



Dear Macharniks,

I am very excited to invite you to "Matzah Without Dogma: Four Centuries of Secular and Humanistic Judaism." The more we know how we came to be, the thinkers and movements that are the evolutionary ancestors of Secular Humanistic Judaism, the better we can understand who we are.

This weekend seminar is offered by Machar in cooperation with the International Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism. Originally intended for training professional Leaders/Madrikhim-ot/Vegvayzers, these seminars offer invaluable opportunities for intellectual stimulation and personal inspiration. They are open to anyone who wants to learn, or to learn more, and I encourage you to attend even part of this unique opportunity.

Rabbi Adam Chalom

Dean-North America, IISHJ

Rabbi, Kol Hadash Humanistic Congregation



Rabbi Adam Chalom's family background is a microcosm of the Jewish world. His mother comes from an Ashkenazi East European Yiddish Socialist and Reform Judaism background and was born in the Midwest, while his father comes from the Brooklyn community of Syrian Sephardic Orthodox Jews. They found their common ground in Humanistic Judaism, and Adam was raised as a Humanistic Jew at the Birmingham Temple, the founding congregation of Humanistic Judaism.

Rabbi Chalom earned a B.A. from Yale University in Judaic Studies, a Master's Degree at the University of Michigan in Hebrew and Jewish Cultural Studies, Rabbinic ordination from the International Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism, and his PhD at the University of Michigan in Near Eastern Studies. His dissertation was titled "Modern Midrash: Jewish Identity and Literary Creativity."

Rabbi Adam Chalom joined Kol Hadash Humanistic Congregation in July of 2004. Before then, he served for three years as co-Rabbi of the Birmingham Temple in suburban Detroit, Michigan. Rabbi Chalom is also the North American Dean for the International Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism, the leadership and rabbinical training institution of the world-wide movement of Secular Humanistic Judaism and he serves on the editorial board of the quarterly journal Humanistic Judaism.

For Rabbi Chalom, Humanistic Judaism is not only a professional pursuit but also a personal passion he shares with his wife, A.J., who also grew up as a Humanistic Jew - they were even in the same youth group. They have two children.

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Secular Humanistic Judaism embraces a human-centered philosophy that combines rational thinking with a celebration of Jewish culture and identity.

We affirm the power and responsibility of human beings to shape their own lives independent of supernatural authority.

Machar is affiliated with the Society for Humanistic Judaism and the International Federation of Secular Humanistic Jews.

President's Letter

Dear Machar Members:

People join Machar for many reasons, but primary among them is to be part of a community. Machar was that community this past month, as we came together for two sorrowful events, with the deaths of members Bert Donn and Norm Gleichman.

Bert Donn was a long-time member of Machar who "religiously" attended services and activities right up until his death at the age of 93. Bert was a very active participant in Machar's Social Action activities in his earlier years. In recent years, his wife Marj pushed him into our venues in a wheelchair, and their travels could not have been easy, but they were devoted! Rabbi Ben Biber delivered a meaningful eulogy at his memorial service, and many members attended.

Norm Gleichman's death, in a swimming accident while on vacation with his family, was untimely, tragic, and difficult to grasp. My own reaction mirrored many: I refused to believe it at first. Norm was only 58—vibrant, healthy, and as busy as ever with his work as a lawyer for the Service Employees International Union, his acting, his volunteer and community work, and his close family. Norm was at my home just the week before, for a Rabbi

Committee meeting. I can still see and hear him asking piercingly perceptive questions and keeping us on task.

The Machar community responded to Norm's death in the best Humanist tradition: we did all we could to help the living. Members helped organize the memorial service (attended by many hundreds of Norm's friends, family, and colleagues) and did errands for his family. At the memorial service, Machar member Steve Samuels delivered a wonderful eulogy (reprinted in this newsletter); members Joy Markowitz and Joanna Pratt led the huge group in a soulful singing of Hineh Ma Tov; members Alberto Grosmark, Rick Eisen, Marlene Cohen, Miriam Gitler and I were ushers. Many members attended the service and contributed in ways large and small. We already are executing plans to include his family in Machar activities and holiday commemorations, to ensure that Machar's warmth envelopes them in the coming years. Most tellingly, this tragedy brought Machar together as a community, to respond to the need and help each other cope with the loss of our friend.

Nadine Wettstein
Machar President

From the American Humanist Association Free Mind, Winter 2012 issue:

AHA has launched a new website, KidsWithoutGod.com. It has a short book about Darwin the dog and science videos. It offers materials for children and parents. "The websites (one for kids, one for teens) contain information on humanism, history, discrimination, politics, schools, reading suggestions and...other resources...geared for reaching out and supporting kids without supernaturalism." And they're open to your additional resource contributions:)

Additionally their ad campaign included young people with 2 different statements: One is "I'm getting a bit old for imaginary friends" and the other is "You're not the only one."

International Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism



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”

GENERAL PUBLIC
\$30/SESSION, \$60/SEMINAR

MACHARNIK/UNDER 25
\$15/SESSION, \$25/SEMINAR

IISHJ LEADERSHIP PROGRAM
\$125-/SEMINAR (MINUS \$25 /AIRFARE)

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.



