

Draft

History of HGP

Editor's Footnote: I have created a separate document listing all the different boards as far back as I could.

I only added a new board from the newsletters when there was a change.

Currently, (March, 2018) I have 29 different board configurations between May, 1996, and October, 2015, though many earlier newsletters have yet to be reviewed.

I don't know when HGP was chartered, but AHA could probably tell you. Note: I contacted them years ago now, and asked if they could tell me, but I never got a reply— to two separate queries.

One of the situations here is that we have very little institutional memory, and that's something we should be addressing somehow.

In the short run, perhaps, every officer should serve for two years, and only half the board positions should be new each year. That would certainly help with continuity.

We should also keep some log of decisions, probably culled from the board minutes, so we know at any time what the current policies might be, separate from bylaws. For example, years ago the board authorized three members

For example, there were concerns about members taking the HGP banner (not the one at the front of the room every Sunday, but one with our full title on it). Some members didn't always want us in all parades and at all gatherings with the banner, suggesting that the presence of the banner meant that the people were there with some official stance.

I suggested an option: have a banner that says "Members of The Humanists of Greater Portland" as one option. Whoever wanted to take it to a parade or event, could.

But I'm fearful that all such solutions have been lost and forgotten.

Pre-Sunday Meeting Events

The first Oregon Secretary of State listing for the chapter was on May 23, 1973.

Our name at that point was The Humanist Association of the Willamette Valley.

Article II, Purpose, is as follows:

To provide humanists a framework in which they can find stimulating companionship, experience intellectual and emotional growth, further the educational objectives of the American Humanist Association, and participate more fully in creating a society in which humanist values are universally recognized and widely accepted.

We used the original name until November 7, 1983, when we became the Humanists of Portland/ Vancouver Metro Area.

We changed to Humanists of Greater Portland in September of 1997, about five months before the first Sunday Meeting.

From an article in the Northwest Examiner, July, 2006

Humanists of Greater Portland began in 1977 with a few people gathered to view a slide show on evolution. Meetings were held sporadically in various locations. Regular Sunday meetings featuring outside speakers, began in 1988 (sic).

Editor's Footnote: Please bear in mind that these dates may only reflect when we got around to notifying the State of Oregon, rather than when the change took place inside our organization.

There's a document saying there will be a meeting on Sunday, Feb 20, with no year given. It's signed by Les Kirkendall, an early leader of the group. There were Sundays on Feb 20th in 1977, 1983, and 2000, and the date of the letter is most likely 1983.

Early gatherings

Paul Barkett moved here from Stockton, CA in the late 1970s; His twin brother Pete came here about a year later.

1993 Dick Mase was President of HGP.

Pete Barkett become the president next, and was succeeded by Gerry and Mary Ann Gage, who moved to SW Portland in April, 1995.

We first began casual meetings at Vinnie's shortly after it opened in June of 1997.

Early outreach efforts included a bookstore at MLK and Killingsworth,

Monthly Potlucks and Discussions

Early (monthly) meetings usually alternated between Vancouver and Portland, often meeting in Unitarian Church facilities, other times meeting in members' homes.

Those locations included the West Hills Unitarian Church, Michael Servetus Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Vancouver; East Rose Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in East Portland; and Rose Villa Senior Living Community, Milwaukie, OR.

Generally, the meetings alternated between Oregon and Washington, and normally attracted up to a dozen members, normally the Burnets, Barketts, Kovashes, Gages, and the Fays.

The meetings' content was mostly discussions; early on it was rare that a speaker presented a program, though sometimes we heard programs from a speaker that the Unitarians had used or brought in to speak.

From Dorothy Fay:

I do not recall the exact date but sometime in the early 90's, Pat Burnet suggested that Warren Fay lead a group discussion. He was delighted to pick up one of his old roles as professor and set about turning various materials into something suitable for the group to bring opinions to. The group was small at first but soon started filling our living room. Various backgrounds were represented providing a place for like minds to flourish and friendships to form.

Warren would sometimes have a taped talk or a short printed passage as a jumping off place. There was (and still is) no problem in filling the time allotted. We met every month for several years until, unfortunately, Warren developed serious health issues and could no longer continue.

Good things came from these discussions in that we personally met the Gages and others who helped us through the next difficult time. And the group continued to meet in various locations and eventually became the group it is today. Warren would be proud of you all.

For one of the early meetings at West Hills, Dick Mase invited a professor from Willamette University's Jesus Seminar to speak. The Jesus Seminar was a gathering of 40 or so of the most highly respected Galilean scholars, who would hold annual meetings, debate the precision of early New Testament passages, and then vote on their attribution: the words of Jesus, attributable to Jesus, or, essentially, no way.

We first began casual meetings at Vinnie's shortly after it opened in June of 1997.

The Sunday Meeting and meal-oriented potlucks (these came much later) slowly eclipsed the Fay's potlucks and discussions.

The 1992 AHA Annual Conference

In early May, 1992, the AHA held its annual conference in Portland. After some deliberation, we selected the Lloyd Center Red Lion as the venue. We also set up the menu so that the primary entrée was vegetarian, with the second choice a meat dish. Few people chose the primary option, but we felt as though we'd made a statement. Pat Burnet headed our local efforts to support the event.

Kurt Vonnegut was honored as Humanist of the Year, and subsequently was the (honorary) National President from the conference to his death in 2007.

Dick Mase remembers driving Kurt Vonnegut to Powell's for a book signing, and seeing the long lines of readers waiting to get their books signed after his address to them.

Dennis Brown remembers holding his clutch of Vonnegut books under his arm at the conference, and chancing to share an elevator with Mr. Vonnegut, who was railing (ranting?) about the foolishness of autographing his own books. Dennis chose the diplomatic exit, and did not ask that his books be autographed.

The 2007 AHA Annual Conference

In early June of 2007, the AHA held its 66th annual conference in Portland.

We had a strong Planning Committee which created a surprising presence for the AHA people who had no idea we were such a vibrant chapter.

Historically, the AHA Chapter of the Year award went to the chapter that had the highest percentage of AHA members, but since we are so fiercely independent out here in the West, we didn't show up on their radar.

In Florida, the previous year's conference site, there were 3 people at the Volunteer Training Night, just before the start of the conference. In Portland, the AHA people were amazed and delighted to see 26 people ready to pitch in and support the conference.

From the June, 2007 Newsletter

We also wanted you to know that there are several HGP members who will be part of the program for the conference.

Hank Robb and Robert Sanford will be giving workshop sessions they have already given at the Sunday Meeting: Hank will talk about his SMART addiction treatment program (Thursday evening), and Robert will be giving his two-part program about the hero's journey and how it relates to our daily lives (Saturday afternoon).

HGP members Carol Kellogg, Lloyd Kumley, and Pat Burnet are part of a panel discussion on how to create a children's program; they'll also be presenting on Thursday PM.

Carolyn Tomei will be part of the opening program on Friday night, when Joyce Carol Oates gets the Humanist of the Year award.

In addition, the Barkett Brothers, Pete and Paul, will be singing at three different sessions on Saturday. They will be performing from 6-7, 7-8, and 9-10 PM.

Finally, there is a recent addition to the program: a presentation on Friday PM about Oregon's Death with Dignity program.

At the following annual conference the HGP was recognized as the Chapter of the Year.

From the newsletter

May, 1996

June, 1996

Note: This newsletter was volume 5, NO. 6, suggesting that the first newsletter was January, 1991.

There was a summer solstice picnic at Gabriel Park in Portland, on June 23; we invited the Humanist Association of Salem to join us for the day..

The HP/VMA also planned a winter solstice gathering, as well as honoring the 6,000th “anniversary” of the creation of the Earth, by a celebration which was to be held on October 23, 1997, at 9:00 AM Greenwich Mean Time.

Apparently the chapters, or members of the chapter, had been financially supporting a woman at the Atheist Center in Vijayawada, India to assist her obtaining a Master’s Degree.

Some of the members, carrying the banner, marched in the LGBT Pride parade on June 22nd.

Sunday Meeting History and Locations

The Sunday Meeting is the flagship of our little HGP fleet.

It consistently draws the largest audiences, and covers the widest range of topics.

Here’s the normal (current) schedule of events.

10:00	Meeting Called to order
	Reading (see below)
10:10 ±	Introduction of Speaker
10:15	Program begins
11:15	Announcements begin

11:30

Meeting Ends

Vinnie's

In the Spring of 1998 three of the senior HGP members (Del Allen, Gerry Gage, and Fred Mosher) met to determine what kinds of new activities we might explore.

The solution was the Sunday Meeting, which began on April 5, 1998; 8 attended. We met at Vinnie's Pizza Parlor, on N. Killingsworth, as it was owned by Pete Barkett, and so was available at no cost. There was a piano there, and there was lots of music every week from Pete and Paul.

Starting the third Sunday of May, 2000, on the Sunday when we collated the newsletter, Pete would fire up the oven and make pizzas for us.

There were, originally, only a few attending, and the normal HGP polite but fervent squabbling about meeting times: should we meet from 9:30 until 11:00, or from 10:00 until 11:30. There were votes, of course, and surveys, and we tried both options, more than once. Of course, the arguments for and against the changes never changed. . . .

Early on, members provided almost all the programs-- and there were lots of group discussions, often about issues in the news concerning secularism and church/state separation.

Del Allen would often bring in a reading from the Humanist Manifesto to share. He usually got through only a couple of sentences of the few paragraphs he'd selected, when people started saying "Well, I don't agree with that," and we'd be off to the races.

In those days, some programs were members sharing the stories of how they arrived at non-belief or humanism, often only from an outline, but sometimes, very effectively, Dick Mase interviewed the person rather than them just talking (often extemporaneously).

As we got more people attending, there were sometimes outside speakers, then more and more outside speakers, until that now seems to be the norm.

(Editor's Footnote: Through April, 2010, we had 535 Sunday Meetings, but we only have topic and speaker information for 359 of those programs. Out of those 359 programs [April, 1998 through April, 2010], HGP members presented 131 programs, plus led another 21 discussions, for a total HGP member-led program percentage of 44.5.)

Early on, the audience was almost all men, though by 2002 or so, that had changed until now (late 2015, and for quite some time) the gender ratio has been much closer to balanced; sometimes there are a few more women attending than men.

In September of 2000, an e-mail to Steve Jacobs, then the President, went something like this:

Wow! Twenty eight people this morning: a new record. I can't wait until that's a low attendance."

The program was Gerry Gage's presentation on Mark Twain.

We grew slowly, and also got more organized and a little crisper. What I mean by that is that (assuming a 9:30 start time) as the Sunday Meetings began, about 9:40 or so, someone, usually Del Allen, would say, "We'll it's time we got started; what does anyone want to talk about?"

One thing we learned was that people were busy and had things to do after the meeting, so a precise starting time and ending time was a benefit, and people seemed to appreciate that crisping up the meeting honored their investment of time and energy.

Editor's Footnote: Some members felt that September 11, 2001, caused a surge in attendance at the Sunday Meetings, but I don't remember it as a surge as much as a somewhat quicker, but steady, rise in attendance.

In the fall of 2001, PCC was expanding and buying up property to add more buildings, and Pete Barkett needed to open a new version of Vinnie's, very close to the original one.

NW Cultural Center

As the old Vinnie's was gone, and the new edition not yet ready for occupancy, in January of 2001 we moved temporarily to the Northwest Cultural Center at 1819 NW Everett. We met there two separate times, for a few months each time.

The Northwest Neighborhood Cultural Center wasn't ideal-- there was only a small parking lot, and there were support columns in the middle of the meeting room we used, and if the speaker moved at all . . .

From the newsletter, December, 2001.

In the last month, HGP has seen record attendance (44) at Sunday Meetings that has pushed the capacity of the new Vinnie's to its limit. It seems that this is a result of the WTC tragedy and the article that appeared in *The Oregonian* that included a description of our group and comments from Robert and me.

This development is a very encouraging one for our group. There are a large number of people out there with the Secular Humanist perspective who would like to know we exist and would likely join us.

As of mid-January, 2002 we drew a crowd of forty-two adults, six children and one infant, nearly topping the record Sunday we had right after the Oregonian article Oct. 28, 2001.

Back to Vinnie's

In July of 2002, we moved to the new Vinnie's, as its open (customer) space was larger than the original, and, unlike the Northwest Cultural Center, didn't have posts in the middle of the room.

But it wasn't much later than that when we tried the Northwest Neighborhood Cultural Center again, as we'd outgrown the new Vinnie's as well.

Editor's Footnote: Meeting at Vinnie's meant that Pete Barkett had to be there every week, even after closing late Saturday night just 6 hours before.

Northwest Academy

The next big move was to the Northwest Academy, a private middle- and high-school kitty-corner from the downtown Unitarian Church.

From the newsletter, December, 2001.

After meeting for 6 months at the NW Cultural Center, while

Vinnie's was being moved to a new location, we returned to Vinnie's last July. Since then we have been nearly bursting on Sunday mornings, on two occasions needing to borrow chairs from the business next door.

We met in the Northwest Academy's drama room, though it was very dark in there, with only the subordinate lights (the stage lighting was not available to us). At least there weren't any posts in the way.

When we moved from Vinnie's to the school, the coffee and donuts that Pete Barkett had always provided were going to be discontinued.

Naida Lavon thought it would be an important welcoming gesture to have food and coffee during and after the meeting, since people bond over food,

She attended the board meeting and volunteered to take over the coffee service, asking for a small donation from the board to buy the supplies, and all the members gave her their pocket change: \$7.00. The coffee service started with \$7.00 donated by the individual board members, not out of the organization's budget.

Naida, Ellen Peoples, and Bev Schwartz's efforts at the Sunday Meetings led eventually to the monthly potlucks, which led to the formation of the large potlucks.

From Naida Lavon: In the spring of 2002 (or so), Gretchen Quigg started asking members to join her for lunch after the meeting, to continue the gathering, and people started joining her to visit further and discuss the presentation. At first there were about 4 of us, mostly women, meeting in places like Sawat restaurant on 21st and Lovejoy.

We set our first really large Sunday Meeting attendance mark on March 3, 2003, at 96 with a program about how Victorian spiritualists and séance leaders hoodwinked the public with, essentially, magic tricks. Jerry Andrus, from the Humanists of Salem, was the presenter.

The next membership notice in the record is that in September of 1997 we had 197 members.

Changing Meeting Times (Again)

Around May of 2005, after we'd been meeting from 9:30 until 11:00, several members wanted to advance the meeting a half hour later in the day.

There was the usual flurry of effort trying to make everyone happy, and the meeting time moved to what it is now: 10:00 until 11:30.

Then, Sandra Auld invited all of the HGP members to a potluck at her house to watch, then discuss, a video. That was the first large potluck in the current series.

