

THE HUMANIST

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE HUMANISTS OF NORTHEAST FLORIDA

PO BOX 1143 ORMOND BEACH FL 32175

PUBLISHED MONTHLY

June 2004

OUR GOAL IS THE APPLICATION OF REASON AND SCIENCE TO UNDERSTAND
NATURE AND TO EXERCISE HUMAN COMPASSION TO SOLVE HUMAN PROBLEMS

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The Humanists of Northeast Florida

will meet on Saturday

JUNE THE 12TH

at **1:00 PM** at the Ormond Beach Library located at 30 S. Beach St. in Ormond Beach.

The topic will be

“An Almighty Alpha”

**How Our Primate Heritage Contributes
to Belief in God.**

Our presenter will be:

Andrew Bernardin,

writer, lecturer, and adjunct professor of psychology for Daytona Beach Community College. Two of Andrew's recent talks have been put into article format for publication in Sceptic magazine. He is currently working on what he describes as a feel good book for atheists.

A discussion period will follow the presentation.

*A coffee/social hour will
again take place after this meeting.*

MONTHLY EVENTS CALENDAR

General Meeting : 6.12. – 1:00 PM

Ormond Beach Library

Board Meeting : 6.16. – 10:00 AM

Ormond Beach Library

Brunch / Bunch : 6.27. – 10:30 AM

Riviera Country Club

Our pre-meeting lunch on June the 12th will take place as always at 11:00 AM in the Dining Room of the

Riviera Country Club

located at Calle Grande Ave. in Ormond Beach. If you wish to attend the pre-meeting lunch, please give **Rosalyn** a call at **(386) 761-1456**.

May Meeting

Our May meeting was attended by 27 guests who were eager to find out what Mr. Bidgood had to say about the global and local water crisis. He convinced us, that despite the immense amount of water in front of our doorsteps the world in general is facing a tremendous water problem if we do not get our act together and learn how to manage our natural resources more intelligently. I regret that more people did not attend the program of great concern to all.

July meeting

The meeting on July the 10th has not been finalized at the time of this writing and therefore shall be announced in our July newsletter.

June Board Meeting

The board meeting for the month of June will be as usual on the third Wednesday, which is

June the 16th

at 10:00 AM. It will take place in the Ormond Beach Library and is followed by our monthly Birthday/Social luncheon at 12:00 noon in the **Riviera Country Club**, located at Calle Grande Ave. in Ormond Beach.

Brunch with the Bunch

Brunch with the Bunch will be on the **last Sunday** of each month; in this case it will be **June the 27th** at **10:30 AM** at the Riviera Country Club, located at Calle Grande Ave. in Ormond Beach. As usual it is always a casual, friendly get-together, which provides the opportunity to exchange those special and sometimes even trivial thoughts. **Everybody is**

welcome – we love your company!! If you plan to join us, please give Rosalyn a call. Her phone number is (386) 761- 1456.

THOUGHTS OF THE EDITOR

Neo Conservatism –

the new slogan ?

Or is it the American philosophy of the 21st Century.

What does it really mean to be a “new” conservative ? According to the dictionary and various encyclopedias it means traditional, adhering to past customs, maintaining old established values.

In other words to avoid things or thoughts which are considered to be harmful or in disagreement with the traditional way of life or old philosophies. As we well know some people in our society are embracing mainly the thoughts postulated in the “big book.” I realize that this definition is sort of simplistic, but it is in essence what conservative people advocate. I believe firmly, that they are not adhering to their philosophy. They are pragmatic conservatives as long as it suits them. They are willing to believe what was said yesteryear as expressed in the bible but accept modern science and technology if it makes their life more comfortable and secure. For instance: Very few prefer medical treatment the old fashion or traditional way. Because, doing so the chance of survival would be frequently minimal or even non-existent; therefore they accept the latest “know how” science has provided hoping it will prolong their life or at least make it better.

How about looking in the political arena of our world ? We as the richest nation in the world believe in our tradition and apparently are not accepting that other cultures also have traditions. By our own definition those other cultures are actually behaving like conservatives trying to maintain their way of life.

