

Humanorah

the newsletter of the Society for Humanistic Judaism
affiliated with the International Federation of Secular Humanistic Jews



Autumn, 2007

Vol. 30 No. 1

2007 COLLOQUIUM TO PAY TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF RABBI SHERWIN WINE

BY PRESIDENT LOU ALTMAN

Even before I became active in Humanistic Judaism, I fell in love with the biennial colloquia that Rabbi Wine and the International Institute put on. This **October 19-21** promises to bring another in a string of great shows.

Few events provide such a concentrated intellectual feast. Rabbi Wine was a great draw as a speaker, but these meetings also have benefitted from another of his talents: the ability to identify and attract leading scholars and speakers in their respective fields and then give them a forum to impart their knowledge and insight, and sometimes even to figuratively knock heads with each other. Unfortunately, Rabbi Wine will not be with us, but before his untimely death in July, in his own inimitable manner, he did arrange this upcoming event for us. Our presence, there, will pay homage to his memory.

After a colloquium weekend I typically return home with the feeling that I have had a quick PhD, that I have seen all sides of a subject and now understand it fully. And how important are those subjects, how central to our lives as Humanistic Jews? Decide for yourself.

1997: "Reclaiming Jewish History" I heard what historians—scholars such as Norman Cantor—had discovered about the truth behind our myths. **1999: "Beyond Tradition: the Struggle for a New Jewish Identity"** We examined alternatives ranging from Bundism and Ethical Culture to Reconstructionism and Secular Humanistic Judaism with the dean of

the College of Pluralistic Judaism in Jerusalem and a columnist for *The Jerusalem Record*. **2001: "Secular Spirituality: Passionate Journey to a Rational Judaism"** looked for the balance between a secular lifestyle and the quest for "spiritual" fulfillment. Does our rational belief system leave any room for such a thing? **2003: "Jews & Non-Jews: The Love/Hate Relationship"** *Time* magazine's Lisa Beyer helped us investigate. **2005: "Digging for the Truth: Archaeology and the Bible."** Who knows more about this than Professor Israel Finkelstein of Tel Aviv University and Professor Amihai Mazar of Hebrew University in Jerusalem?

AND NOW...

2007: Jews and the Muslim World: Solving the Puzzle. Speakers include Fawaz Gerges, author, senior analyst and commentator for ABC TV; Amir Hussain, author and specialist in Muslim societies in North America; Jacob Lassner, author and professor of Jewish Studies, Northwestern University; and others. The topic is timely, and I, for one, wouldn't miss it for the world.

SHJ members sometimes ask how they can get more out of their membership in the Movement. Here's one way. Come to Colloquium 2007 and have a once-in-a-lifetime intellectual adventure you'll never forget. **For more information, call 248-476-9532, email iishj@iishj.org or visit www.iishj.org.** And if you want to catch up, purchase the proceedings of past colloquia from the SHJ (www.shj.org).

SHJ CONFERENCE 2008 WILL DISPLAY CHILDREN'S WORKS

Don't miss viewing the student "Tikkun Olam/Repairing the World" competition entries displayed Friday, April 4-Sunday, April 6, 2008, at the Marriott Warner Center in Woodland Hills, California, during the **2008 SHJ Conference and Teen/Young Adult Conclave**. Congratulations go to the following finalists:

Art Competition

Beth Adam, Boca Raton

Ben McGrath (4th-8th grade)

Ashley and Adam Heller

(4th-8th grade)

Kahal B'raira, Boston

Greg Kaiser (Kdg.-3rd grade)

Secular Jewish Circle of

Puget Sound

Daniel Valarsky (Kdg.-3rd grade)

Suzanne Parikh (high school)

Writing Competition

Beth Adam, Boca Raton

Jason Dobkin (4th-8th grade)

Special Awards for Group Projects

Birmingham Temple, MI

Or Emet, MN

Witness our students' creativity at Conference 2008, "**Connecting to Judaism: I Did It My Way**," Join us as we explore how each of us connects to Judaism in our own way.

Book your hotel room now: 1-800-228-9290, and tell them the SHJ sent you. Stay tuned for more information.

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MACHAR, CHSJ

CANADA

ORAYNU, TORONTO, ON

TO HONOR A MAN AND HIS LIFE'S WORK



In two days, it will be seven years since Karel died. I think of him every day, but even more at this time. It was Karel who became enamored with Sherwin. Not long after we arrived in Detroit from London in 1968, he attended a class on comparative religion and couldn't stop talking about this wonderful Rabbi Wine! Deciding to join the Birmingham Temple was the best thing we ever did! Not only did we find intellectual stimulation but many, many, new friends. The Temple truly became our second home and the center of our lives.

Later, when we toyed with the idea of moving to California, the decision was made easy by the very existence of O.C.S.H.J., right here in what was then Leisure World. The minute we walked in on that first Friday night, we felt at home. That was nine years ago. Our group, here, is still vibrant, though smaller than previously, and the core members are definitely aging. I just celebrated my 75th birthday and am the *kid*; that's why they let me be president, going into my seventh year!

Belonging to SHJ is a wonderful thing; you have like-minded friends wherever you go! My daughter, Paula, is now a member of Oraynu, in Toronto and good friends with Rabbi Eva Goldfinger. It's a small world!

A natural outgrowth of my involvement with SHJ was to establish THE KAREL & SHEILA BASS FUND FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT. On Sherwin's recent visit here, which was received with great enthusiasm by both members, and guests, I brought my Fund to his attention and let him know that it has its place in my will. I did not tell him to receive his thanks, but to let him know that I wish to honor his life's work. Sherwin created this wonderful Movement with which so many of us have linked our lives; I want to make sure that it will continue long into the future, after both he and I are no longer around.

I hope those of you who are able will also take this step, which will ensure the place of Humanistic Judaism as the fifth dimension of Judaism.

Sheila Bass, president, Orange County, CA

[*Editor's Note: You, too, can honor Rabbi Sherwin Wine and ensure the future of Humanistic Judaism by remembering the SHJ in your will. In turn, the Society will recognize you in its Heritage Circle. Established in 2007, the Heritage Circle was created to distinguish and honor those donors who have supported the Society through a planned gift. Look for our new brochure in the mail later this fall.*]

Autumn 2007

Humanorah

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Humanorah is a publication of the Society for Humanistic Judaism, a non-profit organization that mobilizes people to celebrate Jewish identity and culture consistent with a humanistic philosophy of life.

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Notes From Around the Globe



ORAYNU HOLDS SCREENING OF *KIKE LIKE ME*

After the destruction of the Temple, the legend developed that on the spring harvest holiday of *Shavuot*, God gave the *Torah* to the Israelites on Mt Sinai. *Shavuot* thus became a time to explore our defining texts.

Humanistic Jews do not limit our texts to the *Torah* and ancient sources. Nor should we limit ourselves to print texts. Jews have used film since its invention in the last century to explore identity.

