



Utah Humanist

Promoting Humanism in Utah since 1991

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Humanists of Utah is a Chapter of the *American Humanist Association (AHA)*. 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, AHA

Americanhumanist.org



Hi All

from Bob Lane

It has been several months since I last submitted anything to the newsletter. Some traveling and having guests for the holidays, plus being just plain lazy are the reasons. Over the years as a board member, and thirteen of them as president, I was happy to submit something most months. The main problem for me was that I would almost always procrastinate until the last minute and then rush to get finished before the deadline. I'm working on that by

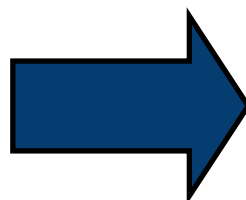
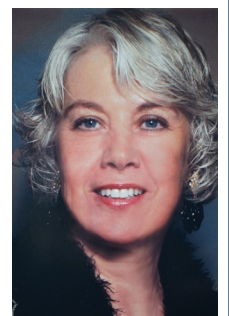
(Continued on page 2)

Come back to in-person meetings!

March 17 1pm

Salt Lake Library Conf Rm C
Lauren Florence MD

Talking About Medicare:
Path to Universal Coverage



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Inverted Priorities

A little over a century ago the term “buggy whip” was coined to mean “out of touch with reality.” Gas powered automobiles were rapidly replacing horse drawn vehicles and so buggy whips were no longer needed and factories devoted to their production were going out of business.

HB 374 State Energy Policy Amendment codifies not only continuing to use, but to actually develop “dispatchable energy resources” like coal and waxy crude oil at or near the top of the list for funding by state monies. There are mentions of hydrogen, nuclear generation, etc., but inclusion of wind and solar are few and far between. This seems to reason enough to label the current legislative session the Buggy Whip Gang.

It just seems to be totally bassackwards of how we should be spending state funds. **Wayne Wilson**



Read more about [HB374 here](#). Call your legislator to share your thoughts—they work for you!

(Hi from Bob Lane continued from page 1)

forcing myself to get started early enough to not get stressed and do it over a couple of sessions if needed. It will also help by getting it to our editor days in advance rather at the last minute. I plan to write something six or eight times a year now. I hope I don't bore you all to death with my ramblings and complaining about certain issues. But I plan to be rather critical of things like the ongoing political nightmare we have in this country and indeed the whole world, plus the lack of urgency about climate change. With just those two subjects there is a plethora of subheadings to write about. A number of years ago many of our members had their “Journey to Humanism” printed in the newsletter. I plan to redo my story with a little more detail and a different way of looking at it. That is, as being more of a discovery than a journey. When I started thinking about redoing my “Journey to Humanism,” It occurred to me that I didn't travel along in life until I became a humanist, but rather that my thinking and attitudes were always, or from an early age Humanistic for the most part. It wasn't until I was made aware of humanist organizations that I started calling myself a humanist. I'll get started on this redo in an upcoming submission to the newsletter. I believe my humanism began when religion stopped making sense at about 14 or 15 years of age. Hopefully it won't bore everyone to death. That's about it for now, I hope to see some of you at our next meeting.

Women Who Advocate for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

March 2024 is Women's History Month. The theme from the National Women's History Alliance is "Women Who Advocate for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion". Does this sound familiar? I was nicely surprised at the humanist ideals included in this focus. This said, these are all attributes we should be maintaining always instead of just during specific times.

The NWA's theme recognizes women throughout the country who understand that, for a positive future, we need to eliminate bias and discrimination entirely from our lives and institutions.

Women's studies is a focus that is continually on the rise and many of us are feeling called to step into positions that affect change. It is long overdue and the residual effects of male dominated industry is felt everywhere. Reform and restitution is needed and the challenge is accepted.

