

NOSHA NEWS

Newsletter of the New Orleans Secular Humanist Association
Fall 2008

New Orleans Secular Humanist Association

520 St. Louis St., Apt. 3
New Orleans, LA 70130

(a 501c3 corporation)

<http://nosha.secularhumanism.net>

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NATIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Council for Secular Humanism
American Humanist Association
Atheist Alliance International
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MEETINGS

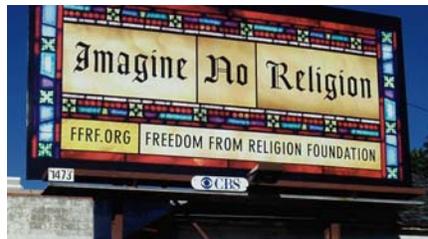
3rd Saturday of month, 2:00 pm
New Orleans Public Library
219 Loyola Avenue

N.O. COX CABLE TV
CH 76 "Humanist Perspective"
Sat. midnight; Sun. noon

CH 78 "AtheistViewpoint"
Tues. 10:30 am; 10:30 pm

ADVERTISING FREETHOUGHT

During the summer months, the Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) set forth on a project of advertising freethought throughout the United States. Initially, billboards went up in Wisconsin, then in Colorado, and finally in a total of eleven states with the most recent one going up in California along Rte. 66 in the city of Rancho Cucamonga. The billboards are all similar, featuring what appears to be a stained glass window and the simple message "Imagine No Religion" from the lyrics of John Lennon. Across the bottom of the billboards is contact information for the FFRF.



Early this fall, the British Humanist Association embarked upon a similar campaign of placing signs on buses in London. British evolutionary biologist and best-selling author, Dr. Richard Dawkins, offered to underwrite the first attempt with a matching grant should they be able to raise half the cost of one sign. To date, they have signs on 30 London buses which say, "There's probably no God. Now stop

worrying and enjoy life." Donations continue to pour in exceeding their greatest expectations. A similar campaign is underway in Australia.

For this holiday season, Washington, D.C.-based American Humanist Association is sponsoring their own ad campaign. They have placed signs inside and outside of D.C. area buses which read, "Why Believe in god? Just be good for goodness sake." These signs are

appearing in 200 metro Washington buses. They have also sponsored billboards outside Philadelphia and New York that say, "Don't Believe in God? You are not alone."

It's time we made ourselves more visible to the community around us. To quote a recent mailing from the Atheists for Human Rights group in Minnesota: "For years, atheists—to the extent that they organized at all—have mainly sat around and talked to each other ... We simply must make an effort to become an acknowledged and respected part of the community. With visibility comes familiarity and eventually acceptance."

NOSHA has set up a committee to determine the cost of launching a similar campaign in New Orleans. We could put signs inside city buses and/or on the sides of the St. Charles Avenue streetcar, or we could put up a billboard. FFRF and FreeThoughtAction will help by providing the signs, but we would have to pay for the space. The costs could be several thousand dollars. With your contributions, we could do it. We are setting up a "Freethought Advertising Fund" now. If you would like to contribute, send your check payable to "NOSHA" to 2509 Giuffrias Ave., Apt. 603, Metairie, LA 70001. Please make a notation of your contribution.

CONFUCIANISM AS A SPECULAR ETHICAL SYSTEM Samuel Milligan

(The author is a board member of the Secular Humanist Society of New York, and this article is reprinted from their newsletter PIQUE.)

Confucianism is not a religion, and attempts to make it so invariably end in failure.

Confucius was not a god or saint. he specifically stated that he was only a human striving for moral perfection.

Confucianism does not insist on obedience to corrupt and oppressive political authority. In fact, it is the duty of oppressed people to overthrow such governments.

It is not incompatible with science, democracy or industrial capitalism. *And ...*

It has nothing whatever to do with the offensive “Confucius say” fortune cookie mentality ascribed to it.

