

July 2017
Issue 6.04

Jefferson Humanists

Jefferson County Colorado Chapter of The American
Humanists Association
www.jeffersonhumanists.org



It's Picnic Time for Jefferson
Humanists

When: Sunday July 23, 2017
at 4 pm

Where: Applewood Park
1840 Alkire Court

In July, rather than a formal meeting and speaker, we invite you to join fellow Humanists to celebrate friendship and community. We'll have food and fun with a humanist Trivia contest. The winner gets a prize.

The chapter will provide meat, and veggie burgers, condiments, an ice cream sundae bar, and soft drinks,

along with a grill. Beer (\$2 donation) and wine (\$3 donation) will also be available. Members and friends should bring a side dish to share. This is an excellent way to meet other humanists in a relaxed environment and make new friends.

To ensure we have enough food and drink, please RSVP on Meetup (<http://meetu.ps/qyfy>) or by email or phone to Traci Bickell (TraciBickell@gmail.com, 303.432.8694).

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Upcoming Meeting Programs

August 27: Soaring Past 7 Billion: Population Challenges for a Crowded World: John Seager, President and CEO, Population Connection. Jefferson Unitarian Church.

September 24: Planet Mars: History and Future. The speaker will be Dr. Steve Lee, Curator, Planet Science, Denver Museum of Nature and Science. Jefferson Unitarian Church.

JH Board Report, May and June

Submitted by Edna Miller

New Board Member: Carol Hughes was introduced as the new Board member

Chapter Dinners: Our dinners are scheduled through 12/30/17 with Pam our caterer. We will be asking for people to help with the dinners and clean up.

Executive Director Search Committee: Jim Bole and Barb Bailey are interviewing for a chairperson of the Search Committee. The questions that will be asked of candidates were approved by the Board.

WE Pay: The possibility of using WE PAY as a means for the JPac Group to pay into their JHC account is being checked out.

Humanist Perspectives Group: The group meets at JUC the third Saturday in June. Chuck Mowry, Barb Bailey and Traci Bickell will work with Tom Kellogg.

Nature Hike: Nature hikes are scheduled for the first Saturday of each month, at least during the summer.

JUC UU Humanists: Eric Banner, Associate Minister at JUC, will put out a bulletin this Fall with all the UU Humanist Events. Jim Bole and Chuck Mowry will present a 3-4 week course based on the book, HUMANIST VOICES IN UU, Gibbons and Murray editors for JUC UU's.

IT Committee: The JH Web Site is working well. Check it out and give feedback please. The IT Committee will sponsor the annual picnic/potluck in July.

JH Retreat: The JH Retreat is a planning session to evaluate our past year, to plan for our next year and to develop a theme for the year. A theme possibility is how to start a Humanist Community Center.

Service Project: Carole Hughes is interested in volunteer opportunities for our Chapter. Carole will write a report on

possibilities. She is willing to research and publicize our volunteer choices.

Planned Giving: A Planned Giving Program would be for present giving and estate giving. Chuck Mowry moved we launch a program with planned giving to create in stages a Humanist Community Center. The motion passed. Chuck will check with Bruce Vincent about assuming a consultant role. Homework needed from the Board is to decide what we want to do and how to get it accomplished. Matthew Elisha moved we appoint Jim Bole and Chuck Mowry to start a Planned Giving Committee, add committee members from the membership and work out the details.

June Program: Freedom from Religion Foundation

by Linda Baer

In our June program, Claudette St.Pierre, President of the Metro Denver Chapter of the Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF), presented "Separation of State and Church, Why all the Fuss?: How the Freedom from Religion Foundation works to keep the 'wall of separation' from crumbling."

Claudette first explained how she was raised in a Catholic family in Long Beach, California. Early in her Catholic schooling she had doubts and gradually became a non-believer through her reading and asking questions. After high school, she went on to earn a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing and now works as a Pediatric Nurse Case Manager at Colorado's Children's Hospital.

Having been a member of FFRF since 2009, in 2013 she helped to start the local Denver chapter (they are associated with the Secular Hub). She explained that the FFRF is especially involved in state-church separation issues. With headquarters in Madison, Wisconsin, the FFRF has 29,000 members and 20 chapters. With their focus on state-church separation, they have established a well-staffed legal group as well as a newspaper, radio program, and charitable efforts.

Claudette wanted to show us a video clip of a talk by Andrew L. Seidel, one of the FFRF staff attorneys where he was speaking about "Defending the Constitution: Even little violations matter." Unfortunately we could not get a video clip to work in the JUC chapel. The talk is worthwhile. If you would like to view it, go to the YouTube video at:

The talk focused on some of the legal work that the FFRF legal team has been working on to stem the many state-church separation violations that have been occurring.

