

THE HAT NEWSLETTER

The Quarterly Periodical of the HUMANIST ASSOCIATION OF TORONTO

Promoting Humanism and the Separation of Church and State

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2018

The HAT AGM takes place on Saturday, April 28thth. Our general meeting will be OISE, 252 Bloor St West, Room 5240 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. The past will be summarized, the present discussed and a future course agreed upon. If you cannot attend please **complete the proxy form** which is found on the last page of the newsletter and on the HAT website. Your proxy helps ensure that our constitutional quorum requirements be met. Please mail the proxy form to our postal address (HAT Newsletter, next page), email it to HATCoord@gmail.com or hand it in to a steering committee member. Thank you!

UPCOMING GUEST SPEAKERS

Ideas for future speaker topics include 'indigenous conversations' and putting together an 'ethical eating panel'. If you have a topic, idea or speaker in mind, contact us now!

OTHER EVENTS

Please also see the HAT website at www.humanisttoronto.ca which lists the events, and updates of the events, listed in the newsletter. There are other events listed on the HAT website, as well.

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

Weekly forums (see entry below) take place at the Church Street Community Centre. (The group can plan to meet elsewhere in the rare case of an upcoming room/building cancellation.) If in doubt about any event, please go to www.humanisttoronto.ca for **event details, scheduling information**, etc., or call HAT at (647) 361 - 7084.

THE HAT FORUM One of our most popular programs takes place each Saturday from 11:00 a.m. to 1 p.m. We meet in an informal way to discuss various topics of interest to free-thinkers. (You don't have to be a HAT member to attend.) If you are looking for a spirited group with whom to discuss ideas and make new friends, you are welcome to show up! Check the website for weekly details on topics to be discussed. After a discussion, attendees often go out for coffee or a bite to eat. Centrally located, not far from Yonge and Bloor, the forum takes place at the 519 Church Street Community Centre - steps north of Wellesley Street.

Guest Speakers Speaker events are held every three months or so, from 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Please see opposite column for information about these free events or/and check the HAT website. All welcome! (Speaker events most often take place at the Ontario Institute of Education (OISE) on 252 Bloor St. West.)

Note Out of respect for people with allergies and chemical sensitivities, we request that participants at HAT events avoid using scented products such as perfumes, colognes, hairsprays, etc.

The HAT Newsletter

Vol. 25: No 1; 2018

EDITOR: Cornelia Laven

The HAT newsletter is published on a quarterly basis. Copy deadline is approximately ten days prior to publication.

The editor welcomes your contributions! *Submissions* are routinely from members, relatively current, signed by you, your own work or quoted material on which you comment and, as well, not opposed to the spirit of humanism. The editor's preference is that your submissions be emailed as attached MS Word documents or simply pasted into your email as unformatted text. The editor reserves the right to select materials and to edit these for style, length and content. Submissions may include articles, photos, poems, illustrations, book reviews and so forth.

The aim is *never* to rewrite your meaning, but to ensure clarity and balanced, ethical reporting practice. Space is limited and we cannot guarantee publication. All opinions are those of the authors and *not* necessarily those of the editor, steering committee or HAT members. All initialed material is the work of the editor.

COPY DEADLINE
The 20th of June 2018

Send Submissions and Advertising to:

HAT EDITOR

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Box 68559, 360A Bloor St West
Toronto, Ontario M5S 1X0

Or by email to the Editor or Co-ordinator

lleahcc@gmail.com

HATNewsletter@gmail.com

HATCoord@gmail.com

HAT phone line/voice mail: (647) 361 - 7084

HAT Website: www.humanisttoronto.ca

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

We of the steering committee look forward to seeing you at the HAT Annual General Meeting! Please see the first column on page one for details.

A revamping of the newsletter archives, primarily, resulted in delays in the emailing of the previous newsletter and its posting on the HAT website. I did not understand the technicalities but am happy to move on.

Wishing you warmer temperatures for the remainder of spring!

c.l.

ADVERTISING RATES

Classified: (1 insertion) 25¢ per word; min. 10 words - max. 60 words.

Display: (6 insertions) \$25 dollars per column inch. Full column is 3½" wide by 10" long.

**Please note that the above prices are half-price for members.*

Please submit camera-ready artwork or layout and copy to the HAT Editor.

Make cheques payable to the:

Humanist Association of Toronto

Note The editor can at any time, for reason of incompatibility with the general principles of secular humanism, refuse to accept an ad.

STEERING COMMITTEE

The HAT Steering Committee meets monthly to conduct the business of the association. Since HAT is a member-driven organization, your presence and participation are essential. Members are welcome and encouraged to attend these meetings.

