

Hakol

The Voice of the Pelham Jewish Center

A Message from the Rabbi

Dear Friends,

When rabbinical students interview with me for the position of rabbinic intern, one of the first questions that I ask them is what they want to do in their internship. Invariably they tell me that they would like to see what the life of a pulpit rabbi is like by *shadowing* me. I get a good laugh out of this. I tell them that I spend a majority of my day responding to emails so unless they want to watch me type at the computer, they should re-imagine the way they want to structure the internship.

I have now reached the point at which I too would like to re-imagine the way I structure my rabbinic work. A rabbi should spend his/her time doing the most important elements of clergy work: visiting people who are sick and homebound, studying and teaching, counseling, building relationships with people in real time (in person or on the phone), playing a leadership within the local community, and writing. Alas, in my day to day work, I answer email more than doing any of the above. Despite all of the time I put into emailing, my inbox is virtually always overflowing and I am almost always late with my response.

MY VISION FOR COMMUNICATION

I realize that electronic communication is presently a major medium for being in touch, but I am not convinced that it is the most effective method for the purposes of clergy work. I care deeply about the relationships that I have built with members of our congregation, and I realize that email has been one of the ways in which we communicate with one another. I hope that we will be able to deepen the content of our interactions and communication even if we reduce the quantity of them. My hope is that sharing a cup of coffee or speaking together in my study will replace hours of emailing about matters that can be more efficiently handled in an administrative manner.

THE NEW SYSTEM

After much consideration and with the blessing of the PJC Board of Directors, we have created a new system to manage my email traffic. All emails sent to me will be screened by our new Office Manager Kimberly Lewis, and she will respond to most of them on my behalf. This means that Kimberly will see all of the emails sent to me, including the emails that are of a confidential nature. We have a new service that will filter all emails that are sent to me for the first time. You will receive an automated email in response asking you to verify your email address and reminding you that another person will receive these emails on my behalf from this

point on.

Kimberly will protect the confidential nature of your email in the same way that I do, but if you are uncomfortable with another person reading the email, I encourage you to call me directly in order to discuss the matter at hand.

The basic presumption of my rabbinate is that the relationships that I build with individuals in our community are at the center. This administrative change is meant to free up time for me to deepen those relationships and create a new medium in which they can develop: phone calls and in person conversations. I believe that I will serve you more effectively with this change by having more time for my pastoral and rabbinic work and cutting down on the administrative burden of email.

THIS IS AN EXPERIMENT

I am aware that some people may find this change off putting. It is in no way a signal that I want to be less accessible. It is, in fact, the opposite: I want to be more accessible in more meaningful ways. However, this change is an experiment and I am asking for your patience as it is implemented. We will survey the congregation after six months of this change in order to assess its impact and your feelings about it.

Thank you for your understanding regarding this issue. I have felt for

**THE
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JEWISH
CENTER**

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of Conservative Judaism

Rabbi David Schuck

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The deadline for articles and other submissions for the Febraury 2013 issue of the Hakol is Tuesday, January 15th. Please send articles to Kim Lewis at office@thepjc.org and Jack Klebanow at Jack.klebanow@gmail.com

some time that email has become a tremendous burden, and I would like to take better control of my time to best serve you. I appreciate your openness to this experiment. I look forward to cups of coffee together. Give me a call so we can set it up.

L'shalom,



Rabbi David A. Schuck

Remember that Rabbi Schuck's blog can be found at www.viatherabbi.blogspot.com. Feel free to leave comments in order to have a fruitful conversation.

**A Message From
the President**

The "culture" of the daily train commute to NYC is still something that I find dismaying, even 5 months into the routine. The commuting culture embodies much of what I find alienating in our modern life. In recognizing what upsets me about the culture, I have been able to refocus on what I find meaningful. Let me explain.

One morning recently I ran into a PJC friend on the platform. When she saw me, she asked if I had plans for my time on the train, and if not, would I like to talk with her? On the one hand, it was refreshing that she was so direct in acknowledging the reality, but the reality itself is the very thing that I still find so very jarring. The "reality" to which I refer is my experience that, more often than not, conversation is considered a nuisance or a downright imposition. Conversation "intrudes" on the agenda that we have formulated for how we will use our time. So everyone sits in

solitude---connected with his/her "device of choice---iPod, iPad, iPhone --but totally **DIS**connected to any human interaction. Occasionally when I say hello to someone in passing through a car looking for a seat, I see recognition, followed by the briefest flicker of hope co-mingled with disappointment: hope that I'll keep walking; disappointment when I stop to exchange the briefest of polite "how's everything's "..... followed by relief when I release them back to doing their own thing.

