



THE HUMANIST SOCIETY OF NEW MEXICO NEWSLETTER

October 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, October 11th

HSNM Informal Meeting 11:00 AM - 1:00 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, October 18th

HSNM Topical Discussion 10:00 AM - Noon

Whole-Hearted Living: Are You Doing It?

Special Collections Library 423 Central Ave. NE

Saturday, October 25th

HSNM Speaker Meeting 10:00 AM - Noon

The Public Banking Solution - A National Movement

Vern Hagen & Fred March

Free and open to the public

Botts Hall, Special Collections Library

423 Central Ave. NE, Albuquerque

Humanist Minute: Robin Matthews

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 HUumanist 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

It's not easy being a prophet. I can see why those guys were all so grumpy. Here you've seen the future plain as day in a dream or waking vision - you know disaster is looming, but with this fortuitous advance warning the worst can be avoided - only, no one will listen. The biblical prophets were mainly treated with derision in their own time, and their stories come down to us as tales of seeming crazy people who spoke to god or were visited by angels or otherwise saw signs and wonders. Some were vindicated when the events they foretold came to pass. However, the way the stories get spun is that God is the one who is vindicated, because He was the one whispering into the ear of the prophet.

Putting aside their legendary dreams and visions, it's quite possible the prophets were just smart people who could see a little further than the ends of their noses. They may have been observant, critical thinkers capable of working out causal relationships and willing to venture an educated guess about

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.

how to avoid a bad situation in the future or rectify an existing one. The problem with being a prophet, versus say a saint or angel or messiah, is that you are all too human and usually long-lived. So, you get to 1) be mocked and 2) suffer the dire events you had tried to prevent and, worst of all, 3) listen to everyone whine about it. "I told you so" is no consolation at all; and if your doomsaying made you the object of disdain in the past, rubbing it in that you were right may get you pilloried.

The prophets of old were all too human and were possibly humanists. Perhaps the dreams and visions, signs and wonders were only fictions designed to galvanize action using the vernacular of the day. I bet we have a lot of scientists, educators, doctors, farmers, artists and accountants who feel like modern day prophets as they watch the future unfold. We talked about the dangers of global malnutrition 40 years ago; today not only is hunger rampant around the globe but increasingly here in the U.S. as well. For decades now, experts have been telling us about the dangers of industrial pollution, nuclear waste, mega-farming, infra-structure decline, the military-industrial complex and endless war, gun violence, copyright abuse, surveillance and tracking by government and private industry, and deteriorating educational and health standards. Unfortunately the experts don't get a lot of media bookings. Preference is given to political pundits, who enact a dialogue (at best) or dramatic disagreement that is a lot like theater, so that even while viewer emotions are heightened, our sense of reality is diminished, and with it the idea that we should or could take action.

The tools of divination are all around us - the very test of sound science is its ability to predict using procedures that can be duplicated and relied on to yield consistent results. Apocalyptic warnings from contemporary prophets are truly distressing exactly because they are founded in verifiable facts, not "take-my-word-for-it" visions. But we have good reason to believe that solutions are also within our power - assuming we can get our heads out of the clouds, or out of the sand.

For our October speaker meeting, two cheerful visionaries will present "The Public Banking Solution," a practical approach to improving the economic health of our communities.

October Speaker Meeting

The Public Banking Solution - A National Movement

By Vern Hagen & Fred March, Members of the Public Banking Institute's (PBI) New Mexico Affiliate

"We Are People Here!"

Public banking is grounded on humanist principles of social, political and economic justice. Its intent is to improve qualified community access to a fair share of the common wealth that belongs to the entire community: its environmental, cultural, financial, educational, infrastructural and business resources.

Ellen Brown, author of *The Web of Debt* and *The Public Banking Solution* founded the Public Banking Institute to educate the public to the problem of corrupt banking practices, and to advocate the founding of public banks owned by states, counties and cities as the solution. Our debt-based money system is reaching its limits and requires significant institutional reform if the national and global economies are to survive. The public banking movement is a response to this reform that does not require changes to United States banking and finance laws and regulations.

Hagen and March will lecture about the rapidly gaining momentum of this nation-wide reform movement, as citizens in many states are demanding an end to the social and economic harm caused by past and current banking abuses. The lecture includes a 12-minute video about the sky-high risks of the global banking system, and a 15-minute power point presentation about Wall Street Bank abuses that threaten the very fabric of our economy and democracy. The lecture will then focus on how public banks can free New Mexico from the high costs of doing business with Wall Street.

Attention: Informal Meeting Time Has Changed!

