



The Menorah

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Notes from the Rabbi: Ethan Seidel What I Did on My Sabbatical

Thanks so much for these wonderful last 3½ months of sabbatical! I figured you might like to know what I did between mid-November, and March 1st, so here goes:

Trips I Took

In late November, at the beginning of my sabbatical, I journeyed to the Isabella Friedman Retreat Center in Connecticut for a long weekend of silence at a Jewish meditation retreat. This was deeply renewing, and very helpful for my own meditation practice. And the food at this retreat center is great!

In mid-December, I flew to Boston for the annual convention of the Association of Jewish Studies. At this conference, I heard fascinating papers about a wide variety of

topics. Among the many great sessions I attended, were talks about:

- how the Babylonian Talmud was influenced by the surrounding Sassanian and Zoroastrian cultures.
- how those who choose to leave the Lubavitch community view themselves and their former community.



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President's Column: Jeff Davidson Recognizing Our “Servant Leaders”

Elizabeth Barrett Browning reminds us:

“Measure not the work
Until the day's out and the labour done,
Then bring your gauges.”

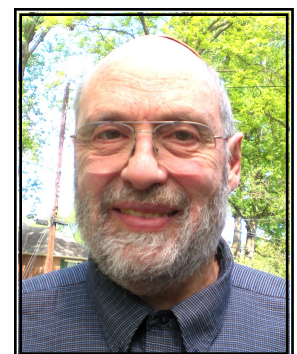
Now that Rabbi Seidel's sabbatical is finished, it is appropriate to bring out our gauges, not to measure the Rabbi's accomplishments during his sabbatical, but rather how we as a congregation worked during his absence. We did just fine.

An extraordinary group of volunteers worked very hard to keep our normal services operating and to make sure that our members' needs were met. I offer a special thank-you to TI's professional staff,

who worked beyond the norm in the Rabbi's absence. Thanks to **Jevera, Eitan, Sheri, Virginia** and **Marla**.

I will try to recognize the volunteers in this column. If I have inadvertently left anyone out, I offer my most sincere apologies. We owe a very large debt to our Ritual Vice President, **Wilhelmina**

(Continued on page 4)



Rabbi's Notes (continued)

- the historical politics of gelatin – approved and then disapproved by the Orthodox Union.
- the new English translation of the Mishnah project (our congregant Hayim Lapin is one of the leaders of this enormous endeavor).
- how family foundations and NGO's, in their sponsorship of Jewish programs for 20-somethings (e.g. Birthright, Avodah, service projects in New Orleans), are now the principal mediators of Jewish experience for this age group. Is this a good thing?

I spent almost a month in Israel. During the first two weeks, Rachel and I traveled around together. We spent

time in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, and Tzfat (where I bought myself a new tallit I plan to wear for the first time on my first day back).

It was wonderful being back in Israel, though at times I found it stressful driving our rented car around the country. After Rachel returned home, I drove down to Kibbutz Lotan, about an hour north of Eilat (thanks to Jessica Bell for connecting me to this kibbutz), and spent a week learning about permaculture (in preparation for TI's possibly starting an urban garden).

For my last three days in Israel, I hired Mark Novak's son Zack (a licensed tour guide) to lead me on hikes in the desert. We hit it off right away – he bakes bread, rides a unicycle and loves the outdoors. On the first day we climbed Har Sh'lomo (right outside of Eilat), and on the second day we took a long hike in the Ramon Crater.

These hikes were a little outside my comfort zone, which I both feared and hoped for. The last day we hiked around S'dei Boker, and did a few side trips (including an impromptu beer tasting at a microbrewery!) before I boarded my plane that night, exhausted and happy!

Books I Read

I read some good books, among them:

Sojourner Truth's America, an academic study of this Biblical-style American prophet of the Civil War period. On many levels I felt at a distance from her – she was born a slave, was devoutly Christian, and never learned to read or write. And yet, I found her life overwhelmingly inspiring: her physical and spiritual strength, her ability to change course with the changing needs of her community, her powerfully effective speaking style, her ability to pull out the exactly right Biblical text to support her incisive comments. She allowed her convictions to lead her in a way that most of us humans avoid.

Second Person Singular, a novel written by Sayed Kashua, a well-known Israeli Arab author. Among many things, it's about Arab life in Israel, especially successful Arabs in Jerusalem. Kashua is shrewdly critical of both Arab and Jew, in the best tradition of the novel. (Thanks to Shelly Heller for recommending this excellent book!).

The Guns of August, Barbara Tuchman's classic history of the lead-in to, and the first month of, World War I. (I think both Aviel Roshwald and Bernie Shleien recommended this one to me).

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It's Time to "Practice for Peace"

Claudine Schweber

Parents, does your child play a band (flute, oboe, bassoon, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, French horn, trombone, tuba) or string (violin, viola, cello, double bass) instrument? Would your child like to play fun music with other children under expert tutelage and help the world by doing social action in the process? Then "Practice for Peace" is for you!!

Seth Glabman, who has many years of experience as a teacher/composer/performer/ of music and has taught instrumental music at the elementary level for many years, is initiating two pilot groups.

