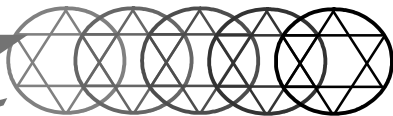


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# Tikvah Talk



Vol. 32 Iss. 2

Congregation B'nai Tikvah Walnut Creek, CA

October 2012

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## From Where I Stand

By Rabbi Raphael Asher



It's gotten to the point where the mind plays tricks; you wake up on Rosh Hashanah morning, and like the film Groundhog Day, the whole scene replays before our eyes. There's the shofar, here comes Avinu Malkeinu and the apples and honey. There's always that surprise 'ice puddle' as we step off the curb, and then here in California we wonder how many weeks before the rains come. Like all the nice folks in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania, we see all our fellow congregants in their usual spots, and the Bill Murray in us glumly wonders what all the small-town chirping conversation is about.

Once inside the Yontov framework we begin to view things differently. Rather than use the repetition to get one-up on everybody else, we can trust the replays to improve ourselves, both style and content. The Bill Murray character gets a fresh start, and by Yom Kippur so can we.

With Sukkot, when the seasons start to change, we invite Mike Pechner, KCBS meteorologist, to join us in the sukkah (Monday, October 1 from 8 – 9 am). Better than Punxsutawney Phil, Mike will let us in on his more scientific predictions about the rains this Fall and Winter. My own less extended forecast is that it's going to be beautiful weather to have a meal in the sukkah. I encourage you to swing by anytime this 1<sup>st</sup> week of October. Steve Rabinowitz and his construction crew, plus our Religious School decoration squad will provide a beautiful setting for lunch or dinner. No reservations necessary.

CHAG SAMEACH. *Please open yourselves to the joy of this holiday and consider building your own sukkah next year.*

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## Reflections...

By Cantor Jennie Chabon



*Cantor Chabon's Rosh Hashanah Drash.....*

Shana Tova !

I'd like to begin today by letting you in on a secret. A secret about Jewish clergy. You might think that because we went to seminary and have devoted our lives to this work, rabbis and cantors get some sort of VIP access to spiritual renewal. **But here's the secret: we don't.** We struggle to find inspiration and direction just like everyone else, especially as we prepare for these days of awe.

If you have ever sat in meditation or gone to a yoga class where you are meant to focus your attention on your breath, then you know that this is no easy task. It shouldn't be so hard, just sitting with yourself and your breath, but it is! Thoughts slowly begin to creep into your mind, taking away your attention, distracting you from the strangely challenging task of just breathing.

Now, one of the foundational principles of yoga and meditation is to calm the whirling of your mind, not so that your mind becomes blank, but so that you can begin to actually hear what it is that your heart is saying to you. The difference between these two ideas is quite significant. In the first, you spend your time and energy trying to make your thoughts go away, maybe chastising yourself for not being able to empty out your mind. That is certainly not a very loving practice.

The second idea encourages you to allow your thoughts to arise and to examine them for a few moments. Perhaps they are really mundane: what's for lunch, I really want some coffee, ouch, I need a pedicure! But beneath those thoughts, more important ones begin to reveal themselves, and those are the thoughts that deserve our attention. Maybe your mind will drift to a conversation you had recently, to something stressful going on at work, to your children, a fight you had with a friend. *Maybe your mind is wandering right now.* Meditation teaches us that these are the thoughts and experiences in our lives that actually need some loving attention.

I was taught by one of my mentors in cantorial school that our high holyday preparations should begin after Tisha B'av. So every

*(Continued on page 6)*

**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**  
**Jennie Chabon, Cantor**  
**Stephen Richards, Cantor Emeritus**  
**Judy Blum, Temple Administrator**  
**Phil Hankin, Director of Education**

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**Website: <http://www.tikvah.org>**

#### CONGREGATIONAL OFFICERS

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Vice President	Tina Guterman
Vice President	Glenn Gould
Vice President	Jenifer Paul
Secretary	Bob Stern
Treasurer	Todd Goldman
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Mary Ann Wittenberg	Todd Young

### Upcoming B'nai Mitzvah

*Samuel Rubinfeld*  
*Son of Susan and John Rubinfeld*  
*Saturday, October 6*

*Elizabeth Goldstein*  
*Daughter of Jill Miller and*  
*the late Daniel Goldstein*  
*Saturday, October 13*

*Cami Cohen*  
*Daughter of Charlene and Brian Cohen*  
*Saturday, October 20*

Shabbat Services begin at 10 am.  
 The Congregation is invited to attend.

#### Welcome to our new members...

Garrett King

Michal and Eitan Konstantino  
*Maya 9/25/1996, Daniel 12/5/1998,*  
*Yoav 9/13/2003*

Anna and Petr Loza  
*Daniil 1/4/1993, Lyubol 1/4/1993*

Neil Young

#### 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 10<sup>th</sup> of each month. Please submit articles electronically, if possible, to Congregation B'nai Tikvah, at [office@tikvah.org](mailto:office@tikvah.org) (subject *Tikvah Talk*) or by mail to 25 Hillcroft Way, Walnut Creek, CA 94597, (925) 933-5397.

