



Congregation
Netivot Shalom

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FROM THE RABBI **Elijah and You!**

By Rabbi Stuart Kelman

Now that I have your attention, let me explain. Yes, though it is February as I write this column, I know that the issues I want to discuss are relevant, even before Pesah, when Elijah formally appears. When he does show up, we open the door for him, symbolizing, among other things, our desire to provide food and hospitality for all.

Hakbnasat orehim — welcoming guests — is the formal concept. It's part of our mission statement and our obligation both as a community and as individuals. So it was quite shocking to learn from a former congregant that for three years, during which he attended shul fairly regularly, he was invited to someone's home only once for a Shabbat meal. And it is also difficult to hear other stories of guests and "regulars" who let me know that we are not quite the friendly place we claim to be.

The good news is that we have an opportunity, as our tradition suggests, to change and to truly accept this obligation on ourselves. I have undoubtedly overstated the case to make a point, because I know that when we began our shul, we all wanted *kiddush* after shul on Shabbat to be more than just wine and cookies. We wanted to provide something more substantial so people could congregate, meet, talk and gather as a community. We could provide food for all, but we could also provide an opportunity for people to meet and greet.

So here we are — 15 years later — and we simply need to do more. Here are two proposals: First, after shul each Shabbat, the chair of the Community Building Committee or the president or someone delegated by them would stand up and announce: "If there is anyone who needs or wants a place for lunch, or anyone who has some seats available at their table, please meet in the designated corner of shul so we can match you up." I would hope that during the prior week, you could call Katya and Joel Gurvein, who have agreed to coordinate this effort at the beginning, and tell them that you have room at your table. This is the first part of the *mitzvah*. The second is to find someone during the public *kiddush* whom you don't know (member or not) and say "Shabbat Shalom." It's easy and it's hard at the same time.

Second, I've just learned that there are certain individuals in the congregation who need a ride to and from shul on Shabbat

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FROM THE PRESIDENT **Strategic Planning: Building a Stronger Netivot Shalom Community**

By Carol Cunradi

First, I'd like to thank those of you who have e-mailed, called or come up to me after services to express your support for me as I begin my term as president. I really appreciate your encouragement — it means a lot to me. My only request is that when you receive a call asking you to volunteer for a Netivot Shalom program or event, say yes! I believe that having an active membership that views volunteering as the norm is one of the keys to ensuring that my tenure as president is successful.

These are very exciting times at Netivot Shalom, and they are times of transition. As we anticipate the move into our new home, we have the responsibility and opportunity to think through many strategic issues, including how we can attract and retain new members, and how we can put ourselves on a solid financial footing that will ensure that our programmatic plans are sustainable into the future.

Towards that end, the board has approved a strategic planning process, to be led by Joe Meresman, who will assemble a group of appointed individuals to meet over the next few months to develop near-term and long-term strategic plans. Near-term goals are to (1) review and update existing operations and capital plan, including expectations regarding membership dues, other sources of operating revenue, size and timing of building assessment, and required membership growth; (2) define alternative approaches for achieving financial, operational, program and staff requirements; (3) assess feasibility and implications of alternative near-term approaches on Netivot Shalom governance and operational structure; (4) describe example decisions and initiatives that would be expected to flow from adoption of alternative near-term approaches; (5) rank the feasibility, attractiveness and consistency of alternative near-term approaches; and (6) integrate high-ranked alternative approaches into a proposal for the near-term strategic plan. Please note, however, that at the time of this writing, the committee has not yet been completed. As this occurs, the participants may alter the committee's scope and focus.

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When Pesah Begins on Saturday Night (e.g., April 23, 2005)

By Rabbi Stuart Kelman

In order to assure the proper observance of Shabbat, many of the rituals that are usually performed on the night or the day before the first *seder* of Pesah are moved back to Thursday or Friday.

***Siyyum bekbolim* — fast of the firstborn:** Thursday morning, April 21, 7:15 a.m. One who is a firstborn should fast on the day before Passover in commemoration of the deliverance from Egypt. Typically, congregations conduct a *siyyum*, a public completion of some part of Talmudic literature, on the morning before Passover. Every time we do a *siyyum*, it is followed by a *se'udat mitzvah*, a festive meal, which follows the performance of certain *mitzvot*. Since firstborns are present, they may eat and, therefore, do not need to fast for the rest of the day. Since a fast for the firstborn cannot take place on Shabbat or be moved to Friday, the *siyyum* and the *se'udat mitzvah* will be held on Thursday, April 21.

***Bedikat hametz* — the search for hametz:** Thursday evening, April 21. This is customarily done on the evening before Passover. This year, however, it is to be conducted on Thursday evening. The appropriate blessing is recited. For those of you who are keeping enough *hametz* for Shabbat meals, the formula nullifying *hametz* (*kol hamira...*) is not recited. For those of you who will be using only *matzah ashira* (see below), then the formula for nullification (*kol hamira...*) is recited Thursday evening.

***Biur hametz* — the removal of hametz:** Friday morning, April 22. This day is treated as an ordinary *erev Pesah*, and the burning of the *hametz* should be completed by the fifth hour after sunrise. The stove should be koshered for Pesah, and only Pesah utensils used. Friday is the time to do all the cooking for both Shabbat and the first *seder*.


Shabbat meals

There are two traditional practices in this situation:

1. It is customary to refrain from eating matzah on the day before Pesah, so that one can eat the matzah with appetite at the *seder*.
2. It is customary to eat three meals on Shabbat — *motzei* needs to be recited in at least two of these meals.

There are two ways of dealing with these complications:

1. Set aside enough *hametz* for the Shabbat meals. Use paper and plastic for the *ballot* and *hametz* dishes to avoid coming into contact with the Pesah dishes. Since one cannot eat *hametz* on *erev Pesah* from approximately four hours after sunrise, some people *daven* quite early and then finish eating *hametz* in time. Once the eating of *hametz* has been finished, what remains should be flushed or spread for the birds, since nothing can be burned on Shabbat. At this point, the formula, *kol hamira...*, should be recited.
2. Have two full Pesah meals on Friday evening and Shabbat morning. This is possible because one can use *matzah ashira*, enriched matzah such as egg matzah, for the *motzei*. *Matzah ashira* may not be used for the *seder*, but it still requires the saying of *motzei*. Actually, since it is *matzah ashira*, it may be eaten up until two hours before sunset. In this case, the second meal can also be later in the day. If you choose this option, recite the formula *kol hamira...* before leaving for shul that morning.

Personally, the Kelmans will follow option two. We will make the house *pesahdik* on Friday and use *matzah ashira* on Shabbat. This way, there is less chance of making mistakes, and since all the meals for Shabbat and the first *seder* will have been prepared on Friday, there may even be a mood of relaxation before the *seder*! 

Pesah Foods

By Rabbi Stuart Kelman

The Torah prohibits the ownership of *hametz* (leaven) during Pesah. Therefore, we arrange for a sale of the *hametz* to a non-Jew. This year, we are using a slightly different form (see page 3), which should be filled out and returned to our offices not later than Friday morning, April 22. The transfer, *mekhirat hametz*, is accomplished by appointing an agent, usually the rabbi, to handle the sale. It is a valid and legal transfer of ownership. At the end of Pesah, the agent arranges for the reversion of ownership of the non-permitted *hametz*. If ownership of the *hametz* was not transferred before the holiday, the use of this *hametz* is prohibited after the holiday as well.

In our office is a Pesah guide produced by the Rabbinical Assembly. Please contact the RA, or better yet, come by for a copy. In it, you will find a general guideline for what is permitted and what is prohibited and how utensils may be *kasher*d. For the past several years, we have had a “pot (boiling) party” courtesy of Michael Cohen. Once again, we will have this event this year, on Sunday, April 17, from 10:00 a.m. to noon.

Over the past several years, perhaps the most frequently asked question has been: is tofu kosher for Pesah? This raises the question of *kitniyot*, commonly known as legumes — rice, corn, millet, beans and peas (not string beans). The Committee on Jewish Law and Standards has ruled that peanuts and peanut oil is permitted. Many other Ashkenazic rabbis have also ruled that the use of legumes in a form other than their natural state is to be

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NETIVOT SHALOM NEWSLETTER

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Layout, design & production: Karen Friedman

Please submit copy to newsletter@netivotshalom.org. Copy may be edited for accuracy, clarity, length and language, including adherence to grammatical and stylistic consistency.

Issue	Deadline
May/June	March 28, 2005
July/August	May 23, 2005

“How good is a word rightly timed.” (Proverbs 15:23)

AN EXODUS TO CELEBRATE THE EXODUS!

Our move to University Avenue will be occurring sometime around Pesah.


Help our own exodus go without any plagues — save some time in late April and May to help!

Need more information? Talk to Eugene L. Berg (415-665-3927).

PESAH FOODS (continued)

permitted (for example, corn oil). I hold to this position and, therefore, naturally processed tofu (no added ingredients) would be permitted on Pesah. Sefardim commonly serve and eat rice on Pesah, because they do not hold to the principle of *kitniyot*. My colleague and close friend, Rabbi Joel Rembaum, of Temple Beth Am in Los Angeles, and a leading Conservative rabbi, has ruled, as *marah d'atra*, the legal authority at Beth Am, that “it is permissible for Beth Am members to eat rice and *kitniyot* on Pesah. Obviously, they are subject to the general requirements of all foods on Pesah. Since rice and *kitniyot* are not, themselves, *hametz*, they do not make other foods, utensils or dishes *hametz*. Therefore, one who chooses not to eat rice and lentils on Pesah may have a Pesah meal in a home that does serve such foods without fear of eating *hametz*.”

Rabbi Rembaum’s opinion is based on the fact that until the 13th century in France, there is no mention of the issue of *kitniyot* at all. It seems to have arisen then because the raising and eating of beans, which grew better than grains in the colder climates of Northern Europe, had become widespread. The rabbis feared that if such foods were to be eaten on Pesah, they might be confused with foods made with grains and, therefore, something prohibited might be eaten. Furthermore, lentils were eaten at a time of mourning, and since the holidays are times of rejoicing, their consumption would be inappropriate. In a stunning *t’shuvah* written for the Va’ad Halakah of the Rabbinical Assembly in Israel, Professor David Golinkin outlines precisely why this custom is both “mistaken and foolish.” You can read a summary of the *t’shuvah* at www.schecther.edu (click on ResponsaForToday, Vaad HaHalacha, volume 3). While I do not think I’m personally ready yet to eat rice, I am fully prepared to eat any derivative made from legumes, and to say that anyone in our congregation who chooses to eat legumes would not be violating the laws of Pesah. Life may certainly be easier, and these changes may even add joy and greater pleasure to your observance of Pesah.

Hag Kasber v'Sameah 

Form for the Sale of *Hametz* – 5765

If possible, all *hametz* — food not acceptable during Pesah, or materials containing such unacceptable food — should be destroyed or given away before the holiday begins. Should this be impossible, the *hametz* may be stored in such a way that we are sure not to use it during the holiday, and its actual ownership is transferred to a non-Jew until the holiday ends. Please complete this form and return it no later than Friday, April 22, at 8:00 a.m. It is customary that you give some *tzedakah*, and that this be given to someone in need.

Know all people by these presents: that I, the undersigned, do hereby make and appoint Rabbi Stuart Kelman my true and lawful representative to act in my place and stead, for me and in my name and on my behalf, to sell all *hametz* owned and possessed by me, knowingly or unknowingly, as stated in the Torah and defined by the sages of Israel (e.g., *hametz*, *hashash hametz* (suspect *hametz*), and all kinds of *ta'arovet hametz* (*hametz* mixtures)); also, *hametz* that tends to harden and to adhere to the surface of pans, pots or other cooking or eating utensils, of whatsoever nature; and to lease all places wherein the aforementioned *hametz* owned or possessed by me may be found, especially in the premises located at (your address) _____. Rabbi Kelman has the full authority and power to sell said *hametz* and to lease said place or places wherein said *hametz* may be found, upon such terms and conditions as discretion dictates. Rabbi Kelman has the full power and authority to assign or appoint a substitute or substitutes to act in my behalf with all the same powers and authority that I have invested in the rabbi, and I do hereby ratify and confirm all that Rabbi Kelman or a rabbinic substitute lawfully does or causes to be done by virtue of these presents.


And to this I hereby affix my signature on this _____ day of _____ in the year 2005/5765.

Signature _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Telephone _____

**Please return this form by
Friday, April 22, 8:00 a.m.** 

FROM THE RABBI (continued)

morning. If you can provide this, call me. Actually, I'd love for someone in our shul to take this on as their *mitzvah* — coordinating rides for those in need. This will probably become more acute as we transition to our new home, but we need rides even now. There are other *mitzvot* that need coordination as well. Let me know if you can help — and I'll try to match you and a *mitzvah!*

Hakhnasat orehim takes effort — but it is a core value that we have to relearn and make real. Remember the end of that quote from the Talmud: one gets a reward for this *mitzvah* not in this world, but in the next. There is also a startling quote in the Talmud (Shabbat 127a) that alludes to the importance of this *mitzvah*: Hospitality is greater than welcoming the presence of the *shekhinah*. ❧

FROM THE PRESIDENT (continued)

Following this, the long-term plan will need to develop and build upon an understanding of demographics within the congregation and in our local area, including micro trends (why members come and go) and macro trends: what we value and want to become; our financial requirements; and our organizational structure (staff and governance). The long-term plan will also identify needs for and address methods of achieving leadership, fundraising, congregant participation expectations, member marketing and retention, and board and professional structures needed to carry this out.

