



THE NEWSLETTER OF  
**The HUMANIST ASSOCIATION**  
of CONNECTICUT



AHA Chapter

November 2015

UU Humanists Local Group

## *Nina Stein In Israel/Palestine*

Our featured speaker at our monthly meeting on Monday, November 16 will be HAC member Nina Stein, Ph.D. The meeting will be held at USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike in Hamden at 7:30 p.m.

"I traveled to Israel/Palestine this summer as part of the 54th delegation of Interfaith Peace Builders. This organization brings people to the area in order to observe first-hand the situation on the ground.

"During the trip we were presented with different viewpoints, and met with individuals and representatives of various organizations involved in different aspects of the struggle for a just peace. We traveled both within the 1948 borders of Israel and in the West Bank.

"Through a slide presentation, I will recount some of what we saw and heard.

"I grew up in a family where there was a lot of emphasis on human rights and social justice. It is this background along with my Jewish heritage that led to my interest in the Israel/Palestine conflict, which I view primarily from a human rights perspective. This interest led me to join and

## *Calendar of Events*

Unless otherwise noted, all programs are held at USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike, Hamden, CT. RSVP for dinners at [meetup.com/cthumanist](http://meetup.com/cthumanist).

### **NOVEMBER 2015**

Mon., 2	Social Dinner at Turkish Kebab House, 1157 Campbell Ave., West Haven. (203) 933-0002	7:00 p.m
Sat., 7	Conversations: TED Talk on Political Prisoners	2:30 p.m.
Mon., 16	Monthly Meeting Main program: Nina Stein on her visit to Israel	7:30 p.m. 8:00 p.m
Sat., 21	Book Discussion: "The Collapse of American Criminal Justice" by William Stuntz	2:00 p.m to 4:00 p.m
Sun., 22	Board meeting	2:30 p.m

### **DECEMBER 2015**

Sat., 5	Conversations: Program TBA.	2:30 p.m.
Mon., 7	Social Dinner at Turkish Kebab House, 1157 Campbell Ave., West Haven. (203) 933-0002	7:00 p.m
Sat., 19	Book Discussion: "An Unquenchable Thirst: a Memoir" by Mary Johnson	2:00 p.m to 4:00 p.m
Mon., 21	Annual Meeting and pot-luck dinner Annual Meeting & Elections, followed by Winter Solstice Party	7:30 p.m. 8:00 p.m
Fri., 25	Annual dinner at the Kennedys' home in Shelton	4:00 p.m

[www.cthumanist.org](http://www.cthumanist.org)

become active in Jewish Voice for Peace, and ultimately led to the trip that I took to Israel/Palestine this summer."

Nina received her doctoral degree in organic chemistry from Brandeis University. In addition, Nina has masters degrees in chemistry and in special education. For the past 35 years Nina has been teaching chemistry at

the Waterbury Campus of the University of Connecticut. She has also taught at Hartford State Technical College and at Yale.

The evening will start with coffee and conversation at 7:30 p.m. at 700 Hartford Turnpike in Hamden. Nina's presentation will follow brief announcements at 8:00 p.m.

[www.cthumanist.org](http://www.cthumanist.org)

[www.facebook.com/cthumanist](http://www.facebook.com/cthumanist) • [www.meetup.com/cthumanist](http://www.meetup.com/cthumanist) • [www.twitter.com/cthumanist](http://www.twitter.com/cthumanist)

## *Carl Sagan Day at Yale, November 9*

### *SPECIAL EVENT: Monday, November 9 (Carl Sagan Day)*

#### **Celebrating Carl Sagan: A Conversation with Nick Sagan**

7:00 p.m. at Yale University, Linsly-Chittenden Hall, Room 102

Though he died in 1996, astronomer Carl Sagan's work continues to have a tremendous impact. He influenced a generation of scientists and thinkers, taught millions about the wonders of science, and inspired the world to ask big questions. His work enriched and entertained, from his books like "Contact," "Pale Blue Dot," and "The Demon-Haunted World" to his television series *Cosmos* (recently rebooted with new host Neil deGrasse Tyson). He inspired us to look up to the stars, but also to look inward. He helped us better understand the world around us—and by encouraging us to be curious, courageous, and compassionate, he also helped us better understand ourselves and one another. Carl Sagan was an unparalleled scientist, storyteller, and communicator, and his contributions will be felt for years to come.

This Carl Sagan Day, Yale Humanist Community (YHC) is honored and thrilled to welcome a special guest: Nick Sagan, son of Carl Sagan. In a moderated discussion with YHC Executive Director Chris Stedman, Nick will talk about his father's impact, the connection between his father's work and Humanism, and his memories of growing up with Carl Sagan—including what it was like to record a greeting for potential extraterrestrials at six years old for the Voyager Golden Record.

