



# 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](http://www.suncoasthumanist.com)

For the better Angels of our Nature...

## Will Violence fade away?

Stephen Pinker\* has written that interpersonal and even state violence has greatly diminished in the past century. We are all too well aware that terrible things happen arising from human causes. In the last century, wars, crimes, pogroms, massacres, as well as the more subtle and muted violence of interpersonal belligerence, animosity, competitive business decisions, prejudice and discrimination of many kinds are the stuff of everyday news.

But could it be that despite the apparent human chaos being brought before us everyday, that the level of violent behavior has measurably receded from what it was?

Certainly the Bible testifies to the widespread, nearly continuous state of war in which the relatively primitive tribes of the time were engaged. This is further verified by many other written accounts of the time. And from there, we know of the existence of states of warfare between thousands of fiefdoms; conditions that were characteristic of all the "civilizations" of the time, leading right up to the present.

Are we hopelessly entangled in skein of conflict, fear, and homicidal rage on a mass scale? Or will humankind find its way in time?

**Matt Cooper** will lead a round table discussion in consideration of Steven Pinker's new book, "*The Better Angels of our Nature*"

\*2006 Humanist of the Year JP

**Roy Speckhardt speaks** - See [page 8](#)

## A New Meeting Place!

### Starting this month: **February**

Our Meeting space will move to the **Countryside Library** at 2741 State Rd. 580 Clearwater, FL 33761. It's just a few miles further north. We were unable to secure our traditional space at the Clearwater East Library. We sincerely regret the inconvenience.

Don't forget to bring canned and boxed food for  
**Tampa Bay Harvest.**



Please join us  
for this free and  
open discussion.

On **Saturday,**  
**February 4th**  
at 2 PM:

**Clearwater Country  
-side Library**  
2741 State Rd. 580  
Clearwater, FL 33761

Following our  
meeting, many of us  
will dine and argue  
together at the  
**Greek City Cafe,**  
across from the mall  
Close to the Library.

Volume 20 No. 2

February, 2012

*Join us in our effort to ignite critical  
thinking, and embrace reason, &  
compassion in life, and to make the  
light of our life shine in the dark  
places of confusion .*

~ **Join or Renew** ~

### The Humanist Society of the Suncoast. Annual Dues

- ☐ Trial -3 month- free news
- ☐ **Regular -\$25.**
  - Renewal (January)
- ☐ Reg. Couple -\$30.
- ☐ Life -\$200.
- ☐ Life Couple -\$250.
- ☐ Associate -\$10.
- ☐ Contribution for growth

*If new, please fill out the form;  
if renewing just indicate your name  
and any changes from our previous  
information. Thanks!*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address -if new : \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

(Privacy respected)

Send to:

**Glenn Paul, Asst. Treasurer**  
**Humanist Society of the Suncoast**  
2507 First St. #E  
Indian Rocks Beach  
33785-3010



*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

## The moveable feast for January will take place at the

*Ivory Mandarin*

5 PM February 19th

2192 Main St. (S.R.580), Dunedin, FL 34698 (in Coastal Plaza, 1/4 miles West of Countryside Mall)  
Phone: (727) 734-3998  
A wide variety of choices. The prices begin at \$8.

Please contact Glenn Paul at 727-595-3347 or email [kpaul29@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:kpaul29@tampabay.rr.com) or reservations by Saturday February 18th.

## Laugh Lines

## 12 ADULT TRUTHS

1. *Sometimes I'll look down at my watch 3 consecutive times and still not know what time it is.*
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.*
9. *I can't remember the last time I wasn't at least kind-of tired.*
10. *Bad decisions make good stories.*
11. *You never know when it will strike, but there comes a moment at work when you know that you just aren't going to do anything productive for the rest of the day.*
12. *Can we all just agree to ignore whatever comes after Blue Ray? I don't want to have to restart my collection, again.*

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

**Steve Brown**  
**Jim Butler**  
**Robert Byrch,**  
**Matt Cooper, VP—treasurer**  
**Terry Eckstien**  
**Lois Fries, Secretary**  
**Jon Green**  
**Jim Peterson, President**  
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Mark Kligman, Jerry Moore, Mark Winterbottom, Bob Collette, Glenn Paul, Don Acenbrach, Jackie Jordan, Brent Yaciw, Mike Hubbard

~\*~\*~\*~\*~

**Jim Butler Publisher.**

**Jim Peterson, Editor**

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

E-Mail us at:

[jim@suncoasthumanist.com](mailto:jim@suncoasthumanist.com)

## Brighten a Day

### for a member of our family

As we get older, we get better, but sometimes there's just that little hiccup that might dampen our enthusiasm slightly. Then we need each other ....just a little more.

