

# THE SHUL SHOFAR

VOL. 22, NO. 3 \* Congregation Beth Israel \* Bellingham, WA 98225 \* [www.bethisraelbellingham.org](http://www.bethisraelbellingham.org) \* (360) 733-8890

## Biennial reflections

### 4-day convention was action-packed, inspiring

Six individuals represented CBI at the URJ Biennial in Boston just a few weeks ago. Accompanied by 6,000 other Reform Jewish rabbis, cantors, educators, board members, scholars, synagogue members, youth group leaders and musicians, our cohort made the most of their experience by learning, engaging, and singing from the light of dawn until the middle of night. Along with Rabbi Samuels (his third Biennial), were Board member Isaac Konikoff (1st time), Keshet Director Sagit Hall (1st time), Melissa Schapiro (4th time), National NFTY Board member Asher Suloway Baker (2nd time) and working as a Biennial Ambassador Naomi Schapiro (2nd time).

Hopefully you livestreamed some of the fantastic sessions as well as the largest Shabbat ever! The Biennial is an experience each of us should be lucky enough to attend some time in our lives. Below are just some reflections our friends wanted to share with you.

#### Rabbi Joshua Samuels

"Overwhelming" might be the best way to describe my Biennial experi-



Shabbat dinner with 6,000 Biennial attendees. More photos: Page 9

ence, but in the best way possible. Having the time to learn with my colleagues, share best practices with other communities, meet leaders focusing on cuttingedge ways to engage congregants, and listen to inspiring speakers is something I look forward to the minute Biennial

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FROM THE RABBI

## Israel in Boston

As you have no doubt gathered from the Shofar's main article, the recent URJ Biennial in Boston was inspiring as well as spiritually and intellectually



fulfilling. I only wish that you could have virtually attended all the lectures and discussions with me. While most of the talks I went to were riveting

and worthy of copious notes, my final session still has me thinking. The discussion was titled, "Navigating the Place of Israel Conversation in Your Congregation." It was part of the larger "Bringing Israel Home" Israel engagement symposium that nearly everyone participated in.

Speaking to my breakout group that morning was Dr. Dov Waxman, professor of Political Science, International Affairs, and Israel Studies, and the Stotsky Professor of Jewish Historical and Cultural Studies at Northeastern University. As we will be celebrating Israel's 70th birthday this May, I thought it might be both relevant and thought-provoking to share some of Dr. Waxman's ideas.

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*From the President ...*

# What a difference a few thousand years makes

Dear Fellow Congregants,

The Torah portion for the first week of January is the beginning of the Book of Exodus. It is fitting that we start 2018 with the first chapters of the next book in our tradition. The past few months have been full of tremendous events in the life of our community. Like the Israelites of the opening chapters of Exodus, we have been strangers living outside of our home; but unlike our ancient ancestors, this has not been a time of oppression. We are thriving under these challenging circumstances. This is the result of both the community we have built for ourselves and the neighbors with whom we share our corner of the Northwest. Our ancestors in the Book of Exodus were refused the right even to celebrate festivals in the wilderness; but in our time between homes we have found joy in many places. Our neighbors at the First Congregational Church, at the Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship, at the Bellingham Public Schools, and at the Gateway Center have provided us with gracious hospitality, and with space in which to worship, to celebrate, to learn, and to work. We are fortunate to have so many friends who share Congregation Beth Israel's commitment to faith, family, friendship, and inclusion.

Our success is built first and foremost on people. Mary and the Rabbi have kept our doors open for business and made it look easy. The Rabbi and Andrea have continued to help us celebrate lively services and prepare for upcoming life cycle events. Sagit and the Keshet staff have welcomed our children into new classrooms full of the traditions of our people, and they have maintained our commitment to quality and fun Jewish education. I thank them for their hard work; and I thank the members of the board, and of our active committees, who have lent a hand and made these feats possible. The tremendous success of our recent Hanukkah party at Bloedel-

Donovan Park highlights this great work.

