



The Menorah

Notes from the Rabbi: Ethan Seidel

The Art of Welcoming – and Finding our Place

Welcoming folks into the *shul* is an art, partly because each person could use a different welcome. For example, here are two extremes:

Newcomer #1. The newcomer who confidently finds her seat, whips her own *tallit* around herself before she sits down, and then immerses herself in the davening. Such a visitor doesn't need you to tell her the page number.

For one thing, unless she arrived at *shul* right on time, this type of davener may well be trying to catch up, working through some of the prayers the congregation has already said. For another, she may have her own *siddur*. Such a person probably already feels a degree of comfort in our *shul*, even if she's never been here before.

With this type of experienced davener, I might not even say hello until there's a natural break in the davening – both hers and ours.



Newcomer #2. Appreciating a quicker welcome is the newcomer who exhibits some or all of these behaviors: he takes a *tallit* from our rack, or perhaps walks in without a *tallit* at all; he walks in clearly unsure of himself; or, when sitting down,

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President's Column: Joel Cohen

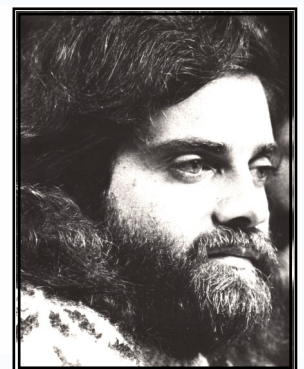
Lighter Fare

My last several columns have addressed some of the most serious issues that we American Jews face. Since we just passed April Fools Day I thought that it was time to let my lighter side take over.

On March 17, St. Patrick's Day, we celebrated Bella Alterman's Bat Mitzvah. I was asked to make a few remarks about the Jews and St. Patrick in honor of Bella's Irish grandmother. I discovered that "Irish Bat Mitzvah" does not get very many hits on the Internet, so I emailed my best buddy from childhood, Al Tapper, who knows every joke ever told. He wrote a book entitled *A Priest, a Minister, and a Rabbi*. (\$8.29 on Kindle.) Between that and a little googling around, I managed to put together a perfect program for the "announcements."

Unfortunately, it was Shabbat Parah, so there were two Torahs and a double *parashah* with some very long *aliyot*.

In addition, the microphone was not working perfectly, which I didn't realize, and I was not paying much attention to the time. I misinterpreted the hands cupped around ears as people not wanting to miss the punchline, and I thought the cries of "we're hungry" were from those hungering for



(Continued on page 3)



Notes from the Rabbi (continued)

he spends a good deal of time with the paper handouts, or picks up the *siddur* and thumbs through it aimlessly.

So how *do* we welcome person 2? I think it's often polite to lean over to them, when they first sit down, and tell them the page number. (I can only say "often", because each guest sends off different vibes, and we must be sensitive to each individual case.)

Announcing Pages

This leads me to another topic. Though we occasionally announce page numbers on Shabbat morning, we don't announce enough of them to keep all the newcomers with us. And as helpful as announced page numbers can be, they are not nearly as welcoming, I think, as a personal offer of help from someone sitting nearby.

There are other reasons we eschew the public announcing of many page numbers. For one thing, folks really don't always need to be on the same page. We announce the page right before the *Sh'ma* and the *Amidah*, because it *is* important for the community to do those central parts of the service together.

But for the rest of the service, we allow, even encourage, folks to daven at their own pace. By announcing many page numbers throughout the service, we are exhibiting an implicit paternalism, in effect saying: "It's very important that you be on such and such a page, where we are!" and "The congregation is not expected to keep up unless told what to do."

Page Number Flip Chart

The Ritual Committee recently mulled over another solution to the page-number problem: using a flip chart, and constantly (or occasionally) flipping it to show the correct page. Though it is less intrusive than constant public announcements of the page number, it has the weaknesses noted above, as well as a third: someone would have to be the flipper, sacrificing their davening that morning. All in all, I think the personal touch is the best way to go – much more welcoming than a public display.

By the way, if you yourself are having trouble figuring out where we are in the service, I hope you will be forthright and unashamed enough to ask a nearby person the page number. Making human connections is what a community is about, and those connections are forged when we ask for help when we need it.

So here's to casting aside shyness: when we need help, we should ask; when we see another who needs help, we should offer! If we do this, we may well approach the Holy One on Shabbat morning. As it says in the *siddur* (from Psalm 96:8): *שאו מנחה ובאו לחצרותיו*
Bring a gift, and enter God's courts!

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Later Starting Time for Friday Night Services

With Daylight Savings Time, Kabbalat Shabbat Services now begin at 6:30 p.m. instead of 6:00 p.m. The later start time will continue until the fall, when we return to Standard Time.

President's Column (continued)

more jokes. I eventually did cut short my talk. So to make up for it, I will now present my remarks more-or-less in full.

I started with the legend that the Irish are the offspring of pre-Celtic men and seven Jewish maidens who survived a shipwreck off the Emerald Isle. You may have forgotten that the pre-Celts, or Picts, were exogamous, which means that a man is required to marry *outside* his tribe!

Anyway the Picts married the Jewish maidens, and they all changed their names so as not to sound too Pictish. My sources are from an article by R. A. S. Macalister, in *The Irish Monthly*, Vol. 46, No. 539 (May, 1918), pp. 252-267, confirmed by two sources at the American Jewish University (admittedly in California) as well as in a blog by someone named Rhonda. The name change just seemed obvious.