**Bob Collette** is recovering from surgery while wife, **Dot** is having a little trouble with general memory problems. They can use a little support. [dotybob@verizon.net](mailto:dotybob@verizon.net)

**Marios Psomas** recently had a little heart attack. Happily for us, he seems to be recovering nicely.

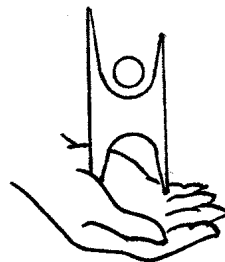
[marios\\_psomas@hotmail.com](mailto:marios_psomas@hotmail.com)

Please let me know of anyone who would like to be contacted .

**Jim Peterson**  
[Jamestp@metrodirect.net](mailto:Jamestp@metrodirect.net)

See **page 3** for more on the Caring committee

## Humanist Helping Hands



Several members have formed a caring response team to help any members of our Humanist family who may need supportive practical help. This is an independent group, not affiliated directly with the Humanist Society. But their efforts are wholly consistent with the Humanist outlook. Contact a member below if you wish to participate.

- ◆ Terri Eckstein (813) 891-9399
- ◆ Jerry Moore (727) 455-4973
- ◆ Nan Owens (813) 662-6612

Contact any of them if you feel you or someone in our group may need help.



## Our Humanist Traveling Library

Thanks once again to the great and generous efforts of **Matt Cooper**, we are able to offer a great selection of fine Humanist books, that often are not found in local libraries. This is a circulating library that depends on the integrity (and memory) of members to return and keep circulated, the many volumes in this fine collection. Matt has "paid it forward", now it's our turn.

**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](mailto:jim@suncoasthumanist.com)

**Have an opinion, idea, news, or essay?**

This newsletter is your space.

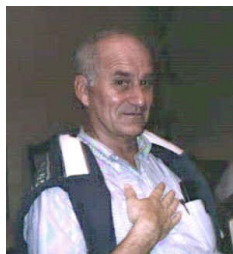
For editorial consideration for the next issue, contact Jim Peterson at:

[jim@suncoasthumanist.com](mailto:jim@suncoasthumanist.com)

## Here's a chance to do some good

by 'clicking on' to some various websites daily. It only takes about 1 minute each day to click onto [thebreastcancersite.com](http://thebreastcancersite.com), [thehungersite.com](http://thehungersite.com) and about 6 more worthy websites each day, each of which produces income for the site, and costs you nothing but a minute of your time. Please consider doing it daily - it is a gift that keeps on giving. I have been helping these websites for almost ten years.

**Glenn Paul**



## 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.

## Volunteer !

3

If we are truly to make a difference in an often indifferent world, we will have to constantly renew our efforts.

Even if you have an active work and family life, there are always opportunities in ways large and small to be a leader in helping to right the world, to heal its wounds, and to create a place fit for gentle people to inhabit.

Nor is retirement the end of activity, but the beginning of putting your energy and efforts into the things that truly matter.

If you think that the basic philosophical outlook of Humanism can make a major contribution to human well being at all levels, it is time to join us as a volunteer to put your beliefs to work.

Contribute to the welfare of your own local community by leading efforts to bridge gaps, bring tolerance and social unity, and exercise kindness everywhere.

Give to our Food collection effort. Hunger is still a big problem everywhere.

At a recent board meeting, we made plans to participate with an **information table** at a major public event in the coming year.

We are putting together a **Speakers Bureau** for outreach. You can help in many ways.

And we need help in setting up our meetings: chairs, electronic components when needed, literature and food collection tables. See a **Board member** to offer your help. JP

"True freedom is the capacity for acting according to one's true character, to be altogether one's self, to be self-determined and not subject to outside coercion."