What a difference a few thousand years can make! In the Book of Exodus our ancestors had to struggle for the right to leave Egypt, and then they wandered for decades in the wilderness. We have certainly had to work hard, but we are ready to write new chapters in the history of our community that are full of promise. One of those chapters was recently inked! Late last year, CBI signed a new contract with Rabbi Samuels that runs through June 2023. The response to this commitment has been overwhelming. Many of you have communicated to me your joy that we reinforced this precious relationship between a congregation and its spiritual leader.

We are very close to achieving occupancy on San Juan Boulevard. The festival of Hanukkah this year was preceded by some miraculous good weather that allowed us to complete the paving of our roads and parking lots. (I have undertaken what seems like a graduate level seminar in paving and the finer points of concrete. I will now confess that the sight of paved roadway to our front door brought me more joy than I thought possible from asphalt.) The New Synagogue Task Force is working closely with our contractors as well as the City and the County to check off the final items needed for us to move in, and the Capital Campaign Committee is actively raising the funds to pay for all of this! We are preparing to welcome a necessary round of final inspections. A move in date is within view, and I hope that by the time that you receive this issue of the Shul Shofar our plans will have become more concrete. Please keep an eye out for updates and contact me (steven.garfinkle@gmail.com) with any questions, concerns, or offers of help.

STEVEN GARFINKLE,  
PRESIDENT

## CONGREGATION BETH ISRAEL

2200 Broadway  
Bellingham, WA 98225

*The Shul Shofar*

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**Deadline for submission of all articles and calendar events for the March/April issue is FEBRUARY 15.** Call the office for more information.

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You can reach us at:  
phone: (360) 733-8890  
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# Beth Israel to host NFTY-NW event

## Host families sought to house 130 teens

Congregation Beth Israel is hosting NFTY-NW Winter Social Action Kallah! We need help housing 130 teens from all over the Northwest for the event, Feb. 2-4, 2018.

We need families to open their homes to these teens and serve as host families for this weekend. What this means:

- Providing transportation and a few meals
- We ask each family to take a minimum of three teens

We look forward to sharing this amazing event at Congregation Beth Israel with you.

For more information: Talk to Beth Israel Youth Advisers Amanda Robbins or Daniel Zagnoli or contact Abbey Bell at [nftynw@urj.org](mailto:nftynw@urj.org) or visit [northwest.nfty.org](http://northwest.nfty.org)

If you'd like to host please fill out this form: <https://urjyouth.wufoo.com/forms/s113h8nm1q9wthj/>



**NFTY-NW teens get to know each other during the Mixers at Congregation Kol Ami in Vancouver, WA during Winter Kallah 2017.**

**TENTATIVE SCHEDULE** (Schedule is subject to change):

### FRIDAY, February 2

7 p.m. Teens arrive to synagogue for services, Shabbat dinner, and programming

10:30 p.m. Pick up and take teens to your homes

### SATURDAY, February 3

8:30 a.m. Arrive at synagogue (please provide breakfast)

11 p.m. Pick up and take teens to your homes

### SUNDAY, February 4

9 a.m. Arrive at synagogue for program finish (provide breakfast)

## Community seder save-the-date

The annual CBI Community Seder will be on the second night of Passover, 5:30 p.m. Saturday, March 31, 2018, at Bellingham Technical College's Settemyer Hall.

Tickets, which will go on sale Jan. 20, 2018, will be:

\$55 for non-members; \$40 for members; \$20 for youths (age 6-12); \$5 per child (ages 2-5); free for children younger than 2.

## Sisterhood book group meetings

Sisterhood book group meets at 2 p.m. on Sundays.

**Jan. 21:** We will discuss THE LEONARD BERNSTEIN LETTERS edited Nigel Simeone, at the home of Esther Faber.

**Feb. 18:** We will discuss LOVING-KINDNESS by Ann Roiphe, at the home of Joan Wayne.

Information: Contact Joan at (360) 676-8939.

