



THE HUMANIST SOCIETY OF NEW MEXICO NEWSLETTER

July 2014

A Chapter of the American Humanist Association

<http://humanistsocietyofnm.org/>

<http://hsnm.wordpress.com>

zelda@amadorbooks.com

HSNM Meetings in Albuquerque

HSNM meetings are free and open to the public unless otherwise noted.

Saturday, July 12

HSNM Informal Meeting 10:15 AM - 12:15 PM

For HSNM members and their guests. For invitation or questions,
please contact Zelda Gatuskin at 505-344-6102.

Albuquerque Center for Peace and Justice, 202 Harvard SE.

Refreshments provided.

Saturday, July 19

HSNM Topical Discussion 10:00 AM - Noon

How Would You Change Our Political System?

Special Collections Library 423 Central Ave. NE

Saturday, July 26

HSNM Speaker Meeting 10:00 AM - Noon

The Human Connecton: Transcending Labels and Providing Support
Ananda Parnell

Free and open to the public

Botts Hall, Special Collections Library

423 Central Ave. NE, Albuquerque

Humanist Minute: TBA

Meetings by HSNM Affiliates are held throughout the month.

For more information please visit their websites.

New Mexicans for Science and Reason (www.nmsr.org)

First Unitarian HUmanist Group

(<http://www.uuabq.org/classes.html>, 505-344-8930)

Freedom from Religion Albuquerque

(<http://www.meetup.com/FFRABQ/>)

Santa Fe Atheist Community

(<http://www.meetup.com/Santa-Fe-Atheist-Community>)

Roswatheists (<http://www.meetup.com/Roswatheists>)

President's Message

by Zelda Gatuskin

I want to try to write down my "elevator speech" from the recent AHA National Conference in Philadelphia, where I led and represented the AHA Feminist Caucus at several activities. Before and after the FC business meeting held over lunch on Friday, the State of Humanism Plenary meeting later in the day (at which I was part of the parade of group leaders who gave short reports to the membership), and the awards luncheon on Saturday, where I had the honor of presenting the 2014 Humanist Heroine Award to Jessica Valenti, I was approached by dedicated humanists of all ages with many questions and ideas for the feminist movement. Their earnestness convinced me that with such a strong desire for institutional change, and such actual, dramatic change on an interpersonal level when it comes to gender identity and equality, we must surely be poised to prevail. Strident opposition to the mere word "feminism" has started to sound more like the howl of a dying beast than a battle cry. Maybe

The Humanist Society of New Mexico
A Nonprofit Corporation

A Chapter of the American Humanist Association
Member of The New Mexico Coalition of Reason

The purpose of HSNM is to promote ethical,
naturalistic, democratic Humanism among its
members and within its community.

Officers/Committees

Zelda Gatuskin: President
Randall Wall: Vice President/Speaker Programs
Leland Franks: Past President
Richard Grady: Treasurer
Ashley Jordan: Member-at-Large, Newsletter Editor
Cynthianne Yabut: Member-At-Large ,
acting Secretary

Subscription to HSNM Newsletter, published monthly, accompanies HSNM membership or can be obtained by nonmembers for \$20 annually, HSNM membership is \$20/year (\$30 for two adults in the same household. Send subscription or membership request to: Humanist Society of New Mexico, P.O. Box 27293, Albuquerque, NM 87125-7293. Send Newsletter submissions to: Editor, Ashley Jordan, AshleyNJordan@GMX.com or to Humanist Society of New Mexico, P.O. Box 27293, Albuquerque, NM 87125-7293. The deadline for Newsletter submissions is the third Friday of each month. Website submissions may be sent to president@humanistsocietyofnm.org. HSNM dues are now paid separately from AHA dues, visit www.americanhumanist.org for more information about the American Humanist Association.

Humanism is an ethical philosophy that derives its principles from science and reason rather than theology. It asserts the worth and dignity of every person, advocates personal liberty tempered by social and environmental responsibility, and promotes democracy, compassion, and justice. It sees human beings as natural organisms, whose values arise from culture and experience and holds humanity responsible for its own affairs.

there's less fight in the champions of the status quo than we imagine. With this in mind, my own call to arms, such as it was, came out something like this:

Not everyone is an activist. We get involved because we have to - we see something that is wrong and we jump in. There are people who are good at activism and enjoy it and make a career or ongoing project of it, but that's not for all of us and it shouldn't be. If our desire is to live in a free and fair society where we can all pursue our unique interests and fulfill our unique potential, then activism, for most of us, cannot be an end in itself. If a goal of feminism is to have more women achieving more opportunities and positions of influence in all walks of life, then we have to set our sights beyond the next cause and tend to our own careers and self-actualization.