Confucianism is, on the other hand, a sophisticated system of social ethics, and has a great deal to offer this troubled age, as it did for a similar age two and a half millennia ago.

What if one could have an ethical system not encumbered by religion and its endemic tendency toward wickedness? The religious will immediately claim that such a system is impossible. One cannot, they say, behave ethically without the fear of some divinity or other to keep one from sin. Religion, they claim, is our only defense against moral chaos.

This is not true.

The First Teacher

Roughly two and half millennia ago Confucius—Kong-zi, or Master Kong (551-479 BCE)—presented exactly such a system, complete in itself, in which ethical conduct is pursued with no dependence whatever on the supernatural. We learn from the oldest Confucian source available to us, the *Analects (Lunyu)*, that he had no interest in the spirit world or with life after death. In fact when a disciple asked how the spirits were to be served, Confucius answered, “if you don’t know how to serve your fellow man, how can you serve the spirits?” The disciple asked about death, and Confucius continued, “If you don’t know anything about the living, how can you be concerned with death?”

We also learn that he “did not speak about strange phenomena (i.e., omens, such as comets, etc.) feats of strength, disorders (such as earthquakes, floods and so on), or spirits.” Since none of these things—including spirits, please note—pertain to ethical conduct, they were of no use or interest to him.

But what are the teachings on which the system rests? What is Confucianism all about, exactly?

While Confucianism is often called a philosophy, as I suppose it is in some sense of the word, it is more accurately a system of social ethics. Confucius had little regard for the ascetic who would abandon society and thereby selfishly avoid his social obligations. neither does the Confucian have time to putter about nature with the Daoists, nor contemplate his navel with mystics of whatever persuasion.

The Confucian realizes that someone has to bring in the harvest, bury the dead, educate the children, feed the pigs, wash the dishes, defend the state, pay the taxes and do all these things and at the same time achieve a deeply satisfying ethical life of contentment and beauty.

But how to go about it? Confucianism begins and ends with the people around us. When asked to give a simple definition of his system, Confucius said that the one single word “reciprocity” (*shu*) would cover it. “Don’t do anything to anybody else that you wouldn’t want them to do to you.”

To aid in this, Confucianism stresses the cultivation of virtues, the five cardinal ones being the following:

The first, and by far the most important of the virtues is *Ren*. The word has been translated in a number of ways, such as love, kindness, compassion, humanity, philanthropy agape and so on. None of these fit, exactly. I myself like the term human-heartedness, which, I think, gives a good general idea of what it’s all about—that is, a natural, caring concern for the welfare of others.

The second virtue is *Yi*. As the American writer on Confucianism, h. G. Creel, defines it, its sense is not simply that of what is right or righteous in the ordinary definitions of these words, because it has the further meaning of that which is fitting and suitable. “Thus when the disciple Yu Jo said, ‘If in making promises one stays close to *Yi*, his words can be fulfilled,’ he meant that before one agrees to do something one should consider all the circumstances and promise only what is proper and suitable. It was with a similar intent that Confucius approved the conduct of one who seeing an opportunity for gain, thinks of *Yi*. Such a man reflects upon whether, by taking a possible profit he will violate a trust, wrong another person, or in any respect act in a way that is unsuitable under the given circumstances.

“Obviously, this concept of *Yi* is an extremely important moral force. It is a regulator of conduct ... and one that constantly places [one’s] own responsibility squarely before the individual.”

Yi also implies justice. A student came to Confucius with the news that another teacher was maintaining that one should repay evil with good. “With what, then,” Confucius asked, “shall we repay good? No. Repay good with good, but repay evil with justice.”

The original meaning of *Li* was “ritual sacrifice.” Then the primary meaning became simply “ritual.” then

by extension it became “ritual propriety” or “proper social conduct.”

We live in a crowded world and need some rules of the road in order to negotiate it. In all your dealings with others, Confucius told a student, “behave as if you were receiving a highly honored guest, and if you are so fortunate as to find yourself in a position of authority over others, discharge that trust with solemn care, “as if you were assisting at a great ceremony.” One must always act with respect when dealing with others, particularly with those under our authority.

