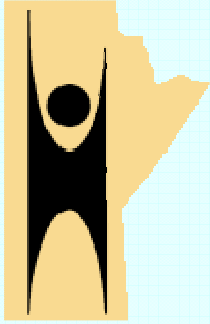


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# Manitoba Humanist



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Manitoba

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[mb.humanists.ca](http://mb.humanists.ca)

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## Humanist Association of Manitoba

### Upcoming events

**Monthly Meeting**  
**Saturday, September 12, 2009**

**Deaf Centre**

**285 Pembina Highway • 2 blocks south of Confusion Corner**

NEW  
LOCATION

Meeting / Presentation: 7:00 pm

Join us for dinner before the meeting: 4:45 pm \*\*

\*\* see details on page 3

**Guest Speaker: Prof Dr. Henry (Hank) David Venema**

Director, Sustainable Natural Resources Management  
International Institute for Sustainable Development

**Topic: Earth: A Report on the Health of the Biosphere**

For more information on the topic, see page 3

Mark Your Calendars!

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**Monthly Meeting**  
**Saturday, October 10, 2009**

Park West Inn, 525 Dale Boulevard, Charleswood

**Topic: TBA**

## WANTED – A NEW MEETING PLACE

It looks like the Humanist Association of Manitoba is in need of a new long-term place to meet.

Up until last month, we had a standing agreement with the Viscount Gort Hotel. We were not charged a meeting room rental fee, in exchange for attendees ordering from the coffee shop menu. People could eat what they wanted, and no minimum number of attendees was required.

However, the Viscount Gort is now imposing a room rental fee, and/or a requirement to order a set meal from their dinner menu. As a small organization, HAM cannot afford a regular rental fee, nor do we want to lock people into purchasing a whole meal. So, we're currently on the lookout for a new permanent home for us. We have a number of options, and we'll be trying out a few different locations over the next few months, so don't be too surprised if monthly meetings aren't in the same place twice!

In our minds, our "wish list" for a new meeting place has a large enough room to host us, includes audio-visual capability, is "guest speaker" friendly, is relatively centrally located, includes enough parking (free parking, hopefully), and has a relatively varied menu that is financially flexible and includes vegan/vegetarian options.

Of course, we'd like your feedback. Can you recommend a perfect location? Or do you have a preference?

If you've been out to our meetings, would you prefer a facility with no meal, or is the meal the major draw for you? Would you prefer a room that's better for the guest speaker, with great sound and a large screen for slides or video?

To share your opinion, just contact a member of the executive or drop me an email at [ham\\_librarian\(at\)yahoo.ca](mailto:ham_librarian(at)yahoo.ca).

- Donna Harris

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*"Don't pray in my school, and I won't think in your church."*

- Unknown



## Additional Information for the September Meeting

The September meeting is themed "Earth: A Report on the Health of the Biosphere".

In preparation for this meeting, some of you may wish to get familiar with some documents which have been recommended by our speaker and others in the field. If you browse through some of these documents, you may have better questions for our speaker (you can also look at the [speaker's bio](#)<sup>1</sup>).

The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, published in 2005, is considered one of the best recent global assessments of ecosystem health and its impact on human well-being. Their web site contains documents in a number of specific subject areas which you can find from their [Guide to the Millennium Assessment Reports](#)<sup>2</sup> page. Two key documents are the Statement of the MA Board (28 pages and the Overall synthesis report (155 pages!).

Another other well known document is the [IPCC](#)<sup>3</sup> (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) Fourth Assessment Report (AR4) on Climate Change 2007. You can

download the full report (about 50 pages), or browse some of their other reports and technical papers.

Unfortunately, I was unable to find what I was really hoping for: a five to ten page document with graphs showing the most significant (and hopefully, uncontroversial) indicators, like trends in population, energy, climate, forest and agricultural land, clean water, biodiversity and such.

If you know of better documents (not too long and not overly technical), send us a comment!

*- Neil Schipper  
Meeting Organizer*

### LINKS

<sup>1</sup> <http://tinyurl.com/n8an8v>

<sup>2</sup> <http://tinyurl.com/ynbl8o>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.ipcc.ch/>

You can also find links at the HAM website:  
<http://mb.humanists.ca/200909/sop.html>

### Join Us for Dinner Before the September 12<sup>th</sup> Meeting!

The lecture starting at 7 p.m. is a non-meal event. However, many of us will be dining together beforehand. **Meet us at the Deaf Centre entrance at 4:45 p.m.** From there, we'll proceed to one of the many nearby restaurants. (Most have main dishes starting at around \$11 or \$12).

We may need to break into groups, but either way, you'll have a chance to catch up with some familiar faces or to meet and welcome new humanists. Hope to see you there!