## Synagogue 411

**Archives:** Tim Baker, 647-7031

**Care:** Sylvia Williams, 319-5059

**Kesher Parent Committee:**

Nora Mazonson, (360) 422-5900

**Library, Scrip:** Joan Wayne, 676-8939

**Membership:** Rita Spitzer, 647-7065; Ann Suloway, 647-7031

**New Synagogue Task Force:**

Warren Rosenthal, 961-9772

**Scholarship:** Emil Hecht, 733-4825

**Social Action:** Linda Blackwell, (360) 647-9519

*Vermeda M. Fred, MFT, MFA*

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# Hold on to your kishkes — we have good news

The Ark Design Group is thrilled to announce that Tom Lutz, a professional woodworker, with incredible creative and artistic skills was chosen to build the furniture for our new bimah.

"I've been designing and building custom furniture and cabinetry in our community for nearly 25 years. It's a particular thrill and honor to be a part of this project!" You can view some of his work at [www.thomaslutzdesign.com](http://www.thomaslutzdesign.com).

The Ark Design Group is a subcommittee of the New Synagogue Task Force. It is an honor to help design the ark and accompanied pieces. We have been working steadily this past year on our own and now with Tom. There has been much brainstorming, researching, sketching and revising.

We continue our forward progress as funding is made available by the NSTF. We are especially pleased to report that in the new year we will be finalizing the form of the ark and working on the numerous details. We look forward to sharing these updates with you.

For any questions please contact:

Warren Rosenthal, NSTF  
[warren.rosenthal@yahoo.com](mailto:warren.rosenthal@yahoo.com)  
 (360) 961-9772

Vicki Jaffe, Ark Design Group  
[jaffez@comcast.net](mailto:jaffez@comcast.net)  
 (360) 220-5961

## Birthdays

### JANUARY 2018

1/1 Elias Anderson (12th)  
 1/1 Jeaninne Kahan  
 1/1 Binnie Perper  
 1/1 Alison Zak  
 1/3 Tobias Reitz (22nd)  
 1/3 Tahlia Somers (11th)  
 1/4 Julia Bakken  
 1/4 Linda Blackwell  
 1/4 Wolf Pomerantz (6th)  
 1/4 Asher Stoane (15th)  
 1/5 Jewels Ramras (2nd)  
 1/5 David Sager  
 1/5 Jack Schneider  
 1/6 Isaac Konikoff  
 1/6 Tom Maxim  
 1/8 Victoria Mayers  
 1/9 Helen Feiger  
 1/10 Lou Lippman  
 1/11 John Schapiro

1/12 Talia Clarke (14th)  
 1/15 Diana Dixon (4th)  
 1/15 Nora Mazonson  
 1/15 Kathi Paluch  
 1/16 Maya Cornwall (15th)  
 1/17 Julian Booker (16th)  
 1/17 David Elkayam  
 1/17 Audrey Jaffe  
 1/17 Jodi Litt  
 1/19 Lauren James (12th)  
 1/20 Gayle Kay  
 1/21 Alyson Kassen  
 1/22 Stuart Berman  
 1/23 Joshua Greenberg  
 1/25 Marc Weinstein  
 1/26 Mitch Press  
 1/26 Geraldine Reitz  
 1/28 Adam Goldstein  
 1/28 Angie Lee  
 1/30 Wendy Blum  
 1/30 Gib Morrow

### FEBRUARY 2018

2/1 William Freeman  
 2/2 Andrea Evans  
 2/4 Bonnie Zell  
 2/5 Elizabeth Weinstein  
 2/6 Laura Wolfson  
 2/7 Elan Maxim (18th)  
 2/8 Samantha Schwartz (13th)  
 2/9 Ruth Evans  
 2/10 Jacob Bishop (16th)  
 2/11 Ella Barney  
 2/11 Shalem Blum (13th)  
 2/14 Bob Goldman  
 2/14 Ted Schuman  
 2/15 Gloria Lebowitz  
 2/17 Dan Ohms  
 2/18 Tom Oliver  
 2/20 Don Fenbert  
 2/20 Sagit Hall  
 2/20 Susan Schneider