Naturally, if one is to get by in a society, one must work within the conventions of that society. Discretion is allowed in modifying those conventions when the situation warrants, but being careful not to violate the principles of *Ren* or *Yi*.

On the other hand, one should not err in the direction of spinelessness. When standing up for our principles we are not obliged to suffer fools gladly.

Li, then, is a sort of modifier of conduct, preventing excess in either direction, maintaining a balanced norm.

Zhi is the wisdom of accumulated knowledge. We can always acquire more knowledge in order to learn more effective ways to practice *Ren*. In fact, the two are interdependent. Bertrand Russell gives a valuable illustration of this. During the European Middle Ages, when plague struck, compassionate people encouraged everyone to crowd into the churches to pray for relief from the pestilence. This, of course, just enabled the disease to spread more easily. Russell points this out as an example of love without knowledge (the result was death on a large scale) and gives war as an example of knowledge without love. Again, the result is death on a large scale.

As an appalling example of applying knowledge without love, the Tuskegee Experiment comes to mind, in which syphilitic patients were deceptively given ineffective placebos in order to study the effects of the disease if left untreated. Science is essential in learning about the cosmos and our place in it, but to do science without human-heartedness is a sure road to disaster—to death on a large scale.

But, knowledge coupled with human-heartedness will result in wisdom (and, I might add, better science).

Xin is sincerity or realness, without which all the other virtues are worthless. Again, h. G. Creel—“It cannot be too strongly emphasized that Confucius did not consider such accomplishments as *Li* and music to be primary. the basic point that he pounded at this students, again and again and again, was sincerity, sincerity, sincerity. “If sincerity is lacking,” he told them, “I don’t know how one can get on, any more than a wagon could without a yoke for attaching the horses.” The disciple Zizhang asked how one should conduct oneself. The Master told him, “In everything you say, be sincere and truthful, in all your actions be honorable and careful, and

you will get along very well, even among the barbarians.” he praised those who were not ashamed to seek enlightenment from those inferior to them in rank, and honest enough to cause their meritorious inferiors to be raised to a rank on a par with their own. he was scornful of hypocrisy; he would be asked, he said, to stoop to “clever talk, meretricious manners and simulated respect.” “The man who covers his inner weakness with a harsh and overbearing manner is no better,” he declared, “than a thief.” This is a remarkable insight into the mind of the bully wherever found—from the schoolyard to the seats of government.

True sincerity is also displayed in action. We must learn what is right and then act on it. To fail to do so is cowardice. We are reminded of those Confucians who, standing by their principles, were buried alive during the Qin Dynasty. Like them, we must be ready to give up our lives for our principles if need be.

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“I regard monotheism as the greatest disaster ever to befall the human race. I see no good in Judaism, Christianity or Islam—good people, yes, but any religion based on a single, well-frenzied and virulent god, is not as useful to the human race as, say, Confucianism, which is not a religion but an ethical and educational system.”

--Gore Vidal, American writer (1988 -)

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‘TIS THE SEASON TO LIE TO CHILDREN Harry Greenberger

A *Times-Picayune* reader couldn’t miss Macy’s nearly full-page reproduction of the old *New York Sun* 1897 article captioned, “Yes, Virginia, There is a Santa Claus.” That letter to an 8-year-old child still rankles me.

Virginia’s less retarded friends tell her there is no Santa Claus, but her father does not concede.

Many of the words and some of the concepts in the response by the *Sun* might be beyond Virginia’s third grade level, but if she can understand their article, she is educated enough to realize she has been taken for a dummy by her parents. The *Sun* writes, “They (the other children) think that nothing can be which is not comprehensible by their little minds.” It’s their “little” minds that are so enlightened that they can discern fact over fiction. The paper says, “how dreary would be the world if there were no Santa Claus!...There would be no childlike faith then, no poetry, no romance to make tolerable this existence.” Really! Is the best Virginia can hope for a “tolerable” existence?

