



The Menorah

Notes from the Rabbi: Ethan Seidel

Help With My Sabbatical and an Urban Garden

As many of you realize, I have a 3 ½-month sabbatical from November 15 until the end of February. There are a number of projects I am thinking about (see below), but first I want to ask for your book recommendations, as I hope to do lots of reading over these three-and-a-half months, and I have always appreciated suggestions from congregants.

I would particularly like to know of books you have read that you think I would enjoy reading, and/or books that would expand my horizons. And if you have a copy of the book to lend me, that would be great!

I have many ideas for how I would spend my sabbatical:

- a trip to Israel

- a baking class, leading to an eventual *milchig* bakery run out of TI's kitchen



- a counseling class

- writing and learning new music for services

- studying other models of conversion classes

- taking some bike trips with friends

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President's Column: Jeff Davidson

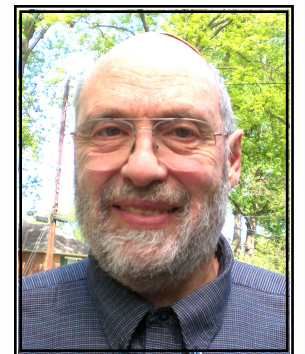
Blood in the Matzah

Writing this column around Labor Day is much harder than I anticipated.

At a Shul like TI, with our tradition of labor activism, a column about the importance of the labor movement would seem a natural. As someone who has spent virtually all of his adult working life in environmental and occupational health and safety, surely there are easy labor-related issues to write about.

But my life's story reflects a profound unease with the labor movement and easy topics are hard to come upon. As a young man, I worked as a teamster and belonged to the appropriate

union. At Yom Kippur for almost all of my life, I have beat my breast and tried to repent for paying dues to that evil organization.



My paternal grandfather, Israel, for whom I am named, was known for his great strength and was one of the few Jewish longshoremen on the docks of New York City.

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Notes from the Rabbi (continued)

- going to a Jewish studies conference
- writing poetry
- studying a new Rabbinic text – I'm thinking about the Chafetz Hayyim's work on *L'shon HaRah*

Realistically, I know that I will actually have time for only a few of these projects. But I mention them here because if you have a connection that might help me pursue one of these, I'd be much obliged if you'd pass it on to me!

I am also planning to study Permaculture and Urban Gardening, with an eye towards TI's possibly someday setting up such a garden, subject, of course, to board approval, either on TI's property, or on the abandoned

triangle four blocks from TI in Shepherd Park. (I spoke of this during Yom Kippur – you can find that drash on the TI website.)

I will quickly outline some of the issues connected to the possibility of TI's purchasing that triangle (which I gather can be had for a year's back taxes -- \$250), again asking for your input:

The project would:

- be fun!
- beautify our neighborhood
- teach TI and other kids where food comes from
- include Shepherd Park adults in a joint project
- enable us to donate some of the produce to the Community Food Bank
- give locals in apartments a chance to garden
- connect us, on a deep level, to life (see my drash)

But before buying we would have to consider carefully, among concerns you might have:

- neighbors' concerns, both before and after the purchase
- composting – how to produce enough? And if we have on-site bins, how do we control animals and what neighbors put into our on-site bins?
- a water source
- zoning issues – we would need to build at least a little shed there
- long-term financial obligations, like taxes
- do we have the energy in the shul – both organizational and physical – to pull this off?

It may end up that we decide that this is not doable, or that a garden on TI's property might be the better choice. I look forward to hearing your ideas about this project.

Thanks for your input!

Rabbi Seidel

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President's Column (continued)

We grew up knowing what not to talk about. My family read the *Day*, not the *Forward*.

As our children matured and began to work, we witnessed the irrelevance of the traditional labor movement toward people who work part time, have short-term consulting arrangements or are knowledge workers in the modern sense.

At the same time, some of my closest friends and colleagues at TI and in the larger community have dedicated their lives to the labor movement and are responsible for much good in the world. I have too much knowledge of some of the terrible things done to the most vulnerable workers.

Impact of 1911 Triangle Fire

So much of Jewish progressive thought can be traced to the reaction to incidents such as the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire of 1911. I can remember how shocked the public health community was when essentially the same story happened in North Carolina in 1991 at a chicken processing plant.

In my own career, I have had to shut down and evacuate public buildings because of deranged thinking on the part of management. Then, it happened again this year in Bangladesh with many dead in a clothing factory.

In writing this column, I googled sweat shops and found articles defending the sweat shop system

as being necessary for economic development, written by progressive authors such as Nicholas Kristoff and Paul Krugman. In looking at remedies for the situation, whether we are consumers who buy clothing, investors seeking a decent, yet ethical, return on their investment dollar, or merely concerned about the situation, I found an impenetrable thicket of suggested remedies.

What to Do?

The layman, who is not expert in this field, has as much chance of becoming a crack Talmudic scholar as determining what to do. The solution demands a combination of corporate conduct codes, labor protection built into trade treaties and consumer education.

The story is told about the great 19th century Rabbi, Yisroel Salanter, who was asked to inspect one of the first automated matzah factories. It was a structure with a Charlie Chaplinesque vision of gears and so forth and the employers evidently did not treat their employees well.

Rabbi Withholds His Hekhsher

Rabbi Salanter did not give the factory his *hekhsher*, because of the "blood in the matzah." The factory owner protested and said there was no blood used in baking the matzot. The Rebbe replied "it's the workers' blood I am worried about." We should not lose track of the blood in the

matzah in our search for the cheapest of goods.

The music critic for *Slate* magazine was recently asked to name the most beautiful melody he could think of. Surprisingly, he did not name a melody by Schubert, Verdi or Gershwin, but instead listed an arrangement of a Yiddish song, memorializing the Triangle Shirtwaist fire, by Vocolot, a musical ensemble we were lucky enough to have at TI a few years ago.

