

THE
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Hal Nevis working as a flight instructor, c. 1961



**Our Unique and
Diverse Jewish Stories**

In the Image of God: A Cautionary Tale About Diversity

Rabbi's Corner

By Rabbi David Kosak

"Adam, the first human being, was created as a single person to show the greatness of the Ruler Who is beyond all Rulers, the Blessed Holy One. For when a human ruler mints many coins from one mold, they all carry the same image, they all look the same. But the Blessed Holy One shaped all human beings in the Divine Image, as Adam was shaped "btzelem elohim," "in the image of God." And yet not one of them resembles another." - Sanhedrin 38a, Babylonian Talmud

Let's get the easy part out of the way. Diversity is a Jewish—and a human-value. All humans have infinite worth because not only do we each carry a spark of infinite divinity within, but also we are each unique. Recognizing and building societies and communities that celebrate diversity is therefore a mitzvah. To do so is part of what Micah tells us God wants from us—"Do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly." I think humility helps us to appreciate diversity. It leaves us more receptive to differences.

There's a way that Judaism is all about diversity. The Talmud famously preserves minority opinions—the voices of those who lost the day. As a people and religious civilization that has lived across the globe, Jews come in all colors. Dozens of languages are spoken in tiny Israel. There are Persian Jews and Yemenite Jews, Moroccan Jews and Australian Jews, French, Spanish, and Swedish Jews. These days, we find increasing numbers of individuals who choose conversion and join the Jewish community. They add to the remarkable mosaic that defines who we are. Diversity, after all, is a handmaiden to unity. Apart from the fact that diversity defines what it is to be a unique human, we use the concept to encourage unity. Celebrating diversity is a mechanism toward inclusion.

I'd love to end here.

But the Torah and our culture historically have placed a value on truth over comfort. Our Biblical heroes are fa-

mously sketched as flawed and multifaceted, just like all of us. That rich portraiture also provides us an important model that it is okay to address our weaknesses. This is no less true when it comes to issues of diversity. There are numerous examples where our sacred writings point out that the drive for unity, which lies at the heart of diversity, can lead us astray.

The short episode of the Tower of Babel, which occurs at the end of parshat Noach, is one example of this. On the surface, it looks like all of diverse humanity is engaged in a unified project of hope and aspiration—building a beautiful monument to their common effort. That's not how our sages viewed it. They saw in the incident a strong authoritarian impulse that actually squelched diversity in the name of uniformity. There are some midrashic writings that fill in the narrative, saying how babies were used in making bricks, and that people were pushed off the tower by those above them. Numerous examples abound in the Talmud which explore this theme.

There's a way we can get so caught up in one particular type of diversity that we can forget or neglect other types of diversity. In our era, which often shows up in our politics, in our discourse about political correctness, or even in academic studies about gender, race, and equity. Diversity is fine so long as it's the sort of diversity that agrees with our conclusions. Across America, we are growing stronger in addressing learning



differences as well as gender, racial, and sexual diversity. Much work undoubtedly still needs to be done, but it feels like we are making progress. When it comes to those who think differently or express their values differently, however, we are more than ready to throw them off the tower. Our focus on diversity can sometimes verge on the authoritarian and oppressive.

Why is that? Are we afraid of something? Filled with uncontrolled anger? Are we so pleased with our own certainty that we have forgotten Micah's injunction to walk humbly with God? Each of us is free to ponder the reasons.

What I keep returning to is the Talmudic illustration about coins and humans with which we started. We all ought to be committed to building a more inclusive and just world of which diversity is

Continued on next page

Proud of You

Rabbi's Corner

By Rabbi Eve Posen

Every night at bedtime, after we sing the *Shema* and go through our rituals, the last thing I say to each of my kids is “I’m proud to be your Mommy because...” And I fill in the blank with something they did that day that made me proud of them. As they’ve grown, they’ve started to reciprocate with “I’m proud to be your child because...” And they share something I did that makes them proud. Usually, it’s about how I’ve helped someone through work or how we’ve celebrated a holiday together. I absolutely love this ritual because it gives us an opportunity to explore our recent actions and to celebrate our identities and our roles in the world every day.

The holiday of *Shavuot*, which we celebrate in mid-May, is in many ways a celebration of Jewish pride, not just a celebration of our shared religious experiences, but also a celebration of a community built around shared values and core beliefs. Traditionally *Shavuot* celebrates the Israelites receiving and accepting the Torah from God at Mount Sinai. They’re gathered in sacred celebration of the recognition that these laws are meant to create a society built on loving and supporting one another, from the system of justice to caring for the poor.

Agriculturally, *Shavuot* is a celebration of first fruits, of the regrowth and regeneration that happens when we

care for the land. But the same is true when we care for each other. As farmers take pride in their crops, as a community we take pride in caring for and nurturing one another and building an inclusive and welcoming *kehillah*.

Jewish commentary mentions that *Shavuot* and the giving of Torah are God’s gift of love for the Israelite people. This gift is given out of the pride God feels for this community and its people who support each other. It’s also about the pride the Israelites feel as they finally celebrate being Jewish—in being in relationship with God.

Take some time this week to discuss as a family why you’re proud to be Jewish. Fill in the blank: I’m proud to be Jewish because _____.

In our own family, Shiri is proud to be Jewish because “it’s fun and we work together to care for other people.”

Matan is proud to be Jewish because “I love celebrating holidays.”

Duncan is proud to be Jewish because “Judaism prioritizes asking questions and being curious.”

I am proud to be Jewish because it means community and caring for the world and each other.



I would love to know why you’re proud to be Jewish and how it reflects the identity you bring to Judaism. What’s wonderful about this little tradition my family has of sharing our proud moments is that it celebrates specific actions more than general identity statements. Every day I’m proud to be their mommy, I’m proud to be my parents’ daughter, I’m proud to be Duncan’s partner, and I’m proud to be a leader in our Jewish community. It’s easy to be proud to be a part of our leadership because of the ways I’ve seen our CNS *kehillah* celebrate one another in our acceptance of each other, our uniqueness, as well as our diversity of identities.

Rabbi Kosak continued from previous page

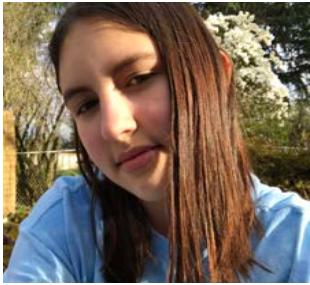
a key component. Simultaneously, we should recall our flawed Biblical heroes, and keep in mind how our focus on some types of diversity often is ac-

companied by a fierce rejection of many other forms of God-given variety. It is so easy for the coins of diversity to all look the same. We need to reckon with

that so we can do a better job living up to Michah’s injunction to “do justly and love mercy.” *I am hopeful that we can get there.*



Upcoming B'nai Mitzvah



Avital Horowitz | May 1

Avital Horowitz is the daughter of proud parents Sonya and Zachary Horowitz, the sister of Yael, and granddaughter of Fanny and Barry Horowitz, Joanne and Arnold Logan, and Jeffrey Mitchell. She is an eighth grader at Jackson Middle School in Portland, where she enjoys studying language arts, math, science, and the ukulele. She loves reading, paddle boarding, baking, crafting, spending time with her friends and sister, and her dog Posey.