Our speaker then gave us some background about the Metro Denver Chapter of the FFRF. They have 400 individuals registered in their MeetUp roster. They have sponsored a number of recent activities, including the March for Science, a Summer Solstice Picnic, recent billboards in Denver, and lobbying in favor of the Johnson amendment. The chapter has participated, together with their national office and the American Humanist Association, in supporting litigation in Douglas County having to do with the use of taxpayer supplied funds for religious schools.

A lively question and answer session covering a wide range of topics followed Claudette's presentation. She provided copies of a number of brochures about FFRF and its activities, For more information about the FFRF, go to their national website at: ffrf.org.

A Secular Humanist Invocation for the Colorado House of Representatives

by Tim Bailey, Humanist Celebrant

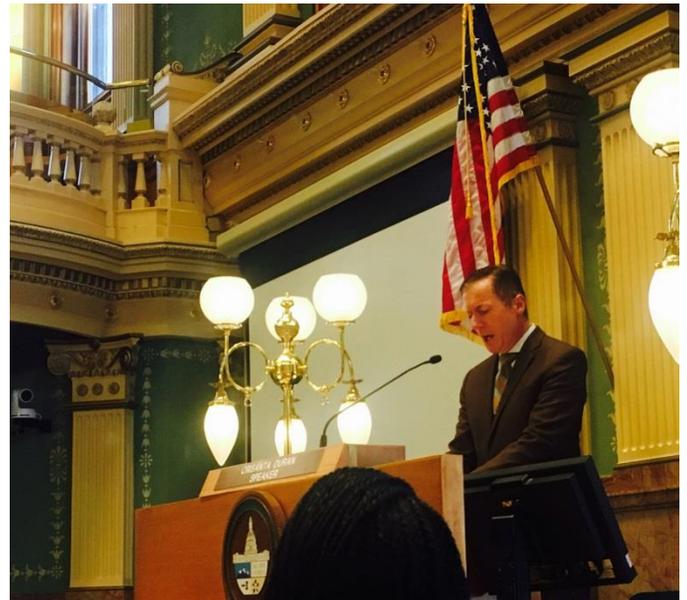
In April, I received and accepted an invitation from the Colorado House of Representatives to give a secular invocation on Monday May 1st, 2017. The invitation was requested by Colorado Representative Chris Hansen of House District 6. His staff reached out to me, having found my Humanist Celebrant profile on the Humanist Society website.

I learned that this was to be the first Secular Humanist and atheist invocation to be given at the Colorado capitol – at least to anyone's recollection. This I considered a great honor, as well as an opportunity to express the positive traits of Humanist thought.

I was understandably nervous upon arriving at the capitol, not knowing what to expect. When we walked into the House chamber, my wife Jen and I were greeted by helpful and welcoming staff and sergeants-at-arms. When he was informed of our arrival, Representative Hansen immediately walked up to us, welcomed us, shook our hands, and told us how thrilled he was that we were there. He said it was a relief they were having a Secular Humanist invocation. He and many of his colleagues felt that they all had it up to their ears with an overabundance Christian prayers and pronouncements that served only to bully and

marginalize those of other traditions.

I was scheduled as the first one to speak, followed by the pledge of allegiance, then the call to order. The invocation was received without any negative verbal response or protest, however there was a bit of an odd silence permeating the chamber, as many seemed to be a bit bewildered as to what they were truly experiencing. To start, I told everyone to not bow their heads and to keep their eyes wide open. These made the experience different enough that shook people out of their habitual routines. For those present were looking around while hearing words of encouragement for humanity that had nothing to do with religious claims or connotations.



Our Own Tim Bailey Provides Invocation at the Colorado House of Representatives

Here is the full text of what was presented as the Secular Humanist invocation:

Rather than bowing our heads or closing our eyes, let us all keep our heads raised and our eyes wide open. Let us look upon each other and appreciate the diversity and beauty of each one of our fellow human beings.

As I share with you these thoughts, let us look upon each other with thankfulness that our presence in each other's lives enriches us all. May We have the courage to remain Free

*May We have the freedom to remain Strong
May We have the strength to remain Secure
May We have the security to remain Kind
May We have the kindness to remain Wise
May We have the wisdom to remain Loved
May We have the love to remain Together*

May We stand together to remain Courageous

*Let your actions and decisions today work for
the benefit of all Coloradans.*

The text itself is a modification of a song written in 2015 by Robert Brown of the musical group, 'Abney Park.' The song was one that had been an inspiration at times for me. Therefore, I chose these words as I felt that they provided positive statements that speak to the sum of humanity regardless of background or belief.

Afterward, Representative Hansen walked up to speak with us again. He indicated that he'd love to have me return next year for another Humanist invocation. Additionally, he stated that he wants to invite leaders and speakers from across Colorado who hold beliefs and opinions outside that of Christianity. I told him I would love to return and help remind our representatives that they stand for all Colorado citizens.

I consider it an honor to have represented the Humanist, Freethought, and Atheist communities in front of our Colorado House of Representatives.

