

# The Phoenix Skeptics News

A Bimonthly Publication of the Phoenix Skeptics

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## December Meeting

We had a large turnout for the December meeting. As advertised, Jim Speiser of the Mutual UFO Network (and a Phoenix Skeptics member) spoke on evidence he believed was currently unexplainable. Accompanying him were Marge Christenson, National Publicity Director of MUFON, and her husband Dave Christenson, an interested supporter. Jim has since proposed what he calls Project AZURE to allow Arizona MUFON and Skeptics to investigate local UFO sightings as a team.

## January Meeting

Dr. Robert Dietz, Professor Emeritus of Geology, ASU, came to give an informal talk about creationism. He passed on some amusing observations that may in the future be part of a "History of the World" calendar.

## Philip Klass Lecture

Philip Klass, author of several books on UFOs and a contributing editor to *Aviation Week and Space Technology*, will be at ASU on Saturday, March 5 to talk about UFO abduction cases. Starting time is 8 p.m., location is Neeb Hall on the Arizona State University campus. There is parking available west of the building.

Mr. Klass has just written a new book on abduction cases, *UFO-Abductions: A Dangerous Game*. UFO reports were in a decline for a while, but have recently experienced a comeback with tales of "close encounters," including abductions for scientific experiments and baby-stealing.

## Skeptics Reorganized

Our group has been reorganized and given a written charter. This was done as a necessary step in the process of getting IRS non-profit status under 501(c)(3) of the tax code.

We are now organized along similar lines as CSICOP. We have a group of nine Fellows who control the organization, and a Board of Directors (chosen from among the fellows)

who run the organization. We also have Consultants to aid in investigations.

The Board is made up of five positions: Executive Director, Assistant Executive Director, Treasury Director, Administrative Director, and Publications Director.

Elections have just been held for these positions. The current Directors, in the order of positions listed above, are: Jim Lippard, Ted Karren, Keith Hemstreet, Michael Norton, and Ron Harvey

The remaining Fellows (Fellows at large?) are: Charles Cazeau, Bob Guzley, Randy Jones, and Hans Sebald.

## Skeptics subcommittees formed

Several subcommittees have been formed to help organize our work. These, with their respective chairmen, are: Dowsing Test, Mike Norton; Psychic Detective Investigation, Jim Lippard; Psychic Surgery Investigation, Randy Jones, and Ron Harvey. If you would like to help with any of the above, please feel free to contact the appropriate person.

## Peter Popoff Came to Town

by Jim Lippard

Faith healer Peter Popoff was in Phoenix for three days the weekend of February 12-14. Popoff, you may recall, is the former TV evangelist who was exposed by James Randi on the *Tonight Show* in February of 1986. Using an radio device in his ear to simulate divine communication, Popoff became very popular. He regularly filled large halls and stadiums with followers. In 1985, when he began using the device, he was bringing in at least \$1.25 million a month. After the exposure on the *Tonight Show*, Popoff lost access to television and his income dropped to a mere \$100,000 a month or so. He still has his mailing list (now trimmed down to around 100,000 names) and is still on several radio stations around the country (including KMLE 107.5 FM in Phoenix, on weekdays at 10:15 a.m.).

The CSER team also uncovered (very strong) evidence that Popoff had faked a break-in and vandalism to his offices in March of 1985. In early April of 1985, on Popoff's TV program, the vandalism was shown and a teary-eyed Popoff said that vandals had brought his ministry to a "standstill." He said that he and his wife had used their credit cards to raise \$1000 and asked his followers to do the same (or take out loans) to help get things going again. According to bank statements leaked by former Popoff insiders, he was making over \$1 million a month at the time.

Last year, the Peter Popoff Evangelical Association declared bankruptcy. Popoff abandoned his home in Upland, Cal. and moved into an apartment in Anaheim. He formed a new organization, People United for Christ.

