

President's Corner

The latest issue of *Religious Humanism* arrived in my mailbox just a couple of days ago (June 11). The main significance of this event for me is that most of you (I wish I could be sure it's all of you) have gotten your copies of this outstanding issue, for which we all have waited so long. As Roger Brewin informs us elsewhere in this newsletter, this is the first of three issues that he anticipates we'll send out over the coming months.

The biggest news for the HUManists Association — in recent years, at least — is that we have received generous bequests, from the estates of two husband-and-wife donor pairs, that together will put us in one of the best financial positions we've ever enjoyed in the history of FRH/HUManists. This good fortune couldn't have come at a more opportune time, and we intend to make the most of it, through wise investment and budgeting.

If we're to avoid future deficits it's terribly important for our members to understand the economics of our organization. Publishing our journal and sponsoring events at the General Assembly are expensive activities, especially in the absence of membership numbers in the thousands, and when they've been coupled with salaries or contractual office services they inevitably have resulted in large deficits. Probably the simplest and clearest way to illustrate this is with a simple chart of our end-of-year assets for five years over a recent span of eight years in all: In seven years from 1997 to 2004, our assets fell by some \$84,000, or \$12,000 a year!

1997	2001	2004	2005	2006
\$94,000+	\$44,865	\$10,180	\$9,704	\$63,172

In calendar year 2005, we were finally able to bring about a dramatic drop in these annual deficits, primarily as a result of our unavoidable decision to terminate our commitment to spend \$14,400 a year for outsourcing office services, after spending \$6,000 we just didn't have in the first five months of the year. This has admittedly resulted in some major adjustments, both for our organization and for our members, over the past two years.

We'll need to make further adjustments, of course, even while we continue to maintain a strong presence at GA and develop our services to congregations throughout the UUA. Starting now, five important changes I expect to make are to (1) bring our website into the 21st century; (2) use the Internet more effectively for business and communication; (3) establish a highly visible membership recruitment campaign in the *UU World* and other publications; (4) put this organization on a pay-as-you-go basis; and (5) institute a dynamic capital fundraising program. And with judicious budgeting and aggressive growth and astute capital investment, we can now be confident that we not only will prevent any future financial crisis such as occurred in the past but will enjoy strong growth and vigorous outreach for many fruitful years to come!

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Minutes of the HUUMANISTS Annual Meeting

St. Louis, MO, Friday, June 23, 2006

This is an excerpt from a report by Walter Wells, Secretary. Deletions are enclosed in square brackets [...] in the text. For the complete report please visit our website. – Editor

President David Schafer called the meeting to order.

Elections

[Wendy Jerome was elected to fill the vacancy left by Kendyl Gibbons.]

Treasurer's Report

Because of continuing deficits and resulting lack of cash flow it became necessary in May 2005, about the same time Bob Prestemon had to resign as Treasurer because of continuing ill health, to end our longstanding contract with the American Humanist Association to pay them \$1,200 a month for office services. Our current Treasurer William Miller is unable to be with us at this meeting. As is noted in the newsletter, on April 1 we had total cash on hand of \$13,897, an amount that does not include some significant deferred expenses for publications and GA 2006.

For the past two years we have not asked our members to renew their memberships as we have been working to bring our journal publication up to schedule and to develop a more accurate membership information base. [...] A dues notice will come out when and only when we are satisfied that we have reached a reasonable expectation of meeting our commitments to our members.

Other Current Matters

The chair noted that the HUUMANISTS structure is aimed at creating a grassworks network of UU members and congregations within the twenty districts of the

UUA. [...] We want to make it easier for our members in the same metropolitan area and within the same district to connect with each other. The chair pointed out that we are working to bring the organization into full compliance with our By-Laws. Our By-laws call for a Nominating committee and two standing committees — Finance and Membership. Our biggest problem in achieving compliance is that to do this we need more volunteers.

The chair asked whether any of those present knew people who would be willing to serve on some of these committees. Sarah Oelberg moved the names of Kendyl Gibbons and Stefan Jonasson to serve as the Nominating Committee for the coming year. Kendyl asked that her name be removed from consideration for lack of time. Stefan would accept a place on the committee. David Schafer as president would serve on committees ex officio. A discussion ensued concerning the desirability of not placing Board members on the Nominating Committee. No objection was heard to this suggestion. The chair asked Stefan to take charge of the nominating process, receiving input from membership and seeking as broad geographical distribution as possible.

