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**Carol Hoffer
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2211 Old Earhart Rd, #165
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Letter to the Editor

A "nuanced" anti-Zionist runs for the Ann Arbor City Council

The function of the Ann Arbor City Council is to make policy decisions for running the city. Its jurisdiction ends at the city limits. Nonetheless, ideologues, more concerned with agitation than with the democratic process, keep pushing the Council to pass resolutions on national and international issues beyond its scope. A leading practitioner of this modus operandi, Chuck Warpehoski, is now running for the City Council in the 5th Ward. Warpehoski is director of the Interfaith Council for Peace and Justice. The ICPJ has been able to find injustice only in Israel, not in Sudan, or Syria, or Iran, and from time to time promotes boycotts of Israeli goods. The ICPJ has refused to condemn the Herskovite harassment of Beth Israel Congregation, even though Daoud Walid, the Michigan Director of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, did so at a meeting sponsored by the ICPJ. This was reported in the Washtenaw Jewish News, but was left out of the accounts of the meeting in other media outlets.

Warpehoski is the author of the Islamophobia resolution passed by the City Council that was based solely on anti-Muslim activities that took place hundreds of miles away and therefore not within the City's purview. When this was first broached, the Human Rights Commission (appointed by the mayor and City Council) proposed a broader anti-bigotry text including condemnation of anti-Semitism as represented by the very real local manifestation of this form of prejudice in the now nearly nine-year long ongoing siege of Beth Israel referred to above. Warpehoski out-maneuvered the Commission to push through his one-sided version. That he took such great pains to avoid condemning anti-Semitism is troubling. On a subsequent AnnArbor.com blog, his response to criticism was to the effect that Jews ask for too much. In the previous primary in the same ward, Neal Elyakin was subjected to thinly veiled anti-Semitic attacks (anti-Zionist, Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and his ilk call it). Despite sometimes-raucous tactical differences with him, Henry Herskovitz and Blaine Coleman would interpret the election of Chuck Warpehoski as encouraging progress for their jihad, and as an invitation to escalate their monomaniacal antics that have disrupted City Council meetings with endless calls for anti-Israel sanctions.

by Henry Brysk

Sukkah competition, continued from page 1

Huron Valley Chapter). The AIA is reaching over 5,000 architects and builders throughout Michigan and everyone is encouraged to submit a design. Additionally, requests for design submissions have been sent to the various schools and academic programs teaching Architecture, Design and Construction throughout Southeast Michigan and Northwest Ohio. The Jewish communities in Detroit, Toledo and Windsor have also been contacted about this. It is modeled after a similar event held in New York City in 2010.

Registration is now open to submit intent to propose a design. Actual designs can be submitted through July 1, 2012. A select jury comprising religious leaders and architects will review the submitted designs and determine finalists. They will base their decisions upon criteria including sustainability, portability/reusability, beauty/inspiration/awe and innovation. Five finalists will have their designs commissioned to be built and receive a stipend to purchase materials.

Volunteers are needed to serve on build-teams, under the direction of the commissioned sukkah's designers, to assist in their creation.

The five finalist sukkahs will be put up in Liberty Plaza Park in downtown Ann Arbor, for one day, on Sunday, September 23. The sukkahs will subsequently be moved and reassembled on at the JCC on Sunday, September 30, and remain available for community viewing and usage throughout the Sukkot holiday. While the sukkahs are up, people will have the opportunity to vote for their favorites. Top vote-getters will receive cash prizes

and recognition of their designs.

The holiday of Sukkot and the building of a sukkah comprise many universal themes. The basic needs of shelter and the fragility of life are symbolized by the sukkah. Sustainability and the environment are also symbolized by the nature of these structures. This will help serve two important goals of Sukkah Arbor. It is intended to unite



the wider community while raising awareness in the wider community to issues of homelessness, hunger and the environment. To that effect, net proceeds will be donated to the Shelter Association to further their mission on behalf of the homeless.

Sukkah Arbor was made possible through a grant from the Community Impact Fund of the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor. The fund makes initiatives that benefit the entire Ann Arbor Jewish community possible. Go to www.sukkaharbor.com for more information, to donate and to register. ■

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2935 Birch Hollow Drive
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48108
voice: 734/971-1800
fax: 734/971-1801
e-mail: WJN.editor@gmail.com
www.washtenawjewishnews.org

Editor and Publisher

Susan Kravitz Ayer

Calendar Editor

Claire Sandler

Advertising Manager

Gordon White

Design and Layout

Dennis Platte

Staff Writers

Mary Bilyeu, Sandor Slomovits, Rochel Urist

Contributing Writers

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