



Congregation Netivot Shalom

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Vol. 17, No. 2

FROM THE RABBI

Reflections on Our Annual Meeting

By Rabbi Stuart Kelman

At our annual meeting, I had an opportunity to reflect on that particular moment in the history of our congregation. Since then, many of you have asked that I share those thoughts in writing. Here they are — in slightly edited form.

“Vasu li mikdash, v’shakhanti betokham” — “make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them.” Well, we did the first part, and now we’re working on the second part of the verse. Rashi actually understands the word *“li,”* (me) to mean: make in My Name a *beit kedushah* — a house of holiness; a house that is different from any other house and community in the world; a place where humans behave differently.

This morning, I’m filled with two emotions. The first is joy — here we are, in our **own** building, holding our annual meeting in our **own** social hall, for the very first time! I have a twinge of nostalgia for the Berkeley Senior Center — but only a twinge! And as part of our meeting, we’ll premiere the DVD made to mark this moment in our shul’s existence. So here we are — *she-beheyamu*.

The second feeling is one of confusion — of sadness and joy. This is the first time in our history that there is a competitive election. We’re maturing and changing in many ways: a new building; new programs; a new executive director; yes, a new rabbi in a year and a half; a new kitchen — and new visions of what could be. That’s the joy. And the confusion comes from trying to figure out just what it means to have God present, here with us. Everything we do in this *bayit* must be a reflection of the divine, of the holy; otherwise we are not living up to our selves, to our God and to our community. Conflict, scholars tell us, is a sign of creativity and innovation. All well and good, but this congregation is built on another value: that of trust — *bitahon* — trust in God, trust in our tradition and trust in each other. If our *kasbrut* policy is predicated on this notion of trust, so should the ways in which we conduct our business and our elections. The synagogue has to be one place where people can feel safe — to talk honestly and confidentially. And that confidentiality makes us different from the American public’s value of “right to know.” In American elections, everything is fair game; everything is supposed to be open. In the synagogue, we debate, we argue — about concepts, about law, about issues — not about people. We have established processes, by-laws, that

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

The Year in Review

By Carol Cunradi

While preparing to give the president’s report at our recent annual meeting, I reread the remarks I gave at last year’s annual meeting, after being elected president. Last year, I stated that there were two main challenges facing us as a community: moving into our new building and reenvisioning our programs; and the transition in rabbinic leadership with Rabbi Kelman’s planned retirement in June 2007. In addition, I stated that I hoped to accomplish the following three goals during my presidency: (1) increased participation in congregational committees, (2) more attention to fundraising, and (3) addressing governance issues. How have we as a congregation met these challenges, and how much progress have we made toward reaching these goals?

Last year, we envisioned striving toward 25-hour Shabbat observance in our new home. I am happy to report that we have made considerable progress toward that goal. Thanks to the efforts of Michelle Wolfson, our director of education, as well as the Young Adults, Youth Education, and Community Building committees, we now have Friday night potluck dinners and services a few times a month. Our Shabbat morning services and Torah study continue to flourish. We have placed a special emphasis on greeting visitors, new members and guests, and have established the practice of issuing an open invitation to *shabbes* lunch. We have also begun to hold *minhah* services. Under Cathy Shadd’s leadership, our pre-school Shabbat B’Yachad program has grown to over 40 families, including nine families that have joined SBY since we moved into our building. We still need to raise money for a pre-school play yard to accommodate the children in this program. And under the direction of Michelle Wolfson, all of our elementary-school-age children are welcome to attend our Shabbat program. We have 20 students participating in the Amitim program in preparation for their *b’nei mitzvah*, and 26 children are attending our K–6 weekday religious school.

Since moving into our new home, we have had the opportunity to launch new programs and activities. Among these are sponsoring talks by the Israeli consul general and members of parliament; hosting author presentations and book signings; offering cooking demonstrations and baking events with local and nationally known chefs; inviting all congregant musicians to participate in Netivot Shalom’s own band rehearsals; and last but not least, renting our facilities to individuals and organizations. This is an area of

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our founders felt would produce a fair and just outcome in the best interests of the congregation. But that requires that we trust people to behave justly.

Two weeks ago, in my Liturgy Literacy class (previously called the Adult B'nei Mitzvah class), I found myself starting a sentence by saying: "The truth is . . ." At that very moment, I realized that this overused phrase in my own vocabulary was simply wrong, and that I can't use it anymore. Does anyone here know "the truth"? It would be *chutzpadick* to make that claim. There are so many sides to every story. But what we **can** do is trust the people we have chosen to lead the congregation and the processes that have been established.

"*Hokbiah tokbiah*" says the Torah — when you see someone doing something wrong, you must reproach him or her. That's the *mitzvah*. And the *Sefer Hamitzvot* says explicitly: no, do not do this in public. Do it in private, and in confidence. This is not about secrecy; it's about respect. *K'vod ha-beriyot* — the respect for other humans.

So, here we are — experiencing the joy of this building and simultaneously the growing pains of maturation.

During our 17 years, I've consistently said that our mission statement is the statement from Shabbat 127a: "These are the deeds which yield immediate fruit and continue to yield fruit in time to come: honoring parents; doing deeds of lovingkindness; attending the house of study punctually, morning and evening; providing hospitality; visiting the sick; helping the needy; welcoming the bride; attending the dead; probing the meaning of prayer; making peace between one person and another, and between man and wife. And the study of Torah is the most basic of them all."

We've worked on some but not all of these values. Yesterday Rabbi Daniel Kohn spoke about *hakbnasat orehim*, being a welcoming congregation, as our "value for the year." Actually, I think there is another value that we now need to focus on: *hava'at shalom* — the striving, the working for *sh'laymut*, for wholeness, for trust, for well-being, peace between people. What is primary is not the outcome of an election, but how we treat each other. Without this, we are just another organization; with it, we are a synagogue.

And with it we can begin to understand what it means to have built this building and to have God be here among us. Before we speak, we need to pause and ask ourselves: does what I am about to say reflect the value of *kavod ha-briyot* — of the respect for one another? If we are able to observe this *mitzvah*, we have a shot at figuring out how God can be here. *That* is my blessing and my challenge for all of us as we now move into the next era of our shul.

May the way we voted and the way we conducted our discourse — before and after the vote — reflect our highest aspirations for the community we are striving to create in this beautiful space.

"*Vasu li mikdash, v'sbakhanti betokbam*" — "Make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them." ❧

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great potential for us, and provides a wonderful opportunity to market our facility and our community.

Regarding the transition in rabbinic leadership, we have had a Rabbi Search Process Committee (pre-search committee), led by Art Braufman and assisted by Barbara Wezelman, Dan Handwerker and others, hard at work doing the planning for the coming year leading up to hiring a new rabbi. Pauline Moreno will be heading a committee to honor Rabbi Kelman in the year leading up to his retirement. This committee will help organize study sessions, collect essays and *drashot* on liturgy that are written in his honor, and will help organize a fundraising retirement party. Please speak to Pauline if you are interested in helping with any of these areas.

Goal 1: Increased Participation

Turning to the first of my main goals — increased participation in congregational committees — I am happy

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**Report on the New
*Mahzor***

By Rabbi Kelman

Last *erev* Yom Kippur, we were privileged to test a new version of kol nidrei from the new Conservative *mahzor*. We were one of only five congregations in all of North America that were asked to pilot this edition. More than 100 congregants responded with extremely positive constructive criticism. Almost everyone (not only from here, but from all the congregations) responded positively to the content of the *mahzor*. The translation seemed to work well and, most important, people said they could pray from it. The explanations and readings were well received, with obvious differences in taste. Criticism focused almost exclusively on the format — type, size, color and columns. The committee met recently, and we formulated changes based on your comments. Personally, I was very proud to have been part of the team developing the *mahzor* and proud that we were selected to test it. Thank you all for your efforts.

NETIVOT SHALOM NEWSLETTER

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Please submit copy to newsletter@netivotshalom.org. Copy may be edited for accuracy, clarity, length and language, including adherence to grammatical and stylistic consistency. Photos should be digital, if possible, in highest possible resolution; e-mail to david@radwin.org, and provide names of people in each photo.

Issue
March/April

Deadline
January 23, 2006

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

Report from the Board

By Deborah Yager, Board Secretary

This fall the Netivot Shalom Board of Directors focused on campaigns to ensure that our long- and short-term financial goals are met and preparing for the annual meeting. The following are excerpts from board minutes.

October 30, 2005, board meeting:

- **Personnel.** We made an offer to our top executive director candidate, David Stein, and are in the process of finalizing the terms of his employment. We plan to introduce him at the Nov. 20 annual meeting; he will begin work the following week. We are still in the process of prioritizing tasks for the executive director, including (1) oversight of all financial records, (2) oversight and supervision of office staff, (3) building oversight and security, (4) building/social hall rentals.
- **Yom Kippur Appeal.** We have received excellent feedback on Ann Swidler's presentation. Approximately \$27,000 was pledged. A letter will go out soon to congregants asking for payment.
- **Building Assessment Meeting.** A meeting was held on 10/23/05 to discuss the financial projections concerning mortgage payments. The following recommendations were agreed upon: (1) encourage all congregants with Capital Campaign pledge balances to pay off the balance ASAP (by 12/31/05). This helps to forestall assessments and can be used for debt service. (2) As of July 2006 (fiscal year 2007), we will need a 25 percent increase in full dues-paying membership fees, and a 10 percent increase in adjusted membership fees. These monies would be used for mortgage payments. (3) In January 2008, we will need to launch Capital Campaign II, which would be a three-five year campaign. (4) We should launch a Planned Giving Endowment Program.
- **Purim Ball.** The Purim Ball Committee (Andrea Aultschuler, Laurie Greenhut Zell, Mary Breiner and Susan Stanfield) presented plans for our first annual Purim Ball, to be held Sunday, March 12, 2006, beginning at 7:00 p.m. Entitled "QE's Shushan West Supper Club" (QE = Queen Esther), the event will be a night of swingin', singin' and shoppin' with wine, food, drinks and dancing. There will be event underwriters, a two-three item "live" auction, an ad book, a silent auction and a "karaoke auction" in which bids will be made to hear congregants sing particular songs (think Rabbi Kelman singing "Baby Let Me Light Your Fire"). The goal is to raise \$15,000-\$20,000.

Motion The board approves the proposed budget of \$8,000 to cover the expenses for catering, band, flowers, postage, decorations and paper goods. **Passed 8-0-0.** ❧

Report from the Rabbi Pre-Selection Committee (RPSC)

By Art Braufman

It is time for you to tell us what you want in a rabbi! Each member household will soon receive a congregational survey prepared by the RPSC Study Group, chaired by Rena Dorph and Wendy Rosov. The purpose of the survey is to determine our members' priorities for the future of Netivot Shalom and how these relate to the qualities we want in our future rabbi. Since the survey results will help determine our criteria for a new rabbi, **this is your best chance to tell us what you want.**

The survey was generated based on key questions and issues that were identified during the meetings of the focus groups held in December. The survey results will be used to develop a qualifications profile for the ideal future rabbi, and also will establish rating of criteria that will be used by the Rabbi Selection Committee in evaluating candidates. What factors, characteristics and experiences are most important for a new rabbi? This is an opportunity for each member to weigh in and express her or his desires.

To get as broad a picture of the desires of our members as possible, every post-*bar/bat mitzvah* household member will be asked to complete either a paper or a Web-based survey (only one per person, please). We request that members make completion a high priority, so that our timeline can be met. All surveys will be anonymous, and individual data kept strictly confidential.

Preliminary survey results should be available by the end of February. To ensure that all members get the chance to hear the results, several open meetings for all members will be held during March.

We extend our appreciation to all members who participated in the focus groups and to the group leaders and recorders. Their input was critical to develop a suitable survey.

