



THE
HUMANIST SOCIETY
OF NEW MEXICO
NEWSLETTER

May 2018

A Chapter of the American Humanist Association

hs-nm.org

president@humanistsocietyofnm.org

HSNM Meetings in Albuquerque

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

Saturday, May 12

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

Saturday, May 19

HSNM Topical Discussion 10am – Noon
Special Collections Library 423 Central Ave. NE
Libertarian Socialism and Humanism

Saturday, May 26

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

Writing Is a Way of Thinking
by Zelda Gatuskin

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

Margaret Barker's presentation last month on literacy was outstanding! Informing us of the dimensions of disadvantage here in Albuquerque, she illustrated how difficult it is for a non-literate or low English proficient person to survive financially in today's world. The lesson is clear, illiteracy is undeniably linked to poverty. With that established, she went on to demonstrate how an adult can learn to be literate or more English proficient and thereby find a way out of poverty. All in attendance were impressed with the difference her organization and its volunteers are making in our community! The HSNM board subsequently decided to make a \$200 donation to Literacy Works! I would like to again thank Charlene and Allen for making this presentation possible.

May's presentation will be given by one of HSNM's favorite people, Zelda Gatuskin! I know that her presentation on *Writing as a Way of Thinking* will be informative as well as something everyone can use in their daily life. As her award-winning essays in this very newsletter show, she really knows her stuff! As a person who has been a writer for many years, I'm looking forward to it!

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.

Next Speaker Meeting

"Writing Is a Way of Thinking"

by Zelda Leah Gatuskin

Have you ever wanted to... keep a journal, send a letter to the editor, start a blog, write an informative article, your memoirs or a novel... but found yourself stuck with pen poised over paper or fingers over keyboard? Award-winning writer and editor Zelda Leah Gatuskin will share her tips on writing, with emphasis on using the writing process to record and clarify our thoughts for ourselves. Writing as a way of thinking is an essential first step in composing convincing opinion pieces, cohesive fiction, and meaningful memoirs. It is a personally enriching activity whether or not you plan to share the results. For those seeking publication, Zelda can answer questions about writing genres, finding outlets for your work, and the submission process. Bring your favorite analog writing tools (paper and pen/pencil). This will be a screens-free presentation!

Speaker's Bio

Zelda Leah Gatuskin is the pen/professional name for Zelda L. Gordon. Zelda was born in Wilmington, Delaware; she attended Emerson College in Boston, graduating in 1979 with a degree in Visual Communications. In 1983 she moved to Albuquerque, New Mexico with her true love, musician Frank G. Johnson. Together they are proprietors of Studio Z, multi-media arts. 1991 saw publication of Zelda's first book, *The Time Dancer*, and the beginning of an ongoing collaboration between Studio Z and Amador Publishers. The founders of the press, Harry Willson and Adela Amador, introduced Zelda to the Humanist Society of New Mexico; and the rest, as they say, is history.

But, in case you weren't there.... In 2006, Zelda became co-owner of the re-organized Amador Publishers, LLC; in January 2010, with both Harry and Adela in failing health, Zelda took over the press as sole owner and editor-in-chief, with the goal of perpetuating her mentors' vision for an independent press dedicated to peace, equality, respect for all cultures, and preservation of the biosphere. And in her spare time, she served as president of the Humanist Society of New Mexico 2010-2014, and co-chair of the AHA Feminist Caucus 2012 – 2014.

By now, Zelda has ten books of her own in print, and editorial credits on several others. She continues to work as a visual artist, and credits her early training in design and art history as providing an important foundation for her creative writing.

Minutes of HSNM Board Meeting, April 28

- Financial Report:
Checking: General Fund, \$8,685.05;
Scholarship fund, \$2,495.00; Total, \$11,190.05
Shares: 1/1/18 balance, \$58.70;
1/24/18 dividend, \$12.99; Total, \$73.69
- American Ethical Union Assembly is coming June 7-10 to the Sheraton on Louisiana & Menaul.
Randy is on a panel at 3 pm on Friday, June 8.
- Essay contest did not work out- no entrants- rethink for next year.
- June picnic: Cynthia will check with Charlene to set up for June 30.
- Discussed adding a discussion board to the HSNM website. - Might be too much work for too little return. Tabled for present; David to look into what it would entail.
- Review of State reporting requirements for HSNM- current approach approved.
- New Business:
Donation of \$200 to Reading Works proposed and approved; Richard will make out a check & present it.
Website is still being worked on.

