

# Manitoba Humanist



## Curious about Electric Vehicles?

Saturday, September 17<sup>th</sup>

### The Environmental Impact of Electric Vehicles

Canad Inns Polo Park, 1405 St Matthews Ave

Our Social Time is 5:30 PM; Meeting at 6:30; Speaker at 7:00

You have heard the myths about EV's. Now you can learn the truth from **Ross Redman**, Secretary of the **Manitoba Electric Vehicle Association**. An experienced driver since 2011, Ross will detail the environmental impacts of gas and electric cars to show how each affects our province and planet using Manitoba specific data. This presentation will be somewhat technical and is aimed at adults, although kids who are interested in cars are welcome to attend. Mr. Redman will have his car at the hotel so people can go out and take a look at it in the parking lot.

For those interested in seeing more, he has also invited all of our members to attend the **Manitoba Electric Vehicle Association's MEVAfest on September 10, 11:00 am to 4:00 pm at the Legislative Grounds, 450 Broadway**. Around 30 vehicles of all sizes, styles and ages will be on display as part of **ManyFest**.



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



# HAM<sup>2</sup>

[mbhumanistsatheists.ca](http://mbhumanistsatheists.ca)

## CITY HALL VIOLATES SUPREME COURT RULING

Did you know that Winnipeg City Council is still allowing Christian prayers to be read at their meetings?



If you didn't, you're not alone. Canada's Supreme

Court ruled last year that governments must remain neutral regarding religion; but prayer continues in Winnipeg because no one has challenged the practice.

### Until now.

Read about the ruling, and learn which councillors are still praying, who's challenging them, and what you can do to help, on our [website](http://mbhumanistsatheists.ca).

## WELCOME TO HAAM!

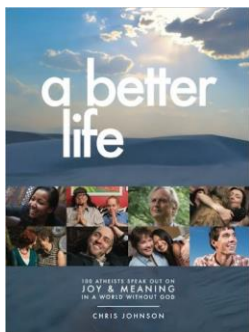
If you're new to HAAM, welcome! Our regular monthly meetings are always open to the public. Come early for dinner, drinks, or just to visit. Late-comers and drop-ins are welcome, so if you can't make it on time or stay till the end, don't worry. You can eat during the meeting if you're late - the buffet is open till 8 PM.

Our other events are intended for paid members only. If you would like to check us out, you are welcome to attend one or two events before becoming a member. After that, if you wish to continue to participate, we ask that you support the group by joining. Contact and membership info is on page 6. More information, and past newsletters, are on our website.

All events are subject to change, and some details may be TBA. In the event of inclement weather or unforeseen circumstances, events may be subject to cancellation or details may change. Check future newsletters, our [website](#), [Facebook page](#), or [Meetup](#) for information and updates.

### October

**Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> – Film Screening.** The film is **A Better Life: An Exploration of Joy & Meaning in a World Without God**, Millennium Library, 251 Donald Street, 6 – 9 PM. Most of us have heard the misconception that atheists have no purpose, and that life is meaningless.



Nothing could be further from the truth. We're the people who don't believe in an afterlife, so to us, this life is incredibly precious. This is it! There is no dress rehearsal. So it shouldn't come as a surprise that atheists can find lots of joy and meaning in the world around us.

Join us for a special screening of this inspirational film. It's a

follow-up to author Chris Johnson's book of the same title, which is a collection of interviews with atheists, to discover what brings joy to their lives.

**Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> - Humanist 'Missionaries' in Uganda,**

Canad Inns Polo Park, 5:30 PM. We are extremely pleased to welcome a very special guest, Hank Pellissier, the founder and director of the [Brighter Brains Institute](#) (BBI), an non-profit organization that builds



schools and health clinics in Uganda.

This is the organization that operates [Kasese Humanist Primary School](#). HAAM is committed to sponsoring the tuition for an orphaned child who attends there.

More information about this meeting will be provided in our October newsletter, or you can check out the event posting on our [website](#).

### November

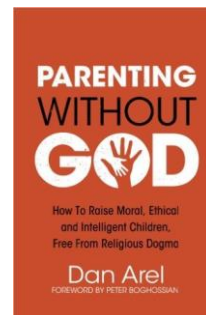
**Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> - monthly meeting**, 5:30 PM, topic TBA. Save the date!



**Date and Location TBA** - Fall is a good time to get our Book Club going again. Calling all parents! Dan Arel's book **Parenting Without God: How to Raise Moral, Ethical and Intelligent Children, Free from Religious Dogma** offers advice on teaching children to question what others tell them and to reach their own conclusions based on evidence and reason. This book is primarily aimed at nonbelieving families trying to raise free-thinking kids while surrounded by a Christian-dominated culture. Arel argues that parents should lead by example—both by speaking candidly about the importance of secularism and by living an openly secular life.

