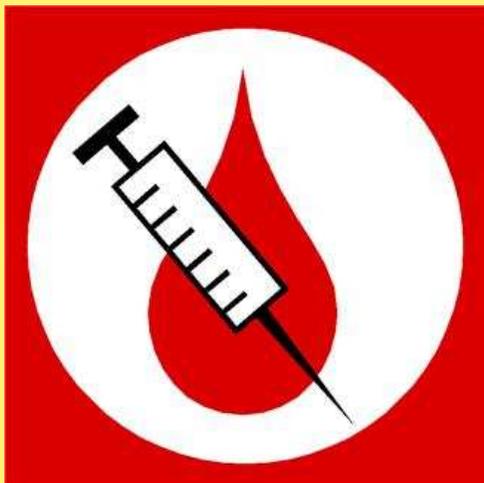


Manitoba Humanist



**The Blood
Signal is on.**

**You have the
power to save a
life.**

Please give.

Published by and for the
Humanists, Atheists and
Agnostics of Manitoba

*“We are beyond
belief”*

HA²M

www.mbhumanistsatheists.ca



IMMEDIATE NEED FOR BLOOD DONORS

At this time of year, many of us are taking a well-deserved break and enjoying the wonderful summer weather. However, accidents and emergencies don't stop during the summer months.

Please note that Canadian Blood Services is currently In Blood Signal mode. Inventory is far below normal levels and current appointments in the system are not enough to turn the situation around. It is getting close to a very **urgent** situation. Please consider helping out.

Call 1 888 2DONATE to make an appointment. HAAM is part of the Partners for Life program, so you can let them know that you wish your donation to count towards the Humanist Association of Manitoba's yearly pledge of

just 10 donations. Our ID number is **HUMA008484**

Here is how you sign up for Partners for Life.

Please go to the following website: www.blood.ca

- 1) Select: Partners for Life
- 2) Select: Join Partners for Life
- 3) Select: Member (blue square)

Follow directions from there. The information required is indicated below:

Partner ID: HUMA008484
Organization: Humanist Association of Manitoba

You literally have it in you to save a life.

UPCOMING EVENTS

All of our upcoming events can be found on page 5 of this newsletter.



Prof. Arthur Schafer will be speaking at the Dying with Dignity event

IMPORTANT: UPCOMING MEETING DATES

In the past, our regular monthly meetings were usually on the second Saturday of the month. However, we keep running into long weekends and holidays! (Thanksgiving, for example).

So.... Please note that the dates of our meetings will vary. Still on Saturdays, but they may fall at different times of the month. Please check the schedule in the newsletter before marking your calendar!

Or better yet, join our Meetup group and get automatic meeting reminders.

BUS ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN KICKS INTO GEAR!!

We are there!! We're almost at our goal, so we're moving forward.



We've sent in our application and information to run our very own exterior advertising on Winnipeg city buses. The approval and production process should take a few weeks, so look for HAAM advertising on transit buses by September or October. We'll keep you updated on the start date!

Thank you SO MUCH to everyone who has contributed to make this dream a reality. You've made it happen!

DYING WITH DIGNITY

The organization Dying With Dignity has asked for our assistance in promoting their upcoming Winnipeg event. Following is their information.

THERE IS SOME SUFFERING THAT ONLY DEATH CAN END

One horrible morning a woman finds a lump in her breast. She is 36 years old, a wife and mother of two preschool children. She consults her physician and consents to surgery to remove the malignant tumor. No law says she must have surgery.



She bravely accepts more surgery and years of radiation and chemotherapy. Again, all treatments are chosen without the requirement of a law.

The cancer is aggressive and attacks the spine. She is becoming increasingly paralyzed, and in agony. She chooses to stop her ineffective treatments; our laws allow her this choice.

Death is inevitable and is not far off. The woman wants to make one more decision. She wants to determine when and how death comes. She wants a willing physician to assist her to die. But Canadian laws prevent this. The woman is terrified, if she cannot hasten her death she will be totally paralyzed until she suffocates to death. In desperation, she asks her sister to help her to die.

What would your answer be to this woman's plea? Would your answer change, on knowing that assisting someone to die is a criminal offence in Canada, punishable by up to fourteen years in prison?

Personal autonomy ends at our death bed. We have the right to take our own life, but no one can counsel or assist us. We have the right to stop eating and drinking and die slowly over a

period of up to three weeks. We have the right to palliative sedation, being rendered unconscious until death comes.

Assisted dying is legalized or decriminalized in the Netherlands, Albania, Belgium, Luxembourg and Switzerland, and in the states of Oregon, Washington, Montana and Vermont. The Quebec government has tabled a bill that would allow for medically assisted death as part of end-of-life care. Quebec is circumventing the criminal code by making this an issue of provincial health care.

In June 2012, Madam Justice Lynne Smith of the British Columbia Supreme Court ruled that those sections of the Criminal Code that prohibit assisted dying violate the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, because they unjustifiably infringe on the rights of disabled people and on Canadians' rights to life, liberty and security of the person. She gave legislators one year to craft a bill legalizing medically-assisted dying.

