

It is clear to everyone that astronomy at all events compels the soul to look upwards, and draws it from the things of this world to the other.

~ Plato

Phactum

The Newsletter and Propaganda Organ of the
Philadelphia Association for Critical Thinking
August / September 2012

editor: Ray Haupt email: phactpublicity@aol.com
Webmaster: Wes Powers <http://phact.org/>

PhACT Meeting - Saturday, September 15, 2012

at Community College of Philadelphia in Lecture Room C2-28 in the Center for Business and Industry
at the corner of 18th and Callowhill Streets. At 2:00 PM.

All are Welcome. This event is Free and Open to the Public. Handicap accessible.

Dr. David Cattell, Chairman of the Physics Department of Philadelphia Community College, will host Paul Halpern, a Professor of Physics at University of the Sciences, who will speak on his book:

Edge of the Universe: A Voyage to the Cosmic Horizon and Beyond



The observable universe, the part we can see with telescopes, is incredibly vast. Yet recent theories suggest that there is far more to the universe than what our instruments record -- in fact, it could be infinite. Colossal flows of galaxies, large empty regions called voids, and other unexplained phenomena offer clues that our own "bubble universe" could be part of a greater realm called the multiverse. How big is the observable universe? What it is made of? What lies beyond it? Was there a time before the Big Bang? Could space have unseen dimensions? In this book, physicist and science writer Paul Halpern explains what we know -- and what we hope to soon find out -- about our extraordinary cosmos.

Paul Halpern is author of 13 books, mostly about physics and the universe.

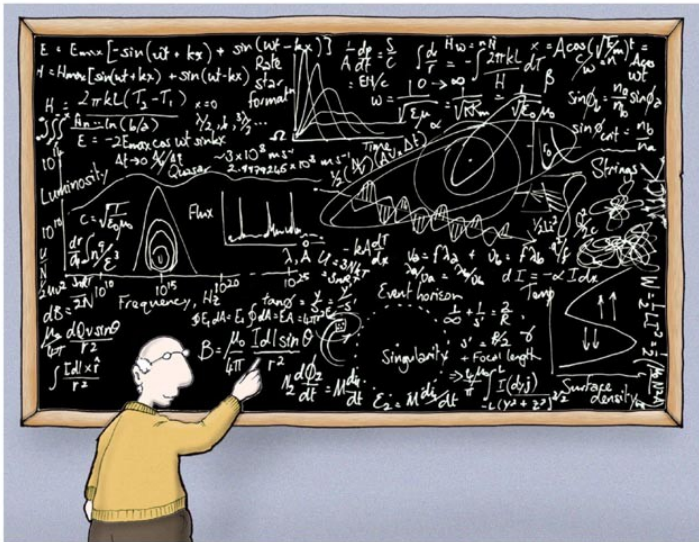
(Continued on page 2)

I spent three days a week for 10 years educating myself in the public library, and it's better than college. People should educate themselves - you can get a complete education for no money. At the end of 10 years, I had read every book in the library and I'd written a thousand stories.

~ Ray Bradbury, (1920—2012) ,American novelist

Dr. Halpern's research interests include complex and higher-dimensional solutions in general relativity, structurally dynamic cellular automata and genetic algorithms, the history of modern physics, and the relationship between science and culture.

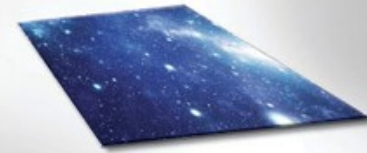
There will be a book signing after the meeting.



Astrophysics made simple

Cartoon by Nick D. Kim, <http://www.lab-initio.com>
Used by permission.

EDGE of the UNIVERSE



A VOYAGE TO THE COSMIC HORIZON AND BEYOND

PAUL HALPERN

Edge of the Universe: A Voyage to the Cosmic Horizon and Beyond

By Paul Halpern

Publisher: Wiley; 1 edition (September 25, 2012)

Hardcover: 240 pages

ISBN-10: 0470636246

ISBN-13: 978-

0470636244

Cosmology, the science of the universe, is undergoing a startling revolution!

Colossal flows of galaxies, large empty regions called voids, and other unexplained phenomena offer clues that our own "bubble universe" could be part of a greater realm called the multiverse.

How big is the observable universe? What it is made of? What lies beyond it?

Was there a time before the Big Bang? Could space have unseen dimensions?

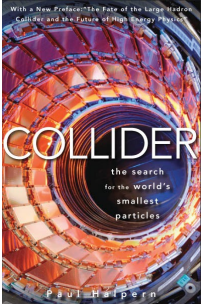
What exactly is the "axis of evil?" And what are the mysterious cosmic dragons that lurk in the gamma ray fog?

Edge of the Universe investigates these fascinating questions and more, offering the background behind humanity's search for the frontiers of the universe!

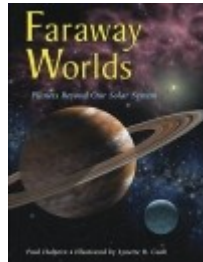
Phactum Table Of Contents

Letters to the Editor	p. 5
Various Ruminations	p. 7
PhACT Meeting Reports	p. 11
The PhACT Blue Hole Expedition	
Notes by Ed Gracely and Jeff Cooney	
Another Ancestral Species?	p. 15
By Paul Schlueter III	
Wagner Free Institute	p. 17
Fall 2012 Adult Education courses	
A 19th Century Mayor of Philadelphia	p. 19
Elected Vice President of the United States	
By Ric Ben-Safed	
Calendar of Events	p. 21

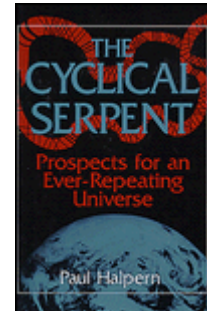
Other books by Paul Halpern



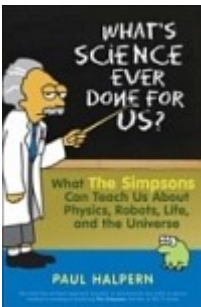
[Collider](#)
[The Search for the](#)
[World's Smallest](#)
[Particles](#)



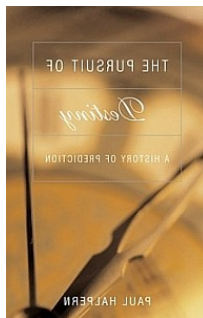
[Faraway](#)
[Worlds](#)[Planets](#)
[Beyond Our Solar](#)
[System](#)



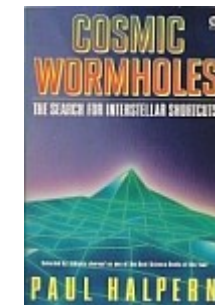
[The Cyclical](#)
[Serpent Prospects](#)
[for an Ever-](#)
[Repeating Universe](#)




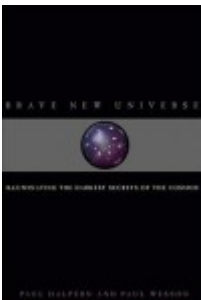
[What's Science Ever](#)
[Done for Us?](#)
[What The Simpsons](#)
[Can Teach Us](#)
[About Physics,](#)
[Robots, Life, and](#)
[the Universe](#)



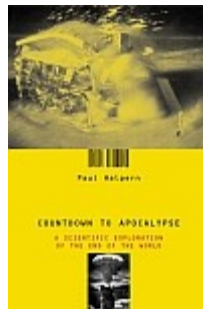
[The Pursuit of](#)
[Destiny A History](#)
[of Prediction](#)



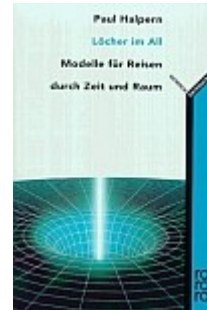
[Cosmic](#)
[Wormholes](#)[The](#)
[Search for](#)
[Interstellar](#)
[Shortcuts](#) 



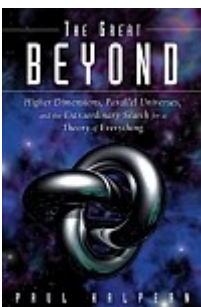
[Brave New](#)
[Universe](#)
[Illuminating the](#)
[Darkest Secrets of](#)
[the Cosmos \(with](#)
[Paul Wesson\)](#)



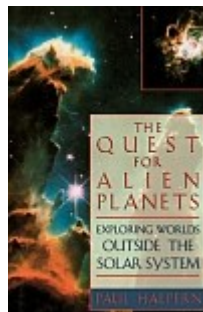
[Countdown to](#)
[Apocalypse: A](#)
[Scientific](#)
[Exploration of the](#)
[End of the World](#)



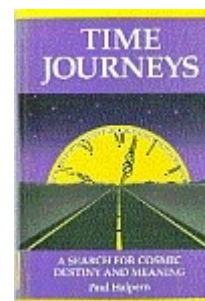
[Löcher im All](#)
[\(German version](#)
[of Cosmic](#)
[Wormholes\)](#)



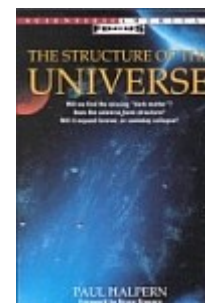
[The Great Beyond](#)
[Higher Dimensions,](#)
[Parallel Universes](#)
[and the](#)
[Extraordinary](#)
[Search for a Theory](#)
[of Everything](#)



[The Quest for](#)
[Alien](#)
[Planets](#)[Exploring](#)
[Worlds Outside the](#)
[Solar System](#)



[Time Journeys](#)[A](#)
[Search for](#)
[Cosmic Destiny](#)
[and Meaning](#)



[The Structure of the](#)
[Universe](#)

For more information about Professor Halpern's publications go to:

<http://phalpern.com/>

Some Interesting Galactic Facts (gleaned from Science News, June 18, 2012, by Paul Schlueter III)

Speed of the Sun: 83,500 kilometers per hour (with respect to the galaxy)

1st Map of the Milky Way: 1785, by William and Caroline Herschel

Our central Black Hole's name: Sagittarius A* ("A-star"), seen in the constellation of Sagittarius.

Distance, Sagittarius A* to our sun: 27,000 light years

Time for our sun to orbit Sagittarius A* once: 230 Million years Sagittarius A*'s mass: approx. 4 million times the sun's (but only about 15 times the sun's diameter)

Diameter of the "galactic bulge" at its center: 8,000 light years

Diameter of the galactic "pinwheel" spirals: 100,000 light years Milky Way's rotational speed: 250 km/s (radius of this measurement, not clear)

New estimates of the Milky Way's total mass say it is approx. equal in mass to our nearest sister galaxy, Andromeda

Estimated number of stars in the Milky Way: 100 billion

Caroline Lucretia Herschel (1750 - 1848)

Caroline Herschel was the sister of the famed astronomer Sir William Herschel. She was born in 1750 in Hanover, Germany, the eighth of ten children. After contracting typhus as a child she was disfigured, never grew taller than 4 feet 3 inches, and had few prospects for marriage.

At the age of 22, Caroline went to live with her brother William, who had moved to England to teach music. At first, she was essentially a housekeeper. But William taught her mathematics and she learned to help him make larger and larger telescopes. She slowly gained expertise and self-confidence as a technician and telescope maker.

Sir William credited Caroline as being instrumental in his discovery of Uranus and for that discovery King George III paid him a salary of 200 pounds a year. Additionally he paid Caroline 50 pounds a year as her brother's assistant. Caroline thus became the world's first female professional astronomer and the first woman to hold a paid government position in England.

Caroline began sweeping the skies with a small refractor searching for faint deep sky objects not cataloged by

Messier.

Her first discovery was the open cluster, now called NGC 2360, made on February 26, 1783. This was the first of 14 deep sky objects that she discovered. Her deep-sky discoveries inspired William. He gave up his double star observations and began to map the heavens once he understood the riches to be discovered there. His diligence led to the mapping of hundreds of additional deep sky objects, which led to the New General Catalog (NGC) used by astronomers to this day.

Caroline helped her brother with his catalog and continued to observe. In her free time, she swept the sky with her four-inch refractor and discovered eight comets between 1786 in 1797. Comet seeking was her favorite activity, and her discoveries cemented her reputation as a first-class astronomer.



Caroline Herschel - 1829

Letters to the Editor

Editor: Whilst doing some research on sea serpents, I stumbled across the below curious article in the November 25, 1936 edition of the Chester Times, Chester, Pennsylvania:

A BOW TO BRITAIN

Some very weird tales used to emanate from Winsted, Conn., but it appears that these things are done better in the British Isles.

Frequently we hear that a camel-humped sea serpent has reared its ugly head in some Scottish loch or other. Now comes the story of the "talking mongoose of the Isle of Man," which caused such a stir that it was discussed even in Parliament.

The remarkable Manx creature in question, which never seems to be around when reporters call, is said to speak English, Russian, Hebrew, and other tongues, and to sing Spanish songs.

Those who had thought "kidding the public" was an exclusive Yankee trait will bow in admiration of this British effort—unless, to be sure, there is such a linguistic animal.

An article in the January 2011 issue of ForteanTimes entitled *Gef the Talking Mongoose: Meet the strangest media sensation of the 1930s!* by Christopher Josiffe (http://www.forteanimes.com/features/articles/4915/gef_the_talking_mongoose.html) examined this pathetic case in detail and noted that "Although the 'talking mongoose' affair may now have fallen into obscurity, it was, during its heyday in the early 1930s, an international sensation." Alas, though the Loch Ness Monster is still internationally famous, few nowadays have ever heard of that "little extra, extra clever mongoose".



Don Nigroni
Glenolden, PA

Editor: Re: "It is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it" [Phactum May 2012, page 5] attributed to Aristotle: Critical thinking has advanced since Aristotle's day; an even higher standard was promulgated by F. Scott Fitzgerald, who wrote that "the test of a first-rate intelligence is the ability to hold two opposed

ideas in the mind at the same time, and still retain the ability to function." Wise, also, are the words of President Andrew Jackson--a challenge to the intellect, really--that "It is a damn poor mind indeed which can't think of at least two ways to spell any word."

Howard J. Wilk
Philadelphia

Editor: Paul Schlueter's essay (The Realities of Mutation, Phactum, May 2012) made many interesting points, and one in particular jumped off the page at me as soon as I read it. The reference in mind was to the "monster" in Mary Shelley's novel Frankenstein. Shelley, as talented author, was making what I see as important social commentary. On the surface, the story ascribes the monster's murderous behavior to the "mad scientist" wanting to "play God" in creating a human being, and the repercussions of such arrogance. Taking this view would also absolve the locals of any wrongdoing placing blame for the evil squarely on Dr. Frankenstein. Or, we can see what I believe Shelly was going after here, using the monster as a metaphor for innocent children and strongly suggests the local population is fulfilling a negative role model for it. As small children learn all value judgments forming behaviors both good and bad, so does the monster who "learned (brutality) from its treatment at the hands of humanity". Hermeneutics can go a long way in making an influential and often unpopular statement about a society and its cultural values. I then began to consider the plausibility of a society accusing the science itself, or more commonly the researcher for potentially causing harm in finding new scientific knowledge.