New Emcee

In the spring of 2005, upon his move to the Seattle area, Robert Sanford resigned as the Sunday Meeting Emcee, a post he had held since he joined in the summer of 1998, overseeing about 325 + Sunday Meetings.

Arnie Panitch replaced Robert, and served for three years.

Then Arnie, Marsha Abelman, and others alternated these duties, until 2011, when Dave Pebworth started scheduling a rotation of five Emcees. (See note at Sunday Meeting Support Staff.)

Friendly House

We moved to Friendly House on July 3, of 2005. Here's that notice:

After more than 5 years of holding our weekly meetings at the Northwest Academy, HGP has moved to a bigger and better facility! Our Sunday programs are now held at Friendly House Community Center, 1737 NW 26th Ave., (between Savier and Thurman).

The Friendly House facility has more room, better acoustics and lighting, and a more inviting atmosphere. We hope all our members will stop in and check out our new meeting space. Meetings are held each Sunday starting at 9:30 am and ending at 11:00 am.

Humanism T-Shirts

From the July, 2005 newsletter

Humanism T-Shirts Available

HGP has received a second batch of the popular humanism t-shirts. The shirts are available at \$7 for members and \$10 for nonmembers. We have sizes XXL, XL, L, M, and S. The shirts are gray preshrunk cotton, and the front says:

Membership Hack

From the December, 2005 newsletter

Our Humanist organization shows good signs of growth and increased vigor. Since moving to Friendly House our attendance is up. A Finance Committee has been created. We have frequent and well-attended potlucks. Our membership has increased to almost 150.

Currently, the largest attendance mark is 117, for HGP member Sue Emmert's program on her struggle with leaving the Mormon Church. That program was on February 4, 2007.

Her brother attended, as did two of her children; her other children and her brother are estranged from her on account of her "apostasy."

The brother then all-but demanded equal time to present his version of Mormonism, which presented the Board with a quandary, as you might expect.

The MC suggested a compromise: the brother could have a future meeting to rebut the claims made in the presentation, if the Mormon Church would allow Sue Emmett's presentation as the program some Sunday at their worship services. That ended the quandary.

November, 2008 Newsletter

Naida Lavon will step down from her many volunteer duties on November 2. She has served as the contact person for the Social Concerns Committee, organizing the small intimate potluck initiative, and from coordinating the Sunday morning coffee duties, including cash control.

Editor's Footnote: Naida was an early Sunday Meeting attendee whose name is sprinkled throughout this history.

Among other efforts, she originated the coffee and cookie service

when we moved to The Northwest Academy, watching the Vaux Swifts at Chapman school, she was part of re-starting the monthly pot lucks, and their variant, the SIPs.

Beginning September 6, 2009, the meeting start time will be 10:00 A.M.

Un-Easter Parade April, 2010

For the last few years, a number of us have come to the HGP meeting Easter Sunday dressed as "Church Ladies," hats, gloves and all. Won't you please join us on April 4th in making gentle fun of our church-going neighbors and dress accordingly?

If you can't find anything in your closet, a number of hats will be provided!

Editor's Footnote: There's no note for when this tradition began.

From the newsletter, April, 2010, another barometer of growth

Starting May 6, 2010, HGP will have the use of the Garden Room at Friendly House every Thursday evening from 6:30PM to 8:30PM. If you would like to use the space for your committee, project, reading group, or other HGP-related event, just fill your event info into the desired date entry on the sign-up sheet inside of the Garden Room storage closet door. First come, first served. Early arrivers can also visit the HGP library/office upstairs starting at 6PM. Questions to Dave DiNucci.

Sunday Meeting On-going Programs

Annual Meetings

Originally the annual meeting allowed us to plan for the upcoming year as well as elect the new board. Here's an announcement for the first one, on June 3, 2000.

Our upcoming annual planning meeting will be held at the Michael Servetus Unitarian Church in Vancouver.

A potluck dinner will precede the business meeting at which we will present the Pat Burnet Humanist of the Year Award. This is

the time to meet your new officers and hurl final insults at those who are retiring.

We continued the process of having Annual Meetings, which was a way to get suggestions from the floor from all the members of the direction and the methods of achieving those goals the chapter members determined were the most important.

Since it took more than a normal meeting period to go through the process, the Annual Meeting was often held off-site. For example, the 2000 Annual Meeting was scheduled for the Downtown Branch of the Multnomah County Library, from 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM toward the end of August.

From the newsletter:

The Annual Meeting of the Humanists of Greater Portland has been changed to Saturday, May 19th, 2001, since the Oregon Food Bank Postal Workers Food Drive will be on the 12th, and members of HGP will be volunteering to help.

The meeting will begin at 1:00 pm and run until 4:00 pm in the Garden Room of the Friendly House Community Center, 2617 NW Savier.

Editor's Footnote: This may have been our first gathering at Friendly House.

The Sunday morning meeting on January, 27, 2002, will become the semi-annual planning meeting for HGP. All members are encouraged to bring their ideas, questions, critiques, etc.

The Annual Planning Meeting and Election of Officers will be held on Sunday, October 13th, 2002, after the regular meeting.

The date of the HGP Annual meeting of the Membership has been set as December 7th, 2003 at the NWA, in the time slot of the usual Sunday Program

From the newsletter, January, 2006

We Have a Dream - The Report

On January 1st the HGP membership gathered to decide what goals this organization should work toward in the future. We broke into six

groups, dreamed about our future, shared our ideas and reported these results. Here is the list, in priority order, of the top four goals:

1) Publicity leading to increased growth of membership

(Chosen by all six groups)

2) Lease or buy a building

(five groups)

3) Develop a children's program

(two groups)

4) Develop a Social Action Committee

(two groups)

All the other goals were chosen by only one committee each, and are not being listed. The Finance Committee, which requested this program related to HGP's goals, will recommend these goals to the HGP Board.

Editor's Footnote: Reading through the notes from newsletters we seem to have held Annual Planning Meetings, sometimes connected to Board Elections, sometimes not, just about every month of the year. This is not critical, as long as we have them, but can suggest the downside of a lack of institutional memory.

Children's Program

Early on, especially after moving to The Northwest Academy, there was an ad-hoc children's program during the Sunday Meeting. There were two to four children normally, but of pretty divergent ages, with two older ones and one younger one.

Jeff Strang was part of that effort, creating programs for the children and taking them on field trips. The field trips were often to Rhythm Traders, Ariadne Garden (a co-op community garden), and OMSI.

Here's a news-letter piece from April, 2004.

On March 14, the Board of Directors of HGP passed a resolution to support child care for two hours during the HGP Sunday meeting. The program will include

toddlers (potty-trained) up to 12 years old. Further details will be worked out with the involvement of those interested in becoming initial participants.

Barbara Kerr and Carole Kellogg, along with Pat Burnet and others, were lobbying the board to create a Children's Program, on the basis that we were aging and not attracting many young people, including, of course, young parents.

This was of the "If you build it, they will come" strategy, and the apparent success of the local CFI Chapter, recently certified, in attracting younger members. After years of asking for support from the Board, the Board agreed to fund the insurance and pay of a primary school teacher for six months, to create a day care for the Sunday Meeting, to attract younger visitors who might become members.

The HGP Children's Program will begin welcoming children on Sunday, November 2, 2011.

The first stage of the program will consist of childcare and activities for toddlers and older. As attendance grows children will join classes with others of their own age. All phases of HGP's Children's Program will give children the opportunity to explore, discuss, and live humanist values.

The program ran for six months, from November 2, 2011 to the end of May, 2012, but we attracted few steady takers or visitors or new members with children using the program, and after May 31, 2012, sadly, the program was canceled.

Here's the newsletter notice.

Carole's Kids Terminated

The HGP Board voted at its May 13 meeting to terminate Carole's Kids, our Sunday children's program, as of May 31. The children's room at Friendly House will no longer be rented after that date, and the reference to a children's program on our front sign board, Web site and printed literature will be removed.

I (Jeff Strang, Children's Committee Co-chair) want to give a big "thank you" to all of you who supported Carole's Kids. We served over 50 different children over the past 3+ years, providing an important service not just for the kids, but also for their parents and the community.

Sell Your Book

From the newsletter:

At the latest Vinnie's Night, a group of us discussed an addition that might help make our group a little more informative. It was suggested that the open discussion include a Book and Movie time, where members would bring the title and author of a book they have recently read along with a short paragraph to read. Same drill on the films they would recommend to other Humanists.

Typically, Del Allen took the lead on this, and by March, 2005 the second Sell your Book (new title) was a Sunday Meeting, and the Sell Your Book (play, film) program became part of the normal Sunday Meeting schedule, twice a year, just as the Variety Show now runs.

Here is the list of recommendations from the first session: Jan 4, 2004

Ä Distant Mirror	Barbara Tuchman
A Short History of Just about Everything	Bill Bryson
A Walk in the Woods	Bill Bryson
Destructive Emotions	Daniel Goleman
Dispatches	Michael Herr
Emotional Intelligence	Daniel Goleman
Guns of August	Barbara Tuchman
Guns, Germs and Steel	Jared Diamond
How We Believe	Michael Shermer
I'm a Stranger Here Myself	Bill Bryson
In a Sunburned Country	Bill Bryson
Jarhead	Anthony Swofford
Notes on a Small Island	Bill Bryson
Proud Tower	Barbara Tuchman
The DaVinci Code	Dan Brown
The Girl with the Pearl Earring	Tracy Chevalier
The March of Folly	Barbara Tuchman
The Zimmerman Telegram	Barbara Tuchman
There's Nothing in the Middle of the Road But Yellow Stripes and Dead Armadillos	Jim Hightower
Under The Banner of Heaven	Jon Krakauer
War is a Force That Gives Us Meaning	Chris Hedges
Whale Rider	Witi Ihimaera
Working with Emotional Intelligence	Daniel Goleman

Sell Your Book--- March 28, 2005

The End of Faith: Religion, Terror and the Future of Reason	Sam Harris
We the People -- A Call to Take Back America	Tom Hartman
The Botany of Desire	Michael Pollan
The Structure of Scientific Revolutions	Thomas Kuhn
American Dynasty	Kevin Phillips
Crossing the Rubicon: the Decline of the American Empire at the End of the Age of Oil	Michael C. Ruppert
Plan B: Rescuing a Planet Under Stress and a Civilization in Trouble	Lester R. Brown
At the Grave of the Unknown Fisherman	John Gierach
Don't Think of an Elephant	George Lakoff
We'll Always Have Paris: American Tourists in France Since 1930	Harvey Levenstein
Emotional Intelligence	Daniel Goleman
The Divine Right of Capital	Marjorie Kelly
Essential Cell Biology	Alberts et al
Guns, Germs and Steel	Jared Diamond
Our Kind	Marvin Harris
European Dream	Jeremy Rifkin
Inventing America	Gary Wills

Jam Session Talent Show Variety Show

Here's the first notice in the newsletters (December 2004) of this part of our Sunday Meetings.

Jam Session - Back by popular demand. Several folks expressed their pleasure for the Jam Session we had some time ago so we'll have another. We have several people in our group who have (or desire to have) musical talent (or ambition) which is unknown to the rest of the members. So, if you are one of these hidden musicians, step forward. You need not be great, just have a desire to share and make the program interesting as well as entertaining.

Some of the performers will be Pete and Paul, Dave and John,

Jeff, Dennis, Mike, Lloyd (I think), and others. At the end, we will all join in and sing *Imagine* by John Lennon.

Jordis Jensen orchestrated these events until July, 2007, when Al Christians assumed his current benevolently dictatorial powers, scheduling these programs to run on the first Sundays of January and July each year.

Al assembles the list of volunteers who would like to sing, dance, read a poem or two, play an instrument, etc. and he and Helen Christians host a pot luck the day before that Sunday Meeting at their home for all the performers.

Those who cannot attend the rehearsal often get to perform anyway, if there is time toward the end of the program.

Editor's Footnote: You'll notice, as with other components, the names morph over the years, just as we have held Annual Meetings just about every month of the year..

HGP Library

From the October, 2005 newsletter

HGP Library Books Available for Checkout

Now that we are in our new location at Friendly House, we finally have room for part of the HGP library! Books are located on a shelf in our storage area in the Garden Room.

All HGP members are welcome to check out books; there is a sign-out sheet on a clipboard. There is also a complete list of HGP's books, so if you want something that's not on the shelf, let Deanna Sewell or Dennis Anderson know, and we'll bring it in the next Sunday.

Women's History Series/ Women's Stories

The first specific program about women's contributions to all of us was on March 11, 2007. Here's the blurb from the newsletter.

Women's history didn't start with Eleanor Roosevelt-or suffrage, Queen Elizabeth I, or Cleopatra...it began when the first humans on earth stood upright and recognized a difference. This brief stroll through women's history includes issues that

have faced women as a group, introduction to some interesting well-known and not-so-well-known women, and ways in which we are all a part of history in the making.

The first Women's History Sunday program was March 6, 2011, and the program continued through 2014.

The program has evolved to include members' stories of remarkable women in their lives, as well as more distant but still inspiring significant women in literature, history, politics, or the arts.

As of this writing (early 2016) there is some interest at the Program Committee toward making this an annual Sunday Meeting Program.

From the newsletter (or a report to the Board):

On March 6, 2011, HGP observed Women's History Month with a program dedicated to "Women Who Have Touched our Lives." Several members volunteered to give five-minute presentations about women who were important to them. Speakers chose a remarkable variety of women, including their own mothers, grandmothers, and friends, living women who are influencing society today, and historical women who had significant impact on the world. We gave time for extemporaneous speakers at the end.

The second Women's History Sunday program, "Women Who Have Touched Our Lives," was March 4, 2012.

We invited members to speak 5 minutes about family, friends, or historical women who have meant something to them. The variety of personal and historical heroines made for an engaging program.

Here's a note from the February, 2012 newsletter:

Sunday, March 4 Lenora Warren and Marsha Abelman are showcasing women's stories again. Our own members will be the presenters. If you did not have a chance last year to tell the story of a woman who has impressed you, either personally or historically, famous or unsung, inspiring or imperfect and human, here is your chance to tell us about her. Pictures, a bit of song, or pure unadorned storytelling are all acceptable.

The third Women's History Sunday program was March 3, 2013. We opened the program with a brain-teaser quiz about famous women. This time we assigned specific women to be discussed: Leonora O'Reilly, Claudette Colvin, Belva Lockwood, Hannah Arendt, and Henrietta Lacks. Also included was HGP's own Ruth Currie, who was honored on Portland State University's Walk of the Heroines outdoor memorial.