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## President's Message

By John Rubinfeld

I hope your high holiday season was full of celebration, reflection and fond memories!!

Part of my Rosh Hashanah speech paid tribute to our past Presidents. Their actions paved the way to where we are today. However, in addition to these valiant leaders, I want to thank our original families. Similar to the 12 Tribes

of Israel, we had the 11 tribes of CBT who have maintained continuous membership since our first High Holyday season in 1981:

*Marc & Debbie Usatin, Zaffy & Denis Welch, Nancy & Arthur Solomon, Lynette & Alan Scharlach, Judy & David Niver, Miriam & Stan Newman, Marcia & Harvey Maslin, Irene & Arthur Korn, Susan & Joel Friedman, Pat & Chuck Eisner, and Stephany & Stevan Cavalier.*

They were the ones who decided to take a chance on a young rabbi named Raphael Asher. They were the ones, like wandering Jews, who gathered in fellow member's homes to attend Shabbat services or the JCC for High Holyday services. They established our religious school, hired a Cantor, and recruited more families. They found and beautified our "second" home. But most importantly, they established our identity, our culture, and our traditions.

I don't know how many of you know the origins of CBT. Like many other new congregations, it takes a small group of courageous people to that big leap and hope it's a soft landing. To get the full story, go on to our website and click on the "History of CBT" link. On behalf of the shtetl, we are extremely grateful!

Speaking of our founding families, a countless number of them have given their time, dedication, and energy to our community. I'd like to recognize one in particular. That's Pat Eisner. She has contributed in so many different ways for so many years. I could write on and on about all the accomplishments Pat has provided from organizing fundraisers, editing Tikvah Talk, Religious School Committee, Membership committee and many other projects. Pat is like the Benjamin Franklin of CBT!

But I'd like to focus on one area that made a profound impact on our temple—that was managing our technology requirements. She started in the late eighties. For those of you old enough - that's when we used 5.25 floppy disks. Despite the limited available resources, Pat brought us out of the paper-world and created databases, templates, mail merges and financial statements. The savings in time for Judy and Lance are in the 1000's of hours and the convenience for our members is "Priceless." Want more, there's more! Pat built, enhanced and maintained our website. On a very limited budget, she helped set up our current membership database, allowing us to pay

(continued on page 7)

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## Turn It, Turn It, Turn It Again

By Phil Hankin, Director of Education

During a recent meeting I attended with other East Bay Educators we explored the topic of how do we support our teachers. This can be applied to my professional realm as the "manager" of the Religious Education program who hires and oversees the teaching staff, as well as my role as a parent of a student within a supplementary religious education program.

And this year I am also working as a teacher myself at my home synagogue, co-teaching the 7<sup>th</sup> grade on Thursday afternoons. So the question speaks to me on many levels. What I want all of you to think about is how each of you, parents of students currently in the school, parents of teens who recently finished the program, parents of future students, or parents of former students who are now waiting to have grandchildren attend school, can help support our teachers.

One way is to have your children attend classes on a regular basis. The more often your child attends the more likely they are to absorb the material that is being taught. Our teachers work very hard to create the best lessons that engage our children on multiple levels. The more a student attends class the more they will grasp the concepts taught. This helps with continuity and community. The teachers find great joy in seeing the mind and soul develop and this can only happen if they get the chance to see their students on a regularly.

Another way that you can support our teachers is by making their jobs easier through volunteering. Whether it is being a room parent who helps coordinate class/school functions, being a class photographer who helps document the weekly/monthly happenings in the class, being available to help with the all-school snack program, or it is being around to help with an in-class project or holiday event, just by being around and showing your child that you are invested in their educational development is very supportive to the teachers.

One more way to support the teachers is to ensure that what is being learned in the classroom becomes reality at home. If the student is learning about the Shabbat rituals, make sure that you have a family Shabbat dinner where the student can witness the rituals taking place. Try to erect Sukkah this year so the student can get the feeling of what it is like to decorate and eat within the temporary structure and not just the one at the synagogue. Celebrate holidays, attend Shabbat services on a Friday evening or Saturday morning, make a commitment to creating a home tzedakah project that will help support the community – whatever it is, ask your child what is going on in their class and reinforce the learning at home. This is the best way you can help support our teachers.

And please tell them thank you for their hard work and dedication on a regular basis. See what happens when you get involved. I know that you will be fulfilled and the school will be better off for it.

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## Sisterhood News

By Rayna Ravitz, Sisterhood President

Our Membership brunch is always a fun event. This is our only "formal" meeting of the year where we discuss events we want to participate/organize. Please plan on joining in!

Upcoming Events:

### **Sunday, October 7, 9:45 am – Sisterhood Membership Brunch at CBT**

All Sisterhood and new CBT women are invited to attend this catered affair. Bring books to pass on for our book exchange. This is a great chance to meet other fun and interesting women. RSVP by October 2, [Raynaravitz@gmail.com](mailto:Raynaravitz@gmail.com)

### **Tuesday, October 30, 6:30 pm - Book Sisters Potluck Dinner at CBT**

"The Arrogant Years: One Girl's Search for Her Lost Youth" by Lucette Lagnado. Bring a non-meat dish to share! RSVPs always appreciated.

