



**No Jewish History Buffs this month.
Next meeting Sat. March 10, 10:15
AM**

At the home of Lori Godwin
91 Sunnyside Way
New Rochelle, NY
914-654-1027, lgodwin@optonline.net

We will continue with the achievements of some of the German Jews of the 19th century, the issues of the many conversions to Christianity and discuss the effects of revolution and reactionary response on the Jews' progress towards true emancipation in Western Europe. As an additional treat, Bunny Reyman will read us some of her father's research on her family in Bohemia.

Saturday, Feb. 11, 12 Noon
At the Community Unitarian Church
TU B'SHVAT SEDER
Community Unitarian Church-
Directions-
468 Rosedale Ave. White Plains, NY

Take the Hutchinson River Pkwy. to exit 25, which is North Street. Follow the signs to White Plains, left if you are going north, right if you are going south, onto North St. At the first block and traffic light turn left onto Rosedale Ave. The church is one block down on the right. Look for red sign at entrance.

The Jewish diaspora was alive and well on Saturday, January 14. Rabbi Tamburello's talk on Italian Jews brought out a good-sized crowd who came to hear about the Jews of Italy. Among those who joined us for the lecture were more than a few people of Italian background, both Jewish and gentile, some curious about their own families and some about the neighbors they had grown up with in Italy.

Rabbi Tamburello spoke first of his own roots - a practicing Catholic family and a somewhat mysterious Jewish grandmother from Trapani in Sicily. It was a tale some of us had heard before, first in Spain, then in Latin America, and finally even in New Mexico, strange rituals which his family had practiced and regarded as mere superstition. After a family death the mirrors were covered, not because a mourner might look at his image in a moment of vanity, as Jewish law would have it, but because a dead soul might be passing by, and, on seeing its own image, call down the evil eye on the family. I must admit there was quite a bit of talk about the evil eye in my own family, which has not a drop of Italian blood as far as I know. Some foibles seem to be universal.

We were brought back first to the times of the ancient Greeks, when Sicily was, according to the rabbi, "Easthampton on the Sea". The sea, of course, was the Mediterranean, a good place to kick back after a long winter of philosophizing and mathematics and all that heavy work creating democracy. The Jews arrived a few centuries later, many as slaves of the Romans, and remained there until they were expelled during the Spanish Inquisition. Since Sicily was at that time ruled by Spain, the Jews, who had dispersed to cities all over Sicily, either left for more friendly parts, including northern Italy, or went underground, resurfacing as New Christians.

There was a lively discussion after the lecture. In the audience were Jews from Rome and gentiles from Sicily who remembered the towns and the surnames in their own communities, which they now learned were originally Jewish.

There was a short shabbat service at the beginning of the program and a havdallah service at the end. Followed, of course, by coffee and cookies provided by our hospitality committee. (*Gloria Weil*)

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914-713-8828 aristophil@yahoo.com

For general information and questions:

Dimitry Turovsky
84 Sprague Road
Scarsdale, NY 10583

or our website
www.wchj.org

Rabbi Frank has requested a small section of the newsletter to offer quotations and thoughts for our congregation. Here is our new "Rabbi's Corner"

COURAGE

"Be strong and of good courage."
(Joshua 1. 9)

In Jewish thought, the heart is not just the emotional center, it is the kaleidoscopic core of our inner being. Among its many qualities, the heart can be strong or weak, and the strong heart - **ametz lev** in Hebrew - is what gives rise to courage. The strong heart boldly pursues what is right and what is called for, without succumbing to anxiety or fear about its own safety or benefit.

Alan Morinis



INVITES YOU TO A HUMANISTIC PURIM

FEATURING

- **MINI ART EXHIBIT OF PAINTINGS, SCULPTURE, PRINTS, BY JEWISH ARTISTS**
- **SILENT AUCTION OF JUDAIC ARTIFACTS**
- **READING OF THE MEGILLAH WITH GROGGERS AND MASKS LED BY RABBI FRANK TAMBURELLO**
- **MUSIC AND SINGING WITH JOYFUL SOUND**
- **HAMANTASH HOSPITALITY**

WHEN- SATURDAY, **MARCH 10**, AT 2:30 PM

WHERE- COMMUNITY UNITARIAN CHURCH,
468 ROSEDALE AVE, WHITE PLAINS

COST- NO CHARGE BUT DONATIONS ARE WELCOME.

PARTICIPANTS ARE ALSO REQUESTED TO BRING CANNED OR PACKAGED FOOD FOR FOOD DRIVE AS PART OF TRADITIONAL GIVING (SHALACH MONOS)

For more details and RSVP please contact : CharlotteKlein,
charlotteklein48@verizon.net Tel. 218-8535

A STATEMENT OF CIVILITY

The undersigned Rabbis and Cantors of Westchester County, members of the Westchester Board of Rabbis and Kol Hazzanim: Westchester's Community of Cantors, are deeply concerned about what we perceive as a growing social problem. We Americans, including Jewish Americans, have often lost our sense of civility in public discourse, which at times leads to demonizing those who disagree with a particular point of view. Such attacks preclude reasonable discussion of complex and pressing issues and polarize society.

The Jewish community reflects this degradation, most often as it pertains to our discourse about Israel. We recognize that Jews hold passionate feelings about Israel with which we are all inextricably bound. However, we believe that it is unacceptable to engage in vitriol against those people with whom one does not agree. May our love for Israel unite us rather than divide us.

