



NMSR Reports

The Newsletter of the
New Mexicans for Science and Reason

NMSR Reports, David E. Thomas, Editor, 1201 N. Avenida de Chamiso Pl., Socorro, NM 87801 © 2022

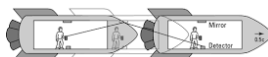
MARCH MEETING:
NEW MEXICANS FOR SCIENCE AND REASON will hear
Dave Thomas, on
Those Wacky Anti-Relativity Folks: Insights from John Geohegan
=>March 8th, 2023 7:00PM<=
=>Attend online!<=
=>RESUME LIVE MEETINGS?<=
Vote at roundorflat.com/covid19

FUTURE MEETINGS ANNOUNCED!

March 8th, 2023 NMSR Meeting: Those Wacky Anti-Relativity Folks: Insights from John Geohegan

NMSR has received a challenge from Dr. Hamdoon A. Khan, who has pledged a reward of \$20,000 to anyone who can disprove his rebuttals of Special Relativity. We will review this challenge at our March Meeting.

This topic is a specialty of NMSR founder and former president John Geohegan. John won't be able to participate directly, as his health has taken a downturn of late. He is being cared for by his wife Janet, and is currently residing at a hospice facility in Albuquerque. Letters may be sent to John c/o The Village in Alameda, 8810 Horizon Blvd, Albuquerque NM 87113, Apt # 257. In person visits are best arranged beforehand; contact Dave Thomas for more information. In addition to John Geohegan's work on Relativity, numerous other of his efforts on behalf of NMSR will be presented.



John Geohegan, with visitors Dave Thomas, John Covan and Kim Johnson, in mid-February.

Dr. Hamdoon Khan has provided a manuscript with his challenge, and has also produced some YouTube videos to describe the project.

Here is his first Challenge:

“Envisage two identical balls; A and B. A is suspended under a roof or in space, and B is traveling towards A in uniform velocity V. when B hits A; A should move backward and B forward according



to the suspended ball. But as special relativity comes into account, from the perspective of B, it is stationary and A is the one in motion. Therefore, when it is hit, it should move backward and A forward. How these two self-contradicting events can occur as a consequence of a single incident! Perhaps, based on this experiment, we can prove that only one of those two perspectives can eventuate. Thereon the relativistic perspective of B would be proved just to be a falsifying illusion.”

Join us at 7PM on March 8th, 2023 on Zoom!

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 a secure, undisclosed location. NMSR Reports is its official newsletter.

NMSR officers:

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Membership: \$25/year (hardcopy newsletter), or \$15/year (downloadable PDF), make your check payable to NMSR, send to treasurer (Debbie Thomas).

NMSR Advisors:

- *Mark Boslough*,
Adjunct Professor, University of New Mexico.
- *John Geissman*
Professor of Paleomagnetism
- *Alan Hale*
Southwest Institute for Space Research

Cyber-Cypher Clue: W = J, Z = W.

Bonus Puzzle Clue: Use variables for the two pairs of wet and dry heights, calculate areas and volumes in terms of the full cone's values.

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 **March 8th at 7PM!** Meetings, Live or Zoom? Vote!



PUZZLE TIME!

[Please send solutions to Dave Thomas at: nmsrdave@swcp.com, or at 1201 N Avenida de Chamiso Pl., 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.

" B C N E P T D J X K L J N V D E D R
P T N O . D B ' R B D V N B P M D T N
Y O N N J P V U K E F B P C N K G B C E K O N
Z P O F N O R . E P L M O N R R R C P Q G J
N L J B C N B H O K L L D E K G T K E E D L N
V K L J K B N ! " - O N X . V K O W P O D N
B K H G P O M O N N L N .

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/DECEMBER CYPHER SOLUTION

"I'M JUST REALLY PROUD OF THE DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS. I LOOK AROUND IN OUR MEETINGS, AND I THINK WE REALLY LOOK LIKE AMERICA." - SENATOR KYRSTEN SINEMA

Esteemed November/December Code Crackers: Mike Arms* and Austin Moede*!

*Secret Word: "PUNDIT FOR SALE"

SOCORRO STUMPER

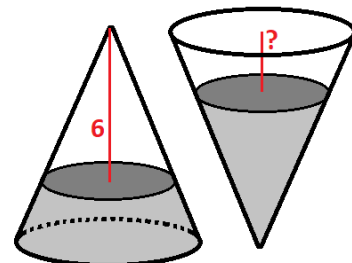
Need more Secret Word Cryptograms?