I then proceeded to tell the following jokes:

Many of you remember that Robert Briscoe served as the first Jewish Lord Mayor of Dublin. He happened to be in New York on one St. Patrick's Day and was asked to lead the parade. Two Jewish women were watching. One nudged the other and said, "Oy, what a country. Only in America could a Jew be the Lord Mayor of Dublin!"

An Irish priest, a Rabbi and a Baptist minister got together a couple of times a week to relax and talk shop. One afternoon, one commented that preaching to people wasn't really all that hard. A real challenge would be to preach to a bear. One thing led to another and they decided to do an experiment. They would all go out into the woods,

find a bear, preach to it, and attempt to convert it. A week later, they meet to discuss the experience.

Father Flannery, who had his arm in a sling, went first. "Well, I went into the woods to find a bear. And when I found him I began to read to him from the Catechism. Well, that bear wanted nothing to do with me and began to slap me around. So I quickly grabbed my holy water, sprinkled him and, Holy Mary Mother of God, he became as gentle as a lamb. The bishop is coming out next week to give him first communion and confirmation."

Reverend Billy Bob spoke next. He had an arm and a leg in casts. "Well brothers, you know that we don't sprinkle! When I found me a bear I began to read to him from God's holy word! But that bear wanted nothing to do with me, so I took hold of him and we began to wrestle. We wrestled up one hill and down another until we came to a creek. So I quick dunked him and baptized his hairy soul. And he became as gentle as a lamb. We spent the rest of the day praising Jesus."

They both looked down at the rabbi, who was lying in a hospital bed. He was in a body cast and traction with IV's and monitors running in and out of him. He was in really bad shape. The rabbi looked up and said, "I probably should *not* have started with the bris."

Yeshiva University decided to field a crew team. Unfortunately, they lost race after race. They practiced for hours every day but never managed to come in any better than dead last.

The university finally decided to send Yankel off to Cambridge to spy on the Harvard team. So Yankel hid in the bushes off the Charles River, where he carefully watched the

Harvard team practice. Yankel finally returned to Yeshiva University. "I have figured out their secret," he announced. "They have eight guys rowing and only one guy shouting."

Father Flaherty was called away for an emergency. Not wanting to leave the confessional unattended, he called his friend Rabbi Levy and asked him to cover for him. The rabbi told him he wouldn't know what to say, but the priest promised he'd stay with him for a little bit and show him what to do. When the rabbi arrived, he and the priest sat in the confessional together.

In a few minutes a woman came in and said, "Father, forgive me, for I have sinned. I have committed adultery." The priest asked, "How many times?" The woman answered, "Three times." The priest said, "Say two 'Hail Marys', put \$5.00 in the poor box, and sin no more."

A few minutes later a man entered the confessional. He said, "Father, forgive me, for I have sinned." The priest asked, "What did you do?" The man answered, "I have committed adultery." The priest asked, "How many times?" The man replied, "Three times." The priest said, "Say two 'Hail Marys', put \$5.00 in the poor box, and sin no more."

Rabbi Levy told Father Flaherty that he got the idea, so the priest left. A few minutes later another woman entered and said, "Father, forgive me, for I have sinned." The rabbi asked, "What did you do?" The woman replied, "I have committed adultery." The rabbi asked, "How many times?" The woman replied, "Once." The rabbi said, "Go do it two more times. We have a special this week, three for \$5.00."

New Members

Jared Garelick

David and Linda Luxenberg

Both David and Linda originally trained to be urban planners. Linda worked for the City of Rochester for nearly 30 years, handling the city's real estate and working on housing revitalization and other community development programs. David began as a community organizer, then moved into real estate management, and eventually had a construction company that built commercial buildings, especially senior housing, throughout the northeast US.

While in Rochester, David and Linda each served on the boards of many Jewish and secular social service organizations. After many years in Rochester, NY, the Luxenbergs retired to a home in Cape Cod, where they are also members of a small conservative shul.

Among their four adult children and six grandchildren (with one more on the way) some live here in Washington. The Luxenbergs found an apartment here to be near them for part of the year, mainly the winter.

Picnic Brunch and Playdate for New Students

Do you have a child ready to enter Tifereth Israel's Himmelfarb School this Fall?

Lisa Blumenthal, the chair of the Himmelfarb School Board, and Eitan Gutin, TI's Director of Lifelong Learning, invite you and your preschooler(s) to a picnic brunch and playdate on **Sunday morning, April 22**.

The event will be held at the Shepherd Playground, just down the alley from Tifereth Israel on Jonquil Street. At this informal gathering your children will have a chance to meet their future classmates and you will have a chance to get to know their parents.

For more information, contact Eitan Gutin at eitan@tifereth-israel.org.

Here in Washington, they had no need for shul shopping. They were close friends of the Seidels' cousins in Rochester, and had met Ethan and Rachel at family events in Rochester. For membership development, we might consider sending the Rabbi out of town more often – he might meet someone who will move to Washington eventually.

Regular readers of this column might recall that this columnist himself hails from the fair city of Rochester. For those keeping track, the number of mentions in this month's column is a new record.

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

Social Action Sunday

Join other TI'ers in Social Action on **Sunday, April 15**. Celebrate the end of Passover (the day before) by baking a casserole for the shelter operated by **So Others Might Eat (SOME)** and drop it off at TI that Sunday. The **Tuna Casserole Recipe** is now on the TI website!.

