



AHA Chapter

THE NEWSLETTER OF

The HUMANIST ASSOCIATION of CENTRAL CONNECTICUT

February 2002



ASHS Affiliate

Nathaniel Wolf

Our dear friend, fellow member, and Chairman of the Program Committee, Nathaniel Wolf, died of a stroke Thursday, January 17, at Stamford Hospital. He was 80.

The son of the late Aaron and Helen Kramer Wolf, he was born in New York City on June 27, 1921.

He graduated from Townsend Harris High School in Flushing, N.Y., where he pitched for the baseball team. Later he formed his own amateur baseball team in the South Bronx called the Gotham Athletic Club.

Before enlisting in the U.S. Army Signal Corps in 1942, he attended City College of New York. He received the Bronze Star during World War II.

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Nick Orsini: "Thoughts On Immortality"

Artist Nick Orsini, an old friend and longtime member, is scheduled to speak for our February Humanist meeting, to be held Monday, the 18th, at 7:30 p.m. at the Unitarian Society of New Haven, 700 Hartford Turnpike, Hamden.

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Calendar of Events

FEBRUARY, 2002

Mon., 18	Monthly meeting, USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike	7:30 p.m.
	Coffee and conversation	7:30 p.m.
	Cynthia Harvey — <i>Why I Am A Humanist</i>	7:55 p.m.
	Main program. Nick Orsini — <i>Immortality</i>	8:00 p.m.
Sun., 24	Memorial service for Nat Wolf, USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike	3:00 p.m.

MARCH, 2002

Sun., 3	Board meeting, USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike	2:00 p.m.
Fri., 8	Conversations, USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike — <i>Enron</i>	7:30 p.m.
Sat., 9	Mystic/Noank discussion group — <i>A Look at Multiculturalism</i> at the Mystic/Noank Library	10:15 a.m.
Thu., 14	Dinner at MisFitz Inn, 57 Oak Tree Rd. Southbury	7:00 p.m.
	Nash Boutros — <i>The Brain & Belief</i>	
Mon., 18	Monthly meeting, USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike	7:30 p.m.
	Coffee and conversation	7:30 p.m.
	Tom Platt — <i>Why I Am A Humanist</i>	7:55 p.m.
	Main program. Panel Discussion — <i>Civil Liberties and the War On Terrorism</i>	8:00 p.m.
Sat., 23	Follow-up session for David Schafer's course, <i>Islam & the Modern World</i> , USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike	3:00 p.m.
Sun., 24	Board meeting, USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike	2:00 p.m.

APRIL, 2002

Fri., 5	Conversations, USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike	7:30 p.m.
Thu., 18	Dinner at MisFitz Inn, 57 Oak Tree Rd. Southbury	7:00 p.m.
Sun., 21	Anniversary meeting, USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike	3:00 p.m.
	Coffee and conversation	3:00 p.m.
	Joe Stachelek — <i>Why I Am A Humanist</i>	3:25 p.m.
	Main program. Tom Ferrick, Humanist chaplain at Harvard., <i>Humanism</i>	3:30 p.m.
Sun., 28	Board meeting, USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike	2:00 p.m.

WWW.CTHUMANIST.ORG

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While stationed in England during the war he met and married Joyce Mary Yardley. They were married for 57 years.

Nat and Joyce have lived in Stamford for 40 years. He was president of H&W Products of Stamford, a sales organization for the housewares industry, for more than 25 years.

In addition to his wife, he is survived by a son, David Wolf of Ridgefield, as well as one grandson and one granddaughter.

Burial with memorial services will be held at the Middletown Veterans Cemetery, Middletown, at a date to be determined.

A Humanist memorial service, organized by the Humanist Association of Central Connecticut, will be held at the Unitarian Society of New Haven, 700 Hartford Turnpike, Hamden, on Sunday, February 24, at 3:00 p.m. Please join us for this service.

The Brain and Belief at MisFitz

Join us in Southbury at MisFitz on Thursday, March 14 at 7:00 p.m. Member Nash Boutros, M.D., Professor of Psychiatry and Neurology at Yale University, has agreed to give us his popular presentation *The Brain and Belief*. If you missed it at USNH or at Yale, don't miss it again! Please RSVP to Carol Stone (editor@cthumanist.org or (203) 264-8546) by Tuesday, March 12.