The fourth Women's History Sunday program was March 16, 2014. Presenters included musical numbers by Linda Pritchard, Gayle Myrna, and The Spring Chickens: Kay Byerly and Joyce Lackie. The six presenters selected the women they talked about.

Sunday Program Survey Results

The survey gave us some idea of what programs were best received. Dr. Schmidt's presentations (27), Robert Sanford's Poetry sessions (12) and the topic of Nutrition by Loch Chandler and Mary Malinski (8) received the most votes. Many other programs received recognition by one or more members.

On the least liked side, open discussions (14) received the most thumbs down.

On the topic of open discussion frequency, members voted as follows:

1 a month - 6	1 every 2 months - 5
1 a quarter - 7	2 or 3 a year - 2
Rarely - 18	Never - 10

The Program Committee feels that the most equitable response would be to have 2 or 3 a year.

Readings

After calling the meeting to order, the MC usually asks for the reading from a member who has scheduled a 3 minute (or so) reading that they wish to share.

All Christians began this program in _____ and members would schedule through him, as well as use one of the selections he'd provide if they needed one, but as of _____ 2015, members could use the web site to sign up for a reading.

Here's a note from the June, 2005, newsletter

Readings Squad Still Taking Volunteers

Many thanks to all the great readers who have read to the HGP on Sunday mornings. If you would like to participate as a reader or as a locator of incendiary materials, contact Al Christians.

Music Programs

See note under Growing Pains.

From the January, 2010 Newsletter; this is the first notice of special music programs other than the Jam Sessions, which weren't all music.

Jeff Strang to Coordinate Music Program

In a recent survey of attendees at an HGP planning meeting, it was unanimously voted to have music at our programs. Jeff Strang, Chair of the Program Committee, thought it would be fun to be more inclusive by having a DJ opportunity as well as a performance opportunity about ten minutes before the program starts.

Members could either play music on CD's (a CD player will be available), or perform music.

This would be organized like the weekly readings slot - people could sign up ahead of time to host the music slot each week. Jeff will start the program off as the music coordinator. If you'd like to either perform or play music for a particular Sunday, contact Jeff and he will organize the schedule.

First Sunday Music

Starting in _____ when we moved upstairs at FH, _____, Lenora Warren, a semi-professional singer who also helped originate the Women's Stories programs in March of 2011, began the First Sunday Music program.

She said the only part of church services she missed was the music (she'd played the piano at her local church in Oklahoma, as a little girl).

Since that's a sense that others have shared over the years as well,

she asked Pete and Paul Barkett, our own in-house professional musicians, to begin playing and singing at 9:30 on the first Sunday of the month.

The resident musicians were starting to warm up about 9:30 anyway, so this was clever way to add enjoyment to all.

Usually, the Barkett Brothers, Pete (piano) and Paul (guitar), two of our earliest and most stalwart members (the youngest of the elders, so to say), would begin playing at 9:30, providing a wonderful selection of music before the Sunday Meeting actually started at 10:00 AM. Lenora would often join them during that time, or for a final song (in place of the more normal Readings).

The first newsletter notice (**Editor's Footnote:** an admittedly incomplete set) I have is the August, 2011 notice that Joyce Lackie, Kay Byerly, and Greg Gonzalez will play and sing for us on Aug. 7 at the beginning of the regular meeting.

At ten AM, after the meeting was called to order, instead of the normal reading that kicks off the meeting, the performers would do an encore.

Other performers on the First Sunday Music program included Linda Pritchard (piano) and The Spring Chickens, Joyce Lackie and Kay Byerly, who also perform in the community a few times a year, as well as at the (now semi-annual) Variety Show.

From the August, 2014 Newsletter

Jules Elias will present the First Sunday Music at Friendly House Aug. 3, 9:30 - 10:05. Come early and be entranced with lovely clarinet music.

Member of the Year

Editor's Footnote: Starting about 2001 or so we created the Pat Burnet Member of the Year award,

The two members winning this award, which was pretty much decided by Gerry Gage, were Del Allen and Pete Barkett (awarded April, 2001.).

After the Sunday Meetings were a going concern, Del was pretty much the Program Committee, and even before the inception of the Sunday Meetings Pete Barkett wrote and printed the newsletters,

opened up Vinnie's, and fed us once a month. He (and Paul) were also Board Members on many occasions.

At this point, we had about 80 members.

Similcasts

August, 2007 saw the Board approval for spending a little money to have similcasts in the Garden Room to deal with the SRO circumstances in the main meeting room.

As many might not know as this is written, in early 2016, we used to meet downstairs at Friendly House, though starting in [redacted] we moved upstairs.

Building Committee

From the September, 2006 Newsletter

The Building Exploration Committee, with the approval of the HGP Board, has constructed a survey of the membership. We need every member's opinion regarding planning for HGP's future.

Please fill out the survey which is included in this newsletter. There is a deadline of Sept. 10 to return it to the table in the hall at Friendly House or mail it to this address: Portland Humanists, PO Box 3936, Portland, Or. 97208-3936.

From the October, 2007 newsletter:

We're bursting the seams of the Conference Room (80 capacity) at Friendly House for our Sunday morning programs, in spite of simul-casting to the Garden Room (30 capacity). So the Board re-activated the Building Exploration Committee to try to find a larger space. A number of us checked out the Scottish Rite Center, at SW 15th and Morrison, but it wasn't judged better than Friendly House. If you've got a tip, please pass it on to Anne Henderson, who will bring it to the committee.

Another barometer of growth—of committees, if not members; also from the October, 2007 newsletter

Please remember to make note of your room reservation when

your committee schedules its next meeting. There is a Room Reservations - Sign Up Sheet posted on the bulletin board as you enter Friendly House.

Coffee and Afterthoughts

KoffeeKlatch

Here's the first notice for what became Afterthoughts.

It's from the May, 2011 newsletter.

Come join us after our regular Sunday program on May 29 and have a little nosh, courtesy of the HGP Board. We'll be in the Arts and Crafts room, right next door to the regular meeting, with coffee, tea, juice, and some sweet and savory food to tempt your taste buds! Meet your fellow members, gab a little, eat a little, discuss the Sunday program. It's the 5th Sunday of the month, so we won't be bothered with any missed committee meetings!

From the newsletter, July, 2011: from a list of new ideas the board hopes to implement in the 2011-2012 time period.

Sack lunches and conversation after the regular meeting in the Arts and Crafts Room at 11:30am. HGP would provide water and sodas. All ages welcome. We want to start July 3.

From the October, 2012 newsletter.

AfterThoughts Needs Your Help

Just once a month, please bring one snack item, beverage, or last night's party leftovers to the Arts and Crafts Room before the program (we have some serving plates, utensils and a toaster for bagels, etc.). That's it! We'll do the rest, and with our faithful setup/cleanup artist, Bev Schwartz, your AfterThoughts will continue into the future.

If you'd like to help, just find the initial of your last name on this list and donate one item on that week each month. We'll be sure to send reminders :

1st Sunday: A, B, C, D, E, F

2nd Sunday: G, H, I, J, K, L
3rd Sunday: M, N, O, P, Q, R
4th Sunday: S, T, U, V, W, X, Y, Z
5th Sundays: hosted by a volunteer

Thanks for whatever you can contribute to help our community of humanists grow stronger!

In addition, there's almost always coffee and a few snacks available before the Sunday Meeting begins in the same room as Afterthoughts.

The people who normally do this important work for all of us include Anne Henderson, Bev Schwartz, John Hendricks, and Jim Adams.

Discussion Groups

In addition to the Sunday Meeting itself, other events occur before, after, and even during the actual Sunday Meeting.

As an example, from the newsletter of March, 2008, here are the discussion sessions and topics for the month

First Sunday

What's in a Name? Humanist, Atheist or Other?

Second Sunday

Open Discussion

Third Sunday

Is the Sky Falling? Financial Advice

Fourth Sunday

Project Vote Smart

This was a pet project of Don Burnet.

Further, here are the options for January, 2015; these continue on a pretty regular basis..

First Sunday

8:45 AM Early-bird Discussion Group
11:45 Open Discussion

Second Sunday

8:45 AM Early-bird Discussion Group
11:40 AM Applying Humanism

Third Sunday

8:45 AM Early-bird Discussion Group
10:00 AM Discussion: "Surviving Religion"
11:40 AM Science Discussion Group

Fourth Sunday

8:45 AM Early-bird Discussion Group
11:40 AM Applying Humanism

Here's the schedule for the following month

First Sunday

8:45 AM Early-bird Discussion Group
10:00 AM First Sunday Open Discussion
11:40 AM Surviving Religion Discussion

Second Sunday

8:45 AM Early -bird Discussion Group
11:40 AM Applying Humanism

Third Sunday

8:45 AM Early-bird Discussion Group
11:40 AM HGP Science Discussion

Fourth Sunday

8:45AM Early-bird Discussion Group
11:40AM Applying Humanism

From the newsletter, January, 2012, here are the activities for the month.

Editor's Footnote: This list is pretty typical for this time of year, though it is certainly not the only applicable version. Summers bring potlucks and more activities, for example. At other times of the year other events occur, and some discussions groups' topics evolve into other topics and directions.

Sunday, 1/1		No Program Friendly House Closed.
Friday, 1/6	4:30	Pub Night! Believe in DOG?
Saturday, 1/7	9:00	Walk the Mall & Support Science & Reason
Sunday, 1/8	8:45	Early-bird Discussion Group
	10:00	Program: Jam Session
		Children's program
		Discussion: Leaving Religion? Dealing with Fall-out? Find Support
Wednesday, 1/11	10:00	Sunshine Division Food and Clothing Drive
	6:00	Vinnie's Night Out -- no host dinner
Thursday, 1/12	6:30	HGP Science Discussion Group
Saturday, 1/14	9:00	Walk the Mall & Support Science & Reason
Sunday, 1/15	8:45	Early-bird Discussion Group
	10:00	Program: Edge of Science
	10:00	Children's program
	10:00	Edge of Science
	10:00	Discussion: "Socrates Café"
Wednesday, 1/18	10:00	Sunshine Division Food and Clothing Drive
	1200	Men's Lunch Group Lucky Lab Brew Pub

Thursday, 1/19	1:00	HGP Book Club meeting
Saturday, 1/21	9:00	Women's Brunch Carolyn Tomei's Home
	9:00	Walk the Mall & Support Science & Reason
		HGP Book/Study Group
		Women's Brunch at Carolyn Tomei's Home
Sunday, 1/22	8:45	Early-bird Discussion Group
	10:00	Proselytizing in the Military Academies
	1000	Children's program
		Discussion: Dealing with Doubt & Change of Belief
Thursday, 1/26	6:30	Leaving Religion? Dealing with Fallout? Find Support
Saturday, 1/28	9:00	Walk the Mall & Support Science & Reason
Sunday, 1/29	8:45	Early-bird Discussion Group
	1000	Program: Iranian Revolution
	1000	Children's program
		Discussion: Dealing with Doubt & Change of Belief

Personal Growth Conversation, April 10, 2012 11:45 AM to 1:00 PM

Join us for an opportunity to discuss how you might make life more meaningful, what, if anything, would make it more so, what changes you might consider, what goals you have or want to set, how you could create more satisfaction for yourself. The facilitated discussion will be based on your thoughts. Everyone will have the opportunity to participate, but listening only is also an option. If you have questions or suggestions about the content or format, contact Dick Mase or Sheila Pastore, one of whom will facilitate each monthly session.

Sunday Meeting Support Staff

It takes a lot of people to manage the Sunday Meeting, and without their continuous efforts, the programs, generally via laptops and with substantial sound systems for our aging population, would almost certainly devolve into pantomimes.

Videographer (and web-site poster)

Mike Birchet

Mikes and Sound System

Dave DiNucci, Jeff Strang,
Lewis Womble

Emcees: At the end of 2015

Ena Abel

Arnie Panitch

Paul Pappas

Dave Pebworth

Robert Sanford

Dave Pebworth started scheduling the emcees about 2011, following Marsha Abelman's turn as emcee and scheduler, which lasted 18-24 months.

Comment Mikes: Deanna Sewell, Dave DiNucci, and whoever volunteers

Greeter: Don Feller and/or Donna Stuhr

Library Cart: Deanna Sewell

Deanna also counts the house and gives the count to the Treasurer.

Literature: Donna Stuhr and Don Feller

Q&A Table: Steve Jacobs

Money Count: two members, usually part of the Finance Committee, count the money from the donations.

From the newsletter, October, 2012

Did you know you can view video of most past HGP Sunday programs?

It may take a few weeks to edit and post each new video. But, if the presenter gave permission, the recorded program can be found on our website by clicking on **View previous Programs** in the left column of

most of our web pages. Selecting **Vimeo** from one of the sub-menus also gives you the same listing.

Editor's Footnote: This (as with other entries) may not be the start of this feature, but it's the first notice in the newsletter.

Non-Sunday Meeting Chapter Events

Solstice Gatherings

From a report on the Annual Meeting, June, 1996

It was decided to hold a Summer Solstice potluck picnic, 2:00 p.m., June 22nd, in Gabriel Park, 45th and S.W. Vermont, Portland.

From the same report: the group also planned

A winter solstice celebration.

A celebration of the 6,000 year anniversary of the creation of the Earth; October 23, 1997, 9:00 a.m. Greenwich time.

Pursuit of several other goals were discussed briefly;

- 1) initiating a bookstore or combination bookstore-coffee shop.
- 2) establishing an office, possibly with the Oregon Chapter of the World Future Society,
- 3) developing a roster that contains biographical or other identifying data about members,
- 4) reporting on altruistic activities of the HP/VMA.

Solstice Party '99

The 4th annual Winter Solstice party (since the world will end two weeks later) will be hold on Saturday, December 18th, from 7:30 to 9:30 pm, there will be mirth and merriment at the Koinonia House (PSU Campus Ministry), 633 SW Montgomery St.

Mike Birchet directed this event, as well as (at least) the 3rd Annual Winter Solstice party the year before.

Solstice Gathering

Naida Sanchez and Del Allen are planning a solstice party at the NWA on Saturday evening, June 21st, 2001, which just happens to be the Summer Solstice.

Dance and game night. We plan on having board (not bored) games in the meeting area. It could be cards, monopoly, Pictionary etc. Folks are encouraged to bring their favorite appropriate game to play if they feel so inclined. There can be several different games going on at the same time.

At about this time, Naida and Bev Schwartz put some energy into having monthly potlucks in the summer, and began requesting hosts.

From the newsletter, December, 2001

It's time for our Annual Winter Solstice Party
Sunday, December 30th, 5:00 - 8:00 pm
The Northwest Academy

As usual, it will be a potluck, so bring your favorite dish along with your own service, etc. This will be an excellent opportunity for the long-time members to meet some of the many new members.

To arrange for a ride, call Ellen Peoples.