The following names were put forward: For the Finance Committee — Ross Henry, Dale Handeen, Aaron Hamburger. For the Membership Committee — Jack Reich, Richard Bozian, and Sarah Oelberg. All were elected unanimously.

[Discussion continued...]

Sarah moved that we adjourn; Jack Reich seconded. The meeting was adjourned.

President's Corner *continuing from Page 1*

We'll be delighted to tell you much more about these developments when the dust has cleared and we know for certain what our situation will be. So stay tuned, and watch this page or, better yet, start visiting our website, which will at last be incrementally overhauled

beginning most probably in late July, after the GA is behind us. We now have the wherewithal to implement the vision for HUUMANISTS that we set forth in our newsletter a year ago.

David Schafer

HUUmanists Board, Officers, Others

Officers

President Term Expires 2008 David E. Schafer	Secretary Term Expires 2008 Walter W. Wells
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Vice President Term Expires 2007 Sarah W. Oelberg	Treasurer Term Expires 2007 William Miller
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Board

Term Expires 2007
Gayle C. Walter
Lance Haworth

Term Expires 2008
Kathleen D. Korb
Michael W. Werner

Term Expires 2009
Wendy Jerome
Carol A. Hepokoski

Others

Journal Editor
Roger Brewin

HUUmanists
News Editor
David E. Schafer

Past President
(*ex officio*)
Stefan M. Jonasson

HUUmanists Treasurer's Report

January 1, 2006 - December 31, 2006

INCOME

Memberships, subscriptions	\$ 13,117
Bequest	
~72.5% of principal	56,250
Interest for 2005	3,750
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 73,117

EXPENSES

General Assembly 2006	\$ 1,826
Olds, <i>American Religious Humanism</i>	
Preparation for printing	550
Printing	5,999
Shipping and mailing.....	965
<i>Religious Humanism</i> , vol. 38, no. 1	
Printing	3,009
Preparation for mailing	295
Editing, inventory management	2,172
Preparation of journal and newsletter	2,475
Newsletter printing	497
Mailing of journal and newsletter	349
Database management	628
Archive storage	476
UUA contribution	100
Miscellaneous	27
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 19,659

BALANCE ON HAND

January 1, 2006	\$ 9,704
December 31, 2006	\$ 63,162

Note that without the bequest, which was anticipated, expenses would have exceeded income by \$6,542. We did not receive the bulk of the bequest until November, so it was necessary to make an interest-free loan to operate through most of the calendar year. This loan has since been repaid.

Respectfully submitted,
Bill Miller *David Schafer*
 Treasurer President

Our Newest Board Member, Wendy Jerome

At our annual meeting in St. Louis in 2006, Rev. Wendy Jerome was unanimously elected to fill the board vacancy created by the departure of Rev. Kendyl Gibbons, who had reached the 6-year statutory limit of eligibility as a board member at large. Wendy has spent the past year pursuing advanced studies in the graduate school of the University of Minnesota. She has recently accepted a position beginning this fall as interim minister of the First UU Church of Winnipeg [MB], Inc.

A Note from the Editor of *Religious Humanism*

In response to your inquiries about our plans for forthcoming issues of the Journal, I've recently invited Roger Brewin to fill us in. — Newsletter editor

The recent archives of the Journal reside at my house, and from their humidity-controlled, high-security vault (a set of storage shelves in a reasonably dry spot) previous copies go forth, one or two or a dozen at a time, to libraries, seminary students, and ministers, to be sold at church and fellowship appearances, and during that frantic week we call General Assembly. Others are shipped from here to supply humanist discussion groups, church reading rooms and individuals who need to fill in a back issue, or who remember, but can't find, an article from last year, etc.