## Red River Road Trip

We have an opportunity for another road trip, gang!

Our neighbours to the south, the Red River Freethinkers of Fargo, North Dakota, are hosting a free event with a special guest speaker.

The event has two related parts. Both will be presented at the Fargo Theatre on September 24, 2009.

One is a documentary, "Letting Go of God", starring Julia Sweeney. This documentary narrates Sweeney's journey of faith in an emotional and funny way.

The other event is a lecture by the well known atheist blogger, PZ Myers. Myers is a scientist and an Associate Professor at the University of Minnesota, Morris. His blog site: [www.pharyngula.com](http://www.pharyngula.com) is the third most popular blog site written by a Minnesotan. Myers was recently named American Humanist of the year 2009 by The American Humanist Association.

In 2005, Myers received the 2005 Kolfax Award for the Best Expert Blog. His blog has also been listed by the journal, Nature as the top blog written by a scientist.

Myers will also give a lecture at NDSU during the afternoon of September 24<sup>th</sup>.

The Fargo Theatre events are as follows:

**Thursday, September 24<sup>th</sup>**

**Fargo Theatre  
314 Broadway N.  
6:00 pm movie "Letting Go of God"**

**8:30 pm lecture by PZ Myers,  
followed by discussion**

These events are free to the public.

So far, we have only one car-load heading down to Fargo. We'll be leaving Thursday morning, staying overnight and returning Friday.

Please let us know if you're interested in attending as well.

- Donna H



## Getting to Know...Heather McDonell

This is part of a continuing series that will focus on the members of HAM's executive. Heather McDonell has been a member of HAM since 2006, and has been on the executive since January 2007.



**What is your favourite color?**  
*Blue/Green.*

**If you had one word to describe yourself, what would you choose?** *Compassionate*

**What is your middle name?**  
*Lynne*

**Do you have a hero? If so, who and why.** *I don't know if I have a single hero, but I admire David Suzuki deeply for his environmental work.*

**Do you have a favourite meal or dessert?** *I love a good veggie stir fry with tofu, peanut sauce, and udon noodles.*

**Were you named after someone?**  
*An ER nurse my mom used to work with.*

**Who is your favourite author and/or book?** *I love *The Never Ending Story* by Michael Ende.*

**Pets. Do you have any? If so, what kind?** *2 cats (Iorick and Raiju), 1 rabbit (Cadbury), and numerous tropical fish. My dog Hayley is 14 1/2 years old and lives with my parents.*

**If you could travel to anywhere in the world, where would it be?**  
*The Galapagos Islands.*

**What is one thing that really irritates you?** *The neglect or abuse of animals.*

**Are you a morning person or a night owl?** *Night owl.*

**What's the last thing you bought yourself, just for fun.** *Bath products from Lush.*

**Do you like to dress up for Halloween? If so, what was your most memorable costume?** *I absolutely love Halloween and consider it my favorite holiday of the year. One year as a kid I went as the Monopoly Man and re-created the Monopoly board on large sheets of cardboard to wear over my snow suit. That thing caught a lot of wind resistance and I nearly got blown over a few times.*

Executive:  
Jeff Olsson  
Neil Schipper  
Helen Friesen  
Heather McDonell

Members at Large:  
Myrna Donald  
Barry Hammond  
Donna Harris  
Katie Higham  
Jake Peters  
Grant Rogerson  
Sophie Shulman  
Marlene Wallace  
Barrie Webster

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## International Blasphemy Day – September 30

A campaign for a Blasphemy Day recently came to my attention through certain blogs that I read. Here is an excerpt from the campaign's Facebook page:

*"Blasphemy Day International is an international campaign seeking to establish September 30th as a national day to promote free speech and stand up in a show of solidarity for the freedom to mock and insult religion without fear of murder, violence, and reprisal.*

*It is the obligation of the world's nations to safeguard dissent and*

*the dissenters, not to side with the brutal interests of thugs who demand "respect" for their beliefs (i.e., immunity to being criticized or mocked or they threaten violence). So if you support free speech, and the rights of those who disagree with religious views to voice their opinions peacefully, support our group and join the cause!"*

Sounds like an interesting and important cause. For more info, visit <http://tinyurl.com/araekb>

Yes, I would like to BECOME A MEMBER of the Humanist Association of Manitoba

New Member       Renewal

Membership Category:

- Individual Membership      \$25.00
- Individual Limited Income      \$10.00
- Household Membership\*      \$45.00
- Household Limited Income      \$15.00

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. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

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

I would like to make a donation to HAM of:

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

PAYMENT:     Cheque       Money Order  
                   Visa         Mastercard     Amex

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 HAM meeting and give it to Helen Friesen, or any member of the executive.