This is a challenging project — and a critical one to help our congregation meet the demands of the future and permit us to go from strength to strength. Our goal is to hire a rabbi who is the best match for Netivot Shalom.

Questions or concerns can be sent to me by snail mail or e-mail (braufs@cs.com). ❧

Sunday Morning *Minyanim* January/February Schedule

By Art Braufman, for Ritual and Adult Education Committees

The Sunday *minyanim* on the second and fourth Sundays for January and February promise to be most interesting. Start 2006 off right by planning to attend some programs. Our speakers put a lot of effort into their presentations, and all who have attended past programs have been very pleased. The diversity of our speakers (all members) has made for very interesting, mind-expanding hours, plus the pleasure of davening shaharit and enjoying breakfast with fellow members. We encourage you to come at **9:30 a.m. for services**, but if you like to sleep in or have other stuff to do, come for the **speaker at 10:30 a.m.**

Here is the upcoming schedule:

January 8: Josh Gressel: “Sacred Commitment” — What do “wedding vows” or “sanctity of marriage” actually mean? Josh will make explicit some implicit spiritual assumptions we bring into our marriages and committed relationships. Using a careful reading of Genesis as proof text, we will look at the divine plan behind our instinctive turning to couplehood as a way of living life more fully. Josh is a clinical psychologist in private practice in Concord. His passion is working with couples from a spiritual perspective, and he has presented this program at other religious institutions in the Bay Area.

January 22: Rabbi Kelman: “Conservatism and Reconstructionism — Similarities and Differences.” Third session in the series: “In the Middle Doesn’t Mean Pareve: A Fresh Look at Conservative Judaism.”

February 12: Linda Blachman: “Sacred Autobiography: The Healing Power of Story, Listening and Legacy.” In 1995, Linda founded Mothers’ Living Stories, an award-winning nonprofit project that helps mothers living with cancer record life stories as living legacies for their children. She will talk about her own journey to create this project, how it related to Judaism, and how it led to publication of her book: *Another Morning: Voices of Truth and Hope from Mothers with Cancer*. Her talk will include readings from this powerful, inspirational and deeply moving book; a tapestry of the voices of ordinary women coping with a mother’s nightmare: a cancer diagnosis while raising children. The book documents the struggle of women confronting the profound collision of mothering and cancer and struggling to raise children. In her private practice, Linda is a personal historian, public health consultant, workshop facilitator and counselor for life transitions. This session will be extended until noon to permit sufficient time for questions and book signing. Some proceeds from book sales will go to the congregation.

February 26: Rabbi Kelman: “How Law Works — Some Case Studies, *Halakhab*.” Fourth session in the series: “In the Middle Doesn’t Mean Pareve: A Fresh Look at Conservative Judaism.” ☞

My Plans for Adult Education

By Cynthia Hoffman, Chair, Adult Education

As we begin this new “semester,” I would like to give you some idea of what I have in mind for adult education here at Netivot Shalom. First, I want to build on the wonderful programming that I have inherited from Robin Braverman. I have a particular interest in revitalizing the Hebrew language program (I remember attending a trope class a number of years ago on the same night that the Hebrew program was going, complete with three classrooms full of people studying!), and plan to recruit teachers for that purpose.

I have been in discussions with a number of people in the Jewish community of the greater Bay Area about having Netivot Shalom sponsor a series of book readings with Jewish authors from around the country (and the world), and have been working with Rabbi Kelman to design liturgy and other Judaica classes. I hope to tap into the rich sources of Jewish learning in the Berkeley academic community, and from within Netivot Shalom itself, where we have a large number of rabbis and Jewish educators among our membership.

Finally, in the next month (as soon as the current semester grades are filed), I hope to reconstitute some form of Adult Education Committee. If you are interested in joining me to develop the adult education program in our shul, please get in touch with me at adulthoodeducation@netivotshalom.org. I’m recruiting all the help I can get. ☞

In the Middle Doesn’t Mean Pareve: A Fresh Look at Conservative Judaism

*Emet Ve-Emunah: Statement of Principles
of Conservative Judaism*

*Continuing Course in Conservative Judaism,
with Rabbi Stuart Kelman*

Sunday, January 22, 10:30 a.m.
Conservatism and Reconstructionism —
Similarities and Differences

Sunday, February 26, 10:30 a.m.
How Law Works — Some Case Studies,
Halakhab

Sunday, April 23, 10:30 a.m.
The Founders — A Brief History

Sunday, June 25, 10:30 a.m.
So, What Is the Ideal Conservative Jew?

Kaddish and the Morning Minyan

By Glenn Massarano

I am coming to my father's first *yahrzeit*. Spurred by this and Art Braufman's passion for the issue of observing a *yahrzeit* in the morning *minyan*, I wanted to look at some of these aspects of the Jewish mourning practice.

There are seven people for whom one has a *hiyuv* (religious obligation) to say *kaddish*. These are father, mother, spouse, brother, sister, son and daughter. (All the closest blood relatives one generation before, concurrent with, and after you.) The *hiyuv* starts immediately following the burial and continues for 11 months (from the day of burial). This *hiyuv* exists for any service that one attends. During this period, the person is called an *avel* (mourner), or *en anyo* ("in the year") by the Judeo-Spanish.

During the 11 months following the burial, the *avel* typically follows certain practices, including saying *kaddish* at every service. At the beginning of the 12th month, the person is no longer considered an *avel*, nor does he or she say *kaddish* at every service.

At that point, the person begins to observe the date of the *yahrzeit* or *anyo*. The *yahrzeit* occurs every year on the anniversary of the passing of the relative. It is our custom for that person to say *kaddish* on the Shabbat immediately before the *yahrzeit*. However, the general practice is to attend services on the day of the *yahrzeit* (or as close as possible) to say *kaddish*. For certain occasions, special prayers can also be recited including the *el malei rahamim*. The Sephardim recite the *hashkavah*.

I want to encourage people who have a *yahrzeit* to come to weekday *minyan* to say *kaddish*. There are many reasons for this. One is it's a more intimate space to mark the occasion. Since I have been *en anyo*, I have much more of an appreciation for the community structure that the morning *minyan* provides. I think it's equally important that those without a need to say *kaddish* also consider finding time to be part of a morning *minyan*, to help form, create and support that infrastructure. The feeling of connection in this way, for me, is very powerful.

I wouldn't want the morning *minyan* to become just a "*kaddish minyan*." But I think it's an important function. Just as *bakhnasat orehim* (welcoming guests), *bikkur holim* (visiting the sick) and *talmud torah* (study of Judaism) are all core components (good ones, too!) of our larger community, none is, on its own, sufficient to sustain the community. Just the same with the *minyan*. It's a place to say *kaddish*. But it's also a place to learn and build community. Consider picking one of the *minyanim* each month to come. The non-*Shabbat minyanim* occur every Wednesday, on Rosh *Hodesh* (typically first day), and on the second and fourth Sunday of every month. If you come on a Sunday, you get the added benefit of a light repast and the wonderful study sessions that Art lines up.

If you have any questions about the *minyan* or the practice of saying *kiddush*, please feel free to ask me or Art Braufman. ☞

Ritual Committee Activity

By Glenn Massarano, Chair, Ritual Committee

What occupied the minds of many on the Ritual Committee in recent months was the Yamim Nora'im. I want to thank everyone who participated in making the services happen. This includes all the *ba'alei k'ria* (Torah readers), *ba'alei baftarab*, *ba'alei t'fillah* (davenners), *darshanim* (those who gave sermons), *gabbaim*, and leaders (including the rabbi). It's rarely obvious how much work goes into the preparation for these tasks.

I also want to thank those who helped coordinate this past year's Ritual Committee activities, including Lee Feistein (*ba'alei t'fillah*), Eric Seder (*darshanim*), Sheri Pearl (assisted in the overall coordination), and (I guess) myself (*ba'alei k'ria*, *ba'alei baftarab*, and *gabbaim*). Debra Lobel once again provided overall coordination. These jobs, while also entailing much hard work and good thinking, are behind-the-scenes activities that are critical to the success of the services. *Hazaq uwarukh!*

Also, I want to recognize the organizers of the two additional kol nidrei services. Claire Sherman and Judy Rodowski coordinated and ran the family kol nidrei service. And Josh Gressel, Noga Gressel, Rachel Heinstein, Jonathan Heinstein, Mel Sibony and Rabbi Tzippi Gabbai organized the Sephardic kol nidrei. Again, *hazaq uwarukh* and *today rabbah*.

Here are some of the items that the Ritual Committee has been discussing recently.

- Much of the last meeting included a review of the Yamim Nora'im services. We also agreed that it would be best to plan to continue to hold services at Northbrae Community Church.
- We are considering the possibility of organizing a second-night seder this year for Pesah. If you have thoughts about this, please let me know.
- We started discussing the issue that Rabbi Jonathan Omer-man raised with regard to the use of the phrases "please stand" and "please rise" in our services.

As always, if you have any questions or comments about any of these items, anything ritual, or ideas you might have, please feel free to contact me. ☞

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to report the formation or revitalization of a number of committees. For example, thanks to the efforts of Marshall Platt, Josh Kirsch and Babbie Freiberg, we now have an active Marketing/Publicity Committee. In conjunction with graphic artist and congregant Lee Bearson, they have designed an attractive new Netivot Shalom brochure, as well as a large banner displayed on the western side of the building, and are also working on Web site design and other Marketing/Publicity issues. Another example is the Fundraising Committee. Thanks to the efforts of Lisa Fink, Babbie Freiberg, Susan Stanfield and others, our Fundraising Committee has been revitalized (more on that later). And thanks to the leadership of Charlene Stern and a core group of volunteers known as the Kitchen Cabinet, we have a food-oriented committee that will showcase our kitchen, social hall and building through food-oriented programs and events, such as hosting acclaimed cookbook author Joan Nathan.

In addition to these new or revitalized committees, there is a great deal of volunteer work behind many of our long-standing committees. The Ritual Committee, currently under the leadership of Glenn Massarano, is a model of a parliamentary-style committee that has met monthly throughout the existence of our synagogue. The Adult Education Committee, formerly chaired by Robin Braverman, has offered wonderful programs. Under its auspices, a core group of congregants met to discuss Adult Education Long-Range Planning. The Youth Education Committee has had between five and 12 households represented at its meetings over the past year. Under former chair Carol Dorf's leadership, this committee strived to involve ALL the parents of our preschool and day school, and public school parents, in their planning and youth ed activities. The Membership Committee, formerly led by Melissa Mednick and assisted by Maia Fleming Singer and Elissa Kittner, worked hard at welcoming new members. The committee instituted a "buddy system" to pair new and seasoned members to allow more congregants to get to know each other on a personal basis and to further everyone's sense of community. The Social Action Committee, chaired by Jonathan Stern, participated in BOCA (Berkeley Organizing Congregations for Action) events, turkey drives and Hillel dinner sponsorship. Led by Katya and Joel Gerwein, our Community Building Committee organized Shabbat lunches at congregants' homes, and a Pesah picnic jointly sponsored with Congregation Beth Israel. The House Committee, chaired earlier this year by Eugene Berg and now by Susan Lawrence, has ensured facility set-up for our meetings and services. Our former administrative chair, Golda Blum, supervised our office staff and oversaw their functioning. And our *mitzvab*-based committees — *Bikkur Holim*, chaired by Peter Strauss, *Gemilut Hasadim*, co-chaired by Steve Tobias and Alice Webber, and *Chevra Kadisha*, chaired by Andrea Cassidy — have inspired congregants to visit the sick, provide meals for those in need, and carry out Jewish burial and mourning customs.

