



K/1 JCS students commemorate Lag B'Omer with paper chains and candy bonfires. Read more JCS news on page 3.



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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.

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.**

May 5

Enhancing US Foreign Assistance by Advancing Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
Carla Koppell, Machar member

Carla Koppell is spearheading efforts at the US Agency for International Development Senior Coordinator for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment to transform the way US assistance serves and empowers women while designing and implementing all aid programs in a gender sensitive manner. She will share with us challenges and priorities for increasing gender equality and empowering women during the second Obama Administration.

Community Sunday

Post-mitzvah class presentation and b'nei mitzvah presentation by Yael H.-L.

May 19

Social Action & Tikkun Olam: Humanistic Judaism's Progressive Vision & Challenges
Rabbi Ben Biber, Machar's Rabbi

Rabbi Ben will discuss Humanistic perspectives on the evolution of the Jewish concept of tikkun olam (improvement of the world). We'll also probe the centrality of social action in Humanistic Judaism.

Community Sunday

End of year picnic, Rock Creek picnic area at 16th and Kennedy, NW

Machar adults and children joined in a game of cooperative musical chairs for our April 14 Israel and Middle East Peace Day.



Tots: The tot class learned about Yom Ha'atzmaut (Israel Independence Day). The class read a book and learned about the different important sites across Israel and the kids all made their own Israeli flags. —Roxanne Arnon

K/1: The K/1 class commemorated Lag B'Omer, the period between Passover and Shavuot, by having students count down with paper chains! We didn't count how many loops we made, but when we put our individual chains together, it was pretty impressive! Besides counting, the main way people commemorate Lag B'Omer is by building bonfires. After a dramatic flick of a lighter to capture their attention, we set to work building our own bonfires - out of candy! We had pretzel stick logs, pieces of chocolate pretzel kindling, and, of course, ripped up Swedish Fish for the red hot fire. While we worked on our fires and tried to resist eating them immediately, we read a book about Israel to refresh everyone's memory from our transcontinental flight last week. —Ben Lauing

Second Grade: The second graders had a "Mitzvah Auction" in which students

went around the room choosing pieces of paper with Mitzvot (good deeds) written on them, and each student chose a "mitzvah."

The students discussed why we do a Mitzvah in the first place and the class referenced back to the commandments we once learned about and that some people do Mitzvot because they feel they are commanded to do so, some because it's part of their life, because it makes us feel good, it's part of something a group like the Girl Scouts we belong to is doing, because we are good at something and want to share it, because it's "personal."

In one conversation spurred about the Mitzvah of "telling a teacher about a bully" students shared why that is so important in their perspective and some shared they have become friends with kids who needed a friend!

The class also talked about Shabbat and Havdalah and read a short book - "The Shabbat Box." Amanda sang one verse of the song "Shavuah Tov, may you have a good week"- The students asked to know more about Hebrew and

spelled "Shabbat" in Hebrew. —Amanda Sagarin

Fourth Grade/Fifth Grade: In April, the 4th and 5th graders continued their journey through Israel and the Middle East by studying the region's geography. We also discussed Israel's history and population, and how daily life in Israel is different than here. Finally, each student prepared a brief presentation on a famous Israeli and shared it with the class. In our remaining classes we will continue with Israel, studying the story of Masada and wrapping up with a sampling of typical Israeli foods. —Chelsea Drumheller

Sixth Grade: In the last few sessions we learned about Israel's Independence day, made our names in Hebrew out of clay, and learned about the three main monotheistic religions in the world that culminated in a tough but fun jeopardy game. I hope to end this year with fun and learning - we will be learning about the holiday of Shavuot and the Ten Commandments and doing a fun wrap up class. —Hadas Gold

4/5 grade JCS students took a field trip to the Museum of Natural History to see the Egyptian Afterlife exhibit.