Dorothy Cantor | May 8

Dorothy Cantor is the daughter of Steve and Sarah Cantor, sister of big brothers David and James, and granddaughter of Marilyn Wolf (z"l), Arnold Cantor of Vero Beach, Florida, and Steve and Nancy Kneipple of Denver. Dorothy is a seventh grader at Jackson Middle School, where she enjoys improv and choir; she tolerates her other classes. She enjoys taking care of younger children and is looking forward to babysitting when Covid restrictions lift.



Chloe Stevens | May 15

Chloe is the daughter of Elisa and Joshua Stevens and big sister to Jonah. She is the granddaughter of Anne (z"l) and Harvey Taub (z"l), Sharyn and Dennis Spitzer, and Mike and Judy Stevens. Chloe is a seventh grader at Stoller Middle School. She enjoys spending her summers at BB Camp and traveling to new places. Chloe is creative and artistic. She loves crocheting, drawing, aerial silks, listening to music, and training her Aussiedoodle Olive.



Eliana Rose Yoken | May 29

Eliana Yoken is the daughter of proud parents Jennifer and Jonathan Yoken and sister to Hannah and Rachel. Her grandparents are Judy and Art Berman of Singer Island, Florida; Susan Robbio of Delray Beach, Florida and Stephen Yoken of Tulsa, Oklahoma. A seventh grader at the Catlin Gabel School, Eliana enjoys playing tennis, volleyball, skiing, and drama. Whenever possible, Eliana can be found in the kitchen cooking a new recipe or hanging out with friends.

We are also excited to celebrate the Bar Mitzvah of Ido Dolev on May 22

We Are Many and We Are One

Cantor's Corner

By Cantor Eyal Bitton

How “Jewish” does the name “Bitton” sound? I haven’t met any other Bittons here in Portland but, in Israel, Bitton is the fifth most common family name. FIFTH. By far, the most common surnames in Israel are Cohen and Levy. Following those are Mizrahi, Peretz, and Bitton.

Throughout my life, I’ve been exposed to the idea that the Jewish people is made up of a rainbow of backgrounds. In Kinshasa, Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of the Congo), the Jewish community was made up of Jews from all over the world. It was a small community, but it was, using today’s terminology, diverse. The idea that it was diverse was a non-idea as this was all I knew; the fact that Jews come from all over the world was a given. My own family was “diverse.” This mirrored the non-Jewish world around me: my neighbors and classmates were from all around the world. I was exposed to a rainbow of ethnicities, foods, languages, and cultures.

The majority of American Jews are descendants of Eastern European Jews who fled the vicious pogroms of the early 1880s. American Jewry is, generally-speaking, Ashkenazi. But Jewish identity is much more.

We are a people that was taken out of our homeland and scattered into various lands for two thousand years. This experience of being in the *galut*, the diaspora, means that we bear thousands of years of trauma, ranging from being second-class residents of a host country to being victims of pogroms and genocide. It also means that we are a people enriched by having inherited a plurality of cultures and ethnicities. While we have many differences, we are fundamentally one people.

The ancient Romans took our people out of our land and thus began the diaspora. We went from residing in one land to residing in many. In the language of our colonizers and conquerors, “*E uno plures*,”



“out of one, many.” The State of Israel has created a single Jewish state in which Jews from around the globe are again one. Here in the US, we must look at our fellow Jew not as different but as the same; we may have a separate diaspora experience but we share the same fundamental identity. Using the language of those who set us on the path to many lands, we must find a way to look at each other and say “*E pluribus unum*,” “out of many, one.”



Talia Isobel Weinstein | June 19

Talia is the daughter of Ross Weinstein and Darcy Hoyt, older sister of Asher Weinstein, and the granddaughter of Dorothy Weinstein and Basil Weinstein (z"l), and Donald Hoyt and Jackie Hoyt. Talia is in seventh grade at Portland Jewish Academy; in the summer, she likes to go to Camp Solomon Schechter. Talia enjoys art, hiking, and camping.



Zachariah Cabelly | June 26

Zachariah Joseph Cabelly is the son of Christina and Eli Cabelly, brother of Gideon, and the grandson of Alan Cabelly and Jean Benavento. He is a student at Highland Park, transitioning to the eighth Grade. Zachariah enjoys free open-source software, history, any form of technology, and reading.

The Strength of Our Neighborhood

President's Corner

By Glen Coblens, CNS President

When I think about neighborhood, the first thing that comes to mind is community. In my immediate neighborhood near Mt. Tabor, we know many of our neighbors with whom we have over the years shared soup nights, projects, food drives, garden bounty, and kid-sitting. I love how we can easily walk or bike to restaurants, shops and friends' houses; I love how friendly folks are. For those who know my passion for running, living next to Mt. Tabor is truly special. I am sure most of you find beauty in your neighborhood as well.

Right around the corner from us is Glencoe Elementary School that our son Levi attends. His Aunt Debbie and Uncle Rick, who both went there too, have fond memories of their young lives in our neck of the woods. My own childhood was spent between the eastside, where my grandparents lived (in Eastmoreland) and the westside in the Multnomah and Raleigh Hills areas, where we lived. For me, "neighborhood" represents all these people and places, all these different communities, all the different parts of

our congregational family.

In today's relational Judaism, meeting people where they are at has never been more important. We embrace diversity in all forms, from economic status, to age differences, to sexual orientation, and yes, geographical diversity. Did you know that not only do we have members all throughout the east and westside but as far away as Seattle, Corvallis, Hood River, and Tillamook? This year in some ways has strengthened our Kehillah Kedoshah, with Zoom and livestreaming easing the constraints placed by physical distance between us. Our tent is broad and beautiful! As such, I'm pleased to share, starting in the Fall, we are hoping to offer classes, tutoring, and other activities at the new, bright space of the Eastside Jewish Commons on NE Sandy.

At the same time, I could not be more excited to welcome you back, in person, to our lovely Neveh Shalom campus. You'll first notice security improvements in the form of new card readers rather than keypads. In the coming months, you will see a new roof, paint, and park-



ing lot enhancements, with much more to follow. Thank you all for your generous donations that allow us to invest in our immediate, precious neighborhood, the home of CNS!

Every time I am on our CNS campus, I am struck by the beauty, the history, the peace, and the love. It is my home, it is your home, it is our home!

Please share your neighborhood thoughts with me at president@nevehshalom.org.