Goal 2: Fun(d)raising

Regarding my second goal — fun(d)raising — we've made considerable progress toward raising money and having fun doing it. Then-board member Scott Adams did an outstanding job of raising money at our annual kosher tailgate parties

at the Oakland A's games. Susan Stanfield took the lead in organizing Pesah wine sales. Lisa Fink and Babbie Freiberg were behind our first successful benefit concert featuring Jewish music groups Za'atar and Klez-X. Lisa Fink, Babbie Freiberg and Ann Swidler were responsible for planning and ensuring the success of our Yom Kippur Appeal, which netted over \$30,000. And led by Andrea Altschuler, Susan Stanfield, Laurie Greenhut Zell and Mary Breiner, we will be having our first-ever Annual Purim Ball on March 12, 2006. This event will feature an auction, wine, hors d'oeuvres, live music and karaoke, with a goal of netting between \$15,000 and \$20,000.

Goal 3: Addressing Governance Issues

There is still a fair amount of work to be done in order to meet my third goal, addressing governance issues. Some governance issues (infrastructure, staffing, operations) were addressed by Joe Meresman's task force, an ad hoc strategic (operational) planning group that consisted of a core group of congregants that met over a few months.

Although we have made progress in making the culture of Netivot Shalom more welcoming and inclusive, there is still room for improvement. For example, exit interviews with former members reveal that not everyone has been made to feel truly welcome. We need to continue our efforts to ensure that we live the *mitzvab* of *bakhnasat orehim* — welcoming guests — through our actions.

Welcome, David Stein!

After we moved into our new home, it became painfully obvious that we couldn't go on without an executive director. In that connection, I want to welcome here our new executive director, David Stein. I hope everyone takes the opportunity to greet David and welcome him to Netivot Shalom. David will oversee our financial systems, office administration, building security and rentals; he will also assist with marketing, membership and numerous other tasks. David was recruited through the efforts of our Executive Director Search Committee, which consisted of Sam Salkin (chair), Joe Meresman and Golda Blum.

Thank You

Thanks to the leadership of Mike Irwin, we secured a \$3.2 million loan at a 10-year fixed rate of 7.535 percent. In her report on building finances, Capital Campaign co-chair Ann Swidler explained how we propose to pay off this loan. I again want to thank Dan Siegel for his work on the 2005 Memorial Day Weekend retreat. These types of events are critically important for fostering community. Dan hopes to organize another retreat in 2007. I also want to thank all of the congregants who served on this year's Nominating Committee: Diane Bernbaum (chair), Marcia Brooks, Debra Lobel, Hannah Dresner, Elad Ziv, Billi Romain and Joel Gerwein. I would like to acknowledge the tremendous amount of work carried out by the Site Work Group, led by Joe Meresman (chair), David Finn, Blair Prentice, Ellen Gobler, Ed Anisman and Bruce Starkman. Finally, I want to thank all of the board members and Rabbi Kelman for their support throughout the year. It has been an honor for me to represent Netivot Shalom over the past year during Shabbat services, at public events such as the *hamukat ba-bayit*, and at conferences. I look forward to another year serving the congregation as your president. 🍷

Katrina Firsthand

By Diane Bernbaum

On Shabbat, November 5, the congregation was treated to a gripping presentation by former Berkleyite, Rachel Luft, on the devastation of Hurricane Katrina. About 30 congregants remained after Shabbat services and *kiddush* to hear Dr. Luft, who kept them in rapt attention for nearly two hours.

A Berkeley native, Dr. Luft became *bat mitzvah* at Congregation Beth El, graduated from and later taught for me at Midrasha, and went on to get a Ph.D. in sociology from UC Santa Barbara, specializing in anti-racism education. For the past year and a half she has been on the faculty of the University of New Orleans. She explained that her childhood in the Bay Area, while teaching her to “duck and cover” in the event of an earthquake, did nothing to prepare her for the correct behavior in a time of a hurricane. So the Saturday morning before Katrina struck found her gathering with six friends to decide whether to evacuate. They decided to meet again in a few hours and drive to relatives of one of the women who lived in Alabama. Dr. Luft prepared for what she thought was only a short car trip by driving to the health food store, buying organic nuts, and grabbing four tank tops, a yoga mat, a laptop and some flip flops, all appropriate for the 105 degree weather. It never dawned on her to take important documents, photographs or mementos, or to park her car on high ground.

Dr. Luft went on to talk about why long-time veterans decided not to leave (mainly because they’d lived through too many false alarms), or why they couldn’t (no money for bus tickets or gas, and walking all day wouldn’t even get them out of the flood area). She talked about students of hers who were separated from their families and put on buses to towns where they knew no one. She described returning briefly to New Orleans to see the devastation in her apartment, trying to bleach the mold out of furniture, and tossing most of her possessions into huge piles of debris on the street. She tied all of this up with text on Sukkot and the fragility of life, and ended by speaking about her anti-racism work and the uneasy partnership that Jews have with other minorities in the field.

For those interested in learning more, or contributing, Dr. Luft offered the following suggestions of grassroots organizations leading Katrina rebuilding:

1. The People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond

PO Box 2508909
NY, NY 10025

The People’s Institute was founded in 1980 by long-time community organizers Ron Chisom of New Orleans and Jim Dunn of Yellow Springs, Ohio. It has been based for most of its history in the city of New Orleans until its displacement by Hurricane Katrina. The People’s Institute was created to develop more analytical, culturally rooted and effective community organizers.

1a. The Kimberly Richards Roof Fund.

Kimberly Richards is a core trainer with the People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond. She was planning to relocate to Picayune, Miss., to her family home, which sustained roof damage.

Contact: rachel.luft@sbcglobal.net

2. The Partner with Katrina Family Network

This network has been formed in an effort to strengthen ties between families directly affected by the hurricane and those indirectly affected, in order to build human networks, share resources, nurture self-determination, and facilitate a healthy, just interdependence of communities across the country.

Contact: rachel.luft@sbcglobal.net

3. The People’s Hurricane Relief Fund

This coalition of local, community-based organizations (educational reform, anti-discrimination, fair labor, etc.) was formed in order to build and maintain a coordinated network of community leaders, organizers and other evacuees with the capacity and organizational infrastructure that can help to meet the needs of people most affected by the hurricane.

The People’s Hurricane Fund
c/o Vanguard Public Foundation
383 Rhode Island St., #301
SF, CA 94103



Vote in World Zionist Congress Elections!

Show pride in your synagogue and help the Conservative Movement.

Vote in the upcoming World Zionist Congress Elections.

On July 1, 2005, the U.S. elections for the 35th World Zionist Congress officially began, with the opening of voter registration. Voting for the 2006 Congress will be a two-stage process: registration and balloting.

Any American Jew who turns 18 by the end of June 2006 and who affirms the Jerusalem Program can vote. When you receive your ballot, be sure to vote for the slate of candidates from MERCAZ, the Zionist political arm of the Masorti/Conservative Movement.

Why is this election important? The World Zionist Organization (WZO) controls 50 percent of the Jewish Agency. That, in turn, translates into influence over the Jewish Agency’s more than \$300 million annual budget. This year, the Masorti Movement in Israel will receive about \$700,000 from the Jewish Agency. By increasing our share of the vote and, thereby, our representation in the WZO, we will be in a position to increase the funding for Masorti.

Registration will extend until January 15 by mail and February 15 online, with a fee of \$7 for adults and \$5 for students. Ballots will be distributed upon registration, with the completion of voting as of February 28, 2006.

To register online, go to www.mercazusa.org and click on “Register.”

It is my hope, in this column, to encourage discussion and even debate with regard to issues concerning and confronting Israel. What follows are the thoughtful — and, I hope, thought-provoking — views of one member of our community, as well as information on two upcoming programs in Israel. I encourage you to engage with the articles and also, if you wish, to offer other ideas and/or articles.

— Editor

Views of a Centrist

By Seymour Kessler

At a recent Netivot Shalom event — the Yitzchak Rabin memorial — I was greeted by someone who said something to the effect, “Here’s the right-winger.” I treated the incident as a jest or a friendly tweek. Nonetheless, it set off a train of thinking about how difficult it is to maintain a centrist position when it comes to Israel. It made me realize that perhaps others do perceive me as representing the political positions of the right, because I cannot identify with those on the opposite spectrum who perennially find fault with Israel, its policies and leaders. Despite the fact that I value the centrist position and eschew the programs and missions of the extremists on both the right and left, others seem to see me as an advocate for an extreme position. Perceptions, it seems, have a life of their own and, as my personal experience attests, they are difficult to modify toward a greater and more nuanced reality.

Consider Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. Over the past few years, the perception of this man has undergone a sea change in both Israel and the international community. Yet, there are many still wed to their initial negative images of him and have difficulty accommodating to — and thus truly understanding — his policies and aspirations. His adoption of a centrist position has been long in the making — it’s not something that happened overnight — and careful observers of Israeli politics have watched, for years, as he chucked the rule book, skillfully restructured Israeli politics, and radically altered the perception of Israel internationally. What binds the “old” Sharon and the “new” is a respect for pragmatism rather than ideology. That seems to give him a flexibility of thinking and action lacking among many of his detractors.

In the article that follows, Aluf Benn, a left-of-center journalist for *Haaretz*, contrasts two world views, the idealists and the realists, the former generally associated in Israel with the left and the latter with the right. Of course, these are broad generalizations, and both the right and left have their share of idealists or ideologues and pragmatic realists. Benn here addresses primarily the left of center constituency. He is particularly critical of the ideologues of the left, and without mentioning him by name takes a swipe at Yossi Beilin and his pretentious Geneva accords. He points out the inconsistencies in the positions the left has taken over the past year with respect to the Palestinians and argues for greater attention to social cohesion within Israel itself, rather than worry so much about the Palestinians’ *tzoras*, as the left is wont to do. Lastly, he addresses the new leader of the Labor Party, Amir Peretz, who built a career as an ideologue, and reminds him that there is a difference between being a politician and a statesman.

* * * * *

“In a Perfect World” by Aluf Benn (*Haaretz*)

“In a perfect world, perhaps Netzarim would not have existed. Neither, for that matter, would the rest of the settlements and the huge political and economic price Israel paid for them.

“In that perfect world, Israel would be celebrating this summer the fifth anniversary of the signing of the historic final-status settlement between Ehud Barak and Yasser Arafat at Camp David. There would be no terror attacks, assassinations and separation fences between Israelis and Palestinians, only mutual respect and fraternity of nations.

“But the world is not perfect. It has Palestinian hatred and murderous terror, Israeli occupation and arrogance, ambitions of politicians and generals, and even dozens of settlements that were built shortsightedly and must now be evacuated. This imperfect world sometimes needs imperfect leaders, like Ariel Sharon, to make and carry out decisions, instead of dreaming about peace in Geneva, or analyzing the intricacies of international law in Sweden.

“The pullout from Gush Katif did not seem like a fantasy. Far from it. Israel did not hand the keys to the settlers’ houses to Mahmoud Abbas in a golden trunk tied with a ribbon and ask his forgiveness for the occupation and the violation of the Geneva Convention. It didn’t even contribute to his election campaign. Instead, Sharon insisted on leaving Gaza without asking the Palestinians. He did not think how the evacuation would serve Fatah in its fight against Hamas, but how it would contribute to Israel.

“In the perfect world of the left, it would have been better to stay in Netzarim and Morag, as long as they were handed by agreement to Abbas and strengthened his regime. According to this approach, like in a math test, what counts is the way, not the result. But Israeli leaders are elected to preserve Israel’s interests, not those of Fatah. Netzarim was destroyed to get rid of an irksome, redundant burden, not to influence the results of the Palestinian Authority elections.

