



# The Menorah

## President's Column: Susan Catler Improved Synagogue Communications



Since my article in last month's *Menorah*, Tifereth Israel has dramatically changed the ways in which it communicates with members and potential members. Our new website went online, our weekly newsletter debuted, we started a Facebook page, and we began taking reservations for events on-line.

These changes are part of an overall effort to review how we do what we do. One of the main things we do as a synagogue is communicate. We tell our congregants what is happening at the synagogue and with fellow members. We also need to coordinate our activities. And we need to attract potential members when they receive information about us.

All of these efforts take time and some take money. After many years, it was time to thoroughly review and revise how we communicate in light of changes in technology and how people prefer to get and provide information.

### A New Website and Weekly Newsletter

We decided to update the web site more than a year ago. We needed one that was attractive and that could be changed more easily to keep it up-to-date. Now that we have a web site that has current information about all our programs, we can e-mail a weekly newsletter about upcoming events with links to the appropriate web-site pages rather than to flyers about each program.

We used the same free software that the Himmelfarb School is using to produce its parents' newsletter to put together one for the congregation. Your comments on how

to improve it have been very helpful. We see this as an important source of information for those who continue to rely on e-mail.

### A Facebook Page

At the February Board Meeting, our Membership Vice President, Sara Goldberg, asked for authorization to establish a Tifereth Israel Congregation Facebook page. She explained that many of our new and potential members use Facebook as a primary way to get information and that having a TI page to announce upcoming events was a good way to reach them.

Within a week the page was up and running. The results for the first event posted – the Tot Shabbat – were very encouraging. Many families indicated in advance that they would be attending, which encouraged others to attend, too. While Facebook is not the best way to reach everyone in the congregation, it is an important tool for us to use to reach our members who use Facebook. Sara, Josh Furman and Debbie Pomerance will continue to select appropriate events and post them on Facebook.

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## President's Column (continued)

We have also begun to accept reservations for events on-line. We do this to increase the accuracy of the reservations taken and increase the efficiency of this process for both our members and our office. By filling out the form, the member provides all the needed information the first time so that follow-up calls and e-mails are minimized.

Rather than using an outside program that charges for each transaction, as many other synagogues in the area do, we created our own forms for both the Share a Shabbat program and the Carlebach dinner. We put links to the reservation forms on the web site, in the newsletter and on the Facebook page so members who were reading about a program on line could immediately make a reservation, day or night.

When people fill out the form, the spread sheet for the event is updated. At any moment the office knows how many people are signed up for the Carlebach dinner and how many vegetarian meals are needed. We will continue to develop ways to make on-line reservations work for those members of the congregation who use a computer.

### Other Improvements in Development

We are also updating additional communication channels. We are testing a new way of generating Yahrzeit notices and the weekly list of Yahrzeitin that we hope will be significantly less time-consuming for the office. We are doing this without purchasing any new software.

We are beginning a new schedule of donation announcements that we hope will recognize gifts closer to the time they were made and to the event they were given to acknowledge.

We continue to review how to best use additional communication methods. Numerous members have told us that Twitter would help us reach them because they rarely use other digital communications. We are thinking about how to use blogs. And we will review whether changes should be made to the contents or method of delivery of *The Menorah* in light of the electronic communications we now have.

The changes to the web site have been in the works for over a year, and I want to express my thanks to those who helped with this total make-over. Debbie Pomerance coordinated the effort and the following people were each responsible for part of the work: Rachel Stone (Banner Design/Graphics of the Ark); Mark Verschell (Graphics); Jeff Peterman (Photos); Mark Berch, Mollie Berch, Carl Bergman, David Cohen, Eitan Gutin, Elizabeth Handwerker, Jennifer Kefer, Rona Siskind, Jessica Weisman (writing and editing pages); Rona Siskind (editor); Carl Bergman, Joe Davidson, Morton Simon and David Zinner (web site design). We appreciate all their efforts.

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

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### Notes from the Rabbi

**Rabbi Seidel's column  
will resume in April**

## New Members

### Jared Garelick

Be happy, it's TI! (not to mention Adar.) Where does an expert on searching for happiness go to shul? You don't need to read a book to find out: TI, of course.

#### Eric Weiner and Sharon Moshavi

Eric and Sharon, both originally from Baltimore, describe themselves as recovering journalists. They had been foreign correspondents for many years, Sharon for various newspapers, and Eric for National Public Radio. Notable postings included Delhi, Jerusalem, and Tokyo.

Sharon is now vice president of the International Center for Journalists, which trains people from countries without a strong press tradition in journalistic methods. She has run training programs for people from such diverse places as Malaysia, India, and, yes, Egypt.

