



AHA Chapter

THE NEWSLETTER OF

The HUMANIST ASSOCIATION of CONNECTICUT

August 2011



CSH Affiliate

“Religion as a Natural Phenomenon”

We are fortunate to have a science educator as our speaker for our monthly meeting on Monday, August 15, at 700 Hartford Turnpike in Hamden. Gregory Shenk earned his Ph.D. in the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at the University of Connecticut. He teaches at the Greater Hartford Academy of Mathematics and Science.

After September 11, 2001 a handful of researchers dared to ask, “what is religion (good) for?” Investigators from a wide range of different disciplines have entered the fray and, perhaps predictably, their explanations are nearly as diverse as their backgrounds.

This month’s guest will review the current explanations and evaluate the merits of each of them to see how close researchers are to figuring out whether we are the only species with religion and, if so, why.

We will meet on Monday, August 15, at 700 Hartford Turnpike in Hamden at 7:30 p.m. for refreshments and conversation. Greg’s presentation will follow brief announcements at 8:00 p.m. Bring a friend!

Bring a Poem

Join us on August 6 at 3:00 p.m. when we will hold another “bring a poem” session. (This replaces the August “Humanist Conversations” meeting. Conversations will resume in September.) Please bring one item to share, either a poem or short selection of prose, in a copyable format to share.

June Schafer will chair this meeting. Refreshments will be served.

Woodbridge Walk

Join us on Sunday, August 7, from 9:30 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. for a walk on a walking/jogging trail in Woodbridge followed by optional lunch. Fitzgerald Trails is located at 100 Center Road in Woodbridge, Connecticut, and there’s plenty of parking at the Woodbridge Town Library at 10 Newton Road. *We will meet on the trail next to the intersection of Center Rd (Route 114) and Beecher Rd.* If you arrive after 9:30 a.m., just wait at this location and you will see us in a few minutes as we walk around the track, or you can call one of the mobile numbers below. The event will be canceled in the event of rain. If in doubt about the weather, contact Manny Ratafia: e-mail: manny@ratafias.com, home (203) 387-7348, cell (203) 901-9553; or Nina Stein: home (203) 757-2539, cell (203) 215-0022; or Marsha Zellner: home (203) 393-2816, cell (203) 494-3856.

Calendar of Events

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

AUGUST

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| Mon., 1 | Social Dinner at Turkish Kebab House, 1157 Campbell Ave., West Haven. (203) 933-0002 | 7:00 p.m. |
| Sat., 6 | Poetry — Bring a Poem II | 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. |
| Sun., 7 | Social walk in Woodbridge, with optional group lunch to follow | 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. |
| Sat., 13 | Picnic at the Lyons’ home in Cornwall, Connecticut. (860) 672-0550 | 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. |
| Mon., 15 | Monthly Meeting Main program: Gregory Shenk, Ph.D. — “Religion as a Natural Phenomenon” | 7:30 p.m. 8:00 p.m. |
| Thu., 25 | Dinner at Imperial Caribbean Restaurant, 51 Shunpike Rd., Cromwell. (860) 613-0005 | 7:00 p.m. |
| Fri., 26 | Potluck and Movie: John Ford’s adaptation of Steinbeck’s <i>The Grapes of Wrath</i> | Potluck 6:30 p.m. Movie 7:00 p.m. |
| Sat., 27 | Book discussion: John Steinbeck’s <i>The Grapes of Wrath</i> | 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. |
| Sun., 28 | Board meeting | 2:30 p.m. |

SEPTEMBER

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| Sat., 3 | Humanist Conversations: TBA | 2:30 p.m. |
| Mon., 5 | Labor Day Cookout at Crystal Lake, 100 Livingston Road in Middletown | 12:00 noon to 4:00 p.m. |
| Mon., 12 | Social Dinner at Turkish Kebab House, 1157 Campbell Ave., West Haven. (203) 933-0002 | 7:00 p.m. |
| Sat., 17 | Social walk in Woodbridge, with optional group lunch to follow | 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon |
| Mon., 19 | Monthly Meeting Main program: Dr. David Schafer — The Legacy of Unitarian Universalist Humanism | 7:30 p.m. 8:00 p.m. |
| Thu., 22 | Dinner at Imperial Caribbean Restaurant, 51 Shunpike Rd., Cromwell. (860) 613-0005 | 7:00 p.m. |
| Sun., 25 | Board meeting | 2:30 p.m. |

