
Tikvah Talk

Vol. 32 Iss. 5

Congregation B'nai Tikvah Walnut Creek, CA

January 2013

From Where I Stand

By Rabbi Raphael Asher



Lying Fallow

Mitigating any guilt I might have for taking a sabbatical and neither going to Israel nor writing the great American novel, I am reminded that the sabbatical in an agricultural context was to let the land lie fallow. Sometimes people need to shut all systems down to soak up fresh nutrients for the next heyday.

I freely admit I'll be following the sun with a conference in Palm Springs and a visit to see (daughter) Mira in New Orleans (post Mardi Gras) in March. For the rest of my time I'll take my cue from the 2 Jewish holidays I will miss in this year's Temple cycle. Tu B'Shevat is a reminder that the best time for planting is in the dead of winter. Any books I read in January and February may be seeds for sermons in September. The hilarity of Purim is also a good reminder that the month of Adar (February 10 – March 10) comes with the prescription to allow for some joy-boosters to combat any seasonal affective disorders.

I'll be back in the loop for the Congregational Seder Tuesday, March 26. In the meantime I'm very pleased that Rabbi Jerry Levy will be a regular rabbinic presence while I'm away. He is already familiar with our congregation and is more than willing to go beyond his contractual coverage to be a presence for any pastoral or family issues. Let me also thank Cantor Chabon who will field any Jewish concerns you may have while I'm away.

I look forward to seeing what new seedlings and opportunities await us all in the Spring.

Reflections...

By Cantor Jennie Chabon



Happy (secular) New Year!

Every year, I feel strange wishing people a Happy New Year at the beginning of January. It's almost as if I am violating Rosh Hashanah—or my observance of it—if I don't differentiate between the two holidays somehow. So I'm stuck with my awkward greeting: Happy (secular) New Year! Kind of takes the fun out of it, doesn't it?

Rosh Hashanah really is my New Year in a deep and meaningful way. I don't make resolutions to lose weight or exercise more or eat less sugar. I don't even really think much about the future at all. Rather, I spend my time contemplating the past year, and how I want to learn and grow from it. It really is an accounting of my soul.

The secular New Year always feels like a letdown compared to the intensity of Rosh Hashanah. I have almost never celebrated New Years Eve in a satisfying way, perhaps because I know it's supposed to be a really big deal, but my celebration never matches my expectations. It certainly doesn't help that in recent years, Steve and I are asleep by 10:30!

This year, I decided to allow myself to re-imagine New Years Eve not as a dim and shallow version of Rosh Hashanah but as an entirely different kind of holiday. A holiday that I would celebrate not as a cantor or even as a Jew, but just as a woman, a friend, a wife, a mother. A holiday when I could allow myself to indulge in some material aspirations. After all, couldn't we all aspire to healthier, cleaner eating and more exercise? Or more time with friends? Or more date nights? Perhaps not all significant moments in life need to be marked by the deepest of soul searching. Or perhaps, even more radically, they don't need to be marked by the desire for any change at all. Maybe 2013 can be the year of accepting and being grateful for things just as they are.

May 2013 be for us all a year of health and happiness and gratitude.

Happy New Year!

Congregation B'nai Tikvah is a Reform congregation which, through personal attention, provides to its members an extended family. The congregation fulfills its members' spiritual needs, fosters their Jewish identity, promotes the perpetuation of Judaism and its members' Jewish education, and encourages a commitment to full participation in Temple life.

Raphael W. Asher, *Rabbi*
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Shabbat Shira!

On January 26th, we will observe *Shabbat Shira* here at B'nai Tikvah, the Sabbath of Song. On this Shabbat we read the story of the crossing of the Sea of Reeds, when the Jewish people finally triumphed over their Egyptian oppressors by virtue of the miracle of the splitting of the waters. This passage from Exodus (15:1-18) is called *Shirat Hayam*, The Song at the Sea. It is a magnificent piece of biblical poetry recited by the Jewish people after their triumphant victory.

On *Shabbat Shira*, we celebrate this victory with song. The Song at the Sea is sung with a special chant unique to this passage of Torah and additional beautiful music is added to the service to contribute to the joy of the day. Please join us Saturday, January 26th at 10 am to celebrate *Shabbat Shira*!

Tikvah Talk

Tikvah Talk is published 11 times a year and is distributed free of charge to anyone expressing an interest in Congregation B'nai Tikvah. All news items are due the 10th of each month. Please submit articles electronically, if possible, to Congregation B'nai Tikvah, at office@tikvah.org (subject *Tikvah Talk*) or by mail to 25 Hillcroft Way, Walnut Creek, CA 94597, (925) 933-5397.

