



The Idaho Humanist

The Humanists of Idaho is a chapter of the American Humanist Association and the Council for Secular Humanism. We are a nonprofit corporation organized to promote ethical, democratic, and naturalistic Humanism in the state of Idaho through public awareness, education and community involvement.

December 2007

<http://Idaho.humanists.net>

Idaho@humanists.net

President's Message

Charitable Giving – 'Tis the Season

Humanism is a rational philosophy informed by science, inspired by art, and motivated by compassion. It affirms the dignity of each human being and supports individual liberty consonant with social and planetary responsibility. Humanism advocates participatory democracy, the open society, human rights, and social justice. Free of supernaturalism, it recognizes human beings as part of nature and holds that all values—be they religious, ethical, social, or political—have their source in human nature, experience, and culture. Humanism thus derives the goals of life from human need and interest rather than from theological and ideological abstractions, and asserts that humanity must take responsibility for its own destiny.
—*The Humanist*,
Official publication of the
American Humanist
Association

The end of the year, with its holiday seasons, also always seems to be the time we hear most about charitable giving. We can put some of our humanistic values into action by helping those who are less fortunate.

On October 21, Jan Rowe, Doug Van Curen, several other members of their family, and Paul Rolig walked in the Ada County **CROP WALK**. This was the third year in a row for members of Humanists of Idaho to participate in this event. HOI raised in excess of \$500 for anti-hunger programs locally and around the world.

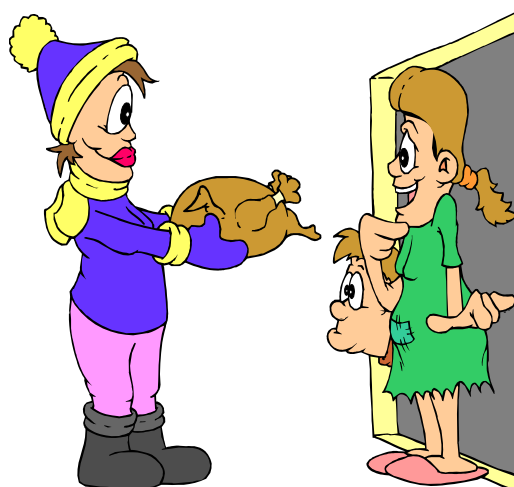
Elsewhere in this newsletter are details of our holiday project this year. Donations of various goods for Boise's newly opened **Interfaith Sanctuary Homeless Shelter** will be collected at our Solstice Party. Why should humanists support Interfaith Sanctuary? Because it is the only homeless shelter around that is secular in nature. Other shelters make demands that clients worship with them and be subject to proselytizing. Interfaith Sanctuary makes no demands that clients believe this way or that way on the subject of religion. Its driving founders happen to be leaders in various faith groups who are more interested in the humanistic value of caring for the poor than they are in "spreading the word."

On the national and international fronts, both of HOI's national affiliates have charitable arms that distribute aid for disaster relief. Donations can be made for Southern California wild fire relief, South Asia monsoon relief, or other projects.

American Humanist Association operates **Humanist Charities** at 1777 T St NW, Washington, DC 20009. Make credit card donations by phone at 800-837-3792 or on the web at www.humanistcharities.org

Council for Secular Humanism operates **Secular Humanist Aid and Relief Efforts**. Donate to "S.H.A.R.E." c/o Council for Secular Humanism, PO Box 664, Amherst, NY 14226-0664.

Please help make our world a better place, and donate to your choice of worthwhile causes. Then come celebrate the Winter Solstice, HumanLight (www.humanlight.org), and Newton Day at our house on Friday, Dec. 21! See details elsewhere in this newsletter.



Humanists of Idaho Monthly Meetings

We have instituted a new format for our monthly meetings. From 6:30 PM to 7:30 PM we are now the Humanist Supper Club. We invite everyone to arrive whenever they can at the Flicks, try some of their delicious food for dinner and join the group upstairs for informal discussion and socializing. At 7:30 we will start our program.

