

✧ ✧ Upcoming AOF Events ✧ ✧

➤ Free Movie Nights!

Friday, Aug 5 & Friday, Aug 19, 7pm – 10pm

Location: A Netflix TeleParty, details below

Twice a month, [Reason Center](#) (RC) and AOF host a **Free Movie Night** under an excellent [MPLC License](#).

We can't name the movies here. But the first, from 2021, is a suspense of clever high stakes, deceit against counter-deceit. Exceptional pacing keeps you guessing who you should be cheering for - possibly no one - but what a game is played with twists you won't see coming! Starring Rosamund Pike, Peter Dinklage, Eiza González, Chris Messina and Dianne Wiest. (The second movie has not yet been selected.)



To attend, you'll need a personal Netflix account + a laptop or desktop computer with the [Google Chrome](#) or [Microsoft Edge](#) web browser. If you have these, do as follows:

1. Open your Chrome web browser right now and install the Netflix TeleParty Extension. Get it at <https://www.netflixparty.com/>. (Please 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 events calendar about then.
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 Netflix 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 perfectly welcome. To become a Reason Center member, if you'd like, sign up at <http://reasoncenter.com/donate/>. Membership is a measly \$5 a month and is tax deductible if you itemize. We hate taxes, right?

Details for Aug 5: See <https://www.meetup.com/sacfan/events/wmnijsydcibhb/>.

Details for Aug 19: See <https://www.meetup.com/sacfan/events/qmnijsydcibzb/>.

Or contact Reason Center at <http://reasoncenter.com/contact/>.

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

➤ Adopt-a-Highway Cleanup

Saturday, Aug 27, 2022, 9:00 am - 11:00 am

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

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 is tidy because we have cared for it, nurtured it, lovingly rescued it from litter and debris, and received recognition for our work. One of our more successful civic efforts, it proves freethinkers can also serve the community.

So please join us! 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. **And Cal-Trans is now paying AOF a stipend for our work.**

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. 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. 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 if possible, or somewhere near it.



Contact for details: 916-447-2169 (Don Knutson), or see <https://www.aofonline.org/contact.html>.

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

Review the CalTrans Highway Cleanup guidelines at <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/maintenance/adopt-a-highway/covid19>. In case of rain, fog, excessive mud, rapture or locust plague, the Cleanup will be rescheduled. If unsure, call the Activity Captain (Don).

➤ **Natural View: A Toolkit**

Sunday, Aug 28, 2022, 2pm - 4pm

Location: Sam's Hofbrau meeting room, 2500 Watt Ave, map at <https://goo.gl/maps/Sf8o8QKV1WcDQcFQA>.

A new website is in town (cue theme from *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly*). [Naturalview.org](https://www.naturalview.org), "promoting a natural worldview," is a toolkit and resource for religious believers who feel a bit lost in the supernatural perspective and have begun to consider moving to a world of scientific understanding and critical thinking. Its mission: to help them re-evaluate or deconstruct faith. For believers, many of whom were indoctrinated since childhood, deconstruction is like a long slow tooth extraction. It might mean losing family relationships, jobs, even spouses.

Churches have implanted notions of eternal consequences such as Hell for those who "fall away." For those seeking intellectual integrity, cognitive dissonance is very real.

Natural View's Objectives are to identify, recognize and fund young atheist activists, authors and YouTube creators who are making contributions to a scientific or non-supernatural worldview and to provide education, inspiration and support for deconversion.

Presenting the website will be Alex Von Allmen, site creator and technician, and Paul Storey, longtime AOF member and previous president.

This is an in-person event. Be aware of COVID risks, and keep sneezes to yourself.

Park free in the lot. Get some snacks, and convene in the room at the back.

Contact for details: See <https://www.aofonline.org/contact.html>.



➤ **Davis Community Meal - Feed the Hungry**

Tuesday, Aug 30, 2022, 4pm - 7pm

Location: St. Martin's Episcopal Church, 640 Hawthorne Lane, Davis, CA, map at <https://binged.it/1uBpi57>.

