



THE WORKMEN'S CIRCLE / ARBETER RING

Newsletter

SPRING/SUMMER
2013

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Workmen's Circle In The News

INTRODUCING JSOURCE!

JSource is the Workmen's Circle's online resource guide to the world of progressive Jewish thought. J.J. Goldberg, our renowned Activist-in-Residence, curates the site's content with Workmen's Circle's core values as a guiding principle. With thousands of articles, videos and links to the wider Web, and more being added every week, JSource brings together a wealth of information and ideas to inspire liberal and progressive activists, Jewish and non-Jewish alike, who are looking for the roots of our civilization at its best.

The material in JSource is divided into sixteen main categories, ranging from civil liberties and economic justice to gender, the environment, genocide and the Middle East. The categories are further divided into subcategories—one hundred and eighty-five so far—that cover everything from the science of climate change to biblical teachings on workers' rights.

Finally, articles are hyperlinked to one another, enabling readers to jump from article to article, follow a topic in ever-greater detail or simply wander wherever their curiosity or imagination leads them. Best of all, the entire site is fully searchable, making JSource a useful tool for activists, educators, researchers and random browsers alike.

As we continue to build JSource, we're hoping visitors to the site join us by sharing



Ed Asner & Maddy Braun

impressions, letting us know what works and doesn't work, what could be improved and what you'd like to see added. We hope, too, that you'll follow the various links back to the articles' sources so you can read them in their original context and connect to the wider community of progressive Jewish activism that's represented here in JSource. Take a look at the site at www.circle.org/jsource.

WHO KNEW LOU GRANT WAS A MEMBER TOO?

We are so grateful to our longtime Workmen's Circle leader and activist, Harvey Sigelbaum, for hosting a cocktail party to benefit the Workmen's Circle at the beautiful Rockefeller Center headquarters of his group, The Riverside Company. Fifty guests enjoyed the opportunity to catch up with old friends, meet new ones, and hear from another longtime member, Ed Asner. Though best known for his roles in theater, movies, and on television (including his role as the tough but lovable newsman, Lou Grant, on *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*), Ed Asner is also a proud Workmen's Circle member and activist for labor justice! More than \$200,000 was raised to support the Harold Ostroff Education Fund, named in honor of the late visionary leader and former national president. For more information or to make a contribution to the Education Fund, contact Ellen Goldstein, Director of Development, at 646-291-8367 or egoldstein@circle.org.

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Workmen's Circle Values In Action

WORKMEN'S CIRCLE JOINS THE SOCIAL JUSTICE ROUNDTABLE

Among the family of organizations in the Jewish community that concern themselves primarily with social justice issues, the most serious "players" now convene through a relatively new group called the Jewish Social Justice Roundtable, begun with the support of the Nathan Cummings Foundation in 2009, when a group of Jewish social justice leaders gathered to share ideas, resources and have a visioning conversation that became the establishment of the Roundtable.

The Workmen's Circle has become one of the newest of the Roundtable's twenty-six members. Whereas the first phase of the Roundtable focused on deepening relationships among Jewish social justice organizations, in 2012 the Roundtable began prioritizing collective action, including issue campaigns, communities of practice and building internal structures. Today, the Roundtable supports and advances strategic collaborations that motivate the Jewish community to act on social justice issues. We are delighted to join our colleagues to work on this year's agenda—securing national immigration reform.

ACTIVISM IN SUPPORT OF IMMIGRANT FARM WORKERS

Since its founding in 1900, a commitment to education and collective activism has been a hallmark of the Workmen's Circle/Arbeter Ring. This year, in concert with our colleagues at the Jewish Social Justice Roundtable (see article above), we urge our constituents to focus on immigration reform in the United States. We have chosen this symbol of a tomato to open our eyes to the urgency for food justice and immigration reform, and to elevate the power of organized farm workers to transform their slavery and deprivation into a rallying cry for



hope. We celebrate the work of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers to end abusive conditions in Florida's tomato fields.

Our commitment to labor and immigrant rights calls us all to take action now. We must commit to working with those who are struggling to transform their lives and to helping them secure their human rights. To learn more and take action, visit these websites:

- Coalition of Immokalee Workers: www.ciw-online.org/
- Just Harvest USA: www.justharvestusa.org/
- T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights: www.truah.org/

IN THE WAKE OF THE NEWTOWN MASSACRE...

Workmen's Circle Statement on the Senate's Failure to Pass the Manchin-Toomey Gun Reform Amendment

The Workmen's Circle expresses its shock and outrage at the inexcusable failure of the United States Senate to pass the Manchin-Toomey gun reform amendment.

