



**Volume: 1 Issue: 11  
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## Jewish Cultural School—A Play

Beth Ami Jewish Cultural School invites you to a performance of "A Rabbi Finds His Home" written by Michael and Marti Hirsch. It is the story of Sherwin Wine's life and how he became the founder of Humanistic Judaism.

When: November 14th 11:00 am

Where: Countryside Recreation, 10470 Oak St. Westminster

We will also be welcoming Rabbi Miriam Jerris, Society of Humanistic Judaism rabbi, to our congregation.

*This I believe...* Barry Levene

### A Circular Argument

I try to ride my bicycle at few times a week, at least during the summer months, both for exercise and for fun. I have a set of routes I usually take from the house. All of them are loops or generally circular. That is, I leave the house in one direction and return on a different path. I do the same when I take a walk or travel by car. When I go walking or hiking, I search for paths that are loops. When driving I insist on going forward around the block or more when I miss a turn, rather than making a U-turn and going back the way I came. This got me thinking why. Why do I have this need to travel in circles, rather than going one way and returning on the same path?

I came up with several reasons, aside from the possibility that I am just plain neurotic.

One is my interest is observing or hearing something new and different. Around the next curve in the path may be wildlife: a hawk perched on a high tree branch, a coyote in the nearby grasslands, a goldfinch perched on a thistle seed head, a meadowlark singing its unique song. Or there may be some interesting plants: a patch of puncture vine along the trail that does what its name implies to unsuspecting bike tubes, a flower garden by the trailside that someone lovingly maintains, a linden tree in bloom with its overpowering fragrance. There may be interesting people to see: city workers may be just ahead, pruning trees or spraying for weeds. There may be an older couple up ahead, walking hand-in-hand or a family out for a stroll. I may miss these sights, sounds, and smells if I take the same way home.

I like the idea of learning something new. If I miss a turn when driving, going around the block means I might discover a new place I have never been before, a new shop, a new restaurant, a neighborhood that is new to me. Or, I might get lost and have a real adventure. I truly believe that I become a little bit of a different and better person with each new encounter.

I also like the idea of discovery. One of my favorite TV programs when I was a kid was Wagon Train with Ward Bond. I loved that show and came to believe that maybe I was born 100 years too late and would have been a perfect pioneer. Likely I would never have survived the difficult trip along the Oregon Trail, but the idea has always been alive for me. Seeing the remnants of the Trail in Nebraska has been something of a fascination for me and made the dream come alive. Of course, theirs was a one way trip, but the sense of possibilities of discovery dictate a circle route. (cont. on page 4)

*Beth Ami is a welcoming community where we connect to Jewish past, celebrate Jewish present and link to Jewish future through a humanistic philosophy*

**Beth Ami means:  
House of my people**

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# Adult Education for Lifelong Learners



On Oct. 10, Diane Rabson returned with a *bissel Yiddishkeit* in the form of Yiddish proverbs for us to deconstruct.

Thanks to all participants who shared memories and select sayings from their grandparents' kitchens.

As of this printing, there was an Oct. 24 session with Laura Moin about a "ripped from the headlines" issue from Israeli politics.

Join us at Countryside on Nov. 7 for a book discussion of Raising

Freethinkers: A Practical Guide for Parenting Beyond Belief by Dale McGowan. This is a follow up to Parenting Beyond Belief, discussing facets of nonreligious parenting, best practices and a wealth of ideas, activities and resources. Chapter 8 recognizes Humanistic Judaism and affirms the need to build community around our beliefs.

On Nov. 14, we'll visit with Rabbi Miriam Jerris for a discussion of our umbrella organization, the Society for Humanistic Judaism, its teaching arm, the International Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism, her many "hats" and how she can support the Beth Ami community.

Adult Education is open to parents bringing students to JCS, Beth Ami members and any other adults interested in exploring facets of Judaism in a relaxed, supportive environment. There is no charge, and we follow each session by joining with the children for *limmud* and lunch.