The newest ones just arrived here — a thousand copies that will be slowly distributed by all the means above — in addition to the other one thousand sent directly to members and subscribers. Yours may have preceded this newsletter through your mail slot. The same day the truck brought boxes full of the latest issue, the final cut was made for inclusion in the next issue, starting with Rev. Ann Fox's sermon "Courageous HUUmanists." What convinced me was the line in which she tells her parishioners "the person who has no time for spirituality is NOT deficient." Her article joins Jerome Stone's "Axiological Determinacy and Ambiguity in Recent Religious Naturalism," a treatise as scholarly as Fox's is breezy. That's actually the subtitle: Stone's shorter and semi-breezy title is "Power and Goodness," but who can resist flinging around the term "Axiological Determinacy?" Not this editor.

Also in the upcoming issue: a great talk I heard Professor Arthur Falk give last year to the West Michigan Freethought group on "Darwinism and the Meaning of Life." It's really the fourth or fifth revision of the talk, since Arthur keeps getting invited to give it more and more places, and keeps sending me each-better-than-the-last rewrites. I finally had to tell him to stop, but if you're in the upper Midwest in the early fall, you may hear him give a yet-further-improved version, about the time this version arrives by mail.

Francis Sink, thirty years a psychologist, submitted an article called "Soul Searching" over 18 months ago. It didn't fit with the issue I was editing at the time, and has sat since, working its way on me slowly. Last year

at GA, I heard Mary Oliver deliver the Ware lecture... an hour of the poet simply reading a selection of her works. Watching her craft (the choosing as much as the phrasing) I thought of Francis, choosing the Oliver selection, which begins her piece. I'm pleased to share it with you now.

Finally after seven years I've succumbed to the editorial temptation, and written a piece myself, based in part on my role in a Media Reform Conference (with full press credentials, no less — much to the discomfort of the reporter for the local daily assigned to cover us). That trip found me in Memphis, at the site of his assassination, on the weekend of Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday.

So while the arrival of each issue may seem like a distinct event to you, to me the Journal is a continuous process, of which the printing and mailing of the latest version is just one current in a huge river. A few weeks ago I ran a HUUmanists booth at a District Annual Meeting, and distributed copies of what I've come to call the "Elevator set," the 2003 Journal paired with that year's "Communicator" (the last issue of this newsletter to go under that name). Together they contained the four humanist elevator speeches delivered in response (some would say rebuttal) to President William Sinkford's challenge for all UUs to be able to succinctly communicate their beliefs. HUUmanists were the only subset of the UUA that met the President's challenge — fitting, perhaps, since we were also the group organizing fierce but respectful opposition to his call for one common UU language of reverence. Sinkford's own gracious reformulation in response is in that same issue.

In the midst of reliving that tempestuous time, I realized how much I have come to see the Journal as an ongoing conversation, one that I'm privileged to moderate, and to some extent, monitor. My hope, as you read this, is that the letter or better yet, the article that responds to something I've just printed, is taking shape in your thoughts.

If you would like an elevator set, I've got a dozen or so besides what I'll need for GA in Portland. Drop me a note at rabrewin@aol.com with your address. By the next issue of this newsletter, I hope to have a detailed

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THE HUMANIST INSTITUTE

Fifteenth Class

Do you wish to learn more about the depth and breadth of Humanism? The Humanist Institute, a program that prepares students to spread the message of Humanism, is accepting applications for its Fifteenth Class.

Join fellow Humanists to learn about the history, philosophy and organizational structure of Humanism; leadership and organizational design; ethical studies and comparative religion; contemporary social and economic issues; and science and its significance to contemporary problems, reason, and ethics.

The Institute's faculty includes some of today's leading Humanist thinkers. Students come from the American Humanist Association, American Rationalist Association, Council for Secular Humanism, the Ethical Cultural movement, Society for Humanistic Judaism and Unitarian-Universalist congregations—as well as from fields such as teaching, social work, business, medicine, and law.

Apply now for the Fifteenth Class beginning August 15-19, 2007 at the New York Society for Ethical Culture.

You will attend three sessions a year for three years and earn a certificate at the end. Significant readings are involved.

Mentors

We are pleased to announce that Anne Klaeyesen and Anthony Pinn will be the co-mentors of Class Fifteen.

Anne is currently the Leader of the Long Island Ethical Humanist Society in New York and a graduate of The Humanist Institute.

Tony is the Agnes Arnold Professor of Humanities and Professor of Religious Studies at Rice University and a member of our Adjunct Faculty.

