

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES AND EVENTS

Friday, Nov 30 8:15 pm Shabbat Eve Service
And Oneg Shabbat

Sunday, Dec 9 10:00 am Chanukah Party

Friday, Dec 14 7-7:45pm Family Shabbat Service
With Eli Rubenstein

Friday, Dec 28 8:15 pm Shabbat Eve Service
And Oneg Shabbat

Saturday, January 12 10:00 am Shabbat Service and
Bar Mitzvah of Benjamin,
Son of Evelyn Koch and
Moty Gutman

Friday, January 18 7-7:45 Family Shabbat Service
With Eli Rubenstein

Saturday, January 19 10:00 am Shabbat Service and
Bar Mitzvah of Sam
Goodis, son of Judy
Plotkin and David Goodis

Friday, January 25 8:15 pm Shabbat Eve Service
And Oneg Shabbat

Saturday, January 26 10:00 am Bar Mitzvah of Russel,
son of Karen Weinstein
and Jason Hanson

Make a note in your new 2008 Calendars:

February 9, 2008 6.30pm

Family Shabbat Dinner & Service, accompanied by
the Habonim Guitar Summit.

WANTED:

Guitarists for the Habonim Guitar Summit, which will accompany the service after the potluck dinner on Feb 9, 2008. Please email Tom Bellman at tom@bellman.ca or phone him at (416) 535-6664 if you are interested. If you have done so on a previous occasion, I haven't forgotten you, but it might be a good idea to reaffirm your interest. This will involve at least one rehearsal. Any level of guitarist is welcome, as long as you have a guitar.

TO PARENTS OF CHILDREN AT THE HABONIM RELIGIOUS SCHOOL:

We need volunteers to participate in a parents' committee. The school needs your involvement to make it the best it can be. Make a difference in your child's Jewish education and get involved! Please contact Tom Bellman at tom@bellman.ca or (416) 535-6664.

CHARITABLE GIVING AND CONGREGATION HABONIM

Today more than ever, there is an opportunity for you to make a difference to a variety of worthy charitable causes. The proverbial four questions in this case are:

Will you give?
How much will you give?
When will you give?
Who will you give to?

Last month at a seminar at Habonim entitled "Jewish Estate Planning", Eli told a story about Bluma Appel – a major supporter of the arts, who passed away earlier this year. It turns out that one of her favourite charities supported comedians in need. When asked why she supported this cause, she said that no one was helping them, and she knew that she could make a real difference to their lives and their art. In her case, she knew that she wanted to give now, and wanted to help a cause where it would have the most impact.

Why people give is a very personal process. Many Jews feel a special cultural connection to charity and to Tikkun Olam – Repairing the World. Some people give to help them leave a legacy to a group that they were close to. Others make a donation to honour a friend or relative.

Avrum had an interesting approach that he also discussed at the seminar. He suggested that some people he knows view the community as an additional child. When they set up their Will, if they have 3 children, they will then split their estate in four. Each child would receive one quarter, and the community would receive the other quarter.

One area of the Jewish community where an individual or family could have a significant impact is right here at Congregation Habonim. The need is there for support to help fund building upgrades. The need is

there to sponsor an education/speaker series. The need is there to help secure Habonim's place as a leader in humanistic Judaism in the Greater Toronto Area.

Like Bluma Appel, helping the comedians because she could make a big difference, Habonim is looking for a few members to step up and make that kind of difference.

As a prime example, Eli, Avrum and several members of the congregation have great ideas for speakers and events that would really enhance the Habonim experience. Unfortunately, because of the cost of these events, we have only been able to have them on a sporadic basis. There is a great opportunity for a Habonim family to sponsor a speaker series. This can be a series for a year, or an ongoing legacy. It can be named after the family or perhaps in honour of a loved one who was committed to Habonim.

There are many other ways to help. A simple and tax-effective way to help would be to donate shares of companies. BCE is a prime example of a company where many holders will face a large capital gains tax bill – unless they choose to donate the shares.

All donations of \$180 or more will be announced in the Bulletin.

