



Humanists Of Idaho, BUUF Humanists,
Sages, Idaho Society of Reason

Free Thought

sponsored by Humanists of Idaho

February 2018

HOI President's Message

At our January board meeting, we began preparations for the upcoming officer elections. Our board is made up of six officers, currently President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Charitable Coordinator, and Newsletter Editor.

That last position, Newsletter Editor, was added as a board position in 2017, pending approval by membership vote in the upcoming general election. In addition, the board considered a more comprehensive title for Newsletter Editor – Information Officer and Media Officer among the suggestions. Exact title and job description will be settled at the March meeting, following discussion.

The election is in May, with votes counted and the election certified by the board at the May meeting on May 21st. Nominations are open until April 21st, after which voting members will receive their ballots and will have until May 20th to return them. Anyone interested in running for one of the above mentioned offices, should contact our Vice President, Pat Acks, at pat@acksnet.com.

As to the Newsletter, I have placed a poll on our meetup page asking for preferences on the newsletter. We would really like to know what everyone thinks about the newsletter, so I would like to encourage everyone to take a few seconds and answer the poll. It is just one question, check your preferred choice, so it will only take a few seconds.

Our new website is up and running. The new url is <http://humanistsofidoaho.angelfire.com/>

Drop in, take a look, and let us know what you think. Just bear in mind that it is an unfinished, work in progress. The by-laws have been uploaded to the site, and can be found by clicking on the "ABOUT" button.

As part of our outreach, we have been providing inmates with secular reading material. Much of what prisons provide to inmates is of a religious nature, and we received a couple of letters from inmates asking us for more choice. Rehabilitation and recovery need not be tied to religion, and we have been trying to accommodate those seeking self improvement with secular alternatives.

We used to have a secular counselor listed on our website, but she no longer works in this area. If anyone knows of a secular counselor who can fill that slot, we would gladly give him or her a listing on our secular services web page.

Our next board meeting is March 19th. The primary focus will be on the upcoming elections. Anyone having an issue that they would like addressed by the board, can email me directly at CelebrantVan@gmail.com, and I will add it to the agenda for discussion.

D G Van Curen

President, Humanists of Idaho

A note from your editor, Jeanette Ross

My responsibility as editor concludes May 2018, when a newly elected Board of Directors will take charge of Humanists of Idaho. They direct all policy and procedure, including communications inside and outside of the organization.

I have enjoyed my rather long tenure and wish only the best in energy and support for all of you, members of HOI, ISOR and other freethinkers. Please express your wishes for further communication or news to the new Board.

In the four issues remaining to me I will continue with history of HOI, adding some history of humanism. I will include a President's message but in response to expressed preferences among several newer members I will omit group notices and reports. Bon Voyage to each and every one of us.

Humanists of Idaho from November 1996

General meetings were at the Flicks; board meetings at smaller venues. Detailed minutes for both were regularly published in the organization's newsletter. These are summaries by J Ross

November 7 1996 After a brief business meeting, Steve Hopkins spoke to the group on the history and purpose of the Snake River Alliance. SRA is an environmental organization that expresses its peace and justice mission as a citizen monitor of INEL, the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory. It was organized in 1979 in response to the pumping of radioactive waste directly into the Snake River Aquifer at INEL. This is an earthquake prone area over the second largest aquifer in the United States, and is unsuitable for radioactive waste storage according to a study done by the National Academy of Sciences in 1966.

Steve explained the different types of hazardous waste stored at INEL and what is affected or not affected by the Governor's agreement with INEL

The estimated cost for cleanup, in case of an accident, is phenomenal. The most dangerous storage is that of 1.8 million gallons of highly radioactive liquid waste from spent fuel reprocessing. Current technology is inadequate to dry some of this waste. Also, transuranic waste contaminated with plutonium is radioactive for millions of years, and half of this was dumped into the ground.

Some of the waste at INEL is too contaminated to be stabilized. And we will be accepting 6 million cubic feet of mixed waste from both the U.S. Department of Energy and commercial sources for 'treatment,' probably incineration. This is in addition to the 1,133 new shipments agreed to by the Governor of Idaho. According to Steve, the proposed government fine for failure to remove certain materials is so small that it would be cheap rent for a permanent nuclear dump.

