



# CHAI-LIGHTS

JUNE 2009

Affiliated with  
The Society for Humanistic Judaism and the Congress of Secular Jewish Organizations

Volume X11. No.10

**Sunday, June 28th 1:00 PM**

## ANNUAL END OF YEAR PARTY

at the home of

**Terry Bayer & Victor Vega**

12 Whitesands, Newport Coast, CA

*After a short meeting, there will be*

**FOOD!**

**ENTERTAINMENT!**

**SHMOOZING!**

**SURPRISES!**

**FUN for ALL!**

**HOPE TO SEE YOU ALL THERE!**

RSVP to Greta Singer - 714-594-3866

danandgreta86@yahoo.com

The Next PC Film Club presentation  
Tuesday, June 30th at 7:30 PM:

"GOD ON TRIAL"



In the Jewish tradition of arguing with God, Jewish prisoners in Auschwitz decide to put God on Trial.

At the home of Shirley Spiegel

Please RSVP to Shirley at:

714-378-1186 or SHIRL-B@SOCAL.RR.COM

## DINE OUT

SATURDAY, JUNE 13th at 6:00 P.M.



1623 West Katella Ave.  
Orange CA 92867  
Ph. (714) 769-7020  
East of the Honda Center

RSVP no later than June 10th

Knechtfour@aol.com or 714/739-1366

**Mark  
Your  
Calendar**

**Saturday, June 13th, 6:00 PM**

**DINE OUT**  
at  
**The Lazy Dog Cafe**  
(see Page 1)

**Sunday, June 28th 1:00 PM**

**ANNUAL END OF YEAR  
PARTY**  
at the home of  
**Terry Bayer & Victor Vega**  
(see Page 1)

**Tuesday, June 30th, 7:30 PM**

**FILM CLUB**  
at the home of  
**Shirley Spiegel**  
(see Page 1)

**Saturday, Sept. 19th**

**ROSH HASHANA**

**Monday, Sept. 28th**

**YOM KIPPUR**

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**



Dear Fellow Pacific Community Members;

Once again, we have suffered the loss of one of our members. Ken Klipper was not only a long-time, very involved member of the Pacific Community from its inception, he was a wonderful person and friend to all of us who knew him. Our hearts go out to Shirley, Karen, and all the rest of his family. We will miss him so very much!

On to more mundane matters -- looking back on the past month, I am happy to be able to say that we had two very successful programs. The first was a Shabbat dinner followed by information given and discussed regarding the Israeli/Palestinian conflict. I think that those of us who attended learned a few things that evening, and, as always, we enjoyed the schmoozing and the eating part. Secondly, we had a program in which we gathered to hear a League of Women Voters speaker and her two mentors present an analysis of the pros and cons of the propositions on which we have since voted. Speaking for myself, I found it extremely informative and helpful in making up my mind.

Now we are winding down the main part of our year to allow our members to take summer vacations, if they have so planned. We will conclude with a brief general meeting and then celebrate another successful year with a party which will include special entertainment. I do hope to see all our members there on the June 28th!

Shalom,  
Alice

**Letter to the Editor:**

Hello,

I just wanted to share with everyone at Pacific Community that Matthew Kozlov had his Bar-Mitzva in Israel, December 22, 2008. Attached are a few pictures. The event took place at Massada, israel.

I would like to thank the Pacific Community for supporting the Sunday school, which had a big impact and ultimately helped us with the decision on having the Bar-Mitzva ceremony.

Thanks again, Pacific Community!

Ludmila Kozlov



*Editor's note: The Koslovs were members of the Pacific Community when the Community had an active Sunday School, The Jewish Culture School. Both of the Koslov's two children attended the school until the school was closed.*

**CONGRATULATIONS TO MATTHEW AND THE ENTIRE KOSLOV FAMILY**

**The Pacific Community  
mourns  
the passing of**

**Kenneth (Ken) Klipper**

**Condolences to Shirley Klipper,  
Karen Knecht and the entire  
Klipper family**

One of the founding members of the Pacific Community, Ken Klipper passed away this month. Serviceman, husband, father, grandfather and friend, Ken was always ready to serve whenever needed. Whether schlepping tables or providing music for the Holidays. Ken never said no. After several years of battling cancer, he passed away. He will be sorely missed.