President's Message

By John Rubenfeld

One of the most important jobs as a President is to find your successor. Sometimes it can be challenging, but not this time!! I'm very proud and excited to announce that Harry Wittenberg has graciously decided to put his name on the ballot to be our next President. Although only knowing him for just a few years, I've quickly come to appreciate and respect his wisdom, patience, and passion.

Some of you know that Harry led the resurgence of creating a wide-variety of programs/events for our male members which led to the creation of "Men of CBT." If you recall my last article, Harry and the Men of CBT held three events in November. Not to be outdone, they sponsored a thought-provoking discussion last month led by Jhos Singer. In addition to the "Men of CBT," Harry has been involved in nearly all of our major fundraisers (Summer of Love, Havanah Nights, Texas Hold'em and more). I couldn't end my praise for Harry without mentioning he is the leader of the renowned band, The Tikvah Tones. The best way to describe Harry is he is a "renaissance" man and with the upcoming retirement of Rabbi Asher, I can't think of a better person to lead us. Please join me in congratulating Harry on his new journey!

I want to thank Amy Lichtenstein and her committee for their limitless work on putting together our upcoming annual fundraiser. Most of you know it's not easy coordinating a party for 10 to 15 people, let alone 125. Save the date - March 23rd!! I love their theme "A Night on Broadway." It attracts the young and the young at heart. Some can go back to the 60's and remember "West Side Story," "Fiddler on the Roof" and "Grease," while our contemporary members can appreciate the instant classics, "The Lion King," "Jersey Boys" and "Mama Mia." Come enjoy the music and dance the night away while raising funds for our community. The best part - no tie-dye or go-go boots.

As we continue our path of getting to know our Past Presidents, we certainly must acknowledge our sixth President, Lynne Groff, who was president from 1993 - 1995. She and husband Al, along with children Sarah, Allison, and Zachary, moved to Virginia in 1999. Lynne is often out this way visiting her CBT friends and still enjoys receiving Tikvah Talk. On behalf of our members, Lynne, thank you!

Our 7th President was Florence Specland and she and I have a very special "Presidential" bond. Both of us had the honor to see our boys read from the Torah as they were Bar Mitzvah'd during our term. Even though her term ended 13 years ago, Florence is still active in many ways: she and her husband, David, are seen at many of our fundraisers, always willing to help in many of our programs and events, and are great ambas-

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Turn It, Turn It, Turn It Again

By Phil Hankin, Director of Education

January 1, 2013. First day of the first month of the Gregorian (secular) calendar. We are taught that this is the time to reflect upon the year that was and to set goals that we can reach within the year that has begun. But we are Jewish and we also have another calendar that allows us to function in this manner. And better yet, we are parents and we are slaves to the school-year calendar. We also might be financial professionals and have to function on a fiscal calendar. So how do we balance all of these various artificial conformities of time? When you celebrate a holiday on one calendar how does it affect the others? When you take "time off" to go away on a trip or vacation, which calendar takes precedent?

As the director of the Religious School at CBT, I must be conscious of many calendars. My first guiding principle is to follow the Jewish calendar. After all, am I not running a Jewish educational program? When there is a Jewish holiday that conflicts with one of the school district calendars or the Gregorian calendar, do I ignore the fact that attendance might wane because, for example, the week of Pesach does not match up with Spring Break of the Mt. Diablo School District? How and when do we celebrate Purim? Do I close school because Halloween falls on one of our midweek classes? Should the school year for CBT's Religious School begin after Labor Day and end before Memorial Day, or should school begin in late August and end in mid-June?

What is the ultimate goal of the Religious Educational Program at CBT? To quote our mission statement:

Mission of CBT's Religious School:

To instill a sense of holiness and belonging as each child engages in the quest to deepen their Jewish literacy.

The Goal of CBT's Religious School Curriculum is to produce learned and committed Jews who are...:

- Proud of their heritage
- Excited about being Jewish
- Familiar with rituals and customs associated with Shabbat and holidays
- Comfortable being both participants and leaders in communal prayer services
- Wholly respectful of others
- Aware of the historical bond between them and *Eretz Yisrael* (Land of Israel)
- Literate in the Hebrew language
- Wrestlers with God, Torah, and Mitzvot
- Strong supporters of lifelong learning

In order to do "engage each child in the quest to deepen their Jewish literacy," does this only happen on Sundays and Tuesdays from September to May? Of course the answer is no. The Religious School teachers, Madrichim, and I are not here to

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Sisterhood News

By Rayna Ravitz, Sisterhood President

We had a very fun Chanukah party with lots of wonderful food. We made 10 no-sew blankets for Children's Hospital in Oakland, collected 3 sacks full of Toys for Tots and did a lot of schmoozing. Thank you a million times to Laurie Rabinowitz who pre-cut the material for the blankets. That was fantastic!