Linda Hirschorn in Residence

I am so happy and proud that Linda Hirschorn, the distinguished leader of this ensemble will be in residence at TI from October 30 through November 3 (see article on page 6). Perhaps, if we are lucky, we can hear some of this beautiful melody.

Here is a link to the story, and the recording can be found at the end. http://www.slate.com/articles/arts/music_box/2013/07/the_most_beautiful_melody_in_the_world_is_it_gershwin_brahms_the_beatles.2.html

Family Shabbat October 5

10:30 a.m.

K'tongregation (K-2nd grade)
Junior Congregation
(3rd- 5th grade)
Balcony Babka (7th-8th grade)

11:10 a.m.

Tot Shabbat (0 - Pre-K)

New Members

Jared Garelick

Vered and Allan Drazen

Vered, who grew up in Israel, and Allan, from St. Louis, have lived in Washington for a number of years. Allan is a professor of economics at the University of Maryland, specializing in political economy. Vered is a busy mother to their two daughters, Ayelet, 14, and Talya, 11.

Allan and Vered met in Israel while he was on a sabbatical. They recently did some shul-shopping, and found that TI was the right place for them.



Preparing the Sanctuary for the High Holidays



Getting Assignments for Rosh Hashanah Food Deliveries

Seth Feldman and Lisa Ellern Feldman

Seth is a local native, from Chevy Chase, while Lisa grew up on the island of Manhattan. Seth is director of marketing at MedImmune. You will do both him and yourself a favor if you get your flu vaccine this year. Lisa is an attorney who also works as a counselor for Au Pair America, matching up young people from abroad with US families.

The Feldmans have two daughters, Samantha, 9, and Nava, 7. Lisa's last name is familiar to TI'ers because she is the sister of member Carla Ellern. But respect that Lisa is her own individual, and not just Carla's sister. Remember, she is also Stan Dorn's sister-in-law. That makes Carla and Stan TI Magnet Members of the Month.

The Feldmans just added further to the extended family by adopting a rescue dog. Welcome to this month's featured new members, daughters, and dogs.

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).

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

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

Marcia Goldberg h: 301-589-0352

Marcia Goggin h: 301-593-8480
w: 301-754-1963

Summary of TI Board of Directors Meeting August 12, 2013

Attending: Larry Baizer, Susan Catler, Joel Cohen, Jeffrey Colman, Joe Davidson, Lisa Goldberg, Stephanie Roodman Murdock, Ray Natter, Margie Odle, Cynthia Peterman, Debbie Pomerance, Andrew Reamer, Howard Riker, Vivian Seidner, Daniel Turner, Chris Zeilinger.

Excused: Sharon Brown, Jeff Davidson, Joanne Hovis, Ariel Brandt Lautman, Ruth Shapiro.

Absent: Varda Fink, Eitan Gutin, Wilhelmina Gottschalk, Morris Rodenstein, Mark Verschell.

Staff: Sheri Blonder, David Mackoff-Borisy, Rabbi Ethan Seidel, Jevera Temsky.

Stephanie Roodman Murdock, substituting for President Jeff Davidson, called the meeting to order at 8:08.

Review of Minutes of Previous Meeting: The minutes were approved unanimously.

Approval of Agenda for Meeting: The agenda was approved with one exception: adding Good and Welfare at the end of the meeting.

Stephanie said that Jeff Davidson asked that we make a token donation to Luther Place to help defray the costs of cleaning their organ after green paint was thrown on it. Rabbi Seidel offered to use his discretionary fund. Jeff will talk with Rabbi when he returns after 8/20.

No *D'var Torah* was offered since Morris Rodenstein, the scheduled speaker, was absent.

High Holiday Report, Sue Catler and Sheri Blonder: Tickets will be mailed out by end of next week. Only two orders have been received

for Roz's meals for Rosh Hashanah. There were no flowers last year on the bimah. Those on the bimah in previous years were individually sponsored. Will need a sponsor to have flowers this year. Cynthia suggested this be an item in the next newsletter letting people know of the opportunity to sponsor flowers on the bimah for the High Holidays.

We are on track for High Holiday ticket orders: over 400 individuals in the Wolman sanctuary; 100 in Cherner. Last year totals were: 555 in the Wolman; 200 in the Cherner. We are at a comfortable point compared to the same time last year in August. This year saw a major shift to online ordering. 88 households ordered online. This shows that many families are comfortable with using technology, which is important as the synagogue makes the shift to online bill paying.

There has been a significant reduction in costs for lulav/etrog sets. We have many volunteers already for the High Holidays. We still need people as greeters, "lobbyists" in Wolman, and for Goldberg commemoration days (Labor Day weekend). In response to a question, Sheri and Jevera responded that neither of them has received any complaints about the new High Holiday ticket system.

Executive Director's Report, Jevera Temsky: Jevera noted how busy the office is every day, with many volunteers coming in and out, and how hard the staff works in the office, maintenance, kitchen, and school. Her highest priority is figuring out what the best way is to use staff most efficiently? When David Zinner went to 40/50%, he shifted responsibilities to other staff people. Ariel's job has been phased out this month. Chose to accept a payout of the rest of her leave for the

rest of the month. Extra bookkeeping is shifting to David Mackoff as full bookkeeper.

It appears that Shul Cloud will be the best option for software. After the holidays, staffing and finances will be the highest priorities. Also, technology, hardware and software. Rabbi Seidel congratulated Jevera on doing a fine job with a complicated position at this time of year.

Jevera was asked how is it moving from a Board member to a paid employee? Quite seamless, a natural move because she cares so much about the congregation. However, she is working six full days, and Saturday is not a rest because people cannot distinguish between work and rest for her.

