



# The Menorah

## Notes from the Rabbi: Ethan Seidel An Overheard Conversation

Did you catch the Rabbi's article in the November Menorah

*Nah, I don't generally read the bulletin anymore.*

Really? Why not?

*I don't have time. When I used to get it by mail, it would sit around the house, and eventually I might look at it – if only on the john. But now it comes in my inbox. I don't delete it, but I get so much email that it gets buried, and I never think to get back to it.*

You know, you can ask the office to send you a hard copy each month. That's what I did. You should read the Rabbi's column – it's not a bad article. A little weird, maybe,

but that's just the Rabbi. *He's like that some-times. Some of his sermons are too clever by half – I feel like I never get the point.*



Did you like any of the High Holiday sermons he gave?

*I wasn't at TI for the Holidays.*

Oh, were you out of town?

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## President's Column: Joel Cohen Fundraising

This is the time of year when we at TI are just finishing up our biggest and most important economic event of the year, the Fall Fundraiser for the Annual Fund. Before I make that expected plea for more participation and more money, let me say just a little bit about the TI finances.

To begin with, dues do not cover all our expenses. Very roughly, dues cover the basic costs of the synagogue's administration and spiritual leadership. They do not cover the cost of food, the subsidy to the Hebrew School, our wonderful programs and classes, the library books, the chumashim and siddurim, and repairs and improvements; in short, most of the extras that we don't think of as extras, but which are really a part of synagogue life.

Fundraising of all types pays for these "extras."

For example, most of the food cost is borne by donations made for specific kiddushim and lots of people donate for other specific reasons.

Yet our phone calls and emails in the Fall constitute the most important single source of our non-dues income.



## Notes from the Rabbi (continued)

*Nah, we were here, but I couldn't see paying all that extra money just for High Holiday tickets. We went to the services at 6<sup>th</sup> and I.*

Really! How were they?

*OK, I guess. It was a little weird not being at TI. The Rabbi and the Cantor were great, but hardly anybody sang along. It was like a performance. A good performance, sure - it was worth the \$9 they charged. But it didn't feel like TI. I don't know what we'll do next year.*

Who knows? Maybe TI will change the ticket policy. But whatever they do, I know the Rabbi helps people to pay for High Holiday tickets from his Discretionary fund.

*Yeah, but I hate having to ask, because we **could** scrape up the money if we had to.*

The services were good this year. Even Yom Kippur Minchah – which I ended up at because I got the time of the afternoon talk wrong – it was really hopping – great tunes, everyone singing along, unpretentious, but really serious. Say, how's your daughter doing? She feeling better?

*A little better. Now the doctors are saying ... hold on, let me see who this is. Oh, it's just my wife, I'll call her back later. What were we talking about?*

I forgot. Oh yeah, the Rabbi's sermons.

*Frankly, I'm not a big fan – which I guess is partly why we didn't come to the High Holidays this year. He's always nudging us to study Torah. I mean, get real – I don't even have time to watch the shows I've Tivo'ed anymore – and he thinks I've got time to learn Hebrew??*

You still Tivo? What about Hulu? Or Netflix?

*We've got lousy broadband. Damn, I just hate being at the mercy of [company's name deleted by the editor]. I'm about ready to Occupy DC. **That's** what the Rabbi should be talking about – how we need better broadband in this country!*

Fat chance he'll talk about that! I don't think he even watches TV. Last I heard he doesn't even use a cell phone. Pop culture is not his strong point. He made this reference to Harry Potter in one of his sermons that we all thought was a joke, because it wasn't from Harry Potter at all, but from Spiderman.

But according to some friends that talked to him, it wasn't a joke at all – he was just plain wrong – he had no idea that quote was from Spiderman!! Maybe it's not true – I didn't talk to him directly.

*That's the problem – when does he talk to people? Except for his Torah classes, which no normal person has time to take.*

Actually, I was thinking about taking a class this year. That Sunday night Intro to Judaism is about my speed. And I don't have to make every class – each one is separate, I gather.

*And you have the time for this?*

*(Continued on page 3)*

### The Menorah Tifereth Israel Congregation

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Appointments are recommended.)

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*Tifereth Israel is a traditional egalitarian congregation affiliated with the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism*

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## President's Column (continued)

We therefore need participation from every member. This is where you decide how much to donate. BUT it is very important that *everyone* donate, because when we ask outside sources for help, it is enormously useful to be able to say that we have 100% member participation.

If you have not been a regular donor, please make a gift this year. Even \$25 helps towards the goal of 100% participation. If you are a regular donor, please increase your highest previous gift by at least 10%.

You now know why the synagogue needs the donations, and some of the extras you get for your donation. But, you might ask, "What do I personally get if I donate at this time?"

I'm glad you asked that question, because there are many things you get from such a donation. First, you

get the pleasure of having helped your synagogue. But closer to home, you will notice that your car will be shinier, and your dishes will come out of the dishwasher sparkling. Your towels will come out of the wash softer and with the faint smell of a fresh breeze.

Your car will get better mileage and your co-workers will have fresher breath. The team you root for will win the World Series, and your guy will be elected president next year. And that's only the beginning!

Your children will help much more around the house and do their homework without being told. If you do not have children yet, you may have some before the next Fall Fundraising campaign. (Certain long-time members might even find themselves with grandchildren!)

More personally, your dentist will tell you that your teeth are in perfect

condition and that you don't have to come back until the next checkup. In addition to all this, there are the specials, that one-time favor you need done, a new job, winning the lottery, etc.

You may wonder how I can guarantee all this. Well, as president of a medium-sized synagogue, I have a direct line to God's answering machine, and he checks messages frequently. (In case you are wondering, at small congregations, the president just gets an email address. At very large congregations, the president gets a phone number and talks directly to God's Husband).

And I have decided to use my sacred privilege to grant all the above-listed favors as appreciation to ANY family that donates to the Annual Fund. So in all sincerity I ask you to please make that donation. You owe it to your children, and to your dishes.

## Notes from the Rabbi (cont.)

No. But, well, during the holidays, it just occurred to me that I waste a lot of time with entertainment. And that I spend a lot of time trying to look at all my email, when hardly anyone else I know responds to all of their email in a timely fashion. I just thought I might spend some time laying a foundation for the rest of my life, rather than constantly chasing around for interesting movies, and great music.

*You sound like the Ultra Orthodox!*

No. I still like movies. And I love listening to music. But I think I'm missing something. I'm just going to reorient my priorities a little. See how it feels. Oh, wait, now I remember – I was asking about your daughter.

*Oh yeah. Thanks for asking! Oh, damn, who is it this time? It's my wife again, I better take this...*

[Rabbi Seidel is recuperating from the High Holidays, and will return with his regular column next month]

### **Funeral Practices Committee Always On-Call**

Chaverim of the Funeral Practices Committee are on call to provide counsel and services to synagogue members and their dependents. Prior to contacting the funeral home, please contact one of the following chaverim, Rabbi Seidel, or the TI office (202-882-1605).

