



# The Separationist

Volume 23, Issue 10

October, 2016

## Cecil Bothwell

**“Usin’ the Juice” - how we can turn weaknesses into strengths as humanists and non-theists**

**Sunday, Oct 16, 2016, 4:00 PM, Gage Hall, 4 Archdale St, Charleston**

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### About SHL

The *Secular Humanists of the Lowcountry* was founded in 1994 by a group of local non-theists in Charleston, South Carolina.

Our members are freethinkers of many kinds. We call ourselves agnostics, atheists, skeptics, secular humanists, rationalists and scientific naturalists. We welcome you and all who are interested in participating in our friendly community, either as members or observers.

The purpose of our non-profit, educational organization is to promote the non-theistic, human-centered viewpoint as a valid contribution to public discourse and to strive to maintain the First Amendment guarantee of separation of state and church.

Our October monthly meeting will feature journalist, politician, and author Cecil Bothwell presenting a talk entitled:

***“Usin’ the Juice” - how we can turn weaknesses into strengths as humanists and non-theists***

Cecil Bothwell is an editor, investigative reporter, biographer, novelist, poet, musician and painter based in Asheville, NC and has received national awards from the Association of Alternative Newsweeklies and the Society of Professional Journalists for investigative reporting, criticism and humorous commentary. Former news editor of Asheville City Paper, former managing editor of Asheville’s Mountain Xpress and founding editor of the Warren Wilson College environmental journal Heartstone, he



*Cecil Bothwell earned broad acclaim as a muck-raking journalist writing about a corrupt sheriff and then became an atheist hero when he was elected to Asheville city council and faced a public threat to have him removed from office because he is non-religious.*

served for several years as a member of the national editorial board of the Association of Alternative Newsweeklies and currently serves on the boards of two international educational non-profit organizations working in Latin America. His weekly radio and

print journal, Duck Soup: Essays on the Submerging Culture, remained in syndication for 10 years. He was first elected to Asheville's City Council in 2009 and was re-elected in 2013.

**When:** Sunday, Oct. 16, 2016, 4pm

**Where:** Gage Hall, 4 Archdale Street

**Cost:** Free!

Parking is available behind Gage Hall in any of the spots marked as belonging to the Unitarian Church.

SHL will provide light snacks during the check-in and social period prior to the meeting.

After our meeting, please join us for dinner at nearby Bull Street Gourmet.

# Upcoming SHL Events

Events sometimes get added after The Separationist is posted. Keep up to date with SHL events by signing up for our [email lists](#) or [Meetup](#), or check postings on our [website](#) and [Facebook](#) group.

## October 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5 <a href="#">Happy Hour</a>	6	7 <a href="#">Gaytheist in the Bible Belt</a>	8 <a href="#">Corn Maze Potluck</a>
9	10	11	12	13	14	15 <a href="#">Volunteer Activity</a> <a href="#">Movie Club</a>
16 <a href="#">Playdate</a> <a href="#">Monthly Meeting</a>	17	18	19	20 <a href="#">Girls Night Out</a>	21	22
23 <a href="#">Book Club</a>	24	25	26 <a href="#">Trivia</a>	27	28	29
30	31 					

## Upcoming SHL Events, cont.

### SHL Happy Hour

Thursday, October 5, 2016, 6:00pm

The Green Goat, 1300 Savannah Hwy, Charleston  
(West Ashley)

Happy Hour is always a fun and relaxing evening of stimulating conversation over drinks (alcohol is optional) and yummy food among old and new friends!



This month we will meet at The Green Goat in West Ashley. Everyone is welcome. Don't be shy - come join us!

RSVP requested via [Meetup](#) or [Facebook](#).

