

# The Newsletter of the Humanist Community

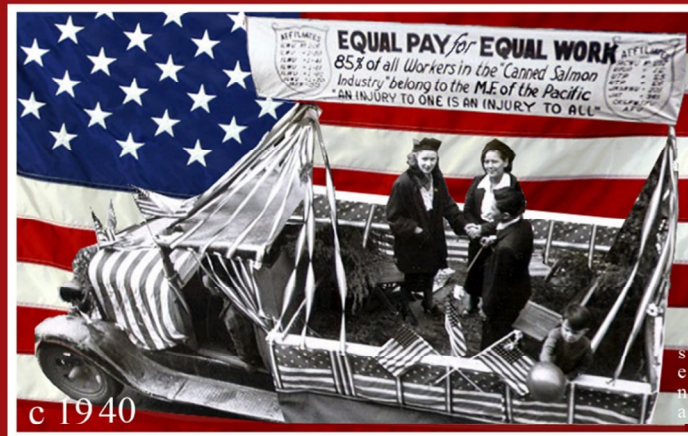
Our values - freedom, fairness and compassion, health and happiness, and using science and reason to acquire and apply knowledge. **in Silicon Valley**



September 2014

P.O.Box 60069, Palo Alto, CA 94306-0069

svhumanists@gmail.com



Labor Unions - The People Who Brought Us the Weekend

## September Forums

### September 7 Death with Dignity in California: Strategies for Victory

Chris Riley is the San Mateo County Organizer for Compassion & Choices' newly launched Death with Dignity Campaign (<https://www.compassionandchoices.org/2014/07/03/california-kicks-off-dwd-campaign/>). She will discuss how this Campaign is leading the effort to make aid in dying open, accessible, and legitimate in the state within five years.

### September 14 Secular Activism.

Tom Manger, Legislative Chair for the Secular Coalition for California (SCCA), <http://states.secular.org/states/california>, will speak on secular activism in California, with some discussion of national secular activism (e.g., his work with SecularityUSA, <http://www.secularityusa.org>). Tom will give a wrap up of 2014 California legislation from a secular perspective. He will also talk about activities planned for 2015 and ways you can assist in not just enforcing the separation of church and state, but in reversing the many ways that religion is unduly privileged in existing laws.

### September 21 Whose Schools are These, Anyway? The Privatization of the Public Good

In the purported interests of improving public schooling for all, No Child Left Behind (Bush's educational reform mandate), and Race to the Top (Obama's reform mandate), public schooling is undergoing massive changes. Many of these changes will negatively affect a majority of students. How can interested communities challenge these draconian measures? Professor Roberta Ahlquist (a writer, speaker, and book editor, who teaches teachers the multicultural foundations of education in the College of Education at San Jose State University) will present.

### September 28 Asteroid Mining and Colonizing Space

How practical is asteroid mining and how soon will it happen? It's actually beginning to happen this year. Humanist Community member Marc Perkel will show a 30 minute video about Planetary Resources that explains asteroid mining in detail. He will also discuss the advantages of colonizing space itself rather than colonizing other planets, and create a new vision for the future of humanity.

#### 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 \$12 is requested.

*Humanist Community  
serving Silicon Valley*

Volume 20, Issue 9, September 2014

www.humanists.org

Visit our facebook page:

Humanist Community in Silicon Valley

**Editor**

Alex Havasy

**Production**

Hilton Brown, Helen Athey, Carl Angotti, Sena

Havasy, Brian Davis, Burt Liebert

Cover graphic composed and edited by Sena

Havasy

**Letters to the Editor**

Letters to the editor may be submitted to havasy@live.com with "Letter to Editor" in the subject line. The length should not exceed 100 words and may be edited for clarity.

**Board of Directors**

Arthur Jackson, President

Martin Squibbs, Vice President and Recorder

Hilton Brown, Treasurer

Dominic Borg

Andrea Dorey

Midge Dorn

John Figdor

Laura Mappin

Harrienne Mills

**To contact the Board**

email Arthur@arthurmjackson.com

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

**Visit our Facebook:**

Humanist Community in Silicon Valley. We welcome people to post ideas and information of interest to members of the Humanist Community.

**HELP**

Do you need some help?

· For confidential assistance contact Arthur Jackson at Arthur@arthurmjackson.com or call 408-620-4278.

· If you need to talk to someone about a problem, 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 (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.



**Our values** – freedom, fairness and compassion, health and happiness, and science and reason to acquire and apply knowledge.

**Our vision** – living by and acting on these values, for the greater good, while balancing current versus future needs and desires.

**Our Mission** – To support the social and intellectual needs of our members and to live by and promote our values and vision.

## The Cover

Labor Day, the first Monday in September, is a national holiday set aside to celebrate the American labor movement. Through the heroic struggles of workers, often with brutal opposition by both company thugs and by municipal, state and federal authorities, labor was able to gain favorable legislation limiting work hours, outlawing child labor, and establishing oversight and standards for worker safety.

## Does Religion Spoil Everything?

It isn't true, as we have often heard, that only religion can make a good person do bad things. It is understandable that we might think that when we look at all the blood spilled in its name, even today.

Religion is a product of human nature. We come together to share stories and develop a common understanding of how the world works and how we should behave. This is culture, and the beliefs and rituals that go with it are religion. They both unite and divide us.

