

The Hoosier Humanist

Herald

FreeThought Fort Wayne, Inc. Newsletter

Volume 2, Issue 3

Message from the President

I'm baaaaack! Yup, but just temporarily. Thought I would just tell you one of my true life stories. Let me tell you about one of my misguided attempts to fly. I had the good fortune to never have had to mow a lawn until the spring of 2006 when I rented a duplex. I asked around and eventually bought a decent self-propelled gas mower. I liked being outdoors in the spring and the smell of fresh cut grass was beckoning, so I was excited. The day arrived and I was psyched. I fill up the gas tank, wheel my shiny, bright red, spanking new mower out of the garage, pull, pull, pull the starter cord and the engine roars to life. In fact, it makes so much noise that I just *know* that all my neighbors are looking out their windows watching the novice mow her first lawn.

I next pull the self-propel lever back to the handle and “*whoosh*,” off we went. By “we,” I mean the mower with me hanging on for dear life, legs pumping wildly like a cartoon character’s legs spinning like a windmill. We charged across the driveway, cut a diagonal swath across the front lawn, continued over the sidewalk and onto the tree lawn when I realized that if I didn’t want to be dragged into the street by this feckless 5.75 horsepower machine that seemed determined to have me killed by a heart attack or being run over by a passing car, I had to let go of the handle and let that damned mower run off into lawn mower limbo land—without me.



In the end, the lawn got mowed, in fits and starts, over the course of the next hour. Apparently, I'm a slow lawn mower learner because it took me a good while to find that sweet spot on the self-propel lever where I could walk comfortably without pin-wheeling around the yard panting like a dog. I finished the yard sweaty, having an asthma attack, and satisfied that at least my humiliation was worth it because the lawn was mowed. Then, it rained--for three straight days. The grass was ankle high and I soon learned that wet lawn and lawn mowing yields green, grass covered legs and permanently green socks!

Karen Mizner, Former President of FTFW

FTFW CafePress Shop

The [CafePress storefront](#) for getting your own piece of FTFW merchandise is now open! We have a number of shirts/hoodies and stickers/buttons/magnets/signs currently available, with more products to come! FTFW gets a small commission from each purchase, so we greatly appreciate your contribution!

Karen's Corner

As we approach Pi (Pie) Day, may I present a color morph of a Ball Python:



PI - - BALD

Karen Mizner, Former President of FTFW

Cargo Ship Pollution



Did you know that cargo ships pollute our oceans and produce more carbon emissions than most countries? In fact, nine of ten goods of all types are shipped halfway around the world on board freighter ships that are some of the biggest and dirtiest machines on our planet. It has been estimated that just one of these huge ships, whose length can be 600-780 yards, can produce as much sulfur oxide pollutants as 50 million cars! The emissions from just 15 of these mega ships match those of all the cars in the world.

How many cargo ships are there in the world? Good question. Here is the breakdown of the largest types, [as of January 2018](#).

General Cargo Ships	17,000
Bulk Cargo Carriers	11,380
Crude Oil Tankers	7,400
Container Ships	<u>5,150</u>
Total	40,930

Now, *that* represents a **lot** of pollution. So what's to be done? A group of researchers and environmentalists have encouraged ships to sail at slower speeds. The group has also worked to help companies find a new way to make money. Ultimately, they would like to do away with the need to burn oil to transport goods overseas with an end goal of using green, renewable energy to propel ships. These groups want to reduce emissions 50% by 2050. It is unlikely that anything will change without regulation, which will be dependent on how much pressure is put on the industry.

Karen Mizner, Former President of FTFW

Amazon Smile



Do you make purchases on Amazon? Did you know that FreeThought Fort Wayne is now a charitable organization listed on Amazon Smile? Simply use the link on the Amazon Smile logo above or look up the charity, "American Humanist Association," in New Haven, IN (on Amazon Smile) to have Amazon contribute 0.5% of your Amazon purchase (at no cost to you!) to FTFW. You can also find a link to contribute to [our Amazon Smile](#) on the FTFW website under the "Stores" menu.

Annual Membership Renewal



NOW is the time And we want YOU!

**Yes, it's our annual member renewal time
Please renew your membership dues by going to**

<https://www.freethoughtfw.org/becoming-a-member/>

**There are lots of membership options
Including becoming a "Monthly Steward"**

OR

Just see a FTFW Board Member at any meet up.



