



Humanist Society of New Mexico



September 2011

<http://humanistsocietyofnm.org/> zelda@amadorbooks.com

Quote of the Month

Every renaissance comes to the world with a cry, the cry of the human spirit to be free.

Anne Sullivan

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.

Santa Fe Humanists

Saturday, September 3rd, 10:30am

*Will Our Governmental Sclerosis Lead to Fatal
Strokes?*

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

Friendly Philosophers

Tuesday, September 6th- General Discussion

Monday, September 19th - "9/11 Truth" Claims

Dave Thomas

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

Upcoming HSNM Meetings

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

Saturday, September 10th

Informal Meeting

General Discussion starts at 10:10am

Restricted to Members and their Guests Only. For
invitation please contact Zelda Gatuskin at 505-
344-6102 for details or questions.

Refreshments: Veronica Garcia

Summit Apartments, 3901 Indian School NE

Saturday, September 17th

Topical Discussion – Open to the Public
Compassion

North Valley Library, 7704-B 2nd Street NW
(Note new location! If approaching from the south,
use entrance for First Choice Community Health)

Saturday, September 24th

Speaker Meeting – Open to the Public

*How the Affordable Care Act Affects Elders
and Persons with Disabilities in NM*

By Nell Graham Sale

Humanist Minute: Jerry Gilbert

Refreshments: Jerry Gilbert

UNM Law School, Room 2406, 1117 Stanford NE

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

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

Veronica Garcia, Public Information Chair

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 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. HSNM dues are now paid separately from AHA dues, visit www.americanhumanist.org for more information about the American Humanist Association.

President's Message, News & Notes

by Zelda Gatuskin

When Frank and I moved into our house in the North Valley, the welcome wagon did not come around. We went to work pulling weeds in the neglected front yard, and let everyone get a good look at us. The neighbor to the east introduced herself over the fence. She cast her gaze over the street where she had lived for more than thirty years and said, "It's not like we go on picnics together or anything, but we do keep a eye out for each other. You can count on 'em if you're in trouble." She lifted her chin to indicate the homes across the street.

That was sixteen years ago and there hasn't been a picnic yet. But there have been plenty of cases of keeping an eye out and of coming to each other's aid. We've also managed to either amicably resolve or tactfully ignore irregularities with such things as parties, pets and parking. Mostly we keep out of each other's business. We recognize the element of randomness at play here - we picked the place or ended up here for reasons other than the company of our neighbors. In other words, we're stuck with each other and it's in everyone's best interests to get along.

Belonging to a society like HSNM is a little different. Common interests bring us together. We like getting to know each other and sharing about ourselves, especially in the realm of ideas and ideals. We do have picnics and parties. Still, we maintain a degree of separateness in keeping with the humanist inclination to independence. Our purpose is not to cultivate a common style of living or to reinforce any sort of ritual practice. On some Saturday mornings our various routines happily overlap for a couple of hours of good conversation, and then we go our separate ways again. I have found, though, that it doesn't take many Saturday mornings before a warm feeling sets in. There is a caring for each other that transcends life stories and lifestyles.

The emergence of humanist celebrants, humanist Sunday schools, and humanist holidays causes some to wonder if humanism is a sort of religion. To me, that is a question of semantics. My practical concern, especially as president of HSNM, is with actually building community. Can we count on each other when there's trouble? Would we feel comfortable asking for help? Are we dedicated enough to form and fund committees

that can respond effectively to a variety of member needs? Maybe this is not a realistic goal for HSNM, I doubt it was on the minds of our group's founders. But it is on mine. We have grown to encompass members of all ages, all across New Mexico. If we were a stamp collecting society the personal worries of our members would be peripheral to our endeavor, but as a society dedicated to increasing our own and others' knowledge of humanism and putting our philosophy to work in the world, I think it's reasonable that we strive to develop a better support system within our group. What do you think?

We have had some excellent presentations about health care this year, and the series continues in September with Nell Graham Sale on The Affordable Care Act. As always, our Speaker Meetings are open to the public and provided for the purpose of educating the wider community as well as ourselves, so please feel free to invite your family, friends and associates - and maybe even your neighbors.

Condolences

Don Gutierrez' wife Marlene Zander Gutierrez died on August 19, following a series of illnesses. Don is an activist and man of letters, and a frequent contributor to this Newsletter. Marlene was an accomplished and admired artist, whose intellectual and creative qualities complemented Don's for almost 60 years. Visit www.artofmzg.com to view Marlene's artwork. News of Marlene's passing came on the day of our HSNM Topical Meeting, at which we discussed the importance of art. Here is what Marlene had to say on the subject, from her artist's statement on-line: "Art is a search for aesthetic expression, whether one tries to make visible what is invisible or creates a new reality or simply reproduces what one sees. The challenge is to create something that is aesthetically interesting and that also expands awareness. The subject can be anything, from the most banal to the most profound. It is in how the subject is rendered that the value and meaning of art becomes evident." To this I will add an observation I made at our meeting, that art is a conversation across generations. Marlene has added her voice to this dialogue and left us a lasting gift. We send condolences to Don, to his and Marlene's two sons, and to all those who will be missing Marlene's gentle presence.

