
Tikvah Talk

Vol. 31 Iss. 5

Congregation B'nai Tikvah Walnut Creek, CA

January 2012

From Where I Stand...

By Rabbi Raphael Asher



Three towering figures drew 6000 Jews to Washington last month for the Biennial of our Union for Reform Judaism, and it was a memorable experience for me, my wife, and our daughter, Jocelyn. President Obama's charisma and his pro-Israel message were enhanced by his humanity. He spoke of his being the father of 13 year-old Malia who is, seemingly every week, invited to another Bar or Bat Mitzvah by her school friends. He referred to his delight that her friends could reflect on each week's Torah portion and also the weekly discussions on appropriate attire for the parties.

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 along with the rabbi. Phil Hankin will be covering tefillah and Torah reading, and Tina Eisenman, a veteran tutor in

Contra Costa County, will be working with the students on chanting their Haftarat and Torah portions. We also have several wonderful congregants who are volunteering to lead Friday night Shabbat services once a month.

Most significantly, we have hired a lovely woman named Fran Burgess to be on the bima for our Shir Joy Shabbats and to lead the B'nai Mitzvah ceremonies with the rabbi. Fran is finishing her last year of cantorial school at AJR, the Academy for Jewish Religion in Los Angeles. She commutes each week between Berkeley and LA, where she not only takes classes but also sees her beautiful granddaughter. She has worked at many shuls in the Bay Area and she is very comfortable on the bima both as a singer and as a *shaliach tsibur*, a service leader. We are very fortunate that it worked for her schedule to cover for me while I'm gone because she is both a capable and beautiful singer. Below you will find more information about Fran from her bio. I hope you will all join me in welcoming her to our sweet community. When you see her, introduce yourself! The more people she meets and feels comfortable with, the warmer and more meaningful her services will be.

Fran Burgess is a resident of Berkeley and has sung both regular and High Holidays services at synagogues throughout the Bay Area for the last nine years. Her training is classical, and Ms. Burgess sang with the San Francisco Opera for ten seasons as a member of the professional chorus. Before being engaged by San Francisco Opera, she sang with various professional choruses, including the San Francisco Symphony chorus, as well as performing solo roles with regional community opera companies in the

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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

Temple Office (925) 933-5397
Office Hours: Mon-Fri 9:00 - 5:00

Fax (925) 933-6833

E-mail: office@tikvah.org
Website: <http://www.tikvah.org>

CONGREGATIONAL OFFICERS

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Vice President	Tina Guterman
Vice President	Glenn Gould
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Secretary	Bob Stern
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Past President	Lisa Wenger

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Bruce Meyers	Rayna Ravitz
David Specland	Lynda Webster
Mary Ann Wittenberg	Todd Young

Upcoming B'nai Mitzvah

Nick Webster
son of Lynda and Larry Webster
Saturday, January 7

Hallie Unger
daughter of Marcy and Steve Unger
Saturday, January 21

Katie Assael
daughter of Melissa and Brian Assael
Saturday, January 28

Mazel Tov!
The Congregation is invited to
join the families for Shabbat services
at 10 am.

SAVE THE DATE!

FEBRUARY 25, 2012

SUMMER OF LOVE!

CBT'S ANNUAL GALA!!

\$50 PP IN ADVANCE
\$65 AFTER FEBRUARY 10

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 Rubinfeld



At the time I'm writing this article, we are still in shock of the abrupt closure of the Contra Costa JCC. The impact has rippled throughout our community from the loss of 30 staff members, close to 100 pre-school children suddenly looking for a school (in the middle of a school year), and the discontinuation of the Millman Center (an adult day care and Alzheimer's caregiver program). In addition, there are countless other programs that will need to find new homes (i.e. Jewish film and book festivals, cultural and educational events, etc.). As I reflect back on my experience of the JCC, I recall my father reminiscing about his teen years hanging out at the San Francisco JCC with his friends enjoying being Jewish (during a time when anti-Semitism was widespread). As for my own memories, I remember playing organized sports (i.e. football and basketball), learning to swim, summer day camp, meeting my best friends, etc. Even as adult, I joined the gym, attended lectures and participated in community social events. I'm sure many of you have similar stories.