Mary Shelley (née Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin; 1797 – 1851)

As far as "mad" scientists go, it is my firm belief that the vast majority of scientists are moral, ethical people and that the goals and methods they use are, by far, ethical as well. Just as importantly, I also see the science itself as value-neutral. But not everyone agrees with me, particularly if we are talking about stem cells, genetic engineering, or cloning. My response to this is that these advances don't start out in the lab as controversial issues. They begin existence as scientific findings and then are made to be controversial by people

"One of the principal obstacles to the rapid diffusion of a new idea lies in the difficulty of finding suitable expression to convey its essential point to other minds. Words may have to be strained into a new sense, and scientific controversies constantly resolve themselves into differences about the meaning of words. On the other hand, a happy nomenclature has sometimes been more powerful than rigorous logic in allowing a new train of thought to be quickly and generally accepted."
~ Sir Arthur Schuster (British physicist, 1851 - 1934). Opening Address to the Annual Meeting of the British Association by Prof. Arthur Schuster, in Nature (4 Aug 1892)

who, for whatever reason, see these advances as wrong or harmful to society. I know of no other endeavor where discoveries can even be considered harmful or dangerous. Dangerous or abused in the wrong hands perhaps, but the knowledge itself cannot be harmful.

Scientific knowledge is not a social agenda. Unfortunately, what people do with that knowledge can make it seem as so. People are the drivers of controversy, not science.

Tom Medero
Philadelphia

Editor: This, from the "Physician's First Watch for August 16, 2012":

Different Blood Types, Different Coronary Risks?

People with non-O blood types are at higher risk for developing coronary heart disease, according to a study in Arteriosclerosis, Thrombosis, and Vascular Biology.

Using data from both the Nurses' Health Study and the Health Professionals Follow-up Study (together comprising almost 90,000 participants), researchers found a significant increase in the hazard ratio for coronary disease among those with type AB blood (HR, 1.23), B (1.15), and

A (1.08), relative to those with type O blood. They estimate that over 6% of coronary disease is attributable to the presence of a non-O blood group. The association was not modified by the presence of other known risk factors, such as smoking or diabetes.

The authors speculate higher levels of some clotting factors in people with non-O blood types may partially explain the association.

Let this be a reminder to those fighting blood-type-influence quackery that there really are non-transfusion-related differences in health due to blood type. For more information, see Quackwatch's review of *Eat Right 4 Your Type* at

<http://www.quackwatch.org/04ConsumerEducation/NegativeBR/d'adamo.html>

Howard J. Wilk
Philadelphia, PA

Editor: From the August 15, 2012 ABC News account, *Scottish Sailor Claims To Have Best Picture Yet Of Loch Ness Monster* (<http://gma.yahoo.com/blogs/abc-blogs/scottish-sailor-claims-best-picture-yet-loch-ness-100057921--abc-news-topstories.html>) we can gather that a fellow has been

There are certainly those occasions that one does not dwell upon the notion of writing a letter of opinion or fact correction to Phactum's editor.

We suspect the poor fellow squirming in the dental chair is not pondering humanities cosmic questions. But Phactum readers who happen to be in a somewhat better situation are encouraged to compose thoughtful articles, letters of rebuttal, and other materials that might be of interest to fellow skeptics.

We invite readers to extract their thoughts, but not their teeth, and apply those thoughts to paper in such a ways as to disseminate knowledge and opinion to others of perhaps similar mind. Almost any topic, including fluoridation of drinking water, is fair game. If you have found a sublaxation please report it here.

We would very much like participation from Reiki Masters, fortune tellers, chiropractors, aroma therapists and others often scorned by Skeptics. Student letters and essays are welcome as are communications from established professionals. It could be a great mental and writing exercise to entertain some thoughts that you do not accept. But, please, no partisan politics, and do not submit enthusiastic fan club reviews of the screeching of Justin Bieber or your cat.



Send submissions to the Phactum Editor at phactpublicity@aol.com

devotedly searching for Nessie for 26 years and has lots of high-tech equipment with him. He thinks that he finally sees Nessie yet we get but one photo. How unbelievably odd!!! One might have expected that the chap would have taken many, many photos and even an awful lot of video. How-



ever, one would also expect that showing us such might have revealed a lot of useful information, perhaps too much, about the real nature of the alleged monster, such as, did it ever change shape or move against the current. Knowing things like that could have at least provided some insights into whether said object was an animate being or not.

Don Nigroni
Glenolden, PA

Editor's note: At the end of the article the Scottish sailor offers some advice for adventurers who wish to see Nessie for themselves.

"You have to be on the lake every day, with a camera and binoculars, and you have to be in the right place at the right time."

We agree with that sailor and add that a bottle of rum might be a useful catalyst for such a sighting.

Ω Ω Ω

Various Ruminations

Collected/Written by Ray Haupt
(with help from others)

A Year After the World Did Not End

The End of the World as calculated and predicted by Bible fanatic Harold Camping magically or by Divine Intervention did not occur. Tom Napier informed us of this interesting article about some of the people who were deeply immersed as devout believers in the inerrancy of that mistaken notion.

www.religiondispatches.org/archive/atheologies/5983/a_year_after_the_non-apocalypse%3A_where_are_they_now/

But do not worry; according to the Mayan Calendar the World Ends on December 21, 2012 ... or a few billion years thereafter.

Astrologers predict Obama win in November

Astrologers at the United Astrology Conference have predicted that President Obama will win re-election in November.

This fascinating story reported in USA Today, May 29, 2012 goes on to say :

"This year's panelists used an array of different techniques to reach their predictions. One panelist inserted the candidates' birth information into winter solstice charts and directed the information to the swearing-in location, Washington, D.C. Another looked at planetary charts dating back to 1880. All chose Obama to win.

The astrologers also warned that a Mercury retrograde — an alignment of Mercury, the sun and Earth — begins on Election Day and could lead to voting irregularities. The last time a Mercury retrograde appeared on Election Day was on Nov. 7, 2000 — and it took a Florida recount and Supreme Court decision to finalize a winner."

Oddly the newspaper account of the conference was silent about the End of the World event scheduled for December 21, 2012.

<http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/story/2012-05-29/astrology-conference-predict-future/55272842/1>

Psychic Convention

PhACT member Amy Lowenstein suggests that Phactum readers might appreciate a recent cartoon about Psychic Conventions. We agree and expect that clairvoyants among us already know.

<http://www.gocomics.com/nancy/2012/06/06>

Government Agency Declares: Mermaids are Not Real!

It seems that the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) became exasperated by a Noahic Flood of inquires about the existence of mermaids triggered

by a preposterous program on the Animal Planet cable TV network entitled “Mermaids: The Body Found.”

http://www.slate.com/blogs/future_tense/2012/07/02/mermaids_the_body_found_government_agency_noaa_debunks_animal_planet_show.html

“No evidence of aquatic humanoids has ever been found,” the federal agency boldly declared in a statement on its website.

Nonsense!! Mermaids are real and we can prove it. You can see for yourself the Fiji Merman at the Zwaanendael Museum in Lewes, Delaware. If mermaids exist it is only reasonable that mermen exist. For more information see Phactum, February 2010, p. 24.



The Zwaanendael Merman
Photo by Bob Clark

Arsenic—medicinal uses

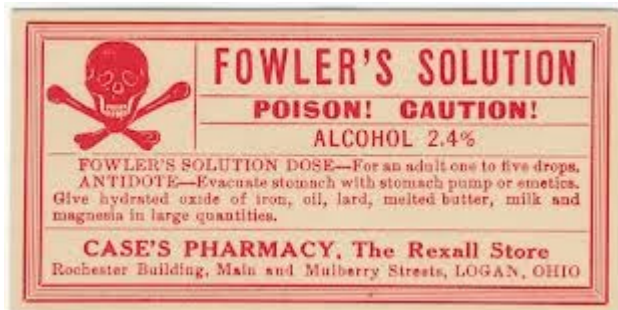
In the May 2012 Phactum on page 9 we had an article by Caroline Rance who, though not a doctor, is proprietor of a very interesting website called [theQuackdoctor.com](http://thequackdoctor.com) which deals with medical quackery in days past. The article at hand discussed the unfortunate consequences of a young woman who in 1868 self-diagnosed that she had breast cancer and consulted a shoemaker who had a side-line of treating cancer. He provided a topical compound of lard and arsenic. She died of arsenic poisoning and a pathologist determined that she did not have cancer to begin with. This clearly is a situation where the shoemaker should stick to his last.

Arsenic compounds, however, are not always a lethal substance and in the hands of skilled physicians do have some useful applications although most have been displaced by more modern and safer compounds.

In 1909, a German Physician, Paul Erlich (1854 - 1915), developed an arsenic based organic compound called Salvarsan which proved to be highly effective as a cure for syphilis in its early stages. It was so effective that it was in clinical use by 1910 replacing the conventional mercury salts treatment for that disease. Salvarsan did have various drawbacks in that it is a perishable compound and was distributed in a powdered form requiring careful preparation with sterilized water to form an injectable medication. Adverse side effects

were caused mainly by improper administration. Salvarsan remained the major treatment for syphilis until the 1940's when penicillin was developed.

In Edinburgh, Scotland Dr. Thomas Fowler devised an inorganic potassium-arsenic compound that came to be known as Fowler's Solution. It was used as a tonic and for treatment of various diseases of the blood, skin, malaria, and



syphilis. In 1845 Fowler's Solution was used in treatment of leukemia. During the 1930's there was some experimentation using arsenic trioxide as a treatment for CML (Chronic Myelogenous Leukemia) with some success but side effects were too dangerous. Unfortunately arsenic compounds are toxic and carcinogenic having side effects such as cirrhosis of the liver, hypertension, bladder cancer, and skin cancers.

Arsenic concoctions generally fell from common medical usage after World War 2, but in 2001 the U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved a drug of arsenic trioxide to treat APL, a rare form of leukemia, acute promyelocytic leukemia. In 2011 researchers at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center at Harvard University proposed a clinical trial with a new look at arsenic trioxide in conjunction with other drugs as a treatment for CML. Arsenic trioxide, a nasty potion if misused, is back on physicians lists of useful substances.

Arsenic - non-medicinal use

While on a recent vacation in various western states I happened to visit the old Idaho State Penitentiary located in Boise. In the women's prison behind those gloomy walls there was a poster relating the story of one Lyda Anna Mae Trueblood, born 1892.

Lyda married Bob Dooley at Twin Falls, Idaho and settled in with him and his brother Ed during March of 1912. Three years later, August 1915, Ed died of ptomaine poisoning according to an autopsy. Lyda and Bob collected \$2,000 from an insurance policy. Not long thereafter Bob Dooley died of typhoid fever and Mrs. Dooley collected \$2,500 on his life insurance policy.

Heartbroken, Lyda in May 1917 married William McHaffie who died of flu in 1918. Sadly, McHaffie had let his life insurance policy of \$5,000 lapse and Mrs. McHaffie could not collect.

March 1919 Mrs. McHaffie married Harlan Lewis, a salesman, who died of flu in July of the same year. Lyda collected \$10,000 from his insurance company.



Just a few months later Mrs. Lewis married Edward Meyer, a ranch foreman, who died a month later. The insurance company required an autopsy which did show typhoid virus in his system but Lyda did not try to collect his \$12,000 insurance policy in an attempt to reduce suspicion.

But authorities were getting suspicious. The body of Edward Meyer was exhumed and a post-mortem examination revealed that his body contained sufficient arsenic to be lethal.

Mrs Meyer was quite handy in the kitchen. Investigators discovered a barrel of flypaper that had been boiled to extract arsenic, a special ingredient of her various soups and apple pie not likely to be found in cookbooks of that era.

Meanwhile, as investigators investigated, the Merry Widow Waltzed to Hawaii and in short order married a young naval officer, Paul Southard. Lyda, now Mrs. Southard, was to her dismay arrested and extradited to Idaho where in 1921 she was tried, convicted of murder, and sentenced to ten years to life imprisonment. The marriage was annulled.

Lyda was not finished however. While in prison she made acquaintance and charmed inmate Harry Minton. In 1931 smitten Minton, after his recent parole, helped Mrs. Southard escape. Minton was captured a year later and revealed Lyda's whereabouts in Kansas. Lyda had not been idle that year as she married Harry Whitlock, husband number six. She had been urging Mr. Whitlock to buy a life insurance policy but Harry was slow to act. Understandably, when his vivacious wife was arrested Harry was stunned to learn of her rather unusual and disturbing proclivities.

Mrs. Whitlock returned to the Idaho State Penitentiary where she resided until paroled in 1942. Lyda eventually returned to Twin Falls where she married Hal Shaw who mysteriously disappeared two years later. His body was never found and the house had no unusual quantity of fly paper. Widow Shaw moved to Salt Lake City and in 1958 died of a heart attack.

Just the facts ain't enough, Ma'am

PhACT member Eric Hamell found this interesting and somewhat depressing article at the Australian website, Cosmos Magazine which is dedicated to good science.

<http://www.cosmosmagazine.com/blog/5808/just-facts-aint-enough-maam>

The author of the article and editor in chief of Cosmos Magazine, Wilson da Silva, discusses the difficulties in dealing with people such as Creationists and quack medicine

enthusiasts who hotly stick to their beliefs no matter what level of contrary evidence is presented. Intelligent and functional people often have some areas of what some folks might describe as irrational opinions and I suspect that will never change.

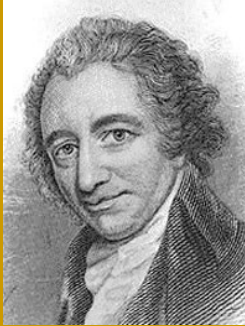
Mr. da Silva's article is well reasoned and I believe deserves thoughtful reflection. He refers to some points made by Professor of Molecular Biology at University of Wisconsin, Sean B. Carroll, who listed the six steps used by all denialists in discussion:

1. *Doubt the science.*
2. *Question scientists' motives and interests.*
3. *Magnify legitimate, normal disagreements among scientists and cite gadflies as authorities.*
4. *Exaggerate the potential harm of believing the science (and scare people).*
5. *Appeal to personal liberty and freedom (no government official should tell me what vaccinations I need).*
6. *Show that accepting the science would represent a repudiation of a cherished common philosophy or worldview held by most people.*

I suspect that Dr. Carroll's observations are largely correct when dealing with various groups of people and various

“To argue with a person who has renounced the use of reason is like administering medicine to the dead.”

~ Thomas Paine, *The Crisis*



Thomas Paine
(1737 - 1809)

interests, but surely not universal. Points one and two, for example, are exactly what skepticism is all about if not stubbornly and dogmatically applied. Scientists and others in authority are routinely questioned by other scientists and laymen, hopefully fairly, to achieve confirmation or contradiction of the claims at hand.

