

## ✧ ✧ This month's Main AOF Event ✧ ✧

### ➤ Potluck in the Park

**Sunday, Sept 24, 2023, 2 pm – 4 pm**

**Location:** Westwood Park, 8100 Butternut Drive, Citrus Hts, map at <http://mapq.st/3BhFpNz>.

Come hobnob again at AOF's third annual potluck picnic. It's always a blast!

Bring a picnicky dish to serve 6-8 people, something portable and yummy. Also your own non-alcoholic beverages (alcohol is a no-no in this park). BYO cushion too if you like. Picnic benches can be hard.

AOF will provide plates, cups, utensils, napkins, and cool water. The picnic tables are in the shade under a gazebo and the restrooms are clean – we checked.

We will enjoy the beautiful afternoon, chat about things freethoughty or otherwise, and solve all the world's problem. Feel free to invite family and friends. We're chill with that.

Directions: From I-80 take exit 100 for Antelope Road. Go west on Antelope Road for 0.3 miles. Turn right onto Lichen Drive. At the second stop sign continue straight onto Butternut Drive. To find the picnic area, then turn right onto Treeleaf Way. See the gazebo on the right -- the one with crepe paper? That's it.

Parking is free and a breeze. The neighborhood around the park has free parking. Also there's a free parking lot. To get to the lot from Butternut Drive, turn right onto Treeleaf Way, then turn right onto Cloverleaf Way.

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



## ✧ ✧ Other Upcoming AOF Events ✧ ✧

### ➤ Free Movie Nights!

**Friday, Sept 8, 7pm – 10pm**

**Wednesday, Sept 20, 7pm – 10pm**

**Location for Sept 8:** Reason Center, 1300 Ethan Way, Ste 675-B, Sacramento, map at <https://goo.gl/maps/S5MR1e8ZodBzb4TG8>.

**Location for Sept 20:** An online "Teleparty." To attend, see <https://www.meetup.com/sacfan/events/wzhcgtyfcmBBC/> for details.

Movie nights are back, and AOF is once again a sponsor. For Sept 8, go to Reason Center, and enter from the back north corner of the building. "RC" will provide popcorn; feel free to bring your own snacks as well. There is no fee to attend, but we do appreciate your donations.

**Details for Sept 8:** See <https://www.meetup.com/sacfan/events/tjtsqtyfcmblb/>.

**Details for Sept 20:** See the link above. You must load the "Teleparty Extension" to your browser.

**Contact with questions:** Call 916-426-6416, or see <https://reasoncenter.com/contact/>.

*Movie Night is 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, a measly \$5 a month, is tax deductible if you itemize, and the perks (like this one) are a buried treasure.*

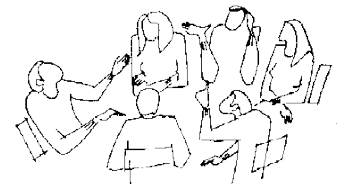


### ➤ Board of Directors Meeting

**Tuesday, Sept 12, 2023, 7 pm – 8 pm**

**Location:** Reason Center, 1300 Ethan Way, Ste 675, Sacramento, map at <https://goo.gl/maps/S5MR1e8ZodBzb4TG8>.

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



Join us, meet the Board, and keep an eye on the shenanigans. We love visitors. We often have snacks. And maybe you'll have some good ideas, hm? (Note, this will be an actual in-person meeting. Not one of those Zoom things.)

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

*Bring your ideas for AOF, your strategies, your event and activity suggestions -- best of all, your volunteerism! Helping hands are the bomb. (A good kind of bomb.)*

## ➤ Adopt-a-Highway Cleanup

**Saturday, Sept 16, 2023, 9 am – 11 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's 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 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. Note, Cal-Trans is now paying 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. 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 Natomas area. 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.

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

Please review the Highway Cleanup guidelines at <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/maintenance/adopta-highway/covid19>.

