

NOSHA NEWS

Newsletter of the New Orleans Secular Humanist Association
Fall 2002

New Orleans Secular Humanist Association

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NATIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Council for Secular Humanism
American Humanist Association
Atheist Alliance International
American Atheists, Inc.

MEETINGS

1st & 3rd Sundays
1:30 p.m.
Smith Branch Library
6301 Canal Blvd.
New Orleans

A GIANT STIRS Harry Greenberger

The American Religious Identification Survey 2001 (ARIS) of the Graduate Center of The City University of New York, found that 29.4 million Americans reported having no religion. The introduction to the report quoted an anthropologist of religion as advising, "The magnitude and role of this large secular segment of the American population is frequently ignored by scholars and politicians alike . . ." Study authors wrote of the 14.1% of respondents who reported "no religion", "This is a diverse and politically independent group . . . that will likely never march under one banner, label or organization."

The first attempt to disprove that opinion was made on Saturday, November 2. The Godless Americans March on Washington was cosponsored by American Atheists, Council for Secular Humanism, Atheist Alliance International, Campus Freethought Alliance, Institute for Humanist Studies and others, totaling over 100 national, regional and local groups.

On a cold, clear Washington morning more than 2000 marchers, walking behind organization banners and carrying preprinted and handmade signs, proceeded down the length of the Mall with the Washington Monument behind them and the Capitol gleaming in the sunshine ahead, arriving at the stage area, with its giant projection screen. Along each side of the Mall, religious protesters displayed large professionally made banners and signs, along with other amateur posterboard messages, all admonishing the marchers that there were severe and unpleasant consequences awaiting them unless they obeyed God's word and repented.

With C-SPAN coverage from the 11:00 a.m. commencement of the program until nearly 4:00 in the afternoon, the dedicated nonbelievers stood or sat on the ground to hear 23 representatives of freethinker organizations describe social and political obstacles they face, the determined intrusion of religion into government, and their own demand for equal civil rights and a "place at the table" where previously discriminated minorities have attained a place, many beginning with Washington marches. The highly motivated and energized crowd came from every part of the country to share their concerns about the theocratization of the United States' political entities and threats to protection of minorities as provided by the Bill of Rights. One Texas attendee reported she was unaware of the March until she heard that Jerry Falwell had predicted that it wouldn't attract enough people to fill a telephone booth. That convinced her that she had to attend and be counted.

The "hero" of the event, in addition to Ellen Johnson, President of American Atheists, who devised and directed the Godless Americans March, was Michael Newdow, physician and attorney, whose recent lawsuit resulted in a Federal court ruling that the words "under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance are constitutionally prohibited under the church/state separation provision in the Bill of Rights. (He has also filed suits regarding the constitutionality of paid governmental chaplains and the religious national motto.) Other speakers--including Norm Allen, Executive Director of African

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Americans for Humanism; Douglas Campbell, an Atheist political office candidate; SFC Kathleen Johnson, founder of Military Association of Atheists and Freethinkers; and Edwin Kagin, founder of Camp Quest, with an annual retreat for Atheist families--illuminated the variety of non-belief issues.

This initial informal consortium of nonreligious groups is only a first step toward empowerment with ultimate success depending upon the sustained determination of the March participants and organizations to bring into the movement the still closeted nonbelievers, and to show politicians and the media that they have numbers to be reckoned with. The authors of the same ARIS survey which questioned the likelihood of a convergence of these disparate groups, also wrote, "Larger than many denominations, and for the most part unorganized, it is a potential sleeping giant waiting to flex its political and cultural influence." On November 2 the giant began to stir.

(Editor's note: Three NOSHA members attended the Godless March, including Harry Greenberger and Helen and Howard Bostock. NOSHA thanks you for your courage and perseverance on behalf of freethinkers everywhere.)

* * * * *

BAD FAITH

Peter Beinart

(Originally printed in The New Republic on March 25, 2002 – reprinted with permission)

A month or so ago, in a speech to the National Religious Broadcasters' annual convention, Attorney General John Ashcroft said the following: "Civilized individuals, Christians, Jews, and Muslims, all understand that the source of freedom and human dignity is the Creator. Governments may guard freedom. Governments don't grant freedom. All people are called to the defense of the Grantor of freedom, and the framework of freedom He created." And with those words, Ashcroft encapsulated everything that is admirable, and everything that is awful, about the Bush administration's understanding of religion in the United States.