Eric now writes books. His last, published to good sales in 2008, was *The Geography of Bliss: One Grump's Search for the Happiest Places in the World*. If you read it, you'll learn what country's residents are happiest. Apart from a recent exclusive interview with this reporter, Eric is currently incommunicado, racing to meet the deadline for his next book, due out in December, which will be an exploration of world religions.

Eric and Sharon live in Silver Spring with their six-year-old daughter, who recently started the French immersion program at Sligo Creek Elementary.

## TI Board Minutes

Starting with the April issue, *The Menorah* will include each month a summary of the approved minutes of the Tifereth Israel Board of Directors meeting of two months before.

The two-month delay is unavoidable. The minutes of a Board meeting are not revised and approved until the following month's meeting. A summary cannot be published until the *Menorah* issued the month after that.

Accordingly, the April *Menorah* will contain a summary of the February Board meeting.

The full minutes of the February Board meeting will be available for review in the TI office soon after the March Board meeting.

#### Beth Kanter-Leibowitz and Louis Leibowitz

Beth, originally from Pittsburgh, is a University of Wisconsin graduate. She is now a consultant at Booz Allen in communications and management consulting. She can tell you how to manage your affairs the right way. If you fail to do what's right, you may have to call Louis.

After six years as a public defender, Louis has spent the last three years as a lawyer at the Stein Sperling firm in Rockville doing civil litigation and all kinds of criminal defense. At last report, he was working on a DUI and an attempted murder. Louis grew up in New Jersey, and moved to Washington to attend American University Law School.

Beth and Louis are avid movie fans, although their theater attendance dropped off sharply eight months ago when their baby daughter was born. They also both like to cook, which they have been better able to keep up during early parenthood. Welcome to this month's featured new members!

### **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

## USCJ Seaboard Region Honors Two Tiers

Tifereth Israel members **Josh Furman** and **Sara Goldberg** are among the recipients of *Azor Hof HaYam* Young Leadership Recognition awards from the Seaboard Region of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism.

The awards honor individuals age 45 and under who are making their mark in their communities and will continue to be the future leaders of the Conservative/Masorti Movement. Past TI honorees include **Devora Kimelman-Block** and **Jennifer Kefer**.

Josh and Sara will receive their awards at B'nai Israel Congregation in Rockville, Maryland, on Sunday, April 10, 2011, 5:30 pm to 8:30 pm. A light supper will be served, followed by lively entertainment. The cost is \$54 per person. TI members are encouraged to attend.

The following is part of TI President Susan Catler's letter nominating Josh and Sara:

### **Joshua Furman**

Josh joined Tifereth Israel in the summer of 2007 and has served on the Board since 2008. After being an active member of the Membership Committee for two years, Josh became the Chair of Adult Education. In that capacity he has increased learning opportunities for adults by encouraging more of our members to give talks or teach classes, increased our course offerings and created a monthly

post-Kiddush lunch speaker series called **Shalem** (for Shabbat Afternoon Learning Monthly). More than 70 people have attended each Shalem talk.

He coordinated and led Kol Nidre Services this year for one of our two adult services, has led the Parashat HaShavua weekly discussion group when neither the Rabbi nor the Director of Lifelong Learning was available, taught sessions in our Introduction to Judaism Class and is scheduled to teach a four-week session for our Chai School (post Bar/Bat Mitzvah students) this spring.

Josh's involvement in Conservative Judaism dates back to his time in college at Northwestern, when he helped coordinate the Conservative minyan at Northwestern Hillel from 2002 to 2003.

He worked at a Conservative synagogue in Lexington, Massachusetts, for three years, from 2004 to 2007, teaching Hebrew school courses, leading Jr. USY and Kadima groups, and planning retreats and sleepovers for elementary and middle-school children.

Josh is currently pursuing a PhD in Modern Jewish history at the University of Maryland (with a research concentration in American Jewish history).

### **Sara Goldberg**

Within a year of completing her Conservative conversion, Sara

was leading Tot Shabbat services, joined the Board of Directors of Tifereth Israel as Vice President for Membership and agreed to serve as chair of the Annual Appeal. She also gave the *drash* on the first anniversary of her conversion.

In addition to jumping right into leadership roles in our community, Sara has participated in the Greater Washington Jewish community. She was on a panel as part of a workshop open to the public at 6th and I Historic Synagogue about conversion and how converts approach the winter holidays.

When asked how she serves the greater Jewish community and will impact the future of the Conservative movement, Sara said:

"I like to think that as a convert who was part of an interfaith couple/family before my conversion I have a unique perspective that can be of value to helping interfaith families and couples find greater involvement and meaning in their Jewish life, particularly within our and other Conservative synagogues.

"This is something I would like to do more of in the future--help interfaith couples and families connect with Judaism and synagogue life. I also hope to mentor conversion students more in the future. Both of these are important to helping more people find a home in Conservative Judaism and both things that are very important to me."