**Contact for details:** 916-805-9337 (Don Knutson), or see <https://www.aofonline.org/contact.html>.

*In case of rain, fog, excessive mud, rapture or locust plague, the Cleanup will be rescheduled. If unsure, call the Activity Captain (Don).*



## ✧ ✧ Non-AOF Events ✧ ✧

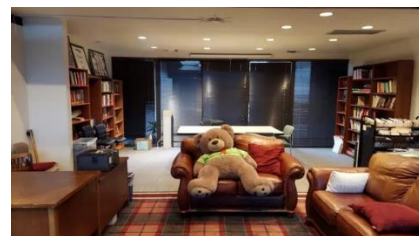
Don't be surprised, but Sacramento has other freethought groups; AOF is just one. We advertise their events as a courtesy because we're all friends. Here are highlights. Give them a try, you might be pleased.

## ➤ Open Library at Reason Center

**Thursday, Sept 7, 3:30 pm – 6:30 pm**

**Location:** Reason Center, 1300 Ethan Way, Ste 675, Sac., map at <https://goo.gl/maps/S5MR1e8ZodBzb4TG8>.

Come browse the Reason Center library. We have an extensive collection of fascinating books, and you can borrow them if you are a Reason Center member. See [reasoncenter.org](http://reasoncenter.org) to join, or you may join at the site.



We plan ultimately to have the library open twice monthly, and we hope to see you there!

**Contact for details:** Call 916-426-6416, or see <https://reasoncenter.com/contact/>.

## ➤ Blasphemy Breakfasts - and a Brunch

**Saturday, Sept 9, 2023, 10 am – 11:30 am (Folsom)**

**Sunday, Sept 10, 2023, 9:30 am – 11:30 am (midtown Sacramento)**

**Sunday, Sept 17, 2023, 9:30 am – 11 am (Rocklin)**

**Sept 9 location:** Mel's Diner, 13399 Folsom Blvd, Folsom, CA, map at <https://goo.gl/maps/ri6JvaBoSZVHTdnU6>.

**Sept 10 location:** Mel's Diner, 3000 J Street, Sacramento, CA, map at <https://goo.gl/maps/toijMkseMwMtanVP7>.

**Sept 17 location:** Mel's Diner, 6708 Lonetree Blvd, Rocklin, CA, map at <https://goo.gl/maps/ZUY2gg72KkmcC4bU6>.

Like to hang out with like-minded people? Want to meet freethinkers in smaller groups? Or do you just get the morning munchies? Join us for our "Blasphemy Breakfast." We really don't blaspheme all that much, but dark mutterings may emerge ... be warned. A great place to speak your mind, and a good starter if you are new to meetups. *Please* RSVP.

**Details for Sept 9,** see <https://www.meetup.com/sacfan/events/srvlqtyfcmmb/>.

Details for Sept 10, see <https://www.meetup.com/sacfan/events/btpcgyfcmnb/>.  
Details for Sept 17, see <https://www.meetup.com/sacfan/events/pwwnssyfcmbwb/>.

### ➤ Recovery from Religion (RfR) Virtual Support meetings

**Saturday, Sept 9, 5 pm – 7 pm** (for women & non-binary, attendance link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87403436249>)

**Saturday, Sept 16, 7 pm – 9 pm** (attendance link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7287067292>)

**Sunday, Sept 17, 12 noon – 2pm** (for LGBTQA+ folk, attendance link <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7287067292>)

Providing ongoing and personal support to individuals letting go of religious beliefs. Please be sensitive and tolerant, and cut others some slack, because *slack* binds us together. “RfR” is here to help you.

### ➤ Sacramento Skeptics in the Pub

**Saturday, Sept 9, 2023, 6 pm – 9 pm**

A social meetup for the skeptical minds, a community of people, friends, and families that champion the methods of science and critical thinking. Visitors and new skeptics most welcome!

