

December 2016



# Temple Talk

News you can use from the TI-JCC community

### ***A Message from Rabbi David Fine***



#### **BEYOND THE ELECTION**

I cannot remember a time when there was as much anxiety following a presidential election as we have been experiencing this past month. We have seen protests and read about recriminations. We heard that the Canadian immigration website crashed after the election results were tallied. None of us are prophets and can say with certainty what the future will or will not bring. But I do believe that a certain optimism in the future is the stalwart position of the person of faith. I also believe, deeply believe, in the stability and goodness of our country.

As a rabbi I am cognizant, and have been very conscious throughout the election season, of what my role is *not*. That is, while I can and do speak for issues and values, it has *not* been nor is it now my role to endorse individual politicians. But there is a distinct line between politics and civics. There is a role for the religious community to support the state and its elected officials and to serve as an engine of civic loyalty in a society committed to laws and good government. For that reason, the American flag is proudly displayed in our, and most, synagogue sanctuaries throughout the country. We do not do that only to allow us to display the Israeli flag (which we do as well with a special pride). We display the American flag because we see ourselves as a partner to the state, loyal to its virtues even as the “wall of separation” exists between us, maintaining our freedom.

And so, I would extend congratulations to the president-elect no matter who he or she was.

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### ***Words from Rabbi Jacob Lieberman***



One of the foundational ideas in Reconstructionist Judaism is the recognition that we Jews in America live in two civilizations, the American as well as the Jewish. At different times, one or the other culture, its values and ideals, influences the other. It’s our responsibility and our opportunity to bring these influences to bear for good.

In this new secular year, our country will celebrate the birthday of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and a few short weeks later, we, as Jews, will celebrate the holiday of Tu B’Shevat. Through initiatives to make Martin Luther King Jr. Day a day of service, many of us will volunteer or offer our services. We may participate in dialogue groups or attend events where we can learn about and share King’s legacy.

To celebrate Tu B’Shevat, we may organize a seder and arrange programs or events about the environment or food justice. We’ll do this despite the fact that living in the diaspora, many of us celebrate Tu Bish’vat in the dead of winter. We are less likely to see the first fruits of our growing season than the empty branches of last year’s growth. Here in New Jersey, some of us use local ingredients we can find or grow, and many of us import fruits and nuts from other places. This is a triumph of hope and resourcefulness.

King’s work for civil rights, to end segregation, and against poverty is legendary and inspiring. While we have much to celebrate, as I think about this season and its holidays, I think we might benefit from remembering not only King’s accomplishments but one of his setbacks, from 1962, the year before he began organizing (successful) nonviolent protests in

*Continued on page 3*

In the Prayer for Our Country that we recite every Shabbat morning, when we ask for God's blessings for our leaders, I have been adding "and our leaders-elect." I will do so until Inauguration Day, as I would have done no matter who the president-elect was. But in this year, following this election, I feel all the more compelled to do so. Because I continue to hear and read comparisons between the United States today with Germany of 1933, mixed with real fear and angst, I find it necessary to offer a more centrist (if less passionate) perspective.

Yes, it is undeniable that if there is one lesson to be learned from the Holocaust, it is that we should never take our security for granted, and never assume that what happened "there" and "then" could not happen "here" and "now." That being said, we are not, in my opinion, living in 1933 Germany. Here are but a few points that are salient in my mind:

- While Trump and Hitler are both charismatic politicians and came to power from an anti-establishment platform, Trump was elected through the normal process of our Electoral College system. Hitler was appointed by the ruling elite, whom he quickly moved against as soon as he could. The very elite who appointed Hitler were themselves already disavowing the legitimacy of German democracy.
- The fifteen-year-old German Weimar Republic was already on unsteady ground as the few years before Hitler's seizure of power were marked by presidentially appointed governments that did not command parliamentary consensus.
- Our American government has persisted under our current constitution longer than any other in the world. We are the most stable of nations. Our long-serving constitution is marked by a separation of powers that could not be more different than the parliamentary system that Hitler inherited in Germany. Our Congress stands as an independent branch of government from the executive. While we are well familiar with the liabilities of this system through the long history of log-jams between Congress and the White House, we need to recognize that it serves as a hurricane wall to protect us against an unchecked executive. Indeed, our constitution was crafted by the Founders specifically with that in mind.
- Hitler was an avowed anti-Semite. President-Elect Trump's most trusted advisors are his Jewish daughter and son-in-law.
- One out of four American Jews voted for Trump. The proportions were more or less consistent with every election, give or take a few percentage points. Three-quarters of Jews vote Democrat and one quarter Republican. (We are traditional that way.)

While I do not want to get involved in the political analysis of the statements and positions of the president-elect, I do urge us to keep historical perspective. This was a difficult election that unleashed very dangerous fears and hatreds within the fabric of the American people. I look to President-Elect Trump to lead the nation

beyond the election. As President George H. W. Bush wrote in the letter he left in the Oval Office for President Clinton: "You will be our president .... Your success now is our country's success. I am rooting hard for you."

In our Muffins and Mishnah sessions we have been studying this month from Tractate Shevu'ot, the laws of oaths. The only formal oath I have taken in my life was for my first job after graduating from high school. I signed up to be a census worker, and as any federal employee must do, I raised my right hand and swore to defend the Constitution of the United States. Donald Trump will take that oath on January 20. We are linked through that bond.



## MORE POST-ELECTION "COVERAGE"

### Post-Election Analysis:

### What's Next for the U.S.-Israel Relationship?

Please join us for an AIPAC Briefing on **Thursday, December 15 at Temple Emanuel of the Pascack Valley** with Ambassador Brad Gordon, AIPAC's Director of Policy and Government Affairs and chief lobbyist. Ambassador Gordon will unravel the election's results and how they will impact the U.S.-Israel relationship.

Prior to coming to AIPAC, Ambassador Gordon worked at the CIA and on Capitol Hill.