Conservatives seemed genuinely puzzled by the outcry over Ashcroft's words. "I think General Ashcroft was quite inclusive," said Ken Connor, president of the Family Research Council. "He made reference to Christians, Jews, and Muslims all recognizing the Creator as the origin of freedom." And in a sense, Connor was right. Not long ago a conservative cabinet member from a

conservative administration, speaking before a conservative Christian audience, might not have mentioned Jews and almost certainly wouldn't have mentioned Muslims. Ashcroft was being ecumenical in a way that, say, Ed Meese probably wouldn't have been.

One reason is that the United States is more religiously diverse than it was two decades ago—Muslims, for instance, played a role in George W. Bush's electoral considerations in 2000 in a way they never did for Ronald Reagan. Another reason, of course, is September 11. Respect for American Muslims is now a critical component of American foreign policy.

But I don't think Ashcroft's ecumenicism is purely instrumental; I think he genuinely believes it. As TNR's Gregg Easterbrook and others have noted, conflict between religious denominations has declined in recent years as traditionalists from various faiths have joined in solidarity against what they perceive as a growing secular threat. Conservative Catholics and Southern Baptists have put aside their theological hostility to make common cause against abortion. Evangelicals and Orthodox Jews have come together to push for government support of religious education. And the affinity isn't only political; it's cultural as well. Writing in TNR last January, my friend Tevi Troy, an Orthodox Jew and former Ashcroft aide, noted that Ashcroft probably employed more Orthodox Jewish staffers than any other senator. "[A]s a devout person," Troy wrote, Ashcroft "feels an affinity to other believers."

The same goes for Ashcroft's boss, President Bush. After September 11, any American president would have insisted that most American Muslims do not support terrorism. But Bush, as TNR's Franklin Foer has noted, made a particular point of absolving Islam itself. Influenced by conservative intellectuals who argue that nothing truly religious can be evil, Bush quoted the Koran and declared that "Islam is peace." Last November, Bush hosted the first-ever White House dinner marking the start of Ramadan. Muslim dignitaries were invited to pray in the East Reception Room before listening to Bush tell the assembled that "America seeks peace with people of all faiths."

And with that line, Bush exhibited the same moral blindness as his attorney general. Of course the United States seeks peace with people of all faiths. But what about people of no faith at all? In fact, the Bush administration *never* mentions non-believers; it never suggests that they, too, possess a moral sense that leads them to abhor terrorism and defend freedom. To the contrary, Bush has said, "The true strength of America lies in the fact that we are a faithful America by and large." He has described the job of political leaders as call[ing] upon the love that exists because of a gracious and loving God." As Vice President Cheney put it last year, "Every

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great and meaningful achievement in this life requires the active involvement of the One who placed us here for a reason.”

Don't get me wrong. It's perfectly fine for Bush, Ashcroft, and Cheney to declare their faith. It's even fine for them to speak about the good they believe religion does in the world. But Tony Blair has done that as well, and yet he's also said, “This atrocity is an attack on us all, on people of all faiths *and on people of none.*” As far as I can tell (and the website *beliefnet.com* chronicles George W.'s statements on religion), President Bush has never uttered a similar thought. And when he and his top advisers, in hundreds and hundreds of statements, never miss an opportunity to exclude non-believers, it's hard to believe the exclusion is purely accidental. Consider, again, Ashcroft's speech last month: “Civilized individuals, Christians, Jews, and Muslims, all understand that the source of freedom and human dignity is the Creator.... All people are called to the defense of the Grantor of freedom....” Are individuals who don't see “the Creator” as the source of freedom and human dignity” uncivilized? And how can “all people” be “called to the defense of the Grantor of freedom” if some people do not believe the Grantor exists? In lauding the attorney general's ecumenicism, conservatives ducked the real issue: that for this administration, celebrating the dignity of all believers has become a way to impugn the dignity of those who believe in no religion at all.

Politically, there are reasons for the Bush administration's behavior. While as many as 14 percent of Americans profess no faith, they are so unpopular among the population at large that affirming their decency is far more politically perilous than affirming the decency of Jews or Muslims. An April 2001 survey by the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life revealed that 66 percent of Americans viewed atheists unfavorably—almost twice the percentage that held a negative view of Muslims. And a survey that same year by the Kaiser Foundation, *The Washington Post*, and Harvard University found that 69 percent of Americans would be bothered by a close family member marrying an atheist.