**Details:** see <https://www.meetup.com/sacskeptics/events/lzkdgyfcmmb/>.

**Location:** Duke's Pints & Plates, 510 La Sierra Dr, Sacramento; map at <https://goo.gl/maps/aNzV4j33cnizW9j77>

### ➤ Sunday Assembly

**Sunday, Sept 10, 2023, 11 am – 1 pm (doors open 10:30am)**

**Location:** Reason Center, 1300 Ethan Way, Suite 675, Sacramento, map at <https://goo.gl/maps/S5MR1e8ZodBzb4TG8>.

Sunday Assembly is a secular celebration with music, readings, food and speakers, plus entertainment for smalls. For the potluck lunch, bring your favorite dish to share, and be hungry. Kids welcome, visitors welcome, pets OK.

**Details:** see <https://www.meetup.com/sacfan/events/kgtsqgyfcmnb/>.

**Contact:** see <https://www.meetup.com/sunday-assembly-sacramento/members/?op=leaders>.

### ➤ Suicide Loss Survivors Discussion and Support

**Tuesday, Sept 12, 2023, 5 pm – 7 pm**

Online survivor support in a compassionate, secular way. Attendance link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82683645189>.

### ➤ Games at the Reason Center

**Friday, Sept 15, 6 pm – 9 pm**

**Location:** Reason Center, 1300 Ethan Way, Suite 675, Sacramento, map at <https://goo.gl/maps/S5MR1e8ZodBzb4TG8>.

A fun evening of games and food. Please bring a small dish to share for our potluck. Feel free to bring some of your own games to share. We have a variety of games, both board games and card games. (Here are a few: Ticket to Ride, Azul, Camel Up, Labyrinth, Rummikub, and more.)

But no gambling allowed. Good grief, people.

**Details:** see <https://www.meetup.com/sacfan/events/ggslyfcmmb/>.

**Contact:** See <https://www.meetup.com/sacfan/members/380483831/>, or call 916-426-6416.



### ➤ Ancient Christian Study Group

**Sunday, Sept 17, 12 noon – 2 pm**

**Location:** Shine Café, 1400 E Street, Sacramento, CA

The history of ancient Christianity is endlessly fascinating. Don Fox and Steve Thoreson are facilitating this meet up to review the history of Rome, religions of the Roman Empire, Gnosticism, Mystery cults, history of Christian persecutions, biographies of major Christians, Bible writings and many other related topics. If you ever wanted to sort out Eusebius from Clement, or Constantine from Diocletian, or the Vulgate from the Septuagint, then this group is for you. Previous biblical knowledge not required. Topic this month: Persecution.

**Details:** see <https://www.meetup.com/sacfan/events/ndfzqyfcmbwb/>.

### ➤ Black Humanists & Non-Believers Book Club

**Saturday, Sept 23, 2023, 3:30 pm – 5:00 pm**

An online book discussion open to all. Book topic to be announced. RSVP to attend, and the location will be revealed.

**Details:** see <https://www.meetup.com/bhnb-sacramento/events/whnfftyfcmmb/>.

### ➤ Reason Center Grand Opening

**Saturday, Sept 23, 5 pm – 7 pm**

**Location:** Reason Center, 1300 Ethan Way, Suite 675, Sacramento, map at

<https://goo.gl/maps/S5MR1e8ZodBzb4TG8>.

The new Reason Center has been open for a while, but finally plans a Grand Opening Party at the new location! More details are pending; “RC” wanted to post this event so you can save the date. It will serve up appetizers and lovely secular music.





RSVP at the link below. RC will update the event to tell you what else is happening.

**Details:** See <https://www.meetup.com/reasoncenterevents/events/295433390/>.

**Contact with questions:** Call 916-426-6416, or see <https://reasoncenter.com/contact/>.

### ➤ **Humanity Breakfast**

**Sunday, Sept 24, 9:30 am – 1:30 am**

**Location:** Please sign up and vote at <https://forms.gle/PPBcXq1YbPsCWb6T9>.

A get together for another fabulous breakfast. This time we will squeeze in time for a planning meeting as we have Freethought Day around the corner and we have a lot of preparation in the works.

