

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](#), [COR](#), and [CSH](#). Find us at www.suncoasthumanist.com

Happiness

~ Humanism as a philosophy of personal growth,
satisfaction, peace, and fulfillment ~

Our Speaker for December 4th is author & former
director of the Humanists of Florida Association,

Jennifer Hancock



The Humanist Approach to Happiness is a book that basically says – here are personal ethics, here is why they are important, and here is how you can apply them to your daily life and why doing so will help you live a happier more productive life. It isn't a philosophy book so much as a book about the pragmatic reasons for being an ethical, compassionate and responsible person. People who can benefit from this book include:

- Anyone who wants to learn more about Humanism and it's practical application to daily life
- Teens and Young adults looking for advice on everything from dating to dealing with jerks at work or at school.
- Anyone who is struggling with self-identity issues
- Anyone who is experiencing grief and wants a Humanist perspective on how to cope with it
- People dealing with addiction that are looking for secular advice on how to gain the courage to confront their addiction.
- Anyone who wants easy to understand lessons on how to start practicing Freethought
- And anyone who wants to better understand the benefits of applying critical thinking skills and ethical values to every day problem solving

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 in our area.
This year's goal: 700 pounds. **It's the Humanist thing to do!**

Coordinator, Glenn Paul says that Tampa Bay Harvest food deliveries in the past year amounted to 2,765,517 pounds of food to 220 agencies who feed the hungry in Pinellas and Hillsborough counties last year. That's 5,531,000 meals to feed the hungry by TBH's calculations.



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December, 2010

Now, see the
Humanist Society
on [Facebook!](#)

Be a Friend!

Thanks to Bob Byrch!



Help Pakistan, Haiti, Chile,
etc. through secular charity.

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

**On Saturday,
Dec. 4th
at 2 PM:
Clearwater East
Library
2251 Drew St.
Clearwater**

Following our
meeting, many of us
will dine and argue
together at the

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



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 for December will be our

Humanlight celebration, which will again be at Bob Cummings home at December 19th beginning at about 2:30PM and finish about 6:00PM His address is **13062 Gulf Blvd in Madeira Beach**. Bob's house is located just behind the All Season's Resort Bldg, on the Gulf side of Gulf Lane, less than a mile north of the John's Pass bridge. See area [Map](#). This will be a covered dish/pot luck affair and Anita Garcia (727) 381-3933 will be coordinating food selections. Give her a call, and tell her what you would like to bring.

This is a holiday that celebrates the reality of positive human qualities that create a just and meaningful experience of life. Because humanists don't have a bible or religious doctrine, there's no right or wrong way to celebrate HumanLight. Friendship, food, and intelligent discourse mark the Humanist approach to social life.



Laugh Lines Pithy Observations

1. I think part of a best friend's job should be to immediately clear your computer history if you die.
2. Nothing sucks more than that moment during an argument when you realize you're wrong.
3. I totally take back all those times I didn't want to nap when I was younger.
4. There is great need for a sarcasm font.
5. How the hell are you supposed to fold a fitted sheet?
6. Was learning cursive really necessary?
7. Map Quest really needs to start their directions on # 5. I'm pretty sure I know how to get out of my neighborhood.
8. Obituaries would be a lot more interesting if they told you how the person died.

Thanks to Connie Purdum

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
Steve Brown, Secy.
Jim Butler
Robert Byrch
Bob Collette, Vice Pres.
Mark Kligman
Glenn Paul, treasurer
Jim Peterson, President
Mark Winterbottom

~*~*~*~*

Jim Butler Publisher.
Jim Peterson, Editor
Have an Idea, opinion or essay you want to share?

E-Mail us at:

jim@suncoasthumanist.com

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

~ Join or Renew ~

The Humanist Society of the Suncoast.

- ☞ Trial -3 month- free news
- ☞ Regular -\$25. **New! 2011 only**
- ☞ Reg. Couple -\$30.
- ☞ Life -\$200.
- ☞ Life Couple -\$250.
- ☞ Limited income -\$10.

Name: _____

Address -if new: _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

(Privacy respected)

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

A First of Its Kind Film Festival is Coming

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(Tampa, November 23, 2010) The Freethought Film Festival Foundation is hosting the First Annual International Freethought Film Festival in May of 2011, at the historic Tampa Theatre located at 711 Franklin Street in downtown Tampa, Florida, USA. Opening night is Friday the 13th. The weekend-long event will run through May 15th, and the program will consist of Independent films selected from film submissions that have been entered for consideration. Ten different screenings of films, which best reflect the mission of promoting reason, critical thinking, and freedom of inquiry, will be scheduled. The film selections are to be announced after the final judging in January, 2011.

The International Freethought Film Festival is a home for Independent films from around the globe that critically examine truth-claims. Reason, logic, critical thinking and science are embraced as the best ways to explain the natural world; while superstition, dogma, tradition and argument by authority are rejected as justifications for practices, policies and behaviors that are often of detriment to humans and the earth. Freedom of inquiry and expression are boldly exercised. The event tagline, "Going there!!!", is symbolic of this.