This past *Shavuot* (in May) Oraynu members engaged ourselves with a brand new text about this subject, in the media of film. We held a private screening of the hot, new, as yet unreleased, documentary film, *Kike Like Me*, with its producer and director, Torontonians Jamie Kastner. Jamie's warmth, humour and thoughtfulness made it a very special evening for us. This darkly comic road movie asks what it means to be Jewish in the eyes of Jews and

non-Jews, and who gets to choose the definition. Kastner cast himself as a cool guy, eager to get along with strangers but who inadvertently creates revealing situations wherever he goes. From Orthodox Jews in New York to an aborted meeting with Pat Buchanan, from an Amsterdam football team who call themselves *Juden* as some kind of joke, to a Paris encounter with Arab anti-semitism, his scenarios open up surprises and questions about ritual and self-conception, bigotry and oversensitivity. In Berlin and Auschwitz, he exposes both remorse and distastefulness in the local art and business of memorializing genocide victims.

Kike Like Me recently premiered at Toronto's Hot Docs International Documentary Film Festival. It is funny, scary and thought provoking. When it becomes available, it will be a superb piece for youth and adults to explore the significance and meaning of Jewish identity.

by Karen Levy for Oraynu (Toronto)

Your Generosity Makes a Difference.

Your gift to the SHJ can ensure the future of Humanistic Judaism.



- Please contact me about the Pooled Income Fund.
- I am enclosing a tax deductible donation to the SHJ:
 - \$136
 - \$236
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FOR MACHAR, LIFE IS IN FLUX AS STUDENTS GRADUATE, AND A FOUNDING MEMBER MOVES ON

A Transition and a Tribute by Michael Prival, *madrikh*

Now in its thirtieth year, Machar, the Washington Congregation for Secular Humanistic Judaism, is in a period of transition. Two of our seven founding members, Ann and Harold Black, moved back to the Detroit area two years ago, and we are still mourning Harold's recent death. Soon another of our beloved founders, Mary Perica, will be moving to Israel to be closer to many grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and other family members.

Machar's success over the past three decades is anchored in the work of our founding members. Each, in very different ways, gave strength, meaning, and a human connection to what we do. They all kept working actively in Machar's congregational life for much longer than we had a right to expect. We will always be indebted to Mary for her years of service as an officer and board member, her teaching in our Sunday school, her work on writing and organizing holiday events, her delightful and insightful talks at High Holiday services, her participation in the choir, her long tenure as editor of our newsletter, and her uncompromising devotion to the principles of Secular Humanistic Judaism. For many of us, the high point of each Machar year was Mary's solo singing of *Oif'n Pripitshok* at our Yom Kippur service.

So we are preparing to say goodbye to Mary this fall when she starts her new life as a *kibbutznik*! The members, and especially the children, of *Kibbutz Samar*, Mary's new home, will soon

be wondering how they got along all these years without her.

B'nai Mitzva Students Graduate by Roz Seidenstein

We're still kvelling over this year's class of 10. We celebrated with three group ceremonies and one individual ceremony. Students' research topics included Tom Lehrer, Dada Art Movement, Marc Chagall, Peace Efforts in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict. The papers are posted on our website at <http://machar.org/mitzvah.html>.

Jewish Cultural School Assessed by Marlene Cohen

If you ask SHJ members, a critical benefit of membership is the opportunity to educate our children as humanistic and Jewish and secular. But we at Machar had never assessed if our kids connected with the values we teach, or if our approach to teaching prepared them to be confident and independent-thinking adults.

Last spring, former Machar Jewish Cultural School Director (and Machar VP) Marlene Cohen took on that task and facilitated a discussion with one recent college graduate and two high school students on "Growing Up in Machar's Jewish Cultural School."

Panelists were Daniel Mauer, 2007 graduate of Brandeis University, now a congressional staffer on Capitol Hill; Eve Gleichman, a senior at Montgomery Blair HS (MD), editor of their award-winning newspaper and our well-remembered violinist for many a

Kol Nidre; and Zach Popkin-Hall, sophomore at Marshall High School in Falls Church, VA, and the wonderful cellist in the Machar Band.

E-mail feedback came from Joanna Mauer, a 2003 graduate of Cornell in civil and environmental engineering, who is now completing three and a half years as a Peace Corps volunteer in the Dominican Republic; and Elana Eisen-Markowitz, currently getting her Masters of Arts in Teaching at Tufts.

It was encouraging to hear that the value of *tsedaka* and a feeling of being empowered to make changes for social and environmental justice came from their JCS schooling. Joanna credited her Peace Corps decision to values reinforced in Sunday school. Other former JCS students now actively engaged in political or social action were mentioned as well.

Best remembered were experiences such as a day when 4th grade students studying the role of Jews in the labor movement went on strike against JCS, fighting rigid new school rules in a role play that was very real to them at the time! They also told of the joys of communal singing in the morning.

Panelists had suggestions for JCS: to find ways for Machar kids to link with other Jewish kids when our goals match, and to keep encouraging students to study conversational Hebrew with Rabbi Ben Biber, which they will value in adulthood.

Congratulations to these young adults and their parents for all they are becoming!

HELP WANTED MUSICAL DIRECTOR SEEKS A PARTNER

Almost ten years ago, six members of the Congregation for Humanistic Judaism (CHJ) in Sarasota, Florida, got together to sing. Soon they became known as the Humanaires and are now a chorus of 37 voices who sing at most CHJ meetings and holidays. Their director, CHJ member David Berman, is a professor emeritus from the School of Music, Ithaca College, New York. He and his wife Alice were attracted to Sarasota by its cultural qualities— theater, music, museums— and the lovely physical surroundings. Soon after CHJ was founded, in 1996, the Bermans became active.

The music of the Humanaires has added a wonderful facet to CHJ meetings, and the congregation enjoys singing along with them. The chorus has also sung for various other Sarasota organizations and functions such as the Sarasota/Manatee JCC, the Jewish Federation, Americans for Peace Now, community Holocaust memorials, and local retirement homes. For the past four years they have combined with the Sarasota Unitarian-Universalist Church's chorus to sing at a U-U and a CHJ service. Their concerts have served to make the Congregation for Humanistic Judaism more visible to the Sarasota Jewish community as well as to many others in the Sarasota area. The Humanaires' most recent concert at the JCC focused on the theme of Jewish resistance during the Holocaust. A DVD video recording of that performance, complete with song texts and narration, will be released in the fall.

The Humanaires rehearse once a week from late August through April. Their repertoire includes just under 100 selections, just skimming the surface of the vast amount of

photos by Jules Attenberg



appropriate music available in English, Yiddish and Hebrew as well as other languages. Lack of music reading ability or a familiarity with the various languages doesn't create any serious problems for the the choir. Songs have been arranged to suit the abilities and older voices of the members. New songs are introduced with simple home made CDs. Dave and a paid accompanist are the only professionally trained musicians in the group.

Dave is passionate about the Humanaires, but approaching 80 years of age, he wishes there were someone with whom to share the responsibilities and help create a smooth transition when he is ready to retire. The best option is finding someone in our movement with some choral experience who would relocate or retire to beautiful Sarasota and take over and shape the music program to his/her tastes and talents. Wonderful sunny Sarasota, a great congregation, new friends, and beautiful music making! What could be better?