### Gaytheist in the Bible Belt

Friday, October 7, 2016, 6:00pm

Robert Scott Small Bldg, 175 Calhoun St, College of Charleston

SHL members are invited to attend this event organized by the Secular Student Alliance at CofC. Callie Wright, host of the [Gaytheist Manifesto Podcast](#), is coming to the College of Charleston campus as part of her Gaytheist in the Bible Belt tour to speak on the intersection of LGBTQA+ and atheist activism. The event is at 6pm on October 7th in room 235 of the Robert Scott Small Building on the College of Charleston campus. Snacks will be provided.



See an event you want to attend? We'd love to have you join us! Some events ask for an RSVP which you can easily do via [Meetup](#) or [Facebook](#). This gives the event organizers a count of how many are attending which is especially important when making reservations at restaurants, providing supplies, etc.



# Upcoming SHL Events, cont.

## Corn Maze Potluck

Saturday, October 8, 2016, 7:00pm\*—10:00pm

West Farm, 2641 Cooper Store Road, Moncks Corner

*\* Arrive early if you'd like to spend more time at the facility—they open at 11:00am*

Come out for an evening of fun for the whole family! Activities include:

- \* 2.8-mile First Responder themed corn maze
- \* Your chance to solve a MONSTER MYSTERY!
- \* Hay ride

Especially for children:

- \* Pint-sized corn maze
- \* Hay-bale maze
- \* Play area
- \* Corn kernel boxes
- \* Tire climb activity
- \* Farm zoo with cows, goats, pigs, sheep, and chickens
- \* Pumpkins are for sale



We'll meet at the party shed that SHL has reserved. You may come as early as you wish to enjoy the facility. They are open from 11 AM to 10 PM on October 8. The official SHL reserved time in the party shed starts at 7 PM for our potluck.

Please mention you are there for the Secular Humanists of the Lowcountry event when you pay to get in so you will receive the corn maze attraction discounts listed below.

POTLUCK: Please bring a main dish, side dish, and/or dessert to share. Non-alcoholic beverages only, please. You may also wish to bring your lawn chairs, mosquito spray, and flashlights; the corn mazes are even more fun when the sun goes down!



### ADMISSION

Corn Maze Admission (general admission AND corn maze combined): Mention you are with the SHL party to get \$2 off these corn maze rates!!

Adults (12 and over) \$10.50

Children (3 to 11) \$6.30

2 and Under are FREE

Non-Corn Maze General Admission: No discounts offered.

Everyone 3 and Up \$5.25

2 and Under are FREE

Children aged 11 and under must be accompanied by an adult inside the corn maze.

The facility accepts cash or credit, as does the food

## Upcoming SHL Events, cont.

truck, concessions and pumpkin sales. However, the apple slingshot, animal feed, and the kettle corn vendor only takes cash. They do not have an ATM onsite and do not offer cash back. There is an ATM at the gas station right next door.

There are porta-potties on site.

West Farm Corn Maze  
2641 Cooper Store Road  
Moncks Corner, SC 29461  
843-408-2284

<http://www.westfarmcornmaze.com/>

*RSVP requested via [Meetup](#) or [Facebook](#).*



From Steffi Green, SHL Family Activities Coordinator:

I am trying to get more families involved in going to play dates and to do that I created a short survey to get a sense of how often people want play dates, where they want to do play dates, their kids ages, and where the bulk of the families live. Your feedback is appreciated and will help us plan fun activities for your family.  
Thanks!

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/9MDHF9W>

### Volunteer Activity: Lowcountry Food Bank

**Saturday, October 15, 2016, 9:00am—noon**

**2864 Azalea Dr, North Charleston**

Our October volunteer activity of 2016 takes us back to the Lowcountry Food Bank. Many of us fondly remember past times volunteering there making special packages for needy children, and sorting entire pallets of food donated by stores.

Please join us on the morning of Saturday, October 15th from 9AM to noon at the Lowcountry Food Bank, 2864 Azalea Drive in North Charleston.



A few things to note:

The warehouse we will be working in is not climate controlled. So, wear clothes appropriate for the outside temperature. You must wear closed toed shoes. Older children (14 and up) are welcome to help with this activity.