## Department of Lifelong Learning

Eitan Gutin

### Himmelfarb School News

The students in the Himmelfarb School have had a fantastic winter. Here are highlights from two of our classes:

The Gan (Kindergarten) class, led by **Silvia Edenburg**, has learned their colors in Hebrew through the use of art and song. They have also been using each week's *Parasha* for Hebrew practice which has given them a chance to learn words such as *tzedakkah* and *shulchan* (table).

In Alef (1st Grade), **Seth Glabman** has his students working in teams with *HaChaver Sheli* (my friend). The class is solid on their *Alef Bet* and is now beginning to practice Hebrew reading, a major milestone in their year.

### Curriculum Revision

The Himmelfarb curriculum renewal is proceeding at a good pace, led by **Lynne Snyder**. As part of the process we have begun a pilot program of a new Hebrew curriculum in the 5th grade called *Mitkadem* (Progress). *Mitkadem* is a 23-level program that allows each student to learn Hebrew at his or her own most appropriate speed.

We would like to congratulate **Allegra Levone** for being the first Himmelfarb student to complete

one of the levels. Our current Gan Teacher, **Silvia Edenburg**, has agreed to work on the Hebrew curriculum for K-2.

### Family Service a Big Success

We had a wonderful Family Service on February 5. See Mark Berch's enthusiastic description on Page 6. While the National Park Service does not provide official estimates, a crowd of at least 100 participants was present.

### SHALEM: Shabbat Afternoon Learning Monthly

Each month at TI we feature one or more speakers in the Reamer Chapel after Shabbat Lunch. Our next SHALEM program is on March 12 at 1:00 p.m. **Carolivia Herron** will present *Jewish Influence on the Life of Marian Anderson*.

World famous contralto Marian Anderson had a Jewish grandfather, was discovered by a Jewish impresario, stayed in Jewish homes in Eastern Europe as the Holocaust was beginning, bought a "kibbutz shirt" in Israel because of her love of the new nation, and established a scholarship for young Israeli musicians.

As a Jewish introduction to the opera *Let Freedom Sing: The Story of Marian Anderson*, for

which she wrote the libretto, Dr. Herron will share some of the connections between Ms. Anderson's life and the Jewish people.

### Adult Education Highlights

**Jeffrey Davidson** will lead a three-session course, *The Torah's Subconscious: Understanding Midrash Through A New Lens*, on Sundays, March 6, 13, and 27, 10:15-11:15 a.m. This class will be guided by Avivah Gottlieb Zornberg's book, *Genesis: The Beginning of Desire*.

"Midrash is the subconscious of the Torah -- it expresses what the Torah knows but cannot say for itself." With these words Zornberg demonstrates why she is one of the most distinguished writers of contemporary Midrash and explication.

She is very well versed in the traditional sources, but she adds a great deal of material from contemporary literary and critical theory. She also utilizes contemporary psychoanalytical theory and pays quite a bit of attention to the female characters.

### Continuing Adult Programs

Meanwhile our Monday learning program continues every week, starting at 11 a.m., with *Parashat Hashavuah*, complimentary lunch and Job Club.



## Kol Nashim

Paula Flicker



### Successful February Programs

We thank the speakers for our two February programs, Maxine Grossman and Michele Sumka.

About 40 people attended Dr. Maxine Grossman's talk, *Women in the Biblical Tradition: What exactly is women's role?* Maxine used images of pieces of art depicting biblical women to initiate a discussion of each woman. It was a delightful, thought-provoking presentation.

Michele Sumka presented a SHALEM (Shabbat Afternoon Learning Monthly) talk, again before a large post-Kiddush audience.

She spoke about davening with the Women of the Wall, *Nashot HaKotel*, and on finding her great-grandfather's grave on the Mount of Olives, *Har HaZeitim*.

Like many a good story, the two threads came together at the end. Michele presented many views of life in Israel with her fascinating talk.

The Women of the Wall has a web site <http://womenofthewall.org.il>, on which you can see a video of the arrest of Anat Hoffman at the Kotel, which includes Michele trying to help keep the Torah in Anat's arms.

### Upcoming Activities

Come help Kol Nashim cook on **Thursday evening March 3**, starting at 7 p.m., for TI's Kiddush lunch on March 5.

A nominating committee to recruit a new board for Kol Nashim is being assembled.

We plan to hold a Salon for Kol Nashim members in May or June. It will be an opportunity for members to mingle, be entertained, and provide input on Kol Nashim programming.

**Mitzvah Knitting:** Upcoming dates are March 7 and April 4, from 7-9 p.m.. Join us for knitting, crocheting, or just some good conversation.

