



# The Menorah

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## Notes from the Rabbi: Ethan Seidel

### Upcoming Hebrew Classes in the Fall

There is nothing like knowing even a little Hebrew to deepen your understanding of our tradition. Imagine trying to understand, say, French culture, while knowing nothing of the French language.

I've made it my business over the (now 20!) years I've served at TI to offer Hebrew at a number of different levels. Here are two classes I'm thinking about offering next fall, if there's enough interest.

#### Beginning Biblical Hebrew

All you need to know to start this class is how to pronounce, even just haltingly, Hebrew words. (If you already know a few words and a little grammar, talk to me – you might want to join this class after a month or two.)

The class lasts a few years – but don't sweat it – whether you stick it out for the full course, or you drop out at some point, you will have learned much that will serve you well.

And there is homework – but you didn't expect to learn a language without some effort, did you?

Actually, learning Biblical Hebrew is much, much easier than learning a modern language: you *can* learn it in your spare

*(Continued on page 2)*



### (Outgoing) President's Column: Joel Cohen

#### Valedictory

By the time you read this, I will have begun my new role as Immediate Past President. The new Junta will have taken over following an almost bloodless coup (a small paper cut, but it's nothing really) at the Annual Meeting of the Congregation on May 29. So this is my valedictory column.

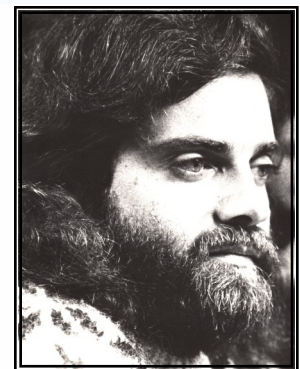
There is some controversy about the meaning of valedictory. It comes from the Latin *vale dicere*. *Dicere* means "to say" and *vale* comes from the verb *valere* which means "to be worth." *Vale* can also mean "be well" or more commonly "fare well." Thus *valedicere* can mean either "saying farewell" or "it is worth saying." I hope that this column will be both.

I must admit that I give up this job with a touch of sadness. I have enjoyed being

president of the congregation more than I can easily express.

I feel that I brought two gifts to the job. The first is a sense of humor that is not necessarily acceptable everywhere. The second is an ability to read from a lively discussion what compromise or midpoint will be satisfactory to most people taking part. I hope the first has been evident to everyone for the past two years. The second has perhaps been

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## Notes from the Rabbi (continued)

time, due to the small number of roots, and the (relatively) simple grammar. I'm tentatively planning to offer this class on Sunday mornings, during Hebrew school. If you're at all interested, let me know.

### Intermediate Biblical Hebrew

This is for the folks who have taken the Beginning Class, or who have acquired a solid basis in Hebrew grammar in some other way. We'll study some narrative piece of the Tanakh, to be determined by those in the class.

I'd also like to offer this class on Sunday morning, depending on who is interested, and when they can make it.

I hope one of these classes interests you. If so, please let me know. If I get enough response, I hope to offer both of them!

Rabbi Seidel

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## Women of the Wall Program

An exciting discussion about the rights of women to pray at the *Kotel* in Jerusalem will take place at Tifereth Israel on Sunday, June 2, at 7 p.m. The program is co-sponsored by TI and Jews for a Democratic Israel (JDI).

Invited speakers are Naomi Paiss, Vice President for Public Affairs, New Israel Fund; and Rabbi Gilah Langner, Coordinator, Washington Jewish Healing Network. TI member Michele Sumka, co-convenor of Washington Friends of Women of the Wall (<http://washingtonwow.webs.com/>) will moderate the discussion.

The panel discussion will examine the recent legislative decisions on Women of the Wall, as well as the broader issue of women's participation in Israeli society. Cynthia Peterman, Eitan Gutin and Michele Sumka helped to organize the program.

This is the fourth discussion program organized and co-sponsored by JDI with Washington area synagogues around issues of peace and democracy in Israel.

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**Executive Director:** David Zinner, ext. 103  
**Administrator:** Sheri Blonder, ext. 101  
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*Tifereth Israel is a traditional egalitarian congregation affiliated with the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism*

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## Caregivers Support Group

Are you helping to care for an elderly or sick friend or relative?

Would you like to chat with others in similar circumstances?

Join Rabbi Seidel's support group for caregivers, Sunday, June 2, at 10:15 a.m.

## (Outgoing) President's Column (continued)

seen by the Board of Directors, but in truth we have had almost no issues that remained contentious for long. Almost all major issues have ended in a virtually unanimous consensus.

These two qualities have not been of much direct use in my day job as professor of Mathematics at the University of Maryland. However, they have been useful in side jobs that I took on. Building consensus has helped in my roles of Ombudsman of the University and chair of the University Senate. A sense of humor has helped in organizing the annual holiday party. Both were useful when I chaired the national political group Americans for Democratic Action.

### TI Is Unique

I'm not sure there are many other synagogues (or other groups) in which these qualities would have been useful, or even accepted. I have come, over these two years, to understand the uniqueness of TI. I realized it the first time I looked at the Conservative movement's presidential list-serve.

Other synagogues are very different from ours. The problems they write about are very different – falling membership, especially among younger Jews, budget problems to the point of running deficit budgets year after year, or reliance on a small number of very rich members.

In this week's *Forward*, a prominent journalist notes "The people who hold the Torahs during the reading of the Kol Nidre prayers are the congregation's big *machers*... millionaires, if not billionaires." Can you imagine an honor given out at TI because someone is rich? We have some very generous members, but you can't figure out who they are by looking at the High Holiday honors or any other honors.

At TI, people are honored for their generosity of spirit, their hard work, their time. Our large donors also often give up much of their time to work on the Board or in committees, or to set up for programs, or to lead davening, so their honors do not distinguish them as "the rich ones."

### Executive Director Job Search

Some of this was brought home to me during the recent search for a new Executive Director. We received inquiries from about 30 candidates from around the country. Their view of a synagogue and image of the executive director were generally very foreign to the members of the Search Committee. Most of the candidates talked about how much money they would bring to the synagogue, by either cleverly attracting outside money or squeezing more out of the present members.

The Committee, however, was looking less for specific abilities the candidates brought to the office and more for their personal human qualities. We wanted to know what was in their heart as they viewed the shul. It really says something about TI that the three finalists were all locals who knew TI the best, and were already comfortable with our type of synagogue. Even more interestingly, all three were very active members of Jews United for Justice, a group that actively works for justice in the lives of our neighbors in the DC area.

This difference is felt by many in the Jewish community who apologize for not being members. I have often heard them say "If I didn't live across the street from Adas..." "If I didn't live an hour away..." "If I ever were to join a synagogue..."

At the Roast of David Zinner in May we heard David say many of these same things that are special about TI. This uniqueness is not to be

taken for granted and is very fragile. I don't think it could be maintained while making sudden major changes. There is no doubt that part of it is the Shabbat Kiddush. Few synagogues have 200 members who hang around until 1:30 or 2:00 every week.

Another unique piece is, of course, the Rabbi, a great scholar who is admired throughout the rabbinic community, but who is so modest that most of you are unaware of this. (I only know it from conversations with other rabbis.) Rabbi Seidel combines modesty with competitiveness, and has such a strong sense of self that he has no problem when someone stands up during services to disagree. He will stick to his opinion, yet is always open to considering an argument in the other direction, and has no shame about changing his mind.

