



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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Climate Change ~What can I do?~

At our January general meeting, I was happy to moderate a discussion on climate change where we posed the question; what can I do?

But before we began the discussion, we agreed that it was time to start calling it climate crisis rather than climate change. Then I took a few minutes to talk about some of my knowledge of the subject by way of my University of Utah Physical Geography studies. We used Google Earth to look at the High Uintah mountain range so that I could point out the perennial snow fields and patches which represent the edge of what we call the Cryosphere or the areas of the earth that are consistently at an average temperature below freezing. Through dozens of backpacking trips I observed a few specific areas of large and small snow fields, basically watching them grow and shrink through a number of years. While studying these snow fields I was also taking numerous slides of the evidence of the last glaciation, where at times you could observe that 15 to 20 thousand years ago, the trail you are on would be under over a thousand feet of glacial ice. The study of this Upper Alpine environments and Lake Bonneville gave me an understanding of the way climate changes naturally. Then the question becomes one of how are we humans accelerating these changes.

I also complained about the fact that we get distracted by the arguments about climate change and global warming when we should be talking more about pollution and the over use of resources.

Also, while we were online, I showed us a web site called the National Snow and Ice Date Center. This web site has all kinds of information useful to scientists and non-scientists alike. If you want to learn about the Cryosphere online this is a good place to go.

When I finished with my remarks, we went back to the question; what can I do?

Starting out, I said that we might put the possibilities of action in order from large to small, starting with global and national as the large efforts, followed by state and local, then neighborhood, and finally as individuals.

I certainly can't remember all the comments, but the discussion touched on many topics. On the global and national level, we talked about supporting the Citizen's Climate Lobby, as advocated by

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Humanists of Utah

2020 INTERNATIONAL

Darwin Day

CELEBRATION

T-REX

FAMILY VALUES

Dr. Paul J. Bybee
Utah Valley University, Dept. of Biology

MYRMECOPHILY

Ants and the Species That Love Them

Marissa Harrison
Chief Entomologist, Museum of Ancient Life

Science exhibits

Children's activities

Birthday cake

Meet & hear fascinating guest speakers!

FREE

Bring your family and friends!

February 15

SAT 1:30 – 4:30

Museum of Ancient Life

Thanksgiving Point

3003 N. Thanksgiving Way
Lehi, UT 84043

Atheists of Utah

Free Thought Forum

Utah Valley Oasis

Utah Friends of Paleontology

All Humanists of Utah monthly meetings are free and open to the public, and donations are gratefully accepted though not required. Please bring interested friends and family!



President's Report

Climate Change

The Dark Ages of medieval times received its name from the dearth of intellectual stimulation and progress in the realms of science, discovery and reason. Under the crushing weight of strict religious control, deadly plagues and incessant warfare, ideas and their applications seemed generally lost to the west. Indeed, it was the fortunate preservation and encouragement of past ideals and knowledge by the Islamic and eastern kingdoms that kept many of the ideas and records alive during these days.

As we get ready to celebrate Darwin Day next week, I have been reflecting on the need to not only preserve scientific ideas and information, but to use it to fight against the encroachment of intolerance and pseudo-science. Charles Darwin is perhaps best remembered for his world travels that culminated in his publication of *On The Origin of Species*, in which he pondered evolution and its consequences for all of life, but few realize that he was a prize fighter in his time for the ability and right to question authority and dismiss conformity. After dropping out of medical school due to boredom and revulsion at surgical practices, his father pressed him to into becoming an Anglican priest, matriculating him into seminary. During this time, Darwin had grown utterly fascinated with naturalism, taxidermy and life sciences, eventually joining a group known as the Plinian Society, which challenged orthodoxy in religious concepts of science. His voyage to several continents would allow

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board members Brian Trick and Lisa Miller in their December newsletter piece. I mentioned a group called World War Zero with John Kerry and Susan Rice as two well knowns pushing that organization. They are one of the organizations that are now switching from calling it Climate Change to saying there is a Climate Crisis.

We discussed overpopulation and agreed that it wasn't a good idea to get to preachy about having too many kids, but rather offer aid that would help empower women to have control over their choice of when and how many children to have. I mentioned how in a documentary I viewed; they were giving solar ovens to families in tribes along the edge of the Kalahari Desert in Africa. These ovens are beneficial in a number of ways. They are beneficial to the environment by reducing the gathering of what little wood there is along the edge of a desert for cooking. The ovens help the women by eliminating the need to spend time gathering fuel and by eliminating the smoke from cook fires.

We talked about how many communities are restricting or banning the use of leaf blowers. Studies have shown that a two cycle leaf blower creates as much exhaust pollution as seven average cars in the same amount of time. While they also stir up toxic dust containing all sorts of contaminants such as pesticides, fertilizers, bug parts, animal feces, and on and on.