Matzah Without Dogma—February 8-10, 2013

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

TOTS CLASS: Roxanne Arnon, teacher

The tots class learned about Tu B'Shvat, the birthday of the trees, this week. We read a story and learned how trees are homes for many different animals. The kids then gave examples of different things trees give us. Since trees give us fruit, the kids put together fruit baskets. Finally, while we were outside playing, the kids sang happy birthday to a big tree on the playground. Next class we will be learning about the story of Purim! Feel free to have kids come to class in costume.

KINDERGARTEN/FIRST GRADE:

Ben Lauing, teacher

It was another great morning in K/1! This week we learned about Tu B'Shvat, the Jewish holiday that celebrates the environment. We talked about ways we can protect the environment, then decorated our very own pots so that we can honor the holiday by planting a tree (or perhaps something a little smaller)! After reading "The Great Kapok Tree," we created our own "forests" - with frosting dirt, Oreo fertilizer, broccoli trees and gummy worms. Next class, we'll be learning all about Purim

SECOND GRADE: Amanda Sagarin, teacher

The second graders have recently studied Tu B'Shvat, Bal Tashchit (protecting the environment), Martin Luther King, Shalom Bayit (peace in the home), and Darchei Shalom (ways of peace). Each topic is always tied into the Mitzvahs (good deeds) we can do--for example, we made a list of well over 50 Mitzvot we can do for the environment and for protecting and celebrating trees! On February 10th we will learn about Purim. MACHAR is having a community Purim Party, however, the second graders will also have a Purim Party in class on the 10th and through that party learn

the story, values, rituals, and importance of Purim. I am greatly looking forward to covering Passover the end of March; it has been my favorite holiday since I was a child and there is much to learn from it.

THIRD GRADE: Jessica Tombeck, teacher

Our class learned about the holiday of Tu B'Shevat, the new year of the trees. We read a story about Theodore Herzl, and talked about planting trees in Israel, as well as being good stewards of the Earth here at home. We also played Tu B'Shvat charades, which had us all loudly laughing as the children acted out relevant concepts, such as sun, earth, tree... and learned a few of the words in Hebrew as we went along. Later, we created our own trees and labeled four branches with secular humanist values, e.g. integrity, self-reliance, responsibility, connection/identity. This discussion dovetailed with our reading about Martin Luther King, Jr. last week. Each child spent some time thinking about how these values manifest in their daily lives, for example, "I am responsible when I feed my cats" or, "I have integrity when I talk about taking care of the Earth and then recycle at home" or, "I celebrate Jewish holidays" to represent connectedness. In our last few minutes, we created some origami birds.

FOURTH/FIFTH GRADE: Rachel Young, teacher

We did a brief map exercise where we tried to guess where different races lived in Washington DC. The kids colored blank maps according to where they thought people lived and then we looked at a map that shows the actual racial make-up of the city according to the census. We talked about the segregation that was imposed on the Jews through ghettos and shtetls and the continued problem of de facto segregation we have today.

Most of the class was spent learning more about the original ideas of the Enlightenment philosophers and the Haskalah thinkers. We ended class with the kids thinking of ways we practice Judaism at Machar that grew out of the Haskalah and Enlightenment. Here are some of our thoughts (paraphrased):

Philosophers had new ways of thinking about god, and we have new ways of thinking about god and will come up with even newer ideas in the future. We are unorthodox. - Jacob and Ian

We use reason and observation to understand the world around us. We don't look to the bible to explain things. - Abby and Olivia

We are secular and study secular subjects like the Haskalah thinkers. We study history and culture. -Jeremy, Jeremy, and Spencer

I found the complexities of their thoughts and all of the children's ability to draw connections between their own lives, what they learn outside of Machar, and what we do learn in Machar very mature and impressive.

SIXTH GRADE: Bill Young, teacher

Last class saw our introduction to comparative religion. We talked through how the students self-identify by religion and whether they're aware of friends who practice a religion different than theirs. We outlined the basic relationship between Judaism, its branches, and the other two major Middle Eastern monotheisms. We and introduced some major concepts in comparative religion--theological ones like monotheism, polytheism, and atheism--as well as the notion that religion may be concerned with behaviors, groups and organizations, and feelings, in addition to those theological concepts.

We then turned to a set of maps that reflected increasingly complex ways of showing where people practice what religions, both in the United States and across the world.

Over the next few classes, we will discuss the specifics of some of the major religions of the world.

Next class, we will begin our discussion of one particular religion, Hinduism. I've decided to start with Hinduism because it (arguably) is the oldest of today's major faiths; and I think there is a benefit to beginning with an example outside of the middle eastern triad.

We will begin with an outstanding primer on Hinduism, put together by the good folks from Kent, UK, and available at <http://www.chiddingstone.kent.sch.uk/homework/religion/hinduism.htm>. In particular, we will look to Hinduism's story about the reincarnation cycle: the individual soul, "atman", trapped in a cycle of rebirth, "samsara", and which, through obedience to moral duty, "dharma", is able to improve its moral state, "karma", so as to gain escape, "moksha", from that cycle and reunite with the divine oneness of the universe, "brahman." (See, it's easy!)

