



**Jewish Secular Community  
of Cleveland**

# **50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Memory Book**

**1967 / 1968 – 2016 / 2017**



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# 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE

## CO-CHAIRS

JIM & KATHE MAYER

## ARRANGEMENTS

ELLEN SCHWARTZ  
ELAINE SHERMAN

## PHOTO PRESENTATION

RONI BERENSON

## B'NAI MITZVAH

JIM MAYER & LOIS GROSS

## MEMORY BOOK

LORI BERENSON

## INVITATIONS

SUZETTE COHEN

## MICKEY STERN BOOK COMMITTEE

NORA KANCELBAUM

## RSVP'S

PEG FISHMAN

## OTHER COMMITTEE WORK

ALLEN GUTH

## **DISCLAIMER & REQUEST**

To those who might object to the accuracy, inclusion, or exclusion of material contained in this memory book:

We have tried to be as accurate as we could be in compiling this book given the materials we had available. If we have stated something inaccurately, please send an email to Lori Berenson (lorib@berenson.net) or Mark Weber (laboraction2000@gmail.com), so that it can be corrected.

# INVITATION TO JSC 50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION



*You are cordially invited to the  
FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION  
of the Jewish Secular Community of Cleveland*

*Sunday, June 25, 2017*

*11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.*

*Dino's Catering at Acacia*

*26899 Cedar Rd. Lyndhurst, OH 44122*

*Kindly RSVP by June 1, 2017*

*by returning the enclosed card.*

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*Kindly RSVP by June 1, 2017 to  
Peg Fishman, 5259 Cheswick Drive, Solon, Ohio 44139*

*Or*

*pegfishman@gmail.com*

*Current members: free\**

*Others: \$20\**

*Menu choices: Chicken or pasta with vegetables*

*Name \_\_\_\_\_ Menu choice \_\_\_\_\_*

*Name \_\_\_\_\_ Menu choice \_\_\_\_\_*

*Please mail a check with this card for \$20 per non-member made out to  
Jewish Secular Community*

*For additional people  
write name (s) and food choice(s) on the back of this card.*

*\*Note: Caterer's late fee \$15*

# THE JEWISH SECULAR COMMUNITY OF CLEVELAND 1967-2017

Introduction by Mark Weber

## I.

Almost all of us remember the 1960's as a period of intellectual and political ferment. Beginning with the Civil Rights movement, this decade saw struggles against the war in Vietnam as well as the birth and growth of the modern feminist, environmental and LGBT movements. For American Jews, these years were also a period of searching. Some younger Jews began to look for an alternative to the traditional and mainstream temple-synagogue culture for their families. Frequently, these young Jewish parents wanted a different kind of education for their children.

In the summer of 1967, five Cleveland area families met to discuss the need for a progressive, secular Jewish Sunday school that would impart to their children a secular and cultural Jewish identity along with the values of tolerance and social justice. Out of this meeting came a decision to create a new kind of school. On September 17, 1967, the New Jewish Secular School (NJSS) was established with 17 students in rented space in Fairfax Elementary School in Cleveland Heights. Seven years later, in the fall of 1974, the student enrollment reached a high-water mark of 105. In 1971, the NJSS became an affiliate of the organization now known as the Congress of Secular Jewish Organizations (CSJO).

A historic turning point for the NJSS came during the 1972-73 school year, when it became more than a school for children and changed its name to the Jewish Secular Community of Cleveland (JSC). The school continued but now there was adult programming as well. By this time, the school and adult programs of the JSC had moved from Fairfax School to the Jewish Community Center on Mayfield Road. In 1974, the Ohio Secretary of State formally recognized the JSC as a nonprofit organization. Eight years later, in 1982, the local Bureau of Jewish Education recognized the Sunday school of the JSC as a Jewish educational institution. Unfortunately, this did not mean that secular Jewish education for children enjoyed widespread tolerance across the Cleveland Jewish community. For example, in December of 1982, an issue of the Cleveland Jewish News featured a heated exchange on whether a secular Jewish Sunday school was indeed a "Jewish educational institution."

As an affiliate of the Congress of Secular Jewish Organizations (CSJO), JSC hosted the national conferences of CSJO in Cleveland in 1984, 1994, 2002, 2007, 2010, and 2014. As the JSC entered its 20th year, the Community observed this milestone with a special celebration. However, the Community also faced a challenge: the Sunday School, which once enrolled more than 100 students, now had no students! While the following year the enrollment "jumped" to fourteen students, the handwriting seemed to be on the wall: a stand-alone school could no longer be sustained as it had been in the past. A solution presented itself when the Cleveland Workmen's Circle suggested that the JSC join with it in organizing a joint Sunday school. During this period, classes of the merged Sunday school were held at the Workmen's Circle's I.L. Peretz building on South Green Road. The JSC also offered some adult programs at the Workmen's Circle meeting hall. In January of 2002, the JSC severed its "joint school relationship" with the Workmen's Circle. This would end the JSC's formal involvement with

schooling for children and teens. There was more than a little sad irony in the fact that what became the JSC began as an effort to provide a different kind of Sunday schooling for children in 1967. From this point forward, the JSC would be an adult organization with no school affiliation and no programming for children.

The organization continued to attract adults with a varied menu of such activities as Shabbat dinners and adult programs, holiday celebrations, and social activities such as theatre or museum visits and community service projects. In addition, four members of the community are trained as Humanist celebrants who preside over holiday and life cycle events: Roni Berenson, Rifke Feinstein, Bobbie Varble and Mark Weber

## II.

Today, at the age of fifty, the Jewish Secular Community of Cleveland continues to uphold the values and traditions of a Jewishness in a new key: secular, progressive, and humanist. In the last fifteen years the JSC has become more accepted by mainstream organizations in the Cleveland Jewish community. This acceptance has come, in part, because members of the JSC have participated in Jewish community service projects as well as in the Cleveland Jewish community fundraising events. A second factor has been the increased pluralism in the JSC as well as the growth and maturation of secular and humanistic Judaism as a legitimate expression of one's Jewish identity. For example, today, the membership of the JSC has become more diverse in both sentiments on politics in general and on Israel in particular.

This being said, the majority of the membership of the JSC has settled in a center-left political position together with a small minority of those who identify as "conservative." When it comes to Israel, the opinions of the membership have become much more diverse than when the JSC was founded half a century ago. Today, the outreach program of the JSC could more accurately be described as community service rather than social justice. As individuals, some members of the Community continue to be active on issues of social justice. However, no group of Jewish adults has a richer history of both advocacy and action in favor of social justice than do the members of the JSC over the years. The arenas of their activities include civil rights, anti-war, peace in the Middle East, civil liberties, LGBT rights, reproductive rights, and the rights of trade unions.

Looking back over fifty years, we see that the family of the JSC embraces current members, former members who have dropped away, former members who have moved away, and former members who have passed away. All have stood for the humanist Jewish values of secularism, democracy, inclusion, and justice.

Before it was generally accepted, the JSC championed a B'nai Mitzvah program that recognized young men and women as equals, warmly welcomed intercultural and intermarried families, and opened a dialogue with gay and lesbian Jews. Before it was accepted, five families met to talk about starting a secular Jewish Sunday school. That was 50 years ago.

We owe much to those founders for their courage and vision. We owe much to those who were part of the Jewish Secular Community of Cleveland over the years for their dedication. And we owe much to those who are with us now as our Community celebrates a half century of offering to Jewish families a secular-humanistic Jewish alternative.



## THE B'NAI MITZVAH

1972 - 2001

For more information about the early years of the B'Nai Mitzvah, see pages 70-71 and 103-105.

2012 - 2017

After a long absence of the B'Nai Mitzva program, Mickey Stern believed that to fill a perceived community need, it was time for JSC to restart the program. In 2012 a committee was formed to recruit a teacher, Dani Copeland, and with her help develop a curriculum. As a service of the JSC, the program was marketed through electronic and print media. The first class of two students started in the autumn of 2013 and held their ceremony at the Cleveland Music School Settlement. In 2014 one student participated and had a ceremony at the Cleveland Botanical Garden. We hoped that class size would be at least 3 students and with a year's free membership included in the program fee, parents would become long term members. These goals were never met and the program was spun off to Dani Copeland in 2015. As of May 2016, she had two students scheduled to complete their work in 2017. Special thanks should be expressed for the extensive efforts that the late John Klein provided in mail and email market surveys, advertising and publicity.

### **B'Nai Mitzvah's**

Kaleigh Mooney – 2014

Lily Waugh - 2014

Ruby Kaufman - 2015

## COMMUNITY SERVICE REPORT

Community service has always been an important part of the mission of the Cleveland Jewish Secular Community. 2009 was a very busy year. We volunteered at the Cleveland Food Bank packing boxes of food standing along a long conveyor belt. At our July annual meeting/picnic, members contributed \$100 to WREN, Women's Re-entry Network, which works with women returning from incarceration to help them put their lives back together when they are released. The same year members helped at our National Public Radio affiliate, WCPN, during its on-air fundraising drive, and in November, we brought wrapped children's clothing, toys, and other gifts for the Hebrew Shelter Home. On Christmas Day, we helped the residents of Montefiore Home get to the bingo room and help them play.

In January 2010, members were asked to bring checks to the monthly Shabbat dinner to be bundled into a collective donation for Haitian relief after an earthquake there. The board at that time discussed whether the Community should set up an emergency fund in the event of a catastrophic event. No decision was made at that time.

In February of 2010, for the first of several times, we partnered with a Unitarian-Universalist church in Kirtland and a Brecksville mosque to prepare and serve meals at the Boulevard Presbyterian Church in Euclid under the sponsorship of Inter-Act Cleveland, an organization that promoted interfaith activities. The JSC continued this activity once every other month for several years.

In March, the board approved a resolution to establish a Tikkun Olam fund for the purpose of making monetary donations to local, national, and international causes. A separate line would be added to annual dues notices for these contributions. At its May meeting, the board voted to name the fund the Bill and Carol Falender Tikkun Olam Fund in honor of our former JSC members who had contributed so much to the Community. Also in March, members participated in the Interfaith Dinner Dialogue, where we hosted or attended dinners with Christians and Muslims. Some members helped to serve lunch at various locations to Cleveland school children who were out of school for the summer.

Each spring for a few years, we helped beautify the Hebrew Cultural Garden by planting flowers on a Sunday morning during an event sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Cleveland.

Also in 2010, the Board established a Caring Hands Committee, whose purpose is to assist those who are undergoing surgery or having other emergency needs.

In October, we volunteered at the Chesed Shel Emeth Cemetery in Brooklyn Heights, a very old Jewish cemetery that had fallen into disrepair, and many people came from various organizations to help clean it up before the high holidays. In December, we packed food boxes at the Cleveland Food Bank. Every Chanukah, we have brought either food items or clothing for distribution to those in need. In 2010, we also answered phones for the WCPN membership drive and served lunch with Interact at Boulevard Presbyterian Church in Euclid.

In 2011, we contributed to the Homeless Stand Down clothing collection, continued serving bi-monthly lunches at Boulevard Presbyterian Church, and hosted a dinner at Ronald McDonald House for families whose children were being treated in area hospitals. Some members volunteered at the Jewish Federation's Super Sunday fundraiser and at WCPN's on-air fundraiser. Kosher food was collected for a project of the Jewish Family Service Association, and members helped deliver the food. The JSC also contributed \$500 to the American Joint Distribution Committee for Japanese disaster relief after the earthquake and tsunami that occurred there. As usual, we were at Montefiore on Christmas Day. We contributed to Medwish International Haiti relief efforts after the earthquake there.

The Community became a member of Greater Cleveland Congregations in 2012, a coalition of congregations and organizations committed to organizing to improve the quality of life in Greater Cleveland. We again helped to pack food items at the Cleveland Food Bank and participated in "Chanukah in a Basket," for Jewish Family Service to distribute to group homes, members of the Orthodox community, and local Holocaust survivors.

2013 found members volunteering at the Cleveland Sight Center working on a service project with a group of young families called Caring Cubs, an organization that teaches young children the importance of volunteering in the community. In October, the Kosher Food Bank, under the direction of Devorah Alevsky, was the venue for us to help sign in and distribute food to hundreds from the community (Jews and non-Jews) who fall below the poverty level.

In February of 2014, Sandy Guth, our Community Service Chair, organized a trip to the Greater Cleveland Foodbank, where we once again sorted and repacked food to be distributed to local food pantries, hot meal programs, and shelters. In a survey of volunteer interests, that turned out to be the favorite.

In the spring of 2014, members helped to prepare for Parade the Circle in University Circle, cutting out shapes from paper and fabric. Once again, we donated kosher food items for the Kosher Food Bank and brought gifts for Jewish children and families for Chanukah and clothing for Operation Warm-Up, a community collection of winter clothing for those in need.

JSC volunteers participated in 2015 on three separate occasions at Montefiore: In February, they helped residents with an arts and crafts project, in April, we transported residents to a Yom Hashoah/Holocaust ceremony, and we helped out the staff on Christmas Day. Also that year we donated to the USO personal products and snack items for service personnel overseas and again in December, participated in Operation Warm-Up.

In 2016, the JSC collected food items for the Kosher Food Bank again. In May, we brought food items to donate to a food pantry in Twinsburg, and in November, we again bought winter clothing for Operation Warm-Up, and did our yearly gig at Montefiore on Christmas Day.

So far this year, 2017, we have donated kosher food items to the Kosher Food Bank.

## HOLIDAY REPORT

Several changes have occurred in our holiday observances in the past few years. Our meetings and programs started at the First Unitarian Church, and have taken place at many other places since; i.e., Church of the Western Reserve, Pepper Pike; Solon Community Center; Nature Center of Shaker Lakes. Our current location for most of our meetings and programs is the Unitarian Universalist Church, Shaker Hts.

Our Rosh Hashanah program has remained the same with readings and songs appropriate for the occasion with Fred Sternfeld as our song leader. Sid Brode has been our inimitable shofar blower at every service in memory. Mark Weber for many years has delivered an inspiring talk, often encouraging us through it to be better people in one way or another. Every year, before Bill and Carol Falender left for North Carolina in 2010, they led a lovely walk in a Cleveland Metropark after lunch.

Our Erev Yom Kippur celebration has been observed with cello playing of the Kol Nidre by members of the Cleveland Institute of Music.

At our Break-the-Fast, Mark Weber has often led us in a discussion, and in the past few years, we have heard poetry recited by our members or learned how they contribute to our community through volunteering.

Succot is often hosted by Walker and Edie Todd at their home in South Russell. Not only is our succah still being erected, but the Holiday Committee has created a lovely program that focuses on protection of the earth. We also shake a lulav and enjoy the etrog. And, of course, there is always food.

At our Chanukah celebration, which has been held along with our Shabbat meeting closest to the Chanukah, we bring contributions of food items or clothing. There is a lighting of the menorah and, of course, latkes. Through the years, they were made with loving care by Dorothy Werblow, Nora Kancelbaum, Marcia Rosenthal, Eunice Berko, and Ellen Schwartz. We have also been entertained by many musicians.

Tu b'Shvat is now celebrated at our Shabbat meeting closest to the date of the holiday. We still eat the traditional fruits, nuts, and seeds and have a seder explaining the holiday. Guest speakers are chosen based on their interest in conservation, ecology, and sustainability.

On Purim we meet on the Shabbat closest to Purim. Groggers are placed on each table, and we enjoy drowning out the name of Haman at every opportunity. For several years, Marcia Rosenthal created a Purim spiels, which was always funny and farcical and starred our most talented members, and we have had costume contests that bring out the creativity of our group. In 2016, in a salute to conservation, we created our own groggers from Styrofoam food containers saved by Marcia Rosenthal.

On Passover, we read from our own Haggadah, pass around the traditional foods of the holiday, and enjoy a traditional Passover meal. Fred Sternfeld has continued to be our accompanist for our singing.

## SOCIAL ACTIVITIES / SHABBAT SPEAKERS / DISCUSSION GROUPS

Social events during the years from 2007 to 2017 were loosely associated with Jewish tradition; others were musical, theater, or just fun. The Shabbat programs had speakers on many themes not necessarily Jewish, but where Jews were involved. Discussion Groups held interesting meeting on some of the subjects listed below.

### Social Activities

- “A Christmas Story” – The Bolton Theater
- “A Civil War Christmas” – Dobama Theater
- “Ain’t Misbehaving” – Bolton Theater
- “Exodus” movie – University Hts. Library
- “Havdalah Concert an Advocacy Evening for Darfur” – B’nai Jeshurin Congregation
- “Inherit the Wind” – CSU Benefit at Playhouse
- “Jerry’s Girls” – Cleveland Playhouse
- “Keyboard Conversation” at CSU
- “Magic and Music” – Master Illusionist Neil Rozum and dinner at Peppermint Thai Cuisine
- “Making Trouble” – Cedar-Lee Theater – exploring the lives of 6 legendary American Jewish women comics
- “Open a New Window: The Songs of Jerry Herman” – Tri-C Performing Arts Center and dinner at the Europa Restaurant
- “Operation Finale: The Capture and Trial of Adolph Eichman” – Maltz Museum
- “PDQ Bach” – Cleveland Institute of Music
- “Prelude to a Kiss” – Ensemble Theatre and Dinner at Claddagh’s Irish Pub
- “Raise the Roof” – Jewish Film Festival
- “Spellbinding Bach” – Jeffrey Siegel
- “Swingin’ at the Temple – A Tribute to Jewish Composers” – Cleveland Jazz Orchestra
- “The Gospel According to James” – Ensemble Theater and dinner at Mongolian Grill
- “The Illusion” – Eldred Theater and dinner at Maggiano’s, Beachwood Place
- “The Last Romance” – Chagrin Valley Little Theater, and dinner at Burntwood Tavern
- “The Revisionist” – Dobama Theater
- “This Light of Ours: Activist Photographers from the Civil Rights Era” – Maltz Museum and lunch at Corky’s
- “Yoo Hoo, Mrs. Goldberg” – Cedar Lee
- Bus trip to Old Jewish Cleveland
- China Buffet - Chanukah celebration
- Fantasy Candies and dinner at Brown Derby
- From Holocaust to Freedom: A Journey to Cleveland – Cedar-Lee Theatre
- Hollywood’s Jewish Pioneers – Bill Rafalski, aka “The Movie Guy”
- Imperial Wok Asian Restaurant with Lion Dance – celebrate Chinese New Year
- Inlet Dance Company – Cleveland Public Theater
- International Film Festival, Hard Rock Café
- Simon Wiesenthal: The Life and Legend – book by Tom Segev – at Mandel JCC
- Tour of Severance Hall with the “Tuesday Tumblers”
- Tour of the Plain Dealer Publishing Facility
- Valley Art Center Gallery, Chagrin Falls and dinner at Raintree Restaurant
- Visit to a Usonian home designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, tour of the Allen Memorial Art Museum and dinner at Weia Teia restaurant

### Discussion Groups

- A Significant Decision I’ve Made in My Life and Its Implications
- Civility in our Country: Can we find it?
- Cleveland: The Good News and the Bad News
- Do you have concerns or fears for your family and/or descendants regarding the world they will live in?
- Does Secular Humanistic Judaism Have a Future?
- Explaining the Philosophy of Humanistic Judaism
- Go Back in Time to When You Were 17 and Give Advice with Benefit of 20/20 Hindsight – Mens Discussion Group
- Is Liberal Humanism the Dominant “Religion” of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?

## **Discussion Groups, continued**

- What Are Some of Your Proudest Moments?
- What Experiences Have Shaped Your Political Views?
- What Should our Relationship Be, as Individuals and as Americans, with Muslims Locally and Nationally?

## **Shabbat Speakers**

- 555 - Understanding Islam – Ahmed Fellague
- A Life in Music – Carl Topilow, Cleveland POPS Orchestra
- A Stitch in Time: The Cleveland Garment Industry” – Sean Martin, Western Reserve Historical Society
- Aging with a Plan: How a Little Thought Today Can Vastly Improve Your Tomorrow – Sharona Hoffman
- An Agenda for Cleveland and Northeast Ohio, and What the Political Parties Intend to Do About it – Peter Lawson Jones and Mary E. Samide
- Arts Education: Changing Lives, Creating Futures – Marsha Dobrzynski
- Cleveland Foundation – Kathleen Cerveny
- Cleveland Jewish FilmFest – Deborah Bobrow
- Cleveland’s Future: It’s Not What it Used To Be – Brian Gleisser, Council of Economic Opportunities in Greater Cleveland
- Cooperative Ownership: The Oldest New Model - Brett Jones
- Counting the Dead – Making the Dead Count – Mark Weber
- Creating Real Democracy: Human Rights Over Corporate Rights – Greg Coleridge
- Death Penalty: Time for Reform or Abolition? – Margery Koosed
- Donating Medical Equipment Hurts the Recipients – Robert Malkin, Ph.D.
- Easy and Affordable Ways to Adopt Sustainable Lifestyles – Stephanie Spear, EcoWatch
- Edwins Restaurant – Matt Feldman
- Emerging Democracy or Reasserting Autocracy? Egypt’s Transitions Since the January Uprising – Joshua Stacher, Ph.D.
- Engliyada, a Jewish Federation program that sends volunteers to teach conversational English to Israeli adults in Beit She’an, Cleveland’s sister city – Andrea Kroppveld & Julie Rabin
- Future of Jewish Theater in Cleveland – Faye Sholiton
- Getting Corporate Money out of Elections – Greg Coleridge
- Global Judaism in Focus: Central Asia’s Bukharan Jews – Alanna Cooper, Ph.D.
- Growing Markets in Cleveland – Donita Anderson, North Union Farmers Market
- How to Talk (and Think) About Israel – Alan Federman, J Street Cleveland
- Jewish History in Cleveland After World War II – Dr. Sean Martin
- Jews and Rock and Roll – Derek Poindexter
- Lake Erie: Is It Healthy? What Makes the Lake Healthy or Ill? – Professor Gerald Matisoff
- Laughter Yoga – Laurie Dreskin
- Leaving Iran, a Glimpse into the Persian Mind – Isaac Yomtovian
- Medical Advances - Who Owns Them and Who profits – Suzanne Rusnak, Educator
- Miep Gies and Anne Frank – Fern Levy
- Nostalgia for Jerusalem’s Past: Israeli and Palestinian Memories – Dr. Dana Hercbergs
- Ohio End of Life Options – Lisa Schattinger
- Our Heritage, Our Health - Ashkenazi Jewish Diseases and Gaucher’s Disease – Gary Frohlich
- Partnership Between Jewish Community of St. Petersburg, Russia and the Jewish Federation of Cleveland – Ilanit Gerblich Kalir
- Preventing an Iranian Nuclear Weapon Without War – Getting Real – Norman Robbins, M.D., Ph.D.
- Rabbi Abba Silver’s Battle Against the Cleveland Nazi’s – Dennis Sutcliffe
- Recent Church-State Controversies – Alex Luchenitser
- Renewing Jewish Life in Germany after the Holocaust – Jay Geller, PhD, CWRU
- Six Jewish American Film Directors, Bill Rafalski
- Songs of Chanukah – Noah Budin, entertainer
- Starting Up: Taking the Entrepreneurial Leap and Transforming the Economy – Leah Yomtovian

## **Shabbat Speakers, continued**

- Stem Cells: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly – Barbara Truitt, CWRU
- Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis: Law, Justice, Zionism and Secular Judaism – Walker Todd
- Surviving 9/11 – George Sleigh
- Sustainable Business Principles – Victoria Avi
- Teaching Kids to Be Capitalist – Greg Malkin
- Teaching the Holocaust to Non-Jews – Aimee Young
- The 2008 Elections and the Jewish Right – Professor Peter Haas, CWRU
- The Evolution of Yiddish – Annabelle Weiss
- The Future of Cleveland and Northeast Ohio – Can They be Saved? – Norm Krumholz
- The Insanity Plea: A History of Reform, Revenge, and Rationalization – Phillip Resnick, M.D., CWRU
- The Jews of Cuba – Robin Lieberman
- The Jews of India – Linda Tobin and Stephen Pepper
- The Known and Unknown of This Year's Election (2012) – Jerry Graham
- The Mah Jongg Story - Game or Addiction? – Lois Klein
- The Secret Medical School in the Warsaw Ghetto – Harold Ticktin
- The Urban Farm Movement – Jacqueline Kowalski, OSU Extension Educator
- U.S. Monetary Policy: The Road to Weimar? – Walker Todd and Ray Kalich
- View from the Editor's Desk – Cynthia Dettelbach, past editor of The Cleveland Jewish News
- What is Jewish Art? Controversy and Confusion – Dr. Samantha Biskind
- What's Wrong with American Democracy and How Can It Be Fixed? – Robert Charlick, PhD
- Witness to History – Internment of Japanese-Americans during WWII – Ed Ezaki
- Women of the Wall: A Personal Account – Fran Immerman
- Yiddish Music – Bert Stratton

# BEING A MADRIKH (MADRIKHA) / LEADER / VEGVAYZER

By Rifke Feinstein, Mark Weber & Bobbie Varble

Rifke Feinstein

The three titles in the headline were those bestowed on me after I finished my studies at the International Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism (of which CSJO is a member) in 1993 in Detroit, Michigan.

The courses were varied and intense...from Ancient through Modern History; from Jewish Culture (including Holidays) through Life Cycle Events; from the Philosophy through the Roots of Secular Humanistic Judaism.

I enjoyed the readings and loved the discussions. When I completed my work, I felt that I knew more about my background than ever before. I very much wanted to officiate wedding ceremonies, for which I needed my Madrikha / Vegvayzer / Leader status, and so, I completed the intense three-year course of study. It has proven itself very worthwhile!

And it has certainly been beneficial to the communities I am, and have been a part of, in helping me create secular Jewish holiday programs and in presenting information on Secular Humanistic Jewishness.