### **Wednesday, December 5, 6:30 pm - Sisterhood Chanukah Party at CBT**

### **Sunday, January 6, 2013 – Trip to Contemporary Jewish Museum**

### **Friday, January 18, 2013, 7:30 pm – Sisterhood Shabbat**

Book Choices for later in the year:

"The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks" by Rebecca Skloot

A Nora Ephron book to be determined

"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.

Rayna Ravitz

[raynaravitz@gmail.com](mailto:raynaravitz@gmail.com)



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## Social Action

By Tina Guterman, Social Action Chair

*We wish everyone a Sweet New Year* and hope that you will participate in the various social action efforts happening in and around our community (listed below) aimed at *providing service to those in need and working toward social justice*:

**\*\* (New) Contra Costa Food Bank Drive from the mid October through December:** This year, CBT will be participating, along with many other local synagogues, in an annual Holiday Dinner Drive. We are proud to support the Contra Costa Food bank in providing healthy food and *hope* to families facing hunger during their holiday season, and help the food bank reach their holiday needs. *Every CBT family will receive a flyer in the mail about this Holiday Food Drive. Please help us reach our goal of distributing thousands of food bags by sending in a donation in the return envelope provided in the mailing. You will be receiving your flyer in October.*

**\*\*Winter Nights:** CBT is proud to once again be partnering with Shell Ridge Community Church to help operate the Winter Nights Shelter program during its two week stay at the Church from Monday, October 22 through Sunday, November 4. Please see details and sign up through Sign-up Genius at this link: [www.SignUpGenius.com/go/20F0B4AACA82D6-winter](http://www.SignUpGenius.com/go/20F0B4AACA82D6-winter) (this link is also in the Temple's email about October happenings, and I can email it to you as well). *There are many slots available to help with meals and overnights, and Winter Nights could very much use your help.* If you have questions, please call Jared Goldin at (925) 699-2005.

**\*\* SHELTER, Inc. is organizing Hike for SHELTER** which aims to raise awareness about homelessness in our community. This annual fundraising hike aims to gather people to enjoy the beauty of the outdoors through hiking, while raising awareness and money for low-income and homeless families in the community. The event takes place on October 21. For more information, please go to [hike@shelterincofccc.org](mailto:hike@shelterincofccc.org).

**\*\*The Rainbow Community Center (RCC)** will be CBT's tzedakah recipient, chosen by social action, for the months of October, November, and December. RCC is the only organization in Contra Costa County that is solely focused on serving the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) community. RCC's current priorities are to build services for LGBTQ youth, seniors, people living with HIV/AIDS and to develop community building efforts that will diminish the sense of isolation and promote greater acceptance of all LGBTQ people.

