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TEMPLE BETH HILLEL
 TORAH • LIFE • COMMUNITY

The Shofar



TEMPLE BETH HILLEL, RICHMOND, CALIFORNIA
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A Message from Rabbi Dean

"For I desire kindness, not sacrifice;..." Hosea 6:6

Our society is angry. We all know the symptoms; road rage, people with short fuses, ready to blow-up at any time, a general rudeness that seems to run through much of our public discourse. Athletes "talk trash," that is they say nasty things about their opponents. We clamor for the most intimate details of the private lives of so-called celebrities and

magazines meet that need with reams of gossip. We all know that when running for office politicians talk more about their opponents' failings than their own successes and accuse one another of being every type of extremist from fascist to communist without debating the issues.

I fear our societal anger has seeped into our congregation. I have read angry email posts, overheard harsh words, heard the motives of our synagogue lay-leaders questioned, been told of gossip about former members and heard scornful rationale about why someone chose to leave the congregation. I am not suggesting that we must all think or act the same or agree with one another. Disagreement is a natural part of life. The world would be a boring place if we all thought the same way. Diversity of opinion enriches our lives and the lives of the congregation. Dispute and argument are imbedded into our Jewish DNA. It is not the conflict that bothers me but the undercurrent of anger that worries me, because anger and resentment eat away at the heart and soul of our community.

Rabbi: continued on page 2

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by

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Rabbi: continued from page 1

Anger feels good in the moment but it usually leaves hurt feelings and confusion in its wake. Often the one who acts in anger feels guilty later. Judaism rejects anger and cultivates kindness. Our rabbis taught, "The Torah begins with deeds of loving kindness and it ends with deeds of loving kindness. It begins with deeds of loving kindness, as it is written, 'And Adonai our God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them.' (Genesis 3:21). It ends with deeds of loving kindness, as it is written, 'And he buried him [Moses] in the valley of the land of Moab.' In other words the entire Torah is a meditation on kindness toward others. In that spirit, I want to suggest that we can disagree with someone or object to someone's behavior and do so in a kind and compassionate manner. Rabbi Hillel, after whom we are named, was once approached by a Roman soldier who asked, "Teach me the entire Torah while standing on one leg." Hillel replied, "That which is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow. That is the whole Torah; the rest is the explanation. Go and learn" (Talmud Shabbat 31A). In other words, treat others as you want to be treated. When the anger rises up in us we should pause for a moment and give the other person the benefit of the doubt; assume that their motives are as positive and constructive as our own. We are all trying to do the best we can. I doubt there is one person in our community who wants to hurt or anger anyone. But we are all human and we all make mistakes, even with the best of intentions.

During the High Holy Days we came together as a community. One of the central messages of that sacred time is that we are imperfect and that if God can forgive us and show compassion then we should do the same for one another. Here are a few suggestions on how to act on that message. Let's not gossip about each other. If you have a problem with someone, speak with them directly to resolve it rather than speaking to others. Be thoughtful about email. It's a great way to transmit information, but it's a poor way to express emotion or resolve a conflict. If you are upset with someone, don't send them an email. Give them a call or set up a meeting to talk about what's bothering you and try to work things out. Let's give each other some slack. Many people volunteer countless hours to help this congregation. Without them we wouldn't

exist. No one has to help and there are never enough people. Every single person who works for the benefit of our congregation deserves our thanks. Before every board of directors meeting, we read a prayer from Siddur *Lev Chadash*, of the English Union of Liberal and Progressive Synagogues. There is one line that always moves me, "May we listen to each other with respect and judge each other with charity and may our controversies be only for Your sake." These are some of my ideas, I am sure you have your own that will help make our community an island of compassion, empathy and kindness.

Rabbi Dean Kertesz

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FROM THE PRESIDENT BY LAURA TAUB

We are now in a new year. We have re-examined our lives during the Days of Awe, looked at our intentions and goals, and thought about how to become what we want to be. Now we are faced with the reality of our busy lives and routines, and we need to figure out how to incorporate our goals into our daily lives.

The Board is also working on moving toward its goals for the year. We hope to be the kind of place that you will want to be involved in, to provide the programs, activities, and comfort that you will want to make a part of your lives.

So, thank you to all who came to the Special Membership Meeting. I appreciate your taking the time to contribute your thoughts and to participate in the governance of the Temple. I hope I am correct in thinking that everyone was able to express their opinions in a way that was thoughtful, respectful, and considerate of those who disagreed with them, and that people were able to accept the decisions of the membership.