Footnote: For many years, Ellen Peoples, who live downtown, would arrange rides for HGP members. Dick Mase, among others, often provided transportation for others to and from meetings.

Winter Solstice

From the June, 2005 newsletter.

OK all you party folks, who is planning the Winter Solstice Party??? Has anyone given it a thought? The Solstice is on the 21st, a Wed. night. The other folks are celebrating on Friday night, the 24th, so we could have ours on the 24th as well and have a realllly big party as everyone will be partying.

So who wants to start planning this? Find a location, entertainment, food, drinks, etc. The earlier it is planned, the

better the chance people will put it on their calendars. We usually bring clothing or canned food or money for one of the shelters. If you start planning now, you should be able to get people to help before they get committed to someone else. Soooooo, lets do it. Contact Del or Carolee Allen and we'll collect the names of the interested persons and help find a facilitator.

Not sure if there was a function that year, but at least two people were thinking about it ahead of time.

From the Dec. 2009 Newsletter

This year, we are doing something a little different for our Winter Solstice Potluck. We are having it in conjunction with CFI and other free thinking groups. The event will be held at Friendly House, upstairs on Saturday, December 19 from 6 to 9 p.m.

The theme for the party is "From Dark to Light." We will decorate a Solstice Tree -the Tree of Knowledge- with little books, humanist sayings, music, musical instruments, notes, etc. Please bring something to go on the tree. A member of CFI will be on hand dressed in a medieval astronomers' costume to wow the kids with stories and fables,

There will be singing, performances by some of our musical friends, such as Lenora Warren and Dave Almond, and of course, lots of good food provided by you!

From the Dec. 2011 Newsletter

HumanLight Celebration

Join the Fun of a Holiday with No Religious Overtones!

Come join the revelry of the Humanist of Greater Portland HumanLight Celebration on Saturday, December 17 upstairs at the Friendly House from 6pm to 930pm. This is a family friendly event, complete with a magician, a comedian, musicians, group sing, children decorating a "Tree of Knowledge" and of course, a potluck! Come dressed in your holiday finery and be prepared to have a rousing good time!

Fred Strong Winter Programs

From the August, 2012 newsletter.

Dark to Light celebration

A few HGP members have auditioned for parts

There will be three performances, December 21 evening, and December 22 matinee and evening.

Darktolight

After a successful audition and other contact efforts, DARKTO-LIGHT is on its way to being fully cast and, as in the DTL of 2010, HGP members are playing a prominent role. So far 3 cast members (out of an eventual 12) are on the HGP roster as well as our webmaster, Roger Bates and the show's creator, Fred Strong.

Lenora Warren agreed early on to join the ranks of this year's talented line up, in addition HGP's 'Spring Chickens', Joyce Lackie and Kay Byerly have also accepted parts.

Unlike the DTL of 2010, this year's production (Named 'Universe De-Light') is an all original musical which seeks to set the standards of the yearly event higher and give the secular community of Portland metro a viable alternative to the plethora of religious and traditional productions of the December month.

Hopefully this will become the secular answer to Portland Christmas Revels and other shows of that ilk. As far as we know there is nothing like this show anywhere else in the US, perhaps even the world.

POSITIONS NEEDED - As the talent line up is nearing completion there is still much to be done and much help still needed. Right now we are looking for someone to volunteer for the position of General Manager of the event as well as folks who can help with making costumes, working with the sets, helping to coordinate volunteers, etc. If you have a few hours a week or a month and would like to be a part of this groundbreaking, show please visit our website, darktolight.org and click on the VOLUNTEER page where you can sign up.

We are hoping for sell outs for all three shows (December 21st, 7pm, December 22nd, 2 & 7pm) so we urge everyone to get your tickets soon. Also, we are thankful to anyone who is able to make a contribution of any size.

From the August, 2012 newsletter.

Our cast of 13 includes some familiar Humanist faces.

Several members of HGP were a part of the December, 2012 effort which was sponsored by CFI-Portland. The show had 3 performances and attracted audiences numbering over 200 to the Portland Metro Arts theater in Portland.

Lenora Warren, Joyce Lackie and Kay Byerly were members of the cast, Paul Barkett was the band's guitarist, Paul Pappas delighted as MC, and Gayle Myrna provided pre-show entertainment.

Roger Bates acted as webmaster and helped produce the video and Fred Strong wrote and co-directed the show.

Step aside, Christmas Revels, hop over, Hallelujah Chorus, can it, Christmas Tuna...DARKTOLIGHT is here. Now the secular community has its own event to revel in with this year's expanded and anticipated show, BANG!

BANG!, for those of you who haven't heard, is this year's DARKTOLIGHT Winter Solstice musical rooted in the philosophy of Humanism, the annual program that gives those with a secular point of view an alternative to the traditional, religious plethora of musical and cultural events in December.

BANG! Is a musical revue that transports the audience through time and space from the big bang to present day Earth. It's fun, provocative, and even educational. You'll see Bonobos sing New Ape in Town, hear what it's like to be atomic element number 2 (Helium Tango), visualize the Earth in its early, ugly, barren days (In the Soup) and delight in the beauty and symmetry of our dancing, ballet-like solar system (Eight Planets and a Star).

The second act focuses on Humankind and the impact of our complicated species on our home planet with a varying series of songs that range from inspirational (The Waters Ahead), to Buck Owens country style (More People), Michelle Seaton. The music and script is the brainchild of Fred Strong. You can visit all these wonderful, talented folks and learn more about them

on the talent and creative staff pages of our website, darkto-light.org.

There was a public showing of the DVD in July, 2013, at Friendly House, following a jam session by the cast members present.

From the newsletter, March, 2014

Fred Strong has decided NOT to produce (a solstice) musical in 2014.

From the newsletter, May, 2014

HGP member Fred Strong has just launched a Kickstarter project to fund a professional cast recording of BANG!, the Humanist/Freethought musical which premiered in Portland in 2012. Kickstarter is an online, grassroots group that helps gather donations for entrepreneurial projects over a specified period of time. You can make an online donation but, if the project is not successful, your credit card is not charged. The BANG! project seeks to raise \$10,000 by mid May, those who donate \$25.00 or more will receive a free copy of CD.

BANG! is the world's first and, so far, only, Humanist musical and perhaps the world's first Humanist stage play of any type. It is of our community as it was written, produced and performed in Portland. At least a half dozen HGP members were involved in its' making, there is a copy of DVD and words in the HGP library. If we can successfully fund this project then, hopefully, creative secularists everywhere may be encouraged to follow through on new projects and we can begin to grow a secular cultural community. Below, please find the link:

From the newsletter, December, 2015

Winter Solstice Party

Come one, come all to HGP's Winter Solstice party on Saturday December 20th from 7pm to 930pm. We're going to sing secular holiday songs, have a potluck, drink holiday punch (with and without alcohol) and nosh on holiday goodies. Come see the Keeston Room transformed into a sparkly magic XMAS space. Bring your kids and something for 6-8 to eat.

Potlucks

In early 2003, Naida and Bev Schwartz put some energy into having monthly potlucks in the summer, and began requesting hosts.

In the April, 2004 newsletter, is a note about potlucks, which are now an important part of our nice-weather event schedule.

Since HGP started the potluck program last year, we have settled into a rhythm of about one potluck every one to two months. The potlucks are very popular and are a great place for members to get to know each other. Some potlucks feature a video or other theme, while others are just a time to eat and visit.

The Fellers

Don and Mary Feller often hosted the June Potluck at their home; many of those gatherings had a costume component. Here's a note about one of those from the newsletter.

The theme for this year's Summer Solstice Potluck is a tribute to religion and mythology. You are invited, but not required, to come dressed as a symbol from ancient or modern times depicting a person or symbol of any religion or mythology story. (Some suggestions include Jimmie Swaggert, Moses, Elmer Gantry, the Easter Bunny, a dinosaur kicked out of the ark, a favorite witch, or something from your own wild imagination.

In the October, 2008 newsletter is a notice that for the second year, and perhaps more years than that though there isn't a record of it, Anne Henderson is hosting a Thanksgiving pot luck at her home for any HGP members who would like to get together.

(The first such newsletter notice is October, 2007.)

Small Intimate Potlucks SIPS

In January, of 2008, Naida Sanchez, one of the first women to attend the Sunday Meeting, started the **Small Intimate PotluckS** because, as much as she enjoyed the large potlucks, gathering 20+ people in one home could leave people feeling like they didn't really have an opportunity to get to know others as they might in a smaller gathering.

Naida asked Bev Schwartz and others to her apartment to discuss

organizing the rotating small dinners of no more than 12 people, in order to have a chance to sit down with people and have more intimate conversations and get to know each other better.

Bev had been involved in a similar effort at another organization and was able to show us how to create the rotating schedule.

The schedule is somewhat complicated, as it changes dinner companions every month as well as responsibilities, from hosts to entrees to desserts to salads.

More recently, as our membership ages, some SIPS are held as brunches, allowing the guests to drive home more safely while it's still light.

Here's the first newsletter notice: March, 2008

January's Small Intimate PotluckS (SIPS) were a GREAT Success!!!

In January, we tried something new: Small Intimate Potlucks (SIPS), or "Getting to Know You" potluck dinners. They were such a success, there have been many requests to do it again. So, WE ARE! With a few slight changes.

Instead of a potluck NIGHT (It's always been on Saturday night) we will have a SIP WEEKEND.

The next SIPS will be scheduled for the weekend of Friday March 21 and Saturday March 22. And just like the January SIPS, we invite our members who are interested in hosting 6-10 people (including themselves) for a potluck to contact Naida Sanchez.

From the newsletter, August, 2012

It is time to start organizing Small, Intimate Potlucks again. If you would like to sign up, you can do so online. Go to www.portlandhumanists.org and log in. Then, click on Programs and select SIPS (Small Intimate Potlucks) from the drop-down menu.

What can you expect? During September, October and November, you will host or attend a potluck once a month; however, you will be with different people, so you have an opportunity to get to know other HGP members better and meet

and talk to people you might not know now. You will host only once and attend up to two times. If you cannot host, please sign up anyway.

Editor's Footnote: Bev Schwartz is still heavily involved with this program.

Cultural Anthropology

Dr. Frank Pasquale, an HGP member with a doctorate in Cultural Anthropology, created several questionnaires measuring various attitudes and beliefs of non-believers. Even though the numbers of non-believers was growing rapidly during this time, few researchers were exploring the nuances of that part of the population.

Here are some newsletter notes from December, 2005.

HGP survey research: Request & reminder

Questionnaires have been distributed or mailed to every HGP member on the mailing list (nearly 150).

Please complete and return the surveys in the enclosed, stamped envelope **postmarked by January 7th, latest.** (Postal rates are scheduled to increase on January 8th.)

Representative results depend on the highest possible response rate.

I want to thank each and every one of you for your collaboration in this work, and look forward to discussing with you, very soon, results concerning your views on Humanists of Greater Portland as an organization (pages 1-3), the prior research or prevalent assumptions addressed by all other questions (pages 4-9), and the nature and aims of the full research project.

HGP Research Report 1: Highlights

Since newsletter space is limited, findings from the survey distributed to HGP members in December, 2005, by Frank L. Pasquale will be provided in a series of brief reports. We begin with a brief summary of the sample and a few highlights.

Of 150 listed members, 105 returned completed surveys, for a response rate of 70 percent. This is quite strong, and again, I thank you.

With regard to the respondents:

- the mean and median age was 65 years
- 40 were female and 65 were male
- 95 percent are or have been married
- 85 percent have (had) children
- 85 percent hold undergraduate or advanced university degrees.

HGP Research Report 2: “Spirituality”

There is, of course, a great deal of talk about the “spiritual” and “spirituality” in the U. S. today. Interestingly, many HGPers speak of “spirituality,” but there is a “catch.”

As a reminder, respondents overwhelmingly described themselves as “not at all religious.” On a 0-8 scale (not at all to very), the average religiosity rating was .94! Only one person rated him/herself as high as 4 and no one chose 5 or above (in the positive range).

HGP Research Report 3: Influences

Survey responses provide some insights into the factors that led individuals to adopt nonreligious or humanist worldviews.

The great majority report religious backgrounds. Only 4 mothers and 10 fathers were described as having no religion, and 70 percent reported some form of early religious instruction. These backgrounds were apparently more influential for siblings than for the respondents. Nearly 90 percent of those with siblings (all but 11) indicated that they were less religious than their siblings, often significantly so. Something prompted these individuals to be different from other family members and to chart their own courses (away from religiosity).

Half of the respondents said they decided they were not religious before the age of 20, in keeping with a great deal of other research. This said, a remarkable number of respondents did so later in life: 20 between 20 and 30 years of age; 15 between 30 and 40; 6 between 40 and 50; and 3 between 50 and 75.

There were further surveys; the file holds one form Autumn, 2006 published in May, 2007.

HGP Yellow Pages

Del Allen thought that there was a lot of expertise in the chapter: members had had a wide variety of careers and interests, and his plan was to create a kind of intellectual and experiential HGP Yellow Pages.

The idea was to get us each to list areas we knew a lot about that we'd be willing to share. The results of the members' lists would be collected into a document— printed or on the web site.

Then, for example, if someone wanted to start gardening, they could consult the HGP Yellow Pages and see who the experienced gardeners were, and then contact them to arrange some visits and consultations.

Unfortunately, after Del put in a lot of time and effort on this project, changing membership, and perhaps other factors, as well as the rush of normal life, slowly left this project to gather dust.

Members' Binders

Del Allen, once again working hard and thinking about the chapter, created a three-ring binder for each member. The binder contained membership rosters, the by-laws, and other useful information.

His idea was that each current member would get one, and that new members would be presented their binders in front of the group at the first Sunday Meeting of the next month; this little ceremony would also be a terrific way to acknowledge their joining the chapter.

Unfortunately, bowing to the dictum that some (to many) great ideas suffer from the burden of sustaining the effort: starting is often easier than maintaining.

Membership changes, by-laws change, people leave the chapter and don't think about returning the binders, and over all this, the internet emerged as a much more flexible way to be a resource for all of us, including a way for members to stay up to date on announcements and events.

Hikes

From the newsletter, July 2003

Herb Dirksen will lead a hike in the Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge at the end of August or the beginning of September, 2003. This was the first of several such events Herb managed for us all.

Walk the Mall

The December, 2011 newsletter contained a notice about gathering for conversation and exercise:

Good light exercise and fun too!

Lloyd Center 9:00 AM, Saturday mornings

Meet at the Food Court and look for the red HGP/Meetup sign. Wear your Darwin/Evolution/Humanism tee shirt and spread the word. Call Sue Nunn, Outreach Chair, for more information

Urban Hike

From the newsletter, June, 2013

HGP member Arnie Panitch will lead a walk from Lair Hill to the South Auditorium District and tell about the area's rich cultural history and the changes that urban renewal brought in the 1960's.