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## Contributions

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### GENERAL FUND

In memory of Ronald Toban  
*Marcy and Steve Unger*

In memory of Honey Saltzman  
*Joan and Dick Schwartz*

In memory of Peisah Sadetskiy

In memory of Avrum-Moyshe Sadetskiy  
*Rakhil and Naum Sadetskiy*

In memory of Sylvia K. Schwartz

In memory of Harry J. Schwartz  
*Joan and Richard Schwartz*

In honor of Rachel Melino's Bat Mitzvah  
*Sandi Warner and Marge Wesler*

In memory of Esther Vineberg  
*Joni and Mal Vineberg*

In memory of Sam Blumberg

In memory of Ida Nankin  
*Alvin Trepper*

In memory of Charles J. Alexander

In memory of Abraham Dubin  
*Frances Dobin*

In memory of Leon Rabinowitz  
*Laurie and Steve Rabinowitz*

In memory of Gerald Kowitz  
*Leslie Kowitz and Eric Roswall*

### RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

In memory of Alice Kushnick  
*Beverly and Phillip Winslow & Family*

In honor of Alexandra's Bat Mitzvah  
*Myrna Leib*

In celebration of the birth of Lyla Rea Melmed  
*Roni and Paul Melmed*

In honor of Matan Kiesler's Bar Mitzvah

In honor of Jordan Levy's Bar Mitzvah

In honor of Zack Babka's Bar Mitzvah  
*Mora Zvia*

In memory of Roland Forest Tullis  
*Christine and Murray Sheldon*

### CANTOR'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

In honor of Alexandra's Bat Mitzvah  
*Myrna Leib*

In memory of Charlotte Gilman

In memory of Stanley Gilman  
*Carol Reif and Jeffrey Gilman*

### GENERAL FUND FOR CANTOR'S MUSICAL PROGRAMS

In memory of Roslyn Trules  
*Alison Trules and Edgardo Oñate*

In memory of Ben Brown  
*Sharon and Ron Brown*

In honor of the Tikvah Tones  
*The Babka-Kurzrock Family*

### JAMES COHEN MEMORIAL FUND

In memory of Sandy McReynolds  
*Diane and Victor Leventhal*

### CANTOR STEPHEN RICHARDS MUSICAL ENRICHMENT/CHOIR FUND

In memory of Kevin Pratt

In memory of Ruth Ellis Wise  
*Marjorie and Cantor Stephen Richards*

### STEPHAN JASPAN RELIGIOUS SCHOOL FUND

In memory of Joseph Powers  
*Marcy and Steve Rubin*

### ABRAHAM NIVER SCHOLARSHIP FUND

In memory of Edith Goldensohn  
*Julia Babka-Kurzrock and Serge Babka*

### CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

In memory of Dave Appleberg  
*Idelle Lipman*

### RABBI JOSEPH ASHER LECTURE FUND

In gratitude to Rabbi Asher for marrying Vera and Phil  
*Rina and Lev Shur*

### TREE OF LIFE - a leaf has been added

The Simon Twins Ezra David & Clio Madeline  
April 30, 2012  
*Barbara and Bill Almy*

### **Meditation Workshop – The Art of Jewish Prayer**

Let's face it. Many of us consider prayer to be rather old fashioned. On the other hand, prayer has had an essential role in the miracle of the survival of the Jewish people. Some of that is made clear each Shabbat when our rabbi urges us to "open our lips that our mouths can begin to pray" or our cantor thrills us with the beauty of her prayful voice.

Please join us for our next meditation workshop, The Art of Jewish Prayer. We will learn something of the history and development of Jewish prayer. We will also enjoy prayer through readings from our own siddur. If you have never had the

opportunity to engage in meditation you are most welcome.

Come for only one or two or all four of our sessions. As recently requested, I will spend time introducing the background and the mechanics of meditation for beginners. There is no charge for this workshop. If you plan to attend, simply email philip.paris@ymail.com.

Dates: TUESDAY, November 6, 13, 20 and 27.

Time: 10 to 11 AM Place: CBT library

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## Reflections.....

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(continued from page 1)

year, as the summer is ending, I start paying more attention to the interactions I have with the people in my life; I read more carefully, hoping to glean some inspiration from an unexpected word or sentence. I go to as many yoga classes as I can. But most of all, I try to listen more attentively to my own heart and soul, to find out what is really going on inside of myself each year.

This year, I went about the process as I always do, turning inward, listening more carefully to the world around me, looking in all the familiar places. But no matter where I looked or how hard I tried, I could not find the inspiration I was looking for. It was like there was a wall between me and the messages my heart was sending me and I didn't know how to break it down to find my way to this day. I began to feel a sense of desperation.

And in that deep, desperate place, a tiny thought kept poking its head up to be revealed. "You are not lost," it kept saying, "the message has been loud and clear this whole time. You just aren't listening." My heart was right, of course. I was stuck on this idea of what I **SHOULD** be hearing and feeling, as opposed to being present and allowing myself to just **BE**. I was hearing the message, but I was pushing it away, trying to bury it within myself, sure that it was wrong. It was only once I actually allowed myself to just breathe and **LISTEN** that everything became simple and clear. Here is what I heard:

### SURRENDER

This is incredibly hard work! And trying to force it to move more quickly or smoothly only makes it harder. In fact, the idea that we are in control of the process at all is the real illusion. I spent weeks trying to force myself into a state of spiritual inspiration, when what my heart was begging me to hear was the idea that I just need to **surrender**. Surrender to the natural process that was unfolding within me; surrender to the enormity of the task at hand; surrender to the idea that what I am capable of--**whatever we are all capable of**--whether it feels good enough or not, is **JUST RIGHT!**

### SURRENDER

I heard once from a rabbi friend of mine about a lesson he learned in rabbinical school about how to deliver a great sermon. Write the whole sermon, word for word, and then, 5 minutes before Shabbat, *rip it up*. He learned that you would remember 90 percent of what you intended to say, and that the most beautiful part of the sermon would end up being the moments when you struggled to remember the important details, because only then would your passion and love be apparent.

THAT is what God is asking of us today, what we are asking of ourselves. To rip up the script of what we *expect* to have happen here, and instead to surrender to what is **ACTUALLY HAPPENING**. To surrender to the reality of our lives, rather than what we think our lives **SHOULD** look like, and to forgive ourselves for our limitations year to year. To surrender to the act of listening to ourselves and to the incredible wisdom that we each have within our hearts and souls. Surrender and forgiveness. Maybe then--*only then*--will teshuvah, *transformation*, be possible.

We read in Shir Ha-Shirim Rabbah (5:2), an ancient midrashic text, "*God says: My children, create for me a small opening of Teshuvah, as tiny as the head of a pin, and I will open for you openings that even wagons and chariots can pass through.*"

I would like to give you a sacred task, as we move into the unetaneh tokef. As I sing, as we sing, as we pray together over the next several minutes, I want to ask you to listen to yourselves. Without judgment. To observe the thoughts that arise and allow them to circle around your mind for a bit. To open your hearts to the messages that you keep buried within yourself most of the time. And when one thought in particular catches your attention, hold onto it. Sit with it. Maybe it's one relationship in your life that needs healing, one quality of your own that needs to be forgiven. Maybe it's one habit that you need to let go of. Or maybe it's something or someone you are incredibly grateful for. Whatever it is, pick just one, *the size of the head of a pin*, and devote your love and prayer to it. Surrender to it. We are all here with one goal in mind, teshuvah, *return to ourselves*, and if we all engage in this holy work together, we will bring about real transformation.



