



# 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.

September 2008

<http://Idaho.humanists.net>

[Idaho@humanists.net](mailto:Idaho@humanists.net)

## President's Message:

### Putting a Positive Face on Humanism

Humanists are popping up in several public places in Idaho these days. These efforts should help make the world a better place, and also put a positive face on Humanism for other Idahoans to see.

As your President, I represented Humanists of Idaho as opposing torture in a short meeting with Sen. Mike Crapo on August 25, along with clergy and other representatives from several churches. My written statement is reproduced elsewhere in this newsletter. The meeting with our Senator was arranged by Lou Landry, a local Quaker, on behalf of The Interfaith Alliance of Idaho. I find TIA-Idaho quite a useful place to build alliances with people who do not necessarily share humanistic views on theology, but who generally do share humanistic views on human rights, peace, justice, charity, tolerance, and other important humanist values.

Our group from TIA-Idaho included representatives from Catholic, Lutheran, Quaker, United Church of Christ, Unitarian, and other groups, in addition to Humanists. We got about 20 minutes to meet with Sen. Crapo at his office, present our written statements expressing our moral outrage that the United States, under the current administration, has been torturing prisoners, and delivering prisoners to other governments known for torture.

Sen. Crapo did accept our statements, and pledged to read through all of them within a day or two. He did not make any other commitments beyond saying that "of course" he did not support torture. He did not indicate his opinion on the current administration's claim, refuted 3 times now by the U.S. Supreme Court, that anyone *suspected* of being a terrorist or an "enemy combatant" could be held indefinitely in secret, with no legal redress.

At one point, Crapo asked us whether we felt comfortable that John McCain would oppose the use of torture. I replied that yes, I was comfortable that John McCain is clearly opposed to the use of torture, but I was uncomfortable that he might "split moral hairs" and permit "extraordinary rendition" or deny terror suspects due process of law. My statement apparently got recorded and played later on KBSU, because a coworker mentioned to me that he had heard me on the radio on the subject.

Other positive things going on include the formation of the Boise State Secular Student Alliance, plans for a freethought group viewing of the forthcoming movie "Religulous," HOI's payment to be listed as a Corporate Sponsor of Planned Parenthood of Idaho, and various charity efforts, including the upcoming CROP WALK, and Making Strides Against Breast Cancer.

Stay tuned, and get involved!

*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

## 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.

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

### September Meeting, Monday, September 22<sup>nd</sup>

Book Discussion - *The Great Turning: From Empire to Earth Community* by David Korten :  
*From the Wikipedia Article on Great Turning:*

In the book Korten makes a number of primary arguments:

- "Empire" - a form of social organization based on hierarchies, chauvinism, and domination through violence, started developing about 5,000 years ago. A primary characteristic of empires is a significantly unequal distribution of power and benefits, with a relatively small portion of the population receiving a disproportionately large share of the wealth.
- Corporate consolidation of power represents a modern version of empire.
- The rise of powerful modern technology combined with the control of empires is becoming increasingly destructive to communities and the environment.
- We are about to face a perfect storm of converging crises including climate change, peak oil, and a financial crisis caused by an unbalanced economy. This will cause major changes to the current economic and social structure.
- These crises present an opportunity, if we so choose, for significant changes that replace the paradigm of *Empire* with one of *Earth Community*. The vision of *Earth Community* is based on sustainable, just, and caring communities which incorporate mutual responsibility and accountability. These values, which are shared by most of the world's people, are eloquently described in the Earth Charter.

**The Great Turning Initiative** based on that book and others' work, including Joanna Macy, who uses Great Turning to refer to a change she sees us in from a civilization primarily focused on industrial growth to a more life-sustaining civilization. Joanna Macy was in Boise conducting a workshop on the initiative in May.

## Humanists of Idaho Program Schedule

Program Chair – Wally Keltner

- October 27– Presentation by Planned Parenthood Arranged by Jan Rowe
- November 24 – Open
- Saturday, December 21st –Winter Solstice party at Paul & Nancy Rolig's home.
- January 26– Presentation by Melanie Curtis of Second Chance, a recycled building materials program– Arranged by Mary D Gutierrez
- February 23 – Special Charles Darwin 200<sup>th</sup> Birthday. Need Help Planning!

### BUUF Discussion Group –Sunday, October 11<sup>th</sup>

Second Sunday of the Month at 11:00 AM

Boise Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 6200 Garrett, Garden City

Library in the south wing

Everyone is welcome whether you consider yourself a UU or not. The September meeting will be a Book Discussion - "The Great Turning." We are now meeting in the Library at 11:00 sharp so we can be done with the room at 12:15.

