



## Please Welcome Our New Rabbi!

Dear Machar members,

Machar is delighted to welcome Rabbi Nehama Benmosche as our Rabbi through June 2015 – and hopefully beyond!

I want to thank our Rabbi Committee chair Mark Swartz, and the committee members Michael Prival, Joy Markowitz, Akiva Lieberman, and Nadine Wettstein, for working so hard to make this happen.

Rabbi Nehama will lead our family-friendly Community Seder on April 20. We look forward to seeing her during our JCS Sunday activities as we continue our Machar year through May. We will work with her over the summer as we plan for our coming year, including our Jewish Cultural School and Community Sunday events, our holiday observances and celebrations, and community Shabbats and Havdalas.

Rabbi Nehama is eager to get to know our Machar family. She has great ideas to share and I know we have an exciting time to look forward to as she leads Machar.

**Darlene Basch**  
Machar President



**Rabbi Nehama Benmosche** has served the Jewish community across many movements for over 20 years. She served as a congregational rabbi at Am Haskalah in Bethlehem, PA and as a student rabbi at Kol HaNeshama in Sarasota, FL, West End Synagogue in New York, NY and Beth Israel in Woodbury, NJ. Prior to her graduation from the Reconstructionist Rabbinical college in 2010, she was a day school and synagogue school teacher in Atlanta, Georgia where she earned a bachelor's and master's degree from Emory University. She is completing a doctorate in Jewish education at the Jewish Theological Seminary with a focus on educating staff and campers of a Jewish summer camp about differences in sex, gender and sexuality. She serves as an educator, consultant and board member of the

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Interfaith Community, an organization for Jewish/Christian families supporting two faith households. She serves on the board of Keshet, an organization working for the full inclusion and equality of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender Jews in Jewish life. Her life of service to progressive Jewish life holds a close second place to being the mother of her two adopted, Ethiopian sons: Eliyashu and Sima.

## JCS News

Debby Brennan

We had a wonderful Purim party at the Schweinhaut Senior Center, with hamantaschen, groggers, an obstacle course, art projects, and a great brunch. Thank you to all who made it such a fun morning!

We look forward to an equally exciting Passover Seder. We hope that as many students as possible can come to the Seder. If a child wants to participate in the Seder, please let us (Debby, Kelly or Rabbi Nehama at [RabbiNehama@gmail.com](mailto:RabbiNehama@gmail.com)) know by email.

**April 6 is GOOD DEEDS DAY.** We hope that all members will bring a new toy (wish list is attached) for children in the hospital at Children's National Medical Center. We also are looking for a volunteer to drive the toys to the hospital.

**ONE NOTE TO PARENTS:** Before or after class, when you are in the multi-purpose room, please watch your children. They may not be in classrooms or hallways in the school without an adult. We have had some complaints about the rooms in the school, and their condition, and it is critically important that we watch our children at all times. – Debby Brennan

### CLASSROOM NOTES:

**Tots:** The tot class learned all about Purim. They made groggers so that when they read the story of Purim they could make noise and boo for Haman. The class also learned about the different traditions to celebrate Purim like eating hamantaschen. Finally, the children colored pictures of characters from the story before going outside to play. – Roxanne Arnon

**Kindergarten:** The class read a book all about Queen Esther and how she saved the Jewish people from Haman's evil plot to kill them. Then we got to work. First, we made groggers, the traditional noisemakers we shake whenever we hear the name "Haman." This is the Jews' way of 'booing' the king's wicked advisor. We folded paper plates in half, put beads inside, stapled the plates' rims together, and decorated the outside. Then, we made masks. It is a Jewish custom to dress up for Purim (I described it as "the Jewish halloween"), so we took plates with two eyeholes cut out and decorated them however we wanted—one was an angry

face, one was an alien with hundreds of teeth, and one had a hilarious little mustache! We then tied yarn onto the plates so the masks would stay on our heads. After some play time outside, we concluded class with a very hands-on activity—making hamantaschen! On Purim, Jews make three-pointed cookies called hamantaschen to represent Haman's three-cornered hat. – Ben Lauing

**First/Second grade:** The first/second grade read the Jewish creation story out of Michael Prival's "Learning Bible Today." (Priceless comment of the day: "the Jews have a bible!?!") The students have also read other creation stories and they discussed why cultures around the world have stories of creation, and thought about whether those stories really help us to understand how we got here.

The class wrote their own (very silly, nonsensical) creation story. We went around the circle twice, each grown-up and student contributing a sentence, word, or phrase. Here it is:

Once upon a time  
We ate breakfast  
I don't know  
'Fridgerators were created  
I had lunch, breakfast and dinner at the same time  
(Teo was sleeping)  
The earth exploded 10 times and everything had to be re-created  
But we're not sure where things were created from in the first place  
Uh...  
Cheese  
A Ninja ate candy  
God created houses. Cool.  
...Teo still sleeping  
Is this some kind of interview?  
The End.