New puzzles every week at www.nmsr.org/SocorroStumper.htm

March Bonus: "I'll have a Double Cone"

Submitted by Dave Thomas

In the cone shown below (in two orientations), the shaded portion represents a liquid that has half the volume of the cone.



The March Bonus:
If the height of the dry half at left is 6 zarns, how tall is the dry half at right?

December Bonus Solution: "Takin' a Slow Train"

Submitted by K. Sengupta

The cities of Ramonsdale and Stamosville are connected by a railway line whose length

in miles is divisible by 264.

A train started from Ramonsdale towards Stamosville and, 6 hours after departing, developed an engine snag which forced it to continue at 5/7 velocity and under an hour late.

If the engine snag had occurred 98 miles later, it would have arrived 24 minutes sooner at its destination.

The December Bonus: How far apart are Ramonsdale and Stamosville? What was the initial speed of the train, and how many minutes late was the train?

Answer: Ramonsdale and Stamosville are 792 miles apart. The initial speed of the train was 98 mph and the train was just a hair under 50 minutes late.

Congrats to: Earl Dombroski (NM), Rocky S. Stone (NM), and Gene Aronson (NM).

January 11th, 2023 NMSR Meeting: A Look at Graham Hancock's "Ancient Apocalypse" series.



Our Panelists included John Hoopes of KU, Mark Boslough, Dave Thomas, and Ted Cloak (not at UNM, formerly at SUNY). Dave Thomas showed a part of the last episode of the Graham Hancock series, focusing on the Channeled Scablands of Montana and Wyoming. The geologist who realized these bizarre features were sculpted by a series of floods at the end of the last Ice Age, J. Harlen Bretz, showed his colleagues that catastrophic floods indeed have their place in geology. But he described many floods, not just one. Hancock, in his zeal to convince us that a single deluge reset humanity, insists it was only one flood, exactly 12,800 years ago.

Hancock claims that there was a Lost Civilization, dated back to the end of the last ice age. Origin myths tell the same basic story - humanity shared the earth with a more advanced society, until a great flood occurred. A chosen few were chosen to repopulate earth, helped by mysterious strangers arriving by sea. Hancock insists that Science confirms this series of events 12,800 years, ago, in the Younger Dryas, and that only then did our ancestors start agriculture. One of the Comet Research Group founders, Allen West, described a 12,800 years-ago debris of a giant comet, having the effect of thousands of A-bombs, and temperatures plunging Miami's warmth to Anchorage values overnight (months). Mark commented that the Comet Research Group scorns skeptics and maintream scientists, labelling them "cynics".

Dave showed a video by Dr. David Miano titled "What Graham Hancock Gets WRONG about Flood Myths." Miano solidly debunked Hancock's "30 foot rise in sea level overnight." Ice-age ending sea level rises have been *studied*. During the one a couple millennia prior to Hancock's 12,800 date, Meltwater Pulse 1A (14,600 years ago), sea level rose 16 to 25 meters, but over a period of *centuries*. The actual rate of sea level rise was 40 to 60 millimeters per year (just a couple of inches), hardly a "30 foot rise overnight". The next big pulse, 1B, saw a sea level rise of 28 meters, over a 500-year period beginning 11,500 years ago, again at a rate of only 40 millimeters per year, or less. It certainly was nothing like Hancock's analogy of a permanent tsunami on a global scale.

Hancock refers to "2000 flood myths" from around the world, suggesting that each myth reflects the same global flood. But many of the myths refer to various floods, such as Deucalion's flood in Greek history. Furthermore, Japan and Central Asia have no flood myths at all, and they are very rare in Africa. Only a small number of the myths refer to a worldwide flood. Hancock believes that Plato's account of Atlantis is one of the more important flood myths. The account says that Athenian soldiers sank into the ground (earthquake?), and that the island of Atlantis sank into the ocean, leaving a mud shoal that prevented sea travel there. But it wasn't a "flood" that saw rising sea levels; it was a subsidence of the island into the sea, and this does *not* fit with Hancock's narrative. And Atlantis is not global; Athens and Egypt were not flooded at that time. Also, Plato says this was before the flood of Deucalion (the Great Deluge, the "Big One"), and that floods occurred prior to the fall of Atlantis as well. Atlantis was simply not a global event. Likewise, Miano says, the myths of Gilgamesh and Noah were probably influenced by earlier Mesopotamian myths. The similarities in the myths are simply due to the ancients of this region influencing one another, and almost certainly are not independent observations of an actual global deluge.