### New President and Director

As I fade into the sunset, I have every confidence in our new president, Jeff Davidson, and the new Board. Jeff combines great sensitivity with great energy. As administrative vice president, he solved some very delicate situations before they even became problems.

I am also looking forward to many happy and successful years with the extraordinary Jevera Temsky as our Executive Director. She brings a commitment to Jewish values, office experience in the world of social justice, and a determination to have everyone share in the business of the synagogue, which will make her a worthy successor to David Zinner.

It has been an honor, a privilege, and a joy to serve as president. My thanks to all of you for your support. From my position beyond the sunset, I will occasionally write some post-presidential words, and will occasionally give some post-presidential announcements.

## (Incoming) President's Column: Jeff Davidson First Steps

For my first column as President, I thought I would let people know that although Immediate Past President Joel Cohen and I share a common Ashkenazi heritage, I do not carry the Henny Youngman gene that Joel so obviously possesses. Announcements will therefore be a bit different than they have been for the last two years.

I am excited, however, to tell you about how I have been preparing to be President. First, I have chaired a search committee to hire a new Executive Director, to replace our friend, David Zinner, who is retiring. Our entire *kehillah* owes a debt of gratitude for his decade of service. We wish him the best as he continues his sacred work on death and dying in the Jewish community.

Our search committee consisted of Ray Natter, Laurie Berger, John List and Loretta Saks. Jennifer Taransky was helpful in many ways and Joel Cohen attended many of our sessions *ex officio*. We advertised in Jewish and secular vehicles and cast a very wide net for candidates. The process both informed us and reinforced some of our and TI's core values. In talking to the candidates, we all came to realize that we began to value a sense of *menschlichkeit* over technical skills. Not to worry, we looked for specific technical expertise, also.

Without going into great detail, we conducted preliminary interviews with a variety of candidates and asked selected finalists to come to TI, where they met with Rabbi Seidel, Etan Gutin and the other staff. We had a series of standard questions built around a series of scenarios that we discussed with all the candidates. We also welcomed questions from candidates or anything else they wanted to share with us.

We were impressed with all the candidates and offered the job to TI's own member, Jevera Temsky.

We are very happy that Jevera is joining our professional staff. She truly rocked her interview. For those of you who don't know Jevera, she is a long-time Petworth resident who has long worked in the Jewish social justice world, especially at Jews United for Justice and AVODAH: The Jewish Service Corps.

She has been a TI member for eight years and is a proud graduate of the 2008-10 adult Bat Mitzvah class. Beginning in May and continuing through June, Jevera has been training for the job, so you will see her around the synagogue a lot. Please introduce yourself and wish her good luck in her new responsibilities.

Last month, I was lucky enough to attend SULAM, a training session and leadership development program from the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism. I came away with a sense of great pride in our congregation and its leadership over the years and thinking how fortunate I am to be entrusted with these responsibilities for the next two years. TI is different in many crucial ways from many Conservative congregations today.

Looking at our institution in a data-driven way, we are in a good financial place. Thanks to the efforts of a dedicated membership committee, the warm and welcoming nature of our professional staff, and the friendly ambience of our congregation, we have continued to grow. Going against the national norm, we attract young families as members.

Although it might seem at times that we spend endless amounts of money on our building and grounds, we are

not stuck with a huge edifice out in the suburbs that is too big for the current congregation and dependent

on an automotive culture. Challenges may await us in the area of *keruv*, the welcoming of the other, but we have made much progress and are a different, and I believe, better congregation than we were some years ago.

At SULAM, the attendees went through an exercise in which we were given two different color adhesive spots and directed to a large white board where several dozen synagogue functions were listed. You used one color to indicate if this was a rabbinical function and another color to indicate if it was a congregational function to fulfill.

Tifereth Israel was a virtual outlier when it came to a variety of tasks in the areas of acts of *hesed*, learning, and ritual. We do not depend solely on the Rabbi to visit the sick in the hospital, or on paid staff to lead us in prayer or teach our classes. Our pattern of shared responsibility among the Rabbi, the Director of Lifelong Learning and lay leadership were an anomaly and one that provoked a good bit of discussion. It was nice to be in a place where people envied what we take for granted.

I certainly hope that we continue on this path and look for help from everyone to continue to reach these goals. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity for this service.



## New Members

### Jared Garelick

#### Tamir Damari and Rebecca Rubin Damari

To avoid burying the lead, let's start with the big news: Tamir and Rebecca are the proud parents of Dov Asher, born on May 11 and, as of this writing, believed to be TI's Newest Member! In light of TI's current fertility explosion, that title seems to change week to week, so don't get used to it, Dov.

Proud mother Rebecca, a Maryland native, is currently a post-doctoral student specializing in interpersonal and cross-cultural communications in the Linguistics department at Georgetown University. Proud father Tamir is an attorney with the international law firm Dentons.

Tamir and Rebecca found TI through members Mark and Diann Saltman, making the Saltmans Magnet Members of the month. The Damaris were happy to

celebrate Dov's brit at TI, with Rabbi Seidel taking the non-surgical leadership role.

#### Shoshana Eisenberg and Harold Burgess

Shoshana, originally from New Jersey, and Harry, from Melbourne, Australia, have now settled in the Washington area. Harry is a researcher at NIH. He specializes in cellular developmental biology. Shoshana, a lawyer, worked in New York City for an organization that provided legal services to low and moderate income people, funded in part by UJC. She now cares for their three children, Yael (age 6), Solomon (4), and Joshua (1 and ½). They have greatly enjoyed the children's programs and the Himmelfarb School at TI.

Welcome to this month's featured new members, parents and young ones alike!

## Women's Rosh Hodesh Service

### Marcia Goldberg

Rosh Hodesh Tammuz will be observed by Washington Friends of Women of the Wall with a service at Ohev Sholom (our across the street neighbor), Sunday, June 9 at 9:30 a.m. The entrance is on Jonquil Street. The service will be for women and girls only.

Rabbi Herzfeld is the only Orthodox rabbi in the Washington Metropolitan area to support WOW. He will speak briefly before the women's service begins, so men are also welcome to come to hear him.

We hope you will attend **if you are not a regular at TI's minyan**. We do not want to deplete the service at TI.

Washington Friends of Women of the Wall hold a monthly Rosh Hodesh service except for Shabbat and Rosh Hashanah. TI has already hosted two of these services.

### **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.

In the event of a death, prior to contacting the funeral home, please contact one of the following chaverim, Rabbi Seidel, or the TI office (202-882-1605).

<b>Shelly Heller</b>	h: 301-942-1836 w: 202-242-6698
<b>Jeff Davidson</b>	h: 301-593-1335
<b>David (Judy) Cohen</b>	h: 301-652-2872
<b>Marcia Goldberg</b>	h: 301-589-0352

## Summary of TI Board of Directors Meeting April 8, 2013

**Attending:** Renee Brachfeld, Sharon Brown, Alice Burton, Susan Catler, Joel Cohen, Jeffrey Colman, Jeff Davidson, Joe Davidson, Deena Dugan, Varda Fink, Esther Herman, Joanne Hovis, David Levy, Paula Martin, Rabbi Sarah Meytin, Margie Odle, Cynthia Peterman, Debbie Pomerance, Andrew Reamer, Vivian Seidner, Jevera Temsky, Daniel Turner, Mark Verschell.