In the Religion section of the *Arizona Republic*, a week before Popoff's arrival, there was an ad for "3 Special Days with Peter Popoff" at the Hyatt Regency in downtown Phoenix. "Come Expecting a Miracle!"

The next day, Sunday, we put together a press release and information packet containing several articles about Popoff which was sent Monday to the local media, with copies to KMLE and the Hyatt Regency. There was no immediate response from the press.

I contacted CSER to let them know Popoff was coming, and was shortly thereafter called by James Randi and then by David Alexander with advice on how to deal with it. This was to be the first time Popoff had been out doing healing sessions in about six months. According to Randi, his attempt to have an "Inner Circle" prayer meeting in Sacramento attracted only about six followers. Alexander said he was interested in knowing who Popoff's new "front man" was, as his former one, Reeford Shirrell, had quit shortly after the *Tonight Show* exposé.

It was decided that several Skeptics would attend the Friday night session and attempt to be healed. The idea was to see if Popoff was still using his same methods of obtaining information for calling people out by name. On Saturday, flyers would be distributed informing people of Popoff's history.

Several of us arrived early on Friday evening. Popoff had rented part of one of the ballrooms, with a seating capacity of about 200. When about 10 people had arrived,

Popoff and his wife came in (about 7 p.m.). Popoff thanked everyone for coming, and said that he had mailed an invitation and an envelope to his prayer partners. About three people went up and handed him envelopes. Popoff then left, saying the service would begin at 7:30 p.m.. Mrs. Popoff remained at the back of the room, setting up a book table. Several people from the audience went back to talk to her.

As Popoff was leaving, an elderly woman came in. Popoff claimed to recognize her from last time he was in Phoenix (about 12 years ago—but he also made this claim to several other people who denied having ever been to one of his services). The woman told him that she would be unable to stay and would be unable to attend on Saturday or Sunday. She seemed a bit upset. Popoff just smiled, shook her hand, and said that it was all right and that it was good to see her again. He left, and the woman went to talk to Mrs. Popoff. One of the Skeptics was perusing the book table at the time, and was able to overhear part of the conversation. He heard Mrs. Popoff say (paraphrased): "Those things those people say are lies. I would never say anything like that. That wasn't my voice." (Popoff's initial response to reporters after the *Tonight Show* exposé was to claim that NBC had fabricated the audio tape which Randi showed. He backed down on that claim a few days later, saying that the radio device was used for communication with the TV crew. Of the many hours of CSER tape, the radio device was not once used for communication with the TV crew.)

The elderly woman left, and the service began shortly after that. By this time there were about 80 people in the audience, including seven Phoenix Skeptics members. It appears that Popoff has no staff working with him, although several people showed up at the end to help pass the collection baskets. At least one of these people is a local minister.

Popoff was in Phoenix with his wife, Elizabeth, his daughter, Amy, and his sons, Nicholas and Alex. When Popoff came in, he spent several minutes talking to his wife at the back of the room.

Popoff's "sermon" was a list of various "names of God" in the Bible. Along with mentioning the names (in Hebrew and English), he had stories to go with them. For

"God the provider," he told the story of how his father once fed 10 ministers with a 4-inch loaf of bread, after which the loaf was no smaller than when he began. He also told of driving from Lawrence to Kansas City on 5 cents worth of gas.

Then the healing began. He made a big show of asking people if he could "shake" them. Popoff was not using his electronic device, and did not call anyone out by name or address. He did call a few people out by ailment, and these were, for the most part, people who had spoken to Mrs. Popoff before the service. The others were people responding to a call for healings of the audience at large—e.g., "Someone here has just been healed of some pain... who was it?" and "Someone here has diabetes." The person who responded to the call for being healed of pain was an elderly black man, who claimed he had lost a pain in his left side. This same man was healed again Saturday night in another generic call for healings—that time for "high blood pressure or dizzy spells," to which he responded when nearly 30 seconds went by without response from anyone else. The person who was told that they were healed of diabetes was also told that there was no longer a need to watch what food was eaten.

