Machar Begins our Active and Forward-Looking 2013

As we begin 2013, once again we Machar members find ourselves with a packed schedule of great activities, many more than our community, by our size, should have going on—with something for every interest! As I write this, we are busy planning for the visit on the January 11–13 weekend of Tammy Kaiser, a multi-faith chaplain and rabbinic student who will be leading a Shabbat service on Friday night, 7:30 at the River Road Unitarian Universalist Church, in Bethesda. Tammy also will be presenting the Adult Education talk on Sunday at 10 a.m. at JPDS.

On Sunday, January 27, beginning at 10 a.m., for Adult Ed at JPDS, Jeff Dawson, one of our new and young members, will speak on his journey from several years of ultra-orthodox training to Secular Humanistic Judaism.

Immediately after Adult Ed and JCS on January 27, all will gather for a lovely (and short) Tu B’Shvat seder, beginning around 11:45, at JPDS. The Seder was a wonderful event last year, and this year promises the same.

The evening of January 23, WITS will be meeting—see separate piece in this newsletter with details.

Following soon after, on Saturday evening, February 2, from 5–9 pm, we’re hosting another of our very popular Games Nights, which we begin with a short Havdalah (end of Shabbat) service. We have separate tables for children and adults, with age-appropriate games for all. It’s a great way to make new friends and visit with our old ones. To be held at the Scheinhaut cozy Art room—watch for sign-up on the website.

A full weekend of educational activities is scheduled for February 8–10, when Machar is honored to host Rabbi Adam Chalom and the International Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism’s seminar “Matzah Without Dogma.” The seminar begins Friday evening at 7 and continues on Saturday, at the Silver Spring Civic Center. It concludes Sunday morning at JPDS. The price for this weekend seminar is extremely reasonable, particularly for Machar members. See Machar website for full details.

On Sunday, February 10, after classes, while the Adults are learning from Rabbi Chalom, the JCS students will enjoy a Living History presentation with an actress playing the role of immigrant Anna Shulman. This event is funded by a grant to Machar from the Jewish Federation of Greater Washington Initiative for Congregational Education.

Mark your calendars for Sunday, February 24—our special Purim Carnival! And this is just January and February! Much more to come in the months ahead.

Nadine Wettstein
Machar President
Machar Celebrates Hanukkah!

Above left and right: Machar latke judges David Abramson, Rahel Hanadari, Rick Gold, and Ari Zentner deliberate and present awards. Below and right: JCS kids enjoyed playing dreidel and other gelt-fueled games.
Whaddaya Talkin’?
Marlene Cohen

In which Machar’s newsletter will provide you with Your Monthly Word in Yiddish—Use it ten times this month and you won’t forget it!

Let’s start 2013 with a hefty word—Oy!
Leo Rosten says that “Oy” is perhaps the single most characteristic expletive/exclamation/declamation in all of Yiddish and therefore Yinglish. The exclamation point fits whenever the word is used with emphasis. It’s a lament, a protest, a cry of dismay, a reflex of delight. It can mean simple surprise, startledness, minor sadness, joy, relief, dismay, despair, shock, outrage, irony, and many more. Where in English is there such a multifaceted little word?
It’s sometimes used with “vay,” pain or woe, to make “Oy vah.”
Scene: A Restaurant in Hitler’s Berlin
First Man: Oy…
Second Man: Oy, vay…
Third Man: Vay iz mir…
Fourth Man: If you three don’t stop talking politics, I’ll get out of here.
—Leo Rosten, The Joys of Yinglish, 1992

Machar Selected for Website Pilot Project
Machar is honored to have been chosen as one of two congregations by the Society for Humanistic Judaism to participate in the Website Outreach Pilot Program. This program, sponsored by SHJ and supported by a donor’s contribution, is intended to increase and maximize our web outreach, including via social media, to potential new members. We are grateful to SHJ and especially to Liz Pomper, a Machar member who agreed to be the Machar representative for the program. Liz is the Director of Online Outreach for the National Audubon Society’s public policy program. She has helped with our website re-design (new website will be launched soon!) and is one of the most active users of our Facebook page. Thank you, SHJ and Liz!

