



NMSR Reports

The Newsletter of the New Mexicans for Science and Reason

NMSR Reports, David E. Thomas, Editor, 801 Fitch Ave., Socorro, NM 87801 © 2018

**MARCH MEETING:
NEW MEXICANS FOR SCIENCE
AND REASON WILL HEAR
Chris Witt**

on "Life, elevated"

7:00 PM March 21st, 2018

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

==>Room 204<==

Bring a friend!

April 11th, 2018 NMSR Meeting: Susan Gerbic, on "Guerrilla Skepticism on Wikipedia (GSoW): It's About Time"

Gerbic is a skeptical activist, investigator, mentor, conference speaker, and writer, co-founder of Monterey County Skeptics, Skeptical Inquirer contributor, and a recurring contributor to the Skepticity podcast. She received the James Randi award in 2017 and became a Fellow for Committee for Skeptical Inquiry in 2018. While her particular focus has been "Grief Vampires" (psychics), her activism encompasses all areas of skepticism.



You supported the March for Science. Now what? Susan Gerbic will be explaining why the answer is to join her project, Guerrilla Skepticism on Wikipedia (GSoW). She will explain why improving the pages for Science and Scientific Skepticism on the 10th most popular website improves education world-wide. GSoW works to support the people and organizations that do the research, write the books, organize the conferences and take the heat from the anti-science and paranormal world. GSoW gives them the best possible Wikipedia pages possible, while following all the rules of Wikipedia. The GSoW has had a large impact on education around the world since 2010. The GSoW has written and rewritten hundreds of Wikipedia pages, including Spontaneous Human Combustion, Facilitated Communication, Perry DeAngelis, Thomas Bopp, Seth Andrews, Jerry Coyne, Matt Dillahunty, Mary Roach and many more.

May 9th, 2018: TBD

June 13th, 2018: Dave Straub on "Building Models of Historic Structures"

FUTURE MEETINGS ANNOUNCED

March 21st (a week later than usual, again) : "Life, elevated" with hummingbird biologist Chris Witt.

Chris is an Associate Professor at UNM, and got his



Ph.D. in Biological Sciences at Louisiana State University in 2004. His research interests include Avian systematics and molecular evolution;

evolutionary inference using phylogenetic comparative methods; biogeography of the Neotropics; hummingbird evolution and comparative physiology; high-altitude adaptation; integrative ornithology.

7:00 PM March 21st, 2018, on CNM Main Campus, STUDENT RESOURCE CENTER (SRC), room 204.

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 (Thomas). 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 = Q, Z = F

Bonus Puzzle Clue: Do the math, it'll be worth it!

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., MARCH 21st, 2018,** 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: MARCH 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.

" J F P N O A G F H I J X U
E I W I F A K R Y R S L S W E K
O Q . J A G J X X B R R Q
F A B J K L G I R A R ' I W E ' F K U
' E I C ' V O R A G J W K A .
W H H F A J W K F X X C , J
Z J K U F K F K A E R S . " A G R Q I R K
I F E B J K L

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

FEBRUARY CYPHER SOLUTION

"NOTHING IN LIFE IS TO BE FEARED, IT IS ONLY TO BE UNDERSTOOD. NOW IS THE TIME TO UNDERSTAND MORE, SO THAT WE MAY FEAR LESS."
- MARIE CURIE

Esteemed February Code Crackers: George Egert*, Austin Moede*, Mike Arms*, Alice Anderson* and Terry Lauritsen*.

*Secret Word: "FRIGHTEN DOUBLY"

SOCORRO STUMPER

Need more Secret Word Cryptograms?

New puzzles every week at

www.nmsr.org/SocorroStumper.htm

March Bonus: “Chicken Futures”

By Dave Thomas; Based on a True Story

8 pc. 2 legs, 2 thighs, 2 breasts & 2 wings	\$5.98
16 pc. 4 legs, 4 thighs, 4 breasts & 4 wings	\$10.98
50 pc. 13 thighs, 13 drumsticks, 12 breasts & 12 wings	\$54.00
100 pc. 26 thighs, 26 drumsticks, 24 breasts & 24 wings	\$75.00

At the sprawling Wally World store, the deli prices for about equal numbers of chicken legs, thighs, breasts and wings are:

8 pieces	\$5.98
16 pieces	\$10.98
50 pieces	\$54.00
100 pieces	\$75.00

The March Bonus: You are in charge of getting fried chicken for the big party, and you have a budget of \$100. Chicken is tax-free, by the way.

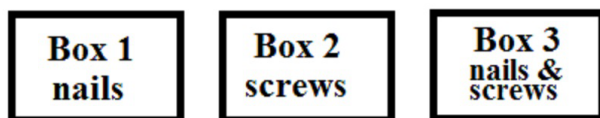
What is the largest number of pieces you can purchase at Wally World?

February Bonus: “Honest Advertising”

Submitted by Dave Thomas

Three boxes are all labeled incorrectly, and you must get the labels right.

The labels on the boxes read as follows:



To gain the information you need to move the labels to the correct boxes, you may remove a single item from one of the boxes. You may not look into the boxes, nor pick them up and shake them, etc.