**Shelly Heller** h: 301-942-1836  
w: 202-242-6698

**Jeff Davidson** h: 301-593-1335

**David (Judy) Cohen** h: 301-652-2872

**Marcia Goldberg** h: 301-589-0352

## Lifelong Learning

Eitan Gutin

### Family Education/ Programs

#### Family Service, November 5

This will be the second family service of the year. We would love to have both school-age children and their parents and/or siblings leading the service. Please visit <http://bit.ly/NovFamSrv> in order to see what parts are available. Then, contact either Kim Levone ([klevone@yahoo.com](mailto:klevone@yahoo.com)) or Eitan Gutin to sign up.

Services begin at 10:30 a.m. At the end of services we will proceed upstairs to the Wolman Sanctuary to dance during Adon Olam, and then enjoy the community Kiddush Luncheon cooked by the TI parents of school-aged children.

#### A Few Good Cooks Needed

Last year we began a tradition of parents and grandparents of school-aged children cooking and sponsoring the Kiddush on the morning of a Family Service. We are still looking for both cooks and donors. We will gather in the TI kitchen on Wednesday evening, November 2, from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m. to cook for Shabbat. Please contact the office if you would like to volunteer to cook and/or make a donation in support of the Kiddush.

#### Family Hanukkah Party & Dinner, December 21

Sure, it is barely November, but that is no reason not to think of Hanukkah. Join other families with school-aged children beginning at 6:30 p.m. on the second night of Hanukkah. Watch your email for more information.

### Himmelfarb & Chai Schools

#### Special Class for New Students

Do you know a child in grades 3, 4, or 5 who has never had a Jewish education? If so, please contact the family and tell them about our wonderful new class. This year we have enrolled three students in the Himmelfarb school who have never had a Jewish education.

These 3<sup>rd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> graders spend part of their time mainstreamed with the rest of the school, but spend two hours a week as a separate class learning Hebrew and Jewish culture in a small, warm environment. We hope to add two or three students to the group by the end of November. Thank you to **Stephanie Rubin** and new member **Rachel Lemberg** for teaching this wonderful group.

#### Thank You, Sukkah Build Hosts

On the Sunday morning after Yom Kippur the entire Himmelfarb school went to work as home builders -- for temporary homes at least -- as part of our annual Sukkah Build. Thank you to the **Gryziak, Borzekowski, Weiss, Snow**, and **Levone** families for hosting this year's Sukkah Build.

#### Still Time to Register for Chai

The Chai school is an excellent way for your 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, or 10<sup>th</sup> grader to continue his or her Jewish education. Please contact the office for more information.

*There will be no Himmelfarb or Chai classes on Wednesday, November 23; Shabbat, November 24; and Sunday, November 25 due to the Thanksgiving holiday.*

### TI Youth Programs

#### Please Welcome New Staff

This year we have hired two new advisors for our youth programs:

**Rachel Lipow (USY Co-Advisor, Kadima Advisor)**, recently moved into the DC area and is a graduate student at GW working towards a Masters in Public Health. She is a product of the USY chapter at Keshet Israel in West Chester, PA. Rachel was deeply involved as a youth leader in building up a local chapter from very humble beginnings and knows just how valuable an experience USY can be for a Jewish teen.

**Amanda Rudman (USY Co-Advisor, USY Madrikhim Coordinator)**, has been working at TI for the past year as a tutor and the leader of K'Tongregation. Amanda grew up at Beth El in Bethesda and is a graduate of JDS. As USY Madrikhim Coordinator, Amanda will be working with teens who hold volunteer roles within TI and will also help our teen leaders in creating Hessed projects both inside and outside the synagogue's walls.

#### Seaboard USY

USY and Kadima are split up nationally into 17 regions across the country. Our local region, Seaboard, stretches from Greensboro, NC, up to Northeastern Maryland. One goal for our youth programs this year is to get our 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders more involved in the region. We are off to a great start:

One of our new advisors, **Rachel Lipow**, spent a Shabbat at the Pearlstone Retreat Center along with

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## Lifelong Learning (continued)

chapter staff from all over the region. We have already begun to implement ideas that Rachel brought back with her.

**Gabriella Pereira-Feron** became the first Tler in recent memory to attend the regional **USY Encampment** in August. Gabriella will tell anyone who asks that it was a transformative experience.

**Hersh Garelick, Claire Spellberg,** and **Gabriella** all attended the annual **Leadership Training Institute**, which was held at B'nai Israel in Rockville. They were all inspired by the experience and came home ready to get to work. All three have been taking initiative in building our programs. They are also becoming regular attendees at meetings of the new TI Youth Committee.

**Chaya Blonder** and **Sam Cohen** attended the **Fall Kadima Kallah** at the end of October. Gabriella, Chaya, and Sam were all able to take advantage of the **TI USY/Kadima First Timers Club**.

Made possible by the Himmelfarb Fund, the First Timers Club is for any 6th-12th grade child of a TI member registering for and attending his or her first regional Shabbat program in USY or Kadima. Please note that donations to the Himmelfarb Fund go to support this and many other worthy educational programs and opportunities for the school aged children of TI.

### USY Regional Fall Convention

Come spend the weekend of **November 18-20** in Virginia Beach with other Jewish high schoolers and have the opportunity to make over 100 new friends from across Maryland, Virginia, Washington, DC and North Carolina, while having the time of your life! Watch your email, or contact Eitan Gutin for information

about the weekend, how to register, and how to take advantage of the TI First Timers Club.

### USY International Convention

Every year over 1,000 Jewish teens gather together for a one-of-a-kind experience known as the USY International Convention, or IC for short. This year the IC will be held **December 23-29** at the Downtown Marriott in Philadelphia, and will include a pre-convention at the Pearlstone Retreat Center from **December 23-25**.

The IC will be particularly special this year as it will be celebrating USY's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary. From the opening of the convention, during which there are 1,200 voices united in Jewish song, until the travelers' prayer on Thursday morning, there is nothing like IC.

The registration deadline is November 7. The cost is \$999 which includes roundtrip charter bus transportation to/from Philadelphia, 6 nights lodging, all Kosher meals and snacks, sightseeing in Philadelphia, all program fees, and a Seaboard USY t-shirt.

Please contact Eitan for more information, and if you would like to find out about scholarships to attend the convention.

### Teen Leaders Needed

We would like to have as many 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders as possible become USY Madrikhim. Madrikhim run Shabbat morning groups, coordinate Bonim and Machar, and also serve as classroom aides in the Himmelfarb School. Please contact Eitan for information. TI is able to offer service learning/community service hours for students in both the Montgomery County and DC public schools.

### Bonim (K-2<sup>nd</sup>) & Machar (3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>)

This year's opening programs for both Bonim and Machar will take place on **Shabbat, November 19**, and will coincide with Howard Sumka's SHALEM program on getting to the two-state solution. Watch your email for details.

### TI's Annual Retreat

Register today for the annual retreat, **December 9-11**. This year's retreat theme will be all about "Creating A Caring Community." Registration is still open. Just open the TI website and you will find a link to the retreat information under the "Adult" section of the menu.

