



President's Corner

by David Schafer

YES, IT HAS BEEN A VERY LONG TIME since our last newsletter. We've heard from enough of you to be acutely aware that you have missed hearing from us, and while we appreciated the compliment we have deeply regretted the circumstances that have made it difficult for us to keep in touch. This has, as you'll see, been a year of surprises and adjustments—not all happy, but one or two, as it is turning out, very happy indeed. In the present installment I want to walk you through the year, bring you up-to-date, and, by the time I'm finished, persuade you that in spite of the unexpected we're still very much in business and our prospects look brighter than ever!

A good place to start might be well before the General Assembly of 2004, in the first week of March, when I received a letter from attorneys in St. Louis for the estate of Charlotte Ann Metzger, deceased, with a check for \$1,149.54 as HUUmanists' share of her estate's income for 2004. The bequest to HUUmanists was to be used in memory of her late husband, Edgar L. Metzger. I received no further information about this bequest until just before Memorial Day, when I telephoned the attorneys to inquire further about it. I'll have more to say below about that conversation.

The next significant event was also before the GA, on June 8, when HUUmanists, as a UUA independent affiliate, received an inquiry from the UUA Board of Trustees represented by Lyn Conley, asking for our responses to four questions for the purpose of "evaluating the current system of associate/affiliate/other related organizations." Our affiliate status is something we've always considered an essential part of our identity and our development plan, and we replied promptly and fully. I'll come back to this also.

At the GA in Long Beach our Board met to outline the tasks we wanted to set for ourselves and concluded, among other things, that we need to recruit volunteers! We were also proud to present two excellent workshops, each twice. The first, "What's 'Intelligent' About Intelligent Design?" with Eugenie Scott, Executive Director of the National Center for Science Education, anticipated the nation's current puzzlement over I.D. In "Not Your Father's Humanism" a panel including Kendyl Gibbons, Katy Korb, and me offered three views of Humanism's continuing evolution over the years. We had good attendance at both these workshops. You can read more about the Board meeting and the I.D. workshop in this issue.

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Returning home I immediately began to investigate various HUUmanists options for programs at GA 2005. By the middle of August, six weeks later, we had made definite arrangements for one workshop featuring our first choice as speaker—Prof. Paul Woodruff (see below). In early July I also set out to meet our quarterly publication deadline for an issue of *HUUmanists News* detailing our experiences at GA 2004 in Long Beach. As I contacted various people who had been assigned at Long Beach to collect specific information—about workshops, meetings of the Board and the membership, new members, and especially our financial situation—very slowly it became apparent to Bob Prestemon, our treasurer, and me that because of vacations, family emergencies (one of them extreme!), one computer crash, and even the threatened collapse of one building being remodeled neither Bob nor I would get the information we needed in time to meet the quarterly deadline. Reluctantly I decided we must make the best of the situation and put out a double issue in the next quarter, including an analysis of the November election. As it happened it was just as well that I did so, because the last of the GA data we'd requested didn't reach us until the end of October!

I had spent the last week of October trying out various possible designs for our first advertisement in the *UU World*, scheduled for the Jan/Feb issue. After getting the reactions of Bob Prestemon and some other interested HUUmanists, and especially a lot of professional advice from Kathy Todd at the UUA, I finally settled on one that we all seemed to prefer. (Did you see it, on p. 46? Any suggestions for the next one?)

From then on things began to go better—at least if you don't count the election results, about which Sarah Oelberg spoke to the Humanists of Minnesota on November 14. She gave me permission to publish her talk (it's in this issue), and I believe we were almost ready to go to press when I got a letter from Roger Brewin on December 3, wondering why the HUUmanists weren't included among affiliated organizations in the new UUA directory! This was very worrisome news to me because, again, we have always prized our status as a UUA independent affiliate, and some of our most ambitious development plans depended on it—for instance, we had just made prominent reference to that

status in our *UU World* advertisement.

Sure enough, when I phoned Nancy Lawrence, assistant to Kay Montgomery, UUA Executive Vice President, I learned for the first time that 10 months earlier, at the beginning of February, a renewal application form had been mailed to all independent affiliate organizations, and that since it had not been completed and returned by the deadline we had been dropped for at least one year. Nothing could be done now about the fact that I had not received (or even expected!) this form. There was a good deal of speculation about why I hadn't received it, but no satisfactory explanation. Nancy suggested that for UUA purposes I should give my home address as the HUUmanists address, and I did so then and there. Although the rules specified that we were not to represent ourselves as an independent affiliate, I was told that our coming advertisement in the Jan/Feb *UU World* wouldn't be held against us, and in February 2005 we would be invited to submit another application for reaffiliation. The most obvious result of our not being officially affiliated with the UUA was that we would be limited to sponsoring one event at this year's General Assembly, rather than two as in the past. Coincidentally, it had just been suggested by John Hooper (scitechnetwork-uu) that HUUmanists might be invited to join a panel discussion of religion and science at the GA. Since the number of our own sponsored events was now limited this possibility was even more interesting.

At this point I contacted several people familiar with the reaffiliation process, and learned that in our earlier identity as Friends of Religious Humanism we had temporarily lost our independent UUA affiliation at least twice before! Each time we had recovered without permanent damage. Now, however, as I mentioned above, the UUA Board was reviewing the entire concept of affiliation, and the outcome of this review seemed in doubt. I decided that we should begin to consider a contingency plan in case our UUA affiliation or all UUA affiliations were eliminated. The main question was how best to proceed with this in a period of such uncertainty.

In early December my wife June and I took a few days to drive down to a board meeting of the Humanist Institute in Washington, D.C. (There's an article about the Institute in this newsletter.) Later that month and

into January I was slowed down by a nagging respiratory infection and some medical tests I had been putting off. From last year I vividly recalled that we would soon be preoccupied until March 15 with details of HUUmanists arrangements for the General Assembly, so to focus on this, June and I decided to cancel the annual trip to our daughter's home in Boston over the holidays. On December 23 Paul Woodruff and I resumed discussions about the circumstances and substance of his GA talk. By January 4 we had a title for the talk, "Reverence Without Theology: Universal Humanism?" On January 30, two days before the deadline, we had the complete 50-word abstract, about which the HUUmanists board was effusive in its praise. At the same time we also decided to reserve a 10' x 10' booth in the exhibit hall for HUUmanists, since the American Humanist Association, whose booth we shared last year, will not be at the GA this year. (See the article in this issue about the GA program.)

My elation over Paul Woodruff's talk was soon sobered by the news that on February 4 Bob Preston, HUUmanists' treasurer, had been rushed to the hospital with what turned out to be acute interstitial pneumonia. For the past two years Bob has been the board member on whom I've relied the most, often conferring with him several times a week. Unfortunately his recovery has been slow, and I have accepted his offered resignation with the utmost reluctance. (I've written a note of appreciation in this issue.) I'm relieved to be able to report that I've found a superb candidate to take Bob's place on the board as treasurer, William Miller of the Unitarian Society of New Haven, who works as a bank examiner in Hartford and has agreed to accept the responsibility.

