



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.

April 2009

<http://HumanistsOfIdaho.org>

Idaho@humanists.net

President's Message – Humanist Outreach Activism

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

Part of the mission of HOI is to educate Idahoans about Humanism. This includes letting humanist-leaning folks (who may not even identify themselves using the humanist label) know that there is an organization for them, and it includes letting non-humanist folks know what humanism is and is not.

Our most ambitious project to date is our “Beware of Dogma” billboard up for March and April on Fairview in west Boise. This has generated some, but I would say surprisingly little, press coverage. I’m aware of two newspaper articles and one TV blurb. There are the predictable disapproving articles on a couple fundamentalist Christian websites, but even these attracted comments for only a few days.

We had several new folks show up at our last meeting, though only one was on account of the billboard. After another month’s worth of exposure, we can hope for more newcomers this month.

I expected a flurry of disapproving letters to the editor of the Idaho Statesman; I’ve seen only a couple, and it has been over a month since the story broke.

Perhaps this is good news, in that it may indicate non-theism is far more acceptable to Idahoans than most people believe. After all, the [American Religious Identification Survey of 2008](#) shows that 23% of Idahoans identify as “None, No religion, Humanistic, Ethical Culture, Agnostic, Atheist, Secular.” Another 6% refused to answer or said they did not know how they identified religiously. (In Idaho, Catholic =10%, Other Christian = 59%, Other Religion = 3%.)

Clearly, the evangelical, fundamentalist Christians who make such a big fuss in the media have skewed public perception. They gasp and let the word “atheist” roll off their tongues dripping with condemnation, yet the observable fact is that nearly one in four Idahoans is not religious.

This misperception extends to committed, avowed atheists, agnostics, and humanists ourselves. I personally know a number of people who do not want their lack of religion made public, for fear of losing their jobs or suffering some other form of harm at the hands of fundamentalists. Never mind that federal and state non-discrimination laws explicitly list religion as a reason NOT allowed for firing someone from a job.

The more we spread the word, the more this misperception can be laid to rest.

We are currently planning to have a booth in the Hyde Park Street Fair in Boise this coming September 18-20. This is a great opportunity to make ourselves more widely known. Van is spearheading our booth entry.

There are many more opportunities, if we can find more folks willing to devote some time and energy to promoting specific events. Some examples include the National Day of Reason (May 7, same date as National Day of Prayer), Summer Solstice Picnic, and others.

If you really love to spread the word on humanist ideas, you would be most welcome to work with HOI to write material for this newsletter or to post on our email list or website. Maybe even do press releases and interviews! Please contact Van or me if this interests you. We'd love to have the help.

Our opponents have a well-oiled media machine right here in Boise. They put out regular press releases and have well-cultivated contacts in the media. They get their message out very effectively. We may disagree with the content, but it does get delivered.

Imagine what we could do with an effective media presence. We would **NOT** just argue with Mr. Fischer. That puts us in a negative, reactive role, setting our sights way too low. We could and should chart a positive, proactive course to fulfill the mission of Humanists of Idaho:

- To educate Idahoans about Humanism,
- To encourage rational thinking,
- To demonstrate Humanist values and fellowship in our activities, and
- To provide a support system for freethinking Idahoans.

Billboard Beckons Atheists on Highway 95

March 24, 2009

"Don't believe in God? You are not alone." Starting this week, these words will be read by motorists traveling on Highway 95 near Moscow, Idaho. They are part of a highway billboard that features an image of blue sky and clouds with the words superimposed over. The billboard is placed by the American Humanist Association, a national advocacy organization, and is part of an ongoing campaign to raise the public profile of nontheism.

The striking message raises a question . . . and maybe some eyebrows. "The point of the billboard is to let nontheistic people--such as atheists, agnostics, humanists and freethinkers--know they're not alone," explained Roy Speckhardt, executive director of the American Humanist Association. "The message is particularly important in smaller towns like Moscow and Pullman, which tend to have a larger percentage of religious people than the big cities. Nontheists might not realize there's a community out there for them because they're inundated with religious messages on every corner. But now they'll have a message catered specifically to them."