Mystic/Noank Discussion Series

The next meeting of the humanist discussion group is scheduled for Saturday, March 9, at 10:15 a.m. at the Mystic Noank Library.

The topic will be *A Look At Multi-Culturalism*.

For more information and directions, phone George Marcus at (860) 572-9188 or e-mail gminnoank@worldnet.att.net.

Thornton Street, Hamden, CT 06517-1321. Submissions and requests for permission to reprint articles should be made to this address or to editor@cthumanist.org. Please include a SASE to have material returned. We welcome letters, articles, photographs,

poetry, comic strips, news items, cartoons and other illustrations related to humanism. Approximate circulation: 120 copies. Annual subscription price \$10.00, included in membership. The editor would like to thank everyone who contributed to this issue.

<p>MEMBERSHIP</p> <p>Adult \$35</p> <p>Family \$50</p> <p>Newsletter Only \$10</p> <p>In cases of financial hardship, the association may waive the membership fee. Please mail checks for annual membership payable to Humanist Association of Central Connecticut to: Humanist Association of Central Connecticut, 27 Thornton Street, Hamden, CT 06517-1321.</p>	Name(s): _____
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Nick Orsini, Continued from page 1

When asked for a glimpse into what he might say, Nick offered these words: "Is religion still an indispensable illusion?"

Dostoevsky wrote the greatest novels in the world, just to show how men became obsessed with demons when they abandoned God. Napoleon thought that the greatest miracle in Christianity was that it kept the poor from murdering the rich. Can Humanism rescue the world from this tyranny? Is it possible to have a meaningful life without paradise? These and other relevances await your discursive engagement on this timely topic."

The evening will begin at 7:30 p.m. with our customary half hour including informal conversation and refreshments, plus a short talk by Cynthia Harvey, our new Conversations leader, on "Why I Am a Humanist." As always there will be ample opportunity for discussion. Plan to come and bring a friend!

Update - Dr. Younas Shaikh

Edited extracts from Dr. Shaikh's letter to Babu Gogineni, Executive Director, International Humanist and Ethical Union (www.ihcu.org). (Written in November 2001)

I hope this letter finds you in the best of your health. I am well and trying to keep fit. Well, the 11th September US tragedy brought a lot of grief for the loss of valuable American lives. Indeed, it was a great loss for humanity and civilization. Religious barbarism struck a blow and awakened the world to the

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Humanist Conversations

Humanist conversationalists on Friday, March 8, will be discussing Enron for more reasons than because it is dominating our news. Read whatever you can find on the topic and we will view some recent tapes to give us all some common background.

Also, we will be discussing future topics at the beginning of the meeting. The point of these evenings is to get together for an informative, full, and free discussion of all points of view. Pizza is optional at \$5 apiece (all a normal person can eat). Come, bring a friend, and contribute your own ideas!

Join us at the Unitarian Society of New Haven (700 Hartford Turnpike, Hamden) on Friday, March 8, at 7:30 p.m. in the Library.

A Cordial Invitation To All Of You

You are invited to attend the Annual Dinner Meeting of the Interfaith Cooperative Ministries (ICM) to be held Thursday, February 21 at 6:00 p.m. at the Center Church Parish House, 311 Temple Street, New Haven. The two annual Mustard Seed awards will be presented, respectively, to persons who have given outstanding service to the community and to ICM programs. Dinner will be prepared and served by our graduates of the food service class taught by the Downtown Evening Soup Kitchen staff. The program promises to be interesting. Our speakers, Rabbi Herbert Brockman of Mishkan Israel, The Rev. Jerry Streets of Battell Chapel, and Bishop Peter Rosazza, will describe their recent trip to Bosnia, where they interviewed chaplains with the U.S. military. For dinner reservations at \$10 call me at 281-6232.

— *June Schafer*

Ed. Note: June Schafer is a previous Mustard Seed awardee.