In order to avoid some of the chaotic happenings at the Peace Center during our morning meetings, the HSNM board has decided to try moving the time of the meeting from 10:00AM-12:00PM to 11:00AM-1:00PM for the October and November meetings. This will allow more ease in parking and arriving and hopefully help our meeting flow more smoothly.

If we hold to tradition, instead of the December

Informal Meeting in the morning we will have a late afternoon Human Light party and potluck.

We are currently looking into other venues for the Informal Meetings in the new year, and as always, your suggestions are needed and appreciated.

HSNM Governing Board Nominations Closed

By Jeanette Smith

The HSNM Nominating Committee (Jeanette Smith, Salem Smith, and Jerry Wesner) has submitted seven names for the seven board positions: Ananda Parnell for President, Randal Wall for Vice President/Speaker Programs, Zelda Gatuskin for Past President, Richard Grady for Treasurer, Cynthia Yabut for Secretary, Ashley Jordan for Member-at-Large/ Newsletter Editor, and Cheryl Gatner for Member-at-Large. They have all been invited to write a brief commentary on their nomination and pertinent biographical information. Voting ballots will accompany this newsletter.

Ballots will be distributed to all members in good standing with the November newsletter.

Get To Know Your Candidates

Nominee for President

Ananda E. Parnell D.Div, CPE, MBA, M.Ed.

First I have to tell you that I am honored to have been nominated for President of HSNM. It is something that I take seriously and enthusiastically. During our last meeting in August, several members voiced concern about my ethical, moral, and legal acceptance of all varieties of beliefs and non-beliefs, as well as what I would want to change as far as the organization goes. As a chaplain, I can never refuse service or comfort to anyone regardless of their beliefs and non-beliefs. I have read the entire Humanist Manifesto and agree wholeheartedly with each and every component of it, including our own responsibilities to do and uphold all that is right and just without relying on any 'higher power.' Our own human light is enough, and indeed it is the only thing that matters, and has been the only thing that makes a difference. I strive to continue to be connected with that Human Element and all the various ways it is expressed.

Ultimately, I do not want to change anything about

HSNM, except to be able to network more with the University and High School communities and be able to provide an opportunity for a variety of individuals throughout the greater Albuquerque community to be socially involved and inherently connected to individuals who are compelled to do right because of their humanity. What I want to do is continue to support the great work you have done and build on the legacy you have created. That truly does not necessitate a great deal of “change,” but it does require a solid vision, which I also bring to the table with a business background, specializing in 501(c)(3) tax exempt organizations, as well as a background in education.

It is my hope that my passion for HSNM, coupled with my qualifications upholds the gracious nomination for my role as president. I accept this nomination with gratitude, joy and light.

Outgoing President
Zelda Gatuskin

For the position of Past President, the HSNM By-laws state: “The outgoing President will continue as a Board member for the two year term or terms of the next serving president.” I look forward to continuing on the board in this new capacity.

As president, I had to keep tabs on many aspects of HSNM; as past president, I’d like to put more focused effort into fewer tasks, as directed by the new president. My own pet project was the Humanist Lives interviews and videos, and I hope we can get that going again. I do have another life outside of HSNM: I am an artist and author, and provide a variety of design and literary services through my business Studio Z, which also represents my musician husband, Frank Johnson. In 2010, I took over the small press Amador Publishers, LLC, through which I publish my own books and a variety of humanist and literary titles by others. I grew up in Wilmington, DE; attended Emerson College in Boston; and have lived in Albuquerque for more than 30 years.

Nominee for Vice President
Randal Wall

I was born and raised in Artesia, NM, went to college at New Mexico State University in Las Cruces and finally ended up in beautiful Albuquerque, NM. I have

worked at Presbyterian Healthcare for 25 years. I’ve been a part of HSNM for the past 12 years. I’ve enjoyed being part of this group and its great people and would like to endeavor to create an even better group for the years to come. I would love to help build this group by seeking out high quality and interesting speakers for our speaker program. I have served in the past as Member-at-Large, Newsletter Editor, and for the past year Vice President.

Nominee for Secretary
Cynthianne Yabut

My only claim to fame is that I was the absolute worst skier ever to do a face plant on the Sesame Street kiddie slope at Mammoth ski resort. I am a retired copy editor, and during most of my retirement I was house-bound, taking care of my invalid mother. After she died, I found the Humanist Society, a good bunch of open-minded, rational people who have become my community. Serving on the board takes a few hours every month or so. It’s the least I can do.