The federal government has accepted responsibility for nuclear waste by 1998, absolving the industry from responsibility, which amounts to a huge subsidy to private industry. Corporations such as Westinghouse and Lockheed Martin stand to make millions of dollars and are a powerful political influence in small states like Idaho. "Get the Waste Out" was a corporate front with funding from Lockheed Martin and others to back the Governor's agreement and confuse voters on the recent ballot initiative. Steve stated that the Yucca Mountain storage site in Nevada will probably never open and the WIPP plant in New Mexico has yet to open. SRA advocates a national waste policy that is fair and equitable to all. SRA also works to halt nuclear proliferation and to stop new plants. There were many questions. John and Vi Harms had friends exposed to radiation by nuclear testing in Nevada.

November 22 1996 The board decided to sponsor a booth at the Snake River Alliance Peace and Justice Fair on December 7. Joe Voight will buy or make a table and canopy. Leftovers from Hyde Park Street Fair will be sold or given away. A no-host dinner at the Flicks will replace the regular December meeting. The current newsletter editor, Dan Foster was resigning as he planned his upcoming wedding.

Idaho Society of Reason has joined Humanists of Idaho.

Meetings are held 2nd Sundays in Boise, 4th Sundays Nampa, starting with a noon potluck. Watch for details, changes at <https://www.meetup.com/Humanists-of-Idaho/>

January 2, 1997 A drenching downpour didn't stop 12 hardy souls. Jim Holden purchased a table for HOI use. Ed Chaney, natural resources consultant knowledgeable on the needs of Idaho's salmon will speak at the next monthly meeting. Possible future speakers were suggested, including, Jim Tompkins, Gaylord Walls, Marilyn Shuler and Leslie Goddard. Other possibilities: offering another community education course on humanism; helping someone receive training in Rational Recovery; recruiting a new Humanist counselor were discussed. Out of the discussion on how to gain more publicity on a limited budget, one member, Lou Ray, agreed to contact someone from the Statesman staff related to the religion page.

February 21 1997 The board heard that Dan Foster will accept duties as newsletter editor. They started arrangements to play a tape of an interview with Noam Chomsky for March.

March 6 1997 Twelve attendees. The newsletter was approved with typos corrected. Information about a new student Freethought movement was introduced and a volunteer offered to send a copy to a former sponsor of a BSU freethought group at BSU, Gaylord Walls. Dan Foster was approved to lead a new Internet project to establish and maintain a website. A motion was made and approved for the group to express its opposition to a proposed Idaho law that would subsidize private schools.

The first half of a video, "Manufacturing Consent" was shown, presenting the work of Noam Chomsky, activist author, linguist and philosopher. The second half will be shown at the home of Dale and Pat Hall, to save rental of vcr equipment.

April 21 1997 The nominating committee presented its slate of officers for the May membership meeting. Joe Voight agreed to report on a new organization, the Interfaith Alliance, a coalition of mainstream and liberal faiths recently organized to counter the influence of the radical religious right. Another possible speaker was mentioned, Terry Gilbert, who can represent the local chapter of Americans United for Separation of Church and State.

May 1 1997 Fourteen members attended. Dale Hall presented the proposed slate of new officers: John Harms for President, Lou Ray Vice President, Charlotte Chaney Secretary and Joe Voight Treasurer. Nicolle Nelson will be newsletter editor as Dan acts as internet representative. Content of the newsletter was discussed, validating a previous choice to emphasize positive expression of humanist ideas and avoid 'angry atheist' name-calling or ridicule. They will also avoid reprinting. Promotional material from Interfaith Alliance was shared, with some questions of whether Humanists are 'people of faith.'



Humanists of Idaho, a chapter of American Humanist Association & Council for Secular Humanism, is a nonprofit corporation promoting ethical, democratic, and naturalistic Humanism through public awareness, education and community involvement. See the meetup page or Facebook for calendar of events.

Officers for Humanists of Idaho

President	D Van Curen 409-6209 CelebrantVan@gmail.com
Vice President	Pat Acks pat@acksnet.com
Secretary	Jan Rowe 409-6209
Treasurer	Paul Rolig 863-2521 roligpd@gmail.com
(& Membership)	P.O. Box 44913 Boise ID 83711-0913
Newsletter	Jeanette Ross
Charitable giving	open

More from HOI, 1997-1998

May 23 1997 The board met at the home of the new president, John Harms. A summer picnic and 2 new speakers, Mary Kelly McColl of Planned Parenthood and Rabbi Fink were suggested.