The schedule of GA events reached me around March 10, and I returned it five days later with minor changes and the complete text of a full-page advertisement bought by HUUmanists for the official program. A week later I met with John Hooper for lunch to talk over plans for the GA panel discussion on religion and science I mentioned above. We met again on May 12 with Ted Laurensen, president of UU Religious Naturalists, the third panel member, for a conference call with Meg Riley, the panel moderator. (For more details be sure to read the article on our

GA activities in this newsletter.)

When we submitted our application for UUA re-affiliation this year we understood that it would come before the UUA board meeting in April. I expected to include the results in this issue of *HUUmanists News*, so everyone would know, one way or another, what we ought to plan on. On May 10, however, we received a memorandum from the board notifying us that (1) no decisions had been made at the April meeting, because no decision had yet been made on fundamental policies defining relationships of the UUA board to various categories of UU organizations, and (2) a public discussion bearing on these policies will be held at the GA on Friday morning, June 24 (see our GA article!), prior to the regular board meeting on Tuesday, June 28. It appears that a final decision could be delayed until the board's October meeting, or conceivably even later. It's now even more important that we discuss a contingency plan at the GA at our annual meeting.

Events during the last week of May led to significant changes. In the confusion following Bob Preston's sudden illness a misunderstanding evidently arose about bills from the AHA totalling \$2,400 that remained unpaid. When we eventually realized this and paid the bills, it was clear that in order to meet our other anticipated obligations it would be necessary for us to end our long dependence on the services of the American Humanist Association, effective at the end of May. This we did, regretfully, while at the same time summoning our resources in an attempt to fill the potential service gap this created. Fortunately for us, we were able in a short time to find volunteers to perform for the immediate future some of the services the AHA had been handling for us. We have also undertaken to have this newsletter printed and mailed from New Haven, which has entailed further time-consuming efforts that fortunately will not have to be repeated soon. I expect to take along many copies of the newsletter to the General Assembly.

For the longer term, we've begun to consider various ways HUUmanists might be able to increase services to our members while actually reducing expenses. One example of increased service is that we have finally

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begun to work on our website, with the help of Richard Siddall, president of the Humanist Association of Connecticut and our new webmaster. Over the next few months we expect it to become much more member-friendly. For now, you can look for our GA program at

www.huumanists.org/uuaga2005.html

Some board members with considerable organizational experience believe that we ought to be able to mobilize volunteer efforts from our members to accomplish many of our common goals. We'd like to hear from you about this.

You'll recall that in the second paragraph of this article I mentioned a bequest of unknown amount to HUUMANISTS from the estate of Charlotte Ann Metzger of St. Louis. More recently, after the continuity of our cash flow came into question I telephoned the attorney handling the estate to ask about the status of that bequest. I am happy to report to you that the attorney hopes to settle the estate as soon as the IRS completes its analysis of assessments of the property and various other possessions, perhaps as soon as the end of this calendar year. When that happens, according to him HUUMANISTS will be entitled to receive a significant amount from the settlement, providing an agreeable cushion for us, the bulk of which, I presume, we will decide to invest. While nothing is ever certain, with this news our financial prospects seem to have improved perceptibly.

A few days ago Roger Brewin told me that the journal had recently been mailed out to subscribers. That's most welcome news! *HUUMANISTS News* is next. If you have received this newsletter by mail, I'd like to hear from you, and besides, we need your current e-mail address so we can begin to send out announcements

to all our members electronically! So please drop me a line at

president@huumanists.org

to let me know that you received the newsletter, and anything else you'd care to mention. But *use some identification such as "HUU" in the subject of your e-mail!* If I don't recognize it there's a good chance I might delete it. If you attend the GA and don't have your newsletter, I expect to have a copy for you there, and hope to see you at our events. Please introduce yourself! ●

LET'S WORK TOGETHER, *continued from page 18*

household for the price of a single membership. In other words, we don't look upon dues as "paying for a vote." Fourth, if you feel we've not treated you fairly in any way please send me a specific complaint. Fifth, if you think we're on the right track and would like to show it with additional financial support, of course we'll be most grateful to you!

In any case we're always glad to hear from you, even if it's only to hear your criticisms, if it means you care as much as we do about the success of Humanism in the UUA. We've dedicated our best efforts to that success, and we know we will succeed, because we know you want us to succeed, and will do your best to help us build a stronger Humanism for a stronger Unitarian Universalism! ●

What's "Intelligent" About Intelligent Design?

a review by Jone Johnson Lewis

This is a review of Workshop #2011 at General Assembly 2004, presented by Eugenie C. Scott, Executive Director of the National Center for Science Education, Inc., and sponsored by the HUUmanists Association. It was edited by Joyce Holmen.

INTRODUCED BY Dr. David Schafer of HUUmanists, Eugenie C. Scott, a physical anthropologist by education, began by recounting the founding of the National Center for Science Education. NCSE was created against a "background of a largely scientifically illiterate population" and the decline of science education. The organization was to work to get evolution into, and creationism out of, the curriculum. Scott noted wryly that when that work was done, she'd hoped to move on to other science education issues—but that time has not yet come.

She noted that there are basically two kinds of creationists: Bible-based creationists and design-based creationists. Bible-based creationism includes young earth creationism, "creation science," and Genesis-based creationism, using literal interpretations of the Genesis creation story.

But not all creationists are Biblical literalists. Design-based creationism presents an explanation of creation that seems scientific. Scott explained this kind of creationism as teaching that the origin of "structural complexity" cannot be explained except by an intelligent being, "and the intelligent being just happens to spell its name with three letters."

She spoke of the history of attempts to get "scientific creationism" into the public school curriculum, but in *Edwards v. Aguillard* the Supreme Court declared that the purpose of "scientific creationism" was really to teach a religious belief. But Justice Brennan's statement in the decision about the ability of teachers to "supplant the present science curriculum with the presentation of theories, besides evolution, about the origin of life" opened the door to another approach.

Some who had promoted "scientific creationism"

began promoting the idea of teaching "scientific alternatives to evolution"—the "abrupt appearance theory didn't last long," Scott said as an aside—and so young earth creationism proponents "morphed into" being "intelligent design" proponents.

The first explication of "intelligent design" was promoted in the book, *The Mystery of Life's Origin: Reassessing Current Theories*. The underlying idea is that life is too complicated to ever explain its origin by the operation of natural processes. This argument has much in common with the "argument from design" put forward by William Paley in 1802 in *Natural Theology*. In Paley's argument, if you find a watch (i.e. something "structurally complex") you may infer a watchmaker. Paley used the vertebrate eye as another example of something that could not be explained without an intelligent designer. Thus, Darwin's writing on natural selection deliberately uses the structure of the eye to demonstrate how natural selection might explain the origin of natural structures.