Book Clubs

The Book Club will meet on Tuesday, Aug. 19th, 2003, at the home of Deanna Sewell, in Gresham. Call Dorothy Fay if you want to car pool.

Shakespeare Outdoors

Here's an example of several summers' worth of events.

Naida is inviting fellow HGPers to join her Labor Day, Monday, Sept. 1, 2003, for a potluck picnic at the Portland Actors Ensemble's free performance of Shakespeare's "*A Midsummer Night's Dream*."

Free Shakespeare in the Park on the Labor Day holiday, Monday, Sept. 3, 2007. This year the Portland Actors Ensemble is performing

The Taming of the Shrew. Several members attended their performance last year at Reed College and enjoyed it so much, they will be going again.

Hungry Humanists

The Hungry Humanists social program began about March or April, 2007; there is a notice in the August newsletter about the Hungry Humanists starting "several months ago."

A few people organized a Hungry Humanists dinner or lunch, but that petered out, possibly because our aging population found it more and more problematic to drive at night. This limitation may have intruded into other shared evening events; as I write this (late 2015), we are slowly changing other events to early afternoon.

In August of 2007, a newsletter reminder suggested that we now had different monthly coordinators for this program.

In May, 2011, this was the announcement:

Come join the fun at Cornelius Pass Roadhouse on Wednesday, May 18 at 7pm. The Hungry Humanists are at it again, seeking out new restaurants for your dining pleasure, and we've found a great McMenamin's farmhouse south of Highway 26 at Cornelius Pass Road in Hillsboro. Contact Anne Henderson to let her know you're coming. Depending on the weather, we may be able to eat outside.

Open Table

This was a brunch meeting every second Saturday at Fleur de Lis Bakery Cafe in Hollywood..

Here's a typical newsletter notice:

Second Saturday Open Table

March 9 (2013) 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM

Fleur de Lis Bakery & Café 3930 NE Hancock St., corner of 40th
www.fleurdelisbakery.com.

Open table, open talk, a variety of high quality food choices.

One orders/pays at the counter; food is served to you. Street parking.

Public transportation: buses #12 & 75;
Max train, 42nd and Halsey.

At first, Sheila Pastore reserved a large table for us at 10:00 AM. After a year or so, someone in our group asked her to move the gathering to 11:00 AM so that there would be more lunch offerings.

By then, area families had discovered the cafe, and it became much more crowded, especially at the later hour, and they no longer accepted reservations.

As no replacement site was located the event ended in June, 2014, after two years of enjoyable gatherings of from 6-12 people.

Vinnie's Nights

We started Vinnie's Nights, at Vinnie's Pizza on Killingsworth, as social, meal-centered gatherings on May 21, 2000: the third Sunday of the month.

Pete made pizzas for us after the meeting.

Vinnie's Night no longer at Vinnie's

Well, it moved. . .

A newsletter note from November, 2005.

Pete Barkett has had to consolidate his two pizza places into one. Vinnie's Pizza on Killingsworth is closed and the business will continue out of the St. Johns location, which has no dining room. Alas.

After this, we moved to the Lair Hill Cafe, just south of downtown, but problems with its size and service limitations suggested a move to Billy Bang's, down the hill at St. John's Landing, in March, of 2007, though this place was noisier than the others, and it was hard to create a sense of community, especially with (mostly) people sitting across from one another at several tables line up end-to-end.

Such an arrangement meant you could really only converse with two or three other people, as others were too far way to really hear easily,

especially for older people.

Once we moved to the Lair Hill Cafe, though, we had started a meet-up presence, and the Vinnie's Night gatherings were successful in attracting and retaining new members.

Culture Vultures

Sheila Pastore organized the Culture Vultures in September, 2006, shortly after joining HGP. One Sunday morning, she announced that she was going to see a film or play and that if anyone wanted to join her, she shared the information.

Bev Schwartz soon suggested that we coordinate this idea and call it Culture Vultures, with the purpose of helping members share cultural events, from plays to concerts to lectures to

The idea was that anyone who was attending an event could share that information with other members, and those who wished to could also attend.

For a summer or two we had good attendance at Shakespeare in the Park events at Reed College, Mt. Tabor, and other venues.

One particularly successful Culture Vulture event had about a dozen members attending the Schnitz to see Hal Holbrook presenting Mark Twain Tonight!

This program has had different iterations and has taken different forms over the years.

Swift Birds

On Culture Vultures event met, for a few years, thanks to a suggestion by Naida Sanchez, at Chapman School to see the Chimney Swifts arrive,

Here's the note from the September, 2006, newsletter:

The Swifts are returning to Portland, marking the Fall Equinox. And as usual, the Humanists will be there to celebrate and watch them dart in and out of the Chapman school chimney to roost.

If you would like to watch the Swifts, meet at Chapman Elementary School, NW 27th and Pettygrove,

And again from September, 2007 newsletter

The annual (unofficial) Fall Equinox Celebration cheering on the Vaux's Swifts as they stream into the chimney of Chapman elementary school.

Nightly, for three weeks in September, migrating Vaux's Swifts roost overnight in Chapman Elementary School's chimney on their way to southern Central America and parts of Venezuela.

The September, 2008 newsletter also mentioned this event and added the following notice:

The Audubon Society estimates that the number of Swifts in 2006 swelled to 10,000 in mid-September with some estimates as high as 35,000!

Membership Hacks

From October, 2007 newsletter

WHO'S NEW AT HGP

Flash! HGP Now Has Over 200 Members!!

Women's Brunch

Carolyn Tomei, the former Mayor of Milwaukie, and an Oregon State Representative in the 41st district since 2001, a member of the chapter for many years, hosted the Women's Brunch on the third Sunday of the month, at her home in Milwaukie starting at about 11:00.

So far the first newsletter notice I've found was for the May, 1997 event.

Those gatherings pre-dated the Sunday Meeting, and obviously, pulled most of the chapter's (then few) women members away from one Sunday Meeting every month. This was unfortunate, as the meeting attendance was, early on, preponderantly men.

Starting September 10, 2006, the HGP Women's Brunch was moved further into the day to start at 11:30 am so that women members can attend the HGP Sunday meeting. As always, all Humanist women are

invited.

In January, of 2012, the Women's Brunch was moved to the third Saturday of the month, so those attending the lunch could also attend the regular Sunday Meeting.

From March, 2013 newsletter

Due to Carolyn's work schedule in the State Legislature, Saturday Brunch is now Sunday Lunch.

This schedule allows time to get from Sunday meeting in NW to Carolyn's home in SE.

Men's Lunch

In August, 1996, the first Men's Lunch was held at *****.

After those early sessions, the Men's Lunch moved to SE Portland at Fryer Tuck's, on the third Saturday of the month, but generally only a half-dozen or so of the members would attend.

That gathering eventually folded due to apparent low interest, about 2005 or 2006.

There was a note in the September, 2011 newsletter about the re-starting of the Men's Lunch.

The HGP men's lunch group will meet at the Lucky Labrador, 915 S E Hawthorne, at noon the 3rd Wednesday of every month. Contact John Hendricks if puzzled.

That Men's Lunch still continues (as of March, 2018), and the men meet on the fourth Tuesday of each month, at the Lucky Labrador Tavern in Portland, at about 9th and Hawthorne.

These gatherings are now the fourth Tuesday, apparently so all those attending can schedule all their doctor appointments earlier in the month.

Inside Passage Cruise

Six members of HGP cruised from Seattle to SE Alaska and back, going up the Inside Passage. The waitress for their dinner table was a very nice young Polish Catholic woman, who really enjoyed

connecting with those on the cruise, then all but stopped even speaking to them the last day, outraged upon learning that they were non-believers.

The six Humanists on the trip also won the Trivia Contest Grand Prize for virtually demolishing all other teams in the contest.

Thursday Evening Book Group

For a while in 2011, we added a Friendly House rental by reserving Thursday evenings during the month for game nights, book clubs, and the like.

Here's the first notice I've found in the newsletter about this.

The Thursday evening book group is reading the following books: February 17th "How We Decide" by Johah Lehrer. He also wrote "Proust was a Neuroscientist."

We gather at Friendly House about 6:30pm on Thursdays. Come even if you haven't read the book.

From the December, 2011 newsletter: Board minutes.

The board reduced the Thursday evening rentals from each week to one week a month, (apparently to under utilization).

This additional meeting option wasn't fully utilized, so we let the experiment lapse. Perhaps it was the parking in the area is tight, perhaps it was that our aging population didn't like driving at night, or didn't like driving into the city at night.

Whatever the reason(s), this was another experiment in increasing the connections between our members, and the board is to be commended for trying out this idea.

The Varieties of (Non) Religious Experience

One of the qualities that seems to mark our chapter is that people can attend a variety of events, or (kind of) not.

For example, some members, at other events right in the thick of things, come to the Sunday Meeting but mainly visit each

other in the Afterthoughts room, enjoying themselves and whoever comes in for more coffee. These members will sometimes come into the meeting itself, especially for the announcements, but seem to find more of what they seek from each other than the speakers.

Other members seem to seek out the Sunday Meeting programs, but are rarely at the more social events.

One long-time member from the late 1990s to just a few years ago, hosted us at several annual potlucks at his home, but never attended a Sunday Meeting.

Another member, in the early oughts, Leonard Schiflett, only attended the Men's Lunch.

And good for them all: if we keep offering a variety of events, with different options for participation at many of them, we'll have the greatest opportunity to embrace many experiences and welcome many with various interests.

Chapter Outreach

Portland Cable Access TV

We've had four presences on local cable access TV programs over the years.

Humanism Northwest

The first program was Pete and Paul Barkett, and their program was called Humanism Northwest. The program first aired around June, 2000. Mike Birchet took the Director's Class from the Cable TV people, in February of 2000, and also served as the director.

There were discussions, guests from the chapter, and the Barkett brothers answered questions from the audience.

HGP president Gerry Gage obtained a \$1000 to use for various production costs of Humanism Northwest. The grant was awarded by the American Humanist Association Chapter Expansion Fund.

January, 2001 We've finally got a somewhat regular time slot for our weekly humanist television program, hosted by Pete and Paul Barkett and directed by Mike Birtchet.

We also got volunteer support from the Portland Cable Access staff, who crewed the show.

Conversations with Dr. Don

Long-time member, some time Board member, and Humanist Celebrant Dr. Don Baham launched his cable TV program, "Conversations with Dr. Don," in May of 2001 on the Tualatin Valley Community Access Television channels.

It is still running, perhaps a record for cable access TV, is broadcast several times a week in the Portland Metropolitan service area, in many community access TV stations throughout the country, and is also broadcast worldwide on You Tube.

As of December, 2015, there have been well over 700 programs of Conversations with Dr. Don.

Schedule from the October, 2014 newsletter

By October, 2014, "Conversations with Dr. Don" was down to Washington County and seven airings a week. This reduced schedule had been the case for some time.

The Humanist Perspective

In the winter/spring of 2002, we helped sponsor The Humanist Perspective, a half-hour program produced nationally and distributed by the Council for Secular Humanism, on local cable-access TV.

Note from Sept. 2003 newsletter

Due to several factors and after discussion with many HGP members, broadcast of "The Humanist Perspective" will end with the September 26th program.

Many of the nearly 80 programs broadcast during the past 1 1/2 years have been recorded on VHS for future viewing by members (hopefully in an HGP media center some day!).

Jimmie Moglia

From the April, 2004 newsletter

HGP Member Jimmie Moglia is now producing a monthly program on TVTV Cable Channel called “Shakespeare’s Views on the News.”

Each program examines a few issues – comments on each issue are terminated with the most apt Shakespearean quotation. The contest ‘Guess the Quote’ was extended to the Humanist Group.

Web Presence

Dennis Brown was our first web-master, creating the site and updating it as our needs changed and the technology improved.

In February of 2007, after many years of Dennis being the only person working on this, we created a Web Committee, which has also gone through a few iterations of direction, leadership, and changing versions and visions of what's currently on line.

Meet-up

Starting in _____ we established a Meet-up page to augment, and attract people to, the chapter web site and to social activities, such as Vinnie's Night. .

Historically, the vast majority of first-time visitors tell us they first located us on line, sometimes the first week after they moved to Portland, so these efforts are of significant importance.

Regional Library Displays

The library display project was begun some time in the 1990s, and since 2004 we display a sampling of our books and a list of Humanist authors; we have mounted displays in six or seven libraries each year.

In September, 2006, Deanna Sewell posted a notice in the newsletter, as well as doing almost all the work on this project, which continues through the end of 2017, and beyond.

From the Newsletter, February, 2013, an article about the benefit of planting a lot of seeds, but not knowing which ones actually grow.

Our January (library) display is getting a lot of positive feedback, with people asking for a list of the books we are displaying. Thanks to the folks below who have really helped make this happen!

The Hewitts for making the initial contact.

Bill Maiden for printing and delivering copies of the list of books.

And especially to Marsha Abelman. She answered a query posted to HGP's Facebook page: "Just saw your display at the Cascade Park Library in Vancouver, WA. I wanted to cry tears of joy. Never in a million years did I ever expect to see a Humanist display. Thank you! I had my daughter with me and it was such an honor to show her the display of authors, celebrities, and scientists who share my philosophy. I immediately took a picture of the display and sent it to my friend. Can't wait to learn more about your organization."

And Marsha's response: "That is thrilling for us to hear. That's why we take those displays out. It is a joy to share the philosophy of humans helping humans! HGP has been around since a group of friends needed a support group in 1973."

Marsha went on to describe our meetings, web site, and activities such as potlucks, book groups, and discussion groups.

From the Newsletter, February, 2013

We were heartened to read the overwhelmingly positive comments submitted by a number of folks, including one posting from New Jersey (from a) . . . library district:

Public libraries exist to offer access to ideas and information. Libraries are among the last bastions of free speech and the open exchange of ideas in our culture. We cannot grow as human beings unless we challenge and question, and allow others to challenge and question our received beliefs and opinions.

I applaud the staff at Cascade Park—and at the whole FVRL system—for their willingness to initiate a conversation about true freedom of (and from) religion. (I am not an atheist, by the way.) I'm sorry, but if a person cannot sustain faith in the face of difference, then maybe that faith isn't very strong!

Another posting read: "It's about time atheists were prominently featured." The executive director of the library district also responded in *The Columbian*, Public libraries exist to offer access to ideas and information

from a variety of perspectives. A democracy can only be healthy and vigorous if we both learn and explore our differences as well as our common ground. If we are fulfilling our responsibility, FVRL libraries will promote understanding, prompt a conversation, encourage a healthy debate, and—yes—sometimes strike a nerve. It's what good public libraries do."