The Jefferson Humanist Book Discussion Group
(FROG Freethinkers Reading Opportunity Group)



The Jefferson Humanists reading group invites you to join us for a discussion of our July book *The Selfish Gene* by Richard Dawkins. In his first book, published in 1976, Dawkins discusses evolution from a gene-centered view rather than the previous focus on the organism and the group. In this view, individuals that are genetically related are more apt to behave selflessly with each other and selfishly with other individuals, helping to perpetuate their genes. Dawkins book caused a revolution when it was published and it continues to be popular today. His theories on "kin selection" have been challenged in the past decade by those like E.O. Wilson who are proponents of "group selection," though many scientists believe both viewpoints are sound and are complimentary.

For more information and to RSVP, see <http://meetu.ps/3b91Gd>.

Date: Sunday, July 9th

Time: 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM

Reading Assignment: *The Selfish Gene* by Richard Dawkins

Facilitator: Traci Bickell

Location: **Jefferson Unitarian Church, 14350 W. 32nd Ave., Golden – We will meet outdoors on the patio behind the main building**

The Jefferson Humanists' reading group (FROG) typically meets on the 2nd Saturday of the month, although for several reasons we are meeting on the second SUNDAY in July. We enjoy great discussions about thought provoking books on a wide variety of topics. We currently have around 30 FROG members with around 12-16 attend every meeting. You can find details about our upcoming books and topics on Meetup at www.meetup.com/JeffcoHumanists. If you'd like to join the group and be added to our email list, contact FROG leader Matthew Elisha (mrelisha@msn.com, 303.432.8694).

Upcoming schedule:

- August 12th – TOPIC: Overpopulation
 - September 9th – *The Plot Against America* by Phillip Roth
-

Review of June 9th FROG Discussion by Dan Green

Half-Earth Our Planet's Fight for Life

by Edward O. Wilson

- Extinction rates are increasing to the point that they may become a massive one, equal to the past planetary extinctions.
- Humans in the Anthropocene epoch are responsible for the increased rates.
- Therefore humans are obligated to correct the situation for both moral and selfish reasons.
- The proposed solution is to set aside large areas for species to inhabit without interference.

The title refers to the amount of surface area needed to sustain the planet's non-human life. The premise is that the species extinction rate is accelerating and humans are the cause of the acceleration. Continued, the extinction will become a massive one involving most species.

The fraction "one-half" is derived from a formula given in Chapter 19, (p 186): the change in the area of

a habitat, up or down, results in a change in the number of sustainable species by the third to fifth root, most commonly close to the fourth root. So if the earth's area is reduced by one-half, the remaining species would be the fourth root of one-half = .841 or about 85%. Time is not a factor in this subjective formula so a sense of urgency to attain this set aside area must be provided elsewhere.

This urgency is provided by estimates of the acceleration in extinction rate from the primordial (one in ten per million species per million years) to the present. The current rate of extinction of well-known species is close to one thousand times the primordial rate, and accelerating (p 185.) The increase in rate is attributed to human involvement in about the last 11,000 years, named the Anthropocene epoch. On p 43 an estimate for fish extinction rates is made. Before the origin of humans the rate is estimated as one per three million years. The current rate is 877 times greater. These numbers seem difficult to verify objectively, but what better numbers are there?

To solidify the concerns about human caused extinctions, chapters 4 and 5 provide some objective listings of species loss. Chapter 4 is an elegy for rhinos that are nearing extinction through loss of habitat but more significantly by sport hunting and poaching for the horns. A pretty direct human caused extinction. In chapter 5 the broader case is made with amphibian extinctions due to disease (fungus for frogs) and habitat removal: for birds with hunting and invasive species; for fishes with habitat change (dams); for plants with invasive species and chemicals.

The "So What" is addressed. So what if a few salamanders, mussels, birds are lost? This is the dominion of man over nature philosophy that seems to be triumphing. In the US it is the progressive/conservative divide. If you deny the science of conservation, you likely deny the science of pollution/global warming. Wilson addresses this by listing the direct human impact of some species loss – loss of foods, loss of employment, loss of habitation, and importantly, loss of diversity. No species stands alone. It impacts those species all around and it is a gamble as to when a chain of extinction occurs.

Wilson goes on to describe the invisible empire, the world of viruses and bacteria that vastly outnumber the plant and animal kingdoms and maybe outweigh them too. The bacteria are described as ecosystems in our human microbiome. The five kingdoms of plants, animals, fungi, monera, Protista, become the domains of eukarya, bacteria, and archaea.

Given the need to preserve the biome, what can be done to alleviate the extinction rates? Wilson, after consultation with other conservationists, came up with a list of best spots where biodiversity may still be saved.

Wilson addresses the questions regarding what will become of humans if large areas are set aside for nature. He writes of increased efficiencies, reduced consumption, robotics. Something like those ideas expressed in *The Second Machine Age*.

