

Dear Friend,

We have big news since our February Update--our Professionals Advisory Circle conference in May was a great success, and in July we're adding a rabbi to our staff to address the issue of rabbis officiating at interfaith weddings--and lots to tell about our ongoing activities.

Please let us know what you think about our progress!

Organizational Highlights

1. New Staff



We are very pleased to announce that Rabbi Lev Baesh will join InterfaithFamily.com's staff full-time in July as our first Rabbinic Circle Director. Lev was ordained at Hebrew Union College in 1994, led Temple Israel in Dover, N.H., for 12 years, and has frequently taught programs for the Reform movement's Northeast Region.

Lev's job will be to respond to the many requests we get for help finding a rabbi to officiate at interfaith weddings (currently 60 a month), encourage couples to connect with local Jewish organizations, add content to the [Rabbinic Circle](#) section of our website that will be helpful to all rabbis whether or not they officiate, and provide a private "for rabbis only" space to discuss officiation. We know officiation is controversial--please read our [announcement](#) for more detail on our approach.

Also see the [JTA brief](#) on the news.

2. Other Organizational News

Yossi Abramowitz, who created our Web Magazine while at Jewish Family & Life!, has moved from our Board of Directors to our Advisory Board. You can reach Yossi on his blog, www.peoplehood.org.

There's a new baby in the IFF family. Congratulations to Amy Rovin, our Community Connections Coordinator, and her husband Michael, on the birth of Roxy Faye on April 6.

Curious about who our users are, our impact on their lives, what they'd like more of? Read our [report](#) on our User Survey.

InterfaithFamily.com has a new P.O. Box. Please update your address book to:

InterfaithFamily.com
90 Oak Street
P.O. Box 428
Newton Upper Falls, MA 02464

Education Activities

1. Web Magazine and Resource Pages

We've covered a wide range of topics in the past three months. In addition to our regular topics--[Passover/Easter](#), [Death & Mourning](#), and [Babies](#)--we addressed the threat of [Messianic Judaism](#) for the first time. Our [Communication in Interfaith Relationships](#) issue attracted our fourth and fifth most heavily trafficked days since July 1, 2006, and [Perfecting the Art of Arguing: Jewish Women and their Non-Jewish Mates](#) was the most popular article in April. In May we published a special issue on [Secular Judaism](#) and created a new [Secular Judaism Resource Page](#), both sponsored by the Jesse and Julie Rasch Foundation.

2. New Features

We developed our first easily printable content package, about interfaith families and Passover and Easter, designed for program providers to give to interested individuals, or to use in group discussions. To access the package, [click here](#).



Connections Activities

1. Connections In Your Area (CIYA)

Twenty seven organizations joined our [Connections In Your Area](#) system between February 15 and May 31, bringing the total number of listed organizations to 418, from over 120 communities across North America.

June 2007

What's in this Update

[Organizational Highlights](#)
[Education Activities](#)
[Connections Activities](#)
[Advocacy Activities](#)
[Marketing](#)
[Key Metrics](#)
[Finances and Development](#)

2. Professionals Advisory Circle



L-R: Kathy Kahn, national outreach director for the Union for Reform Judaism; Ed Case, our president and publisher; and Rabbi Charles Simon, executive director of the Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs (the Conservative movement).

The first conference/retreat of our [Professionals Advisory Circle \(PAC\)](#), held May 8-10, funded by the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation, was a great success! The conference/retreat is believed to be the first gathering in recent years specifically for professionals whose jobs include conducting outreach programs that target interfaith families. Participants came from across the spectrum, including the Reform movement's national outreach director, Kathy Kahn, and its entire regional staff; Rabbis Charles Simon and Braham David from the Conservative movement; Liz Marcovitz from JOI; and professionals from all kinds of agencies and independent organizations from all over the country.

Evaluation comments included: "I especially loved the opportunity to make personal connection with others in the field" and "obviously this was a major need, to get outreach professionals together." There was great interest in establishing a national association of outreach professionals that would offer regular training, networking, mentoring, and standards, leading to a professionalizing of the field. We intend to try to make progress toward that end with the existing PAC. We have already put a number of resources on the [PAC section of our website](#), where you can find a detailed report on the conference/retreat, as well as photos.

We also are seeking funding for a more substantial association.

