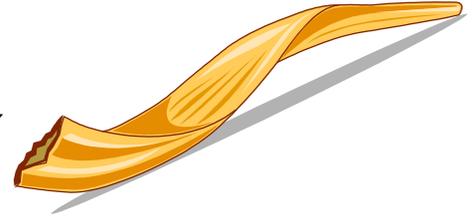




מרבח תורה • מרבח חיים

TEMPLE BETH HILLEL
TORAH • LIFE • COMMUNITY

The Shofar



TEMPLE BETH HILLEL, RICHMOND, CALIFORNIA

Volume 20, Issue 10, July 2014. Tamuz-Av 5774.

A Message from Rabbi Dean

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I rarely speak about current political issues from the *bima*. I have frequently said, I am a rabbi, not a politician. I studied and know something about Jewish sacred texts. But when it comes to politics I am no more or less well informed than any other member of the congregation. Which is not to say that I avoid social problems, I think I speak or write quite frequently about issues like poverty, food insecurity, homelessness, the lack of civil discourse in our political debates, the willingness of both sides of the political divide to blame the other for our societal

problems rather than take their share of the responsibility or find a way to come together to solve these problems. But social and societal problems are very different from specific political philosophies, points-of-view, political parties, or solutions. Judaism is not absolute. It does not endorse a particular political party.

However, Judaism does call us to be engaged in our society. It demands that we take responsibility for alleviating the plight of the weakest and most vulnerable in our society. These verses from Exodus 22:20-23 express that value clearly, "You shall not wrong a stranger or oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. You shall not ill-treat any widow or orphan. If you do mistreat them, I will heed their outcry as soon as they cry out to Me, and My anger shall blaze forth and I will put you to the sword, and your own wives shall become widows and your children orphans." In ancient Israel and in the language of our Torah, widow, orphan and stranger, symbolize the weakest members of society, those who have no one to protect or care for them. Thus it was society's divinely commanded, moral responsibility to care for them. I believe the category of widow, orphan and stranger, and the imperative to care for them, is mentioned 36 times in the Torah.

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But here is where it gets complicated. Torah commands that society take responsibility for the poor and a number of solutions are spelled out, like leaving some of one's harvest in the field for the landless poor to take. Our rabbis developed a highly sophisticated system of social welfare institutions including a community chest, soup kitchens, a burial society, a fund for ensuring the dowry and wedding expenses of poor brides, to name a few. Every community had to establish a burial society before they could begin construction of a synagogue. But these systems are all examples from ancient agrarian and medieval societies. They predate the modern nation state. Would Judaism demand that a particular political line be followed, whether Democratic or Republican, liberal or conservative? Although I have my particular political leanings and biases, like anyone else, ultimately I don't think so. I do think Judaism would ask us as a society whether we taking the needs of the poor seriously, and putting their interests on the same level as our own. It would condemn us if we favored the rich over the poor, or if we favored the poor over the rich. (Leviticus 19:15) Jewish thinking on this topic is too big and too sophisticated to be reduced to an endorsement of one political party or philosophy over another. Both conservative and liberal solutions are valid... as long as they help ameliorate the sufferings of the poor.

Abortion is another example. While many claim that their religious convictions require them to oppose abortion, Judaism does not. This is derived from Exodus 21:22, "when men fight, and one of them pushes a pregnant woman and a miscarriage results, but no other damage ensues, the one responsible shall be fined according as the woman's husband may exact from him, the payment to be based on reckoning." From this passage our sages derived that a fetus could not have the same status as a human being. For if that were the case then the man who caused the miscarriage would be put to death, since it says just before in Exodus 21:12, "He who fatally strikes a man shall be put to death." Thus, in our tradition, abortion is not just allowed, but required, to save the life of the mother. The mother's safety is paramount factor until the head and shoulders of the baby emerge from the birth canal. At the same time, Judaism does not allow abortion on demand. The safety of the mother is the paramount issue, although there is debate among rabbis as to how they define the safety of the mother.

