



# Humanist Society of New Mexico



August 2009

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

## Quotes of the Month

Ignorance gives one a large range of possibilities

George Eliot

The reason there are so few female politicians is that it is too much trouble to put makeup on two faces.

Maureen Murphy

## Upcoming HSNM Meetings

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

---

**Saturday, August 8th**

### Informal Meeting

*General Discussion*

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

Refreshments: Lee Delaney

Summit Apartments, 3901 Indian School NE

---

**Saturday, August 15<sup>th</sup>**

### Topical Discussion

*Evolutionary Psychology*

Special Collections Library, 423 Central Ave. NE

---

**Saturday, August 22<sup>nd</sup>**

### Speaker Meeting

*Art and Religion – The Challenge for  
Secular Humanists*

Zelda Gatuskin

Refreshments: John Waldrop

UNM Law School, Room 2406, 1117 Stanford NE

## HSNM Family Co-op

### Alternative Children's Sunday School

Call 505-292-4375 for meeting times

---

## Santa Fe Humanists

**Saturday, August 8<sup>th</sup>, 10:30am**

(note date change)

*Health Care*

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

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

**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.

**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*

*Randall Wall: Newsletter Editor*

*Janet Johnson: Book Club*

*Ted Cloak: Community Liaison*

*Phil Smith: Webmaster*

*Membership Director: Open*

*Social Coordinator: Open*

*Publicity Director: Open*

*Family Co-op: 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.

**President's Message**

By Fred March

At the Board meeting on July 18 the board considered a joint proposal from Ron Herman and Fred March with the objective of adding diversity and numbers of members to the HSNM, through a program of publicity, and a special focus on adult education. In its first stage though the end of 2009 the Board agreed to give further consideration to the following proposal specifics:

- \$ 6,600 for publicity
- \$ 1,400 to compensate Ron for course development and teaching (approx. \$10/hr based on expected commitment)
- \$ 1,500 for rental of classroom space.
- Application of current HSNM general and educational funds for this year, and initiation of fund raising from HSNM members and from external humanist funding organizations.

The Board agreed that the proposal is challenging and will require good planning and execution. Issues that the Board agree to consider at its next meeting on August 2 include:

- Details of the publicity plan in terms of media, message, and targets with option for paid professional input.
- Plan to add a welcome message to our website for responders.
- Plan for rapid response and follow-up with all persons who e-mail or phone the designated points of contact.
- Discussion of risks in the light of past efforts and application of lessons learned.
- Plan for fund raising with specific targets.
- Plan for curriculum completion and review by education committee
- Plan to create opportunities for any HSNM member to volunteer support.
- Plan to create joint social activities with the Atheist and Free Thinker group for mutual understanding, and potential role in our plans.
- Plan to keep the membership at large informed and we plan, execute, seek membership input.

Please feel free to call me or any Board Member with your ideas or questions.

## **Marcia Stone Memorialized**

We on the Governing Board of HSNM wish to honor here one of our members who died recently. Marcia M. Stone, 89, passed away peacefully in her Albuquerque home Thursday, June 4, 2009, surrounded by her loving family, including her husband of 57 years, Sidney.

Marcia and Sidney became active in the Humanist Society of NM in 1990, and they were named New Mexico Humanists of the Year in 1995. They hosted monthly meetings in their home for many years around that time. Several members remember Marcia as a delightful person. Jerry Wesner, former president of HSNM, said she had mentioned "losing her religion" by the end of her freshman year in college. "She was a caring person, who was confident in her understanding of the world," Jerry said. She was a willing donor to important causes, including HSNM and the American Humanist Association. Lavern Rison recalls her saying in her later years "I can't do much now, but I can still write checks."

Marcia was born in 1920 in Hood River, Oregon, and she had set two goals for herself before she turned 20 - to swim across the mile-wide Columbia River and to climb Mt. Hood. She achieved both. She attended Willamette University in Salem, OR, and later moved to California, where she graduated from UC Berkeley with a BS in Nutrition and Biochemistry and did research on cholesterol. She was honored with membership in Sigma Xi Scientific Research Society. She enjoyed playing piano and was active in international folk dancing. She met Sidney Stone at Berkeley and they were married 1951. They moved to Los Alamos, NM, in 1957, where she became active as a founding member of the Unitarian Church. She was also active in the American Association of University Women, the League of Women Voters, and the Democratic Party. She was a very involved mother for her two daughters and led them to experience new cultures and see many historic sights across the European continent. Later in life she enjoyed traveling with Sidney on cruises and tours, making new friends around the world. They moved to Albuquerque in 1990, after Sidney retired from Los Alamos National Laboratory. Here she enjoyed and supported Albuquerque Civic Light Opera, Musical Theatre Southwest, NM Symphony Orchestra, Rio Grande Jazz Society, KNME programs, KHFM classical music, and OASIS classes, as well as the Friendly Philosophers. All through her life she supported organizations that protected the environment and women's reproductive rights and those groups that fed

and clothed the disadvantaged. She was happy to live to see Barack Obama become President, but was concerned about the current economic and global warming issues.

