



# Humanist Society of New Mexico



October 2011

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

## Quote of the Month

Violence is an admission that one's ideas and goals cannot prevail on their own merits.

Edward Kennedy

## Upcoming HSNM Meetings

Meetings are free and run from 10:00 to noon  
(except where noted)

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**Saturday, October 8<sup>th</sup>**

### Informal Meeting

Informal Meeting 10:00 a.m. - noon  
at the home of Leland Franks, 615 Ridge Pl. NE  
Restricted to Members and their Guests Only.  
For invitation or directions please contact Leland at  
505-247-1537.

Refreshments: Helen and Jack Fuller

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**Saturday, October 15<sup>th</sup>**

### Topical Discussion – Open to the Public

*Let's Be Honest About Dishonesty*

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

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**Saturday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>**

### Speaker Meeting – Open to the Public

*36 (Bad) Arguments for God's Existence*

By Rebecca Goldstein

Humanist Minute: Roy Moody

Reception to follow: noon to 1:00pm  
UNM Law School, Room 2402, 1117 Stanford NE

## HSNM Family Co-Op Alternative Children's Sunday School

3:00 p.m. first and third Sundays  
Unitarian Universalist Church (UUC)  
Comanche and Carlisle, NE  
Call 505-292-4375 for more information  
or go to [www.Meetup.com](http://www.Meetup.com).

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### Santa Fe Humanists Saturday, October 1<sup>st</sup>, 10:30am

*Mormonism*  
Guest: Larry Ogan

Community Room, La Farge Branch of the  
Santa Fe Public Library, 1730 Llano St.  
For more information contact Bill Weihofen  
(505) 988-1343

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### Friendly Philosophers

**Monday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>** - General Discussion

**Monday, October 17<sup>th</sup>**-

*Urbanization: Impact on Global Climate*

Paul Deal

Copper Canyon Restaurant, 5455 Gibson (opposite  
Lovelace Hospital) in conference dining room.  
Dinner at 5:30; talk follows.

**H**umanism 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*

*Roy Moody: Vice President*

*[Education/Programs]*

*Fred March: Past President*

*[Special Projects]*

*Leland Franks: Treasurer*

*Jerry Gilbert: Secretary [By-laws, Membership]*

*Carolyn Kaye, 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*

Subscription to HSNM Newsletter, published monthly, accompanies HSNM membership or can be obtained by nonmembers for \$15 annually. HSNM membership is \$15/year (\$20 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](mailto: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, News & Notes**

by Zelda Gatuskin

Last month I wrote about building our local humanist community. This month we have an opportunity to advance the cause by coming together for our very special October 22 Speaker Meeting with Rebecca Goldstein, AHA's Humanist of the Year. We will host a reception following the talk, which will give us a chance to visit with each other as well as with Rebecca. I'd love to have our members from Santa Fe, the east mountains and other outlying areas join us for this event. For those who live farther afield, we want to make it easier for you to attend by providing home hospitality. If you have a long drive and would like to come into town Friday and stay overnight, we will find an Albuquerque member to host you. Anyone who either needs home hospitality or is willing to host an out of town member should contact Jerry Gilbert. Those who are here in Albuquerque and would like to help, but don't have room for guests, can also contact Jerry to offer help with logistics, or get in touch with Ruthie Francis to help with the refreshments and reception arrangements.

The Humanist Society of New Mexico is a statewide organization. This Newsletter is our vehicle for communicating with each other. We welcome reports from all parts of the state. I know that some of you feel isolated and are looking for other humanists in your area, or have formed a small satellite group and are looking for speakers and activities. Let's all keep each other in mind as we travel around the state, try to make contact, and do what we can to expand our reach and visibility. Now that we have completed our membership renewal period, an updated membership list will be distributed to all members. You can use this list to look for members near you.

For those who use the Internet (most but not all of us), we have our website, an HSNM Yahoo Group, and email to make communication easy across the miles. Your input and contributions to the website are welcome, and there is a wealth of resources online which can be used to promote humanism and membership in our society.

Thank you one and all for your enthusiastic renewals, your additional contributions, and your interest in our special projects. You will be getting more individual responses to your feedback from the GB and committee chairs in the coming weeks.

## **Governance Notebook**

by Zelda Gatuskin

The HSNM Governing Board met on Saturday, September 10. Here is a brief summary of our work:

We reviewed responses to the proposed by-laws revision. We had very few, which suggests that the proposal has passed muster. We voted to move the proposal forward to a membership vote on ratification. We also allocated funds to run ads for the HSNM Family Coop, and we discussed HSNM meeting plans and special activities for October, November and December. See below for more details on these items. We also reluctantly accepted the resignation of our newest member Veronica Garcia due to her time constraints. For a copy of our meeting minutes, contact Jerry Gilbert.