**Corliss Lamont**





# Take Action: Tell Congress To Oppose Funding For Abstinence-Only Education!

4



Congress will soon introduce an appropriations bill that funds the federal government through the end of Fiscal Year 2012. **Unfortunately, this bill contains a \$5 million earmark that would revive funding for obsolete abstinence-only-until-marriage programs.**

This earmark contradicts the budget cutting message Congress constantly pushes on the American people. It is upsetting that politicians would decide to once again to waste taxpayers' money by funding the now-defunct Community-Based Abstinence Education (CBAE) grant program that decades of research has shown to have no effect on teen behavior.

**The removal of abstinence-only funding and the focus on comprehensive sexual education programs has greatly improved sexual health among American teens and has prepared them for a lifetime of responsible decision making.** A reversion back to ineffective sexual education programs such as the abstinence-only program endangers our youth and hinders our nation's ability to promote a responsible and comprehensive sexual education program.

**Contact your Representatives and Senators right now and stand with the American Humanist Association in opposing funding for ineffective abstinence-only education programs**

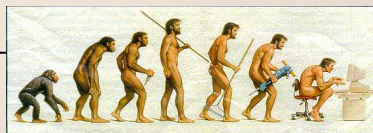
The American Humanist Association supports sexual education programs that are based in a scientific understanding of the body and a realistic approach towards youth behavior. Comprehensive sexual education is vital to the health of our youth, and ineffective programs such as the abstinence-only program hinder our ability to inform and prepare them for a lifetime of decision-making regarding sexual activity. [Please take a moment to contact your congress people to oppose this earmark.](#)

By supporting education programs that utilize the best available scientific and psychological information, you help to improve the lives of countless individuals. [Please take action now.](#)

Sincerely,

Roy Speckhardt

Executive Director



**FOR SEVERAL YEARS** the Ethical Humanist Society of Long Island has celebrated Darwin Day on or around February 12 (Charles Darwin's birthday). Last year's Darwin Day/Stand Up For Science Day was our best yet. Dr. Victor Schuster gave a wonderful demonstration of the scientific method during his platform talk. He posed a situation that also included an ethical problem and he elicited audience participation in solving the dilemma. During his entire presentation, Dr. Schuster reminded us how we were employing the scientific method: Observing, identifying a problem, forming a hypothesis, and testing for consistency or reformulating the hypothesis. We enjoyed his presentation so much that we have invited him back to join us this year, when February 12 falls on Sunday, our regularly scheduled platform day.

What makes our annual celebration unique is that it is conducted as an intergenerational event sponsored by our Sunday morning secular children's program called Kids In Deed (KID). Everyone at the Ethical Humanist Society of Long Island enjoys participating or watching other members engaged in the hands-on activities. One of our members, a biology professor and parent active in our children's program, came up with activities that included dissecting owl pellets to identify what owls eat, extracting DNA from strawberries, and a game called "Predator/Prey B-I-N-G-O."

As a longtime public elementary school teacher, I tried to find an activity that was appropriate and fun for younger kids. I found the "Survival of the Fittest" game online, written as a high school exploration, and rewrote it for children ages five to thirteen.

It surprises me that more secular children's programs haven't embraced Darwin Day, but as I search the Internet, it appears that only colleges and adult organizations have activities.

Here is a niche that our ethical societies and humanist organizations should fill. Children are inquisitive by nature, so science lends itself to countless hands-on learning activities for children of all ages. Parents should feel comfortable allowing their children to participate in these activities because it increases their academic skills and involvement in a variety of ways.

However, most importantly, it's fun for all involved. From *The Humanist* magazine 2-'12



Please visit  
[www.FloridaHumanist.org](http://www.FloridaHumanist.org)  
to support HFA with your  
membership & donations



**Humanists of Florida**  
Association  
*Reason and Compassion in Action*



The bus is still not full as of this writing. Humanist Society members who would like to travel by Bus to DC for this event can contact Rick O'keefe: [rokeefe@centerforinquiry.net](mailto:rokeefe@centerforinquiry.net)

### **What is the Reason Rally?**

The Reason Rally is a movement-wide event sponsored by the country's major secular organizations. The intent is to unify, energize, and embolden secular people nationwide, while dispelling the negative opinions held by so much of American society... and having a damn good time doing it! It will be the largest secular event in world history. There will be music, comedy, great speakers like *Adam Savage* of *Mythbusters*, *Tim Minchin*, *Paul Provenza* and *James Randi*, and lots of fun... and it's free! Full details at: <http://reasonrally.org/>

### **When will the Rally be held?**

On March 24, 2012, from 10:00AM – 4:00PM at the National Mall, nontheists from all corners of the nation will descend on Washington, D.C. en masse to deliver the good news: "We're huge, we're everywhere, and we're growing."

