



# Congregation Netivot Shalom

January, 2003 • Tevet-Shevat, 5763

FROM THE RABBI

## A Decision Being Made With Care

By Rabbi Stuart Kelman

Last month's column about "The Role of the Non-Jew" elicited a number of interesting responses. Some of them came directly to me, some were emailed to board members; some came to members of various groups that had been dealing with the subject (Judaism Revealed, Ritual Committee, etc.) And, in the last of the seven sessions that we held, there were other responses that needed attention. So, I want to take this opportunity to respond more publicly. Please forgive me if I can't get back to each of you individually. But I felt that since we decided to make this process public, this is probably the best way to communicate.

Let me start by saying that discussion of this very issue draws us all into conversations about Jewish identity and boundaries. It's not as if we need to be reminded of these issues, particularly at this time of year, but, in fact, these are prominent concerns for all of us.

It seems that the very term, "non-Jew" caused some to read into the use of the term more than was intended. The term has been used in our congregation and in the legal literature of the Conservative Movement not in a pejorative sense – but merely as a description of someone who is not matrilineally Jewish or converted. Period. Frankly, if there were another descriptive word, it would have been chosen. But it seems that it is the best that there is. For the record, I found the same problem (that is, terminology) when I wrote my PhD dissertation about "Why Parents Send Their Children to non-Orthodox Jewish Day Schools". Here, too, there was discomfort with the "non" term. And here too, I was using the term because I could find no other and that is the term that was used in the literature.

**A point of clarification:** The process

that we are using is that of *she'elah u'teshuva* — question and answer. This is a time-honored part of our tradition, in which a legal question is posed and an authority responds. If the questions seem ever so minute, they were intended to be so. The purpose of this process of *she'elah u'teshuva* is to respond to specific questions with specific answers. The process is not designed to produce a philosophical treatise. In composing these specific questions, many groups and individuals (both Jewish and non-Jewish) had an opportunity to frame them.

Our policies currently in effect have developed over time — and this is the first opportunity we have had to look at them as a whole. A larger picture may begin to emerge as a result of specific responses, but that is not the intent of the process at this point.

Study and investigation mingled with listening and conversation. Over the course of the seven sessions, we studied the materials that I listed in last month's newsletter (there is a copy in the library). The sessions were intended to focus on the study of the materials presented — and as such, did not allow for extended discussion of some of the possible implications. Therefore, a decision was reached at our last session to use **Sunday mornings, January 5 and 12**, from 10:30 a.m.-12:00 noon, as an opportunity for more discussion — some of which will focus on theology (a topic that emerged from some sessions) but most of which will be on some conclusions that might be drawn (for example, the creation of a category called "*ger toshav*"). Please come and join the conversation.

During the spring, I intend to reach some conclusions, write a *teshuva* on this subject, present it first to the Ritual

Committee, then to Judaism Revealed participants, the Board and the congregation (in that order). This process is essentially the same as the one we used when we worked on the question of gays and lesbians.

**A reminder:** These discussions and, ultimately, the emerging decisions tell us much about the nature of our congregation and about ourselves. They reflect how we interact with each other and they must be considered in the context of discussions that are carried on "*leshem shamayim*", for the Sake of Heaven. All of us will be required to show care and love in this process. To quote one board member: "We can be divided on issues, but the issues must not divide our community." As another person remarked, "Perhaps we should change the title of this series from 'The Role of The Non-Jew' to 'A Role for the Non-Jew' or even 'Under One Tent – Jews and Non-Jews at Netivot Shalom'". Come discuss on **January 5 and 12**.

### DON'T MISS THE ANNUAL MEETING

**Sunday, February 23, 2003, from 9:30 a.m. to noon. At the North Berkeley Senior Center, 1901 Hearst Street (corner of Hearst and MLK). Childcare will be provided at the shul office.**



## CONGREGATION NETIVOT SHALOM

1841 Berkeley Way, Berkeley, California 94703

Telephone: 510-549-9447 • Fax: 510-549-9448

www.netivotshalom.org • email: administrator@netivotshalom.org

Office Hours: Mon.-Thurs. 10:30 a.m.-6:00 p.m. • Friday 10:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

## RABBI & STAFF

### Rabbi

Rabbi Stuart Kelman

549-9447 ext.103

skelman@netivotshalom.org

### Office Administrator

Rhea Harlow

549-9447 ext. 102

administrator@netivotshalom.org

### Administrative Assistant

Jennifer Zahigian

549-9447 ext. 101 • aa@netivotshalom.org

### Bookkeeper

Lauri Abrahamsen

549-9447 ext. 246•bookkeeper@netivotshalom.org

### Director of Education

Deb Fink

549-9447 ext. 104 • edu@netivotshalom.org

### Admin. Assistant to Director of Education

Jonah Sharkey

549-9447 ext. 108 • eduaa@netivotshalom.org

### Family Room Coordinator

Serena Eisenberg

549-9447 ext. 249 • serenagay@hotmail.com

### Midrasha Director

Diane Bernbaum

843-4667 • dianebernbaum@midrasha.org

### Shabbat B'Yachad Coordinator

Cathy Shadd

549-9447 ext. 248 • cathy@inventek.com

### Ramah Day Camp

549-9447 ext. 111

ramah@netivotshalom.org

### Ritual Coordinator

Debra Lobel

428-1048 • rituals@netivotshalom.org

### Tiferet Project Director

Rose Levinson

510-526-1322 • tiferet2@earthlink.net

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### President

Debby Graudenz

525-1814 • president@netivotshalom.org

### Vice President

Carol Cunradi

234-1003 • Cunradi@prev.org

### Secretary

Robert Jacobovitz

268-9100 • secretary@netivotshalom.org

### Treasurer

Mark Priven

559-8393 • privwest@pacbell.net

### Past President

Pauline Moreno

428-1048 • touchrs@aol.com

### Finance Chair

Rena Dorph

527-6656 • rena.dorph@ucop.edu

### Budget Chair

Marshall Platt

526-8358 • marshallpl@yahoo.com

### At Large

Turi Adams

415-648-3988 • live-mic@major.net.com

Peter Jacobs

482-0148 • petermjacobs@earthlink.net

Florence Lewis

524-8013 • florencelewis@earthlink.net

Barbara Staman

530-2464 • bws@sfglaw.com

## RESOURCES

### Bikkur Cholim

Peter Strauss

547-8174 • nanandpeter@yahoo.com

### Chevra Kadisha Coordinator

Andrea Cassidy

549-1407 • acass@cc.co.contra-costa.ca.us

### Cuban Affairs Coordinator

June Safran

526-7173 • junesafran@aol.com

### Drash Coordinator

Rena Fischer

658-8713 • renafischer@mac.com

### Gemilut Chassadim

Alice Webber & Stephen Tobias

654-4561 • ahwebber@cs.com

Sharon Priven (New Babies)

559-8393 • privwest@pacbell.net

### Kiddush Coordinator

Janet Harris

524-2245 • janeth2@aol.com

### Kashrut Resource Coordinator

Glenn Massarano

644-0654 • massaran@lmi.net

### Newsletter Editor

Karen Friedman

528-0728 • newsletter@netivotshalom.org

### Shabbat Greeter Coordinator

Djedi Mateen

839-2568 • DLMateen@aol.com

### Torah Study Coordinator

Noriko Obinata

848-7906

### Web-Shomer

Jim Davis

webmaster@netivotshalom.org

### Yahrzeit Coordinator

Diana Wood

## COMMITTEES

### Administration Chair

Jan Malvin

658-8780 • janmalvin@yahoo.com

### Adult Education co-Chairs

Robin Braverman

925-979-1998 • rivkah48@aol.com

Ethel Murphy

559-8372 • emurphy@california.com

### Arrangements

Andrea Altschuler

649-9290 • andalt1@yahoo.com

### Capital Campaign Steering Committee co-Chairs

Art Braufman

525-8492 • braufs@cs.com

Ann Swidler

644-0858 • swidler@uclink2.berkeley.edu

Claudia Valas

848-6536 • eks@wenet.net

### Community Building co-Chairs

Mel & Lisa Sibony

841-2268 • sibony@telocity.com

Cathy Shadd

654-5522 • cathy@inventek.com

### Fundraising

Open

### House Chair

Eugene Berg

415-665-3927 • lilypadgroup@attglobal.net

### Membership Chair

Rebecca Calahan Klein

524-0939 • rcklein@mindspring.com

### Money Management

Phyllis Helfand

925-376-9341 • PHelfand@aol.com

### Public Relations Chair

Claude Fischer

fischer1@uclink4.berkeley.edu

### Ritual Chair

Josh Gressel

234-4862 • adirhu@yahoo.com

### Site Work Group Chair

Joe Meresman

653-1978 • MeresmanJ@aol.com

### Social Action Chair

Cyndi Spindell Berck

524-2984 • cyndiberck@hotmail.com

### Youth Education Chair

Robin Mencher

528-6814 • robinjm189@aol.com

# President's Letter

A couple of months ago people started asking me, "So, are you counting the days?" The first time someone asked I responded in all honesty, with, "To what?" Now I know what folks are talking about, and although the answer is "Yes, I am counting the days," it's bittersweet.

Of course, my family will be very happy to have me more available to them. Rom will delight in the phone ringing, knowing with certainty he's back to a 50-50 chance that the call might actually be for him. Avi's looking forward to fewer meetings, fewer phone calls right around his reading-together time, and a mother who is less distracted. And I'm looking forward to more time with my family, more time with myself, and – yes – a bit less stress.

But I've also taken great pride in being able to say that I am the president of Netivot Shalom. Not because I think I've done such an exceptional job, but because of what I think of Netivot Shalom and our place in the Jewish community. We have our ups and downs, our foibles and our problems. Some days I've really understood the Bob Seger line, "Wish I didn't know now what I didn't know then." We're certainly not perfect, and, as I've said before, we are a work in progress. But we are also a synagogue community unique in many respects, and I would imagine that it's aspects of that distinctiveness that have drawn many of us to Netivot Shalom. I imagine also that it's that same individuality as a congregation that will keep us, as a community, a continual work in progress. That, as far as I'm concerned, is an exciting characteristic of Netivot Shalom.

Other than being a parent, being president has been the hardest job I never got paid for. Like parenting, being president has been the most fulfilling job I never got paid for. I remind myself – sometimes not often enough – that we are a congregation that is only in our 14<sup>th</sup> year. Systemically, we're an adolescent. And we are seeing some of the developmentally appropriate challenges of adolescence: the idealism and the angst; the feeling that our parents (the board? the rabbi?) aren't doing enough, or aren't doing it right. Erik Erikson said that the basic conflict of adolescence is "identity vs. role confusion" and that "The teenager must achieve a sense of identity in occupation, sex roles, politics, and religion." One look at some of the discussions we've had this past year – Talking About God, Israel, the Role of the Non-Jewish Partner at Netivot Shalom – and one can see that we're right on target as an adolescent. It can be a very difficult time, for the adolescent, his or her parents, and the whole family. But we also know that supporting a teenager in this process helps them through it.