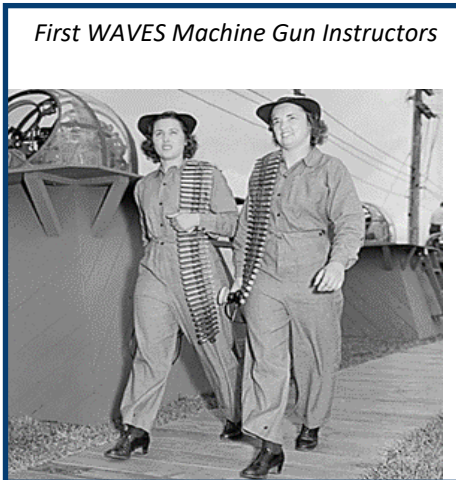
I had a conversation earlier this week about revolution and what that all entails. Often times, the visual that comes from the word revolution is one of war, unequalled power, chaos, violence and even

death. While this is valid, there are other ways for revolution. "Softer" more direct power to change. Voting, conversation, how and who we give our money/time/resources to, peaceful protest...just to name a few.

Women Electric Welders 1918



The way of the peaceful warrior in these situations has been an extremely effective way for me personally. It is definitely not the easiest path, but the collateral damage is minimal if any. It develops strong personal character, and creates a stronger foundation when followed all the way through. I was



raised by my dad for this strategy. I was also raised to speak my mind and not put up with wrongfulness and hurtful practices.

During this month, on our

Humanists of Utah Facebook page, I will be randomly adding strong women who have dedicated their lives, their work, their passions and their time to the betterment of the human race. I hope you will take a look and learn about them and what they contribute to us... and to remember, for every one you read about, there are thousands doing the work behind the scenes unnoticed.

"Rarely does a well behaved woman make history." I have heard this before and while it is funny to some, to many of us, it is not. Let's just say this... All of us well behaved women will make history... And we are changing the world!

Fight the good fight, cause the good trouble. Know that this month, while we are in the limelight, we will be working hard to make the world a better place for everyone...and that this work has NO end.

Melanie White-Curtis

Evolution of Birds

Jerry Harris PhD

Darwin Day Lecture, 2/10/24

Notes by Lauren Florence

We honor Charles Darwin for having the brilliance to conceive of and the temerity to defend evolution, the greatest idea that anyone in science has ever had. In celebration of Charles Darwin's birthday, 2/12/1809, Jerry Harris PhD spoke about the "Evolution of Birds". He teaches and does research at Utah Tech University. From childhood, he has had a special interest in birds, the most diverse group of tetrapods.

"If I were to give an award for the single best idea anyone has ever had, I'd give it to Darwin...Because in a single stroke the idea of evolution by natural selection unifies the realm of life, meaning and purpose with the realm of physical science, spacetime, cause and effect." Daniel Dennett PhD

Birds have four limbs (thus tetrapods) with "fingers" and toes. Birds are amnios because they have amniotic sacs. They have been grouped with reptiles because they have scales. But, Linneaus created the classification system of living organisms and named the birds Class Aves. With the features of feathers, a toothless beak, a wishbone (furcula), a stubby tail (pygostyle), a big projection on the sternum (keel), skeletons filled with air (pneumatic bones), as well as air sacs throughout their bodies, first toe pointing backwards (anisodactyly), shoulder strut (called corocoid), semi-lunate carpal (carpometacarpus), fused metatarsal (tarsometatarsus), and backward pointing pubis bones, birds are unique. In the mid 19th century,

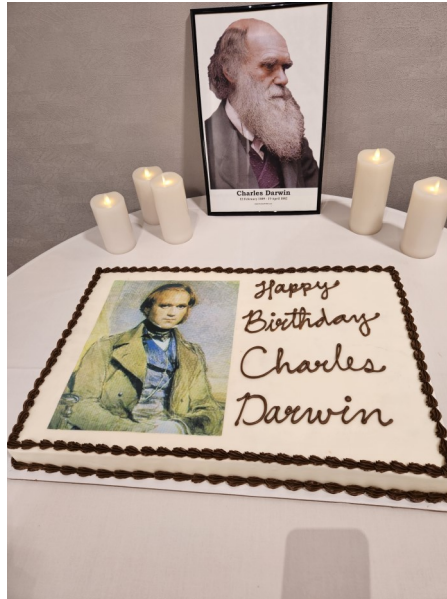
Thomas Henry Huxley and Sir Richard Owens were the two top experts in animal anatomy. Huxley saw the many similarities between the skeletons of extinct small therapod dinosaurs with living birds. After becoming acquainted with Darwin and his theory of evolution, he proposed that birds evolved from dinosaurs. Gerhard Heileman said birds and dinosaurs came from a common ancestor. John Ostrom in 1960's agreed. Huxley said that dinosaurs and birds are very closely related. Bird ancestry lies in the therapod line due to their no dead space trachea, pneumatic skeleton, and many openings in the skeleton to allow birds to fill the air sacs and the lungs when they breathe.