## Family Shabbat – Hands-on and Happening

Ingredients for a fun and successful Beth Ami Shabbat:

- An easy to follow and take home service
- Musical heat by Eve Orenstein on voice and keyboard
- A bubbly mixture of energetic children
- Healthy potluck
- An assortment of board games and activities
- Guitar and sing-along with Troy Anderson for dessert

Delicious in so many ways!



Kids playing games (left) & Troy playing guitar (right) at our last Beth-Ami Family Shabbat and Game night



### SAVE THE DATE:

Save Sunday, December 5th at 1:00 pm for a Klezmer Chanukah concert at Countryside Recreation, 10470 Oak, Westminster followed by donuts and latkes.



## Dignity

Rabbi Wine wrote *Judaism Beyond God* in 1995. In it he talks

about personal dignity. It is the secular answer to religious humility. He also answers the question What does it mean to lead a life of dignity? Here is his answer:

**Dignity** means autonomy. It encourages all people to be the masters of their own lives.

**Dignity** means responsibility. If we have assumed authority over our own lives, we cannot turn the responsibility for our decisions over to others.

**Dignity** means individuality. As social beings, we need groups, we find ourselves in groups, and we join groups. As primates with a very long childhood, we do not separate from parents easily. But we are individual beings, unique and distinct from all others.

**Dignity** means courage. Reality is not always what we want it to be. ...If we wish to be the rulers of our own lives, we cannot plead the weakness of traditional followers who prefer to be sheltered from the truth.

**Dignity** means sensitivity. We have many needs to satisfy... Reasonable people come to terms with all their needs. They are sensitive to their diversity and do not try to diminish them.

**Dignity** means mutuality. The defense of my dignity is also the defense of yours...In the contemporary world of technological plenty and machine slaves, dignity for everybody makes society more just.

**Dignity** means control. Uncontrolled anger, jealousy, love or fear may undermine our sense of being in charge of our lives and subvert our self esteem. In the end, we must be able not only to experience our emotions. We must also be able to use them constructively.

**Dignity** means democracy. The right to advise comes from competence.

**Dignity** means chutzpa. Chutzpa is that untranslatable Hebrew and Yiddish word that suggests outrageous defiance.



The late Rabbi Sherwin Wine

# November 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7 JCS & Adult Ed	8	9	10	11	12	13 10am Hike Lunch with Rabbi Jerris 7:30pm Havdalah
14 JCS & Adult Ed 1pm Board Mrg	15 Rabbi Jerris speaks at Boulder JCC	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

## Upcoming:

**November: 12–14th Rabbi Jerris Visit**  
**Sunday 7th** -10 am *Jewish Cultural School #7 & Adult Ed at Countryside*

**Saturday 13th** -10 am Hike followed by lunch with Rabbi Jerris. Hike Stanley Lake, then lunch at a casual restaurant nearby. ( will cancel if weather does not cooperate)

AND 7:30 pm Havdalah with Rabbi Jerris at Montview “Praying without God: What do Humanistic Jews do?”

**Sunday 14th** -10 am *Jewish Cultural School Session 7 and Adult Ed* with Rabbi Jerris

1 pm Executive Committee Board Meeting with Rabbi Jerris

**Monday 15th** -Rabbi Jerris meets with Sheila & Michelle  
 Evening presentation – Rabbi Jerris speaks at Boulder JCC, 7pm  
 “Praying without God: What do Humanistic Jews do?”

**December: Chanukah begins 12/2**

**Sunday 5th** -1 pm Community Chanukah Party at Countryside (note: time change from earlier publication)

**Friday 10th** -6 pm Shabbat and Movie Night at Sheila’s

**Sunday 12th** -10 am *Jewish Cultural School Session 8 and Adult Ed at Countryside*

**January 2011 2nd Semester of JCS and Adult Ed**

**Sunday 9th** -10 am *Jewish Cultural School Session 1 and Adult Ed at Countryside* & 1 pm Executive Committee Meeting

**Sunday 23rd** -10 am *Jewish Cultural School Session 2 and Adult Ed at Countryside*

## Schedule of Events -

See November events below. Rabbi Jerris will visit from Nov. 12–14th.