We have many opportunities to involve ourselves in this work-in-progress. The more of us who are involved – with our varying backgrounds, interests and views – the more dynamic will be our growth and evolution as a community. Involvement is a commitment of time, energy and creativity. Any shul would need that – our participatory congregation all the more so. I know very well the demands on one's personal and family life that involvement in the shul entails. I also know the joys, the sense of growth and accomplishment and the *nachas* that one gets. Although in some ways it's a whole lot easier to just "go with the flow," it's a whole lot more exciting to be one of those determining the direction of the flow.

Our Annual Meeting will be **Sunday, February 23**, from 9:30 a.m. to noon at the North Berkeley Senior Center. Childcare will be provided at the shul office. I urge you to come to the meeting and ask questions about the new building, to hear about the financial and programmatic state of our shul, to vote on any resolutions brought forth, and to vote in our new Board members and Committee Chairs.

*B'shalom,*

Debby Graudenz

**PLEASE NOTE THE NEW DEADLINE FOR THE NEWSLETTER:**

The Deadline for submitting material for the February newsletter is **Wednesday, January 1**. Please send articles or letters to: newsletter@netivotshalom.org.

## T'FILAH SCHEDULE

### SATURDAYS

All services & minyanim are held at the Berkeley-Richmond Jewish Community Center 1414 Walnut Street, Berkeley

**Torah Study** 9:00 a.m.  
each Shabbat

**Shabbat Services** 9:45 a.m.

**Meditative Minyan,** 9:30 a.m.  
3rd Shabbat, room 14  
January 18

**Learner's Minyan,** 9:00 a.m.  
2nd & 4th Shabbat, room 14  
January 11 & 25

**FOR CHILDREN & PARENTS:**  
**Shabbat B'Yachad (pre-school),** 11:00 a.m.  
2nd & 4th Shabbat, room 14  
January 11 & 25

**Children's Program**  
**(Registration required)** 10:30 a.m.  
for K-6th grades  
(each Shabbat, unless otherwise indicated)

### WEEKDAY MINYANIM

All services are held at our offices, 1841 Berkeley Way, Berkeley

**Morning Minyan** 7:15 a.m.  
Wednesdays

### Rosh Chodesh Minyan

Rosh Chodesh Shevat is on January 4

## TORAH STUDY SCHEDULE FOR:

### JANUARY

**4 Va-Era**  
Exodus 6:2-9:35  
with Naomi Seidman

**11 Bo**  
Exodus 10:1-13:16  
with Nitzhia Shaked

**18 Beshallah**  
Exodus 13:17-17:16  
with Rabbi Arthur Gould

**25 Yitro**  
Exodus 18:1-20:23  
with Nitzhia Shaked

## UPCOMING ROSH CHODESH SERVICES

**Rosh Chodesh Shevat is Saturday, January 4.**

**Rosh Chodesh Adar I is Sunday, February 2.** Services will be held at 9:00 a.m. in the shul Library.

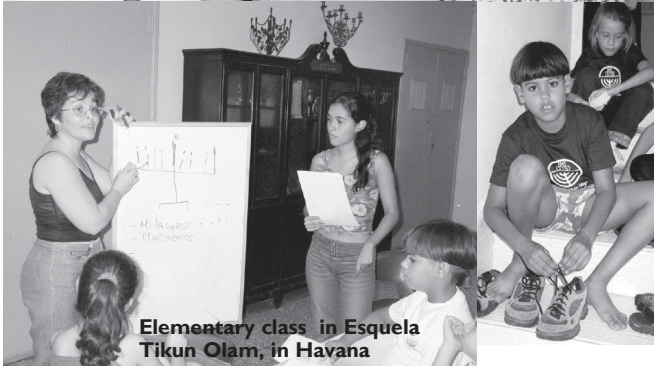


# *iGreetings from Our Sister Congregation in Cuba – Comunidad Hebrea Hatikvah!*

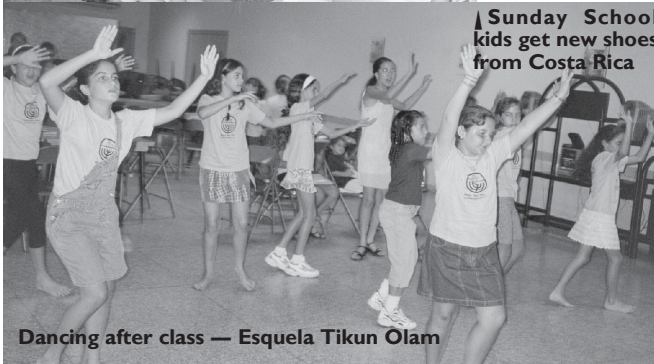
Photos by June Safran, Cuban Affairs Coordinator



June visits with grandparents waiting for Religious School children.



Elementary class in Esquela Tikun Olam, in Havana



Sunday School kids get new shoes from Costa Rica

Dancing after class — Esquela Tikun Olam



Alina made matzo ball soup in my honor. Claudia loved it so much that she ate three bowls full.

## Newly Formed Brit Tzedek v'Shalom

By David Marcus

Earlier this year, in a drash on Shabbat Zachor, President Debbie Graudenz spoke about a pointed avoidance of discussions of Israel at Netivot Shalom. In the June newsletter, Rabbi Kelman cited Conservative Movement principles “that ground our public discourse.” Those principles include the following: “...the litmus test of the character of a democratic Jewish state is its treatment of and attitude towards its religious and ethnic minorities...we recall the prophetic injunction to our people to be ‘a covenant people, a light of nations’...the Conservative Movement has not always agreed with Israel’s positions on domestic and foreign affairs...We hope...that the State will continue to maintain the moral principles of our prophets and sages who never ceased to call for morality in government and international affairs...”

There are many Jews in America who feel that support for the State of Israel is best expressed by supporting solutions to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that are consistent with “the moral principles of our prophets and sages.” A new organization, Brit Tzedek v'Shalom, was formed in April of this year to be a national organization of American Jews deeply committed to Israel's well-being through the achievement of a negotiated settlement to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Brit Tzedek's basic premise is that an enduring peace, and hence enduring security for Israel, can only be achieved through the establishment of an economically and politically viable Palestinian state, necessitating an end to Israel's occupation of land acquired during the 1967 war. Brit Tzedek, as an American organization, provides a platform for American Jews to articulate their belief that the ongoing conflict threatens Israel's security, severely damages its economy, and erodes the values that underlie a democratic society.

Brit Tzedek's founding principles, which set forth in more detail its vision of a just peace between Palestinians and Israelis, can be found online at [www.btvshalom.org](http://www.btvshalom.org). They closely parallel the near-agreement reached at Taba, under which Israel would withdraw both soldiers and settlers from the occupied territories, but with mutually agreed upon border adjustments, and Jerusalem would be the capital of both states with universal access to religious sites.

The website also describes recent activities by Brit Tzedek, such as its sponsorship of an American tour by delegates from the Bereaved Families Forum (<http://www.theparentscircle.com/parents/ff>), an organization of 200 Israeli and 200 Palestinian families who have lost close relatives as a result of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and have joined together to give a human face to the conflict and build foundations for a strong and respectful partnership for peace. The delegates came to the U.S. to tell their personal stories of bereavement, to demonstrate that the cycle of hatred and revenge can be ended, and to seek international support for their cause.

The intention of Brit Tzedek (whose current President, Marcia Freedman, is a former Member of Knesset who now lives half the year in Israel and half in Berkeley) is to become a large membership organization that will conduct advocacy and educational activities through local chapters. It also plans to co-host, with similar groups, an Advocacy Day each year during which Brit Tzedek members will meet with their elected representatives.

Netivot Shalom members who are interested in joining this new organization can do so online at [www.btvshalom.org](http://www.btvshalom.org).

## UPCOMING B'NAI MITZVOT ANNIVERSARIES

**January 4, Vaera**  
Benjamin Simler  
Renna Khuner-Haber  
Rachel Ranney

**January 25, Yitro**  
Andrea Gottlieb  
Maya Gundelman  
Jessica Grossman  
Jonathan Levy Wolins

**January 11, Bo**  
Judith Rosenblatt  
Valerie Morris  
Gabriel Scheffler  
Maggie Bond

**February 1, Mishpatim**  
Ari Radousky

**January 18, Beshalach**  
Etan Basseri  
Noam Ben Oni  
Elan Ben Oni  
Emma Mayerson  
Yonitte Hindawi

### Rosh Chodesh Group

The Rosh Chodesh group will meet **Sunday evening, January 5** at 7:00 p.m. Heidi Wexler will present a documentary video from her Masters' project, drama therapy with seniors with memory loss, featuring caregivers and patients. Please contact Toby Gidal for further information including location, [tgidal@attbi.com](mailto:tgidal@attbi.com).

## Remembering Ethelyn K. Simon, z"l

It is with deep sadness that we announce the death of Ethelyn Simon, z"l, a long-time member and supporter of our congregation

**Yad Ethelyn (a memorial to Ethelyn):** The many students, colleagues and friends of Ethelyn Simon, z"l have established a fund in her memory. It will be used to honor her passion for lifelong Jewish learning. Our idea is to mark her *yahrzeit* in years to come with a special Jewish learning opportunity for adults. The yearly decision will be made by a committee consisting of the Adult Education chairs, several of her students and the Rabbi. This committee will begin its work in the fall. If you are interested in participating on the committee please let the rabbi know. Please make checks out to Netivot Shalom and indicate that it is for the Yad Ethelyn fund.

## Mature Mavens Meets Again

Monday, January 13, 2003 at 7:00 p.m. in the shul library,  
1841 Berkeley Way  
Learning to Move with Ease  
Facilitated by Gail Gordon, physical therapist  
Please wear comfortable clothing. R.S.V.P. to Jean at 549-3231.



Do you have a camera that you're not using? Netivot Shalom needs a camera to record some of the events in our community. Please consider donating your extra camera to us. (Or consider a monetary donation to cover the cost of film and processing!)

### MAZAL TOV TO:

**Hope & Noah Alper** on the Bar Mitzvah of their son, Robbie  
**Sara Leah Schley** on the Bat Mitzvah of her daughter, Elise Harrington

**Rabbi Kelman and Alison Jordan** on the publication of their article, "The Rabbinic Leader & the Volunteer Leader", in this month's issue of *Religious Education*. This article is based on a paper presented at the Avi Chai Foundation Conference. Copies are available in the office.