**About your By-laws Ballot:** The final version of the proposed by-laws that we will be voting on is posted on the HSNM website (follow the link on our home page). Any member may request to have a fresh copy sent to them by e-mail or snail-mail, but since so little has changed, we are not going to the expense to print and distribute complete new copies to everyone. Our thanks to all who weighed in, and especially to Angela Welford for carefully reviewing the document and pointing out a few changes in word order and punctuation that make the language more clear. We now invite all members in good standing to cast your vote on adoption of these new by-laws. Use the ballot that is printed at the end of this Newsletter, or follow the instructions for casting a vote by e-mail. All votes must be received by October 15 to be counted. Results will be announced at the October 22 Speaker Meeting and published on the website and in the December Newsletter.

Our **October 22 Speaker Meeting** with Rebecca Goldstein will be in room 2402 at the Law School (our usual room is 2406), and we will hold a reception afterwards in the “Forum” area on the main level. If you can help with refreshments, set-up or clean-up, please contact: Ruthie Francis (505)294-4367 [ruthe@msn.com](mailto:ruthe@msn.com). If you are willing to provide home hospitality for one or more out-of-town members so they can attend this special meeting, please contact Jerry Gilbert.

We will use our **November Speaker Meeting** as a General Membership Meeting. This will be a chance to discuss our ongoing projects, talk about plans for the future, and have some fun too. If you would like to present a report, a proposal, a poem, a song, a joke, or have an issue you would like to hear addressed by the Board, contact Roy Moody.

There will not be a Speaker Meeting in December, but we will have a **Holiday Lights party**. If you would like to help plan this event, contact Fred March.

### **How to contact your GB members:**

**Zelda Gatuskin**, President, (505)344-6102

[zelda@amadorbooks.com](mailto:zelda@amadorbooks.com)

**Roy Moody**, Vice President, (505)344-8930

[speaker@roymoody.com](mailto:speaker@roymoody.com)

**Fred March**, Past President, (505)323-6784

[march@thinkwellassociates.com](mailto:march@thinkwellassociates.com)

**Leland Franks**, Treasurer, (505)247-1537

[lelandof@gmail.com](mailto:lelandof@gmail.com)

**Jerry Gilbert**, Secretary, (505)400-9649

[drjgilbert@aol.com](mailto:drjgilbert@aol.com)

**Carolyn Glen Kaye**, Member-at-Large, (505) 323-5288

**Randy Wall**, Member-at-Large/Newsletter Editor

(505) 379-5791, [Paragon2012@comcast.net](mailto:Paragon2012@comcast.net)

## **Next Speaker Meeting Bio and Introduction**

**Faith and reason:** not since the Enlightenment has the clash between these ideals been so much on people’s minds. World events are being shaped by fervent believers at home and abroad, while a new, aggressive atheism is asserting itself in the public sphere. These clashes fill the headlines, op-ed pages, and bestseller lists, and show no signs of abating. On purely intellectual grounds the skeptics would seem to have everything on their side. Yet people refuse to accept their seemingly irrefutable arguments, and embrace faith in God as their source of meaning, purpose, and comfort. This is the subject matter of Rebecca Goldstein's novel, *Thirty-Six Arguments for the Existence of God: A Work of Fiction*. Her premise is that the tension between religion and doubt cannot be understood through rational argument alone, but also must be explored from the inside—from the point of view of individual people caught in the raptures and torments of religious experience in all their variety. And that can only be done from the insider perspective of fiction.

**Rebecca Newberger Goldstein** is a novelist and philosopher and the author of nine books. She grew up in White Plains, New York, the daughter of a cantor, and graduated summa cum laude from Barnard College, receiving the Montague Prize for Excellence in Philosophy, and immediately went on to graduate work at Princeton University, receiving her Ph.D. in philosophy, specializing in philosophy of science and mathematical logic. After earning her Ph.D. she returned to her alma mater as a philosophy professor. It was some time during her tenure at Barnard that she used a summer vacation to write her first novel, *The Mind-Body Problem*, which went on to become a critical and popular success and was followed by six more works of fiction.

Goldstein is also the author of *Incompleteness: The Proof and Paradox of Kurt Gödel*, which was named one of the best books of the year by *Discover* magazine and *The Chicago Tribune*. She followed this with *Betraying Spinoza: The Renegade Jew who Gave Us Modernity*, winner of the 2006 Koret International Jewish Book Award in Jewish Thought. Her latest novel, *Thirty-Six Arguments for the Existence of God: A Work of Fiction*, was published by Pantheon Books in 2010, and has just come out in paperback. It was designated the best book of the year by *The Christian Science Monitor*.