**Details:** see <https://www.meetup.com/bhnb-sacramento/events/295857297/>.

### ➤ **Coffee and Community**

**Sunday, Sept 24, 2023, 10:00 am – 11:30 am**

**Location:** A videoconference; to attend, wait for the meeting time, and then click

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88317332021?pwd=OVI6M3IRQm52L0hQUmhwd0pucENEQT09>.

Meet for open-topic conversation, brew your own coffee. Get to know new folk or visit with some old friends! Hosted by Nancy Sneed and Mynga Futrell, such friendly people!



### ➤ **Porch Talk**

**Wednesday, Sept 27, 7 pm – 8:30 pm**

A social gathering on the virtual front porch. Join online (via your personal computer) for a chat on topics of the day; just click the link at meeting time and follow the instructions. Your discussion suggestions are welcome. Host: Nancy Sneed.

**Attendance link:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88417809715?pwd=UGx1Q3hpU25iWkwrZjZaTWZFZMEMxZz09>.

**Details:** see <https://www.meetup.com/sacfan/events/xcnkftyfcmkbc/>.

### ➤ **Atheists Community videos & discussion**

**Monday, Oct 2, 2023, 9:30 am – 10 am**

**Location:** A videoconference; to attend, wait for the meeting time, then click

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86335813654?pwd=RktpTmhQSzZRZ1UwV3htaUg5QzhzUT09>.

An educational and entertaining teleconference about Atheism, Logic, Reason, Thoughtfulness - accentuated by videos and, of course, your presence.

**Details:** see <https://www.meetup.com/reasoncenterevents/events/hhpqdyfcmdb/>.

### ➤ **More Events – See the Event Calendars**

There's more! Believe us. And plans keep changing, so don't trust the static list above. To keep track of all those other events, bookmark & follow these links:

- Sacramento Freethinkers, Atheists and Nonbelievers, <https://www.meetup.com/SacFAN/events/calendar/>
- The Reason Center calendar, <https://www.meetup.com/ReasonCenterEvents/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/>
- Compassionate Humanists of Roseville, <https://www.meetup.com/compassionate-humanists/events/calendar/>
- Sunday Assembly Sacramento events, <https://www.meetup.com/sunday-assembly-sacramento/events/calendar/>
- Central Valley Alliance of Atheists & Skeptics, <https://www.meetup.com/fresno-cvaas/events/calendar/>

### ***Help us. Here's how.***

#### **Support Reason Center**

Since the first Reason Center opened in July 2014, it has hosted hundreds of events and accrued 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. 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 join or donate, visit [ReasonCenter.org](http://ReasonCenter.org).

#### **Suggest a Meeting**

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

**Volunteer?** See <http://www.aofonline.org/learn/committees.html> for opportunities.

## ✧ ✧ Secular Holidays ✧ ✧

### ➤ World Cleanup Day

**Saturday, Sept 16, 2023**

In the United States, [World Cleanup Day](#) (WCD) is the third Saturday of September, which due to calendar vagaries can drift from Sept 15 to Sept 21. But eco-groups urge us to think of all of September as World Cleanup Month. And that's a great idea.

WCD began in the small country of Estonia in 2008, when 50,000 people united to clean up the entire country in just five hours. On that day, a bottom-up civic movement was born. It spread around the globe, capturing the hearts off people worldwide, who followed suit with the same 'one country, one-day' formula. By 2018 it had united 18 million people across 157 countries and territories.

Today the simple idea is a global movement with millions of volunteers and charismatic leaders. The simple act of cleaning has bound together people and groups that would otherwise never unite to work towards the same goal. Civil society, governments and global corporations, women in Saudi Arabia, people defying war in Yemen and Syria, Muslims, Jews, Hindus and Christians, men and women, children.

Why? Because every human has a place they call Home, be it a mansion, street, hut or cardboard box. Then there are the cities, countries, and regions we call home; the planet we call home. When the Estonians successfully cleaned their home in 5 hours, the world took notice. The simplicity and the 'let's do it' attitude took off and the rest, as they say, is history.