2/20 Elijah Wolfson (9th)  
 2/21 Gregg Orlik  
 2/21 Ben Sokol (18th)  
 2/21 Kristin Sykes-David  
 2/22 Frank Corey  
 2/22 Teva Corey-DuBow (11th)  
 2/22 Arthur Ingberman  
 2/22 Karen Sloss  
 2/22 Jeannette Stephens  
 2/22 Alan Stone  
 2/23 Harriet Emanuel  
 2/24 Todd Haskell  
 2/24 Robert Meltzer  
 2/24 Isabel Stolzoff (15th)  
 2/25 Nancy Auerbach  
 2/25 Avi Brennan (11th)  
 2/25 Genny Cohn  
 2/26 Orly Ziv-Maxim  
 2/27 Ken Levinson



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From the Keshet Center for Jewish Learning

# Decoding 'Audacious Hospitality'

As a first time participant of the URJ Biennial I had to pause every time I heard the term "Audacious Hospitality" at the Boston event this past December. I will be honest here and admit that although the slogan has a positive sound, at first "glance" it sounded unfamiliar, superficial, and I couldn't come up with a quick Hebrew translation to make it more digestible, in my mind.



It was during the moving remarks of the young April Baskin during the 6,000-participant Kabbalat Shabbat that it finally clicked. Ms. Baskin, the URJ's Vice President of Audacious Hospitality, was recalling the days

after a family crisis she had experienced as a teenager, leaving her and her brother temporarily parentless (her father was in the hospital sick and her mother was involved in a severe car accident). She talked about the force of her synagogue's community that supported her and her brother during this most difficult time in the life of her family.

The sense of being accepted and supported as described by URJ's concept of Audacious Hospitality — especially in a nontribal society such as the United States — is not a given. As I see it, the merit of community programs such as Keshet, the events, classes, and special programming we offer, first and foremost, support this concept of Audacious Hospitality. One example from our community that is still fresh in my mind as I am writing this column is CBI's Chanukah party. Like the lesson Abraham teaches us when he generously welcomes guests to his tent, the leading audacious hosts that make up our community (shout out to Marcia Lippman and Lynn Korner) did such thoughtful work in putting together an event that made everyone welcome — cheerful table arrangements, plenty of food — enough for anyone who would like to join us. I am thankful for



Marcia Lippman helped organize CBI's Hanukkah Party 2017.

this important teaching they exemplified last night and grateful to have been a part of it.

—SAGIT HALL שגית הול  
DIRECTOR, KESHER CENTER  
FOR JEWISH LEARNING



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## BIENNIAL REFLECTIONS

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ends on Sunday afternoon. Some highlights for me included listening to Sen. Elizabeth Warren and the Rev. William Barber address the crowd. Barber has a way of galvanizing his audience in a way I've never been witness to before. To say it was inspiring and spiritual would be a great understatement.

I also took so much away from the various sessions I went to, including: B'nei Mitzvah Experience — Creating Meaningful Experiences for All; Bringing Israel Home — Israel Engagement Symposium; How Do We Embrace and Honor a Diversity of Political Voices in the Reform Movement?; How Your Congregation Can Leverage the Power of Social Media; Judaism Struggles with Gender-Modernity, the Gender Revolution and the Family; and The New Normal — Supporting Interfaith Families. I am grateful to have spent this week with Sagit, Melissa and Isaac, and I can only hope to share this experience with many of you in the years to come. Perhaps Dec. 11-15, 2019, in Chicago.

### Keshet Director Sagit Hall

Both as a Jewish educator and as an Israeli member of the Reform movement, I will forever remember the 2017 Biennial as a transformative, meaningful, and moving experience. The rich range of sessions offered, the ideas that were discussed, the spirituality, and the wisdom of the speakers who shared those ideas will certainly shape the way I see my place in the URJ community and the American Jewish community for years to come.