He is looking for children who are at least in 4th grade and have begun studying a band or orchestral

instrument either at school or privately. The groups are also open to middle school, high school and college students, and to adults.

A serious commitment to practice is necessary. Interested? Please contact **Melissa Perera** at perera_melly@yahoo.com.

A Beginner's Guide to Jewish History

Are you afraid to admit you don't know the significance of the years 70 and 1492? Don't know Mendelssohn from Maimonides? Then this is the course for you! Beginning March 5, and continuing through April 9,

Cynthia Peterman will teach a six-session course on Jewish History on Wednesday evenings, from 6:45 to 8:45 p.m. The course will cover ancient Jewish history through Modern America.

The cost for all six sessions is \$90 for members, and \$120 for non-members.

For an additional \$7 you can also purchase a dinner -- cooked at TI!

Rabbi's Notes (continued)

The People of Forever Are Not Afraid, a novel by a young Israeli about the life of women in the Israeli Army. I found this book to be very raw and unsettling -- I had trouble sleeping after reading one passage towards the end. But I guess that's part of the point of literature. (Thanks again to Shelly Heller for the book suggestion).

Motivational Interviewing in Health Care, recommended to me by JSSA staff, was very helpful in explaining techniques of guiding (more effective than simply "directing") patients towards making changes. Though the book was written with health-care professionals in mind, there was also plenty here for me in my role as rabbinic counselor.

Collected Short Stories of Nathaniel Hawthorne, which I may not quite finish by the end of the sabbatical.

(Thanks to Dossie Rabin for recommending this book!).

Jewish Study Projects

In addition, I worked on two study projects of Jewish sources:

I studied and prepared a summary/translation of a large part of Rabbi Yisrael Meir Kagan's *Hafetz Hayim*, written in 1873. This fascinating and discomfiting book codifies (and enlarges) the laws of gossip. I plan to address some of these laws during upcoming *drashot*, and also teach them after Monday evening minyanim.

I've also been studying a number of passages from the Talmud about magic and superstition, in preparation for teaching a class in Hebrew High this spring. Solomon's battle with the King of the Demons, Ashmedai (a name taken from the

surrounding Persian culture, I learned, at that AJS conference!), the creation of a Golem, the reason we pour three times while washing, the danger of doing things in pairs, the proper construction of amulets -- weird stuff that I hope the kids will like (they asked for this subject!).

And I haven't even mentioned writing in my journal! What a blessing to have the time to think, and to record thoughts I may want to return to! All in all, this was a varied, fulfilling, and challenging break for me.

In conclusion, I want to thank my sabbatical committee for its gentle, but sure guidance. I'd like to thank the many volunteers who helped fill in for me while I was gone. And of course thanks again to TI as a whole for giving me this opportunity for reflection, learning, and renewal.

Rabbi Seidel

President's Column (continued)

Gottschalk, who coordinated much of our service needs while being new to her Board position. She was ably assisted by **Iris Lav**, who coordinated much of the Shabbat service and was responsible for arranging the *drashot*, among other duties.

The following people served as Rabbi for the Day and helped our Shabbat service run smoothly, introducing the Torah and Haftarah portions and assisting people on the Bimah:

Wilhelmina Gottschalk, Iris Lav, Joel Cohen, Carla Ellern, David Cohen, Marcia Goldberg, Howard White, Cynthia Peterman, Josh Furman, Eitan Gutin, Rabbi A. Nathan Abramowitz.

The following members and guests gave the *D'var Torah* during the Rabbi's sabbatical:

Rabbi Devorah Lynn, Bruce Berger, Josh Furman, Mark Hetfield, Howard Gleckman, Ralph Miller, Stan Dorn, Barbara White, Mark Berch, Hadar Susskind, Judy Tulchin, Howard White, Cynthia Peterman, Bill Galston, Greg Kauffman.

The following volunteers stepped up to lead the Erev Shabbat services:

Eitan Gutin, Jevera Temsky, Paul Bardack, Josh Furman, Yvonne Shashoua, Elizabeth Handwerker, Stefan Gottschalk, Dov Weitman, Stan Dorn, Barbara White, Joelle Novey, Ethan Merlin, Wilhelmina, Gottschalk, Simcha Kuritzky, Naimah Weinberg.

These congregants gave *drashlets* at those services:

Eitan Gutin, Judi Berland, Allan Tulchin, Howard White, Bob

Rovinsky, Gabriella Feron, Barbara White, Ben Dreyfus, Mira Diamond-Berman, Franca Brilliant, Carolivia Herron, Rich Kruger, Stan Dorn, Janet Nesse.

In addition, many others did other parts of the service, such as *leyn* Torah, that are needed to make our ritual life possible. TI members have continued to comfort the sick and bereaved and have reached out to those in the community who have needed help during this time. In keeping with our customs, I will keep these generous souls anonymous.

One last special thank-you goes to all those who designed and helped run the annual congregational retreat, under the leadership of **Jessica Weissman**.

We have recently read *Parashat Yitro*. It teaches us:

"You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a *kingdom of priests and a holy nation*" (Ex. 19: 4-6).

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks teaches us:

"Yet in what sense were Jews ever a kingdom of priests? The *cohanim* were an elite within the nation, members of the tribe of Levi, descendants of Aaron the first high priest. There never was a full democratisation of *keter kehunah*, the crown of priesthood.