I hope we will continue to treat each other with this kind of goodwill, caring, and appreciation of our differences, even when we don't agree. All of us really do have the best interests of the Temple at heart. Sometimes this is harder to do by e-mail than it is face-to-face. Please think about how what you say will affect the recipients, even if you can't see them.

I hope you will join us at several of the educational and social programs coming up in the next few weeks. On Sunday, November 7, there will be a bagel brunch with Emily L. Blanck from American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) on "An Israel Update - the U.S.-Israel Relationship".

Also on November 7, we are co-sponsoring the Global Day of Jewish Learning at the Jewish Community Center of the East Bay.

Rabbi Dean's ongoing class on the prophets promises to raise some interesting and challenging issues. The next meeting is on Sunday, November 21.

Just for fun, we are having another Game Night (with homemade pizza) on Saturday evening, November 13. If you were on vacation for the last one and missed the fun (or if you were there to enjoy it), come. We will have a variety of traditional and new games for all ages.

We will have a special treat at the Latke Party, Sunday, December 5 – a display and sale of beautifully designed work from local craftspeople. Come, have some delicious latkes, and find some Hanukkah gifts.

There will be a New Member Potluck and Service on Friday, November 5. Come to honor and get to know our newest members. Another special service is the Hanukkah Potluck and Service on Friday, December 3, an opportunity to light candles and celebrate the holiday together.

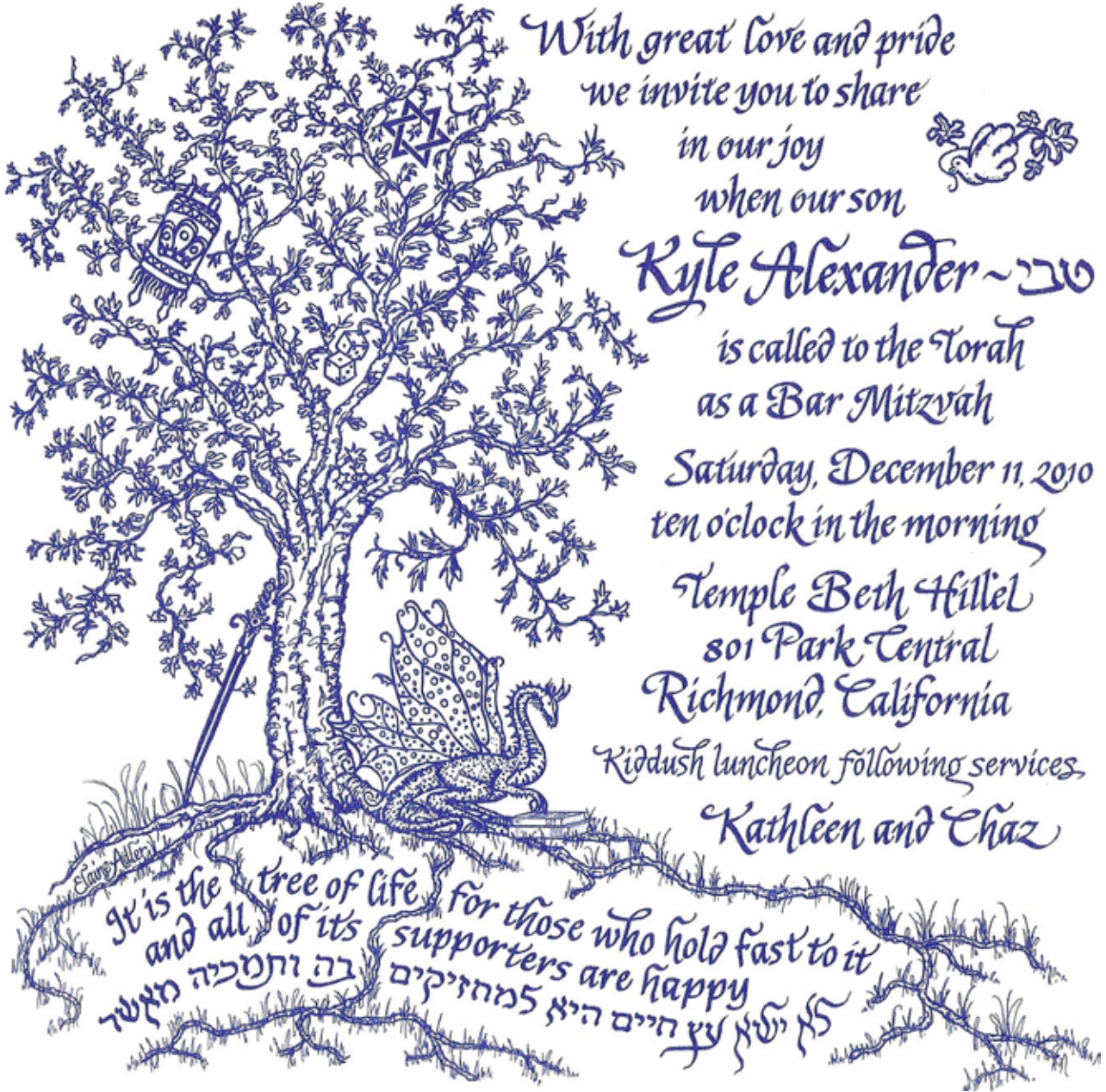
We are making an effort to recognize and thank those who have especially contributed to TBH. If you know of people who have particularly given of themselves recently, please let me know.