High Holiday Appeal, Dan Turner: There will be a phone bank at TI on Tuesday, Aug. 27, beginning with dinner at 6:00 p.m. It will meet again on Tuesday, Sept. 10, at 6:00 and each night thereafter until all calls have been made. Committees should send to Dan Turner all exciting things that are planned for this upcoming year and have been done recently which could be included in letters sent to all congregants before calls are made.

Finance Committee Report, Chris Zeilinger: Three reports were distributed: Assets and Liabilities for last fiscal year; Profit and Loss Budget vs. Actual for last fiscal year; and Income and Expense July, 2011 through August, 2013. It has been three years since we have been audited, and we need to contract with an auditor again. Someone asked why are we not refinancing while rates are low? Commercial lending rates are not as low as private rates. The Finance Committee plans to

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Kol Nashim

Margie Odle



Kol Nashim's fall and winter programming is falling into place. We are excited to be able to offer a series of presentations by TI's women rabbis.

words reflect the different eras and agendas of those who wrote them, and identify which themes still resonate with our contemporary understanding of the holiday.

The first, by **Rabbi Avis Miller**, will be on Sunday, November 17, at 10:15 a.m. Other sessions will be in January, March, and April with **Rabbis Elizabeth Richman, Jane Berman, and Sarah Meytin**. And of course we'll have light refreshments at all the sessions.

Anyone who has taken a class with Rabbi Miller knows what a wonderful and engaging teacher she is. Her alternate title for the talk is "Beyond 'I Have a Little Dreidl': The Songs of Hanukkah". This is likely to inspire some interesting conversation at the Thanksgiving dinner table!

Alternating non-fiction and fiction, the book club chose the following books and meeting hosts for its next four sessions:

October 15: *The Sabbath*, by Abraham Joshua Heschel — Pearl Schainker

November 19: *Mothers*, by Jennifer Gilmore — Cyndy Weitz

December 17: *Terror in the Night: The Klan's Campaign Against the Jews*, by Jack Nelson — Margie Odle

January 21: *Wartime Lies*, by Louis Begley — Jessica Weissman and Louise Kelley

Here's what Rabbi Miller says about her November 17 presentation: "Its title is *Songs of Hanukkah: Text, Context, and Pretext*. As we anticipate the celebration of Hanukkah, we will analyze the lyrics of the liturgy and songs of Hanukkah. We will study how these

The September Kol Nashim book club meeting was held at Shelley Heller's on September 17. Instead of discussing a specific book, the 15 participants brought their many recommendations for books they would like the group to select during the next year.

Linda Hirschhorn to be Artist-in-Residence

October 30 - November 3



Renowned singer, composer, and conductor **Linda Hirschhorn** will be artist-in-residence at Tifereth Israel for five days, October 30 through November 3, 2013.

While she is with us Linda will give a solo concert, offer a *drash* on Shabbat morning and teach in the Himmelfarb Religious School.

Many people know Linda as the conductor of the *a cappella* group Ocelot, which she founded and has directed for the last 25 years. She is also the cantor at Temple Beth Shalom in San Leandro, California, where she has served since 1988.

She will also teach some of her unique and original melodies to a volunteer chorus who will lead the congregation on Shabbat morning.

Mark Your Calendar!

Board Meeting Summary (continued)

have a recommendation well in advance of TI's balloon payment's due date of next June, 2014.

Good and Welfare: Joel announced that Jeff appointed Bruce Heppen to

form a committee to work with finance and development to prioritize development: bathroom; school; rain garden; ramp. Cynthia congratulated Rabbi and Rachel Seidel on the engagement of their son, Natan. Sue

Catler reported that David Levy is up and walking a bit and hopes to return to DC in 2-3 weeks.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:26.

Nayes un Mekhayes for TI'ers

Barbara Raimondo

Can't Get Enough of a Good Thing

Rachel and **Sarah Meytin** recently got married (again!), in the presence of more than 100 friends and family members, one day after the 10-year anniversary of their first marriage (which was also a Jewish wedding in front of more than 100 friends and family). This wedding was actually their third, as they had a civil marriage in San Francisco way back when, but that was annulled by the nasty California Supreme Court. They hope that three's the charm.

Mariah Finkelstein just finished her first year as an outdoors living specialist (doncha like the sound of that? It's like living in a hammock.) at Camp Louise, and she's now started her freshman year at Dickinson College.

Dinah Finkelstein is working as a copywriter and social media strategist (doncha like the sound of that? It's like you rule the world.) at Catch 24 Advertising and Design in Manhattan. She just started work on her MFA in poetry on a full-tuition fellowship (doncha like the sound of that? It's like you pay no money for your kid to go to college.) to Rutgers University. She lives in Brooklyn.

And, **Gabriel Finkelstein** has been acting as a volunteer *hazan* at Congregation Ahavas Israel (more commonly known as the Greenpoint Shul) and also lives in Brooklyn.

Miriam and **Jeff Davidson** traveled to the "other" B-town, Berkeley, California, for the wedding of their son, **Sam**, to **Gillian Siple** in beautiful Tilden Park. Gillian is working as a dramatic arts teacher in a local public school while Sam works for the California League of Conservation Voters. **Ezra** and his family joined his brother by moving to

Oakland to assume his new job on the history faculty of the San Francisco University High School, the first time that both brothers have been in the same town for a long time.

Also, daughter, **Naomi**, flew in from Paris, where she is working on a book covering immigration from the Maghreb to Europe and Israel by both Jewish and Muslim citizens in the mid- and late- 20th century. She will be spending the upcoming academic year in Berlin on fellowship to work on the book.

Walk On . . .

Well, at least one member of TI made it this summer to the Bethlehem Hebrew Congregation in New Hampshire. Whatever happened to the rest of you? **Ellie Dugan** (daughter of **Deena** and **Pierre**), who is hiking the Appalachian Trail with her friend, Russell, spent two nights of home comfort with **Gail Robinson** and **Martin Kessel** in Bethlehem. (Mmm, hot showers . . .)



