

Vote Vote Vote Vote Vote Vote November 7

November 2017
Issue 10.04

Jefferson Humanists

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

CURRENT PROGRAMS

November Program “Jefferson County Landmarks” Tom "Dr. Colorado" Noel

Dr. Noel's talk will be an overview of Jefferson County's many landmarks from Golden's Welcome Arch to the Sculptured House, from Red Rocks to Conifer, from JCRS to Mount Olivet. Prof. Tom "Dr. Colorado" Noel will argue that amid rapid growth it is vital that JeffCo preserve some of its historical treasures.

Thomas Jacob Noel is a Professor of History and Director of Public History, Preservation & Colorado Studies at the University of Colorado Denver. Tom is the author or co-author of 50 books and many articles. He was a longtime Sunday columnist for *The Denver Post* and the *Rocky Mountain News*. He appears regularly as “Dr. Colorado” on Channel 9’s “Colorado & Company.” Starting in 2009, he became the Co-Director of the Center for Colorado Studies at the Denver Public Library.



Take Note: Our November meeting will begin 30 minutes earlier than usual for the election of officers

When: Sunday November 26, 4:30pm
Where: Jefferson Unitarian Church
14350 West 32nd Ave., Golden, CO

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BE SURE TO RSVP FOR the 11/26 DINNER

barbaile@aol.com or 303-979-0508

<https://www.meetup.com/JeffcoHumanists/events/242975727/>

Tom completed his B.A. at the University of Denver and his M.A. and Ph.D. at CU-Boulder where his mother (a psychiatrist) and grandmother (a teacher) also did their graduate work. Please check Tom's website: www.dr-colorado.com for a full resume and updated list of his books, classes, tours and talks. Tom's latest books including *A Short History of Denver, Denver Landmarks & Historic Districts*. His book, *Colorado: A Historical Atlas* won three prizes as the best regional history book of 2016.

Carter Wilson Speaks to Jefferson Humanists October Chapter Program, October 22, 2017

Carter Wilson, author of the *Revelation*, winner of the Colorado Humanist Award in the Thriller category, spoke to 40 JH members about his book and his writing style. Wilson describe his writing style as "panster" meaning he doesn't plan his plots in advance but rather writes from the seat of his pants, beginning with an idea and then letting the characters take the plot forward. He began his writing career sitting bored in a college class, and began to doodle ideas and thought of a scenario: what if three people died in three parts of the world? What might have connected them? Three weeks later he had written 300 pages. It took him two years to find an agent who would take him on and that book never sold; neither did the next five that he wrote. He finally was able to sell his sixth book, *A Boy in the Woods*, and his writing career had begun.



Revelation is his sixth book. It is the story of a young man, Harden, who wakes up in on a dirt floor, having been beaten, with his friend's dead body next to him, and the only items in the room a table, a chair, an old typewriter, a stack of blank paper, and a note saying, "Tell me a story." Earlier in the year, Harden had accepted a new roommate, Coyote, who turned out to be a psychopath. Coyote decided he wanted to see if he could create a new religion, with himself as the leader, and control people. He wants Harden to be his diarist, to record every aspect of how he starts the religion and to be his first disciple. Over time, as Coyote becomes drunk with his own power, Harden resists and ends up on the dirt floor with the typewriter and paper. Harden realizes that his only way of escape is to weave a story that will catch Coyote's interest and get him released. The book alternates between Harden's time in prison and flashbacks to Coyote's efforts to develop his religion as recorded by Harden in the pages he writes for Coyote to read.

Throughout the book Wilson shows disdain for religion in his writings with comments such as: "The hard part isn't believing in a god. The hard part is choosing the right one to follow" and "Your whole concept about starting a religion? It's not hard at all? There's no revelation, you know. It's all the power of suggestion?" In his presentation, however, Wilson said he believes



people should be left alone to believe whatever they want and what ever gives them comfort. The audience for the program had lively questions about Wilson’s writing style; his life beyond writing (he runs a hospitality business consulting firm); and if his description of Coyote was related to characteristics associated with our current US President. (See more about this later under the FROG discussion.)



Wilson has a new book coming out in January, *Mr. Tender’s Girl*, another thriller. In addition to a major PR campaign about the book, it has also been optioned as a movie. After dinner, Wilson sold copies of *Revelation* and joined us for wine and dinner and extended conversation.

