



# The Humanist Society of the Suncoast

*A Socratic society dedicated to the proposition that the fully examined life is well worth living.*  
Member organization of the [Humanists of Florida](#), the [AHA](#), and [ASHS](#). Find us at [www.metrodirect.net/humanist](http://www.metrodirect.net/humanist)

## Our Program for Saturday, May 2nd **TOM PAINE'S UNFINISHED REVOLUTIONS** Living to Some Purpose

In 1789 Tom Paine wrote from overseas to George Washington, his friend and former comrade-in-arms, that he was feeling some satisfaction in his recent efforts. He said, "A Share in two revolutions is living to some purpose." Still a hero in France, where, with the aid of a translator, he took part in the revolutionary National Convention, he is of mixed reputation today in the U.S. His cry for independence, "Common Sense," stirred America to arms and brought him renown, but his later attacks on



organized religion had the effect of knocking him off that pedestal. In our meeting Saturday, May 2, Dr. **Joyce Chumbley** of Orlando, member of the board of directors of the national group, Thomas Paine Friends, will ask what Paine would think today of the outcome of that pair of revolutions. She'll also bring to mind other revolutions Paine helped to instigate.

Biographer Jack Fruchtman Jr. said that Thomas Paine "attacked everything that seemed to him to sidetrack humanity's long struggle for the common good, liberty and rights of all people, especially those who were the victims of tyranny and terror, slavery and poverty."

Paine rose from the artisan class, first following his father's trade as a maker of corset stays. He was 39 when "Common Sense" made him famous, and from that time on he was a friend and colleague of the movers and shakers in the U.S., France and his native England.

In addition to "Common Sense," Paine is also known for his authorship of "Rights of Man" (1791, 1792) and "The Age of Reason" (1794, 1796).

**Joyce Chumbley** will demonstrate that the writings of Thomas Paine are still relevant -- and revolutionary -- today. Chumbley earned her Ph.D. in Drama and Theatre Arts from the University of Hawaii. She is a researcher, writer and activist. For more than three decades she has lived in Florida and has been involved in education, the arts and progressive environmental, social and political issues. She is co-editor of the recently published "Thomas Paine: In Search of the Common Good," a compilation of papers presented at the United Nations in celebration of International Human Rights Day 1987 by contributors representing seven nations including historians Eric Foner and Sean Wilentz and former U.N. Assistant Secretary-General Robert Muller.

**Steve Brown**

Volume 18 No. 5

May, 2009

## Renewal

This is our annual membership renewal period.

The board is happy to announce that for the 2009 period we are **reducing** dues to: **\$25 per individual** and **\$30 per couple**.

This will allow more members to continue, and new members to join in these difficult times.

**Please join us for this free & open discussion.**

**Saturday, May 2nd 2:00 PM**

**Clearwater East Library**  
2251 Drew St.  
Clearwater

Following our meeting, we will dine together at the

**Farmer Boy Restaurant**  
at 2129 Drew St. just 2 blks west of Library.

Don't Forget...

**Tampa Bay Harvest**

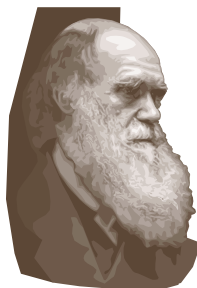


**Please...**

**Bring as many boxed and canned food items as you can to this meeting.**

With the important help of **Glenn Paul** and **Tampa Bay Harvest**, we can do our part to help relieve significant human suffering.

**It's the Humanist thing to do!**



**The Darwin Bicentennial and the Year of Science**

[www.evolvetampa.com](http://www.evolvetampa.com)

JP

### The Philo Café

For those of you living in Tampa, Fridays at 6:30 pm at the [Carrollwood Cultural Center](#) at 4537 Lowell Road, in Tampa is a great way to spend 2 hours on issues of philosophical importance. Group selects topics.



*Humanists work to build a world in which happiness is the enduring criterion of social policy.*

## What do Humanists Want?

1. To extend a human centered approach to the critical problems of life and society.
2. To encourage attitudes of kindness, compassion, tolerance and a loving generosity in human relationships, and in our treatment of all life. These attitudes help us to see ourselves in the lives of others and encourage appreciation for the remarkable diversity of human culture and experience.
3. To develop and popularize the skills of creative and critical thinking that empower people to challenge prejudice, superstition and irrationality in every area of life. Such empowerment enables the individual to reach the highest levels of achievement.
4. To exalt those artistic and imaginative expressions of life which have been the source of the greatest pleasure and enlightenment, and which reflect compelling human truths. Through music, literature, art, dance, and other expressions, we embrace the essence of the human spirit.
5. To explore the grounds of ethics and morality within the unfolding history of our evolving culture. Such knowledge will enable us to become effective protagonists for the happiness of the individual person. JP

### Our monthly social dinner, The Moveable Feast...

## TooJay's Gourmet Deli Restaurant

on May 17th at 5:00PM.

This restaurant is located at 27001 U S Hwy 19 in the Countryside Mall.