If you would like to consider discussing possible donations with Habonim, please call me at 416-733-3292. We can discuss the best charitable options. Of course, feel free to talk directly to Eli, Avrum, or Samantha as well.

We will discuss charitable giving strategies further in future issues.

Ted Rechtshaffen – Treasurer Habonim

HABONIM: THE FIFTH CHILD!

By Avrum Rosensweig

I walked past my memories, memories of singing,
praying, chanting, Of running, shouting, laughing,
Respectfully dressed in my young boy's finest, Coming
and going in the House of God. (The Synagogue of
Laudenbach, A poem by Simon Schwarzchild)

People seem to be very proud when they say they are a member of Congregation Habonim. I hear it in their voices when I walk through the Shabbat, High Holidays and Bar/Bat Mitzvot crowds.

I understand that pride because I have it as well. I too recognize the uniqueness of our place of worship; the

warmth exuded by leadership and membership; and the level of intellect and quality of services and programming we offer.

Habonim is a humble place; a modest environment with a soft nature. Once Eli said in a Shabbat speech one of his own particular goals over the years has been to ensure there is peace within our walls – that dissension is not a pillar on which the shul teeters. He/we have succeeded at accomplishing this objective. We are indeed a gentle congregation.

It is not enough to be proud, however. We must also be conscious of what Habonim has given us and think about how we can express our appreciation for this fine edifice and the spirit and happiness it has brought to our lives as members. It is Jewish to be thankful. It is upright to express gratitude.

Ask yourself how you feel about Habonim today? What are your memories? And what of the future of our shul? Will others, our children, be able to celebrate their children's Bar/Bat Mitzvah in this one-of-a-kind spiritual home as we have?

Consider as well that we are not a wealthy shul. Quite humble actually, although sometime ago, somebody very wisely made a smart decision to purchase the houses next door. The income built into those properties ensures we are prepared should the winds of economics blow dramatically south in a time of financial struggle. But that is not enough to secure our future.

What I would like to suggest therefore, is that each of us ponder what many others are doing in synagogues/ temples/shuls around the city. How can I contribute to Habonim financially so that the things we love about it are perpetuated for decades to come?

Ask yourself, 'while I sit and author my will, am I including Congregation Habonim in it; have I done what so many other Jews in Toronto are doing – left a legacy for that place I called when I was in need of a shoulder to lean upon; a room to sit in and mediate while prayer was happening around me?'

'Am I familiar with other ways and means of strengthening our shul financially, perhaps by taking out an insurance policy in its name; by inquiring about endowments which will benefit the shul for years to come?'

Think about this. We are. As you will read in this newsletter there is a structure we are creating which will

allow our membership to play a stronger financial role, become tzedakah partners, for the future.

How special it would be if you donated some resources toward the development of an educational institute within Habonim. This is part of an idea to develop regular educational programming including progressive Torah classes, workshops and roundtables on Jewish thought, folklore, storytelling, philosophy etc.

How secure we would all feel if families and individuals stepped forward interested in leaving an endowment that would help us create Holocaust programming for years to come such as the groundbreaking and exceedingly meaningful Kristallnacht memorial we recently held. The opportunities are endless.

Our shul is special. Please think about this message and ask yourself why you belong to Habonim when there are so many other shuls you could go to; why you attend our services; the buzz that occurred once your daughter/son completed his/her Bat/Bar Mitzvah service with the words – "...and thank you for sharing this day with me and my family. Mazel tov."

If you would like to be part of the development of a Habonim Forever group (responsible for securing donations for our future), let us know. If you would like to discuss your will and other ways of being a financial partner in Habonim, give us a call.

Feel free to send us ideas to expand and enhance the shul as well as naming opportunities. We will determine how they fit with the overall shul vision and how much tzedakah would be required to make your idea happen.

Tzedakah is an important Jewish value. Literally it means justice. It is indeed just to contribute to a place that is holy in nature; that has given so much to your spiritual life; that has enhanced your family celebration [s] and generally brought life and meaning to your existence. This is a good time to think of Habonim as your 'fifth child' – a worthy recipient of funds you have worked so hard to make. We're a good place Habonim is, with a fine family. Let others have the chance to say the same in 2057.