4th Monday of the month
The Flicks in Boise
646 Fulton, at 6th and Myrtle
6:30 PM Humanist Supper Club
7:30 PM Program

HOI Meeting - **Monday, November 26th**

6:30 PM Humanist Supper Club

7:30 PM Discussion of Holiday Celebrations and Seeking Community

Parenting Beyond Belief: Chapters Three and Nine

Parenting Beyond Belief is a book for loving and thoughtful parents who wish to raise their children without religion, but the issues are good for discussion no matter your parenting status. The book includes essays by Richard Dawkins, Julia Sweeney, Penn Jillette, Mark Twain, Dr. Jean Mercer, Dr. Donald B. Ardell, Rev. Dr. Kendyl Gibbons, and over twenty-five other doctors, educators, psychologists, and secular parents. You may find out more or order a copy at: <http://www.parentingbeyondbelief.com>.

Chapter Three includes the essays:

- "Humanist Ceremonies",
- "Losing the 'Holy' and Keeping the 'Day'"
- "To Easter Bunny or Not Easter Bunny"

Chapter Nine includes essays:

- "Building the Secular Community,"
- "Summer Camp Beyond Belief," and "Let's Get Organized."

BUUF Discussion Group - **Sunday, December 9th**

Second Sunday of the Month at 11 AM

Boise Unitarian Universalist Fellowship , 6200 Garrett, Garden City

3-4 grade room in the north wing

With the change of time we hope more will be able to attend the lively discussion we have in this group. Everyone is welcome whether you consider yourself a UU or not.

At the November meeting we discussed interaction with religious believers. In December we will be discussing worship and what renews us as humanists.

BUUF Senior Sages

2nd and 4th Thursdays of the Month, 9:30 am at the Kopper Kitchen (2661 Airport Way)

This group of Humanist/Freethinkers meets over a cheery, no-host breakfast and discusses a variety of topics. They would welcome new members to join the discussion. If you would like more information or to get on the email list and/or phone tree contact Tom von Alten at 378-1217 or tva@fortboise.org.

The Humanist Perspective on Channel 11

Tuesdays at 6:00 PM

"The Humanist Perspective" now airs each Tuesday from 6:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m., and then repeats at 8:00-8:30 Wednesday morning on Boise's local cable access television station, TVTV Channel 11 on CableOne. To check on programming schedules, see the website at www.tvpatv.org. The Council for Secular Humanism (CSH) produces a weekly half-hour television program exploring issues of interest from a humanist point of

Interfaith Sanctuary Is Now Open

The Interfaith Sanctuary opened for services on November 1, 2007. The hours of operation are from 6 pm - 7 am, seven days a week. We provide shelter and supportive services to men, women, established couples, and families. The shelter is located at 1620 W. River Street which is behind Corpus Christi House at 525 Americana Blvd. Access to the shelter is from Cooper Street, the first right (turning West) just south of the skate park/overpass on Americana Blvd.

Volunteers are needed to help at the shelter. If you would like to be part of a team from Humanists of Idaho to help one night, please contact Jeannette Ross (378-1217 or jjross@fortboise.org) or Rick Groff (336-4921 or rbgroff@cableone.net). A team of volunteers is seven people who cover duties at the shelter from 6:00 pm to 7:00 am.

Solstice Party Friday, December 21st.

Join us for a celebration of the season.

Where: Paul and Nancy Rolig's home

9877 W. Ripley St., Boise (see the map)

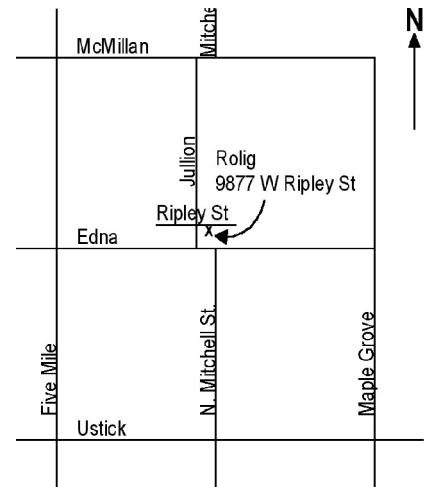
When: Anytime after 6:00 pm

What to Bring: Your favorite finger food to share

Your own Beer or Wine if like

Donation for Sanctuary

Our holiday charitable giving project this year is the Interfaith Sanctuary.