This efficient use of oxygen allowed birds to fly in low oxygen environments, witness the flight of geese over Mt. Everest. The widespread air throughout the bird's body also works as a heat exchange allowing birds to dump heat generated by working so hard to fly. The pneumatic skeleton, furculas and protofeathers developed later on the therapod tree and nowhere else.

(Continued on page 5)

The fossil record, found mostly in China, confirms these bony and feather changes. Pennaceous feathers (true feathers) then developed probably for display purposes, maybe for keeping themselves and their broods warm, since small animals lose heat to the environment much more rapidly than large animals. Maybe wings were used for flushing out prey (flapping while they run). Flapping could have also aided these protobirds to run faster and jump higher to capture a flying insect. As evolution proceeded, theropods started to show elongated coracoids to be used as struts (braces) when pectoral muscles became stronger. Later, the semi-lunate carpal appeared, allowing feathers a wider range of



motion and to be protected by being held against the body when not in use. Wings maintained their forelimb claws. Strong running legs then developed. Both characteristics would help with climbing into trees.

Most paleontologists think real flight began as gliding from one tree to another. Theropods evolved flight at the same time that the flight feathers evolved asymmetry, which allows flight due to differential air flow patterns generated across the two different sides of the feather, creating lift. The theropod fossil to first show all of these characteristics (with a few exceptions, namely teeth in the beak and feathers on a tail with vertebral bodies present) is named Archeopteryx and is called the first "bird". The fossil remains of Archeopteryx were discovered in 1861. These fossils were laid down about 150 million years ago in the late Jurassic period.

Medicare and Universal Coverage

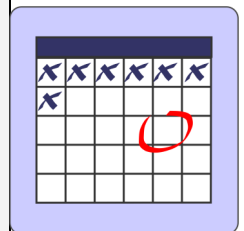
Lauren Florence MD

Dr. Florence will talk about how we get to universal coverage by expending Medicare beyond seniors and how we approach talking about it to friends, families and legislators.

Salt Lake Library

Conference Room C

March 17 1 pm



What is IVF and Where is it Going?

In vitro fertilization, also called IVF, is a complex series of procedures that can lead to a pregnancy. It's a treatment for infertility, a condition in which you can't get pregnant after at least a year of trying for most couples. IVF also can be used to prevent passing on genetic problems to a child.

During in vitro fertilization, mature eggs are collected from ovaries and fertilized by sperm in a lab. Then a procedure is done to place one or more of the fertilized eggs, called embryos, in a uterus, which is where babies develop. One full cycle of IVF takes about 2 to 3 weeks. Sometimes these steps are split into different parts and the process can take longer.

In vitro fertilization is the most effective type of fertility treatment that involves the handling of eggs or embryos and sperm. Together, this group of treatments is called assisted reproductive technology.

IVF can be done using a couple's own eggs and sperm. Or it may involve eggs, sperm or embryos from a known or unknown donor. In some cases, a gestational carrier — someone who has an embryo implanted in the uterus — might be used.

Your chances of having a healthy baby using IVF depend on many factors, such as your age and the cause of infertility. What's

more, IVF involves getting procedures that can be

time-consuming, expensive and invasive. If more than one embryo is placed in the uterus, it can result in a pregnancy with more than one baby. This is called a multiple pregnancy.

In vitro fertilization is a treatment for infertility or genetic problems.

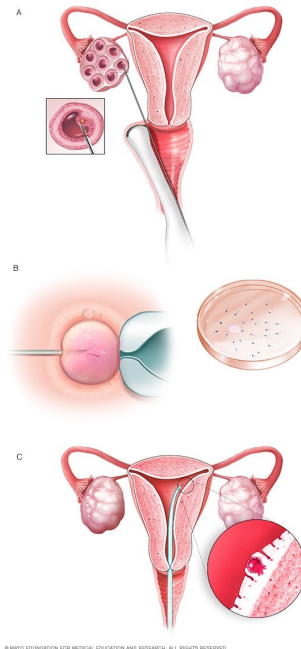
Before you have IVF to treat infertility, you and your partner might be able to try other treatment options that involve fewer

or no procedures that enter the body. For example, fertility drugs can help the ovaries make more eggs. And a procedure called intrauterine insemination places sperm directly in the uterus near the time when an ovary releases an egg, called ovulation.

