



# 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

## DECEMBER MEETING:

NEW MEXICANS FOR SCIENCE  
AND REASON WILL HEAR

**Benjamin Radford**

on "New Mexico UFO  
Conspiracies"

7:00 PM December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2017

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

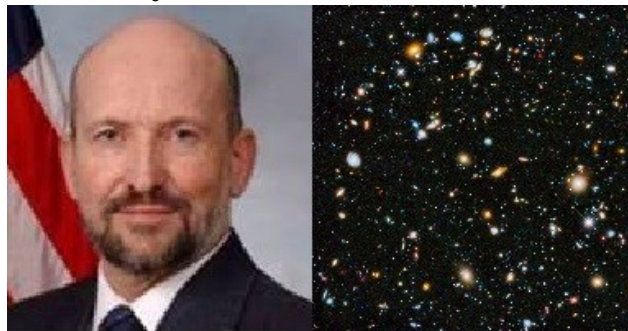
==>Room 204<==

*Bring a friend!*

7:00 PM December  
13th, 2017, on CNM  
Main Campus,  
STUDENT  
RESOURCE CENTER  
(SRC), room 204.



**January 10th, 2018 NMSR  
Meeting: Mark Fraser, on "The  
Cosmic Distance Ladder - How do  
we really know the distance?"**



At our January 10th meeting, Mark Fraser will discuss how we know how big the Universe is. How far away are planets, stars, and galaxies? And, how do we know?

## FUTURE MEETINGS ANNOUNCED

**December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2017 Meeting: Ben  
Radford, on "New Mexico UFO  
Conspiracies"**



At our December 13th meeting, Skeptical Inquirer managing editor Ben Radford will discuss "New Mexico UFO Conspiracies."

**Coming in March: "Life, elevated"  
with hummingbird biologist Chris Witt**



## 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:

**Dave Thomas, President**

801 Fitch Ave., Socorro, NM 87801  
nmsrdave@swcp.com

**John Covan, Vice-President**

jmcovan@juno.com

**Debbie Thomas, Treasurer**

3205 Alcazar NE, Albuquerque, NM 87110  
abqdebbie@comcast.net

**Eddy Jacobs, Resident Neutron Generator**

eddyjacobs88@gmail.com

**Mark Fraser CNM Sponsor**

ippon@earthlink.net

**John Geohegan, Past President**

jgeoh@swcp.com

**Kim Johnson, Industrial Physicist**

kimber@comcast.net

**Marilyn Savitt-Kring, Science Mom**

**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: V = W, W = V.

Bonus Puzzle Clue: How is this related to October puzzle?

### 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 **WEDS., DECEMBER 13<sup>th</sup>, 2017**, at Student Resource Center, room 204 at CNM!

## PUZZLE TIME!

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

### Cyber-Cypher: DECEMBER 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.

" A Z B O C Z O B A N R H O P Q G C G  
J R S K R Y U C R V F O S D O . B P B A  
G V G K R Y P Q B C U B C D ; G V G K  
R Y A U O X P B Z G F F K  
B C P O H H R D G P B C D P Q O  
E C B W O H A O . " - Z G H F A G D G C

### 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

### NOVEMBER CYPHER SOLUTION

"I DON'T KNOW WHY THEY'RE AFRAID OF JUST ADOPTING NGSS; THERE'S GOT TO BE A REASON."  
- LANL FELLOW GREG SWIFT, ON PROPOSED SCIENCE STANDARDS FOR NM SCHOOLS.

Esteemed November Code Crackers: Mike Arms\*, Nancy Shelton\*, and Austin Moede\*.

\*Secret Word: "SCRIPT HOLY AGENDUM"

Need more Secret Word Cryptograms?

### SOCORRO STUMPER

New puzzles every week at

[www.nmsr.org/SocorroStumper.htm](http://www.nmsr.org/SocorroStumper.htm)

### December Bonus: "Tug of War"

Submitted by Dave Thomas

Two strong individuals are playing Tug-of-War with a very long, very strong, and very light-weight rope. The two players are strong

enough to keep the rope taut, no matter how long it gets. They are playing the game on the Megaville Salt Flats, which are smooth and free of obstructions for hundreds of miles. The players are holding the rope four feet above the ground.



**The December Bonus: Assuming that the Earth's radius is 3960 miles, how far apart should the players be for the rope to just touch the ground?**

**The November Bonus: "Too Early for Sunset?"**

New Orleans, Louisiana has a latitude of 30 degrees North, and a longitude of 90 degrees West. Imagine that you are in NOLA on the day of the summer solstice (June 21st). At noon, you observe the Sun as being directly south. Two hours later, at 2:00 PM, the Sun has moved 15 degrees per hour towards the West, and thus has an azimuth (here, south-towards-west) of 30 degrees.

In the official "Flat Earth" model, the Sun is 40 miles in diameter, and moves above the flat earth at a height of 3,000 miles. On the summer solstice, observers on the Tropic of Cancer (23.5°N) will see the sun directly overhead at noon. Therefore, on the solstice, the Flat Earth Sun will move in a circle 3000 miles above the Tropic of Cancer, and will be directly south of New Orleans, and a bit north of the Yucatan (latitude 23.5°N, longitude 90°W) at noon.

The November Bonus: Assuming that the Earth is Flat, (A) what is the latitude/longitude of the Sun at 2:00 PM on the Summer Solstice? (B) What is the Azimuth of the Sun at 2:00 PM, as observed from New Orleans, LA?