We have needles and yarn and can teach you to knit or crochet. Contact Ellen Zwibak if you have any questions.

## You Should Try the Family Service

Mark Berch

If you don't have small children, you probably haven't attended a TI Family Service. I took a look at the February 5 Family Service and saw a lot of energy, and a huge number of people--upwards of 60 adults (including a few grandparents), and vast numbers of kids.

The service was highly structured, broken up into a number of small pieces, each led by a different person or group. These included the Himmelfarb gimel, alef, hey,

dalet, gan, zayin and vav classes, along with the second graders of JPDS, plus numerous individuals, including **Izzy Friedland, Meribor Matusow, and Jane Berman**

There was a great handout with the order of the service (including page numbers), some brief explanations, and who's-doing-what--again, very organized.

The service seemed to me to be remarkably successful, which I'm sure was due to the efforts of **Kim**

**Lavone, Jennifer Kefer, Eitan Gutin** and others. Kudos to all who were involved, kids and adults, in putting on this service.

So on April 2--the date of the next service--if things look a little thin in the sanctuary and you are wondering "where is everybody?," well, those missing souls may well be down in the Cherner, at a service which on its own terms, is just as successful as the one you're at.

## What Is The TI Homecoming and Why Should I Care?

Rona Siskind

Each year TI has a spring fund-raising event called the Spring Fling. This year's theme is **TI Homecoming: Celebrating the People and Spirit of TI.**

The TI Homecoming, which will be held on **Sunday, April 3, from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m.**, is intended to bring together past, present and future members to celebrate and support the community that is uniquely TI.

### A Chance to See Old Friends

We hope to bring back former members and people who grew up coming to TI – for Hebrew school, for b'nei mitzvah, USY dances – to see old friends and to see how TI has grown.

For whatever reason people left the shul, when they were members they were an integral part of our community and we want to reconnect with them. We want to see how they're doing now, reminisce and capture their memories, especially as we think about TI's fast-approaching 100th anniversary.

Send contact information for former members you're still in touch with, and for your grown children, to [homecoming@tifereth-israel.org](mailto:homecoming@tifereth-israel.org) so we can invite them to join us.

### Fun Programming for All Ages

The Homecoming will include a cocktail hour, dinner, live music and of course, the **famously fun TI auction!** Age-appropriate programming will also be available for kids K-6<sup>th</sup> grade and child-care for ages 2-K. It's a great night out—a chance to relax and schmooze with friends, while helping TI.

The auction provides healthy competition as you try to outbid your friends. There are usually opportunities to bid on vacation get-aways, kid's activities, or a lunch or even a speaking engagement with one of TI's many renowned members.

The auction also offers a chance to show-case your talents. Donate something you made, teach a class, host a Shabbat dinner or dinner party. Impress us with your talents!

### Help Us Expand the Auction

This year, we'd like to expand the number of items we have at the auction. You can help by soliciting donations from the places you frequent. Think creatively, think big. Every item helps us raise money to support TI operations and programs.

You can [print off a donation form](#) (Word), pick one up in the TI office, or fill out the [Donation Web Form](#) online.

### Raffle of Shleien Art Works

This year, there is also a very special raffle and the winners will be announced at the Homecoming. Bernie Shleien has agreed to raffle off any three pieces of his art work (anything that's hanging in the Cherner auditorium).

Can you imagine being lucky enough to have original Bernie Shleien art work hanging in your home? Now's your chance! For as little as \$10 for one ticket or \$25 for three tickets you could be a winner. Raffle tickets are available in the TI office or you can e-mail [tiadmin@tifereth-israel.org](mailto:tiadmin@tifereth-israel.org).

### Invitations Arriving Soon

Look for your invitation in your e-mail. It's coming soon. And when you get it, hurry to purchase your ticket by e-mailing or calling the TI office (see box). Remember to tell your friends who used to be members and, buy a ticket for your grown kids—it'll be a great excuse to see them.

Come and enjoy and help make the TI Homecoming a true celebration! If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at (301) 589-8799 or at [rsiskind@gmail.com](mailto:rsiskind@gmail.com).

See you on April 3!

## TI Homecoming

Members – \$54 per ticket

Former TI'ers – \$20.11

Teens – \$18 per ticket

Children's Spring Fling – \$10 per child

For tickets: e-mail [tiadmin@tifereth-israel.org](mailto:tiadmin@tifereth-israel.org)  
or call (202) 882-1605

## Social Action at Tifereth Israel

Stephen Nelson

*In the upcoming months, this column will profile TI members and other members of the Jewish community who are dedicating much of their efforts to better the Greater Washington region. Suggestions are welcome; please e-mail those to [TISocActCS@tifereth-israel.org](mailto:TISocActCS@tifereth-israel.org).*

From his early days, **Pierre Dugan** has been active in social action. As a high school student, he always showed an interest in trying to understand the sources of poverty, as well as engaging in activities to combat it.