Another example is the death penalty. Capital punishment is clearly mandated in the *Torah* for a number of crimes ranging from murder to adultery and other forbidden sex acts, idol worship, working on the Sabbath, and a wilfully disobedient son. There were four different types of capital punishment as well, stoning, burning, decapitation and strangling. Despite the clarity of these divinely commanded

punishments our rabbis were not comfortable with death penalty and by Talmudic times had legislated it out of existence by establishing a burden of proof that was so high as to be impossible to attain. They could not abolish the death penalty; it was commanded by God. Instead they let it stand but made it impossible to carry out.

Each of these issues, our obligation to the poor, the weak and the vulnerable, abortion, and the death penalty, are deeply divisive in our political discourse. As a society we are polarized with each of the opposing sides, certain of the rightness of their point-of-view. Judaism cautions us against political certainty and tries to walk a middle path, a path of compromise. Such a stance may be less emotionally and intellectually satisfying, it may not make for good talk radio or political pontification, but it is a deeply human and humane attitude. Certainty is dangerous. Not to put too fine a point on it, but I have always been struck that the belt buckles of German soldiers during WWII were inscribed with the words, "*Gott mit uns*," (God is with us). The painful irony is that we know that nothing could be further from the truth since this army was an instrument of such unspeakable horrors. The Jewish tradition, on the other hand, teaches us to listen to one another and question our certainties, as it says, "both these (the ideas of the School of Hillel) and these (the ideas of the School of Shammai) are the words of the living God." As we relax during the summer, as we approach the difficult days of *Tisha b'Av*, and as we begin our moral reckoning in the days and weeks leading up to the High Holy Days, let us study the Jewish tradition to identify our moral obligations. Once we have done that it is time to act. How you act, however, is a matter of your particular political philosophy and that is your business. That is why I try not to talk about politics from the *bima*.





Message from Our President

Jane Durango

My dear TBH friends,

It is a great honor and pleasure for me to become President of Temple Beth Hillel, a community that we all love. I see this honor as a chance to deepen the commitment I have had to you over the last several years through our work on the Ritual Committee, the Purim Carnival, Bagel Brunches and other events.

For those of you who don't know me, I was born in Phoenix and spent my formative years in Albuquerque. I graduated from the University of New Mexico. I am married to Pablo Durango, who is originally from Quito, Ecuador, where we lived for the first 30 years of our marriage. Our two sons, Pablo and Roberto, grew up in Ecuador and moved to the U. S. for college. Our son, Pablo, lives in Evanston, Ill., with his wife, Liz, and our 3 grandchildren, Daniel, Rachel and Sarah. Roberto lives in Springfield, Ill. We have lived here in the Bay Area since December 1999. Pablo and I joined TBH in 2000 where I was called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah in 2003.

The last year has brought many fundamental changes to

TBH, and it will be my job to move forward with the hope of further implementing the changes and actively working together with all of you towards making life at the synagogue as welcoming and inclusive as possible for us as a family, no matter where our interests lie. Please don't hesitate to e-mail or call me with any questions or comments you may have. I will be pleased to work with everyone in making our synagogue a dynamic place through Adult Education, Services, Religious School or any other area so that we all come together as one. I would welcome and encourage all of you to volunteer for projects and committees so that we can get things done in a way that is helpful for all. Thank you in advance for your help.

Finally, one thing I would like to do is include a recipe with my monthly columns. Please let me know if there is a recipe of mine you would like me to share or if you would like to share one of your own with the community.

L'shalom,

Jane C. Durango

“Matzo Balls” – Makes 8 matzo balls (please let me know if you'd like to make 300 for the TBH Seder!)