The entire Santa Claus fable foisted upon innocent children by those they most depend upon and trust—their parents and family—offends my sense of propriety and integrity. Imaginative ruses to convince these babes that Santa Claus, the North Pole toy shop, reindeer, gifts for good children, are seriously connived to assure the child’s heartfelt unquestioning belief.

What is it about this Christmastime joke that so distresses me? It parallels exactly the same determined effort of parents and other adults to convince children of a fictional Santa-like God. Without proof, an immature person must accept the word of trusted adults that a supernatural being “knows if you’ve been good or bad,” and will reward only the good kids. I can’t understand why children, after finally learning they had been liked to about Santa, don’t recognize the second lie. As George Bush couldn’t repeat correctly: Fool me once, shame on you. Fool me twice, shame on me.

Macy’s provides postcards for children to list for Santa everything they want given to them. They are preaddressed to “Santa Claus, The North Pole,” and require that a postage stamp be attached. Wonder what happens to those 42-cent stamps.

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INGERSOLL’S VOW
Robert Green Ingersoll



Robert Green Ingersoll (1833-1899) was a Civil War veteran, an American political leader and an orator during The Golden Age of Freethought. He is considered by many to be the “father” of secular humanism in America. Like many of us secularists, when he realized there were no gods, no force or power or dogma to control his life, he cast off the shackles and espoused his freedom. Here he expresses his feelings in a short essay called “Ingersoll’s Vow.”

When I became convinced that the Universe is natural—that all the ghosts and gods are myths, there entered into my brain, into my soul, into every drop of my blood, the sense, the feeling, the joy of freedom. The walls of my prison crumbled and fell, the dungeon was flooded with light, and all the bolts, and bars, and manacles became dust. I was no longer a servant, a serf, or a slave.

There was for me no master in all the wide world—not even in infinite space. I was free—free to think, to express my thoughts—free to live to my own ideal—free to live for myself and those I loved—free to use all my faculties, all my senses—free to spread imaginations wings—free to investigate, to guess and dream and hope—free to judge and determine for myself—free to reject all ignorant and cruel creeds, all the “inspired” books that savages have produced, and all the barbarous legends of the past—free from popes and priests—free from all the “called” and “set apart”—free from sanctified mistakes and holy lies—free from the fear of eternal pain—free from the winged monsters of the night—free from devils, ghost, and gods. For the first time I was free.

There were no prohibited places in all the realms of thought—no air, no space, where fancy could not spread her painted wings—no chains for my limbs—no lashes for my back—no fires for my flesh—no master’s frown or threat—no following another’s steps—no need to bow, or cringe, or crawl, or utter lying words. I was free. I stood erect and fearlessly, joyously, faced all worlds.

And then my heart was filled with gratitude, with thankfulness, and went out in love to all the heroes, the thinkers who gave their lives for the liberty of hand and brain—for the freedom of labor and thought—to those who fell in the fierce fields of war, to those who died in dungeons bound with chains—to those who proudly mounted scaffold’s stairs—to those whose bones were crushed, whose flesh was scarred and torn—to those by fire consumed—to all the wise, the good, the brave of every land, whose thoughts and deeds have given freedom to the sons of men. And then I vowed to grasp the torch that they had held, and hold it high, that light might conquer darkness still.

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“A false belief, maintained and cherished for thousands of years, does not thereby become any less false.”

--Ashleigh Brilliant, British-born author and cartoonist (1933 -)

“Heresy is another word for freedom of thought.”

--Graham Greene, English author (1904-1991)

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RELIGION UNNECESSARY FOR MORAL AND ETHICAL SOCIETY

A recent article from *The Times* (on-line) reports that an American study shows that “In general, higher rates of belief in and worship of a creator correlate with higher rates of homicide, juvenile and early adult mortality, STD infection rates, teen pregnancy and abortion in the prosperous democracies.”

