

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85727128840?pwd=d1E3ZXM2RTEzZ3VPVUJWSmhtRzN5UT09>. It will take you to a "Zoom Page." Enter your ID info if it asks, then click the blue box that says Launch Meeting. Or follow the displayed instructions.

If it asks you to sign in: If you have a Facebook or Google account, or even an SSO account, just click one of the buttons for those, then sign in with your Facebook or Google info. Or create your own free Zoom account, but this is not necessary.

If it wants a Meeting ID (it probably won't), the ID is **857 2712 8840**.

If it wants a passcode (it probably won't), the passcode is **515048**.

If necessary, click the line that says "Join from Your Browser".

The videoconference should begin. Speakers on, please! Sit back and enjoy.



Or, listen in by phone at 1-669-900-6833. Same meeting ID (**857 2712 8840**) and same passcode (**515048**). This is for the Northern California region.

Location: An online Videoconference via Zoom - see link above.

Contact: Email "programs (at) aofonline.org", or see <https://www.meetup.com/SacFAN/events/276064925/>.

To support the Speaker Series, join AOF at www.aofonline.org/join. Because without AOF, it wouldn't happen.

✧ ✧ Other Upcoming Events ✧ ✧

➤ Sacramento-area Online Meetings

Other local groups are also meeting online. Join for free and share the fun!

- **Monday, May 3, 5pm – 7pm: Indoctrination: Ghosts in the Machine.** Nate Phelps, noted escapee from the fundamentalist Westboro Baptist Church, will discuss how religious ideology insinuates itself into our thoughts and beliefs, how it misinforms reality, and how it may take a lifetime of vigilance to root it out. Meeting link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/186729414> (or see <https://www.meetup.com/RfR-Sacramento-CA/events/277817241/> for details).
- **Tuesdays, May 4, May 18 & Jun 1, 7pm – 9pm: Porch Talk.** A gathering on a virtual front porch, a chat about topics of the day. Your topic suggestions are welcome. Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86401692746?pwd=NWVhZDhpEellNblRiR0w4RGtmQ2ZLUT09>.
- **Wednesdays, May 5, May 19 & Jun 2, 7pm – 8pm: Black Lives Matter and Me.** Talk, read, watch videos; discuss social justice, reforms, privilege and power. Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82590278514?pwd=K1pzaXA0dGVESzlvS1UcEs4RnE2UT09>.
- **Wednesdays, May 12 & 26, 7pm – 9pm: What's Your Story?** Meet other freethinkers, atheists, agnostics, nonbelievers and humanists in the Sacramento area; discuss beliefs and philosophy, and what led you to this place. Attendance link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85489607519?pwd=a1V2eEVKb3hnWXhZMVZRMm04Wk5BQT09>.
- **Thursday, May 13, 7:15pm – 8:45pm: Building an Exciting and Youthful Atheist Movement.** Evan Clark, Executive Director of Atheists United in Los Angeles, will present the ideas, programs, and leaders helping revitalize and reshape the secular movement. Join at <https://tinyURL.com/ACSJ-room> or <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3541153947?pwd=M1NxNEppRUNkQkZieDYvajJuYjZmQT09>. (Zoom Meeting ID 354 115 3947, Passcode 1122020.)
- **Monday, May 17, 6:30pm – 8:30pm: Book Club.** Discussing *Being Mortal: Medicine and What matters in the End*, by Atul Gawande. Bring a few thoughts/ideas about the book to discuss. Details: <https://www.meetup.com/SacFAN/events/276285774/>.
- **Thursday, May 20, 7pm – 9pm: Recovering from Religion Virtual Support Group.** Providing personal support to individuals as they let go of religious beliefs. Share your story or just listen. Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82268955990>.
- **Saturdays, May 22, 7pm – 9pm: Wine, Cheese, and Litera-cheer.** Share your thoughts about any book of choice, one you like or one you hate, one read recently or long ago. Just be nice (focus on the "cheer"), and BYO wine & cheese. Attendance link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84805276575?pwd=V2ZJekhZd2JGY2kvZkRk1ybDISUT09>.
- **Friday, May 28, 6:30pm – 9:30pm, Virtual Skeptics.** A social meeting for the Sacramento Area Skeptics, welcoming new Skeptics and like-minded folks too. Details: <https://www.meetup.com/sacskeptics/events/tsvpxrycchblc/>.

➤ Blasphemy Breakfast – An actual in-person meeting

Sunday, May 16, 2021, 9:30am - 11:00am

We're back! Do you like to hang out with like-minded folk? ... Or do you just get hungry on Sunday mornings? Join us at Mel's Diner for what we call our "Blasphemy Breakfast" (not that we blaspheme that much, but topics come up at times). This is a great starter event if you haven't been to freethinker gatherings before. Also a great group of people to answer any questions you might have, help you learn more about all the goings-on in the region, or help you any way we can.

