



THE SECULAR CIRCULAR

Newsletter of the Humanist Society of Santa Barbara

www.SBHumanists.org

NOVEMBER 2012

November Program:

"A Tour of the Observable Universe"

Chuck McPartlin

Chuck McPartlin has been showing the sky to people in Santa Barbara for about thirty years, and just received the 2012 Las Cumbres Amateur Outreach award from the Astronomical Society of the Pacific, sort of an amateur astronomy Nobel Prize. As Outreach Coordinator for the SB Astronomical Unit, the local amateur astronomy club, his group brings telescopes and astronomy presentations to schools, campgrounds, parks, hotels, elderhostels, and shopping centers, reaching over 10,000 people a year. In real life he is a computer nerd, working for Northrop Grumman Aerospace Systems.



Chuck will lead us on a tour of our solar system, starting at the earth, hitting the Sun, the major planets, moons, asteroids, comets, and dwarf planets. We'll find out what happened to Pluto, and why. Then we'll venture out of our solar system, talking about stars, constellations, and interesting deep sky objects visible in amateur telescopes, both within and beyond our home galaxy.

We'll end up at the Cosmic Microwave Background, the surface of the fireball of the Big Bang, at the edge of the observable Universe.

Date: November 17, 2012

Location: Patio Room at Vista del Monte. **(Park ONLY in spaces marked "VDM".)**

Time: Doors open at 2:30pm. Program begins at 3:00 pm

Cost: \$2 members/\$5 non-members

Dinner: Vista del Monte. \$22. RSVP judithannfontana@yahoo.com or 967-7911. For more details, see Judy Fontana's article below.

For More Info: Activities@SantaBarbaraHumanists.org or call 769-HSSB

Welcome New Member!

Heidi Kent, Santa Barbara

HSSB Book Club Marty Shapiro

In the Fall, a Humanist's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of --- food! (Apologies to Alfred, Lord Tennyson). And with visions of Thanksgiving feasts dancing in our heads, your Humanist Book Club has selected a spicy item for our November reading. It's the best-selling *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: A Year of Food Life*, by the popular author Barbara Kingsolver (*The Poisonwood Bible*, *Prodigal Summer*).

The book is Kingsolver's journal recording her family's struggles to distance itself for a year, from mass-manufactured and processed foods, and to try to live off the natural riches that Nature provides in some abundance, on the lands surrounding their rustic North Carolina home. (But I've been wrong before.)

The date: Wednesday, November 14, 1:30 p.m.
The place: Chez Shapiro, my spacious maison, 249 Savona Ave. (out of the fire danger zone). Call 968-0478 for directions.

This will be our last meeting before the annual Winter Solstice break. We'll be resuming on January 16 with Michael Shermer's *The Believing Brain*.

Club Activities Judy Fontana

Fine Dining at Vista del Monte. Once again join us for a great meal following our November 17 meeting. This month's menu is tossed green salad, multigrain roles, pot roast, fresh catch of the day, mashed potatoes, rice pilaf, acorn squash, green beans, assorted desserts, wine and beverages: all for the amazing price of only \$22! Tax and tip included. Reservations required. RSVP to

judithannfontana@yahoo.com or call 967-7911 no later than Wednesday, November 14.

Winter Solstice Celebration. Don't forget to put December 16 on your calendar. This year's annual Winter Solstice Celebration will take place at Vista del Monte and will include a wonderful meal and lighthearted entertainment provided by a few of your highly talented co-members. More details will follow later.

Participants Needed. Anyone interested in participating in the Winter Solstice entertainment please contact Judy Fontana. See above. Mediocre singers needed to perform the Humanist version of many of your favorite holiday tunes. First rehearsal is at 7pm, Wednesday, November 7 at Encina Royale Clubhouse, 250 Moreton Bay Lane, Goleta.

