



AHA Chapter

THE NEWSLETTER OF

# The HUMANIST ASSOCIATION of CENTRAL CONNECTICUT

June 2000



ASHS Affiliate

## Richard Feynman

This month's speaker at the regular meeting of the Humanist Association will be our President, Rev. Douglas Peary, presenting the latest of his very popular "Humanist Heroes" series of talks.

Perhaps best remembered for his demonstration of o-ring failure during the Challenger inquiry, Feynman is now considered one of the most lucid scientific educators of the twentieth century. His books, and videotapes of his lectures, are a common feature of popular scientific magazines.

Doug's talk will take us beyond the bare essentials of Feynman's life, and give us some of the flavor of the man's philosophy.

Bring a friend and come learn

## Calendar of Events

### JUNE

- |          |  |           |
|----------|--|-----------|
| Mon., 19 | Monthly meeting at USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike.<br>Coffee and conversation.                              | 7:30 p.m. |
|          | Main program: Doug Peary will present "Richard Feynman, Humanist Hero."                                  | 8:00 p.m. |
| Fri., 30 | Humanist Conversations at 700 Hartford Turnpike.<br>A discussion of Asimov's autobiography, "I, Asimov." | 7:30 p.m. |
| Note:    | There will be no board meeting in June   |           |

### JULY

- |         |  |           |
|---------|--|-----------|
| Sun., 2 | Annual picnic at the Raffords' home in Middlebury. | 12 noon   |
| Sun., 9 | Board meeting at USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike.      | 1:30 p.m. |
| TBA     | Humanist Conversations at 700 Hartford Turnpike.   | 7:30 p.m. |

### AUGUST

- |          |   |           |
|----------|---|-----------|
| Mon., 21 | Monthly meeting at USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike.<br>Coffee and conversation.     | 7:30 p.m. |
|          | Program: Manny Ratafia will present "Alternative Medicine: One Man, Two Views." | 8:00 p.m. |
| Sun., 27 | Board meeting at USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike.                                   | 1:30 p.m. |
| TBA      | Humanist Conversations at 700 Hartford Turnpike.                                | 7:30 p.m. |

about the real Richard Feynman on Monday, June 19. The evening will begin at 7:30 p.m. with

a half-hour of coffee and conversation; Doug will speak at 8:00.

## July Picnic Directions

Our main activity for July will be the annual picnic, to be held again at the lovely home of Dr. Bob and Ms. Joan Rafford, 57 Clearview Knoll Rd., Middlebury. The day is Sunday, July 2, rain or shine. Hours are 12 noon to 4 p.m. Please bring outdoor chairs with you. We'll have hot dogs and cold drinks; anything else, you can bring. If you need directions call the Raffords at (203) 758-9798. The house is off route 64 near

intersection of routes 63 and 64, just west of Waterbury. The nearest expressway junction is exit 17 off I-84.

*From the New Haven area:*

Take Rte. 8 north to I-84 and go west to Exit 17. From the exit go straight ahead (west) on Rte. 64 to the stoplight...

*From the Stamford area:*

Take Rte. 7 north to I-84 and go east to Exit 17. At the exit turn left onto Rte. 63, go to the next light (Rte. 64), and turn left

again onto Rte. 64...

*From the junction of Rte. 64 with Rte. 63:*

Head west on Rte. 64 less than one mile, passing through one more stoplight. If you pass a gas station you have gone too far. On the right, look for the Tzepos Law Firm sign. At that sign, turn right onto Clearview Knoll Road and drive to the top of the hill. #57 is on the left. Park in the driveway (2 cars wide) or on the street.

### MEMBERSHIP DUES

Adult . . . . . \$35  
 Family . . . . . \$50  
 In cases of financial hardship, the association may waive the membership fee. The membership year runs from 1/1 to 12/31.

### Officers

President Douglas Peary  
 president@cthumanist.org  
 Vice-President Manny Ratafia  
 Secretary June Schafer  
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### Committee Chairs

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### Newsletter

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The deadline for each issue is three weeks prior to the monthly meeting. The editor would like to thank everyone who contributed to this issue.

## Dine With Us

Watch this space for an invitation to Dinner in July. We are actively seeking suitable locations in lower Fairfield county, the New London area and the Hartford area. Do you know a restaurant with good food, reasonable prices, and a private room? Please call Carol Stone at (203) 264-8546 (or e-mail editor@cthumanist.org) with the name and phone number of the restaurant.

Alternative suggestions welcome. If a group of people think pot luck is not too much work, for example, we'll try it.

