



# Humanist Society of New Mexico



April 2008

[www.humanists.net/nm/](http://www.humanists.net/nm/) [fmarch@thinkwellassociates.com](mailto:fmarch@thinkwellassociates.com)

## President's Message

Several weeks ago the AHA mailed a letter I had written to AHA members and "The Humanist" subscribers inviting them to join our Chapter. Four people have since joined. Among them is Harold Folley. He is also the Chairman of the Board of the New Mexico Holocaust and Intolerance Museum. As his name suggests, he is not Jewish, yet he has a commitment to community education about that peculiarly cruel and somehow universal trait - persecution and mass murder. I am a co-chair of a committee sponsored by his organization to organize an annual Holocaust Memorial Public Commemoration and we had a chance to talk.

Harold's fascination for the Holocaust is not so much on the grisly facts and figures, but on that aspect of human nature that causes some people to persecute, others to resist by protecting the persecuted, and others  
(continued next page)

### Santa Fe Humanists

Saturday, April 5, 2008 9:30am

*Effective Personal Communication*

220 East Santa Fe Avenue (from Paseo de Peralta – Old Santa Fe Trail intersection: one block S. ½ block W.)

---

### Grants Humanists

Saturday, April 5, 10:00 to noon

*Stress Management*

Hank Bulger

NMSU, Grants Campus, Room 103

## Upcoming HSNM Meetings

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

**Saturday, April 12, 2008**

### Informal Meeting

*General Discussion*

Refreshments: Salem Smith/Ron Herman  
Summit Apartments, 3901 Indian School NE

---

**Saturday, April 19, 2008**

### Topical Discussion

*Fact Based Look at Alternatives to  
Petroleum*

Note: No Food or Drink

Meet at Special Collections Library  
423 Central Ave. NE

---

**Saturday, April 26, 2008**

### Speaker Meeting

*Woe to the Women – The Bible Tells Me So  
Gender and Religion in This Time, in This  
Place*

Diane Wood – Director of the N. Regional ACLU  
Summer Little – UNM Women's Resource Center

Carolyn Jo Glen Kaye – HSNM Moderator

Refreshments: Randall Wall

UNM Law School, Room 2406, 1117 Stanford NE

**H**umanism 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.

to simply watch it all happen. That of course struck a chord with me - I am of course both Jewish and a humanist who is obsessed by the mysterious and contradictory complexity of human nature. Harold lent me a book: "The Altruistic Personality - Rescuers of

Jews in Nazi Europe." Here is an excerpt:

*Its (i.e. the Nazi's genocide) success was due to the relentlessness with which the Nazis pursued their prey, and the collaboration of the native populations, as well as the fact that the majority of the world's citizens simply stood by. Yet in the very midst of this catastrophe, there were exemplars of great humanity...those non-Jews who committed themselves to helping Jews despite the personal risks. This group...refused to abdicate their (moral) responsibilities even when the majority of their neighbors abandoned them. They understood that their task...might result in death to themselves and to their families. If perpetrators and collaborators constitute the tragedy of this human experience, rescuers constitute its hope. What enabled this group to choose its markedly different path? ...That people act in the service of their own self interest is a maxim we are quite likely to accept. We are not even startled when they behave demonically. What we find difficult to accept or explain are behaviors that appear transcendent.*

We humanists need no preaching about goodness and mercy. We empathize with the victims and the underdogs of the world. More of us are likely to be rescuers, fewer of us bystanders, and hopefully none of us collaborators. We have a lot to learn about this scary aspect of our human nature and I am looking forward to Harold's company to help us along.

*Fred March*

## **Irrational Exuberance**

A phrase from my un-favorite banker, Alan Greenspan, has been rattling in my head for days now. "Irrational Exuberance" – his way of warning, but not really, against stock market bubbles, which may ultimately burst.

I'm wondering why it's so hard for me to be exuberant these days. There's a lot going on to be depressed about: war, the election, pollution, recession. But nevertheless – consider these other things I have

## **The Humanist Society of New Mexico (HSNM)**

A Membership 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**

*President: Frederic March*

*Vice President/Programs: Harry Willson*

*Treasurer: Ed Root*

*Secretary: John Waldrop*

*Membership: Frederic March*

*Public Information: Salem Smith*

*Director of Classes: Ron Herman*

*Social Activities:xxxxxxxxxxx*

*Newsletter Editor: Randall Wall*

*Website: Phil Smith*

*Ex Officio: Jerry Wesner*

Subscription to HSNM Newsletter, published monthly, accompanies AHA/HSNM membership or can be obtained by nonmembers for \$12 annually. Send subscription and membership request to: Humanist Society of New Mexico, P.O. Box 13675, Albuquerque, NM 87192. Send Newsletter submissions to: Editor, Randall Wall at Email [paragon2012@comcast.net](mailto:paragon2012@comcast.net)

The deadline for Newsletter submissions is the third Saturday of each month.

**Sunday, April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2008**

**HSNM Book Club**

**2:00-4:00pm**

*It Can Happen Here: Authoritarian Peril in  
the Age of Bush*

by Joe Conason

plus a secondary selection of

*It Can't Happen Here*

by Sinclair Lewis

Title Wave Books, 1408 Eubank NE

observed recently.

[1] The tulips and daffodils have been displaying marvelous irrational exuberance, in spite of the cold and the dry wind which keep me indoors.

[2] The robins are blatantly twitterpated. Their antics make me laugh out loud as I watch them through the tightly closed window.