Mark Weber

I joined the Jewish Secular Community of Cleveland (JSC) in the Spring of 1995. I remember giving a Friday evening talk on "Jewish Detective Fiction" shortly after I joined JSC. Starting in 1995, I served several terms as chair of programming for Friday evening Shabbat celebrations. Starting in 1998, I began giving Rosh Hashanah "sermons" and I still enjoy the privilege of delivering them each year. In 2001, I completed the Leadership Program at the International Institute for Secular and Humanistic Judaism, in suburban Detroit. Upon finishing the program, I became a Madrikh and began serving the JSC. Over the years, I have presided over marriages, memorial services, baby naming, and bar/bat mitzvah ceremonies for the Community.

Bobbie Varble

I have been asked to describe what prompted me to become a madrikha and what that role means to me:

I admit that I'm proud of myself for being one of the very first to be certified as a Leader / Madrikh / Spokesperson, though I must also admit that I did not plan that achievement. It was the late 80's and I was already actively involved on the organizational level of our movement. When the International Institute for Secular and Humanistic Judaism was created to educate our followers and train our leaders, of course I wanted to help it succeed. So I signed up for one course. I didn't consider entering the madrikh certification program since I was already a 'leader' and way too busy to commit to years of required weekend seminars (in Michigan!) plus papers, projects, and an internship.



But I dutifully made the time to attend that one early seminar and, to my surprise, found it to be extraordinary in every way possible. So, just for fun, I enrolled in the next seminar being offered. And the next. And the next. And the rest is history. I completed the entire curriculum and was ordained in 1993.

Of all the education I have received, of all the jobs and careers in which I've engaged, of all the remarkable experiences that have come my way, none have been as satisfying and pleasurable as training and practicing as a madrikha. We "guides" are privileged to welcome babies and families into our fold, then continue to assist them throughout their secular Jewish lives, however they may need us. Most fun of all, we spend long hours with couples in love, focusing on only the most joyful aspects of the human experience. As if the emotional rewards of being a madrikha weren't enough, we also often get great food and even a little gelt. Who wouldn't love this work?

**FOLLOWING IS A COPY OF  
THE MEMORY BOOK PRESENTED AT THE  
40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION**



## **40th Anniversary Celebration**

**1988 / 1989 – 2007 / 2008**

## **OUR PURPOSE**

The Jewish Secular Community (JSC) provides a warm and supportive community where we can:

- celebrate the rhythms of life and the Jewish calendar in a meaningful and secular humanistic mode
- learn about Judaism and teach it to our children
- meet like-minded people to discuss issues of Jewish or universal importance
- socialize with friends and family
- contribute to the betterment of society, and
- belong to a world-wide movement of Secular Humanistic Jews

## **OUR PHILOSOPHY**

- Human beings have the power and responsibility to shape their own lives independent of supernatural intervention
- Life should be directed to human growth and self-fulfillment
- We have a responsibility to work toward the achievement of freedom, dignity and happiness for all people
- Judaism is the continually evolving culture and civilization that the Jewish people created throughout history
- A Jew is an individual who identifies with the history, culture, and future of the Jewish people and with their struggles and triumphs
- No single Jewish ideology or lifestyle will be relevant and meaningful to all Jews. Only Jewish pluralism will guarantee the continuity of the Jewish people
- Jewishness is the integral part of our lives and we strive to make our choices consistent with our Secular Humanistic Jewish beliefs

## **OUR ACTIVITIES**

### **Jewish Festivals and Life Cycle Events**

- Holiday celebrations / observances with reflections, readings and music giving voice to our beliefs and ideals
- Perpetuating humanistic Jewish traditions and creating meaningful new ones
- Egalitarian ceremonies marking milestones and reflecting our contemporary, personal convictions

### **Social and Cultural Activities**

- Adult get-togethers
- Family Shabbat and holiday dinners
- Monthly newsletter
- Social action and volunteerism

### **Discussion Programs**

- Adult education and discussions on a variety of topics, including human and contemporary world issues
- Adult and children's reference library

## 40TH ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE

### Chairperson

- Marcia Rosenthal

### Steering Committee

- Beverly Feingold
- Rifke Feinstein
- Allen Guth
- Mickey Stern
- Edith Todd
- Tybee Zuckerman

### Program Committee

- Jim Mayer – Chairperson
- Roni Berenson
- Carol and Bill Falender
- Nadelane Joseph
- Kathe Mayer
- Mickey Stern

### Invitations and Mailings

- Allen Guth
- John Klein
- Marcia and Gary Rosenthal

### Power Point Slide Show

- Roni Berenson

### Opening Activities

- Allen Guth
- Roy Berko

### Recollections

- Mickey Stern – Founder
- Chuck Lapine – Founder
- Rifke Feinstein (1<sup>st</sup> decade)
- Liela and Michelle Brode (2<sup>nd</sup> decade)
- Carol Falender (3<sup>rd</sup> decade)
- Mark Weber (4<sup>th</sup> decade)

### Music

- Song (original JCS lyrics by Bill Meckler and Gene Rosewater for 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary)
- Revision and Update by Tybee Zuckerman for 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary
- Chorus – Elliott Berenson, Carol Falender, Ellen Schwartz, Sharon and Steve Shucard, Walker Todd, Tybee Zuckerman

### Publicity

- Sandy Guth

### Memory Book Committee

- Lori Berenson
- Roni Berenson
- Liela Brode
- Suzette Cohen
- Nora Kancelbaum
- Mickey Stern
- Dorothy Werblow
- Mark Weber - Introduction

## 1988 - 1989

### Board of Trustees

President	Barry Epstein
Treasurer	Sid Brode
Sunday School	Carole Delmonte
Holidays	Allan Rubinstein
Adult Education	Enid German
Social	Dorothy Werblow
Membership	Gloria Einstein and Carol Bortz
Newsletter	Scott Radway
CSJO Liaison	Bobbie Varble
Coordinator	Carol Falender

### Treasurer

- Bills were mailed to members in October. It was reported that the JSC was “reasonably solvent.”

### Sunday School

- Sunday School began on September 25 at the Mayfield Jewish Community Center with 14 students. Gail Pollis Spiro was the educational director.
- Parents had a bagel and coffee gathering the first Sunday of each month to discuss Sunday School issues.
- The students covered the holidays, Israel, Bible stories, tzedakah, minorities/prejudice, immigration, and eastern European roots.
- The students attended a Megillah reading for Purim at Suburban Temple.
- Gail felt that despite the children’s varied ages, they had become a close and caring group.
- A Sunday School Open House was held for prospective families on May 7.
- Gail Pollis Spiro was our representative to the Bureau of Jewish Education.
- The Teen Group met with Samantha Barone and participated in sports activities and played Traditions, a game that is like Jewish Trivial Pursuit. They participated in many other activities.

### Holidays

- Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur programs were held at the Civic. There were 200 people in attendance on Rosh Hashanah. Potluck brunches were served in members’ homes after the Rosh Hashanah program. We had a children’s Yom Kippur program at a member’s home that included storytelling, music, and the blowing of the shofar.
- There was a Chanukah party (including entertainment) for adults. The children’s Chanukah party followed the next day.
- A Succot party was held at the home of Bill and Carol Falender. Children helped decorate the succah with their teachers, and a potluck lunch was served.

- Tu B'Shvat was celebrated with a seder. These gatherings were potluck with eight families hosting others in their homes. Eighty people attended. Members were also encouraged to plant trees in Israel.
- The Passover Seder was held at the South Euclid Community Center with close to 90 people attending.

### **Adult Ed/Shabbat Programs**

- On November 20, Sidney Kraus, a political commentator on Channel 43 who attended both the Republican and Democratic Conventions, spoke to the group. His topic was "What Do the Elections All Mean?"
- Laura Meckler, a high school teen, had represented the JSC in December at a CSJO training seminar and presented a program entitled "The Roots of Secular Judaism" to the JSC on January 6.
- In February, Moshe Adler led a lively discussion on the differences and similarities between our community and other Jewish groups.
- On April 7, Bobbie Varble spoke on "The Impact of the Holocaust on 20th Century Jewry."

### **Social Gatherings**

- The annual summer picnic was held at Horseshoe Lake Park in Shaker Heights on July 10.
- "Crossing Delancy," a romantic comedy in which a delightfully nosey, old-fashioned "bubbie" hires a matchmaker to marry off her modern, independent, 80's style granddaughter, was the play selected for a Jewish Secular Community theater party on November 12. An after-theater party was enjoyed at the home of David and Carol Bortz.
- On December 12, the JSC toured an exhibit at the College of Jewish Studies called the "Rebirth of Israeli Art," followed by dinner at Corky and Lenny's.
- At the adult Purim party members were encouraged to wear costumes. More than 40 people attended.
- In May, there was another theater party at the Cleveland Public Theater featuring a Yiddish play.

### **Membership**

- There are 71 family units in 1989-90.
- New members: Abe and Shirley Brustein, Jim and Penny Harris, Don Sayre, Leonard and Barbara Gelfand, Sam Burke, Marie and Aaron Anton

### **Newsletters**

- Our newsletters were sent out regularly by the editor, Scott Radway.

### **Congress of Secular Jewish Organizations (CSJO)**

- Bobbie Varble reported that there was a newly developed national training program for secular teachers and leaders.
- In May, the Congress of Secular Jewish Organizations' (CSJO) 19th annual conference was held in Cleveland at the Clarion Hotel chaired by Bobbie Varble and Carole Delmonte. About 150 people attended from all over the U.S. and Canada. It was a very successful conference and featured 18 workshops.

## **Other**

- Mickey Stern began to prepare the records of the Jewish Secular Community to be preserved at the Cleveland Jewish Archives at the Western Reserve Historical Society. Information was provided on how to accomplish this.
- The June 17 issue of the Cleveland Jewish News contained an article about the Jewish Secular Community.
- A committee is being formed to rewrite/revise the Rosh Hashanah program.



## 1989 - 1990

### Board of Trustees

President	Dorothy Werblow
Treasurer	Kathe Mayer
Sunday School	Carole and Jordan Delmonte
Holidays	Carol Bortz and Don Sayre
Adult Education	Enid German
Social	Deborah Bonem and Rona Weiss
Membership	Gloria Einstein and Susan Marder
Newsletter	Gilbert Winer and Bill Falender
CSJO Liaison	Bobbie Varble
Coordinator	Carol Falender

### Treasurer

- In September the treasurer reported our financial situation to be just fine. Dues covered costs for the entire year.

### Sunday School

- Gail Pollis Spiro was the principal.
- School began with two classes on October 8, 1989, with 29 students and a live music presentation. Parents were invited to stay for bagels and conversation.
- On December 3, parents had a discussion about the December Dilemma, regarding the stress and confusion intermarried couples experience at this time of year.
- The children's Chanukah party was on December 17. Over 50 people enjoyed several musical presentations.
- On February 4, at the Sunday morning bagel get-together Harriet Tishkoff (former principal of the JSC) presented a program primarily (but not exclusively) for new members about the history of the JSC, its ideals, and values. Teen Amy Mayer discussed the B'nai Mitzvah program and Secular Judaism's relevance to teens today.
- JSC students joined Suburban Temple for their Purim Carnival.
- The teen group didn't continue this year because too few teens were interested.
- There was an Open House for new members on April 29.
- In May, Sunday School families evaluated the school, making suggestions for the future.

### Holidays

- The Rosh Hashanah program was held at 10 A.M. at the South Euclid Community Center with potluck brunches in members' homes following. About 80 people attended the brunches.
- The Yom Kippur program was held on October 8.
- The children's Yom Kippur program was at 10:30 A.M. with ceremonies, readings and commentary appropriate for young children.
- Succot was celebrated at the Falenders' on October 15 with succah decorating and a potluck luncheon.

- Tu B'Shvat was celebrated on February 9 in members' homes (hosts and guests) with a Tu B'Shvat Seder.
- The Passover Seder was at the South Euclid Community Center with 80 people attending.

### **Adult Ed/Shabbat Programs**

- On January 26, there was a discussion on "Who Wrote the Bible?" with Bobbie Varble offering the secular point of view.
- On March 2, a program was offered entitled "Be an Armchair Traveler" with Jewish travel interests highlighted.
- In May, Alvin Schorr of the Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences spoke on the timely and engaging topic of the modern American family welfare policies and family social issues for the 1990's.

### **Social and Cultural Gatherings**

- The camp weekend was held on September 8-10 at Camp Klein in Concord. The weekend included much food and a highly engaging and penetrating lecture by Don Ramos of Cleveland State University discussing the Central American political situation. David Bortz did an excellent job organizing the weekend, which also included Lana Moresky speaking about the Democratic Party Convention that she had attended, a play by the JSC Players, and Samantha Barone leading a discussion about dating.
- A theater party was held on November 4 featuring "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dream Coat," with a discussion, food, and fun at a member's home afterwards. Twenty-four people attended.
- A Cholesterol Festival/Cooking Demonstration featuring kreplach and challah among other delicacies was held on November 17. .
- The adult Chanukah party was on December 16.
- A Purim party was held on March 10 with 40 participants enjoying hamentashen and fun.
- On June 2, David and Carol Bortz hosted a farewell party for Judy Bergmann and Marsha Meckler, members who were moving out of town.

### **Membership**

- New Members: Nadelane Joseph and Mark Finkenbine, Jerry and Leslie Keller, Ann and David Olszewski, Karen Rosenberg and Ray Szubski, Mark and Carolyn Siegel, Mark and Peggy Sivakoff, John and Susan Hersch
- There are 77 family units in 1989-90

### **Newsletters**

- They were published with regularity.

### **Congress of Secular Jewish Organizations (CSJO)**

- A discussion was held in April regarding the JSC's involvement in CSJO and how much each adult member should be charged to help finance the national office.
- Bobbie Varble requested that the registration fee for the next leadership training institute should be covered by the JSC. She encouraged others to attend the institute.
- CSJO will be having its annual conference in Toronto in late May.

## 1990 - 1991

### Board of Trustees

Chairperson	Dorothy Werblow
Treasurer	Kathe Mayer
Sunday School	Carole Delmonte
Holidays	Mark Sivakoff
Adult Education	Abe Brustein
Social	Debbie Bonem and Rona Weiss
Membership	Susan Marder
Newsletter	Gil Winer
CSJO Liaison	Bobbie Varble
Coordinator	Carol Falender

### Treasurer

- Balance as of August 20, 1990, is \$6406.32.
- Family membership was \$150 and single membership was \$75.

### Sunday School

- Gail Spiro was the principal and teacher of the younger grades. Emily Cole-Kelly was her teacher's aide.
- Jordon Delmonte was the teacher of the older grades. They studied Europe, Africa, and South America in ancient, medieval, and current times.
- The Sunday School opened with 28 students. Tuition was \$175 per child.
- The parents had a bagel and coffee brunch the first Sunday of each month to discuss Sunday School issues.
- The school had a food drive for Thanksgiving and donated food to B'nai Brith Women's Council.
- The children's Chanukah party, held at the home of Deedra and Michael Uth, was a great success.
- Two classes attended a performance of the play "The Sabbath Peddler" at the JCC.
- In February, the Purim party was held at Gail Spiro's home for hamentashen baking.
- The classes attended Suburban Temple for their Purim festival on February 4.
- A Community Open House was held on April 7. Prospective Sunday School families were invited.
- In May, parents reviewed and discussed the curriculum and made suggestions for next year.

### Holidays

- Rosh Hashanah was held at St. Paul's Church. Ann Olszewski provided the music, and the Sunday School children sang at the service. Six families hosted 70 persons for the brunches after the program. The families were Bonem, Bortz, Falender, Joseph/Finkenbine, Rubinstein, and Weiss.
- The Yom Kippur program was held at the South Euclid Community Center.

- Tu B'Shvat dinners were held at members' homes. Six families hosted and 60 attended.
- The Passover Seder, potluck style, was held at the South Euclid Community Center on March 30 with music by Ann Olszewski and the Sunday School chorus.

### **Adult Education/Shabbat Program**

- Programs were held in member's homes.
- A "Show & Tell" evening was held when members brought mementos and treasures from their past that were reminiscent of their Jewish heritage, background or orientation. "Jews From Exotic Places" was the topic. Three of our members spoke about growing up Jewish in their respective countries. They were Schlomo Benson from Turkey, Maureen Hack from South Africa, and Morris Kajawski from Argentina.
- David Guralnik spoke on "The Yiddish Theatre."
- Karen Nussbaum, Executive Director of 9 to 5 Organization of Office Workers, spoke on "Judaism and Feminism."
- A special meeting was called on February 17 for members to share their feelings about the Gulf War.

### **Social**

- The camp weekend was held at Camp Klein on September 1-2. Attendance included 18 adults and 6 children. One suggestion for next year was to plan a day-long event at a water park.
- The adult Chanukah party was held December 15 at the home of Nadelane Joseph and Mark Finkenbine.
- A retreat was held on March 3. Sandra Arndt helped lead the activities. The results of the retreat presented two major recommendations. One involved strengthening the sense of interconnection and interdependency among our membership by having more communal participation such as Shabbat dinners. The other recommendation involves redefining and reinterpreting our relationship to the sacred, spiritual, ritual, and other traditional religious elements that have been the source of mainstream Judaism. Members will assess whether to revise the content of our Rosh Hashanah program. Likewise, the parents of Sunday School children will be reviewing the instructional content of the Sunday School curriculum. Two committees were formed to address these issues.
- Members attended the play "Wallenberg." The Varbles hosted an after-theater party.
- Shabbat dinners were reinstated. The Delmontes, Falenders, and Olszewskis hosted 26 participants.
- The summer picnic was held at Pioneer Waterland.

### **Membership**

- There were 75 family units in 1990.
- New members: Michael and Deedra Uth, Dennis and Joyce MacCrombie, Michael and Barbara Carter, Tom and Kathy Cole-Kelly, Richard and Denise Novak, David Rockwell, Wendy Phillips, Mark and Lynn Singer. Gloria Einstein changed her name to Gloria Miller.

## **Newsletters**

- There were 5 newsletters printed in October, November, January, March, and April.

## **CSJO**

- The International Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism (IISHJ) conference met in Chicago on October 19-21, 1990. The theme underlining the meetings was "The Future of the Jewish People: A Secular Humanistic Response."
- In lieu of its national conference this year, CSJO will be holding a nationwide teen and young adult conference this year May 25-27, 1991, at Camp Tamarack, Michigan.

## **Board Decisions**

- JSC filed for 501(c)3 tax status.
- We voted to join the International Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism (IISHJ) as an associate member.
- The Board approved a proposal that formalized the relationship between the JSC and the IISHJ Leader Training Program.
- Bobbie Varble attended the Institute Leader Training of the IISHJ in Detroit February 5.
- Shabbat dinners were reinstated on a regular basis as a vehicle for building community.
- The JSC contributed \$50 to support the Yom Hashoa Commemoration.
- Bobbie Varble and Laura Meckler attended the Jewish Community Federation's Young Leadership Conference subsidized by the Board.

## 1991 - 1992

### Board of Trustees

President	Dorothy Werblow
Treasurer	Kathe Mayer
Sunday School	Debbie Bonem and Nadelane Joseph
Holidays	Mark Sivakoff
Adult Education	Abe Brustein
Social	Carol Bortz and Miriam Grossman
Membership	Deedra Uth
Newsletter	Scott Radway
CSJO Liaison	Bobbie Varble
Coordinator	Carol Falender

### Treasurer

- Balance as of July 3 was \$7,900.

### Sunday School

- Gail Spiro is returning as principal and teacher. Jordon Delmonte is also continuing as a teacher. Samantha Barone joined the staff. Emily Cole-Kelly and Tracey Weiss were teachers' helpers. Sarah Lee Epstein taught dance. School started on September 15 with 29 students.
- JSC gave our students tickets to the production of "Ish Kabibble," a JCC youth theatre production as a Chanukah gift.
- The children from the Russian-Jewish Acculturation program at the JCC were invited to our Purim party.
- The B'nai Mitzvah class volunteered with Russian Jews and some learned Hebrew. Their B'nai Mitzvah ceremony will take place September 12, 1992.
- On May 3, there was a parents' bagel brunch and a year-end evaluation of the school. A committee has volunteered to review the curriculum for next year.
- On May 10, there was a year-end party with folk dancing followed by pizza for lunch.

### Holidays

- Jewish Holidays were celebrated in secular fashion and at several different locations.
- Rosh Hashanah was held at the South Euclid Community Center on September 9. The children's chorus sang. Five families hosted 58 persons for the Rosh Hashanah brunches: Bortz, Falender, Mayer, Varble, and Weiss.
- The Yom Kippur program was held at the Cleveland Heights Main Library on September 17.
- The children's Yom Kippur program was held at the home of Rona and Barry Weiss.
- The Succah building was at the Falenders' home and included a community potluck on September 22.
- Tu B'Shvat was held at members' homes on Friday, January 24.
- Passover Seder was held at the South Euclid Community Center and was attended by 40 persons.

## **Adult Education**

- Programs are held in members' homes.
- In October, Al Stern spoke on "Current Prospects for Peace in Israel."
- Mark Weber spoke on Jewish Detectives and Detective Fiction also in October.
- Dr. Joseph Kelly, Chairman of the Religious Studies Department at John Carroll University, spoke on "Anti-Semitism from a Gentile's Perspective."
- Dr. Thomas Murray, medical ethicist spoke on issues regarding life support, AIDS treatment, and the current best seller Final Exit.
- Donald Morris of the Urban League spoke on "African-American & Jewish Relations."
- "Funerals & Burials": How can our JSC support our members? Speakers were Ms. Betzel, a lawyer, Natalie Shapiro, a funeral director, and Kit Luoma of the Hemlock Society.
- Member-led discussion on Simon Wiesenthal's book Sunflower.
- Rabbi Suzannah Heschel spoke on "Feminism in the Jewish World."

## **Social**

- The Klezmer Festival, which was held at the JCC, was attended by both adults and children.
- The adult Chanukah party was held at the home of Barry and Barbara Epstein.
- A JCC Theatre Party was held on May 16 to see "Doubles." The Varbles hosted the after-theater dessert.
- The summer outing was held at Pioneer Waterland on June 28.

## **Membership**

- A series of ads has been placed in the Cleveland Jewish News, the Sun papers, and the Dobama Theater Program. Three ads in the Sun papers were \$320 each, four ads in CJN at \$100 each. The response to our ads was very positive.
- Seven new family units joined the community: Dennis and Chris Aster, Russ and Debbie Falkner, Howard and Adrienne Zucker, Terry and Daniel Wolpaw, Barbara and Dennis Trauben, Renee Lipson, and Mary Wyman. An orientation breakfast was held for these families on January 19.
- The 1991 roster listed 61 family units.
- A get-acquainted coffee was held for new and prospective members at the JCC on January 26, 1992.

## **CSJO**

- There will be three regional conferences held this year in lieu of one national conference. The Midwest Regional conference was held November 22-24, 1991, in Detroit. Bobbie Varble attended. Ben Varble was a teen representative to the conference.
- The CSJO National Conference was held in Windsor, Canada, on May 23-25 1992. Samantha Barone, Renee Lipson, Bobbie, Jon, and Ben Varble, Marsha Meckler, and Michael Weinstein (from Hawaii) attended the conference.

## **Board Decisions**

- JSC has been granted a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status.
- A new board position was created for a Social Action/Community Service person to organize activities for the community.
- Restructuring the Sunday school's administration was discussed. Dr. Sylvia Abrams, Assistant Executive Director at the Bureau of Jewish Education, was contacted and agreed to be an educational consultant. After meeting with Dr. Abrams and with JSC Sunday School staff, Deborah Bonem and Nadelane Joseph felt that the school will need a principal if it continues to grow.
- The Board contributed \$50 to underwrite the Yom Hashoa program at Park Synagogue.



## 1992 - 1993

### Board of Trustees

Chairperson	Mark Sivakoff
Treasurer	Kathe Mayer
Sunday School	Debbie Bonem and Nadelane Joseph
Holidays	Dorothy Werblow
Adult Education	Abe Brustein and Russ Falkner
Social	Carol Bortz and Barbara Trauben
Membership	Deedra Uth
Newsletter	Barry Weiss
CSJO Liaison	Bobbie Varble
Coordinator	Judy Bergmann

### Treasurer

- At the October board meeting, it was announced that the community had a deficit and that dues would be raised the following year. Also, non-members would be asked for donations at the holiday observances. Mark Sivakoff, Chair, sent a letter to all members asking for donations to meet the shortfall, which was due to expanding programs, the hiring of a third teacher, a larger venue for Rosh Hashanah, and unexpected expenses.
- The community received approximately \$20,000 from the estate of Jim Mayer's late aunt, Lottie Pinkus. These funds were to be used as an endowment for the Sunday School.

### Sunday School

- The year started with the B'nai Mitzvah of three Sunday School students, Sheila Keller, Julia Olszewski, and Jed Wolpaw. The three families worked together for a year to prepare the program. It was a time of study of Jewish philosophy and values, volunteer commitments, and reflections on Jewish, humanitarian, and family issues.
- Thirty students were enrolled in the Sunday School in three classes taught by Gail Pollis Spiro, principal, Samantha Barone (Dorothy Werblow's niece), and Judith Holzer. Sheila Keller, Julia Olszewski, and Tracey Weiss were teacher assistants. Ms. Holzer also taught a half-hour Hebrew class starting mid-year for interested students. Folk dancing was taught four times during the year by Sara Lee Epstein.
- The curriculum was revised using resources from other groups.
- In November, Walker Todd substituted for Judy Holzer and gave a talk about the movie "Raiders of the Lost Ark" and its biblical tie-ins.
- In December, the parents' bagel brunch featured the annual "December Dilemma" discussion regarding the stress and confusion inter-married couples experience this time of year. The 1st through 4th grades attended a Chanukah play at the JCC.
- In January, The Shalhevet dance group and the Edna Duffy Liturgical Dance group presented a multi-arts production, "I Have a Dream," in commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the expulsion of the Jews from Spain and in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.
- In February, the students attended an exhibit at the College of Jewish Studies, "The City of David: Discoveries from the Excavations."