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ALIYAH Update

Learning From This Year

Mel's Corner

By Mel Berwin, Director of Congregational Learning



First, I want to thank everyone who participated in our CNS Fundraiser in April, and thereby supported our education programs! Your support of our ALIYAH, Tichon, and Lifelong Learning programs means the world to me and to our teachers after this year that we pray was different than all others to come.

Not all in this year was negative or even challenging, though. Our goal this spring, as we turned our attention towards fall programming, was how to combine the best of what we did pre-Covid and the best of what we've experienced this past year. After all, this year presented really new opportunities, since we're a learning community open to innovation.

This year, our K-6 children have been meeting online for Judaics classes Sunday mornings. They have the option of weekly in-person individual Hebrew tutoring at Neveh Shalom, or a small online group Hebrew class on Zoom, or, in some cases, individual tutoring on

Zoom. A survey of our K-6 families in March provided helpful—but not surprising—feedback: The families who participated in tutoring options (in person or on Zoom) were, overall, so enthusiastic about the experience that over 90% of them said they would want to continue a more individualized approach to Hebrew in the coming year.

Our teachers who tutored this year were similarly enthusiastic. They identified the following factors as positives when considering the comparison between teaching classes and tutoring: the individual connection with students; the clear sense of progress for the children; and the ability to meet each student at their level and learning style.

So what does this change mean in practical terms? Our plan is for K-6 students to attend in-person on Sunday mornings, with a newly designed structure incorporating three elements: *Judaics*, *Chugim* (creative activities/electives), and *Tefilah* (prayer service). These activities allow for more creative, experiential focus on Jewish topics as well as expanded communal time to practice prayers and ritual leadership together. This structure also allows us to focus more on the social/communal side of our time together on Sundays, which over 70% of our families indicated was especially important to them at this time.

For Hebrew, families will choose among options of in-person tutoring at CNS or at the new Eastside Jewish Commons, or tutoring on Zoom, with a choice of one or two students per tutoring session. This fits with our value of making the full ALIYAH program truly accessible for everyone, no matter the distance or circumstance. And while private tutoring with skilled tu-

tors generally costs quite a bit more than group classes, the cost of ALIYAH will not change for families. The resources it took to provide an inclusive program for all of our students in classrooms, with the necessary tutors and para-educators, is not significantly different than the cost to provide each student with an individualized learning experience.

We are excited for this new structure of our ALIYAH program, and the ways our learning community continues to grow and adapt!

A sampling of comments from our survey:

"My kids love the individualized Hebrew tutoring because they can learn at their own pace."

"This would be awesome. Both my kids love it, and for at least one of them, they focus better this way."

"This year has taught us the importance of in-person gatherings, but it has also shown how much of our lives were spent in cars driving from activity to activity. I would love to see us move forward with a new approach that both honors the value of in-person time and honors the value of time not in cars...."

"Our family loves the idea of shifting to individualized Hebrew lessons – thank you for thinking creatively about the options for next year!!"

"I think this is a great idea – a combination of group activities and individualized lessons gives the kids the best of both worlds."

Hal Nevis: Israel Saved My Life

By Hal Nevis & Mel Berwin

Hal Nevis moved to Portland in 1969 and has been a member of CNS since 1996. He participates in Mensches & Mavens and the CNS Keshet community, attended Rabbi Stampfer's (z"l) Talmud study classes, and helped organize the Portland Jewish Film Festival for many years. Hal originally told this story to Mel Berwin. Mel and Hal co-wrote and edited this piece together.

I grew up with a negative relationship with Judaism. My mother's father was a prominent Chicago rabbi and our home was Orthodox. My mother brought us up with the clear idea that to be a Jew was to obey the law. There were a lot of things I did not do according to what she wanted. Our fights led to my rebelling against Judaism. In fact, during that part of my life I was a bit of an anti-Semite. We did not live in a Jewish neighborhood, so most of my friends were not Jewish, and that was frowned upon. My relationship with my mother was an issue. I fought her and Judaism tooth and nail. As I grew older, I came to realize that Judaism was much broader than what I was taught. I also came to realize that my mother was only doing what she understood the law required of her.



In my first year of high school I discovered Habonim, a Labor Zionist youth organization. I began to understand that I didn't have to be religious, in my mother's sense, to be Jewish. I went to meetings where we learned about love of the land. I went to a summer camp, where we helped build a new dining hall. Then, in 1948, there was a big rally at the Chicago Stadium. I went and listened to Ben Gurion (broadcast over the loudspeaker) declaring the State of Israel. Still, to this day I remember how I felt on that first Yom HaAtzma'ut in 1948, with tens of thousands of others in the stadium. Shortly after that, the summer between my sophomore and junior year of high school, I went with a Habonim group to Israel. We had classes and toured the country. I fell in love with the country and the land. Secular Zion-

ism and Israel saved my life. For the first time in my life, I felt like I was a Jew, and I liked it.

In 1949 the population was for the most part secular—quite the opposite of what I had experienced at home, so I thrived on it. Everyone else went home, and I stayed. I found a place on a kibbutz; I went to work and school. It took me about a year to learn the language. Eventually I ended up at Kiriat Anavim, a kibbutz outside of Jerusalem. One of

the members was an IDF pilot; listening to him, I developed an interest in flying. I joined Gadna Avir (kind of a civil air patrol) where we learned aerodynamics and principles of navigation. That summer I went to a summer camp in the north near Rosh Hanikra where we built and flew gliders. When I got back to the kibbutz that summer, I decided to enlist in the Air Force.

When I left the US, I dropped out of sight as far as my parents were concerned. I



Hal (left) and his siblings, Selig, z"l and Zelda, as children

never told anyone here about enlisting in the IDF or going to flying school. I got my wings in June. My sister, who is two years younger, and now lives in Hebron, just happened to be coming to Israel for a summer with Bnei Akiva, the Religious Zionist youth group. When we met on the pier in Haifa she looked at my uniform and said: "I knew it!" I invited her to our rotation's Wings Parade. It was nice having family present.

I lived in Israel from 1949-1956. After those 7.5 years I decided it was time to return to the US to continue studies. I

applied to the University of Chicago and was accepted. After undergraduate studies I remained at UChicago for medical school. In Chicago, I discovered the Hillel house and Rabbi Maurice Pekarsky. What a wonderful man! Through him I began to get closer to religious Judaism and I began to enjoy going to Friday evening services as well as the holidays there. So, I got back to Judaism on my terms.

In 1969 I accepted a job in Portland with Kaiser Permanente in Internal Medicine. This was a perfect location as I wanted to be somewhere where I could enjoy the outdoors. Eventually, I decided to join a congregation, met Rabbi Isaak, and joined Neveh Shalom. Interestingly Misha Isaak and I were students together at Reed College, he as an undergraduate and I in the Masters program.