Marcia is also survived by her two daughters, Susan Stone Mather of Savusavu, Fiji Islands, and Wendy Stone Shray of San Carlos, CA, their husbands, and her grandchildren Julia and Aaron Shray.

Honoring Marcia's wishes, the family will scatter her ashes at Mt. Hood, Oregon, at a later date. An Albuquerque memorial service is being planned for August 22, and anyone wishing to attend should contact Sidney at 275-8415 or Ron at 292-4375 for details. Those wishing to make a donation in Marcia's memory should contact Planned Parenthood of NM or a board member of HSNM.

## **CREATIVE PROSE WORKSHOP**

A Workshop for Fiction and Nonfiction Writers

Conducted by Paul H. Deal

(Phone: 872-1918 Email: paulhdeal@peoplepc.com)

Mondays 9:00 - 11:00 AM beginning Aug. 3, 2009

Ponderosa Pine Room at Palo Duro Senior Center

5221 Palo Duro Ave., NE, Albuquerque, NM

Discuss plotting, dialogue, characterization, etc.; present work for critical analysis; critique contributed works; investigate publication opportunities; join the workshop at any time; no prior experience needed.

## **Disappointment with Obama**

By Harry Willson

We attended the recent monthly informal meeting of the Humanist Society of New Mexico. More than thirty very aware and sensitive people sat in a large circle, and took turns saying what was on their minds. We were impressed with how many of the group expressed impatience and disappointment with President Barak Obama. It felt like an almost unanimous consensus.

We are pleased that the president is not G.W.Bush, nor John McCain. We are impressed with Obama's patience, his intelligence, his mastery of the English language, his good-natured optimism, and his coolness under fire. We agree that he is a marvelous human being, and wish him every success. But we are disappointed, and becoming impatient.

He came into our awareness with a message of hope, with promises of change. He stirred in us feelings of hope for change. But in several areas of concern, there has been no change, or not enough change.

[1] War and the war budget. One war seems to be winding down; the other is cranking up seriously. The total war budget is worse, i.e. bigger, than before. That isn't the change we hoped for.

[2] Banking. Greedy self-serving persons put the country and the world into the economic mess we are in. Greed was made into a virtue. "Greed above all," became a mantra. These same people have been rewarded with huge sums of government money -- bailouts for institutions which are regarded as "too big to fail." This kind of nonsense needs to change drastically. Restoring the old now-wrecked system is not the change we thought the candidate was referring to.

[3] Health care. Seventy-two percent of Americans want a single-payer system. Isn't that a majority? Bribery still prevails in Congress -- we thought the change that was promised included making bribery a crime again.

What will happen when a critical mass, even more than 72%, of Americans figure this out? Will we get orange T-shirts and make the place look like the Ukraine? Shame on us, on all of us!

[4] Torture. This is the most serious disappointment and the most dangerous situation over the long run. It's not that we think that Obama himself believes that torture is permissible, or that it works at all, which it doesn't. We do believe that Obama is a morally upright human being who hates torture. Some of us are reading his book, DREAMS FROM MY FATHER, and are marveling that he is such a fine and amazing human being. But we are concerned that by not prosecuting those who justified and authorized and ordered torture Obama gives the appearance that he or someone high in the circle of his aides, someone we never heard of yet maybe, like Yoo, wants to keep torture in the presidential quiver of weapons that can be used at some time.

Used to do what? "Defend our country," they'll say. But they used it, when they used it, to get disinformation from their suffering victims, which they then used to justify the illegal, immoral unconstitutional invasion of Iraq. We'd have been better off without torture then and we don't need it now.

The failure to prosecute those who ordered torture makes it look like Obama or someone wants to keep it for future use. That puts all of us at risk, really. Most Americans do not think it is useful. Cheney won't tell us how and when and where torturing people saved

thousands and hundreds of thousands of lives. We don't believe him. He hides behind "secrecy." But most Americans are catching on to this fraud. Scoundrels use secrecy to defend themselves from scrutiny and prosecution. Secrecy has become one more way for them to lie to us and to Congress.

Will awareness, and the indignation that goes with awareness, reach critical mass in this case, and bring about the change we hoped for? Or will the indignation dissipate with time, and we'll end up as a country with a badly deformed moral compass, which cannot be repaired with rhetoric and empty promises?



### **Friendly Philosophers**

**Monday, August 3<sup>rd</sup>**

Open Forum

Bring a Your Own Topic for General Discussion

**Monday, August 17<sup>th</sup>**

*The Human Nature of Religion and Science*

Frederic March

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, August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 9am**

Albuquerque Center for Peace and Justice, 202 Harvard SE

**Tuesday, August 18<sup>th</sup>**

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

---

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

**Wednesday, August 12<sup>th</sup>, 7pm**

*The Psychic and the Serial Killer: Examining the 'Best Case' for Psychic Detectives*

Benjamin Radford

UNM Law Building

1117 Stanford NE, Room 2402

