

THE
CHRONICLE

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Would It Be Right To Re:write, If We Could?

By Rabbi David Kosak



The responsibility falls squarely on Mr. Kennedy, my 6th-grade teacher. He had a habit of inscribing Latin phrases on the classroom's blackboard several times a week, if not daily. *Cave canem* – beware of the dog. *Caveat emptor* – let the buyer beware. *Carpe diem* – seize the day. These phrases intrigued me, steering my decision to choose Latin over French or Spanish for my 7th-grade language elective.

Although studying Latin didn't directly improve my spoken-language skills at the time, it significantly enhanced my English vocabulary and proved to be a secret advantage for the SATs. We learned an abundance of Latin roots, prefixes, and suffixes, enabling us to deduce the meanings of unfamiliar words on the standardized tests.

This issue of *The Chronicle*, with its focus on the prefix “re,” rekindles these memories, as “re” signifies “again” or “back” in Latin. English speakers might intuitively understand this given the prevalence of “re” as a prefix in our lan-

guage. Words like rediscover, reimagine, revisit, return, reevaluate, recall, reconstruct, and relent – though the latter may be less obvious to those not versed in Latin – all follow this pattern.

For those of us fascinated by language, these reflections are delightful in and of themselves; however, they also lead us to deeper contemplations about human nature. It's intriguing to ponder why we sometimes repeat actions in hope of a different outcome, while at other times, we seek the comfort of familiarity. For example, we might order our favorite dish at a local restaurant to relive the same delightful taste and experience.

In Hebrew, “re” is translated to שׁוּב, as in *teshuvah*, where we revisit our past actions, reflect on them, and recommit to betterment. The famous High Holiday melody by Shlomo Carlebach, urging us to “return to the land of your soul,” invites us to rediscover our essential nature through *teshuvah*. This concept underscores our realization that sometimes we regret our actions, while at other times, we aim to reinforce our best selves and choices.

Can we ever truly return to our past? Marcel Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past* might suggest so. However, the original French title, *À la recherche du temps perdu* – in search of lost time – offers a more poignant insight. It suggests the elusiveness of the past, underscoring the importance of making prudent decisions in the present.

Reflecting on *teshuvah*, Adin Steinsaltz proposed that forgiveness alters the nature of time from linear to cyclical, enabling not just a revisitation but an amendment of the past. *Teshuvah* af-

fords us the opportunity to mend the fragmented aspects of our lives and restore a semblance of a former world.

While we may desire Rabbi Steinsaltz's interpretation to be true, reality might suggest otherwise. Nevertheless, the essence of his message seems to be the importance of releasing the past's stronghold on us. To release is to loosen, implying that freeing ourselves from the past is within our grasp.

The challenge, however, lies in confronting unhealthy shame. Healthy shame is crucial for sustaining relationships, as it prompts us to acknowledge our missteps and assume responsibility for our actions. Unhealthy shame, in contrast, is mired in the past, casting judgment on our essence rather than our actions, anchoring us to past mistakes and defining us by those moments.

Antonia's Line, a remarkable Dutch film from 1995, depicts a matriarchal community led by Antonia, where members are empowered to flourish, quirks and all. Towards the film's end, Antonia comforts young Sarah about an impending death within their tight-knit community:

Antonia: “Nothing dies forever. Something always remains. A little something from which new things grow. So life begins, without knowing where it came from or why it exists.”

Sarah: “But why?”

Antonia: “Because life wants to live.”

Sarah: “Isn't there a heaven either?”

Antonia: “This is the only dance we dance.”

This exchange has resonated with me,

Continued on next page

Re:vision, Re:new

Rabbi's Corner

By Rabbi Eve Posen

Turn it over again for everything is in it." This famous quote by Rabbi Ben Bag-Bag in *Pirkei Avot, Wisdom of Our Ancestors*, has long been a favorite of mine because it can be applied to so many different aspects of life. It can be applied to rereading a favorite book and discovering new meanings, rewatching a favorite television show to connect in a different way, or the way we read the Torah over again each year and finding new meaning. Judaism is a religion with a foundation of renewal and revision.

Judaism as a rich tapestry of faith, culture, and tradition, has evolved over the centuries through a process of continuous revision. The power of revision within Judaism lies in its ability to adapt to changing circumstances while preserving the core tenets that define the identity of the Jewish people.

At the heart of Judaism, Torah is a sacred text that serves as a guide for Jewish life. The Torah itself has spawned meticulous revisions, with scholars and sages contributing commentaries and interpretations throughout history. The power of these revisions lies in their capacity to breathe new life into ancient texts, making them relevant and applicable to contemporary challenges.

One of the most notable instances of revision within Judaism is the Talmud, a

vast compilation of teachings, commentaries, and debates that expounds upon the laws and principles found in the Torah. The Talmud is a dynamic and evolving work, with different Jewish communities contributing their insights over the centuries. This ongoing process of interpretation and revision has allowed Judaism to remain a living and adaptable religion.

The power of revision in Judaism is not confined to textual interpretations alone; it extends to the very structure of religious observance. Jewish rituals and customs have been subject to adaptation based on geographic, social, and cultural contexts. As Jewish communities dispersed across the globe, they encountered diverse cultures and traditions. The ability to revise and adapt rituals allowed Judaism to integrate and coexist with various cultural influences without compromising its core.

In essence, the power of revision within Judaism is a testament to its resilience and ability to navigate the complexities of time. It allows Judaism to maintain its spiritual core while embracing the challenges and opportunities presented by each era. The dynamic interplay be-



tween tradition and adaptation ensures that Judaism remains a vibrant and relevant force in the lives of its followers, illustrating the enduring strength that lies in the powers of revision.

Another interpretation of Rabbi Ben Bag-Bag's statement might be "Everything old is new again." While change can be challenging, Judaism is founded on the ways in which we have a *hiddush*, or innovation, to make the old fit our new. May this Spring offer us the space to revise our thinking, renew our faith, and reconnect to our community.

Re:write *Continued from previous page*

offering a profound counterpoint to our innate human desire to "re."

