



HUmanists News

Newsletter of the HUManists Nov, 2011 No. 2 P.O. Box 185202, Hamden CT 06518-0202

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President's Corner

John B. Hooper

We had a large turnout at our annual meeting at the UUA General Assembly last June in Charlotte, NC. HUManists members and friends gathered in a crowded, energy-packed room to greet one another and talk about the exciting possibilities for a more activist Unitarian Universalist HUManists Association.

We elected new officers and Board members with outstanding qualifications, experience, and capabilities. Welcome Bill Murry and Pat Mohr! We also took the time to express our appreciation to Wendy Jerome and Kathleen Korb, who completed their service on the Board. Thanks again Wendy and Kathleen for your dedication to religious Humanism.

Sean Faircloth, the Executive Director of the Secular Coalition for America gave a stirring presentation on the SCA's work on a variety of initiatives to protect and strengthen the secular character of our government and the rights of nontheistic Americans. "The Secular Coalition for America is committed to promoting reason and science as the most reliable methods for understanding the universe and improving the human condition. Informed by experience and inspired by compassion, we encourage the pursuit of knowledge, meaning, and responsible ethical codes without reference to supernatural forces. We affirm the secular form of government as a necessary condition for the interdependent rights of religious freedom and religious dissent." At the close of Sean's presentation, the HUManists members approved a motion that HUManists make application to become a member organization of the SCA.

Bill Murry described his inspirational new book to annual meeting attendees. "Becoming More Fully Human: Religious Humanism as a Way of Life" is being published by HUManists new publishing arm *Religious Humanism Press (RHP)*. RHP has been created to make it possible to publish important Humanist offerings without the barriers frequently imposed by major publishing houses. Bill's book is now available! Order your copy on-line at www.HUManists.org or send us a check.

Things are really looking up for the UU Humanists Association. Our paid membership is growing, which will allow us to more actively pursue programs in our focus areas. Here are some examples:

- Scholarship, Teaching and Ministry – In addition to publishing Bill Murry’s new book and building up a distribution channel for it, we are also actively supporting the Humanist Institute in its Humanist leadership training program. The HUUmanists Board has authorized an annual \$500 scholarship to help support Unitarian Universalist students in the Humanist Institute program. The first recipient of this scholarship is Paul Selnow of the DuPage Unitarian Universalist Church in Naperville, IL.

- Promotion and Communication – We’ve been upgrading our website and increasing the frequency of email communications with members and friends. I have been visiting local Humanist groups, where I have led discussions on the modern synthesis of religious Humanism and religious Naturalism. It’s been a wonderful learning experience for me to interact with Humanists (of all stripes) in different locations around the country. I’ve made five such visits already and am planning more. Perhaps you’d like me to come out to your neck of the woods to talk with your group about the exciting things happening in UU Humanism.

- Advocacy – We have made formal application for membership in the Secular Coalition for America. We expect to be accepted for admission in January, 2012. We are planning to actively participate in the Justice GA to be held in Phoenix, AZ, in 2012. More about this later this year

GA Booth 2011

Diversity was in the air at the General Assembly Exhibit Hall in Charlotte this past June, with the HUUmanists booth cheek and jowl with a collection of UU theological groups - our neighbors across the aisle were a coalition of liberal Christians, Buddhists, Pagans, Mystics and UUs for Jewish Awareness. Friendly competition and issue-based collaboration, along with conversations about how to approach next year’s Justice GA, were on the agenda.

The diversity of the humanist spectrum was also on display within our booth - we were joined by representatives of Charlotte Atheists and Agnostics (standing in for the national American Humanist Association), and the Humanist Institute, which trains Humanist leaders from half a dozen organizations. Also present were staffers from the Channing Murray Foundation, an Illinois UU Campus Ministry. Patrick Everett, who has become a reliable booth staffer for HUU, was promoting a pilot program of encouraging local groups to seek joint HUU/AHA affiliation, while Jack Reich and Roger Brewin staffed the HUU bookstore, eye-candy table (buttons and bumper stickers), and handled membership and subscription renewals along with new signups. Bill Murry stopped by to promote his newest book – “Becoming More Fully Human” (published by our Religious Humanism Press, and available now on the website).

