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**Rabbi's Message**

RABBI J. ROLANDO MATALON

raising it, you must nevertheless raise it with him" (*Ex. 23:5*), and obviously our friend: "If you see your brother's ass or ox fallen on the road, do not ignore it; you must help him raise it." (*Deut. 22:4*) But what if both your enemy and your friend require help at the same time? Wouldn't you obviously rush to help your friend and ignore your enemy? The Talmud stunningly legislates "If a friend's animal requires unloading and an enemy's animal requires loading, you should first help your enemy—in order to subdue your evil inclination." (*Baba Metzia 32b*) The Talmudic teachers display here deep psychological insight by recognizing how unnatural and counterintuitive it is to reach out to our enemies, and by forcing us to put them ahead of our friends they force us to subdue and transcend our feelings of hatred and ill will.

According to the *Pirkei Avot 4:2*, the conquering of our evil impulse is a sign of true might. *Avot deRabbi Natan 23* goes even further by declaring that turning an enemy into a friend is a sign of true might. By coming first to our enemy's help, we actively engage in breaking the cycle of hostility and revenge and awaken the potential for reconciliation.

*(continued on page 10)*

**Executive Director's Message**

DEBORAH PINSKY

As we complete another Jewish new year, I have some exciting but bittersweet news. I have been offered an amazing opportunity to direct a brand new Jewish Community Center in the San Francisco Bay area—the Peninsula JCC. The Jewish Community and the Foster City municipality have entered into a unique partnership—a campus with a beautiful and big JCC facility, a Hebrew Day School, an early childhood Center and plans to build a theater/cultural arts center and senior center in the next five years. This destination will provide a multitude of activities for all ages and backgrounds under one roof. The potential growth presents galvanizing possibilities. The center is in a fantastic position to become a major focal point for the community and Bay area. As many of you may know, most of my career has been spent in the JCC field so it is a "return to the family" so to speak. Although I am very sad to leave BJ and NYC, I believe that this is a wonderful challenge for me to take on at this time.

It is no accident that I was targeted for recruitment—BJ's reputation has penetrated the west coast as well. But, it is not without much regret and sadness that I decide to leave this wonderful oasis called BJ and Manhattan. I have met many fascinating and wonderful people, colleagues, volunteers, congregants,

*(continued on page 10)*

## Social Action: BJ Community Reaching Higher and Higher

At this time of year, I am reminded of an old Hasidic tale retold by the Yiddish writer I.L. Peretz, *Oib Nit Noch Hecher* ("If not Higher"). This is the story of a charismatic rebbe who is rumored to ascend to heaven every year just before the Days of Awe, to plead for the good health and fortune of the Jewish community. Always at the time of Selihot, the Penitential Prayers that precede Rosh Hashanah, the Rabbi of Nemirov would vanish. A Lithuanian Jewish man follows the rebbe because he is skeptical of this tale. The man points to the text in the Talmud and says "even Moses, in his whole life, never made it into Heaven; ten handbreadths below Heaven was the highest he got!" What this man discovers is that the rebbe does not simply recite the Selihot prayers but says them as he does an act of loving-kindness. He follows the rebbe and watches him as he chops wood from the forest and brings it to the door of a poor Jewish woman. Dressed in the guise of a Ukrainian peasant named Vassil, the rebbe helps this poor woman by lighting the fire and bringing warmth to her shabby home. As he adds wood to the fire, he recites the Selihot prayers, first groaning, then with solemnity, and finally rejoicing. The rebbe spends the time of the prayers doing a very concrete, physical act of helping someone. From then on the Lithuanian Jewish man, impressed by this scene, when he hears the story of the rebbe ascending to heaven, quietly adds, "If not higher!"

The lesson I draw from this story is in the meaning and value of action. As individuals and as a community, BJ members who work in the shelter, who serve meals at the lunch program, who fight for marriage equality or who rally for Darfur lift each other just a little bit higher. From these activities, they are inspired and renewed. BJ's social action/social justice activities create a context in which members can gain sustenance from a community that holds in its heart the history and struggle for freedom and dignity for all.

On Rosh Hashanah, my family sings a song called "Sholem Lid."

*Lomir ale freylekh zayn, Lomir ale zingen. Zingen far sholem, Zingen far broyt, Boyen a morgn, On has un on noyt. Zingen far sholem, Zingen far broyt, Boyen a morgn fun sholem, Boyen a morgn fun sholem.*

*Let us all rejoice, Let us all sing. Sing for peace, Sing for bread. Build a future without hate or need. And work for a future of peace, and work for a future of peace.*

BJ members participate in this struggle through direct service and through advocacy for systemic change. Each individual can engage in this work in his or her own way, and BJ offers many opportunities to take action. Working side by side with people who commit their time and energy to acts of loving-kindness and who struggle for justice is inspiring for many of BJ's lay leaders.

