

Atheists and Other Freethinkers Newsletter

January 2000

Contents

- [January 9 Meeting](#)
- [December speaker](#)
- [Quoted](#)
- [Darwin Day Celebration](#)
- [Convention of the Atheist Alliance, Inc.](#)
- [Internet site of the month](#)
- [Humanist discussion/message board](#)
- [Help is needed for the AAI Convention...](#)
- [Highway Cleanup](#)
- [Correction](#)
- [Calendar of Events](#)

January 9 Meeting

The January speaker will be Lori Thompson from Planned Parenthood. Lori will discuss the importance of family planning and reproductive health care to our community, the current political climate for reproductive issues and trends for the future. Her discussion will include legislative bills of the last few years and bills upcoming in next session, such as requiring insurance companies to provide coverage for the birth control pill. Many medical insurance policies cover Viagra but the pill is not covered and is left as an expense for the individual woman. Lack of coverage for the pill presents a burden to low income women. Historically, one of the biggest opponents of legislation to include contraception needs in medical insurance coverage is the Catholic Church, objecting to having to provide contraception to employees of Catholic hospitals.

December speaker

The speaker at the December meeting was AOF President Dave Flanders, speaking on the Humanist Manifesto 2000. Dave provided some history of the Humanist Manifesto in 1933 and Humanist Manifesto II in 1973, illustrating how the views were modified by the conditions of the times -- the depression in the first case, and the aftermath of World War II, the United Nations, the women's movement, and other forces in the second case.

Dave made comments regarding the document--including the idea that our 'tribal minds' have a difficult time adapting to this modern world. Dave described the Humanist Manifesto 2000 as planetary humanism, recognizing the need to work with the natural environment. Humanist Manifesto 2000 emphasizes that we are responsible for our own destiny, and that we can best solve our problems by rational inquiry. It provides a strong defense of human rights. Of special significance is the "Planetary Bill of Rights and Responsibilities": we have a responsibility to humanity as a whole, to end poverty and disease, and to ensure peace and prosperity for every member of the world community. The Manifesto recommends concrete reforms to achieve these goals: a new planetary income tax, the regulation of global conglomerates, open access to the media, population stability, environmental protection, an effective security system, development of a system of World Law, and a new World Parliament. The Manifesto urges us to rise above parochial ethnic nationalism and divisive multiculturalism and to focus on our commitment to the survival of the human species on the planet. And it invites people of goodwill, representing diverse cultural, ethnic, and religious tradition, to work together in forging a new planetary humanism.

No doubt some of the recommendations of the Manifesto may be considered radical, even utopian, but surely humanism should provide high ethical ideals, which, although difficult to achieve today, are worthy of attainment tomorrow." There was considerable audience discussion as the presentation went along, offering elaboration and views of the Humanist Manifesto and related contemporary thinking.

Quoted

So far as I can remember, there is not one word in the Gospels in praise of intelligence.

Bertrand Russell

Darwin Day Celebration

Sunday Feb 6, 1:00-3:30

The third annual Darwin Birthday celebration will be held on February 6 from 1:00-3:30. It will be at a different location this year, the Coloma Community center, 4623 T Street, Sacramento. See the flyer with this newsletter for more information.

Internet site of the month

<http://www.biblicalastronomer.org/>

This site is dedicated to the proposition that the earth is the center of the universe -- and it doesn't move. This is a difficult position to defend -- much more difficult in 2000 than it was in 1000. You can assess the quality of the defense. This is also the site of the quarterly publication "Biblical Astronomy".

Humanist discussion/message board

Dale Marshall of [human_ism@onelist](mailto:human_ism@onelist.com) writes:

All members of the freethought or Humanist community, and any others interested, are invited to join in discussions on any topic at Human_ism@onelist.com. This list is an outgrowth of the Humanism list which was hosted by Internet Infidels, and we hope it will become a nucleus for agnostics, atheists, freethinkers, and Humanists -- not just throughout the US, but around the world.

Discussions of articles in Humanist publications, of ethical questions arising from today's news or from personal experiences, of political opinions, and of social agendas are all fodder for the list. The site at OneList has a Calendar section, where we'll be happy to post upcoming events and meetings as a convenience for your membership and as a way of informing others in your area so that they may attend or join your group.

We'll be happy to put a link to your website in the section provided for that, as well. By functioning as a lively discussion site *and* a message board, we hope that more networking will be available for all.

Many on our list are members of AHA; some are affiliated with CSH, IHEU, HAC, and BHA. Our membership has included English speakers from the US, Canada, UK, Australia, and Germany. No group membership or particular outlook is required of list members; we are seeking to expand our community, provide a way for groups to talk to each other concerning common issues, and for individuals to become aware of the diversity and appeal of Humanist thought. We see this list as the best way for a grass-roots expansion of the freethought movement -- we are independent of any organization and will remain so.

Discussion of the alliances and antipathies among the organizations is encouraged so that we may all be informed and help move toward more democratic and participatory freethought in the world.

Please join us! Invite your friends and fellow members, if you are in a group, to do so as well. And please exploit the opportunity to publicize your meetings and events on the site.

You may join by sending a message to Human_ism-subscribe@onelist.com or going to

http://www.onelist.com/community/Human_ism.

Any questions, or announcements to be posted, may be directed to me at

Human_ism-owner@onelist.com

I look forward to meeting you at our Virtual Community.

Dale Marshall

Help is needed for the AAI Convention

April 21-23, 2000, to be hosted by AOF.

Thanks to all who have volunteered already. The following jobs still need to be filled:

1. Packet Stuffers: With information from the Treasurer (Kay Dickey), stuff packets for convention attendees with programs, name tags, meal tickets, Sacramento information. We have a few volunteers already, but will need more to complete the job just before the convention.
2. Debate Liaisons: Deal with debaters concerning their special needs. Post convention, work with treasurer (Kay Dickey) to split debate revenues.
3. Registration Greeters: Greet guests and collect fees from those not pre-registered, distribute registration packets, direct guests to meeting rooms. We have a couple of volunteers already, but need more to cover convention dates.
4. Moderators: Introduce speakers, ensure A/V operators have checked equipment, refer Speakers to A/V operators for slide operations, ensure speakers remain within time frames. We have a couple of volunteers but will need more to cover the convention.
5. Audio-Visual Operators: Check equipment, Report malfunctions to hotel liaisons (Cleo & Hank Kocol). Obtain slides from speakers, load slide trays, operate equipment as needed.
6. Sales: Staff table for AOF and convention sales items, collect money, make change, replenish supplies, report proceeds to treasurer.
7. Recorder Liaisons: Obtain speakers' releases, Work with contractor for video and audio taping of speakers and debate.
8. VIP Shuttle: Meet arriving VIPs at airport and shuttle from and to airport. We have one volunteer, but will need a couple more.

This is our chance to showcase AOF and its members in a national setting. Volunteers at the convention itself will have the opportunity to meet famous atheists from throughout the country and to show off AOF and the Sacramento area. Let's be great hosts for this convention.

For further information and/or to volunteer, contact Hank Kocol, hkocol@hotmail.com.

Highway Cleanup

The next AOF highway cleanup is scheduled for Saturday, Jan.8 at 9am.

Correction

The address in the November newsletter for Elizabeth Bernstein's book of poetry was incorrect.
The correct address is:

PO Box 94
Paradise, CA 95967-0094