I totally get the pressure to use those 27 minutes of commuting time "productively"--- to respond to emails, prepare for a meeting, or write a HAKOL article, even! I understand the appeal of getting one more task done. I feel the urge myself! And yet each time I talk with someone instead of addressing one more task, it always turns out to be just the thing I really needed in that moment. Really, when was the last time my spirit was buoyed by an email?

When I enter the train car that I described above, I feel a wave of sadness pass over me, and palpably feel isolation. Experiencing this sadness has allowed me to reclaim for myself the ultimate importance in my life of relationships. For me, nothing is more meaningful than making an authentic connection with someone. I realize that making connections is how my soul feels "alive".

Life is hectic. Time is scarce and therefore, precious. So the question of how to use this train time represents, for me, the larger question of how I choose to use my time in general. Each moment of considering whether I chat with someone or send another email reminds me to be conscious and mindful of the choices I have. My commuting has reminded me of what stirs me. In this moment of turning the page to a new year, I want to RE-commit to spending more time in relationships, which is what, ultimately, fills my well.

By the time you read this, you will just be receiving the updated PJC membership directory. I plan to use mine to re-connect with friends I haven't seen in awhile; to invite someone I don't know well to shabbos dinner; to find out if my friend made up with the sister they were fighting with, or how their mother is doing after a recent illness.

I invite you to use yours too, and often! Let's not lose the momentum created in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy of care and support for one another. Let's BE the warm and welcoming community we say and think we are. Warmth comes through in person a lot better than it does through the screen! And I suspect you well will be refilled, too, by reaching out.

Wishing you a meaningful "connected" 2013!

Kate

A Message From the Education Director

The Hebrew month of *Tevet*, which started on the 4th night of Hanukkah and will end on January 11th, is a month with no holiday celebrations. As I browsed the events that happened along Jewish history during the month of Tevet, two dates caught my attention and made me think about how we understand historical events of great magnitude from a different perspective in time. Let me share these two historical events with you, and perhaps try to make sense of them, enlightening our insight about our own lives.

The first major event: on the 10th of *Tevet* (426 BCE or 589

BCE – according to two different sources), Nebuchadnezzar, King of the Chaldeans (Babylonia), laid siege on Jerusalem. This was the first step who further led to the breach of the walls of Jerusalem on the 17th of Tammuz and subsequently to the destruction of the First Temple on the 9th of Av, 586 BCE. The 10th of Tevet is a fast day for the Jewish people.

The second event: on the 17th day of Tevet, 1728, the First New York Synagogue was built by the congregation “*Sheerith Israel*” (Remnant of Israel). *Sheerith Israel* was a congregation of descendants from Spanish-Portuguese Jews who fled the Inquisition, arrived in Brazil and were subsequently expelled from there, arriving to “New Amsterdam”, now New York, in 1654.

Why do I find these two different events in Jewish History, that happened on the month of Tevet, so mind-blowing? And why do I feel there is something here that can give us insight towards our own present, what we do at the Learning Center and perhaps the future of the Jewish people as well?

Well, some of you may have already found some threads between these two events, and perhaps many differences as well: both events deal with a Temple: one about the catastrophic destruction of the First Temple, and the other, a meaningful and promising construction of a prominent Jewish community of our times. Both events deal with expulsion and exile: the first, the 70 years exile to Babylon; the second event, the Inquisition and expulsion from Spain (1492) and from Portugal's colony, Brazil (notice the year: 1654!) And another thread: both expulsions and exiles yielded an

enormous amount of new Jewish traditions, adaptations of Jewish law to new challenges, Jewish liturgy and magnificent Jewish rabbinical texts. Both exiled communities (Babylonian and American) became extremely impactful in the Jewish world of their time and the large world as well.

Fine, you may know where I am heading with this; the logical but not easy understanding that out from our darkest moments we can see the most brilliant spark of light: how the Jewish spirit and the Jewish tradition can overcome the hardest challenges and rise from the ashes anew and fortified.