Fond Memories

We will honor our dear friend Sidney Stone at a memorial service to be held in Albuquerque on Saturday, October 15, at 1:00 p.m. at the German American Club, 4821 Menaul Blvd, NE. Bring your photos and stories to share. The event is being planned

by Sidney's daughters, Susan and Wendy. We look forward seeing them and their families in Albuquerque soon. An obituary will be published in the Albuquerque Journal in late September and we will put that into our HSNM October Newsletter as well.

Congratulations

Paul H. Deal has published a new novel, *A Lesser God*, available in print and Kindle editions from Amazon.com - or purchase an autographed copy from the author himself. Paul combines a wealth of knowledge about philosophy and political systems with imaginative fiction and fine writing to bring a utopian world to life, and in the process clarify the strengths and weaknesses in our own society. Here is another example of the power and purpose of art.

You are Invited

I have a new book coming out as well. My novel, *Where the Sky Used To Be*, will be released in September, and everyone is invited to the Amador Publishers launch party on Sunday, September 25 from noon to 3:00 p.m. at the Matrix Fine Art Gallery, 3812 Central SE. Find all the details at www.amadorbooks.com.

The Really Big News

Our October speaker will be none other than AHA's 2011 Humanist of the Year, Rebecca Goldstein. Rebecca is a scholar of philosophy and psychology, popular novelist and engaging speaker. She is also a super nice person who has agreed to stay after the meeting for a reception so we can spend a little more time with her. Please contact me or Roy if you would like to help with the event. More details will follow via e-mail, website and in the next Newsletter.

Change of Venue for Topical Meeting

The Erna Ferguson Library will be under construction for a few months and our meeting is moving to the North Valley Library, 7704-B 2nd Street NW for September, October, November and December.

And Finally, Governance

* The next Governing Board meeting will be held on Saturday, September 10, at the Summit Apartments, immediately following our regular informal meeting. Members are invited to stay and observe. Contact me soon if you would like to put an item on the agenda or address the Board.

* We are in the midst of our membership enrollment renewal month as I write, and the response is encouraging. My thanks to all new and renewing members for your support of HSNM.

* So far, the proposed revised By-Laws which were circulated last month have not generated much comment. Has anyone read them? Member comments will be reviewed at the next GB meeting, after which we will go forward with a vote for ratification. The process and policies for voting are explained in my cover letter to that document.

Next Speaker Meeting Bio and Introduction

The Affordable Care Act was passed by Congress on March 23, 2010, amid furious controversy, and continues to be a target for reform and repeal. It is important for all Americans and New Mexicans to understand the basics of its provisions so that they can navigate through the sound bites and understand how it will affect each of us.

Nell Graham Sale's practice concentrates on taxation, estate planning, estate administration, business succession, disability planning and elder law. Nell is a Certified Elder Law Attorney as designated by the National Elder Law Foundation. The recipient of much recognition from her peers, Nell has been selected for inclusion in Super Lawyers 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011, and The Best Lawyers in America 2010, and Madison's Who's Who for 2009. Nell is also a fellow in the American College of Trust and Estate Counsel.

Additional info at www.pbwslaw.com

Roswatheists

By Doris Rashad, HSNM

A new group is starting in Roswell. If you or someone you know is in the Roswell area and would like to join, please contact Doris at roswatheist@yahoo.com or check out the group on Facebook.

The Silent Marauder's Songs

By Jean O'Hara 11/30/1996

The miles to go are not measured by what
One person wears on his head or his feet
But, rather, by what footsteps come to Gut
And Endurance in the mileage of heat.
Whether summer or winter, it makes no
Difference, as sun or snow stops the same
Because a kilometer is not snow
Or sun but just mileage in cold wet rain.
To obeisance the weather requires,
Therefore, a look to the surge of Hate's Fates
So, that Nature keeps out the hated briars
And one sees weather as leaving Gemmed Gates.
The District of Columbia makes lure
On rocks to cure the Pure not to endure

Letters to the Editor

Back in the mid-1980's, we founded the Humanist Society of New Mexico primarily because of efforts being put forward to insert Intelligent Design into high school science courses here in Albuquerque.

Intelligent Design is not a science at all and was invented in order to present something a bit more acceptable to modern thinkers than the usual religious fundamentalist line.

I should add that Intelligent Design seemed to be a nice compromise, and people who should have known better were attracted to its seeming reasonableness. The Intelligent Design people said, "Offer it to the kids in science classes and let them make up their own minds. Why are you afraid of that?"

Refute the argument with a description of the Scientific Method. Intelligent Design does not measure up to that at all. A great deal that is highly interesting can be said about the development of the Scientific Method, and it is very obvious that humankind has benefited enormously because of it. The difference between a European peasant living in 1500 AD and his ancestors living in 1500 BC was small. The difference today is enormous.

Intelligent Design is returning in the coming presidential election contest, and I ask the Humanist Society of New Mexico to be primed to tackle that particular subject effectively. We do not send our children to school to learn that it's just a matter of opinion as to how the eye developed, by means of evolution or by means of the Almighty – who happened to design intelligently that day.

Lois Reisz Kimbrell

The Atheists and Freethinkers of New Mexico

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

Sunday September 4th, 9am

Albuquerque Center for Peace and Justice,
202 Harvard SE

Tuesday, September 20th, 6:30pm

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

New Mexicans for Science and Reason

September 14th, 7pm

Ken Frazier, Ben Radford and Dave Thomas speaker
on CSICON. See www.nmsr.org for details