Actors/Actresses Wanted

Next March, HSSB will produce "Speak of the Devil", a play by Richard Stockton about Robert Green Ingersoll. The play calls for a cast of five men, one woman, and two gender-neutral roles. The production will be a reading, with some stage movement. No memorization is required.

Auditions will be held in early December, with rehearsals starting in January. If you would like to try out for a role in this play, please contact **Ray Stone**, at rstone@west.net, or 805-682-2123.

From: the Social Justice Committee Jean Olsen, Chair

The Social Justice Committee is in full swing for the year. Six members met together in September to brainstorm different issues we would like to examine in the next year. First and foremost for this fall was research and recommendations for the Ballot Propositions. Marian Shapiro put in countless hours researching and comparing the pros and cons of each proposition. She then presented a six page report and made recommendations to the committee as to how a Humanist vote would look. The committee then voted to agree or disagree with her recommendations. The results were

handed out to attendees at the October 20 meeting and emailed to all members on the opt-in email list. The important thing, of course, is to VOTE. Special THANKS to Marian Shapiro for her excellent report.

Future topics the committee may present are: the issue of immigration—a complex subject; how to understand, analyze and respond to misinformation we all receive from various sources; and possible films or forums “for your information” in 2013. We will be asking for your suggestions on issues and your interest in an education format. We welcome your input. If you have a social justice issue you feel we should examine, please let me know. The committee will give serious thought to it.

The committee will meet again in January. At this time, we will again examine our original list of 10 issues, possibly add to it, and decide on Spring quarter research and recommendations. These will be issues that we will bring to the attention of the board and the members.

We are adding new members to fill in for those who have moved or have left for personal reasons. Current members are: **John Ernest, Helen Gordon, Dusty Miller, Marian Shapiro**, and **Roger Schlueter** (temporarily on leave as he assumes Acting President duties). We welcome new members **David Echols, Hugh Smart**, and **Suzanne Spillman**.

Secular Studies in College: Phil Zuckerman Robert Bernstein

Growing up in Pacific Palisades, Phil Zuckerman did not know people who went to church or to temple except for special holidays. When he was 15, lovely 16-year-old Michelle Brewer invited him to the high school dance. She was fun to be with and he was surprised to learn that her father was a Baptist preacher. He thought they were a relic from the days of the Salem witch trials. He was even more surprised after going to their church that fun-loving Michelle believed in the Rapture and Biblical

Armageddon. He realized their world views were vastly different.

There is no shortage of those who study religion. There are even journals of religious cuisine, music and dance. But he realized no one was researching the majority of people he grew up with: the “Nones” who belonged to no religion. No one studied them as secular people.

The Institute for the Study of Secularism in Society and Culture at Trinity College in Connecticut was the first attempt at such research. It was founded ten years ago by Barry Kosmin. Three years later the Nonreligion and Secularity Research Network (NSRN) web site was created by Lois Lee in the UK for a similar purpose. But Zuckerman was the first to create a major in Secular Studies at Pitzer College where he teaches.

The “Nones” are the most rapidly increasing group in religious surveys carried out by Pew and other pollsters. President Obama acknowledged them at his inauguration, for the first time ever. His parents were both atheists as were his grandparents from Kansas and his stepfather.

There are over 350 chapters of the Secular Student Alliance, including here at UCSB with their group SURE (Scientific Understanding and Reason Enrichment). SURE meets weekly and regularly hosts events on campus.

Secular Studies can take many interdisciplinary approaches.

- History: Who was secular in the past? India, China, Rome, Greece.
- Sociology: Who tends to be secular? Asians vs African Americans. Why are Jews so secular? Relationship to race and class.
- Psychology: Neurology, personalities, attitudes about authority. Brains and physiology.
- Political Science: How secularity affects politics. Ataturk in Turkey. France now. Past forced secularism in the USSR.

