HUMANISTS OF MINNESOTA
HUMANIST NEWS & VIEWS

Volume 30 Issue 4 April 2016

IN THIS ISSUE

2 President's Column

3 Announcements
Discussion Groups

4 Mar. Chapter Summary

5 HofMn BOD Candidates

6 Bylaws Comm. Report
Save the Date!

7 Contact Information

Saturday
April 16th, 2016

Monthly Chapter Meeting

First Unitarian Society
900 Mt. Curve Drive
Minneapolis

Doors open at 10:00 a.m.
Program 10:20 a.m.-noon

HUMANISM:

A better life for all through education, democracy, free speech, reason, and science, without reliance on arbitrary dogmas, revelations, and faith.

Humanists of Minnesota Chapter Meeting

Minnesota on the Move for Climate Change

by J. Drake Hamilton, Fresh Energy

Saturday, April 16th, 2016

The global climate crisis is in the news every day and there is no question that countries need to take action now. People all over the world are experiencing huge changes that are affecting their environment and daily lives. Last fall President Obama invited Minnesota's own J. Drake Hamilton, the Science Policy Director of Fresh Energy, to the White House to discuss clean energy solutions. In December 2015, 196 countries were represented at the Paris Climate Summit and J. Drake was there representing Fresh Energy.

At our April meeting J. Drake will present Minnesota's best opportunities to address climate change in 2016. She will discuss the Clean Power Plan which brings the first restrictions to carbon pollution from power plants and update us on renewable energy initiatives in Minnesota. She is a gifted speaker and expert on climate change solutions at the state and national levels. Her responsibilities include scientific analysis and policy development of clean energy solutions to global warming that will maximize economic opportunities for the Midwest. She is invited to give more than 50 presentations each year to businesses and civic organizations and frequently appears on television and Minnesota Public Radio as well as in the business press, the Washington Post, the New York Times, and newspapers all across Minnesota.

J. Drake earned her undergraduate and graduate degrees in physical geography at Dartmouth College and the University of Minnesota with emphasis on climatology and water resources. She was an assistant professor at George Washington University and was awarded an international leaders fellowship from the European Union and used the award to study climate policy solutions. Currently she serves on the board of directors of the United States Climate Action Network. Mpls.St.Paul Magazine named J. Drake one of 100 influential people "who make things happen." Last but not least, she is an organic gardener and grows peaches, pears and plums that have won blue ribbons at the Minnesota State Fair. Ω

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

I can't believe I missed it! The 10th annual Earth Hour to shut off lights on March 19th in support of energy conservation and protecting the planet. Me--the avid environmentalist since my youth—who to this day constantly goes around my house *and* other people's houses shutting off lights—welcome or not! It was two days later that I saw the article on the back page of the Strib: *Cities Worldwide Go Dim*. Other Minnesotans apparently missed it, too—and most of the country. New York City gave a nod to this environmental movement (begun in Australia in 2007) by dimming the lights atop the Empire State Building and some billboards in Times Square. I could have been the poster child for this environmental campaign! O.K.—more accurately--the poster *matron*. You can always count on me to turn out the lights.

You see, I was well trained in my youth. There was a time when conservation was the norm—even in the U.S. It had been a strong civic virtue at least through WWII, but social, political and economic events converged after the war to propel America into an age of unbridled consumerism, consumption and excess. Yet conservation remained a stalwart personal value among many poor and working-class families well past mid-century. Being raised by conservative parents in a rural community, I always thought conservation was a conservative value. My parents epitomized that value and instilled it in their children.

How times change! Over the course of a few decades, America became the "Little Shop of Horrors" whose appetite for more stuff was insatiable. Some modest grassroots movements and bi-partisan policy efforts were attempted in the 60s and 70s to curb the appetite of the beast, but a decisive change in our civic values emerged with the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980. He helped bury the value of conservation—at least among conservatives—as he sold the country a Hollywood version of America that still holds sway today. Continuous growth, unregulated excess, maximizing profit and unfettered personal choice are held up as civic virtues of our time. Along with the trope that we—or at least some of us—can have it all. Until we can't.