Advocacy Activities

1. Surveys

Our third annual Passover/Easter survey attracted 684 responses. We publicized the results in [What We Learned from the 2007 Passover/Easter Survey](#). The respondents who were in an interfaith relationship and raising their children Jewish were doing many more Passover activities than Easter activities, treating Passover as a more religious holiday than Easter and keeping the two holidays separate.



2. Advocacy Writing

Our [JTA op-ed](#) on Steven M. Cohen's "A Tale of Two Jewries: An 'Inconvenient Truth' for American Jews" was reprinted in a number of publications, including the [Washington Jewish Week](#), [The \(New Jersey\) Jewish Standard](#), [The \(Philadelphia\) Jewish Exponent](#), the [New Jersey Jewish News](#), the [Connecticut Jewish Ledger](#) and Seattle's [JTNews](#).

3. Speaking Engagements

We spoke about recent intermarriage research and co-led a workshop on parenting at the Interfaith Family Weekend and Conference in Philadelphia on March 25. The conference was sponsored by [Faithways](#), the outreach arm of Jewish Family and Children's Service. We will be speaking at Congregation B'nai Torah, a Conservative synagogue in Trumbull, Conn., in July, on "The New Jewish Family" at a symposium on Jewish diversity sponsored by [Ayecha](#) at the [CAJE](#) conference in St. Louis in August, and at the [JOI national conference](#) in Washington, D.C., in October.

Marketing

1. Search Engine Optimization and Marketing



We continue to learn that search engine marketing campaigns work. Our Death and Mourning Resource Page was viewed 97 times in February; after we started a Google AdWords campaign on Death and Mourning, it was viewed 845 times in March, and 1,647 times in April. We also saw increases in the traffic to our Pregnancy and Birth Ceremonies Conversion Resource Pages after starting search engine marketing campaigns.

2. Marketing Through "Partner" Organizations

We are continuing with our link exchange program, asking the more than 400 organizations in our Connections system to put a link to IFF on their websites.

The Boston Interfaith Collaborative's showing of *Rashevski's Tango* in March was very successful. More than 220 tickets were pre-reserved on the event web page we created for the program.

4. Content Distribution

We sent an email alert to all of the secular and humanistic organizations on our Connections system so they could publicize our Secular Judaism issue to their constituents.

5. Press Mentions

Our 2007 Passover/Easter Survey was mentioned in a *New York Times* column by Sam Freedman, "A Difficult Journey of Devotion to One Faith and to a Spouse of Another Faith." The *JTA's* story on the survey was reprinted in the *Baltimore Jewish Times*, *New Jersey Jewish News*, *Connecticut Jewish Ledger* and other publications. Barbara Meltz, parenting columnist for *The Boston Globe*, also wrote about the survey in her blog. We were also quoted in a [package of articles about young adult children of intermarriage](#) by Sue Fishkoff of JTA, and in a *Cape Cod Times* article about interfaith weddings.

The JTA just published a [news brief](#) about our new Rabbinic Circle director, and we anticipate more coverage of the news.

The JTA just published a [news brief](#) about our new Rabbinic Circle director, and we anticipate more coverage of the news.

Key Metrics

- **Website traffic** : In April, we had 19,997 visitors and 21,876 visitor sessions.
- **Bi-weekly email newsletter** : Our May 8 email newsletter went to 7,662 subscribers. From February 15 to May 31, we added 250 new subscribers.
- **Organizations listed on Connections In Your Area**: 418 as of May 31.
- **Requests for rabbinic officiation referrals**: 171 from February 15 to May 31.

If you don't receive our biweekly email newsletter highlighting articles from the newest issue of our Web Magazine and would like to, click [here](#) .

Finances and Development

We continue to experience rapid financial growth. We have increased our projected income for 2007 to \$850,000 and our projected spending to \$820,000, which will represent close to 60% growth over 2006.

Since February 15 we received a \$100,000 grant from The Skirball Foundation for general operating support payable over four years, as well as renewed and increased funding toward our rabbinic officiation initiative of \$25,000 from The Samuel Bronfman Foundation and \$25,000 from Linda and Michael Frieze, and \$2,500 from Paula and Jerry Gottesman.



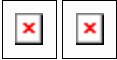
Thank You for Your Interest!

We appreciate your support and interest very much. We welcome your input and advice--please let us know what you think of this update.

And please help us by forwarding this update to anyone who might be interested in our work.



With best regards,



Edmund C. Case, President and Publisher