April 16: Forward to the Past: Life in a Second-World Country
What’s it like to live in Armenia, a former Soviet republic and a member of today’s Commonwealth of Independent States? Pretty much like living in America before the Great Depression. People have cars, electricity, factory jobs, and homes, but still make their own bread and cheese.
Jason Paul Kazarian worked in Armenia from 2008-2009 as a director of an IT training academy. Join him for an “agri-tour” of this tiny nation in the Caucus Mountains where the 21st century has, in some respects, yet to arrive.

April 23: Your Digital Monetary Power
HCSV member Tom Bergstrom will discuss how to use mobile phone apps and web commerce to fight right wing groups, how to buy products and invest in socially responsible companies that value ethical behavior, and socially responsible investing and lobbying, mostly through online sources.

April 30: Science, Long Life, and Cryonics
Future technologies can keep us alive and healthy for as long as we want. Those of us alive today can reach these technologies by preserving ourselves at ultracold temperatures until these technologies can restore us to health. This talk will offer a glimpse of these technologies, how they might work, and the practice of cryonics today.
Dr. Ralph Merkle is a Stanford University Ph.D who has an impressive career in technology and is a winner of the Feynman Prize for Nanotechnology. He is a Senior Research Fellow at the Institute for Molecular Manufacturing, a Director of Alcor, and Department Chair for Nanotechnology at Singularity University.
This feels to me like a very existential moment for the Humanist Community in Silicon Valley – our community. I believe it is important as we work together for healthy growth of our community that we do it in a way that fully embodies our own understanding of what it means to be humanists.

Times of stress push us to ask what is important, what gives us direction. Such soul-searching can help to ground us. I hope all of us will do enough to assure that we are always aware of why we care about each other and the Community we share.

When I first considered writing this piece, I wondered why I felt so anxious. Anxiety can be limiting, debilitating – a real energy drag. Anxiety makes us fearful, less focused. We are likely just to tread water or spin our wheels furiously, getting nowhere. I think I have never seen or felt, so much social anxiety as now – in the time of Trump and all that entails. It is not only Trump, but also what he reveals about our society, and perhaps ourselves. I don’t expect that anxiety will dissipate for a long time. But I know that we are healthier and more effective when we are able to say what is at the root of the anxiety.

I am also anxious about this Community. I want to identify those things that cause concern and join with other members of the Community to address them. Perhaps what I am doing now is giving myself the pep talk that I know I need and hoping it will be useful to you as well.

We must push the limits of what we believe we can do. Push the limits of our comfort zones. Sometimes give more than we believed we could give. Sometimes we will need to ask others to help us.

And, it must always be clear that we each have the right and responsibility to set our own limits. It is always OK to say, “Nope; not something I can do.”

We must be ready to accept goals and work diligently toward them even when we know rewards are likely to be weeks, months or years away.

It is obvious that we are facing a substantial financial challenge. We have committed ourselves to a space that I have come to really appreciate. We have committed ourselves to an Executive Director who I have liked from my first introduction and have come to appreciate more with each passing day. She’s amazing. And, in my opinion, she is exactly what our community needs.

We have reserves which will sustain us for a while, but we must have substantially more regular, current income if we are to continue and thrive. We must grow.

My personal view is that our financial issues are not our most pressing challenge. We must recognize and celebrate what we already have. We must reach out to include others in our Community. We must be willing to do the work necessary to grow the Community to a viable size. At its core, that is not a financial problem.

I think our challenge is to be sure that members of the larger community around us are aware of why we care about each other and the Community we share.

Around the world this month there are many marches and demonstrations expressing concern over our fate. On April 22nd we will March for Science, expressing our belief in the truths we learn from Science and March for Environmental Protection expressing our concern about the threats to our environment.

All over our nation groups are springing up over concerns caused by our new administration which is cutting funds for everything except the military and the tax cuts for the rich. The Action Group Network (actiogroups.net) provides lists of active groups sorted by location and issue, so individuals can connect with like-minded advocates in their area.