Temple Israel & Jewish Community Center is a co-sponsor of this community-wide program.



For security purposes, please RSVP at [www.aipac.org/pascackvalleycommunityevent](http://www.aipac.org/pascackvalleycommunityevent). For more information, please contact Ayelet Kahane at [akahane@aipac.org](mailto:akahane@aipac.org).

### Join us for a special Tikkun Olam event Gun Violence Prevention Shabbat Saturday, December 17

Sarah Nanus, founder of the Bergen County chapter of Moms United to Prevent Gun Violence, will deliver the d'var torah. Join us for special readings, discussion, and kiddush. Services begin at 9:00 a.m. with Muffins and Mishnah.

Rabbi Lieberman, cont'd. from page 1

Birmingham, Alabama. King spent about a year in Albany, Georgia, fighting segregation alongside other activists. In that year, the Albany Movement did not win *any* significant campaigns. King wrote this about his experience in Albany (from the *Autobiography of Martin Luther King, Jr.*): “The mistake I made there was to protest against segregation generally rather than against a single and distinct facet of it. Our protest was so vague that we got nothing, and the people were left very depressed and in despair. It would have been much better to have concentrated upon integrating the buses or the lunch counters ....” As most of us know, King went on to do just that.

As we move into this secular new year, I want to wish you the joy of many specific successes, and offer my hope that they’ll help in warding off depression and despair. I pray that we are blessed to find new fruits here in America even in the most barren of seasons, and that we can look forward to a bountiful and full harvest in Israel and across the globe. May all who are hungry find nourishment, and may we find awe and inspiration in the Source of Life that renews our days and seasons.

**thirty-six/24**

**An activist *beit midrash* for Jewish learning and social justice**

**Sunday, December 18, 3-6 p.m.**



As Jews, we believe Jewish learning and social justice work are among our most sacred values. Many of us want to learn and make justice work a part of our lives but feel that we just don’t have time. Designed by RCBI’s Rabbi Jacob Lieberman, this innovative program combines learning and social justice in Jewish community for sustainable, holy practice. The one-hour segments allow participants to make a modest but achievable commitment to learning and justice work.

During each hour, participants will spend **36 minutes on activism** (one for each exhortation in the Torah not to oppress the stranger) and **24 minutes on Torah study** (one for each hour in the day were we to study day and night.) Choose from three sessions – come for one or come for all!

**President’s Message: Bob Obeiter**

Being a business person, I had assumed for many years that running a synagogue was very much like running a business. So, initially I thought, “I have run successful businesses, both large and small, so how different could a synagogue be? After all, we need to hit some bottom-line goals to remain viable.” Well I was wrong. Thinking of TI as a business of any size is not the right model.

Most obviously, at TI we don’t have customers; we have members. We don’t have a company that provides a service. We—all of us—create the service when we show up. In our community, when we give, it is not to the synagogue, it is to ourselves. When we serve, it is not the institution that we are serving, but each other. When we fall short, which we do on occasion, I remind myself that the work at our shul is based on volunteers. Our members contribute enormous expertise, time, and effort (in addition to their day jobs and families).

At the end of October our board of trustees furthered our focus on our jobs by learning how to run a synagogue, spending the evening in a leadership training session lead by professionals from the Jewish Federation of Northern New Jersey. In December and January, we will begin to follow up on the recommendations and guidance from that training. Our goal is to continue the process of moving beyond a focus on month-to-month operations to ensure a thriving future for Temple Israel that maintains our unique identify.

When I look back, just over the period of the last month or so, I am overwhelmed by the amount of activity that has taken place at our shul. We had a very active Mitzvah Day involving students and adults; a Scholar-in-Residence Program sponsored by member Rabbi Selig Salkowitz, which was held both at TI-JCC and at Temple Avodat Shalom; a Shabbat morning service honoring our past presidents and their contributions to Temple Israel; and a Sunday Open Mic, where members showed off their talents, just to name a few. And, looking forward, we will have a joint Hanukkah celebration with RCBI on December 24, complete with Chinese food (and possibly a movie). In January, we will have our Sisterhood Shabbat, the start of Rabbi Fine’s adult education program based on his new book, *Passionate Centrism: One Rabbi’s Judaism*, and our annual Karaoke Night (albeit without DJ Susie). In March, we will have our annual Ways and Means dinner honoring Joe and Sandy Wechsler and Tina Polen, as well as our Brandeis Men’s Club Shabbat.

So, if you want to get involved with activities at TI, I can say with confidence—and pride—that whatever interests you, there is a group at TI involved in it. Whatever skills you have, there is a role for you to play. And whatever committee you join, you will spend your time with friends, advancing shared goals. Not sure how to start? Drop me an email at [President@Synagogue.org](mailto:President@Synagogue.org).

## Sisterhood News ... and Notes of Appreciation

Without our dedicated members, Sisterhood could never put together and pull off so many great events and activities. In the past couple of months, we've cooked, done yoga, played games, cooked some more, partied with our TI-JCC community, and so much more. Everyone had a great time at our golden mah jongg game and we had a fabulous Ladies Nite Out with our 2nd annual Latke/Vodka/Bingo event.

With that in mind, Sisterhood thanks the following members for their contributions:



- ◆ To Elaine and Arlene for our annual Kugelthon, which supplies our Yom Kippur Break Fast. It was a lot of work and it was a great success.
- ◆ To Debbie for leading Israeli dancing at Sisters in the Sukkah and for running our yoga program.
- ◆ To Arlene for our monthly mah jongg program and supplying food for all of our events.
- ◆ To Irene and Beth for working so hard on Progressive Dinner. It was a huge success.
- ◆ To the Progressive Dinner hosts for opening their homes to us: the Habers for hors d'oeuvres; to the Bordowitz, Cantor, Freeman, Klein, Gottesman/Zeller, Rosen, and Vladi/Prakhina families for dinners, and the Brodys for dessert.
- ◆ To Arlene for our delicious Hanukkah snacks.