Sunday, January 6 – Trip to Contemporary Jewish Museum

Exhibit of "The Radical Camera 1936-1951." Docent led tour beginning at 11:00 am.

We are privileged to see this wonderful exhibit of work by the members of the New York Photo League.

We'll meet at Walnut Creek BART. Please let me know if you would like to drive and how many you can accommodate. The cost will be \$15 (for entry and docent fees). RSVP to Susan Friedman at: SusanBFriedman@aol.com.

Friday, January 18 - Sisterhood Shabbat 7:30 pm

Our speaker that night is Jonathan Carey from BlueStar, the organization that is educating the next generation of Israel advocates and leaders. Sisterhood has selected this organization as the CBT Tzedakah box recipient for this quarter. (see pg 14)

Tuesday, January 22 - Ladies night out! 6:30 pm at LaSen Bistro at Todos Santos Sq in Concord.

RSVP to Natalie Fay at fay.natalie@gmail.com.

Sunday, February 10 – Lecture “Subversive Scripture, Tales from the Bible that’ll make you say ‘What’” 10am

See description of this lecture on page 6.

Wednesday, February 20 - Book Sisters @ 6:30 pm

"The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks" by Rebecca Skloot

Thursday, February 28, – “Singing in the Rain” Leshner Center

I have reserved tickets for \$40 each (regular is \$55) and will be ordering more. Please let me know if you are interested in this by January 10.

Tuesday, March 12 - Jewish Film Festival and Dinner PARIS MANHATTAN. CineArts Dome in Pleasant Hill

Sunday, March 17 – Women’s Seder 4pm Social Hall

Saturday, March 23 - “A Night on Broadway” Annual CBT Fundraiser

Last year we made or bought yummy desserts that were auctioned off successfully and have been asked to do that again. If you can help, let me know. Plan on attending a fun party.

Book Choices for later in the year:

"Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail" by Cheryl Strayed

"In the Garden of Beasts: Love, Terror, an American Family in Hitler's Berlin" by Erik Larson.

Social Action

By Tina Guterman, Social Action Chair

Thanks to everyone who donated to this year's Holiday Food Drive! This was our first year participating in this effort along with several other synagogues. Most successfully, the CBT community raised a total of \$2,336 for the Contra Costa Food Bank.

Upcoming:

Tu B'Shevat: CBT will be once again partnering with Walnut Creek Open Space for a planting event at Indian Valley Pond on Sunday January 27th from 10:00-1:00 in observance of Tu B'Shevat. If you need to leave early (to pick up your children from religious school, for example), that is fine. Please join us for this fun outdoor event which helps in the preservation of Walnut Creek Open Space.

Here are the details - We will meet at the end of Marshall Drive, where there is plenty of street parking, by 10:00 on 1/27 and walk about a quarter of a mile from there to Indian Pond.

Directions to Marshall Drive: From downtown Walnut Creek, drive out Ygnacio Valley Road to Homestead Ave. Turn right on Homestead Ave. and drive approximately 0.2 miles to Marshall Drive. (The first street on your left.) Turn left on Marshall Drive and drive 1.15 miles to end of the street at Indian Valley School.

DO YOU HAVE TIME TO HELP A CBT MEMBER ONCE IN A WHILE?

Chesed is a group of CBT members who help other members of our community when they are going through a difficult time. We might drop off meals, drive to doctor appointments, help grocery shop, babysit, etc. Sometimes we just go to visit.

This is how it works: you join our email list and when a need arises, a request is sent out for help. If you are able to help, you simply sign up on a website set up for this purpose, or let me know.

If you are interested in performing an act of kindness by lending someone a hand on occasion when the need arises, please join us! More volunteers are needed!

Thank you!