2 tablespoons vegetable oil
2 large eggs, slightly beaten
½ c matzo meal
2 tablespoons broth (chicken or vegetable) or water (I use water)
1 teaspoon salt, if desired

To cook you will need

1 small bowl
6 cups (1-1/2 quarts) cold water
4 quart pot

Prepare:

- In a bowl beat eggs, add oil, matzo meal and salt. Blend together. Add broth or water and mix until uniform;
- Cover and chill in refrigerator for about 20 minutes (overnight is best; mixture will keep covered in the refrigerator for 2-3 days)
- Bring 6 cups(1-1/2 quarts) salted water to a brisk boil
- Remove chilled matzo ball mixture from the refrigerator. Wet hands with cold water and form mixture into matzo balls approximately 1 inch in diameter (I use a medium cookie scoop and wet it in cold water after each matzo ball is formed)

Cook:

- Reduce heat. Drop matzo balls into pot of boiling water
- Cover tightly and simmer until thoroughly cooked, about 30-40 minutes. **TIP FROM ROSE GENIRBERG:** Do not remove the lid from the pot until matzo balls are cooked,





Welcome Cantor Fran Burgess

Temple Beth Hillel in Richmond welcomes Fran Burgess as its new Cantor. A classically trained opera singer and accomplished musician, Fran received her ordination and Masters of Sacred Music from the Academy for Jewish Religion California (AJRCA) in 2012. She succeeds Cantor Howard Cohen who passed away in June 2013. Cantor Fran joins Rabbi Dean Kertesz leading religious services and co-leading the family Tefillah service on Sunday mornings. She brings a wealth of musical talent to all aspects of the congregation's religious life. Her new duties will include teaching an adult education class on chanting Torah and teaching religious school students the musical component to prayer. She looks ahead to creating a youth choir. "Music and prayer have a special bond in Jewish worship. Music opens a gateway to the soul. I have the privilege and pleasure of sharing our chain of musical tradition at Temple Beth Hillel."

Fran's love of music began at a very early age. Raised in a musical family, by age six, she was the third member of a recorder trio with her mother and father. She later studied the flute, the oboe, and then voice at the Boston Conservatory of Music, the Santa Cecilia Conservatory of Music in Rome, and the Manhattan School of Music. Moving in an entirely new direction, she earned a nursing degree and followed up with a study of orthopedic massage. However, Fran never forgot her love of music, studying voice and singing with the San Francisco Symphony Chorus and the San Francisco Opera's professional chorus for ten seasons.

Her path to become a Cantor began when she and her husband, Sandy Zirulnik, and children, Martin and Alexandra, became members of Temple Sinai in Oakland. Martin began his bar mitzvah studies while Fran became more involved with synagogue life. She joined the adult choir and began leading services as a soloist. Wanting to learn to pray like a Jew--not just sing a good service--led her to attend the Academy of Jewish Religion California where she was ordained after five years of study.

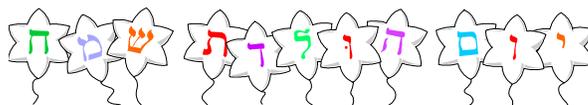
Now, Fran Burgess' cantorial voice becomes an integral part of Temple Beth Hillel's congregational life as she assumes her new position with Rabbi Dean Kertesz on Friday, July 4, 2014, TBH's Family Barbecue and Potluck (6:30 p.m.) followed by the evening Shabbat service (7:30 p.m.).



Anniversaries:

Josh & Elaina Genser	7/5
Dean Kertesz & Carla Cassler	7/8
Alan & Margie Marks	7/21
Beverly Lesch & David L. Osburn	7/27

Birthdays



Adios Amigos

‘We’ll Be Seeing You In All The Old Familiar Places (But Not TBH, sadly)’

You could have knocked us over with a peach tree!

Judy and Jim Freeman announced recently (and abruptly) that they were ‘up and moving’ to suburban Atlanta, Georgia.

Now, there’s nothing wrong with hankering for a little warmer weather, like, how about, oh, Walnut Creek. And a taste for a somewhat lower cost of living like, how about, oh can we get back to you on that?

But Georgia? Isn’t that just a touch, ohhh, radical?

What the heck! Sounds like quite an adventure; off to the deep South bag and baggage, dog and Harley, new friends and new vistas.

Good luck to you both, and we’ll miss you.