So how does this connect to what we do here at our Learning Center? I often hear from parents about their daily struggle to bring students to our Religious school, as their children face an ever-growing amount of academic work and expectations, especially in the Middle and High school years. Parents and students describe to me their impossible daily schedules and their stressful school demands. It is really tough to put Hebrew High School into that equation and prioritize its time (2- weekly hours) when facing all the modern life constraints our teens are facing. And still, I am certain that once we are clear on the relevance of developing the study of Judaism, of strengthening Jewish identity and Jewish life, once we can prioritize these few hours to be the special time devoted to deal with the development and improvement of one's Jewish self, we will be going in the right direction. Learning about our millenary tradition of struggle and how to cope with adversity can certainly strengthen our ability to face 21st century challenges. Our history can teach us fabulous lessons

about resilience, flexibility, trust and faith that can only benefit the weaving of a strong character and a robust approach to life's tests.

The second semester that starts this January in our Learning Center brings new opportunities for students and their families to experience Jewish learning in many different ways and levels; for example, in our Hebrew High School: The PJC is participating in the Westchester Jewish teen Learning Initiative, a pilot program that seeks to offer new avenues for teen engagement with Jewish learning and Jewish life. We are especially thrilled to have been granted the opportunity to offer our 10th, 11th and 12th graders "The David Project" program, which will empower High School teens to understand the challenges facing Israel in the Middle East. The David Project mini-course will take place on 5 Tuesday night sessions: Jan 22, Feb 12, March 5, March 12 and April 23, and will be open to all 10th, 11th and 12th grade Jewish teens in the Westchester area, regardless of their enrollment in Hebrew School. The course will explore the questions such as: What's with all the hype over Israel? What does Israel have to do with me? This mini-course will expose participants to a number of personalities and their beliefs about the Land and State of Israel over the course of history. Teens who complete the course will be able to articulate personal views on Israel, and will have the opportunity to add themselves to the complex history through a culminating presentation of their personal connections. This program was generously granted to us through The Westchester Jewish Education project and the Westchester Jewish Council.

There is a legend that tells that from each stone scattered throughout the world during the destruction of the Temple, a new Jewish community was built. Our beautiful PJC community, a heaven of Jewish life in America, is certainly one of them. How the month of Tevet connects with our lives today? Well, come to the LC and learn all about it with us!

L'shalom,
Ana Turkienicz

From the Editors

When we give money to tzedakah, or when we do good deeds through social action and the like, we often do it with personal goals. While we may aim for it to be given completely selflessly, at least for many of us, it isn't so easy. The drive to do these acts of *hesed* is complex, as our altruistic and selfish motivations are often intermingled. These emotionally charged considerations become even more complex when we have contact with the recipients of aid. At times we may judge them morally inferior, insufficiently needy, or ungrateful. It is valuable for our own growth to be aware of these feelings when we experience them. Giving is seldom a simple proposition. This is not a reason to keep from participating or giving. We should continue to give generously of our time, money and efforts. It is important, however, that we recognize the complex emotional and ideological aspects of these acts and to continue to wrestle with the endeavor, especially from a Jewish perspective.

In an Anonymous Hakol article last month, some of these issues came

to the fore and congregants have disagreed with the sentiments it expressed. The editors wish to make it clear that the article did not express the views of the PJC Board or leadership, and was not closely vetted prior to publishing. We regret any offense.

Further, we wish to make clear that financial donations to the PJC and to social action causes are both due the highest honor. In no way do financial contributions play "second fiddle" to active volunteerism in the PJC. These are two vital pillars of our community, on which we firmly stand, like two legs of a person. We encourage you to continue to support our community with both, to the best of your ability.

SAVE THE DATE

Saturday night!!!!