After that, we will attempt a brief Hindu meditation, concentrating on a Shiva mantra, which, I hope, will show the students one aspect of Hindu practice while also hammering home a basic tenet of the faith.

We will also briefly consider the caste system, both in its relationship to the reincarnation cycle and its most obvious social injustice, the creation of the out-caste untouchables—we will watch a brief video on this topic, available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j31veR74gSo>.

If time permits, we may also discuss some of the major Hindu books, the origins (in Vedism) of the Hindu tradition, and the place of the river Ganges (because there's an awesome documentary on it at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UM9aPy7H534>).

Lastly, if your son or daughter should come home yearning for more Hindu culture, you may want to check out the 94-episode TV series, "Mahabarat," http://www.youtube.com/watch?annotation_id=annotation_893358&feature=iv&src_vid=nLBhXHKUOXI&v=05uPstPKz04, which will certainly do more justice to Indian folk stories than I ever could.

B'NEI MITZVAH CLASS:

Seth Garfinkel, teacher

Continuing our studies in comparative Judaism, the B'nei Mitzvah class examined the way different Jewish movements recognize significant occasions-- notably birth, marriage, and death -- to see how a secular humanistic Jewish community celebrates triumph and grieves loss. Taking into consideration symbols (the chupah), traditions (the breaking of the glass), and rituals (sitting shiva), we discussed the importance of these events and the value of marking these occasions both individually and as a community. We also looked at other Jewish movements to see which symbols, traditions, and rituals are unique to Jewish secular humanism and which ones are shared within the entire Jewish community. Moving forward, the B'nei Mitzvah class is excited to start its session on Jewish Heroes and learn about the contributions that Jewish people have made to the global community.

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!

Plotz – rhymes with "watts"

It comes from the German "place" or platzen is "to burst."

So it can be a seat – "Save my plotz," but that's not the common usage.

More often it is used as onomatopoeia – that is, it sound like what it means.

"I'm so tired, I could plotz." Or "If I laugh anymore I'll plotz."

It's feeling the extreme – either ready to burst or explode (from pleasure, from being full, from being overwhelmed) or it can involve being "angry beyond bearing; outraged."

So you could also be "so angry I could plotz."

It's a very versatile word

—Leo Rosten,
The Joys of Yinglish, 1992



Clubs and Activities

Havurot/Social Events

Laurie Miller

Over 25 Macharniks gathered on February 2nd to enjoy a potluck dinner and get down to the business of playing some games. As in past games nights, it was a lot of fun. We had players of all ages mixing and mingling over various card and board games. These events provide a great opportunity to schmooze and see what you might have in common with other members.

January flew by so quickly and we were not able to get a Shabbat scheduled around the various other social events that did take place. Delete these two sentences and add. Roberto Levy and Nancy Harris are starting a monthly restaurant gathering. The first dinner will be on Saturday, **February 23 at 6 p.m.** at the Capital Grille, 5310 Western Avenue, Chevy Chase, MD 20815 (walking distance from Friendship Heights Metro; parking validation for up to three hours at Bloomingdales). The place is not inexpensive, but we will make sure the next event will be less costly. Please send a confirmation to Nancy Harris at remwen@earthlink.net or to Roberto Levy at levy.roberto@yahoo.com by February 16th.

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@gmail.com.

WITs

Renée Weitzner

This month the women's group of Machar, WITs (Wimmin in Transition) enjoyed a lively repast at the lovely home of Eva Shankman. We had one of our largest groups present which made for delicious food and conversation. Thank you, Eva!

For February, we are going to a restaurant in Bethesda, Kabob Bazaar at 7710 Wisconsin Avenue on **February 27, 2013 at 7 pm**. This is the restaurant that a group of Machar people went to with Tammy Kaiser when she came to visit. Everyone enjoyed the food and atmosphere of Kabob Bazaar.

I hope you will be able to join us at our February meeting. Please let me know if you can come by February 25, 2013 so that I can let the restaurant know how many people to expect. You may reach me by phone or by email at [rwcats at aol.com](mailto:rwcats@aol.com). Thank you. I hope to see you soon!!!

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](mailto:mprival@aol.com).

Book Club

Darlene Basch and Renée Weitzner

I hope you are all staying warm in this freezing cold weather. We have a couple of meetings scheduled for the next couple of months. In March, we are meeting at Martha's on **March 10 at 3 pm**. We will be discussing Rebecca Goldstein's fascinating book, *Betraying Spinoza*. In April, we will be meeting at Darlene's home on **April 7 at 3 pm**. We will be discussing Natalie Wexler's fine book, *A More Obedient Wife*. Natalie will be joining us for that discussion. Please let either Darlene or me know that you are coming so that we may let our hosts have an idea of how many people to expect.

If you would like to join us, please contact Renee Weitzner at [rwcats at aol.com](mailto:rwcats@aol.com) or Darlene Basch at [dab0507 at verizon.net](mailto:dab0507@verizon.net).

Young Adult Havurah

Liz Pomper

Join our listserve 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.