Nick Sagan is an author of novels, screenplays, teleplays, comic books, animation episodes and computer games. A prolific filmmaker and writer, his credits include episodes of *Star Trek* and the book "You Call This the Future?," which Publisher's Weekly called a "delightful 'expedition in search of the future,' providing clear explanations of today's cutting edge technologies." He is also the author of the acclaimed "Idlewild" series and creator of the "Shrapnel" graphic novel series for Radical Publishing. The son of astronomer Carl Sagan and Pioneer plaque artist Linda Salzman, Nick was 6 years old when his greeting, "Hello from the children of planet Earth," was placed aboard the Voyager Golden Record as a representation of the English language for potential extraterrestrials to one day discover.

Join the Yale Humanist Community on November 9 for a conversation with Nick Sagan, and a celebration of the life and legacy of Carl Sagan.

## *Volunteers Needed – New Haven and Bridgeport*

**LifeBridge Community Services** is a 166 year-old social services agency whose mission is to empower people to build a brighter future, by linking flexible, innovative programs to restore personal capability, develop skills, and build a pathway to self-sufficiency. LifeBridge is located in Bridgeport with a Food Services Program in New Haven.

### **Senior Dine Program – New Haven location**

The Food Services Program offers an alternative to dining at senior community centers and housing communities by offering

meals at local area restaurants on specific days during the week with a fixed menu of 9-10 entrées. Seniors benefit from a varied menu in a social setting that lifts their spirits and nurtures their bodies. Volunteers are needed to register and greet the clients for this program, collect tickets and track attendance.

### **VITA Program – Bridgeport location**

LifeBridge Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program provides free income tax return preparation to eligible low income clients from late January until early

April. Last year, LifeBridge helped over 650 families complete their taxes free of charge. As one of the larger VITA sites in Fairfield County, we utilize volunteers as Greeters, Preparers and for Quality Review. Volunteers receive online and in person training before tax season begins. Prior accounting or tax experience is not required.

To find out more about these and all our volunteer opportunities, please contact Laura Rundell, Volunteer Coordinator, at 203-368-5582 or [lrundell@LifeBridgeCT.org](mailto:lrundell@LifeBridgeCT.org)

## ***Six Hundred Thanksgiving Dinners!***

Meals on Wheels does not deliver on Thanksgiving, so Interfaith Volunteer Care Givers (IVCG) and Downtown Evening Soup Kitchen (DESK) have taken 600 of the names of frail and elderly people to prepare and deliver their dinners. We need pies and *frozen* turkeys, drivers to deliver the dinners, and financial support to buy other necessary items. If you can provide any of these please call me, June Schafer, at 203-281-6232 *by Sunday, November 15*, for further instructions. Checks should be written to "IVCG" with "Thanksgiving for all" in the corner below, and mailed to me at 27 Thornton Street, Hamden CT 06517. Your help will be deeply appreciated!

— June Schafer

## ***SMART Recovery® Meetings***

Every Wednesday: 7 - 8 p.m. in the Murtha Cullina meeting room at the Happiness Lab coffee shop, 756 Chapel Street, New Haven.

Every Saturday: 10:15 - 11:45 a.m. at the Wilson Branch of the New Haven Free Public Library, 303 Washington Avenue, New Haven.

SMART Recovery is the leading secular alternative to Alcoholics Anonymous.

## ***Book Discussion: "The Collapse of American Criminal Justice" by William J. Stuntz***

Our book for November is "The Collapse of American Criminal Justice" by the late Harvard legal scholar William J. Stuntz. (<http://today.law.harvard.edu/william-stuntz-1958-2011-an-examined-life-of-thoughtfulness-and-grace>).

From the book's inside flap: "The rule of law has vanished in America's criminal justice system. Prosecutors now decide whom to punish and how severely. Almost no one accused of a crime will ever face a jury. Inconsistent policing, rampant plea bargaining, over-crowded courtrooms, and ever more draconian sentencing have produced a gigantic prison population, with black citizens the primary defendants and victims of crime. In this passionately argued book, the leading criminal law scholar of his generation looks to history for the roots of these problems - and for their solutions."

From Louis H. Pollak, Senior U.S. District Court Judge: "[This book] ...is a searching - and profoundly disturbing - examination of American criminal law in action. It shows that our main achievement has been the incarceration of millions, while giving short shrift to fairness and equality. This is a masterful work."