**Excused:** Stephanie Roodman Murdock, Chris Zeilinger.

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

**President's Report:** Andrew Reamer reported on a relatively new interfaith organization focusing on improved city housing policies toward the homeless, the Good Faith Communities Coalition. Approximately 20 faith organizations are involved, including TI and Temple Micah.

**Helping Hands:** Sue Catler reported that she attended a meeting for a Religious Traditions Outreach Patient Support Network. The goal is to provide post-hospitalization support to ill people. A motion to that effect was passed.

**Rain Garden:** Carla Ellern, as chair of the Environment Committee, reported that TI got a grant for \$65,000 from the DC government to build a rain garden. The project uses technology that enables water to be absorbed into the ground rather than flowing into storm drains and then to the Bay.

**Membership:** New members are Paul and Rachel Goldstein and Susan Cohen.

**Lifelong Learning:** There was a very successful Yom Ha'Shoah program. Those who didn't get to hear it can view the video made by Mark Verschell. The USY group has raised over \$2,000 in *tzedakah* and

USY president, Gabriella Feron, participated in a Hurricane Sandy cleanup. Registration for Himmelfarb and Chai School will open soon. The Chai School program is being revised for the first time in six years.

**Finance:** General fund projections and next year's budget: The proposed budget is in balance and was presented to the Board. This proposed budget lowers High Holiday ticket prices over time and offsets that amount with increases in dues. A majority indicated support for the general principle that we should move toward subsuming High Holiday costs into dues.

**Executive Director's Report:** David Zinner reported that Ashreinu Girls' School is likely to move forward as a tenant. In addition, there are two other summer camp rental possibilities, Moed and a language camp. Over the next few months, there will be a lot of activity in *kiddushim*, rentals, and weddings.

### Historic TI Wedding

On Sunday, May 19, Louise Kelley and Jessica Weissman were married at Tifereth Israel.

This was the first public wedding of same-sex partners that Rabbi Seidel has conducted in the sanctuary.

Standing under the Hupah, in the adjacent photograph are (from left to right) Carolivia Herron, Dave Wachter, Liz Adkisson, Louise Kelley, Rabbi Seidel, Jessica Weissman, Matt Snyderman and Marion Snyderman.



## Lilmod U'lilamed: Eitan Gutin

### Teaching the Wall (Part 4 of 4)

Since I wrote my first essay about the *Kotel* and Women of the Wall this past January a lot has taken place.

Natan Sharansky proposed a third section for the *Kotel* which led to cheers, jeers, and difficult questions (sometimes all three from the same source). A district court in Israel declared that women wearing *tallitot* and other ritual accoutrements does not violate a law regarding religious conduct at holy places only to have the question asked as to whether the ruling would be followed or not (so far so good).

In the meantime the women who pray at the *Kotel* every Rosh Hodesh were kept out of the women's section by a large group of yeshiva girls and prayed under police protection while being heckled and screamed at (and worse) by thousands of fellow Jews.

Rabbi Haskel Lookstein, a Modern Orthodox rabbi in New York City and the Principal of the Ramaz School, said the following about the women's Rosh Hodesh service in his Shavuot sermon:

"Ironically, last Friday was also the 45th day of *sefirah* (counting the 49 days between Pesah and Shavuot). The period of *sefirah* is a time of mourning. According to Jewish tradition, we mourn for the 20,000 pairs of students of Rabbi Akiva who died from a plague during the *sefirah* period. Why did they die? The Talmud tells us: 'Because they didn't demonstrate respect one for the other.'

"Could there possibly be a greater sacrilege during *sefirah* than what so-called religious Jews did to other Jews on Rosh Hodesh in front of the *Kotel*? Was Rabbi Shteynman teaching religious commitment when he called upon high school girls to

express hate toward other Jews? Have we learned nothing from the Talmud's attempt to teach us both history and proper behavior?"

We have made the *Kotel* into an inspirational place, but that inspiration comes at a cost. By allowing the theology and practices surrounding the *Kotel* to devolve into borderline idolatry we have created a situation in which a place is more important than people.

While I do not have a short-term solution to this problem I believe that changing how we teach the *Kotel* is the only long-range option that does not involve either giving up the *Kotel* or allowing one group of Jews to dictate how everyone else can worship or, even worse, letting the situation devolve into an eventual religious civil war.

This is not entirely hyperbolic. Before Rabin's assassination in November of 1995, when the peace process looked like it was running smoothly, there was much worry in Israel that as Arabs became less of an external threat Jews would turn on each other.

Here are some ways we can teach the *Kotel* to children of Tifereth Israel, which if they become standard in the Jewish community, would help to transform the *Kotel* from a wedge into a bond:

#### From Notes to Bricks

The first time children learn about the *Kotel* in the American Jewish community is surprisingly similar across schools and denominations. A pretend *Kotel* is made; it can be as simple as lines on some butcher paper or as elaborate as cardboard boxes painted and stacked complete with vines (green streamers) growing

up, around, and out of them. Students are invited to write a note to God, a prayer, and to place the note in this *Kotel*.

The prayers kids write on these papers can bring tears to your eyes. They are hopeful and beautiful. However, by connecting the prayers to the *Kotel* we are already laying the groundwork for the idea that a note placed in the *Kotel* is more meaningful or effective. If this idea is repeated throughout a Jew's life, it can lead to a near pagan devotion to the place itself.

I would like to preserve our children's meaningful prayers while transforming their writing from an individual act into a team-building challenge. A class will be told that they have to build the *Kotel* together. Each student will be given a "brick" (a cardboard box) to decorate and on which to write a prayer for the Jewish community.

The class will then build the *Kotel* together, but a brick cannot be placed in the wall unless another student helps. By building their *Kotel* of hopes together, the students will learn that such places are only built -- only have meaning -- if we approach them in cooperation and unity.

#### Hashem is There, Hashem is Here

The Talmud tells us that when praying we should face Israel; while in Israel we should face Jerusalem; while in Jerusalem we should face the Temple mount; and, while at the Temple mount, the Holy of Holies. Why? If God is everywhere why does it matter which direction we face during prayer?

A typical answer to this question is to tell students that God's "home" is in

*(Continued on page 8)*

## Kol Nashim

Adele Natter



### Changes in KN Board

We extend best wishes to **Paula Flicker**, past president, who is leaving the Board and will be greatly missed. We thank her for her service and her willingness to pitch in whenever needed.

Kol Nashim is pleased to welcome our new Board members:

**Ruth Shapiro,**  
**Loretta Vitale Saks,** and  
**Sharon Brown**

### Upcoming Programs

**Hallah Three Ways**, Sunday, June 2, 10:30 a.m. **Jessica Weissman** will demonstrate making a traditional *hallah*, a Sephardic pumpkin *hallah*, and a Quick! one-hour *hallah*. Come find out about *hallah* baking and sample!

**Member Get-Together.** The event originally scheduled for June 9 is being postponed due to a conflict with other Jewish events that day, including Israel @65.

**KN Book Club**, June 18, 7:30 p.m. We will meet at the home of **Janice Mehler**. The group will discuss *Inn at Lake Divine* by Elinor Lipman. The July book will be *My Russian Grandmother and the American Vacuum Cleaner* by Meir Shalev.

## Teaching the Wall (continued)

Jerusalem and that by facing there we are directing our prayers to God. I have even heard explanations that prayers first travel to Jerusalem and only there are they transferred to the heavens and into God's ears.