There are ideological reasons as well. Many cultural conservatives equate secularism with relativism, and they genuinely believe that religion is the only source of morality. I think that's theoretically simplistic and empirically absurd—I doubt atheists and agnostics lie, cheat, steal, or fly airplanes into skyscrapers any more than anyone else. But if Bush and Ashcroft really think that, then they should have the courage to say it, and open up their arguments to scrutiny and rebuttal. What they are doing instead is worse: implicitly writing atheists and agnostics out of America's moral community. When they describe the country they love, they describe a place where people of different faiths live in harmony and

equality, and where people who follow no faith simply do not exist.

Speaking last month in Beijing, President Bush declared: “Freedom of religion is not something to be feared; it's to be welcomed, because faith gives us a moral core.” No, freedom of religion is to be welcomed because it allows some people to practice their faith—and, through it, to find a moral core. And it allows others to find a moral core far from churches and synagogues and mosques—secure in the knowledge that their government considers them just as civilized, and just as American, as anyone else.

(Thanks to Don Bruce for this submission.)

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A SECULAR HUMANIST COMMEMORATION ON THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF TERRORIST ATTACKS

Harry Greenberger

(Editor's Note: On Sept. 11, 2002, we marked the one year anniversary of the horrendous terrorist attacks on New York and Washington. In the New Orleans area, a number of memorial events were planned. Despite the concerted efforts of NOSHA president, Harry Greenberger, non-believers were excluded from the many “interfaith” gatherings, including the main event sponsored by the Catholic Archdiocese at St. Louis Cathedral. On that evening, however, an impelling secular memorial service was held at the First Unitarian Universalist Church of New Orleans. Following are the remarks made at that service by Harry Greenberger.)

Along with the rest of the country, we were appalled by the immorality of those of suicidal religious zealots who last year murdered thousands of innocent people for the greater glory of Allah. The response of the leaders and the people of this country was permeated with the fervor of religious patriotism—with the conviction that the two—religion and patriotism—were inseparable. A few even suggested that we nonbelievers were responsible because we had driven God to remove his protection from America.

Public officials and other notables were eager to opportunistically capitalize on this national tragedy by denying the validity of our Constitutional church/state separation, as exemplified by last September's U.S. House of Representatives vote of 404-0 for a resolution urging public schools to display “God Bless America” as a show of support for the nation.

Memorials, interfaith services, gatherings of all sizes across the country were conducted, including representa-

(09/11 Commemoration continued from page 3)

tives of many, but not all, of this country's religions, providing solace for the bereaved through shared expressions of their particular faiths. But, almost without exception, we nonbelievers were not invited to participate in those public expressions of loss and grief.

With 14% of the United States' adults stating that they have no religion, it is obvious that hundreds of those victims of terror in the buildings and the planes were nonbelievers, who deserve to be recognized and their murder condemned, but who would not have chosen an exclusively prayerful event as the venue in which to be remembered and mourned. The secular families and friends of those who lost their lives also deserve consideration and solace from like-minded persons who recognize that the loss of those loved individuals is particularly tragic, since each of them has not only had a life cut short, with its promise unfulfilled, but with no expectation of "crossing over" into a new and better existence.

Secular Humanists decry actions by individuals which interfere with the rights of others to live rewarding lives. Those responsible for terrorism forfeit their right to live freely in a civilized society and should be apprehended. But we must be concerned about the taking of innocent lives while punishing the guilty. Should our newly inflamed patriotism condone attempts to free the world from terrorism and from "the axis of evil empires" through a self-righteous "crusade" avowing that God is on our side only?

Last October, Sheriff Harry Lee's full page *Times-Picayune* statement included these words: "When misplaced patriotic fervor obliterates moral distinctions, it destroys us from within. It makes us weak and vulnerable. When Americans attack Americans, only the enemy rejoices."

We should gather around the country today, religious and secular members of our communities, with a shared belief that each of us deserves to be treated with respect and dignity. Our nation's original motto, "*E pluribus unum*," translated into "From many, one," simply describes a country of diversity, including diversity of religion and nonreligion as guaranteed by the Bill of Rights. Today, in remembrance of those who died and who grieve, let us honor that motto and let's return to a true expression of patriotism, the original pledge of allegiance, "one nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

"The Christian Resolution to find the world ugly and bad has made the world ugly and bad."

--Friedrich Nietzsche

MEMBERS' PUBLISHED LETTERS

The following letter, written by **Stephen Voelkel**, appeared in the *Houma Courier* on August 29:

Regarding the letter, "Nation losing battle due to argument of one," letter writer Jack L. Daniels finds it shameful what has been taking place in our America these days on a complaint of one person.