Interfaith Sanctuary Want List

Master Supply List

- Coffee (large cans)
- Tea (caffeinated and herbal)
- Instant Creamer
- Sugar
- Stir Sticks
- Hot Cups
- Instant Hot Chocolate (in packets)
- Honey
- Cup of Noodles (instant noodle soup in it's own bowl)
- Crackers
- Salt/Pepper, Tabasco Sauce, Soy Sauce
- Cookies
- Bread
- Peanut Butter
- Jelly
- Instant Oatmeal (in packets)
- Granola Bars
- Snacks – pretzels, corn chips
- Bananas

- Bowls (for oatmeal)
- Paper plates
- Napkins
- Paper Towels
- Plastic Utensils
- Laundry Detergent (needs to have 'HE' label)
- Dryer Sheets
- Air freshener (spray – not solids)
- Toilet Paper
- Liquid Cleaner (like Pine Sol or Simple Green)
- Spray disinfectant cleaner (for bathroom/kitchen surfaces)
- Sponges
- Trash Bags – large and small
- Hand Wipes (in containers)
- Tissues
- Feminine Hygiene products
- Foot powder
- Small sized deodorant

Other Needs: Updated 11/10/07

- Pillowcases
- Twin fitted and flat sheets
- Double/Full fitted & flat sheets
- Adult sized sweat pants/shirts
- Socks
- Large electric coffee pot
- Metal Shelves (for storing pantry and laundry items)
- 2 computers, monitors and software (Windows XP or Vista) in good condition
- Bike racks
- Tool Kit
- Folding Ladder
- Dolly
- Books, magazines



Atheist Iraq War Vet Still in Foxhole

COLUMN By DANIEL KUHN HumanistNetworkNews.org Nov. 14, 2007

In today's politically correct society, it's just fine to be different. Everyone has the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. No one should be looked at differently for their personal views. The freedom to personal expression is one of America's most unalienable rights.

As a Marine, I was on call twenty-four hours a day seven days a week for four years to protect those rights. In 2003, I was called upon to serve in Iraq and continue to protect the rights and freedoms of America's citizens.

Now that I have left military service, I have been called an atheist in a foxhole.

I was taught in Marines that we don't reside in foxholes. Foxes hide from confrontation, and Marines fight for what they believe in. Now I should be able to stand up for what I believe in no matter what the consequences, but then why do I feel that I must keep my opinions and beliefs to myself.

Everywhere I go I'm inundated with references to God, religion, and all other aspects of theology, yet I feel that I must go through my day hiding my true self for fear of what kind of looks or comments will be made. So, now why do I have to hide my true self in a supposed secular society. This country is based on the idea of freedom of religion. Yet, what if I don't have a religion, if I'm a humanist, a free thinker, a secularist, a Darwinist, or what ever name I choose to refer to myself and my beliefs?

Living in America is about freedom and the right to choose to believe in what I or anyone wants. So, why do I feel that I have to stay in the proverbial foxhole? I can't move my ideas mainstream for fear of being ostracized.

I look forward to when all people of all faiths or beliefs can live in harmony. Why is America, a supposed secular nation still so bent on being tied to religion? I know that I'm not alone and the atheist in a foxhole organization <http://www.maaf.info/> is beneficial to all service members, but really why should we need a special organization to provide support for our ideals? In a supposed secular society, all service members should be free to think what they wish.