March 2, 2013

PJC Fundraiser

Celebrate of Spirit of Giving

Details to follow

SOCIAL ACTION

Breakfast Run

The Breakfast Run was a huge success! On the morning of December 2nd, Marcelo Nacht and Cheryl Goldstein, Ana and Neco Turkienicz, Claudia, Darren and Izak Lee, Roger, Chloe and Oliver Krulak, Rachel, Andy, Sarah and Janney Collens, Amy Hersh and Sarah Rubock all traveled into the New York City and served a hearty, hot breakfast to over 75 homeless men and women. We also gave out toiletries and new undergarments and clothing. Thank you to Beth Yelsey for providing those new undergarments. The Breakfast Run would not be possible without the generous monetary contributions from the PJC Board, Rhonda Singer and the Barback and Mailick families. We are also especially grateful to Lisa Daley from The Bakery at Four Corners for providing baked items, Costco for providing a generous gift card, The Stern, Grossman and Brown families for donating clothing, The Pelham Country Club for lending us the containers to keep the coffee hot, and H & R Bialy (the bagel place in Wykagyl) for donating the bagels. The next time the PJC will be participating in a Midnight Run will be April 20th. Mark your calendars!

Soup Kitchen

Thank you to the Hersh/Rubock, Perrotti, Dunkin/Kraftowitz, Levitz, Dukess/Liesman, Cynthia Cheney, Levine, Driesen, Singer and Yelsey families for providing a healthy meal to the Community Service Associates Soup Kitchen in Mount Vernon on December 18th. If you would like to provide baked ziti, salad and chocolate chip cookies for the Soup Kitchen on Tuesday, January 15th, please email Rachel Collens at rachelcollens@optonline.net.

Food is cooked in your own kitchen and brought to Rachel's house as early as Sunday evening the 13th and no later than 1:00 PM on Tuesday the 15th.

The Pelham Jewish Center Remembers the Following Yahrzeits in January

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1/1 Morris Jacobs, father of Gerald Jacobs | 1/15 Sadie Druckerman, mother of Martin Druckerman |
| 1/2 Henry Goldman, father of Robert Goldman | 1/16 Emanuel Cabin, grandfather of Daniel Cabin |
| Stanley Stern, father of Melanie Stern | 1/20 David Jae, Founding member of Pelham Jewish Center |
| 1/3 Helen Goldberg, mother of Shelli Goldberg-Peck | 1/23 Rose Feffer, Aunt of Gerald Jacobs |
| 1/4 Frank Bennett, grandfather of Leah Leonard | 1/24 Ellye Bloom, wife of Norman Bloom |
| Ellenore Levander, wife of Seymour Levander | Nathan Windman, father of Joel Windman |
| 1/6 Nathan Schaeffer, father of Florence Grossman | 1/25 Theodore Handelman, father of Stephen Handelman |
| 1/8 Ruth Katz, mother of Arthur Katz | 1/26 Stanley Backer, father of Jon Backer |
| 1/9 Elsie Goldiner, mother of Paul Goldiner | 1/27 Rita Agris, mother of Cheryl Agris |
| 1/11 Morris Covell, Founding member of Pelham Jewish Center | 1/28 Ester Taub, mother of Shelley Klein |
| 1/14 Esther Kraftowitz, mother of Lawrence Kraftowitz | 1/30 Gussie Jacobs, mother of Gerald Jacobs |
| | Marsha Lanoil, mother of Jerry Lanoil |

SOCIAL ACTION

Pictures from the Breakfast Run



SOCIAL ACTION



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 Port Chester, NY 10573
 phone: 914.937.2320
 fax: 914.937.4902
 email: fsw@fsw.org
 web: www.fsw.org

Susan B. Wayne
 President and
 Chief Executive officer

December 3, 2012

Dear Friends:

On behalf of the Board and staff of Family Services of Westchester (FSW), I want to express my deep appreciation to you for participating in our Thanksgiving-in-a-Box drive this year. I truly wish you could have seen the looks of delight and gratitude on the faces of the families who arrived at our pick-up locations—FSW’s Family Center sites in Pelham, Yonkers, Mt. Vernon, Port Chester and Sleepy Hollow—to collect their boxes the day before Thanksgiving. While Westchester is often considered to be a county of affluence, this is far from true for many of our residents who struggle every day to meet their families’ most basic needs. For them, providing a special holiday meal is simply not possible. However, because you were willing to donate your time and resources, nearly 500 families in Westchester County were able to share in the bounty of Thanksgiving when they might not otherwise have been able to do so. We are so grateful to you for bringing these families such joy and for helping us to make a real difference in their lives.

Warm Regards,

Susan B. Wayne
 Susan B. Wayne
 President/CEO

Thank you for making such a difference!

