



THE HUMANIST SOCIETY OF NEW MEXICO NEWSLETTER

October 2017

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, October 14

HSNM Informal Meeting 10am – 12pm
Special Collections Library 423 Central Ave. NE

Saturday, October 21

HSNM Topical Discussion 10:00AM – Noon
Special Collections Library 423 Central Ave. NE
Whom Do You Trust? Why?

Saturday, October 28

HSNM Speaker Meeting 10am – Noon
Special Collections Library 423 Central Ave. NE

Challenges of LGBTQ Advocacy under the Trump Administration
Presented by Adrian Carver, Executive Director, EQNM

Meetings by HSNM Affiliates are held throughout the month.
For more information please visit their websites.

Atheist Skeptical Kingdom of Albuquerque
(www.meetup.com/ASK-Atheist-Skeptical-Kingdom-of-Albuquerque)

Freedom From Religion, Albuquerque
(www.meetup.com/FFRABQ)

New Mexicans for Science and Reason (www.nmsr.org)

Roswatheists (<http://www.meetup.com/Roswatheists>)

Santa Fe Atheist Community
(<http://www.meetup.com/Santa-Fe-Atheist-Community>)

President's Message

by Randall Wall

New Mexico, the Land of Enchantment. It's a place known for many things. Its painted deserts contrast with its majestic mountains. So many varied cultures found throughout. And the sunsets... Wow! But there's something else New Mexico is known for. Science. New Mexico is home to three national laboratories and three research universities. It was here that the first atom bomb was tested. Suffice it to say, New Mexico loves Science!! So it follows that we should have the best science education. Well, we try but not everyone is on board.

We've known for many years that there are folks who just love science... except for what it says, what it has actually found. Like finding out that people are descended from lower forms of animals, or that the earth or maybe even the whole universe are billions of years old. They also don't like the idea that the Earth might indeed be warming due to our use of fossil fuels. Now these folks could just sit by and let the experts steer the ship, but that's just not in their nature. These True Believers know better than anyone and they believe they have insight that's needed to right the ship. So they make a lunge for the ship's wheel.

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.

Officer/Committees

Randall Wall: President

Tara McCaughin: Vice President/Speaker Programs

Cynthianne Yabut: Secretary

Richard Grady: Treasurer

Cheryl Gatner: Member-at-Large

Jeanette Smith: Member-at-Large

A subscription to the 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). Youth/student membership (24 years or under) is \$5.00 per year.

Send subscription or membership requests to: Humanist Society of New Mexico, P.O. Box 27293, Albuquerque, NM 87125-7293.

To join or renew membership on line, go to the website at <http://humanistic/join.html>.

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

Send Newsletter submissions to: Editor, Randall Wall, Paragon2012@comcast.net. Send Website submissions to president@humanistsocietyofnm.org. The deadline for Newsletter submissions is the third Friday of each month.

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.

This is nothing new and we've beaten them before, but they always come back. And indeed, they are back. As a recent article on www.motherjones.com put it:

“New Mexico’s public education agency wants to scrub discussions of climate change, rising global temperatures, evolution, and even the age of planet Earth from the standards that shape a school’s curriculum.

“The NGSS [Next Generation Science Standards], which have been adopted by at least 18 states and the District of Columbia, include ample discussion of human-caused climate change and evolution.

“But the draft released by New Mexico’s education officials changes the language of a number of NGSS guidelines, downplaying the rise in global temperatures, striking references to human activity as the primary cause of climate change, and cutting one mention of evolution while weakening others. The standards would even remove a reference to the scientifically agreed-upon age of the Earth—nearly 4.6 billion years. (Young Earth creationists use various passages in the Bible to argue that the planet is only a few thousand years old.)”

I plan on writing a letter on behalf of HSNM to the NM Public Education Department in opposition to these changes. I hope you will support this and also join me with your own responses.

For more information, see <http://www.nmsr.org/ped2017.htm>.

October Speaker Meeting

Adrian Carver, Executive Director of *Equality New Mexico*, will talk about

the challenges of LGBTQ civil rights advocacy under the Trump administration.

Equality New Mexico (EQNM) is New Mexico's statewide LGBTQ advocacy and civil rights organization. EQNM develops and implements a variety of advocacy campaigns and outreach and education programs to create a supportive environment for systemic change.

With a strong commitment to racial, gender, and disability justice, EQNM seeks to demonstrate to our base and community the importance of cross-sector movement-building to increase equity, full access, and sustainable wellness for LGBTQ New Mexicans.

Speaker Bio

Adrian N. Carver is currently Executive Director of *Equality New Mexico*.

A ninth generation New Mexican, Adrian is a hardworking and committed advocate who stands with marginalized communities and young people in New Mexico. His creativity and innovation are rooted in his values of social justice and racial healing.

Having started as a community organizer in middle school, he has served on a number of boards and been honored with Albuquerque Business First's *Top 40 under Forty* award, the *Fueling Increasingly Relevant Education Award*, New Mexico Voices for Children's *Amy Biehl Spirit of Youth Award*, and Molina Healthcare's *Community Champion Award*.

Humanist Lights Holiday Party

The HSNM Holiday Party is coming up- it will be on the second Saturday in December, December 9, a potluck, from 1 pm to 3pm at the Unitarian Church, 3701 Carlisle. Save the date!