- In May, the 6th and 7th graders attended a performance of the play “Rags” at the JCC.
- Samantha Barone’s 3rd-through-5th-grade students visited the East Side Catholic Women’s Shelter and brought clothing and health and grooming supplies and shared a lunch with the residents. The class also visited Young Israel of Cleveland and toured Taylor Road Synagogue.
- Gail Pollis Spiro’s class went on a pretend trip to Israel, and Carolyn Siegel presented a program on Marc Chagall.

### **Holidays**

- Our Rosh Hashanah program was held at Executive Caterers. Carol Falender was presented with a gift for her long-time service as coordinator of the JSC.
- We observed Yom Kippur evening at the University Heights Library. On Yom Kippur day, a children’s program was held at the home of Barry and Rona Weiss.
- The community succah building and potluck lunch were hosted by Bill and Carol Falender. The Sunday School students invited imaginary guests and “introduced” them to those present.
- Our annual Tu B’Shvat celebration in February was held at various members’ homes.
- Our Passover Seder was held at the South Euclid Community Center.

### **Adult Education/Shabbat Programs**

- During the year, Renee Lipson and Judy Bergmann became the new chairs of the Adult Education Committee.
- In November, Sidney Kraus from Cleveland State University presented a post-election review.
- In March, Walker Todd presented a program on the movie “Raiders of the Lost Ark” and its biblical tie-ins.
- In April, a reading of Sunflower by Simon Wiesenthal was held.
- In May, the movie “The Dybbuk” was seen and discussed.
- Shabbat family dinners were held in March and June.

### **Social Gatherings**

- A Labor Day picnic was held at the home of Rona and Barry Weiss.
- In November, we attended the play “Every Other Jump” at Dobama Theater and an after-theater party at the Varbles’ home.
- December marked our annual Chanukah party at Mark and Peggy Sivakoff’s home. A children’s Chanukah party was held at the home of Chris and Dennis Aster.
- In February, the community attended an exhibit at the College of Jewish Studies, “The City of David: Discoveries from the Excavators.” A special tour with Bobbie Varble as docent was arranged for our members.
- In March, we celebrated Purim with our annual potluck party.
- In May, we attended the JCC play “Rags” about the garment industry that was directed by Fred Sternfeld, a former JSC student.
- Our end-of-the-year activity was a picnic with water activities at Pioneer Waterland.

## **Membership**

- There were 55 families/households in the membership this year. New Members: Edie and Walker Todd, Vivian and Edward Duvall, Lynn Sometz, Debbie and Paul Ernsberger, Wendy and John Mizani, Harvey and Sheryl Rothenberg and 9 students in the youth group.

## **Social Action**

- In the fall, the community contributed to the hurricane victims in Florida through the American Red Cross.
- Gil Winer expressed an interest in forming a social action committee, and his first project was arranging a donation of food to the Cleveland Food Bank.

## **CSJO**

- Bobbie Varble attended the international CSJO conference in Israel and was named to the Board of Governors of the International Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism. The Institute was starting a rabbinical training program, and Bobbie was asked to design a program about secular humanistic Judaism.
- Of note this year was a statement issued by the CSJO addressing the right of Soviet emigres to Israel to be provided a pluralistic approach to their future.

## 1993 - 1994

### Board of Trustees

Chairperson	Jim Mayer
Treasurer	Kathe Mayer
Sunday School	Edith Todd
Holidays	Dorothy Werblow*
Adult Education	Abe Brustein and Renee Lipson
Social	Barbara Trauben**
Membership	Barry Weiss
Newsletter	Barry Weiss
Social Action	Gil Winer
CSJO Liaison	Bobbie Varble
Coordinator	Dorothy Werblow

\* In December, Jerry Goldstrom was appointed Chair of the Holiday Committee.

\*\*Debbie Ernsberger became the Social Chair later in the year.

### Treasurer

- Our opening operating balance was \$5,309, and total assets were \$25,309 due to the large donation from the previous year.

### Sunday School

- There were two B'nai Mitzvah groups in September at the Alcazar Hotel. One group consisted of Zachary DuVall, Jacob Finkenbine Joseph, and Scott Rothenberg, and the other included Laura Bonem, Anne Hersch, and Rachel Siegel. In spring 1994, Alexander Dزامtovski celebrated his Bar Mitzvah.
- Edith Todd divided the committee responsibilities of the Sunday School into Curriculum-Debbie Bonem and Nadelane Joseph, Bagel Brunches-Carol Falender, Snacks-Chris Aster, and a telephone, holidays, and JCC liaison yet to be chosen.
- Gail Pollis Spiro, principal, and Judy Holzer were the teachers at the beginning of the year. Another teacher, Ann Weisman, was added to teach the 2nd through 4th grades. Aviv Sack became the dance instructor, and Ann Olszewski was the music coordinator.
- Tuition was raised to \$210. There were 19 students. Teens were asked to indicate their interest in a post-B'nai Mitzvah youth group and/or returning as student helpers.
- In December, the students and teachers attended a theater production of "Looking to the Light."
- In February, the Sunday School held a Purim party, to which the community was invited.
- The children were introduced to the observance of Yom Hashoah in the spring.
- In April, the Sunday school Bagel Brunch came up with a list of more than 200 names of famous Jews to be used at the opening night mixer of the CSJO conference in May.
- The Board and Sunday School is committed to running a kindergarten class in the 1994-95 year.

- The Sunday School held an end-of-year party in May. The students played “Jewish Baseball,” in which students advanced through bases after answering questions correctly.
- The Youth Group participated in several activities this year including volunteering at the Cleveland Food Bank, potluck dinner planning, leading the Sunday School Tu B’Shvat Seder, and having a discussion with Bobbie and Jon Varble about the upcoming CSJO conference.

### **Holidays**

- The Rosh Hashanah observance was again held at Executive Caterers at Landerhaven. A new system was put into effect for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Members would receive tickets to the service, and there would be a suggested donation of \$18 for guests. Barbara Trauben coordinated the after-program lunches.
- The Yom Kippur observance was held at the Cleveland Heights Library. The next morning, the children’s Yom Kippur service was held at the home of Rona and Barry Weiss.
- Tu B’Shvat was celebrated at members’ homes.
- Our Passover Seder was held at the South Euclid Community Building. As in the past, each table had a host who planned the menu for that table.
- The Falenders hosted the Sunday School students at a Succot celebration, which was followed by lunch for both students and adults.

### **Adult Education/Shabbat Programs**

- Judy Seid came to Cleveland in October and spoke to our group on “Making Midrash: An Open-Minded Approach to Jewish Mythology.”
- In November, Rabbi Alan Lettofsky, Director of Hillel at Case Western Reserve University, spoke on “Diversity in the Jewish Community.”
- For our December meeting, Bobbie Varble gave a talk on “Exploring the Ideas of Secular Humanistic Judaism.”
- Walker Todd spoke in January on “Connections between Jewish History and the American Constitution.”
- At our March meeting, Suzanne Tishkoff gave a presentation on “Jewish Artists and the Second Commandment: An Overview of Sculpture from Bezalel to Zadkine.”
- In April, there was a discussion of the movie “Schindler’s List.”
- Our last talk of the year in May was presented by Al Stern, who spoke about “The Peace Process in Israel.”

### **Social Gatherings**

- In November and April, Shabbat dinners were held at members’ homes.
- Our annual Chanukah party and potluck latke dinner was held this year at the home of Jim and Kathe Mayer.
- Purim was celebrated at the home of the Bonems.
- For our Shavuot party, we were asked to bring a copy of our favorite law. It was held at the home of Edith and Walker Todd.

- Also in May, in conjunction with the CSJO conference, the community attended the play “And the World Goes Round.”
- Our summer event was a picnic at West Branch State Park together with the Maranatha Christian Fellowship of Cleveland Hts. Debbie Ernsberger, as the new Social Chair, planned this event. Contacts with this group were initiated after the white supremacist group, Aryan Nation, dropped hate literature on the lawns of Beachwood and University Heights residents this spring.

### **Membership**

- In October, an orientation meeting was held at the home of the Brodes for new and perspective members.
- New Members: Jessie and Mindy Malone, Marv and Aviva Sack, Ann Weissman, Diane Dzamtovski. Enid German returning

### **Social Action**

- The JSC board reinstated the Social Action Committee. A food contribution was made to the Heights Emergency Food Center, and members were asked to bring contributions, including personal grooming items, to every JSC function.

### **CSJO**

- The 1994 CSJO Conference was held in Cleveland at Notre Dame College. Bobbie Varble and Debbie Ernsberger chaired the conference committee. Bobbie’s son Jon chaired the teen conference.
- The CSJO Social Action Workshop published position papers on the following topics: refugee policy and immigration, environmental issues, women’s issues, and children at risk.
- Bobbie Varble received her certification as a Madrikha from the International Institute of Secular Humanistic Judaism (IISHJ). This year marked the first ever graduation ceremony of the IISHJ, in which nine men and women from all over North America received their certification as Madrikh/a (leader).

### **Board Actions/Other**

- During the summer, the staff and directors of the Sunday School were recognized along with other area Sunday schools by the Bureau of Jewish Education in a two-page announcement in the Cleveland Jewish News.
- The JSC co-sponsored with Planned Parenthood and other pro-choice groups “Lunch with Your Legislators.” The event was a great success, with 150 guests attending.
- Jim Mayer as chair received a Certificate of Appreciation from the Jewish Family Service Association for contributions made by JSC members.

## 1994 - 1995

### Board of Trustees

Chairperson	Jim Mayer
Treasurer	Mark Sivakoff
Sunday School	Edith Todd
Holidays	Jerry Goldstrom
Music Coordinator	Marilyn Samuels
Adult Education	Cindy Goldberg and Paula Auerbach
Social	Debbie Ernsberger
Membership	Renee Lipson and Barbara Trauben
Newsletter	Barry Weiss and Rona Weiss
Social Action	Gil Winer
CSJO Liaison	Bobbie Varble
Coordinator	Dorothy Werblow

### Treasurer

- Donations for the High Holidays, memorials, and anniversaries were acknowledged.
- The community remains solvent with nothing remarkable to report.

### Sunday School

- Our enrollment had become very small. Workmen's Circle approached us to combine our schools because they were at risk of losing their support from the Jewish Community Federation and needed to enlarge their enrollment along with some other changes in their operation.
- Dorothy Werblow was invited to serve as a trustee on the board of the Jewish Education Center or Cleveland (JECC), formerly Bureau of Jewish Education, as a representative of both the Jewish Secular Community and The Workmen's Circle School.
- Tuition for Sunday School remained at \$225 even though the Workmen's Circle students paid a higher fee. We subsidized our students for the difference in tuition.
- We had 15 students attending the school.

### Holidays

- Our Rosh Hashanah program was held at Executive Caterers on September 6. It was very elegant, very well attended, and appreciated by all. Lunches were held at members' homes after the program. The Yom Kippur program was held at Harkness Chapel at CWRU.
- The children's Yom Kippur service was held at the Cleveland Heights Main Library on September 15. They performed the entire service.
- The Cleveland Jewish News interviewed Mark Sivakoff, Bobbie Varble, and Carol Falender. The newspaper wrote a very informative article about Secular Judaism and our community.
- This year an \$18 donation was requested of guests to help cover costs of both facilities.

- Tu B'Shvat dinners were held in members' homes on February 13.
- A Succot party was held at the home of Carol and Bill Falender. After the children met with their teachers on the lawn for a short while, everyone hung the decorations in the succah. Lunch was potluck.
- The Passover celebration was held at the South Euclid Community Center on April 23. It was very well attended.

### **Adult Education and Shabbat Programs**

- The first program of the year was at Renee Lipson's home on September 9 called "A Congregation of our Own." Members of the Chevrei Tikva, Cleveland's gay and lesbian congregation talked about their involvement and acceptance in the wider Jewish community.
- Dr. Alex Rubins of Tri-C was the presenter of "How to Live to Be 100 and Enjoy the Trip" on October 14 at the home of Dorothy Werblow.
- Bonnie Caplan, a Cleveland Heights Councilwoman active in the Jewish community, spoke on November 11 at the home of Debbie and Paul Ernsberger. Her topic was "Jewish Perspective on Politics and Issues."
- A youth member of our community, Laura Meckler, attended a leadership training conference in Philadelphia and spoke to us on "The Historical Roots of Secular Judaism." It was held at the Rubinsteins'.
- Carol and David Bortz hosted us on February 12. The speaker was Moshe Adler, rabbi and Educational Director of Agnon School. He spoke and led a discussion on "Secular and Theistic Jews: Our Similarities, Our Differences, Our Common Peoplehood."
- On February 24, Walker Todd presented "Constitutional Basis of Religious Freedom" at the Rona and Barry Weiss home. Walker had reading material available for us to enhance his presentation.
- On March 17, Walker Todd again presented at the home of Cindy and Bob Goldberg. The topic was "A Natural Theory of Justice."
- Bobbie Varble spoke and led a discussion on April 7 at Carol and Bill Falender's. The topic was "The Holocaust: The Major Influence on 20th Century Jewish Thought." Bobbie has been preparing to become a Madrikha at the International Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism in Michigan.
- Judge Janet Burnside of Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court spoke on "Victims' Rights" on June 9 at John and Susan Hersch's home.

### **Social/Cultural Gatherings**

- A Bagel Brunch took place at the Workmen's Circle Center while the children were at their classes. Rifke Feinstein, CSJO Executive Director, and an early member of our community, was visiting from Michigan. The idea of the brunch was to enable our current members to meet Rifke and discuss anything that CSJO might assist us with (i.e. growth, school development, programs, advertising, etc.).
- The Chanukah party was held at June and Allan Rubinstein's home on December 3. The latkes were delicious along with all the other foods and contributed to a wonderful evening.
- A Purim party was held on March 18 at Dorothy Werblow's home. Various paper products and canned goods were collected for our tzedakah program.



- A theater party was the activity for April 8. "The Immigrants," directed by Fred Sternfeld, a graduate of our school, was presented at the Halle Theater in the Mayfield Jewish Community Center. An after-theater party was held at the home of Mike and Bobbie Varble.
- On April 30, we attended a fascinating exhibit at the Cleveland College of Jewish Studies entitled: "BETA ISRAEL The Jews of Ethiopia." After the exhibit, members and their guests continued their discussions over an ethnic dinner at Parma Pirogies.
- Horseshoe Lake Pavilion was the site of our community picnic on June 17. Members of the Maranatha Christian Fellowship of Cleveland Heights joined us for good food and a discussion of anti-Semitic leaflets that had been distributed in the Beachwood and South Euclid area.

### **Membership**

- A new member orientation breakfast was held in November at the Workmen's Circle Center.
- Renee Lipson and Barbara Trauben produced a new brochure.
- There were 63 families/households in our membership this year.
- New Members: Bob and Ellen Frank, Janice Small and Allen Scott

### **Newsletters**

- Unfortunately, only 3 copies of our Newsletters were saved for this year.

### **Congress of Secular Jewish Organizations (CSJO)**

- The annual conference was held in Chicago and celebrated its 25th anniversary and the 20th anniversary of the youth conference. Eight of our members attended.

## 1995 - 1996

### Board of Trustees

Chairperson	Jim Mayer
Treasurer	Mark Sivakoff
Sunday School	Bill Falender
Holidays	June Rubinstein
Music Coordinator	Marilyn Samuels
Adult Education	Cindy Goldberg
Social	Debbie Ernsberger
Membership	Barbara Trauben and Jerry Goldstrom
Fund Raising	Paula Auerbach
Newsletter	Barry Weiss and Aaron Anton
Social Action	Gil Winer
CSJO Liaison	Renee Lipson and Bobbie Varble/alternate
Coordinator	Dorothy Werblow

### Treasurer

- In January, our bank balance was \$6,972. The money market fund was \$22,000. Since we had passed the major expenses of our fiscal year, we felt that Jewish Secular Community was quite solvent.
- Dues remained at \$100 per adult and \$225 tuition, per child. The community continued to subsidize the cost of tuition.

### Sunday School

- The B'nai Mitzvah of Mark Goldberg and Zack Aster took place at the Hawthorne Valley Country Club on August 25. The entire community was invited. Both Mark and Zack worked with Judy Holzer to prepare. The community presented each of them with a book.
- We had 15 students in school this year.
- Dr. Mel Arnoff became the director of The Workmen's Circle/Jewish Secular Community School.
- Our board has been concerned that Workmen's Circle never mentions the Jewish Secular Community in school publicity and on their letterhead. This is not in keeping with our original agreement when the merger began.
- Workmen's Circle has not yet added the history of the Secular movement to the curriculum but say that they will do so.

### Holidays

- Rosh Hashanah celebration was on September 25 at Executive Caterers at Landerhaven. Emily Bonem, a seventh grader, played the cello. Fred Sternfeld provided the music for the singing portions of our program. The room was decorated with "Stained Glass Windows" that had been made by our students. This very attractive addition was the conversation piece of the event. Luncheons were held at various members' homes.

- Yom Kippur was on October 3 at the Cedar Center library. A donation of \$25 was requested for guests to help defray costs and/or for donation to Mazon. This request was generously accepted by all.
- The Chanukah party was held on December 16 at the home of June and Allan Rubinstein. Dorothy Werblow prepared the latkes, which were devoured by all.
- February 13 was our celebration of Tu B'Shvat at member's homes.
- The Purim party was on March 2 at Carol and David Bortz's with the usual good food and good friends.
- Passover was celebrated on April 6 at The Workmen's Circle Center. It was very well attended.

### **Adult Education/Shabbat Programs**

- A Shabbat potluck dinner was held on September 8.
- On October 1, Bobbie Varble, a recent graduate as a Madrikha of the International Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism, presented a three-hour workshop on Secular Judaism. The program was held in the Connelly Center of Notre Dame College.
- On October 21, Rifke Feinstein presented the first of four programs on "Roots of Secular Judaism" at the home of Kathe and Jim Mayer.
- Jew vs. Jew by Samuel Freedman was the topic of the January 26 Shabbat program. The presenter was Mark Weber, Dean of Libraries at Kent State University.
- Al Stern presented "Prospects For Peace in the Middle East" on February 16 at the home of Carol and Bill Falender. He had recently returned from Israel, where he served as an international observer at the first Palestinian democratic elections on January 20.
- Friday Shabbat programs were held at The Workmen's Circle Center.

### **Social/Cultural Gatherings**

- Luncheon was held on November 18 with the Maranatha Church group to discuss brotherhood issues.
- A group of 24 people attended "Twilight of the Golds" at the JCC Halle theater on December 12. Bobbie and Mike Varble once again hosted an after-theater party.
- The Purim party was held on March 2 at Carol and David Bortz's home.
- On June 17, a picnic was held at Horseshoe Lake Park in Shaker Heights. Several members of the Maranatha Christian Fellowship joined us.
- Pioneer Waterland was the location of a July 7 family fun day.

### **Social Action**

- Several volunteers joined with the Jewish Federation for the "Help Build a Playground" project on the corner of East 69th and Whitney Ave on August 13.
- The Kosher Food Bank was another effort that our members assisted by donating foods and sundries collected at many of our events during the year.
- December 16 was the "Mayor's Food Basket Give-A-Way" for Christmas dinner. Our volunteers loaded and delivered large bags of food to inner-city recipients.
- "The Harvest for Hunger" program on March 31 required the volunteers to load and deliver large food bags for Easter dinner.

## **Membership**

- New families: Dale and Paula Williams, Judy and Bob Takacs, Phil Star and Jane Peterson, Mark Weber and Felisa Anthony, Mel Arnoff, Cindy and Bob Goldberg

## **Congress of Secular Jewish Organizations (CSJO)**

- Annual Conference will be held in Toronto on Memorial Day weekend.
- The position paper “Jews Among the Nations” will be discussed and voted on. Our community agreed with the position of CSJO,

## **Other**

- At the June 12 Shabbat program, there were memorial readings from Sherwin Wine’s Celebration on peace, hope, and respect to commemorate the murder of Yitzhak Rabin on November 4, 1995.
- A list of books in our library was created and printed out for members.

## 1996 - 1997

### Board of Trustees

Chairperson	Abe Brustein
Treasurer	John Hersch
Sunday School	Bill Falender
Holidays	Eddie Todd
Adult Education	Nadelane Joseph and Mark Weber
Membership	Cindy Goldberg
Newsletter	Aaron Anton
Social Action	Debbie Ernsberger and Gil Winer
PR & Advertising	Renee Lipson
CSJO Liaison	Renee Lipson
Bagel Brunch	Mark Weber
Music Director	Marilyn Samuels
At large	Jim Mayer
Coordinator	Dorothy Werblow

### Treasurer

- As of May 1997 there was about \$4,500 in the accounts.
- Phone calls are being made to members delinquent in paying their dues.

### Sunday School

- The school was again in partnership with the Workmen's Circle Sunday School, with most of the operating cost underwritten by WC. Dr. Mel Arnoff is principal.
- There were 11 students in the school (Alexzandra Weber, Erica Trauben, David and Steve Meshenberg, Carolyn Hersch, Alyse Rothenberg, Timmie Ernsberger, Laura Falender, David Weiss, Sam Star, Lauren Goldstein-Klas).
- In March, school children sang Yiddish songs during the joint Purim celebration at Suburban Temple.
- In addition to regular Sunday School classes, the school offered Jewish Folk Dance classes and music lessons.
- The JSC library offered several hundred books and periodicals.

### Holidays

- Community Shabbat dinners took place at Workmen's Circle and at members' homes.
- September - Rosh Hashanah program was held at Shaker Community Building followed by luncheons at several members' homes.
- Yom Kippur program was at Shaker Nature Center.
- Succot program and Passover Seder were held jointly with Workmen's Circle.
- Chanukah party, Tu B'Shvat dinners, and Purim parties took place at members' homes.
- B'not Mitzvah of Sarah Falender and Sarah Todd were celebrated at the Shaker Community Building.
- A wedding of a member's son was officiated by Madrikha Bobbie Varble.

## **Adult Education**

- In October, Mark Weber presented “Jewish Detectives & Detective Fiction.”
- Two programs were held in November - 1) Dr. Sidney Kraus, professor of communications at CSU spoke on “After the Election, What Does It All Mean?,” and a discussion was held on “Celebrating Secular Chanukah - A December Dilemma.”
- In January, Linda Silver, librarian, reviewed two books.
- Al Stern, member of JSC and Peace Now - spoke in February and presented the topic “The Israeli Election, Netanyahu & the Peace Process.”
- In March, the group heard Rabbi Sherwin Wine, talk about the anthology, Judaism in a Secular Age.
- Mark Weber, review of Hitler’s Willing Executioners in May.
- It was suggested that adult education programs be integrated into Friday evening Shabbat celebrations.

## **Social Gatherings**

- Gourmet group dinners were held at members’ homes.
- In August, there was an outing to the Great Lakes Science Center including a movie at the Omnimax Theater.
- Members took part in the Klezmer Festival at the JCC in November.
- A picnic at Goldbergs’ Swim Club was planned for August.

## **Membership**

- The year began with 42 family units.
- New Members: Linda Erlich, Belva and Joe Singer, Lynn Salzbrenner, Helene Weiss returning.
- Attempts were made to increase membership by placing ads in the Cleveland Jewish News and the Free Times and having informational “coffees” at members’ homes.
- Questionnaires were filled out by members to establish how they could be best served.

## **Social Action**

- In July, Aaron Anton, Abe Brustein, and Gil Winer participated in the Habitat for Humanity Housing Blitz.
- In June and August, members met with JACT (Jews and Christians Together).
- In December, members were asked to bring donations of blankets for the Altrusa International Campaign to the Chanukah party and volunteer for the Mayor’s Food Basket program.

## **Congress of Secular Jewish Organizations (CSJO)**

- Dues are being paid to CSJO.

## **Other**

- A fund raising project was the JSC Storefront, where members could buy, sell, and barter among each other, with a portion of profits going to JSC.

## 1997 - 1998

### Board of Trustees

Chairperson	Abe Brustein
Treasurer	John Hersch
Membership	Lynn Salzbrenner
School	Bill Falender
Bagel Brunch	Phil Star
B'nai Mitzvah	Nadelane Joseph
Holidays	Eddie Todd
Music	Marilyn Samuels
Social Gatherings	Sid Brode
Phone	Liela Brode
Adult Ed	Mark Weber
PR	Jerry Goldstrom
Social Action	Gil Winer
Music	Marilyn Samuels
CSJO	Renee Lipson
At-Large	Cindy Goldberg
Coordinator	Dorothy Werblow

### Treasurer

- The treasurer reported that we are solvent and in a healthy financial position.

### Sunday School

- The school joined with the Workmen's Circle school, with Joselyn Eskenazi as the director of the school, Irv Sunshine the chairman of the school board, Mel Arnoff director of Workmen's Circle, Jonathan Einhorn teaching Yiddish. Of the total 33 students, 7 are from JSC. This was increased to 9.
- In May, the tuition was raised to \$450 for first child and \$300 for a second child. JSC will continue to subsidize JSC students so that their tuition will remain at \$275 per child.

### Holidays

- Rosh Hashanah services were held at the Shaker Community Building.
- Yom Kippur adult services were held at the Shaker Lakes Nature Center.
- The Chanukah Party, the Passover Seder, and the Shabbat Community dinners took place at Workmen's Circle.
- Tu B'Shvat celebration took place in member's home.

### Adult Education/Shabbat Programs

- The Shabbat programs began with a responsive reading, some traditional activities like the candle lighting, the Kiddush (tasting of the wine), and Challah (tasting the bread), followed by discussions or adult education programs.
- Book group met at members' homes. Some of the books discussed were Judaism Beyond God by Sherwin Wine and Jewish Power by J. J. Goldberg.
- The May Shabbat program speaker was Betty Sue Feurer, Regional Director of the Anti-Defamation League.