I'm not saying there shouldn't be religion in the military, since everyone has their own personal beliefs. In fact, chaplains provide an invaluable service to military members, because they provide a person that all soldiers, airmen, Marines, or sailors can talk to without fear of reprisal. Why does a man like this need to be tied to religion?

I do, however, disagree with organized prayer in the military formations or other ceremonies. I should never have to bow my head to anything I don't believe. I know that I may sound proud and that some may think that it doesn't make a difference -- I should just go with the flow. However, if an individual in the military has different religious beliefs than another individual the military offers separate services for each of them. In fact all religions have their own services, yet, I'm expected to bow my head to something I don't believe in.

This double standard in today's society is why I still feel that I must keep my personal views to myself. One day I hope to be able to express beliefs, the same way a religious person can. Until that day I remain an atheist in a foxhole, waiting to move to my fighting position.

Daniel Kuhns is a senior at the University at Albany, majoring in sociology. As a U.S. Marine 1st Marine Division, 5th Marines in 2003, he was in the second vehicle to enter Iraq and the second vehicle to enter Baghdad as part of "Operation Iraqi Freedom".



Moments & Milestones

Weddings and other family celebrations Custom designed to suit the needs & preferences of the participants located in Boise, but serving most of Idaho

Services performed by D. G. Van Curen

A Celebrant, Ordained through the Humanist Celebrant Certification Committee

www.angelfire.com/id/vancuren/weddings.html

"How do I Tell Fundamentalist Mom I'm a Humanist?"

For HumanistNetworkNews.org Nov. 14, 2007

Dear Sweet Reason,

I'm a former fundamentalist Christian — a former missionary, actually. I'm now a delighted Universal Unitarian humanist and have found great joy in this new world view. But my mother is still a dedicated "fundi-christian," has no idea I'm not a Christian any more, and would weep if she found out -- not to mention call all my church family and tell them. Our conversations are getting odd and I debate on whether to tell her or not. Worry about her feelings and keep quiet or reveal my heart? Marie

Dear Marie,

If your conversations are already "getting odd," then you have already started down the road to telling your mother *something*, especially if you live near her -- how many times can you refuse to go to church with her on Sunday morning without an explanation?

But, you can choose what you will say to her, and when. First, you need to decide what you want for yourself and your mother. Many parents and adult children spend years just avoiding conflict--and sometimes, that really is the best they can do. But, if you and your mother have (or used to have) a close, loving relationship with few secrets from each other, then it probably will be painful for you to settle for less. And, while worrying about you would be painful for your mother, so would the feeling that a wall has grown up between you.

Whatever you decide, the first step is the same--simply tell your mother you are going to a different church now. Tell her that there are good people in your new "church family," and they make you feel welcome and supported.

If there is a question about your becoming a missionary again, tell her (in your own words, of course) that you learned from experience that missionary work is not for you. If you are comfortable saying it in language that is familiar to her, go ahead and say that you "are not called to be a missionary." That is the literal truth.

From then on, if you have chosen not to tell your mother more, you will find you just have to be evasive, usually by changing the subject. It may help to find some understanding people who can talk with you after your visits to your mom.

If you are trying to have a deeper relationship, consider inviting your mother to come with you to a *social* gathering with your Unitarian friends. Inviting her to a Sunday service puts too much emphasis on your theological differences; at a social gathering, at least your mother has a chance to see for herself that your new friends are kind and caring.

Keep in mind that for any parent, no matter how open-minded and supportive, there can be times when a child's decision to live differently feels like a *personal rejection*. When your mother is upset, if you can figure out whether she is feeling personally rejected, you can reassure her that you love her.

If the problem is that she is worried about the state of your "soul," you will just have to let that be her problem. It takes some judgment to decide how to handle the worry.

For example, with one person, it might work better to say, "I love you; please let's not fight;" with another, "I just can't talk about that;" and with another, "Isn't that between me and God?"