Randy Jones was wearing a back brace under his street clothes, and had a cane next to him that took up three chairs. Popoff came over and healed him, but didn't mention what was wrong.

One woman was clearly drunk. She walked around during the service several times, frequently going back to talk to Mrs. Popoff. At one point, she called out "I have alcoholism" and Popoff "healed" her. She was back again Saturday night, just as drunk. (She sat next to me at one point, I can attest to her drunken state.)

At the conclusion of the service, Popoff said that he had called his office that morning and discovered that his two printing presses had broken. He asked for people to pledge \$100 to help him overhaul his presses. He handed out envelopes to those who raised their hands, and asked them to write "press" on the back. Then the collection plates went around. Most people who did not drop in envelopes deposited amounts of \$1-\$5. David Alexander mentioned that this is not the first time that Popoff has collected for broken printing

presses. Perhaps he should buy equipment of higher quality?

Saturday night, three of the Skeptics (including myself) handed out flyers outside the Hyatt. Mrs. Popoff came down and confronted the other two, saying "you people are in every city we visit." She then went to call security. No security people ever spoke to us. We didn't inquire why. She may have been ignored, or she may have decided not to bother.

After about 8 p.m., we stopped handing out flyers (the service started at 7:30 p.m. again). I took the remaining flyers back to my car while the other two Skeptics went up to the service. They were confronted at the door by Mrs. Popoff, who said "Why don't you just leave? We're renting this room." They did not try to get in after that.

I came back to the hotel from my car and spoke with the others about what had happened. I decided I would try to attend anyway, since Mrs. Popoff had not confronted me. I had no problem getting in.

The Saturday service was pretty much the same, except that the topic was about types of healing and concluded with Popoff anointing people with oil. The crowd seemed to be about the same size. This service was attended by reporters from a couple of the local papers who spoke with me afterward. Popoff made no comment about the presence of skeptics.

Sunday was yet again the same sort of service, but this time the subject was Popoff's prophecies for the near future. Popoff predicted that inflation would bring the price of gold up to \$2000 an ounce, bread \$5 a loaf, and automobiles \$150,000 each. He predicted that ministers would have open orgies in the churches, claiming to be justified by the Bible. There would be 10 major riots. 21 world leaders would form a world government. The increase in airline fatalities would cause Congress to stop all flights in the U.S. until the safety problem was resolved. The graves of atheists and communists would be found filled with snakes and insects. There would be more nude beaches and even nude cities. And so on. The only time frame given was "Soon. Soon."

It doesn't look like things are going very well for Popoff. It's hard to say how much money he took in over the weekend, since the major contributions were in sealed envelopes.

Judging by the apparent (lack of) wealth of the audience and the number of envelopes contributed, I'd say he didn't make much money. It's possible that he lost some money, depending on what he was charged for the room.

Popoff's trip received a humorous paragraph in the Scoops section of the February 17-23 *New Times*, and a scathing column by the religion editor in the Feb. 20 *Arizona Republic*.

Thanks to the others who gave up parts of their weekend to help: Jim Crossman, Denise Esoldo, Bob Guzley, Ron Harvey, Mark Jacquemin, and Randy Jones.

## Towards a more effective organization

by Bob Guzley

The December meeting of the Phoenix Skeptics afforded members an opportunity to hear Jim Speiser, a local UFOlogist. He was backed up by Marge and Dave Christenson. He presented what to many members was an opposing point of view regarding evidence for the existence of UFOs. A lively discussion followed a brief slide presentation.

A fair amount of ambiguity existed between what Mr. Speiser said and what his slide show portrayed. He claimed that "unexplained" UFO sightings and alleged abductions were just that—unexplained and alleged. However, the slide show implied, or at least, intimated, that these incidents had a sort of extraterrestrial explanation. The Christensons echoed such suggestions—sometimes subtly and at other times more overtly.