The class also read a story about Purim. The teens came into class and we made masks in preparation for the "Where The Wild Things Are" play, and we finished up class with a wonderful music session with Naomi in the library. The class made groggers out of paper-towel tubes filled with rice (sorry for any leaky rice!). The kids also learned the song "Let the Mystery Be" by Iris Dement (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nlaoR5m4L80&feature=kp>) and tied

it back into the previous week's discussion about creation. This coming session we will focus on Passover. – Sue Zwicker

**Third grade:** The class started off with a little video about Purim. It was a cartoon that combines modern day ideas with history in a way that is funny and interesting for kids (and adults!). The kids really loved it and begged to watch it again! We didn't have time to watch it again since we were so busy, but I will make sure to have another one for Passover for our next class. The message of the video was to stand up for what you believe in, which is also a main message from Purim. We talked about what that means and how each person would be able to do that. While discussing this I asked the students what sort of things they were supposed to do for others as Jewish people. We started talking about doing Mitzvahs and Tzedaka, which were our two big vocabulary words for the day. Then we talked about Maimonides' Ladder and levels of Tzedaka. I read and we discussed each different level as a class. Then the students paired up and drew a picture of one of the levels (each group had a different level to work on). Finally, each group presented their art and explained how it depicted their level of Tzedaka.

We also had a "Where the Wild Things Are" rehearsal mixed in there. – Heather Gale

**Fourth Grade:** The 4th graders at Machar have been busy learning about Jewish immigration to America. Over the last couple of months we have read through the book Letters from Rifka and completed our family tree projects. Now that we've learned about where our families come from and how they arrived to the United States, we're excited to learn what it was like for Jewish immigrants living in America. We'll explore Ellis Island, learn about immigrant life in New York City, and discuss the importance of Yiddish language and its impact on Jewish culture. – Aviva Downing

**Fifth/Sixth Grade:** The fifth and sixth graders took a deep dive into the meaning of Purim and its relevance to secular humanistic Judaism. The Megillah of Esther is unique in that it has no mention of God & puts a major emphasis on the role of women in creating justice. It is problematic to think of Purim as a joyous occurrence; after all, it ends with an all out massacre of non-Jews by Jews. However,

the lessons learned are huge and I think we had a really productive conversation about it. As always, your kids are wonderful and really make me look forward to spending every other Sunday morning with them. Thanks to them for their insight and creativity. – Izzy Parilia

**B'nei Mitzvah Class:** Thank you so much to Akiva Liberman for a wonderful class with the b'nei mitzvah students. Akiva spoke about different branches of Judaism, particularly modern Orthodox Judaism, and how secular humanism differs in so many ways from the other branches. Akiva brought along several Jewish articles, including tefillin, and he explained, in a wonderfully understandable way how we as secular humanists developed a different ideology from many other Jews.

### REGISTER NOW FOR MACHAR'S ANNUAL COMMUNITY POTLUCK SEDER

Sunday, April 20, 4:30 - 8:00 pm  
Cedar Lane UU Church  
9601 Cedar Lane, Bethesda, Maryland 20814

Highlights include Machar's Humanist Haggadah, sharing the Passover story, asking the "four questions," and the famous hunt for the Afikomen. You can expect fantastic food and good company. Nonmembers and prospective members are welcome.

Register on the home page of [www.machar.org](http://www.machar.org). \$18 member adults; \$25 nonmember adults; \$7.50 children 5-13 (under 5 free) Prices, which help to cover rental and supply costs, have not changed in years. If you do not use the Internet, you may send payment by check to Machar, P.O. Box 42014, Washington, DC 20015, indicating what you can bring and whether you can help with setup, table service, or cleanup.

**REGISTRATION DEADLINE:** Wednesday, April 16 (or earlier if sold out)

We will collect Passover contributions for Mazon, a Jewish response to hunger. Please make checks out directly to Mazon and bring to the event.

Machar Adult Education and Community Sundays

**Adult Education Sessions are Sundays from 10–11:30 a.m.** Sessions are open to all. All sessions are held in the Jewish Primary Day School, 6045 16th St. NW, DC 20012 unless noted.

There is parking on 16th Street and in the back. All talks will be in the gymnasium. (If you have trouble climbing stairs, use the rear entrance.)

April 6
Group Discussion—Wholeheartedness and Humanism

A discussion about embracing authenticity, self-compassion, play, and other guideposts of Brene Brown’s research, which Rabbi Miriam Jerris introduced many of us to during the High Holidays this year. Led by Marlene Cohen and Danielle Leff.

Community Sunday: Good Deeds Day

April 20 (Easter Sunday)
Passover Seder at Cedar Lane UU Church, 9601 Cedar Lane, Bethesda, MD, 4:30 p.m.