You haven't said why it bothers you that your mother would tell her "church family" about the new you. From your point of view, the emotional support they can give her will be a mixed blessing if they tend to emphasize that your leaving Christianity is something to be sad about. Still, she does need to talk with them. Since you can't control those conversations, just plan on reassuring her of your love, and try not to worry about it.

The other questions would be, "How will these people treat you?" And, "How should you react?" Unless this group is very extreme, different people will behave differently, and you can react accordingly. You do not have to put up with unkind, accusing, or abusive behavior! If someone expresses genuine, kindly concern about your mother's feelings, you can tell them you're glad she has their support, and move the conversation to another topic.

On the other hand, if someone accuses you of being cruel to your mother, tell them once that they are talking about something that is between you and your mother. It is OK to avoid people who are unkind, or more interested in proselytizing you than in maintaining a friendship.

I really do believe that the strength and capacity for joy that have already helped you to change will help you to cope with these new challenges, and to continue growing.

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To request advice from Sweet Reason, use the anonymous web form at http://humaniststudies.org/ask_sweetreason.html

OR send postal mail to: Institute for Humanist Studies, 48 Howard St., Albany, NY 12207, ATTN: Sweet Reason

UN Report Highlights Rights of Atheists and the Non-religious

By MATT CHERRY HumanistNetworkNews.org Nov. 7, 2007

The 2007 annual report by the United Nations Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Religion or Belief highlights the rights and concerns of humanists and other nonreligious groups. For the first time, the report includes a whole section devoted to the situation of atheists and other non-theists. The report is written by Asma Jahangir, who was placed under house arrest, by the government of Pakistan earlier this week.

I believe that the five page section on the "Situation of persons with atheistic or non-theistic beliefs" will be an extremely valuable tool for current and future campaigners for the rights of the nonreligious. It provides an excellent summary of the relevant international laws and agreements that reference non-theists and the non-religious. It explicitly demonstrates that the guarantee to freedom of "religion or belief" includes "non-theistic and atheistic beliefs" equally with theistic beliefs. It also raises a raft of problems and concerns that I and other humanist representatives and freethought groups have raised at the UN and elsewhere in recent years. Humanist concerns addressed in the Special Rapporteur's report to the UN include:

- Atheists' taxes being used to finance religious organizations
- Blasphemy laws
- Obligations to participate in religious worship in schools
- Discriminatory employment practices by faith groups
- Religious exemptions in equality legislation
- Discrimination in faith-based services
- Official consultations with religious leaders that exclude non-religious representatives.

The report also weighs in on the issue of "defamation of religion" which is currently roiling the UN. Jahangir reiterates the view of humanists and many human rights groups that "criminalizing 'defamation of religions' can be counterproductive, since it may create an atmosphere of intolerance and fear and may even increase the chances of a backlash." She also notes that, "Accusations of 'defamation of religions' might stifle legitimate criticism or even research on practices and laws appearing to be in violation of human rights but that are, or are at least perceived to be, sanctioned by religion." When I last met with Jahangir, less than two weeks ago, I thanked her for her focus on people with non-theistic beliefs. She shot me a wry grin and said, "We will see what they do. A lot of people won't like it."

The entire 2007 Annual Report by the Special Rapporteur can be read on the UN website.

UN Advocate of Rights of Non-believers Arrested in Pakistan

By MATT CHERRY HumanistNetworkNews.org Nov. 7, 2007

Pakistan has arrested the United Nations Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Religion or Belief, Asma Jahangir. Jahangir was placed under house arrest late on Nov. 3, 2007, following President Musharraf's imposition of emergency rule and the suspension of the constitution. One of Pakistan's leading human rights lawyers, Jahangir is also the United Nations official responsible for monitoring freedom of conscience around the world.