The slide show was a brief overview of some of the more famous alleged UFO sightings and abductions. Absolutely no conclusive evidence was presented that would warrant removal of the adjective "alleged" from any of those presented incidents. Specifics of any particular cases were lacking. This was most disappointing since these cases were supposedly the strongest in "evidence" to support Mr. Speiser's contentions.

However, Mr. Speiser's lack of concrete evidence suggesting the existence of alien beings was not nearly as troublesome as the reaction of many skeptics in attendance. As discussion and debate between Mr. Speiser

and several skeptical attendees became more acrimonious, I saw a need for some sort of monitoring of the discussion process. Some members were nothing short of rude in their responses to some of Mr. Speiser's claims. Some shouted out personal opinions, often before allowing others to respond to a previous question. Derisive comments, albeit with humorous intention, were made at times. Several members rightfully accused Mr. Speiser and the Christensons of fallacious reasoning, but invoked fallacious reasoning of their own, focusing on beliefs and motivations rather than evidence. Although many excellent points were made by attendees negating the validity of Mr. Speiser's alleged evidence, I feel the meeting was somewhat marred by a less than scholarly atmosphere.

I do not propose that we environ ourselves in formal "stuffed shirt" surroundings for future meetings. On the contrary, I find the informality much more comfortable and conducive to our goals of disseminating and objectively evaluating evidence of claims of the paranormal. However, we must monitor ourselves to be sure that we are always proceeding toward these goals. This may involve developing parliamentary procedures for debate, selecting an individual to monitor discussion, or relying on members themselves to point out cohort rudeness or fallacious reasoning as it occurs.

Critical thinking and the scientific method require that debate and discussion are orderly processes which focus on evidence rather than innuendo, belief, and speculation. They also require a close scrutiny within the ranks and constant introspection. I hope the Fellows can establish a policy for future discussions at Phoenix Skeptics meetings.

## Update on the Radiocarbon Dating of the Shroud of Turin

by Jim Lippard

On September 29 to October 1, 1986, the Turin Workshop on Radiocarbon Dating of the Turin Shroud took place in Turin, Italy. Shortly before his death, Umberto di Savoia, the shroud's owner, had given authorization for Carbon-14 dating to take place. At his death, the shroud became the property of Pope John Paul II. After requests from Cardinal Ballestrero, the Archbishop of Turin and

appointed Pontifical Custodian of the shroud, the Pope gave his approval and "involved the Pontifical Academy of Sciences as scientific consultant." The Turin Workshop was arranged by Professor Carlos Chagas, President of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences. Also present at the Workshop on behalf of the Catholic Church was Professor Luigi Gonella of Turin Polytechnic, acting as the "scientific and technical consultant of Turin Bishopric." The 22 persons attending the Workshop included representatives of laboratories in France, Hong Kong, Italy, Switzerland, the U.K., and the U.S.

The conclusions of the Workshop were as follows (quoting from "Conclusions and Procedural Steps" of the Workshop):

"1. This is the time for radiocarbon dating of the Shroud.

"2. A minimum of cloth will be removed, which is sufficient (a) to ensure a result that is scientifically rigorous and (b) to maximize the credibility of the enterprise to the public. For these reasons, the decision was made that seven laboratories will carry out the experiment: five accelerator-mass spectrometer laboratories and two small-counter laboratories.

"3. The samples should be taken from an unobtrusive part of the Shroud, and from a portion which is not likely to yield other useful information. The samples should not include charred material. They should be prepared in a form, not too small, so as to allow reasonable pre-treatment processes. In addition to the Shroud samples, the British Museum will also prepare and provide two control samples for each laboratory.

"4. For logistic reasons, samples for radiocarbon dating will be taken from the Shroud immediately prior to a series of other experiments planned by other groups. Selection of the material to be removed and the actual removal will be the responsibility of Mrs. Flury-Lemberg (Abegg-Stiftung, Bern, Switzerland).