In 1996 Goldstein became a MacArthur Fellow, receiving the prize which is popularly known as the "Genius Award." She has also received a Guggenheim Fellowship and a Radcliffe Fellowship. She was recently named the "Humanist of the Year 2011" by the American Humanist Association and has just received the award of "Free-Thought Heroine" by the Freedom From Religion Association.

## **Sidney N. Stone Obituary**

Sidney N. Stone was born May 11, 1922 in Syracuse, NY to HW and Jennie Stone. He spent his youth in Rochester, NY and later the family moved to Mount Vernon, NY where he graduated from high school. He developed an interest in astronomy when he was just 11 years old and built his first telescope, learning how to grind his own mirrors with the help of an optometrist friend of the family. While studying Astrophysics at Cal Tech, he became friends with, and was mentored by, the well-known astronomer Edwin P. Hubble who later on was instrumental in getting him posted to Aberdeen Proving Grounds in Maryland during World War II so he could continue his scientific studies. After the war

was over, he attended University of California at Berkeley to earn both his BS and PhD in Astrophysics. While at UC Berkeley, he met and married Marcia McClain who was also attending UC Berkeley earning a degree in Nutrition. They were married in September 1951. Sidney's first job after graduating from UC Berkeley was working at Lick Observatory on Mount Hamilton near San Jose, California. In 1957, he was offered a position at Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory in Los Alamos, NM. During his career at Los Alamos, he was active in many astronomical and weapons related projects which took him to traveling around the globe as well as spending time at Johnston Island in the South Pacific, Point Barrow, Alaska, White Sands Missile Range and Nevada test site during the Cold War era. One of his last projects before his retirement was lost aboard the Space Shuttle Challenger disaster. While living in Los Alamos, he and Marcia became charter members of the Unitarian Church of Los Alamos. From the time they moved to Los Alamos, Sidney was very active in international folkdancing, a regular season pass holder at Pajarito Ski area and played tournament singles tennis, earning him the title of #1 Men's Singles aged 50-55 group in the Southwest.

Sidney retired from Los Alamos National Laboratory in 1985 and he and Marcia moved to Albuquerque in 1990, becoming active in many organizations such as Oasis, Friendly Philosophers, Humanist Society of New Mexico, Rio Grande Jazz Society, Albuquerque Little Theatre, New Mexicans for Science & Reason and the Albuquerque Astronomical Society. They were both honored as Humanists of the Year in New Mexico in 1995. Sidney and Marcia also enjoyed traveling around the world until her death in June 2009 after 58 years of marriage.

Sidney suffered a severe stroke June 27, 2011 while attending his granddaughter's Bat Mitzvah in San Carlos, CA. He passed away with his family surrounding him on July 9, 2011. He is survived by his two daughters, Susan Stone and her husband, Jeffery Mather, of Savusavu, Fiji Islands and his younger daughter Wendy Shray, her husband, Steve, and their two children, Aaron and Julia, his only grandchildren. He is also survived by several nieces and nephews.

A memorial is scheduled for Saturday, October 15<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 pm at the German-American Club located at 4821 Menaul NE, Albuquerque. In lieu of flowers, the family asks that a donation be made in his memory to the American Humanist Association.

## Open Letter to Senator Tom Udall

by Marjorie C. Burt, June 27, 2011

Endless mouthing and show by too many people in our United States Congress – certainly on the Republican (corporate) side. Of course the United States is in fiscal trouble.

Our military budget is tanking this country. Period. Cut it in half, say. Let the military top brass accountants and reachers scramble as they pull in our U.S. horns and recalibrate their lessened budget - and ambitions.

In my opinion, the United States should not be militarily based, dug in – in every other back lot country on this planet – where, if truth be known, we are likely often paying off the greatest abuser-leaders of their own people, citizens who, as a whole, little enough realize personal benefits from U.S. Dollars (borrowed dollars at that).

As we, the American people, too often are led to believe that many ordinary citizens of poorer nations hate and fear us. If they don't already, they likely will if this empire-building behavior on our part continues.

Where – in world history, has any empire survived indefinitely?

P.S. And – with that retrieved revenue let us put our people back to work renewing the infrastructure of America.

## The End of Summer – before The Fall

By Jean O'Hara, Sept. 23, 1997

The lake washes gently against the shore,  
The wind whistles the pine needles in trees,  
The time is past midnight and what is more  
The screened piazza won't let in a full breeze.  
Sleeping is restful in the Maine backwoods,  
There is Nothing to disturb tranquil rest,  
The darkness has pulled off the goods  
And Artificiality doth test.  
Look, how Nature turns itself off by switch  
Which means the Land or Red Sea can control  
Acts of nature by bulldozing a ditch,  
If one wants to make mountains from the mole.  
There is an eternity between dawn  
And midnight on the camp's lake washed lawn.