Now it's mostly progressives who have taken up the banner of conservation given the stark reality of climate change. It is indeed a hard row to hoe these days. Our economic system, our infrastructure design and our social conditioning have trained us to consume as much as we can as fast as we can. We've become addicts. Every day we are able to acquire more and more stuff that makes life easier, more pleasant with more options, so that most of us leave a bigger and bigger carbon footprint with every passing year.

We might dismiss Earth Hour as a useless symbolic gesture to consume less electricity for only *one hour*. But its focus is completely on point. We need to consume less—to actually conserve resources. It is not enough to support renewable energy—important as that is; we also need to consume less energy. It is not enough to eat locally grown foods, grass fed beef or cage-free chickens. We need to waste less food and substantially curb our meat intake. It is not enough to drive a Prius or another fuel-efficient car. We need to drive less, and instead hop on the bus, train, a bike—or even walk—a whole lot more. Of course we should re-use and recycle, but we also must reduce our consumption altogether.

As humanists and environmentalists we accept the responsibility to appeal to our better selves. We pay attention to the issues, we study the facts, we chart a course and then we walk the talk. Often it will happen little by little, hour by hour, day by day as we develop new habits and new passions that befit our changing world. We encourage, support and challenge one another in the process. As humanists we take our commitment to the well-being of all and the sustainability of the planet seriously. We are part of something bigger than ourselves. We have each other and we have allies across the globe.

This year Earth Hour events in China were promoted with the slogan "Consume less. Enjoy more." Let's explore the many ways we can do this together here. Share your ideas. For instance, I've been seriously thinking about taking the pledge for *30 Days of Biking* in April as a way to develop a biking habit—but I'm afraid to commit. Anyone want to join me? In any event, you can at least count on me to always turn out the lights. Ω

Announcements

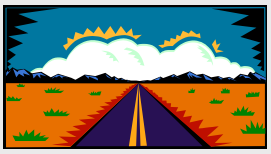
DISCUSSION GROUPS ETC.

2nd Friday 5:00 p.m., *Humanist Happy Hour St. Paul,* Green Mill Restaurant & Bar, 57 Hamline Ave S.
4th Friday 5:00 p.m., *Humanist Happy Hour Minneapolis,* Salsa a La Salsa--2841 Hennepin Ave., Mpls.
2nd Saturday 10:30 a.m., *Blasphemers' Brunch***,** Pizza Luce, 800 W 66th Street, Richfield
2nd Sunday 2:00 p.m., *Sunday Assembly.* First Unitarian Society. 900 Mt. Curve Avenue, Minneapolis.
1st Sunday, 9:00 a.m.-noon, *Lake Superior Freethinkers monthly meeting.* Radisson Hotel Duluth, Viking Room. For information contact Bill van Druten, (218) 724-4176.
1st Sunday, 10:00 a.m.*, Central Minnesota Freethinkers, St. Cloud Coffee Social.* Check their website for details*: cmfreethinkers.org* or contact them at *info@cmfreethinkers.org*
Mondays, 5:00-6:30 p.m., *Atheists for Human Rights Happy Hour,* Ol' Mexico Restaurant, 1754 Lexington Ave., Roseville (just north of Larpenteur). Tables on terrace level. Call Paul Craven, (763) 788-8918.
1st and 3rd Mondays, 6:30 p.m., *Freethought Toastmasters Club*, Larpenteur Estates Party Room, 1276 Larpenteur Ave. W., St. Paul. Contact George Kane, nup@minn.net or (651) 488-8225.
2nd & 4th Mondays, 5:00-7:00 p.m., *Freethought Dinner Social*, Davanni's, 8605 Lyndale Ave So, Bloomington. Call Marilyn Nienkerk, (612) 866-6200.
1st Tuesday, 11:30 a.m.—1:00 p.m., *Freethought Lunch,* Old Country Buffet, County Road B2 between Fairview and Snelling. Call Marilyn Nienkerk, (612) 866-6200.
3rd Wednesday, 11:30 a.m., *Freethought Lunch*, Dragon House, 3950 Central Avenue NE, Columbia Heights. Call Bill Volna, (612) 781-1420.
2nd Thursday, evening, *Rochester Area Freethinkers (RAFT),* Downtown Rochester Public Library, Meeting Room A. Contact Jim Salutz, jsalutz@aol.com or (507) 280-8012.