I think that the rabbis knew that it does not matter to God where someone is standing or what direction he is facing while praying. We need to recognize that the top priority of the early rabbis was to re-establish God's Temple in Jerusalem.

The earliest prayers, with the Amidah in the center, were all written to convince God to make that happen. Facing Jerusalem and the Temple Mount while praying for a return to Israel and the rebuilding of the Temple was the rabbis' way of enhancing the Jewish peoples' focus while saying these prayers.

We should continue to face Israel and Jerusalem while praying since it is one of the things that makes Jewish prayer special. However, our educational programs need to do a

much better job teaching **why** we face that direction and that it does not matter where you are when you pray -- God is listening.

### Both a Defender and a Critic In All Things

It is always frightening to question or criticize objects and ideas that are *kadosh* (holy). It frightened many Jews when over 100 years ago rabbis, first in Germany and then in the United States, began interpreting the Torah through the eyes of modern textual criticism.

These same rabbis then turned a critical eye to the development of Jewish law and began to question whether the words of a rabbi who died two millennia ago should really be held in higher regard than one who is alive right now.

There was furious resistance among many Jewish leaders to the ideas these rabbis were proposing but they became the basis for how millions of American Jews practice the religion today. Those founders of

Conservative Judaism taught us that nothing is too holy to be questioned and that no respectful criticism should ever be forbidden.

When it comes to Israel and the *Kotel* the Jewish community has forgotten both lessons. Our educators must remind us that to be a Jew is to question and criticize. This will happen only if we amplify questions instead of shushing them and if we celebrate critics instead of calling them names.

If we apply these ideas to the *Kotel* we must be willing to apply these ideas to other areas of Jewish life as well, whether it involves holy places such as the *Kotel*, holy people such as our GLBT brothers and sisters, or holy ideas such as the peace process.

Only through allowing inquiry and criticism will we enable future generations of Jews to defend Judaism and Israel and, with God's guidance, to bring peace both among Jews and among all those nations whom God created.



## Lifelong Learning

### Eitan Gutin

#### Award - Winning USY

Congratulations to the Tifereth Israel USY! At Seaboard Region USY's recent Spring Convention our USY leaders came home with a number of awards that recognize the hard work they all put into this year's program.

The awards that we are most excited about are:

- Highest donation to Tikun Olam out of the entire region. Our USYers raised over \$2200 for *tzedakah* this year.
- Highest Per-Capita Donation to Tikun Olam, USY's youth-run *tzedakah* fund.
- Best Tikun Olam Program for our Shabbat Dinner this past March.
- Best Social Action Program for cooking/serving at Luther Place
- Highest Percentage Increase in Kadima Membership.

Our USY leaders and advisor did an incredible job and are already excited to continue to build on this year's successes.

#### One Week of Jewish Camping for Only \$325!!!

USY Encampment (9th-12th) and Kamp Kadima (6th-8th), August 19-25, make for an incredible week of traditional camp experiences and Jewish celebrations all rolled into one. Thanks to the Himmelfarb Fund any child of a TI'er who has not yet spent a Shabbat with Seaboard USY or Kadima qualifies for a 50% subsidy to attend camp. Please contact Eitan Gutin, Director of Lifelong Learning, for more information.

#### Himmelfarb and Chai Schools

Registration is now open for the 2013-2014 school year. If you have a child whom you would like to enroll in our congregational school and you did **not** receive a registration packet please contact Eitan Gutin as soon as possible. We would like to welcome TI member **Esther Bardack** as our new Bet Class teacher.

Congratulations to:

- The Vav Class on their upcoming graduation.
- **Gabriella Pereira-Feron** for her completion of the Chai School and Confirmation.
- The Bet Class on their Siddur Party and class Siddur featuring their own illustrations.

#### Family and Graduation Weekend

On the weekend of June 7-9 we will be celebrating different groups of TI'ers and their accomplishments along with the beginning of the summer break:

- June 7: Family Service and Shabbat Dinner
- June 8: Honoring graduates from high school
- June 8: Honoring Chai School confirmand and the Vav Class graduates.

Finally, start the summer off right: Join us at noon on June 9 for our first ever Karnival Kayitz featuring bouncing and BBQ. Check your email for more information about this fun afternoon at TI.

## June Highlights at Tifereth Israel

June 1	Samuel Cohen Bar Mitzvah
June 2	Women of the Wall Program, 7 p.m.
June 3, 10, 17, 24	Monday Learning <i>Parashat HaShavuah</i> , 11 a.m. Job Club, 1 p.m.
June 8	Natan Chiappori Bar Mitzvah Honoring Himmelfarb and Chai School Graduates
June 9	Karnival Kayitz, 12 noon
June 15	Zoe Friedman Bat Mitzvah

## Social Action at TI: Martin Kessel Volunteers Needed for Annual Xmas Lunch

We Care



& Take Action

Tifereth Israel's largest and most successful Social Action project is the Christmas Luncheon which we provide to the occupants of four homeless shelters in Washington.

Last year over 100 volunteers from TI and Adat Shalom prepared, delivered and served close to 300 meals. The feedback we received was unanimously positive. The shelter residents particularly enjoyed our special home cooking and the friendly way the meals were served.

This major effort requires a significant amount of preparation and planning. Given the size of the project, it is now critical that we become better organized if we are to continue to serve so many people successfully.

At this time we are actively seeking additional assistance for our 2013 Christmas Luncheon. We need several motivated members of TI to take responsibility for the different tasks that are key to the success of this project:

- An overall coordinator with oversight for the following 6 tasks.
- A person to organize the lists of volunteers for cooking, serving and delivering the food. This person will also be the liaison with the administrators at each of the faith-based shelters.
- A person to work with Roz Kram in ordering all the perishable and non-perishable goods needed for the project. This person will also be responsible for organizing the cooking that is done at TI.
- A person responsible for organizing the pickup of all the non-perishable items from TI and delivery to the four shelters. This person will also organize the delivery to the shelters on Christmas Day of the food cooked at TI and at private homes.
- A person to collect and distribute the gifts of hats, gloves, scarves and toiletries for the shelter residents.
- A person to take care of the purchase, cooking and the carving of the some 20 turkeys needed for the lunches.
- A person responsible for project publicity, contact with the local and Jewish press, and distribution of flyers and menus to the shelters.

If you are interested in volunteering for one of the above responsibilities please contact Martin Kessel at [martink1937@gmail.com](mailto:martink1937@gmail.com). He will be pleased to talk with you further and provide more detailed information on the above tasks.

## October Conference Celebrates USCJ Centennial

This October in Baltimore, United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism will celebrate its Centennial by hosting *The Conversation of the Century* – an unprecedented gathering of 21st century Jews and today's most innovative leaders, teachers, and performers.

This event is for anyone looking for personal inspiration and the tools to foster thriving communities in a changing Jewish landscape.

**October 11-12**, there will be a joyous Shabbaton, including five different services, renowned prayer leaders,

and learning with outstanding scholars.

At the conference which follows, **October 13-15**, congregational leaders can address the major issues involved in building thriving communities:

- changes in Jewish identity and affiliation
- making prayer resonant
- building financial sustainability
- engaging interfaith families

The program will abound with music and performances by leading artists. You'll leave with concrete ideas and practical strategies for creating a *kehillah* – a sacred community – of meaning and purpose.