The paper, published in *the Journal of Religion and Society*, by Gregory Paul, a social scientist, further shows “The United States is almost always the most dysfunctional of the developing democracies, sometimes spectacularly so.”

The study concluded that the United States was the “world’s only prosperous democracy where murder rates were still high, “ and that the least religious countries were the least dysfunctional. Rates of gonorrhea in U.S. teens were up to 300 times higher than in less religious countries, for example.

The author of the study further said “the study shows that England, despite the social ills it has, is actually performing a good deal better than the USA in most indicators, even though it is now a much less religious nation than America.”

Disparities were even greater when the U.S. was compared with France, Japan, and Scandinavian countries. Those nations have been the most successful in reduction

of murder rates, sexually transmitted diseases and abortion.

Dr. Paul's findings show that "the non-religious, proevolution democracies contradict the dictum that a society cannot enjoy good conditions unless most citizens ardently believe in a moral creator."

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MEMBERS' PUBLISHED LETTERS

The following letter by **J. Michael Malec** appeared in the *Baton Rouge Advocate* on October 17, 2008 under the title "Flying to north Louisiana to go to church is NEVER state business":

For a Catholic such as Gov. Bobby Jindal, it's not even religious business. Attending a Baptist service in Monroe does not satisfy the requirement to go to Mass.

Such trips are clearly political campaign trips, and should be paid for out of campaign funds, not state funds.

Louisiana State Police security is a state responsibility, as are state staff. However, Jindal and campaign staff (even if they double as state workers) should pay their own way.

We should not use state money for political purposes.

The following letter by Dr. **Barbara Forrest** appeared in the *Baton Rouge Advocate* on November 24, 2008:

If Gov. Bobby Jindal is puzzled about why educated Louisiana citizens are leaving by the thousands, he should look in the mirror.

Louisiana's problems did not begin with Jindal, but when he had the opportunity to make Louisiana a better place for educated, talented people to live as workers, parents and citizens, he chose instead to cater to the farthest reaches of his Religious Right base.

Jindal understands what he's doing. However, he apparently hopes no one else understands. He apparently hopes that the people of Louisiana are too busy or too uninformed to pay attention to his actions, rather than merely to his words.

Here are some things he did to make Louisiana a less-desirable place to live:

- He refused to extend Gov. Kathleen Blanco's Executive Order 2004-54 guaranteeing equal rights to gay citizens who work, pay taxes and improve Louisiana through their talents and skills.
- He signed a bill permitting creationist supplementary materials in public schools.
- He signed a bill outlawing state funding for research using somatic cell nuclear transfer, which offers hope to millions of people with dreadful – and fatal – diseases. He did this even though Louisiana has one of the country's

cutting-edge research facilities, the Pennington Biomedical Research Center.

He did these things not only because of his own extreme rightward views, but because his actions are supported by groups such as the Louisiana Family Forum, to which he is politically allied. And he has stacked his Louisiana Commission on Marriage and Family with people who will promote this right-wing agenda as public policy.

Young, well-educated people don't want to live in a state where their gay friends and family members – or maybe they, themselves – are not welcome, where they don't have the same rights as everyone else.

Young, well-educated people cannot confidently build careers in a state where promising scientific research is outlawed by the Legislature and the governor.

Young, well-educated people cannot be confident that their children will get a decent education in a state where the governor signs creationist bills promoted by right-wing organizations such as the Louisiana Family Forum.

Using state helicopters to campaign in north Louisiana churches will not help the people of Louisiana, but it will cement the governor's Religious right base.

Signing creationist legislation will not improve Louisiana's work force, which he says is one of his top priorities, but it will keep the Religious Right happy.

Putting obstacles in the path of scientists who do lifesaving scientific research will not enhance Louisiana's national image, but it will keep the governor's supporters pacified at home.