The strategic planning group will not have formal decision-making powers; rather, its purpose is to discuss and recommend planning options to the board regarding updated operations and capital plans and near-term strategic plans. The expected timeline is that the strategic planning group will meet during February and March, and present its recommendations at the April board meeting. The board, in turn, will present the approved near-term strategic plan to the membership during the Memorial Day Weekend Netivot Shalom retreat at Camp Newman (see registration form on page 13). Serendipitously for the board and the strategic planning group, the theme of the weekend is “Building a Stronger Netivot Shalom Community.” In addition to all the wonderful recreational, educational and social activities that are planned, we will also have the opportunity to discuss the proposed strategic plan with each other during the retreat weekend. Some of you longer-term members (12+ years) may remember previous Netivot Shalom retreats or *shabbatot* that were held in the early years of our congregational life. It's been at least 10 years since we held such an event, and the upcoming retreat promises to be an occasion you won't want to miss. I hope that everyone plans on attending.

Lastly, there is an ad hoc Building Celebration Committee that is planning celebratory activities in anticipation of the move into our new home. Stay tuned for updates on these exciting events! ❧

Letting the Program Come from You: An Approach to Adult Education at Netivot Shalom

By Robin Braverman, Chair, Adult Education

What should adult education consist of at Netivot Shalom? What programs and classes should we offer? During the months of March and April, I will be putting together the Adult Ed budget for next year. To do that, the program plan for next year has to be in place. While those who are working on various aspects of adult education this year will be telling me the kinds of programs they would like to offer next year, and while the rabbi and I will discuss what he would like to teach and the programs he would like Adult Ed to sponsor next year, I will still need input from all of you so that the Adult Ed programming can best meet the needs of all of the members.

To facilitate this, Adult Ed will hold **two input meetings: Sunday, March 13, 5:30–6:30 p.m.;** and **Monday, March 14, 8:30–9:30 p.m.,** both at the **shul office**. The content of these two meetings will be the same. The meetings are being held on different days, at different times, to make it easier for people to attend at least one of them. Anyone who would like to attend both is welcome to do so, to hear what other members of the congregation have proposed or commented upon.

At each meeting I will share a rough draft of the proposed program plan for next year, and also listen to the input of those who have ideas about what programs they would like to see Adult Ed offer. I will also have available the information from the Adult Ed survey that Rena Fischer compiled for Adult Ed last year.

These meetings will also be a time when you can learn about the kinds of things we need volunteers to do in Adult Ed. We are hopeful that you will think about the possibility of becoming an Adult Ed volunteer. I will have a list of small, compartmentalized tasks that Adult Ed needs volunteers to do — tasks with manageable time commitments that can fit in with busy schedules. Perhaps you will find something that fits with your time constraints and level of energy. We would welcome your involvement.

I am committed to facilitating the programs you want, and look forward to hearing from people face-to-face on March 13 and 14. If you can't attend, but have something to say, I would still like to hear from you. You can e-mail your ideas to rivkah48@aol.com, or phone me at 925-979-1998. ❧



Sunday Morning Minyanim: a Real Smilemaker

By Art Braufman, for Ritual and Adult Education Committees

If you had been around after recent Sunday morning *minyanim*, you would have noticed a lot of animated people chatting away with big smiles on their faces. Comments such as “we have so many smart people in our congregation,” “what a wonderful way to start off a Sunday,” “this is a great way to meet other people in the congregation” would have been overheard. Each week, we’ve had to call “time” on the formal discussion; yet after “adjournment,” the questions and discussion just kept on going. Here are some of the January highlights:



Michael Meltzer, science writer and environmental engineer, Livermore Labs, had people on the edge of their chairs marveling about the intricacies of the Galileo Space Probe to Jupiter, and the genius and tenacity of scientists that were able to find ways to make the mission succeed against all odds when the main radio antenna didn’t deploy as designed. How do you go about reprogramming the equivalent of a PC 286 computer with complex technical instructions when it’s a hundred million

miles from Earth? Michael loves mysteries and who-done-its, and that’s the way he threaded us through this story. Truly fascinating, and we’re all looking forward to seeing his book when it is released later this year.

Claude Fischer, professor of sociology at UCB, had to use all his professorial skills to get through his talk on “Religious Diversity in America, 1900–2000,” due to all the questions thrown at him by his enthusiastic audience. Some of the statistics that led to considerable discussion included: (1) The percentage of Protestants decreased from about 80 percent to 54 percent, and their internal shift was mostly from “mainline” to “conservative”; (2) Catholics have increased from below 10 percent to 25 percent; (3) The percentage of Jews attending weekly services decreased from 15 percent to 10 percent. This was not as sharp a decline as experienced by Catholics, from 75 percent to 35 percent; and (4) One of the biggest changes of all was that Jews who say that they believe in life after death increased from 20 percent in 1973 to almost 60 percent in 2000. Lots of food for thought; we could have talked for another hour. With this kind of information and curious audience, one of these times we will need to schedule a statistician to talk (any volunteers?).

We’re very pleased to announce the following programs for the **second and fourth Sundays of March and April:**

- **March 13: Rabbi Kelman:** “*Levayat hamet*, Attending to the Dead”
- **March 27: Arthur Reingold, professor and chair of epidemiology, School of Public Health, UCB:** “Public Health Issues following the Far East Tsunami”

- **April 10: Rabbi Kelman:** “*Bikkur Holim*, Visiting the Sick”
- **April 24:** 1st Day of Pesah, no special *minyan*, services at the BRJCC

Shacharit services start at 9:30 a.m. followed by breakfast at 10:15 a.m.; the study program follows, 10:30–11:30 a.m.

Another comment we’ve heard is, “We have to put this show on the road.” Well, don’t wait until you have to go somewhere else to hear your own fellow shul members speaking about their specialties. Everyone is welcome, so c’mon out and join the fun — it’s even free! ☞

Ritual Committee Activity

By Glenn Massarano, Chair, Ritual Committee

Here are some of the items that the Ritual Committee has been discussing the past few months:

- We are working to update the rolodex that contains the Hebrew names of each member. This rolodex is used by the *gabaiim* to call people up for an *aliyah*. You may get a call in the next few months from someone to check on this information. And, if you have not had an *aliyah* in a while and would like one, this would be a great opportunity to let someone know!
- Part of the ongoing activity of the Ritual Committee is preparation for the next holiday. This time of year, we are working on Purim, Pesah and Shavuot.
- With our move into a new building, we are considering the possibilities of having Yamim Nora’im services in our new place. But this means we also would need additional space nearby. We are researching sites, imagining configurations that might work.
- We are continually looking for new Torah and Haftarah readers. If you are interested, contact the ritual coordinator. If you want to learn these skills, check out the Adult Education classes!
- United Synagogue recently published a laminated *birkat hamazon* (grace after meals) card. Soon, we’d like to replace our current *birkon* (*bencher*) with this one. (We will maintain a supply of Kol Echad *birkonim* for the monthly singing of *z’mirot* after services.)
- Rabbi Kelman, along with Julia Watts-Belser and myself (as Kashrut Resource Coordinator) have been working to update the synagogue *kashrut* policy. Recently, the list of approved caterers was made current. The list of approved bakeries also has been updated recently. Look for these lists on the synagogue Web site.

If you have any questions or comments about these items, anything ritual, or ideas you might have, please contact me, at gmassarano@alumni.ucsd.edu or 510-644-0654. ☞

Report from the Board

By Deborah Yager, Board Secretary

In most (if not all!) organizations, communication is everything. Every month the Board of Directors of Netivot Shalom meets to study, to listen, to discuss and to make critical decisions that direct the life of our shul. For those of you interested in what we do, this column is for you. It is our hope that by opening the communication lines, you will understand some of the many difficult issues we face. I also hope to convey the spirit of commitment and common concern we hold toward each other and our duties. Following are some board meeting highlights that include discussion topics as well as decisions (in bold type):

Notes from the November 21 and December 19, 2004, board meetings:

1. In her first act as president, Carol Cunradi appointed Michael McCullough as treasurer.
2. There is a need to restructure the nomination of officers, as this has historically not been a smooth process. Carol proposed an ad hoc Leadership Transition Committee composed of Denise Moyer-Schnur and two other members.
3. In a report to the Membership Committee, Art Braufman projected that Netivot Shalom must increase its membership base to 500 household units by 2009 in order to sustain our new building costs. Carol requested that the Membership Committee propose a concrete plan for accomplishing this.
4. Babbie Freiberg shared information about the Community Study conducted by San Francisco Federation, which contains Jewish population data for the Peninsula (Sonoma to Cupertino). This data will be released in January 2005 and should also be representative of the East Bay.
5. The Youth Education budget cycle is very different from our current fiscal cycle, beginning in January. The board should consider adopting a January-December fiscal year because of such scheduling issues.
6. Rabbi Kelman will speak at the Rabbinic Assembly National Conference about the Tiferet Project.
7. Where are we after 15 years? Rabbi Kelman expressed the need to professionally assess the nature of fundraising, and the structure of leadership and leadership development required at Netivot Shalom.
8. Rabbi Kelman recommended that we hire someone to go through office boxes prior to moving to the new building. At \$10/hr, 8 hrs/week for 16 weeks, this amounts to \$1,280. Rabbi Kelman offered \$500 of his discretionary funds to offset this cost. **Motion** to allocate the remaining \$780 to fund this task was **approved 3-2-0**.
9. Rabbi Kelman is looking for sponsors to cover the cost of reprinting *birkat ha-mazon* booklets, estimated at \$400 for 200 copies.
10. Rabbi Kelman will have rabbinic students (Michelle Wolfson, Dean Kertesz, Julia Watts Belzer) organize a NS library book sale prior to moving to the new building. Contributions of other Judaic books to sell are encouraged.

Notes from the January 23, 2005, board meeting:

1. Carol appointed Peter Berck as the new budget chair.
 2. Reuben Greenwald has been hired as the new office administrative assistant.
 3. Carol conducted a well-received Chevra Kadisha class at Temple Beth El on January 9, and will do a follow-up session in February.
 4. There was a huge political firestorm following Rabbi Kelman's congregational e-mail expressing his reasoning and intentions for not attending the Berkeley Rally Against Global Terrorism. More than 200 hostile phone calls and e-mails were received by Rabbi Kelman and the front office from people outside our congregation. From our congregants, for whom the communication was intended, many supportive responses and only one negative response were received. Although backed by the East Bay Board of Rabbis, Rabbi Kelman was the only East Bay Rabbi to publicly take a stand. In view of this, a **motion** was **passed 8-0-1** to formally make the following statement:
 - "In light of the sponsorship and intent of the Berkeley rally involving Jerusalem bus #19, and in light of the outcome where some violence did occur, we thank Rabbi Kelman for taking a stand on this controversial issue and we support the stance that he took. We also thank the rabbi and office staff for their equanimity in the face of the harassment they withstood as a result."Carol will draft a letter of appreciation to the police officers who provided exceptional concern and protection during this difficult time.
 5. Carol reported that Art Braufman prepared a detailed draft document outlining steps needed to formalize our rabbi search selection process. Carol has asked Art to be head of a Rabbi Selection Process Committee.
 6. The needs of Youth Education are completely off cycle with our budgeting process, particularly regarding the education director's contract. Michelle Wolfson needs to know now if funds are committed to support Youth Ed next year at current levels, including her compensation package. **Motion approved 8-1-0:** The board commits to subsidize the Religious School budget by \$60,000 for fiscal year 2005-6, contingent on receiving the Civic Foundation grant and the private housing donation.
 7. Carol will appoint a New Building Celebration Committee.
 8. Carol has appointed Joe Meresman as chair of the Strategic Planning Committee, with the following committee members (others to be solicited): Dean Kertesz, Marshall Platt, Josh Hirsch, Helen Schneider, Cathy Shadd, Ken Schnur. Joe explained that the committee will meet two Sundays a month for five hours, with five hours of assigned homework between meetings, resulting in a five hr/week time commitment. The proposed strategic plan is a business plan focused on membership and financial issues, not a program plan. There are two target dates to hit, the new building move-in date and the congregational retreat in May; hence, the intense current effort.
- Motion passed 8-0-0:** The board agrees to the establishment of a strategic planning process as outlined, other than the hiring of a consultant, and will use the approved plan as a framework in future board discussions and decisions.
- Motion passed 6-2-0:** The board authorizes the effort to raise funds to hire a consultant to assist the Strategic Planning Commit-

tee, not to exceed \$10,000. The consultant will be selected by the Strategic Planning Committee upon confirmation of consultant's qualifications.