"Faced with this problem, the commentators offer two solutions. The word *cohanim*, 'priests,' may mean 'princes' or 'leaders' (Rashi, Rashbam). Or it may mean

'servants' (Ibn Ezra, Ramban). But this is precisely the point. The Israelites were called on to be a nation of servant-leaders. They were the people called on, by virtue of the covenant, to accept responsibility not only for themselves and their families, but for the moral-spiritual state of the nation as a whole.

"This is the principle that later became known as the idea that *kol Yisrael arevin zeh ba-zeh*, 'All Israelites are responsible for one another.' Jews were the people who did not leave leadership to a single individual, however holy or exalted, or to an elite. They were the people every one of whom was expected to be both a prince and a servant, that is to say, every one of whom was called on to be a leader. Never was leadership more profoundly democratized."

It has been such a pleasure and honor to help our congregation of servant leaders during the rabbi's sabbatical. Thank you all for your contributions.

Talks on Jewish Films

The Library of Congress will host a series of five film talks, at noon, March 3-7, by the directors or producers, with clips from their films, each focused on Jewish or Israeli themes.

The series is free and open to the public. Tickets are not required. All programs will be held in the Library's James Madison Building, 101 Independence Ave. S.E.

New Members

Jared Garelick

Demography is destiny some say, particularly those lucky enough, like this reporter, to be married to demographers. For scriptural support, see the first few lines of the Book of Numbers, in *parashat B'Midbar*. TI old-timers might remember a time when there were relatively few children in the congregation. Today, as young Jewish families have moved back to the TI area, the Himmelfarb School is growing and lively, and attracting members.

If you know young Jewish families looking to put down roots in the region, suggest that they consider the TI environs, once again the most exciting Jewish community in the metropolitan area. If they're already here and have children, recommend that they check out TI and its exciting Hebrew School. You'll be doing them, and TI, a favor.

Adena Galinsky and Joel Kramer

Adena, originally from Philadelphia, and Joel, from Salt Lake City, met in Baltimore while both did graduate work at Johns Hopkins University. Adena earned a PhD in public health, and Joel a PhD in math. In Baltimore they attended Beth Am Synagogue, an historic in-town Conservative shul, and when they asked members there where they should go in Washington, they were told TI. (Reciprocally, TI'ers considering a move to Charm City should check out Beth Am.)

Adena works at the National Center for Health Statistics, a branch of the CDC in Hyattsville, where she works on the National Health Interview Survey. Joel continues to work in math. They and their year-old son, **Raphael**, live in Silver Spring. Joel enjoys games of various sorts, and Adena likes dancing and drumming.

Robyn Altman and Brendan Doherty

Robyn, an upstate New York native, grew up in Schenectady, and her mother is from Rochester, this reporter's home town. Her husband, Brendan, is from Connecticut. The two met in this area and then went to California for graduate studies. Robyn received an MBA from Stanford, and Brendan got a PhD in Political Science at Berkeley.

Robyn works in the education division of Discovery Communications, which delivers educational content to schools. Brendan is an associate professor of political science at the United States Naval Academy. They live in Chevy Chase with their two children, **Eva**, age 6, and **Asa**, 3. The family was attracted to TI primarily by its Hebrew School, impressed by a discussion with Lifelong

Learning Director Eitan Gutin, as well as by a chance meeting with members Jennifer and Josh Kefer. That makes the Kefers TI Magnet *Members* of the month. Robyn and Brendan enjoy running and travel.

Michael New and Linda Turnowski

Michael and Linda both grew up in New York City, in different boroughs, and attended competing high schools: Bronx Science (he) and Stuyvesant (she). They met at Columbia University (still New York) where Linda was an undergraduate and Michael in graduate school, eventually earning a PhD in chemical physics.

Michael now works at NASA headquarters, helping to manage science programs. Linda, a professional copy editor (don't ask her about romance novels), is currently occupied as a stay-at-home mom. Their daughter, **Isabella** (Izzy to those who know her), age 6, is in the same dynamic Hebrew School class as **Eva** (see above). Michael and Linda were also attracted to TI by the school, making the Himmelfarb School the TI Magnet *Program* of the Month.

Welcome to all of this month's featured New Members!

Funeral Practices Committee Always On-Call

Chaverim of the Funeral Practices Committee are on call to provide counsel and services to synagogue members and their dependents.

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 January 13, 2014

Attending: Larry Baizer, Sharon Brown, Susan Catler, Joel Cohen, Jeff Davidson, Joe Davidson, Varda Fink, Wilhelmina Gottschalk, Ariel Brandt Lautman, Stephanie Roodman Murdock, Ray Natter, Andrew Reamer, Morris Rodenstein, Vivian Seidner, Ruth Shapiro, Daniel Turner, Mark Verschell, Chris Zeilinger.

Excused: Jeffrey Colman, Margie Odle, Cynthia Peterman, Debbie Pomerance, Howard Riker.

Absent: Joanne Hovis, Lisa Goldberg.

Staff: Jevera Temsky, Eitan Gutin.

