



The JSC Newsletter

Newsletter of the Cleveland Jewish Secular Community

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We've Got a Friend?

Remember the Carol King oldie "You've Got a Friend"? Have you ever said, "With friends like these, who needs enemies?" On Valentine's Day, as we sat among a throng of Jews and Christians at a Rally for Israel event in Orlando, these thoughts kept nagging at us.

The rally featured several speakers, including Ofer Bavli, the Israeli consul general; a lieutenant colonel in the Israeli military who had fought in the second Lebanon war; representatives from AIPAC; and members of CUFI (Christians United for Israel), a self-styled "Christian Zionist" organization founded by fundamentalist pastor John Hagee.

The Jewish presenters offered interesting insights and received polite responses. Then the featured guest from CUFI rose to

speak. When he was done, the auditorium nearly exploded in cheers and applause.

Scott Thomas, the Florida state director of CUFI, is a young preacher whose words breathe thunder and lightning. To call his address a stem-winder would hardly do justice to his style. Listening to him, you began to understand the passion of evangelical conversion. Compared to Pastor Thomas, Chaim Weizmann himself might seem as Israeli as the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem. He minces no words: "I declare to you on Feb. 14, 2010, Israel shall stand forever." End of story—or so it seems.

CUFI, founded and controlled by John Hagee, a right-wing Christian minister, seems to be a mixture of fear and loathing of what they term "Islamofascists" and a militant defense of the Judeo-Christian tradition. Whatever other motives may lie behind CUFI's position require some investigation.

In a column written for the online *Columbia Journalism Review* by Zachary Roth in March 2008, the writer labels Rev. Hagee an anti-Semite and a Catholic-hater. Hagee has called the Pope the Anti-Christ and described the Catholic Church as a "whore." Of the Jews, he has said, "It was the disobedience and rebellion of the Jews, God's chosen people, to their

covenantal responsibility to serve only the one true God, Jehovah, that gave rise to the opposition and persecution that they experienced beginning in Canaan and continuing to this very day... Their own rebellion had birthed the seed of antisemitism that would arise and bring destruction to them for centuries to come.... it rises from the judgment of God upon his rebellious chosen people.”

Hagee interprets modern history from a Biblical perspective. In his book *Jerusalem Countdown*, Hagee takes a passage from the Book of Jeremiah to explain the Jews' responsibility for and Hitler's divinely ordained role in the Holocaust. In short, the Shoah was simply part of God's plan to return the Jews to the land of Israel. Many Christian fundamentalists—and we think Hagee is one—believe that after a third world war, to be fought in the Middle East, the unconverted will be relegated to Hell, while believers will have 1,000 years of peace on earth. These people do not favor a negotiated two-state solution.

For the moment, CUFI and Israel appear to strongly embrace one another as comrades-in-arms. In his remarks, Mr. Bavli said, “The spread of radical Islam, as personified by Iran, is aimed at Christians as well as Jews. They see us as one. Let us [i.e., Israel and CUFI] stand together. Let us be the same.”

The question is this: If what most of us hope for happens one day and peace breaks out in the Middle East, will today's embrace become a death struggle? Will Israel then be singing “Which Side Are You On?”

— Steve Shucard

Enjoy Shabbat Dinner

Mark your calendar for **March 19** for the JSC's monthly Shabbat program. Members can meet and mingle beginning at 6:30 p.m.; the program will start at 6:45 p.m.

The featured speaker will be Dr. Samantha Baskind, Associate Professor at Cleveland

State University, who will discuss “What Is Jewish Art? Controversy and Confusion.” Dr. Baskind has authored numerous publications, including *Raphael Soyer and the Search for Modern Jewish Art*, (University of North Carolina Press, 2004), and *The Encyclopedia of Jewish American Artists*.

Please RSVP to Marcia Rosenthal (sunchoke@sbcglobal.net, 440-423-1718) by **Wednesday, March 17**.

