

The centerpiece of the convention was the retirement tribute to President Eric Yoffie's 16 years at the helm of the Union. Repeatedly throughout his tenure, Rabbi Yoffie has had the remarkable ability to dialogue respectfully yet forcefully with any of those with whom he has had contentious issues. He has disarmed Evangelical Christians, American Muslims, pro- and anti-Zionists of all stripes with his understanding that finding common ground is not an abandonment of principles. Retaining his tone of civility and strength will be critical to the Reform Jewish future.

Most thrilling for me was to find ourselves in the same elevator with Natan Sharansky, the Refusenik who inspired the Soviet Jewry movement and the freedoms he helped secure in the 1980's. Currently as director of the Jewish Agency in Jerusalem, he is reinvigorating the Israel-Diaspora relationship not just by repeating the indebtedness we should feel for the Israeli enterprise but the indebt-

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Reflections...

By Cantor Jennie Chabon



As you all know, I will--God willing--be giving birth to a healthy baby boy in early January. I am incredibly excited to meet the newest addition to our family and to learn to navigate the waters of a family of five. Ezra and Levi are both having mixed feelings about the arrival of their baby brother. They are excited to meet him and hold him and kiss him, but they are NOT excited about how much babies cry. I guess that makes four of us!

During my absence, there is a team of people who will be helping to take my place in various ways. Because our 7th grade class is so big this year, we have two additional tutors who will be working with the b'nai mitzvah students