After all, anyone can pick up trash. But World Cleanup Day has become much more than that. Daycares, schools, companies, government officials – the old, the young, the rich, the poor, the able and less able – everyone has contributed. Because they can. Because they wanted to be involved in making their home a better place. Because they were given an opportunity to help. Because they belong to a community, and the community belongs to us.

How can you help? Go to <https://www.worldcleanupday.us> or <https://www.worldcleanupday.org/>, find your local contacts, register for a Cleanup, and rise early that day to help to beautify your parks, trails, beaches, mountains, and open spaces. The world will be better for it, and you will be a better person.



### ➤ Ask an Atheist Day

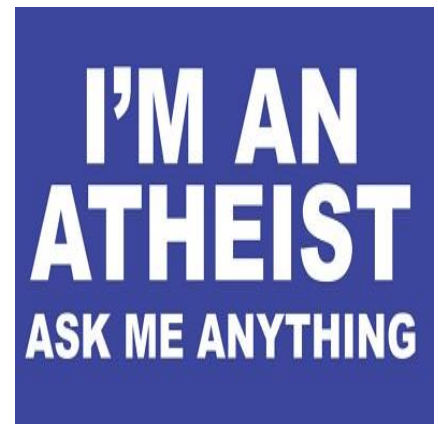
**Friday, Sept 22, 2023**

[National Ask an Atheist Day](#) is a movable secular holiday that occurs twice each year -- first on the 3rd Thursday of April (which can be anywhere from April 15 to April 21), then on the 3rd Thursday of September (from Sept 15 to Sep 22). As if atheists don't have enough to do already.

"NAaA Day" is an opportunity for secular groups across the country to dispel myths about atheism and to encourage constructive, courteous dialogue between believers and nonbelievers. And it is an opportunity for the general public—particularly folk of faith—to approach non-theists and ask questions about secular life. Please don't be afraid to spark up a discussion with us, we won't bite. Most don't, anyway.

The first event was in February of 2011, when members of the [Secular Student Alliance](#) (SSA) at the University of Illinois set up a table with a sign that said "Ask an Atheist." The next month an article appeared in the [Friendly Atheist website](#), written by a "Guest Contributor" (probably an SSA member), saying the event was a smashing success and the Illinois group hoped to take the day nationally. "The SSA is ready to help," it added. Since then NAaA Day has occurred each April, and soon in September as well.

For those interested, it helps to know a bit about atheism. Of course the point is to ask atheists questions, but here is some background. Generally, atheists have no belief in deities, which is not *quite* the same as a positive belief that no deity exists. The prefix "a" just means "without." Atheism has no set ideology—atheists may be humanists, rationalists, unitarian universalists, postmodernists, secularists, among other things. Historically, Greek and Roman philosophers and writers such as Epicurus, Democritus, and Lucretius had an influence on what would become atheism. The term didn't appear until the sixteenth century, a time when freethought and skepticism began to flourish. Some that lived during the Age of Enlightenment were the first to identify themselves as atheists. The supremacy of human reason was a facet of the French Revolution, and it was at this time that atheism first became used politically. Science also began to lock horns with orthodox religion during the second half of the nineteenth century.



### ➤ Talk Like a Pirate Day

**Tuesday, Sept 19, 2023**

*Avast ye lubbers.* International [Talk Like a Pirate Day](#) is a day to show your Piratude. Created in 1995 by John Baur and Mark Summers, promulgated to worldwide popularity by humorist Dave Barry in a syndicated column, this is a secular

holiday we can celebrate in many ways: garb like pirates, talk like pirates, swill grog like pirates, stagger and fall down like pirates. What's grog? Never mind, just find some and knock it back.

Then haul your keel, shiver your timbers, and do wha' ever else seem right and proper, 'cause this be a day to celebrate. More info ahoy, [here](#).

Other Piratery links:

How to Talk like a Pirate, instructions [here](#).

Translate text into Pirate Talk [here](#).

