



# Humanist Society of New Mexico



April 2013

<http://humanistsocietyofnm.org/> [zelda@amadorbooks.com](mailto:zelda@amadorbooks.com)

## Quote of the Month

Success is failure recycled. Life is death reborn.

Jonathan Lockwood Huie

## HSNM Family Co-Op

### Alternative Children's Sunday School

Classes for kids of all ages are at 10:00AM  
on the first and third Sundays of each month  
at a local private School.

Call 505-292-4375 for more information  
or go to [www.MeetUp.com/Humanist-Family-CoOp/](http://www.MeetUp.com/Humanist-Family-CoOp/)

### Santa Fe Humanists

April 6th, 2013 at 10:30am

*What's On Your Mind? - Open Discussion*

Library of Unitarian Universalist Congregation  
of Santa Fe

107 W. Barcelona Rd. Santa Fe

For more information contact Martin Tierney  
(505) 983-5001

## Meetings Held in Albuquerque

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### Saturday, April 13th, 10:10am to noon

Informal Meeting

HSNM Members and their Guests Only. For  
invitation or questions, please contact Zelda  
Gatuskin at 505-344-6102.

Refreshments: Salem Smith

Summit Apartments, 3901 Indian School NE

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### Saturday, April 20th, 10:00am to noon

Topical Discussion – Open to the Public

Prostitution: Pros and Cons

North Valley Library, 7704-B 2nd Street NW  
(Use entrance for First Choice Community Health)

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### Saturday, April 27th, 10:00am to noon

Speaker Meeting - Open to the Public

*The Yezidis*

Rob Leutheuser

Humanist Minute: TBA

Refreshments: TBD

Central New Mexico Community College, Montoya  
Campus  
4700 Morris NE, Albuquerque  
Room H-128

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.

## **The Humanist Society of New Mexico**

*A Chapter of the American Humanist Association.*

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

### **Officers/Committees**

*Zelda Gatuskin: President*

*Bill Kimbrough: Vice President/Speaker Programs*

*Leland Franks: Past President*

*Eric Pax: Treasurer*

*Jerry Gilbert: Secretary/Membership*

*Jay Lee Evans, Member-at-Large*

*Richard Grady, Member-at-Large*

*Ashley Jordan, Member-at-Large*

*Randall Wall, Member-at-Large*

### **Ongoing Projects:**

*Ron Herman, HSNM Family Co-op Coordinator*

*Randall Wall, Newsletter Editor*

*Attila Csanyi, Friendly Philosopher's Director*

*Sylvia Ramos, Chair, Feminist Caucus-HSNM*

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, Randall Wall, paragon2012@comcast.net or 1009 Childers NE, Albuquerque, NM 87112. The deadline for Newsletter submissions is the third Saturday of each month. Website submissions may be sent to [president@humanistsocietyofnm.org](mailto:president@humanistsocietyofnm.org). HSNM dues are now paid separately from AHA dues, visit [www.americanhumanist.org](http://www.americanhumanist.org) for more information about the American Humanist Association.

## **President's Message for April 2013**

by Zelda Leah Gatuskin

HSNM periodically makes our membership list available to all members in good standing, which is not uncommon for dues-paying groups. We want HSNM members to be connected to each other without going through intermediaries. How timely that even as HSNM board members and volunteers are working to get our list updated and ready for distribution, I am prepping my talk on privacy rights. It is a reminder to me of why even freethinker groups impose certain rules and protocols on ourselves and strive to follow them conscientiously.

To start, we pay dues not only to support the activities of the group but to indicate our willingness to act responsibly within the HSNM community. This includes respecting the privacy of those who are or have been members of HSNM. When you are contacted from time to time about paying dues or renewing your membership, we are not merely concerned with bolstering our bank account and membership numbers. We have a responsibility to protect member information from being shared outside of our organization. This is the main reason that folks who get behind in their dues and do not respond to our reminders are dropped from our membership list. (If there are other reasons you haven't paid dues, like you can't afford to, you should speak to a board member, because we do have members who are willing to sponsor additional memberships upon request.)