Fund-Raising Success—Thank you to All!
Our recent end-of-the-year fund-raising campaign was a huge success. Final numbers are being tabulated but we exceeded our goals and our matching grant! Thank you to all those who contributed and to the fund-raising committee: Chair, David Wittenberg, and callers: Barry Dancis, Anna Greenberg, Neil Greene, Ester Rozenblum, Susan Schappert, Eva Shankman, Mark Swartz, Dan Tobocman, and Renée Weitzner. Details in next month’s newsletter.

6th grade JCS students with their teacher visiting Holocaust Museum
photo by Brenda Platt.

Teen & College Conclave
April 12–14, 2013 • Suburban Detroit, MI
Registration Deadline: February 14, 2013
Questions, contact info@shj.org or aj@hujews.org
http://www.hujews.org
Havurot/Social Events

Laurie Miller

December and January have been very busy months with Hanukkah and several interesting Community Sunday activities. We hope to re-energize a DC Havurah in early 2013. Do mark your calendars for our next Family Games Night scheduled for Saturday, February 2nd from 5-9 p.m. at the Schweinhaut Center.

We are always searching for volunteers to host events. Hosting is fun and easy. Select your preferred date and event type then sit back and let others bring the food to you. OK, there is a little more to it than that - but not much. If you are interested in hosting or helping to coordinate a Shabbat, potluck, or any other style of event, please contact me at LAURIE.MILJAZI at gmail.com (note new address).

WITs

Renée Weitzner

The women of WITs (Wimmin in Transition), the women’s group of Machar, enjoyed a delightful Hanukkah celebration in December at the home of Harriet Peck. We ate latkes and various salads and shared stories and small gifts. What fun! This month, we are meeting at the home of Eva Shankman on Wednesday, January 23, 2013 at 7 pm. We hope you will be able to attend with your dish of choice, ready for a warm repast with great conversation.

Each month, the women of WITs meet for dinner and discussion. We provide support for each other in difficult and joyful times. I hope you join us. Please let me know if you are coming and your dish of choice by January 21, 2013 so that I may let our host know the menu and the head count.

Evening Study Group

Michael Prival

The Machar Study Group on Jewish religious texts continues to meet every other Monday evening at my home. We are reading and discussing texts from the Bible, the Talmud, and other rabbinic sources. In this way we are learning not only about the Hebrew Bible but also many fascinating and surprising things about traditional Judaism as it existed before the Jewish Enlightenment began in the 18th century. All Machar members, at any level of prior knowledge, are invited to join us. If you’d like more information about this study group, please send me a note: mprival at aol.com.

Book Club

Darlene Basch and Renée Weitzner

The Book Club of Machar will be meeting at the home of Phyllis Hodes on January 13 at 3 pm to discuss the book, Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide by Nicholas Kristoff and Sheryl WuDunn. This book focuses not only on the oppression of women across the globe but also on individuals worldwide who have helped others free themselves from the yoke of oppression. The book focuses on what has occurred but also goes further to illustrate what can be done. With what is going on in the world this will be a timely discussion. We hope you will be able to join us.

If you would like to join us, please contact Renee Weitzner at rwcats at aol.com or Darlene Basch at dab0507 at verizon.net.

Young Adult Havurah

Liz Pomper

Join our listserv at groups.google.com/group/macharyah or join our group on Facebook at www.facebook.com/groups/macharyah to get the details.

YAH events are open to all regardless of membership status in Machar, and participants are encouraged to bring friends who may be curious about our movement.

Machar December Board of Directors Highlights

Joyce Rosenthal

• Board members discussed outreach for the upcoming International Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism seminar that Machar is sponsoring on Feb. 8–10 (for more details, please see http://tinyurl.com/d2xcwyv9). Outreach will include announcements within the congregation as well as to outside groups such as the Washington Ethical Society, the 6th and I Historic Synagogue, and bulletin boards at grocery stores, in addition to local media, both Jewish and secular. A flyer was sent out to the MacharCommunity listserv; please print it out and post it at your neighborhood coffee shop or grocery store!

