



The Utah Humanist

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HumanistsofUtah.org

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Humanists of Utah is a Chapter of the *American Humanist Association*. We are a nonprofit corporation organized to advocate and promote ethical, rational, and democratic humanism among our membership and the larger community.



Humanism is a rational philosophy informed by science, inspired by art, and motivated by compassion. It affirms the dignity of each human being and supports individual liberty consonant with social and planetary responsibility. Humanism advocates participatory democracy, the open society, human rights and social justice. Free of supernaturalism, it recognizes human beings as part of nature and holds that values—be they religious, ethical, social, or political—have their source in human nature, experience, and culture. Humanism thus derives the goals of life from human need and interest rather than from theological or ideological abstractions, and asserts that humanity must take responsibility for its own destiny.

—*The Humanist*,
Official publication of the American
Humanist Association

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1991-2019

Florien Wineriter

12/31/1924 ~ 3/24/2019

In Memoriam

Flo was one of my heroes, in fact I often thought of him as second father. He was also the father of institutional humanism in Utah and was our longtime chapter president.

Like many of us he was raised in the LDS Church and came to humanism as a philosophical reaction to religion in general and to Mormonism in particular. His trigger service in World War II, he had real difficulty in killing fellow humans and especially other Mormons.

In 2012 he wrote a summary of his life philosophy, “We celebrate the diversities of the human mind and the variety of acceptable life styles those minds have developed.

“Like the diverse colors of a rainbow that exist separately but blend together in a glorious array of beauty, we celebrate our human individuality, and our independent beliefs that blend together to make our community a glorious array of beauty. humanism believes that our very existence depends upon the web of life and that our place in nature must be in harmony with all of life.

“Humanist ethics, based on love and compassion for humankind and nature, place responsibility on humans for shaping our destiny and the future direction of the world.”

If you are interested in reading more and have a few minutes to several hours go to the humanistsofutah.org and use the Google Search box and look for Wineriter. Articles from before 2011 are stored at a year level so the link won't take you directly to Flo's writing. Use your browser search feature (control-f) and look for Wineriter.

I've seen Flo one or two times a year for several years since he moved to St. George and he was ready to die; legally blind, nearly deaf, and no longer able to care for his body himself. He is missed but should be celebrated as a fine human being.

—Wayne Wilson



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Humanists of Utah *present*

An evening with the Utah Citizen's Climate Lobby



President's Message

Happy April, fellow humanists! As we enter spring finish the first quarter of 2019, the Humanists of Utah have been quite busy implementing many ideas and strategies that we deemed priorities for the year. I feel confident in our ability to provide you with a top-notch experience with fellow Humanists as well as an environment of learning, activity and camaraderie.

In looking forward this year, one of the first needs we identified for HoU was increasing our visibility to potential members and the public. Without knowing HoU exists and what it stands for, potential humanists will not be able to find the information, support and social bonding that aligns them with our organization. An improved marketing framework for our organization and its offerings is under way and we are seeing improvements so far. I wanted to share a few highlights:

Facebook—Our Facebook group (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/humanistsofUtah/>) currently sits at 1062 members and has shown growth for each of the last 4 months. Member interaction has increased, and we have used the group to heavily advertise our events and meetings with great success. In a digital era, Facebook presence is ubiquitous, and we will continue to use this as a platform for reaching many current and potential members. If you use Facebook and are not a member of the Humanists of Utah group, please join.

Formal events—Darwin Day in February was a great success. Dr. Craig Wilkinson spoke on evolution and molecular biology at the Eccles Dinosaur Park in Ogden. We had attendance of 82 people and were assisted by the Atheists of Utah, who helped promote the event and brought the cake. A highlight was having 14 students from the anthropology department at

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Humanists of Utah



humanistsofUtah.org

Support the AHA

Humanists of Utah urges you to support the American Humanist Association.

The AHA is dedicated to preserving individual rights and promoting nationally the philosophy of humanism.

Membership brings you the *Humanist* magazine and *Free Mind* newsletter six times a year.

Annual membership is only \$45.00 (**\$35 Introductory Rate**) and can be paid with plastic. Phone (800) 743-6646 or write to:

**American Humanist Association
1821 Jefferson Place, NW
Washington DC 20036**

Or visit online:

<https://americanhumanist.org/>



Meditation Improves Humanism

As humanists, we try to live a thoughtful, joyful, and rational life based in human experience. This type of life is a process of discovery. Meditation can function as an exploration tool to discover how best to live as a human being and can be a part of traveling the path to successful Humanism.