We have to let them know how many people will be coming. So, if you do plan to participate, please e-mail us at [volunteers@lowcountryhumanists.org](mailto:volunteers@lowcountryhumanists.org) to let us know.





# Upcoming SHL Events, cont.

## SHL Movie Club

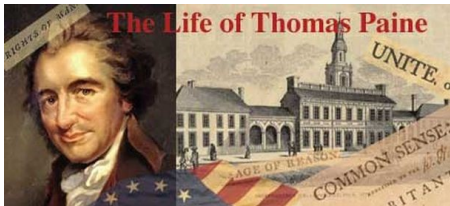
Saturday, October 15, 2016, 3:00pm

Home of Sue Edward, 20 Wespanee Dr, West Ashley

Join us for a viewing of **To Begin the World Over Again: the Life of Thomas Paine**.

Thomas Paine (1737—1809) was an English–American political activist, philosopher, political theorist, and revolutionary. One of the **Founding Fathers of the United States**, he authored the two most influential pamphlets at the start of the **American Revolution**, and he inspired the rebels in 1776 to declare independence from Britain. His ideas reflected Enlightenment–era rhetoric of transnational human rights. He has been called "a corsetmaker by trade, a journalist by profession, and a propagandist by inclination."

The play *To Begin the World Over Again: the Life of Thomas Paine*, starring Ian Ruskin and



directed by Haskell Wexler, was filmed on March 3, 2015 in front of a live audience at the Lillian Theatre in Hollywood, California.

*A remarkable and entertaining way to see the American Revolution, the French Revolution and the Age of Reason through the eyes of the most misunderstood figure of the time, the visionary thinker, and Deist, Thomas Paine.*

BYO snacks and beverages (adult beverages ok!) Following the movie we will discuss the film over dinner at a nearby restaurant.

## Pumpkin Patch Playdate

Sunday, October 16, 2016, 11:00am

Boone Hall Farm, 2330 North Hwy 17, Mt. Pleasant  
(enter via Hwy 17, NOT main Plantation gate)

Join us for a spooky hay ride, inflatables and fun. \$10 per person admission. Hopefully we will beat the church crowd.



## SHL Monthly Meeting

Sunday, October 16, 2016, 4:00pm

Gage Hall, 4 Archdale St, Charleston

Join us for our monthly meeting with speaker **Cecil Bothwell**. See page 1 for details.



# Upcoming SHL Events, cont.

## Girls Night Out

Thursday, October 20, 2016, 7:00pm

Apartment A Nachos & Tamales, 221A Coming St  
Charleston

A fun night for secular girls to socialize! This month we will be going to Apartment A in downtown Charleston. I know parking can be a pain, but this place is worth it!

Nursing infants okay, but otherwise adults only please.

*RSVP requested via [Meetup](#) or [Facebook](#).*



*Apartment A*  
*Nachos • Tamales • Cocktails*  
*Charleston, South Carolina*



## SHL Book Club

Sunday, October 23, 2016, 4:00pm

Barnes & Noble, 1812 Sam Rittenberg Blvd, Charleston

This month we are reading **The End of White Christian America** by Robert P. Jones (2016, 320pp). The author, CEO of the Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI), challenges us to grasp the profound political and cultural consequences of a new reality—that America is no longer a majority white Christian nation. “Quite possibly the most illuminating text for this election year.” (Sam Tanenhaus The New York Times Book Review) lives.

The End  
of  
White  
Christian  
America

Robert P. Jones  
CEO, Public Religion Research Institute

Afterward we invite you to join us for dinner at a nearby restaurant where the conversation always continues.

You can purchase copies of these books from Amazon on the SHL page and a portion of the purchase price will automatically be donated to SHL.