Recommended: the malts, omelets, biscuits 'n' gravy, and grilled cheese. And everyone's friendly here.

Location: Mel's Diner, 6708 Lonetree Blvd, Rocklin, ph. 916-772-6357, map at <https://goo.gl/maps/x62J3w1tDqZ47CVP9>.

Details: See <https://www.meetup.com/SacFAN/events/277346328/>.

➤ Other Events (via the Sacramento Coalition of Reason)

And more! Other freethought events pop up all the time. Keep an eye on the Sacramento Coalition of Reason global calendar at <https://unitedcor.org/event-calendar-2/>, and you'll never be bored.



How you can help

Support Reason Center

Reason Center is now closed, but that's temporary (we hope!). Its continuing mission: to support a social and intellectual community for freethought, to contribute to society through education and community service, to advance the civic understanding and acceptance of freethinkers, and to uphold the separation of religion and government. All good work.

But "RC" depends on support from members and donors. Please stand up for Reason Center, because it stands up for you. To set up a monthly or one-time donation, visit ReasonCenter.org.

Support AOF

You can support AOF *without spending a dime*. How? When you purchase goods at Amazon.com, simply use this link: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/68-0325762>. Bookmark it now! Prices & service will be the same, but AOF will receive a small kickback for whatever you purchase. Sweet!

Suggest a Meeting

Know a compelling speaker, have a great meeting idea? Tell the AOF Program Committee! Go to <http://www.aofonline.org/contact.html>, click "Program Committee" in the drop-down line, and enter your thoughtful idea. (Reasonable honorariums paid to speakers.).

✧ ✧ Secular Holidays ✧ ✧

➤ National Day of Reason

Thursday, May 6, 2021

[National Day of Reason](#) is a secular celebration observed on the first Thursday in May. The purpose is to celebrate reason and to bring attention to the threat to religious liberty caused by the U.S. Government's increasing encroachment into the private religious lives of its citizens. It was a direct response to the National Day of Prayer—a day that violates the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution because it requires federal, state, and local governments to fund religious ceremonies on this day. On this day, secularists, humanists, and atheists can come together and enjoy a celebration dedicated to reason and not one devoted to any established faith or religion. For details, see: <https://www.holidayscalendar.com/event/national-day-of-reason/>.



➤ Towel Day – In memory of Douglas Adams

Tuesday, May 25, 2021

[Towel Day](#) is the annual celebration of the life and writings of Douglas Adams (1952-2001), humorist, humanist, conservationist, science fiction writer, and social critic. On that day, fans around the universe proudly carry a towel in his honor. Why a towel? Don't panic, go to the website to see - or better yet, read [The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy](#). It's a great book!



➤ Opposite Day

Wednesday, May 26, 2021

Some say the proper date is May 26, some say April 30, some say March 27th -- can you ever be sure? When someone says "Today is [Opposite Day](#)," he might be lying! Opposite Day is a day to say the reverse of what you mean, with a wink, with a nod; a day when "no" means "yes" and "shut up" means "keep talking;" a day to be nice to your boss, teacher or enemy, and a complete jerk to your best friend; a day to turn words on their head; a day to tie knots in logic. Celebrate with care. It might get you in trouble!

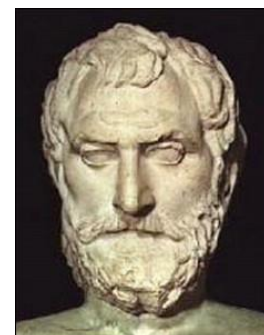
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➤ Birthday of Science

Friday, May 28, 2021

The Birthday of Science marks the day Thales of Miletus (in 585 BCE) correctly predicted a solar eclipse. A better choice might be the discovery of fire or the wheel, but we don't know exactly when that happened, or who did it. We do know about Thales. He was significant because the idea of cause and effect (causality) applies to all science. Given any phenomenon, with the exception of purely random quantum events, in principle we can trace its cause or causes, and the cause of those causes, back through time – until all cause-tracks merge at the "Big Bang," beyond which, presumably, no tracks remain. The seeds of our life and future were sewn then.

Science desires a beginning that applies to the big picture, and a sense of order and predictability. That is where causality leads us.



Mayday for Humanity

On **Thursday, May 6, 2021**, please join the Freethought Society, Recovering from Religion, the Freedom from Religion Foundation, the Secular Student Alliance and the Secular Coalition for America in celebrating [The National Day of Reason](#) with a Zoom entertainment extravaganza, **Mayday for Humanity**.