Summary of TI Board of Directors Meeting February 13, 2012

Attending: Susan Catler, Joel Cohen, Jeff Davidson, Joe Davidson, Deena Dugan, Joshua Ferman, Paula Martin, Esther Herman, Stephanie Roodman Murdock, Margie Odle, Debbie Pomerance, Naomi Revzin, Jevera Temsky, Daniel Turner, Mark Verschell, Chris Zellinger, Renee Brachfeld.

Excused: Vivian Seidner, Susan Vitale, Lynne Snyder, Sara Goldberg, Ruth Shapiro.

Absent: Varda Fink, David Levy.

Staff: Rabbi Ethan Siedel, Eitan Gutin, David Zinner.

Guest: George Greenberg

Membership Committee: New members since the last board meeting: Barbara and Michael Milton, Jackelyn Lopez, and Mariama and David Lantner and their three children.

Finance Committee, Chris Zeilinger: The Finance Committee is preparing for next year's budget. Two issues: First, should there be a price difference for High Holiday tickets upstairs and downstairs? Second, should High Holiday tickets be included in the cost of dues?

Chris Zellinger said the numbers work either way, and the question is how people feel about the two issues. Any changes to the High Holiday ticket system could not begin next year. The dues are set by the congregation.

Ritual Committee: The rip in the small Torah was fixed. Friday night services on Passover will be 6:00.

House Committee: The balcony speakers are now installed.

Lifelong Learning Committee

School: The last Sunday of January, the 4th and 5th graders went to the cemetery to place old High Holiday prayer books in a grave and shovel dirt on them.

Adult Ed: The adult education catalogue was published. Currently there is an exhibit on Jewish life during the civil war in the Cherner which is on loan from The Jewish Historical Society.

Youth Groups: March 9-11 we will be hosting the National USY Convention. The kids will do most of the davening and Torah reading.

Babysitting and Shultime: We are establishing a list of babysitters for synagogue events. Shultime still needs to get fully staffed up.

Communications Committee, Debbie Pomerance:

Web Improvements: The website has a new search which uses Google's customized search engine. We now have a direct donations link from the home page. There are web announcements for youth events. Gatherthejews.com will announce our information. Forms will now be available on line from the TI website, e.g. havurah application, coffee orders.

Listserve Policy. Debbie developed a listserve policy that will be distributed to all members when they join the listserve.

Ad Hoc Committee for a Sister Synagogue, Naomi Revzin: The Gottingen community in Germany has approved their partnership with TI.

Executive Director's Report

Office Update: PEPCO put in new strong wires outside. They are also installing FIOS next week. A new copier is coming next week. People will be re-arranging offices next week.

House Purchase: TI engaged an agent and got pre-approved for a mortgage in order to consider purchasing the house at the corner of the alley and Jonquil. Joe Davidson asked, if we bought the house, how would we pay the mortgage? David Zinner stated that if we want the first shot at it we should bid in the next few weeks.

A motion was passed to establish a committee to research the issue further. Joel Cohen stated that Shemaya Klar and Howard Riker, who are in real estate, would join Deena Dugan, and Daniel Turner to form the committee.

Executive Session: There was a discussion of the Executive Director based on the executive director evaluation.

Food Collection

We are now collecting food for Shepherd's Table. As you clean out your cabinets before Pesach, this is a great chance to donate unopened non-perishable items.

Place donations in the wicker basket in the Juniper Street lobby. **Collection ends Tuesday, April 3.**

Adult Education

Josh Furman

Our April slate of activities begins on **Sunday, April 1**. Before you help deliver Passover food packages, join **Carla Ellern** for “**Creating a Rain Garden**.” Learn about TI’s plan to establish a rain garden, how it helps the environment, and how you can set one up at home!

Between Passover and Shavuot this year, we will once again have a 5-session Sunday morning text study class. The theme of this year’s class is the **Five Megillot**. On Jewish holidays throughout the year, we read special ancient texts. Don’t miss this opportunity to read each one in depth with a great teacher!

Join **Rabbi Seidel, Eitan Gutin, Iris Lav**, and **Jeff Davidson** to explore

the *Song of Songs (Shir Ha-Shirim)*, *Esther*, *Lamentations (Eichah)*, *Ecclesiastes (Kohelet)*, and *Ruth*. The first class will be **Sunday, April 15** at 10:15 after minyan, and the class will continue through **May 13**.

Our April **SHALEM** speaker will be former **Ambassador Richard Schifter**. Ambassador Schifter’s talk is titled, “**Israel, American Jews, and the World**.” He will speak about Israel’s relations with the international community, the United Nations, the U.S. Congress, and the American Rabbinate.

Ambassador Schifter will focus on an anti-Israel propaganda apparatus that has existed within the United Nations system for decades. He will

explain how this apparatus plays a key role in the international effort to delegitimize the Jewish state. Join us for this talk on **Saturday, April 21** at 1 PM following kiddush lunch.

Last but not least, save the date **Sunday, May 20** for this year’s **Tifereth Israel Adult Ed Bus Trip -- to Richmond, Virginia!**

We’ll visit a historic synagogue, Beth Ahabah, and tour its museum of colonial Jewish life, explore the Chimborazo Medical Museum to learn about health care during the Civil War, and end the day at the Virginia State Capitol.

See you on the bus!

April Highlights at Tifereth Israel

April 2, 9, 16,
23, 30

Monday Learning
Parashat HaShavuah, 11 a.m.
Job Club, 1 p.m.

