

# The Newsletter of the Humanist Community in Silicon Valley



The mission of the Humanist Community is to meet the social, intellectual, and emotional needs of Humanists of all ages; to contribute to the well-being of the larger community; and to be a voice for Humanism.

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**Midge Dorn** is the newest member of the Board of the Humanist Community. She is stepping in as Treasurer for Marie Stephens who is taking a much needed leave of absence after doing an excellent job of putting the Humanist Community on a sounder economic footing. In 2011 Marie and husband Jon were Humanists of the Year.

Midge grew up a freethinking Catholic in southern California in Hermosa and Redondo Beach. When she graduated she joined the Peace Corp as a teacher. While serving she met her future husband, Fred Dorn. After they left the Peace Corp in 1968 they moved to the Bay Area where Fred was transferred by his company. They married shortly thereafter and had two daughters. Lisa works for Acterra and lives with Midge and Fred; Erin is attending U. C. Davis.

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## September Forums

### September 1 What Do Traditional Religions Get Right?

This Forum will begin with a 10-minute video of a talk by Alain de Botton, in which he poses this question, "What aspects of religion should atheists consider adopting?" He suggests a "religion for atheists" that incorporates religious forms and traditions to satisfy our human need for connection, ritual and transcendence.

Following the video, Paul Gilbert and Arthur Jackson will comment on their reactions to de Botton's talk, then open the forum to general discussion.

### September 8 Close Encounters in the Middle East

Roberta Ahlquist gives us an overview of her two months traveling in 2012 to Pakistan, Egypt, Jordan and the United Arab Republic. During this time she visited schools, spoke with ordinary people on the streets, attended a three-day wedding in Pakistan, met Egyptians in Cairo's Tahrir Square, and numerous archeological sites.

Dr. Ahlquist is a social justice academic who teaches at San Jose State University and presents multicultural foundations courses to prospective high school teachers. Her research includes post-colonial studies, indigenous education, and unlearning racism and other forms of bias.

### September 15 The Rainforest Action Network

The Rainforest Action Network (RAN) conducts campaigns to protect rainforests, their inhabitants, and the natural, life-sustaining systems through education, grassroots organizing, and non-violent direct action.

Gemma Tillack directs RAN's agribusiness campaign. She will talk about RAN's newest campaign, Last Stand of the Orangutan. This campaign exposes the dark secret of palm oil usage in the US snack food industry, and its effects on the natural habitat of the Orangutan. The Network calls on companies to commit to purchase only responsibly grown palm oil.

Chelsea Matthews, Forest Program Coordinator at RAN, will talk about RAN's current campaigns to address the root causes of climate change, deforestation, and the oppression of forest peoples. She will also give an overview of RAN's success in transforming the global marketplace through education, grassroots organizing, and non-violent direct action.

To learn more about RAN, and how you can take action to support RAN's work, go to [www.ran.org](http://www.ran.org).

### September 22 What is a Healthy Diet?

Miharu Alison Sato will discuss what makes up a healthy diet, specifically, the extent to which different types of meat, dairy products, and eggs can be part of a healthy diet, and whether easily accessible and healthier substitutes for these foods exist.

Ms. Sato is a Registered Dietician, Certified Diabetes Educator, and Health Educator for the Palo Alto Medical Foundation.

### September 29 Bridging the God Gap

Did you know that atheists are the minority group most Americans are least willing to allow their children to marry? According to a recent study, they are "seen as a threat to the American way of life." No wonder it's such a challenge for believers and non-believers to talk about religion.

Dr. Schriener will suggest ways of helping people see atheism as valid and potentially positive. He will describe techniques for discussing theology without coming to blows, and ways of finding conceptual common ground with some liberal theists.

Dr. Schriener is Minister Emeritus of Mission Peak Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Fremont and a retired psychotherapist. He is the author of five books, including *Bridging the God Gap: Finding Common Ground Among Believers, Atheists and Agnostics*, in which he strongly affirms the legitimacy of secular humanism. He will have copies of his book on sale after the Forum.

### FORUM INFORMATION

Palo Alto High School - Student Center  
50 Embarcadero Road, Palo Alto 94301  
Sundays 11 AM-12:15 PM - Free and open to the public  
Lunch 12:15-2 PM. - A donation of \$10 is requested.



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Alex Havasy

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Letters to the Editor

Letters to the editor may be submitted to [infohcsv@yahoo.com](mailto:infohcsv@yahoo.com). The length of your submission should not exceed 100 words and may be edited for clarity.

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To contact the Board

e-mail [Arthur@arthurmjackson.com](mailto:Arthur@arthurmjackson.com)

Disclaimer

Opinions expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions or positions of the Humanist Community.