He notes that most secularists are politically left. But Ayn Rand and others are not. 32% of those under 30 say they are not religious. The demographic trend is toward more secularism. Twenty years ago, evangelical Christians outnumbered Nones 2:1. Now it is reversed. What will that mean for elections?

Before taking questions, Zuckerman answered some frequently asked questions.

The checkout guy at Trader Joe's asked: Aren't all of college Secular Studies? True, math is secular, but Secular Studies is the study of secularity itself. An Asian professor teaching geography does not make the class Asian studies.



Phil Zuckerman

Photo by Robert Bernstein

Secular Studies is not just about debunking religion. It asks how do secular people deal with traditional religious domains like death. What are their political views? How do they live?

Isn't this philosophy? It is more about real peoples' lives than about just their philosophy.

Perhaps most important: what would a student do with this degree? In a way, it is no different than majoring in French Literature, Classics or Creative Writing. It is part of a liberal arts education. But quite concretely a Secular Studies graduate might go on to law school, public policy or a think tank. To advocate for the interests of secular people.

Other questions:

Q. Is science denial addressed in the program? Yes, and it is why Pitzer Physics Professor Scott Gould is part of the program.

Q. Is it possible that Nones are simply non-joiners? A show of hands revealed about half of those in attendance consider themselves generally non-joiners. Zuckerman pointed out issues that motivated Nones to become actively organized: Catholic pedophiles, GW Bush, 9-11, the Religious Right takeover of the Republican Party, Gay Rights, the loss of the Cold War negative association of atheism. He pointed out that PBS is planning a three part series on the rise of the Nones. [<http://video.pbs.org/video/2288849147/> is a preview.]

Finally, Zuckerman was asked about how he is parenting his 14, 11 and 6 year olds. He says it is a delicate balance not to be overbearing with your own beliefs, but not to hide them either. His eldest daughter wanted to attend a Jewish summer camp and wanted a bat mitzvah. His second daughter preferred Camp Quest, a secular summer camp. But she still wants the bat mitzvah, too.

His next book will be on the subject of secular parenting. We wished him the best with the book and with the Secular Studies program!

More about Zuckerman Per Wehn

Our October speaker, Dr. Zuckerman, points out that in Scandinavia and the United Kingdom religion is wilting on the vine, while in the United States it is flourishing. Being Scandinavian, the temptation to have an opinion is overwhelming. I don't think Dr. Zuckerman mentioned the real difference: in the UK and Scandinavia religion has been made boring, in the US it has been made profitable.

When the government takes care of religion, even teaches some in the schools, and provides a church for those ceremonies that need a kick upstairs from the local dance hall, such as baptism, weddings, and funerals, there is no need to get fanatical about it. Take Sunday off and go skiing. In the US the faith must be focused on the cash flow to maintain a god, a church, and his ministers.

This needy god, is he an actual physical, living, or spiritual being? No, absolutely not, he is the fig leaf we use to cover our ignorance. But if a critical mass of people decide to believe in a god, and act accordingly, then that god can take on attributes of reality that may be difficult to disprove. The human mind can create fictional entities and believe in them. Every incorporation of a company proves it.

Nobody would dispute the existence of General Motors, but nobody expects Mr. Motors to show up at a meeting, no matter how important. Mr. Motors relies on a board of directors to make decisions for him, and an army of "officers of the corporation" to collect cash and write checks on his behalf. We have come so far now that the US Supreme Court has decided a fictitious embodiment can hold a political opinion, although Mr. Motors personally has no mind in which to hold anything whatsoever.

Read the first five books of the bible, the Pentateuch. If you have ever been involved in the creation of a company, you will recognize, tucked in between the myths, the folklore, and the superstitions, the papers of incorporation of the Hebrew tribe. It is remarkably complete, with articles of incorporation and bylaws. It covers taxation and has a rather extensive penal code. The Christians use the New Testament as additional bylaws.

