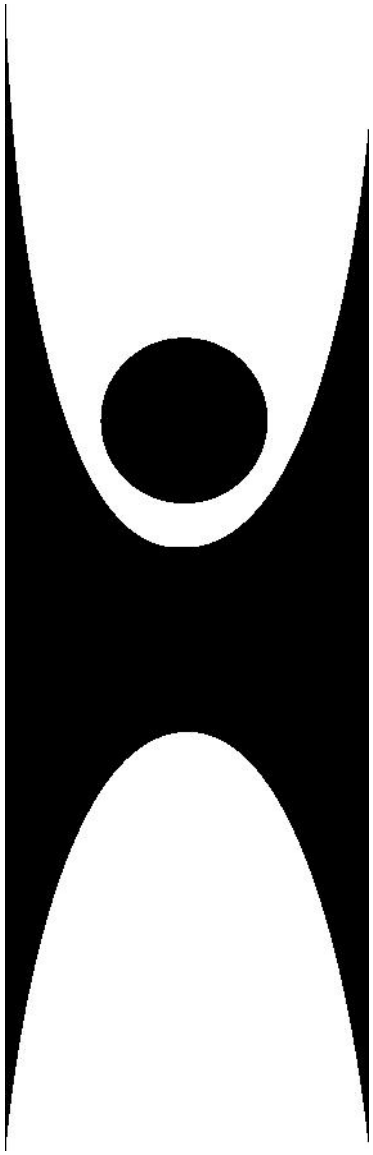
AMERICAN HUMANIST ASSOCIATION



GRASSROOTS MANUAL

Contents

How to Use this Manual

The goal of the *American Humanist Association Grassroots Manual* isn't to tell you what your local Humanist group must become. Rather, it's a guide for the possibilities that exist.

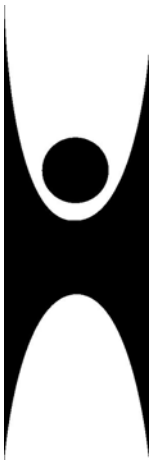
This manual is a resource to be used as you and your members carry out the challenging yet rewarding task of building and expanding your local group. Because groups in the American Humanist Association field network are in various stages of development, this manual was created so that all local groups could use it, though not everyone would find exactly the same things useful.

Therefore, while it's important that you familiarize yourself with the contents of this manual, it's not intended to be read cover-to-cover or all at once. We hope that you will refer to it often, when you would like additional insights for activities your group is already good at or when you are embarking on new endeavors.

Each section of the manual stands alone. You can even rearrange the sections to better suit your purposes if you like.

The appendices provide examples for the topics discussed in the main body of the manual. The addenda contain additional materials for you to consider.

SECTION I



RUNNING EFFECTIVE MEETINGS

Running Effective Meetings

In many ways, meetings serve as the core activity for local groups. As your local Humanist group grows, you will probably need to set up various meetings, activities, and events in order to meet the needs of your members. Though this section mainly addresses regular meetings, no matter what type of meeting you hold some very basic principles regarding time and place will apply.

Pre-Meeting Logistics I: Where and When to Hold Meetings

It is always important to have a good meeting space. Since even most of our strongest local Humanist groups don't have a building they can call their own, the next best option is to find a public meeting space. Possible meeting locations can be found in local libraries, university campuses, community centers, or apartment complexes. Meeting spaces can usually be secured for low or no cost.

Holding a meeting in a public place is preferable over meetings in someone's living room. In general, people are more comfortable with meeting in a public place, and this is especially true for new volunteers and new members.

The meeting location should also be easily accessible via public transportation. In large urban areas, not everyone has access to a car, and in order to attract a maximum number of people it's important that the meeting space is easy to get to. Where possible, public transportation routes and a map for those who are driving should be clearly noted on the group's website (see Section VIII: The Internet & E-Humanism) or on other promotional materials.

Your local Unitarian Universalist congregation is a possible meeting location. You can go online to http://www.uua.org to find a nearby congregation.

Though local Humanist groups all have their own level of comfort with meeting at a UU congregation, it is worth considering since there is significant crossover between UUs and AHA members (surveys have found that approximately half of UUs would self identify as Humanist).

When taking advantage of any private facilities like those of UU congregations, be sure you understand and accept their rules. They might require group leadership to be members of their congregation, which may or may not be a problem for your local group.

Schedule a time where the maximum number of people can attend, but keep in mind that it's impossible to please everyone. Though not everyone can make it, meeting times should not be changed too often. That can confuse some members, and others may feel it's not worth the effort to attend if the date and time keep changing.

Pre-Meeting Logistics II: Before the Meeting Begins

Remember to assess the meeting space beforehand. Are the room's chairs and other furniture set up in a practical manner considering the type of meeting? Will everyone be able to see and hear the speaker? If there is a sound system, is it ready to go? Will everyone be able to see and hear each other?

Is there space for a small refreshment table? Having a small amount of money budgeted (see Section II: Strategic Planning & Budget) for some snacks and drinks for meetings can go a long way in fostering a friendly atmosphere. Having refreshments set out before the meeting begins can establish a casual tone, and it gives people an excuse to mingle and talk. This is an especially good way for visitors to get a feel for the group before any official activities start.

Another useful table is for magazines and books that would be of interest to group members. When someone has finished an issue of a magazine or book they no longer want, they can place it on the table for anyone else pick up and take. This allows for ideas found in books or magazine to have wider exposure in your group.

Having a person specifically act as the 'greeter' before and after meetings is also an effective way for newcomers to feel welcome (see Section V: Building Community). This person would come to meetings early and leave late, and would always be sure to approach visitors, answer any questions they may have, and provide information about the group. This, of course, does not preclude other members from welcoming newcomers, however, it's important that someone is specifically assigned the task.

Example Meeting Program:
6:00 PM Arrive at space, make sure everything is ready, and set out snacks
6:30 PM Official start time of the meeting
6:35 PM Start meeting a few minutes late to allow stragglers to wander in
- -Introductory welcome remarks (remember to welcome newcomers)
- -Go over evening's events
- -Brief committee announcements
- -Emphasize becoming a member of the group

6:50 PM Introduce speaker for the evening and note that there will be Q & A time following the talk
6:55 PM Speaker begins talk
7:30 PM Speaker ends talk and does Q & A
8:00 PM Make concluding remarks
- -Thank speaker for coming
- -Reminder about upcoming events
- -Reminder of the food and welcome people to stay and chat
- -If newcomers want information about the group, can talk to any board member

8:30 PM Tidy up room and leave

The greeter should also direct visitors to a sign-up sheet (see Appendix Page 1: Sign-up Sheet) that should be prominently displayed. Having a sign up sheet is a good way to get contact information for potential members. The greeter (or someone else assigned the task) can also be responsible for contacting the people who have filled out the sign-up sheet.

Pre-Meeting Logistics III: The Program

Even for the most casual of meetings, a program (or agenda) is essential, as is a designated person who is clearly in charge of the meeting. Meetings can quickly devolve into chaos if it appears (or is the case) that no one is in charge. Even a few bullet points written down on a scrap of paper is preferable to "winging it." The program itself should be briefly touched upon at the beginning of the meeting. If your group meetings are large enough to have a formal agenda, print and distribute copies. This engages participants and allows them to feel they have a better

grasp as to what is going on. By knowing what is going on, people feel more in control, are more likely to participate, and will get more out of the meeting. Time limits for topics of discussion are more likely to be respected if they're written out.

Three Types of Meetings:

There are generally three types of meetings that local Humanist groups hold—regular, summer, and business.

Regular Meetings

These meetings should be member-oriented and can serve various purposes. It's an opportunity for group members to come together and connect with each other; become educated on a topic by hearing from a speaker; or discuss issues and explore ideas. When a new group is forming, this is the primary type of meeting that people will attend. When the group grows, it becomes the mainstay activity for many members.

Summer Meetings

Because of the summer schedules of members, your group could experience a slowdown during June, July, and August. If your group consistently has fewer than usual participants during regular meetings, you may want to switch to a more informal meeting structure. One option is a picnic.

Potlucks and potluck picnics (though they can happen any time of the year) are a positive way for group members to socialize in the summer, in a casual and relaxed atmosphere. Space can be reserved at a local park or community center and people can bring a dish to share. There could be a short program for items that need to be discussed. Instead of a speaker, there could be a short talent show, musical performance, or skit. With a more relaxed atmosphere, summer meetings can focus more on activities that are creative and "right brain" oriented.

Many times, regular meetings will involve a speaker. In order for members to get the most out of a speaker during the Q & A session, here are two suggestions:

Before the Q & A session starts, you should remind people that brevity in questions is appreciated, questions should end in question marks, and there is only a certain amount of time available for questions. When the time is up, thank the speaker, end the session and note (if it's been arranged) that the speaker will remain at the meeting for a while and is happy to talk one-on-one with folks. Setting these limits ensures that people who are interested in more discussion will still be able to engage the speaker, while allowing those who want to leave the chance to do so without feeling it would be rude to go.

If you have a very large crowd, one technique to make people more confident in asking questions (usually not a problem for Humanist groups) is to have audience members turn to a neighbor and spend one or two minutes posing questions they want to ask the speaker. By verbalizing questions one-on-one to another person, audience members are more likely to ask question and participate in the Q & A. This technique can also work for public events, as described in Section XI: Public Events.

Business Meetings

No matter if your group is led by a board of directors, an executive council, or an untitled group of people, it's important for the group leaders to set aside time outside of regular meetings and other events to discuss the business of the group. These meetings, though

they should be open to the entire membership, should be set aside to focus on group operations. Though some members find discussing organizational details to be enthralling, the majority will not. Business meetings can be held at an entirely separate time, or before or after a regular meeting.

Meeting topics can be hard to come by. The following is a list of broad topics, examples of specific talks, and good speakers that you can refer to, if you need to brainstorm topic ideas.

Broad topics:
Humanism; church-state separation; civil liberties; ethics; comparative religions; local issues; reproductive choice; women's issues; emerging technology and its social implications; gay rights; science and its role (modern & historic) in understanding nature. Also see page VI-2 for educational themes.

Examples of specific talks:
The Assaults on Civil Liberties Since 9/11
Death with Dignity
American Buddhism
War Against Women, an Attack on Equality
Roger Williams, Freedom's Forgotten Hero
Electing Atheists to Public Office
Grassroots Humanism and a Vision for the Future

Potential speakers:
Tony Hileman, AHA executive director
Fred Edwords, AHA editorial director, former executive director
Roy Speckhardt, AHA director of membership and programs
Jende Huang, AHA field assistant
Edd Doerr, past AHA president and president of Americans for Religious Liberty
Any AHA board member (check with the AHA for the most up-to-date listing)
Rob Boston, assistant director of communications for Americans United for Separation of Church and State
Eugenie Scott, executive director of the National Center for Science Education
Annie Laurie Gaylor, editor of *Freethought Today*
John Hartman, executive director of the American Ethical Union
August Brunsman, IV, executive director of the Secular Student Alliance
Helen and Edwin Kagin, founders of Camp Quest
You can also contact local progressive nonprofits to see who in their leadership may be interested in speaking to your group

Dealing with a 'Toxic Personality'

No matter what you call them, local groups can sometimes find themselves in the presence of an individual or two who can become a disruptive presence at meetings. This could

include attempting to incessantly argue with everyone in the room, refusing to end discussion on a point, or always attempting to dominate conversation.

You shouldn't ignore toxic personalities in the hopes that their presence won't become an issue for others at the meeting. Having a toxic personality at your meetings can chase away otherwise dedicated members and activists if they decide it isn't worth the effort to attend meetings in order to hear someone rant and rave over obscure topics. Remember that though there may be a strong desire to respect free speech rights of such a person, by allowing a toxic personality to dominate, you're depriving others of their rights, including their right to speak in a welcoming environment and to hear from everyone. Though it may come to the point of asking the person not to return to future meetings, there are some steps that may head-off the necessity of having to expel someone from membership.

Rules of Decorum

One way to deal with toxic personalities before they even walk in the door (and this is a good idea to implement in any case) is to establish rules of decorum for meetings. This is a set of ground rules for how people are asked and expected to behave at gatherings. If a toxic personality is unwilling to follow the rules, she or he can be asked to leave the meeting.

Some suggested rules of decorum:
- Remember the need of others to be heard and limit the amount of time you spend speaking, unless you have permission from the group
- Avoid personal attacks
- Avoid abusive language
- Avoid demeaning gender/ethnic terms

In the Meeting

If you're in the midst of a meeting, there are a few techniques you can use to try to defuse a toxic personality.

- Put the discussion on hold, saying that it's being postponed until the end of the meeting. This allows for the continued discussion of the point in question by the toxic personality and anyone else interested, but for those who don't want to hear about it, they'll have the opportunity to leave the meeting area.
- Stop the discussion and ask for a show of hands to see if others at the meeting are interested in hearing more talk about the topic, or from this person. If you're wrong about the level of interest in the discussion, you can allow it to continue. However, if there really is no interest, the show of hands will allow you to move onto other topics or people.
- Stop the discussion and say that the points being made are interesting. However, the points might be better understood if they were put down in writing. See if the toxic personality might be interested in writing

down the ideas, which can be kept or distributed at future meetings, at your discretion.

Following the Meeting

If members of your group keep up the conversation long after the meeting has officially ended, you may want to arrange for members to head over to a nearby restaurant so that people can interact on a more social level. Facilitating connections among group members can be a good way to help strengthen your group. It's always good if your members think of the group, not only as a place for intellectual stimulation, but also as a place where friendships can be created and nurtured.

SECTION II

STRATEGIC PLANNING & BUDGET

Introduction to Strategic Planning and Creating Budgets

For any group, no matter how large or small, it is important to have a strategic plan, as well as a yearly budget. As the group grows, these elements will become more relevant, and it's a good habit for the group to form early on.

Strategic Planning

A strategic plan serves as a roadmap for a local group. Whether a strategic plan reaches forward only one year or five years, it allows for the identification of goals (both short and long term), it creates benchmarks to measure progress toward the goals, and it sheds light on specific steps needed to be taken by your group to reach its goals.

A strategic plan in no way limits the resources and effectiveness of your group. Done correctly, it focuses the resources and efforts of a group on achievable goals while still allowing flexibility when dealing with new variables. Strategic planning can be broken down into three easy steps.

Step 1: Overview and Prepare

This is time for the leaders in your group to come together and ask questions which will help guide the entire strategic planning process. The questions below can be used to stimulate your thinking for step 2.

- What are the group's goals for next year? (Getting member input though a membership survey [see Section V: Community Building] is a good way to decide the goals, as well as getting ideas from the national office) Does the group want to focus on multiple issues, or a single one?
- What challenges does your group face next year?
- What are some opportunities facing your group next year?
- What issues will your community face next year?
- What other ongoing issues does your community face?
- What resources (human, financial, other) will your group have available next year?
- What is the group's current and future financial situation?
- What other information do we need to know in order to formulate our strategy for the next year?

When brainstorming ideas, no ideas should be outright rejected. Even ideas that seem unconventional can lead to a realistic plan of action. Another set of questions that can help your group along during this part of the process is to envision the ideal state of your group. How many members would it have? Where would it meet? What sort of events would it hold? How would the group interact with the community? How would it outreach to the media and to interested individuals? What else would it be doing? Answering these questions may not provide specific guidance as to how to set budget priorities for next year, but it can help and provide a vision for where your group may want to go in the future.

It would be most effective if these questions are distributed before the meeting. Members should be asked to come to the meeting with their answers written out, and they should be prepared to discuss them. The more ideas you can generate at this point of the process, the better.

Step 2: Prioritize

Once you have sifted though the ideas your group has generated, it's time to narrow your focus and decide on the goals for the upcoming year. Though you shouldn't be afraid to think big at this point, be mindful of your group's resources.

When thinking of your group's goals, remember that they should be in line with your group's mission statement and vision (see Section III: Organizational Issues). Priority should be given to goals that match your mission and vision. The goals must also be realistic. If your group has no established fundraising mechanism beyond membership, then your fundraising goal should almost entirely reflect membership revenue, heavily discounting any other efforts until they are proven successful.

If your group has committees or people who work on special projects, you'll also want to come up with a shorter, more specific list of goals for them. If one of the goals crosses several lists, then that goal should be a priority for the entire group.

Step 3: Create the Roadmap

Now that you have your list of specific goals and know what you want to do over the course of the next year, it's time to figure out some specifics as to when and how you want to see things happen. There are several ways to achieve this.

One way is to start with specific event dates and create a "backward calendar." If, for example, you want to hold a Darwin Day banquet followed by a debate, you would shoot for activities on February 12. Knowing that, you can start planning backwards from that day, to figure out what needs to be done to prepare for the event (see Appendix Page 2: Backward Planning Calendar).

The calendar will give your group a big picture of the time commitment needed for an event, and you'll be able to figure out how realistic it is to do all that you've planned. If you notice a high concentration of events clustered together during one part of the year, you can then work to spread them out.

In addition to creating a backward calendar, you can create mini action plans to help organize the strategic plan into manageable segments, by parceling out specific tasks for committees to work on. Breaking down a broad strategic plan into smaller segments has two advantages. First, it means you can assign people or committees to implement and be responsible for specific portions of the strategic plan. Second, breaking down the plan into manageable parts gives everyone a chance to work on some aspect of it and will create a greater sense of ownership.

Other Notes on Strategic Planning

One way to assure the strategic plan's success is to verify that everyone in your group is aware of the plan by continually promoting it to the group throughout the year. This isn't to say that every meeting must begin and end with a reading of the strategic plan. However, once your group has settled on a plan, most, if not all of what you do, should be oriented toward it. A strategic plan can help to keep people focused on the priority tasks, and prevent too much sidetracking.

A schedule should also be set up to review the progress of the strategic plan. Even though the plan may have been written up and included with input from numbers of people, there should be someone who is responsible for making sure that things stay on track. Having regular reviews that are led by this person will help increase efficiency.

Though you want a plan that provides stability and structure to guide you through the year, you should also leave some room for flexibility. Situations both inside and outside of your group can change quickly, and you need to be able to address such changes by using flexibility within your plan or making a conscious decision to change the plan.

Roy Speckhardt, AHA staffer, has had training in strategic planning. He is willing to assist—when possible—with over the phone consultations. He can be reached at the AHA national office, at 800/837-3792.

Creating a Budget

Budgets are often misunderstood, undervalued, and under used. A budget

Jerry Lieberman, president of the Humanists of Florida Association (HoFA), on strategic planning: Four years ago, HoFA developed and implemented a strategic plan. Prior to this time we had no specific plans for our future. The planning process offered us an excellent opportunity to brainstorm and involve our entire membership in creating an exciting future. It moved us beyond armchair philosophy to a vibrant activist group.

The strategic plan set clear and measurable three-year goals. We either achieved or exceeded these. Membership grew from 50 to over 300. The treasury increased eight-fold. We went from a strictly volunteer and aging membership organization to attracting younger people and appointing professionals to implement our ambitious plans. Now we are commencing with a new five-year plan.

This month our public information director joins a select group of activists (including our executive director) who are employed by local Humanist groups. Having paid staff was once considered far-fetched. As long as HoFA lacked a vision and strategy as to where it wanted to go—and a road map on how to get there—who would invest in us?

Increasingly we're becoming a player in the state. Relationships are being established with numerous progressive organizations. We're solidifying our base among Humanists and simultaneously forging substantive collaboration with groups that complement our philosophy and work for the betterment of society. 2003 was also our best year for donations and membership growth.

Most of this is attributable to our willingness to more aggressively foster Humanism, take decisive action, and be risk takers. You will be amazed with what is happening and future prospects. Much of this can be directly attributable to the quality of thinking that went into strategic planning and a commitment to follow through.

HoFA online: www.floridahumanist.org

is not merely a document to be contrived at the end of the year and then checked against reality the following year. Budgets can be useful tools for planning your activities. They should help you with decision-making and continually paint a representative picture of your financial health.

Your budget is your strategic plan expressed in numbers, so the two documents should be developed simultaneously. You'll need to have an income estimate and potential expenditures forecast in order to enter the prioritizing phase of strategic planning—that way you'll be able to base your judgments on a reasonable assessment of your available resources.

Remember, when making a change in either the strategic plan or the budget, the other document should be appropriately updated. Still, try to hold to your plans. If it's not in the plan, think twice before you spend on it.

Like the strategic plan, the budget should be a living document. As you approach the unexpected and consider new programs, examine your budget for areas of potential increased giving or areas that can be cut. You should examine the progress of your budget at least quarterly to see whether or not you're on track. Don't wait until you're writing next year's budget to examine last year's. Perhaps you've already raised more money than you expected and are in the enviable position of having to decide to spend more or save for a rainy day. Keeping your budget balanced is essential.

You can use accounting software, but all this can be done by hand, and the best balance between time and accuracy is entering this information into a spreadsheet, using Microsoft Excel, or a similar program.

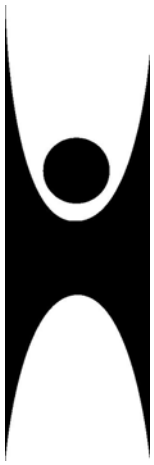
Use these documents to help you raise money. Foundations and high dollar donors will be impressed by a well-considered budget and strategic plan. Use your detailed budget to identify the cost of projects you would like others to pay for.

Step by Step

1. After completing the first phase of strategic planning (overview and prepare), make a long list of all the things your group would like to do in the coming year. This list should be longer than your income potential would indicate—the longer the better. You may get better results choosing the best 4 of 10 choices than the best 4 of 5. Longer lists also provide ideas for the future.
2. Next, identify costs for each of these projects. Use your best judgment on the details. A well thought-out "guestimate" may suffice, but historical data is better and researched figures are the best. Even in your "guestimates" don't forget the little items that add up, like postage and paper.
3. Determine when costs might occur. Fixed events like Darwin Day in February cannot be funded by a fundraising event in July—unless you plan to use reserves and are confident of the future income. Again, use your judgment on detail. Putting costs into their corresponding quarter may be more than sufficient; trying to predict actual dates could take you all year. Larger groups may want to allocate by month.

4. Determine what income you're likely to receive from different sources like membership, events, and foundations. You may find it most effective if you create three separate income charts; one with all you might possibly get; one with income you're sure to get, and one with a realistic best estimate.
5. Place income from your realistic best income estimate into the same timeline you chose for expenses.
6. Now you can subtract your calculated expenses and see how much money you'll have to cut in the prioritizing phase of strategic planning.
7. Once all the cuts are made and the budget is finalized and approved, be sure to refer to it regularly. See if you are on track, make necessary changes, and allow it to inform your decision-making.

SECTION III



ORGANIZATIONAL ISSUES

The Most Important Aspect of Organizational Issues

When reading this section, remember that your group shouldn't get bogged down in these details. Filing articles of incorporation, creating bylaws, and deciding if you want 501(c)3 status are all important details that your group should work out. However, for people starting a Humanist group or who are revisiting their bylaws, many times they'll get caught up in little details and can accidentally end up crippling the process. If group members begin spending inordinate amounts of time focusing on the wording of bylaws and articles of incorporation, remind them why the group was formed—to further Humanism, not fight about word usage.

Governing Documents

Articles of Incorporation

The Articles of Incorporation document is usually required if your group wishes to register as a non-profit organization with the state. They are fairly legalistic documents that state your name, basic purpose, designate scope, and say you'll follow your bylaws (see Appendix Page 4: Articles of Incorporation).

Bylaws

A solid set of bylaws is a good asset for the organization as well as a legal requirement for incorporating. Bylaws cover your purpose more thoroughly, explain your organizational structure, and explain the duties of leadership (see Appendix Page 7: Example Bylaws).

How do these documents fit together? The articles of incorporation establish the existence of your group; your bylaws say how it's run; the mission statement explains the purpose; the vision statement lays out your goals; and the strategic plan (see Section II: Strategic Planning & Budget) helps you get there.

Mission Statement

Although a mission statement usually isn't part of the legal filing requirement, having a statement provides direction and purpose for a group. Mission statements are normally a sentence or two that describe the reason for the group's existence (see Appendix 9: AHA & Local Group Mission Statements).

Vision Statement

A vision statement is how your group should envision itself in an ideal future. Stating how you want your group to be in the future provides direction to your members and activists today (see Appendix 10: AHA & Example Local Group Vision Statements).

Tax Exemption

If you wish contributions to your organization to be tax deductible, then you'll need a federal tax exemption. Also, if your group is raising a significant income you may want to file for exemption so the IRS doesn't ask for taxes on the money you've raised. What's

significant? There are a few factors, but if you're raising $25,000 you must file for exemption and you must also file an annual 990 (or 990EZ return).

Taking part in the AHA's Group Exemption

The AHA can save you the time and money of applying for your own tax exemption if you choose to utilize the AHA's group exemption. The AHA secured this difficult-to-acquire group exemption from the Internal Revenue Service in order to benefit our Chapters.

Should you decide to use this group exemption, your organization's future would be further tied to the AHA's. Also, though the AHA has documented approval for both educational and religious purposes (under section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code) the IRS seems to only publicly recognize the religious purpose. Though the AHA doesn't call itself a religious organization, or consider Humanism to be a religion, this may be an issue of concern to your members.

There are no further burdens or requirements on the Chapter that chooses to utilize this benefit. The sub-group information the IRS requires is already provided by you as part of the existing Chapter requirements. Other than the institutional tie, your group's independent operations won't be infringed upon.