April 27
Membership Meeting

Members’ input is valued. Please attend to hear from the Board what we have been doing in the past year and discuss plans for the future.

Community Sunday: Yom Ha Shoah (Holocaust Remembrance)

May 4
Sherry and Bob Jason—City Hearts: Kids Say Yes to the Arts...Transforming At-Risk Children through the Arts

Sherry and Bob Jason (Darlene Basch’s sister and brother-in-law),

both former Los Angeles County Public Defenders, established City Hearts in 1984 to provide free visual and performing arts classes to the most-at-risk children in economically distressed neighborhoods in Southern California, enabling children and youth to be confident, imaginative, tolerant, generous and cooperative, as well as productive, contributing participants in their communities.

May 18
Debby Brennan—Jewish Education: Exposure or Commitment?

Machar’s Jewish Cultural School Director, Debby Brennan, will talk about the JCS curriculum, the model SHJ curriculum, and will lead a discussion on members’ expectations about children’s Jewish education at Machar. What would Machar parents and members like children to learn? What Jewish experiences would they want children to have? She will also share with members her own reflections and questions about “exposure” versus “commitment” as different goals of a Jewish education. Would Machar parents like their children to be “exposed” to Judaism? Or do they expect their children to learn “how to be a Jew” with the goal of a Jewish identity?

Community Sunday: Lag B’Omer Picnic

April 6 – Good Deeds Day Wish List for Hospital:

- Infants
- Infant mirrors
- Infant toys
- Baby blankets
- Activity centers
- Soft/squeeze toys
- Baby books
- Picture books
- Crib mobiles
- Pop-up toys
- Play telephones
- Toddlers
- Teething toys
- Infant videos
- Musical toys
- Rattles
- Wooden puzzles
- Stack toys
- Plastic trucks
- Fisher Price medical kits
- Dolls
- School-Age
- Fisher Price tape players
- Bubbles
- Musical books/Board books
- Duplo building blocks
- Sesame Street character toys
- Blocks
- Fisher Price toys (all ages)
- Push/pull toys
- Adolescent
- Battery-powered hand-held electronic games
- UNO
- Monopoly
- Boggle
- Scattergories
- Scrabble
- Clue
- Jenga
- Sorry
- Activity books/Word-find books
- Magna Doodle
- Etch-a-Sketch
- Matchbox cars and race tracks
- Bubbles
- Paint sets (water color)
- Action figures
- Play-doh (ONLY GLUTEN FREE)
- Arts and crafts kits
- Construction paper
- Regular playing cards
- Dolls
- Model kits (snap tight)
- Wooden models
- Gimp
- Disney character items
- Bead kits/Sand art kits
- Barbies and Barbie doll clothes
- Boggle Jr.
- Scattergories Jr.
- Card Games (Old Maid, Go Fish)
- Battery-powered hand-held electronic games
- Coloring books
- Crayons/markers/colored pencils
- Legos / Model sets
- Videos (G & PG-rated)
- Uno cards
- Checkers
- Memory
- Connect Four
- Chutes and Ladders
- Trouble
- Sorry
- Candyland
- Monopoly Jr.
- Scrabble Jr.

WITs

Renée Weitzner

During the month of March, the wonderful women of WITs met at the home of Donna Copeland for a delicious feast with lively conversation. We are now celebrating the group’s 10 year anniversary (!) and will be meeting at 7 p.m. on April 23 at the home of Harriet Peck, where we will feast on foods from Mandalay. Elaine Dancis has kindly offered to pick up our food from the restaurant. The cost per person should be around \$10 - \$15 per person.

Please let me know by April 21 whether or not you can attend so that I can let our host know our numbers. You can reach me at rwcats at aol.com or by phone. I hope to see you very soon.

Young Adult Havurah

Danielle Leff

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.

Book Club

Renée Weitzner

The Book Club of Machar met in March at the home of Martha Mednick. We enjoyed a lively discussion of Gone to Soldiers by Marge Piercy. While quite long, the book is very engrossing; indeed it was hard for some of us to put down. Thank you, Martha, for your kind hospitality.

We are meeting on April 13 at 3 pm at the home of Darlene Basch to discuss our next selection, The Hare with Amber Eyes by Edmund de Waal.

We hope you will be able to join us for this conversation. Please let me know that you are coming by April 11 so that I can let our host know our numbers.

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.



# Machar's 2014 Purim Party

At our Purim Party on March 16, we enjoyed mural and puppet-making, the Megillah (Purim story), a fun obstacle course, and creative costumes (including plenty of Purim queens!).