The Israel I knew was such an

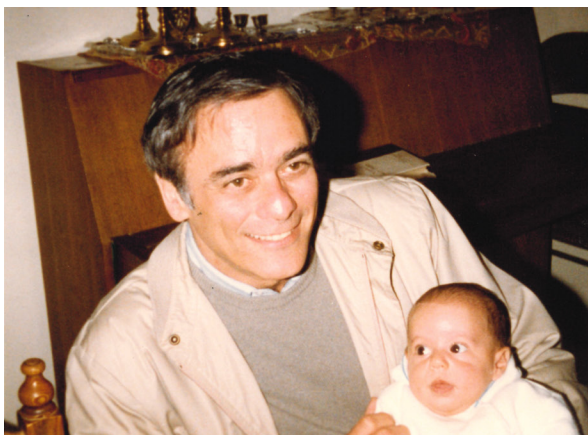
exciting place. You really felt you were doing something. Israel today is very sad because it's politically torn apart; it's a very different place now. But still to me the excitement remains. My family, Air Force buddies, and classmates from school are still there. I go very often.

Now I'm religious in my own way. I've done a lot of mountain climbing and hiking in the area. I like the sunrises and sunsets. Those are experiences that are religious for me. I don't keep a kosher home, but I don't eat pork. I enjoy going to services when I can. I like going to b'nai mitzvah and *smachot* (special occasions like weddings). I participate in the Mensches and Mavens program. I have defined religion in my own way, which is kind of like what it was like when I got to Israel in '49. On Friday night, we wore white shirts. After supper, the tables were cleared, someone played the accordion, and everyone danced. It was a way of separating Shabbat from the week, and it felt good.



Hal at Kitiat Anavim

I do enjoy celebrating the holidays and fasting on Yom Kippur, but I sometimes ask myself why I am fasting. Being religious is something between you and God. I see people who aren't religious but want a family member to be buried in a Jewish cemetery, or want their kids to have a Jewish education, so I find comfort in that. It makes sense. It's a lot about community and connection. I've learned that I don't need to follow anyone else's definition in order to be happy.



Hal with one of his neices

That Sense of Belonging

By Jamie Simms



Jamie Simms and Family

Part of what makes humans unique is our sense of self and identity. America did not start out as my native country, but through my experiences it has truly become the place I feel is my home. I spent the first handful of my formative years in Seoul, the capital city of South Korea, before my parents and I uprooted our entire lives and immigrated to Los Angeles, California. Although that transition was a complete shift in all aspects of my life, I vividly remember never feeling afraid of that enormous change. I'm sure a part of that can be attributed to my young age, but I believe that much of the credit is due to the strong sense of family that my parents (my culture) had cultivated. I believe that sense of security, of comfort in the face of the unknown, stemmed from my confidence and faith in belonging to my family unit. Growing up in Southern

California, I had to learn to navigate my identity as both Korean and American. With the support and confidence I received from my family, I realized I didn't have to choose one in place of the other. Instead of reducing myself to a single identity, I chose to embrace the best parts of both cultures. Though I greatly valued family, I learned the value of independence and self-reliance as well, which were emphasized in the American, though not necessarily in the Korean culture.

I felt that same sense of community from the first moment I stepped inside Town & Village Synagogue in New York City for a Shabbat service more than 16 years ago. From that day forward, I have always felt that warmth, that trust in this new family unit, the Jewish community. I may not have looked like most

of the people sitting around me during Kabbalat Shabbat or Saturday services, or holiday gatherings, but I always felt accepted...secure. The more I felt that sense of belonging, the more I sought to learn about this accepting community, the more I found that there were meaningful commonalities between my original Korean culture and my newly adopted Jewish faith.

The familiar core values of family, loyalty, tradition, and responsibility were never more appealing or purposeful than when my husband and I were blessed with the first of our three wonderful children. Becoming a parent not only highlighted the significance of holding those values in our own lives, but also it made me appreciate the importance of passing those values on to our children, the next generation.

"I believe that sense of security, of comfort in the face of the unknown, stemmed from my confidence and faith in belonging to my family unit."

At the end of the day, I proudly hold many identities. I am a mother, a wife, a daughter, a sister, a friend, a neighbor, and a citizen, to name just a handful. I consider myself fortunate to have been shaped by the values of my Korean, American, and Jewish backgrounds, all of which allow me to be the best version of myself when carrying out each of those roles. My children will have their unique and various identities. I can only hope that they, too, will choose to embrace the best parts of their own experiences and cultures.

Finding My Place in Judaism

By Ellen Dunn-Malhotra

As I write this, Passover is only days away. Inevitably, I think of my grandfather and Seders in his home when I was a child with my parents, aunts, uncles, and nine cousins. Following the moans and groans of the adults, all grandchildren who could, recited either or both the Four Questions and the blessings over wine from oldest to youngest. Every year the adults tried to get my grandfather to hurry along and designate only one child to recite the questions and blessings. But it was his table and he ignored them, kvelling as we chanted.

I have other memories of my grandfather. He taught me to read Hebrew when I was maybe four, and he would put coins in a *tzedakah* box he kept nearby when I did well. I remember walking with him to the little Orthodox shul on a Yom Kippur afternoon.

Why do I mention these moments? It is because my grandfather instilled in me my Jewish identity. It wasn't so much that I was proud of being Jewish: it was

just who I was. He imparted this to me even though he had lost so much. He immigrated with three children to the U.S. around 1924 from Germany, leaving behind family there and in Poland—lives ended at Auschwitz.

Yet my journey took me far afield from my Jewish life and community when around 17, realizing that no matter my Jewish education, I did not count in a minyan. My grandfather died when I was 13, so that strong link was gone. Being a quietly rebellious youth, I walked away from Judaism. I felt if I didn't count, I didn't belong. It was twenty years before I returned.

I immersed myself in other cultures through years living in Mexico and my marriage to a budding Indian scientist (Ripudaman) with visits to India, immersion in family life there, and ten years focused on daily meditation. But I never could completely walk away from my Jewish past. There was a pull; there were those memories. Because I couldn't walk away, I finally decided to find out why I couldn't.

Of course, it was a bit complicated. After all I was married, and as Ripu reminded me, he hadn't signed up for that journey. When we married, my mother somehow found a Reform rabbi to marry us who only asked that we raise any children Jewish. Even so, I never imagined that when I decided to explore Judaism that Ripu would actually join me.

We started with an interfaith workshop and then with our young daughter par-



Ripudaman, Ellen, and Ellen's cousin who lives near Jerusalem. Taken on a visit to Israel in 2016

ticipated in a *chavarah* with a few families with whom we began to celebrate Jewish holidays and Shabbat. We started lighting Shabbat candles, singing prayers, blessing our daughter. It took a few years before I bought a tallis, an emotional step for me. Then, when I saw a woman reading Torah, I knew I had to learn the trope. It felt as if I was reclaiming a part of myself. The sound of Hebrew chanting resonated with me, whether I understood the words or not.