For Chapters, all that's need to become a part of the AHA's group exemption is to notify the national office of your interest and provide your Tax Identification Number, also called an Employer Identification Number (EIN). Most groups get an EIN when they establish a bank account. If you don't yet have an EIN you can easily get one by completing a one-page form from the IRS, Form SS-4, which can be downloaded from http://www.irs.gov. The field team at the AHA office is available to assist you in answering individual questions, since some forms are trickier than they look. (For groups just getting their EIN, it's recommended that you have your organizational bank account tied to the EIN, instead of a personal social security number. This protects both the individual and the group.)

Once the AHA has your EIN it will notify the IRS that it is adding your group to the AHA's group exemption. Such notifications are done annually in the summer. But for most purposes the local group can operate as if the process is complete as soon as the AHA has been notified.

Getting your own Tax-Exemption

By having your own federal tax-exempt status, you'll be fully independent of the AHA. But should you choose this route, you'll discover that it can be time consuming and somewhat costly. As with all complex organizational decisions, we recommend taking this to your group as a matter to be voted on. If at a later date, there is disagreement with the choice made, it's always beneficial to be able to refer to the vote that decided the issue for you.

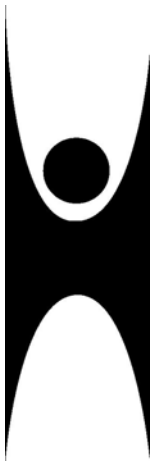
If you intend to apply for your own tax-exempt status, download Package 1023 from http://www.irs.gov. This contains the forms and instructions you'll need. If you haven't yet

received an EIN (as discussed above) then you will also need Form SS-4. Lastly, you'll need to get Form 8718, which is for submitting your application fees.

A new organization that anticipates annual income averaging not more than $10,000 during its first four years pays $150, all others pay $500 to apply.

The AHA can provide some assistance answering the more difficult questions on this form, and you may want to show your "ready to send" version to the AHA for feedback. It's recommended that you secure the services of a lawyer who specializes in this area of tax law. Mistakes made in the application automatically result in the IRS asking additional questions (assuming they don't just deny your application). From experience, we've found that IRS follow-up questions are more time consuming to answer than the originals. The lesson is: spend the time to get approved on the first try.

SECTION IV



ISSUE ADVOCACY

Creating Local Advocacy

Though not all local Humanist organizations see issue advocacy as a priority, many do. After all, people who are attracted to the Humanist way of life tend to have a strong interest in acting on their beliefs in the social and political arena.

As it says in *Humanist Manifesto III*, "We work to uphold the equal enjoyment of human rights and civil liberties in an open, secular society and maintain that it is a civic duty to participate in the democratic process and a planetary duty to protect nature's integrity, diversity, and beauty in a secure, sustainable manner." It's simply not enough for many Humanists to further a theoretical ideal; they must strive for substantive progress for Humanist perspectives.

Your group may choose to participate in coalitions with a national or local scope that engage in direct action on issues like the separation of religion and government, reproductive rights, conflict resolution, or environmental protection.

Policy Watch Group

The first step to getting involved in advocacy is learning what's going on. The AHA provides local group leaders with regular updates about issues of Humanist concern at the national level, but you will benefit by complimenting such communications with local information. To accomplish this you might establish small committees that will cover specific issue areas and report back to the group at general meetings. Such tasks can be issue specific or source specific. Someone, for example, may want to track movements in the state legislature while someone else monitors the religious right in your community.

Local Coalitions with Like-Minded Groups

Coalitions are an excellent way to participate in advocacy. Some of our greatest accomplishments —from getting a day designated as a Day of Reason to stopping some faith-based initiatives from passing Congress— have been the result of coalition efforts.

Many local Humanist groups are also starting to take part in progressive coalitions in their area. This is a good way to get involved with political and community issues.

Be a proud Humanist! Part of leading a Humanist group is providing a positive presence of Humanists in your community. Therefore, when participating in public events, carry a banner, or wear a Humanist t-shirt, button or pin.

To give you examples of the types of coalitions in which you might be interested in participating, here are some that the AHA is part of: Council of Ethics-Based Organizations (CEBO), Leadership Conference on Civil Rights (LCCR), Coalition Against Religious Discrimination (CARD), Coalition for the Community of Reason (CCR), Coalition Against Politicizing Houses of Worship (CAPHOW), Coalition Supporting the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice (RCRC), and the National Coalition for Public Education (NCPE). The AHA also co-sponsors the National Day of Reason, was a co-

sponsor of the 2004 March for Women's Lives, and works in coalition on other events that promote Humanism and Humanist issues.

Acting Locally

Once you've identified the issues, tracked them in the news and political process, and joined in the relevant coalitions, the next step is to use the information and connections you've made to effect humanistic change. Here are some ways your group can have a positive effect:

- Letter writing and calling campaigns to:
  - editors of local newspapers
  - politicians with the power to vote for results
  - business and community leaders
- Press conferences announcing major program or other news of interest
- Public forums on issues that will educate the community
- Voter registration drives
- Direct visits to key representatives in public office
- Public protests in the form of candlelight vigils, flash rallies, or marches
- Be creative, other than influencing the electoral process, there's virtually no limit to what you can do!

Action Alert

The action alert is a tool to mobilize your members and especially your activists. It informs people about issues they care about so they can ensure their voices are heard.

Action alerts are usually sent out over email and are in response to a local issue of interest (e.g., the school board is voting on science education standards that don't mention evolution). When you're sending out an action alert, include a brief summary of a particular issue and where to go to get more information, should that be relevant. Be sure to connect the issue to your organization's message or ideals.

The most important part, of course, is encouraging action. Depending on the situation, you may have your members and activists contact members of Congress, local government, or the media, via letters to the editor or opinion pieces (see Appendix 11: Action Alert).

Getting Members Involved and Turning them into Activists

People will join your group for many reasons. Some come ready to participate in activism while others fail to see the necessity of it. However, as your group grows, it's important to get members involved. You want people energized to do the mundane but necessary preparations before a meeting, as well as helping to coordinate a public debate.

As your group grows, you'll begin to notice the distinction between your primary core of activists and your secondary core.

Primary core:
- 5 to 10% of your membership
- Will take on officer roles
- Will be volunteers you can always count on

Secondary core:
- 10 to 20% of your membership
- Will regularly attend meetings
- Willing to volunteer, but probably needs to be asked

Remember that between work, family, and other organizations they may be volunteering with, many of your activists have busy lives. Don't be put off if you get rejected every once in a while when asking for help. Also, don't be nervous if your core of activists is closer to retirement age. Dr. John Green, director of the Ray C. Bliss Institute of Applied Politics, has studied many organizations with grassroots components. Despite cultural stereotypes to the contrary, he has found that the average age of activists is skewed older. After all, it's statistically the population with more money and time to give.

Delegating and Managing Tasks

Task management and delegation are two important tools to successfully draw people into your group's activism efforts.

When thinking about your group's activities and activism, you need to be able to split responsibilities into smaller tasks and then delegate them to the right people. Remember, no activist wants to be given an overwhelming set of responsibilities.

To help prevent this, you should create a list of everything that needs to be done. The responsibilities from this larger list can then be divided as much as necessary to make them manageable.

If you find there is a large list of tasks to be done, don't panic. Keep all the similar tasks prioritized and grouped together and assign responsibility to an already existing committee, create a new ad-hoc committee, or reduce the scope of your activity.

It's important to match people's skills with their interests. Your group's membership survey (see Section V: Building Community) can be a way to locate members' skills and give clues as to what they're likely to volunteer for. This information should be put into a database or otherwise noted. Keeping a current list of member's interests is a good way for when you are seeking a member for a specific task.

When approaching members, make it personal. Sending out an email to your membership list in search of activists isn't as effective as approaching people individually. If you know a given member's interest and can tie it into the task you need done, it shows that you recognize her/him as the right one for the job.

Make it clear that they aren't alone and are part of a team. Do not assume that a new activist knows exactly what needs to be done. If necessary, training and the tools needed to succeed should be provided by the group. Your activist must be empowered—whether it's updating information about pending legislation, writing template letters to the editor, or

creating a current list of people to contact for an upcoming debate—in order to do a good job.

Sometimes enthusiasm among activists can lead to well-meaning ideas that won't actually work. Don't squelch creative input by dismissing the idea or saying that it isn't a current focus of the group. You should refocus this eagerness in a more productive direction. If someone has an interest in making fliers, but if it's already being done or it's an advertising strategy that doesn't work, see if they might be interested in working on producing the newsletter or assisting on designing the website.

If you have group members who've been previously involved, find out if they'd be willing to act as mentors, to help new activists get on their feet. You should also set aside a meeting a year, or whenever you get enough new activists, as a training day.

Be sure to check up on volunteers to make sure they have the resources and encouragement they need. Volunteers who reliably complete small tasks make good candidates for larger projects.

Inclusive Atmosphere

In addition to empowering activists with the necessary tools, having an inclusive atmosphere (which you should already have in principle) also encourages these newly emerging activists. Though you don't want to overreach and become so unstructured, it's important that your group serve as a place where everyone can feel comfortable contributing. Make your group more inclusive by:

- Committee meetings held at public places, not at people's homes, so newer activists feel comfortable
- Keeping "in-crowd" conversation to a minimum
- Inviting and inciting discussion
- Allowing new activists and members to contribute

What 501(c)3s Can and Cannot Do

Organizations recognized by the federal government as under the 501(c)3 code of the Internal Revenue Code have some limitations on the types of activities in which they can take part. While the dangers are real if you cross the legal line, most organizations err far on the side of doing too little for fear of doing too much. The following section should give you the confidence to do all that you are permitted.

No Electoral Activities

501(c)3s have an absolute ban on participating in partisan electoral activities. So these must be avoided in their entirety. For those researching IRS documentation on the matter, it's worth noting the IRS equates the word "political" with "electoral." So, when they say you must not engage in political activities, remember that they really mean electoral activities—not lobbying.

Non-partisan electoral activities are tricky for Humanists to do because it's hard for many people to believe that we'd treat all political parties (even ones that start with R!) equally. Therefore if you decide to go down the treacherous road of something like a non-partisan

candidate forum, be sure to keep an extensive paper trail proving how each candidate was treated equally. Even documents you don't write that refer to things you don't do (such as a thank you from the local Green candidate for all the work your group did to support their campaign) can be held against you in an IRS investigation. Voter registration drives that avoid obvious partialities are probably the only truly safe bet.

No Legislation, No Lobbying

Restrictions on lobbying only cover issues where representatives (at any level) vote for various legislative issues. Administrative and judicial actions don't count! You can speak all you want on pluses and minuses of the President's dealings, or that of the courts, or that of school boards or other administrative bodies. The rules only restrict, but do not prohibit, expenditures to influence legislation.

No Money? No Limits

The first thing to recognize is that as far as the government is concerned, it's all about the money—and volunteer time. After all, it's hard to be accused of misappropriating donor funds for non-charitable purposes when you don't spend money on them. If you aren't spending money on lobbying, there are no problems. If you are just including suggestions to write legislators on an issue as an insignificant portion of your newsletters, there are also no problems because the expenditure is insignificant.

Fortunately, the kind of grassroots lobbying we do as Humanists is very cheap. Letter campaigns, emails on issues, and volunteer visits to politicians are all considered lobbying costs, but they cost almost nothing. Assuming that isn't your organization's primary purpose for existence, you can do that quite a bit before it becomes a significant expenditure.

What the IRS and the Federal Trade Commission are really after are organizations that violate the electoral activities prohibition and those who lobby as a primary purpose. The examples of those who get caught are invariably those who spend monies on campaign and lobbying advertising. Those tend to cost so much that they become an easy target for investigation.

As you'll see in the next section, the IRS defines limits on these inexpensive activities in such a way that few organizations in the Humanist movement would ever have to worry about exceeding these limits.

Money Limits

The federal government permits 501(c)3s to lobby as long as they don't devote a "substantial part" of their activities to attempting to influence legislation.

There are two perfectly legal ways to define what the IRS means by "substantial part."

The **first test** of substantiality allows up to 5% of your expenditures to be used for lobbying. That 5% figure comes from case law (*Seasongood v. Commissioner*). Some

organizations have legally done more, as facts and circumstances count, but if you stay under 5%, you're safe.

What can that 5% be spent on? The IRS says (in *Revenue Ruling 80-278*) "In determining whether an organization meets the operational test, the issue is whether the particular activity undertaken by the organization is appropriately in furtherance of the organization's exempt purpose, not whether that particular activity in and of itself would be considered charitable." Since the AHA addresses nearly every issue under the sun in pursuit of a more humanistic world, you are not really limited on the issues you approach.

If you violate the rule, you may lose tax exemption and have to pay a 5% tax on all the organization's lobbying expenses for all years the organization was ruled to be in violation. Organization management could also be taxed a similar fee if it was ruled they knowingly risked the organization's tax exemption in directing lobbying activities.

The **second test** is an option only for organizations with educational purposes. Those the IRS defines as having religious purposes, like the AHA, may not choose this option. This test of substantiality allows about 20% of your expenditures to be used for lobbying—the actual percentage is determined under IRC 501(h). To qualify for this expanded test of substantiality you must elect to disclose your lobbying expenditures, in detail, to the IRS in form 5768. If the expenditure limits are exceeded, you're still not likely to lose your exemption. Instead, a 25% tax under section 4911 will be imposed on the organization's excess lobbying expenses. To lose your tax exemption from lobbying, you would have to exceed the limits by 150% over an extended period.

SECTION V

BUILDING COMMUNITY

Building a Community

Though issue advocacy is an important part of a group's existence, it's important to remember that many people also come seeking a sense of belonging. Indeed, creating community and deeper ties between members can strengthen your group when pursuing activism or educational opportunities. In order to have a well-rounded group you must strive to create a strong sense of community among group members.

There are many ways to define community. Your group may want to think about how it views community and what sort of community you want to create. The following is one definition:

> Community is a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members' needs will be met through their commitment to be together — Taken from McMillan, David W. and David M. Chavis. "Sense of Community: A Definition and Theory" *Journal of Community Psychology*, 14 6-23.

The book *Community Building: What Makes It Work* by Paul Mattessich, Ph.D., and Barbara Monsey, M.P.H., defines community building as, "any identifiable set of activities pursued by a community in order to increase community social capacity." Social capacity is "the extent to which members of a community can work together effectively."
So building a community is what empowers people to effect change. The change itself happens because of activism and education, and a community nurtures these factors. Community building gives "... improved *capacity* to accomplish tasks and goals and a heightened sense of community—a strengthening of social and psychological ties ... not the actual accomplishment of goals."

Ways to Build Community

Membership

One of the simplest ways to create a sense of community is to have dues-paying members. This makes it easy to draw a distinction between those who are simply interested in your group and those who have (literally) made an investment in your group. By being a member, they make the group partially theirs.

Voting and receiving a newsletter are two basic benefits. Your group may want to decide on other specifics to provide. This is, of course, also a good way to entice friends and visitors to take the step toward membership. Having dues-paying members creates a higher level of representative participation, as opposed to allowing anyone who attends a meeting to be considered a member. The more that people are invested in the membership process the better, since Humanists involved in your group will tend to have expectations of a democratic structure.

Memberships are usually renewed on a yearly basis. To save some paperwork headaches of different renewal dates, you may want to establish a common renewal date (say, May 1) for all members. For someone becoming a member at any other time of the year, the group can offer pro-rated dues.

Membership Secretary

Once your group hits 20 to 25 members, you may want to assign someone to act as the membership secretary. This is someone who focuses specifically on maintaining the membership list, reminds people when its time to renew, and helps to coordinate announcements to group members between meetings. They may also focus on attracting new members, turning members into activists (see Section IV: Issue Advocacy), and responding to member needs.

Membership Survey

Another way to draw members together and provide them with a voice in the group is to do a membership survey, to find out what members want from the group. A broad survey can focus on what sort of speakers they want to hear at meetings, what type of social events they'd be interested in taking part in, and what sort of activism they want to work on. A membership survey can also assist in your strategic planning process (see Section II: Strategic Planning & Budget), as well as turning members into activists (see Section IV: Issue Advocacy). You can give a survey form whenever someone signs up as a new and renewing member, or pass it out on a yearly basis, or when you feel that enough new members, with differing interests from previous members, have joined the group.

At Regular Meetings

You always want to have an open and welcoming atmosphere at meetings—especially for new attendees. Some things you may want to do include:

- Assign someone (perhaps the membership secretary) to greet new people. This is an opportunity to learn a bit about new attendees and find out her or his interests and reasons for coming to the meeting.
- Provide nametags at meetings and make sure new attendees receive ones of a different color so they can be recognized.
- Let the new attendees know how to get more information about the group and offer them a trial subscription to the newsletter.
- At the beginning of the meeting, new attendees should be publicly welcomed. But just offer a general greeting; don't single out any specific person.

One thing to keep in mind is not to go overboard. Paying too much attention to new attendees may scare her or him off. Make it clear that new people are welcome, that they should feel comfortable approaching group members with questions, but you shouldn't dwell on these potential members for too long.

If there's a speaker at the meeting, be sure to glance over at the new attendees during the Q & A to see if they have any questions. They may be shy in their new surroundings and a bit of friendly prompting may get them more involved.

Set up social opportunities for group members to have fun together. This allows members to interact outside of meetings, and it will foster stronger times among your group. Though you can never force friendships to develop, socializing can foster opportunities for friendship. Examples of good social events are: book/movie discussion groups, outdoor activities, potlucks, game nights, “movie and a meal" nights, seeing a play, going to local cultural attractions, general discussion groups (on science, ethics, or philosophy) and family activities. If a member is performing in a concert or a play, encourage other members to attend.

The Newsletter

If your group has a newsletter, it can be a powerful tool for furthering community.

As a source of information for members, the newsletter itself helps strengthen community. It’s a way for all members (especially those who aren’t able to attend meetings) to stay informed and involved. Section IX: Newsletter & Promotional Materials focuses on newsletter content. There are two especially important types of information newsletters can convey.

The first type of information concerns group business. It’s always a good idea to have a summary of the previous meeting, or any public event (see Section XI: Public Events) of your group. If group leaders are having separate meetings, be sure to publish the minutes, if they’re concise. Otherwise, publish a summary of what was discussed and decided. Part of having an open leadership structure (see Addendum I: Leadership Structure) means there’s no need to hide information from group members. Indeed, your group will be stronger if members know what’s going on, and know that their voice can be heard throughout the decision-making process. For group leaders that are interested in receiving input, the newsletter is a good place to pose questions.

Member focused information is also key to community building. The newsletter is a good place to announce milestones or events in the lives of your members. You can have people send in information, or you can make it a point to talk to people at meetings and find out what is going on. Always be sure to get permission before printing any sort of information. You may want to create a section that has short pieces about what’s going on in your members’ lives. Births, deaths, weddings, graduations, recovery from illness, job promotions, and people’s involvement with the local community (perhaps through volunteering or politics) are all good things to cover. The newsletter can also announce new members. As your group evolves, you may get a better sense for what type of information members are interested in hearing about.

Group Dynamics

Some of the most important practices that lead to community building include things you're probably already doing but just don't realize it! Many of the following principles are taken from *Community Building: What Makes It Work.*

- **Self-awareness and self-understanding within the group:** A mission statement (see Section III: Organizational Issues) and a strategic plan (see Section II: Strategic Planning & Budget) provide clarity for the reason your group exists. Understanding the need and the role your group can play in the community helps in creating a strong sense of identity and cohesion among members.
- **Coalition efforts and connections with outside groups:** Formal (see Section IV: Issue Advocacy) and informal links between your groups and others remove you from isolation and place your group in a wider context. Not only will group leaders have a better idea about what's going on in your area but these links can create useful exchanges of information, possible revenue avenues for your group, and good ideas on ways to strengthen the organizational structure of your group.
- **Flexibility, adaptability, discussion, consensus, and cooperation:** These concepts are part of the Humanist worldview and are necessary mindsets for your group. Openness to new ideas, flexibility in performing tasks, doing what's best and not what's always been done, having honest discussions, valuing cooperation, and working toward consensus all help in creating stronger communities. Applying the values which underlie Humanism provides a strong example for group members.
- **Focusing on tasks that benefit members:** Higher participation comes when your group's activism, education, and social events are perceived as beneficial to members. The membership survey can help ensure that you're focusing on the needs of your group.
- **Democracy and open leadership:** This structure (see Addendum I: Leadership Structure) encourages new leaders to assume roles in the group and strengthens the long-term viability of the group. As your group grows and takes on more functions, you will require more people to carry out various tasks. Producing leaders on a regular basis benefits the group and its focus.
- **Good mix of financial resources:** Much in line with coalition efforts, striving for a balance in fundraising creates stability for your group. Money should come equally from multiple sources. When you're starting out, you'll need to be more reliant on internal funds, like membership dues, in order to build a track record. Once your group is established, it'll be easier to get outside funds, like grants.
- **Leaders in the know:** Leaders need to understand the group and the members they are serving in order to ensure cohesion, as well as to help grow and strengthen the group. Among other things, you should know the history of the group, the culture that has developed among group members, formal and informal power dynamics that may have arisen, and the way decisions have been made.
- **Training:** Giving your members the skills they need to help build your group will go a long way. Having someone give a talk on organizational skills, group facilitation, or human relations will go a long way. In addition, you may want to focus on mentoring by having more experienced leaders of your group show the new ones the ropes when it comes to running the group.

Humanist Communities

The Humanist Society is embarking on a Humanist Communities project which would ideally enable Humanists to reliably and frequently enjoy the human pleasure of seeing each other while they share concerns, plans, and special occasions. Humanist Communities would serve the function of a local group, but members will provide a stronger focus on family and community aspects of the group.

Another goal of this project is to create an environment where children experience Humanism as the norm, where they don't feel "funny" because they don't go to church, and where they can learn about the practical, positive aspects of what it means to be a Humanist. Parents can enjoy the feeling that their community supports the ideas they express in their homes.

The Humanist Community project focuses on Humanist educational programs for prospective and new members, child care and education for children during regularly scheduled meetings, community celebrations of selected occasions and life cycle events, and support for certifying Humanist Celebrants.

Holiday celebrations and observances also encourage community. The winter solstice (some celebrate HumanLight on December 23), the National Day of Reason (first Thursday in May), Darwin Day (February 12), and World Humanist Day (the summer solstice) are a few of the opportunities to create Humanist-themed events and celebrations. Consult Secular Seasons, http://www.secularseasons.org, for more information.

Owning a Building

Many local groups have the sensible dream of buying a building. Seeking a permanent meeting space (and having the ability to have full control over it) is a worthwhile goal. A building with meeting spaces and other facilities can act as a community center, a place for educating the young and old, a space to organize activism, and a safe area for those seeking like minds.

Many local Humanist groups, however, currently lack the financial resources to buy a building. Unless a sizable donation suddenly falls in to your lap, it's unlikely your group will have enough money for many years to come. If your group is interested in having a building, the effort should be set up as one of your group's long-term goals. Establish a separate building fund to accept donations. If you're doing strategic planning (see Section II: Strategic Planning & Budget) set your goal for a specific amount of money to raise for the fund each year.

Though this means that it will be several years before your group will have the financial strength to seriously consider purchasing a building, you're at least pointing your group down the right path.

It's also important to remember that you shouldn't be looking to purchase a building in order to create a sense of community. Having a space will help strengthen an already existing community but will not create a community if one doesn't already exist. If your

group members aren't creating strong links between each other, don't assume that a building will somehow solve your problem.

Humanist Celebrants

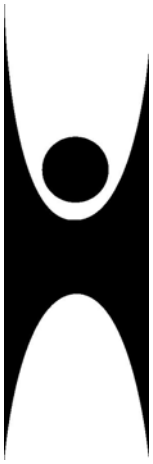
From time to time, members of your group may need the services of a Humanist Celebrant. Celebrants are analogous to ministers, pastors, priests, or rabbis. The Division of Humanist Certification of the Humanist Society functions as the qualifying body, which confers uniquely Humanist ministerial credentials. All persons certified by the DHC are legally authorized to perform rites of passage such as naming ceremonies, coming of age events, weddings, and end of life ceremonies in all 50 states.

The simplest way to find out if your group has a Humanist Celebrant is to ask. You can contact the Humanist Society, which can provide you with a list of Celebrants across the country. If your group doesn't have a Celebrant, you may want to remind members that it is a possibility and see if there is any interest.

Visit the Humanist Society online at http://www.humanist-society.org for more information.

Many local groups have expressed interest in attracting families. To get families—who already have tight schedules—to participate, the key is to offer something. You may want to establish a subgroup focused on families. They can have their own activities, in addition to attending regular meetings and events. If there are many infants and small children, the families can rotate babysitting duties at regular meetings. If you find enough interest, your group may even want to pursue a "Sunday school" for children in order to teach ethics and provide identity.

SECTION VI



EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Local Group's Curriculum

As your local group grows and you start having regular meetings, members will probably begin to realize the important role that education plays in your group's goals and mission. Since Humanism is much like philosophy and science—in the sense that there is a continual search for knowledge and re-evaluation of our beliefs—there is a great breadth of background knowledge, as well as new discoveries, which inform us. Even if your meetings are informal, you may start noticing that your group is following a general "curriculum."

