

The Idaho Humanist

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

June 2001

<http://go.to/hoi>

humanist@email.com

(208) 429-1866

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 super-naturalism, 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

Solstice Party Anyone?

June 21, 2001, is the summer solstice. In past years we have gotten together to hold a potluck. We would like to do this again this year. So if you would be willing to host the solstice party at your home, please let us know at the June meeting. We can then send out notices to everyone in time to plan a wonderful kickoff to the summer season.

Supreme Court Declines

The U.S. Supreme Court declined to hear an appeal of an Indiana case dealing with a government-sponsored Ten Commandments monument displayed on public property. The decline means that a lower court ruling prohibiting government endorsement of the Commandments will stand, and that a monument erected in front of the city municipal building in Elkhart, Indiana in 1958, will not.

Three conservative justices issued a dissent. In response, Justice John Paul Stevens pointed out that the line, “I AM THE LORD THY GOD” was in larger type than the rest, making it “rather hard to square with the proposition that the monument expresses no particular religious preference.

Skeptical Inquirer on TV

Skeptical Inquirer magazine has a new segment on the Discovery Science Channel. The five-minute segments are hosted by William B. Davis, (formerly of the X-Files) and appear several times throughout the day. Segments addressing such topics as magnet therapy and acupuncture apply a healthy dose of science and skepticism, including interviews with scientists and live debunking demonstrations. For more information on Skeptical Inquirer magazine, visit www.csicop.org.

Inside This Issue

Looking Ahead to FY 2001.....	2
A Closet Door Opens.....	2
Faith-based Programs Ineffective.....	3
Upcoming Events.....	4

Looking Ahead to FY 2001 *by Chris Struble, HoI President*

Since this is the first newsletter since our officer elections, I thought I would take this opportunity to say a few words about our organization and where we are headed this year.

First, I want to thank you all for your support and encouragement this past year. With our daughter in her second year and another baby due this summer, it hasn't been easy. There are always more things that need to be done than time to do them. But for a chapter of our size we are accomplishing much. Here are a few things I hope we can accomplish together this year:

- * Complete our filing for federal tax-exempt status and apply for an outreach grant
- * Update and improve our web site and increase links to our site to attract more new members.
- * Continue community activities such as sponsoring a family, IPTV volunteer work, marching in the July 4th parade, etc.
- * Increase our editorial and letter-writing

Transplanted

by Patricia Midge, submitted by Nicolle Foster

*If I had not come to these high plains,
my heart would have missed
the beat of this love of place,
my guts would have yearned for
some unknown fulfillment,
my mind would have shrunk
to a small, civilized size,
and my soul would have tentacles,
searching, always reaching out
for what I found here.*

*But I am now like the tenacious sage
wide roots forced into this seldom yielding
ground
to make a place for me
to hold on tight
to nurture and be nourished
and, oh this land does feed me.*

efforts, with a goal of 2-3 op-eds per year.

- * Send a member to at least one leadership conference or workshop this year.
- * Invite a well-known humanist speaker from out of state to speak to the community.

If there are other activities you would like us to pursue, let us know.

A Closet Door Opens

This message was sent to Atheists of Florida by e-mail and reprinted in Grass Roots News:

I am currently a senior at Sickles High School in Tampa. A Christian practice has been going on here for quite some time. Before school 25+ students meet in the center of school, while alternating members preach about "taking back the school for God" then engage in group prayer. All those offended have let it pass...and the group vows "not to let alone stand in their way".

Finally fed up with this offensive display and official tolerance, I made a sign that said "No Prayer in School" and just stood near the group so everyone walking by would see me. I did this for about one week, until one day, another guy I'd never met before came up to me, told me he was with me and participated in the silent protest. The next day, a couple more people showed up. Now, people I don't even know are approaching me and asking how they can get involved.

I formed the Campus Ablimelech Society and in the past two days the number of members has tripled. I distributed fliers explaining the purpose of the group... not to bash Christians, but to organize just as well as a group that bashed us. I've caused an uproar in the school and in a belief where I was once alone, I have huge numbers looking to me for guidance. It literally brought tears to my eyes to see atheists, deists, agnostics, and skeptics emerge to where they were once too scared to travel...

Member News

Congratulations to Chris Struble who has taken a new position at HP, he is now working as a programmer developing software testing tools.

If you have member news, (birthdays, life events, etc.) please contact LeAnne Struble at 362-6873.

Campaign

A new campaign organized by American Atheists is calling on all secular Americans to speak out this summer against President Bush's plan for government-funded faith-based programs.

The campaign, called The Day That Counts, will feature a press conference in Washington, D.C. on July 10th, and a nationwide effort to fax, phone, and mail to the White House

Faith-based programs ineffective

Claims that "faith-based" drug and alcohol recovery programs are more effective than their secular counterparts are not supported by empirical research data, says Americans United for Separation of Church and State.

For example, Teen Challenge, a fundamentalist Christian recovery program popular with the Bush administration, claims a success rate of 80 percent, but fail to point out that only 18 percent

June Meeting

This month's membership meeting will be on Thursday, June 7 at 7:30 PM, at the Flicks Theater, 646 Fulton, Boise.

Instead of the usual business meeting, we will meet downstairs at the Flicks and then head into downtown to enjoy First Thursday activities.

and their representatives in Congress on July 17th. The plan is to have as many people as possible write in on the same day to maximize the effect.

AA is seeking support from secular groups and individuals and for this effort. Supporters can endorse a statement on the campaign's web site, www.thedaythatcounts.org.

actually complete the program. (Teen Challenge has since drawn fire after members boasted about converting Jews to Christianity while testifying before a House subcommittee).

A 1998 General Accounting Office report found that research on the effectiveness of faith-based groups is "extremely limited," and "there has not been sufficient research to

May Meeting

Nine members attended the meeting on May 3, 2001.

May was officer election month. Chris Struble was elected as President, Nicolle Foster as Vice President, and LeAnne Struble as Treasurer. There was no one to run for the position of Secretary so it was decided by the membership that one member would volunteer to take notes at each meeting and LeAnne would preform any secretarial tasks that needed to be done between meetings.

Mary Fran brought up that the Rural Council would like to borrow our canopy to use, the membership unanimously decided to allow them to borrow it.

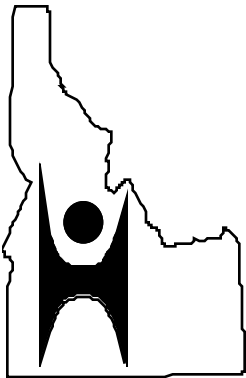
The membership discussed participating in Paint the Town and decided that at this time we didn't have a large enough group to participate. We will look into the possibility of participating in Rake Up Boise in November.

determine the results of this type of treatment."

The report also noted that many conventional recovery programs have success rates of 40-50 percent and cost less than Teen Challenge. Other studies pointed out that religion-based recovery programs were much more likely than secular programs to limit the clientele they serve, skewing their statistics.

Upcoming Events

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| June 7, 2001 | Humanists Night Out (see inside for details)
7:30 PM at the Flicks Theater, 646 Fulton |
| June 21, 2001 | Summer Solstice |
| July 4, 2001 | Parade in Downtown Boise |
| July 5, 2001 | General Membership Meeting
7:30 PM at the Flicks Theater, 646 Fulton |



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