“It is sad to discover that both Israeli right- and left-wingers suffer from a stereotypical and superficial view of the Palestinians. The peace agreement foes see them as an incorrigible gang of Jew murderers. The peace aficionados, on the other hand, treat them as though they lacked will-power and act only in response to Israel’s actions. Those experts, who now explain that Israeli pressure on the PA is weakening Abbas, said only a year ago that those pressures were strengthening Arafat. At the time they explained that incorrigible Israeli obduracy unites the Palestinians. Now they say only generosity could help. But perhaps Abbas’ weakness has internal reasons as well, like lack of charisma, bad management and fear of confrontation?

“This controversy is not academic. After the elections, the gradual evacuation of 60,000 settlers living beyond the separation fence will be on the table. If the national interest requires getting out of there, for demographic, political and security considerations, it is important to do so in the most effective way that would not rupture Israeli society.

“It is desirable and preferable to achieve an agreement with the PA. But we must not give it the power to veto it and fall again into the ‘final-status settlement’ trap of holding on to

the most isolated outpost until the Palestinians do us the favor of agreeing on the Jerusalem and refugee issues. It is more important to enlist domestic accord to pull out and resettle the evacuees in a dignified way and integrate them in Israeli society.

“Ideology is significant in shaping public opinion, education and party platforms. Practical statesmanship should take the constraints into consideration and deal with what is possible, not with fantasy. Sharon understood this long ago. Amir Peretz, who believes in a Palestinian partner and in striving for a final-status settlement, also knows the difference between election speeches and post-election actions. He knows peace requires domestic support, and sometimes achieving a little less can gain more in the long run.” ☞

Conservative Yeshiva 2006: Summer in Jerusalem

The Conservative Yeshiva 2006 summer program provides an opportunity to study the classic texts of Judaism, including Talmud, Tanakh, *halakhab*, *t'fillah* and Jewish thought, with traditional *bevruta* and *shiur* learning, led by *Rashei* Yeshiva Richie Lewis and Joel Roth, with Prof. Pamela Barmash and other Yeshiva faculty.

The program includes an intensive morning ulpan to build up Hebrew skills and afternoon classes in Talmud and Tanakh. The advanced track includes an intensive morning Talmud class and afternoon *shiurim* in *halakhab*. An introductory intensive text study track will be offered each morning.

Two three-week sessions will be held July 2–20 and July 23–August 10. Students may attend either or both, and students of all ages and backgrounds are welcome.

The Conservative Yeshiva is a project of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism. For more information and an application, contact Yeshiva@uscj.org, 972-2-622-3116, or www.conservativeyeshiva.org.

The Israel Bike Ride: An Israeli Program Serving Arabs and Jews

By Yvette Hoffer

In 2005, for the second time, my son, Avi, rode in the **Arava Institute Hazon Israel Ride** in the Negev to support the environmental programs at the Arava Institute for Environmental Studies. The institute is based at Ketura, the only Young Judea kibbutz founded by Americans. It was founded by a small group of young graduates of the Young Judea year-in-Israel course, at the close of the Yom Kippur War in November 1973.

The Arava Institute provides studies for Jews and Arabs working together to improve the air, water and shared resources where they are scarce. These are some highlights of their accomplishments in 2005.

- Ten of its students, from Israel, Jordan and the Palestinian Authority, participated in the Beyond Boundaries: Vermont-Israel-Arab Peace Partners Project in the fall. They were matched with environmental internships in Burlington, Vermont, and attended a Global Water Resources Symposium in October.
- The Bike Ride 2005 was a huge success, with 130 riders completing a 265-mile, six-day ride from Jerusalem to Eilat — cycling for peace, partnership & environmental protection

2006 Ride

Now, the 2006 Israel ride is being planned. The Israel Ride is an extraordinary experience: 150 Americans and Israelis will bike for five days through Jerusalem, Ashkelon, the Negev, Mitzpeh Ramon and Kibbutz Ketura to Eilat. They will celebrate on the beach in Ashkelon and spend Shabbat in Mitzpe Ramon by the Ramon Crater, ending with a closing banquet in Eilat.

The Ride takes place May 9–16. Riders pay a registration fee and commit to raise a minimum sponsorship amount. The Ride is then fully inclusive, including domestic flights in Israel, all food and accommodations, and full bike support for eight nights and seven days. Registration is now open.

The ride is co-sponsored by Hazon, a New York-based organization dedicated to fostering new vision in the Jewish community through outdoor and environmental education, and the Arava Institute for Environmental Studies. For more information about the 2006 Israel ride, see www.israelride.org, or contact me at 510-215-7672 or teachme99@comcast.net. ☞



Avi Hoffer takes a break during the 2005 Israel Ride.

Too Much Water and Other Things

By June Safran, Cuban Affairs

The hurricane season is over but the problems linger on. I am including some personal accounts of what happened in Cuba, a country that suffers hurricane damage every year and tries to be prepared for the “big one.” There are other letters to fill you in on life as it is.

Letters from Cuba

From my dear friend Lourdes Albo:

“Dear June: We didn’t have problems with the hurricane [Wilma], but the water arrived almost until 4 blocks of the house. We had in the country too much rain and inundation [flooding]. You know we live on the third floor. We were without light for two days. Nobody in the community lost a house but they had inundation in some houses.”

From José Altshuler:

“Dear buddies, Thank you for your care. Yes, for some time the surroundings around the building we live [in] looked very much like Venice (boats included). But thanks to the fact that the flooding was predicted quite accurately by our meteorology service long before it happened, we could take effective preventive measures. For instance, our son with his wife and baby daughter drove in their car to his in-laws in Arroyo Arenas, a place (30 minutes by car from here) which is on high ground and remained largely unharmed. However, our building’s garage, being below street level, was totally flooded for a couple of days, until water was pumped out by our communal services. Such a flood was quite bad since the building’s landlady’s apartment, water cistern and pumps, and electric service entrance switches and watt hour meters are placed in the garage.

“Water level was about 1.5 meter above street level. People whose apartments were at street level were most damaged (floating mattresses and furniture).

“Quite decent packages of food, water and refreshments were supplied free immediately after the passing of the storm. Under the circumstances, we fared quite well in our 7th floor apartment, since no window panes were broken and we even could have once in a while a look at the news on TV during the long blackouts, since the battery+inverter we had prepared for the purpose long ago didn’t let us down. All the best, Jose”

From Tatiana Santos, a physician who loves photography (you can see many of her pictures at www.jewishcuba.org):

“Dear friend, First, I hope you, Bob, and everyone are fine over there.

“I have some things to tell you. Deborah [Sorriano] got married yesterday to Franco Canetti. It was a beautiful wedding. I was the photographer. You will see a couple of photos that I’m attaching to this mail. There was a party after the legal ceremony and many people of the community went, specially the young members, like me. Ja!!!!!!!!!!!!!! [Tatiana is 40,

but young in spirit and energy.]

“The other event is the publication of Maritza’s [Corrales] book. The title is *The Chosen Island: Jews in Cuba*. I haven’t read it yet. She just gave it to me today. I took the pictures for the book. [available on Amazon.com]

“The only bad news is that we couldn’t celebrate Simcha Torah nor Sukkot because of the overfloodings. Things here got very bad, especially for the ones who live near the ocean. The water got to the Patronato [synagogue], but fortunately didn’t enter. All my love for you, Tatiana”

More from Lourdes Albo:

“Hi, good to hear from you. Miriam sent me your message but I have been like crazy and I did not want to rush writing to you. The wedding was very nice. The newlyweds were radiant. I could not go to the ceremony because I had to work and Lula [her daughter] was working too. She was posted nearby her senior high school (you remember ?). The good news is she has become the doctor of former classmates and teachers. She assists at two schools. One is for handicapped children and the other is for children with behavioral problems.

“Ok . . . back to the wedding. The party was like a family reunion, most of the guests were from the community. I really enjoyed being there and the most important thing is the couple. They were so happy. Love to Bob and you, Lourdes”

From Tañia Mesa, mother of Carlitos, one of the autistic children helped by the CAJM:

“My good friend, I had not written you before because my computer was broken but I knew of you from Elaine. She said [to] me [that] you travel to Israel for a few days and I hope you had been a good days for this places. My Carlitos is very fine but he needs to continue with the therapy yet. Sometimes in him appears disruptive conduct but in the other aspects he is very well. In this moment his therapist work specifically on language and table works and he has some improvements in this aspect, like he imitate how do the car, plane, train, the cow. He say me ma-má and his father say pa-pá; when he want water he say something like this and bread when he is hungry. I am very happy because he looks like a normal child like the others kids and he is very interested in all surround him and he imitate many activities that we usually do in our daily life. His therapist says he is an autistic child of high functioning but in the most deep of my heart I will wish he will be a normal child. Kisses, Tañia and family”

From Olguita Stolik, a young woman in her thirties who gets around on a motor scooter:

“I was out of office 15 days. I begin to work today. I had an accident. I hurt my head and I have a contusion cerebral.

“I’m sorry for my English, but it has been a lot of time without any practice and I loss memory and other skills by the accident.

“My only email address is this one: stolik_lipszyc@yahoo.es. Now, I only can check my account one time a week. Kisses and hugs, Olguita”

Visit to Cuban Jews Living in Israel

I spent three weeks with the Cuban Jews who now live in Israel. It was a wonderful experience to see how well they have adjusted to life in Israel. There are three more babies since I was there last, and I also spent time with several young adults who have made *aliyah*. Three have Israeli girlfriends and three are attending school for professional degrees. There are about 600 Cuban Jews who have made a successful *aliyah* since the State of Israel came into being. I met with about 30 of them on this trip. They live in various parts of the country, including Beersheva, Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Rishon Litzion and Tiberias. The first letter is **from Daniel Reimon**, who is married to **Delfine**. They are both working and live in Ramat Aviv. There are no children yet, but they are enjoying life together.

“Hi how are you? I am now in Paris with the parents of my wife. Today I come back from London. We were there 3 days. Next Sunday we come back to Israel. I was here (France) 10 days. London is beautiful. I would like to visit USA too. I hope can travel there. Bye”

From Andres Novoa, who was here in Berkeley for three weeks several years ago, while he was the religious leader in Santiago and before he made *aliyah*.

“It was pleasure to have you with us for some hours; we are really sorry that it couldn't be more time. We missed Bob; please give him a hug in our names. Thanks for your kind invitation; I truly want to visit the Bay Area again and to meet so many loved people over there. One day we will make that trip, I promise. Kisses Andres, Dania and children”

Eitan and Nili Behar have done well in Beersheva. They recently enjoyed their daughter, Shirli's, first birthday party with lots of friends.



Newlyweds Franco Canneti and Deborah Sorriano.



The Bradmans: Haya, Eduardo and baby, Shir.

Mazal tov to Eduardo and Haya Bradman on the birth of a second daughter, Shir, in Rishon Litzion. Their older daughter, two-year-old Or, is very excited to have a new sister.

Finally, here is something for those who read Spanish, from **Junior Rodriguez Eli** from Caibarien. He now lives in Jerusalem and is preparing to go to the Hebrew University to study physics, but he does not yet have friends in Jerusalem:

“hola june, disculpa nuevamente que te esciba en espannol pero es como siempre ando bien apurado, tengo mas o menos idea de donde esta la sinagoga asi que a lo mejor algun dia paso por alla, me alegra que haysa tenido unas fiestas tan agradables en compannia de tu familia, yo no hice mucho en sucot, solo estuve con mi familia de jerusalem y tambien viaje a Ashkelon para visitar mi otra familia, lo que mas disfrute es que estuve muchos dias sin nada importante que hacer y pude estudiar unas cuantas cosas que me hacian falta, espero andes muy bien, ambien vi el video que me mandaste, muy lindo, muchas gracias . . . un abrazo, Junior” ❧



Delfine and Daniel Reimon.