**Rabbi Stuart & Vicky Kelman** on the engagement of their daughter, Navah Kelman, to Michael Becker

**Michelle & Shahpour Akhavi** on the birth of a baby girl, Chaya.

### CORRECTION:

Mazal Tov to **Connie & Jonathan Heller** on the birth of their *daughter*, Micah

### CONDOLENCES TO:

**Helen Schneider** on the death of her sister, Thelma Proweller, z"l

**Phillip & Sherrin Rosenthal** and family, on the deaths of Phillip's father and Sherrin's father

**Josh Gressel**, on the death of his father, Phillip Gressel

## Kosher for Passover Candy Sale!

Buy Barton's Kosher For Passover Candy and support Netivot Shalom's Religious School! These yummy treats will sweeten your Passover and 40% of the proceeds go to our school. The entire congregation is invited to join in this fund-raising event. Please contact Sharon Priven at (510) 559-8393 for more information or to place an order. Forms are also available at the shul offices.

BRIDGES TO ISRAEL-BERKELEY:

Giving a Face to Victims of Terror

By Seymour Kessler

As I write this erev Shabbat, Israel is mourning the victims of another vicious suicide bombing in Jerusalem. As usual, the target was civilians; 11 dead, over 40 injured. Since the start of the *intifada*, over two years ago, nearly 700 Israelis have died and countless thousands have been maimed physically and psychologically. And why? Only the most naive among us still believe that fundamentally the problem is settlements or occupation or any of the other issues that were on the table for negotiation at Camp David in what seems like an eternity ago. It is Israel's mere presence in the Middle East, its existence, that is in question.

This suicide bombing comes on the heels of Amram Mitzna's win in the Labor Party primary and signals the resolve of Palestinian extremists to see another right-wing victory in the Israeli general elections in February. Mitzna promised withdrawal from Gaza and negotiations with the Palestinian leadership without pre-conditions. In short, he held out a hand for peace, and one must shudder for the possible terror yet to come, to assure that peace in the Middle East is the loser.

[Since these words were written, there has been a vicious attack on Israeli civilians in Kenya, a failed attempt to shoot down an Israeli airliner with over 260 passengers, and an assault on people at a polling place in Beit She'an in which six Israelis died. Can we doubt that there are killers out there with designs in their hearts to commit mass murder of Jews?]

As the number of casualties climb we more and more lose touch with the specific human beings the data represent. After a while, we become inured and dulled as the pattern of violence repeats itself again and again. That is why, as an organization, Bridges to Israel has taken the step to adopt two Israeli families injured as a result of terrorism.

We aim to give a face to the impersonal and a name to what easily slips away unrecognized into silence. We want to show we care about Israel, but in a way that sidesteps political differences and recognizes that those who suffer are our relatives; our family. In truth, they are.

There are many worthy organizations to which one might make donations to help Israel. We chose the more difficult path of developing personal relations with specific families in an effort to make the struggle of ordinary Israelis to survive a living reality for us in Berkeley. In our broader community's tendency to intellectualize the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians, the torn flesh and shattered bones and dreams of individuals and families are easily forgotten and reduced to ideological rhetoric.

We here, in Berkeley, specifically in Netivot Shalom, are in pain—the pain that comes from caring and wanting to help others and feeling helpless and inadequate to do so. By developing a relationship with these families we hope to feel more adequate, more empowered, more useful, and most important, more connected to the struggle of the State of Israel and the Jewish people. Some of us have talked to the injured mothers in these families: Shula Gaon, with three children and an amputated leg, still recovering from trauma; Anna Vishin, paralyzed for life from the waist down, with a 2 yr-old child—families victimized by terrorism. Their lives and dreams, now disrupted, both are struggling to stay afloat financially and emotionally. Shai

Gaon, Shula's son, just became a bar mitzvah and Bridges to Israel advanced them money so that they could experience, in their suffering, some degree of joy and simchah.

We have written to them and spoken with them. We plan to exchange photos, raise money for them and make them a part of our lives and, hopefully, for at least a brief period of time, we will be part of theirs. When members of Bridges go to Israel we will visit and spend time with them as we would with anyone we care about.

These ordinary people, innocent victims of hatred, have much to teach us about being Jewish and being dedicated to doing mitzvot. They teach us that the act of *tzedakah* is more than simply slipping coins into a *pushkeh* or writing a check. By personalizing our connections with them we hope to better understand the depth of the human struggle going on in Israel today and, in the course of doing so, learn something about our own humanity. By helping them, we help ourselves.

For more information about these families or to be put on the Bridges to Israel mailing list call us at 525-3582 or e-mail us at seykessler@aol.com or hildakess@aol.com.

Roses From Israel with Love

What better time to give Valentine's Day a Jewish twist. Instead of buying roses from South America, or California, how about buying roses from Israel? That way you can show your loved one that you can love them and love Israel at the same time.

Another Jewish twist. Valentine's Day is on Friday. So you can think of the roses as gracing your Shabbat table.

This great opportunity is being brought to you by Bridges to Israel-Berkeley. Not only will Israel's economy be helped by purchasing Israeli products, but all profits from the sale will go directly to assist our two adopted Israeli families. Our supplier, M&M Roses, is located in the Negev and now depends on the American market to stay afloat given the European boycott of Israeli goods.

So, do a mitzvah, enjoy the love, fragrance and beauty of Israel.

A dozen 18" stemmed roses costs \$18.00, including delivery and taxes. They come in multiple colors, red, yellow, pink and circus variety (which is yellow with red-tipped petals.) They will also supply a mixed dozen which consists of 2-4 colors in one bunch. Since this is a very busy season, they cannot guarantee all requested colors but they will do their best.

All orders must be received no later than **January 24** in order to make sure that they have enough time to process the order and arrange for delivery.

Some of you are already old-timers at this and know how beautiful the roses are and how remarkably long they last. So get your order in early. E-mail your order to Hilda Kessler at hildakess@aol.com, or call me at 525-1526.





## Opportunities to Learn & Help Around the Bay...

### Sunday, January 19 Oakland Special Needs Parent Support Group

Special Needs Parent Group — open to all parents of Jewish children who have special learning needs and reside in the East Bay. Jewish Community Services, 412 Monte Vista, Oakland. For information, call (510) 839-2900, ext. 233 or e-mail [desmid@jfed.org](mailto:desmid@jfed.org)

### Volunteer Training in Visiting People Who Are Ill (Bikkur Cholim)

Presented by the Community Rabbi of the Greater East Bay, this training is free to individuals who have a strong interest in doing the mitzvah of bikkur cholim (visiting those who are ill) as volunteers. For more information or to apply, contact Rabbi Miriam Senturia at [Rabbimiriam@jfed.org](mailto:Rabbimiriam@jfed.org) or call (510) 839-2900, ext. 212.

### Give a Hand

Opportunities abound right here in our own community to help others. You can serve meals at a homeless shelter, tutor young school children, serve on committees or boards of Jewish agencies, and visit homebound people — to name but a few. Call (510) 839-2900, ext. 261, or e-mail [vac@jfed.org](mailto:vac@jfed.org)

### MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger

As many of you know, we have been a sponsor of MAZON. Each Yom Kippur, a special appeal is made for contributions to this marvelous tzedakah.

#### This year (2002):

- 1,034 synagogues participated (770 in 2001)
- Total dollars raised was \$1,056,363 (compared to \$982,986 in 2001)
- Number of contributions was 16,794 (15,359 in 2001)
- Average contribution was \$62.90 (\$64 in 2001)

*Todah!* to all who participated. Remember, every time you have a *simcha*, make a contribution to MAZON so others can share in your joy!

**Visit a great web site: [learn.jtsa.edu](http://learn.jtsa.edu)** for Torah commentaries; book excerpts and recommendations; a Kid's Corner; holidays; interactive activities, and resources for parents and educators. Also, visit [courses.jtsa.edu](http://courses.jtsa.edu) to take challenging courses with world renowned JTS faculty in an interactive environment. (See article on page 16.)

### March 1-7, 2003 8th Annual Contra Costa International Jewish Film Festival: A Celebration of Independent and Foreign Films

Bay Area Premiere: The Israeli Award-winning film "A Trumpet in the Wadi." Also featuring: "Late Marriage," "God Is Great and I'm Not," "Trembling Before God," "Left Luggage."

For more information: (510) 839-2900, ext. 253, [riva@jfed.org](mailto:riva@jfed.org)

### Thursdays, 10:15 a.m.-12 noon San Leandro Weekly Lecture Series Continues

The Center for Jewish Living and Learning MID Lecture series continues.

**1/9:** From the Golden Land to the Promised Land: American Jews and the State of Israel

**1/16:** Translations of Anti-Semitism: Jews and Violence in Indonesia

**1/23:** Remembrance of Times Past: Making Sense of the New Wave of French Anti-Semitism

**1/30:** The Yiddish Book in the 21st Century.

Log on to [www.jfed.org](http://www.jfed.org) for a full program.

All MID lectures are at Temple Beth Sholom, 642 Dolores Ave., San Leandro. For more information or to register, call (510) 839-2900, ext. 233 or e-mail [desmid@jfed.org](mailto:desmid@jfed.org)

### Become a Volunteer Reading Tutor

If you can read this, you have qualified for one of the greatest experiences you'll ever have. 650 volunteers from the Bay Area Jewish community are helping children learn to read. Won't you join them? Become a reading tutor in an East Bay public elementary school or after-school program with the Jewish Coalition for Literacy. In California, 53 percent of fourth grade children are reading below grade level. The Jewish community can play a leading role in combating illiteracy in our schools by acting on our proven dedication to education, literacy, and social justice.

This winter, please try to envision yourself as a JCL tutor. By spending only one hour per week in a local public school, you can help a child become a lifelong reader. You will have the opportunity to form amazing new relationships and gain firsthand insight into the world of our public schools. Additional help is needed to collect books for our tutoring sites.

Training for new volunteers will be offered in January and early February. To sign up, call (510) 839-2900, ext. 272 or log on to [www.jclread.org](http://www.jclread.org).

### ASK JCI & R— JOBS, JOBS, JOBS!

Looking for a job? Please call JCI & R for help with workshops, networking, counseling, high tech ops, training programs, learning new technology, internships for youth, special services for émigrés and people with disabilities. Call JCI & R, 415/777-4545 or toll-free in the Bay area, 877/777-5247 (9 to 5 weekdays) or email: [JewishNfo@sfjcf.org](mailto:JewishNfo@sfjcf.org). Jewish Community Information and Referral is a FREE, confidential service of the Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin and Sonoma Counties. Visit their websites at [www.sfjcf.org](http://www.sfjcf.org) and [www.jholidays.org](http://www.jholidays.org).

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Summary of the 11/24/02  
Board Meeting**

Deb Fink has expressed concerns with the time and responsibility allocation of the Director of Education position. Currently her time is allocated to 60% education, 20% adult education and 20% community building. This seems to be an unrealistic allocation of time; since education is proving to be more than a full time responsibility within itself. The school currently has an enrollment of 93 children. Deb Fink requested a change in her job description, and offered to work a 10-month year to assist in the reallocation of funds. The board approved her request. Ways to allocate a person and time to Adult Education and Community Building/Programming are being explored.

The Rabbi reported that the synagogue now has 63 children younger than 3 years of age. He thanked the board for voting to allow him to take a sabbatical and reviewed the plans of who will be responsible for what with his absence.