Social Action Committee

Rick Gold

[On the Streets and In the Legislature](#)

Machar's Social Action Committee has yet to meet this year, but that has not stopped us from engaging in social justice activities consistent with Machar's values. On Inauguration Day, Committee Chair Rick Gold canvassed on behalf of Machar's partner, J Street, to make

peace and justice in the Middle East priorities of the second Obama Administration.

Rick also represented Machar at the Jewish Community Advocacy Day in Richmond on January 22. The group of 130 persons visited 32 State Senators and Delegates from Northern Virginia to fight challenges to separation of church and state/religious freedom; support the expansion of Medicaid; assure that renewables, wind and solar power are priorities for addressing climate change; and maintaining support for investment by Israeli companies in Virginia. The Group also heard from Governor Bob McDonnell and Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli, who spoke of their commitment to fighting trafficking, eliminating gangs and improving the incentives and accountability of k-12 teachers. The Jewish Community was represented by four Jewish Federations /Jewish Community Relations Committees. Northern Virginia co-sponsors included B'nai B'rith, Hadassah, JCC of Northern Virginia, American Jewish Committee and Temple Rodef Shalom's Hineinu Environmental Working Group.

Machar members also joined thousands of persons, including 200 from Newtown, Connecticut and large contingents from Cedar Lane Unitarian Church and Temple Sinai, in the March for Gun Control on January 26. David Wittenberg, Roberto Levy, Rahel Hanadari and their three children, as well as Rick Gold, represented Machar. We were proud to be among the earliest activists of the post-Newtown gun control movement and look forward to making it a major priority for the country in 2013.



Jeff Dawson spoke to a full crowd on January 27 at Machar Adult Education audience on My Journey from Ultra-Orthodoxy to Secular Humanistic Judaism. He gave a thoughtful account of his amazing transitions into, then out of Ultra-Orthodoxy.



Machar is a member of SHJ, the Society for Humanistic Judaism.

Society for Humanistic Judaism Supports Federal Ban on Assault Rifle Sales; Calls for Boycott of Stores Selling Assault Weapons

As Humanistic Jews, our hearts are broken as we grapple with the loss of 26 lives at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut. For more than a decade, we have been witness to mass shootings with no relief. Across the United States, in schools, theaters, and malls, from Virginia Tech, to Columbine, to Aurora and now to Sandy Hook, the senseless violence has continued. It is time to say enough. Committed to taking responsibility for improving our world, the Society for Humanistic Judaism believes it is time for us to come together to demand a change in our gun laws.

The Society has adopted a resolution calling for a federal ban on the sale of assault rifles and high capacity magazines. The Society does not believe that the right to bear arms as embodied in the Second Amendment includes the right for citizens to own military-grade assault rifles and high capacity magazines. The resolution recognizes “that the response to such mass shootings is complex and must be approached with a multi-faceted solution that includes better mental health treatment and screening as well as a society committed to less glorification of violence” and that “a federal ban on assault rifles and high capacity magazines needs to part of the solution.” The resolution urges “support for federal legislation banning assault rifles and high capacity magazines as well as increased efforts to prevent people from buying guns through unlicensed dealers without a background check.” Read the full resolution on the Society’s website, <http://www.shj.org/AssaultWeaponBan.html>.

Recognizing that the huge profitability from the sales of assault weapons and high-capacity magazines provides a disincentive for retailers to remove these items from their shelves, the Society for Humanistic Judaism is organizing a boycott of retailers who sell assault rifles and high capacity magazines. People can join the boycott by signing the petition at <http://tiny.cc/k3tpqw>.

Signing the petition is a pledge to boycott the retailers that continue to sell these weapons and instead shop at retailers that have removed such weapons from their online catalogues

and stores. The petition lists the “responsible” retailers that have removed these weapons and the “irresponsible” retailers that have not. The Society will be notifying the “irresponsible” retailers of the boycott, and will update the lists as additional information is received, including moving “irresponsible” retailers to the list of “responsible” retailers if they decide to stop selling these weapons. If you have questions about the boycott, please contact the Society at info@shj.org and include “boycott” in the subject line.

The Society for Humanistic Judaism is the national umbrella organization for Humanistic congregations in North America. Humanistic congregations embrace a human-centered philosophy that celebrates Jewish culture. Humanistic Jews value their Jewish identity and the aspects of Jewish culture that offer a genuine expression of their contemporary way of life. Humanistic Judaism embraces the belief in the human capacity to create a better world rather than in reliance on a supernatural power or an omniscient deity.

There are currently nearly 30 congregations in the United States and Canada affiliated with this growing movement. Forty-nine percent of the United States 5.5 million Jews say that their outlook is secular and forty-eight percent do not belong to a synagogue or other Jewish organization according to the American Jewish Identification Survey undertaken by professional statisticians under the auspices of the Center for Jewish Studies at the City University of New York. The Society helps to organize local congregations and havurot, creates and disseminates celebrational and educational materials, provides national programs, including programs for teens and young adults, and serves the needs of individual members who do not live near an existing Humanistic congregation.

For more information, contact the Society for Humanistic Judaism at 248-478-7610, www.shj.org.