JOIN US FOR THE JH ANNUAL SEASONAL CELEBRATION

Save the date! December 30, at JUC.

**Join us for
Great Food
Singing Seasonal Songs
Entertainment
Merrymaking
Seasonal beverages**

Watch for more in the December issue.



**Jefferson Humanists Book Discussion Group
(FROG: Freethinkers Reading Opportunity Group)**



The Jefferson Humanists reading group continues apace, adding 2 new members in October. If you enjoy reading and discussing books and stimulating topics, consider joining our group. We typically meet on the 2nd Saturday or Sunday of the month at a local public library. We currently have around 30 FROG

members with around 12-16 attend every meeting. If our success continues, we might even consider starting a second reading group.

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).

Date: Sunday, November 12th

Time: 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM

Reading Assignment: *Debunk it: How to stay sane in a world of misinformation* by John Grant

Facilitator: Traci Bickell

Location: Arvada Library, 7525 W. 57th Ave., Arvada

Date: Saturday, December 9th

Time: 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM

Reading Assignment: *The Righteous Mind: Why good people are divided by politics & religion* by Jonathan Haidt

Facilitator: Ralph Hughes

Location: Lakewood Library, 20th & Miller, Lakewood

Upcoming schedule:

- January 10th – Topic: The Enlightenment – Read a book about the Enlightenment (“the Age of Reason”, 1685 – 1815), written during that era or about a major enlightenment thinker.
- February 10th – *Lamb: The Gospel according to Biff, Christ’s childhood friend* by Christopher Moore
- March 10th – *The Political Mind: Why you can’t understand 21st century American politics with an 18th-Century brain* by George Lakoff
- April 14th – *Trust us, We’re Experts: How industry manipulates science and gambles with your future* by John Stauber



***REVELATION* by Carter Wilson A Report of the October FROG Discussion by Nancy Bolt**

Carter Wilson’s award winning book, *Revelation*, was the featured speaker at the October Chapter Program. To prepare for the presentation, the FROG JH Book Club read his book. The book had a mixed reaction from the participants. Some indicated they don’t usually like thrillers and some that they don’t usually read fiction. However the book prompted a lively discussion.

The theme of the book is how to start a religion – a theme of interest to most atheists. Carter describes convincingly what attracts people to religion; a need for comfort, something to believe in outside themselves, a desire to be part of something bigger than themselves. A complaint about the book is that, while Carter describes **that** he plans on recruiting up to 1000 students and community members to his new religion, there are few details on **how** he does it.

There was also considerable discussion about the relationship between the psychopath Coyote and our current President. Some comments describing Coyote were: “Coyote demands devotion;” “You’ll need to tell him how beautiful and brilliant he is every few days, maybe more often;” “He was bored and needed to stir up some excitement to make his evening feel complete;” “If someone hurts you, hurt them back. It doesn’t have to be complicated;” and “I’m the perfect fucking messiah.” Wilson said that he had not consciously made a connection between President Trump, but he recognized the similarity.

That led to a discussion if politics can be like a religion, with some arguing that yes, adulation of a political figure can be like a religion, and others saying no, a religion required a belief in a supernatural being.

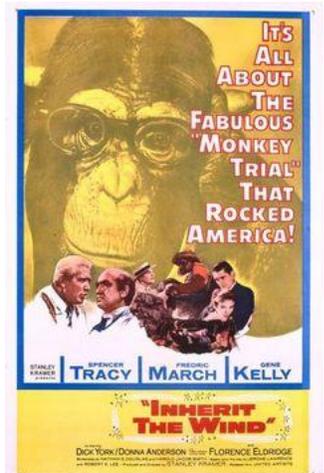
Another statement made by Coyote in the book is: “The point I’m making is that it’s human nature to yearn for something bigger than one’s self. To believe in something after death, something to give hope to the hopeless? To believe there’s a greater purpose that what we can just see and feel in our time alive. It doesn’t really matter what outlet a person uses go get there as long as they get there, you see? It doesn’t matter what they believe in, so long as they simply believe?” The discussion revolved around if this applied to atheists and humanists. Some felt it applied only to those who believed in a god. Others felt it did apply to atheists and humanists in that many of us believe that we can make a difference for the future, make the world better, and leave a legacy after our death; that what we believe in is that we have the power to make a difference.