Studies by leading academics have found that safeguards to protect the vulnerable work. Laws change to reflect society. Women vote and same sex couples marry because laws change. Imagine the peace of mind it would give to the dying person to know that when the suffering becomes too great, a gentle death can be summoned.

We are all only an illness or an accident away from being where my sister was. There is some suffering that only death can end.

Sheila Noyes is a past president and current board member at Dying With Dignity Canada. Her passion for choice at the end of life comes from having supported both her mother and sister in their terminal and tragic illnesses.

Dying With Dignity is a national, member-based, registered health charity. Dying With Dignity informs individuals about all end-of-life options and supports individuals at the end of their lives.

On September 10, from 7pm - 9pm at the Riverview Community Centre (90 Ashland Ave,

Winnipeg), Sheila will be hosting a presentation by renowned ethicist and Dying With Dignity supporter, Professor Arthur Schafer. The presentation is open to the public. You are warmly invited to attend and to bring your friends and family.

REMINDER – CORN & APPLES!

Don't forget that HAAM is going to be back at our booth at the Morden Corn and Apple Festival in less than 3 weeks! Our preparations are swinging into high gear, but it's not too late if you want to volunteer. Just email us at ham_news (at) yahoo.ca.

If you're not up to volunteering, just come on out and enjoy the festival. There's something for everyone!

VACATION REPORT – THE AMAZING MEETING

Dorothy Stephens and her husband Michael visited TAM – here's her report!

TAM (The Amazing Meeting) is a convention organized annually in Los Vegas by the James Randi Educational Foundation to promote critical thinking. It lasted 4 days from at 8 AM until 11 PM each day, so it would be impossible (and interminable) to try to relate everything that took place. Rather, I would like to share a few highlights, fun facts, and new resources. I cannot vouch for the accuracy or credibility of everything I am sharing; verifying it all would be an exhausting task. Rather, I am hoping our members will be interested in checking some of them out (skeptically). If you find something worthwhile, please share it back on our HAAM facebook page or at a meeting.

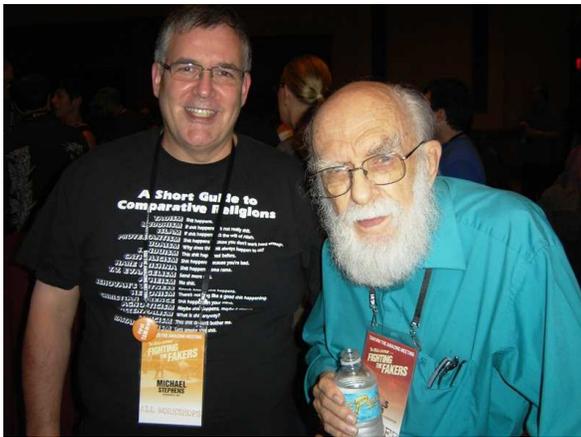
TAM's theme this year was Fighting the Fakers: Putting Quacks, Scams, and Shams on the Ropes! The topics covered included alternative medicine, the science of rationality, exorcism, UFO's, martial arts, crystal necklaces and power balance bracelets, MENSA, Indian gurus, global warming, medical quacks and cranks, the ethics

of cheating, con men, why people lie, sexual addiction, comics, creationist textbooks, junk science, cold reading, mammograms, bias in the media...

Hemant Mehta (Friendly Atheist) sent a journalist to live blog TAM, so if you are interested in reading more, check his archive (July 11-15). But ask me, too; I'd love to talk about it!

Highlights

Meeting so many celebrities in person, especially James Randi himself. More photos to follow on the HAAM facebook page.



Michael Stephens meets James Randi

Meeting brave freethinkers from around the world: Leo Igwe spoke about the horrific conditions in Africa, where women are jailed or exiled in camps for witchcraft; and Sanal Edamaruku told about being threatened and forced to flee to Finland after exposing fake gurus and religious hoaxes in India.

The Million Dollar Challenge: since 1964, a monetary prize has been offered to anyone who can show evidence of any paranormal, supernatural, or occult power or event. No one has ever claimed it, but people still try. This year we watched Randi test a man who claimed he could 'see' objects secretly hidden in a room (epic fail!). JREF distributes phony checks promising psychics that if they can prove their ability, the check will be replaced with a real one. I brought some back and will make them

available at HAAM meetings. So next time you encounter a psychic, you can hand them one.

Books

Lots of authors were there with great books for sale. We brought 3 back to share, and they will be placed in the HAAM library this fall.

- Dire Predictions: Understanding Global Warming, by Michael Mann
- Encyclopedia of Claims, Frauds, and Hoaxes of the Occult and Supernatural, by James Randi (signed copy)
- Sleights of Mind: What the Neuroscience of Magic Reveals About our Everyday Perceptions, by Stephen Macknik.