Yet, I must confess, a part of me yearns to return to Mr. Kennedy's classroom,

where I would replace those Latin phrases with quotes from Miguel de Cervantes, Isabel Allende, or Jorge Luis Borges. Latin might have bolstered my SAT scores, but Spanish would have con-

nected me with 460 million more people who could have regaled me with their stories. If only we could "re"—we would all discover new reasons to rejoice!

Re:building a People

By Cantor Eyal Bitton

Cantor's Corner

The astonishing amount of antisemitism we have witnessed since October 7, the largest and most gruesome massacre of Jews since the Holocaust, has profoundly changed our perception of the world around us. Before confronting the tsunami of antisemitism that has cascaded into Western societies across the globe, we must be firm in our own identity. Since October 7, I have held that three steps are needed in order to rebuild and reinvigorate ourselves with Jewish pride so that we can withstand the outside pressures.

1. Identify and cultivate allies. Who has stood with us? Who has abandoned us? Who has understood that there's a movement to destroy the Jewish state, and that such an act would mean utter calamity for the Jewish people around the world? Who has grasped that the dissolution of Israel, which some call "decolonization," is only possible through massive ethnic cleansing and genocide of at least half the world's Jewish population? Who has shown sympathy to the Jewish people for not wanting to return to being a stateless people?

Cultivating these friendships at the community level does not mean agreeing on

all local, social, or political issues. For decades, American Jews have asked Israel to set aside differences with mortal enemies for the sake of peace. If we can ask Israel to take such steps, why can't we, locally, find common ground with people who we might disagree with yet who are far from being our mortal enemies?

2. Demand accountability from our institutions, academic, economic, social, commercial, cultural, and political. We have seen institutions tolerate hate, intimidation, threats, and worse towards Jews. We must be prepared to pull support from places that prove to be hostile or dangerous to Jewish identity.

3. Transform Jewish education. We should all be proud of what Mel Berwin, director of Aliyah, has accomplished and continues to accomplish in our supplemental Hebrew school. I know I am. On a wider scale, though, I believe that we need to re-examine Jewish education across the U.S. post-October 7. There's the current reality of what our youth are facing in universities that continues to trickle down into K-12 education. Our Jewish youth need to know how to confront that reality, how to confront the accusations and ostracization they may face. They need to know that they will



likely face a litmus test of acceptance: abandon Jewish peoplehood and be accepted or embrace Jewish peoplehood and be vilified. They need to learn the love of Zion, the love of Am Israel, and the connectedness to one another as a people rooted in our homeland.

If we are to have a future in America, we have two options: separate Judaism from Jewish peoplehood or take the steps above to rebuild and reaffirm our identity as a proud people who have historical, spiritual, and unshakeable ties to our ancestral homeland *and* who love this country.

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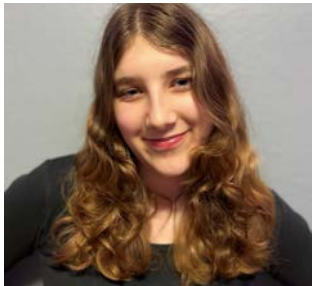


Upcoming B'nai Mitzvah



Lily Renee Simms | April 5

Lily Renee Simms is the loving daughter of proud parents Adam and Jamie. Lily is a wonderful big sister to her younger sisters, Alyssa and Julia (and kitty brother Smokey). She is a stellar student in 7th grade at Lake Oswego Junior High. After school, she loves to dance, play golf and soccer, bake, solve puzzles, and hang out with her friends. Lily, true to her New York City roots, is also a proud Yankees fan.



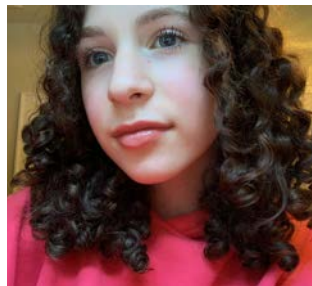
Alivia Stiber | April 13

Alivia Stiber is the daughter of Barri and Fred Stiber, older sister to Eitan Stiber and dog Teddy, and granddaughter to Joan and Jules Stiber of Portland, OR, and Robbie and Paul Grimstad of Vancouver, WA. Alivia is in 7th grade at Laurelhurst. Alivia loves playing basketball, listening to Taylor Swift, and going to Starbucks with friends.



Jonah Benjamin Bradbury | May 25

Jonah Benjamin Bradbury is the son of Randi Sachs and Drew Bradbury, grandson of Judy and Ned (z"l) Sachs, Judith Bradbury, and John Bradbury and Fran Fergusson. Jonah is a 7th grader at OES who is usually found playing piano, tennis, or ping pong, as well as teaching himself math or cuddling with his dog, Sadie.



Samara Schulman | June 15

Samara Schulman will become a Bat Mitzvah on June 15th. She is the daughter of Peter Schulman and Melissa Jacobs and has an older brother, Adrian. Her grandparents are Joseph and Rita Schulman and Geri Jacobs. Samara is in the 7th grade at West Sylvan Middle School, where she is in the Spanish immersion program. Outside of school, Samara enjoys ballet, drawing, and spending time with her friends.



Asher Weinstein | June 22

Asher David Weinstein is the son of Ross Weinstein and Darcy Hoyt, mischievous younger brother of Talia Weinstein, and the grandson of Dorothy and Basil Weinstein (z"l) of London, United Kingdom, and Donald and Jacki Hoyt of Portsmouth, New Hampshire. In his spare time, Asher enjoys Taekwondo, gaming, listening to music, and playing with his dog, Crumppet. Asher is a 7th grader at Jackson Middle School.

Re:collecting the Past Two Years!

By Liza Milliner, CNS President

On February 7th, I found myself staring at the subject line of an email from **Brian Rohr**: “RE: Regarding the April-June 2024 Chronicle issue.” I quickly scrolled through the email to see what *The Chronicle* topic would be. To my surprise it read: “Liza Milliner: 350-450 words (last article as president – you can make it up to 550 words if needed).” My initial reaction? WHAT? How could it be that the end of my tenure as president has arrived? I immediately had mixed emotions: part of me was excited to move on to my next chapter in synagogue volunteering, while another part felt there was still unfinished business to attend to.