Musical News

Richard Grady, our HSNM Treasurer, is a member of the New Mexichords Barbershop Chorus (newmexichords.org). The New MexiChords is a 501c(3) charitable non-profit organization celebrating its sixty-fifth year of barbershop harmony in Albuquerque. Their Spring show is coming up!

New Mexichords Barbershop Chorus Spring Show

St. John's Methodist Church, 2626 Arizona St. NE
(one block east of San Pedro, one block north of Menaul on Arizona).

Friday, May 18 – 7 pm

Saturday, May 19 – 2 pm

Tickets are \$15

Plan Ahead: June Potluck/Picnic at Charlene and Allen's!

When: Saturday, June 30 at 6 pm.

Where: Loretta Drive near Coors and Alameda Blvd NW.

Please call Charlene at 505-350-2436 for directions and to let her know you are coming. There will be lemonade, iced tea and wine. Bring what you wish for drinks and food to share. Bring a favorite joke/shaggy dog story/limerick or party game.

American Ethical Union Assembly Here in Albuquerque this June!

American Ethical Union 103rd Assembly Meeting this June in Albuquerque! For those of you unfamiliar with AEU, its origin is similar to other humanist organizations like the AHA, but it retains a congregational/religious flavor.

The Assembly runs from June 7th to the 10th, and is being held at the Sheraton Albuquerque Uptown. (2600 Louisiana NE-corner of Menaul)

The overall theme for the assembly is “Seeds for the Future: Environmental Justice and Ethical Culture.”

You might also be interested to know that your own Randy Wall will be participating in one of the panels, titled “Humanism, Skepticism, Atheism, Non-Theism and other Heresies” being presented on *Friday, June 8th at 3:00 – 4:00 pm*.

Along with other representatives from secular groups in Albuquerque, we’ll be discussing the similarities and differences between our respective organizations and how we can work together to further the goals of free thought, skepticism and humanism.

We’d like to have at least a few representatives from our group to attend, so please give it a thought. For more information see <https://aeu.org/event/aeu-103rd-assembly/>.

First-Ever Congressional Freethought Caucus Established

www.americanhumanist.org April 30, 2018

(Washington, DC, April 30, 2018)—The Center for Freethought Equality (CFE) and the American Humanist Association (AHA) are proud to announce the establishment of the first-ever Congressional Freethought Caucus as a Congressional Member Organization of the 115th Congress.

Founded by Representatives Jared Huffman (D-CA), Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Jerry McNerney (D-CA), and Dan Kildee (D-MI), the Congressional Freethought Caucus will: promote public policy formed on the basis of reason, science, and moral values; protect the secular character of our government by adhering to the strict Constitutional principle of the separation of church and state; oppose discrimination against atheists, agnostics, humanists, seekers, and nonreligious persons; champion the value of freedom of thought and conscience worldwide; and provide a forum for members of Congress to discuss their moral frameworks, ethical values, and personal religious journeys.

“The American Humanist Association (AHA) and the Center for Freethought Equality were

honored to be participants in the organizational meetings held to create and define the objectives for this caucus,” said Roy Speckhardt, executive director of AHA. “The very existence of this Congressional caucus for freethinkers and humanists is a marker of how far the movement for secular and non-theist equality has come. This significant step is also a new beginning for our country as both religious and non-religious leaders work to better the nation.”

In November, Rep. Huffman was endorsed by the Freethought Equality Fund Political Action Committee as he identifies as a humanist, as nonreligious, or as agnostic. Humanism, as defined by the American Humanist Association, is “a progressive life stance that, without theism or other supernatural beliefs, affirms our ability and responsibility to lead meaningful, ethical lives capable of adding to the greater good of humanity.”

“Establishing the Congressional Freethought Caucus is an historic step in normalizing the participation of atheists and humanists within American politics,” said Ron Millar, Political and PAC Coordinator at the Center for Freethought Equality. According to research from PRRI, the percentage of Americans who identify as “religiously unaffiliated” increased from 16% in 2006 to 24% in 2016. The Pew Research Center found that the change in the Democratic Party is even more dramatic with the percentage of the “religiously unaffiliated” increasing from 9% in 1997 to 33% in 2017.

“Our democracy is impoverished, said Millar, “and the quality of our political candidates is diminished, if a quarter of the population is effectively banned from the electoral arena. This caucus will help end discrimination against non-theist candidates and elected officials, allow candidates and elected officials to be authentic about their religious beliefs, and encourage atheist, agnostic, and humanists to run for political office.”