It is not what one says, but rather what one does,
That makes all the difference in the world

Pirke Avot 1:17

KRISTALLNACHT 2007
PROGRAM AT HABONIM

"I Will Love You Until My Last Breath"

Kristallnacht 2007 at Habonim proved to be a most memorable evening. "It was one of the most moving programs I have ever been to," one member noted.

"My children and I found the program very moving. I was brought to tears several times....The speech by Eloge (the Rwandan Genocide Survivor) really hit me in the heart," said another member.

The evening began with the children from Habonim's religious school reading a poem called "We Pray for the Children", contrasting the luckier children of the world, with the less fortunate ones. The children then read a Holocaust poem, as they lit six memorial candles in memory of the victims of the Shoah. They sang Eli, Eli, which was followed by the chanting of El Malei Rachamim by Cantor Esther Ghan Firestone in honor of the 6 million victims of the Shoah.

Then the main part of the evening began.

Carla Wittes, the Director of the Canadian Centre for Diversity, spoke eloquently about her own personal history and how it propelled her into her chosen field of Holocaust education and the teaching of diversity. (Carla is also the Canadian director for the March of Remembrance and Hope, a Holocaust and genocide studies program for university students of all backgrounds.)

The audience listened intently as Carla described her experience as a young Jewish girl growing up in Montreal. She had one especially strong desire - to reunite her mother (Annemarie Klauber) with Carla's grandmother who had disappeared in WWII. It was only after Carla's mother's own passing, that Carla began to discover the full story behind her grandmother's disappearance, and indeed behind the deaths of so many of her family members.

Shortly after her mother's passing, Carla discovered a letter hidden in her mother's drawer, a letter from her grandmother to her mother, the last words that she had ever written before she was deported from Vienna and murdered by the Nazis.

"I will love you until my last breath..." Carla's grandmother wrote to her only child, who by then had escaped with the kindertransport to England. Carla began collecting other's letters with the wish to keep alive the

memory and the stories of the victims. Their words, written on scraps of newsprint, postcards and smuggled note paper, release them from the anonymity of the gas chambers and give us a glimpse into who they were, how they lived, and not just how they died.

Carla then introduced three students: Carrie Charters, Juliet Karugahe and Tope Salami, all alumni of the March of Remembrance and Hope (MRH) program.

The three students - all of diverse backgrounds - read eloquently from poems written by MRH alumni. The first poem - Something to Believe In - was read by Carrie Charters, and was written by Kari May Grain, an alumna of the MRH 2007 program:

Something to Believe In

*I thought I didn't have
Something to believe in.
He spoke of Shabbat with fervor,
She of her revered Allah,
Others sang about their savior with tears
Lapping on the shores of their lashes.
Like watching entwined lovers on Valentine's Day
From my table for one,
I was joyous for them
And devastated by a familiar aloneness.*

*But there was the dandelion.
In a sun-drenched graveyard in Krakow,
My breath was stolen away by soft light
Taking flight on feathery wings of a single dandelion seed.
Like a slender human hanging
Desperately, delicately
from a white umbrella,
I couldn't help thinking how far I'd been carried
On whimsical winds.*

*And there were a million shoes.
In less than seventy years they had already turned
The color of earth.*

*And there was a small mountain of human ash
infused with anguished souls,
where young blades of grass peeked through,
Green with idealism and hope,
Searching for light,
And nourished by darkness.*

*Like the seed taking flight,
and the changing colors*

*and the grass stretching from the ashes,
It happened quietly;
like the barely audible meeting of eyelashes
when you drift off to sleep,
it happened inconspicuously.
By the time I noticed it,
I could no longer imagine living without it.
Somewhere,
In the graveyards and death camps
Where so many people thought they had lost their god;
Lost their Something to believe in,
I found mine.*

The three students also read excerpts from the last letters of Holocaust victims written to their loved ones. These letters are being collected for a forthcoming book being written by Carla Wittes.