June 5 1997 Members voted to suspend July and August meetings. Pat Hall raised the issue of proposed use of the Southwest Idaho, Owyhee region for bombing practice. When she urged the group to take a stand, Joe Voight stated he saw this as a political issue on which HOI should not take an official position. After discussion the group voted to support a call for the public to receive more information on this issue, and asked Pat Hall to prepare a draft letter.

Vi Harms expressed concern about the Governor's conflict with the gambling enterprises of Idaho's Native tribes. She spoke to the federal law granting treaty rights of independent people for traditional practices, which included gambling. Nicole Nelson asked for consideration of the group providing a booth for the upcoming Boise River Festival.

June 19 1997 board considered future speakers, including a city council candidate and Rabbi Fink. The group agreed to register for a booth at Hyde Park fair.

July 24 1997 The board considered the question of whether they should take a stand on breaching several Columbia river dams to allow survival of migrating salmon. This was postponed to allow for a knowledgeable presenter.

August 21 1997 The board discussed ways of raising visibility of humanists. John Harms suggested more group positions in the newspapers; Dan Foster suggested press releases. Joe Voight's recommendation that HOI support Idaho Atheists in opposition to a 10 commandments monument at Caldwell City Hall; this was unanimously approved and Dan agreed to write a press release. Another suggestion was to circulate the newsletter in area public and college libraries. Nicolle will look into having a booth at BSU events.

September 4 1997 had 12 attendees. Bylaws were amended to require the board to fill by appointment any board vacancies by the next board meeting. Members agreed to share volunteering at the upcoming Hyde Park fair.

September 18 1997 Hyde Park booth was declared a success; those signing up will receive 3 free newsletters. Vice President Lou Ray resigned and Nicolle Nelson was elected to fill the position. Nicole and Dan Foster announced their upcoming marriage; Nicole presented a new format for the newsletter, which was approved enthusiastically.

November 6 1997 Nicolle and Dan announced their plan to distribute HOI newsletters at area libraries.

Secular Idaho News is published by HOI. Yearly membership (\$25), family memberships (\$45) include SI News, paper or electronic copies. Distribution by Paul Rolig at roligpd@gmail.com. Mailed news subscription is \$15/year; electronic copies gratis. PO Box 44913 Boise ID 83711-0913. **Editor** Jeanette Ross jross@fortboise.org 208 870-6487 Event calendar at www.meetup.com/Humanists-of-Idaho; web <http://humanistsofidoaho.angelfire.com/>

December 4 1997 This General meeting was devoted to brainstorming ideas for becoming more active in the community. Suggestions: *John Harms will offer a course on Humanism at the Boise Unitarian Fellowship. * Mary Fran Groll will offer a similar course through the city's Community Schools. * the group will work toward bringing in a known speaker who would attract a crowd. * Individual HOI members will participate, volunteer with causes sympathetic to Humanist values. *HOI will object to beginning Boise City Council meetings with prayer. * Develop a Rational Recovery group. * Form a Humanist reading group. *Publicize HOI meetings on TV community calendars. * Hold public discussions, presentations, lectures. * Issue regular press releases. * Participate in the fall Snake River Alliance Peace Fair, December 6. * Advertise meetings in the Boise Weekly. * Resume inviting speakers to member meetings. * Support visibility to other groups by name tags t-shirts.. *Increase a letter-writing campaign to the Idaho Statesman. *Join efforts to sue Caldwell to force removal of the ten commandments memorial.

After discussion, the group agreed to attempt to find a major speaker and supported the more frequent press releases. Nicolle will look into having t-shirts designed and printed.

December 20 1997 John Harms agreed to look into a source for Humanist, non-religious funeral services. Another suggestion was to produce a simple brochure that provided information about HOI. The general meeting for January 1 was cancelled.

February 5, 1998 Eight attended this general member meeting. John Harms was thanked for his letter in support of legalizing homosexual marriage. John will look into supporting production of a tape of music by Rosalie Sorrells, which is humanist in character. Nicolle has applied for certification as a Humanist Celebrant.