Letter to the Editor and Newsletter Submissions

**Have a story to tell?
Have something to say?
Want to write a letter to the editor?**

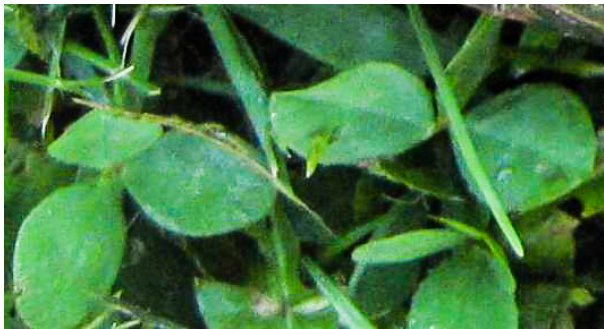


Put your thinking cap on, grab your laptop and pen an article for the "Hoosier Humanist Herald" monthly newsletter. Just 200-300 words and you can be published writer! Submissions due by the 16th of each month. Submissions may be edited for length and content.

Send submissions to: fortwayneaha@gmail.com

Here's your chance! Have an idea for our group? Have a question for us? Have you experienced frustrations as a non-believer? Do people question you about what Humanism means? Just want to vent a bit? Have a funny story to share? Have a question for our Celebrant, Victoria Gipson? The Hoosier Humanist Herald committee will do its best to respond to your concerns. Submit your letter via e-mail to fortwayneaha@gmail.com with the subject line of "Letter to the Editor" or "Ask a Celebrant," then watch for a response in our next month's newsletter! Alternatively, if you wish to discuss current events or an interesting article, feel free to submit your thoughts as an article in the newsletter! Please note that submissions may be edited for clarity and space (200-300 words).

St. Patrick's Day



Even though this yearly celebration is based on the life of a real priest, some of his deeds are not entirely accurate. St. Patrick is often touted as being the one responsible for driving snakes out of Ireland, even though there were never snakes on the island in the first place. However, he really did use three-leaf clovers (pictured above, the "natural" state of clovers) to represent the Holy Trinity of Christianity in his efforts to convert the majority of the island's Pagan population. But, since snakes represent evil in Christianity, such mythological tales of him removing snakes from the island only fueled his conversion efforts and confirmed his status as the patron saint of Ireland.

Although I am ~38% British/Irish myself (as determined by a "23 and Me" DNA ancestry test), I often regard this as the most personally frustrating national holiday due to its Christian origin with snake-hating themes. Snakes are often vital parts of the environments in which they live, providing crucial ecological links between the small animals (like mice) that snakes prey upon and large animals (like cats/wolves) that prey upon snakes. Snakes should be treated with respect and left alone to live their lives in the wild, not sought out, captured, and skinned alive for the entertainment of tens of thousands of people every year at rattlesnake roundups.

These events are able to persist largely due to Christians brainwashing their children into hating snakes as if they were damned incarnations of the devil, itself. Humans, as a species, do not innately fear snakes, as that fear is a learned behavior. With effort, that fear can often be unlearned, which is why I am giving a free one hour Indiana snake presentation to the Little River Wetlands Project at their "Breakfast on the Marsh" event at Indiana Wesleyan's Conference Center on Thursday, March 14, at 8:30-9:45 am. The more you know, the less you fear.

Chris Rex, Vice President of FTFW

Fort Wayne Movie Club (FWMC) Movie Buzz List

This is a new newsletter feature this month. FTFW board member, Chris Woods,

has shared his [Fort Wayne Movie Club](#) (FWMC) [Movie Buzz List](#) of movies from January through March 2019.

Upcoming Events

FTFW Monthly Board Planning Meeting

March 10, 2019 (Sunday): 1:30-3:30 pm at the Arby's on 333 E. Washington Center Rd (Fort Wayne)

Current dues-paying members are welcome to join the FTFW board of directors at their monthly planning meeting. Details can be found on our Facebook pages as well as our website calendar. This will be the first meeting with the new board members.

Third Annual Pi (Pie) Day Celebration

March 14, 2019 (Thursday): 6:30-10:00 pm at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fort Wayne (Social Hall) on 5310 Old Mill Rd

A time to celebrate 3.14, the first three digits of the irrational number, Pi, which is critically important for calculations involving circles. Come join us for a fun evening of food, prizes, and a bit of science as we talk Pi while judging and eating pie. This year, we will have two categories of food: bring either some kind of sweet pie, or a savory pie [such as pizza (pie), Shepherd's pie, pot pie, or whatever kind of main dish pie you can think of]. Vote by making a cash donation (to FTFW) to the pie(s) of your choice. The winner of each category will receive a prize. We will then watch the short video, "A Brief History of Pi," and the movie, "Green Book."