2013 HuJews Teen and Young Adult Conclave

The Society for Humanistic Judaism is pleased to announce that the 2013 HuJews Teen and Young Adult Conclave will be held April 12–14, 2013, at Butzel Conference Center in Ortonville, Michigan. We are planning a fantastic weekend for the teens and young adults affiliated with our member communities. The teens and college students who participate in the conclave will experience a community service activity, workshops and discussions run by their peers, Shabbat and Havdala services, camp games like The Amazing Race or a Night Hike and a Campfire, and plenty of time to socialize and of course have fun! There also will be an open mic night, for which participants should plan. Rabbis Miriam Jerris and Jodi Kornfeld and Rabbinic Student Denise Handlarski will join us for the weekend.

In an effort to reduce costs in this economic climate, The Society for Humanistic Judaism is limiting its printed and mailed conclave information this year. We will send emails directly to teens for whom we have personal emails, but that is only 1/5th of our database. If you know of any teens or young adults who would like to receive information about the conclave, please forward this information to them in an email and copy AJ Chalom at hujews@gmail.com.

Conclave begins at the Birmingham Temple, Farmington Hills Michigan at 3pm on April 12, 2013. Transportation to Butzel Conference Center will depart no later than 4pm and we will not wait for latecomers.

Who is eligible to attend the HuJews Teen and Young Adult Conclave?

Teens who are currently enrolled in the 8th through 12th grades in school and young adults who are ages 18–22 and enrolled in university or college may attend. We apologize, but we cannot accommodate 13 year olds who are currently in your Mitsva program or enrolled in the 7th grade at school.

How much does it cost? How do teens and young adults register?

The cost for teens and young adults includes all meals, programs and shared sleeping accommodations (but not transportation to Detroit, MI, or Butzel Conference

Center). The registration deadline is **February 14, 2013**. There is a late fee of \$26 for registrations and payments received between February 14, 2013 and April 1, 2013.

Fees are:

Teens (8th Grade Only): **\$215**

Sibling Fee (Teens Only): **\$215**

Teens (9th-12th Grade): **\$240**

Young Adults: **\$225**

Chaperones: **\$275**

Round Trip Bus Transportation from Airport/Train to Conclave: **\$25**

Non-Member Fee: **\$25**

Late Fee (after 2/14/13): **\$26**

Who goes to conclave?

Humanistic Jewish teens and young adults ranging in age 14–22 from eighth grade through college students. People come from across the United States and Canada.

What do people do there?

Conclave is a weekend of fun, insight, and discovery. It enables young Humanistic Jews to connect with peers from all over the United States and Canada, while exploring and becoming more connected with Humanism and Judaism

Can you give me some examples of activities?

Certainly! Every conclave includes thought-provoking discussions, fun-filled workshops, Humanistic Shabbat and Havdala services, and much more. Workshop topics vary from a movie discussion, to role-playing activities or conversations about identity or Humanistic Judaism self-defense.

Any other questions?

Ask the teens who are going!

<https://www.facebook.com/events/514218931941329/?fref=ts>

<http://www.hujews.org/gi-cnclv.htm>

Or email AJ, the conclave coordinator at hujews@gmail.com

Machar Adult Education and Community Sundays

10:00–11:45 a.m. promptly, followed by **12:00 p.m.** bagels and Community Sundays for all ages! Programs conclude at **12:30 p.m.**

The intent of the adult education program is to increase members' access to the best of Jewish and Humanistic practices and perspectives.

Jewish Cultural School for children **10:00–11:45 a.m.**

February 8–10

[Matzah Without Dogma: Four Centuries of Secular and Humanistic Judaism](#)

On the weekend of February 8–10, Machar is proud to host Rabbi Adam Chalom for an International Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism seminar, "Matzah Without Dogma: Four Centuries of Secular and Humanistic Judaism." The seminar begins Friday evening at 7 and continues on Saturday, at the Silver Spring Civic Center. It concludes Sunday morning at JPDS. There is no charge for Machar members on Friday or Sunday, and the Saturday sessions are very reasonable. See Machar website for full details and registration.

Families, please plan to stay until 12:30 p.m. on Sunday, February 10. We have special activities for the kids while adults enjoy the IISHJ seminar and Darwin Day with Rabbi Adam Chalom (see full page announcement for details). Thanks to a grant from the Jewish Federation of Greater Washington's Initiative for Congregational Education, we are hosting a special living history presentation for children.

[Anna Shulman: The Queen of H Street:](#)

[11:45 a.m. to 12:30 p.m](#)

This one-woman show tells the entertaining and true life story of Anna Shulman, her arrival in the U.S. and in Washington, and her impact on the H Street neighborhood, home to Jewish merchants in the 1920s and 1930s. Contemporary students unfamiliar with their immigrant heritage will learn how immigrants such as Anna repaid their debt of welcome by helping subsequent immigrants in their turn.



February 24

Purim Carnival, Schweinhaut Center

No adult education speaker. Join the Purim fun from 10 am to Noon at the Margaret Schweinhaut Senior Center, 1000 Forest Glen Road, Silver Spring, MD 20901.