## **Social Gatherings**

- Gourmet Group dinners and Book Club meetings were held at members' homes.
- We attended the College of Jewish Studies Museum for the Ends of the Earth exhibit.
- A brunch-picnic at Horseshoe Lake Pavilion in August was very well attended.

## **Membership**

- The 1997/98 year began with 38 family units
- Attempts were made to increase membership by placing ads in the Cleveland Jewish News as well as a weekly listing in the synagogue section. Ads were also placed in the Free Times and paid listings.
- We also had informational "coffees" at members' homes.

## **Newsletters**

- A monthly newsletter listed activities and programs, news of members, occasional thought-provoking articles, and general information.

## **Social Action**

- Members cooperated with the Jewish Volunteers in Action Habitat for Humanity Housing Blitz program.
- Members donated blankets for the Altrusa International Campaign,
- Members contributed to the Heights Emergency Food Center
- Members volunteered with the Harvest for Hunger and the Mayor's Food Basket.
- Donations were made to the Freedom of Choice Coalition.
- Some members also met with JACT (Jews & Christians Together).

## **Congress of Secular Jewish Organizations (CSJO)**

- Renee Lipson reported to the membership about CSJO activities.

## **Other**

- A B'nai Mitzvah celebration for Carolyn Hersch, Alyse Rothenberg, Erika Trauben, and David Weiss took place on June 20th.
- John and Susan Hersch's daughter, Ann, was honored in Columbus for her photography. Only 25 photos were honored from 12,000 photos submitted.
- This year marks the 30th Anniversary of the Jewish Secular Community



## 1998 - 1999

### Board of Trustees

Chairperson	Abe Brustein
Treasurer	John Hersch
Sunday School	Phil Star
Holidays	Barbara and Dennis Trauben
Adult Education	Helene Weiss
Social Gatherings	Sid Brode
Membership	Lynn Salzbrenner
Newsletter	Bill and Carol Falender
Social Action	Gil Winer
Publicity	Jerry Goldstrom
CSJO Liaison	Renee Lipson
Coordinator	Dorothy Werblow

### Treasurer

- The JSC began the new year with a comfortable balance and no need to raise dues. A committee was formed to plan for the future so that funds would be used to reflect the wants and needs of the organization. Dues were \$125 per adult per year. Sunday School dues were \$275 per year.

### Sunday School

- Lynn Salzbrenner organized an orientation meeting for prospective members that was attended by Jocelyn Eskenazi and Mel Arnoff from Workmen's Circle.
- Laura Falender's Bat Mitzvah took place on May 29 at the Shaker Heights Community Building.

### Holidays

- The Rosh Hashanah observance was held at the Shaker Heights Community Building followed by lunches at members' homes. Approximately 90 people attended the program. Abe Brustein added a personal touch with his readings, and Fred Sternfeld, former JSC student and Bar Mitzvah, provided a positive and uplifting addition with his music.
- The Yom Kippur program was held at the University Heights Library. As has been our tradition, members shared thoughts, poems, readings, and memories.
- In February, our Tu B'Shvat Seder was held at Workmen's Circle.
- Our Passover Seder was held in April at Workmen's Circle.

### Adult Education/Shabbat Programs

- Adult programs were scheduled for the second Friday of each month. Helene Weiss, chair of adult education, planned a full year of Friday evening programs, some including a Shabbat dinner and others with dessert and coffee at members' homes.
- In October, Helene Weiss led the program. The topic was "An Eye for an Eye: A Jewish View of Justice."
- In November, Mark Weber, Madrikh-in-training, spoke on "The Lost World of Polish Jews."

- The February meeting hosted David Beach from EcoCity, who spoke about ecology and urban sprawl.
- In March, Mark Finkenbine and Nadelane Joseph gave a talk on “Jewish Humor.”
- In April, Shirley Brustein, Fern Levy, and Dorothy Werblow gave a talk about Jewish women—women who crossed the prairie, women in science, women in the arts, and women in politics.
- The May meeting featured Rifke Feinstein, who spoke on the subject “Matzah Balls and Easter Eggs: Honoring Diversity in Multi-Cultural Families.”
- In June, Mark Weber presented a program on Shavuot and secular Judaism.

### **Social/Cultural Gatherings**

- Our Gourmet Group, coordinated by Edith Todd, met every other month beginning in September for a different themed dinner. November’s theme was Thanksgiving, “Stuffed Stuff,” and was held at Renee Lipson’s. January had the theme of “I Had a Dream” because of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day and was hosted by Mark Finkenbine and Nadelane Joseph, and for March, there was a Turkish dinner hosted by Enid German and Helene Weiss.
- Our annual Chanukah party was held for adults and kids at Renee Lipson’s party room. The program consisted of a presentation by Fern Levy.
- Shabbat dinners were held at members’ homes in May.

### **Social Action**

- Our members participated through Jewish Volunteers in Action and Cleanland Ohio in removing debris and trash from the E. 79th Street rapid station in October.
- At the November board meeting, the members voted to donate \$100 to the Mayor’s Food Basket Give-Away.
- In December, members participated at the Food Basket Give-Away at the Zelma George Recreation Center.

### **Membership**

- A new members’ meeting was held in October for prospective and newer members. Topics covered were: What is secular Judaism, the history of the Cleveland Jewish Secular Community, and the Sunday School.
- There were 38 households listed in the 1998-99 roster.
- New Member: Lisa Brand

### **Other**

- A Jewish book club began meeting once a month, and the group started by reading Jewish Power by J. J. Goldberg. From November through January, the group discussed An Eye for an Eye by Joseph Talushkin. February’s book was Sunflower by Simon Weisenthal.
- JSC information was now appearing in the religious section of the Cleveland Jewish News every week thanks to Jerry Goldstrom. The cost was \$100 for the year. Jerry will also have special events listed in the Community News section.

## 1999 - 2000

### Board of Trustees

President	Carol Falender
Treasurer	John Hersch
Sunday School	Phil Star
Holidays	Barbara and Dennis Trauben
Adult Education	Lynn Salzbrenner and Helene Weiss
Social Gatherings	Open in the fall
Membership	Abe Brustein
Phone Outreach	Rona Weiss
Newsletter	Bill Falender
Social Action	Gil Winer
Publicity	Jerry Goldstrom
CSJO Liaison	Renee Lipson
Coordinator	Dorothy Werblow

### Treasurer

- Dues for the year were \$125 per adult.
- In January, a committee was formed to look into investing a portion of our Vanguard Fund in a stable growth-oriented fashion. The committee consisted of John Hersch, Treasurer; Dennis Trauben and Bill Falender. The decision was made to dedicate a board meeting to a discussion of the future purposes of the funds.

### Sunday School

- At the beginning of the school year, Phil Star reported that there were 27 students enrolled, four of whom were JSC members: two Stars, one Weber, and one Ernsberger. There were also four pre-K students. Several students had an introductory tuition rate, and it was hoped that they would return the following year at the full tuition rate.
- The Workmen's Circle was working out scholarship rules. Budget information reflected the fact that the JSC would be requested to raise \$1,500 to \$2,000.
- The school board was made up predominantly of parents, which was an important change.
- The director's hours were reduced from 15 to 10 hours per week, which saved \$3,500.
- Carol Falender and Phil were to meet with the Circle School board regarding the future of the school and the JSC's additional monetary contributions.
- At the January Board meeting, Phil reported that the school had a \$6,000 shortfall. A motion to contribute \$2,000 was amended to donate \$1,200, which was passed. Carol and Phil were to meet with the Circle School, after which an additional donation must be considered.
- In the spring, a group of members met with Workmen's Circle about the Sunday School, trying to define our ongoing relationship with them. In attendance were Susan London and Mel Arnoff from Workmen's Circle and Phil Star and Carol Falender from the JSC. Budget information disclosed later revealed that the national Workmen's Circle office was contributing \$16,000 and the building, but that amount was being reduced to \$10,000.

- The Sunday School also needed a K and 1st grade teacher.
- The consensus of our Board was the Sunday School was very important, even with a small number of students, for the Community as a whole and for any future growth.
- Mark Weber expressed concern that the Sunday School taught Jewish culture but not Jewish values.

## **Holidays**

- In preparation for our holiday services, Barry and Rona Weiss hosted Sundaes and Singing. Fred Sternfeld, former JSC student and Bar Mitzvah and local very talented stage and music director, led us in song while we rehearsed, laughed, and ate ice cream. Dorothy Werblow helped organize the event.
- Our Rosh Hashanah service was held at the Shaker Heights Community Building.
- Our Kol Nidre service for Yom Kippur took place at the South Euclid Community Building.
- For Succot, dinners were held at members' homes.
- In February, Tu B'Shvat Seders were held at members' homes.
- For our Passover Seder, Dennis and Barbara Trauben, Dorothy Werblow, Cindy Goldberg, and Debbie Ernsberger revised the Haggadah.

## **Adult Education/Friday Evening Programs**

- In October, Christine Link, executive director of the Ohio chapter of the ACLU, spoke about the school voucher program. The title of her presentation was "Principles or Pragmatism: Public Education, Challenge for the New Millennium."
- In November, the Board decided to change the name from Adult Education to Friday Evening Programs. Also in November, Al Stern, Israel/PLO relations expert and national board member of Americans for Peace Now, spoke on "Israel at the Millennium." In attendance was a group of young members of Betar, a Jewish group that supports Israel's control of the West Bank and all of Jerusalem. With the unexpected "guests," there was a bit of tension, but it was managed by Helene Weiss, who served as moderator. At the end of the meeting, our guests helped to fold and put away the chairs. Approximately 35 JSC members were there as well as 15 to 20 Betar members.
- In January, Mike Varble coordinated a presentation and panel discussion on the topic "School Violence: Will It Touch Our Lives?" Mike, with his background as a public school administrator, brought his personal insights into the problems our students and schools are facing.
- In February, our annual Tu B'Shvat Seders were held at various members' homes.
- Our speaker for March was David Beach, founder and director of EcoCity Cleveland, who spoke on the subject "The Citizens' Bioregional Plan: The Challenge of Sprawling Growth." He talked about what Northeast Ohio could look like if we stopped urban sprawl, redeveloped our cities, and protected our open spaces.
- For our last Friday evening program in May, Mark Weber led the community in large and small group discussions on "How Do We Explain the Basic Ideas of Secular Humanistic Judaism?"

## **Social/Cultural Gatherings**

- Although there was no Social Chair at the beginning of the year, Mark Sivakoff volunteered to host the first gourmet dinner with the theme “Foods from the Harvest.”
- In December, our annual Chanukah party was held at Renee Lipson’s party room. Approximately 40 people attended and enjoyed latkes by Dorothy Werblow along with a potluck dinner. Barbara and Dennis Trauben organized the party, and Fern Levy presented a video and led a discussion about miracles.
- In January, the Gourmet Group met to eat and talk at the home of Enid German and Duane Beck. January’s theme was Southwestern.
- Our annual Purim party was held in March at Workmen’s Circle.
- Also in March, the Gourmet Group prepared all kinds of Sephardic dishes.
- June’s theme for the Gourmet Group at the home of Mark Finkenbine and Nadelane Joseph was Italian.

## **Membership**

- New Members: Lori Berenson, Roni and Elliott Berenson

## **Social Action**

- The Cleveland JSC was one of the sponsors of this year’s Yom Ha’zikaron (remembrance) and Yom Ha’atzmaut (independence) celebration.

## **Other**

- The JSC Book Club began operations again in October and continued throughout the year.
- In February, Carol Falender set up a committee to review and adjust the community’s by-laws. The change was needed to better reflect our current functioning and to support our organizational needs for the future. She also suggested that the Community institute an annual meeting, and this was approved by the Board.
- The CSJO annual conference was held this year at Eastern Michigan University in Ypsilanti.
- Plans for a “Dancing and Desserts” event were being made for late August similar to the “Sundaes and Singing” last year before the Holidays.
- Mark Weber, a Madrikh-in-training, saw his role in the community as educational, pastoral, and ceremonial, and as a spokesperson for the community.

## 2000 - 2001

### Board of Trustees

President	Carol Falender
Treasurer	Barry Weiss
Sunday School	Phil Star
Holidays	Bill Falender
Adult Ed/Shabbat	Lynn Salzbrenner and Helene Weiss
Social Gatherings	Barbara and Dennis Trauben
Membership	Mark Sivakoff
Phone Tree	Lisa Brand
Newsletter	Scott Radway
Social Action	Gil Winer
Publicity	Jerry Goldstrom
CSJO Liaison	Renee Lipson
Coordinator	Dorothy Werblow

### Treasurer

- There was no increase in membership dues this year. Barry reported in October that the Community had \$6,361 at Ohio Savings and \$27,700 in our Vanguard account. At the end of the fiscal year, total cash and bank accounts totaled \$30,108.

### Sunday School

- Three open houses were held for prospective members before Sunday School began in September. In November, there were 23 families and 35 students enrolled in the joint Sunday School. The school was "almost solvent."

### Holidays

- Our Rosh Hashanah observance was held at the First Unitarian Church of Shaker Heights. Fred Sternfeld provided the musical accompaniment, and Sid Brode did his usual shofar blowing. Mark Weber spoke on "The Decline of Civic Virtue in America."
- The Yom Kippur program was held at the Shaker Lakes Nature Center. There was no charge for guests, but a basket was placed at the entrance for donations.
- As was done last year, members gathered at the Falenders' home to build a succah and enjoy lunch together.
- Tu B'Shvat was celebrated as a community gathering. Members brought, besides dinner items, fresh fruit, dried fruit, nuts, and seeds to be eaten during the Seder.
- In April, our Passover Seder was held at Workmen's Circle.

## Friday Evening Programs

- In September, a fall opening program was held for members and guests, to which unaffiliated Jews in the Cleveland area were invited. The Community received such a list from the Jewish Community Federation, and John Klein facilitated the mailing of the meeting announcement. Those working on the program were Lynn Salzbrenner, Dorothy Werblow, Helene Weiss, Mark Weber, and Bobbie Varble. The program was an interactive, exploratory, and thought-provoking look at Secular Humanistic Judaism. It was held at the Mandel JCC and was followed by lunch. Bobbie and Mark were the facilitators for the meeting, "Living as a Secular Humanistic Jew."
- In October, the first of our Friday evening programs featured Sid Kraus, professor of communications at Cleveland State, who spoke on "Lieberman and the Democratic Party: A Challenge."
- In November, The film "The Disputation" was shown at the home of Helene Weiss. The film was a dramatization of a historical debate in the year 1263 between Nahmanides, a famous physician and scholar representing the Jews, and Pablo Christiani representing the Catholic Church. This was the time at the beginning of the Spanish Inquisition when the Catholics were still trying to convert the Jews.
- Our January meeting featured Mark Weber's review of the book Jew v. Jew by Samuel Freedman. The book explores the infighting among Jews in the U.S. and expressed views on the demise of Secular Judaism.
- At our March meeting, Dr. Mark Aulisio, Director of clinical ethics at MetroHealth Medical Center, addressed the Community on the subject, "The Family's Role in End-of-Life Decision Making."
- In May, Eleni Zulia, litigation coordinator for the Ohio ACLU, spoke about hate speech on the Internet.

## Social/Cultural Gatherings

- The year started out with "Dancing and Desserts" in August at Bob and Cindy Goldberg's pavilion. Dancing was led by Alice Stratton.
- A Friday discussion group met almost monthly and discussed such things as the movies "Sunshine" and "Avalon" and the book The River Midnight.
- The gourmet group got under way with an autumn/Halloween theme. Other themes during the year were Latin American and Hawaiian.
- Our annual Chanukah party was held in December in Renee Lipson's party room.
- In February, members played Whirly Ball.
- For the first time in several years, plans were made for a camp weekend at Stanford Hostel in the Cuyahoga Valley National Park.

## Social Action

- Aaron Anton, Renee Lipson, Belva Singer, and Gil Winer volunteered at the Jewish Community Federation's Super Sunday phonathon.
- Gil checked into the Jewish charity Mazon as a fund to which we might send donations collected at JSC events.

## **Membership**

- Mark Sivakoff, Membership Chair, organized a group to review and explore membership recruitment ideas. The fall opening program was one of the ways to recruit unaffiliated Jews in the community.

## **Publicity**

- Jerry Goldstrom created an ad for The Source, a resource guide for the Jewish community published by the Cleveland Jewish News. He also had an ad in the on-line Cleveland Connection, and at the end of the school year, ads were placed in the Beachwood Buzz, the Cleveland Jewish News, and the Free Times.

## **Other**

- The Community went high tech as Dorothy Werblow worked on creating a Web page for us at [www.community.cleveland.com/cc/jsc](http://www.community.cleveland.com/cc/jsc).
- This year, the Board approved revised by-laws followed by approval by the membership.
- The JSC's first annual meeting was held in June with a potluck brunch. The speaker was Joel Ratner of the Anti-Defamation League. The election of officers for the next year took place at that time.
- At the October Board meeting, it was decided to explore whether to continue our affiliation with the CSJO or join with the Society of Humanistic Judaism. A committee was set up consisting of Helene Weiss, Renee Lipson, Mark Sivakoff, and Bobbie Varble to study this issue. This had not been decided by the end of the year.



## 2001 - 2002

### Board of Trustees

President	Mark Sivakoff
Treasurer	Barry Weiss
Holidays	Bill Falender
Adult Ed/Shabbat	Mark Weber
Social Gatherings	Dennis and Barbara Trauben
Membership	Lisa Brand (email/phone tree)
Newsletter	Scott Radway
Publicity	Jerry Goldstrom
CSJO Liaison	Renee Lipson
Coordinator	Carol Falender

### Treasurer

- Dues were increased to \$145 per member this year.

### Sunday School

- In January of 2002, we severed our school association with The Workmen's Circle. Our final three students dropped out of class bringing our Sunday School to an end.

### Holidays

- Rosh Hashanah was observed on September 18 at First Unitarian Church on Shaker Blvd. followed by lunches in members' homes.
- Yom Kippur was observed on September 26 at the Shaker Lakes Nature Center. Bill Fink, a member, performed the Kol Nidre on the viola. Bill Falender will chair a committee to review and make alterations to the Yom Kippur program, which has not been changed for many years.
- Passover Seder was held at the First Unitarian Church on March 24. The format was changed from "family table groups" to a buffet with assigned items to contribute to the dinner. It worked very well, and it shared the burden very well among the attendees. Thanks, Carol and Bill, for this change. Lori Simon led the singing.
- Our Chanukah party was held on December 15 at Renee Lipson's Party Room.
- Tu B'Shvat Seder was held at the Four Seasons Party Room on January 25 along with a Shabbat program.

### Adult Education/Shabbat Programs

- Mark Weber was certified as a Madrikh by the International Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism (IISHJ) in October. He has volunteered to do a short program at every Shabbat and coordinate it with the Torah portion for that period.
- On October 26 Michael Charney spoke on school vouchers and K-12 funding.
- Eric Fingerhut was the speaker on November 30. His topic was "Gun Control and Public School Funding." The talk was an update on the issues currently on the agenda of the Ohio Senate.
- The February 22 Shabbat program was a talk by Mark Weber on "America's Jihad."

## **Social/Cultural Gatherings**

- On August 26, "Singing and Sundaes" was a fun event held at Marc Sivakoff's home to prepare for the upcoming High Holidays. Fred Sternfeld provided the music and led the singing. It was loads of fun and the ice cream sundaes were a definite hit with all.
- On October 6, we enjoyed a 24-hour retreat at Stanford Hostel in the Cuyahoga Valley National Park. Roy Berko performed readings by Sholem Aleichem and others on Saturday evening. We played board games and kibitzed and on Sunday a group went for a hike in the park. A wonderful special time was enjoyed by more than 30 attendees.
- The Berkos hosted the Gourmet Group on January 12.
- A theater party to see "Yentl" at the Halle Theater was held on February 2. Twenty people enjoyed the play.
- Valentines Day Gourmet Group met on February 9 at Enid and Duane's home.
- A fun afternoon at Whirly Ball was held on March 9. We had 12 players + 5 shmoozers attending.
- On April 6, the Gourmet Group met at the Mayers' home. The theme was April Showers.
- On June 15, a group visited the Great Lakes Science Center to see the traveling exhibition of 250 artifacts recovered from the Titanic as well as several recreated staterooms.

## **Membership**

- We had 40 members during this year.
- New Members: Andrew and Lois Gross, Tom Orac, Roy and Eunice Berko, Bill and Selma Fink, Belva Singer

## **Congress of Secular Jewish Organizations (CSJO)**

- The International Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism (IISHJ) held its biannual colloquium on the weekend of October 18 at the Picnic Center at Birmingham Temple. The topic was "Secular Spirituality: A Passionate Journey to a Rational Judaism."

## **Other**

- Tim Ernsberger was Bar Mitzvah on November 17, 2001
- Judith Seid, author of God-Optional Judaism, had a book signing event at Joseph Beth Booksellers on Shaker Square on November 27. Judy Seid is a 3rd generation secularist who is a Madrikha in the Secular Humanist Movement and is currently preparing for her ordination as a rabbi. She is the author of several books that are available through CSJO.
- Our Annual meeting was on June 2.

## 2002 - 2003

### Board of Trustees

President:	Mark Sivakoff
Treasurer:	Barry Weiss
School:	Bill Falender
Holidays:	Nora Kancelbaum, Enid German
Adult Education:	Mark Weber, Debra Ernsberger
Social:	Cindy Goldberg, Edie Todd
Membership	Debra Ernsberger
Social Action:	Belva Singer
Publicity:	Jerry Goldstrom
CSJO:	Renee Lipson
Newsletter:	Scott Radway
Phone Tree:	Lisa Brand
Coordinator:	Dorothy Werblow

### Treasurer

- Financial reports were presented at board meetings.

### Holidays

- Tu B'Shvat Seder/Shabbat program
- Passover Seder
- Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur were observed at the First Unitarian Church.
- Succah decoration and potluck lunch at the Falenders.
- The Chanukah party took place at Renee Lipson's party room.

### Adult Education

- February: Jerry Gordon of Single Payer Network Action.
- March: Mark Weber on "America's Jihad."
- March: Peter Lawson Jones on "The Future of the Democratic Party in Ohio."
- Judith Seid spoke about her new book "God Optional Judaism."
- September: Sue Koletsky, curator of The Temple's Museum.
- October: Speaker from the Jewish Genealogical Society of Cleveland.
- November: Bernard Wasserstein reviewing the book "Divided Jerusalem."

### Social Gatherings

- In October members joined in an overnight at the Stanford Hostel in Cuyahoga Valley.
- The Gourmet Group had dinners (Vietnamese, French, Mom's best, and others) at homes as well as at restaurants.
- A theater party was held at the JCC for the show "Yentl."
- In June, the annual meeting was combined with a picnic at The West Woods.
- A Whirly Ball party was planned.
- Members saw the Titanic exhibit at the Science Center.
- Members had another theater party to see "The Producers."

**Membership**

- New Members: Allen and Sandra Guth, John and Esther Jean Szucs, Matthew Weinstein and Laura Staples, Dietz Ziechmann, Gundula Ziechmann, Shirley Berner – returning, Fern Levy – returning, Ed Feil – returning.
- We have 44 household members this year.

**Social Action**

- Group members collected food items at the Seder for Harvest for Hunger and for Mazon, a Jewish Response to Hunger.

## 2003 - 2004

### Board of Trustees

President	Barry Weiss
Treasurer	Barry Weiss
Holidays	Enid German, Nora Kancelbaum
Adult Ed/Shabbat	Dietz Ziechmann, Fern Levy
Social Gatherings	Edie Todd, Cindy Goldberg
Membership	Helene Weiss
E-mail-phone tree	Matthew Weinstein, Laura Staples
Newsletter	Nadelane Joseph, Mark Finkenbine
Publicity	Allen Guth
CSJO Liaison	Renee Lipson
Madrikh	Mark Weber
Coordinator	Dorothy Werblow

### Treasurer

- The treasurer reported that the JSC is in solid financial shape.
- The majority of the money, a generous bequest given to the community a number of years ago, is in a mutual fund.

### Holidays

- Rosh Hashanah was observed at the First Unitarian Church, Shaker Heights. There were luncheons at members' homes following the program.
- Over 100 people observed Erev Yom Kippur/Kol Nidre at the Shaker Lakes Nature Center. Participants were encouraged to bring a brief reading to share.
- On Yom Kippur afternoon, many members met at The West Woods in Geauga County for a program lead by Madrikh, Mark Weber. The program was followed by a Break-the-Fast.
- The Succot celebration, a potluck lunch, was held at the German-Beck's home.
- A Chanukah party was held at Renee Lipson's party room. Latkes, applesauce, side dishes and desserts were enjoyed by all. Menorahs were lit at each table.
- The Tu B'Shvat Seder was enjoyed at Renee Lipson's party room.
- The Purim party was held at Helene Weiss's party room. Costumes and masks were optional; appetizer and dessert contributions were mandatory.
- The Passover Seder was held at the First Unitarian Church of Cleveland.
- Tzedakah baskets were available at all holiday programs. Donations were made to Mazon, the Jewish Response to Hunger.

### Adult Education

- Friday evening Shabbat programs featured a rich variety of speakers and topics: Sidney Kraus, "The Political Outlook"; Eric Resnick, "The Jews of Kai Feng"; Fern Levy, "Reflections on a Trip to Jewish Europe"; Dietz Ziechmann, "Exploration of Erich Fromm and Jewish Humanism."
- Other speakers were David Pomerantz, a candidate for the Ohio House of Representatives, and Chris Link, executive director of the Cleveland chapter of ACLU.

## **Social and Cultural Gatherings**

- The Gourmet Group met throughout the year. Dinners included Hungarian dishes at the home of Andrew and Lois Gross, vegetarian food at the home of Roni and Elliott Berenson, and outings to Potpourri Fondue Gallery, Szechuan House, and Mad Greek restaurants.
- Social outings included varied locations such as The Cleveland Botanical Gardens, The Plain Dealer, and The Judaic Museum at Tiferet Israel in University Circle.
- The spring retreat was held at Stanford Hostel in Peninsula.
- Members were invited to a New Year's Eve party at the home of Rona and Barry Weiss.