## April 6 – Good Deeds Day Wish List for Hospital Continued:

### Adolescent Continued

- ☐ Life
- ☐ Pictionary
- ☐ Hangman
- ☐ Battleship
- ☐ Chess & Checkers
- ☐ DVDs (PG & PG-13)
- ☐ Portable CD players with CDs
- ☐ Stationery

- ☐ Movie theatre gift cards
- ☐ Footballs, soccer balls, baseball bats and balls
- ☐ Art sets
- ☐ CD players
- ☐ Nintendo Wii
- ☐ Scrap booking materials
- ☐ Diaries/journals
- ☐ Makeup sets
- ☐ Manicure kits
- ☐ Baseball caps

- ☐ Playing cards
- ☐ Batteries
- ☐ Pencils/colored pencils
- ☐ Grooming kits (girls and boys)
- ☐ Bicycle helmets
- ☐ Nerf balls
- ☐ Model kits (snap tight)
- ☐ Word-search/crossword books

### Dream Gifts

- ☐ Digital cameras
- ☐ Digital video camera
- ☐ Polaroid cameras and film (Model 600)
- ☐ Video game systems and games (X-Box 360, Playstation 2, PSP, Wii)
- ☐ Sewing machines
- ☐ Teen videos and DVDs (PG and PG-13)

- ☐ Laptop computers
- ☐ Brand New DVD players & Portable DVD players
- ☐ iPods

- 1 Purim Art Projects
- 2 Purim Obstacle Course
- 3 Purim Hand Puppets
- 4 Purim Queens
- 5 Purim Storytelling



Birthdays

- April 1: Roberto Levy
- April 4: Susan Morawetz
- April 6: Marlene Pratt
- April 6: Pedro Rodriguez
- April 6: Michael Zamore
- April 6: Zachary Popkin-Hall
- April 7: Nancy Harris
- April 8: Marco Gonzalez
- April 8: Jacob Royle
- April 11: Rachel Popkin-Hall
- April 13: Lydia Swartz
- April 15: Bouchra Chati
- April 16: Rochelle (Shelly) Schwab
- April 17: André Williamson
- April 17: Joshua Rogin
- April 18: Lauren Brown
- April 19: Susan Warshauer Kahn
- April 19: Adam Namm
- April 20: Jill King
- April 23: Jeremy Lahn
- April 24: Peter Kahn
- April 27: Akiva Liberman
- April 28: Joel Block
- April 29: Roslynn Seidenstein
- April 29: David DeMocker
- April 30: Jonathan Weiss

Yarhzeits: We remember...

- April 4: Frank Klein, father of Jill Grant
- April 14: Richard Popkin, father of Sue Popkin
- April 16: Rochelle Frank, sister of Myrna Frank
- April 16: Joseph Morris, grandfather of Laurie Miller
- April 17: Thurza Godden, mother of David Godden
- April 23: Tillie Haskin, grandmother of Patti Maslinoff
- April 23: Jack Miller, grandfather of Laurie Miller

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Machar is so fortunate to have a community of people willing to share their expertise. Three of our members are therapists or social workers and are willing to be contacted by any members who may need someone to talk to about any personal trauma or other issues that come up. These volunteers will plan to have an initial discussion with the member and/or family, to listen and to help direct them to more support or services in the area. Please contact Renee Weitzner, [rwcats at aol.com](mailto:rwcats@aol.com), for information. All discussions are entirely confidential.

# 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!*

## Glitch or Glitsch?

I don't have to explain this one—you know what it means. But I'll bet you didn't know it seems to have gotten Americanized from Yiddish. In German "glitschen" is "to slip" and in Yiddish, "glitch" means "slide."

So it began as sliding or skidding on a slippery surface. But during World War II the word "gremlin" from England and "glitch" from Yiddish/

German were both used to talk about aeronautical problems that cropped up. (So then who was wise enough to call that AMC car a Gremlin? It WAS a glitch!)

Later the term "glitch" was applied to computer and electronics industries, followed by video games. Now we also can refer to human organizations as suffering glitches.

— Leo Rosten, The Joys of Yinglish and Wikipedia

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\*Be a mensche, and submit your Whaddaya Talkin' entries to: [MarleneCCohen@comcast.net](mailto:MarleneCCohen@comcast.net)

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- Neighborhood Havurot  
Laurie Miller

- Wimmin' In Transition (WITs)  
Renée Weitzner

- Young Adult Havurah  
Danielle Leff

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- Machar Rep to SHJ  
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- SHJ Board of Directors Members  
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- Michael Prival, Madrikh  
Deb Godden, Madrikha  
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**Interested in Advertising with Machar?**  
Contact [info at machar.org](http://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. 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](mailto:Email@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 Pre-screened 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 and more! \*Earnings depend on the type of project and range from \$2–\$6.

*Your Teen Can Start Earning a Driver's License Today!*

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

stepping in a classroom.

Their quality course provides everything needed to prepare for the DMV permit and driver's license exams. Sign up and DriversEd.com will contribute 5% of the tuition amount to Machar's Jewish Cultural School.

## 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](http://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!