The **Davis Community Meal** is serving meals to the hungry, the poor, the indigent, the outcast. It happens in bucolic Davis city, so near to us, where compassionate citizens have developed a secular solution for the problem of hunger, and have asked for help.

Join us in this effort. Your reward will be an opportunity to meet new minds and hobnob with your freethought friends, a likely free meal, jazzy music, and the rosy hearts-glow of benevolence. Also, seriously, it's a blast!

Cooking? Nope, none required. The Davis Community Meals team will perform all the food prep and kitchen work. Our job is simply to set up chairs & tables, serve, put things away at the end, and clean a bit (with a minimum of mopping). Extra points if you can arrive for setup, but if you can't, that's OK, any help is good help. Setup begins about 4:30 p.m., food service at about 5:45. At 6:30 we clean up, leaving the hall as we found it.



For details, please see [Davis Community Meals](#). For a map to the site, see: [Martin's Episcopal Church](#). (Yes, a church hall, so what?) Please be respectful and bring a COVID mask.

Contact: See [Contact Page](#), or call Service Coordinator (Don, 916-447-2169)

Carpooling may be available. For info, please contact the Service Project Coordinator.

❖ ❖ **Other Upcoming (non-AOF) Events** ❖ ❖

Don't be shocked, but AOF is not the only freethought game in town. Other groups are meeting and thriving, hosting their own unique parties, with loads of fun. Following is just a sample.

➤ **Coffee and Community**

Sunday, Aug 7, 2022, 10:30am – 12 noon (online meetup only)

Sunday, Aug 21, 2022, 9:30am – 11am (in the park)

Meet us for coffee, treats, and conversation. For in-person meetups, we bring folding chairs and our own favorite coffee or tea. Please feel free to share your favorite snacks or goodies, but if you don't, come anyway, there is always plenty. New folk welcome! Hosted by Nancy Sneed and Mynga Futrell, two wonderful people.

Video link for August 7: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87468875186?pwd=dGkxTXY5a2p3cTFPTmx2MU95ZWpnUT09>.
Location for August 21: East Portal Park, Sacramento, map at <https://goo.gl/maps/p8WHusZXbNca94r8>.

➤ **Recovery from Religion Online Support Groups**

Sunday, Aug 7, 2022, 4pm – 6pm, and

Tuesday, Aug 18, 7pm – 9pm, and

Saturday, Aug 20, 2022, 7am – 9am

Providing ongoing and personal support to individuals letting go of their religious beliefs.

For Aug 7, online attendance link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7287067292>.

For Aug 18 & 20, online attendance link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82268955990>.

➤ **Blasphemy Breakfasts**

Saturday, Aug 13, 2022, 10am – 11:30am, and

Sunday, Aug 21, 2022, 9:30am – 11am

Do you like to hang out with like-minded people? Want to meet with freethinkers in smaller groups? Or do you just get the morning munchies? Join us at Mel's Diner for what we call our "Blasphemy Breakfast." We don't blaspheme all that much, but who knows what dark mutterings will emerge? This is a great starter event if you haven't been to meetups before.

On August 13: 13399 Folsom Blvd, Folsom, CA, map at <https://goo.gl/maps/ri6JvaBoSZVHTdnU6>.

On August 21: 6708 Lonetree Boulevard, Rocklin, CA 95677, map at <https://goo.gl/maps/ZUY2gq72KkmcC4bU6>.

➤ **Word Confusion**

Saturday, Aug 13, 2022, 7pm

Wonder about words or phrases? Quirks of language come into use or change over time. Here's a online gathering to discuss them. Hosted by Nancy Sneed. For details, see <https://www.meetup.com/sacfan/events/286617622/>.

Attendance link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88417809715?pwd=UGx1Q3hpU25iWkwrZjZaTWZFMEMxZz09>.

