



President's Corner

by David Schafer

AS GA 2006 APPROACHES we are looking forward with increasingly eager anticipation to seeing our members and friends in St. Louis. Whether you plan to be there or not, we think it's pretty important for you to have a report on our activities at and since the last GA before we go marching into the next one. This newsletter will bring you up to date on the essentials of the last GA, what we've done in the months since, what we plan to do at GA 2006, and most important of all, what we expect to do in the year ahead.

GA 2005 at Fort Worth

Attendance at GA 2005 was around 4000, down to only 53% of what it was two years earlier in Boston, and fewer than four people on the average from each UU congregation, with proportionately greater representation from the surrounding region. These numbers only reinforced our basic view that while the GA has always been an important part of our activities and will remain so, nowadays there are other, far less expensive and more efficient ways to reach out to potential members throughout the UUA (see below, p. 5).

Our booth in the exhibit hall was abuzz with activity, and attracted a steady flow of the committed and the curious. Of the latter more than 50 signed up, and in the follow-up, by Labor Day the total of new members was more than 100, a gratifying result to our efforts.

We had one HUManists-sponsored event on the program, and what a humdinger it was, and very well attended and received! Paul Woodruff, distinguished professor of classics and ethics at the University of Texas, delivered a gem of a talk on "Reverence Without Theology." It was something every Humanist will want to read, and at our request he is editing it for publication. We were also represented on a panel entitled "Speaking Truth WITH Power: Science and the Language of Reverence," along with speakers from the Sci-technetwork-uu and the UU Naturalists. In all, we reached a much wider audience than we had expected.

Our annual meeting, immediately after Paul Woodruff's talk, elected three new board members (see page 3, below). On the last full day of the GA, board members still in attendance (David Schafer, Sarah Oelberg, Walter W. Wells, Katy Korb, Kendyl Gibbons, and Gayle Walter, plus journal editor Roger Brewin) held a quiet but busy dinner meeting at a nearby hotel restaurant to review the GA and plan the year ahead.

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President's Corner

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Setting Up Our New Office

Back home during the summer we immediately plunged into work on the HUUmanists database, which clearly needed remedial attention beyond the constant maintenance that any database requires. I had to learn the basics of Access, and we had a pile of data from the GA to enter, plus a steady stream of new memberships and subscriptions right up to Labor Day from people eager to use the "GA discount" we had offered until then. I had lots of help from Carol Stone, our computer maven, and Richard Siddall, our Webmaster.

We urgently needed to update our financial records after Bob Prestemon's prolonged illness and sad loss. While we no longer were paying \$1,200 every month for office services it was by no means obvious how much it would now cost us to do these things for ourselves. Practically every phase of our activities would be affected in some way. Our new treasurer, Bill Miller, became familiar with our situation, and we studied the numbers until we both had a good grasp of them. It became clear that we needed a faster and larger computer with upgraded software, so I bought one, added a cable Internet service, and spent most of my available time getting used to them.

Reentering the Publishing Business

In September we also began to get appeals from persons preparing for the UU ministry for help obtaining Mason Olds' classic *American Religious Humanism*, an assigned reading. We'd had such requests before, but not this many, and now the supply of these books, last printed in 1996, was exhausted. We had considered the possibility that we might publish a revision of this book, but had not felt ready to undertake anything that big, and for Olds an extensive revision was out of the question. The board discussed these issues in a teleconference at the end of October, but needed more facts.

Almost at once it became evident that the solution would be to reprint the 1996 version of Olds' book with a few judicious changes. Luckily Jane Baker, who had

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HUUmanists Treasurer's Report

November 1, 2004 - April 1, 2006

INCOME

Memberships, subscriptions	\$ 16,598
Interest (bequest)	4,900
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 21,498

EXPENSES

Publications, mailing	\$ 7,356
Office services (to 6/1/05)	9,600
Office moving expenses	710
GA 2005 program	500
Archives storage rental	472
Ad in <i>UU World</i>	395
2005 UUA affiliation	100
Miscellaneous	252
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 19,385

INCOME LESS EXPENSES \$ 2,113

CASH ON HAND

November 1, 2004	\$ 11,784
April 1, 2006	\$ 13,897

This is an interim combined report for the 17 months indicated. It is essentially the same as one submitted to the UUA in April 2006. It includes information about expenses from the last eight months prior to termination of our previous office agreement on 6/1/05. It does not include some deferred expenses for GA2006 and publication costs after 4/1/06. A full and definitive report including all income and expenses will be made public after a complete reconciliation at the end of the current fiscal year (June 30, 2006).