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## President....

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(continued from page 3)

online, and most importantly consolidated all the resources (i.e. calendar, history, links, etc.) to just a “click.”

When you reflect over the 31 year old history of CBT and all the incredible accomplishments our fellow members have contributed, Pat is either near or at top of that list. On behalf of the CBT community, we thank you for all that you’ve done!

### Meet Pat Eisner



CBT has been a major part of our family’s and my life since we joined in October 1981, after attending its first High Holiday services at the old JCC on Creekside Drive. At the time we had 2 young children, Dan and Deborah and we felt that we had found a home and family. Having grown up with parents who believed in volunteerism, I began volunteering at CBT, a task I have willingly continued in several capacities over the years, some of which are described below. As you can see, CBT is my second life.

I began as a member of the Oneg Committee which oversaw the Oneg Shabbats after services at both the old JCC and from approximately late 1983, at our present location (we held services at the Church while in escrow in the mid-1980’s.) As our family grew with the addition of Jonathan, I continued to volunteer at the fundraisers. Chuck became the congregational treasurer, and I kept the books, pre-computer;. Every paycheck and bill went across our dining room table for two years in the mid-1980’s. When Chuck became president in 1987, I was part of the Membership Committee. After his term concluded in 1989, I joined the Religious School Committee, and served as chair for several years in the early 1990’s.

When we got our first home computer in the late 80’s, I took over the membership database from Steve Jaspan, and maintained it, eventually writing a membership database program to help automate mailings and record-keeping for the Temple Office. In the same time frame, I was asked to take over the editorship of *Tikvah Talk*; Deborah helped design and create the updated layout. Though I handed *Tikvah Talk* to other temple members for brief periods, somehow it came back to me for several more years, through the mid 2000’s. I have also maintained the CBT website since the mid 1990’s. The web designs have been done through several iterations by my son Dan, so it has, indeed, been a family effort. Now both Dan and I serve on the Online Communications Committee.

All of the various computer work that I did early on led to my becoming the “IT department” for the Temple. I have been in charge of the computers in the office since we purchased the first computer perhaps 20 years ago.

All three of our children served as *madrichim*, and two went on to become Religious School teachers, and bar/bat mitzvah tutors at CBT and other synagogues. One has made his career in Jewish education. I hope that my children, who considered themselves part of a club of “children whose mothers spent way too much time at the Temple,” will continue in the Eisner family tradition of Jewish volunteerism and service.



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The Jewish Federation  
The Jewish Community Foundation  
OF THE EAST BAY



Congregation K'nai Tikvah

Happy New Year to all of you! Midrasha has launched to a great start for the 2012-13 year. We're so excited. Our Opening Night was a special evening. It's always so great to see the teens come back from summer vacation to give each other great big hugs and enthusiastic screams of excitement.

As one of our educators mentioned, it's also gratifying to see how the teens continue to connect with the educators and staff at our campus. We have an amazing staff, an enthusiastic group of teens and a solid roster of special programs, retreats and electives. In fact, check out the exciting list of electives being offered this Fall...

***Around the World at Midrasha with Danny Fleischer*** Have you ever tasted the nectar of the gods, danced to the rhythmic music of the French Caribbean islands, climbed to the top of Mount Everest? In this elective, we will "travel" the world and indulge our senses as we explore all the wonders our beautiful plant has to offer. Don't forget your sunscreen!

***Carnival – Planning CCM's Veteran's Day of Service with Aaron Glass*** Join with other Midrasha teens to create a carnival day of fun! Contra Costa Midrasha is partnering with Shelter Inc., who provide transitional housing for families to prevent homelessness. On Veteran's Day, we'll bring a day of carnival fun to the kids and parents living at the Shelter Inc. site in Antioch. Join this elective to plan this day of service and earn community service hours in the process.

***The Voice from the Wings: Improv and Jewish Theatre with Maimone Attia*** Love to act, perform, be a (Kosher) hame or just be silly in front of others? Then check this elective out! We'll play improvisations theatre games and read and perform passages from plays and screenplays written by Jewish writers. The games will be energetic, amusing warm-ups. Then, we'll take turns reading performing excerpts from scripts. Sometimes we'll even watch scenes from the film/TV shows we just read, comparing them.

***PTI – "Pardon the Interruption," Midrasha Sport Center with Russell Eisenman*** Join with Russell for your nightly "take" on the world of sports, Jews and controversies. Each night we'll play, debate and converse about sports and its relevant topics. If you "fear the beard," this elective is for you!

***Senior Shmooze with Sacha Kopin*** Come talk about what's going on in your hectic, transitional worlds. This time will provide a safe space to explore the issues, concerns, and excitements about leaving the nest and moving forward into that vast world. We will discuss how to stay connected to Judaism while at college and explore approaches to the big Jewish questions and life as a second semester senior.