➤ **Women's Online Recovery from Religion Support Group**

Saturday, August 13, 2022, 5pm – 7pm

For individuals who identify as female, non-binary and gender-fluid, recovering from the crush of oppressive religion.

Online attendance link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87403436249>.

➤ **Online Photo-share**

Wednesday, Aug 24, 2022, 7pm – 9pm

Do you enjoy photography? Maybe you caught something interesting or mysterious, perhaps a landscape, a sculpture, a flower, a plant or tree, and that photo turned out to be unique. Perhaps a photo of certain people. And you might have an interesting story behind your picture you like sharing with others. Join us for a pic-exchange and discussion of the art.

Online attendance link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88417809715?pwd=UGx1Q3hpU25iWkwrZjZaTWZFMEMxZz09>.

➤ **Online Skeptics in the Pub**

Wednesday, Aug 24, 2022, 7pm – 9pm

Skeptics In The Pub for August will again be on Zoom, joining with our friends, the Bay Area Skeptics. All are welcome!

Online attendance link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/s/84064864877?pwd=Ky9LZXdSRFNJWkc2d1BFaEIOMEprUT09>.

➤ **Remote Book Club (BHNBS)**

Saturday, Aug 27, 3pm – 5pm

Topic: *The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story*. "The New York Times Magazine's award-winning 1619 Project issue reframed our understanding of American history ..." Discussing Chap 13 through the end.

To attend, or for details, see <https://www.meetup.com/bhnb-sacramento/events/287435701/>.

➤ **Saturday Morning Hike**

Saturday, Sept 3, 2022, 9:30am – 11:30am

Sacramento is filled with gorgeous hiking places, ranging from riverside nature to rugged hills. Join us for a hike event each first Saturday of the month, to meet new people, observe nature, and get burrs in your socks. Site to be announced.

Details: See <https://www.meetup.com/sacfan/events/hfkcqsydcmbfb/>.

Questions or site suggestions, please contact Muhannad at <https://www.meetup.com/SacFAN/members/328699576/>.

➤ **More, more Events - online Sacramento Event Calendars**

Most of the local skeptic/freethought/humanist groups have their own event calendars; and plans evolve. So don't depend on the static listing here. To track local events, please bookmark & follow these links:

- The Reason Center calendar: <https://www.meetup.com/ReasonCenterEvents/events/calendar/>

- Sacramento Freethinkers, Atheists and Nonbelievers, <https://www.meetup.com/SacFAN/events/calendar/>
- Black Humanists of Sacramento events, <https://www.meetup.com/bhnb-sacramento/events/calendar/>
- Recovery from Religion Sacramento, <https://www.meetup.com/RfR-Sacramento-CA/events/calendar/>
- Sacramento Skeptics events, <https://www.meetup.com/sacskeptics/events/calendar/>
- Sacramento Brights Action Meetup events, <https://www.meetup.com/Bright-Action-Sacramento/events/calendar/>

You can help AOF. Here's how.

Support Reason Center

Since Reason Center opened in July 2014, it has hosted hundreds of events and accrued twelve partner organizations. Its mission: 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. All good work.

But to continue, "RC" relies 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 really dope meeting idea? Tell the AOF Program Committee! Visit <http://www.aofonline.org/contact.html>, click "Program Committee" in the drop-down line, and enter your fabulous suggestion. (Reasonable honorariums paid to speakers.)

Volunteer?

We suggest it meekly. See <http://www.aofonline.org/learn/committees.html> for opportunities.

✧ ✧ **Secular Holidays** ✧ ✧

➤ **World Friendship Day**

Sunday, Aug 7, 2022

Humans are social creatures, recognizing the value of friendship, the invisible thread connecting our hearts. In 1935 the US Congress proclaimed World Friendship Day as a time to celebrate this humanist sentiment.

Other nations across the world soon adopted the noble idea of Friendship Day, honoring it on the first Sunday of August every year, making it a true international celebration.

How to acknowledge Friendship Day? Call on your friends, invite them for food, embrace them, exchange cards and flowers, gift them with a [friendship band or bracelet](#), or mark the day with programs celebrating human camaraderie.

