



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.

October 2007

<http://Idaho.humanists.net>

Idaho@humanists.net

President's Message:

Humanist Outreach

One of our group's priorities is to reach out to others in the community who may be humanist and just do not know it yet. We participated in a booth at the Hyde Park Street Fair this past weekend, Friday, Sep. 14 – Sunday, Sep. 16. Jan Rowe, Doug Van Curen, Paul Rolig, and Gary Bennett of Humanists of Idaho worked shifts, along with several members of Idaho Atheists (to which Gary also belongs). We all had a great time and had several interesting conversations with passersby. We handed out quite a bit of the literature we had available. Several booth visitors



were quite excited to make contact with people speaking out to promote atheism and humanism.

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

National Coming Out Day – Thursday, October 11, 2007

Becky McGavin and the Wesley Student Center are sponsoring a panel discussion, “**Interfaith / People of Conscience: How Love Transcends Faith And Religious Boundaries**” to celebrate National Coming Out Day, Thursday, October 11, 2007, 3-5pm in the BSU Student Union Building.

“Join this panel discussion to celebrate the diversity of the human race. Come with questions where sexuality has challenged your Faith and Religious Boundaries.”

Doug Van Curen, and possibly Paul Rolig will represent Humanists of Idaho in this panel as part of our humanist outreach to gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender students in particular and to the BSU student population in general. If there are any other members of HOI who would like to participate, you would be most welcome to do so. Contact Paul at roligpd@spro.net or 377-0535.

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, September 24th** **6:30 PM Humanist Supper Club**

7:30 PM Discussion of Parenting Beyond Belief: Chapter One

Parenting Beyond Belief is a book for loving and thoughtful parents who wish to raise their children without religion. It 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. This book will be used for discussions at both HOI and the BUUF discussion groups in the fall. You may find out more or order a copy at: <http://www.parentingbeyondbelief.com>.

Chapter One: Personal Reflections includes the essays:

1. **Navigating Around the Dinner Table by Julia Sweeney**
2. **Thinking My Way to Adulthood by Norm R. Allen, Jr.**
3. **Good and Bad Reasons for Believing by Richard Dawkins**
4. **Growing Up Godless: How I survived Amateur Secular Parenting by Emily Rosa**
5. **I'd Rather Play Outside by Anne Nicol Gaylor**
6. **My Father's House by Dan Barker**
7. **Passing Down the Joy of Not Collecting Stamps by Penn Jillett**

Note New Time BUUF Discussion Group - **Sunday, October 14th**

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

11:00!!

Boise Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 6200 Garrett, Garden City

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 our October meeting we will begin a series of discussions on the language of faith and how different meanings of words can make for misunderstanding between people.

Sunday, October 21th Crop Walk
Collecting donations begins NOW
Walk: Noon at Julia Davis Park

CROP WALK

"We walk because they walk."

This year's Crop Walk will take place on Sunday October 21. There's a rally and registration beginning at noon. The walk itself begins at 2:00. As in past years, each walker has a choice of a 1, 3 or 6 mile course.

This is a great way to make a difference in the lives of those around us and those around the world. And it's so easy; we gather donations, turn them in on Sunday the 21st then walk. That's it. Last year approximately \$193,000 + was raised. Of that 25% stayed right here in Idaho to take care of those who need the help. The remaining 75% is used in anti-hunger programs all over the world. Let's show the community that Humanists are truly pro-humanity.

If you don't want to walk, that's fine; you can still donate money-any amount will do. Maybe \$5.00 won't do much, but when all those donations are added together, like rain, they become a flood of food and programs.

If want to pick up packets to collect money or just want to contribute, Jan Rowe will have materials at the next meeting or call her at 208-376-5475

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 a 378-1217 or tva@fortboise.org.

Planned Parenthood of Idaho Volunteers Needed!

Planned Parenthood of Idaho will host an education/outreach booth at the Idaho Wellness Fair (Nampa Oct 20-21). These booths are a fantastic way to sign up new activists, introduce Idahoans to PPI's mission, and to educate the public. However, we can't execute these booths without a significant number of volunteers. This is an excellent opportunity to help PPI. If you are interested, please contact burke.hays@ppidaho.org Burke or call 376-2277 ext.11. If e-mailing, please include a telephone number.

Planned Parenthood of Idaho Gala: Plan It for the Planet Saturday, November 10, 2007

Thanks to many of you the Humanists of Idaho was able to contribute \$250 and become one of the named sponsors for this event.

The 5th Annual Gala: Plan It for the Planet is Planned Parenthood of Idaho's premier fundraising event, held November 10, 2007 at the DoubleTree Riverside Hotel. Last year's event was a tremendous success, grossing nearly \$43,000 to support our Education and Service Outreach efforts to uninsured and low-income Idahoans and their families. This year's Gala will highlight the importance of family planning as it relates to the health of our planet.

With your support, we expect over 400 people to join us for an elegant evening of dancing, dinner, live and silent auctions, and special guest speakers. This year's agenda is packed with exciting surprises, and the details will be delivered to your mailbox soon! For ticket and table reservation information, contact Autumn at 208-376-2277 ext. 13 or autumn.kersey@ppidaho.org.