Meanwhile, the Humanaires continue to learn from Dave and remain as passionate as he is about enriching their lives with the joy of singing together and bringing that pleasure to their congregation and the community.

by Ron Fox, Sandy Cadman, Dave Berman



BAR MITZVA BOY HELPS BUILD DARFUR GROUP

After the Holocaust, Jews everywhere vowed “Never again.” As Jews and humanists, we are deeply moved by the genocide occurring in Darfur and feel obligated to do something to help. “Help Darfur Now” is an organization that raises funds and awareness for Darfur refugees. Proceeds go to humanitarian aid via Doctors without Borders or the International Rescue Committee.

For his *bar mitzva* social action project in the CHJ of Morris County, Max Littman established a “Help Darfur Now” chapter. Our chapter’s first project, a T-shirt sale, raised more than \$400 for humanitarian aid for Darfur refugees. Our up-and-coming *b’nai mitzva* students are expected to take leadership roles in running future events.

Lisa Littman, president, CHJ, NJ

WESTCHESTER WRAPS UP THE SEASON

It was a busy season in Westchester, enjoying Shabbat services and pot luck suppers in members’ homes on an almost monthly basis.

Reaching out to the community, we showed the film *Forgotten Refugees* with guest speaker Vaturi Neiman. Early in the year SHJ Vice President Bob Ginsberg made a special presentation about Humanistic Judaism, which had been widely publicized and was well attended. This brought a number of guests.

We held our second annual art program with a guest speaker from the Jewish Museum in NYC and a mini exhibit of art work by some of our members.

Other members shared works they owned that were created by Jewish artists. The *Passover seder* emphasized music with Nina Gordon and her daughter Savannah in addition to our own Howard Weinberg.

Our Jewish History Study Group meets monthly and really enjoys the stimulating discussions.

Charlotte Klein, co-president, NY

RABBI WINE’S VISIT RECHARGES OCSHJ

With Rabbi Wine and 70 others, we held our installation dinner, June 8, followed by an all-day public forum, Saturday, June 9. The topic, “What Will Be the Muslim Influence on the Western World in the Next Quarter Century?” brought 85 people, including some from our other California communities. We held a coffee, Sunday, for prospects and are hopeful some might join. We are pleased to welcome *madrikha* Rosalie Gottfried (and her expertise), who transferred to us from the Pacific group as she now lives closer to us.

Sheila Bass, president, Laguna Woods

BETH CHAVERIM DIPS IN FOR ITS 5TH YEAR

We celebrated Passover with a community *seder* and also a chocolate *seder* during school. We continue to expand our monthly adult programming. In addition to the on-going Bible study class in which we have completed the *Torah* in English and are now into the *Book of Prophets*, we instituted a monthly Jewish book group. We read contemporary Jewish American and Israeli authors and books with Jewish themes. To date we have read *The Plot Against America* (Roth), *To Know a Woman* (Oz), *Everything is Illuminated* (Foer),



Jake Kolesky dips a strawberry as his brother Alex looks on.

Puttermesser Papers (Ozick), *Fabulous Small Jews* (Epstein), *Those Who Save Us* (Blum), and will next read Michael Chabon’s new book, *The Yiddish Policemen’s Union*.

What members say about our Bible Study class : “I never realized how crazy and violent the *Torah* was before taking this class. Having never read much of it before, I’ve thoroughly enjoyed each Adult Education class. Jodi [Kornfeld] leads the class in a manner that encourages thoughtful discussion, while adding insight from her own extensive background in Judaic studies, and highlights aspects of the text that are relevant and meaningful from a humanistic perspective. As a result of the class, I not only have a basic foundation in the *Torah* stories that we have studied, but also a keen appreciation of the context and multiple meanings behind those stories.”
Michele Rivkin

“I am so happy that Beth Chaverim formed an Adult Education Class. I never had the opportunity to study the Bible and especially have it explained to me in such a meaningful way. Jodi’s interpretations and comments always make me think, and I look forward to every class. I have learned so much and I look forward to continuing. I even share my excitement with my colleagues at work!” *Beth Stein*

by Linda Horn, administrator, IL

BETH ADAM PROUD OF COMMITTED TEEN, MITSVA STUDENTS, SHJ CONTEST WINNERS

How busy we've been. More than 70 members, friends and families joined CBA for our Passover *seder* led by BJ Saul with music by Cantor Joy Parks. It was great, singing, eating, and searching for the *afikoman*.

May 18, we celebrated Jenny Cohn's confirmation. Jenny enrolled in the Children's Education Program in 2000 when she was in third grade. Following her *bat mitsva* in 2003, she participated in the post *mitsva* program, became a teacher's assistant in the school, and began leading us in song for our *Shabbat* services.

Recently, Jenny became a branch on our Telephone Tree, keeping members abreast of events. She also attended the SHJ Teen Conclave in Chicago. For her social action project, Jenny chose Save Darfur. She participated in rallies, in a club at her school, and she asked all

Shabbat participants to sign a petition to stop the genocide. We are so very proud of Jenny's commitment to CBA and to Humanistic Judaism.

Also in May we were involved in community service. We pitched in for the annual Help Your Neighbor Day and collected food donations to feed the needy in the city of Boca Raton.

CBA was proud to celebrate the *bar/bat mitzvas* of Eric and Alex Lenson, Julia McGrath, and Taylor Schoenfeld. When our students participated in SHJ's "*Tikkun Olam/Repairing the World*" contest, we were thrilled to see our students selected as winners. Writing Competition: Jason Dobkin; Art Competition: Ben McGrath, Ashley and Adam Heller (all 4-8th grade level).

CBA's membership has been growing due to the initiation of our monthly



Confirmand Jenny Cohn

"Welcome: Coffee and Conversation" program. We have been inviting people by special invitation who have shown an interest in Humanistic Judaism and in our congregation.

As we look to the fall, we are excited to have Cantor Joy Parks join us as pianist and music leader for our Shabbat celebrations. She brings us to new heights of musical enjoyment.

B.J. Saul, president, Boca Raton

SECULAR JEWISH CIRCLE PLANS FOR 2007-2008

Secular Jewish Circle ended the year with a gathering of more than 70 members celebrating our accomplishments and thanking our volunteers. Special thanks went to five women who have extended themselves above and beyond: Erica Jonlin, Jeanne Wolf, Sarah Hopkins, Lauren Bricker, and Robin Gitelman. Round that out with a Jewish deli night (not all that easy to come by in Seattle) and a rousing game of "SJC Jewpardy!" and it was a great send off into the summer.

Planning for 2007-2008 began in June and now the High Holidays are upon us. We are pleased that our former *madrikha*, Susan Levine, is leading the "Preparing Yourself for the High Holidays" gathering before Rosh Hashana, as well as leading our ceremony. We will also be holding our regular Tashlikh, Kol Nidre, and Yom Kippur day gatherings. We are working on strengthening our regular pro-

gramming to add variety to our Shabbat gatherings with better opportunities for members to get to know each other and new ways to celebrate. We will be expanding our regular, bi-weekly Sunday morning adult meetings to explore issues like end of life planning and living our values better.

On top of this, we will be increasing our participation with the Jewish Coalition on Homelessness and have already participated in the Jewish community festival, "Celebrating All Things Jewish."

If all that weren't enough, we have two exciting visits planned next year as well. Lori Lipman Brown, the lobbyist for the the Secular Coalition for America, will be headed our way in November, and Rabbi Miriam Jerris will be joining us in February. We look forward to both their visits!