You too can be involved. Come to the events in the coming months and help us plan new ones. See the Help Wanted column for some of the help we need, or contact me. We particularly need help with the raffle/silent auction at the Purim Carnival. There are a number of jobs to be done soon, including contacting members and businesses and organizing various parts of the planning. Please contact me if you can help.

As was pointed out at the Membership Meeting, you are welcome to come to Board Meetings and to bring up matters of concern to you. The next Board Meeting is Wednesday, November 10. It would be helpful to let me know if you are coming, so we can make time for you.

I hope to see you soon.
Laura





NEW MEMBER SERVICE

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 5

**Potluck 6:30 PM
Service 7:30 PM**

COME HONOR AND GET TO KNOW OUR NEWEST MEMBERS

Yahrzeits

May Their Memories Be A blessing

Rose Breda, mother of Bo Breda	11/9
Sidney Highiet, remembered by Pearl Wolffs	11/9
Laurie Hudson Connelly, sister of Nori Hudson	11/10
Al Shapiro, uncle of Howard Cohen	11/12
William Hardy, brother of Sherbie Aberle	11/14
Samuel Wolf, remembered by Temple Beth Hillel	11/15
Esther Byer, remembered by Temple Beth Hillel	11/16
Ruby Dulberg, mother of Bernie Dulberg	11/16
Harry Guss, grandfather of Saralynn & Helen Nusbaum	11/17
Joseph Morris Leib, father of Alice Chaniwitz	11/17
Isaiah Meyer, father of Dana Meyer	11/19
Ed Nusbaum, brother of Evelyn Hooker	11/20
Sarah Haberer, grandmother of Linda Rose	11/20
Thomas Waxman, father of Arny Waxman	11/23,
Frances Blumenfeld, mother in Law of Leila Blumenfeld	11/24
Annie Kiefer, mother of Harry Kiefer	11/24
Richard Matta, father of Raquel Matta	11/26
Fannie Bloom, remembered by Temple Beth Hillel	11/27
Arnold Neiderbach, husband of Janet Neiderbach	11/27
Harry Dulberg, father of Bernie Dulberg	11/28
Clara Lieberman, mother in Law of Beverly Zell	11/29
Sam A. Manger, father of Irene Morgan	11/29
Seymour Zell, husband of Beverly Zell	11/30

Let's get together and study about Israel. Please come to our next Bagel Brunch, Sunday Nov. 7:

An Israel Update - the U.S.-Israel Relationship

We are pleased to have **Emily L. Blanck** as our speaker. Emily is the Leadership Management Director at AIPAC for the East Bay, Sacramento Valley and Northern Nevada area. Emily was formerly at JCRC, as the Director of JIMENA (Jews Indigenous to the Middle East and North Africa).

Start time: **10:15 a.m., Sunday November 7**

So, come! We'll have education about Israel at this important time in renewed peace talks; we'll have each other's company; and we'll have a bagel spread!