Another Coyote comment was: “It’s a sense of belonging that drives people to faith.” The group discussed whether the strength of a group like Jefferson Humanists could be built on building a community, without the supernatural belief associated to religions.

Personally, I enjoyed the book very much and also the presentation by Wilson at the Chapter Meeting. I went on to read two more of Wilson’s books and find them to be intriguing and well-written.

Humanist Perspectives is Showing a Great Classic Movie Inherit the Wind Starring Spencer Tracy by Tom Kellogg

Saturday, November 18th at 10:00 AM, at the Jefferson Unitarian Church, we’re showing *Inherit the Wind*, made in 1960. This ground-breaking movie is still relevant today. It is a dramatization of the actual 1925 Scopes Monkey Trial and takes place in Tennessee where the teaching of Darwin and evolution was banned in public schools. Spencer Tracy won the Best Actor Oscar for his performance as Henry Drummond, the well-known defense lawyer for John Scopes, played by Dick York, on trial for the crime of teaching evolution in a public high school. Fredric March was the famous Bible-toting prosecution lawyer, played by Fredric March. Gene Kelly played Judge Mel Coffey. Scopes was convicted but only had to pay a \$100 fine. The trial became a worldwide sensation and paved the way for evolution to become accepted as a mainstream subject in schools. The movie also stars Gene Kelly as the reporter who would go on to write the book on which the movie was based.



If there is time after the movie, we can discuss current challenges for getting evolution universally accepted. For more details and to RSVP, go to the Meetup announcement at <https://www.meetup.com/JeffcoHumanists/events/243846980/>

**Humanist Heathen Happy Hour with the Secular Hub
Was a Big Success
Next Happy Hour, November 15, 6pm
Teller Taproom and Kitchen
by Tom Kellogg**

The first event was very cool. On Wednesday October 18th at 6:00 pm, at least 20 people from both the Jefferson Humanists and the Denver Secular Hub got together for a collaboration event at First Draft Taproom & Kitchen, just north of Downtown Denver. This was more fun than Heathens should be allowed to have. Both groups mingled well and enjoyed meeting other like-minded folks.

The collaboration between the two groups is opening doors. Members of the Hub would like to see more Humanist events there. Humanists of Colorado, which used to meet at the Hub, has become inactive. This is an opportunity for JH to do further collaborations with the Hub and even work together on doing events with them. This could attract new members to JH and build a lasting relationship with the Hub.

First Draft Taproom & Kitchen is an amazing place, where high-tech meets tap house. And the best part is that you pour your own, however much or little you want. Even better, there are 40 taps to choose from. You taste as many different brews as you want. There are also a few hard ciders on tap and some wines. Of course, there are non-alcoholic beverages and the food is pretty good, too. We had the entire upstairs mezzanine to ourselves.



Here is how First Draft works: You show the cashier your credit card and/or ID and are handed an electronic card that you rub on the plaque above the tap you want to pour until a green light goes on. Pour as much as you want and the amount is recorded. You pay for the total ounces poured.

The Humanist Heathen Happy Hour takes place on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 6:00 pm. We'll try new places and come back to our favorites. The next event is on November 15th at the same location. Go to <https://www.meetup.com/JeffcoHumanists/> for more information and to RSVP.

**Don't Miss the Last Monthly Walk/Hike of the Season
Clear Creek Trail in West Wheat Ridge
Saturday, November 4th at 10:00 AM
by Tom Kellogg**

For the last hike of the season, we'll return to our favorite hiking spot. It goes along the Clear Creek Trail open space corridor between Youngfield and Kipling. This is a truly amazing natural wonder tucked right

in the city, but you don't even know the city is even there. This section of the trail has it all - Forest, lakes, secluded side trails, and of course a creek. It is easy walking the whole way.

We'll meet at the Clear Creek Trail Head on Youngfield, south of 44^h Avenue, located at 4130 Youngfield Street in Wheat Ridge. It is north of the King Soopers shopping center on the east side of Youngfield. After the walk, we'll meet somewhere nearby for lunch.