April 7
April 8

Passover 1
Passover 2

April 13
April 14

Passover 7
Passover 8, Yizkor

April 15, 22, 29
May 1, 8, 15

The Five Megillot, 9 a.m.

April 21

Ezra Grimes Bar Mitzvah

April 21

Tot Shabbat Service, 11:10 a.m.

April 21

SHALEM: Israel, American Jews and the World

April 28

Adam Kritz Bar Mitzvah

Library News

Michele Sumka

Pesah Books

We have a good selection of *haggadot*, as well as books about the holiday for adults and children. Except for two special *haggadot*, all can be checked out, but please limit yourself to three or four titles so that there will be enough for others.

Shelf Space

For the past several months, I have been learning more and more about the library, both by exploring the shelves and by consulting with the Library Committee and the volunteers. One of our biggest challenges is finding enough shelf space for all our current books.

This was already an issue when I started volunteering with Mollie (z"l) last year, and she agreed that we could give away the third or fourth copy of a given title. She wanted to keep more than one since sometimes books are not returned (not that anyone at TI would intentionally keep a library book!).

If you have library books at home that you are finished reading, please return them as soon as possible, so we can have a clearer idea of which books we own.

My group of volunteers and I have continued culling books, but there's still not enough shelf space. Last week someone came up with the brilliant idea of taking the duplicate titles off the shelves

and putting them in our closet. This has made a lot more space.

In addition, we have re-shelved a number of books. We have combined all of the Autobiographies, Biographies and Memoirs in the same section, which has freed up space in the Adult Holocaust section, which will give us more room in the History section.

Purchasing New Books

Before we make new purchases we want to know which kinds of books the congregation would like to have in the library. The committee is in the process of composing a questionnaire to help us determine the future direction of the library. You will hear more from us soon.

Upcoming Friday Night Minyan Assignments

April 6

Martin Kessel & Gail Robinson
R. Jason & Devora Kimelman-Block
Alexandra Kincannon & Paul Moorehead
Dennis Kirschbaum & Barbara Raimondo
Morris Klein & Naomi Freeman
Roger Kohn
Allan Kilmer
Edward Koren & Claudine Schweber
Michael & Lisa Kraft
Anita Kramer

April 27

Mitchell Lazarus & Judith Shapiro
Beverly Lehrer

Louis Leibowitz & Beth Kanter-Leibowitz
Elihu Leifer
Ken & Rachel Lemberg
Stephen Lerner & Marilyn Sneiderman
Shirley Levine
Wylie & Kim Levone
David & Ellen Levy
Mark Lewis & Janet Nesse

May 4

Dan Liebman & Lis Davis
Kobi Lifshitz & Lisa Traiger
John & Lynne List
Sean & Jara MacDermott
Oscar & Amy Mann
Stephen Marcus & Renee Matalon

Joseph & Paula Martin
Robert Mathis & Tali Stopak-Mathis
David & Carla Matusow
Adam Mausner & Anna Shapiro

May 11

David & Janice Mehler
Alexander & Danielle Meitiv
Ethan Merlin & Joelle Novey
David & Dana Mermelstein
R. Sarah & Rachel Meytin
Daniel Michelson-Horowitz
Josephine Mickelson
Adil & Emily Moiduddin
Kenneth Morris & Terri Zall
Sammie Moshenberg

Nayes un Mekhayes for Tiers

Barbara Raimondo

Science Guys

Man of many talents, **Bernie Shleien**, is the Consulting Editor on the 6th Edition of *Health Physics and Radiological Health*, published by Walters-Kleuwer. From 1983 to this present publication he was the sole or primary editor of this handbook.

Another man of many talents, **Gene Herman**, had a successful trip to San Francisco for the Society of Toxicology meeting, where he gave a presentation on his research on cardiac toxicity associated with new anti-cancer drugs.

Also, check the hot-off-the-press 10th Anniversary Edition of the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center catalog, in which **Esther** and **Gene** are featured in photographs and interviews. Tifereth Israel is mentioned as an important part of their life cycle together.

Man of many talents-to-be, **Asher Kirschbaum**, was accepted to the Rochester Institute of Technology as a physics major. He wants to study in that field so that he can find the Higgs Boson. His mother advised him to look under his bed. No luck yet.

Party Times

Alan Landay attended a party in Pittsburgh for his Aunt **Dorothy Landay's** 90th birthday. It was a fun and wonderful event and a great family reunion. Alan's aunt's son, **David**, and his wife, **Caron**, who live in Pittsburgh, were the organizers. Caron is so good she could organize a box full of worms if she wanted.

Several family members were staying at an Embassy Suites near Pittsburgh, which resulted in some

confusion, since Dorothy's other son is also Alan Landay. At one point they had (our) Alan sharing a room with his cousin's wife, and the other Alan taking care of a box full of worms. Eventually things got worked out, and your faithful columnist is sure that everyone eventually will be speaking to each other once again.

Josh Furman has been named the Dr. Sophie Bookhalter Fellow in Jewish Culture at the Center for Jewish History in New York for the 2012-2013 academic year. As part of the fellowship, he'll work on his dissertation project about the education and socialization of Jewish baby boomers, participate in seminars with the other Fellows, and give a lecture. That's "fellow," not "fella."