HOI MINUTES 1998-9

February 19 1998 board meeting it was ruefully announced that attempting to contact a celebrity speaker was more difficult than anticipated. Dan and Nicolle will present information about Rational Recovery programs at a future meeting.

March 5 1998 John Harms played the BUUF-owned tape of Rosalie Sorrells. President Harms also presented information about Camp Quest, a secular humanist camp for youth.

Members contributed on the spot toward the \$80 cost of the license fee for Humanist Celebrant. Pat Hall announced that all were invited to hear activist Sam Day speak at their home on April 5.

March 19 1998 President Harms read the bill he had just submitted to the Statesman, thanking Governor Andrus for vetoing an abortion bill. Dr. Harms also brought information on the 57th conference of the American Humanist Association, to be held in May in San Diego. He said he felt it was important to send Nicolle to the meeting. She took the information and said she would see if she could take time off from her job.

The newsletter editor expressed frustration with the lack of member contributions to the publication. The secretary offered her suggestion that those who appreciate the work being done and want to see it continue in its present form should take this as a warning that more member support is needed.

April 2 1998 a new member, Chris Struble, was welcomed. Nicolle showed t-shirt designs already proposed and asked for more. Feedback to John Harms asked for estimates of the cost of producing a CD. There were objections to mention of 'god' in the music. Additional funds were donated to allow Nicolle to attend the AHA convention as an official delegate. Nicolle suggested that some members may be interested in receiving the newsletter by email, which would save printing and mailing costs. A vote was held to raise member costs to \$25 a year for individuals and \$45 for a family membership; this was approved. Dale Hall and Roberta Voight were appointed to come up with a slate of officers for the upcoming election.

April 23 1998 The election committee promised names soon. Nicolle announced she was attending the AHA conference.

May 7 1998 The annual meeting included new member Chris Struble and returning member Tim Teater. Only six members were present; with Chris Struble's encouragement and willingness to take the open office of secretary, new officers were elected including two not present (if willing to serve): Nicolle Foster president, Pat Hall Vice President, Chris Struble secretary and Eileen Ball, treasurer.

May 19 1998 board meeting had only 2 of the board present, with Dan Foster agreeing to step in as treasurer. Action items: Chris will draft a membership recruitment letter, examine by-laws for possible changes, finish an article for the biography section of the newsletter, contact the Council for Secular Humanism about member lists. Nicolle will contact AHA and freethought groups.

June 4 1998 Enough members were present for a final election. The revised May slate was approved. HOI now has 19 members. Nicole proposed holding coffee talks each month, with fliers distributed around the campus. Joe's motion to set aside the permanent building fund and not use it for membership purposes was approved. Pat and Dale Hall will host a summer solstice picnic June 21.

September 3 1998 Chris and LeAnne Struble invited members of HOI to their wedding, which will be officiated by Nicolle Foster, September 20. Dan Foster has found a Chapter Assembly of AHA to help local groups. There is a \$30 fee to join; the organization has a \$100,000 fund that offers grants for member groups. This was approved. Chris mentioned a new secular humanist Family Matters newsletter. The Strubles are hosting an October 30 Halloween party with potluck treats.

Finally, Dan made one more appeal for articles, book reviews, conversations and discussions in the newsletter.

November 5 1998 Chris shared an email response from the Association of Secular Humanist Societies, with costs and benefits of joining. Two boxes of food donations were collected at the Halloween party. Chris and LeAnne reported on humanist books in the local libraries; most holdings are quite old. Nicolle will make an appeal for donations of newer books about or by humanists for possible donation.

John made an appeal for a gift subscription category for giving memberships in HOI; he wanted to give one to the Twin Falls Unitarian Fellowship. A special 'newsletter only' category for \$15 was established.

December 16 1998 Nicole reported to the board on result of a search for rentable space for HOI. One available for \$188 per month might be doable if shared with another group. Chris reported that HOI's donation to a needy family was received with appreciation.

January 7 1999 Nicole reported that most letters to those previously signing sheets at events came back without response. The group approved joining the Council for Secular Humanism and writing for a subscriber list in Treasure Valley. The Strubles donated funds to pay for Nicolle's license fee for the following year. LeAnne raised the issue of children dying for lack of medical treatment when parents refuse all but prayer as treatment. Nicolle spoke about humanist funerals.

