



Celebrate Hannukah with the Machar Community

Sunday, December 18
10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Schweinhaut Senior Center
1000 Forest Glen Road
Silver Spring, MD



Join us for Machar's annual Hannukah party.

All Machar members are encouraged to attend this event and bring friends — visitors are welcome!

Please note that we are starting the party at 10:30 a.m. to give you more time to make latkes or other food! Please sign up for your potluck item and to volunteer to assist with this event. Sign up [here](#).

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Sharing Mishpachah

Norm Hall

The Mishpachah Committee would like to do more to encourage members in the Machar community to share news about personal adversity. We know it can be hard to mention many of the matters that cause us to grieve — beyond the death of family members and friends and severe illness, there are also events such as the relocation of family and friends, job loss, separation, divorce, estrangement, unsought retirement, declines in independent living among the elderly and chronically ill, and being aware of similar wounds facing relatives, neighbors, and friends.

To improve our ability to respond to all of these, we are seeking volunteers from the community to act as messengers. The goal is to have enough messengers so that all members of the congregation will be able to report personal concerns to somebody they know, among the names that appear in each newsletter.

Sometimes, as I know from personal experience, it is helpful enough just to be able to find somebody who takes the time to listen to the narrative story behind the grieving. At other times, there may be a call for some kind of material assistance, a meal brought in during a hospital stay, a run to the grocery store or pharmacy for an errand, whatever. We welcome your suggestions.

Machar Post-Election Focus on Community

On November 20, following the Adult Ed session, 40 Machar members met to discuss how Machar might respond to post-election realities, at the local, state, and/or national levels.

It was a very lively discussion. There was a lot of interest in taking action as a community, and many different ideas about what kinds of actions we might take. We decided that in order to move forward, we would meet again on December 4, following Adult Ed, to discuss specific ideas and choose a few to begin working on.

Some of the ideas at today's meeting;

- Reaching out to a local mosque and seeing what their needs are, perhaps sharing a meal together to build bridges
- Creating a fund to pay for immigration legal services for immigrants who may be facing deportation, especially DREAMers
- Attending marches like the planned January 21 Women's March in D.C. as a group
- Donating to Planned Parenthood as a group
- Creating a fund in Joe Goodman's name

We welcome further ideas as well! Please send your ideas to [Jennie Guilfoyle](#), who will compile them, and we can come together to discuss and begin choosing which ones we want to pursue.

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!

Gantseh Megillah

Of course, you know *megillah* right? The Purim story of Queen Esther is the Megillah — in which she strikes a blow for Jews without needing divine intervention ... a secularist's dream of a Bible story.

Well THAT megillah is a story, and a *megillah* is a story! Merriam-Webster says it comes from the Hebrew word *mēgillāh*, meaning scroll or volume. Since the early references were to that whole story of Purim, the word's taken on the meaning of a long, involved story

— a whole scroll of a story!

Then *gantseh* is entire or complete.

If you have to hear again the whole story of Uncle Arthur's mean neighbor, that could be a *gantseh megillah*. If you're seeing your whole family this holiday season, that's the *gantseh mishpochah*.

Happy breaks from routine ... and time to enjoy the whole thing!

Machar News/Clubs & Activities

Call for B'nei Mitzvah Mentors

Norm Hall

As Machar's new b'nei mitzvah liaison, I am seeking volunteers from membership to be mentors for students who will be having ceremonies in March, May and June 2017.

For the past several years, mentors have had the opportunity to watch and support our students as they have explored topics relating to secular humanistic Judaism's values and identity. Ideally a mentor-student relationship is based on enthusiasm

for the research area that the student selects and willingness to discuss topic ideas and review drafts of presentation. The result should be a connection to a member of the congregation that persists long beyond the last mazel tov and kvellings from family members.

Please contact me if you have any interest at all in doing this.

Neighborhood Havurah

Don't Forget! December 10 Neighborhood Havurah at the home of Kara Blank Gonzalez and Marco Gonzalez. Please see the Machar weekly update for additional sign up information.

Save the Date! Machar Coffeehouse

The next Machar coffee house will be on February 4 from 7-9 p.m. More information to follow.

The 411 on Machar 911

In the event of a personal emergency, please contact:

Rabbi@machar.org / 215.475.2814

Administrator@machar.org / 202.686.1881

President@machar.org

Due to the fact that we are a volunteer organization and our staff members are employed part-time, please contact more than one person in the event of an immediate need or concern. This will help ensure that all requests are responded to in a timely manner.

WITs

Rose Levine

The wonderful women of WITs will be meeting on Wednesday, December 21st at the home of Harriet Peck for our annual Hanukkah party and gift exchange. Please bring a wrapped gift of no more than \$10 in value so everyone can enjoy opening a small present.

On Friday, January 20, Inauguration Day, we will meet at the home of Darlene Basch for an "anti-inauguration" dinner. We will discuss concrete things we can do and programs

we can support to be a positive influence during the next administration.

WITs is open to all female members of Machar, and we are always delighted to welcome new members. If you would like more information about WITs or to have your name added to our email list to keep abreast of our happenings, please contact me, Rose Levine, jay3026@msn.com.