<http://www.cosmosmagazine.com> is a fine website. Thank you for the tip, Eric.

Ray Bradbury, R.I.P.

Science fiction writer Ray Bradbury passed away on June 5, 2012 at age 91 in Los Angeles.

From OEDILF, The Omnificent English Dictionary In Limerick Form, limericist SusanL described Ray Bradbury:

*Not too many will stand up and fight;
Be the voice for what matters, what's right.
Once, Ray Bradbury told*

*A tale, timeless and bold,
Against censoring words that ignite.*

In 1968 Russell Kirk (1918 – 1994), an American political theorist, moralist, historian, social and literary critic wrote of Ray Bradbury:

Some librarians, too, have taken alarm. Bradbury's stories are disturbing! No disturbances can be permitted in this perfect American culture of ours. In error, a company which distributes educational books included among a consignment of books for children one copy of Fahrenheit 451. A female librarian detected this work of heresy, and fired off a letter of furious protest to the wholesaler. How dared they send such a dreadful book? "I took it right out in back and burned it." Tomorrow is already here.

Mutant butterflies

Discover Magazine reports that mutant butterflies have been observed in the vicinity of the Fukushima Nuclear Power Plant disaster following the tsunami and earthquake of March 2011. Can Mothra be far behind? Let's hope that lizards have not been irradiated!



<http://blogs.discovermagazine.com/80beats/2012/08/15/mutant-butterflies-near-fukushima-linked-to-nuclear-radiation/>

QUACK!!! Quack!! Quack!

Earlier in this edition of Phactum we mention thequackdoctor.com, a most interesting website dealing with the history of medicine. Also, we have mentioned Quackwatch.com, the God Father of anti-quackery websites. Recently I have stumbled upon a third website with "quack" as part of the title ... quackometer.net.

Quackometer you ask? The quackometer is a clever computer program designed to analyze the contents of a website to ascertain its level of quackery as perceived by the Black Duck.

Accordingly I plugged phact.org into the Quackometer resulting in the following report:

The quacking noise is deafening. This web site is riddled with loosely defined terms and possibly pseudoscientific language. It is full of scientific jargon that is out of place and probably doesn't know the meaning of any of the



terms. However, the black duck can spot a fellow sceptic! The site is highly sceptical in language and is debunking. It also looks like this site is trying to sell stuff. Buyer Beware!

This site has a has a currently measurable quackery content of 0 Canards (The Canard is the internationally recognised SI unit for Quackery.)



All in all that is a pretty accurate rating on target except for the part about selling stuff. We sell nothing but many of the websites listed do sell things of very questionable value and the buyer should be aware of the perils of doing business with those vendors.

I tested the Quackometer on Quackwatch.com which also has a rating of 0 Canards. The Black Duck says:

This web site has more quackery than my village pond. It is full of scientific jargon that is out of place and probably doesn't know the meaning of any of the terms. However, the black duck can spot a fellow sceptic!. The site is highly sceptical in language and is debunking.

I then turned the Quackometer against itself which yielded the following result of 0 canards:

This web site is using serious amounts of quack medicine terms. It is heavily using scientific jargon and may be doing this to bamboozle. However, the black duck can spot a fellow sceptic!. The site is highly sceptical in language and is debunking.

Of the Web site of 'The International Center for Reiki Training' (<http://www.reiki.org>) the black duck awards 8 canards and says...

This web site has more quackery than my village pond. It shows no sceptical awareness and so should be treated with a suspicious mind.

The Black Duck awards 10 canards to ABC Homeopathy at (<http://abchomeopathy.com/>) and to the American Chiropractic Association (<http://www.acatoday.org>) 5 canards.

Have fun with this website and be sure to read the abundant articles exposing quackery in its many varieties. For some humorous reading try this website: <http://www.scottishvibrationalmedicine.com/> ... and plug it in to the Quackometer.

Blood Cancer Fund Raising Walk

PhACT member Eric Hamell reports that Philadelphia area freethinkers are taking part in the Light the Night walk against blood cancer as Hitchens' Hikers. The walk will be on October 27, 2012 starting at The Philadelphia Museum of Art at Eakin's Oval This effort benefits LLS, the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. You can read more about it and sign up or donate here:

<http://pages.lightthenight.org/epa/Phi12/HitchensHikersFBB>

Ω Ω Ω

**PhACT's
 Seriously Scientific Expedition to
 the Blue Hole of New Jersey
 Reports by Ed Gracely
 And Jeffery Cooney**

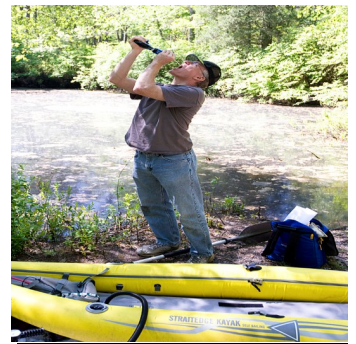
Notes from Ed Gracely

Bottomless pit? Lair of the Jersey Devil? Site of odd anomalous temperature readings? The "Blue Hole" in the New Jersey Pine Barrens has had all of these traits attributed to it! On a sunny, pleasant Saturday morning (May 19) about a dozen PhACT members and friends, plus one dog (to fight off the Jersey Devil, if encountered) set out to investigate. Along the way, we learned about the flora and fauna of the Pine Barrens, while taking an enjoyable walk in the woods.



**The Blue Hole
Photo by Ned S. Levi**

Don Nigrone, Pine Barrens expert and PhACT member, led the expedition and did much of the scientific work. We met in a parking lot off Piney Hollow Road (love that name!) and walked about a mile over sandy roads to reach the Hole. Before we started, Eric Krieg, PhACT President, took a radiation reading. He got a value of 7



**Eric drinking water from
the Blue Hole filtered by
some new fangled gadget.
Does it remove Bile of the
Jersey Devil?
Photo by Ned S. Levi**

microrad per hour, which is not excessive, and we noted that the dog was acting normally.

At the site of the hole, Eric orally tested the water (that is, he drank some!) after purifying it in a special filter. He said it had a slightly metallic taste and a bit of dead leaf flavor. We noted that even at the site itself, the dog was acting normally. And after drinking the water, Eric was acting normally as well! The radiation level was similar to what Eric found at the entrance.

Don told us a bit of the history of the Blue Hole, taken largely from "More Forgotten Towns of Southern New Jersey", by Henry Charlton Beck. At one time the old-fashioned Devil (Beelzebub) was considered to reside in the bottom, and to drag down swimmers. Don noted that this belief served a practical purpose by offering a boogie man for mothers to keep their kids from swimming in the Hole! Over time, the legend changed to incorporate our own local Jersey Devil instead, and this is now the dominant version. Someone suggested that we might find Jimmy Hoffa down there too!



**Walking on the sandy road to the Blue Hole.
Rhett the ectoplasm detecting dog in the lead.
Photo by Ned S. Levi**

Don told an account of a group of scientists who supposedly came to



**Don Nigroni scientifically testing the legendary depth of the Blue Hole with rope and lead sinker. 7 feet 2 inches. Would sonar give the same reading?
Photo by Ned S. Levi**

the Hole years ago and dropped several hundred feet of cable without reaching the bottom. We had that much rope and fishing line, but did not expect to need it.

Eric provided some facts about the geology of the area. We were right over a vast aquifer, much used in local communities. Sands in the area have supported a glass industry (hence, Glassboro) and those sandy soils support plant life adapted to well-drained conditions, notably that of the Pine Barrens.

Eric then tested the air for electric fields, and found none. There was a slight electrical field in the water, which could be a battery effect of the acidic water.

Don then went out on the lake in his inflatable kayak, taking both temperature and depth soundings from five locations, namely the center and all 4 corners of the Hole. Depths ranged from 3' 1.5" to 7' 2", not quite meeting most people's definition of "bottomless"!

Temperature readings (Cen-tech infra-red surface temperature reader) varied a bit, and were cooler in shady spots (mostly) as expected. Interestingly, one of the coolest locations was near the entry point and had a relatively low temperature (57.6) in spite of being in a sunny spot. This was also near the point of the deepest sounding, so we wondered if there might be a spring feeding the Hole at that point. For the record, the warmest point was 64.6 degrees, in the sun. The coolest was 56.3, in the shade.

Along the trails were a variety of plants that are well adapted to the sandy soil of the area, such as pitch pine (the dominant tree) plus white cedar in wetter areas, sweet pepperbush, blueberries of two species, sheep laurel (with attractive clusters of deep pink flowers), and more!

There were turtles basking on the Hole (which someone identified as map turtles, but based on a picture and a range map we believe they were painted turtles). As we were leaving, a large, black, evil-looking bird with a bare head and wings held at an angle like some demonic horns was flying by, keeping an eye on us. Someone said it was "just" a "turkey vulture" but I think it may have been you know who... Which would be the closest to anything anomalous we encountered on



**Painted Turtle.
A shy denizen of the Blue Hole.
Photo by Andrew Clark**

For more information about the history and folklore of the Blue Hole, see Don Nigroni's article on page 13 of the May/June 2009 edition of Phactum (<http://www.phact.org/data/phactums/Phactum%202009-05.pdf>).

Henry Charlton Beck in *More Forgotten Towns of Southern New Jersey* (1937) told of this eerie place. The pool was supposedly a bottomless pit with bluish water that was icy cold in some spots, even in summer, and warm in other places which never froze over, even in winter. Within the pool the Devil, namely, Beelzebub, was said to lurk and he would grab onto swimmers and pull them down into its depths.

For a Google books version, see Chapter XX of "*More Forgotten Towns of Southern New Jersey*" at:

<http://books.google.com/books?id=QShPWdSppFIC&printsec=frontcover&dq=henry+charlton+beck&cd=5#v=onepage&q=henry%20charlton%20beck&f=false>

 The book cover is blue with white text. At the top, it says "MORE FORGOTTEN TOWNS OF SOUTHERN NEW JERSEY". Below that is a circular photograph of a small, old house. At the bottom, the author's name "HENRY CHARLTON BECK" is printed.



A Turkey Vulture like this one appeared shortly after Eric drank the waters of the Blue Hole and Don was happily paddling his kayak in it.

Photo: National Park Service

the trip.

Overall a fun day for all... perfect weather for a walk and picnic. No poison ivy in sight. Birds singing, turtles basking, and a fine skeptical conclusion -- no paranormal events.

Ω Ω Ω

PhACT Field Trip to the Blue Hole, NJ Pine Barrens by Jeffrey Cooney

The New Jersey Pine Barrens is a wilderness area encompassing 1,000,000 acres of the Outer Coastal Plain of southeastern New Jersey. The interaction of forest fires, sandy soil, and acidic waters has created a mosaic landscape of upland forests, Atlantic white cedar bogs, and hardwood swamps that support many rare and unusual biota. The lowland vegetation can be different than the nearby upland vegetation, with little or no overlap of species depending upon the surrounding geological conditions. To the careful observer, this difference can be stark and abrupt. That is, one can move from one forest type to another, simply by crossing a road. This is a short report on vegetation seen at this unique landscape.



PhACT scientists on the bank of the mighty Blue Hole. Are those sewer pipes the actual lair of the Jersey Devil?

Photo by Ned S. Levi

One recent PhACT field trip was to a spring called the “Blue Hole”. Like other parts of the Pine Barrens, the Blue Hole wetland is unique in appearance, and vegetation. Typical of wetlands, it is surrounded by Atlantic White Cedar (*Chaemacyparis thyoides*), which are tall, straight conifers, and several Sphagnum Mosses (*sphagnum spp.*). Mosses serve many purposes: water conservation, erosion control and flood control. Some species of moss can absorb twenty times their weight in water. They are valuable plants, and need to be protected. Other lowland trees observed were Black Gum (*Nyssa sylvatica*) and Swamp Magnolia (*Magnolia virginiana*), a tree which could



Ruins of a recently constructed illegal and dangerous foot bridge across Great Egg Harbor River, about 120 feet from the Blue Hole. The river is not tidal at this point. The water appears tea-colored because of cedar and bog iron in the area. Not to worry ... it is all natural!

Photo by Ray Haupt

be mistaken for a shrub. The Magnolia has leaves which are very aromatic when crushed. It’s important to use senses other than sight to identify local flora! Finally, near the spring were Trident Red Maple (*Acer rubrum* var. *trilobum*), with small, three lobed leaves. These trees are obligate or facultative wetland species; always or almost always, appearing in wetlands.

Just like the trees, the lowland shrub community varied greatly from that of the nearby upland community. We saw an obligate wetland shrub, Swamp Azalea (*Rhododendron viscosum*), having white, sticky flowers. Again, senses other than sight are available to identify plants! Other facultative wetland shrubs included Sweet Pepperbush (*Clethra alnifolia*), having sharply toothed leaves, and Highbush Blueberry (*Vaccinium corymbosum*), a tall shrub.

On the short walk to the Blue Hole we observed a much dryer upland community of plants. This included Pitch Pine (*Pinus rigida*), Yellow Pine (*P. echinata*) and Scrub Pine (*P. virginiana*). A few Oaks were also seen: Blackjack Oak (*Quercus marilandica*), and Bear Oak (*Q. ilicifolia*). The shrub layer in the upland forest is noticeably different than the lowland areas. The majority of understory consists of members of the heath family: Huckleberry (*Gaylussacia spp.*) and Blueberry (*Vaccinium spp.*). Other shrubs appeared: Mountain Laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*), having clusters of showy white flowers ringed with pink, and Fetter-bush (*Leucothoe racemosa*) with finely toothed, lance shaped leaves and bell shaped flowers hanging in long, single rows. Finally, one pretty spring bloomer was the Sheep Laurel (*Kalmia angustifolia*) with its clusters of pink to purple bell shaped flowers. This spectacular shrub was abundant near the parking lot where we started our trip. This treat to the eyes was a great way to start our adventure!



Sheep Laurel

I spend many hours at the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge in Philadelphia. I birdwatch with my friends, and I'm a member of a group of Weed Warriors. We remove invasive plant species from the refuge, a little at a time. The work is very labor intensive, but very rewarding. Not only am I learning the value and beauty of our natural world, I'm also part of an important team. Gratefully, the portion of the Pine Barrens that we saw on this trip is not nearly as degraded as other heavily trafficked parts of the world, such as the Heinz Refuge. The Blue Hole is a hidden gem and needs to be protected and conserved for others to visit, like I did with my friends. Take a few hours to find and visit this unique part of the Pine Barrens, you'll be glad that you did!

Ω Ω Ω

Heinz NWR Weed Warrior Vine Training **Saturday, November 3, 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM**

Do you want to learn more about native and invasive plants, as well as help wildlife at John Heinz NWR? Join the Weed Warriors! The mission of the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge Weed Warriors is to enrich wildlife habitat within the Refuge by participating in the restoration of native plant communities. Weed Warriors recognize that these native plant communities are vital to supporting a rich and diverse population of native wildlife, including more than 300 species of birds. After taking an online training course and attending an in-house workshop and field training, Weed Warriors remove invasive plant species in plots they have adopted or along Refuge trails. Call 215-365-3118 to register!