These are the governor's priorities, and he fully understands what he is doing. He just hopes that we don't get it.

The following letter by **Michael Malec** appeared in the *New Orleans Times-Picayune* on November 27, 2008:

What's the matter with St. Tammany Parish?

We get three stories in about a week from St. Tammany schools. In one story, a 5-year-old has to enlist the ACLU to get the superintendent to back off from an entirely arbitrary and capricious rule on hair length, and even then they don't scrap the rule—they just give the Native American kid an exception.

In another story we hear that staff members prevented students from celebrating the election of President-elect Obama, or even mentioning his name! Apparently, they think it's perfectly OK to suspend free speech if you only do it for a few days, to prevent "disorder."

The third story is that the same superintendent has been named "Superintendent of the Year"! Now, I know that St. Tammany is a rich, Republican white-flight

suburb, but even my Republican friends are champions of free speech and individual liberty.

In St. Tammany Parish, apparently you get an award for oppression and suppression of innocent schoolkids' rights.

When the Newsletter of the Secular Humanist Society of New York, *Pique*, invited readers to define their secularism, our **Harry Greenberger** submitted the following response which appeared in their November 2008 edition:

I'm an atheist, and when asked how I can be so sure of my atheism, my response is: "I know there is no god the same way I know there is no Santa Claus."

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“GODLESS” LICENSE PLATE – AN UPDATE

Readers will recall from the Summer 2008 edition of NOSHA News, member **Doug Stewart**'s short battle with the Department of Motor Vehicles over his requested license plate. Doug won that battle is pictured here with his new plate. His license plate holder at the top says "Atheist," and at the bottom "Because Honesty Compels."



Doug still challenges others to test the DMV with similar requests for vanity plates.. See the last newsletter for some suggestions. The Louisiana DMV website address is www.expresslane.org.

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**HUMANIST PERSPECTIVE TV
IMPROVED ACCESS**

For those of you who have been unable to view NOSHA's "Humanist Perspective" on Cox Cable Channel 76 (only in New Orleans), some programs are now available on YouTube, thanks to **Farrar Hudkins**.

You can select from the programs presently transferred in this way: <http://www.youtube.com/neworleanshumanists>. At that site, click on "playlists."

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REBUILDING NEW ORLEANS

On two Saturdays in October, a half dozen NOSHA members joined another dozen or so folks from the Rebuild Together project in helping to restore a home in the Broadmoor neighborhood of New Orleans which had been badly damaged by Hurricane Katrina. Our hard work mostly involved scraping and repainting the siding, but it was the start up work necessary to rebuild the home.



NOSHA would like to thank **Doug Stewart** for organizing NOSHA's efforts in the project as well as other NOSHA members who helped, including **Dave Schultz**, **Connie Gordon**, **Ricky Adams**, **Charlotte Klasson**, and **Harvey Stern**.



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NOSHA GOES TO THE MOVIES

On Sunday, October 5, about 30 NOSHA members gathered at Canal Place to view the Bill Maher documentary film, “Religulous.” Then we all gathered in a nearby food court to discuss the flick. The film did a great job of portraying many of the tenets of religious faith as inane and ridiculous. If you haven’t seen the film, you should rent the DVD when it is available.



It was really great to see the turnout for the film. Some folks came all the way from Mississippi, down from Baton Rouge, and over from Houma and Thibodaux.

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NOSHA MEETING PRESENTATIONS

It’s always nice when NOSHA members step up to volunteer and make a presentation at a regular NOSHA meeting. **Glen Sandberg** has done it more than once, for which we are grateful.

The topic of Glen’s presentation was “The Design of Intelligent Nature and the Nature of Intelligent Design.” He attempted to articulate human ideas about reality and the reality of ideas and discussed the philosophical quandary of physical determinism versus free will. The topic has been a pet project of Glen’s for years and a complete essay on the topic may be found at Glen’s website: www.gsandberginfo/Essays/Index.html.