Investigating how meditation can benefit us in the Utah chapter of the American Humanists Association, we invited Mary Ellen Seien Sloan Sensei to speak to us this March.

Seien Sensei is a Zen Teacher and certified Big Mind Facilitator. She has studied with Zen Master Genpo Roshi since 2001, was ordained in 2005, and received acknowledgment as a Sensei (Zen Teacher) September 2017. Mary Ellen is a lawyer. She was formerly counsel to the Salt Lake County District Attorney's Office, as well as having practiced privately.

Speaking with us, Seien Sensei asked if we wanted to meditate and what had stopped us from that practice. The discussion led to many saying that they were distracted by their own thoughts about what they were doing, what they were going to do later, what they did earlier, were they wasting their time, and all the other disrupting thoughts that had arisen unbidden as people had tried to meditate. Her description was of us being controlled by our "thinking minds".

Seien Sensei then asked us to get comfortably relaxed in our chairs with our hands on our knees or in our laps. We could keep our eyes open or closed. Sensei asked us to think whatever we wanted to think and give the "thinking mind" full control. My mind went empty when I had permission to think whatever I wanted. I was no longer distracted by the myriad of thoughts swirling in my mind.

An empty and quiet mind is a state that allows the meditator to receive the most benefits.

"Clarity" is the one-word response that a different teacher, Lama Surya Das, gives when asked about the benefits of meditation. He then offers a longer list and calls the benefits amazing. He says:

- Meditation helps our minds empty themselves of clutter and confusion.
- It makes us feel calm, peaceful, and more aware of our inner resources.
- It brings a sense of being centered, grounded, and balanced.
- It makes our senses and perceptions more vivid.
- It helps us see how everything in life fits together.
- Meditation helps us become more skilled at navigating life and, consequently, less likely to be buffeted about by the winds of fate.
- It helps us gain greater insight into our personal issues and hang-ups.
- It helps us become less egotistical and self-centered.
- It helps us increase our capacity and ability to love.
- It helps us gain greater insight into the nature of reality.
- It helps us become more mindful and able to lead our lives with greater awareness and understanding.

Meditation, it seems, can help us become better humanists. Our visit with Seien Sensei cracked open a door through which shone a very bright light.

—Lauren Florence, MD





President

(Continued from page 2)

Weber State show up to earn extra credit for writing a report on Dr. Wilkinson's presentation.

In June we will have a table at **Pride Festival** in Salt Lake City to support LGBTQ causes and awareness in Utah. We will have a booth to disseminate HoU materials and information, answer questions, encourage people to join our organization and sell Humanist items. If you are interested in helping us with the booth or planning, please contact us.

Website—The HoU board is currently looking into upgrading our existing website to gain more flexibility, functionality and design options while still preserving existing data. The hope is that by integrating stronger social media links, digital payment options, graphics and security, we can reach more people and promote the humanist lifestyle more effectively.

Meetings—Our monthly meetings have a full schedule this year with very interesting guests on a variety of subjects. Attendance so far is over double our previous autumn average and we hope to make that increase permanent. Increased promotion, engaging subject matter, and guests from members and HoU Facebook group have contributed to this. We are still meeting at Elliott Hall on the second Thursday of each month at 7:30.

Upcoming Meetings

April 11—Citizen's Climate Lobby : *Fighting Climate Change with Democracy*

May 9—*International Rescue Committee on the Plight of Refugees in SLC*

June 15—Jason Torpy, president of Military Association of Atheists and Freethinkers (MAAF): *There Are Atheists in Foxholes, and how to make sure that your community knows it.*

Hopefully you are feeling as excited as we are this early into the year. We are counting on each and every one of you to attend our events, contribute online and consider bringing friends and family to events with you. We are passionate about enhancing our visibility and we are seeing early success. But we still have a long way to go and any ideas or thoughts on this will be considered, so we would like to see you involved!

—Jeff Curtis
President, HoU

Death: Celebrate Life

Flo contributed a great deal to this newsletter over the years. This article from December 1994 seems appropriate now.

This past month I spoke at a memorial service for a life-long, close friend. As I looked over the group of people attending the service, I realized how many of them had suffered the grief caused by the death of a loved one in the past few years. Many had experienced the death of a spouse, a parent, or a child and I thought how our coming together to celebrate the life of a friend helps us to understand our own grief, have compassion for the grief of others and generates a sense of community.