Individuals, Websites, and Organizations

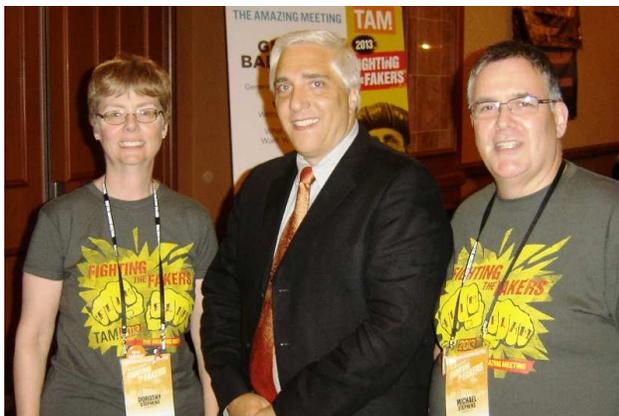
represented, promoted, or mentioned at TAM (all are readily searchable on the web; many also have a facebook and/or twitter account):

- Skeptic Action – use apps called Web of Trust or rbutr to rate the credibility of info on the web. This fledgling group will become more effective as more people join.
- Science Based Medicine - examines issues around 'alternative medicine' and 'complementary therapies'.
- Marty Klein - marriage and family therapist and author of "America's War on Sex".
- Doubtful News - guide to skepticism and news stories which are all... well, doubtful
- Skeptic's Guide to the Universe – podcast about science news
- Quackwatch - guide to health fraud
- Institute for Science and Human Values
- International Humanist and Ethical Union
- Secular Student Alliance
- Joe Schwarcz (chemistry professor and author) with a blog 'Separating Sense from Nonsense'

A Few Fun Facts from the sessions:

- Attendees included about 1100 people from over a dozen countries and 43 US states.
- The 1969 moon landing could not have been faked with the available video technology of the time.
- The graph of sports victories by zodiac sign is a flat line.
- There are more laws in the US today related to sexuality than there were in 1975.
- Randi once joined MENSA, but quit when he discovered that they have subgroups for members interested in astrology, evangelical Christianity, and conspiracy theories.
- There is a guru in India who sells a breathing training program.
- A book for evangelicals about how to protect your kids at college advises not to let them take a philosophy course.
- Computers predict that in about 2 billion years all life on earth will be extinguished.
- Some students in a university class thought that 'peer-reviewed' meant that scientists actually repeated a study to check its results
- Most of those seriously looking for cryptids are creationists trying to disprove evolution.
- Routine physicals do not reduce mortality unless symptoms are present.

- Dorothy Stephens



Dorothy, Steve Novella, & Michael

UPCOMING EVENTS

August 23, 24 & 25, 2013

HAAM information booth

Morden Corn & Apple Festival

Location: Morden, Manitoba

Time: varies. See www.cornandapple.com

September 7 & 8, 2013

HAAM information booth

Manyfest

Location: Broadway Avenue, Winnipeg

Time: varies. See www.manyfest.ca

Tuesday, September 10th, 2013

Public Meeting – Dying with Dignity

Location: Riverview Community Centre, 90

Ashland Avenue

Time: 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Speaker: Prof. Arthur Schafer

Saturday, September 14th, 2013

Skepticamp

Winnipeg Skeptics

Location: To be determined

Time: 10:00 am – 5:00 pm

Saturday, September 21st, 2013

Regular HAAM Monthly Meeting

Location: Canad Inn, 1405 St .Matthew Avenue

Time: 5:30 pm

Speaker: Scott Burton

Executive:

Donna Harris, President
Heather McDonell, Vice President
Helen Friesen, Treasurer
Allison Nelson, Secretary

Members at Large:

Scott Burton
Cheri Frazer
Diana Goods – HAAM Librarian
Pat Morrow – Outreach Coordinator
Jeff Olsson
Jake Peters
Grant Rogerson

Newsletter Editor:

Donna Harris
ham_librarian@yahoo.ca

We're on the Web!

See us at:

mbhumanistsatheists.ca

HA²M



Yes, I would like to BECOME A MEMBER of the Humanists, Atheists & Agnostics of Manitoba

New Member Renewal

Membership Category:

- Individual Membership \$30.00
- Individual Limited Income \$10.00
- Household Membership* \$50.00
- Household Limited Income \$15.00

* After July 1st, just pay ½ the yearly fee for the rest of the year. After October 31st, pay full fee and get the entire next year.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Province: _____

Postal Code _____

Telephone#: _____ Cell #: _____

Email address: _____

*Household Memberships: Please give the names of all additional Humanists in your household 18 years or over:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

DONATION (Tax receipts issued for all donations of \$10 or more)

I would like to make a donation to HA²M of:

- \$10 \$20 \$30 \$50 \$100
- Other: _____

PAYMENT: Cheque Money Order
 Visa Mastercard

Please complete the following if paying by credit card:

Account No. _____

Expiry Date: ____/____

Name on Card: _____

Signature: _____

Please make cheque or money order payable to:
Humanist Association of Manitoba and mail to:
*Humanist Association of Manitoba, 7 Pinehurst Lane,
Mitchell, MB, R5G 2J3.*

Or bring your form and the fees to any HA²M meeting and give it to Helen Friesen, or any member of the executive.