When I took on the role, my goals were twofold: physically re-engage our community and programming within our building, but also navigating the retirement of **Fred Rothstein**, our former Executive Director. Even without a successor lined up, Fred was set on bidding adieu in June 2023. My grand plans for increasing committee leadership development in my first year were swiftly replaced by the urgent task of forming Round 2 of the ED search committee. From that search, we welcomed **Marlene Edenzon** into our fold: what an honor it has been to collaborate with her this past year. In one of our initial meetings, I shared with her my vision of reuniting our community physically and offering enhanced leadership training to our board of directors and committee chairs.

Marlene joined CNS in May 2023; by August, we put together a full-day board of directors’ retreat that laid the groundwork for strategic board involvement. Our *kehillah kedosha* (sacred community) has flourished, and our building is

busy again with activities practically every day. Every Monday, as I read the “Our News” email, my FOMO (fear of missing out) kicks into high gear!

From lectures to holiday festivities, Men’s Club and Sisterhood events, or unique Shabbat services, I eagerly scan for which events I can squeeze into my calendar. What truly warms my heart, though, is witnessing the fantastic turnouts captured in event photos and writeups. Thank you to everyone for actively participating at Neveh Shalom.

Our programs owe much of their success to **Lisa Richmond**, our stellar Director of Programming. I’m excited to share our re-energized Youth programs catering to children from 3rd to 12th grade. Led by **Sarah Rohr**, Youth Activities Coordinator, CNS youth have participated in activities from ritual events to social events including Youth High Holiday services, dinners, movies, hiking, and *Chesed* work, the preparation of food for our *kehillah* members in need as well as the greater community. **Rabbi Posen’s** YAFE: Youth and Family Engagement, continues to produce meaningful—and fun—religious and social events. Recent and upcoming events include Tot Shabbat and Kiddush Club, 4th Fridays with Rabbi Posen, PJ Havdallah, Family Camp, and Build Our Garden for Foundation School.

When asked about my greatest challenge, there’s no hesitation: navigating the aftermath of October 7th with sensitivity while continuing to celebrate joyous occasions. Witnessing our com-



munity rally together and CNS hosting solidarity gatherings underscored just how integral our synagogue is to the Portland community. Since that fateful day, CNS’s programming has served as a place of learning and healing, helping us process the events unfolding in Israel.

It has been an immense honor and privilege to serve as president these past two years. To each person who shared their thoughts and ideas with me, I extend my heartfelt gratitude and eagerly anticipate our continued collaboration on committees in the future. To the dedicated staff and clergy, thank you for making Neveh Shalom your home, not just a job. To the Board of Directors, your dedication to Neveh Shalom supports our welcoming, inclusive, and caring community. When we walk into Neveh Shalom, we feel all the love from our current, past, and future generations. Let’s continue all this great success!

Read more about Liza's term on page 13.

Re:reflecting on a Year

By Marlene Edenzon, Executive Director

Rarely does a day go by that I'm not stopped and asked, "How are you settling in?" My usual response is to dismiss the question with a quick "I'm good," and quite honestly, I am! It is hard to believe that I am coming up on my first year in Portland and at Neveh Shalom. An anniversary is cause for reflection. Reflecting on my experiences this year immediately brought to mind our Neveh Shalom theme, *Lev Shalem. How do you learn, love, and lead with an open heart?*

I found that looking for the answers to this question became a guide to how I approached this new time in my life. Making the decision to leave my home of sixty years, move to Portland, and start a new job was not easy, but once made, the decision was intentional. Lev Shalem provided structure for my year of exploration. There was so much for me to learn, and there still is. I jumped

wholeheartedly into learning about the people that make up the *kehillah* at Neveh Shalom.

I was invited to share a beautiful Shabbat dinner with the **Axel family** and spent time at the home of **Marcy and Ron Morris** with their *havurah*. I learned about the rich history of Neveh Shalom and the desire to see the legacy live on for generations to come. I learned that members are truly family and that belonging means something. I've learned that the Neveh Shalom community shows up, participates.

The stories about receiving and giving are equally important. I learned that working at Neveh Shalom is not just a job but a labor of love. Every employee feels like family. The staff genuinely like each other and their jobs supporting the community. They were hesitant about this new person coming on-board, yet they welcomed me **wholeheartedly**.

I approach *leading* with an open mind and an **open heart**. My goal is to be a leader that is caring, committed, flexible, and decisive. Congregation Neveh Shalom is made up of members, lay leaders, and professionals who come together to further the vision, mission, and defining values of our community. Sharing my experience in synagogue



leadership has provided a new way of approaching how we steward the needs of a community that has sustained us, while remaining relevant in the lives of our younger members. It means working closely with the clergy and lay leadership to support the spiritual, cultural, and social needs of our *Kehillah*.

I am especially grateful for the generosity and grace that was shared with me as the newcomer. Recognizing faces and putting names to them takes time, so please continue to introduce yourself as there are many of you and only one of me. Poke your head in my office and say hello when you're on campus. Lean in, take part, make community. We are Neveh Shalom. Together we are community.

With gratitude and love,
Marlene



Marlene Edenzon (2nd from right), with Liza Milliner, Danit Rothstein, and Marissa Richardson

Re:Connecting with Jewish Education

By Mel Berwin, Director of Congregational Learning



In our last *Chronicle* edition, I wrote about how we educate our youth in times of war and threat to the Jewish people. This time, I want to turn to the positive side of the challenges we've faced this year.

There's no question that October 7 and the resulting political demonstrations have made many of us draw new lines. It's also prompted some Jewish families to connect with synagogues who haven't before. In ALIYAH, we've had eight new families join since October!

We're also seeing higher levels of participation by families this year than in the past. When ALIYAH K-6 grades led a Friday evening Shabbat service in February, the main sanctuary was packed with children, parents, grandparents, siblings, and friends, as well as our usual Friday evening shul-goers. The kids led many of the prayers, from *Shalom Aleichem* to *Adon Olam*, and a few songs as well—our younger ones leading “Bim Bam Shabbat Shalom” and our older students singing the Israeli classic “Ani v'Atah—You and I Will Change the World.” Dinner afterwards was buzzing, with 200 people attending. More than ever, it feels like our

families want to be here, connecting with the Jewish community.