### **Why are we doing this?**

Across America, in every city, every town, and every school, secularism is on the rise. Whether people call themselves atheists, agnostics, secular Humanists, or any of the other terms used to describe their god-free lifestyle, secularism is coming out of the closet. According to the 2008 American Religious Identification Survey (PDF), the percentage of people with no religious affiliation grew in all fifty states. The purpose of this particular rally will be to advance secularism (in the broadest sense of the word) in society.

### **Are we just going to use this opportunity to trash religion?**

No. This will be a positive experience, focusing on all non-theists have achieved in the past several years (and beyond) and motivating those in attendance to become more active. While speakers have the right to say what they wish, the event is indeed a celebration of secular values.

### **What do you hope to achieve from this Rally?**

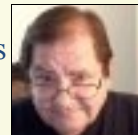
**To dispel stereotypes** – there is no one "True Atheist" no matter what your pastor or parent may tell you. We will have non-theists from all political persuasions, ethnicities, genders, and backgrounds. We will show that there are atheists in every American demographic.

- **Legislative equality.** We want to show the country that atheists can run for office and adequately represent theists, just as theists in office can represent atheists proudly and openly. We deserve a seat at the table just like theists, and we hope this rally can put our values in the radar of American voters, who may one day elect an atheist to public office.

Introducing our new sister Organization...

## ***Tampa Humanist Association***

THA is headed up by board member, **Rob Byrch**, who acting with leaders in HSoS, brought this Into full fruition in December. The idea was discussed at board meetings as far back as February, of creating another group centered in the Tampa area. Both groups will be sharing programs at all levels, and will provide twice as many opportunities for all members to hear speakers, participate in social events, and generally share in all the benefits that come from being in the company of people like us.



THA will recruit it's own members as well, and will have a major impact on further development in the Bay area. Along with CFI, headed by Rick O'Keefe, and AoF headed by Ed Golly, this will afford yet another convenient opportunity for independently minded people in our area to find each other. Read more about THA at:

<http://www.tampahumanist.com>

[www.facebook.com/tampahumanist](http://www.facebook.com/tampahumanist)

[www.meetup.com/Tampa-Humanist-Association](http://www.meetup.com/Tampa-Humanist-Association)

JP

### **THA first Meets: A great Success...**



## **Celebrate Darwin Day with THA!**

Sunday, February 12th at **The Brass Tap** 775 Brandon Town Center, Brandon, FL

THA's **next meeting** will be on February 18th at 11 AM: Hear An Address by **Toni Van Pelt** on Government Faith-Based Programs & Church/State Realities.

It means much hard work, but the future for this group, with Rob's leadership looks very promising. Those interested in attending future meetings should register on the Meetup page at:

[www.meetup.com/Tampa-Humanist-Association](http://www.meetup.com/Tampa-Humanist-Association) but all are welcome at any meeting announced here. **RB.**





# Humanism, Our World, and Our Future

OSHER LIFELONG LEARNING INSTITUTE  
WINTER 2012 PROGRAMS

TUESDAY LIBERAL ARTS COURSES

## Climate Change and the Future of Tampa Bay

The future holds challenging possibilities. The depletion of petroleum and other industrial commodities, and the pressing problems of climate change and overpopulation, involve science, economics and politics. All will undoubtedly influence Tampa Bay's future. This course will attempt to uncover the reality and dispel the myths concerning each of these aspects of climate change. Current research, relevant news and experts from various disciplines will add to our understanding. All issues will be fully discussed, and class participants are invited to bring their own proposals, thoughts and ideas. (Science & Mathematics)

**Matt Cooper, Luke Melton, Ron Frase & Jim Peterson** of the Tampa Bay Post Carbon Council and the Humanist Society will present.

Fee: \$30 • 2nd choice option: \$15 (Call 1/24) • parking: \$9

122XOSCSM0261 • Tue • **2/7-2/21** • 10am-12pm • 3 mtgs  
Vincent A. Stabile Research Bldg, SRB USF Campus, Tampa



Parking is by valet.