I joined the BJ staff and community four months ago as Social Action Coordinator, and I am glad to be working within a Jewish community that places the work of social action and social justice at the heart of its practice. Working with Guy Austrian, BJ's Director of Social Action/Social Justice, I am responsible for our direct service programs, crisis response, and one-time social action events, as well as all SA/SJ communications. Before coming to BJ I worked in Disaster Services for the American Red Cross in Greater New York on disaster relief, sheltering, assessment and volunteer staffing. I've also done many years of student and community organizing on issues including racial profiling, tenant rights, and the war in Iraq. I look forward to working with and learning from everyone at BJ.

Below is a list of our advocacy hevras, service programs, one-time events and crisis response work. In this New Year, I urge you to commit to participate in one of BJ's many Social Action/Social Justice activities. It may be a source of inspiration and renew your sense of purpose in unexpected ways.

—Channa Camins, BJ Social Action Coordinator

### BJ/SPSA Homeless Shelter

Contact: Anne Millman and Jim Melchiorre, x340, annieMill@aol.com, jmelchi567@aol.com

Since 1985, the Homeless Shelter has reflected BJ's commitment to the mitzvah of caring for the most vulnerable strangers in our midst. Sunday through Thursday, homeless guests are bussed to us from two drop-in centers run by the city. **Needed:** Two to three people per night from 7-9 PM to set up beds, serve a small meal, maintain the storage closets, and interact with the guests; two additional people each night from 9PM-7AM to sleep over, supervise, help with a light breakfast, collect linens, and put away beds. Volunteers are also needed to cook or order in dinner for our guests. A minimum commitment of one evening per month is requested.

### BJ Reads...At PS 166

Contact: Ellen Schechter and Sandy Davidson, x391, bjreads@bj.org or sandyd001@rcn.com

BJ Reads offers volunteers the opportunity to make a tangible difference in the lives of elementary school children who are not yet reading at grade level. With the steady presence and enthusiasm of our volunteers, our partners' reading and comprehension skills flourish over the course of the year. **Needed:** Individuals of all ages to work with children. Minimum commitment is one one-hour session, one morning a week (Mondays or Wednesdays, 9-11AM) from October through May. Reading takes place at PS 166, 132 West 89th Street.

**BJ/Ralph Bunche School Partnership**

Contact: Rory Butler and Ilene Richman, x301, rbspartnership@bj.org

The partnership is dedicated to helping children attain literacy, to love and value books and reading, and to enhance basic math skills. Volunteers meet one-on-one with children in Grades 1-3 to support classroom instruction in reading and writing, as well as Grades 3-4 to reinforce math lessons. This partnership is an exciting opportunity to make a difference in the lives of children, one at a time. **Needed:** Individuals to work with an eager elementary school student: literacy sessions from 8:30-10:30AM on Tuesday or Thursday morning, math sessions will be on Tuesdays. If you cannot make a regular commitment, please sign up as a sub.

**Judith Bernstein Lunch Program**

Contact: Carole Lurie, Ruth Lazarus, Robin Tunick, and Susan Samuels, x338, sssamuels@aol.com

Join this wonderful, friendly, intergenerational effort by serving lunch to our West Side guests at 88th Street on Thursdays. We care for both body and soul by providing our guests with a meal in a comfortable atmosphere as well as the services of a volunteer social worker. **Needed:** Caring individuals to prepare food, set tables, serve lunch, and clean up on Thursdays from 9:00AM-1:30PM. On Wednesday nights, we need individuals to make soup and salad from 5:00-8:00PM. Help is always needed. Sign up for an hour each week or each month.

**Panim el Panim Task Force**

Co-Chairs: Robert Buxbaum and Jenny Eisenberg  
Contact: Guy Austrian, Director of Social Action/Social Justice, x259, gaustrian@bj.org

Panim el Panim aims to transform our congregation by facilitating deeper relationships among our members and between our BJ community and our citywide neighbors. Panim el Panim seeks to address the root causes of injustice by changing power structures, laws, policies, relationships, and practices—complementing the direct service programs that BJ has operated for many years. Our power to make change is developed through a congregation-based community-organizing model including one-to-one relationships, community conversations, leadership development, and participatory decision making. **Needed:** Enthusiastic people committed to social justice and the BJ community, who want to work with a dynamic, diverse team of leaders on any of the issue areas below!

**Environmental Action Hevra**

Contact: Gil Kulick and Carol Schiffman-Durham, bjgreenhevra@yahoo.com

Campaign: **Greening BJ:** Adopting environmentally sustainable practices in our synagogue and our homes, and building a movement among local congregations to do the same. Becoming a voice for environmental justice in our city.