Clubs and Activities

Havurot/Social Events

Laurie Miller

There are two events on the calendar for May. The Blank-Gonzalez family is hosting a potluck for families of children in JCS grades K-3 on May 11th. The “restaurant havura”, initiated by Roberto Levy and Nancy Harris, will be noshing at DGS Delicatessen on May 18th. Last June, Susan Morawetz and Yan Raytselis hosted a Sunday afternoon BBQ. It was very well attended, a lot of fun for members of all ages, and the food was delicious! We are hoping to have a similar event this year. Please contact me directly at LAURIE.MILJAZI@gmail.com if you would be interested in hosting this year’s BBQ.

WITs

Renée Weitzner

The women of Machar, WITs, (Wimmin’ in Transition) met at the home of Harriet Peck on April 24, 2013, for a delightful and delicious meal, replete with good conversation and food. Thank you, Harriet, for sharing your home with us, for ensuring we had such a good time. WITs is open to all female members of Machar. We become more powerful, I believe, when we join together to discuss our common goals and interests. We provide food for thought for each other.

Next month on May 24, 2013, at around 7 pm, we will be meeting at the home of Martha Mednick. Please let me know by May 22, 2013 if you can come and what you would like to bring. You may reach me by phone or by email at rwcats@aol.com. I look forward to seeing you soon.

Natalie Wexler, author of *A More Obedient Wife: A Novel of the Early Supreme Court* and daughter of founding Machar member Henrietta Wexler, joined the Book Club for an April 7 discussion of her book at the home of Darlene Basch.

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@aol.com.

Book Club

Darlene Basch and Renée Weitzner

The Book Club of Machar mourns the loss of one of its most vital members, Enrique Lerda. Enrique brought a unique sensibility to our discussions. His insights were extraordinary; there seemed to be no subject that was not within his grasp. And he was able to explain arcane ideas so that everyone emerged with a clear understanding of the topic under question. He will be missed. We are hoping to collect a do-

nation from our members to a literacy organization at our next meeting in Enrique’s memory.

Our next meeting will be at 3:30 pm (note time change) on May 19, 2013 at the home of Rick Gold. We will be discussing *Nostromo* by Joseph Conrad, a story about silver and intrigue in South America, in a fictitious country, Costaguana, which resembles real-life Colombia. Relations between classes and ethnic groups, trust among the characters are just some of the themes of the book. Written in 1904, its themes still seem contemporary despite the passage of many years.

We hope you will be able to join us. Please let me know by May 17, 2013, if you are able to come. You may reach me by phone or by email: rwcats@aol.com

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

DC Patient Protection Act – Time for Action

In the April newsletter, the Social Action Committee sought member feedback on a proposed resolution calling for approval of the DC Patient Protection Act by the DC Council. The Board approved the resolution, shown below, at its April 11 meeting. We shared the resolution with the DC Councilmembers and the Mayor. To prevent cost-cutting measures from harming patients, the Act would establish standards in DC hospitals for nurse-patient ratios, provide protections for nurse whistleblowers, and restrict the use of overtime for nurses, quality of service.

The DC Council is now soliciting input from citizens. Machar members are invited to share with the Council their experiences in DC hospitals and advocate for the Patient Protection Act at a Council hearing on May 14 at 11 AM. You can sign up at <http://dccouncil.us/events/health-the-patient-protection-act-of-2013-b20-101>. If you can't testify at or attend the hearing, the Council members would appreciate your letters. You can find Councilmember e-mails at <http://dccouncil.us/council>. For more information, contact Social Action chair Rick Gold at [rickgold at mindspring.com](mailto:rickgold@mindspring.com).