The Board discussed the budget, which is very tight this year. Income from fundraising is well below what was budgeted, and the budgeted figure was very conservative. The board discussed cost-saving and fundraising solutions. A special meeting of the board to continue discussing finances will be held on December 18.

Congregation Netivot Shalom

Invites you to meet

**Stephen Fried**

for a discussion of his controversial book...

*The New Rabbi*

*The Search of a Lifetime*

Stephen Fried is an award-winning investigative journalist. His new book is about the politics of community, the power of inspirational leadership, the retail business of religion, yearning for spirituality, and the complicated world of American synagogue life.

**January 28, 2003**

**7:30 p.m. in the shul library**

**1841 Berkeley Way**

*Carla Cassler &  
Dean Hertesz*

*invite you to share in their simcha*

*on Saturday, January 4, 2003,*

*parashat VaYera,*

*as their daughter,*

*Simone Hertesz,*

*is called to the Torah*

*as a bat mitzvah.*

**Elana Reinin &  
Marshall Platt**

invite you to share in their simcha

on Saturday, January 11, 2003,

parashat Bo,

as their son,

**Ariel Emek,**

is called to the Torah

as a bar mitzvah.



## SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE

**A Voice of Hope**

By Cyndi Spindell Berck

In November, Gene Sandretto of Hope Flowers School in Bethlehem (West Bank) spoke to a small group at Netivot Shalom. Gene is an American volunteer who has spent several years dividing his time between Israel (working directly for Hope Flowers), and the U.S., raising funds for the school.

As I've written before, Hope Flowers is a school founded by a Palestinian Muslim family and dedicated to peace and democracy. What follows is a summary from Gene's remarks, from the school's newsletter, and from articles about the school in the Jewish Bulletin and other newspapers.

Hope Flowers was founded in 1984 by Hussein Ibrahim Issa. Hussein, who died an untimely death of natural causes in 2000, grew up in a refugee camp in the West Bank. However, he did not accept the prevalent attitudes of despair and hatred of Jews and Israel. Hussein received degrees in education and social work, sought out personal contacts with Israelis after the area came under Israeli control in 1967, and eventually founded Hope Flowers on a philosophy of religious tolerance and peaceful coexistence.

During the hopeful "Oslo" years of 1993-2000, the school developed relationships with Jews in Israel: sister school relationships with Israeli schools; Israeli teachers volunteered at Hope Flowers (and were invited home for lunch by Palestinian parents); Palestinian and Israeli schoolchildren met to play and plant a garden; there were visits to Neve Shalom/Wahat al Salaam, the Jewish-Arab peace village.

The school is nondenominational. Both Muslim and Christian children attend, and the stated position is a hope that someday Jewish children will be able to attend as well. The school is planning to sponsor an interfaith conference next year in order to use religion as a bridge between people.

The *intifada* ended personal visits, although the school still maintains communications and relationships with Israeli sister schools.

Gene told two stories that made a strong impression on me. One recalls his first meeting with Hussein. The night before, Hussein's car had been firebombed by a radical Palestinian faction that considered him a collaborator. Hussein's response: "This just makes me more determined to work for peace."

The other story is of a 6th grade student who, during the *intifada*, refused to join the boys in his neighborhood in throwing stones at Israeli soldiers. By way of explanation, the boy cited his relationship with Hope Flowers and his prior meetings with Israeli children.

Since Hussein's death, the school has been run by his widow, Hind Issa, and their grown children. I have been corresponding with the Issa family, and have been struck by their dedication to their mission. They avoid taking political positions in order to maintain their focus and credibility. They close every letter with an invitation to visit.

Always dependent on international donations, and always strapped for money to provide scholarships and pay teacher salaries, the school is in a financial crisis due to the effects of the *intifada*. Anyone wishing to learn more can contact me (524-2984, cyndiberck@hotmail.com) or see [www.hopeflowers.org](http://www.hopeflowers.org). Anyone wishing to make a tax-deductible contribution can do so through the Orange County Middle East Peace Fund, POB 5891, Orange, CA 92863-5891. The Fund is sponsored by the "Cousins Club," an Israeli-Palestinian dialogue group in Orange County.

**Social Action Committee Needs a Chairperson**

By Cyndi Spindell Berck

I'm afraid the headline sums it up. I can't continue, and the board is looking for a new Chair. Anyone who'd like to know more about the job can contact me at 524-2984, or [cyndiberck@hotmail.com](mailto:cyndiberck@hotmail.com).

## SUKKOT IN APRIL

**Seeking a House Captain**

We are seeking an experienced trades person to serve as House Captain for Congregation Netivot Shalom's 2003 Sukkot in April effort. This is a great way to put your skills to work on behalf of both our congregation and those in need in the wider community.

Each year, for the past three years, Netivot Shalom has participated in Rebuilding Together (formerly Christmas in April). This is a volunteer effort held each April to make improvements to the homes of low income, disabled, and elderly people. Last year, about 40 members of Netivot Shalom volunteered their time over two weekends in April to fix up a home located near our new University Ave. location.

We are once again launching preparations for Sukkot in April, which will be held on **April 27, 2003**. This year we need to find a new House Captain who is experienced enough to be able to walk through a house and determine what work needs to be done and how many volunteers it will take and how much time will be required to do the work.

Sukkot in April works because it marries the energy and dedication of less skilled volunteers with the experience and savvy of more experienced trades people. The House Captain is one of the most important participants in the program. The House Captain is the central working figure at each site, and is in charge of many tasks: House Captains decide on the work to be accomplished at the site, plan for and purchase necessary materials, determine the number of volunteers needed for the job, and direct volunteers on the workday. The position requires about 40 hours of volunteer time, the workday included.


Jonathan Klein will again serve as the person who recruits volunteers and raises the money necessary for Netivot Shalom to sponsor a house of our own. If you are interested in serving as House Captain, please contact him at 510-524-0939 or at [jklein@liifund.org](mailto:jklein@liifund.org).

**Is Your Newsletter Always Late?**

People have communicated to me that they are tired of their newsletters always arriving well into the month. In an attempt to improve the timeliness of the newsletter, I am asking you to help me track when you receive your newsletter. Simply note the date that your newsletter arrives at your home and send me an e-mail ([newsletter@netivotshalom.org](mailto:newsletter@netivotshalom.org)) with that date and your ZIP code (no other information is necessary). If you do not use e-mail, please send the information to the shul office, Attention: Newsletter Editor. (Please do not telephone the office.) Thank you for your help.  
Karen Friedman, Newsletter Editor

# JANUARY 2003

# TEVET-SHEVAT 5763

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			<b>1</b> 27 TEVET 8:00 am Morning Minyan  OFFICE CLOSED	<b>2</b> 28 TEVET	<b>3</b> 29 TEVET  4:45 pm candle lighting	<b>4</b> 1 SHEVAT 9:00 am Torah Study 9:45 am Shabbat Services; Simone Kertesz will be called to the Torah as a bat mitzvah  <i>NO Children's Program</i>
<b>5</b> 2 SHEVAT 10:30 am Role of the Non-Jew 10:30 am Seminar with Seymour Kessler  7:00 pm Ritual Committee meeting 7:00 pm Rosh Chodesh Group	<b>6</b> 3 SHEVAT 4:00 pm RELIGIOUS SCHOOL RESUMES	<b>7</b> 4 SHEVAT 4:30 pm Amitim  7:30 pm Talmud, with Rabbi Kelman 7:30 pm Advanced Talmud with Ilana Fodiman, at Beth Israel 7:30 pm University Ave. Site Work Group	<b>8</b> 5 SHEVAT 7:15 am Morning Minyan  4:00 pm Religious School	<b>9</b> 6 SHEVAT 7:30 pm Adult B'nai Mitzvah	<b>10</b> 7 SHEVAT  4:52 pm candle lighting	<b>11</b> 8 SHEVAT 9:00 am Torah Study 9:00 am Learner's Minyan 9:45 am Shabbat Services; Ariel Platt will be called to the Torah as a bar mitzvah 10:30 am Children's Program 11:00 am Shabbat B'Yachad 4:30 pm Oneg Shabbat, at the Kelmans
<b>12</b> 9 SHEVAT 10:30 am Role of the Non-Jew 10:30 am Seminar with Seymour Kessler  5:00 pm Executive Committee meeting	<b>13</b> 10 SHEVAT 4:00 pm Religious School 7:00 pm Mature Mavens 7:00 pm Social Action Committee	<b>14</b> 11 SHEVAT 4:30 pm Amitim  7:00 pm New Parent Education Series with Vicky Kelman, offsite 7:30 pm Talmud, with Rabbi Kelman 7:30 pm Advanced Talmud with Ilana Fodiman, at Beth Israel	<b>15</b> 12 SHEVAT 7:15 am Morning Minyan  4:00 pm Religious School 7:30 pm Beginning Hebrew 7:30 pm Haftorah Trope with Jan Fischer	<b>16</b> 13 SHEVAT Time TBA Amitim workshop, at the home of Deb Fink  7:00 pm Tiferet Group	<b>17</b> 14 SHEVAT  4:59 pm candle lighting	<b>18</b> 15 SHEVAT <i>Tu B'Shevat</i> 9:00 am Torah Study 9:30 am Meditative Minyan 9:45 am Shabbat Services; drash by Rabbi Kelman  <i>NO Children's Program</i>
<b>19</b> 16 SHEVAT	<b>20</b> 17 SHEVAT  MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.'S BIRTHDAY  NO RELIGIOUS SCHOOL  OFFICE CLOSED	<b>21</b> 18 SHEVAT 4:30 pm Amitim  7:30 pm Talmud, with Rabbi Kelman 7:30 pm Advanced Talmud with Ilana Fodiman, at Beth Israel 7:30 pm Membership Committee meeting	<b>22</b> 19 SHEVAT 7:15 am Morning Minyan  4:00 pm Religious School 7:30 pm Beginning Hebrew 7:30 pm Haftorah Trope with Jan Fischer	<b>23</b> 20 SHEVAT 7:30 pm University Ave. Site Work Group	<b>24</b> 21 SHEVAT  5:06 pm candle lighting	<b>25</b> 22 SHEVAT 9:00 am Torah Study 9:00 am Learner's minyan 9:45 am Shabbat Services; Sam Hecht will be called to the Torah as a bar mitzvah 10:30 am Children's program 11:30 am Shabbat B'Yachad
<b>26</b> 23 SHEVAT 10:30 am Seminar with Seymour Kessler  5:00 pm Board of Directors meeting 7:00 pm Youth Education meeting	<b>27</b> 24 SHEVAT 4:00 pm Religious School	<b>28</b> 25 SHEVAT 4:30 pm Amitim  7:30 pm Advanced Talmud with Ilana Fodiman, at Beth Israel 7:30 pm Talk by journalist Stephen Fried	<b>29</b> 26 TEVET 7:15 am Morning Minyan  4:00 pm Religious School 7:30 pm Beginning Hebrew 7:30 pm Haftorah Trope with Jan Fischer	<b>30</b> 27 SHEVAT	<b>31</b> 28 SHEVAT  5:14 pm candle lighting	