The event will begin at **4pm PST** (that's **7pm EST**). Comedians **Leighann Lord** and **Ian Harris** will co-host the 3-hour event, and usher in an array of comedians, poets, and musical performers.

The National Day of Reason (NDoR) falls on the same date of the National Day of Prayer. As the religious community prays, the nontheist community will take action. During the NDoR *Mayday for Humanity* event we will be collecting online donations to benefit homeless shelters and food banks selected by the event co-sponsors. Beneficiary organizations operate in a non-discriminatory and secular manner.

The program will include messages from co-sponsors, celebrity supporters, and people conducting grassroots community service projects during the 2021 Secular Week of Action (April 30 - May 9). An online auction will also occur with items donated by Zenos Frudakis, Ann Druyan, Curt Anderson, the Humanists Society of Santa Barbara and many others.

Register to attend via Zoom at: bit.ly/Join4Humanity

For details see <https://www.meetup.com/SacFAN/events/277246257/>.

Pre-event donations can be made at: bit.ly/MAYDAY4HUMANITY. You can also donate via text! Just text the code: "MAYDAY4HUMANITY" to **44-321**.

Note: Please sign the petition to lawmakers to proclaim an annual National Day of Reason here: <https://p2a.co/o1GznEr>.



Big Day of Giving

The annual [Big Day of Giving](#) is **May 6**. Donation pages for California Freethought Day and Reason Center are *now open*.

- **Donate to CFD through May 6 using this link:** <https://www.bigdayofgiving.org/FreethoughtDay>.

You can even create your own fundraising page and goal at the same link by clicking "Fundraise". **PLEASE** consider creating a personal fundraising page and share your unique link with your friends through social media and email. Let's make it a fun competition.

Note: **mark your calendar now** for October 10 (Sunday), 2021, for [California Freethought Day](#) in Sacramento. Plan to be at the State Capitol for this amazing, all-day event. Follow the event on social media ([Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#), and [TikTok](#)) @FreethoughtDay as CFD announces speakers, live entertainment, scholarship contests, community awards, and more.

- **Donate to Reason Center at** <https://charity.gofundme.com/o/en/campaign/new-reason-center-home>.

Help Reason Center find a new home! Even a few dollars will make a difference.

2021 Secular Student Alliance National Conference

The Secular Student Alliance is excited to host a multi-day virtual conference on **May 15-16, 2021**, with live-streaming and on-demand videos for the larger secular community. The event is open to all.

- For details, see <https://secularstudents.org/conference/2021conference/>.
- To register (free!), go to <https://secularstudents.z2systems.com/np/clients/secularstudents/survey.jsp?surveyId=6>.

Freethought Videos and Podcasts for You

- **Point of Inquiry** by the [Center for Inquiry](#) (CFI). For popular episodes, see <https://pointofinquiry.org/tag/popular/>. (For the whole shebang, visit <https://pointofinquiry.org/all-episodes/>.)
- **Freethought Matters TV** by the [Freedom From Religion Foundation](#). In Sacramento, view it each Sunday at 8:30am on KQCA-MY (Ch. 58). Or go to <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLX0IPASW58Y7JVIJ7wtZHeH0v3mDb4t99>.
- **FFRF Freethought Radio**, a weekly show by the Freedom From Religion Foundation. Irreverent views, news, music and interviews. Listen at <https://ffrf.libsyn.com/> or <https://open.spotify.com/show/1Xe4MuRtu142nBUo6QdKqW>.
- **The Infidel Guy Radio** by [Reginald Finley Sr.](#) Yes, he is still broadcasting! Browse the complete archives at <http://www.infidelguy.com/home/archives-listing>.



The Scrooge's Saintry Daughter

THE CHURCH OF St. Mary Overie (better known these days as Southwark Cathedral) has less connection than might appear to the virgin birth. "Overie" simply means over the river. But never mind, it's enough that it commemorates the most slapstick of medieval legends.

The Mary in question was the daughter of the most notorious miser in Southwark, John the ferryman. He did anything to pinch a penny – eating scraps, rarely lighting a fire and giving his servants as little as he could get away with.

One day, he came up with a cunning plan to save a bit more: faking death. That'd mean a day of mourning when no one in the house could eat, and 24 hours later he would unexpectedly recover.