• In the newly redesigned Machar website (look for it soon on a computer near you!), how many b’nei mitzvah speeches should be available for the public to look at? What about photos? The board discussed these and other questions related to archiving Machar documents. Several board members are getting more information on current and future storage needs; the board will continue the discussion at its January meeting.

• Darlene Basch discussed a proposal to give thank-you gifts to Machar members who referred new members to Machar. Referring members will be given gift cards to restaurants such as Lebanese Taverna, Clyde’s, or a Judaica store – such as Israeli accents – or an online Judaica website. Members received more details about the thank-you gift in an email.
Matzah Without Dogma: Four Centuries of Secular and Humanistic Judaism

Hosted by Machar: The Washington DC Congregation for Secular Humanistic Judaism

How did Jewish life become so diverse today? Who were the first Jews to connect with Jewish culture independent of religion? And how did they lead to Secular Humanistic Judaism?

**Friday, February 8 — NO CHARGE, ALL ARE WELCOME**
At Silver Spring Civic Building at Veterans Plaza, One Veterans Place, Silver Spring, MD 20910
7:00pm-9:30pm Shabbat Celebration – “Secular Humanistic Judaism & Jewish Tradition”

**Saturday, February 9**
At Silver Spring Civic Building at Veterans Plaza, One Veterans Place, Silver Spring, MD 20910
I) 9:00am-12:30pm “Judaisms—Enlightenment, Emancipation & Modern Judaisms”
II) 1:30pm-4:30pm “Jewishness: Socialism, Yiddishism, Zionism & Modern Culture”

**Sunday, February 10 — FREE for Machar members or under 25**
At Jewish Primary Day School, 6045 16th St. NW, Washington DC 20011
III) 10:00am-12:30pm Darwin Day: “Still Jewish: Science & Secular/ Humanist Philosophy”

Presenter Rabbi Adam Chalom is a national leader of Humanistic Judaism. Rabbi Chalom holds a Ph.D. in Hebrew and Jewish Cultural Studies and is the Dean for North America of the IISHJ. He also serves as the rabbi of Kol Hadash Humanistic Congregation in suburban Chicago, Illinois.

**IISHJ Seminar Registration Form—Register online at www.machar.org**

- Name(s) ____________________________
- Paid Registration (circle): I II III All LP
- Email or Phone ________________________
- Amount Enclosed: ___________

RETURN WITH PAYMENT TO: Machar, PO Box 42014, Washington DC 20015

Seminar Questions? Please contact Machar at 202-686-1881 or Kelly@machar.org

Please register by February 4, 2013
IISHJ Questions? (847) 383-6330 info@iishj.org
Jewish Cultural School for children 10:00–11:45 a.m.

January 11–13

During the weekend of January 11–13, Machar will be visited by a candidate for our rabbi position. Tammy Kaiser is a multi-faith chaplain and a rabbinic student in our movement. She is the Director of Lifelong Learning for a large synagogue in New Mexico. She has been much praised by leaders within the Society for Humanistic Judaism. You can check out her website: www.tammykaiser.com

Friday, Jan 11, at 7:30 pm. Tammy will lead a Shabbat at River Road Unitarian Universalist Church, 6301 River Road in Bethesda. There’s plenty of free parking and no steps via the front entrance. If you want to be picked up at the Bethesda Red Line metro stop at 7:10 p.m., write to Kelly [at] machar.org. by Friday morning. We’ll have light refreshments after the service.

Saturday evening, Jan 12, there will be a dinner with Tammy. If you are interested in joining the group, please contact Nadine Wettstein (nwettstein [at] nwettstein.com). The location will depend in part upon how many people will be involved.

Sunday, Jan 13, Tammy will be giving the Adult Ed talk at 10 am at JPDS on 16th Street, followed by our Community Sunday.

January 27

Adult Ed: My Journey from Ultra-Orthodoxy to Secular Humanistic Judaism

New Machar member Jeff Dawson will discuss his decision to leave U.S. graduate school for the ultra-orthodox Jewish world in Israel, with its strict separation of the sexes, almost blind obedience to rabbis, and his marriage to a girl he barely knew. He will also recount his struggles once he renounced his faith to leave behind the community and a wife who refused to grant him a divorce. (This event is rescheduled from fall.)
Mazal Tov!  