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All JSC Shabbat dinners are held at the First Unitarian Church, 21600 Shaker Blvd. (east) in Shaker Heights.

??? What to Bring ???

Names **A to S** — side dish for 10-12 people
Names **T to Z** — dessert for 10-12 people

If bringing a guest, please be sure that your food contribution feeds more people.

Judy Herzog asks that, because some diners have certain sensitivities to food, we list the ingredients of potluck dishes on double-sided cards that will be provided. Also, please pre-slice the food you bring if slicing is required.

Chicken, challah, wine, drinks, and all serving utensils are provided.

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Dr. Dana Hercborgs, an instructor at Siegal College, was the featured presenter at the February Shabbat dinner. Her talk, titled “Nostalgia for Jerusalem's Past: Israeli and Palestinian Memories,” recounted her fieldwork interviewing Israelis and Palestinians about growing up in Jerusalem.

In Mark Weber's absence (Mark was in Colombia participating in “Witness for Peace” activities), **Bobbie Varble** filled in admirably as the evening's madrikha.

Volunteer Activities

On Saturday, February 13, five JSCers partnered with members of a Brecksville mosque and a Kirtland Unitarian-Universalist church to prepare and serve a meal at the Boulevard Presbyterian Church in Euclid. The meal was sponsored by InterAct Cleveland, a non-profit interfaith organization to which the JSC now belongs, which is dedicated to promoting interfaith activities in Cleveland.

Before the guests arrived for lunch, we met and spoke with members of the mosque and church. The male mosque members were mostly doctors and engineers from Iran (one man was from Lebanon). The women wore traditional head scarves and brought their children to help set the tables and serve coffee and desserts.

Although relatively few (36) guests attended, we all viewed the event as a success, with the three groups providing a main course, salad, and dessert. We were assigned the salad preparation (thought to be easiest for our first venture). Since the church is a member of the Cleveland Food Bank, I had accompanied the minister, Anne McCabe, to the food bank a few days earlier to pick up any salad ingredients that might be available. We got about six packages of greens, to which **Dorothy Werblow** added several kinds of fresh vegetables from Sam's Club.

After the food was served and all the guests had come through the line, the volunteers got their lunches and sat among the guests and shmoozed. **Edie Todd** discussed the economy with the Muslims at her table. At my table I explained the partnership in which we were involved. After lunch, several of us had a conversation about Muslim dietary rules, which seem to be almost identical to Jewish laws of Kashrut. One gentleman told us about a store called the Jerusalem Market that sells products that meet both Jewish and Muslim dietary rules,

and Edie later pointed out that that store could stand as a metaphor for how we can both be unique in our identities and exist together.

We will be participating in a community meal at the church every other month. The next meal will be on **Saturday, April 10**. The meal is served at 12:00 noon, and the total time we spend at the church is about four hours. We would very much appreciate anyone's participation as there are many tasks to be accomplished in that time. Food can be prepared either at home or at the church. The JSC participants—Edie, Dorothy, **Gil Winer**, **Dietz Ziechmann**, and I felt that doing this community service was a worthwhile and rewarding experience, both from the point of view of helping others and of meeting some very nice people whom we would be unlikely to meet otherwise.

— Nora Kancelbaum

Purim, Passover Plans

This year's Purim Carnival will take place on **Sunday, March 7**, from 3:30 – 6:30 p.m. at the Solon Community Center. Here's your chance to dress up. The best costumes will win "fabulous" prizes. And be sure to take the kids. The carnival will include crafts and games, the Megillah reading, a costume contest for children *and* adults, and a light supper that includes holiday treats.

RSVP by March 1: Members should contact Marcia Rosenthal (sunchoke@sbcglobal.net). Non-members should contact Jane Horowitz at janehorowitz76@hotmail.com. The festivities are free to JSC members and children under 12, \$5 to all others.