Scott said that it's important to understand two levels of "intelligent design" (I.D.)—the scientific and philosophical claims, and the idea of cultural renewal.

The scientific/philosophical claims of intelligent design are:

- (1) The universe or parts of the universe have been specifically designed by an intelligence.
- (2) It is possible to detect evidence of design by "intelligence" either by using "irreducible complexity" or an "explanatory filter."

Michael Behe, who teaches biochemistry at Lehigh University, is probably the leading proponent of I.D. (and one of the least doctrinaire about Biblical literalism). Behe looks at "irreducible complexity" at the biochemical and cellular level, and defines "irreducible complexity" as the condition in which all aspects of the structure must be present in order for the structure

to function successfully.

Behe uses the analogy of a mousetrap, in which five parts must be present for the mechanism to work. Scott pointed out that if you Google “Behe mousetrap” you’ll find that many people have indeed come up with “reduced mousetraps” of fewer parts, as a partial refutation of Behe’s argument.

A standard biological example of “irreducible complexity” used by I.D. proponents is the bacteria flagellum, in which, Behe argues, 50 or more proteins need to be present in order for the organism to function. Thus, Behe argues, the bacteria flagellum could not have evolved, since there would be no selective advantage of a non-functional partial structure.

But this argument has been challenged, not least because parts may be argued to have had other functions. Like the mousetrap, parts of the flagellum exist elsewhere and are functional in those contexts, so one needs to look at whether a structure is really irreducibly complex—or if it is composed of parts with functional antecedents. Counter-examples which Scott cited include an antifreeze glycoprotein, which evolved from another protein, and the “Calvin system” involving catalyzing sugars and oxygen, which comes from functional subsystems.

Scott pointed out that the I.D. proponents pick out just the unsolved scientific questions like the bacteria flagellum. The bones of the middle ear, which can be seen as evolving from jaw bones in both embryonic change and the fossil record, could just as easily have been described as “irreducibly complex.” But it’s hard to find a fossil record for micro-features like the flagellum, so refuting I.D. claims is difficult. “The goalposts will continue to move” as science finds explanations for one structure and then I.D. focuses on a different scientific unknown. Scott pointed out that such claims are theologically dangerous: when a “God of the gaps” is posited to explain what otherwise cannot be explained scientifically, that “diminishes God’s majesty with each new scientific explanation.”

In short, Scott pointed out, the Behe argument is this:

(a) Irreducible complexity exists;

(b) Irreducible complexity cannot be explained through incremental natural selection; and

(c) Therefore, irreducible complexity cannot have evolved.

Scott explained that this argument is flawed because part (a) is “true by definition,” (b) has not been demonstrated to be true, and (c) “is a false conclusion even if (a) and (b) are true.” What it really says, according to Scott, is that “the unknown is unknowable by definition.”

Part (d) of the I.D. argument is that irreducible complexity is evidence for design—and this, too, is a fallacious argument because it is a “conclusion from assertion.”

Still, “intelligent design” proponents continue to try to get their ideas taught in science classes. Scott asked, “What would they teach—that ‘We can’t explain this and we can’t explain that’?”

“Intelligent design” is promoted through the Discover Institute in Seattle, founded in 1996. Scott showed how their logo and name have evolved (ironically) to remove images of Michaelangelo’s depiction of the creation of Adam by God, replacing them by images of a galaxy called the Eye of God, and to change the name from the Center for the Renewal of Science and Culture to simply Center for Science and Culture. The founders, clearly remain, through these changes, concerned with secular cultural change. The trajectory of the attack, Scott said, is that by attacking evolution, they attack modern science, and by attacking science, they attack secularism.

The goals of the Institute include this: “To defeat scientific materialism and its destructive moral, cultural, and political legacies.” Scott pointed out that there are two ways that the word “materialism” is used. The first, methodological materialism, means to use natural causes to explain natural phenomena—that is, to avoid invoking supernatural causes. Science, Scott said, “has to hold variables constant... How do you hold supernatural forces constant?” Such variables are set aside by science, because a scientist cannot order God to act in specific ways or “keep God out of the test tube. We don’t have a ‘theometer.’”

The other kind of materialism is philosophical materialism, the idea that there is no reality beyond the material world. This is not the same as methodological materialism which only looks at what natural processes do and tries to find explanations. But often science is confused with atheism.

Cell division is equally as materialistic as is evolution, Scott said, but cell division doesn't have as much to do with meaning and purpose, so there is not the same emotional response.

Where are attempts to bring "intelligent design" into the science curriculum? Scott mentioned the Santorum amendment to the No Child Left Behind bill. In a section looking at critical thinking, this amendment singled out evolution among all scientific ideas for attention. The amendment didn't make it into the bill, "but unfortunately too many conservatives supported a rewritten version" where the language about evolution "stayed behind in supporting documents." Though the language didn't make it into the bill itself, "the 'intelligent design' people nevertheless claimed victory."

Scott closed by recommending several books on the "intelligent design" controversy including *Tower of Babel* (Robert T. Pennock), *Creationism's Trojan Horse: The Wedge of Intelligent Design* (Barbara Carroll Forrest and Paul R. Gross), and the forthcoming *Evolution vs. Creationism: An Introduction** (Eugenie C. Scott). ●

*This book has since been published.

The National Center for Science Education, Inc., is a non-profit, tax-exempt membership organization working to defend the teaching of evolution against sectarian attack. For further information see their website www.ncseweb.org
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On the Value of Comfort as a Reason for Belief in the Palpably Untrue

by Ross Hamilton Henry

"Nature, to be controlled, must be obeyed."
– Sir Francis Bacon (1561-1626)

It would be a great comfort to many if pi were simplified to be an even 3.0000000 instead of the more inconvenient 3.1415926..., and I've heard that one city in Arkansas passed an ordinance making it the law that pi be exactly 3. But no matter how much we'd like to change the laws of nature to conform to what we're more comfortable with, the laws of nature remain unaffected by human desires, prayers, or legislation.

You're free to use 3.0000000 as the factor to multiply the diameter of your circular lot by to calculate the length of a fence you'll need to encircle it, but no matter how much you desire it to be correct, if you use this more convenient, aesthetically pleasing number your fence will always be too short by 0.1415926 times the diameter.

Similarly, your desire to have convenient supernatural beliefs intervene on your behalf in this world will fall short of expectations if you ignore the laws of nature. The universe is ruled by sometimes inconvenient but immutable sensible laws of nature that we can discover by using the unprejudiced, simple, straightforward methods of science.