9. Social Action Committee report: Jonathan Stein reported the following:

- Rebuilding Together/Sukkot in April: Netivot is gearing up to participate once again in this annual project. This year is especially important as we are about to move into our new neighborhood. In light of the timing proximity to the big move, we've scaled back from sponsoring our own site to co-sponsoring a site in conjunction with other synagogues. This will reduce our fundraising commitment to half that of previous years (about \$1,800).
- Grants with BOCA: Tamar Fendel is working with Rabbi Kelman to rewrite a grant to the Goldman Foundation for social/community services in West Berkeley. We have met with the BOCA executive director and Rabbi Ted Feldman of JCFS to explore the social services needs of West Berkeley. Our next step will be to leverage existing assets and expertise to perform a needs assessment of social services. Receiving a grant could be a big step in establishing ourselves as an actor in providing services in our new neighborhood.
- Netivot Shalom sponsorship of a UC Berkeley Hillel Shabbat: Adam Weisberg of Berkeley Hillel approached the committee soliciting Netivot sponsorship of a UCB Hillel Shabbat. He is looking to raise \$1,200 for food, etc., for a spring (March) campus-wide Shabbat. Sponsorship would allow Netivot to (1) have higher visibility in the campus community; (2) fulfill our obligations as a congregation in a college town; and (3) acknowledge our many existing connections to the university.
- Ongoing programs: Netivot Shalom members continue wonderful services through our sponsorship of meals for the homeless, our sister Cuban congregation and Shabbat services for seniors at Claremont House, just to name a few. These programs continue because of the diligent efforts of a small core group that focuses on these projects exclusively. We have had ongoing interest but insufficient volunteer resources to begin programs with Shalom Bayit and a tutoring program with a neighboring school through the Jewish Coalition for Literacy.
- Committee expansion: Currently there are lots of *tikkun olam* projects and very little support for the people committed to these programs. The committee does not have the people to move forward with the new programs mentioned above. Jonathan proposed that each board member commit to recruiting a new Social Action Committee member to help build capacity in existing programs and help establish new programs. Board involvement would help garner a cross-section of the shul and a broader skill base needed to move forward.

10. Building budget overview: Joe Meresman reported the following:


With 60 percent of the construction project completed (as of December 31, 2004), the Site Work Group projects that by the completion of construction we will have spent close to 5 percent of the \$3 million direct construction budget on unplanned and over-budget expenses. The largest owner contingency expenses will have been for ancillary costs associated with the heating/ventilation/air conditioning system design/build subcontract, rebuilding retaining walls and correcting drainage to the south of our building, raised utility connection fees (twice what was

budgeted), and added fire department requirements for the alarm system. Typically in construction projects, 5 percent of the construction budget is set aside by the owner as a contingency for unexpected costs that arise during the course of construction. Following extensive competitive subcontractor pricing and value engineering reviews with the contractor, the Site Work Group and the board of directors decided at the time the construction contract was being negotiated to set aside only 2 percent of the construction budget for unexpected owner costs (with another 3 percent set aside in the contractor's contingency reserve). So, although stringent cost controls have been and are being exercised, and the overall costs of change orders are well within industry standards, they will be significantly over the amount budgeted for owner contingency. We will cover the expected 3 percent variance (about \$80,000) by tapping into our second reserve account (mortgage reserve), which contains six months of mortgage payments.

11. There has been an excellent response to the request for participation in "active construction by owner" projects. There were 35 people working today (1/23/05) at the new building site installing low-voltage wiring.

12. We expect control of the new building by late April 2005.

13. There are sample chairs at the shul offices available for testing, along with evaluation forms. Estimated chair costs range from \$15,000 to \$35,000.

All comments and questions are welcome, either by phone (510-886-6824) or by e-mail (secretary@netivotshalom.org). 

And Introducing . . . Reuben Greenwald, Our New Administrative Assistant



Reuben grew up in the Bay Area, and was a member of Kehilla Community Synagogue, where he became a *bar mitzvah*. He received a BA in theatre, with a psychology minor, from the College of Santa Fe in New Mexico. While at the College of Santa Fe, he ran the Hillel under The Soref Initiative for Emerging Campuses with small Jewish populations. He later served as both activities chair and president for the associated student govern-

ment. He has worked for over six years at Jewish Community Center camps around the Bay Area. Reuben currently works at Kehilla Synagogue part-time on Wednesdays and Thursdays as the school assistant for its Hebrew school, and is the administrative assistant at Netivot Shalom on Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays. Next time you're in the shul office, say hello to our newest staff member!

Creating Our New Home Together

By Joe Meresman, Chair, Site Work Group

We have planned our construction project to make extensive use of volunteers, both to reduce its cost and to provide opportunities for each of us to actively participate in the construction of our new home. Already many of you have volunteered and much has been accomplished. As we move toward completion of construction this spring, more volunteers are needed.

Volunteer Labor

In general, we need willing hands, along with whatever skills that you bring with them. We are building fences and shelving, landscaping and painting. Construction experience for these tasks is helpful, but not necessary. Other tasks are more domestic in nature, such as gardening and sewing. Many tasks relate to moving into our new building.

For example, we need to organize and pack up our library, determine which books will go where in the new building, salvage and reinstall existing shelving, build new shelving where we can afford to, physically move boxes of books, and unpack and reshelve the books.

Some of the work will need to be done at the construction site before we move into our new building. This work is best done when construction is not taking place — Sundays, late weekday afternoons and evenings, and on the occasional weekday construction holiday. Other work can be done at times of your convenience in our shul office, or after we have moved into our new building.

You can start the process of volunteering by letting me know your interests, skills, amount of time that you can volunteer, and your flexibility in when you can volunteer. I will then make this



View from University Avenue: the building is now surrounded by scaffolding to allow installation of glazing and exterior finishes.



Main entry with courtyard walls in the foreground.



Social hall as viewed from second floor classroom.



A “cherry picker” elevates these construction workers to the roof eave to complete the soffit installation.



East elevation of the building showing the sanctuary wall.



Sanctuary as seen upon first entering from the adjoining vestibule.



Looking across the sanctuary as viewed from the second floor; the *aron* and library are at the right and left sides of the photo, respectively.

information available to the appropriate project leaders (carpentry, painting, landscaping, library, moving, etc.), who will contact you with specifics of what we would like you to do.

Surplus Furnishing

We have very little budget with which to furnish the new building. We plan to take everything that is and isn't nailed down from the old building and reinstall it in the new. Let us know if you have access to surplus chairs, tables, shelving or storage that might work for the new building.

The best way to reach me is via e-mail at meresmanj@pacbell.net. Alternatively, you can telephone me at 510-654-9451.

Thank you all, for all your wonderful help in the past — and a heartfelt thank you in advance for this next round of effort to complete our new home! ☺

Tour Quotes:

“The best part about our tour was seeing the inside of the new building. The rooms were all laid out in front of us, and for the first time I could really imagine what it will be like for us to make this our new home!”
Claire Max

“I was truly impressed by the thoughtfulness, sensitivity and practicality that is reflected in the design of the new home for Netivot Shalom. It is clear that a huge amount of time and effort has been spent in thinking through the present and future needs of our congregation. Bravo to all involved.”

Laurie Marson

It's Not Just Our Own Building That Needs Construction Help

By Jonathan Stern, Chair, Social Action Committee

April will be a busy month. We will all be donning our work boots to add the finishing touches to our new building. Even in this busy season, we should not forget the needy. Please keep those work boots on just a bit longer . . . for Rebuilding Together's Sukkot in April.

In coordination with East Bay Federation's Volunteer Action Center, Netivot Shalom will take some time out from our busy schedule to help Rebuilding Together revitalize our neighborhood by rehabilitating the homes of low-income seniors and/or people with disabilities, as well as nonprofit agencies' facilities. Last year, we helped to paint the building, repair the greenhouses and prep the gardens for our new neighbor, Berkeley Youth Alternatives. As of this writing, we don't know our assignment, but we have requested a site near our new West Berkeley home.


On Sunday, April 17 (a little early this year to accommodate Pesah), we will need up to 20 volunteers. Mark your calendars! Because April will be challenging, what with completing our move to the new building, we have scaled back our commitment from sponsoring our own site to sharing a site with Tehiyah. This reduces the number of volunteers we can bring to the site, but still, we have committed to raising \$1,800 to pay for materials on this shared site. The best news is that our own **Howie Miller** has stepped forward and volunteered to be our house captain and builder-in-chief. My thanks to Howie — many of our experienced builders are devoted 100 percent to the new building, and he stepped forward to fill their capable shoes. We are still looking for a first mate to help with all the coordination involved with this whirlwind event.

I'm looking at this as another opportunity to work with our new neighbors — sending the message through real actions that we are there to help strengthen the community. It's a great deed to perform on the eve of our moving into the neighborhood.

So what can you do? We need volunteers and money!! Specifically, we are looking for a first mate, child care and food preparation help.

About donations of money: we need some!! Many have given generously to this event in the past. An early donation will assure this project has the momentum to succeed in this busy season.

Please make your check payable to Rebuilding Together, and bring or mail it to the shul office.

For more information, please contact Jonathan Stern at 510-872-0751 or socialaction@netivotshalom.org. Thank You! 

Warming Up Our Welcome — the Membership Committee Needs You!!

By Elissa Kittner, Assistant Co-chair, Membership Committee

The Membership Committee is one of the many committees at Netivot Shalom dedicated to building and nurturing our community. Right now, the committee consists of the three people elected last November: Melissa Mednick, chair; Elissa Kittner and Maia Fleming-Singer, assistant co-chairs.

The committee's mission is straightforward: "To increase and retain membership." To achieve this end, we do a variety of things on a day-to-day basis, such as fielding calls from prospective members, phoning new members to welcome them to the shul, planning and hosting new member events, and contacting members who haven't renewed to find out why. We also perform a variety of administrative tasks, including helping to prepare renewal packets, and putting together new and prospective member packets. These are the tangible components of our work, and we expect that the three of us can get these tasks done within our current committee.

There is a BIG task ahead of us, however, that we cannot possibly accomplish without the help of everyone at Netivot Shalom.

As we look toward the spring and occupying our new home, we anticipate (we hope!) an increase in our membership: the shul

(continued on next page)

Yeah for YEAH!

By Robin Mencher

Thanks to a listing in the Shabbat announcements a couple of years ago, for the second winter in a row I am volunteering two evenings a month at the Youth Emergency Assistance Hostel, or YEAH! Now in its third year, YEAH! is Berkeley's only shelter for homeless young adults, ages 18–25, where young men and women, as well as their children and their pets, can find a safe, warm, welcoming, caring space off the streets to eat, shower, sleep and socialize.

A few of the guests at YEAH! are just passing through town. Some are the young people who often congregate on Telegraph Ave. Many found themselves on the streets after aging out of the foster care system with nowhere to go and no plan for their future. Most have personal histories of adults who were absent or destructive influences in their lives. All choose YEAH! over other shelters for adults because it caters to youth culture, is safe for young adults, and is nonjudgmental about the guests' life choices.

As a volunteer, I help prepare and serve food, check in people for the evening, hand out cots and bedding as well as slots for the shower. From week to week, I often see a few familiar faces. Each night I work, I also meet new people. My goal is to support this

(continued on page 17)

currently has 330 households, and the five-year plan calls for 500.

This needed increase comes at a time when our committee is, unfortunately, getting feedback from new members and former members along these lines: “*I feel really awkward at Shabbat services because I’m new, I have no one to sit with, and rarely does anyone approach me or wish me Good Shabbos.*” Or, “*I tend to leave immediately after services because I don’t feel connected to people at the kiddush.*” Or, “*There was a lot about Netivot Shalom I really loved, but I was a member for several years and I never once got invited to Shabbat dinner.*”

Along these lines, Connection/Welcoming was identified as one of the three major themes at this year’s annual meeting, in association with re-envisioning Netivot Shalom as we move into our new building (see Jan.-Feb. 2005 newsletter). The Membership Committee is dedicated to addressing this important issue, but creating a welcoming culture at Netivot Shalom is not something that a committee of three can do; it takes an entire congregation.

The good news is that whether you are 4 or 94 years old, and whether you have been associated with the shul for 14 years or 14 days, there are easy things that you (and all of us) can do to create a warmer atmosphere at shul, almost immediately.

For example, you see a young woman staring blankly at her *siddur* during the Torah service — you get up and bring her a *bumash* (*Eitz Hayim*) opened to the right page.

You notice someone standing in the middle of the sanctuary after Shabbat services, looking confused — you say, “*Shabbat Shalom / Good Shabbos. I’m Melissa Mednick. I don’t think I’ve met you before.*” (Well, use your own name.)