The announcement of the billboard coincided with a press conference held by the American Humanist Association today at the 1912 Center in Moscow. Speckhardt said he was excited to talk to the local community about the billboard campaign and the American Humanist Association's mission.

Reaching out to nontheists isn't the only goal of the billboard campaign: "We want people to know you can be good without God," said Maggie Ardiente, director of development of the American Humanist Association. "There's a lot of misinformation out there about nontheists, so we want to educate people about our community and change those false perceptions. Humanists are patriots, we are dedicated to our families and friends and we want to live fulfilling, virtuous lives."

The billboard will run on Highway 95 between March 24 and June 14 of this year. It can be found just south of Moscow near the Sweet Avenue cross street, facing southbound traffic.

The billboard is one of many that have gone up around the country, including billboards outside of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and Charleston, South Carolina. In addition, during the past holiday season the American Humanist Association ran an ad campaign on metro buses in Washington, DC, which garnered both applause and controversy



Humanists of Idaho 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 for dinner and join the group for informal discussion and socializing. At 7:30 we will start our program.

April Meeting, Monday, April 27th

This month's program will be presented by Gene Barrett and Jim

Holden from **Idaho Health Care for All**. This organization is a voluntary association of concerned citizens committed to seeing that all residents of our state have access to high quality medical care through universal health insurance coverage. It is the Idaho chapter of the national organization Physicians for a National Health Program [PNHP].

"Access to affordable, high quality health care is in crisis in Idaho and the United States. The right to health is one of humankind's most basic rights. Yet every day access to affordable, high quality health care is denied to increasing numbers of Idaho residents," from the website: idahohealthcareforall.org.

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 Officer Nominations in April

It's that time of year again. May is the time we elect board members and special chairs. These are the people who keep our organization going. Right now there are only four of us holding all the positions. **We all would gladly hand over some of our responsibilities to anyone who would like to help out.**

The board of Humanists of Idaho consists of four officers: a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Our bylaws are online at <http://idaho.humanists.net/meetings.html>. The duties of the officers are as follows:

- The President is the spokesperson for the organization and leads the membership meetings and board meetings.
- The Vice President administers elections and assists the president as needed.
- The Secretary keeps the minutes of business meetings.
- The Treasurer checks the mailbox, writes and deposits checks, and gives financial reports for our operating funds account.

The following positions are non-board positions.

- Webmaster. Maintains and updates the web site and email account for the organization.
- Yahoo Group Administrator. Approves users who request to join the Idaho Humanists Yahoo group, and sends email communications to the Yahoo group.
- Newsletter Editor. Publishes and prints the newsletter
- Database Administrator. Maintains and updates the database of members and prospects used to generate mailing lists. Prints mailing labels for newsletter.
- Building Fund Treasurer. Takes up collection for and deposits checks into our Permanent Building Fund. This fund is a separate account from our operating account. By our rules, this person is not supposed to be a member of the board. 10% of membership dues must go into this fund. This ensures that deposits are made regularly and the fund remains active.
- Charitable Coordinator. Organizing participation in charitable activities such as answering phones for IPTV, sponsoring families for WCA, book drives for the local libraries, etc.
- Publicity Coordinator. Making sure meetings and other events are publicized and get listed in community calendars
- Program Chair – Leads the effort to identify programs for future meetings. The Program Chair does not do all the programs, and does not line up all the programs. The Program Chair finds volunteers to take responsibility for preparing one program, which may be as simple as picking a topic of discussion or inviting a speaker from a local group that humanists support, or just want to learn more about.

Nominations are open for all offices. If you would like to present yourself for nomination, please contact our Vice President Van Van Curen either by phone (376-5475), by email (CelebrantVan@aol.com), or at the meeting.

**Because Memorial Day falls on the 4th Monday of May, we will be having our
HOI May Meeting - Tuesday, May 26th at the Flicks!!!**

BUUF Discussion Group –Sunday, May 10th

Second Sunday of the Month at **11:00 AM**

Boise Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Library, 6200 Garrett, Garden City

Everyone is welcome whether you consider yourself a UU or not.