### Upcoming Sisterhood events —please join us!

-Mah Jongg and More is the first Wednesday of every month. Beginners are welcome.

**-January 14: Sisterhood Shabbat, when our TI women will lead the service.** Kiddush luncheon will follow.

-Feb. 12, 2017: Men's Club/Sisterhood Healthy Event

-March 9, 2017: Vashti's Feast Ladies Nite Out

-April 2017: Passover sale

## MUSICAL NOTES

Temple Israel and JCC music has much in store for the coming year. Our music began on Sunday, November 20 with the annual Open Mic, featuring thirteen in-house artists. Marc Cantor was a terrific MC. Congratulations to all the talented participants, some of whom performed for the first time.



### SAVE THESE DATES!

#### KABBAIAT SHABBAT MUSIC

-The Temple Israe'lights Bima Band will play for the following Shabbatot:

December 23, January, 13, February 3, March 24, April 7, and May 5

-May 12: Prayers and music with singer-song-writer Amichai Margolis

-June 30 and July 21: Shabbatot Under the Summer Sky

#### THIRD ANNUAL CABARET NIGHT: Saturday, January 21, 8:00-11:00 p.m.

Fantastic entertainment and fabulous food and drinks. \$30 per person in advance, \$35 at the door. RSVP [music@synagogue.org](mailto:music@synagogue.org) or the temple office (201) 444-9320.

#### CLASSICAL MUSIC CONCERT: Sunday, May 7, 3:00 p.m.

Mike Lemma, guitar and Annette Lieb, flute

Clarinet quartet featuring John Centenaro, Marcie Phelan, Naomi Freshwater, and Jean Rougharden

We look forward to seeing you at these great musical events!

*Marc Cantor and Nanette Rosenbaum, Concert Co-Chairs;*

*Tamara Freeman, Sacred Music Chair*



*Ariel Fine steps up to the mic.*

## ADULT EDUCATION

### Partay! Kol HaKavod, Rabbi Fine!

We had a lovely turnout on Sunday, November 13 to celebrate the publication of Rabbi Fine's new book. Special thanks to Jo Rosen for shopping for and preparing the delicious bagel brunch we all enjoyed as we listened to the rabbi explain the genesis of and share excerpts from this dynamic volume. It was a great preview of his upcoming Sunday Morning Lecture Series, beginning on January 22! (see below.) If you would like a signed copy of *Passionate Centrism: One Rabbi's Judaism* (United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, 2016), copies are available through the Temple office. Email [mnassan@synagogue.org](mailto:mnassan@synagogue.org).



*Rabbi Fine and his family at the book launch event.*

### Beginning January 15: Learn to chant Torah

Rabbi Fine will be teaching a Torah trope class on Sunday mornings at 8:30; details to follow.

### Beginning January 22: New Sunday Morning Lecture Series with Rabbi Fine

#### "Passionate Centrism," Based on His New Book of the Same Title

In *Passionate Centrism: One Rabbi's Judaism*, Rabbi Fine shares his theology, exploring issues of Jewish law that affect contemporary life, crafted from years of writing and editing responsa for the Law Committee of the Rabbinical Assembly and experience in the pulpit. Among these are keeping kosher, driving to synagogue on Shabbat, music on Shabbat, liturgical changes, egalitarianism and same-sex marriage. With his historian's perspective on context and how legal interpretation has evolved through the ages and his always-lively presentation, Rabbi Fine will help us reflect on the Conservative movement's meaning and relevance for our time. Up-to-date information about the class schedule will be online at [www.synagogue.org/calendar/](http://www.synagogue.org/calendar/).

### Wednesday, January 25, 7:00-8:30 pm: Interfaith Dialogue on *Passionate Centrism* Ridgewood Public Library



Join Rabbi Fine and The Rev. Canon John G. Hartnett of St. Elizabeth's Episcopal Church at the Ridgewood Public Library for an enlightening evening of discussion. The two spiritual leaders will explore the differing Jewish and Christian perspectives of topics covered in Rabbi Fine's newly published work. There will be time for questions from the audience and an opportunity to purchase *Passionate Centrism*, personally inscribed by Rabbi Fine.

*Rev. John Hartnett*

### Rabbi Fine's Tuesday Evening Talmud Class is Back — Join this Lively Study Group

Come study Tractate Berachot, learning the laws of prayer along with a wealth of material on rabbinic theology. We use the new user-friendly Steinsaltz edition, in an informal, interactive seminar-style class. All levels welcome; no Hebrew reading facility required, and you can jump in any time! Check the TI-JCC website and weekly *TI-JCC Tidbits* for upcoming class dates.

### Special Events: Stay Tuned

#### Friday / Saturday, March 31 & April 1: Adele Rebell Memorial Scholar-in-Residence Shabbat

Dr. Benjamin D. Sommer, Professor of Bible and Ancient Semitic Languages, Jewish Theological Seminary, and author of the book *Revelation and Authority: Sinai in Jewish Scripture and Tradition* (Yale University Press, 2015) will be our scholar-in-residence. Dr. Sommer's latest volume is a study of biblical theology and modern Jewish thought, describing the ways biblical authors and contemporary theologians alike understand the process of revelation and hence the authority of the law. Our scholar-in-residence is also the brother of long-time Temple Israel member Bob Sommer.

Details regarding Dr. Sommer's presentation, Shabbat dinner, and Kiddush lunch are still in the planning stage. Check *TI-JCC Tidbits* and [www.synagogue.org](http://www.synagogue.org) for the latest information.