Celebrating life as we grieve reminds us how short and how precious are the bonds we develop with just a few other humans during this experience we call life. It reminds us of the very short time we have to share the beauty of a sunrise, the serenity of a sunset, a refreshing breeze, and a cleansing rain.

It reminds us that we, too, are drifting toward the end of life and we should take advantage of every opportunity to make life meaningful for our selves and meaningful for those with whom we share this experience. The human condition is precarious and chaotic. Let us celebrate its uncertainty frequently.

—Flo Wineriter
December 1994



Humanists of Utah meetings are open to the public and free of any admission charge. A discussion and light refreshments follow the speaker's presentation. Come join us and **bring a friend!**

Disclaimer: The views expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position of Humanists of Utah nor the American Humanist Association. Reprinting of articles is permitted for humanist groups promoting the interests of humanism if attribution is properly stated.



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>> Put Your Name Here <<
 >> Write an Article! <<

Nonprofit

Humanists of Utah is a nonprofit organization supported in large part by dues paying members. Our other major source of funds comes from generous gifts, mostly from the same dues payers who give a little more. In February 2003, chapter member Marion Craig died and left HoU a bequest of \$20,000. We invested this money in an endowment fund. The interest is still helping to pay for banquets, special events, etc. When you create your personal will please consider leaving a gift to Humanists of Utah.

Membership/Renewal Application

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 Phone: _____ Email: _____

- \$50 Regular Annual Membership and subscription to the Utah Humanist
 - \$90 Regular 2-year Membership and subscription to the Utah Humanist
 - \$35 Regular Annual Membership with email delivery of the Utah Humanist
 - \$65 Regular 2-year Membership with email delivery of the Utah Humanist
 - \$20 Student Annual Membership and subscription to the Utah Humanist
 - \$20 Annual subscription to the Utah Humanist (I do not want to be listed as a member of **Humanists of Utah**)
 - Please send a *FREE* trial Subscription to the Utah Humanist
 - \$ _____ additional contribution to help promote public awareness of humanism
- => All contributions in excess of the \$20 subscription fee tax deductible.
 => *Members* have the right to vote in Chapter elections and participate in Chapter decisions.
 => Dues provide for information packets, honoraria to speakers, expenses of newsletter publication, trial subscriptions, copies to libraries, and newsletter exchange with other chapters.

Humanists of Utah
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West Jordan, UT 84084

Notes:

- ◆ *General Meetings* are for all members and the general public. There are no admission charges.
- ◆ *Discussion Group* meetings are open to everyone. A different book or topic is covered every month.
- ◆ *Board Meetings* are planning and business sessions. They are open to all members.
- ◆ Eliot Hall is in the First Unitarian Church located at 569 South 1300 East in Salt Lake City.
- ◆ RE 201 is upstairs in the East Educational Building at the First Unitarian Church.

Charitable Giving While You Shop

Amazon.com

Sign up for Amazon Smile and a percentage of your purchase will be donated to HoU:

- Log into amazon.com and open your personal account settings.
- Select “Your Amazon Smile.”
- Search for “Humanists of Utah.”
This will find “American Humanist Association” in West Jordan because we use the AHA as our umbrella for sales tax exemption.
- Click the “Select” button.

If you have a bookmark for Amazon please modify it to go to smile.amazon.com—you always want to use the “smile” option.

Smith’s Grocery Stores

Humanists of Utah is enrolled in Smith’s Inspiring Donations program. If you have a Smith’s Fresh Value card, you can register it to benefit Humanists of Utah. Simply visit www.smithsfoodanddrug.com/inspire , create an account, associate it with your Fresh Values card number, and then enter NPO Number: KQ330 within your “account summary.” All future purchases will now benefit HoU.

Upcoming Events

Meeting	Topic	Date	Time	Place
General Meeting	Fighting Climate Change with Democracy <i>Bill Barron and Steve Glaser</i>	Apr 11	7:30	Eliot Hall
Board Meeting	Chapter Business	Apr 18	7:30	TBA
General Meeting	Plight of Refugees in SLC <i>International Rescue Committee</i>	May 9	7:30	Eliot Hall
Board Meeting	Chapter Business	May 16	7:30	TBA



Happy Humanist

Humanists of Utah

A Chapter of the American Humanist Association

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