



# Humanists of West Suburban Chicagoland



Meeting at DuPage Unitarian Church, 4 South 535 Old Naperville Rd., Naperville IL 60563 (<http://howsc.org>)

## JULY AND AUGUST 2010

On hiatus for the summer, we use this opportunity to report on past conferences and upcoming events.

## HUMANIST MONTHLY LUNCHEON(s)

(Philosopher's Lunch)

**Thursday, July 15 at 1:00 p.m.**

**Thursday August 19 at 1:00 p.m.**

**Where: Country House at Lisle**

**6460 College Road in College Square, Lisle, IL**

The philosophers, a not-all-that-intellectual group of Humanist explorers, continue meeting year round. This is a casual coming together of liberals breaking bread and enjoying one another's company. No study is required. We have a private room in the back and the prices range from modest to medium. RSVP Jack Sechrest at (630) 554-8058 or [jack@skognet.com](mailto:jack@skognet.com)

## SAVE THE DATE

**Sunday Sept. 5, 2010**

**At the home of Jack and Perry Sechrest**

**452 Burr Oak Dr., Oswego IL**

If you've ever attended this Labor Day event, you don't need a reminder of the herald to our coming year. There's wine, lemonade and the best-est potluck you can imagine, all under a garden tent large enough for a wedding reception or a horseshoe tournament.

Roy Speckhardt, executive director of AHA, and Maggie Ardiente, director of development have been invited as Jack Sechrest's guest and will be attending the picnic. Maggie has degrees in sociology and religion and serves as editor of the AHA's membership newsletter, *Free Mind*. She has served as Vice President of the JMU Freethinkers, and is a former member of the Board of the Secular Student Alliance. Roy has appeared on CNN Headline News, Fox News, numerous national radio shows, and has spoken to dozens of local humanist groups across the country. He also serves as a board member of the Humanist Institute and the United Coalition of Reason and an advisory board member of the Secular Student Alliance. He has an MBA plus a degree in sociology.

## REPORT FROM THE 2010 AHA CONFERENCE

HWSC was well represented at the AHA conference in San Jose, California June 4-6. Board members Howard Katz, Paul Sellnow and Stephanie Downs-Hughes along with

Duncan Hughes, Brant and Grace Abrahamson attended. What follows is an abbreviated report from Brant.

"The sessions that we attended were all excellent. Grace

and I often split up so that we could attend as many as possible, and later debrief each other.

"I was impressed with Rod Tremblay and his book, *The Code for Global Ethics*. His book focused on the "ten personal and social rules of rational humanism." These are dignity, respect, tolerance, sharing, undenominational, conservation, democracy, and education with a focus on reducing war and superstition.

"The Humanist Celebrants asked probing questions. I was impressed with Howard Katz's knowledge and the professional way in which he conducted their meeting. The critical thinking session in which I participated was also well attended by an enthusiastic group interested in education. My focus was teaching critical thinking through fallacy avoidance that has been a course at Riverside-Brookfield H. S. for more than 40 years.

"Grace thought the Feminist Caucus Lunch was well run, found the story of Wendy Liu who grew up in China under Mao to be inspiring and enjoyed meeting the representatives of the Secular Student Movement.

"I talked with Mynga Futrell, AHA Board member and co-founder of the Brights network, comprising about 55,000 participants in the Network world-wide.

"An issue related to how the AHA promotes humanism. Should we use the GAY community methods -- have billboard along highways, in buses and such? This was not a contentious issue at the convention (from my perspective) but it could become one. The Center For Inquiry founded by Paul Kurtz has been more or less ripped apart on the issue of persuasion vs. propagandistic methodologies."

## HUMANISM CONFERENCE

June 26, 2010, more than 100 members and friends of the HUumanist Association "came home" to the First Unitarian Society of Minneapolis, the congregation where John Dietrich became known as the "father of religious humanism" during his 1916-1938 ministry. HWSC founders Jack Sechrest and Mike Werner attended the meeting which began with UUA President Peter Morales and concluded ten hours later with the election of John Hooper as new HUumanist Association president. More than two dozen speakers and moderators—including *Good Without God* author Greg Epstein—discussed the past,



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present, and future of Humanism in the world and in the Unitarian Universalist movement. The event marked the conclusion of the HUUmanist presidency of David Schafer. “The subtext of this meeting today,” he said, “is that the UUA is changing and UU Humanism is changing, and it has turned the corner in the last year or so. Programs have been well-attended and well-appreciated.”