Yes, there is a lot that needs doing in the feminist-humanist movement, and a lot to be gained from getting involved and learning organizational and leadership skills. There are serious injustices to rectify, and we all have our part to play in mobilizing against discrimination. Ultimately, though, I think that all of our humanist organizations need to focus more on helping and urging women and men to get down to our own work, to valuing and cultivating our unique interests and skills, to becoming accomplished and successful in whatever we do, so that we will be influential by virtue of the examples we set. This is where we truly make our mark on the world, in our daily living and interactions.

I am an artist, writer and publisher. I feel that when I do these things well, I am helping humanity and not letting humanity down because I didn't do other things. I'm lucky to live at a time when I can pursue such endeavors and even aspire to achieve recognition for my work - without having to change my name to George. It would be ironic to divert all of my energy to organizing for equal rights while neglecting to "do my own thing." I'm an activist because I have to be, because I see my sisters and brothers in the fight and I want to share the load with them. But I owe it to the ones who came before me to seize the opportunities they didn't have, to assert an identity unique and of my own choosing. And that is what I want for everyone.

It concerns me to see people, especially women, simply shifting from one kind of self-sacrifice to another, or from traditional domestic roles to modern but equally constricting social projects. Cooperation

toward a worthy goal should not mean submission or regimentation. That's why, to all the wonderful people who want to know, What can I do? What more can I do? for the feminist-humanist cause, the best I can recommend is this: Go out and be awesome.

By this time, the elevator has definitely landed, even from floor 36, but I have a little more to add specifically for my HSNM readers:

Naturally, group activities play a big part in personal fulfillment. We want to take our awesomeness and share it and combine it in rewarding and fruitful ways. When we get together for common purpose, organization is required; leaders need to step forward along with many volunteers to perform routine tasks. Some people like to lend their particular expertise to a project, and others are looking for something completely different from their daily work. Some of us simply notice that something needs doing, so we set about trying to do it.

Over several decades HSNM has grown in membership, diversity, visibility, and influence. With success has come more work, and even more ambitious plans. As we move into our membership renewal period and Governing Board nomination and election process this summer, you will see requests for volunteers in this Newsletter and at our meetings, and you may receive a personal call or email. All I ask is that if you think you can help out even in a small way, then say Yes; and if you say Yes, then make every effort to do the task conscientiously, knowing that you are not expected to do it forever. The example we set by volunteering now will perpetuate the pattern of service that has brought us this far, and hopefully will secure our continued existence and growth.

July Speaker Meeting

The Human Connection: Transcending Labels and Providing Support for Adolescents and Adults

By Ananda Parnell

Ananda Parnell explains that everyone needs human connections and examines how the use and misuse of labels can both promote and impair these connections, using many examples from her life, and her work with students at Eldorado and Highland High School.

The labels people give themselves and others can be misleading and divisive, even when they seem to be

objective: Minister; Gay; Woman; Blasphemer; Atheist; Humanist; Mother; Christian...

The list is endless. Labels govern how people see themselves and each other, and how they relate to each other. They can promote acceptance or rejection; unify a group, or cause dissension. All labels carry baggage that influences how people view themselves and others. They can be liberating or restrictive.

Ananda Parnell is a native New Mexican, born in Albuquerque, and raised in the Manzano Mountains. She has BA degrees in English and German, an MBA (2006), and is currently a teacher at Highland High School, and is a professional chaplain (Doctor of Divinity). Ananda started teaching in 2004, and sponsored the Gay Straight Alliance at Eldorado High School, as well as Highland, where she now co-sponsors the Humanists of Highland, an atheist group on campus.

Ananda is an interfaith, nondenominational minister; her D.D. dissertation was on spiritual needs in the transhuman age. Her faith base is a "New Age" practice called Agni Yoga, most closely related to Buddhism.

HSNM Board Nominations Now Open

The Nominating Committee for the next HSNM Governing Board elections is now being formed and will be chaired by Jeanette Smith. If you would like to join the committee or to be considered by the committee for a position on the GB for the November 2014-October 2016 term, please contact Jeanette at jeanettec47@gmail.com or (505)-232-9838.

Upcoming Important Dates

It's an election year for us at HSNM, and you know what that means! There will be lots of important things going on over the next few months, so here's a small calendar to keep you up to date.

July: Nominating Committee forms.
August: Governing Board Nominations open; Membership Renewal Period begins.
August 23: Our Speaker Meeting will be used as a General Membership Meeting with reports and discussion about HSNM activities and future plans; plus 2014 AHA Conference highlights. If there

is an issue pertinent to HSNM that you feel should be discussed or that you would like to report on, please contact Zelda prior to the meeting.

September 15: Membership dues must be up to date in order to be eligible to vote in HSNM . Board election.

End of September, with October Newsletter: Governing Board Candidates announced and Election Ballots distributed.