## **Social Action**

- Some members helped tend the Hebrew Cultural Garden.
- Volunteers attended a party on Christmas for special needs adults and their families.

## **Membership**

- New Members: Marsha and Gary Rosenthal. Total household members is 43.

## **Newsletters**

- Throughout the year, newsletters mentioned many opportunities for members to attend community programs of interest.
- Chico Marx was quoted in the January 2004 newsletter. "You can't fool me! There ain't no Sanity Clause!"

## **Congress of Secular Jewish Organizations (CSJO)**

- Plans were under way for the CSJO annual conference, which was held May 20, 2004.
- Workshops featured topics including Jewish life in North America, secular Jewish life in eastern Europe and social action.

## **Other**

- Renee Lipson wrote a special thank you letter to Mark Weber "for your wonderful, thoughtful, intelligent and integral input to my appreciation of being a secular Jew in Cleveland."
- Roni Berenson mailed over 175 letters to friends and acquaintances describing the Jewish Secular Community's Rosh Hashanah program.
- The community has a library of books on Secular Jewish philosophy, history, and holiday celebrations. Dorothy Werblow was the contact.

## 2004 - 2005

### Board of Trustees

President	Barry Weiss
Holidays	Enid German and Nora Kancelbaum
Adult Ed/Shabbat	Dietz Ziechmann and Fern Levy
Social Gatherings	Bev Feingold and Marcia Rosenthal
Membership	Helene Weiss
Email/Phone Tree	Matthew Weinstein
Newsletter	Nadelane Joseph and Mark Finkenbine
Social Action	Position Open
Publicity	Allen Guth
CSJO Liaison	Renee Lipson
Madrikh	Mark Weber
Coordinator	Dorothy Werblow

### Treasurer

- Monthly reports were given at the board meeting. The treasury was always in the black.

### Holidays

- September: Rosh Hashanah was celebrated at the First Unitarian Church followed by post-service luncheons at members' homes.
- Yom Kippur program was at the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes, and members were encouraged to bring a reading to share. The following day a discussion related to the Rosh Hashanah talk took place at the Rosenthal home.
- December: Chanukah party at Renee Lipson's party room.
- January: Tu B'Shvat Seder/Shabbat program at Renee Lipson's party room.
- March: Purim celebration at Schnurmann House.
- April: Passover Seder at First Unitarian Church.

### Adult Education

- There were monthly Shabbat programs with speakers on various subjects
- October: Gil Elan, Director of the Friends of the Israeli Defense League.
- November: Panel discussion by long-time members on the history of the Jewish Secular Community.
- December: Panel of speakers (rabbi/professor from CWRU, Imam from Uubah Mosque, lesbian protestant minister, professor of Catholic theology from Notre Dame College).
- February: Natalie Shapiro of Shapiro Funeral Services spoke about Jewish bereavement practices, pre-planning arrangements and purchasing of burial plots.
- March: Joan Southgate, speaking about the Underground Railroad and her walk from Cincinnati to St. Catherines, Canada.
- April: Eleanor Mallet, PD columnist, author of Tevye's Grandchildren.
- May: Lillian Mark, Biosophy Institute, "Biosophy & Spinoza."

## **Social Gatherings**

- October: Middlefield Cheese Factory and dinner at Mary Yoder's Farm.
- November: Dinner at Corky & Lenny's, followed by "Ragtime" at the CCC Theatre.
- December: New Year's Eve party at the Weisses'.
- January 05: Brunch followed by tour of Cleveland Museum of Natural History and Planetarium.
- February: Chinese New Year - dinner and shopping.
- May: Annual retreat at Stanford Hostel in Peninsula, Ohio.
- June: Tour of Peter B. Lewis Building at Case Western Reserve University and lunch.
- June: New board members were announced at the Annual Meeting and Bagel Brunch at the Goldstroms'.
- Plans for summer and fall included an afternoon at Ferrante's Winery in Geneva, a musical at CCC followed by dinner, and a fall retreat at Stanford House in Cuyahoga Valley National Forest in October

## **Membership**

- New Members are: Lola Farron, Bev Feingold, Sondra and Harvey Jacobs, Jean Joseph, Tabitha (Tybee) and Sheldon Zuckerman, Mary and Victor Silverman
- In October a "Sunshine Committee" was begun, with Sandy Guth as chairperson.
- In February a new class of membership, "associate", was established, for those who are also full dues-paying member of a synagogue.
- In order to interest possible new members, news items were sent to the Jewish News, as well as an ad for the Passover celebration.

## **Newsletters**

- The monthly newsletters contained articles of interest (Darfur genocide, personal memoirs, book reviews, Iraq, Medicare, Israel/Palestine, Jews in history) news about members, milestone birthdays and anniversaries, and regular reports from CSJO, reports of JSC members in the news and occasional bits of humor.

## **Social Action**

- Tzedakah collection baskets were available for donations at holiday services.
- CSJO Social Action Committee affirmed support for legal recognition of same-sex marriages and made efforts to publicize opposition to Issue 1 (same-sex marriage).
- Donations were collected for Hurricane Katrina victims and eyeglasses for the Sight Center.
- Members participated in the Jewish Federation's Euclid Street Fair, in cemetery cleanups, revitalization of the Hebrew Cultural Gardens, and, at Chanukah, volunteered at Montefiore.

## **Congress of Secular Jewish Organizations (CSJO)**

- Renee Lipson reported news of CSJO action and events.



## 2005 - 2006

### Board of Trustees

President	Allen Guth
Vice-President	Edie Todd
Treasurer	Barry Weiss
Secretary	Dietz Ziechmann
Holidays	Bill and Carol Falender
Adult Ed/Shabbat	Mark Weber
Social	Bev Feingold and Marcia Rosenthal
Membership	Barbara Trauben
Newsletter	Rona Weiss and Tybee Zuckerman
Social Action	Don Sayre
Publicity/Sunshine	Sandy Guth
CSJO Liaison	Renee Lipson
Madrikh	Mark Weber
Coordinator	Dorothy Werblow

### Treasurer

- Total assets as of October 9, 2005, were \$44,310.
- The Katrina Hurricane Relief Fund received \$350 from the holiday and Shabbat events.

### Holidays

- Rosh Hashanah was observed Oct. 4 at the First Unitarian Church of Shaker Heights, followed by potluck lunches at members' homes. Bill and Carol Falender invited members to come along on a walk in North Chagrin Reservation later in the afternoon.
- Kol Nidre was observed on Oct. 12 at the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes. The following afternoon, the community met for a discussion and break-the-fast at the home of Marcia and Gary Rosenthal. Mark Weber, our Madrikh, facilitated a discussion related to the subject of his talk on Rosh Hashanah.
- Kathi and Jerry Goldstrom hosted our Succot celebration and succah building. The members put together a succah, and we hung gourds, corn stalks, and other vegetation from the roof, after which we enjoyed a potluck lunch.
- On February, 17, our Tu B'Shvat celebration was combined with our Shabbat program at the Sherri Park Apartment party room. Dr. Michael Schwartz, president of Cleveland State University, was scheduled to speak on "The State of Public Universities and Anti-Semitism on Campus, but he mostly talked about the need for money for state universities.
- In April, our Community Passover Seder was held at the Schnurmann House Social Center. About 60 members and guests participated in the event. Our JSC-prepared Haggadah was read aloud, and we shared symbolic foods, songs, and stories. Chuck Fink provided the lively musical accompaniment.

## **Adult Education/Shabbat Programs**

- September featured State Senator Eric Fingerhut, who gave an interesting and informative discussion about the state budget, the schools, and the upcoming 2006 election.
- Carrie Davis, a staff attorney with the ACLU of Ohio, spoke in October on “A New Threat to Our Freedoms—the Ohio Patriot Act.” It was a fascinating, informative, and frightening presentation, and the audience joined in an enthusiastic discussion.
- In November, our speaker was Marty Plax from the Republican Jewish Coalition speaking on the topic, “Are American Jews Becoming Republican?”
- In January, our Madrikh, Mark Weber, substituted for the scheduled speaker and spoke on “Terrorism and Islamic Law.” Renee Lipson was presented with a plaque honoring her for her 10 years as liaison to the CSJO.
- In March, Judith Neulander, Associate Director of the Judaic Studies Program at Case Western Reserve University, spoke on the topic, “Esther: Queen and Saint.” Her provocative talk addressed the role of the Esther story in Jewish tradition.
- Our April program featured Jeremy Genovese, a professor at Cleveland State University, who spoke on “Evolution and Intelligent Design.” He explained that evolution is about change in the gene pool. He described natural selection, mutation, and genetic drift.
- In May, Ed Fire, retired labor leader and social activist, spoke on “The Future of Labor.”
- On June 9, our Shabbat meeting was combined with our annual meeting, and Mark Weber and Rifke Feinstein spoke on the subject “Roots of Secular Jewishness.”

## **Social/Cultural Activities**

- In September, we enjoyed a Rogers and Hammerstein tribute performance, Something Wonderful, at Tri-C East, then we had dinner at Wok with Wing. Marcia Rosenthal and Bev Feinberg, Social Chairs, planned to have other ethnic meals throughout the year.
- In November, many JSC members and guests met at the Atma Center in Cleveland Heights for an invigorating lesson in chairside Yoga, followed by a lecture and slide presentation on Indian culture. We then had dinner at the Indian restaurant Café Tandoor.
- In December, the Community held its annual Chanukah dinner at Schnurmann House. The dinner was prepared by Marcia Rosenthal and Bev Feingold for the 50+ attendees. Pianist Judy Strauss entertained during dinner. The members brought 60 gifts for children and adults and wrapped them before dinner. They were to be donated to Jewish Family Service and Trinity Cathedral for its outreach program.
- Rona and Barry Weiss hosted their annual New Year’s Eve party, which is always a treat. Among the guests were more than 50 JSC members.
- In January, following a lunch at Corky and Lenny’s, about 50 members and guests went on a guided tour of the new Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage to see the Frederick Brenner photo display of Jews all over the world and to see the museum’s permanent collection of local Jewish history.
- Saturday, January 21 was a great evening of family-friendly Improv Comedy’s “Schtick Situation” at the JCC. About 20 JSC members attended.

- In March, we had our annual Purim party at the Schnurmann House Social Center. Accordionist Ralph Szubski provided the music for dancing. A delicious Mediterranean supper was prepared by Marcia Rosenthal, Bev Feingold, Carol Falender, and Ida Burday. Bob Goldberg photographed costumed guests against a backdrop of King Ahashuerus created by Tybee Zuckerman. Sheldon Zuckerman won first prize for his Biblical shepherd costume.
- The Community attended a faculty concert in April at the Cleveland Institute of Music, after which they had a Hungarian dinner at Balaton Restaurant.
- In May, the Community met at the Holy Rosary Church for a tour of Little Italy. Their guide explained the architecture and symbolic art in the church and discussed the rich cultural history of the neighborhood. After touring the church, members browsed the shops and galleries and had dinner at Anthony's Pizzeria.
- A July summer picnic was washed out because of rain, but a few JSCers gathered in Materials Park at the American Society for Metals in Newbury to see the flowers and interesting rock and metal display and wander around the geodesic dome designed by Buckminster Fuller.

### **Membership**

- We welcomed the following new members this year: Karen Tucker and Greg Malkin, Helga Gleisser, Steve and Sharon Shucard.
- On a sad note, we lost Shirley Berner, who died in May.
- A cover letter accompanying a dues notice was to be drafted for potential members after they had attended a significant number of events.

### **Social Action**

- A new Social Action Committee came into being, and members were asked to give ideas for community service.
- Donations for Mazon were collected at Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and the October Shabbat program.
- Before Rosh Hashanah, Community members gathered at Chesed Shel Emeth cemetery, which had fallen into disrepair. They joined members of other Jewish organizations to clean, weed, trim, and beautify the cemetery. It is traditional for Jews to visit the graves of loved ones before the High Holidays.
- At the November board meeting, Treasurer Barry Weiss reported that about one-fourth of the annual budget of \$8,800 had been spent. The Katrina Hurricane Relief Fund brought in \$350 from the holiday and Shabbat events
- In December, 18 JSC members helped at Montefiore Home to transport residents to their Chanukah party and celebrate the holiday with them. Because it was Christmas, their presence also helped to relieve the reduced staff that day.
- In February, several JSC members made phone calls for Super Sunday, the main fund-raising event for the Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland.
- At the February Shabbat/Tu B'Shvat program, members brought toiletry items to be donated to New Life Community, an organization that provides transitional housing for homeless and jobless families.
- In April, 14 energetic members volunteered at the InterAct Hunger Center to stock shelves and pack bags and cartons of food for distribution to needy families.
- In June, Community members participated in the Federation's Brunch & Bloom at the Hebrew Cultural Garden on East Boulevard.

## **Publicity**

- At the October board meeting, it was decided to add our High Holiday schedule to the synagogue listings in the Cleveland Jewish News.

## **CSJO Liaison**

- In December, Renee Lipson resigned her position, and Mark Weber volunteered to become the new liaison to the CSJO. Renee served in that capacity for more than 10 years.

## **Other**

- In October, the Community spent a weekend at the Stanford Youth Hostel in the Cuyahoga Valley National Park in Peninsula, Ohio. It was a weekend of socializing, hiking, cooking, eating, entertainment, discussions, games, and good times. Barbara Trauben and Dorothy Werblow coordinated the weekend with the help of many cooks and clean-up crews.
- Allen Guth, Carol Falender, and Dorothy Werblow were to meet to plan for a successor to Dorothy as coordinator of the JSC.
- The June Shabbat program was combined with the Annual Meeting, with President Allen Guth speaking about the accomplishments of the board members. Mark Weber and Rifke Feinstein spoke about "The Roots of Secular Jewishness."

## 2006 - 2007

### Board of Trustees

President	Allen Guth
Vice President	Edie Todd
Treasurer	Greg Malkin
Secretary	Dietz Ziechmann
Holidays	Bill and Carol Falender
Adult Ed/Shabbat	Mark Weber
Social	Bev Feingold and Marcia Rosenthal
Membership	Barbara Trauben
Newsletter	Rona Weiss and Tybee Zuckerman
Social Action	Don Sayre
Publicity/Sunshine	Sandy Guth
CSJO Liaison	Mark Weber and Renee Lipson
Coordinator	Barry Weiss

### Holidays

- Rosh Hashanah was observed at the First Unitarian Church with members participating in the reading. Post-service luncheons were held at various members' homes, and there was a walk in the woods at the North Chagrin Reservation in the afternoon. Yom Kippur eve program was at the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes. The day after, there was a discussion and break-the-fast at the home of Marcia and Gary Rosenthal.
- In October, a succah was constructed and decorated at the home of Kathi and Jerry Goldstrom followed by a potluck dinner.
- About 60 members gathered for a Community Passover Seder at the Schnurmann House to take turns reading from a secular Haggadah and listen to music by guitarist Chuck Fink and Barbara Trauben's daughter Erica.
- A Chanukah/Shabbat program was held at the Schnurmann House. Mark Weber led the Shabbat part, followed by a gourmet dinner prepared by Marcia Rosenthal and Bev Feingold. Nationally renowned violinist Steven Greenman entertained during and after the dinner. Dorothy Werblow was honored for her 15+ years as JSC coordinator and presented with a plaque.

### Adult Education/Shabbat Programs

- In September, the speaker was Peter Haas, Abba Hillel Silver Professor of Judaic Studies at CWRU, who spoke about "Challenges to Liberal Judaism."
- The October program featured Eric Fingerhut, State Senator and former Congressman, speaking on "The Election: What's at Stake?"
- In November, Brent Larkin, Opinion Page Editor of the Plain Dealer spoke on "An Election Post Mortem."
- In January, Wendy Wasman, librarian at The Temple-Tifereth Israel and Program Chair of the Greater Cleveland Chapter of the Association of Jewish Libraries, spoke about Jewish graphic novels.

- The speaker at the February Shabbat program was Fletcher Miller, a representative of Green Energy Ohio, who spoke about “Alternative Sources of Sustainable Energy.” More than 50 members and guests attended.
- The March program featured Dr. Sylvia Abrams, Academic Dean at Siegal College, who spoke about “Private Judaism: Changing Ideas of Jewish Identity and Practice.”
- Dr. Jeremy Genovese, CSU Professor of Education, spoke at the April Shabbat program. His topic “Do the Dead Survive?” covered spiritualists and other fakes.
- In June, members enjoyed a Shabbat dinner and program with Jim Bockhoff, well-known Cleveland guitarist and songwriter.

### **Social/Cultural Gatherings**

- In August, a Ladies’ Mystery Trip brought 12 members to the Willoughby Farmers Market.
- In October, JSC members attended a concert by the Suburban Symphony.
- Also in October, members went to CCC to see “Modern Orthodoxy,” a play dealing with the conflicting ideas of Secular and Orthodox Judaism.
- In November, JSC celebrated Jewish Book Month at a lecture by Ori Soltes, author and former teacher at the College of Jewish Studies. He discussed his books, *Our Sacred Signs* and *The Ashen Rainbow*.
- New Year’s Eve party was once again at the home of Barry and Rona Weiss.
- In January, members met for lunch at the Tandoor Restaurant and then toured the Maltz Museum’s special exhibit, “Threads and Remembrance: Visions on the Holocaust.”
- Members enjoyed a JCC-sponsored performance of “On a Clear Day You Can See Forever” at the CCC campus in February. After the performance, dinner at China Gate restaurant.
- In March, there was a Purim Dinner Party held at the Schnurmann House Social Center. Costumed guests were entertained by belly dancers of Troupe Hareem Shar’eem.

### **Membership**

- Plans are being made to create a Web site for the Jewish Secular Community.
- Annual membership fee remained at \$145 per adult. An associate membership category was started for those people who are already members of a synagogue. The associate fee is \$75.
- New Members: Suzette Cohen, Jerry Weiss, Harvey and Ellen Schwartz, Irv Bayer, Felice Lowell, Mae Berkman, Harriet Goldberg, Ruth Kendel Fonoroff. There are 51 member households.

### **Newsletters**

- Monthly newsletters kept members informed of events, opportunities to get involved, phone numbers of senators and representatives, “Naches Notes” and “Members in the News,” articles of general interest with Jewish relevance, and occasional humor.

## **Social Action**

- In September, members helped clean up the Chesed Shel Emeth Cemetery in Brooklyn Hts.
- JSC members brought gift-wrapped clothing for the Children Who Witness Violence program of Community Mental Health at the Shabbat Chanukah party.
- Members donated many items for the toiletry collection for the Hebrew Shelter Home.
- At the Passover Seder, members brought donations to Mazon, the Jewish Response to Hunger.
- In November and March, JSC members sorted and packed food for the Cleveland Food Bank.
- Easter Sunday was a time for members to practice Tikkun Olam by volunteering at Montefiore, giving staff members a chance to celebrate the holiday with their families.
- In June, members helped beautify the Hebrew Cultural Gardens.
- The annual meeting in June 2007 was held at West Woods Park in Geauga County. After a delicious lunch, President Allen Guth highlighted the successes of the past year and thanked members for their time and effort.

## **Other**

- In April 2007, the community lost Barry Weiss, who died while scuba diving in Honduras. Barry had been a member for 24 years and had served as president, treasurer, newsletter editor and coordinator. A memorial service was held for him with members and many other friends attending.

## 2007 - 2008

### Board of Trustees

President	Allen Guth
Vice President	Edie Todd
Treasurer	Greg Malkin
Secretary	Dietz Ziechmann
Holidays	Nora Kancelbaum and Rifke Feinstein
Shabbat	Lynn Salzbrenner and Walker Todd
Social	Bev Feingold and Marcia Rosenthal
Social Action	Stephen Shucard
Membership	Barbara Trauben
Newsletter	Rona Weiss and Tybee Zuckerman
Publicity	Sandy Guth
CSJO Liaison	Mark Weber
Sunshine	Sandy Guth
Coordinator	Greg Malkin
Email Postmaster	Scott Radway
Madrikh	Mark Weber

### Holidays

- About 90 people attended the 2007 Rosh Hashanah program, which was held again at the First Unitarian Church. Madrikh Mark Weber's topic was "Sherwin Wine and the Principle of Genuine Dissent." Fred Sternfeld led the singing. As always, Sid Brode blew the shofar. After potluck lunches at members' homes, Carol and Bill Falender led a hardy group of hikers through the North Chagrin Reservation.
- At the Erev Yom Kippur program at the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes, a student from the Cleveland Institute of Music performed the Kol Nidre on the cello. On Yom Kippur afternoon, more than 40 JSC members and guests gathered at the home of Mark Weber and Felisa Anthony to discuss the evolution and future of the organization.
- The succah was decorated once again at the home of Kathi and Jerry Goldstrom followed by potluck lunch.
- A gala Chanukah was celebrated at the Schnurmann Social Center, with the Workmen's Circle Klezmer Orchestra entertaining the many members and guests.

### Adult Education/Shabbat Programs

- In October, Sharonna Hoffman from the CWRU School of Law spoke on the subject of "Is There a Place for Race in Jewish Thought?"
- In November, the speaker was Dr. Hugh Burtner, professor emeritus of religion at Baldwin Wallace College. His topic was "Do religions have a future?"
- In December, a vote was taken at the Shabbat program to determine whether members would prefer to pay a small fee instead of continuing to bring side dishes and desserts. The vote was for continuing to have members bring food.
- The December speaker was JSC member Roy Berko, a dance and theater reviewer, director, actor, and professor of communication and psychology. He gave a spirited and well-received presentation about "The History of Yiddish Theatre" to the more than 70 members and guests.



## **Social/Cultural Gatherings**

- In October, members and guests traveled to Middlefield to tour shops and the cheese factory and gathered at a private Amish home for a typical Amish Wedding Feast.
- In November, several members visited the special exhibit "Questionable Issue: Currency of the Holocaust" at the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland.
- In December, following a lunch/brunch at Baker's Square in Cleveland Hts, many JSC members enjoyed "Keyboard Conversations – America's Fascinating Rhythms" with Jeffrey Siegel at Cleveland State University. The concert and commentary by Mr. Siegel, who talked about the music and composer prior to each selection he played, earned a standing ovation.
- February found members listening to a Suburban Symphony concert after a lunch/brunch.
- Several committees were busy planning the 40th anniversary celebration of the Cleveland Jewish Secular Community, which will be held on Sunday, May 4, 2008, at the Wellington Party Center in Highland Heights.

## **Membership**

- New Members: Ginger and Alan Kuper, Ethel Paley, Ruth Ness, Leo Tobacman, Bev and Jim Wattenmaker, Lynda Zielinski

## **Social Action**

- On Super Sunday in October, a number of JSC members helped to make phone calls for the Jewish Community Federation's 2008 Campaign for Jewish Needs.
- On Christmas Day, members assisted residents of Montefiore Home for afternoon entertainment in order to allow non-Jewish staff to spend Christmas with their families.

## **CSJO**

- The annual Conference was held in Cleveland on Memorial Day weekend at Ursuline College, with more than 100 visitors from many U.S. states and Canada, plus more than 40 Cleveland members. Beginning with an Oneg Shabbat, the weekend had workshops on Saturday and Sunday, keynote speakers, and entertainment on Saturday evening. It was a great success.

**On May 4, 2008, the Jewish Secular Community Celebrated its 40th Anniversary.**

This Memory book and all the files and materials for the past 40 years will be preserved at the Cleveland Jewish Archives of the Western Reserve Historical Society.