Family Ties

Dana and **Sheridan Neimark** enjoyed a week's cruise to the Bahamas February 19-26 with daughter **Rebecca**, her husband, **Lee Spector**, and grandchildren, **Eli** and **Anya**. The company was great, and the escape to warm weather was most welcome.

Rebecca, a graphic designer, recently designed another in a series of book covers for the Rabbinical Assembly as well as a just-issued *Haggadah* for the Reform movement, *Sharing the Journey: The Haggadah for the Contemporary Family*, by Alan S. Yoffie and Mark Podwal.

Larry and **Pearl Schainker's** daughter, **Mira**, became engaged to **Marc Kline**. They will be moving to Frankfurt, Germany in April for two years, where Marc will be working for the State Department at the U.S. Consulate.

Lillian Rosen, daughter of **Elliot Rosen** and **Sharon Cohen**, and **Joshua Nadas** are engaged to be wed in the summer of 2013.

Neshama Rovinsky left on March 21 for a five month student exchange program sponsored by the American Field Service. Neshama will be living with a host family in Mossel Bay, South Africa and attending an Afrikaans-speaking high school there for the second semester of her sophomore year. When she returns in the fall she will enter the International Baccalaureate Program at the George School in Newtown, Pennsylvania.

Neilah Rovinsky was selected to attend the Congressional Youth Leadership Institute, which met at the end of February at the National 4-H Youth Conference Center and focused on what it takes to become and be a leader.

Alan and **Cyndy Weitz** welcome a new leader-to-be, granddaughter **Noa**, born to their son, **Joshua**, and his wife, **Maira**.

And now for the meaning of last month's word, *skosh*: "a small amount: bit, smidgen." (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 your faithful columnist at 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 full-of-nayes edition of Nayes un Mekhayes for Tiers.

Kol Nashim

Shirley Sirota Rosenberg

One Sunday afternoon more than 30 years ago, my husband and I, strolling around downtown D.C., wandered into the Rasmussen Art Gallery at the corner of G and Fourth Streets, N.W. (Rasmussen is now the director and curator of the Katzen Arts Museum.) We were unprepared for what was to come.

On display were about 20 paintings by Mindy Weisel, their abstract shapes and misty blacks, whites, greys, and browns all evocative of the Holocaust. We didn't speak. But the paintings spoke to us of a people abandoned, isolated, crying for help in a world where no one hears or listens.



Until then, there were few if any artists dealing with the Holocaust. Weisel's daring seminal work broke down barriers, spurring other artists--poets, writers, composers--to start giving voice to those unspeakable times.

That Sunday Jerry and I bought *Es Brent* (It's Burning), a large oil painting rendered on handmade paper with bits of oil pastel. Embedded in the painting, as in her other Holocaust works, is Mindy's father's concentration camp number. On a personal note: For me, the painting also expresses how I felt, but could never put into words, when in my childhood I, too, felt abandoned.

Es Brent has been a spiritual presence in the Rosenberg home for a long time. On the evening of May 13, Jerry and I will gift the painting to Tifereth Israel. Artist Weisel will join us. A reception will start the festivities. Look for further details in the weekly newsletter and the May issue of *The Menorah*.



Artist Weisel also travels as a cultural ambassador. In this recent photo, Mindy, under the auspices of IsraAid (Israel for Countries in Crisis), utilizes art therapy to help elderly Japanese Tsunami survivors return to normal life.

Upcoming Juniper Street Collections

Want to know what to save? Here is a look ahead at planned collections for the next three months.

Please don't bring anything in early; there is no space to hold it at TI.

Thanks in advance for your generosity.

April: Sample sizes of toiletries such as shampoo, soap and toothpaste for Community Vision (part of Interfaith Works).

May: Summer clothing for Martha's Table.

June: Linens (blankets, sheets and towels) for Emory Church transitional housing program.

Look for detailed notices via the listserve, weekly newsletters, website and Facebook page at the appropriate times.

If you have questions or would like to suggest future drives, please contact Jeri Roth Lande at rothland@erols.com.

The TI Spring Fling and Auction Has it All!

Looking for a chance to enjoy being with your TI friends?

Looking to do something to help TI that doesn't involve a lot of effort or too much money?

Looking to laugh out loud?

Looking for a good meal that you don't have to cook?

Looking for something to do with your kids while you're enjoying yourself?

The Spring Fling and Auction is TI's annual fundraising event and we have another fabulous evening lined up for you this year. In addition to cocktails and hor d'ouerves, a wonderful silent auction, and dinner, we've added a comedy show produced by Kim Levone and her company, Improbable Comedy (see page11).

Local comic Shahryar will begin the evening followed by our headliner, Philadelphia's famously funny Chris Coccia. With promises of laughter, good food, and good friends, why wouldn't you come out for the Spring Fling?

There's even a special "KID ZONE" that offers entertainment and food for children 18 months of age through 6th grade. So you don't have to get a babysitter and the kids can celebrate and support TI too!

Our theme this year is TI is Blooming because as a community we are blooming in all sorts of ways: membership continues to grow, as does our wonderful cultural and educational programming for all ages. There's a lot to celebrate so come - help support TI and have fun doing it!

This is a fundraiser but we also want this to be a community celebration; so if the cost will prohibit your participation, please contact David Zinner directly.

It's easy to purchase your tickets to the TI Spring Fling, a raffle ticket (or many) for Bernie Shleien sculpture and/or a Kindle Fire, and make a donation to the silent auction: you can do it all online.