Directions: 271 S. to 422 E; exit Rte. 91 S, SOM Center Rd. Turn right onto SOM (91 S). After passing Aurora Rd. (Rte. 43), go two more traffic lights and turn left onto Portz Rd. The

Community/Wellness/Rec Center is past the library, on the right.

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The JSC will celebrate Passover on **Sunday, March 28** at the Solon Community Center. You are invited to meet and mingle at 4:00 p.m., with the seder beginning at 4:30 p.m. **Please RSVP no later than March 20** by calling or emailing Rifke Feinstein (rifke@bronxbobbe.com, 216-481-0850) or Ellen Schwartz (eschwa7500@yahoo.com, 440-449-4418).

To assist the planners, please RSVP as early as possible and note how many in your party plan to attend. The seder is free to members, \$10 for guests.

The Spanish Inquisition and the Jews' Secret Observance of Purim

We thank **Tybee Zuckerman** and **Rona Weiss** for citing an article at <http://www.aish.com/jw/s/83867402.html> that tells about how the Jews of Spain, called *anusim*, contrived to celebrate Purim before and during the Inquisition, and even after their relocation to the New World.

The Social Scene

Group tickets are available for JSC members to attend a concert by the Cleveland Jazz Orchestra, "Swingin' at the Temple -- A Tribute to Jewish Composers," **Sunday, April 11**, 4:00 p.m., at Fairmount Temple.

The cost is \$15.00. Please make checks payable to "Jewish Secular Community" and send to: Eunice Berko, 403 Muirfield Dr, Highland Hts, Ohio 44143, or to Marcia Rosenthal, 13569 County Line Rd, Chagrin Falls, Ohio 44022 **by March 15**.

Member Briefs

The JSC sends best wishes for a speedy recovery to **Mimi Feil**, who, when last heard from, was expecting to undergo hip replacement surgery in New York.

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Marie Anton is also recovering from hip surgery and says hello to everyone. Get well soon, Marie. And good luck to you and **Aaron** on your move to Beachwood.

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The Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America (CAMERA) has awarded **Tybee Zuckerman** honorable mention as one of seven writers who have contributed to making Israel's case by their letter-writing efforts.

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Mark Weber publishes a modest broadside (Mark's words!) called "Relentless Review." Issue number 13 deals with the impact of Yiddish on politics and culture on the Lower East Side of New York City. If you'd like to receive it, e-mail Mark at lastdetective@yahoo.com.

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Referring to her volunteer efforts, **Eunice Berko** was recently quoted in the Jewish Community Federation's Face of the Month: "I look to the Federation to connect me to real needs in the general community. This year I was able to share this experience with my husband and three grandsons. It is rewarding to know that we are making a meaningful difference in the lives of others during a time when they need it most."

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Steve Shucard is co-author of an article in the Fall 2009 issue of the *California*

Management Review (Vol. 52, No. 1). The title of the piece is “Merged Datasets: An Analytic Tool for Evidence-Based Management.”

‘Round Town

On **March 23** at 7:00 p.m., Dr. Wayne Mayer of John Carroll University, son of **Kathe and Jim Mayer**, will make a presentation based on the slides from former Vice President and Nobel Laureate Al Gore’s “An Inconvenient Truth.” The event will be held in John Carroll University’s Donahue Auditorium (Dolan Science Center). In Mexico City in September 2009, Dr. Mayer participated in the first Latin American Summit on Climate Change. There, among nearly 300 other participants, he received training from Al Gore to educate the public and to raise awareness about climate change.

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The Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland is conducting a survey to assess the need by Jews living on the south and west sides of Cleveland for JFC services or interest in volunteer activities. To take the survey go to the JCF website.

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You may remember Stephanie Spear, the featured speaker at our January Shabbat dinner. Stephanie’s organization, Ecowatch, is sponsoring its 2nd Annual Green Gala, which will held on **April 9** at 7:00 p.m. at Executive Caterers in Mayfield Heights. The featured speaker will be Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. For more information, call (216) 387-1609.