Lisa McLaurin

Chesed Coordinator

jjltmclaurin@sbcglobal.net

Contributions

GENERAL FUND

In memory of Ethel B. Dobin

Frances Dobin

In memory of Frank Lerner

Jill, Kevin, Danielle and Shane Wilk

In memory of David Margolit

Anna and Petr Loza

In memory Max Barat

Pat and Ken Barat

In memory of Lillian Weil

Judy Weil

In memory of Sue Rattner

In memory of Clara Medvin

Deborah and Alvin Medvin

In memory of Marilyn Siegel

In memory of Rudolph Fatula

Kathryn and Neil Siegel

RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

In memory of Fritzi Gewing

Anna and Walter Gewing

In memory of Jack Dauber

In memory of Lillian Dauber

In memory of Jack Levine

Paulette and Lewis Dauber

In honor of Miriam & Stan Newman becoming great grandparents

Shirley and Paul Kadden

In honor of Cami Cohen's Bat Mitzvah

Anita Heyman

CANTOR'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

In memory of Marti Ann Schwartz

Cindy Turner and Brian Schwartz

In honor of Cami Cohen's Bat Mitzvah

Anita Heyman

GENERAL FUND FOR CANTOR'S MUSICAL PROGRAMS

In memory of Bessie Lerner

In memory of Frank Lerner

Nessa and Robert Wilk

SOCIAL ACTION FUND

In memory of Leah Dorin Bettelman

In memory of Isadore Dorin

Jana and Leonard Dorin

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

In memory of Lawrence Shaw

Idelle Lipman

In memory of Harry Maslow

Michael Fischer

In memory of Gertrude Ravitz

Rayna and Richard Ravitz

Shalom Connection

Mazel Tov to:

Lance and Bob Canter on the marriage of their daughter, Beth, to Gal Sasson

Julie and Bob Miller on the birth of their daughter, Leah Melinda

Miriam and Stan Newman on the birth of great granddaughter Madelyn Rose Newman

Sally Jaspan on the birth of grandson, Stephen William Jaspan

On Friday, December 14th we honored our Founding Families during Shabbat services. Back row (l-r) David and Judy Niver, Nancy and Arthur Solomon, Debbie Usatin, Rabbi Asher, Marc Usatin, Art Korn, Greg van Buskirk and Sharon Kantor, Joel Friedman. Middle row: Chuck Eisner, Alan Scharlach, Irene Korn, Susan Friedman. Front row - Pat Eisner, Lynette Scharlach, Miriam and Stan Newman. Not pictured - Marcia and Harvey Maslin, Zaffy and Denis Welch, Stephany Houghton and Stevan Cavalier.

Please join the Men of CBT on Sunday, January 27th in the CBT library at 10am for an open discussion on topics of interest. The meeting will begin with a story I'd like to share of my attendance at Jewish Services in six different countries in Europe and the Far East. Join us for a nosh and some conversation.



Men of CBT who stayed for the picture after Jhos Singer's presentation

TU B'SHEVAT

The observance of Tu B'shvat has a long and varied history. The theme most commonly ascribed to the holiday today is the environment.

During the festival we consider our obligation to care for God's world and responsibility for sharing the fruits of God's earth with all. Often we plant trees during this time.

A growing tradition of special meals and seders have increased the awareness of the holiday.

Kabbalist of the 16th century developed a Tu B'shvat seder based off the Passover seder to celebrate the holiday..

Four glasses of wine were served with a sampling of fruits and nuts belonging to specific groups.-

Fruits and nuts with a hard outside and edible inside,

Fruits with soft exteriors and an inedible inside,

Fruits that are entirely edible,

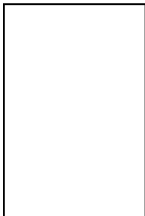
Fruits that are invisible to the eye and are enjoyed by smell.

Please join us for our special oneg where we will enjoy these varied tastes and celebrate the holiday as a community.

Friday, January 25

Service time 6:30 pm.

Learn with Jhos Singer



Subversive scripture, Tales from the Bible that'll make you say:

"What the...!?!?"

**Sisterhood invites all - Sunday, February 10 at 10 am
(NOTE DATE CHANGE!)**

Years ago I was teaching a 6th grade religious school class at a large, liberal synagogue Hebrew school. We got to the story of Lot and his daughters and, since it deals with somewhat sensitive themes, I decided to alert the parents of my students that we would be studying a slightly off-color subject in the upcoming week. An uproar ensued. The parents were incensed and at least one parent insisted that what I was teaching couldn't possibly derive from the Torah.

The rabbi of the congregation assured them that it was indeed from the Torah. This episode in my career led me to compile a series of teachings that are often skipped over, ignored, or otherwise swept under the rug. In this class we will pull them out of their dank caves and examine them in the light of day, proving that there is a lot more to the Torah than Patriarchs and Patriarchs and lots of sand.....

Kabbalah on One Foot

Men of CBT invite all - Sunday, March 10 at 10 am

Hillel the Elder is famous for saying that he could teach the entire Torah while standing on one foot. He says, "Love your neighbor as yourself" is the whole Torah, the rest is just commentary, now go study."

With just a wee bit of chutzpah, I would follow Hillel by saying that I can teach the whole of Kaballah while standing on one foot: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

All the rest is just commentary. In this class we will study that deceptively simple line to reveal wisdom on the literal, figurative, interpretive and mystery levels. We will use musical, literary, graphic and numerological techniques to reveal kabalistic messages embedded in this well known opening line. Come and see.....