Mazel tov to Deb and David Godden on the wedding of Deb’s son, Jim Ryan and Suzanne Lamb on 12/28/2012. The date also is David and Deb’s 21st wedding anniversary. Happy Anniversary! Our love and best wishes to all!
Staff, Board of Directors, and Leadership

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Congregational Administrator
Kelly Hand
Jewish Cultural School Director
Debby Brennan

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Nadine Wettstein
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Clubs and Havurot Chairs
Book Club
Darlene Basch
Renée Weitzner
Neighborhood Havurot
Laurie Miller
Wimmin’ In Transition (WITs)
Renée Weitzner
Young Adult Havurah
Betsy Kolmus

SHJ Reps from Machar
Machar Rep to SHJ
Marlene Cohen
SHJ Board of Directors Members
Larry Lawrence (Vice President)
Deb Godden (Secretary)

Machar Trained Leaders
Binyamin Biber, Rabbi
Michael Prival, Madrikh
Deb Godden, Madrikha
Dan Tobocman, Spokesperson
Directions to Machar

“Cedar Lane” events are held at Cedar Lane UU Church. 9601 Cedar Lane, Bethesda, MD.

From DC, go north on Wisconsin Ave. (Rt. 355), pass the Naval Hospital, right on Cedar Lane., cross Beach Dr., 2nd entrance on right. From 495, Rockville, etc., take Rockville Pike (Rt. 355) S to left on Cedar to 9601. Metro - Red Line to Medical Center. Walk ½ mile north on 355, right on Cedar, 0.7 miles, or Ride-On Bus #34 (ask the driver).

“JPDS” is the site of our Jewish Cultural School (JCS). 6045 16th Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Metro: Red Line to Silver Spring. S-2 or S-4 bus to Federal Triangle to Military Road and cross 16th Street. JCS and Adult Ed begin promptly at 10 a.m.; please arrive early.

For meetings in private homes, contact hosts for directions.

Machar E-mail Lists for Members and Nonmembers

Michael Prival

There are two different e-mail lists that Machar members can join. The first, the “Machar” list, enables members to receive the monthly Newsletter, event reminders by email, plus announcements of program changes that may occur between printed newsletters. Almost all Machar members are already on this list.

The second list is “MacharCommunity.” Members of this list can share information about local, non-Machar cultural, educational, social action, or community service events and activities. Any list member can post a note on the “Machar Community” list at any time.

If you would like to be added to either of these lists, or if we are not using your preferred e-mail addresses for them, please send a note to Email at machar.org. Of course you can get off these lists at any time.

Earn for Machar Jewish Cultural School with Service Magic and DriversEd.com!

Get Matched to Prescreened Home Improvement Contractors and earn up to $6*!

Service Magic is a FREE service matching you to pre-screened, customer-rated service professionals: Maids, painters, remodelers, plumbers, roofers & more! *Earnings depend on the type of project and range from $2–$6.

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With DriversEd.com, your teen can complete the required drivers education online—without ever stepping in a classroom.

Reign for Machar Jewish Cultural School with Service Magic and DriversEd.com!

Help Machar as You Shop

Larry Lawrence

Machar participates in the eScrip (Electronic Scrip) program, a fundraising organization in which participating business partners contribute a percentage of your purchases to our Jewish Cultural School. Some participating businesses in the Mid-Atlantic are Safeway (which contributes 1-3% of your purchase value) and American Airlines (3%). To sign up for eScrip, go to http://www.eScrip.com and choose “Machar–Jewish Cultural School” as the benefiting group.

Raise Money for SHJ While you Surf

Use GOODSEARCH.COM to Search on the Web and Raise Money for SHJ

GoodSearch.com is a Web search tool for organizations such as ours to raise money each time someone uses it. Simply go to goodsearch.com, key in “humanistic Judaism,” and type in whatever you are searching for. You can even see how much we have raised—and imagine the potential if all of us use it!