You may also choose to purchase a USF parking permit, \$9.



TBPCC is an autonomous adjunct to the Humanist Society. In February of 2012, council members will be presenting **a course on Post Carbon issues** at the University of South Florida. We will show that there are likely to be dramatic changes in the way we live in this century.

Humanist Society members, **Ron Frase, Jim Peterson, Matt Cooper**, and **Luke Melton** are planning the curriculum for this initial three week course. It will take place at the USF Tampa Campus. Expert guidance, AV technology, and interactive devices will supplement the learning environment.

Our subject matter will encompass the full range of likely social, economic, and natural problems that will engage the attention of people in the rapidly emerging future. At this point, the constraint of time imposed by campus logistics will prevent us from having the more full ranging discussion that is needed by many of these subjects, but we will try to hit the most salient aspects of each area. The next time we do this, we hope to have 6 to 8 weeks to more fully unpack the more significant aspects of how these problems might impact our civilization.

These will affect all aspects of our lives including housing, transportation, work, the natural environment, and our relations with each other. See future issues for more.

This is yet another opportunity to bring attention to the problems and opportunities we will have in the future. The philosophical perspective of humanism can make a significant contribution to that transition.

We invite you to become a member of the Council, and make a difference in the quality of our lives. Click below or:  
[www.tampabaypostcarbon.com](http://www.tampabaypostcarbon.com)

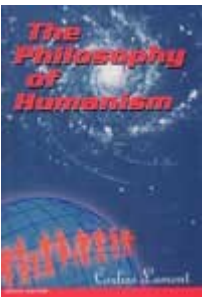
# Humanist Books from the AHA

**One Planet One People by Carl Coon** Hardcover 149 pp \$22.



By Carl Coon, Former Ambassador to Nepal  
In this succinct, highly readable overview of the evolution of human society, the author argues that the 21st century will witness a crucially important and difficult transition for the human race. Blending the disciplines of anthropology and evolutionary psychology with over thirty years of experience in the diplomatic corps, Coon traces the evolution of the human tendency to divide others into two groups, "us versus them." Today, he argues, we have reached a stage where the whole world must be viewed as "us," for only a united world community can cope with today's global challenges.

**The Philosophy of Humanism** - Corliss Lamont



\$16.95

By Dr. Corliss Lamont.

In a work that is a standard text and reference in the ongoing international discussion around secular humanism, Lamont offers an argument for a philosophy that advocates for happiness in this life rather than hope for an undefined afterlife. Paperback, 371 pages.

**Why Was I Born?**



\$5.00

Why Was I Born? book.

What is my purpose for being here?

A Humanistic view of life by Lyle J Simpson.

These books and a great many more can be ordered from: **The Humanist Press**  
<http://evolvefish.com/fish/HumanistPress.html>

**economichumanrights.org**  
POOR PEOPLE'S ECONOMIC HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN

**Contact: Rev. Bruce Wright**

Phone: 727 278 1547

Email: [bgcwright@aol.com](mailto:bgcwright@aol.com) or Cheri Honkala at:  
[cherihonkalaPPERHC@gmail.com](mailto:cherihonkalaPPERHC@gmail.com)

Phone: 267 344 6318

**The Poor People's Economic Human Rights Campaign and others will march on opening day of the Republican National Convention on AUGUST 27th, Monday from 3pm to 530pm. This is a March of the Homeless, the Poor, the Unemployed and Supporters to call for a STOP TO ALL FORECLOSURES, STOP THE CRIMINALIZATION OF THE POOR AND HOMELESS. HOUSING AND FOOD ARE HUMAN RIGHTS!**

Find out more about end of life issues. Everyone has to face this final question. But there are choices not provided by conventional institutions. For more information see: [www.compassionandchoices.org](http://www.compassionandchoices.org)



## Current news of interest

### The Development Committee

The Committee will according to Chair, Matt Cooper. There is still much to do if the Society is to fulfill its potential.

### The Speakers Bureau

Those of us who would like to help the Humanist cause by becoming a speaker on various aspects for public organizations are invited to join the Speakers Group after the meeting.