## Brandeis Men's Club — Congratulations to our Man of the Year and Youth of the Year!



*Honorees Bob Dworkin and Raquelle Rothschild with Elliott Brown (left), regional executive vice president and Harvey Hershkowitz, regional president.*

### **Words of appreciation from honoree, Bob Dworkin:**

#### **OH BOY, I'M A MOY! NOW WHAT?**

Of course it is a great honor to be selected as the Brandeis Men's Club 2016-2017 Man of the Year (MOY). You bet. But just think of it. Once you have been outed as a volunteer and an active member of the Men's Club, Temple Israel, and the Jewish community, you can expect your phone to ring more frequently, emails to fill up your inbox faster, and personal invitations and requests to do even more volunteer work and participate in more club, temple, and community activities. It's a good thing I am semi-retired (from work), so I still have the time, and I truly, look forward to doing the volunteer activities that our community needs.

#### **IN GOOD COMPANY**

Of course, I'm not alone. There are a good number of other TI members who frequently attend BMC meetings and events, who go to Friday evening and Saturday Shabbat services, help make a Sunday minyan, and, console bereaved families by their presence at shiva minyanim. None of us expects to be rewarded for any of this. We do it because we want to do it, and it makes us feel good to help and support where it is needed. That is not only good, it is critically important for the continuation of our religious and social well-being as a Jewish community. Our clergy do a great job for us as spiritual leaders, counselors, and friends, but they can't do it all; they just help hold it all together through their guidance.

I have been keeping track of the Brandeis Men's Club's MOY honorees since joining TI. Thanks to David Millman, our current BMC co-president, and Joe Landau, I was able to complete the list going back sixteen years. If you know of others from the 1990s, please let me know. This present MOY gratefully recognizes and lauds all our prior MOYs for their accomplishments and selfless acts. When you see them, why not offer your congratulations once again?

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*Man of the Year, cont'd. from page 6*

I also want to recognize and congratulate the Brandeis Men's Club's latest Youth of the Year, Raquelle Rothschild, for her Jewish youth leadership and community involvement. Raquelle's YOY honor is well deserved, and she follows in the path taken by other TI honorees as a YOY, most recently by Mollie Bakal and Jerry Vogel.

Brandeis Men's Club Man of the Year Roster

Alex Rothschild	2015	David Millman	2007
Manny Haber	2014	Bob Rohrberger	2006
Howard Schreiber	2013	Eric Klein	2005
Freddie Kotek	2012	Allen Rubin	2004
Bob Obeiter	2011	Joe Wechsler	2003
Denis Vogel	2010	Barry Kornblum	2002
Bob Smolen	2009	David Rosenthal	2001
Bill Kay	2008	Alan Alterman	2000

**TIKKUN OLAM**

The Tikkun Olam committee's members from both TI and RCBI work together to try to repair the world. Our efforts focus on helping people in our community who are poor and homeless, and on raising awareness about important national issues. We had a busy fall, centering around the High Holidays and Mitzvah Day.

**We are currently participating in a countywide Holiday Toy Drive. Boxes for toy donations (new, unwrapped toys) are in the lobby. Please donate a toy to help brighten a child's holiday.**

**High Holiday Food and Clothing Drive**

Thanks to the generous donations of our congregants, we collected 97 bags of food and personal care items for the Social Service Association of Ridgewood. We also collected over 30 bags of gently used clothing, which committee members sorted and delivered to Catholic Charities, the Bergen Family Center, Oasis (Paterson), Girls Helping Girls (South Orange), Dress for Success, the Women's Rights Information Center, and Father English Community Center (Paterson). Special thanks go to Caryn Starr-Gates, Sue Coleman and Rena Rabinowitz for their hard work in sorting and delivering clothing to the appropriate local charities.

**Mitzvah Day, November 6**

Tikkun Olam sponsored the semiannual Blood Drive, held jointly with St. Elizabeth's Church, on Mitzvah Day. Community Blood Services collected 25 units of whole blood, packed red cells, and platelets.

Mollie and Sarah Renee Bakal continued their Girl Scout award collection projects. Mollie collected over 2,500 children's books, which were donated to Bergen Reads, JFNNJ's volunteer program that helps low-level readers in grades K-4, and Ramapo Readers, Ramapo College's program that distributes books to schools in need. Sarah Renee collected 447 pairs of new and used socks under the auspices of Knock, Knock, Give a Sock, which directs donations to homeless shelters.

**Family Promise Walk-In Dinners**

Four times each year, our synagogue community cooks, delivers, and serves dinner at the walk-in shelter for the homeless in Hackensack. Our fall dates were November 1, when we served 105 people, and December 20. This large-scale endeavor is possible through the leadership of Sue Hill and Nadine Genet and the continued efforts of a large group of volunteers who prepare and serve the meals.

**Immigration Panel and Sukkot Dinner**

On October 21, over 45 people attended Kabbalat Shabbat services, a panel discussion about immigration, and a dinner in the sukkah. Congregants Kurt Rosenberg, Alla Fine, and Corina Aroneanu shared their experiences as immigrants to the United States. The dinner was prepared under the expert supervision of Jo Rosen.

## Survey Says ...

Many thanks to all of you who responded to our recent communications survey. We received a terrific response and can easily report our results at the 95% confidence level (statistically!). Your input will inform our communications strategy and plans for the short- and long-term. And for those who volunteered to help, we will reach out when we think your talents can best be realized.

The following are the survey highlights :

### **Temple Talk (TT)**

**Findings:** 95% read TT and 90% find it valuable; the majority read most of it and want it in print and electronic formats at least six times a year.

**Action:** Temple Talk will be published six times a year both in print and electronic (pdf) versions.

### **Tidbits**—our weekly email announcements

**Findings:** 83% read it and 78% find it valuable.

**Action:** Tidbits will be enhanced in the upcoming months to make it easier for you to find the information you need—now you need to scroll a bit.

### **Website**

**Findings:** almost two-thirds know our website is new and have visited it one time.

**Action:** The website will continue to be updated—check out the calendar for events.

### **Facebook**

**Findings:** less than half know we have Facebook pages for TI and RCBI and less than 25% have visited them.

**Action:** As we continue to post synagogue and Jewish community news/ events and links to interesting articles, we ask everyone who is on Facebook to like our pages and share posts widely!