Google's Pirate Search engine is [here](#).



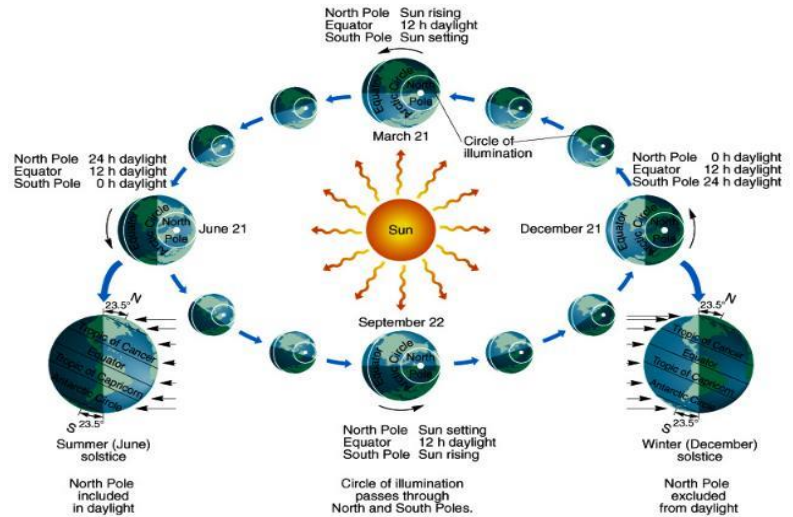
## ➤ Equinox (September)

**Friday, Sept 22, 2023**

The **September Equinox** is one of two days in the calendar year when day almost equal the night hours. In the northern hemisphere it is also the first day of autumn or fall (Gregorian calendar), called the Autumnal Equinox. (In the southern hemisphere it is the first day of spring.)

The Autumnal Equinox marks when green things begin to shed, when growth which was young in the spring has reached maturity. Animals prepare for winter, tree leaves turn colors, and the air takes a chill. In most cultures this a time for harvest and taking stock of life's fragility. It is a time when people begin noticing the waning hours of daylight in anticipation of the winter. Since this time of year is one of the most temperate, it is also a good time to reflect on the meaning of life.

In every culture the Autumnal Equinox signals the return of weather that favors slowing down, introspection, and conservation. Many cultures celebrate the harvest as a means to defeat the starvation brought on by winter. It is also a time closely associated with the dead. Though the dead do not return to life nor walk the earth this time of the year, it is well to remember or memorialize those who are no longer with us. For freethinkers the Autumnal Equinox is a great time to celebrate the lives of those who contributed to the freethought movement. It is also a perfect day to contemplate your own thoughts on the meaning you invest in life, and share those thoughts with others.



## ➤ Blasphemy Day

**Saturday, Sept 30, 2023**

Secularists and freethinkers worldwide celebrate [International Blasphemy Day](#) or "Blasphemy Rights Day" to mark the anniversary of when images of Muhammad appeared in the Denmark newspaper *Jyllands-Posten* in 2005. Conservative Muslims reacted to the drawings with worldwide protests, riots, embassy burnings and death threats.

Formally founded in 2009 by Ronald Lindsay, Directory of the Center of Inquiry in Amherst, New York, and promoted by the [Campaign for Free Expression](#), this secular holiday now stands as a platform for individuals freely to express criticisms of religion and religious establishments. As Ronald Lindsay said in a television interview: "... religious beliefs should be subject to examination and criticism just as political beliefs are, but we have a taboo on religion."

"... we're against restrictions on speech based purely on the possibility that some people might be offended," he also said; "Because if you go down that path there's no end to it."

**Save the Date!** This year's [Freethought Day](#) Festival will occur **Sunday, October 8**, in [Capitol Park at the State Capitol Building](#), with a fun fundraiser reception the evening before. As always the main event is *free*, but registration brings delightful perks. Register now at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/california-freethought-day-2023-registration-650404606687>. More information about the event at <https://freethoughtday.org/>.