Robin Gitelman, president, SJC of Puget Sound, WA

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as your search engine. Type in "Humanistic Judaism" as your charity and our name will appear. Then search the Web for your needs. And know that this time you will earn money for SHJ while you search!

Got E_MAIL?

Send your e-mail address to info@shj.org and begin to receive **member only** updates about Humanistic Judaism, holiday facts and greetings and more.

CHJ OF SARASOTA RALLIES TO HELP VICTIMS OF DARFUR

Spring at the Congregation for Humanistic Judaism (CHJ) in Sarasota brought a series of exciting events. Our Passover dinner at a local country club was celebrated by more than 110 congregants plus *Elijah*. The month of April also included some very fine speakers: Bill Hall, professor at St. Petersburg College and a member of The Center for Inquiry, spoke on "The Religious Impulse." This was combined with a program featuring our own wonderful chorus, The Humanaires, and the chorus from the Unitarian Universalist Church. What joyful singing!!

We celebrated Israel Independence Day with a speaker from Israel, Eddie Fair Fraiman, on "Through The Eyes of a Young Israeli." Our Social Action Committee made the congregation aware of the situation in Darfur, with speakers and a video urging us to exert pressure on our government to stop the genocide. CHJ members were well represented at a rally here promoting awareness.

The month of May had us celebrating a very successful year at CHJ with a luncheon followed by our annual meeting. Those who made it such a wonderful year were duly thanked and a slide show of pictures taken throughout the season reminded all of what a super year it was. May also included a fascinating speaker, Dr. Meg Lowman, an environmental conservationist who has done much of her work in forest canopy ecology.

Spring turned into summer, and CHJ slowed down, meeting once a month. Two meetings featured a film followed by a no-muss-no-fuss Shabbat with box dinners from a local deli. The third meeting took place at a local theater presenting a staged reading of a play, "A Green and Sacred Place," written by one of our congregants, Corinne Fleisher.

Summer living is slower in Sarasota but our Board and committee chairs worked to get ready for another great year at CHJ.

Sim and Irv Lesser, co-presidents

PACIFIC COMMUNITY ENJOYS ITS CULTURE

The Pacific Community had an outing in April to see an Israeli Academy award-winning play, *Master of the House*. At our Holocaust Memorial program, we watched the documentary, *Paper Clips*, about a Tennessee town's efforts to help its middle school students understand the magnitude of the Holocaust by collecting six million paper clips from donors all over the world.

Besides this, we had our last *Shabbat* dinner of the year and afterwards, watched a film about Daniel Barenboim and his friend Edward Said's accomplishment in putting together a music camp and a concert series for young adult Israelis and Arabs, which culminated its first season in a concert in Ramallah.

*Alice Selfridge, president,
Huntington Beach, CA*

KB IS MOVIN' ON

On Sunday, June 10, Kahal B'raira packed its tents (actually, our library, arts and crafts supplies, liturgy, and many other of our worldly possessions) and quietly melted away into the leafy spring day. Community of Choice, Greater Boston Congregation for Humanistic Judaism was on the move.

The Solomon Schechter Day School, home to KB since autumn of 2000, is a beautifully appointed Jewish day school in suburban Newton. It is a *kosher* organization. KB is not. When we began our "walk on the *kosher* side," we were provided with certain ground rules and a list of kosher bakeries and caterers for our food-oriented events. And how

many Jewish events aren't oriented around food, kosher or otherwise?

Now, Kahal B'raira is looking forward to a new home at The Fayerweather School in the Fresh Pond Area of Cambridge. Although we will miss the Judaic setting we enjoyed at the Schechter School, we are convinced that certain advantages are to be had at our new location. It is reachable by public transportation (the T). It is all on one level for easy wheelchair access. For the first time, KB will have its own office outside of a member's home! Also, we will be able to hold more events at the Fayerweather, including committee meetings, certain services, including havdala, and other events.

So please come visit us! And, in case change is hard for some, we still will hold our High Holiday services at the First Parish Church in Arlington, just as we have for years. Open to the public, with donation requested.

You can always find us on our website: www.kahalbraira.org.

*Jon Levine, Board Designee,
Boston, MA*

OR ADAM TURNS 20

On April 21, Or Adam celebrated our 20th anniversary with a party for members. We feasted and danced the evening away with a wonderful *klezmer* group featuring several of our own Or Adam musicians. Members shared fond memories of the beginnings of the group (or the start of their own involvement), and we gave away copies of *A Life of Courage* about Rabbi Sherwin Wine as door prizes, and presented honorees with gift certificates for the SHJ bookstore.

For new members, it was a great chance to connect to the history of Or Adam, and there was lots of excitement about what's ahead.

*Laura Kamienny,
Board Designee, Phoenix, AZ*

KOL HADASH, ILLINOIS, ENDS YEAR ON HIGH — EXCITEMENT AND INVOLVEMENT CONTINUE IN NEW YEAR

Spring provided many opportunities for members of Kol Hadash Humanistic Congregation in suburban Chicago to come together to live our Humanistic values.

Our very first Congregational *seder* on the second night of Passover packed the Bluegrass Restaurant with almost 100 people. With Rabbi Peter Schweitzer's *The Liberated Haggadah* as our text, Rabbi Adam Chalom led us in a meaningful multigenerational *seder* that was warm, inclusive, and delicious.

Celebrating our congregation's sixth confirmation service, we gathered on May 18 to confirm three wonderful young people, Amy Reed, Dayna Schwartz, and Zack Sills, who spoke eloquently of their beliefs, ideas, and experiences.

On Mother's Day eve, more than 150 Kol Hadashians, friends, and family gathered at the Gorton Center for a spectacular Kol Hadash concert, *My Yiddishe Momme*, a concert linked by the theme of honoring family and mothers. Conceived and organized by frequent Kol Hadash soloist Martin Pazdioch and Kol Hadash choir director Sarah Beatty, the two-hour concert featured 25 musical numbers, representing a cross-section of music from Jewish culture and tradition. More than a dozen multitalented performers lent their talents to creating a truly magical evening of music, including **Ellen Apley** (soprano), **Sarah Beatty** (soprano), **Rabbi Daniel Friedman** (trumpet), **Cody Hurder** (violin), **The Jim Jacobs Trio** (**Jim Jacobs**, **Randy Knowles**, **Jerry Tiberi**), **Lisa Jacobs** (dancer), **Jennifer Lazarz** (mezzo-soprano), **Rhonda Pawlan** (piano), **Martin Pazdioch** (voice, piano), **Lois Wolens** (piano) and the host for the evening, **Rabbi Adam Chalom!**



Kol Hadash joined SHJ in its annual observance of May as Community Service Month. We began the month with a blood drive, held on May 3, the National Day of Prayer, to show that, "We will answer their prayer with human action." We quickly followed this event up with an outreach project, serving food at the Beth Emet soup kitchen in Evanston. Continuing our regular practice of volunteering at the Friedman Center Home for the Blind, Kol Hadash congregants helped residents in a variety of ways throughout the month of

May. Kol Hadash volunteers ended our month-long series of service projects by assisting in the annual West Deerfield Food Pantry drive event, Three Guys and a Truck. We invite everyone in the area to join us throughout the year as we continue to volunteer to serve our community.