Interfaith Sanctuary Has a New Home

Finally, because of the volunteer work and donations of good-hearted people from various religions, Interfaith Sanctuary found a home — a 10,200-square-foot building at 1620 River St. The shelter will open on Nov. 1 and will have separate spaces for single men, single women and families. No one will be turned away in the middle of the night. Eventually, volunteers hope to offer more than warmth and rest — services like a day care, a preschool and adult literacy and living skills classes.

The Humanists of Idaho members contributed more than \$800 to the Sanctuary Project.

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

Van's First Ceremony – Congratulations!



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

“A Brief History of Disbelief”

Saturday, November 17

1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Boise Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 6200 Garrett, Garden City

Written and narrated by acclaimed British intellectual **Jonathan Miller** — author, lecturer, TV producer/host, director of theater, opera and film, and neurologist — *A Brief History of Disbelief* originally aired on the BBC in the U.K. It was the first-ever historical look at the controversial topic on television. It is only during the last few years in the U.S. that atheism can be fully and widely discussed. Many leaders and celebrities are “coming out of the closet.” Just this week, U.S. Congressman Pete Stark publicly declared that he does not believe in a supreme being. "This series is about the disappearance of something: religious faith," Miller says in the opening. "It's the story of what is often referred to as 'atheism,' the history of the growing conviction that God doesn't exist."

A Brief History of Disbelief combines an exploration of the origins of Miller's own lack of belief with historical perspective and interviews with leading authorities, including biologist **Richard Dawkins**, philosopher **Daniel Dennett**, recently deceased playwright **Arthur Miller**, and physicist **Steven Weinberg**.

"In making this series I have inevitably discovered that the history of faith and doubt is a great deal more complicated than it might seem," Jonathan Miller declares. Among the program's surprising revelations is that philosophy, not science as often assumed, played a larger role in the gradual erosion of belief. And contrary to what many Christian fundamentalists today consider America's founding principles, the first presidents were actually skeptical of religion.

Part I: Shadows of Doubt

Miller visits the site of the absent Twin Towers to consider the religious implications of 9/11 and meets Arthur Miller and the philosopher Colin McGinn. He searches for evidence of the first "unbelievers" in ancient Greece and examines some of the modern theories around why people have always tended to believe in mythology and magic.

Part II: Noughts and Crosses

With the domination of Christianity from 500 AD, Miller wonders how disbelief began to re-emerge in the 15th and 16th centuries. He discovers that division within the Church played a more powerful role than the scientific discoveries of the period. He also visits Paris, the home of the 18th century atheist Baron D'Holbach, and shows how politically dangerous it was to undermine the religious faith of the masses.

The Final Hour

The history of disbelief continues with the ideas of self-taught philosopher Thomas Paine, the revolutionary studies of geology, and the evolutionary theories of Darwin. Miller looks at the Freudian view that religion is a "thought disorder." He also examines his motivation behind making the series touching on the issues of death and the religious fanaticism of the 21st century.

A Brief History of Disbelief is presented by the **Independent Production Fund**, which has produced highly acclaimed information programming for over thirty years. The company and its producers have used television to educate, engage and challenge viewers to consider issues, ideas and public figures from new perspectives. Major funding for *A Brief History of Disbelief* is provided by The Center for Inquiry, with additional funding from American Ethical Union, American Humanist Association, Institute for Humanist Studies, and HKH Foundation.

Recent Letters to the Editor in the Idaho Statesman

Bryan Fischer Beware the gestapo in your bedrooms

Watch out everyone. Bryan Fischer and his IVA gestapo want to get into our bedrooms (Other Voices, Statesman, Aug. 22), to see what we are up to and to enforce certain laws that should never have become law in the first place (fornication, adultery).

He suggested that these laws should be enforced, and also taught to our children in public schools. There are numerous reasons why these laws aren't enforced. One obvious one is that these are religious views attempting to legislate nature and equate to establishment of religion, in violation of the First Amendment of the Constitution. Another reason regards trying to imprison more than half the population of the state, many of which are police, prosecutors and judges. Statistically, 78 percent of high schoolers will be sexually active before graduation. Bryan wants to put them all in prison with murderers and drug dealers. We need to educate our children about responsible sexuality, but with real information that will benefit them, not religious scare tactics.

Sorry Bryan, but your IVA Gestapo is not welcome in my bedroom, home or school.

Jan Rowe, Boise

Fischer Doesn't Share Values with Most Idahoans

As I watched the Sen. Craig story unfold, something occurred to me. There, on Day 1, was an interview with Bryan Fischer. It seems that any time a "values" question pops up, the local media run to Bryan for an opinion. The question is "Why?" I have been told that it is because he is executive director of Idaho Values Alliance.