Guests: Rabbi Devorah Lynn, Carla Ellern.

Welcome and D'var Torah: Rabbi Devorah Lynn spoke on humility.

President's Report: Jeff Davidson reported on the FTC Decision on Funeral Homes and Next Steps. The FTC has issued a decision on the proposed acquisition by SCI of Stuart, which is the parent company of Hines Rinaldi, the current funeral home with which the Jewish funeral practices committees in the area have contracted.

The decision requires SCI to divest Sagel, but not Hines Rinaldi. As a result, the community is looking at a joint

Jewish/Muslim funeral home contract. There is an option to renew the Hines Rinaldi contract, which seems to be the best option in the short run.

Membership Report: Ruth Shapiro informed the Board that there are two new member families: Gabe & Ruth Tabak, and Joshua & Dinah Berch. There will be a new member Shabbat on February 15, 2014.

Executive Director's Report: Jevera Temsky reported that the synagogue is running well during the Rabbi's sabbatical. Wilhelmina Gottschalk, Ritual Vice President, is doing a lot of work, as is President Jeff Davidson.

The office got new computers. ShulCloud, the synagogue's new data management program, is in the Beta testing phase. Louise Kelley is working part-time in the office. Letters for members to use to document tax deductible contributions will go out soon.

Fabrangen and Ohev Sholem have experienced pickpocketing and have had things stolen from unlocked offices. The alleged thief is 5'7", with dark skin, and slender. The person seemed very confident and at ease in services at Ohev.

Kaizen Karate will offer a free training session this Sunday from 5 to 6 p.m. on self-awareness and self-defense. It was suggested that a sign be put on the

synagogue door alerting people to the recent pickpocketing. Also, someone in the bat mitzvah class had her car broken into a few blocks from here.

Storm Water Runoff Project: Carla Ellern explained how runoff threatens the health of the Chesapeake Bay. TI has received a \$65,635 grant from the EPA via the DC government. There were in-kind contributions from TI in the amount of \$23,630.

We are using LID-GI technology to reduce storm water runoff at TI. We are also educating congregants about what they can do at home. And we are going to share our results with other congregations.

We will have three types of permeable paving in the alley which allows water to go 18 inches underground. We will be working with Solar Gardens. The District gave us \$17,000 more in funds for cost overruns, and we will raise \$7,000 for plants.

There will be a rain garden which absorbs about 30% more water than a standard lawn. The water will go through an infiltration planter. Then the water will overflow to a bio-swale.

The accessible ramp which is part of this project will cost \$9,500 and the temporary ramp rental will be about \$1,000. The project will have signage acknowledging the funders. Carla Ellern will put the

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Adult Education

Jessica Weissman

Last month featured very different adult education programs.

Mark Tyler Nobleman, author of *Boys of Steel: The Creators of Superman*, entertained a group with tales of the Jewish roots of Superman and other superheroes. Audience members from 8 to nearly 80 years old laughed and learned -- and enjoyed egg creams and other treats from Roz' Soda Fountain.

On a more serious note, the TI Big Read focused on Letty Cottin

Pogrebin's *How to be a Friend to a Friend Who's Sick*. In an after-Kiddush discussion TI'ers shared experiences, mulled over Pogrebin's stories and recommendations, and learned about how community members can help each other through TI's Lotsa Helping Hands program.

To receive a list of the 10 recommendations, or if you have suggestions for future Big Read books, please contact Jessica Weissman, chair of the Adult Education Committee.

Family Ruach Shabbat Saturday, March 1

10:30 a.m., K'tongregation
(K-2nd grade)

10:30 a.m., Jr. Congregation
(3rd-5th grade)

10:30 a.m., Balcony Babka
(7th & 8th grade)

11:10 a.m., Tot Shabbat
(0 - Pre K)

Board Meeting Summary (continued)

presentation she made to the Board on the TI website. In addition she will prepare a page for the website on "How to make a rain garden."

Ruth Fellowship and the SNAP Project: Deena Dugan and Tobi McFarland told the Board how JUFJ and the Jewish Community Relations Council got a grant to work on poverty issues. Two people from each synagogue that agreed to participate in the Ruth Fellowship are working on this project.

The goal is to have a project for each congregation. The first year was spent studying poverty. Deena explained that during the summer, anyone under 18 can get breakfast and lunch, at DC sponsored sites.

DC has had trouble getting the word out so we will help with that. We will also help with the programming at one of the sites of the meals. There is a small grant to pay for equipment.

There is a kickoff program -- called the SNAP challenge -- whereby people agree to live on the Food Stamp allowance for a week. This will start on March 1. There will be a dinner using the SNAP challenge allowance -- about \$2.10/person/meal.

There is a hope that people will donate the money that they would have spent on food for a week. Concurrently, the Hebrew school will also study the SNAP challenge.

New Business, Good and Welfare: The Men's Club and

Kol Nashim had a successful game night with over 70 people. Brenda Footer has been awarded a fellowship through JTS through the Jewish Early Childhood Leadership Institute.

There have been two successful movie nights. The next movie is a documentary on Sholem Aleichem.

The last movie is *Footnote*. Christmas dinner was a great success. It was featured in *The Washington Post* and on WPFW.