January 20 1999 Several members attended the MLK march that attracted an estimated one thousand marchers. Chris will write a letter to the editor on religious exemption to child abuse laws.

February 4 1999 Nicolle raised twice the cost of printing t-shirts and the extra funds went into the library book fund. HOI was approved to participate in the IDPTV Telethon; all agreed to use group funds to purchase t-shirts in time for this.

The Strubles are working on a bill to repeal religious exemptions from child neglect laws.

Paul Rolig - Media TV Coalition of Reason 208.863.2521
 roligpd@gmail.com www.TreasureValleyCoR.org
Dustin Williams - Coordinator dustinewilliams@gmail.com

There is a gap of five years in the records of HOI that I have been able to locate. Based on one set of minutes for the year 2000, it appears that Chris Struble was then HOI president and continued into 2005. I am reprinting his January 2005 Message.

HOI from 1999-2000 J Ross summaries conclude

The style and thus content of minutes changed significantly in 1999. The new secretary followed conventional format, including actions planned and completed. Here is a snapshot:

March 25 1999 At the board meeting, Chris Struble reported an agreement with the Council for Secular Humanism; they will send a mailing to all their members, state-wide, for the cost of mailing. HOI approved \$50 for pamphlets and postage. The newsletter editor, Daniel, said he was unable to meet his expectation that the newsletter include statements of "what members believe and are doing." Lacking this, the newsletter was temporarily replaced by a postcard informing members of upcoming events.

Efforts to bring in a major speaker continued. Chris Struble met with Hewlett Packard's Diversity Manager and contacted CSH, AHA and other groups to see if they could work together to do this. Nicolle Foster met with organizers for United Vision for Idaho and made note of their upcoming strategic planning meeting. She also contacted local hospitals to offer her services as a Humanist Celebrant.

April 1 1999 At the general meeting, Chris Struble reported that several of the books donated by HOI to the Boise Public Library had been checked out. Members approved paying the fee for Daniel Foster to attend the United Vision for Idaho strategic planning conference. During discussion of the loss of the newsletter, the Strubles offered to write and publish the newsletter for several months. "The Fosters will handle printing and mailing." Daniel Foster made a presentation on the Rational Recovery program and is interested in acting as coordinator. HOI will vote on paying the \$85 start-up fee and \$30 for the first year's expenses.

May 5 1999 Daniel Foster reported the gain of five new members as a result of the CSH mailing; this more than paid the cost of participation. Members approved paying the fee that will allow Daniel to start a Rational Recovery program in Boise. They also agreed to participate in the Children's Miracle Network Radio-thon taking place at Boise Towne Square. Election of officers: the proposed slate was approved unanimously.

Daniel and Chris formed a committee to review the bylaws for possible changes. Mary Fran Groll then "discussed a proposal called the Binding Triad to reform the United Nations and make it into a world government. The Center for War and Peace Studies is eliciting support for this proposal. Mary Fran would like the HOI to consider supporting this, and handed out materials for the group to review."

August 5 1999 Daniel Foster proposed moving meetings to the Boise Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Garden City, for wheelchair access, ample parking and outreach opportunities. This was approved. LeAnn Struble is contacting Camp Quest about having a similar program in our region. She also encouraged all to "write the Nampa Library and commend them for standing up to pressure from the religious right."

President's Update By Chris Struble

As I write this, the Christmas holiday is a week away and the New Year soon to come. As I reflect on the events of the past year, my feelings include a mix of disappointment and pride, regret and hope.

Like many of you, I decided some time ago that the best way for me to spend my energy to defend humanist values was to work for the defeat of George W. Bush. My disappointment is not only in the Americans who voted for Bush, but in the weakness of the Democratic party leadership and voters in the early primaries who selected a weak candidate like John Kerry to run against Bush. The presidential campaign was a debate about competence rather than values, about nuance rather than direction, about what kind of imperial power America was going to be rather than whether we were going to be an empire at all.