Ellie and Russell attended Shabbat services and were delighted to find that the *hazan*, Marlena Fuerstman, had been hiking with the Bet Sefer

the previous week. At the time of their visit Ellie and Russell had completed 1800 miles of their 2100 miles after beginning in Georgia in March. Only 300 to go!

Cynthia and **Tania Peterman** spoke at a conference in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, September 9, on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. They presented to an audience of more than 50 school teachers, administrators, and counselors, as well as nurses and physicians. Later that week Tania was a featured speaker at the gala of the National Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome held at the Embassy of Italy. Cynthia, **Jeff**, and Tania's fiancé, **Adrian**, were honored to accompany Tania to this exciting affair.

Dennis Kirschbaum's Jewish-themed chapbook of poetry, *Clattering East*, is being published this month by Finishing Line Press. It is available online from Amazon and from finishinglinepress.com. Or get a signed copy from Dennis. Be sure to request the TI discount!

And following several book events for *Against Violence Against Women: The Case for Gender Protection* (Palgrave Macmillan), **Rona Fields** has been invited to do events for the book at Shepherd Park on October 5 and at the Columbia Library later in October.

Returning to Zion

Judy and **David Cohen** have had two very different returns to Zion this past year. In January, they made their first trip back to Israel in more than 12 years. They stayed in Kfar Sabah with old friends, **Byron** and **Rachel Metrikin-Gold** (he and his first wife, Nan, were TI members

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Nayes un Mekhayes (continued)

many years ago) and enjoyed reunions with cousins on Kibbutz Ramat David and in Jerusalem.

Then, during the last week in August, Judy and David vacationed in Southern Utah, amid the spectacular scenery of Cedar Breaks National Monument, and Bryce Canyon and Zion National Parks. They were last in Zion National Park in 1967, tent camping with their then-9-month-old son, Benjy. This time the hearty adventurers bagged a hotel. As Judy noted, this time David wore a backpack; 46 years ago, he had a baby on his back. At the end of September they were off to Provence for two weeks. No Zions there, but the Mediterranean was nearby.

Speaking of the wild west, the enormous **Goldberg** clan -- **Marcia, Eliot** and **Traci Goldberg, Devra** and **Avi Weiss**, and four (count 'em!) grandchildren -- spent a week in Yosemite National Park. They hiked, biked, swam and scrambled over boulders. Actually, Marcia did only a few boulders. They brought a shofar with them and blew it in almost every part of Yosemite. The hills were alive with the sound of Elul! The Jewish bears loved it!



David Levy is back in the saddle again after 33 days at a rehabilitation facility center in Portland, Oregon. He had been incapacitated, probably by the parathyroid cancer for which he has been treated at the National Institutes of Health for about 10 years. David's wife, **Ellen**, family, and granddaughter helped in the recovery. And thanks to **Pierre Dugan**, whose wonderful Street to Street organization fixed up David's house for his return.

David is grateful to a long list of TI'ers who visited -- like **Paula Tucker**, who was attending a conference in Portland and stopped by to say hello -- and who called or wrote -- such as **Rabbi Seidel, Rachel Seidel, Sue Catler, Debra Shleien, Jeff Davidson, Joe Davidson, Esther Kimelman-Block, Jennifer Kefer, Esther** and **Gene Herman, Barbara White, Rona Fields, Audrey Smith, and Myrna Goldman**, as well as others who expressed support in other ways.

David says, "Seeing you all again as I walked by myself into a recent

Shabbat service was one of my motivating factors in recovery."

Sad News

Morton Taub, father of **Sheri Blonder** and grandfather of **Aviva** and **Chaya Blonder**, died in Baltimore. He was 80 and had been ill for a short time before his death. The funeral was held in New York. May the mourners find comfort in their memories.

And now for the meaning of last month's word, *grok*: "to understand profoundly and intuitively" (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 the umpteenth edition of Nayes un Mekhayes for TI'ers.

Adult Education

Jessica Weissman

By now, or very soon, the Fall/Winter catalog will be available. Some of the upcoming events include classes by Gideon Amir (*Biblical Dreams*, starting **October 17**) and Barbara White (*The Book of Proverbs*), as well as intermediate and advanced courses on the Book of Kings by Rabbi Seidel.

Don't forget the **November 11** trip to the National Archives to see the stirring and beautiful exhibit of Iraqi Jewish artifacts.

SHALEM

On **October 19**, **Eti Bardack** will be the SHALEM speaker, talking about her father, **Noah Roitman**, and the shelling of the Irgun ship, *Altalena*, under the orders of Haganah leader Ben-Gurion. Mr. Roitman refused to fire on the ship. To learn more about this remarkable man, come to Eti's talk.

On **November 17**, **Rabbi Avis Miller** will be the SHALEM speaker.

A Tale of Three Continents

Frank Solomon

I met George in 1977 at the University of Missouri while he was visiting his son. A slight man with a gentle smile, George was Russian-born and French-educated. He spoke eight languages. He was an engineer for DuPont.

George Preston was born Grisza Priszkulnik on March 31, 1914, in Rovno in the Russian province of Volhynia, now Rivne, Ukraine. He came to the United States in 1946 and settled in Delaware. His son, David, was my best friend in the Graduate School of Journalism. He often told me about his father's experience in Auschwitz.

David's mother, Halina, survived the Nazi occupation of Poland by hiding for 14 months in a sewer beneath the city of Lwow. She later attended the teachers' institute of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America in New York. George and Halina met in the U.S. and married in 1951.

George and Halina's Legacy

In March 1965, at the invitation of the German government, George Preston testified at the Auschwitz war-crimes trials in Frankfurt-am-Main. His testimony, which made international headlines, helped to convict his former barracks *kapo*, Emil Bednarek, of murder and sent him to prison.