You notice a man at the *kiddush* balancing a plate, a glass and trying to blend into a potted palm so that no one will notice that he is alone. You walk over to him and say, “*I can barely manage to balance a plate and cup simultaneously at the kiddush, let alone also become one with a potted plant! Or you might also try saying, “Great kiddush, huh? I’m (Your Name Here).”*”

Seemingly small gestures are in fact very meaningful and go a long way toward making a visitor or new member feel welcome and part of the Netivot Shalom community. *Thank you for making the extra effort!*

The Membership Committee is actively recruiting congregants to help us warm our welcome at Netivot Shalom. If you are interested in writing up brief profiles of new and existing members for the newsletter, helping with event logistics, or serving occasionally as a Shabbat or other shul event greeter, please contact any one of us (see contact info below). We especially need help with the upcoming **new member kiddush** on March 12. And finally, if you have feedback or suggestions about this issue, please feel free to contact any one of us: **Melissa Mednick**, chair, melissamednick@sbcglobal.net, 510-653-7848; **Maia Fleming-Singer**, assistant co-chair, flemingsinger@sbcglobal.net, 510-601-8666; **Elissa Kittner**, assistant co-chair, ekittner@sprynet.com, 510-644-3014. ❧

Thinking Ahead — Help Us to Help You

By Andrea Cassidy, Coordinator, Chevra Kadisha

Rarely do we anticipate dealing with the death of a family member, but it is a part of life we are all likely to face. The congregation’s *chevra kadisha* (burial society) provides multiple services to bereaved congregants; for example, *tabarah*: ritual washing and preparation of the deceased (*met*); *shmirah*: watching the deceased until burial; arranging leaders and participants for *shivah minyanim*; delivering meals to the bereaved family; and providing ongoing support for the bereaved through the *nechama* subcommittee.

All of these services are provided by volunteer members. When a family is faced with the death of a loved one, our ability to provide services is triggered by someone notifying the rabbi, or if he is not available, the *chevra kadisha* coordinator, the office or the congregation president. When the death occurs out of town, often the family leaves quickly, and a friend or other family member informs the rabbi or office. To avoid any duplication of efforts, it is important for the rabbi or *chevra kadisha* coordinator to know of the death even if the family wants to make its own arrangements.

The *chevra kadisha* has negotiated a fixed price for funeral services at the Wilson Kratzer funeral home in Richmond (currently \$2,462). This permits us to use its facility to perform Jewish burial rituals, and includes all the services of the funeral director, transporting the deceased to the funeral home and later to the cemetery, obtaining three certified death certificates and the burial permit required before interment, and providing a kosher casket. It is not necessary for the family to go to the funeral home to make arrangements. If the family wants to use the chapel at the funeral home for services, or the transportation is outside the usual area, additional charges may apply; the *chevra kadisha* coordinator can arrange the funeral home services. We have also been exploring the use of Sinai Memorial Chapel in Lafayette, once their remodel is completed.

Once the arrangements have been made with the funeral director, families need to determine where burial will take place. If no plot has been purchased, Tel Shalom Burial Association in Richmond has a limited number still available. Tel Shalom can be contacted through Ernie Alexander (at 510-981-8030). A new cemetery is being developed over the hill on the Orinda-Martinez border. More information on this project will follow. If the deceased has a plot, the cemetery should be contacted to determine when the plot can be opened, since it will affect the scheduling of the funeral. The date and time of the funeral must be coordinated with the rabbi if the family wants him to officiate at the service.

If the family wants the *chevra kadisha* to perform the *tabarah*, the rabbi or the *chevra kadisha* coordinator must be informed in order to coordinate these services. Another decision that the family has to consider is whether they will have *shivah minyanim* during the

(continued on page 12)

We're spreading the wealth, so that we may meet more and more of you. Now, the Membership Committee has taken up the gauntlet, along with other congregants, in presenting these relatively new members — the Polstons — to you.

Lisa & Josh Polston

Lisa and Josh Polston joined Netivot Shalom a little over a year ago. They were drawn to Netivot Shalom because of their “desire to be part of an active, larger Jewish community through a Conservative synagogue.” They also had heard good things about the synagogue’s Shabbat B’Yachad program and had a few friends who were already members.

“Joining Netivot wasn’t the easiest at first — it’s a little like being the new kid at school. It seems that lots of people already know each other and have established friends and networks,” said Lisa. “But, we’ve had a wonderfully welcoming experience through Shabbat B’Yachad, and I know that the best way to get involved is to get involved, so I’m hoping to find more ways to be involved in the synagogue once we come out of this intense period with two very young children.”

Lisa and Josh are parents to Sidney, 18 months, and Bayla, 3 months old (they plan to have a baby blessing for Bayla in Shabbat B’Yachad in February and hope to have an *aliyah* with her in the main sanctuary in the coming months).


Since moving to the East Bay from the Peninsula in 2000, they have been busy with careers, children and renovating a Victorian fixer-upper in North Oakland that they are just now moving into.

CHEVRA KADISHA (continued)

shivah week or at a later time. If the family leaves town for the burial, a *shivah minyan* may be held at the end of the 30-day period after the burial.

The bereaved family may be contacted about meals by volunteers. It is helpful to advise the meal volunteer about the number of people in the home, observance of *kashrut* and any other special needs or desires regarding meals.

The *nechama* subcommittee provides support to the bereaved family throughout the year after a death. A volunteer is matched to the bereaved congregant and makes contact.

Finally, these services are all provided by volunteers, members just like you, who have careers, children and family obligations. If you think it is important for us as a community to provide these services, consider offering to help. There are no committee meeting requirements, and no prior experience is necessary, just a desire to participate in a *mitzvah*. Whatever your skills, we can use your help, and thankfully we have not had to call upon volunteers often. Contact me, at 510-549-1407 or 2berk2@mindspring.com, if you are willing to help us continue this important work. 



Lisa is a graduate of UCLA and has spent more than 12 years teaching high school history in Los Angeles, Cupertino and Walnut Creek. A few years ago, she decided she wanted to work in a more urban school district and moved to the Oakland Unified School District. Currently a district administrator in Oakland, she runs a program providing support and training to more than 450 new teachers annually, but is enjoying maternity leave at the moment.

Josh is a UC Berkeley graduate with a degree in urban planning. He currently works for Muni Financial, a consulting firm that provides financial and economic services to public agencies. He is also a general contractor who has spent the last six months (every night and weekend!) completely renovating the Victorian home they purchased.

Lisa grew up in Cupertino in a family that was very active in the Kol Emeth Conservative synagogue of Palo Alto. Her father served as president of the synagogue, her mother was president of the sisterhood, and Lisa was regional president of United Synagogue Youth (USY). She said, “I was a synagogue brat. We were all very involved. I went to Hebrew School K–8 and attended Camp Arazim, a Conservative summer camp, from 4th grade through my senior year of high school. When Josh and I got married, there were probably 20 people there who were friends of mine through camp and USY.”

Josh grew up in Los Angeles in a family that was more culturally Jewish than religious. His parents did encourage him to become a *bar mitzvah* though, and he ended up studying with Chabad and having his *bar mitzvah* in Israel. After graduating from college, he spent five months studying in Israel through the Livnot U’Lehibanot program, with which he is still very involved.

Please join the Membership Committee in welcoming the Polstons to our shul! 

Barry Muhlfelder

Barry was born in Newark, New Jersey, to German immigrant parents and raised in nearby Livingston. With both sets of grandparents sharing his home at different times, a father who served as temple president and board member for 30+ years, and a mother involved with social action projects, he grew up in a richly Jewish environment. The Muhlfelder family belongs to Temple Emanuel, a reform congregation, where Barry was a *bar mitzva* and was later confirmed and graduated. He attended public schools, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, and the University of Rochester for graduate school in low temperature physics. During these years, Barry became a highly competitive bridge player and long-distance runner. Barry's thesis work on SQUIDS (super conducting quantum interference devices), highly sensitive magnetometers capable of measuring tiny magnetic fields, earned him a post-doc



position at the National Institute of Standards and Technology in Boulder, Colorado. Working his way west and out of cold climates, he subsequently joined the Gravity Probe B (GP-B) program at Stanford University, where he has worked for the last 19 years.

GP-B is a NASA-funded project designed to test certain predictions from Einstein's

General Theory of Relativity, a theory that describes gravity as a geometric distortion of space and time. Although there have been several indirect tests, GP-B is the first direct test of these predictions. At the core of this experiment are four precisely built gyroscopes the size of ping pong balls. Barry's group designed and built the SQUID readout systems for these gyroscopes. After more than 40 years of dogged persistence in science and engineering, GP-B was launched aboard a Boeing Delta II rocket from Vandenberg AFB on April 20, 2004, into a clear blue sky, and hit perfectly the desired polar orbit, 400 miles above the earth. The spacecraft continues to travel this orbit at 17,000 miles/hr, circling the earth every 1.6 hours. After an initialization phase, GP-B entered the science phase of its mission in August and began the data collection that will continue until summer 2005. So far the experiment progresses brilliantly, and thanks to extremely low SQUID noise, the gyro readout measurements have unprecedented precision, detecting fields to less than one-trillionth of the strength of earth's magnetic field. One hundred years after Einstein proposed the General Theory of Relativity in 1905, it is hoped that GP-B will produce the data that will either prove or refute it.

Barry is married to Deborah Yager, a research bioengineer and Netivot Shalom board member. They live in Castro Valley with their two children, Joshua (13, who celebrated his *bar mitzva* at Netivot Shalom last June), and Mira (8). They have enjoyed Netivot Shalom membership for seven years.

Information about GP-B can be found at <http://einstein.stanford.edu>. For e-mail updates on GP-B, contact Deborah Yager at dcyager@hotmail.com. ☞

Netivot Shalom Goes to Camp!

Congregational Camp Retreat Sign-Up Form

May 27-29, 2005, at Camp Newman, near Santa Rosa

We will "Build a Stronger Netivot Shalom Community" by sharing a variety of recreational, educational and social activities from Friday, 4:00 p.m., through Sunday, 5:30 p.m. Kosher food will be served. Housing will be in motel-style rooms with private bath. There will be childcare and youth programming for children ages 2 and over.

Please return this form to the Netivot Shalom office with your payment **no later than April 1, 2005**. Spaces are limited and will be allotted on a first-come, first-serve basis. Payment in full with registration greatly appreciated, but a deposit of \$250 may be made for family units. Any remaining balance is due by May 6 (you will not be sent a bill).

Adult #1 Name _____

Adult #2 Name _____

Child #1 Name _____ Age/Grade ____/____

Child #2 Name _____ Age/Grade ____/____

Address _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

How many people can you provide a ride to? _____
 How many people need a ride in your family unit? _____
 How many vegetarians in your family unit? _____
 How many non-members in your family unit? _____
 Are you requesting optional linen service (towels/sheets/blankets for \$15/person)? _____

- For other special needs or to assist at the retreat, please contact Dan Siegel at 510-540-6128 or siegeldb@pacbell.net.
- If donations are received, partial scholarships may be available based on need.
- Singles will be assigned to shared double rooms.

Checks are payable to Netivot Shalom; put "Retreat" on check.

Adults: \$170

College/grad student: \$140

Ages 12-17: \$110

Ages 2-11: \$80

Under 2: Free

Non-member: \$30 per adult
 additional fee

Optional linen service: \$15/person _____

Total fees due: _____

Amount enclosed: _____

Donation for those needing financial assistance: _____



The Cuba Connection

By June Safran, Cuba Affairs

The newspaper article below was written about a trip I facilitated in February 2004. I thought it might be nice for you to hear a different voice for a change. I will report on the *bar mitzvah* trip in the next issue. Suffice it to say that the *bar mitzvah* was moving and the Ha Tikvah community was a pleasure to spend time with.

Following are extracts from "The Cuba Connection," by Kevin Odegard, special to the Star Tribune, published January 15, 2005.

* * *

A pleasant Caribbean breeze filled the large room, a Jewish sanctuary in Havana, where a Minneapolis rabbi stood and told the congregation and 22 Twin Cities visitors of her family's remarkable journey to freedom. Temple Israel Rabbi Marcia Zimmerman held a firm grip on her audience with the tale of her Russian grandfather's long and slightly detoured voyage to America.

Max Pasternak left Russia by ship in early 1920, at a time when the U.S. port-of-entry at Ellis Island in New York was temporarily closed for expansion and repairs. His ship was rerouted to Cuba. He stayed there for a few months and eventually joined his uncle's family in St. Louis, where his future bride was waiting.

Not long after Pasternak left Cuba, the U.S. borders were closed, and most of the Ashkenazic Jews, along with a number of Sephardic Turkish Jews, about 17,000 people total, found themselves unexpectedly stranded in Cuba. Through four decades, most would remain there.

"If my grandfather was delayed, I would be a Cuban Jew," said Zimmerman, reflecting on her visit slightly more than a year ago to the Communist island nation on a humanitarian mission with members from her Reform congregation.

At Beth Shalom congregation in Havana, Zimmerman was invited to deliver the sermon at Shabbat morning services. Her message was based on the Torah reading, Genesis 33, *Va Ye'zab*, in which brothers Jacob and Esau are squabbling. She tied the biblical themes together to underscore the need to "strengthen the Cuban Jewish community and its ties with the American Jewish community as well."