October 15: Deadline for return of ballots.

End of October, with November Newsletter: Election Results Announced.

November 1: New HSNM Governing Board takes office.

November 22: Last Speaker Meeting of 2014.

December 13: Traditionally we have used our last Informal Meeting of the year for a party and donations drive for Roadrunner Food Bank; watch Newsletter for possible adjustments to date/time/venue

Humanist Ice Cream Social A Hit

Near the end of May HSNM held its new member meet up in the form of an Ice Cream Social, hosted by Leland Franks, its Past President, and his brave wife Judy. Lots of time and effort was put into picking ice cream flavors and toppings, but we're glad to say it was all worth it! The event was a great success, and allowed members new and old to mingle and enjoy the summer weather, while being serenaded by ABQ: A Barbershop Quartet who performed several fantastic songs for us.

Many thanks to ABQ: A Barbershop Quartet, and to all the members who made the event possible. We hope you'll come out to next year's new member meet and greet if you missed this one! It's never too late to come out and get involved, no matter how long you've been a member. We'd love to see you.

HSNM Family Coop and Humanist Sunday School Classes to Restart in September

By Zelda Gatuskin

Based on the inquiries we receive on a regular basis, there is a growing need for nonreligious "Sunday School" in our community. So we took advantage of our Humanist Ice Cream Social to bring together current and prospective families from our HSNM Family CoOp

with the general HSNM membership. What a delight to have the span of generations, from 2 yrs. to 80-plus, gathered for some old-fashioned, all-ages fun.

Although it was not possible for all of the interested families to attend, we got a good start on meeting one another and building our contact list. The next step will be to bring parents together in August to figure out a schedule for classes to run twice per month September through December. In the meantime, we are looking into locations for the classes, and seeking volunteers from our general membership to suggest resources and assist with activities. Please jump in if you can, and do help spread the word so that young families seeking a nonreligious community will learn about this opportunity. The HSNM Family CoOp has had several successful semesters under the leadership of Ron Herman, and we're confident we can reboot and build on that success.

HSNM member Cheryl Gatner has generously agreed to keep the contact list for our families and volunteers. To participate in planning or request updates on classes, please contact Cheryl at kewwlnurse@gmail.com or 505-890-4176.

The purpose of the HSNM Family Coop is to provide both a peer community and multi-generational community for families who are raising children without religion.

The focal point of the HSNM Family Coop is a Humanist Children's Sunday School, which is managed by a team of Family Coop and general HSNM members and leaders. Funding and ongoing assistance with organizational and logistical issues are provided by HSNM.

We strive to provide Humanist Children's Sunday School classes twice per month at a time and location that best serves the majority of participants, for periods of several months at a time. "Lessons" are oriented around experiential learning and guided play, using science and art projects, music, drama, and storytelling, led by parents, HSNM member volunteers, and invited guest teachers. Parents have access to numerous online resources as well as an accomplished and diverse local community of HSNM members, as they learn more about humanism, cultivate their own humanist home culture, and instill ethical principles in their children.

Is Sunday Assembly Coming to Albuquerque and Santa Fe?

Sunday Assembly, the godless “best bits of church without the church part” phenomenon is apparently on its way to New Mexico. Organizers from the UK are in touch with local freethinkers trying to start up local Sunday Assembly’s.

Are you interested in volunteering, participating, or attending once it gets going? If so, contact SundayAssembly@gmail.com and let them know you’d like more information.

Fare Thee Well

HSNM member Nate Brown bids us goodbye with his move to northern Arizona. We wish him well and look forward to hearing about the humanist community in Sedona. And our HSNM Secretary, Jerry Gilbert is moving to Pueblo, Colorado. He has requested that our Governing Board chores not follow him up there, so we send him off with our heartfelt thanks for his service and warm wishes.

Humanist Book Review: A Call To Action: Women, Religion, Violence, and Power by Jimmy Carter

By Barbara White

As most know, the author is a devout Christian, still teaching Sunday school. He quotes recorded statements of founders of assorted religions worldwide that regard both sexes as equal. But that message was lost by authoritative figures – priests, imams, etc. – turning (via selective quotations) the message to one of male dominance. That squares with my own long-held conclusion, that the more religious any people, the harder it is on women.

Observing that violence against women is on the rise worldwide, he highlights two U.S. areas currently getting attention: campuses of higher learning and the military. Congressional hearings on the military have ended, with the commanding officers, despite their dismal record, still in charge of reporting crimes and dispensing punishment. The message should be even clearer by now: ladies, forget donning a uniform. Why work where your chance of enduring assault and battery is one in five? I see this part of the book as especially useful because the media have fallen short in publicizing

these problems.