What's Up in the Secular Humanistic Jewish Movement?

Machar report on SHJ Meeting, Farmington Hills Michigan, November 11-13 2016

Provided by Marlene Cohen and Larry Lawrence

This meeting was attended by the following Machar members: Marlene Cohen, Machar's representative to SHJ and Youth Education Committee Chair, Past President Larry Lawrence, and at-large member Rick Gold, who now lives in Florida. Our SHJ Humanorah Newsletter Editor is Machar's Deb Godden, living in Charlottesville, Virginia. See the [latest issue](#).

We personally welcomed Paul Golin as SHJ's Executive Director; he lives in New York City. He reminded us of all we have accomplished in making the Society such an important expression of Judaism. We now have a very engaged board, a clear strategic plan and an experienced Executive Director. We are focused on increased visibility, fund- and friend-raising, acting for social justice and being creative in meeting potential members "where they are." Paul will emphasize helping the movement grow and finding ways to better serve the communities. He intends to set up methods (such as a Google Group) so all members and communities in the movement can have conversations directly with one another.

Machar members who are interested in participating in the SHJ Board or on the Finance Committee, Development Committee and/or Ethical Values in Action Committee (which sets our social action agenda) are being sought. A committee member need not be a Board member. We need more financial expertise, and we need to develop sources of funds in order to stop using restricted funds each year. The Ethical Values Committee is open to any interested Machar or SHJ member. Get involved at the North American level, with a great group of committed secular humanistic Jews! Contact marleneccohen@comcast.net for more info.

Meanwhile Paul Golin will visit Machar some time in 2017. He is available to support our communities, which includes those individuals who think like us but who are not affiliated. Given that the American Humanist Association has grown tremendously, we know there is more opportunity for us. Paul asked, "How can we become the dominant movement in Judaism by 2030?" The latest Pew study shows that 40% of U.S. Jewry doesn't believe in a god who answers prayers. No Jewish denomination has 40%! We should



**Society for
Humanistic
Judaism**
www.SHJ.org

Notice our new streamlined SHJ Humanorah logo

consider — how does this movement benefit / add meaning for me and my family? What's the change we could make in people's lives? And how can we benefit the world?

He asks us to look at the barriers we put up to curious nonmembers. We need to adapt to young people who change

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their identities rather easily — we say to them, “You can be Jewish right now, not because you were (or weren’t) born that way.” Yes, we value rituals as we make them work for us. Let’s focus on engaging people in secular Jewish activities in the short term, even if they don’t wish to join a community yet. And let’s go more often to where people are, instead of waiting for them to come to us. We need to discover, what has the most potential for growth.

President Richard Logan recognized Machar as the one congregation who has supported SHJ with an over-the-requirement amount of annual community funding for five years consistently! And Rabbi Miriam Jerris reported that Tampa, Florida is moving fast toward becoming our newest SHJ community.

Solicitations will be sent at year-end for the Fund for Humanistic Judaism. Remember that, when you donate to the Fund, 80% goes to the Society for Humanistic Judaism and 20% goes to our training institute, the International Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism (IISHJ), based in Chicago. But you can earmark donations in a different proportion if you wish — just note this with your donation.

Rabbi Sivan Malkin Maas spoke to the Board. She has been the dean of Tmura IISHJ since 2003, the Israeli branch of our movement. (*Tmura* means change or metamorphosis in Hebrew). There are now 13 established secular humanistic communities in Israel! As of May 2017, the Israeli branch will have 32 ordained rabbis and 25 rabbinical students. Significantly,



the Israeli Supreme Court has ruled that the government must support nonorthodox congregations, and secular Tmura is recognized as one of those alternatives! This is a big step for our movement. Also, the Israeli Army recognizes IISHJ to teach Army officers and recruits.

Check online for Project ZUG; *zug* means partner in Hebrew. It offers courses with one-on-one contact with the professor. For example, Zug has a course in English called Secular Jewish Culture, at a cost of \$37. The course includes introductory video lessons, then online meetings. One target audience is the 1 million Israelis living in the U.S.!

The SHJ board passed two resolutions created by the Ethical Values in Action

Committee. One is a commitment to Oppose Defunding Planned Parenthood, the second supports secular education for all children, arguing that all US religious schools should teach basic life skills students need, such as English, math and science. The Board encourages us to support these positions at the local level and report back our efforts. The full documents can be found at SHJ.org.

Join both the [SHJ Facebook page](#) and the SHJ Facebook group for lively discussion.

Also, [sherwinwine.com](#) contains a great deal of wisdom from our founder, including recorded lectures.

Thank you, Machar, for honoring me to be your representative to the SHJ Board.

