

Location: Reason Center, 1300 Ethan Way, Rm 675, Sacramento, map at <https://goo.gl/maps/RwiUgEJ5ESHRhrPu8>.

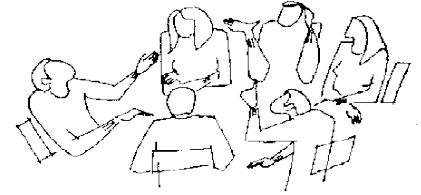
It's an AOF planning meeting, mainly for AOF directors & officers but open to all. These happen as required, and are more fun than they sound.

Please join us, meet the Board, keep an eye on the shenanigans. We love visitors. We have snacks, usually. And maybe you'll have some good ideas, hm?

Note, this Board meeting will be an actual in-person meeting, so be sure vaccinations are current, or wear a mask, or just don't cough on us.

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, July 12, 2025, 9 am – 11 am

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

Out on Highway 99, for two miles from Elkhorn Boulevard to Elverta Road, runs a lonely stretch -- *our* stretch! Sac-area freethinkers "adopted" it in July 1995. We have cared for it, nurtured it, lovingly rescued it from litter and debris, and received recognition for our work. One of our 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.

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 CalTrans Highway Cleanup guidelines at <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/maintenance/adopt-a-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).



➤ Davis Community Meal: Feed the Hungry

Tuesday, July 29, 2025, 4:30 pm – 7 pm

Location: St. Martin's Episcopal Church hall, 640 Hawthorne Lane, Davis, CA, map at <https://maps.app.goo.gl/d1rfVpbhC7DWJzv8>.

In nearby, bucolic Davis city, compassionate citizens have a secular solution for the problem of hunger -- and they need our help! Join local freethinkers in an ongoing effort to feed the poor, the hungry, the indigent, the outcast. Your reward? The opportunity to meet new minds and hobnob with your freethinker friends, a likely free meal, jazzy music, and the warm hearts-glow of benevolence. Also, seriously, it's a blast!

No cooking required. The Davis Community Meals team will perform food prep and kitchen work. Our job is simply to set up chairs & tables, smile, 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 is OK, any help is good help. Setup begins about 4:30 p.m., buffet food service at about 5:45. At 6:30 we clean up, leaving the hall as we found it.

For more info, please see <https://daviscommunitymeals.org/>.

Contact for details: See <https://www.aofonline.org/contact.html>, or call the Service Coordinator (Don, 916-805-9337). *Carpooling may be available. For info, please contact the Service Project Coordinator.*



✧ ✧ Other Upcoming Events ✧ ✧

Some local *non*-AOF events worthy of your attention. We don't list them all, just highlights. For more, please check the calendar links below.

➤ Polyamory: Small Groups, Big Talk

Saturday, July 5, 2025, 4 pm – 7 pm

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

NOT A SEX PARTY (drat), but a discussion of Polyamory for those new to it, experienced, or just curious as to what it is. "We are a community within Sacramento who practice Polyamory, a form of Ethical Non-Monogamy. Let's get together and talk! Whether you have wisdom to share, questions to ask, or need to just observe: you are welcome. The space is closed and completely private. We will get together around tables of 6-8 and discuss various questions relating to polyamory and relationships."

Details at: <https://www.meetup.com/reasoncenterevents/events/308025272/>.

Note: This is a Safe Space. That means no tolerance for hate or violence. Please listen and not pass judgements. It is safe to make mistakes and receive advice as to how to do better.

➤ Sacramento Skeptics in the Pub

Sunday, July 6, 2025, 6 pm – 8 pm

Location: Urban Roots Brewing & Smokehouse, 1322 V St., Sac.; map at <https://maps.app.goo.gl/V8ek6ragKu4ULbcJA>.

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

Details: see <https://www.meetup.com/sacskeptics/events/308220221/>.

➤ Atheists Community relevant video clips & discussion

Monday, July 7, 2025, 7:30 pm - 10:30 pm

Location: Visit <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81807086862?pwd=ZjUyamt1b2dlc1N5bEZ6Q0w1Um00QT09> at meeting time.