A look at some notable moments for the island nation's Jews:

- **1906:** The first Jewish cemetery is established by American Reform Jews who settled shortly before and after the 1898 revolution. It still is used.
- **1910–14:** Turkish and Syrian Sephardic Jews arrive in large numbers.
- **1918:** Eastern European Jews of Poland, Russia, Lithuania and Romania begin arriving in large numbers.
- **1924:** The U.S. closes its doors to European immigration leading to Cuba's becoming the choice country to reside in temporarily until the people can go to the U.S. as Cubans.
- **1925:** Jewish schools are established.
- **1948:** Hillel-B'nai B'rith is established.
- **1959–60:** The revolution precipitates the decline and flight of the Cuban Jewish Community, continuing through the 1980s.
- **1990s:** With the breakdown of the Soviet system, religion again becomes more acceptable, although the structures are in ruin. Each year since then, Americans have brought more help to Cuban Jews to assist them in maintaining their health and rebuilding their communal life.

Zimmerman believes the journey to Havana "allowed Temple Israel in Minneapolis, Minnesota, to extend our hands to help the Jewish community of Cuba, [and] also fulfilled the mission given to our movement in 2003" by Rabbi Eric Yoffe, president of the Union of Reform Judaism: "We must see the Jewish community as an international community. It is not enough for American Jews to be concerned with Israel alone; we must reach out to other Jews wherever they are in need."

With that message in mind, Temple Israel saw the humanitarian mission to Cuba as "a way to reach out to the international Jewish community and strengthen ties between all Jews as the world continues to change," Zimmerman said.

The Temple Israel group brought into Cuba more than 1,000 pounds of medical aid worth several thousand dollars. "Access to medication is problematic in Cuba," Zimmerman said. "Basic medications like ibuprofen, Tylenol, antibiotics and others are not always available and not easily accessible. This means there is little hope without outside help."

And while the Communist state says it provides the necessities for its people — and therefore, higher wages are unnecessary — reality suggests otherwise. School supplies, for example, are priced far beyond what an average Cuban can afford. This inspired the Temple Israel visitors to bring in school supplies — crayons, paper, books, notebooks and the like.

Nearly 90 percent of the Cuban Jewish population departed following the 1959 revolution that brought Fidel Castro to power. Over the next four-plus decades, the remaining Jewish population has intermarried with the members of indigenous faiths. And Jews count many converts among their current ranks of 1,200.

Most Cubans know little, if anything, about Judaism. There is no rabbi or cantor in the Havana area. The music, teachings and worship are taught by local Jews trained by two young adult educators sent to Cuba from Argentina. With the breakdown of the Soviet system in the late 1980s, religion became more acceptable. Each year since then, Americans, Canadians and others have visited to help their fellow Jews.

Havana's largest and most active synagogue is part of a recently remodeled complex most often referred to as the "Patronato," a combination of Beth Shalom Synagogue, a library, clinic, community center and Sunday School.

"It is a fairly large sanctuary with

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Bridges to Israel-Berkeley

By Hilda and Seymour Kessler, Co-founders

March promises to be a busy month. For the anticipators and plan-ahead types, there's the initiation of the *hametz*-divestiture program. It's as my mother would have said (in Yiddish, of course), "You know, guys, it's **only** nine weeks to Pesah." But, naturally, she would have said something like that during the cold, snowy days of Hanukkah, and would have been appalled by anyone beginning Pesah preparations so close to Purim. Ah, well, that was a generation!

Bridges to Israel will sponsor a major public event in March: **Hirsh Goodman**, Israel's preeminent journalist and news analyst, will speak on Israel in the post-Arafat era at Congregation Beth El (Arch & Vine Streets, Berkeley) on Sunday, March 13, at 7:30 p.m. Those who have heard him speak or read his columns in *The Jerusalem Report* know that he is unquestionably the dean of Israeli journalism and a major voice for sanity and liberal democracy. And for those of you unfamiliar with him, you are in for a real treat.

Goodman is currently a senior research associate at the Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies at Tel Aviv University. He is an astute observer of the multiple conflicts and tensions within Israel itself, and in his writings focuses attention on the rights of minorities; social justice; and the strains within Israeli society between the secular and religious and between the settlers and others. As the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians ebbs — and we all pray that the promising developments of the past few weeks will take root — Israel's internal problems will surely come to the fore. These, in turn, may affect Israel's ability to reach a peaceful settlement with its adversaries.

CUBA CONNECTION (continued)

no loud fans and would be quite acceptable in the United States," recalled mission participant Paul Slaton.

June Safran, executive director of the Cuba-America Jewish Mission in Berkeley, Calif., has been visiting Havana for 10 years and bringing aid groups for the past eight. She loves the Jewish communities of Havana and the provinces. She praises the public school system, "which offers equal opportunity for all children and quality teaching, even though some materials are hard to come by. The children wear uniforms, the teachers are very good and standards are generally high."

Asked about the neighborhood around the Patronato, Safran said, "Like all large cities, there is a certain lack of socialization between neighbors that does not exist in the smaller cities in the provinces. The closest members live two blocks away. Most people live farther. Some walk as far as three miles. Some drive greater distances.

"They come in all ages and both sexes. Many people between 20 and 40 attend, both married and single. I find the synagogue comfortable, and I feel like a member. There are youngsters running up and down the aisles these days. It's a pleasure to see how at home they feel." ❧

Goodman originally came to Israel in 1965 from South Africa's apartheid society, and is an indefatigable fighter for an Israel free from prejudice. He will consider the prospects for peace between Israel and her Arab neighbors, as well as Israel's unique internal problems that push the envelope of and sometimes threaten her democratic institutions. I would like to encourage and urge the members of Netivot Shalom to attend his presentation and hear one of Israel's truly brilliant analysts. It is an event not to be missed.

Advanced tickets for the event are already on sale: \$15 for general admission and \$50 for reserved seating with an opportunity to meet with Goodman one-on-one at a supper/reception at 5:30 p.m. before he speaks. You can obtain tickets on-line by going to www.bti-b.org and clicking on the Hirsh Goodman link, or call the East Bay Federation at 510-839-2900 ext. 256.

The program is co-sponsored by Israel Task Force of JCF and other organizations, including Congregation Netivot Shalom.

The month of March is also the time to keep your eyes open for the announcement from the Rose Lady of Berkeley (AKA Hilda) and be the first ones on your block to get your orders in for **Roses from Israel** for your Passover table. The best and most beautiful roses are generally produced at that time of year in Israel, and we are hoping for a bumper crop from our wonderful supplier, Myron, at Moshav Sde Nitzan. What's a Pesah without roses from Israel? And remember, the proceeds go to help Israeli victims of terror. ❧

Hirsh Goodman speaks on "Prospects for Peace in the Post-Arafat Era: An Insider's Perspective."

Sunday, March 13, at 7:30 p.m.,
Congregation Beth El

Goodman is founder and past editor-in-chief of *The Jerusalem Report*, contributing editor at *U.S. News & World Report*, contributor to *New Republic*, and a news analyst for CBS News. He is now a senior research associate at the Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies at Tel Aviv University.

General Admission: \$15
Reserve seating: \$50 (includes pre-program reception/supper with Goodman at 5:30 p.m.)
Purchase tickets online at <http://bti-b.org.kintera.org/hirshgoodman> or at the Jewish Community Federation, 510-839-2900 ext. 256.

Co-sponsors include Bridges to Israel-Berkeley, Jewish Community Federation of the East Bay, Congregation Netivot Shalom, Congregation Beth El.

Netivot Shalom Members Respond to Tsunami Tragedy

In the midst of the tsunami's ongoing tragic tales, some of our congregants have reported back to us about their experiences. Three of these communications are presented below.

Report from Sri Lanka by Stan Moore (who was the fund raiser for our new home). **January 21, 2005.**

Well, here's the best I can tell you at the moment about Sri Lanka.

I rented a van in Colombo and traveled south. My destination was Matila, the province on the very southern tip of the nation island. There, I was to meet up with a major general in the Sri Lankan army to work on the logistics of food distribution for that hard-hit province. For the first hour or so on the road, I saw no evidence that anything at all had occurred. Then, I began seeing occasional sporadic coastal damage about 100 yards inland from the shoreline, but nothing of the magnitude that I had seen on television.

Gradually, so very gradually, a world I could never imagine began to unfold. The surreal became the real, and all I had known as real had simply vanished. My eyes and my mind became glazed. All that men had created had been reduced to pure rubble. Wood and bricks lay in piles on the ground. Endlessly. Men, women, children sat on foundations that had once been their very meager homes, looking helpless and hopeless. Many women and children stood by the side of this two-lane ocean-side road, the main highway around the island, waiting for vehicles to stop and hand them food or clothing. The railway tracks that had been built beside the sea were twisted and torn and broken. Hundreds, then thousands of boats that had no doubt been far out to sea could be seen hundreds of yards inland, just standing there on dry land, as though they had been brought in from their ocean home for repair. Everything man-made was gone, but the majestic and resilient palm trees still stood, leaves swaying in the wind.

Two hours, three hours, four, then five, then six hours into this nightmarish trip, nothing changed. The tragedy just continued on and on and on, until I finally arrived in Matila. Virtually every home and boat and tourist haven, and all the livelihoods of all the people, had been taken. And in those homes and boats and tourist havens, virtually all the people had been taken by the sea as well. The general told me that 70 percent of the entire coastline of this desperately poor nation had been hit by this tidal wave.

Before this tsunami, the people here had virtually nothing. Now, even the little they had, had been taken. In the camps, mothers now sit watching their children, as mothers do. Their children play and laugh, as children do. But I cannot describe the utter emptiness in the eyes of their moms. When I wasn't distributing food or planning to do it, I played games with the kids each day and gave them candy I had brought along. The mothers watched and tried to smile in appreciation. But how do you smile or appreciate anything when most or all you love and cherish is gone?

Everyone now has food, and I don't know what else I can do in

Sri Lanka, at least for now. The government says it will try to rebuild, yet the country has so little in the way of resources. Aid will come, from all of you and from the governments, but life as most of these people had once known it will never be the same. Please continue to give and keep giving. But rebuilding will not heal the psychological trauma. That will remain, perhaps, for their lifetimes. And what will happen to the children? Who will care for them? Where will the money come from to build and run all the orphanages?

Report from Ronna Kabatznick, who had been living in Thailand with her husband, Peter Dale Scott. **January 10, 2005.** (They returned January 30.)

Hi Toby [Gidal], thank you for calling last week. It meant so much for me to hear your voice! How comforting and soothing to feel your love and support. I'm finally back with Peter. I can hardly move, the exhaustion is through and through. It was eight days of working 20 hours per day. Here are some of the things I did and saw:

Helped identify bodies of children, parents, spouses and friends in a makeshift morgue with more than 700 (rotting) bodies. The smell and the sight was unimaginable.

Comforted those shrieking and wailing with grief and anguish in the hospital, at the morgue and in the hotel.

Fielded at least four nervous breakdowns.

Sat with people while they called relatives about the bad news (one, two and sometimes three dead).

Sat with people while the forensic team delivered the bad news that a dental match or fingerprint match had been found for one of their loved ones.

Helped stop a man from jumping off the hotel balcony after his daughter's passport was handed over to him by some government official in the hotel lobby (she was identified the next day).

Prayed with dozens of strangers.

Admitted suicidal and psychotic people to the hospital; got them calmed down with talking, medication or both.

Listened to countless heartbreaking stories from people who had lost spouses, children, siblings, and many times there was more than one person dead and/or missing.

Counseled two surviving spouses, who were both on their honeymoon.

Saw bodies being unloaded off the back of a pick-up truck, and stacked outside the morgue because there was no room inside.

Saw hundreds of coffins that had been hastily made by Thai prisoners. Saw many lined up at the airport, ready to be loaded as cargo.

Also saw some wonderful things, mitzvahs in action — like the Israelis who went around all day and night bagging bodies to afford the dead (all nationalities) some dignity. Also, how so many people went to the Israeli forensic team for assistance (when they were getting nowhere with their own governments) and how the Israelis were so kind and comforting, and above all helpful. The forensic people sat with the loved ones and took down all the information from them personally, and spent a long time with them. (Most other teams coldly asked for people to fill out forms, including photos, dental records, on their own, and then asked them to put the forms in a pile once they were completed.) Then the team worked tirelessly and came up with many matches, so people could get a closure to this nightmare. I'm certain that more than 90 percent of the identifications were done by that team, by the way.

Too tired to write another word. Big hugs to all our wonderful friends. Can't wait to do normal things with you again. xx, RK

Re: Helen and Marty Wachs' daughter, Faye Wachs

American Diver Underwater During Catastrophe December 29, 2004. Posted 11:21 a.m. EST

(CNN) — An American woman who was scuba diving with her husband in Thailand as one of Sunday's tsunamis roared overhead said she was oblivious to the disaster until after they surfaced, her mother told CNN on Tuesday. Faye Wachs, 34, was diving with her husband, Eugene Kim, Sunday morning off Ko Phi Phi Island in Thailand when they noticed the water visibility worsened and felt as though they were being sucked downward, Helen Wachs said. Their dive master signaled to them to surface, "but we still didn't know what happened," Faye wrote in an e-mail to her mother Tuesday.

