



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

Our Program for January 2nd...

Tis the Season

To **Renew** those dues!

Dear Friends,
Whether we make humanism our preferred lifestyle, our enduring advocacy, or our vehicle for learning and social life, it cannot exist without your help. Many are the social and political forces that stand in the way of human freedom and happiness, religion chiefly among them. We are few in organization, though many in individuals. Feel obliged therefore, to do your part to keep our cause alive.

Thanks, *Jim Peterson*
See page 2 to send dues.



Dave Dockery

will deliver his introduction to "Social Networking Boot Camp" You've often heard the names: blogs, wikis, MySpace, Facebook, YouTube, Delicious, Flickr, RSS Feeds, Tagging, Podcasts, Mashups, MeetUp, LinkedIn, and Twitter... but do you know what they are and which ones should you be using? Let Doc sort it all out for you in a single session.

Social networking is often cited as one of the latest "game changing" technologies that will change how we live and how society functions. Even now, many conversations occur with only one person present in the room, connected to the entire world by Bluetooth. For many older people (over 40), this represents an alien and hard to understand change in the traditional ways in which knowledge and social support is exchanged.

As a Humanist and a computer technologist, (president of the Tampa Bay Computer Society), Dave is a great explainer of all things technological, and a sensitive interpreter of the human condition as well. Join us for this great talk. JP

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.

Humanists tend to recognize that we cannot just discuss our way to a better situation. Progress relies on our starting to take pragmatic actions toward that end.

The humanist movement offers a fresh framework for such actions. Whenever you wish, take the opportunity to self-identify as a person who has "a naturalistic/humanistic worldview." You can (if you have not done so already) engage others on the playing field of civics rather than religion. No need to be locked into customary patterns.

Our New Website

All newsletters from the past two years are there, as well as pictures of some of us. (We need more!) See the calendars and maps. We can be found at:

<http://suncoasthumanist.com>

Volume 19 No. 1

January, 2010

**At our last
board meeting,
we agreed to
co-sponsor to
2010 Annual
conference.**



The Humanists
of
Florida
Association

in collaboration with
AHA & CFI

announces

*the first-ever, all-inclusive
Humanist & Freethought
Conference*

April 30 - May 2, 2010
Sarasota, FL

info@FloridaHumanist.org

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

**Saturday,
Jan. 2nd
2:00 PM**

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

Following our meet-
ing, many of us will
dine together at the

**Farmer Boy
Restaurant**
at 2129 Drew St. just 2
blks 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 **January** will be at:

TOOJAY'S GOURMET DELI

in the Countryside Mall

on Sunday January 17th at 5:00PM. This restaurant is located at 27001 US Hwy 19 in the Mall in north Clearwater. TooJay's features many fine sandwiches, soups, salads and entrees at reasonable prices.

Contact Glenn Paul kpaul29@tampabay.rr.com or by phone at 727-595-3347 for reservations by Saturday January 16th.

Laugh Lines

Why, Why, Why? (x 2)

Why do we press harder on a remote control when we know the batteries are almost dead?

Why do banks charge a fee on 'insufficient funds' when they already know there is not enough money?

Why does someone Believe you when you say there are four billion stars; but have to check when you say the paint is still wet?

Why doesn't Tarzan have a beard?

Why does Superman stop bullets with his chest, but ducks when you throw a revolver at him?

Why do Kamikaze pilots wear helmets?

Thanks to Connie Purdum

HUMANIST SOCIETY OF THE SUNCOAST

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

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Meets Sept., December, April

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~*~*~*~*~*

Glenn Paul Publisher.
Jim Peterson, Editor

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

E-Mail us at: jamestp@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! 2010 only**
- ☞ Reg. Couple -\$30.
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(Privacy respected)

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

The Least Religious Nations Are The Happiest

(Courtesy of The National Secular Society; Dec 4)

A [new study](#) (pdf) into the correlation between religious belief and contentment and security shows that the less religious a society is the happier and more secure it becomes.

The study, by Gregory Paul, published in Evolutionary Psychology Journal puts paid to the widely touted notion that without religion society would collapse. According to Mr Paul, the reverse is true. Religion flourishes where a society is dysfunctional and poor. When affluence is present and people feel secure through the provision of health care and social services, religion quickly loses its hold. In other words, those societies that have moved furthest away from religion have higher levels of contentment, stability and affluence.

Unlike many others in his field, Paul does not think that humanity is hardwired for religion, nor that belief in a higher being is necessary for a society to achieve a high level of functionality.

"Popular religion," Paul says, "is a coping mechanism for the anxieties of a dysfunctional social and economic environment." Simply put, it means that without safety nets such as universal healthcare (which more prosperous democracies have), people depend on the "supernatural entities that could be petitioned for aid and protection."

"In view of the reduced levels of religiosity consistently extant in populations that enjoy secure middle class lives," Paul writes, "it can be postulated that if socio-economic conditions had been similarly benign since humans first appeared, it is unlikely that religion would have developed to nearly the degree seen in actual human history, and atheism would have been much more widespread and possibly ubiquitous since the beginning."

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 or organization.

Call Jim at (813) 531-8138 or E-mail me at: jamestp@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, see Jim Peterson at: jamestp@suncoasthumanist.com

Share your favorite restaurant.

Glenn Paul wants to improve the selection of restaurants in which we have our monthly social dinners. Our main criteria for selection is:

1. Location—center county preferred
2. Cost—low to moderate accommodates everybody.
3. Room—to accommodate up to 25
4. Ambience—not too noisy at 5PM.
5. Food—good.

Contact Glenn at:

kpaul29@tampabay.rr.com
or call 727-595-3347

Read Humanist Periodicals:

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

****Classifieds****

Automotive:

1997 TOYOTA CELICA CONVERTIBLE Sports car looks. Drives like a dream. 5-speed stick shift. White with black top only 115,700 miles. Alloy wheels. Asking \$4500. Call Steve Brown. 727.525-3487

Humanist Quotes

"Being human means throwing your whole life on the scales of destiny when need be, all the while rejoicing in every sunny day and every beautiful cloud."

— [Rosa Luxemburg](#)



"Life is painful. It has thorns, like the stem of a rose. Culture and art are the roses that bloom on the stem. The flower is yourself, your humanity. Art is the liberation of the humanity inside yourself."

— [Daisaku Ikeda](#)