I find it more American that one person can still keep a restricted view of liberty and America from imposing on others. Daniels' Army Officers Guide might be useful for keeping people in battle line, but it does not take precedence over the Constitution.

"Under God" did not appear in the original pledge, which was a simple, non-coercive patriotic statement of respect for liberty and justice for all. It wasn't changed to say anything about "always complying at an appropriate time without hesitation." Even during my unblemished, honorable Army service, I would have honored liberty and justice properly by disobeying any order that was not constitutional.

It is too narrow to understand our history and rights as only respecting each other's faith. Freedom of religion also includes respecting freedom from those trying to mandate religion.

I wish Mr. Daniels would find comfort as I do, that a few individuals will not allow a patriotic sentiment to be changed into a manual for religious directives.

The following letter, written by **Harry Greenberger**, appeared in the *Shreveport Times*, September 11:

From as far away as New Orleans I have read John Baldwin's Sept. 9 column regarding terrorists and the rule of law. Congratulations to Baldwin and The Times for publishing his insightful, authentic coverage of the subject. Our national motto should be returned to "*E pluribus unum*" (from many, one) and the original pledge of allegiance reinstated: "...one nation indivisible with liberty and justice for all."

The following letter, written by **Harry Greenberger**, appeared in the *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, October 13:

President Bush's faith-based initiative has yet to be approved by Congress, so he is accomplishing his intended government financing of religious groups through the Compassion Capital Fund grants.

On Oct. 4, The Times-Picayune reported that \$25 million had been distributed in this manner, including a grant to a group founded by the infamous Pat Robertson.

The final paragraph of the article read: "Because the program remains unauthorized, there are no rules in law to

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govern sticky issues governing the separation between church and state that accompany any government financing of religious groups.”

This claim by the administration is preposterous. Those recipients of the grants are as devious as the president and should be condemned for their willingness to flaunt the provisions of our Constitution.

The following letter, written by **Connie Gordon**, appeared in the *Shreveport Times*, October 23:

Letter writer Steve Casey of Stonewall recently complained it was the American Civil Liberties Union’s interference with our schools’ teaching of the Ten Commandments of the Judeo-Christian religions in our public schools that was to blame for a shooting near an area high school and student sex acts on a school bus. Doesn’t Casey realize most all of civilized society agrees it’s wrong to kill, and that his definition of adultery (i.e., “any sex act outside of marriage”) comes from his own personal religious view, not all of civilized society’s?

Any teaching from a religious perspective should be done by parents in their own homes; it is not the job of our teachers. The sole purpose of the ACLU is to uphold the laws of the U.S. Constitution, including freedom of religion and the separation of church and state. Their job is becoming ever more difficult with the religious right in this country attempting to dictate their own theology to our government leaders. This should frighten Casey because these religious zealots could just as easily impose some form of theology upon us that even he disagrees with.

Religious zealotry is dangerous to democracy and free people everywhere. Example: the Taliban and al-Qaida.

I am personally grateful for the ACLU’s continuing efforts on my behalf and others’ as well.

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IN THE NAME OF GOD . . .

LAGOS, NIGERIA—An Islamic court in northern Nigeria has condemned a pregnant 30-year-old woman to death-by-stoning for having sex outside of marriage. Organizers of the Miss World pageant have asked for assurances from Nigeria’s government that the execution will not take place. Contestants from Spain, France, Kenya, Denmark, Belgium and Switzerland (but not the USA) have threatened to withdraw from participation. The pageant has already been postponed until after the Islamic holy month of Ramadan, but if the stoning goes on, it’s likely

to disrupt the “largest entertainment event ever held in Africa’s most populous country.”

LUBONDAI, CONGO—It’s not just Catholic priests who molest youths; it seems at least one Presbyterian missionary has done that, too. The Presbyterian Church (USA) recently released a report detailing the sexual abuse of at least 22 young women and girls by a former missionary in the Congo. The Rev. William Pruitt, who died in 1999, apparently roamed the darkened dormitories of the Central School in Lubondai, dressed in black pajamas and used magic tricks and hypnosis to “have his way” with young girls. The church is now considering new reforms on handling sexual abuse cases determining that Rev. Pruitt “might have been stopped if officials had intervened.”