The focus might begin with Humanist and humanistic philosophers and thinkers—from ancient times, through the European Renaissance and Enlightenment and into modern times. Members may be interested in hearing about how various religious traditions and belief systems compare with one another, which may lead to discussions about ethics and morals. When discussing the contemporary world, topics such as social issues, psychology, economics, sociology, and politics come into play. Strong interest may also exist in the meaning and implications of science and technology, or in Humanist themes expressed in the arts: music, painting, poetry, and theater. Much like a university, your group will probably at one time or another cover a broad range of issues that have many implications in daily life.

Lectures Versus Discussions

There are many ways to approach these topics. Some of these subjects could be the focus of a series of lectures and others (e.g., social issues, economics, and politics) make good discussion topics. Humanism and the arts can be covered by a theater, film or book club. It would take your group a few years to completely cover this "curriculum."

Check to see if your local library or school carries the *Humanist*. If not, you may want to consider donating a subscription to your library. Having Humanist materials available for broad audiences that use libraries is another way to educate people about

Chances are that some of your members studied, or are experts in the various topics that your group wants to cover. Have these members give talks to your group. Most will be more than excited to discuss their areas of expertise and share their knowledge with others. It is sometimes difficult to find suitable reading material from which to prepare presentations for meetings. Articles in the *Humanist*, the journal *Philo*, and other publications can be helpful in this regard. For a specific example, one can build upon the original research and articles by Humanists that are published in *Essays in the Philosophy of Humanism*, a peer-reviewed journal sponsored by the AHA Chapter Assembly and the Humanists of Houston.

Broad Outline of a Humanist Curriculum

Principles of Humanism
The foundations of Humanism and the Humanist worldview

History of Humanist Thinking
The works of Humanist philosophers and thinkers

Humanist Philosophy
Reason and logic, scientific method, and cosmology

Humanist Ethics
The major ethical systems and the ethical foundations of Humanism

Humanist Social Issues
Humanism's response to problems faced in the contemporary world

Humanist Living
Important issues in the daily lives of individual Humanists

Religious Traditions and Humanism
Studies of different religions and the comparison between them and the Humanist worldview

Science, Technology, and Humanism
The implications of advances in the sciences and technology for the human condition

Humanism in the Arts
Humanist themes expressed in music, painting, poetry, novels, drama, sculpture

Our Humanist Future
Designing a Humanist world

Future Looking Humanist Studies

In his germinal work, *Consilience*, E.O.Wilson (1998) makes the claim that through the unification of knowledge, we will understand who we are and why we are here. Wilson sees this quest as "the moral imperative of humanism." Systems Theory provides a framework that can unify natural science and technology. Perhaps we will discover a linkage between systems and information theory. We live in a human-made world, comprising the incredible variety of systems, which support our modern lives. But the most incredible systems are yet to come. We contemplate but have not yet achieved technological feats with similar far-reaching import: involving space travel, building machines with consciousness, and robots with superhuman capabilities. We contemplate genetic engineering to cure hereditary diseases, and to create post-human beings. We contemplate systems that will produce superabundant wealth for everyone. In the future,

we may be focusing on devising systems that bring enlightened governance throughout the world and to every level of society. And it will be crucial for people with humanistic convictions to be ready to help interpret and find ways to accommodate to the changes.

Your group may begin to accumulate books from a wide variety of sources. Instead of keeping them in boxes gathering dust create a lending library for your members. This allows for the continued transmission of knowledge among members.

At the highest level, Humanism is an all-encompassing worldview. Its relation to religion is an ongoing subject of investigation. The persistence of religions of all varieties is similarly a topic for Humanist research.

Parallels exist between the AHA and an academic society, in the sense that we want to provide education to the general public and to our members. These endeavors are interdisciplinary in that they force us to bring all of our knowledge to bear. Our annual conferences have always honored scientists, literati and luminaries of the world of affairs who have brought new light to bear on our general condition. Summarizing the state of the art and the best of practices is a crucial part of the Humanist agenda. There is a need for people with general knowledge and wisdom in its application to monitor the body of knowledge, which has been built up over the years (see Appendix Page 12: Curriculum Book List).

Groups may also want to consider scheduling a regular "Introduction to Humanism" class for newcomers, new members and others who are interested in learning more about Humanism.

Leadership Training

Another form of educational development is leadership training. Local groups require strong leadership in order to survive. Leadership training for Humanists and freethinkers is an emerging field, and both the American Ethical Union (AEU) and the Humanist Institute (HI) have programs that work to prepare people to be leaders in the movement.

While the AEU's Lay Leadership programs (http://www.aeu.org) are specifically geared toward Ethical Culturalists, the HI (http://www.humanistinstitute.org) offers a more generalized program. It's a three-year graduate level program, which includes intensive reading and reflection and three annual seminars, which culminates in a Graduate Certificate of the Humanist Leadership Studies Program.

Perhaps the most accessible program for Humanist training is the Institute for Humanist Studies' Continuum of Humanist Education (COHE) program, which will be online at http://www.humanisteducation.com in 2004. According to the IHS, COHE will "explain and explore how humanism can be used to better understand the world, to develop personal potential, and to help create a better society. COHE will provide accessible and stimulating courses on a wide variety of subjects — including philosophy, science, ethics, psychology, religion and law. There will also be practical courses on humanist activism. All courses will relate their subject matter to the humanist worldview and mission." COHE will be completely online, and students will be able to work at their own pace and level.

The AHA's annual national conference also provides training opportunities for local leaders.

Youth Education in Humanism and Freethought

One of the more interesting tasks confronting Humanism surrounds education for children and teens. Along with the Humanist Community project (see Section V: Community Building) there is interest in gathering a list of materials that are available for younger students and children. There are thousands of books for kids of all ages, and vast quantities of films and other materials. So we will restrict this list to items with specifically Humanist and freethought interest (see Appendix Page 16: Children's Books).

The *Humanist* Essay Contest is a yearly opportunity for students age 13 to 25. It's an opportunity for teenagers and young adults to share their perception and vision on humanity and the future. The contest happens each year, with a deadline of Dec 1. Prizes for essays range from $100 to $1,000.

Local groups might consider having their own local contest. This is a way to create connections with young adults, and to engage future generations of Humanists, and hear their views on issues that we all face.

Another opportunity for youth education is Camp Quest, the nation's first residential summer camp that caters to Humanist, freethinking, and atheist children and teens. Camp Quests are beginning to spread around the country as various local groups work to serve the needs of their youth. For more information, visit Camp Quest online at http://www.camp-quest.com

SECTION VII

FUNDRAISING

Fundraising

Since fundraising is one of the most important activities for your organizational leadership to undertake, take time to plan it carefully and make it a regular part of your procedures instead of an annual activity. Fundraising enables you to conduct nearly all other operations.

In this country, local churches receive the vast bulk of individual contributions. Use this to your advantage. Though a significant number are Unitarian Universalists, most AHA members are not active members of any church. Therefore, they might be asked to consider making your group the recipient of their most significant donations.

Membership Dues

Most local Humanist groups receive the bulk of their contributions from annual memberships, but this is likely a result of not aggressively pursuing other methods. Local groups have the potential to bring in far greater dollars. That's not to say that membership fees aren't important. On the contrary, they form a stable base for your group's funding; the more members you have, the greater potential you have to be successful in other types of fundraising efforts.

Membership levels vary significantly from group to group, ranging from nothing to $100. AHA Membership Chapters adopt fixed rates but other groups may set their rates at whatever level they wish. Membership levels should be set high enough to provide a solid base of organizational income but not so high that you are significantly effecting the size of your group. A large number of members giving less dues money is better than just a few giving more. This is because you can always ask them for more after their renewal date. But don't take this to the extreme. All groups should ask for annual membership donations, even if it's just $5, because it literally creates "buy-in." The more money someone invests in an organization, the more she or he will want to see the organization be successful. Often the more one gives the more one is willing to give. If membership is free, members may consider it worthless.

While it's always a good idea to give your members the option to contribute more than the basic dues when they renew, focus on keeping your renewal response numbers high, and remember other opportunities exist to seek contributions.

If you choose to do specific mailings to acquire new members (called acquisition mailings), there are a few points to keep in mind. Lists from groups with which we share common causes may prove effective, but most acquisition mailings lose money—even when successful. The theory is that the money is made back during the course of the new members' membership period. To increase your response rate, personalize the mailing, use real stamps, and handwrite addresses. A 1% response on an acquisition mailing is considered successful. Any less than that indicates you probably shouldn't use that type of list again.

Fundraising Drives

Fundraising drives (also called appeal mailings) are the key to making-up the difference between what your membership dues raise and what you need to meet your basic needs. This is especially true for AHA Membership Chapters, which inherently have less flexibility in setting membership dues levels.

Some groups send so many appeals that members are turned-off by the aggressive approach. Many national organizations send six to ten appeals per year. The AHA sends three to four such appeals, and you can be sure that all but the most crotchety members will not be bothered by two appeals per year in addition to their membership renewal. It doesn't mean that they will give every time, but some will.

Fundraising drives can also be used to benefit children and students in the group. You may want to hold a fundraiser to help sponsor members' children to Camp Quest, or to sponsor students to attend AHA conferences. If you're near a campus group you may also want to hold a fundraiser for their group.

This is a chance to ask for higher (but not huge) contributions. Try different types of appeals to see what works for your members. Some letters focus on a political issue the group has raised a voice about, others address a commitment to Humanism and nontheism, others ask for funds for a particular program, and still others focus on a campaign for a building or an endowment. Don't focus on organizational hardship because people are less likely to give under such situations, and when they do give, it is usually in smaller amounts.

Major Donors

Raising the money you need to become the ideal organization you want to be takes more than just small increments. If fundraising drives make up the difference between what your membership dues raises and what you need to meet your basic needs as a local group, then major donors help your group expand your program to achieve its true potential. Groups define major donations different ways, and one might consider $200 a major donation where another might only consider a donation of $2,000 to be in that category.

To get started with a list and cut-off amount, pick your top ten donors, and use the smallest annual contribution of those ten as your method for defining a major donor.

To find others willing to give your group major gifts, start by including your major donor cut off amount as an option (and one higher) on all your appeals and contribution requests.

Ask everyone in your group leadership (and others that might agree to participate) to create a list of potential major donors. Assign group leaders to contact each person on the list with whom they have a relationship. Have group leaders meet with (or call) existing major donors and those members who seem likely major donors. Initial conversations should explore why the member initially joined, why the member still supports the group, and what the member might like to see the group do.

Though it's perfectly acceptable to make an 'ask' (the act of requesting a specific amount of money from a donor) for money on the first contact, leaders may want to wait until the second such contact. When you ask, *always* ask for a specific amount. Also, mention the date by which you need the donation; this should always be "now" or within two weeks—even for general support. If your conversation does not include a specific time line, then it is unlikely that you will collect the pledged amount.

Invite wealthy non-members to a special one-on-one meeting where a group leader describes the organization and pitches membership and/or support. For those new to the group, be sure to make the case for your organization. Prior to entering conversations with potential donors, prepare a short, concise presentation describing what your mission is, who your leaders are, what your activities are, and who your supporters are.

There is no substitute for asking for donations. Most people feel honored to be asked, even if they may initially feel uncertain about giving. The key is to get the donor engaged in conversation, talking about why she or he cares about the group immediately proceeding the 'ask.' The number one reason people give for not contributing more money is that they feel they weren't asked to do so—so ask big.

Another oft-overlooked potential major donor is the social action committee of your local Unitarian Universalist congregation or Ethical Culture Society. Be sure to let these groups know about your activities and your need for support.

When asking for money:

- Be certain potential donors feel personally asked. Most people you've decided to approach have the money and care.
- Remember that major donors always get asked personally—one-on-one meetings work much better than phone calls, and phone calls better than mail.
- Learn as much as possible about a donor and incorporate these nuances to establish rapport with donors.
- Tell donors how their investment will be used. This will assure them that their contribution is necessary and will be used constructively.
- Be specific about the amount you are asking for and when you need it.
- If the donor initially declines, gently ask for their reasons, and *be ready with a response*. Be prepared to negotiate down. Offer to keep them informed about your activities and contact them again later.
- *Follow up!* Immediately send the donor a thank-you letter. Keep him or her "in the loop" with respect to your group's progress and, when appropriate, solicit future contributions.

Grants

Another possible source of funds for your group is grants. The AHA's Chapter Assembly (see Addendum II: The Chapter Assembly) runs a Fund for Chapter Expansion, which awards grants every year based on a percentage of the principal on a trust reserved for that purpose. All AHA Chapters, which are automatically part of the Chapter Assembly, must

fulfill one or two minimal requirements to apply. Applications are usually due at the start of the year, and decisions are made and funds are distributed by March. The AHA national office provides the application forms to Chapters.

The Fund for Chapter Expansion has approximately $5,000 available in grants each year. The grants are usually provided for AHA Chapters that either expand/improve an existing program, or experiment with a new type of program, activity or procedure.

Contact the AHA Chapter Assembly for the latest, and most complete information.

The Institute for Humanist Studies has a grant program that has been distributing, approximately $130,000 a year since 2000. The IHS Fund offers money exclusively to Humanist and freethought organizations, on a local, national and international level.

Though all proposals are taken into consideration, the IHS Fund gives special priority to:

- Local group projects that pioneer models that can be replicated by other local groups
- Initiatives that increase cooperation among organizations promoting the rights and beliefs of humanists and the nonreligious.
- Projects that utilize new media and technologies.
- Programs that increase public understanding of humanism.
- Projects by and/or for students.
- Educational projects.

Application forms can be filled out online or in print and mailed to the IHS. Applications are usually due in the fall, with money disbursed in time to begin projects in January. Visit the IHS Fund online, at http://www.humanistst udies.org/fund.html for more information.

Since many other organizations offer grants, generate a list of sources for local foundation grants. Consult the "Foundation Directory" at your local library to find out which foundations award grants in your area on your issues. Every community has local foundations. The leaders in your organization will undoubtedly be leaders in other civic organizations and activities—their knowledge will be instrumental in developing your list. Foundations concerned with the following may consider your grant request: Humanism, separation of church and state, freedom of expression, civil liberties, and social justice.

There are similarities, no matter what type of grant process you are taking part in:

- *Applications:* Every foundation has its own regulations and procedures for awarding grants. A formal proposal is almost always required. Requirements range from a brief 1 to 2 page description of the project to detailed proposals requiring a line-item budget, formal time line, and more. Quite possibly, the process might be too cumbersome to merit devoting your resources to the application.

- *Time line:* The time cycle of awards varies greatly. Be sure to match your organization's budget and time line to that of possible grants. If a grant is not awarded in time to help you, for example, then apply for next year's cycle and not this year's.
- *Contacts:* The decision makers in the foundation could very likely be acquaintances of your members. When appropriate, schedule meetings with them to "lead" your group in.

Fundraising Events

Fundraising events can be a good source of significant contributions, but be aware of the risk associated with fundraising events—it's nearly impossible to insure a "profit." Events are also quite labor intensive. Members need to be involved with set-up and clean up of the facility, developing the program and inviting guests. They also incur substantial monetary costs, such as food, facility, entertainment, and invitations. Low donor events (e.g., bake sales) are better for getting people involved with your organization and recruiting volunteers than for raising money.

Because these programs—when planned and executed well—attract many people, there are several potential benefits for your organization. You can introduce your group to people for the first time, allowing you to publicize your mission and programs, and you can use this opportunity to draw more people into the work of your group, either as volunteers or otherwise. Events also can build relations among members and prospective members.

From a fundraising perspective, their social aspect can be used to build closer ties that might lead to donations down the road. Of course, without a strong 'ask' at a future event or during a future person-to-person meeting or phone call, all that building of ties will not lead to more funds. Be sure to evaluate the success of your event, based on what you are hoping to gain.

Don't overtax your base by having too many fundraising events in one year. Many donors see their major general contributions as being a once-a-year event. They might give smaller amounts to help with different campaigns, but those giving levels may not make a second event successful. If you think your group is ready for a second event, you might try targeting a different part of your local geographic base or focus on raising funds for a particular program.

Fundraising events net more dollars when you spend less on them. That means that, unless you're bringing in high rollers, an after-dinner reception will be much more "profitable" compared to a dinner with a three-course meal. The only way around this is to have a particularly wealthy person host the event and agree to cover meal costs.

Asking for attendance is critical. A phone call follow-up will more than double your response to the typical mailed invitation. Don't have their phone numbers? Look them up—it's worth it. The hosts should invite their own friends and acquaintances—especially people likely to be interested in your mission who don't already know about it.

If at all possible, a mailed invitation should be sent to as many folks as you have addresses for. If there is a friendly group that has members who might be interested, perhaps they would send your invitations for you if you gave them the quantity necessary all ready to go. Don't rely on ads in existing publications, which alone rarely suffice. Of course having an interesting speaker or host who folks would like to meet also helps.

Asking for money is critical. While you can charge for the tickets to cover costs or set your ticket price to raise funds, there should still be an unambiguous 'ask' during the event. One often-used method of asking is for the event host to highlight the positive things the money goes toward and describe how the work of the group is personally meaningful, and then ask everyone to give at least some particular amount. The host can close by pulling out a checkbook and writing a check to the organization for some amount notably higher than the 'ask.'

Lastly, be sure to follow up. Thank those who gave. Send more information to newcomers, for whom this event was their first contact with your group. Call those newcomers once they've had a week or so with the new information and ask them for support and/or further participation.

Successful fundraising events can take a good deal of time and planning, but they are often one of the best opportunities to build commitment to your organization and can also be a good source of funding.

Forming a Development Committee

In identifying and recruiting people to serve on your organization's development committee, include group leaders who can talk readily about the strengths of your organization. Keep an eye open for those who have experience in your community with soliciting institutional grants/donations, holding house parties, identifying large donors, or sponsoring events. As with other aspects of fundraising, you will have to actively recruit for your finance committee. Have core leaders meet with possible recruits and ask them for ideas about who to contact. Committee members must make a personal contribution and pledge to help raise funds.

The finance chair will work with the committee to develop your budget and much of the fundraising plan. Also make sure that a single person is in charge of each fundraising project (event, house party, etc.) to keep it going. Remember to let your finance committee members know how much you appreciate and value their hard work and persistence.

SECTION VIII

THE INTERNET & E-HUMANISM

Online Tools to Spread Humanism

The rise of the Internet and new online technologies gives local groups many new opportunities when it comes to organizing, attracting new members and getting the Humanist message out to the public. It is important to understand and take advantage of these new tools.

Matt Cherry, executive director of the Institute for Humanist Studies (IHS), on Humanists.net: Although Humanists are well known for advocating the benefits of science and technology, they haven't always practiced what they preach! There are still Humanist groups without websites, and many groups with websites pay high commercial rates for them and often receive poor quality service in return. Free websites are usually low-level domains disfigured by intrusive ads.

In response to these problems, IHS has developed its own website hosting service, and now offers free website hosting and email to Humanist groups.

The Institute acts as a professional, high-quality hosting service, except that we do not pass on any of the costs incurred in setting up and hosting sites and email. We can accept sites already hosted elsewhere and are especially interested in facilitating a Web presence for groups that are new to the online community or might not otherwise be able to own a website.

Our Web hosting service is part of the Institute's commitment to cooperation and innovation in promoting Humanism. The Institute has been offering website hosting through its Humanists.net project since 2000. In 2003, the number of independent Humanist sites hosted by Humanists.net passed 100.

IHS online: www.humaniststudies.org

Website

Thanks to lowered costs, and a growing Internet-savvy population, your group should be able to easily establish a website, which can serve as an important resource for group members, as well a source of information for potential members and other interested people. There are three main aspects to establishing a website: the technological aspects, the design, and the content.

Establishing a Website

It's likely that one or two people in your group have the necessary skills to establish a website for your group. If you can get someone to act as a volunteer webmaster, they can help create the look of the page and be responsible for updating it with new information.

Two general costs associated with web pages are hosting fees and the domain name. Hosting is what a company does to connect the website to the rest of the Internet. Your domain name is the address (e.g., http://www.americanhumanist.org) that people type into their Internet browser to connect to your website.

Most, if not all, of these costs can be avoided, thanks to the Institute for Humanist Studies' Humanists.net, which provides free Web hosting and email for Humanist, freethought, and atheist groups. Though Humanists.net will not design a website for your group, they'll host your site and can save your group money.

Visit the IHS' Humanists.net site at http://www.humanists.net for more information about Web hosting and email options for your group.

Website Design & Content

Establishing a website is only part of what your group needs in order to have a successful Web presence. Once you settle the technical details, it needs to be designed and filled with solid content that turns it into an easily readable and useful resource.

A professional looking site adds credibility. Though there are many opinions on what makes a well-designed website, there are a few things to keep in mind:

- Avoid large graphics files and animations. They can take time to download and may frustrate visitors with slower Internet connections.
- Avoid placing all of your content on the home page of the website, forcing people to scroll endlessly down the page. The opening page should be a guide to the rest of the site. A small organizational hierarchy of your pages will be easier for visitors to navigate.
- Avoid background colors that make it difficult to read the text.
- A couple of matching colors look more professional than several clashing ones.

Tied in with the design is the content that you will be placing on the site. Many of your decisions about content should be driven by the question, "Who'll be visiting the website and what will they want to know about the group?"

Some common elements that you'll want on your website, no matter who is visiting (a group member, supporter, reporter, or a person interested in learning more about your group) include:

- Mission statement and vision
- Short biographies of your leaders
- Updated information about your meetings and events (complete with directions and maps)
- Summaries of past meetings and events
- Press releases
- Newsletters (at least one example)
- Short pieces (perhaps written by members, or from the AHA) that explain Humanism and the Humanist worldview
- Links to other Humanist and freethought organizations in your area and around the country

Though anyone with an Internet connection in the United States can access your website, you should always remember that your primary audience is supporters, detractors, and others in your area who are interested in what your group does and has to say. Your website should strive to be the local portal to the wider Humanist and freethought movement. By serving in this manner as a resource to your community, you can build a reputation among other community groups, the press, and even local politicians.

If your group is more activist-oriented, your website can become the clearinghouse of information about current issues in your community. If your group sets up a blog, chat room, or discussion board, the website can be a place where issues are discussed and debated. You may also want to consider setting up a password-protected section of your website, where your members can have access to materials not available to the general public. This can include fliers, handbills, and special action alerts.

Even if your group is not primarily activist-oriented, it's worth the effort to update your website every week or two with new content. This can be as simple as adding a new event to your calendar or writing a topical opinions piece for the front page. You may also want to consider adding an "updates page" on to your website where all new additions to the site are listed.

By building up a repository of articles, commentaries, and reports from meetings, any member of your group can quickly and easily point to the website as an introduction to the group. The site also becomes a way to record the history of your group.

Reviewing the websites of other Humanist, atheist and even religious right groups will also provide insight in to what to put there.

Maintaining and Updating your Website

It's important to remember that once you establish and publicize your group's website, you should have your webmaster update it on a regular basis. Once people get accustomed to seeing your website, they might judge how active your group is by the amount of new content.

In addition, if your group's website is filled with articles and updates that were current three months ago, visitors will not turn to it as a source for updated information about the group, or the community of which you are a part. It is especially important to keep the site current if your group gets involved in local issues and you want people to turn to your website as a resource.

An active website, to which people regularly return, is a great way to keep your members informed about current events. It lets supporters and interested people know that you're out and about in your community, shows reporters that you're active and have an interesting story to tell, and even lets the religious right know that we're not idly standing by as they work to impose their regressive worldview on society.

Email

Whether or not you are spending a significant amount of time surfing the Internet, it's worth knowing that email usage still ranks as the major activity for online users. If used correctly, email can be another powerful tool to organize your members and inform the public and the press about your activities.

Email Announcement Lists

It is important to maintain some sort of database or spreadsheet of email addresses of members, supporters and the press. Email is a cheap and time saving method for keeping everyone updated about current activities in your group.

These names and email addresses can be part of your group's email announcement list. An email announcement list should be low volume—no more than two or three emails a week—and only used to send out reminders about meetings, major events, or important issues in your community.

Your email announcement list can grow to include hundreds of people. When sending out a mass email to them, make sure you enter their addresses into the 'BCC' field of your mail browser. A blind carbon copy means that none of the names you are sending to will be visible to others. If you send it 'CC' or carbon copy, all the names and emails will be visible, which could cause privacy concerns, or at the very least, annoyance because readers may have to scroll through a long list of names and email addresses before getting to the message.

The email announcement list is 'one-way' and not meant for people to respond to. Though most will use regular email for this function, a listserv can be set-up as announcement only and will accomplish the same goal. This has the advantage of mitigating some of the administrative duties including some of the subscribing and unsubscribing duties. For general group discussion, you should definitely use a listserv.

Listservs for Group Discussions

Listservs have grown in popularity in recent years, and these email discussion lists run through a gamut of topics. A listserv for group discussions is different from your email announcement list because instead of one person posting a message for others to read, it acts as a forum for discussion. Everyone who participates in a listserv sends a message to one central address (for example, a listerv the AHA maintains for Chapter leaders is ahafield@yahoogroups.com). Once the message is sent to the main address, it is then sent to everyone who is on the list. Messages can either be received as individual emails, or in digest format, which is when the listserv provider waits until receiving a set number of emails to the list, and sends all of the messages in one long email. Each person on the list can choose if they prefer to receive individual or digest format. This sort of technology allows large discussions to take place over email without each person having to manage a large list of names.

Reminder to AHA Chapter Leaders: The AHA maintains a moderated listserv for Chapter leaders, to exchange ideas for the benefit of all groups. If you're a Chapter leader and interested in being on the list, contact AHA field staff.