Wishing or praying has no effect on the value of pi, nor on the outcome of events in this real world, governed by the laws of nature. On the other hand, if we apply our human intelligence to the task of understanding those laws we can improve our world by learning the true and good and productive methods to build all our fences and to construct all our human circles that either isolate or encompass the rest of our human family. ●

Ross Hamilton Henry is a Humanist minister and the outgoing president and current program director of the Asimov Humanists of Montgomery County (an AHA chapter) in the Houston, Texas area. As president he obtained the Asimov family's permission to use the name. He is a member of HUUmanists and the Northwoods UU Church.

Board Members Discuss Structure and Agenda at GA04

by David Schafer

Based on notes by Brian Eslinger and Walter Wells.

Rationale

In these times of lightning change, of peril perhaps without parallel, and yet of promise beyond anything imaginable not long ago, the UUA and the world need more than ever the reason and compassion of Humanism. We know you agree. The members of the HUUMANISTS board believe profoundly in our mission to be the strongest possible voice for Humanism in the UUA. But we know we can accomplish our aims only with your help, not merely with financial support but also with your active participation. We believe you want to be fully informed about what we are doing and what we hope to do.

During the 2004 General Assembly in Long Beach, members of the HUUMANIST board met on June 27, several days before the Annual Meeting, for a long-anticipated planning session. Present were David Schafer, chair; Brian Eslinger, secretary; Bob Prestemon, treasurer; Nancy Jo Haley, and Walter Wells. Roger Brewin, journal editor, was also in attendance. Kendyl Gibbons, Carol Hepokoski, and Katy Korb were absent. Sarah Oelberg, vice president, and Mike Werner did not attend the GA. After a brief consideration of other items to be included on the agenda of the Annual Meeting, the group turned its attention to the main topic for discussion: our plans for the future.

A review of the past year was both gratifying and challenging. Membership had increased substantially. Income from memberships and subscriptions was supplemented by a few generous donations. Our largest single expense at the time, services from the American Humanist Association, was \$14,400 a year.

Those present unanimously agreed that even the most active board could not possibly fulfill our ambitious goals without help from members, and that to support the program to which we were committed we

would have to explore a variety of ways to (1) increase our use of volunteer services, (2) increase our revenues from memberships, subscriptions, and fund-raising, and (3) decrease our expenses wherever possible.

Essential Tasks

We then discussed our options, developing a list of specific requirements that must be met and tasks that must be carried out efficiently for HUUMANISTS to become a strong voice for Humanism within the UUA. Many of the tasks then were services by the AHA on contract; some were performed by Board members or other volunteers.

A. Maintaining Identity and Address. We were required to maintain our status as an independent affiliate of the Unitarian Universalist Association and our incorporation as a tax-exempt (“not-for-profit”) organization on a regular basis. Our current address was the office of the AHA at 1777 T Street NW, Washington DC, 20009-7125. We also maintained e-mail and telephone communications there.

B. Expanding and Developing Membership. We perceived this as the most urgent task before us, especially as we believed (and continue to believe) that our membership has enormous growth potential. We divided this task into the following subtasks:

- (1) recruiting (fine-tuning our message, including our vision, mission; purposes, methods, and short-term goals; advertising this message in *UU World*, district meetings, GAs, and elsewhere; personal contacts);
- (2) maintenance (renewals, acknowledgements, continual database updating as itemized separately below);
- (3) regular announcements (via e-mail, website, surface mail);

- (4) recruiting and organizing volunteers (choose coordinator(s), document skill sets in database, using volunteers for all appropriate tasks, at all organizational levels—local, district, and national).

C. Organization. We must continue to develop, refine, and clarify the organization's structures and functions, focusing on the mutual relationships of the members and the Board, through:

- (1) a standing nominating committee;
- (2) operating committees (membership, finances, publications, electronic communications, publicity, planning, etc.);
- (3) bi-directional contacts/communications in each district and congregation;
- (4) services specific for groups of members in other organizational contexts (UU congregations, AHA etc.), e.g., a list of HUUmanist speakers/spokespersons;
- (5) mechanisms for member input into decision-making process other than GA (annual meeting) attendance—e.g., congregational and/or district representatives at GA, newsletter and online polls.

D. Print Publications. We needed to maintain, and develop for optimum use in networking with and among our members, the three main types of printed materials we had published or distributed in the past. In addition to soliciting and selecting letters and manuscripts, the publications entail editing, layout, printing, and distribution:

- (1) *HUUmanists News*, our newsletter (formerly called *The Communicator*), to be published several times during the year to highlight recent and upcoming events and feature opinions of readers and others we feel to be of particular interest;
- (2) our journal, *Religious Humanism*, edited by Roger Brewin, an unpaid staff member, who has solicited, selected, and edited manuscripts of informed opinion on Humanist matters of particular interest to UUs, with editorial assistance from Greg Seaman, also a volunteer. Brewin has overseen the preparation of edited articles for the press or electronic media and subsequent printing and distribution

to libraries and members via surface or electronic mail (see Electronic media, below);

- (3) books, which in the past had prominently included Mason Olds' histories of UU Humanism and collections of sermons by eminent Humanist UU ministers, including John Dietrich, Curtis Reese, and Charles Francis Potter. We had used these to good advantage in promotions and for dissemination of information about Humanism to members, congregational libraries, and seminaries. At this time the stocks were depleted, new editions might be appropriate, and new volumes were under consideration.

E. Electronic Media. As an independent affiliate of the UUA, we were encouraged to make use of the superb electronic media facilities of the UUA, and we intended to do so to an increasing extent. Present and planned uses included e-mail lists (both moderated and unmoderated, as appropriate) for announcements, discussions, and conduct of business, and a website at uua.org in the near future. Tasks included:

- (1) E-mail lists (three at that time)
 - (a) Two managers (required) for each list, up to a maximum of nine;
 - (b) Moderators for each moderated list (none at that time);
 - (c) Maintenance of archives as desired by members;
- (2) Website at uua.org
 - (a) Design and maintenance
 - (b) By-laws of HUUmanists
 - (c) Publications and other information about HUUmanists, our Board, and congregational and district contacts;
 - (d) Facilities for joining HUUmanists and shopping for selected items.

F. Database. In order to serve members in an individualized manner deemed appropriate by the members themselves, we would need continuously updated information about each member's expectations from HUUmanists. At that time our database

was maintained as a service by the AHA. Personnel and information included:

- (1) an administrator to keep lists up to date;
- (2) membership lists including, according to members' wishes,
 - (a) contact information—name(s) , phone number(s), fax number(s) , e-mail address(es), mailing address(es), home congregation and district;
 - (b) membership information—date first joined, most recent renewal, next date for renewal, type of membership (if applicable); any additional donations;
 - (c) personal information, if offered—reason for joining, primary interests and concerns, relevant memberships in related organizations, volunteer skills;
- (3) lists of friends of HUUMANISTS (non-members, financial supporters) with appropriate information
- (4) lists of subscribers and interested organizations (e.g., libraries, congregations)

G. Storage Management. An organization such as ours would ordinarily need to rent storage facilities for limited amounts of archival materials, and inventories of other materials needed for promotional or educational purposes. Our storage facilities then included one in Minneapolis MN and one at the AHA office. These facilities required:

- (1) a conveniently readily accessible site;
- (2) a manager, and inventory capability;
- (3) periodic triage of existing materials in storage;
- (4) electronic record storage.