On Friday the 13th, after the opening ceremony and first screening of the International Freethought Film Festival, the "Superstitions Unplugged" Opening Night After Party will take place. The party is sponsored by Cigar City Brewing, as well as The Bricks of Ybor City and the Skate Park of Tampa. The venue for the celebration is The Bricks of Ybor City, located at 1327 East 7th Avenue in Ybor City. During the party, guests will be able to engage in activities that defy well-known superstitions such as breaking mirrors, walking under ladders, opening umbrellas indoors, spilling salt and piercing voo-doo dolls. According to the director, Andrea Steele, a superstition has already been defied, since the lease agreement for the Tampa Theatre was signed in the month of November.

Steele adds, "The International Freethought Film Festival is a celebration of freedom of expression, and to educate the public on the importance of using reason and science, instead of superstitions and pseudoscience to explain our natural world. There is nothing in the universe that should be exempt from inquiry and critical examination. Most importantly is that when such inquiry and critical examination produce evidence that is contrary to popular belief or present knowledge; there should never be negative ramifications perpetuated by others when it is voiced."

According to the Freethought Film Festival Foundation, there are eight more film screening sponsor slots available to date. Currently, the American Humanist Association and the Center for Inquiry—Transnational are each committed film sponsors. The International Freethought Film Festival is also offering advertising space in their printed program. The event is being promoted Internationally.

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 - even if not from a distinctly Humanist perspective.

Let me know if you would like to recommend a person, idea, or organization.

Call Jim at (813) 531-8138 or

E-mail me at:

jim@suncoasthumanist.com

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

For editorial consideration for the next issue, contact Jim Peterson at:

jim@suncoasthumanist.com

Share your favorite restaurant.

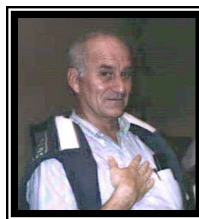


Carolyn Frase

has graciously taken over as chair of the social committee. She welcomes your comments and suggestions for future venues for our mid-month dinner.

Frasec@aol.com

Many thanks to
Glenn Paul
for all of his work.



Read Humanist Periodicals:

The Humanist, Free Inquiry, Free Mind, Humanist Perspectives, Skeptical Inquirer, Secular Humanist Bulletin, The Florida Humanist Journal, Skeptic, Essays in Humanism, and many others.

Humanist Quotes

A key to a wonderful life is exploring the wonders of life.

Without the emotional drive of the clergy, there would be little or no terrorism.

Even a turtle can't go any where until he sticks out his neck.



Frank Prahl

**Read
Poetry on the Literary page
on [page 5](#)**



HFA E-NEWS

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An Electronic News Update from The Humanists of Florida Association

Need to create a Humanist 'voice' remains a priority

Conference participants in May unanimously agreed Humanists need a greater voice in forming state and local policy. Presently, nine participants – representatives from Tallahassee (CFI and Tally Atheists), Jacksonville (First Coast Freethought Society), Port St. Lucie (Humanists of the Treasure Coast), Fort Myers (Free Inquiry Group), Tampa (CFI-Tampa Bay and an individual), Gainesville (Humanist Society of Gainesville) and Sarasota (HUSBAY) – are beginning a conversation with HFA president Jerry Lieberman to identify the issues that are of greatest concern to Humanists across the state, and to devise mechanism for having our voice heard.

It's not too late to join in the conversation! If you are a member of a local group and are interested in making suggestions and providing input on either of these questions, please ask your group leader to identify you as your group's liaison and committee representative. If you are not a member of a local group and are interested in serving on the committee, please contact info@FloridaHumanist.org.

'A First of Its Kind Film Festival is Going There'

The Freethought Film Festival Foundation, an associate member of HFA, is hosting the First Annual International Freethought Film Festival in May of 2011, at the historic Tampa Theatre located at 711 Franklin Street in downtown Tampa. Opening night is Friday the 13th. The weekend-long event will run through May 15, and the program will consist of independent films selected from film submissions that have been entered for consideration. Ten different screenings of films, which best reflect the mission of promoting reason, critical thinking, and freedom of inquiry, will be scheduled. The film selections are to be announced after the final judging in January, 2011.

Read more at http://www.freethoughtfilmfest.org/web_documents/iffeventannouncementpress.pdf

Please visit
www.FloridaHumanist.org
to support HFA with your
membership & donations



Humanists of Florida
Association
Reason and Compassion in Action

The National Defense

The budget for fiscal year 2011 is **720 billion dollars**, up 67 percent from 2001's 432 billion, accounting for inflation.

