

The Hoosier Humanist

Herald

FreeThought Fort Wayne, Inc. Newsletter

Volume 2, Issue 4

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Message from the Vice President

As my first, and last, message as VP, I wish to provide you all with an update on the board member positions for FreeThought. As a result of my move to Muncie and my incredibly busy schedule this past year (with going through cancer treatments and recovery while teaching two classes full-time at Ball State and teaching two classes part-time at Ivy Tech), I have been relegated to a reduced role within FTFW to "Technology Director." Unfortunately, this role will not last long, as I will be moving to North Carolina in the next couple of months (as my wife got a great job opportunity that pays a lot better). I will continue to offer my input and support as long as I can and will always think positively of my time here with all of you great people!

But, let's get away from talking about myself to discuss the other changes in board member roles at FTFW. Chris Woods has opted to take the position of President Pro Tem while remaining as Secretary. Jack Humbert has accepted my old position as Vice President. Duane Thompson has accepted the role as Communications Director. Karen Mizner will act as Treasurer, with V. being the Assistant Treasurer. Victoria Gipson will become the Humanist Director. We are incredibly thankful for our new board members stepping up to the plate and for the incredible contributions made by past board members to get this organization to where it needs to be. We are always looking to improve how we can best serve you and the community. As a result of your feedback, this is the first newsletter to feature a Table of Contents to help you better navigate to the relevant section of your choosing. Enjoy!

Chris Rex, Former Vice 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

Earth Day April 22, 2019.

EARTH DAY APRIL 22, 2019



Karen Mizner, Former President of FTFW

Our Appendix



My daughter recently had an emergency appendectomy so I was curious about the appendix. Our appendix has long been thought to be a vestigial organ meaning it has no function. Physicians now understand that our appendix functions as an important part of our immune system by helping to strengthen, support, and boost the immune system of adults. It has high concentrations of immune cells within its walls and functions as a lymphoid organ helping in the maturation of lymphocyte immune “B” cells that produce antibodies which attack invading viruses, bacteria, and toxins. Immunoglobulin A (IgA) produced in the appendix is an important mucosal antibody. The appendix is also a storehouse for beneficial bacteria that assist the gut to recover from infections and help prevent further infections.

Research has shown that people who have had their appendix removed are four times more likely to have a recurrence of a bacterial infection that causes abdominal pain, diarrhea, nausea and fever. To put things into context, appendectomies (the removal of the appendix due to some complication) occur at rates of 5-20% during one’s lifetime and have resulted in ~26x higher survival rates than they were 50 years ago (input by Chris Rex, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1422654/>).

In the course of evolution, research has shown that the appendix has evolved at

least 30 times among different lineages. Even more interesting, once the appendix appeared, it was never lost. In a human fetus, the appendix starts to develop in the fifth week and is thought to help fetuses develop and it shows very rapid development early in life. During the eleventh week of fetal development, endocrine cells appear in the appendix and are responsible for producing hormones that assist with various biological control mechanisms. The appendix is at its longest in childhood and gradually diminishes in size throughout adulthood. A study has shown that a short appendix can be a colon cancer risk factor. Unfortunately, the appendix tends to become a liability in adulthood, sometimes resulting in massive inflammation (appendicitis) and its removal by a surgical operation due to lack of immune challenges, (input by Chris Rex, <https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2009/08/090820175901.htm>). That, combined with the leading thoughts on "pro-biotics," is what lends many evolutionary biologists to believe that the appendix has a very limited, if any, relevant, positive, biological function in modern-day humans and, in fact, is more a liability than not, lending credence to the idea that it is a vestigial organ (input by Chris Rex).

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.

A Time for Courage



Ronald McNair (left) and brother Carl McNair.

Carl, the older brother of NASA astronaut, Ronald McNair, told the story of an incident from his brother's childhood. They grew up in segregated South Carolina. Ron dreamed of flying airplanes one day and wanted to read books on aeronautics and science.

In 1959 Ron walked to the Lake City Public Library, laid his chosen books on the counter and said, "I want to check out these books." The librarian refused to release them and told him, "We don't circulate books to Negroes." Ron jumped onto the counter and said he wasn't leaving without the books. The librarian called police and Ron's mother, Pearl. Ron told his mother it wasn't fair. Pearl assured the librarian her son would take good care of the books.



NASA Astronaut and Physicist Ronald McNair.

Hearing all sides, one of the two police officers said, “Ahh, just let the kid check out the books.” Begrudgingly, the librarian gave in. A children’s book was written about this incident that erroneously gave the librarian the credit for advocating for Ron. I wish the children’s book would have relayed the truth, that a police officer came to Ron’s aid. The police officer recognized it was a time for courage, a time to do what was right.

Embracing humanist values, I hope our world can attain social justice and opportunity for all. It is a time for each of us to be courageous and advocate for those who don’t have the power to advocate for themselves.

Victoria Gipson, Humanist Director of FTFW

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).

Fort Wayne Movie Club (FWMC) Movie Buzz List

[Fort Wayne Movie Club](#) (FWMC) is a social group on Meetup.com and Facebook, intended mostly to watch and discuss movies, and explore events in Fort Wayne and the surrounding area with other movie lovers, mostly on big screen, but also other

venues as opportunity arises.. FTFW board member, Chris Woods, has shared his [Movie Buzz List](#) of movies from February through April 2019.

Upcoming Events

Keep America Beautiful Month

April 2019

This is the month to focus on making America beautiful, focusing on growing things, recycling, and investing in renewable energy sources (by voting, volunteering, and/or donating).