Sometimes, IVF is offered as a main treatment for infertility in people over the age of 40. It also can be done if you have certain health conditions. (Mayoclinic.org)

Over 8 million babies have been born in the US due to IVF, about 2% of babies born, since 1981.

Read about the [current court ruling and IVF controversy here.](#)



Man Created God

Worldview For These Times

A Book by Albert G. Carter

Review By Wayne Beckman

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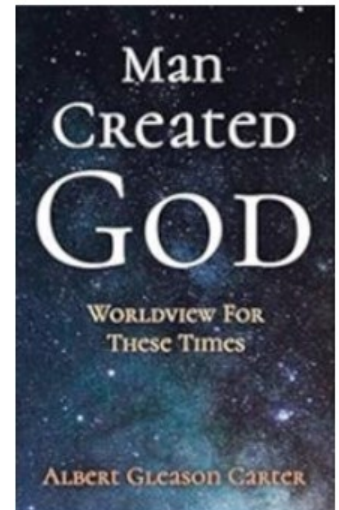
The HSSB (Humanist Society of Santa Barbara) Secular Circular –
March 2024

In this book, Carter places great emphasis on how people join different “tribes” based on their worldview. We have to be aware of how our worldview shapes how we interpret what we see and read.

Hundreds of different religions are based on what their believers are convinced is the accurate reading of the Bible, but of course they cannot all be right. Carter is making the point that the book doesn’t create the beliefs, the beliefs create the interpretation of the book. He promotes what he calls the Mythopoetic Natural Worldview. He thinks that all of the religious texts should be used for inspiration, not as sources of authority. A point he makes is that we need to always question our beliefs and think about the validity of our worldview.

A unique aspect of the book is that a very large percentage of the text is direct quotes from many sources. There are 532 quotes listed in the end notes. They are quotes from a wide variety of religious and philosophical authors. It is good to see exactly what these authors wrote, rather than just Carter’s interpretation of what they wrote. It supports the idea that you don’t convince people by stating your opinion, you convince them by presenting evidence.

This book is not your typical strident atheist refutation of religion, but an explanation of why people believe what they believe, and why an alternative worldview, rather than a traditional religious one, would be better for the world.



Get Involved!

Plan a Service Project

Plan and organize a HoU service project! Do you know of an organization that needs help? Give members, family and friends an opportunity to contribute. If you are interested in planning or working on a service project, contact Wayne at wwilson@xmission.com.

Join a Discussion Group

Start a discussion group on contemporary topics like criminal justice, unhoused people, body autonomy, local climate change, (no religion or politics!) informed by a selected podcast series, film, fiction or non-fiction book. Be part of a monthly virtual group to share, meet and hear other members. Contact Wayne at wwilson@xmission.com.

Contribute to the Newsletter

Write an article or submit an item to be included in Utah Humanist, contact Deon at deongines@gmail.com.

Suggest a Speaker

Bring a topic to the HoU meeting. Talk to Wayne at wwilson@xmission.com.

HoU Membership Form

Name: _____

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- \$10 Regular Annual Membership, Utah Humanist
- FREE* trial Subscription to Utah Humanist
- \$_____ additional contribution to help promote public awareness of humanism (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 and website publication, trial subscriptions, and newsletter exchange with other chapters.

Humanists of Utah

P.O. Box 1043 West Jordan, UT 84084

Pay online with PayPal
no form/ mailing needed!

Humanists of Utah meetings are open

to the public and free of any admission charge. A discussion follows the speaker's presentation. Come join us and ***bring a friend!***

The views expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position of HoU nor the AHA. Reprinting of articles is permitted for humanist groups promoting the interests of humanism if attribution is properly stated.

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Key Contacts:

Wayne Wilson—801-440-8372
wwilson@xmission.com
Deon Gines newsletter editor
deongines@gmail.com