## B'NAI MITZVAH GRADUATES (1972 – 2001)

### 1972

Seth Isler  
Robert Kutzik

### 1973

Amy Glin  
Howard Heuer  
Keeve Jaffe  
Ben Levy  
Gary Stern

### 1984

Lori Kohn  
Karen Seidman  
Lisa Wiesenberger

### 1975

David Esrati  
Michael Klein  
Elizabeth Loeb  
Kenneth Seidman

### 1976

Michael Heuer

### 1977

Wendy Blattner  
Debbie Brode  
Robert Kates  
Andrew Pollis  
Adam Sacks

### 1978

Anne Blum  
Drew Chavinson  
Edward Feil  
Allison Gilmore  
Barbara Kancelbaum  
Jill Nagusky  
Sylvia Rohfeld  
Eric Sachs  
David Weiss

### 1979

David Brode  
Amy Chavinson  
Brian Eisenberg  
Jonathan Gilmore  
Margo Horwitz  
Douglas Klein

### 1980

Lauren Blattner  
Donna Flinker  
Steven Horwitz  
Karen Nagusky  
Eric Richman  
Mark Rosewater  
Grant Roth

### 1981

Michelle Auerbach  
Tanya Charlick  
Kenneth Chavinson  
Missy Eisenberg  
Laura Meckler  
Alysse Rosewater  
Rachel Tiffany  
Jody Wohl

### 1982

Brian Bortz  
Jonathan Finkelstein  
Toni Fromson  
Jed Horwitz  
Martin Levine  
Rachel Moresky

### 1983

Michelle Brode  
Jill Chavinson  
Cheryl Flinker  
James Gilmore  
Greg Harris  
Sara Levine  
Wayne Mayer  
Amy Meckler  
Peter Nagusky  
Elisa Richman  
Julie Roth  
Zach Stein  
Steven Wohl

### 1984

Daniel Charlick  
Stephanie Dueser  
Zia Fuentes  
Matthew Lazarus  
Candice Stuart  
Jennifer Woda

### 1985

Devin Friedman  
Elana Lewis  
Amy Mayer  
David Samuels

### 1986

Tami Harris  
Joanna Moresky

### 1987

Jamie Cohen  
Jessica Delbaum  
Erin Marks  
Todd Stein  
Ben Varble  
Julie Woda

### 1989

Jon Varble

### 1992

Sheila Ruth Keller  
Julia Hermien  
Olszewski  
Jed Thomas Wolpaw

### 1993

Zachary Edward  
Duvall  
Jacob Finkenbine  
Joseph  
Scott Hugh  
Rothenberg

### 1995

Zachary Maxwell  
Aster  
Mark Daniel  
Goldberg

### 1996

Sarah Anne Falender  
Sarah Elizabeth  
Todd

### 1997

Emily Marianne  
Bonem  
Emma Finkenbine  
Joseph

### 1998

Carolyn Hersch  
Alyse Rothenberg  
Erica Trauben  
David Weiss

### 1999

Laura Falender

### 2001

Tim Ernsberger

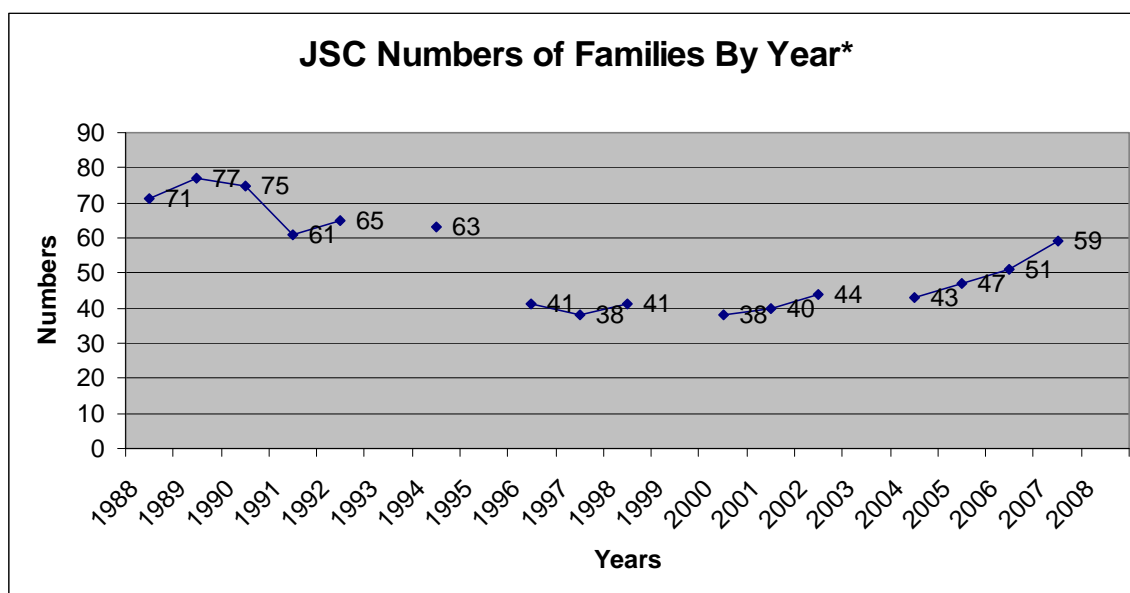
## THE B'NAI MITZVAH

Without a doubt, one of the Community's most cherished events each year has been the B'nai Mitzvah celebration. The B'nai Mitzvah program combines the expression of our unique Jewishness with our ties to the past and to the future. It represents the culmination of the education of our children. It involves the entire family and the entire Community. It is an example extraordinaire of our ability to adapt traditional and religious practices to meet our needs. Our secular B'nai Mitzvah is truly a special thing, for the individuals who participate, and for the Community who shares this emotional and significant rite of passage.

The program was adapted from that used on Kibbutzim in Israel. It requires the student to complete several tasks throughout the year ranging from writing papers on great moments and people in Judaism to volunteering regularly at a Jewish Agency. The parents are also kept busy throughout the year as they develop and write the ceremony, usually in a group with other parents and B'nai Mitzvah students.

Perhaps the most emotional part of the ceremony were the speeches given by the B'nai Mitzvah to the Community and those given by the parents to their children. "Everyone I've ever talked to about it says that that portion is the most moving. The rest is nice, but that is the one thing that sets it apart," one parent recalls.

The services differ in detail but are common in theme. They all revolve around the central concept of B'nai Mitzvah - a coming of age. Taking the next step into adulthood and maturity. Developing as a person and as a Jew. Themes explored range from values clarification to the heritage of the Jewish people, feminism to friendship.



\*Some Numbers Are Interpolated

**FOLLOWING IS A COPY OF  
THE MEMORY BOOK PRESENTED AT THE  
20<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION**

# **JEWISH SECULAR COMMUNITY**

## **20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration**

**1967 / 1968 – 1987 / 1988**

## 20TH ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE

Sandy Arndt and Liela Brode, Co-chairs

Bill Meckler and Gene Rosewater, Program Committee

Roy and Betsy Woda, Slide Show

John Klein, Invitations and Mailings

Marc Moresky, Opening Activities

Allan Rubinstein, Recollections

Carol Falender, Overall Coordinator, Site and Food

Carol Bortz, Decorations

Peggy Rubinstein, Decorations and Registration

Mickey Stern and Laura Meckler, Memory Book

Memory Book Contributors: Carol Falender - Collating and Binding; Marsha Meckler - Editing and Writing; Scott Radway - Writing, Cover Design, and Laser Printing; Al Stern - Writing, Reading, and Computer Consultant.

Other Contributors - Carol Bortz, Barbara and Barry Epstein, Joan Flinker, Kathe Mayer, and Amy Meckler.

## INTRODUCTION

Over the past twenty years, the Jewish Secular Community (JSC) has met the needs of families and individuals who wanted to relate to and express their Jewishness outside of the more traditional religious institutions.

For some, the JSC has been an institution that educated their children and offered holiday services, but did not serve as the focal point in their social, political, or cultural lives. Others, searching for an alternative that JSC was unable to provide, saw it as a way station in their journey and moved on. And for many, the community has been an extended family through which long-lasting and deep friendships have been forged. As you read this book, chronicling the Community's twenty years, you can recall your own participation in our shared past.

# JEWISH SECULAR SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

## **General Goals**

Our goal is that each pupil emerge from the school as a morally committed, informed and socially responsible human being who positively identifies with his/her Jewishness and is involved with family, community and all humanity.

We take the position that if our Jewish background, history, culture, and ethics are to operate in our daily lives and those of our children, these teachings should be made relevant to the important issues of our times. Therefore, we seek to continually address the insufficiency of peace, liberty, equality and justice in the world in which we and our children live.

Finally, we seek to provide a sense of community for secular Jews for in the course of building our Sunday School program we have discovered that there is a need among adults, as well as our young people, to feel a sense of kinship and to give meaning to their Jewish heritage. Thus, we strongly encourage active involvement by the parents in their own secular Jewish education, in the education of their children and in the operation of the school, as ways of enriching both the content of our program and our sense of identity.

## **The Secular Jew**

Secular Judaism is characterized as identification with Jews as a people who share common language, traditions, literature, culture, and history. Our school teaches that being Jewish does not depend upon a belief in God. Thus, while we take no position on the existence of a deity and further respect a diversity of opinion among our members and the larger Jewish Community on theological questions, we approach and interpret our heritage from a secular rather than religious point of view.

We recognize that the peoplehood of Jews, which spans nearly 6,000 years, has been significantly shaped by persecution and minority status, by the diaspora, and by an ongoing struggle for human dignity. Thus, the central theme of our program is that our Jewishness demands a sense of brotherhood, a dedication to the quality of life, and an awareness of social responsibilities.

We reject the idea that these responsibilities can be met by devotional exercises. Thus, we have no spiritual leader. Rather, we emphasize the humanism of our heritage and tend to evaluate all aspects of our history and tradition in light of humanist criteria.

## **Criteria**

We seek to provide our students with a basic understanding of Jewish history, and to familiarize them with all facets of Jewish philosophy, traditions, literature, art and music. The history of Jewish religion and the significance of the holidays and customs are taught as secular subjects. Miracles are taught as legends. Materials having religious roots and historic significance are taught for their intrinsic educational value, so that a particular Bible story which lacks evident humanist relevance, or a historic episode which runs contrary to the humanist theme, are not necessarily ignored. Rather, the relationship (or lack thereof) between such a story or event and our humanism is explored.

The evolution and development of the nation of Israel is studied, and pupils are encouraged to feel a positive sense of relationship with and concern for Israel. However, diverse opinions about the meaning of Israel for American Jews are presented, and the controversial issues in Israeli life and policy are aired.

Yiddish and Hebrew are both regarded as relevant and worthwhile. They are included in the curriculum, from time to time, as our resources permit.



## 1967 - 1968

Chairperson: Chuck Lapine  
Treasurer: Al Stern  
Secretary: Lorry Levinger  
Principal: Eugene Bayer

In the summer of 1967 five founding families (Shirley and Chuck Lapine, Marianne and Max Levey, Vivian and Bob Plonsey, Ida and Harvey Post, and Mickey and Al Stern) met to discuss their need for a once a week, progressive Sunday School. They wanted to impart to their children an identification with and a pride in the culture of the Jewish people and to relate their Jewish heritage with the political happenings of the time.

From this meeting the New Jewish Secular School was formed:

“Our goal is that each pupil emerge from the school as a morally committed, informed and socially responsible human being who positively identifies with his Jewishness and is involved with his family, his community and all humanity.”

Eugene Bayer was hired as principal and classroom space was rented at Fairfax Elementary School. Chuck Lapine sent out the first publicity announcing the school, and 15 families enrolled.

On September 17, 1967, the doors of the school opened to 26 pupils, ranging in age from 5 to 15, divided into four classrooms. Faculty included Terry Bayer - 1st level (5-6 years), Sandy Loeb - 2nd level (7-8 years), Sophie Bartel - 3rd level (9-12 years), Eugene Bayer - 4th level (12-15 years), Music - Ruth and Jack Emmer, and Dance - Mickey Stern.

The only activity held outside the confines of the school was the first annual Passover service, held at Diamond's Restaurant. At this service Keith Berner read a statement explaining why he was taking the middle name of Martin in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr.

Parents met once a month to discuss curriculum and to educate themselves on Jewish history, culture, and philosophy. In one program, Shirley Lapine reported on The Golden Age in Spain.

During the first year, the school faced a deficit of \$161 and decided to ask parents to contribute voluntarily \$15 per child in order to provide seed money to start the new year. A fundraising letter was sent to 20 families formerly associated with the Meyer Levin School, a progressive Sunday School of the 1950s, to raise supplementary funds to complete the school program. Three hundred and thirty dollars was raised.

A picnic was held at Horseshoe Lake on June 23rd to wind up the year.

In looking to the future, the school aimed to have a class for teenagers the next year. Jonathan Reichert and Bob Loeb showed interest in helping to teach a teenage class on ethics and values.

The first families and their children: Joanne and Bert Benkendorf / Judy (11); Naomi and Larry Breslau / Daniel (6), Jonathan (7); Ann and Irv Chudner / Ricky (10); Eleanor and Irv Gitlin / Nina (12); Shirley and Chuck Lapine / Elisa (5); Marianne and Max Levey / Ben (7); Lorry and Bernie Levinger / Nancy (6), Naomi (10); Sandy & Bob Loeb / Jeremy (7), Beth (5), Mrs. and Bill Mandle / Lisa, Dawn; Vivian and Bob Plonsey / Daniel (9), Ida and Harvey Post / Allison (6), Marc (8), Rochelle (10), Linda (13); Mim and Mel Rosenthal / Jim (5), Ann (10), Jeanne (12); Mickey and Al Stern / Gary (7), Brian (10), Laura (11); Maggie and Irv Weisberg / Marc; Selma and Eugene Bayer / Paul (15). Several families joined later in the year including Shirley and Jerry Berner / Seth, Keith; Sally and Dick Goldman; Nancy and Bob Klein; and Audrey and Howard Schneiderman.

## 1968 - 1969

Chairperson: Bob Loeb  
Secretary: Vivian Plonsey  
Treasurer: Al Stern  
Principal: Eugene Bayer

The New Jewish Secular School opened its second year on September 21st, at Fairfax School with 26 families. The School was administered by the parents who determine policy, curriculum, and staff. The theme for discussion with prospective members was "Culture without Ritual."

Faculty included: 1st grade - Terry Bayer, 2nd grade - Sandra Loeb, 3rd grade - Sophie Bartel, 4th grade - Eugene Bayer. Special programs such as assemblies, holiday observances, and field trips were regularly scheduled.

Eugene Bayer, with the help of Bob Loeb and Jonathan Reichert, worked with the teenage students, whose class assignment was to write a critical biography of Sholem Aleichem, his life and his work.

Monthly meetings were held on Sunday evening to discuss curriculum and to continue our program of Jewish education. Guest speakers and parents prepared research papers on such topics as Tzadakah, the Haskalah Society, and the History of the Secular Movement.

On Sunday March 23, 1969, all classes attended the Masada Exhibit at the Jewish Community Center.

The second annual Seder was on March 30th at Sherwin's Party Center, (choice of chicken or brisket dinner for \$4.00 per person). Harvey Post and his committee rewrote the Haggadah originally used.

New Families: Mr. and Mrs. Jack Gold, Ilene Gregg, Roberta and Art Heuer, Mr. and Mrs. Jay Loeb, Hedy and Walter Page, Mr. and Mrs. Phillippe Pearle, Alice and Paul Rolnick, Janet and Marvin Rosenberg, Martha and Herb Schlosser, Violet and Marv Sternfeld, Muriel Ticktin, Sue Weisenberg, Florence and Joseph Zinker

Non-returning: Chudner, Mandle

## 1969 - 1970

Chairperson: Al Stern

Faculty: Principal - Sandra Loeb, Kindergarten - Sandi Stern, 2nd grade - Sandy Loeb, 3rd grade - Roberta Heuer, 4th grade - John Perry, Teens - Bob Frankel and Eugene Bayer

The New Jewish Secular School began its third year with 29 families.

Although the adult community had not yet formally formed, a parents' meeting on January 25th was held at the Sternfelds', where Bob Frankel led a discussion on "A Progressive Look at Israel." Other soon to become regular events included a potluck dinner, held at the Loeb's' on March 14th and the third annual seder on April 19th.

Parents were urged to take an active part in sustaining the school. One or both members of each family were asked to join one of the following committees: Publicity, Bar Mitzvah, Hospitality, Social Affairs, Adult Programs, Membership, or Curriculum.

Eugene Bayer retired as principal. A farewell party was held at the home of Harvey and Ida Post. A library for the school was begun with contributions from the members. It was called the Eugene Bayer Library Fund.

New Families: Liela and Sid Brode, Adele and Phil Hart, Linda and John Klein, Sandra and Allen Lerner, Jean and Alan Miller, Jim and Judy Saks

Non-returning: Breslau, Benkendorf, Gold, Goldman, Jay Loeb, Pearle, Rolnick, Schneiderman

## 1970 - 1971

Chairperson: Al Stern  
Principal: Sandra Loeb

30 family units, 51 students

The NJSS moved classes from Fairfax Elementary School to the Jewish Community Center on Mayfield Road in Cleveland Heights. Although not yet officially a “community,” the group began to organize events on a more regular basis which extended beyond the school.

On October 1st, a Rosh Hashanah Open House was held for members of the community. Succoth, Chanukah, and Purim were celebrated at the Sunday School. The Passover Seder was again held at Diamond’s Restaurant.

A parents’ meeting on March 7th had Don Kuby of the Jewish Defense League as a guest speaker.

The NJSS joined the International Conference on Jewish Secular Education-CJSO (now the Congress of Secular Jewish Organizations). Nineteen secular organizations from the U.S. and Canada attended the second annual conference in Detroit. Representing Cleveland were Al Stern and Sandy Loeb. Al was on a panel discussing “Jewish Secular Philosophy in 1971.”

The parents of the NJSS took responsibility for staffing the Peace Vigil at the First Methodist Church in Cleveland. The vigil was begun at the time of the My Lai massacre in Vietnam and was staffed 24 hours a day for several weeks. Each group took a 24-hour period. Our day was Sunday, December 21, from 6 a.m. to 6 a.m. the next day. Each person signed up for one hour during which there were readings of prose, poetry, or whatever one wished to express. The experience was meaningful for all who participated.

On May 5, 1971, the NJSS had \$589.

New Families: Barbara and Irv Feldman, Carol Fisher, Bobbi Glin, Lonnie and Stan Gottlieb, Marilyn and Saul Isler, Sharon and Mitch Kaufman, Helen and Dave Nagusky, Gail and Neil Newstein, Harriet and Gary Tishkoff

Non-returning: D. Kaufman, Miller, Plonsey, Reichert, R. Stern

## 1971 - 1972

Chairpersons: Sid Brode and Roberta Heuer  
Secretary: Florence Zinker  
Treasurer: Bobbi Glin  
Membership: David Nagusky

Principal: Sandra Loeb

28 family units, 47 students

NJSS applied for affiliation with the Bureau of Jewish Education. The request was tabled for further consideration and approval did not come for another 10 years.

Gary Tishkoff, accompanied by Martha Schlosser, gave a benefit concert for NJSS which was not only successful financially, but gave the attendees a great thrill in hearing Gary's superb violin playing.

In the spring of 1972, Seth Isler was the first student to have a Bar Mizvah at the NJSS. He explained in his speech that he spent hours with his dad in preparation "discussing and rewriting and arguing and disagreeing and just talking until we realized that maybe that's really what this Bar Mitzvah was supposed to accomplish." He spoke on ten topics including God, Faith, Humanism, Secularism, Being Jewish, Pride, Tradition, Parents, Self and War. Sandy Loeb helped him prepare for the program, which was held at the Jewish Community Center's Mandel Auditorium.

On June 10, Helen and Dave Nagusky hosted a potluck supper. Many of the newest members attended and we had a good opportunity to learn more about each other.

New Families: Edie and Richard Blum, Sonya and Jack Jaffe, Nora and Joshua Kancelbaum, Sheila and Fred Markowitz, Marilyn and Eugene Marx, Essie and Robert Perelman, Gladys and Melvin Reydman, Connie and Bob Soltz, Gene and Lynne Rosewater, Alice and Les Wyman

Non-returning: Bayer, Berner, Gottlieb, Kaufman, Newstein, Page, Sternfeld, Weisenberg

## 1972 - 1973

Chairpersons: Liela Brode and Josh Kancelbaum  
Principal: Harriet Tishkoff

As the organization officially transformed from solely a school to an adult community as well, the name transformed as well. We were now the Jewish Secular Community. Member families felt the need to come together to celebrate life cycle events such as B'nai Mitzvahs, deaths, and child naming, as well as holidays. The broader scope allowed people to join who do not have school-age children, and singles and mixed-marriage couples have found the Community to be a very comfortable place.

During the summer of 1972, there were two ongoing committees, dealing with curriculum and a B'nai Mitzvah. Sandy Loeb and Roberta Heuer, members of the latter, requested materials on a secular Bar Mitzvah from CSJO members. From Philadelphia and Detroit they received the format for an Israeli Bar Mitzvah - Kibbutz style. From these materials the committee adapted a program to suit our students, involving extra-curricular study delving more deeply into Jewish heritage and Jewish values and performing "mitzvos."

Sandy Loeb helped organize the first Camp Wise Weekend in early September, and a Rosh Hashanah Open House was held September 9th at Linda and John Klein's new home.

The Succoth program included a "Bring Your Own Picnic Supper" at Horseshoe Lake. Sunday School classes helped decorate a Sukkah.

A personal growth encounter group was formed and met twice each month for over a year. Those in the group included Alice and Les Wyman, Gene and Lynne Rosewater, John and Linda Klein, Bill and Marsha Meckler, Sandy Loeb, Bobbi Glin, Gary and Harriet Tishkoff, Karen and Larry Katz, and Lynn and Harvey Fisher.

The 1972-73 roster was missing so we do not have an accurate account of new and non-returning families. The following names are some of the families that joined: Bob and Judy Blattner, Buckland, Garson, Joyce and Abe Glickman, Goldstone, Karen and Larry Katz, Kutzik, Nancy and Bob Mack, Marsha and Bill Meckler, Stephanie and Bill Wohl, Gerri and Dave Zauder.

## 1973 - 1974

Chairpersons: Cathy Light and Art Heuer  
Treasurer: Dave Nagusky  
Secretary: Bobbi Glin

Sunday School staff: Principal - Harriet Tishkoff, Kindergarten - Nancy Jacobson, 1st grade - Casey Gross, 2nd grade - Roberta Heuer, 3rd grade - Bill Meckler, 4th grade - Bea Camiener, 5th grade - Bruce Mandel, Dancing - Mickey Stern, Music - Rik Solowich, Hebrew - Varda Levey, Upper Grades - Rik Kohn, B'nai Mitzvah Advisor: Larry Katz

71 family units, 102 students

1973-74 was an active year for the JSC as traditions such as the newsletter and the Yom Kippur service were established and the Sunday School flourished with 102 students.

The Yom Kippur service was organized by Bill Meckler, Roberta Heuer, and Bob Loeb. It was held at the home of Karen and Larry Katz. Bill Meckler distributed readings on the Holocaust and Gary Tishkoff played a very moving violin piece.

The annual weekend outing was held at Round-Up Lake this year.

Roberta Heuer wrote a newsletter called "Rivka's Briv." One issue reported, "The Sunday morning get togethers are alive and well. There are always a few people around with whom to get a good argument moving."

A workshop was held February 25th for parents and teachers to discuss ideas from the Conference on Jewish Education. Larry Katz coordinated the discussion that included the relationship of the JSC to the Jewish establishment, building community, curriculum, and secular life style.

We were not prepared for all the people who came to our Passover Seder. Bobbi Glin chaired a committee to improve the next year's program.

Eugene Bayer spoke at our final meeting on May 20th on the topic of "The Prophetic Tradition." The annual potluck supper on June 2nd was held at the new home of Lynne and Gene Rosewater.

David Epstein joined the Bar Mitzvah Committee and was extremely helpful. The young B'nai Mitzvah students worked hard with their parents in preparing for their ceremony on June 9th.

New Families: (May include some families that joined in 1972.) Barbara and Tom Bale, Aaron and Sharon Billowitz, Marilyn and Elliot Borofsky, Carole and Ed Brown, Bea and Jerry Camiener, Kaye and Mel Chavison, Lynn and Harvey Fisher, Phyllis and Alan Gary, Mary and Arthur Glassman, Nancy Greene, Nancy and David Jacobson, Nancy Kates Jacobson, Robert Kates, Pippa and Bill Kiraly, Ron Kohn, Linda and Harry Lehman, Joanne and Bob Lewis, Cathy and Mort Light, Lana and Marc Moresky, John Nussbaum, Alice and Ron Perloff, Marcia and Merle Pollis, Ann and Howard Prigolson, Ruth and Stan Raskin, Noreen Robbins, Rae and Nate Rohfeld, Jan Rosenberg, Mitzi and Stan Siegal, Carol and Sam Tenenbaum



## 1974 - 1975

Chairpersons: Al Lerner and Cathy Light

Board Members: Education Committee - Liela Brode, Kaye Chavinson; Treasurer - Sid Brode; Holiday Committee - Roberta Heuer; Policy Coordinator - Larry Katz; Adult Program Committee - Jan Rosenberg

Sunday School staff: Principal - Harriet Tishkoff, Kindergarten - Nancy Jacobson, 1st grade - Sue Scheider, 2nd grade - Casey Gross, 3rd grade - Barbara Bale, 4th grade - Melodie Begleiter, 5th grade - Rae Rohfeld, 6th grade - Rik Kohn, Upperclass - Cathy Light, Dancing - Joel Siegel, Hebrew - Cathy Blumberg, Music - Lynne August, B'nai Mitzvah advisor - Larry Katz

80 family units, 105 students

The Jewish Secular Community began its eighth year as a school and its third year as a community at the Camp Wise Labor Day retreat weekend. There we adopted the new by-laws that had been drafted the previous spring. Anticipating that elections to the newly created "Board of Governors" would be vigorously contested, the by-laws provided:

"Elections for the Board of Governors shall be by mailed ballot. Ballots listing the nominees shall be mailed to all members eligible to vote. They (the ballots, not the members!) shall be returned enclosed and sealed in an unmarked envelope which shall itself be enclosed in an envelope bearing the signature of the member on the outside upper left hand corner."

This procedure worked well for the first election of the Board, when 18 people ran for the coveted nine positions. Since then, the procedure has been rarely used because we have rarely had more people "running for office" than we've had offices to fill! Sometimes we had more positions than people - this method of "election" is sometimes referred to as "voluntoldism."

The JSC applied to the State of Ohio for incorporation as a non-profit organization and was recognized without difficulty.

Climaxing the year was Cleveland's hosting of the annual CSJO conference (then still called the "Conference on Secular Jewish Education" - CSJE). Dave Nagusky coordinated the event, held in May at the Somerset Inn,

Shaker Heights. Harold Ticktin delivered the keynote address, "Dealing with Anti-Semitism in North America Today." Workshops included values clarification, teaching the Holocaust, adult programming, and secular Judaism during the high school and college years – topics we will cover at conferences. Sherwin Wine, rabbi for Detroit's Birmingham Temple, a humanistic Judaism congregation, spoke on "Marriage and Death – How Secular Jews Observe Them." Cathy Light planned and supervised the first "teen conference" component of CSJO, creating a tradition still followed today. The conference concluded with a banquet that presented the now legendary play, "Securella."

Although the conference lost \$518.15, Treasurer Sid Brode concluded that it was "worth all the effort and expense, which is easy for me to say since [David Nagusky] did most of the work."

David Nagusky reflected later that "CJSE '75 was the best annual conference held to date"; however he was not as enthusiastic about the state of the community. In June he wrote a four-page letter to the Board outlining what he saw as problems in the community, centering around a lack of secular Jewish content and a lack of commitment from the membership. Angered that more people from Cleveland did not participate in the conference, David pointed to a lack of response from members on several occasions for discussion of secular Jewish topics. "It has been virtually impossible to attract any numbers of our members to programs dealing with any subject even remotely concerned with secular Judaism," he wrote. He concluded his letter with a challenge: "I fear that if this is not the best year of the Jewish Secular Community of Cleveland that it may be its last." Several of David's suggestions for improvement were implemented the following year.