I am proud of the fact that I got involved and made a difference. I became active in the Howard Dean presidential campaign, I was a delegate to the Idaho State Democratic convention, and I helped start a new organization called the Idaho Progressive Caucus to promote progressive candidates and issues within the Democratic Party. I donated and knocked on doors and made phone calls for candidates. I also became co-host of a new political talk radio show called **The Progressive Voice**. I made new friends, learned about coalition building and organizing and messaging, all of which I hope to put to good use for humanism. The one regret I have about putting all this energy into politics is that I didn't have as much energy left to put into Humanists of Idaho. Despite this there have been some important accomplishments during the past year.

Working with members of a new humanist group recently formed within the Boise Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, members of Humanists of Idaho organized the first ever **Intermountain Humanist Symposium** on October 23rd. Mel Lipman, president of the American Humanist Association, came to Boise to give a talk on prospects for humanism in the future, and how humanists should present ourselves and our values to the world. I would like to thank the planning committee, including Rick Groff, Jeanette Ross, Phyl Hower, LeAnne Struble, and Paul Rolig for making this event happen. 25 people attended the symposium, and we had some wonderful discussions and came away with new energy and commitment.

That energy has shown itself in recent meetings. In December, 15 people attended the humanist meeting at the BUUF, and the new Boise Humanism Meetup had 10 people, many of them new people. We also have a new online discussion group for humanists in Idaho to share, discuss, and keep in touch with each other.

Sage Utilities

These days, the robots read your gas and electric meter, but it was not always thus. Chuck Hansen's first job after serving in the Navy during WW II was reading meters in Albany, NY and he collected some interesting experiences along with the kilowatts and cubic feet. He'll share his stories at the next gathering of the BUUF Sages, and you're invited. We meet at the Kopper Kitchen (2661 Airport Way) over a no-host breakfast at 9:30 am, Thursday, February 8. Newcomers are welcome! Contact Tom von Alten (tva@fortboise.org or 208 378-1217) for more information.

BUUF Humanists meet for conversation 3rd Sundays, 11:15 am, in the Boise Unitarian Universalist Fellowship library. February 18 we will begin plans for a Humanist summer service..

BUUF Sages meet 9:30am, 2nd Thursdays, February 8 and 22, 9:30am, at the Kopper Kitchen, near the Boise airport.

Reprinted from January 2005 Humanists of Idaho News

from Chris Struble's January 2005 President's Report

One of the questions I hoped to learn from the October symposium was where we fit in the spectrum between atheism and liberal churches like the Unitarian Universalists. I believe Humanists of Idaho has several unique things to offer.

As an independent organization, **we can reach out to all humanists**. Humanism is a life stance in which we can live ethical lives for the greater good of humanity, without supernaturalism. Beyond that we shouldn't require people to use or not to use a particular label such as atheist, rationalist, freethinker, "bright", spiritual, or religious to describe themselves. We can be neutral territory where all humanists can meet and share their perspectives and journeys.

An emphasis on **social action**. Humanists believe we have a responsibility to act on our knowledge and try to make the world a better place while we are here. While other secular groups focus on religious criticism and separation of church and state issues, I believe that we should be a catalyst for social action within our communities. We should be actively involved in charitable work and show through deeds that humanists are good people.

An emphasis on **ritual**. Humanists believe in enjoying life here and now and in celebrating the milestones in our lives with rituals that give us meaning. Whether it is births, weddings, deaths, or the passing of the seasons, ritual is important to us. In the past, one of our most important reasons for existing was to enable one of our members to provide weddings and celebration services. We can again become a place to share ideas on secular celebrations, rituals, and traditions.

An emphasis on **communication**. As a chapter of two national humanist groups that often speak out on national issues, we have an obligation to do the same on issues in our communities. It is important that we learn how to communicate the humanist perspective in a positive way, and be engaged in local debate so that our neighbors expect to hear our point of view and come to understand it even if they don't agree.

I hope to see you and hear from you at future meetings or online. Let us focus on building our community and working toward our own goals.

Humanist President Speaks at Building Dedication By Chris Struble

In November 21, 2004, I was asked to say a few words on behalf of the humanist community of Idaho in the dedication of the newly expanded Boise Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Garden City. I sat in a place of honor alongside ministers of many faiths. About 400 people were present. Here is what I said:

"When I considered what to say today I turned as I often do to the wisdom of the Native Americans. Chief Joseph of the Nez Perce once said 'We do not want churches because they will teach us to quarrel about God. We may quarrel with men sometimes about things on this Earth. But we never quarrel about God. We do not want to learn that.'

