

The Humanist Society of the Suncoast

A Socratic society dedicated to the proposition that the fully examined life is well worth living.
Member organization of the [Humanists of Florida](#), the [AHA](#), and [ASHS](#). Find us at www.metrodirect.net/humanist

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Our Program for Saturday, January 3rd.

Dr. Angie Theisen will be our special guest. She will speak on "Nourishing your Creative Capacities from our Common Human Experiences." What exactly is the human spirit? Is it the force that animates us? The unique difference separating humans from animals, as shown by our self awareness? Does it exist at all? These questions -- and even more so, people's answers -- annoy the heck out of me. Catholic clerics will tell you what the Church teaches, Jews point to what the tradition says, and Unitarian Universalist clergy, i.e. me, tell you what *I* think.

After 16 years of Catholic education in Michigan and Florida—much of which knowledge she still cherishes and uses to this day, **Angie Theisen** earned a Bachelor's degree in English.

Following ten years in journalism and advertising, Rev. Angie felt called to a different phase of the persuasion business, known as the Unitarian Universalist ministry. She earned her Masters and Doctorate degrees at the University of Chicago and Meadville/Lombard Theological School, and set out to save the world.

After 27 years of service in virtually every part of that profession, she has retired to the writers life in the New Port Richey area. The variety and richness of her experiences give her a unique platform from which to address the world.



Renewal

This is our annual membership renewal period.

The board is happy to announce that for the 2009 period we are **reducing** dues to: **\$25 per individual** and **\$30 per couple**.

This will allow more members to continue, and new members to join in these difficult times.

Don't Forget...



Tampa Bay Harvest

This Year is Special!

Because of the economic crises we are all experiencing, there are Large numbers of homeless and hungry people in the Tampa bay area who are dependent on socially conscious citizens like us for life sustaining nutrition.

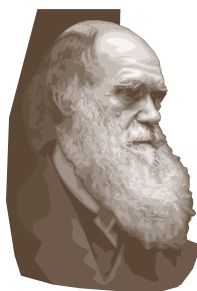
Please...

Bring as many boxed and canned food items as you can to this meeting.

With the important help of Glenn Paul, we can do our part to help relieve significant human suffering.

It's the Humanist thing to do!

The Charles Darwin Bicentennial 1809 to 2009



Project

A steering committee has been formed to develop a program to honor the great scientist, Charles Darwin and to bring attention to the science of evolution and the great scientific project in general. Among the participants are the Center for Inquiry, the Humanist

Society of the Suncoast, and Atheists of Florida. CFI has undertaken a poster project to encourage children in Schools to create original posters showing the importance of Darwin and the scientific method. Other developments are anticipated for the **February 12th** event. A special web site is being created to coordinate our local events. Its address is www.evolvetampa.com . JP

Presentation on Post Carbon Issues

will be the subject of the December 27th meeting of the Tampabay Sceptics at the CFI Center on Kennedy Blvd. in Tampa at 11:00.

Please join us for this free & open discussion.

**Saturday, January 3rd
2:00 PM**

**Clearwater East Library
2251 Drew St.
Clearwater**

Following our meeting, we will dine together at the

Farmer Boy Restaurant
at 2129 Drew St. just 2 blks west of Library.



Humanists work to build a world in which happiness is the enduring criterion of social policy.

What do Humanists Want?

1. To extend a human centered approach to the critical problems of life and society.
2. To encourage attitudes of kindness, compassion, tolerance and a loving generosity in human relationships, and in our treatment of all life. These attitudes help us to see ourselves in the lives of others and encourage appreciation for the remarkable diversity of human culture and experience.
3. To develop and popularize the skills of creative and critical thinking that empower people to challenge prejudice, superstition and irrationality in every area of life. Such empowerment enables the individual to reach the highest levels of achievement.
4. To exalt those artistic and imaginative expressions of life which have been the source of the greatest pleasure and enlightenment, and which reflect compelling human truths. Through music, literature, art, dance, and other expressions, we embrace the essence of the human spirit.
5. To explore the grounds of ethics and morality within the unfolding history of our evolving culture. Such knowledge will enable us to become effective protagonists for the happiness of the individual person. JP

The Moveable Feast...

Our January social dinner will be held at

TUCSON'S TEX-MEX RESTAURANT

on Sunday January 18th at 5:00PM. This restaurant is located at 13563 Icot Blvd just off Ulmerton Rd. in Clearwater.

Look for coupons in your mail flyers occasionally.

Please reserve with Glenn Paul at 727-595-3347 or glennkayp@juno.com by Saturday, January 17th.

In Memorium

Katherine Modisett died at the nursing home on December 10th. No public memorial or services have been announced at press time. According to Mitch, she, "passed away quietly and peacefully without pain nor discomfort. She looked beautiful." Give him a call at **(813) 788-5516** or E-mail mmodis@3oaks.com

Laugh Lines 10 thoughts for a New Year

- 1.. A journey of a thousand miles begins with a cash advance.
- 2.. Stupidity is not a handicap. Park elsewhere!
- 3..They call it PMS because Mad Cow Disease was already taken.
- 4 .. He who dies with the most toys is nonetheless DEAD.
- 5.. A picture is worth a thousand words, but it uses up three thousand times the memory.
- 6 .. Ham and eggs...A day's work for a chicken, a lifetime commitment for a pig.
- 7.. The trouble with life is there's no background music.
- 8.. The original point and click interface was a Smith & Wesson.
- 9... I smile because I don't know what is going on any how
- 10.. A hangover is the wrath of grapes.