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Miller
Treasurer

David Schafer
President

HUUmanists Board and Officers

Officers

President

Term Expires 2006

David E. Schafer

Vice President

Term Expires 2007

Sarah W. Oelberg

Secretary

Term Expires 2006

Walter W. Wells

Treasurer

Term Expires 2007

William Miller

At Large

Term Expires 2006

Kendyl Gibbons

Carol A. Hepokoski

Term Expires 2007

Gayle Walter

Lance Haworth

Term Expires 2008

Kathleen D. Korb

Michael W. Werner

Other

Journal Editor

Roger Brewin

HUUmanists

News Editor

David E. Schafer

Past President

(ex officio)

Stefan M. Jonasson

Our Newest Board Members, Elected at GA 2005

BILL MILLER is our new treasurer. He is 42 years old, with an active young family. He is a member of the Unitarian Society of New Haven, where he has previously served as treasurer. At present he is a full-time bank examiner in Hartford. He enjoys attending meetings of the Humanist Association of Connecticut when his schedule permits. In the past he has pursued academic studies in rabbinical Judaism and modern Islam as an avocation.

LANCE HAWORTH is Executive Officer of the Division of Materials Research at the National Science Foundation (NSF), an independent federal agency. He was educated at the University of Liverpool, the University of Alberta, and Yale, and was on the faculty of Wayne State University from 1972 until 1985 when he joined NSF as a program director. He is a member of the UU Church of Arlington, Virginia where he is also a founder of the hUUmanists, an eclectic group whose activities converge principally around secular humanism. He and his wife Letitia have two children and live in Falls Church, Virginia.

GAYLE WALTER is a realtor. She has a BS from Boston University and a master's degree in public health from Columbia University. As a member of the Unitarian Society of New Haven for over 20 years, she is in her second term on its board. She has served on the RE committee and as an RE teacher. She is the mother of two teenagers, one of whom is youth outreach director on the Clara Barton District Board. She and her son Jeff have been USNH delegates at GA. As a Humanist, feminist, and environmentalist, she rejects supernaturalism while she enjoys taking part in CUUPS and Cakes for the Queen of Heaven groups. She now participates in small group ministry and the anti-racism transformation team.

Thanks, Kendyl Gibbons!

This month Rev. Dr. Kendyl Gibbons, one of the most distinguished Humanist members of the UU clergy, will have completed two consecutive three-year terms as a member-at-large of the HUUmanists board of directors, the maximum permitted by our bylaws. During three of those years she simultaneously served as president of the UU Ministers Association. She has just contributed a Foreword to our newly reprinted edition of Mason Olds' classic *American Religious Humanism*. Naturally we asked her whether she would consider nomination to be an officer of HUUmanists, but she has declined, on the reasonable ground that she has more than enough to do in the near future. Not only is she continuing as Senior Minister of the First Unitarian Society of Minneapolis, Minnesota (often called the "flagship" of UU Humanism,

where John Dietrich famously articulated the principles of religious humanism), but recently she became one of two deans of the Humanist Institute (the other being Carol Wintermute), and for the next three years she will also be busy as the mentor of the Institute's incoming Class XIV (see the ad below). Kendyl's cover article "Human Reverence" in the Summer 2006 issue of *UU World* is the best answer we can think of to the stereotype of Humanism exemplified by President Sinkford's unfortunate reference in the same issue (see "Our Calling"). We will miss her input at board meetings, but we are consoled by the thought that she remains accessible to advise us informally until such time as she may be able to return in some formal capacity.

THE HUMANIST INSTITUTE



Do you wish to learn more about the depth and breadth of Humanism? The Humanist Institute, a program that prepares students to spread the message of Humanism, is accepting applications for its Fourteenth Class, Rev. Dr. Kendyl Gibbons, Mentor.