***Rodef Shalom: Cultivating Peace with Shlayma Shamberg and Jen Holzer*** - Also known as the "No-Hater Boot Camp for teens," this elective uses meditation at its core to engage in techniques for creating and cultivating peace (*rodef shalom*). Tikkun Olam (to heal or transform the Earth) will be a core theme as we look at peace within ourselves and in the larger communities of our families and the world.

Of course, it's not too late to join in the excitement. All Jewish teens in our community are welcome to join at Contra Costa Midrasha. In fact, our teens are encouraged to "Bring a Friend" all during October. Any teen whose "friend" enrolls in the Midrasha program will be given a \$10 iTunes card as a thank you for helping to expand our community.

We'll end October with the first retreat of the year! See you soon...

### ***Shalom Connection***

#### **MAZEL TOV TO:**

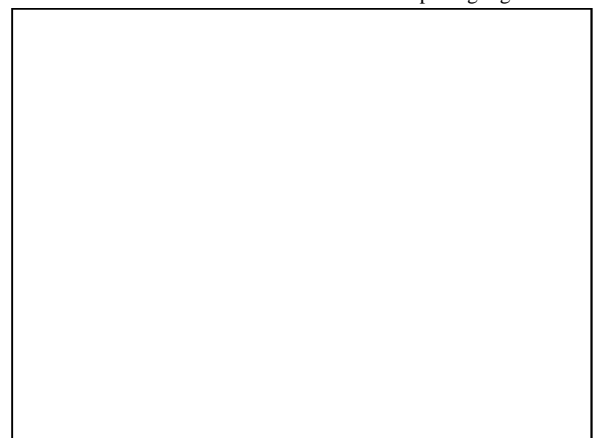
Riva and Lev Shur on the marriage of daughter Vera to  
Phil Seaton

Phil and Dena Hankin for Bar Mitzvah of their son, Zachary

Roni and Paul Melmed on the birth of granddaughter,  
Lyla Rea Melmed

Linda and Daryl Wolf on the marriage of Aaron  
to Gretchen Kepel - Aleks

Some CBT students at Midrasha on opening night





# OCTOBER 2012 Tishri - Cheshvan 5773

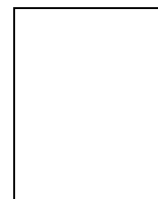
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<b>1</b> (Office closed) SUKKOT Sukkot Service and Brunch 8:00 am	<b>2</b> NO Religious School	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> Family Shabbat Service 6:30 pm	<b>6</b> *Hol Homoed Sukkot Shabbat Service - Bar Mitzvah of Samuel Rubinfeld 10:00 am
<b>7</b> Religious School Sisterhood Membership Brunch 9:45 am Simchat Torah and Consecration 6:30 pm	<b>8</b> (Office closed) SIMCHAT TORAH Executive Board Meeting 6:00 pm	<b>9</b> NO Religious School Restaurant Walk 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> I Have a Teshuvah: Reform Responsa & the Logic of Jewish Law 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm	<b>12</b> Shabbat Service "Refuat Hanefesh" (A Healing of Spirit) 6:30 pm	<b>13</b> *Bereshit Tot Shabbat 9:00 am Shabbat Service - Bat Mitzvah of Elizabeth Goldstein 10:00 am
<b>14</b> Religious School	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> Rosh Hodesh - Heshvan Religious School 4:00 pm - 5:30 pm	<b>17</b> Education Committee Meeting 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> SHIR JOY - Rb. Joseph Asher Memorial Lecture 7:30 pm	<b>20</b> *Noah Shabbat Service - Bat Mitzvah of Cami Cohen 10:00 am
<b>21</b> Religious School Men of CBT Open House 10:00 am - 11:00 am	<b>22</b> Assisting Winter Nights @ Shell Ridge General Board Meeting 6:30 pm	<b>23</b> Assisting Winter Nights @ Shell Ridge Religious School 4:00 pm - 5:30 pm	<b>24</b> Assisting Winter Nights @ Shell Ridge	<b>25</b> Assisting Winter Nights @ Shell Ridge I Have a Teshuvah: Reform Responsa & the Logic of Jewish Law 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm	<b>26</b> Assisting Winter Nights @ Shell Ridge Shabbat Service 6:30 pm	<b>27</b> *Lekh Lekha Assisting Winter Nights @ Shell Ridge Morning Minyan 10:00 am
<b>28</b> Assisting Winter Nights @ Shell Ridge Religious School 2014 B'nai Mitzvah Parents Meeting 7:30 pm	<b>29</b> Assisting Winter Nights @ Shell Ridge	<b>30</b> Assisting Winter Nights @ Shell Ridge Religious School 4:00 pm - 5:30 pm Book Sisters 6:30 pm	<b>31</b> Assisting Winter Nights @ Shell Ridge			

Rabbi Joseph Asher Memorial Lecture  
Friday, October 19, 2012  
7:30 pm

RABBI RALPH MECKLENBURGER: "MY FATHER'S VOICE  
REFLECTIONS ON NEUROSCIENCE & IMMORTALITY"

Rabbi Ralph Mecklenburger of Temple Beth El, Fort Worth, Texas, formerly associate rabbi with Joseph Asher at Emanu-El San Francisco, will speak on his new book, *Our Religious Brains*. Following the latest discoveries in neuroscience Rabbi Mecklenburger will discuss how they complement or challenge Jewish assumptions about the soul.