An Evening with Richard Dawkins by Traci Bickell

Richard Dawkins came to Colorado. A few of us got together to attend the sold out program. We waited in the rain in a line that went around the building at the Boulder Theater from 5:30 pm to be sure to get seats together as it was open seating. Only a few of the Jefferson Humanists were able to attend.

The program was not a book tour promoting a new book by Mr. Dawkins. He spoke with a guest who seemed to act as a go between for subjects that he covered, such as the use of double blind studies for medical efficacy testing. He pointed out that there are many claims of efficacy from Homeopathic "medicines" but without the double blind study the problem of bias can invalidate the data.

After the talk he took questions from the audience. Many asked questions about getting others to understand science and scientific facts surrounding Climate Change, environmental issues and vaccines. He made a point that he was not some wise man with knowledge of the ages, but a Biologist with a lot of knowledge about biology. He reiterated that he is not a sociologist and that many of the questions from the audience were more along the lines of sociological questions such as, "you can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink". I personally asked a similar question that many can claim to be scientist but sometimes do not understand the science they work in. His comment was such that he might question someone with an education from a biblical university. It is okay to question someone's claim to expertise.

As it was a Monday night no one stayed to meet for a drink after, but for those of us that went, it was still an enjoyable evening out.



Hot news from the AHA's Appignani Humanist Legal Center (AHLC) during June: Colorado's own Douglas County School District will be facing the AHA in court, after the Tenth Circuit Court reversed a lower court ruling that the plaintiffs lacked legal standing. In January 2016, the lower court ruled that a parent and child were "not harmed" when solicited at school for donations to a Christian mission project. Apparently the lower court believed that the solicitations were not conspicuous or constant, and thus not harmful, despite the plaintiff's claim that their child was taunted for not participating in the fundraiser. The case will now be heard on the merits as a church-state separation claim. Douglas County School District stated "We stand by our students who choose to freely exercise their religious rights, but are aware of the duties imposed on the School District and its employees by the Constitution's Establishment Clause."

Just one day prior to that news, a US District Court found in favor of the AHA's claim that a cross in a public park in Pensacola, FL was an unconstitutional religious display. The court's opinion is available on the AHA website, and demonstrates the power of the rule of law in deciding issues which Kings and Popes could not have resolved without war. It is an instructive and entertaining read, which I quote here regarding The Lemon Standard:

"To pass constitutional muster under Lemon, a government practice must have (1) a secular purpose; (2) it must neither advance nor inhibit religion in its principal or primary effect; and (3) it must not foster an excessive entanglement with religion. 403 U.S. at 612-13. "If [the challenged government action] violates any of these three principles, it must be struck down under the Establishment Clause."

The opinion points out that the claim of Pensacola's mayor, "I hope there will always be a place for religion in the public square" was a violation of Lemon. Looks like it's summer, and time for some lemonade. Congratulations to the smart dedicated lawyers at the AHLC, and members of AHA for supporting them, as they teach us about the rule of law.

June was Elder Abuse Recognition month and I think the issue is important enough to begin our summer newsletter.

We are facing an enormous problem with elder abuse, which can be physical, psychological, sexual harm, neglect (self-neglect or by a caregiver) or financial exploitation of vulnerable older people. Elder abuse in all its forms is ugly, painful, costly and simply wrong! But the problem is bigger than most people realize. It's seriously under-reported, but an estimated 1 in 10 older people experience some kind of abuse every year.

The most common form of abuse is financial exploitation and is considered "the signature crime of the 21st. century". This crime is perpetrated by family, friends, caregivers and predatory outsiders. This problem is very complex and nearly always "flies under the radar."

Excuses are plentiful, as is a lack of awareness and preparation. It gets excused ("She bruises easily"), rationalized ("he was going to inherit that money anyway") or simply missed by good people in a position to help but don't know what to look for or how to intervene.

Elder abuse has devastating and far-reaching health consequences and triples the risk of premature death, compared to a group of older adults with similar medical problems who do not experience abuse. Compared with their peers, victims of elder abuse are also three times more likely to be admitted to the hospital and four times more likely to be admitted to a nursing home.

If there is any good news, it is that elder abuse has become the domain of increasing scientific scrutiny, with more research, education and awareness in the past twenty years. In an arena like this, where health care, finances, the law and social services intersect, knowledge is power and empowerment is a big part of the solution.

No victim of abuse is ever to blame for mistreatment, but it is true that some people are at increased risk.



As a group, women suffer disproportionately more from abuse and may suffer more physical and psychological damage from it. The older people are, the higher their risk. Other at-risk groups include people who are socially isolated; people who need a lot of help with the activities of daily living, such as bathing, dressing or using the bathroom; people with disabilities; people who live with someone with mental illness or substance abuse issues; and people with mental impairments or dementia. The last group, those with cognitive problems, face considerable risk that gets even greater if their disease causes them to “act out” with difficult behaviors.

Who are the abusers? 90% of elder abuse and neglect is perpetrated by someone well known to the victim, usually family members, especially grown children or spouses. There is no excuse for such behavior. It demands the full available range of prevention and intervention.