Each letter was heartbreaking - as every member of the audience could feel the yearning of the parents for their children (whom they would never see again), their concern for their welfare and the overwhelming love which they expressed, even or perhaps especially, during these difficult times...

Several of the letters were from the parents of the late and much missed Gangolf Herman, a founding member of Congregation Habonim, a President for many years, and a generous supporter and volunteer for the project that Carla has undertaken.

Below is an excerpt from a letter written to his aunt of Sally (Sheindele) Wassermann, a Holocaust survivor who also participated in MRH. Carrie Charters, the young MRH alumna who read the letter, was overcome by tears as she reached its last passage:

"I am writing this letter to you during my last days of my life. We are expecting death any time now. We know what kind of death to expect... My dearest, the end is bitter and tragic. My dearest I see the angel of death before me. I don't believe even a miracle can help us now. My little son and I are the last sacrificial victims. My dear ones I write this letter with love instead of hate... The only things that makes it easier on my heart is knowing that Sheindele will be saved. I know she is in good hands with good people. My dearest, be good parents to your children and to my little girl.

I can feel in this moment the pain in your heart when you read this letter. It is not your fault. We are innocent. Our

future is lost and cannot be changed.

I am walking around like a crazy woman. It is terrible to die when your mind knows everything that is going to happen and you can see the angel of death before you.

It hurts me terribly - it breaks my heart to write this letter to you, but you must know what happened to your family and how they disappeared.

Our loving mother of blessed memory, thank God, died of natural causes in the year 1942. The date 6 Tammuz you should observe the yoretzeit of our mother's death. Father was killed 3 months later by the murderers.

I am sorry to say that from the whole family nobody is alive.

We are the last, we are in danger, there is no possible way for us to live through this.

Angie my beloved sister - be strong and courageous - Take Revenge!

We know there is no way out - we cannot run.

We are surrounded on all sides.

I cannot write anymore - I do not want to pain you.

This is the last letter from me to you.

Be well.

Your sister

Toby

On July 28th. 1943. Dombrowa was declared "judenrein" - free of Jews.

The last poem of the evening was read by Juliet Karugahe. It was called *Beloved Child* and written by Natasha Stubbs an alumnus of MRH 2006 who became very close to Sally Wasserman. Reading Sally's mother's letter and hearing her story were the inspirations for this poem.

Beloved Child

I hold you close

My darling

my love

I rock you gently and whisper sweet words

Hold onto me tight

We mustn't lose one another

*Soon, my darling child, the pain will end
No longer will hunger gnaw
Our weariness will end and the sun will shine again
Close your eyes, beloved child
Forget the horror your beautiful eyes beheld.
Think of flowers, not corpses
Remember the smell of warm bread not death
Soon my love our turn will come
Breathe deeply
Do not be scared, Mama is here.
Hold onto me tight, darling child
Wipe away your tears, be brave
We are joining papa in a better place
Smile, my darling,
My love
Breathe deeply
We shall soon be free.*

The concluding remarks came from Eloge Butera, a student at McGill University Faculty of Law, an alumnus of MRH 2007, a human rights activist - and a survivor of the 1994 Tutsi Genocide in Rwanda.

The audience held on to every word that this eloquent young man shared with them.

"50 years after the Shoah the genocide of the Tutsis started in Rwanda in April 1994. I was 10 years old at the time," he began.

Eloge went on to describe how he and his family fled from the Hutus and hid in the bushes and how, with his father and younger brother, he wandered 165 kilometers, for 14 days.

"The morning my father was taken away he woke me up and he actually said my morning prayers for me. That was the only time my family had ever heard him pray...

For the past 14 years since that incident I can still feel the touch of his hand waking me up at dawn.... I will always remember this story, and I will tell this story to my children.....14 years later I don't remember the words to his prayer....but I remember the moment, and will remember this story. And when no one is here to remember the moment, I hope someone will be able to share this story."

"And hundreds of these moments lie in the letters, in the papers, from Carla, seemingly written by ink, but really written through tears and blood.

It is in remembering this and transforming this memory into a tool and inspiration, an object of a meditation and resolution, that we can truly do justice to

the sacrifice our loved ones have made."