The enormity of what was happening while they were scuba diving was not immediately apparent after they surfaced, Helen Wachs said her daughter told her. "She said she saw a lot of trash in the water. The dive master said it was really rude for people to throw trash. Then they saw large bits of debris and thought there might have been a boat crash," Helen Wachs said. She said her daughter didn't know what had happened until the dive master got a text message from his wife telling him about the catastrophe. Soon they saw bodies floating past them, Wachs' mother said in an interview from Oakland, California, where she lives. Once they returned to shore, the couple did what they could to help, Helen Wachs said.

"I can't describe carrying a moaning person who just saw his girlfriend killed down a hill in the middle of the night," the e-mail said. "I saw more bodies than I care to report. The hotel where we were staying is mostly gone. We lost everything but our lives." Faye Wachs said she was impressed by the efforts of the Thai government and the International Committee for the Red Cross, but "she was appalled at the treatment they got" from the U.S. government, her mother said. At the airport in Bangkok, other governments had set up booths to greet nationals who had been affected and to help repatriate them, she said. That was not the case

with the U.S. government, Wachs told her mother. It took the couple three hours, she said, to find the officials from the American consulate, who were in the VIP lounge.

Because they had lost all their possessions, including their documentation, they had to have new passports issued. But the U.S. officials demanded payment to take the passport pictures, Helen Wachs said. The couple had managed to hold on to their ATM card, so they paid for the photos and helped other Americans who did not have any money get their pictures taken and buy food, Helen Wachs said. "She was really very surprised" that the government did so little to ease their ordeal, she said. In an e-mailed response from the State Department, the chief of American Citizen Services said the embassy usually meets and greets every flight personally, but acknowledged there had been confusion the first night in setting up the operation.

Helen Wachs said her daughter told her they would need "some serious counseling" upon their return to Los Angeles. Once aboard the plane, Wachs told her mother, the biggest thing they noticed was the absence of the stench of raw sewage that had permeated the air. "She said the clean smell was amazing." She returns acutely aware that many thousands of others don't have that option. "The tourists are able to get out, but those there are left with utter destruction," Helen Wachs said. ☞

YEAH FOR YEAH! (continued)

crucial community service in my own backyard. Each time I am there, I strive to be a stable, welcoming, considerate influence on the guests. Through smiles, handshakes and conversation, I let them know that some adults really care, and we will be there for them, supporting them as they reach out for the social services that can help them improve their lives. The YEAH! staff is available to connect guests with structured help, and to refer them to services that can assist them in changing their lives. YEAH! is making such a positive contribution to the community that the city of Berkeley actually *increased* its funding in this very lean budget year!

YEAH! is located at the Lutheran Church of the Cross on University Avenue, just a few blocks east of our new building. As our congregation considers how we will be a part of the Downtown Berkeley community, YEAH! pops up as a perfect fit. We can get involved in a variety of ways including: preparing meals and delivering them to the church; helping with administrative work during the day; volunteering an evening (8:00–10:00 p.m.), a morning (6:00–8:00 a.m.) or overnight; leading a workshop or a class one evening; or encouraging others to lend support, to name a few!

If this sounds at all interesting to you, I encourage you to check out YEAH!'s Web site at www.yeah-berkeley.org or stop by one evening and see YEAH! in action.

Midrasha in Berkeley

By Diane Bernbaum, Midrasha Director

Over the years, Midrasha has experimented with many ways to raise money to support our scholarship fund. In the olden days it was a garage sale. Way too labor intensive. My back has never been the same since. Then, to replace the income we had generated from the garage sale, we started having our wonderful annual *se'udab*. Some years the program has been instructional, but this year, we decided to Just Have Fun. So put on your dancing shoes

Max & Cecilia Rosenheimer Camp Scholarship Fund

This fund was established to assist Netivot Shalom members in sending their children to a Jewish summer camp.

Application Form

Application deadline is **March 24, 2005**

Please contact Michelle Wolfson with questions at 510-549-9447 ext. 104 or edu@netivotshalom.org.

Name of child #1

Name of summer camp for child #1

Name of child #2

Name of summer camp for child #2

More than two children? Please include their information on a separate piece of paper.

Parent(s) name(s)

Daytime phone #

Evening phone #

E-mail address

Return this form to:

Michelle Wolfson, Director of Youth Education
Netivot Shalom, 1841 Berkeley Way, Berkeley, CA 94703



and save the evening of Saturday, March 5, for our Cajun Celebration. This evening will feature the live Cajun-Creole dance music of the band Sauce Piquante (including fiddle player Steve Tabak, head of Tehiyah Day School — who knew that Jewish educators were such a talented bunch of people?). The *se'udab* will be held in the Social Hall at Temple Beth Abraham in Oakland and will begin at 8:00 p.m. Sweets, savories and fine wines will round out the evening, and you can even have a picture taken, by photographer Barrie Rokeach, just as you did at your high school prom. Tickets are \$54 per person. We hope you can come, but in case you can't, consider buying a *se'udab* ticket anyway in support of Midrasha, or buy tickets to our raffle. Gifts include great wine, dinner at Ristorante Raphael, a gift certificate to Focal Point, and a year of free Midrasha tuition plus much more. For reservations and questions, phone the Midrasha office, 510-843-4667.

But from joys of Cajun dancing, let me take a moment to reflect on a memory. In the summer of 1978, I had been living in the Bay Area for two years, teaching in the religious schools of Congregation Beth El and the now defunct Jewish Community School. That summer, I attended the Conference on Alternatives in Jewish Education (CAJE). CAJE is now a huge national organization, but at that time, the conference at UC Irvine was brand new. After each day's sessions, participants gathered in their dorms to process what they had learned. My daily discussion group was led by the most charismatic educator I'd ever met, a woman named Phyllis Mintzer. My joy at studying with her was increased greatly when I found out that she lived in the Bay Area and was the educator at Temple Isaiah, an easy drive from my home. I told her that one day we would work together, and the following summer, when the Jewish Community School suddenly folded and I needed a new place to teach, I waddled out of the house, eight months pregnant, to interview with Phyllis. As I left the house, my husband, with great *chutzpah*, said, "Ask her if she'll provide childcare." I laughed because in the 1970s no one was doing that, but I asked and Phyllis said, "Of course. I'll get a teen to watch your baby on Sundays with those long double sessions."

And so I joined Phyllis's family. She molded a faculty with such love that now, 25 years later, many of us are still friends. She would inspire us to bundle our kids into car seats and *shlep* to her home in San Francisco for faculty *handalabs*. Every Purim and Hanukkah, delicious homemade goodies would appear for each of us. And when my fourth graders made quilt squares on famous Jewish Americans, she took the squares home to her mother, Hattie, who miraculously sewed them into a beautiful quilt by the time the class met two days later. One Sunday, she walked into my classroom and saw a note on my desk that I had picked up during break. It was from my husband, telling me that while I had been at work, our son had taken his first steps. Phyllis read the note, and had the class stand and say a *she-beheyanu*. It was only then that I cried.

Two years later, Lily Fetter, the educator who directed both Beth El's religious school and Midrasha, moved away. Beth El asked me to interview to direct their school. I told them that I didn't think I could manage that job with a toddler at home, but that they should talk to my friend Phyllis, who was leaving Temple Isaiah.

(continued on page 19)

On Committees and Welcoming Children

By Carol Dorf, Chair, Youth Education Committee

Our youth education programs, under the guidance of our talented educator, Michelle Wolfson, have taken off this year. The Shabbat and weekday religious schools are busy and sometimes noisy places where kids are playing games, engaging in dramatizations, and discussing texts. By incorporating creative play in our programs, our children are learning more and having more fun. Feel free to stop by and see what’s happening on Shabbat and in our weekday classes.

The Committee

The Youth Education Committee has also been invigorated. Brought together by budgetary anxieties, and a desire to have a more enjoyable experience for our children, committee members have been meeting to work on fundraising, and looking at various models of youth education. A survey has gone out to families in our congregation for their input into what would work best for them and their children. Although few among us say “Oh, goody, another meeting,” discussing fundamentals has helped us move from looking at what works best for our own children to what works best for all the children in our community.

Welcoming Children

I know that Cathy Shadd, our wonderful Shabbat B’Yachad

MIDRASHA (continued)

Instead, I interviewed for the Midrasha job, which was then, with a student body a quarter of the size it is now, considered a 12-hour a week job. And so, Phyllis and I were both hired to do different parts of the job that Lily was vacating, which meant that for the next five years we shared a very tiny office and a very overworked administrative assistant. At the beginning, there was only one desk in the office, and of course it was Phyllis’s since she worked full-time and I didn’t. So I’d come in, find a card table, spread out my things, get organized, and by then it would be time for me to leave. Phyllis realized the folly of this long before I did and got a second desk for me. And then, I spent five years having her as a role model for how to run a school. It was her warmth and compassion for the students, the parents, and mostly the faculty that I hope rubbed off on me. She exuded love, made everyone feel comfortable, and convinced you that you were perfect.

Although Phyllis and I stopped working together directly in 1986, we never stopped seeing each other, and she never stopped mentoring me. Our birthdays were exactly one month, one day (and 20 years) apart, and each year I would use the Berkeley schools’ holiday of International Women’s Day, always near her birthday, to *shlep* my boys into San Francisco to have lunch with Phyllis. As her Sha’ar Zahav teens began to attend Midrasha, we *knelled* that we once again were sharing the same students. Phyllis passed away on December 28, having met with loving students until the last few days of her life. How she will be missed. ❧

coordinator, has spoken in these pages about being welcoming to young children — the five-and-under group. I’d like to speak to the issue of being welcoming to school-aged children — kindergartners to sixth graders. Sometimes when we see these bigger kids, we expect them to meet adult expectations for participation, and are surprised when they don’t meet our expectations. However, as adults, it is our job to create environments where children can succeed. If we expect our children to participate in Jewish life as adults, it needs to be sweet for them now.

This is relatively easy on days when we have Religious School. Until the *kiddush*, most of the kids are in class. They arrive at the *kiddush* after they’ve had a snack, so mostly they behave with some degree of restraint and can wait until our blessings are over.

But what about the other Shabbats? How can we welcome children on those weeks? I think, first, we can think about being tolerant during the service. Our congregation is blessed with a few children who are able to sit and more or less participate during our services. However, usually we see children playing with a small toy, or reading. In this case, at least they are hearing the melodies, and their parents have the opportunity to participate. Most parents in this situation sit toward the edges of the congregation, which makes the inevitable walking in and out less disruptive to others. Children want to know what their parents are doing, and even if they are willing to stay with our babysitter, they need to come in and out of the service.

Creating a welcoming environment means thinking about the physical environment as well. The *kiddushim* where the tables are covered until the blessing are much easier on the children, because the coverings symbolize that it isn’t time to eat, rather than the children hearing a constant chorus of “not yet” from their parents and from people they don’t know.

Finally, being welcoming means being friendly to children in similar ways you would to adults. Start a conversation, but if a child seems shy, give her or him the option of not responding. If you are sitting next to a child at services, or during the *kiddush*, try to include him or her in conversations.

As we work on the new building, we can think about ways to arrange our physical and social space to be welcoming to all members of our community.

I want to conclude with some thank yous:

Michelle Wolfson, our Youth Education director, for all the fun she has added to the curriculum.

Rabbi Kelman for keeping education central to our work as a congregation.

Andrea Altshuler and Peter Berck for all their work on the *Love Letters* fundraising projects, and **Paul Feinstein** for letting us fundraise with the *Love Letters* book.

Jenny Groody for the Passover candy fundraiser.

Mark Priven for being our board liaison.

All the people who have been coming to Youth Education Committee meetings, for enriching our discussions. ❧

SBY Celebrates Tu b-Sh'vat!

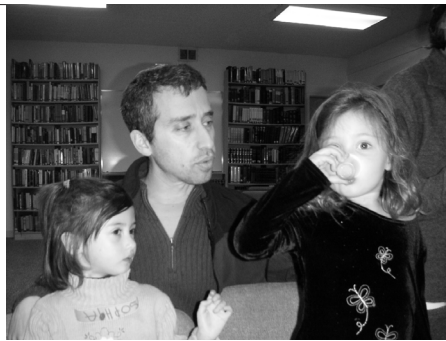
By Cathy Shadd, Coordinator, Shabbat B'Yachad

For the first time, Shabbat B'Yachad had a Tu b-Sh'vat celebration. On Sunday, January 23, SBY families gathered in the shul offices to learn about this holiday. The children planted parsley seeds (which we hope will be sturdy little plants by Pesah!); made leaf rubbings that they cut out and strung with yarn onto crossed popsicle sticks to make leaf mobiles; made collages of all the things we use in our daily life that come from trees; and made thumb print leaves on a drawing of a bare tree. While fun, we hope that the activities also helped the children to appreciate more the many gifts we get from trees and to associate the miracle of nature with God.