H. General Assembly/District/Congregational Meetings. There has long been a consistent visible presence of HUUMANISTS at General Assemblies. We had begun to expand these activities to the District level and planned to help facilitate other meetings in congregations where potential interest would permit. Tasks included:

- (1) annual membership meetings at General Assembly;

- (2) arrangements for public workshops, panels, and lectures at UU meetings;
- (3) setting up and maintaining information/membership booths/tables in exhibit areas at all UU gatherings;

I. Building Collegial Relationships with UUA and Affiliates.

- (1) coordinating with other UUA groups (e.g., CUUPS, UUCF). Coordination might involve co-sponsoring panel discussions or other public events;
- (2) developing appropriate contacts with UUA officers and staff involved in facilitating communication within the UUA and between the UUA and the outside;
- (3) maintaining visible identification of members as HUUMANISTS in all UUA activities and elsewhere).

J. Fundraising. Fundraising ideas that were briefly discussed included:

- (1) organizing different levels/categories of membership;
- (2) sending an annual or semiannual fundraising letter to members and friends;
- (3) organizing a committee to develop a comprehensive fundraising plan.

Summary

Those present agreed that the discussion had served a useful purpose by spelling out in considerable detail many, if not all, of our main concerns about future needs of our organization, and giving a fairly clear indication of how far, and in what directions, we should attempt to go in the foreseeable future. The bottom line that emerged was that we must plan to (1) organize into working committees, (2) develop a corps of volunteers, (3) continue our efforts to build our membership rolls, (4) expand our use of free electronic communication facilities available to independent UUA affiliates, and (5) reduce our dependence on costly services beyond our means.

What You Can Do

As you have read above, we have recently had to discontinue our dependence on the AHA, by mutual agree-

ment. As a result, we've had to speed up our development and implementation of a plan for increased volunteer support. We're well aware that such a plan has long been desired not only by the board, as I've outlined above, but also by many of our members. We'd like to hear from *all* of our members! Perhaps on reading over this list of tasks to be done you've thought of one or more you might be able to help with, serving on one of our committees or offering a much-needed skill, if only for a few months. Or recommend someone you know. In any case, write to me at

president@huumanists.org

and please put an identifier such as "HUU" in the subject. Include specific information about what you might be able to do, and tell us one or two relevant facts

about yourself. I'll see that the information gets to the right people right away. We hope to recruit old and new member volunteers from every corner and every UUA district of the nation! ●

Needed: Informed Humanist Leaders

AT SOME TIME or other the thought may have entered your mind that you could be an effective Humanist leader or, if you already are one, that you could become even more effective. If so it's very possible that you're right. Why not find out? The opportunity has never been better. The Humanist Institute recently started its 13th class, mentored by HUUmanists vice president Sarah Oelberg. It's now taking applications for the 14th class, opening next summer, with new Institute Dean Kendyl Gibbons, immediate past president of the UU Ministers Association, as its mentor.

Each class meets three weekends a year for three years for intensive discussion of carefully selected readings that include the historical background of Humanist philosophy and organizations in social and political context. The mentors are assisted by members of the Institute's adjunct faculty with expertise in the subject areas the classes will explore.

Readers of this newsletter will find the names of several former students of the Institute. Jone Johnson Lewis and I were both members of the 5th class, along with Sarah Oelberg. Ross Henry, who wrote the article

on pi in this issue, was a student of mine when I was mentor of the 9th class. Mike Werner, a member of the HUUmanists board and former president of the American Humanist Association, is on the adjunct faculty of the Institute. Pat Hoertdoerfer, since 1993 Director of UUA Children's Programs and Family Ministry, is a graduate of the 4th class, as is Fred Edwards, Editor of *The Humanist*. And you would recognize many other names connected with the Institute.

I urge you to act on your impulse to get more information about the Institute's program and what it can do for you and your efforts to advance Humanism. Visit the Institute's website at www.humanistinstitute.org. Email manager@humanistinstitute.org or write to Humanist Institute, c/o Kristin Steinberg, PMB #220, 8014 Olson Memorial Hwy, Golden Valley, MN 55427-4712. And if you plan to attend the General Assembly, by all means look for Ross Henry at the Institute's exhibit booth. — David Schafer

What Humanists Can Learn from the Election

by Rev. Sarah W. Oelberg

The following article has been loosely abridged, with the kind permission of the author, from a talk presented the evening of November 14 at the First Unitarian Society of Minneapolis.

NOBODY SHOULD HAVE been surprised that the evangelical Right emerged as a powerful political force in the recent election. Even before the election I heard many pundits giving unsolicited and, alas, largely unheeded advice to the Democrats. In their analyses, I found some bits of wisdom that I think might also be helpful to us as Humanists. Here are a few examples.

1. Being right doesn't necessarily mean you'll win. Right usually does not make might, and the truth does *not* always set you free. Offering only rational and plausible solutions may be totally ineffective. Against an adversary that cherry-picks its facts, selects its contexts, and appeals to powerful emotions like anger and fear rather than to reason, a completely explained and wholly truthful response often doesn't have a chance.

2. Even logical argument usually isn't enough. In the Arnold Schwarzenegger film *Total Recall*, ideas are implanted fully formed in the minds of unsuspecting victims, so they truly, absolutely believe them and won't accept any others, no matter how logical, factual, or carefully proven. In this election, a much simpler brainwashing technique was used so effectively that most Americans still believe Saddam Hussein had WMD's, was connected to 9/11 and Al Qaida, and was an imminent threat to the U.S.! Efforts to discredit parts of this total picture fail—logic requires analysis, and the total memory simply can't be analyzed. *So reason alone has little chance of changing people's minds.* Likewise the myths of religion are firmly implanted in people's brains from their earliest years, and our chances of dislodging them by purely rational arguments are equally small.

3. Unconscious emotional needs are real and powerful. We Humanists may then ask, "Can any group which holds a reasonable and progressive set of values,

centered on the need to create a decent world where humanity will flourish, ever attract a mass following?" The answer is yes, but only if we're able to reach the deep anthropological, psychological, and social level where faith plays its role in the lives of many human beings. Traditional religion is a powerful influence on most people, whether its central tenets are reasonable or not, because religious practices and associations fill a profound need in the psyche. Their very non-rationality may strengthen religious identification. We humans are generally guided by needs stronger than the need to be rational.