## Viewing for the Movie “Religulous”

Time and Date TBA

Members of the Atheist Meetup group are planning a group viewing of the new documentary “Religulous” which is Bill Maher’s take on the current state of world religion. Bill Maher who wrote and stars in the movie is known for his HBO series “Real Time with Bill Maher” and author of “Politically Incorrect”. Known for his astute analytical skills, irreverent wit and commitment to never pulling a punch, Maher brings his characteristic honesty to an unusual spiritual journey as he travels around the globe interviewing people about God and religion. The film is directed by Larry Charles who also directed “Borat” and HBO’s “Curb Your Enthusiasm”. The movie opens October 3<sup>rd</sup> nationally.

## Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk Saturday, October 11<sup>th</sup> in Eagle

Jessie Gillingham spoke at our August meeting about the American Cancer Society and the “Making Strides Against Breast Cancer” walk. This walk is a noncompetitive walk to help fight breast cancer and provide hope to people facing the disease. The funds raised go to the American Cancer Society’s breast cancer research, prevention, early detection and support programs for breast cancer.

Registration opens at 7:00 AM and the walk begins at 9:00 AM at Old State St. and Eagle Road and goes 2.2 miles to Guerber Park. You may join Kate Jensen’s Save Second Base team for the walk or you can make a donation. Go to the website [makingstrides.acevents.org](http://makingstrides.acevents.org) and click on Idaho on the map.

## CROPWALK- Sunday, October 19<sup>th</sup>

Mark your calendars and Kari will have details for signing up on the HOI team to raise money to feed the hungry around the world. This event is put on by Church World Services, but our donations can be directed to several secular organizations such as the Idaho Foodbank. Donations are collected by walkers either personally or you can go to the website [cropwalk.org](http://cropwalk.org).

Walkers are asked to arrive at Julia Davis Park at 1:00 PM to register and turn in donations. The walk starts at 2:00 PM and you have three choices of walks: 1, 2 and 6 mile walks. You can contact Kari for more information at [justkari143@hotmail.com](mailto:justkari143@hotmail.com) or 353-4301.

## HOI Donations Update

**PlayCamp:** At the July meeting \$120 in donations were collected for the PlayCamp put on by Boise Parks and Rec. The money went to send 8 children to the last week of camp free of charge. Look for this fundraiser again next summer.

**Planned Parenthood of Idaho:** HOI contributed \$250 to become an “Advocate for Choice” level sponsor.

## Help a Mom in Need!

Kate Jensen called to our attention at the August meeting of this fundraiser. “Cheri Cavazos is a single mother who has stomach cancer. She was just diagnosed with a lump the size of a plum in her throat. We are holding a Pampered Chef Fundraiser for her where 25% of the sales will go towards her medical bills. To help, go to [www.pamperedchef.biz/katejensen](http://www.pamperedchef.biz/katejensen) and click on Order Products. Put Cheri Cavazos in Choice 1 and order whatever you want! This fundraiser will go through the end of August. Thanks for your support!”

## 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.

## HOI Strategic Plan

Wally Keltner has been hard at work facilitating a strategic plan for the Humanists of Idaho. The first draft as reviewed by members at the August meeting and Wally revised the plan accordingly. The HOI board met with Wally to further refine the product. The following is what completed.

### Vision –

Humanists of Idaho will be recognized and respected as Idaho's leading organization promoting and practicing Humanism.

### Mission:

“The mission of Humanists of Idaho is:

- 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.

### Strategies and Goals:

#### **Educate - Strategy -**

Educate the members of HOI and outside interested parties about Humanism, including its tenets, values and history.

- Meeting activities (speakers, book studies, etc.)
- Maintain & promote the library
- Letters to the editor
- Speaking engagements

#### **Inform - Strategy**

Inform the HOI membership and Idahoans about news and information relevant to Humanism and its values.

- Outreach to the public and other organizations
- Operate the HOI Yahoo! Email list.
- Maintain the HOI web site.
- Publish a Newsletter

#### **Demonstrate - Strategy -**

Demonstrate the values derived from the practice of Humanism to the HOI membership and Idahoans.