March 3

[Children on the Fringe, How We Make Meaningful Connections in Their Lives; Debby Brennan](#)

Machar Sunday School Director and public school teacher in Washington DC Debby Brennan will share the lessons she has learned from teaching in the inner city.

Community Sunday

TBA

March 17

[A Look Inside the Book of Esther; Michael Prival](#)

Long-time Machar Member and Madrich Michael Prival continues Purim with the Book of Esther, which tells the story of Purim. It is a fantasy that never mentions God. Where did it come from? Was Esther a secular Jew who was able to live as queen in the Persian court, not known for its kosher cuisine? Who is the real hero of the story? And just how did Esther win that famous "beauty contest" anyway? It would be helpful to read this short biblical book before the session.

Community Sunday

Preparing for Passover

Save the Date

Machar's Community Passover Seder and Potluck

Saturday, March 23, 4:30 p.m.–8 p.m.
Cedar Lane UU Church, Bethesda, MD

Birthdays

February 2: Paul Eliot
February 3: Andrea Lightman
February 7: Manny Pastreich
February 10: Lila Grosko
February 11: Alessandro Topa
February 14: Enrique Lerda
February 18: Teo Topa
February 23: Ann Black
February 26: Evan Williamson

Machar's members are our biggest asset and our greatest resource in letting their friends and family know about our wonderful community.

If you recommend a member or family who joins Machar, Machar will thank you with your choice of a \$100 gift card for dining out at Lebanese Taverna or Clydes, for local shopping at Politics and Prose or Israeli Accents, or some on-line Judaica shopping at moderntribe.com or traditionsjewishgifts.com.

So please tell people about Machar; we hope to give out lots of thank you cards!

—Darlene Basch

Anniversaries

February 21: Adam Namm and Mei Huang
February 26: Susan Morawetz and Yan Raytselis

Yarhzeits: We remember...

February 11: Anna Kamalich, grandmother of Richard Kamalich
February 16: Rose Miller, grandmother to Laurie Laurie Miller
February 19: Thelma Baron, mother of David Baron
February 19: Robert Arthur Kahn, father of Peter Kahn
February 28: Bessie Maslinoff, grandmother of Patti Maslinoff
February: Nicholas Dopulos, stepfather of Harriet/Gary Peck

Welcome to our New Members and Congratulations to Ann and Ami

Welcome to new Machar members Rahel Hanadari and Roberto Levy and their daughters. Rahel and Roberto already have become active members: Rahel is organizing our Purim celebration, and Roberto and long-time member Nancy Harris are organizing the Restaurant Havurah. Thank you!

Our newest members, joining just this past month, are Donna Copeland and Terry Johnson. Donna and Terry already have joined us at our Hanukah party, at WITs and at other events. They were introduced to Machar by Ann and Ami Argaman. For telling their friends about Machar and helping us expand our membership, Ann and Ami are the first winners of Machar's new thank you-gift for new member recruitment. Ann and Ami will receive a gift certificate in the amount of \$100. Thanks, Ann and Ami and enjoy your gift!

Machar's own Dick Schwab is producing a play for the Little Theatre of Alexandria!

Dial "M" For Murder, written by Frederick Knott, directed by Carla Scopeletis, and produced by Jamie Blake and Richard Schwab, will be performed February 23 – March 16, 2013 at the theater on Wolf Street in Alexandria.

Details: www.thelittletheatre.com, or 703-683-5778.

The Machar Family

35th Anniversary Fundraising Campaign A Success

I am pleased to announce that our fundraising campaign for 2012 was a great success. The response to an anonymous challenge grant of \$6000 was an equally generous response from Macharniks of almost another \$13,000, for a total of almost \$19,000. This exhibits the devotion of so many Macharniks to our congregation, its work, what it has represented for 35 years, and to its commitment to provide a community for secular Jews in the future.

In addition to thanking all of those who made this fundraising campaign successful with their generous giving, gratitude is due in particular to those who agreed to make fundraising telephone calls. They were Renée Wietzner-Wolfe, Susan Schappert, Mark Swartz, Anna Greenberg, Dan Tobocman, Barry Dancis, Neil Greene, Ester Rozenblum and Eva Shankman.

David Wittenberg
Fundraising Chair

List of contributors to Machar in 2012 (includes above-minimum dues pledges for 2012–13).

Members

Jules Abrams and Anita Willens
David Abramson and Kelly Hand
Harry Appelman and Mimi Brody
Amichay and Ann Argaman
Darlene Basch
Donna Bassin
Ann Black
Kara Blank-Gonzalez and Marco Gonzalez
Marina Broitman and Tibor Roberts
Marlene Cohen and Michael Kidwell
John Cooper and Linda Seligmann
Barry and Elaine Dancis
Bert and Marjory Donn
Mark Epstein
Aaron Ferster and Anne Dooley
Myrna Frank and Howard Dubowitz
Pamela Fye
Jeff Gaynes
Miriam Gitler and Pedro Rodriguez
Norman Gleichman and Marie Ritzo
David and Deb Godden
Rick Gold and Bouchra Chati
David Goldberg and Claire Huson
Joe and Millie Goodman
Rob Goor and Linda Tebelman
Tom Gordon and Tricia Ekenstam Gordon
Jill Grant