### **Flyers**

**Findings:** 95% are aware and find them useful reminders and forward to friends.

**Action:** Keep on the lookout .... We will continue to alert the congregation to events if and when we know!

## SAVE THESE DATES!

- December 24** First night of Hanukkah with Chinese dinner, menorah lighting, and fun for the whole family
- January 7** Tot Shabbat in the morning, karaoke and vodka at night for the adults
- January 21** Cabaret Night
- February 11** PJ Havdalah for families with young children (and those who want to kvell)
- March 4** Ways and Means dinner/dance honoring Joe & Sandy Wechsler and Tina Polen.

## Membership Updates

Temple Israel and Jewish Community Center heartily welcomes the following people to our community:

- Andrew and Jennifer Arbeit and their children, Harrison and Madeleine, from Glen Rock
- Stacie Geffner-Atiya and Yosef Atiya and their children, Alexander, Daniella, Lillach, and Reuven, from Fair Lawn
- Emily and Josh Austein from Waldwick
- Jessica Bayner from Ridgewood
- Rachel Coakley from New Milford
- Tammy Lane from Paramus
- Anna Vladi and Michael Prakhina and daughters, Leena and Yana, from Glen Rock
- Jackie Schechter Rigante and Domenic Rigante and their children, Samantha and Daniel, from Wyckoff
- Jen Blanch and Evan Weitz and their children, Molly and Colin, from Ridgewood
- Beth Goldberg from Fair Lawn
- Madeline and Casey Trimble from Fair Lawn
- Madelyn Robinson and Jakob Shipe from Hawthorne



We welcome unaffiliated individuals and families, and we have several financial incentives in place.

- ⇒ First-year dues for all new members are half price.
- ⇒ With a child in a Jewish nursery school for two days a week or more, dues are reduced.
- ⇒ If your child is enrolled in Gerrard Berman Day school, synagogue dues are absorbed by both Temple Israel and GBDS; you are responsible only for fees and the building fund. This program recognizes the importance of a Jewish Day School experience and the high cost of tuition.

If you know someone interested in joining our community, invite them to Shabbat services or any of our events. Your friends can call me at 201-805-3989 with questions.

And to our existing members, thank you for your continued support. We welcome your involvement in committees and event planning. Please let us know what you would like to see happen at shul and get involved!

Jo Rosen, Membership Chair

## NNJA News

NNJA (Northern New Jersey Jewish Academy) has enjoyed a busy and enjoyable few months. The school opened this year with over 50 students and our enrollment is continuing to grow, especially in our younger grades. We have a new monthly program for two- and three-year-olds and our prekindergarten and kindergarten programs have new options as well.

Another new addition to our school is our monthly Fun with Rabbi Fine (or Rabbi Zelicovich), during which every grade level spends a half hour monthly learning directly from the rabbi. Also, each of our Aleph through Hay students received a sheet of tefillah goals at our first session this year to take home, and each student is working at his or her own pace to complete them. I listen to each student as they are ready to be tested for a particular prayer and email the parent directly when a student achieves one of his or her goals.

### Activities that have already occurred include:

- ◇ Meet the Teachers at Rita's night, where we introduced our new mascot, Torahasaurus.
- ◇ A Tzedakah Fair, where the students voted on how much of their tzadakah funds to allocate to four organizations that our Daled and Hay class had chosen, researched, and presented to the younger students. This year's funds will be divided among the American Cancer Society for breast cancer research, American Red Cross for disaster relief, the Bergen County Center for Food Action for their weekend snack-pack program, and Bergenfield Bears, which sends toys to needy children in Israeli hospitals. Additional donations allocated for these deserving organizations are always welcomed.
- ◇ Mitzvah Day, where we put together over 70 weekend snack packs that are sent home with local school children who have little or no food over the weekend. (See story on page 16.)
- ◇ Two sessions of Krav Maga as part of our Tarbut program, which has also included cooking, music, and additional special programs.
- ◇ A Sukkot field trip for the Aleph through Hay classes during which we learned about the harvest aspect of Sukkot and had a Prayer in the Pumpkin Patch service.
- ◇ The first of our three Saturday morning family education programs, which centered on Sukkot and how it was celebrated when our ancestors were wandering in the Sinai desert, during Temple times, and in communities in the diaspora. We will continue to learn about Jewish customs and how they have changed during different historical periods in our upcoming two Atid Saturday morning education programs.



### December and January also include these fun and creative programs:

**Sun., Dec. 11** -- Our annual Hanukkah celebration at Temple Beth Sholom in Fair Lawn with an interactive presentation by Drum Tales which continued our theme of learning about Jewish history; the students and their families learned about the history of Hanukkah through a participatory drum experience. We once again appreciate the Men's Clubs of both Temple Israel and Temple Beth Sholom for providing hot dogs and latkes for the Hanukkah celebration.



NNJA, cont'd. from p. 9

**Fri., Dec. 16** -- Our first NNJA Shabbat service and dinner of the beginning at 6:15 pm. The evening is called Pokemon Shabbat and will include NNJA Pokemon cards with the faces of our teachers and other staff members on select Pokemon. Please join the NNJA community that evening to collect your limited edition of the NNJA Pokemon card RABquaza featuring Rabbi Fine as well as 14 others. This event is also open to the community and all young people in attendance will receive a pokeball.

**Sun., Jan. 29** -- A trip to the Tenement Museum in New York City (sponsored by the Brandeis Men's Club) for our older students, who are learning about American Jewish history as part of their curriculum this year.

We also will have more upcoming prayer events such as Prayer in the Planetarium and Prayer in the Pool; information will be forthcoming.

Please share with your friends and neighbors the dynamic learning environment created at NNJA and invite them to come try us out. Our best opportunity for growth is through personal connections.