Nominee for Treasurer
Richard Grady

I am a retired accountant and have lived in Albuquerque for 6 years, but I have been a member of AHA quite a bit longer than that. I love music, especially classical, opera and jazz, and sing in a barbershop chorus and quartet. My barbershop quartet performed at the Humanist Ice Cream Social in May. I am the treasurer of the local chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society, and also a trumpet player who once played in the Tulsa Philharmonic. My other principal hobby is Tournament Bridge. I have three children and 10 grandchildren. I love movies and read voraciously.

Nominee for Member-at-Large
Ashley Jordan

I found the Humanist Society of New Mexico when I contacted Zelda Gatuskin about doing an internship with her Humanist Press Amador Publishers, LLC. It has been a wild ride ever since she invited me to my first meeting, having been nominated to the Board as Member-at-Large, and then handed the reins to the Newsletter when Randy stepped up to be our Vice President. I do my best to provide you with an interesting and exciting newsletter each and every month, and enjoy

sharing my life and joys and disappointments with our community at our meetings and parties. I greatly value being a member of HSNM, and am happy to continue serving on the board to maintain and improve our organization in the coming years.

When I'm not slaving away at your newsletter, I can usually be found telling people they are wrong on the internet, writing for TheHumanist.Com or Pitbull Rescue Central, and dressing my husband's Chihuahua up in dragon costumes for Halloween.

Nominee for Member-at-Large
Cheryl Gatner

Originally from Canada, I have lived in the US for the past 21 years. I worked as an RN in Canada, Saudi Arabia and here in the US. Being brought up our family was Secular for the most part, though I did attend the United Church of Canada several times and really never understood what their premise was until I was in my early 20's. I have always lived as a Humanist. My interest and passions vary but I am now interested in social justice causes, women's rights and presently helping coordinate the newly formed Humanist Sunday School CoOp. My family live in Canada but I have my 3 'furry' children here with me. I am honored to be asked to be a member-at-large for our local Humanist chapter and graciously accept this invitation.

New Releases from Amador Publishers!
Join us for a Book Bash on October 19
by Zelda Gatuskin

What's a Book Bash? It's a party at which we introduce new titles, celebrate authors, enjoy readings, music, refreshments and socializing. Oh, and we sell books - which is what keeps our "little humanist press that could" chugging along.

Amador Publishers was the labor of love of the late Harry Willson and Adela Amador, prolific authors and devoted members of HSNM. It is thanks to them that I am an author, publisher and humanist.

Harry wrote for this newsletter frequently, as did Don Gutierrez, another late great humanist author I have had the pleasure to work with. Don wanted to have me re-publish a work of literary criticism about the poetry of Kenneth Rexroth, and after Don died last year his

sons carried on with the project. "The Holiness of the Real: the Short Verse of Kenneth Rexroth" (second edition) is one of the two books that will be introduced on October 19, and members of Don's family will be on hand.

The second book is a collection of poetry called "Another Spring" by Virginia poet Robin Matthews, and Robin himself will be here! He has an interesting history with New Mexico, where he lived in the 1970s, and to which some of his poetry alludes. As well, there is a definite and entirely serendipitous relationship in lyric style and humanist subject between the Rexroth poetry that Don explored in his book and Robin's poems.

To round out our poetic trip down the decades, I've asked Frank to share some songs from the 60s and 70s. And there's one more thing that makes the unveiling of these books especially exciting: the beautiful book covers are the work of our own HSNM Newsletter editor, Ashley Jordan.

Please come support and celebrate our creative humanist endeavor and labor of love. Bring a poem to read!

What: Amador Publishers Book Bash Celebrating the release of 2 new titles:

"Another Spring" collected poems by Robin Matthews
"The Holiness of the Real: the Short Verse of Kenneth Rexroth" by Donald Gutierrez

When: Sunday, October 19, 2014, from 1:30 to 4:00 PM

Where: Albuquerque Center for Peace and Justice; 202 Harvard SE, Albuquerque

Reading and Booksigning: poet Robin Matthews, author Zelda Gatuskin, and special guests

Music: Frank G. Johnson with songs of the 1960s and '70s

Plus: Refreshments, Book Sales, Poetry Open Mic

Cost: FREE

HSNM Family CoOp Lives On!

We've now had two successful meetings of our reenergized HSNM Family CoOp, with three more scheduled on October 12, November 9, and December 14. Led by parents and helped along by HSNM Members Zelda Gatuskin, Cheryl Gatner and Ashley Jordan, our CoOp is back to doing what our community needs: Creating safe spaces for humanist families and children to explore science and build community.

Our new permanent location, the Mountain Mahogany community school in the North Valley, allows the parents and kids plenty of space for play and experiments, as shown at our last meeting when the kids got to play with Non-Newtonian fluids. Don't worry- We cleaned up the mess!

