

The Cherry Creek News & central denver dispatch

Lowry News

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With News of the Heart of Denver

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Jon Entine pitches *Children of Abraham* at Mizel JCC - Dec. 16th

by Guerin Lee Green

It's one of the best books of 2007.

Former television producer Jon Entine's *Children of Abraham* takes the power of modern DNA research to examine the core of questions of race, intelligence, and Jewish identity in a book of rare scope and power.

The author is stopping in Denver at the Mizel Jewish Community Center to talk about his book, December 16th at 3:00 pm.

Few mainstream books marry scholarship and breadth the way *Children of Abraham* successfully does. On par with *Guns, Germs and Steel*, Entine takes history, biblical and archaeological, and cutting edge genetics to explore the meaning of racial identity in a world seething with shifting perspectives.

Entine explains how recent DNA discoveries show how genes can be used as time machines. The centuries of intermarriage and times of repression and isolation make the genes of modern day Jews a particularly powerful tool for exploring the past. The same factors make Jewish genes a powerful tool understanding and, hopefully, someday curing, diseases with a prominent genetic component.

Entine's story leaps from synagogues in the mountains of India to



Author Jon Entine

Catholic churches with a Jewish identity in New Mexico and Colorado to provide different patterns of connection within the journey of the Jewish diaspora. By examining accounts of the Hebrew lineage of Ethiopian tribesmen, the building of Africa's Great Zimbabwe fortress, and even the so-called Lost Tribes, Entine shows how legend and fact now meet.

Not shy of controversy, Entine's previous book, *Taboo: Why Black Athletes Dominate Sports and Why We're Afraid to Talk About It*, arose from his work as a producer for Tom Brokaw at NBC.

Optimists charge forward

by Devon Barclay

When Buffalo Bill Cody was still alive, Denver saw the formation of one of the world's first Optimist Clubs. In what would later become the Mile Hi Optimist Club, in 1916 a group of Denver businessmen decided it would be good to set a weekly meeting to get together and talk hopefully about the city they lived in. Over the years, new members joined, and in 1988 the club accepted its first female members. Now, the club is one of the oldest and most successful Optimist clubs in the country, and works to be a "friend of the youth" by offering and supporting a suite of programs throughout the year that give members a chance to work with young people and help make society better.

But, in weekly meetings at the Denver Country Club, there's still a sense of the club's original feeling. Each Thursday, the Mile Hi Optimists host a guest speaker - anyone from Mayor Hickenlooper to Detective Estrada - sit down for lunch, and enjoy the good graces and fellow feeling that comes from sitting in a room with the distinct purpose of looking at the bright side.

"I lived in Steamboat, and thought, 'how can I be involved with kids throughout the year,'" says

Pam Kirk, who now works with kids through the club on an ongoing basis at Valdez Elementary.

"These kids just melt your heart - I come up from Castle Rock, because I just think it's such a cool thing. I like the values - everyone's just so nice here. And you don't have to make up the meetings you miss," she says, something that sometimes happens at other service organizations. This, among other challenges, has been one of the obstacles that has prevented many new members from joining volunteer organizations in recent years. With increasingly hectic schedules, greater demands on time than ever before, and the rigors of the workweek, it's hard for many to get involved. Helping out youth on one's own, as delightful as it is, requires the kind of time and preparation resources few can find on their own. It can even be difficult to find time for an extra lunchtime meeting in the middle of the week. What the Optimists offer, along with the social camaraderie and resources that come with working with a group of like-minded, optimistic, hard-working people, is a degree of flexibility.

"It's a great place for fellowship, to make new friends, and just get away for a few hours," says Larry Andersen. "The way I look at it,

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Philanthropist Josh Hanfling announces for State House

Founder of organization to support firefighters, to run for Romanoff's seat

by Heather Worrell

Denver's District Attorney Mitch Morrissey and Denver Auditor Dennis Gallagher were among the Democrats gathered to launch the campaign of entrepreneur Josh Hanfling for the Colorado House in District 6.

Hanfling will seek the Democratic nomination to fill the seat of House Speaker Andrew Romanoff, who is term limited.

Also joining Hanfling was Mike Huttner, who leads Progress Now, one of Colorado's largest progressive organizations.

Hanfling is more known in phil-

anthropic circles than political ones, having founded the non-profit Friends of the Denver Fire Department, and long chaired the Denver Justice Council, which support law enforcement and crime victims.

Udall's Senate campaign as part of the Congressman's Finance Committee, Hanfling says he's ready for a tough campaign.

"I can't wait to get out, meet more of the people of this district," says

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Josh Hanfling will challenge for the Statehouse

Hanfling founded his first business in college, a recycling concern, Aardvark Recycling. He also began a high-tech startup in Denver, Aartronic.

Currently raising money for Mark

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