Make sure to bring a water bottle and wear comfortable clothes with good walking shoes. Bring sunscreen and a hat. For more information contact Tom Kellogg at kellogg52@gmail.com or call his cell phone at (720) 808-2825. To see the Meetup announcement, go to

<https://www.meetup.com/JeffcoHumanists/events/243196728/>



We'll take a break for the 4 most wintery months and start up again on April 7th. This is a recurring event that is usually 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 may sometimes split into two groups by level of challenge or interest. After the hike, we will meet at a local hangout or have a picnic.

"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.

Jeffco Political Action Taskforce by Ralph Hughes

In conjunction with Common Cause and Represent.us, and support from Jefferson Humanists, the Jeffco PAT is holding a "Learn about the American Anti-Corruption Act" event at 1pm this Saturday, November 4th at the Lakewood Library.

The Swamp Never Went Away

But we the citizens can still fix it!
Reform the system from the bottom-up.

People just like you are getting together to support the
American Anti-Corruption Act



Text "AACA" to 444-999 to join the effort!

Sat, November 4th, 2017 ♦ 1:00 PM – 2:30 PM
Lakewood Library ♦ 10200 W 20th Ave, Lakewood, CO 80215

The swamp never went away as promised! Given the 2010 Citizens United decision, special-interest money in politics now rules the U.S. more than ever. But citizens like you and me have figured out something we can do about it--and "end around" on Citizens United.

We've drafted a bill called the American Anti-Corruption Act (AACA), and citizen groups across the country are now busy getting it passed at the local level. The AACA will redefine the meaning of corruption and end the

"pay for play" system that currently rules Washington D.C. We've got to start getting this bill submitted and passed in our cities, counties, and states.

At our Nov 4th event, we will have three powerful speakers before breaking into local-action workshops:

- 2) Common Cause: "How special interests commandeers our legislators"
- 1) Represent.Us: "What is the American Anti-Corruption Act?"
- 3) Colorado rep. Joe Salazar: "Structuring local AACAs to be effective and constitutional"

One of the best things about focusing upon anti-corruption acts is the support we are receiving from people on both sides of the political divide. Everyone's equally fed up with the system we've got. Ending political corruption is an issue that can unite us again.

Space is limited, so register through <https://www.meetup.com/JeffcoHumanists/>, Facebook, or EventBrite to reserve a seat. Eager to help out? No need to wait: Text "AACCA" to 444-999 to get involved.

Social Responsibility with Jefferson Humanists by Carole Hughes

A devotion to social responsibility is part of the mission of our Chapter. Consider joining with other Jefferson Humanists to organize regular community service activities. Contact Carole Hughes at cathug51@yahoo.com or 303 234-1304.



Eighteen Chapter Members spent a lovely October morning at a warehouse packing groceries for The Action Center. Working in an assembly line, we packed and loaded 420 boxes for distribution to families in need.

Eighteen Jefferson Humanists Pack Groceries for Families in Need

Donate Toiletry Items at Monthly JH Chapter Meetings

Thank you for your continued generosity. We've been collecting hygiene items for three months now. As of our October meeting, we've donated over three hundred items to The Action Center. Please keep bringing personal hygiene necessities (shampoo, conditioner, soap, toothpaste, floss, toothbrushes, lotion etc.) to Chapter Meetings and we'll see that they are donated to The Action Center, a local non-profit organization that provides basic human needs and pathways to self-sufficiency for residents of Jefferson County and the homeless. Any size toiletries will be useful. Bathroom tissue and disposable razors are also helpful. Look for the donations box at the Chapter Meetings.



Every time I turn on the news..... by Mari Crowley

When I wrote October's article, I really thought November's would provide follow up information on weather preparedness. Then... there was Las Vegas. Mass shootings have become a tragic and frequent part of American life; deaths that shock the soul. At times like this, many of us are drawn to - or cannot avoid - media coverage of the event, trying somehow to understand what has happened.

Please note, this article is not about gun control! What I want to focus on is how do we decompress from the deluge of bad news, bad politics, and natural disasters. There is no escaping what is going on in the world, nor should we stick our heads in the sand and expect it to go away. But we need to learn how to deal with the stress we feel witnessing the event over and over. Whether or not we consciously acknowledge what we are feeling, we need to think about what all this bad news is doing to us.