Yahoo! Groups is probably the most popular commercial listserv provider currently available on the Internet. The service is free and easy to use, but you will have a number of advertisements to wade through, and some people may have privacy concerns with providing Yahoo! with personal information.

Local groups can use email discussion lists for two purposes. The first is a general discussion list for members. This is a way for members to interact with each other beyond the regular meetings. A listserv can be used to discuss issues relating specifically to the group or about topics that are generally of interest to Humanists and freethinkers.

Bulletin boards are another way that group members can communicate with one another. Bulletin board systems can either be purchased, rented or downloaded as open source software, and installed on your website. For example, the *Humanist* magazine has the *Humanist Salon*, a series of bulletin boards. There are general discussion topics, as well as places to discuss articles that appear in the magazine. Visit it online at http://www.thehumanist.org.

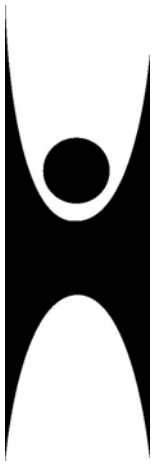
A second use of listservs can be for leaders and core volunteers to communicate when planning future events for your group. Though a listserv can never replace face-to-face discussions among group leaders, it can help augment discussions and the decision making process.

Other Internet Organizing Tools

As technology continues to become more integrated into everyday life, and as new innovative strategies are created for people to organize via online tools, it is important that Humanists stay abreast of these new developments. The advent of online web logs (known as blogs) and the creation of Meetup.com are just two of the innovations that Humanists should take advantage of. By keeping up with the online community (you can do this by reading http://www.wired.com and http://slashdot.org), Humanists can keep up-to-date and informed about the tools available to help further our movement.

One thing to keep in mind, though, is that there are a number of Americans not connected to the Internet. So www.meetup.com and blogs are only effective to the extent that people are already online. Drawing in new members and organizing events via the Internet can work as a supplement, but have not yet replaced more traditional organizing tools.

SECTION IX



NEWSLETTER & PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

Introducing Yourself to the Community

The materials created by your group should present Humanism clearly and concisely. Such materials offer many readers their first glimpse of our worldview. Whether your group has a table at a community fair, or is passing out information to local media, your materials will determine the initial reaction others have of the group. It is important to take care when crafting your group's message.

Reminder: In addition to the materials you create, the AHA has professionally designed brochures and other materials. We can supply these to your group at little to no cost. Contact AHA field staff for an up-to-date listing of what we offer.

Group Newsletter

A newsletter (semi-monthly, monthly, bi-monthly or quarterly) is a useful tool. It serves as one of the main sources of information for your group members and can be a good way to introduce your group to new or prospective members. Depending on the resources available, your newsletter can be a page that lists your group's events for the month or it can be eight pages of news items, commentary, and other contributions from your members. A newsletter, especially one driven by member submissions, allows everyone to feel connected and up to date and can attract new members.

Though desktop publishing is cheaper than it's ever been, between that cost and production and mailing costs, it can be a significant share of your budget. Newsletters can also become time consuming. Nevertheless, many programs can be used to design professional looking newsletters, including Adobe PageMaker, QuarkXPress, and Microsoft Publisher. Microsoft Word can also be used to produce simple newsletters. Provided your newsletter doesn't contain too many photos or other high definition images, any sort of home printer should be able to do the job. Another option is to send an electronic copy of your newsletter to be produced by a print shop (see Appendix Page 17: Newsletters).

Content

Basic information that should be in each newsletter includes a schedule of upcoming meetings, reports from past meetings, a report or letter from the group leader, community announcements (like birthdays or anniversaries), community events that may be of interest to Humanists, news updates and activism alerts from organizations such as the AHA, information about upcoming conferences, and other contributions from members.

The newsletter should always the have contact information of the editor and officers, an explanation of Humanism and your group's purpose, information about joining the group, information on (including how to contact) on national groups you're affiliated with, such as the AHA, and your group's regular meeting place and time.

Remember that allies and even some opponents will have an interest in your newsletter. The newsletter should always reflect the mood and character of the group. But as history shows, the religious right has no scruples in twisting quotes and taking statements out of context in order to further their agenda. Don't censor yourself, but it is worthwhile to consider how people outside of your group might misconstrue your statements.

Who Gets It

In addition to ensuring that members receive a copy of the newsletter (this is a benefit that should be included with membership) you might also want to create a mailing list for non-members who receive your newsletter. This includes potential members, other local Humanist and freethought groups, the local media, and the AHA.

For people who have expressed interest, it is worthwhile to send them a trial copy (perhaps up to three months) so that they can learn about your group. At the end of their three free issues, send a letter (or include it in the newsletter) to remind them that their trial is up, express your hope that they enjoyed the newsletter, and ask them to become a member so that they can receive the newsletter and other benefits year round. A follow-up call is a good idea.

It can be beneficial to exchange newsletters with other local Humanist and freethought groups. Getting a sense for what other groups are doing can inform your thinking about future activities and ideas for your group. It's also a way to build relations with fellow Humanists and freethinkers. If you find a good article from another newsletter,

Clark Adams, president of the Humanist Association of Las Vegas and Southern Nevada (HALVASON), on newsletter PDF's: Most local groups waste a lot of money, not to mention natural resources, on copying and mailing newsletters. We at HALVASON estimated it cost us over $1 per newsletter sent out. The cost is unnecessary and we eliminated most of this expense by "going digital." To my knowledge, we're the first such organization to do this.

In late 2001, I convinced our new newsletter editor—as well as the HALVASON board—that we should do the newsletter right, namely by doing it in a desktop publisher so it could be electronically distributed. We started out by continuing to "snail mail" out 125 copies or so. Gradually, we began sending newsletter via email, in Adobe Acrobat PDF. The PDF is a common compressed file format for transferring files. At first, only a few of us received the newsletter electronically. Then we ceased paper newsletter distribution to other AHA Chapters but offered electronic copies to like-minded organizations. We received no complaints and many enjoy reading our newsletter each month.

Then we began to push for electronic distribution for our members. At first, many members received both an electronic copy and the dead-tree version. Most preferred the electronic copy as it was in color and received much sooner. HALVASON's three "geeks" — Raul Martinez, Ray Johnson, and I—helped many members with technical issues, all of which were easily resolved. A few months later we pushed for all HALVASON members to receive the newsletter electronically. Most did. The few members without computers still receive the newsletter via postal mail. Now we sent out approximately 25 newsletters via snail mail and over 100 electronically. The savings have been tremendous.

HALVASON online: www.halvason.org

you should consider getting permission to reprint it in your newsletter (most newsletters already allow for reprints, provided credit is given to where the article was originally printed).

Sending the newsletter to a few local reporters (newspaper, television or radio) is also a way you can get noticed by the press. But don't blindly send out copies. Send a letter introducing yourself and the group before adding a media contact to your list.

The AHA is interested in having archival copies of newsletters and other materials that have been produced by local Humanist and freethought groups.

The Newsletter Editor

Because the newsletter is in itself a large responsibility, it's worthwhile to spend time finding a good newsletter editor. It's important to define the role that the newsletter editor will play: will she or he simply be responsible for layout, or will the person also be providing a majority of the content? Depending on group dynamics and the responsibilities of the leadership, the newsletter editor might be already be in a leadership role or could be someone who doesn't have too many responsibilities in the group.

Remember that one way to reduce the amount of pressure on your editor is to invite contributions from group members. These submissions can also provide a sense of ownership for group members, since they'll feel that they have a stake in the newsletter.

The Newsletter Publisher

Sometimes, a conflict may arise as to who has final say over the contents of the newsletter. The group owns and publishes the newsletter, which means the newsletter editor does not have final say regarding content. If this is not made clear when the newsletter editor begins her or his duties, it can lead to conflicts when the newsletter editor and the leadership disagree over the publication of certain articles.

To prevent conflicts, an editorial or publishing committee should be established. It is their job to review the newsletter before it is published. They have the final say in what is published. They aren't there to censor articles, but they do ensure that the newsletter, as one of the primary voices for your group, is properly representative of your group.

Pamphlets and Brochures

Pamphlets and brochures are useful tools when conveying your group's message to the community. The brochure should briefly introduce people to Humanism and to your group. Several elements are common to many introductory brochures.

Content:

- Definition of Humanism (either the AHA's, or your group's version)
- Description of your group's mission and goals
- List of your group's recent successful activities
- Services offered by your group (intellectual discussions, sense7of community, etc.)
- Contact information for an officer or for the group, especially the email address and website, if applicable
- Sign up sheet for people who want to become members
- Note the group's affiliation with national organizations, such as the AHA

Design:

- Use tri folded 8.5 x 11" paper
- Name of your group prominently displayed on the front cover
- Logo (designed by the group, or use the Happy Humanist) prominently displayed
- The flap that folds out to the right should have the sign-up sheet, since it can most easily be torn and returned to the group
- Font size will partially be determined by the amount of content, but bigger is always better
- Small graphics can be used to break up large masses of text

The AHA has an introductory pamphlet and a wallet-sized card that summarizes *Humanist Manifesto III*. Both are available to your group, but if resources permit, it's a good idea for your group to have its own brochure that spells out specifics about your group's mission and activities (see Appendix Page 27: Brochures).

Public Service Announcements

Public service announcements (PSA) are free advertisements that run in the public interest. This means that PSAs are supposed to educate on issues of interest or provide information about upcoming events in your local community. They cannot be political. The Federal Communications Commission requires television and radio stations to run PSAs, and to run them at no charge.

Contact your local radio and television stations to see what their specific requirements are for running PSAs. PSAs are good opportunities to promote upcoming public events such as a debate (see Section XI: Public Events) or when running a public awareness campaign (think of the Ad Council's Smokey the Bear forest fire prevention campaign). There are many creative options open for your group.

Cable or community access shows are an often underutilized medium for local groups. Your group more than likely qualifies to have a show on cable access. The first step is to decide what sort of content you'd be interested in putting on. Then you should contact the community access station and find out what their rules and requirements are for having a show. Do they provide space and equipment to tape shows? Or do you just have to drop off tapes? You may want to contact other local groups who have done cable access shows to learn about their formats and topics.

SECTION X

MEDIA RELATIONS

Media Plan

Engaging in proactive media relations requires planning, a slew of resources, commitment to your organization's vision, and knowledge of media tools.

The size and strength of your group will partially determine your media efforts. You may at first, want to take on these activities slowly, and then work up to larger and more time-consuming projects. For instance, your group may decide to focus first on print media and build up to press conferences. The more you prepare for your media options, the more likely you are to maximize your resources.

The Basics

Terms You Need to Know

Message
Know what you want to say and communicate your message clearly and *simply*. Messages convey advocacy, action, and cultural or political positions. Try to set the stage for solutions that you want to see happen.

Target
Target your audience: Who are trying to reach? Your basic focus should include lawmakers, opinion-makers, people of faith, community leaders, or the general public. Determine the scope of your media involvement. If you're trying to target the local community to attract more members, for instance, then aim for the "Metro" section of your city's major newspaper, as well as community papers and alternative weeklies or monthlies.

Lead
The lead is the first line or paragraph of a media piece. It concisely and energetically represents the central point. A lead paragraph of a media piece should contain the most important components and capture journalists' attention, but it need not explain everything.

Pitch
Pitch means to orally give an idea for a news story to editors, reporters, or producers. It's essential to be enthusiastic and be sure to offer additional sources. For instance, after sending a press advisory, make a follow-up call and pitch the advisory. Make sure to include the who, what, why, where, when, and how. Try not to pitch to more than one journalist at a news outlet; if you do, let the journalist know.

Spin
Spin is a way to influence the outcome of a news story, or in other words, a way to cajole and direct the news. Most sides of an issue have their own direction and message. Try to focus on your organization's angle while downplaying others.

Hook
A hook is a way to make media pieces more enticing for journalists. Some components of a hook that appeal to the media are:

- Controversy
- Timeliness
- Localizing a national interest
- Anniversaries
- Groundbreaking news
- First-ever or unprecedented events

Framing

The frame of your media piece is its boundaries, impact, and defining limits. Try to get your organization in the framework or change the framework in order to do so.

An example of framing: Gay and Lesbian Rights.
- One side of the debate frames the issue as "special rights for homosexuals who choose to be gay and might be cured."
- The other side frames it as "a matter of basic fairness" and advocates the need to "stop discrimination against gays and lesbians."

Focus on an issue—what's your organization's objective (in regard to the issue)? Try not to just react to your opponents (e.g., the religious right). Instead construct a frame for your organization's benefit. Try to put your opponents on the defensive.

How you frame your news will inform the general public about your position on issues, communicate your messages, and persuade your targeted audience to respond in a certain way.

Preparation

Be *ready* to contact local and national media sources. Locate relevant media contacts by issue and geographic location. Also be sure to secure the contact information of the nearest wire service. Wire services are news sources that record and file articles to send to newspapers, radio, and TV stations nationwide. Mainstream wire services include the Associated Press, the New York Times News Service, Reuters, and United Press International

Create and maintain a current spreadsheet or database of journalists' contact information. This can be time consuming but is essential to any media plan. Research local newspapers, pay attention to bylines, figure out which reporters cover humanistic issues, and keep a list. You may also contact media outlets directly and ask for the names of reporters who cover issues pertinent to your group. The AHA national office is also a good place to check for media contacts. Sending media pieces via email or fax to journalists is fast, reliable, and the preferred method.

Media Tools

Monitoring the news is an important preparatory step in your group's media plan. You may want to have a small committee of volunteers who monitors the local news for issues of interest for your group. Stay updated and informed.

AHA staffers run a Humanist news and commentary blog that is updated during the week. Visit it at http://www.humanistnews.blogspot.com. You should also check the AHA's website for national news and see Google News at http://news.google.com for breaking stories.

Coverage from the Local Press

Many local newspapers tend to have a consistent angle toward certain issues. Research local newspapers to discover which ones are widely read and whether they are conservative or liberal. Regardless of your group's position, submit media pieces to *both* liberal and conservative papers.

Be sure to connect with the local media. If your paper has an editor in charge of a section that covers religion and ethics, be sure to introduce yourself to her or him. This type of section is usually where feature pieces about your group or information about your events would be placed by editors. It is also worthwhile to get to know selected members of the media on a personal basis. You may even want to consider asking them to give a talk at a regular meeting.

If there is a newspaper columnist who covers local and community issues, try to connect with her or him, or see if you can add this person on to your email or mailing list.

Don't overlook ethnic, youth, alternative, and college campus media. Such local press is a reliable way to increase name recognition and attract new members.

Communicating with the Media in Print

Try to write concise leads that will hook the reporter. If you don't entice the reader by the end of the first paragraph or even the headline, she or he may not continue reading. *Always* include contact information, name, address, telephone number (at which you can be immediately reached), and email.

Press Advisories and Press Releases

Press advisories and releases let members of the press know about an upcoming news event as well as an event that has happened. Since a press advisory draws the press to your event and gives them a chance to give you advance publicity, and a press release summarizes what happened for potential news stories, both are vitally important.

The purpose of a press advisory is to let the press know about an upcoming event that may be of interest to them. The press advisory should summarize the upcoming event on one page and only needs to be between 100 and 400 words. Headlines and opening sentences must be crafted to catch the readers attention. The advisory itself should be printed on your group's letterhead, with contact information prominently visible. The advisory should be brief and straightforward and include the following information:

- What event will be occurring?
- Why is the event occurring and why is your Humanist group part of it?

- Who is involved in the event? If there are leading community figures, include names and positions.
- When is the event occurring? Local events should include date and time.
- Where is the event taking place? Include directions if possible.

It is also important to include a short statement about your group's mission and who its members are. Think of the advisory as an invitation to members of the local press. It should be sent to reporters, news editors, assignment desks, and daybooks (which is a wire service listing of events that may be of interest to reporters).

Contact your local press outlets to find out how far in advance they want an advisory sent to them. In general, it's worthwhile to send out an advisory a month before the event and then another advisory the week of the event. A follow up call should then be made to ensure that the advisory reached the right person. Never assume that the person you intended to see the advisory received it, or that she or he was paying attention to it. During the phone call, be prepared to "pitch" your event to the reporter. Have copies of the advisory at hand in case you need to resend it to the reporter.

Remember that most press outlets have different reporters writing on the weekdays and weekends. If your event is occurring on a weekend, make sure to contact the right reporter (See Appendix Page 31: Press Advisory).

By contrast, a press release summarizes the key points of an event (or juncture in the debate about an issue) that has already happened and provides perspective. When writing it, you should consider it as a tool that will assist the reporter when writing her or his story. The release should include direct quotes, the basic facts and figures, and your group's overall message. Like a press advisory, it should be only a page in length, on your group's letterhead, and have wide margins, so that reporters can write in notes. Put the date of issue and a release date (usually "For Immediate Release") above the body of the release.

The editorial and opinions pages in newspapers are a way for your group to take part in the public discourse. Three types of pieces usually run in the back pages of the front section, and it's important to know the difference. An *editorial* is the institutional voice of the newspaper and is written by the paper's editorial board. The board can consist of senior managers and editors of the paper, or a separate staff of people who help shape the voice of the paper. *Letters to the editor* are found on the same page as the editorials. LTE's are usually very short opinion pieces which are unsolicited and can be submitted by anyone in the community. The *op-ed* (short for "opinion editorial") page is for opinion pieces. Op-ed pieces can be up to 1,000 words and most newspapers accept them unsolicited. Check each paper's rules, because they vary. Sometimes an opinions editor may be interested in hearing a specific point of view and will solicit an person or organization to submit a piece.

The first paragraph should very concisely include the Who, What, Why, Where, When and How that was put into the press advisory. The second paragraph should have a quote from

a speaker and provide more detail on the What and Why. Remember that the most important information should be at the top of the release. The first two paragraphs need to hook the reporter.

Creating and maintaining an email list of media contacts whom to send press releases is a good way to build a relationship with journalists. As a result of press releases, the AHA is regularly quoted in print and radio news, and is occasionally asked to provide a guest for radio and television programs. (See Appendix Page 32: Press Release)

Letter to the Editor

A letter to the editor is a way to respond to a quote, an idea, an article, or some other news piece, which has *previously* been printed. Always mention exactly what you are responding to and when it appeared.

A letter to the editor should be short, clear, and concise. Time is of the essence. If you are responding to an article or a quote from a speech, try to send it to the designated newspaper that day or the next.

Aim to write between two to three paragraphs including these elements: cite what you are responding to; introduce your point, argument, or something personal; and end with a strong, attention-getting conclusion. Maximum word counts are usually around 250 words or 300 words.

Sign your name and organization and always include full contact information separated from the signature line. (See Appendix Page 33: Letter to the Editor)

Op-Ed

An op-ed is a way to communicate your messages directly to the media. Make your opinion pieces short, clear, and, when possible, personal. (See Appendix Page 34: Opinions Piece)

Letters to the editor and opinion editorials are great ways to communicate your organization's message to a wide audience.

Communicating with the Media in Person

There are three main types of news events: public media events, press conferences, and editorial meetings. No matter the event, make sure you have a chance of filling the chosen venue, or reporters may think your turnout was poor.

Public Media Event

A media event features a group doing something visually attention getting and interesting. It may include speakers, a public debate or panel discussion, and lectures. (See Section XI: Public Events)

Public media events are often more newsworthy than press conferences. Media events offer more photo opportunities and thus are more appealing to TV reporters. Successful media events are engaging—to keep the interest of journalists.

Press Conference

A press conference is often used to publicize a program or a controversial position of your group or to react to a news development. *Do not* merely promote your organization—actually create news (protest held, report released, new announcement, etc).

A press conference is often formal and structured, usually featuring spokespeople and a question and answer session. Typically, three to four speakers speak for about ten minutes before they take questions.

Press Kit

A press kit is a great way to gain media interest during a press conference or media event. There are two basic kinds of press kits, generic and issue-focused.

A *generic press kit* consists of information on your organization and profile, such as the history of your organization, board member profiles, an annual report, and a newsletter. A generic press kit can be distributed at any time and is not issue based.

An *issue-focused press kit* is connected to one issue. It consists of some background history of your group but primarily contains specific information about an issue. Issue-focused press kits may be given to reporters at press conferences and other media events.

The following are some of the basic materials to be included in a press kit:

The Left Pocket

- A black and white photograph with a caption (optional). The photograph may be of a key spokesperson or something that captures the issue
- Copy of published press clips (op-ed, letter to the editor, etc)
- Biography of key speaker(s)
- List of supporting organizations, statements from coalition partners are appropriate
- Fact sheet on your organization

The Right Pocket

- Business card
- Press release on the issue
- A report if applicable
- Fact sheet on the specific issue
- Speech text or a longer statement on the issue

Radio/TV interviews

The key to a successful interview is to be a good spokesperson for your group. Practice beforehand. If the interview is issue-focused, familiarize yourself with *both* sides. Try to connect the issue with your group's key messages and ideals. Discuss a relevant personal

story. Use sound bites, which are short, attention-getting statements that communicate the essence of your group’s message.

Media Crisis

Sometimes a media crisis is unpredictable, such as when a media event goes haywire or a scandal erupts. For example, one of your speakers might unexpectedly endorse a candidate from the podium or criticize a friendly organization. The key is to be prepared and anticipate controversy. Clear channels of communication with media sources and coalition partners are essential. The same goes for your own leadership—keep them and your core volunteers updated and informed.

The best way to handle a media meltdown is to get the facts and respond quickly—don't ignore the crisis. Work with the media and try to accommodate journalists. Try to use the crisis to your group’s advantage. Communicate your key messages to the media.

SECTION XI

PUBLIC EVENTS

Holding Public Events

Though your group's regular meetings should always be open to anyone who wants to attend, having a separate type of event—debate, lecture, or banquet—can be an additional way to reach out to your community. These types of events can help energize your members, make your community aware of your existence, spread the Humanist worldview, and gain new members.

Organizing Principles

No matter what type of event you hold, several factors come into play.

Timing

- Take a close look at the calendar. Unless your event is holiday orientated, pick a day when it doesn't appear that too much is going on in your community.
- Events, other than press conferences, should be at night or during the weekends. For weekdays, starting an event around 7 PM allows people time to head home for food and then attend your event, or they can just stay at the office. It also allows people to get out of the event at a reasonable hour.
- Unless you're holding events as part of a "Separation of Church and State Month" or a weeklong series of events leading up to Darwin Day, don't have several events in a row. This can wear out even your most committed activist.

Location

- If your community has a good public transportation system, use it. Don't assume everyone can drive to the event. If there is a good subway or bus system, try to hold events within a five-minute walk from it.
- Libraries and community centers (and possibly churches) are all good places to start your search. Businesses and nonprofit organizations might have spaces for smaller events, but it's likelier that they'll charge money.
- If you're specifically interested in attracting college students to your event, have the event on or near campus.
- The event determines the type of room you get. Try to estimate turnout. It's better to get a smaller space that might overflow instead of a cavernous, but empty room.

As with any type of event, be sure to create a backward planning calendar (see Appendix Page 2: Backward Planning Calendar) in order to ensure that you have a timeline for all of the tasks that you need done in order to make your event a success. Generally, debates take longer to plan than a lecture or banquet.

Speakers

Finding a speaker is also a time consuming task. Before you draw together a list of names, be sure to consider:

- What do want from you speaker (or debater)? What do you want the person to focus on? What do you want her or him to know?
- Do you want to enlist a prominent member of your community, a member of your group, or someone prominent on a national level?

- Is the group willing or able to pay an honorarium? This may be a factor for speakers, especially nationally known ones.

Once you have an idea of a few people who you would like to invite, get in touch with your first pick. Introduce yourself, your group, and the reason for your call. Try to gauge the level of interest from your potential speaker. If there is none, thank them for their time. If there is interest, go more in depth about what you're looking for and ask if the person would be interested. Be sure to provide some general times and locations for the event.

With a tentative speaker in place, along with a list of times the person is available, you can now figure out a time, date, location, and topic for your event—assuming that it's not already set. Confirm with the speaker that the finalized time and location is acceptable. Get biographical information and anything else you may need to know in order to properly promote the event.

If the speaker has authored books or has other merchandise, find out if she or he wants an opportunity to sell them. Provided there is room, you should also offer the speaker a small space so that any free materials they have—such as magazine articles they authored or information from an organization they represent—can be displayed.

Remember to call your speaker a few days before the event as a gentle reminder, as well as to confirm any travel arrangements, and to answer any last minute questions. Be sure to also confirm any biographical details that you'll be using in your introduction of the speaker to the crowd.

Advertising the Event

The best ways to advertise your event are through newspaper ads and free listings (both online and in print), a press advisory, fliers and handbills, community calendars, Public Service Announcements, fliers to your group members, and word of mouth.

If your group has enough money, you should consider placing ads in local newspapers. This can include the daily paper, the weekly alternative paper, and small community papers. You would need to contact each paper to find out the rates and specifications for placing display ads.

Place handbills or fliers in your community to get the word out. You may wish to leave materials in community centers, coffee shops, bookstores, music venues, grocery stores, the offices of your local elected officials, and nearby campuses. Always remember to get permission before placing your materials in these places.

Reminder to AHA Chapter leaders: The national office can assist in a mailing to AHA members and *Humanist* subscribers in your area.

Find out if your community distributes (either in the local newspaper or online) a calendar of upcoming events. If so, you should contact whoever is in charge of the calendar and get your event listed.