The theme of connection resonates in our classrooms as well. I recently asked my teachers to reflect on how they teach the “big Jewish ideas” of their curriculum, and how they can tell when the kids are learning. Here are a few responses:

Kindergarten—Morah Meital and Morah Miri

In Kindergarten, we learn what it means to be Jewish. More than just learning together, we are becoming one group. We are learning about the Jewish calendar, holidays, Shabbat: the kids are realizing that there is a whole vocabulary of Jewish tradition and the year.

1st Grade—Morah Hani and Morah Abby

We have a lot of children with a lot of big feelings. As we learn the Torah stories—Jacob and Esav, the servant Eliezer who is tasked with finding a wife—I ask the children, “Is this a big problem or a small problem? How do you think they will solve it?” We are thinking about how our ancestors navigated these challenges and relating their problems and solutions to our lives.

3rd Grade—Morah Amanda

We are learning to participate as a community. Today we finished learning about Purim. We had a circle-share of what each person had learned. It's a “yes and” process. Each child adds to the story another one told and adds details. They really have to listen to each other in order to do that. It's cooperative learning.

5th Grade—Moreh Gal

There are no exams in ALIYAH. What kids take away is as much a sense of community as the content that we're teaching. In our class we focus on the lifecycle rituals of Judaism and building on that Jewish vocabulary. We are practicing for the Jewish wedding. They are learning the songs, the dances, and the blessings, but they're also learning that we all feel less self-conscious when everyone sings or dances together.

Music—Moreh John

We are learning traditional and non-traditional Jewish music and dance that we want them to recognize throughout their lives. The music of Shabbat, holidays, and weddings... The kids are additionally connecting with each other through rhythm and melody.

Art—Morah Bari

There's so much that kids are learning in Art; I try to communicate the whole story through what I send home and what I post for parents on Facebook. What I see that shows me they are learning is that they are willing to try new things and take risks. They are always talking to each other about what they are trying, to share ideas, and to help each other.

Speaking of connection, from now through the end of the year, our Parent Committee will be hosting parent coffees each week on Sunday mornings, which is a chance for parents to stay after ALIYAH begins, meet each other, and shmooze. If you're in the building—come say hello!

Re:remembering Betje

By Naomi Leavitt

My daughter **Bella** had a Bat Mitzvah twin, Betje de Vries, who died in the Holocaust. Believe it or not, that “twinship” started from a Facebook ad. For once the algorithm was spot on! An ad from Yad VaShem, the holocaust memorial and center in Israel, was promoting a Twinning Project. I was intrigued, so I signed up.

When a packet came in the mail, we were suddenly connected with Betje de Vries, who was born in Amsterdam. Bella’s middle name and her Hebrew name are Batya, so the name Betje was a lovely match for her. We learned about Betje’s family, were given stunning photos of each of her family members, and received some suggestions on how to incorporate a Bat Mitzvah twin in our upcoming *simcha*.

Two summers ago, while we were in the Netherlands, I hoped to make some connections to Betje’s past. We had some information from the testimony pages in the Yad Vashem packet, including her former address. We made a point to stand in front of her house on what would have been her 91st birthday. It was a profound and meaningful moment.

I was so curious to know who had signed the testimonies for Yad Vashem. These



These Stolpersteine are in front of the home Betje’s family lived in until they were taken during the war

forms verifying that this person lived and died during the war and are typically filled out by a surviving family member. I could tell it was a Dutch person from the handwriting. I sent a letter via post. I received a text response a few days later insisting we have lunch so we could talk. I didn’t even know who this person was yet, and we were being invited over!

Reini, who is 84, had filled out the testimonies. Her mother and Betje’s mother were sisters, making Reini and Betje first cousins. We spent several hours at Reini’s house with her daughter Judith, hearing their stories and understanding the past.

Throughout Europe there are stumble stones, called Stolpersteine, in front of the homes of people who were victims of World War II, most often Jews. Each one shows the name of the person, the dates of their deportation, and their death. They are placed right on the sidewalk, so you stumble over them: they are just there, out in the open. The individual, personal part of history is right there in front of you.

During our time with Judith and Reini, we asked if there were stumble stones for Betje and her family. Since there weren’t, we asked if we could help make that happen. Reini and Judith gave us their blessing. Each stone costs \$150; we had hoped to raise enough to cover five stones for Betje and her immediate family. This became the *tikkun olam*, or repairing the world, part of Bella’s Bat Mitzvah.

We were completely blown away by the response and support we received when we shared Bella’s project. Over 39 families from all over the U.S. contributed to the stones, so



Bella reading her speech next to Naomi and two of Reini’s children

we raised enough money to pay for 11 stones. Bella spoke proudly at her Bat Mitzvah of this girl she didn’t know but was close to. She honored Betje during her *simcha* and made sure her memory wasn’t forgotten.

Last spring we were in Amsterdam for a whirlwind trip. The stones for Betje’s family and cousins were being laid in a special ceremony, and Reini and Judith invited us to be a part of it. Bella and I got to speak, joined by ambassadors from the U.S., Israel, and Germany. We stood in front of Betje’s former home and honored her family. We sang, prayed, and cried. It was an incredible experience which we are truly grateful for.

May the memories of Betje’s entire family be for a blessing. *Yom Hashoah begins at sundown May 5.*



Gathering with Reini and her children, the maker of the stones, the U.S. ambassador to the Netherlands, and the Leavitts

Re:visiting - Lev Notes = Love Notes

By Jenn Director Knudsen

It really is lovely getting anything in the mail from a real person," said **Gail Sherman**, referring both to hard-copy letters that arrive in one's mailbox and those that aren't a bill or ad for 1-800-Carpet. Regarding Congregation Neveh Shalom's Lev Note initiative, begun at the start of this Jewish New Year, Gail said, "(Receiving) the notes themselves confirm community. A Lev Note is not just a random note, but it's an immediate way to recognize shared values in a community."

The Lev Note name is a riff on the idea of a "love note" that originated from synagogue staff's collaborative conversations about this year's overarching theme: "*Lev Shalem: How Do We Learn, Love, and Lead with Our Whole Hearts?*" Lev Note packets – available for free in a Neveh Shalom main office near you – are specially designed to encourage congregants to write and send notes to others as a show of appreciation, if not love, **Marlene Edenzon**, the CNS executive director, explains.