A Humanist Approach to Happiness

From the Newsletter, October, 2013

Dave Collamer will conduct a new class called "A Humanist Approach to Happiness" based on Jennifer Hancock's book of a similar title. The class will run eight Sundays in the Keeston Room (our regular meeting room).

Supporting the Community

Food Drives

The Second Sunday food drives begin in July, 1997 following suggestions by Naida Sanchez.

The food goes to the Sunshine Division, a program managed by the Portland Police Bureau.

First Annual Winter-Solstice Food Drive

From the Newsletter, December, 2006.

The Social Concerns Committee is sponsoring a food drive this year. Please bring non-perishable food items to the meeting on December 10. Members of the Social Concerns Committee will collect them and transport them to the Food Bank. Of course, there is a sweet prize for the person who donates the most pounds!

Postal Workers' Food Drive

Seventeen HGP members (and four grandchildren) turned out on Saturday, May 12th, 2001, to package 16,000+ pounds of food collected by postal workers for the Oregon Food Bank.

We worked at the post offices, in the back where the mail deliverers

parked their trucks to bring the mail in, and work off those load docks, sorting food into cardboard boxes to be taken to the food bank.

We worked on this in the early oughts, from 2001 through 2004 or so.

Here's the call to action for Saturday, May 8th, 2004

The Oregon Food Bank and the National Association of Letter Carriers are conducting a food drive on Saturday, May 8. This is one of about a dozen special drives carried out by the Food Bank. People in the greater Portland area will get a plastic bag in their mail in early May. On May 8 they can leave the bag filled with non-perishable good items, and their mail carrier will take it to the food bank.

Don Burnet normally oversaw this annual effort to support the community.

Sisters of the Road

Editor's Footnote: For some years now, we have been taking some of our normal salad bowl donations and sharing a percentage with Sisters of the Road.

From the February, 2013 newsletter

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your wonderful support! Warmth, a hot meal on a cold day and a welcoming smile - when we sit together at the table, our hunger for companionship, understanding and nourishment is met. Your generosity makes this possible in Sisters' Cafe for the hungriest in our community.

I love volunteering at Sisters because it keeps me out of trouble, keeps my mind busy, and I get to meet new friends. Being at Sisters has kept me remembering who I am, that I am a human being who can love people and do good things.

From all of us at Sisters, thank you for your donation of \$409.78, which we received on December 11, 2012. And as part of Together at the Table, your gift, along with a generous pool of matching donors, provided a 50 cent match for each \$1 donated by a returning donor!

Thank you for joining us and for ensuring there is a seat at the table for each of us.

Our warmest gratitude,

Monica Beemer, Executive Director
Sisters of the Road

Transition Projects

In addition to Sisters of the Road, we also support Transition Projects; here's a note from them from the March, 2013 newsletter.

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your gift of \$409.78 to Transition Projects for calendar year 2012. We will put it to immediate use helping people transition from homelessness to housing. We are so grateful for your support.

In the past year, we:

- ▣ Found permanent housing for 637 people.
- ▣ Housed 132 veterans
- ▣ Provided more than 24,000 showers to people living on the streets.
- ▣ Served 1,560 people through our short-term residential programs (Doreen's Place, Clark Center, and Jean's Place).

We can do only this work with your support. Always, if we can provide you with more information, or a tour, please contact us. With warm wishes for a Happy New Year,

Doreen Binder
Executive Director

We got parallel letters from each group in 2014 for our end-of-the-year 2013 donations.

Oregon Food Bank

We also supported efforts of the Oregon Food Bank as early as late 2000, and perhaps well before that, though there were no specific mentions of those in any newsletters before November of 2000.

Humanist Celebrants

Humanist Celebrants are ordained under the auspices of the Humanist Society of Friends to officiate at weddings and memorial services, as well as at other rites of passages, and to counsel humanists and the community in ethical and philosophical questions, serving as the humanist equivalent of traditional clergy.

As early as September, 1996, these were ours: Hugh Allen was the most recent person certified.

Don Baham

Pat Burnet

Millie Priebe

Hugh Allen

In the April, 2001, newsletter, long-term member Iva O'shaunesy was listed as a celebrant for the first time.

By May, 2012, we also had Sheila Pastore and Bernie Dehler listed as Celebrants.

Humanist Counseling Service

Dick Mase, Merle Kovash, and Gerry Gage set up the Humanist Counseling Services in January of 1997 to meet a crucial community need, providing secular low- and no-cost counseling.

Virtually all the low- and no-cost counseling in the four-county region was pastoral, but if you are a non-believer, a counselor who tells you what Jeremiah said to the Canaanites doesn't provide much therapeutic value.

From the Newsletter, January, 2013: Dick Mase explained the program to bring the membership up to date. Many newer members might not have known about this long-term effort.

If you are a newcomer to HGP you may be unaware of a program the organization has been sponsoring for 15 years now.

It's called Humanist Counseling Services, and has been serving members of the community who are uninsured and low income. HCS was begun with significant help from Merle Kovash and

Gerry Gage. Merle has continued to be an integral part of the program as a therapist. HGP members Grace Dunsmore, Sheila Pastore, and Suzanne Thornton, respond to callers requesting counseling appointments with us.

After stints in two other locations, we have settled on an office in the Milwaukie area. We get free office space in return for providing counseling services to residents and staff of a retirement facility there. Because we initially viewed SE Multnomah County and Clackamas County as underserved areas, the location works well for us.

Because our clients are low income and often jobless, we offer our counseling on a donation basis.

There's even a \$20 limit on donations. We figure that if they can donate more, they can afford services elsewhere. Most years, however, we have taken in more in donations than we have cost HGP in expenses.

HCS is now well known in hospitals, clinics, mental health departments, schools, colleges, and everywhere the uninsured are seeking low-cost counseling. A side effect of meeting a need is that the word Humanist is being used frequently and in a positive way.

Thank you HGP for your sponsorship! It means a lot to us and many others.

Dick Mace

The program has operated at four different sites, but mainly at Rose Villa, a senior living facility in south Milwaukie. In exchange for free space, Merle Kovash agreed to see the residents and staff there.

There have been many interns and retirees who have joined the program to offer counseling to the hundreds of low-income, uninsured clients who have been served ever since. Nadia Lavon Sanchez, a long-time member of HGP, was also a counselor in this program.

SMART

SMART (Self-Management and Recovery Training) addiction treatment programs approach addictions far differently than do traditional Twelve-Step programs.

Dr. Hank Robb oversaw the local SMART weekly meetings, at first with the help of HGP members Dick Mase and Merle Kovash and then often using psychology graduate students as group leaders.

At one time in the early-middle oughts (2001-2006 or so), and continuing today (December, 2015), there were just over 20 meetings a week throughout the 4-county area.

KOPB Fund raising

For almost 15 years, Dick Mase (and others, including then-President Brad Boston) oversaw the gathering of volunteers and scheduling them into the KOPB Pledge Drive sessions, normally early in December.

As with many of our activities, without someone now to take over the responsibility, this tradition has been lost.

The December, 2003, pledge drive marked our 7th straight year of participation. We participated though (at least) 2008, which would be our twelfth straight year.

Here's some information from the newsletter about that:

HGP took part in Oregon Public Broadcasting's December pledge drive for the seventh straight year. Seventeen of us collaborated with nine Xerox employees to answer phone calls and we raised \$16,000 during our shift.

One of our group took a pledge for \$1000. When interviewed afterward, and asked how it was done, the member, asking to remain anonymous, said simply, "superior marketing."

Editor's Footnote: Which Dr. Gerald Gage does that sound like?

Recently (Fall, 2015), we were going to resume our participation in this event, but KOPB did away with phones in the studio, replacing them with computers and tablets, which required a 2-hour training session in the evening, plus they wanted us to take a late shift, ending at perhaps 11:15PM.

With our aging membership, new technology, and this requiring more driving at night, we weren't able to continue this effort.

REACH

REACH is a secular version of Habitat for Humanity and for a few years HGP members supported their efforts on their annual Community Work Day.

The first notice was in the September, 1999 newsletter.

The newsletter notice below is a sample: August, 2001.

Several HGP members have volunteered the last few years to help REACH with its annual paint-a-thon. This 2001 work party is on Saturday, August 18th.

We also participated in 2000, 2002 and 2003.

Peace & Justice Fair

From the newsletter, March, 1999

On Memorial Day, May 31, 1999, the 6th PEACE & JUSTICE FAIR will be held from noon to 5:00 pm at Irving Park, NE 7th and Fremont. The HGP advocacy committee plans to set up a table there to hand out humanist literature, answer questions, and invite interested persons to sign up to receive our newsletter.

Mike Birtchet will be needing people to staff the table. Call him to volunteer (that's how Mike first learned about us. Early on, starting in the 1980s, participating at this event was one of our primary community participation activities).

From the newsletter, August, 2013

The Humanists of Greater Portland will be sponsoring a booth at the upcoming Vancouver Peace and Justice Fair, which will be held on September 7, 9am to 4pm in Esther Short Park at 8th and Columbia Street.

Please contact Donna Stuhr if you are willing to volunteer at the booth for an hour.

From the newsletter, October, 2013

Thank-you to the following members who volunteered their time to represent HGP at the Peace and Justice Fair: Donna Stuhr, Willie Willworth, Rick Agosto, Joyce Lackie, Ted Kozlowski, Ted Pyle, Sheila Pastore, and Ely Nichols.

The fair was a very valuable opportunity to connect with a number of persons about Humanism. George Thomas served as a fair volunteer, reading a poem at the end of the day. Other Humanists who attended the fair were Helen and Dick Hewitt, Jim Anglin, Linda Pritchard, and her mother Kirsten.

Humanist Helpers

The first announcement for the Humanist Helpers was in October, 2005.

Here's the newsletter lead:

Humanist Helpers Launched - Hurricane Katrina Fund

Humanist Helpers (Del Allen's phrase) is what we've decided to call HGP's social service providers. Pat Burnet signed her letter-to-the-editor published in the Sept. 6 Oregonian above that affiliation, so the name has been publicly launched. Eleven members at the Sept. 4 program meeting signed up to physically assist evacuees from Hurricane Katrina.

By September of 2006, with the Hurricane Katrina emergency behind us, the group changed its focus to inside the chapter.

The Humanist Helpers, who identified by a yellow name tag, volunteer to help HGP members with projects and errands, from helping people move, to checking on them post-surgery, and the like.

From an article in the Northwest Examiner, July, 2006

"During a recent meeting, (Ann) Rushing rose to announce the formation of a social concerns committee, to be operated by 'humanist helpers,' and getting involved in marches, parades, food drives, educational campaigns, and other activities."

Here's a reminder notice from the May, 2007 newsletter.

At times, one of us may need help beyond our own ability and we would like to ask assistance from our trusted group. Illness, loss of one kind or another, and physical needs such as moving to another home, are but a few examples of the extra help that may be needed. That is the role of Humanist Helpers. We are continuing the tradition of years past. The main contact persons are Naida Lavon and Dennis Brown.

Over the years, the official Humanist Helpers organized other Humanists to off this kind of support to many members; we moved a couple of them a few times, but, clearly, in each case, it was our chance to help other Humanists juggle some of life's struggles.

From March, 2008, newsletter

One of our members is in critical need of housing. If you know of anyone who could rent to this person, a response would be most appreciated. This member is very responsible and able to take care of self but has come on difficult times and needs housing for a low rent. Can provide housing references if needed.

Please contact Naida Lavon if you know of any possibilities for this person.

Oregon Legislature Convocations

Carolyn Tomei, HGP member and now serving in the Oregon Legislature representing District 25, invited our chapter's Humanist Counselor/ Ministers to present an opening for their daily legislative sessions.

April, 2001 Pat Burnet

May, 2001, Dr Don Baham

May, 2009, Dr Don Baham

August, 2009, Hank Robb

Walking Tours

A notice from May, 2006, newsletter.

HGP Member Arnold Panitch will conduct his walking tour of South Portland's Jewish and Italian immigrant community on Saturday, May 16, 2009, beginning at 10 a.m.

Campouts

Anne Henderson starting inviting members to join her at a campground for a long weekend, starting about 2008. The first two years we were at River Bend Campground, near Lebanon, OR. The third year we changed to Champoeg, west of I-5 at Wilsonville; the fourth year found us at Milo McIver State Park, almost to Estacada SE of Portland; and the fifth year we went to Battle Ground State Park, just NE of Battle Ground, WA.

Magazines for Prisoners

Here's a notice from the March, 2011 newsletter. This donation program had been going on for some time when this notice appeared.

As you know, our HGP Social Concerns Committee has been recycling your donated magazines by delivering them to the Coffee Creek Women's Correctional Facility. They are very appreciative. Recently we also delivered a donated quilt. The staff were delighted and plan to use it as a fund raiser. Their quilters' group has informed us that any scraps of materials which could be used for making future quilts would be most welcome.

Programs for Prisoners

A notice from the September, 2012, newsletter.

Sheridan Prison Programs/Startup Group. A group of 5 HGP people have volunteered to meet with inmates. The inmate group is waiting for a program coordinator.

From the November, 2012, newsletter.

Sheridan Prison Programs/Startup Group – Hank Robb volunteered to be minister of record for their group. He has been in touch with Jason (Holden).

From the February, 2013, newsletter.

Bernie Dehler (Humanist Minister) met with Jason Holden, a prisoner at the Sheridan prison, to help plan ways to help the secular movement in his prison. HGP is also sending Jason duplicate books from our library. Jason is very knowledgeable

about Secular Humanism and is trying to start a humanist group within the prison.

From the June, 2015, newsletter.

Appreciation Letter

For: Volunteer Appreciation
Subject: Bernie Dehler, Humanist Celebrant

The Humanist group of FCI Sheridan would like to take this opportunity to show our appreciation for Bernie Dehler, our Humanist volunteer.

Until recently Humanist groups were not recognized by the bureau of prisons religious services. But now that we are we hope we can develop a model that works well and can be adopted by other Humanist groups as they are established throughout the BOP (Federal Bureau of Prisons).

While Bernie and the Humanist group at Sheridan have only recently been acquainted, we are encouraged that this flagship program will be a success due in part to Bernie's years of organizational experience.

Humanists find meaning in human life itself and do not relate to a transcendent being or spirituality beyond human life. With this premise in mind, we appreciate having Bernie to help us create a new social identity to replace the criminal label, find meaning and purpose in the experience of imprisonment, empower us by turning us into agents of Humanism, and develop a sense of control over our unknown futures.

Thank you.

From the September, 2015, newsletter.