Pierre has been active in TI's Social Action Committee since he joined the congregation in 1992. He's been a driving force behind TI's partnership with the Emory United Methodist Church, and for 10 years was Treasurer of the Emory Beacon of Light, the church's social action organization.

He was an early volunteer for that organization's homeless shelter, and has volunteered there as an overnight resident almost every week since 2000.

### Street to Street

Pierre, who has a consulting business advising insurance companies, brokers, and self-insured employers on risk management issues, recently started a new organization called *Street to Street*, which is designed to focus on what he says are the three elements that are most important in reversing the spiral of homelessness in the inner city:

- Jobs
- Housing
- Education

### Creating a Community

The ultimate goal of *Street to Street* (S2S), says Pierre, is to create a community, based on the kibbutz model, in which members can live, have remunerative employment, and better educate themselves and their families.

But at this point, S2S is just beginning. Pierre hopes to get his 501(c)(3) status later this month, and then buy a truck and equipment so that he can find opportunities for inner-city youth to get jobs in landscaping and renovation.

Once these young adults are getting regular work, S2S will organize education projects so that some of these workers can get their GEDs. Eventually, Pierre hopes the group can produce enough revenue to purchase a house.

Even though S2S has lofty goals, Pierre feels that its program "is rooted in daily, simple acts of kindness, which can make a huge difference in the lives of young people." He adds that "if someone provides these kids a little bit of attention, it can be valuable for a lifetime."

### Other Involved Tiers

Pierre isn't the only TI member involved in S2S.

**Lynn Golub-Rofrano**, long-time former Director of Lifelong Learning at TI, serves as Executive Director of the organization.

**Dr. Carolivia Herron** is a member of the Board of Directors.

**Ronni Davis** is serving as the S2S Treasurer.



**Kassahun Teffera** serves as an advisor.

While Pierre's wife **Deena** has no official title, she's been very supportive throughout.

At this point, most of the revenues for *Street to Street* come from contributions. Those interested in helping the organization financially should visit the organization's website, [www.streettostreet.org](http://www.streettostreet.org).

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Last month's *Menorah* Social Action column summarized the great panel discussion at the January Shabbaton on the legacy of the Rosenwald Schools, which were built in the South under the sponsorship of the great Jewish philanthropist Julius Rosenwald.

One of the panel members, Erika Scott (Rosenwald's great-great granddaughter), wrote a letter to Gene Herman thanking the community for the kind welcome she received.

"Your congregation shatters the stereotype of shuls that make new visitors feel like strangers," was one of the things she wrote.

TI members should be proud of the great reception that it gave, not just to Erica Scott, but to the other participants at the Social Action Shabbaton.



## Nayes un Mekhayes for TI'ers

### Barbara Raimondo

#### Ski

**Alan Landay** travelled to Ogden, Utah for a week at the beginning of February, with the Columbia Ski Club. The club skied at Snow Basin and Powder Mountain. One of the days at Powder Mountain was a true powder day with more than half a foot of snow, aptly illustrating the premise that truth in advertising exists.

On the last day, Alan went to the Utah State Railroad Museum, in Ogden. Ogden is the town close to where the Union and Central Pacific Railroads met to complete the first transcontinental railroad in North America. Yesterday, Union and Central Pacific, today, Metro. That's progress!

**Marjorie Rosenthal** has been partying like it's 1956. That's the year Natalie and Julian Levine, her *machatonim* – her daughter's parents-in-law, for you non-Yiddish-speakers – got married. They recently celebrated their 55<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary at Olam Tikvah Congregation in Fairfax, VA., where they have been members since its inception in the early 60's. They have served as president and on the board and all the committees of the shul. Their three children have become bar and bat mitzvah there.

To celebrate the anniversary they had a beautiful Shabbat service followed by a kiddush luncheon. They sponsored a dinner at a restaurant, with a musician named Vladimir who played tunes from Fiddler on the Roof and other smash hits. On Sunday they had a brunch, with friends visiting from as far away as Texas (they are native Texans) and California.

Marjorie also will be singing with "One Voice," the JCC senior chorus, at two performances in March. One is at Ring House, 11:00 a.m. on March 17, and the other is on March 24 at 1:00 p.m. at Har Tzeon. The concerts will feature Purim music.

**Georgia Herron**, mother of member **Carolivia Herron**, thanks Rabbi Seidel and the TI congregation for their support during her recent illness. An aside: the handsome calligraphy you see on some selected pieces of Kol Nashim's mail is a gift from Georgia.