If you'd like to participate, we have one copy of this book in our HAAM library and it will be at the September meeting – first come, first served! The public library does not have a copy, but it can be ordered from McNally Robinson (may take up to 3-4 weeks), or you can get the ebook version from [amazon.ca](#) or [chapters.ca](#).

Join us for this discussion in **late November**. (That gives everyone lots of time to get the book and read it.) **Tammy Blanchette** will be our host. The exact date is still TBA; let us know that you're interested and we'll try to find a date that accommodates those who are planning to attend.



### December

**Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> - Winter Solstice Party**, Heritage Victoria Community Centre, 950 Sturgeon Rd, 5:30 pm - 9:30 PM. Details TBA. Mark your calendar now!

### MORDEN OUTREACH REPORT

HAAM members spent another fun weekend at a special fiftieth anniversary Morden Corn and Apple Festival. We don't have official numbers but if the

crowds and perfect weather are any indication I'm sure it was the best attended festival so far.

Activity at our Outreach booth started off slowly as it usually does on a Friday, with lots incredulous staring being the norm as the locals discovered us. I was able to get out and have a look around. The festival has everything you would expect at any fair, except that a great many of the booths are sponsored or run by local religious groups. These were mainly food and market vendors raising money for their churches, but there were others that were directly or indirectly proselytizing and evangelizing. These included a group from *Teen Challenge* who wanted to get kids off drugs with Jesus, and the *Answers in Genesis* Young Earth Creationists with their new 18-foot trailer advertising "real science". They were joined by *Ray Comfort's Living Waters Ministry* handing out free copies of his movies "The Atheist Delusion" and "Audacity"; the latter being a disgusting homophobic film that, like all Ray's movies, goes from the absurd to the insane. There was the *Child Evangelism Fellowship* booth, where children could get their faces painted in exchange for first sitting through a Bible story. Another booth offered free walking sticks provided you were willing to listen to their volunteers talk about Jesus. Finally, one of the stranger booths I found was "*Bikers for Jesus*", which advertised free knife sharpening. At this tent they will share Jesus's love, give you a hug and put a fine edge on your weapon.

Our Outreach booth is primarily designed for just that - outreach to likeminded thinkers. That's why our banner reads "*Don't believe in God? You are not alone*". We were often asked "What's the point; why are you here?" Essentially our answer breaks down to three points:

1. To reach out to like-minded individuals, and as the banner says, let them know that they are not alone. This is especially important in Bible belt areas where developing secular connections and secular communities will diminish the harmful effects of the predominant fundamentalist supernatural beliefs.

2. To promote "Capital H **Humanism**" and positive atheism as a better way to understand the world and each other.

3. To talk to people about what they believe and why they believe it, in an effort to open them up to more rational ways of thinking about life's big questions.

We've had great success in this last area talking to what is probably hundreds of people; however, many of the religious seem to consider our signage, or even our mere presence at the festival, as a personal offense. For example, as one family walked by, the mother noticed our sign and pointed it out to her husband. Their young child of seven or so also looked over, which prompted

the husband to place his hands on the sides of his son's head and turn him away from the booth as they kept walking. I'll never understand the fear of people who apparently know the "truth". If one is that certain of the truth I would suspect that one little booth staffed with a few humanists wouldn't change a thing.

Of course, the incredulous stares continued all weekend, but also we experienced what seems to be becoming a new trend with some Christians: passive-aggressive baking – the dropping off of baked goods at the booth, sometimes with inspirational messages. I



The message on the napkin reads "Given to you by the grace of God"

suppose if you can't convert us with a rational argument, 'Tasty Baking' is worth a try? There were also a number of people who provided us with free apologetic literature, assuring us that if we only read their books or tracts, or watched a certain DVD or YouTube video, we would set aside our evil ways and believe

in god and the afterlife. As a result, we now have an apologist book to add to the HAAM library - if anyone wants to take up the challenge to read it.

Saturday we met a lot of folks who were happy to see us, but we were exceptionally busy with all the faithful who chose to stop by. Some people were genuinely interested and questioning, and with them we had some wonderful, respectful conversations. Others, not so much; the frequency of visitors who were fundagelical\* young-earthers\*\* or polished presuppers\*\*\* on Saturday led a few of us to consider the possibility that they were sent to the booth on purpose. Many appeared to be reciting the same script verbatim! The activity built to a crescendo in the evening with some 15-20 people (by my rough head count), both for and against us, having discussions at the booth and on the street.