From a statement by Roy Speckhardt, Executive Director of the AHA:

Thanks to the generosity of American Humanist supporters like you, our legal team **won three major cases** defending church-state separation and humanist rights this month!

. . . at a federal prison in Oregon, the AHLC successfully represented the rights of a humanist inmate to organize a humanist group. The prison's administration and chaplain repeatedly de-

nied the inmate's right to organize—a special privilege that used to be afforded only to religious groups, but is now also open to humanists and atheists.

Bernie Dehler has been visiting this group (as a representative from HGP as a Humanist Celebrant) on a monthly basis to help establish it and to give them encouragement from outside the prison.

Scholarship Program

A notice from the July, 2012, newsletter.

For the first time, HGP has offered a Scholarship Essay Contest, and found three out-standing Humanist high school seniors who submitted winning essays.

Del Allen had begun the Scholarship Fund several years ago, and in March 2011 the Board made it a restricted fund with an annual budget line of \$1,000, and created the Scholarship Committee. Del asked our generous members to add their contributions to the Scholarship Fund, and that fund has reached over \$10,000.

From the July, 2012, newsletter.

The Scholarship Committee is pleased to announce that we selected two winners for our annual scholarship awards of \$2000.00 each.

The program continued through 2016 as of this writing.

Regional Secular Activities

During the later 1990s, there were four main free-thought groups in the region: The Corvallis Secular Society, The Humanists of Salem (founded late 1995), United States Atheists, and HGP. Both of the latter were in Portland.

The groups took turns managing the regional conferences, which ran from 1998 until 2003, when the series ended.

For example, Corvallis oversaw the third symposium, and HGP the

fourth. Corvallis Secular Society ran the fifth and said they'd manage the sixth as well, but by the time we realized that we should have already been meeting, selecting a theme, speakers, and a venue, it was too late to catch up.

For each of the conferences, the other three groups were also major players; one would be in charge of the venue and food, one the speakers and workshops, and so forth. It was pretty much the same organization year after year, but with some one else's name at the top of the letterhead.

First Annual Symposium for Rational Living

Location Oregon Forestry Center, Washington Park summer of 1998

Second Annual Oregon Symposium

As of August, 1999: Plans are continuing feverishly for the 2nd Annual Symposium for Rational Living which will be held on November 7th this year at the World Forestry Center in Portland.

Third Annual Oregon Atheist/Humanist/Skeptic Symposium

Annie Laurie Gaylor and Dan Barker of the Freedom From Religion Foundation were the keynote speakers at the third annual freethinkers symposium July 29th, 2000, on SE Foster Road, near the USA meeting place. The organizing team was headed by John Dearing from Corvallis – attendance about 140.

CoR

One function of the conferences, or rather one result, was attracting free-thought citizens who perhaps didn't know about the sponsoring groups. For example, I still remember registering a Tigard resident at the Third Symposium, Don Feller, who has since, along with his wife, Mary, become important and valued members of our chapter.

Fourth Annual Freethinkers Symposium

The 4th Annual Freethinkers Symposium, sponsored by HGP and other like-minded groups, was held on Saturday, June 23rd, 2001, at the Greenwood Inn on Allen Road at Highway 217.

Michael Shermer was the main keynote speaker, we had coverage from The Oregonian, and several HGP members led workshops, in addition to HGP managing the event.

James K. Sager, President of the Oregon Educational Association,

was the other keynote speaker.

The theme of this event is how to influence and support education at the local level, including ways of reducing non-rational influences upon education.

Fifth Annual Oregon Secular Symposium

Saturday, June 22, 2002, at the Portland Conference Center

Keynote speakers included Frank Zindler and Margaret Downey.

Zindler, a member of AAAS, and The Jesus Seminar, lectured extensively on Bible history, creationism vs. evolution, and the historicity of Jesus. He was also an editor of American Atheist Press and its magazine.

Downey was at that time one of the few nationally known speakers about atheist issues. She was a board member of The Atheist Alliance, The Humanist Institute, FFRF, and had spoken at the United Nations, as well as representing the atheist community at two international United Nations conferences.

Keynote topics were Consequences of the Drug War, Using the Scientific Method to Investigate Supernatural Claims, and Your Family not Keen on your Atheism?

Workshop leaders included Nancy Powell of USA, and our own Del Allen, who led a seminar on how to improve your secular group.

Editor's Footnote: You will have noticed, I'm sure, that the event had a different name every year.

Northwest Free-Thought Alliance Conferences

Following the success of the 2007 AHA National Conference in Portland, a few individuals, primarily led by HGP Members, began a series of Regional free-thought conferences alternating between Portland and Greater Seattle.

The planning and executing organization was called the Northwest Free-Thought Alliance, to remove it from the sometimes divisive politics of the existing groups, though HGP was primary behind the scenes, even advancing the money to hold space at the facility for the first conference, then being repaid from registration fees.

Primary planning and executing came from HGP, along with much support during the conference in such areas as Registration.

The first of this series occurred late in March, 2009, about 7 weeks following Charles Darwin's 200th birthday. The conference was at Portland State University, and attracted about 125 people.

The second of this series was to be held in the Greater Seattle area, but low registration caused it to be cancelled. Seattle's free-thought community is much more fractured than Oregon's, and in spite of them holding 4 joint events a year, with each group taking the lead and others providing much support, we couldn't get enough people registered in time.

The third program, back at Portland State at the end March of 2011, had almost 200 attendees, with Dr. P. Z. Myers as the keynote speaker.

The fourth event, with over 325 in attendance, took place at Renton Technical College, SE of Seattle, the last weekend in March, 2012. The keynote speaker was Dr. Richard Dawkins and his staff, which attracted 325 registrations.

The proposed fifth event, back at Portland State, did not occur, again due to low registrations and other factors. The main planner (the name tag read "Exalted Grand Poobah") was out of the country for over three months the winter before the event, and the cost was noticeably higher, mostly to respond to earlier concerns mentioned in previous evaluations. The proposed cost for the event was between \$90 and \$150, depending on student status or meal options, the highest cost for non-students with a full meal package.

The organizers elected at that point not to continue these events, as each one takes about six months of full time work: 1,000 plus hours.

Darwin Day

From the newsletter, February, 2012

This year HGP will again greet unsuspecting passers-by with a piece of cake and some words of wisdom from Charles Darwin on Sunday, February 12 from 12noon to 3pm.

We'll be at the Broadway corner of Pioneer Square, wearing birthday hats, blowing kazoos, and greeting passengers coming

off the MAX trains all in the name of Darwin. Come by after our regular Sunday meeting and join in the celebration!

This is the first notice of such an event in the newsletter.

From the newsletter, March, 2012

HGP, along with our sister in Humanism, CFI, celebrated Darwin Day (Sunday February 12), by passing out cake to folks at Pioneer Square. We had a wonderful time, letting people know about Darwin, evolution, Humanism, and scientific inquiry.

We had 5 big sheet cakes, and didn't come back with a single piece! We kept it light, with birthday hats, kazoos, streamers- everything for a great birthday party! Thanks to all who helped.

From the newsletter, February, 2013

No one volunteered to lead the Darwin Day effort for 2013, so we had no participation in such an event that year.

From the newsletter, February, 2014

On our last scheduled Planning Sunday, a number of people wanted a Sunday where they could just sit down and have a pleasant chat over food with their fellow HGP members. Well, we listened! On Sunday, February 9, please bring a potluck dish to feed 6-8 folks, brunchy dishes please!

Laurent Beauregard will do a short presentation on Darwin, and the rest of our regular HGP session will be eating, mingling and debating- all of the things that HGP members excel at!

From the newsletter, April, 2014

We did much the same thing-- a potluck, rather than a program, on Easter.

Humanist Symposium on Epigenetics

From the newsletter, January, 2015

A second Humanist Symposium on Epigenetics is being planned for 11 April 2015. Stay tuned for details.

The only articles about the first such conference were early 2014: here they are.

From the newsletter, January, 2014

Thanks also to Del Allen for copies of *The Epigenetics Revolution* and *Epigenetics: How Environment Shapes Genes*. These books will be the focus of the epigenetics conference scheduled for this spring.

From the newsletter, April, 2014

The schedule and a registration form for the 2014 Free-thought Epigenetics Conference, scheduled for April 5 (are on the HGP web site).

Regional Free-thought Picnic

The free-thought groups in the area (Portland down to Corvallis) planned a Regional Free-thought Picnic at Champoeg Park, south of Portland and just west of I-5, for Saturday, August 28, 2004. We aren't quite sure why, but the only people attending were from HGP.

Secular Summer Picnic

From the newsletter, July, 2012

Saturday, July 14, 2012, 11:00 AM at Laurelhurst Park in the SW corner of park.

HGP Organizer: Anne Henderson invites anyone and everyone who shares our vision of a secular society based on humanist values to a secular summer picnic put on by our friends at CFI.

This is a potluck Please RSVP to Anne Henderson.

Day of Reason

Thanks to the persistence of HGP past-President Gerald Gage and the attention and cooperation of State Representative Carolyn Tomei, Governor John Kitzhaber has declared the summer solstice, June

21st, 2002, as (the first) Day of Reason.

Mayor Vera Katz has followed suit, and issued a proclamation that June 21, 2001, the summer solstice, the longest day of the year, is to be declared in Portland a DAY OF REASON.

From the newsletter, July, 2005

Pat Burnet Addresses Oregon House of Representatives on June 21, Oregon Day of Reason

A number of HGP members traveled to the Oregon Capitol June 21 to hear Pat Burnet's convocation at the start of the day's session of the Oregon House. Orchestrated mainly by Gerry Gage and Rep. Carolyn Tomei, Oregon Day of Reason has been declared by the governor for several years now. Pat read the Day of Reason proclamation, signed by Gov. Kulongoski, and encouraged legislators to use reason when balancing the various social pressures in order to craft the best laws for our state.

From the Newsletter, spring, 2006

This is the fifth year that June 21 has been proclaimed Oregon Day of Reason. As the longest day of the year in our state, the Summer Solstice is appropriate for reflecting on reason: shining light on the world helps us better discern the truth. Humanists enthusiastically endorse the celebration of the Day of Reason.

Portland Coalition of Reason

From Dave DiNucci, the CoR Regional Coordinator.

On June 28th, 2010, HGP and several other non-theist groups in the Portland area convened to form the Portland Coalition of Reason, or Portland CoR for short. That formation was suggested by a national group called the United Coalition of Reason (United CoR), headed by Fred Edwards, formerly of the AHA, and catalyzed with an offer that if we would form this local coalition, United CoR would provide a website, an advertising campaign to make our presence known, and some help in getting Greg Epstein, a well-known humanist, to give a talk in Portland regarding his new book, "Good without God".

Thirteen local groups accepted that offer, and United CoR made

good on its end by putting ads onto 10 TriMet buses from Nov 16th to Dec 13th, and Greg Epstein spoke at Reed College on Nov 19th. The bus ads read "Are you good without God? Millions are!" along with the Portland CoR's website address, www.PortlandCoR.org.

The formation of this coalition was not without controversy -- partly by design. United CoR's knew from experience that much of the local CoR's exposure would come for free as a result of local press covering the ads, and they were likely right: Links to coverage by virtually all of the local media can now be found on the Press page of the CoR website.

But controversy has also come from within. One effect of collecting groups with common traits has been to magnify our minor differences in focus, terminology or traditions.

For example, we have found a unifying adjective acceptable to all groups only by watering down terms like "humanism" or "atheism" into "non-theism," but Humanists who wish to primarily focus on or identify with some trait other than their non-theism may wonder whether membership in a coalition based on that theme is wrong-headed from the outset.

While working together on the ad campaign, the group representatives in the area have come to know each other, and this familiarity and the combined mailing list among the reps has made it easy to share information and garner cooperation among like-minded groups. Moreover, an often-expressed HGP wish of having a combined calendar for pertinent local events held by groups other than HGP has now been achieved on the PortlandCoR.org website.

Local reporters have also apparently found the CoR website a convenient location to find sources for stories benefiting from a non-theist perspective.

HGP members interested in getting information to or from Portland CoR should contact our CoR representatives Robert Sanford (HGP) or Sue Nunn (PAHM). Other groups represented within the CoR are: Atheist and Agnostic (A+) Forum at PSU; CFI Portland and its components Beaverton Atheist Meetup (BAM), Secular Parenting Meetup (SPM), and Secular Humanists of East Portland Meetup (SHEP); The Flying Spaghetti Monster Meetup (FSM); The City of Portland's FAASHN affinity group; Kol Shalom; Recovering from

Religion™ meetup; Reed Secular Alliance; and United States Atheists.

Film Festival

Editor's Footnote: This is the first notice I've yet seen about the Film Festival. It's from the September, 2011 newsletter.

Marsha Abelman reported on the Portland Humanist Film Festival. She met with Sherry Hansen last week and discussed the progress the two groups are making (CFI, the sponsor of the Festival and HGP, the contributor). The Film Festival is completely run by volunteers and more will be needed in the fall to advertise the event. There will be a volunteer informational meeting August 27 for all interested in helping the Festival be a success.

From the April, 2012 newsletter.

Portland Humanist Film Festival. Sylvia Brenner of CFI came to talk about the film festival.

Nancy Pappas moved that we spend the budgeted amount of \$1000 and take the remaining \$1000 out of savings.

Editor's Footnote: The person most responsible for the film festival was Sherry Hansen, a member of both HGP and CFI. Our support was mostly financial, in exchange for some naming rights and being able to have a table with HGP literature at the festival site.

Paraphrased from the August, 2012 newsletter.

John Lutz reported that there were starts and stops in the festival planning. Sylvia Benner is now heading up the effort, so things are moving again. The dates are changed to October 26, 27, and 28.

Faithless Feminist

From the August, 2015 newsletter.

One of our members, Karen Garst, has started a new blog at faithlessfeminist.com. The blog will feature posts about women and

religion. She is seeking people who would like to write posts about this topic. You can email her at karen@faithlessfeminist.com if you are interested.

Growing Pains

Committees

There is a note in the July, 1999 newsletter that we have 11 standing committees, in an organization that had 75 members.

In the 2015 State of the Chapter report, we have 12 active committees and 5 inactive committees for 165 members.

Executive Officer

Around the spring of 2000, we were growing rapidly, and wanted to try to accomplish more than we might just using volunteers. Two or three long term members hired one of the members, Joan Binninger, to be the Executive Officer, at a rate of \$20 per hour.

These were the specific duties:

Prepare a list of organizations (including contact person, address and phone number) that provide funding to our type of organization (or programs associated with HGP such as counseling services) to present at the June board meeting.

Write a formal letter of introduction to all appropriate organizations in the immediate area signed by the president.