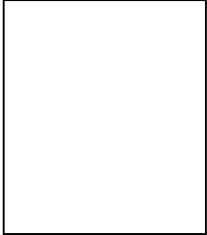
President....

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sadors of our community. Thank you both for making a difference and adding life, love and a smile to our second home!

Art Korn followed Florence in 1997 and during his term, Susan and I joined the temple. As new members, you try to find your way into the community and each time we came to Shabbat services, Art always made us feel welcomed. If you didn't know, Art is a very good singer. I can't be sure, but he might be the only President who was also a Para-cantor!! During my Presidency, every Sunday morning I see Art outside the Gift Shop and we talk temple politics. He is a wealth of information and is always pitching a new idea. In fact, some of the initiatives we've launched were from conversations I had with Art. If that's not enough, we recently honored Art and Irene (his wife) as chartered members!! We are very fortunate that they are part of our community.

Meet Florence Specland



I had the honor of being the Second Woman President following fellow Chavurah (ah yes, we were the Hagafenos...and yes we all loved wine!) member Lynne Groff. People used to kid us about what was in the wine our Chavurah shared; over the years our members became board members, sisterhood presidents, brotherhood presidents, executive Board members and two Temple Presidents.

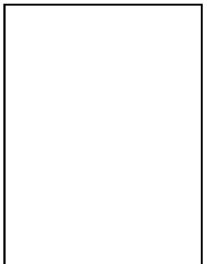
We had a major life cycle event in the middle of my Presidency. Our son, Robbie Specland, was bar mitzvah'd on December 28, 1996, so my time on the bima as President was made even more special as I had watched all those children grow up along with Robbie.

My first reaction would have been that watching our son and his friends become B'nai Mitzvot at Congregation B'nai Tikvah was my proudest moment as Temple President, but upon further reflection I realize that although that was near the top of the list, there was an even more important accomplishment.

I urged fellow congregants during my first High Holiday address to "try it, you'll like it" (playing off a very old and overused television commercial)...To my surprise, congregants listened...

At an event we had recognizing all those who had volunteered their time to the Temple and had gotten involved, I realized how many had heeded those words. The bima overflowed with folks who had "tried it, liked it" and how found the same life long connection to the Temple that I had.

Meet Arthur Korn



Irene and I moved here in 1979 and began synagogue shopping when we saw a notice in the CC Times that a new congregation was being formed and if there was any interest to attend a barbeque at someone's home. We did attend, along with Amy and Leigh, where we met Marc Usatin and Rabbi Asher. We were sold on the exciting prospect of being part of a new endeavor. Needless to say that as a CPA I was drafted to be the treasurer.

I could always be seen with my checkbook under my arm and making payments on the spot as needed. I even kept manual books. I worked with Irene on many activities and fund raisers such as the first congregational seder at the Holiday Inn in Concord, theater parties at the old Regional Center and the Willows Theater, the Chai Cho-Down in our backyard where we hired an instructor to teach line-dancing and also started a long career as "designated Schlepper" for the CBT gift shop which Irene began in the back of our station wagon on

Sunday mornings during religious school at the old JCC on Creekside Drive.

After leaving the Board, I became the first president of the Contra Costa Midrasha. When I could not find someone who would agree to succeed me, I served a second term as president. My daughter was in the first graduating class of 3 students, 2 of which were from CBT, and my son was in the second graduating class of 12 students. When I finally found a replacement, we lost our treasurer so there I was taking on another treasurer position. I ultimately returned to the CBT Board as a vice president and served 2 terms before becoming CBT president.

During this period, I was Brotherhood president, was voted man-of-the-year by the Brotherhood and served on 3 cantorial search committees. I also had the honor of being president when we celebrated CBT's 18th anniversary. We celebrated with a San Francisco Bay dinner cruise. We cruised under both bridges and had a wonderful dinner. All of the founding members, past presidents, myself and the Rabbi and Jennifer got to light a candle on our anniversary cake. The crowning moment for me that evening was the burning of the mortgage from our purchase of our building. The candle lighting and mortgage burning were against the ship's policies, but I convinced the captain that we would take great care by having several pitchers of water on hand. All of this was on the second deck, and after dessert we went down to the first deck which had a dance floor and we had a disc jockey, Jacob Rupp,

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“Throwing Linguini – Midrasha’s Way to Try out new Electives”

In January we begin another semester of new electives at Midrasha. This year we’re trying a few new approaches to our elective process. Our goal, as always, is to create classes and programs that inspire and excite our teens. For any teen who might want to “try out” Midrasha, January 9 and January 16 will be opportunities to make that happen. Here’s what to expect....