OTHER EVENTS

2nd Thursday, 7:00 p.m., *Humanists of Minnesota* Board of Directors meeting. Open to all members. Contact Audrey Kingstrom at akingstrom@comcast.net.
Thursdays, 7:00 p.m. (during school year), *Campus Atheists, Skeptics and Humanists (CASH)* general meeting. 3rd floor Coffman Memorial Union, 300 Washington Ave. SE, Minneapolis. Contact cash@cashumn.org.

Check out our Meetup events at
http://www.meetup.com/humanism-166



Spring Highway Cleanup

April 30th

The spring highway cleanup will begin at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, April 30th. We meet at the gas station located in the southeast corner at the intersection of Interstate 35W and Highway 23 (right turn from 35W northbound). This is the last exit on 35W going north before it joins 35E, and is about nine miles north of 35W and I-694. I will bring the trash bags and orange vests, so all you need is appropriate clothing and shoes, and possibly gloves, sunscreen, and insect repellent. We are usually finished by noon and most of us get together for lunch and good conversation at a nearby restaurant.

A big turnout means we finish sooner and have more chance to socialize, so I hope many of you will be able to join us. This is a great opportunity to show Humanists at work on behalf of the community. If you have questions, call me at (651) 319-2753 or email me at smithbranca@gmail.com.

Juliet Branca

Death and Dying Series
First Saturdays of the month (Oct. –June)
Rondo Community Library, St. Paul

April 2nd @ 10:30 am
Being Present with Grief

At our April session we will be joined by guest presenter Joan Apt, Bereavement Coordinator from AseraCare Hospice. The discussion will focus on compassion and comfort in the face of loss, the other side of sadness, resiliency and living mindfully.

This series is designed to help humanists, agnostics, atheists and freethinkers prepare for the final chapter of one's life. Through facilitated discussion, each session focuses on a particular end-of-life issue providing the opportunity to think out loud about our mortality and the pragmatic issues surrounding our impending deaths. For more information about the series, contact Audrey at akingstrom@comcast.net.

"Humanist Views," our weekly Cable program, airs at **6:30 p.m. Mondays** on MTN Channel 75.

March Chapter Meeting

"Work/Life Balance"

Summarized by Nathan Curland and Scott Lohman

44 members and friends came to the March Chapter Meeting to hear Benjamin Stafford, a PhD student in Business Administration at the University of Minnesota, discuss the status/trends of *Work/Life Balance* in the United States.

Stafford began by noting that work/life balance can be discussed in terms of three work domains: the individual level, the organizational level, and the societal level. He went on to ask "What is Work?" From an academic analysis, work can be categorized into a 2x2 matrix consisting of the four boxes that arise from the combination of paid/unpaid and inside-the-home/outside-the-home. John Budd, in his book *The Thought of Work*, listed 11 characterizations of work: A Curse; Freedom; A Commodity; Occupational Citizenship; Disutility (a leisure/work tradeoff calculation); Personal Fulfillment; A Social Relation; Caring for Others; Identity; or Service.

The next question is "What is Work/Life Balance?" One definition, from the Society of Human Resource Managers, is: "Having a measure of control over when, where and how individuals work, leading to them being able to enjoy an optimal quality of life… for the mutual benefit of individuals, business and society." Research by those studying the field has identified a number of factors that affect work/life balance. - Conflict between family and work which causes an imbalance. – Individual differences such as psychological states or preferences. – Employer practices which prescribe interventions or policies. Furthermore, there are influences at the societal level which are often embedded in laws. Examples are: The Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 and subsequent legislation which, among other things, defined how overtime is to be paid and put regulations in place on wages, family medical leave and parental leave.

