



NMSR Reports

The Newsletter of the
New Mexicans for Science and Reason

NMSR Reports, David E. Thomas, Editor, 801 Fitch Ave., Socorro, NM 87801 © 2017

AUGUST MEETING:
NEW MEXICANS FOR SCIENCE
AND REASON WILL HEAR
Dr. Hillard Kaplan
on *“Coronary atherosclerosis
in indigenous South American
Tsimane”*

7:00 PM August 9th, 2017

==>**CNM MAIN CAMPUS,
Student Resource Center**<==

==>Room 204<==

Bring a friend!



a man and his son fishing
with bow and arrow

Do the Tsimane suffer Heart Disease?

**September 13th, 2017 NMSR
Meeting: Matthew Lee Loftus on
“Genetically Engineered Food
Opposition: the Gap between
Science and Public Perception”**

Our September speaker is Matthew Lee Loftus, also known as the “Real Credible Hulk.” Check out his Facebook page at [facebook.com/therealcrediblehulk/](https://www.facebook.com/therealcrediblehulk/).



FUTURE MEETINGS ANNOUNCED

August 9th, 2017 NMSR Meeting:

Dr. Hillard Kaplan will discuss a recent publication, *“Coronary atherosclerosis in indigenous South American Tsimane: a cross-sectional cohort study.”* How does lifestyle affect our hearts? This will be interesting!

**7 PM Wednesday August 9th, CNM Main
Campus, Student Resource Center, room 204
(@ Richard Barr Boardroom).**

New Mexicans for Science & Reason (NMSR)

NMSR is a non-profit group with the goals of promoting science, the scientific method, rational thinking, and critical examination of dubious or extraordinary claims. NMSR meets at 7 PM on the second Wednesday of each month, in Albuquerque, New Mexico, at CNM's Student Resource Center, room 204 (@ Richard Barr Boardroom). NMSR Reports is its official newsletter.

NMSR officers:

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Harry Murphy, Physicist, Medical Quackery

Membership: \$20/year, includes newsletter, make your check payable to NMSR, send to treasurer (Shelton). Newsletter available in hard-copy and downloadable PDF.

NMSR Advisors:

- **Mark Boslough**,
Physicist (Impacts, Climate Change,
Global Warming). Sandia National Labs.
- **Kendrick Frazier**
Editor, Skeptical Inquirer
- **John Geissman**
Professor of Paleomagnetism, UNM
- **Alan Hale**
Southwest Institute for Space Research
- **Randy Thornhill**
Professor of Biology, UNM

Cyber-Cypher Clue: Y = M.

Bonus Puzzle Clue: For time calcs, disregard vertical distances traveled.

WANTED: READER ARTICLES & COMMENTARY

Got something to share with NMSR members? Send it in! ATTN: Dave Thomas, Editor, NMSR Reports.

REMEMBER, our next NMSR meeting is at 7 PM on **WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 9th, 2017**, at Student Resource Center, room 204 at CNM!

PUZZLE TIME!

[Please send solutions to Dave Thomas at: nmsrdave@swcp.com, or at 801 Fitch Ave., Socorro NM 87801.]

Cyber-Cypher: AUGUST PUZZLE

(Submitted by Dave Thomas)

The following letters are a simple substitution cypher. If R stands for L, R will stand for L everywhere. Your Cyber-Cypher Clue: Clue? Oh, well - if you must, see p. 2.

" Q V L O C Q P I O E Y C R D L
W P X P W L W P O L X L J R Q V P O K
L B E L , D N Q Q V L R C B B
E V C J L C E P O K B L D I W R
I H E Z P L O Z L . " - P E C C Z
C E P Y I X

SUPER SECRET WORD!

However you prefer to do the cypher itself (above or below), simply duplicate those actions on the alphabetized row of cypher letters below. You'll build an answer key, and you'll also reveal - the Super Secret Word!

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

JUNE CYPHER SOLUTION

"POLITICS WOULD BE A HELLUVA GOOD BUSINESS IF IT WEREN'T FOR THE GODDAMNED PEOPLE." - FORMER PRESIDENT RICHARD M. NIXON

Esteemed July Code Crackers: Mike Arms* and Terry Lauritsen*.

*Secret Word: "FOURTH PANDEMIC"

Need more Secret Word Cryptograms?

SOCORRO STUMPER

New puzzles every week at

www.nmsr.org/SocorroStumper.htm

August Bonus: “Uphill Both Ways”

Submitted by Dave Thomas

A commuter using a bicycle has a two-mile ride to work. Going to the office, the path is level for a half mile, then runs uphill at a 10% grade for one mile, then downhill at a 10% grade for a quarter mile, and finally uphill for a quarter mile at a 20% grade. The



commuter goes ten mph on a level surface, half that for a 10% uphill grade, three-halves that for a 10% downhill grade, and one-quarter that for a 20% uphill grade. For a 20% downhill grade, the rider purposely limits his speed to no more than that for the 10% downhill grade.