From around the globe, we hear about terrifying groups conquering and butchering their way across areas of Iraq and Syria. We hear about planes falling out of the sky on what seems to be a weekly basis, hurricanes destroying lives and property and now we've seen a mass shooting in Las Vegas. Oh, by the way, lets not forget London, Belgium, and France. The world, in short, seems to be falling apart. At least that's how it feels to those of us who sit safely at home, watching every bloody moment of it via cable news and social media. This raises an important question: In an age where we can mainline bad news 24/7 if we choose, what's the psychological impact of all this exposure to tragedy at a distance?

Mary McNaughton-Cassill, a professor at the University of Texas, San Antonio and leading researcher on the connection between media consumption and stress, said the current trend of breathless, protracted coverage of tragedy and calamity can be traced back to the Oklahoma City bombings. "That was the first event where it really went viral, 24 hours of news coverage, and now that's become the norm."

Yet here we are, two (2) decades later and news outlets (facing pressure from an endlessly multiplying array of competitors all zeroing in on the same stories), have greater incentive than ever to ramp up their coverage of scary, emotionally wrenching stories. It can be hard not to see media coverage as an "unrelenting flow" of negativity, especially when it's so loudly amplified by social media. Before getting into how this steady, negative information overload effects us, it's important to state what a steady diet of bad news won't do.

According to McNaughton-Cassill it won't give you PTSD, anxiety, or depression if you aren't predisposed towards these conditions. To be fair, causation is tricky here: It may simply be that depressed or anxious people are more likely to seek out bad news and bad news in turn could worsen the effects of these conditions in certain ways.

But for those of us who don't normally experience free floating anxiety or depression, we are affected in different, more subtle ways and those effects could have major long-term impact. This is particularly important for preteens, teens, and seniors.

One of the major effects of all this bad news is that it can lead us to believe things everywhere are falling apart and this in turn makes people feel more threatened. When people feel threatened, it affects their decision making and their politics. We already know from political-psychological research that the more threatened, the more likely we are to support right-wing policies. We all want and need to feel safe.

So how do we fight back against the unnecessary darkening of our outlook that may be occurring every time we glance at our TV or cell phone? Well, the simplest solution is "just turn it off." For some, that may not be so

easy, but we have to make a conscious effort to take a break from the non-stop media coverage of an event. Sitting glued to the TV, computer or cell phone screen won't fix the situation we are witnessing. Getting constant updates may give us the illusion of doing something when we feel helpless, but we'd do better if we took the time to reflect on the event or spent some time with our loved ones.

We all know we can't change the externals, but we can control our consumption. What's most important is getting a handle on why we are anxious and worried. The more you understand your own reaction to the news, the easier it will be to shape your news-consumption habits.

Of course, it's both unrealistic and undesirable to construct bubbles that keep out the world's bad news. But there's a difference between being informed and being obsessive, and its a line that's very easy to accidentally cross in an age when there's so much scary information out there.

Exercise is a proven stress-buster for people of all ages. When you turn off the media flow, take a walk, ride a bike or go for a swim. Remember, leave your phone or headset at home or turned off. For others, you may want to try breathing exercises or meditation. If you have a friend that exercises or walks with you, talk to him/her. They may be having the same feelings you are and its comforting to know others are struggling with the same issues. Talking to someone you trust helps clarify what you are feeling.

In the end, anything that reduces unnecessary stress will make your days more enjoyable. Whatever your approach, fighting stress from media overload is worth the effort.

Need a Celebrant?



Tim and Jennifer are a husband and wife team, creating ceremonies to match your lifestyles, philosophies and values. www.celebratingtimes.com

Tom Kellogg and Evolve Fish Offer Pins and Hats



Humanist Lapel Pin

\$9



Jefferson Humanist Hat

\$18

These High quality items are Available for purchase at monthly meetings and special JH events. Proceeds go to membership building

?Monthly Reader Survey?

Your intrepid editors get to share their opinions all the time. Now it's your turn. We are going to ask a question each month and hope you will send in your answers. nancybolt@earthlink.net

We'll publish them the following month. Here is your first question:

What are the best movies that demonstrate humanism? Send up to three movies and a brief description (two or three sentences) of why you chose those movies?

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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