The parents gathered separately for a workshop on telling Torah stories to young children. The much beloved Torah story part of our SBY Shabbat service gives the children a connection with our ancestors, with the land of Israel, with our core values and ideals, and with the Torah itself. Parents both lead the services and tell the Torah stories, and the more parents who volunteer, the better! The workshop was designed to give parents some helpful tools to use when they volunteer. Afterwards, we sang some songs about trees and Tu b-Sh'vat and enjoyed a very mini-seder. The children tasted 15 different kinds of fruits and nuts! For those who couldn't join us, and for anyone else who might be interested, I would like to share this blessing, culled from several on-line sources, which was read aloud at our seder:

“Our God, by eating these fruits, may we enjoy the hidden heavenly roots from which they draw their life. Adonai, nourish and ripen all trees for an entire year of blessing, good life, and peace. May we become strong, like healthy trees, with solid roots in the ground and with our arms open to the love that is all around us. May we be blessed with the courage to grow, and to fix and help heal ourselves and our world. May we create peace in our lives and in the world.”

L'Shanah tovah uv'raha p'ri ut'nuvah!
May the year be fruitful and blessed! ❧



Adam Weisberg sits at the mini-Tu b-Sh'vat seder with his daughters, Sophia and Ariella.



Chalyn Newman's daughter, Ariel, enjoys some of the delicious fruit, next to her mom.



Maxine Gill samples some unusual fruits like pomelo.



Nava and her parents, Debbie & Daniel Kohn, enjoy the celebration.



The holiday table is weighed down with so many kinds of fruit!



Arlene Zuckerberg and her daughter, Mira, enjoy the company of friends, as well as the fruit.



Sophia Brodie-Weisberg (left) and Cathy Shadd and her daughter Ziva (right) also enjoy the event, and hope all the SBY friends not present also got to celebrate this wonderful holiday!

Please save the following dates:

Sunday, March 20, 10:00–noon, BRJCC: SBY Celebrates Purim!
Shabbat, June 11: Annual shul-wide celebration of SBY

SHUL ACTIVITIES

YOUTH EDUCATION

Shabbat B'Yachad (SBY) for families with preschool children five years and under. Program includes *t'fillah* (prayer), songs, Torah stories, a Torah parade and kiddush. Registration is required, but membership in Netivot Shalom is not. 2nd & 4th Shabbat each month, 11:00–12:15 a.m. at the BRJCC.

Religious School for children in grades 1–6. Weekday classes cover Hebrew, Torah study, Jewish calendar and holidays, Jewish history, ethics, Israel and life-cycle events. Shabbat classes focus on *t'fillah*, games Jewish values, and Torah stories.

Shabbat Program for children (K–6) in either Religious School or day school. Each Shabbat, 10:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m. at the BRJCC. Innovative game-based classes focus on the values of the week.

Amitim (*b'nei mitzvah* preparation program) classes focus on the structure and meaning of prayer. Students also study Torah texts and explore their relevance for a teen's life. Open to Netivot Shalom member families. Classes meet Tuesdays, 4:00–6:30 p.m.

Midrasha, an inter-congregational program for East Bay Jewish teenagers, offers classes ranging from Talmud and Hebrew to Jewish film and drama. The program provides students with the skills and knowledge they will need as committed Jewish adults.

ADULT EDUCATION

SUNDAY

Morning minyan, 9:30 a.m., NS office

Teachings, 10:30–11:30 a.m., NS office

(For a list of teaching sessions, see the article on page 5 of this newsletter.)

THURSDAY

Talmud

7:00–9:00 p.m., NS office

SHABBAT

Praying Outside the Synagogue: For the Heart and Mind

Rabbi Stuart Kelman

Various *shabbatot* after services

WEEKDAY T'FILLAH

Held at the Netivot Shalom office, 1841 Berkeley Way

Morning Minyan, every Wednesday at 7:15 a.m.,

2nd & 4th Sundays, 9:30–10:30 a.m.



OUR COMMUNITY NEEDS

Sponsor a Kiddush: Calendar On-line

Go to http://my.calendars.net/netivot_shalom/admin or contact us: Joanna Weinberg (weinbgj@itsa.ucsf.edu) and Turi Adams (live-mic@majornet.com).

The Morning Minyan Needs You

There are people attending these services who need to say *kaddish* and have been unable to do so. Consider becoming a once-a-month attendee. 7:15–8:00 a.m.

Are You Struggling with Infertility or Miscarriage? Would you like to talk with someone from the congregation who has had a similar experience? Contact Robin Braverman at rivkah48@aol.com or 925-979-1998.

SHABBAT SERVICES & PROGRAMS

Held at the BRJCC, 1414 Walnut Street

Shabbat Morning Services

Morning services begin at 9:45 a.m.

Meditative Minyan

9:30 a.m., room 14, 3rd Shabbat each month

Shabbat B'Yachad

11:00 a.m., room 14, 2nd and 4th Shabbat each month

Youth Shabbat Program

Children grades K–6, 10:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

Torah Study: the weekly *parashah*

See calendar for teachers; Shabbat, 9:00–10:00 a.m., BRJCC library; free

SOCIAL ACTION

Claremont House Kabbalat Shabbat 4500 Gilbert in Oakland, 5th floor lounge, 7:00 p.m., 1st & 3rd Friday of the month. Volunteers are needed during services, to hand out *kiddush* cups and for schmoozing afterwards. Contact Hilla Abel at 510-848-4843 or hilla_abel@hotmail.com.

Dinners for the Homeless Dorothy Day House of Berkeley, 1st Sunday of the month. Volunteers needed for shopping, cooking or serving. Donations are needed for food purchases. Make contributions to Netivot Shalom, marked "Dinners for the Homeless." Contact Sharona Barzilay at 510-658-8157.

Feed the Hungry Food barrels are available in the office. Bring unopened nonperishable food any time the office is open.

Social Action Committee meetings 4th Thursday of the month in private homes. Contact Jonathan Stern at socialaction@netivotshalom.org or 510-872-0751.

Jewish Coalition for Literacy Tutors Volunteers needed to tutor students one hour a week at the Berkeley Youth Alternatives program. Contact Jonathan Stern at socialaction@netivotshalom.org or 510-872-0751.

March 2005

Adar I - Adar II 5765

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 20 Adar I 4:00 pm Amitim	2 21 Adar I 7:15 am Morning minyan 4:00 pm Religious School	3 22 Adar I 7:00 pm Talmud Study	4 23 Adar I 5:47 pm Candle lighting	5 24 Adar I Parashat Va-yakhei Torah study: Nitzhia Shaked Shabbat services; Sara Gellebter will be called to the Torah as a bat mitzvah 10:30 am Youth Shabbat program 8:00 pm Midrasa Dinner Dance 7:18 pm Havdalah	
6 25 Adar I 10:00 am Amitim, at Michelle Wolfson's home	7 26 Adar I 4:00 pm Religious School	8 27 Adar I 4:00 pm Amitim	9 28 Adar I 7:15 am Morning minyan 4:00 pm Religious School	10 29 Adar I 7:00 pm Rosh Hodesh Group, Purim evening 7:00 pm Talmud Study	11 30 Adar I ROSH HODESH ADAR II 7:15 am Rosh Hodesh minyan 5:54 pm Candle lighting	12 1 Adar II Parashat P'kudei; Rosh Hodesh Adar II Torah study: R. Stuart Kelman Shabbat services; Shabbat Sh'kalim; New Member Shabbat and kiddush 10:30 am Youth Shabbat program 11:00 am Shabbat B'Yachad 7:25 pm Havdalah
13 2 Adar II 9:30 am Minyan 10:30 am Rabbi Kelman: Levayat hanet (Attending to the Dead) 5:30 pm Adult Ed mtg. 7:00 pm Ritual Com. 7:30 pm Prospects for Peace, at Beth El	14 3 Adar II 4:00 pm Religious School 8:30 pm Adult Education meeting	15 4 Adar II 4:00 pm Amitim	16 5 Adar II 7:15 am Morning minyan 4:00 pm Religious School 7:30 pm Rabbi Kelman: Kashrut: Private Observance	17 6 Adar II 7:00 pm Talmud Study	18 7 Adar II 6:01 pm Candle lighting	19 8 Adar II Parashat Va-yikra Torah study: Nitzhia Shaked Meditative Minyan 9:00 am Torah study: Nitzhia Shaked 9:30 am Meditative Minyan 9:45 am Shabbat services; Shabbat Zachor 10:30 am Youth Shabbat program 1:30 pm Rabbi Kelman; Kashrut: Private observance 7:32 pm Havdalah
20 9 Adar II 10:00 am SBY Purim Celebration, at the BRICC 10:30 am Rabbi Kelman: Kashrut: Communal Practice	21 10 Adar II 4:00 pm Religious School	22 11 Adar II 4:00 pm Amitim 7:30 pm Rabbi Kelman: Kashrut: Communal practice	23 12 Adar II 7:15 am Morning minyan 4:00 pm Religious School	24 13 Adar II FAST OF ESTHER PURIM 6:30 pm Kids program 7:30 pm Megillah reading & costume parade, BRICC	25 14 Adar II 9:45 am Purim Services NS office 6:07 pm Candle lighting	26 15 Adar II Parashat Tzav Torah study: Cynthia Hoffman 9:00 am Torah study: Cynthia Hoffman 9:45 am Shabbat services: Eileen Blum will be called to the Torah as a bat mitzvah 10:30 am Youth Shabbat program 11:00 am Shabbat B'Yachad 7:38 pm Havdalah
27 16 Adar II SHUSHAN PURIM 9:30 am Board mtg. 9:30 am Minyan 10:30 am Arthur Reingold, Public Health Issues following Tsunami	28 17 Adar II 4:00 pm Religious School	29 18 Adar II 4:00 pm Amitim	30 19 Adar II 7:15 am Morning minyan 4:00 pm Religious School	31 20 Adar II 7:00 pm Talmud study		

Beginning Hebrew available by appointment;
925-979-1998 or rnvka48@aol.com.

April 2005

Adar II - Nisan 5765

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
3 10:00 am Making Pesach 7:00 pm Ritual Committee DAYLIGHT SAVINGS BEGINS	4 24 Adar II 4:00 pm Religious School	5 25 Adar II 4:00 pm Amitim	6 26 Adar II 7:15 am Morning minyan 4:00 pm Religious School	7 27 Adar II 7:00 pm Talmud Study	1 21 Adar II 6:14 pm Candle lighting	2 22 Adar II Parashat Sh'mini Torah study: Nitzhia Shaked Shabbat services; Shabbat Parah Youth Shabbat program 7:44 pm Havdalah
10 1 Nisan ROSH HODESH NISAN 9:30 am Minyan 10:30 am Rabbi Kelman: Bikkur Holim (Visiting the Sick) 6:00 pm Rosh Hodesh Group Seder	11 2 Nisan 4:00 pm Religious School	12 3 Nisan 4:00 pm Amitim	13 4 Nisan 7:15 am Morning minyan 4:00 pm Religious School	14 5 Nisan 7:00 pm Talmud Study	15 6 Nisan 7:27 pm Candle lighting	16 7 Nisan Parashat T'zaweh Torah study: Nitzhia Shaked Meditative Minyan Shabbat services Youth Shabbat program 8:57 pm Havdalah
17 8 Nisan 9:30 am Board Meeting 10:00 am Rebuilding Together 10:00 am Pot (boiling) party	18 9 Nisan 4:00 pm Religious School	19 10 Nisan 4:00 pm Amitim	20 11 Nisan 7:15 am Morning minyan 4:00 pm Religious School	21 12 Nisan TA'ANIT BEKHORIM (Fast of the Firstborn) 7:15 am Siyyum Bekhorim BEDIKAT HAMETZ (Search for Hametz)	22 13 Nisan 7:33 pm Candle lighting	23 14 Nisan Parashat Aharei Mot Torah study: Simon Firestone Shabbat services; Shabbat HaGadol 11:00 am Shabbat B'Yachad Erev Pesah - First seder 9:06 pm Havdalah
24 15 Nisan PESAH I 9:45 am Pesach services at the BRICC	25 16 Nisan PESAH II 9:45 am Pesach services at NS office No Religious School OFFICE CLOSED	26 17 Nisan PESAH III (Hol ha-Mo'ed) No Amitim	27 18 Nisan PESAH IV (Hol ha-Mo'ed) 7:15 am Morning minyan No Religious School	28 19 Nisan PESAH V (Hol ha-Mo'ed)	29 20 Nisan PESAH VI (Hol ha-Mo'ed) 7:40 pm Candle lighting OFFICE CLOSED	30 21 Nisan Pesah VII Torah study: Nitzhia Shaked Shabbat services No Youth Shabbat program 9:10 pm Havdalah

Upcoming B'nei Mitzvah Anniversaries

March 5, Va-yakhel
Andy Moskowitz
Gretchen Stern
Hadara Greenberg-Stanton

March 12, P'kudei
Tali Weininger
Adam Scheffler
Abbey Augus

March 19, Va-yikra
Micah Burger
Dale Guinasso
Sarah Koplowicz
Noah Belkin
Ari Khuner-Haber

March 26, Tzav
Andrea Morris
Graham Prentice

April 2, Sh'mini
Ari Breakstone
Oran Gannot
Sarah Whitman-Salkin

April 9, Tazria
Daria Armstrong
Sharon Koppman

April 16, M'tzora
Jeremy Pearl Jacobvitz

April 23, Aharei Mot
Kyla Buchin
Agam Neiman
Elan Radousky
Thomas Sproul

Kiddush in Honor of Our New Members

On **March 12**, the Membership Committee of Netivot Shalom is coordinating and sponsoring a Shabbat *kiddush* in honor of the shul's new members. Over the past year and a half, almost 40 new households have joined the synagogue, and we look forward to introducing our new members to the congregation and acknowledging their commitment to the shul! Please join us in welcoming our newest members by staying for the *kiddush* after services and making a special effort to talk with folks you may not have talked with before — on March 12 in particular, but every other Shabbat as well.