- Attracting new members
- Charitable activities
- Volunteer activities

#### **Strategy – Support System for Freethinkers**

- Provide a support system for freethinkers.
- Humanist celebrant
- Regular HOI meetings
- Social events
- BUUF Humanist Group
- BSU Secular Student Alliance

### Values -

- Reason
- Tolerance
- Ethical Behavior
- Democracy
- Active Minds
- Earth Stewardship
- Fellowship
- Learning
- Human Rights
- Compassion
- Charity

#### **Educate - Goals**

- Present six educational programs at regular monthly meetings
- Maintain and promote the HOI library, including adding materials and loaning items to HOI members.

#### **Inform - Goals**

- Participate in one activity annually to inform people about Humanism.
- Maintain the HOI web site.
- Operate the HOI Yahoo! email list
- Publish the HOI newsletter
- Send complementary newsletters to interested parties.

#### **Demonstrate - Goals**

- Increase the paid membership to 44.
- Select two charities to support and provide total donations of \$500.
- Select and support two volunteer activities.

#### **Support System for Freethinkers - Goals**

- Provide Humanist celebrant services for all.
- Produce 11 HOI monthly meetings.
- Produce one social event
- Support local affiliated groups with newsletters and activities.

## Boise State Secular Student Alliance

Congratulations to Lloyd Lowe and Andrew Choufrine for organizing a chapter of the National Secular Student Alliance on the Boise State campus this fall. They were able to garner interest from more than 50 students at Student Organizations Extravaganza and at a booth on the first day of school with a sign that asked “Outgrown Your Imaginary Friend?”

The group was featured in an article *Non-Religious Students Find Camaraderie* in the BSU student newspaper The Arbitrator. Lloyd is quoted, “Our group’s main goals are to bring together secular students of all types in order to support each other and present a positive view of non-belief to the community. We intend to promote and practice the open, rational and scientific examination of the universe and our place in it, while offering plenty of social gatherings for BSU students and the community,”

The group has already approved a constitution and elected officers and is having regular meetings. Lloyd is President of BSSSA. Meetings are alternating between Tuesday and Wednesday nights: Tuesdays from 5-7 and Wednesdays from 7-9 and once a month some sort of a food related meeting on a Friday. The next meetings will be Friday the 19th at 6pm at the Flying Pie Pizzeria on State and then Tuesday, the 23<sup>rd</sup> on campus.

For more information about the BSSSA, e-mail [boisestate@secularstudents.org](mailto:boisestate@secularstudents.org), or visit [secularstudents.org/boisestate](http://secularstudents.org/boisestate). The Website provides a link to the BSSSA Facebook page, which has further information.

## Paul Rolig’s Letter to Senator Crapo Addressing Torture

Dear Senator Crapo,

I appreciate you taking the time to meet with us. My name is Paul Rolig, and I am President of Humanists of Idaho.

That makes me sort of an unusual member of this group of “Interfaith” leaders, since Humanists reject beliefs based on faith. But Humanists do believe fervently in morality based on reason, compassion, and the observable requirements for our survival as human beings. We agree with nearly all faith groups in believing that all people should be treated with dignity and respect.

I’d like to relate just a couple stories of how, growing up, I learned certain *moral values* that most would consider fundamental American values. They also happen to be Humanist values, and most Christians, Jews, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, and others I know personally share them as well.

As a child at home, in my neighborhood, and at school, I observed some children hit, steal from, or otherwise abuse one another. Fortunately, our parents and teachers taught us that these actions were wrong, and furthermore, that it was not a valid excuse to say, “Well, they did it to me first!”

Yet today, it seems a great many grownups, including in the Bush administration, hold the attitude that it is OK for the United States to torture and abuse *suspected* terrorists because, “Well, they did it to us first!” This childish phrase must not become a new moral principle of American justice.

In high school, in the late 1960’s, I wrote a book report on Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn’s *The First Circle*. This book is a sort of historical novel exposing the Soviet Union’s “Gulag Archipelago” in which dissidents were “disappeared” and locked away in secret, and without being charged and brought to trial. From this I learned about the importance of the Rule of Law and the need for a transparent judicial system. I learned that we needed to defend ourselves from the evils practiced by the Soviet Communists.

Now the Bush administration has made such practices the policy of the United States government. As a Humanist, I expect you to speak out and take action against these morally outrageous practices. Paul D. Rolig, President, Humanists of Idaho; member of delegation from The Interfaith Alliance

## 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](http://www.angelfire.com/id/vancuren/weddings.html)



## Sweet Reason: When Children of Atheists Choose Religion

For [HumanistNetworkNews.org](http://HumanistNetworkNews.org) Aug. 20, 2008

**Offering advice and commentary by Molleen Matsumura, "Sweet Reason" deals with the life-concerns and problems of humanists, secularists and nonreligious individuals.**

While I haven't literally counted, the advice requests I receive suggest that the commonest family disagreements about non-theism and religion involve religious children of atheist parents. Perhaps the next most common is differences between spouses. But it also turns out that every combination of relatives possible may have tensions arising from their differences of belief.