Culture counts: Culture always makes a difference and presents another layer of complexity and nuance for anyone seeking to help. In Chinese-American populations, for instance, psychological abuse, such as disrespect, cursing and ignoring, is considered worse than physical abuse. Chinese older adults living in Western countries have the highest suicide rate of any ethnic group in the United States, due in part, to a sense of shame and stigma.

Health professionals: Health care professionals are not solely responsible for letting abuse continue unreported. But there is clearly more they can do, including conversations with patients and educating themselves on resources available. Research shows that nearly 60% of clinicians polled, indicated they had never asked elderly patients about abuse.

THIS NEEDS TO CHANGE!

It really takes a village: Elder abuse is truly a problem whose solution will take a village, which in science and social science terms, means an interdisciplinary approach is needed. The goal isn't to “catch it” after it happens, but to prevent it from happening in the first place.

Funding for elder abuse research is extremely low. For example, in 2013, federal agencies spent a total of \$11.9 million for all activities related to elder abuse, while \$649 million was spent for violence against women programs. The lack of funding has stalled plans to conduct a more comprehensive study of elder abuse. Although \$600 million was allocated through the ACA

(Obamacare) none of those funds have been allocated. Even more discouraging is the fact that the ACA is being torn apart and its likely that any existing funding will disappear altogether.

We know that financial, physical and emotional abuse is on the rise, if the number of arrest warrants and abuse complaints are any indication. But even as prosecutors around the country target elder abuse, many cases still go unreported. Why? Some older adults fear if they complain, they will end up in a nursing home which in their mind is a fate worse than death. Those with dementia may not be able to remember they have been abused and studies show more than a third of people with dementia suffer psychological or physical abuse at the hands of people providing their care.

Meanwhile, their natural advocates - family members - live hundreds or thousands of miles away. Perhaps the greatest culprit is that we have a growing elderly population and a burgeoning and virtually unregulated industry of home healthcare workers.

At the moment, there are no federal regulations covering home-care workers other than the broad standards for care provided under Medicaid/Medicare. Only about half of all states require home-care agencies to conduct any sort of training for their employees and just fifteen (15) states require agencies to conduct periodic in home reviews to make sure workers are doing their jobs. Most states require criminal background checks of home-care workers but do not require agencies to check records in other states. These background checks are the very minimum of inquiry. Sadly, many home care agencies charge \$50 or more an hour, but keep a large portion of the profit for themselves rather than investing it in education, training and supervision.

This topic is so complex that it cannot be covered in just one article, so next month we'll take a deeper look at risk factors, interventions in the community as well as Elder Abuse helplines and hotlines. We will also explore the different types of elder abuse in more detail.

Family Court
By Ogden Nash
One would be in less danger
From the wiles of the stranger
If one's own kin and kith
Were more fun to be with

Humanist Perspectives: The Most Hated Woman in America

by Tom Kellogg

Saturday, July 15, 2017, 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM

Jefferson Unitarian Church

"Humanist Perspectives" – A Monthly 3rd Saturday Morning Series with Refreshments.

The Most Hated Woman in America - the story of Madalyn Murray O'Hair

This month we are showing the new Netflix movie about the life and death of Madalyn Murray O'Hair, Founder of American Atheists. It is a well done and suspenseful docudrama, mostly true. O'Hair was the first person ever to go on National TV during the 1970's to proclaim that Christianity and religion in general are nothing more than made up lies and fairy tales. This was outrageous and shocking to people at the time, and earned her death threats as well as a following that donated lavishly to her cause. She and her family were brutally murdered in 1995, but by who and why? Come see the movie to find out.

Before the movie, we'll show a 4-minute documentary, which is an introduction to a 50 minute documentary done a few years back, about O'Hair's life, work and death, also quite fascinating and highly recommended. Madalyn Murray O'Hair was a true American trailblazer, and also the Most Interesting Woman in America.

Please RSVP through Meetup at [Meetup JH-Most Hated](#), to Jim Bole (randjbole@gmail.com), or Tom Kellogg (kellogg52@gmail.com), so we have an estimate of food and drinks required.

The Jefferson Humanists Chapter of the American Humanist Association is very pleased to offer a regular explorations series on 3rd Saturdays, 10-12 AM, at Jefferson Unitarian Church (JUC). Each session will be slightly different and include several segments to showcase aspects of Humanism through a presentation, videos, movies, forums and explorations, followed by discussions. We will include time for participants to socialize and get acquainted, in keeping with our chapter goal of building community.