Prof Hoopes asked "How long can details of oral history persist over generations?" The story of Atlantis would have to have been preserved over 9000 years (300 to 400 human generations), and that is asking for a lot. Ted Cloak added that "Memory of generations" is a metaphor. Prof. Hoopes noted that every single time Hancock says "I believe... I suspect...", he is asking audiences to respect his authority as an expert. If he disagrees with something in archaeology, he dismisses it as "orthodox archaeology/science," but labels things he agrees with as "widely accepted," trying to have it both ways. Hoopes mentioned some of Hancock's other beliefs, including that the "Face on Mars" was from an ancient Martian civilization that eventually seeded life on Earth.

Mark Boslough described Allen West as a key part of the Comet Research Group. In May of 2007 a press conference was held at the AGU in Acapulco, in which several of West's claims about a mysterious airburst around 12,800 years ago were put forth. The group claimed evidence of fullerenes, for example, but never delivered that evidence. For a 2008/2009 NOVA broadcast, they claimed to have evidence of nanodiamonds, but have not followed up since with any raw data. Boslough organized a debate between skeptics and Younger Dryas impact proponents in the summer of 2008 at a

Pecos conference in Flagstaff, Az. Joining Mark were Carolyn Shoemaker and Bob McCone. Proponents included Allen West and Ted Bunch, who referred to the skeptics as "cynics", much as Hancock does. Mark mentioned that if there were over 200 km-sized bodies lurking in the Taurids swarm, as the Comet group has claimed, we would have detected them by now. There is not much to the Younger Dryas Hypothesis other than hypotheses; actual *data* seems *never* to materialize.

The "Black Mats" cited by Hancock as an indicator of a global flood 12,800 years ago, also do not hold up. These black mats are formed by swampy, boggy deposits, which were formed all over the southwest for centuries as the ice age ended. These mats did not all form at the same time, just as Hancock's flood myths do not indicate a single point in time. Prof. Hoopes pointed out that when the Comet group is challenged on things like black mats not being connected to a single time, they change their tune, and claim that the *impacts* went on for a couple of centuries, and that's why their evidence appears spread out over centuries. Mark pointed out that the group's claims about finding a platinum anomaly on Greenland are (one) more than a meter above the onset of the Younger Dryas event, and (two) irrelevant, as platinum would be found only in asteroids, not in comets. When a crater named "Hiawatha" was discovered under Greenland ice, the Comet group predicted it would be "their" comet. Then it was dated, to 58 million years ago, a little too old!

Mark commented on oral history of floods in the early 20th century. The 1900 Galveston flood killed thousands, and was memorialized in a spiritual "Wasn't that a mighty flood." Lyrics were added or changed later by folksingers like Tom Rush. In 1927 there was another flood, inspiring Lonny Johnson's "When the Levee Broke." In 1937, the Ohio/Mississippi flood was mentioned in Johnny Cash's song "5 Feet High and Risin'". After just a few years, are people going to know these songs are about different floods? Add a few millennia to that, and it appears more likely that those ancient floods were, likewise, similarly isolated, local events.

In the Q&A, P.T. Barnum was mentioned as saying nobody ever lost money underestimating the American public, and that there is no such thing as bad publicity. Hoopes wondered if paying any attention to Hancock's nonsense and lies is counter-productive. "Ancient Apocalypse" is much more popular around the globe than Ancient Aliens, which are a

mainly American obsession. Boslough mentioned that Hancock's constant attacks on "arrogant cynical mainstream scientists" is just like professional wrestlers making boasts before a match. P.T. Barnum all the way!

Hoopes mentioned how Hancock challenged him to debate, but he refused because he doesn't want to debate science versus metaphysics. Hoopes recommended David Miano for a debate, which Miano agreed to, but Hancock insisted that only Hoopes would be considered for the debate.

A passionate discussion followed. NMSR thanks our panelists for a fascinating presentation.

As usual, **videos of this and past meetings are available at <http://www.nmsr.org/meetings.htm>.**

**February 15th, 2023 NMSR Meeting:
Leonard Tramiel & Dave Thomas, on
"Doing Science With Your Camera"**



Dave Thomas and Leonard Tramiel discussed several examples of photography-involved science, such as using a camera to measure distance to the Moon. Leonard Tramiel is a physicist and former vice president, software, of Atari, working for Commodore also. He is on the Executive Council of the Committee for Skeptical Inquiry and on the board of directors of the Center for Inquiry. Leonard is an avid photographer and astronomy enthusiast. Watch it on NMSR's YouTube channel!

DUES check the date on your mailing label. If it's time for you to renew, or to make a contribution, please make your check **payable to NMSR**, and send it 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, Debbie Thomas, Keith Thomas, and all of our Puzzlers!

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March Meeting
Relativity Denial
Weds 8th 7PM
Online/Zoom