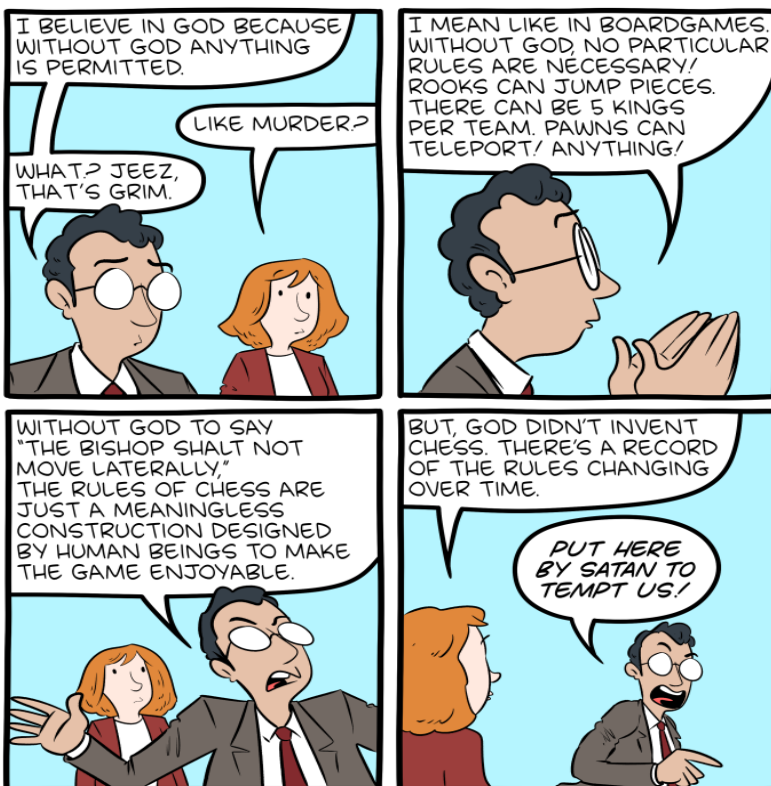
In the event, the apparent demise of the miserable old Scrooge backfired. The servants staved his best wine, roasted his best pig, and partied like it was 999. John rose from his bed howling with rage. And mistaking him for the Ghost of No Christmas Presents they beat his brains out with an oar.

Inheriting his estate, Mary sent for her young gentleman friend to come and marry her. This lad clearly had an eye for the pennies too, because he was so excited he leapt onto his horse, rode off, fell off and copped it.

Learning from experience, Mary then used her money to court the favour of a more reliable loved one, the Lord. She built an abbey, became a nun, and lived happily ever after (and I mean "ever").

The moral of this story could go either way, so here are two, for the cynical and the spiritual. Take your pick.

1. The only one who got any happiness from this money was the one who gave it away.
2. Money doesn't buy you sainthood, but having enough for an abbey can help.



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AOF

Atheists and Other Freethinkers

Not yet an AOF member? Please join us!

Atheists and Other Freethinkers is a 501(c)(3) non-profit association, FEIN 68-0325762, incorporated in 1993. Meetings are free and open to the public. AOF also hosts civic service projects, dinners, movies and parties! See what awaits you at www.aofonline.org.

AOF President: Prolific Pamela Rivers
Vice-president: Marvelous Mynga Futrell
Secretary: Rapid Ruth Rezos
Treasurer & Registrar: Kinetic Ken Nahigian
Webmistress: Palpable Pat Kelley
Program chair: Supersonic Susan McLean
Facebook page: Keen Kaeleigh Pontif
Directors at large:
Roger Zabkie, Fran Evanisko, Christine Tweet,
Linda Ostrofsky (Jetta), Kaeleigh Pontif

How to Contact AOF:

- Call 916-304-3796 (voicemail)
 - Or write to PO Box 15182, Sacramento, CA 95851-0182
- Or visit <http://www.aofonline.org/contact> to e-message us

How to Join AOF:

Visit <http://www.aofonline.org/join>, or come to a meeting. We have forms.

AOF's Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Atheists-and-Other-Freethinkers/533365556831322>

AOF Mission Statement:

"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."

What is a Freethinker? One striving to form opinions of life, religion, politics and philosophy on the grounds of reason and experience, rather than tradition, authority or custom. He or she need not be an atheist, though in a religious society most atheists do tend to be freethinkers.

AOF supports a benign separation of Church and State as the best means to protect the liberty and intellectual commerce of citizens. "... to keep forever from these shores the ceaseless strife that has soaked the soil of Europe in blood for centuries" (James Madison, 1803).

Our vision: to be a venue where secular and unchurched citizens can socialize, dialog, develop friendships and enjoy shared company. AOF does not discriminate on such grounds as race, sexual orientation, age, gender, class, physical debility or (*cough*) religion. We welcome the fair-minded of all political persuasions and preferences. Be respectful, and you may join.

Donations to AOF are tax deductible, and the newsletter is free by email. Please share with sympathetic friends.

Letters, submissions? We love them! See:

<http://www.aofonline.org/read/submission-guide.html>.