The August Bonus: (A) How much higher is the rider’s office above their home, in miles? (B) How long does it take the rider to get to work from home? (C) How long does it take the rider to get home from work?

July Bonus: “Tubular Bells”

Submitted by Dave Thomas

A windchime maker plans to cut a ten-foot length of conduit pipe into eight sections, such that the ratio of each piece to its longer neighbor is $4/5 = 0.8$.

The July Bonus: What are the lengths of the longest and shortest pieces?

ANSWER: ~2.403 and 0.504 feet.

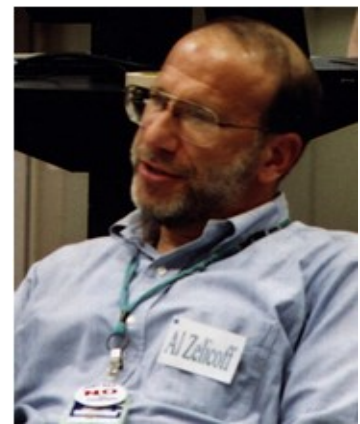
Congrats: Keith Gilbert (NM), Rocky S. Stone (NM), Harold H. Gaines (KS), Brian Pasko (NM), Mike Arms (NM), and Terry Lauritsen (NM)!

Smallpox Story: Correction

Our May speaker, Al Zelicoff, has graciously provided these corrections to the summary article from the June issue.

- The US did NOT destroy its samples of

smallpox strains. There are about 400 or so in the CDC collection (the only place they can be legally kept other than the VECTOR lab where I worked in Russia). The US never ‘weaponized’ smallpox — that is, when there was an offensive (as opposed to purely defensive) biological weapons program in the US, smallpox was never considered as an agent for weapons fill simply because the US strategy (to the extent there was one) was to contaminate and infect individuals within a ‘controlled’ area. The US never picked agents that would start an epidemic (which is why anthrax was the leading choice; it simply doesn’t spread from person to person or from animal to person unless an infected animal is consumed). The Soviets, well, had other ideas.



- The technique of ‘variolization’ means using the actual virus that causes smallpox (called variola) to induce an immune response. It works, but has a mortality rate of something like 2%. The vaccination technique that might be used to spread limited supplies of the vaccine organism is called person-to-person (or ‘arm-to-arm’) vaccination, which uses the organism ‘vaccinia’ (from which the word ‘vaccine was, in fact derived). Vaccinia (of which the US has stockpiled 300 million doses or so) rarely cause death (may 1 per million vaccine recipients save for people with immune system disorders including eczema) is thought to have originated at Jenner’s time from cowpox (‘vacca’ in Spanish = ‘cow’ in English) but it has been serially passed so many times among different animal species (which were, in fact, the vessels for making more of the organism) that it has slowly

mutated over time. It is clearly in the same virologic 'class' (or family) as smallpox, but in no means causes anything close to the same disease in humans.

Loved the "Cue Twilight Zone music". That pretty much captures how I felt when I stumbled into contemporary photos of the Lev Berg still on display. I doubt most people living in the area have much of an idea of what horrors were associated with that boat and its crew. It is equally chilling that the Russians have never owned up to the experimentation on Voz island, even though every former Soviet-era BW scientist living in the west concedes that they were working with the organism well into the 1980s for biological weapons purposes, and in obvious violation of the Biological Weapons Convention. My guess —it is JUST a guess — is that they still are.



Hope I can speak before NMSR again. Always a delightful evening for me. The questions are

terrific and thought-provoking. Best, AL Z.

Summer Skeptiverse Haiku!

by Keith Thomas, August 2017

Do space aliens Have sesquipedalian Communications?	Did sea serpents swim With arching undulations Or sideways slithers?
Sci-fi productions Often place/Much too much noise Out in outer space.	Some institutions Seem atmospherically Denialistic.
The basic structure Of Skeptical inquiry Calls for revision.	Our vast multiverse Might include a land that's led By Donald J. Drumph!

DUES - check the date on your mailing label. If it's time for you to renew, or to make a contribution, please send a check to NANCY SHELTON, NMSR Treasurer, 11617 Snowheights NE, Albuquerque, NM 87112
 Name _____
 Address _____
 Membership \$20 per annum*
 On the Net? Ask for the Paperless NMSR Reports! Send an email to nmsrdave@swcp.com "Dave Thomas"
 *For Renewals that are above the \$20 annual amount, the excess will be applied to the NMSR budget. Thanks!

The NMSR e-mail list is fun! It's an e-mail list with news announcements of interest to NMSR members, discussions about news of the times, and more. To join, send a request to nmsrdave@swcp.com.

Thanks to: John Covan, Eddy Jacobs, Nancy Shelton, Debbie Thomas, Keith Thomas, Al Zelicoff, and all our Puzzlers!

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