Kitchen Cabinet News

By Charlene Y. Stern, Chair, Kitchen Cabinet

Our Joan Nathan event on November 13 was an uncommonly great experience for everyone who participated. The numbers of members who made this success happen was amazing. From the pre-event dinner in Joan's honor to the evening event, to the delicious desserts to the cookbooks we sold — everything helped to create great tastes, new stories, significant money and wonderful memories out of our synagogue kitchen.

There are some very special people I want to thank for their leadership on this event: Rabbi Kelman, for arranging to get our speaker through the Jewish Book Council; Helen Schneider, for extraordinary deliveries of announcements and flyers everywhere in our Berkeley/Oakland-and-beyond community; Regina Karp, gifted professional pastry chef and member, for her talent, grace and generosity in seizing on and achieving a wonderful first-time synagogue kitchen bake-a-thon as coach, master juggler and head chef of the many desserts from Joan Nathan's cookbooks; Debra Lobel, our cookbook purveyor extraordinaire, who got all four of Joan Nathan's cookbooks in time and managed sales and inventory along with Michael Irwin, the world's most overqualified checkout clerk! Big thanks also to Hope Alper, who directed chef Dominico of Raphael Bar Ristorante, to create a most delicious banquet dinner in Joan Nathan's honor, featuring some of her favorite recipes (she made me take photos of his creativity in re-creation of her wild mushroom and goat cheese recipe to show her editor). And all those world-class maven bakers who chose a Joan Nathan recipe and baked it — Barbara Bibel, Jan Fischer, Hilda Kessler, Barbara Wezelman, Joan Bradus, Rebecca Friedman, Jessica Buffington, Molly Mae Dubrovsky, Larry (yes — our best, one and only man in the kitchen!) and Ruth Amernick, Rita Stein, Joanna Weinberg, Andi Cassidy, Elizabeth Weber Handwerker and June Safran, who all created a sweet table to rival anyone, anywhere. If you came and tasted, you know what I mean! Yummmmm. Big thanks also go to Janet Schneider, who



(From left) Rebecca Friedman, Molly Mae Dubrovsky and Jessica Buffington prepare a delicious dessert to celebrate Rebecca's 14th birthday, do a mitzvah and have a good time.



Joan Nathan talks about the process of creating her now famous cookbooks.

got the ads into the *J.* bulletin on time and on the right page — the food page, of course!

And the star of this event, one jet-lagged, but magnificent Joan Nathan, who entertained us and told us the real stories behind the people she's met from all walks of life — chefs and home cooks — and the special recipes that came out of her travels across America to everywhere and nowhere you've been, to launch her newest and highly acclaimed cookbook, *The New American Cooking*. It was a first-rate event and we, the kitchen and our community are enriched greatly by it.

Now to the future. The three attributes of our congregation, that we are *egalitarian, participatory and inclusive*, guide our vision of cooking and eating great food together, learning our Jewish food heritage, connecting to family and each other, and building community through our kitchen.

We're at work creating our next uncommon idea (your input is more than welcome). Egalitarian means there's no glass ceiling, or floor for that matter — to joining us for the next event or the whole first year. Even if you think you're a rank amateur — we want you! Participatory goes without saying — the best feedback we got was from those who helped and baked. All day we learned, laughed and noshed together! Inclusive means just that — the Kitchen Cabinet door is wide open; whether you keep kosher at home or don't, our kitchen warmly welcomes you for a nosh, as a learner, to attend an event and/or as a doer. We're busy cooking up a recipe that will nourish all of us and last for a long time to come.

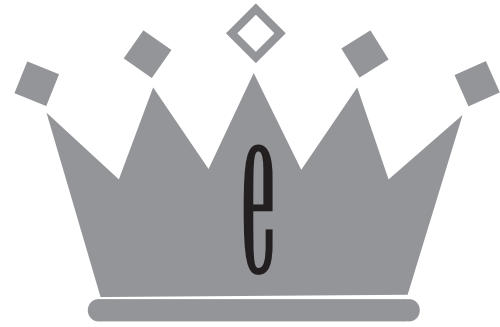
And just in — A great time was had by all who attended opening night of Billy Crystal's 700 Sundays in San Francisco. A huge thank you goes to Joanna and David Levine for buying 20 tickets in advance and on faith that they'd sell, making a significant donation to our kitchen. They all did, we went, laughed and cried during this extraordinary performance. It added up to a great memory with a real mensch entertainer, enjoyed by our community. ☺



Jesse Gerwein grabs the etrog from his father, Joel Gerwein.



Ari Rabin Fendel, born November 3 to Joe (pictured left) and Tamar Fendel (not pictured), reclines on the lap of his mother's brother, Lev Metz, while Joe's father, Dan Fendel, applies wine and mazel Chanan Feld performs the circumcision. Ari is named for Joe's maternal grandfather and Tamar's paternal grandfather (both named Jerry) and for Joe's paternal grandfather, Irvin (Rabin). His middle name also reflects his being born on Yitzchak Rabin's 10th yahrzeit.



Queen E's Shushan West Supper Club Coming to Netivot Shalom

When was the last time you had a swinging night out? Whether it was last night or many moons ago, we invite you to Queen E's Shushan West Supper Club, on Sunday, March 12, at 7:00 p.m. to celebrate Purim. On just one night per year, Queen E's Shushan West Supper Club opens its doors. In it you will find elegantly dressed men and woman enjoying the delights of delicious delectables, drink and song. While some may be swinging to the sounds of Queen E's fabulous band, others are shopping at tables of exciting wares and artistic designs. The master of ceremonies interrupts only when someone takes to the stage to sing a hit song from yesterday or today.

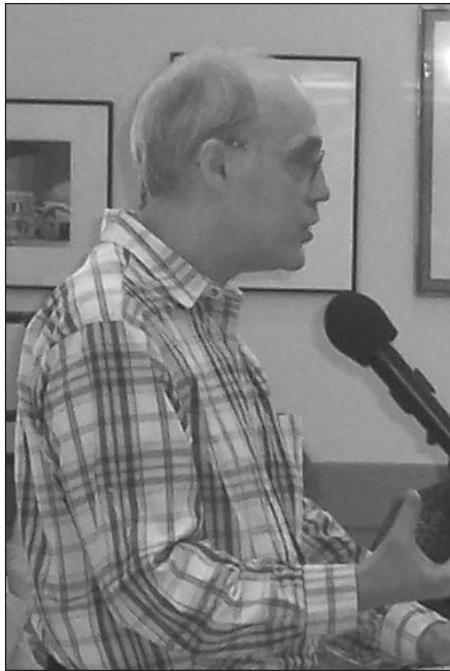
This year, on Sunday, March 12,
at 7:00 p.m.,

Queen E's Shushan West Supper Club
is coming to Netivot Shalom.

Entry, including food and drink, is \$75 per person. All proceeds from this Purim party extraordinaire will support the ongoing operating needs of the Netivot Shalom congregation. The entire Netivot Shalom community is cordially invited to attend. Please mark your calendars and don't miss this exciting night!!

Queen E's Shushan West Supper Club is organized by a special committee appointed by Netivot Shalom's board of directors. Co-chairs of this event are Andrea Altschuler (510-649-9290), Laurie Greenhut Zell (510-506-2865), Mary Breiner (510-848-3367) and Susan Stanfield (510-848-6181).

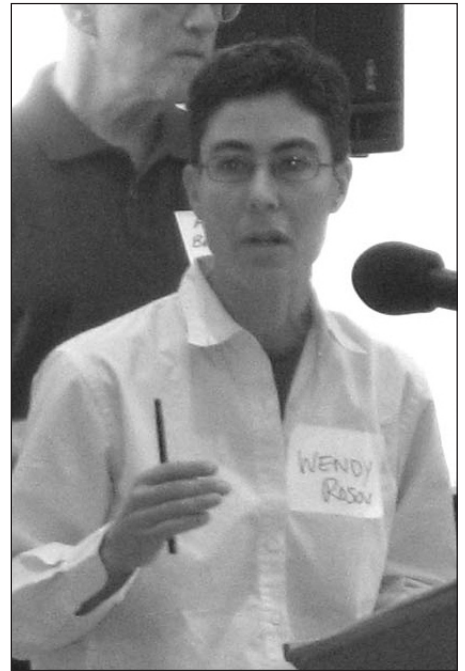
The committee is still seeking valiant volunteers for special assignments. If you have talents in writing, editing or decorating, or have experience in any aspect of event production, we need you! Please call one of the co-chairs to find out how you can be a part of Queen E's Shushan West Supper Club!!!



Newly elected vice president Joe Meresman addresses the congregation on upcoming issues of importance.



Then-treasurer Michael McCullough discusses the current and projected financial situation for the shul.



Wendy Rosov discusses the focus groups for the pre-rabbinic search organized by committee co-chairs Art Braufman, Daniel Handwerker and Barbara Wezelman.



David Levine serves as moderator for the open forum.



Debra Lobel addresses the congregation during the open forum.



Then-kiddush coordinators Joanna Weinberg (left) and Turi Adams make a passionate appeal for more kiddush sponsors.



Capital Campaign treasurer Mike Irwin announces the status of the building's finances.

Jewish Heritage Tour of China

By Larry Polon

This past summer I visited China as one of six participants on a Jewish Heritage Tour. We traveled throughout the central and eastern regions of the country, including Beijing, Xi'an and Shanghai.

We explored aspects of Jewish culture in China, both past and present. This included attending a kabbalat Shabbat service at the Reconstructionist Jewish Community Center in Beijing, and touring the Jewish ghetto in Shanghai, which became the port of last resort for thousands of Jews fleeing Nazi persecution.

Kaifeng's Jewish Past

We visited Kaifeng, the imperial capital of China during the Sung Dynasty from the tenth to the thirteenth centuries. Kaifeng had a population of 1.5 million people in the tenth century, making it the largest city in the world at that time. Kaifeng contains the remnants of a Jewish community, which flourished for nearly a thousand years, and had an identifiable Jewish presence until the 1840s. Beginning in 998 C.E., a group of Jews wandering the Silk Road came to Kaifeng, where they were welcomed by the emperor and encouraged to keep their customs and traditions. Many Jewish merchants seeking better business opportunities followed. Judeo-Persian documents revealed that Jews probably came to Kaifeng from Persia in the eleventh century, bringing with them cotton cloth to China.

Many Jews settled in Kaifeng during this period, establishing an observant Jewish community that revolved around its synagogue, built in the eleventh century. This synagogue was destroyed many times by natural flooding of the adjacent Yellow River. As many as 5,000 Jews lived in Kaifeng in the 1700s. Included in this community were some 34 rabbis who taught the Hebrew language.

The Kaifeng Jews were discovered by the outside world — not by fellow Jews, but by European Christians, led by the Italian Jesuit missionary, Matteo Ricci, during the seventeenth century. They reported that these Jews observed synagogue practices, festivals, abstained from eating pork, circumcised their sons and followed Moses' laws as did Jews in Europe. A civil war in the mid-seventeenth century destroyed Kaifeng, leaving only one-third of its Jewish population. No documents about the Kaifeng Jews can be found from the eighteenth century on.

During the mid-nineteenth century, a lack of rabbis, absence of a Chinese Torah translation, loss of Hebrew proficiency, and the repeated destruction of the synagogue by flooding led to the assimilation of the Kaifeng Jewish community. Poverty forced the remaining Jews to sell their synagogue and manuscripts to Christian missionaries. Although many Jews assimilated into mainstream Chinese society, individual Jews remained who felt a link to Judaism.

Kaifeng Today

Currently, approximately 600 Chinese families in Kaifeng claim to have been Jews for many generations. Our tour group met one such family, the Jins, including Zhang Jin Lang (Shlomo), his 18-year-old niece, Jinjin, and her father, Jin Guang Yuan. Shlomo immigrated to Israel about five years ago, where he underwent a ritual circumcision and recently celebrated a *balakbic* wedding in Jerusalem to his Chinese born wife, Dina. The two had been married as non-Jews for about two decades and have a 21-year-old daughter, Shalva. Shlomo had returned to Kaifeng to visit family this summer.