Bea Freifeld	7/6	13th birthday
Sharon Mittleman	7/7	
Joan Seal	7/7	
Frida Hilsabeck	7/8	
Roberta Alexander	7/11	
Irene Morgan	7/13	
Avi Kertesz	7/14	20th birthday
Wendy Roth	7/14	
Joel Rosenbaum	7/15	
Nathan Joseph Rosenbaum	7/17	11th birthday
Samuel Evan Rosenbaum	7/17	11th birthday
Steve Welstand	7/28	
Sylvia Freifeld	7/29	17th birthday

Notes from the board meeting of June 10, 2014.

- In honor of Larry Fox’s last meeting as president, the board thanked him for his service and presented him with a gift.
- Cantor Fran Burgess will begin in July and everyone is invited to the July 4 barbecue and potluck before the Friday night service.
- TBH will have a booth at the El Cerrito Fourth of July celebration. Anyone with material to distribute is asked to turn it in as soon as possible.
- The landscaping committee will focus on getting the ground ready for planting in the fall.
- A Religious School cleanup is planned for July. The date will be announced. (Ed.Changed to August)
- Future board meetings will be the third Wednesday of the month, with the executive board meeting the second Wednesday.

Submitted by Roberta Alexander, secretary

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 Fund:

Sherbie Aberle, in remembrance of Ruth Hardy

Dues Relief Fund:

Sanford & Helene Wichner, in remembrance of Rachel Danielle Ellis

Beautification Fund:

David Brown & Cheryl Black, in Honor of Sam Gernirberg's 90th Birthday

Maintenance Fund:

Bobbi Nadler, in remembrance of Jack Henner

Bobbi Nadler, in remembrance of Jaime Nadler

Linda Rose & Jim Montgomery, in remembrance of Charles Rose

Tzedakah-Tikkun Olam Fund:

Roberta Alexander, in remembrance of Ruth Alexander

Eric Husby-Gerry, in remembrance of Herman Lester Gerry

Michael Nye & Mindy Pines, in remembrance of Nathan Nye

Neil & Roxann Zarchin, in remembrance of Thurston Glass

Adult Education Fund:

Michael & Joan Seal, M.D., in remembrance of Dr. Herman Seal

Cantor's Discetionary Fund:

Alan & Margie Marks, in remembrance of Rena Marks

Rabbi's Discetionary Fund:

Steve & Fran Welstand, in remembrance of Mae Welstand

Steve & Fran Welstand, in remembrance of Joseph Maurice Welstand

Cantor's Memorial Fund:

Rose Fox, in remembrance of Bill Fox & Israel Schwartz

Rose Fox, in remembrance of Ken Fox

Zelda Holland, in remembrance of Alexander Schlocker



My Dear TBH Community,

I was overwhelmed by the love and appreciation sent my way at our General Membership Meeting. It warms my heart significantly to have the support of my Community and know that what I have tried to do, hopefully made a positive difference. Like I mentioned to many people today, my change in title does not change my love or caring for our Community. I will continue to serve, knowing it is for the good of us all.

For any who may have missed the meeting or wanted to know what I actually said, here is the text of my President's Report.



Thank you,
L'Shalom
Larry

President's Report 2013-2014

The past year has been real a challenge for our TBH Community and for me as, both as President & personally. As I began the 2nd year of my 2-year term as President, I was focused on the kinds of changes that would help us to move forward and shake things up a bit. How quickly we would be confronted with life changing events and moments to test our faith, our resolve, and our relationships within our TBH family.

We barely had gotten past our last General Membership Meeting and we were confronted by the death of our friend, long time member & Cantor - Howard Cohen. We faced many challenges at that time, but our TBH family present & past stepped up to the occasion. David Brown, in our time of need, broke the news to me & helped to get Rabbi Judy Shanks to officiate at Howard's funeral. Our Caring Community did what they do best and helped pull the funeral together. It was a sad and moving time that brought us together as community. It also would set in motion a lot of changes for this past year.

Howard's passing would not be our first brush with death. Within a two week period we also lost our founding member Rose Genirberg & recently rejoined member Daivd Katzenellenbogen. It seemed as if we could not catch our collective breathe and grieve. Again our wonderful Caring Committee stepped up and did what was needed to give a respectful goodbye & help those who were grieving. We unfortunately had to call upon them for the all too early passing of David & Cheryl's son Elton Brown.