#### Three

**Lynn Golub-Rofrano** has accepted a position as Assistant Director for Operation Homefront Village – DC, running the Bethesda Village. Operation Homefront Villages provide transitional housing for wounded warriors who are leaving the service. Most of the vets are getting medical discharges as a result of injuries received in Iraq or Afghanistan. If you are interested in learning more about Operation Homefront and how you can become involved, contact Lynn.

In other news from the G-R family, **Josh** came in second at the DC Eastern Chess Open in the under 1900 category -- a fancy chess ranking, for you non-chess-players. He won enough money to cover his rent for the month of January. Next stop, Las Vegas!

His sister **Myriam**, having visited him at the Rochester Institute of Technology during Spring Break, has decided to go to Florida for college. Myriam was accepted to Lynn University in Boca Raton, and

the family visited the school at the end of February. They left their snow boots in Rochester.

#### Agree

**Diana Levy**, daughter of **David** and **Ellen Levy**, is engaged to be married to Danny Moldovan of New York City. An August wedding in New York City is planned. Faithful TI'ers may remember Danny from when he came with his family for the Martin Luther King weekend January 15, 2010. At that time his grandfather, Dr. Alfred Moldovan, was part of the panel of doctors telling their story about going south during the civil rights movement.

**Sheridan** and **Dana Neimark** are delighted to announce the birth of **Frieda Gabriella** to son **Matthew** and daughter-in-law **Dikla Neimark**, February 4. She joins siblings **Benyamin Shimon** and **Noa Chaya**. Frieda Gabriella is named for her great grandmother **Frieda Perlzweig**, who, with her late husband **Benjamin**, was a member of TI for fifty years.

**Louise Wiener's** daughter-in-law and former TI member **Mari Schindele** became a bat mitzvah in New Jersey at the end of January. **Dana Beyer** was to be Gabbai but got sick at the last minute. Still, TI tunes rang out, as did Adon Olam to the melody of "Ode to Joy." The *New Jersey Jewish News* wrote a story on Mari, available at <http://njewishnews.com/article/central/mom-puts-the-mitzva-in-her-own-bat-mitzva>.

(Continued on page 10)

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

**Shelly Heller** recently received a Fulbright fellowship titled "Fulbright Scholar" -- an impressive Fulbright category, for you non-Fulbright scholars. In this program Shelly, like other Fulbright scholars, will be available as a consultant to Fulbright universities around the globe. Her two areas of expertise are noted as educational uses of computers and the recruitment and retention of women in science, technology, education and math (STEM).

So Shelly, what do you think about TI being on Facebook? Tell us what you *really* think! Shelly is the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs (Mount Vernon Campus) of George Washington University.

### Sad News

**Sanford Heller**, father of **Stephen Heller**, father-in-law of **Shelly Heller**, died at the age of 103 plus, in Rockville. The burial was in New York.

**Dottie Mathis**, mother of **Bob Mathis**, died after a long illness. Many TI'ers had met her, as she came to shul occasionally, especially to kvell over her granddaughters **Miriam** and **Hannah**.

And **Jerry Anker**, long-time TI member and former TI president, passed away. The funeral was held at TI, with burial in Maryland.

May their loved ones be comforted among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.

And now for the meaning of last month's word, fulsome: "abundant or copious." (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 with "Nayes un Mekhayes" in the heading, or to P.O. Box 466, Washington Grove, MD 20880.

This brings to a close this edition of Nayes un Mekhayes for TI'ers from your faithful N un M wallah.

## Upcoming Friday Night Minyan Assignments

### March 4

Leonard Bachman  
Jessica Badt  
Sidney & Heike Bailin  
Ethan & Jodi Balis  
Mr. Justin Bank  
Paul & Esther Bardack  
Burt Barnow  
Charles Baum  
Leonard & Joy Baxt  
Bruce & Laurie Berger

### March 11

Mollie Berch  
Mark & Mona Berch  
Carl Bergman & Marjorie Odle  
Judith Berland  
Barbara Beuchert  
Dana Beyer  
Sean Blake & Larisa Aranbayeva  
Martin Block & Renee Comet  
Sheri Blonder  
Gideon & Lisa Blumenthal

### March 18

Irving Borochoff  
Lenora Borow  
Ron & Dina L. G. Borzekowski  
Nat Bottigheimer & Eve Ostriker  
Ronald S. Bowyer  
Larry Bram & Lise Krantz  
Leonard Braverman  
Michael Britton  
Sharon Brown  
Stephen Burd & Laura Schiavo

### April 1

Susan Chapin  
Daniel Chazan & Ronit Eisenbach  
Nataliya Chernyak Cowen  
Todd Christiansen & Rebecca Pikofsky  
Ann Cohen & Avi Dorot  
David Cohen  
David & Elana Cohen  
David & Judith Cohen  
Joel Cohen  
Raymond & Rebecca Coleman