SHL is affiliated with the Amazon Associates program! Our organization earns up to a 15% commission on items purchased at Amazon.com through the links on our Website. So, if you are buying the book club book (or anything else from Amazon), this is a super-easy way to contribute to SHL! Simply use the link at <http://lowcountryhumanists.org/default.php>

## Events, cont.

### Team Trivia

Wednesday, October 26, 2016, 7:00pm

LG's By the Creek, 1005 Tanner Blvd, Hanahan



Come out for a night of trivia and socializing! This is a team event and is free. It's also lots of fun! Any winnings will be used to purchase appetizers for the team at a future trivia night.



RSVP requested via [Meetup](#) or [Facebook](#).



## Mark Your Calendars!

The Holy City will be the host of two, count 'em, TWO major secular conferences/conventions in 2017!

### [American Humanist Association](#)

#### [Annual Conference: June 8-11, 2017](#)

The American Humanist Association, the oldest and largest humanist organization in the United States, has held an annual conference since its founding in 1941 so that humanists, atheists, and freethinkers can gather together for a weekend of informative lectures, networking, and fun activities.



### [American Atheists](#)

#### [Solar Eclipse Convention: August 19-21, 2017](#)

We will present a conference focused on science, space, technology, and (of course) atheism featuring prominent academics, scientists, and community leaders during the weekend and, on Monday, will host an eclipse watch-party (narrated by a surprise special guest!) in Charleston.



## AMERICAN ATHEISTS

Charleston is the last major city in the path of the eclipse's path. This is the first total solar eclipse to cross the continental United States since the 1970s!

There will be opportunities for SHL members to volunteer at the conference and convention. Needs are still being evaluated so stay tuned!



## Charity of the Quarter

SHL collects donations for a worthy charity each quarter, and donates the full amount under the name Secular Humanists of the Lowcountry. Our Charity of the Quarter for Q4 2016 is [Trans Love Fund](#).

The Trans Love Fund is a program of We Are Family, an organization dedicated to providing resources, support and leadership development to

LGBTQ+ youth. The Trans Love Fund is dedicated to helping the transgender community of South Carolina through providing microgrants to trans-identified individuals for medical, legal, and emergency living expenses.

We believe that all people have the right to live as their most genuine selves, and seek to make that possible by financing the

care of trans people in South Carolina. We seek to create trans inclusive spaces, collaborate with other organizations to create increased access to resources, and spread education and awareness of trans issues.



*Four times a year SHL collects donations on behalf of a worthy charity. You can donate by cash, credit card, or check at our monthly meeting or by mailing a check to*

*SHL  
PO Box 32256  
Charleston SC 29417-2256*

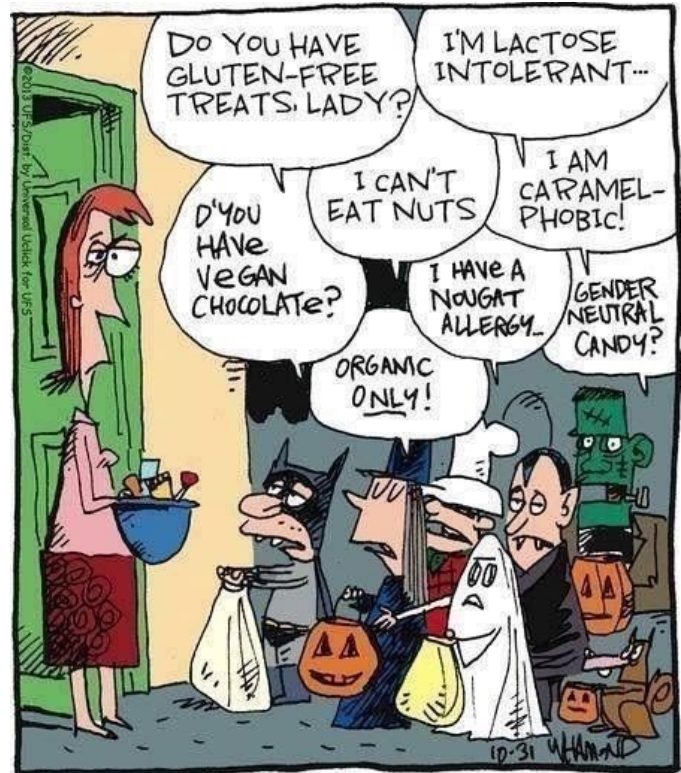
*Make checks payable to SHL and note COQ in the memo line.*

*Or securely [donate online!](#)*

## SHL Store

SHL is pleased to announce that t-shirts, mugs, bags and other merchandise featuring our logos and slogans can now be purchased at our [online Zazzle store](http://www.zazzle.com/lowcountryhumanists).