It seemed as if our year was going to be consumed with death and loss, but our sense of purpose and community pushed us all to come together even more to take on the challenges brought to us.

We began with trying to find someone to fill the role of Cantor for the High Holy Days. With what may have been G-d's guiding hand Rabbi/Cantor Sara stopped by our booth at the City of El Cerrito 4th of July Festival. This was a successful outing for us. We had a great showing of congregants and made a good impression in the greater local community. We're doing this again this 4th of July. (Please sign up for a shift on the sheet that is going around or see me after the meeting to talk about it.)

After a brief, but intensive search to find a candidate for the High Holy days we went with Rabbi/Cantor Sara Shendelman. Her voice and ability helped to fill a void in our High Holy Days services. With the efforts of Rabbi Dean Kertesz, Jane Durango & the Ritual Committee, and our wonderful choir under the direction of John Kendall Bailey we had a very meaningful High Holy Days experience that began to let us process our grief and helped us in our spiritual renewal.

We again participated in the annual Jewish Heritage Night with the Oakland Athletics. It was a great family outing. We had even more of our TBH Community attend than last year. I invite you to join us this summer on August 19th for this year's game.

We hosted a booth at the Solano Stroll where we were able to reach out to our greater community maintaining our presence, and having opportunities to communicate the advantages of being a part of Temple Beth Hillel.

Throughout the year our committed Marketing Committee got out "*the word*" on Facebook, our website, the weekly update, various online forums, advertisements and articles in a variety of media celebrating what TBH does.

Our Social Action Committee, headed by Jeff Romm, again lead the efforts on the "Food For Thought" project, where we brought food and educational toys to 80+ families and managed, with the help of our Marketing Committee, received mentions in a couple different articles affirming what a heart our community has. The Social Action Committee also arranged for us to go to the Contra Costa Food Bank and help sort the food and get it processed to go out to the various local food banks in our community. It was a very positive experience for all who participated in helping with our efforts to reduce food insecurity.

Every month we participate with the Greater Richmond Interfaith Program (GRIP) in providing meals to the homeless and giving food to the Richmond Food Pantry. Jane Kaasa & Arlene Lisby anchor our efforts on the 4th Wednesday of the month. Our Religious School kids help with their monthly cooking projects



lead by Neoma Kenwood & Selma Goldberg. The people involved vary but the commitment to helping others and bringing an awareness to those in need does not. Thank you to everyone involved.

Speaking of involvement, I must mention the great efforts of Cantor Search Committee which included Rabbi Dean, Jane Durango, Carl Nelson, Maggie Jacobs and myself. Without the efforts this group for the many months since the High Holy Days through today – we would not have had the very thoughtful, inclusive and transparent process that we have had leading to our successful selection & negotiation of our new Cantor, Fran Burgess. It was an especially difficult process, just in terms of logistics & time and then the added burden of trying to really find out what our community wanted and needed in terms of music & services at TBH. That was made especially apparent through the Special Membership Meeting we had in October, the various conversations and ultimately through the feedback from our cantor candidate lead services. (More on our new Cantor later.)

Like I mentioned last year I would be remiss if I did not mention the efforts a small group of devoted people who put together our Weekly Update E-mail. It is sometimes an intense and redundant process, but without their effort we would not be able to get our weekly dose of Torah from Rabbi Dean or our upcoming events, so for all involved in this unofficial committee - I appreciate your efforts.

This too is the case with the monthly Shofar and all the contributions from our various members. Barbara & Jay Weidenfeld continue to manage to get it out to us each month.

Thinking of consistent efforts - I have to thank Maggie Jacobs & Eric Husby-Gerry for their efforts to enrich our Shabbat services with music. Especially since Howard's passing, it has been even more important to have them add energy & music to our spiritual experience.

This past year Rabbi Dean reintroduced us to a former TBH tradition of reading Torah on Friday nights. This has been a great experience for our members getting to hear the Torah read more often and getting to involve them consistently in the guide for our people.