Less than two weeks ago, on Oct. 25, as president of the Non Governmental Organizations (NGO) Committee on Freedom of Religion or Belief at the United Nations, I met with Jahangir at the UN in New York. At an NGO briefing I chaired, Jahangir spoke powerfully about the rights of the non-religious and the challenges to freedom of conscience around the world. Now, Jahangir seems to have been targeted precisely because of her vocal commitment to human rights and the rule of law. A long-time human rights lawyer, Jahangir is president of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP). On Nov. 4, 2007, the police raided the Lahore offices of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan and arrested 55 of its members, according to reports from the HRCP. An arrest warrant was also issued against Jahangir's sister, Hina Jilani, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General for Human Rights Defenders.

Pakistan is a prominent member of the UN Human Rights Council and is therefore pledged to uphold the highest standards of promotion and protection of human rights. However, the arrest of human rights defenders in Pakistan seems intended to accomplish the exact opposite: denying fundamental rights and silencing their strongest champions. Jahangir's assistant at the UN in Geneva, Michael Wiener, told me today that Jahangir is well and "admirably courageous" in the circumstances. She appreciates the outpouring of support from human rights defenders across the world, and appears undaunted by her arrest. On Monday, Nov. 5, she told *The Economist* magazine that she regretted that President Musharraf "had lost his marbles." I believe that everyone who cares about freedom of conscience and human rights should protest the arbitrary detention of Asma Jahangir..

Matt Cherry is the executive director of the Institute for Humanist Studies. He is the author of [Introduction to Humanism](#) at the Continuum of Humanist Education, the online school of the Institute for Humanist Studies.

HOI Membership

We have 40 full memberships and 3 newsletter subscribers.

To those of you who have received this newsletter complimentary, I hope you will decide to join our group. Please fill out the form below and send in the payment for the level of involvement you wish to the address below.

Nancy Rolig, Secretary, Newsletter Editor and Membership Administrator

<p style="text-align: center;">Humanists of Idaho Board</p> <p>President: Paul Rolig377-0535 or roligpd@spro.net Vice President: Van Van Curen:.....376-5475 or saw2thking@aol.com Secretary: Nancy Rolig..... 377-0535 or nrolig@spro.net Treasurer: Jan Rowe376-5475 or janiejolee1@aol.com</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Auxiliary Positions</p> <p>Webmaster/Yahoo Group Administrator:..... Van Van Curen 376-5475 OR saw2thking@aol.com Newsletter Editor/membership Administrator:.....Nancy Rolig 377-0535 or nrolig@spro.net 9877 W. Ripley St. Boise 83704 Charitable Giving Coordinator:Jan Rowe 376-5475 603 or janiejolee1@aol.com Publicity Chair:.....Van Van Curen: 376-5475 or saw2thking@aol.com Permanent Building Fund:Paul Rolig roligpd@spro.net 9877 W. Ripley St., Boise 83704</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Organization Information</p> <p>Your support of this local chapter with your membership, donations and ideas is greatly appreciated.</p> <p>Mailing Address: Humanists of Idaho P.O. Box 44913 Boise, ID 83711-0913</p> <p>Website: http://Idaho.humanists.net Yahoo Group: idaho-humanists@yahoogroups.com Email Address: Idaho@humanists.net</p>
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Humanists of Idaho Membership and Donation Form

Name _____

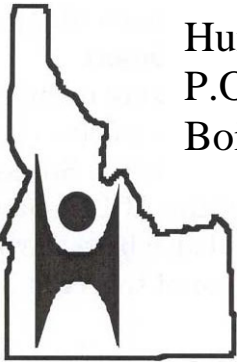
Mailing address _____

City, state, zip code _____

Phone and e-mail address _____

- \$25 **Individual** annual membership and Newsletter subscription
- \$45 **Couple** annual membership and Newsletter subscription
- \$15 Newsletter subscription only
- \$___ donation to help promote public awareness of Humanism
- \$___ Humanists of Idaho Permanent Building Fund Donation

Mail to:
Humanists of Idaho
P.O. Box 44913
Boise, ID 83711-0913



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Kopper Kitchen, 2661 Airport Way, Boise

Friday, December 21st – 6:00 PM – Solstice Party

The Roligs, 9877 W. Ripley St., Boise

NO HOI Meeting in December