A wide variety of food is available at reasonable prices. Please reply with you reservations by May 16

Contact Jerry Moore, our concierge pro-tem as Glenn and Kay are traveling again, at 727-455-4973, or e-mail to [humanist@ij.net](mailto:humanist@ij.net)

### Laugh Lines Deft-initions

#### ADULT:

**A person w ho has stopped grow ing at both ends and is now grow ing in the middle.**

#### BEAUTY PARLOR:

**A place w here w omen curl up and dye.**

#### CANNIBAL:

**Someone w ho is fed up w ith people.**

#### CHICKENS:

**The only animals you eat before they are born and after they are dead.**

#### COMMITTEE:

**A body that keeps minutes and w astes hours.**

#### DUST:

**Mud w ith the j uice squeezed out.**

#### EGOTIST:

**Someone w ho is usually me-deep in conv ersation**

#### HANDKERCHIEF:

**Cold Storage.**

#### INFLATION:

**Cutting money in half w ithout damaging the paper.** Thanks to *Connie Purdum*

**Our Humanist Society is actively looking for interesting speakers with novel and well thought out ideas on just about any subject of interest to a general audience . Let me know if you would like to recommend a person or organization. Call Jim at (813) 531-8138**

## HUMANIST SOCIETY OF THE SUNCOAST

A chapter of the American Humanist Assoc.  
the Association of Secular Humanist Societies

### Board of Directors

**Meets** Sept., December, April

*Don (Ace) Acenbrack*  
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**Glenn Paul Publisher.**  
**Jim Peterson, Editor**

Have an Idea, opinion or essay you want to share?

E-Mail us at:  
[sunhum@metrodirect.net](mailto:sunhum@metrodirect.net)

*Join us in our effort to ignite critical thinking, and embrace reason, & compassion in life.*

*~ Join ~*

*The Humanist Society of the Suncoast.*

- ☞ Trial -3 month- free news
- ☞ Regular -\$25. **New! 2009 only**
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*(Privacy respected)*

**Send to: Glenn Paul, Treasurer**  
**Suncoast Humanist Society**  
**2507 First St. #E**  
**Indian Rocks Beach**  
**33785-3010**

Humanism is a nonreligious ideology that touts appreciation for and representation of the human condition, yet it has neglected to fully recognize art as a fundamental component of our collective experience. Humanism aims to represent our intrinsic drives toward rational thought, orderly scientific inquiry, and displays of compassion. But for it to honestly encapsulate the entirety of our human condition, the humanist belief system must open its doors to the inherent need to create, express, and behold the beauty put forth in poetry, song, painting, and other artistic media. In short, humanism without art doesn't adequately reflect the complex human condition.

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## RELIGION AND ART

Religious adherence is so popular because religion answers some of our deepest questions and assuages some of our strongest fears. Religion quells our apprehension of death with the promise of a supplemental (and improved) afterlife, offers us guiding principals lest we be burdened with deciphering our own moral canons, and provides us with communicative ritualistic practices to prevent us from feeling alone. As contemporary philosopher, poet, and novelist Raymond Tallis wrote in the September/October 2006 issue of *Philosophy Now*: "Art can and must lay claim to the hole left by the absence of God." The humanist movement hasn't yet replenished the chasms left by godlessness. Art inspires humanism. One of the most profound images for me, and one that I think relates something of humanist philosophy, is Michelangelo's painting of the *Creation of Adam* for the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. That extraordinary moment of separation between the Christian God and his first human being is, for all its reproduction and bastardisation, an image I find deeply moving. Seeing it in reality is almost overwhelming. Of course, in the painting, Eve still resides in God's arms and is not yet part of the earthly realm. Humanism is important to contemporary artists. The acclaimed Australian artist S. Norrie refers to artists as great barometers of their times. They alert us to unpredictable and sometimes dire evolutions in culture by offering us images and ideas that are alternative to the mainstream. Much recent art has delivered potent and transforming commentary on the state of the cultural and bio-diverse world. And if we think of the some of the more provocative works of our time, we see that a sledgehammer impact combines acute observation, irony and occasional humor. Humanism is about optimism. We are asked to believe in ourselves and make life as meaningful and as good as it can be -- for ourselves, for each other, and for the earth from which we rise. Much recent art has delivered potent and transforming commentary on the state of the cultural and bio-diverse world.

## Your opportunity to meet the press

Reporter's Name: Jane Lampman

Email: [lampmanj@csmonitor.com](mailto:lampmanj@csmonitor.com)

Title: Staff writer

Media Outlet/Publication: The Christian Science Monitor

Anonymous? No

Are you Changing religion or leaving religion (or already have)?

News Category: General

Query:

"I'd like to talk briefly with a few individuals who have changed religions or denominations - or left religion - during their lives.

I'm interested simply in why they made the change and whether it has made a difference for them. Please contact me by email and include information on how/when I can reach you by phone."



Sign up for a free E-mail newsletter that incorporates the activities, ideas and analysis of outstanding skeptic, magician, and atheist James Randi.

This weekly e-mail newsletter will keep you up to date with the latest JREF News, Randi Speaks videos, and Swift articles written by JREF associates. The James Randi Educational Foundation ([www.randi.org](http://www.randi.org)) is a not-for-profit organization that promotes critical thinking, science education, and skeptical inquiry by providing the public and the media with reliable information about paranormal, supernatural, and pseudoscientific claims. Go to the website above to sign up.

**“Ethical Humanism is primarily an attitude about human beings, their worth, and the significance of their lives. It is concerned with the nature and quality of living; the character and creativity of our relationships. Because of this concern, humanism spontaneously flowers into a spiritual movement in its own right.”**

***Edward L. Ericson,***  
Distinguished author  
& member of the society

### Congratulations!

to **Jerry Moore**, who got his co-pilot certificate for monorail navigation on his 81st birthday

**Have an opinion**, idea, or essay that needs to get vented? This newsletter is your space.

For editorial consideration for the next issue, see Jim Peterson at [humanist@ij.net](mailto:humanist@ij.net)