- Marlene Cohen

The Machar Family

Birthdays

December 3: Eitan Miller
December 4: Rigby Zentner
December 6: David Wittenberg
December 9: Jasper Delicath
December 12: Alberto Grosmark
December 12: Renee Weitzner
December 17: Melissa Bianchi
December 18: Sam Pastreich
December 23: Elaine Dancis
December 26: Guiseppe Topa
December 26: Amy Williamson
December 27: Luke Cohen
December 28: Miriam Gitler
December: Ella Goldman

January 1: Marlene Cohen
January 2: Barbara Francisco
January 5: Ella David
January 5: Howard Dubowitz
January 5: Abigail Smith
January 7: Joe Palca
January 7: Dick Schwab
January 9: Sue Zwicker
January 15: Daniel Mason
January 15: Joy Block
January 17: B. Tibor Roberts
January 22: Laura Ariovich
January 22: Leo Cohen
January 22: Mason Schnell
January 24: Amy Walter
January 24: Rubin Siegel
January 30: Ami Argaman

Anniversaries

December 21: Miriam Gitler & Pedro Rodriguez
December 28: Deb & David Godden

January 21: Ann & Ami Argaman
January 22: Bouchra Chati & Richard Gold

Yarhzeits: We remember...

December 2: Juliet Popkin, mother of Sue Popkin
December 4: Solly Frank, relative of Myrna Frank
December 15: Martin Goldberg, father of David Goldberg
December 18: Sophy Frank, relative of Myrna Frank
December 18: Edward Frieden, father of Joyce Rosenthal
December 18: Carmen Rodriguez, sister of Pedro Rodriguez
December 19: Rose Dinerman, relative of Helena Dinerman
December 23: Robert Baron, father of David Baron
December 23: Radomir Perica, husband of Mary Perica
December 25: Eve Zwicker, sister of Sue Zwicker
December 27: Hal Hartogensis, brother of Deb Godden
December: Lavinia Topa, sister of Guiseppe Topa

January 3: Mark Harris, husband of Nancy K. Harris
January 4: Barry Cohen, brother of Steve Cohen
January 6: David Bassin, father of Donna Bassin
January 8: Pauline Seidenstein, mother of Roslynn Seidenstein
January 11: Norm Gleichman
January 17: Ellen K. Greene, wife of Neil Greene
January 18: Lena Goldman, grandmother of Ted Goldman
January 18: Celia Grosmark, mother of Alberto Grosmark
January 20: Charles Goor, father of Rob Goor
January 20: Doris Jonas, mother of Jill Grant
January 24: Leslie Kidwell Jr., father of Michael Kidwell
January 29: Joyce Waldman Kahn, mother of Peter Kahn
January 30: Harvey Gold, father of Richard Gold
January: Anna Gold, mother of Marlene Platt
January: Ronald Rosenberg, father of Dan Rosenberg

Staff, Board of Directors and Leadership

Staff

Rabbi

Nehama Benmosche

Congregational Administrator

Jane Christenson

Jewish Cultural School Director

Shel Lyons

Board of Directors

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Vice President

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Ester Rozenblum

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Holly Campbell-Rosen

Past President

Darlene Basch

At-Large

Marlene Cohen

Myrna Frank

Norm Hall

Joyce Rosenthal

Jack Schwartz

Honorary Directors

Jules Abrams (*deceased*)

Harold Black (*deceased*)

Ann Black (*deceased*)

Joe Goodman

Millie Goodman

Mary Perica

Michael Prival

Henrietta Wexler

Board Liaisons

B'nei Mitzvah Liaison

Norm Hall

Madrikhim

Michael Prival

Deb Godden

Machar Committee Chairs

Adult Ed

David Abramson

Communications

Joyce Rosenthal

Community Service

Vacant

Education

Norm Hall

Email Lists Manager

Norm Hall

Fundraising

Donna Bassin

High Holidays

Nadine Wettstein

Liturgy

Vacant

Membership

Marlene Cohen

Membership Directory

Miriam Gitler

Mishpachah

Renée Weitzner

Newsletter Editor

Vacant

Nominating

Nadine Wettstein

Passover Seder

Vacant

Play Reading

Marlene Cohen

Rabbi Committee

Joy Markowitz

Reduced Fees

Miriam Gitler

Social Action

Peter Kahn

Sunday Refreshments

Ami Argaman

Clubs and Havurot Chairs

Book Club

Nature Club

Alberto Grosmark

Neighborhood Havurot

Darlene Basch

Volunteer Coordinator

Marina Broitman

Wimmin' In Transition (WITs)

Rose Levine

Young Adult Havurah

Vacant

SHJ Reps from Machar

Machar Rep to SHJ

Marlene Cohen

SHJ Board of Directors Members

Larry Lawrence (*Immediate Past President*)

Rick Gold

Machar Trained Leaders

Michael Prival, Madrikh

Deb Godden, Madrikha

Dan Tobocman, Spokesperson

Directions to Machar

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

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

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

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

For meetings in private homes, contact hosts for directions.

Machar E-mail Lists for Members and Nonmembers

Michael Prival

There are two different e-mail lists that Machar members can join. The first, the “Machar” list, enables members to receive the monthly Newsletter, event reminders by email and 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 to the “Machar Community” list at any time.

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

Shop with AmazonSmile and Contribute to Machar at the Same Time

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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](https://www.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](https://www.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

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