The February Bonus: What is the algorithm for success? Remove 1 item from Box 3. If it is a nail, then Box 3 is all nails, Box 2 is mixed, and Box 1 is all screws. If it is a screw, then Box 3 is all screws, Box 1 is mixed, and Box 2 is all nails. Congrats to solvers Keith Gilbert (NM), Gene Aronson (NM), Earl Dombroski (NM), Rocky S. Stone (NM), Joseph Archbold (NM), Mike Arms (NM), Alice Anderson(NM), Terry Lauritsen (NM)!!

February 21st, 2018 NMSR Meeting: Valorie Aquino on "Organizing March for Science: From Moment to Movement".



Thanks to Mark Fraser for inviting me to speak at the February meeting of the New Mexicans for Science and Reason, and to all the members who attended!

I am a PhD Candidate in Anthropology at UNM, specializing in archaeology and geochemical dating techniques, and my excavations and research investigate human-environment interactions with a long time perspective. I draw concepts from ecology and complexity science to better understand relationships among natural and human social systems. Specifically, I ask: What role(s) did climate change play in the development, maintenance, and erosion of the dominant and widespread political tradition of the Classic Period Maya (ca. 200-900 AD) world? Using an archaeological site called Uxbenka, located in present-day southern Belize, as my case study, I reconstructed and analyzed architectural sequences of the site’s civic-ceremonial – or “downtown” – precinct, estimating the pace and nature of building campaigns as proxies for political contraction and expansion. Additionally, I’ve directly dated human remains of individuals hypothesized to belong to that ancient community’s dynastic lineage and performed preliminary stable isotope studies to develop a picture of individual diet and how those changed over time. My original data are supplemented with extant data from the site’s stelae (or carved stone monuments) and artifact analyses from the larger Uxbenka Archaeology Project. Moreover, I have been part of an international team of scientists that reconstructed hundreds and millennia of years’ worth of paleoclimate data using speleothems, or mineralized cave deposits, which have the potential to be robust, ultra high-resolution archives of past climate change.

Outside of my academic scholarship, I was also one of three national co-chairs who organized the March for Science (MFS) which took place on April 22, 2017. Within the first week of its origins, the march attracted more than 1.5 million followers on two social media

platforms: Facebook and Twitter, and a call for volunteers yielded about 50,000 responses. By the time the march happened, more than 1 million people showed up in over 600 locations on all seven continents in a great demonstration of support for science and improving the relationships among science, society, and policymaking. People championed science for the public good, defended scientific integrity and evidence, and promoted public engagement. The MFS made history as the largest event ever held for in support of science. More importantly, the MFS activated a new community of science advocates and organizers, and it helped bring science into public discourse and raise awareness of some of the threats that the scientific enterprise faces – such as science denialism when it comes to anthropogenic climate change, vaccines, and GMOs; scientific censorship; science funding; and issues of diversity and inclusion within the sciences.

Scientific evidence and integrity don't stand up for themselves. Like democracy, science isn't a spectator sport. As science supporters and scientists, we must speak out to protect our hard-earned findings and help make sure that if those can benefit society and help our communities, that they are communicated to the public and applied in policies that affect us. It's up to all of us to let science meet its potential – as an enterprise deserving of the hope we place in it to help build a better future in which we want to live.

Visit the MFS Albuquerque Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/marchforscienceABQ/>

Join the local community of science advocates: www.marchforscienceABQ.org

Thank you, Valorie

Valorie Aquino is a national board member of the March for Science movement, was a national co-chair organizing the March for Science on Earth Day 2017, founded MFS-ABQ, a TEDxABQ 2017 speaker, and recipient of the American Anthropological Society 2017 Executive Director's Award.. She is an anthropology Ph.D. candidate at UNM whose work reconstructs paleoclimate and

cultural records in the ancient Maya world, and has contributed to publications in Science and Nature journals.

NMSR thanks Valorie Aquino for a splendid presentation.

NEWSLETTER COSTS UPDATED

At our January meeting, members voted for a new rate structure to reflect the higher costs of the print newsletter over the online version. Hereafter, if you want the hard copy newsletter, membership dues will be \$25.00 per year; for the online newsletter, dues are \$15.00 per year.

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 \$25 per annum (hard copy newsletter), or \$15 per annum (online newsletter).

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, Debbie Thomas, Keith Thomas, and all our Puzzlers!

NMSR Expedition to M Mountain

On Feb. 25th, an NMSR team headed to the top of M Mountain in Socorro, where we trained our sights on Sandia Peak, some 84 miles to the north. Even though this peak is 3,400 feet **higher** than M Mountain, a theodolite and two other devices confirmed we were **looking down** on Sandia Crest. That would be impossible on a Flat Earth!

Full report, <http://www.nmsr.org/flatter2.htm>.
 Sponsored by the Round Earth Society.

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 for Science

March Meeting
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 Hummingbirds
 Weds. Mar 21
 7:00 PM
 CNM SRC 204

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 David E. Thomas, Editor (505) 410-0753
 801 Fitch Ave, Socorro NM 87801