See you there, Doug



NOTES FROM THE BOARD

October 13, 2010

Upcoming Events

- New Member service and potluck, November 5
- Bagel Brunch: An Israel Update - the U.S.-Israel Relationship. Emily L. Blanck of AIPAC, November 7
- Day of Jewish Learning. November 7 at the JCC East Bay
- Game Night. November 13
- Nahum Goldberg will host a virtual rally for the Friends of the Arava Institute. November 14

Guest Presentation: URJ

- Rabbi Alan Henkin of Union for Reform Judaism (URJ) West District, (LA office) presented an organizational introduction to URJ and recent downsizing. He suggested many websites, presentations, conferences and initiatives of interest to Reform Jews. See <http://urj.org/cong/>

Treasurer's Report:

- The Dinner Dance netted approximately \$600.
- High Holy Day receipts are down significantly.

Buildings and Grounds

- Larry Fox and Josh Genser have received quotes for signage at our building entrance and around our building. We're happily anticipating much improved building identification as well as activity postings visible from outside the building, soon.
- David Brown and Josh Genser are continuing to negotiate potential changes in the lease of our cell tower.

The Board Thanks....

- The Van Hoy family for their generous gift of a new sound system, installed on the occasion of Emma Van Hoy's Bat Mitzvah, this month.

From the Religious School Teacher

- Malka Helfman is proposing a community-created mural and will be soliciting designs.

Operations

- If you know of anyone who has made a special effort to help TBH, please contact Laura Taub to include them in the Special Thanks column.
- If you are organizing an event, contact Laura Taub to solicit help via the Help Wanted column
- We are trying to minimize calendar changes. Please review the annual calendar (available in the lobby) and let Laura Taub know of any changes or potential scheduling conflicts.



Tzedakah

*"If I am not for myself, who will be for me?
And if only for myself, what am I?
And if not now, when?"*

General Contributions

Barbara Polikoff, in memory of William Polikoff
Jay & Barbara Weidenfeld, in memory of Sylvia Leben
Judy Windrix & Bill Hartman, in memory of Freda Caplan

Religious School Enrichment

Hallie Friedman & Kim Mack, in honor Evelyn Hooker's Birthday

Dues Relief Fund

Irene Morgan, in memory of Allan Morgan

High Holy Day Flowers

Douglas & Meg Freifeld, in honor of Howard Cohen
Hallie Friedman & Kim Mack
Ken & Evelyn Hooker, in memory of Carl & Ed Nusbaum, Moe & Celia & Anne Nusbaum
Dana Meyer & June Kamerling
Joel Rosenbaum & Wendy Roth
Jay & Barbara Weidenfeld, in memory of Irma Stern

Tzedakah-Tikkun Olam

Roberta Alexander, in honor of Evelyn Hooker's Birthday
Roberta Alexander, in memory of Adolph Alexander
Bobbi Nadler, in honor of Evelyn Hooker's Birthday
Geri Stern & Alan Blavins, in honor of Evelyn Hooker's Birthday
Sheri Tattenham & Stan Hazlak, in honor of Evelyn Hooker's birthday
Mr. and Mrs. Irving Meinrath, in memory of Joe Nusbaum

Office Equipment

Bob & Arlene Lisby

S. Stone Scholarship

Steve & Fran Welstand, in memory of Marcy Ann Binder

Cantor's Discretionary Fund

Joyce Kessler, in memory of Samuel Kessler
Maria Paz Rubinstein, in honor of Phil Rubinstein Birthday

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

James & Deborah Koenig
Rabbi Bernie & Yetta Robinson, in memory of Joe Nusbaum
Eric Zell & Wendy Siu, in honor of the High Holy Days

High Holy Day Appeal Fund

James & Judy Freeman, in honor of Rabbi Dean, Cantor Howard & Jane Durango
Nahum & Selma Goldberg
Frida Hilsabeck, in honor of Evelyn Hooker's Birthday
Paula Ho-Wolper
Eric Husby-Gerry, to help with resurfacing the parking lot
Sharon Mittleman, in honor of Emma Van Hoy's Bat Mitzvah
Carl & Suzanne Nelson
Frank & Louise Snitz
Pearl Wolffs

"If I am not for myself, who will be for me?"



WE ARE EXTREMELY GRATEFUL
TO THE
VAN HOY FAMILY
FOR THE
DONATION AND INSTALLATION
OF A
NEW, MUCH-NEEDED
VERY HIGH QUALITY SOUND SYSTEM

NOTES FROM THE SPECIAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

October 24, 2010

Bylaw Changes

- **Article IV, Section 1.** “Adult” as used in the bylaws was changed from “an emancipated person over the legal age of majority” to “a person over the age of B’nai Mitzvah.”
- **Article IV, Section 3.** Was not changed. It continues to read, “Each adult in each family shall be entitled to one vote at Membership meetings.” The proposal to change it to “Each Household shall be entitled to one vote at Membership meetings....” did not pass.