Machar Resolution on the DC Patient Protection Act

WHEREAS, the health and safety of patients are endangered by unsafe staffing levels in the District of Columbia hospitals, creating a public health crisis;

WHEREAS, inadequate nurse staffing

leads to preventable hospital-acquired infections, falls and injuries, pressure sores and other negative medical outcomes, as well as hospital readmissions;

WHEREAS, District hospitals stand to lose millions of dollars in federal funding due to poor patient outcomes;

WHEREAS, registered nurse burnout and poor working conditions have led to a sizable turnover of nurses in the city's hospitals, which deprives patients of experienced, trained nurses and is very costly;

WHEREAS, residents of the District of Columbia are deserving of the highest standards of hospital care;

WHEREAS, registered nurses have a duty to advocate in the exclusive interests of patients;

WHEREAS, clinical research demonstrates that higher nurse staffing levels result in better patient outcomes and fewer patient deaths;

WHEREAS, mandatory, minimum, nurse-to-patient ratios have been proven to save lives and improve patient outcomes in California where such ratios are mandated by statute and have been shown to be a cost-effective solution for hospitals;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that:

Machar endorses the Patient Protection Act of 2013, sponsored by Chairman Phil Mendelson and nine other members of the District of Columbia Council, which would protect patients by mandating safe nurse staffing in the hospitals of the District of Columbia, provide whistle-blower protection for nurse and other hospital staff, and prohibit mandatory nurse overtime which causes medical errors. We will so inform the Council of the District of

Columbia, Mayor Gray, our members and the public of our support for this important campaign and encourage their support.

April 2013

Machar March Board of Directors Highlights

Joyce Rosenthal

Congratulations to the new Board of Directors for the 2013–2014 fiscal year, who were elected by acclamation at the Machar Annual Membership Meeting on April 21.

They are:

- Darlene Basch (President)
- Miriam Gitler (Treasurer)
- Susan Morawetz (Secretary)
- Nadine Wettstein (Past President)

and at-large directors:

- Holly Campbell-Rosen
- Norm Hall
- Rahel Hanadari
- Peter Kahn
- Danielle Leff
- Laurie Miller
- Ester Rozenblum
- Mark Swartz
- Renee Weitzner.

The new board term will begin on July 1. Welcome to the board, everyone!

The board discussed dues for one-adult households; currently they pay \$750 per year, which board members felt to be too close to what two-adult households pay. The board voted to reduce the dues for one-adult households to \$625.

The Machar Family

Birthdays

May 1: Laurie Miller
May 3: Neil Greene
May 3: Greg Rosenthal
May 4: Talia Appelman
May 7: Darlene Basch
May 7: Anne Dooley
May 9: Vida Fye
May 11: Pamela Fye
May 12: Sarah Gold
May 12: Harry Appelman
May 13: Amy Kotkin
May 14: Joshua Desenberg
May 14: Jay Carter
May 14: Adam Gold
May 14: Catherine Sheehy
May 16: Holly Campbell
May 18: Joyce Rosenthal
May 19: Sam Palca
May 20: Noah Castellano
May 20: Marina Broitman
May 23: Donna Bassin
May 24: Nancy Wolfe
May 27: Sam Hellerstein
May 27: Andrew Hellerstein
May 28: Linda Tebelman
May 30: Abigail Royle
May 30: Jules Abrams

Anniversaries

May 25: Holly Campbell and Keith Campbell-Rosen
May 25: Barbara Francisco and Marc Maurer
May 26: Winthrop Morgan and Ann Levin
May 28: Catherine Sheehy and Binyamin Biber

Yahrzeits: We remember...

May 1: Renee Dopulos, mother of Gary Peck
May 4: David Broitman, father of Marina Broitman
May 7: Joseph Maslinoff, grandfather of Patti Maslinoff
May 18: Margaret Popkin, sister of Sue Popkin
May 19: Andrew Goor, son of Rob Goor and Linda Tebelman
May 19: Arnold Namm, father of Adam Namm
May 20: Edith Levine, mother of Rose Levine
May 20: William David Francisco, father of Barbara Francisco
May 22: Reva Ceasar, mother of Harriet Peck
May 23: Sol David Prensky, father of Hank Prensky
May 25: Julia Ortiz, mother of Pedro Rodriguez
May 26: Regina Frumkin, mother of Ann Black
May 26: Sara Morris, grandmother of Laurie Miller
May 29: Harry Ceasar, father of Harriet Peck

Mazel Tov!

Mazel tov to our JCS Director, Debby Brennan, on the birth of her granddaughter, Anna Aviva wyman, on April 4, to Debby's daughter Sarah and her husband Michael.