### **Rabbi Miriam Jerris**

Rabbi Miriam Jerris has been a member of the Society for Humanistic Judaism and committed to its philosophic principles since 1970. She is rabbi of the Society for Humanistic Judaism. She serves as president of the Association of Humanistic Rabbis. Rabbi Jerris is the 2006 recipient of the Sherwin T. Wine Lifetime Achievement Award. Rabbi Jerris holds Masters Degrees in Near Eastern Studies from the University of Michigan and in Humanistic and Clinical Psychology from the Center for Humanistic Studies, and a Ph.D. in Jewish Studies with a specialization in Pastoral Counseling from The Union Institute in Cincinnati, Ohio. She was ordained by the International Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism. Rabbi Jerris serves on the faculty of the International Institute and serves as a mentor for the rabbinic students. She has officiated at intermarriage ceremonies and worked with intercultural families since 1985.



Rabbi Jerris



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## News from National

“Rabbi Sherwin Wine founded the International Federation of Secular Humanistic Jews in 1986. Tragically, Rabbi Wine was killed in Morocco in July 2007, leaving his cherished global umbrella organization, created to unify world secular and humanistic Jewry, with a void... On June 14, 2008, its successor was incorporated in Washington, DC, as the International Federation for Secular and Humanistic Judaism (IFSHJ).”

- from the IFSHJ homepage

The following was forwarded to all SHJ communities from Marvin Rosenblum, excerpted here:

“On Wed., Dec. 8, through Fri., the 10th, the IFSHJ and Tmura, the educational arm and rabbinical seminary of the IFSHJ in Israel, will be conducting a mini-university and ordination of 12 rabbis at the Bibleland Museum in Jerusalem. Thereafter, the entire enclave will move to Haifa for a day of celebrations on Sat., the 11th, sponsored by the city government, commemorating the final day of Chanukah and the extraordinary camaraderie that exists in that city among the Christians, Jews, Moslems, Baha'i and others in that pluralistic city. Prof. Yair Lifshitz, vice president of the IFSHJ and tenured professor at the Technion will be our host.

Please call or e-mail Marvin Rosenblum, 908-879-1006, Ext. 201, mrosen110@aol.com or Peter Bishop, 202-0248-4880, pbb@ifshj.org for any questions and reservations. There are no registration fees, but travel, accommodations and some food are on you. Please review our website at <http://www.ifshj.org>.”

(continued from page 1 “This I Believe”)

There is also the idea of risk-taking and surprise. What lies ahead is unknown, unpredictable, and possibly a bit dangerous. Up ahead there may be a signage-challenged detour, there may be glass or thorns on the trail or a tree branch blocking the way. There may be a loose dog that hates bicyclists or a snake may slither across the path. On a hike, there may be an unexpected creek to ford. You always know what's behind you, but what is ahead is a mystery to be encountered and faced head on. To me, taking these calculated risks is appealing.

To a philosopher, the circular trip could be a metaphor for a year cycle or a life's journey. I visualize a year as a circle. Some view it as a line. Whatever you believe, there is no way you can turn around and go back the way you came.

## November Birthdays and Celebrations

**Happy birthday to:**

Nathan Wilson Nov. 1  
Anya DuBow Margolis Nov. 2  
Eitan Moin Nov. 8  
Alex Wildon Nov. 9  
Ron Kingston Nov. 15  
Tay Tay Anderson Nov. 28



There is only forward motion. Certainly there are detours, with ups, downs, and side-ways movement. But nothing repeats itself in reverse order no matter how hard, sometimes, we wish it to be otherwise.

Lastly, maybe my need for circular travel is a genetic thing. Maybe I have the circular gene, evolved for the purpose of humans having a greater chance to find food or water. Maybe survival of the fittest means never retracing your steps.

Whatever the case, unless there is no choice, I prefer the route that goes forward, and returns to its starting point. I believe in going in circles.

- Barry Levene  
Beth Ami Board Member