Visit the TI website at <http://www.tifereth-israel.org/> and you'll find all the links you need under Spring Fling!

TI is Blooming at the Spring Fling & Auction

May 6, 2012 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Join Us for an Evening of Fun, Friends and Laughter

Cocktails and Silent Auction

Dinner and Dessert

Comedy Show

Kids Zone (18 mos. - 6th grade)

Tickets*

Adults - \$54 (includes wine coupon)

Teens (7th grade +) - \$18

Children (18mos. - 6th grade) - \$10

Family Maximum - \$128**

* this is a fundraiser but we don't the cost to prohibit your participation; please contact the TI office if this is an issue

** families with 2 adults and more than 2 children or a combination of teens & younger children

An "Improbable" Spring Fling

Last summer, TI's own Kim Levone fulfilled her long-held dream of producing stand-up comedy. She started a production company, Improbable Comedy, and had three sold out shows in Silver Spring with local comics as well as talent from LA and NYC.

Improbable Comedy helped this year's Spring Fling committee create a great comedy line-up for the night's entertainment. They are sure to keep the crowd roaring!



Chris Coccia

Chris Coccia's hilarious set includes improvised interaction with the audience and his own take on the ins and outs of married life. He often ponders the humor in daily human interactions, including: the offenses of the unreturned facial expression, the plague of body hair and the confusion of the bra sizing system. He performs at clubs and events across the country and has appeared on Comedy Central, the Game Show Network and XM Radio. And, though he is a human, he won the \$10,000 grand prize at this year's National Purina Pet Comedy Challenge. Chris also teaches the "Stand-Up Comedy: Five Minutes to Funny" at the DC Improv.



Shahryar

Working for the government has been great for Shahryar's comedy! His act includes riffs on the hilarity of working for the Feds and his experience with day to day life in America. In 2009 he was runner-up in the Funniest Fed Contest. He's a regular at the DC Improv and he's been profiled in the Washington Post and on Voice of America.

B'nei Mitzvah

My name is **Ezra Tchitelotsky Grimes**. I flew fighter jets for the Soviet army for 12 years, and stopped because I was too busy learning for my bar mitzvah. In my spare time I like to hunt, I have a jet that I still fly occasionally and love video games.

I moved to this area a few years ago because I wanted to live in a more peaceful location, and to escape the remnants of the KGB that are trying to take me down. So far I have had no trouble evading them, but they keep finding new clues as to my whereabouts.

I am very excited to be called up to read the Torah, and hope that all of my relatives can come, including those still in the gulag. My parents and brother, Raphael, have been very supportive of me, and I hope that my brother gets into his dream school, The American Beauty Academy.

I hope to see everyone there, April 21. Save the date!



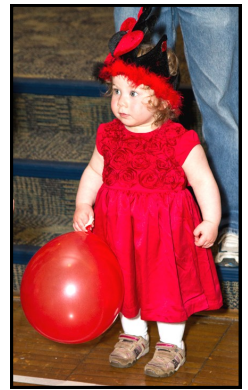
My name is **Adam Kritz** and my Bar Mitzvah is on April 28.

I graduated from the Jewish Primary Day School and now am in the 7th grade at North Bethesda Middle School. My favorite subject in school is Mandarin Chinese.

I enjoy playing travel soccer, hanging out with my friends and most especially spending time with my brothers.

My family and I look forward to sharing my simcha with the TI community, friends and family.

Purim 2012



Schedule for Pesah

Sunday, April 1	Morning Minyan, 9:00 a.m., followed by sale of <i>hametz</i>
Friday, April 6	Service & Siyyum for First Born, 7:00 a.m., followed immediately by final sale of <i>hametz</i> (no sales after 9:00 a.m.) Erev Pesah, Short Kabbalat Shabbat Service, 6:00 p.m. First Seder
Saturday, April 7	First day of Pesah, Morning Holiday Service, 9:00 a.m., followed by simple Kiddush Second Seder
Sunday, April 8	Second day of Pesah, Morning Holiday Service, 9:00 a.m., followed by Kiddush sponsored by Mollie Berch z"l
Friday, April 13	Seventh day of Pesah, Morning Holiday Service, 9:00 a.m., followed by Kiddush sponsored and cooked by Kol Nashim Short Kabbalat Shabbat Service, 6:30 p.m. (note: later start time and no dinner afterwards this year)
Saturday, April 14	Last (Eighth) Day of Pesah, Morning Holiday Service, including Yizkor, 9:00 a.m.

A Journey into My Past

Morris Rodenstein

I want to applaud Eitan Gutin for taking two of the older Himmelfarb School classes to Mount Lebanon Cemetery for the *genizah* ceremony. It was a great learning experience for those students in demystifying the Jewish cemetery.

Eitan's valuable lesson connects to my recent experience. My mother, Rose Rodenstein, z'l, died in February 2009. We all knew that she had been adopted. Her biological mother had been an unwed Jewish girl with the last name of "Kessel." That was all she and we knew.

Last October, my brother, Larry, who had looked after our mother in her later years, was going through her personal effects to donate to charity. At the bottom of her hope chest was a 1981 letter from the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families detailing the six foster homes in which our mother had lived before, at age 6-½, she came to live with the couple we knew as our grandparents.

Honoring My Mother's Memory

Since receiving that letter I have been driven to honor our mother's memory by finding out as much as I can about where she came from and the circumstances under which she lived as an infant and young child. My search these past few months has revealed many secrets, some painful, but others allowing me to better understand and appreciate my mother.