A History of the Humanist Society of New Mexico (continued)

by Laverne Rison

Toward Greater Interaction with the American Humanist Association

In October of 1996, we elected Charles Archibald of Durango, Colorado, our new president. He would travel 200 miles each way to attend our meetings, but in a world with computers

and telephones, you can direct an operation largely from a distance. Charlie had long been active in the AHA and his aim from the beginning was to bring our local chapter into partnership with the national offices. Right away, one could see a big change in our operations just by reading our monthly *New Mexico Humanist Letter*.

Charlie appointed a new and younger member, Eric Rajala, editor. Eric was a psychiatric social worker and a close friend of Kaz Dziamka, also an admirer.

In 1997, Charlie was elected secretary of the AHA Chapter Assembly. His primary focus was to bring not only our chapter, but the Chapter Assembly into full partnership with the AHA.

In our March 1997 newsletter, Charlie told of the Harvey Labram Trust Fund, which annually provides a \$1,000 grant to any chapter which first donates \$20 to the fund; then provides the best idea for spending that \$1,000 grant. Charlie would discuss that idea with us at our next informal meeting. We agreed to donate the \$20; and later to apply for the grant. Our idea was to use the money on advertising,

We formed a committee whose job it was to think of ads which might attract new members to our society; ads such as: IT'S BETTER TO GROW UP THAN BE BORN AGAIN; and HUMANISTS DO IT (when there's something to be done, we get the bother and the fun. We haven't anyone but one another). The ads were clever. We landed the grant; but the ads didn't succeed in attracting new members (or even visitors to our group). New members came first as speakers or guests, or in response to a notice in the press of a speaker they wanted to hear.

One thing you could say about Charlie Archibald. He was not shy. When Charlie learned that nationally famed entertainer and writer, Steve Allen, would be in Albuquerque, he had the nerve to ask if that celebrity would care to meet with the Humanist Society of New Mexico. Steve Allen accepted the invitation! When somebody asked, "How'd you get by without paying him anything?" Charlie answered, "He didn't mention money. Neither did I."

We did have to shift our meeting time to his convenience. Steve Allen met with us April 11. He'd be signing books till six, but he'd meet with us at seven. I had bought one of his books: *Dumbth: and 81 Ways to Make Americans Smarter*, and I had written a review of that book for our *Humanist Letter*. We had a crowd that evening, and I felt a bit pushy as I made my way to the front of the room where Steve Allen was grabbing a bite to eat while introductions were being made. I set the book and the review on the table before him and went back to my seat. That great man not only signed the book; he wrote me a letter of thanks for the kind review. Steve Allen was truly a Humanist.

We re-elected Charlie in 1998, which means he served a four year term, a big change from the one-year presidents we'd had in the past.

In October of 2000, we elected Jerry Wesner. Jerry had retired after teaching high school social studies for 36 years. He was enthusiastic about that job we had to draft others into under a threat of closing our books. Jerry attracted new members. Our numbers rose to 100 (the highest in the history of New Mexico Humanists). New people included Louis Metzger, a former student of Jerry (who went on to attend UNM). Louis was appointed new Web-master on the INTERNET. Jerry and Louis were hoping to start a student Humanist Society at UNM or TVI.

Jerry got a number of our members interested and involved with his idea of holding an essay contest for high school students. The group raised \$1,000 in prize money which was awarded to Britta Lindquist, an outstanding student in St. Michael's High School in Santa Fe. Her winning essay was titled "The Advantages and Disadvantages of Racial and Cultural Diversity in Current Societies." Britta received the Presidential Scholar Award in 2002 and went on to attend Harvard College.

Bob Gordon, who served as Jerry's vice-president, decided that a society which could attract Steve Allen, might try for the governor of New Mexico. Governor Gary Johnson shook up our state Republican Party as well as many other politicians across the nation when he came out in favor of legalizing marijuana. He not only came

out in favor of the idea, he made it his mission, making appearances on national television as well as speaking engagements across the nation. A busy man, he found time for us. As I said, a speaker likes nothing more than facing an intelligent audience with a sympathetic ear.

HSNM Named AHA Chapter of the Year for 2003

Our president, Jerry Wesner, and past president Charlie Archibald led a contingent of our members to the 2002 AHA Conference in Houston. While there, they voted for Charlie's dream of making the chapter full partners with the governing board of AHA. They came home with the proposal approved by the convention. We have since become one of the first in the nation to become member chapters.

Because most of our members are also affiliated with AHA, apart of our AHA dues are refunded to our chapter to be used as we see fit.

We were named AHA 2003 chapter of the year for a number of reasons: Our membership rolls had again doubled; and 70% of those members also belonged to the American Humanist Association. We initiated our high school essay contest and kept it going, when Cathy Burt took over from Gordon McClure.

We had an excellent group of officers: Lou Cuevas, who attracted intelligent and interesting speakers. Paul Deal put out an almost flawless newsletter, with interesting and important ideas as well as news of upcoming meetings, etc. Our secretary, Randall Wall, doubled as publicity chairman. He also saw to it that we had one of our members ready to present a "humanist minute" (or five minutes) at each formal meeting. Ron Herman organized a small but enthusiastic group of like-minded students at The University of New Mexico. Our treasurer, Caroline Glen Kaye, was as active in politics as she was in our society; and yours truly almost never failed to come up with the coffee and cookies as well as our yearly picnic in my side yard.

End of HSNM History up through 2003