On February 8, author Mike Tyler Nobleman will speak about the Jewish connections to the *Superman* and *Batman* comics.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50.

Lifelong Learning

Eitan Gutin

Himmelfarb and Chai Happenings

This month we would like to shine the spotlight on the **Daled Class**, led by Morah **Hagit Leibowitz** and classroom aide **Ari Eckmann**.

At the request of class parents this year's Daled curriculum includes more of an emphasis on Modern Hebrew than in the past. As part of this new emphasis, the students are all working with their parents on Hebrew projects.

Each student has chosen a favorite topic and been provided, in turn, with a glossary of Hebrew words related to the topic. As we near the end of the school year the students will have a chance to present their completed projects and demonstrate the new Hebrew words they learned to the students and parents of the school.

Himmelfarb 2.0

Get ready for the first fruits of **Himmelfarb 2.0**. As you may recall, this project will refurbish TI's classroom floor by replacing all the furniture and installing up-to-date technology in each space. We recently ordered the first set of desks, tables, and chairs. We expect to install this furniture in rooms 1 and 2 (at the top of the front stairs) by March 10.

All are welcome to try out the new furniture. Please consider donating so that we can continue to improve our learning spaces for the entire community.

Junior Chai

Pretty soon we expect to catch the students of Jr. Chai (7th and 8th)

clowning around -- and their teacher will be encouraging them! Inspired by their second-semester topic of *Tzedakah*, the Jr. Chai students requested a chance to get trained in how to be a Mitzvah Clown.

We plan to extend the training to all of our middle schoolers through our Kadima program. More information will be available soon.

The same class will be making a special trip to the US Holocaust Memorial Museum as the concluding piece to their first-semester study of the Holocaust. Cynthia Peterman will guide our students through the museum on Sunday, March 30.

Youth Groups

Tzedakah Dinner

Congratulations to **TI USY** on the success of the third annual Tzedakah Dinner. Nine USY'ers and one Kadimanik joined Roz in the kitchen to cook a sumptuous feast (See photo on next page).

Two nights later, six USY'ers and three Kadimaniks provided table service for 80 guests. In the end a lot of fun was had, a lot of great food was consumed, and **more than \$1400 was pledged** to the USY Tikun Olam Tzedakah Fund.

A hearty "Todah Rabbah" goes to USY Advisor **Ari Eckmann**, Kadima Advisor **Amanda Rudman**, **Dione Pereira** for assisting with the cooking, **Steve Ross**, and to the "Head Honcho," **Roz Kram**, for letting us take over her kitchen for a few hours. Please wish a congratulations to all the USY'ers and Kadimaniks who were involved

in the cooking and/or serving if you see them around the community:

Bella Alterman (9th)
Chaya Blonder (8th)
Eli Cohen (12th)
Adam FIngerhut (11th)
Ethan Fingerhut (7th)
Jordan Fingerhut (12th)
Hannah Garelick (10th)
Max Heimowitz (7th)
Iliana Jaime (10th)
Esther Kimelman-Block (9th)
Adam Kritz (9th)
Solomon Kritz (11th)
Rafi Pederson (7th)
Yoni Pederson (10th)
Gabi Pereira-Feron (11th)
Aaron Shulman-Englander (9th)

Luther Place

Kadima will also be mixing food and *Tzedakah* when they cook for and serve at Luther Place on Sunday, March 9. All TI 6th-8th graders are welcome!

Family Programs

TI's annual teen-run **Purim Carnival** will be on Purim Day, March 16, from 12:15 to 3:00 p.m.

We are very proud of the home-made nature of our carnival. Children of all ages can play all afternoon, have a great pizza lunch (complete with *hamantaschen*), and go home with some fabulous prizes.

Save the Date for our third Family Service of the year. The service will take place after Pesach on Shabbat Morning, **May 3**. Sign-up information will come out in the second week of this month.

Kol Nashim

Margie Odle



Mingling and Mimosas

Kol Nashim had a very successful Mingling and Mimosas brunch on Sunday February 23. Nearly 40 current and potential KN members shared great food, drink, and conversation. We also brainstormed some programming ideas for the coming year, including the idea of "getting educated" about a number of women's issues that we might support as individuals or as a group.

For example, there are many world-wide and local micro-financing initiatives that provide women with a means to make a living. Further, there are initiatives that target specific women's health issues that are often ignored or underfunded in emerging countries.

Closer to home, we discussed some TI projects that would benefit from KN support. The KN board will bring these ideas, along with others that have been offered, to our program planning meetings that are taking place over the next few months.

TI's Women Rabbis

The next in our series "TI's Women Rabbi's" will take place on Sunday morning, March 23, at 10:15 a.m., in the Mollie L. Berch Library in the Emsellem Room. Rabbi **Jane Berman** will be the speaker.

She will explore through Talmudic text the healing dynamic between patient and visitor. We will have an opportunity to discuss our own experience of illness and visiting the sick.

Book Club

The TI book club met in February and had a lively discussion of Ariel Sabar's *My Father's Paradise*. In addition, the group chose the March and May books (April is being skipped because of Pesach):

March 18, Bernard Malamud's *The Magic Barrel*. This a classic collection of short stories from one of the outstanding Jewish writers who

came to prominence in the middle of the 20th century. It is available in the Montgomery County and DC libraries, in paperback, and in electronic format.