Close to a thousand delegates and attendees stopped by at this slightly smaller than normal GA, to peruse, purchase, pick up a complimentary copy of the Journal or put forth their ideas. Over fifty new members joined and over a dozen renewed during the week. A popular give-away was Humanist “Random Wisdom Cookies” - we’d call ‘em Fortune Cookies, but you know how we are about making predictions without adequate evidence!

Depending upon how you ask the questions, surveys say between 40% and 60% of all UUs are Humanists - and this scrupulously neutral observer estimates the traffic at our booth was roughly equal to all the other theological groups combined. Not that anyone’s keeping score! But GA is a cross section of UUdom at its liveliest and most committed, and we do, as a lifestance, and as an organization, seem to hold our own.

Roger Brewin, booth coordinator

Financial Results for Last Fiscal Year

A condensed report of income and expenses for the HUUmanists for the last fiscal year, July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011, is shown below.

“Net sales” is the total sales income less sales expenses. Administrative costs include credit card fees, new letterhead design, and a laptop computer.

We are working to increase membership income, and to reduce expenses. We hope to present a balanced budget for fiscal year 2012-13.

Income and Expenses

July 2010 – June 2011

| Income | |
|-----------------------------|----------|
| Memberships & subscriptions | \$9,683 |
| Donations | 153 |
| Net Sales | 199 |
| Unspecified Deposits | 105 |
| Interest earned | 202 |
| <i>Total Income</i> | \$10,342 |

| Expenses | |
|---------------------------|----------|
| Advertising | 175 |
| General Assembly | 7,395 |
| Journal | 13,554 |
| Newsletters & mailings | 2,291 |
| Membership Services | 173 |
| Admin | 2,052 |
| Data & Inventory Handling | 1,577 |
| <i>Total Expense</i> | \$27,218 |

| | |
|-------------------|----------|
| Net Income | (16,876) |
|-------------------|----------|

GA 2012 IN PHOENIX

General Assembly 2012 will be different from most other annual gatherings of the UUA - delegates and attendees will participate in programming and public witness related to the issues of immigration and economic justice. Designed as a response to an initial call to boycott Arizona and move the GA out of Phoenix after that state passed a set of anti-immigrant laws (later largely struck down by a Federal Judge), the “Justice GA” results from the invitation issued by Arizona UU activists and two pro-immigrant organizations, to come to Arizona and honor the spirit of the boycott by working for that week, not on GA business-as-usual, but on social action projects in solidarity with local residents facing oppression.

The idea of a Justice GA generates some controversy, both because UUs will spend hundreds of thousands of dollars in convention hotels (the UUA was on the hook for huge cancellation fees if GA was moved out of state) and the general Phoenix economy, and due to the unpredictable impact of the arrival of hundreds, if not thousands of UU activists, on both the immigrant community and the (often small) organizations that serve them. Groups like ours, which have a sizable programming and exhibit hall presence at GA, have also been waiting to hear how our efforts might fit in. A recent set of invitations to submit programming proposals, and to consider participating in an "inclusive exhibit hall," meaning that each organization would make its own decisions on how to contribute, are encouraging, and HUU is currently considering whether and how to participate.

A small (and definitely unscientific) survey conducted among HUU members and other humanists at this year’s GA booth suggests modest support for organizational involvement in immigration issues (slightly higher than for either Marriage Equality or Worker Rights), and records that one-third of the respondents have some current personal involvement in the issue. Any HUU programming at GA 2012 would need to be at least related to either immigration or economic justice, and any booth presence would need to pay some attention to these issues.

Roger Brewin

Religious Humanism Press

The HUUmanists now have a publishing arm, Religious Humanism Press, for publishing books relevant to humanism. We are proud that our first such effort is the third in a series by William R. Murry. It is available for \$16 plus \$4 for shipping and handling. Send a check to:

HUUmanists Association
PO Box 185202
Hamden CT 06518-0202

or go to our web site,
www.huumanists.org
to use a credit card.