"They are there to help people show gratitude, appreciation and love, and be connected to community," she stated. "Lev Notes are a great way to promote these ideas and are how individuals in our *kehillah* can show love with a whole heart," Marlene noted, providing a key definition, wholeheartedness, of *Lev*

Shalem. She added, "Those who participated as both sender and receiver in the launch of this initiative in Fall 2023 have really appreciated it."

Jennifer and Mark Kalenscher and **Lidia and Raul Krivoy** have been on both ends of Lev Notes. "I think the Lev Notes are a great addition to the many ways and opportunities Neveh provides congregants to reach out, connect, or touch someone," Lidia and Raul expressed in a joint email.

"We'd sent a few cards before we got one ourselves," they continued. "When Raul got one it inspired him to write a couple of new ones to folks who did great work for the shul. It was a great feeling to receive a thoughtful note from the heart, knowing that the sender took the time to acknowledge us."

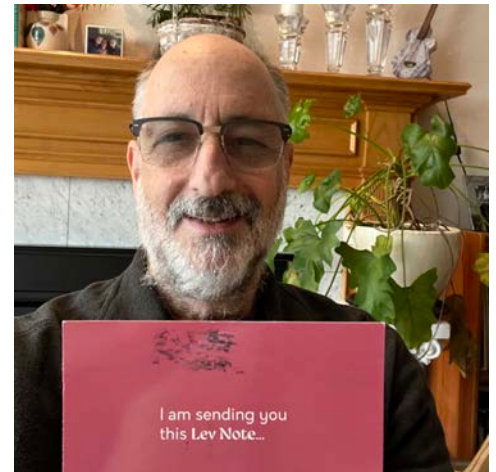
Mark, incoming Board president, also received a note. "It was a pleasant surprise," he said, "and made me feel seen and appreciated for my contributions. This is a simple yet meaningful way to tell people how much we value them as congregants and individuals."

Marlene hopes more members of our *kehillah* will help reinvigorate the Lev Note enterprise. There are so many reasons to send one (or more), including for Father's Day, graduations, and related rites of passage, as well as "just because."



Lidia and Raul Krivoy

"Any way you can show 'I'm thinking about you' is a good thing," Marlene stated, noting, "A little retro is good, too, and these postcards take a moment longer than an email or text and helps make more intimate our large institution." She added that a new theme is in the works for next year, so get a Lev Note packet of five while you can.



Mark Kalenscher with a Lev Note he received in the mail

Gail's younger sister died in August 2023, shortly before the High Holy Days, and her sorrow was heavy. She'd recently read a shul eblast about Lev Notes and realized, "I could use them to acknowledge those who were in touch with me after her death." She took a pack of the postcards emblazoned with the Lev Shalem logo – two fingerprints in the shape of a heart – and wrote to fellow *kehillah* members.

"It was really healing for me to do that; I feel connected to the larger CNS community in doing so," Gail said. "For me, this is what *Lev Shalem* means, to facilitate being in community, to have been supported after the death of my baby sister."

Gail urges you to grab some postcards and take a moment to send a note from your *Lev Shalem*, whole heart: "We don't want to generate dead trees [unused paper] but we do want to generate a heart connection between Jews. All people really do feel touched by getting a personal note in the mail, and it just doesn't take that long to do."

More details can be found at this link: nevehshalom.org/levnotes

Re:port - I Came to Help Israel

By Emily Yeomans

It's 1:30 pm as the plane lands at Ben Gurion, but my eyes are burning from overtiredness. I exit the terminal and make my way to baggage claim. Photos of hostages line the walkways, demanding to be brought home, now.

"What is the purpose of your visit?" inquires the customs agent. I mull over potential replies before spitting out: "I'm here to visit family." He tells me to enjoy my trip. While my response is truthful, my trip halfway around the globe is about much more than simply visiting family. I am here to show solidarity with Israel.

My cousin Chaya picks me up at the airport. We talk about her twin brother, an IDF Combat Officer, who was killed in Gaza in November. I fight back tears as she speaks with a stoic calmness. "We can't let Arnon's death be in vain. We must fight on. It's what he would have wanted," she tells me, in a tone driven by a deep respect for her homeland.

We head to Jerusalem to drop off a suitcase full of supplies I brought for a doc-



Emily and soldier at a military base

tor in need. She is overjoyed with gratitude. Next, we go to the Kotel. Tears stream down our cheeks as we pray for the safe return of the hostages and peace for Israel. In an effort to seal our prayers, we carefully step away from the wall walking backward.

The next few days are spent volunteering on agricultural farms, where I make new friends from all over the globe. The farmers are grateful for the extra hands and send us home with containers of freshly picked strawberries and oranges.

I wake up on Thursday and try to mentally prepare for the day. I'm heading to the Negev with Zemer, an activist who helps people bear witness to the October 7th atrocities. The air is heavy as we discuss politics and the war. We stop at a bomb shelter in Sderot covered in bullet holes. We see hundreds of cars that were blown up by grenades, the owners' contents still visible: a hairbrush, an open pack of gum, a water bottle. We pay our respects at a kibbutz where dozens of Filipino farm workers were slaughtered, and then we head to the site of the Nova Music Festival in Re'im. Loud artillery booms in Gaza punctuate our emotions every few minutes.

At a soldier rest area in Shuva, I hand out the socks and cards I collected from Oregon, along with hugs. The soldiers are appreciative of the support from global Jews. I thank them for doing the difficult work of protecting all of us. Zemer and I drive home in quiet contemplation.

Shabbat is spent with my family in Yesud HaMa'ala, near Lebanon. Booms from the Iron Dome awaken me at night in re-



Emily and her cousin Chaya at the Kotel

sponse to rockets. When Shabbat is over, I visit my dad's grave in Tzfat. As I set down rocks on his grave, I consider what he might say about the current situation. I can hear his voice ringing in my head, saying "Be proud of your Judaism."

It is my last day in Israel and Hostage Square is quiet. A few people are holding signs demanding the Red Cross do their job. A woman is singing an Ishay Ribo song while a man next to her holds a poster with hostage Noa Argamani on it. I recall her story from the news and wonder if they are related.