It all takes place at the Baltimore Marriott Waterfront Hotel. See an up-to-date list of speakers and register at [www.uscj100.org](http://www.uscj100.org).

Don't wait: there are special discounts for people who register early. There are also special discounts for students and young adults.

# Nayes un Mekhayes for TI'ers

Barbara Raimondo

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**Yvonne Shashoua** and big brother **Azaria** announce the birth of a baby girl, born Thursday, April 25.

**Jeffrey** and **Marcine Snyder** and big sister **Rivka** announce the birth of **Isaac Abram Snyder**, born Wednesday, May 1.

**Rebecca** and **Tamir Damari** announce the birth of **Dov Asher Damari**, born Saturday, May 11.

And **Laura** and **Eli Muller**, big sister **Nadia**, and grandparents **Sharon** and **Jerry Muller** announce the birth of **Julia Elizabeth Muller**, born Sunday, May 19.

Mazel tov, mazel tov, mazel tov, and mazel tov, respectively.

**Ophir Lifshitz**, son of **Kobi Lifshitz** and **Lisa Traiger**, and a rising junior at University of Maryland College Park, is spending the summer in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where he is a software engineering intern at TripAdvisor. Super, the next time they cancel your hotel reservation you'll know whom to blame.

And before **Aylat Lifshitz** attends Towson University's Honors Program in the fall as a special education major, she is working as an inclusion counselor at Camp JCC in Rockville.

With an "empty nest" this fall, Lisa Traiger will be happy to meet for lunch, dinner, dance or other interesting activities, particularly because Kobi travels out of town most weeks each month and she has watched every last episode of Downton Abbey. Every single one!

223.814

**Samuel Goldberg, Eliot** and **Traci's** son and **Marcia's** grandson, won the Virginia State Hill Climb Championship in his 10-12 age group. The race started in the valley and ended on the top of Wintergreen Mountain. This is a 6.75 mile climb with an elevation gain of 2,636 feet, which works out to an average incline of 7.4 percent. Samuel is collecting a lot of bike-racing awards, but this was his first attempt at a hill climb championship.

Speaking of going up, **Laura Rappaport** has accepted a position as Director of Congregational Learning at Temple Shalom in Succasunna, NJ, beginning July 1. This is her childhood home and synagogue, so it is her chance to fire all those Hebrew school teachers who made her life miserable.

She will be working with a close friend from rabbinical school who is now the synagogue's rabbi. A major factor in her winning the post was that she was the only candidate who could pronounce the name of the town.

In other TI promotions, Secretary of State John Kerry named so-called "veteran Jewish political operative" **Ira Forman** to be the administration's Special Envoy and head of the Office to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism.

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**Neilah Rovinsky** was selected as a National Cathedral Scholar. This program, run out of the National Cathedral, selects 15 ninth grade students each year, three from each of five public schools in Washington DC, and puts them through three college prep summer programs for the next three years, including internships and enrichment activities.

**Margie Odle** and **Carl Bergman** are delighted to announce the marriage on Memorial Day weekend of their daughter, **Hannah**, to **Mitchell Hergett**, son of Teri and Steve Hergett of Billings, Montana.

Hannah, a University of Pittsburgh graduate, is pursuing a Ph.D. in clinical psychology at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland. Mitchell, a graduate of Montana State University, is a staff engineer with Columbia Technical Communications. They met while undergraduates as summer employees of the DC Tourmobile. Thanks, DC tourists. But next time, stand to the right!

**Simcha Kuritzky** put in two exhibits at the National Money Show in New Orleans. His exhibit on Henrietta Szold won second place in the Common Theme class, and his "Ba'al Shem Tov Amulet"

exhibit (the basis for his talk at the *Tikun Leil Shavuot*) won first place in the Arts class.

On the subject of top spots, after winning first prize in the Prince George's Area Science Fair last month, **Aaron Solomon** is headed to Phoenix for a one-week International Science Fair, where he will be competing against 1,200 budding scientists from around the world. This fall Aaron will attend the University of Maryland, College Park on a full scholarship. He plans to major in cell biology and molecular genetics. Get those cheek swabs ready.

**Sad News**

**Vera Schweber**, mother of **Claudine Schweber (Edward Koren)**, died May 12 in New York. The funeral was held in New York. Our condolences to the family and loved ones.

And now for the meaning of last month's word, *jocose*: "characterized by joking, humorous" (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 an inexorable edition of Nayes un Mekhayes for TI'ers.

## Jewish Annotated New Testament

A discussion group on the new book, *The Jewish Annotated New Testament*, will meet on Monday, June 3, at 8 p.m. in the Reamer Chapel.

Future meetings will be held about every three weeks.

## Fun-Filled Spring Fling

### Rona Siskind

This year's Spring Fling was another fun-filled fundraiser! With "Dessert Roast" as our theme, we ate a lovely meal and scrumptious desserts, drank wine and dessert liqueurs (responsibly of course), bought lots of great stuff at the silent auction, and -- best of all -- got to poke fun at, laugh with, and say a fond farewell to David Zinner before he departs TI.

The silent auction was truly bigger and better than ever, with auction items taking up space on the library level and in the Cherner Auditorium. With over 160 items or services to auction off, we were able to raise over \$21,000!!! There are still a few items that we plan to sell online and we're hopeful that this could bring in another few thousand dollars, going beyond our budgeted projections and raising yet more money for TI's general fund.

Putting on the Spring Fling takes a village as they say. There are lots of people who helped make this year's event happen.

- Co-chairs, **JT Taransky** is a donor-seeker extraordinaire and **Carla Ellern** is simply extraordinary in every way.
- **Sylvia Horwitz**, **Ellen Kramarow** and **Debbie Pomerance** were instrumental in set-up.
- **Adina Rombro** and **Lena Siskind** used their creative talents to put the centerpieces together and make signs.
- **Dorothea Wolfson**, **Pam Stone** and **Sylvia Horwitz** helped solicit donations from previous donors.
- **Paula Flicker**, **David Mackoff**, **Franca Brilliant**, **Gene Herman**, **Dori Gillman**, **David Hart** and **Ted Kram** poured drinks with flare.
- **Paula Martin** put together a beautiful book of photos and well wishes for David.
- **Jared Garelick** and his team of roasters – **Joel Cohen**, **Jennifer Kefer**, **Deena Dugan**, **Louise Kelley** and **Jeff Davidson** -- were magnificent in capturing 10 years of David with humor and love.
- **Sue Catler** was a tremendous help with marketing and invitations.
- **Debbie Pomerance** is our Website guru and put together all the forms and links that made sign-up and donations doable with a simple click.
- **Eitan Gutin** and his helpers ran a great program for our younger members allowing their parents to schmooze and spend money freely.
- **Roz Kram** and her terrific kitchen crew prepared a delicious meal and **Marsha Rose** created the desserts for our centerpieces and many of the other delectable desserts.
- And it goes without saying, (but I'll say it anyway) that the Spring Fling is only possible because of TI's great staff. So thank you, **Rabbi Seidel**, **David Zinner**, **Sheri Blonder**, **David Mackoff**, **Eitan Gutin**, **Marla Sevi**, **Ariel Davis**, **Steve Ross**, **Tony Craft** and the rest of the crew for all your help.

The Spring Fling is an annual event so if you missed it this year, there's always next year to get involved in the planning and prep, or simply come and enjoy and support TI!

