
June 1982 "BASIS", newsletter of the Bay Area Skeptics

Bay Area Skeptics Information Sheet
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Editor: Bob Steiner

BAY AREA SKEPTICS FOUNDED

From the germ of an idea to realization took just slightly over one month. In today's red-tape-ridden world, that accomplishment borders on the fantastic.

Some of the skeptics in the Bay Area have kept in close contact with others of a similar persuasion. There had become an increasing awareness that we are building a cadre of people interested in critically examining claims of the paranormal.

If that last sentence sounds familiar, take heart. It is part of the Statement of Principles of The Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal (CSICOP).

Bay Area Skeptics has been approved as the first local chapter of CSICOP.

At a Mensa Gathering in Napa, California, in April, 1982, many of us were on the program. We had the opportunity to increase our acquaintance with other skeptics.

And then it burst forth: In a telephone conversation with Robert Sheaffer, the inspiration hit. Robert came up with the founding words: "LET'S FORM AN ORGANIZATION OF BAY AREA SKEPTICS!"

The idea met with instant acceptance with me, with the Executive Council of CSICOP, and with several skeptics in this area to whom we've spoken. And so we're on our way.

How does one thank Paul Kurtz, Phil Klass, and James Randi for the swift and considerable support given to this new idea and chapter, without risking slighting the other members of CSICOP's Executive Council who also, obviously, supported this effort? Thank you all for your backing -- we fully intend to justify your trust.

WHO WE ARE

We are you, if you are interested. Come on aboard!

The founding members are:
=> Lawrence Jerome, Fellow of CSICOP, science writer, engineer.

=> Wallace I. Sampson, M.D., Member of the Paranormal Health Claims Subcommittee of CSICOP, and outspoken critic of health fraud.

=> Terence J. Sandbek, Member of the Education Subcommittee of CSICOP, Clinical Psychologist, Professor of Psychology - American River College.

=> Robert Sheaffer, Fellow of CSICOP, science writer, designer of micro-processor software, and an alert idea man.

=> Robert A. Steiner, Consultant to CSICOP, Member of the Education Subcommittee, CPA, magician, writer, lecturer.

WHERE WE ARE

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POSITIONS OPEN

Subscribers. A minimum contribution of \$5.00 will keep you on our mailing list for a year. This will keep you informed of our activities, challenges, and other things as they come up.

Friends.

Supporters.

Contributors.

Editor. If interested in this, please contact Robert Sheaffer or Bob Steiner.

Publisher. Someone with copying equipment and computer mailing list capabilities would be much appreciated.

Skeptics. You're not alone! Come on out.

Scientific and Technical Consultants. If you have skills in investigation of mystics and/or have considerable critical judgement, and are interested in working on the firing line, please contact Robert Sheaffer.

Writers. If you have something to contribute to this newsletter, please send your copy to Bob Steiner. If you have a lot to contribute, and/or if you are well organized in writing, consider taking on the job as editor.

Media persons interested in our ideas, progress, challenges. Please contact any of us.

Other interested parties. In order to be complete, every list must have one category called "other".

H.A.N.D.

ARE YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TAX-DEDUCTIBLE?

We think so.

Those who wait for every detail to be absolutely resolved and nailed down before beginning rarely launch new projects.

Our present TENTATIVE opinion is that, as a local chapter of CSICOP, we are covered under the umbrella of their tax exempt status.

By the time of the next issue of "BASIS", we hope to have a formal answer to this important question. Stay tuned.

A FOUNDING PARTY!

Have you grown weary of having a new acquaintance at a party inquire about your sign, rather than being interested in what you think?

Happily, there are many skeptics in the Bay Area. Come on out so that we can meet one another.

Saturday, June 26, 1982, 7:30 P.M. will be the founding party of the Bay Area Skeptics, at the home of Bob Steiner.

There will be snacks, conversation (REAL conversation), magic, planning, challenges, intellectual stimulation, and more.

One can just look around the Bay Area and realize that we seem to have more than our share of mystics. Come hither and see that there are a goodly number of real skeptics who dwell hereabouts: some are silent skeptics, and others are not so silent about it.

This party is the launch pad for the future ventures of Bay Area Skeptics. COME ON OUT!

Bring a spouse or date. And please feel free to invite other sincere skeptics.

BYOB. Smoking will be outside on the patio.

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Directions: Heading North or South on Routes 80 or 17, exit at Central Avenue, El Cerrito, heading towards the mountains. Somewhere between .3 and .7 miles (depending which route you come off of), you will arrive at Carlson Blvd., go one block, turn right onto Avila Ave. Park immediately. You are here.

We look forward to greeting you. Please remember: There will be only one Founding Party for the Bay Area Skeptics.

TIME FOR A COMMERCIAL

A \$5.00 contribution will keep you on our mailing list for a year. Contributions in any amount will be welcome.

Please make checks payable to Bay Area Skeptics, and mail to:

Bay Area Skeptics
Box 659
El Cerrito, CA 94530

IS THERE A NEED?

There are those in the Bay Area who "earn" their daily bread from the pain, suffering, guilt, fear, and hate of others.

Rev. B. Woods Mattingley, Founder-Director of The Seeker's Quest, entitled the lead article in his current newsletter: "Why Do We Suffer Pain?"

His answer: "Most serious illness can be attributed to one of several reasons: karmic, in which current life pain results from

the excesses or 'sins' of a past life.... Physical pain is also a telling statement that the person has some past-life reason which is creating his present-life pain."

Those who are unfortunate enough to suffer pain do not need guilt piled on top of it!

Opinions expressed in "BASIS" are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of BAS, its board or its advisors.

The above are selected articles from the June, 1982 (premier) issue of "BASIS", the monthly publication of Bay Area Skeptics. You can obtain a free sample copy by sending your name and address to BAY AREA SKEPTICS, 4030 Moraga, San Francisco, CA 94122-3928 or by leaving a message on "The Skeptic's Board" BBS (415-648-8944) or on the 415-LA-TRUTH (voice) hotline.

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