Chaya drives me to the airport that night. We hug tightly and fight back tears. I check my bags and walk past the hostage posters once again. I text Chaya when I land in L.A. "Thank you. For everything. Will try to come back this summer."

I head to Customs. "What was the nature of your visit to Israel?" I scrutinize the question more carefully this time before responding. "To help," I reply. "I came to help Israel."

Realizing We Belong to Them All

By Emily Silverman

There's a tradition on Shavuot night to stay up until sunrise studying Torah. Today when I think about pulling an all-nighter, it usually involves humidifiers and children's ibuprofen, but twenty years ago, when I was in seminary, Shavuot night found the *beit midrash* filled to the brim with men and women learning Torah from after the evening prayers until the first light of morning.

I always felt pressure to decide how I would fill those ten hours of overnight study. It's momentous—what book does one open to commemorate the receiving of the entire Torah? One tradition is to read the first and last line of every single book, from Genesis to Uktzim (the last chapter of the *Mishna*). Some focus on texts related to the holiday itself. I always gravitated towards some spiritual text that would really *mean* something. One year, I spent the night with my younger sister reviewing for an exam in Prophets that she had coming up in school.

Today, as a mother, I think about this question of *what book do I open?* more broadly. How do I create a deep and broad Jewish experience for my children, so that when they consider their Jewish identity, they can see the myriad of legitimate and meaningful pathways that lay before them?

Many parents around me grapple with this same question, in different frames. A group of parents of school-aged kids recently discussed how we each contend with the “why do I have to go to re-



ligious school?” conversation, and when it makes sense to push our kids to participate despite their protests. A fellow parent of a preschool-aged child spoke to me about the importance of Jewish songs and celebrations at this young age, saying “It creates nostalgia. Without nostalgia, there is no lifelong connection.” As parents, it can feel daunting to be the ones responsible for the continuation of Jewish identity and learning in our children. We want to make it meaningful for them, and we inevitably also strive to right any wrongs that we may have experienced in our own childhoods. We try to curate a more healthy, more enjoyable Jewish experience for our children in hopes that they will love what we loved and be protected from the parts we hated.

In our family, our approach has been *diversify, diversify, diversify*. To be clear,

this did not start as a thoughtful educational tactic. It was a natural consequence of the inherent contradictions and complexities that already existed in our Jewish lives. My husband grew up in Latin America, where being Jewish and Zionist in a sea of Catholicism was to be marked as different, strange, and insular. I spent years as an Orthodox Jew and today am a proud Torah-secular Jew (yes, I made that up). My husband feels more comfortable in an orthodox service. I feel most comfortable anywhere that will let me speak my mind. We both identify deeply with Israeli Judaism. We both want our kids to be proud of their heritage.

Since we moved to the States ten years ago, we navigated our way through the different communities as we saw fit. We ignored the various pitches to join one group or another. We thought we didn't belong to any of them. Then, one day, I realized we actually belonged to them all. I have watched my children enter Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, and other Jewish spaces with the confidence that they belonged and could contribute to each. I see them asking deep questions about why some Jews do things one way and some another. I see them taking lessons they've learned from one community and bringing them to another.

By diversifying their Jewish experience, we have made it more robust and complex. They know that there are a million ways to be Jewish, all of them right in some way. And we have given them an incredible gift—the gift of choice.

As Outgoing President, Liza Milliner Re:lects, Re:motivates, Re:vives, Re:tturns, and Re:visits

By Jenn Director Knudsen

There's an old saw in the shul world that goes something like this: Question: "What is the best volunteer position to hold?" Answer: "Immediate past-president." **Liza Milliner**, immediate past-president as of this July, disagrees with this one.

Reflecting on her past 12 years on the Board of Directors, followed by two years as president (and only the third woman in Neveh Shalom history to hold this role), Liza said, "I thought I'd be happy to be done, but instead I feel mixed. I once thought maybe I'd disappear for a while, but no. I'm not leaving volunteering at Neveh." Rather, she finds that thinking ahead remotivates her to continue to finish some initiatives she's begun but that remain incomplete.

So what's next for Liza in synagogue life?

Taking a page from her professional life as a manager in a semiconductor manufacturing company, she says she'd like to implement more active leadership-training opportunities. That means getting a wider swath of *kehillah* members on committees and helping them grow in their volunteer capacity to pave the path toward bigger leadership commitments like joining the Board of Directors, its Executive Committee, and perhaps even working toward becoming a future president of Neveh Shalom.

"I think people like to start small rather than starting big," such as jumping directly from a committee to the Board, Liza explains. She believes it's best to

first get to know more fellow congregants and their ideas in order to engage in smaller initiatives that provide an important, foundational view of our large and diverse synagogue.

Liza says a small task force that included herself, **Brian Suher**, and **Eric Oslund** created a short handbook that was to lend greater structure to committees, their chairs, and their members. But that was in 2020, "So then, of course, it wasn't our first priority," due to the pandemic.

She plans to revive a similar task force to benefit Neveh Shalom's 18 committees, such as Membership, *The Chronicle* (hint!), Ritual, Building and Grounds, and Chesed, noting that "people will volunteer more when they have guidance."

Marlene Edenzon said Liza is among those in our *kehillah* who helped sell her on becoming Neveh Shalom's executive director after **Fred Rothstein's** retirement.

"It was obvious from the start Liza was in it as president for all the right reasons, saying 'It's my turn to lead and get things done,'" Marlene stated, adding, "She's easy to approach and talk to, and she doesn't hold anything back; I felt like this person could be my friend."

Liza says, "I look forward to just being a volunteer" in lieu of Board president,



Liza Milliner

and to returning to putting more time into personal passions such as fundraising for the annual local Walk MS on behalf of the National MS Society, woodworking, and gardening—and of course, spending more time with her wife, Beth, and their three beloved bulldogs.

Coming this June to Liza's storied garden is a new and expanded crop of giant tomatoes, jalapeños, garlic, squash, and loofahs that she'll train along a trellis she builds herself. "The past two years I tried squeezing these activities into my life to help keep me calm, but now I'll have the time since I won't be in meetings four out of five nights a week!" Liza said.

She might want to revisit that shul saw that was introduced at the beginning of this piece.