Make sure that all members and friends of your group are aware of the event. If you have a newsletter, be sure to prominently include information about the event. You may also want to send out a separate mailing to your members. Some of your members who normally don't attend meetings may be more likely to come to a larger event.

Public Debate

The main purpose of the debate isn't to change people's minds on the spot. If this is your goal, you'll almost certainly be disappointed. Debates are chances to expose people to various points of view, create dialogue, and, if lucky, plant seeds of change. The strongest and most successful types of debates are between two equally matched speakers. Debates, especially about controversial topics, can draw huge crowds, give you a fair share of publicity in your local media, and introduce your group to the community.

Cosponsoring a debate has several advantages. It reduces the logistical pressures and costs for your group. Instead of having to do all of the work and pay for everything, you can split the responsibilities between two sets of dedicated volunteers and two bank accounts. Having cosponsoring organizations, which respectively support the worldviews of the debaters, adds legitimacy. Attendees are less likely to think that the debate is a one-sided setup. Having a cosponsor can also result in more people attending, since the other group will undoubtedly have access to some people you do not.

Organizing Principles for Debates

Depending on the size of the debate that you are planning, you may want to start as much as three months in advance. The bigger you are planning to make it, the more lead time you'll need. If you decide to cosponsor, once you come up with some general ideas for a debate, you should seek out cosponsors. Your group's best bets are with similarly sized groups in your area.

Finding the debaters and the venue are the next steps. When searching for space, it's safe to assume the better the debaters are known the likelier it'll be that you can draw a large crowd. This isn't to say that a good topic can't generate a crowd, but having recognizable names helps. If you're holding the debate on a nearby campus, you should try to find a department or other office at the school to be one of the cosponsors. Doing so may allow you to get the room rental fee waived and save a significant amount of money.

Possible debate topics:
- Do Miracles Really Happen?
- Naturalism & the Supernatural: Where Does the Evidence Point?
- Does the World Show Signs of Intelligent Design?
- Good Without God? Is it Possible to Live an Ethical Life without Religion?
- The Role of Cloning in the Future
- Are we a Christian Nation? Church-State Separation in the United States

The topic of the debate also depends on who you get. If you're seeking out national debaters, you might want to focus on one of the suggested topics on the left. If your debaters are more local, you may have better luck by focusing on an issue in your community.

You may even want to hold a debate directly in response to a local controversy. If a school board is debating textbooks that mention evolution, or if there is a Ten Commandments monument on government property that is being challenged, having a timely debate on the topic can be very effective.

You also need to seek a moderator for the debate. It can be someone from your group or you could have co-moderators if you're cosponsoring the debate. You might also want to try to find a well-known local personality to act as moderator.

It's important to get agreement as to the format of the debate. Who will speak first? How will that be determined? How much time is allotted for statements and counterstatements? Can debaters directly question each other? Will there be a Q & A session following?

Unless the debate is going to put your group into a severe financial crisis, it's advisable not to charge an entrance fee, especially since it may discourage some from attending. However, if necessary, it can be way to recapture some costs. If you do charge a fee, though, it shouldn't be more than $5.

The Day of the Debate

No matter how smoothly the planning went, stay prepared for last minute problems. The size of the problem will probably be in proportion to the size of the debate. You should arrive at the debate location at least two hours in advance. Be sure to do a final walk through of the space, ensuring it's correctly set up. Make sure any audio-visual equipment is ready to go and that lighting controls work. If you're setting up tables in the foyer, or in the back of the room, make sure they're where they should be.

All the volunteers staffing the debate should be advised to arrive well before the event begins. You will then have the time to go over any last minute issues, answer any questions and assign tasks as needed.

If your group has the resources, you should make an audio or video tape of the debate. Having a recording of the event can be part of the archival history of your group. It can also be used to showcase the accomplishments of your group and can be presented at future meetings. You can also give or sell recordings of the debate to members who may have missed it and to the AHA.

When the debaters arrive, bring them to their place on the stage or a quiet location you've prepared for them. Make sure their last minute needs have been met. Be sure to place some water (without ice) on the stage for the debaters.

If you are cosponsoring, one representative from each organization should introduce the audience to the debate. Basic points to cover include:

- Welcome to the debate
- Representatives introduces themselves and their groups (be sure that you indicate how the audience can get more information about your group)
- Introduce respective speakers (cite biographical information)

- Turn over debate to moderator, who will explain the rules of the debate, discuss the Q & A session (if there is to be one), and get things started

Once the debate is concluded, be especially sure to publicly thank not only the debaters, but all of the volunteers who helped make your event a success.

Questions and Answers

If you plan to have a question and answer session, plan accordingly and be certain well in advance that the speaker(s) have agreed to answer audience questions in advance. First, be sure to set and then announce a time limit for the Q & A session. Leaving it open-ended can be frustrating for many in the crowd if the session starts to drag on. If it's a big crowd, instead of setting up a microphone for people to ask questions, it makes more sense to provide paper and pencils for people to write down their questions. The moderator, or people from the cosponsoring groups, can then pick the questions. This ensures that speakers get a fair share of questions and opportunities to respond. With a crowd of fifty people or less, you could probably do without the pencil and paper and have an open microphone.

Allowing the crowd to directly ask questions is tricky. People may feel more involved in the debate, but you also run the risk of having someone give a long-winded speech, instead of asking a question. If you're having people ask questions, there should also be someone from the group who will take on the responsibility of cutting people off, or requesting they ask a question instead of articulating a dissertation.

As the time for your Q & A session nears its end, check the crowd. If they're getting restless and shifting around in their seats, it's best to end the session. If people seem engaged, you may want to let the questions extend for a few more minutes. However, even if you do end the session on time, you can virtually guarantee that anyone who didn't get her or his question answered will make a beeline for the speaker(s) for more discussion.

Public Lecture

A public lecture is an educational and outreach event. This differs slightly from your regular meetings, where education and outreach are just two of the many components. If group business needs to be discussed, it should be separate from the lecture. Public lectures should be of interest not only to your members but also to the wider community. You should also be seeking a more high profile speaker than you'd normally have at a group meeting. The public lecture is the time and place to find supporters, build interest in your group, and educate your community about a topic. It requires less planning than a debate, but many of the same issues apply.

If your group becomes particularly adept at handling lectures, you may want to consider creating a lecture series. Having a regular lecture every month over the course of a year can establish your group as a valuable resource in your community.

One type of lecture series you could do is a “brown bag” lunch and lecture in your downtown. This can be a way to attract workers and professionals who usually may not have the time to attend your regular meetings.

Lecture Organizing Principles

The lead time you’ll need for a lecture need not be more than a month but can benefit from long range planning and publicity. The topic of the lecture should be your first consideration. Do you want to have the talk focus on a local issue, something of national importance, or something else entirely? What is going on in the community and the world that would draw people to a discussion about it? The topic should be able to draw people who are not yet involved with your group or the wider Humanist movement.

Having a Ph.D. doesn't guarantee the speaker will give a good talk. If your potential speaker has given talks for other Humanist groups, you may want to contact their leaders to find out if she or he is an effective public speaker.

In some ways, the speaker is more important than the topic. Even with an interesting subject, if you have a bad speaker you’ll end up with an ineffective event. If you're looking for a national speaker, the AHA has a speakers’ bureau to which AHA Chapters and Affiliates can access.

Though the AHA's speakers’ bureau is meant to be comprehensive, if you don’t find a good speaker you could look to other national organizations inside and outside of our movement. Their leaders, and probably their own speakers’ bureaus, could have good options for your group.

If you want the talk to focus on a more local issue, you’ll find that local nonprofits, leaders from other area advocacy groups, and other nearby local Humanist and freethought groups are all potential resources from which to draw speakers. Having someone who can speak authoritatively from experience on a local issue is as good as having name recognition. So a small business owner many may not have heard of can still be a strong draw because of her or his experience applying Humanist ethics to their business.

When searching for a speaker you should also be thinking of a venue to hold your lecture. If your regular meetings are already happening in a public space like a library or community center, you could just have the lecture there. Or you may want to explore other places where you don’t regularly meet. For example, you could have space dictate topic. Observatories and museums may have meeting space, but they’ll only allow your group to use it if you hold a lecture related to their areas of interest. So you could have a speaker come to the

For the benefit of future leaders, keep a speaker log. This is for speakers at your regular meetings as well as at your public lectures. The log should include the name and contact information of the speaker. It should record the name, date, time, and turnout of the event. The log should also note the ability of the speaker and have room for any additional comments. The log serves as a historical record for your group and provides valuable information for future leaders.

observatory to talk about the evolution of the universe or to debunk astrology. A speaker at a museum might discuss how Renaissance humanism influenced art of the period.

The Day of the Lecture

You should arrive at the lecture location well in advance. Much as with a debate, this gives you the opportunity to do a walk-through of the space, set up any audio-visual equipment, and do any other necessary room set up. When your volunteers arrive, assign remaining tasks to them.

When the speaker arrives, set her or him up near the front of room. Make sure any last minute needs have been met. Be sure to place some water (without ice) on the stage for the speaker.

The lecture should not open with the speaker standing up to talk. Someone in the leadership of your group, or a special guest, should introduce the speaker. You may want to hold off on the introduction until a few minutes after the official start time of the lecture to allow for latecomers. Basic points include:

- Welcome to the lecture
- Introduce self and group (be sure that you indicate how the audience can get more information about your group)
- Introduce speaker (provide biographical information)
- Try to save the speaker's name until the end, and then call for applause

Banquets

Hosting a banquet may have more appeal to group members, and can still be an opportunity to do outreach to Humanists and other freethinkers in your area. Banquets are a time to celebrate the successes of your group and to look to the future. They commonly happen in connection with the winter solstice but can be done in conjunction with any type of holiday, event, or recent development.

A banquet can serve many purposes. You can celebrate an event such Darwin Day or the National Day of Reason; you can give awards to honor outstanding volunteers; or you can have a national Humanist leader give a talk. If your group donates to charities or does a fair amount of volunteer work, you may want to have some sort of tie in at the banquet.

If there are several local Humanist and freethought groups in your area, you may want to hold a joint banquet. Though your groups may have differences in emphasis or focus when it comes to what they pursue, there are also many shared interests that can draw your groups together for a social event.

Banquet Organizing Principles

Where you hold your banquet is dependent on your financial resources. Larger groups usually have the money to hold the banquet in a hotel ballroom, with food being served by the hotel staff. Smaller groups may want to begin having banquets as potlucks at their

regular meeting place, or perhaps a community center. The most common practice is to reserve the banquet room of a local restaurant and order from the menu.
The most important step when planning a banquet is finding out if members are even interested in attending! Find out how much interest there is in such an event, by including it as part of your membership survey (see Section V: Building Community), or simply by asking around your membership. If there's general interest, estimate the number of people who may attend. Then it's time to look for a location.

If you're not sure at which hotel you want to hold the banquet, contact your local tourism/convention bureau. Let them know your requirements; they'll pass that on to various hotels that match your criteria. Those hotels will then get in touch with you. If you already have a hotel in mind, call them and tell them what you're planning, and see if they can accommodate you. Most hotels have conference planners who will work with you.

As you're working with the hotel to figure out what meals to serve, and what the costs will be, you should also think about what the focus on the banquet is. Will you be having a speaker come and give a talk? Are you celebrating a holiday, such as Darwin Day? Are you raising money and accepting donations for a local charity? Is it a time to recognize outstanding volunteers? No matter what you do, the main part of the banquet will usually happen after the food has been served.

If you're having a speaker, you can prepare the banquet by using many of the previously discussed Lecture Organizing Principles. If you're recognizing volunteers, prepare short remarks, highlighting why the person is being so honored. If your group wants to give some sort of award, present it at this point, and have the recipient say a few words.

Don't forget that banquets usually begin with a social hour, allowing people to mingle. If you're trying to draw families, you should have age-appropriate activities for kids.

Following Up With Your Speakers

No matter what type of event you have, be sure to send thank-you notes to speakers or debaters who participated. This provides a positive impression of your group, and your speakers may be more likely to mention to colleagues their experiences, which can lead to others being more open to speaking to your group in the future.

Roundtable Discussions

Having a roundtable discussion is like a small-scale debate. The goal, as always, is dialogue and a better understanding of different views, as opposed to arguing. A roundtable discussion is more informal than a panel discussion, and usually consists of three or four speakers who each give a short speech. They can either spar among themselves or answer questions from the audience. A roundtable discussion is usually about a predetermined topic and likely has no audience since everyone participates.

Roundtable Discussion Organizing Principles

The most important thing about the location is the setup of the room. The discussion should happen where everyone is facing each other in a circle or square of chairs.

The topic will be determined partially by the audience you're trying to reach through the discussion. If you're interested in having a discussion between your members and people from a local religious community, your focus may drift toward myths and generalizations about each other's worldviews or the basis for beliefs. If you're trying to cast a wider net, go for broader topics. Remember not to pick an issue that's too technical. That might prevent a majority from being able to participate or even to understand the conversation.

To prevent the discussion from descending into a chaotic shouting match, or from becoming a silent room filled with people staring at each other, someone should facilitate the discussion. The facilitator's job is to keep discussion going, prevent people from getting off track, and generally ensure order.

The facilitator isn't there to give a speech. The facilitator should explain the ground rules for the discussion, present the topic, pose one or two questions, and then begin the interaction.

The facilitator must be someone who, if necessary, will cut off someone's comments if they become long-winded, off topic, or overheated.

A dialogue can range from one to two hours. The facilitator should set a specific time for ending or as with the Q & A sessions following lectures and debates, should assess the participants to gauge their

Chris Lindstrom, founder and coordinator of the Garrison-Martineau Project, on roundtable discussions:
Since 2002, the Garrison-Martineau Project (named for the friendship and dialogue that developed between William Lloyd Garrison, a staunch Christian, and Harriet Martineau, an avowed atheist) has been facilitating small group dialogue between "believers" and "nonbelievers." Over 100 participants—including Presbyterians, Baptists, Catholics, atheists, Humanists, independents and more—have made connections!

Today, the Garrison-Martineau Project aims to create the next generation of Garrisons and Martineaus by enabling ordinary people across the theological spectrum to come together face-to-face and have "the conversation mother warned you about" in a facilitated, productive and friendly manner. No barriers. No audience. Just people talking to one another. I personally find comfort in telling the story my fundamentalist family doesn't want to hear. Nonbelievers within other progressive movements, who hadn't before considered our group, participate. Journalists call for interviews: inter-community dialogue is hot!

A small Humanist group can get a lot of bang for very little buck out of small group dialogue. What are you waiting for? Sponsor a Garrison-Martineau conversation in your neck of the woods! Your participants will thank you for the opportunity to be heard. Your group will thank you for the publicity. And, as you lay the groundwork for a world where humanists are universally respected, your grandchildren will thank you.

Garrison-Martineau Project online: www.garrison-martineau.com

level of interest. When the dialogue is waning, the facilitator should announce that the primary goals have been achieved and that there will only be a few more minutes for discussion. At the end, the facilitator should offer a few closing remarks, thank everyone for coming, and officially end the discussion. People can be reminded that, although it's the end of the meeting, they are more than welcome to stick around to continue talking.

Regional Conference

Holding a regional conference serves many purposes. Conferences provide an opportunity to work alongside other Humanist and freethought groups in the area, raise the profile of your group and the Humanist movement in the eyes of your community, energizes your activists and volunteers and introduces Humanism to larger numbers of people than your regular meetings.

A regional conference is usually a one or two day event. Although one local group will normally lead the effort, working with other Humanist and freethought groups in the area will help guarantee success and draw a larger crowd. You can think of a regional conference as a string of lectures over the course of a day. In addition to having talks, you may want to provide space for local groups to set up tables and plan a reception or dinner for the evening.

Regional Conference Organizing Principles

Agreeing on a date and location are the first big issues you and any other cosponsors will face. Most conferences take place on a weekend to draw the maximum number of people. If you're holding the event on Saturday, you may also want to have some sort of small event Friday night. This will encourage people to show up early and not miss any of the Saturday conference.

Either a hotel or a Unitarian Universalist congregation would work as a venue. The UU congregation may be advantageous because you may be able to get a better deal in using their space.

It's important to decide the theme of the conference. Do you want the conference to be about organizing more groups in your area or forging coalitions among groups that already exist? Perhaps you'd like it to be about discussing various aspects of Humanism, ways to build bridges with liberal religious communities, or how to get a strong Humanist voice in local and national politics. The ideas for topics and themes are endless. If you are specifically interested in catering to members, take a survey to find out what they might be interested in hearing about. From these survey results, you may be able to draw some general themes.

Many of the organizing principles applicable to a regional conference are similar to those used to prepare a lecture and a banquet. After picking a theme, and while securing a venue, you can start contacting potential speakers. You may want to contact speakers three or four months in advance because a regional conference is a much larger event than a lecture. This way you will have enough time to publicize the lineup of the conference.

The AHA would be interested in working with any local group seeking to have a regional conference.

Tabling at Public Events

Although it's always important for your group to have public events in order to draw new people, events and activities put on by other groups in your community are also great opportunities to do outreach. It's a way to gain exposure, build contacts, and provide a fun experience for group members.

When you want to table at an event or conference, get all of the necessary information beforehand from organizers. Will they provide an actual table, or is there simply room to set your own up? Will you have to share a table with another group? Are there requirements to table? Will there be a fee? Do they need to see your materials beforehand? Is it okay to ask for donations?

The table should have the following:

- Your group's brochure, or at least a short information sheet about the group.
- Copies of your group's newsletter.
- AHA's *Voice of Humanism* brochure.
- Issues of the *Humanist.* Contact the AHA if you need current or back issues.
- Copies of *Humanist Manifesto III* (either the full version, or the wallet sized cards).
- Sign up sheet (see Appendix Page 1: Sign-up Sheet) with several pens and pencils so that many people can sign up at once. Make clear that by signing up for the list, they're only being added to a mailing list, not becoming a member.
- An additional list for people to sign up for your group's action alerts (see Section IV: Issue Advocacy).

If you find your group going to a lot of events, you may want to consider getting a professionally made banner to drape over your table or hang up behind it.

Display boards also improve your ability to draw folks in and communicate your message. You might even want to buy your own small table if many of the events you go to only provide the space for a table, but not a table itself.

Where to Table

If your group has done a lot of coalition building (see Section IV: Issue Advocacy) you should already have a good idea about the other area groups with which you share common cause. Find out when these groups are holding larger events and see if they have space for like-minded organizations to display materials. Also keep an eye out for national organizations holding conferences or other events in your city.

Community activity fairs, rallies, protests, and marches are also good events for tabling. These activities usually involve a broader, more diverse cross-section of your community. Many people don't know the first thing about Humanism or freethought (or have skewed views about it). Giving them the opportunity to see your table and approach you (even if they disagree with what you support) is important in order to dispel the usual myths.

At the Table

Always be pleasant with visitors to the table. When someone comes near, quickly establish eye contact, smile, and then look away. If you keep staring at them, they might be a bit intimidated about coming up to the table to look through your materials. Once they come up to the table, however, ask if they have any questions about the group or if they'd be interested in signing up to the email list. Remember that you aren't there to argue with people. When you spend time arguing with someone, another person who may agree with you could be walking away from the table. If someone wants to start a fight, politely tell him or her that you aren't interested in debating at the moment. At conferences of like-minded individuals where you are confident that most are interested in Humanism, you might more aggressively invite folks to visit your table and learn more about your organization.

Leaving your Materials at Other Public Venues

There are many locations in your neighborhood open to self-promotional activity. Public forums such as community centers and libraries are good places to leave or post things. Private locations, such as coffeehouses, bookstores, fitness centers, grocery stores, and other community-based businesses are also valuable. Make sure to receive permission from the owner or manager before putting out brochures or posting notices about future meetings.

SECTION XII

LOCAL GROUP BENCHMARKS

Striving for the Ideal

There are several paths to an ideal local Humanist group. There are varying thoughts as to what is needed in order to make a sophisticated, effective and dynamic local Humanist group. Every local group has its own focus, interests, and members who want to see the group go a certain way. The AHA tends to see local groups as falling under one of three broad categories: educational services/philosophical discussion; community-oriented activities; and local activism. This can serve as a framework for thinking about your group. Do you want it to excel in one of these areas or do you want to have a balance between these categories (which are covered in Section IV: Issues Advocacy, Section V: Building Community and Section VI: Educational Development)? The AHA is proud to support all types of local groups, no matter their size or focus.

Between the current strengths and weaknesses of our local groups and the way we envision local groups of the future, we can provide a snapshot of the benchmarks necessary to build the foundation of an ideal local Humanist group.

Group Benchmarks

- Publicity draws in two newly interested people to regular meetings.
- Two or three people become members each month.
- Membership renewal rates are 90%.
- A majority of members attending regular weekly meetings.
- Social gatherings, organized by the group, occur at least twice a month.
- Works in coalition with Humanist and freethought groups in the region.
- Affiliated with one or more national Humanist or freethought organizations.
- Works with students on nearby university, community college and high school campuses to form secular student groups.
- Works to start and support local Humanist groups in neighboring communities (see Addendum IV: How to Start a Local Group).
- Has a fully operating, regularly updated, interactive website.
- Has the names and contact information for 250 people who donate money yearly.
- Sends out regular action alerts to list of at least 500 local activists
- Has money set aside in a building fund.
- Holds regular public events, coordinates debates or hosts speakers in addition to regular meetings.
- Local media regularly contacts the group for comment on relevant issues.
- Works with nearby Humanist and freethought groups to hold a regional conference.
- Employs one full-time staff person.
- Applies to foundations for grant money for community projects.
- Has “sub-groups" that focus on specific topics of interest to members.
- Maintains a fully operating lending library of books
- Has yearly “lobby days” where group members meet with legislators at the state capital
- Runs “Sunday school” program developed to teach ethics and values to children.

APPENDICIES

The event is a debate on the topic of "Good Without God? Is it Possible to Live an Ethical Life Without Religion?" cosponsored by the Humanist Association of Generica and the Generica Christian Fellowship. The Humanist Association of Generica decided in early June 2004 to start organizing a debate.

Debate is being held Saturday Oct 2, 2013, at 7 PM

0 day prior: -Do any last minute media calls
-Arrive at debate venue 2 hours in advance
-Finalize setup
-Enjoy!

1 day prior -Pick up debate programs from printers
-Cover any last minute details with GCF
-Take debater to and from their lecture

2 days prior -Pick up debater from airport

3 days prior: -Final contact with debaters and venue administrators to confirm any last minute details
-Final wave of fliers, handbills, and press releases

1 week prior -Confirm final edits of debate programs
-Contact newspaper and television editors to remind them about the debate

2 weeks prior -Contact debater and confirm schedule and take care of any issues

3 weeks prior -Follow up with reporters and editors
-Do another wave of fliers and handbills

1 month prior: -Have the American Humanist Association send out a flier to all AHA members, and subscribers of *The Humanist*, within a 50 mile radius of the debate
-Do another wave of fliers and handbills
-Agree with moderator on terms

1.5 months prior: -Start publicity for debate. Include:
-Press releases and calls to metro and religion reporters at major area newspapers; editors at neighborhood, alternative weeklies, and campus newspapers; television news reporters; radio news reporters
-Call other local secular and progressive organizations to inform them about the debate and inquire if they will promote it to their members

-Put up fliers and distribute handbills at local venues, including shops, coffeehouses, musical venues, libraries, bookstores, community centers, and on campus

2 months prior: -Confirm venue location on the University of Generica's main campus
-Draw up list of publicity options that both organizations will pursue and spilt up the list
-Start designing programs and advertisements
-Confirm details on lecture that debater will give night before the debate
-Go over list of potential moderators

2.5 months prior -Confirm agreement with debater and confirm any lodging requirements.
-Stay in the loop with GCF so that both sides know who will be debating
-Make sure that debaters have each other's contact information, if they want to contact each other beforehand.
-Search for other speaking opportunities when debater is in Generica

3 months prior -Contact potential debaters, explaining possible topics and dates for the debate

3.5 months prior: -Agree to cosponsor debate with Generica Christian Fellowship (GCF)
-Begin search for appropriate venues

4 months prior: -Contact various local area Christian groups, to find a debate cosponsor and to decide on a topic

2004 ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION
of the
AMERICAN HUMANIST ASSOCIATION

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS:

Pursuant to the provisions of "The General Not for Profit Corporation Act of 1986", the undersigned corporation hereby adopts the following Restated Articles of Incorporation:

The name of the corporation is the **AMERICAN HUMANIST ASSOCIATION**.

The following Restated Articles of Incorporation were adopted on May 9, 2002, by the affirmative vote of all of the Directors in office, at a meeting of the Board of Directors, in accordance with Section 110.15.

ARTICLE I
NAME

The name of the corporation is the **AMERICAN HUMANIST ASSOCIATION**.

ARTICLE II
PURPOSES AND POWERS

The corporation is organized exclusively for educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended. The corporation is an educational philosophic organization in support of the lifestance of Humanism.

No substantial part of the activities of the corporation shall be the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, except as otherwise may be permitted in Section 501(h) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended. The corporation shall not participate in or intervene in (including the publishing or distributing of statements) any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for public office.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of these Articles, the corporation shall not conduct or carry on activities not permitted to be conducted or carried on by any organization exempt under Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, or by any organization, contributions to which are deductible under Section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended.