SEATTLE—Although the Boy Scout Law states that members must be trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean and reverent, that’s just not enough. “The Boy Scouts is a faith-based organization,” says a Seattle area Scouting official, and because 19-year-old Eagle Scout Darrell Lambert refuses to swear to a deity in which he doesn’t believe, he’s out. Actually, the young scout was given a week to find God. “They say that I should think about what I really believe and get back to them,” he said. “I have thought about this for years. Can they expect me to change my beliefs in seven days?” Lambert is not relenting, but he is appealing his ouster.

“When a man has once brought himself to accept uncritically all the absurdities that religious doctrines put before him and even to overlook the contradictions between them, we need not be greatly surprised at the weakness of his intellect.”

--Sigmund Freud

DUES AND DONATIONS

NOSHA membership dues of \$15 paid now cover you through December 31, 2003. Use the application form in this newsletter and the convenient envelope attached and you’re in. HOWEVER, income from dues alone do not cover the operating costs of NOSHA, so we request consideration of making your check for \$25, \$50, or more, to show your support for our mission. Make checks payable to “NOSHA”.

THE GROWTH OF FUNDAMENTALISM

Randall Kolb

(From the Editor: As some of you know, there is a NOSHA-sponsored on-line discussion group at Topica.com to which any of you can subscribe. Sometimes there is humor, participants post letters and articles of interest from around the country, and often there is animated and interesting dialog on a diversity of topics. One such discussion recently was in response to a New York Times article about the growth of fundamentalism. One participant's response was so good, it is printed here with his permission.)

Why are the fundamentalist churches growing while the moderate/liberal churches are declining? I have my own theories and I'll throw them out there for you to either pick apart or ignore.

Actually I see the issue as two different questions: (1) Why are people attracted to religion at all? and (2) once a believer, why should a person gravitate toward the fundamentalist churches? I'll start with the latter question.

I think there are two main differences between the two types of churches, and theology, though relevant, is not one of them. The biggest difference is emotion. The moderate and liberal churches are often accused of being dry and boring. While they may not be exactly passionless, they are generally much more reserved and restrained. There is more emphasis on substance (it's a relative term) and less on entertainment. The fundamentalist churches, on the other hand, are very emotional. For some, if you removed the emotion there would be nothing left. But they excel in the pep-rally, energizing frenzies that make so many people feel so good. When you consider that many of the people who go there in the first place are feeling either depressed (i.e., feeling nothing at all), sad or unsettled, then the experience can be very rewarding. It's truly like a drug. The reason people take drugs is simply to feel better, and there's no reason to believe that these church experiences can't perform a similar function. Further, consider any performing art, be it a musical performance, a play, or dance or, for that matter, some talking head on TV. What sets a great performance apart from a so-so performance is not technique or content, but emotion. Those who FEEL something about what they are doing and convey that emotion are so much more effective. That's one reason why people such as Rush Limbaugh have such a big audience. He is passionate. He's a narcissist, bigoted jerk, but he is also effective because he speaks with passion and authority. Many people will believe just about anything spoken in that manner. But there is also another component to his success and that component is also the

second difference between the two types of churches: he appeals to a person's sense of superiority or dominance.

The message that most permeates the dialogue of both Limbaugh and the fundamentalists is "we are the superior people." They appeal to that instinctual tendency to identify with a community of people and assert the superiority or dominance of that group over others--Us vs Them. In evolutionary terms, it's likely that being identified with the dominant tribe had survival value and I think these churches take advantage of that. I think this instinct reveals itself today especially in the realm of sports. The whole point of sports is for one tribe to assert its superiority over another, and it is so humiliating when our tribe loses, even though we don't know a single person on the team and our life continues along completely unaffected by the outcome. And I don't think it's any accident that football draws the largest crowds given that it most resembles warfare with two armies going in hand-to-hand combat. Anyway, the point is that the church not only helps people to feel happier but also helps inferior-feeling people feel stronger through an identity with a superior or dominant community.