# FEBRUARY 2003

# SHEVAT-ADAR I 5763

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						<b>1</b> 29 SHEVAT  9:00 am Torah Study 9:45 am Shabbat Services; Midrasha Shabbat
<b>2</b> 30 SHEVAT <b>Rosh Chodesh</b>  9:00 am Rosh Chodesh Service 10:30 am Seminar with Seymour Kessler  7:00 pm Ritual Committee meeting	<b>3</b> 1 ADAR 1 <b>Rosh Chodesh</b>  4:00 pm Religious School	<b>4</b> 2 ADAR 1 4:30 pm Amitim  7:30 pm Advanced Talmud with Ilana Fodiman, at Beth Israel 7:30 pm University Ave. Site Work Group	<b>5</b> 3 ADAR 1 7:15 am Morning Minyan  4:00 pm Religious School  7:30 pm Beginning Hebrew 7:30 pm Haftorah Trope with Jan Fischer	<b>6</b> 4 ADAR 1   7:30 pm Adult B'nai Mitzvah	<b>7</b> 5 ADAR 1     5:22 pm candle lighting	<b>8</b> 6 ADAR 1 9:00 am Torah Study 9:00 am Learner's Minyan 9:45 am Shabbat Services; Ethan Kimball will be called to the Torah as a bar mitzvah 10:30 am Children's Program 11:00 am Shabbat B'Yachad
<b>9</b> 7 ADAR 1	<b>10</b> 8 ADAR 1  4:00 pm Religious School  7:00 pm Mature Mavens  7:00 pm Social Action Committee	<b>11</b> 9 ADAR 1  4:30 pm Amitim  7:00 pm New Parent Education Series with Vicky Kelman, offsite 7:30 pm Advanced Talmud with Ilana Fodiman, at Beth Israel	<b>12</b> 10 ADAR 1 7:15 am Morning Minyan  4:00 pm Religious School 7:30 pm Beginning Hebrew 7:30 pm Haftorah Trope with Jan Fischer	<b>13</b> 11 ADAR 1  Time TBA Amitim workshop  7:00 pm Tiferet Group	<b>14</b> 12 SHEVAT     5:30 pm candle lighting	<b>15</b> 13 SHEVAT  9:00 am Torah Study 9:30 am Meditative Minyan 9:45 am Shabbat Services; drash by Julie Batz  <b>NO CHILDREN'S                      PROGRAM</b>
<b>16</b> 14 ADAR 1 <i>Purim Katan</i>	<b>17</b> 15 ADAR 1  <b>PRESIDENT'S DAY</b>  <b>NO RELIGIOUS                      SCHOOL</b>  <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>	<b>18</b> 16 ADAR 1 4:30 Amitim  7:30 pm Advanced Talmud with Ilana Fodiman, at Beth Israel 7:30 pm Membership Committee meeting	<b>19</b> 17 ADAR 1 7:15 am Morning Minyan  4:00 pm Religious School 7:30 pm Beginning Hebrew 7:30 pm Haftorah Trope with Jan Fischer	<b>20</b> 18 ADAR 1   7:30 pm University Ave. Site Work Group	<b>21</b> 19 ADAR 1    5:37 pm candle lighting	<b>22</b> 20 ADAR 1 9:00 am Torah Study 9:00 am Learner's minyan 9:45 am Shabbat Services; drash by Julie Weissman 10:30 am Children's program 11:30 am Shabbat B'Yachad
<b>23</b> 21 ADAR 1  9:30 am-12:00 noon <b>ANNUAL MEETING</b> at the North Berkeley Senior Center  10:00 am SBY Storytelling workshop 5:00 pm Board of Directors meeting 7:00 pm Youth Ed meeting	<b>24</b> 22 ADAR 1  4:00 pm Religious School	<b>25</b> 23 ADAR 1  4:30 pm Amitim  7:30 pm Advanced Talmud with Ilana Fodiman, at Beth Israel	<b>26</b> 24 ADAR 1 7:15 am Morning Minyan  4:00 pm Religious School 7:30 pm Beginning Hebrew 7:30 pm Haftorah Trope with Jan Fischer	<b>27</b> 25 ADAR 1	<b>28</b> 26 ADAR 1    5:44 pm candle lighting	

## RITUAL COMMITTEE

# Conservative Judaism

## Part I: History of the Movement

By Josh Gressel, Ritual Committee Chair

What does it mean to the average member of Netivot Shalom to be identified as a Conservative Jew? Why do we pick the synagogue we do? The research shows that very few Conservative Jews could articulate the principles on which their denomination is founded. Most of us have a vague sense of “not Reform/not Orthodox” which tells us who we’re *not*, but not who we are. The reasons for this theological ambiguity are complex. Certainly the fact that it was 100 years before the Conservative movement wrote a statement of principles (in 1988) has something to do with the lack of clarity we all feel.

In these articles on the Conservative movement, I want to address this ambiguity and hopefully help us have a more educated understanding of why we’ve made the choice we have. This month’s installment will cover the history of our movement. I think understanding our origins is necessary to understanding Conservative theology. Next month’s article will deal with its founding ideology and theological tenets.

I would like to begin this article and this series with the following quote:

All too often many of our [Conservative] members have only a vague understanding – or often, misunderstanding – of the Movement. They often think that one “graduates” from one movement in Judaism to another by becoming more “religious.” That is not true... There are essential differences among the movements and the decision to affiliate with any of them should be based on the tenets and philosophies it reflects. *The decision to be part of one movement and not another must be based not on how observant one is, but rather on how one is observant* (Garfinkel, in Dorff, p. 1, emphasis original).

**The historical roots of Conservative Judaism:** Gillman traces Conservative

Judaism via the Reform movement to the European Enlightenment, or *Haskalah*. Briefly, in about the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century Jews were exposed along with all of Europe to a new worldview which was to “let in the light” (thus “Enlightenment”) into what was thought to be the darkness that preceded it. The light was the light of reason, not received tradition or external authority. It is probably difficult for 21<sup>st</sup> century Americans to appreciate what a radical shift in consciousness this was because it was so successful and is so much a part of our worldview today. The Enlightenment shifted the balance of power from external authority (the state, the Church) to the individual.

For Jews this meant a few things. First, the Emancipation (the political process which accompanied the Enlightenment) allowed Jews to become more integrated into mainstream culture, becoming citizens of the emerging states founded on principles of Enlightenment and Emancipation (France in 1789, America in 1791). Second, with new political freedoms came threats to the ethnic integrity that was more easily maintained in the *shtetl*. Jews began reading books and philosophy from other cultures and were able to study in secular universities. This caused Jews to look at their religion in new, “enlightened” ways: “In short, if Jews were to be emancipated, then Judaism would have to be emancipated as well – emancipated from all that was primitive, undignified, superstitious, irrational, or generally not worthy of being embraced by a modern, sophisticated European” (Gillman, p. 13).

This is the context in which the Reform movement was born, seeking to “reform” Judaism so that it could survive in the new landscape of Enlightenment. Gillman emphasizes that the motivation of these Jewish reformers came from their passionate devotion to Judaism and their belief that without such reform it would not survive the new worldview. They looked courageously at all aspects of Jewish religious practice, from using Hebrew as the language of prayer, to circumcision, to the dietary laws. While the movement began in

Germany in the early 1800s, by mid-century the Jewish center of gravity began to shift to America.

The Reform movement had its more radical and its more conservative wings. One need only remember some of our own debates over minor innovations (to pause or not to pause before the *Sh’ma*, to say or not to say *al kol yoshvei tevel* in the Kaddish) to get a sense of what their rabbinic conferences were like when they debated whether to keep Shabbat on Saturday or move it to Sunday.

### The birth of Conservative Judaism

Already in Europe there was a conservative response to the Reform ideology being promulgated. It was most prominently articulated by Zechariah Frankel, who was chief rabbi of Dresden. He broke away from the Reform movement with which he was initially associated because he felt them too radical and hasty in their process. In 1854 he became head of a new rabbinical school, called The Jewish Theological Seminary of Breslau.

Frankel was attacked from the right for being no different than the Reform, most vociferously by Samson Raphael Hirsch, considered the father of Modern Orthodoxy. Frankel defended his views, saying that Jewish law developed in response to changing historical conditions and the authority for that change lay within the community, which would continue to determine the shape of Jewish belief and practice in every generation.

In contrast to the polar positions of Reform and Orthodoxy, Frankel was proposing a program of development that would be carefully disciplined, academically justified, and communally based. He attempted to authenticate his approach through an appeal to history and community. He was saying, in effect, that there was nothing radically new in his approach. Since the community had always sanctioned changes in Jewish beliefs and practices over time, it was in fact he, and not



Hirsch, who had captured the dynamic of Judaism over the ages (Gillman, pp. 22-23).

It's tempting to write that the American Conservative movement was borne out of the Reform because of shrimp and frog's legs. It would be more accurate to write that these forbidden foods were the proverbial straw that shattered the back of a fragile coalition within the Reform movement in America. It happened at the first U.S. Reform rabbinic ordination banquet in July 1883. This banquet was attended by leaders of all factions from the movement. To the surprise of many, the menu included clams, shrimp, frog's legs, beef, ice cream, and cheese. The traditionalists walked out. The split was finalized two years later following the Reform movement's 1885 Pittsburg platform, which rejected dietary laws, priestly purity, the idea that Jews are a nation, and the return of Jews to Israel.

In the U.S. the leader of traditional opposition to the Reform movement was Alexander Kohut, who studied at the Breslau seminary headed by Frankel. He spoke of how "the sphere of Reform must be limited, and nothing must be admitted whose results and conclusions cannot be foreseen, for the law must always be firmly established and irrevocable so far as concerns the revealed Law and Religion... The true idea of Liberty excludes the idea of License. Development does not mean Destruction. Recasting is a very different process from casting aside" (quoted in Gillman, p. 29).

The Conservative movement thus was founded in response to the Reform movement and hoped to be the spiritual home for everyone who wasn't Reform. This definition of "not Reform" has continued as a partial self-definition until today.

In both Europe and America, Conservative Judaism began with the formation of a rabbinic school, the one in Breslau in 1854 and the Jewish Theological Seminary (named after its Breslau counterpart) in New York in 1886. The other two organizational components of American Conservative Judaism — the rabbinic and congregational associations — were not formed until much later (the Rabbinical Assembly in 1901 and the United Synagogue of America in 1913). This gave the seminary primacy in setting the agenda for Conservative Judaism. As happened in Europe, the seminary was immediately

attacked by both the left and the right. The Reform accused it of being too Orthodox; the Orthodox charged that it was the same as Reform.