The Jins took us on a tour of their family cemetery. Located in the middle of a remote corn and peanut farm field, the family plot contains a recently unveiled black marble headstone with the engravings of eight generations of Jin family members, written in Chinese and translated into English. A smaller memorial stone stands in front of the family headstone with the engraving "The First Monument of Jews — China" written in both Chinese and English. A Jewish menorah is engraved at the top of the stone.

We also visited a local home in the community. As we entered the modest one-room house, we noticed a *mezuzah* attached to the doorpost. A group of four elderly women were seated at a center table playing Mahjong. One of these women was the owner of the house. She told us her husband had died 15 years ago. It wasn't clear if she herself practiced any Jewish rituals, but displayed on a chest were several Jewish ceremonial objects including three menorahs. The wall was adorned with photographs of members of the Kaifeng Jewish community, some dating back 100 years, paper cuttings of the former synagogue, and a red street sign stenciled with the name "Teaching the Torah Street" (written in Chinese, Hebrew and English), once the main street of the Jewish section of Kaifeng, where the synagogue once stood. She sold us some paper cuttings, one of which had a Purim motif of Mordecai riding a donkey, circumscribed with the Hebrew excerpt about *mishloah manot* from *Megillat Esther*, which encourages one to send food and gifts to the poor.

Help Save Kaifeng's Jewish Community

We learned from Jinjin that the Kaifeng Jewish community maintains a school. They are endeavoring to teach their members about Judaism, but are in desperate need of educational materials, especially Hebrew primers, *siddurim*, *haggadabs* and Jewish history books. They have few resources with which to acquire such materials. We have received a mailing address and have been assured by Jinjin that any materials sent to this address will be secure, and no harm will be inflicted upon the community. Donations toward the purchase of such materials and shipping costs are encouraged. Checks can be made out to Congregation Netivot Shalom with "Kaifeng Jewish Community" listed in the memo. ❧



David Callen and Laura Suci

Our story begins in the great Midwest. Laura grew up among the lakes of southern Michigan, while David was nurtured by the hill people in Louisville, Kentucky. (OK, OK, so maybe Louisville is more southern than midwestern.) We both attended the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, but our paths didn't cross until we each arrived in San Francisco. We met at a nonprofit organization and braved many meetings and cube walls to find each other.

Four years later, we're sharing our lives with each other and living in Berkeley. This year has been especially exciting! We both joined Netivot Shalom and started new jobs. On August 21, Rabbi Kelman married us in a beautiful ceremony at the foot of the Sonoma hills. For the month of December, we'll be on our honeymoon in Argentina and Chile — hiking across glaciers, cavorting with penguins and lounging in natural hot springs.

After what's sure to be an incredible adventure, all of you at Netivot Shalom may be one of the only things that brings us back home! We look forward to seeing all of you in January and continuing to become a part of such a loving and learning community.

B'shalom and ciao ☺

Cynthia Hoffman

I've been asked to introduce myself to the congregation as I prepare to take on the *mitzvah* of chairing the Adult Education Committee of Netivot Shalom. Personally, I'm not sure what's so interesting about me, but then I live with myself every day.

I grew up in Philadelphia, and then Northern California. My father is a retired professor of English at UC Davis, and he moved us all out here longer ago than I care to admit. When I was 16, I moved to Berkeley to attend university, and aside from a few errant occasions, I have been a resident of Berkeley and its environs ever since. I started attending Netivot Shalom in the late 1990s, and became a member when my partner, Jane Credland, moved to the United States from Canada in January of 2000.

I am a lifelong learner, and have spent most of my adult life in and around educational institutions, from UC Berkeley, where I attended graduate school, to my present employment as a faculty member in the Judaic Studies and English Departments of the Jewish Community High School of the Bay in San Francisco. In one of my wanderings outside the Bay Area, I attended the Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies for a couple of years. Its unwillingness to accept openly homosexual students drove me to withdraw from the program, though I haven't given up on the idea of being ordained a rabbi.

Jane and I are moving into the Berkeley *eruv* in December, and I look forward to contributing more fully to the vibrant community at Netivot Shalom, both as Adult Education chair, and in other diverse ways as they present themselves to me. You can generally find me in shul on Shabbat mornings if you want to chat (I'm the one with the long gray hair . . . like that helps or anything), or you can contact me through the adulthoodeducation@netivotshalom.org e-mail address.

I'm looking forward to working with you all. ☺



In each issue, we introduce one or more congregants to you — some new and some not so new — so that we can all get to know each other better. If you would like to introduce either yourself or someone you have come to know, please send copy, and a .jpg photo if possible, to newsletter@netivotshalom.org.

David Stein

Netivot Shalom Executive Director

At Machesney School in Oakland my records state I was a “discipline problem,” and the red marks on my knuckles bore witness to my teachers’ attempts to correct this defect. But I eagerly went once a week to a conversational Hebrew class at Beth Abraham taught by a young sabra. In 1952, my father’s doctor directed him to move to Phoenix to recover from his lung problems. The school system was more “progressive,” but my family joined what we now call a classical Reform synagogue, which was a real challenge: they did not wear *kipot* and they prayed in English! I refused at first to enter the building.

But then I became a “good Jewish boy” of the ‘50s and ‘60s: active in school and Temple Youth Group, eventually becoming national vice president of NFTY. When I completed undergraduate school at 18, my rabbi struggled to get me admitted to the newly established Hebrew Union College in Los Angeles, but in 1963 the dean refused to consider a candidate who had admitted “homosexual tendencies.” So I went off to the University of Illinois to earn a Ph.D. in the new field of Chomskian linguistics, spending half my time studying and half in anti-war activities in Chicago, including helping friends who had lost their graduate deferments move to Canada to continue studying.

At the completion of my Ph.D., I was granted a Fulbright and then a Rothschild grant to support me in the newly establish Linguistics Department at Tel Aviv University — the radically “modern American” college in Israel. The two-year grant ended, but I stayed for 10 years in all. In late 1979, mainly because of the changing political environment and the growing reaction against American linguistics, I moved back to the States, quit academia and joined a national designer fabric and furniture company related to my family’s business.

I stayed in that business for 19 years in various positions until they put me in charge of all operations (purchasing, sales, merchandising and communications) outside of the home office, which consisted of 16 offices (designer showrooms) around the country. During those years, I joined a young, audacious, gay and lesbian synagogue called Sha’ar Zahav, paid my \$60/year dues and become the 61st member. In six months I was treasurer, and several years later president, spearheading our fundraising drive to move into a remodeled building across from Mission Dolores.

Sha’ar Zahav’s liturgy was written by its members in 1979, and has been acknowledged as the precursor to all gender-neutral liturgies. Among us early members, most were raised Conservative or Orthodox and a few classic Reform. We joined the Reform movement because it would accept us and thus give us a broader audience to raise awareness among Jews everywhere to accept us. I think we have been pretty successful.

My life path has always revolved around synagogues, so I decided to leave the company and devote time to Jewish communal work, beginning as executive director to the Holocaust Center and Library in San Francisco; then becoming a staff budget and agency analyst of the Planning

and Allocations Department of the Federation in San Francisco. A synagogue called me one day to become its executive director; that was followed by two more such requests and finally Netivot Shalom. These synagogues each set me remarkably similar goals: helping them become manageable. In addition, I am often asked to consult with treasurers or other synagogue committees in Northern California for the Reform Movement.

I continue to consult with my mentors, who are working as directors of Reform and Conservative synagogues around the country. Our task is to seek better “best practices” for synagogues. Synagogues are distinct from regular nonprofits. The members of our synagogues are not simply donors to an agency’s operating fund, they are primary stakeholders — in fact, they are owners. Our primary responsibility is to serve and respect the wishes of our members. We manage the budget and money, the calendar, the building and the operating staff; we facilitate ritual ceremonies, educational classes and programs; we offer advice and direction to the board and committees; we remind the officers of the laws governing nonprofit activities and personnel management. And we make sure that everything in the building looks good and everything that goes out to the community reflects the mission, ideals and policies of the congregation . . . and has the right look!

I live in San Francisco with my wonderful partner, Bill Stewart.

Now you have read my story. I look forward to hearing or reading yours! ☺

Jen Childs

Administrative Assistant

Jen moved to California from Michigan 14 years ago and has been a Berkeleyite ever since. An avowed “Jane of all trades,” she’s worked a variety of jobs, from printing to information technology.

After working for four years at the Bureau of Jewish Education in San Francisco, she found herself in the never-a-dull-moment office of Netivot Shalom. Despite the alarming indication that she’s begun to specialize, she’s happy to have found a home here with all of us. ☺



SHUL



ACTIVITIES

Unless otherwise noted, all activities will be held at our shul, 1316 University Ave, Berkeley.

YOUTH EDUCATION

Shabbat B'Yachad (SBY) for families with preschool children five years and under. Program includes *t'fillab* (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 a.m.–12:15 p.m.

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'fillab*, games, Jewish values and Torah stories. Tuesday–Thursday, 4:00–6:00 p.m.

Shabbat Program for children (K–6) in either Religious School or day school. Each Shabbat, 10:15 a.m.–12:15 p.m. Innovative game-based classes focus on the values of the week.

Family Kabbalat Shabbat Service for all ages (especially 2nd–7th grade), with singing, a Torah story and the minimum halakhic service. 4th Friday each month, 6:00 p.m. dinner, 7:00 p.m. service. Check announcements to confirm dates.

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 and Thursdays, 4:00–6:30 p.m.

Midrasha, an intercongregational 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, 2nd and 4th Sunday, 9:30 a.m.

Teachings, 10:30–11:30 a.m.

(For the schedule and a list of teaching sessions, see weekly announcements.)

TUESDAY

Talmud

7:00–9:00 p.m.

WEDNESDAY

Morning Minyan

7:15 a.m.

SHABBAT

Various *shabbatot* after services; see weekly announcements

OUR COMMUNITY NEEDS

Sponsor a Kiddush: Calendar On-line

Go to http://my.calendars.net/netivot_shalom/admin.

The Morning Minyan Needs You

People are attending these services who need to say *kaddish*. Consider becoming a once-a-month attendee. Wednesdays, 7:15–8:00 a.m.

SHABBAT SERVICES & PROGRAMS

Shabbat Morning Services: Morning services begin at 9:30 a.m.

Meditative Minyan: 9:30 a.m., 3rd Shabbat each month

Shabbat B'Yachad: 11:00 a.m., 2nd and 4th Shabbat each month

Youth Shabbat Program: Children grades K–6, 10:15 a.m.–12:15 p.m.

Torah Study: the weekly *parashah*

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

Kabbalat Shabbat and Ma'ariv Services: 7:00 p.m., 2nd Friday of each month, services followed by a potluck dinner. Family kabbalat Shabbat, 7:00 p.m., 4th Friday of each month, services preceded by dinner at 6:00 p.m.

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 Joan Bradus at 510-528-3467 or drfriedman@juno.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 lobby. 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 at the Berkeley Youth Alternatives program. Contact Jonathan Stern at 510-872-0751 or socialaction@netivotshalom.org.

Midrasha in Berkeley

By Diane Bernbaum, Director, Midrasha

Have you ever had something wonderful happen to you, but for a very sad reason? I'm sure that's not an uncommon experience. A few months ago, I got a phone call from Debbie and Mike Feiler. They are parents of two Midrasha graduates, and Debbie is a current Midrasha teacher and faculty representative to the Midrasha Board of Directors. The Feilers told me they wanted to make a substantial contribution to Midrasha, to establish a Midrasha Director's Discretionary Fund. The sad reason that goes with this particular good news is that the contribution was to be in memory of their daughter, Rebecca, who died of cancer in September 2004 at the age of 22.