The question that immediately popped up in my head was, "How can we help?" As I mentioned above, this impacted "our" community. One of the families who had a child in the pre-school program was Jen and Ben Paul. Their 4 year old son, Isaac, was one of the children displaced. When Jen heard the news, she immediately stepped into the fray by coordinating with other parents, JCC pre-school teachers, and pre-school administrators with Congregation B'nai Shalom. On a short timetable, she worked countless hours considering viable options for all the affected families and teachers. Jen, Judy Blum and I met with B'nai Shalom's Board of Directors and Rabbi Jennifer Flam (their pre-school director), and together we quickly came to a solution to offer these families a viable alternative. I want to thank Jen for her tireless effort to bring the community members together in order to find a solution. Unfortunately, this is only one group that was impacted. As I mentioned above, there are other important programs that require the Jewish community's attention. We will be reaching out to several organizations (i.e. The Federation, Jewish Family and Children's Services, Jewish Vocational Services, etc.) to see how CBT can provide temporary support. As I mentioned in my High-Holiday speech, "It takes a shtetl." Our friends in the adjacent shtetl need our help and we will be there for them.

Speaking of Jen Paul, I'm very proud to announce that she is officially part of our Executive Board. In addition to the work she accomplished in response to the JCC pre-school closure, she heads up our "New Members" committee. She coordinated several newcomer events, personally recruited unaffiliated families, and participated in all the "family" services/events (i.e. family Shabbats, Tot Shabbats, etc.). Please join me in congratulating Jen for accepting her new role!

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Turn It, Turn It, Turn It Again

By Phil Hankin, Director of Education



To Camp or not to Camp?

As most of you know by now, I am a huge advocate for having children attend a residential Jewish summer camp sometime in their lives. As studies have proven over time, and most notably the one just completed this past Spring by The Foundation For Jewish Camp, attending a residential Jewish summer camp will increase your inclination to practice Jewish behaviors (e.g. lighting Shabbat candles on a regular basis, using Jewish websites, appreciating the value of Jewish charities, attending synagogue on a regular basis) and will also increase your inclination to seek out the experience of Jewish community (e.g. joining together with other Jews for communal prayer, stronger sense of identifying with other Jews in Israel). This is nothing new but researchers have just begun to quantify the effects of attending a Jewish camp on young people. It is long known that most Jewish professionals can trace their formative roots to being a camper at a Jewish summer camp. But now the data supports the fact that young people who attend a Jewish summer camp are between 5-55% more likely to become a more engaged Jew in areas from emotional attachment to Israel to synagogue affiliation to having a strong Jewish friendship group. All of this is to say that you could do worse for your child than send them to a Jewish residential summer camp.

Why do I bring up the topic of camp at the beginning of January? Well, the question is fairly simple: To camp or not to camp, that is the question. You can just imagine Hamlet debating this issue with his wife when discussing what to do with the kids for the summer as Jan/Feb roles around. The debate plays out every year after the calendar turns, when summer brochures begin to arrive in the mail. What choices do you make? What influences those choices? Sports? Money? Quality of program/education? Religion? Convenience? Staff ratios?

As a parent, I debate the same issues for my children. Is the camp Jewish or not? Is my child going to be watched and nurtured safely and respectfully? Is this camp experience going to fleece my wallet or is there a greater benefit for my child? Is there pre and after-care (for day camp situations)? Are any of my children's friends attending? What skills will my child learn after attending this camp? Is the camp ACA (American Camping Association) accredited? The list is endless....

As a former summer camp director and current Jewish educator, I have a certain bias when it comes to the choices parents make in determining the best program for their children. I look at summer camping through different lenses than most parents, though. First and foremost, I look for a safe and nurturing environment. Is there quality education and sufficient staffing ratios? Do the staff look at each individual child as special and

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Our Chanukah potluck last month exceeded all expectations. We had a delightful evening and made 7 no-sew blankets to donate to Children's Hospital. We also collected presents for a vulnerable family that evening. Thank you to Amy Lichtenstein for spearheading the family adoption project and to all who participated. Thank you also to Jeanne Appelbaum for taking care of the no-sew blanket project.

Upcoming Events:

Sunday, January 8 - 9:15 am—Legion of Honor Museum

We will meet at B'nai Tikvah at 9:15 a.m.