May's discussion will be on the book, "Thank God for Evolution: How the Marriage of Science and Religion Will Transform Your Life and Our World". by Michael Dowd who will be speaking at BUUF in September. The following is from the website: thankgodforevolution.com where you can find more information. The book is on sale at BUUF and Amazon.com

Boise State Secular Student Alliance

Thursday, April 23rd 7:00 PM

The BSSSA will be hosting a discussion about faith with some members of the various religious groups on campus. in the Jordan 'A' at Boise State Student Union. For details contact Lloyd Low at loweb1@gmail.com or go to BSSSA [boisestate@secularstudents.org]

Legislative Update

The good news from this year's Idaho legislature is that H216 (Pharmacy Refusal) and HCR11 (Faith Based Organizations) both are stalled in Senate committees. Both passed the House with flying colors, but were not met with as much enthusiasm in the Senate. H216 was referred to Senate Health and Welfare; HCR11 to Senate State Affairs. Neither committee chair plans hearings on these.

Humanism for Kids

At last month's meeting the Board approved the purchase of 50 copies of the booklet *Humanism for Kids* published by Family of Humanists in Salem, OR. This booklet is aimed at roughly the 4-to-8-year-old age range, and has been quite popular with our membership. The author contacted me by email with word that there is now a revised and expanded edition suitable for older children. I modified the order to get 25 copies of each. No delivery date is available yet.

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. The Council for Secular Humanism (CSH) produces a weekly half-hour television program exploring issues of interest from a humanist point of view.

Dissecting a Bible

A Critical Analysis of the Holy Scriptures
By D G Van Curen, Celebrant HSCCC

To purchase a copy directly from the
Author:

Paperback: \$9.95 ea Hardbound: \$17.95
ea.

Shipping: \$2.95 for 1st book + .50 for each
additional

Free shipping on orders over \$150

Send check or money order to:

D G Van Curen
1506 Rand St
Boise, ID 83709

Save the Planet, Get your Newsletter Electronically!

Receive your HOI newsletter by email. I already make a .pdf file of the newsletter each month. Email me, Nancy Rolig at nrolig@spro.net and I will add you to my recipient list. I will notify you of your membership expiring by email. I will continue to mail the newsletter to everyone I don't hear from.

HOI Membership

To those of you who have received this newsletter complimentary, complimentary subscriptions are for 6 months maximum. I hope you will decide to join our group. Membership in Humanists of Idaho entitles you to voting rights in the organization's elections and the privilege of holding an office. Membership dues go towards the group's charitable works projects, Humanist awareness, sponsoring the Humanist Perspective on TVTV and contributions to community organizations with humanistic interests.

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: Doug Van Curen:.....376-5475 or CelebrantVan@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 CelebrantVan@aol.com</p> <p>Newsletter Editor/membership Administrator:.....Nancy Rolig 377-0535 or nrolig@spro.net 9877 W. Ripley St. Boise 83704</p> <p>Charitable Giving Coordinator:OPEN</p> <p>Program Chairman:.....OPEN</p> <p>Permanent Building Fund:Paul Rolig 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://HumanistsOfIdaho.org</p> <p>Yahoo Group: idaho-humanists@yahoogroups.com</p> <p>Email Address: Idaho@humanists.net</p>
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Humanists of Idaho Membership and Donation Form

Name _____

Mailing address _____

City, state, zip code _____

E-mail address and phone _____

- \$25 **Individual** annual membership and Newsletter subscription
- \$45 **Family** annual membership and Newsletter subscription
- \$10 Newsletter subscription only (U.S. Mail or Electronic)
- \$___ donation to help promote public awareness of Humanism
- \$___ Humanists of Idaho Permanent Building Fund Donation
- I would like my newsletter sent electronically.

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

Newsletter/Membership Email:
nrolig@spro.net

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



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

Thursday, April 23rd - Boise State Secular Student Alliance Debate
7:00 PM at the Jordan A Ballroom at BSU Student Union

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**Monday, April 27<sup>th</sup> - HOI Meeting**  
**6:30 PM Humanist Supper Club, 7:30 PM Program**

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

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**Sunday, May 10<sup>th</sup> , 11:00 AM – BUUF Humanist Group**  
**Boise Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 6200 Garrett, Garden City,**

**Because Memorial Day falls on the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of May, we will be having our  
May Meeting - Tuesday, May 26<sup>th</sup> at the Flicks!!!**