It is entirely possible to partake of HSNM's community benefits without joining, and many do. Our HSNM Newsletter and educational materials are available online. Our calendar of meetings is widely disseminated, and the meetings are free and open to the public (or, if "members and guests only," easy to get invited to). We welcome and encourage the wider community to join into our educational and public service activities.

Those who do join HSNM create the voting body that makes decisions for the group, which is a Chapter of the AHA and bound by their requirement that we operate by democratic process. We therefore follow a set of Bylaws which our members have approved; these set forth a structure of standing committees comprised of and

chaired by HSNM members in good standing. The committees are intended to perform necessary functions or recruit volunteers to do so, and to guide the HSNM Governing Board (GB) with respect to the application of our resources. This is what might be called a bottom-up or horizontal organizational structure as opposed to a top-down hierarchy. Every two years a new GB is elected without much if any politicking, because the task of any GB is not to sweep in with a brand new agenda but to keep our established programs running smoothly and facilitate the progress of new initiatives that reflect the will of the membership. In addition to the standing committees, HSNM also has ad hoc committees and subcommittees that have come about via direct organizing among our members with approval and support from the GB. These include the Humanist Sunday School and Family Coop, the Feminist Caucus and the Humanist Lives project.

While we have had some success mobilizing special projects, our standing committees have unfortunately gone by the wayside. A Membership Committee could and should be tasked with advising the GB on the manner in which our membership list is annually reviewed, purged and shared. Equally important matters await the attention of engaged Public Information, Education and Social committees. In the absence of fully functioning committees, your GB members find ourselves wearing too many hats for comfort. That is not efficient, effective, democratic or fair, and I have expressed to the GB, as I now appeal to the general membership, that my primary goal for this executive term is to resuscitate our standing committees.

Please read on for the descriptions of each committee contained in our bylaws and whom to contact if you would like to volunteer for a committee position. Your involvement might be as simple yet invaluable as helping to guide decision-making on a single topic, or perhaps you will plunge in to find a wellspring of untapped energy and talent that you have never had a chance to explore before. I invite you to be part of this humanist experiment. HSNM represents a highly thoughtful, educated, creative, diverse and caring community. Avail yourself of our combined experience and share your own to help make us a more influential and resilient grassroots organization that walks the talk of our humanist, egalitarian ideals.

#### From the BYLAWS OF HUMANIST SOCIETY OF NEW MEXICO (2011)

H. Standing Committees: Chairpersons of Standing Committees may select from the Membership the other

members of his/her Committee. Chairpersons will keep records of Committee activities and make those available to the Board. The Standing Committees are:

1. Public Information: It will:
  - a. assign an editor to produce and distribute to all members a monthly Newsletter which will announce the time and place of meetings and all other HSNM events and activities. Newsletter content will advance the goals and ideals of Humanism.
  - b. assign a webmaster to create, maintain, and update an HSNM website.
  - c. disseminate to the general public, through various media, information about humanism, HSNM, and HSNM events.
2. Education: It will arrange Society programs for adult and child education about humanism. All programs must be approved by the Board.
3. Membership: It will recruit and retain members in the Society, keep records of all members and their status, and stay aware of member needs and views.
4. Social: It will arrange social events and see that refreshments are provided at general meetings and social events.