An educational and entertaining teleconference about Atheism, Logic, Reason, Thoughtfulness, debunking conspiracy theories - accentuated by videos and your presence.

Details at: <https://www.meetup.com/reasoncenterevents/events/308831632/>.

➤ Blasphemy Brunches and a Breakfast

Saturday, July 12, 2025, 10 am – 11:30 am, at Mel's Diner, 13399 Folsom Blvd, Folsom, CA, map at <https://goo.gl/maps/ri6JvaBoSZVHTdnU6>, see details at

<https://www.meetup.com/sacfan/events/308682028/>.

Sunday, July 13, 2025, 9:30 am – 11:30 am, at Mel's Diner, 3000 J Street, Sacramento, CA, map at <https://goo.gl/maps/toijMkseMWmTanVP7>, details at

<https://www.meetup.com/sacfan/events/wlzbqtyhckbrb/>.

Sunday, July 20, 2025, 9:30 am – 11 am, at Mel's Diner, 6708 Lonetree Blvd, Rocklin, CA, map at <https://goo.gl/maps/ZUY2gq72KkmkC4bU6>, details at

<https://www.meetup.com/sacfan/events/wlzbqtyhckbrb/>.



Like to hang 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 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 (see the links).

➤ Sunday Assembly & Potluck

Sunday, July 13, 2025, 11 am – 1 pm (doors open 10:30am, presentation at 11)

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

Sunday Assembly is a secular celebration of *you*, with music, readings, food and speakers, plus entertainment for children. Featured presenter is **Sarah Norris** of Wild Rye Consulting. Her topic: **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Urban Forest**. Bring a food dish to share if you wish – it's a potluck too! (Child care included.)

Details: see <https://www.meetup.com/sacfan/events/308518456/>.

➤ LitraCheer

Saturday, July 19, 2025, 2 pm – 4 pm

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

Reason Center continues with in-person book discussions in the library seating area. Come enjoy the weekend afternoon discussing your favorite books with fellow thinkers. Everyone will get a chance to share their ideas about a book of their choice—any genre, fiction or nonfiction. It's a great way to keep abreast of what like-minded people are reading.

👉 Let's follow common sense decency in choice of books, avoid marketing pitches, and generally be nice. Focus on the "cheer" part of the event.

👉 Optional to bring your snacks to add to our complementary treats. Enough to share is all we ask.

Details: see <https://www.meetup.com/sacfan/events/308588558/>.

➤ Ancient Christian Study Group

Sunday, July 20, 2025, 12 noon – 2 pm

Location: Mast Coffee, 1430 28th Street, Sacramento, CA, see map: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/zerBD1Q5DvfaKCCx7>.

The history of ancient Christianity is an endlessly fascinating topic. Don Fox and Steve Thoreson will facilitate meetups to review the history of Rome, religions of the Roman empire, Gnosticism, Mystery cults, history of Christian persecutions, biographies of major Christians, the history of the Bible 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 is not required to participate.

Details: see <https://www.meetup.com/sacfan/events/308520171/>.

➤ Black Humanists & Non-Believers Book Club

Saturday, July 26, 2025, 3:30 pm – 5:00 pm (online meeting)

An online book discussion open to all. The topic will be **My Brother's Name Is Kenny: The Greatest True Hip-Hop Story Ever Told**, by Kenny Parker. RSVP at the Details link below, and you will see how to attend.

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

➤ Humanity Supper

Sunday, July 27, 2025, 4 pm – 6 pm

Location: 2667 Alt Arden Expy · Sacramento, CA, map at <https://maps.app.goo.gl/Gut8tECrhg5rWGZBA>.

Our dining series is seeking to comb the area for great Black owned restaurants and support them with our dollars. Also, a great opportunity for new people trying to commit to our events. Why not start this month with this event? We would love to get to know you. Please RSVP at the “details” link below.

Details at: <https://www.meetup.com/bhnb-sacramento/events/308154416/>.

Notes: Be prepared to bring cash to have the most flexible payment experience (if party size is larger than 3). Also, honor your RSVP and keep it updated. Greatly appreciated.

➤ More Events – So many Calendars!