*Editor's Note: It also goes without saying that it all would not have happened without Rona Siskind's leadership, imagination and persistence.*



## Spring Fling, May 5



The evening began with delicious food and animated conversation, followed by a spirited silent auction...



...and a hilarious “roast” of David Zinner, by Jared Garelick, Louise Kelly, and Joel Cohen, to Flingmeister Rona Siskind’s delight



Equally funny roasters included Deena Dugan, Jennifer Keefer and Jeff Davidson



David Zinner loved it all!

## So, How Is MoEd Going?

Elizabeth Weber Handwerker & Orna Eldor Gerling

**Elizabeth:** It's been a busy year for MoEd: A Jewish Afterschool Community. Last May, Orna Eldor Gerling became our founding executive director (and first staff member). Born in the US and raised in Israel, Orna grew up in the *Tzofim*, the Israeli scouts, served in the Israeli army, and has had a lengthy career leading NGOs in Israel.

Her previous experience included promoting arts for underserved children, directing education and programming for 180 Jewish community centers in the former Soviet Union, and creating community centers for learning and resilience throughout Israel. She came to the US three years ago with her partner of 18 years and their two children. Orna has used her educational and Jewish cultural knowledge and not-for-profit savvy to turn MoEd from an idea into our area's first cross-denominational afterschool Hebrew program.

Orna's vision has shaped MoEd. We parents who started the planning for the program had the idea that time afterschool, when working parents like ourselves need afterschool childcare, could be used for Jewish learning. When we thought of Jewish learning, we thought of Hebrew school.

Orna thought of her experience in the *Tzofim*. She understood that the program could only succeed if the children feel they own the program, and adapted our program this year to fit the interests of the children. As a parent enrolling her own Hebrew-speaking children in the program, Orna said, "Nobody's teaching Hebrew to my kids who doesn't speak Hebrew as well as my kids." That hiring criterion meant that every member of MoEd's staff is a native speaker of Hebrew, even our

teenaged classroom assistants. This Hebrew capability has been a defining feature of the program.

**Orna:** MoEd opened last August with children in grades K-4 who are members of eight congregations (and unaffiliated families), who arrive at Ohr Kodosh Congregation on buses from six different public schools. On days when local schools are closed, they come to Tifereth Israel for full-day camp programs, bringing friends who join them for these camp programs.

Many of our students attend MoEd in addition to attending their own synagogue's Hebrew school. Each child brings a different set of experiences to the program, and so our staff works to welcome these contributions.

When the children of MoEd discussed Jacob and Esau, immersed in matters of birth rights and inheritance, the girls broke out in a loud protest about the unfairness of Biblical law that favors boys. When we discussed *Megilat Esther* one of the children asked how Esther could exist without a father and a mother. At MoEd we believe in kids' natural curiosity, and build their Jewish education on the knowledge and experience they and their friends bring, combined with a good dose of information presented in fun, informal, creative and unique ways.

After a long day at school, some kids need to relax, some need to blow off steam and others just want to play with their friends, and we try to meet the kids where they are. We not only read the stories, we work to bring them to life and engage. In studying the story of Noah's ark, the group launched into a lengthy discussion about the kinds of birds Noah sent out, which was first, and how many

times each was sent out. It gave kids an opportunity to make the story their own, interjecting what they know about the story of Noah (and about birds...).

Every school day, children arrive at MoEd between 3:30 and 4:00 p.m. They get off the bus and run outside to play. At 4:15 one of the kids rings the bell and everyone comes in to wash hands, say the *brakhot* and have a snack. The program begins around 4:30 with circle time, where our staff discuss the day's events, listen to the kids describe their day, and then discuss the current topic, listening to what the children have to say about it and involving them in the discussion. Finally, we lay out the plans for the afternoon.

The children of MoEd play a lot of games. Many Israeli games lend themselves nicely to educational content. Games like *Havila Hegia* (Pass the Parcel) are used to teach Hebrew colors and numbers, *Yam v'Yabashah* (Sea and Land) to repeat and practice Hebrew words, *Amudu* (Freeze), *Tofeset Tsva-im* (Color Tag), and many more.

They also employ quizzes, trivia games and connect the dot worksheets to the task of repeating Hebrew texts and specific words. There are a lot of crafts and skits, and whenever there are full-day camps at Tifereth Israel, the kids are cooking or baking.

**Elizabeth:** This winter, The Covenant Foundation selected MoEd as one of 18 winners of their very competitive grants, giving us \$20,000 to pay for staff preparation time to develop our curriculum. The Covenant Foundation has also helped us by gathering together leaders of new Jewish afterschool

*(Continued on page 15)*

## Zemer Chai Annual Concert, June 5

Alan Weitz

Zemer Chai will present its annual concert, *Sing Haleluyah!*, on **June 5 at 8 p.m.** at Ohr Kodesh Congregation in Chevy Chase, Maryland. Zemer Chai, the Washington Metropolitan Area Jewish Chorus, is celebrating its 37<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

The group will be joined in the concert by soloists Cantor Robin Helzner of Tikvat Israel Congregation and by tenor Rob McIver of The Soldiers' Chorus of the US Army

Field Band. TI members, **Carla Ellern** and **Alan Weitz**, sing in Zemer Chai.

The Hebrew word *haleluyah* is the inspiration of the concert this year. Originating in the Bible, *haleluyah* has become a universal expression of joy, wonderment and appreciation.

The word and its many meanings will be celebrated in musical compositions dating all the way from

the Renaissance to the most modern of classical and folk settings.

Zemer Chai has performed at leading venues locally, as well as in New York, Boston and Israel. Its concerts often sell out, so those interested in attending the concert are encouraged to go to its website, [zemerchai.org](http://zemerchai.org), for tickets, or contact the group at [info@zemerchai.org](mailto:info@zemerchai.org). Tickets are \$20 for general admission and \$40 for preferred, reserved seating.

## So, How Is MoEd Going? (continued)

education programs from around the country—Edah in Berkeley, JKG in Atlanta, Makom's Downtown Playschool in Toronto, Tarbuton in San Diego, and others. Our groups formed the Nitzan network, which has been a wonderful resource for us.

This spring we are making plans for the upcoming 2013-2014 school year. Registration is now open for MoEd's second year, and we will be starting our second year with a week of camp in Rock Creek Park and Tifereth Israel, August 19-23. Many of our camp activities will be led by an Israeli *shaliah* who will be coming to us from Camp Ramah.

**Orna:** When I see the children engaged in real discussions, borrowing tidbits from their lives and thus bringing their Jewish heritage to life, I feel a sense of accomplishment. There is also no better feeling than to see how much kids love to come. They love the atmosphere, they love their friends and yes, they also love the content. It is also great to give parents the peace of mind that comes with a great afterschool program.

While the idea of using the afterschool time to connect kids to Hebrew and Judaics in a fun and engaging way is very straightforward, simple and smart, actually doing it can be quite a challenge. An afterschool program like ours must always keep in mind that the kids come to the program after a full day of school, and have little desire to sit and learn. We must also remember that a child's happiness is largely dependent on his/her ability to find a friend or playmate to connect with.

I feel that over this past year MoEd has more than withstood the challenge. Day in and day out, the program skillfully finds ways to provide Jewish content in fun, informal ways in a relaxed social setting, and has become a warm second home for a great group of lucky kids.