Member News



Marsha Spellman and Jacob Haas are kvelling this month with TWO major life events! On November 8, son Jacob Haas and wife Riki Dayan welcomed daughter Yona Ahava Raba to join big sister Keshet, into their beautiful family in Victoria, Canada. And on December 10, daughter Leah Haas married her love, Richard Mopas, in Sayulita, Mexico. Jacob officiated the wedding under a big palapa overlooking the beach. Marsha says: "It's been a busy beautiful couple of months."

Mazel tov to Rabbi Eve Posen on graduating from the 18Doors fellowship program dedicated to supporting interfaith families. Pictured is Rabbi Eve with the framed paper cutout artwork that was given as a graduation gift.



Mazel tov to Dorice and Bob Horenstein on the birth of their new granddaughter **Maya Adi Mazor**.

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

We regret to inform you of the passing of CNS member **Bobbie Altmark, z"l**, on December 21 at the age of 79. She is lovingly remembered by her son, **Asa (Debra) Altmark**; her grandchildren, **David and Eric Altmark**, and her brother, Jerry Gellis.

We are sorry to inform you of the passing of Celina Beatriz (Levinton) Jacobson, z"l, on Saturday, December 30th. Celina is the daughter of the late Leon and Flora Levinton, z"l. Celina is loved and remembered by her children, **Deborah (Ariel) Levy**, Issac (Reli) Jacobson, Lucas Jacobson, and **David (Katie) Jacobson**; her grandchildren, Kayim, Orr, Val, Ella, Kali, Ronen, Jonah, Zev, and Zelda; her late brother Sergio, z"l (Dora) Levinton; her nephew Pablo; a wonderful extended family, and dear friends.

We are sorry to inform you of the passing of Ethel Birnbach, z"l, just shy of her 97th birthday. She is lovingly remembered by her children, **Jack (Melanie) Birnbach** and Gerry (Donna) Birnbach. A spring celebration of life is being planned.

We are sorry to inform you of the passing of CNS member **Josif Sheinkman, z"l**, on January 5, 2024. He is lovingly remembered by his wife **Inna Sheinkman**; his daughters Lana (Joe Ahadian) Sheinkman and Alla (Justin) Pierce, and two grandchildren.

We are sorry to inform you of the passing of CNS member **Seymour Lawrence "Larry" Kaner, z"l**, at the age of 92. He is lovingly remembered by his wife, **Betty Kaner**, children **Lisa (Peter Glade) Kaner**, Richard (Sara) Kaner, Robert (Ellen) Kaner, and seven grandchildren.

We are sorry to inform you of the passing of CNS member **Suzanne Liberman, z"l**, at the age of 94. She is predeceased by **Eric Llewelyn Liberman, z"l**, and is lovingly remembered by her children, Adam (Gemma Whelan) Liberman and Lev (Joan) Liberman, and her four grandchildren.

We are sorry to inform you of the passing of **Helene Cogen, z"l**, on February 1, 2024. She was predeceased by her husband Stephen Cogen, z"l, and is lovingly remembered by her sons **Mitchell (Arlene) Cogen** and Jeffrey (Lisa Pelligrino) Cogen, and her grandchildren **Alana Cogen, Abrielle Cogen**, Johanna Cogen, and Alexander Cogen.

We are sorry to inform you of the passing of CNS member **Janet Menashe, z"l**, on Sunday, January 21, 2024. She is lovingly remembered by her husband **Jerome Menashe**, her daughter **Erika Menashe**, and her siblings Diane (John Baringer) Lefkow, Michael Lefkow, Joe (Joanne) Menashe, and Denise Menashe.

We are sorry to inform you of the passing of **Vern Beck, z"l**, on January 22, 2024. He is lovingly remembered by his children **Laura (Rabbi David) Kosak**, and Eric (Trish) Beck, and grandchildren **Shayah and Amitai Kosak**, and Maddox and Dane Beck.

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/calendar.

Sisterhood BIPOC meeting

Wed., Apr. 3, May 1, June 5, 7-9pm, Zoom
Women of different backgrounds discuss questions of faith and confronting social justice issues. Contact: smallfryeterp@gmail.com

Sisterhood Mah Jongg Tournament

Sunday, April 7, 11:00am-4:00pm
A fun filled day of Mah Jongg and friendship. Experienced and new players welcome.

Art, Heart, and Soul: Hand-painted Ceramics

Thursday, April 11, 6:00-9:00pm
Join us as we take a field trip to The Butterfly Effect Art Space in Multnomah Village for an unforgettable evening of creativity and camaraderie. Contact: Irichmond@nevehshalom.org

Women's Torah Study

Sat., Apr. 13, May 11, 25, June 8, 12:30pm
Join Mel Berwin for an hour of uplifting study and conversation. In-person.

Men's Club Poker Tournament

Sunday, April 14, 5:00-9:00pm
Join the Men's Club Texas Hold'em Tournament. Open to everyone 18+.

Wise Women Social Brown Bag Lunch

Thurs., Apr. 18, May 16, June 20, 12:00-1:30pm, Rm. 102
Pack a lunch and join this friendly group of women to schmooze and empower one another. Contact: jenkal@comcast.net

Teen Comedy Night

Saturday, April 20, 7:00-9:00pm
We will hear a stand-up act and learn some improv skills to take with us into our lives!

Service Project and Ice Skating with Interfaith Youth

Sunday, April 21, 10:00am -1:30pm
5th-8th graders: Join youth from a local Lutheran youth group for a service project benefiting youth in foster care.

Sisterhood Book Group - 7:00pm

May 20: *Antisemitism* by Deborah Lipstadt
June 24: *The Confidante* by Christopher C. Gorham
Contact: dianeandjosh@hotmail.com

2nd Night Passover Seder

Tuesday, April 23, Time TBA
Join Rabbi Kosak and the CNS community for a special 2nd night Passover Seder.

8th Annual Neveh Shalom Family Camp at Camp Solomon Schechter: Passover Edition

Thursday-Sunday, April 25-April 28, 2024
Families with kids through 3rd grade gather for Shabbat and community in this special Passover family camp.

Young Adult Seder

Saturday, April 27, Time TBA
20s-30s adults from Neveh Shalom and all over the PDX Jewish Community will gather at Congregation Beth Israel to celebrate Pesach.