See the John Heintz National Wildlife Refuge website:

<http://www.fws.gov/heinz/index.html>

Also

Friends of Heintz Refuge website:

<http://www.friendsoftinicummarsh.org>

Another Ancestral Species?

By Paul Schlueter III

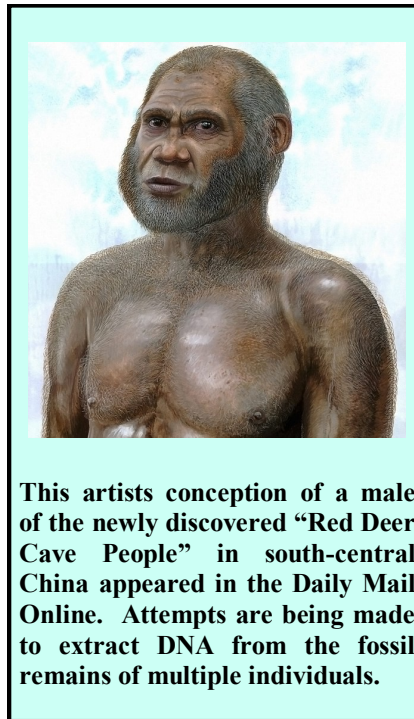


In the April 7, 2012, Science News, Bruce Bower wrote of yet another possible species of Homo, this one found in south-central Chinese caves, dated to between 14.3 and 11.5Kya. The small, geographically distinct group has a combination of features including both modern characteristics, and ones (such as flaring cheekbones) which seem more similar to African Homo fossils some 100K years old. Photographed with skulls from *H. sapiens*, *H. heidelbergensis*, and *H. neanderthalensis*, the un-named Chinese specimen is visibly different. Darren Curnoe, an anthropologist at the University of New South Wales (Sydney) reported the find in the March 14, 2012 PLoS ONE. He suspects that the new fossil group represents a separate species that evolved in Asia.

Curnoe, perhaps not constrained by the Creationist reactionism faced by anthropologists in the U.S., commented that, "We're cautious about classifying these fossils, because scientists lack a satisfactory biological definition of *Homo sapiens*." The Creationists who continue to promote "teaching the controversy" of human evolution will surely latch onto such unguarded statements, and present them as if they were evidence that scientists don't know what they're talking about. More reasonably, what Curnoe is actually referring to is a lack of a specific (and necessarily arbitrary) line of demarcation which would serve to separate *H. sapiens* from predecessor species. There are arguments which maintain that Neanderthals are actually *H. sapiens*, even though the best evidence indicates that Neanderthals evolved in Asia and Europe from *H. heidelbergensis* nomads who had previously left Africa, and that *H. sapiens* evolved separately while still in Africa. Speciation, in general, is a relatively vague concept in biology, allowing for infinite subtleties in gradation between species during the period when they

become gradually different from the preceding species (which itself may or may not survive as a distinct "cousin" in the same time period). To Creationists' enduring delight, it's not always possible to point out every gradual increment of difference among the fossil record; the conditions necessary for fossilization of *Homo* remains only occur with agonizing rarity.

One of the classic definitions of speciation is that two species which have lost the ability to interbreed are definitively separate species. Even this concept remains vague, because it doesn't define HOW the inability to interbreed came about. Lions and tigers are physically capable of producing hybrid offspring (apparently fertile, at that), as are bobcats and lynx; still we recognize them each as distinct species, because GIVEN REASONABLE OPPORTUNITY, they will self-segregate and breed within their own species. In other examples, the breeding obstacle is geological separation (think of the ocean separating the Galapagos Islands from anywhere else), more than biological (at least, in the early stages). Thus, humans migrating out of Africa encountered cousin Neanderthals who already resided in Asia, and interbred with them (while NOT leaving evidence of such interbreeding among people who stayed in Africa); the speciation had been primarily geological, not one of physical



This artist's conception of a male of the newly discovered "Red Deer Cave People" in south-central China appeared in the Daily Mail Online. Attempts are being made to extract DNA from the fossil remains of multiple individuals.

incompatibility.

Another bit of new discovery described in the article is new evidence indicating that west-Euro Neanderthals were genetically distinct from, and eventually supplanted by, east-Euro Neanderthals, somewhere between about 70 and 55Kya (well before the human exodus occurred). This was described online by Chris Stringer (Natural History Museum, London), February 23, in Molecular Biology and Evolution. Geneticist Love Dalen (the Swedish Museum of Natural History,

Stockholm) says the western group had much less genetic diversity than the easterners.

In the same "Story One" lead article of Science News, Bower describes how cold-climate refuges may have influenced Homo evolution in bygone times. Having left Africa, the idea goes, human ancestors exploited temperate periods to spread widely, but when the climate shifted periodically (every 8 to 12 thousand years), people retreated into isolated pockets, or refuges, where local weather was more tolerable. There, they bred in isolation, gradually becoming distinct because they didn't share specific mutations with others outside their isolated groups. This is now thought to explain how groups such as the Denisovans, the H. Floresiensis (Hobbits), and the new Chinese species came to evolve separately. Today, we ordinary folks tend to recognize biologically inconsequential differences in regional groups, and refer to them as "racial characteristics," though there is so little actual distinction between Africans, Asians, Europeans, and Native Americans that serious biologists proclaim that there is no such thing as "different races" among humanity. If we were to actually encounter a Neanderthal, one of our closest cousins, the distinctiveness would far exceed the differences we notice among racial and national groups today, yet within such groups, modern humans tribalize and self-segregate so routinely that many people still insist on believing that "other races" are "not human, like WE are." Psychologists are even now claiming that there is some measurable neuro-psychological difference that disposes people toward the distinction between Conservative and Liberal, though even the most extreme of those opposing groups remain unlikely to assert a speciation event has occurred between us.

H. heidelbergensis, which first left Africa between about 600 and 400Kya, is most likely the common ancestral species of the known populations we now recognize as relatives. There remains the substantial likelihood that

anthropologists will still discover other unknown species, from both before and after the dispersal of our relatives across the planet. DNA researchers are also likely to find more surprises within the genome, as they manage to read and compare the genetic codes of the many ancient specimens available or soon-to-be-found (this is, in fact, the only way in which we are aware of the Denisovans as a distinct group). DNA studies will perhaps tell us more about the new Chinese fossils (could it be that we now have skulls of Denisovans? Hmmm...), which presumably lived in isolation, but simultaneously with surrounding groups of modern Asians. Now that we know where they lived, perhaps archaeologists will even begin to discover evidence of their culture, aspects of their physical health (some traces of disease can be found on fossil remains), and perhaps even identify the cause of their eventual disappearance (were they perhaps found, to be either wiped out as competitors, or absorbed as cousins?) Might there even be mythological and/or folklore accounts of them which survive (are they the Yeti?)

I personally find such discoveries to be much more intriguing than the modern fantasticisms of Bigfoot and Nessie, etc. As we learn more about who has shared this planet with us, and as we answer some of the questions the new discoveries raise, we always seem left with still more to marvel at.

Paul Schlueter III is serving Life in Prison in NE Pennsylvania. His supporters have created a website about him. www.jaylbird.org

Ω Ω Ω

Viewpoint: "We evolved to be tribal, and politics is a competition among coalitions of tribes. When people feel that a group they value-be it racial, religious, regional, or ideological-is under attack, they rally to its defense, even at some cost to themselves. The great trick that humans developed at some point in the last few hundred thousand years is the ability to circle around a tree, rock, ancestor, flag, book, or god, and then treat that thing as sacred. People who worship the same idol can trust one another, work as a team, and prevail over less cohesive groups. So if you want to understand politics, and especially our divisive culture wars, you must follow the sacredness.'

~ **Psychologist Jonathan Haidt in NYTimes.com
THE WEEK March 30, 2012**



Adult Education Course Schedule Fall 2012 Courses

More Physics and Chemistry in the Kitchen, Professor Paul J. Angiolillo.

8 Thursdays, September 27 - November 15, 2012, 6:30 - 8:00 PM. Saint Joseph's University, Science Center (Room 317), City Avenue and Lapsley Lane, Philadelphia. This course will explore the scientific foundations of cooking and cooking practice; in particular the chemistry and physics of food preparation (molecular and physical gastronomy).

No preregistration required.

What is in the Kitchen? An Evolutionary and Global Perspective on Food and Diet, Professor Janet Monge. 6 Tuesdays, October 2 - November 6, 2012, 6:30 - 8:00 PM. University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, 33rd and Spruce Streets. This course addresses the issue of what constitutes an optimal diet for humans using an evolutionary and adaptive perspective.

No preregistration required.

History of Photography: Art, Science, and Technology, Professor Jane E. Boyd.

7 Wednesdays, October 3 - November 14, 2012, 6:30 - 7:45 PM. Independence Branch of the Free Library, 18 S. 7th Street (between Market and Chestnut). This course will explore the history of photography from many points of view: artistic, scientific, technological, and cultural.

No preregistration required.

The Institute's adult evening courses grew out of the original lectures given by William Wagner at his home. Since its incorporation in 1855, the Wagner Institute has drawn upon scientists and teachers from the many distinguished educational and research institutions in the region for its faculty. Many hold joint appointments with the Wagner and institutions such as the University of Pennsylvania, Princeton University, Bryn Mawr College, the Academy of Natural Sciences and Temple University. Today the courses are held off-site at a variety of locations throughout the city to make them accessible to a wide audience.

The adult lecture courses are offered on an introductory college level. They are open to anyone seeking an introduction to various areas of the sciences as well as those familiar with the subjects who wish to broaden and update their knowledge. The courses also provide an excellent opportunity for motivated junior high and high school students to supplement their current science courses and to help prepare them for further study in these fields at a college level. The courses are appropriate as well for teachers seeking to expand their knowledge.

The Wagner Free Institute of Science admits students of any race, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, nationality, and ethnic origin. All students are accorded access to the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally made available by the Institute.

Visit the Wagner Free Institute of Science website at: <http://www.wagnerfreeinstitute.org>



The **Philadelphia Honey Festival returns on September 7, 8, and 9** – this time, sweeter than ever! This year's festivities will span three days and take place at the Wagner Free Institute of Science, Wyck Historic House & Garden and Bartram's Garden. All three institutions are the organizing partners teamed up with the Philadelphia Beekeepers Guild to bring you a fun-filled, sweet-tasting, educational weekend of honey-related activities and programs.

This year's festival highlights include a *Honey Happy Hour*, talks by local artists and authors, appearances by Jessica Long, the Pennsylvania Honey Queen, beekeeping workshops, open hive talks with beekeepers, local honey tastings and sales, hands-on activities like beeswax candle making and seed bomb workshops, the *Bee-A-Bee Pageant*, prize raffles and more!

Speakers include Deb Delaney, Ph.D., prominent honey bee researcher from University of Delaware, who will speak on *The Secret Lives of Bees: Feral Bees in Trees*, Jimmy McMillan from Barry's Home Brew, who will talk about brewing beer with honey, Matthew Shoemaker & Sarah Newhouse, Historical Society of Pennsylvania will describe *300 Years of the Philadelphia Honeybee*, and many more!

The goal of the Philadelphia Honey Festival is to raise awareness about the importance of bees to our environment, the impact of local honey on our economy, and to promote urban beekeeping and gardening. All festival events are free and open to the public. In 2011, the Philadelphia Honey Festival was attended by just under 1,000 visitors and this year promises to be an even bigger success!

There will be something for everyone in the family at all three anchor sites!

Friday, September 7, 10am to 6pm at the Wagner Free Institute of Science (100 W. Montgomery Ave.).

Saturday, September 8, 10am to 4pm at Wyck Historic House and Garden (6026 Germantown Avenue)

Sunday, September 9, 10am to 4pm at Bartram's Gardens (54th Street & Lindbergh Blvd.)

www.phillyhoneyfest.com

A 19th century Mayor of Philadelphia elected Vice President of the United States

By Ric Ben-Safed

This story is reprinted with permission from the Weekly Press, a Community Newspaper in Philadelphia
Wednesday, August 1, 2012

<http://weeklypress.com/a-th-century-mayor-of-philadelphia-was-elected-vice-president-p3249-1.htm>

I admit I felt a little like Dan Brown investigating the Priory of Sion in Da Vinci Code as I stepped into the 3rd and Lombard Street graveyard of St. Peter's Church. I was only looking for a long lost and previously unknown, to me, Mayor and Vice President, George Mifflin Dallas. And of course I didn't find any secret of secrets of Philadelphia. No, there is no 'Da Vinci Code' mystery afoot. City of Philadelphia and its neighborhoods were different in 1844-1848 when he was Vice President. But today there is not even a historical marker on the street, and they seem to spring up all over the city about lesser known people.

At St. Peter's, we find relics of that past age, and there are many grave markers dating from the 18th and 19th century there. Perhaps each family is a novel of its own!

As I wandered about there, I eventually found a directory beside one of the paths that helped me to locate the grave of the first Vice President born and raised in Philadelphia. It's located on a non-descriptive corner on the right side of St. Peter's building facing 2nd street at Lombard. Quite unassuming! He's buried with several members of his family. His name is at the head of the multiple names on the family plot. No adornments of any kind, almost like a Quaker grave.

Interestingly, the grave marker doesn't even list him as a Vice President of the U.S.

Wow, how "Philadelphian" to keep such a secret! A Mayor of Philadelphia was elected Vice President of the country.

Furthermore, the Masonic Temple on Broad St. did not even mark the Vice President's gravestone with the small symbol of the "Square and Compass" of the Masonic order to signify that he was a member of it. And George Dallas was a Grand Master of the Masonic Temple of Philadelphia.

However, the only mystery was in finding his grave and to find out why this native son is not even a little bit honored in the City of Philadelphia. From my genealogical and historical research, George M. Dallas was a natural born citizen of the U.S., born on 10th July 1792 - while George Washington was President and governed from 5th & Market Streets in Philadelphia. He was elected VP and served with James K. Polk from 1844-1848. And before that he was a Mayor of Philadelphia in 1828 (Ten years before, Philadelphia even had its first elected Mayor.)

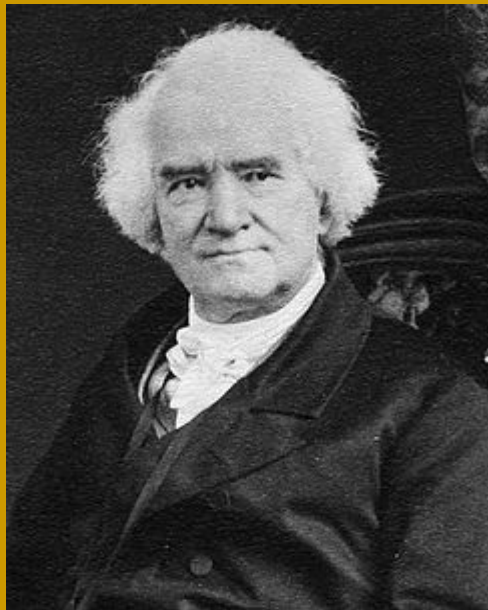
Yes, George Dallas was appointed Mayor by the same Municipal Corporation that Wm Penn had chartered in 1682 and continued to run the City Corporation.