Of course, the retreat is not just for adults. We want to have parents and children together. We will be running a high-quality children's program throughout the weekend that parallels the adult experience.

## Family Service Needs You!

Please join the November 5 Shabbat Family Service. It is a great opportunity to see TI's youth--both Himmelfarb and day school students--lead a slightly abbreviated morning service.

The service has many small and discrete parts and congregants of all ages are invited to lead a line or two. Torah readers (just a verse or two apiece), ark openers, Torah carriers and supervisory volunteers are also needed.

If you want to participate, or aren't sure what your child or you could do, contact Kim Levone at [klevone@yahoo.com](mailto:klevone@yahoo.com), or Eitan Gutin at [eitan@tifereth-israel.org](mailto:eitan@tifereth-israel.org).

## Adult Education

Josh Furman

Our November Adult Education calendar at TI is packed full of exciting programs and opportunities for Jewish learning!

This month, join **Howard Sumka** on Shabbat, **November 19**, for a SHALEM discussion on *Getting to a Two-State Solution in the Middle East*. Each month, we offer a post-kiddush-lunch discussion on a topic of interest to the community that we call SHALEM (Shabbat Afternoon Learning Monthly).

If you've never joined us before, we hope to see you this month for an engaging and informative conversation.

Our Sunday morning and evening classes offer additional chances to learn at times that are convenient for you.

This month, join **Stan Dorn** on Sunday evenings at 8 p.m. for *Finding God on the Bus*, a look at Hassidic insights about God and their application to everyday living.

On Sunday mornings following services, join us at 10:15 for the following classes:

**November 6**, the first of **Rabbi Gilah Langner's** two classes on *Exploring Radical Judaism*, Rabbi Arthur Green's latest book. The

second session will be on **December 4**.

**November 13, Naomi Reem**, on *Building Community One Family at a Time* (sponsored by Kol Nashim).

**November 20, Joelle Novey**, for a *Jewish Perspective on Climate Change* and what we can do about it.

Looking forward to learning together!

Please note: The screening of *The Syrian Bride*, originally slated for Saturday evening, November 19, is being rescheduled.

### Save the Date!

On Sunday afternoon, December 11, a concert of contemporary Jewish music will be held at Tifereth Israel.

The program is entitled *No Rock Like You: Songs for the Jewish Soul*.

The program is sponsored by Shalshet, a nonprofit organization whose mission is to "enhance spirituality and build community through the creation and dissemination of Jewish sacred music."

Watch for further details and ticket information.

## Chaverim Lecture on Middle East

Ray Natter

At 8 p.m., Saturday, November 12, Chaverim will present a lecture by Sarah Stern on *Israel, Egypt and the New Middle East*.

Ms. Stern is the founder and president of the Endowment for Middle East Truth (EMET), a Washington DC "think tank" that specializes in Mid-East issues.

She previously was the National Policy Coordinator of the ZOA, and the Director of Governmental Affairs for the American Jewish Congress.

Sarah has testified often before Congress about the treatment of Christians and other religious

minorities by the Palestinian Authority, and has brought the issue of anti-Semitism on our nation's campuses to the attention of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.

She has written many articles, and has been published in *The Jerusalem Post*, the *Washington Jewish Week*, and the *Middle East Quarterly*.

Wine, cheese and other refreshments will be served. There is no charge, but please let Sheri Blonder in the TI office or Ray Natter know if you will be attending this event.

## Social Action at Tifereth Israel

Stephen Nelson

On Erev Yom Kippur, TI member Joelle Novey, Director of Greater Washington Interfaith Power & Light, testified before the State Department against the proposed Keystone XL Pipeline. The pipeline would carry oil from Canada's Alberta province through six Midwestern U.S. states. According to Novey, it would damage Canada's boreal forest and threaten the drinking water of millions of Americans and Canadians.

Referring to the pending decision as "our nation's Yom Kippur moment," Novey went on to make a plea that struck close to home:

"Every single person who works at the State Department is also a human being who lives on Earth, and hopes for their children and grandchildren to also live on Earth. You surely know in your hearts that, at some point, our nation will be forced to shift away from dirty fuels, no matter which foreign corporations stand to benefit from further delay, and to turn instead towards investing in clean energy and repairing our climate."

### Activism Began Early

Novey's activism in the climate change arena stems directly from her upbringing as a Jewish youth in Baltimore. "The idea that people might not care about what happens in future generations, or might not care about people who don't live in this country, or might not care about other species goes against everything I was led to believe with regard to Judaism."

She notes that the Torah and other important Jewish texts reiterate the importance "to care about both the most vulnerable people in the community and the lives of future generations."

Novey is a 2002 graduate of Harvard University. She was an editorial associate at Green America, a nonprofit environmental group, when she got the opportunity in 2009 to lead Greater Washington Interfaith Power & Light, a small nonprofit (one employee, in addition to Novey) that seeks to engage local congregations of all faiths in responding to climate change.

### Environmental Advocacy

In addition to opposing the Keystone XL Pipeline, her organization has been active in regional environmental advocacy, such as supporting legislation to encourage wind energy facilities off the Maryland coast and the effort to shut down the GenOn Potomac River Coal plant on the Alexandria, Va., waterfront. (In August, the city announced that GenOn would take the plant offline by next October.)



Joelle Novey

We Care  
  
 & Take Action

The organization also supports congregations in efforts to save energy, re-bid their electricity contracts, purchase clean power, and otherwise "go green." For example it is working with green team leaders at Tifereth Israel, Fabrangen, and Ohev Shalom to explore green initiatives for these neighboring congregations.

Novey is the co-author of *Green and Just Celebrations*, a purchasing guide that Jews United for Justice distributes to local congregations to assist families in making green purchasing decisions with regard to weddings and bar and bat mitzvah celebrations.

### Tikkun Leil Shabbat

She has also been active for many years in Tikkun Leil Shabbat, another Jews United for Justice-sponsored project. Tikkun Leil Shabbat holds Friday night services (usually in the Dupont Circle area in D.C.), which feature "songful, soulful" prayers, discussion of social justice issues, and a potluck vegetarian dinner.

Novey's work all comes back to her view that Judaism affirms our interconnectedness with each other and the rest of the world. "The natural world is sacred, and other human beings are sacred. It is sinful to irrevocably damage the ecosystem on which all people depend. The spiritual cost of not taking action is so high. We can pretend we aren't connected, but we would lose our soul."