**Marriage Equality Hevra**

Contact: Amy Lavine, alavine@gaycenter.org, and Susan Olderman, susanolderman@yahoo.com

Campaign: **Marriage Equality:** Working to pass legislation in NY State for equal access to the rights and responsibilities of civil marriage for same-sex couples.

**Women's Rights Hevra**

Contact: Judith Trachtenberg, jtrachte@aol.com, and Cindy Wachenheim, cwachen@yahoo.com

Campaign: **Comprehensive Sex Education:** Ensuring that families can access comprehensive, age-appropriate, and medically accurate sex education.

**As individuals and as a community, BJ members who work in the shelter, who serve meals at the lunch program, who fight for marriage equality or who rally for Darfur lift each other just a little bit higher.”**  
—Channa Camins

**BJ RESPONDS**

As always, we seek opportunities to "pray with our feet" by participating in public demonstrations and annual one-day events, and by responding to ongoing crises such as the AIDS and breast cancer epidemics or sudden emergencies such as the South Asian tsunami and Hurricane Katrina. **Needed:** People who are passionate about making a difference in our world! For more information, contact the BJ members below or contact Channa Camins, Social Action Coordinator at x261 or ccamins@bj.org.

**Darfur Response Committee:** Josie Shapiro and Liz Lasky, darfur@bj.org

**AIDS Walk,** every May: Loren Brenowitz, lorenb@nyc.rr.com

**Blood Drives,** twice a year: Trudi Levine, trudi1531@aol.com, and Sharon Messitte, shasiem@aol.com

**Hazon Jewish Environmental Bike Ride,** Labor Day weekend: Heidi Sadowsky, hsadowsky@gmail.com and Elissa Meth, elissameth@gmail.com

**Komen Breast Cancer Race for the Cure,** in September: Glenda Frank, glfrank@verizon.net and Andrea Bigelson, andmugs@aol.com ■

## When Duty Calls

The reaction is always the same when the notice arrives in the mail. Oh, no. Not again. It feels like I'm constantly called. A master at dodging it, I immediately hatch my plan. But upon closer examination, I see I've not been called for Jury Duty. I've been called for Jew-ry Duty. Still, I wonder if I can defer.

It says if you cannot attend to please call and arrange a more convenient date. Geography and family concerns listed as plausible hardships. A mere eight blocks from the BJ Sanctuary, I can't get in under distance. And while walking my dog at the ungodly hour of 7 AM may be a hardship to me, I don't really think it would qualify. I tack the postcard on my bulletin board as a reminder to think about it some more. A visiting friend notices it several days later.

"What should I do?" I ask.

"Is there a problem? Will you be out of town?"

"No." In fact, it's a very good time for me. I work out of my home Tuesdays and Wednesdays, and I'm called for a Monday. A summer morning, the weather is good. And it won't interfere with the day, as the commitment is under an hour beginning at 7:30 in the morning. Yikes. 7:30 in the morning!

"I'm just turning over at 7:30 in the morning," I say, it becoming clear my resistance all about being on time and functional at 7:30 in the morning.

"Well, get over it. It's only once a year," says my friend. "You have to go."

"Yes," I agree. "You're right. I have to go." I do. But once I make that decision, something shifts. I realize I want to go. Plus, I've never been.

The postcard requests we support members of our community who are saying Kaddish. I feel honored to be a member of the BJ community that can be called upon. I re-read the words "we want to be able to count you." Growing up in a synagogue where women did not count, I truly want to be counted.

The night before I plan to get to bed early, but I work very late and fall asleep near 2. Accustomed to nine hours of sleep, I do not know how I will wake at 7. But I do. In fact, I spring up. People are counting on me. What if only nine people show? I dress quickly and arrive on time.

Although fifteen people are already there, this is the first time I feel my presence at a service has meaning beyond me. Especially when I am greeted by a BJ friend made through volunteering at the Shelter. There for Kaddish, she sees me and smiles.

The service is sweet and warm. I am given an aliyah, and beam when I get to dress the Torah. It is my very first time. I feel blessed to touch it.

Dara announces it is her last Monday Morning Minyan before starting her job at a congregation in LA. In her honor, there is a breakfast downstairs. Feasting on bagels and coffee and salads and chitchat, I feel awake and alive.

Back home when I sit down to work, I see it is the same time as always. Except not only have I already been to the gym, I have also exercised my spirit and my soul. I take the Jew-ry postcard from my bag, and instead of disposing of it, I tack it back up on my board. It is not just my certificate to say I have served, but it is also a reminder to go again. ■

—Laurie Graff

## Hoshanah Rabbah • Shemini Atzeret • Simhat Torah

### Hoshana Rabbah

Wednesday, October 3

#### Morning Service

88th Street .....7:30 AM

### Shemini Atzeret

Wednesday, October 3

#### Evening Service

88th Street .....6:30 PM

Thursday, October 4

#### Morning Services (Yizkor)

88th Street.....9:30 AM

#### Children's Services

88th Street Frankel Hall.....10:45 AM

### Simhat Torah

Thursday, October 4

#### Erev Simhat Torah

#### Family Service

88th Street Frankel Hall .....6:30 PM

88th Street .....7:15 PM

Friday, October 5

#### Morning Services

88th Street.....9:30 AM

## Mazal Tov

**To the following members and their families on their b'nai mitzvah (through September):**

Michael Wiener-Bronner	Arielle Korman
Raphael Ellenson	Sarah Revesz

**To the following members and their families (through August 31):**

Ira Kustin and Steve Salee on the birth of their twins, Isabelle Anne and Aaron Edgar Kustin-Salee.

Daniel Harrison and Adee Ishakov on their wedding.

Dapha Mor and Daniel Freedman on their wedding.

Margot Asher and Seth Kleinman on their wedding.

Kimberly Jackson on the birth of her daughter, Sofia Querida Jackson.

## Condolences (through August 31)

*The community of B'nai Jeshurun mourns the death of our beloved member Mark Offitzer and extends sincere condolences to Shirley Abraham and Noah and Maia Offitzer on the death of their husband and father*

*The community of B'nai Jeshurun extends sincere condolences to the following members and their families:*

Martin Schneider and Debra Fine on the death of Martin's beloved father, Jack Schneider.

Debra and Michael Lifschutz on the death of their beloved mother, Laura E. Wagman.

Jeff Yablonka on the death of his beloved uncle, Leonard Yablonka.

Dorothy Hilf on the death of her beloved grandson, Harold Hilf.

Carlos, Brian, Yael, and Michal Rizowy on the death of their beloved father and grandfather, Gerszon Rizowy.

Harriet Goren on the death of her beloved sister-in-law, Elaine Goren.

Shira, James, Alex, Gideon and Benjamin Levin and their family on the death of thier beloved father, father-in-law and grandfather, Rabbi Judah Nadich.

Susan Goldberg on the death of her beloved cousin, Stuart Goldberg.



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
	1 <b>HOL HAMO'ED SUKKOT</b>	2 <b>HOL HAMO'ED SUKKOT</b>	3 <b>HOSHANAH RABBAH</b> • 7:30 AM – Services, 88th St.  <b>EREV SHEMINI ATZERET</b> • 6:30 PM – Service, 88th St.	4 <b>SHEMINI ATZERET</b> BJ OFFICE & BJHS CLOSED • 9:30 AM – Services, 88th St. • 10:45 AM – Children's Services, Frankel Hall  <b>EREV SIMCHAT TORAH</b> • 6:30 PM – Family Service, Frankel Hall • 7:15 PM – Services, 88th St.
7	8 <b>Columbus Day</b> BJHS CLOSED  • 9:30 AM – Bar Mitzvah: Jasper Soloff	9 • 7:00 PM – Marriage Equality Hevra Forum: A Conversation with Rabbi Steven Greenberg, 88th St.	10	11
14	15	16	17	18  • 7:00 PM – Ledor Vador Tziporah Salamon, 88th St.
21  • 4:00 PM – Class of '07-'08 B'nai Mitzvah Community Learning Programs, 88th St.	22  • 5:00 PM – Bet Mispaha, 88th St.	23	24	25
28	29	30	31	

SERVICE TIMES

**Morning Minyan (88th Street):**

• Monday-Friday 7:30 AM. • Sunday & National Holidays 9:30 AM

**Kabbalat Shabbat:**

• 6:00 PM 88th St. Sanctuary • 7:30 PM 88th Street Sanctuary  
• *Additional Services* October 5: Family service 6:00 PM 88th St. Sanctuary • Wandering Minyan 6:00 PM 88th Street Frankel Hall  
• *Additional Service* October 26: Contemplative Shabbat Service 6:00 PM 86th St. Sanctuary

**Shabbat Morning:**

• 9:30 AM 86th Street • Children's Services 10:45 AM 86th Street Chapel and Parlor  
• *Additional Services* October 6, 20: Junior Congregation 10:30 AM 86th Street Social Hall

DAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p><b>5</b> <b>SIMHAT TORAH</b></p> <p>BJ OFFICE CLOSED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9:30 AM - Services, 88th St.</li> </ul> <p> 6:00 PM - Family Kabbalat Shabbat Service, 88th St.</p> <p>6:00 PM -Wandering Minyan, 88th St. Frankel Hall</p> <p>7:30 PM - Kabbalat Shabbat Service, 88th St.</p>	<p><b>6</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9:30 AM - Shabbat Morning Services, 86th St.</li> <li>10:30 AM - Junior Congregation, 86th St. Social Hall</li> <li>10:45 AM - Children's Services, 86th St. Chapel and Parlor</li> </ul>	
<p><b>12</b> <b>ROSH HODESH HESHVAN</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6:00 PM - Kabbalat Shabbat Service, 88th St.</li> </ul> <p> Following 6:00 PM Service - Gimmel HS Family Dinner, 88th St. Frankel Hall</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7:30 PM - Kabbalat Shabbat Service, 88th St.</li> </ul>	<p><b>13</b> <b>ROSH HODESH HESHVAN</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9:30 AM - Shabbat Morning Services, 86th St.</li> <li>10:45 AM - Children's Services, 86th St.</li> <li>Bar Mitzvah - Sam Brunswick</li> <li>Bar Mitzvah - Jonathan Manocherian</li> <li>Following Services - Community Kiddush, 86th St. Social Hall</li> <li>12:30 PM - Women's Rosh Hodesh Group Potluck Lunch, 86th St. Chapel (SEE P.9)</li> </ul>	
<p><b>19</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6:00 PM - Kabbalat Shabbat Service, 88th St.</li> </ul> <p> Following 6:00 PM Service - Hey HS Family Dinner, 88th St. Frankel Hall</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7:30 PM - Kabbalat Shabbat Service, 88th St.</li> <li>Following 7:30 PM Service - Tze'irim/Birthright "Shabbat Without Chairs" dinner, 86th St. Social Hall</li> </ul>	<p><b>20</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9:30 AM - Shabbat Morning Services, 86th St.</li> <li>10:30 AM - Junior Congregation, 86th St. Social Hall</li> <li>10:45 AM - Children's Services, 86th St.</li> <li>Bar Mitzvah - Benjamin Jacobs</li> <li>Bat Mitzvah - Margot Motulsky</li> <li>Following Services - Ledor Vador Luncheon, 88th St. Frankel Hall (SEE P.9)</li> <li>5:30 PM - MInḥa/Ma'ariv</li> <li>Bat Mitzvah - Sarah Perelson-Gross</li> </ul>	
<p><b>26</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6:00 PM - Kabbalat Shabbat Service, 88th St.</li> </ul> <p> Following 6:00 PM Service - Dalet HS Family Dinner, 88th St. Frankel Hall</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6:00 PM - Contemplative Shabbat Service and Potluck Dinner, 86th St. (SEE P.9)</li> <li>7:30 PM - Kabbalat Shabbat Service, 88th St.</li> </ul>	<p><b>27</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9:30 AM - Shabbat Morning Services, 86th St.</li> <li>10:45 AM - Children's Services, 86th St.</li> <li>Bar Mitzvah - Jacob Moscona-Skolnik</li> <li>Bar Mitzvah - Owen Kaye-Kauderer</li> <li>Following Services - Community Kiddush, 86th St. Social Hall</li> <li>5:00 PM - MInḥa/Ma'ariv</li> <li>Bat Mitzvah - Kate Braun</li> </ul>	

ADULT CLASSES

**Monday**

- Introduction to Judaism 7-9 PM (begins October 15; through May)

**Tuesday**

- The Book of Genesis 8:10-9: AM (begins October 23; through May)

- For Tze'irim—The Things We Never Learned: Finding Our Way Into Shabbat 7-8:30 PM (October 16, 23, 30, November 6)

**Wednesday**

- Contemplative Practice at BJ: Creating Space for Quiet 7-9 PM (October 10, 17, 24, 31, November 7, 14, 21)

- Abraham Joshua Heschel's Heavenly Torah 6:30-8 PM (October 17, 24, 31, November 7, 14, 28, December 5)

**Thursday**

- Parashat HaShavu'a: Study of the Weekly Torah Portion 7-9 PM (begins October 18; through May)

YOUTH CLASSES

**Monday**

- 4-5:30 PM, Kindergarten and First grade
- 4-6 PM, Second through Sixth grade

**Thursday**

- 4-5:30 PM, Kindergarten and First grade
- 4-6 PM, Second through Seventh grade

ONGOING ACTIVITIES

**Sunday–Thursday**

- BJ/SPSA Homeless Shelter 7 PM

**Thursday**

- Judith Bernstein Lunch Program 12 PM

 indicates Family Life and Hebrew School events

**Candlelighting Times**

October 3	6:18 PM (Erev Shemini Atzeret)
October 4	7:15 PM (Erev Simḥat Torah)
October 5	6:15 PM
October 12	6:03 PM
October 19	5:53 PM
October 26	5:43 PM

**Parashat HaShavu'a**

October 6	Bereshit
October 13	Noah
October 20	Lekh Lekha
October 27	Vayera

**Havdalah Times**

October 6	7:11 PM
October 13	7:00 PM
October 20	6:50 PM
October 27	6:41 PM

## A Sukkah of One's Own

**“You shall live in sukkot, booths, for seven days.”** —Leviticus 24:32

The *sukkah* in which we are commanded to dwell is only a scaffold: four walls and a leafy roof. The rest—the gourds, the strings of popcorn or cranberries, the tables and chairs where we gather for festive meals—is inspired by our personalities, memories, and families. For both those of us building our own *sukkah* this year, and those of us who will be visitors in others' *sukkot*, I would like to provide another kind of scaffold, a template that you and your family can build and personalize. What follows are suggestions, springboards, and scaffolding to help you “build” a *Sukkot* experience that is personal and meaningful to your family.

In my imagination, the festival of *Sukkot* has four walls and a roof, like a *sukkah*. Each speaks to us in a voice inspired by tradition. How we answer is up to us.

Traditionally, one wall of the *sukkah* can be a wall of an existing structure, like your own house or building. This First Wall asks: “Which Jewish traditions does our family already have that can be incorporated into celebrating *Sukkot*?” Many of the Jewish activities we do each week can be transplanted into the *sukkah* during *Sukkot*, such as saying *Hamotzi* and eating meals, singing Jewish songs, decorating the *sukkah* with favorite Jewish artwork, or discussing something your children learned

in Hebrew school or at services that week. A simple change of scenery is sometimes all it takes to inspire wonder.

Another wall of *Sukkot* is peace. Every evening of the year, Jews traditionally ask God to “spread a *sukkat shalom*, shelter of peace, over us, over God’s people Israel, over all the world, and over Jerusalem.” In our imagination, peace takes the form of a giant, world-encompassing *sukkah*, just like the ones we build here on earth. The Second Wall asks: “How can we use the inside of our *sukkot* to experience peace?” As families, we can take time during *Sukkot*

to talk about the meaning of peace. Families can learn about the progress of peace in Israel or discuss ways of maintaining *shalom bayit*, peace at home.

A third wall of *Sukkot* is the *arbah minim*, four species (citron, palm, myrtle, and willow), also called the *lulav* and *etrog*. We hold the four together and wave them around our bodies, to show that God’s bounty surrounds us. This Third Wall asks: “We are blessed to have food and loved ones to share it with us. How can we help others who may not have these things?” Whenever Jews harvest, we designate a portion of our wealth for the lonely and the needy. *Sukkot* is a harvest holiday, and a great time to do a family *tzedakah* or *gemilut hasadim* project, such as donating food or clothing, cooking at the BJ Shelter, comforting the sick in hospitals, and visiting the elderly. As a family, you can choose a way to share your love and abundance on *Sukkot*.

A fourth wall of *Sukkot* is *ushpizin*, the symbolic guests we invite into our *sukkot*. Traditionally, the seven days of *Sukkot* corresponded to seven men from the Bible, and families would set an extra place for them at the dinner table! The Fourth Wall asks: “Who are our Jewish ancestors and heroes, and how can we honor and remember them?” Your family can dress up and play the part of Jewish heroes, male and female, and take turns interviewing each other. You can also invite modern Jewish heroes and “ancestors” to join you in your *sukkah* by hosting grandparents, aunts and uncles, and friends. Each of the *ushpizin* can also be represented by new faces in your home, so now is a wonderful time to share a meal with new friends.

The roof of *Sukkot* is covered with *sehah*, leafy greens, which allow glimpses of the stars. Looking through the roof situates us in the cycle of time. The Roof asks: “What will we remember from this year?” *Sukkot* can be a special time to reflect on the growth of our families. Your family can make a time capsule of favorite things, written hopes, photographs, and audio- or videotapes, which you can revisit next year at *Sukkot* to see how you’ve grown over the year.

May the physical *sukkot* in which we sit this year inspire us to build *Sukkot* experiences that will linger in our hearts and minds. May they carve out a time of wonder and awe for us as families, as we bring ourselves, our hopes for peace, our desire to share our abundance, our love and respect for ancestors and heroes, and our memories into them. When we say *shehehyanu*, may we feel truly blessed that we have reached this moment. ■

—Hollis Gauss, Director of Education (Youth & Family)

**In my imagination, the festival of *Sukkot* has four walls and a roof, like a *sukkah*. Each speaks to us in a voice inspired by tradition. How we answer is up to us.”**

—Hollis Gauss

• **Ledor Vador Presents Tziporah Salamon:**

**The Fabric of My Life**

Thursday, October 18 • 7:00PM • 88th Street Sanctuary • Free; registration not required. Back by popular demand! Using stories, anecdotes, pictures and clothes, BJ member Tziporah Salamon will perform her sartorial autobiography entitled "The Fabric of My Life." If you missed her presentation last winter, this is your chance to see her show which delighted all those who saw it. Please RSVP at x334, leaving the names of those who will be attending.

• **Ledor Vador Shabbat Luncheon:**

**Jewish Life in the Theatre**

Saturday, October 20 • Following Shabbat morning services • 88th Street Frankel Hall. Our first Ledor Vador Shabbat

• **BJ Contemplative Practice**

**Rabbis Marcelo R. Bronstein and Rachel Cowan**

7 Wednesdays (October 10, 17, 24, 31, November 7, 14, 21) • 7:00-9:00PM • 88th Street Sanctuary (November 14 only: 86th Street Chapel) • Free; registration required. Join us for an opportunity to engage in regular meditation practice. The evenings will include seated and walking meditation, niggunim, and discussion. Open to all, no experience needed.

• **Rosh Hodesh Women's Group for Heshvan**

**Facilitated by Rabbi Felicia L. Sol and Marshall T. Meyer Fellow Chen Ben Or Tsfon**

Saturday, October 13 • 12:30PM (potluck lunch following Shabbat morning services) • 86th Street Chapel • Free; registration not required. Each new month on the Hebrew calendar, we will have an opportunity to study, discuss, celebrate and pray together on this holiday traditionally associated with women. Registration is not required. Please bring a dairy/vegetarian kosher snack to share with the group as part of the celebration of Rosh Hodesh.

• **Introduction to Judaism**

**Rabbi Brent Chaim Spodek, Marshall T. Meyer Fellow**

Mondays (October 15-May 19) • 7:00-9:00PM • BJ Office, Conference Room 1 • Individuals: \$420 (members)/\$630 (non-members); Couples: \$630/\$945. (Although you must enroll for the entire year, tuition may be paid in two installments). This course will be a nuanced overview of the core history, beliefs, and practices of Judaism. We hope to deepen the understanding of those just beginning to explore Jewish life, or those who would like to be able to participate more fully in the life of the Jewish community, both inside the synagogue and outside of it. No prior knowledge or experience necessary.

• **FOR TZE'IRIM (20s AND 30s, SINGLES AND COUPLES)**

**The Things We Never Learned: Finding Our Way Into Shabbat**  
**Rabbi Felicia L. Sol**

4 Tuesdays (October 16, 23, 30, November 6) • 7:00-8:30PM • Home of Rabbi Felicia Sol; last class will be held at a venue on the Upper West Side • Free; registration required, please call x233 or register online at [www.bj.org](http://www.bj.org). BYOB to share, light snacks provided. Uncover the mysteries and keys to Shabbat in the tradition in order to make it meaningful and accessible for

Luncheon of the year kicks off with hearing from our members involved with New York City theatre life. Please RSVP at x334, leaving the names of those who will be attending. Also, send a check for \$15/member or \$18/non-member with "Ledor Vador 10/20" on the memo line. Children are welcome to attend free of charge.

• **Contemplative Shabbat Service and Potluck Dinner**

Friday, October 26 • 6:00PM • 86th Street. Join us for services that will combine prayer, meditation, and niggun toward a deepening experience of God. We will work together to awaken the soul, deepen the connection, and focus our prayer. There will be no instrumentation. The service is drawn from the siddur, but does not follow the complete text. To celebrate the first service of the year, it will be followed by a potluck dinner.

today. Come to understand how the layers of tradition built the Shabbat experience, the practical do's and don'ts, the whys and the why nots and the structure of the Shabbat liturgy. The final class will be devoted to pursuing the challenging question of how to build a Shabbat life and community in NYC in 2007.

• **Abraham Joshua Heschel's Heavenly Torah**

**Rabbi J. Rolando Matalon**

7 Wednesdays (October 17, 24, 31, November 7, 14, 28, December 5; no class Thanksgiving week) • 6:30-8:00PM • 88th Street Frankel Hall • Free; registration required. We resume our study of Rabbi Heschel's gigantic work on rabbinic thought in observance of his centennial year. *Heavenly Torah*, recently translated into English, explores the polarity in Judaism between transcendence and immanence, and between mysticism and rationalism. Heschel also invites us to look at contemporary issues through the lens of classical rabbinic discussions. Please bring the book to class (available in paperback); no photocopies will be distributed. New participants are welcome.

• **Parashat HaShavu'a: Study of the Weekly Torah Portion**

**Esther Lederman, Marshall T. Meyer Fellow**

Thursdays (October 18-May 15) • 7:00-8:30PM • BJ Office • Free (members)/\$150 (non-members) for the year. A Hasidic story teaches that Moses wanted to reveal more Torah to the people, but God refused, wanting to give the people a sense that there is something hidden among the words for them to discover. By adding our own understanding of the text, we too become a part of its unfolding story. In this class, as we study the weekly Torah portion with the aid of both ancient and modern interpretations, we will reveal its many layers and find ourselves reflected in its stories and teachings.

• **The Book of Genesis**

**Rabbi Hillel Friedman**

Tuesdays (October 23-May 20) • following morning minyan, 8:10-9:00AM • 88th Street Sanctuary • \$100 (members)/\$150 (non-members) for the year. Using both traditional and modern commentaries, the class will participate in a close reading of the latter parts of Genesis (in translation), and discuss their meanings in terms of your own life experiences.

Please see the BJ website, [www.bj.org](http://www.bj.org), for more information and how to register.

**Rabbi's Message** RABBI J. ROLANDO MATALON *(continued from page 1)*

Such beautiful teachings, but who can really live by them? Aren't these teachings naïve and reflecting some fantasyland view of reality?

During the BJ trip to Israel this past summer, we had the honor of meeting truly mighty and courageous people who live by these teachings. The Bereaved Families Forum for Peace, Reconciliation and Tolerance was established by Yitzhak Frankenthal after the murder of his son Arik by Hamas in 1994. Today, hundreds of Israeli and Palestinian bereaved families have joined the Forum and have chosen a path of reconciliation rather than revenge. We met with Robi Damelin, an Israeli whose son David was killed by Palestinians, and Dr. Omar Al

Aloul, a Palestinian whose father and brother were killed by the IDF. While the meeting was filled with sadness for the hatred, violence and the loss of countless lives, there was also great hope that their joint action and their many educational and public media projects will further a much needed culture of peace. An important outcome of this work is that Palestinian leaders of the Families Forum are contributing to a growing non-violence movement within their society. A change of Israeli and Palestinian awareness and public opinion is imperative for the leaders of both nations to try the path of peace. Since everything else has failed, perhaps what is left is to help our enemies and allow them to help us rise from under the burden of hatred and revenge. ■

**Executive Director's Message** DEBORAH PINSKY *(continued from page 1)*

donors, and staff. I feel that we have accomplished many innovative and inspiring programs, events, projects and community connections. I recently was sent a quote attributed to Abraham Lincoln: "Everyone is born an original but sadly most men die copies". BJ will never be accused of being a copy and I learned much from its originality. I will be leaving the Big Apple in January to reside in warmer environs but the warmth of this synagogue and this city will stay with me always. The experience has provided me with added meaning and inspiration and has created an atmosphere of belonging and community.

I have had the privilege to partner with an amazing group of lay leaders and staff. I am grateful to our talented staff who have helped re-energize the synagogue, infusing it with their enthusiasm and new ideas. I particularly want to thank our Board of Trustees and all the Presidents with whom I have worked during the past eight years. We have collaborated well as a team with great productivity. Our current President, Susan

Kippur, has been passionate, inspirational and a guiding light for BJ. Her knowledge, judgment and clarity have given me the confidence and presence to help implement our shared vision, our blueprint for the future. And what a future it is. There is lots of energy and excitement around the potential of acquiring the Heschel building and all that this space can help us realize. It is truly an unprecedented opportunity for us to reach for the stars and fully engage in dreaming anew. Of course, we cannot dream without our wonderful Rabbis and Cantor. They approach everything with a depth of commitment, transformative thinking and a variety of perspectives. They practice and promote lifelong learning and personal renewal and encourage us to connect with something larger than ourselves, essentially a spiritual act. This driving force leads to organizational renewal at BJ and elevates the vision to a moral level (doing the right thing). I have learned to think more reflectively as a result of my interaction with them and hope that my quest for learning and renewal can continue with them (and all of you) across the great divide—even if it may only be by email or voicemail. ■

## Donations

*(through August 28)***Adult Education Fund**

Harriette Weisman in memory of Jeff Yablonka's uncle, Leonard Yablonka

**Beba Bronstein Camp Scholarship Fund**

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**Yizkor Fund**

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June Frank in memory of Marilyn and Joe Stone's beloved son, Daniel Stone

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Stephen and Dede Kessler in memory of Dede's parents, Lettie and Jack Glicksman

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Jules and Judith Love in memory of Jules' beloved mother, Jenny Yoselevitz and Judith's beloved father, Tobias Zwerdling

Miriam Lox in memory of her beloved mother, Elsie Lox  
James and Laurie Oestreich in memory of Jim's beloved father, Abraham A. Oestreich

Deborah Pinsky in memory of Martin Schneider's beloved father, Jack

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Janet Sullivan and Armand Pierro in memory of Janet's mother and Armand's mother-in-law, Amely Sullivan

Sharon Zane and Evan Macosko in memory of their beloved father and grandfather, Dr. Manuel D. Zane

**Social Action Fund (in support of BJ Reads)**

Eitan Evan in honor of Arthur Gottesfeld's 75th Birthday  
Marilyn & Gordon Frank in honor of Arthur Gottesfeld's 75th birthday

KOL HADASH • NEW VOICE  
October 2007

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