The documents were filed by the Levites, the Hebrew priesthood, three thousand years ago, and the authorship shows. They give special status to the Hebrew tribe in this earthly brawl, and to the males within the tribe. The priesthood is exempt from military service, get to lounge around the temple all day, collect the tithes, and pick the choicest meats for their own table. Rabbinical studies are still a favored career choice for young Israeli males.

The special treatment of the priesthood is still with us. Study 3000 year old ignorance and get a degree in superstition. Then you too can join the televangelists and radio commentators. On the strength of statements that cannot be verified,

threats that are not theirs to make, and promises they cannot possibly keep, they are allowed to beg with impunity, and get to keep the loot tax free. It beats working for a living.

To justify themselves theologians write volumes for our benefit and their profit. For eighteen hundred years they have toiled. But the theologians have been shoved aside. The final arbiter of faith is now the IRS. They alone decide whether your god is a true god, and worthy of tax exemption.

Enlightening irony can go no further.

Paul Kurtz (1925 - 2012) **Roger Schlueter**

He was a man both reviled and revered. Throughout his adult life, he was damned as a secular humanist. He was indeed that, but much more than just a humanist, he was the USA movement's philosophical guru, its leading organizational innovator and spokesman for Humanism known around the world.

Paul Kurtz died on October 20 in his hometown, Amherst, N.Y. A complete list of his accomplishments would fill a book. I'll just mention his connection to our Society. For more in-depth coverage go to [latimes](#) and [cfr](#) and [nytimes](#) and, of course, [Wikipedia](#).

Paul spoke to our Society in one of our very early "special meetings". We met at the Sizzler in Goleta and had, as I remember, about 65 people in attendance. I remember him as intense and serious. I don't think I saw him smile or laugh the whole evening. That is not to say that he lacked a sense of humor just that his mission (from his point of view) that night was proselytizing and fund raising. He was serious about those topics.

He was later scheduled to visit us again but something came up that prevented his being here. He was contentious about his absence and made sure we held our event, but with a substitute.

On a personal note, at one time I was considering working for the Council for Secular Humanism, Paul's central organization. The position was in Buffalo, New York. We talked on the phone for at least half an hour. He was animated and direct. At one point I raised my concerns about moving from Santa Barbara to Buffalo. He responded (paraphrasing), "What does it matter where you live as long as you are doing good work?" I think that was typical of him, namely, all business.

As a philosopher, it is no surprise that Paul was instrumental in formulating Humanist principles and ideals. The original Humanist Manifesto, written in 1933, actually talked about Humanism as a "religious movement" meant to replace traditional religious practices. Paul was too young to be involved in preparing this version of the manifesto.

However, he co-authored Humanist Manifesto II in 1973. It took a more expansive yet more concrete approach to Humanism. It was well ahead of its time, for example, advocating for divorce, birth control and the establishment of an international court. That court is now in existence.

There is a Humanist Manifesto III as well as numerous other versions authored by various committees and organizations around the world. All versions reject the supernatural, state that mankind is responsible for its own destiny and emphasizes rational, scientific thinking.

How does this relate to the Atheism+ movement that I wrote about last month? The ideas expressed by those behind Atheism+ are distinguishable from these manifestos only in emphasis and minutia. The overall ideals are identical.



Paul Kurtz

Paul had an immeasurable impact on Humanism both in the USA and around the world. We have lost one of our best.

Religious Unaffiliation Growing in US, Pew Research Shows

The number of Americans who do not identify with any religion continues to grow at a rapid pace. One-fifth of the U.S. public - and a third of adults under 30 - are religiously unaffiliated today, the highest percentages ever in Pew Research Center polling.

In the last five years alone, the unaffiliated have increased from just over 15% to just under 20% of all U.S. adults. Their ranks now include more than 13 million self-described atheists and agnostics (nearly 6% of the U.S. public), as well as nearly 33 million people who say they have no particular religious affiliation (14%).

This large and growing group of Americans is less religious than the public at large on many conventional measures, including frequency of attendance at religious services and the degree of importance they attach to religion in their lives.

