



THE HUMANIST SOCIETY OF NEW MEXICO NEWSLETTER

May 2015

A Chapter of the American Humanist Association

<http://humanistsocietyofnm.org/>

<http://hsnm.wordpress.com>

president@humanistsocietyofnm.org

HSNM Meetings in Albuquerque

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

Saturday, May 9th

HSNM Informal Meeting Cancelled

Saturday, May 16th

HSNM Topical Discussion 10:00 AM - Noon

Your Favorite Movies and How They Changed Your Outlook on Life.

Special Collections Library 423 Central Ave. NE

Saturday, May 23rd

HSNM Speaker Meeting 10:00 AM - Noon

AHA Conference Report

By HSNM Members

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)

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 Ananda Parnell

I am thrilled to be a part of the HSNM, and to share Humanist ideas and ideals with high school students through the Humanists of Highland. We are truly grateful to all of the generous contributions that have made it possible to attend the American Humanist Association National Conference in Denver this year and look forward to sharing our experiences with everyone upon our return.

In working as a co-sponsor of the Humanists of Highland, I have taken to heart a great truth that I have needed to see in a number of different ways to fully accept and recognize its power: we need a great deal of courage to challenge our own beliefs. Courage was once defined to me as not the absence of fear or despair, but the strength to overcome them. In my current position as president of the Humanist Society of New Mexico, I have had to draw deep on my courage, as I have faced experiences I had not yet encountered in my life thus far. I have made several errors

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

Ananda Parnell: President
Randall Wall: Vice President/Speaker Programs
Cynthianne Yabut: Secretary
Zelda Gatuskin: Past President
Richard Grady: Treasurer
Ashley Jordan: Member-at-Large
Cheryl Gatner: Member-at-Large

Subscription to HSNM Newsletter, published
monthly, accompanies HSNM membership or
can be obtained by nonmembers for \$20 an-
nually, 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. The deadline for Newsletter submissions
is the third Friday of each month. Website
submissions may be sent to president@hu-
manistsocietyofnm.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 ev-
ery 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.

in judgment and have leaned quite heavily on those who
have come before me to guide me in a positive direction.

Courageously, I am embarking on a journey to Denver
with a handful of students from the Humanists of
Highland. Although I have traveled with larger groups of
students to Europe, I have never considered taking a group
of students to a conference on behalf of an organization
other than curriculum enrichment; furthermore, my
previous trips abroad were all funded by the students
and their families, and not by community donations and
sponsors. It is exciting and intimidating to think of the
trust placed in us to be good ambassadors for the state
of New Mexico. I and the Humanists of Highland are
honored and humbled by all who contributed funds for
this endeavor; your sponsorship is valued much more
than you will ever know!

Courage also comes in the form of continuing to lead
positive and effective meetings every 2nd, 3rd, and 4th
Saturday of the month, and also in admitting when
my leadership has faltered. There have been some
disagreements regarding my messages in the newsletter,
and also in diplomatically delegating work to various
members of HSNM. Many of these disagreements can
be resolved with simple communication; others may
likely have no resolution.

On the front door of my classroom, I have placed a
very small poster. It is placed in such a way that it is
the first thing anyone sees when entering my learning
environment. This poster states the Four Agreements,
as written by Don Miguel Ruiz and Janet Mills. Not only
do I ask that my students follow them, but it is also a
reminder to myself of how I envision working with my
students each and every day. It is also good to have a
reminder stated here, as a compass of how I envision
my further interaction between HSNM and the larger
community to be reflected.

1) Be impeccable with your word. Speak with integrity.
Say only what you mean. Avoid using the Word to speak
against yourself or to gossip about others.

2) Don't take anything personally. Nothing others do is
because of you. What others say and do is a projection
of their own reality. When you are immune to the
opinions and actions of others, you won't be the victim
of needless suffering.

3) Don't make assumptions. Find the courage to ask questions and ask for what you really want. Communicate with others as clearly as you can to avoid misunderstandings, sadness, and drama.

4) Always do your best. Your best is going to change from moment to moment; it will be different when you are healthy as opposed to when you are sick. Under any circumstance, simply do your best, and you will avoid self-judgment, self-abuse, and self-regret.

May marks the first six months of my current HSNM presidency. During this time, I have had the honor of working alongside some of the finest people I have ever encountered within Albuquerque. I also know that in my enthusiasm, I have overlooked several elements that are crucial to the continued success shared by so many within HSNM. I cannot do anything with perfection, but I will continue to fulfill the duties of the presidency with the Four Agreements in the forefront of my actions. If you have any concerns regarding my activity, please feel free to contact me. I look forward to serving out the rest of this term with continued success, positive communication, and a warm welcome to all who are interested in being a part of this wonderful community.

A Message from the Center for Peace and Justice

The Center for Peace and Justice has the opportunity to go to all solar power! While this is a wonderful celebration, it also means that we will not have a venue for our Informal Meeting on May 9th. This is also the weekend of the National Conference, and many will be out of town for this event. After much discussion at our Informal Meeting on April 11th, it was decided that the Informal Meeting for May will be cancelled. We will have our Topical Meeting on May 16th, and our Keynote Speaker Meeting on May 23rd. Both the Topical and Keynote Speaker meetings will be held at the Special Collections Library (Central and Edith) from 10:00-12:00 pm. HSNM looks forward to you joining us!