Thursday, January 26 - 6:30 pm - Book Sisters

"Petropolis" by Anna Ullrich. Potluck dinner (dairy or vegetarian) in the Social Hall before the discussion. RSVP: Rayna-ravitz@gmail.com

Tuesday, January 31 - 7:00 pm - Challah Baking Class

Meet at the CBT kitchen for this class taught by Jennifer Rosenberg. RSVP: Raynaravitz@gmail.com

Thursday, March 1 - Legally Blonde

Fifteen of us have our tickets for Legally Blonde. If you want to join us, you can purchase tickets at the Leshner Center and meet us for dinner at Lettuce at 6:30. (Lettuce is across the street and a participant in our Taste of Walnut Creek Restaurant Walk.)

Monday, March 12 - 7:30 pm - Jewish Film Festival

Movie: "Who do You Love?" As we have in the past few years, we will meet for dinner and go to the movies together.

Friday, March 16 - 7:30 pm - Sisterhood Shabbat

Sasharet, an organization helping Jewish women with Breast and Ovarian cancers will be our Tzedakah box recipient for January-March. I have asked for a speaker for this evening from the organization. Sisterhood members will participate in the service.

Thursday March 29 - 6:30 pm - Book Sisters

"The Lost Wife" by Alyson Richmond

TBD:

Eugene O'Neill Museum
Genealogy class

Rayna Ravitz

raynaravitz@gmail.com

President's Message.....

(Bruce Meyers - continued from page 5)

Longing for a return back to the Bay Area, I came back to Oakland with Linda in 1997 and began a new career path working in the financial planning and investment advice realm. Linda, meanwhile, has worked on a consultant basis in the video game industry.

Linda and I are lucky to have both sets of parents, numerous siblings and much extended family a short distance away---allowing for spirited holiday celebrations. And recently we were able to encourage my parents, Barbara and Sid Meyers to join the B'nai Tikvah mishpacha.

We truly have enjoyed our years here at CBT and have developed many wonderful friendships for which we are truly grateful. The welcoming warmth we felt right away, the genuinely caring people we have encountered have added to a rich and meaningful experience. In addition to duties around religious school and various boards and committees, I can sometimes be found on the softball field where for many seasons I have tried to avoid embarrassment on the CBT team.

President's Message.....

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Our two board member profiled this month are Alan Gould and Bruce Meyers.

The next time you join us for a Shabbat service, your child attends a class or enjoy one of our many social events, you should thank Alan. As the Facilities chair, he makes sure when something goes awry (flickering lights in the Ravitz social hall, a fallen tree against the building or a leak in the kitchen) it gets repaired before most anyone notices. Alan is a champion for us all not only maintaining our beautiful temple but looking to the future on areas that will eventually need service or replacement (i.e. parking lot pavement, HVAC, roof, etc.). He and his wife, Arlene, along with their two grown sons, Justin and Marc, have been long time members and supporters of CBT. We are very fortunate to have Alan as a member of our shtetl!

Bruce, his wife, Linda, and their son, Sam, have been members for several years. They're excellent recruiters as his parents Sid and Barbara joined CBT last year. I asked Bruce to join the board and he jumped in with both feet as he is actively involved with our Finance Committee, interviewing survey respondents and making contributions on a variety of topics and programs. Bruce provides a wealth of knowledge and a high level of energy that is very much appreciated. Participation in the family must be a trend as we are very fortunate that Linda joined our newly formed technology committee and is providing valuable input in regard to adding a Facebook page and updating our website.



Meet Alan Gould

I was born in Brooklyn, NY, right after the war. My parents moved us early in 1946 to sunny Pasadena in an attempt to find a better business environment. Pasadena was an ideal place for me and my brothers to grow up. We played baseball morning, noon, and night and quickly became huge Dodger fans.

I graduated from Flintridge Prep and went on to receive a BS in accounting from Cal State Los Angeles. I worked for a small accounting firm in Pasadena for three years until I enlisted in the Marine Corp in the summer of 1969. The same year Arlene and I met and were married in the summer of 1972. We moved to Orinda when I had the opportunity to be the comptroller for the Elliott Construction Corp. Justin was born in 1980 and Mark in 1986.

We were introduced to CBT by our good friends, Al and Lynne Groff in 1988 and have been members ever since. I have been on the board for twenty years mainly as the chair of the house committee. My dad was an active member of the Wilshire Boulevard Temple in Los Angeles and contributed a lot of his time on their Temple House Committee. I fondly remember working with him on a number of the temple maintenance issues. I have enjoyed contributing that tradition my dad and I started many years ago.