However, a new survey by the Pew Research Center's Forum on Religion & Public Life, conducted jointly with the PBS television program Religion & Ethics NewsWeekly, finds that many of the country's 46 million unaffiliated adults are religious or spiritual in some way. Two-thirds of them say they believe in God (68%). More than half say they often feel a deep connection with nature and the earth (58%), while more than a third classify themselves as "spiritual" but not "religious" (37%), and one-in-five (21%) say they pray every day. In addition, most religiously unaffiliated Americans think that churches and other religious institutions benefit society by strengthening community bonds and aiding the poor.

With few exceptions, though, the unaffiliated say they are not looking for a religion that would be right for them. Overwhelmingly, they think that religious organizations are too concerned with money and power, too focused on rules and too involved in politics.

Read Pew's full report at:

<http://www.pewforum.org/Unaffiliated/nones-on-the-rise.aspx>

What's Going on There?

Andrew Hankin, in Italy

1. "God's word is true. I've come to understand that. All that stuff I was taught about evolution and embryology and the big bang theory, all that is lies straight from the pit of Hell. And it's lies to try to keep me and all the folks who were taught that from understanding that they need a savior. You see, there are a lot of scientific data that I've found out as a scientist that actually show that this is really a young Earth. I don't believe that the Earth's but about 9,000 years old. I believe it was created in six days as we know them. That's what the Bible says... it teaches us how to run all of public policy and everything in society. And that's the reason as your Congressman I hold the Holy Bible as being the major directions to me of how I vote in Washington, D.C., and I'll continue to do that."

These are words from US Representative Dr. Paul Broun (Republican, Georgia), who faces certain re-election in November 2012, because there is no Democrat challenger. Broun has an M.D. from the Medical College of Georgia. He also holds a B.S. in chemistry.

Science educator Bill Nye argued that it was detrimental to have such a school of thought represented on the House Science Committee. "Since the economic future of the United States depends on our tradition of technological innovation, Representative Broun's views are not in the national interest," Nye [told The Huffington Post](#) in an email. "For example, the Earth is simply not

9,000 years old. ... He is, by any measure, unqualified to make decisions about science, space and technology."

2. A religious nonprofit suing City Hall of Santa Monica to restore nativity scenes to their winter-season home in Palisades Park filed an injunction this week that, if approved, would only allow displays that celebrate seasonal holidays in the public space. The motion is aimed directly at groups of atheists who applied for and won 18 of the 21 available spaces for displays in 2011, and used them to erect signs that some felt denigrated Christianity.

The signs — like one that juxtaposed Santa Claus, the Roman god Neptune and an image of the devil and called them all myths — quoted Supreme Court decisions about the separation of church and state and founding fathers like Thomas Jefferson deriding religion. Supporters of the nativity scenes accused them of purposefully disrupting the tradition and called on the City Council to force them to give the unused spaces back.

Full story: <http://www.smdp.com/nativity-backers-file-injunction-to-allow-only-seasonal-displays/113080>

Focus on the Family, in the Old Days

From: *The Family: A World History*, by Mary Jo Maynes and Ann Waltner, excerpted on delanceyplace.com, 10/24/2012.

In the context of contemporary Christianity and its strong "focus on the family," it is interesting to note the strong admonitions against marriage by prominent early church leaders such as Augustine and Tertullian. Those admonitions echoed some of the text of the New Testament itself:

"In his life of preaching, as recorded in the Gospels, Christ preached to men and women, rich and poor. This sentiment is echoed in St. Paul's epistle to the Galatians, which discussed an open approach to welcoming converts: 'There is neither Jew nor

Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.' Although Christ was God's son, he had been born of a human woman and grew up with a human family; some of his most important followers were women.