**We Remember**

*At the rising of the sun and its going down,  
we will remember him.*

*At the blowing of the wind and in the chill of winter,  
we will remember him*

*At the opening of the buds and in the rebirth of the spring  
we will remember him.*

*At the rustling of leaves and the beauty of the autumn,  
we will remember him.*

*At the beginning of the year and when it ends,  
we will remember him.*

*When we have joys we crave to share,  
we will remember him.*

*When we have love and are embraced,  
we will remember him*

*As long as we live, he, too, will live;  
for he is part of us, as we remember him*

**THE CSJO CONFERENCE**

by Lee Jacobi

This May, I attended my first ever CSJO (Congress of Secular Jewish Organizations) annual conference. I had a very positive experience.

There were about 100 attendees from CSJO local communities across the US and Canada. The venue was a small private college outside Philadelphia, PA. There was great public transportation from the airport to a station a mile from the campus.

The theme of the conference was Heroes and Heroines. Executive Director Roberta "Rifke" Feinstein, in her keynote address, gave recognition to founders and long-time leaders of CSJO, some of whom were right there in the room. There was discussion at later sessions regarding definitions, i.e. who we should be considering as heroes and heroines: people who made contributions to society in general, or secular Jews who made contributions to society in general, or secular Jews who made contributions to the secular Jewish movement. I enjoyed Bennett Muraskin's session so much that I bought his book "Let Justice Well Up Like Water" which contains short biographies of progressive Jews, historical through present.

A second, unofficial, theme of the conference was concern about the future of the secular Jewish movement. We are aging and our numbers are declining. Larry Bush, the editor of Jewish Currents magazine, called on us to increase our knowledge of our secular Jewish traditions and also of the religious Jewish traditions i.e. Judaism. Several people suggested mergers of the CSJO, the Society for Humanistic Judaism (SHJ), and the Workmen's Circle that are all small and have similar philosophies. In Philadelphia, the three are working together with an institutional arrangement they call "The Kehilla" (community council). Rifke. noted that relatively\* high dues in her Cleveland local allow them to do more, and they are one of the few growing locals. \*Note: that was high relative to other CSJO locals, still low relative to synagogues.

Nicholai "Kolya" Borodulin taught a Yiddish language class, 50 words in 50 minutes. It was a masterful teaching performance, making learning a language fun!

I had a couple of surprises at the conference. First, I was asked to come to the mike and briefly describe our PCCJ group's activities (representatives from each of the locals did this). People were not aware that our group is affiliated with both CSJO and SHJ, as that was only considered as a theoretical pos-

sibility The second surprise was the number and enthusiasm of the youth participants. There were about three dozen teen-to-20's attendees, and they were clearly having a great time. Some of the west coast youth called for a youth conference to be held on the west coast, and then for the entire CSJO conference to be held on the west coast. I am in favor of that!

Jamie "Zwick" Ireland (daughter of members, Jerry and Leslie Zwick) was elected to a two year term as an Executive Member-At-Large on the CSJO Executive committee.

Our own Karen Knecht was a great emcee. Food was fine. For those who wanted more than classroom sessions, there was a field trip to an art museum. I regret that I had to leave before the talent show, which I am told was a highlight of previous CSJO conferences.

A suggestion was made by a Sholem Community (in LA) representative that we consider forming an LA-OC kehilla.

**HOW ABOUT IT? - BOOK SWAPPING**

Several years ago, we started something but never followed through on it. I'm referring to our Book Exchange.