There are many wonderful Kol Hadash events in the coming months. Following the High Holidays, all members are invited to our exceptional Progressive Dinner Party, an opportunity for members to meet and greet each other while partaking of delectable offerings. Additionally, our secret puzzle masterminds have returned to help us organize another interesting, intriguing, and insidious treasure hunt. Members and non-members, alike, enjoy driving around the North Shore, solving clues and enjoying each other's company. Kol Hadash has a little something for every age, interest, and outlook!

David Hirsch, president, confirmation teacher, Illinois

Photo by Peter Sills shows Dayna Schwartz, Amy Reed seated; Rabbi Adam Chalom, Zachary Sills and David Hirsch, standing. [The Liberated Haggadah can be purchased through SHJ]

MINNESOTA CONGREGATION TAKES ON COMMUNITY SERVICE

May 10, Or Emet members volunteered at Second Harvest Heartland. They put together 275 nutrition boxes (more than 8,000 pounds of food) for low-income seniors and mothers with young children. Laura Melnick, social action chair, arranged the event. Pictured from left, President Margo and David Fox, the Dahlager-Melnick family (Laura, Mark, Elana, Ari Dahlager), Jean and Rich Sonenblum.



CONGRATULATIONS!

TO THE PRESIDENTS & LEADERS OF OUR AFFILIATED COMMUNITIES:

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Notes from Around the Globe continued

THE CITY CONGREGATION RECAPS HIGHLIGHTS OF A "GREAT YEAR"

Hello from The City Congregation! Much has happened including exciting Shabbat programs, *bar/bat mitzvas*, KidSchool classes, Adult Perspectives discussions, and congregational outings.

Rabbi Peter Schweitzer and Larry Bush, editor of *Jewish Currents*, combined organizations to co-sponsor a program featuring Lori Lipman Brown of the Secular Coalition for America. On a one time basis, TCC was able to contact the

Jewish Currents substantial mailing list. Rabbi Peter now writes a regular column in the magazine.

Shabbats included playwright James Sherman, on "What's So Funny about Being Jewish?" and Julie Salamon, journalist/author, on "The Gift of Giving," based on her book on the topic. A final Shabbat in June honored longstanding members Nikki and Hank Greenberg, who left the board after years of service. We thanked outgoing co-president Isabel Kaplan and other board members and welcomed new ones.

Rabbi Peter led our congregational *seder*, presided over several open houses for potential new members, and officiated at four *bar/bat mitzva* ceremonies. Abby Cheskis, Sam Lewis, Ben Farber, and Sabrina Frank made their families and congregation proud. The congregation set a record with seven ceremonies this year! [TCC is the recipient of the SHJ Pivnick Grant to support the transition to a full-time rabbi.]

Trips/outings included accompanying Rabbi Peter to the National Museum of American Jewish History in Philadelphia for a special tour of his recently-donated collection of Jewish Americana, a trip to Chinatown for a gourmet dim sum lunch (part of our *Restaurants Around the World* series), and an AIDS Walk to raise money and awareness for AIDS research. In July we visited New York's Museum of Jewish Heritage for the exhibit, "The Other Promised Land: Vacationing, Identity, and the Jewish-American Dream," featuring more of Rabbi Peter's collection.

Our Teen Group attended an exhibit at the Jewish Museum entitled "Good and Evil in American Comics," delivered Purim packages to elderly shut-ins with a local organization called *Dorot*, and set up and staffed several booths at our annual KidSchool Purim Carnival.

As reported earlier, we purchased some congregational software called Rakefet. We focused initially on its database capabilities and are now transitioning our finances into the program, which will streamline our financial operations and enable all of our financial activity to occur in our office.

The City Congregation has had a great year in 2006-2007. We look forward to more growth and wonderful congregational events in the upcoming year! High Holiday services will begin September 13 at the Marriott Financial Center in Manhattan.

Isabel Kaplan, outgoing co-president, New York City

Building Community

by Rabbi Miriam Jerris

To Be or Not To: That Is the Choice

Most of us remember the first time we learned about Humanistic Judaism and had the “aha” experience, when we knew that finally we had found a Jewish home. For many, it happened later in life. I was extremely fortunate. I discovered Humanistic Judaism when I was a young married woman, before I had children. And I lived in Metro Detroit, where a full service Humanistic congregation existed. Not only had I found my psycho-spiritual home, but the home had a house, a school, and a rabbi, everything that I had grown up with in Reform Judaism. And it had a philosophy that was consistent with my beliefs. This good fortune inspired me toward my life’s work. I wanted everyone else who had yearned for a Humanistic Jewish identity and home to have one.

The process is challenging. Today I speak to two issues: growth and the difficulties that arise in not growing and the difficulty in attracting young families to Humanistic Judaism.

To quote the Unitarian Universalist Handbook, “A congregation either grows or dies.” A difficulty with that

reality is that a congregation needs energy, resources, and creativity to grow, and when a congregation is in decline those entities are not readily available. However, there is no choice in this regard because a congregation either grows or dies. When membership begins to dwindle, the most common impulse is to pull back, to decrease programming, to reduce advertising, to close the school, to withdraw from community involvement. That is the gravest of errors; it hastens the decline.

It may seem counterintuitive, but crisis and decline create an appropriate breeding ground for renewal. It is during this time that the community needs to reconnect with its corporate memory and recall times in its prior history that created excitement and energy. It also needs to assess what contributions the congregation can make to the spiritual life of the community in which it resides to reenergize its own community.

Secondly, why is it so difficult for our communities to attract young families? For most young families in which Jewish identity is a priority, a full service congregational experience is desired. The lives of these families often are too busy and too complex to put the kind of time that is necessary into a new, growing, pioneering community. The cultural Jewish philosophy may be important to them but may not be as important as a significant Jewish experience for their children. New Humanistic Jewish communities tend to be smaller and less expensive and to meet less frequently. And because our communities are smaller and have fewer resources, often we

(continued on next page)



CHJ, Fairfield County, CT, elects new officers: standing ready (from left) are Ellie Shafer (Exec VP), Roz Hill (President), Ruth Windsor (VP Programming), Theodora Bednarski (Ritual), Suzanne Friedman (Secretary), Gail Ostrow (Newsletter), Elsa Cantor (Social Action), Mike Hill (High Holiday Logistics), Dana Preis (Treasurer).

Support the Fund for Humanistic Judaism

Building Communities Training Leaders Developing Resources

Community Development

The Sherwin T. Wine Group Development Fund helps nurture and develop Humanistic Jewish communities and leadership. This fund enables humanistic rabbis and other leaders to visit established and developing communities; energize, strengthen, and guide them; and increase the visibility and outreach capabilities of the communities and the Movement. The Miriam Jerris Community Development Fund supports communities in promoting weekend events.

Youth and Young Adult Programs

The Society for Humanistic Judaism Teen and Young Adult Conclaves help establish bonds among our teens and reinforce both their Jewish identity and their connection with Humanistic Judaism. Young adult programs at Society conferences and humanistic *havurot* on university campuses provide a forum for discussion and the sharing of ideas among college students at a time when they are self-identifying, inquiring, and most receptive to new ideas and information.