Mimouna Celebration

Thursday, May 2, 5:00-9:00pm
Enjoy a traditional Moroccan celebration to end Pesach, and enjoy festive crafts, treats, music, dance, and henna. Fun activities for all ages.

Yoni Suher, z"l, Scholar-in-Residence Program

May 3-5
Join us for an exciting conversation about "Science, Artificial Intelligence, and the Human Connection" with Award-winning Physicist, Professor Daniel Zajfman.

Youth Activities Lunch and Outdoor Adventures

Sunday, May 5, 12:00 -1:30pm
3rd -5th grades: Pizza lunch provided, then outdoor adventures in the woods near CNS.

Shroud Crowd

Sunday, May 5, 2-4pm, Room 102
Help create traditional burial clothing for use by the *Chevra Kavod haMet*. Contact: sandyaxel@msn.com

Tichon Teen Storytelling Performance

Wednesday, May 8, 7:00pm
Tichon storytelling performance. The congregation is invited to attend this special event as our teens perform true short stories from their lives.

Cooking for Outside In: Sunday, May 12, June 9, 12-2pm, CNS "Marla's" Kitchen

Cook a meal to feed homeless teens. Contact: 8888octopus8888@gmail.com

What's SUP?

May 26th, 1:00 -3:30pm
5th-8th graders, have fun stand-up paddling with Youth Activities!

Shavuot Celebration - More info TBA

June 11-13
CNS Annual Meeting
Thursday, June 20, 7:00pm
Please join the whole CNS community at our annual meeting.

Morning Minyan and Shabbat Services

Please visit the website for more info
Morning Minyan
Monday-Friday, 7:15am (7:00am Jewish holidays and Rosh Chodesh; 9:00am US holidays); Sundays, 8:45am

Kabbalat Shabbat Service

Fridays, 6:15pm
Sisterhood Shabbat
Friday, May 17, 6:15pm

Shabbat on the Plaza Begins

Friday, June 7, 6:15pm
Kol Shabbat
2nd Friday, 7:15pm
Lay-led, voices-only service.

4th Friday Shabbat w/Rabbi Eve

4th Fridays, 5:15pm
Rabbi Eve leads Shabbat for families (ages 0-10), with singing, a story, and blessings.

Saturday Morning Shabbat Service

Saturdays, 9:30am
Downstairs Minyan Shabbat Service
2nd, 4th, 5th Saturdays, 9:30am

Tot Shabbat (Ages 0-5)

1st and 3rd Saturdays, 10:30am
Join young families as we gather together for some Tot Shabbat fun.

Kiddush Club (K-3rd Grade)

1st and 3rd Saturdays, 10:30am
Morah Sarah Rohr and Moreh Gershon Liberman alternate leading Kiddush Club.

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"Science, Artificial Intelligence, and the Human Connection," with Award-Winning Physicist, Professor Daniel Zajfman

Our upcoming Scholar in Residence Program will explore generative AI as well as its intersections with science and Judaism. Given that, we requested ChatGPT, an AI natural language model, to compose the following article.

Embark on a captivating journey of discovery at the 7th Annual Yoni Suher Scholar-in-Residence event, hosted by Congregation Neveh Shalom, May 3-5. At the helm of this enlightening gathering stands Professor Daniel Zajfman, a distinguished physicist whose illustrious career and profound insights promise to illuminate the intersection of science, artificial intelligence (AI), and Jewish thought.

Professor Zajfman's journey epitomizes the marriage of scientific inquiry and Jewish heritage. Born in Belgium and steeped in his Jewish roots, he has traversed the realms of academia and scientific exploration with a fervent curiosity. From his groundbreaking research in atomic and molecular ion dynamics to his leadership roles at prestigious institutions like the Weizmann Institute of Science, Professor Zajfman embodies a commitment to both scientific excellence and community outreach.

Throughout the event, attendees will

have the privilege of engaging with Professor Zajfman's expertise firsthand. From a presentation on the altruistic pursuit of science to a thought-provoking discussion on the ethical implications of AI, his contributions serve as a guiding light, illuminating the complex

interplay between scientific progress and moral responsibility.

Moreover, the Scholar-in-Residence event offers a platform for dialogue and exploration, inviting participants to reflect on the timeless teachings of Jewish tradition in the context of contemporary scientific inquiry. Through interactive sessions and panel discussions, attendees will grapple with profound questions about the nature of beauty, the future of AI development, and the ethical considerations that shape our technological advancements.



Supported by the Stan and Ethel Katz Briller Jewish Education Fund and the Yoni Suher Fund, this event embodies a commitment to fostering intellectual curiosity and spiritual growth within our community. Join us as we embark on a journey of discovery, guided by the wisdom of Professor Daniel Zajfman and the enduring insights of Jewish thought. Together, let us explore the boundless realms of science and spirituality, forging new pathways of exploration and enlightenment.

More & RSVP at: nevehshalom.org/SIR

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Congregation Neveh Shalom's

2nd Night

Community Passover Seder

Tuesday, April 23
5:00pm

Gather round the table with Rabbi David Kosak and your Neveh Shalom kehillah for a 2nd night seder. We'll enjoy reading from the Haggadah while having opportunities to engage beyond the text with meaningful interactive activities and discussions.

A delicious multicourse Passover meal is provided.

Price for CNS Members:

\$54/adult (13+) | \$40/Child (ages 3-12) | 2 and under free
Scholarships are available.

Price for Non-Members:

\$60/adult (13+) | \$45/Child (ages 3-12) | 2 and under free

RSVP by April 18 at:
nevehshalom.org/seder24



Congregation Neveh Shalom
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CONGREGATION NEVEH SHALOM'S

Mimouna Celebration

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Thursday, May 2, 5:00-9:00pm

2900 SW Peaceful Ln, PDX | 503.246.8831

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RSVP: nevehshalom.org/mimouna24

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Join us for three days of lectures and panel discussions exploring AI and how it intersects with the human connection.

Professor Daniel Zajfman, PhD, is a former president of the Weizmann Institute of Science and member of the Max Planck Institute of Nuclear Physics.



RSVP required
More info at: nevehshalom.org/sir

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