The Membership Committee could really use help with the preparations for this event; please contact Elissa Kittner at 510-644-3014 or ekittner@sprynet.com if you can help with either the advance preparations or on the day of the *kiddush*. We look forward to seeing you on March 12!

Robin Keller & Mark Geliebter
invite you to share in their simḥah on

March 5, 2005

24 Adar I, 5765

Parashat Va-yakhel

when their daughter, Sara Geliebter,

will be called to the Torah

as a Bat Mitzvah.

MAZAL TOV! TO...

Rena Dorph & Peter Wahrhaftig on the birth of their daughter, Ayelet

Michael Gill on the establishment of his new independent record (CD) label, Sting-A-Bee-Back Records

Serena & Meldan Heaslip on the birth of their daughter, Jemima Grace

Rabbi Stuart Kelman was invited to become a partner of the Kalsman Institute on Judaism and Health of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. At their meeting in Los Angeles in January, which brought together health care and communal professionals, rabbis, cantors and educators from around the country, he spoke to the participants about end-of-life issues, namely the project that has been developed by Alison Jordan on *vidui* — the deathbed confessional.

WELCOME

To these newest members of Netivot Shalom, *b'ruhim baba'im* — welcome to the shul!

Roger Klein & Rachel Cohen

Estie & Mark Hudes

Rabbi Daniel Isaacson & Liora Brosbe

Margalit Mathan

Golda & Eric Blum
invite you to share in their simḥah on

March 26, 2005

15 Adar II, 5765

Parashat Tzav

when their daughter, Eileen Blum,

will be called to the Torah

as a Bat Mitzvah.

The Rosh Chodesh Group

Thursday, March 10, at 7:00 p.m.

We will welcome Adar II with a Purim evening. A member will lead us in a new and humorous perspective to the Book of Esther.

Sunday, April 10, at 6:00 p.m.

The annual Pesah seder and vegetarian dinner will be held.

All women in the congregation are invited to join us. For additional information and locations, contact Toby Gidal: tgidal@comcast.net or 510-841-8868.



20TH ANNUAL Jewish Music Festival

The largest festival of Jewish world music in the U.S. celebrates its landmark anniversary in Berkeley, San Francisco and Marin, **March 19–April 3**. Highlights include:

- **Theodore Bikel** (Sunday, March 20, Temple Emanu-El, SF)
- **Klezmatiks** (Sunday, April 3, Wheeler Auditorium & BRJCC)
- **Israel's East West Ensemble** (Saturday, March 19, Wheeler Auditorium)
- **Community Music Day** with an Instrument Petting Zoo and workshops for all ages (Sunday, March 27, BRJCC)
- **Judith Cohen**, a leading scholar of Sephardic music (Monday, March 28, BRJCC)
- **Emil Zrihan**, one of Israel's most acclaimed cantors of the Moroccan tradition, in a sneak preview of a new collaboration between him and America's premiere, San Francisco-based, **new music string quartet** (Thursday, March 31, JCCSF)

Tickets available at Festival Box Office (call 415-276-1511) or on-line: www.brjcc.org.

A project of the BRJCC. For the complete program, call the box office or check the Web site.



And Now For Something *COMPLETELY* Different!



On Sunday, May 15th, come out for **THE FOOTHILL CENTURY: *The Only Kosher Ride in the West!*** Choose from our 100K, 25-Mile and 10K Family Fun routes. The Foothill Century offers something for everyone: beautiful scenery, great kosher food, Israeli products, and a memorable, healthy day for the whole family!

Join 600-plus cycling friends for an unforgettable century!

Sponsored by South Peninsula Hebrew Day School.

Shleppers of the World Unite!

The big move into our new home will be in late April and May — so save some time to help us move! Need more information? Talk to Eugene L. Berg (415-665-3927)

Enjoy the Party.

Call Raphael Kosher Catering.

The freshest fish, homemade pasta, and Italian vegetarian specialties. Try our tempting desserts. We do it all large or small. You enjoy!

510-644-9500

2132 Center St., Downtown Berkeley
Validated parking at
Center St./Allston Way garages.
www.ristoranteraphael.com



CUCINA VEGETARIANA ITALIANA

Our sincerest thanks for your support of Netivot Shalom.

Netivot Shalom wants to extend to all its donors a heartfelt and resounding thank you for your ongoing financial support — whether it’s for the new building, or a meal for someone who needs it, or simply the resources to function each day. The office has recently had several changes in personnel, and is currently involved in catching up on all the donor acknowledgements. Thank you again to everyone for your ongoing financial support — and thank you for your patience! The complete acknowledgement list will appear in the next issue of the newsletter.

Wish List for Netivot Shalom

First-Ever, Unique and Fabulous, Netivot Shalom Wish List!

If you’d like to donate any of these items or would like more information about the wish list, please contact the shul office at 510-549-9447 ext. 101 — and many, many thanks!

- A new bagless vacuum that works — something geared for institutional, heavy-duty use!
- Brilliant I.T./techie-type people to help program our computers! On a Sunday, even!
- Cake servers
- A toaster oven
- DVD player

This list is ongoing and evolving — so please check in with the office for updates!

Upcoming BRJCC Programs

Wednesday, March 9, 11:30 a.m.

Does God Exist? Reconstructionist, Humanist and other Jewish Views about God’s Existence With Rabbi Jane Litman
Fee: \$5, registration 11:00 a.m.

Thursday, March 17, 7:30 p.m.

A Green Planet Torah: Earthy Wisdom from *Perek Shira*
With David Cohen Fee: \$5 BRJCC members, \$8 public

Monday, March 28, 7:30 p.m.

Book Club: *American Pastoral: The Jewish-American World of Philip Roth* Facilitated by Laura Bernell Fee: \$10

Thursday, April 14, 7:30 p.m.

To Dust You Will Return: Jewish Perspectives on Dying, Death and an Afterlife With Rachel Brodie Fee: \$5 BRJCC members, \$8 public

For more information call 510-848-0237 ext. 110 or e-mail info@brjcc.org.

We Extend Our Condolences to

Ben Heschen on the death of his sister,

Jean Donohue, *נ"ל*

Glenn Massarano on the death of his father,

Leonard Mell, *נ"ל*

Brad Rudolph on the death of his mother,

Naomi Rudolph, *נ"ל*

Yahrzeits

Zichronam I'verakhab —

May their memories be for a blessing

Rose Lowsky	20 Adar / March 1
Pearl Pollero	21 Adar / March 2
Mildred Harris Burger	21 Adar / March 2
Donald Weinberg	22 Adar / March 3
Norman Pollner	22 Adar / March 3
Maurice I. Neipris	22 Adar / March 3
James Bloom	24 Adar / March 5
Marjorie Alper	25 Adar / March 6
Rachel Press	25 Adar / March 6
Esther Matthews	26 Adar / March 7
Leah Jacobson Reingold	26 Adar / March 7
Mira Kon	26 Adar / March 7
Pearl Pripstein	26 Adar / March 7
Bennett Hornstein	26 Adar / March 7
Nathan Brandwynne	28 Adar / March 9
Nathan Patrusky	1 Adar II / March 12
Joan Siegel	4 Adar II / March 15
Susan Shackman	10 Adar II / March 21
Marc Rappaport	13 Adar II / March 24
Morris Lifschitz	14 Adar II / March 25
Louis Woolf Meltzer	15 Adar II / March 26
Seymour Bradus	16 Adar II / March 27
Joseph Hornstein	16 Adar II / March 27
Wilson Kelman	18 Adar II / March 29
Stephanie Davis	19 Adar II / March 30
Rivke bat Dora v'Yankev	20 Adar II / March 31
Carl Slater	22 Adar II / April 2
Sylvia Jacobson	22 Adar II / April 2
Stella G. Dorman	23 Adar II / April 3
Robert Finegold	24 Adar II / April 4
Max. M. Falk	1 Nisan / April 10
Meir Simler	4 Nisan / April 13
Anna Margueleis Schuman	5 Nisan / April 14
Barbara Strauss	5 Nisan / April 14
Frances Keller	7 Nisan / April 16
Bernhardt Dorman	10 Nisan / April 19
Charlotte Koltun	11 Nisan / April 20
Hyman Feinstein	11 Nisan / April 20
Reggie Hyne	12 Nisan / April 21
Jack I. Antokal	12 Nisan / April 21
Betty Falk	12 Nisan / April 21
Saul Sherman	13 Nisan / April 22
Diana Jurdem	13 Nisan / April 22
Beatrice (Bebe) F. Simon	13 Nisan / April 22
Jacob Gordon	14 Nisan / April 23
Mary Jane Dannenbaum	14 Nisan / April 23
Penina Shragai	15 Nisan / April 24
Sandy Schneider	16 Nisan / April 25
Sarah Gordon	17 Nisan / April 26
Rifka Radousky	17 Nisan / April 26
Joseph Richmond Levenson	18 Nisan / April 27
Rosemary Levenson	18 Nisan / April 27
Jens Grossman	18 Nisan / April 27
Moishe Brose	19 Nisan / April 28
Jack Maslan	19 Nisan / April 28
Ilan Gabriel Biederman	19 Nisan / April 28
Sadie Estry	20 Nisan / April 29
Devorah Fox	20 Nisan / April 29
Fred Marcus	21 Nisan / April 30



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Congregation
Netivot Shalom

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Pesah Is Coming!

By Robin Braverman, Chair, Adult Education Committee

Members of the congregation who want more information or assistance in increasing Pesah observance in their homes are encouraged to read the *Guide to the Perplexed* booklet available at the shul office. The following congregation members, along with Rabbi Kelman, are also available to answer questions:

Art Braufman, braufs@cs.com

Glenn Massarano, gmassarano@alumni.ucsd.edu

Norm Rosenblatt, nrosenblatt@mindspring.com

Robin Braverman, rivkah48@aol.com

The Ritual and Adult Education Committees jointly recommend that members of the congregation consider increasing their Pesah observance this year by conducting a search for *hametz* in their homes on **Thursday night, April 21**. The search, known in Hebrew as *b'dikat hametz*, is conducted in the dark, by candlelight, using a feather and a wooden spoon. It is a fun family activity that helps to mark the beginning of the holiday. Start a new family tradition this year! Kits are available at a nominal cost at Afikomen, or see Rabbi Kelman. Information about how to conduct the search will be available during workshops offered in the **Making Pesah/Making Pesah Fun Program** on **Sunday, April 3, at 10:00 a.m.** at the shul offices.

Seder Matching

If you want to attend a *seder*, or if you have room at your *seder* to welcome a guest, please contact Melissa Mednick at 510-653-7848.

Making Pesah /Making Pesah Fun

Come and share ideas and *haggadot* at **The Swap — a new workshop this year at the Making Pesah /Making Pesah Fun Program**, sponsored by the Religious School, the Ritual and Adult Education Committees, and Shabbat B'Yachad. Come and share with others, and hear from others. What do you do at your *seder* that is fun and interesting? What special readings or activities do you do? What *haggadah* do you use? We will cover all areas of Pesah preparation and observance, and share with each other how we do them. Simultaneous workshops, on **April 3** from **10:00 to 11:30 a.m.** at the shul office, include: Making Pesah Fun for Children; Pesah Recipes; The Swap — Sharing Our Ways of Making Pesah. These will be followed by a text study from the *haggadah* from 11:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m., led by Rabbi Danny Isaacson. Ritual objects for Pesah will be available for sale from Afikomen.

MEMBERSHIP FACTS AND FIGURES

How many are we? Currently 330 households representing approximately 750 individuals.

How many children ages five and under in our **Shabbat B'Yachad program?** 60 children from 40 families.

How many Shabbat B'Yachad "graduates" since the program's inception? 45

How many children in Netivot Shalom's weekday and Shabbat **Religious School?** 65 children grades K-6.

How many b'nei mitzvah since our inception? 175

Where do we live? All over the Bay Area, with the great majority in the East Bay — mostly Berkeley and Oakland, but others in Alameda, Albany, American Canyon, Benicia, Castro Valley, El Cerrito, Emeryville, Kensington, Lafayette, Moraga, Novato, Piedmont, Pinole, Pleasant Hill, Richmond, San Francisco, Santa Rosa, Tiburon, Walnut Creek. We even have a few members in other locations: Los Angeles; Reno, Nevada; New Haven, Conn.; and Mamaroneck, N.Y. (sorry if we missed anyone!).