We're always looking for ideas and people to help out --in fact we have a few kids particularly interested in the science of explosions --so if you'd like to get involved or have an idea for an experiment or lesson, you can contact Cheryl Gatner at kewwlnurse@gmail.com or Ashley Jordan at AshleyNJordan@gmx.com to volunteer!

HSNM Financial Report

The Humanist Society of New Mexico's current finances as of September 21st, 2014 are as follows:

General Fund: \$5,272.84

Scholarship Fund: \$2,250.00

Dues for HSNM are \$20 for individuals and \$30 for couples, and we are collecting dues for the new enrollment year now. If you would like to become a member of HSNM or make an additional contribution, you can make checks payable to Humanist Society of New Mexico or HSNM and mail them to Humanist Society of New Mexico, P.O. Box 27293, Albuquerque, NM 87125-7293.

All Families Matter Coalition Launches New Project; Here's How You Can Help

By Havens Levitt

Please help us spread the word about a new project launched this week by Why Marriage Matters New Mexico in partnership with Familia es Familia New Mexico. Here is a summary of the project:

In New Mexico, we don't turn our backs on our gay and lesbian family members. It's time to talk... Over the next several weeks, Familia es Familia New Mexico will be engaging many New Mexico communities through a bilingual public education radio campaign consisting of stories. These stories were developed in collaboration with a community member-led committee tasked with developing messages on issues surrounding marriage equality, and to continue the conversation of

fairness, acceptance, and family unity in various real life situations. The New Mexico Supreme Court has recognized the right to marry, and county clerks have been issuing licenses to same-sex couples since 2013. Even with this amazing progress, families in many parts of our state still struggle with issues of acceptance, bullying and a lack of understanding.

We have chosen three stories that are based on real life situations and produced three radio spots that will air on both Spanish-Language and English-Language stations: a father's journey story to acceptance of his gay son, a story about bullying with a grandfather intervening on the child's behalf, and a mother's acceptance of her gay son's spouse. The spots focus on broad issues in our community: LGBTQ homeless youth, acceptance, family inclusion, and bullying prevention - and are congruent with the messaging that was created with a lot of input from Coalition members back at the end of 2012.

The radio spots will launch this week with a press conference tomorrow. I'm asking you to:

1) Encourage folks to listen for the ads, go to the website to hear them, spread the word about them, and engage in conversation about them. The ads will be aired both inside and outside the I-25 corridor, and they will be available online at <http://eqnm.org/wmmnm-radio-ads.aspx>. This webpage also includes information about where the ads will run.

2) SHARE! As we roll out the three different ads over the next three weeks, there will be social media posts for you to share. You can also email the general press release to our friends, families, and other coalitions, which can be found here: http://equalityfederation.salsalabs.com/o/35024/t/0/blastContent.jsp?email_blast_KEY=18866

In Social Media posts, please point back to the webpage we've created for this effort: <http://bit.ly/familiaesfamilia-radio>

I'd really appreciate your help in getting this info out to the largest number of people.

HSNM joined the All Families Matter Coalition in 2013, just before the New Mexico Supreme Court ruled same-sex marriage constitutional in December 2013. There

is still much more to be done in our communities when it comes to same-sex marriage and acceptance for all LGBTQIAP+ individuals, so please consider sharing this new campaign as coalition members.

Halloween: It Turns Out It's Not Just About Embarrassing Your Children or Pets On The Internet By Ashley Jordan

It's that time of year again. No doubt you've already been barraged in every store and on the internet by black and orange décor and images of dancing skeletons, and it's not even October yet as I write this.

Halloween, like many holidays we celebrate in America, is at its core superstition and myth that's been surrounded by candy, adorable children in costumes, and petulant pranking teenagers. It's certainly not the worst of holidays when it comes to being a nonbeliever in your community; not going to church on Christmas can get your garage spray painted, but not putting out a bowl of candy on Halloween pretty much just means you dislike loud hyper children, and no one seems to put up too much of a fuss about that.

Whether you enjoy Halloween or hate it, it's always good to know the history behind our holidays and celebrations, so here are some interesting facts you might not have known about Halloween to get you through our spooky season.

1. The term "Halloween" comes from the Catholics

Hallowmas was a three-day Catholic holiday where saints were honored and people prayed for the recently deceased. At the start of the 11th century, it was decreed by the pope that it would last from Oct. 31 (All Hallow's Eve) until Nov. 2, most likely because that was when the Wiccan holiday Samhain was celebrated and the church was trying to convert the pagans. But because Protestant England did not believe in Catholic saints, the rituals traditionally associated with Hallowmas (or Halloween) became associated with Guy Fawkes Night. England declared November 5th Guy Fawkes Night to commemorate the capture and execution of Guy Fawkes, who co-conspired to blow up the Parliament in 1605 in order to restore a Catholic king.

