

Fellowship of Reason®

July 2000 Newsletter

"Promoting Personal Excellence and Virtue"sm

Volume 2, Number 7

Mission Statement

The Fellowship of Reason® is an open, benevolent, and vital rational moral community in which we celebrate our lives, our freedoms, and our philosophy of reason.

E-Mail Introduction to FOR

[From time to time, people request information regarding the Fellowship of Reason®. This short essay introduces FOR to those people. What do you think? Have I described FOR accurately? Have I described FOR in an appealing manner? Would you add or subtract anything? Would you visit FOR based upon this introduction?]

Thank you for your interest in the Fellowship of Reason®.

The members of FOR believe that individuals achieve happiness through virtue. We, therefore, study and practice virtue, not because of some externally imposed duty or the promise of heaven, but because happiness in this life can be achieved only by acting virtuously.

According to our philosophy of reason, virtue does not involve the avoidance of sex and alcohol, which is a common understanding of "virtue" these days. On the contrary, the enjoyment of both in moderation can be virtuous. Virtue means discovering the pertinent facts in any particular life situation, applying reason to those facts and circumstances, and acting upon one's knowledge and conclusions.

That sounds easy, but very few people actually practice virtue.

Members of FOR focus upon self-improvement, not upon the improvement of others. Our goal is not to save the world, but *personal moral progress*.

Members of FOR heed this ancient advice—"know thyself" and "become who you are."

Members of FOR believe that by intentionally directing our attention to the good things in our lives, we can enjoy life more. We have a monthly activity that we call Celebration. Members choose from among ten activities to create our one-hour long activity, usually on the first Sunday of each month.

Welcome
Celebration of Freedom
Celebration of Visitors and Each Other

Celebratory Announcements
Celebration of Art
Celebration of Heroes
Celebration of Talent
Oratory on Ethics
Celebration of Talent
Spiritual Exercise
Closing Quotation

FOR has two methods of communication with its members—e-mail and snail mail. Content differs. Full membership communication requires both methods.

If you wish to receive local e-mail and snail mail, please send me your e-mail address and your U.S. mail address.

We communicate with non-members on the Internet via egroups.com. Non-members wishing to receive notice of web site updates use this method of communication. fellowship-of-reason-subscribe@egroups.com

Our web site address is <http://www.kindreason.com>.

Our monthly meeting is free of charge and open to the public.

The History of Ideas

"Aristotle and Politics"

The right to keep and bear arms.

Did you know that the relationship between an armed citizenry and political freedom was noticed by Aristotle (384-322 BCE)? "[W]hen cities increased in size and those possessed of heavy arms grow stronger, more people came to share in the polity. That is why what we now call polities [the best regime according to Aristotle] our predecessors used to call democracies."

The three branches of government.

Did you know that Aristotle defined the three branches of government—executive, legislative, and judicial? "All regimes have three parts.... One of the three is what deliberates..., a second is what concerns the offices..., and a third is what decides law suits."

I'll just bet that our Founding Fathers had Aristotle's Politics open when drafting the United States Constitution. What do you think?

So far this is the lineup for Sunday, August 6, 2000:

Celebration of Talent—Linda "Celebration"
Welcome
Celebration of Freedom—?
Celebration of Visitors
Celebratory Announcements
Celebration of Each Other
Ellen's Corner—Ellen
Celebration of Art—?
Celebration of Heroes—?
Celebration of Talent—?
Oratory—**Tom**—"Life Lessons from Baseball"
Celebration of Personal Mission—?
Spiritual Exercise—?
Closing Quotation

Celebration Schedule 2000

We have two more special Celebrations planned in 2000—one in September and one in November. These special Celebrations are intended to make our organization known to other specific groups who are likely to have values in common with us.

- Sunday, August 6—a regular Celebration. **Tom** will give the oratory entitled "Life Lessons from Baseball." We need all other performers.
- Sunday, September 3—a special Celebration. No other performers needed.
- Sunday, October 1—a regular Celebration. We need all performers.
- Sunday, November 5—a special Celebration. No other performers needed.
- Sunday, December 3—a regular Celebration. We need all performers.

Movie Night

On Saturday, August 12, 2000, at 7:30 p.m. Leanna will host FOR's Saturday night at the movies at her house. Remember it's potluck so bring something good to eat. Mark your calendars now. Details to follow by e-mail.

Non-Profit Corporation

I planned to incorporate the Fellowship of Reason® as a Georgia non-profit corporation this year. I like November 1 as a filing date since I obtained the web address on that day in 1996—four years ago.

I have several volunteers for the board of directors already. Perhaps you, too, would be interested in helping plan FOR's future. If so, let me know.

Contact information:

Martin L. Cowen III is the director of the Fellowship of Reason®.

Fellowship of Reason® is a non-profit, unincorporated, volunteer-supported association. The association uses the service mark with the express permission of the owner of the mark.

Fellowship of Reason® is a service mark registered in the United States Patent and Trademark Office, Reg. No. 2,191,966. Martin owns the mark.

Copyright 2000 Martin L. Cowen III.

Permission to photocopy this newsletter and to distribute it to others free of charge is granted.