New Families: Linda and David Arnold, Beth and Richard Desberg, Bonnie and Neil Dick, Nina and Steve Esrati, Terry and Howard Freedman, Myra and Howard Gilmore, Adele and Sherwood Greenfield, Roberta and Don Herman, Joan Horwitz, Ann and Stuart Klein, Ron Kohn and Joan Baker, Barbara and Vic Livadi, Margaret and Richard Margolis, Judy and Larry Pollak, Margo and Bob Roth, Penny and Richard Rubin, Susan and Jeffrey Salkin, Beverly and Nelson Siegel, Mary Lou and Walter Simon

Non-returning: Camiener, Gary, Glassman, Max Levey, Bob and Nancy Mack, Perloff, Prigolson, Nate Rohfeld, Schlosser, Muriel Ticktin, Zauder

## 1975 - 1976

Chairpersons: Mort Light and Bill Meckler

Board Members: Finance Committee - Bob Blattner, Holiday Committee - Elliot Borofsky, Education Committee - Liela Brode, School Committee - Kaye Chavinson, Membership Committee - Mel Chavinson, Adult Programming - John Klein, Communications Committee - John Nussbaum

Sunday School Staff: Principal - Harriet Tishkoff, Kindergarten - Louise Coate, 1st grade - Marilyn Zusman, 2nd grade - Jane Harel, 3rd grade - Linda Terkel, 4th / 5th grade - Ellen Unger, 6th grade - Rik Kohn, 7th grade - David Harel, Teen class - Cathy Light, Music, Dance and Hebrew - Helen Winoker

55 family units, 58 students, 4 young adults

The ninth school year (fourth community year) featured the most active adult program schedule ever offered -- before or since -- to our membership. This revival in programming was initiated in response to fears that the community's activities and participation were no longer consistent with its philosophy. In a letter to all community members, the Board explained that "all family members will be expected to be continually involved in activities of the community and Sunday school."

In keeping with this, John Klein, chair of the adult education committee, declared "Every Sunday is a Secular Sunday!" Greeting parents of children attending Sunday school (as well as other members) in the adjacent rooms of the JCC, John and his committee offered coffee, bagels, babysitting, and a different program every Sunday that school was in session. The variety of programs ranged from "News Media Coverage of the Jewish Community" (Merle Pollis), to values clarification (Sandra Loeb), to folk dancing (Mickey Stern).

On January 9th, seven member families – the Brodes, Chavinsons, Feils, Fishers, Kleins, Levadis, and Rosewaters – hosted fellow members in the Community's first celebration of the Sabbath eve. The idea behind the dinners was to break into small groups of two or four families and discuss the meaning, history, pleasures, and the possible relationship of the Sabbath to Secular Jews. The community distributed Sabbath resource materials to help the hosts and guests develop a program that was meaningful to them. The meals were prepared jointly by the hosts and their guests.

Mickey Stern formed a discussion group for women only to look "at Jewish History from a woman's viewpoint. How were the roles of Jewish women influenced by men's attitudes?" Those attending the meetings read assignments from "Response" journal's issue "The Jewish Woman - An Anthology," which formed the basis of the discussions.

The education committee, setting policy for the Sunday School, recommended that the Board adopt a requirement of "family participation" in the Sunday School. Family projects were to be related to the curriculum and to be prepared by each student and his or her family. The requirement was adopted as policy: "The anticipated outcome of this policy is to help parents relate more meaningfully to Secular Judaism, to develop family secular traditions, to share the knowledge of the secular school units, and TO HAVE A GOOD TIME WITH OUR CHILDREN" The requirement was met with limited success.

The CSJO conference was held in Philadelphia.

New Families: Jerald and Ariella Brodkey, Abe and Wendy Cantor, Shirley Dratler, Lee and Sheila Horowitz, Nelson Siegel, Beverly Siegel, Steve and Gail Simon

Non-returning: Arnold, Bale, Billowitz, Desberg, Dick, Feldman, Gilmore, Greenfield, Jaffe, Katz, Robert Katz, Kiraly, Klein, Kehman, Sandy Lerner, Max Levey, Margolis, Perelman, Rast, Rubin, Schlosser, Segall, Sherman, Simon, Tenenbaum

## 1976 - 1977

Chairpersons: John Klein and Jan Rosenberg

Board Members: Education - Joyce Mandel, Merle Pollis; Adult Programming - Shirley Dratler, Merle Pollis; Holidays - Roberta Heuer; Treasurer - Bob Blattner, Membership - Marcia Pollis, Mel Chavinson; Secretary/Newsletter - Bill Meckler; Social Action - Larry Sachs

Sunday School staff: Principal - Harriet Tishkoff, Kindergarten / 1st grade - Louise Coate, 2nd / 3rd grades - Dennis Schuman, 4th grade - Jane Harel, 5th / 6th grades / Music - Fred Sternfeld, 7th grade - David Harel, Teen Class - Sandy Loeb, Hebrew - Lee Ascherman

58 family units, 54 students, 8 young adults

The first memorial service for one of our own members was held for Max Levey at the home of Mickey and Al Stern on September 22nd. John Klein coordinated the program, which included prepared remarks by close friends Shirley and Chuck Lapine, Al Lerner, Al and Mickey Stern, and Marianne Levey. (Ben spoke of his father at a special teen group meeting.) Then followed an open forum for anyone to speak (Bill Meckler and others), a recorded song by Paul Robeson, tape of Max's speech at Ben's Bar Mitzvah, candlelighting and reading, and group song: "We Shall Overcome". It was a very moving experience.

Traditionally, the Labor Day weekend was held at Camp Wise.

The Life Cycle committee on Death and Burial Service met and generated a list of questions to be asked at an interview with the three Jewish funeral directors: Temple Memorial Home, Miller Deutch and Berkowitz-Kumin. A report on their findings was presented at an adult education meeting.

The Education committee divided its duties: Marsha Meckler - Room-Parent coordination, Lynne Rosewater and Joyce Mandel - Curriculum, Mimi Feil - Parent Involvement, Lynne Rosewater - Teacher Evaluation, Merle Pollis - Enrichment

The B'nai Mitzvah curriculum was revamped to be project oriented. All students were required to do several self-study projects, as well as cover a summary of Jewish history, the history of Zionism and Israel, Jewish arts and sciences among other things.

Dues this year were \$225 for school tuition and \$25 per person for Community membership.

Gene Rosewater served as our new Sunshine Chairman (whoever needed any sunshine were to call Gene and he'd be right over).

Three Sabbath dinners were held this year. About 50 percent of the Community participated and members said it is a delightful experience, a good way to get to know one another, and an excellent way to integrate new members.

The Board scheduled a workshop for May 15th to discuss the apathy of the membership and how the Community could best serve its members. The Board members examined their own reasons for belonging to the JSC: education of children, social needs (most often mentioned), Jewish activity around holiday times, need for Jewish identity, and time of crises needs. Things most important to members seemed to be the values clarification sessions, the Encounter group, and other self-awareness type of activities.

In February, the Board gave approval for a permanent phone number listing for the JSC. In 1988 we finally got one!

The CSJO conference was held in Chicago.

The final social event of the year was a potluck dinner at the Rosewater's.

New Families: Gil and Anula Ellis, Barry and Barbara Epstein, Mimi Feil, Jack Horner, Nancy Johnson, Arnold and Anita Kaplan, Harriet Mack, Mark and Linda Presser, Larry and Bobbie Sacks, Paul and Carol Selinkoff, Helene Weiss

Non-returning: Brodkey, Esrati, Ginsberg, Nussbaum, Pollak, B. Siegal, Simon

## 1977 - 1978

Chairpersons: Roberta Heuer and Jan Rosenberg  
Principal: Harriet Tishkoff

52 families, 60 students, 1 young adult

The community celebrated its 10th anniversary in the fall of 1977 at the Villa Di Borally, complete with a formal sit-down dinner, reminiscing, and a discussion on the history of Secular Judaism by Merle Pollis.

But 1977-78 was a difficult year financially, and after much discussion a decision was made to raise the dues to \$365 for a family with two adults, one teen, and children in the Sunday School. Dues for single members, adults or teens, went from \$25 to \$35.

Merle Pollis wrote a very humorous newsletter, whose layout attempted to resemble a newspaper. The headlines were hand-written, and the typing was more than a little off, but the spirit of the community came through the monthly, chock full of news publication. "Newsy Notes," a monthly feature, poked fun of many people in the community with such news tidbits as, "Sid Brode is not allowed to join the teen group...no matter what birth certificate he produces...Good try Sid," "The Board has voted against, by a small margin, separate seating for men and women at holiday programs...It was an unorthodox vote...Good going Board," and "Question: If you go to the Purim Party as Barry Goldwater, is that a famous half Jew...and do you only wear half of the clothes you would wear as a full Jew? Good going question."

In May 1978, a general meeting of the Community was called to discuss a recommendation of the Board to hire Anson Laytner, a 4th year rabbinical student, as an advisor and consultant. As this move represented a first in paid outside leadership, as well as a \$15 per person dues increase, there was considerable discussion of the plan; however, in the end, there was almost unanimous agreement to the move. A decision was made to hire him for eight monthly weekend visits (September-May) at \$120 per weekend.

The year's co-chairpersons both moved away from Cleveland that year, Jan to Peoria, Illinois, and Roberta to Detroit, Michigan.

The CSJO conference was held in Bethesda, Maryland.

New Families: Harvey and Barbara Eisenberg, Ed Feil, Pat Fine, Linda Fodor, Nancy and Bill Wohl, Allan and Fran Harris, Ed and Estelle Richman, Paul and Susan Shurin, Mike and Bobbie Varble

Non-returning: Borofsky, Cantor, Ellis, Glin, L. and S. Horowitz, D. Jacobson, Levadi, Salkin, Wiesenberg, A. Wyman, L. Wyman

## 1978 - 1979

Chairpersons: Mickey Stern and Sid Brode

Board members: Barbara Epstein - Holidays, Linda Fodor - Secretary and Membership, Nora Kancelbaum - Membership, Ron Kohn - Adult Program, Marsha Meckler - Treasurer and Newsletter Editor, David Nagusky and Bobbie Varbie - Education

51 family units, 45 students, 13 young adults

Highlighted by the participation of a rabbinical student, the completion of a report on dealing with death, and an active adult program, 1978-79 was an exciting one for the JSC.

During this year we hired Anson Laytner, a rabbinical student from Cincinnati, who did an eight-month internship with the JSC as a resource person. He met with all standing committees, the young adults, and the B'nai Mitzvah class and parents. He also consulted with the Board and the principal and was available to participate in the classroom. He provided us with much information on holidays and life cycles. He prepared a program dealing with "Preparing for Death: The Ethical Will." A form covered instructions for one's funeral and an ethical message to one's family.

The Labor Day weekend, held in previous years at Camp Wise, was moved to Camp Yakewi, with Gene Rosewater in charge. Standard events like apple picking at Succot, and a Children's Yom Kippur Service prepared by the B'nai Mitzvah class, served to highlight the fall.

Perspective Community members were given a tongue-in-cheek "self-quiz" to see if they would be comfortable in the JSC. The multiple choice test was hardly serious, but gave people a sense of what we were all about.

Mickey Stern was searching for any items from the Community's past events - announcements, newsletters, Haggadahs, holiday programs, B'nai Mitzvah programs - to keep a record of our history.

Liela and Sid Brode, Nora Kancelbaum, and Linda Fodor hosted and coordinated the meetings for prospective members, which resulted in 8 new members and 6 children.

Throughout the year, the Life Cycle Committee on Death worked on establishing a procedure for use in the event of the death of one of our members. The committee's final report included funeral and burial costs, funeral and memorial services, Community support, materials on mourning, and a "Plan of Action" for the Community. Since its creation (kena hora) no community member has died, and the plan has not been implemented.

Adult programming was active and full of Jewish content. Topics included two perspectives on the Middle East, Judaism in the Soviet Union, Yiddish stories in English, Chanuka for secular Jews, and the ethics of our ancestors. A mini-course exploring the roots and values of secular Judaism was scheduled for Sunday mornings. Abram Sacher's book "History of the Jews" was used and the discussion leader was Irv Gitlin.

The election procedure for the Board was used for the first time since its establishment, with six people running for four spots, and with a teen as one of the candidates.



The CSJO conference was held in Toronto.

New Families: Shirley Berner, Milton and Suzanne Fromson, Paula Hurwitz, Rona Kaplan, Bonnie Caplan, Judy Lipkin, Jim and Kathe Mayer, Allan and Judy Rubinstein, Mimi Spellman, Linda Stein

Non-returning: Brown, Fine, Fisher, Heuer, Horner, Cathy Light, Mandle, J. Rosenberg

## 1979 - 1980

Chairperson:           Kathe Mayer  
Principal:               Harriet Tishkoff

Board Members: Treasurer - Marsha Meckler, Secretary/Membership - Linda Foder, Membership - Bobbie Varble, Education Committee - Rona Kaplan and Paul Shurin, Adult Programs - Harold Ticktin and Helene Weiss, Social Action Committee - Barry Epstein

Sunday School Staff: Kindergarten / 3rd grade - Gail Pollis, 4th grade - Lee Ascherman, 5th / 6th grades - Fred Sternfeld; 7th grade - Steve Bram; Teens - Howard Cohen and Sandy Loeb

58 family units, 48 students, 15 young adults

1979 saw a new addition to the Secular Community Life Cycle events - a baby naming. Rona Kaplan named her 6-week-old son and 3-year-old daughter at the Rosh Hashanah service.

A committee of Lillian Levine, Liela Brode, Margie Buxbaum, and Mickey Stern researched, read, argued, and formally wrote the first formal Yom Kippur program; the reaction was overwhelmingly positive.

Barbara Epstein and Ed Richman chaired the Holiday Committee, which created a Tu B'Shevat program. Many community members participated in the potluck dinners using this program.

The Life Cycle Committee presented a report on "Preparing for Death," which outlined community resources and costs of various services. Ethical wills were also discussed.

Finances were a problem to the Board as the School was not self-supporting.

The CSJO conference, in Los Angeles, moved from Memorial Day to late December, hoping to attract more people seeking warm weather.

New Families: Dick and Margie Buxbaum, Paul and Barbara Feinberg, Jon and Joan Flinker, Gordon Friedman, Merrily Kaplan, Margery Mazoh (Y.A.), Lynn Millier (Y.A.), Virginia and Dennis Morton, Gail Post (Y.A.), Marilyn Schauer Samuels, Harold Ticktin, Bonita Tiffany

Non-returning: Berner, Blum, Caplan, Judy Rubinstein, Seidman, Spellman

## 1980 - 1981

Chairperson:               Kathe Mayer

Board Members: Treasurer - Allan Rubenstein, Education - Rona Kaplan and Paul Shurin, Secretary - Margie Buxbaum, Holidays - Fran Harris, Membership - Joan Flinker, Adult Programs - Harold Ticktin

Sunday School staff: Principal - Harriet Tishkoff; Kindergarten / 3rd grade - Gail Pollis; 4th / 5th grades - Julie Montlack; 6th grade / Jr. Hi teens - Lee Asherman and Joan Flinker, 7th grade / Sr. Hi teens - Fred Sternfeld; Teacher's aids; Debbie Brode and Eddie Feil.

81 family units, 38 students, 17 young adults

The year kicked off with the Labor Day, Camp Wise/Camp Yakewi weekend, which was held at Shaker Day Camp under the direction of Allan Rubenstein. A number of people camped out under the stars on the beach.

The Yom Kippur Committee made changes based on last year's suggestions and included an addition written by Mel Chavinson. The B'nai Mitzvah class wrote and directed the children's Yom Kippur program.

Harold Ticktin arranged many interesting adult programs such as "From Russia with Love," a Sephardic Jew's Perspective, Theatre Party - "King of Schnorrers," "Right Out of History," a film of Judy Chicago's "The Dinner Party," and a mini course on Sunday mornings to study the Bible.

The budget was a constant concern of the Board.

Tu B'Shevat was celebrated with potluck dinners, Purim with the annual "cholesterol festival"/costume party, the Passover Seder was held at Workmen's Circle.

New Families: Phyllis Asnien, Judith Bergmann, Laurie Blattner (Y.A.), Judy and Bob Charlick, Charles Delbaum and Marjorie Kornhauser, Carol and Harvey Finkelstein, Enid German, Stuart Freedlin, Linda Stein-Goldurs and Jim Goldurs, Mark Hoffman, Phyllis and Ronald Kallen, Ellen and Steve Lazarus, Janet and Milt Lieblich, David Miller (Y.A.), Julie Montlack, Bob Shafran, Cheryl and Mickey Weinstein, Judith Lazarus Yellon, Fred Yellon

Non-returning: B. and J. Blattner, Hurwitz, N. Jacobson, M. Kaplan, Lipkin, Mack, Morton, J. Salkin, N. Siegal

## 1981 - 1982

Chairperson: Joan Flinker

Board Members included: Treasurer - Allan Rubinstein, Secretary - Enid German, Membership - Carol Finkelstein, Education - Lillian Levine and Bob Charlick, Holidays - Sid and Liela Brode, Adult Programs - David Bortz and Harold Ticktin, Newsletter Editor - Nora Kancelbaum.

Sunday School staff: Principal - Harriet Tishkoff; Kindergarten / 1st / 2nd / 3rd grades - Gail Pollis; 4th / 5th grades - Debby Gold; 6th grade / 1st term - Lee Ascherman, 2nd term - Larry Waxman; 7th grade / music - Fred Sternfeld; Dance - Sara Lee Epstein; Hebrew - Judy Friedman; Teacher Aides - Amy Chavinson and Eddie Fell

81 family units, 14 young adults and 38 students.

1981-82 saw no major changes for the community or the Sunday School. Events including the camp weekend, Rosh Hashonah and Yom Kippur services, the Chanuka party, the Purim party, Shabbat dinners, the Passover Seder, and monthly adult programs went off with customary success. In addition, the Secular Suitcase Players entertained the JSC throughout the year.

The Sunday School produced a newsletter, "The Secular Spieler," which compiled articles written by students in every class. A letter from the 5th and 6th grade class to the Syrian Ambassador was published, demanding an explanation for the inability of Syrian Jews to emigrate. The letter concluded, 'Please provide us some kind of explanation for your government's physical and emotional abuse of its Jewish citizens.' Also, a letter to "Bintel Briefs" asked, "I hate to go to Sunday School but my parents make me. What can I do about this?" The response advised, "Nothing, So go and try and make the best of it. Someday you'll know why they sent you and you'll be glad. (So they say.)"

The youth group was divided into a junior and senior section, with both being represented at the CSJO conference in Detroit. The junior youth group planned and presented a workshop on intermarriage.

New Families: Lois Adelson, Eileen Adler, Michelle Auerbach (Y.A.), Russell Baron, Joel and Beth Berger, David & Carol Bortz, Clara Conoby, Lynn and Judy Dueser, Harvey Epstein, Ruth and Leah Finkelstein, Paul and Margie Goldberg, Paul and Shere Lynn Lehman, Herb and Marla Limsi, Dora Pink, Irene Shenker, Vi Sternfeld, Janet Storti, W.George and Phoebe Stuart, Ray and Ruth Warner, Roy and Elizabeth Woda

Non-returning: Blattner, Gilmore, Lazarus, Pollis, Shafran

## 1982 - 1983

Chairpersons: Joan Flinker and Fred Yellon

Board Members: Treasurer - Sid Brode, Secretary - Enid German, Membership - Carol Finkelstein, Education - Marc Moresky and Roy Woda, Holidays - Allan Rubinstein and Fred Yellon, Adult Programming - David Bortz and Bob Charlick.

Sunday School staff: Principal - Harriet Tishkoff; Kindergarten / 1st grade - Michelle Auerbach, 2nd / 3rd / 4th grades - Gail Pollis; 5th / 6th grades - Debby Gold; 7th grade / Music - Fred Sternfeld, Dance - Sara Lee Epstein, Hebrew - Yael Tszfrir

94 family units, 40 students, 14 young adults

In 1982, the Sunday School was recognized by the Bureau of Jewish Education as a Jewish educational institution. The Bureau, by a 2:1 vote margin, ultimately concluded that we met the standard criterion of "fostering a Jewish identity." In December, the issue was the subject of a Point-Counterpoint in the Cleveland Jewish News between two members of the mainstream Jewish community.

Although the Sunday School began the 1982-83 year with 19 families and four classes, with a graduating class of 14, the largest ever, enrollment significantly dropped. There were four separate B'nai Mitzvah services this year. But the next year saw only 3 classes and the beginning of the school's seriously decreasing enrollment.

Gene Rosewater and Bill Meckler continued to entertain the community at Passover with a puppet show performance featuring themselves as anchors of a news program. People only wished it would have lasted a little longer. At that Seder, the youth group auctioned off community services ranging from backrubs to homemade soup to airplane trips to help pay the way to the Congress of Secular Jewish Organizations (CSJO) conference in Philadelphia.

Other annual holiday events continued, including Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Chanukah, Purim, and Shabbat celebrations. Other favorites included the annual camp weekend, held at Camp Klein, and monthly adult programs.

The CSJO conference was held in Philadelphia. Adults and teens were again there to represent Cleveland. At the business meeting, Amy Lieblich, a Cleveland teen, accepted the responsibility of hosting the 1984 conference on behalf of the JSC. Marsha Meckler and Bobbie Varble backed her up on this and did most of the work the next year to make it happen.

New Families: Jordon and Carol Delmonte, Bill and Carol Falender, Sonia Pressman Fuentes, Maureen Hack, Gabi Hays, Myra Kaplan, Donald and Mary Ann Lannoch, Fern Levy, Jim and Susan Marder, David and Honey Meir-Levi, Helen Mencher, Karen Moss, Diane Phillips-Leatherberry, Janet Porris, Scott Radway, Norman and Dorothy Robbins, Gary and Eileen Sabo, Jeff and Susan Salkin, Janet Sax, Rena Selden, Barry and Rona Weiss, Dorothy Werblow, Gail Zabell

Non-returning: Baron, Conoby, Finkelstein, Freidlin and Kaplan, Fromson, P. Kallen, J. Kancelbaum, Pink, Post, Shenker, Shurin

## 1983 - 1984

Chairpersons: Fred Yellon and Judy Bergmann

Board Members: Treasurer - Sid Brode, Secretary - Marla Limsi, Membership - Dorothy Werblow, Education - Marc Moresky and Roy Woda, Holidays - Marla Limsi and Julie Montlack, Adult Programming - Judy Bergmann, Social Events Coordinator - Diane Phillips-Leatherberry

106 family units, 32 students, 17 young adults

The 1983-84 year brought a lot of hard work for several community members as Cleveland hosted the 1984 CSJO conference. CSJO is an organization of groups throughout North America with philosophies similar to our own, and each year a conference is held in one of the affiliate cities. Marsha Meckler, Bobbie Varble, and Allan Rubinstein chaired the program, arrangements, and entertainment committees respectively, with Donna Flinker chairing the teen conference. The weekend's theme, Community and Continuity, brought much interesting and significant discussion for both adults and teens.

The conference, held at John Carroll University over Memorial Day weekend, was attended by 71 adults and 31 teens, with 46 people from Cleveland involved.

The community looked into filing its archives with the Western Reserve Historical Society. No action was taken then.

New Families: Roger and Frances Abrams, Louise Abrams, Ida Bortz, Ruth Fazio, Elaine Green, Saul and Min Isler, Michael and Peggy Isquick, Robert Kates, Margaret Lamm (Y.A.), Peter and Nancy Lewis, Seth and Johnnie Marks, Daniel and Polly Morgenstern, Irv Pomerantz, Melvin and Gladys Reydman, Jim and Dora Schorfeld, Doris Somers

Non-returning: Adler, Berger, Light, Porris, Robbins

## 1984 - 1985

Chairperson: Jim Mayer

Board Members: Treasurer - Sid Brode, Secretary - Helen Mencher, Membership - Dorothy Werblow, Education - Johnnie Marks and Bert Kutnick, Holidays - Fern Levy and Scott Radway, Adult Programs - Judy Bergmann.

Sunday School staff: Principal - Harriet Tishkoff; Kindergarten / 3rd grade - Gail Pollis; 4th / 6th grades - Anita Davidson; 7th grades - Debby Gold; Teachers' Aides - Myra Tishkoff, Michelle Auerbach, Laura Meckler.

99 family units, 32 students, 16 young adults

A special feature of the adult programming for the year was a history course offered by Community member Bert Kutnick.

David Ariel, President of the College of Jewish Studies, spoke to the Community on the subject, "Is There a Secular Tradition in Judaism."

Chanukah will be celebrated with latkes and Jewish Trivial Pursuits.

Judy Bergmann and Dorothy Werblow organized a meeting to formally introduce the Jewish Secular Community to prospective members.

Cleveland was represented, as always, by teens and adults at the CSJO conference held in Toronto.

New Families: Brian and Gail Bash, Jill Baum, Carol Chernikoff, Donna Cohen, Amy Cole, Lenny and Cheryl Horvitz, Susan Kozminski, Carole Kraig, Bert and Dalia Kutnick, Ken and Sheri Levine, Susan Lewis, Amy Lieblich, Susannah Muskovitz, Stanley Whay

Non-returning: Adelson, Asnien, Epstein, Finkelstein, Gilmore, Harp, M. and J. Horowitz, Lannoch, Lewis, Lieblich, Limsi, Moss, Rohfeld, Soltz, Somers, Storti, Stuart, Tiffany, Zabell

## 1985 - 1986

Chairpersons: Jim Mayer and Helen Mencher

Board Members: Secretary, Adult Programs - Helen Mencher, Treasurer - Sid Brode; Membership - Gloria Einstein; Education - Johnnie Marks; Holidays, Youth Group - Fern Levy; Holidays, Newsletter - Scott Radway; Camp Weekend - David Bortz, Adult Education - Judy Bergmann, Adult Programs - Allan Rubinstein

94 family units, 25 students, 14 young adults

With only 25 students enrolled in the Sunday School, the Community considered merging with the Workmen's Circle. The idea was rejected for several reasons, including fears that we would lose our identity and uniqueness.