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Machar received sad news that long-time member Enrique Lerdaud died on April 22. He had been in failing health recently and his last days were peaceful and pain-free. His family intends to arrange a celebration of his life in the summer. See the Clubs and Activities Page for the Book Club's remembrance of Enrique.

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

The families of the JCS B'nei Mitzvah class members

Ruthie F. and Julia R.

Mina C. and Gabriel Benjamin S.

Margot B., Areya C. and Anna W.

cordially invite members of the Machar community to attend their

B'not Mitzvah ceremony

B'nei Mitzvah ceremony

B'not Mitzvah ceremony

Saturday, May 11, 2013
10:00 am

Saturday, May 18, 2013
10:30 am

Saturday, May 25th, 2013
9:00 am

Cedar Lane Unitarian
Universalists Church
9601 Cedar Lane
Bethesda, Maryland

The Kay Spiritual Life Center
American University
4400 Massachusetts Ave NW
Washington, DC

Bethesda North Marriott Hotel &
Conference Center
5701 Marinelli Road
Rockville, MD

Please join us for these joyous ceremonies.

RSVP's appreciated to confirm seating availability:

Anne Dooley:
[dooleyferster at gmail.com](mailto:dooleyferster@gmail.com)

John Cooper:
[jcooper32 at cox.net](mailto:jcooper32@cox.net)

Holly Campbell-Rosen:
[shkabibble60 at hotmail.com](mailto:shkabibble60@hotmail.com)

<https://www.american.edu/ocl/kay/>
Free parking is available in the American University parking lot, located at the intersection of Nebraska Avenue and New Mexico Avenue, NW. Entrances from Nebraska or New Mexico. Park in area nearest Ward Circle. The Kay Spiritual Life Center is across Nebraska Avenue from the parking lot. It is a small circular building located on the quad.

Whaddaya Talkin'?

Marlene Cohen

A long-term goal of Machar –
to give our members a **haimisher (m) / haimisheh (f)** feeling!

I attribute this goal to former Machar President Donna Bassin, and she got me using the word more often.

"Haimish" rhymes with "Tameish (right, that's not a word)." Its root is the German and Yiddish word "heim" for "home."



So Donna was saying that we want people to feel "at home" in Machar. It also means "without pretention" and giving a warm and cozy feeling.

Rosten explains that a "haimisher mensh/mench" is someone with whom you could take your shoes off and let your hair down.

—Leo Rosten, *The Joys of Yinglish*, 1992

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!

Show Your Pride for Machar at the Capital Pride Festival

The annual Capital Pride Festival will take place on Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, near the Capitol. More than 150,000 people will attend the Festival, which takes place on Sunday, June 9, 2013 from Noon–9 pm. Machar won't miss the fun. Our members will be there, celebrating Machar's commitment to freedom, equality and empowerment for all people; support for LGBT rights; and pride in building a diverse, welcoming congregation devoted to Secular Humanistic Judaism.

If you are interested in staffing the Machar table for an hour or two, please contact Rick Gold at [rickgold at mindspring.com](mailto:rickgold@mindspring.com).

Staff, Board of Directors, and Leadership

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Binyamin (Ben) Biber

Congregational Administrator

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Debby Brennan

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Renée Weitzner

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Jules Abrams

Harold Black (*deceased*)

Ann Black

Joe Goodman

Millie Goodman

Mary Perica

Michael Prival

Henrietta Wexler

Board Liaisons

B'nei Mitzvah

Susan Morawetz

Newsletter

Rabbinic

Michael Prival

Madrikhim

Michael Prival

Deb Godden

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Harriet Peck

Communications

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Barbara Francisco

Education

Larry Lawrence

Email Lists Manager

Michael Prival

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Nadine Wettstein

Liturgy

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Rabbi Committee

Michael Prival

Shelter Staffing

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Social Action

Rick Gold

Sunday Refreshments

Ami Argaman

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



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.

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, 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! .