While many freethinking parents sincerely believe that they want their kids to make up their own minds when they grow up, they may be shocked to find out how upset they are when the kids choose religion -- especially if they choose fundamentalism. If that happens to you, this letter may help you take the special perspective needed to cope with the situation. Whatever parents are feeling, they still have to be careful how they handle the psychological power they have even with adult "children".

*Dear Sweet Reason,*

*My middle son is a devout evangelical Christian. When I visit him we often go for a walk at a state park near his house that displays fossils. I use that as an opportunity to start a conversation about science and creationism, but he gets sullen and clams up. I want to try to open his mind a bit, but apparently I'm going about it the wrong way. Can you suggest anything?*

*Evolving with Increasing Perplexity*

Dear Perplexed,

Unless your son is at risk of doing something dangerous, just back off, at least for now--you know that's his unspoken message. If he were about to give his house to a TV preacher, you'd have to intervene, but you don't seem to be facing any such crisis.

So, find ways you can enjoy each other's company and interests; if you're going to the state park, plan a hike or bring binoculars and a guide to local birds. Talk about how his job is going; ask what presents to bring his kids--whatever is needed to show respect for his independence, and build affection and trust.

Bear in mind that if your son is going to respond to intellectual arguments (the approach you've been trying), he might not do so when the arguments come from his father, of all people. You haven't said how his siblings feel; if they share your concerns, maybe they can help you decide what to do.

Meanwhile, try to understand why he is devout. Anyone's beliefs (yours and mine, too) can be understood as a result of the influence of others, and as an attempt to solve life's problems.

What's the "influence" story? For example, if you brought your son up as a Christian, it could seem unfair to expect him to change because you have. If you have an evangelical ex-wife, he may be uncomfortable with divided loyalties.

Does your son have reasons to think that faith has made his life better? If he feels that it is helping him handle serious life challenges, it may become possible to discuss alternative or additional solutions, but it could be unwise to try to force the pace of change -- if he is going to change.

Will thinking about these issues show you a way to influence your son? Maybe slowly, maybe not at all. But it will at the least bring understanding and acceptance.

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To request advice from *Sweet Reason*, use the anonymous web form at [http://humaniststudies.org/ask\\_sweetreason.html](http://humaniststudies.org/ask_sweetreason.html)  
OR send postal mail to: *Institute for Humanist Studies*, 48 Howard St., Albany, NY 12207, ATTN: *Sweet Reason*

# 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

### Humanists of Idaho Board

**President:** Paul Rolig .....377-0535 or roligpd@spro.net  
**Vice President:** Doug Van Curen:.....376-5475 or saw2thking@aol.com  
**Secretary:** Nancy Rolig..... 377-0535 or nrolig@spro.net  
**Treasurer:** Jan Rowe .....376-5475 or janiejolee1@aol.com

### Auxiliary Positions

**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:** .....Kari Rowe  
353-4301 or justkari143@hotmail.com  
**Program Manager:**.....Wally Keltner  
286-0764 or wallykeltner@msn.com  
**Permanent Building Fund:** .....Paul Rolig  
9877 W. Ripley St., Boise 83704

### Organization Information

Your support of this local chapter with your membership, donations and ideas is greatly appreciated.

### Mailing Address:

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

### Website:

<http://Idaho.humanists.net>

**Yahoo Group:** idaho-humanists@yahoogroups.com

### Email Address:

**Idaho@humanists.net**

## 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



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

**Friday, September 19<sup>th</sup> BSSSA Dinner Meeting**

6:00 PM. Flying Pie Pizzeria on State St.

**Monday, September 22<sup>nd</sup> - HOI Meeting**

**6:30 PM Humanist Supper Club, 7:30 PM Planning Meeting**

**Tuesday, September 23<sup>rd</sup> BSSSA Meeting**

5:00 PM at BSU

**BUUF Senior Sages**

**2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays of the Month, 9:30 AM at the Kopper Kitchen (2661 Airport Way)**

**Saturday, October 11<sup>th</sup> - Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk**

**Sunday, October 12<sup>th</sup>, 11:00 AM – BUUF Humanist Group**

**Boise Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 6200 Garrett, Garden City,**

**Saturday, October 18<sup>th</sup> - CROPWALK-**