

Quest West News

The Newsletter for Camp Quest West

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Registrar's corner

With camp fast approaching – *only 10 more weeks* - and the deadline for Early Bird Registration running out May 15th we have already 28 campers from 6 different US states and Canada signed up for this years fabulous camp!

Thank you to all of you, who have worked through the online registration process, some of you have already filled out the online Health form as well. Thank you for being so prompt and in turn making my work as a registrar a breeze and real fun!

Campers who will be flying into *Sacramento International Airport:*

If you would like to arrange for a free pick-up by a camp counselor from SMF please let us know about the flight details as soon as they become available.

We suggest an arrival time July 12th around noon and a departure time on July 18th after 6:30ish. This will allow the campers to get to camp on time and also be part of the final day activities. The drive from SMF to camp site is approx 2 hrs.

For any questions regarding the registration you can e-mail me at RajaShanti@juno.com."

---Gloria Kaczmariski, Registrar

Early Bird Deadline ends May 15th!

Yes, only 2 weeks remaining for Early Bird Special! Sign up now, before May 15th and save \$50 of the camp fee. Please refer to our website for other possible discounts.

If you know of any friends who are interested in signing up for this years camp please let them know that our Early Bird registration is running out May 15th or give them our promotional flyer. The flyer can be found on our website (click on forms, stroll down to promotional materials, and click on [promotional flyer](#)). Please feel free to print the flyer, pass it on to friends and/or hang out on your local public bulletin boards.

T-Shirt Contest Winners Ashley and Jesse

Congratulations to winner's Ashley and Jesse for the T-Shirt design contest. Both winners had something to say about their designs.



Ashley from California designed a monster looking into the mirror. She got her inspiration from a book she is currently reading about Greek mythology and has the Cyclopes who didn't know he was one and didn't know he had one eye.

The monster (Cyclopes) portrays that he was different and unique and isn't a bad monster. The message Ashley says

in her drawing reveals that it's okay to be different and not to be afraid.

Jesse from Washington also won the contest and his design was a caution road sign. His thought about the design was that it was humorous and it fit this year's theme, "Encounter with Reality".

He was really surprised when he found out he won the contest along with Ashley. He didn't think he would win because of several reasons he wishes to conceal.

Meet Camp Counselor Fred



My name is Fred James. I have been a rationalist since I began reading science at age nine. I learned to fly light

airplanes at the University of Illinois. I served three years in the Army during Vietnam. After I got out of the Army I pursued a career in radio and TV doing news and talk and now I write commentary for people who like my style.

I have three kids who I taught to trust their OWN minds, to believe something only after as many facts as can be gathered are gathered and to distrust those who would place themselves in a position to gain by your errors.

When I was 18 and 19 I was a lifeguard at a beach on Lake Michigan, reacting to tiny kids, middle school kids and collegians as well as the parents. I think I like middle school kids the best, they are usually the most honest and open. But then ALL kids are the future so they are all equally VALUABLE!

Sincerely
Fred James

History or Hogswallop is coming to town!

Author and historian Dr. Richard Carrier and his loyal sage David Fitzgerald will present History or Hogswallop!?

An exciting team game that pits all your wits against the wildest claims in history. Can you figure out how to uncover the truth? Will your team win the prize? Find out, when you play History or Hogswallop!?


Dr. Carrier developed this game last year based on previous years at Camp Quest, when presenting challenging questions about ancient history led to a lot of fun for all. Gigantic ships, famous battles, and crazy claims were described, and campers had to work together to come up with smart ideas how they'd find out if any of these stories were true.

Now we've got a whole new batch of crazy claims, and a slick new way to run an action-packed competition among teams of campers, this time for a prize. Everyone player will learn a lot about history and historical method, without any boring lectures. What's more, their intelligence and ingenuity will be challenged, and their skills as a skeptic honed. Some will even get a good bit of exercise!

Camp Director's Corner



Well, I've been hiring lifeguards, meeting with our staffers, working with them to get some CPR/First Aid certified, planning activities. I'm seriously excited that we've got not one but



two musical staffers this year who play guitar. Campfire is never going to be the same again! We've also got a drama instructor on staff which I'm very excited about since I've been interested in how drama and Freethought go together ever since I heard the actor who played "Smoking Man" in the X-Files say that "a lot of actors are skeptical because they learn how to act realistically in unrealistic settings". So - it's countdown to camp now. We're 10 weeks away. Summer's really on it's way.

I did want to talk a little about family camp because people have been asking me, "What happens at family camp? What's that all about?" Family camp is here because two ideas came together at the same time. Julie Wiley from the Palo Alto Humanists Family program had been interested in family camp & I was too, after attending the American Camping Association's Camp Director's Basic training class and hearing that "family camps are hot". When we moved to Camp Ross Relles we realized we had all this extra space and why not put it to good use.

Family camp was designed for families with younger children. It starts on Thursday and runs through Sunday - shorter since it's harder to camp with younger children for an entire week. Meals are provided and showers and there's a few cabins on a first come first serve basis. But the real fun of family camp is meeting up with other Freethought families, sharing tricks of the trade and making new friends, kids and adults alike.

While family camp is more unstructured than kids' camp, it does have organized activities for the entire family to enjoy.

After arriving on Thursday afternoon and getting settled in, families will play some get acquainted games designed for families before joining everyone including the kids' campers at the nightly campfire. On Friday morning, they'll enjoy some arts and crafts and a nature hike while it's cool out. In the afternoon, they'll spend some time panning for gold down by the creek and enjoying "Family Swim Hour". A special Family Challenge is planned for that evening along with ice cream making. Saturday will be a real treat - while kids camp is having parent afternoon, we'll be sending our lifeguards to our favorite spot on the Yuba River where families can enjoy a field trip together. (We'll also be sharing our favorite Root Beer Float spot in an old one-horse town nearby!) Families will come back for a final camp fire & join the next day for a farewell circle and breakfast before taking off for home, hopefully refreshed and connected both with each other and the new friends they've met.