

## **Seattle Atheists Meeting Minutes**

**Issaquah Library (10 West Sunset Way, Issaquah, WA 98027)**

**January 8, 2012 at 1:00pm**

Board Members in attendance:

President – Shellie Brighton

Vice President – Jerry Schiffelbein

Secretary – Jami Blackann

Treasurer – Liz Frost

Members at Large – Kyle Hepworth, Ericka Johnson, Mike Keiser, John Keiser

Others in attendance:

Rada Bittner-Rozenberg

### **Action Items:**

- \* Kyle: Work on new t-shirt designs.
- \* Kyle: Name tags for ambassadors.
- \* Kyle and Jami: Research options for stickers and bumper stickers. Work on designs.
- \* Jami: Send out message to the volunteer about Darwin Day planning meetings.
- \* Jami: Create Relay for Life webpage.
- \* Jami and Mike: Secure a group location for summer camping trip. Create Meetup.
- \* Jami: Newsletter blurbs: Relay for Life, Camp Quest NorthWest registration, and open Member at Large position.
- \* Jami: Compile newsletter once everyone has sent in their write-ups.
- \* Jerry: Continue working on database transfer.
- \* Jerry: Ask 2100 Building if we can have access to the kitchen for events, especially for Darwin Day.
- \* Jerry: Newsletter blurb: gift wrapping review.
- \* Jerry: Buy a gift for Tom Flynn, \$50 budget.
- \* Jerry: Tell Robert that SA wants to buy four Conference tickets, which will be used for scholarships.
- \* Shellie: Write a thank you letter to the community relations manager at B&N.

\* Shellie: Stay in contact with Rada about Relay for Life. Find out what exactly we need to do to take the next steps. Create Meetup event.

\* Shellie and John: Take care of Google phone administration.

\* Shellie: Purchase \$50 gift certificate for Eileen in thanks for bus ad work.

\* Shellie: Newsletter blurb: Darwin Day.

\* Ericka: Tell university groups that we're participating in Relay for Life. Solicit volunteers.

\* Ericka: Contact fungi expert about giving a talk for Darwin Day.

\* Ericka: Give Titan the green light to extend non-Christmas bus ads.

\* Ericka and John: Work on Press Release for bus ad extension. Mike will help send them out.

\* Ericka: Newsletter blurb: Bus ads.

\* John: Fix events/calendar system on the SA website.

\* John and Ericka: Keep working on community forum/email list.

\* John: Ask Mary for August meeting notes.

\* John: Newsletter blurb: Conference and note about Meetup group going public.

\* Mike and Kyle: Work on new Ask an Atheist ads.

\* Liz: Email the budget to the board.

\* Liz: Booth and parade bookings.

\* Everyone participating in Relay for Life: Register online asap.

## **Meeting Minutes:**

**Start time:** 1:15 p.m.

\* Still need meeting minutes from August. Simple notes are fine – just something to confirm that we had a meeting and discussed business.

\* December meeting minutes approved unanimously.

## **Financial Report:**

\* Balance: about \$10,300

\* Gift wrapping donations: \$559

\* Current Members: 289

Breakdown:

\* 241 are active

\* 57 are 6 months or less past due

\* 32 are 12 months or less past due

\* 27 are over a year past due

\* We've raised \$3,721.09 for bus ads.

### **Budget Meeting:**

\* Shellie, Jerry, Liz, and Jami met at 11:30 to create the budget for the 2012 year. Keeping numbers similar to last year's.

\* Liz will send the budget to the board list.

\* Review of 2011: We had a marked decrease in the number of renewing members. For comparison, we had 52 new members the previous year, but only 45 new members in 2011. One new lifetime member. Also, 57 members dropped off the list in 2011.

\* Time to get more postage. Jerry will be buying 1,000 stamps soon.

\* Transfer remaining balance of CQNW funds – done.

### **Marketing Materials**

\* The last marketing meeting (12/5/11) focused mostly on the bus ads. Jami: We touched on brochures and stickers, but don't have a finished product – still brainstorming. We discussed ideas for a new logo, overall color scheme for the organization. Would help if we had a volunteer who works in marketing.

\* T-shirts – new design – KH. Tabled for now.

\* Bumper stickers for welcome packet – KH/JB. Ongoing. They have some ideas (available in the marketing meeting minutes), looking for more. It's easier if other people bring solid ideas to the table, and then Kyle and Jami can execute them.

\* Name tags for ambassadors – KH. Ready by Darwin Day.

\* Tri-fold brochures – JB/KH. Ongoing.

### **Gift wrapping at Barnes & Noble**

\* Fun, successful, got some new people involved. We only had four days over two weekends. Didn't get the sweet spots right before Christmas, but we still received some good donations – a total of \$559.

\* All proceeds go to Children's Hospital. Will write a check as soon as money is deposited.

\* Shellie will write a thank you letter to the Community Relations Manager at B&N.

## **SA Website**

\* Adding upcoming events – Jami has been taking care of this. Would love more help for website content.

\* Website comments. Jami requests that other board members look at comments, approve them (or trash them if they're spam), and respond. We need to stay on top of website maintenance. There are currently approved comments in the queue with no responses, and Jami's out of bandwidth.

## **Ask an Atheists ads**

\* We need new ones – KH/MK. Darwin Day specific, street fairs.

## **Bus Ads – report on current campaign**

\* They're up and running, and we've spotted a few. Jerry's been working overtime to track down the live bus ads.

\* About 13 new members have joined since the campaign started.

\* Ericka, John, and Bob have been responding to comments on 1in4WA.org. The questions have slowed down recently.

\* We've gotten a lot of negative comments about the statistic and the word "atheist." We've researched the study, and we agree that the number is accurate. It's spurred a lot of discussion, some agreeable, some contentious. When freethinking allies don't want to call themselves an atheist, it shows that we still have more work to do, that it's still seen as a bad word. In general, it's good to get the word "atheist" in the public. When the public understands that atheists make up a not insignificant part of the population, they are more trusting.

\* Reimburse Kyle, Josh Frost, and Mike Wilson. Also, Kyle would like Barry to be compensated somehow. Even though he volunteered, he should be thanked for his efforts.

\* Bus ads expire January 15. Potential to extend the non-Christmas ads for \$1,820. We've also budgeted \$3,000 for ads later in the year.

\* The board unanimously agreed to extend the ads. John and Ericka can work on the press release. Mike will help send them out.

\* This year, we've raised \$3,721.09 for bus ads. Since March 2009, we've raised \$7,059.04.

- \* We should craft a response to the bus ads. Acknowledge positive and negative feedback.
- \* Ericka would like to see more videos of personal stories.
- \* Budgeted \$500 for online ads. We could do something in conjunction with fair season.
- \* Billboard would be a great way to advertize. Cost considerations.
- \* Who will answer Google phone number? Shellie will handle this, but can't answer phones immediately during business hours. John will give instructions to Shellie.
- \* Also, Eileen got a lot of calls during the beginning of the campaign, and she burned out. We didn't anticipate such a huge response. We should give her something for the inconvenience – Shellie will get \$50 gift card to someplace nice.

### **Hiring vs. Volunteering**

- \* John and Jami raise the following concern: How do you handle someone who volunteers but is also being paid? Sometimes the line between the two is blurry, and we don't know when it's okay to say no to paying a volunteer. Can also lead to awkward situations where multiple people are working on the same project, but one of them is being paid. Not really a problem now, but it's something to consider for future projects and boards. We should have a policy, and also make sure that we properly handle conflicts of interest.
- \* When you're being paid, you need to have a contract. Make sure the paid job is a clear distinction from volunteer work.

### **Relay for Life**

- \* May 12-13, Dempsey Stadium – Rada Bittner-Rozenberg
- \* Jami created an email list and added all the board members: [relay@seattleatheists.org](mailto:relay@seattleatheists.org)
- \* Rada registered the team, and she's been waiting for the rest of us to join her. SA paid the team's fee, which means that people can join for free. We need something on our website to explain how to register, what your options are. We have a discount code, which we will give out through personal communication.
- \* Rada will send information and registration instructions to Jami. Shellie will create a Meetup event. We'll make announcements at Darwin Day and our Meetups at the Blue Star Café.
- \* Kickoff event: January 12 at 6pm. Architecture Hall, Room 147, at the University of Washington.
- \* Inform university groups – EJ. Ericka's going to the meeting on Monday.