Meet Bruce Meyers

A native of the Bay Area, I'm now in my 6th year as a member of CBT and first year serving both on the general board as well as a member of the Temple's Finance Committee. My wife, Linda, and I have one son, Samuel, who is a proud member of Bob Canter's much heralded fifth-grade class. We live in Lafayette along with our latest addition, Annie, a lovable Tibetan Terrier.

I was born and raised in Oakland, and my family was originally members of the Temple Beth Jacob before moving through the tunnel to Contra Costa County and joining Temple Isaiah. As the middle child of three, certainly one of my highlights of my "Jewish" upbringing was following my brother's footsteps by having my Bar Mitzvah in Israel at the "Western Wall" in front of many Israeli cousins. I continued post-Bar Mitzvah education by completing confirmation ceremonies and was quite active in several Jewish youth groups including AZA and attending UAHC's Camp Swig as both a camper and counselor for several summers.

I attended UCSB earning a BA in an unconventional double major of Business Economics and Religious Studies. While in school, I wrote for the school newspaper and worked in the Department of Athletics, which led to a job handling publicity for several athletic teams, but primarily the basketball program at the UNLV.

After two years in the bright lights of Las Vegas, I moved back to California and served as the Assistant Athletics Director at Loyola Marymount University where I oversaw external affairs including publicity, marketing, media, and corporate sponsorship for the 17 intercollegiate athletics teams. During my seven years there in Los Angeles, I had the opportunity to work with many major sporting events including the 1994 World Cup and 1996 Summer Olympic Games. I was also able to earn an MBA at LMU while employed there with a marketing emphasis.

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Contributions

GENERAL FUND

In memory Ann Christian
Joni and Mal Vineberg
In memory of Theodore St. Pierre
Debbie and Michael Schoenholz
In memory of Max Barat
Pat and Ken Barat
In memory of Gertrude Ravitz
Rayna and Richard Ravitz
In memory of John Levich
Trish and Jared Goldin
In memory of Sidney Tatz
Shirley and Jeffrey Weiner
In honor of Sandy Leon
Jo Kerner
In memory of Jerome Kushnick
Beverly and Phillip Winslow
In memory of Sue Rattner
In memory of Clara Medvin
Deborah and Alvin Medvin
In memory of Charles Trepper
Alvin Trepper
In memory of Ester Shepievker
Regina and Oleg Tachkov
In memory of Rudolph Fatula
In memory of Marilyn Siegel
Kathryn and Neil Siegel
In memory of Lillian Weil
Judy Weil
In memory of Mildred Newman
Miriam and Stanley Newman
In memory of Etta Resler
In memory of David Resler
Renee Denwitt
In memory of Louis J. Alexander
In memory of Charles J. Alexander
In memory of Ethel B. Dobin
In memory of David I. Dobin
In memory of Abraham Dubin
Frances and Rabbi Joel Dobin
In memory of Louis Becker
Susan and John Klein
In memory of Lilian Weil
Sanford Weitzner

RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

In memory of Ethel Weiss
Florence and David Specland
Joe Weiss
In memory of Miriam Kudish
Ellen and Doyle Duree
In memory of Fritzi Gewing
Anna and Walter Gewing

CANTOR'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

In memory of Marti Ann Schwartz
Cindy Turner and Brian Schwartz

GENERAL FUND FOR CANTOR'S MUSICAL PROGRAMS

In memory of Sydney Rapoport
Cookie Svingos
In memory of Miriam Kudish
Ellen and Doyle Duree

JAMES COHEN MEMORIAL FUND

In memory of George Maisels
In memory of Robert Zeimer
Sally Cohen

CANTOR STEPHEN RICHARDS MUSICAL ENRICHMENT/CHOIR FUND

In memory of Moshe Teitelman
In memory of Samuel Teitelman
Carol and Allen Teitelman

ABRAHAM NIVER SCHOLARSHIP FUND

In memory of Bernice Chase
Patricia and Lorry Marcus
In memory of Lawrence Shaw
Idelle Lipman

SOCIAL ACTION FUND

In memory of Isadore Dorin
Jana and Leonard Dorin
In memory of Ida Shiela Salusky
Monica Salusky and John Sutherland

LIBRARY FUND

In memory of Bernice Scharlach
Lynette and Alan Scharlach

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

In memory of Harry Maslow
Michael Fischer

TREE OF LIFE - a leaf has been placed on our tree

In memory of Jerome Mazer
In memory of Connie Mazer
Judy and David Niver



From Where I Stand.....