We hope you will show your pride and help support SHL by shopping at our new store: <http://www.zazzle.com/lowcountryhumanists>.



### BECOME A DUES-PAYING MEMBER OF SHL!

Membership is open to all who support the purposes for which this organization is founded. Your dues help provide a variety of programs and activities for young and old alike.

The available membership levels and corresponding dues (new members and renewals) are:

- Individual \$35.00
- Family \$50.00
- Sustaining \$100.00
- Benefactor \$150.00
- Lifetime \$500.00

There are 3 easy ways you can join/renew:

- Pay by cash, credit card, or check at our monthly meeting.

- Mail a check to:

**SHL**

**PO Box 32256**

**Charleston SC 29417-2256**

Make checks payable to SHL and note "Membership" and level in the memo line. Please include your name, address, phone number, and email address.

- Or securely [pay online](#) and select your membership level in the dropdown box.

# Just for Fun



With three hours in costume still ahead of them, Mike was becoming increasingly dismayed as Ed wolfed down his third bowl of beans and cabbage.





# Letters to the Editor

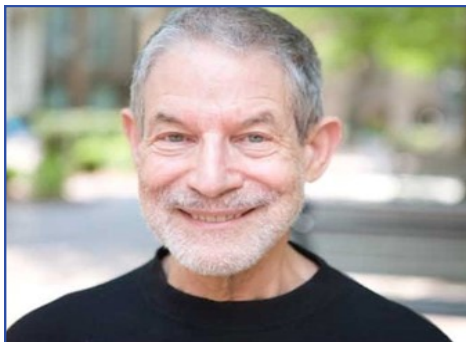
*The following letter to the editor appeared in the Post & Courier, September 15, 2016*

## **Letter: Religious beliefs**

Rep. Mark Sanford often talks about his Christian beliefs, so I was surprised to see a Sept. 11 headline quoting him as saying, "I'm not a Buddhist." I doubt that many people thought he was, but he felt the need to respond to the rumor. Sanford added that he meant no offense to Buddhism and has "an appreciation for every faith around the world."

Had someone called Sanford an atheist, I wonder if his denial would have included his appreciation for atheists. We are a country of all faiths and none. Atheists do not ask for special rights, but we are a growing minority who deserve no less respect than do people of faith.

Herb Silverman  
George Street



**Herb Silverman** is founder and President of the [Secular Coalition for America](#), author of [Candidate Without a Prayer: An Autobiography of a Jewish Atheist in the Bible Belt](#), and Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Mathematics at the College of Charleston.

*The following response was published September 28, 2016*

## **Letter: Atheists do believe**

A misunderstanding exists regarding atheists. In a letter to the editor on Sept. 15, the writer stated: "Atheists do not ask for special rights, but we are a growing minority who deserve no less respect than do people of faith."

Actually, atheists are people of faith and belief, it just happens that atheists believe and have

faith in the self above all. As a priest, the way I define faith comes from II Corinthians 5:7, where Paul states: "We walk by faith, not by sight." So faith for the Christian is: Forsaking all, I trust Jesus.

For the atheist it could be translated this way: Forsaking all, I trust — me. In my mind it takes more faith to believe in the self above all else than it does to believe that Jesus is the caring, forgiving and loving son of God. It requires more faith to consider we all ended up on planet Earth through a scientific maneuver than the divine plan of God.

We all have faith, and it would be a mistake to pretend we don't. It's just a question of what we put our faith in.