January 9, 2013 at Midrasha – “Linguini Electives Night at Midrasha”

No, we won’t be serving linguini, though I guess it’s a possibility. (I’m sure someone will offer a cooking class!) The theme for the evening is based on the idea that sometimes you have to throw a lot of linguini at the wall to see “what sticks.” That evening, our amazing educators will offer a smorgasbord of elective choices – each trying out new things. This may include a Jewish cooking class, Israeli hip-hop videos, krav maga or Jewish ethics through South Park. We’re still ironing out the choices, but it will certainly be an evening not to be missed. If you have an idea, let us know! Please invite all the teens you know to come and check it out!

January 16, 2013 at Midrasha – “Round Robin of Spring 2013 Electives”

Now a tradition at Midrasha, our “round robin” elective evening is a chance for Midrasha teens to try out the electives we’re offering, just in a shorter period of time. We all gather in the Social Hall, teens get to travel from table to table – a sort of “Midrasha Speed Dating” – doing a 15 minute version of electives that they might want to take in this new semester. Community members are invited – it’s a great way to get an overview of what Midrasha offers to its teens. This is another great opportunity for teens new to Midrasha to “check it out” without making a “full” commitment. The evening ends with each teens filling out their elective choice form.

We’re off the week of January 23rd, since it’s Finals for so many of our teens. (That’s the night when we get to have staff training – hooray!) When we come back together on January 30th, electives are assigned and the fun really begins! Side Note: Our teens are welcome to switch electives whenever they want during the semester. This gives them lots of options to keep trying on new opportunities at Midrasha!

Please join us in celebrating our teens and Contra Costa Midrasha on March 2, 2013. It’s the night of our annual fundraising event! This year our theme is “Midnight at the Circus.” Expect to be transported to a world of bright colors, acrobats and great music!

As always, you are welcome at Midrasha! Just let us know to expect you. Drop me a line to schedule a night, ask a question, or give some feedback. Happy to hear from you! Reach me, Devra Aarons, the Contra Costa Midrasha Executive Director at 925/944-4701 or office@ccmidrasha.com.

Happy 2013!



JANUARY 2013 Tevet - Shevat 5773

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 (Office closed) NEW YEARS DAY NO Religious School	2	3	4 Family Shabbat Service "Refuat Hanefesh" (A Healing of Spirit) 6:30 pm	5 *Shemot Torah Study (Lay Led) 9:00 am
6 Religious School Sisterhood to CJM Hebrew Book Camp II 12:15 pm - 1:15 pm	7 Ritual Committee Meeting 7:30 pm	8 Religious School 4:00 pm - 5:30 pm	9	10	11 Rosh Hodesh - Shevat Shabbat Service 6:30 pm	12 *Va'era Kids Congregation 9:00 am Torah Study (Lay Led) 9:00 am
13 Religious School Hebrew Book Camp II 12:15 pm - 1:15 pm	14 Executive Board Meeting 6:00 pm	15 Religious School 4:00 pm - 5:30 pm	16 Education Committee Meeting 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm	17 Purimshpiel Auditions 7:30 pm	18 SHIR JOY - Sisterhood Shabbat w/guest speaker 7:30 pm	19 *Bo Torah Study (Lay Led) 9:00 am
20 NO Religious School	21 (Office closed) MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY - Commemoration @ Civic Park 12pm 12:00 pm	22 Religious School 4:00 pm - 5:30 pm Sisterhood - Dinner Out 6:30 pm	23	24 Purim Shpiel Rehearsal 7:30 pm	25 Shabbat Service 6:30 pm Tu B'Shevat Oneg 7:30 pm	26 *Beshallah/Shira TU B'SHEVAT Torah Study (Lay Led) 9:00 am Shabbat Shira Service 10:00 am
27 Religious School Tu b'Shevat planting Hebrew Book Camp II 12:15 pm - 1:15 pm	28 General Board Meeting 6:30 pm	29 Religious School 4:00 pm - 5:30 pm	30	31 Purim Shpiel Rehearsal 7:30 pm		

Kids Congregation - Saturday, January 12 at 9 am

Please join Cantor Chabon for our Kids Congregation service. Come see the Torah up close.
Enjoy singing and a story in a small setting. All ages welcome - from babies on up!
The service will be followed by a small oneg.