(continued from page 1)

edness that he feels and Israel should recognize more clearly to American Jewry not just for its funding but for its variety and creativity of Jewish expressions.

I told my daughter the story of Sharansky's release from Soviet prison in 1986. There was a prisoner exchange on the Glienicke Bridge in Berlin, and Sharansky was told by his handlers to waste no time in walking straight across the bridge to West Berlin. However, always aware of his God-given freedom and ever-defying Soviet authority throughout his imprisonment, Sharansky zigzagged across the bridge at his own sweet pace.

Such freedoms – individual autonomy, the joys and responsibilities of Reform, and the courage to speak truth to power – make up the sweetness of Chanukah which I hope you experienced last month. And such was the sweetness of hearing an American president, who exudes freedom with every step he takes, addressing our Reform movement.

Shalom Connection

CONDOLENCES TO:

Len Dorin and family on the loss of his sister,
Leah Dorin Bettelman
Jim Melino and family on the loss of his mother,
Maureen Melino

MAZEL TOV TO:

Diane and Vic Leventhal on the birth of grandson,
Ryan Burke
Terri and Brent Waterman on the birth of grandson,
Charlie Tate

GET WELL TO:

Ellen Duree
Carol Gunter

Turn It, Turn It, Turn It.....

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unique or are they just lumped together and not really well supervised? How old are the staff members and what experiences/qualifications do they hold as they relate to camp and supervising young children? When referring to Jewish camps, is the camp considered a Jewish camp or is it simply a camp for Jews? Who runs the educational programming and is there a particular theme for the summer?

Once you have weighed all of your options, the hardest decisions come down to the area that many parents struggle with because it is not tangible, not in the present. What is the ultimate outcome for my child this summer? Is this going to be Jewish summer or not or a combination of both? Do I look for a camp (or series of camps) that will satisfy my immediate needs for this summer and deal with the succeeding summers as they come or do I establish a pattern that will allow my child to grow and develop every year? What do I want for my child as they leave the nest and make decisions on their own? Will they have a strong Jewish identity? Do I care? Isn't Religious School enough to give my child the Jewish education he/she needs?

This is where the previously mentioned Foundation For Jewish Camp report comes in. Camp is a holistic immersion experience. It is a socializing experience much more than it is an educational experience. Camps are isolated and insulated. They have their own cultures and campers quickly develop their own internal tribes. The relationships formed are intense and life-long. Camp environments show young children what it is like to be in a 100% Jewish community. This is foreign to most and was the most striking and impressionable aspect of camp for me when I was 8. The language is "Jewish", the daily schedule is "Jewish", the food is "Jewish"; everyday is eat, sleep, and play "Jewish". Your camp counselors are not only your de-facto parents but also perform the vital function of being a Jewish role model. I would not be the Jew I am today if it was not for my Jewish summer camp experiences. The relationships I formed with bunkmates and fellow campers are cemented with the shared memories of the bygone days playing ga-ga, swimming, singing, dancing, Shabbat, Havdalah in the Redwood Grove, escaping from Russia to Palestine, hikes to the Star of David on the hill, late-night raid attempts on the girls' cabins, etc. My hope for you is that you attempt to make decisions for your children that have as lasting an affect on their Jewish future as the one my parents made for me.

Camperships are available through the Federation of the Greater East Bay or here at B'nai Tikvah. Please feel free to contact me if you are in need of some financial help. Also, please mark your calendars for Sunday January 29 when a representative from URJ Camp Newman will be here to talk to the students and parents about attending this summer. They will be here at 9:45am that morning. I know that spaces are filling up fast so this is a must to find out more about our regional Reform

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One of my hopes for this year had been to raise the bar of our teens experiences - to give them a variety of opportunities to do Tikkun Olam work with their hands. I am pleased to share that so far, we seem to be hitting the mark! In Fall of 2011, Contra Costa Midrasha saw a resurgence in its Tikkun Olam (Healing the World) activities! It was a time when our community came together to support the larger community, finding itself to be a more bonded "keshet" (community) as a result.