Jeffco Political Action Task Force

by Ralph Hughes

Next Meeting

Monday, July 24, 2017, 5:45 to 8pm

Infinitus Pies (Pizza), 5807 W. 38th Ave, Wheat Ridge
2 blocks east of Harlan on 38th Ave, between

Wadsworth and Sheridan

Order your meal ahead of time! (720) 287-5915 or

<http://infinituspie.com>

Agenda:

- Over 1,200 copies of the Rational Inquirer have been distributed...let's hear where people dropped them off
- Story conference to set topics for our next issue's three news pages...we now have a cartoonist!
- Training on the ActionNetwork electronic platform for petitions and protest events

JH's Jeffco Political Action Taskforce (JPAT) is in high gear now. We have uncovered a powerful combination of strategy, technology, and alliances. All we need now is greater participation from Jefferson Humanist to make this group a serious force on the Colorado political landscape.

First, JPAT has aligned itself with People Demanding Action (PDAction), the grassroots group that recruited Bernie Sanders to run. We can revoke this alliance at any time, but to date it has generated important benefits, including an information technology platform that we could never duplicate ourselves. Using PDAction's platform we can create national petition-signing campaigns such as those used by MoveOn.org. The platform will also automatically send our opinion pieces to the inboxes of a wide collection of newspapers, giving us automated letter-to-the-editor capabilities. Moreover, we can send out the call for protest events and fund raising efforts, greatly amplifying our reach. Before we joined forces with PDAction, we had only 250 people on our mailing lists. In concert with PDAction, we now have the address for 6,000 activists in Colorado alone.

Second, JPAT is publishing 3,500 copies the first edition of its tabloid, the Rational Inquirer, on Sunday, June 25. The cover of this inaugural issue will sport the blended visages of Trump and Putin with a headline asking "Who's Running the Country?"

Inside are articles highlighting how the current President is quickly losing support even among Republican voters, plus other news focusing upon recent, big gains in green energy, and how many resistance groups are now using Tea Party strategies against the G.O.P.

JPAT's current tabloid squad only has eight people at this time, so we need help in distributing this first issue. We plan to use "guerilla distribution" techniques; we will leave a copy in a shopping cart when we go to the store, on a table when we visit a library, on a seat when we ride light rail or the bus, and near the front door of every restaurant and coffee shop we patronize. We also plan to make the back page of the tabloid ready-to-change, so that other resistance groups around the country can easily customize each issue for their local events and meetings, then print and distribute it around their home turf. When enough people around the U.S. start regularly seeing a tabloid asking why the U.S. leader is so inconsistent, reactionary, and heavy handed, we hope it will manifest as a cultural-level force that convinces swing voters to select their representatives far more carefully next time.

With the new PDAction platform and the tabloid, JPAT is poised to make a big difference. But we desperately need greater participation from the JH membership. Perhaps you could join one of our committees, such as the tabloid's opinion page editors, or the guerilla distribution network? Given our expanded electronic reach, we should be calling for street protests and letter writing campaigns, but we've been so busy putting together the platform, we haven't thought about what exactly we want to say and what policies we want to demand. Why not join our Social Networking committee, figure out Jefferson Humanist's national policy agenda, and send out a call for action? Now that we have a hefty hammer in our hands, we need to start swinging. We meet in person on the fourth Mondays of every month, and online all the time. Reach us through our website—actiontaskforce.org—or contact me at ralph.hughes@yahoo.com.

Barack Obama recently said in Italy that "Americans get the politicians they deserve." If Jefferson Humanists sit back during this era of aggravated populism and do nothing to channel a demand for rational government, then yes, we do deserve what we get and cannot gripe about how our children and grandchildren are going to suffer when the current administration finishes dismantling the past 75 years of progressive institutions. Join the JPAT group today

and do not leave this Earth without making a difference.

The image shows the cover of a tabloid titled "RATIONAL Inquirer" with the subtitle "Free Speech from the Center". The main headline is "Who's Running the Country?". Below this, it says "Republicans Turning Against Trump" and "APPROVAL POLLS SINK TO 40%". There are also smaller headlines: "Swalwell (D-CA): Trump has surrounded himself with people who do business with and are sympathetic to Russia." and "Reveal tax returns or forget reelection! Bills now in 25 states". A QR code is present with the text "Third Quarter 2017" and "actiontaskforce.org". A small photo of Royce Williams is in the top right corner.

The Curious Incident of Some Humanists at a Play

by Matthew Elisha

Nine Jefferson Humanists members enjoyed a Thursday evening out at the theater when we went to see *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time* at the Denver Center for the Performing Arts. Adapted from the best-selling book by Mark Haddon, this Tony and Olivier award winning play tells the story of young Christopher Boone, a 14 year old with autism, who resolves to solve the mystery of the death of Wellington, his neighbor's dog. As he investigates the murder, Christopher uncovers a greater mystery than he expects and ventures outside his comfort-zone of home and school.

The production does an excellent job of conveying Christopher's challenges and helps the audience see and feel how he can be overwhelmed by sensory overload, represented by flashing lights, pounding music, and cacophony of sounds. The set is sparse, consisting of three walls and the floor all done in cross patterns reminiscent of the holodeck on *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. Through LED lights embedded

in this grid, digital projection and laser lights, the set creates an impression of Christopher's travels among the houses of his neighbors to his school to the train (and later) tube station and to his parents' homes. (A dramatic rescue of his beloved pet rat Toby is especially suspenseful, making the viewer truly fear for Christopher's safety, conveyed expertly through lights and sounds representing the threat of an oncoming subway train.) The actors all were excellent, especially Adam Langdon who played Christopher.