Join fellow Humanists to learn about the history, philosophy and organizational structure of Humanism; leadership; ethical studies and comparative religion; contemporary social and economic issues; the aesthetic experience; and science and its significance to contemporary problems, reason and ethics.

The Institute's faculty includes some of today's leading Humanist thinkers. Students come from the American Humanist Association, American Rationalist Association, Council for Secular Humanism, the Ethical Cultural movement, Society for Humanistic Judaism and Unitarian-Universalist congregations – as well as from fields such as teaching, social work, business, medicine and law.

Apply now. The Fourteenth Class begins August 16-21, 2006 at the Ethical Culture Society in New York City. You will attend three sessions a year for three years on site and earn a certificate at the end. Significant readings and Internet discussion between sessions are involved.

The Humanist Institute admits students of any race, color, gender, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs and school-administered programs.

For more information, including scholarship opportunities, please visit Booth 218 at the 2006 UUA General Assembly. Or please contact: NACH/The Humanist Institute, c/o Kristin Steinberg, Administrator, PMB #220, 8014 Olson Memorial Hwy, Golden Valley, MN 55427-4712. E-mail manager@humanistinstitute.org. Fax 763 545-8943 or go to www.humanistinstitute.org

A HUUmanists Vision: Digital, Decentralized, District by District

Even before we became the HUUmanists Association we have always envisioned our organization becoming a **grass-roots network** of Humanists throughout the UUA. Now that our database more accurately reflects reality and we're acquiring some facility in using it, we believe we're ready to articulate and implement this vision.

What is the purpose of such an organization as ours? For the near future we see our main purposes as (1) communication and (2) facilitation – interactions to support and empower each other in our efforts to live the Humanist life to the fullest within and beyond the UU context. Our original predecessor, the Fellowship of Religious Humanists, could be content to meet once a year at GA to conduct its activities, but something completely different is necessary today to meet the many needs of Humanists around the nation.

Like politics, Humanism is local. Frequent extensive travel is no longer desirable for many purposes. In several metropolitan areas, like Greater Chicago, the Twin Cities of Minneapolis-St. Paul, and the District of Columbia,

Humanists are proposing to come together from time to time for more effective local interaction. At the next level, the UUA is functionally divided into 20 districts, where getting to know each other and work together is more than just a theoretical possibility. With our database becoming more functional, we are developing a plan to help HUUmanists groups organize effectively along metropolitan, regional, and district lines.

Our webmaster, Richard Siddall, is enthusiastic about the possibilities of the Internet. We're looking into making our website more interactive, so we can take payments by credit card, and maybe even stock certain kinds of items Humanists often ask for. We think it's very fortunate that, at just this critical time in our history, the digital revolution is making available such powerful new tools as blogging and podcasting, and we want to make the fullest possible use of these and other tools to share with you one-way and interactive textual, audio, and eventually video materials you can use at the local level. We think Humanism must always strive to be in the vanguard, and never be left behind.

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prepared that version for printing, was delighted to help again, and the same printer, Thomson-Shore, gave us a quote we couldn't refuse. Not least, Rev. Kendyl Gibbons agreed to write a Foreword for the new printing, and by December 7 we had signed a contract with Thomson-Shore to submit copy for the new printing by mid-February. At that time editing for our journal *Religious Humanism* was right on schedule, but two weeks later editor Roger Brewin's father had a massive heart attack. With our deepest sympathy and support, Roger had to curtail his activities indefinitely as his father weakened and eventually passed away.

Getting Ready for GA 2006

With the January 31/February 1 deadlines approaching to make reservations for the 2006 General Assembly, our attention now turned in this direction. We asked Gary Moss, the professional graphic designer who has been managing technical details of layout, printing, and mail-

ing for us, to supervise further progress on our database with Rebecca Schoen, our very capable new office assistant. This year we've been able to sponsor four events (two events, both selected to be repeated); we have a double-sized exhibit booth (10' x 20'), shared with the Humanist Institute; and we again have a full-page ad.