**Elizabeth:** I'm really pleased with how much my first-grader has been learning in MoEd, and yes, she's still enrolled in the Himmelfarb School at TI. Why? First, because we asked her if she wanted to keep attending the Himmelfarb School,

and she said she did (as long as we would let her miss class for birthday parties this year). Second, because the Himmelfarb School includes different material than MoEd.

This year, my daughter has started every Sunday morning with Eitan's wonderful age-appropriate version of *Shaharit*. MoEd has had much less of an emphasis on *tefillot* (besides *brakhot*). My daughter's Himmelfarb school teacher, Rachel Lemberg, has also helped my daughter with her phonetic Hebrew reading, which has been less emphasized at MoEd. I feel that MoEd and the Himmelfarb School have complemented each other very well.

**Orna:** If you would like to receive an update about MoEd, we do have an email list of community members. To get on our email list, please visit us at [http://www.moedcommunity.org/](http://www.moedcommunity.org) or email me at [orna@moedcommunity.org](mailto:orna@moedcommunity.org). For more frequent updates, you can 'like' us on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/MoEdCommunity>.

## Anything You Can Sing, They Can Sing Sweeter

Frank Solomon

What do **Shira Jones, Carla Ellern, Lianna Levine Reisner** and **Alan Weitz** share in common?

They have Jewish music in their souls, and they can sing.

Known for her high notes, Jones often chants the Torah like an opera singer delivering an aria, with a pitch that easily beats out the barking dog next door. Weitz and Ellern are members of the longstanding Washington Jewish community choir, Zemer Chai. Reisner sings at multiple venues and recently formed a chamber music group in part to showcase Jewish chamber music.

While the four came to sing through different paths, they all enjoy singing and believe there is a purpose in Jewish music.

### A Family Tradition

Weitz often leads High Holiday services at TI, following the tradition of his grandfather, Jeremiah Weitz, the cantor at TI in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. “Jewish liturgical music is essential to creating the real spirit in prayer services and bringing congregants together into a true community,” says Weitz, who, when not singing with Zemer Chai, practices law. “In a true sense, music is prayer.”

Weitz began singing almost as early as when he started walking, and won second place at age 4 in a talent contest singing “Chattanooga Shoeshine Boy.” His experience singing in a synagogue choir as a boy eventually led him to be a member of Zemer Chai.

The group is the Washington Jewish community’s attempt to keep alive

and present all branches of Jewish musical traditions and languages. Its repertoire ranges from ancient tunes, to the Renaissance, to 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe, to Ladino, to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century labor movement in Palestine and the West, to Yiddish, and to folk traditions and modern Israeli- and American-composed music.

What makes music Jewish?

Weitz offers one insight only a musician can discern: “In general, at least one element that makes music typically Jewish is that it’s written or sung in a minor rather than a major key, which gives it more of a plaintive tone and feel, in contrast to more declaratory, Western music.”

### A History of Choir Singing

Jones sang in secular choruses as a child and in her aunt’s church choir, and has been a member of various Jewish choirs over the years. These days, she does solo singing for various events, including her own historic Washington singing tours.

“I feel that Jewish topics, seen from a Jewish perspective, make the music Jewish, particularly when the melodies, though often borrowed, or particularly lyrics, are placed in the context of the experiences of the Jewish community,” Jones says. Unlike most American Jewish singers whose music comes from Ashkenazi or European roots, she learned her Shabbat *Zemiroth* Jewish music from a Yemenite friend. The experience led her to learn Mizrachi and Sephardic styles of music.

“Jewish music has the ability to adapt melodies from other traditions and fuse those melodies with a poignancy based on the experience of the

Jewish community, especially in Ladino,” she says. “The power of that experience echoes down through the ages in a way that no other people’s music can—bringing 5,000 years of yearning with it.”

### Singing Since Childhood

Carla Ellern, like Weitz and Jones, has been singing in choirs since she was a child. She has been a member of Zemer Chai for years.

“Jewish music speaks to my soul,” Ellern says. “Jewish music is music that expresses a point of view of the Jewish people at a specific place or time. I find if the music speaks to me, then it often will speak to others. Singing enhances my Shabbat. In Zemer Chai, we come from a variety of Jewish backgrounds, so different traditions are familiar to different groups of Zemer Chai singers.”

Jewish music is part of Ellern’s Jewish life. She says she believes much more in singing together than performing. “The more Jewish music is part of Jewish life, the more it has a future,” she adds. “When it becomes an esoteric bit of history, it loses a lot of its interest.”

Reisner moved to New York a year ago after her husband accepted a job in Manhattan. She used to perform at various DC venues, often accompanied by Rabbi Seidel on the piano.

### Learning Trope Began Her Interest

She took an interest in ancient Jewish music when she learned trope in preparation for her bat mitzvah, and was intrigued by the primitive notation and widely varying styles and sounds

*(Continued on page 17)*



## Library News

### Michele Sumka

I'm excited to tell you about a new project that **Ben Verschell** is doing for us for his Eagle Scout rank in memory of Mollie Berch. He is working with a master carpenter to design shelves for the nook under the stairs (across from the Emsellem Room) that will become the Mollie Berch Children's Library Nook.

We will re-locate all the children's books as well as some or all of the young people's books to this area. There will be new lighting and some kind of comfy seating.

I have worked with Ben from the start, and we recently met again to figure out what size and color the shelves and wall should be. He has presented his idea to the Board, as well as to the House and Art

Committees. We're not promising a definite date for the finish, but we're pretty sure it'll be before the High Holidays.

As we will have to re-locate the Humor, Sports, Poetry and Yiddish books, this will give us the opportunity to re-arrange many of the shelves in the library. When the time comes, I'll be looking for volunteers to help with the re-shelving, so I hope many of you will join the effort.

We have been continuing with the work to enter more books into our system. Some of the new books we have put on the New Acquisitions shelves in the hallway are: *To the Other Shore* by Steven Cassedy, *Hannah Arendt and the Jewish Question* by Richard J. Bernstein,

*The Roots of Anti-Semitism: In the Age of Renaissance and Reformation* by Heiko Augustinus Oberman, *Britain and the Jews of Europe 1939-1945* (Oxford Paperbacks) by Bernard Wasserstein, *The Root and the Bough, The Epic of an Enduring People* by Leo W. Schwarz, *Rivonia's Children: Three Families and the Cost of Conscience in White South Africa*, by Glenn Frankel, *The Story Begins: Essays on Literature* by Amos Oz, *At the Entrance to the Garden of Eden: A Jew's Search for God with Christians and Muslims in the Holy Land* by Yossi Klein Halevi, *Song of Songs: Erotic Love Poetry* by Judith Ernst, *Judaism in America* (Columbia Contemporary American Religion Series) by Marc Lee Raphael.

## Anything You Can Sing, They Can Sing Sweeter (continued)

that the same notation can have in different Jewish communities all over the world.

Following her mother, who was a music teacher, Reisner learned contemporary Jewish music and traditional Israeli music, as well as traditional *Zemirot* when she was active in USY in high school. "Even though my Hebrew wasn't great, singing these Hebrew/Aramaic songs made me feel more connected to the Jewish people," she says.

"I love how when you visit other Jewish communities around the country and world, if you know these songs, or even just the texts, if not the tunes, you have a feeling of belonging and connection."

As an undergraduate student at Brandeis University, Reisner was a

member of a chamber choir that did a program on the Song of Songs. She considered a career as a *hazanit*, but after deciding that the Jewish community and Jewish prayer are best served when services are not performances by a *hazan*, but rather lay leaders and congregants praying together, she took on a different career track.