## Humanist Conversations

The next Humanist Conversation will be on Friday, June 30, at 7:30 p.m. We will meet, as usual, at the Unitarian Society, 700 Hartford Turnpike, Hamden. Such a good time was had at the May meeting when we ordered out for Chinese we will order from Blessings II again.

Manny Ratafia recommended Isaac Asimov's nonfiction writings as a topic, along with a video of one of his speeches.

Although there isn't any "required" reading for this discussion, Manny has suggested a few (short) chapters from Asimov's delightful autobiography, his second, "I, Asimov" (New York: Doubleday, 1994, ISBN 0-385-041701-2; likely available at most public libraries).

This autobiography was written at the urging of his second wife, Janet. She suggested he start from the beginning, not giving "unending details," but the "general sweeps" and his reaction to it. Asimov was reluctant, believing that he was no deep philosopher and that no one would want to read the thoughts of an old, dying man. But after writing only a few pages, he realized that he did indeed want to write the book, since, after all, his favorite topic about which to write was himself.

The chapters in the book are from two to six pages in length and cover various topics along with personal details. Those topics that could supply material for our discussion are (with pages cited from the 1994 edition):

- Chapter 5: Religion, p. 11-14
- Chapter 6: My name, p. 15-18
- Chapter 7: Anti-Semitism, p. 19-23
- Chapter 105: The bible, p. 322-324
- Chapter 107: Death, p. 325-331
- Chapter 106: Life after death, p. 331-334
- Chapter 151: Humanists, p. 498-500

I recommend reading even more of the book than these few chapters. Asimov's ironic and sometimes self-deprecating humor is engaging and, as he might have put it, charming.

For more information, call Mickey Koth at (203) 498-8333 (or e-mail mkoth@snet.net). Thanks to Manny Ratafia for suggesting the topic and recommending the specific chapters of the book.

## **Humanist Professional Directory**

To add your listing (free to members) call Carol Stone at (203) 264-8546 or e-mail editor@cthumanist.org.

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### **Northeast Professional Genealogy**

Dr. Robert L. Rafford  
Professional Genealogist  
27 years of experience  
Phone (203) 758-9798  
Fax (203) 577-2484  
rob raff@snet.net  
www.FamilyTreeDoctor.com

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### **HACC Humanist Services**

Humanist services to mark all of life's major events.  
Douglas Peary  
Phone (860) 644-8812.

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### **Wild N'Oats**

Celtic/World/Folk Quartet  
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mkoth@snet.net  
Phone (203) 498-8333  
Kasha Breau  
harpplayer@worldnet.att.net  
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### **Avon**

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Carol Stone  
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### **Web Hosting**

Reasonable rates for unlimited traffic, small sites.  
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sales@elirion.com

## **New Location for New London Group Meeting!**

The next meeting of the New London discussion group is scheduled for Saturday, June 3, at 10 a.m. It will be at the home of George and Paula Marcus in Noank, rather than the usual Mystic Noank Library.

There has been much public discussion about the World bank and the IMF. For the benefit of those of us that are not fully aware of the implications of the financing and lending operations of those entities, and the ethics involved, Helen Hall has volunteered to provide some enlightenment. She has studied the topic and surely will be able to give us some valuable insights for discussion.

For directions and/or further information call George or Paula Marcus at (860) 572-9188.

## **SNET Community Connections**

We're pleased to announce that the Association's application to join the SNET Community Connections program was approved. This means that members who are SNET All Distance customers can support the Association at no extra cost. The Association's organization number is 3057.

SNET has a history of community involvement. For example, SNET donated a \$30,000 astronomical observatory to the Naugatuck Valley Community College in 1984.

The Community Connections program, which started in 1996, allows All Distance customers to designate one enrolled organization to receive 5% of the customer's long distance bill.

If you are an SNET All Distance customer, we encourage you to please take advantage of their scheme on behalf of some worthy organization. Why let this money go to the shareholders?

If you are aware of a non-profit organization that is not enrolled in Community Connections and which could advance humanistic ideals, please encourage them to enter the program.

You can sign up or get more information by calling SNET at 1-800-635-7638 or visiting the Community Connections page (<http://www.snet.com/About/0,1847,22,00.html>) on the SNET web site. More details about the scheme are in the enclosed brochure.

One last time, the Association's organization number is 3057.

## **Help!**

Could you spare half an hour a month?

We need to know if our press releases are appearing in your local paper. Please contact June Schafer, chair of our publicity committee, at (203) 281-6232 to report which paper you can watch and she'll let you know what to watch for and when to expect it.

Our web site:  
[www.cthumanist.org](http://www.cthumanist.org)