Now, why are people attracted to religion at all? If I had to sum it all up in one word, I'd chose the word 'fear'. While there are other issues, I think fear is the biggest motivator. The fears are largely legitimate. Life is scary. While most of us don't consciously think about it often, we all recognize at one time or another that our life is fragile and could end at any moment. And there is nothing quite like a crisis or tragic event to force us to see that most clearly: Sept. 11, a death, a car accident, an illness. That's when people become aware of their fears, realize how vulnerable they are, see clearly that they have very limited power to control those forces that can affect their lives so drastically, and look for something to make them feel better. I think that is why so many people turned to religious expressions on Sept 11. The realistic thing to do, of course, is to recognize our own fears and limits and then adapt--accept the realities, deal with them as best we can and live life as best we can. But for many that is simply unacceptable. They want comfort. They want control over these forces. They want meaning from these senseless acts. And they want it now. Well the only thing that can have any control over events like these is something supernatural, so god is the obvious choice. It's one thing to be aware of this and CHOOSE this option, but it's another thing entirely to deny the fears and NEED god to provide the illusion of safety and control. That's what I think is the difference between a fundamentalist and a moderate believer--that denial and necessity.

It's hard to maintain that constant demand of denial. It requires being constantly on guard for those unacceptable realities that rear their ugly heads not only within one's own mind, but out there in the external world

(Growth of Fundamentalism continued from page 6)

as well. So it's important to be able to control these things--everything: the self, the environment and other people too. Denial and control go hand-in-hand.

This illusion of being in control is much easier to maintain if they can surround themselves with like-minded people and feed off the emotional boosts that they get at their pep-rallies. There is strength in numbers, so they bring others to their fold, not motivated by a sense of sharing but by a need to reduce their own anxiety. So they are highly motivated to enlarge their group. And the more they spread their gospel, the more people they find who also are looking for a way to deny their fears. These people are highly motivated--there is nothing quite like fear, anxiety and neurotic thinking to energize a person into action.

So you have a group of superior people, highly motivated by necessity, emotional meetings that make them feel good and provide them with a frequent and significant social life through a well-established institution with a general, though mistaken, reputation for moral leadership, and a tax-exempt status to boot. Then there is the issue of propagation. Considering that most people adopt the religion of their parents (i.e., most don't ever really think about it), those groups that encourage 'families' and even go so far as to outlaw birth control are bound to succeed in the numbers game. No wonder they're growing. And we haven't even touched on the guilt and shame factor.

This is why I think that religion is not the problem but rather a symptom of the problem. The real problem is mental illness. Logic has no relevance to someone who NEEDS to believe in god. It's futile for us to focus our energy on logical arguments against the existence of god for the purpose of influencing these people. Many moderate and liberal religionists may be receptive, but not fundamentalists. They are more than uninterested--they are threatened by it and hostile toward it. They have invested a lot of energy into building their mental constructs and protections and they will not give it up. To me the issue is mental health. If a person is happy, well-adapted and realistic, he won't need religion. He may still choose it, but he probably won't need to force it on everyone else. And if there were no such thing as religion, a fundamentalist would likely find something else to take its place--maybe nationalism or some political party-ism. So, I think a focus on mental health issues and services would be more beneficial to our society in the long run.

(If you would like to join the Topica discussion group, contact the list manager, David Schultz, at biol-ds@nicholls.edu.)

HOW YOU CAN BE A VOICE FOR SECULAR HUMANISM

- #1 Call the White House at (202) 456-1111, or write to the President at:

THE WHITE HOUSE
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20500

- #2 Call your elected officials through the Capitol Switchboard Operator at (202) 224-3121.

Write to your Senators at: Write your Representative at:
U. S. Senate U. S. House of Reps
Washington DC 20510 Washington DC 20515

- #3 Attend your local town hall meetings, write to the editor of your newspaper, and call radio talk shows to voice your opinion.

VOLUNTEERS' CORNER

At member request, our new meeting format has every other meeting dedicated to a group discussion led by volunteers from our membership. Thanks to the first two such volunteers who led interesting and thought-provoking discussions. Lanny Goldfinch led the September discussion on personality types based on Jungian psychology, and Del McGinnis led the October discussion on the rapid decline of our environment.

Bob Sylvia has volunteered to lead the November 17 discussion on the search for extraterrestrial intelligence.

If you would like to make a presentation or lead a discussion at a future NOSHA meeting, please see Dave Schultz at the next meeting, or contact him at biol-ds@nicholls.edu.

The first NOSHA potluck/movie night was held at Harry Greenberger's home on October 13. About 25 people enjoyed great food, better conversation, and a really good movie, "The Contender". Since the evening was a great success, more such evenings will be planned. Let us know if there is a particular movie you would like to see and we'll see if we can get it. Thanks to **Sally Mooney** for all her hard work in planning the evening.

HAVE A HAPPY AND SAFE THANKSGIVING
HOLIDAY – DRIVE CAREFULLY!