Coordinator..... Richard Dowsett
HatCoord@gmail.com

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Public Relations Officer.....TBD

Spokesperson Moses Klein

Newsletter Editor Cornelia Laven
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External Representative Martin Frith
Members at LargeTanya Long, Janet Rudd

NOTEWORTHY MOTIONS OF THE MOST RECENT STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Motion that HAT support the Beyond Believing program to the amount of \$20 per month and review in 12 months.

Personalized

HUMANIST CEREMONIES

Are you or one of your relatives planning a wedding?

Will you soon be organizing the funeral of a friend or relative or pre-planning your own?

Would you like to have a naming ceremony for your new baby or grandchild? Or a coming-of-age ceremony for a young adult?

We are licensed humanist officiants who collaborate with you to create meaningful life-passage ceremonies that fit with your values, beliefs and traditions. We are also creating brand new traditions that fit with a secular humanist worldview.

See the HAT website for more officiants in your area!

HUMANIST OFFICIANTS AT YOUR SERVICE

MARY BEATY TORONTO, ON
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www.weddingsoftoronto.com

MARTIN FRITH, BES, M.DIV., RMFT
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*My sister, Annemieke, was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis (MS) in the mid-nineties and faced horror with grace and equanimity. Anne has been using a wheelchair for over a decade. Aside from MS, my sister became prone to serious infections that often required hospitalizations. Despite her afflictions, and a vile doctor who asked if resuscitation should be done after she was left unconscious as a result of hospital negligence in 2013, Anne feels an abiding appreciation of living at home and being alive. She wrote 'morning pages', as suggested by an author, creatively on a daily basis, empathizes with - and speaks up for - those who are labelled disabled, developed a great passion for and understanding of classical music over the duration of her illness, reads widely and thoughtfully both fiction and non-fiction, enjoys frequent outings to a nearby coffee shop in Ottawa and faithfully exercises at a specialized gym three times a week (a spartan 'Neurogym' to which she refers to in her sketches below). We once discussed end-of-life alternatives, briefly, and my sister stated "**I am on the side of life**". The love and devotion of her husband and adult sons is amply reciprocated. Fortunately, Anne receives well-established and comprehensive nursing care at home by Personal Support Workers (PSWs); thankfully, her husband also helps out - especially on weekends. Of course, 'care' does have its down side as indicated in Anne's entries! The time I spend conversing with Annemieke by phone, and visiting her in Ottawa hospitals and at home, is highly valued by yours truly. I cannot imagine life without Anne in the world! Those who actually know my sister cannot help but love and admire her and by and large feel much the same as I do.*

FROM THE MORNING PAGES of Anne Laven

24.2.18 Let me tell you what it is like to be me...

Sometimes I feel like I am part of the public domain, where nothing is private, nothing is my own. I suspect that in any idle moment, of which caregivers seem to have many, any of them might pick up my Pages, totally unconcerned that they may be violating my privacy. When I eat my lunch, they're always there, an unwelcome presence nine times out of ten. Personal Support Workers besiege me endlessly with tales of their families. (Why are they not with them, with their families, I ask myself, are they unhappy or work too hard?) Either that, or they confront me with a stony silence.

Every day, it's the same routine: I have to check that caregivers have emptied the dishwasher, have pressed the lemons, have adjusted my leg bag and so on and on. Some of them do not see what is needed and will refuse to do certain things, "Could you please.....?" I then say. And they reluctantly do, motivated always to make their getaway as promptly as possible.

I have turned into a full-time patient, which to me is like a job. A nurse comes to empty my pee bag every day, a relinquishment I neither accept, or feel comfortable with. And yet, the only rational response is gratitude that I receive the services that I now need.

In spite of the annoyances, I bond with the PSWs, and get to know them.

I am older than my caregivers, and some of them seem almost like children. When they spontaneously leave my service to take on some other position, I wonder about them, and am confronted with the necessity of training their replacement.

Finally it's 'Day Six' and after the morning ablutions, for a short while I can pretend I am a free agent.

Longing is part of my nature, as is thinking that things could be different.

Until my parents died, I didn't think much about my mortality. They disappeared from the planet and from my life in 2005 and 2013, respectively, and all of a sudden I was old, realizing with a shock I was next, that I had about twenty years left, give or take a few.

An early midlife crisis hit me. In my thirties I read **The Artist's Way** by Julia Cameron, a book that got me writing Morning Pages to fulfil my striving towards a more creative life, a writer's life, and from 1992 to around 2012, I wrote Morning Pages faithfully every morning before breakfast, just as the author had suggested, stopping only when MS finally caught up with me, destroying my fine-motor control.