## HELP

Do you need some help?

· For confidential assistance contact Arthur Jackson at [Arthur@arthurmjackson.com](mailto:Arthur@arthurmjackson.com) or call 408-620-4278.

· If you need to talk to someone about a problem you're having, call Arthur Jackson at 408-620-4278.

· If you need some other kind of help (for example, a ride to a doctor's appointment, some groceries brought by, a recommendation for a lawyer), email [hchelp@yahoogroups.com](mailto:hchelp@yahoogroups.com) (which forwards your e-mail to members of the HC HELP group, each of whom may send a reply e-mail to you and the group if they can help), or reach them through Sena Havasy at [senahav@gmail.com](mailto:senahav@gmail.com).

## Midge Dorn continued

Midge worked as a teacher, using her Peace Corp experience, but took classes to become a bookkeeper and tax preparer. In 1980 she opened Dorn Tax & Bookkeeping Service.

Midge is a long-time neighborhood activist and has served on many of East Palo Alto's city boards, including the Planning Commission, the East Palo Alto Historical and Agricultural Society and the Transportation Commission. She currently serves on the Rent Stabilization Board where she chairs the Outreach and Education Committee.

She was involved in the development of The Weeks Neighborhood Plan for Land Use, Economic Development, and Historic Preservation.

When they moved to Sunnyvale, Midge and Fred attended the Unitarian Universalist church there. They were especially glad that there was no minister and, thus, 'no talk of God in our lives'. Later they moved to East Palo Alto and attended the Unitarian Universalist church in nearby Redwood City which also had no minister, but had frequent guest ministers. Unitarian friends told them about the Humanist Community which they checked out and have been attending ever since.

Midge was attracted to the Humanist Community because there was no talk of God and she enjoyed hearing talks about social issues. She has no personal definition of Humanism but agrees with the descriptions found in the Humanist literature on the Greeter's table. She says, "I believe in treating others as I would like to be treated, although I don't always live up to this. I'm not good at turning the other cheek, but I do like to be part of a team helping our neighbors everywhere."

She especially enjoys Sundays mornings at the Humanist Forum because of the interesting speakers, the interesting questions, the delicious lunch and the chance to sit and talk with fellow Humanists.

## Calendar of Events

### Fun Group Outing

#### "Reduce, Reuse, Re-imagine" Exhibit

For generations, artists have looked to found objects as a source for art making. Through creativity and ingenuity they have re-purposed and transformed cast-off materials, giving them new life as art. The artists in this exhibition take that tradition one step further—they look not only to discarded materials, but to detritus.

Engaging a Zero Waste philosophy, the participants in Reduce, Reuse, Re-imagine rescue objects from the waste stream--items disposed of as trash rather than recycled--and re-imagine them in a new context to create original, enticing, and thought-provoking art. Through their work, the artists shed creative light on our role as active participants in the management of earth's limited resources.

Showing concurrently is also an exhibit of Fletcher Benton's kinetic artworks and a recreation of his studio.

**What:** Visiting the Reduce, Reuse, Re-imagine Exhibit

**Where:** de Saisset Museum, Santa Clara University,

500 El Camino Real, Santa Clara, CA 95050. Meet at the museum entrance.

**When:** Saturday September 28, 11:00 AM

**Admission:** Free, donations accepted

For more information visit <http://www.scu.edu/desaisset> or call (408) 554-4528.

## Humanist Community Hiking Group

For information on the September hike contact Bill Rausch at 510-299-0147.

## Potluck

The September potluck will be at 6:00 PM on a yet to be determined Saturday. See webpage for details.

## Welcoming Committee

We schedule small monthly get-acquainted gatherings in private homes, assist with all holidays, greet visitors, and keep ourselves informed about goings-on in the Community. We meet on the 3rd Thursday of each month at 3:00 PM.

If you are interested in attending, hosting a Coffee & Dessert, or joining the Welcoming Committee, please contact Dianne Jacobsen, Committee Chair, ([diannej750@yahoo.com](mailto:diannej750@yahoo.com)), or Sena Havasy.

## Membership Committee

The Membership Committee arranges potlucks and seasonal celebrations, including the annual spring dinner honoring the new Board. At the Sunday Forum it prepares the Membership Table, the lectern flowers and the table decorations. Sandy Smith's Sunshine subcommittee sends paper cards.

Feedback and volunteers are always welcome. Please contact me at [senahav@gmail.com](mailto:senahav@gmail.com): or 408-462-2156.

Sena Havasy,  
Membership chair

## The Family Program

The HC Family Program is designed for children ages 4 to 13 in freethinking humanist families. The parents supervise the program. Participants involve themselves in science, art, and drama projects, reflecting the ideas and goals of the families and community. At the end of each program meeting, they join the community for lunch when the program is on site.