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Labor Day Cookout

Brian Ditter and Tara McLaughlin invite HAC to a cookout and pot luck on Labor Day, Monday, September 5, from noon to 4:00 p.m. at Crystal Lake Park, Middletown.

Please RSVP to Brian Ditter by text at (xxx) xxx-xxxx, voice at (860) 704-0439, or Tara McLaughlin at (860) 545-5065.

If you have a little extra time to help set up that morning, please be sure to let Brian know when you call.

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Picnic in Cornwall, August 13

Join us for a pot luck/barbecue on Saturday, August 13, from 11 a.m. until 5 p.m., at the lovely home of Bill and Kathy Lyon, (860) 672-0550, 120 Dudleytown Road, Cornwall, CT. The Lyons will provide meat for the grill and soft drinks. Feel free to bring a side dish, desert, or beverage, and shoes suitable for a walk in the woods. Around 2:30 p.m., Bill will play an audio selection for discussion.

From the New Haven area and other places to the south of Cornwall, take Route 8 north from either I-95 or the Merritt Parkway. Go through Waterbury and get off at exit 38 (). Turn left at the end of the exit ramp. Go a short way until you see signs for Route 254. Turn left onto 254 and head towards Litchfield. 254 ends at Route 118 where you turn left and go up the hill about a 1/2 mile. Turn right onto Route 63 before you go through Litchfield center. Stay on 63, pass the Goshen Fairgrounds, and turn left onto Route 4 at the rotary in Goshen. In a few miles you will turn left again at an intersection in order to stay on 4. Watch for a sign for Cornwall Village. You will turn left onto Pine Street (right would take you onto Route 125). At the end of Pine St. turn left onto Valley Road. Follow this for 2 miles past the second street on the left (Everest Hill Road). Go over a small metal bridge, and then the road forks. On the left you will see Everest Hill Road immediately followed by a fork with Castle Road on the left and Dudleytown Road on the right (which is unmarked and a dead end). Bear right onto Dudleytown Road. Climb a mile up the hill. The road turns to dirt a half mile up. At the end there's a metal gate, beyond which is a dirt path. The Lyons' driveway is on the right. There is no mailbox, but #120 is painted on a phone pole.

Book Group: "The Grapes of Wrath"

The Book Discussion Group's next read will be John Steinbeck's classic, "The Grapes of Wrath." If you can't find it on your bookshelf, it's available in all libraries. Dan Blinn will be moderator for the discussion on Saturday, August 27, from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m.

We will watch the film the night before on Friday, August 26, at USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike, Hamden. We will start with a pot-luck supper at 6:30 p.m. and begin the movie at 7:00 p.m.

If you plan to skip the book and only watch the film, please do yourself a favor and, at the very least, read the last chapter. Although John Ford's 1940 film adaptation is a masterpiece that you'll find on most top 100 all time film lists, the prevailing standards didn't permit him to include what many consider to be the most powerful endings to a novel ever written. And, please don't take this suggestion as a pass to skip the reading! Steinbeck won a Pulitzer for this novel, and it is the main reason that he later won a Nobel prize.

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: 180 copies. Annual subscription price \$10.00, included in membership.

The editor would like to thank everyone who contributed to this issue.

MEMBERSHIP

Adult \$35
 Family \$50
 Newsletter Only \$10
 Our membership year is 1/1-12/31.
 In cases of financial hardship, the association may waive the membership fee. Please mail checks for annual membership payable to Humanist Association of Connecticut to: Humanist Association of Connecticut, 27 Thornton Street, Hamden, CT 06517-1321.

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