2. Halloween has roots around the world, and is really, really old

Also called Hallows' Eve, Hallows' Evening, All Hallows' Eve, Witches Night, Lamswool, Snap-Apple Night, Samhain, and Summer's End, Halloween is actually much older than Catholicism, and is thought to have originated around 4000 B.C. which means Halloween has been around for over 6,000 years. Halloween was influenced by the ancient Roman festival Pomona, which celebrated the harvest goddess of the same name. Most of the things we associate with Halloween actually had to do with the harvest, such as scarecrows and bonfires.

In China, Teng Chieh or the Lantern Festival is practiced on Halloween. Lanterns shaped like dragons and other animals are hung around houses and streets to help guide the spirits back to their earthly homes. To honor their deceased loved ones, family members leave food and water by the portraits of their ancestors.

Meanwhile Mexico celebrates the Day of the Dead (Dias de los Muertos) on All Saints' Day (November 1) and All Souls' Day (November 2) instead of Halloween. The townspeople dress up like ghouls and parade down the street, and New Mexico has a very lively Dias de los Muertos parade each year.

3. We should carve Turnips, not Pumpkins

The origin of Jack-O-Lanterns comes from a Celtic folk tale of a stingy farmer named Jack who would constantly play tricks on the devil. The devil responded by forcing him to wander purgatory with only a burning lump of coal from hell. Jack took the coal and made a lantern from a turnip, using it to guide his lost soul. The myth was brought over by Irish families fleeing the potato famine in the 1800's, and since turnips were hard to come by in America, pumpkins were used as a substitute to guide lost souls and keep evil spirits like "Jack of the Lantern" away.

Boston, Massachusetts, holds the record for the most Jack O'Lanterns lit at once (30,128), and the largest pumpkin ever measured was grown by Norm Craven, who broke the world record in 1993 with a 836 lb. pumpkin.

4. Halloween is still the Wiccan New Year

Halloween originates from a Celtic tradition called Samhain, a festival that marked the end of the Celtic

calendar year in Ireland, Scotland, and the Isle of Man. They believed it was a time that spirits or fairies could enter our world, and the Celts would put out treats and food to placate the spirits — sometimes, a place at the table was even set for the souls of the dead.

Wiccans still celebrate Samhain as a New Year celebration today.

Interestingly, the intense fear of Halloween is named Samhainophobia, after the wiccan holiday, and not after the Christian rooted one.

5. Halloween is the second highest grossing commercial American holiday of the year

The candy industry in America rakes in an average of \$2 billion annually thanks to Halloween (that's 90 million pounds of chocolate, for those keeping track).

Americans spend an estimated \$6 billion on Halloween annually, including candy, costumes, and decorations, according to History.com. (The most commercial holiday in the U.S. is Christmas.)

6. Halloween and the Candy Industry supposedly influenced Daylight Savings Time

Candy makers supposedly lobbied to extend daylight savings time into the beginning of November to get an extra hour of daylight so children could collect even more candy (thus forcing people to purchase more candy to meet the demand). They wanted it so badly that during the 1985 hearings on Daylight Savings they put candy pumpkins on the seat of every senator, according to NPR. (The candy industry disputes this account, according to The New York Times.)

It's not everything there is to know about Halloween, but it's probably more than you wanted. Whatever you decide to do this Hallows Eve, whether it's taking your kids around in overpriced costumes for overpriced candy, or sitting at home watching Bette Midler put a spell on Salem, or, like me, dressing your Chihuahua up in ridiculous costumes and posting pictures to the internet, do it safely! Traffic accidents and emergency

room visits spike every year on Halloween, making it to this day one of the most dangerous nights to be out all year.

It's not the spirits you have to watch out for, after all.

Gatherers of The Land

By Jean O'Hara

A spring afternoon you and I did walk.
We saw the bladed green grass waft gently.
The breeze was absent like our talk.
Nature coruscated the bent grass; lee
And wind sides were absent on this hill top
Because the worn down terraces that housed
The goat shed no longer heard the goats clop,
Clipping, smelling and getting neighbors moused.
"You would remove poems, quietude, nature,
Earth, fire and water, then, the goats, then, me,"
Said the poet to the neighbors. For sure
As the concatenation of every
Refulgent argument quivers and dies.
Goats, humans, get letters patent's lies.

Food For Thought Quote

"The most dangerous phrase in the language is, 'We've always done it this way.'" – Admiral Grace Hopper