His words reminded me of several things. They sound a lot like what most humanists feel about most churches most of the time. But they also remind me that what matters about buildings, including churches, is what we do inside them and after we leave them, and that what we do inside them and after shapes how others feel about the building itself.

What I feel about this building is welcome. To me it represents the knowledge that this valley will continue to have a community that welcomes all seekers and affirms the dignity of each person to find his or her own path. That is truly worth celebrating. May it always be so."

After the dedication several people thanked me for my words. It was quite an honor and I was proud to represent our community in that moment.

The Future of Humanism

Notes from Mel Lipman's talk at the Intermountain Humanist Symposium, Boise Idaho

Mel Lipman, president of the American Humanist Association, was kind enough to share the notes from his speech at the Intermountain Humanist Symposium on October 23rd, 2004. There are some great talking points here:

Humanism is a life stance in which we can live ethical lives for the greater good of humanity, without supernaturalism.

Estimated 13 million Americans don't believe in God; we need to be heard as an organized block rather than individually.

Two greatest threats Humanists face are:

Danger of our country becoming a theocracy; and

Overt and covert discrimination against non-super-naturalists.

President Bush stating he will only appoint federal judges "who know our rights come from god".

AHA has launched its religious liberty initiative this past July to strengthen wall of separation between church and state from a uniquely Humanist perspective.

The HUMANIST magazine last month featured four major articles on church/state issues.

Holly Near's song "I ain't afraid". (Listen to it at: <http://thomasmc.com/1204hn.htm>)

(Humanists) need to form coalitions; need for more public exposure; need to run for elective offices.

(We) need to remove stigma in this country of Humanists being immoral, unpatriotic hedonists.

(We) need to stop debating among ourselves regarding terms we use--atheist, humanist, agnostic, god, spiritual, religious, etc.

(We should) Devote our energies to eliminating perception that morality depends on supernatural beliefs.

Encourage young people to come out of closet and be as proud of their beliefs as are the supernaturalists.

Instead of attacking religion, let's talk about our own philosophy of life.

Let's talk about the joy we have in living a life free of superstition.

Radical attacks on "religion" generally, will only polarize religionists and create more fundamentalism.

I can co-exist with liberal and even moderate religionists. It is the fundamentalists who concern me.

Being critical of other beliefs is not the defining characteristic of Humanism.

Let's talk about the promises of Humanism--the good life here and now.

CHILDREN-- How do we nurture the beliefs of Humanist children? Don't be defensive when asked the offensive question, "How do you raise your children?" Respond by asking the questioner how THEY raise their children, then explain how Humanist children are taught to live ethically and to be concerned with all of humanity.

My personal "wish list" for my Humanist grandchildren:

That their beliefs concerning human origins and destination will be as accepted as are the beliefs of supernaturalists.

That their beliefs (or non-beliefs) will not be considered if they decide to run for the presidency of our country.

That our government will be completely out of the business of legislating morality based on some book of mythology.

And finally, That the words to John Lennon's song, "Imagine" will no longer be figments of our imagination but will be reality.

We are the future of Humanism.

At our January meeting, BUUF Humanists discussed the hows and whys of the group, along with the question of what to focus upon this coming year. By consensus we decided to add some structure, or 'scaffolding' to the current rather loose procedure. Wherever possible we will share leadership as we share our interests, life experiences and the lessons learned.

For the next several months we will also be working toward the presentation of a humanist summer service.

Also of note: Jeanette will lead "The Roots of Humanism," five classes meeting on Tuesday evenings starting February 13, 7 to 8:30pm, in the Channing room of BUUF. Expect a highly interactive experience drawing from many cultures and ages, leading into the many forms humanism takes today.

No book purchase needed; materials will be provided. There is no charge for the class

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

Please join us with a membership in Humanists of Idaho,
the sponsors of this newsletter.

*A single one year membership of \$25 or family membership of \$45 means
that you are supporting the humanist cause in Idaho.*

*With assistance from activists in Idaho Society of Reason, HOI organizes
events, maintains social and other media (including the newsletter) and edu-
cates itself on policy and law related to secular society.*

See page three for who to contact and how.

*And if you have joined, please attend our May annual meeting to help select
leaders for the next two years. HOI is a democratic nonprofit organization.*