Unfortunately, one particular individual was there just to disrupt; he would ask a question or offer a nonsense statement and then either talk over the person responding, ignore the answer, or interrupt someone else's conversation. This "gentleman" didn't have the most basic grasp of science or what is written in his own bible. What's worse is that he had his two preteen kids in tow who are being programmed the same way - fully

indoctrinated and ignorant. I feel for these kids who are so short changed so early in life.

At the booth many visitors tell us, in one way or another, that we are destined for hell; it just goes with the territory. Some relay the message with anger in their voices, while others show genuine concern for our us as they imagine our souls being barbecued in a fictional place created by their all-loving God. I find myself feeling sorry for these folks who carry so much stress and anger, which is wholly a consequence of their religious beliefs. On the other hand, there is a scary and disturbing psychopathy in a person (such as the aforementioned "gentleman") who can tell you that you're going to hell, with all that entails, and say it with a smile on his face. It's almost like he was looking forward to it. It's, in a word, creepy.



This was the fifth year for our Morden outreach and it was very much a success. We were able to connect a number of interested folks with HAAM and/or the Pembina Valley Secular Community. We spoke with a lot of people and opened up new opportunities. We celebrated some firsts as well. For some of our volunteers, it was their first time working in the booth. It was the first time we had members of the PVSC in the booth with us, and their help on Saturday was greatly appreciated. I want to thank all our HAAM and PVSC volunteers; without them, we couldn't put this together. But the biggest thank you goes to our visitors - the questioning, the curious, the interested, and the ones with whom we had great conversations. And finally, thanks to the YEC's, the fundagelicals, the presuppers, and the willfully ignorant, because they drive folks to a more rational way of thinking every time they engage in discussion or debate.

\*Fundagelical – a portmanteau word combining fundamental with evangelical

\*\*Young-earthier – a young earth creationist (YEC), i.e. someone who believes that creation story in the Bible is

literally true and that the earth is only about 6,000 years old

\*\*\*Presupper – a proponent of [Presuppositionalism](#), a school of Christian apologetics that believes the Christian faith is the only basis for rational thought. It presupposes (assumes) that the Bible is divine revelation and attempts to expose flaws in other worldviews. In Presuppositionalism, all knowledge comes from Christian scripture or divine revelation.

- Pat Morrow

## NEW SECULAR GROUP IN STEINBACH

Our Outreach booth at Steinbach's Summer in the City Festival in June is already reaping positive results. A number of nonbelievers living in the area left their names at the booth and are now taking initial steps to form a local support/social group. They will be planning an informal meet-and-greet in the fall.

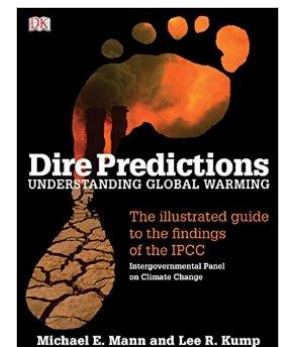


Being non-religious in this part of Manitoba can be a lonely experience, especially if your work, family and social circles take for granted that you share a faith and common values. If you are a nonbeliever living in the Steinbach area, and are looking for support, good conversation, and people with whom to share ideas, [contact HAAM](#) and we will pass your name along to the organizers of the group. Responses will be subject to screening and all personal information will be kept confidential.

## IN THE LIBRARY

Since the theme for our September meeting is the environmental impact of automobiles, the subject of how various forms of energy affect climate change is bound to arise. We all have an idea of what global warming is and why it's important, but if you don't fully grasp the mechanisms by which it's occurring, you have lots of company.

**Dire Predictions: Understanding Global Warming**, by Michael E. Mann and Lee R. Kump explains the data behind climate change science, using illustrations and graphics to make a complex topic comprehensible to general audiences. The authors are elite



climate scientists – Dr. Mann is a professor of Atmospheric Science and Dr. Kump is head of the Geoscience Department, both at Penn State.

Here are Dr. Mann's main takeaways from the book: *Climate change is real, caused by human activity and already a threat. The threat will get much worse if we don't act on the problem. Solutions to the problem are available NOW in the form of renewable energy and policies to incentivize a shift away from fossil fuel energy. There is no excuse for further delays in action.*

Members can borrow this book, or any of the others in our library, at the September meeting. Check [here](#) to see a complete list of the books in our library. If you find one you'd like to read, you can reserve it online and we'll have it for you at the meeting.

## PARTNERS FOR LIFE UPDATE



HAAM supporters have already accumulated **11** blood donations! Now let's keep up the momentum... you can be our 12<sup>th</sup> donor. Visit [this page](#) for more information. If you haven't donated blood before, scroll

down to "Can I donate?" and take the eligibility quiz. Next, make sure you have an online account (even if you *have* donated before). Use the Log-In button at the top of the page to create one. Then click the "Join an Organization" button and sign up to have your donations credited to HAAM. You will need to enter HAAM's Partner ID # (HUMA008484) when you complete this section.