When our daughter prepared for her Bat Mitzvah, Ripu decided he needed to understand the ceremony, so he learned to read Hebrew; then, together we attended Shabbat services. Ripu's journey is really his to tell, but as a praying atheist (you need to ask him about that) he found that Shabbat and the prayers resonated with him as well. So together we became part of the group of Shabbat regulars which led us to become part of a Jewish community, to study and participate in synagogue programs, including trips to Israel and Eastern Europe. A detour there brought us near where my grandfather had lived. At Auschwitz, we found the family names of those killed there, including the aunt for whom I was named—a fitting piece to my Jewish journey.



Photo of Ellen's grandparents, mother, and uncles about three years after they immigrated to the U.S.

"Why do you talk so much about being Jewish? It's like your whole thing."

By Alyssa Knudsen

Those words in the title of this article, spat at me by a teammate in high school, echo in my head every time I do something Jewish. I hear it when I purchase a loaf of challah every week at my university's Shabbat Market. I hear it when I'm nodding off in a Zoom meeting for Hillel, or when I draw attention to incidents of anti-Semitism on my social media platforms. Upon my return home for winter break, this sentiment was even expressed by a family member, unknowingly opening an old wound.

Moments like this always give me pause. Am I too singularly focused? Do I bring up my Jewishness in inappropriate settings? Am I missing the social cues people use to indicate disinterest? Social settings have always been somewhat of a minefield for me, especially when the conversation revolves around my passions. It has certainly been true, in the past, that I have had the tendency to dominate the conversation and misinterpret others' niceties for interest, as can often be the case for those of us on the autism spectrum. By the time my teammate complained, however, it had been years since my social skills posed a problem.

He was right, in a sense. I did put my Jewish identity on full display. Truthfully, I felt I had to be an obvious representative of my community. I went to an Episcopalian school for 10 years and then a Catholic high school, so it was rare for there to be more than one other Jew in my grade. My club swim team also had very few Jews, as Portland's Jewish community is quite small. Indeed, many of my friends had never met a Jew before, so I felt compelled to be "the Jew."

Displays of Jewishness, which may have come across as pride, were simply a necessity. Of course, I was proud to be Jewish, but pride in my culture took a backseat to education. In other words, my expression of Jewishness was defensive, not truly prideful.

This changed when I went to college. While many factors went into my choosing to attend Brandeis University, the school's Jewish founding and prevailing character seemed a welcome change and a respite from years of Christian education. And although Jewish students are technically still a minority, comprising roughly 35 percent of the student body here on campus, Jewish life and culture are vibrant, obvious, and seem more natural than they do at other institutions.

My perspective is in large part informed by having grown up in the Pacific Northwest, where the Jewish community is much smaller than it is here in the Northeast. Many of my classmates, though not Jewish themselves, grew up with Jewish friends, going to their b'nei mitzvah and seeing *hannukiot* in windows during the winter. But I digress: though problems of anti-Semitism are no smaller here than anywhere else, Jewishness as an identity and an expression is more commonplace.



Alyssa and her friends tabling for Birthright with Hillel

Coming to this realization filled me with a deep sense of relief. No longer was I some trophy on display, nor was I a walking, talking encyclopedia to be opened at the leisure of the ignorant. I was part of the crowd: normal, unobtrusive, included. Being Jewish at Brandeis meant having the freedom to explore my identity, not defend it. That freedom prompted joy, and joy greeted pride like an old friend.

My pride is calm. She is like feeling tired after a hearty meal. She is like the last minutes of a summer BBQ by a still lake where the warm breeze carries the scent of smoke. She is a long hug from someone you've hugged many times before, but whose arms never lose their tenderness.

My pride is me, Jewish, just being.

Growing Community: Foundation School's Sensory Garden

By Cory Willson, Foundation School Assistant Director

Under the amazing guidance of seasoned gardener Morah Carol Biederman and CNS Master Gardener Vicki Rotstein we are pleased to announce that we have embarked on an ambitious project together, the Foundation School Sensory Garden!

Over the years we have always planted a vegetable garden at Foundation School, where we find year after year that the kids are drawn to the work of creating in the soil. This year, our vision took us beyond our veggie beds to a full-on sensory garden. The vision includes a garden that draws one in, encouraging the use of all five senses.

Kids are the center of all the work we do here at Foundation School and this garden is no exception! Kids have already weeded the raised beds and are going to



Carol Biederman and Havi Rothstein



Vicki Rotstein

be planting grasses that wave and shudder in the wind, edible flowers of many colors, a variety of herbs, scented plants for stepping upon or brushing up against, and if all goes well, a tunnel made of flowers the kids can move through and explore light, scent, and sound. Each classroom will have a dedicated space to care for as the school year continues.

Our families have also gotten involved by donating pots, seeds, time, and whatever they can contribute. Our amazing morahs will be documenting the progress of the project from start to finish so that whether they are able to participate or not, families will see it all unfold.

This project also encompasses something both intentional and beautiful that may go unnoticed in the busyness of this endeavor. I would like to highlight it here

as it truly deserves to be. We are all moving through a year together that has been isolating and challenging. This garden is a symbol of the connection that happens at CNS as different groups come together within this sacred community. This sensory gardening team represents teachers, children, families, and CNS members who have all united to create a lovely and shared experience. Beyond the garden, which is meaningful in its own right, this coming together sows the seeds that tie us together as a community. The roots, if you will, of this amazing community become stronger as we nurture each other and collaborate in this way.

A big thank you to Carol and Vicki for leading us through this project that brings new connections and new growth to Foundation School and CNS alike.

Neveh Shalom Happenings

Please enjoy this sampling of what is being offered at Neveh Shalom. The best way to get the latest information is through our weekly eblasts. You can sign up at: news@nevehshalom.org. Please visit the website for links at: nevehshalom.org/virtual-events.

Women's Torah Study

Saturday, May 1, 12:00pm
(Summer dates TBA)

Join Mel Berwin for an hour of uplifting study and conversation. All levels of experience welcome.

Tichon Social Justice Art Mural Exhibit

Friday-Sunday, May 7-9

Join teen artists Nava Weingrad, Talia Valdez, and group members Maya Rosman and Ava Silverberg as they discuss their artwork, vision, and process. Nava's collaborative project, "I have a Disability and..." and Talia's work, "Hispanic Teen Immigrants: Riding the Roller Coaster of Emotions | Los inmigrantes Hispanos adolescentes: una montaña rusa de emociones" will be on show at the front gates of CNS at these times: May 7, 12:30-2:30, May 8, 4-6pm, and May 9, 2-4 pm.

Kabbalat Shabbat with Ilene Safyan

Friday, May 8 & June 4, 6:15pm

Musical Midrash Project

Join Mark Sherman as he shares his original songs based on the weekly Torah reading. More info at: musicalmidrash.com/events.

* **Leviticus: The Musical - Tue, May 11, 7:00-8:00pm** Mark will present ten original songs that "put the love in Leviticus."