Earth Day

April 22, 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.

FTFW Monthly Board Meeting

April 23, 2019 (Tuesday): 6:30-8:30 pm at the Georgetown Branch of the Allen County Public Library

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.

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!

Single Payer Health Care

April 28, 2019 (Sunday): 12:00-2:00 pm at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fort Wayne on 5310 Old Mill Rd

Jonathan Walker, M.D., will be presenting on single-payer health care. Free and open to the public.

National Blood Pressure Month

May 2019

This is the month to focus on ensuring your blood pressure remains within healthy ranges, somewhere around 120-140/80-90. Helpful techniques include reducing salt and saturated fat consumption, while increasing vegetable, fiber, and unsaturated fat consumption.

FTFW Reunion Brunch

May 5, 2019 (Sunday): 11:00-1:00 pm at Lucky Turtle Grill on 622 E Dupont Rd
FTFW would like to invite members since 2007 to this gathering in the back section of the back room of this establishment.

Astronomy Day

May 11, 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 Monthly Board Planning Meeting

May 13, 2019 (Monday): 6:30-8:30 pm at the Taqueria La Pinata on 6121 N. Clinton St. (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.

Meeting of the Minds

May 22, 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.

FTFW Monthly Board Meeting

May 28, 2019 (Tuesday): 6:30-8:30 pm at TBD

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.

LGBT Pride Month

June 2019

This is the month to focus on celebrating LGBT equality, as well as men's health.

Fort Wayne Arab Fest

June 1-2, 2019 (Saturday & Sunday) at Headwaters Park (333 S. Clinton St., Fort Wayne)

Supporting the Arab community, Arab Fest is a two-day event that features music, camel rides, a market with vendors, characters, dancing, and food. Details can be found [here](#).

FTFW Monthly Board Planning Meeting

June 9, 2019 (Sunday): 1:30-3:30 pm at TBD

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.

Meeting of the Minds

June 19, 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.

World Humanist Day

June 21, 2019 (Friday): all day

World Humanist Day is an opportunity for humanists and humanist organisations to publicize the positive values of Humanism and to share the global concerns of the Humanist movement, and we've been celebrating the day since the 1980s.

Humanist groups around the world mark World Humanist Day with a wide variety of activities ranging from activism to parties. World Humanist Day may be recognized with official proclamations or promotional campaigns to educate people about the growth of the secular community and the ethical values of humanists. Groups may run courses or conferences to deepen understanding of the principles of Humanism and programmes run by humanist organisations. They may emphasize their global solidarity by raising awareness and money for a freethought group working in a different country. Or groups may simply throw a party or share a picnic to celebrate. Details can be found [here](#).

FTFW Monthly Board Meeting

June 25, 2019 (Tuesday): 6:30-8:30 pm at TBD

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.

Arc Encounter Protest

July 6, 2019 (Saturday): 10:00-1:00 pm at The Arc Encounter (1 Arc Encounter Dr, Williamstown, KY)

This protest is hosted by American Atheists.

Three Rivers Festival

July 12-20, 2019 (Friday & Saturday) at Headwaters Park (333 S. Clinton St., Fort Wayne)

The Three Rivers Festival draws nearly half a million visitors each summer that come together to have some fun, savor tasty treats, and catch up with old friends, all while making new friends and creating great memories! As a not-for-profit entity, Three Rivers Festival generates its revenue from sponsorships, vendor participation fees, ticket sales, gate admission at the Festival Plaza, souvenir sales, and refreshment sales. The Festival strives to keep events at a free or minimal admission fee to keep the festival accessible to the community! Three Rivers Festival offers everything from food to fun. Bring your family and friends and enjoy

Food Alley, Art in the Park, the Bed Race, the Three Rivers Festival Parade, Trivia Night, Children's Fest, and so much more! Details can be found [here](#).

FTFW Monthly Board Planning Meeting

July 14, 2019 (Sunday): 1:30-3:30 pm at TBD

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.

Meeting of the Minds

July 17, 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.

FTFW Monthly Board Meeting

July 23, 2019 (Tuesday): 6:30-8:30 pm at TBD

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.

Fort Wayne Pride Fest

July 26-27, 2019 (Friday & Saturday) at Headwaters Park (333 S. Clinton St., Fort Wayne)

Supporting the LGBTQ community, Pride Fest is a two-day event that features live entertainment, vendor market, a beer tent, food plaza, workshops, tournaments, KidSpace and fun with the Fort Wayne community. Details can be found [here](#).

National Immunization Awareness Month

August 2019

National Immunization Awareness Month (NIAM) is an annual observance held in August to highlight the importance of vaccination for people of all ages. Communities across the country use the month each year to raise awareness about the important role vaccines play in preventing serious, sometimes deadly, diseases across the lifespan. Details can be found [here](#).

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!

National Book Lovers Day**August 9, 2019: all day**

National Book Lovers Day harnesses all the excitement bibliophiles feel about books into one celebration on this day. A day for all those who love to read, National Book Lovers Day encourages you to find your favorite reading place, a good book (whether it be fiction or non-fiction) and read the day away. From the scent of a rare first edition book found in an old time book collection, to a crisp, fresh book at the local supermarket, the very sight of a book can bring back memories. Reading as a child, enjoying the short stories, the long books and the ability to lose yourself in a story so powerful that at the end your asking yourself where to get the next book in the series. This is for the reader in all of us, the celebration of Book Lovers Day! Details can be found [here](#).



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