Note, some groups and nations celebrate Friendship at other times of the year, with different customs and different emphasis. For instance:

- National Friendship Day is the first Sunday in August
- Women's Friendship Day, the *third* Sunday in August
- International Friendship Month is February
- Old Friends / New Friends Week is the third week of May

What is remarkably constant amid this diversity is idea of the celebration of our connections. Everywhere, people express love for their friends and cherish their presence in life. For more information on this secular holiday, click [here](#).



➤ **Ingersoll Day**

Thursday, August 11, 2022

Ingersoll Day marks the birthday of [Robert Green Ingersoll](#), honoring the life and work of one of the most noted freethinkers in US history. Ingersoll was also the most successful orator in nineteenth century America, heard by more Americans than any human before the advent of motion pictures and radio. A leading political figure, he campaigned against slavery and for the rights of women and minorities. They called him the "Great Agnostic." He attracted huge crowds to lectures that criticized religion and promoted freethought. Walt Whitman and Mark Twain greatly admired him.



Celebrate Ingersoll Day with a visit to [the Robert Green Ingersoll Birthplace Museum](#), or by reading excerpts from [the Complete Works of Ingersoll](#).

"When I became convinced that the universe is natural, that all the ghosts and gods are myths, there entered into my brain, into my soul, into every drop of my blood the sense, the feeling, the joy of freedom. The walls of my prison crumbled and fell. The dungeon was flooded with light and all the bolts and bars and manacles became dust. I was no longer a servant, a serf, or a slave. There was for me no master in all the wide world, not even in infinite space. I was free -- free to think, to express my thoughts -- free to live my own ideal, free to live for myself and those I loved, free to use all my faculties, all my senses, free to spread imagination's wings, free to investigate, to guess and dream and hope, free to judge and determine for myself . . . I was free! I stood erect and fearlessly, joyously faced all worlds."

-- Robert Green Ingersoll, "Why I Am An Agnostic"



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 & Editor: Fantastic Fran Evanisko
Vice-president: Marvelous Mynga Futrell
Secretary: Rapid Ruth Rezos
Treasurer & Registrar: Kinetic Ken Nahigian
Webmistress: Palpable Pat Kelley
Directors at large:

Dave Flanders, Roger Zabkie, Pamella Rivera,
Linda Ostrofsky (Jetta), Kaeleigh Pontif
... And the rest of the motley team.

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/53336556831322>

AOF is affiliated with the Alliance of Secular Humanist Societies (ASHS), Atheist Alliance of America (AAA), American Atheists (AA), American Humanist Association (AHA) and the Sacramento Coalition of Reason (SCoR).

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. Any who will treat others with respect and dignity may join.