FEBRUARY 2013 Shevat - Adar 5773

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Family Shabbat Service 6:30 pm	2 *Yitro Torah Study (Lay Led) 9:00 am
3 Purim Shpiel Kids Rehearsals Religious School - Parents Day Hebrew Book Camp II 12:15 pm - 1:15 pm	4 Ritual Committee Meeting 7:30 pm	5 Religious School 4:00 pm - 5:30 pm Jewish Meditation Workshop - Purim 7:00 pm	6	7 Purim Shpiel Rehearsal 7:30 pm	8 Shabbat Service "Refuat Hanefesh" (A Healing of Spirit) 6:30 pm	9 *Mishpatim Kids Congregation 9:00 am Torah Study (Lay Led) 9:00 am
10 Purim Shpiel Kids Rehearsals Religious School Rosh Chodesh - Adar Sisterhood sponsored: "Subversive Scripture. Tales From the Bible That'll Make You Say 'What'" 10:00 am Hebrew Book Camp II 12:15 pm - 1:15 pm	11 Executive Board Meeting 6:00 pm	12 Religious School 4:00 pm - 5:30 pm Jewish Meditation Workshop - Purim 7:00 pm	13	14 Purim Shpiel Rehearsal 7:30 pm	15 SHIR JOY w/Jhos Singer speaking 7:30 pm	16 *Terumah Torah Study (Lay Led) 9:00 am
17 NO Religious School	18 (Office closed) PRESIDENTS' DAY	19 Religious School 4:00 pm - 5:30 pm Jewish Meditation Workshop - Purim 7:00 pm	20 Book Sisters 6:30 pm Education Committee Meeting 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm	21 Purim Shpiel Rehearsal 7:30 pm	22 Shabbat Service 6:30 pm	23 *Tetzaveh Torah Study (Lay Led) 9:00 am Purim Carnival and Dinner 5:30 pm Purim Shpiel 6:30 pm
24 "Mitzvah Day" in Religious School PURIM	25 General Board Meeting 6:30 pm	26 Religious School 4:00 pm - 5:30 pm Jewish Meditation Workshop - Purim 7:00 pm	27	28 Sisterhood to Leshar - "Singing in the Rain"		

THE UNDER ONE TENT JEWISH BOOK CONTRA COSTA JEWISH BOOK FESTIVAL

Sunday, January 6, 3:00 - 5:00 PM

Master Puppeteer Jen Miriam with Her Amazing and Fabulous Puppet Performers

Venue: Contra Costa Jewish Day School

Sponsors: PJ Library, Cong. B'nai Shalom, Gan Ilan and Contra Costa Jewish Day School

Saturday, January 12, 5:00 PM

How Do We Know Right from Wrong

Rabbi Ralph Mecklenburger, author of *Our Religious Brains*, explores what cognitive science reveals about belief, morality, community and our relationship with God.

Venue and Sponsor: Temple Isaiah

Looking Ahead: Wednesday, April 17

The Bar Mitzvah and the Beast with Matt Biers Ariel 10:30 AM at Temple Isaiah and **7:30 PM** at Beth Chaim. In this humorous and poignant memoir, we follow 13 year-old Yonah as he celebrates his rite of passage with a family bike ride from San Francisco to Washington, D.C.

Admission is free unless otherwise specified. For more information and directions to venues: www.jfed.org/bookfestival or call 510.318.6453.

Save the Date!

Saturday, March 23, 2013

CBT's Annual Fundraiser!
Featuring Les and the Miserables

NIGHT ON



\$50 in advance
\$72 after February 25

Sign up now through the Member's Only section of our website or send a check to the Temple Office.

Have auction items to donate?

Email kittypurr13@gmail.com.

The 6th graders collected wonderful Chanukah gifts for a family of domestic violence who found shelter at Shalom Bayit.

(Not all students were available for the picture.)

Turn It, Turn It....

(continued from page 3)

make your children Jews – that is your job as parents/ grandparents. We are here to provide a place where structure and tools are given so each child and family can go home and create a vibrant Jewish life (however you wish to define it). To quote a colleague of mine who is an education director at a synagogue in Potomac, Maryland:

[Synagogue Religious Schools] can create committed, literate, striving Jews who integrate Jewish rhythms into their daily lives. We can connect our people to our living texts, we can teach about the sanctity of people and the sanctity of time, we might even improve the quality of our families' lives. The cost is family buy-in and involvement. If you commit to raising a serious Jew the same way you commit to a serious musician or athlete, it takes what all these people talk about: participation, cheering your kid on, modeling healthy behavior, and yes, as any concert musician or Olympian will tell you, sacrifice. All those athlete profiles we watched from London this summer moved our emotions about how the athlete's families have to sacrifice for the success of their child. I think we have to create this same expectation for our families if they want to commit to raising successful Jews....How is this done? In small part this can be accomplished by participating in services, engaging in activities, taking an active role in the school community, bringing Judaism into the home, and carrying it out and sharing it with others.