[President Dwight D. Eisenhower, "The Chance for Peace," speech given to the American Society of Newspaper Editors, Apr. 16, 1953 \(h/t Hume's Ghost\):](#)

"Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed. This world in arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children. The cost of one modern heavy bomber is this: a modern brick school in more than 30 cities. It is two electric power plants, each serving a town of 60,000 population. It is two fine, fully equipped hospitals. It is some fifty miles of concrete pavement. We pay for a single fighter plane with a half million bushels of wheat. We pay for a single destroyer with new homes that could have housed more than 8,000 people."

The above quote was submitted by **Steve Brown**, whom we thank for turning our seasonal thoughts to the ongoing acts of inhumanity playing out on the human stage. Americans have no greater responsibility than the enlightened guidance of their own government.

BLACK BLOOD AND BLACK BONES

The gluttons treasure and wage war over
the Black Blood and Black Bones

These are prizes in a vicious game in which
men are drowned or blown apart,
swept off the earth
like chess pieces off the board.

The Black Blood and Black Bones
slake gluttony and provide great energy
to support the players' sloth,
build their temples and feed their golden gods;
all the while polluting
the planet's pure, precious breath.

The Black Bones pull some men down
into the bowels of the earth,
poison their lungs or crush their bodies,
burying them forever beside the Black Bones.

If there is never a realization of these tragedies,
never a humanistic connection,
all the ghouls, along with the innocent,
will themselves eventually become
Black Blood and Black Bones

Patricia Walters

5/ 03/ 2010

CYBERIA

By Lula Dovi 2010

Orbits studded with satellites
circling techno-bits
overwhelming our systems.

Winken, Blinken and Nod never knew
or fished for such stellar orbiters.

We harvest our celestial ocean.
We find our geopositions.
We gather swarms of soundbites
netted for our Earthlings.

ON THE STREET CORNERS

By Lula Dovi 2010

Wraiths at so many street corners
with supplicating signs—
food, money, work—
I dare not look.
Once there was a pregnant woman!
Where is home?
Is it a cardboard box?
Is it made of blankets or plastic?
We know the address:
nowhere in this town.

Be a more active Humanist!

Being an active agent of social change in many ways defines the practical meaning of Humanism. Despite the vast numbers of us on this planet, all too few actually are involved in making life better for all of us. Especially if you are retired, or have leisure, you should consider expanding the range of your positive involvement in the lives of others.

At the most recent Board meeting, the directors present announced several initiatives to enable members to play more significant roles in the life of our community.

Mark Winterbottom is leading a section that will enable Humanists to be more of a presence in the science program at the St Petersburg Aquarium.

The board also decided to make the [Tampabay Post Carbon Council](#) an adjunct to the Society.

As always, we will continue to participate in social service programs. Be sure to contribute!
-- - *Jim P.*

Your letters to the Editor

After reading all the various ways and means to reduce the federal budget deficit, I was really surprised that I did not notice one single obvious idea put forth pertaining to the perks each of our US senators and representatives receive. While in this rather steep recession, why can't the free and excellent medical care each of our congressmen receive be eliminated. That should be applied to all of our other government's highly paid personnel as well - whomever they may be.

I am certain there are many other perks these power wielders receive which could be removed to help the deficit - without much affect on the life styles of these men and women. As aging retirees, my wife and I must pay for Medicare insurance and an ever increasing [25% increase in 2010 and a whopping 71% for 2011] amount of money for secondary health insurance to keep us safe from possible poverty. We also pay a substantial amount of money for Medicare Part D prescription drug coverage additionally. Why can't Congress do the same- they certainly can afford it!

Glenn Paul



Floridians won a significant victory for voting rights on Tuesday with the passage of Fair Districts Amendments 5 & 6. This historic vote will move Florida forward towards more fair elections with less gerrymandered districts, and a system far less likely to allow politicians to rig elections. The ability of politicians to gerrymander districts in order to protect their seats and reward their friends and allies is diminished, and the protection of minority voting rights has been strengthened – added to the Florida Constitution for the first time. In past three election cycles, Florida's redistricting process has given incumbents running for reelection to the Florida Legislature an unfair and decisive advantage – the product of an incumbent-protecting process that denied voters competitive elections. The odds were so stacked against fair and competitive districts that only 3 out of 420 incumbents in those election cycles lost. No wonder our political system is broken and the public has such a cynical view of government. But now we have hope for the future and Amendments 5 and 6 are a great start for historic change in Florida. The ACLU of Florida played a major role in this victory, and we thank our staff, volunteer leaders, and members.

Our political committee, People over Politics, assembled a campaign team, located in Jacksonville, Tampa and Miami to work alongside FairDistrictsFlorida.org. ACLU Chapter volunteers across the state worked to support Amendments 5 & 6 by taking the Fair Districts message to hundreds of thousands of voters in their local communities who came out to support reform. The ACLU of Florida held hundreds of voter education events, engaged the media and spread the word about Amendments 5 and 6. This was a significant victory that crossed party lines.