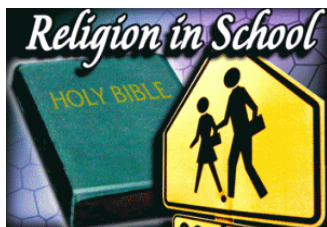
If you have difficulty with the sign-up process, [contact us](#) and we'll help you. There's more info the August newsletter; archived [here](#) if you missed it.

**Upcoming clinics:** You can donate at the main clinic on William Ave (across from HSC) during their regular hours (Mon 10-2 and 3:30-7:30; Tues 1:30-7; and Wed-Sat 8-2). Or visit one of the mobile clinics held in Winnipeg and around the province. You can find clinics in your area via the [website](#).

## WHAT'S IN YOUR CHILD'S BACKPACK?

It's that time of year again. Your kids will likely be bringing home lots of notices from school over the next few weeks. Here are a couple that you will want to watch out for.

HAAM is aware of at least two Christian organizations, well-known for proselytizing children, that operate in



some schools in Manitoba. They are always trying to expand their reach into new schools, especially in the fall when extra-curricular activities are being organized.

**Child Evangelism Fellowship** operates a Christian bible-club for kids called the **Good News Club**. **Samaritan's Purse** asks school children to contribute money or gifts for a project called **Operation Christmas Child**, which sends shoeboxes full of goodies (and indoctrination) to needy kids overseas.

If you are unfamiliar with either or both of these groups, you can learn about them now. Watch this [documentary](#) about Good News Clubs, and read about HAAM's fight to keep them out of the Winnipeg School Division, [here](#). Learn about Operation Christmas Child, and how one parent successfully petitioned to have it removed from his child's school, [here](#).

## CHARITY OF THE MONTH



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
WINNIPEG

September means Back to School! So we've picked a charity that aids students who need a little extra help to get an education. The University of Winnipeg's **Opportunity Fund** helps help make it possible for inner-city youth to dream big. Its goal is to help ensure access to higher learning, bridge the graduation gap, and transform lives through education. The Opportunity Funds runs three programs to help disadvantaged students:

- A *bursary program* to assist students with direct education costs (tuition and books). It's aimed at those from under-represented student populations (recent immigrants or refugees, and Aboriginal or inner-city students).

- A *tuition credit program* that provides an incentive for at-risk youth to stay in school, maintain good grades, graduate, and participate in their community. Students enrol as early as grade 4, and by the time they complete high school, will have earned significant financial credits to help cover tuition costs.



- A *tuition waiver program* to cover undergraduate tuition fees for eligible Youth-In-Care. Tuition waivers are based on financial need, and applicants are selected by the Awards and Financial Aid Office in partnership with the Child and Family Service Authorities and the Province of Manitoba.

Let's help create a great start to the new school year for these kids!

## HAAM's EXECUTIVE

### Officers:

President Donna Harris  
Vice President Pat Morrow  
Treasurer Henry Kreindler  
Secretary Rick Dondo

### Members at Large:

Tammy Blanchette  
Todd De Ryck  
Helen Friesen  
Norm Goertzen  
Tony Governo  
Cheri Frazer  
Sherry Lyn Marginet  
Dorothy Stephens  
Jim Taylor



Contact us at:

<http://mbhumanistsatheists.ca/contact-us/>

[mbhumanistsatheists@gmail.com](mailto:mbhumanistsatheists@gmail.com)

or Phone 204-612-0601



Humanists, Atheists, and  
Agnostics of Manitoba



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Agnostics of Manitoba



@MBHumanists



Humanists, Atheists, and Agnostics of Manitoba

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

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

Province: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell #: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Registered Charity # 85080 5326 RR0001

New Member       Renewal

Membership Category:

- Individual Membership      \$30.00  
 Individual Limited Income      \$10.00  
 Household Membership\*      \$50.00  
 Household Limited Income      \$15.00  
 Lifetime Membership      \$1000.00 or more

### Special Offer for New Members!

If you are a NEW member joining for the FIRST  
TIME, and you join after September 1st, your  
membership fee will include membership for the  
2017 calendar year.

**DONATION** (Tax receipts will be issued for  
donations of \$10 or more)

I would like to make a donation to HA<sup>2</sup>M of:

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

Please DO NOT send cash in the mail. Make  
cheque payable to: **Humanist Association of  
Manitoba** and mail to: Humanist Association of  
Manitoba, 181 St. Cross Street, Winnipeg, MB  
R2W 3Y4

Memberships are also available by credit card on  
our website, or by cash or cheque at any HA<sup>2</sup>M  
meeting or HA<sup>2</sup>M event.