Rebecca graduated from Midrasha in the spring of 2000. She was passionate about social justice, and indeed, while at Cal chose to work with the Emma Goldman Papers project, as well as for Middle East dialogue. While at Midrasha, her teachers wrote things on their evaluations such as: "I am so fortunate to have students like Rebecca to teach. She can definitely hold her own in an often debate-like environment. I am always impressed by her thoughtful offerings, and the class thrives from her participation." "She is a strong, insightful and caring person, and her passion is reflected in her writing." "I really appreciated Rebecca's open, sunny disposition." "Rebecca always has pithy interpretations and clearly has thought a great deal about the class material." "Rebecca was extremely responsible and helpful. She was a delight to have in class." "Her warmth and good nature, combined with her sensitivity and willingness to engage the material, continued to make her a consistently positive presence in the classroom." "She is thoughtful and intelligent in her comments, and seems genuinely interested in every subject we covered. She is quite mature for her grade and is a terrific role model for the rest of the students, just by being herself. Never judgmental about others' opinions, Rebecca simply offers her thoughts,

and is a very active participant in a class which offers a number of outspoken individuals." "Rebecca is a bright, positive, open-minded student who always approaches poetry with such integrity and heart."

I am telling you about the establishment of a Midrasha Director's Discretionary Fund for two reasons.

First, so that you will know it exists, if you are ever moved to make a contribution to such a fund. And second, so that if you know of needs within the community, you can let me know. People think of approaching rabbis in time of need, but sometimes educators also have discretionary funds. Help me find good use for this money. And many, many thanks to the Feiler family.

And a heads-up on things in the future. The new semester at Midrasha starts January 8. We continue to accept new students all year long. If you know teens who were too overwhelmed with school, applications to high school or college, and everything else that fall brings, and who haven't yet registered at Midrasha, it's not too late. Check our Web site (www.midrasha.org). Our new building is huge and we have plenty of room to accommodate new students.

And keep the late afternoon/early evening of March 5 free. It will be this year's Midrasha *se'udab* with special featured guest Michael Krasny. If you'd like to make sure you get an invitation, phone the Midrasha office, 510-843-4667. 🍷



Rebecca Feiler

Camp Ramah

Camp Ramah in California is open to all children grades 2-9*

Session 1:	June 28-July 25
Gesher A (3rd and 4th)	June 28-July 4
Gesher C (4th and 5th)	July 12-25
Gesher E (4th and 5th)	August 10-23
Session 2:	July 27-August 23
Gesher B (3rd and 4th)	July 5-11
Gesher D (3rd and 4th)	July 27-August 8

Write:
Camp Ramah
15600 Mulholland Dr.
Los Angeles, CA 90077

*Scholarships available: contact Michelle Wolfson.

**Now
is the time
to think about spending time
in Israel — in Ramah programs:**

- Family Israel Experience • Adult Seminars
- 8th Grade and Teen Trips • High School Programs
- Ramah Jerusalem Day Camp

And for those of you in grade 12 — consider spending the next year in Israel.

Contact Rabbi Kelman for further information.

Upcoming B'nei Mitzvah Anniversaries

January 7: Va-yiggash

Jesse Mintz-Roth, Sarah Reingold

January 21: Sh'mot

Emma Schnur, Madeline Sproul-Friedman

January 28: Va-era

Renna Khuner-Haber, Benjamin Simler

February 4: Bo

Maggie Bond, Valerie Morris, Judith Rosenblatt, Gabriel Scheffler

February 11: B'shallah

Etan Basseri, Yonitte Hindawi

February 18: Yitro

Andrea Gottlieb, Jessica Grossman, Maya Gundelman, Jonathan Levy Woolins

February 25: Mishpatim

Ari Radousky

Docent Training at Judah L. Magnes Museum

The Magnes announces its 2006 docent training beginning **January 8, 2006** at the museum
2911 Russell Street, Berkeley

The course is open to all curious, creative consumers of culture. Take an educational journey through Jewish art and history.

For more information, contact Faith Powell, 510-549-6950 x333 or fpowell@magnes.org.

Get Your Copy of Our DVD

If you were at the Annual Meeting, you saw our first showing of our newly produced DVD — marking our move into our new building. If you would like a copy, please e-mail aa@netivotshalom.org. If you'd like additional copies, send a check for \$5 per copy to the office.

Thank you to Mrs. Esther Kelman for making this project possible, and to Jonathan Gruber for his outstanding direction and production.

An Upcoming BRJCC Program

Tuesday, Feb. 21, 7:30 p.m.

Crossing the Line —

When Criticizing Israel Is Beyond Legitimate!

What is legitimate criticism of Israel and what is anti-Semitic? **Rick Davis** facilitates workshops and classes on the emergence of neo anti-Semitism.

Fee: \$10, **To register,** contact andream@brjcc.org or 510-848-0237 ext 132.

Strengthen Your Relationships

By Nancy Facher

Did you know that...

- *There's a difference between a complaint and criticism?*
- *Within conflict is a hidden dream?*
- *69 percent of conflict between partners never goes away?*
- *Resolution of conflict is not essential to improving your relationship?*
- *Taking breaks during difficult disagreements improves communication?*
- *What you do after your fight is crucial to maintaining your relationship?*

Come to an enjoyable, interactive and educational evening to learn about psychologist **John Gottman's** ideas and research findings about couples; what helps them to not only endure, but also maintain deep friendship and intimacy. Learn about what Gottman calls the relationship "masters" and "disasters," and practice some strategies for strengthening your relationships — present or future. I will show video clips and facilitate discussion and activities based on Gottman's findings (I am a social worker and a certified Gottman Educator). Come alone, with a friend, or with your partner.

And coming soon . . .

A Couple's Workshop on Maintaining Your Relationship Now That You Have a Child

Discover how to keep your relationship happy when you bring your baby home and afterward. Research shows that a couple's satisfaction dramatically declines in the first years of their child's life. Gottman says that "the greatest gift you can give your child is a strong parenting relationship." That's a great pearl of wisdom, but how ironic — there's nothing harder on a relationship than parenting! This workshop is for new or expecting parents and is aimed at helping them maintain their friendship and intimacy.

The workshop is geared for couples (both heterosexual and same-sex) and teaches couples how to:

- *Parent together while meeting the emotional and psychological needs of your child*
- *Manage conflict during the challenging transition to parenthood*
- *Promote relationship satisfaction*
- *Communicate in a way that allows fathers to be central to, and deeply involved in, parenting*

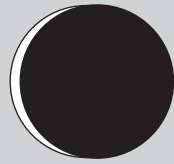
Dates haven't been set in time for this newsletter deadline, so please call me at 510-526-5874 for information or look for the dates in the weekly announcements.

Netivot Shalom Returns to Israel

Congregations Netivot Shalom and Kol Shofar are teaming up for an Israel Pilgrimage,

March 15–27, 2006.

Contact Rabbi Kelman for further information.



The Netivot Shalom Rosh Hodesh Group

Monday, December 30

To celebrate Sh'vat, Claire Sherman will lead a program
"New Rituals for Women's Life Cycles."

Wednesday, March 1

For Adar, Abby Kaplan will lead us in a
healing evening.

Meetings begin at **7:00 p.m.** with refreshments
and socializing, and are held in members'
homes. All women in the congregation are
invited to attend.

For additional information, times and locations,
contact Toby Gidal: tgidal@comcast.net or
510-841-8868; or Nan Strauss
nanandpeter@yahoo.com or 510-547-8174.

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the "J" Weekly.



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2603 Tassajara Ave.

El Cerrito, CA 94530

www.tehiah.org

Please join us...

Kindergarten Information Brunch
Sunday, January 8, 10:00-11:30 a.m.

Tehiyah welcomes students of all religious and ethnic backgrounds. It is a beneficiary of the Center for Jewish Living and Learning of the Jewish Community Federation of the Greater East Bay and Koret Foundation.

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SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>1 1 Tevet</p> <p>Rosh <u>Hodesh</u> Tevet</p> <p>Hanukkah: 8 candles</p>	<p>2 2 Tevet</p> <p>Hanukkah: day 8</p>	<p>3 3 Tevet</p> <p>No Religious School or Amitim</p> <p>8:00 p.m. Intermediate Talmud Study with Ilana Fodiman Silverman at Beth Israel</p>	<p>4 4 Tevet</p> <p>7:15 a.m. Minyan</p> <p>7:00 p.m. Jewish Mystics with R. Jonathan Omerman at Chochmat HaLev</p> <p>7:30 p.m. Text study with Sara Leya Schley at Beth Israel</p>	<p>5 5 Tevet</p> <p>No Religious School or Amitim</p>	<p>6 6 Tevet</p> <p>4:47 p.m. Candle lighting</p>	<p>7 7 Tevet</p> <p>Parashat Va-yiggash</p> <p>9:00 a.m. Torah study with Naomi Seidman</p> <p>9:30 a.m. Shabbat services</p> <p>Gaby Rothman is called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah</p> <p>No Religious School</p> <p>5:48 p.m. Havdalah</p>
<p>8 8 Tevet</p> <p>9:30 a.m. Morning minyan</p> <p>10:30 a.m. Talk by Josh Gressel: "Sacred Commitment"</p> <p>7:00 p.m. Ritual Committee</p>	<p>9 9 Tevet</p>	<p>10 10 Tevet</p> <p>Asarah b'Tevet</p> <p>4:00 p.m. Religious School resumes (3rd-6th)</p> <p>7:30 p.m. Liturgy</p> <p>Literacy with R. Kelman</p> <p>8:00 p.m. Intermediate Talmud Study with Ilana Fodiman Silverman at Beth Israel</p>	<p>11 11 Tevet</p> <p>7:15 a.m. Minyan</p> <p>7:00 p.m. Jewish Mystics with R. Jonathan Omerman at Chochmat HaLev</p> <p>7:30 p.m. Text study with Sara Leya Schley at Beth Israel</p>	<p>12 12 Tevet</p> <p>4:00 p.m. Religious School resumes (1st-2nd)</p> <p>4:30 p.m. Amitim resumes</p>	<p>13 13 Tevet</p> <p>4:53 p.m. Candle lighting</p>	<p>14 14 Tevet</p> <p>Parashat Va-y'hi</p> <p>9:00 a.m. Torah study with Nitzhia Shaked</p> <p>9:30 a.m. Shabbat services</p> <p>No Religious School</p> <p>11:00 a.m. Shabbat b'Yachad</p> <p>5:54 p.m. Havdalah</p>
<p>15 15 Tevet</p>	<p>16 16 Tevet</p> <p>Martin Luther King Jr. Day: office closed</p>	<p>17 17 Tevet</p> <p>4:00 p.m. Religious School</p> <p>8:00 p.m. Intermediate Talmud Study with Ilana Fodiman Silverman at Beth Israel</p>	<p>18 18 Tevet</p> <p>7:15 a.m. Minyan</p> <p>7:00 p.m. Jewish Mystics with R. Jonathan Omerman at Chochmat HaLev</p> <p>7:30 p.m. Text study with Sara Leya Schley at Beth Israel</p>	<p>19 19 Tevet</p> <p>4:00 p.m. Religious School</p> <p>4:30 p.m. Amitim</p>	<p>20 20 Tevet</p> <p>5:01 p.m. Candle lighting</p>	<p>21 21 Tevet</p> <p>Parashat Sh'mot</p> <p>9:00 a.m. Torah study</p> <p>9:30 a.m. Shabbat services</p> <p>9:30 a.m. Meditative minyan</p> <p>10:15 a.m. Youth Shabbat program resumes</p> <p>1:30 p.m. Minhah</p> <p>6:02 p.m. Havdalah</p>
<p>22 22 Tevet</p> <p>9:30 a.m. Morning minyan</p> <p>10:30 a.m. Talk by R. Kelman: "Conservatism and Recon-structionism"</p>	<p>23 23 Tevet</p>	<p>24 24 Tevet</p> <p>4:00 p.m. Religious School</p> <p>8:00 p.m. Intermediate Talmud Study with Ilana Fodiman Silverman at Beth Israel</p>	<p>25 25 Tevet</p> <p>7:15 a.m. Minyan</p> <p>7:00 p.m. Jewish Mystics with R. Jonathan Omerman at Chochmat HaLev</p> <p>7:30 p.m. Text study with Sara Leya Schley at Beth Israel</p>	<p>26 26 Tevet</p> <p>4:00 p.m. Religious School</p> <p>4:30 p.m. Amitim</p>	<p>27 27 Tevet</p> <p>6:00 p.m. Family potluck dinner</p> <p>7:00 p.m. Family Kabbalat Shabbat</p> <p>5:08 p.m. Candle lighting</p>	<p>28 28 Tevet</p> <p>Parashat Va-era</p> <p>9:00 a.m. Torah study with Nitzhia Shaked</p> <p>9:30 a.m. Shabbat services</p> <p>10:15 a.m. Youth Shabbat program</p> <p>11:00 a.m. Shabbat b'Yachad</p> <p>6:10 p.m. Havdalah</p>
<p>29 29 Tevet</p>	<p>30 1 Sh'vat</p> <p>Rosh <u>Hodesh</u> Sh'vat</p> <p>7:15 a.m. Rosh <u>Hodesh</u> minyan</p> <p>7:00 p.m. Rosh <u>Hodesh</u> group (in a private home)</p>	<p>31 2 Sh'vat</p> <p>4:00 p.m. Religious School</p> <p>8:00 p.m. Intermediate Talmud Study with Ilana Fodiman Silverman at Beth Israel</p>				