Birthdays

Clara-Rae Genser	11/3	
Bill Hartman	11/5	
Nahum Goldberg	11/7	
Dean Kertesz	11/11	
Zachary Hansen	11/15	16th birthday
Rose Genirberg	11/19	
Eric Hansen	11/23	
Hannah Mayer	11/23	8th birthday
James Koenig	11/25	
Kathleen Hunt	11/27	
Roy Trumbull	11/28	

**Come one, Come All
to the TBH
Hanukkah Crafts Fair**

December 5

Noon to 4PM

Sales and Raffle

**Persons interested in participating,
please contact Rene Powell as soon as
possible**

**by E-mail: rcp2525@sbcglobal.net
or Telephone: 510 741-1931**

COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD

**Are you looking for services? Housing?
Employment? Or do you have these
available?**

**Do you have something to buy, sell, rent,
exchange?**

**This is your space to contact members of
our community. Please send your notices to
Louise Levinson-Snitz**





COME ONE, COME ALL



GAME NIGHT

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 7 P.M.



AT TEMPLE BETH HILLEL

BRING YOUR FAVORITE BOARD/TABLE GAMES

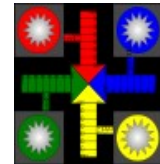


AND LEARN SOME NEW ONES

GAMES FOR ALL AGES



WITH



HOME-MADE PIZZA



DRINKS AND ADDITIONAL SNACKS ARE WELCOME

FREE

(DONATIONS FOR PIZZA APPRECIATED)



Chaos Theory

By Roberta Alexander

I've always had an ambivalent attitude toward neatness. I've been told I was a tidy little girl who liked to arrange my dolls and blocks in symmetrical groupings. As opposed, perhaps, to my brother, who liked to knock things down. And I didn't like finger paint or clay because they were messy. But it's hard to be clear about all this because the issue of neatness became the earliest—and longest running—bone of contention between my mother and me. As I got older, I rebelled against all sorts of rules that felt constricting or stupid. And, of course, I never liked being told what to do, no matter what the issue. For all I know, my mother made up all that stuff about what kind of toddler I was in order to pressure me into clearing my room. Ah, my room. Not a week went by when my mother didn't ask, order, plead, threaten, cajole or otherwise inveigle me to clean it up. It was perfectly clear to me even then that if she hadn't made such a fuss about it, I wouldn't have dug in my heels, and probably would have been a tad tidier as a result. But, she cared. She cared a lot. She thought it reflected badly on her that my room was messy. (Not dirty, by the way. Just messy.) In my opinion, she cared way too much what other people thought. Not that she wanted *my* opinion on the subject. In an attempt to shame me into compliance, she once flung open the door of my room, announcing to her guests, "my daughter the slob lives here." Unfortunately for her, I burst out laughing. But the episode does illustrate that in this battle, nobody was taking any prisoners. Then in high school, I filled an empty period with a class on business law, which is where I learned about contracts. As a result, my mother and I created a contract to solve, or at least detoxify, the issue of my room. We established standards of neatness (minimal, I might add) and restricted her access. My favorite part was limiting her forays to emergencies, and then establishing that "dirt is not an emergency." The other seminal event of my adolescence on this subject occurred the summer I was 18, and employed