As a means of accomplishing the foregoing purposes, the corporation shall have all of the general powers set forth in Chapter 102.10 of the Illinois General Not for Profit Corporation Act of 1986 (805 ILCS 105), and as it may hereafter be amended. These

general powers shall be exercised exclusively for the attainment of the purposes of the corporation as set forth in this Article.

ARTICLE III
NO PRIVATE INUREMENT

No part of the net earnings shall inure to the benefit of any director or officer of the corporation or any private individual (except that reasonable compensation may be paid for services rendered to or for the corporation affecting one or more of its purposes). No director or officer of the corporation, or any private individual, shall be entitled to share in the distribution of any of the corporate assets on dissolution of the corporation.

ARTICLE IV
DISSOLUTION PROVISIONS

Upon the dissolution of the corporation, the Board of Directors shall, after paying or making provisions for the payment of all of the liabilities of the corporation, dispose of all of the remaining assets of the corporation exclusively for the purpose(s) of the corporation set forth in Article II hereof in such a manner or to such organization or organizations operated exclusively as charitable organizations which would then qualify under the provisions of Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, as the Board of Directors shall determine. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the District Court of the County in which the principal office of the corporation is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations as said District Court shall determine which are organized exclusively for such designated purpose(s).

ARTICLE V
INITIAL REGISTERED AGENT AND REGISTERED OFFICE

The address of its initial registered office in the State of Illinois is 33 North LaSalle Street, Chicago, Illinois 60602, and the name of its initial registered agent at such address is CSC Prentice-Hall Corporation.

ARTICLE VI
MEMBERS

The corporation shall have members. The designation of membership classes, the manner of election (or appointment) and the qualifications and rights of the members of each class shall be as set forth in the corporation's Bylaws established by the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE VII
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The board of directors shall be elected by and from the membership of the Association, in addition to such ex-officio members as are provided in the Bylaws and appointed by the Board.

ARTICLE VIII
EXEMPTION OF PRIVATE PROPERTY

The private property of the directors, officers, employees and members of the corporation shall be exempt from all debts, obligations and liabilities of the corporation of any kind whatsoever and directors, officers, members and other volunteers of this corporation shall not be personally liable in that capacity, for a claim based upon an act or omission of the person performed in the discharge of the person's duties, except for a breach of the duty of loyalty to the corporation, for acts or omissions not in good faith or which involve intentional misconduct or knowing violation of the law, or for a transaction from which the person derives an improper personal benefit. If Illinois law is hereafter changed to mandate or permit further elimination or limitation of the liability of the corporation's directors, officers, employees, members and volunteers, then the liability of the corporation's directors, officers, employees, members and volunteers shall be eliminated or limited to the full extent then permitted.

ARTICLE IX
AMENDMENTS

These Articles of Incorporation may be amended at any time and from time to time as provided by the Illinois General Not for Profit Corporation Act of 1986, but no amendment shall be adopted which deprives the corporation of tax exempt status under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended.

The duly adopted restated articles of incorporation supersede the original articles of incorporation filed with the Illinois Secretary of State on February 13, 1943, and all amendments to them.

The undersigned Corporation has caused these Articles to be signed by its duly authorized officers, each of whom affirm, under penalties of perjury, that the facts stated herein are true.

Dated this 9th day of May, 2002.

AMERICAN HUMANIST ASSOCIATION

By:_____ By:_____
Edd Doerr, President Lois Lyons, Secretary

BYLAWS OF THE

HUMANIST ASSOCIATION OF GENERICA

Article 1 – Name

The name of this organization is the Humanist Association of Generica, a Membership Chapter of the American Humanist Association, a non-profit educational organization.

Article 2 – Purpose

The purpose of the Humanist Association of Generica is a to promote Humanism, an ethical, democratic, naturalistic, lifestance that challenges irrationality, promotes critical thinking and the separation of church and state. We present a system of Humanist ethics that is a rational alternative to those based in religion and encourage fellowship among thoughtful people in our community.

Article 3 – Membership

Any person shall be eligible for voting membership who is in general accord with the above-stated purpose and a member in good standing with the American Humanist Association.

Article 4 – Government

The association shall be governed by its members and, between meetings by a Board of Directors consisting of a President or Co-Presidents, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Fundraiser, Membership Secretary, Newsletter Editor and one or more other members, all elected by the membership for staggering terms of three years (so one-third of the board is elected each year)

Except as otherwise prescribed in regulations of the membership or of the Board of Directors, the duties of the Board the officers and committees of the association shall be those as prescribed in Robert's Rules of Order.

Article 5 - Meetings

Regular meetings of the membership and the Board shall be held at times and places set by the Board and the membership. Special meetings, social events, public programs, etc., may be scheduled by the Board or by a committee it appoints. A quorum for the transaction of business at Board meetings shall be a majority of elected Board members.

Article 6 – Elections

A nominating committee shall be appointed by the President in September with the election to be held in January. The nominating committee shall nominate (with the consent of the nominee) one or more persons for each place to be filled. Additional nominations may be made before the January elections either at Board meeting or Membership meeting. Members will be notified by mail or phone (in December) of the Elections Meeting in January.

An election committee appointed by the Board or at a Membership meeting shall check, count and report on the election. In the event there is no competition for a specific officer position, there is no need for balloting. Election shall be by vote of a plurality of those voting for an office.

Article 7 – Amendments

Amendments of these bylaws may be proposed by vote of a majority of the Board members or by those present and voting at a Membership meeting, or by petition of 20% of the members of the association. Notice of a proposed amendment shall be given to the paid membership prior to voting by members at regular membership meeting. Enactment of all amendments shall be by vote of a majority of the members voting at a regular membership meeting.

Article 8 – Limitations

No part of the association's resources shall be devoted to influencing the election of anyone to public office. No part of the association's resources shall be used to benefit individual members. No provisions of these bylaws shall be interpreted in any manner to conflict with the laws of our land required to maintain a tax-exempt non-profit organization.

Article 9 – Termination

If and when the association is dissolved or otherwise terminated, its assets shall be distributed to the American Humanist Association, or other non-profit organizations which are tax exempt under section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code.

Mission Statement of the American Humanist Association

Dedicated to serving the needs of its members, the mission of the American Humanist Association is to be a clear, democratic voice for Humanism in the United States, to increase public awareness and acceptance of Humanism, to establish, protect and promote the position of Humanists in our society, and to develop and advance Humanist thought and action.

Mission Statement of The Humanist Association of Central Connecticut

The purposes of the Association shall be:

A. To foster the principles and values of Humanism

B. To serve as a forum and a voice for common concerns and interests of Humanists in Connecticut

C. To conduct programs of interest to Humanists in Connecticut

D. To provide a supportive atmosphere to encourage the free exchange of ideas and information

E. To promote collegiality with others who share Humanist values

F. To implement programs and plans developed and adopted by the Association that are consistent with the purposes articulated above.

Mission Statement of The Humanists of the Gold Coast

The purpose of this organization is its concern for the advancement of human existence on earth through a philosophy that assumes the responsibility of all human beings for their own actions and for conditions in their culture. In applying Humanistic values to daily living we can advance healthy and natural growth for the actualization of each individual and thus improve the quality of life for all.

Mission Statement of The Humanists of Utah

The purpose of this association is to promote ethical, naturalistic, democratic Humanism among our members and in our community.

Mission Statement of The Secular Humanists of the Lowcountry

To increase the visibility and respectability of nontheistic viewpoints within the larger culture, to protect and strengthen secular government as the best guarantee of freedom for all, and to work in coalition with like-minded organizations where joint action is needed to achieve these goals.

Vision Statement of the American Humanist Association:

Guided by reason and our rapidly growing knowledge of the world, by ethics and by compassion, and in the pursuit of fuller, more meaningful lives that add to the greater good of our society and all humanity, the members of the American Humanist Association envision a world of mutual care and concern where the life stance of Humanism is known and respected and where humanity takes responsibility for the world in which we live.

Example Local Group Vision Statement:

We, the Humanist Association of Generica envision our group as the premier local grassroots Humanist organization in our region. We serve the interests of all Humanists and fellow freethinkers who choose to be a part of our organization. We provide space for community, an outlet for activism, and the opportunity for learning and individual growth. Through our engagement with the media and in our communities, we provide a positive image of our lifestance, and serve as leaders for the important issues that our city faces.

Use a Religious Right Poll to Support Gay Marriage

Help stem the tide of fundamentalist homophobia by contacting your representatives at the start of the 2004 session this coming Tuesday, the 20th of January!

The American Family Association (AFA), an ultra-conservative, anti-gay organization has initiated a Gay marriage poll asking people to vote for or against legalization of homosexual marriage or civil union.

Early in the polling the AFA announced plans to present the results of the poll to Congress. Yet, somewhat surprisingly, the results of the AFA poll clearly indicate support of Humanist ideals! Over two-thirds of the tallied votes are in support of gay marriage or civil union. Over half a million votes favored "legalization of homosexual marriage"—as the AFA terms it.

Since we can't count on the AFA to follow through with their promise to report these numbers to Congress, it is imperative that all who support equal rights for gays and lesbians let their representatives know about these results and your feelings on the subject.

While the numbers are already favorable, it can't hurt to add your vote. To vote and to see the latest statistics go to http://www.afa.net/petitions/MarriagePoll.asp

Anti-gay representatives in the House introduced a constitutional amendment to define marriage as exclusively between one man and one woman. On January 13, 2004, Bush administration officials announced that they are planning an extensive, $1.5 billion initiative to promote marriage.

Religious conservatives in the U.S. Congress are stubbornly clinging to their timeworn prejudices, despite recent gains toward the equal rights of gays and lesbians. The U.S. Supreme Court has struck down a Texas statute outlawing consensual sex between members of the same gender, Canada has legalized gay marriage, and the Episcopal Church has approved the election of an openly gay bishop. Domestic partnerships are recognized in New Jersey, Massachusetts, California, and Hawaii. In Vermont, civil unions between same-sex couples are legal.

ACTION
Contact your representatives and share with them the results of this survey adding your own voice as a voting constituent.

Visit: http://www.visi.com/juan/congress/ to contact your representatives in Congress. Just enter your zip code and state of residence in the pertinent boxes. Once you've done that, you can click on the name of your representative and his or her district contact information will be displayed on the screen.

Section VI: Educational Development discusses the need for local Humanist groups to maintain educational programs. The following includes selections from an existing program which has been developed over the years by the Humanists of Houston, an AHA Membership Chapter. Listed are subjects of interest to Humanists, which could serve as the theme for a local group's meetings for six months or a year. It's sometimes difficult to find suitable reading material from which to prepare presentations for meetings. Articles in the *Humanist*, *Essays in the Philosophy of Humanism*, *Philo* and other magazines can also be helpful in this regard. The books listed are by no means the only major references in their areas, but are a starting point.

Principles of Humanism
Foundations of Humanism and the Humanist worldview

Flew, Anthony; (1984) *God, Freedom and Immortality*, Prometheus Books
Kurtz, Paul; (1983) *In Defense of Secular Humanism*, Prometheus Books
Lamont, Corliss; (1949) *The Philosophy of Humanism*, Ungar. 8th Edition
Van Praag, J.P.; (1982) Foundations of Humanism, Prometheus Books
Vaughn, Lewis & Austin Dacey; (2004) *The Case for Humanism: An Introduction*, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers

History of Humanist Thinking
The works of Humanist philosophers and thinkers

Hutcheon, Pat Duffy; (2001) *The Road to Reason*, Canadian Humanist Publications
Hillar, Marian; (2002) *Michael Servetus*, University Press of America
Magee, Bryan; (1998) *The Story of Philosophy*, DK Publishing Inc
Walter, Nicholas; (1998) *Humanism: Finding Meaning in the Word*, Prometheus Books
Wilson, Edwin H.; (1995) *The Genesis of a Humanist Manifesto*, Humanist Press

Humanism and Philosophy
Reason, analysis, science and theory

Dennett, Daniel C.; (1991) *Consciousness Explained*, Little, Brown and Co
Popper, Karl; (1972) *Objective Knowledge: An Evolutionary Approach*, Clarendon Press
Rapoport, Anatol; (1986) *General System Theory*, Abacus Press
Rorty, Richard; (1979) *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, Princeton University Press
Smith, George H.; (1989) *Atheism: The Case Against God*, Prometheus Press

Comparative Religion
Studies of different religions and the comparison between them and Humanism

Armstrong, Karen; (1993) *A History of God*, Ballantine Books

Bruce, Steve; (1996) *Religion in the Modern World: from Cathedrals to Cults*, Oxford University Press
Dewey, John; (1934) *A Common Faith*, Yale University Press
Finke, Roger and Rodney Stark; (1992) *The Churching of America, 1776–1990*, Rutgers University Press
Huxley, Julian; (1957) *Religion without Revelation*, Max Parrish
James, William; (1902) *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, Modern Library edition, 1936
Monroe, Charles R.; (1995) *World Religions*, Prometheus Books

The Humanist Lifestance
Important issues in the lives of individual Humanists

Ellis, Albert and Robert A. Harper; (1998) *A New Guide to Rational Living*, Wilshire Book Co
Ericson, Edward L.; (1988) *The Humanist Way*, Continuum Publishing Co
Kurtz, Paul; (1997) *The Courage to Become*, Praeger
Morain, Lloyd and Mary; (1988) *Humanism as the Next Step*, Humanist Press
Wine, Sherwin T.; (1995) *Staying Sane in a Crazy World*, Center for New Thinking

Ethics
The major ethical systems and the ethical foundations of Humanism

Dewey, John & James Hayden Tufts; (1932) *Ethics*, reprinted in *John Dewey, The Later Works, vol. 7*, edited by Jo Ann Boydston, Southern Illinois University Press
Dobrin, Arthur; (2002) *Ethics for Everyone*, Wiley
Kidder, Rushworth M.; (1995) *How Good People Make Tough Choices*, Simon and Schuster
Mackie, J.L.; (1977) *Ethics: Inventing Right and Wrong*, Penguin
Talyor, Richard; (2000) *Good and Evil*, Prometheus Books

Social Issues
Problems in the contemporary world, sociology and Humanism in management and business

Boston, Robert; (2003) *Why the Religious Right is Wrong about Separation of Church and State*, Prometheus Books, 2nd edition
Bullough, Vern L. and Bonnie Bullough; (1995) *Sexual Attitudes*, Prometheus Books
Friedan, Betty; (1962) *The Feminine Mystique*, Dell Publishing
Grant, Robert; (1999) *American Ethics and the Virtuous Citizen: Basic Principles*, Humanist Press
Hutcheon, Pat Duffy; (1996) *Leaving the Cave*, Canadian Humanist Publications

Economics & Humanism
The major economic theories and the foundations of Humanist economics

Boulding, Kenneth E.; (1978) *Ecodynamics: A New Theory of Societal Evolution*, Sage Publications.
Etzioni, Amitai; (1988) *The Moral Dimension: Toward a New Economics*, The Free Press
Friedman, Milton and Rose; (1979) *Free to Choose*, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich
Galbraith, John Kenneth; (1984) *The Affluent Society*, Houghton Mifflin, 4th Edition
Soros, George; (1998) *The Crisis of Global Capitalism*, Public Affairs

Humanism and Politics
Humanist principles in politics and designs for the future

Fromm, Eric; (1961) *Marx's Concept of Man*, Frederick Ungar
Hoffer, Eric; (1951) *The True Believer* Harper Perennial
Machiavelli, Nicolo; (1532) *The Prince*, Mentor Books Edition 1952
Popper, Karl R.; (1962) *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, Princeton University Press, 5th Edition
Rawls, John; (1972) *A Theory of Justice*, Oxford University Press

Science, Technology & Humanism
The implications of advances in the sciences and technology for the human condition

Bronowski, J.; (1973) *The Ascent of Man*, Little, Brown and Co
Dawkins, Richard; (1976) *The Selfish Gene*, Oxford University Press
Goodenough, Ursula; (1998) *The Sacred Depths of Nature*, Oxford University Press
Sagan, Carl; (1980) *Cosmos*, Random House
Wilson, E.O.; (1998) *Consilience: the Unity of Knowledge*, Alfred A. Knopf

Humanism in the Arts
Humanist themes expressed in music, painting, literature, sculpture.

Clark, Kenneth; (1969) *Civilisation*, Harper & Row
Snow, C.P.; (1964) *The Two Cultures: and a Second Look*, Cambridge University Press

Our Humanist Destiny
Designing a Humanist future

Huxley, Julian; (1960) *Knowledge, Morality and Destiny*, Mentor Book
Hughes, James; (2004) *Cyborg Democracy: Free, Equal and United in a Posthuman World*, Westview Press
Kurzweil, Ray, (1999) *The Age of Spiritual Machines*, Viking

Moravec, Hans P.; (2000) *Robot: Mere Machine to Transcendent Mind*, Oxford University Press

Roco, Mihail C. and William Sims Bainbridge, eds; (2002) *Converging Technologies for Improving Human Performance: Nanotechnology, Biotechnology, Information Technology and Cognitive Science*, National Science Foundation

Abrahamson, Brant; (2001) *History of the Hebrew Bible*, The Teachers' Press
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Barker, Dan; (2002) *Just Pretend: A Freethought Book for Children*, Freedom From Religion Foundation, Inc
Barker, Dan; (1990) *Maybe Yes, Maybe No: A Guide for Young Skeptics*, Prometheus Books
Glossup, Jennifer; (2003) *The Kids Book of World Religions*, Kids Can Press
Hoose, Phillip M. and Hannah Hoose and Debbie Tilley; (1998) *Hey, Little Ant*, Tricycle Pr
Khan, Jemima; (2003) *A Life Like Mine: How Children Live Around the World (Children Just Like Me)* Penguin Books Ltd
Montessori Explorer Series; *In The Beginning…*, NAMTA
Saville, David; (1991) *Evolution of the World (Revolving picture book)*, Hyperion Books for Children
Strong, Theda K.; (1981) *World Religions Stories for Young People*, The Religious Education Committee, American Ethical Union

Media Advisory

For More Information Contact:
American Humanist Association
202/238-9088 // aha@americanhumanist.org

Darwin Day Celebration

What: The Washington Area Secular Humanists (WASH) and the American Humanist Association (AHA) invite you to celebrate the life and work of evolutionary scientist Charles Darwin. Enhance your understanding of the evolutionary sciences, explore your own interests in science, and discover the impact Darwin's and others' work continues to have on humanity. The day will include short talks by the AHA and WASH presidents, and executive director of the AHA, as well as a statement provided by distinguished philosopher of science Professor Daniel Dennett (author of Darwin's Dangerous Idea), prizes for younger attendees, refreshments, and a possible visit by a Darwin impersonator.

For More Information

www.americanhumanist.org

www.darwinday.org

www.wash.org

Where: Chevy Chase Community Center, 5601 Connecticut Avenue NW, Washington, D.C. 20015 (North of Van Ness Metro Station)

When: Saturday, February 14, 2004 from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Who: Stuart Jordan, president of WASH, Mel Lipman, president of the AHA, and Tony Hileman, executive director of the AHA.

Why: The Darwin Day Program, cosponsored by the AHA and WASH, champions science in conjunction with the arts to celebrate the role of science in the arts and humanities, and "humanizing" science, thereby showing how science serves as a tool in all realms of life, and is a process in which we all participate.

AN INTERNATIONAL CELEBRATION OF SCIENCE AND HUMANITY

Humanism is a progressive philosophy of life that, without supernaturalism, affirms our ability and responsibility to lead ethical lives of personal fulfillment that aspire to the greater good of humanity.

For Immediate Release
February 4, 2004

Contact: Roy Speckhardt
202/238-9088

Humanists Applaud Massachusetts Ruling Favoring Same-Sex Marriage

(Washington, D.C.) “The Massachusetts high court decision supporting same-sex marriage, indicates a major step forward in the history of American marriage law,” states American Humanist Association (AHA) President Mel Lipman. “The Massachusetts Supreme Court makes clear that denying marriage to same-sex couples is inconsistent with individual liberty and freedom from government intrusion.”

Lipman continued, “As the courts are beginning to realize, there's no room for the creation of second-class citizens in this country. This ruling is a step forward, but more steps are needed. We mustn't tolerate the withholding of equal rights on the basis of sexual orientation.” In deciding that civil unions weren't an adequate alternative to equal consideration, the court did not fail to see the analogy of this case *to Brown v. Board of Education*. “Separate, but not equal, is a falsehood any rational person can recognize,” emphasizes Lipman.

Today’s decision reflected AHA board member and Harvard Humanist Chaplain, Tom Ferrick’s statement that, “This ruling will not harm the lives of anyone who is not gay, but will be a great benefit to those who are and want full citizenship in our Commonwealth.” Writing the opinion, Chief Justice Margaret Marshall said, “The department has offered no evidence that forbidding marriage to people of the same-sex will increase the number of couples choosing to enter into opposite-sex marriages in order to have and raise children. There is thus no rational relationship between the marriage statute and the Commonwealth's proffered goal of protecting the “optimal” child rearing unit… It cannot be rational under our laws, and indeed it is not permitted, to penalize children by depriving them of State benefits because the State disapproves of their parents' sexual orientation.”

AHA Executive Director Tony Hileman adds, “We agree with the court’s affirmation that the institution of marriage is secular, not sacramental. Regardless of religious precepts, marriage conveys legal benefits that cannot be constitutionally bounded by church decrees.

“The AHA has long pushed for equal marriage laws everywhere and we won’t stop until every state respects the rights of all Americans. As most of us know instinctively, sexual orientation has no bearing on depth of commitment, ability to raise children, or overall family stability. Lesbian and gay couples deserve equal rights—not unenlightened legislation that tries to tie our society to blind tradition,” concludes Hileman.

# # #

The American Humanist Association (www.americanhumanist.org) is the oldest and largest Humanist organization in the nation. The AHA is dedicated to ensuring a voice for

those with a positive nontheistic outlook, based on reason and experience, which embraces all of humanity.

The Washington Times

Letter to the Editor, published Monday, December 22, 2003

Joyce Howard Price's bias shined through in “Nativity scenes causes uproar.” To take “Christ out of Christmas” is not the goal of those who defend the Constitution and the principle of church-state separation. The goal is for every citizen who enters a taxpayer-funded building to know —beyond a shadow of a doubt — that the state exists to serve all citizens, regardless of religious belief.

Every holiday season, some are willing to brush aside the First Amendment in their eagerness to inappropriately insert sectarian faith into public schools and spaces. The First Amendment does not elevate one religion above all others, but rather places all religions on a par with one another, and recognizes the equality of religion and non-religion. If we dismissed concerns over displaying a Nativity scene in an elementary school, we would open the door to topping government buildings with crosses or stars of David or statues of Buddha, depending on the whims of those with authority over the premises.

Christians do not need governmental help to keep Christ in Christmas, Jews do not need governmental support for their celebration of the Hanukkah miracle and pagans do not need governmental support for their winter rituals. The winter solstice should be a holiday season for all citizens to enjoy in their own way, and none should be made to feel as outsiders by unconstitutional sectarian governmental endorsements.

MEL LIPMAN
President
American Humanist Association
Las Vegas

Op-Ed, published Sunday, November 2, 2003

Bush's Hypocrisy Shines

By Tony Hileman

President Bush's statements favoring America's constitutional rights and freedoms sharply contrast with his actions to preserve them. While sometimes there simply is no action, often the initiatives of his administration serve to undermine rather than preserve our unalienable rights. Such inconsistencies underscore America's need for public policies that protect the nation's liberty, health, and welfare.

In a news conference on Tuesday, October 28 George W. Bush stated, "In America, we love the fact that we are a society in which people can pray openly or not pray at all for that matter." It's hypocritical for Bush to make such a statement when at the same time his administration has not hesitated to push for changes that significantly violate the principle of church-state separation.

The Bush administration is promoting taxpayer-funded vouchers that redirect public funds to sectarian private schools. Even over the objections of Congress, Bush is enacting his faith-based initiatives that divert public dollars to religious charities, ignore civil rights protections, and allow proselytizing. The administration has also bolstered the annual presidential declaration of a National Day of Prayer, going so far as to suggest the prayer Americans should use. All these measures open the door for inappropriate governmental pressure to participate in religious activities—especially for those who prefer a different prayer, would rather pray privately or who'd rather not pray at all.

Bush makes clear through his actions that he hasn't seen the light about what it means to have true religious freedom—that the only way to enjoy the full freedom of your own religion is to be fully free from impositions of another's religion.

Referring to the war on terrorism, Bush explicitly declared, "Ours is a war not against a religion, not against the Muslim faith. But ours is a war against individuals who absolutely hate what America stands for." Yet, Bush allowed Army Lieutenant General William G. "Jerry" Boykin's intolerant religious rhetoric to stand without reprimand.

Boykin's inflammatory comments to Muslims that his God was bigger than theirs, and that his was real and theirs just an idol, inflamed tensions in the Middle East and placed American troops abroad in danger. Boykin also said George W. Bush is a president "appointed by God" and specifically called the enemy "Satan" rather than the Bush

administration's declared enemies, Saddam Hussein or Osama Bin Laden. While Bush publicly declared that Boykin's comments about Muslims don't reflect his point of view, he failed to dismiss, reassign, or even reprimand him.

Bush has also allowed the Federal Bureau of Investigation to seek lists of law-abiding American Muslims. This doesn't square with his platitudes about Muslim friendship. What's more, the FBI acted on instructions to count all mosques in an area and use that number to determine their "quota" for a region's anti-terror investigations.