First, I finally resolved any lingering doubts that I am halachically Jewish. My maternal, biological grandmother, Annie Kessel, was the daughter of a Jewish couple, Joseph and Eva Kessel, who had immigrated to America in 1900.

Annie had a very difficult life. She was born in 1909 in Lawrence, Massachusetts. Her father, Joseph struggled economically as a junk dealer/peddler. Joseph and Eva had two sons, Benjamin and Morris, before Annie arrived.

Eva tragically died of stomach cancer in 1917. In 1925, Annie, having been sent away to a special school, became pregnant with my mother. It was highly likely that Annie already had begun her descent into severe mental illness, the reason she would spend nearly 50 years in state mental institutions until her death in 1972.

Visiting the Lawrence Cemetery

Late on the morning of March 14, I went to the small Jewish cemetery in Lawrence, Massachusetts. The director for many of the North Shore's Jewish cemeteries had given me the location of the graves of several of my relatives.

I first found my great-grandmother, Eva Kessel's grave under a large tree with some dead brush on it. I knelt down and moved all the twigs away. This was my great-grandmother's grave! How dare it be anything

but trash-free! I stood up, placed a stone on her marker and said Kaddish for my great-grandmother.

Her husband was buried separately. It took me several additional minutes to find his gravestone. I also placed a stone on his grave, said Kaddish for him and did the same for her brother, Benjamin.

An Unmarked Grave

Before going to Boston, I sadly had learned that when Annie died, her brothers had instructed the funeral director to bury her in a cemetery around the corner in an unmarked grave. That generation attached a lot of shame to mental illness. I bear no anger towards them.

I went to that cemetery and walked around knowing I was as close to Annie, my maternal biological grandmother, as I was ever going to be. I said Kaddish for her on behalf of my mother, who had never had that opportunity.

The following Shabbat morning as I sat in shul, I finally had time to reflect on these experiences of the preceding week at several Jewish cemeteries, libraries and archives in and around Boston. I closed my eyes and realized just how humbling it was to have stood before the graves of my great-grandparents of whom, less than six months before, I had virtually no knowledge.

TI Members Hold Vigil for Alan Gross

Frank Solomon

Thirteen Tifereth Israel members, led by Rabbi Seidel, joined three protesters at a lunchtime vigil on March 5 outside the Cuban Interest Section to seek release of a local Jewish resident who has been in a Cuban maximum-security prison since 2009.

Alan Gross, 62, is serving a 15-year sentence for “undermining the integrity and independence of Cuba.”

Gross said he was in Cuba in 2009 on behalf of USAID performing humanitarian work for the Jewish community there. He was caught bringing “illegal” communications equipment onto the island. He was convicted by a state court after more than a year without charges. He appealed to the Cuban Supreme Court, which affirmed the conviction.

But on March 5, in the world court opinion against the state, the verdict was 16 to 0.

Many Groups Holding Vigils

Tifereth Israel was among the many religious organizations that have been holding weekly vigils under the auspices of the Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Washington. Besides Rabbi Seidel, TI members who took part that day included Mona Berch, David Levy, Larry Greenfeld, Marcia Goldberg, Larry Greenfeld, Janice Mehler, David Rubin, Frank Solomon and four unidentified individuals. Mona, Cynthia and Frank had participated in previous vigils.

While the Cuban Interest Section building was dead quiet and forbidding, the demonstrating gang of 16, led by Rabbi Seidel with a bullhorn, made sure that drivers and

passers-by noticed their cause and that their upbeat prayers and songs kept those inside the building awake. Curious drivers slowed down to look at the protest signs. Many nodded. One responded to the rabbi’s melodies with a “yeah”; another yelled, “Give it to them!”

Pastor Participating Weekly

E. Gail Anderson Holness did just that. She has been participating in the vigils almost every week. Holness is the pastor of DC’s Christ Our Redeemer AME Church and a candidate for the City Council who serves on the mayor’s Interfaith Commission. Known for her dynamic sermons and colorful campaign antics, she led the crowd with chants of “Free Alan Gross....Now!”

“Dear God, Holy Father and...” Anderson paused, looked at the rabbi, and continued, “We will be here until Alan is free.”

“Don’t hide behind the walls. We know that you are watching us, taking pictures, recording us. We know that you know what we are talking about,” she belted out.

Rumors of Spying

There have been rumors that Gross was spying for the United States, and such rumors caused some uneasiness in the larger American Jewish community. Gross and his supporters have rejected all accusa-

Continued on page 15



Rabbi Seidel and TI members David Levy, David Rubin, Marcia Goldberg and Frank Solomon demonstrate outside the Cuban Interest Section on March 5.

Daughters in Israel, a Unique Institution

Simcha Kuritzky

Baltimore City was founded in 1729. Jews were made citizens of Maryland in 1776 and given the right to hold public office in 1826, when about 125 Jews lived in the city. They founded the first synagogue in 1830 and first Jewish charity in 1834.

The population grew steadily, reaching 1,000 around 1840, then shot up as Jews fled failed revolutions in the Germanys in 1849. By 1860, there were 8,000 Jews in Baltimore and three religious movements: Reform, Orthodox, and moderate traditional (similar to the Conservative Movement).

As the Jewish population grew, so did the number of charities. The Daughters in Israel women's group was founded in 1890 (Jewish year 5651). By that time, Baltimore's Jewish community had split into two distinct groups: the "uptown" or German Jews, who were already well

established, and the "downtown" or Russian Jews, who were still arriving from Europe.