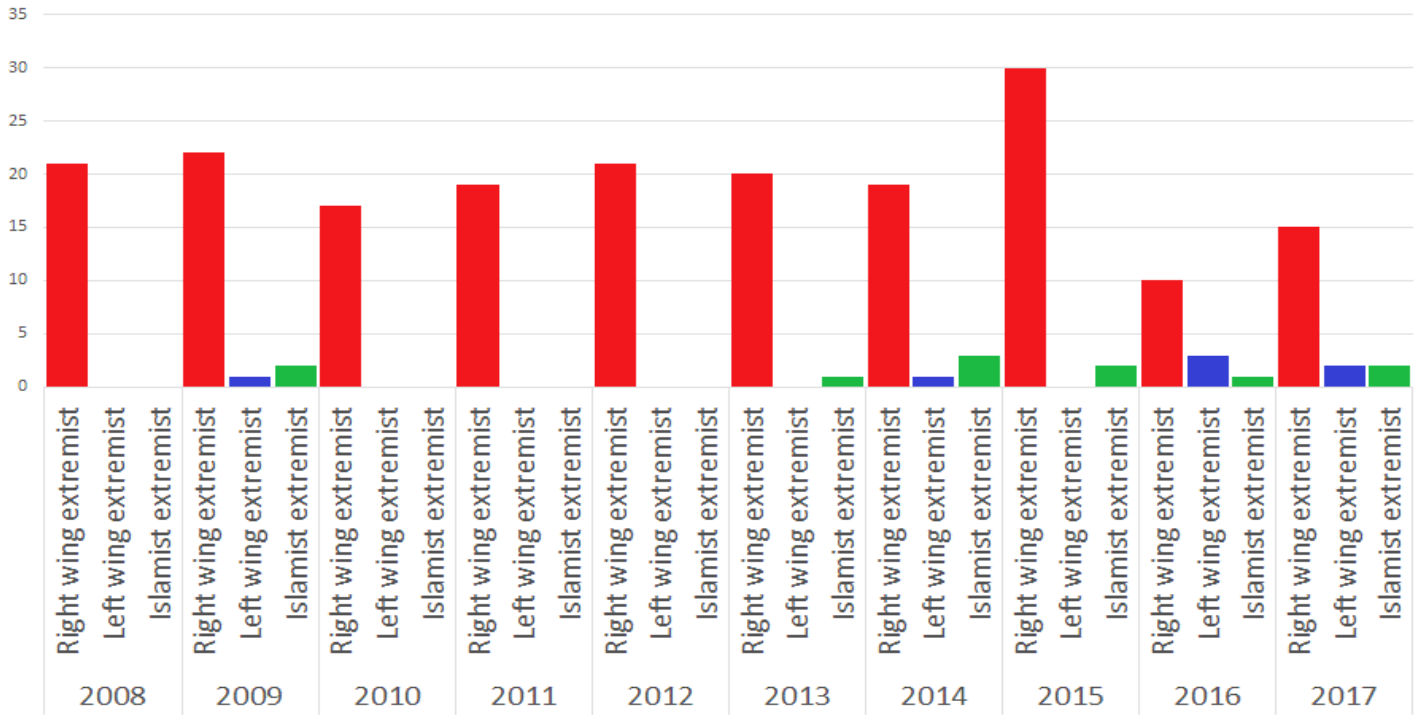
Donations to AOF are tax deductible, and the newsletter is free by email. Please share with sympathetic friends.

Letters, submissions? We love them! See:

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

Incidents of murder by extremist ideology (2008-2017)

Red - right wing, Blue - left wing, Green - Islamist



Source: ADL H.E.A.T Map data

See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Murders_by_extremist_ideology_US.png

The Bathwater Messiah

WHEN GOD CLOSES A DOOR, they say, he opens a window. I don't know what this means, but it seems to have worked for [Tanchelm of Antwerp](#), who had to try various openings, failing as a monk and as a diplomat, before finding his niche as the most successful cult leader of the 12th century.

He toured the Netherlands denouncing the official Church to anyone who would listen. And because he did it rather well, they listened in their thousands.

"You might as well go to a brothel as go to these churches," he cried. Soon they were boycotting the church *en masse*. Probably some of them kept going to church and just started visiting brothels as well, but I'm guessing.

He preached to his adoring public in the fields. The similarity to John Wesley became less marked when the fame went to his head a little bit, and he announced that he was the incarnation of the Holy Spirit, a second Christ, and, yes, God himself.

Just when you thought that pretty much covered all the options, he also publicly married the Virgin Mary. He had all crucifixes replaced with his own banner. He told his followers that they were the only true Church, and that they should give him fantastic amounts of money, which they did, apparently as a wedding gift for him and the Perpetual Virgin.

But his best moment came when he started distributing his bathwater among the flock. He told them to drink it as a replacement for the eucharist. Whether he managed to transubstantiate it is not recorded.

At the height of his popularity, no unbeliever could get near him without being knifed by his bodyguards. In the end, though, he was killed by a local priest – but only after he had lost most of his followers to a newcomer, [St. Norbert of Xanten](#), who did miracles and also talked to the animals.



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