Humanists' members attending were Traci Bickell, Matthew Elisha, Nancy Bolt, Bob Hofmann, Marc Levy, Arlene Levy, Lindy Baer, Robin Baer and Carole Hughes. All agreed that the play was excellent and a respectful retelling of the book. I think they would agree that an evening at the theater is something we'll have to do again very soon.

Jefferson Humanists/Secular Hub March in Denver Pride Fest

by Nancy Bolt

Jefferson Humanists and Secular Hub members joined forces to staff a booth and march in the PrideFest parade. Secular Hub sponsored the booth and it was staffed by members of both groups. One interesting activity was a big board with the Dawkins Scale on it. The Dawkins Scale asked people to rate themselves on a scale from absolute atheist to absolute theist. People were intrigued by the scale and stopped by to put their own preferences on it. Most fell on the left side, leaning toward atheist. Many young people wanted to know where to sign if they did not believe in god but were spiritual. One Mormon stopped by and signed on the theist side. He stayed to talk and asked how we explained evil if there was no Satan. We told him there were just some bad people! He was very interested in us.

On Sunday, 22 Jefferson Humanists and Secular Hub members marched in the PrideFest parade. Nancy Bolt arrived loaded down with beads and flags to share with the marchers.

It was a pleasure to cooperate with Secular Hub on this effort. We look forward to working together on more projects.

Following the parade, the Hofmann/Bolts, Bickell/Elisa's and Kellogg's enjoyed a celebratory lunch.



Jefferson Humanist Pride Marchers



Bob Hofmann and Matthew Elisha Carry the Banner



JH & Denver Secular Groups Join for Pride Parade



Bolt/Hofmann, Bickell/Elisha and Kelloggs share lunch following the parade

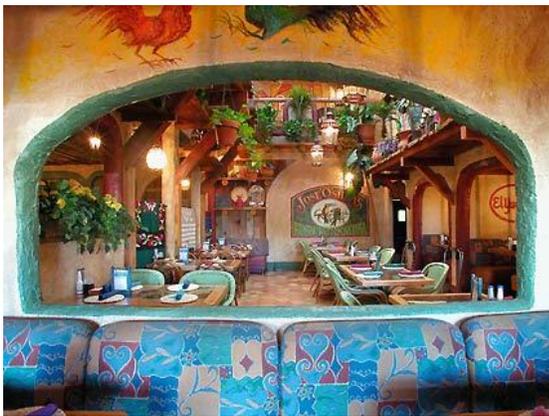
Monthly Dinner Social - Jose O'Shea's Fine Mexican Dining in Lakewood
by Tom Kellogg

Wednesday, July 19, 7:00 PM

Jose O'Shea's

385 Union Boulevard, Lakewood, CO

(Take 6th Avenue Freeway to Union/Simms Exit and go 2 blocks south)



Join your fellow Humanists and Heathens for an evening of dinning and comradery at Jose O'Shea's Mexican Restaurant in west Lakewood? The food is good with dinners starting around \$8.50. We'll be located in the lower indoor patio area, under the name Jefferson Humanists. Jose O'Shea's has been around for a long time, and is a local favorite cantina.

Please RSVP at [Meetup JH-Social Dinner 7-19](#) or contact Tom Kellogg at kellogg52@gmail.com, by Tuesday, 7/18 so we can give the restaurant a head count.



This event takes place on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 7:00 pm. We'll try new places and come back to our favorites.

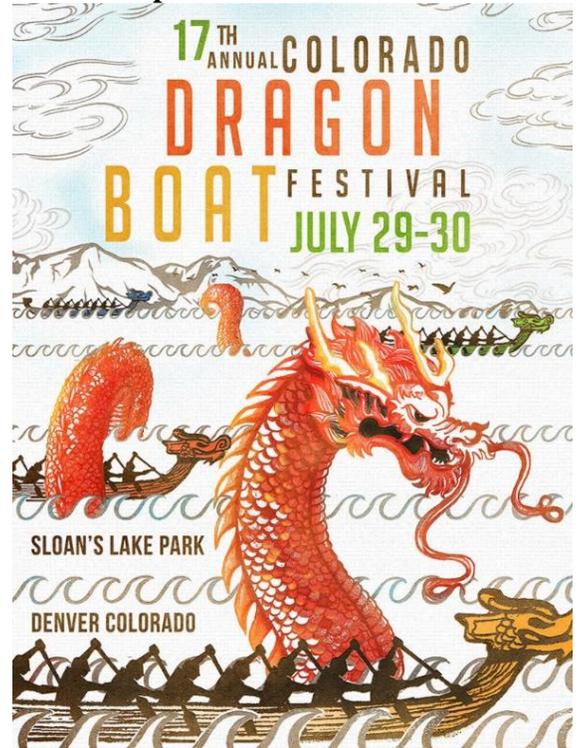
Jefferson Humanists Monthly Walk/Hike with 2 Levels of Challenge

Dragon Boat Festival, Sloan Lake

Saturday, July 29, 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM

Sloan Lake, Sheridan at 25th Ave, Denver, CO

Meet at the pier on the north side of the lake



NOTE: The August Hike will be one week earlier on July 29th.