"5. Seven samples containing a total of 50 milligrams of carbon will be taken from the Shroud. In addition, a single dummy sample will be prepared by the British Museum. These Shroud samples and the dummy sample will be distributed to the seven laboratories in such a way as to ensure that the seven laboratories are not aware of the identification

of their individual sample. This distribution will be the responsibility of the following three certifying institutions: the Pontifical Academy of Sciences (Professor C. Chagas), the British Museum (Dr. M.S. Tite) and the Archbishopric of Turin (Professor L. Gonella).

"6. The taking of the samples will be done so that representatives from the seven laboratories will have complete knowledge of the process. Samples will be delivered by the three certifying institutions (See 5 above) directly and immediately to the representatives of the seven laboratories who will thereafter be responsible for the samples.

"7. At this time, a date will be chosen for submission of experimental results from the seven laboratories to the following three analyzing institutions: the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, the British Museum, and the Metrological Institute of Turin, 'G. Colonnetti'. These institutions will keep the results in sealed envelopes until an agreed upon date, at which time they will be opened for statistical analysis.

"8. After the analysis of the experimental results by the three analyzing institutions, a meeting will be held in Turin between the three analyzing institutions and representatives of the seven laboratories to discuss the results of the statistical analysis with the objective of deciding the final result of the measurement program.

"9. The radiocarbon groups will, through correspondence, establish a common format for presenting the experimental results to the analyzing institutions.

"10. The cost of the experiments and the analyses will be borne by the participating institutions. Travel and living expenses entailed will be provided by the Pontifical Academy of Sciences unless other arrangements are made.

"11. Samples from the Shroud will be taken by May, 1987. It is hoped that the final result will be available by Easter of 1988. This final result will be published in an appropriate scientific journal as a collaborative paper."

So far, so good. The results of the Workshop were announced to the public in a Press Communique from the Archbishopric of Turin dated October 4, 1986. Unfortunately, things took a sudden change for the worse.

A letter from the laboratories to Cardinal Ballestrero, dated July 1, 1987, contained the following quotes: "Your Eminence, it was to satisfy this desire on your part for a convincing and valid proposal for radiocarbon dating the Shroud that we drew up the protocol. A most important article in the protocol concerned the minimum number of independent measurements required to fulfill your charge of achieving a credible result. In our judgement that number should involve measurements by seven different laboratories.

"We were therefore alarmed to read in the April 27, 1987 issue of *La Stampa* a statement attributed to Professor Luigi Gonella, your science advisor on matters concerning the Shroud of Turin, that only two or three laboratories will be involved in the measurement. If that is indeed the case you are risking the possibility that what may be the first and only chance to date the Shroud cloth will fail. The material removed from this precious object will have been wasted.

"We urge Your Eminence, before making a final decision on this question, to reconvene a meeting of the seven carbon dating laboratories and the British Museum with your science advisor Professor Gonella to more fully apprise him of the dangers of modifying the Turin Workshop protocol in this fundamental way."

The response to this was a letter from the Archbishop of Turin to all participants in the Turin Workshop, dated October 10, 1987. The following are key points from this letter:

"At the end of May I received positive instructions from the Holy See, personally signed by the Cardinal Secretary of State, on how to proceed to the radiocarbon dating of the Shroud of Turin.

"The instructions agree to the main line of the proposal put forward at the Turin Workshop of last year, but do not accept a few items. In particular, they direct that no more than three samples be taken, to be used for measurement by different Laboratories. ...

"The choice of the three Laboratories among the seven which offered their services was made, after long deliberation and careful consultations, on a criterion of internationality and consideration for the specific experience in the field of archaeological radiocarbon dating, taking also into account the required sample

size. On this criterion the following Laboratories are selected:

"Radiocarbon Laboratory, University of Arizona

"Research Laboratory for Archaeology, Oxford University

"Radiocarbon Laboratory, ETH, Zurich

"The operations for taking the samples have to be presided by myself, in my capacity as Pontifical Custodian of the Shroud. H.E. Professor Carlos Chagas, President of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, will be invited to be present at the operation, as well as at the eventual final meeting, as my personal guest, in consideration of the collaboration he gave in working out the project. The instructions from the Holy See do not deem it necessary for representatives of the measurement Laboratories to attend the sample-taking operations."