Rev. Alfred Zadig, Jr.  
Rector  
St. Michael's Church  
Broad Street  
Charleston

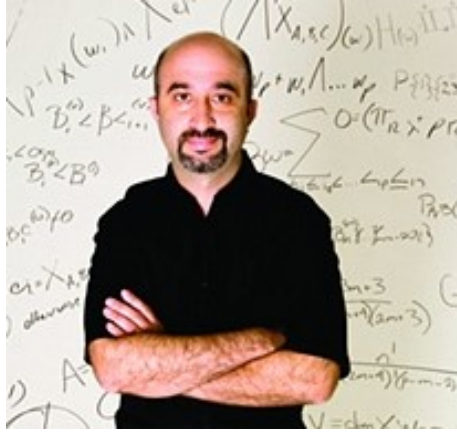
## Letters to the Editor, cont.

*Alex Kasman submitted his reply to Rev. Zadig (not yet published in the Post & Courier)*

In a recent letter, Rev. Alfred Zadig, Jr. wrote that atheists are also "people of faith" in that they "have faith in the self above all". I write now to correct this mischaracterization of both the word "faith" and of atheists.

According to the first definition listed at [Merriam-Webster.com](http://Merriam-Webster.com), "faith" is belief in God. By definition, atheists do not have that. The next definition listed is "firm belief in something for which there is no proof".

This second definition is important for two reasons. It is a source of pride for many religious people that their faith does not rely on evidence, since they see it as a test. The letter's suggestion that "faith" means nothing different than "belief" is therefore unfair to them. Moreover, when atheists say our beliefs are not examples of faith, we are just sincerely explaining



**Alex Kasman** is a math professor at the College of Charleston. He has been on the board of SHL for 15+ years. During that time he has served various roles including volunteer coordinator, newsletter editor, Webmaster and is currently serving as SHL President.

that they do depend on evidence. For instance, I do not believe the Biblical account of creation because geological, biological, astronomical and physical evidence all say it didn't happen that way. If the evidence supported it, I would believe it...but even then that would not be an example of "faith."

In addition, I am disturbed by the letter's emphasis on the word "self" because it may leave readers with a misimpression that atheists are isolated or self-

ish. The evidence we consider in determining our beliefs is not limited to our own thoughts, but includes the discoveries and writings of experts in all disciplines around the world. We are part of families, local communities (such as our group, the Secular Humanists of the Lowcountry which recently celebrated its 20th anniversary) and even national organizations (like the American Humanist Association, which is meeting in Charleston in June). And, importantly, we are part of the global community of humanity, doing our part to make the world a better place through charitable acts.

If we are seeking common ground between those who are religious and those who are not, that common desire to help other people seems like a better place to start than Rev. Zadig's misleading claim that we all have "faith".

Alex Kasman, President  
[Secular Humanists of the Lowcountry](http://SecularHumanistsoftheLowcountry.org)

If you have written a letter to the editor or an original article or essay that you would like to have considered for inclusion in [The Separationist](http://TheSeparationist.org), please send it to:  
[newsletter@lowcountryhumanists.org](mailto:newsletter@lowcountryhumanists.org)



## SHL Board for 2016-2017

**Alex Kasman**, President

**Sue Edward**, Vice President

**Garrett Gehlhausen**, Treasurer

**Bonnie Cleaveland**, Secretary

**Ed Stephens**

**Tom Amon**

**Steffi Green**

# SECULAR HUMANISTS



## OF THE LOWCOUNTRY

### Contact us!

SHL  
Post Office Box 32256  
Charleston, SC 29417-2256  
843-670-0290  
[president@lowcountryhumanists.org](mailto:president@lowcountryhumanists.org)

SHL is a non-prophet  
organization!

## Find us online! We're (nearly) omnipresent!



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## The Separationist

The Newsletter of the Secular Humanists of the Lowcountry

*Opinions expressed in The Separationist are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of SHL.*