Thanks to *Connie Purdum*

Our Humanist Society is actively looking for interesting speakers with novel and well thought out ideas on just about any subject of interest to a general audience . Let me know if you would like to recommend a person or organization. Call Jim at (813) 531-8138

HUMANIST SOCIETY OF THE SUNCOAST

A chapter of the American Humanist Assoc.
the Association of Secular Humanist Societies

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E-Mail us at:
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Join us in our effort to ignite critical thinking, and embrace reason, & compassion in life.

~ Join ~

The Humanist Society of the Suncoast.

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Is the end of the war in sight? *By Bob Herbert*

Common Dreams

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I don't mean Iraq. I'm talking about the war against working people in the U.S. that has taken such a vicious economic toll over the past three decades.

Even as Americans by the thousands sign up for jobless benefits in this horrendous holiday season, or line up to declare bankruptcy, or stand sorrowfully aside as their homes are foreclosed upon, there are some slender reasons to hope.

On Friday, George W. Bush, in the slapstick final weeks of his disastrous presidency, grudgingly announced that, yes, emergency loans would be made available to prevent the collapse of the U.S. auto industry. He looked like a boy who had been forced to eat his spinach, or drink his castor oil.

But the economy is in such an awful state that even the most backward administration of our lifetime recognized that risking the chain reaction of a complete auto industry meltdown was not an option. (The Bush deal is unfairly onerous to auto workers, but the loans will serve as a bridge to the Obama era, when, presumably, a more equitable arrangement could be worked out.)

Mr. Bush's announcement came a day after it was learned that President-elect Obama had chosen Representative Hilda Solis of California, a fierce advocate of workers, to be his labor secretary. The Obama administration also is committed to moving quickly on an economic stimulus package that could reach \$1 trillion over two years.

These are developments that portend a radically different environment for the nation's workers. From Ronald Reagan's voodoo economics to Henry Paulson's \$700 billion Troubled Asset Relief Program, we've put the mighty resources of the national government overwhelmingly on the side of those who were already rich and powerful.

Ordinary workers have suffered. It took years to get a lousy little boost in the minimum wage for the working poor.

Attempts to expand health insurance coverage were fought almost to a standstill. Guaranteed pensions vanished. And the maniacs who set fire to the economy with their incendiary financial instruments (yet another form of voodoo) were hot to privatize Social Security.

As Andy Stern, president of the huge Service Employees International Union, told me on Friday: "We've had a 25-year experience with market-worshipping, deregulating, privatizing, trickle-down policies, and it has ended us up with the greatest economy on earth staggering, and with the greatest amount of inequality since the Great Depression."

The contempt for workers over this long period has hardly been hidden. Until Mr. Bush was forced by circumstances to tap the TARP program for the auto industry loans (small potatoes compared with the gargantuan Wall Street bailouts), the administration had gone out of its way to keep the program's hundreds of billions of dollars reserved for the elites of the financial services industry and their associates.

These elites, of course, were the geniuses who ruined the most powerful economy on earth. When Citigroup went into yet another swoon last month, the rush to rescue it was breathtaking. Poses don't come more elegant: the outgoing treasury secretary, Hank Paulson; the incoming treasury secretary (and president of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York), Timothy Geithner; and a former treasury secretary (not to mention Citigroup board member), Robert Rubin.

They materialized magnificently, armed with hundreds of billions in taxpayer bailout cash.

Leo Gerard, president of the steelworkers union, summed up the government's attitude nicely when he said: "Washington will bail out those who shower before work, but not those who shower afterwards."

Working people have been treated like enemies, a class to be preyed upon. Labor unions were ferociously attacked. Jobs were shipped overseas by the millions. People were hired as temps or consultants so benefits could be denied.

All of this may finally be changing. It remains to be seen how strong a voice Ms. Solis will have in the Obama administration, but she is pro-worker to her core, a politician who actually knows what it's like to walk a picket line.

And there have been other promising developments. More than 200 laid-off workers staged a successful six-day sit-in at a factory in Chicago this month, demanding and eventually getting severance pay and benefits that they were owed by law.

A more substantial victory occurred in Tar Heel, N.C., last week when workers, after a brutal 15-year struggle, succeeded in organizing the notorious Smithfield Packing slaughterhouse, the largest hog-killing and processing plant in the world.

These are shaky steps in the overall scheme of things, to be sure. But at long last, they are steps in the right direction.

On the loss of Katherine Modisett

Katherine was a charming, witty, kind and giving person.

We feast at the table of life; we give it everything we've got, and we take from it every enjoyment we can. There nevertheless comes a time when we have to leave, and make room for someone else. But we still live on . . .

I hope that you, Mitch, live on in health and the knowledge that you did your best for her

Fond wishes, *Jan Loeb Eisler*

"The point is not always to speculate, but also ultimately to think about applying our knowledge. Today, however, he who lives in conformity with what he teaches is taken for a dreamer."

--Immanuel Kant