"In a striking departure from local precedent, he also taught that faith came before earthly ties, including family. For example, Luke's Gospel quotes Christ as having said, 'If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.' He promised his disciples a reward for their renunciation of family: 'Verily I say unto you,' Jesus said to them, 'There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake/ Who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting.'

"Although such passages are open to a variety of interpretations, some early Church leaders read them to mean that a celibate life of devotion to Christianity and away from all family ties was the best form of Christian life. Some traditions of early Christian commentary reveal a strong strain of hostility toward the female body, sexuality, and family life, despite the recognition of their necessity. Augustine, a Christian philosopher and theologian who lived from the fourth to the fifth century CE, for example, wrote 'I fail to see what use woman can be to man ... if one excludes the function of bearing children.' In his writings on marriage Augustine held up celibacy as the highest spiritual state: 'For intercourse of marriage for the sake of begetting hath not fault; but for the satisfying of lust, but yet with husband or wife, by reason of the faith of the bed, it hath venial fault: but adultery or fornication hath deadly fault, and, through this, continence from all intercourse is indeed better even than the intercourse of marriage itself, which takes place for the sake of begetting.'

"In the hands of an unabashedly misogynist writer such as Tertullian, who lived from the second to the third century CE even the redeeming virtues of

reproduction were not enough to justify marital sexuality. Tertullian's views on sexuality drew upon the tradition of blaming Eve for the introduction of sin into the world. 'You,' Tertullian wrote to Christian women, 'destroyed so easily God's image, man.' According to Tertullian only human law makes the distinction between marital sex and fornication; he believed that 'the best thing for a man is not to touch a woman; and accordingly the virgin's is the principal sanctity, because it is free from affinity with fornication.' "

I Don't Pray Anymore

I have a lovely mate forever
two unbelievable children
A comfortable house
with electricity and running water
I am not going to beg a God for more "Things".

I am going to think before I hurt someone
curb the urge to curse that poor driver
Step forward when I see the need
give that person a wrinkled dollar
I will not have to plead for forgiveness.

When our canoe hit a rock in the Stanislaus
the water went from light green to black
I was the only one there.
I had to cope with the horror myself.
There was not time to pray for a miracle.

~ Erna Hennessy

"After doing everything I was supposed to do, being a good kid and not embarrassing my parents, graduating, going to college, teaching, joining the WAVES, marrying Bernard Hennessy, having three wonderful children, off to Columbia University, helping my husband die as gracefully as possible from cancer, at 75 I fell in love with poetry.

At this great age it is more joy
to hunt for a better word
Than to read other's poems
or memorize favorites.
It is my mind's final frontier." Erna Hennessy.

"I Don't Pray Anymore" was published in *Above Us Only Sky, Atheist Poetry, Volume Two*, Incarnate Muse Press, 2008.

2012 Presidential Election Scorecard

Early in October, the Secular Coalition for America released its 2012 Presidential Candidate Scorecard for the general election—a guide for secular-minded Americans on the presidential candidates in the upcoming election. Candidates from the two major parties, as well as significant third party candidates were included and received the following grades: Gary Johnson, Libertarian- B; Barack Obama, Democrat- C; Mitt Romney, Republican- F; Jill Stein, Green Party- Incomplete

The complete scorecard appears on page 11 of this newsletter. SCA's complete report can be found at: <http://secular.org/content/2012-general-election-presidential-candidate-scorecard>

HSSB Opt-In List

From time to time, local events of interest to Santa Barbara Humanists may be publicized too late to be mentioned in the Secular Circular. HSSB has established an Opt-in email list for notifying people of these events.

To add your name to this list, notify Wayne Beckman at hssbwebmaster@cox.net that you'd like to be included on the Opt-in list.

Letters to Editors

To: Editors, LA Times and Santa Barbara News Press.

These are suggestions by an ordinary citizen.