However, all aspects of work/life balance, especially in the US, are evolving. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has issued a report that the US is now 29th out of 36 countries surveyed when it comes to healthy work/life balance, and is 32nd out of 36 for time employees have for personal care. The US is one of the few countries that has no national paid leave policy. Nor does it have a program to reduce poverty among working families or invest in early childhood development.

Going hand in hand with these issues is the evolving nature of careers. Today's workers in the US can expect to have had 10-14 jobs by the time they reach age 38. In parallel to this is the rise of a workers-as-contractors movement (the "gig" economy). Furthermore, they face increasing competition from the rise of global talent. All these factors put stress on individuals affecting their work/life balance.

Jobs, job design, and organizational design are also evolving in ways that affect work/life balance. Organizations are becoming flatter which leads to broader individual job responsibilities. The use of Teams as the unit of labor diffuses or even confuses an individual's job function. Contracting work out means that the firm is more interested in the result rather than in the process and therefore has less invested in the contractor work/life balance.

Stafford noted that many areas have been understudied by researchers with respect to work/life balance: volunteerism; retirement; small business (most studies have been done on large corporations with easily accessible data); or the impact of life events. On the positive side, new frontiers are being tackled at the public policy level. Need for a "living wage" is being discussed at the state/city level. More regulation of overtime is being reviewed. Changes in how health care is being delivered are being discussed. Whether these will pass the hurdles of the political process is, of course, not known.

The presentation and Q&A session was followed by an excellent Italian-themed lunch organized by Mark Thoson and Poldi Gerard. Ω

Highlights from the Board

by Juliet Branca Secretary

From the March board meeting:

- The candidates for the board to be presented to the members at the March Chapter meeting. (See pages 5,6)
- The board approved an expenditure of $190 for registration fees to participate in the May Day Festival, and the Pride Festival.
- Spring Highway Cleanup date was approved for April 30th.

Candidates for the Humanists of Minnesota Board of Directors

Officers

President: Audrey Kingstrom

Let me reintroduce myself for those who may not know me. I was born and raised a devout Minnesota Lutheran, but made my way to NYC in my twenties to go to seminary. I ended up an atheist. I then redirected my life to the field of education—in publishing and high school teaching. After 16 years I returned to Minnesota and discovered contemporary Humanism at the First Unitarian Society. From there I became acquainted with Humanists of Minnesota and joined six years ago. Not long after, I was elected to the Board and a couple of years ago became President. It has been gratifying to help expand our programming, engage more members and increase our visibility in the community. I look forward to leading the organization another year with your support.

Vice President: Harlan Garbell

Harlan has been a member of Humanists of Minnesota for two years. In that time he has served on the Speakers Program Committee and the Bylaws Committee. He is currently involved in the recently created Membership Committee. The goal of this committee is not only to grow the organization but also to enrich the membership experience. Harlan is also the host of the monthly "Coffee and Current Events" program. A long-time resident of southwest Minneapolis, Harlan has a Juris Doctor degree as well as a Master of Business Administration degree.

Treasurer: Brad Bolin

Thank you for considering extending my job as treasurer of Humanists of Minnesota. As I transition out of the role I've played for eight years I hope I have earned your trust and confidence. We will continue to search for someone to take over this important duty. I am grateful to all of the volunteers stepping up to host events. Let's continue the growth of the Minnesota freethought community together.

Secretary: David Guell

I've been involved with Humanists of Minnesota for the last three years, starting with the effort to move our membership rolls online. For the last year, I've served as an At-Large member of the Board and on our Media/Tech team. With degrees in chemical engineering, I know well the power of science and reason to solve problems and make human life better. For me, Humanism is the natural extension of reason to everyday life, philosophy and politics.

Directors at Large

Susan Campion

Susan is a Nationally Certified Gambling Counselor II and a Minnesota Licensed Alcohol and Drug Counselor. Problem Gambling Awareness is her true passion and she works to raise awareness of problem gambling, treatment options in Minnesota, and responsible gaming. She also presents locally and nationally on working with secular clients and the growing population of "nones." She has three children and a German shepherd.