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Nora Kancelbaum writes that on February 4, 2010, a J Street Kick-Off event was held in 21 cities around the United States and was attended by approximately 2,000 people. J Street calls itself the political arm of the pro-Israel, pro-peace movement. In Cleveland, the organization Brit Tzedek

v’Shalom has recently merged with J Street because of their similar missions. The local kick-off took place at the Bertram Woods branch of the Shaker Heights Library. About 65 people attended.

J Street was founded to change the dynamics of American politics and policy on Israel and the Middle East. The organization believes that the security and future of Israel depend on achieving a two-state solution and regional comprehensive peace.

At the kick-off, the national director of J Street, Jeremy Ben-Ami, spoke to the attendees from a meeting in Philadelphia. He talked about how the security and survival of Israel was at risk without a two-state solution, saying that it is not only in Israel’s and the Palestinians’ interest but also in America’s to end the conflict.

The local branch is gearing up to recruit members to join in advocacy work. Beginning in March, J Street Cleveland will offer an array of educational programs, including films, discussions, and guest speakers. For more information, contact Alan Federman at acf1950@aol.com, or go to www.jstreet.org.

Protecting Your Identity (Jewish or Otherwise)

In case you hadn’t noticed, it’s getting rough out there in cyberland. We’ve all heard stories about email scams: A Nigerian prince needs help moving his fortune offshore. Advance him some money and you will be richly rewarded. But those stories take on a whole new meaning when the fraud targets you. We almost learned that the hard way one day in early February.

An email purporting to be from Hotmail (our email provider) instructed us to provide our user name, password, date

of birth, and country, warning that failure to provide the info would result in suspension of our email account within 48 hours.

The request smelled phishy (no kiddin'), and the tortured grammar in which it was written smelled even worse. Sensing that you are being phished is like listening to robbers jiggling the knob of your back door in the dead of night to see if they can sneak in without any resistance and steal you blind.

Luckily, we didn't comply with the instructions; instead we called Hotmail. They confirmed that the email was bogus—an attempt to phish personal data that could be used for nefarious purposes. In this case, the scammers wanted to access our email. We followed up with an email to MSN's investigative department (a term we use loosely) and called the Federal Trade Commission's ID theft department and the FBI.

We didn't expect a vigorous response to our efforts, so we weren't surprised at the half-hearted reaction that followed. After obtaining additional information from us, Hotmail told us that they had closed the account belonging to the scammers. When we then pressed Hotmail to take legal action, they demurred, suggesting that we would have to get a subpoena. We have heard nothing at all from the feds.

Only a week or two prior to the incident, a family member of ours was phished by criminals passing themselves off as AOL. Another acquaintance of ours tells us that she was phished very recently. JSC member Roy Berko, too, informs us that he was the target of an online scam.

The incident should serve as a lesson. The prevalence of this kind of illegal activity has become alarming. We need to be wary in the new Wild West of digital commerce and communication. But do not expect the cavalry to ride to the rescue.

— Steve Shucard

Men's Discussion Group

The next meeting of the Men's Discussion Group will be on Wednesday, March 31, at 7:30 p.m., at the home of Mike Varble, 5600A Emerald Ridge Pkwy, Solon. At this writing, the evening's topic had not been set. For directions/information, call or email Mike (440-498-4747, varble2@yahoo.com).

February's meeting was at John Klein's home. The group discussed "What Experiences Have Shaped Your Political Views?" The discussion was friendly, honest, and insightful.

2010 CSJO Conference Takes Shape

Hans Leander (committee coordinator), has sent out this preliminary lineup of workshops to be held at the 2010 CSJO Annual Conference: One Hundred Years of Secular Jewish Schools; Jews in China; Yiddish/Jewish Theater; A Taste of the International Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism; Secular Jewish Education; Exploring Our Jewish Roots Through Film; Yiddish; Immigration and Jewish Values; Jews and the Left: A Natural Affinity?; Life Cycle Ceremonies for Secular Jews; Secret Medical School in the Warsaw Ghetto; Jews in India; The Future of Jewish Newspapers; Gay Issues and Jews; Bioethics and the Jewish Tradition.