The Passover Haggadah was rewritten after many years of using the same program.

Adult programs included a Theatre Party to see "The World of Sholem Alechem" and an exhibit of "The Jews of North Africa" at the College of Jewish Studies.

Harriet Tishkoff retired as principal of the Sunday School after 14 years of service.

The irregularly traditional Summer Potluck took place at the home of the Sternfelds.

The CSJO Conference was hosted in Chicago. Laura Meckler coordinated the teen conference, held along with the adult segment. At this meeting, Marsha Meckler was elected treasurer of CSJO.

New Families: Brent and Edi Delman, Gloria Einstein, Jessie and Carol Epstein, Bob and Sylvia Evans, Louise Abrams and Robert Fuerst, Sue Longman, Dick and Linda O'Connor

Non-returning: L. Abrams, Auerbach, Buxbaum, Horowitz, Lewis, Lieblich, Meir-Levi, Phillips-Leatherberry



## 1986 - 1987

Chairperson: Allan Rubinstein  
Principal: Helen Mencher

Board Members: Membership/Publicity - Gloria Einstein, Carol Bortz, Rona Weiss, Adult Programming - Judy Bergmann, Education - Jim Marden, Newsletter Editor - Bob Charlick, Camp Weekend - David Bortz, Youth Group - Ed Richmond

77 family units, 21 students, 11 young adults

The Brodes host a "Retirement" potluck brunch to honor Harriet Tishkoff for her 14 years of service as principal of the Sunday School. The evening included the classic poem by Community Poet Judy Dueser entitled "To Harriet Tishkoff, A Laureate From the The Realm of the Great Lizard." The poem recounted how Harriet was able to convince Judy's son that there was some value in a Jewish education.

Liela Brode and John Klein spoke at Park Synagogue's "23rd Annual Summer Patio Services" on "Isms in Judaism."

The Annual July Potluck Picnic took place in August at Shaker Lakes. There was also one of the seldom "twice a year" Friday Night Potluck Shabbat Dinners.

Carol Bortz and Gloria Einstein headed the newly formed Membership/Publicity Committee and organized a booth at the Coventry Street Fair. The purpose of the booth was to promote the Community and the Sunday School. A few new members and a significant list of prospects resulted from this effort. Statistical research showed no correlation between the JSC booth and the eventual shutdown of the Fair.

Allan Rubinstein negotiated a "deal" for the Community for the exclusive use of Camp Yakewi on Labor Day for years to come by arranging a "Pre-Kibbutz Camp Weekend Get Away Work party," which resulted in the camp getting a new roof for one of its buildings and Allan Rubinstein and Roy Woda getting blisters and backaches.

A JSC General meeting set new policy in Sunday School, dues, and Community staffing. A Sunday School Task Force was established to address the pertinent issues. Dues were increased to \$75 per adult member and it was agreed to hire a professional administrator on a trial basis.

The Monte Carlo Committee headed by Allan Rubinstein crashed and burned. So much for Monte Carlo night...

The CSJO Conference was held in Ypsilanti, Michigan.

New Families: Mitchell and Lori Fromm, Leonard and Barbara Krause, Bob and Mary Schlesinger, Harris and Sura Sevastopoulus, Sheree Tennenbaum

Non-returning: Abrams, Baum, Delman, Eisenberg, Fuentes, Isler, Isquick, Kaplan, Kates

## 1987 - 1988

Chairperson: Barry Epstein  
Coordinator: Carol Falender

Board Members: Membership/Publicity - Gloria Einstein, Carol Bortz, Rona Weiss, Adult Programming - Maureen Hack, Education - Carol and Jordon Delmonte, Scott Radway - Newsletter, Camp Weekend - David Bortz, Youth Group Leader - Marsha Meckler

71 family units, 11 young adults, 16 potential students

The organization, which began solely as a school opened its 20th year for the first time without a school. The Sunday School closed temporarily due to no enrollment, although the Delmontes and others labored hard to bring programming to the Community children and to recruit students for the next school year.

Carol Falender agreed to work as a Coordinator for our community; she worked with the Board, and with committee chairs in planning, organizing, and implementing JSC activities.

The Community began to prepare to celebrate its 20th Anniversary. Sandy Arndt and Liela Brode co-chaired this event; others helping have been John Klein - Invitations and Mailing list, Bill Meckler and Gene Rosewater - Program, Betsy and Roy Woda - Slide Show, Marc Moresky - Opening Activities, Allan Rubinstein - Recollections, Mickey Stern and Laura Meckler - Memory Book, Carol Falender - Site and Food, Carol Bortz - Decorations, Peggy Rubinstein - Decorations and Registration

CSJO Conference was held in Philadelphia with Amy Meckler coordinating the teen conference. In Philadelphia, Cleveland tentatively agreed to host the 1989 conference.

New Families: Howard and Deborah Bonem, Jerry and Kathi Goldstrom, Gil Winer, Elia Wishauer

Non-returning: Bosh, Deuser, Cole, C.J. Epstein, Freidman, Fromm, Stein-Goldurs, Hurwitz, Kallen, Krause, Sax, Warner

## B'NAI MITZVAH GRADUATES BY YEAR AND BY GROUP

### 1972

Seth Isler  
Robert Kutzik

### 1973

Amy Glin  
Howard Heuer  
Keeve Jaffe  
Ben Levy  
Gary Stern

### 1984

Lori Kohn  
Karen Seidman  
Lisa Wiesenberger

### 1975

David Esrati  
Michael Klein  
Elizabeth Loeb  
Kenneth Seidman

### 1976

Michael Heuer

### 1977

Wendy Blattner  
Debbie Brode  
Robert Kates  
Andrew Pollis  
Adam Sacks

### 1978

Anne Blum  
Drew Chavinson  
Edward Feil  
Allison Gilmore  
Barbara Kancelbaum  
Jill Nagusky  
Sylvia Rohfeld  
Eric Sachs  
David Weiss

### 1979

David Brode  
Amy Chavinson  
Brian Eisenberg  
Jonathan Gilmore  
Margo Horwitz  
Douglas Klein

### 1980

Lauren Blattner  
Donna Flinker  
Steven Horwitz  
Karen Nagusky  
Eric Richman  
Mark Rosewater  
Grant Roth

### 1981

Michelle Auerbach  
Tanya Charlick  
Kenneth Chavinson  
Missy Eisenberg  
Laura Meckler  
Alysse Rosewater  
Rachel Tiffany  
Jody Wohl

### 1982

Brian Bortz  
Jonathan Finkelstein  
Toni Fromson  
Jed Horwitz  
Martin Levine  
Rachel Moresky

### 1983

Michelle Brode  
Jill Chavinson  
Cheryl Flinker  
James Gilmore  
Greg Harris  
Sara Levine  
Wayne Mayer  
Amy Meckler  
Peter Nagusky  
Elisa Richman  
Julie Roth  
Zach Stein  
Steven Wohl

### 1984

Daniel Charlick  
Stephanie Dueser  
Zia Fuentes  
Matthew Lazarus  
Candice Stuart  
Jennifer Woda

### 1985

Devin Friedman  
Elana Lewis  
Amy Mayer  
David Samuels

### 1986

Tami Harris  
Joanna Moresky

### 1987

Jamie Cohen  
Jessica Delbaum  
Erin Marks  
Todd Stein  
Ben Varble  
Julie Woda

## THE B'NAI MITZVAH

Without a doubt, one of the Community's most cherished events each year has been the B'nai Mitzvah celebration. The B'nai Mitzvah program combines the expression of our unique Jewishness with our ties to the past and to the future. It represents the culmination of the education of our children. It involves the entire family and the entire Community. It is an example extraordinaire of our ability to adapt traditional and religious practices to meet our needs. Our secular B'nai Mitzvah is truly a special thing, for the individuals who participate, and for the Community who shares this emotional and significant rite of passage.

The program was adapted from that used on Kibbutzim in Israel. It requires the student to complete several tasks throughout the year ranging from writing papers on great moments and people in Judaism to volunteering regularly at a Jewish agency. The parents are also kept busy throughout the year as they develop and write the ceremony, usually in a group with other parents and B'nai Mitzvah students.

Perhaps the most emotional part of the ceremony were the speeches given by the B'nai Mitzvah to the Community and those given by the parents to their children. "Everyone I've ever talked to about it says that that portion is the most moving. The rest is nice, but that is the one thing that sets it apart," one parent recalls.

The services differ in detail but are common in theme. They all revolve around the central concept of B'nai Mitzvah - a coming of age. Taking the next step into adulthood and maturity. Developing as a person and as a Jew. Themes explored range from values clarification to the heritage of the Jewish people, feminism to friendship.

**As we think back, the words from B'nai Mitzvah services of the past 16 years, representing the youth of yesterday and the leaders of tomorrow, echo in our minds.**

To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under heaven.

Last night I had the strangest dream I've ever had before, I dreamed the world had all agreed to put an end to war.

I am a Jew because in all places where there are tears and suffering, the Jew weeps.

I am a Jew because in every age when the cry of despair is heard, the Jew hopes.

You may say I'm a dreamer, but I'm not the only one.

There comes a moment when to believe is not enough, When to go on merely thinking and feeling is inexcusable -- there comes a moment when we must go out and act.

If I am not for myself, who will be for me? If I am for myself alone, what am I? If not now, when?

The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind, the answer is blowin' in the wind.

Where there is prejudice and hatred, let there be tolerance and love. Where there is tyranny and oppression, let there be freedom and justice. Where there is strife and discord, let there be harmony and peace.

We remember the heroism of the Jews -- men, women, children -- who fought in the ghettos, in the forests, on the war fronts, together with all democratic humanity, to stop the curse of fascism from engulfing the earth. We will be true to their memory by being vigilant in the cause of peace and freedom in our land and throughout the world.

May we bring into this world a bit more truth, a bit more justice, a bit more love -- than there would have been if we had not loved the world - enough - to quarrel with it. Out of a vision of what it ought to be.

The flame of life has been passed down from generation to generation. Our parents kindled it within us...We light this candle as the symbol of our hopes for you.

We are the newest generation, following the last, preceding the next I am a Jew. My roots are deep in the millenia that formed my people's culture.

I am I. My eyes and hopes are on the future. My identity and strength come from the past and from the present. From the heritage of all our yesterdays I will help build a humane tomorrow for humanity.

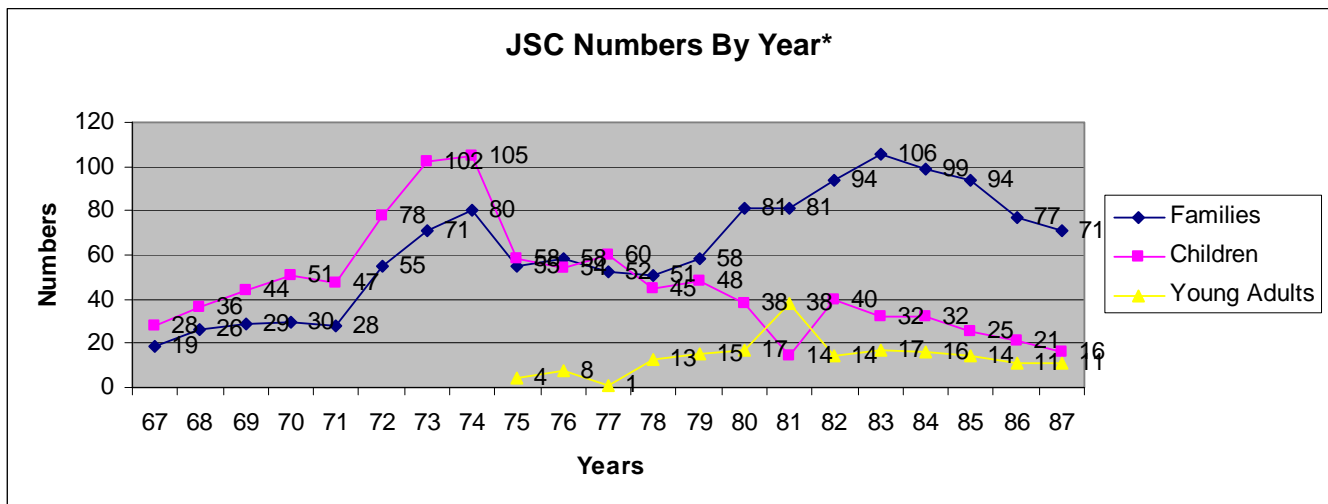
## THE ETHICAL WILL

In the B'nai Mitzvah ceremonies, many parents tell their children about the kind of person they hope they are becoming. In a way, it is an oral version of the ethical will, a document one leaves to his or her children, stating the values he or she wishes to pass on to those who survive.

Last spring, the youth group, in a values clarification exercise directed by Sandra Arndt, created its own list of values and moral guidelines that the members believe they have been given by their parents:

- Respect all people regardless of race, color, or creed
- Support Jewish cultural values
- Be independent
- Be honest
- Never underestimate yourself
- Become your own person
- Question authority
- Vote
- Remember the Holocaust
- Support your children's religious choices
- Try to make a positive difference in the world

As this memory book represents our past, the teens, imbued with a strong sense of Jewish cultural and ethical values, are our future.



\*Some Numbers Are Interpolated

## SECULAR JUDAISM IN AMERICA AND CLEVELAND

By Merle Pollis - Tenth Anniversary Dinner - Saturday, October 22, 1977

Robert Benchley . . . the American master of the essay . . . once wrote: "We call England the Mother Country because we all came from Russia and Poland."

And that is where we came from. From Russia, Poland, Germany, what is now Yugoslavia in some cases . . . from what once was Prussia . . . from what is now Hungary . . . that is where we came from . . . to the new land. And the history of this Community . . . whose tenth anniversary we celebrate tonight. . . did not really begin, therefore, in September of 1967. Or 1957. But, rather, it began in different times . . . and different places. It began in that other country . . . that "Mother Country" I talked about. . . and inched its way across the Great Circle Route . . . toward Ellis Island . . . and the ghettos of New York City . . . and the sweat shops of Manhattan . . . and the community kitchens of the Catskills . . . and eventually into the eastern suburbs of Cleveland . . . that we call The Jewish Community.

Three quarters of the population of the United States can trace its "Roots" -- and these days we put "Roots" in capital letters and put quotes around it -- they can trace their "Roots" to the older country . . . not the Mother Country of this country.

The Jewish immigrant . . . in most cases . . . brought to America what none of his contemporaries did. The Jew brought a culture that was different . . . but the same . . . no matter from where he came. His Russian Borsht was a little Jewish . . . their Hungarian Goulash had a touch of Friday night in it . . . their chopped liver -- a lot of love in it. And from everywhere they converged on New York and Boston . . . in an effort to live.

I guess what many of us fail to realize -- or maybe, remember, is that the immigrant who came here . . . to America -- was the renegade of their time. It was no different than the Jewish population of the American sixties that showed their respect for human life in the anti-war and civil rights movements. Most of the Jews who came here in the other times -- were -- as they liked to put it to their non-Jewish contemporaries -- "not very religious".

And those "not very religious" people would form the nucleus for the celebration we observe tonight. Because they didn't know what to call themselves . . . they were certainly Jewish. I mean, didn't they sometimes even light candles on Friday night. Didn't they even enjoy sometimes going to the synagogue. But . . . they didn't know what to call themselves. We call them "Secular."

It would be as impossible to separate the political history of the American Jew . . . as it would be to separate the history of the early Secular Jew from the Jewish Secular Community whose birthday we celebrate tonight.

Throughout all history -- not just this country's -- but all history there are certain groups of people who more or less contributed something specific to the times. The Jew in America -- if they are to be credited with contributing anything -- can be said to have given political humanism to the masses.

Most historians tend to separate the telling of the story of America in the early 1900's -- when for all times things changed. America was quickly changing from an agrarian society to an urban one. And in 1906 -- the Carnegie Steel Corporation merged with the Edgar Thompson Steel Corporation to form United States Steel. Never again would America be the same. And almost never again . . . would the Jew work in the mill. United States Steel was not interested in Jews in their mills. After all . . . "these people were different."

If all the Jews in America didn't work in the sweat shops of New York -- it sure seemed as if they did. And by the time we were knee deep in World War I . . . the Jew . . . working in that sweat shop had become the framework for active Socialism in the United States.

While perhaps 75% of the Jewish population outside of New York City, by 1925 considered themselves as affiliated with the established community of synagogues and community centers -- more than 60% of the working class Jews in New York -- had formed their brand of Judaism -- Secular Judaism. And there was no way to separate the political from the cultural and the religious.

"Shulas" -- not named, by the way, after the football coach -- he was named after them -- sprung up throughout the teeming slums that people were forced into. If you were to visit an apartment house, say, in Brooklyn, in the early 1920's . . . you would come across several things that told the story: newspapers on the newly scrubbed kitchen floor . . . and the "Shula in the basement . . . which meant "School" in Yiddish . . . and was the place where the children were taught what they were. They had already learned in public school what they were not.

What they were not was rich . . . modern . . . and able to keep up with the Joneses. Or even the Ginsburgs . . . if the Ginsburgs owned a little store or managed the sweat shop in which their parents worked.

And if you were to come across a meeting of the local labor organization you would hear more Yiddish. Maybe, even, if you had read the lead editorial in *The New York Herald* . . . later *The Herald Tribune* . . . of October 18, 1927, you would have discovered that many modern Jews . . . believing in a new political system called Zionism . . . were speaking a modern and effective language called "Hebrew" -- which eliminated some of the "Bastard German" of the Yiddish. The newspaper would point out that only the crazed left -- the ones who want to overthrow our government -- speak in the little understood Yiddish.

I don't want to leave the impression that everyone in this period was Secular, Communist. . . and a hard worker. The German Jews had brought with them to their America another new type of observance of their heritage. Reformed Judaism was born in the villages of Milwaukee's suburbs . . . and Cologne's old fashioned homes. And while Secular Judaism was breast feeding at the nipple of worker exploitation . . . Orthodox and Conservative Judaism was spreading the word from the pulpit that "If you don't believe in God and go to Shul you were not a Jew." Secular Jews were in good company. To the Orthodox and Conservative . . . the Reform temple was not a Shul!

By the middle of the Depression in the 1930's . . . the fight was on in the left. Should we be Communists or Socialists. And in those years the right wing of the left wing broke away. Today we call them *The Workmens Circle*.

The history of mankind . . . and womankind . . . is stored in a million places. In attics and in cemeteries . . . in more modern times on microfilm. But perhaps the best history of our people . . . the Secular Jew . . . is in the warped and dingy file of *The Jewish Daily Forward* . . . the newspaper that at one time had a daily circulation of 250,000.

Its letters to the editor . . . or "Brindle Briefs" is a belleweather of what was happening in another time . . . another place.

On September 11, 1928 this letter, I think, tells the story of why Secularism has survived long enough for us to be here tonight.

"Dear Editor:

I was born in a small town in Russia and until I was sixteen I studied in Talmud Torahs and Yeshivas. But when I came to America I changed quickly. I became a free-thinker. When I go past a synagogue during these days and hear a cantor chanting the melodies of the prayers . . . I become very gloomy and my depression is so great that I cannot endure it. What is your opinion of this?

The editor of *The Forward* replied simply that this man yearned for the past -- tied to the future. He added: "Perhaps you can find a group of Jews . . . whom have combined our culture and our history and our sense of right . . . with a sense of belonging to the group" . . . and maybe, said the editor . . . "we can steer you to such a group."



Maybe tonight . . . we are that group. Maybe we are the people he would have been led to if it were 1977.

But it isn't 1977. It is 1967. Ten years ago. It is a hot and muggy Sunday night in Cleveland, Ohio. Years have passed since the sweat shops and the shulas and the apartment houses and the Forward. Years have passed. Everyone now lives in comfortable homes in Cleveland's east side suburbs -- Shaker Heights, Cleveland Heights, even Pepper Pike. It has even been about ten years since the last time someone in Cleveland tried to bring Secular Jews together for the purpose of educating their children.

It is 1967. Ten years before tonight -- and ten years after the last attempt at Secularism in Cleveland. At least "our" type of Secularism. That "right wing of the left wing" is still around . . . in almost every major city in America. But the original is gone. And now maybe it would be back.

In about the mid-fifties during an era as dark as America has ever faced . . . the first "Jewish Secular School of Cleveland" stopped being. Ruth and Jack Emmer and so many others had put so much of themselves into it. But it died . . . as many good things die . . . for many reasons. The children of the members had grown up. And besides . . . it wasn't easy being secular and liberal in Cleveland in the fifties. Or anywhere else either. A mad man from Wisconsin named McCarthy and a madder one from California named Nixon saw to that. In the White House there was a nice man with the gumption of a goat named Eisenhower. And in many a Jewish house the left had been forced into the gumption of a goat -- as they saw their children tormented . . . their jobs on the line . . . because of their thoughts. "Most Communists, as you know, are Jews" said The New York Daily News. And instead of reacting in anger as they should have . . . the organized Jewish Community responded by pressure on the Jews who were to the left of center. "My mother did it" -- shouted those who feared.

In the 1950's they executed Julius and Ethel Rosenberg on a muggy night in June . . . and a Jewish judge sent them to their graves. "Judge Irving Kaufmann has vindicated us all," said The Los Angeles Jewish Defender, the Anglo-Jewish weekly. And most of us seemed to agree.

Most of us.

Not all of us. Not the small group of parents in Cleveland who continued to send their children to the Secular Sunday School and worked hard to keep it going. The "Mayer Levin School" as they called it.

But in the fifties . . . like hopes . . . dreams . . . and Dashell Hammett . . . it died.

So now it is 1967. And, as history shows us it always will, new things happened that make even a few years before seem so cloudy and indefinable.

McCarthy seemed millions of years ago. The goat in the White House had been replaced by a steer from Texas, whose main claim to fame was "Hey, hey, LBJ . . . How many kids did you kill today?"

And in Mississippi and in Massachusetts too, and in Cleveland, the big issue was civil rights. We were five years in front of women's rights . . . and five years back from states' rights . . . smack in the middle of civil rights.

It was in this climate that five families got together one night and formed The New Jewish Secular School.

The New Jewish Secular School. That is the name that still officially sits in the records of The Central National Bank of Cleveland today on the checking account. The New Jewish Secular School. Chuck LaPine gave it that name . . . because . . . it sounded like the times . . . New School for Social Research in New York . . . the word "new" was like a transfusion.

The thankless job of treasurer . . . I know -- (I have it this year) -- went to Al Stern. And the first principal . . . was a man of great principle . . . Eugene Bayer.

And so on a Sunday morning it was born. Born of the frustration of a century of Secular Judaism . . . The New Jewish Secular School was born.

It was in the Fairfax Elementary School. The old one. And the parents of the children were as thrilled . . . as the children were not. After all . . . another day of school.

There was a feeling in that era, that, like all feelings, cannot be recaptured. You can never go home again, they say . . .

And you can't turn back the clock to a time when people cared so much about so much. So much that they had to close the school on the day of a big peace demonstration in Washington, D.C. Too many people would not be in town.

There were people who kept other people honest. Max Levey . . . whose concern for the human being ran deeply. That same community gathered around his family when Max died last year. And his legacy is still very much a part of this community in his son . . . who is a Secular Jew . . . and part of The Jewish Secular Community.

And whether Chuck LaPine is in Maryland or Madrid . . . he will always be a part of the Community . . . as will Mickey and Al Stern . . . or even some of the early members who don't belong anymore.

One of them . . . one of the early members who still very much does belong . . . is Sandy Loeb who is responsible for planning this celebration tonight for which we are all so grateful.

By 1972 it became evident that not only Joseph McCarthy killed the first Sunday School. It was also the victim of no perpetuation. As kids finished Sunday School . . . there was no more . . . It was also evident that the parents of the children needed to know what they were . . . as much as the kids themselves. The New Jewish Secular School became The Jewish Secular Community. A Community of people . . . who didn't all think the same . . . or do the same thing . . . but who all cared . . . or at least most of them . . . and that made it all worthwhile.

In recent years the Community has conducted B'nai Mitzvahs . . . so that as children became young men and women . . . they would not be denied rites of passage that for so long had been part of the more ritualistic way of life.

Not all is done. The Jewish Secular Community of Cleveland has a lot to do. It has to find a way to make the life cycles something secular . . . and it has to find a way to exist in an always-changing world.

But it is ten years old. Now part of a National and International Jewish Secular Organization. Because as the story of our secular heritage filtered down from New York to Cleveland . . . it went north and west too . . . to Los Angeles and Toronto, Detroit and Boston.

Ten years ago tonight the hopes and dreams of Cleveland were nestled in the hands of America's first black mayor Carol Stokes. Many Jews thought their hopes and dreams were in the hands of the world's first major woman premier, Golda Meier.

But "As The World Turns" . . . as the soap opera says . . . the Jewish Secular Community has kept its continuity. And if people continue to give their time and attention . . . it will survive to meet for its 15th and 20th and 25th anniversary dinners as well.

One of our more active members over these years, John Klein, once said: "The Community is at its best when it is discussing its own survival."

Maybe so. And because that is done so often . . . I am sure there is no question we will survive.

Abe Rosenthal, the executive editor of The New York Times, a Secular Jew, once related the time his sister asked if she could go to school on Yom Kippur. "No," said his mother "We are Jewish." "But you told me we were Secular", the sister said. "We are Secular Jews", -- and then the mother paused -- "No," she said -- "We are Jewish Secularists."

I believe that is what we are. Thank you.