Neil Greene and Ellen Miles
Tami and Brett Grosko
Alberto M. Grosmark and Ester Rozenblum
Nancy Harris
Madeline Henley and Joseph Kaster
Phyllis Hodes
Jill King
Brian and Sarah Kirkell
Susan Kohut
Carla Koppell and Giuseppe Topa
Larry Lawrence and Amy Kotkin
Kenneth Lederman and Helena Dinerman
Akiva Liberman and Julie Lewis
Andrea Lightman and Steve Wease
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Ken Silverstein and Clara Rivera
Caroline Simon and John Foster
Mark Swartz and Jennifer Guilfoyle
Renée Weitzner and Peter Wolfe
Nadine Wettstein and David Baron
Amy and André Williamson
David and Katie Wittenberg
Michael Zamore and Abigail Smith
Ari Zentner and Kathryn Greenberg
Kenneth Zinn and Roxie Herbekian

Nonmembers and former members

Brian Freedman
Nancy and Ken Hyatt
Riderwood Jewish Community
SHJ Riderwood
John and Meriel Steines

The following is the eulogy written and delivered by Steve Samuels at the Memorial Service for Norm Gleichman on Sunday, January 20, 2013:

I met Norm through Machar, the Washington Congregation for Secular Humanistic Judaism, in the mid-1990s.

Many years later we realized that we had actually attended Stanford Law School at the same time, but we did not meet until Norm's son Nick and my son Evan were classmates in the Machar Sunday School.

Machar has traditionally held a group Bar and Bat Mitzvah – or B'nei Mitzvah – ceremony for its 13-year-olds. Rather than learn to read from the Torah, each student chooses a topic that he or she researches during the school year and then reports on at the group ceremony.

Proving the adage that the apple never falls far from the tree, Nick presented a dramatic performance based upon Art Spiegelman's Maus series. Meanwhile, Evan had decided his project would be Jewish humor. I wasn't sure how this would be received, but when I mentioned it to the other parents Norm exclaimed in that utterly sincere voice of his: "Jewish humor! I think that's a GREAT topic!" My concerns were immediately put to rest. And I can still remember how, at rehearsals for the ceremony, Norm laughed out loud at each of Evan's Jewish jokes, no matter how unpolished Evan's delivery was or how many times Norm had listened to Evan tell the same joke. Norm's enthusiastic feedback gave Evan the confidence to give a Don Rickles-like performance at the B'nei Mitzvah ceremony.

The last time I saw Norm was when a group of friends from Machar went out for lunch after our Yom Kippur service. Yes, you heard that right. We're secular humanistic Jews, so we can have lunch on the day of fasting. Norm was still kvelling in Eve's moving violin performance at the Kol Nidre service the night before, in this very room in fact. And

he was looking forward enthusiastically to serving on the committee to select Machar's next rabbi.

It just so happened that one candidate for that position, Tammy Kaiser, visited Machar last weekend. My wife and I decided to attend an adult ed session with Tammy on Sunday, not so much because we wanted to hear her speak but because we were in a complete state of shock and wished to be with friends who loved Norm like we did.

As it turns out, Tammy is a professional grief counselor, and she spent the entire adult ed session describing how she dealt with the overwhelming grief of losing her best friend and barely escaping death herself when a terrorist shot six women at the Jewish Federation of Greater Seattle in 2006.

Secular humanists, of course, do not have the benefit of some of the usual mechanisms for coping with grief. For example, we are not able to rationalize Norm's premature death by saying that he is in a better place now or that this is somehow all part of God's plan.

Tammy explained that she could not follow the simple advice to "move on," as if the mass shooting had never happened. Instead, she "moved forward," never escaping her grief and anger and guilt but rather building upon them to make herself a better person.

So here is how I am moving forward:

- By remembering and attempting to emulate Norm's unselfish good deeds and respect toward all his fellow human beings.
- By remembering and attempting to emulate Norm's unwavering optimism and idealism and his contagious enthusiasm.

- By remembering Norm's wonderful theatrical performances, which I will never ever attempt to emulate.
- By remembering that every conversation I had with Norm put a smile on my face.
- By remembering Norm's unbounded love for Marie, Nick and Eve.
- By seeing Norm live on through Nick and Eve and their future accomplishments as a lawyer and a truly gifted writer.
- And by relishing every moment that I am alive, and cherishing every moment that I share with friends and loved ones.

In preparing for this memorial service, I watched a video of the 1997 B'nei Mitzvah ceremony. Here is part of what Norm said to Nick that day. He could so easily have been talking about himself.

"Nick, I think one of the things I'm proudest about in terms of you as a person who is becoming not only a man but more important, a mensch, is that you care about other people. ... I hope you will carry that feeling for others for the rest of your life. If you do, you will be following not only the great Jewish tradition, but a great tradition of our own family where nana and your papa held service to others as one of the highest possible goals. And whether it is by agitating, litigating, picketing, marching, lobbying, speaking, or something that's not in our tradition, working quietly, I know you'll make a contribution to making the world a better place for your having been in it."