And also at the time that George M. Dallas was Mayor, he was automatically the chief Judge of "The Mayor's Court", he and the City Council (titled Altarman)

actually held court and decided cases (without a jury). I think they were fines and small claims court type of legal issues. City government in 1838 was different as well as confined to what we know now as Center City. We didn't have City and County consolidation until 1853.

I kind of admire George Dallas, though; he was

George M. Dallas (1792 - 1864)



**Mayor of Philadelphia (1829-1831)
United States Senator (1831-1833)
Vice President of United States (1845-1849)**

subpoenaed by the Assembly soon after the 1844 Race and Anti-Catholic Riots. To his credit, he seemed to function like a present day ACLU Lawyer. The political opposition party thought that the Masonic orders were 'evilly' involved.

Dallas wrote:

"I am a citizen of Pennsylvania by birth and constant residence. Having imbibed in early youth, I still retain a strong sense of the free spirit of her institutions; and am unconscious of ever having, directly or indirectly, intentionally or inadvertently, committed an act or uttered a sentiment repugnant to her Constitution, inconsistent with her laws, injurious to her morals, or derogatory to her character.

I am a member of the society of Freemasons. It is more than 20 years since I became so. At that period the example of the wisest and purest patriots, of Dr. Franklin, Gen. Washington, Gen. Warren, Gen. LaFayette, and of many dear and near friends, were naturally alluring. Public opinion designated the association as virtuous, useful, and harmless. In passing through the forms of admission, I voluntarily assumed obligations and duties in themselves perfectly compatible with the paramount obligations and duties of a citizen to his country, and tributary to the pursuits of an enlarged philanthropy.

The ninth article of the Constitution of Pennsylvania, titled Declaration of Rights, sets forth and unalterably establishes 'the general, great, and essential principles of liberty and free government'.

As a private citizen of Pennsylvania I claim, with special reference to this Article of her Constitution, to possess and enjoy rights and liberties which no earthly power can abridge or destroy; nor will I consent to be in the slightest degree accessory to the mischiefs which a surrender or waiver of those rights and liberties, on an occasion so ostensible as this, might produce.

I will not consent to discredit the declaration that the free communication of thoughts and opinions is one of the inviolable rights of man.

I will not consent to consider as idle and nugatory the emphatic precaution, that 'the people shall be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and possessions, from unreasonable searches and seizures.'

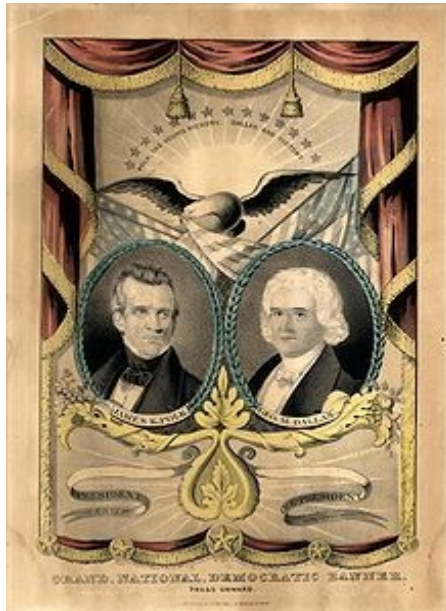
I will not consent to the validity of an 'ex post facto law.' In a word, I will not consent to hold my rights and liberties of private intercourse, private sentiment, and private business subject to the domiciliary visitations, the changeable majority, or the ideal policy of any body of

men whatever.

Added to the considerations at which I have thus glanced, it is impossible for me to be insensible to the dictates of personal honor. Assuredly, this sentiment should never restrain any one from denouncing what is criminal or dishonest.

Were I acquainted with anything of that nature in the operations and tendencies of Freemasonry, nothing could bind me to silence. But I was received by this association into its own confidence, upon my own application. I have been allowed a knowledge of the modes in which its members identify each other, and avoid deceptions upon their benevolence.

At a time when neither law, nor public opinion, nor my own conscience suggested a doubt of its correctness, I engaged myself to secrecy, and I cannot, without a sense of treachery and degradation prove false to my promise. Better, by far, endure the penalties of alleged contumacy, be they what they may."



Polk/Dallas Campaign Poster - 1844

Ric Ben-Safed, retired, and now a freelance writer, a newly elected Secretary of American Revolution Roundtable of Philadelphia, a genealogist and historical researcher who also pens mystery short stories that are generally set in mid 19th century Philadelphia. Has a degree in History from Universidad de las Americas, in Mexico City. A Master's in Social Policy and Planning from Temple University. He also loves the Phillies as much as Philadelphia History.



Ω Ω Ω

AARTOP - The American Revolution Round Table of Philadelphia
will meet **Wednesday, September 26, 2012 at 7:15 PM** at **Brittingham's Irish Pub and Restaurant**, 640 East Germantown Pike, Lafayette Hill, Pennsylvania. (610)828-7351.

<http://arrtop.com/>

Joseph Becton will speak on Fighting for Freedom: Choosing Sides. Africans in The American Revolution.

PHACT CALENDAR

PhACT Events

Dr. David Cattell, Chairman of the Physics Department of Community College of Philadelphia hosts meetings of **PhACT** - at 2:00 PM on the third Saturday of most months at Community College of Philadelphia... Parking is easily available and costs \$4.00 for all day. Enter the college parking lot on 17th Street which is one way south bound. This meeting site is handicap accessible. **PhACT Meetings are Free and open to the public unless otherwise noted.**



Saturday, September 15, 2012 - Physicist Paul Halpern will discuss his new book "**Edge of the Universe: A Voyage to the Cosmic Horizon and Beyond**". See Pages 1 and 2 for more details.

Saturday, October 20, 2012 - **The Pseudoscience Wars: Immanuel Velikovsky and the Birth of the Modern Fringe.** Princeton Professor Michael Gordin will speak.

Saturday, November 17, 2012 - Writer Ken Silber will speak on "**Politics vs Science**". More details to come later. Please visit his web site at <http://www.advisorone.com/author/kenneth-silber>

Saturday, January 19, 2013 - TBA

Saturday, February 16, 2013 - John Ruscio will talk on fallacies and new technology related to lie detector tests.

Saturday, September 21, 2013 - **AIDS denialism.** - Nicoli Nattrass of South Africa will talk on AIDS denialism. Hundreds of thousands of people are thought to have died based on misinformation concerning AIDS and treatments. Learn about how science is reducing the deaths and spread of the disease even though irrationalism has been doing the opposite.

The **PhACT Calendar** is open to members and non-members who wish to announce meetings and events of other groups of which they are interested or affiliated. These events should be of some general interest to the Skeptical or Scientific community and should be within a reasonable radius of Philadelphia. Send submissions to the editor at phactpublicity@aol.com. Keep the announcements brief. Space is limited and insertions will be made on a first come-first served basis after the needs of PhACT are accomplished. Phactum does not accept paid advertising.



The Philadelphia Area Center for the History of Science (PACHS) maintains a calendar of events about the history of science, technology and medicine that may contain some interesting events not listed in the Phactum Calendar. Check out their website at:

<http://www.pachs.net/events>

Friday, September 7, 2012 at 8:00 pm (doors open at 7:00 pm) at Eastern State Penitentiary, 22nd & Fairmount Sts., Philadelphia (215) 236-3300

The Secret Cinema presents **WE WHO ARE ABOUT TO DIE** at historic Eastern State Penitentiary

Secret Cinema is proud to return to Eastern State Penitentiary for our 13th screening there on Friday, September 7. As usual, we'll be entertaining our "captive" audience by projecting prison-themed film fare in a screening room complete with real steel bars, echoing the scenes on screen in a unique twist on "3-D" movies. This year's feature film will be **WE WHO ARE ABOUT TO DIE**, a little-seen 1937 drama based on the true story of wrongfully convicted death row inmate John Lamson.

There will be one complete show, starting at 8:00 pm. Doors open at 7:00 pm, allowing the audience time to take a look at many new and existing museum exhibits at ESP. Admission is \$10.00.

As always at our annual film screening at ESP, seating is limited, so early arrival is suggested (there's plenty to look at while you're there!). All Secret Cinema presentations are projected using 16mm film (not video) on a giant screen. The program will include the following feature, plus surprise short subjects. Admission: \$10.00.

WE WHO ARE ABOUT TO DIE (1937, Dir: Christy Cabanne)

This little seen drama stars John Beal as an innocent man who is convicted of murder and sentenced to death. He learns the grim reality of life on death row, where each condemned man waits his turn on the gallows. Nobody will believe his story, except for his faithful girlfriend (Ann Dvorak) and one hard-working police detective (rugged, Ocean City, NJ-born screen hero Preston Foster). The film was based on the true account of author John Lamson, who spent 13 months awaiting execution in San Quentin before the Supreme Court reversed his conviction.

Christy Cabanne, one of the most prolific directors in screen history, began his long career as an assistant to D.W. Griffith. In 1947, near the end of his career, he directed Bela Lugosi's sole color film, **SCARED TO DEATH**, a Secret Cinema favorite.

Eastern State Penitentiary, built in the 1820s, is a world famous historic landmark, which influenced the design of hundreds of other prisons. Closed as a working prison since 1971, the decaying structure, which once housed Al Capone and Willie Sutton, has become a popular tourist attraction and museum over the last two decades. The film will be projected right inside the main prison building in a hallway just outside Capone's cell, surrounded by iron bars and ghosts of convicts past.

SECRET CINEMA WEBSITE: www.theseccinema.com

EASTERN STATE PENITENTIARY WEBSITE: www.easternstate.org

SOCRATES CAFE is moderated by: Lewis Mifsud, Ph.D., P.E., a member of PhACT and of The American Academy of Forensic Sciences. At 7:00 PM every Monday evening except holidays (on Tuesdays after a Monday holiday) at the Springfield Township Public Library (215-836-5300) at 1600 Papermill Mill Road, Wyndmoor, PA. 19038. This philosophical discussions group is free and open to the public. Join us and share your critical thinking, questions and opinions.



Saturday, September 8, 2012 at 6:00pm at Laurel Hill Cemetery, 3822 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia, PA19132. 215-228-8200

<http://www.thelaurehillcemetery.org>

Music for the Hearing Eye:

The Divine Hand Ensemble Concert atop the Crypts

This once-in-a-lifetime event comprises the first time in 250 years that a program of funerary music will be performed publicly, and the first time ever in America! Join us for this musical event of a lifetime, aside the dead at sunset.

Witness Mano Divina, leader of The Divine Hand Ensemble, harness electricity with his fingertips and draw music out of the air as master of the Theremin, an early electronic musical instrument controlled without discernible physical contact from the player. It is named after its Russian inventor, Professor Léon Theremin, who patented the device in 1928, and is associated in contemporary culture with the eerie sound that has been used in various movie soundtracks and rock albums. In addition to this rare instrument, the Ensemble includes a string quartet, classical guitar, two harps, a glockenspiel, a soprano and a tenor, together rendering a one-of-a-kind listening experience.

The Ensemble's music has been described as hypnotic, breathtaking and mesmerizing, an "amalgamation of magic, science and music." The International Review Board notes them as "a must see experience that will leave a remarkable impression for a lifetime." There are thus few more appropriately ethereal settings to take in the power of this performance than historic Laurel Hill Cemetery, where the Ensemble will be performing a selection of exciting contemporary and classical compositions for the twenty-first century, while also introducing the audience to funerary music as the only group internationally to perform it publicly.

The concert will be offered as part of the 16th Annual Philly Fringe Festival. The cost is \$25/person general admission, and includes complimentary wine, beer and refreshments. **BRING YOUR OWN BLANKETS OR BEACH CHAIRS.** The performance will run approximately 1.5 hours, and will additionally include a ½ hour intermission, offering visitors an opportunity to explore America's first National Historic Landmark cemetery while enjoying a drink or two. A haunting selection of Memento mori photography will also be on display. Translated from the Latin to mean "Remember you must die," Memento Mori refers to a variety of artistic genres dating back to antiquity, all of which share the common purpose of reminding people of their mortality.

Advance reservations are requested, and can be made by calling 215.228.8200, or emailing tours@thelaurehillcemetery.org. Tickets can be purchased via the Fringe Festival Box Office. In the case of inclement weather, all tickets are transferable to our rain date of Saturday, September 15, 6:00pm.

Sunday, September 9, 2012 / 2:00-4:00 PM at Warwick County Park, Pottstown, PA

Historian Clarissa Dillon, PhD will discuss **Dr Mom, Colonial Style - Animal, Vegetable, Mineral**

Domestic medical practices were not all based on plants. The use of various animal and mineral ingredients was common. Show-and-tell items will illustrate the program.

Monday, September 10, 2012 at 6:00 PM at National Mechanics Bar, 22 S. 3rd St., Old City, Philadelphia

<http://scienceontapphilly.com>

"Takeover by Alien Invaders: Invasive Species in our Oceans"

With Amy Freestone, PhD., Assistant Professor of Biology, Temple University

Although not from space, alien invaders are appearing in our ecosystems at an accelerating pace. Species are transported across the globe through human travel and trade, and these species are continually being introduced to new environments where they did not exist previously. These species are called introduced, non-native, exotic, or even alien, and while many are harmless, some can become invasive and cause significant ecological and economic harm. Invasive species are one of the leading threats to global biodiversity today. Invasive species in our oceans are less understood than many of the conspicuous invasive species that occur in

terrestrial ecosystems, but their occurrences and impacts are on the rise. Travel with Dr. Freestone to her coastal field sites along the North Atlantic Ocean and Caribbean Sea as she discusses her research on marine invasions and a new global initiative that she is leading to understand invasion dynamics across the Americas, Europe, and Australia.

Dr. Amy Freestone is an Assistant Professor of Biology at Temple University. Her ecological field research spans North and Central America and the African island nations of the Union of the Comoros and Madagascar. Her research has been supported by the Smithsonian Institution and the National Science Foundation and has appeared in numerous scientific journals. She has been invited to give talks on her research both nationally and internationally.

This Science on Tap is presented by the Wagner Free Institute of Science.

Science on Tap is a monthly gathering in Philadelphia that features public discussion on engaging science topics.

Held in a relaxed, bar setting at 6:00 PM on the second Monday of every

month, Science on Tap features a brief, informal presentation by a scientist or other expert followed by lively conversation. The goal is to promote enthusiasm for science in a fun, spirited, and accessible way, while also meeting new people.