May 20, Matti Friedman's *The Aleppo Codex*. This is part history, part mystery and all fascinating. *Salon* calls it "the bizarre history of a precious book".

Board Meetings

The KN Board meets the third Wednesday (formerly Monday) of each month at 7:30 p.m. at TI. We encourage anyone interested in participating in KN planning to contact one of the current board members and/or come to the monthly meeting.



USY'ers prepare food for February 21 Friday night Tzedakah Dinner

Nayes un Mekhayes for TI'ers

Barbara Raimondo

Skiing

In late January, **Alan Landay** went on a week-long ski trip to Crested Butte, Colorado with the Columbia Ski Club. Crested Butte is a small town and one of the friendliest places on the planet, with very good restaurants and beautiful weather (what they call "blue bird" days), so what could be bad?

Alas, there was no snow -- for fresh "powder," as ski bums call it -- while they were there. They had some good snow a week or so before they got there; and, of course, a big storm hit two or three days after they left. Isn't that always the way.

Running

Paul Bardack is throwing his *kippah* into the ring and running for the Maryland State House of Delegates from District 19 (which includes Kemp Mill). The Democratic Primary is June 24.

Paul told your correspondent that he's running on a platform that includes calls for smarter state job creation and training programs -- as well as more *fleishig* kiddush lunches -- and that he'd welcome the involvement of his friends at TI.

David Levy has been appointed by Governor O'Malley to the Maryland Commission on Child Custody Determinations.

And **Claudine Schweber** will be teaching a short course about crisis management in southern France, at ESC-Pau (ecole superiere de commerce) at the end of March. Your faithful columnist wants to know: Does southern France ever *have* a crisis?

Traipsing

While we were watching the thermometer, wondering "How low will it go?," **Myrna Goldman** visited Australia from mid- to late-January, travelling, as usual, with her sister, **Harriet Ainbinder**. They went to Melbourne, Adelaide, Alice Springs, Ayers Rock, Port Douglas, and Sydney. The heat was unbelievable in Melbourne, and it was very hot and humid in the Port Douglas area near the rain forest. However, they persevered and enjoyed the tour and the group.

Myrna and Harriet attended Friday night services in Melbourne and had Shabbat dinner with the rabbi. They also visited the Jewish Museums in Melbourne and Sydney. If you ever want a small stuffed koala with a *kippah* or an aborigine print *kippah*, this is where to get it.

Finally, they had a tour of the Great Synagogue in Sydney, which has been restored and is quite beautiful. Then it was back to suffer in the cold with the rest of us!

Sad News

Claudine Schweber's uncle, **Fred Gordon** (originally Alfred Goldfischer), died recently in Fort Lee, NJ. He was 84 years old and had been ill for some time. In 1946, at age 17 he came to the USA from Switzerland, where he and his sister, **Vera**, had escaped during WWII. He later joined the U.S. military and was sent as an interpreter to Germany -- instead of Korea -- due to his "international experience"!

Former member, **Selma Abramson Shinberg**, widow of the late **Philip Shinberg** and mother of **Stacy Shinberg Benjamin**, **Cheryl Astran**, and **Greg Shinberg**, died in January at age 90. She was buried at King David Cemetery. May the families be comforted among those who mourn for Zion and Jerusalem.

And now for the meaning of last month's word, *succinct*: "marked by compact precise expression without wasted words" (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 about for next time with celerity to baraimondo@gmail.com, with "Nayes un Mekhayes" in the heading, or to P.O. Box 466, Washington Grove, MD 20880. This brings to a close this edition of Nayes un Mekhayes for TI'ers.

The Spring Fling & Auction at Tifereth Israel May 4, 2014

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Kosher Wine, Craft Beer and Local Spirit Tastings

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We need help soliciting donations, creating relationships with sponsors and community partners, set-up and other functions.

To volunteer, contact

SpringFling2014@Tifereth-Israel.org



Jennifer and Josh Kefer hosted a Havdallah Potluck on January 25, attended by 50 people.
Esther and Gene Herman will host the next Havdallah Potluck at 6:00 p.m. on March 8.

Jews and IQ

Frank Solomon

"In Hungary in 1904, Jewish families owned 37.5 percent of arable land. By 1910, although Jews comprised only 0.1 percent of agricultural laborers and 7.3 percent of industrial workers, they counted 50.6 percent of Hungary's lawyers, 53 percent of its commercial businessmen, 59.9 percent of Hungary's doctors and 80 percent of its financiers." (From *The Making of the Atomic Bombs* by Richard Rhodes).

Rhodes' observation of Hungarian Jews' dominance in science, law, finance and medicine in the early 20th century has played out in almost every nation to which Jews moved. This has led to professional success and economic prosperity as well as anti-Semitism, with accusations that Jews "control" everything in everything they do and in every country they live.

Given that Jews comprise a mere 18/100 of 1 percent of the world's population (13 million of 7 billion) and that 99.8 percent of the world is non-Jewish, the list of Jews' accomplishments is impressive. Jews won 160 of the 660 Nobel prizes awarded between 1901 and 1990, more than any other ethnicity, and 40 times more than should be expected based upon population statistics.