One key area of Tikkun Olam work was joining in Shalom Bayit's "Adopt a Family" program. In this, Contra Costa Midrasha teens and families purchased gifts and gift cards for one family. As we shared with our teens, this type of tzedakah - where gifts are purchased and delivered anonymously - is considered amongst the "highest" types because it preserves the dignity of all involved. It was such a pleasure on December 7th to see cards being made, gifts getting wrapped and food supplies along with gift cards composed into baskets. Our community rallied to make this a special holiday for our adopted family.

Food collection and delivery was another Tikkun Olam project for CCM this past semester. November 11th, our "Day Long Hands-On Food Adventure," saw a group of us at a farm in Sunol, collecting the final harvest of peppers, tomatoes and squash. In all, we hand-picked almost 75 pounds of produce! Some of this we kept for ourselves, making a delicious Shabbat dinner from it. The rest we hand delivered to the Contra Costa Food Bank. Many of the teens who participated in that day commented on how special it felt to be able see food move through the food chain - as picked by their own hands.

This Spring, the hands-on experiences will continue. We'll have another day of a "Food Adventure." And our "Havdalah Outreach Events" kick into high gear, with a Saturday night of Havdalah at Beth Chaim on January 28th and B'nai Shalom on March 17. (We had a fantastically fun night on Dec. 3rd with the 7th grade families at B'nai Tikvah - more to share of that later!)

Of course, we'll have a great opportunity to celebrate this work and more on March 24, the night of our annual fundraiser event! The theme this year is chocolate - you won't want to miss it! Mark your calendars or buy your tickets today via our online site at <http://ccmidrasha.com/annual-event>.

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residential summer camp in Northern California (the camp is located in Santa Rosa).

As an added bonus, I will be attending Camp Newman this summer from June 19 - July 1, serving in the capacity of "Jewish professional faculty" during that time. If your child attends camp during that 2-week period, I will be hosting a gathering in my cabin at some point during that time for all CBT campers.

See you this summer! My goal is to have all CBT students attend a Jewish summer camp at some point this summer, and specifically match the more than 45 campers who attended both Camps Newman and Tawonga. Let's see how close we can get!!



Thank you to the 4th and 7th grade families for their wonderful donations for the Adopt A Family gift drive.

CBT Book Group

Re-reading Firestone's Intro to Islam for Jews

In anticipation of Professor Firestone's appearance for the Rabbi Joseph Asher Memorial Lecture on Friday, January 20 (7:30 pm service), we encourage the Book Group to re-read this important work that was discussed last year. (There are 4 free copies in the Temple Office. 1st come. 1st served!)

Stay tuned for a series on Israeli authors that Riva Gambert is organizing throughout the East Bay. Rabbi Asher will likely be focusing on David Grossman at a March session that will hopefully draw from several synagogues. Grossman's latest work, To the End of the Land, has just recently been translated into English and is monumental! His other books that CBT Book Group tackled in past years are The Yellow Wind and See Under: Love.

JANUARY 2012 Tevet - Shevat 5772

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 NEW YEARS DAY NO Religious School	2 (Office closed)	3 Religious School	4 Religious School	5	6 Family Shabbat Service 6:30 pm	7 * Vayechi Shabbat Service - Bar Mitzvah of Nick Webster 10:00 am
8 Religious School Sisterhood - Legion of Honor visit 9:15 am	9 Executive Board Meeting 6:00 pm Ritual Committee Meeting 7:30 pm	10 Religious School	11 Religious School	12	13 Shabbat Service 6:30 pm	14 * Shemot Morning Minyan 10:00 am
15 NO Religious School	16 (Office closed) MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY - Commemoration @ Civic Park 12:00 pm	17 Religious School Social Action Meeting 7:00 pm	18 Religious School Religious School Committee Meeting 6:30 pm	19	20 Shabbat Dinner 6:15 pm SHIR JOY / Asher Memorial Lecture - Reuven Firestone 7:30 pm	21 * Vayera Shabbat Service - Bat Mitzvah of Hallie Unger 10:00 am
22 Religious School	23 General Board Meeting 6:30 pm	24 Religious School	25 Religious School Rosh Chodesh - Shevat	26 Book Sisters 6:30 pm	27 Shabbat Service "Refuat Hanefesh" (A Healing of Spirit) 6:30 pm	28 * Bo Shabbat Service - Bat Mitzvah of Katie Assael 10:00 am Poker Night! 6:00 pm
29 Religious School Social Action Volunteer Fair Camp Newman presentation 9:45 am	30	31 Religious School Challah Baking class 7:00 pm				

**WE'RE MAKING IT EASIER FOR YOU TO GET TO SERVICES -
JOIN US FOR SHABBAT DINNER!**

Friday, January 20 before the Rabbi Joseph Asher Memorial Lecture

Shabbat Dinner 6:15 pm Shabbat service 7:30 pm

Taheri's will be catering a vegetarian pasta dish.