The senators who voted to block the measure betrayed the American public that elected them, a public that overwhelmingly supports modest reforms to curb the epidemic of gun violence plaguing our nation. They betrayed the 30,000 Americans killed by gun violence each year and the countless thousands more who are wounded or left behind to mourn. They betrayed the children of Columbine, Aurora, Sandy Hook and the tragedies yet to come—tragedies that have been made all that much more certain by the actions of these 46 senators.

Moreover, they betrayed American democracy. That a minority of the Senate can routinely prevent action on the critical issues confronting our nation makes a mockery of the very idea of government of the people, by the people and for the people for which so many have sacrificed so much. America needs a legislature capable of doing its job. We deserve representatives worthy of the name.

We urge the lawmakers who led the way in crafting this legislation to continue working until gun reform is achieved. And we call on the American public not to give up but to join with us in demanding greater gun safety in our streets, our schools and our homes.

FIGHTING FOR THE RIGHTS OF THE DISABLED COMMUNITY

The Board of the Workmen's Circle recently adopted a resolution affirming our commitment to inclusiveness with regard to all people with disabilities, which reads, in part:



In the words of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act, "Disability is a natural part of the human experience." Twenty-three years after passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act and thirty-eight years after passage of Public Law 94-142, and later IDEA, the full inclusion of people with disabilities as supported by civil and human rights activists and within the broader society is long and shamefully overdue. For too long, the access needs of people with disabilities have been viewed as an optional step rather than a minimum requirement of compliance with federal civil rights law. Exclusion of people with disabilities remains an all too common phenomena and is akin to the segregation of people of color, and that of us as Jews. While the current situation is certainly not limited to the Jewish community, our experiences as Jews afford us a particular sensitivity to the oppression of others, and a responsibility to come together to enact change.

To read the full text of the resolution, go to www.circle.org/press-media/.

Workmen's Circle At Work And Play

WORKMEN'S CIRCLE BRINGS YIDDISHFEST AND SOCIAL JUSTICE TO MADISON AVENUE!

Mark your calendars: on July 28th the Workmen's Circle will be sponsoring the Workmen's Circle Social Justice Street Fair on Madison Avenue in NYC from 42nd through 57th Streets. Members of the Workmen's Circle will be joined by fellow social justice organizations at tables on every block.

We will continue our Yiddishfest concert series with live music throughout the day, and of course there will be an ample array of traditional street fair food and merchandise vendors. We are very excited to be able to share this new experience with our members! Please be sure and stop by when you come to this great program! Please note, there are no seats available for this concert. **Sunday, July 28, 2013 between 10:00 am and 6:00 pm on Madison Avenue between 42nd and 57th Streets.**

REMEMBERING THE HEROES OF THE WARSAW GHETTO

On April 19th, we gathered to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. The Workmen's Circle was the first organization to honor the Ghetto's heroes immediately after the war and their unbelievable heroism still resonates among us today. We continued our important tradition of remembrance with presentations from Caroline Stoessinger and Maida Feingold. Caroline's new book, *Lessons from the Life of Alice Herz-Sommer, the World's Oldest Living Holocaust Survivor*, recounts Alice's brave and fascinating journey through surviving the Theresienstadt concentration camp to becoming an accomplished cellist and conductor. Maida's beautiful performance concluded the evening with traditional and beautiful songs from the ghetto.

LONG ISLAND SING-ALONG

Branch 1075 on Long Island held a spring musical event on April 28 featuring Maida Feingold singing

"Yiddish Songs of Love and Life" at the Workmen's Circle Nassau Cultural Center. While the event was billed as a concert, the more than 50 attendees were delighted to join in with Maida as she played and sang a program of old favorites. The event, which was offered at no charge to Branch members and friends, was a wonderful opportunity for old friends to meet and catch up as well!

Do you have Branch activities to report on or recruit for? Send your information to our Newsletter Editor, Philippa Crowne, at pcrowne@circle.org for inclusion in our next newsletter.

PLANNING YOUR SUMMER GETAWAY TO CIRCLE LODGE

Starting on June 28 this year, Circle Lodge is offering a month of outstanding programming at our all-inclusive resort on the shores of Sylvan Lake in Hopewell Junction, NY. A team of top-notch professors, master teachers, and experts will present on topics including the Sacco-Vanzetti Case, the history of Jews in music and the movies, Jewish humor, and of course, Yiddish language and culture.



For more information or to sign up for a program, email us at circlelodge@campkr.com

DID YOU CELEBRATE PEYSAKH WITH THE WORKMEN'S CIRCLE THIS YEAR?

Many hundreds of Workmen's Circle members and their families celebrated Peysakh with music and meaning in Boston, Cleveland, the Bay Area, Los Angeles, the suburbs of Detroit, Long Island and Manhattan this past March. For many of our members, our Seders are an integral part of their holiday plans. Do you have memories or mementos of Workmen's Circle Peysakh Seders that you can share? We're collecting stories and pictures for a feature in our next newsletter, and we'd love to include you!