This prompted a letter from Prof. Harry Gove, director of the nuclear structure research laboratory at the University of Rochester, to Prof. Chagas, dated October 27, 1987. Enclosed with this letter was a letter to the Pope endorsed by representatives from the laboratories and a press release to be made public if the appeal to the Pope failed. The letter to Chagas strongly objected to:

"1. Five AMS and two small counter laboratories reduced to three AMS laboratories.

"2. No independent textile expert designated to remove the Shroud samples.

"3. Laboratory representatives not permitted to witness Shroud sample removal.

"4. No suggested involvement by laboratory representatives in the final data analysis.

"5. No official involvement by the Pontifical Academy of Sciences at any stage. Professor Chagas invited to participate merely as a guest of the Cardinal of Turin."

The letter to the Pope stated that removal of 12.5 square centimeters (less than 0.03 percent of the total surface of the Shroud) would suffice for all seven laboratories. This letter stated that "It is our collective impression that Cardinal Ballestrero has received very unwise scientific advice. The proposed modifications will confirm the suspicion of many people around the world that the Church either does not want the Shroud dated or it wants to have it done in an ambiguous way."

The appeal to the Pope failed, and the press release came out. A meeting was arranged for January 22, 1988, between the Archbishop of Turin, Gonella, and representatives of the three labs chosen. In Ian Anderson's article "Vatican undermines tests on Turin shroud" in *New Scientist*, January 21, 1988, it was stated that "Gonella will not attend the meeting unless the laboratories agree to participate in the dating procedure as approved by the church hierarchy." This article also says that "[Garman] Harbottle [of the Brookhaven Institute] disputed a suggestion, contained in a letter from the Archbishop of Turin, that the three chosen laboratories were more experienced than the others. The Isotope Measurements Laboratory at Harwell in Britain—one of those rejected—had pioneered the field and had done more sampling than the others put together, Harbottle said."

In an article by Kenneth R. Clark in the January 17, 1988 *Chicago Tribune*, written as a result of a press conference called by Gove and Harbottle, quoted Gove as saying, "We're a little bemused by the fact that the two labs in New York State, which are the ones that originally offered to date the shroud, are two of the four labs that are excluded, and the reasons for that is not at all clear to us. We feel it's extraordinarily bad advice the cardinal is being given by his science adviser. That's Luigi Gonella. He's a professor of metrology, whatever that is, at Turin Polytechnic. He's a man nobody [in the scientific community] ever heard of."

This article also quotes Gonella, saying that he refused to give a reason for the reduction in labs or discuss the upcoming meeting with the three labs, "which he called a private matter." Gonella said, "I do not have to account for my credentials to Gove and Harbottle. As a professor at Turin Polytechnic, I only have to account to my faculty. This business of holding press conferences is just an effort to intimidate people who don't agree with you. It's not going to work. They can hold all the press conferences they want. It won't change anything." Gonella also said that the Workshop protocol was only a suggestion, never an agreement.

In an article in *The Arizona Republic* of January 30, 1988, it was stated that "A three-nation scientific team is ready to begin radiocarbon-dating the Shroud of Turin ... The

British Museum will announce the results later this year."

A conversation on February 18 with Dr. Douglas Donohue, co-director of the laboratory at the University of Arizona, gave more light on the January 22 meeting. Present at that meeting were representatives of the three chosen labs, the British Museum, and Prof. Gonella. The press release issued after that meeting stated that "it is proposed that, as far as possible, the spirit of the original protocol of the 1986 meeting will be retained." The proposal agreed upon by the members of this meeting has not yet been approved by the Archbishop of Turin, but it is Dr. Donohue's understanding that lab representatives will be permitted to observe the taking of samples and will take part in the final data analysis. Each lab will receive three samples, including dummy samples prepared by the British Museum. In short, the only significant deviation from the original protocol is the reduction of the number of labs from 7 to 3 and the elimination of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences from the data analysis. The only date given for the release of the final results was "by the end of 1988." As for ensuring a solid chain of evidence in the testing, Dr. Donohue said that the proceedings involving samples of the shroud would be videotaped.