A Jewish saying states, "*Derech Eretz Kadmah L'Torah,*" proper conduct precedes the Torah. This teaches us that if we hope to appreciate the rest of our tradition's most noble values, we must begin with *Derech Eretz* - good and proper conduct. Respectful speaking and listening - an integral part of good conduct - is essential, even in the midst of a heated argument.

Our tradition establishes respectful speech as absolutely essential by reminding us of the disputes, in Talmudic times, of two opposing schools of thought: Hillel and Shammai. They and their disciples argued brilliantly, and fought passionately, for their respective points of view. But their words were never vicious, or filled with hate.

We call upon the community to always engage in mutual respect. We know, at times, we will have widely differing opinions. But we pledge to emulate the disputes of Hillel and Shammai. Such discussions will be considered virtuous even in the Heavenly Court. In the year ahead, let us resolve to strengthen our commitment to speak of all matters and to one another with kindness, compassion, fairness and respect.

(Signed by rabbis and cantors of most major temples and Synagogues in Westchester)



If you ever needed an excuse to visit Washington, D.C., this is it. Humanist organizations from all over the country will be gathering on the National Mall.

The Reason Rally is being co-sponsored by the Society for Humanistic Judaism and pretty much every humanist organization in the country. Its intent is to "unify, energize, and embolden secular people nationwide, while dispelling the negative opinions held by so much of American society, and having a damn good time doing it!".

There will be music, comedy, speakers, and more, at this free event. The lineup of speakers includes, among others, the world famous author and scientist Richard Dawkins, James Randi, the famous skeptic and debunker, Taslima Nasrin, the woman's rights activist and author, who is coming into the United States specifically for this event, famous blogger and science professor PZ Meyers, and comedian Jamie Kilstein.

James Randi, by the way, has been nationally in the news for his offer of a one-million-dollar prize to anyone who can show, under proper observing conditions, evidence of any paranormal, supernatural, or occult power or event.

The event will take place in Washington, D.C. on Saturday, March 24th, 2012, a date when weather in D.C. is decidedly better than in Connecticut. It will be held from 10:00AM – 4:00PM at the National Mall.

The website for the rally is:

<http://reasonrally.org/>

which has detailed information on the event, including discounted hotel rooms and bus transportation.

If you'd like to join me with other HJ'ers there, give me a holler.

Cary Shaw, SHJ Rep, President Fairfield CT. Congregation (203)849-8978

caryshaw@optonline.net

Jack Billig is rapidly becoming our resident philosopher and humorist. Please enjoy his latest contribution:

GREAT TRUTHS THAT LITTLE CHILDREN HAVE LEARNED:

- 1) No matter how hard you try, you can't baptize cats.
- 2) When your Mom is mad at your Dad, don't let her brush your hair.
- 3) If your sister hits you, don't hit her back. They always catch the second person.
- 4) Never ask your 3-year old brother to hold a tomato.
- 5) You can't trust dogs to watch your food.
- 6) Don't sneeze when someone is cutting your hair.
- 7) Never hold a Dust-Buster and a cat at the same time.
- 8) You can't hide a piece of broccoli in a glass of milk.
- 9) Don't wear polka-dot underwear under white shorts.
- 10) The best place to be when you're sad is Grandpa's lap.

GREAT TRUTHS THAT ADULTS HAVE LEARNED:

- 1) Raising teenagers is like nailing Jell-O to a tree.
- 2) Wrinkles don't hurt.
- 3) Families are like fudge...mostly sweet, with a few nuts.
- 4) Today's mighty oak is just yesterday's nut that held its ground.
- 5) Laughing is good exercise. It's like jogging on the inside.
- 6) Middle age is when you choose your cereal for the fiber, not the toy.

GREAT TRUTHS ABOUT GROWING OLD

- 1) Growing old is mandatory; Growing up is optional.
- 2) Forget the health food. I need all the preservatives I can get.
- 3) When you fall down, you wonder what else you can do while you're down there.
- 4) You're getting old when you get the same sensation from a rocking chair that you once got from a roller coaster.
- 5) It's frustrating when you know all the answers but nobody bothers to ask you the questions.
- 6) Time may be a great healer, but it's a lousy beautician.
- 7) Wisdom comes with age, but sometimes age comes alone.

THE FOUR STAGES OF LIFE:

- 1) You believe in Santa Claus.
- 2) You don't believe in Santa Claus.
- 3) You are Santa Claus.
- 4) You look like Santa Claus

DATES AT A GLANCE

2012

DATE	TIME	PROGRAM	LOCATION
Sat. Feb. 11	12 PM	Tu B'shvat Seder	CUC*
Sat. March 10	10:15 AM	Jewish History Buffs	Lori Godwin's
Sat. March 10	2:30 PM	Purim Program, Members' Art Exhibit, Silent Art Auction, and the Ganze Megillah	CUC*
Thursday, April 5	6:30 PM	Passover Seder	CUC*
Sat. April 7	10 AM	Jewish History Buffs	TBA
Sat. May 5	10 AM	Jewish History Buffs	TBA
Sun. May 20	TBA	Shavuos	ethical culture society
Sat. June 2	10:15 AM	Jewish History Buffs	TBA

DATE	TIME	PROGRAM	LOCATION
Sat. June 9	TBA	Annual Meeting	TBA

***CUC- Communiity Unitarian Church**