## Summary of TI Board of Directors Meeting September 12, 2011

**Attending:** Renee Brachfeld, Susan Catler, Joel Cohen, Jeff Davidson, Deena Dugan, Sara Goldberg, Esther Herman, Paula Martin, Stephanie Roodman Murdock, Margie Odle, Debbie Pomerance, Naomi Revzin, Vivian Seidner, Jevera Temsky, Daniel Turner, Mark Verschell, Joshua Furman, David Levy, Ruth Shapiro

**Excused:** Susan Vitale, Lynne Snyder, Chris Zeilinger

**Absent:** Varda Fink, Seth Glabman.

**Staff:** Rabbi Ethan Seidel, Eitan Gutin, David Zinner

The meeting was called to order by President Joel Cohen at 8:05

**Approval of the Minutes.** The minutes were adopted with minor changes.

**Sister Congregation.** It was agreed that we would enter into a relationship with Gottingen Congregation, Germany.

**New members.** There are two new families.

**Takoma Park Festival.** There was a lot of interest in TI at the Takoma Park Folk Festival, and we should continue to attend meaningful festivals to recruit new members.

**High Holidays.** 120 people are registered for the downstairs services and the upstairs services are 80 percent full. We will do a survey after the high holidays to see how people feel about the two services.

**Sukkah Walk.** The Sukkah Walk will go into Woodside this year. It will be on Thursday, October 13, and the Tashlich Walk will be September 29.

**Annual Appeal.** We have raised \$56,000 so far – a 4% increase from last year for donations.

**Finance Update.** Chris Zeilinger submitted a written report.

**Adult Ed.** They had their first program with Jason Kimelman-Block yesterday. The fall catalogue of classes will be out this coming week. The SHALEM program is returning. Devora Kimelman-Block will hold a class this coming Sunday on KOL foods.

**Himmelfarb School.** The school opened this past weekend. K-6 now has 58 children registered. There are 3 new first grade students totaling 13. The upstairs classrooms were

painted and have new props on the walls and floors. Enrollment is good.

There were over 80 people at the first student Friday night event. Kids are now invited to walk around the synagogue with plush Torahs on Saturday when the Torahs come out. This will encourage families to come to services earlier.

**Youth Groups.** The youth committee had its first meeting led by Jennifer Kefer.

**Executive Director Evaluation Update.** Jeff Davidson reported that a survey would be circulated shortly regarding how the synagogue is working and to judge the effectiveness of the Executive Director.

**Israel Forum/J Street Presentation.** There was a lively discussion about the meaning of TI sponsoring or co-sponsoring an event. "Hosting" may be a better word for events at TI, but we must "co-sponsor" an event that is not at our synagogue. This will be discussed at the next meeting.

**Communications/Marketing Task Force.** The committee came up with core values of the Task Force which were summarized in a handout.

**House.** There is a new concrete step that replaces the wood platform at the Sixteenth Street entrance. The bimah insert has been completed. More volunteers are needed for new projects.

**Retreat.** We already have 80 people coming, so we can take over the whole facility.

**Adjournment.** The meeting was adjourned at 10:05.

### Social Action Sunday November 13

Join other Tlers in Social Action!

#### 10 a.m.

Bake a casserole for the shelter operated by So Others Might Eat (SOME) and drop it off at TI. The Tuna Casserole recipe is now on the TI website!

#### 4:30 p.m.

Support those who are hungry. Join us as we drive a soup-and-sandwich van for Martha's Table, serving dinner to homeless men and women on the downtown DC streets.

#### 6-8:30 p.m.

Cook and serve dinner to 25 women living in Luther Place Church's N Street Village.



## Kol Nashim

Carla Ellern



### Upcoming November and December Events

#### Joint Kol Nashim/Chaverim Wine and Cheese Party, November 12.

Contact Ray Natter, at 202-244-9646, for details.

#### Naomi Reem Lecture, November 13, 10:15 a.m..

Naomi Reem, Head of School of The Jewish Primary Day School of the Nation's Capital and TI member, will speak at Kol Nashim's next Sunday morning program. She will discuss community building — among children and among families, with ties into the community at large.

Please join us as we learn how JPDS seeks to eliminate bullying and enhance positive interactions between children and among

children and staff. This should be a great prelude to the TI Retreat.

#### Hagbah Workshop December 17:

Join **Mark Verschell** in the sanctuary after services for the second workshop on the art and science of picking up the Torah. Missed the first? No worries, everything will be covered again.

#### Entertainment Books

Did you know the old Entertainment Books expired November 1? Get your new Entertainment Book for \$30 and make sure you're covered for the next year. If you register your Entertainment book online you'll receive additional coupons by e-mail.

We have Entertainment Books for Maryland and Virginia. The books

contain coupons for discounts for a wide range of places and services such as car wash, movies, and hotels. Pick one up at the office or at TI events this fall.

#### Join Kol Nashim

**Shirley Rosenberg** and **Anne Woods** designed the lovely bookmarks that will be or have been sent to you with your TI bill. The bookmarks are a reminder to you to check your bill, and contact the office to join Kol Nashim if you're not already a member. Membership in Kol Nashim is \$25 per year and supports our activities at TI.

## Friday Night Minyan Assignments

### November 4

Matthew Watson  
Marc & Deborah Weinberger  
Jon Weintraub  
Michael Weiss & Phyllis Stanger  
Jessica Weissman  
Dov Weitman & Sylvia Horwitz  
Alan & Cynthia Weitz  
Howard & Barbara White  
Howard Wial  
Louise Wiener

### November 18

Peter Winch  
Adam & Dorothea Wolfson  
Marion Zatz  
Christopher Zeilinger  
Yohannes Zeleke  
Diana Zurer  
Ellen Zwibak  
Alan & Judy Tulchin

Luis & Karen Acosta  
Andrew Afflerbach & Joanne Hovis

### November 25

Miriam Alpern  
Jon Alterman & Katherine LaRiviere  
Timothy Anderegg & Lisa Fogel-Anderegg  
David & Felice Anderson  
Charlotte Anker  
Leonard Bachman  
Jessica Badt  
Sidney & Heike Bailin  
Ethan & Jodi Balis  
Justin Bank

### December 9

Paul & Esther Bardack  
Burt Barnow  
Charles Baum

Leonard & Joy Baxt  
Mark & Mona Berch  
Bruce & Laurie Berger  
Carl Bergman & Marjorie Odle  
Judith Berland  
Joseph Berman & Marsha Gentner  
Barbara Beuchert

### December 16

Dana Beyer  
Sean Blake & Larisa Aranbayeva  
Martin Block & Renee Comet  
Sheri Blonder  
Gideon & Lisa Blumenthal  
Ron & Dina L.G. Borzekowski  
Nat Bottigheimer & Eve Ostriker  
Ronald S. Bowyer  
Larry Bram & Lise Krantz  
Leonard Braverman

## Nayes un Mekhayes for Tiers

Barbara Raimondo

### Across the Pond

**Paula Flicker** went to Cambridge, United Kingdom between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur for a one-day meeting plus two days of annual leave (i.e., fun!). Besides walking around and around central Cambridge she visited the Botanic Gardens, because she had always been told to "stop and smell the flowers."

Paula spent most of a day in the Fitzwilliam Museum, which has an amazing range of art and antiquities, and met with some former colleagues whom she hadn't seen for a long time (six to 27 years – more antiquities, you might say). She went to four different bookstores, but only bought one book. The weather was lovely, especially considering it was England. She had never been to the U.K. before.