Halina later conceived the idea and saw to the construction of the "Garden of the Righteous" at the Jewish Community Center in Wilmington, patterned after Israel's Yad Vashem. A year before she died in 1982, Halina unveiled markers bearing the names of two Polish Catholic sewer workers who had saved her: Leopold Socha and Stefan Wroblewski. These two markers were the first memorials in the United States to Christians who

saved Jews. The Halina Wind Preston Holocaust Education Center was subsequently established by the Jewish Community Relations Council.

David was passionate about the Holocaust. His series in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* would make him a Pulitzer Finalist in Feature Writing in 1986. "Journey to My Father's Holocaust" described how, by traveling through Germany and Eastern Europe, David managed to come to terms with his father's experience in the Holocaust.

Researching the Holocaust

Inspired by my friend's trip and story, in 1986 I trekked through Germany, Poland, Austria, the Ukraine and the former Czechoslovakia to see the concentration camps and visualize the horror for the victims. Intrigued by tales I heard of Nazis hiding in South America after World War II, I spent a month in South America the following year.

With the help of an Israeli friend, Uri, and information from the Simon Wiesenthal Center, I spoke to historians, Holocaust survivors, local officials and anyone in Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay who would talk to us. Without David's historian memory and investigating skills, we uncovered nothing about Nazis that had not been uncovered before.

Ending Up in Venezuela

Exhausted, we left Uruguay and hiked up to Aconcagua, the highest point of the Andes. We went north to Brazil, Bolivia, Peru and turned east through the Amazon Basin to Colombia and Venezuela in search of more Nazi information.

In Venezuela, I visited another friend from journalism school, a Brazilian

named Alberto, who was working in Caracas. There we ran into a young Venezuelan woman. From that moment, Uri would almost disappear, surfacing only periodically to ask me to translate — Christiana didn't speak English, and Uri didn't speak Spanish.

On the third day, Uri declared that he and Christiana were engaged, but I wondered: Would a cheery Catholic make a good bride for a brooding Jew? Would she be happy living in Israel?

With Uri busy with his new treasure, I turned to my Brazilian friend. Alberto said he knew of a historian of indigenous Indians who spoke German, who was "hiding" in the Andean mountains near the Colombian border. The next day, Christiana, Uri and I boarded a bus *circa* the 1950s, jammed with indigenous Indians. For two hours, the tin can lumped along a narrow road and trundled up 3,000 feet above sea level. We passed the mountain city of San Cristobal, finally reaching a tiny enclave along the Colombian border.

Finding Our Man

We found a man with silver hair, a silver beard and a straw hat, in his 70s or 80s, who the locals said hailed from Argentina. The man possessed a wealth of knowledge about the Native Americans, their tribal languages, and their migratory patterns. He told us how he had traveled through the Amazon Basin, Argentina, Paraguay, Peru, Bolivia, and Colombia, ending in Venezuela. He spoke with what I thought was a heavy German accent.

I made the catch, I thought, and was ready to pose the big question. At that moment, the man took off his

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Himmelfarb School Mosaic Dedicated

Two years in the making, a student- and community-created mosaic has been completed and mounted in the stairwell leading up to the Himmelfarb School. On Friday evening, September 20, the mosaic was dedicated.

Envisioned, coordinated and directed by **Fylis Peckham**, the mosaic is the product of two years of hard work. The project began with Fylis preparing five presentation boards, each with a different theme: Israel, Torah Stories, Jewish Symbols,

Jewish Holidays and Mosaic History. She then brought these boards to each class in the school to discuss the themes in depth and generate excitement and enthusiasm for the mosaic.

The students next voted on their favorite theme, and selected Jewish Symbols. In a following session with each class, each student did a pencil sketch of a Jewish symbol. The pencil sketches were then displayed in the space where the mosaic is currently hanging. The children then

turned these pencil sketches into paintings. Fylis taught basic painting lessons, including mixing colors from the primary colors and other techniques.

At a community event, the paintings were cut up and fashioned into a mural. Fylis took photographs of the paper mural and created a sketch for the intended space that incorporated the ideas of all the paintings. Every child's symbol was included in the master plan. Next, Fylis drew the

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A Tale of Three Continents (continued)

jacket and sweater, raised his hand and pointed to a site on a worn-out map of the Amazon. I noticed the tattooed number on his arm.

"Avrum" said he didn't originate from Argentina, but came from the Ukraine in 1944 right after the liberation of the Janowska concentration camp, where his wife and their two children perished. He and his surviving sister left the camp and went to Argentina.

A New Life in South America

In Argentina, he married another survivor, a Polish Jew, and continued his prewar career as a physician. They had three children. One went to the United States, another stayed in Argentina before making *aliyah*, and the third moved to Caracas. After his second wife died, Avrum followed this son to Venezuela, and took up natural medicine and Indian history. He had been living in this mountainous village for almost a decade, nearly completely cut off from the outside world, tending to the Indians.

Like Ukrainian-born George Preston, Avrum was educated in France —

and Germany. Also like George, he spoke eight languages — Russian, German, Hebrew, Spanish, Dutch, English, Ukrainian, and the local Arecuna dialect.

After I told him why we were there, Avrum said he had encountered some suspect Nazis during his 40 years in South America, and furnished information to the appropriate authorities in Israel. We left Avrum after four hours. The catch of the trip: Uri netted a bride.



Uri, Christiana and Frank Solomon meet historian-physician of South American tribes on Venezuelan-Colombian border

Alberto found the opposite of what he believed. Instead of finding a Nazi, I found a surviving Jew.

Epilogue

In 1997, David Preston wrote *Hitler's Swiss Connection*, an expose of Francois Genoud, the Swiss financier of fascism, manager of the hidden Swiss treasure of the Third Reich, and principal benefactor of the Nazi diaspora. David later left the *Philadelphia Inquirer* for CNN and eventually joined the *Philadelphia Daily News* where he is an assistant city editor.