I'm sure that we all have books that we enjoyed reading and have had for some time and now are just gathering dust on our book shelves. They look nice, but serve no purpose other than taking up space.

So, why not bring a couple to our various PC functions and let someone else enjoy them too, while you enjoy someone else's books.

***HAPPY BIRTHDAY***

Marilyn Ackerman	June 6th
Greta Singer	June 6th
Norma Kellam	June 13th
Debby Penley	June 13th

***HAPPY ANNIVERSARY***

Steve & Lynne Koffler June 15th

**A VERY WORTHY CAUSE**

by Jack Stein

Most of us are descendants of Eastern European Jewish families. These families go back hundreds of years and during that time, developed a language of their own. This language spread to almost everywhere Jews lived. They could travel to other countries and there would be people they could converse with. They also created a literary culture.- Hundreds of books by Sholem Aleichem, Y.L. Peretz and countless others.

The Nazis tried and almost succeeded in wiping out that culture. The literature survived and has been found all over the world. Thousands of books in private libraries, waiting to be rescued.

They have been rescued, thanks to one Aaron Lansky, who had an idea. He nourished the idea until it grew into the National Yiddish Book Center, located in Amhurst, Massachusetts.

Thousands of volunteer hours, book donations and calls from people with books to be picked up. . .All this takes money, lots of money.

As Cultural Jews, we have an obligation to support this cause. It is our heritage, and it supports the very essence of who we are.

**TRIBUTES**

Donations have been made to the Pacific Community in memory of Ken Klipper

by

Alice & Bill Selfridge  
Jack & Bernice Stein

*Pacific Community is always glad to accept donations to commemorate simchas or tsuris. When you donate, our Tribute Chairperson, Greta Singer will send a card to the person or family whose event you have commemorated (so be sure to include their address) as well as a card to you acknowledging your contribution.*

714-594-3866 or  
danandgreta86@yahoo.com

**OFFICERS 2008-2010**

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<b>Treasurer:</b>	Karen Knecht	Knechtfour@aol.com
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<b>Program Coordinator:</b>	Marilyn Ackerman	MA111@aol.com

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<b>Tributes:</b>	Greta Singer	danandgreta86@yahoo.com

## UNDERSTANDING EINSTEIN`S BELIEFS: A STRUGGLE WITH SEMANTICS

by  
Norma Kellam

“God does not play dice with the universe.” Does this well-known statement by Albert Einstein indicate that he believed in traditional religion?

Due to Einstein`s use of the word “God,” some people think that he believed in the Judeo-Christian God. On the contrary, Jayson Post, Deputy Director of the World Union of Deists ([www.deism.com](http://www.deism.com)) says, “Einstein definitely rejected the Biblical God.” Bob Johnson, the founder and Director of the World Union of Deists, says that Einstein “frequently spoke out about not believing in a personal God and didn`t believe in the type of God the Jews and Christians promote, one who gives orders and punishes and rewards based on how well someone follow his orders.”

Einstein clearly stated that he did not believe in a god who intervenes in human affairs, but that he believed that the order and predictability in the universe showed evidence of a superior intelligence. That is what deists believe. Johnson states, “The reason I believe Albert Einstein was a Deist is because of the process of elimination. He stated that, even though he greatly appreciated Spinoza`s writings and ideas, he was not a Pantheist. He also stated on several occasions that he was not an Atheist.”

Einstein was a member of the American Humanist Association, and his lack of belief in divine intervention fits secular-humanism. He placed great importance on ethics, but he saw no connection between ethics and God. He did not believe in individual immortality.

In denying that God plays dice, Einstein was objecting to quantum theory, which proposes random motion at the subatomic level. He said that the natural laws, and even the actions of people, depend on cause and effect. Post says, “Einstein was a determinist.” Post explains this term as it applies to people. “A determinist is someone who believes that human action is not chosen but is determined by motives regarded as external force action on the will.”