You Came Through!
HSNM Delegation Heading to Denver
by Zelda Gatuskin

HSNM members donated \$1170 to send our President

Ananda Parnell and her Humanists of Highland contingent up to Denver for the AHA Annual Conference. Added to the cash contributions was an additional generous donation of a hotel room for the students. Take a look at the conference website, <http://conference.americanhumanist.org/>, to see what's in store for our delegation, and watch for live podcasts of key presentations during the conference weekend, May 7-10. We will hear from Ananda and other conference participants at our May Speaker Meeting. If you are attending the conference in person or following the podcasts, please join us at Botts Hall on May 23 to share your impressions.

HSNM Supports Community Radio...

On Friday, April 17, HSNM sent a team of four - Ananda Parnell, Richard Grady, Cynthia Yabut and Zelda Gatuskin - to help answer phones for the KUNM pledge drive during the Democracy Now/All Things Considered shift. Did you listen? Special thanks to Cynthia for driving! KUNM pledge drives are held in spring and fall. If you would like to join our HSNM phone team in the future, please let us know.

Endings

by L. Franks

I was curious as to what happened in the lawsuit in New Mexico courts concerning the statutory prohibition against "assisted suicide". Doing so is a felony under NM law. The lawsuit was a hot topic two years ago, but seems no longer newsworthy. I and others had hoped that the courts would put an end to the idea that helping another find peace in the dying process would no longer be considered a criminal felony. On inquiry, I found that the matter had been litigated in the State District Court in Bernalillo County before Judge Nan G. Nash. The Parties were numerous but primarily the Doctors, Katherine Morris and Aroop Mangalik, were Plaintiffs represented by attorneys of the ACLU of NM Foundation, and that the State Attorney General and the Bernalillo County District Attorney were the Defendants. The Court's decision was filed 1/31/2014. It held that a "physician" rendering "aid in dying" to a "mentally competent, terminally ill" patient would NOT be subject to prosecution as having assisted a suicide. The District Court relied upon the NM Constitutional provision guaranteeing to its citizens "life, liberty and

the seeking and obtaining [of] happiness” as the basis for its decision. The case was timely appealed by the Defendants to the NM Court of Appeals where briefs were filed, oral arguments heard, and the matter is awaiting the appellate court’s decision. Whatever that decision is, the case will most likely be further appealed to the NM Supreme Court for a final decision.

Not Long Ago In the Movies

by Barbara White

Depending on your source of TV programs (mine is cable), you may have Turner Classic Movies available. Mine, Channel 64, shows films round the clock. Often I “channel-surf” over to 64 when I don’t find anything else of interest. If it’s a “western” or something military, I move on. About 95% seem to be American-made, in about the ‘30s to and including the ‘70s. And what strange territory it is, everyone in hats, chaps always in business suits or tuxes (when not in something sports-specific), most adult puffing away on cigarettes, the women in elaborate hairdos and always in skirts, no pants suits back then. Often, background music was playing, dialog or no dialog. Worth watching? Usually not, plot-heavy and dialog-primitive, they are usually awful. They were only “entertainment”, just enough to get folks out of the house to pay and watch. A shining exception in its way were the “dance” films, with the incredible Fred Astaire and countless others (including even Elvis P., surprisingly light on his feet), and the occasional Marx Bros, or Laurel & Hardy fun. But did most of them have to be that bad? Of course not, but why go for arts when you can pack ‘em in with old tried-and-true formulas? All that changed, though perhaps not fast enough, with the advent of TV. If you were to sell the advertised products, you had to have something more interesting to offer. But I do remember hearing otherwise-intelligent friends say they had seen some given movies twice or even more often. The only one I saw more than once was “My Dinner with Andre”, a two-hander written by and starring Wallace Shawn. If, dear reader, you can get the DVD of it, do.

Religion: A License to Discriminate

Dear Friend,

Imagine walking in to a restaurant with your family and friends, only to be thrown out moments later because you are gay. Can you imagine the hurt, confusion, and sadness that would come with being told by the owners that they don’t serve “your kind” at their establishment?

This nightmare scenario could soon become a reality if Governor Hutchinson signs the Religious Freedom and Restoration Act, which has already passed the state legislature and could legalize discrimination based on religious views.

Not so long ago, a person could be denied service by a business because of their race. America recognized that this unethical behavior has no place in this country, but religious right activists are trying to once again legalize discrimination against Americans based solely on who they are as a person.

Don’t let America fall backwards in the battle against discrimination. Tell Governor Hutchinson to veto the Religious Freedom and Restoration Act!

Religious beliefs can be respected, but they must not be allowed to become a legal basis for discriminatory behavior towards our fellow citizens. This bill may talk about “restoring rights” but the only thing it truly restores is the ability to turn personal bigotry into legalized discrimination.

Corporations, government officials, and public figures are already speaking out against similar bills in Indiana and other states. Please take a stand against religiously motivated discrimination by contacting Governor Hutchinson and letting him know that this bill just isn’t right for Arkansas.

Fighting prejudice is what makes us humanists. Thank you for joining us.

Sincerely,

Roy Speckhardt, Executive Director, AHA

Food For Thought Quote

“Teaching and writing, to me, is really just seduction; you go to where people are and you find something that they’re interested in and you try and use that to convince them that they should be interested in what you have to say.” Lawrence M. Krauss