A Unique Sisterhood

The Daughters in Israel was a sisterhood with a unique structure. It was not associated with a particular synagogue. Each member was part of a band or circle of 10 women, (they would not think of calling it a *minyan*). They limited the circle size to 10 so that it was large enough to do real work, yet small enough that no one would attend merely for social reasons.

Each band was devoted to a specific purpose such as sewing, teaching immigrants English, giving parenting classes, and providing candies to impoverished children attending Hebrew school. Each band reported at least twice a year to the general organization, which would then

produce a report of overall accomplishments. The two mottoes of Daughters in Israel were "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Leviticus 19:15) and "Whatsoever your hand finds to do, do it with your might" (Ecclesiastes 9:10).

Organizational Badge

In order to lend some sense of unity, members were required to wear the organization's badge, engraved on a U.S. silver dime. One side has the organization name and founding Hebrew date, all in English, with well-formed letters and simple scrollwork. The reverse Hebrew inscription, also surrounded by a circle, is the motto *v'ahavta lirakha kamokha*, Love your neighbor as yourself.

The Hebrew is readable but the *mem* has the wrong proportions and the *kholem vov* looks more like a *resh*.

(Continued on page 18)

Vigil for Alan Gross (continued)

tions that he harmed or intended to harm the Cuban government.

Harvey Reiter, president of the JCRC, said, "We are urging Alan's immediate release on humanitarian grounds. Alan has lost about 100 pounds and is suffering from several ailments.

"Since his incarceration, his wife has undergone surgery and his two daughters, one of whom was recently diagnosed and treated for breast cancer, fear they will never see their father again," Reiter said.

Gross' 89-year-old mother is fighting inoperable lung cancer and is afraid that she may never see her son again.

President Obama, senior administration officials, members of the State Department and Congress, various national leaders, and newspaper editorials have called for his immediate release.

Personal Appeals by Gross' Wife

Judy Gross has written personal appeals to President Raúl Castro to release her husband for humanitarian and health reasons.

Alan Gross also made personal, written appeals to President Castro, offering to return to Cuba for the conclusion of his case in exchange for permission to travel to the United States to be with his daughter while

she was fighting for her life. All to no avail.

Appeals to Pope Benedict

In anticipation of Pope Benedict XVI's trip to Cuba, March 26-28, the Jewish Community Relations Council launched a nationwide on-line petition drive appealing to the pontiff to help obtain Gross' release while he was there.

Adina Remz, executive assistant of the JCRC, asked people to sign the petition at freealangrossnow.com and forward it electronically to family, friends and associates and encourage them to sign and forward the petition to others.

Daughters in Israel (continued)

What makes this piece unusual among Hebrew engravings is that it includes the *nekudot* and *dageshim* (diacritical marks). What is most likely is that the engraver did not know Hebrew but copied the text directly from a printed Hebrew Bible. If this badge was worn, it must have been in a bezel since there is no sign of a loop or hole.



The Daughters in Israel's headquarters opened October 17, 1893, at 1310 East Baltimore Street. The 1900 *Jewish American Year Book* (first edition) lists the Daughters in Israel's membership at 200 and annual expenditures of \$2,500.

In 1899, the focus of the Daughters in Israel changed to supporting a

Working Girls' Home, which trained orphaned girls to work a trade. (Three years earlier the Maccabeans had founded a similar home for teen boys and young men).

Growing Number of Charities

As the Jewish community grew, so did the number of charities and there

was much duplication. The Jewish community decided to coordinate the various charities by placing them under umbrella organizations. The German Jewish charities in Baltimore were placed under the Federated Jewish Charities in 1906, while the Russian charities were placed under the United Hebrew Charities the next year.



In 1909, the Daughters in Israel and the Maccabeans together formed the Jewish Educational Alliance to provide classes for immigrants and sponsor youth clubs. In 1913, the Federation incorporated the Jewish Children's Bureau with 350 beneficiaries composed of a number of charities including Daughters in Israel.

Vacation Home in the Mountains

In 1917, the Daughters in Israel opened a vacation home in the Blue Ridge Mountains so the residents of the Girls' and Boys' Working Homes could get out of the city for a week in the summer time. This eventually became the current Camp Louise.

The federation was succeeded by the Associated Jewish Charities in 1920 (now called The Associated: Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore). By this time, Jews fleeing Russian persecution and the Great War pushed Baltimore's Jewish population over 60,000.

The Daughters in Israel dissolved in 1924; their work was divided up among other charities.

April Youth Activities Schedule

Rock Climbing, Sunday, April 1 (New Date), 12 noon-2:30 p.m., A fantastic event at Earth Treks in Rockville, MD.

Israeli Advocacy Seminar, Sunday, April 1, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. High School Juniors and Seniors are invited to participate.

USY Shabbat Dinner and Services, Friday, April 13, 6 p.m.

Earth Day Event, Sunday, April 22, 2 p.m. Help beautify the synagogue grounds and celebrate Earth Day.

Yom Ha-Atzmaut Overnight, Saturday, April 28, 9:15 p.m.

Celebrate Israel's Independence Day with an overnight at TI featuring Israeli snacks, movies, TV, and games! We'll leave directly from TI for the King's Dominion day bus.

Kings Dominion, Sunday, April 29. Join us for this annual event with the Seaboard Region!

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