Warmly,  
Rabbi Estelle



Sponsored by NNJA  
At Temple Israel/JCC  
475 Grove St. Ridgewood



Shabbat

Service followed by Dairy Dinner

- Service led by NNJA Students
- Collect 1st edition NNJA Pokemon Cards
- Learn how Pokemon connects to Judaism
- Free Pokeball to all young people



RAVQUAZA (RAYQUAZA)

Dinner: \$10 a person (under 4 free)  
\$36 Family Special (2 adults with children)

Please email [emills@synagogue.org](mailto:emills@synagogue.org)  
NO LATER THAN Monday, December 12<sup>th</sup>!

With your Family Name,  
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Family Special (2 adults with  
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Open to the Entire Community

Questions call or email

[emills@synagogue.org](mailto:emills@synagogue.org) or (201) 444-4194



## Youth Groups

Our youth groups have had a great start to the year but the fun is just beginning! Come join us and bring your friends. All of our youth group programs are open to nonmembers.

### **ELAL**

Our fourth and fifth graders have been meeting at Temple Israel, enjoying lunch and other activities together. In November, with the help of their advisor, Rochelle Phillips, they baked for the Walk-In Dinner Program in Hackensack. Rochelle can be reached at [youth@synagogue.org](mailto:youth@synagogue.org).

*Elianna Gluck and Rochelle Phillips make brownies for the walk-in dinner.*

**Join El Al at TI for our upcoming programs:**

**Sunday, January 22, 12:30-1:45 p.m.**

Lunch and games in the youth lounge.

**Saturday, February 11: 6:30-8:00 p.m.**

Dinner and a movie in your PJs



**Sunday, March 5: 12:30-1:45 p.m.**

Lunch and Purim fun

### **FLIPPER Kadima**

FLIPPER Kadima joins middle schoolers from five synagogues for a variety of fun programming.:

**Saturday, January 21** – Bingo Night at JCC-Paramus

**Sunday, January 22** – 8th graders ice skating with FLIPPER USY

**Sunday, February 12** – FunPlex in East Hanover

**Friday & Saturday, March 3 & 4** – Shabbat dinner and 8th grade Shabbaton at Fair Lawn Jewish Center

Contact FLIPPER Kadima Advisor Shira Goldstein at [sgoldstein621@gmail.com](mailto:sgoldstein621@gmail.com) for more information about these events.

### **FLIPPER USY**

Our consortium program for high schoolers has been busy, with great turnout at all of our events. Come join us at an upcoming youth-led program:

**Sunday, January 22** – Ice skating

**Sunday, February 12** – FunPlex in East Hanover

**Friday & Saturday, March 3 & 4** – Shabbaton at Fair Lawn Jewish Center

To get involved in USY, contact co-president Mollie Bakal at [molliebakal@gmail.com](mailto:molliebakal@gmail.com) or FLIPPER USY Advisor Emily Cobert at [emcobert91@gmail.com](mailto:emcobert91@gmail.com).

### **Hagalil**

The Hagalil regional calendar is also filled with activities for Kadima and USY members. FLIPPER chapter members have a great time at regional events. Come with us to:

### **Hagalil Kadima:**

**Saturday, January 28** – Saturday Night Live

**Sunday, March 5** – Kadima Day

**March 17-18** – Eighth grade Shabbaton

### **Hagalil USY:**

**Saturday, January 21** – Hagalil Social Action/Tikkun Olam Dance

**Friday, February 3 through Sunday, February 5** – mid-winter Kinnus (weekend -ong convention)

**Friday F& Saturday, February 10 & 11** – Senior Shabbaton

**Saturday February 25** – Junior/Senior Prom



## **B'Yachad**

B'Yachad has been having a busy and exciting fall! We started out with a Shabbat potluck dinner in September at the home of Evan Weitz and Jen Blanch. I'd like to thank them so much for hosting. A fun time was had by all.

We also had a beautiful October outing filled with apple picking, picnicking, and hanging out with friends. Everyone who made the trek up to Warwick, New York had a great time.

As always, watch your emails for upcoming events including more potluck dinners—the next on December 17—family bowling on January 8, and an adult night out on January 28.

Contact me if you are not yet on the B'yachad email list and you want to be a part of these fun events!

Erin Lindenberg  
[erinlindenberg@hotmail.com](mailto:erinlindenberg@hotmail.com)

**Join us for a wonderful evening as we celebrate  
Joe & Sandy Wechsler and Tina Polen at our annual Ways & Means dinner.**

*Enjoy music, great company, delicious food, and a generally fun evening!  
See the next page for our ad journal reservation form. Be on the lookout for details about the event  
and silent auction opportunities. Meanwhile, mark March 4, 2017 on your calendar!*



**ANNUAL WAYS & MEANS CELEBRATION  
HONORING  
JOE & SANDY WECHSLER  
TINA POLEN**

**Save the Date**

**Date: March 4, 2017  
@ Temple Israel & JCC**

**Contact person: Linda Paige  
Phone: (201) 669-1019  
Email: lsp Paige@gmail.com**

**Did you Shakshukah in the Sukkah?**

Rabbi Jacob led a lively "Shakshukah in the Sukkah" event at the end of Sukkot which was a big hit! He got everyone busy in the kitchen with his shakshukah recipe. After much chopping, sauteing and simmering, the gang was ready to eat! Thank you to Marc Cantor for taking our "action shots"!





**Temple Israel**  
and Jewish Community Center

# JOURNAL FORM 2017

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 Ad copy must be received by our office no later than February 17, 2017.  
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**Thank you for your generous support!**

Temple Israel & Jewish Community Center \*475 Grove Street\* Ridgewood, NJ 07450

## **TI's Past Presidents are Honored at Their Special Shabbat**

On Shabbat morning, November 19, we invited all the past presidents who served Temple Israel since its inception. Fifteen past presidents were represented, either by themselves or a family member. It was enlightening to learn about some of our Temple Israel history through the deeds of this elite group of our esteemed leaders. Since 1952, we have had 42 presidents! Below are some of the highlights they recounted during their tenure.