Our November meeting presenter was **Dan Cameron**, curator of Prospect.1 New Orleans as well as Contemporary Arts Center’s Visual Arts curator. Prospect.1 New Orleans is considered to be the largest international contemporary art exhibit ever in the United States. For more information about Dan Cameron and the event: <http://prospectneworleans.org/>.

Thanks to both Glen and Dan for their presentations. We always welcome volunteers from our membership as well as suggestions for topics and speakers for upcoming meetings. If you have any suggestions or would like to volunteer yourself, please e-mail Harry Greenberger at hpgreenx@yahoo.com.

DECEMBER NOSHA MEETING AND SOLSTICE CELEBRATION

The December 20 NOSHA meeting will start one-half hour earlier at 1:30 pm. Our speaker will be The Reverend Kevin J. Wildes, President of Loyola University and Chairman of the state Ethics Board Nominating Committee. The title of his talk is “Searching for Public Ethics in New Orleans.”

This meeting is also the annual general membership meeting. There will be an election for new members to NOSHA’s board of directors. Names in nomination to date are **Doug Stewart** and **Serena Bodolini**. If you would like to put another name in nomination or volunteer your-self, please attend the meeting and do so.

Following the meeting, we are all invited to the home of Doug and Lynette Stewart (and their 30+ dogs) in Mandeville for a Winter Solstice celebration., the theme of which is “Praise Be to ‘Dog’”. If you plan to attend, you should bring along any readings, poetry, or songs to commemorate the solstice.

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PLANS FOR 2009

The first meeting in the New Year is Saturday, January 17. NOSHA board member **Denis Dwyer** has volunteered to lead a discussion on “Why do people believe weird things?” He hopes everyone will participate and will bring their own stories on the topic.

Again, we need topic suggestions and volunteers for subsequent 2009 meetings.

February 12, 2009 is the 200th anniversary of the birth of Charles Darwin as well as Abraham Lincoln, as someone said, “the two great emancipators.” Plans are underway for a Darwin Day celebration in New Orleans. More information is forthcoming.

As discussed on the front page of this newsletter, NOSHA is pursuing a campaign of enlightening the community to the existence of non-believers among them. We know there are many more of us out there who don’t know that organizations such as ours exist. Also, it’s time that the religious community understands and realizes that we are all good, kind, ethical citizens. Suggestions for content of signs and venues to place them are welcome. Let’s make 2009 a humanist year in New Orleans.

NOSHA is accepting dues payments for 2009. Please use the membership form on the back of this newsletter and send in your **\$15.00** today. Thanks for your support.

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“Humanism is a progressive philosophy of life that, without theism, affirms our responsibility to lead ethical lives of value to self and humanity.”
--The American Humanist Association

The New Orleans Secular Humanist Association (NOSHA) was formed to provide an opportunity for like-minded people to meet and exchange ideas and to promote awareness of secular humanist viewpoints in the community. We are committed to the application of reason and science to the understanding of the universe and to the solving of human problems. We reject efforts to explain the world in supernatural terms and to look outside nature for salvation. We strive to make the public aware of the importance of the separation of church and state, to oppose the teaching of creationism and other religious doctrines in the public schools, and to provide a voice of reason when superstition is presented in the media. We believe in enjoying life here and now, and in cultivating moral excellence. We believe in the fullest realization of the best and noblest we are capable of as human beings.

To become a friend of THE NEW ORLEANS SECULAR HUMANIST ASSOCIATION, complete, clip, and mail in the following form:

Check one: New Member Renewing Member Mailing list only Newsletter by mail

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone and/or e-mail: _____

2009 Annual dues are \$15.00. Make checks payable to "NOSHA" and mail to Connie Gordon, 2509 Giuffrias Ave., Apt. 603, Metairie, LA 70001.

NOTE: For those of you who receive the newsletter by standard mail, the year for which you have last paid membership dues is reflected in the upper right corner of the mailing label.

**NOSHA
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