Do Jews Have a Higher IQ?

This spectacular success has led many scholars to wonder whether Jews have higher intelligence than other ethnic groups. In "Natural History of Ashkenazi Intelligence," published in 2005 in the *Journal of Biosocial Science*, G. Cochran, J. Hardy and H. Harpending maintained that Ashkenazi Jews as a group inherit higher verbal and mathematical intelligence, but lower spatial intelligence, than other ethnic groups, because of inherited

diseases and peculiar economic conditions in medieval Europe.

Kevin B. MacDonald suggested in a series of books that Judaism is a "group evolutionary strategy" to enhance the ability of Ashkenazi Jews to out-compete non-Jews for resources. He questioned the existence of Jews' superior genetic traits, including above-average verbal intelligence and a strong tendency toward collectivist behavior.

Culture, Not Genes

Other researchers suggest that Jews have higher intelligence not because of superior genes but because Jewish culture promotes cultivation of intellectual talents. These scholars argue that after the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE, Jewish culture replaced its emphasis on ritual with an emphasis on study and scholarship.

Unlike the surrounding cultures, most Jews, even farmers, were taught to read and write in childhood. Talmudic scholarship became a leading key to social status. The researchers argue that the Talmudic tradition might have made the Jews well suited for financial and managerial occupations at a time when these occupations provided new opportunities.

Some cultural explanation proponents also advanced "other culture" theories: Since Jews were a minority group in most places they lived, they always helped fellow Jews preserve their position and their holdings; since Jews were marginalized by pogroms and discrimination, they had to put in more effort to survive and excel; the encounter with Islam forced Jews to strengthen the literacy revolution that had taken root centuries earlier and made it more challenging for Jews to

integrate in Arab society; and since Ashkenazi Jewish women would only have children with Jewish males who had high status or wealth, male Jews strived to excel.

Robert Lindsay, the independent leftist journalist and follower of liberation theology, believes that cultural "selection" accounts for the higher IQ that many people attribute to Jews. In his blog "Beyond Highbrow," Lindsay said "When Ashkenazim went to Europe, Talmudic Judaism unfolded around 1,000 CE or so, and in order to be a Jew, a man had to read the Talmud and the Torah in full and study all the time. "That's hard to do, and a lot of men couldn't hack it. If you could not hack it, you left the community and converted to Christianity. The only ones that stayed were the smart ones."

Religious Literacy

Maristella Botticini and Zvi Eckstein, two economic historians who teach in Italy and Israel, voiced their explanation of Jewish economic success in their 2013 book, *Jewish Literacy as the Road to Riches: the Chosen Path of the 'Chosen Jew'*. They steered clear of the genetic and cultural theories and focused on "religious literacy"—purely for religious motives — after 70 CE.

They argued that Torah study — without conscious design that it might bring other benefits — endowed Jews with other skills and assets, including general literacy, the ability to understand texts, analytical reasoning, mobility and networking abilities. Centuries later, these skills would become the engine that propelled Jews into occupations that require high skills and specializations, such as law,

(Continued on page 13)

TI Full Moon Hike

John List

I hope you had the chance to gaze at the full moon between Adar 14-16. It was beautiful.

The TI Full Moon Hike was on Adar 17 (February 17), and the clouds had moved in by evening. However, five of us set off into Rock Creek Park in

28-degree weather. The snowy woods were a peaceful place to be.

At the half-way point we all sampled delicious chocolate treats. Three of us, **John** and **Lynne List** and **Susan Morse**, got to try out some useful gear for snowy and icy trails--

crampons. Susan had the easy slip-on hiker type by Yaktrak, reasonably priced. **Gabe** and **Ruth Tabak** also participated in the hike.

Watch for notice of the next hike and by the time it gets organized, it will be warmer.

Jews and IQ (continued)

medicine, science, trade and finance. Botticini and Eckstein say that 2,000 years ago, most Jews were illiterate farmers like the rest of the population where they lived, whether it was Southern Europe, North Africa, Mesopotamia, or Asia Minor. After 70 CE, with the destruction of the Second Temple, Judaism became a religion focused on every member of the community reading and studying the Torah.

Jews Sent Children to School

Judaism was the only religion at that time—and for many centuries after—that required families to send their children to school or the synagogue, from age 6 or 8, to learn to read the Torah. That was a revolutionary practice in a primarily agrarian and illiterate world where a farmer needed the physical strength of his children with his farm work.

Jewish Literacy as the Road to Riches may be better remembered for what the writers reject as explanations for the economic success of Jews than for its “religious literacy” explanation.

The authors reject the argument that Jews invested in literacy and education because they were a persecuted minority, since in Israel, where Judaism’s transformation into

a literate religion began 2,000 years ago, Jews were the majority of the population.

Moreover, the authors note, in the first millennium, there were other persecuted minorities, such as the Samaritans, the Druse and the Christians. None of them required their adherents to educate their children and their families.

In modern times, Gypsies have been a persecuted minority and the Palestinians, are widely considered a persecuted minority even though they constitute a majority where they live, but neither people has invested in education and literacy.