4. Understand where "common-sense" values come from. Why do so many people vote and act against their self-interest? George Lakoff's 1996 book *Moral Politics* draws on cognitive science to explain that political choices usually follow either the strict-father family model (conservative) or the nurturing parent model (progressive). The side that invokes its model more persuasively succeeds. Lakoff repeats this theme in "Our Moral Values," in *The Nation* for December 6, where he argues that progressive values are more deeply and traditionally American than those of the Right, and we need to proclaim them with greater clarity and conviction.

5. Frame the discussion. In another book, *Don't Think of an Elephant! Know Your Values and Frame the Debate*, Lakoff stresses the importance of the way we present issues. Religious conservatives spend years researching how to talk in ways that make black seem white, using code language that appears to say one thing while meaning another. Experienced debaters know how to handle "trick" questions like "Have you stopped beating your wife?" Humanists must frame issues so as to make our own logic clearer and simpler, so that our reasoning will be more readily understandable to the listener. If we are proactive we can set the agenda ourselves.

6. Emphasize our strengths. On many contentious “moral” issues, the populace has moved toward the liberal Humanist viewpoint. “Moral values” as an issue should work to our advantage. A very recent Gallup poll showed that 80% of Americans believe abortion should be legal, at least in certain circumstances, and 52% believe that same-sex relationships between consenting adults should be legal. We’re actually winning! We must define morality ourselves, emphasizing societal as well as personal values.

7. Elitism will get you nowhere. Help others to be comfortable in your presence. Use plain, everyday English. People are most loyal to what they identify with. Most of them, even if they have repudiated their childhood religion, will still identify with it on some deeper level. Most do not identify with elite intellectuals (like Humanists). We may manage to attract some people for a time because they have become alienated from another religion, but alienation from one belief doesn’t create identification with another, let alone deep loyalty to it. It’s never enough just to give them a way out of the past. We need to inspire them, and appeal positively to their emotions as well as their intellects.

8. Listen and learn. We need to listen sensitively to folks on the other side and try to understand what makes them think and act the way they do. To comprehend the motives and desires of people who disagree with us it’s essential to listen to them and dialogue sympathetically with them. No group is totally homogeneous. We have things in common with people in virtually every group, and we can work and form alliances and perhaps even significantly agree with many of them, if we take the time to listen to them.

9. Tell a compelling Humanist story. Humans need to be inspired by myth, drama, and narrative, and live to a great extent by metaphor, symbol, story, and images. We liberals don’t like to acknowledge this need, because it is not rational. Traditional religion, and myths and fears based on it, give powerful expression to this indwelling, semi-conscious, but pervasive need. Mere rational attacks make hardly any difference at all to believers, so efforts to debunk religion are often useless, even counterproductive. It’s far more effective to tell a story that explains in moving terms what we are for!

10. Stand up strongly for what we believe. Proclaim our principles proudly. Never let the accusation of being liberal, or secularist, or, God forbid, atheist, scare us. When the L word is bandied about say, “You bet I’m a liberal—open-minded, generous, tolerant, progressive, broadminded, and understanding. I believe in individual freedom, in equality and opportunity for everyone, in telling the truth and doing what is right.” If we believe an idea on the other side is harmful, we have an obligation to speak out against it, using unambiguous language that calls issues what they really are (for example, it wasn’t a tax “cut” but a tax *postponement!* Someday, somebody’s going to have to pay for it)!

11. Educate the world about Humanism. Our clear, positive Humanist message of reason, science, tolerance, peace, justice, education and good sense is a much-needed antidote to the confusions around us, a wonderful medicine for the soul! We have a duty to sell it! But effective salespersons are confident in their product, and let others know it. Compromise creates confusion. Most people don’t want long explanations; they want us to K.I.S.S.—keep it simple, stupid!

12. Etc. You can take it from here. People all around yearn for voices that can articulate a clear, compelling moral agenda. Why else do code phrases like “faith-based” and “compassionate conservatism” work so well? Let’s recapture the moral high ground! As Franklin D. Roosevelt said, “the test of our progress is not whether we add to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little.” A meaningful values debate is about passion and principle, an inspiring vision, not just a laundry list of policies and plans. If we want to get to the promised land, we must fight hard for real moral values that spring from our clear philosophical priorities.

Watching the election unfold, I’ve become convinced that we Humanists need to grow out, to expand our social discourse. It’s great to publish and read wonderful magazines and have exciting discussions, but it’s not enough to talk among ourselves. We need to get our message out there, and make it positive. Folks nowadays want to know what we’re for, what we offer to the common good, what our vision is of the future.

How to do this? I suggest we need to become *politi-*

cal, in the finest and fullest sense. We need to turn our philosophy into principles; our principles into a plan; our plan into a platform; our platform into policy; our policy into a political presence. If we do all this firmly and with conviction, others will join with us. Humankind is longing for a more humane world; let's be the facilitators for turning Humanist principles into reality.

I'm not alone in this conviction. A recent book of essays, *Toward a New Political Humanism*, edited by Barry F. Seidman and Neil Murphy (Prometheus, 2004), assembles concrete suggestions by various Humanist authors of ways to implement a Humanist political activism. The publisher's website says, "In an age when religious (and other) fundamentalisms have made powerful inroads into the political arena secular humanism has an especially important role to play in promoting its ideas [and] in converting them into... action... The time is ripe to...develop an all-encompassing political platform based on the humanist life stance [and] including both political and economic agendas. The authors...offer real-world humanist solutions born out of progressive politics."

The book opens with this quotation: "For the world of the 21st century, humanistic values must project a vision of a peaceful world in which no man, woman, or child, or class of men, women, or children shall live as servants or slaves existing simply to fulfill the whims and wishes and desires of others, a world in which no man, woman or child shall be used as a tool to satisfy the lusts or greed or ambitions of others; a world in which every human life, the life of every man, woman, or child shall be a wanted, welcomed, esteemed member of the one human family." (Gerald R. Larue, from "Human Values for the 21st Century," *Humanism Today*, vol.12, *Globalization and Humanism*).

Reviewing his own book at Amazon.com (under "Seidman reviews"), Seidman asks whether the Humanism of the Affirmations and the Manifestos "can continue to stay neutral on political issues...which...shape our daily lives and collective future." It isn't easy for Humanists to reach consensus...Yet Humanism "can't reach its potential unless it becomes...a global ethic that values [both] interconnectedness [and] individualism." Seidman believes it's time for Humanists "to articulate

[our] political vision of a better world and have [our] voice represented in the political arena...We should support candidates whose platform articulates a vision of the United States and the world, where people build cooperative structures instead of competitive ones; [where] humanistic economics, universal human rights, and respecting human needs take precedence over corporate capitalism, religious intolerance, and ultra-conservative ideologies... We need to move beyond (but not forgo) our basic foundation of skepticism. We have to do more than write impressive manifestos and affirmations—we need to live by them!"