Despite our challenges, we still have been to be able to celebrate a number of our holidays like sitting in the sukkah for Sukkot, dancing with the Torah for Simchat Torah, and enjoying our Latke Party for Chanukah, which included an even bigger and better local artisan's fair. We joyfully celebrated Purim with our annual Purim Carnival which takes all "hands on deck" to make it happen and our wonderful annual 2nd night of Pesach seder. All of these events and much more have been made possible by the efforts of our dedicated members, especially our Board Members and our Temple Office Manager Arlene Lisby.

As I have been looking back over the past year, I am very much aware of how fortunate we are to be a part of this great congregation and how it has been my honor to serve as your president.

Even though the positions & people change, our commitment to this congregation and each other is what matters most. Thank you for this opportunity.

L'Shalom

Larry

COMING TO A THEATER NEAR YOU

Film festival selections are a bit like boxed chocolates. To quote a famous movie protagonist, "You never know what you're going to get."

Add in all the flavors that a San Francisco and Bay Area Jewish Film Festival brings with it and the audience palate will be relentlessly challenged. With seventy films spread over half a month, showing in theaters from the tropic South of Palo Alto to the frosty North of San Rafael no one will have an excuse for staying home.

Since this is the Jewish film festival we can be sure that the art and craft of film making will be stretched to its limits. After all, most of us have read *An Empire Of Their Own: How The Jews Invented Hollywood* by Neal Gabler. Our roots in this pursuit go long and deep.

The Festival will show us such well-known personalities as Susan Sontag and Uri Geller, a profile of the pilots of 1948 who flew cobbled-together junk planes in the war of liberation, comedies of life's absurdities (what else?), tension and suspense, poignancy, romance both sweet and bittersweet, mystery, affectionate (occasionally raunchy) and angry documentary.

Famous names and newcomers populate the credits.

SF Film Festival July 24 - August 10, 2014

TIX: 415 521-0523 sfff.org

JLW



Join Us For Jewish Heritage Night with the Oakland A's

Tuesday, August 19, 2014

Enjoy an Evening at the Ballpark with our TBH Community and get a Jewish Themed Meal, Plaza Infield Seating, Free Parking & Commemorative Baseball Cap with A's Logo in Hebrew. Tickets are \$26.50 each.

Contact Larry Fox for Tickets



VS





Yahrzeits

May Their Memories Be For A blessing

Jerome Blumenfeld, husband of Leila Blumenfeld	7/1
Herman Seal, M.D., father of Michael Seal, M.D.	7/2
Al Loptman, beloved member of the congregation	7/3
Jacob Scolnick, father of Deborah Koenig	7/4
Jacob Lesch, father of Beverly Lesch	7/5
Robert Bearson, father of Dann Ozer-Bearson	7/6
Allan D. Morgan, husband of Irene Morgan	7/7
Samuel Snitz, beloved father of Frank Snitz	7/7
Eva Linker, beloved wife of Henry Linker	7/8
David Refkin, father-in-law of Deanna Brown Refkin	7/8
Anne Herrod, beloved member of the congregation	7/9
Ben Cohen, grandfather of Howard Cohen	7/11
Iisa Feiger, sister of Eva Linker	7/11
Dora Jaffe, mother of Arlene Lisby	7/11
Gary Goldstein, brother-in-law of Allan Sagle	7/14
Nell Kest, mother of Michele Waxman	7/14
Rudolph Langer, beloved member of the congregation	7/14
Sophia F. Weiner, mother of June Maberry	7/14
Albert Greenberg, beloved member of the congregation	7/15
Cantor Howard Cohen, beloved member of our congregation	7/16
Hazel Gross, aunt of Frank Snitz	7/17
Eugene Baker, cousin of David Brown	7/18
Sidney Altholz, father of Suzanne Nelson	7/19
Max Sagle, stepfather of Allan Sagle	7/19
Seymour Aberle, beloved member of the congregation	7/22
Blaise Hardy, brother of Sherbie Aberle	7/22
Joseph Kaplan, beloved member of the congregation	7/22
Israel Michael Schneiweiss, son of Rose Fox	7/22
Helen Houskaa, beloved member of the congregation	7/23
Gussie Hyman, grandmother of Helene Class	7/23
Jacob Sondheimer, father of Miriam Gerber	7/23
Jack Goldberg, father of Clara-Rae Genser	
Grandfather of Josh Genser	7/27
Bessie Polikoff, mother-in-law of Barbara Polikoff	7/27
Zanvel Schwartz, grandfather of Beverly Lesch	7/28
Rose Genirberg, wife of Sam Genirberg	7/29
Lily Magaril, mother of Rose Fox	7/29
Ethel Zenkel, grandmother of Eric, Bonnie & Tracy Zell	7/29
Melbourne Blum, beloved member of the congregation	7/31
Samuel Blumenson, beloved member of the congregation	7/31
Alvin Hugo Delzen, grandfather of Barry Horton	7/31
Sylvia Zigman, aunt of Gordon Raskin	7/31