First, cut the insane allotment to the military in half. We do not need more battleships, tanks or other arms of mass destruction. Believe me, nobody is going to invade our country. Right now we have

enough missiles to eliminate all human life on this planet. And as to the threat of a terrorist attack, we do not need probes to flatten areas where terrorists are located as well as innocent civilians. This is like killing a scorpion with a bazooka. Leave this problem to the Secret Service, the FBI and our police forces with the same organizations of other Western European countries. Together they have been able to prevent such attacks in the past. Also bring home the troops stationed in foreign lands on friendly grounds. World War II ended long ago.

Second, all the millions of acres of land belonging to church or religious organizations should be forced to pay property taxes just like any homeowner must. Our government should not give special treatment to any religious sect. Our founding fathers built a wall between church and state, a wall which has been slowly crumbling. Let us rebuild it. With the revenue that these actions produce, we can improve and repair our roads, bridges, dams, sewer, gas and waterlines, all in dire need of repair. We would create millions of jobs not just in the labor force but also in the factories and shops that supply materials and tools for these jobs. This would place us on the road to recovery.

John L. Coppejans

Non-HSSB Events of Interest Diane Krohn

Upcoming events that may be of interest to humanists, atheists, skeptics, and freethinkers:

Upcoming Events in California:

- November 4: Ophelia Benson: *Secularism and Equality*. CFI West, Los Angeles. <http://www.cfivest.org/calendar/feedyourbrain.htm#benson>
- November 18: Leonard Tramiel: *Accepting the Absurd*. CFI West, Los Angeles and Costa Mesa. <http://www.cfivest.org/calendar/feedyourbrain.htm#tramiel>

- November 18: Dr. Sean M. Carroll: *The Particle at the End of the Universe: How the Hunt for the Higgs Boson Leads Us to the Edge of a New World*. Skeptics Society, Cal Tech, Pasadena.
<http://www.skeptic.com/upcoming-lectures/>
- December 2: Dr. Donald Yeomans: *Near-Earth Objects: Finding Them Before They Find Us*. Skeptics Society, Cal Tech, Pasadena.
<http://www.skeptic.com/upcoming-lectures/>
- December 2: Jim Underdown: *A Date With Dr. Phil: Anatomy of a TV Appearance*. CFI West, Los Angeles.
<http://www.cfiwest.org/calendar/FeedYourBrain.htm>
- December 16: Dr. Paul Zak: *The Moral Molecule: The Source of Love and Prosperity*. Skeptics Society, Cal Tech, Pasadena.
<http://www.skeptic.com/upcoming-lectures/>
- January 5, 2013: Dr. Jared Diamond: *The World Until Yesterday: What Can We Learn From Traditional Societies?* Skeptics Society, Cal Tech, Pasadena.
<http://www.skeptic.com/upcoming-lectures/>

Upcoming Events Outside of California:

- November 9-11: Skepticon 5, Springfield, MO. The annual skeptics convention. Speakers include PZ Myers, Greta Christina, Jessica Ahlquist, Richard Carrier, and of course many others.
<http://www.skepticon.org/about/>
- November 30-December 2: Eschaton 2012: Celebrating Reason at the End of the World. Center for Inquiry, Canada. Ottawa, Canada. Speakers include PZ Myers, Natalie Reed, Hank Fox, Eugenie Scott and many other scientists, skeptics, philosophers, freethinkers, etc.
<http://eschaton2012.ca/>

HSSB Contact Information

Officers:

President: Dick Cousineau
687-2371

president@santabarbarahumanists.org

Secretary: Diane Krohn
569-5503

secretary@santabarbarahumanists.org

Treasurer: Richard Martin
687-3563

treasurer@santabarbarahumanists.org

Board Members at Large:

Wayne Beckman	Roger Schlueter
Judy Fontana	Claudia Solé
Helen Gordon	Nancy Wahl
Jean Olsen	Mary Wilk

Newsletter Editor:

Ray Stone

Editor@santabarbarahumanists.org

Newsletter Deadline:

Deadline for submissions to the Secular Circular is Midnight, the last day of each month.