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			<p>1 3 Sh'vat 7:15 a.m. Minyan 7:00 p.m. Jewish Mystics with R. Jonathan Omerman at Chochmat HaLev 7:30 p.m. Text study with Sara Leya Schley at Beth Israel</p>	<p>2 4 Sh'vat 4:00 p.m. Religious School 4:30 p.m. Amitim</p>	<p>3 5 Sh'vat 5:16 p.m. Candle lighting</p>	<p>4 6 Sh'vat Parashat Bo 9:00 a.m. Torah study with Dean Kertes 9:30 a.m. Shabbat services Ramah Shabbat 10:15 a.m. Youth Shabbat program 11:00 a.m. Shabbat First! family service 4:30 p.m. Minhah; talk by Danny Matt 6:17 p.m. Havdalah</p>
<p>5 7 Sh'vat</p>	<p>6 8 Sh'vat</p>	<p>7 9 Sh'vat 4:00 p.m. Religious School 8:00 p.m. Intermediate Talmud Study with Ilana Fodiman Silverman at Netivot Shalom</p>	<p>8 10 Sh'vat 7:15 a.m. Minyan 7:30 p.m. Text study with Sara Leya Schley at Beth Israel</p>	<p>9 11 Sh'vat 4:00 p.m. Religious School 4:30 p.m. Amitim</p>	<p>10 12 Sh'vat 5:24 p.m. Candle lighting</p>	<p>1 13 Sh'vat Parashat B'shallah 9:00 a.m. Torah study with Nitzhia Shaked 9:30 a.m. Shabbat services Tu b-Sh'vat Teva Shabbat 10:15 a.m. Youth Shabbat program 11:00 a.m. Shabbat b'Yachad 6:25 p.m. Havdalah</p>
<p>12 14 Sh'vat 9:30 a.m. Morning minyan 10:00 a.m. Shabbat B'Yachad Tu b-Sh'vat 10:30 a.m. Talk by Linda Blachman and book signing for "Another Morning"</p>	<p>13 15 Sh'vat Tu b-Sh'vat 6:00 p.m. Tu b-Sh'vat seder & teaching on ecology</p>	<p>14 16 Sh'vat 4:00 p.m. Religious School 7:30 p.m. Liturgy Literacy with R. Kelman 8:00 p.m. Intermediate Talmud Study with Ilana Fodiman Silverman at Netivot Shalom</p>	<p>15 17 Sh'vat 7:15 a.m. Minyan 7:30 p.m. Text study with Sara Leya Schley at Beth Israel</p>	<p>16 18 Sh'vat 4:00 p.m. Religious School 4:30 p.m. Amitim</p>	<p>17 19 Sh'vat 5:32 p.m. Candle lighting</p>	<p>18 20 Sh'vat Parashat Yitro 9:00 a.m. Torah study with Naomi Seidman 9:30 a.m. Shabbat services 9:30 a.m. Meditative minyan No Religious School 1:30 p.m. Minhah 6:33 p.m. Havdalah</p>
<p>19 21 Sh'vat</p>	<p>20 22 Sh'vat Presidents' Day: Office closed</p>	<p>21 23 Sh'vat 4:00 p.m. Religious School 8:00 p.m. Intermediate Talmud Study with Ilana Fodiman Silverman at Netivot Shalom</p>	<p>22 24 Sh'vat 7:15 a.m. Minyan 7:30 p.m. Text study with Sara Leya Schley at Beth Israel</p>	<p>23 25 Sh'vat 4:00 p.m. Religious School 4:30 p.m. Amitim</p>	<p>24 26 Sh'vat 6:00 p.m. Family potluck dinner 7:00 p.m. Family Kabbalat Shabbat 5:39 p.m. Candle lighting</p>	<p>25 27 Sh'vat Parashat Mishpatim Shabbat Sh'kalim 9:00 a.m. Torah study with Nitzhia Shaked 9:30 a.m. Shabbat services 10:15 a.m. Youth Shabbat program 11:00 a.m. Shabbat b'Yachad 6:40 p.m. Havdalah</p>
<p>26 28 Sh'vat 9:30 a.m. Morning minyan 10:30 a.m. Talk by R. Kelman: "How Law Works"</p>	<p>27 29 Sh'vat</p>	<p>28 30 Sh'vat Rosh Hodesh Adar 7:15 a.m. Rosh Hodesh minyan 4:00 p.m. Religious School 8:00 p.m. Intermediate Talmud Study with Ilana Fodiman Silverman at Netivot Shalom</p>				

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Our sincerest thanks for your support of Netivot Shalom.

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Gifts of Time Talent & Trimmings

Charlene Irwin for
organizing the Joan Nathan
lecture and program

Ellen Peskin for organizing
Sukkot in Tilden

Leonid Plotkin, who comes
EVERY Wednesday, rain
or shine, and helps with so
very many tasks around
the shul!

Helaine Prentice for
cleaning all our silver ritual
objects for Yamim Nora'im

**Rom Rosenblum & Debby
Lobel** for providing the
DVD equipment at our
annual meeting

**Cantor Pamela Rothmann-
Sawyer** for producing CDs
of our Shabbat morning
service

Charlene Stern for her
Herculean efforts to get
our kitchen finished

Ellen Wunderlich for her
help in creating labels for
the kitchen cabinets

Mazal Tov to . . .

**Grant Edelstone &
Shannon Frank** on the
birth of their son, Henry
Ross Edelstone

Aliza Einwohner on the
birth of her grandson
Yossi & Tamar Fendel on
birth of their son, Ari

**Rabbi Kelman & EKS
Publishing** on the
translation of his booklet
about visiting the sick,
Give Me Your Hand, into
Portuguese for the Jewish
community of Brazil

Perry & Malka Scheinok
on the birth of their
grandson, Nadav Scheinok
— and to his cousins,
Yarden and Ma'ayan

Yahrzeits

Zichronam l'verakhab —

May their memories be blessed

Gerald Tranter	1 Tevet	January 1	Mary Rosenblatt	1 Shevat	January 30
Joseph Yaffee			Yoseph Bruchiel	2 Shevat	January 31
Eric Wood			Dolen Edgar McIntyre		
William Bruch	2 Tevet	January 2	Nathan Solomon		
Harry Beck			Florence Marson	3 Shevat	February 1
Leo Lowsky	3 Tevet	January 3	Nancy Kennedy		
Simon Dov Yaffee	5 Tevet	January 5	Hada Korc	5 Shevat	February 3
Charlot Rehfeld Lanier			Nina Chaya Davis		
Samuel Margolis			Harold Seder		
Matthew Prentice			Sarah Cohen Stahl	7 Shevat	February 5
Helly Barzilay			Chaim Radousky		
David Rosenstein	6 Tevet	January 6	Mollie Levine	8 Shevat	February 6
Bernard Budiansky			Leonard Fox		
Bertha Rodbell Spiegel	8 Tevet	January 8	F. R. Scott	9 Shevat	February 7
Nathan Abraham Epstein	9 Tevet	January 9	Binyamina Lawrence Cohen	10 Shevat	February 8
Max Rosenheimer			Rose Milkman Shandling		
Ida Frank	10 Tevet	January 10	Charmin Knock		
Sophie Chait	11 Tevet	January 11	Sidney Edelstone		
Anna Abramowski	12 Tevet	January 12	Cantor Don Fischer	12 Shevat	February 10
George Trow			Sylvia Facher		
Stan Fink			Harry Rappaport		
Irving Lowe	13 Tevet	January 13	George Levine	13 Shevat	February 11
Maya Cooper	14 Tevet	January 14	Harry Cohen	15 Shevat	February 13
Josef Levi			Shirley Burnstein		
Esther Radousky			William Spielman	16 Shevat	February 14
Sherrie Lee Amernick Schulman	17 Tevet	January 17	Frieda Bloom		
Bernard David Laytner	18 Tevet	January 18	David Hellman	17 Shevat	February 15
Alan Gordon	19 Tevet	January 19	Harry Valas		
Al Becker			Pearl Max	18 Shevat	February 16
Naida Schlossman Epstein	21 Tevet	January 21	Goldye Spilky		
Cecelia C. Rosenheimer			Chan Su Kim	20 Shevat	February 18
Anne Reiter Greif	25 Tevet	January 25	Moishe ben Yudel HaCohen	24 Shevat	February 22
Lorelei F. Cohen	26 Tevet	January 26	Ruth Blachman		
Harry Alter			Edith Shapiro	26 Shevat	February 24
Theodore Karlin	27 Tevet	January 27	Julia De Lorraine Levin		
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Edwin Posner			Lee Valas	28 Shevat	February 26
Gertrude Aronstein	29 Tevet	January 29	Fanya Cohen	29 Shevat	February 27
Rosalie Cohen			Florence B. Levine	30 Shevat	February 28
Frieda Elbogen	1 Shevat	January 30	David Wunderlich		

We Extend Our Condolences to

Simon Guendelman on the death of his father, Adolfo Guendelman, *z"l*

David Jeffrey on the death of his mother, Eleanor Jeffrey, *z"l*

Ed Kujawski on the death of his father, Wolf Kujawski, *z"l*

Our congregational family mourns the loss of our member **Shalva Sorani**, *z"l*, and extends our condolences to her husband, **Avi**, her daughters, **Yarden** and **Ma'ayan**, and her parents, **Malka and Perry Scheinok**.





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Via e-mail, we send weekly announcements of services and activities, plus occasional messages deemed important for our members. If you have NOT been receiving these announcements, please send an e-mail to office@netivotshalom.org; write "Subscribe" in the subject line, with your name and e-mail address in the body. Thank you.

Unless otherwise noted, telephone numbers are in the 510 area code.



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Congregation

Netivot Shalom

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED



President Carol Cunradi introduces the newly elected officers and committee chairs.

Netivot Shalom's Annual Meeting
— more photos inside —



The meeting was literally standing room only as members packed the social hall to hear presentations and to vote in the annual election.