### April 8

Sara Collins  
Jeffrey Colman & Ellen Nissenbaum  
Merry Danaceau  
Jeffrey & Miriam Davidson  
Joseph & Kathy Davidson  
L. Ronni Davis  
Adam Diamond & Rabbi Jane Berman  
Helen Disenhaus  
Stan Dorn & Carla Ellern  
Laura Dowling

### April 15

Lisa Drazin  
David Drelich & Rabbi Gilah Langner  
Pierre & Deena Dugan  
Ernie Englander  
Miriam Feinsilver  
Joshua Felman  
Harvey Fernbach & Ann Birk  
Robert Feron & Dione Pereira  
Rona Fields  
Joshua & Lucia Filler

## Discovering MERCAZ

Elihu I. Leifer

MERCAZ is the world-wide Zionist organization of the Conservative/Masorti stream of Judaism. Until last spring I was unaware of MERCAZ, although my connections to the State of Israel are strong and go back many years—relatives living there, trips and visits, and the purchase of Israel bonds.

Then I saw a MERCAZ newsletter concerning the forthcoming 36<sup>th</sup> World Zionist Congress in Jerusalem in June 2010. I called the MERCAZ USA office in New York and Rabbi Robert Golub, the executive director, kindly invited me to attend, as an observer, the Congress and MERCAZ's pre-congress preparatory meetings.

Although my schedule did not allow me to stay for the Congress, I did attend the MERCAZ meetings in Jerusalem which included delegates from Israel, the U.S., and many other countries. I was favorably impressed with MERCAZ's mission, agenda and programs, its familiarity with Zionist history, and its efficiency and political sophistication.

### MERCAZ USA Biennial Meeting

A few months later I attended MERCAZ USA's biennial meeting in Baltimore at which Janet Tobin was elected the new president, and Rabbi Barry Schlesinger, the past president of the Rabbinical Assembly, Israel Region, spoke. He passionately and learnedly described the pain being caused so many Israeli citizens by ultra-Orthodox control of marriage,

divorce, burial and women's participatory rights.

MERCAZ is involved in many worthy Zionist education, social and religious programs. But for me, what makes the organization exciting and special is its advocacy of religious pluralism in Israel. MERCAZ is not formally allied with any political party, which I think is wise. But for purposes of the Zionist Congress last June, it formed a voting faction with Israel's main opposition party--Tzipi Livni's Kadima--and HaNoar HaZioni, an organization focused on promoting environment-friendly awareness and behavior.

At the Congress, MERCAZ fielded a 59-member delegation, its largest ever. Together with delegates from its parent organization, Masorti Olami, and its faction partners, it represented the second largest faction, ahead of the Mizrachi/Yisrael Beiteinu and the Likud/Shas groupings. Among the successes were:

- the election of the first Conservative/Masorti leader to the position of deputy chairman of the World Zionist Organization (WZO);

- an increased allocation for religious services to the non-orthodox from \$750,000 to \$1 million annually for use in countries outside of North America and Israel;

- rejecting attempts to eliminate the clear statement favoring religious pluralism in a WZO governing document;

- calls for equal status for all streams of Judaism with regard to marriage, divorce, conversion and burial;

- rejecting the MK Rotem conversion legislation that would have negative ramifications for non-Orthodox converts;

- a resolution to improve female gender representation in Congress positions;

- resolutions re climate change, food gardens, conservation of water and energy, and food justice; and

- securing recognition of NOAM, including USY as its North American affiliate, as a full-fledged Zionist youth forum, eligible for WZO funding.

### Membership Really Matters

Because of general unawareness of MERCAZ in the American Jewish Conservative community, the organization presently has only 7,000 membership units in the U.S.

Numbers matter. MERCAZ's ability to play an important role within the WZO, and the Jewish Agency for Israel, is directly tied to the size of its membership and the number of votes it receives in the periodic elections for the World Zionist Congress. The larger the membership, the more effective its ability to lobby on behalf of the Conservative/Masorti movement and religious pluralism.

## Bat Mitzvah

Hi, my name is **Adina Rombro** and my bat mitzvah is on March 26, Shabbat Parah. It is one of the weeks leading up to Passover. While the *parashah* for the week is *Shemini*, there is an additional reading from a second Torah about laws of the red heifer. That means I have a really long *maftir* to read!

I am in 7th grade at Silver Spring International Middle School in the Spanish immersion program. In my free time I like to read. I play soccer and basketball. I am a big fan of the University of Maryland women's basketball team.

For my bat mitzvah project, I am in the Friendship Circle, which is an organization that helps children with special needs. I have been going to Habonim Dror Camp Moshava for a number of years. I hope you can attend my bat mitzvah.