When asked to comment on the dangers involved in using only three labs, Dr. Donohue indicated that the smaller number of labs would only be a problem if one of the labs produced an anomalous result. He also stated that the reason for the reduction in the number of labs was to reduce the amount of shroud material to be destroyed.

### New Phone Number

As mentioned in the previous issue, the phone number for the Phoenix Skeptics is 943-2723. Our mailing address is still Phoenix Skeptics, P.O. Box 62792, Phoenix, AZ 85082-2792.

### Editor's Ramblings

Here we are with our fourth newsletter. Seems like the last one is just mailed out before we're scrambling for material for the next one. As we mentioned in the first newsletter, we are interested in contributions from our members. Book reviews, articles, cartoons or whatever are welcomed. Send them to us at our address

mentioned elsewhere in this issue, or call Ron Harvey at 863-0284.

Despite the fact that our organization is still in its infancy, we seem to be making headway in the Valley. At times, the amount of lunacy and uncritical acceptance of the same seem like giant windmills to our Don Quixote. We notice that Time-Life books recently began a TV ad campaign for a new series—apparently non-skeptical—on the paranormal. Occasionally, though, our efforts do have tangible effects, and the rewards are well worth the effort.

It was reported at our January meeting that the *Sun City Daily News-Sun* carries a disclaimer with its astrology column, possibly because of our efforts. We have since learned that they have had one for quite a while, not due to our efforts. Also, the *State Press*, the student newspaper at ASU, has started to carry a (monthly?) astrology column (without a disclaimer).

There was an interesting notice in the November issue of *Contemporary Women* (the special "Focus on You" edition). It seems that Marlo Thomas was booked to speak at the "Contemporary Women's Educational EXPO," but she cancelled when it was merged with "Focus on You."

From the unattributable quote department, we read in a newspaper that a midget who was arrested for channelling without a license had

recently escaped. The headline was "Small medium at large."

Frank Baranowski, hypnotist and past life regression researcher, no longer has a weekly radio show on KFYI. He will occasionally do specials in the future, as he did during the "Focus on You" expo in December. His shows featured people with many different paranormal claims.

## Upcoming Meetings

Our meetings are normally held on a Saturday near the end of the month. Meetings start at 12:30 p.m. and are held at the Jerry's restaurant at 1750 N. Scottsdale Rd in Tempe (south of McKellips).

**February 27.** Normal meeting time and place. Guest speaker will be Jim Jacobson on Scientology.

**March 5.** Philip Klass at Neeb Hall, ASU, at 8 p.m.. Topic is UFO Abductions.

**March 26.** Normal meeting time and place. Speaker and topic unknown at press time.

If you have a suggestion for a meeting topic or a guest speaker, contact Ted Karren at our address.

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The Phoenix Skeptics News is the official publication of the Phoenix Skeptics. Phoenix Skeptics is a non-profit scientific and educational organization with the following goals: 1. to subject claims of the paranormal, occult, and fringe sciences to the test of science, logic, and common sense; 2. to act as a clearinghouse for factual and scientific information about the paranormal; and 3. to promote critical thinking and the scientific method. Subscription rate is \$10 per year. All manuscripts become the property of Phoenix Skeptics, which retains the right to edit them. Address all correspondence to PS, P.O. Box 62792, Phoenix, AZ 85082-2792. CSICOP-recognized skeptic groups may reprint articles in entirety by crediting the author, The Phoenix Skeptics News, and Phoenix Skeptics. All others must receive Phoenix Skeptics' permission. Copyright © 1988 by Phoenix Skeptics. Opinions expressed in articles are those of the authors.

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