The conference is scheduled to run from Friday, May 28, through Monday, May 31, at Ursuline College. There will be entertainment on Saturday night and a talent show on Sunday. The other members of the Program Committee are **Lois Gross, Allen Guth, Jim and Kathe Mayer, and Lynn Salzbrenner.**

JSC Board Meeting

The next JSC Board meeting will be held on Sunday, March 14 at 11:00 a.m. These meetings are held at the Heinen's in Pepper Pike on Chagrin and Lander Rds. and are open to all JSC members.

Mah Jongg, Anyone?

Want to have some fun, socialize, and relax? How about joining a mah jongg group? If you're interested, call Sharon Shucard (330-425-3234).

All information and opinions in The JSC Newsletter are those of the author(s) and may not reflect the opinion of the Jewish Secular Community, its Officers, Board, or the JSC editorial staff. Letters to the editor and submissions expressing different views are welcome.

The JSC Mission

The Jewish Secular Community, affiliated with the Congress of Secular Jewish Organizations and the International Federation of Secular Humanistic Jews, is a non-profit cultural and educational organization whose purpose is to:

- ✧ *Encourage Jewish identification in a non-theistic setting that draws inspiration from the traditional Jewish sources and values*
- ✧ *Educate adults in the history, culture, and tenets of Judaism*
- ✧ *Celebrate and observe Jewish holidays and life cycle events*
- ✧ *Contribute to the betterment of our society through social action and volunteerism*
- ✧ *Provide a link to a world-wide community of secular Jews.*

JSC Leadership Contacts 2009 - 2010

<p>President* Allen Guth, 216-291-5869 thelanguagesource@neohio.twcbc.com</p> <p>Vice President* Edie Todd, 440-338-1169 egmtodd@gmail.com</p> <p>Treasurer* Greg Malkin, 440-247-7692 jsc@gregmalkin.com</p> <p>Secretary* Dietz Ziechmann, 216-320-1088 dietz.ziechmann@gmail.com</p> <p>Friday Night Shabbat Programs* Lynn Salzbrenner, 330-463-0149 lynnsalzbrenner@gmail.com</p> <p>Shabbat Setup Judy & Sheldon Herzog, 216-381-0651 shell9@sbcglobal.net</p> <p>E-mail Postmaster Scott Radway, 216-691-1949 teamspike@mac.com</p>	<p>Madrikh Mark Weber, 440-519-0220 lastdetective@yahoo.com</p> <p>CSJO Delegate Renee Lipson, 440-646-9337 lipsonrenee@gmail.com</p> <p>Holidays* Rifke Feinstein, 216-481-0850 rifke@bronxbobbe.com</p> <p>Ellen Schwartz, 440-449-4419 eschwa7500@yahoo.com</p> <p>Membership* Beverly Feingold, 440-442-3686 bfeingold@sbcglobal.net</p> <p>Suzette Cohen, 440-449-1078 suzettecohen@yahoo.com</p> <p>Publicity, Sunshine* Sandy Guth, 216-291-5869 thelanguagesource@neohio.twcbc.com</p>	<p>Newsletter* Steve Shucard, 330-425-3234 steveshucard@hotmail.com</p> <p>Enid German-Beck, 216-921-2127 Duane_enid@hotmail.com</p> <p>Social* Marcia Rosenthal, 440-423-1718 sunchoke@sbcglobal.net</p> <p>Eunice Berko, 440-720-0606 euniceberko@yahoo.com</p> <p>Community Service* Dietz Ziechmann, 216-320-1088 dietz.ziechmann@gmail.com</p> <p>Nora Kancelbaum, 216-283-2562 nkancelbaum@gmail.com</p>
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*Member of JSC Board of Trustees