#### To Volunteer for Standing and Ad hoc Committees

##### Contact:

for Public Information: Jay Lee Evans, (505) 917-6450, jlerr@q.com  
for Education, general and adult: Fred March, (505) 323-6784, fmatch@thinkwellassociates.com  
for Membership: Jerry Gilbert, (505) 400-9649, DrJGilbert@aol.com  
for Social: Richard Grady, (505) 554-1156, jr\_grady@hotmail.com  
for Children's Education: Ron Herman, (505) 292-4375, RHerman847@aol.com  
for Humanist Lives: Ashley Jordan, (505) 239-2341, AshleyNJordan@gmx.com  
for Feminist Caucus HSNM: Sylvia Ramos, 505 401-0601, feministcaucushsnm@hotmail.com

#### **Speaker Bio and Topic**

Rob Leutheuser has been taking photographs for about 40 years now. He embarked on his first extended free-form overseas travel in South America and the Caribbean with camera in hand shortly after graduating from the University of Michigan with a degree in Natural Resources Management. As a Peace Corps volunteer he lived in the Central African Empire/Republic for three years in the late-seventies, and upon returning to the States he began a successful professional career working in Western US water

management. Overseas travels and photo adventures, though less extensive during this period, continued to feed the beast. At the turn of the millennium he concluded his civil service career and since has concentrated his energies on life, photography, and travel.

### **The Yezidis**

In the greater Middle East there is the little known religion of Yezidism practiced by a small number adherents who, if not Kurdish, at least share a few thousand years of history and culture with the Kurds.

The Yezidi faith contains elements of many religions including Zoroastrianism, Islam, Christianity, Judaism and Gnostic and local pre-Islamic beliefs. Although the religion is *at least* 1,000 years old, the disparity of information regarding its history and beliefs is stunning - not only among scholars, but among the Yezidis themselves. One of the most onerous and common misconceptions of Yezidis is that they are devil worshippers. Since 2004, Rob Leutheuser has visited Yezidis throughout the region, in Germany and the US. He will share his experiences among the Yezidis. His images will accompany the talk.

### **State Department Program brings African Delegates to HSNM**

by Mina Yamashita

On February 9, 2013, HSNM's informal meeting hosted the visit of ten African delegates, three interpreters and Albuquerque liaison Maria Del Carmen Lopez Martinez, Programmer for the Albuquerque Council for International Visitors. Due to interest in our African visitors, we had a full house—nearly fifty attending—including the delegation.

The delegates, their affiliations, and respective countries are: **Mr. Francois Paul Ramde**, NGO coordinator/BurkinaFaso; **Mr. Abasse Yekini**, President of Young Muslims Association, Aboisso/Ivory Coast; **Sheikh Mohamed Omer Fetah**, Imam of Abdulkadir Mosque in Dire Dawa/Ethiopia; **Mr. Seth Ibrahim Ayi**, Producer/Director Islamic Programs, Metro TV/Ghana; **Ms. Sheila Razoah Bosire**, Managing Editor/Entrepreneur, Canon Literature Media/Belief Magazine/Kenya; **Mr. Mehngoankeh Baymie**, Chairman, Baha'i Youth of Liberia/Liberia; **Mr. Ely Terra**, President of the National Executive Committee of the Biblical Group of the Students and Pupils of Mali/Mali; **Mr. Mohamed Lemine Shah**, Imam of Mosque Al Nasr of Dar Naim/Mauritania; **Mr.**

**Mouhamed Sani Manzo**, Vice-President of NASI (private Islamic association)/Niger; and **Dr. Mohamed Abdelrahman Yousif Mohamed Nour**, Assistant to Leader, Ansar Al Sunna (Religious organization devoted to interfaith dialogue and peace)/Sudan.

Our event was part of the U.S. Department of State's Office of International Visitors Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs "Tolerance and Interfaith Dialogue in the U.S.: A Project for Africa" program.

One candidate was chosen from each of ten African countries. Their U.S. itinerary began in Washington D.C. and on to states including Utah, New Mexico, and Florida where they met with area representatives and religious groups to experience a cross-section of interfaith traditions and practices.

Albuquerque offered an array of experiences with visits to Laguna Pueblo, the Islamic Center, the Buddhist Center, Congregation Albert, a historic Catholic church, and our HSNM meeting, among others. Carmen's family hosted an evening of New Mexican dining and entertainment. Ours was the only city where they met with the mayor, which they understood to show great respect for their group.