This can only happen if we recognize that all calendars work in concert with each other and that we must maximize the time we have in all aspects of our busy lives. Which calendar takes the most precedent? I say all of them. How do we do this? I wish I knew.

PARENT'S DAY AT CBT RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

Sunday, February 3

9:30am-12pm

Please come and join in our annual program whereby you will be invited to be the "fly on the wall" in your child's classroom, as well as have the opportunity to engage in a town hall meeting with the Director of Education, Phil Hankin.

Open Houses and Events

Middle School Open House & Science Night

Tuesday, January 29, 6:00-8:30 pm

An evening for students and parents to learn about our middle school which offers outstanding academics, small class sizes and a dynamic faculty.

Kindergarten - 8th Grade School Tour

January 16, 9:00-11:00 am

Visit our classrooms in action! Join us for this tour or call to set up a private tour at a convenient time.

Bridge Kindergarten Class Tour

Friday, February 1, 9:30-10:30 am

Perfect for students whose birth dates fall after the school cutoff date or who need more time before starting elementary school.

Tour is held in the classroom at Congregation B'nai Shalom in Walnut Creek.

For further information and to RSVP:

Contact Amy Wittenberg, Admissions Director,
amyw@ccjds.org (925) 284-8288

www.ccjds.org

President....

(continued from page 7)

the teenaged son of a member, who by the way is now an orthodox rabbi.

During my term as President, I organized a Long-Range-Planning committee. The committee arrived at a five year plan which ultimately resulted in the addition to our building that we are so proud of. Now I'd like to be around for the burning of our current mortgage!

MITZVAH DAY IS COMING!!!

What is Mitzvah Day you ask?
It is a day of giving, and opportunity to give back to our community.

**EVERYONE in the
CBT community is encouraged to participate
on Sunday February 24, 2013.**

Project details & sign-ups will be available soon.

Our 7th grade students are hard at work coordinating with the CBT Social Action Committee to create opportunities whereby you will have the opportunity to volunteer at various locations around the immediate Walnut Creek/Concord area. There will be many projects that are age appropriate for everyone.

This special day will occur during school hours
from 9:30am-12:00pm.

School will not be in session that morning.

The 7th grade class curriculum has the students learning how they can give back to our community, and this day is an example of what they have learned.

So please join them and engage
in a day of action on Purim!!

The East Bay Children's Book Project builds literacy by putting books in the hands of children who have little or no access to them. Working through individuals and organizations who help children in need, this Book Project has given out more than half a million free books.

Please bring your donation of new or gently used books for children of all ages (preschool through high school) to the bin in the Temple lobby which will be here as long as we continue to receive donations.

For more information about the organization, visit their website, www.ebcbp.org.

Tell your friends too!

Jewish Meditation Workshop – Purim, a Story for Adults

We are all accustomed to seeing joy on the faces of our children and grandchildren as they celebrate the Purim holiday with costumes and grogger noisemakers. What we may not recognize is the serious, adult content of this holiday. It is said there will be no further need to celebrate our Jewish holidays in the World to Come, except for Purim! In our workshop, we will search out the reasons Purim finds itself in this exalted place. We will meet on the four Tuesday evenings in February for one hour beginning at 7 pm in our library.

Everyone is welcome, both those experienced in meditation and the many who have never had that experience. There is no charge for attending, but do send an email to philip.paris@ymail.com if you have plans to attend any one or all four of our meditation sessions.

Congregation B'nai Tikvah
25 Hillcroft Way
Walnut Creek, CA 94597

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Walnut Creek, CA

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

For membership information, please contact the Temple Office.

PURIM IS COMING!

Please join us Saturday night, February 23rd at 5:30pm for Purim!

There is going to be a dinner, a carnival, and of course, a Purim shpiel.
(Watch your emails for more information.)

This year we will be doing A Very GLEE Megillah!

We are looking for lots of congregational involvement in this year's shpiel.

Here's how you can participate:

Auditions for the solo parts will be held on Thursday night, January 17th from 7:30 - 9:00pm.

Please pick up a copy of the score from the CBT office anytime after January 7th
and prepare a song to sing for the audition.

Purim rehearsals for the adult and solo parts will be held on
Thursdays from 7:30 - 9:00pm - January 24th, 31st, February 7th, 14th, 21st.

There are three kids' chorus songs that will be rehearsed during Religious School on February 3rd and 10th.

No auditions necessary for the kids' chorus, just a desire to be silly and sing!

The kids will also be asked to join the adults for a final rehearsal on
Thursday night, February 21st from 7:30 - 9:00pm.

Let's make this year's celebration of Purim the best one we've had in years!