## Letters to the Editor

I agree with Lois Reiz Kimbrell (September) in asking “the Humanist Society of New Mexico to be primed to tackle that particular subject effectively.” Since the 1980s, though, the ground has shifted. The National Center for Science Education has thoroughly refuted all attempts to claim “science” status for Intelligent Design theory and won court cases all across the country against attempts to push I.D. Theory into public school classrooms. There was a thunderous victory for science teachers in Dover, Pennsylvania, just a few years ago. No doubt the schoolroom is still under assault, especially in Texas, but the problem in the coming presidential election is closer to the core conflict between humanists and believers in supernatural powers. I recently expressed to a “Christian” my concern about the climate changes caused by human misbehavior. The theist's response was a shrug and, “God will take care of it.” The shrug is what worries me because “God” may not be an overindulgent parent who cleans up the messes of naughty children. If I were God I might be inclined to think that humans have had their chances, plenty of warnings, abundance of forgiveness, but enough is enough. Wipe the slate clean and start again. A presidential candidate who doesn't take climate science seriously is a menace to the human species and to many other species as well. Today the real scientific controversy is much more in the domain of sociology than in biology or climate science. How can large groups of people who are thoroughly indoctrinated and trapped in delusional understandings of the world be awakened to start acting rationally with respect to real problems?

Dale L. Berry

## Humanist Minute for August's Speaker Meeting: “En-LIGHT-enment”

by Jerry Gilbert

I apologize in advance for offending anyone. but if you are easily offended, you shouldn't be listening to me in the first place.

I call this presentation EN-LIGHT-ENMENT. It is a variation on the “How many people does it take to change a lightbulb” jokes. **And**, thanks to Michele Bachmann, we have one Republican who is PRO-CHOICE—at least about which light bulbs to use!

1. How many **Humanists** does it take to change a lightbulb? **A.** Only one, but first the process has to be written into their Bylaws.
2. How many **Agnostics** does it take to change a lightbulb? **A.** No one really knows for sure.

3. How many **Atheists** does it take to change a lightbulb? **A.** It depends on the source of the light. If the source is science-based technology, 1 atheist is enough. If the source of light is divine commandment (“Let there be light”), atheists will be happy to let the light remain out.

4. How many **Catholics** does it take to change a lightbulb? **A.** God only knows.

5. How many **Jews** does it take to change a lightbulb? **A.** Usually it requires 10, but they can't do such **work** on the Sabbath.

6. How many **Evangelicals** does it take to change a lightbulb? **A.** They literally don't believe in change.

7. How many **Democrats** does it take to change a lightbulb? **A.** They divide into 2 groups. Each chooses a number. Then the 2 groups work out a compromise.

8. How many **Republicans** does it take to change a lightbulb? **A.** The conservative number is one, unless that's how many the Democrats will use.

9. How many **Tea Party** members does it take to change a lightbulb? **A.** It doesn't matter. Their lightbulb is never on.

**The Atheists and Freethinkers of New Mexico**

*<http://atheists.meetup.com/75>*

**Sunday October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 9am**

Albuquerque Center for Peace and Justice,  
202 Harvard SE

**Tuesday, October 18<sup>th</sup>, 6:30pm**

Social Meeting at 6:30pm at Mimi's Cafe, 4316  
The 25 Way, Near Jefferson and I-25

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**New Mexicans for Science and Reason**

**October 12<sup>th</sup>, 7pm**

*John Emerson Roberts: Kansas City's 'Up-to-date'  
Freethought Preacher*

Ellen Roberts Young

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The HSNM Bylaws Committee has completed its task of revising the Society's Bylaws, and the revision has been approved by the Board. The Board now asks the membership to vote on whether you approve or disapprove adopting these revised Bylaws. Votes must be received no later than October 15, 2011 to be counted.

**HUMANIST SOCIETY OF NEW MEXICO BALLOT**

I, (print name) \_\_\_\_\_, a member in good standing of the Humanist Society of New Mexico,

(check or circle one choice)

[ ] approve

[ ] disapprove

adopting the July 11, 2011 proposed HSNM By-Laws.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

You may either MAIL or E-MAIL your vote. Choose one.

1. MAIL: Cut off ballot, complete and mail by U.S. mail to P.O. Box 27293, Albuquerque, NM 87125-7293

2. E-MAIL: In the body of the e-mail, (NO attachments can be counted), type "APPROVE" or "DISAPPROVE", and your full name.  
Send to [lazygravy@aol.com](mailto:lazygravy@aol.com)  
type "HSNM Ballot" in the Subject line