as a stock clerk at Korvette's Department Store in downtown Brooklyn. Korvette's was not your top of the line sort of place. Think Kmart, not Neiman Marcus. My job was to arrive at 8:30 a.m., an hour before the store opened, and make sure all the tables were well-stocked. Once the store opened, I was to monitor the tables and restock them as necessary. Possibly someday I could work my way up the hierarchy and become a cashier. It was a big store, with four floors of merchandise. I was assigned to the ground floor—women's sportswear. It soon became clear that this was not a desirable assignment; my boyfriend, several floors up in housewares, had a much easier time of it. Every day I piled the sweaters, shirts and blouses in neat colorful piles in order of size. And every day by 9:35, the place looked like a cyclone hit it. It seems that even shoppers heading upstairs to look for a new toaster took a quick look [read: a quick churn] through sportswear on their way. I spent the rest of the morning scurrying to undo the damage. I left that job not because of the Sisyphean nature of the task, but because of a disagreement with the floor manager over the need to wear nylon stockings in an area filled with unfinished, snaggy wood furniture. But I learned something there I never forgot, something about the dance between chaos and neatness. Order can be established in all sorts of situations, sometimes ruthlessly, but it's unlikely to be a permanent fix. Change is the nature of things. You can line things up all you want, but those dratted ducks will quack and wander off. I settled into a line of work that reflected my ambivalence about this issue. I am an editor, which means I crave order. I take strings of words and neaten them up, making them grammatical, more accurate, less full of errors ... in short, tidier. But I am also a writer, which means I revel in, or at least accept, the chaos that is the creative process. Yes, I hope to emerge with something coherent and comprehensible. But there's no getting there without allowing myself to sink into a space that defies rational explanation. And I may not end up where I thought I was going. Maybe I have as much in common with the crowds of early shoppers as the stock clerk.



Happy Hanukkah

Temple Beth Hillel Invites you to

Celebrate the Festival of Lights

Sunday, December 5, 2010

11:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Join us for our Annual Latke Party

- *Display and sale of beautifully designed work from TBH Craftspeople & Pinole Artisans*
- *Traditional Latke Lunch with all the trimmings (noon)*
 - *Celebratory candle lighting*
 - *Hanukkah treasures from the Gift Shop*

Temple Beth Hillel

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מרבח תורה • מרבח חיים
TEMPLE BETH HILLEL
TORAH • LIFE • COMMUNITY

*Help fill the red barrels in the Temple lobby.
Bring your non-perishable food contributions for the local food pantry.*



Shoah Memories (Part 4) by Sam Genirberg

The first snows began to fall in Winnitsa. The highways and the sidewalks turned white, a reminder of the coming winter. My landlady began to demand the firewood which I had promised her and I had no source to obtain it for her. I earned little money on my job which was based on piecework. I observed that some of the employees were stealing pieces of leather for shoe soles and selling them on the black market. So one day I too discreetly carried out a piece of leather hidden on my body as I left for the day. Although, that evening some workers were searched as they were leaving the shop, luckily, I was allowed to pass without being detained.

The next Sunday, I sold the leather in the market square where people were conducting trades, and I bought for myself a cooked meal of chops, mashed potatoes, and corn on the cob, which I ate very heartily. It was my first decent meal in a month. A local policeman looked me over, as if he suspected me of something, warning me to stay out of trouble. "Go home where you belong, little shrimp," he ordered looking at me sternly. I would have loved to go home to my family, but tragically, I had neither a home nor a family.

I decided not to get involved in surreptitious practice of dealing with goods any more. I could not take the risk of getting caught and arrested. I knew it was best not to attract undue attention.

Just then when I feared I would not be able to earn enough money to eat and continue to pay rent, I thought of an interesting, though risky, move.

It appeared that the German administration was drafting people from all the occupied countries of Europe for compulsory labor in Germany for work in factories, mines, on farms, or wherever they were needed. Few people were willing to volunteer for those jobs having heard about the sadistic treatment of foreign workers. I weighed the matter very carefully, and decided that I would have less of a chance of starving, if I would join one of the transports of Soviet citizens that were leaving for Germany daily. I knew, of course, such a move would add emotional strain, having to live with my most hated enemies. But, I really had little choice in

the matter if I wanted to go on living. I spoke several languages including German fluently so I didn't expect any problems with integration in Germany. I packed my meager belongings, bade my landlady goodbye, and headed for the train depot. A Russian official asked to see my identity card. He glanced at it briefly, and waved me on to the next man at the counter. This Russian processing official felt apologetic for having to send their own countrymen to Germany to help with the war effort, and he consoled us by repeating over and over again, "There is a war on, what can we do?" He didn't promise us a Garden of Eden, but reassured us that we would have a decent place to sleep and enough food to survive.

Like all of the young people who were herded off, to serve in the enemy camp, I was given a loaf of bread and a chunk of salami before boarding the freight train.

Armed German soldiers were assigned to the long train, and once you entered the prescribed freight car, you were not allowed to leave without permission from the soldier on duty. As soon as the car was filled, it was locked.

The train pulled out late afternoon. As night fell, I and the other young men bedded down for the night to sleep.