Science on Tap is sponsored by a consortium of five Philadelphia institutions: Academy of Natural Sciences, American Philosophical Society (APS) Museum, Chemical Heritage Foundation (CHF), Mutter Museum of The College of Physicians of Philadelphia. Wagner Free Institute of Science



Amy Freestone working in the field in Belize

National Mechanics Bar, 22 S. 3rd St., Old City, Philadelphia

Ages 21+ or accompanied by a chaperone 25 years or older

Wednesday, September 12, 2012 at 7:00 PM at Frankford Hall on Frankford Avenue just north of Girard Avenue.

Philadelphia Nerd Nite

For more information see the website at

<http://philadelphia.nerdnite.com/updates/>

Admission is \$5.00, all are welcome. Great food and beer is available in addition to the company of fellow Nerds. Nerd night is the 2nd Wednesday of each month.

Be there and be square.

Thursday, September 13, 2012 | 6:30PM at College of Physicians of Philadelphia, 19 South Twenty-Second Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103, (215) 563-3737 x304

http://www.collphyphil.org/prog_calendar.htm

The Samuel X Radbill Lecture: The Civil War: How It Impacted the Future of Medicine in America

During the Civil War, America's physicians learned about diseases and their clinical manifestations on a scale never before possible. The war created surgeons from doctors who previously had minimal operating

experience. Physicians who had minimal background in treating complex illnesses and communicable infections experienced a lifetime of practice in several years of camping, marching, and conflict. America's healers acquired administrative skills not feasible in antebellum America. For the first time, the nation's physicians organized ambulance corps, assembled hospital trains, served on draft boards, resolved questions of medical manpower, and designed, staffed, and managed vast general hospitals. Finally, the scale and urgency of the war imposed much needed comradeship and discipline. "The constant mingling of men of high medical culture with the less educated had value," wrote S. Weir Mitchell, "and the general influence of the war on our art was, in this and other ways, of great service." Physicians familiarized themselves with disease and injury on an individual plane while the profession unified on a national level.

Speaker: Ira Rutkow, MD, General Surgeon and Medical Historian
Sponsored by the College's Section on Medical History.

Thursday, September 13, 2012 - 7:30PM-8:30PM at The Franklin Institute Science Museum, located in Center City Philadelphia, at the intersection of 20th Street and the Benjamin Franklin Parkway.

<http://www.fi.edu>

The Archaeology of Qumran and the Dead Sea Scrolls

The Dead Sea Scrolls represent a collection of Jewish religious works, including early copies of the Hebrew Bible, which were discovered in caves surrounding the site of Qumran, by the northwest shore of the Dead Sea. The scrolls were deposited in the caves by members of a Jewish sect that inhabited Qumran in the first century BCE and first century CE. In this slide-illustrated lecture, we examine the archaeological remains of the Qumran settlement, and discuss the connection of the site with the scrolls and the sect's identity.

Speaker: Dr. Jodi Magness, Kenan Distinguished Professor for Teaching Excellence in Early Judaism, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
Ticket Price: \$5.00 per person. Call 215.448.1200 for tickets.

PhACT Event

Saturday, September 15, 2012

**Physicist Paul Halpern will discuss his new book
"Edge of the Universe:
A Voyage to the Cosmic Horizon and Beyond".**

See Pages 1 & 2 for more details

Sunday, September 16, 2012 at 1:00pm at Laurel Hill Cemetery, 3822 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia, PA19132. 215-228-8200

<http://www.thelaurehillcemetery.org>

Buried in the Land of Strangers: The Confederates of Laurel Hill

Fate denied them victory, but gave them immortality. From Pennsylvania's highest ranking Civil War general, to the unmarked grave of a spy who came in from the cold, learn the history of never before told Philadelphians who fought for the Confederacy: who they were, why they fought, and how they came to be buried...in a land of strangers at Philadelphia's Laurel Hill Cemetery. Learn about an important piece of Civil War history so often neglected, while marking the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Sharpsburg (Antietam Creek), the bloodiest day in American History, which took place on September 17, 1862. This walking tour will be led by Sons of Confederate Veterans PA Division Graves Registrar, Sam Ricks. It will conclude with cookies and refreshments.

\$12/person; \$10/seniors + students; \$9/members

Tickets can be purchased at the door, or in advance online, or by calling 215.228.8200.

Wednesday, September 19, 2012 | 12:00n – 1:00PM at College of Physicians of Philadelphia, 19 South Twenty-Second Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103, (215) 563-3737 x304

http://www.collphyphil.org/prog_calendar.htm

Food & Thought: "Litter, Lighting, Parks and Promotions: The Multiple Roles of Business Improvement Districts"

Paul R. Levy, PhD, the founding CEO of Philadelphia's Center City District, will reflect upon his twenty-one (21) years of experience transforming downtown Philadelphia and consider what challenges still remain to enhance the competitiveness and attractiveness of Center City. Examining the circumstances and conditions in Philadelphia and other cities, Mr. Levy will also address the basic question: government and business - who is doing more and who should do less?

Speaker: Paul R. Levy, PhD, Chief Executive Officer, Center City District; Executive Director, Central Philadelphia Development Corporation

Thursday September 20, 2012 / 6:00 PM-8:30 PM at The Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University, 1900 Benjamin Franklin Parkway, Philadelphia, PA 19103

<http://www.ansp.org>

From Roots to Re-Entry: Green Job Training Behind and Beyond Prison Walls

Come to this Urban Sustainability Forum about correctional institutions and green jobs training.

Wednesday September 19, 2012 / 6:30 PM-9:00 PM at The Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University, 1900 Benjamin Franklin Parkway, Philadelphia, PA 19103

Arctic Voices: Resistance at the Tipping Point Author Talk

The Academy's Ted Daeschler hosts an exciting discussion with world-renowned photographer, writer, and activist Subhankar Banerjee. Banerjee's recent book, *Arctic Voices: Resistance at the Tipping Point*, brings together narratives from prominent activists, writers, and researchers who address issues of climate change, resource war, and human rights. Banerjee will be joined by Cindy Shogan, executive director of the Alaska Wilderness League.

The Arctic is a destination for Daeschler, whose studies of Devonian fossils have helped scientists learn more about the early evolution of limbed animals. His research takes him to Elsmere Island in the Canadian Arctic every other year.

Free for Academy members, \$5 for nonmembers
Preregistration available at <http://arcticvoices.eventbrite.com/>

Saturday, September 22, 7:15pm at Laurel Hill Cemetery, 3822 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia, PA19132. 215-228-8200

<http://www.thelaurelhillemetery.org>

No Rest for the Wicked: A Graveyard Cabaret

New York-based REV Theatre Company will return to Laurel Hill Cemetery with another Philly Fringe Festival production.

"Come down and join the circus, it's the end of the world. Come down and join the circus, all you dead boys and girls" to Sip a cocktail or two as darkness falls and lost (singing) souls appear through the mists of Laurel Hill Cemetery for "We're all just skeletons, reclining on a beach of flesh Dancing in a sea of organs through lapping waves of blood"

SEE a sailor lost at sea as his widow drowns in a bathtub.

MARVEL as a serial-killing little girl pleads for the electric chair.

BEWARE because a murdering rapist looks for his next victim.

All with music from Bessie Smith to The Scissor Sisters, Cab Calloway to Nirvana, and including many others.

So come indeed and "Enjoy yourself...it's later than you think!!!"

Bring your own blankets, beach chairs, snacks, beer, wine and/or other beverage.

Friday, September 21, 2012 | 9:00AM – 12:00n at College of Physicians of Philadelphia, 19 South Twenty-Second Street,

Philadelphia, PA 19103, (215) 563-3737 x304

http://www.collphyphil.org/prog_calendar.htm

The Health Effects of Hydraulic Fracturing Symposium

Pennsylvania sits on top of exceptional shale gas reserves that are being tapped using unconventional gas drilling through hydraulic fracturing. However, early results from gas drilling suggest environmental contamination of air and groundwater sources has occurred and the health consequences may be serious. This symposium will examine ways that such contamination can occur and the health effects seen in humans and animals.

Sponsored by The College of Physicians of Philadelphia, its Section on Public Health & Preventive Medicine, and The Claneil Foundation.

Saturday, September 22, 2012 | 10:00AM – 4:00PM at College of Physicians of Philadelphia, 19 South Twenty-Second Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103, (215) 563-3737 x304

http://www.collphyphil.org/prog_calendar.htm

Civil War Hospital Day

During the Civil War (1861-1865), Philadelphia became the second largest hospital city (after Washington, DC) in the North. Ambulances and carts transferred wounded soldiers from arriving trains and ships to hospitals in and around the city. Blue uniforms were seen on every street: many military encampments surrounded Philadelphia. Troops paraded through streets on their way to war.

The College of Physicians of Philadelphia will evoke the atmosphere of medical wartime Philadelphia during the war years on Hospital Day. At the College, museum visitors will find a garrison of soldiers from the 3rd Regiment, United States Colored Troops. The presence of these soldiers highlights their history and connection to Camp William Penn, the first and largest training center for United States Colored Troops during the war, located just north of Philadelphia. Hospital Day will highlight the extraordinary contribution and experience of black soldiers during the war by focusing on their health and mortality. Several medical re-enactors, both men and women, will present displays about the wounds and diseases afflicting all soldiers, and their treatment. The Medicinal Plant Garden at the College will be set up as a temporary hospital.

Visit with the soldiers and the nurses and physicians who looked after them. Learn about the medicines used and techniques of surgery for battle wounds from re-enactors and the College's Karabots Junior Fellows. Discover what hospitals were like. Support the troops! Find out if you have what it takes to be a Civil War soldier—or a doctor!

This educational event will serve as a precursor to a new Mütter Museum exhibit about the medical dimension of the Civil War, scheduled to open in 2013, *Broken Bodies Suffering Spirits: Injury, Death, and Healing in Civil War Philadelphia*.

Event free with Museum admission.

Sponsored by the Mütter Museum of The College of Physicians of Philadelphia.

Saturday, September 22, 2012 / 12:00-3:00 PM at Morgan Log House, Kulpville, PA.

Historian Clarissa Dillon, PhD will display and discuss **small beer in "the world of William Penn"**.

Small beer was the common drink for all - men, women, and children, three meals a day. Process and ingredients will be discussed. No tasting!

Saturday, September 22, 2012 at 1:00pm at Laurel Hill Cemetery, 3822 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia, PA19132. 215-228-8200

<http://www.thelaurelhillemetery.org>

Inside Mausolea: Looking Outward

Curiosity can get the best of many visitors to Laurel Hill, as they wander past the Cemetery's ornate and imposing mausolea... What sights and sounds, scents and secrets dwell behind those doors and walls of impenetrable granite? Do the spirits of those who rest within infuse their tombs with an aura of yesteryear; or are these still and quiet sanctuaries immune to the passing of time? How does our world – that of the living – appear looking outward? Is our gaze returned, unbeknownst to us, as we pass by in our own journey to a common end? Learn the many mysteries of mausolea firsthand at Laurel Hill Cemetery. This lecture and walking



tour will be led by History Professor, Dr. David Horwitz. Dave has been leading tours through Laurel Hill for over 35 years! It will conclude with cookies and refreshments.

Please note that photography is NOT permitted on this tour, out of respect for the individuals whose resting places we will enter.

\$12/person; \$10/seniors + students; \$9/members

Tickets can be purchased at the door, or in advance online, or by calling 215.228.8200.

Tuesday, September 25, 2012 / 7:30 p.m. Talk: at the Marple Historical Society, the 1696 Thomas Massey House, Broomall, PA.

Historian Clarissa Dillon, PhD will discuss **"...the sincerest form of flattery."** how the 18th Century English enjoyed various foods in far-flung parts of the world but could not provide the necessary ingredients to make them at home. Their solution was to create "imitations using home-grown ingredients. Some of the most popular will be discussed.

Wednesday, September 26, 2012 at 7:15 PM at Brittingham's Irish Pub and Restaurant, 640 East Germantown Pike, Lafayette Hill, Pennsylvania. (610)828-7351.

American Revolution Round Table of Philadelphia,

<http://arrtop.com/>

Joseph Becton will speak on **Fighting for Freedom: Choosing Sides Africans in The American Revolution.**

Thursday, September 27, 2012 - 4:00 - 7:00 PM, Lecture at 5:30 PM at the Wagner Free Institute of Science, 1700 West Montgomery Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19121 ph 215-763-6529

www.wagnerfreeinstitute.org

From Flora to Fire: The Ecological Story of the New Jersey Pine Barrens

An Illustrated Presentation by Dr. Amy Karpati, Pinelands Preservation Alliance.



Beaver Pond along the Mullica River in the Pine Barrens

Philadelphians are often surprised to discover that the New Jersey Pine Barrens – a 1.1 million acre landscape of cedar bogs, pine forests, rivers, and hiking trails – is less than 20 miles from their city. The Pine Barrens is classified as an International Biosphere Reserve and is a precious resource for plants and wildlife, water protection, recreation, and scientific exploration. Join us for a virtual tour of this globally unique ecosystem and learn about

its natural history, its rare species, its carnivorous plants, and its curious dependence on frequent fire.

Dr. Amy Karpati is the Director for Conservation Science with

Calling All Astronomers! Rittenhouse Astronomical Society



Monthly Meetings! Bring all of your out-of this-world questions! Join The Rittenhouse Astronomical Society the second Wednesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. in the Fels Planetarium at the Franklin Institute. The society offers all persons an opportunity to participate in the activities of an astronomical group at the laymen's level. They aim to spread knowledge, awareness and enjoyment of astronomy and astronomical issues. It is a popular science club that keeps its members up-to-date on the latest developments. No experience is necessary to attend the FREE meetings. Come with your astronomy questions!

www.rittenhouseastronomicalsociety.org/

Pinelands Preservation Alliance, a non-profit environmental organization dedicated to the protection of the New Jersey Pinelands. Her work has focused on conservation biology, urban ecology, ecological restoration, and plant ecology. Amy also teaches as an adjunct instructor for the Sustainability Management program at The Earth Institute, Columbia University.

Friday, September 28, 2012 at 10:00am at Laurel Hill Cemetery, 3822 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia, PA19132. 215-228-8200

<http://www.thelaurehillcemetery.org>

Laurel Hill: The Hot Spots and Storied Plots

Join us for this informative overview of Laurel Hill's long and colorful history, which will include many of the marble masterpieces, stunning views and legendary stories that afford the cemetery its WOW factor. This is the ultimate tour for first-time visitors to Laurel Hill, and anyone else who likes beautiful art, stimulating history, and just enjoying life...even amongst the dead. This walking tour will be led by genealogist and Friends of Laurel Hill Cemetery board president, Carol Yaster. NEW Hot Spots and Storied Plots will be presented monthly as part of Laurel Hill Cemetery's Fourth Friday tour series, which take place on the fourth Friday of every month at 10:00am.

\$8/person; \$5/members

Tickets can be purchased at the door, or in advance online, or by calling 215.228.8200.