* **Weekly Workshop - Sunday, 8:00am and Monday, 6:00pm.**

Israel360: Ben Gurion, Epilogue/Discussion

Sunday, May 16, 10:30-11:30am

Congregation Neveh Shalom, Israel360, and American Associates, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev are pleased to invite you to a free online screening of the award-winning documentary, *Ben-Gurion, Epilogue*, to be enjoyed anytime between May 6-19. Then join us for a free Zoom discussion with the film's director, Yariv Mozer, live from Israel on May 16 at 10:30am. RSVP required.

Shavuot Happenings

Sunday-Tuesday, May 16-18

Please check our eblasts for information about our awesome Shavuot happenings.

Tichon 7-12th Grade Graduation and Presentations

Wednesday, May 19, 7:00pm

Join us for this uplifting evening as we honor three Tichon graduates: Andrew Caplan, Joshua Weinrobe, and Micah Antick-Oslund. We'll also enjoy presentations by our Mensches and Mavens and our Tichon Social Justice project participants as they reflect on this year.

The Torah of Today: What Judaism Can Teach America, with Rav D

Sunday, May 23, 4:00pm

In a time of social unrest, we will take a look at how trends in America over the last century brought us together or pulled us apart. We will compare those conditions with Jewish wisdom on building sustainable communities.

Exercise with Coach Glen Coblens

Wednesdays, 10:30-11:15am

A dynamic and fun online workout for all focusing on building core strength. Guaranteed to be a stress reducer and energy builder. No previous athletic ability required.

Through a Lens of Fire: Hasidic Insights on Torah with Rav D

Wendsdays, 12:30-1:30pm

The Hasidic approach to Torah utilizes a sophisticated psychological approach that was ahead of its time.

Morning Minyan and Shabbat Services

Please visit the website for links at: nevehshalom.org/virtual-services

Morning Minyan

Mon.-Fri., 7:15am & Sun., 9:00am

Kabbalat Shabbat Service

Fridays, 6:15pm

Saturday Morning Shabbat Service

Saturdays, 9:30am

Downstairs Minyan Shabbat Service

2nd, 4th, 5th Saturdays, 9:30am

Unity Shabbat

Friday, May 28 & June 11, 9:30am

Join us for these special once-a-month Shabbat programs featuring guest faith leaders from around the city. **5/28:** Victor Alvarizares. **6/11:** Emmett Wheatfall.

Young Families

Please visit the website for links at: nevehshalom.org/virtual-services. For more information, please contact Rabbi Eve at: eposen@nevehshalom.org.

Kiddush Club

1st & 3rd Saturdays, 9:30am

Morah Sarah Rohr and Moreh Gershon Liberman alternate leading Kiddush Club.

Tot Shabbat

1st & 3rd Saturdays, 10:30am

Join Morah Levia as she leads our Tot Shabbat service.

4th Fridays Sing-a-Long with Rabbi Eve

4th Fridays, 5:15pm

Join Rabbi Eve as she leads our Shabbat service for families on Zoom. We'll do a bit of singing, a story, and blessings. *We are hoping to do a special "in-person" 4th Friday in the parking lot on May 28. Please stay tuned for more info.*



Member News

Kvell With Us

Mazel tov to **Ken Klein**, whose short film, *Almost There*, won "The Award of Merit: Short Film" category at the 2021 IndieFEST Film Awards.

Mazel tov to **Marla and Bob Weiner** on the birth of twin grandbabies, Gabriel and Bennett, born on January 16. The parents are Matt and Mairin Weiner, the big sisters are Natalie and Sarah, and the big brother is Ryan. Other grandparents are Mike and Pam McCarthy of Livermore, Ca.

Mazel tov to proud grandparents **Raúl and Lidia Krivoy** on the birth of their grandson Hayes Jason Krivoy on January 27th in San Francisco, CA. Baby Hayes and his parents, Brian Krivoy and Priscilla Tsai, are all doing well.

Mazel tov to proud grandparents **Susan and Seth Garber** on the birth of their granddaughter, Quinn Garber, on January 28th in Portland. Baby Garber and her parents Mike and Mandy and big brother Kai are all doing well.

Mazel tov to **Mark Sherman** whose Musical Midrash Project was featured in the BBC News *Heart and Soul* program about Modern Midrash with the description, "Michael Goldfarb explores being Jewish today through the ancient practice of Midrash."

Mazel to **Seth Greenberg & Giovana Oaxaca** on their marriage on March 27th. Proud parents are **Susan and David Greenberg** and Gaby and Carlos Oaxaca. Grandparents are **Marlene Abrams** and Marilyn Greenberg. Also, Mazel tov to **Seth** on being accepted into the Masters in Music Therapy program at Augsburg University in Minneapolis, MN.



Thank you to everyone who helped make the Blood Drive a success! Our goal was 21 and we collected 23 units of blood. We exceed our goal by two. Woohoo! These 23 units will help to serve up to 69 patients in need!

Yihi Zichram Baruch – Our condolences to CNS members who have recently lost loved ones.

We are sorry to inform you of the passing of **Timofey L. Gitlin, z"l** on January 26th at the age of 93. Timofey was born in Kiev, Ukraine in October 1927. He is loved and remembered by his dear wife **Inna** and his children **Irina (Alex Berkovich) Gitlin** and **Leonora Gitlin**, and Irina's ex-husband, **Alex (Zhenya Dashevsky) Berenbeym**, and three grandchildren.

We are sorry to inform you of the passing of long time CNS congregant, **Herbert Hochfeld, z"l** on February 12th at the age of 98. Herb was loved and remembered by his children **Susan (John) Cullerton**, **Barbara Hochfeld** and **Harvey (Susan) Hochfeld** as well as 3 grandchildren (**Andrew, Julia, and Dawson**) and one great-grandchild (**Elliot**).

We are sorry to inform you of the passing of **Sharon Lee Rapoport, z"l**, sister to **Carolyn (Gary) Weinstein**, on March 2, 2021, in Arizona.

We are sorry to inform you of the passing of **Ruth Shlachter, z"l** who died on March 24, 2021. She was buried in Cleveland, OH. She was preceded in death by her son Jay and husband Harry. She is survived by sons **Robert (Mara) Shlachter**, Marc (Kumiko), and Barry. She had seven grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

We are sorry to inform you of the passing of **Susan Ruth Korey, z"l** who died on April 9, 2021. She was the beloved sister of Nikki (Stuart) Director, and aunt of **Jenn (Dave) Director Knudsen**, and Abby Director. She was preceded in death by her husband **Merritt Linn z"l**.

We are sorry to inform you of the passing of **Leonard Krichevsky z"l**, father of **Brent, Randy, and Scott Krichevsky**.