The visitors enjoyed Laguna Pueblo, noting that tribal traditions co-existed with modern life-styles. One delegate, on visiting Temple Albert, said the experience changed his understanding of Jewish culture. Another delegate hadn't met anyone of Jewish faith, and another felt it important that this minority co-existed, and communicated with other groups. One visitor opined that the existence of our HSNM group meant that "religion is not serving its purpose" in American culture. Carmen brought to my attention that the Imam of our local mosque was brought here from Africa, and was part of a previous State Department visit.

It's impossible to describe the outcome of this trip. The time spent was too brief to express the depth of information gathered by our visitors and our own members. Most delegates said Albuquerque was their favorite of all of the cities and that they'd like to come back to visit or live here—a successful meeting of hearts and minds.

If anyone would like to contact the delegates to follow up we have their contact information. Email me at: [mbear@mbear.com](mailto:mbear@mbear.com)

### On the Horizon

HSNM to provide phone team for KUNM pledge drive. Listen to KUNM (89.9 FM) on Thursday, April 11, from 4:00 to 7:00 pm to hear mention of HSNM volunteers helping to answer phones. This would be a great time to call in with your pledge to our local public radio station and let them know that humanists support community radio.

Friday, May 10 through Sunday, May 12, the first-ever Southwest Book Fiesta will be held at the Albuquerque Convention Center. Hours are 9:00AM-6:00PM Friday and Saturday and 9:00AM-5:00PM on Sunday. HSNM will be sharing **Booth #331** with Amador Publishers so that we can greet the public, promote humanism and humanist literature and spread the word about our organization and special projects. Contact Zelda Gatuskin at 505-344-6102 or [zelda@amadorbooks.com](mailto:zelda@amadorbooks.com) to volunteer to help with HSNM's presence at the event. We need help preparing our handouts and maybe gathering some humanist "bling" to sell to raise funds for HSNM, setting up (on Thursday, May 9), and staffing the booth. There will be a wide range of exhibitors, and thousands of attendees are expected.

The AHA National Conference will be held in San Diego, CA May 30 through June 2. Once again, HSNM will be well represented, and our delegation will report back to HSNM on what we did and learned later in the summer.

### On The Many Faces of Humanism

Fred March in into his fifth year as an instructor at the University of New Mexico's Osher Lifelong Learning Center. He has continued to update his Many Faces of Humanism course and has recently replaced the version previously on the AHA website. The course is intended for all humanists as well as for the general public. The web version is in a movie format made from his original lecture slide with his voice-over. The course has five Parts:

Part I: What is Humanism?

Part II: A Brief History of Humanist Thought

Part III: Evolution of the Human Social Order

Part IV: Humanism and Democracy

Part V: Are Science and Reason Always the Answer?

Fred would very much welcome opinions, comments, critique and suggestions from HSNM members. He can be contacted at [fmarch@thinkwellassociates.com](mailto:fmarch@thinkwellassociates.com).

### Death of A Flower

by Jean O'Hara

The flower doesn't die only the Beholders  
That see the frail end of summer's thoughtfulness.  
Expression cease to live. Life shoulders  
Discretion making way for disdain, (cull'd haughtiness.)  
"Living is a miracle," spake Spirits.  
Yet, the great unwashed trample flowers much  
Like they kill the poets, saying, "Fear this."  
War makes no distinction with death's stamped clutch.  
War is useless, Unilateral  
Contracts spent breed conflict and innocent  
Sacred countries go. What's a young man's logical  
Eschatology? It's now bent.  
If contracts or treaties aren't honored,  
Where is the final judgment monitored?



### First Unitarian HUumanist Group, 7pm,

April 16th, 7pm to 8:30pm

Social Hall, First Unitarian Universalist Church,  
3701 Carlisle Blvd. NE

Open to both Religious and Secular Humanists

Meets the second Tuesday of each month

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### Roswatheists

Saturday, April 6th, 2:45pm

Saturday, April 20th, 2:45pm

Starbucks, 1309 N. Main Street, Roswell, NM