Founding a seminary is only a beginning to founding a movement. There was a need to reach out and enlist congregations. The natural direction would be to reach out to the flood of new immigrants coming to America from Eastern Europe at the end of the 1800's. These Jews came from small communities and were more traditional in practice. They mistrusted the Reform but needed a bridge to the modern American society that Conservative Judaism seemed to provide.

A series of meetings were held at the turn of the century between Jews involved in the seminary and Jews from the synagogues of the new immigrants. The two cultures clashed and the meetings — rather than raising money and membership for the Conservative movement — actually led to the increased support and funding for Etz Chaim, a lower East Side traditional yeshiva. This yeshiva years later became Yeshiva University, the seminary for the Orthodox movement. So in effect, the Conservative movement's unsuccessful wooing of the Eastern European Jews helped to create the Modern Orthodox movement.

The seminary and the movement were on the verge of extinction because of a chronic lack of funding. The seminary eventually was saved in 1901 when \$500,000 was raised on its behalf — by a group of wealthy Reform Jews. They did this out of a sense of communal responsibility. They knew the Reform movement would never be able to incorporate the Eastern European immigrants. Despite Conservative Judaism's lack of success in bringing the immigrant congregations into the fold, the Reform leaders believed only the Seminary rabbis would be able to help the acculturation process in America.

With this influx of cash the seminary was able to get Solomon Schechter to agree to head it. Schechter had an international reputation because of his work with the Cairo genizah fragments. According to Gillman, he assembled a faculty of scholars that made the Jewish Theological Seminary the foremost center for advanced Jewish studies in the world. He embodied the two elements that Conservative Judaism was to be about — a modern mind and outlook coupled with a strong traditional Jewish

background and practice. Schechter was followed at the school by a series of more or less like-minded men who held the presidency for extremely long tenures. There were only four presidents from its founding through 1972. During this period, the seminary grew to have an enrollment of 500 students. The congregational organization, founded in 1913 with 22 congregations, had 800 by 1972. The Rabbinical Assembly, founded in 1901, had over 1,300 rabbis by this time as well.

Reform Judaism articulated its position in a clear manner in a series of platforms over the years. In contrast, Conservative Judaism did not write its position until *Emet V-Emunah* in 1988. Gillman writes that "[Conservative Judaism] shares the ambiguity of all middle-of-the-road positions, it eludes clear definition, and it is inherently more complex than the polar positions.... But it also represents a forthright attempt to confront the challenges of being an authentic religious Jew in the modern age by recognizing the claims of both the past and the present" (p. 31).

One of the key differences between Conservative Judaism and Orthodox Judaism is in the way it is studied. While most Orthodox *yeshivot* focus exclusively on Talmud and Jewish law, the seminary modeled itself on the American university, with courses in Jewish philosophy, history and literature. The articles I have written for the newsletter, which look at Jewish prayer and practice from an academic/research point of inquiry, are very different than what would be welcome in an Orthodox publication. The Conservative worldview allows, for better and for worse, for the person to look at the religion from a more critical standpoint. While this satisfies our rational mind, if everything is open to critical inquiry, what makes it holy? This will be answered more directly when dealing with the theological tenets of Conservative Judaism in next month's article.

## Sources

*Emet ve-Emunah: Statement of Principles of Conservative Judaism.* (1988).  
 Garfinkel, S. (1977). Preface to Dorff, E. (1977). *Conservative Judaism: Our Ancestors to Our Descendants.* New York: United Synagogue of America.  
 Gillman, N. (1993). *Conservative Judaism: the new century.* West Orange, NJ: Behrman House, Inc.

YOUTH EDUCATION

**Amitim Retreat**

By Karen Hecht

In October the Amitim group, (including siblings and parents), enjoyed a shabbaton at Shenoa in Philo, California. The physical surroundings were ideal. As Sam Hecht noted, "it was amazingly spiritual davening in the beautiful countryside."

The Shenoa facilities included clean and comfortable private rooms, an airy dining hall for our shared meals, a bright meditation room which served as our sanctuary, an inviting garden filled with vegetables, herbs and flowers, and even a swimming pool with bracing sixty-four degree water. We ate, played and davened together and in the process formed lasting bonds. Ariel Platt commented that he "got to get a lot closer to some of the people that [he] might not have made friends with otherwise." And Lucy Kahn said, "as well as hanging with my chaverim I got to become closer to God in a spiritual way."

Everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. Lucy said, "the trip was so fun!" Ariel added, "I totally enjoyed the retreat." And, as Sam summed it up, "the religious study and the environment were wonderful." The entire weekend was a lovely blend of the spiritual and the fun — a microcosm of life.

**REMINDER:** Religious School resumes on **Monday, January 6.**

**Karen & Tony Hecht**

invite you to share in their simcha

on Saturday, January 25, 2003,

parashat Yitro,

as their son,

**Samuel Hecht,**

is called to the Torah

as a bar mitzvah.

ADULT EDUCATION

**A Look at What's in the Works**

By Ethel Murphey, Adult Education Co-Chair

I've always wanted to use the word penultimate in a sentence and now I have the chance. This is the penultimate column I will be writing, as I will end my position as co-Chair at the Annual Meeting in February. Robin Braverman will continue as Chair and I would hope that she continues to have your support and involvement. By definition Netivot Shalom is a participatory synagogue and we "make things happen" only by staying involved. I urge you to attend the Annual Meeting and to think about increasing your participation in the congregation.

Adult Education events are always listed in the weekly announcements, both on-line and in the handout on Shabbat. What do we have planned for the near future?

- Seymour Kessler's 4-part seminar on Levanis, Soleveitchik and Leibowitz begins on **January 5** (10:30 a.m. at the shul). He prefers advanced registration so call him at (510) 525-1526 or email him at SEYKESSLER@aol.com for information or to enroll.
- We're planning a reading by investigative journalist Stephen Fried. He has just written a book titled *The New Rabbi — A Congregation Searches for Its Leader* about the process and history of the large, prominent Conservative Har Zion in Philadelphia and their quest for a new rabbi. The talk is scheduled for **January 28** at 7:30 p.m. in the shul library. Watch the weekly announcement for details.
- Talmud classes will continue on Tuesday evenings.
- Hebrew classes will continue on Wednesdays. There is room for all levels of Hebrew study.
- Jan Fisher's Torah trope class will also be on Wednesday evenings.
- Rachel Brodie will start a new round of "Women in the Bible" lectures on Thursday evenings.
- Rabbi Serena Eisenberg will present a four-session Sunday morning class on *t'fillin*.
- Sometime in January planning for next spring's Tikun Leyl Shavuot will start. Anyone interested in teaching or leading discussion on Erev Shavuot — or anyone with ideas for the sessions — can contact Robin at (925) 979-1998 or email her at Rivkah48@aol.com.
- We will continue to offer Torah study each Shabbat morning and a Learner's Minyan every 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Shabbat. A new group has formed to explore differing ways of Shabbat observance. Look at the weekly announcements to learn when this group is getting together.
- Several members are readying talks and workshops in the coming spring. Passover workshops will not be neglected!!!
- Don't overlook the happenings at the Berkeley Richmond JCC. March will bring another installment of the not-to-be-missed Jewish Music Festival and a weeklong Women's Poetry Festival is in the works.

**Youth Education Committee Meeting...**

will be held **January 26** at 7:00 p.m. at the shul. We will discuss the Religious School curriculum.

## MIDRASHA

**A Tale of Two Women**

By Diane Bernbaum, Midrasha Director

Ordinarily, I use this column to tell you how I am educating the teens of this community. This month, please allow me a personal indulgence to instead talk about how I was educated. This is the story of two wonderful women, born a few months and a few hundred miles apart, nearly 85 years ago in the heart of the American Midwest. They only met once but their lives intersected through me. They shared, among other things, a passion for education, particularly Jewish education and both of them had a share in making me who I am today. Some of you may have known one of them and a few the other, but probably most of you never met either.

Soon after Ed and I moved to Berkeley in 1976, I began teaching religious school. One of my fellow teachers, a graduate student, told me that in the next year, she would no longer be teaching with me because she had just received an offer from "an old lady" to help her write a textbook of biblical Hebrew. The "old lady" turned out to be Ethelyn Simon, who was then, if my math is right, about five years younger than I am now. A few years later I got to know Ethelyn when we both sat on the board of the Agency for Jewish Education, the predecessor of today's Center for Jewish Living and Learning at the Federation. She was wise, smart, innovative, up-front about what she thought and it was clear that she knew more about Jewish education in the East Bay than most of us.

Her story was that she grew up in Omaha, came out to go to CAL, returned to the Midwest, married, had three children, became a single mom, packed the kids in a car, moved 2000 miles to Oakland, and started a thriving business (Lakeshore Learning Materials). When I came to know her she had just passed the reins of the business to her children and in midlife decided that what she really wanted to do was teach people biblical Hebrew. She hired a few educators to help her write the book, rented a tiny office on College Avenue and formed a publishing company, EKS, after her initials, to bring it to reality. We sometimes used the book at Midrasha. It was a wonderfully clear explanation of Biblical Hebrew, with funny fairy tale texts thrown in as a treat.

At around the same time (and I'm sorry I don't know the exact chronology), Ethelyn decided she wanted to read the entire Tanakh in Hebrew. She hired Vicky Kelman to be her teacher and do it with her. Vicky wisely suggested that that kind of learning might be more fun in a group and so Ethelyn invited a few of her friends to learn with her. One of my colleagues kept missing meetings that I self-righteously thought she should have been at, to be at her "Tanakh group." I couldn't imagine what would be so important. When this colleague was about to take a job out of town, I asked if I could take her place in the group. She politely told me this was a group by invitation only but since I knew Ethelyn, perhaps I could wrangle an invitation. We were all standing at a post Bat Mitzvah kiddush, so I marched right over to Ethelyn and with great chutzpah said I wanted to join her group. She graciously said yes.

Here's how the group worked. The population over the years changed a bit, but it was usually five or six people, all very busy in the rest of their lives, but all of whom carved out a few hours one day a week to come together to study. They had started with Genesis and were up to Judges. Considering it took several weeks often to

go through just one Biblical chapter, this represented years of study. Taking turns around the table, one participant would read half a sentence in Hebrew, up to the "echnachtah" trope mark, translate it, then do the same with the end of the sentence. Sometimes that would be it, but more often a single sentence could engender a 20-minute conversation. Some of the participants had a background that prepared them for this. (I had gone to a Hebrew High School where all we did was read and translate the Bible and read Rashi commentaries. I wish I'd had something more like Midrasha, but at least I was prepared for Ethelyn's class). Others knew no Hebrew until they had studied with Ethelyn. After painstakingly going through her Biblical Hebrew primer, they were invited to join our group. I began to love coming not only because I was studying the Bible, but because these women (and an occasional man) had become my weekly support group.