**Sara Goldberg** also traveled to an exotic locale, New York City, where she met with former member **Lianna Levine-Reisner** and her daughter, **Ma'ayan**, who displayed the requisite amount of adorable-, inquisitive- and sweet-ness.

Sara was in NYC for work, and Lianna and Ma'ayan came down to the Financial District to visit before meeting up with **Elkatan** after he finished work. They walked around Battery Park and it was great to chat. They are doing well and enjoying living in the city and being able to walk everywhere.

**Barbara Raimondo** did some travelling recently, giving a talk on education policy to a group of educators of blind students in Louisville, Kentucky, presenting an all day workshop for a group of educators of deaf students at a statewide conference in Manchester,

New Hampshire, and attending a third meeting with deaf education administrators in Chicago. She is here to tell you that yes, all this can be done in the space of six days.

### Over the Mountain

Just before Rosh Hashanah, **Alan Landay** went on a brief trip to Tennessee for a hike. On Saturday, he and his buddies hiked up Mt. LeConte in the Smoky Mountains (on the Tennessee/North Carolina border), stayed overnight in rustic cabins, and hiked back down on Sunday. Would you believe it, there was no wifi! They had "non-denominational" church services Sunday morning, which he did not attend. If he goes next year, he plans to bring a non-denominational Havdalah candle.

On the hike were his sister, Becky Charles, brother-in-law, George, niece, Dyanna, and nephew, Zeke (who had his Bar Mitzvah a year ago in May). Also, on the hike were Dyanna's boyfriend Promodh, some other friends of his sister's family, and three black bears. It was a beautiful hike with gorgeous weather and a whole lot of challenging fun. He went up with his dulcimer as a backpack and got to play some Saturday night. Luckily his dulcimer-sized sleeping bag fit right in.

**Simcha Kuritzky** put in two exhibits at the Virginia Numismatic Association coin show in Fredericksburg. His exhibit on Feline Species on Coins and Medals won first place, and his exhibit on the History of Modern Zionism (based on a Tikkun L'eyl Shavuot talk he gave at TI a few years ago) won second place.

**Rona Fields'** son, **Marc Fields**, has a production in the upcoming PBS

series, *On the Arts*. It was briefly mentioned recently in a *Washington Post* article. The documentary was given the title *Give Me the Banjo* after the producers turned down the names *Give Me the Banjo, Please, Kindly Pass Me the Musical Instrument*, and *Give Me the @\$% Banjo!* Marc is Associate Professor of Film and Video at Emerson University in Boston.

### Under the Chuppah

**Diana Levy**, daughter of **David** and **Ellen Levy**, married **Danny Moldovan** August 14, at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden. Diana was with Avodah, the Jewish service corps, at the Urban Assembly School for Law and Justice in Brooklyn for one year after her graduation from Northwestern University. Now, three years later, after having received her master's degree from New York University, Diana is teaching social studies to 10<sup>th</sup> graders at the same school. Danny is director of finance and operations at [change.org](http://change.org), a web platform for social activism.

**Bob Rovinsky** is teaching a Basic Judaism course which started October 26. It's for anyone -- whether Jewish or not, observant or religious or not -- who wants to learn about and experience what Judaism is like and where it is going. For more information see the website [www.jewishstudycenter.org](http://www.jewishstudycenter.org), which also lists other great courses.

### Sad News

**Samuel Jackson Ross Sr.**, father of **Steve Ross Sr.**, recently died and was buried at the Cheltenham State Veterans Cemetery. Samuel was employed by Tifereth Israel from 1980 to 2002. Steve has been employed by TI for the last 25 years.

*(Continued on page 11)*

## Emory Beacon of Light/TI Walk for the Homeless, October 16



### Nayes un Mekhayes for TI'ers (continued)

Sam and Minnie were married for 73 years. She predeceased him in 2009. In addition to Steve (Saleema), Sam and Minnie's eight children include Samuel Ross, Jr. (Theodora), Betty Ross Patterson (William), Johnny Ross (Sandra), Billy Ross, Shirley Ross and the late Fletcher Ross and Annie Ruth Ross. Samuel is survived by numerous grand-, great- and great-great-grandchildren.

Longtime member **Ralph Temple**, died August 27 at his home in Ashland, Oregon. Ralph moved from the area many years ago, but

retained his TI membership. He was a regular at TI retreats. His children, Johnny and Kathy, celebrated their Bar and Bat Mitzvah at TI.

As a top lawyer for the ACLU, Ralph was in the forefront of many civil rights issues, participating in legal efforts to end the poll tax and anti-miscegenation laws, prevent unfair arrests, and protect the rights of American Nazis to march in Skokie, Illinois.

May their memories be for a blessing.

And now for the meaning of last month's word, *purlieu*: "a frequently visited place." (Merriam-Webster Online) Thanks to all who sent me news, sent me to others who sent me news, or otherwise helped sniff it out. Please send information for next time to [baraimondo@gmail.com](mailto:baraimondo@gmail.com) with "Nayes un Mekhayes" in the heading, or to P.O. Box 466, Washington Grove, MD 20880.

This brings to a close this edition, which you most surely have read ab ovo, of Nayes un Mekhayes for TI'ers.

## A Memorable Yom Kippur

Leonard Bachman

On a fall evening in 1958 I stood in synagogue listening to the cantor chanting the haunting and beautiful *Kol Nidre*. This medieval prayer is the introduction to the most solemn and important 24 hours in the Jewish liturgical year--Yom Kippur. On this day Jews confront their shortcomings and contemplate their relationship with man and God.

I felt a tap on my shoulder. The synagogue maintenance man quietly asked me to come to the synagogue lobby. I had an emergency call from The Childrens Hospital of Philadelphia.

On the phone was Dr. C. Everett Koop, the hospital's Surgeon-in-Chief. I was the Director of the Department of Anesthesiology.

### Separating Siamese Twins

Dr. Koop informed me that a set of newborn Siamese twins had been flown in from the Dominican Republic. One had a severe heart defect. He intended to separate them in the morning.

No one had successfully separated newborn Siamese twins before. Indeed, very few Siamese twins had ever been successfully separated at any age. He needed me to come to the hospital immediately to help plan the operation. In Jewish law saving lives always trumps everything. I left at once.

Planning this operation was like choreographing a complex ballet. The characters included the general surgeons, two anesthesiologists, two teams of plastic surgeons, the urologists, the orthopedic surgeons and a corps of nurses to assist the surgeons and prepare the instruments. All of these specialists had to have access to these tiny babies at the appropriate time in the operation.

At the time of separation a second operating table and set-up had to be ready to receive the separated twin. No one was sure what we would find.

The interconnection was extensive and included part of the liver, the bladder, genital system, pelvis and lower bowel. The surgeons would face the daunting task of apportioning these vital organs appropriately between the babies.

### Many Obstacles to Face

For me, I did not know how the anesthetic medications given to one child would affect the other. In addition, the two anesthesiologists would have limited access to the newborns for the purposes of monitoring their vital signs and supporting their respirations and circulation, and one child had a defective heart.