Mahad Muhammed

I am honored to have been nominated to the board. I am most passionate about Humanism and community. Through my years of community involvement I've seen firsthand the universal inequalities, criminalization and the disenfranchisement of people of color along the gender spectrum and sexualities and this is where I see Humanist ethics has the biggest role

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

to play to encourage policy action and community engagement. Our Humanist and atheist movements have to be concerned with matters of justice and quality of life in all our communities.

Christina Royal

My introduction to Humanists of Minnesota was a TED Talk event I attended in Dec 2013. From that point on, I felt like I found a unique community of individuals that share values similar to my own. Over the last few years, I have been engaged in a variety of humanist activities, including the Feminist Working Group and humanist collaboration meetings. I consider myself to be a freethinker and benefited from an upbringing that allowed me space to formulate my own ideas rather than being expected to inherit a particular dogma from my parents. As an educator, I believe it is important for individuals to be exposed to a variety of perspectives, but to have the critical thinking and reasoning skills to make sense of it all. My professional bio is available at http://www.educause.edu/members/christina-royal.

Note: When elected, nominees will join Mark Coffey, Dale Handeen, and Rohit Ravindran, who are midpoint in their 2-year terms as at-large board members

(Much thanks to our Nominating Committee: David Guell, Rohit Ravindran, Greg Hart, and Suellen Carroll) Ω

Bylaws Committee Report

by Suellen Carroll

The Bylaws Committee consists of five members who have been working for the last seven months revising the organization's Bylaws: Juliet Branca, Suellen Carroll, Harlan Garbell, Mary McLeod and Mark Thoson. The membership will be asked at the May Membership Meeting to approve these changes. The document with both the current Bylaws and one with proposed revisions highlighted can be found at http://www.humanistsofmn.org/images/Bylaws/RevisedBylawsForNewsletter.pdf . Please review these changes before the meeting.

The principal changes are:

- The institution of a May Annual Membership Meeting at which the budget will be presented.
- Board officers and directors will be elected at this meeting which means that terms will begin at the June Board Meeting and end at the May Annual Membership Meeting.
- The officers will serve 2 year terms and will be limited to serving 8 consecutive years.
- The quorum requirements for many actions have been changed.

If you have any comments or if you need a paper copy snail-mailed to you, please contact me at suellenc38@msn.com or call me at 651-485-4671. Ω

Save the Date!

Rally for Reason at the State Capitol

Thursday, May 5, 2016, Noon-1:00pm

Please join us on the mall at the capitol to champion the use of reason in our public policy deliberations! Let's show our political leaders our fervent support for reason, evidence-based decision-making and the separation of church and state! This event is co-sponsored by Humanists of Minnesota and Minnesota Atheists. Ω

Maple Grove Discussion Group:

Saturday, April 9th, 10:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.: " Sorting Through the Immigration Mess," with Ashley Roth, Attorney. Maple Grove Community Center, 12951 Weaver Lake Rd, room 124, Maple Grove 55311, $5 donation. Register at landforsale@visi.com or call Laurie at (763) 420-6350.

HUMANIST NEWS & VIEWS

Editor, Nathan Curland
Editorial Committee - Brad Bolin, Dale Handeen, Mark Thoson

Articles, letters, event notices and other writings are welcome. Send to: *editor@humanistsofmn.org* with the word "newsletter" in the subject line, or to P.O. Box 582997, Minneapolis, MN 55458-2997. (E-mail submissions are preferred.) All submissions must include the writer's full name, postal address, telephone number and e-mail address. All submissions become the property of this newsletter and cannot be returned. Submission deadline is the 22nd of the prior month.

Humanist News & Views (ISSN 1054-9633) is published monthly by Humanists of Minnesota.

All rights reserved. Opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of this organization or the AHA or CSH. Reproduction of any part of this newsletter is hereby granted, provided the following language accompanies the reproduction: "This article originally appeared in the (month/year) issue of Humanist News & Views, a publication of the Humanists of Minnesota." Reproduction of any part of this issue for commercial purposes is prohibited.