The plan was to go through the entire Tanakh, but when we got to Isaiah, the difficulty of the Hebrew poetry got to us. We turned around and went back to Genesis. Sometime after that Vicki Kelman, who had been the facilitator of the group for many years, took a job that made her unable to continue. Ethelyn asked me to do it. I told her I wasn't qualified. She pooh-pooed that idea. I relented. Being the facilitator meant that you definitely needed to prepare ahead, look up the derivation of difficult Hebrew words and know the commentaries. You took your turn around the table, reading and translating just like everyone else, but if there were any questions, all the eyes would turn to you. Oh, and when you walked into the group there would be a discreetly placed envelope with some cash in it waiting for you. It wasn't easy for me. My strengths are in working with teens and with faculty members, not with the Hebrew language. After two years she gently took me aside and asked me to "prepare more". I told her I was spending hours preparing and this was as good as it gets. I happily found her one of my colleagues to take over. I was proud of the fact that I'd gotten us through Leviticus, not an easy book to read.

I stayed in the group for a long time, but eventually I left it, but remained close to all of the participants. One Friday in November, Rabbi Kelman tracked me down at my mother's home in Arizona and told me that Ethelyn had died. At that moment I was getting dressed for a celebration of my mother's 85 birthday. The two women were nearly exactly the same age. The day I heard of Ethelyn's death was the day of my mom's birthday. My brother, sister and I and our spouses were hosting a Shabbat dinner at my brother's home for 30 of my mother's friends. The evening was magical. She asked that we begin the evening just like we used to 40 or 50 years ago, with me lighting the candles, my brother chanting the kiddush and my sister making the motzi on the challah. The guests were mainly new friends that my mother has made in the nearly three years since my father died. After dinner I called everyone together and they got to tell my mom what she meant to them. They painted a picture of a woman for whom learning is uppermost. She is a member of two book groups. She takes a short story class at a local community college. Every semester she takes several classes offered in the Jewish community. At age 79 she trained in a two-year course to be an art docent and continues to both work at the museum and attend weekly lectures for the docents. She is on the Hillel board of directors and is involved with the Judaic Studies department at the local university. She attends concerts and theater and plays a lot of bridge, nourishing both her neshama and her mind.

We find our teachers and our role models at many places in our lives. You should all be so lucky.

SHABBAT B'YACHAD

Welcome New Families

As Shabbat B'Yachad enters its fourth year, it continues to grow! While we said good-bye to a number of children who "graduated" this September and started kindergarten, we have also welcomed quite a few new families in the past half year. Many of these families are already quite involved— sponsoring kiddush, shopping for special events, participating in parent workshops, telling Torah stories, and helping set and clean up our room. We appreciate and encourage all of this effort!

We hope that our newer members find in SBY a community of friends, a meaningful family davening experience, and a place in which to experience together the joy and wonder of Shabbat. We would like to officially welcome the following families to the Shabbat B'Yachad community (please accept our apologies if your name was inadvertently left out or misspelled):

- Dara Efron & Karen Sukenic, Emma, age 3
- Ruth Ehrenkrantz & Spencer Klein, Micah, age 2-1/2
- Heike & Eric Friedman, Hannah, age 2
- Elisabeth Kashner & Jonathan Stern, Robert Ezra, age 1-1/2
- Norma Kaufman & Michael Meltzer, Jordana, age 1-1/2
- Robin Levi & John Hayes, Hannah, age 2
- Lisa & Howard Miller, Hannah, age 1-1/2
- Anne Schonfield & Peter Miller, Theo, age 1-1/2
- Miriam Senturia and Eliana, age 3
- Devora-Leah Wolf and Benjamin, age (almost) 1

To register for Shabbat B'Yachad, clip and complete this form and send it with your annual registration fee (\$55 for Netivot Shalom members, \$165 for non-members) to the shul office.

**REGISTER FOR SHABBAT B'YACHAD**

Parent(s)' first and last names \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Your child(ren)'s English name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Child(ren)'s Hebrew name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Birthdate(s) \_\_\_\_\_

**The Newsletter Needs Your Help!**

Are you looking for a volunteer opportunity? The newsletter needs a little help. Please contact Karen Friedman at 510-520-0728 or newsletter@netivotshalom.org to find out what you can do.

**JTS Online: Courses for Professional Development & Adult Growth**

The following courses and learning opportunities are being offered through the Kaminer Center-JTS online this winter. Some are geared towards Jewish professionals, while others are perfect for laypeople. Courses follow a week-by-week schedule, but participants can choose when to log in — from their desks at work, from home after the kids have gone to sleep, really anytime. For casual adult learners, we are offering a number of eight-week courses in our winter session, starting the week of **January 15** and costing \$50 or less.

**Teaching Jewish Liturgy, with Dr. Steven M. Brown**

Tefillah, prayer, takes place in many settings. Learn the curricular and pedagogic skills to create learning experiences around it as well.

**Men and Women in Rabbinic Literature, with Rabbi Patricia Fenton**

Master key Talmudic texts which elucidate rabbinic approaches to gender issues and the role of women in Judaism and larger society.

**Introduction to Talmud, with Rabbi Joel Roth**

The Talmud is the most important work of Jewish law and lore. Learn from a renowned teacher how to navigate the unique language and logic of the Talmud, and gain the skills needed for further exploration of the "sea of Talmud."

**Rashi's commentary on the Torah, with Dr. Robert Harris**

Read Rashi's commentaries on a variety of texts, learn his methodologies and develop the mastery needed to read him in the original.

**Intensive Elementary Hebrew, with Danielle Sharon**

Sharpen Hebrew skills with this intensive, second-level Hebrew course.

**Classics of the Jewish Tradition I, with Dr. Bruce Nielsen**

A critical introduction to key Jewish texts and literary works, from the Bible through Piyut, with JTS faculty offering special units on their areas of expertise.

For more information about these intensive, rewarding courses, which may be taken for credit or audited at a special reduced rate, please go to <http://courses.jtsa.edu/credit>. Of course, the [learn.jtsa.edu](http://learn.jtsa.edu) site, now in its fifth year, continues to bring free, worthwhile Jewish learning to thousands around the world each week. To see what's new click on <http://learn.jtsa.edu>.

**For more information, contact:**

Rabbi Joshua Heller  
 Director of Distance Learning and Educational Technology  
 Jewish Theological Seminary of America  
 Mailbox 90, 3080 Broadway New York, NY 10027  
[joheller@jtsa.edu](mailto:joheller@jtsa.edu) • 212-678-8819



## Ethelyn K. Simon, Chava Bat Yaakov V'sarah Eulogy Delivered on November 25, 2002/20 Kislev 5763

By Rabbi Stuart Kelman

While preparing to speak this afternoon, I came across the story of a famous rabbi who, as he approached the end of his life, gave the following set of instructions to his family and his students: "My dear ones, my friends, when the time comes to bury me, let your words be few and simple and honest. Remember, I will be there listening to what you have to say!"

This was strikingly close to Ethelyn's instructions to her family and to Rabbi Chester and me. I'm sure this comes as no surprise to those of you who knew her! She was a woman about whom it would be appropriate for many of you to stand here today and speak. But in her exquisite elegance she chose to have just a few words that are simple and honest. And while we will hold true to her wishes, there remains what I would call "the lore of Ethelyn Simon" — stories that you and I know about the remarkable life of this grand woman. While she asked us to be brief and honest, she left no such restrictions on you! So tell Ethelyn stories. There are so many! And these stories tell us about who she really was.

For me, Ethelyn was always about 'learning': *Talmud Torah Keneged Kulam* — Jewish learning is more important than anything. I remember a story of her flying from Omaha to Chicago to go hear some Jewish speaker. It turned out to be Martin Buber! For as long as I've known her, she always had her Bible study group — and whether it was Vicky or Diane or Nitzhia teaching, it almost didn't matter who taught, as long as the group continued, as it does till now. Whether at her house, or the old EKS on College Ave. or someone else's house, that study group was something that was rarely if ever cancelled. It just kept going. "Before I go, I'm going to make it all the way through the Bible", she would say. At one point, I understand, they were up to the book of Judges, and she decided to start again in Genesis! I guess that she was not only dedicated to learning; she also wanted to live a long life!

She believed that anyone could learn, and she set about to prove that. If there was no Hebrew primer, well, that just meant that she had to write the textbook — and create a company to publish it! (All, please remember, as a second career.) After moving from Omaha to Oakland, raising three children, figuring out that the community needed a place that would create, publish and sell materials of quality to teachers (which meant founding Lakeshore Learning Materials), she embarked on this second career. Not only did she hold the belief that anyone could learn, but she was also prepared to teach. She taught Hebrew to anyone — as long as you did the homework! Countless numbers of people learned the *alef/bet* from her. And not only from her personally, but from the materials she produced at EKS.

She, herself, was the example of adult learning. At age 75 (or thereabout) she mastered the computer and turned to writing her amazing autobiography. Then she found the internet and Amazon.com; she found out that you didn't have to go out to a bookstore; you could order a book online and it would be delivered to you! More important, if some topic came up in conversation, she would go to Amazon, order a book on the subject and within a few days, it would be on your doorstep. God, are there stories!

Ethelyn taught us all about aging. I can say that I learned more about honesty and the "golden years" from Ethelyn than from any book I've read. She was brutally honest about her feelings, struggling to be courageous in the face of pain. She spoke frankly and openly

about the challenges of growing old and fought to hold on to a vision of what could be, while still being realistic about aging. That was one of her endearing traits: her honesty and frankness about most things. Ethelyn always held an opinion — you could count on it! She spoke her mind. She could be difficult, and sometimes you just didn't want to hear. She would argue, but it would be with respect and always with the intent to build, not to destroy.

Charlie, Mike, Sarann, Laurie, Wendy, Jim — I believe that you, her children, know best about how deeply important she held family to be. Every conversation I had with her, she talked about you, and about your families, her nieces and nephews and her extended family and her siblings, Michael, Beth and Ruth. I guess that those Midwest values, instilled at a young age, really held. And the pride that she held for all your many accomplishments was part the very fabric of her being. Stories about you, about her family in Omaha, stories from the early years here in Oakland, stories about Buddy, z"l — all these seemed to center around you and home. Her home on Trestle Glen was the gathering point for you, and for many of us, too. For she showed us very often how to translate the Jewish value of *hachnasat orchim*, hospitality, into reality.

Each and every one of you are here today to pay tribute to this grand woman. I ask you to think about the ways she influenced your life. Remember her dedication to learning, her opinions about what you should be doing with your life, her opinions about world events, her willingness to teach, her belief in institutions (I think that at one point she and Buddy belonged to every synagogue in the area) — this was Ethelyn Simon.

She was very much a part of many intersecting communities and had a profound influence on institutions as well as individuals. When she saw something that needed to happen, she made it happen, whether it was an elevator at Sinai to help people get to the chapel, or assistance with a fledgling synagogue called Netivot Shalom, or a new Ramah Day Camp or the Agency for Jewish Education. Sure, her opinions came along with her actions, but her love was obvious.