Recent history demonstrates very clearly that we do not behave like conservatives when the biggest chief in the country has recently publicly proclaimed:

“We will change the world.”

Is this a conservative view point or a *neo* conservative stance ? I rather think it is none of the above but pure political adventurism ? I can not believe our motive to free those oppressed people was undertaken out of sheer altruistic concerns. If we would be so **“holy”** we would have done much more to prevent the starvation of so many other poor people in other parts of the world. Maybe those other poor people are not sitting on huge oil fields, therefore their plight is of secondary concern. Some of you who are reading the above will now say: “ This is the attitude of a typical liberal or even a marxist. But the truth is, that I feel I am neither one. Mankind and in particular our society has made enormous advancements in so many ways that the goal in our world should be to apply our efforts to ensure the best possible life for all mankind on this planet as long as we occupy it. Conservatism, liberalism, catholicism, communism etc., are labels. They were born during various times on the evolutionary ladder of mankind describing a multitude of life philosophies created by some brilliant but also often fanatic “apostles.”

Our society is sufficiently enlightened to embrace true **Humanism** which should transcend any single minded viewpoint and subsequent action.

MEMBERS FORUM

Our friend, member and camp Quest advocate Jim Strayer submitted this very poignant and touching story about an encounter he had while he was an instructor at this camp.

A Camp Quest experience

At Camp Quest the campers are from eight to twelve years old. There are also older campers age thirteen to sixteen, referred to as CIT's (Counselors In Training). These kids do the regular camp activities and also are given special responsibilities.

The camp directors decided to take the CIT's to a very nice restaurant in Lebanon, Ohio for being so helpful for the week at camp. The restaurant is a “Washington Slept Here” kind of place and is always booked up. The owners made arrangements for the five CIT's and three counselors to come early to eat and then have a special tour through the restaurant's revolutionary period museum.

I did not attend.

After the outing the CIT's and Counselors returned to the camp and I saw one of the young ladies sitting on a picnic table near the cabin area. She was alone with her elbows on her knees and her chin resting in her hands. I thought she looked troubled.

I went to speak to her and asked if anything was wrong. She looked up with tears in her eyes and said:

“ I have never been to a real sit down restaurant. We ate at a table. We had silverware. We had cloth napkins. The waiter talked to me. I had a salad on a special plate. I had a pork chop and we had coffee and cake for dessert. It was the best night of my life.”

Before I could respond some of the other Campers came over.

She said, “ Please don't tell them I cried.” She ran off with them to the camp fire. It was one of the best nights of my life too.

Jim Strayer

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY
WISHES**

TO

**All the wonderful members and
friends who entered this world
during the months of June
and July .**

**Jim Warner 06.05
Shirley H. Lane 06.19
Carroll W. Mitchel 06.30
Rosalyn Pluzynski 07.06
Marty King 07.26
Glen Law 07.28**



The Board of 2004

The President **Dennis Deshaies**
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(386) 761-1456



*Whatever you do -
Wherever you go -*

Please

Take good care of yourself !!!

Health report

We are pleased to report that our friend and member Ray Pluzynski appears to be on the way to recovery. Hopefully he will be seen again at one of our next meetings.

Dear Members and Friends

I wish to repeat what we announced in our previous newsletter, namely that our web site is established and running. You will find many interesting bits of information concerning our chapter as well as related topics in the wide world of humanism. In case you have forgotten or misplaced our address, here it is again:

<http://northeastflorida.humanists.net/>

This Web site was created by Larry Munding. If there is someone who would like to take over the web site Larry would not be offended. In fact, he would be delighted.

Anybody out there interested? Please get in touch with Larry. (904) 471-6148

Membership Application –and Renewal
Humanists of Northeast Florida
Dues per calendar year: Regular \$25.00. Family \$35.00, Patron \$100.00

Optional

Name:.....Birth date:.....

Address:.....

.....

.....

Phone :.....e-
mail:.....

To be paid by check or money order to the
Humanists of Northeast Florida
PO Box 1143, Ormond Beach, FL 32175