Family Services of Westchester is dedicated to providing a broad range of social and mental health services that strengthen and support families and individuals at every stage of the life cycle. FSW offers mental health and counseling services in seven locations; community outreach programs for youth that encourage positive behavior to reduce gang involvement; support for the many families struggling to “keep it together;” and innovative programs for the aging population of Westchester. We annually help more than 30,000 people lead more fulfilling lives.



Making a difference right at home.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Come Check Out the New Mini-Class Format with Shira Wallach!

Sign up for the next 5 week mini class with Rabbinic Intern Shira Wallach! Each session will be developed as a stand alone unit – come to one, two ...or all! **“Women in Midrash”** begins on Thursday, **Jan. 24** from **7:15-8:45pm** and will run on **Jan. 31, Feb. 7, Feb. 14,** and **Feb. 28.** March 7 will be held as make-up date.

In addition, one of the sessions will be developed with an age **13+ audience** in mind to provide a "family" Torah study opportunity for anyone interested. To register or for more information, please e-mail Jeanne Radvany at (dj_rad@msn.com).

How did the rabbis of the midrash relate to female characters in the Bible? In each session, we will study a narrative of one of our famous (or lesser-known) biblical heroines, and then look at how her story develops in midrashic tradition. In our exploration, we will engage in conversation with the rabbis, identifying "ideal" characteristics of the female protagonist, and reflecting upon the literary tools the rabbis use when the biblical narrative pushes them outside their comfort zone.

Dear PJC Community,

I am hosting a musical talent show for middle and high school students to raise money and awareness for the Danny Fund. The Danny Fund is a Pelham based organization that provides financial, emotional, and advocacy support for families of children suffering from a catastrophic illness or injury.

The Danny Fund helps kids like Madison and Jack Lewinger. When they were two years old, twins Madison and Jack were diagnosed with Wilms' Tumor, a rare pediatric kidney cancer. For Jack, since his disease was at a lesser stage and contained in the kidney, the treatment was short and successful. However, Madison's disease spread to her lungs, so she suffered through endless hospital stays and countless hours of treatment, including a stem cell transplant. The Danny Fund was thrilled to be able to discharge the Lewinger family in late 2011. Now, "Maddy the Brave" and "Jack the Strong" are able to attend school and even started Little League last spring.

The show will take place on **January 13, 2013** from 2-4PM at the PJC. In addition to the middle and high school performers, there will also be surprise adult performers, many from the PJC. The suggested minimum donation per ticket is \$5. You can reserve tickets by emailing me at rachelr2345@gmail.com. Checks should be made payable to "The Danny Fund." Tickets will also be available at the door.

Thank you in advance for your support!

Sincerely,
Rachel Radvany

January Learning Center Events

January 8th:

4:30pm-5:30pm: Guest Speakers: Avishai Mekonen and Beejhy Barhany (The Ethiopian Jews Story)

January 11th:

6:30pm – Bnei Mitzvah Family Shabbat Dinner; Program II: Values Game

January 12th:

10:30am – Junior Congregation & Young Junior Congregation

5:30pm – Hooked on Havdalah for Nitzanim through Bet families

January 17th:

4:00pm – **6:00pm:** Parent Teacher Conference

January 19th:

10:30am – Junior Congregation & Young Junior Congregation

11:00am – Torah Time

January 22nd:

(Time to Be determined) - Tu Bishvat program with Camp Monroe

(Time to Be determined) – Kitah Dalet Family Stories Program

January 27th:

10:00am – Yom Rishon Mishpachah

11:00am – Chai Mitzvah

1:00pm – Bnei Mitzvah Family program III: Tefilin + Moral Choices

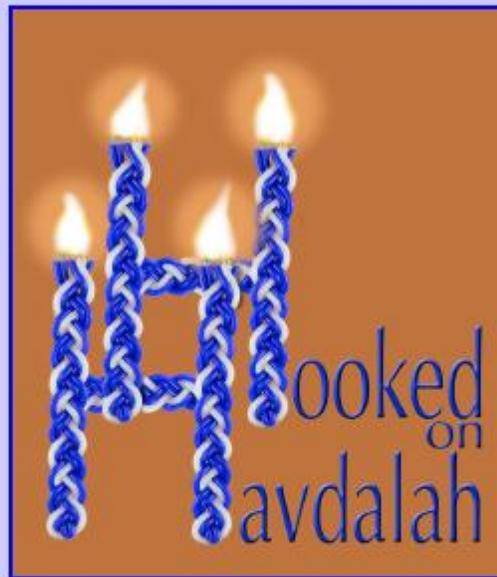
January 31st:

4:00pm –7:00pm - Hei-Vav Class – Living Museum

LEARNING CENTER

Hooked on Havdalah

IS RIGHT AROUND THE CORNER!!!
Saturday, January 12th, 5:00pm-8:30pm



Aren't you HOOKED ON HAVDALAH yet?