### The Tampa Humanist Association

**Rob Byrch** hosted the second meeting with guest, Jennifer Hancock, Who spoke on the Humanist Approach to Happiness. He hopes to call a board Meeting shortly. The next meeting will be on February 18th at 11 AM: An Address by **Toni Van Pelt** on Government Faith-Based Programs & Church/State Realities



**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: 1000 pounds.  
**It's the Humanist thing to do!**

Glenn needs and deserves more support to make this project the success it ought to be for an organization of our size. If you can help (and I know you can!) please see Glenn to offer your support.



**Compassion & Choices**  
Choice & Care at the End of Life.

## Center for Inquiry Calendar

CFI presents a fairly full calendar of opportunities to hear a variety of great speakers on subjects of current and enduring interest. **Check Website updates** <http://www.CenterForInquiry.net/Tampa>.

February 2012 Calendar:

### CFI Socials/Meetups:

2nd Thursday, Feb. 9 - Carrollwood, venue TBA

2nd Sunday, Feb. 12 - Brandon, Darwinmas celebration

2nd Monday, Feb. 13 - Dunedin, good beer/ wine/food at Al Fresco

3rd Wednesday, Feb. 15 - USF/New Tampa, German Beer & Food

3rd Thursday, Feb. 16 - St Pete, Craft Beer Night

**Tampa Bay Thinkers:** 4th Tuesday - Feb. 20 - dinner The Bunker at Tres Amici in Ybor.

3rd Monday, Feb. 20 - Tampa Bay Thinkers Discussion.

**The UU's of Clearwater humanist group** will be meeting at 11am on Feb 25th (Sat) at our facilities located at 2470 Nursery Rd., Clearwater. The speaker will be **Roy Speckhardt**, the executive director of the American Humanist Ass'n. Roy is a national figure in the secular movement and will speak about the current state of the secular and humanist movement. All are invited to attend. - **Mark Brandt**

For activities of the **Society and Tampa Humanists Association, Post Carbon Council** see other pages in this newsletter. Thanx to **Rick O'Keefe**



Senators Patrick Leahy (D- VT) and Mike Crapo (R-ID) have recently introduced a bipartisan bill, S. 1925, to re-authorize and improve the Violence Against Women Act.

**The passage of the original Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) in 1994 was a giant step forward for our nation.** Domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking are pervasive issues throughout the United States. VAWA meant that our federal government formally acknowledged that domestic and sexual violence cause tremendous harm, and therefore put resources into helping victims and responding to these crimes. Our nation and millions of individuals are safer as a result.

**The time has come to again reauthorize this critical legislation.** The Violence Against Women Act of 2011 will build upon efforts to prevent violence before it begins and teach the next generation that violence is always wrong. Congress must reauthorize this legislation to address this and build healthy communities.

**Stand with the AHA in supporting this important piece of legislation today.**

The American Humanist Association affirms the fundamental nature of a person's right to be free from violence. As such, we believe that Congress has a duty to pass legislation like VAWA which protects our fellow citizens from violent aggressors. **Please take a moment to contact your senators and ask them to support VAWA now.**

By supporting the survivors of violence and methods to prevent these crimes, you help to improve the lives of countless individuals. I'm asking you, as a supporter of humanism and human dignity, to make a difference and **take action now.**

Roy Speckhardt **AHA**



Dear ACLU Supporters,

Earlier today, in a big victory for privacy rights, the Supreme Court ruled in *U.S. v. Jones* that the government violated the Fourth Amendment when it attached a GPS device to Antoine Jones's car and tracked his movements continuously for a month without a warrant. The ACLU filed an amicus in the case.

This was a critical decision for defending the Fourth Amendment, which protects Americans from unreasonable searches. But even more significant, this was the first time in 20 years, the Supreme Court has had to consider the constitutionality of location-tracking technology.

As the court made clear, attaching a GPS device to a car and tracking its movements implicates the Fourth Amendment. Unfortunately, the government is likely to persist in arguing that the decision does not apply to tracking the location of cell phones.

Tell Congress: The government can't use our cell phones as tracking devices without a warrant. From GPS tracking to wireless surveillance, the ACLU is making sure your rights are protected and your privacy is respected.

Today was a big first victory. Now, we need to keep pushing for better privacy laws.

Help keep cell phone location data private. Contact Congress today, and tell them you value your privacy!



**A. Romero**