\* Link to Relay site to donate to the team or individual members. Administration is handled by American Cancer Society.

\* 2012 Theme: superheroes. Be thinking of ideas.

### **Gift for Tom Flynn**

\* Mike looked into this, but thinks we should just go with something Pacific Northwest related.

\* Jerry will take care of it.

### **Larger Storage Unit**

\* To save costs, Jerry has offered to share his storage unit for the supplies we don't use often (like the library).

\* CQNW has offered to share a space. We may take them up on this in the future.

### **Summer Group Camping Trip**

\* Jami and Mike are looking for locations. Will get more concrete information in the coming week.

\* Possibilities: Deception Pass, Sequim, Lewis & Clark

\* In general, group sites don't cost a lot. There's a charge for the cost of the site, but once that's divided among the attendees, it's very cheap. Everyone will bring their own equipment. SA should bring some extra cooking and safety supplies.

\* Dates that don't conflict with other events:

\* July 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>

\* July 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>

\* July 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>

\* End of August, right after Camp Quest NW

\* Sweet spot for camping is usually the end of July.

### **Atheist Christmas**

\* Review: Nice event, people enjoyed themselves, but needs to be better managed.

\* Costly event, and way too much food. Should have had a cleaning committee – Jerry had to clean up himself. Need a better location, planned months in advance.

\* We should go back to a Yule celebration, combined effort among different freethinking groups. Don't worry about conflicting with gift wrapping.

\* Solara amenities reimbursement.

### **Newsletter**

\* Jami likes the collaborative method of writing the newsletter. Everyone takes a relevant topic, and Jami will organize them.

- \* Relay for Life – Jami and Rada
- \* Darwin Day – Shellie
- \* Camp Quest registration – Jami
- \* Bus Ads – Ericka
- \* Gift wrapping – Jerry
- \* Conference and scholarships – John
- \* Meetup going public – John
- \* Open Member at Large position – Jami

### **Google Grant and advertising**

\* We have free money to spend. John and Ericka created a variety of ads and keywords. The catch – can only bid \$1 per keyword.

\* We are already getting some benefit, though it's hard to track truly productive clicks. Takes a lot of strategy with ad creation and bid prices.

\* It's good to create ads specific to events.

\* Need to build an ad for Relay for Life and Darwin Day.

\* John will work on setting up Google Checkout. This will give us free transaction processing for a while.

### **Darwin Day**

\* 2100 Building, February 12th

\* Contact fungi expert for presentation – EJ. If we can't find a speaker, Ericka is more than qualified to talk about evolution topics.

\* Logistics go-to person: Jerry. Shellie can handle logistics during the event.

\* Who will do entertainment?

\* Schedule initial planning meetings:

\* First meeting: Tuesday, January 8, Solara Apartments. 7pm

\* Second meeting: Monday, January 16, Solara Apartments. 6:30pm

### **2012 NW Freethought Conference, Mar. 30 – Apr. 1**

\* Cost: \$140 for the weekend.

\* SA would like to offer four \$100 scholarships. (Thanks to Mike for donating \$100 to the cause.) We'll target the student alliance, since they would probably need the most financial help.

Fill out application, write an essay about why atheist activism is important. What can we do as an organization?

\* SA needs to buy tickets immediately – Jerry will talk to Robert. Deadline for essays: March 1. Decision by March 15.

### **Sale of White Canopy**

\* Camp Quest NW has offered to buy it from us.

\* SA will sell it for \$50.

### **1in4WA website**

\* The site is finished, doesn't really need more work.

\* We want a FAQ pulled from the best questions.

### **Age requirement for membership**

\* Without the permission of parents, what's the age restriction?

\* Leave it open for now. If there's something like a field trip or overnight event, they need a parent's permission.

### **Booking Booths and Fairs**

\* Liz will book U-District, Fremont, and Pride.

\*Fremont registration. Street options:

\* Fremont \$225

\* Burke \$200 – This one looks like the best option.

\* Phinney and Canal \$175

\* Rocket Block \$125

### **Next Meeting:**

**February 11, 2012 at 2pm**

**Foster Library (4060 South 144th Street, Tukwila, WA 98168-4128)**

**End time: 3:50pm**