Botticini and Eckstein point out that Jews remained mostly farmers for seven or eight centuries after they became literate. Not until the Umayyad and Abbasid Muslim rulers established a vast empire stretching from Spain to India did commercial expansion and urbanization create a huge demand for professions that required literacy, education, mobility and networking abilities as well as contract-enforcement institutions.

Thus Jews found themselves *accidentally* propelled into economic opportunities because of their religious literacy.

Askenazi and Sephardic Jews

Despite all the various scholarly theories—cultural, genetic or accidental—on possible higher Jewish IQ, few attempts have been made to explain the inequality between Ashkenazi and Sephardic IQ.

In general, Sephardic Jews seemed to stay within trade and finance, while Ashkenazi Jews tended to move into other professions, such as science, law, academics and medicine, while staying financially prosperous.

Moreover, few authors have attempted to explain why the Jewish population has produced more geeks and fewer “Greeks”—adventurous, individualistic men of action (and war) that are the common ideals of American society.

Fewer tried to explain why Jewish women tend to prefer brains whereas women in the general society favor good looks, monosyllables, tattoos, athleticism, Harleys, pickup trucks, gang membership, rims, fancy sneakers, grills, Cadillacs, or a rap label contract.

One possible explanation: most of these qualities do not require high IQ or literacy.

Art Announcements

Audrey Smith

"For lo the winter is (almost) passed ..." and it's time to take up some new projects and revitalize some old proposals of the Art Committee. One of our most successful shows -- Member's Photographs -- will be taken down this month. Many, many thanks to those who contributed such excellent art. We will issue an announcement when these works can be retrieved.

We are convinced that there is more members' art "out there" and are therefore planning the next show for the Cherner -- Art on Jewish Themes by Jewish Artists from TI Members' Collections. It will be mounted before the Spring Fling. Ideally, these loans would be for a six-month period, with a new show planned for after the

High Holidays. If this proves unreasonable, we could arrange for a shorter period of time, perhaps with some rotation.

Over the past few years, the Art Committee, with the help of **Carl Bergman** (then on the House Committee), prepared a plan for exterior signage for TI, because people find it hard to locate us precisely. It would also aesthetically and permanently proclaim our presence on both 16th and Juniper Streets. Bids were secured and came in reasonably at \$8,000 to \$15,000. The committee selected contractors and submitted its recommendations to the Board in July 2013. The Board approved the project, but funds have not yet been provided.

Another long-time interest of the Art Committee is some modification to the Ark to make the Torah scrolls easier to handle and to facilitate the display of our beautiful silver liturgical adornments. Until these modifications can be made, we recommend that at least our silver breastplates be placed on the mantles of the scrolls not immediately in use (all of the mantles were designed to use the breastplates).

The Art Committee -- **Cindy Weitz**, **Laura Schiavo**, **Bernie Shleien**, **Earl Dotter** (our newest member) and I -- would welcome any comments or suggestions that would aid in our work to enrich the beauty of Tifereth Israel.

March Highlights at Tifereth Israel

March 1	SHALEM, "The SNAP Program and the SNAP Challenge"
March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31	Monday Learn & Lunch <i>Parashat HaShavuah</i> , 11 a.m.; Lunch 12 noon Monday Night Minyan, 7:30 p.m.
March 8	Havdallah Potluck, home of Gene and Esther Herman, 6:00 p.m.
March 18	Kol Nashim Book Club, home of Varda Fink, 7:30 p.m.
March 22	SHALEM, David Cohen, "Looking Back & Looking Ahead"
March 23	Rabbi Jane Berman, Healing Between Patient and Visitor, 10:15 a.m.
March 30	Movie Night, <i>The Jazz Singer</i>, 7:30 p.m.

Upcoming Friday Night Minyan Assignments

March 7

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
 Jacob & Elaine Mondschein
 Ken Morris & Terri Zall
 Eli & Laura Muller
 Jerry & Sharon Muller

March 14

Jonah & Stephanie Murdock
 Myron Murdock
 Beth Naftalin
 Ray & Adele Natter
 Sheridan & Dana Neimark
 Michael H. New & Linda Turnowski
 Stephen Nelson & Leslie Goodman-Malamuth
 David Ogilvie & Miriam Lederer
 Lee & Hedy Ohringer
 Sarah Osborne
 Larry Paul & Joye Newman
 Perry & Fylis Peck ham
 Daniel Pederson & Dafna Spear
 David Pelzer & Ellie Tiemann
 Melissa Perera
 Adam & Jessica Perlmutter
 Jeff & Cynthia Peterman
 Michael Pitch & Elaine Weiss

Joshua Pitlick & Janet Blank
 Lisa Plotkin

March 21

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 Schechter
 Nancy Roth
 Marc Rothenberg & Ivy Baer

March 28

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

April 4

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
 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

April 11

Jonathan Strum
 Marc Suddleson & Molly Surden
 Howard & Michele Sumka
 Gabe & Ruth Tabak
 JT & Naomi Taransky
 Kassahu Teffera & Melke Mengiste
 Jevera Temsky
 Neil & Rachel Tickner
 Michael Tilchin & Linda Greer
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