Saturday, September 29, 2012 at 10:00am at Laurel Hill Cemetery, 3822 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia, PA19132. 215-228-8200

<http://www.thelaurehillcemetery.org>

Nature in the Necropolis

Few sites have more appreciation for its "earth," and all of the stories and secrets that lie beneath it than Laurel Hill. The resting place claims status as the first garden cemetery in the United States, boasting 78 acres of green space in the middle of the city. Start off your morning at Laurel Hill, taking in its gorgeous river vistas, and learning of its history as a world-renowned arboretum. Participants will also aim to identify the many bird species, trees and horticultural specimens that still populate the site. Share your knowledge or just enjoy nature's Autumn all around you. Bring binoculars if you wish. This program will be co-presented by Laurel Hill Cemetery guides, Bob Berghaier and Steve Maurer. It will commence with complimentary coffee, juice and pastries.

\$8/person; \$5/members

Tickets can be purchased at the door, or in advance online, or by calling 215.228.8200.

Sunday, September 30, 2012 at 1:00pm at Laurel Hill Cemetery, 3822 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia, PA19132. 215-228-8200

<http://www.thelaurehillcemetery.org>

The Worlds of Thomas Jefferson at Laurel Hill Cemetery

Adopted sons, signers of the Declaration, painters, sculptors, men of science, ladies of belle letters, famous physicians, pariahs of free press, purveyors of fine wine and, of course, political provokers both friend and foe: all recognized by Thomas Jefferson as luminaries in our nation's early "Constellation of Worthies." They now rest peacefully at Laurel Hill. This walking tour will be led by foremost Jefferson scholar and acclaimed portrayer of America's third President, William David Barker (www.thethomasjefferson.com), who will be visiting Laurel Hill from his home in Williamsburg, Virginia. It will conclude with wine and refreshments.

\$12/person; \$10/seniors + students; \$9/members

Tickets can be purchased at the door, or in advance online, or by calling 215.228.8200.

Monday, October 1, 2012 | 6:30PM at College of Physicians of Philadelphia, 19 South Twenty-Second Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103, (215) 563-3737 x304

http://www.collphyphil.org/prog_calendar.htm

Vaccines and the March of Dimes: From Polio to Rubella

It is possible we may see polio eradicated from the world in our lifetime. The elusive goal of polio eradication began with the race to develop an effective vaccine in the mid-twentieth century. Little was

known about poliovirus then, but the research of Jonas Salk and Albert Sabin catapulted into the news headlines through the efforts of the March of Dimes. Founded in 1938 as the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis, the March of Dimes funded the polio vaccines developed by Drs. Salk and Sabin, which brought an end to polio epidemics in the U.S. After changing its mission to birth defects prevention in 1958, the foundation then faced a rubella epidemic resulting in thousands of birth defects. Through the work of Virginia Apgar, a rubella immunization program of the late 1960s likewise put an end to the scourge of congenital rubella syndrome. This talk, by March of Dimes Archivist David Rose, will explore the impact of these two diseases in American life and the vaccines that led to their eradication.

Speaker: David Rose, Archivist, March of Dimes

Tuesday, October 2, 2012 at 6:00pm at Laurel Hill Cemetery, 3822 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia, PA19132. 215-228-8200

<http://www.thelaurehillcemetery.org>

Before Their Time: The Forever Young of Laurel Hill an Antemortem Society event

Upon entering Laurel Hill Cemetery, the average visitor is immediately struck by the curious statuary that sits at its entrance. It is based upon the early 19th century novel, *Old Mortality*, by Sir Walter Scott, wherein the title character cautions, "My hours are like the ears of the latter harvest, and your days are yet in the spring; and yet you may be gathered into the garner of mortality before me, for the sickle of death cuts down the green as oft as the ripe, and there is a colour in your cheek that, like the bud of the rose, serveth oft to hide the worm of corruption." These poetic words would translate into reality for many whom rest at Laurel Hill. From the youngest infants to the young men and women not destined to reach the milestone of middle age, the Cemetery is ripe with the bones of many who departed this world before their time. Alfred Miller was just 7 months old when he found eternal rest at Laurel Hill, soon to be joined by three siblings who died before their 1st birthdays. Civil War Union Colonel Ulric Dahlgren was just 21 when a bullet ended his promising military career. William Emlen Cresson's bronze likeness depicts an artist just 24 years old when he painted his last. Across the Cemetery, Charles Vansant's similarly short life ended on a lazy summer day at the Jersey shore with a shark attack that would decades later inspire the film *Jaws*. This event will be presented by the Antemortem Society, the Young Friends group of Laurel Hill Cemetery. It will conclude with wine, beer and refreshments, and is not recommended for ages under 21 years. Bring your own flashlights.

\$20/person general admission

Advance registration is requested. Tickets can be purchased at the door, or in advance online, or by calling 215.228.8200.

Wednesday, October 3, 2012 - 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM at the American Philosophical Society, Benjamin Franklin Hall, 427 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia

<http://www.amphilsoc.org>

A play by Ian Ruskin

To Begin the World Over Again: The Life of Thomas Paine

Reception 5:30 p.m. Presentation 6:00 p.m.



The Library will open its slate of fall programs with a one-act play on the life of Thomas Paine, written and performed by British actor and playwright [Ian Ruskin](#), with Elliot Gould as the voice of the prologue and epilogue. The Society is pleased to present this performance since Paine was an elected Member of the APS and the Library is a major repository for historic Paine-related materials. The Society's Thomas Paine collection, assembled by Colonel Richard Gimbel (of the famous department store chain), includes nearly every significant edition of every work written by Paine, such as

first editions of *Common Sense*, *Age of Reason*, and *Rights of Man*, and most dramatically, a blood-stained copy of *American Crisis*. The collection also includes more than 100 prints, mostly anti-Paine, by the masters of British political cartooning, such as James Gilray and James Sayre, along with dozens of rare newspapers, pamphlets, and other works printed by advocates of Paine's philosophy.

Among the consulting scholars for Ruskin's play is APS Member Gary B. Nash, Director of the National Center for History in the Schools and Professor Emeritus at UCLA.

Free but please RSVP at: <http://www.amphilsoc.org/node/3542>

Saturday, October 6, 2012 at 5:00pm at Laurel Hill Cemetery, 3822 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia, PA19132. 215-228-8200

<http://www.thelaurehillcemetery.org>

4th Annual Rest in Peace 5K Run

Organized by East Falls Fitness, proceeds from this unique and truly unforgettable costumed run through the grounds of historic Laurel Hill Cemetery support two Philadelphia nonprofits, Gearing Up and the Friends of Laurel Hill Cemetery. For raceday information or to register, visit our official RIP 5K website at www.rip5k.org.

Tuesday, October 9, 6:00pm at Laurel Hill Cemetery, 3822 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia, PA19132. 215-228-8200

<http://www.thelaurehillcemetery.org>

Spirits and Spiritualists of Laurel Hill Cemetery

In the 19th century, thousands of Philadelphians believed that they could communicate with the dead. All that it took was a darkened room, a circle of believers, and a sensitive medium. Other Philadelphians mocked the table-rappers and tried to expose their tricks. Both believers and skeptics are well represented in historic Laurel Hill Cemetery. Along this tour, we will stop at the resting place of Catherine Drinkhouse Smith, whose monument proclaims her as "one of the best mediums of her time," and at the grave of Adam Seybert, whose last will and testament allocated a large sum to the University of Pennsylvania for a study of the truths of spiritualism. We will also visit the grave of Horace H. Furness, the Shakespeare scholar who led an official inquiry into the claims of spiritualists, and at the hillside tomb of Elisha Kent Kane, the famed Arctic explorer who scoffed at spiritualism but who fell in love with America's most beautiful young medium. This walking tour will be led by Dr. Michael Brooks, author of *John Ruskin and Victorian Architecture and Subway City*. It will conclude with wine, beer and refreshments, and is not recommended for ages under 21 years. Bring your own flashlights.

\$20/person general admission

Advance registration is requested. Tickets can be purchased at the door, or in advance online, or by calling 215.228.8200.

Tuesday, October 9, 2012 | 6:30PM at College of Physicians of Philadelphia, 19 South Twenty-Second Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103, (215) 563-3737 x304

http://www.collphyphil.org/prog_calendar.htm

Reading the Body

Reading the Body features "readings" by five fiction writers whose work is published by FC2 Publishing. FC2 is a premier literary press that for the past 35 years has been devoted to publishing the most adventurous work in contemporary American fiction. This event, conceived especially for the Mütter Museum, features FC2 authors whose imaginative work vividly engages the emotional, conceptual and visceral excitements and incitements of inhabiting the human body. The featured novelists are: Samuel R. Delany, Noy Holland, Michael Martone, Lance Olsen and Alan Singer. The reading will be followed with a brief question and answer session.

Sponsored by the Mütter Museum of The College of Physicians of Philadelphia.

Wednesday, October 10, 2012 | 6:30PM at College of Physicians of Philadelphia, 19 South Twenty-Second Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103, (215) 563-3737 x304

http://www.collphyphil.org/prog_calendar.htm

Anatomical Cartography: Mapping the Internal Landscape of the Human Body

Like maps used by famous explorers, Anatomical Atlases have helped physicians find their way around the human body. Drawing on sources that include cadaveric dissection, post mortem pathology, and modern imaging modalities, Susan Standing, current editor of Gray's Anatomy, will take us on an exploration detailing the evolution of these special collections of maps. Using examples including similarities between maps of the London Underground and neuronal connectivity, the lecture will explore how Anatomical Atlases have evolved next to their more familiar cousin, the land map.

Speaker: Speaker: Susan Standing, PhD, DSc, Head, Division of Anatomy, Cell and Human Biology, King's College London, and current editor of Gray's Anatomy

Wednesday, October 10, 2012 at 7:00 PM at Frankford Hall on Frankford Avenue just north of Girard Avenue.

Philadelphia Nerd Nite

For more information see the website at

<http://philadelphia.nerdnite.com/updates/>

Admission is \$5.00, all are welcome. Great food and beer is available in addition to the company of fellow Nerds.

Be there and be square!



Thursday, October 11, 2012 - 7:00PM-8:00PM at The Franklin Institute Science Museum, located in Center City Philadelphia, at the intersection of 20th Street and the Benjamin Franklin Parkway.

<http://www.fi.edu>

Theology of the Dead Sea Scrolls

The Dead Sea Scrolls have been described as the greatest archeological discovery of the 20th Century. Join a discussion of how the scrolls have changed our understanding of ancient Judaism and the Bible, and the significance of the scrolls to the Jewish and Christian faiths. Dr. Schiffman, of Yeshiva University, who worked on the full publication of the scrolls, and Dr. Collins, of Yale Divinity School, who specializes in Second Temple Judaism, will lead the talk.

Speaker: Dr. Lawrence Schiffman, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education and Professor of Judaic Studies at Yeshiva University

Speaker: Dr. John Collins, Holmes Professor of Old Testament, Yale Divinity School

Ticket Price: \$5.00 per person. Call 215.448.1200 for tickets

Friday, October 12, 2012. Eighth Annual Gravediggers Ball: To benefit the Friends of Laurel Hill Cemetery Historic Preservation Efforts The Friends of the Laurel Hill Cemetery will again 'resurrect' the Gravediggers' Ball on Friday, October 12, 2012.

This black-tie or costumed event will be held at the Crystal Tea Room at Wanamaker's and will include cocktails, dinner, dancing and musical entertainment by a dynamic 11-piece dance band. All proceeds go towards the continued restoration and preservation of historic Laurel Hill Cemetery (burial site of General Meade and many Civil War veterans!).

Cost: \$175 donation per person, At Meade Society Table: \$150 per person!

For info call 215.228.8200, or visit theundergroundmuseum.org

Saturday, October 13, 2012 at 1:00pm at Laurel Hill Cemetery, 3822 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia, PA19132. 215-228-8200

<http://www.thelaurehillcemetery.org>

Protecting the High Seas: The Naval Personnel of Laurel Hill

From the early days of the Revolutionary War, to the front lines of the War against Terror, the members of the United States Navy have always been on call to protect and serve on the high seas, both close to our shores and far from them. Learn about the lives of some of these honored veterans of the past who dedicated their service to our country.

To mark the anniversary of the founding of the Navy, exactly 237 years to the day of October 13, 1775, all active and retired Naval personnel receive FREE admission with ID.

\$12/person; \$10/seniors + students; \$9/members

Tickets can be purchased at the door, or in advance online, or by calling

215.228.8200.

Saturday, October 13, 2012 at 6:00pm at Laurel Hill Cemetery, 3822 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia, PA19132. 215-228-8200

<http://www.thelaurehillcemetery.org>

Ghosts Among Our Graves:

Paranormal Investigation of Laurel Hill Cemetery

Is there anything on the other side? Professional ghost hunters, Free Spirit Paranormal Investigators, have conducted numerous investigations of historic Laurel Hill Cemetery in search of the site's haunted history. Join FSPI for this unique workshop, as they reveal the findings of their investigations, and discuss some of the basics in the field of ghost hunting, including types of hauntings; equipment and debunking; EMFs (electromagnetic fields); EVPs (electronic voice phenomena); space weather; and psychic protection. Participants will then have the opportunity to experiment firsthand with ghost hunting equipment, while joining FSPI team leaders on group investigations of some of the cemetery's most reportedly active sections. For more information about Free Spirit Paranormal Investigators, visit www.freespiritpi.com.

\$30/person; \$25/seniors, students; \$22/members

Advance registration is requested. Tickets can be purchased at the door, or in advance online, or by calling 215.228.8200.

MCHUMOR.com by T. McCracken



Cartoon by T. McCracken

<http://www.mchumor.com/>

Used by Permission

Sunday, October 14, 2012 at 1:00-3:00pm at Laurel Hill Cemetery, 3822 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia, PA19132. 215-228-8200

<http://www.thelaurehillcemetery.org>

Fall Family Day

Spend an autumn afternoon exploring the many wonders and mysteries of Laurel Hill Cemetery while celebrating Halloween! Fall Fun for the Family at Laurel Hill will thrill and chill both the young and old! The cemetery's primary location overlooking the Schuylkill River will offer visitors majestic views of the colorful fall foliage and vibrant landscape along Kelly Drive. Activities will include pumpkin painting, apple bobbing, scavenger hunts, arts and crafts, and Halloween games. Feast on an assortment of hotdogs, cookies, popcorn, hot apple cider and other spooky treats. Attendees are advised to wear comfortable clothes and shoes, and children are encouraged to show off their Halloween costumes!

This program is recommended for families with children ages 4-12. Activities will commence promptly at 1:00pm, and will conclude at 3:00pm. Please arrive on time.

\$5/general admission

Tickets can be purchased at the door, or in advance online, or by calling 215.228.8200.

Monday, October 15, 2012 | 6:30PM at College of Physicians of Philadelphia, 19 South Twenty-Second Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103, (215) 563-3737 x304

http://www.collphyphil.org/prog_calendar.htm

Authentic Voices in the Exam Room: The Use of Poetic Imagery in Medicine

The storytelling that occurs in the exam room setting often holds the kernel that invites healing. In this presentation, we explore, through the poetry and art of physician and patient, the shadows and muses that are present in clinical encounters, that emerge from conversation, dreamtending, and laying-on of hands. We visit the power of poetry to speak to the many ways that the human body and psyche reflect the distinctive features of the particular geo-sociopolitical environment they find themselves in (lack of health care, illness, grief, war, birth, joy).