It didn't work out at all, unfortunately, but (of course) it took some months to realize the problem, and then longer to deal with it.

The president at this time was Brad Boston, and his wife Elisa was the secretary. Pat Burnet, one of our Humanist Officiants, had married them, and in that process they became members and then Board Members. We also had a Board Member named Laurie Knightly, who had a long history of volunteering and community activism.

At a previous board meeting minutes that should have been taken were not, as the secretary had a fussy new-born, and had missed many of the critical discussion points about the Executive Officer position and the concern about the quality of the work she was (or was not) producing.

At a subsequent board meeting, a couple of months later, the missing information was proving crucial to establishing a time line, and Laurie Knightly got pretty aggressive toward the president, who promptly resigned, leaving Steve Jacobs, the new First Vice President, as President.

After a lengthy and painful process, Joan Binninger was relieved of her duties as the Executive Officer, probably by September or October of 2000.

At about this time, we had 76 paid members with a few more needing to renew.

By Laws

Partly driven by the Executive Officer mess, and partly because that problem shone a bright light on our need for legally defensible and more precise by-laws, Steve Jacobs and Robert Sanford invested a lot of time in a new set of by-laws, working with a pro-bono attorney from a large Portland law firm, as well as pulling some sections from the OR Secretary of State's web site.

As you might imagine, it took many months of discussion trying to get a set of bylaws that matched our particular actions and operations, as well being legally protective (especially after the Executive Officer situation) for the chapter and, in parallel and separately, its Board Members.

Since this effort began, in late 2000, there have been many different approaches to the by-laws. There were committees to edit and reshape the by-laws, new presidents wanted to work on this as their legacy to the chapter, and etc., sometimes even prompting resignations.

From the newsletter, December, 2006

At the November 5th meeting, the Board authorized a Bylaws Committee with the following membership: David Grover, Dick Hewitt, Helen Hewitt, Jordis Jensen (facilitator), Carole Kellogg, John Kellogg, Joanne Reutiman, and Ed Rogalin.

Recognizing that the current HGP bylaws are no longer adequate for a growing organization, this committee will write new bylaws that:

- * provide a framework for the procedures that the organization needs to function smoothly;
- * provide structure and consistency for a growing organization;
- * plan for contingencies that HGP may face in the future;
- address specific topics that are missing from the current bylaws.

New Newsletter Editor

Pete Barkett had been the newsletter editor for a dozen or so years, not only writing the content, but printing it at his own expense and distributing it as well.

He was the one who began writing the President's Report in the newsletter every month, a policy we have mostly honored ever since.

At one point, there was a smallish dispute between a couple of members; one wanted more discussions at the Sunday Meetings and the other wanted more speakers. One of them wrote a long Letter to the Editor which Pete published, and the following month he published the rejoinder.

Shortly after that, he included a series of light verse (could have been limericks) that contained a couple of items (perhaps only individual words) of somewhat questionable taste.

A couple of people thought that such content did not reflect well on the chapter, even though there was hardly any circulation outside our group, so Pete was asked to become the publisher, rather than the editor.

Early Pre-program Music

Starting in about _____ Linda Pritchard, a long-time member and part of the Program Committee, and an accomplished pianist, thought it might be pleasurable for early-arriving audience members at Sunday Meetings to have some background music.

She started playing the piano regularly, until one member asked publicly and somewhat pointedly, what music had to do with Humanism or even Humanist meetings.

So she stopped playing, and the 40-60 rest of us, who enjoyed the music, all lost out on a lovely addition to the Sunday Meetings until Lenora Warren began the First Sunday programs somewhat later. Fittingly, Linda Pritchard played during some of those musical interludes.

Majoring in Minors

Editor's Footnote: The long-time president of the Humanists of North Puget Sound observed that many Humanists are infuriatingly capable of what he called "majoring in minors," by which he meant sometimes substantial pickiness about miniscule details that in the long run prevent or discourage progress in more important areas.

In our own chapter, a new member once volunteered to assist with the breakfast before one of our annual meetings. She arrived early, and began setting out the entrees and serving pieces. Before she was done, someone came along and realigned all the handles of the spoons in the entrée dishes.

How many more times did that person volunteer, and what was the message to her about helping out?

In Memorium

Some of the special HGP members who we have lost include

Sam Karr 11/08/03

Newspaper columnist and, for a while, our chief raconteur and story teller.

Wonderful writer, and a person with a delightful sense of humor. His columns were titled, "Over the Hill and Enjoying the View."

Here's a part of the introduction Sam wrote for an HGP program he didn't get to live long enough to present.

"In 'retirement,' he is in his 6th year of column-writing for three

Valley Times newspapers, has conducted a Great Books program, is a long-time member of a creative writing group, and has deconstructed Shakespeare, Socrates, Hitler, Columbus, the Duke of Windsor, and Boris Yeltsin for the Humanists and the Senior Studies Institute.

Jane Williams -- 10/4/04

Jane was very generous to us in her will, giving a substantial sum to the Building Fund.

She was a well-born (raised Catholic) woman from the East Coast who lived a life of privilege on Park Avenue, went to Barnard College, and was the secretary to the publisher of the New York Times.

She came here in 1945, following her new husband, a CPA. Her 25-year long community service (a strong part of her life), was giving 1300 sex education talks to 15,000 members of community and school groups, often bringing along "marital aids" to break the ice with her audiences. She was known around town as "The Rubber Lady," as she strongly urged the use of condoms, and not "for the prevention of disease only."

At age 85, she started giving her talks at homeless teen shelters.

Editor's Footnote: She told me once she was having a little bit of a problem establishing rapport with people 70 years younger than she was. I suggested she start by asking them how many times they'd had sex. She should then tell them she'd had sex about 3,000 times and perhaps there might be some aspects of sex that she could share some wisdom on.

Fred Moser May 1, 2006

Frederic William Moser, who for many years was an active member of HGP, died in Portland on May 1, 2006 following a fall at his apartment building. During the time HGP met in the Northwest Academy building Fred was at the door to greet everyone who entered. Ultimately his hearing became so impaired that he was unable to participate in most social situations and he stopped attending meetings of the HGP.

Fred was in the Navy during the Korean War, and graduated from the US Naval Hospital Corps School. Following his discharge he attended North Park College and Theological Seminary in Chicago. During this time he worked as a vicar in a Catholic church. He was a serious student of religion and intended a career in religious work until, as he put it, "I saw the light" and became a humanist. For many years he owned and operated a furniture store. He was well informed regarding problems affecting humanity in this world, and was committed to efforts to alleviate those problems. One-third of his financial assets were left to the HGP.

Fred was one of the original Sunday Meeting organizational planners (along with Del Allen and Gerry Gage).

Most of the early Sunday Meeting attendees have some pretty amazing Fred Mosher stories.

Fred gave a third of his estate to the chapter, and was among the most regular donors during the year.

Sid Lezak

Long-time HGP member Sid Lezak passed away in April 2006. Although in his 80's, his full schedule did not allow him to be an active member.

However, in April of last year he spoke to our group about his extensive work in resolution, arbitration, and mediation, a field he entered after many years as a prosecutor, having been nominated by President Kennedy as U.S. Attorney for Oregon.

Sid called himself a Jewish atheist who escaped from his conservative Jewish background, but he remained culturally attached to his roots. His secret for looking good and staying active: Keep moving! Sid Lezak was a distinguished Humanist, and his work for justice, for fairness, and for equity will long be felt. Our sympathies and thoughts are with his wife, Muriel (also an HGP member), and their children and grandchildren.

Ann Rushing Summer, 2006

There will be a memorial service for Ann Rushing on Sunday, Sept. 10th, 2006, at Friendly House immediately following our HGP program. We'll have a short break for those departing the

regular meeting to leave and for those staying to regroup for the service.

Leon Weiner July, 2007

Leon came to us from Chicago, where he'd been a member of the Ethical Culture Society. He'd had to go to work right out of high school, and after he retired, he started auditing classes at the University of Chicago. He took a class or two a quarter for ten years, amassing the equivalent of 200 credits, more than one would need for a Bachelor's degree.

After one Sunday Meeting, at a luncheon, he expressed an interest in programs about poetry. Subsequently, over two winters, 2008 and 2009, one program a month for four months on how to read and understand poetry was given, and proved to be very popular.

Leon joined HGP in February of 2005 and was an active member from the start. He attended most Sunday meetings and worked to try to bring technology in to assist the hearing impaired - a disability that slowed him down only a little.

As a member of the HGP Book Club, Leon came to the meetings prepared with research he had done about the author and the topic of the monthly selection. He was extremely well read and could discuss a wide variety of topics. Most importantly, Leon was always upbeat, friendly and a valued member of our group. He will certainly be missed.

Mary Ann Gage March, 2009

A vital member since their move from Rickreall, OR to Portland in April of 1995, both Gerry and Mary Ann were significant in adding energy, ideas, and leadership to the chapter.

Carl Pearson

Kathy Wenzler

Dick Hewitt

Ruth Curry March, 2014

Ruth Curry was one of our foremost fighting women: fighting for fairness, peace, and justice.

From the June, 2005 newsletter, here's an account by Amy Mase of the Elders in Action awards night, when Ruth was recognized as a Timeless Treasure.

Ruth Curry Honored

What a thrill it was to be one of nearly 300 attendees who spontaneously stood and cheered the honoree at a recent banquet/fund raiser to benefit Elders in Action, a powerful voice advocating for the rights and welfare of local seniors.

She has been and continues to be an active HGP member, despite nearly reaching her ninth decade. You may have guessed it. She is none other than our own **Ruth Curry**, an amazing role model for us all. If you don't know her well, you will want to.

As Eric Erickson describes the highest stage of development, she, in my opinion, has reached the top of the pyramid : a self-actualizer. And the especially impressive quality about her is that she never tries to impress others. She is humble, modest, never championing herself, but championing a cause to dignify the lives of the vulnerable. A true humanist.

For example, when she told me about this event, she didn't say a word about her being the honoree this year, and would receive the 2005 Timeless Treasure Award. So, after I arrived at the large banquet hall, I began to understand the scope of the event. I scanned the 14 page "Timeless Treasure," brochure * in which her picture and the listing of her many achievements were given. I then saw this delightful woman go forward to receive her engraved gold plaque/clock. I was so thrilled for her.

I stood clapping and shouting "Bravo," with all the many members and friends of Elders in Action. Since she is "one of us," I thought you'd want to share in her most deserved moment of glory, even if you're not a senior. Remember, some day you will be, reaping the benefits of her efforts and others like her.

From the May, 2014 newsletter,

Our good friend, Ruth Curry, one of our long time HGP members, died peacefully of natural causes on Sunday morning, March 10.

We are having a memorial for her after our regular Sunday meeting, May 4 from 12 noon to 2:30pm. Many of our HGP family will want to share their memories of Ruth, and this will be the time. Many of Ruth's non-HGP friends will be there also, sharing. We will present a slide show of Ruth's life. There will be chamber music, food and drink, all to celebrate this great woman's life.

Carole Kellogg

February, 2010

“She died quite some time ago, but deserves to be remembered for pouring her energies into trying to get a children's program (later named “Carole's Kids”) started at HGP almost to the very end of her life. I remember her as bright, sunny, and a great speaker.” She was especially effective introducing our weekly speakers.

Annie Tuppan

From Lenora Warren

My dear friend Annie Tuppan died at 75 in April, 2014. She and I became close after meeting at Suicide bereavement support group after she lost her second husband and I had lost my son. She was beautiful, charming, and French. She met a GI in Paris when young and came to the U.S., settling in Southern California and having two children, Tanya and Erik. The marriage ended in divorce.

Annie and her second husband, John Tuppan, had a wonderful life traveling to exotic romantic destinations around the world. Annie lived in Portland her few last years to be near her daughter's family and help care for granddaughters Chenoa and Paloma. Annie's daughter Tanya Prather is married to Steve Siegel, son of HGP member Rolland Siegel. Annie's philosophy fit right in with the Humanist viewpoint, and she also brought longtime California friend Joan Weed into the HGP fold. Annie was a gracious hostess and

loved to socialize. And she adored anyone who would sing the French National Anthem to her. In French.

Mary Ann Siegel

Mary Ann Siegel was an HGP member for a short time before she became disabled and home bound. She made an impression on several of us women, and we continued a deep friendship with her and often visited at her pleasant apartment on NW Flanders. She was always cheerful and never complained about her illness. Mary Ann had known many interesting people and she shared her life experiences with us. We looked forward to taking food and wine and cooking dinner and sharing stories with her. She died in hospice a few years ago.

Rodney L. Crislip January, 2012

Rod Crislip, 80, died at his home January 5. To quote from his instructions: "I would like a notice in the paper saying that those who might ordinarily attend a memorial service for me take a specified half day off and devote it to being nice to someone they love or doing something charitable or doing something they enjoy, in my memory."

Helen Worrall May, 2012

At one time, we were lucky enough to have four Helens regularly attending Sunday Meetings: Helen Christens, Helen Hewitt, Helen Lipscomb, and Helen Worrall.

Helen Worrall, by far the eldest in the group, was lovely, lively, and also bordered on delightfully outrageous. She was almost always dressed in haute couture purple, lavished with jewelry, and crowned often by great hats.

She was raised on a Wyoming ranch and taught school in rural schools there, then moved to Portland in 1963. After her 1969 divorce, she became interested in sailing; renting sailboats, then buying her own sailboat at the age of 70. She was a lover of the arts, a painter, private pilot, world traveler, and a bon vivant. Her close friends from the Humanists enjoyed lovely luncheons she gave at her downtown apartment before her health

forced her to move to assisted living at Calaroga Tower, where she lived for a few years..

She traveled often, and at one point, tried to meet me (Editor) in Istanbul, though her cruise ship sailed the day before I arrived.

She was feisty, elegant, sparkling, and intelligent: and appreciated a racy story or anecdote as much as a teenager, though with far greater class.

Her memorial service, at a restaurant near the Northwest Academy, attracted a standing-room only crowd, including her friends, family, and several Humanists.

She left the chapter a generous bequest in her will. Helen died at the age of 93.

Robert Upton

August, 2015

Gerry Gage

February, 2016

Gerry Gage died recently, following a hospitalization for a heart attack.

Gerry's wife, Mary Ann Gage, died in March of 2009; she was an important chapter member in the time before the Sunday Meetings began in April of 1998.

They moved to Portland in April, 1995 and joined HGP. Gerry was the President of the chapter for a couple of years in the mid-1990s, was a co-instigator of the Sunday Meeting, and wrote many book reviews (and rants) for the Monthly Newsletter.

He helped shape the chapter for 20 years, until ill health and infirmity mandated he no longer attend meetings.

Few other members have played such a strong and wise role in creating, shaping, and energizing our chapter.