Perhaps Bush's biggest blind spot is in the area of scientific research, its interpretation, and its applications. The Government Reform Committee, at the request of Rep. Henry A. Waxman, assessed whether scientific integrity has been compromised to further an ideological and political agenda. The report shows that the administration has obstructed the development of science-based policies and research on HIV/AIDS among the gay population, despite Bush's statement that the international efforts to fight HIV/AIDS should be concentrated on "programs that work, proven best practices." Both at home and abroad Bush is pushing relentlessly for ineffective abstinence-only programs that threaten the lives of millions.

Scientific information from the Bush administration is also becoming suspect. The National Cancer Institute website was changed to incorrectly tie abortion to an increased risk for breast cancer. The Center for Disease Control's website quietly removed information verifying the effectiveness of condoms. Interior Secretary Gale Norton failed to mention government scientists' research which found that oil drilling in the Far North might harm wildlife. This intentional withholding of pertinent, accurate information is unconscionable in an open society. What we don't know can and will hurt us.

Is Bush really someone interested in objective evidence? Or is he more interested in imposing his "revealed truth" on America? The president needs to stop living in the fog and friction of hypocrisy and conform his behavior to his high-minded rhetoric—which is much more humanistic that his actions.

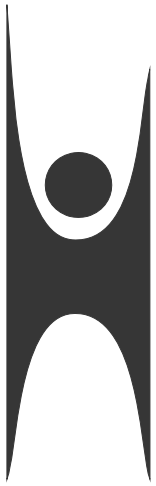
Tony Hileman Executive Director American Humanist Association

Washington, DC, USA

ADDENDA

ADDENDUM I

Leadership Structure



Democracy, consensus building, and an open leadership structure work best to ensure the long-term viability of your group.

Democracy and Taking Ownership

Admittedly, democracy can be frustrating. Democracy can slow down the decision-making process, and sometimes result in less than optimal decisions. However, democracy is still the best model for a local group. Your group can only be successful if it takes in multiple points of view, has leadership that is accountable to its members, and is transparent in its decision making process.

You want to create a group of which all members feel a part, and where they feel welcome. It's important to create a sense of ownership among members, which ensures their continued commitment and involvement. When members pay dues, have the chance to vote, are aware of the decisions being made and can voice their opinion about issues facing the group, then they know that they are tangibly involved with organizational matters and are aware the group is partly theirs. This is a strong feeling that encourages members to stay active and involved.

Consensus Building

Letting your members have their say is an important part of keeping your group strong. If you want to go a step further, your group can focus on consensus building when making some decisions. This is a collaborative decision making process, where all interested parties work together to come to one agreeable solution. This is unlike a straight vote, where majority rules. Consensus building means working together, and searching for a solution where all sides gain something, and no one is totally left out.

Consensus building doesn't need to be used for every decision your group makes, nor should it be used when you need to make a snap decision. However, it is a useful technique that can augment the democratic process, and enhances the feeling of ownership for group members.

Open Leadership

If your group is operating in a democratic matter, many of the elements of open leadership already exist. Members and activists need to feel that they're a part of the group and that the group in belongs to them. Part of this comes from having an open leadership structure, which can translate into two elements:

- Activists and members knowing about the decisions being made, and why they are being made—members should not be kept in the dark about most issues relating to the group's operation.
- Allowing for constructive criticism of the leadership.

Unless you are discussing particularly sensitive matters at a board meeting, your group should also consider holding open board meetings, where any member can attend. This is a way for members to stay informed and knowledgeable about the activities of the group and what the leadership is focused on.

Distribute Leadership Responsibilities

Unless your group is very small, it's important not to have a lot of the responsibilities for the group rest with one person. Though it may seem like a boon for your group to have someone with a strong "take charge and get things done" mentality, it may eventually backfire.

In terms of intensity and focus, having one person responsible for everything can quickly lead to burnout. Though the person may have willingly taken on many duties, she or he may soon become buried under responsibilities, and yet hesitant to call for help. The responsibilities may also turn out to be less exciting than hoped, and become viewed as a pile of drudgework. Either of these situations can lead to the person suddenly dropping from leadership, or making unexpected decisions. Both can be hazardous to your group.

If the sole leader of your group suddenly exits the scene, the other members may not have any idea what decisions have been made and what needs to be done. If everyone has been looking to one person as the "spark plug," and if the person leaves, others may lose interest. Also, valuable materials and membership contact information could be lost.

In addition to all of this, remember that a group's leadership needs to accept multiple ideas from members. No one has a monopoly on good ideas, and multiple views should be heard throughout the decision making process. Having one strong leader can shut out other voices. Remember that new people bring in fresh ideas and new perspectives on issues facing the group.

If your organization is already in a situation where one person has a large share of responsibilities, it's wise to begin weaning yourself off this system. If you do not have leaders who play various roles, you should restructure. The following are general overviews, not specific job descriptions, of the roles of the board of directors, which consists of a president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, fundraiser, membership secretary and newsletter editor. The size of the group plays a role in determining the responsibilities of the board of directors. Among smaller groups, some of these positions can be combined and be performed by one person. Even in a small group, where people may not feel that there is a need for such a formal structure, clearly defining the roles and tasks of leaders will ensure smooth functioning.

President

-Is the head of the board of directors and is the group's primary officer. If there's no executive director for the group, the president is then responsible for the day-to-day activities of the group.
-Oversees the group, distributes tasks among volunteers and ensures that the decisions made by the board of directors are being implemented.
-Runs board meetings as well as regular membership meetings.
-Acts as the primary spokesperson for the group.

Vice President

-Acts as the head of the board of directors when the president is not able to perform the necessary duties.
-Stays as informed as the president in all affairs of the local group.
-Works closely with committee heads on their day-to-day operations.
-Takes on special tasks and duties as defined by the president.

Secretary

-Maintains the core documents of the group (see Section III: Organizational Issues) and other papers necessary for the running of the group. This includes records of speakers, meetings and events.
-Ensures that the bylaws are being followed in group operations.

Treasurer

-Responsible for the funds of the group. This includes receiving and (if necessary) providing receipts for membership dues and other donations, depositing income into the group's back account, paying off bills and any debts, and maintaining records of funds status.
-Keeps the rest of the board of directors up to date on the group's financial status.

Fundraiser

-Works with the rest of the board of directors to identify potential major donors within the group, or through personal or professional social networks
-Identifies local and national grant opportunities that the group could pursue.
-Works to instruct the board and other fundraisers the proper procedures in asking and thanking people for donations

Membership Secretary

-Maintains the membership list of the group, and works with the treasurer to ensure that membership dues are promptly deposited.
-Identifies, approaches and welcomes newcomers attending meetings and smaller events.
-Works with the board of directors to implement techniques to increase membership numbers.

Newsletter Editor

-Oversees the regular production of the group's newsletter.
-Solicits (from the board of directors and members) content for future issues of the newsletter.
-Ensures the distribution of the newsletter to members and other interested people and organizations.

Various committees

Sometimes, developing a committee is the safest way to ensure that something never gets done, but it can focus the energies of those interested and/or knowledgeable about a subject. You can also reach outside your leadership for people who are interested.

Committees can exist on an ad-hoc basis (such as creating a science education committee in order to challenge an attempt to introduce intelligent design into science classes) or they can be used to assist board members, such as having a newsletter committee, fundraising team, program committee or publicity committee.

With the exception of the membership secretary and newsletter editor, the other four positions should be democratically elected. These six, along with maybe one or two more at-large members, should be your board of directors, which is the core leadership of your group.

Identify Emerging Leaders

Finding new and emerging leaders should always be a priority. Your group's leadership should always be on the lookout for members who might make good volunteers or activists, and eventually, good leaders. Section IV: Issue Advocacy discusses how to get members more involved in your group.

Once your have these volunteers and activists assigned to tasks, this is the potential pool from where leaders may arise. You now have the chance to observe these potential leaders.

Identifying leaders is more an art than a science. There are several traits and characteristics that make for good leadership skills, which you should keep in mind:

- Leaders are visionary: Leaders should have an understanding about where the group is, but more importantly, where the group should be in the future.
- Leaders are experienced: Leaders should be people who have spent some time in various positions, or have done volunteer duties for the group. This not only raises legitimacy within the group, but the leader also has a better understanding of what it takes to perform assigned tasks.
- Leaders are action-oriented: Leaders should be people who are willing to do what it takes in order to get the job done, and can motivate others to do the same.
- Leaders are empathetic: Leaders shouldn't only be focused on the logistical details of the group, but must also keep an eye out on the emotional well-being of volunteers, activists and members.
- Leaders are communicators: Leaders should be good networkers inside and outside the group. Leaders should work to build trusting relationships within the group, and make useful professional contacts outside the group.
- Leaders are curious and willing to learn: Leaders should always ask questions, always seek new information, always listen to what others have to say.
- Leaders are not figureheads: Your group shouldn't have leaders who are quick to embrace titles, but are unwilling to assume the responsibilities that come with them.

People that have these characteristics have good potential to move into leadership positions at some point. Current leaders should do what they can to prepare them for that task.

ADDENDUM II

The Chapter Assembly

Introduction to the Chapter Assembly

One of the AHA's primary focuses involves starting and supporting local Humanist groups. Historically, Chapters were the mainstay of the AHA field program. The Chapter Assembly (CA), a coming together of Chapters, was organized with a separate incorporation from the AHA in 1982. The AHA Board elects members of the Executive Committee of the CA, though committee members elect their own officers.

A new charter for the CA was adopted in 2002, establishing the CA as an auxiliary of the AHA to serve as the representative organization of the Chapters to the AHA (see the end of the Addendum for a complete copy of the charter).

The CA also supports the Committee of Trustees for the Fund for Chapter Expansion. This Fund for Chapter Expansion, as described in Section VII: Fundraising, awards grants to AHA Chapters which either expand/improve an existing program, or experiment with a new type of program, activity or procedure.

The CA holds a yearly business meeting in conjunction with the AHA annual conference, in addition to sponsoring one or more sessions that focus on the local groups. Each Chapter of the AHA is entitled to one voting delegate at the yearly business meeting. The AHA publishes a newsletter called *Grass Roots News* on behalf of CA, primarily for local group leaders.

Policy Goals of the CA, as Approved by the AHA's Board of Directors

The AHA encourages local organizations and communities to which its members can belong to learn and grow. In this way the local communities and the national movement can develop together. Our aim is the search for the best way for humans to live. Our method of search is to promote an open society in which good ideas can originate at either headquarters or at the grass roots level and differences can be resolved by rational discourse and the empirical method. The AHA and its chapters have a comprehensive program of activities to assist the expansion of chapters in every major town and city in the country. Each Chapter should serve as a microcosm of the whole movement.

This program has learned from religious organizations the benefits they accord to their members: shared principles and values, shared experience and literature, psychological support and rites of passage, and the numerous internal and outreach services and charities. But the Humanist movement also learns much from secular institutions such as universities. We aim to synthesize what has been learned in the various disciplines such as philosophy, psychology, management, humanities and social sciences. We also learn from the administration of universities and also of professional societies. The following is a list of the services that should feature as parts of this program:

Educational Services: Would provide literature (books, pamphlets, tapes and videos) on every aspect of Humanist living, including Wedding and Funeral Services. To some extent this is provided by the Humanist Bookstore, but it needs to be supplemented by

educational materials and supplies for educational programs, book clubs and training sessions for members and leaders. The Humanist Institute provides such classes but we need to make them available all over the country. We could probably support series of visiting lecturers or speakers bureaus whereby inspiring and knowledgeable speakers could visit smaller chapters on a regular basis. The larger Chapters could use year-long "Sunday School" programs for the moral education of children.

Community Services: Our local Chapters and organizations should provide community support to their members. We must respond to the needs of members at various stages of life from University students to residents of old age homes. Ideally every Chapter should have its own counselor or professional leader. Eventually we may need a fund invested on a national basis to support these people, but until that time we could get started by sharing the services of celebrants and leaders among numbers of Chapters. The production of publications on various aspects of the Humanist Lifestance could in itself be a useful start.

Publications: *Grass Roots News* serves as the voice of the Chapters and should help to disseminate ideas useful for Chapter growth. Each Chapter should be encouraged to submit regular reports on its activities for publication in *GRN* or *Free Mind*. In addition there is a need for a scholarly publication where members can publish original philosophical and scientific papers which advance the cause of Humanism. Such a publication could serve as a "nursery" for authors for *The Humanist* which perforce has to demand high journalistic standards. The AHA head office could help with the production of *GRN*.

Chapter Administration: The problems of administering a small Chapter can be daunting so that advice on how to conduct a Chapter can be very useful. The AHA Chapter Handbook needs to be updated. Sample programs for a year's activities would be useful. Chapters need instruction on effective marketing and advertising, including such mundane matters as stating web pages, accounting and income tax. A Chapter may start by renting space but as it grows there comes the issue of buying a building and the organization of a development fund and raising money.

Outreach: Chapters need help with ideas and materials for charitable, civic and political outreach. Advice on communicating with the press and television would be very welcome at Chapter level. In certain cities Humanists may seek strategic alliances with Ethical communities or Freethought groups, but such coalitions can have their problems and need to be handled on a case by case basis.

Implementation: The level of financing required to support all these ideas would probably be beyond our means at the present time, but every one of them could be started modestly and the budgets they require could be developed over the years. We already have a Fund for Chapter Expansion which finances special projects proposed by chapters. The more routine services which should regularly be a part of the growth of every Chapter could be supported through the Chapter Assembly and the AHA itself. It is therefore proposed that Chapter Assembly, with the approval of the AHA Board, try to initiate action under all the above headings, in concert with the AHA national office, as far as is practical.

Charter of the Chapter Assembly

This Charter was duly adopted in substitution of all previous Charters of the *Chapter Assembly* (CA) by the Board of Directors of the *American Humanist Association* (AHA), on the 9th day of May 2002, and the CA on the 10th day of May 2002, both meeting in Houston, Texas.

PURPOSE

The AHA is a philosophical non-profit corporation, exempt from taxation under provisions of Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code, that, among other things, charters and supports local community groups (Chapters). This Charter establishes the CA as an auxiliary of the AHA to promote ethical, democratic Humanism among its Chapters, and to serve as the representative to the AHA of such Chapters.

ACTIVITIES

The primary responsibilities of the CA are:

A. To advise the AHA Board of Directors on matters of interest and concern to the member Chapters of the CA.

B. To assist the AHA with communication with its Chapters.

C. To facilitate communication between the Chapters themselves.

D. To maintain the Fund for Chapter Expansion for the betterment of Chapters and to administer its grants through a Committee of Trustees.

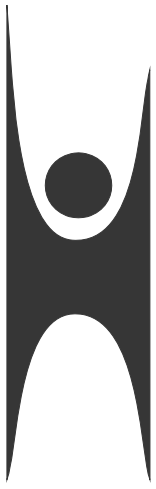
E. To conduct other activities and to fulfill other responsibilities as the Boards of Directors of the CA and AHA may together determine.

AMENDMENTS

This charter may be amended by the Board of Directors of the AHA.

ADDENDUM III

The AHA Grassroots Program



AFFILIATES

Affiliates of the AHA are fully independent local organizations who agree with the mission of the AHA and are willing to work with the AHA. The American Humanist Association's affiliate program is part of our effort to establish, protect and promote the position of Humanists in our society.

Affiliates, many of whom are primarily associated with other national organizations, are local groups who agree with the mission of the AHA while maintaining a clear and separate identity. Affiliates receive benefits from the AHA, with a minimal amount of commitment. Affiliating with the AHA is a good first step for some local groups to gain exposure to the wider Humanist community.

Benefits received by Affiliates:

- Affiliates' contact information will be publicized on the AHA's website, www.americanhumanist.org, (which currently receives 400,000 hits a month), on official documents, at the national conference, and to the general AHA membership.
- Affiliates will receive bimonthly field action packets. These field action packets contain an updated Affiliate/Chapter list, the most recent copy of *The Humanist*, the most recent copy of *Free Mind*, action items local groups may wish to pursue, occasional press releases and press clippings, and any other current information from which the AHA feels the local group can benefit.
- Affiliates will have low-cost and sometimes free access to resources. This includes AHA pamphlets, magazines and books. The AHA is also happy to provide speakers; however, this would require some form of cost sharing with the Affiliate.
- Affiliates can contact the AHA's national office to speak with the experienced, professional staff, which they would normally not be able to afford or otherwise have access to.
- Affiliates will receive action alerts and press releases from the AHA's national office, which will also be made available for Affiliate contacts and Affiliate newsletter editors in a format for easy manipulation and reproduction.
- Affiliates can also receive assistance from the AHA's national office in coordinating major public events.

Responsibilities:

- Affiliates provide proof that the governing body of the group agrees to be affiliated.
- Affiliates provide adequate contact information for the group, but not for its individual members. We do not require your mailing list.
- Affiliates openly identify themselves as "affiliated" with the AHA.
- Affiliates are encouraged to distribute AHA provided materials and notices to members when appropriate and convenient.

- Affiliates are encouraged to contact the AHA’s national office about local issues and significant events that may be of interest to the wider Humanist community, as well as guide the AHA in providing support in this area.

CHAPTERS

Chapters of the AHA are independent but connected local organizations that accept and support the mission of the AHA and are willing to coordinate activities.

Being a Chapter of the AHA involves a close level of relationship. Chapters are in substantial agreement with the AHA's policies, goals and mission. Being a part of the structure of the AHA, Chapters receive preference when it comes to the allocation of resources. The AHA and its Chapters work together, which allows for a clear sense of identification and a chance for unity of action, all toward the goal of advancing Humanism.

Benefits received by Chapters:

- Chapters are able to join the AHA's Chapter Assembly. The Chapter Assembly is an organization within the AHA run by Chapter leaders that exists to serve as a forum to address Chapter issues, as well as ensure that the Chapters have a voice within the AHA.
- Chapters can have the opportunity to apply for grants – ranging from $300 to $2,500 – from the AHA's Chapter Assembly
- The AHA will make possible Chapter membership drive mailings to AHA members in the Chapter's surrounding area. The AHA national staff may assist in the mailing if needed.
- The AHA can help publicize major Chapter events by mailing a flyer or letter to current national and local group members in the area.
- The AHA can additionally help publicize major public events by distributing a Chapter press release to its database of press contacts in the local media market.
- The AHA can also assist with developing press releases and speeches for public events.
- The AHA can provide Chapters with a non-profit tax exemption. Chapters can use this designation to accept tax-deductible donations and to apply for a sales tax exemption in their state.

Chapters also have the same basic benefits Affiliates receive, but may receive priority in the allocation of these resources:

- Chapters' contact information will be publicized on the AHA's website (which currently receives 400,000 hits a month), on official documents, at the national conference, and to the general AHA membership.
- Chapters will receive bimonthly field action packets. These field action packets will usually contain a updated Affiliate/Chapter list, the most recent copy of *The Humanist,* the most recent copy of *Free Mind*, action items local groups may wish to pursue, occasional press releases and press clippings, and any other current information the AHA feels that the local group can benefit from.
- Chapters will have low-cost and usually free access to resources. This includes AHA pamphlets, magazines and books. The AHA is also happy to provide

speakers; however, this would require some form of cost sharing with the Chartered Chapter.

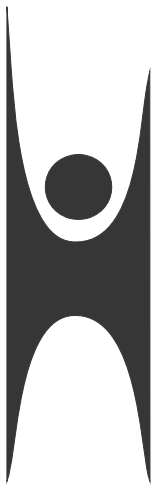
- Chapters can contact the AHA's national office to speak to the experienced, professional staff, which they would not normally be able to afford or otherwise have access to.
- Chapters will receive action alerts and press releases from the AHA's national office, which will also be made available for local group contacts and newsletter editors in a format for easy manipulation and reproduction.
- Chapters can also receive assistance from the AHA's national office in coordinating major public events.

Chapter Responsibilities:

- Chapters are "self-governing within a framework of democratic organizations and procedures" consistent with the AHA's bylaws.
- Chapters must select a name that contains as its only philosophic or lifestance identification the word Humanist(s) or Humanism unmodified. Exceptions to the above will be considered for established groups whose names contain additional identifications so long as the name contains Humanist(s) or Humanism.
- Chapter application includes the signatures of five AHA members who are in good standing.
- Chapters provide contact information for the person who the AHA should address correspondence to, as well as for listing in AHA publications.
- Chapters must promptly and annually send a list of names and addresses of the officers and members to the AHA's national office.
- Chapters cannot work on behalf of a political candidate or party, or engage in other activities that are illegal for 501(c)3 non-profits.
- Chapters send newsletters, bulletins or meeting announcements and public articles to the AHA's national office.

ADDENDUM IV

How to Start a Local Group



Introduction

The American Humanist Association is the nation's oldest and largest Humanist organization. Founded in 1941, the AHA – publisher of *The Humanist* magazine – currently has over 100 Membership Chapters, Chartered Chapters and Affiliates in 39 states and the District of Columbia. Based in Washington D.C., the AHA serves as a powerful voice for Humanism. One of the primary focuses of the AHA is to form and sustain local Humanist groups.

In order to further spread the Humanist lifestance, the AHA realizes that a presence in the nation's capital is only part of the solution. Much of the responsibility for explaining Humanism to the majority of Americans – who have either never heard of Humanism or have misinformed impressions about it – lies with Humanists on a local level.

In communities across the nation, Humanists sometimes are forced to bear the burden of explaining and defending our lifestance to an antagonistic public. In addition to speaking out as individuals, one of the best ways to create change in a community is to join an existing Humanist group, or help create a new one. A grassroots community that can work as activists, think as intellectuals and live as friends has real potential to move us toward a humanistic future.

Starting A Local Group

Initiating the Future

It is important to first check with the AHA's national office to see if there is already a group in your area. You can do this either by calling the AHA at 800/837-3792, emailing us at field@americanhumanist.org or visiting the section of our website dealing with groups at http://www.americanhumanist.org/chapters. If a group does not exist, be sure to ask if there are people in your area who have expressed interest in forming a group.

For local groups to be successful, it usually involves a core of committed volunteers. So the first step is to locate them. There are several ways this can be achieved.

- Attend meetings of groups and organizations that hold beliefs similar to ones held by Humanists. This would include, but not be limited to Unitarian Universalist congregations, Ethical Culture societies, meetings of atheists, agnostics, skeptics, and other types of freethinkers. Find out through the leadership of these organizations, or in interaction with members, if there is or has been interest in forming a Humanist group. See if it is possible to post a flier (Startup Guide Appendix A) or leave one on a literature table.
    - Note: You can locate local Unitarian Universalist congregations online at http://www.uua.org/CONG/index.php. Ethical Culture societies can be found at http://www.aeu.org/society.html. Atheist groups can be found at http://www.atheistalliance.org/aai/members.html and at http://www.atheists.org/state.html

- Also post/leave fliers (with permission) in bookstores, community centers, libraries, coffee houses, other cultural locales and nearby college campuses.
- Attend meetings of atheist, Humanist and freethought groups that are a distance away from your home. Not only will you begin to gain an understanding of how local groups work, you may find that there are Humanists in these groups that live close to you, but only have the option to attend more distant meetings.
- In a similar vein, you should go to the "AHA Chapters" link on our website and look up Chapter leaders from your state or region. They are usually more than willing to help a fledging new group get off the ground, and you can gain many insights into the mechanics of starting a new group by talking with them. Since face-to-face conversations produce a far greater yield, consider driving to meet with a Chapter leader.
- Place a small ad in the religion section of the local newspaper. Or place ads in your city's alternative paper. Both of these require that you call your local newspaper, and inquire about cost and dimensions to place a small ad. Some newspapers, once you provide the text, may even create the ad for you. Newspapers and magazines have varying resources available, so be sure to utilize them. The AHA also has sample ads that can be used. (See Startup Guide Appendix B)
- *Be sure to ask those who are interested, if they know of others who may be interested.* Be sure to get the contact information – name, address, phone and email – for these prospects. Follow up on this information with a friendly invitation – via email, letter, phone, or meeting. When choosing a method of contact, remember, the more personal the contact, the better the results.

Understandably, it can be intimidating to go to a meeting of strangers for the first time, and work up the nerve to introduce yourself and explain that you are looking for people to help form a Humanist group. However, most of the groups you will approach will more than likely be sympathetic. So even if they're not personally interested in working to form a Humanist group, they may provide leads for others who are, which is also valuable.

Personal contact is also one of the best ways to approach people. In order to reach large numbers of people at one time, it is of course necessary to leave fliers and place ads. However, a personal touch is always the optimal choice. Going to meetings of like-minded groups and putting a name, face and story behind your efforts to start a Humanist group will more likely get people involved.

Finding and Organizing

In all of the above situations, people who want to know more about your plans will approach you, or you will need to approach others about your desire to start a local Humanist group. Not only must you maintain a basic level of organization to keep all of your contacts straight, you need spark the interest of potential members.

If you go to a UU congregation and want to approach people about staring a group, or are getting responses to your fliers, are you prepared? Do you know what you want to say? Can you quickly explain what you envision the purpose of a group to be? Can you list the

help you need from volunteers? It is important to take some prep time before going to meetings or have a quick "spiel" ready for the phone. As an example, in response to "Why do you want to form a Humanist group in the area?" you could say:

> "I have lots of reasons I want to get a group going. First, I want to be able to give Humanists a place to meet and interact with each other. There are so few of us that I think it's healthy for us to meet and be able to talk. We need to opportunity to share our concerns with each other and whatnot. Another reason is that I've noticed the religious right is becoming stronger in the area. We need lots of types of people to respond to it, and I think it's a good idea if there is a specific Humanist response to what they're trying to do."