Publications

Society publications provide a ready reference and resource for individuals, families, and communities to create meaningful holiday and life-cycle observations as well as educational programs for adults and young people. *The Guide to Humanistic Judaism*, for example, offers an overview to our philosophy. The topical and timely journal, *Humanistic Judaism*, features issue-oriented articles and regular departments such as book reviews, travel, and regional events. Society Holiday Kits bring Humanistic Jewish holiday celebrations into homes, dorm rooms, and beyond.

Curricula and Training

The Society sponsors training programs and provides resources for youth and adult education. Membership orientation, three-year adult study groups, adult *bar/bat mitzvas* and confirmations, and manuals on history, culture, music, holidays, and life cycles allow members to learn about Humanistic Judaism and connect to our heritage.

Rabbinic and Leadership Training

The International Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism is the academic arm of the Movement. The Rabbinic Program prepares men and women to become the spiritual leaders and mentors of Secular Humanistic communities. Similarly, the leadership, educators', and music programs train individuals to serve the ceremonial, philosophic, and educational needs of our communities. The masters degree program builds on the knowledge base of the above programs and provides an advanced course of Jewish study relevant to the movement. Gifts to the Society's Scholarship Fund allow future Jewish leaders to focus on their seminary studies without the distractions imposed by financial need.

Seminars, Conferences, and Colloquia

The Society sponsors national and regional conferences and seminars that enhance the emotional and intellectual lives of Humanistic Jews across North America. These events bring nationally and internationally renowned scholars, lecturers, and teachers to Society communities and congregations.

To Be or Not To... *continued from page 11*

are unable to provide substantive and adequate programming for this demographic. We may be able to provide the substance without the infrastructure, but that may not be enough for young Jewish families today. Young families want all the bells and whistles: a rabbi, a building, a full youth education program, and programming for families. We are a relatively new movement in Juda-

ism. It takes time to develop, but it also takes more than a handful of individuals to create a movement. Each of us needs to ask the question, "What am I doing to contribute to the growth and development of Humanistic Judaism? What else can I do?" We value and appreciate every individual's contribution and look forward to expanding our efforts with your help. The choice is ours.

From the Executive Director, Bonnie Cousens

Share the Vision, Think BIG



A new year is beginning. It is a time for planning, a time for vision, a time to think BIG. In 1963, eight families and a rabbi embarked on an adventure, creating a new movement in Jewish life. They dared to think BIG, to create a Judaism that would have meaning and value

in their lives and in the lives of all who joined them.

Had they thought small, had they been content to accept the status quo, had they been willing to be a small group of friends gathering in a living room, had they kept what they were doing a secret, had they believed they could succeed without funding, we would not have a movement today. They entrusted their creation to us. It is our turn to think BIG, our turn to accept the responsibility:

To help Humanistic Judaism grow: Members are the lifeblood of our movement. Reach out to your family, to your friends and colleagues. Invite them to a program. Introduce them to the journal *Humanistic Judaism*. Share a Shabbat, a Hanukka celebration, a *seder* with them. Shmooze with the newcomers at a community event. Ask them to join your community. And when they do, recognize that your job isn't done. Create a buddy system so they always feel welcome in the community. Ask them to join you for dinner before a Shabbat. Involve them in the life of your community. Invite them to help plan a program or to join a committee.

And be sure to let SHJ know your community has a new member — the Society will welcome them and provide a connection to other Humanistic Jews around the country. We'll send them the *Guide to Humanistic Judaism* and a home Shabbat celebration as a gift. They'll start to receive the journal. They'll feel connected and your community will gain a knowledgeable, involved member.

To celebrate Jewish identity: Humanistic Judaism opens a door to Jewish culture. It is our link to our heritage. Creative human-centered Jewish celebrations — the holidays and life cycles Jews have celebrated throughout history — empower us. They comfort and energize. They fill us with a sense of well-being and hope. They help us to know that we can seize the moment and achieve goals we might imagine are unreachable.

To spread the word: Humanistic Judaism is unique. We offer a human-centered, non-theistic alternative to the celebration of Jewish identity, an alternative that provides a Jewish connection for secular, cultural, unaffiliated, intercultural, disenfranchised, disenchanting, and free-thinking Jews in an increasingly religious world. Each of us has the power to be an ambassador for this alternative: to talk about our communities, our beliefs, our celebrations, our programs, our schools, our stands on the issues. Each of us can help bring Humanistic Judaism to the fore — in our community and in the media.

To fund our vision: Humanistic communities cannot survive, rabbis and *madrikhim* cannot be trained, professional leadership will not serve, programs cannot be offered, resources cannot be created, if funding does not exist. Each of us is needed to help finance our movement. Contribute to your local SHJ community. Support the Fund for Humanistic Judaism. Include the SHJ in your estate plan. And remember to pay your membership dues quickly and in full.

To get involved with SHJ nationally. Get to know other SHJ members. Visit SHJ communities when you travel. Attend the SHJ conference in Los Angeles in April. Send your children and grandchildren to the youth conclave in April. Join an SHJ committee. Come to the Colloquium in October.

If each of us chooses to think BIG, to share a global vision for Humanistic Judaism, our movement will grow and thrive. Being a Humanistic Jew is a choice. It is also a responsibility. Join me in accepting this responsibility, in making 5768 a year of growth and accomplishment for the Society for Humanistic Judaism. *Shana tova.*

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The Society for Humanistic Judaism is pleased to thank the contributors to the 2006-2007 Fundraising Campaign.

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To Rabbi Miriam Jerris
In honor of her new appointment as
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From Lucie Brandon & Bert Steinberg

To Bonnie & Mark Cousens & family
In memory of her father Joseph Cohen
From Lucie Brandon & Bert Steinberg
Judi & Allan Freund
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Wishing her good health
From Lucie Brandon & Bert Steinberg

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From Sheila Bass

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On receiving his Masters of
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Wishing you a speedy recovery
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To Joe Steinberg & family
In memory of his sister Ruth
From Bonnie & Mark Cousens

To Saul Forman
In honor of his birthday
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From Miriam Jerris & Steve Stawicki
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Bonnie & Mark Cousens