Next come the topics of violence and war, specific crimes, conditions of women worldwide, and the work of the Carter Center. So far, so good. But I was caught up short by his statement that “as a Christian” he opposes abortion. The Bible is silent on the subject. Plainly, a society that forces women to bear children they don’t want doesn’t see them as equal. And that in the face of the UN resolution that women alone should determine the size and spacing of their families.

Until recently this book had bestseller status, due at least partially to the cordial feelings most of us have toward the writer. There must be few of such charm and intelligence (nuclear engineer and agriculturalist) working so hard for so long to make the world a better place.

This Month in Science

By Ashley Jordan

We live in a fast paced world. Science makes astonishing breakthroughs every day. Here are some of the most noteworthy ones this month.

Scientists Use Lasers, Stem Cells to Regrow Adult Teeth

Adding to the ever increasing list of benefits that human stem cells possess, scientists now believe that they can regrow adult teeth with lasers, and that the practice could be in your dental office within the next decade. A group of researchers at Harvard’s Wyss Institute, have found that since stem cells can be made into any type of cell needed, they can actually use a low-power laser to “coax” the cells into becoming dentin. The research has wide implication for dentistry, wound healing, and bone restoration, and could put an end to painful root canals, filling cavities, and dentures.

NASA Announced a Design for a “Warp Drive” Ship... And They’re Naming It Enterprise

Mark Radenmaker and Harold White, two obviously Star Trek influenced NASA Engineers, are making thousands of geeky dreams come true with their latest announcement: Warp drive is possible, and NASA is in the process of designing a warp capable ship. They’ve aptly named it the IXS Enterprise... because why wouldn’t you?! If their designs prove to be space worthy and they actually have cracked the theory of warp drive, this will fit right in with the timeline for

other technology Gene Roddenberry's Star Trek has inspired, including but not limited to mobile phones, tablets, flat screen TV's, and Google Glass.

Quantum Teleportation Was Achieved

Alright, this one isn't actually as cool as it sounds. While we're still a long way from being able to teleport actual matter from one place (or time) to another, scientists at the Kavli Institute of Nanoscience at Delft University say they have managed to teleport bits of information up to three meters away. Essentially, what this means is that pursuing this technology could mean the ability to send large amounts of data anywhere in the world-without connection to the internet or other physical ways of transferring information. It's still in the early stages, but the scientists feel confident enough to say they've officially proved Einstein wrong: quantum entanglement, a phenomenon in which particles located as far away as opposite sides of the universe remain inextricably linked, exists.

Researchers Find Vulnerability in Antibiotic Resistant Bacteria

It's one of the greatest medical crises of our time: How do we fight bacteria that have become resistant to our most powerful antibiotic drugs? Well, researchers at the University of East Anglia in Britain might have found a way to combat these deadly germs. Bacteria survive by surrounding themselves in outer shells, or casings. The research team has figured out how bacteria build their shells- and how to kill off the bacteria by "locking the gate" of the shells. This vulnerability could lead the way to a new generation of drugs and treatments that target the protective shells of the bacteria rather than the bacterial themselves, keeping bacteria from forming drug resistance again in the future.

Study Found Female Named Hurricanes Have Triple the Death Count of Male Named Hurricanes

And get this: It's because people don't respect them. Researchers at the University of Illinois and Arizona State University examined six decades of hurricane death rates according to gender, and found that changing a hurricane's name from "Charlie" to "Eloise" could triple the amount of deaths it produces. To test this result, they surveyed a group of people and found that they

were less likely to associate risk or danger with feminine hurricanes. On top of that, these people were also less likely to follow evacuation and preparation procedures prior to the hurricane. The male scientific community has, predictably, reacted with vitriolic outrage at the idea that sexism could be so ingrained in our society that we unconsciously make decisions about weather due to its gender. However, the scientists behind the study and the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences journal which published it are standing by the findings, and insisting that their models and scientific processes were and are correct. The proposed solution to this phenomenon? Stop naming hurricanes after women, obviously. Because if you don't want to get rid of the inherent, ingrained sexism in society, get rid of the women, right?

Those are the top science stories for July. Keep your eyes peeled for more editions of "This Month In Science"!

Liquidators

By Jean O'Hara

One seldom gets to sit still days,
A quiet study of water pays.
Ducks make waves with their wake.
You can watch the Bosque's waters break.
One wonders at the coming woe,
Where will the ducks go?
The turtles sunning on the logs
Know they're safe in the bogs.
Cattails
Never hear the bulldozers' wails.
It's not Central Park at all,
It's Albuquerque ready to fall.
The Bosque is not a surplus value,
Bulldozers will fix that with their ballyhoo.

Food For Thought Quote

"You are personally responsible for becoming more ethical than the society you grew up in." - Eliezer Yudkowsky