Eloge went on to talk about the ongoing genocide in Sudan, where over 200,000 have already been murdered and millions have been made refugees

"We must stand up and speak up for those who are voiceless," he noted.

"Our loved ones never demanded any more than "may I exist". They were parents, children, sons and daughters of somebody. All they demanded was to live their life in tranquility and someday to be buried by their children...nothing more and surely they did not deserve anything less."

He concluded his remarks with the following words:

"May all of us be blessed by being loved until our last breath. I pray that we all do what is right, what it takes, to make sure that love in the end prevails, so that tyranny sees an end in our generation..."

The program was co-sponsored by Holocaust Education Week.

By Eli Rubenstein

HELP WANTED:

- Looking for a carpenter to help repair the Bima and the 2 podiums and the ark.
- Looking for volunteers to clean the silver on the Torahs.
- Still looking for a replacement for the president!!

Members please note:

"The following is an extract of the Rules and Regulations pertaining to the Habonim Cemetery:

Members in good standing who joined the Congregation prior to May 7, 2000 are entitled a free plot in the Congregation's cemetery. In addition, the adjacent plot is reserved for the surviving spouse at no charge, provided that only a single monument is erected. If a double monument is erected, a deposit for the cost of the reserved plot is required which will be returned to the spouse's estate (if at the time of death the spouse is a paid up member). The reason for this rule is that should the surviving spouse cease to be a member or be buried elsewhere, the use of that

particular plot is lost to the Congregation. It is therefore important to advise either the chairman of the cemetery committee or the Treasurer when contemplating the erection of a double monument. The present chairman of the committee is Walter Steerman, Tel. 416-244-0036.

The above does not apply to members who joined the Congregation after May 7, 2000 who are not entitled to free plots, although, of course, they are entitled to be interred in the Congregation's cemetery.

DONATIONS

Aliyah:

Dr. Bala Jason; Roger DeFreitas

In Memoriam:

In loving memory of my dear husband, Gunther - Edith Rosen

Remembering with love my dear friend, Fritz Weiss - Edith Rosen

In loving memory of David Hurowitz - Eric Hurowitz and Beth Warren

Annual donation - Martin and Sylvia Nathanson

CONGREGATION HABONIM IS OPEN FOR MEMBERSHIP.

Please remember that word of mouth is the best way to recruit new members, and anyone interested is welcome to sit in on a Shabbat Service. Call Lotte Watson at 416-267-0097 or email lwatson@wylideside.com

ONEG SHABBAT SPONSORS NEEDED

Mark a special occasion or memory by sponsoring an Oneg Shabbat. Call Sandra Levy at (416) 665-5595

OUR WEBSITE:

www.congregationhabonim.org

OUR E-MAIL ADDRESS:

office@congregationhabonim.org

To SPONSOR AN ONEG SHABBAT call
Sandra Levy at (416) 665-5595

To SEND GREETING CARDS and DONATIONS
call Rhoda Sion at (416) 782-9663 or write to
716 - 660 Eglinton Ave. W., Toronto M5N 1C3

Are you MOVING, CHANGING your
ADDRESS OR PHONE NUMBER?

Call Dianne Erdos-Rush at (416) 630-7921
or e-mail to: dijer@sympatico.ca

TO BUY A LEAF FOR EITZ CHAIM for any
occasion call Miriam Ostrow at (416) 661-0949
Leaf \$175

QUESTIONS OR NOTICES RE JAHRZEITEN?