The Family Program meets in Science Resource Building of Palo Alto High School, Room 1732, most Sundays, 10:30 AM to 12 noon.

## The Sharing Circle

Palo Alto High School Student Center, Sundays at 10:30 AM. One of several groups that meet prior to the Forum each Sunday, where attendees may share personal feelings or experiences, in an environment of trust and confidentiality.

## Free Thought Discussion

Home of Hilton Brown, Wednesday, 7:30 PM. Discussion of recent news or a book. For more information check [www.humanists.org](http://www.humanists.org).

## Academic Video

Home of Hilton Brown, Thursday, 8:00 PM. View an academic video followed by discussion. For more information check [www.humanists.org](http://www.humanists.org).

## Clinic Defense

Planned Parenthood, any Saturday of the month. 1691 the Alameda, San Jose; 8:00 AM. For information, contact Alex Havasy at [havasy@live.com](mailto:havasy@live.com).

## History Book Group

The new History Book Group encompasses all things history; biography, histories and historical fiction. We will meet at 2:00 PM on Wednesday, September 25, at Kimm's Flowers: 251 W. El Camino Real, in Sunnyvale (650-949-1915), to discuss our next book, *The Daughters of Mars* by Thomas Keneally. Sena Havasy, [senahav@gmail.com](mailto:senahav@gmail.com).

## Other Events of Interest to Humanists

### UU Humanist Roots Potluck and Discussion

Our meetings usually have 15 people. For the potluck, please bring a dish of your choice. Check the website below for the presentation topic.

When: Saturday, September 7 at 6 PM (presentation at 7).

Where: Unitarian Universalist Church of Palo Alto  
Fireside Room, 505 E. Charleston Road, Palo Alto

Direction to UUCPA: <http://uucpa.org/main/location.html>

More: <http://www.humanists.org/blog/associated-organizations/>

### Bay Area Russell Set (BARS)

Join us at the Thai Pepper Restaurant, 103 East Fremont, Sunnyvale, on September 17 at 7:00 PM. We will be discussing chapter 15 of "The Conquest of Happiness: The family." For more details see: [www.meetup.com/philosophy-219](http://www.meetup.com/philosophy-219)

### Ethical Culture Society of Silicon Valley

See their website: [www.ethicalsiliconvalley.org](http://www.ethicalsiliconvalley.org) for details.

### Be a Part of History: The First Sunday Assembly in Silicon Valley

"Live better, help often, wonder more." That's the motto of Sunday Assembly, part foot-stomping show, part-atheist church, 100% celebration of life. The first Sunday Assembly in Silicon Valley will be held sometime in November 2013.

This fall, Sunday Assembly founders, Pippa Evans and Sanderson Jones, will travel across Europe, the U.S., and Australia, hosting Sunday Assemblies in the locations that have shown the most interest. Show your interest and help us bring Sunday Assembly to Silicon Valley by registering before September 15 at Eventbrite:

<http://www.eventbrite.com/event/7337569869>. The site lists a placeholder date of Nov. 3rd, but the actual date and location of the event will be announced by mid-September. The more registrations we have, the more likely that Pippa and Sanderson will bring their fun and joyful roadshow to share with all of us!

For more information on Sunday Assembly, go to: <http://sundayassembly.com/>.

# SEPTEMBER 2013

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1</b> <u>10:30 AM</u> Family Program <u>11:00 AM</u> Forum	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> <u>7:30 PM</u> Free Thought Discussion	<b>5</b> <u>8:00 PM</u> Academic Video	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> <u>6:00 PM</u> UU Humanist Roots
<b>8</b> <u>10:30 AM</u> Family Program <u>11:00 AM</u> Forum	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> <u>7:30 PM</u> Free Thought Discussion	<b>12</b> <u>8:00 PM</u> Academic Video	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b> <u>10:30 AM</u> Family Program <u>11:00 AM</u> Forum	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> <u>7:30 PM</u> Free Thought Discussion	<b>19</b> <u>3:00 PM</u> Welcoming Committee <u>8:00 PM</u> Academic Video	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>22</b> <u>10:30 AM</u> Family Program <u>11:00 AM</u> Forum	<b>23</b> <u>7:30 PM</u> Board meeting	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> <u>2:00 PM</u> History Book Group <u>7:30 PM</u> Free Thought Discussion	<b>26</b> <u>8:00 PM</u> Academic Video	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> <u>11:00 AM</u> Fun Group
<b>29</b> <u>10:30 AM</u> Family Program <u>11:00 AM</u> Forum	<b>30</b>					

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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