Preparing yourself to answer these types of question will show that you are prepared, and have given serious thought to the matter. Being able to articulate your reasons will go a long way to securing interest in your group.

If you have a list of suggested people to contact, you may also want to think up a short blurb for when you meet, talk with them on the phone, or correspond with them via email. The basics of this would be the same as the above example, but you might need to preface it a bit.

> "Hello. This is Corliss Lamont and I'm getting in touch with you because I'm interested in starting a Humanist group in the area and so-and-so suggested that I get in touch with you about it. Do you think that you might be interested in doing something with a group that focuses on furthering Humanism at the local level?"

So now, you finally have a small group of people who are interested. It is important to keep a master list of these people. A list would include names, contact information (mailing address, phone number, email address) and what the person might be willing to do for the group. The strongest assets of any Humanist group are its members and it's no different for a fledging Humanist group. A list helps maintain order during the formative phases of group development. It can also ensure that all the basic information about the group isn't in the head of only one person.

Preparing and Planning

Once you have that core group of volunteers, it is a good idea to hold small meetings to hash out some of the details about the group**.** For the initial meetings, it might be better to use a bookstore, coffee shop, or other public venue. This is a time to get your bearings and work with others to flush out some of the ideas and reasons for the existence of the group. Though you probably have some reasons for why you want to start a Humanist group, it is also vital to hear the views of others. They may be able to provide alternative views that will help strengthen the group in the long term. It is also a time to ask some questions that will be vital to the group's success. These include:

- What is the reason for forming a new group?
- What do people want to see the group do? Activism, social events, support network, educational opportunities, service opportunities and philosophical discussion are just a few of the activities a Humanist group can engage in.
- What sort of leadership structure should there be? Countless examples have shown that democratically oriented leadership structures are usually the most successful.

Once the core group of volunteers decides on these issues – and in order to maintain the momentum that has been created – this is a good time to hold a first official meeting that is open to the public. Even though your core group may already have met on numerous occasions, a "coming out" meeting is a great way to attract new participants, as well as the media.

It might also be a good idea to go back to the places in which you had previous placed fliers, and to leave a new flier, announcing the first meeting of the group. (See Startup Guide Appendix C) Be sure to contact the AHA national office when you decide to have your first public meeting. We might be able to provide speakers, publicity, and other support.

In the Beginning

This first meeting is important. In addition to getting to know your fellow Humanists and freethinkers, it is a time to have an open discussion about what participants want to get out of the group. Some basic questions include:

- Why are people interested in joining?
- What do people want to get out of it?
- How often does the group want to meet?

These are questions that should be discussed by everybody. However, it is important to remember that, even though it is an open discussion, someone should still remain in charge to facilitate and make sure the conversation flows forward. It is helpful for the first meeting, to have one person with an agenda (see Startup Guide Appendix D) leads the meeting and makes sure that all the important points are covered.

Connecting with the American Humanist Association

Another vitally important issue to discuss is what sort of relationship the group wants to have with the AHA. A working relationship between the AHA and local groups is beneficial for both parties. The AHA is always excited about helping to start local Humanist groups, and works hard to support and sustain them. Our combined years of experience with local groups, along with many of our resources that we can usually provide for free, or at cost, can help our groups flourish. We hope that the relationship that is built between local group leaders and AHA field staff is one that will also translate into a willingness to establish a formal relationship between the two organizations.

There are three types of relationships a local group can engage in with the AHA. A local group can become an Affiliate, a Chartered Chapter or a Membership Chapter. A brief overview follows. Let us know at the national office which type of relationship you are interested in pursuing, and we will provide you with more information on it.

More information about our three-tiered structure can be found in Addendum III: The AHA Grassroots Program

To learn more about any or all of these exciting relationships that your group can form with the AHA, the largest democratic organization in the nation that is promoting the Humanist lifestance, contact us via email at field@americanhumanist.org or by phone at 800/837-3792 and ask to speak to Jende Huang, our field assistant, who works on AHA field programs.

We welcome you into the exciting and ever changing Humanist movement. It is through the dedication and hard work of people such as yourself that we are where we are today. With your drive and ingenuity, the potential exists to further advance humanistic ideals into society. The AHA is excited about that possibility, and wants to work with you to make it happen.

Addendum IV-7 is Startup Guide Appendix A: Flier to Start a Local Group

Addendum IV-8 is Startup Guide Appendix B: Ad for Newspaper Announcement

Addendum IV-9 is Startup Guide Appendix C: Flier to Announce First Meeting

Addendum IV-10 is Startup Guide Appendix D: The First Meeting Agenda

Interested in

Humanism?

Are you an ethical atheist?

New Group!

Are you interested in helping to put together a new group dedicated to the Humanist lifestance? The new group would be involved with:

Hearing and discussing ideas

Creating community

Social activism

Service projects

If you are interested in helping to build a vibrant community of Humanists, contact [put your contact here] at [contact phone, email, etc.] or [2nd contact phone, email, or mailing address].

"I am **Humanist**, which means, in part, that I have tried to **behave decently without** expectations of ***rewards or punishment*** after I am dead."
-- Kurt Vonnegut

If so, you're invited
to be part of a new
Humanist community
in the Generica area.
Contact _____ at _____.

Inaugural Humanist Event!

Humanists in Generica and surrounding communities have decided to organize and you are invited to attend the first meeting of this new and exciting group.

Find fellow Humanists and other like-minded freethinkers at the First Unitarian Church of Generica:

Meet fellow Humanists

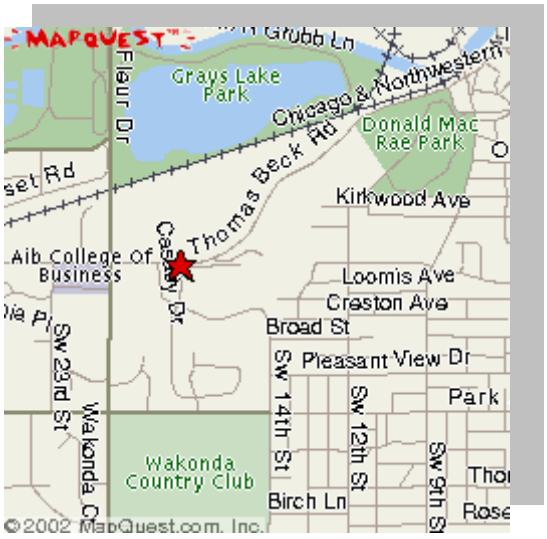
&

like-minded freethinkers!

1800 Bell Avenue

Saturday August 14, 2004

7pm



"Humanism is progressive lifestance that, without supernaturalism, affirms our ability and responsibility to lead meaningful, ethical lives capable of adding to the greater good of humanity."
-Taken from the American Humanist Association

For more information, contact Generica Joe at 555/121-1212 or genericajoe@youremail.org

1. PREMEETING: Set out the food I brought.
2. START MEETING
3. My introduction to the group.
4. Explain how format of this meeting will go, so to prevent chaos.
5. Introductions around the room.
6. Offer general comments about mission/focus of the group, going off of previous discussions with core volunteers.
7. Open up to general discussion. Be sure to focus on why people are interested in joining and what they want to get out of it. Be sure to stay in charge of discussion, and don't let it dissolve into a free for all.
8. Logistics: Good meeting time, place? Get comments from people, change if necessary.
9. Summarize all that we have agreed upon.
10. End meeting, remind people about the food.

**This is intended to serve as a general outline. It would probably be best if you had more specific sub points to go with each agenda item.

ADDENDUM V

Modern Humanism and the American Humanist Association

With roots at least as deep as the ancient Greek philosophers and tendrils reaching back to Eastern thinkers well before them, Humanism was truly in motion in the Renaissance, developed through the Enlightenment, Reformation and democratic revolution, and began to take its present shape in the mid-19th century.

The history of Humanism is the story of a gradual formation and promotion of ideals and values that have persisted through the ages, becoming a major cultural and intellectual force in modern times. In the United States, the culmination of these principles expressed itself in the development and progress of the American Humanist Association, which has become a wellspring of ideas so powerful and relevant to the times that it has formed the seeds of new organizations that continue to exist and prosper into the present. This is a brief history of that progress.

The primary origins of what we now call Humanism date back to the Renaissance. Italy was experiencing a time of immense cultural, artistic, and educational growth and advancement, when new and long-forgotten ideas and modes of thought began to flourish. It was the end of the old medieval systems and the beginning of our modern world. It was here that Humanist thought, including reason and science grew to be widespread, helping to establish a philosophical presence within society that made future organization of these newly arranged ideas possible.

The "father" of the Renaissance and first Renaissance Humanist was Francesco Petrarch, who was crowned poet laureate of Rome in 1341. Spanning several centuries, the Renaissance reached its pinnacle in central Europe before the turn of the eighteenth century as writers, artists, and intellectuals pursued a renewed passion for the arts and ideas of the Greek and Roman classical periods. Intellectuals and artists, such as Botticelli, Michelangelo, and later Voltaire and John Locke (who helped to push Humanism into the Enlightenment), believed that human reason alone could fight the social problems of ignorance, superstition, and tyranny. Such thinking was the herald of the Enlightenment, which shortly followed the Renaissance and challenged outmoded religion and the dominance of hereditary aristocracy. Moving forward, the Enlightenment's humanistic underpinnings continued growing and had immense impact on the intellectual and political leaders of the original British colonies, leading up to the independence and founding of the United States.

A formal, unified Humanist movement originated in the United States during the end of the nineteenth and early part of the twentieth century. Liberal Unitarians, who were slowly moving away from theism, began to discuss the possibility of freeing one's philosophy from the traditional constraints of theistic belief. Organized in 1867, under the leadership of Ralph Waldo Emerson, the Free Religious Association appealed not only to those theological reformers within the Unitarian church, but also to non-Christian religious liberals. The organization proposed a concept they called *humanistic theism*, a precursor to religious humanism, which failed to move much beyond that stance and ceased to exist before World War I. In 1876, Felix Adler also established the New York Society for Ethical Culture. It prompted the creation of similar ethical societies in Chicago, Philadelphia, and St. Louis. The Ethical Culture movement fostered the founding of such

reform efforts as the Legal Aid Society and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), as well as helping establish *Humanism* as a modern term. Beginning in 1927 a number of Unitarian professors and seminarians at the University of Chicago organized the Humanist Fellowship to pursue Humanism in a popular fashion, and as a group began publishing the *New Humanist.*

Around the same time, Charles Francis Potter founded the First Humanist Society of New York. Formerly a Baptist and then a Unitarian minister, Potter began the society with the intent of it being a religious organization, calling Humanism "a new faith for a new age." Shortly thereafter, he wrote a book entitled *Humanism: A New Religion*, outlining the basic premise and points of what he termed: religious humanism. His philosophy openly rejected the traditional Christian belief system and replaced it with one incorporating various aspects of naturalism, materialism, rationalism, and socialism.

Humanism was designed to be ever evolving and compatible with the social schema of the humanity of the day. Potter's intent was to offer a philosophy to replace Christianity, a more progressive approach to living and the common good. Therefore Potter's definition of religion differed from that commonly accepted in his time.

A major Humanist milestone was achieved through the collaboration and agreement of thirty-four national leaders, including John Dewey, when in 1933 *A Humanist Manifesto* was written. This manifesto was a publicly signed document detailing the basic tenants of Humanism. By 1935 the Humanist Fellowship had become the Humanist Press Association, replacing the *New Humanist* with the *Humanist Bulletin*. With the help of Curtis Reese (a well-known Unitarian minister and Humanist,) and along with John H. Dietrich, the Humanist Press Association reorganized itself in 1941, forming the American Humanist Association. The goal was not to establish a religion, as Potter had originally intended, but instead to recognize the secular nature of Humanism, organize the vast members of its adherents, and align the organization for the mutual education of both its religious and non-religious members. In that light, the American Humanist Association is the oldest Humanist organization in the United States.

Along with its reorganization, the AHA began printing the *Humanist* as the successor to the *Humanist Bulletin*. The magazine set out to explore modern day social and political issues through a Humanist point of view.

Early on the AHA was headquartered in Yellow Springs, Ohio, with connections to Antioch College. Over time the organization grew in size and prominence, first moving to San Francisco, California, and then to Amherst, New York. Finally, continuing with a trend toward increasing advocacy, the AHA moved to Washington, D.C., to better affect national policy and increase its social impact.

Into the 1940s and 1950s many Humanists that fought for Humanist values and ideals were not yet aware that such an organization as the AHA existed. Nevertheless, the AHA chose to support individual Humanist thinkers and activists, and gradually grew in significance. The foremost of these was Humanist philosopher Corliss Lamont. Lamont, perhaps the

most influential Humanist thinker of his time and author of *The Philosophy of Humanism*, considered the standard guide to modern Humanist philosophy, spent much of the 1940s and 50s up against Senator Joseph McCarthy and the House Un-American Activities Committee. Lamont held to the position that despite the prevailing "Red Scare" anti-communist attitude, the United States should try to maintain a productive relationship with the Soviet Union. As a result of his position, he became a target of government, was stripped of his property and passport, but fought back and won.

At the end of the 1940s the AHA was supportive of Vashti McCollum in her fight against mandatory Bible study in public schools. The mother of two boys, McCollum argued that religious instruction in public schools violated the principle of separation of church and state. Her case traveled all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. The Court ruled in her favor in 1948 stating that American public schools must uphold a policy of religious neutrality. McCollum went on to serve as AHA President from 1950 to 1965.

In 1952 the AHA became a founding member of the International Humanist and Ethical Union (IHEU) in Amsterdam, Netherlands. As an international coalition of Humanist organizations, the IHEU stands today as the only international umbrella group for Humanism, claiming millions of members from over one hundred organizations, large and small, throughout the world. The IHEU acts as a Humanist clearinghouse. With memberships in the United Nations, the U.N. Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the U.N. International Children's Educational Fund (UNICEF), the Council of Europe, and the European Union, the IHEU aims to create growth and support for Humanism through interaction and cooperation with its member organizations.

It was at this time, in the mid 1950s, that then AHA president Nobel Laureate Harman J. Muller suggested that the AHA could be the American Association for the Advancement of Science's philosophical branch, but the AAAS declined the proposal claiming that the AHA's membership did not include enough individuals with PhDs.

Throughout the 1960s the AHA became actively involved in challenging the illegality of abortion and was the first national membership organization to support abortion rights. Humanist leaders were prominent in the founding of pro-choice organizations, including the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights (now the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice) and the National Association for the Repeal of Abortion Laws (now NARAL Pro-Choice America). These organizations continue to defend and support elective abortion rights.

Around the same time, the AHA joined hands with the American Ethical Union (AEU) to help establish the rights of nontheistic conscientious objectors to the Vietnam War. This time also saw Humanists involved in the creation of the first nationwide memorial societies, giving people broader access to cheaper alternatives than the traditional mortuary controlled burial. Today cremation and humanistic memorial services are more widely available and affordable than ever before.

Other events to note in the 1960s include the contributions of Humanist leaders Maulana Karenga, Edwin H. Wilson, and Toby McCarrol. Karenga, who was jailed for his civil rights activism, created an AHA prison chapter and developed the current national holiday of Kwanzaa. Wilson was one of the original signers of the first *Humanist Manifesto* and the first editor of *The Humanist* magazine. He also founded the Fellowship of Religious Humanists (now the HUUmanists).

In the mid-1960s, the Humanist Student Union of North America (HSUNA) was formed to "supervise, coordinate and initiate all activities of the AHA which involve student and youth members." HSUNA organized campus Humanist groups, published a newsletter and held conferences for students. It is most likely the earliest attempt in the United States to organize Humanist students on university campuses.

Between 1969 and 1977, the AHA and the AEU jointly published the *Humanist*. During the 1970s, the AHA also shared a Joint Washington Office for Social Concern with the AEU and the Unitarian Universalist Association.

Humanism and the AHA reached another milestone during the 1970s when the AHA released a major new Humanist text, *Humanist Manifesto II*. Drafted by Edwin H. Wilson and Paul Kurtz, the work was released during Labor Day weekend in 1973 to unprecedented media fanfare. *The New York Times* interviewed Paul Kurtz after the AHA submitted a pre-publication press release announcing the new work. Following the interview, the *New York Times* published an in-depth, front-page article exploring Humanist philosophy and the new manifesto. This article created a deluge of coverage in major publications throughout the world including extensive press from the *London Times, International Herald Tribune, Le Monde,* and *L'Express*. Public attention and support continued for many months in the form of newspaper commentary and articles. Welcomed by many commentators, the manifesto was denounced by the religious right as anti-religious and anti-God. Regardless, *Humanist Manifesto II* was a monumental achievement for the AHA in its goal to spread Humanism to the public.

Following the release of the new manifesto, the AHA continued on its energized path, publishing several major statements throughout the decade. *A Plea for Beneficent Euthanasia* challenged current wisdom on voluntary euthanasia by calling for "a more enlightened public opinion to transcend traditional taboos and move in the direction of a compassionate view toward needless suffering in dying." The document was signed by medical, legal, and religious leaders and gave rise to the founding of the National Commission for Beneficent Euthanasia as an established AHA program. The document brought the idea of voluntary euthanasia into the public sphere, where it continues to be discussed and debated today.

The AHA then released the document *Objections to Astrology*. Signed by 186 leading scientists, including 18 Nobel Prize winners, it was intended to aid consumers in rejecting this pseudoscience. Shortly afterwards the AHA released *A New Bill of Sexual Rights and Responsibilities*. It set out to illustrate and celebrate responsible sexual freedom without the shackles and control from church or state. The issues were widely debated, and the

publication received coverage in *Time*. The AHA also created the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal. It published a journal called the *Skeptical Inquirer*, until the committee branched off as a separate organization that continues to challenge various forms of pseudoscience around the world.

A Statement Affirming Evolution as a Principle of Science was published in 1977 and mailed to every major school district in the country, solidifying the AHA as a key proponent of evolution over creationism. Shortly after, the AHA published *A Declaration for Older Persons*, calling for an end to age discrimination in the workplace. It was signed by members of Congress, labor leaders, business executives, and religious leaders. Resulting from the AHA's efforts, much of what this document suggested has become national law.

As the AHA approached its fortieth year of operation, it began publishing the *Creation/Evolution* journal, a unique periodical focused on countering the arguments of the so-called "scientific" creationists. The journal was published through the decade, and was then purchased by the National Center for Science Education in 1991. They continue to publish it internationally as the *Reports of the National Center for Science Education* in opposition of creationism and in support of quality science education.

The 1980s saw the beginning of an onslaught of attacks against the AHA from the religious right. In an attempt to successfully quell these debates, the AHA began its own campaign, which included media appearances, public debates, nationally published articles, press conferences, lobbying, and legal action. While the intensity of this public debate between the religious right and the AHA has diminished over time, the AHA continues to use the experience gained as ammunition against present accusations and programs from that quarter. In 1985, world-renowned author Isaac Asimov became president of the AHA. Also in the mid-1980s, the AHA organized a Commission on Campus Humanism.

Through the work of Jack and Lois Trimpey, the AHA advanced Rational Recovery, making the organization a corporate division devoted to helping people with addictions. From Rational Recovery came SMART Recovery, based upon rational-emotive principles. Developed by noted Humanist psychologist Albert Ellis, Rational-Emotive Behavior Therapy is an action oriented approach that teaches individuals how to replace irrational, self-defeating thoughts, feelings, and actions with rational, self-affirming thoughts, feelings, and actions. It is an empowering psychological system, devoid of religious or supernatural influence, meant to create dramatic psychological results in a shorter amount of time than traditional therapy. Along with Albert Ellis, psychologists and psychiatrists including Erich Fromm, Abraham Maslow, B.F. Skinner, Carl Rogers, and Rudolph Dreikurs all wrote extensively on Humanism throughout the twentieth century.

As the AHA celebrated its 50th anniversary in 1991 the *Humanist* magazine became a major alternative medium for social and political commentary. Through such efforts, the magazine has attracted and published the writing of such luminaries as Alice Walker, Harry Blackman, Lester R. Brown, Barbara Ehrenreich, Noam Chomsky, Kate Michelman,

Dan Rather, Ted Turner, and many other leading journalists, writers, political leaders, and activists. In addition to social and political commentary, the *Humanist* publishes the winners of an annual essay contest. The contest asks students and young adults to explore an issue important to them through a Humanist eye. In the past both *Harper's* magazine and *Galaxy* have helped sponsor the contest, selecting winners that continue to have careers of social significance.

Kurt Vonnegut, having previously written for the *Humanist*, was named Humanist of the Year in 1992 and went on to become the AHA's honorary president. Always true to his character, Vonnegut wrote a decade later to the AHA offices: "Find here my permission for you to quote any damn fool thing I've ever said or written, through all eternity, and without further notice or compensation to me."

The AHA was very active in the Parliament of World Religions that took place in Chicago in 1993, sponsoring five separate sessions and exhibiting Humanism to the world. It was during this time that the AHA was preparing to launch American Humanist Seminars, which featured luminaries like abortion rights activist Bill Baird, civil libertarian Barbara Dority, and Lavanam, the Atheist Center director in India.

In 1995 the AHA took part in the issuing of *Religion in the Public Schools: A Joint Statement of Current Law*, along with a variety of other secular organizations and religious groups. This primer was used in schools across the country and was frequently cited in news reports on the issue years after publication.

Beginning in 1998, Humanist leadership became involved in a brand new way to bring young people into the Humanist movement, Camp Quest. As long time challengers of the Boy Scout's exclusionary policies toward nontheists and gays (both in and out of the courts) the AHA was pleased to participate in a nondiscriminatory camp retreat for children. At this time the AHA launched multiple scholarships for students to further expand Humanist outreach to young people.

Humanist writer in Bangladesh, Taslima Nasrin, was given a death sentence by Muslim clergy there and charged by the government for blasphemy because of her outspoken defense of women's rights, her criticisms of Islamic traditions, and the sexual content of her writing. The AHA encouraged officials not to force her case to trial and supported the effort to help Nasrin escape in 1999. Like Salman Rushdie, Nasrin lives today in exile under the continual threat of death.

While the AHA was one of the first organizations to enter the World Wide Web with the introduction of its online website in 1995, its move into the Internet age wasn't complete until the AHA relocated to Washington D.C. It was also through this move, completed in 2002, that the AHA was able to substantively increase the Humanist voice in the public debate.

The philosophy of Humanism took a major evolutionary step in 2003 with the release of *Humanist Manifesto III*, signed by over twenty Nobelists. More concise than its two

predecessors, the third manifesto (called *Humanism and its Aspirations*) sets out to continue the trend of clarifying the Humanist philosophy in a way that pays tribute to the core Humanist ideals and takes into account the knowledge and sensitivities available in the present day.

Today with over one hundred local Chapters and Affiliates nationwide, comprising over six thousand members, as well as ten thousand subscribers and newsstand buyers of the *Humanist* magazine, the AHA continues to attract like-minded people at a rapid rate.

The AHA staff consists of fifteen full-time people supported by semester interns. Functioning as adjuncts of the AHA are: Americans for Religious Liberty (ARL), the Chapter Assembly (CA), the Humanist Foundation (HF), and the Humanist Society (HS). Additionally, the AHA has a volunteer staffed United Nations Office at 777 UN Plaza in New York City.

ARL defends the core constitutional principle of separation of church and state and in so doing, helps to preserve our nation's historic tradition of religious, intellectual and moral freedom in a secular state. Providing a public voice for those who support these aims, and in cooperation with like-minded organizations and individuals, ARL pursues its mission through research, education, advocacy, and publishing.

The Chapter Assembly helps support AHA's nationwide network of Chapters and issues annual grants to local groups to help them grow and promote Humanism.

The Humanist Foundation is the endowment fund of the AHA, offering members opportunities to ensure the advancement of Humanism's life-affirming message to countless millions in the future.

The Humanist Society addresses the daily needs of Humanists. Its Division of Humanist Certification qualifies Humanist Celebrants to legally perform weddings, as well as all other rites-of-passage in all 50 states. The function of a Humanist Celebrant is analogous to that of a minister, clergyperson, pastor, priest, or rabbi.

Working to increase its media presence, the AHA has expanded its activism agenda through coalition efforts in Washington, D.C., including memberships and frequent work with the Coalition Against Religious Discrimination (CARD), Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice (RCRC), and the Leadership Council on Civil Rights (LCCR).

AHA leadership is taking aim at expanding its outreach to fellow Humanists in the Unitarian Universalist Association by working closely with the HUUmanists, and expanding AHA's position in the United Nations with its membership as an official United Nations Non-Governmental Organization (NGO).

Along with the award winning magazine, the *Humanist*, the AHA publishes several other publications, including *Free Mind*, *Grass Roots News*, *Humanist Living*, and *Voice of Reason*. On the legal front, the AHA prepared an amicus curiae brief on behalf of Michael

Newdow in support of his initiative to remove the words “under God” from the Pledge of Allegiance.

Into the future the AHA, its members, Chapters, Affiliates, and publications vow to continue to support and defend core Humanist values, pressing the public to continue the debate and consideration of Humanist issues and social concerns. Guided by reason and our rapidly growing knowledge of the world, by ethics and by compassion, and in the pursuit of fuller, more meaningful lives that add to the greater good of our society and all humanity, the members of the AHA envision a world of mutual care and concern where the life stance of Humanism is known and respected and where humanity takes responsibility for the world in which we live.