Sena
Calendar of Events

Fun Group

The Conjured Life: The Legacy of Surrealism ★
The Cantor Arts Center at Stanford University is pleased to present an extraordinary exhibition that chronicles the mesmerizing and unsettling nature of the Surrealist movement from historic master artists like René Magritte and Marcel Duchamp to today's artistic superstars, including Cindy Sherman, Jimmie Durham, and David Lynch.
When: Saturday, April 1 (no fooling), Meet at entrance at 11:00 AM.
Where: 328 Lomita Drive at Museum Way, Stanford, CA
Cost: Free
RSVP: Especially first time attenders, hcfungroup@yahoo.com
Info: museum.stanford.edu or call 650-723-4177

Social Action Meeting

On April 2 we will be writing postcards to our legislators. On April 16 we will make posters for the March for Science on the 22nd and the Climate Change march on the 29th.
When: Sunday, April 2 and 16, 1:15 PM (after lunch)
Where: Humanist House

Citizen’s Climate Lobby

The Silicon Valley South Chapter of Citizens’ Climate Lobby invites all members of the Humanist community to join and help us advance a national carbon tax which is expected to dramatically reduce CO2 emissions while also growing jobs and the economy.
When: Tuesday, April 11, 7:00 PM
Where: Humanist House
Info: Suds Jain, sudsjain.com or 408-499-2955

History Book Group

We are reading Founding Mothers by Cokie Roberts.
When: 2nd Wednesday, April 12, 2:30 PM
Where: Humanist House
Info: Sena Havasy at senahav@gmail.com or 408-739-5638

Membership and Volunteer Meeting

Calling current committee members and anyone willing to lend a hand to the Humanist Community.
When: Sunday, April 10, 1:15 PM, after Lunch

Computers, Bloody Computers. Hate’m or Love’em, Learn to Use them Better.

This workshop, taught by HCSV member Susan Shalit, will be designed to address your needs, your interests, and your skill level.
When: Every other Thursday, April 13, and 27, 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM
Where: Humanist House Info: On Meetup

Movie Night for Skeptics ★

The Humanist Community and the Silicon Valley Skeptics invite you to watch “Agora,” about Hypatia of Alexandria and the conflict of science and religion.
When: 2nd Friday, April 14, 7:00 PM
Where: Humanist House Info: On Meetup

Annual Banquet ★

The Humanist Annual Banquet in honor of the new board will be a private room at the site of last year’s memorable event. Awards of Appreciation will be given and the Humanists of the Year, Greg Alexander and Chris Vogdas, voted on at the Forums, will receive a plaque and our grateful thanks for their unfailing support while bridging a difficult time.
Reservations may be made at the Forum on Sunday or by contacting Sena Havasy at senahav@gmail.com. In order to keep the cost to $30, the community will cover the tax, tip, flowers, and balloons.
When: Tuesday, April 18, 6:00 PM
Where: The Blue Pheasant Restaurant
22100 Stevens Creek Blvd, Cupertino

Board Meeting

Meeting are open to all members of the Humanist Community.
When: 3rd Monday, April 17, 7:30 PM
Where: Humanist House

Membership and Board Discussion

Members of the board and the community meet to discuss issues.
When: 4th Sunday, April 23, 1:15 PM (after lunch)
Where: Humanist House, 1180 Coleman Ave., San Jose

Recovering from Religion

Learning how to live after questioning, doubting, and changing one’s beliefs is a journey. Share your journey with others who are going through, or have successfully navigated, similar experiences. Everyone is welcome, and confidentiality is respected.
When: 4th Thursday, April 27, 7:00 PM
Where: Humanist House Info: On Meetup

Free Thought Discussion

We discuss recent news on the first Wednesday of the month, and our current book other Wednesdays. Our discussions range far from the topic, so don’t worry about not being up to date on the book or the news. Go to www.humanists.org/blog/free-thought-discussion for information on the present book, future books considered, and our reading schedule.
When: Wednesdays, 7:30 PM
Where: Home of Hilton Brown in Mountain View
Info: Hilton Brown, brownofmtnview@aol.com or 650-941-3146

Academic Video

The Academic Video Group watches videos from www.thegreatcourses.com, followed by discussion.
When: Thursdays, 8:00 PM
Where: Home of Hilton Brown in Mountain View
Info: Hilton Brown, brownofmtnview@aol.com or 650-941-3146

Your membership dues help us to create community for us all. Please, renew or join today! Online or at Humanist House.
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<td>12 2:30 PM History Book Group</td>
<td>13 1:00 PM Computer Workshop</td>
<td>14 7:00 PM Movie for Skeptics</td>
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More details can be found at www.meetup.com/humanistcommunity