Martin Luther King Jr. Service

The 16th annual interfaith worship service sponsored by the Interfaith Cooperative Ministries of Greater New Haven to celebrate the life and legacy of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was wonderfully moving. Representatives from different faiths read from their scriptures or principles. Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro gave strong admonitions to elected officials to work for social justice. The Elm City Girls Choir sang beautifully. The Rev. Samuel Ross-Lee's rousing sermon on "A Deeper Allegiance" was exceptional, advocating an allegiance to peace and justice as taught by the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. The packed congregation gave the speaker a standing ovation. Ministers at the reception afterward said they had not heard such a powerful sermon by a minister in New Haven since the Rev. Mr. Coffin spoke in Battell Chapel. The reception was warm and friendly, with everyone enjoying the many delicious refreshments provided by the ICM Program Committee and USNH members. Thanks to all of you who baked and helped make the reception such a pleasant experience.

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horrors of religious dogmatic beliefs and practices; as well as it stressed the need for humanism, liberalism and secularism. I wrote a letter to the US Embassy here, as well as, sent a message expressing my grief to Prof. Paul Kurtz and American humanists.

As you might remember, my paper 'Deeni Madarsas and Rise of Taliban' presented at IHEU's Mumbai Congress was on this topic. Indeed, globalisation of the world village exposed even the most developed societies to the religious barbarism of most backward societies. And here intensely arises the question of developing and morally supporting the third world liberal persons, associations and governments. Mere slogans of democracy are not enough. Globalization of Humanism, Liberalism and Secularism is necessary not only for the good of the third world countries but also for the 'spiritual' and physical defence of the developed and civilised world.

Now about myself: on August 18, 2001 Capital Punishment was pronounced against me, though the case did not merit this.

On October 1, 2000 I attended a meeting of South Asian Union addressed by an ISI (Inter Services Intelligence) Brig. Shaukat Qadir (ret.) also running a religious-political association of Jamait - I - Islami. I asked a couple of questions about South Asian peace and Kashmir which offended him and he returned a threat. There were foreign office policy makers and newsmen sitting there.

Within 48 hours, a foreign office Pakistan's employee who was also my student at the medical

college I used to lecture at the morning time, prepared an application against me alleging blasphemous remarks in their class and gave to a cleric, who improving upon the complaint, accused me of a specific instance of Oct. 2, 2000 in the class of 2nd year male students and registered the case with Police.

- The Court set aside the cleric's evidence as hearsay.

- The student who wrote the application was found to be absent from the college on the day of the alleged incident, so his evidence was set aside.

- Two other students gave evidence that they heard the alleged blasphemous remarks on Oct. 2, 2000 at 12:15 noon in a lecture that lasted between 12:00 to 12:45 noon.

- In my statement, I informed the Court that on Oct. 2, 2000, I did not take any lecture from 12:00 to 12:45 noon, and therefore there was no incident of uttering blasphemous remarks at 12:15 noon. In support of this I presented the college timetable before the court, which confirmed that my timings at college were limited from 9:30 am to 12:00 noon only.

- Therefore neither the incident took place, nor the prosecution proved that the alleged sentences were blasphemous.

- During the trial, the religious students of the claimant clerics Deeni Madrassa used to demonstrate against me wearing the Taliban style headdress and uniforms, my solicitors were threatened so much so that the court had to be moved to central Jail, Rawalpindi.

- The Court in camera held at Central Jail, Rawalpindi sentenced me to Capital

Punishment, despite the flimsy and uncorroborated evidence against me, and despite documentary evidence in my favour, against which our appeal has been launched.

- People here designed the blasphemy law 295/c Pakistan Penal Code as Religious Terrorism with Law Code.

Thanks to friends like you, I am in good spirits and waiting for decision on my appeal. I am also thankful to IHEU, Amnesty International and other individuals and groups for their support. As per news here, the American and Allied Forces have taken most of Afghanistan from the shackles of Taliban religious Terrorism; it had lots of influence on Islamabad administration, so hopes are rising for some liberal atmosphere. My convictions for the truth of our life stance Humanism are indeed unshakeable and unbeatable. And I am most thankful for the sympathy and support from the Humanist Family of the World. My regards to all Humanists, individually and collectively.

Yours in Humanism
Dr. M. Younas Shaikh

The webpage for Dr. Shaikh is <http://iheu.org/Shaiikh>.

Please, if you want to help:

- 1). Write to your local newspaper.
- 2). Ask your elected representative what concrete action he or she may have taken on this issue.
- 3). Write to President Musharraf at ce@pak.gov.pk
- 4). Forward to IHEU press clippings or news of major media coverage relating to blasphemy laws and the Dr. Shaikh campaign.

Please copy all your communications to campaign@iheu.org.