The Winner Takes It All

By Roberta Alexander

I was never much of a fan of ABBA.

I didn't pay attention to the popular Swedish group when it was in its heyday, except in a subliminal sort of way. I never went to a concert and never bought a song. But as I settled into a media career, I found I needed to know at least a little something about a lot of things, and ABBA fell into that category.

Still, I never chose to listen to its music or cared about the group's vicissitudes.

But that all changed a few years ago. Now I get a kick out of watching "Mamma Mia" when the movie turns up on TV.

After all, it's fun in a frivolous sort of way. The music is energetic and cheerful, and who couldn't use a little more energy and good cheer?

I am even willing to put up with Pierce Brosnan attempting to sing.

I came to this music in a strange and unforeseen way when I was looking for a way to feel more connected to the community by volunteering for something. I didn't have a specific task in mind, but I was pretty clear on what I didn't want to do, and that was to use my professional skills to write press releases for a worthy nonprofit organization.

Not that there's anything wrong with doing that. I just didn't want to spend my time manipulating words, which felt an awful lot like what I did for a living. So I chose to become a volunteer at an assisted living facility for people with dementia and other problems who could not live on their own. I had no experience with this population; what I did have was a certain amount of anxiety, as I'm not too comfortable with people who aren't verbal.

But I thought I would be able to start small—toe dipping, as it were—by choosing an activity that didn't require me to get down and dirty. If I could remain somewhat remote, I wouldn't be so unnerved. The facility's listing specified that it wanted someone to read aloud, which sounded just right to me. But it turned out the day and time it wanted to fill didn't work with my schedule, so I found myself instead assigned to leading a group exercise session and then visiting people who rarely left their rooms.

The exercise group was held in a large space that functioned as a kind of living room for the home. The more mobile residents walked in; others were wheeled in by aides.

Our game involved several balloons that we tossed around, trying to keep them in the air and involving as many people as possible. The volunteer director told me he usually provided a musical accompaniment and showed me where the tape deck was stored.

It didn't take me long to figure out that the big issue in working with this population was how to engage them. They had different needs and different abilities, really pretty much like any other group of people brought together because of the one thing they had in common. A few had physical impairments that meant they needed help with some functions; many were non-verbal, slumped in wheelchairs and seemingly hardly aware of their surroundings.

By my second session, I had discovered the ABBA tape—and how much the residents seem to like it. They were livelier and more engaged when it was on.

I wasn't prepared to look this gift horse in the mouth. The residents liked ABBA? Fine with me, they could listen to their hearts' content.

What I hadn't expected was the way the music drew everyone together. One man whose face I rarely saw because he appeared to be staring at his knees slapped the table in accompaniment. A woman in a wheelchair whose bib was soaked from drool moved her shoulders from side to side, the most movement I ever saw her do.

The more mobile residents did little dances as they slid around, some moving just one foot and others humming and bouncing.

And the laughter! Tossing the balloons back and forth elicited chuckles and giggles. They loved it when I missed and had to scoop a balloon off the floor. I laughed too.