I was born in Idaho, son of a likewise Idaho native, and Bryan doesn't represent my values. In fact, I find many of his opinions intolerant, bigoted and objectionable. Among my long list of native Idaho family and friends, I have yet to encounter one who wants Bryan to represent their values, as well. So who are these Idahoans whose values he represents? I went to the IVA Web site in search of an answer and got the impression that IVA has a membership of one. The site only displays one endorsement, and she is deceased, so can't verify her endorsement. From where I sit, it appears that Bryan, upon moving to Idaho, declared his to be "the" Idaho values, to the exclusion of all others, and the media has bought into it.

Doug Van Curen, Boise

Libertarian vs Socialist and the Humanist Manifesto 2000

Dear Sweet Reason,

I would like some clarification on pages 41 and 46 of the Humanist Manifesto 2000.

For everything that should be provided for everyone on the planet (... economic security, cultural enrichment, education etc.) who exactly are you saying should provide it? ...What is the minimum? There doesn't seem to be any agreement.... Our local humanist group used to have several libertarian leaning members and several socialists. The libertarians and objectivists have pretty much left.... Please define "ability to work." Housefrau

Dear Frau,

Please know that if you had expressed the opposite opinion on libertarianism versus socialism, I still would have edited that part of your letter. That is because there are so many forums where people can express and debate political opinions that this column doesn't need to be used in that way. Also, I avoid political statements myself (in the context of this column) so that all readers will feel comfortable asking my advice.

But, your mention of one "Humanist Manifesto", offers a chance to educate people who are new to humanism.

There are four documents with the title, "Humanist Manifesto". What is important to know about each of them is that it is not intended as a doctrinal statement that all humanists must believe, but as an attempt to represent the humanist consensus at the time of writing. *(Continued on next page)*

(Continued from page 5) Three Humanist Manifestoes and some other position statements are put into historical context in one of the courses offered free by the Continuum of Humanist Education Lesson 2 of the "Introduction to Humanism" is titled "The Contemporary Humanist Philosophy: Lifestance Humanism", and includes quite a bit of useful, thought-provoking information. [See article below]

"Humanist Manifesto 2000" (HM 2000 is not the same as the UNESCO Manifesto 2000) was written by Paul Kurtz, the chairman of the Council for Secular Humanism (CSH), and originally published in 1999 in the CSH magazine, *Free Inquiry*. It's interesting that in 1989, the fall issue of *Free Inquiry* included several essays by socialists and libertarians, each arguing that their respective viewpoint was most appropriate for humanists. HM 2000 is over 60 pages long, and no doubt there are other sections that are also open to more than one interpretation.

Anything I could say would be just one more opinion. Perhaps someone at the Council for Secular Humanism could explain how those phrases were intended. (In case you wrote to me because I am listed among those who signed — my signature was included by mistake.)

It is unfortunate that this question has been such a contentious issue for your group. I would welcome letters from other readers whose groups have successfully maintained a friendly atmosphere during such discussions.

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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

Humanist Education is Free

STAFF REPORTS *HumanistNetworkNews.org* Sept. 5, 2007

In September, children around the world start to head back to school. Few can expect to learn about humanism in their daily school lessons. But the good news is that starting today anyone with an Internet connection anywhere in the world can learn about humanism for free. The Continuum of Humanist Education (COHE) is the world's first online, interactive humanist educational program. The Institute for Humanist Studies debuted COHE in 2004 with rave reviews from students and humanist leaders around the world.

But until today, only the introductory courses on humanism were free. Level two classes used to cost users \$10, and advanced level courses used to cost users \$25.

Now, thanks to the generous support of an enthusiastic donor all levels of COHE courses are free to all.

So far, more than 1200 people from more than 50 countries have registered as COHE students. Hundreds of these students come from the developing world, yet only a handful have signed up for the higher level courses which until now cost money.

"Even though \$10 or \$25 is a bargain for these high quality courses, it's a significant barrier for people in the developing world," said Matt Cherry, IHS executive director. "I'm therefore delighted that IHS can now make these courses free to everyone. This reflects the Institute's commitment, as an innovative nonprofit, to remove as many barriers as possible from the advancement of humanism."

Using twenty-first century technology, COHE strives to explore and advance humanist thought in fresh and stimulating ways. Interactive exercises, student-controlled glossary options, and a community bulletin board are just a few of the innovative tools COHE students will use to enrich their humanist education experience. The COHE motto is *Sapere Aude -- Dare to Know*.

COHE courses explore humanist thought in history, philosophy, psychology, religion, science, ethics, activism and politics. COHE course authors include notable humanist activists such as evolutionary biology professor Massimo Pigliucci, Ph.D. and former humanist lobbyist Tim Gordnier, Ph.D.

Courses are immediately accessible to anyone, anywhere in the world, with an Internet connection.

HNN readers can sign up now, using COHE's free, automated no-obligation registration procedure.

To explore the Continuum of Humanist Education, visit: HumanistEducation.com Please help IHS spread the word about humanism.

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@yahoo.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

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Note New Time

11:00!! Sunday, October 14th – 11:00 AM – BUUF Humanist Group
Boise Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 6200 Garrett, Garden City,

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Noon at Julia Davis Park