

The



HUMANISTS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE HUMANISTS OF NORTHEAST FLORIDA

PO BOX 1143 ORMOND BEACH FL 32175

PUBLISHED MONTHLY

July 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

JULY THE 10TH

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

The topic will be

“What is Humanism ”

A search for labels for religious believes

Please join us and let us know what you think ? This presentation will deviate from previous meetings in as much as it will be conducted in a discussion format with audience participation. With your help we will explore the subject of this meeting. The group discussion will be moderated by Dan Kennedy, PhD. and Marti King.

MONTHLY EVENTS CALENDAR

General Meeting : 7.10. – 1:00 PM
Ormond Beach Library

Board Meeting : 7.21. – 10:00 AM
Ormond Beach Library

Brunch / Bunch : 6.25. – 10:30 AM
Riviera Country Club

A coffee/social hour will again take place after this meeting, followed to the first time by a free wheeling “ After Glow” discussion. Everybody is welcome to participate!

Our pre-meeting lunch on July the 10th 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**.

June Meeting

Our June meeting was attended by 32 guests who were eager to find out what Mr. Andrew Bernardin, had to say about the Almighty Alpha. He showed us in a lengthy dissertation how hierarchies were formed in early history of mankind and at the same time how other primates establish their "ALPHA". Unfortunately I missed in his presentation the link or leap to the concept of God and thereby the human need for religion.

August meeting

The meeting on August the 14th has not been finalized at the time of this writing and therefore shall be announced in our August newsletter.

July Board Meeting

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

July the 21st

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. As usual it is always a casual friendly

Brunch with the Bunch

Brunch with the Bunch will be on the last Sunday of each month; in this case it will be July the 25th at 10:30 AM at the Riviera Country Club, located at Calle Grand 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

Traditions –

The Color of Human History !

This word or better this expression seems so closely linked to the political conservative landscape that I often wonder and think:

“Are those people who use this term the only ones in this world who have a tradition”?

As you all know, nothing is really further from the truth. There is not a human group or society in this world which is without tradition. As a matter of fact it is the foundation and fertilizer to drive human development. It is the interpretation and subsequent conclusion which leads to various paths of evolutionary developments. We just have to look around us in this world of ours and we can see how different many populations and societies are. This applies equally well to the “in our eyes” most primitive tribes as well as to the most advanced nations. My question here is: “At what point does any society have the right to force any other group to convert to the **almighty alpha** with their so called “superior traditions”?

We pride ourselves of being a democratic nation who among many other virtues, but also shortcomings, embrace the free expression of the individual and therefore the whole society. Do we or any other powerful nation have the right to impose on other cultures the traditions or ideals of the strongest bully on the block? After all what separates us from other primates is that we have developed a superior brain which has created magnificent examples of human ingenuity and achievements but unfortunately also horrendous tools to destroy all mankind.

How come that the same brainpower seems to be incapable to create a peaceful coexistence for all humans on this planet?

Is this also part of tradition or are there sinister forces at work which strive in reality for maximum power regardless how many people have to pay the ultimate price?

Dwight David Eisenhower, a great Republican President and successful General who

went with his troops during WW 2 through hell and back coined in April of 1953 the following phrase:

"Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed!"

I believe this statement is as true now as it was then, unless it was just a political slogan as so many others for the purpose of catching votes. It does not take much to become cynical and doubt any statement made by politicians regardless of their address.

I don't like to end my rambling without letting some greater minds of American history express their views:

Mankind is now in one of its rare moods of shifting its outlook. The mere compulsion of tradition has lost its force.

A.N. Whitehead

We should not forget that our tradition is one of protest and revolt and it is stultifying to celebrate the rebels of the past.... while we silence the rebels of the present.

H.S. Commager

The transcendentalists at least escaped the life-hating Christian tradition sufficiently to attempt to achieve a new environment, misguided and essentially childish as those attempts now seem.

C Hartley Grattan

other than to say that it was very successful.

The second was a study of two microorganisms (Camp Quest has four excellent microscopes), a single celled organism and a multicellular organism. This was only partially successful because many

of the organisms died before they could be observed. It did give me a chance to explain that in science experiments sometimes fail.

I also led field trips to have campers learn to identify common plants and to understand environmental relationships.

There was, of course, lots of other activities that I was involved with. I went swimming everyday, was a witness in a mock "burn the witch" trial, and I took part in amateur night. One of the other counselors and I sang "The Unicorn," one of Shell Silverstein's best songs about Noah's Ark.

The most rewarding part of the experience for me may have been the chats with campers and the more serious discussions with other councilors. The Director of Camp Quest, Edward Kagin has been involved in many debates and law suits with creationists. Larry Drably who heads the Atheist Law Center was there. He had many interesting stories to relate. One of the young counselors, Jeff Shawn is very involved with the Holocaust Museums of Cincinnati. He runs the traveling museum and trains others to work at other Holocaust Museums. Fred Edwards, the editor of the American Humanist Magazine is there every year and is a store house of information. There are too many to detail here.

When the week is done I am never sure who has gained the most from the Camp Quest experience, campers or councilors. I can assure you that at the close of the camp there was much hugging, exchange of e-mail address and, "I'll see you next year."

Jim Strayer

MEMBERS FORUM

My Camp Quest experience

I have been talking at HONEF meetings and writing in this newsletter about Camp Quest for a number of years. It came to me that I have given much information about the camp and the young people who attend, but never written much about what I do at the camp. The 2004 camp ran from June 19th to 27th. I hope you find this interesting.

This year I had two main projects. One was to hold an evolution laboratory exercise where the campers dissected and compared the anatomy of sharks and frogs. I do not need to get into details

The Board of 2004

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- Social Chairperson *Rosalyn Pluzynski*
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HAPPY BIRTHDAY WISHES
TO ALL THE WONDERFULL
MEMNERS AND FRIENDS
 who entered this world during the months
 of *July and August*

Rosalyn Pluzynski	07.06
Marti King	07.26
Glen Law	07.28
Dennis Deshaies	08.19
Cal Olmstead	08.22
Helga Law	08.31

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Dear Members and Friends

IN Memoriam

With deep regret we have learned that our long time member and friend

Vivian Carlson

died on May 25, 2004. . Vivian and Art Carlson were close friends of John and Dennis Deshaeis , and according to

Dennis were founding members of HONEF. They visited John almost daily during his various stays in St. Augustine nursing facilities.

While we don' t know any details, we know that Vivian had been undergoing chemo therapy for cancer for more than two years. Art and Vivian moved back to Wisconsin last fall, so Vivian could be near her children and grandchildren. I remember Vivian and Art as very frequent visitors to our monthly meetings as well our occasional Sunday brunches. Their friendly faces will be missed by all of us !

Whatever you do -

Wherever you go

Please

Take good care of yourself !!!