Of course I knew music could be powerful, could change my mood or transport me. But I was unprepared for its effect in this setting. Sometimes, with "Dancing Queen" or "Waterloo" blasting in the room, something ineffable happened. We ceased being a group of elderly people whose minds and bodies no longer obeyed our commands, but became instead a joyous entity—light as air and strong as steel—that was in us and also curled around us. Did it last only a few seconds? No matter. It was glorious.

Special Thanks To

Larry Fox for his dedicated, hard-working and steady leadership as President addressing the needs of our community during this challenging year.

The Cantor Search Committee:

Jane Durango, Larry Fox, Rabbi Dean Kertesz, Maggie Jacobs, and Carl Nelson for their diligence, wisdom and guidance in leading us to select a new cantor.

Maggie Jacobs, who not only served on the Cantor Search Committee and worked with the candidates to teach them our familiar melodies, but also provided us with musical leadership for the entire year.

Michael Nye our representative to the East Bay Jewish Community Relations Council who honored him as a Volunteer of the Year.

Larry Fox and Arlene Lisby for organizing the General Membership Meeting, and **Kia Croom** who attended and expressed appreciation from GRIP.

Jane Durango for providing the bagel brunch.
Jane Kemp who was in charge of the barbeque;
Dana Meyer and Holvis Delgadillo for their expert grilling;
Jane Durango, Larry Fox, Marilyn Hertzberg, Neoma Kenwood, Arlene Lisby, Michael Nye, Greg Tananbaum,
and all those who helped with set-up and clean-up.

Heather Fox, Malka Helfman, Elisabeth Miller and Sheri Tattenham for teaching our Religious School students with wisdom and caring,

Larry Fox for preparations,
and **Heather Fox, Jacob Fox, Jennifer Fox, Michael Fox, and Greg Tanenbaum** for helping with set-up and clean-up for the Religious School mensch awards and ice cream social.

Malka Helfman, Elisabeth Miller and all the **Religious School staff and students** for their support of Jarod Lyke's becoming a bar mitzvah.

Neoma Kenwood for spearheading the project to cook dinner for the GRIP Family Housing Program and, with **Selma Goldberg**, planned, cooked and served the dinners with **Malka Helfman's Religious School class,**

and a special thanks to **Kobi Meyer** for all his help during the religious school year supervising the students during the cooking sessions. Kobi was a great help, a terrific mentor, and a wonderful role model for the students. We will sorely miss him.

Arnold Faerber and Carl Nelson who brought Torah Study to Frank Snitz's home during his recovery.

July 2014

Tamuz-Av 5774

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																								
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August 2014

Av-Elul 5774

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24 <div style="border: 1px solid blue; padding: 2px; font-size: x-small;"> 9:30 AM First Day of Religious School - </div>	25 <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">Office Closed</div>	26 <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">Office Closed</div>	27 <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> Office Closed R.S. Hebrew 3:40-4:30pm (#1) 4:30 - 5:25pm (#2) <div style="border: 1px solid blue; padding: 2px; font-size: x-small; margin-top: 5px;"> Souper Center </div> </div>	28	29	30 <div style="border: 1px solid blue; padding: 2px; font-size: x-small;"> 5th Saturday Shabbat Service </div>																																																																																				
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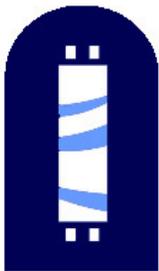
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Jane Kemp jckemp5674@gmail.com

HELP WANTED

Help with the project to **reconfigure the Religious School** – Contact Larry Fox.

Feed the hungry at the **GRIP Souper Center**.
Our next day is July 23 – Contact Jane Kaasa

Post Temple events on websites and community calendars – Contact the Marketing Committee at marketing@tbhrichmond.org

Help organize **Bagel Brunches and other cultural activities** for the congregation –
Contact Jane Durango.

Sponsor an oneg to celebrate Shabbat –
Contact Sheri Tattenham.,

Shelve and/or process books for the **Children's Library** – Contact Laura Taub

Let the Board know of your **ideas to improve our community** – Contact any Board member.

Develop an **incident-response plan** – Contact David Brown.

We have openings for **representatives to the Midrasha Board** – Contact Andre Moskowitz.