### March/Early April Highlights at Tifereth Israel

- |                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| <b>March 7, 14, 21 &amp; 28</b> | <b>Monday Learning, starting at 11 a.m.</b>                |
| <b>March 7 &amp; April 4</b>    | <b>Mitzvah Knitting, 7-9 p.m.</b>                          |
| <b>March 12</b>                 | <b>SHALEM, Carolivia Herron on Marian Anderson, 1 p.m.</b> |
| <b>March 6, 13 &amp; 27</b>     | <b>Jeff Davidson on Midrash, 10:15-1:15 a.m.</b>           |
| <b>March 26</b>                 | <b>Adina Rombro Bat Mitzvah</b>                            |
| <b>April 2</b>                  | <b>Family Service</b>                                      |
| <b>April 3</b>                  | <b>TI Homecoming (Spring Fling), 6:00-9 p.m.</b>           |

## Der Spieler

### David (Judy) Cohen

*Your faithful Menorah editor reports news that didn't make it into Nayas un Mekhayes*

In an effort to provide better balance to this year's *Megillah* reading, **Rabbi Ethan Seidel** will chant from the Book of Esther while simultaneously riding his unicycle and juggling three other activities.

\*\*\*\*\*

**TI President Susan Catler** has decided to lighten up her image. She is discarding her signature hats and will wear—depending on the season—either Nationals or Capitals caps on Shabbat mornings. She wisely rejected a Redskins helmet as too heavy and politically incorrect.

\*\*\*\*\*

Two of our members have entered the Gribbenes Book of Records for listserve participation: **Mark Berch**, for responding 40 (a Biblically important number) times to comments from other members on a single topic; and **Sheridan Neimark**, for his 1,000<sup>th</sup> citation of articles or speeches on Zionist issues.

\*\*\*\*\*

The **Ritual Committee**, after months of exhaustive exploration of options, has developed recommendations on two burning, unresolved issues that have recently split the congregation:

On the question of **where to place the lectern on the lower bimah**, the committee is proposing that it be mounted on wheels and be slowly pushed by the service leader from side to side in the front of the congregation and from front to back in the center aisle, thus ultimately satisfying everyone's preference. The committee did not feel that it was significant

that this pattern would trace the shape of a cross.

On the question of **where the congregation should sit** during services, the committee has again come up with a Solomonic solution, splitting the difference, so to speak. Every other Shabbat, the congregation will be required to all sit in the front rows. On alternating Shabbatot, all will sit in the back rows. Whether in the front or back rows, each congregant will be required to sit alternatively with someone he/she likes and someone he/she dislikes.

\*\*\*\*\*

As a cost- and energy-saving move, and to draw attention to the global-warming crisis, **House Vice President Mark Verschell** reports that the air conditioning will be turned off between Shavuot and Rosh Hashanah. In the future, the building will be air-conditioned only during the winter months when the sanctuary is too hot.

\*\*\*\*\*

Plans for a second in-town retreat have been abandoned in light of recent political developments. Instead of **retreating**, Tiers will **reload!** A special, environmentally-friendly program is planned for Rock Creek Park. Following NRA (No Real guns Allowed) guidelines, congregants will just take pot shots at their favorite political enemies. **Devora Kimelman-Block** has arranged for an organically-raised, range-fed moose to be ritually slaughtered, quartered and kashered, then barbecued for all to enjoy. Devora claims all other barbecues would Palin comparison!

To promote congregational participation in services, a group of Tiers is organizing a monthly **duplicative service** in the chapel. In sharp contrast to the now-defunct alternative service, the once-monthly duplicative service will be exactly the same in format and content as the main sanctuary service. It will enable twice as many congregants to share honors and participate as service leaders.

\*\*\*\*\*

From the I-Got-Rhythm Department: **Azariah Shashoua** and **Lev Gutin** are forming an AO (Adon Olam) support group for fellow pre-schoolers, to teach them how to dance on the bimah. Kids, want to learn all the right moves? If so, join Azariah and Lev and learn the 12 steps to a more spiritual end-of-service experience.

\*\*\*\*\*

From the It's-Never-Too-Early-To-Think-About-Passover Department: TI has recruited three Jewish members of Congress to lead a discussion on Pesachs past and present:

Democratic Senator **Carl Leaven** will detail the finer points of searching for and selling *hametz*.

Independent Senator **Bernie Slanders** will recount the tragic history of Passover-season blood libels.

Republican House Majority Leader **Eric Hazan** will present his recommendations for cutting the taxing length (and costs) of the seder. His proposed 50% reduction would result in only two cups of wine, two questions, two sons, five plagues, half a kid (*Hatzi Gadya*), and a quarter-of-a-matzah *afikomen*.



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