More recently, Reisner has become more interested in learning Jewishly-inspired classical music, written by Jewish composers grounded in standard compositional practices. "Now that I've spent plenty of time in the classical oeuvre at large, I am curious to dig into the question of what Jewish composers were writing about," she says.

That curiosity led Reisner to form a chamber music group in New York

last year, Repose Chamber Music, to present programs at private events and in small performing venues. "I want to help connect audiences more intimately with classical music, to provide an opportunity for conversation about the music, and to perform pieces that are lesser known.

"One of the audiences I'd like to build with Repose is the Jewish community, and I believe there is a market for Jewish chamber music. I want Repose to provide a service to the Jewish community since there are few dedicated venues for intimate chamber music that is Jewish.

"I think there is great potential for bringing people together around Jewish chamber music, having that be a launching point for learning, connection, and identity exploration."

## Upcoming Friday Night Minyan Assignments

### June 14

David & Laurel Rabin  
 Glenn Rapoport  
 Laura Rappaport  
 Jacqueline Ratner  
 Marisol Ravicz & David Rapier  
 Andrew Reamer  
 Sanford & Shelley Reback  
 Naomi Reem  
 Jay Renbaum & Shannah Koss  
 Arnold & Naomi Revzin  
 Ruth Reynolds  
 Howard Riker & Danielle Glosser  
 Morris & Judy Rodenstein  
 Joseph Rofrano & Lynn Golub-  
 Rofrano  
 Charles Rombro & Pamela Stone  
 Elliot Rosen & Sharon Cohen  
 Aviel Roshwald & Alene Moyer  
 Ari Roth & Kate Schechter  
 Nancy Roth  
 Marc Rothenberg & Ivy Baer

### June 21

Robert Rovinsky & Renana Brooks  
 Steve & Shannon Rozner  
 David & Stephanie Rubin  
 Howard & Hannah Rubin  
 Mark & Diann Saltman  
 Lawrence & Pearl Schainker  
 Eric & Shira Schechtman  
 Daniel Schiff  
 Michael & Mical Schneider  
 Mark Schneiderman & Tanya  
 Alteras  
 Keith Secular & Susan Catler  
 Paul Seltman & Jeanne Ireland  
 Hershel & Judith Shanks  
 Phillip & Ruth Shapiro  
 Yvonne Shashoua  
 Nathaniel Shyovitz  
 Richard & Marjorie Siegel  
 David Silber & Eileen Rose

### June 28

Morton Simon  
 David & Rona Siskind  
 Audrey Smith  
 Aaron & Reva Snow  
 Jeffrey & Marcine Snyder  
 Dan & Elizabeth Sokolov  
 Frank Solomon & Laurie Russell  
 Louis & Madge Lee Specter  
 Phil & Dianne Spellberg  
 Barry & Sari Siegel Spieler  
 Masha Spiegel  
 Gregory Stackel & Genevieve Dara  
 Sapir  
 Jeffrey & Julie Steinberg  
 Lois C. Steinberg  
 Jack Stone & Wilma Brier  
 Herman & Malka Stopak  
 Noam Stopak & Shelley Sturman  
 Alexander & Laura Strashny  
 Edwin Stromberg & Rose Ellen  
 Halper

### July 5

Jonathan Strum  
 Marc Suddleson & Molly Surden  
 Howard & Michele Sumka  
 JT & Naomi Taransky  
 Kassahu Teffera & Melke Mengiste  
 Jevera Temsky  
 Neil & Rachel Tickner  
 Michael Tilchin & Linda Greer  
 David & Anne Crandall Tobenkin  
 Peter & Rhoda Trooboff  
 Paula Tucker  
 Jonathan & Cathy Tuerk  
 Daniel & Allison Turner  
 Michael & Ruth Unterweger  
 Mark Verschell & Elizabeth Leff  
 Sherri Vishner  
 Susan Vitale

### July 12

David Wachtel & Jennifer Goldstein  
 Harry Waldman & Susan Morse  
 Marc Warshawsky & Vivian Seidner  
 Matthew Watson & Ellen Cabot  
 Marc & Deborah Weinberger  
 Eric Weiner & Sharon Moshavi  
 Jon Weintraub & Judith Heimlich  
 Michael Weiss & Phyllis Stanger  
 Jessica Weissman & Louise Kelley  
 Dov Weitman & Sylvia Horwitz  
 Alan & Cynthia Weitz  
 Howard & Barbara White  
 Louise Wiener  
 Peter Winch & Denice Zeck  
 Adam & Dorothea Wolfson  
 Marion Zatz  
 Christopher Zeilinger & Ann Baker  
 Yonannes Zeleke  
 Diana Zurer  
 Ellen Zwibak

### July 19

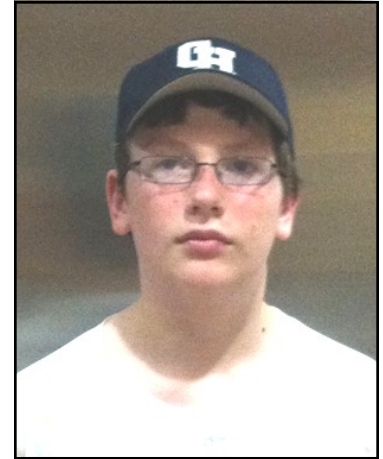
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## B'nei Mitzvah

Hi, I am Sam Cohen. I've been coming to TI since I was two weeks old, and my bar mitzvah is on June 1. My *parashah* is *Sh'lach L'kha*. My bar mitzvah tutor was Seth Glabman, who is a very, very good teacher; he really helped me learn my *haftarah*. I am in seventh grade at St. Anselm's Abbey School. My brother Eli is 16 years old and is a junior at St. Anselm's.

I play baseball and run cross-country, throw shot put and discus, and I'm considering wrestling next year. I play the xylophone. Probably my favorite book is *Italian Folk Tales* by Italo Calvino. It's a collection of very repetitive but interesting Italian folk tales. My bar mitzvah project is working at the Methodist Home, where I help with events on Sunday afternoons.

I am really excited about being able to plan the Kiddush meal because I've never been able to do that before. My favorite thing about the Kiddush is the greens, if by "greens" you mean mint chocolate chip ice cream.



Hi! I am Zoë Friedman, new member of TI and longtime resident of Silver Spring, Maryland. My Bat Mitzvah date, June 15, approaches rapidly. I look forward to sharing my special day with TI congregants, my family, and my friends.

This is my first year at Charles E. Smith Jewish Day School. I love the JDS community and learning experience and am on the cross country and track teams. I won the mile race at the Middle School Track Championships and was awarded a medal for 6<sup>th</sup> place at the cross country championship meet. I love to play and watch all sports but prefer running, tennis, ice skating, rock climbing, basketball, and baseball. The New York Yankees baseball team is my passion.

My abilities to write and speak publicly are my strongpoints. I have published two books and written several poems, short stories, and a Purim play which was performed in two synagogues. I enjoy making movies. I have read the Harry Potter series ten times (and counting).

In school, I participated in a mock Global Health Conference and selected Togo, a small country in western Africa, where drinking polluted water leads to various health issues. Typhoid fever and hepatitis are the most common. For my Bat Mitzvah *tzedakah* project, I will raise money and give all the proceeds directly to Water.org, an organization that provides clean drinking water to people in western Africa.

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