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5pm: Come for playtime and a casual dinner in a congregant's home.

6:30pm: Families gather at the PJC for *Havdalah*

7:00pm: Jazz music, Wine & desserts for parents, special program for the children

7:45 pm: Ice-cream party for the kids!

RSVP to Kim at the PJC office : office@thepjc.org - 914-738-6008

Kiddush Korner

It's never too early to reserve an upcoming Kiddush date now for Winter / Spring 2013—a complete list of available dates is listed below. Our PJC Kiddush represents a wonderful conclusion to the meaningful Saturday morning Shabbat service. It is a time to talk with fellow congregants, welcome new members & guests, and include our children in the weekly traditions. The weekly Kiddush is a special way to celebrate a *simcha*--birthdays, anniversaries, and graduations are just a few occasions to acknowledge. It is also customary to observe a *yahrzeit* by sponsoring a Kiddush in memory of a loved one.

Sponsorship is simple—all you need to do is pick a date—we do the rest, from menu planning to set-up and clean-up. Kiddush package options start at just \$150. Please contact PJC Kiddush Coordinator Leah Leonard at lsleonard@optonline.net to reserve a date. Thank you for helping to maintain an important PJC tradition!

Available Kiddush dates for Winter/Spring 2013:

February 16, 23

March 9, 23, 30

April 6, 13, 20, 27

June 22

The PJC thanks the following congregants for hosting a Kiddush last month:

December 1	Joel & Shelli Goldberg-Peck in honor of their 32 nd wedding anniversary and Josh Fein & Anna Nelson in honor of the naming of their daughter Maya	
December 8	Steve & Hildy Martin and family	In honor of Amy & Yosi's wedding
December 15	Laurence Reffold & Beth Starr and family	In honor of Matthew's Bar Mitzvah
December 22	Ted & Vivian Brown	In honor of their wedding anniversary
December 29	Sam & Barbara Saunders-Adams In memory of the <i>yahrzeit</i> of Barbara's mother, Selma Saunders	

Contributions to The PJC

- David and Jeanne Radvany, in honor of Hildy and Steve Martin's daughter Amy's wedding, and in memory of Barbara Saunders-Adams father Charles Saunders
- Pat Levinson, in honor of the *Yahrzeit* of her mother Irene Silver
- Efreim and Frederica Sigel, in honor of Mark Singer's mother Marjorie Singer
- Steve and Hildy Martin, in memory of Marc Prager's mother Seena Prager, in honor of the generosity and kindness of Bob and Sandra Goldman, and in honor of Debbie Stampfer's birthday
- Rachel Collens, in memory of Janet and Avrom Sigel
- The Lauzars, in *Mozel Tov* to the Stettner-Silva Family on the birth of their baby boy
- The Lauzars, in memory Barbara Saunders-Adams father Charles Saunders
- Sandra and Bob Goldman, in honor of Marc Prager's mother Seena Prager, in honor of Mark Singer's mother Marjorie Singer, in celebration of Rachel Radvany's Bat Mitzvah, and in celebration of the wedding of Amy and Yossi
- Dan Mailick and Lydia Read, in support of the Dec. 2nd breakfast run

Contributions to The Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

- Eleanor Einzig, in memory of her son, Aaron Benjamin Einzig
- David Haft, in memory of his father Abraham Haft
- Gloria Horowitz, in honor of Leah Leonard, hostess extraordinaire
- David, Hnin, and Benjamin Goldman, in honor of Rabbi Schuck for his help with the preparations of Benjamin's Bar Mitzvah
- Cheryl Agris, in memory of her father George Agris
- J. Edward Sporn, the proceeds of the 3 *Tzedakah* boxes that belonged to his daughter Nora Jean

PJC CALENDAR

Invitations for all occasions:

Bar/Bat Mitzvah

Wedding

Sweet Sixteen

Birthday

Birth Announcements

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