In our personal lives using fewer resources is one of the best ways to not create pollution and waste in the first place. I used myself as an example of this by admitting that I use too much paper, mostly in the form of paper towels and that I waste too much hot water when I take a shower. I have committed to having very few fires in my fireplace.

Eating less meat was advocated and the fact that it takes a very large number of calories to produce one calorie of meat was mentioned.

Several other actions were suggested, like electric cars, electric lawn mowers, better insulation in our home, looking into the possibility of ground heat exchangers, home solar energy, consolidating our driving to lessen the number of miles traveled.

I enjoyed our discussion and it is my and our chapter's intention to make this subject of climate crisis an ongoing effort with other meetings and discussions hosted by our chapter. We will also be reaching out to other groups to participate with us in addressing this climate crisis. The time for action is now.

—Bob Lane
HoU Board Member



Free Thought Forum

<https://www.freethoughtforum.org>

We had the opportunity to meet up with the Free Thought Forum at the HoU Winter Solstice banquet. Their group holds weekly meetings in several locations around the local area. Specifics of the meetings are posted on their website.

The group's Tag Line is:

Everyone is Welcome (regardless of personal religious belief, political leaning, education, race, sex, etc.) to join our weekly open and civil discussions on: Moral Philosophy-Science-Religion-Politics-Current Events-and More!

We have attended several of their meetings in Draper and find them well lead with interesting topics. If you are looking for some stimulating conversations you should consider checking them out. Be sure to go to their web page for more information.

—Brian Trick and Lisa Miller
HoU Board Members

President's Report

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him the freedom to oppose prevailing thought and usher in a new paradigm of thought and understanding.

I hope as you consider Darwin's contributions to science this month that you will also consider his radical refusal to accept the thought patterns and societal acceptance that had fallen over those people and institutions seeking to guide his life. He was a fighter, a rebel, an anarchist of thought—and at the base of all this, he was a declared humanist and believed in the power of reason, ethics and exploration to liberate a man's heart and mind. In these times of rampant post-truth and alternative facts, I encourage you to question everything, seek to replicate your theories and thoughts via the scientific method, and have open discourse about ideas and their impacts in our lives. Science and reason do not live in a vacuum nor do they fight for themselves. They need us to do it so that we may avoid another dark age.

Please come out and support us at the Charles Darwin Day celebration next week. The HoU officers and board have worked extremely hard to deliver a fantastic celebration and we want you to be there! Bring friends, family members, neighbors, co-workers, whoever and be prepared to nerd out to science, nature and Humanism in action. See you there!

—Jeff Curtis
President, HoU

March Mammal Madness

Have some March Madness fun this year by joining March MAMMAL Madness. This is an amazing event put together by a bunch of lovely science people running a March Madness bracket—with mammal playoffs (mostly mammals, a few exceptions sneak in from time-to-time). I have had so much fun with this I literally squeak with excitement every time I think about it coming. "March Maaammal Madness!" No hyperbole—every year we learn about incredible animals that tend to come up in conversations throughout the year. Have you heard of the Mantis Shrimp? And that it can literally kill its prey from the shockwave of its fast-moving fist?

There are bunches of resources available for researching out all those mammals you've never heard of. It's a month+ of geek delight: Science Facts, Smack Talk, Heartbreaking Upsets, Team Alliances.

More information and links can be found at <http://mammalssuck.blogspot.com/2020/02/march-mammal-madness-2020.html>. Division announcements come out the end of this month, so keep an eye out!

Pro-tip: Once the games get going, look for the "Rodent Recap" YouTube posts. They are a really fun way to get your bracket night recap.

—Lisa Miller
HoU Board Member



Humanist Celebrant

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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Jared Anderson (MA, BCC) is endorsed by the AHA Humanist Society as a Chaplain, Celebrant, and Lay Leader. He provides rituals across the life span for birth, coming of age, and divorce, as well as weddings and funerals. He specializes in designing personalized ceremonies that integrate ideas from art, history and popular culture. Contact him at jared@humanistsofutah.org

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

P.O. Box 1043

West Jordan, UT 84084

Now you can pay with PayPal!

Newsletter Contributors

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 Bob Lane
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 Wayne Wilson

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

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 | Darwin Day 2020 | Feb 15 | 1:00-5:00 | Thanksgiving Point |
| Board Meeting | Chapter Business | Feb 20 | 7:30 | TBA |
| General Meeting | Disaster Preparedness <i>Linda Milne</i> | Mar 13 | 1:00-5:00 | Thanksgiving Point |
| Board Meeting | Chapter Business | Mar 19 | 7:30 | TBA |

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A Chapter of the American Humanist Association

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