Send your check for dinner reservations to the Temple Office or members sign up on-line.

\$16 adults/\$7.50 children

Reservations due Monday, January 16

FEBRUARY 2012 Shevat - Adar 5772

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Religious School	2	3 Pot Luck Dinner - Grades K - 3 5:30 pm Family Shabbat Service 6:30 pm	4 * Beshalach/Shira Shabbat Service - Bar Mitzvah of Ryan Levy 10:00 am
5 Religious School	6 Ritual Committee Meeting 7:30 pm	7 Religious School	8 Religious School TU BISH'VAT	9	10 Shabbat Service 6:30 pm	11 * Yitro Shabbat Service - 4th graders participating 10:00 am
12 Parent Day! Religious School Midrasha Cooking Class 1:30 pm - 3:30 pm	13 Executive Board Meeting 6:00 pm	14 Religious School	15 Religious School Religious School Committee Meeting 6:30 pm	16	17 Shabbat Service "Refuat Hanefesh" (A Healing of Spirit) 7:30 pm	18 * Mishpatim Shabbat Service - Bar Mitzvah of Ryan Billy 10:00 am
19 NO Religious School	20 (Office closed) PRESIDENTS' DAY	21 Religious School	22 Religious School	23 Rosh Chodesh - Adar	24 Shabbat Service 6:30 pm	25 * Terumah Shabbat Service - 3rd graders participating 10:00 am Annual GALA! 6:00 pm
26 Religious School	27 General Board Meeting 6:30 pm	28 Religious School	29 Religious School			

FEBRUARY POT LUCK DINNER -CALLING ALL K - 3 FAMILIES!

Let's share a Shabbat on Friday, February 3!

We will begin our evening at 5:30 pm in our social hall for a vegetarian potluck dinner,
followed by Family Shabbat services at 6:30 pm
in our sanctuary.

Then it is back to our social hall to end our wonderful evening with our Oneg.

Please contact Jenifer Paul (jenlamkenpaul@hotmail.com) to RSVP
and let her know what you will be bringing!



Reflections.....

(continued from page 1)

Bay Area. She has studied at Boston Conservatory, Santa Cecilia Conservatory in Rome and The Manhattan School of Music.

During the past eight years she has substituted as Cantorial soloist for Shabbat services and High Holyday services at a number of synagogues in the Bay Area.. She moves comfortably between traditional chazzanut and folk styles and can accompany herself on guitar for those services where instruments are permitted.



Help us welcome Fran Burgess at Morning Minyan on Saturday, January 14 at 10 am in our Library.

AFTER-SCHOOL ENRICHMENT PROGRAM

CBT's Religious School has begun offering an after-school Hebrew enrichment program, entitled Hebrew "Boot Camp." The details of the program are as follows:



1. Class is held from 12:15pm-1:15pm.
2. Each "set" of classes is held in 5-week blocks.
3. Current CBT Religious School teachers are teaching.
4. ..Classes are "leveled" - regardless of which grade your child is in, students will be placed together by Hebrew ability.
5. Cost of each 5-week session is \$90.

Students are expected to bring their own lunch to eat before the class begins.

If you feel that your child is behind in their Hebrew learning, or if you are unable to attend class on a regular basis, please look into registering your child for these sessions. Additionally, if we have enough interest in having your student (and/or yourself) learn conversational Hebrew, we will also start a special conversational Hebrew section.

If you have any questions, or wish to register your child, please email Phil Hankin (philhankin@tikvah.org) with the following:

- Session I - continues through Jan 29 (no session on Jan 22 - teacher staff meeting)
- Session II - Feb 5-Mar 18 (no session on Mar 4 - Purim Carnival)
- Session III - April 1 - May 13

Each class must have a minimum of 3 students to be viable. Sign up now by contacting philhankin@tikvah.org.

Thank you to Sinful Bliss (downtown Pleasant Hill) for their donation of 180 mini 'Chanukah' cupcakes for the Zimriah!

Need a LITTLE Help Sending
Your Child to a
Jewish Summer Camp?