It should be noted that all of our presidents, and board members as well, dedicate a lot of time to the present management of our temple and to forward planning. The amount of time they all dedicate is immeasurable, and so are their accomplishments. When you see our current president, Bob Obeiter, or any past president, it would be a nice gesture to thank them for all they have done for us.

**Norman Schreiber, 1964-1965, Rabbi Matthew Kanig**  
Norman and Helen joined TI about 1955.

Representing his family, Howard Schreiber said that his parents' best recollection was of temple shows that were fundraisers. He spoke of shows written by former Presidents Dan Oliff and Joe Rubin and casted by many TI members. The show in 1965 was *Hello Solly!* During Norman's presidency, there were the usual contentious yet productive board meetings, and, at meeting's end, everyone would go out for coffee and cake as close friends knowing that they were all working together.

**Alan Wechsler, 1965-1966, Rabbi Jerry Belson, and 1972-1973, Rabbi Joel Aaron**  
Alan and Bluma joined TI about 1956.

The Wechsler family was represented by daughter Debra and son Norman. During the period that Rabbi Aaron was presiding over the congregation, there was some turmoil among temple members. It was assumed that Rabbi Aaron wanted to take the congregation to a more conservative side of the Conservative movement and some members objected. Alan stepped in, accepting his second term, to act as a calming influence. Alan was one of only two past presidents to serve two terms as president.

**Irving Kaplan, 1967-1968, Rabbi Matthew Kanig**  
Irving and Marcella joined in 1958.

Irving and Marcella's daughter Lois and son Jon represented the Kaplan family. The family sees Irving's most significant contributions as the growth of our Jewish community, design of the stained glass windows in our original building on Grove Street, and also design of the cemetery walkway and seating area.

**Bob Yampell, 1973-1975, Rabbi Allan Schranz**  
Bob and Bernice joined in 1968.

By design, Bob was the first president to serve two years, as did Stu Hoffer after Bob. During his second year, Bob's wife Bernice had the honor of being the first woman to be called to the Torah. Bob has been a dedicated member for almost fifty years now, and we all enjoy seeing his smiling face while at shul!

**Adele Rebell, 1977-1979, Rabbi Allan Schranz**  
Adele and Arthur joined in 1969.

Adele was represented by her husband Arthur. Adele's greatest achievement was being the first woman president, winning over some real opposition at the time, and seeing her daughter as the first bat mitzvah at the temple. Adele also led most of the key fund raising drives during the Rebels' membership years.

**David Cox, 1979/1980, Rabbi Allan Schranz**  
David and Arlene joined in 1974.

When David was second vice president, Arthur Hecht was the first vice president. Arthur could not continue to the presidency and David stepped in. Back then we followed a strict path of succession: second vice president, first vice president, and then president.

*Continued on page 15*

*Temple presidents, cont'd. from page 14*

Arlene and David spent hours just talking with Rabbi Schranz and usually closed up the Temple on Friday nights. When Rabbi Schranz's future wife Ellen came to Ridgewood for a Shabbat weekend, she would stay with David and Arlene. In fact, the rabbi and his wife were married in the synagogue the Sunday after the bat mitzvah of Arlene and David's daughter, Ellen. They left a house full of guests in order to attend the ceremony!

**Marvin Amsterdam, 1980-1981, Rabbi Allan Schranz**

Marvin and Susan joined in 1973.

Marvin was represented by his wife Susan. A tall and distinctive figure, Marvin had great love for Temple Israel and was thrilled to have a key place in its governance. Over his thirty-one years of membership, he was almost always a member or chairman of the Ritual Committee and treasured his roles as Torah reader, lay leader, davener, and shofar blower.

**Pam Grant, 1981-1983, Rabbi Mark Keil**

Pam and Harry joined in 1974, two weeks after arriving in the USA from England.

During Pam's term, the temple began talks with the town and the local community to close the Ridgewood public schools for the Jewish High Holidays. Pam's fondest memory was attending Rabbi Alan Schranz's wedding to Ellen. The rabbi invited the entire congregation for dancing, cake, and champagne.

**Christine Dobkins, 1988-1989, Rabbi Noam Marans, and 2008-2009, Rabbi David Saltzman**

Chris and Evan joined in 1976.

Chris considers one of her most significant contributions while president in 1988-89 to be hiring Jose Serna. In 2008-09, keeping the Synagogue running efficiently when the economy crashed in 2007 was a significant accomplishment. During both rabbis' administrations she prides herself on retaining members and adding new ones, especially after the loss in 2007 of both our rabbi and our cantor. Chris's fondest memories while president were of comforting sick and dying members in their times of need at the hospital or in their homes. Chris is one of only two past presidents to serve two terms as president.

**Merille Siegel, 1991-1995, Rabbi Noam Marans**

Harvey and Merille joined in September 1973, one month after they moved to Ridgewood.

Merille became president when the president at that time resigned in January 1991. It was a tumultuous time and she worked to pull the synagogue together. Merille served until June 1995, making her the longest serving president in TI history. During her term, we reorganized the Hebrew School and changed it from three to two days, a more modern-day experience for the students. Also during her presidency, we renovated the education wing, which involved the first big capital campaign in years.

**Charles Fleischman, 1997-1999, Rabbi Noam Marans**

Chuck and Roberta joined in August 1985, a few weeks after their daughter Lesley was born.

Under Chuck's administration, the board undertook an in-depth evaluation of our building. After considering various options, the board decided on a major renovation and the associated fund-raising initiative. Our current building was the successful result. A particularly fond memory for Chuck was the honor of being asked by Rabbi Marans to make a farewell speech to the congregation upon the rabbi's departure.

**Jeffrey Meltzer, 1999-2002, Rabbi Noam Marans (1999-2000), and Rabbi Gil Steinlauf (2001-2002)**

Jeff and Laurie joined in 1991.