The next morning, as the train rolled westward over the fertile fields of Ukraine, small groups sat around talking, reading, and playing cards. Many if the young people on the train knew one another; they were obviously from the same villages or attended the same schools. Because my clothes had a strangely foreign look - especially my western looking shoes - I wasn't accepted in any of these groups. I felt somewhat isolated. I was hoping to find a way to acquire a native set of clothes and shoes, so that I could shed my West Ukrainian appearance, which looked different.

To be continued.

October 5, 2010

I often write in this column, asking you to do something for Midrasha, but this month I'm going to tell you what Midrasha can do for YOU.

First, do you know we have a job bank of teens willing to work for you? When they register, Midrasha students are asked if they want to make their names available to people looking for teens to babysit, help with their computers or in their office, do housework, moving or lifting, work in the garden, tutor their younger children, pet sit, help build or dismantle their sukkah (remember that for next year!), or help at parties. If you would like a copy of the list, e-mail us at: diane@midrasha.org or call the Midrasha office, 510-843-4667.

And we have another treat for you as well. Sunday, November 7 is our Annual Brunch. It's the one day we welcome members of the community into classes. Everyone arrives (and if you don't know, Midrasha meets at Beth El, 1301 Oxford St. in Berkeley) at 9:30 am and we have a scrumptious breakfast.

Then at 10:30 and again at 11:30 you get to take any class you like, taught by the charismatic and talented Midrasha faculty. Some teachers teach classes similar to ones they teach the teens every week and others create special classes just for this event. In any case, you'll get a flavor of Midrasha. Classes always are diverse - and much more. Some classes are very serious and others just for fun. You are in the driver's seat and go to the ones you want. And you'll get to study with both adults and teens.

There will be classes on Israeli Dance, finding Jewish themes in children's picture books, protest music, Judaism and nature, Jewish-Muslim relationships in Morocco, the revitalization of the Hebrew language, youth pioneering in Israel, hunting Eichmann, art and meditation, Talumd, dating and Judaism and the body.... and more.

Please come and enjoy Midrasha's gift to you.

Dana and June Invite you to join them with seventy of their friends.

Hello family and friends. That's right, our Berkeley Broadway Singers chorus will perform our two free concerts again next month and it'll be **ALMOST LIKE BEING IN LOVE!** Songs in this season's repertoire include: **Dancing Thru Life** (from Wicked; by Stephen Schwartz), **Eleanor Rigby** (by Lennon & McCartney), **Johnny One Note** (from Babes In Arms; by Rodgers & Hart), **Someone To Watch Over Me** (from Oh, Kay!; by Gershwin & Gershwin), **The Long and Winding Road** (by Lennon & McCartney), **This Nearly Was Mine** (from South Pacific; by Rodgers & Hammerstein), **Alexander's Ragtime Band** (by Irving Berlin), **Soul Cake** (arranged by Trente Morant), **Who's Afraid of the Big, Bad Wolf?** (from Three Little Pigs; by Churchill & Ronell) and, of course, **Almost Like Being In Love** (from Brigadoon; by Lerner & Lowe).

BBS' music director is Ellen Hoffman and, like last season, we'll have Trente Morant as our guest conductor.

Here are the details of our **TWO** upcoming concerts:

Saturday, November 20 at 8p at St. Ambrose Church, 1145 Gilman St. (two blocks east of San Pablo Avenue), Berkeley. Yahoo! Maps link: http://maps.yahoo.com/maps_result?addr=1145+Gilman+St.&csz=Berkeley%2C+CA&country=us&new=1&name=&qty=

Sunday, November 21 at 4p at St. Augustine's Church, 400 Alcatraz Ave. (between College and Telegraph Avenues), Oakland. Yahoo! Maps link: http://maps.yahoo.com/maps_result?addr=400+Alcatraz+Ave.&csz=Oakland%2C+CA&country=us&new=1&name=&qty=

The shows are always free (donations are requested) and will last about 90 minutes (with no intermission). Be sure to allow enough time to park and get a good seat for the show.

If you're there, we know that "Almost" will be a Sure Thing!

www.berkeleybroadwaysingers.org



CROSSING MANDELBAUM GATE By Kai Bird

Kai Bird is the improbable name of an American journalist and historian who lived from the age of four until his teens in East Jerusalem. He is the son of a career diplomat and Arabist who's posting as vice-consul to the US consulate in Jordanian controlled East Jerusalem placed his white bread American family at a choke point – Mandelbaum Gate - between Israelis and Arabs during the 1950s. The book is part personal memoir, part historical recollections told in short biographies, and part a search for that shimmering Holy Grail, the key to peace in the Holy Land.