FTFW Game Night: Cards Against Humanity

March 16, 2019 (Saturday): 6:30-11:00 pm at Rick Herman's Apt on 2620 E. State Blvd, Apt. #411 (Fort Wayne)

This will be an **"ADULTS ONLY"** evening. Rick Herman has the game and is providing the venue. You bring a snack or drink to share, and your funny bone. Cards Against Humanity is a raunchy, raucous, smutty, and hilarious game for adults only...seriously! So, if that's your thing, please join us and have a fun time creating witty, weird words of questionable "wisdom" in the name of getting a laugh. Trust me, it's a hoot!

Meeting of the Minds

March 20, 2019 (Wednesday): 7:00-8:30 pm at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fort Wayne on 5310 Old Mill Rd

This is a recurring event for FTFW every month on the third Wednesday, whereby

folks get together for an open discussion on a particular topic of interest. Be sure to bring your suggested discussion topic ideas and we will vote as a group on which one(s) to talk about.

Community Harvest Food Bank Volunteering

March 23, 2019 (Saturday): 8:30-11:30 am at the Community Harvest Food Bank on 999 E. Tillman Rd (Fort Wayne)

FTFW will be helping hand out food to the needy at the Community Harvest Food Bank. We accept non-perishable foods all year long and will deliver them that day. Please keep in mind that only those who are 14+ years old can hand out food, while children 5-13 can work in the grocery store area. The first 30 minutes will be a safety talk, followed by handing out or organizing food. Please wear comfortable clothing that is weather-appropriate, including closed-toe shoes. Plastic gloves will be issued to all participants. If you own a [FTFW shirt](#), please wear it to volunteer. Please [register](#) beforehand if you wish to volunteer.

FTFW Monthly Board Meeting

March ?, 2019: 6:30-8:30 pm at TBD

Meeting day and time will be determined by the new FTFW board members. Current dues-paying members are welcome to join the FTFW board of directors at their monthly meeting. Details can be found on our Facebook pages as well as our website calendar.

Annual Meeting of FTFW Members

March 31, 2019 (Sunday): 11:00-1:00 pm at Old Crown Coffee Roasters on 6417 N. Anthony Blvd (Fort Wayne)

FTFW board members extend an invitation to all current dues-paying FTFW members to attend our annual members meeting. We will discuss 2018 events and proposed events for 2019, as well as a treasurer's report for 2018. The meeting will also be open for members to discuss concerns or ideas for FTFW, as we welcome and value your input. Please plan to attend. We want to hear from you and learn how to better serve your needs.

All the Way Film Showing

April 10, 2019 (Wednesday): 7:00-9:30 pm at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fort Wayne (Meeting House) on 5310 Old Mill Rd

This is an HBO film adaptation of Robert Schenkkan's Tony Award-winning play about the early days of Lyndon B. Johnson's presidency, from the assassination of John F. Kennedy to the battle over the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and his campaign to stay in the White House. While the act gave similar rights, like voting rights to

people of all races, it was strongly opposed, even by members of his own Democratic Party. This film is being shown jointly by the UU Humanists and FTFW in support of the upcoming Racial Studies program trip. This event is free and open to the public.

International Astronomy Day

April 27, 2019 (Saturday): ~9:00 pm (dusk) at the StarQuest Observatory on 1720 Webster Rd (New Haven)

We will join the Fort Wayne Astronomical Society at their StarQuest Observatory for a stargazing event around dusk. Their members will provide several telescopes and guide you through a tour of the visible stars in the universe. It helps to have a flashlight (or to simply use your phone's flashlight function), as it's very dark to permit better viewing of the stars. Mosquitoes can be a problem, depending on recent weather conditions, so mosquito repellent and darker clothing may both be helpful. Cologne is not recommended, as it often attracts the mosquitoes.

FTFW Reunion

April 28, 2019 (Sunday): 11:00-1:00 pm at TBD

FTFW is in its fifth year since Pearl Pfeister started our group. We would like to invite all former and current members to get together to celebrate who we are, where we've been, and where we are going. Did you know, for example, that FTFW is now an affiliate of American Atheists (AA)? Jim Helton, of Tri-State Freethinkers and member of AA, has offered his assistance to us in exploring some new opportunities as a group. Come and meet with old friends, make new friends, and share your ideas. We will have a fun time!

FTFW Annual Picnic

August 3, 2019 (Saturday): 11:00-3:00 pm at TBD

Come one; come all to FTFW's Annual Picnic, which will be a family affair for all members and their families, as well as the general public. The food/drink for this free event is provided by the guests, themselves, so please bring a dish or non-alcoholic beverage to contribute! We will have games and fun activities for everyone!



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