A few copies of *Our Religious Brains* are available for purchase through Rabbi Asher.



# NOVEMBER 2012 Cheshvan - Kislev 5773

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				<b>1</b> Assisting Winter Nights @ Shell Ridge I Have a Teshuvah: Reform Responsa & the Logic of Jewish Law 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm	<b>2</b> Assisting Winter Nights @ Shell Ridge Camp Newman Retreat Grades 4 - 6 Family Shabbat Service 6:30 pm	<b>3</b> *Vayera Assisting Winter Nights @ Shell Ridge Camp Newman Retreat Grades 4 - 6 Shabbat Service - Bat Mitzvah of Jocelyn Schoenholz 10:00 am
<b>4</b> Assisting Winter Nights @ Shell Ridge Camp Newman Retreat Grades 4 - 6 Religious School	<b>5</b> Assisting Winter Nights @ Shell Ridge Ritual Committee Meeting 7:30 pm	<b>6</b> Meditation Workshop - The Art of Jewish Prayer 10:00 am - 11:00 am Religious School 4:00 pm - 5:30 pm	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> I Have a Teshuvah: Reform Responsa & the Logic of Jewish Law 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm	<b>9</b> Kristallnacht Shabbat Service - Men of CBT participating "Refuat Haneefesh" (A Healing of Spirit) 6:30 pm	<b>10</b> *Hayyei Sarah Tot Shabbat 9:00 am Shabbat Service - Bar Mitzvah of Jordan Levy 10:00 am Trivia Night! Doors open at 6:30 pm
<b>11</b> Religious School Men of CBT - Bocce Ball 10:00 am - 1:00 pm	<b>12</b> Executive Board Meeting 6:00 pm	<b>13</b> Meditation Workshop - The Art of Jewish Prayer 10:00 am - 11:00 am Religious School 4:00 pm - 5:30 pm	<b>14</b> Rosh Hodesh - Kislev Ed Committee Meeting 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm	<b>15</b> I Have a Teshuvah: Reform Responsa & the Logic of Jewish Law 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm	<b>16</b> SHIR JOY - New Members Honored 7:30 pm	<b>17</b> *Toledot Shabbat Service - Bar Mitzvah of Eli Stark-Elster 10:00 am
<b>18</b> NO Religious School	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> NO Religious School Meditation Workshop - The Art of Jewish Prayer 10:00 am - 11:00 am	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> (Office closed) THANKSGIVING	<b>23</b> (Office closed) Shabbat Service 6:30 pm	<b>24</b> *Vayetze Morning Minyan 10:00 am
<b>25</b> NO Religious School	<b>26</b> General Board Meeting 6:30 pm	<b>27</b> Meditation Workshop - The Art of Jewish Prayer 10:00 am - 11:00 am Religious School 4:00 pm - 5:30 pm	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> I Have a Teshuvah: Reform Responsa & the Logic of Jewish Law 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm	<b>30</b> Shabbat Service 6:30 pm	

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The B'nai Tikvah Trivia Guys Present

**TEAM TRIVIA NIGHT 2012!**

**Saturday, November 10, 2012**

**Doors Open @ 6:30 p.m. Play starts @ 7:00 p.m.**

**Over 100 fun, brain-challenging questions**

**Entry fee \$175 per team; teams of 6-8 players**

No trivia expertise necessary! If you watch "Jeopardy" or "Who Wants to be a Millionaire?," or even if you just think you're smarter than a fifth grader, then this event is for you.

This is a TEAM event with 6-8 players per team -- you use your collective minds to answer the questions. Maybe you can't recall the name of the cruise ship that ran aground in Italy in January of this year, but somehow it reminds you of Contra Costa County. That might be enough to jog a teammate into remembering the Costa Concordia. That's how the team dynamic works. You'll be surprised to discover just how much minutia you do know!

This event is open to everyone, CBT members or not, so get a team from your office, school, or neighborhood. Have friends in other synagogues? Challenge them to field a team. Don't have enough for a full team? No problem. Sign up as a single or small group and we'll do our best to pair you up that night! (Registration fee for individuals is \$30 per person.)

We welcome teams of high school and college students. We already have several sponsors for student teams. Even if you don't think you'd enjoy playing, you can sponsor a team yourself. We're happy to accept donations that can be used to sponsor student teams or otherwise support the event.

✂\_\_\_\_\_

- ✱ADVANCE EVENT REGISTRATION ONLY – NO TEAM WALKUPS!
- ✱COST IS \$175 FLAT RATE PER TEAM; TEAMS ARE A MAXIMUM OF 8 PEOPLE. WE SUGGEST A MINIMUM OF 6. COST FOR INDIVIDUALS NOT ASSOCIATED WITH A TEAM IS \$30 PER PERSON.
- ✱PAYMENT MUST ACCOMPANY REGISTRATION.
- ✱CASH OR CHECKS ONLY; PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO "CONGREGATION B'NAI TIKVAH." SORRY; WE ARE UNABLE TO ACCEPT CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS FOR THIS EVENT.