Bird uses sections of personal recollection augmented with excerpts from letters and news reports as well as quotes from friends and business contacts to inform sections on his early life in Jerusalem, a youth in the diplomatic residence compound in Saudi Arabia (with lots of exposure to the Aramco Petroleum Company's legendary compound down the road), boarding school in India as well as his eventual exposure, almost as a stranger, to life in the United States.

By chance he is an impressive eyewitness to history. Sitting with fellow students in a garden in the hills above Beirut Airport one day in 1970 he watches the landing of a BOAC Comet, one of four planes caught in the coordinated hijacking orchestrated by PLO. Unknown to him at the time was that his high school sweetheart was aboard as a hostage. She had been attempting to make a surprise visit to him at Beirut's American University.

Family friends from his father's career are among the CIA staff killed in the car-bombing in Beirut. Others become major newsmakers of the era.

It is not surprising that his view of the Israel / Arab begins as wholly one sided (in favor of the Arab – Palestinian cause, of course). At an early point in the reading of his book I was tempted to apply my often invoked Dorothy Parker assessment: "This is not a book to be tossed aside lightly – it should be thrown with great force."

Just as well that I stuck to my determination not to excoriate a book unless I'd read every (damned) word. In subsequent sections, using short biographies as illustrations, Bird examines in detail conflicting sides of the Middle-East cauldron. In one such section he follows the struggle of a young Austrian woman to avoid being swept up by Nazis in the Shoah. She is later to become his mother-in-law, a strong, brave woman who, to the date of his writing, always keeps a packed suitcase near her door in an otherwise empty closet.

In other sections he looks at the career of Hillel Kook, known in the US as Peter Bergson, who started in the 1930s as a fund-raiser and weapons procurement agent for the Irgun but became a fierce lobbyist, first for the rescue of Holocaust victims and later for the founding of the State of Israel. He eventually becomes a member of the Knesset and is witness to the negotiations that make the Orthodox rabbinate one of the most powerful political influences in the country.

Crossing Mandelbaum Gate is packed with history, much of which was new to me and all of which was engaging. Even though I often disagreed with Bird I never found him less than extremely readable. If a non-fiction book can be described as 'a page turner', then this one would qualify. Not much I've read lately has been as thought-provoking.

November 2010

Cheshvan-Kislev 5771

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	1 Office Closed	2 <i>Election Day</i> Office Closed	3	4	5 Shabbat Potluck Dinner 6:30 PM - 7:30 PM Shabbat Family Service 7:30 PM - 8:45 PM	6 10am Torah Study																																																																																																														
7 Bagel Brunch-Israel/U.S Relationship by AIPAC Religious School 9:30AM	8 Office Closed	9 Office Closed	10 Board Meeting - 7:30pm Office Closed	11 Office closed <i>Veterans Day</i>	12 Office Closed	13 10am Torah Study																																																																																																														
14 Virtual Rally-Friends of the Arava Institute hosted by Nahum Goldberg	15 Office Closed	16 Office Closed	17 Office closed	18 Office closed	19 7:30 PM Shabbat Evening Service Office closed	20 10am Torah Study																																																																																																														
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December 2010

Monthly Planner

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November 2010
Cheshvan-Kislev 5771

HELP WANTED

Sponsor an oneg to celebrate Shabbat – *Contact Sheri Tattenham*

Learn how to be a part of Chevrah Kadisha (caring for the dead) – *Contact Michele Waxman*

Help organize our educational and social programs – *Contact Laura Taub*

Help our members: the Caring Community needs drivers and visitors – *Contact Marilyn Hertzberg*

Shelve and/or process books for the Children's Library so we can have new books on display – *Contact Laura Taub*

Print out catalog cards for the Adult Library – *Contact Laura Taub*

Organize beautification efforts – *Contact Laura Taub*

Get involved in social action programs – *Contact Jeff Romm*

Help feed the hungry at the Souper Center – *Contact Jane Kaasa*

Help cook or serve latkes at the latke party, or help with crafts – *Contact Doug Freifeld*

Connect us to the larger Jewish community by serving on the Jewish Community Relations Council – *Contact Alan Marks*

Serve on the Midrasha Board to help enrich our high school students' education – *Contact Laura Taub*