Seeing the Results

In April and May we've mailed complimentary copies of our new printing of Mason Olds' *American Religious Humanism* and Volume 38, Issue 1 of *Religious Humanism* to all our past members whose current addresses we have and a few others who've moved; we've met the deadline for applying to the UUA for renewal of our affiliate status; we've started to get renewals of memberships and subscriptions; we've been filling nonmember requests for the Mason Olds book. For information about GA 2006 events see our ad for the GA program (next page), and for exciting plans for next year, see the article above.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: The Annual HUManists Membership Meeting will be held at GA 2006 on Friday, June 23, in Room 275, America's Center, immediately after Barry Lynn's talk. It will begin promptly at 5:15pm and may remain open up to but not beyond 6:30pm. A brief business meeting, with election of board members and offers, will be followed by a presentation and membership discussion of issues including but not limited to those raised in this newsletter.

HUManists

Strengthening the UUA through a more active and effective Humanism



The Religious Right: More Intrusive Now Than Ever

*Friday, 4:00-5:15 p.m. – America's Center, Room 275
Saturday, 8:30 -9:45 a.m. – America's Center, Room 275*

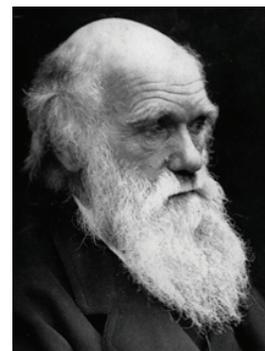
What are the current threats to the separation of church and state and why do we need to maintain a truly independent judiciary? Rev. Barry Lynn argues that the so-called "Religious Right" has become more intrusive and belligerent than ever before—and that this offers unprecedented opportunities for public education and organizing, nationally and locally.

Rev. Barry Lynn is Executive Director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State. A civil liberties activist and lawyer, Lynn is an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ, which gives him a unique perspective on church-state issues.

Notorious: Darwin and the Development of Liberal Religion

*Friday, 2:15-3:30 p.m. – America's Center, Room 228
Sunday, 1:45-3:00 p.m. – America's Center, Room 226*

His father died an unbeliever. He married a "traditional" Unitarian who feared for her husband's soul. Agonizing over his young daughter's death and his scientific work's impact upon religious belief, Charles Darwin slowly evolved a new confidence in the guidance of his own human feelings. A dramatic presentation by Rev. Roger Brewin and cast.



*"Humanism accepts
the Universe and our
place in it as we now
understand them."*

David Schafer
President, HUManists

Visit our display in the exhibit hall

HUManists and The Humanist Institute invite you to visit our display in the exhibit hall, where you can join HUManists, subscribe to *religious humanism*, purchase back issues and books, learn about Humanist higher education or simply chat with folks of like mind. The HUManists display is a gathering place for Humanists throughout General Assembly!

Join us as a member of HUManists and help us promote and strengthen Humanism throughout the Unitarian Universalist Association. Membership includes a subscription to the journal *religious humanism*. (Membership rates: \$50 per year; \$90 for two years; students, \$20 per year. **Ask about our GA discount!**)



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BECOME A MEMBER/SUBSCRIBE
RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP/SUBSCRIPTION
Take advantage of this "GA discount" until Labor Day!

CHECK ONE of the following options
for a one- or two-year membership/subscription:

PLEASE PRINT your information below.

Name:

E-mail address:

Mailing address (street/P. O. box, etc.):

I will serve as a contact at (specify congregation):

For my membership/subscription of \$ _____

and a tax-deductible contribution of \$ _____

I attach a check / money order for \$ _____

Complete this form by adding your signature:

MAIL THIS FORM with check or money order to:

HUUMANISTS
P.O. Box 185202
Hamden, CT 06518-0202

OPTION 1: Full membership
and *Religious Humanism* subscription.
\$35.00 / year OR \$65.00 / 2 years

Full membership includes our newsletter *HUUMANISTS News*, full voting rights, and access to our website and online discussion groups.

OPTION 2. Full membership.
\$20.00 / year OR \$37.00 / 2 years

OPTION 3. *Religious Humanism* subscription.
\$15.00 / year OR \$28.00 / 2 years

OPTION 4. Student: Full membership
and *Religious Humanism* subscription.
\$20.00 / year OR \$37.00 / 2 years

I am a student at (institution and location):

OPTION 5. *HUUMANISTS News* and
e-mail announcements only.
\$10.00 / year

HUmanists News

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