[3] Great grandchildren keep arriving. My daughter is ecstatic over her role as grandmother – the third new arrival in two years just arrived, and another is due soon. I wish I could be exuberant about it, but the “prospects drear” that confront our species prevent much of it.

I find myself not wanting to throw a wet blanket over all that excitement. When I shared some of these thoughts, my friend, Jerry Wesner, set me straight. “All Exuberance is irrational. Your phrase is redundant. And persons born in the depths of the Great Depression [which includes both him and me] have no business wondering why people have babies in the midst of hard and dangerous times. We wouldn’t be here, if someone hadn’t been irrationally exuberant.”

So, there.

*Harry Willson*

Thanks to Carolyn Jo Glen Kaye for the following four submissions.

## **LOVE LETTER TO THE MILKY WAY by Drew Dellinger**

*It's 3:23 in the morning  
and I'm awake*

*because my great great grand children*

*won't let me sleep  
my great great grandchildren  
ask me in dreams  
what did you do while the planet was plundered?  
what did you do when the earth was unraveling?*

*surely you did something  
when the seasons started failing?*

*as the mammals, reptiles, birds were all dying?*

*did you fill the streets with protest  
when democracy was stolen?*

*what did you do once you knew?*

*I'm riding home on the Colma train  
I've got the voice of the milky way in my dreams...*

*Love Letters To The Milky Way* is a small book of cosmological, ecological, and social justice poetry that I highly recommend. It is written by Drew Dellinger (1-866-poetics; info@drewdellinger.org; www.drewdellinger.org).

## **Secular Coalition for America**

The Secular Coalition for America, a D.C. lobbying group composed of humanists, atheists, free thinkers and AMERICANS reports that it made history last year by identifying Rep. Pete Stark (D-Calif) as the first member of Congress to openly acknowledge that he holds no god-belief. Through the Coalition's single lobbyist, our positions are coming to be known on Capitol Hill. So well in fact, that the IRS took notice and chose to audit, finding our books, of course, completely clean.

If you want to help this important lobbying effort sustain itself and grow, send your check to Secular Coalition of America, P.O. Box 53330, Washington, D.C., 20009-9330. (www.secular.org). Your donation is not tax deductible.

The Coalition members currently are: American Humanist Association, Atheist Alliance International, Freedom From Religion Foundation, Institute for Humanist Studies, Military Association of Atheists and Freethinkers, Secular Student Alliance, Secular Web (Internet Infidels), Society for Humanistic Judaism.

Board members are: Ed Buckner, Richard Dawkins, Bruce Flamm, Christopher Hitchens, Wendy Kaminer, Michael Newdow, Massimo Pigliucci, Steven Pinker, Ellery Schempp, Julia Sweeney.

## **New Book by HSNM Member Carolyn Dodson**

Our HSNM member, Carolyn Dodson, together with co-author Wm. Dunmire, has just written "The Mountain Wildflowers of the Southern Rockies" (University of New Mexico Press, \$17.95.) Not a field guide, this is a collection of color photographs and line drawings by a celebrated artist plus noted NM expert Dodson's fascinating comments. So if you are interested in learning about orange sneezewood, elephanthead, beebalm, unlovely buttercup, mulesears, and all the rest of our glorious flora, get in touch with Carolyn through our local HSNM directory or our website.

## **Help Out Military Religious Freedom**

Mikey Weinstein's new foundation, the Military Association of Atheists and Freethinkers is also worthy of our support. You will easily remember Mikey's vivid talk to our group last year regarding his son's experiences at the Air Force Academy and Mikey's ensuing efforts to stop significant, widespread, national military discrimination instigated by the radical religious right. For visibility for HSNM, I suggest bundling our checks and mailing them in one envelope to show our chapter's support. If you send your checks to me (made out to Military Religious Freedom Foundation, NOT to me please) I will be glad to forward them together in one envelope. MRRF states donations are fully tax deductible. Carolyn Glen Kaye, 12201 Menaul, NE, Albuquerque, NM 87112.

## **Letter to the Editor**

Special thanks to Donald Gutierrez (On Torture) and Harry Willson (Last Days) for calling attention to some very destructive human behavior. Those of us who want to do something constructive need to remember that we face ruthless, unscrupulous opposition and to be prepared for vicious, malicious surprises. Would be activists might benefit by attending a talk on stress management by Hank Bulger in Grants April 5<sup>th</sup>.

Dale L. Berry  
Grants, NM

## **The Amazing Meeting 6 Coming in June**

The Amazing Meeting 6, hosted by the James Randi Educational Foundation will be held June 19-22, 2008 at the Flamingo Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada. The title of the conference is I, Skeptic: Modern Skepticism in the Internet Age. In addition to James Randi, speakers will include Dr. Neil deGrasse Tyson, Penn & Teller, Christopher Hitchens, Matthew Chapman, Dr. Michael Shermer, Banachek, NM's own Benjamin Radford and many more. For more information and full bios of all TAM6 presenters see [www.amazingmeeting.com](http://www.amazingmeeting.com).



### **Friendly Philosophers**

**Monday, April 7, 2008**

Open Forum

*Bring Your Own Topic for a General Discussion*

**Monday, April 21, 2008**

*Climate Change: Science, Politics and Speculations*

Marshall Berman and Attila Csanyi

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

---

### **Atheists/Freethinkers Meetup Group**

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

**Sunday, April 6, 2008, 9am**

Showing of the *Atheism Tapes*

Interviews of Arthur Miller and Colin McGinn

Albuquerque Center for Peace and Justice, 202 Harvard SE

**Tuesday, April 15, 2008**

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