Culture can become so rigid we forget that rules exist to make life more civil and fair and that changing our view of the world with new insights is not a bad thing.

It also seems there can't be "us" without "them." It's easy to think of them as less important, less deserving of respect, sympathy and trust. This is a problem not just with religion, but with any method we use to classify people.

I think Humanism is the best hope for a rational ethic because it emphasizes fairness and inclusiveness and accepts new discoveries. I'd say that most of the world follows a humanistic morality regardless of what they call themselves.

But there will always be greed, jealousy, bigotry and a host of other human foibles that we'll all have to deal with.

-Alex Havasy

# Calendar of Events

## The Family Program

The HC Family Program is for children ages 4 to 13 in freethinking humanist families. Parents supervise the program. Participants involve themselves in science, art, and drama projects. When the program is on site, they join the community for lunch at the end of each meeting.

**Where:** Science Resource Building of Palo Alto High School, Room 1732

**When:** most Sundays, 10:30 AM to 12 noon. Call 650-257-0478 to confirm the upcoming meeting.

## The Sharing Circle

Before the Forum each Sunday. Attendees may share personal feelings or experiences in an environment of trust and confidentiality.

**Where:** Palo Alto High School Student Center

**When:** Sundays, 10:30 AM

## Membership Committee

We arrange potlucks and seasonal celebrations, including the annual Spring dinner honoring the new Board. At the Sunday Forum we prepare the Greeter's table, the lectern flowers, and the table decorations. Sandy Smith's Sunshine Committee sends paper cards.

If you are interested, contact Sena Havasy, Committee Chair, at ([senahav@gmail.com](mailto:senahav@gmail.com)) or 408-462-2156.

## History Book Group

The new book this month is 'Elizabeth I, the Golden Reign of Gloriana' or any book of your choice about Elizabeth I of England and her long and amazing reign.

**Where:** Kimm's Flowers: 201 W. El Camino Real, Sunnyvale

**When:** 2nd Wednesday, September 10, 2:30 PM

## Humanist Community Potluck

Marie Stephens is hosting the September potluck at her lovely home tucked in the hills of Pacifica. We are so happy to welcome Marie back! Bring a dish of your choosing. For more information contact her at 650-355-6569 or [mins1@att.net](mailto:mins1@att.net).

**Where:** At the home of Marie Stephens, Pacifica

**When:** 3:00 PM Saturday, September 27

## Free Thought Discussion

Discussion of recent news or a book. For more information check [www.humanists.org/blog/free-thought-discussion/](http://www.humanists.org/blog/free-thought-discussion/).

**Where:** Home of Hilton Brown

**When:** Wednesdays, 7:30 PM

## Academic Video

View an academic video, followed by discussion. For more information check [www.humanists.org/blog/academic-videos/](http://www.humanists.org/blog/academic-videos/).

**Where:** Home of Hilton Brown

**When:** Thursdays, 8:00 PM

## Clinic Defense

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

## Fun Group

### Time Machines: Clocks and Timekeeping

Timekeeping devices have been used for at least 5,000 years and today are essential for the planning and timing of our everyday lives. The Museum of American Heritage (MOAH) presents, Time Machines: Clocks & Timekeeping, an exhibition exploring timekeeping and timekeeping devices from the introduction of the sundial by the Egyptians, circa 3500 BCE, to the precise atomic clock of the 1940s.

In addition to explanations of clock mechanisms, the exhibit examines the role of timekeeping in early navigation and in the industrial revolution, when workers moved from the home to the factory and trains had to run on time.

This exhibition also includes a wide variety of clocks from the MOAH collection and local collectors. For information visit: [www.sfmt.org](http://www.sfmt.org) or call 415-285-1717

**Where:** Museum of American Heritage, 351 Homer Avenue, Palo Alto

**When:** Saturday, September 13 at 11:00 AM

**Cost:** Free, Donations Accepted

## Humanist Community Hiking Group

Greg Alexander facilitates hikes. There is a sign-up sheet at the greeter's table or contact Greg at [greg.alexander@me.com](mailto:greg.alexander@me.com).

## Other Events of Interest to Humanists

### Humanists at UUCPA Potluck and Discussion

We will select topics for the remainder of 2014 and follow it with free discussion.

**Where:** Unitarian Universalist Church of Palo Alto

Fireside Room, 505 E. Charleston Road, Palo Alto

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

Direction to UUCPA: [uucpa.org/main/location.html](http://uucpa.org/main/location.html)

### Bay Area Russell Set (BARS)

Join us to discuss "What I Believe" the third essay in the book, *Why I Am Not a Christian* by Bertrand Russell. For details see: [www.meetup.com/philosophy-219](http://www.meetup.com/philosophy-219)

**Where:** Thai Pepper, 103 E Fremont Ave, Sunnyvale

**When:** Tuesday, September 9, 7:00 PM

### Ethical Culture Society of Silicon Valley

For details see: [www.ethicalsiliconvalley.org](http://www.ethicalsiliconvalley.org)

For more information on groups of interest to Humanists go to: [www.humanists.org/blog/associated-organizations/](http://www.humanists.org/blog/associated-organizations/)



# SEPTEMBER 2014

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

Humanist Community  
P.O. Box 60069  
Palo Alto, CA 94306-006

Humanist Community P.O. Box 60069 Palo Alto,
--

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED