

High Holy Days: Asking the Real Questions RABBI J. ROLANDO MATALON

How frightening it is to leave that which is familiar and comfortable and to jump into the abyss of the new and the unknown.”

A learned individual once came to see the Kotzker Rebbe. The man, in his thirties, had never before been to a rebbe.

“What have you done all your life?” the master asked him.

“I have gone through the entire Talmud three times,” the guest replied.

“And how much of the Talmud has gone through you?” Reb Mendl inquired.

We open the High Holy Days with Selihot (prayers of penitence) and in the span of two and a half weeks we will have gone through the Yamim Nora'im. How much of the Yamim Nora'im will go through us? Will they be just another High Holy Days or will we allow them to become a truly intense, creative, new and spontaneous spiritual adventure? Will we be uninhibited enough, authentic enough, daring enough to let an avalanche of emotions, feelings, memories, longings, prayers, and insights flow in and out of our souls?

The Hebrew root for shanah (year), Sh N H, exists in a fascinating tension and perplexity. Indeed, Sh N H means at the very same time to change and to repeat and therefore the New Year invites us to approach the process of our teshuvah (turning, return, repentance, response, answer) as a quandary and as a question: What must we change and what must we perpetuate and repeat? How frightening it is to leave that which is familiar and comfortable and to jump into the abyss of the new and the unknown. Habit and routine, complacency and peace of mind, conventions and cliches constantly seduce us into pale, superficial lives, lacking in passion, substance and truth.

How often we offer a resounding “No!” to risk, to venture, to struggle, to ambiguity, and settle for getting older without ever growing. And yet, can life be lived exclusively and permanently on the brink of challenge and change?

It would be both simplistic and foolish to declare that everything needs to be uprooted and transformed. There is so much that deserves to be reiterated precisely because it is true and holy. Repetition is a prerequisite for learning and for approaching perfection. Repetition grants us familiarity, comfort, warmth, a soothing mainstay in the often-terrifying face of living.

(continued on page 9)

At the 6th Grade Retreat



PHOTO: EMILY WALSH

See pages 10-13 for more photos and stories from recent 6th Grade, Women's, and Community Retreats.

Social Action/Social Justice	2
Simhat Torah	3
Board of Trustees	4
Community	5-6
Covenant Award Winners	7
Mekusharim	8
Member Profile	9
Youth & Family Education	10
Women's Retreat	11
Community Retreat	12-13
Limud	14
Announcements	15
Contacts	16

inside:

Generations and Genders: 5773 Simhat Torah Honorees	3
Meet BJ's Newest Board Members	4
A Welcoming Spirit	6
L'dor V'Dor — It's a Mother/Daughter Thing	9
Ties That Bind	11
... And That's Just the S's	12

BJ's Economic Justice Hevra Asks Us to Talk about Income Inequality

By Paula Galowitz and Marion Katz

What were over 50 members of BJ doing in lively group discussions in the sanctuary in May? They were participating in a budgeting exercise, trying to make difficult decisions about how to allocate the money received each month from minimum-wage jobs. Every participant assumed that they were part of a family consisting of two minimum-wage earners in full time jobs, with two children, living in the Bronx. This exercise was part of an evening of learning, personal testimonies, and discussion about income inequality, living on a minimum wage, and the "Fair Wages for New Yorkers Act."

Panim el Panim's newest Hevra, the Economic Justice Hevra, has been actively participating in a broad-based coalition of religious leaders, faith-based congregations, and nonprofit and community groups supporting the "Fair Wages for New Yorkers Act." This bill, which was recently passed by the New York City Council by a vote of 44-5, and then again with a council override of Mayor Bloomberg's veto, provides that any private development project directly accepting \$1 million or more in taxpayer subsidies, with revenue of \$5 million or more, must pay employees a "living wage" of \$10 an hour with supplemental health benefits or \$11.50 an hour without benefits. The bill also establishes a policy for the New York City Economic Development Corporation to strive for a 75 percent Living Wage goal for all jobs on projects receiving subsidies. Additionally, new wage reporting requirements will result in the disclosure of the percentage of living wage jobs on all subsidized projects. The "living wage" required by this bill would net the average 40-hour-a-week worker slightly under \$24,000 a year (when no benefits are provided); while this is not as much as is truly needed, it is an improvement over the current minimum wage in New York of \$7.25 an hour, which amounts to \$15,080 before taxes for a 40-hour work week.



PHOTO: CHANNA CAMINS

Paula Galowitz leading budget exercise.

The program on May 9 began with an inspiring kavannah by Rabbi Felicia Sol, followed by a welcome by Sandy Cheiten, Chair of the Economic Justice Hevra. Sandy told a very poignant story about her father's fair treatment of workers at his restaurant when she was growing up, explaining why the living wage was so personally important to her and her family. Desiree Pilgrim-Hunter, the president of the North West Bronx Community Coalition, recounted how she was unfairly treated as a low-wage retail worker and described some of the history of the living wage campaign. The next speaker was Ava Farkas, community organizer with the Living Wage Campaign/Retail, Wholesale, and Department Store Union, who explained the contents of the "living wage" bill, the history of the coalition supporting the bill, and the critical importance of BJ's participation. A worker from the Retail Action Project described current conditions in the retail industry and how the "living wage" bill would affect the workers.

The participants then divided into small groups for the budget exercise for a low-wage worker's family. The exercise helped us to understanding the concrete impact of various choices on the parents, the children,

their marriage, their community, and on the city and state. The budgets were developed by each of the groups with accurate costs taken from the Self-Sufficiency Standard For New York City 2010 and information about available benefits like SNAP (food stamps), state health care programs, etc. After the budgeting exercise, Paul Sonn, the legal co-director of the National Employment Law Project, spoke about the context of the living wage movement and the broader impact of low wages on the middle class, the economy, and city services.

We discussed select Jewish texts that speak our responsibility to workers. For example, one of the texts was from Deuteronomy (24:14-15):

You shall not oppress the hired laborer who is poor and needy, whether he is one of your people or a stranger in one of the communities of your land. You must pay him his wages on the same day before the sun sets, for he is poor and his life depends on them; otherwise he will cry to the LORD against you.

Participants discussed how we hear the cry of the poor or exploited worker now and how we do or should respond.

Participants at the BJ event left informed and engaged. However, there is still much work to be done. Mayor Bloomberg has filed suit against this new law in order to prevent its implementation.

To get involved with the Economic Justice Hevra contact Sandy Cheiten (chair of the hevra) at cheiten@aol.com. ■

Paula Galowitz is a public-interest lawyer and social worker. Marion Katz is an associate professor of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies and a long-time volunteer with the Judith Bernstein Lunch Program. They are both members of BJ's Panim el Panim task force.

1. The event was entitled "Let's Talk About Income Inequality: Why Should I Care About Poverty Wages?"

Generations and Genders: Introducing Your 5773 Simhat Torah Honorees

By Belinda Lasky

Each year, the blessing of Simhat Torah Hatan (groom) and Kallah (bride) is bestowed upon two exceptional members of the BJ community. On Simhat Torah morning, the Hatan Torah has the honor of reading the last chapter of the Torah, while the Kallah Torah reads the first chapter of the Torah as we start the cycle once again. The 5773 honors celebrate two members who exemplify varied areas of the BJ spectrum: Nancy Wolkenberg Greenblatt and Jeremy Hamburg.



Growing up on the Upper West Side, Nancy is among a handful of current members who were active at BJ prior to its rejuvenation. A member with her family since

she was 9 years old, she tells wonderful stories of taking the trolley down Broadway as she and her sister headed to Hebrew School, stopping at Murray's for pickles straight out of the barrel.

In 1985, Judith Stern Peck invited Nancy to services at B'nai Jeshurun to hear Rabbi Marshall T. Meyer, who had recently become the spiritual leader. Nancy not only rejoined BJ but also became one of the first employees, working closely with Marshall to build this new, dynamic community. There were days they sang opera together in the office between meetings.

As a clinical social worker for 35 years, Nancy worked closely with children with special needs at a time when the field was first starting to engage families with special-needs children. She is proud to be a footnote in someone else's book! She eventually changed careers and is now retired after serving 10 years as the Executive Director of the Rita J. & Stanley

H. Kaplan Family Foundation. She used her skills to shepherd grants given to hundreds of worthy organizations and in the process, professionalized the office environment and its technology.

Nancy exemplifies what it means to be a volunteer at BJ. In their various iterations over the years, she has served on the Archive Committee, Membership Committee, and Israel Committee and is a Kol Nidre solicitor. She has been the co-chair of Mekusharim since its inception two years ago, creating opportunities for BJ members 55+ to make connections through social, educational, and holiday programs. She participated in the first and many subsequent BJ study trips to Israel and has maintained relationships with Israelis from Hamidrasha and Nigun Halev.

The 5773 honors celebrate two members who exemplify varied areas of the BJ spectrum: Nancy Wolkenberg Greenblatt and Jeremy Hamburg."

Culture plays an important role in the life Nancy shares with Jack Richard. At any given moment, you can find her giving a tour of the art in her home, attending plays and concerts, visiting the latest museum exhibit, or gardening. She is a self-described Bach-o-holic, and listening to music is a visceral experience for her. Her partner Jack Richard joins her on many excursions. Raising three children and four grandsons gives Nancy the opportunity to see the world through different eyes, and no doubt her affinity for culture inspires each of them.

Both of our honorees' lives have been infused with Judaism. Nancy credits her father with leading her on a path of Jewish study, having witnessed how much he loved his Judaism. You can find Nancy at BJ classes taught by our spiritual leaders,

as well as those at JTS and the Institute of Jewish Spirituality. She notes that "Torah study is seductive" and is inspired by studying with Lizzie Kraiem.



PHOTO: DENISE WAXMAN

Jeremy was raised at Hebrew Tabernacle Congregation in Washington Heights, where his father and grandfather served as President, his mother serves

as Vice President, and his grandmother served as Sisterhood President. He chanted Torah from time to time and learned the inner workings of synagogue life, which he has translated into his dedication to volunteering in the BJ community. He is proud to be a four-time madrich (leader) for Birthright Israel, introducing college students to the Jewish homeland. That experience inspired him to coordinate a trip to Israel in 2007 for 20 active members of Tze'irim.

From the moment Jeremy set foot in B'nai Jeshurun, he was a leader. He served on the Tze'irim Executive Board, is the co-chair of the Education and Communications Team through his position on the Membership Steering Committee, and he served on the BJ B'Yahad Task Force. As a Friday night usher, he engaged hundreds of young people in synagogue life, connecting with them each time he greeted them at the door. Many members can trace their participation at BJ to the smile he gave them as they entered services. These days, Jeremy loves attending Friday night services with his girlfriend Lisa Markman.

In his professional life, Jeremy is an Assistant District Attorney in the Economic Crime Bureau of the Bronx DA, where he

(continued on page 13)

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Meet BJ's Newest Board Members

By Belinda Lasky

At the BJ Annual Meeting in June, the BJ community expressed its thanks to retiring Board members Debra Fine, Christina Gantcher, Barbara Glassman, and Steve Stulman for their dedicated and creative service to B'nai Jeshurun! The breadth and depth of their work have enriched the community. Steve also became an Honorary Trustee.

Additionally, six new members of the Board of Trustees were nominated and unanimously elected by the membership to serve their terms. Let's learn about them.

Nancy Freireich



A member of B'nai Jeshurun for more than 20 years, Nancy is active in Mekusharim and in the Hevra Kadisha. On the home front, she served for many years as vice president of her

co-op. Professionally, Nancy was director of publications and web communications at Columbia Business School and edited such publications as *Scientific American*. Her husband, Paul, has led the Sunday morning minyan since 1992. Upper West Siders for 40 years, Nancy and Paul are the proud parents of Jessica and Abigail and can often be found strolling with their baby grandson, Gabriel, in Riverside Park.

Moshe Horn



Moshe is a partner at the law firm Seeger Weiss, specializing in complex litigation, specifically securities and pharmaceutical litigation. He serves on the firm's management committee,

supervising all HR activities including

staffing, resource allocation, and its marketing initiatives. Moshe spent a decade as an Assistant District Attorney in the Manhattan District Attorney's office, where he tried more than 50 jury trials to verdict, achieving one of the highest conviction rates in the Manhattan office. A graduate of Cardozo Law School, he serves as an adjunct professor there in trial advocacy and mass torts. Prior to law school, Moshe worked for the Jewish Agency. Moshe has been attending BJ services since 1993. He got to know his wife, Leslie, on the steps of BJ. They and their two kids, Talia and Ayelet, can be found most weeks at BJ Shabbat morning services. Moshe has been active on the Men's Havurah Committee, the Israel Committee, and the Community Retreat Committee. Moshe has been involved with volunteer activities for Camp Ramah in the Berkshires, Kinneret Day School, and AIPAC. When not working or with his kids, Moshe can usually be found watching the Knicks or the Yankees or listening to Bruce Springsteen.

Franklin Kern



Frank, Julie, and their two children have been members of BJ for 15 years. Frank is currently a member of the BJ Building Committee. He previously served on the BJ Task Force for 6-12 year olds as

well as participating in the Reimagine 2000 focus groups. The Kern family were proud members of the Zelda bus on the BJ 180th anniversary trip to Israel and participated in the BJ Reach for Shabbat pilot program. Both of his children, Melanie and Adam, became b'nai mitzvot at BJ. Frank studied Public Policy and Management at Carnegie

Mellon University, spending his early career in the public sector as an economic analyst for the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. For the past 25 years he has worked in his family business, which built, owns, and manages New York City apartment houses. He is currently CFO of R.W. Kern Management.

Debbie Lerner



A member of BJ since 1994, Debbie has volunteered with BJReads, served on the Youth and Family Steering Committee, BJ B'Yahad, the ECC Task Force, and the Dues Task Force. Debbie chaired the

Hebrew School Advisory Committee and co-chaired the Capital Campaign for the 89th Street Building. Debbie recently chaired the Mishloah Manot assembly event. She is currently on the Membership Steering Committee and will chair the Marketing Team. Debbie is President of Act 2 Promo, a company specializing in promotional products and corporate merchandising and supplier of the much-coveted BJ onesie. Debbie and her husband, Rick, have three sons: Matt, Jeremy, and Daniel.

Judith Trachtenberg



Judith and her spouse, Renie Rutchick, have been members of BJ since 2004. Judith is co-chair of Panim el Panim, the social justice program of the synagogue, and has been an active

vocalist with BJ Sings since its inception. She is a social worker with a long career in health care as both clinician and

(continued on page 5)

Kiddushing It Up!

By Guy Felixbrodt

“is there a way I can celebrate my simḥa with the BJ community?”

“Of course, you can sponsor a kiddush!”

A mother who sponsored a kiddush in honor of her child becoming a bar mitzvah called me recently and told me how wonderful it was to come down to the beautifully set up room with a “table of plenty,” and to share her family’s simḥa with the whole community in this way. After one of the rabbis made kiddush, a family member was honored with making Hamotzi. Then everyone enjoyed the Israeli spread that was the menu for the day, including pitas, hummus and tahini, a variety of salads and wonderful desserts. The best part, she said, was schmoozing with many fellow BJ members who were there to celebrate with them.

It used to be kiddushim were planned only every other week, when Junior Congregation wasn’t held. Following the Community Building Initiative a few years ago, a very clear request rose from membership—let’s hold a kiddush every single Shabbat. We responded to the logistical challenge, and we now celebrate weekly as a community with food and drinks following the Shabbat morning services at SPSA. It’s true that the

space isn’t exactly the most attractive on the Upper West Side, but the setup and the community make it lively, beautiful, and tasty.

As a community, kiddushim allow us to come together and celebrate the goodness and abundance that we are blessed with, and also fill our bellies after sitting and concentrating for a whole morning.”

In order to make things simpler not just date wise, but also administratively, the whole process is now streamlined through the BJ office. You can even set a kiddush in process with a form on the BJ website. All the information you need is right there. You tell us about the occasion you are celebrating (bar or bat mitzvah, baby naming, aufruf, wedding anniversary, special birthday or anything else) and the date you would like to reserve, select the food, and leave the rest of the planning to us. If you prefer you can still call or email us to make the arrangements. Coordinating it through the BJ office, it should be noted, also allows the cost to be a tax deductible donation.

Sponsors are thanked in the weekly *Kol Jeshurun* so the rest of the community knows who is celebrating and are able to thank them for their generosity.

As a community, kiddushim allow us to come together and celebrate the goodness and abundance that we are blessed with, and also fill our bellies after sitting and concentrating for a whole morning. It is also an opportunity for members to share their joy with the community, to bask in the spirit of its loving support, to feel part of and to give back to this wonderful community.

Do you have an occasion to celebrate this year?

For more information on how to sponsor a kiddush, please visit www.bj.org/kiddush or contact Guy at gfelixbrodt@bj.org. ■



PHOTO, RIGHT: HARRIET R. GOREN

Board Members continued from page 4

administrator, most recently working as Director of the Office of Organizational Learning at New York Presbyterian Medical Center. She has been an active member of the national Society for Social Work Leadership in Health Care, chairing and participating on numerous committees and serving as president in 1994. She is a fellow of the New York Academy of Medicine. Presently Judith has the delight of working as adjunct faculty in the schools of social work of Columbia, Hunter, and Yeshiva Universities.

Anna Winderbaum



where she runs a significant wealth-management business. Before Wall Street, Anna worked at the White House under the Clinton Administration and, prior to that, for a former Member of Congress. For

Anna and her family have been members of BJ since 1997. She is a member of the BJ Hebrew School Advisory Committee. Anna is a Director in the Credit Suisse Private Banking Group,

UJA-Federation, Anna is a member of the Investment Management Division Executive Committee, the Women’s Executive Circle, the Board of Directors, and the Campaign Steering Committee. Anna is also a member of the Board of Trustees of the Caedmon School and is the Chair of their Investment Committee. She holds her MBA from Columbia Business School and her BA from Tufts University. Anna and her husband, Gary Nestler, have two sons at BJ Hebrew School, Zachary and Jake.

Please congratulate everyone on their honors and thank them for their dedication to our community. ■

COMMUNITY

A Welcoming Spirit

By Dale Bernstein

i have spent my entire career in Human Resources and related activities, so I have been exposed to a great deal of training and best-practices assessment. And yet I am constantly pleasantly surprised by the caliber of development activities offered by BJ both to congregants and to lay leaders.

A recent stellar example of this was the meeting held on March 12, 2012 for BJ Committee Chairs. The action-packed agenda was organized by BJ staff including Belinda Lasky, Channa Camins, Jon Wood and Emily Walsh.

She explained that welcoming begins on one level with a friendly 'hello' and then goes deeper by taking notice of one another and listening, really listening, to each other's stories."

The session was designed to promote a lively discussion and seek solutions to create a welcoming community. Many of us can relate to that feeling—perhaps it was the first time you walked into BJ, or joined a class, or went to a meeting—"BJ is full of *ruah*, but I don't know anyone here. Does everyone else know each other? How do I fit in?"

Well, it is the responsibility of each one of us to create a welcoming environment. So, we settled in for a few hours of skill building to learn from each other and from Cyd Weissman, the Director of Innovation in Congregational Learning at LOMED, leading a team to support the creation of Jewish learning environments that positively nurture the lives of learners. She also teaches Organizational Dynamics, Curriculum Design, and Accompanying Families on their Spiritual Journey at Hebrew Union College.

Before settling down for some hands-on learning from Cyd, we took a little time to learn some best practices from several

groups within BJ. Susan Fishman and Suzanne Schecter talked to us about the Welcoming Initiative from the Membership Steering Committee. Some of the actions were as simple as taking the moment to wish "Shabbat Shalom" to someone you don't know at services. Lisa Safier, Rochelle Freidlich, and I outlined some of the practices that worked [and some that did not] while leading the Marriage Equality Hevra through the ups and downs of

the fight to win marriage equality in New York State. Highlights here were taking the time to talk to new and potential members before and after a meeting, celebrating the *simchas* and mourning the losses of members, incorporating learning and teaching into our meetings and, of course, making sure to have fun—both in our meetings and at informal Shabbat dinners with no agenda attached. Julie Sissman and Christina Gantcher talked about the highly popular ways in which the Young Families Committee has made BJ a central part of networking and social connections for families with young children. Creating name tags for families to wear to services week after week got the group past the awkwardness of trying to remember names of someone you met a few weeks ago and created 'in demand' requests like "Hey, how do I get a name tag, too!"

Cyd then led a lively session about what welcoming is all about. She explained that welcoming begins on one level with a friendly "hello" and then goes deeper by taking notice of one another and listening, really listening, to each other's stories. Even in such a large congregation, many of us tend to sit in the same area. With a little effort, you can get to know the names and



PHOTO: DENISE WAXMAN

From left: Julie Sissman, Christina Gantcher, Suzanne Schecter, Susan Fishman

listen to the stories of those familiar faces near you week after week. And if they are not at services for a few weeks, perhaps you can check to make sure they are OK. How much more *hamish* would the congregation be if we each knew that others were thinking about us and looking out for us?

On a very practical level, there were some particular lessons that came out of the session. Communication is key to any successful event, but using only one form of communication is destined to fail. Email and social media are fine, but targeted emails that are more personal are better. A phone call is better yet. And using several of these tools is most effective. The more interactive meetings can be, the better. The key here is making sure everyone feels invited, welcomed, and involved. ■

Dale Bernstein retired as the head of human resources for the NYSE and is the founder of *UnCommon Human Resources*, a firm providing strategic HR consulting to both for profit and not for profit firms. She and her husband Gary joined BJ with their two sons in 1996. She was a co-chair of the *Marriage Equality Hevra*.

BJ Members Peter Geffen and Karina Zilberman Receive Covenant Award

By Siân Gibby

b'nai Jeshurun members Peter Geffen, Founder and Executive Director of KIVUNIM in New York and Karina Zilberman, Director of Jewish Family Life and Culture at 92nd Street Y in New York were recently named by The Covenant Foundation to receive the Covenant Award, among the most sought-after honors in the field of Jewish education.

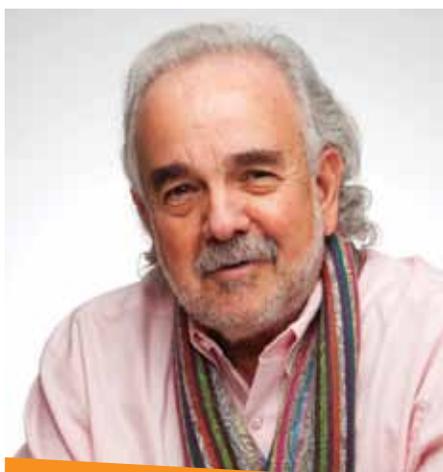


PHOTO: JOSHUA KESSLER

Peter, Founder of KIVUNIM and The Abraham Joshua Heschel School in New York, has devoted his career in Jewish education to elevating Jewish identities informed and driven by social justice, creating educational models in which knowledge of Jewish communities around the world propels individual and collective growth and community building for next generations.

KIVUNIM allows students to travel abroad to familiar, and less familiar, places in the Jewish world with a goal of exploring how diversity and pluralism look on the ground. Students learn from coexistence professionals thought-provoking ways to examine and endeavor to address the complex issues around tolerance found in Israel and in other countries.

Peter has said, of the value of this type of searching, particularly to a culture and a

people that takes engagement with words as its foundation:

What are the formative, one might even say determinative experiences of living within so many different religions, cultures, geographies, languages, costumes, architectures, cuisines? The Jewish people started as a blank slate, nomadic wanderers with no roots and not much more than the proverbial shirts on their backs. And after passing an entire generation of 40 years stopping and starting on the endless pathways of the deserts of Sinai and Zin they had acquired one thing and one thing only: The Word. How interesting that the Hebrew word for desert, M'dbar, and the Hebrew word for speaking, M'daber, are composed of the same four letters. ... The Jewish People grew into reality in this desert. We too will have found our footing on these sands and rocks. Maybe we stepped exactly where they stepped. Maybe 3000 years is as a passing moment in this timeless place. My teacher, Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel once said: "When one enters the Land of Israel one re-enters the Biblical drama."

Karina, Director of Jewish Family Life and Culture at 92nd Street Y in New York since 2007, is the creator, founder, and leader of *Shababa Community*, an immensely popular and vibrant Jewish family education initiative that is stamped with her passions for creativity, arts, performance and community building.

"I believe in the transformative power of relationships, the comfort of lasting bonds, the warm embrace of community and the unifying and uplifting value of traditions, old and new," she has said. "I've felt that connection ... since I was a young girl when my family gathered around the piano that my father played, celebrating life through songs from all over the world."



She says that her goal as an educator has been:

to facilitate meaningful Jewish experiences and activities where positive transformation can occur; to create a space for community members to connect with each other and with Jewish tradition, where the mind is challenged, the heart opened, and the soul uplifted; where people are invited to be part of the Jewish story through songs, music, movement, prayer and play; where the Tallit (prayer shawls) become tents for families to get closer to each other and where we can wish each other a "HUG Sameah" and really mean it. ...

At the core of the Shababa Jewish story is the community feeling that suffuses every moment. Shababa aims to communicate and generate joy, genuine interest in one another, a new or renewed appreciation for the relevance of ritual, and the trust that comes from being part of something larger than oneself.

Sixty-six Jewish educators have been honored with a Covenant Award since the Foundation established the citation in 1991. Each will receive \$36,000, and each of their institutions will receive \$5,000.

Siân Gibby is an editor at the John D. Calandra Italian American Institute and the copy editor for Tablet Magazine. She has been a BJ member for eight years.

MEKUSHARIM

The Renee Kaufman Lecture Series and Mekusharim: Celebrating the Riches of Yiddish

By Nancy Freireich and Sheila Bleckner

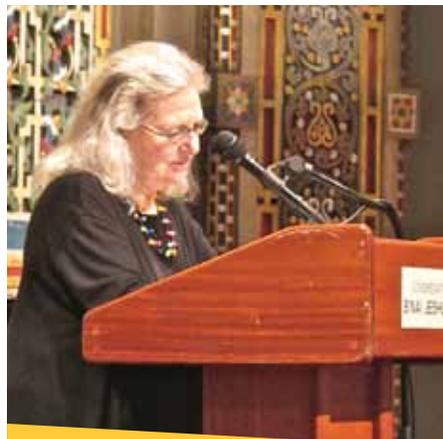
According to conventional wisdom, Yiddish—the soulful voice of many of our grandparents, their parents, and *their* parents—has been consigned to oblivion. But if Yiddish Literary Salon on May 16 is any indicator, interest in Yiddish is strong, as more than 100 people gathered to enjoy an evening filled with music, learning, laughter, literature and love of *mame loshen* (the mother tongue).

Welcoming everyone into the sanctuary were the joyous and haunting sounds of such gems as “Tumbalalaika” and “Oifem Pripitchik,” performed by Basya Schecter and Avi Fox-Rosen, who also serenaded the audience with a musical interlude midway through the program.

To open the celebration, Jeremy Dauber, Atran Associate Professor of Yiddish Language, Literature, and Culture at Columbia University, brought both scholarly insights and humor to his discussion of “Why Read Yiddish Literature (Now)?”

Most evocative for many was the music of the Yiddish language itself, heard as Ellen Perecman read the poems “The Joy of the Yiddish Word,” by Jacob Glatshetyn and “The Sweatshop,” by Morris Rosenfeld, and Asya Berger read “In the Morning,” also by Glatshetyn.

To capture the innocence of the shtetl as it followed the events of the venomous Dreyfus affair in Paris, Michael Kelberg dramatically rendered Sholem Aleichem’s short story “Dreyfus in Kasrilevke.” Rounding out the program were two earthy Midrashic poems—“Abraham and Sarah” and “The Patriarch Jacob Meets Rachel”—by the iconoclast Itzik Manger, delivered in English with theatrical *je ne sais quoi* by Rabbi Adam Roffman, one of this year’s BJ Rabbinic Fellows.



So, what did Professor Dauber offer as evidence in making his case? For starters, Sholem Aleichem’s *The Adventures of Menachem Mendel*, an epistolary novel about an eternal optimist. This work, Dauber says, is a cautionary tale about dreaming that recognizes the impossibility of not dreaming. Other evidence: Glückel of Hamelin’s memoirs, which show how one copes with deep personal loss from which there is no recovery but only accommodation and acceptance; Mani Leib’s poetic ballad “Ich Bin,” which reminds us to live with a song in one’s heart, even as the “high call of the muse” is countered by the “low whistle of the factory”; and, finally, Rabbi Nachman of Bratslav’s “Tale of the Seven Beggars.” For Nachman of Bratslav, Dauber says, there is a divine spark in everything—even stories—and the act of telling stories is actually itself a redemption. The essential fact of the world is separation and a longing for connection



that can be bridged only through tikkun, or repair.

Ultimately, the story itself wants us to interpret it, to connect with it, in all its layers of meaning and complexities. Like all great literature, Yiddish literature beckons us “to recognize it in ourselves and ourselves in it.” ■

Sheila Bleckner, co-chair of Mekusharim, is a volunteer at the Institute of Contemporary Psychotherapy. She enjoys study at Drisha, NYC museums, theater, and the opera. She loves spending time with her three amazing grandchildren.

Nancy Freireich has been a member for more than 20 years. When not volunteering for Mekusharim or studying at Drisha, she is caring for her most delicious grandson, Gabriel.

The annual Renee Kaufman Lecture is sponsored by the Renee Kaufman Memorial Fund, established to honor the life of Renee Kaufman, and to help sustain Jewish family life. B’nai Jeshurun thanks the Kaufman Memorial Fund for its generous support of this event.

From left: The sanctuary with speaker Jeremy Dauber; Asya Berger; Basya Schecter and Avi Fox-Rosen.

PHOTOS: NORMAN BLECKNER



L'dor V'dor— It's a Mother/Daughter Thing

By Lilli Platt

Emily Weinger has been a member of B'nai Jeshurun and Tze'irim since 2007. She is a social worker for SelfHelp, sister to Allison and Seth Weinger, and my daughter. As BJ has become a very important part of my community and my life, I'm very proud to interview my daughter as an active young member of BJ.

Attending the Brandeis School, a Solomon Schechter school on Long Island, Emily always felt a strong sense of Jewish identity. She studied in Israel at Neve Yerushalayim and took classes through MEOR while at George Washington University, went to Israel on a Birthright trip, then went on for her Masters of Social Work degree at Fordham University School of Social Work, attending one semester in Innsbruck, Austria, on a Human Rights Fellowship. But probably her strongest identification was through her grandmother, my mother, a Holocaust survivor.

After moving to Manhattan from Long Island, Emily wasn't quite sure if she would join a synagogue or what kind of job she wanted. She came to BJ one Friday night with me, felt much of the same feelings she felt in Israel, and started coming regularly with me. After some time, she was asked to join the Education and Communications Team, a membership subcommittee co-chaired by Joe Antenson and Jeremy Hamburg, which led to her involvement as a volunteer.

As we both agree, some of the best things about volunteering are the people we meet. Coming from all over the country and the world, people of all ages and many different backgrounds yet, they all share a

vision: to make BJ a more welcoming place for members and prospective members; to make it a real community for its membership. Although Emily and I are both volunteers on membership committees, we each focus on separate areas; she works with communication and public relations, and I work on the Kabbalat Panim Hosts and Bikkur Holim. Emily interviewed a member as a Yasher Koah profile for the *Kol Jeshurun* weekly newsletter—a way to highlight members and a way to get to know one another, and I meet groups who are visiting BJ—each adding another dimension to our BJ experience.

Last December Emily got a job working at SelfHelp, a community social-service organization. The interviewer told Emily she was absolutely perfect for the position: a case worker serving Holocaust survivors in Brooklyn. SelfHelp is a UJA-Federation organization that cares for more Holocaust survivors than any other organization in North America.

Emily's relationship with survivors is a natural one; they remind her of her beloved grandmother, Hanna Platt, with whom Emily was very close. Emily states that she sees her job as twofold: One part is to ensure that the survivors' needs are being met, and two is to allow them to tell their story. She listens carefully, as their stories are important—to them, to Emily and to successive generations. She didn't think of herself as a Third Generation (grandchildren of survivors), but in hearing the familiar stories with their emphasis on resilience and survival, Emily realized that those are the qualities her grandmother spoke about



Emily Weinger and Lilli Platt.

and lived her life by. In fact, she says that resilience is also a quality she admires in the other strong women in her family.

L'dor V'dor—from her grandmother to me, from both of us to her, she hopes she too incorporates those qualities in living her life. ■

Lilli Platt, BJ member and active volunteer within the Membership and Bikkur Holim committees, has been coming to BJ every Shabbat since she first walked in one summer Friday evening in 2007.

High Holy Days RABBI J. ROLANDO MATALON continued from page 1

What must we repeat and what must we change? Repetition and change are each an abyss on either side of Rabbi Nahman of Bratzlav's "gesher tzar me'od," the very narrow bridge of life. Yet, there is no alternative to the bridge if we choose to embrace life in all its reality and fullness. We pray on the High Holy Days that God

allow us to journey on the bridge of life, give us the courage to ask the real questions, and the faith and discernment to respond. May we all be inscribed and sealed in the Book of Life.

Leshanah Tovah Tikatevu veTehatemu. ■

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YOUTH & FAMILY EDUCATION

Mom Was Right, Yet Again! The 6th Grade Retreat

By Noa Mintz

Right before the 6th grade retreat last Fall, my mom gave me a talk about how I had to attend even though I didn't want to, and she insisted I would have a great time. Since my mom is always right about everything, I hoped that for once I could prove her wrong. But that wasn't the case.

On Friday night, after a delicious Shabbat dinner, we were split into small groups with our parents and a BJ staff member. In these small groups, our parents talked about something that made them proud of who we are. This activity was meant to give us a moment to remember with our parents. That night, I had the time of my life. My friends and I talked and laughed about our lives, which is something we don't always have time for in the city, and went upstairs in our little house and invited the girls that we did not know to join us. This Shabbat night was the springboard of a close relationship among six girls.

The next morning, we woke up to a few options: Tefillah Boot Camp, Hiking, Yoga, and more. My friends and I went to yoga, where we tied in events in the Torah-to-yoga moves. After, we had a breathtaking Shabbat service with lots of "BJ ruah." The events that we had later that day were amazing and unforgettable. Besides the fun icebreakers that we played to get to

know our peers in the B'nai Mitzvah process better, we participated in an activity that literally—with Velcro "values cards"—helped us prioritize what's important to us as we become Jewish adults. Everyone had different opinions, and I was so interested to hear everybody's point of view. Because we were out of Manhattan, everything was peaceful and relaxing. We got the opportunity to speak to our parents about anything we wanted before our B'nai Mitzvah, because we were able to step away from the hectic rush we encounter in our daily lives.

The most meaningful part was when Felicia blessed each of us under a huppa and took our personalities and traits and tied them in to our Torah portion. I was so sad when we had Havdalah, because I wanted to keep the Shabbat spirit for longer. In the end, I had a great time, and unfortunately, my mom was right yet again! ■

Noa Mintz is a lifelong BJ member who volunteers at Tot Shabbat and Children's Services and the BJ/SPSA Shelter and will become a Bat Mitzvah in January. She attends Trinity School and is entering 7th grade in the fall. Currently she is coordinating a knitting project for teens in Sderot that relieves stress and creates blankets.

“We got the opportunity to speak to our parents about anything we wanted before our B'nai Mitzvah, because we were able to step away from the hectic rush we encounter in our daily lives.”



PHOTOS: EMILY WALSH

Ties That Bind

By Shari Kenner

the theme of this year's BJ Women's Retreat was "Vaani Tefilati Lekhha." This is usually translated as "I pray to You (G-d)," but our study booklet suggested an alternate translation: "I am My Prayer for You." Another text, from the Talmud in Berakhot states: "One should always pray in a house that has windows ..."

What is prayer? How do I see prayer? Who am I when I pray? Who do I become, and what do I do after I pray? Are those windows in the house of prayer to let the light, G-d, the world in, or to encourage us to send our prayers, and ourselves outward to the world, as well as "upwards" to G-d?

Sunday morning, Rabbi Felicia talked about the prayer when tefillin are put on: G-d says: "I will betroth you to Me forever ... with justice, compassion, mercy, faith." The tefillin straps are bound around ones arm, fingers, and on one's head.

This was the 10th BJ Women's Retreat. I've been blessed to have been at all of them. They have had a profound effect on me. While I love davening at BJ with the whole community every Shabbat throughout the year, I find hearing the women of our community's voices singing together during our annual woman's retreat quite beautiful, ethereal. It brings both a smile and tears to my eyes at the same time. There is a unity, a purity, to the voices—all seem to sing as one. I will stop during the prayers, close my eyes, and just listen. I find myself being carried away on the soulful melodies to another place, beyond that moment in time.

A piece we read by Vikki Hollander about women's sacred time: "We who caretake life. We who are healers. We who are doers. We who mother the world. It's time for us. ... We make space for ourselves to be ... A space of renewal ... So we ... can emerge ... bearing our light ... to better repair our world. ... A space to sing and dance...to laugh and cry, to listen and to share ... to renew and to touch life."

The retreat is a wonderful opportunity to talk, share, study, and engage with other

BJ members on many levels in a relaxed manner, in a cocoon, separated from intrusions by the outside world, in nature, away from cell phones, computers, traffic, TV. To refocus on what is really important in life—other people, relationships, spirituality, all so easy to lose track of in our busy lives.

The concept of "binding" of the tefillin straps becomes a metaphor for connecting, tying us to each other, as well as to G-d and community, in a deeper, more profound way than we sometimes have time or quiet for in the city. I found I was able to reconnect with women there whose presence I have always enjoyed, but didn't often get a chance to talk with among the throngs of those present at



bigger BJ events in the city or at services when most of the time was spent in prayer. I saw sides of people I hadn't gotten the chance to see previously in New York when we were involved in working on concrete tasks in our city lives.

A text we learned previously in Midrash Bemidbar (Numbers) Rabbah 8:2 talks about when a person builds a house, he/she builds it so the windows are wider on the inside, but narrower on the outside so the light can come in and expand, and brighten the inside, but when the Temple was built the windows were narrow on the inside and wide on the outside so the world could be illuminated.

Jay Michaelson, in an article in our retreat texts, said: "The mind—theology,

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explanations, rationalizations—is not why we pray; the heart is."

After we have engaged our hearts, sung together, prayed individually and as a group, made space for ourselves in retreat, renewed, studied, laughed, and cried

together, talked, listened, connected with each other; after a wonderful weekend at the BJ Women's Retreat, the time then comes to go home, refreshed, taking back with us what we have learned, open up the Temple windows and try to illuminate the world. ■

Shari Kenner has been attending, lovingly, BJ for about the past 13 years. She is a social worker who works with people with developmental disabilities and psychiatric diagnoses and writes occasionally. She is indebted to the Rabbis and other teachers who have spoken at BJ for expanding her understanding of the beauty of Judaism, and to the community and her friends in it for adding to her life on so many levels.

COMMUNITY RETREAT

Shabbat, Schmoozing, Shuffleboard, Swimming, Shahrut, Study, Skit, Scavenger Hunt, Shoshi, and S'mores: And That's Just the S's

By Chuck Gold and Anne Kohn

"roly, I think we need to make the retreat last till Tuesday, at least. A weekend is just too short!"
— Sami Gold, age 8

After driving up historic Route 17, as my wife, Anne, explained to our boys what a bungalow colony was and how she had fond memories of summers in the Catskills when she was their age, we arrived at Block & Hexter just in time for Kabbalat Shabbat.

If you were to close your eyes and imagine a place with blooming flowers and beautifully manicured lawns in the midst of ancient tall trees, and a wilderness with cozy cabins facing an expansive breathtaking lake before you, you have now arrived at our BJ Getaway.



We quickly changed into our Shabbat whites and slowly decompressed from our hectic New York City lifestyle as we gathered on the lawn for the opening welcome circle surrounded by friends (and soon-to-be friends) who came to spend Shabbat together with Roly, Ari, Jonah, and Shoshi. As I looked around the circle we were touched to see every aspect of our community represented here—young, old, single members, families, vatikim¹ as well as new members to our community. As we listened to words encouraging us to let go of the stresses of our week and sang songs,

led by Ari on accordion, we were slowly transported to a place of reflection and relaxation to welcome in our Shabbat—BJ style!

... We were touched to see every aspect of our community represented here—young, old, single members, families, vatikim¹ as well as new members to our community."

We took our intentions and expressed them in a highly spirited service, which lasted through a joyous dinner, complete with a delicious meal prepared by B&H staff. The singing resumed and we had time to catch up with old friends and meet new friends from our BJ community. We had the luxury of schmoozing and socializing with adults while our two "active" boys, Sami & Jake, ran and played on their own with the other kids, which was "priceless"!

Roly introduced the learning for this Shabbat—reconnecting with Kavannah (intention). Together with Jonah and Ari we prayed, sang, and discussed how we could make our prayer more meaningful, through song and participation in the community.

(FYI: As a result of a BJ retreat some 17 years ago a group of us formed a Havdalah group that met for many years and continues to get together on special occasions, such as BJ retreats! Ten of our original members attended this retreat as well!!!)

Late Friday night we had a unique experience: our first ever BJ's Rebbe's Tisch. With plenty of good alcohol, we sat up late into the night talking, singing, and debating Shabbat and what we all are looking for.

Unlike services in New York, here, because we were a small group of 110, Roly was able



to interject insights and learning throughout the service, and we were able to participate by sharing our thoughts and comments with the group.

Along with the teachings one of the highlights of all BJ retreats is the chance to learn new songs and niggunim to reinvigorate our prayers and enhance the kavannah. This Shabbat was no exception. Roly walked us through some



1. In modern Hebrew the word *vatik* (plural *vatikim*) means veteran, old-timer, senior. Originally *vatik* meant experienced, steady, earnest. God is described as *vatik* in some prayers, and a Talmudic source has God saying that He has made Israel *vatik* among the nations.

beautiful new tunes and harmonies. Our children participated in their own service creatively led by Shoshi. The kids also worked on a skit they presented to the grown-ups—with much passion and merriment—during Minḥa services. But mostly, they enjoyed running around, playing Capture the Flag, Ping-Pong, swimming, boating, and shuffleboard.

In the afternoon, for those who weren't taking a Shabbat nap or a walk around the lake (or swimming across it!), there was a highly spirited baseball game with adults and kids alike.

For us one of the most moving moments of any retreat is the Havdalah service. Together as a community we sang and danced as we said farewell to another Shabbat.

And then we all looked forward to the BONFIRE! with all the singing and s'mores you can eat! Thanks to the beautiful guitar playing by Todd Chanko and Matthew Arons, we all sang late into the night!

Sunday morning we slowly made our way to the dining room for breakfast that included make your own omelets.

Following Shaḥarit services we wrapped up our study sessions and were all invited to join in a Scavenger Hunt, expertly crafted by Penny Arons and Sue Salwen. It was quite a scene to watch young and old race to be the first to collect all the clues!!!

The end of the weekend came too quickly for many of us as we gathered once more



on the lawn to sing and dance and say our farewells to old and new friends—but not before enjoying a sumptuous barbecue lunch.

Anne and I remember years ago when retreats were the highlight on the BJ calendar. Back then, if you didn't get your application in the minute you received it, you were doomed to be on the waiting list!

After such an amazing weekend, with rekindled energy inspired by Roly, Ari, Jonah, and Shoshi's teachings and singing and, the kavannah felt by all who were there, there's a good chance we will end up on the waiting list for the next retreat if we don't send in our applications right away—and risk missing this very special spiritual time with our community! ■

Chuck Gold has been a BJ member for almost 20 years. He is an optometrist with two

offices in upper Manhattan. He is the founder and president of Luz Para Los Ojos, a nonprofit organization working to strengthen eye health in Upper Manhattan and the Dominican Republic. He serves on the New York State Medical Advisory Board and is a Board Member of the State of New York School of Optometry. He recently was named New York State Optometrist of the year.

Anne Kohn has been involved in BJ since 1993—as a member, volunteer, Coordinator of Singles Programming, and as the past Director of Programming. When not doing volunteer work at her sons' school, she is a psychotherapist in private practice on the Upper West Side. Anne is also a trustee on the Board at Beit Rabban, the school her boys attend. Chuck and Anne met at BJ and now attend Shabbat morning Children's Services with their boys, Sami, 8 and Jake, 5.

PHOTOS: AMANDA SCHANFIELD EXCEPT P.12, BOTTOM: HARRIET R. GOREN

Generations and Genders continued from page 3

handles cases about check fraud, credit card fraud, and auto theft. Sports play an important part after a busy day at work. Season-ticket holders to the Rangers and the Yankees, Jeremy and his father have also played summer softball with the BJ team for several years. You can also find them playing ice hockey together at rinks in Montclair, N.J.

Jeremy has developed and moderated dating workshops to guide people about online and off-line dating. He speaks passionately about his work with

Adaptations, a program of the JCC in Manhattan, for young people with learning disabilities, Asperger's syndrome, and other special needs. He is also working with Adaptations to develop a dating website for high-functioning people with Asperger's and autism, along with a related blog and discussion forum for singles with special needs, their parents, and educators.

Because most of Jeremy's involvement at BJ has been behind the scenes through his various leadership roles and personal relationships, he is excited to be one of this

year's Simḥat Torah honorees, especially because it's his favorite night of the year at BJ. He is training for this honor, which will be the only time he's been close to a Torah at B'nai Jeshurun, aside from writing a letter with the sofer when we commissioned a Torah in 2005.

You can bear witness as Nancy and Jeremy escort us through the end and beginning cycles of the Torah on Simḥat Torah on Tuesday, October 9. ■

LIMUD

Hevruta for All

By Anne Millman

Some years ago, at a BJ retreat, I heard our Scholar-in-Residence, Prof. Ari Elon, describe the special relationship that developed between Resh Lakhish and his study partner, Rabbi Yoḥanan. Rabbi Yoḥanan had rescued Resh Lakhish from a life of banditry and, through his devotion to Torah study in hevruta, transformed him into one of the great thinkers of the rabbinic period.

Elon was fascinated by the all-male society that these early rabbis had created around one-to-one Torah study and the intense relationships it fostered. As I listened, I too became fascinated and wondered if, as a woman, I could experience such intense interaction. And, while I was not a bandit, I identified with Resh Lakhish as someone far removed from Torah study who, nonetheless, started down the path that ultimately brought him to pre-eminence in the field.

I decided to find my own study partner and give it a try. But how? Would I have the time? Would my meager knowledge be enough to start? Would I be able to

find someone who shared my interest and willingness to commit?