Recent articles about the auctioning of a letter that Einstein wrote about a year prior to his death, to Eric Gutkind, present a problem regarding the theory that Einstein was a deist. A quote from the letter reads, “The word God is for me nothing more than the expression and product of human weaknesses. . . .”

(“Einstein`s Atheism: Let There Be No Doubt about It Now.” By Michael Weiss, 5-13-08, Jewcy.

[www.jewcy.com/post/einsteins\\_atheism](http://www.jewcy.com/post/einsteins_atheism) Accessed 3-29-09). That is contradictory to the deist beliefs that Einstein previously expressed. Deists freely use the word “God” even though their concept of God is exceedingly different from the traditional biblical concept. Many people believe that the letter proves that Einstein was either an atheist or an agnostic.

A reprint in *Chai-Lights* (Feb/ 2009, page 4) from *Free Mind* about this letter begins the quote thus: “The word of God . . . .” Worded this way, the quote is completely consistent with deism. Johnson says, “I believe he meant ‘the word of God` meaning the Bible based on his previous writings and statements. Everything he said about God is Deistic and that would fit perfectly with him writing that he believed the Bible (word of God) reflected human weakness, etc.”

An Internet search turned up abundant websites that used the first version of the quote, but only six that used the second version. Actually, neither version reproduces Einstein`s words. He wrote the letter in German!

Armed with my two years of fairly recent college German, I checked several German-language websites. To my dismay, the quote appears in the same two versions in German. Johnson says, “If he wrote that belief in God was human weakness, we would have meant belief in the Bible god, or any god of any ‘revealed` religion, which he clearly differentiated from the God of Nature in his writings.”

It would be great if someone would check the original letter to find out which version is correct. However, Einstein was a secular humanist regardless of which of the two phrases he

## From the JSC Newsletter, May 2009

An item on Page 1 of The New York Times (April 27) read: "More Atheists Are Shouting It From Rooftops," and the full-page story went on to describe a movement of atheists, humanists, secularists, and combinations of all such orientations that seems to be gaining nationwide momentum. Significantly, the story's dateline was Charleston, S.C., "home to Bob Jones University, blue laws and a legislature that last year *unanimously* [italics added] approved a Christian license plate embossed with a cross, a stained glass window and the words 'I Believe'." A math professor named Herb Silverman at the College of Charleston founded the Secular Humanists of the Lowcountry [sic], an organization of 150 members. According to a major national study released last month, respondents who said they had "no religion" represented the only demographic group that has increased in all 50 states over the past 18 years. Nationally, the "no religion" category accounts for 15 percent of the population, though not all members of this group are atheists or agnostics.

The story noted that the Secular Student Alliance numbers 143 chapters, up from 42 six years ago. A new national organization calling itself the Secular Coalition for America, headed by Silverman, includes 10 groups that eschew a belief in God. Another group, dubbed the United Coalition of Reason, is in its embryonic stage and plans to create 20 groups around the country.

Of course, not all citizens of the South Carolina low country are enamored of secular humanists. Prof. Silverman had been invited to deliver the invocation at a meeting of the Charleston City Council, but half of its members walked out when he began to speak. And when members of the Lowcountry organization arrived at a Habitat for Humanity worksite wearing T-shirts saying "Non Prophet Organization," they were asked to leave.

Discrimination in race, gender, and sexual orientation has been largely knocked down in the United States. We can take some pride in having lived in (and worked for) a time when these impediments to equal opportunity were removed. Religious discrimination—not least of all the discrimination against those who do not profess belief in God—may be the last and most resistant barrier to be overcome in this country. No self-avowed non-believer need apply for political office. In most of Smalltown, U.S.A., a secularist carries a more despised stigma than even-dare one say it?—a socialist. Still, we secularists can confidently declare, "We are not alone" and "In Reason we trust."