George Preston died in 2006 at the age of 92 near Wilmington, Delaware, after having worked for DuPont for 44 years.

Uri and Christiana got married in Gibraltar two weeks after their engagement, but Christiana left Uri a year after she went to Israel.

Upcoming Friday Night Minyan Assignments

October 4

Alexander Laufer & Jennifer Siegel Laufer
 Dan & Ariel Lautman
 Michael & Iris Lav
 Adina & Refael Lav
 Mitchell Lazarus & Judith Shapiro
 Beverly Lehrer
 Elihu & Sheila Leifer
 Ken & Rachel Lemberg
 Stephen Lerner & Marilyn Sneiderman
 Shirley Levine
 Steve LeVine & Nuri Nurlybayeva
 Mark Lewis & Janet Nesse
 Dan Liebman & Lis Davis
 Kobi Lifshitz
 John & Lynne List
 John Lister

October 18 *

Sean & Jara MacDermott
 Oscar & Amy Mann
 Stephen Marcus & Renee Matalon
 Joseph & Paula Martin
 Robert Mathis & Tali Stopak-Mathis
 David & Carla Matusow

David & Diana Meyer
 Tobi McFarland
 David & Janice Mehler
 Alexander & Daniel Meitiv
 Ethan Merlin & Joelle Novey
 David & Dana Mermelstein
 Sarah & Rachel Meytin
 Josephine Mickelson
 Michael & Barbara Milton
 Emily & Adil Moiduddin
 Ken Morris & Terri Zall
 Eli & Laura Muller
 Jerry & Sharon Muller

October 25 *

Jonah & Stephanie Murdock
 Myron Murdock
 Beth Naftalin
 Ray & Adele Natter
 Sheridan & Dana Neimark
 Stephen Nelson & Leslie Goodman-Malamuth
 David Ogilvie & Miriam Lederer
 Lee & Hedy Ohringer
 Sarah Osborne
 Larry Paul & Joye Newman
 Perry & Fylis Peckham
 Daniel Pederson & Dafna Spear

Melissa Perera
 Adam & Jessica Perlmutter
 Jeff & Cynthia Peterman
 Michael Pitch & Elaine Weiss
 Joshua Pitlick & Janet Blank
 Lisa Plotkin
 Aron & Karen Primack

November 8 **

David & Laurel Rabin
 Glenn Rapoport
 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 Schecter
 Nancy Roth

* These dates are a week later than previously published for the members assigned.

** This date is two weeks later than previously published for the members assigned.

Himmelfarb School Mosaic Dedicated (continued)

sketch onto four boards, and the students then cooperatively painted each board according to the sketch.

The next step was to collect enough mosaic materials to cover the 8-foot by 3-foot boards. There was a donation box for tiles in the synagogue and area artists also donated a variety of glass and tiles. Fylis ran two concerts in her home to raise money for supplies. The Palisades Recorder Consort, with TI member, **Margie Odle**, donated their services. Fylis extends her thanks to them and to everyone who attended these events or gave a donation.

With the help of children as young as four all the way through teenagers and adults, the tiling was completed in several sessions. **Arturo Ho** was responsible for grouting and installing the entire mosaic. He did an amazing job and was a constant support and go-to person for advice for the entire process.

The parent volunteer who made this project happen was **Lisa Blumenthal**. Whether *schlepping* pieces of wood from Home Depot, or talking to a committee, Lisa was always there. All her hard work is much appreciated. Fylis also thanks

Eitan Gutin and **Marla Sevi** who worked closely with her and arranged for the participation of so many children from the Hebrew School.

Fylis happily report that this project is already considered a success as the students are eagerly pointing out their contributions to this unique piece of art. To quote **Azariah**, "This was an amazing process!"

TI'ers are urged to check out the stairwell just to the right of the Juniper Street entrance and *kvell*.

A Conversation About Teens at TI

In the week before and after Rosh Hashanah, a lively conversation developed on the TI listserve about the preparation of b'nei mitzvah and their subsequent participation in the synagogue. Some excerpts:

Sheryl Gross-Glaser: The *New York Times* has an article today on efforts to reinvigorate...b'nei mitzvah so that students and families do not drop out of Judaism right after. These are mostly, but not all, happening at Reform congregations. I wonder, however, if we throw the baby out with the bath water, so to speak, by emphasizing Tikun Olam at the expense of prayer and Torah study. [While emphasis on] Tikun Olam ... [is] very positive,...none of the efforts described involved anything to make prayer service or Torah more meaningful.

Ben Dreyfus: The standard American bar/bat mitzvah is ALL bathwater -- there is no "baby" to throw out. Learning to read (or memorize) words you don't understand is not prayer or Torah study (even if it shares the outward appearance).

David (Judy) Cohen: There are a lot of substantive "babies" in the "bathwater" at a TI bar/bat mitzvah.... Some musically-challenged kids do, ultimately, memorize the trope they chant, but most actually learn the various tropes...and can apply what they have learned to chant new material....Some are able to take on the challenge of learning new Torah aliyot and new haftarot in the years following their b'nei mitzvah. Similarly, kids who learn the Torah service and the musaf service are able to -- and often do -- lead those services again at various times after their b'nei mitzvah.

Finally...our kids become very comfortable with being on the bimah and its choreography, are not

intimidated by the proceedings, and learn to take on the responsibilities of an adult participant. These are no small accomplishments, even if only a first step in what one would hope would be a lifelong process of learning.

Dan Handwerker: ...TI does a good job helping kids benefit from their Bar/Bat Mitzvah training, and I generally like what I see of Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremonies at TI.

[W]hat...does [TI do] to welcome post b'nei mitzvah teens as leaders in the adult community? How do we turn 13-year-olds who do a good job leading part of a service into 16-year-olds with the experience needed to be great service leaders?