There is one other way in which Ethelyn stood out. She always believed in God. I remember her once saying that in the presence of many of her contemporaries who would profess true allegiance to science, she always proclaimed a belief in God. When others said that science would take the place of God, she stood firm in her belief. *Ner Adonai nishmat adam* (Proverbs 20:27), "the soul of a person is the candle of God." This verse captures the soul of Ethelyn Simon. A candle can be snuffed out, or it can burn out with the passage of time. But a candle can also be used to kindle other candles, and to pass the flame on to others, where its flame will continue to burn long after the mother candle itself has been extinguished.

There is a verse that I've been thinking about ever since I learned of Ethelyn's passing. It's a strange verse to use in this context, but I can't get it out of my mind. It's a verse that's often used at a wedding, between two souls whose lives are intertwined with each other: *nafshi keshurah benafshech* — My 'nefesh', my being, is bound up in yours. Ethelyn, I just know you're listening, *nafshenu keshurah benafshech*; the souls of all of us here, are bound up with yours. You have touched us in ways we have yet to discover. May the soul of Chava bat Yaakov v'Sarah be for a blessing. *Tehi nismata berucha*.

# Y A H R Z E I T L I S T

## Misha Berakh

when we put away the torahs  
 when we say the blessings  
 for those called up to read  
 and for our nation  
 and for the state of Israel  
 he walks around asking  
 for the names of those  
 who are ill the put-upon  
 the silent sufferers  
 the baby born already bearing  
 scars of an impossible life  
 and imminent death  
 those burdened by encrustation  
 of time and tears

the names tumble forth  
 here eagerly there softly  
 with a silent sob  
 sometimes almost routinely  
 catastrophe having been  
 a household companion for years

Michael Sarah David Mark  
 Miriam Ruth Edgar Sam  
 Susan and Charles  
 another David another Sam  
 Alfred Esther Leah Louise  
 it takes a full five minutes  
 to gather them up  
 sew them into the fabric  
 of the misha berakh  
 conveying our prayers  
 for recuperation for recovery

we who are healthy watch  
 sometimes surprised  
 as we hear our own voices  
 call out a name acknowledging  
 ties to torment we thought  
 we could deny fearful  
 yet hopeful that some day  
 someone will care enough  
 to utter our own names  
 in a time of need

he completes the prayer  
 it binds us together  
 it salves our wounds

Julian A. Waller  
 September, 2002

William Samelson	28 Tevet/January 2
Edwin Posner	28 Tevet/January 2
Gertrude Aronstein	29 Tevet/January 3
Frieda Elbogen	29 Tevet/January 3
Rosalie Cohen	29 Tevet/January 3
Benjamin Goor	1 Shevat/January 4
Ellen C. Isaak	1 Shevat/January 4
Mary Rosenblatt	1 Shevat/January 4
Yoseph Bruchiel	2 Shevat/January 5
Max Grosz	2 Shevat/January 5
Nathan Solomon	2 Shevat/January 5
Florence Marson	3 Shevat/January 6
Nancy Kennedy	3 Shevat/January 6
Nina Chaya Davis	5 Shevat/January 8
Harold Seder	5 Shevat/January 8
Regina Beer Lichtenstein	7 Shevat/January 10
Sarah Cohen Stahl	7 Shevat/January 10
Chaim Radousky	7 Shevat/January 10
Mollie Levine	8 Shevat/January 11
Leonard Fox	8 Shevat/January 11
F. R. Scott	9 Shevat/January 12
Paul Madonik	9 Shevat/January 12
Binyamina Lawrence Cohen	10 Shevat/January 13
Rose Milkman Shandling	10 Shevat/January 13
Charmin Knock	10 Shevat/January 13
Sidney Edelstone	10 Shevat/January 13
Cantor Don Fischer	12 Shevat/January 15
Sylvia Facher	12 Shevat/January 15
Harry Rappaport	12 Shevat/January 15
Minnie Mandel Zeff	15 Shevat/January 18
Harry Cohen	15 Shevat/January 18
Samuel Kraus	15 Shevat/January 18
Shirley Burnstein	15 Shevat/January 18
William Mandel	16 Shevat/January 19
Barnet Kaprow	16 Shevat/January 19
William Spielman	16 Shevat/January 19
Frieda Bloom	16 Shevat/January 19
David Hellman	17 Shevat/January 20
Harry Valas	17 Shevat/January 20
David Sendowski	17 Shevat/January 20
Phil Rothblatt	17 Shevat/January 20
Pearl Max	18 Shevat/January 21
Goldye Spilky	18 Shevat/January 21
Chan Su Kim	20 Shevat/January 23
Louis Kahn	23 Shevat/January 26
Moishe ben Yudel HaCohen	24 Shevat/January 27
Ruth Blachman	24 Shevat/January 27
Joseph E. Gould	26 Shevat/January 29
Seymour Breslow	26 Shevat/January 29
Edith Shapiro	26 Shevat/January 29
Julia De Lorraine Levin	26 Shevat/January 29
Cynthia Walter Drazen	27 Shevat/January 30
Lee Valas	28 Shevat/January 31
Leonard Shapiro	29 Shevat/February 1
Fanya Cohen	29 Shevat/February 1
Flora Spitz	29 Shevat/February 1
Florence B. Levine	30 Shevat/February 2
David Wunderlich	30 Shevat/February 2
Ida M. Cohen	2 Adar I/February 4
Marion Morris	3 Adar/February 5
Norma (Naomi) Lewis	5 Adar/February 7
Murray Walter	6 Adar I/February 8
Esther Lipow	10 Adar I/February 12
Abraham Levine	11 Adar/February 13
Benjamin Gottlieb	11 Adar/February 13

# DONATIONS TO NETIVOT SHALOM

**FOR YOUR GENEROUS GIFTS,  
THANK YOU TO:**

**Avi Shragai**, for library and office help  
**Barbara Bibel, Lee Feinstein and Margot Lucoff**, for library help  
**Norman Rosenblatt**, for his DSL and computer expertise once again!  
**Brenda Goldstein**, for inscribing the bnai mitzvah certificates  
**Sharon Todd**, who donated funds directly to CNS because she was unable to get to the Afikomen Bookstore sale  
**Stephanie Davis**, for a coffee pot  
**John Reynolds**, for his generous gift of numerous (non-profit/office management) books to add to our library

**ADULT ED**

**Dina & Robert Beck** in honor of Ilana Fodiman

**BUILDING FUND**

**Thomas & Betty Sue Seaton** in honor of Mike Irwin's 60th birthday  
**Steve & Karen Bovarnick** in honor of Jeanne Reisman's birthday  
**Ralph & Hadassah Kramer** in memory of Norman Kramer, z"l

**E-SCRIP**

**Ann Swidler & Claude Fischer**

**GENERAL FUND**

**Andrea Altschuler & David Finn** in honor of Deb Fink & Aaron Katler's wedding  
**Sheryl Negrin** in honor of the Yizkor Service '02  
**Mr. & Mrs. Sidney Stahl** in memory of Harvey Stahl  
**Mr & Mrs. Stephen Brown** in memory of Harvey Stahl

**Jean Pickus** in honor of the bar mitzvah of Simon Pickus  
**Jeremy Lieberman & Adriene Concus** to help cover the costs of room rental for Samson Eli Lieberman's *bris* on 9/28/02

**KIDDUSH FUND**

**Ruth Konoff & Ben Hermalin** in honor of the bat mitzvah of Rose Hermalin on 10/5/02  
**Debbie & Jerry Isaak-Shapiro**

**RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND**

**Diane & Edwin Bernbaum** in honor of Navah Kelman's engagement to Michael Becker  
**Karen Friedman** in honor of David Marcus' birthday  
**Joann & Charles Kaplan**, in memory of Ethelyn Simon  
**Jeremy Lieberman & Adriene Concus**

**SHABBAT B'YACHAD**

**Dina & Robert Beck** in honor of Shabbat B'Yachad

**TORAH FUND**

**Knut & Laura Grossmann** in memory of Rudolf Grossmann's *yahrzeit*

**YOUTH EDUCATION**

**Rabbi Stuart & Vicky Kelman** for purchase of tapes for Youth Ed  
**Wendy Rosov** in honor of all YNL Staff & Volunteers  
**Alan Katler** in honor of Deb Fink & Aaron Katler's wedding

**YAD ETHELYN SIMON FUND**

**Rabbi Stuart & Vicky Kelman**

**HARVEY STAHL MEMORIAL**

**Dr. Stacy Roback** in memory of Harvey Stahl, z"l

**YOUTH ED SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

**Hope & Noah Alper** in honor of Robbie Alper becoming a bar mitzvah

**YOM KIPPUR APPEAL**

**Gregory & Ruth Morris**

**We welcome  
your gifts...  
Make a  
donation  
to Netivot  
Shalom using  
the form on  
the back  
page of this  
newsletter.**

**Thanks!**

When planning a simcha like a Bar/Bat Mitzvah that has an accompanying "feast", Mazon-A Jewish Response to Hunger offers a way for you to donate a portion of the money you spend to help combat hunger around the world. Please visit the "How You Can Help" page of <http://www.mazon.org>.

**TO ADD A NAME(S) TO THE YAHRZEIT LIST, FILL OUT THE INFORMATION BELOW AND MAIL, E-MAIL OR FAX**

(include only names of departed parents, spouses, sibings or children)

MAIL TO: Congregation Netivot Shalom  
1841 Berkeley Way  
Berkeley, CA 94703

E-MAIL TO: [administrator@netivotshalom.org](mailto:administrator@netivotshalom.org) • FAX TO: (510) 549-9448

NAME OF DECEASED: (English name) \_\_\_\_\_

(Hebrew name, if possible) \_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF DEATH: (civil date) \_\_\_\_\_

(Hebrew date, if possible) \_\_\_\_\_

YOUR NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

RELATIONSHIP TO DECEASED: \_\_\_\_\_



NON-PROFIT RATE  
 U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
 BERKELEY, CA  
 PERMIT NO. 106

**Congregation Netivot Shalom**  
**1841 Berkeley Way**  
**Berkeley, CA 94703**

**Issue Date: January, 2003 / Tevet-Shevat, 5763**  
**Frequency: Monthly**  
**Issue Number: Volume 14, Number 1**

**CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED**

# MAKE A DONATION

We wish to make a donation to Congregation Netivot Shalom. Enclosed is my/our check payable to:  
**Congregation Netivot Shalom**  
**1841 Berkeley Way**  
**Berkeley, CA 94703**

**Donor(s) Information:**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Street \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

**Please honor the following person/event:**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Street \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

**This donation is intended for the following:**

- Adult Education
- Building Fund
- Cuba Fund
- Dinners for the Homeless
- General Fund
- Kiddush Fund
- Library Fund
- Max & Cecelia Rosenheimer Camp Scholarship Fund
- Newsletter
- Rabbi's Discretionary Fund
- Shabbat B'Yachad
- Torah Study
- Yad Ethelyn Simon Fund
- Yamim Nora'im
- Youth Education
- Youth Education Scholarship Fund

**Thank you!**