We started the grueling ten-hour procedure early the next morning. Needless to say, there were many perilous moments. The most

notable one for me was at the time of separation. I was monitoring the weaker baby with a tiny stethoscope taped to the chest. In 1958 we did not have the sophisticated monitoring equipment of today.

### A Heart Stops Beating

As the babies were separated I heard the heart stop beating. I immediately informed Dr. Koop. He thrust aside the drapes and made an incision in the chest and began to massage the tiny heart while I injected adrenaline. In a few minutes the heart began to beat normally again and we continued the operation.

I have experienced over 50 Kol Nidre nights and Yom Kippurs since 1958. Some of these were in exotic locations and circumstances (for example, in hurricane ravaged St. Croix, as part of a medical relief operation).

None of these experiences has given me better feelings about the possibility of human redemption than that grueling day trying to save the lives of those two babies with my long ago colleagues.

*Editor's Note: Both babies survived the operation, but the one with the cardiac defect died some years later while undergoing corrective surgery.*

## Library News: Michele Sumka

# Which Books Are in the Mollie Berch Library?

Many people don't know how to find out which books are in the library other than by browsing through the shelves. Until I began volunteering in the library I was one of them.

It's not a secret, but it's not as well known as I would like. Here's what to do:

Go to [tifereth-israel.org](http://tifereth-israel.org).

Go to the far right heading called **More** and click on **Member Services**.

Then, under the **Mollie Berch Library**, click on **TI Library Catalog**. This will open up in a new window,

<http://www.librarything.com/catalog/TiferethIsrael>.

In the **Library Thing** you'll find the 4,441 books that have been entered in the catalog since July 2009. They're listed according to the date they were entered, but you can search by Title or Author.

Since 2010, they have also been categorized by subject, under **Tags**. I could use more volunteers to enter the topic for the books that haven't yet been categorized.

So, now you know how to find out if we have a given book. However, here are some caveats:

- Not all the books we own have yet been entered in the Library Thing.

- Not all the books we own are in the library because they have been taken out, whether signed out or not.

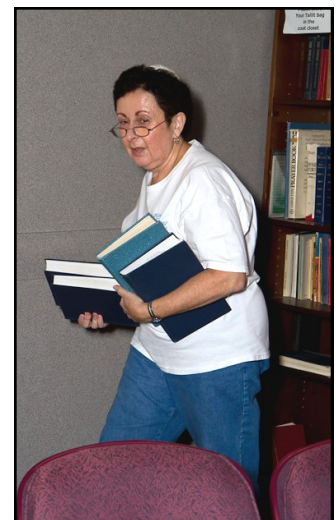
I would like to set up a system under which we could keep better track of books that haven't been returned, but that will take some time.

In a future article I will discuss where to find books on various topics in the library and on the shelves in the lobby outside the library.

## November Highlights at Tifereth Israel

<b>November 4</b>	<b>USY Shabbat Service &amp; Dinner, 6:30 p.m.</b>
<b>November 5</b>	<b>Family Service &amp; Kiddush</b>
<b>November 6</b>	<b>Gilah Langner: Exploring Radical Judaism, 10:15 a.m.</b>
<b>November 6</b>	<b>Stan Dorn: Finding God on the Bus, 8 p.m.</b>
<b>November 7, 14, 21, &amp; 28</b>	<b>Monday Learning Parashat HaShavuah, 11 a.m. Job Club, 1 p.m.</b>
<b>November 12</b>	<b>Maya Fontheim Bat Mitzvah</b>
<b>November 12</b>	<b>Chaverim Lecture: Israel, Egypt &amp; the Middle East, 8 p.m.</b>
<b>November 13</b>	<b>Social Action Sunday</b>
<b>November 13</b>	<b>Naomi Reem: Building Community One Family at a Time</b>
<b>November 19</b>	<b>Opening Bonim and Machar Programs</b>
<b>November 20</b>	<b>Joelle Novey: Jewish Perspective on Climate Change</b>

# Jeremy Goldberg Day, September 25



## On the Road: A Spiritual Journey

Eti and Paul Roitman Bardack

We are writing this article in response to many requests to elaborate on an email Paul sent to the congregation's listserv, in which he briefly mentioned our experience of the past few months.

Back in March, funding for Paul's research faculty position at George Mason University ended when the federal agency which funded his work was cut back significantly. One day, he was running a public policy research center on the use of distance learning to retrain America's workers, especially the unemployed; the next day, he was himself unemployed.

### Emotionally Devastating

For Paul, this was emotionally devastating. He had been unemployed only a few years earlier. Was this to be the pattern for the rest of his life?

For Eti, things were more nuanced. Certainly, unemployment was a bad thing financially; and the fact that her husband was an emotional wreck made things worse. On the other hand, as the daughter of parents who each survived the Shoah while losing everybody and everything they had known from their former lives, Eti knew instinctively there were far worse losses one could have.

### A Dramatic Decision

Several days into Paul's unemployment, Eti said: "We've got to turn your attitude around. We've always dreamed about taking the summer trip of a lifetime. I have the summer off. (She's a teacher at the Hebrew Day Institute). You don't have a job that'll eat up your days.

Let's sell our house and use the proceeds to have the best summer of our lives. And we'll buy a laptop to bring with us, so you can look for work while we're away."

And so we did.

### Divesting Possessions

"Simplify, simplify," Thoreau wrote beside Walden Pond, and those words had had a powerful impact on us, especially on Eti.

Beginning in March, having decided to sell our large house and needing to get it ready for sale, we began materially to simplify our lives. For Eti, it was easy; if it wasn't used almost daily, it was unneeded.

For Paul, still feeling sorry for himself over his unemployment, divesting our things simply added to a sense of continuing loss. Some 2,000 books that we had collected over the past 40+ years? Gone. Much of our furniture? Gone. The artwork? Gone. Surplus pots, pans and dishes? Gone. The clothing we rarely wear? Gone. Our computer peripherals? Gone.

### A Funny Thing Happened...

And then a funny thing happened. The more we gave to charitable organizations or to friends or acquaintances in need, the better we started to feel about ourselves, both individually and as a couple.

Jettisoning our possessions, which began solely to make the house more presentable for sale, soon began to take on a life of its own ... a life we felt increasingly good about.

Paul, in particular, started to feel less sorry for himself. How could he be suffering economically if he had so much material surplus to give away? It made no sense. The shock of unemployment and an identity defined in terms of deficits — a focus on what we no longer had — began to give way to a greater focus on the assets which we had: each other, our family, our friends, and a much smaller array of material possessions we actually would use regularly.

We were, as psychologists are wont to say, increasingly coming to a good place both emotionally and mentally.

### Two Lucky Breaks

We then caught two exceptionally lucky breaks. First, we sold our house at a good price, and quickly; that gave us a financial cushion on which we could survive for a while. But where would we move that would be affordable for a couple with negligible income? That's where the second break came in.

Eti's dad had been trying for several years to sell a home he owned in Silver Spring. But the real estate market in his neighborhood was tanking, and the house wouldn't sell. So he rented the home to a succession of tenants.