If you like walking and enjoying the splendor of nature, we invite you to join us for our monthly nature walk/hike with two routes, each with a different level of challenge. It is a great chance to get some exercise while enjoying the company of your fellow humanists.

News from our Members

On July 29th, we're going to attempt something different and fun, and walk around Sloan Lake during the 2017 Colorado Dragon Boat Festival. This is a big event with dragon boat races, Asian food vendors, arts and crafts, and more. The slow walkers may just want to wander around the festival, while the more ambitious ones will hike all the way around the lake. We'll meet at the base of the pier on the north side of Sloan Lake at 9:00 am. You are on your own to find parking or to make arrangements for carpooling from JUC by using the discussion board on Meetup or contacting Tom Kellogg at kellogg52@gmail.com. Parking options include in the Hood around Sloan Lake, or at Mile High Stadium, where parking is \$5 per car with a free shuttle. Sloan Lake is on the east side of Sheridan between 17th and 25th Avenues. The pier is a few blocks east of Sheridan on Byron Place, which is equivalent to 25th Ave. Please watch for any updates as the plans may evolve, especially regarding parking and carpooling issues. Go to [Meetup JH-Hike Dragon Boat](#)

Make sure to bring a water bottle and wear light comfortable clothes with good walking shoes. Bring sunscreen and a hat. We also encourage you to bring a picnic lunch or purchase some Asian food that can be enjoyed with your fellow walkers after the hike.

About the Monthly Walk/Hike

This is a recurring event that will be held on the 1st Saturday of each month, unless specified, at different scenic locations. The time of day may change during different seasons. In the summer, we may walk in the early evenings. We will always split into two groups by level of challenge or interest.

One group will do an easy, slow "walk" of about a mile that is cane-friendly, and suitable for young kids. There will be stops along the way to study the natural beauty.

The other group sets out on a vigorous "hike" of about 2 to 3 miles at a much faster pace. Both groups will time their adventures to end up at the starting place around the same time, with not more than 1.5 hours of actual trail time. This will make carpooling and socializing easier.

"Nature's peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into trees. The winds will blow their own freshness into you, and the storms their energy, while cares will drop off like autumn leaves." - John Muir, Our National Parks.

Check out Heathen Embroidery

Jefferson Humanist member Tom Kellogg has started a custom embroidery business that makes custom embroidered hats, shirts and other apparel at very competitive prices. Visit his website at:

<https://www.heathenembroidery.com/>

Craft Faire at Jefferson Unitarian Church, Saturday July 8th

Support Jefferson Humanist members Nancy Bolt and Bob Hofmann as they sell jewelry at JUC, 14350 W. 32nd Ave, Golden, Saturday, July 8th 9am to 5pm. It also supports JUC, the church that provides us space for our meetings.

Editors' Note

We've been traveling. As you know, your intrepid editors combined the May and June issues of the JH Newsletter because of our travels. So this July issue will be larger than usual, covering all the great activities that JH did for two months. Thanks go to all of our regular contributors who wrote twice the number of articles for this issue.

One of our travels took us to Charleston, South Carolina to the American Humanist Association annual conference. We took copious notes and plan on producing a special issue of JH Newsletter to cover the conference. We hope you will feel as if you were there. Look for it later in mid-July.

Schedule of Regular Chapter Gatherings

Jefferson Humanists has several interesting Chapter Gatherings each month. We hope you will join us for any and all:

Board of Directors Meetings: 2nd Thursdays 4-6 PM, normally Jefferson Unitarian Church

FROG Book Discussions: 2nd Saturdays 2-4 PM Various locations – see Meetup

Dinner Socials: 3rd Wednesdays 7 PM, See Meetup for location

Chapter Nature Walks – First Saturdays. See Page 11 above for details about this new event

Chapter Programs: 4th Sundays 5 PM normally
Jefferson Unitarian Church. See above for August and September

Humanist Perspectives: JUC 10am - noon

Legislative Action: Watch for location announcements. See announcement on page 8

Note: Gathering details and RSVP choices may also be found at [meetup.com/jeffcohumanists](https://www.meetup.com/jeffcohumanists)

***IMPORTANT:** If you have a change of contact information or would like to be removed from this email list, please reply via the form in the body of the email to which this newsletter was attached.*

Coeditors: Nancy Bolt and Bob Hofmann



Loving Humanity

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