Really, there's more. And plans change, because we're human. So don't trust the list above. To learn of all those other events, please 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/>

You can help. 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 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.

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 suggestion. (Reasonable honorariums paid to speakers.)

Volunteer?

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

✧ ✧ **Secular Holidays This Month** ✧ ✧

➤ Indivisible Day

Friday, July 4, 2025

In the state of Minnesota, former Governor Jess Ventura declared Independence Day to be **Indivisible Day**, a day in recognition of the separation of Church and State, and the vital role it has played in keeping our nation free and whole. For more information, see https://secularseasons.org/july/indivisible_day.html.

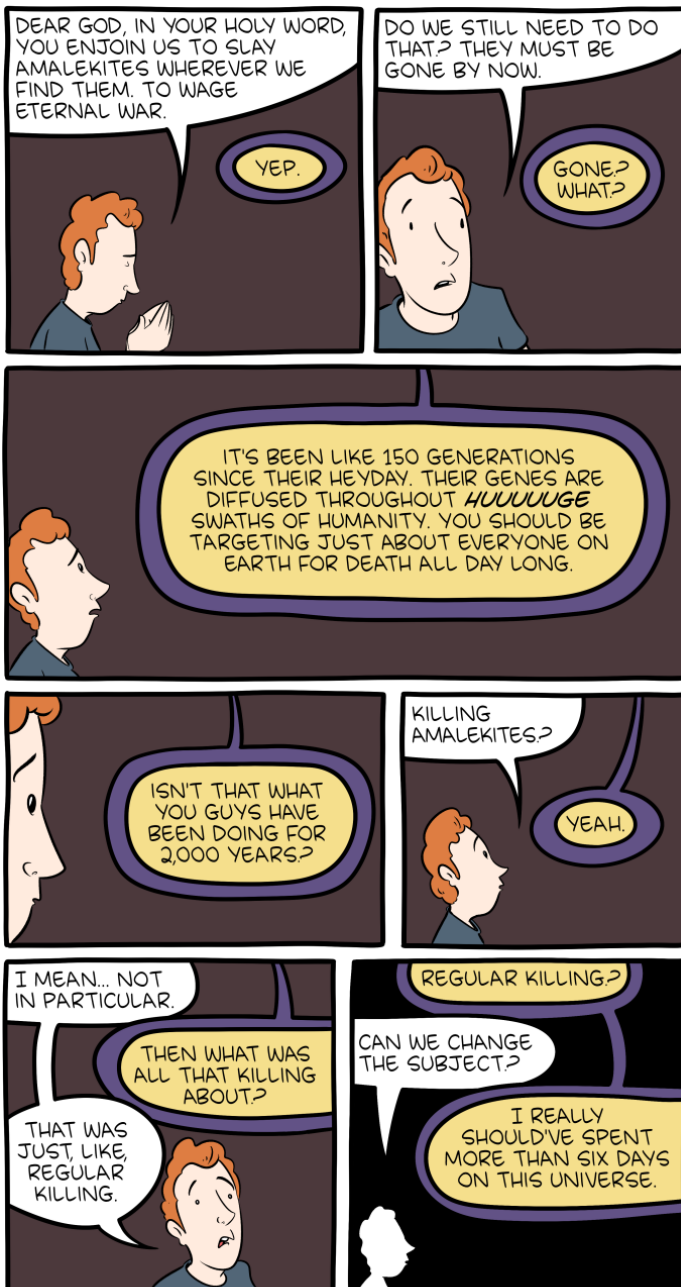
One Nation
INDIVISIBLE

➤ World Population Day

Friday, July 11, 2025

The Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme established [World Population Day](#) in 1989, seeking to raise awareness of global population issues. The inspiration for this annual event was public interest in Five Billion Day, July 11, 1987, when the world's population reached approximately five billion people.

Visit the **World Population Clock** at <https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/>.



gmbc-comics.com

“The Sniffle”

In spite of her sniffle
Isabel's chiffle.
Some girls with a sniffle
Would be weepy and tiffle;
They would look awful,
Like a rained-on waffle,
But Isabel's chiffle
In spite of her sniffle.
Her nose is more red
With a cold in her head,
But then, to be sure,
Her eyes are bluer.
Some girls with a snuffle,
Their tempers are uffle.
But when Isabel's snivelly
She's snivelly civilly,
And when she's snuffly
She's perfectly luffly.