Around the time we were getting our house ready for sale, his tenants announced that they had to leave immediately. Eti's dad suggested that we come and live temporarily in the house he owned, provided we try to make the place look better for sale in a year or two. "Great!" we said!!!

Armed with the proceeds of the sale of our house, a de-cluttered physical

*(Continued on page 16)*

## A Spiritual Journey (continued)

and mental landscape, and the knowledge that we would have a place to which we could return, we tried to turn our lemon into lemonade by embarking on a three-month summer trip of a lifetime.

### Our Journey Begins

And so the adventure began. On any given day we usually hadn't a clue where we would be the following day. We started our journey in British Columbia where, to differentiate this summer from our prior life's experiences, we went to work shoveling horse poop out of stables. Surprisingly, we loved every minute of it.

We did a lot of hiking, including to a wonderful outdoor folk concert which seemingly had attracted every aging hippie in Canada. From there, we went to Seattle to visit our son and continue our hiking adventures. We also participated in a regional Native American pow-wow, where Paul played some of his Native American flutes.

Next, we studied Jewish texts with the ultra-Orthodox community of Lakewood, New Jersey. After staying with friends and family in Connecticut and Massachusetts, we lived for several weeks in a small, mountain-top home in the extreme northeast corner of New Hampshire: no email, no Internet, no telephone. We were far more likely to see moose and bears than other people.

### Many More Stops and Activities

We made stops in Philadelphia, New York City, and Columbus. Visited our grandson in Kentucky. Rescued endangered animals in rural Tennessee. Boated in Maine. Discovered the shul in Bethlehem, New Hampshire where Paul's

grandfather was a cantor some 70 years ago.

We spent hours leisurely preparing food, and even more hours leisurely savoring what we prepared. Watched the Perseid meteor shower from a mountain summit. Learned how to make moonshine whiskey. And, in each place we visited, we made time to engage in job searches, in some sort of local social action, and in Jewish study.

### Sitting in Our Succah

We are writing this article while sitting in our succah, in the back of our temporary home in Silver Spring. Eti has now returned to her teaching at Hebrew Day Institute. Paul has been lucky enough to land some paid consulting work, and to have developed some promising job leads.

As we sit in our succah, we are amazed at how much more fragile it seems this year, perhaps because our lives now also seem so much more fragile.

The first few months of Paul's unemployment found us with far more material cushion than most other Americans now out of work, stronger family support, and more solid educational and professional backgrounds and networks. We were lucky, and we know it. But we can generalize about our experience in spiritual terms. Many of you have asked what we learned, and here is the answer:

### What We Have Learned

The past several months have been the most profoundly, intensely, and consistently spiritually elevated of our lives. They started with despair and anger at the loss of a job,

unwanted sale of a home, and divestment of most of our material possessions. They ended when we learned to take joy and (what we hope is lasting) wisdom from that very experience.

All of it — all of it — was meant to be, we have come to realize in retrospect. The loss became a gain. The sadness became gladness. Time lost from work became time found for parenting.

For the past several months we have very keenly and increasingly felt G-d's presence as we learned that:

- One's physical journey is also one's spiritual journey; each is a metaphor for the other.
- Days that begin with the question "How do I want to live my life today, and why?" are usually a lot more rewarding than days that don't begin with that question.
- The most effective way to end one's own pain is to try to heal someone else's.
- In the end, it's not the quality or quantity of one's possessions which defines a life; it's the quality and quantity of true stories which one can tell others.
- And finally: that driving on the backstreets with the top down at 35 miles per hour generally yields better memories than driving on the Interstates with the top up at 70.





## A Woman of Contradictions

Frank Solomon

Nonie Darwish's life is full of contradictions. Raised in what most people in the West consider an oppressive society, she is anything but submissive to what she was taught. She has been crusading against the traditions and restrictions that she says bind women.

Darwish has been fighting Sharia, the code of Muslim rule, which she says is the driver of everything that is wrong with Islam today. Not surprisingly, her outspokenness has earned her few friends among her people, many enemies, and some death threats.

Darwish is the founder of Arabs for Israel, the director of Former Muslims United, and a much sought-after speaker in the academic world. At a recent presentation at George Mason University School of Law, she found herself mostly in hostile waters. The room was packed; it was lined with security officers. The atmosphere was icy and tense.

### Daughter of a Terrorist

Darwish is the daughter of a top Egyptian military officer who in the 1950's was in charge of terrorism in Gaza against the new Israeli state. The Israelis killed him just before the 1956 Suez war; he became a hero and a martyr in Egypt.

A member of Egypt's elite, Darwish was not affected by the honor killings, rapes, arranged marriages and polygamy that she says trap Egyptian women and, by extension, Muslim women. She grew up singing songs praising martyrdom in fighting Israel under the tutelage of a state-sponsored press. She said she watched Sharia law being hijacked by radical Muslims to fight Israel, Christians and the West. She began to doubt the traditions and messages of her faith.

In her *Now they Call Me Infidel: Why I Renounced Jihad for America, Israel and the War on Terror*, she said Sharia law is a call to battle to "erase infidels." This means Jews, Christians and anyone not Muslim and any nation not Islamic. She argued that leaders in the Islamic world have been playing a game of appeasing the West while collaborating with radical Muslim groups to topple the non-Muslim world. That is the only way these leaders could survive, she said.

### Darwish and Israel

Perhaps it is Darwish's relationship with Israel and Jews that makes radical Muslims see red: "I always blamed Israel for my father's death, because that's what I was taught. I never looked at why Israel killed my father. They killed my father because the *fedayeen* were killing Israelis. They killed my father because when I was growing up, we had to recite poetry pledging jihad against Israel. We would have tears in our eyes, pledging that we wanted to die. I speak to people who think there was no terrorism against Israel before the '67 war. How can they deny it? My father died in it."

After the death of her father, her family moved back to Cairo, where she attended Catholic high school and the American University, earning a bachelor degree in sociology and anthropology. After a stint as an editor and translator for the Middle East News Agency, she emigrated to the United States in 1978 with her husband, eventually becoming a U.S. citizen and a Christian.

About a year after 9/11, Darwish began writing columns critical of Islamic extremism and the silence of moderate Muslims, and talked about reason and love of her newfound faith.

Love was not much in the air at the George Mason Law School auditorium. There was more curiosity than admiration in the room. When Darwish opened up for questions, student after student questioned her credentials to judge Islam and Muslim traditions. She responded to every hostile question with a reasoned answer, often throwing back another question.

In her lecture, Darwish warned that the world should not be misled by "Arab Spring," that while people in the Muslim world are asking for changes in their countries, they are not asking for changes in Islam and Sharia.

"After 9/11 very few Americans of Arab and Muslim origin spoke out. Muslim groups in the United States try to silence us and intimidate American campuses who invite us to speak. I often tell Muslim students that Arab Americans who are speaking out against terrorism are not the problem; it is the terrorists who are giving Islam a bad name. And what the West must do is ask the politically incorrect questions and we Americans of Arab and Muslim origin owe them honest answers."

