



# The JSC Newsletter

Newsletter of the Cleveland Jewish Secular Community

[www.jewishsecularcommunity.org](http://www.jewishsecularcommunity.org)

March 2019/5779

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## Upcoming Events

**Sun Mar. 17** — Board Meeting

**Fri. Mar. 22** - Purim, Ed Kraus, Mayor of Solon

**Sun. Apr. 21** - Passover

## Purim/Shabbat Dinner and Program Friday, Mar. 22, 2019

**First Unitarian Church**, 21600 Shaker Blvd.

Speaker: Ed Kraus, Mayor of Solon  
Topic: Challenges Facing Cleveland's  
Suburban Municipalities

## 2019 Friday Shabbat Programs

**March 22**, Purim, Ed Kraus, Mayor of Solon

**April 12**, Jo Steigerwald, Seeds of Literacy

**May 10**, Jan Ridgeway, Garden Valley  
Neighborhood Center

Ed Kraus is the newly elected mayor of Solon and is that city's first Jewish mayor. He has served in the office of Cuyahoga County Prosecutor as well as on the City Council of Solon.

We will celebrate Purim and read from the Megillah. There will be poems and songs and special gifts. Costumes are welcome! JSC will provide the hamentashen, and you will provide the groggers (Styrofoam containers, please!)

Meet and mingle at **6:30 pm**  
Shabbat program at **6:45 pm**  
Potluck dinner at **7:00 pm**  
Speaker **8:00 - 9:00 pm**

**RSVP by Wed., Mar. 20**, to Peg Fishman at (440) 349-1330 or [pegfishman@gmail.com](mailto:pegfishman@gmail.com).

Last names **A-V** bring a side dish or salad for 6 (couples please bring enough for 12); **W-Z** bring a dessert for 10 (couples please bring enough for 20). Please bring a list of ingredients and pre-cut if possible. The community will provide chicken, challah, wine, drinks, and all serving utensils.

## Calling All Writers

The editorial policy of the newsletter will be nonpartisan, balanced, and receptive to opposing points of view. Items of opinion do not represent the "official" position of the JSC or its Board of Trustees. We welcome attributed letters with comments, rebuttals, or new information. Subject only to space, time, interest to fellow members, and editorial constraints, your article, told in your own words, will be gratefully accepted.

## Does JSC Have a Future?

By Mark Weber

For six of the last eight years, I have been president of JSC. I have enjoyed my time in office; but all things must come to an end. We need someone to step forward and assume the mantle of president for the next two-year term. We have asked six people and all of them have turned us down. Please consider stepping forward and assuming this critical responsibility.

An organization that cannot find one of its members to step up and be president is an organization the future of which is in serious doubt. Help us ensure that JSC will continue.

Bobbie Varble is completing her second year as Membership Chair. During this period, due to her efforts and those of her committee, JSC has gained 9 new members. At the end of this fiscal year, Bobbie will be stepping down from her post, but it is important for JSC's future that we continue the momentum. Members of the Nominating Committee are currently looking for a replacement for Bobbie. So far our search has proven to be negative.

Please step forward and help JSC! Contact Allen Guth of the nominating committee at [allenguth@gmail.com](mailto:allenguth@gmail.com)

## Volunteering in Cleveland



**Terry Waslow and Rifke Finestein  
at Cleveland Food Bank**

I had the opportunity to join members of the [Jewish Secular Community](#) at the Cleveland Food Bank. We spent a few hours packing boxes that will reach many people through the food bank's 600 partners. Food insecurity is an enormous problem in this country and one we

could solve by using our many resources more effectively. I am sure that there are many opportunities in your area to pitch in and lend some needed support just like the members of our Cleveland affiliate do. Please share your stories with us so that we can be proud of your work and inspired to continue ours.

I continued my stay in Cleveland as I was invited to join in the Jewish Secular Community's shabbos meal. Not only was the food delicious, but the shabbos program, led by Mark Weber, was meaningful and engaging. Mark included familiar tunes and secular readings that engaged the rather large crowd participating. After the program and the sharing of food was a very interesting presentation, *Cleveland Then and Now* by author Laura DeMarco.

## CSJO Conference in Cleveland

While in Cleveland I have also been busy with [Conference](#) planning. I want to thank Rifke Feinstein for her ongoing assistance and members of the Jewish Secular Community who met with us, shared their enthusiasm and offered support. I am eager to tell you that I have made a number of contacts and it looks like we have some exciting programming in store for the conference. I will let you know as the final confirmations are made. Mark your calendars for **May 24-27!** Registration will open soon. I promise you it will be a wonderful weekend.

Terry Waslow  
Executive Director, CSJO  
[congress@csjo.org](mailto:congress@csjo.org)  
267-625-2756

## Jottings

Bobbie Varble writes:

The attached flyer came from young Rabbi Adam Chalom, who does wonderful tours and lectures. I have taken three secular tours with the SHJ groups (one in Turkey and two in Israel) and they were all outstanding. No lunches are included in this

trip, but most travelers bring plastic bags to load up with breakfast goodies that provide great lunches as well.

For more information, check out the link below:

Full itinerary and online registration available at <https://secure.ayelet.com/IISHJIsrael2019.aspx>

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Mark Weber's following letter titled "Secular Humanism" was included in the Friday, February 8, 2019 issue of the Plain Dealer. Thanks to Rona Weiss for bringing this to our attention.

"Walter Nicholes has written a thoughtful letter on President Donald Trump ("What goes around comes around," Letters, Jan. 30). However, he writes that, as a secular humanist, he is neither moral or immoral. I beg to differ. Secular humanism is a philosophy of life that is moral but does not derive its morality from belief in a supreme being. Documents like the Humanist Manifesto, written in 1933, make this quite clear. Our world view takes its substance from many different sources and thinkers. The core of our morality is a belief in democracy, pluralism, reason, and science."

**Photo Gallery:  
Feb. 15, 2019 Shabbat**



Lynn Salzbrenner and The Plain Dealer's Laura DeMarco



CSJO's Terry Waslow

Photos by Audrey Halpern

**Please fill out the following food identification label and bring it along with your dish. This will allow members to:**

- determine whether or not they can or want to eat the food that you brought, due to allergies, sensitivities, or general likes/dislikes
- talk to you about the dish you brought
- thank you if they love the dish you brought
- ask you for the recipe

<p>Food Identification</p> <hr/> <p>Name of Food</p> <hr/> <p>Brought by</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Gluten Free</b> (contains <b>NO</b> wheat, barley, rye, oats)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Vegetarian</b> (contains <b>NO</b> animal products)</p> <p>Contains other allergens, including: <input type="checkbox"/> Eggs <input type="checkbox"/> Fish <input type="checkbox"/> Soy <input type="checkbox"/> Shellfish <input type="checkbox"/> Tree Nuts <input type="checkbox"/> Peanuts <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____</p> <p><i>Please list carefully as those with allergies can have severe and harmful reactions.</i></p>
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**– Lori Berenson**

## The JSC Mission

*The Jewish Secular Community, affiliated with the Congress of Secular Jewish Organizations, 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 2018 - 2019

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\*Member of JSC Board of Trustees