[At] ...my *aufruf*...[t]he previous year's Bar and Bat Mitzvah class ... [took] over the...[service]...Elizabeth and I looked at all of these 13- and 14-year-old kids, with skills we didn't have, and we said, "That's what we want for our kids!" We saw some of these same kids continue to use their new skills to benefit the congregation until they left for college...

...Why don't teens give *drashot* here? In my my six years here, I can think of one time that a teenager gave a Shabbat morning *drash*....In my seven years in Berkeley, I heard plenty of good *drashot* given by teenagers. That synagogue focused a large part of their b'nei mitzvah class on *parashah* study, *chevruta* learning, teaching children about what ought to go into a *drash*, and coaching on presentation....Those teen *drashot* were better than some adult *drashot* I've heard at TI...

....I'd love to see more teenaged *darshanim* here. I think it would send a clear message that we consider our teens as adult members of the community....[W]hat about a class geared towards 14- to 18-year-olds

(older adults welcome too) that culminates in several thoroughly pre-critiqued and well rehearsed teen *darshanim* every year?

Paula Flicker: Dan, [p]erhaps you are not aware of what at least some of the post-Bar/Bat mitzvah teens do related to their Jewish lives. There is continued religious school. We do have an active USY chapter. There are teens going to Jewish summer camps as campers or counselors. I do see teens leading the Torah service or Musaf. I see teens helping with caring for small children. We had two teens blow shofar on Rosh Hashanah. There are many ways to participate in Jewish life.

We're not talking about huge numbers of teens....[T]he levels or types of participation will vary from year to year. What percentage of the adults who attend Shabbat morning services more than once a month either lead services or give a *drash*? Leading part of the service or giving a *drash* is not for everyone....Yes, perhaps we could do more to encourage teens or help them participate more fully, but I think what is going on should be acknowledged and appreciated.

Carla Matusow: What a great discussion! FYI, [t]here are a few post-bar/bat mitzvah teens interested in leading services. We are working with Eitan to encourage them and make that happen.

Janet Nesse: We have considered many of these issues over the years, and the teen *drash* option generally received a resounding "NO". We do not encourage them even for b'nei mitzvah because they tend to be uninteresting to the congregation. As to Shacharit, these kids get up really early during the week and the idea of getting up nice and early on Saturday does not appeal. Torah reading is an

(Continued on page 13)

A Conversation About Teens at TI (continued)

alternative because it is finite and can be not too long, but someone needs to be responsible for the teen, help them select the *aliyah* and babysit them through the process the first dozen times they read. It is a labor-intensive process that requires a big personal commitment from an adult

Rachel Tichner: ...[T]he congregation is [not] uninterested in teenagers, but...feels that most teenagers are not yet sufficiently seasoned by life to be able to offer substantial insights into some of the very complicated situations described in the Torah....

How about directing the energy of our teens into social action activities? As a bonus for...[p]ublic [s]chool students, these activities might qualify for the minimum number of Student Service Learning hours required for high school graduation....Specific projects [might include] feeding people who are hungry (as well as preparing the food in advance), participating in Yachad home-repair events, [or] starting a Sukkah-building squad....

Sheryl Gross-Glaser: ...One issue is that there is burnout after the b'nei mitvah. Hurray! I got through that and now I can relax. That is natural and fine. For those who wish to continue with participation in leading services or giving a *drash*, it would be great to have a contact explicitly for that purpose, preferably someone the teens know well already.

For the other 95 percent, we need to treat them as we do the adults in our congregation; teenagers should be able to contribute to the Jewish community in a way that works for them...[and] makes it easy to continue after high school graduation. ...[T]hat might mean a joint Tikun Olam project or a Torah study group (whether adult led or not)

....The point is to keep teenagers feeling welcome and engaged on their terms.

Both of my daughters continued their TI/Shepherd Park tutoring through high school. They continued to feel welcome and engaged at TI....[T]hey [now] have different levels of participation than I would have predicted. [When I was a teenager]... there was literally not one post-13 year old who walked in my synagogue's doors once they were not forced to attend Hebrew school anymore....

Marcia Goldberg: The ritual committee does permit a short *drash* on Friday night before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Another option is for them to write a brief *drash* in their handout for Saturday morning.

Ben Dreyfus: That this factor is even considered is something that I appreciate about TI. At most synagogues, the bar/bat mitzvah takes precedence, without regard to whether any part of the service is interesting to the congregation.

Dan Handwerker: ... I agree that we shouldn't be turning the bar/bat mitzvah day into even more of an event by having kids regularly give *drashot*. That's why...I am asking why more teens aren't being trained and encouraged to give *drashot* during the 5+ post b'nei mitzvah years when they are still part of our congregation.

Lisa Trager: At both of my children's [b'nei mitzvah] the rabbi gave the... *drash* at our family's request. But... each child prepared a brief introduction to the Torah *parashah* focusing on a specific aspect, perhaps two-and-a-half pages, which was written after many study sessions with their tutors and a few meetings with Rabbi Seidel. ...[M]y daughter deliver[ed] hers to the

congregation prior to the Torah reading. It didn't take more than three or four minutes. [I remember] my son's was printed in the handout.

Bob Feron: ...[T]here's considerable wisdom in TI's current approach.... [While] B'nei Mitzvah...are generally NOT permitted to deliver a Saturday morning *drash*, ...they're given the option of doing so at the Friday evening service, to which many families invite their relatives and friends from out of town, sometimes with a special dinner for the family.

...[A]fter...attending almost three dozen B'nei Mitzvah...in a single year, when all of my daughter's classmates from JPDS turned 13, I gradually became convinced that most of those highly intelligent and well-educated adolescents had not yet developed analytical concepts or views that would truly be of interest to the entire congregation....I'm strongly opposed to...establishing a normative expectation that every Bar/Bat Mitzvah young adult should deliver a *drash*.