3.3.18 I feel my trek towards old age very strongly. I have reached that point in my life where there is a lot more past than future. My life has become circumscribed as I become more and more aware of my mortality. I really don't want to die, nor do I want to get any of the numerous and cruel maladies of the very old. Is it not enough that now my abdomen is bulging, my hair white, my hearing lessened?

At this stage, I no longer walk, therefore live in a chair, which makes me shorter than everyone else, a reality that does nothing to bolster my self-esteem, a reality that has taught me humility. When I cannot reach an item I need in the upper shelf of the health food store, or get stuck in the freshly-fallen snow, I do not hesitate to ask the nearest passer-by for assistance. I have found that, in general, people are more than happy to extend a helping hand.

When some PSW or other has trouble getting my chair to roll into position, it creates for me a somewhat tense moment, since I may not be in a position to assist. When my handbag somehow gets wound around the wheelchair controller, it makes for another stressful situation.

Every morning, I am at the mercy of caregivers. I am thankful when they are finally done with me, realizing full well that I ought to be grateful for receiving the services I need.

It has been six years now that I reside in Ottawa. The people no longer resemble 'stick people' to me, as they hasten to their various destinations: offices, government buildings, coffee shops... On Saturday, pedestrians amble along Bank Street at a more leisurely pace; maybe they are just out shopping, or watching the St Patrick's Day Parade go by. Six years, and I do Ottawa things: Neurogym three mornings a week, visiting the old lady who is my neighbour in the co-op where we live, wheeling over to 'Herb and Spice' a health food store.

I trust that now you will have some idea as to what it is like to be me...



Humanist Association of Toronto

www.humanisttoronto.ca

Membership Form 2018

Date: _____ New Member: Renewal Member:

If new member: What influenced you? _____

Name(s): _____

Please print. If this is a 'Household' membership, please include all member names (use next line if necessary).

Address: _____

City: _____ Province: _____ Postal Code: _____

Home phone: _____ Email: _____

Note: we will only use your contact information for HAT-related communication

Please circle the appropriate amount(s)

Membership	HAT membership
Individual	\$30
Student/Limited Resources	\$10
Household	\$40
Limited Income Household	\$15
Life Member	\$200
Donation	
TOTAL	

You may enjoy subscribing to Humanist Perspectives Magazine.
For more information, go to <http://www.humanistperspectives.org>.

Please pay in one of three ways:

- 1. By cheque payable to: **Humanist Association of Toronto** and mailed to
PO Box 68559, 360A Bloor St. W. TORONTO, ON M5S 1X1
- 2. By Interac Email Transfer via your online bank. Please send payment to HatTreasurer@gmail.com
with a one word in lowercase answered question.
- 3. By Stripe online www.humanisttoronto.ca/join-hat/

• Do you wish to be listed in our public membership directory? Yes No

• May we contact you via MailChimp a better, more efficient email system? Yes No

The current quarterly newsletter is available from the website but would you prefer a print copy of upcoming newsletters by snail mail rather than email? Yes No

• May we exchange your name and address with like-minded organizations? Yes No

HAT issues Official Donation Receipts for all contributions.

We welcome your membership and hope to see you at our meetings and events!

Thank You



Humanist Association of Toronto, Inc.

PROXY

For the Annual General Meeting of Members

To be held on

Saturday, April 28th, 2018 - 1 p.m.

at

OISE, Rm 5-240, 252 Bloor St W., Toronto, ON

I, being a HAT member, hereby appoint:

or failing him/her:

to attend and act for and on behalf of the undersigned at the Annual General Meeting of Members of the Humanist Association of Toronto, Inc. (HAT) and at any and all adjournments thereof, with full power of substitution in the premises and, without otherwise limiting the generality of the foregoing, direct the proxy holder named above to vote, or withhold from voting, as specified below:

DATED this _____ day of _____, 2018

Name of HAT member (Please print) _____

Signature of HAT member _____

Note: This proxy is solicited by the Steering Committee of the Humanist Association of Toronto. A member has the right to appoint a person, who need not be a member, to act as his/her proxy at the General Meeting other than the person designated in the above form of proxy. To exercise this right, the name of the desired proxy holder may be inserted in the space provided in this form of proxy or another appropriate form of proxy may be substituted.

This form of proxy must be executed by the member or his/her attorney or proxy holder duly authorized in writing.

Note: From the Constitution of the Humanist Association of Toronto: Section 7 (viii), Members may be represented at meeting by proxy but no member/representative may be proxy for more than 5 members.