Speaker: Gabriella Miotto, MD, MPH

Sponsored by the College's Section on Medicine & the Arts.

Tuesday, October 16, 2012 at 6:00pm at Laurel Hill Cemetery, 3822 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia, PA19132. 215-228-8200

<http://www.thelaurehillcemetery.org>

Specters of the Silent City after Sunset: Stories for the Spirited Soul

Laurel Hill seems to acquire an unexplained aura of magic and mystery after the sun goes down... Its enchantment heightens more so in the long, dark and chilly nights of Autumn. Learn more about the surreal and eerie stories that echo within the occupied tombs and empty shadows of Laurel Hill Cemetery. This walking tour will be led by artist, teacher and tour guide, Terri Greenberg. It will conclude with wine, beer and refreshments, and is not recommended for ages under 21 years. Bring your own flashlights.

\$20/person general admission

Advance registration is requested. Tickets can be purchased at the door, or in advance online, or by calling 215.228.8200.

Wednesday, October 17, 2012 | 12:00n – 1:00PM at College of Physicians of Philadelphia, 19 South Twenty-Second Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103, (215) 563-3737 x304

http://www.collphyphil.org/prog_calendar.htm

Food & Thought: "Just Add Water: A Guide to Water-Drinking Myths"

The Internet is filled with commentary on requirements for water drinking, hydration, fluid intake and all such matters. In this talk, we will review how water is handled by the body and discuss four specific claims for incremental water intake:

1. It clears the body of toxins;
2. It leads to weight loss by suppressing appetite;
3. It enhances the appearance of facial skin;
4. It ameliorates headaches.

Speaker: Stanley Goldfarb, MD, FCPP, nephrologist and Professor of Medicine and Associate Dean for Curriculum, the Perelman School of Medicine, the University of Pennsylvania, President of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia

Thursday October 18, 2012 / 6:00 PM-8:30 PM at The Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University, 1900 Benjamin Franklin Parkway, Philadelphia, PA 19103

<http://www.ansp.org>

Is Sustainable Agriculture Bad for the Planet?

Come to this Urban Sustainability Forum for a panel discussion examining commonly asked questions about sustainable agriculture.

Friday, October 19, 2012 at 7:00pm at Laurel Hill Cemetery, 3822 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia, PA19132. 215-228-8200

<http://www.thelaurehillcemetery.org>

8th Annual Gravediggers' Ball

The Friends of Laurel Hill Cemetery's 8th annual fundraiser is certain to be another enchanting evening of dinner, dancing, entertainment and lasting memories. This year, we will be returning to the historic and hallowed halls of the Union League of Philadelphia. For additional details, including sponsorship opportunities, advertising options and tickets, visit our Event page.

Sunday, October 21, 2012 at 2:00 PM at the Tredyffrin-Easttown Historical Society at the Easttown Library, Berwyn, PA. Historian Clarissa Dillon, PhD will challenge your imagination in a talk entitled: **How the**

PhACT Event

Saturday, October 20, 2012

The Pseudoscience Wars: Immanuel Velikovsky and the Birth of the Modern Fringe.

Princeton University Professor Michael Gordin will be our speaker.

Civil War Influenced the American Revolution (yes, that's the title!). A different approach to traditional history.

Sunday, October 21, 2012 at 1:00pm at Laurel Hill Cemetery, 3822 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia, PA19132. 215-228-8200

<http://www.thelaurehillcemetery.org>

Sinners, Scandals and Suicides

Laurel Hill has its brave military heroes like George Gordon Meade, its uplifting reformers like Sarah Josepha Hale, and selfless philanthropists like Robert Carson. But what about the less than pure spirits?... The South Philly gangster who got whacked when he tried to infiltrate the Schuylkill County numbers racket? The Civil War hero who made his fortune from white lightning and who, because of his many illicit affairs, was referred to by the local press as "a slayer of innocence and a robber of chastity"? The chemical heiress who lost her money in an infamous Broadway bomb starring the producer's talentless girlfriend? The noted artist who committed suicide during the Depression when his priceless book and art collections were sold at auction for a few thousand dollars? The final resting places of these troubled souls will be among the many stops on our walking tour of Laurel Hill's scandalous, sinful and sordid side. This walking tour will be led by Tom Keels (www.thomaskiels.com), noted author of such books as Philadelphia Graveyards and Cemeteries, Forgotten Philadelphia: Lost Architecture of the Quaker City, and Wicked Philadelphia. It will conclude with cookies and refreshments.

\$12/person; \$10/seniors + students; \$9/members

Tickets can be purchased at the door, or in advance online, or by calling 215.228.8200.

Tuesday, October 23, 2012 at 6:00pm at Laurel Hill Cemetery, 3822 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia, PA19132. 215-228-8200

<http://www.thelaurehillcemetery.org>

Edgar Allan Poe: Deep into that Darkness Peering

From 1838-1844, Edgar Allan Poe found his home in Philadelphia. During those six years, he produced some of his best-known and most haunting works, including "The Tell-Tale Heart," "The Pit and the Pendulum," "The Fall of the House of Usher," and "The Masque of the Red Death." While no written proof of such has yet been uncovered, some have speculated that some of Poe's tales may



have been inspired amidst the graves and gardens of Laurel Hill Cemetery. Newly opened when Poe took up residence in the city, the famed necropolis could draw more than 40,000 visitors in one season alone... Surely, Poe could well have been among those curious souls. This after-hours tour of Laurel Hill will focus on what history has revealed to us of Poe's time in Philadelphia – on the literature he produced, and the friends, associates and enemies whom traveled within his circles, many of whom now lie at Laurel Hill. With October marking the month of Poe's passing and Halloween on the horizon, this is a fitting time to summon the stories of the Master of the Macabre. This walking tour will be co-presented by board president and board member of the Friends of Laurel Hill Cemetery, respectively, Carol Yaster and Dr. Dave Horwitz. It will conclude with wine, beer and refreshments, and is not recommended for ages under 21 years. Bring your own flashlights.

\$20/person general admission

Advance registration is requested. Tickets can be purchased at the door, or in advance online, or by calling 215.228.8200.

Tuesday, October 23, 2012 | 11:00AM – 1:00PM at College of Physicians of Philadelphia, 19 South Twenty-Second Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103, (215) 563-3737 x304

http://www.collphyphil.org/prog_calendar.htm

The State of Public Health in Philadelphia

The Deputy Mayor for Health and Opportunity and Health Commissioner, Donald F. Schwarz, MD, MPH, FCPP, will discuss the current status of public health in Philadelphia and highlight his objectives for the coming year.

Speaker: Donald F. Schwarz, MD, MPH, FCPP, Health Commissioner and Deputy Mayor for Health and Opportunity

Sponsored by the College and its Section on Public Health and Preventive Medicine.

Friday, October 26, 2012 at 10:00am at Laurel Hill Cemetery, 3822 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia, PA19132. 215-228-8200

<http://www.thelaurehillcemetery.org>

Laurel Hill: The Hot Spots and Storied Plots

Join us for this informative overview of Laurel Hill's long and colorful history, which will include many of the marble masterpieces, stunning views and legendary stories that afford the cemetery its WOW factor. This is the ultimate tour for first-time visitors to Laurel Hill, and anyone else who likes beautiful art, stimulating history, and just enjoying life...even amongst the dead. This walking tour will be led by Friends of Laurel Hill Cemetery board president, Carol Yaster. NEW Hot Spots and Storied Plots will be presented monthly as part of Laurel Hill Cemetery's Fourth Friday tour series, which take place on the fourth Friday of every month at 10:00am.

\$8/general admission; \$5/members

Tickets can be purchased at the door, or in advance online, or by calling 215.228.8200.

Friday, October 26, 2012 Reception 5:30 p.m. Presentation 6:00 p.m. at the American Philosophical Society, Benjamin Franklin Hall, 427 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia. <http://www.amphilsoc.org>

1812: The Navy's War

George Daughan holds a Ph.D. in American History and Government from Harvard University and is a recipient of the 2008 Samuel Eliot Morison Award for his previous book, *If By Sea: The Forging of the American Navy—From the Revolution to the War of 1812*. At the outbreak of the War of 1812, America's prospects looked dismal. It was clear that the ocean would be the war's primary battlefield—but America's war fleet, only twenty ships strong, faced a practiced British navy of more than a thousand men-of-war. Still, through a combination of nautical deftness and sheer bravado, the American navy

managed to take the fight to the British, turning the tide of the war: on the Great Lakes, in the Atlantic, and even in the eastern Pacific.

In 1812: The Navy's War, prizewinning historian George Daughan tells the thrilling story of how a handful of heroic captains and their stalwart crews overcame spectacular odds to lead the country to victory against the world's greatest imperial power. A stunning contribution to military and national history, 1812: The Navy's War is the first complete account in more than a century of how the U.S. Navy rescued the fledgling nation and secured America's future.

Free but please RSVP at <http://www.amphilsoc.org/node/3788>

Tuesday, October 30, 6:00-8:30pm at Laurel Hill Cemetery, 3822 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia, PA19132. 215-228-8200

<http://www.thelaurehillcemetery.org>

Halloween Flashlight Tours at Laurel Hill Cemetery

Laurel Hill Cemetery's annual Halloween tours have become a mainstay of the season, but always have something new to offer. Guides will lead you along winding, dimly-lit pathways and through forests of gravestones and sculptures, as you learn about the history of this enchanting site. Along the way, you'll meet some of Laurel Hill's most restless spirits, as portrayed by talented local actors, the Not Ready for Afterlife Players, under the direction of theater veteran, Larry Arrigale. After your tour, feast aside fire pits on cookies, hot apple cider and other spooky treats. Halloweeners will have a chance to memorialize their visit to Laurel Hill within our "Phantom Photo Booth." These tours are not recommended for children ages 12 and under. Bring your own flashlights.

Multiple tours will depart each night, so tour-takers can arrive at any time during the 2.5 hour nightly schedule.

\$20/person general admission

Advance registration is requested for groups of 10 or more. Tickets can be purchased at the door, or in advance online, or by calling 215.228.8200. In the case of inclement weather or predicted rain, all tickets will be transferable between nights.

Saturday, October 27, 2012 at 9:30 AM to 2:30 PM at the 1696 Thomas Massey House, Broomall, PA. Hands-on Workshop: A Fall Meal. A meal will be prepared in the 18th century manner with seasonal foods.

For more information and to register, call (610) 642-4269

Cost: \$35.00 per person; registration limited

Tuesday, October 30, 2012 | 6:30PM at College of Physicians of Philadelphia, 19 South Twenty-Second Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103, (215) 563-3737 x304

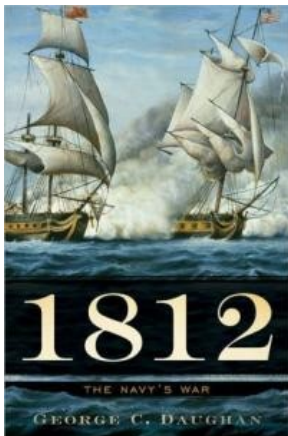
http://www.collphyphil.org/prog_calendar.htm

The Annual Robert L. Sadoff, MD, FCPP Lecture: "The Goodness of the Physician: Hippocrates to High Tech"

Since the time of the ancient Hippocratic authors, the physician's personal goodness and morality have been thought to play a significant role in healing. This concept faded in the 18th and 19th century as scientifically-based methods entered increasingly into diagnostic and therapeutic use. It gradually returned in the late 19th and early 20th century, only to be engulfed by the advent of biotechnology in the 1960s. Objectified medicine-at-a-distance has increasingly become the standard of care. The speaker plans to trace the history of the 2500 year notion of the physician's goodness as it has evolved into its present troubled and neglected state. He suggests new approaches to mitigating the associated loss of the personal bond between doctor and patient.

Speaker: Sherwin B. Nuland, MD, Clinical Professor of Surgery (retired) at Yale University

Sponsored by the College and its Section on Medicine, Ethics, and the Law.



I support the aims of PhACT and would like to join/rejoin for the next year. The annual membership is \$15 and \$10 for students which includes e-mail delivery of Phactum.

If you wish **US Mail delivery annual membership is \$25.** Checks should be payable to **PhACT.**

Membership dues of \$ _____ enclosed to pay for _____ years of membership.

Donation of \$ _____ enclosed for additional support

Donation of \$ _____ dedicated for High School Science Fair prizes

Mail checks to:
PhACT
653 Garden Road
Glenside, PA 19038

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ E_mail _____

The Philadelphia Association for Critical Thinking is grateful for the hospitality extended by Community College of Philadelphia and especially Dr. David Cattell, Chair of the Physics Department, for hosting PhACT and giving us access to such excellent facilities. Part of CCP's mission is to serve Philadelphia as a premiere learning institution and PhACT is pleased to support this goal by having talks on wide ranging, engaging, and educational topics.

PhACT's High School Science Fair Student Prize Funds

Prizes awarded in 2010	= \$ 300.00
Prizes awarded in 2011	= \$ 500.00
Prizes awarded in 2012	= \$ 150.00
Total 2013 Prize Fund	= \$ 163.00

Please donate. Small contributions are preferred and donations in excess of the 2013 goal will be applied to the 2014 Prize Fund or some other youth science education project not yet determined.

ALL money collected for this project will be used for student prizes. PhACT members and others are invited to participate as judges. Contact Eric Krieg for more information: erickrieg@verizon.net

Phactum is, in theory, distributed 6 times a year and is the main propaganda organ for the Philadelphia Association for Critical Thinking.

If you are not a supporting member/subscriber we invite you to become one. \$15 for a one year membership to PhACT with email Phactum subscription. \$25 for US Mail subscription. \$10 for students, email only. Donations are welcome.

Send letters of rebuttal, ideas, short essays, poetry, opinion pieces, complaints, and lavish praise to Ray Haupt, Phactum editor, at phactpublicity@aol.com.

Policy For Article Use

Except where otherwise noted all materials originating in Phactum may be reprinted by groups recognized in CSI's international network of skeptics organizations as published in *Skeptical Inquirer*. The author and Philadelphia Association for Critical Thinking must be credited. All other publications must obtain permission from PhACT before using any item.

Permission to use articles and illustrations originating from other sources must be granted by the original publisher.

Phactum Editor, Ray Haupt
phactpublicity@aol.com

The PhACT Council 2012/13

Eric Krieg, President	Bob Glickman, Secretary
Wes Powers, Webmaster	Susan Glickman, Treasurer
Mike Caro	Dr. David Cattell Ph.D.
Dr. David Cragin, PhD.	Ray Haupt
Dr. David Langdon, M.D.	Tom Napier
Becky Strickland	