Norm made this world a better place for each of us for his having been in it. I will miss him dearly.

—Steve Samuels

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Michael Prival, Madrikh

Deb Godden, Madrikha

Dan Tobocman, Spokesperson

Yiddish class at the JCC

The Yiddish class at the JCC of Greater Washington in Rockville, Maryland is scheduled to start on Thursday, Feb. 7. This semester features Yudel Mark's "Invitation to Yiddish", supplemented with reading materials suited to various levels.

To join the class, please register with the JCCGW (preferably) or just show up. Contact the teacher, Lee Goldberg, directly at leybl_goldberg@yahoo.com.

The class information is listed in Ulpan Hebrew in Jewish Family Living and Learning at jccgw.org

100 Years of Yiddish Theater Music

Tuesday, March 5

7:00 pm

Washington DCJCC, 1529 16th Street NW

\$15; \$12 Member/Student with ID/Senior

Zalmen Mlotek, the Artistic Director of The National Yiddish Theatre-Folksbiene, takes us on a journey from the origins of Yiddish theater in Rumania to contemporary film music.

Along the way you'll hear operetta arias, humorous vaudeville ballads, backstage renditions of Fiddler on the Roof, klezmer music, a Yiddish-English version of Gilbert and Sullivan, and more. As Mlotek seamlessly transforms Yiddish melodies into popular jazz numbers, prepare to learn new and amazing things about the songs you know and love.

With Cantor Arianne Brown from Adas Israel.

For tickets and more information:

<http://washingtondcjjcc.org/center-for-arts/music/>

Project to Translate Yiddish Language Journals and Newspapers

An innovative project is seeking Yiddish-speakers to help create an archive of journals and newspapers from the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Two archival repositories—the Kheel Center for Labor-Management Documentation and Archives at Cornell University in the United States and the Modern Records Centre at the University of Warwick in the United Kingdom—are jointly digitizing more than 1,500 pages from journals and newspapers originally written for working-class Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe.

They are relying on volunteers to translate the publications, which include The Polish "Yidel" and "Hashulamith" newspapers and "The Ladies' Garment Worker," journal of the ILGWU, and cover the period 1910–1918.

As the project continues, more items in Yiddish relating to labor, and particularly the garment industry, will be added continually as pages are transcribed.

Perfect translations are not required; an overall sense of the documents and the content is more important.

Participants in the project will register, select a journal, and type translations into a text box.

After pages are digitized and translated, they are available on the project's wiki, where translated passages show up right next to their scanned pages.

Read the Project Guide:

http://transcribe.lib.warwick.ac.uk/yt/index.php/Main_Page

Read the Complete Announcement:

<http://communications.library.cornell.edu/news/121127/YiddishCrowdsourcing>

The D.C. Commission of the Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) invites you to:



JCRC's Leadership Series With D.C. City Councilmember David Grosso

at Temple Micah

2829 Wisconsin Ave, NW

(public transportation & parking info available at
www.templemicah.org/aboutus/directions)

Tuesday, February 12, 2013

7:00 - 8:00 PM

Light refreshments provided

David Grosso is the D.C. Council's newest member in a full term At-Large seat. He will be serving on the following D.C. Council Committees:

Business, Consumer and Regulatory Affairs;
Education;
Finance & Revenue;
and Health.

This is a wonderful opportunity to hear the Councilmember's vision for the District, including his top priorities of ethics reform, education and economic development. This will also be a chance for him to get acquainted with the good works and advocacy done by our synagogues and Jewish agencies.



This program is organized by the JCRC's D.C. Commission and co-hosted by Temple Micah, not sure if your synagogue or Jewish agency is represented at the JCRC's DC Commission?
Contact Debra Linick, dlinick@jcouncil.org / 202-552-5355





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JSSA joins the national effort to raise disability awareness and support efforts to foster inclusion in our Jewish community.

Special Needs Services

JSSA supports the metro DC special needs community by providing a wide range of mental health, care management, employment and support services. Many children, adolescents and adults in our community struggle with a wide range of physical, cognitive, and developmental disabilities. JSSA's team of specially trained clinicians and other professionals are here to help. For more information, please call 301.816.2633 (Rockville, MD) or 703.896.7918 (Fairfax, VA), email contactus@jssa.org or visit us online at www.jssa.org.

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- Educational and Neuropsychological Testing and Advocacy
- Social Skills Therapy Groups, Clubs, and Camps for Children, Teens and Adults
- Social Skills Therapy Groups for Teens and Young Adults with Asperger's Syndrome
- Paul and Annetta Himmelfarb "Out and About!" Social Club Program for Teens and Young Adults with Asperger's and Related Disorders (outings includes parties, dinners, bowling, and more...)
- Life Skills Training Programs
- Parenting Programs and Trainings
- Jewish Clergy Trainings (Feb. 27 – **"When Every Need is Special – Navigating Special Needs in a Congregational Setting."** For more info: jkahn@jssa.org)
- Future Planning Services
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services
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Jewish Social Service Agency



Connect with JSSA





Interested in Advertising with Machar? Contact [info at machar.org](mailto:info@machar.org)

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. Al-

most 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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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! .