Jeff's most significant contribution while he was president was renovating the building we are currently in. We continued functioning in trailers during the construction. Meanwhile, we kept a growing community together. Most of Jeff's memories were of the building problems, including the flood from Hurricane Irene and having to prepare for a bat mitzvah at Benjamin Franklin Middle School the next day. Jeff especially remembers the esprit de corps that existed during his presidency.

*Continued on page 16*

*Temple presidents, cont'd. from p. 15*

**Evan Dobkins, 2002-2005, Rabbi Gil Steinlauf**

Evan and Chris joined in 1976.

Evan is proud that he instilled a spirit of cooperation and involvement by our members. His presidency witnessed increased attendance at committee and board meetings. Evan played a key role in the hiring of Maureen Nassan. He has fond memories of being able to work so well with Executive Committee members to keep our synagogue on sound financial footing while establishing TI as a preferred Jewish home for young and old alike.

**Denis Vogel, 2009-2012, Rabbi David J. Fine**

Denis and Carla joined in 1998.

Denis considers his most significant contribution while president to be forming NNJA, Bergen County's consortium religious school, which now comprises five participating Northern New Jersey synagogues. Denis was one of the few presidents to serve more than two years. He especially enjoyed congratulating all the bar and bat mitzvah kids during his three years as president.

**Joshua Holden, 2013-2016, Rabbi David J. Fine**

Josh and Susie joined in 2006. Josh is a second-generation member, his family having joined in 1978. Josh emailed us from Nepal with his comments.

Josh's finest memory is our partnership with RCBI, which involved creating, along with Rabbi Fine, a new cooperative, cross-denominational model. Josh enjoyed speaking from the bimah on Yom Kippur. "Those were the only times that I stood before the entire congregation that I was serving. It was humbling to see how many people trusted me to lead the organization that was our shared spiritual home."

"I'm sorry that I wasn't able to be at the Past Presidents' Shabbat, as I was at Everest base camp with my family, including my father. Missing something like this is one of the hardest parts of being away for a year. But I'm with TI in spirit throughout our trip, and have fun following along with all the board emails and reports each month!"



**Mitzvah Day — Supporting area children through the Center for Food Action**

NNJA participated in this year's Mitzvah Day by assembling over 70 weekend snacks for the Center for Food Action, based in Englewood. These snacks provide healthy, kid-friendly, and easy-to-prepare snack foods for children at risk of weekend hunger. Many children who receive free or reduced-price school meals are left without adequate nutrition on weekends and holiday breaks. We also donated extra items of those foods needed for the snack packs.

The concept of a snack pack program originated over 12 years ago when a school nurse noticed that some of the students were arriving to school on Monday mornings with headaches, dizziness, stomach aches, and fatigue. She noticed that these were the same students who were receiving free or reduced-price lunches. The nurse reached out to a local food pantry to organize a way to provide these students with nutritious weekend snacks.

The snack packs NNJA assembled were delivered to seven elementary schools in our area. The teachers discreetly place the snack packs into the student's backpack when the student is out of the classroom.



Thank you to Hay Class students Max Rothschild and Jacob Kramer for organizing the event!

# FIRST NIGHT OF HANUKKAH CHINESE FOOD FEAST

Community Celebration  
and Candle Lighting



December 24, 2016 at 6:15pm



- \* Chinese Food Buffet \*
- \* Competitive Dreidel \*
- \* Kids Activities \*
- \* Movie \*

**ONLY \$5 per person/\$10 per family**

Temple Israel Jewish Community Center  
Ridgewood, NJ

**Come One Come All**

Open to everyone looking for something fun to do on a night unlike all other nights  
(oh wait, wrong holiday) — well, you get the idea. Please join us!

**Please RSVP**

rsuptircbi@gmail.com or 201-444-9320

**Bring Your Menorah**

To join our community first candle lighting

**In the Spirit of Giving**

Please bring unopened cleaning supplies or toiletries to be donated to Ridgewood Social Services



*This community event is sponsored by:  
The Alexander & Sophie Puritz Memorial Endowment Fund  
An anonymous donor, Temple Israel and RCBI*

## **Congratulations to Rabbi Lieberman on his installation!**

On November 17 we celebrated the formal installation of Rabbi Jacob Lieberman as rabbi of Reconstructionist Congregation Beth Israel and assistant rabbi of Temple Israel. The joint service was made all the more special by remarks from Rabbi Fine, RCBI member, Beth Goldberg and Rabbi Deborah Waxman, president of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College and Jewish Reconstructionist Communities; Rabbi Waxman spoke about the unique model of synagogue life we have embarked on together at TI-JCC and of the future of Reconstructionist Judaism. We were also treated to a “Hamilton”-inspired rap written by Chrissi O’Donnell, performed by Chrissi, Scott Baslaw, Ariel Fine and Eliyashu Benmosche Lieberman. RCBI sponsored the festive oneg Shabbat.

Rabbi Lieberman (a.k.a. Rabbi Jacob) has brought some innovative programming to our kehillah such as our Recon Salons—intimate, member-hosted gatherings where prospective members, the generally curious and our own members can learn more about Reconstructionist Judaism in general and RCBI in particular. Last year after the High Holy Days, he invited members into the synagogue kitchen to bake his delicious zucchini bread, which we distributed, along with a personal note and teaching from the rabbi, to our visitors who attended Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur services at RCBI.

For Lag b’Omer we got together at a member’s home for s’mores and grilled fruit made on the barbeque before doing some learning about the holiday’s beginnings and its observance in Israel. Shakshukah in the Sukkah (see page 12) was a fun way to close out Sukkot, and we look forward to many more interesting and engaging programs for our members and friends.

Rabbi Jacob is here every week (with minor exceptions) for office hours, pastoral visits and planning or conducting programs; two weekends a month he conducts our services. (Note, RBCI typically holds a service every Friday night, either with the rabbi or lay leaders, and holds two Saturday services a month, one of which includes a Torah service.) His office is upstairs near our worship space, across from the library.



and Jewish Community Center

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