



AHA Chapter

THE NEWSLETTER OF

The HUMANIST ASSOCIATION of CONNECTICUT

May 2008



CSH Affiliate

Humanism for Young People

Join us on Monday, May 19, 2008, at 7:30 p.m. at 700 Hartford Turnpike in Hamden, when Amanda Metskas and August Brunsman will present their work with two organizations focused on bringing humanism to young people. August will talk about the Secular Student Alliance (www.secularstudents.org), an umbrella organization that supports atheist, agnostic, and humanist groups on college and high school campuses with over 130 affiliates worldwide.

Amanda will talk about Camp Quest (www.camp-quest.org), a sleepaway summer camp with six locations around North America that is aimed at kids from humanist and other nontheistic families. Both Amanda and August will talk about ways that you can get involved, as well as what their organizations do and plans for future growth. They plan an interactive session, with brief presentations followed by a lot of time for your questions.

Amanda K. Metskas is the executive director of Camp Quest, Inc. She has been involved with Camp Quest since 2003, and in 2004 joined the board of directors. Currently, Amanda focuses on providing coordination and support services to all of the Camp Quest programs. While at camp, Amanda leads activities on debate, critical thinking, and international relations. She holds an M.A. in political science from Ohio State University, and a B.A. in international relations and psychology from Brown University.

August E. Brunsman IV is the executive director of the Secular Student Alliance. He has served

Calendar of Events

Unless otherwise noted, all programs are held at USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike, Hamden, CT. RSVP for dinners at humanism.meetup.com.

MAY, 2008

Sat., 3	Humanist Conversations: the Right to Water	2:30 p.m.
Mon., 5	Social Dinner at Pasta Fair, 262 Boston Post Road, Orange. (203) 799-9601 for directions.	7:00 p.m.
Sat., 10	Book discussion: Neil Shubin's <i>Your Inner Fish</i>	2:30 p.m.
Mon., 19	Monthly meeting	7:30 p.m.
	Main program: Amanda Metskas, President of Camp Quest, Inc., with August Brunsman.	8:00 p.m.
Sun., 25	Board meeting	2:30 p.m.
Tue., 27	Hartford-Area Dinner at Lemongrass, 7 South Main Street, West Hartford. (860) 233-4405.	7:00 p.m.
Sat., 31	Bible Reading Group: "God of Old" to "Dinah."	2:30 p.m.

JUNE, 2008

Mon., 2	Social Dinner at Pasta Fair, 262 Boston Post Road, Orange. (203) 799-9601 for directions.	7:00 p.m.
Sat., 14	Humanist Conversations: TBD	2:30 p.m.
Mon., 16	Monthly meeting	7:30 p.m.
	Main program: TBD	8:00 p.m.
Sun., 22	Board meeting	2:30 p.m.
Tue., 24	Hartford-Area Dinner at Lemongrass, 7 South Main Street, West Hartford. (860) 233-4405.	7:00 p.m.

WWW.CTHUMANIST.ORG

in that position since 2001, and started getting paid for it in 2004. August also worked as a programmer for the Institute for Humanist Studies from 2001-2004. In 1997 he co-founded Students for Freethought at the Ohio State University where he graduated Phi Beta Kappa majoring in psychology and minoring in mathematics and cognitive science in 2001. August is also the camp director at Camp Quest Ohio

where he has volunteered since 1999.

August and Amanda are married with two cats, and live in Albany, NY where the Secular Student Alliance and Camp Quest both have offices provided by the Institute for Humanist Studies.

Bring a friend on Monday, May 19. Coffee and conversation at 7:30 p.m. will be followed by August and Amanda's exciting presentation at 8:00 p.m.!

Conversations: Water

Join our next conversation at 2:30 p.m. on Saturday, May 3 at 700 Hartford Turnpike in Hamden. We'll watch and discuss a *Democracy Now!* interview with Maude Barlow, author of "Blue Covenant: The Global Water Crisis and the Coming Battle for the Right to Water."

Membership Approves Camp Quest Sponsorship

At a short business meeting preceding Doug Peary's talk on April 21 our members voted to donate \$450 to Camp Quest, Inc. to sponsor a campership at the Ohio Camp Quest.

www.cthumanist.org

E-mail List

To join, send an e-mail addressed to majordomo@cthumanist.org with **subscribe announce** in the body of the message.

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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.

Picnic in July

Once again, Bob and Joan Rafford have kindly volunteered to host a picnic at their home in Middlebury. This year the picnic will be on Saturday, July 5th. Save the date!

Book Discussion — Your Inner Fish

The next book we will read is “Your Inner Fish: A Journey into the 3.5-Billion-Year History of the Human Body” by Neil Shubin. This fascinating book is written by one of the world’s experts in this field, is packed with lots of information, and is, surprisingly, a very easy read. Although this is a new book, lots of copies are available at public libraries as well as at bookstores and online. We will meet to discuss this book on Saturday, May 10, 2:30 p.m. until 4:30 p.m. at USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike in Hamden.

“Fish paleontologist Shubin illuminates the subject of evolution with humor and clarity in this compelling look at how the human body evolved into its present state. . . . Shubin moves smoothly through the anatomical spectrum. . . . [He] excels at explaining the science, making each discovery an adventure.”

—Publishers Weekly

Bible Discussion Group, Part III

The next meeting of the HAC Bible Discussion Group will be on Saturday, May 31, 2:30 p.m. until 4:30 p.m. at USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike in Hamden.

In addition to discussing the reading materials, we will watch another 15-minute video segment related to the Exodus and the Bible by John Romer, noted historian and archeologist who is particularly well known for his research on Egypt.

For May 31:

A) Look at: “Jewish and Christian Bibles: A Comparative Chart” located at <http://catholic-resources.org/Bible/Heb-Xn-Bibles.htm>

B) In “How to Read the Bible: A Guide to Scripture, Then and Now” by James L. Kugel, read the following:

Chapter 7. Two Models of God and the “God of Old” 107-118

Chapter 8. The Trials of Abraham 119-132

Chapter 9. Jacob and Esau 133-151

Chapter 10. Jacob and the Angel 152-162

Chapter 11. Dinah 163-175

C) Read these Wikipedia articles:

“Binding of Isaac” located at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Binding_of_isaac — note the differences in treatment of this story by different religions

“Abraham” located at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abraham> — note the differences in treatment by different religions.

D) Think about the differences in these stories and their interpretation among different religions and about how your religious background has affected the way you relate to these stories. Be prepared to discuss this at the meeting.

See you on May 31. Feel free to invite a friend. Please go through the assigned reading materials.

IHEU/AHA Conference Reminder

Join the International Humanist and Ethical Union and the American Humanist Association for the 17th annual World Humanist Congress in Washington DC at the L’Enfant Plaza Hotel on June 5-8, 2008. You can book online at: <http://americanhumanist.org/conference/>

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