My favorite approach...[is] the one used at Adat Shalom, in Bethesda, where the Rabbi gave the *drash*, but before that...the parents and the child were each given...perhaps... three minutes...to say a few very carefully-crafted sentences to one another. These personal remarks, typically sprinkled with lots of humor, were often so moving, so caring, so imbued with loving respect, that the entire congregation was brought to tears....If we were to alter anything, this is what I would add.

Stan Dorn: I agree with Bob. If b'nei mitzvah kids gave the *drashot* on Shabbat morning, we would generally get much less out of the *drashot* than we do now. If an exceptional kid has a remarkably good *drash* that meets or exceeds

(Continued on page 14)

Library News

Michele Sumka

Great news! For the first time since I became librarian, I have **purchased new** books for the library! We have previously received many wonderful books as donations which we have shelved and entered into librarything.com. We have also culled duplicates and triplicates as well as many of the older books that have not circulated in a long time.

Now I can see more clearly what is in our collection and which books circulate most. I've gone over the responses to the questionnaire we

sent last year, spoken to some members about what kinds of books they would like to see in the library, and read dozens of reviews of new books.

Please let me know if there are general categories of books or specific titles you would like us to acquire.

Here are the recently purchased books:

Jewish Communal Life

Relational Judaism: Using the Power of Relationships to Transform the Jewish Community, by Ron Wolfson

Revolution of Jewish Spirit: How to Revive Ruakh in Your Spiritual Life, Transform Your Synagogue & Inspire Your Jewish Community, by Baruch HaLevi

Jewish Megatrends: Charting the Course of the American Jewish Future, by Sidney Schwarz

History

Israel: A History, by Anita Shapira

Holocaust Literature: A History and Guide, by David G. Roskies

The Taste of Ashes: The Afterlife of Totalitarianism in Eastern Europe, by Marci Shore

Against Violence Against Women: The Case for Gender as a Protected Class, by TI Member Rona Fields

Israeli Fiction

The Retrospective, by A.B. Yehoshua

Someone to Run With, by David Grossman

Life Cycle/Genealogy

A Field Guide to Visiting a Jewish Cemetery, by Joshua L. Segal

Young Adult Fiction

The Girl Who Circumnavigated Fairyland in a Ship of Her Own Making, by Catherynne Valente

The Enemy Has a Face, by Gloria D. Miklowitz

When the Hurricane Came, by Nechama Liss-Levinson

Children Fiction

Nosh, Schlep, Schluff: Babyiddish, by Laurel Snyder

What a Way to Start a New Year!: A Rosh Hashanah Story, by Jacqueline Jules

Engineer Ari and the Rosh Hashanah Ride, by Deborah Bodin Cohen

Gershon's Monster: A Story for the Jewish New Year, by Eric Kimmel

Teens at TI (continued)

usual TI levels, then I'd be fine with hearing [it]. But the current expectations are a better fit with maintaining a Shabbat morning community that adults will want to attend regularly, whether or not they know the b'nei mitzvah family.

Cynthia Peterman: I would like to add one more explanation...why children have been discouraged from preparing lengthy *drashot* for their b'nei mitzvah....TI is a place where we want and expect our members to take an active role in *davening* and reading from the Torah. In order for us to grow this learned community, we need to train children in the[se] skills...when they are young. By bar and bat mitzvah, they are demonstrating that they are ready to join the adults in the responsibility of leading the service....

I recall Rabbi Abramowitz telling me when I was principal of the religious school in the '80s that it was better for the student to spend time learning more *davening* or *leyning*, than writing and delivering a speech that would be given once. I thought that was good advice then and still seems to fit the culture of our community today.

New Member Package

TI's Summer/Fall Membership Package offers many benefits:

- half price dues for the first year
- free High Holiday tickets
- free religious school for first child and half price for additional children,
- two free Shabbat dinners at TI for the entire family.

Do you know someone who might be interested? Please tell them about TI.

Bat Mitzvah

My name is **Nava Himelhoch**. I am in the seventh grade at Charles E. Smith Jewish Day School. My hobbies include playing piano, gymnastics, and reading "Baby Blues," a cartoon that focuses on family life, in all its funny and sad and aggravating aspects.

I come from a large family, one of four children. Malka (15), Akiva (7) and Meirav (3) are my brothers and sisters, and I have two Siamese cats, Raja and Tejas, whom I adore. Although my birthday is in August, I chose to have my bat mitzvah now because I wanted to read *Parashat Lekh Lekha*. In second grade, at the Hebrew Academy, I learned this *Parashah* nearly by heart. I love the story of Abraham's journey away from home and Sarah's laughter when she finds out that she will have a baby as a very old woman.

One of my favorite things to do is to write, and I admire teenagers and young adults who have been able to publish a book. *To Kill A Mockingbird* is my favorite novel. After reading it last summer I decided to become a lawyer, like Atticus Finch.



October Highlights at Tifereth Israel

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| October 5 | Family Ruah Shabbat, 10:30 a.m., K'tongregation (K-2nd grade), Junior Congregation (3rd-5th grade), Balcony Babka (7th & 8th grade) Tot Shabbat (0 - Pre K), 11:10 a.m. |
| October 7, 14
21, 28 | Monday Learning
<i>Parashat HaShavuah</i>, 11 a.m.
Job Club, 1 p.m. |
| October 12 | Nava Himelhoch Bat Mitzvah |
| October 15 | Kol Nashim Book Club, at home of Pearl Schainker |
| October 17 | Gideon Amir, Biblical Dreams Course begins |
| October 19 | SHALEM, Eti Bardack, 1 p.m. |

Donations

Please note that this is a partial list. Due to the volume of generous donations before and during the Yomim Nora'im, we will have a more complete list in the next Menorah.

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In Honor of

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MARVIN CAPLAN SOCIAL ACTION FUND

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Donations (continued)

Yahrzeit Donations (continued)

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