— Ogden Nash

In honor of the Centennial of the Scopes Monkey Trial

AOF member **Andrew O. Lutes** sends retrospectives on the Scopes Trial, which occurred in July 1925 in Dayton, Tennessee, a century ago. Thanks, Andrew!

HISTORICAL INACCURACIES OF THE PLAY/MOVIE "INHERIT THE WIND"

Sources: *Summer for the Gods* by E. Larson; "A Visit to Dayton" by S. Gould

--Play/movie portrays Dayton, TN, as religious and intolerant. The real town of had a non-fundamentalist majority and a tolerant, diverse, population.

--Play/movie shows the teacher being arrested in his classroom after giving instruction in evolution, and being held in jail. In real, Scopes consented to being indicted and "arrested" to test the "monkey law" and to bring publicity to the town; he spent no time in jail. Scopes later remembered that he actually had not covered evolution in his classroom. He didn't publicly announce this and let the trial proceed, so the test of the law could go on.

--Play/movie shows a love interest between the teacher and a minister's daughter. In real, Scopes dated women in Dayton, but wasn't seriously involved with anyone there.

--Play/movie shows expert testimony being entirely blocked. In real, though the experts weren't allowed to testify in front of the jury, they were permitted to give their testimony as speeches to the crowds in front of the courthouse, and these speeches were then printed in newspapers across the country.

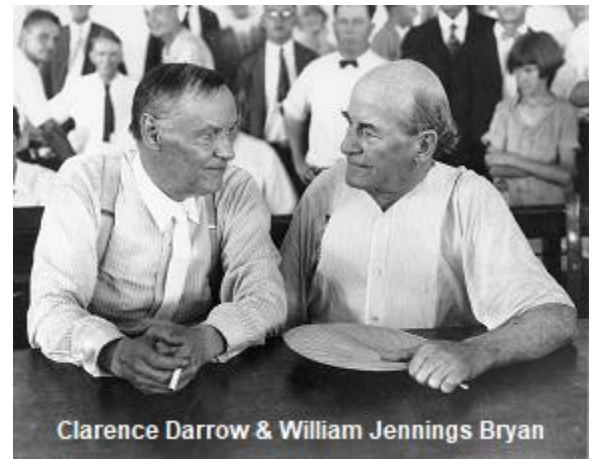
--Play/movie shows the Mencken character as present during the Darrow/Bryan examination. In real, Mencken had already left.

--Play/movie shows Bryan proudly saying he'd never read Darwin. In reality, Bryan had read "On the Origin of Species" and made annotations in his copy. It didn't convince him, but he had read it.

--Play/movie shows Darrow twisting a reluctant admission from Bryan that the days of Genesis could be long ages. In real, Bryan readily admitted this, because the day/age thesis already had by then strong theological support. It was only human evolution that Bryan really opposed.

--Play/movie shows the teacher being forced out of town. In reality, Scopes left for a better position.

--Play/movie at the end shows Darrow as being a closet god-believer who was just defending free expression. In real, Darrow was a strong agnostic who didn't favor equal time for what he considered harmful, which he thought fundamentalist Christianity to be.



