



THE HUMANIST SOCIETY OF NEW MEXICO NEWSLETTER

December 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, December 9

4:30pm to 7pm

Human Light Party

First Unitarian Church Memorial Hall

3701 Carlisle NE (Corner of Comanche)

See Page Two for details

Saturday, December 16

HSNM Topical Discussion 10:00AM – Noon
Special Collections Library, 423 Central Ave. NE
Conformity and Protest: Pledges of Allegiance

No Speaker Meeting in December

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

Albuquerque Skeptics

(www.meetup.com/ABQSkeptics)

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

Let's start with some good news. David Stelle has agreed to be our new Vice President! David has been a very active new member this last year and was our speaker at our last meeting in November. He has now graciously agreed to help us with the task of obtaining speakers for our Speaker Meetings. He is more than willing to take your suggestions for speakers. If you think of one, don't hesitate to let him know. Thank you, David!

I don't know how many of you are football fans. Probably not many, I suppose. But you know the controversy. To stand or kneel for the National Anthem? It's got our country in a fit right now. Some say boycott the NFL, while others are more live and let live. What about allegiance to one's country? Is it what we owe our country or should our allegiance be with something larger? Our topic for this month is to struggle with just such questions. I hope you'll join us. You can sand, kneel or just sit!

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

David Stelle: 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.

Humanist Society Human Light Party

December 9, 4:30pm to 7 pm
Unitarian Church Memorial Hall
3701 Carlisle NE (Corner of
Comanche)

A potluck- bring whatever you like to eat, enough for 4-6 people. A lot of people bring desserts, so we could use a few main or side dishes.

Memorial Hall has a couple of coffee-makers, microwave, stove, refrigerator and lots of tables and chairs.

I will bring coffee, table cloths, paper plates, disposable cups/glasses, utensils and napkins. I also have a CD player and a CD of "redneck" Holiday songs. ("My Mother Got Run Over by a Reindeer," and such classics.) If you have a CD of faves, please bring it.

I plan to arrive at 4 pm to set up tables, start the coffee, etc., and could use a couple of helpers...

We also have a couple of people who have offered to give rides to anyone who needs one- If you need a ride, or want to offer one, or if you have any questions about the party, please call me....

Cynthianne (410-2998)

HSNM's holiday tradition is to give a group donation to the Roadrunner Food Bank after the party each year. To participate, please bring a bag of non-perishable food or a check to the party.

November 25, 2017 HSNM Board Meeting Minutes

- Meeting called to order at 12:15 pm
- Financial status as of 11/28/17:
 - General fund: \$8,727.94
 - Scholarship fund: \$2,495.00
 - Total: \$11222.94
 - Shares: 48.49 + Jan. dividend: 10.21
 - = Total: \$58.70

- HSNM’s insurance premium for 2018 (\$315/yr) has been paid, and the renewal for the PO box is due shortly.
- Replacing officers who have resigned-
 - Bylaws state the president is to appoint members for vacant posts.
 - Ananda (Past president) and Tara (Vice president) have resigned.
 - David agreed to take on the VP role for 2018 and was accepted by the board
 - Replacement for Ananda TBD
- Speaker meeting programming — Board agreed that this would be a joint effort by the board & membership at least for 2018.
- American Ethical Union Assembly is coming June 7-10 of next year; what level of involvement would we like?
 - Decision deferred until more information is available.
- Scholarship Fund Report
 - Board reviewed and approved the proposal that had been developed at the general membership meeting in February.
 - Application form will be included in the December newsletter for comment. (See back page)
- Board voted to hold a general membership meeting in February 2018
- New Business-
 - Bylaws to be amended to reflect dues payment during December of each year (rather than August).
- Meeting adjourned at 1:45 pm.

Humanists Admonish Indiana School for Silencing Teacher on Pledge Rights

www.AmericanHumanist.org July 24, 2017

[Editor's Note: This article from last July is being reprinted here due to its relevance to this month's topical discussion.]

The American Humanist Association (AHA) Appignani Humanist Legal Center admonished Indianapolis high school administrators today for mistreating a teacher who informed students that the Pledge of Allegiance is voluntary.

The teacher in question, Duane Nickell, contacted the AHA after he was instructed by the principal of Franklin Central High School to stop informing students that the Pledge of Allegiance was voluntary. Many public school students are unaware of their constitutional right to opt out of the Pledge, a right secured by a 1943 Supreme Court ruling, *West Virginia State Board of Education v. Barnette*.

“I had read about teachers forcing students to stand and recite the pledge,” said Nickell, explaining why he thought it was necessary to educate students about the right to opt out. “I wanted to make sure that my students knew that their teacher would support any decision they made regarding the pledge.” Nickell was surprised when the school’s principal, Kevin Koers, called him to his office and warned him against educating students about the voluntary nature of the Pledge exercise.

The AHA has been sponsoring a boycott of the Pledge of Allegiance to protest the insertion of the words “under God,” into the recitation. Those words were added in 1954, during the Cold War, after lobbying by religious groups. Humanists and others see the language as a divisive violation of church-state separation principles.

“Restricting the flow of information is a disservice to the schoolchildren and an insult to the Pledge itself,” said David Niose, Legal Director for the Appignani Humanist Legal Center. “It’s unfortunate that educators would choose to suppress knowledge rather than enlighten students.”

“The AHA will stand by students who boycott the Pledge and teachers who seek to inform them of the right to do so,” said Roy Speckhardt, executive director of the American Humanist Association. “We can’t allow overzealous school officials to violate important constitutional rights.”

Draft Proposal for Scholarship Application

The draft HSNM Scholarship application follows. Please review and make suggestions for improvement, especially the topic for the essay- “Humanist Values” is vague and boring, but I couldn’t think of anything better.

Thanks for your help! - Cynthia

HUMANIST SOCIETY OF NEW MEXICO

P.O. Box 27293, Albuquerque, NM 87125-7293

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Humanist Society of New Mexico Scholarship Application

To be awarded to a low-income graduating high school student who wants to attend the Central New Mexico (CNM) community college. The grant covers tuition, renewable for second year if the student maintains a 3.0 average. The winner may enroll in academic or certificate programs.

Open to any student in the Albuquerque school system who will graduate before the start of the CNM fall term. (Relatives of board members or the selection committee not eligible.) All applications are confidential and will not be shared with anyone outside of HSNM. There will be a personal interview for the finalists. Winning essay will be published in the HSNM newsletter.

Applicant Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

City / State / Zip _____ E-mail _____

Name and address of school attending & anticipated graduation date

Please list your goals, interests and hobbies, summer jobs or volunteering efforts

Family and personal circumstances

Deadline for application is **May 1, 2018**

Please send application to: Humanist Society of New Mexico
PO Box 27293, Albuquerque, NM 87125-7293

along with: 1. A recommendation letter from a teacher at your school
2. A short essay (approximately 800 words) on Humanist Values

A Definition of Humanism

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For more information go to: <https://hsnm.wordpress.com/about/humanism/>