



# FELLOWSHIP OF FREETHOUGHT

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## MAKING DOLLARS AND SENSE OF INVESTING



Knowing how to invest for the future can be a challenging task. The stock market can seem risky with its constant changes, and we're often bombarded with financial advice from friends and the media. Sometimes indecision can lead to inaction. However, not investing for the future comes with risks of its own. We hope to clear up some of the confusion and provide you with information you can use to make good investment decisions.

Tim Crookham, Fellowship of Freethought's Finance Director, is giving a presentation that will provide a basic understanding of the stock market as well as discuss concepts people should know in order to make better investment decisions. Tim has an MBA with a concentration in Finance from Southern Methodist University's Cox School of Business and has 11 years of finance and accounting experience.

*Still have questions?  
Contact Tim at  
[tim.crookham@fofdallas.org](mailto:tim.crookham@fofdallas.org)*

## PROGRAM:

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS  
MEET THE BOARD  
MAIN PRESENTATION  
FREETHOUGHT KIDS  
DISMISSAL AND POTLUCK

## SEPTEMBER GATHERING PREVIEW

Starting in September, we'll be kicking off a new theme: "BE A BETTER FREETHINKER"

Join us to learn more about "Definitions in the Freethought Community," presented by Jason Hollis, Fellowship of Freethought's Secretary and Director-at-Large.

Following the presentation, a short panel of different members will share their stories and the forward momentum of the freethought community.

## EDUCATION DIRECTOR ANNOUNCEMENTS

We've heard your feedback: there's an interest in adding short musical performances. Anyone interested should contact Education Director Janie Oyakawa ([janie.oyakawa@fofdallas.org](mailto:janie.oyakawa@fofdallas.org)).

Janie's also responsible for organizing the monthly Gathering topics presented, and we're always accepting suggestions. However, members who are subject matter experts in their field are welcomed to share their knowledge with the rest of our community as well. So, speak up! We want to hear from you! For more information and details, contact Janie ([janie.oyakawa@fofdallas.org](mailto:janie.oyakawa@fofdallas.org)).

## ABOUT OUR LOGO



Four petals make up our pansy, representing the different facets of our organization. From the left (clockwise) Freethought, Fellowship, Friendship and Family. In the center lies a unifying representation of our future. It is owned by all and serves as a reminder that what we do has an impact on those that come after us. Together this union of ideas creates our unique brand of fellowship.

## MISSION STATEMENT

To create a positive impact on our shared world, our mission is to provide a community that values and promotes a freethinking life unencumbered by the biases of tradition, dogma, and authority and that encourages people to live a reason and evidence-based life characterized by close fellowship, ethical contemplation, critical thinking, community service, and the appreciation of scientific knowledge and understanding of the universe and our place in it.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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For general information, email us at [info@fofdallas.org](mailto:info@fofdallas.org). The directors may be contacted by email using [firstname].[lastname] followed by @fofdallas.org.

For all things newsletter related, contact Amanda Stofko at [amanda.stofko@fofdallas.org](mailto:amanda.stofko@fofdallas.org).



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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## LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

To meet the needs of the rising "nones" (those who do not identify with any religion) the Dallas-Fort Worth Coalition of Reason serves as the informal umbrella organization for the local DFW freethinking community, including the Fellowship of Freethought.

While each group within the DFW CoR has something unique to offer, the Fellowship of Freethought is the only registered 501(c)3. This keeps our group member-run and funds service and outreach events in our communities.

We also host monthly Gatherings the third Sunday of each month, which are a great opportunity to meet other like-minded individuals. We've attracted well-known names within the freethought community to speak, such as Matt Dillahunty and Seth Andrews, but also encourage members within our organization to present on topics within their areas of expertise. Afterward, we hope you pull up a chair and join our potluck.

Lastly, we wish to show freethinkers can be good without God. We have several monthly, reoccurring opportunities for members to demonstrate our commitment to community service and outreach.

We know your life is busy, so check our Meetup calendar to see when you can join our next event.

## CAMP QUEST

More than 100 freethinking kids from all over Texas attended Camp Quest Texas earlier this month for a week of the hiking, s'mores and critical thinking. Camp Quest Texas is summer camp for kids ages 8 to 17 and has been in high demand: this year's camp filled to capacity within in nine days of opening registration. However, Camp Quest isn't only about critical thinking and intellectual discussions; all the usual summer camp activities are available as well, such as horseback riding, canoeing and swimming. Starting next month, Camp Quest Texas will be looking for volunteers, and many of the opportunities can be accomplished by those who may not necessarily wish to participate at the actual camp. Some examples include helping update registration and reporting software, staff day camps at freethought events or taking a lead with other administrative tasks. For further information and details, visit [CampQuestTexas.org](http://CampQuestTexas.org).



## CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

As freethinkers, we often have a fine-tuned sense of spotting the more harmful acts committed in the name of faith by its believers and calling out the behaviors. But consider the reality: What are you going to do about it? Many people in our community give to the Fellowship of Freethought, which helps make the work that we do possible. We have many opportunities for you to act. Please consider offering 4 hours or more of your time per month at outreach events, helping plan social outings and assisting Gathering organizers. We also ask that you consider making a donation of \$30 or more per month through the PayPal link on our website: [fofdallas.org/contribute](http://fofdallas.org/contribute). You can also donate in our donation boxes or set up an automatic bank transfer. Additionally, please support us by signing up with Amazon Smile at [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) or by using the Amazon search box on our website when you do your online shopping. As an Amazon Affiliate, we receive a sales commission without any additional cost to you! Your time and donations help us make an impact. You can reach us at [treasurer@fofdallas.org](mailto:treasurer@fofdallas.org) with any donation related questions.



## NORTH TEXAS FOOD BANK

Through the end of August, the North Texas Food Bank will be doubling donations received, so to multiply the impact of our efforts, the Fellowship of Freethought has set up a matching fund. The first \$1,000 in donations made through FoF for the NTFB will be matched before submitting our final contribution. Every \$1 donated to the NTFB provides three healthy meals, but with combined matching programs we'll be able to effectively quadruple any donation made throughout August. So, your \$1 donation can provide 12 meals for families in need. Use the donate button at [fofdallas.org](http://fofdallas.org) or contact any FoF board member for details.

## SAGAN STARS

Youth Director Roddi Schoneberg is looking for volunteers to teach at our monthly Gatherings. We're looking forward to exposing our young freethinkers to a wide variety of educational topics. Roddi has also launched a new program for children to earn "Sagan Stars" as rewards for each volunteer or outreach activity in which the children participate. For additional information and details in either teaching volunteer opportunities or the Sagan Stars program, contact Roddi at [Roddi.Schoneberg@fofdallas.org](mailto:Roddi.Schoneberg@fofdallas.org)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

For more information and details on our upcoming events, register for free with Meetup.com and check out our calendar:

<http://www.meetup.com/fofdallas>



MONDAYS (RECURRING)  
*Skeptical Theological Discussion*

FRIDAY, AUGUST 22  
*Social Science for Adults at the Perot Museum*

SATURDAY, AUGUST 23  
*Cocktails for a Cause: North Texas Food Bank*

THURSDAY, AUGUST 28  
*AIDS Services of Dallas Supper Club*

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 5  
*Feminine Fridays*

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 6  
*Philosophy Club*

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13  
*Second Saturday Shoreline Spruce-Up*

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13  
*Star Party at Frisco Commons Park*

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 6  
*Pub Night at The Lot (Dallas)*



## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

John Pantzer can usually be found operating behind the scenes, and you've likely already seen the results of his valuable contributions as a volunteer: he serves as videographer for the monthly Gatherings and prints our bulletins and newsletters.

John also assisted Youth Director

Roddi Schoneberg and Outreach Director Jeff Elmer by taking the technical lead with organizing and executing plans on an outreach project in June for an elderly member of the community who was facing city fines if her fence was not rebuilt to be brought up to code.

“You can't expect to be part of an organization and not participate.” In return, John says he feels being involved helps restore a sense of community that many people feel they lose when they “walk in reality rather than the delusion provided by religion. [...] At the end of the day, it's why I'm here.”

“Everyone has something to offer. A lot can be done if people just show up.” To illustrate his point, John says that although the fence-building project took thoughtful planning, “No amount of organizing on its own would have helped to physically build the fence.” For newcomers who may be uncertain of where or how

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more information.

to get involved John suggests, “take time to just experience the organization for a while” because it provides a chance to determine what aspect of the organization their talents may be best suited.

John's been involved with the Fellowship of Freethought for the last three years after moving to Dallas from East Texas. He credits his wife Karen for encouraging him and their two children to become involved, even though her health prevents her from attending with them. John also owns Vanquint, LLC, which specializes in providing electrical and mechanical design and related technical services for business-to-business clients.

## SUNSHINE COMMITTEE

Are you or someone you know experiencing a difficult time in your life? We'd like to help cast a few rays of sunshine and kindness into the lives of those in need. For requests, either on your behalf or someone else's, please contact Jason Hollis at [sunshine@fofdallas.org](mailto:sunshine@fofdallas.org).

## SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITY

We're expanding the bulletin into a monthly newsletter, and we'd like to offer you a sponsorship opportunity. In addition to the printed version available at the Gathering, we're working toward publishing online as well to reach an even larger audience. For more information contact Chris Grimes: [chris.grimes@fofdallas.org](mailto:chris.grimes@fofdallas.org).



Volunteers from the Dallas-Fort Worth Coalition of Reason groups helped pack approximately 500 care boxes, containing a variety of hygienic products and other necessities, in anticipation of the arrival of more than 2,000 child refugees from Central and South America and Mexico, all heading for North Texas. With little government funding or structure in place to accommodate the influx, children have been housed in different facilities located around the DFW area while awaiting their turn to have their immigration status determined.