The congregation gratefully acknowledges the following contributions:

Adult Education Fund

Jay & Michele Gilbert:

In memory of Mitchell Gilbert

Dan & Barbara Steinfeld:

In memory of Avia Steinfeld

In memory of Irving Blank

Aliyah Donation

Roz Babener:

In memory of Jeffrey Babener

Annual Giving

Hilary Nan Barthold:

In memory of Mr. Michael Rosenfield

Jill Johanson:

In memory of Patrick Kubin

In memory of Carl Kubin

Rebekah & Ezra Saville:

In appreciation of Rabbi Eve Posen

Becky Menashe Bookshelf Fund

Rick & Abby Menashe:

In memory of Sylvia Jackson

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In memory of Gloria Bacharach

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In memory of Susan Twain

In memory of Bobby Capper

In memory of Shirley Twain

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The Blackbaud Giving Fund (Jill Pelavin):

In honor of Cantor Eyal Bitton

Tyler & Lindsay Gluckman:

In appreciation of Cantor Eyal Bitton

Myra Jackson:

In honor of Cantor Eyal Bitton

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Nancy Fruchtengarten:

In memory of Blossom Volchok

In memory of Janet Grayson Maylie

Rosalie Goodman:

In memory of Mike Horenstein

Max Liebreich:

In memory of Lenore Liebreich

Allison Mudrick:

In memory of Earl Oller

CNS:150 Funding Our Future

Wendy & Steven Kahn:

In memory of Sharon Rapoport

Tony & Priscilla Kostiner:

In memory of Sharon Rapoport

Carolyn & Gary Weinstein:

In honor of Rob & Mara Shlachter

Community Enrichment Award Dinner

Susan Korey:

In memory of Merritt Linn

Donna Jackson Membership Enrichment Fund

Wendi & Sanford Menashe:

In honor of Donna Jackson

Feldstein Library Fund

Elliot & Suzanne Axel:

In memory of Maurice Goldberg

In memory of Lena Axel

Martha & Glenn Decherd:

In memory of Ruth (Dolly) Joern

In memory of Maurine Eve Weil

Ron Eiseman:

In memory of Gerda Eiseman

In memory of Hilde Jacob

In memory of Lottie Eisenhardt

Michael Olds & Gloria Borg Olds:

In memory of Irving Borg

In memory of Harry Borg

Foundation School Fund

Stan & Judy Blauer:

In memory of Samuel Miller

Rich & Roberta Cohon and Family:

In memory of Dorothy Nudelman

In memory of Gloria Bacharach

Andrew Lakefish:

In memory of Richard Lakefish

Irving Leopold:

In memory of Noralee Weinstein

In memory of Samuel Leopold

Randi McLenithan:

In memory of Jack Weinstein

In memory of Marion Weinstein

Joene Rodinsky:

In memory of Eva G. Lewis

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In memory of Cele Schwartz

Gail Semler:

In memory of Nathaniel Jaffe

Mylen & Rosalyn Shenker:

In honor of Lainey Gluckman

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In memory of Mollie Nelson

In memory of Anne Abrams

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In memory of Pearl Adams

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In memory of Wolf & Rivka Rabovitser

Jeff & Sandy Axel:

In honor of Raul & Lidia Krivoy

In memory of Herb Hochfeld

Carol Barer:

In memory of Yetta Donin

In memory of Leonard Donin

Estelle Berman:

In memory of Gloria Bacharach

Barbara Bernstein Fant:

In memory of Percy Bernstein

Stan Blauer:

In memory of Rose Blauer

In memory of Meyer Blauer

Ronald Bockman:

In memory of Barney Bockman

Jerome Brownstein:

In memory of Betty Brownstein

Jane Rosevelt:

In memory of Charles Schroeder

In memory of Marguerite Schroeder

Barry & Barbara Caplan:

In memory of Tillie Caplan

In memory of Philip Caplan

Harvey Checkman:

In memory of David Checkman

Albrecht and Gloria J. Bacharach

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Wynne Cooper:

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In memory of Jay David

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In memory of Reuben DuBoff

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In memory of Frances Eastern

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In memory of Sophia (Sara)

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In memory of Sam Ellis

Michael Feves:

In memory of Sadie Feves

Leslie Galanti:

In memory of Marie Leton

Neesa Galanti:

In memory of Marie Leton

Thelma Geffen:

In honor of Barbara Wolf

In honor of Judy Blauer

Rachael Goldenberg:

In memory of Mildred Goldenberg

Julie Gottlieb:

In memory of Harvey Keller

Joel Grayson:

In memory of Blossom Volchok

Robert Greenberg:

In memory of Jerome Greenberg

Kay Gumbert:

In memory of Grayce Gumbert

Michael Gurfinkel:

In memory of Boris Gurfinkel

Jeff Hamburger:

In memory of Kurt Hamburger

Gregory Harris:

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Marcia & Harry Hauser:

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Irene Hecht:

In memory of Eudice Bernstein

In memory of Malcolm Hecht

Jay Horenstein:

In memory of Bette Londer

Jeffrey Howard:

In memory of Norman Howard

Terry Howard:

In memory of Norman Howard

Linda Jessell:

In memory of Harvey Keller

Julian Kaufman:

In memory of Harold Meyers

In memory of Phineas Stevens

In memory of Helen Powles

Leonard & Mimi Lewitt:

In memory of Ruth Lewitt

Barbara Longaker:

In memory of Marcus & Helen

Mesher

Rudolf & Tamara Lublinsky:

In memory of Tsilya Pirogovsky

Herman Marenstein:

In memory of Louis Marenstein

In memory of Estelle Marenstein

Jo Ellen Miller:

In memory of Joseph Adashek

Simon Moraru:

In memory of Israel Parnus

Allison Mudrick:

In memory of Jake Mudrick

Michael Olds & Gloria Borg Olds:

In memory of Marilyn Shenker

Alkin

In memory of Jack Olds

Raymond Packouz:

In memory of Max Packouz

Mary Peizner:

In memory of Mercada Babani

Robert & Harriet Perkel:

In memory of Earl Goldhammer

In memory of Harry Goldhammer

Boris & Alla Piatski:

In memory of Yevgenia Giterman-Faktorovi

Abram & Rimma Press:

In memory of Gitl Cleyderman

In memory of Abram Rubinovich

In memory of Broha Press

Enya Rabovitser:

In memory of Pesya Khaya Katz

In memory of Rivka & Wolf Rabovitser

The congregation gratefully acknowledges the following contributions:

In memory of Nisl Rabovitser
In memory of Abram Kizhner

Lynn & Arne Rosencrantz:

In honor of Joel Gilbert

Alan & Eve Rosenfeld:

In memory of David Rosenfeld

In memory of Esther Nudelman

Bob & Helene Rosenthal:

In memory of Peggy Maduff

In memory of Jennifer Rosenthal

Ruth Roth:

In memory of Jack Cohen

Daniel Ruimy:

In memory of Joseph Ruimy

Karen & David Sapoznikow:

In memory of Elaine Smelkinson

Chuck & Harriet Saxe:

In memory of Adele Saxe

Jack & Barbara Schwartz:

In memory of Marilyn Shenker
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In memory of Guste Schwarz

Paul & Susan Shaman:

In memory of Mary Shaman

Inna Sheinkman:

In memory of Grigory Amburg

In memory of Yakov Sheynkman

Marjorie Sherman:

In memory of Ronald Meyer

In memory of Bernice Friedman

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In memory of Morton Titelbaum

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In memory of Marc Tobin

Norman & Suzan Wapnick:

In memory of Charles Wapnick

Paul Weiden:

In memory of Isabella Kaufman

In memory of Gerda Weiden

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In memory of Arnold Wohl

Fenya Zamakhover:

In memory of Mark Gutnik

Jay Zidell:

In memory of Emery Zidell

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In memory of Jed Zidell

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In memory of Janet Zuckerman

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In memory of Irwin Holzman

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In honor Mr. & Mrs. Hillel Philip

Nira Levine, Laurie and Ron:

In memory of Leonard Levine

Vic & Toinette Menashe:

In memory of Irwin Holzman

In memory of June Tyler Rogers

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In memory of Denny Singer

Elisa & Joshua Stevens:

In memory of Dianne Hoffman

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In memory of Benjiman Philan

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In memory of Ruth Meyer

In memory of Marilyn Shenker

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In memory of Frieda Katzman

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In memory of Marilyn Alkin

Ellen Singer & Eamon Molloy

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In memory of Herb Hochfeld

In memory of David Spigal

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In memory of Hyman Bookman

Lee Cordova:

In memory of Laura Cordova

Samuel Gottlieb & Carolyn Gorin:

In memory of Sharon Rapoport

Joel Greenblum:

In memory of Murray Greenblum

Randy Hirt:

Get well wishes for Dr. Samuel Hirt

Tony & Priscilla Kostiner:

Get well wishes for Barbara Hochfeld

In memory of Herb Hochfeld

Allan & Nancy Lipton:

Get well wishes for Priscilla

Kostiner

In honor of Mark Sherman

In honor of Jack & Barbara

Schwartz

In memory of Sam Miller

Joel Mullin & Sheri Katz:

In memory of Mr. Herb Hochfeld

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In memory of Herb Hochfeld

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In memory of Judith Kane

Rabbi Isaak Discretionary Fund

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In honor of Rabbi Daniel Isaak

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Get well wishes for Rabbi David

Kosak

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In honor of the Sale of Chametz

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Kosak

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Steven Singer:

In memory of Lewis Singer

Robert & Arleen Zucker:

Get well wishes for Rabbi David

Kosak

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In appreciation of Rabbi Eve Posen

Vladimir Novikov:

In honor of Rabbi Eve Posen

Robbie Ball Memorial Fund for Darfur

Mel & Elaine Ball:

In memory of Rose Ball

In memory of Robert Ball

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In memory of Mary Rosenberg

Rosa Wigmore Holocaust Education Fund

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In memory of Grace Katz
In memory of Irving Katz

Saperstein Chapel Fund

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In memory of Bernice Friedman

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In memory of Timofey Gitlin

Sylvia Pearlman

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In memory of Cele Schwartz

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Bruce Wollstein:
In honor of Mr. Peter Wollstein
Bernice Gevurtz:
In appreciation of Ethan and Elisha

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In memory of Susan Twain
Raquel Zidell:
In memory of Sara Mishkin

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In memory of Max Birnbach

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In honor of Raul Krivoy

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Stuart & Lee Weinstein:
In memory of Noralee Weinstein

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In memory of Tillie Berlant
Bob Weiner:
In memory of Lena Weiner

Yad B'Yad Comforting Mourners

Dale Oller:
In memory of Emery Zidell
In memory of Sidney Oller
In memory of Earl Oller
In memory of Marc Tobin

Forward Progress... In A Most Unusual Year

By Fred Rothstein, Executive Director

Certainly, nobody needs to be reminded that we have been living through the most difficult, unusual, and challenging year of our lives. While that is clearly true for each of us and our families, it is also most assuredly true organizationally for Neveh Shalom as well. That said, it has, nevertheless, been a year of great activity, important work, and essential planning. In addition to our commitment to providing ongoing services as best we could – Foundation School, ALIYAH / Tichon / Adult Education, B'nai Mitzvah, Shabbat and holiday services, Morning Minyan, and Life Cycle events. In addition to all of that, the clergy, staff, and lay leaders have been busy with other projects and achievements as well.

Long Range Plan: Our Long Range Planning Task Force has worked for these

past many months to help in charting the course for CNS's future. If you haven't yet completed the LRP congregant survey, please do so – your input is important and valued. Wonderfully, the LRP has already succeeded in developing and having the BOD approve a new, meaningful and updated Mission / Vision / Values statement to guide our congregation.

Return to Shul: With the central principle of *pikuach nefesh* – the saving and valuing of life – the CNS Reopening Task Force and BOD have adopted a "Return to Shul" plan that provides careful guidance for enabling a safe return to in-person services and programs. We are all looking forward to being with one another again soon at our synagogue home.

Capital Projects: Following over a year of hard work, the Building & Grounds Com-

mittee presented a five-year Capital Projects Plan, which provides a "blueprint" for the Congregation on protecting the investment in our campus. During this general building closure period, we have and will continue to improve and ready our building and campus for full use once again. During the next couple of months, the building will have its exterior painted, new roofs installed, and our parking lot repaved and striped.

Leadership & Governance: The BOD approved a new and updated Employee Handbook this past year, ensuring that we adhere to "best practices" in stewarding the Congregation's relationship with its valued staff team. Additionally, the congregation will have an opportunity to review and approve an updated set of by-laws to assist in governing our organization toward a successful future.



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Thank you for a Successful Fundraiser!

Kol Hakavod! And thank you to everyone for your Generous Donations!

Not only did we “bring the house down” with the unforgettable talent and performance of Shoshana Bean and her friends, but also \$148,000 was raised to support our Foundation School, ALIYAH/Tichon, and Adult Education programs. Education is the lifeline of our congregation, providing avenues for children and adults alike the skills and literacy needed to be active participants in our Jewish world. We are so grateful for your support of our wonderful education programs.

This once-in-a-lifetime virtual experience could not have been produced without the leadership and efforts of our Co-Chairs, Beth and Liza Milliner. A special “shout out” to the amazing committee: Michelle Alberts, Marci Atkins, Steffanie Goldsmith, Jaimie Harper, Geri Luxenberg, Felice Moskowitz,

and Nora Rothstein. And a final post-event “bow” to Michelle Caplan and the entire Neveh Shalom staff for the hours and attention to details to help create a masterful production. Of course, we especially want to thank the incomparable Shoshana Bean for producing and directing this spectacular virtual performance. It truly was a magical evening with our extended Neveh Shalom community. We know you will join us in a big thank you to Shoshana for lifting our spirits and bringing a smile to our faces on Sunday evening!



Co-Chairs, Liza and Beth Milliner