BECOMING MORE FULLY HUMAN

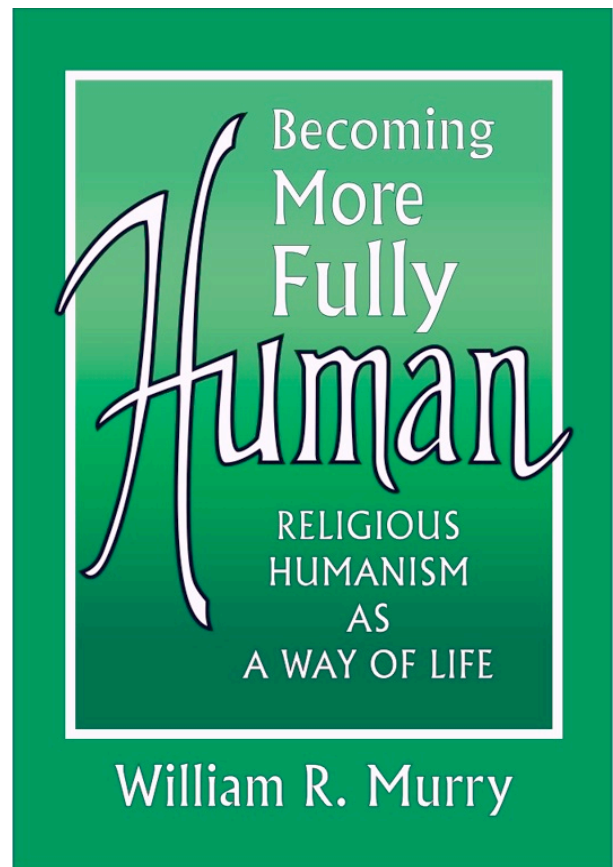
Religious Humanism as a Way of Life
William R. Murry

Becoming More Fully Human approaches Humanism primarily as a way of life rather than as a philosophical perspective, but also includes some discussion of philosophical foundations. Its purpose is to present Humanism as a basis for living in a meaningful and fulfilling way, which enables us to become more fully human. Describing Humanism in positive terms, it emphasizes what Humanism affirms, rather than what it denies. It presents religious Humanism as a personally satisfying and morally responsible way to live, giving our lives meaning and purpose, hope and joy. Most importantly for many readers, it offers practical advice about the qualities that enable one to live well, and explores Humanism's resources for living ethically and dealing constructively with common human problems and personal crises.

Renew Your Membership Before Rates Go Up

Membership rates will go up for next year, from \$50 to \$60 per year and from \$90 to \$108 for two years. This is the first increase in ten years!

So, before Jan. 1, 2012, take advantage of current rates and renew your membership. Send us a check for membership at \$50 for one year or \$90 for two years. Student and limited income membership is half that, at \$25 per year.



Memberships and donations can also be made by credit card on our web site, www.huumanists.org.

No More Free Journals

We have been sending the journal and newsletter to everyone on our mailing list, but we will no longer send the journal to those who do not renew. And, we no longer offer subscriptions only, except for libraries.

Do we have your email address? If not, please send it to greghuu@snet.net. We are sending the newsletter by email to save printing and postage.

HUUmanists coffee cups ...

You can get your HUUmanists coffee cup, bumper sticker or T-shirt from zazzle.com. Search for "zazzle" and "humanists," and there will be many choices on the site.



HUUmanists Officers, Directors & Others

2011-2012

Officers

President
Term expires 2012
John B. Hooper

Vice President
Term expires 2013
Pat Mohr

Secretary
Term expires 2012
Walter W. Wells

Treasurer
Term expires 2013

Past President
David E. Schafer

Directors

Terms expire 2012
Rev. Jane Esbensen
Carol Everly Floyd

Terms expire 2013
Rev. Stefan Jonasson
Rev. William R. Murry
Gayle C. Walter

Others

Editor, religious humanism
Roger A. Brewin