The answer was “yes.” I found my study partner in my havurah. We were equally short on knowledge but willing to try. We decided to study over the telephone in an almost daily morning conversation before heading to work. We made the time for what was usually a 15-minute talk and soon found ourselves eagerly looking forward it. We decided to study the weekly parashah broken down into the seven aliyot. She brought to our hevruta her knowledge of psychology, and I brought my understanding of literature. Each day we discussed one or two aliyot, offering our individual perspectives—questions, confusions, insights, anything that illuminated the text in some way.

This was a far cry from a few minutes of hevruta we had experienced at various BJ programs. As the year continued, we realized that we were probing into ourselves, discovering thoughts we hardly knew we had, making connections to the past and aspects of our lives that would never had surfaced without this daily exchange. And, of course, we came to services with a completely different orientation to the Torah reading, informed as it was by our own prior probing.

When the year was over, we felt unbelievably enriched and didn’t want to stop. We continued with our morning telephone hevruta for

Each day we discussed one or two aliyot, offering our individual perspectives—questions, confusions, insights, anything that illuminated the text in some way.”

another year. This time we used different translations, which opened our eyes to the interpretations implicit in any English version of this ancient and complex text. Slowly, my Hebrew skills improved, and I found myself referring to the original language to see what I could learn from it.

Our second year of hevruta was just as wonderful but quite different from the first. We were not the same people, and our changing lives made us see the text in new ways. As our study moved us beyond our previous comfort zones, we watched as we become bolder in other ways. At the end of the second year, we were ready to move on, though we treasured our long study together.

Since then, I have had other study partners. Each time, we conducted our hevruta over the telephone. Instead of daily talks, these occurred several times a week. My later partners had much better Hebrew skills than I had, but my own Hebrew ability continued to improve. Gradually, I tried the daily readings in Hebrew, though often referring to the translation for clarification.

I heartily recommend hevruta to everyone. Your connection to Torah will deepen immeasurably and the friendships with your study partners, as Ari Elon understood, will have a special depth and richness.

Anne Millman is a retired teacher and staff developer; a union activist; a lifelong learner; and the author of 8 books and countless articles. A BJ member since 1995, she co-chairs the BJ/SPSA Homeless Shelter. ■



PHOTO: HARRIET R. GOREN

KOL HADASH new voice • SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2012

The *Kol Hadash* is published every other month. We would love to print your stories and articles about BJ! For submission guidelines, contact communications@bj.org. All material is the property of B'nai Jeshurun and cannot be reprinted without permission.



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Designer: Harriet R. Goren

Mazal Tov

To the following members and their families (through July 13):

- Cindy Wachenheim and Hal Bacharach on the birth of their son, Keston Aaron Bacharach.
- Sawaka Norii-Katz and Michael Katz on the birth of their son, Jonathan Jacob Sei Katz.
- Susan, Stephen, Amy, and Joanna Samuels on the marriage of their daughter and sister, Alicia, to Eric Rosenstock.
- Steven Dane and Olesya Bruneau on their marriage.
- Jennifer Hirsch on being awarded a 2012 Fellowship by the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation in the Natural Sciences category.
- Martha Ginsberg, Dan Rosenfeld, and Edna Ginsberg on the marriage of Martha and Dan.
- Elana, Louis, Noah, and Carly Klein on the birth of their daughter and sister, Margot Violet.
- Farrah Lehman and Mike Den on the birth of their daughter, Alexa Bethany Den.
- Allison Weinger, Lilli Platt, and Emily Weinger on the marriage of Allison to Felippo Miniati.
- Michelle, Paul, Matthew, and Suzanna Grobman on Suzanna's marriage to Travis Weiss.
- Peninnah Schram on her grandson, Ilan Zafrany, becoming a Bar Mitzvah.
- Jonathan Green and Hilary Thomas on their marriage.
- BJ Staff member Amanda Schanfield on her engagement to Jason Schwartz.
- Karina Zilberman and Peter Geffen for each receiving the Covenant Foundation Award for innovation, inspiration and impact on Jewish education and community.
- Judith Trachtenberg and Renie Rutchick on their marriage.
- BJ Hebrew School student Noa Mintz and her family for launching a knitting club to help relieve stress for kids in Sderot, Israel as reported by Arutz Sheva at www.israelnationalnews.com.
- Hilda Greenberg and her entire family on her 90th birthday.
- Rabbi Felicia Sol, Aiden Sol, and Roberta and Richard Sol on the birth of their daughter, sister, and granddaughter, Sivan Hallel.
- Former MTM Rabbinic Fellow Michelle Dardashti on the birth of her daughter, Miya Shai.
- Gail and William Cohen on the naming of their granddaughter, Bella Eve Schroeder.

Condolences (through July 13)

The community of B'nai Jeshurun mourns the death of our member Nina Levin, and we extend our sincere condolences to Marvin Levin, Jeanne, Shane, Marshall, and Ross Lipson and their entire family.

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

- Rabbi Mychal Springer and Jonathan, Ariella, and Avital Rosen on the death of Mychal's father, James Springer.
- Meryl Zegarek on the death of her mother, Shirley Zegarek.
- Michael Salzman on the death of his mother, Eleanor Salzman.
- Shulamit and Chad Elson on the death of Shulamit's mother, Josephine Levine.
- Joshua Isay, his wife Cathie Levine Isay, and their children Benji and Ruby Isay on the death of Joshua's father, Richard Isay.
- Manal and Taylor Alimari on the death of their father and grandfather, Murad Alimari.



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Committees & Services:

Accounts Payable.....227
Accounts Receivable.....237
Adult Education Information 233
Bar/Bat Mitzvah223
Bikkur Holim.....233
BJ Reads391
Communications.....275
Community Programs255
Conversion261
Daily Minyan.....232
Development
& Donation Information228

88th Street Rental.....255
Family Activities: Hotline.....318
Hakhnasat Or^him.....255
Havurot.....255
Hevra Kadisha 233
Homeless Shelter212-339-4250
Interfaith Committee 379
Kiddush Scheduling.....255
Kol Jeshurun.....275
Kol Hadash.....275
Life Cycles.....233
Lunch Program.....338
Mekusharim.....224

Membership Information.....224
Ralph Bunche School
Partnership 301
Social Action259
Teen Programming.....242
Torah/Haftarah Reading.....232
Tze'irim 250
Ushering.....233
Visiting Groups.....250
Volunteer Information255
Youth & Family Education225

Rabbis:

J. Rolando Matalon
Marcelo R. Bronstein
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Hazzan and Music Director:

Ari Priven

BJ Rabbinic Fellows:

Jonah Geffen, x262
Adam Roffman, x261

Cantorial Intern and Teen Educator:

Shoshi Rosenbaum, x242

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Steve Goldberg, x266

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Director of Social Action/ Social Justice:

Channa Camins, x259

Director of Events:

Guy Felixbrodt, x255

Director of Development:

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