From David Alan Sklansky, Boalt Hall School of Law: "Stuntz argues that much of what we think about American criminal justice is wrong. The system is neither too lenient nor too punitive, but too prone to both extremes, and the extremism is caused by too little democracy. Sweeping, learned, and bracingly original, Stuntz's crowning achievement is a wonderful book."

The book is readily available in numerous libraries around the state.

We will meet at 700 Hartford Turnpike in Hamden from 2:00 - 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, November 21. Refreshments will be served.

Save the date for our December book discussion! On Saturday, December 19 we will be joined by author Mary Johnson when we discuss her book, "An Unquenchable Thirst: A Memoir."

## ***Humanist Conversations: Secret Prisons?***

Does America have political prisoners? How do we define them? If we don't keep them at Guantanamo Bay, where do we house them? How do we treat them? Join us on Saturday, November 7 at 700 Hartford Turnpike when we will watch and discuss the most thoroughly-footnoted *TED* talk you've ever seen.

Refreshments will be served.

Please note that after announcing that we would be moving Humanist Conversations to the Wilson Branch of the New Haven Free Public Library, we have decided to move the meetings back to our home base of USNH for the remainder of the year.

**Email List**

To join, send an email to:  
**hac-announce-request@cthumanist.org**  
with the subject **subscribe**.

To unsubscribe, send an email to:  
**hac-announce-request@cthumanist.org**  
with the subject **unsubscribe**.

**Officers**

- President Carol Siddall  
(203) 264-8546  
[president@cthumanist.org](mailto:president@cthumanist.org)
- Vice-President June Schafer
- Secretary Richard Siddall
- Treasurer Carol Podgwaite

**Committee Chairs**

- Program David Schafer
- Membership Halina Platt
- Development Rebecca Williams
- Publications Richard Siddall
- Publicity Deidre Kennedy
- Hospitality Randy Olear

**Newsletter**

- Editor Carol Siddall  
(203) 264-8546  
[editor@cthumanist.org](mailto:editor@cthumanist.org)
- Production: Richard Siddall  
(203) 264-2182  
[webmaster@cthumanist.org](mailto:webmaster@cthumanist.org)

Copyright © 2015, Humanist Association of Connecticut.  
Articles may be reproduced without written permission, providing attribution is given.

Published monthly by the **Humanist Association of Connecticut, 27 Thornton Street, Hamden, CT 06517-1321**. Submissions and requests for permission to reprint articles should be made to this address or to

# USNH Social Cinema

On Friday, November 6, the USNH social cinema at 700 Hartford Turnpike in Hamden will present *Abrazos*, the story of a group of U.S. citizen children who travel 3,000 miles from Minnesota to Guatemala to meet their grandparents for the first time. After being separated for nearly two decades, these families are able to share stories, strengthen traditions, and begin to reconstruct their cultural identity. The film will be followed by discussion and a Skype interview with the filmmaker – Luis Argueta.

Please bring diapers to donate to Junta at Social Cinema on Nov. 6th. All sizes desperately needed!

The optional potluck dinner at 6:30 p.m. will be followed by the film at 7:15 p.m.

# Yale Humanist Haven Event

The Yale Humanist Community now holds two Humanist Haven events each month, on the first and third Sundays at 1:00 p.m. at The Grove, 760 Chapel Street, New Haven. Parking is available on the street (free on Sunday) or in nearby lots. The next event will be Broderick Greer on November 15. “#BlackLivesMatter: A Movement or a Moment?”

For over two years, the nation has witnessed the deaths of black and brown people at the hands of vigilantes and law enforcement officers. Join Broderick Greer as he leads a community discussion on the inherent humanism in the #BlackLivesMatter hashtag—and the ways in which people of secular and theist perspectives can partner to forge a better world.

Rev. Greer is curate at Grace-St. Luke’s Episcopal Church in Memphis, Tennessee. He is a 2015 masters of divinity graduate of Virginia Theological Seminary and holds a bachelors in Social Work from Freed-Hardeman University.

[editor@cthumanist.org](mailto:editor@cthumanist.org). We welcome humanist-themed letters, articles, poetry, news items, cartoons, and illustrations.

Please include a SASE to have material returned. Approximate

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

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

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>MEMBERSHIP</b></p> <p>! 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: <b>Humanist Association of Connecticut, 27 Thornton Street, Hamden, CT 06517-1321</b>.</p>	<p>Name(s): _____</p> <p>Address: _____</p> <p>Telephone: _____</p> <p>E-Mail Address: _____</p> <p>Please add me to the e-mail Announce List (circle one): YES NO</p> <p>I want my newsletter electronically <u>only</u> (circle one): YES NO</p> <p>Where did you hear about us? _____</p> <p>Comments: _____</p>
--	---