This promises to be a most stimulating and fulfilling class with these two outstanding mentors, in line with the tradition of the Institute to provide the best in humanist leadership education and training. Don't delay in applying, as space is limited.

The Humanist Institute admits students of any race, color, gender, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, or school-administered programs.

For more information

Please visit Booth 560 at the 2007 UUA General Assembly, June 20-24, 2007, Portland, Oregon.

Or please contact:

NACH/The Humanist Institute
c/o Kristin Steinberg, Administrator
PMB #220, 8014 Olson Memorial Hwy
Golden Valley, MN 55427-4712

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Fax: 763-545-8943

Website: www.humanistinstitute.org



Note from RH Editor continuing from previous page

inventory of back issues and featured articles, so that you can place orders easily. Meantime, if there's something you'd like a copy of, but remember only vaguely, give me a call at (773) 881-4028. We'll root around for it.

Yours in the conversation,
Roger Brewin

Religious Humanism Publication schedule:

Vol 38 #2 in your hands or the mails now

Vol 39 #1 (described above) mailed in September 2007

Vol 39 #2 (with ten-year journal index) mailed

December/January 07/08

The advertisement below appeared in the GA 2007 Program Book.

*Strengthening the UUA
through a more active and
effective Humanism*



Reason and Reverence: Religious Humanism Today

Saturday, 10:45 a.m. -12:00 p.m. – Oregon Convention Center, Room F150

Religious humanism has sometimes been characterized as “dogmatic, overly rational, anthropocentric and lacking spirituality.” But a dynamic religious humanism grounded in a scientifically based religious naturalism is none of these, emphasizing feelings as well as reason, regarding humans as part of nature, and finding religious meaning in the natural world. Rev. Dr. Bill Murry is the former President of Meadville/Lombard Theological School. *Co-sponsored by HUUmanists and UU Religious Naturalists.*

Cosmos and Life: The Greatest Story Ever Told

Saturday, 1:00-2:15 p.m. – Oregon Convention Center, Room F150

Dr. Carolyn Porco, leader of the imaging team on the Cassini spacecraft presently in orbit around Saturn, will describe the great cosmic theatre within which Earthly life has unfolded, prospects for the discovery of extraterrestrial organisms, and the spirituality of a life lived on the scientific frontier.



A Jewish Perspective on the Future of Humanism

Friday, 2:45-4:00 p.m. – Oregon Convention Center, Room F150



Rabbi Sherwin Wine, philosopher, author, historian, and founder of the Society for Humanistic Judaism, will discuss how secular and religious humanistic Jewish thought, culture and worldviews informs current and future humanism. What does this Jewish movement and community have to offer Unitarian Universalism? *Co-sponsored by HUUmanists and UUs for Jewish Awareness.*

Why Not Join Us in Strengthening Humanism in the UUA?

Plan to attend the Annual Meeting of HUUmanists, which will be held in between our two Saturday presentations. *Saturday, 12:00-1:00 p.m. – Oregon Convention Center, Room F150.*

Visit our display in the exhibit hall – HUUmanists and The Humanist Institute invite you to visit our display in the exhibit hall, where you can join HUUmanists, subscribe to *religious humanism*, purchase back issues and books, learn about Humanist higher education or simply chat with folks of like mind. The HUUmanists display is a gathering place for Humanists throughout General Assembly!

Join us as a member of HUUmanists and help us promote and strengthen Humanism throughout the Unitarian Universalist Association. Membership includes a subscription to the journal *religious humanism*. (Membership rates: \$50 per year; \$90 for two years; students, \$20 per year. **Ask about our GA discount!**)



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(203) 281-6232 ♦ deschafer@comcast.net



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CHECK ONE of the following options. Indicate the desired term of your option by circling the number of years.

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Membership includes subscription to the *Religious Humanism* journal, newsletter, inter-active website and e-mail, special offers, and full voting privileges.

OPTION 2. Subscription
to *Religious Humanism* journal.
\$22.00 / 1 year OR \$40.00 / 2 years

OPTION 3. Student Membership.
\$25.00 / 1 year
Student Membership includes the same benefits as the Membership above, but for a reduced fee.

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and a tax-deductible contribution of \$ _____

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P.O. Box 185202
Hamden, CT 06518-0202

HUmanists News

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