HSSB meetings are held on the 3rd Saturday of each month at 2:30 pm, usually in the Patio Room of Vista del Monte, 3775 Modoc Rd., Santa Barbara. More information is available at our web site:

www.SantaBarbaraHumanists.org or by contacting any board member. At meetings, a donation of \$2 from members and \$5 from non-members is appreciated. First-time visitors are welcome on a complimentary basis.

To send a copy of this newsletter to someone interested in our Society, please send their contact information to: PO Box 30232, Santa Barbara, CA 93130, or contact Mary Wilk at 967-3045, or mwilk@cox.net. Newsletters are also available at the above web address.

Annual HSSB membership dues are \$36 for a single person, \$60 for a couple, and \$100 (or more) to become a Society Supporter. One may subscribe to our newsletter only for an annual fee of \$20.

Link to HSSB Photos:

<http://picasaweb.google.com/Humanist.Society.of.Santa.Barbara>



HSSB Phone: 769-HSSB

THE SCORECARD

	<u>Johnson</u>	<u>Obama</u>	<u>Romney</u>	<u>Stein</u>
Government and Values				
1. Recognition of the U.S. as a secular nation	B	A	F	N/A
2. Recognition religion not necessary for morality	N/A	B	C	N/A
3. Separation of church and state	A	A	F	A
4. Role of religion in decision making as president	A	F	F	A
5. Definition of religious freedom	A	N/A	C	A
6. Willingness to appoint a nontheist	A	N/A	A	N/A
Section Average:	A	B	C	A
Health and Safety				
1. Protecting religious refusal laws	N/A	B	F	N/A
2. Exemptions from generally applicable law for religious institutions/individuals	N/A	B	F	A
3. Use of religious beliefs to determine public health care policy	N/A	A	F	N/A
Section Average:	N/A	B	F	A**
Education				
1. Support of science-based public school curriculums	F	A	A	A*
2. Support of abstinence-only sex education in public schools	F	C	F	A*
Section Average:	F	B	C	A**
Government Funding				
1. Stance on faith-based initiatives	A	C	F	A
2. Discrimination by religious organizations receiving taxpayer funding	N/A	F	F	N/A
Section Average:	A	F	F	A
Government Acts				
1. Government participation and support of the Boy Scouts of America	N/A	C	C	N/A
2. Support of "Under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance and "In God We Trust" as the National Motto	N/A	F	F	N/A
3. Government participation in the "National Prayer Breakfast" and the "National Day of Prayer" as a government-endorsed day of observance	F	F	F	N/A
4. Opening public events with prayer and religious symbols on government property	A	N/A	F	N/A
Section Average:	C	F	F	N/A
FINAL GRADES				
	B	C	F	Inc.**

* Indicates the Secular Coalition was able to compile an incomplete answer for the given question.

** Indicates that the Secular Coalition was able to compile answers for fewer than half of the questions and that the averaged grade is incomplete.

HSSB Calendar

Tuesday, November 13. Board Meeting, 5:30pm. Home of **Mary Wilk**. Members invited to attend.

Saturday, November 17. Monthly Meeting: Chuck McPartlin, "A Tour of the Observable Universe."

Sunday, November 25. (and the last Sunday of every month), 10am, **Secular Sunday Brunch** for humanists, atheists, agnostics, skeptics, freethinkers, singles, couples and families without religion. No cover charge; membership not required. Pay only for your food, drink and tips. Cody's Cafe, 4898 Hollister Ave. in the Turnpike Center, Goleta in the room to the right as you enter the restaurant. For information phone Board member, Mary Wilk at 805-967-3045.

Sunday, December 16. Winter Solstice Party

Saturday, January 19, 2013. Jonathan Young, "The Mythological Basis for Current Religions"



Humanist Society of
Santa Barbara
PO Box 30232
Santa Barbara, CA 93130