Call Linda Brager at (416) 488-0282

JAHRZEITEN

To be read at the December Services:

Tillie Cherm	Kislev 21	December 1
Moses Vijevaro	Kislev 22	December 2
Joseph Finer	Kislev 25	December 5
Morton Lebowitz	Kislev 25	December 5
Walter Levy	Kislev 26	December 6
Henry Galler	Kislev 27	December 7
Isaac Wilinofsky	Kislev 27	December 7
Al London	Kislev 28	December 8
Louis Mactinger	Kislev 28	December 8
Sheilah Freedman	Kislev 29	December 9
Kurt Barnett	Kislev 29	December 9
Pearl Marcus	Kislev 29	December 9
Soloman Alexander		
Kohn	Kislev 29	December 9
Helen Lennhoff	Kislev 29	December 9
Harold Levy	Kislev 29	December 9
Philip Granovsky	Tevet 1	December 10
Evelyn Dennis	Tevet 3	December 12
Kaethe		
Levy-Weinlaub	Tevet 4	December 13
Edith Rogers	Tevet 5	December 14
Elsa Leinung	Tevet 5	December 14
Regina Bloch	Tevet 10	December 19
George J. Beer	Tevet 10	December 19

Myer Sugerman	Tevet 10	December 19
Fred Justitz	Tevet 11	December 20
Artur Aaron		
Wittekind	Tevet 12	December 21
Leon Fleischer	Tevet 12	December 21
Adele Buium	Tevet 14	December 23
Charles Landes	Tevet 14	December 23
Martin M. Stern	Tevet 15	December 24
Harry Spector	Tevet 17	December 26
Harold Miller	Tevet 18	December 27
Mildred Fleischer	Tevet 18	December 27
Dora Koch	Tevet 18	December 27
Eve Ross	Tevet 19	December 28
Danielle Fisher	Tevet 20	December 29
Kaye Katchen	Tevet 21	December 30
Josef Braun	Tevet 21	December 30
John Penfield	Tevet 22	December 31

To be read at the January Services:

Hugo Abels	Tevet 23	January 1
Julius Leinung	Tevet 23	January 1
Sam Milgrom	Tevet 24	January 2
Sally Lees	Tevet 25	January 3
William Ostrow	Tevet 26	January 4
Hershel Ross	Tevet 27	January 5
Marie Ader	Tevet 27	January 5
Harriet Sommer	Tevet 28	January 6
Rose Kopelman	Tevet 29	January 7
Sigmund Marx	Tevet 29	January 7
Nick Watson	Tevet 29	January 7
Rosalyn Galler	Shevat 1	January 8
Charles Mint	Shevat 3	January 10
Morris Freeman	Shevat 4	January 11
Barbara Parieser	Shevat 4	January 11
Irving Glucklick	Shevat 4	January 11
Harry Buium	Shevat 7	January 14

Harry Ginpil	Shevat 7	January 14
John Leinung	Shevat 8	January 15
Danny Rabinowitz	Shevat 9	January 16
Samuel Persiko	Shevat 10	January 17
Bernie Slomen	Shevat 11	January 18
Esther Glucklick	Shevat 11	January 18
Charles Gross	Shevat 12	January 19
Mauzy Harris	Shevat 13	January 20
Edward Isadore Harris	Shevat 13	January 20
Jessie Kahl	Shevat 13	January 20
Jack Cole	Shevat 14	January 21
Annie Lams	Shevat 15	January 22
Nathan Burrows	Shevat 15	January 22
Malka Wakeam	Shevat 16	January 23
Elizabeth Schwartz	Shevat 16	January 23
Dr. Abraham Skudwick	Shevat 17	January 24
David Brown	Shevat 18	January 25
Flora Kohn	Shevat 18	January 25
Rebecca Van Der Hout	Shevat 19	January 26
Josef Burstyn	Shevat 20	January 27
Mary Milgrom	Shevat 21	January 28
Margarete Weinlaub	Shevat 21	January 28
Louis Marcovitch	Shevat 21	January 28
Paul Freund	Shevat 23	January 30
Herman Seifer	Shevat 24	January 31
Clara Bierman	Shevat 24	January 31

In mourning:

Frank Kohn, Sender Balberman, Joseph Brager, Phillip Gibson, Louis Libman, Marcus Goldberg, Miriam Burrows, Otto Fleisher, Jack Jacobson, Rachel Stern, Dr. George Lednar

Information and contributions to THE BULLETIN?
call Erika Erdos at 416-787-0527, fax 416-787-9640
e-mail eri.steve@rogers.com

Deadline for contributions to the next Bulletin:
Wednesday, January 9, 2008

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