**Register Now:**

Team Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

I/We Don't Have a Team But Still Want to Play: (Name) \_\_\_\_\_

Mail your entry to: CBT, 25 Hillcroft Way, Walnut Creek, CA 94597, or via fax to 925-933-6833.

Have questions or need more information? Contact The B'nai Tikvah Trivia Guys – Bob Canter, Mike Cohn and David Specland – at TheCBTTriviaGuys@gmail.com or call the Temple Office, 925-933-5397.



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## Congregation B'nai Tikvah Special Funds

*Every month in Tikvah Talk we list contributions received. So what are the B'nai Tikvah Special Funds?*

**Abraham Niver Scholarship Fund.** *Provides scholarships for Religious School and Contra Costa Midrasha for those children who may not be able to afford a Jewish education.*

**Cantor Chabon's Discretionary Fund.**

**Cantor Stephen Richards Choir Fund.** *Subsidizes music programming, purchases music, pays guest instrumentalists and sponsors our piano accompanist, Irene Jacobson, at Shabbat Services. (Please indicate if your donation is to support our piano accompanist.)*

**Capital Campaign.** *To help with the mortgage.*

**General Fund for Cantor's Musical Programs.** *Helps defray the costs of musical accompanists who play at Shir Joy ~ our Musical Shabbat services.*

**James Cohen Memorial Fund.** *Assists young people with camp programs of Jewish content.*

**Joseph Asher Memorial Lecture Fund.** *Annually brings us nationally renowned scholars and speakers.*

**Library Fund.** *Helps to build our collection of children's books, tapes and other media of Jewish content.*

**Mordoh / Nadjari Holocaust Fund.** *To further educate people on the Holocaust. Helps sponsor the Community Yom Hashoah service that B'nai Tikvah participates in.*

**Prayerbook Fund.** *Purchases new prayerbooks for Shabbat and all Holidays.*

**Rabbi Asher's Discretionary Fund.**

**Religious School Fund.** *Supports the Religious School budget.*

**Sam Usatin Fund.** *Funded Cantor Chabon's CDs, "Shirei Tikvah" (given to all of our members) and "Shir Joy."*

**Shtender Fund.** *To defray the costs for the acquired Shtender which adorns our Bima..*

**Social Action Fund.** *Supports various out-reach activities. Its funds have been used to purchase food for the Congregation's participation in the Winter Night's family homeless shelter, to support drives for Socks / Batteries for Soldiers, Zimbabwe preschool supplies, and for donations to organizations who have sent us speakers for the Annual Social Action Shabbat.*

**Special Education Fund.** *Focuses attention on students with special needs in our Religious School.*

**Stephan Jaspan Religious School Fund.** *Funds special programs and projects for the Religious School and its students.*

**Youth Fund.** *Funds to support activities for B'nai Tikvah Youth Group - BTTY.*

**In addition to these Funds, a Leaf may be purchased on our Tree of Life or a brick laid in our Simcha Walk.  
\$180 each.**

*Please consider the various funds we have when thinking of tzedakah –  
when remembering a loved one or in honor of a simcha.*

*If you would like more information about any of these funds or making other charitable contributions,  
please contact the Temple Office at 925.933.5397 or Todd Goldman, Treasurer.*

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

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage Paid  
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Walnut Creek, CA

## CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

For membership information, please contact the Temple Office.

### I HAVE A TESHUVA: REFORM RESPONSA & THE LOGIC OF JEWISH LAW

Join Rabbi Asher for 9 Thursday evening sessions  
on the evolution of Jewish Law  
from Torah times to the present.

The methods of Talmud and codes will be explained  
through their application to practical, daily questions  
that a Jew asks. Matters of strictness and leniency  
will be discussed as they relate to  
ritual observance and to the issues  
that Reform Jews encounter today.

Classes will be held October 11, 25  
November 1, 8, 15, 29,  
December 6, 13 and 20  
7 - 8:30 pm  
CBT Library

\$36 tuition members / \$54 non members.  
RSVP to the Temple Office.

### WELCOME TO THE MEN OF CBT!

*"The purpose of the Men of CBT is to engage male  
congregants, both in-faith and inter-faith alike,  
in building a community that enriches their experience  
at Congregation B'nai Tikvah.  
We do this by offering opportunities to learn, socialize,  
and serve our temple."*

#### October 21 - Open House at CBT 10am to 11am

Get to know the men behind the mission...come schmooze,  
eat a bagel, have coffee, and talk to us!

#### November 9 - Sabbath Services and Oneg sponsored by the Men of CBT (German Kiddush Theme) 6:30 pm

The Men of CBT will perform specific readings chosen by the  
Rabbi. The Consulate General from Germany will speak at the  
service. Join us at the Oneg to learn more about the group.

#### November 11 - Livermore Bocce Ball

(it's harder than it looks!)

10am - 1pm

(More info and # of courts to follow)

For more information, contact Harry Wittenberg at  
[wittenb1@comcast.net](mailto:wittenb1@comcast.net).