Contact the Temple Office for an
Application for the
James Cohen Memorial Fund.

Applications Due
February 15, 2012

MORE PRAYERBOOKS NEEDED FOR OUR SANCTUARY



Don't miss an(other) opportunity to order a bookplate
to be placed in a Mishkan T'filah.

To have a bookplate placed in memory of a loved one
or in honor of a happy occasion,
please detach the form below and return
to the Temple office with a check for \$36 each.



Presented to Congregation B'nai Tikvah
by

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Circle one: in honor of in memory of

(please print)

If you would like us to send notification of this donation to someone,
please include their name and address.

(please print)

SOCIAL ACTION....

By Tina Guterman, Social Action Chair

Social action at CBT is a community effort - we, as a congregation, lend a hand to other communities, and in so doing, inevitably strengthen the bonds within our own community. Consider becoming involved in our many annual social action events that focus on helping those in need, working toward social justice, and engaging in community service. Let us know of new ideas for social action that are important to you and your family.

CBT is extremely fortunate to have many congregants who have taken the lead in various social action efforts over numerous years. For example, Cookie Svingos organizes the *Adopt a Family* Program through the Center for the Vulnerable Child at Children's Hospital. CBT is the second largest contributor to this program after Wells Fargo! Phil Weismehl has put together the *Relay for Life* (American Cancer Society), Diane Leventhal takes charge of the *Wardrobe for Opportunity* clothing drive, Jared Goldin coordinated our participation in *Winter Nights*, Toni Dine runs our annual *blood drives*, Lisa and Emma Wenger organize the collection of *Preschool Supplies for Children in Zimbabwe* (with our partner, Kapnek Trust), and Nessa Wilk and Ruth Goldenberg helped to CBT involved in *Tutoring* through the Jewish Coalition for Literacy..

On January 29th, the Social Action Committee will be holding a Volunteer Sign-Up Fair (with bagels and coffee) so you can find out more about the social action efforts at CBT. And, we'll be putting a sign-up board in the lobby listing these events as well. In short, there are lots of opportunities for us to engage in Tikkun Olam together as one community.

*****Upcoming is CBT's response to a need for one week's worth of dinners for 40 residents (children, teens, and adults) at the Mountain View Shelter in Martinez during the week of February 27th through March 2nd through winter nights. If you would like to help out with this, you can sign up on the board in the lobby or at the volunteer brunch, or contact Tina Guterman (tguterman@aol.com).***

Our next social action committee meeting is Tuesday, January 17th at 7:00 at CBT. Please join us if you like!

An Introduction to Islam for Jews

With Scholar-in-Residence Rabbi Reuven Firestone, Ph.D.

Rabbi Dr. Reuven Firestone is professor of medieval Judaism and Islam at Hebrew Union College, Los Angeles, Senior Fellow of the Center for Religion and Civic Culture at the University of Southern California, and founder and co-director of the Center for Muslim-Jewish Engagement in Los Angeles. Author of seven books and over eighty scholarly articles on Judaism, Islam and their relationship with one another and with Christianity, Rabbi Firestone has lived in Israel and Egypt. He received his Ph.D. in Arabic and Islamic Studies from New York University.



Join us for this important series:

Friday, January 20, 7:30 p.m.

Islamic Fundamentalism and the Arab Spring
Cong. B'nai Tikvah, 25 Hillcroft Way, Walnut Creek

Sunday, March 25, 4 p.m.

How Do We See Each Other?
Temple Isaiah, 3800 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette

Sunday, April 29, 4 p.m.

Jews and Muslims in Dialogue
Beth Chaim Cong., 1800 Holbrook Drive, Danville

Admission for the January lecture: \$18
Tickets available at the door, or
by calling 510.318.6453.

Sponsors:

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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

For membership information, please contact the Temple Office.

Join CBT in the first Annual TEXAS HOLD 'EM TOURNAMENT

Saturday, January 28, 2012
from 6:30 pm to when one player is left standing.

Entry Fee includes catered dinner and beer, wine and soft drinks,
\$3000 in chips with one rebuy (should you be unlucky in a few hands)
Cash payouts



Space is limited - \$100 by December 31, 2011
\$125 once 2012 begins if seating is still available.
First 75 to sign up are in!

Make check payable to CBT - send to the Temple Office
Members can sign up on line through the Members' Only section of our website..