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SHJ UPCOMING EVENTS

September 12-14, 2007	RABBI EVA GOLDFINGER ROSH HASHANA VISIT TO TRIANGLE CHJ, NC. Contact: Lois Alpern, (919) 493-4768, lalpern01@sprintpcs.com.
September 21-23, 2007	RABBI MIRIAM JERRIS YOM KIPPUR VISIT TO OR ADAM, PHOENIX, AZ. Contact: Dana Naimark, (480) 663-7788, info@oradam.org.
October 17-19, 2007	SHJ BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING. Contact: SHJ, (248) 478-7610, info@shj.org.
October 19-21, 2007	COLLOQUIUM '07: Jews and the Muslim World — Solving the Puzzle, IISHJ, Farmington Hills, MI. Contact: IISHJ, (248) 476-9532, iishj@iishj.org.
October 27-28, 2007	RABBI MIRIAM JERRIS VISIT TO QUEENS CCJ, NY Contact: Ed Klein, (718) 380-5362, madrikh@peoplepc.com.
November 2-4, 2007	IISHJ SEMINAR, Phoenix, AZ. Contact: IISHJ, (248) 476-9532, info@iishj.org.
November 17-18, 2007	IISHJ SEMINAR, "Jews and Arabs," New York, NY. Contact: IISHJ, (248) 476-9532, info@iishj.org.
February 22-24, 2008	RABBI MIRIAM JERRIS VISIT TO SECULAR JEWISH CIRCLE OF PUGET SOUND, Seattle, WA. Contact: Robin Gitelman, (425) 313-0484, rlgitz@aol.com.
March 6-9, 2008	RABBI MIRIAM JERRIS VISIT TO KOL HADASH HUMANISTIC CONGREGATION, Highland Park, IL. Contact: Rabbi Adam Chalom, (847) 347-3003, info@kolhadash.com.
April 2-4, 2008	SHJ BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING, Los Angeles, CA. Contact: SHJ, (248) 478-7610, info@shj.org.
April 4-8, 2008	Connecting to Judaism: I Did It My Way — SHJ CONFERENCE & TEEN/ YOUNG ADULT CONCLAVE '08 plus TOUR, Los Angeles, CA. Contact: SHJ, (248) 478-7610, info@shj.org.
September 28-30, 2008	RABBI MIRIAM JERRIS VISIT TO WESTCHESTER COMMUNITY FOR HUMANISTIC JUDAISM, NY. Contact: Howard Weinberg, howardwg@msn.com.

SOCIETY FOR HUMANISTIC JUDAISM

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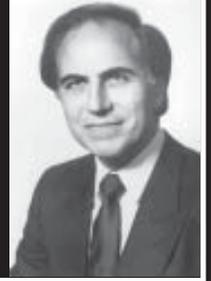
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In Memoriam

A Tribute to Rabbi Sherwin T. Wine

January 25, 1928-July 21, 2007



July 22, 2007

Dear friends,

It is with profound sadness that I inform you of the death of one of the greatest *Humanist* leaders of the 20th Century, my beloved friend and teacher Rabbi Sherwin T. Wine, the 2003 American Humanist of the Year. Rabbi Wine and his longtime partner, Richard McMains, were vacationing in Morocco. Returning from dinner Saturday evening, July 21, in Essaouira, their taxicab was hit by another driver. Both Rabbi Wine and the taxi driver were killed instantly. McMains survived the collision and currently is hospitalized in stable condition.

In the informal feedback the Humanist Chaplaincy at Harvard has gathered from our conference, “The New Humanism,” at Harvard this past April, Sherwin Wine was chosen more than any other presenter as the most outstanding speaker of the weekend-long event, which included such world-famous figures as Salman Rushdie, E.O. Wilson, Amartya Sen, and Steven Pinker. As one younger conference attendee wrote, he was “the surprise speaker who blew me away.” But for those of us fortunate enough to know Rabbi Wine, his excellence came as no surprise. He was not only among the greatest and most knowledgeable orators I have seen, he was also a compassionate and wise leader who showed thousands of people what it means to be good without god. (A video of Rabbi Wine’s stirring speech at Harvard in April 2007 will be available later this week at <http://harvardhumanist.org> and at www.shj.org.)

Wine performed thousands of weddings, funerals, *bar* and *bat mitzvas*, and baby-naming ceremonies based not on obedience to or praise of god but on a celebration of the human spirit. He listened at the bedside of sick and dying patients with the same passion, commitment, and warmth that drove him to found numerous successful organizations, including the Society for Humanistic Judaism, the International Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism, and the Humanist Institute.

Around the world, Wine taught that human dignity, courage, and love are our most important values, not religious obedience. He publicly debated religious fundamentalists such as Jerry Falwell and Meir Kahane. And he refused the religious veneer that America so values in its leaders. Though he kept the title *rabbi*, he did not pray or praise a god he did not believe in. The movement he founded and the career he pioneered— creating a new tradition that I am proud to be among those dedicating our lives to carrying on— was never about being against god but rather about moving beyond god to create humanist community, led by humanist professionals, for the benefit of all human beings.

If we learn one thing from Rabbi Wine’s loss, let it be this: now that the world’s attention has turned to the 1.1 billion non-religious people on earth, and now that bestselling books on atheism by authors such as Richard Dawkins and Christopher Hitchens have shown millions what *Humanists* do not believe in, let us follow Sherwin’s example and dedicate ourselves to building a positive alternative to traditional religion. Let us build communities, organizations, and families that do good for ourselves and others, based on the Humanist ethic of reason, compassion, and creativity.

Sherwin Wine, like Eleanor Roosevelt, knew that it is better to light a candle than curse the darkness. So in moving forward, let us remember the words he wrote in the moving liturgical song, “Ayfo Oree” (“Where is My Light?”):



Where is my light?
My light is in me.
Where is my hope?
My hope is in me.
Where is my strength?
My strength is in me.
And in you. And in you.

**Rabbi Greg M. Epstein,
Humanist Chaplain, Harvard**

prepared by Harriet Maza
Society for Humanistic Judaism
July 2007

GRIEVING FOR THE LOST MOMENTS, THE LAUGH I WILL NOT HEAR AGAIN

Twenty-nine years ago, on a summer evening, in a room lined with books, I met a man who would change my life. I was there to learn about a congregation for my family; I embarked on a life path that would challenge, excite, and engage me. I found a teacher, a guide, a mentor, a friend. This week, on another summer evening, in a room filled with friends, I said good-bye to this man.

Rabbi Sherwin Wine is dead, killed in a tragic traffic accident, in a small town in Morocco many of us had never heard of. The loss I feel is very personal, very private. I grieve for the lost moments, the laugh I will not hear again, how his eyes would crinkle when he smiled, the stories he will not tell, the meals we will not share, the private times when he was there for me, the clarity he would bring to any complex issue, the opportunities to learn from him. I will

miss my daily trips across the hall to his office, knowing we would shmooze a bit before getting down to business.

And the loss is public, global, a loss each of us feels. We have lost our founder, our visionary, the man who brought us Humanistic Judaism, who gave us a home, a place to discover a Judaism that brings meaning to our lives, a way to connect to our heritage and celebrate a culture that enriches. We grieve for our teacher, the man who provided a window on world issues. He inspired and challenged us to find the best in ourselves, to understand that each of us has an obligation to fulfill the values of human dignity, honesty, courage.

Sherwin Wine shared his vision with us. Humanistic Judaism is his legacy. Our challenge is to fulfill his vision, to build Humanistic Judaism as he imagined it, to train leaders and rabbis, to create and



strengthen Humanistic communities, to make Humanistic Judaism a force in the Jewish world. Today there is a hole in my heart, a hole in my movement. My friend and colleague, my guide and teacher, is dead. He taught us that death is real. But life goes on. Sherwin Wine will live on in our memories and in our actions. He will live on in Humanistic Judaism. And we will remember.

Zekher tsadik livrakha, the memory of a good person is a blessing.