Upcoming Critical Thinking Club Meetings

Twin Cities Chapter. Sunday, April 3rd, 10:00 a.m. to noon: "Skepticism and Critical Thinking" by Burke Hilden. Uptown Bryn Mawr Community Gathering Place, 400 Cedar Lake Rd South, Minneapolis.

West Metro Chapter. Saturday, April 23rd, 10:00 a.m. to noon: "Domestic Abuse and Religion," by Nancy Bradshaw. Ridge Point Apts. Meeting Room, 12800 Marion Lane W., Minnetonka.

Stillwater Chapter. Monday, April 11th, 7:00 p.m.: "Domestic Abuse and Religion," by Nancy Bradshaw. Family Means Bldg., 1875 Northwestern Ave, Stillwater.

For additional information, visit: www.meetup.com/Critical-Thinking-Club/calendar

Humanists of Minnesota

Officers:
President -
Audrey Kingstrom:
(952) 924-1039, akingstrom@comcast.net
Vice President -
Sarah McPherson:
(612) 840-5697, sarahflavored@gmail.com
Treasurer -
Brad Bolin:
(612) 600-7352, breebertz@gmail.com
Secretary -
Juliet Branca:
(651) 319-2753, smithbranca@gmail.com

Members of the board of directors -
Suellen Carroll: (651) 485-4671, suellenc38@msn.com
Mark Coffey: (612) 385-8747, mjcoffey@usa.net
David Guell: (763) 494-4095, dguell4@gmail.com
Dale Handeen: (612) 221-8594, dale.l.handeen@gmail.com
Rohit Ravindran: (773) 290-7667, rravin2@gmail.com
Mark Thoson: (612) 226-9132, sonoftow@gmail.com

Webmaster -
Clint Buhs
Associate Webmaster -
Rohit Ravindran:
webmaster@humanistsofmn.org

Group Photographer -
Richard Trombley

Historian -
Paul Heffron

Cable Program Staff -
Scott Lohman, Nathan Curland, Brad Bolin, Grant Lohman

Humanists of Minnesota is a nonprofit educational corporation and has been granted a 501(c)(3) tax exemption as an educational, scientific and charitable organization. Donations to Humanists of Minnesota are tax deductible. HofM is a chapter of the American Humanist Association (AHA) and an affiliate of the Alliance of Secular Humanist Societies of the Council for Secular Humanism (CSH). Address inquiries to the Humanists of Minnesota, P.O. Box 582997, Minneapolis, MN 55458-2997. E-mail us at *president@humanistsofmn.org* or visit our web site: *www.humanistsofmn.org*

HUMANISTS OF MINNESOTA
PO Box 582997
Minneapolis, MN 55458-2997

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Time-Sensitive Mail
Please Don't Delay

April 2016

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION OR RENEWAL

Your membership is vital to the growth of Humanism and the Humanist community. Our membership categories are:
(For categories at RH and above, married couples or domestic partners will be considered as one membership, if you so indicate.)
( ) (B) Budget, $25.00
( ) (RI) Regular Individual, $40.00
( ) (RH) Regular Household, $60.00
( ) (S) Sustaining, $100.00
( ) (P) Patron, $250.00
( ) (BN) Benefactor, $500.00
( ) (L) Life Membership, $1000.00
( ) (T) Trial subscription for 3 months, just ask
*Full time students at an accredited institution can receive a complimentary subscription

---

For national or international membership write to:

American Humanist Association
1777 T Street NW
Washington, DC 20009-7125
www.americanhumanist.org

Council for Secular Humanism
PO Box 664
Amherst, NY 14226
www.secularhumanism.org

Please check the appropriate box, complete the information and mail with your check to Humanists of Minnesota, P.O. Box 582997, Minneapolis, MN 55458-2997.

Name: _____

Address:_____

City/State/Zip:_____

Phone number:_____

e-mail:_____
(for special announcements, blogs etc. Keeps you in touch!)

I would like my newsletter sent via email ( ) (in color!)

Second Member at same address (for RH and above):

_____

Visit our website at:
www.humanistsofmn.org