**ANSWER:** (A): latitude 23.5°N, longitude 120°W; (B) About 90° south-towards-west.

**Congrats:** Rocky S. Stone (NM), Brian Pasko (NM)!

**November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2017 NMSR Meeting: Kim Johnson & Jesse Johnson, on "The NM Science Standards Kerfuffle"!**



At our November 8<sup>th</sup>

meeting, longtime NMSR members Kim Johnson and Jesse Johnson discussed the latest regarding the NM PED's proposed science standards.

Kim began with a rundown of the creation-evolution struggle in New Mexico for the last couple of decades.

## HISTORY AND SERIES OF EVENTS (ABBREVIATED)

- 1996 – Creationists hit the State Board of Ed with new science standards
- 1996-1999 – NMSR on the attack to counter. CESE formed specifically to address the issue. NCSE contacted and helped. Friends ever since then.
- 1998 – Marshall Berman elected to state board by 2 to 1 margin – we all helped.
- 1999-2000 – Temporary patch to science standards added. Creationist effect deleted. Mad creationists coming out the walls. Other state's going through the same problems. Modeled citizen groups after CESE.
- 2003 – long, difficult, politically charged battle to get new, better science standards in place – we win eventually with many diverse supporters, even though more than 50% of state is not evolution friendly.
- 2005 – Kitzmiller v Dover Board of Education victory in court.
- 2005 – 2011 – We fight off multiple attempts at inserting creationism into policy or law (Rio Rancho and multiple bills in legislature – all killed). Also, multiple national efforts to install creationist statutes and policies nationally. Almost all fail. Exceptions – LA, TX, etc.
- 2012 – Current – Battle in NM changes to School, Grading and Teacher Evaluations – but always an eye on creationists (fading from sight – uh-oh),
- 2017 - September X, before public notice was given – a few people find out that the Next Generation Science Standards NGSS) that have been recommended by many groups for adoption as-is since 2013 are going to be "different." Details supplied. Included changes to NGSS performance expectations (did not include the framework) and added multiple NM items.
- September X+1 – I contact the NCSE (National Center for Science Education) to request support on this issue in the form of notifying certain media (from the national organization) that new standards are coming, and they have deleted reference to global warming, most references to evolution (in particular, Haeckel's Embryos – a "radioactive marker" indicating some creationist

involvement, and the age of the earth – also a radioactive marker.

- 2017 – September 12th, the science standards adoption is announced on the PED website under a read page for notices. This is comparable to reading the legal notices in the Newspaper.
- 2017 – September 12 – a listserv is created, and we start networking to inform the world.
- 2017 – September 12 (I think) – Mother Jones writes an article on this and I get a call from the Abq. Journal (later finding out it resulted from a general email I sent out to the CESE Ducks with a heads up and short history. Multiple newspapers and agencies followed the story, generally with nary a kind word for the PED.)
- 2017 October 16 - By the time the mandatory public hearing came about, 200-300 people arrived, most signed up to speak (over 200) – one fire alarm later, and no speakers for the PED, the hearing ended at 1600 hours.
- 2017 before 26 October – more newspaper articles, with one editorial from the positive PED Journal (following the negative one (rolling eyes).
- 2017 October 26 – Legislative Education Study Committee meeting. A number of people spoke for adopting NGSS standards as-is. The evening prior, Ruzzkowski said he gave up. He said he would accept the NGSS as is with 6 NM specific standards. Stand by.

Jesse talked about who first made the changes, and when. Skandera was there when the changes to the standards began, and so was Ruzzkowski. We don't know which, if either, or both, or Governor Martinez were pushing the changes to NGSS. Ruzzkowski is a member of Chiefs for Change, and we don't know what influence they have over him. We don't know who, if anybody, is and/or was pushing the changes to NGSS. Jesse has an IPRA in progress, to see if we can learn the backstory.

NMSR thanks Kim and Jesse for an informative evening.

## Winter Skeptiverse Haiku!

by Keith Thomas, December 2017

Santa Claus, please heed My warning,/And get prepared For North pole warming!	Dave's puzzlers should see, In the town called Ukiah, A hidden haiku.
How does one become A Detoxification Diet Consultant?	Which psychics foresaw Two thousand and seventeen's Major disasters?
America has An authentic appetite For fake news stories.	December solstice. The hemispheres celebrate Opposite extremes.

### FLAT EARTH ARTICLES ON NMSR.ORG!

- Flat Earth Claim that Sun Acts Like a "Spotlight" -- DISPROVED!
  - Simple, Inexpensive Experiment Proves Earth is Round!
  - On the Flat Earth, The Sun Never Sets!
- [www.nmsr.org/flatter.htm](http://www.nmsr.org/flatter.htm), also [flatter2.htm](#) & [flatter3.htm](#).

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 **DEBBIE THOMAS, NMSR Treasurer**, 3205 Alcazar NE, Albuquerque, NM 87110  
Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Membership \$20 per annum\*  
*On the Net? Ask for the Paperless NMSR Reports! Send an email to [nmsrdave@swcp.com](mailto: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](mailto:nmsrdave@swcp.com).**

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

<p><b>NMSR Reports Vol. 23, No. 12 December 2017</b>  <b>David E. Thomas, Editor (505) 410-0753</b>  <b>801 Fitch Ave, Socorro NM 87801</b></p>	<p><i>IN THIS ISSUE:</i>  <b>Future Meetings Announced</b>  <b>New Puzzles!</b>  <b>PED Standards Kerfuffle - History</b>  <b>New Posts at NMSR on Earth: It's ROUND!</b></p>		
<p><b>Radford on UFOs of New Mexico</b>  <b>Weds. Dec. 13</b>  <b>7:00 PM</b>  <b>CNM SRC 204</b></p>			