## SOCIETY PAGES

### Society for Humanistic Judaism Begins Strategic Planning Process

The Board of the Society for Humanistic Judaism (SHJ) has formed a Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) to develop a new long range plan. The current five year plan was adopted in April, 2004.

**The SPC is excited to begin its challenge of looking for creative, innovative, "out of the box" ideas to support the Society and our members through these tough economic times, to strengthen our communities and help develop new ones.**

The new SPC had its first meeting during the board meeting in Farmington Hills, MI, on Saturday, April 25, 2009. Committee members began their work by reviewing the current plan, setting the planning process, considering the components of the plan, and discussing time-lines.

At the board meeting, the Board of Directors participated in a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis to provide the SPC with their perceptions of the SHJ's current state. The information will be used to guide the SPC in its planning process and to help in the development of a Member Survey. Each individual member of the SHJ (including at-large members) will be given an opportunity to contribute to the strategic plan through the Survey. The SPC needs the input of each individual to best determine how the SHJ can meet the needs of its members.

Communication on the results of the SWOT and activities of the SPC will be provided as it becomes available.

Members of the committee:

Lou Altman, President, SHJ  
 AJ Chalom, SHJ Board, Chair HuJews Committee  
 Marlene Cohen, SHJ Board, Machar Congregation for Secular Humanistic Judaism  
 Bonnie Cousens, Executive Director, SHJ  
 Marl Ellyne, Vice President, SHJ  
 Judi Gladstone, SHJ Board, Secular Jewish Circle of Puget Sound  
 Phil Gould, Past President, SHJ  
 Miriam Jerris, Rabbi, SHJ  
 Faith Oremland, At-Large Member, SHJ Executive



### Hotel room

A guy arrives at the Chicago airport for a professional Conference and he finds all hotels booked full.

He call some motels on the outskirts.

"Hello, I am here for the conference and I need a room. Would you have a vacancy?"

"Yes we do", answers the receptionist.

"So please book me in, my name is Kaplan", and he hangs up.

The receptionist turns to the motel owner next who is standing next to him - "you know what happened, I have just rented a room to a Jew"

"well, you will have to explain him that we do not rent rooms to Jews"

As they finish talking a man walks in, "Hi, I am Kaplan, I have just reserved a room"

"Look Mr. Kaplan. I am sure you are a good person, but we don't rent rooms to Jews".

"But I am not Jewish".

"With a name like Kaplan?"

"I don't know where the name comes from", says Kaplan, "but I am not Jewish".

"Hmm, may I give you a short quiz?" asks the clerk,

"Sure"

"Well, who is our Lord and savior"?

"Jesus Christ, Of course"

"and where was he born"?

"In Bethlehem"

"Good. And where in Bethlehem"?

"In a stable".

"OK, last question. Why was he born in a stable"?

"That's because a SOB like you wouldn't rent rooms to Jews".

### Dr. Seuss

The National Education Association has been celebrating, "Read Across America" by encouraging adults to read to children. Of course, *Green Eggs and Ham* is one of the most popular Dr. Seuss books. But there is a dilemma. How can Jewish children celebrate with *Green Eggs and HAM*? So in honor of (and with apologies to the estate of) Dr. Seuss, here is a new ending to the story: -

*Will you never see?*

They are not kosher, so let me be.

I will not eat green eggs and ham,

I will not eat them, Sam-I-am.

But I'll eat green eggs with a biscuit,

Or I will try them with some brisket.

I'll eat green eggs in a box,

If you serve them with some lox.

And those green eggs are worth a try,

Scrambled up in matzo brie.

And in a boat upon the river,

I'll eat green eggs with chopped liver.

So if you're a Jewish Dr. Seuss fan,

But troubled by green eggs and ham,

Let your friends in on the scoop,

*Chai-Lights* is published monthly by the  
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Phone: 949/262-5850  
E-mail: [PacifComm@aol.com](mailto:PacifComm@aol.com),  
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An annual (hardcopy) subscription may be purchased for \$18.00.  
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