THE SCOPES TRIAL WAS ACTUALLY A VICTORY FOR FUNDAMENTALISM

The book *Days of Destiny: Crossroads in American History: America's Greatest Historians Examine Thirty-One Uncelebrated Days That Changed the Course of History* by James M. McPherson and Alan Brinkley (DK Publishing, New York, 2001, ISBN # 0-7894-8010-7) has errors of fact in its chapter ("July 20, 1925: The Scopes Trial: Darrow v. Bryan" pp. 264-277) about the trial of John T. Scopes, the so-called "monkey trial." On page 274 it says that no further anti-evolution laws were passed at that time after the trial, but that is wrong. Two more states did pass anti-evolution laws in the 1920's: Mississippi in 1926 by its legislature (see *The War on Modern Science* by Maynard Shipley, 1927, pp. 63-74), and Arkansas in 1928 by referendum (see *The Great Monkey Trial* by L. Sprague de Camp, p. 475). The chapter also errs by ignoring the first anti-evolution crusade's success in getting evolution out of public school textbooks. The reason the first anti-evolution crusade ended around 1929 is that the fundamentalists by that year had largely achieved a major anti-evolution goal: evolution, which had been well covered in public school textbooks before Scopes, was by the end of the 1920's mostly removed from public school textbooks (see "Moon, Mann, and Otto" by Stephen Jay Gould, in his essay collection *Hen's Teeth and Horse's Toes*, pp. 280-290). There was no major attempt to restore it to public school textbooks until 1959, after Sputnik (1957)-inspired educational reforms established the Biological Sciences Curriculum Study, which sparked the second anti-evolution crusade, which continues to this day. It hurt evolution education to be largely excluded from textbooks from the late 1920's to the early 1960's, because by then one or two generations grew up ignorant of evolution. Their ignorance affected and still affects their children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren when they learn about evolution. The result of this omission was and is to make evolution a continued source of controversy in textbooks and in teaching, as Kansas and other places continues to show us, right up to this current moment.

That chapter should be praised, however, for debunking (page 276) the myth of a fundamentalist decline after the Scopes trial. In prior accounts, the end of the trial is often depicted as a defeat for religious fundamentalism, because though Scopes was convicted, fundamentalism allegedly fell into disrepute. But fundamentalism, though ridiculed, pulled into itself, grew stronger, and re-emerged decades later as a strong social, religious, and political force (see Edward Larson's *Summer For The Gods*, chapter 9). Due in part to Scopes-inspired ridicule, fundamentalists set up their own churches, schools, seminaries, colleges, denominations, indeed a whole separate sub-culture which enabled them to resist assimilation. That was a victory for them. They functioned little noticed until the late 1950's and 1960's, when they exploded onto the scene, exerting pressure and influence on culture, surprising those who thought fundamentalism was dead. *Inherit the Wind*, which is often viewed as an anti-fundamentalist, anti-creationist play and movie, was actually against Joseph McCarthy's 1950's suppression of free thought and speech. Authors Bob Lee and Jerry Lawrence thought fundamentalism was dead, and just used the 1920's trial as a parallel situation (Larson, p. 239-240). To use a pagan metaphor, fundamentalism rose up in the late 50's and 60's like an angry phoenix from the ashes of the Scopes trial, and screams at us today.

California Freethought Day

We're excited to announce the launch of this year's scholarship opportunities, with \$5,500+ available in four different contests!



ESSAY

One \$2,500+ Scholarship

LIMERICK

Five \$100 Scholarships

SPEECH

One \$1,000 Scholarship

VIDEO

Two \$750 Scholarships

Write an essay, share a limerick, draft a speech, or produce a video that discusses this year's theme:

One Nation, Indivisible: Liberty and Justice for All

Each contest has its own entry guidelines, requirements, and due dates. Visit our website for all rules and conditions.

See: <https://freethoughtday.org/programs/scholarships/>

Hurry! The first deadline is July 15, 2025!

Want to **support our scholarship program**? You can make a tax-deductible donation to our Scholarship Fund for next year's opportunities.

And if you work with students, **download our flyer** about this year's scholarships and share it.

Good luck to all of this year's students and **thank you** to everyone who has contributed to support this year's scholarships, including the NickelsonFamily.

Sincerely,

-California Freethought Day



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 Rivera
Vice-president: Marvelous Mynga Futrell
Secretary: Rapid Ruth Rezos
Treasurer & Registrar: Kinetic Ken Nahigian
Event Coordinator: Pamela Rivera (again)
Program chair: Super Susan McLean
Webmistress: Palpable Pat Kelley
Facebook page & Advisor: Keen Kaeleigh Pontif
Directors at large:

Fran Evanisko, David Herbert, Roger Zabkie

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 pages (two):

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1525411971087089/>
<https://www.facebook.com/Atheists-and-Other-Freethinkers-AOF-104763721971742>

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.

Your humble editor is Fran Evanisko.

Letters, submissions? We love them! See:

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