Please send your stories and photos to Philippa Crowne, Newsletter Editor, at pcrowne@circle.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Social Justice Streetfair

Sunday, July 28th
btwn 10:00AM & 6:00PM
on Madison Avenue
btwn 47th & 48th Streets

Yiddishfest Performers:

Joel Landry and friends
Solidarity Singers of the NJ Industrial Council
Maida Feingold with Randie Shane
The Golden Land Orchestra
Christine Lavin
Walkabout/Clearwater Chorus



Learning And Teaching

CALLING ALL FAMILIES!

Are you seeking a high-quality cultural Jewish education for your children or grandchildren? Do you value joyful holiday celebrations and social justice activism?

The Workmen's Circle is expanding its commitment to Jewish cultural learning by organizing and seeding new learning communities. Our engaging Jewish family education programs celebrate holidays, teach progressive values, and inspire action. We want to include all New York-area families with children in K-8th grade in this engaging mission.

For more information about bringing a Workmen's Circle learning community to your neighborhood, contact Kate O'Brien, Director of Education, at kobrien@circle.org or 212-889-6800 x804.



- For more information on our Signature Shules:

Midtown Manhattan:
www.midtownschool.org

Boston:
www.circleboston.org

Long Island:
www.arbeterring.org



Danny & Zoe

Danny: Combining Past and Future in a Bar Mitzvah Speech

Danny's big day was June 15th, 2013. It's both the date of his Bar Mitzvah and his exact 13th birthday. Danny says:

I started preparing for my Bar Mitzvah last September at the East Meadow, Long Island schule. There is a lot of learning that I have to do, and I really enjoy it! For my big day, in addition to the usual Bar Mitzvah ceremonies, I'm preparing a speech about the values most important to me. These are remembrance, justice, compassion, and courage.

For remembrance, I'm honoring Hans Pick, a child in my family tree who was killed in the Holocaust. He was my grandfather's cousin. His life and childhood were taken away by prejudice, but I'm doing something to make sure he's not forgotten. I say the Mourner's Kaddish for him on Jewish holidays, and I will talk about him on my Bar Mitzvah day.

For me, justice and courage are about standing up for what you believe is right, even if others don't agree with you. In my Bar Mitzvah preparations, I've learned about several people in history who showed courage and fought for justice. I want to follow their example.

I'm passionate about helping others. I do lots of community service. I've already raised funds for disadvantaged kids in Israel. Right now, I'm earning money for The Blue Card, an organization that gives financial help to poor Holocaust survivors in America. I'm selling wallets and bracelets for them—so far I've raised over \$300 for Blue Card, and I'm not done yet!

I'm proud to be at schule learning Hebrew prayers and songs for my Bar Mitzvah because I'm carrying on a long heritage of Jewish traditions and learning.



Ally & Hope

Ally: Learning Jewish Values Through Action

Ally, who is ten years old, says:

Camp Kinder Ring is a lot of fun! This is my third year. It's very easy to meet people there. The first time I went, I was a little nervous at first, but after a couple of days, I'd made

lots of friends. At Kinder Ring, we learn from the beginning that Jewish values include kindness, respect for each other, and being friendly to everyone.

We do a lot of sports, and playing in teams is very important. We're always reminded that there is no "I" in "TEAM". We do things like soccer, track and field contests, swimming, and kickball (which I like the best). We have annual Maccabee team competitions, and last year I was captain of my division, a great honor for me.

The camp makes me proud to be Jewish, and it connects me to my heritage. Learning Jewish culture is fun. We do lots of Jewish dancing. On Friday evenings, we all wear white and sing Jewish songs together. We have an Israeli celebration day every year, and we decorate the camp with Israeli flags and blue and white balloons. Israeli campers come to Kinder Ring every year, and we learn a lot of fun things with them. We also learn many stories about Jewish history, both good and bad, like the birth of Israel and the tragedy of the Holocaust.

I love to be at camp and I love learning at camp. I can't wait to go back to Kinder Ring this summer!

Our National Staff

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ANN TOBACK DELIVERS COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS



Ann Toback

On May 22, Workmen's Circle Executive Director Ann Toback delivered a commencement speech to the diplomates at the NYU Wagner/Skirball Dual-Degree Graduation Ceremony and Reception.

NYU Wagner/Skirball offers Dual Degree Masters in Nonprofit Management and Judaic Studies to a

select group of students over two-three year cycles. Located in the epicenter of North American Jewish communal life, students in the dual-degree program are perfectly poised to assume varying positions of professional leadership in the full range of Jewish communal organizations. Most students work part-time and intern throughout their studies, and many students begin to work full-time in their third year of the program. In her remarks, Ann said, "I have been very lucky, in that the Workmen's Circle has provided an ideal laboratory to look at the Jewish community as it exists today, and I have been given the opportunity to use our organization's rich legacy to create meaning for a new generation. I wish for you today that you get that same opportunity—to make meaning and to improve the world through your visions."

