



# Humanist Society of New Mexico



April 2009

<http://humanistsocietyofnm.org/> [fmarch@thinkwellassociates.com](mailto:fmarch@thinkwellassociates.com)

## Quotes of the Month

I am the inferior of any man whose rights I trample underfoot.

Horace Greeley

Happiness is never stopping to think if you are.

Palmer Sondreal

## HSNM Family Co-op

### Alternative Children's Sunday School

April 5<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>, 11:00 am

#### *Regular Meetings*

Ground Level, College of Santa Fe, Albuquerque  
Campus, Pinetree Corporate Center  
4501 Indian School Rd. NE

## Santa Fe Humanists

Saturday, April 4<sup>th</sup>, 10:30am

*Water, Politics and Money*

Guest Speaker: Joe Auburg

Community Room, LaFarge Branch of the Santa Fe  
Public Library, 1730 Llano St.

For more information contact Bill Weihofen  
(505) 988- 1343

## Upcoming HSNM Meetings

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

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**Saturday, April 11<sup>th</sup>**

### **Informal Meeting**

*General Discussion*

This Meeting is for Members Only or Special  
Invitation Only – For invitation please call Fred  
March - 323-6784

Refreshments: Jack and Helen Fuller  
Summit Apartments, 3901 Indian School NE

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**Saturday, April 18<sup>th</sup>**

### **Topical Discussion**

*Can Humanists Find Common Ground with  
the Religious?*

Special Collections Library, 423 Central Ave. NE

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**Saturday, April 25<sup>th</sup>**

### **Speaker Meeting**

*Epicurean Humanism*

Attila Csanyi

Refreshments: Bill and Shirley Little  
UNM Law School, Room 2406, 1117 Stanford NE

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.

## **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**

*Frederic March: President*

*Bill Little: Vice President/Programs*

*Jerry Wesner: Past President*

*John Waldrop: Treasurer*

*Carolyn Kaye: Secretary*

*Ron Herman: Director of Classes*

*Jeff Cornelius: Family Co-op*

*Randall Wall: Newsletter Editor*

*Janet Johnson: Book Club*

*Ted Cloak: Community Liaison*

*Phil Smith: Webmaster*

*Membership Director: Open*

*Social Coordinator: Open*

*Publicity Director: Open*

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.

## **Looking for the Upside**

Someone asked, "Is there an upside to the economic meltdown?" I know people who say they can't imagine any such thing -- it is pure disaster, a 20-year depression -- what could be good about it?

I'm no cock-eyed optimist, but I can think of several things.

[1] The meltdown will lead to a required review of the Pentagon budget, and perhaps even of war itself as an instrument of national policy. What is gained by killing large numbers of people? What do we manufacture for export, besides F-16's?

[2] The meltdown provides the final and complete repudiation of the doctrines of Milton Friedman and the so-called Chicago School, who advocated absolutely total deregulation, privatization of all government functions except war, and the shredding of the safety net human families depend on. Their ideas were carried out in many countries in recent decades, including Chile, Argentina, Bolivia, Poland, Russia and partially even here in the U.S. The meltdown proves that Friedman was entirely wrong. For the details of all this, see THE SHOCK DOCTRINE, by Naomi Klein.

[3] The meltdown will lead to massive popular endorsement of Social Security and the safety net. People will comprehend its value. There will be no more toleration of talk of privatization or of shutting down of Social Security. There will be fresh impetus and opportunity to set up Medicare for all, which will care for all of us and end up cheaper than the current health care mess.

[4] The meltdown constitutes a serious comedown for rampant consumerism and unlimited growth. It will amount to a restoration of reasonableness and a return to reality. There will be less emphasis on individuals amassing heaps of stuff, like all that Christmas crap we import from China. Many families have been renting storage sheds for all the stuff that doesn't fit in the house.

[5] The meltdown could result in a revamped economy, with more emphasis on providing for the necessities of life for everybody. Concern and care for the environment will be enhanced. Equality will once again be taken seriously by a growing number of people. The new economy will not let such a huge fraction of

our ingenuity and effort go into "holidays," while people are hungry and cold.

[6] The meltdown will take away the mystique of Bigness. Small will be seen once again as beautiful. Local will again be seen as preferable to "global."

[7] The meltdown will make more desirable, and feasible, a new social contract, a new sense of solidarity. It will become clearer that we are all in this together, after all. Our species made it through hard times in the early stages, what with ice ages and sabre-toothed tigers. We did it through cooperation. The meltdown has proved that unbridled individualism is a bad idea, for everyone.

What has melted down? Imaginary wealth, scams, then housing, then banks, now employment, now commerce itself. No one is buying anything but food and medicine. The value of the money itself is now seriously at risk. See Zimbabwe. Gone! All gone! Some could call this development "chickens coming home to roost." Recent foreign policy and economic policy -- wrong! All wrong!

If the goal of the world-wide response to the meltdown is to "get back to where we were," as one pundit put it, then there is no upside and no meaning at all in the meltdown. If that's all we attempt, then humans are too stupid to benefit from setbacks, or to learn from mistakes. Unlimited growth and unrestricted greed constitute a mistake. If we don't learn from it, there is no upside.

But this must be noted -- the upside of the meltdown is opportunity. Nothing good is guaranteed or automatic. Nothing good will result, if we do nothing. Maybe we should start doing some of what needs to be done.

*Harry Willson*

## Something to Laugh At

An Irish priest is driving down to New York and gets stopped for speeding in Connecticut. The state trooper smells alcohol on the priest's breath and then sees an empty wine bottle on the floor of the car.

He says, 'Sir, have you been drinking?'

'Just water,' says the priest.

The trooper says, 'Then why do I smell wine?'

The priest looks at the bottle and says, 'Good Lord! He's done it again!'

Θ

Paddy was driving down the street in a sweat because he had an important meeting and couldn't find a parking place. Looking up to heaven he said, 'Lord take pity on me. If you find me a parking place I will go to Mass every Sunday for the rest of me life and give up me Irish Whiskey!'

Miraculously, a parking place appeared.

Paddy looked up again and said, 'Never mind, I found one.'



### **Friendly Philosophers**

**Monday, April 6<sup>th</sup>**

Open Forum

Bring a Your Own Topic for General Discussion

**Monday, April 20<sup>th</sup>**

*Bhutan and India – a Study in Contrast*

Dawn Liberman

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

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

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

**Sunday, April 5<sup>th</sup> 9am**

Albuquerque Center for Peace and Justice, 202 Harvard SE

**Tuesday, April 21<sup>st</sup>**

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

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### **New Mexicans for Science and Reason**

**Wednesday, April 8<sup>th</sup>, 7pm**

*Wiring the Rio Grande Rift with GPS*

Prof. Mousumi Roy

UNM Law Building

1117 Stanford NE, Room 2402