### Politically Incorrect

Darwish may not have a doctorate on Islamic studies, but her experience and closeness to Islam give her the standing to speak about Islamic issues. While it's simplistic to blame Sharia law and Islam for the misery and poverty of their followers, it is refreshing to have someone who dares to be politically incorrect, an Arab who does not blame everyone else for all the Muslim problems, unlike many self-hating Jews who blame their fellow Jews for everyone's problems.

## Bat Mitzvah

Hi, my name is **Maya Fontheim**. I am a 7<sup>th</sup> grader at the Siena School. I love karate, politics and fashion design.

I live in Washington, DC with my parents, my sister, Arielle, my brother, Jordan, and dog, Bart.

My Bat Mitzvah is November 12, and my *parashah* is *Vayeira*. It is an interesting *parashah* because it deals with Abraham's sacrifice of Yitzhak. I hope you will be able to join me!



## Joint Custody is a Jewish Value

David Levy

I will be talking about joint custody on Shabbat, November 26. As a prelude to that, I will refer to the *parashah* for that day, *Toldot*, which includes the story of Jacob and Esau.

Esau was a hunter, while Jacob was a mild man, dwelling in tents. Isaac loved Esau, because he ate of his game, but Rebekah loved Jacob. We are all familiar with how Jacob got Esau to sell his birthright and how Rebekah later helped Jacob to trick Isaac into blessing him instead of Esau.

### Connection with Joint Custody

What has this to do with joint custody? Well, first of all, the story of Jacob and Esau has to do with parents and children, and how they treat them. In joint custody, there is an emphasis on equality. That is, a child whose parents are separated, divorced, or never married, has substantial contact with each parent. The assumption is that both parents love the children, and each wants to participate in raising them.

When the Torah says that Isaac loved Esau, and Rebekah loved

Jacob, does that mean that either parent did not love the other child? The Torah is silent on this point. One would like to think they would love them equally, the way most parents are inspired to unconditionally love all of their children. That does not mean that a child can do no wrong, or need not ever be corrected or guided. It just means that a parent's love always exists for all of his or her children.

### Parents and Children Both Rivals

We cannot assume that is the case, however, with Jacob and Rebekah. In fact, it is implied that love for both children is not equally shared by the parents. Not only are the parents rivals over the children, but the children are rivals with each other.

At least Jacob has it in for Esau, and hardly shows brotherly love. He outsmarted Esau on two occasions, once by convincing Esau to sell him his birthright, lest Esau die from hunger, and then by tricking his father -- with his mother's connivance -- into obtaining his blessing that had been planned for Esau.

Jacob and Rebekah may not have been divorced, but the trickery involved in their story certainly reminds me of the scheming that often occurs in divorce as one parent seeks to gain an advantage over the other regarding the children.

Whether the parents love their children equally or not, the feelings that arise in divorce, including abandonment, deceit, fear of loss of control or contact with the children, and economics, often brings out the worst in the parents, and put the children in the middle of a nasty custody battle.

### Jewish Emphasis on Fair Play

I would not be a national advocate for joint custody if I did not think it was a reflection of the Jewish emphasis on ethics and fair play, as well as advocacy for the underdog, or in this case, the "under parent." After all, *honor thy father and mother* is one of the Ten Commandments. What could be more fundamental to honoring thy father and mother than a respect for the right of a child to be fully a part of both parents' lives in the event there is a family break-up?

## Tifereth Israel, Members Cut Electric Bills

Carl Bergman

Thanks to a coalition of 45 DC religious and nonprofit organizations, TI's electricity rate will go down by almost 20 percent beginning in May. This could save the congregation up to \$2,000 per year.

TI members and staff can also get the same rate reduction in their homes, and TI will receive \$20 for each household that signs up. An average household can save about \$300 per year compared to Pepco's standard rates.

At its last meeting the TI board unanimously endorsed the program and urged Tlors to join. This is a chance to aid your personal bottom line and aid the congregation as well.

### Project Weatherize DC

Last summer, TI joined an electricity-buying group, organized by **Weatherize DC**, which promotes clean energy and energy conservation, and aids in building retrofits. Other Jewish congregational members in the group include Adas Israel, Ohev Shalom, Temple Sinai, Temple Micah and the Religious Action Center of the Reform movement.

Weatherize DC formed the buying group last spring and drafted an RFP, sending it to about a dozen electricity supply companies under the rules of the DC Public Service Commission. DC and Maryland allow users to choose who will supply their power. Pepco, which is the default provider of power, remains responsible for the distribution system--the high voltage lines, wires, and other infrastructure.

### Clean Currents Wins Contract

Last month, working with the Washington Interfaith Network, the

buying group selected the bid from **Clean Currents** of Rockville, Md. Clean Currents offered the group a flat rate, 24/7, of 7.93 cents per kilowatt hour for facilities and their members. This compares with Pepco's basic rate of 9.5 cents per kilowatt hour, which changes during different seasons and times of day. To promote alternative sources of energy, half of Clean Currents energy under the program will come from wind power.

### Easy Sign-Up

TI members or staff who live in DC or Maryland can sign up for the reduced rate. For individual households, the Clean Currents contract provides a simple, one-page, on-line sign-up form. For details, see the **On-Line Sign-Up** box on this page. Alternatively, Tlors can bring their current Pepco bill to TI to sign up on **Sunday, November 6** or **Sunday November 13** at 10:00 a.m.

The deadline to sign up for the new service is **January 21, 2012**. Once you sign up, Clean Currents will inform Pepco that you have changed your service. Your new service will begin with the next billing cycle. Pepco will send you your new bill, but with Clean Currents as your supplier.

Several TI members already have a Clean Current contract. Typically, their rates are less than Pepco's, but more than the group rate under TI's agreement.

This offer is also valid for customers whose renewal period falls before January 21, 2012. If you have an existing contract with Clean Currents, please note your renewal notices. If you have questions, call Kristin at Clean Currents: (301) 754-0430 Ext. 716.

### What's Next

Weatherize DC has outlined several goals to help the region's religious institutions and nonprofits reduce their costs through group buys and to develop sustainable, affordable environments.

It is working to develop its members' financial and technical capacities by taking a whole-building approach to modernization and management. For example, it wants to help install modern heating and ventilation, lighting and energy management systems.

An immediate goal is to expand the group in DC and to bring in Maryland members. TI's House Committee is working with the project to expand its reach to Jewish groups such as JPDS, the DCJCC, and 6<sup>th</sup> & I.

### On-Line Sign-Up

Go to the Clean Current sign-up page. Click either **DC WIN GREEN Enrollment** or **MD WIN GREEN Enrollment**

Enter your name, address, phone, email and Pepco account number, which can be found in the upper right-hand corner of your most recent Pepco bill.

On the bottom of the page, click the **Select from Below** button and click **Tifereth Israel**.

Clean Currents will send you a confirmation email. Within a few weeks, Pepco will send you a letter acknowledging your switch to Clean Currents and the activation date.

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