A few years ago I wrote a paper recounting the principles that I felt had made Humanism great in its heyday, in the early years of Manifesto I. I called for a return to the spirit of those years, with a good, comprehensible, comprehensive, straightforward, sensible definition of Humanism, a clear understanding of what it stands for—in short, a *new Humanist orthodoxy*. If you agree with me that orthodoxies are problematic, you won't like my use of the term *orthodoxy*. The OED, however, defines it as "belief in or agreement with what is, or is currently held to be, right." If Humanism has no orthodoxy even in this limited sense, then what *is* it?

All around us we see a "return to basics;" a movement back to orthodoxies of various kinds—political, religious, social, even economic. Yes, this is frightening, yet it is also understandable in a world in which things seem to have gotten out of control and folks feel helpless and hopeless. Under such circumstances, people relate to certainties, to answers, to clear directions—in other words, to orthodoxies. The challenge before us is whether we Humanists will let other orthodoxies win and set the agenda for the future, or whether we *can get together to formulate and advocate our own, present it to the public, and make it competitive in the political sphere*. I think we can, but it will require a major effort and the infusion of some real enthusiasm and energy.

My purpose here isn't to define this new orthodoxy, but to convince you that we need one: a Humanism with a purpose, a set of principles, organization and leadership, and a sense of mission leading to political involvement. A muscular Humanism, led by muscular Humanists—maybe inspired by Superman (a.k.a. the late Christopher Reeve)! ●

HUUmanists at General Assembly 2005

AGAIN THIS YEAR we are pleased to have a strong and visible presence at the UUA General Assembly. We'd like you to know about our main activities at the GA so you and your friends will be able to find us easily and we can meet each other there.

We are sponsoring three activities, which are described in a full-page ad on page 89 of the Program (which is also reprinted at our Website, www.huumanists.org, along with other helpful information about us). The first of these is our exhibit booth, #236, near the UUA Bookstore, where you'll find literature and a friendly person to talk with.

The second is our featured workshop (#3105), with a talk by Paul Woodruff, Darrell K. Royal Professor in Ethics and American Society at the University of Texas at Austin. Prof. Woodruff, who is the author of the celebrated book *Reverence: Renewing a Forgotten Virtue*, will speak on Saturday, June 25, at 3:45 p.m. in Room 110AB on the topic "Reverence Without Theology: Universal Humanism?" His provocative abstract is found in our advertisement and also on page 45, where his workshop is listed. We think his talk, which will allow ample time afterward for questions and comments from the audience, will bring a whole new dimension to the UU discussion of reverence.

Right after Prof. Woodruff's talk, from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m., is our third sponsored activity, the *very* important Annual Meeting, which offers members a great opportunity to express their views and to help decide the course of the HUUmanists Association over the next 12 months. We hope you will attend this meeting and participate fully in it!

We are also involved in a fourth event, sponsored by the Meadville Ohio District, and organized by Meg Riley from the UUA Washington office and John Hooper from the scitechnetwork-uu. I've been invited to participate as president of HUUmanists. Meg will moderate a panel discussion among John, Ted Laurenson (president of the Unitarian Universalist Religious

Naturalists), and myself of the topic "Speaking Truth WITH Power: Science and the Language of Reverence." This workshop, #5039, is scheduled for Monday, June 27, at 10:15 a.m. in Room 201B.

A workshop of potentially great significance to HUUmanists, #2014, "Discussion on the Future of Independent Affiliate Status," sponsored by the UUA Board of Trustees, will take place Friday at 8:00 a.m. in Room 121C. The question to be considered is what the role of Independent Affiliates is, or may be, in furthering the purposes of the UUA. The room is certain to be packed with UUs eager to listen and talk.

There will be many, many other events of great interest to HUUmanists, among which I will mention only a few. Ursula Goodenough, author of *The Sacred Depths of Nature* and a colleague of both Paul Woodruff and Ted Laurenson, will speak Saturday at 2:00 p.m. in Room 201C on "Exploring the Concept of Religious Naturalism." Edd Doerr, immediate past president of the American Humanist Association, will speak twice, once (#4065) on Sunday at 7:15 p.m. in Room 121A, and in an earlier "repeat" session (#3023) on Saturday at 9:45 a.m. in Room 201C. Mel Lipman, current president of the AHA, will conduct one of his fabled marathons, speaking at four events, two sponsored by the UU Infidels (#2113, Friday at 6:45 p.m. in Room 121A, repeated as #4012, on Saturday at 3:00 p.m. in Room 104), and two in the very large Ballroom C, sponsored by the AHA (#4056, Saturday at 7:15 p.m., "repeated" as #3022, Saturday at 9:45 a.m.).

Others sure to attract large GA audiences include such luminaries as Pete Seeger, George Lakoff, William Schulz, Ware Lecturer Elaine Pagels, and HUUmanists' own Stefan Jonasson. If you're fortunate enough to be in attendance at this year's General Assembly in Ft. Worth, we sincerely hope you'll find some time to spend with us! ●

Our Deepest Appreciation to Bob Prestemon

FOR THE PAST two years the treasurer of HUUmanists has been Robert Prestemon of Rockville, Maryland, just outside Washington, D.C. All that time Bob has been an indispensable aid to the entire HUUmanists organization, the rest of its board and the membership, and especially to me, to whom he was a key member of our executive board, nearly always available for consultation on issues of all kinds that might come up at regular or, for that matter, irregular intervals.

Sadly, Bob has recently been hospitalized for almost 3½ months with a series of problems that began February 4 with a severe episode of acute interstitial pneumonia. Shortly after that, realizing that he might not make a speedy recovery, he offered his resignation as treasurer, but I declined to accept it at that time, partly because we had no replacement in the wings and partly in the hope that he would get better and change his mind.

At one point he joked that he was having problems similar to those of the late Pope—except, he reassured me, that he hadn't been converted. Most recently he returned home on May 16, but continues to experience some difficulties. With Bob's complete concurrence, therefore, I have sought and found a very capable candidate to replace him as treasurer and have reluctantly accepted his resignation.

Bob was born in Columbia Heights, Minnesota, 81 years ago, and he graduated from the University of Minnesota. He retired after a career of some 30 years as a United States civil servant, working first with the Bureau of the Budget and later with the Department of Transportation. He and Betty are founding members of the UU Church of Rockville and have been very active in denominational affairs. They currently have 4 children, 14 grandchildren, and 6 great-grandchildren. We offer Bob and Betty our sincerest support, our deepest appreciation, and our very best wishes.

— David Schafer, May 29, 2005

HUUmanists Treasurer's Report

July 1, 2004-June 13, 2005

Compiled by David Schafer from a previous draft by Bob Prestemon and bank reports. Note: Expenses are given in parentheses.