INTRODUCING DR. MARC RAUCH, DIRECTOR OF CAMP KINDER RING



Marc Rauch

Marc is a Licensed Psychologist practicing in Rockland County, NY. As a certified School Psychologist in the Clarkstown School District, Marc is responsible for counseling students in grade K-12. He has designed and created an array of afterschool programs and is a coach in

several youth sports leagues.

In addition, Marc has over 10 years of consulting work with camps in the American Camping Association and has specialized in staff training and interacting with campers. Over the last few years, Marc has been an active participant in the Kinder Ring staff training programs and a resource to Kinder Ring throughout the

summers. Marc brings a wealth of experience in the world of planning effective programs for children, and in camping in particular. For those of you who may be thinking that Marc's name sounds familiar, you are right! There is "KR Blue and White" in his veins: Marc was in the third generation of his family to spend summers at KR. Marc and his wife, Beth, are both Kinder Ring alums. Marc was a camper, counselor, and Group Leader in the 1980s and 1990s. He was an Olympic Leader in the early 90s and you can see his photos on Group Leader plaques in the Boys Head Counselor Shack. Marc and Beth are the parents of Sydney, who returns to camp this summer as an Ultra Girl, and Brandon, a future KR camper.

INTRODUCING ELLEN GOLDSTEIN, NATIONAL DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

Ellen joined the Workmen's Circle/Arbeter Ring in February and has spent her first few months



Ellen Goldstein

starting to get to know our history and our members and leaders.

She says, "I was attracted to this position at the Workmen's Circle/Arbeter Ring because it involves the challenges and opportunities of re-imagining this wonderful 112 year-old organization for new

generations. The future of the Jewish people depends on our commitment to remember and honor Judaism's history and cultural heritage—and renew them in each generation. We have learned, most recently through a Workmen's Circle sponsored demographic study, that many Jews today are seeking new ways to connect to that heritage and to keep our cultural flame burning bright into the future. Because of our organization's long and rich history, we have a unique opportunity to offer that connection in a way that makes sense to young people, and represents something that will last their whole lives. I want our donors to know that their contributions are critical to ensuring that their values and their vision will be carried forward and will continue to enrich Jewish life in America."

To contact Ellen with questions or suggestions, email her at egoldstein@circle.org or call her at 646-291-8367.





WORKMEN'S CIRCLE NATIONAL POLL OFFERS SNAPSHOT OF JEWISH VALUES AT THE BALLOT BOX

As many as one million American Jews today are seeking a Jewish identity marked by cultural literacy and progressive values, as determined in a national research study commissioned by the Workmen's Circle in 2012, conducted by Professor Steven M. Cohen of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR) and Professor Samuel J. Abrams of Sarah Lawrence College and Stanford University.

The identity motivators of the past — memories of the Holocaust, fear of pervasive anti-Semitism, and concern for the State of Israel — persist, but are less powerful drivers for many younger Jews, for whom social and economic justice and Jewish culture loom large. Jews adopt a far more liberal stance than other Americans on a variety of social issues, as well. They are decidedly more supportive of gay marriage, and the legality of abortion, for example. About twice as many Jews as other Americans believe that abortion should be legal in all cases and favor same-sex marriage. On defense spending, Jews are indeed less inclined to favor greatly increasing spending (9% of Jews vs. 19% of all Americans), and more inclined to greatly decreasing spending (Jews: 19%; America: 14%).

"We are seeing a shift in how American Jews define being Jewish. In the past, those who saw themselves as cultural Jews had a very passive approach to Jewish life. But today they are engaged with Jewish values and look to be part of a Jewish community, although often outside of a congregation. We look forward to creating a twenty-first century Workmen's Circle community that welcomes this emerging group," said Ann Toback, Executive Director of the Workmen's Circle.

Internship Opportunities at the Workmen's Circle

The Workmen's Circle is pleased to offer 3 eight-week internship programs throughout the year to 10 to 12 undergraduates and recent graduates. Our interns are introduced to a professional work environment by providing a broad overview of the day-to-day operations of a not-for-profit organization while also having a focus on one or two projects. They learn alongside our staff members and rotate among our various departments. Please visit our website, www.circle.org, for more information or apply with cover letter and resume to internship@circle.org.

APPLICATION PERIODS

May 1 – May 30
September 1 – September 30
January 1 – January 30

INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS

June 18 – August 8, 2013
October 15 – December 5, 2013
February 18 – April 10, 2014