Bonnie Cousens, Executive Director, Society for Humanistic Judaism

SHJ SELECTS RABBI SHERWIN WINE HUMANIST HERO OF THE YEAR

Each year the Society selects a Humanist hero to honor, a person whose life exemplifies the values we as Humanis-

tic Jews hold. This year we will honor our founder, Rabbi Sherwin Wine. His courage to act on his vision changed the

landscape of Judaism. We will honor Rabbi Wine in our communities and celebrate his life at our conference.

RABBI PLEDGES TO SERVE MOVEMENT

As a member of a reform congregation, I celebrated my *bat mitzva* under the tutelage of a young, attractive, brilliant and funny rabbi – Sherwin T. Wine. When I finished my *Torah* and *Haftorah* readings, I experienced a sense of euphoria combined with the strong desire to become a rabbi. Upon graduating from university, I requested an application for the rabbinic program from Hebrew Union College, the Reform Seminary, only to discover that women could not become rabbis. Who knew?

Fast forward to the 1980s: I have now been involved in Humanistic Judaism since the early '70s, reuniting with my childhood rabbi. Sherwin Wine is creating connections and coalitions, ulti-

mately founding the International Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism. With the establishment of the Institute and the rabbinic seminary, my childhood dream becomes a possibility. In 2001, Rabbi Sherwin Wine ordains me as a rabbi and my dream is realized.

We have suffered a devastating loss. We are a community of mourners, intensely sad and in great pain. As the President of the Association of Humanistic Rabbis, I am poised to continue the vision, passion, and life work of my mentor, teacher, colleague, and friend. He has entrusted me and many others to make his dreams a reality as he did for mine. I am honored to serve the Movement in this capacity and pledge my energies and



commitment to the recruitment of rabbinic students and to strengthening the IISHJ Leader Education programs. It will be my privilege to honor Sherwin Wine's legacy by working to ensure the future leadership of the Secular Humanistic Jewish movement.

Rabbi Miriam Jerris, president AHR



"POWERFUL PEOPLE LEAVE POWERFUL MEMORIES," HE WROTE

KEEPING THE FLAME ALIVE

A flame continues to burn in the human heart long after a person dies. Sometimes it is so palpable, so warm and vital, that our senses confuse it for realness. "Powerful people leave powerful memories," he wrote. The flame burns tall and wide. It has breadth and depth. The flint and stone were struck by the life of Rabbi Sherwin Wine. He built the tower of fire. He lived the life of courage.

The moment has arrived. The one we all dreaded the most. Rabbi Wine has died. His death was sudden. We did not have time to say goodbye or to prepare our hearts. How many times did we hear others or even ask ourselves, "What will we do without him?"

When I was 16, Rabbi Wine asked me to stay after class.

"Tamara," he said in a low booming voice, "please come into my office." "I am in big trouble," I thought. And I did not want to be in trouble with Rabbi Wine. That seemed totally terrifying. After class I walked through his office doors only to discover that my mother was inside, holding a birthday cake with lit candles. The two of them had been in cahoots. He sang to me, out of tune and too loud, "Happy birthday to you..." My mother then read me a card in which she presented a trip to Israel for my birthday present. Rabbi Wine had picked the trip. He was as close to me in that moment as a father can be.

Rabbi Wine did not create Humanistic Judaism for himself. He created it for us. He built this movement in order for it to exist in the world. Humanistic Judaism is an alternative in Jewish life that needs to exist in order to ensure that Jew-

ish life continues to thrive. And we can keep his legacy alive.

There is a word "Dignity." He defined it. He lived it. And he taught us all how to capture it. We are the masters of our own lives. We will not betray his life work by stopping at despair. We will feel our feelings but we will not stop there.

The fire is not diminished. It burns stronger than ever. You are at the heart of the heat. Rabbi Wine started the fire. We will keep it burning.
Rabbi Tamara Kolton, Birmingham Temple



The family of Rabbi Sherwin T. Wine has asked that contributions in his memory be directed to support the Secular Humanistic Jewish Movement he established, through donating to the 21st Century Wine Memorial Fund. Donations may be mailed to the Society for Humanistic Judaism.

IF NOT NOW, WHEN?

THE TIME TO ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY HAS ARRIVED



The loss of Sherwin Wine is a profound blow. His voice, teaching seminars for the International Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism, performing field visits for the Society for Humanistic Judaism, writing articles and books, giving lectures, and offering comfort will never be replaced. He promised natural immortality: he lives on in the lives he touched, the rabbis and leaders he trained, the communi-

ties he inspired, and the ideas and institutions he created. We who knew him and loved him will miss him terribly, and we are that much more grateful for what he gave us.

One of Rabbi Wine's common techniques was to dismiss illusions and face realities – it was an illusion that Sherwin was immortal; the reality is that Humanistic Judaism is greater than one person, as great as that person was. We knew this day, supporting an Institute to train leaders and rabbis and a society of Humanistic congregations without Sherwin Wine to guide us, would eventually come. That this transition is too sudden and too soon does not change the reality that it is here.

Life will be different; no one person will fill all of Sherwin's roles. There will be a transition to determine who will do what, but everyone should know and tell the world that Humanistic Judaism will live – our communities will celebrate Jewish life through human-focused values, our Institute will train new rabbis and leaders and educators, our ideas will continue to inspire. *Beit Hillel*, the school of Hillel, continued teaching in the spirit of Rabbi Hillel long after its founder was gone. We are now *Beit Sherwin*, the school of Humanistic Judaism, and we refuse to flounder without our founder. The time to assume responsibility for our own destiny has arrived. And if not now, when?

Rabbi Adam Chalom, interim dean, International Institute

LET US HONOR RABBI WINE BY LIVING HIS PHILOSOPHY



Rabbi Sherwin Wine was both a visionary and a pragmatist. In his wisdom, he ensured that Secular Humanistic Judaism will survive him. A new generation of rabbis has been recruited and ordained. Their individual contributions, from congregational leadership, to publications, to life-cycle ceremonies, have been received with great enthusiasm and universal acclaim. They have made the movement richer and stronger.

Rabbi Wine founded the International Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism as the intellectual and teaching

center of the Movement, and it has trained rabbis and educators who have assumed leadership positions in more than fifty communities. The IISHJ is also the educational and publications arm of the International Federation of Secular Humanistic Jews, an association of national organizations that espouses non-theistic Judaism and circles the globe from North and South America to Israel, Europe, and Australia. T'mura, the Israeli college of the Institute, graduated its first class of Israeli secular rabbis in 2006.

The commitment of the IISHJ to Jewish identity and continuity forms the foundation of its programs. It was Rabbi Wine's genius to meld rationality and the most current scientific knowledge with Jewish traditions and ethics and thus provide the best guarantee of Jewish survival. His dream of a strong and vibrant movement that

promotes this reality-based Judaism with integrity is carried forward by the IISHJ through its students, who become Secular Humanistic leaders. They share Sherwin's approach to morality and give credence to contemporary knowledge, even as they perpetuate and re-define our Jewish heritage.

Building on the foundation of Rabbi Wine's rich legacy, our movement will continue to grow with the next generation of Secular Humanistic rabbis, leaders, and educators. His philosophy, embracing human dignity, courage, and love will be passed from generation to generation. Let us remember his shining example and the life that he so generously shared with each of us. Let us honor him by living his philosophy in our efforts to make this world better for all.

Linda J. Glass, executive director International Institute