MAJOR ITEMS—INCOME

Memberships,* gifts*	\$ 8,539
Subscriptions,* sales*	1,216
Metzger bequest (for 2004)	1,150
Subtotal	\$ 10,905

MAJOR ITEMS—EXPENSES

Services (AHA, 11 months)	\$ (13,200)
Journal (2), mailings	(5,159)
GA 2004	(893)
Subtotal	\$ (19,252)

NET MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

Jul 1, 2004-Nov 1, 2004	\$ 1,245
Nov 1, 2004-Jun 13, 2005	1,890
Subtotal	\$ 3,135

NET EXPENSES—ALL ITEMS

Grand Total \$ (5,212)

CASH ON HAND**

July 1, 2004	\$ 10,542
June 13, 2005	\$ 5,330

* For the period 7/1/04-11/1/04 only

** Actual bank figures—do not include obligations incurred for expenses of GA 2004 and GA 2005, printing, and mailing.

HUUmanists Board and Officers

Officers	Members at Large	Other
President Term Expires 2006 David E. Schafer	Term Expires 2007 Nancy Jo Haley* Walter W. Wells*	Journal Editor Roger Brewin
Vice President: Term Expires 2005 Sarah W. Oelberg*	Term Expires 2005 Kathleen D. Korb* Michael W. Werner*	HUUmanists News Editor David Schafer
Secretary Term Expires 2006 Brian Eslinger*	Term Expires 2006 Kendyl Gibbons Carol A. Hepokoski	Past President (ex officio) Stefan M. Jonasson
Treasurer Term Expires 2005 Bob Prestemon*		

* Nominees for these positions are listed below.

Nominations for HUUmanists Board at GA 2005

THE FOLLOWING SLATE of board members at large and officers is presented for consideration by the members at the Annual Meeting to be held during General Assembly 2005. Other positions remain unchanged at this time. Terms are shown in the right-hand column.

VICE PRESIDENT:	SARAH W. OELBERG	2005-7
SECRETARY:	WALTER W. WELLS	2005-6
TREASURER:	WILLIAM MILLER	2005-7
AT LARGE:	KATHLEEN D. KORB	2005-8
AT LARGE:	MICHAEL W. WERNER	2005-8
AT LARGE:	GAYLE WALTER	2005-7
AT LARGE:	LANCE HAWORTH	2005-7

Explanation of these changes: Officers and members at large are elected for terms of two and three years, respectively. Sarah Oelberg has accepted nomi-

nation for another full term as vice president. Brian Eslinger, treasurer, and Nancy Jo Haley, member at large, accepted election at the last annual meeting but asked to be relieved of board duties as soon as replacements could be found; Walter Wells, Lance Haworth, and Gayle Walter have agreed to replace Brian, Walter, and Nancy, respectively, for the unexpired portions of their terms. William Miller has agreed to replace Robert Prestemon, treasurer, who has recently resigned for health reasons, for a full term. Both Kathleen Korb and Michael Werner, members at large, have agreed to serve for another full term.

— David Schafer

Let's Work Together

by David Schafer

WE'RE FIRMLY COMMITTED to building a stronger Humanism for a stronger Unitarian Universalism! Today more than ever we stand by our promise to serve *you* as a powerful voice for Humanism throughout the UUA, in a network of UU Humanists at every level of organization, starting from individuals at the grass-roots, to congregations, to districts, right to the top. It's been obvious to us from the beginning that these are *very* ambitious aims, and we won't accomplish them all by ourselves—we must enlist your help. We've heard from enough of you now to know that you understand that, too, and want to know how you can be a more effective part of this project. Here are four suggestions:

1. The most important single step you can take is to send us your current e-mail address! There are at least two reasons why it is so essential for us to take full advantage of electronic communications with all our members. *First*, to be a successful national organization we can no longer rely on meetings at the General Assembly to bring all our members together. *Second*, we can communicate with our members much more cheaply and effectively by e-mail than by print alone. We *promise* not to flood your in-box with messages you neither need nor want! Since our first attempt, we've learned how to do this much better; and we believe, as we always have, that intelligent use of the fabulous electronic media available to us is the right way to go. Even if you think we have your e-mail address, we may not have it in its correct and current form. So please write to me at

president@huumanists.org

with "HUU" in the subject line, and *send me your e-mail address, along with your name* (and any other information or comments you may want to add).

2. Once we get an electronic "quorum" going we can undertake serious business online. Starting immediately we need to identify Humanists who are willing to volunteer even a little time (like an hour a

week) to share a bit of the organizational work. *Let us know if you are one of these*, and suggest the names of others we should contact. Some of the jobs to be filled may call for people with certain interests and expertise. Our by-laws specify three committees—membership, finance, and nominations—to which we would add others, like electronic communications, publications, publicity, a speakers' bureau. The HUUMANISTS Association is *your* organization and we count on your input and good judgment to help your organization make the right decisions!

3. Look around you and find one or two or more Humanists to talk to about the possibility of forming a suitable HUUMANIST nucleus in your area. We've heard from several people who want to do exactly that. For example, one of the most imaginative ideas we've heard about is that of a group in the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area who are talking about a local "chapter," bringing together all 12 of the UU congregations there, some with perhaps two Humanists apiece, and others with maybe two hundred. By spreading the word of our existence, our mission, and our eagerness as UUs to advance our common agenda, you can do more than you might imagine to help strengthen us!

4. Finally, if you haven't paid your membership dues recently, we hope you will consider doing so now. There's a form opposite this page. There are several things you should know as you think about this. First, we recognize that many of you joined within the past 12 months (at or since the last GA) and have been disappointed because you've not received what you expected for your dues. *Everyone in this situation will receive an automatic one-year membership extension!* Second, we know that membership dues are not cheap, and we're prepared to consider requests for a downward adjustment according to your financial situation—so please ask. We don't want to exclude anyone solely for financial reasons! Third, our policy so far has been to extend membership privileges to two persons in one

continued page 4, second column, LET'S WORK TOGETHER



A New Voice for Humanism within the UUA

BECOME A MEMBER/SUBSCRIBE
RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP/SUBSCRIPTION

Per year—choose one category:

- I. Full membership plus the journal. Receive the journal, *HUUmanists News*, full voting rights, and all e-mail privileges. \$50
- II. Full membership (everything except the journal). \$35
- III. Information only (HUUmanists News + e-mail announcements). On request we will waive even this \$10 if you are willing to serve as a HUUmanists contact person to a UU congregation (specify below). \$10
- IV. Journal (Volume XXXVI) religious humanism only. \$22
- V. Full student membership plus the journal (as in I, above). \$25

I prefer Category (I to V, above) _____ at amount (and enclose check for) \$ _____

I wish to make a tax-deductible contribution of \$ _____

PRINT and sign name _____

PRINT e-mail address _____

PRINT surface mail address _____

I am a student at _____
(print name and location) _____

I will serve as a contact at _____
(specify UU congregation) _____

Please waive the \$10 fee in exchange for this service. _____

Mail completed form with check or money order to:
HUUmanists, P.O. Box 185202, Hamden, CT 06518-0202

Humanists News

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