I came into the convention with a mission in mind of gathering “best practices” and “great ideas” from leaders in the world of Jewish education. This type of learning did take place in the more informal meetings with Reform representatives from around the country and the world who shared the incredible work hap-

pening in their home communities. However, I quickly understood that the leaders and key speakers of the convention were there to deliver a message to the 6,000 participants — a message greater than a specific congregational project or fundraiser idea. This message was about the values and the kavanah (intent) that the URJ, as a Jewish organization, would like to disseminate in North America and around the world through Torah learning and worship in areas such as Jewish commitment to Tikkun Olam, social justice, and Israel.

Most interesting to me was the message URJ leadership sent about the relationship of the Jewish American diaspora with Israel. On Shabbat morning Rabbi Rick Jacobs dedicated much of his parashat Vayeshev sermon to the relationships between American communities and Israel/Israelis. In the parasha, Joseph is going to look for his brothers and tells a man he encounters on his way:

אֶת אֲחִי אֲנִי מְבַקֵּשׁ

“I'm searching for my brothers” Genesis 37:16. Despite the rift between Joseph and his brothers, there are still shared values, collective memory and common aspirations that forever bind siblings, and so is the case with our sibling communities.

Rabbi Jacobs suggests that support of Israel is a commitment to an enriching exchange of ideas, and cooperation with the parts that carry the common values we try to instill in our communities, our children, and you.



**The Rev. William Barber addresses Biennial attendees.**

### Board Member Isaac Konikoff

Before going to the URJ Biennial as a first-time attendee, I had an idea that the learning sessions, group programs, and guest speakers would be informative and educational, but I did not expect the high level of intensity and inspiration that would accompany every activity.

The Rev. Dr. Barber challenged us to rise up for social justice, Sen. Elizabeth Warren encouraged our ability to learn from fighting for what we believe in, and URJ President Rabbi Rick Jacobs reminded us that we're all connected to each other by flowing rivers of commitment and dedication to our families and communities.

It is difficult to explain how amazing it feels to be in a room or auditorium with hundreds or thousands of Jews discussing a common congregational challenge or singing and praying together. And although we are all affiliated with the URJ, beneath the surface is a range of diversity of people from all walks of life sharing stories, ideas, opinions, songs, prayers and questions that leaves one with an unbelievable sense of inspiration and hope for a bright future.

I found myself agreeing with some people and disagreeing with others. I discovered how asking questions uncovers your assumptions and brings new light to a topic. I talked to people from different congregations, varying in size from 20 to 2,000 families, all sharing the challenges and successes of Jewish life. Some of the

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## From the Social Action Committee

# Forums planned on environment, Dream Act

Thank you to all who donated money to the Womencare Thanksgiving. We raised more than \$800. This generosity provided for a wonderful Thanksgiving dinner as well as future meals in the New Year. The staff and families of DVSAS were very appreciative.

Once we are in the new synagogue a collection will take place for pet food and bedding for the Whatcom Humane Society. Please hold onto those old towels and blankets.

We have many ways to participate in social action via the CBI website. Go to the Tikkun Olam page, and you will find:

- A link to the Religious Action Cen-

ter (RAC) of URJ, which offers weekly blogs about environmental and social justice programs.

- The URJ's "Urgency of Now" campaign is an initiative for Reform congregants to contact their congressional representatives urging legislation on multiple issues such as transgender rights, criminal justice reform and a clean DREAM Act.

- Directly donate to the Nothing but Nets program, which provides insecticide-treated malaria nets.

- Interfaith Coalition of Whatcom County. Contact CBI liaison Arlene Feld or Linda Blackwell about Interfaith's programs such as making and distributing sandwiches to those in

need, or volunteering at homeless or cold weather shelters this winter.

Finally, another social action group associated with URJ is the Women of Reform Judaism. Learn about it at [wrj.org](http://wrj.org).

The Social Action Committee plans an environmental forum this spring, and is working on getting an educational speaker on the need for the clean Dream Act.

The next Social Action Committee meeting will be in January. Please contact Linda Blackwell for information.

— LINDA BLACKWELL,  
COMMITTEE CHAIR

## BIENNIAL REFLECTIONS

*Continued from Page 6*

challenges are similar and some are more complex, but being at the Biennial with new friends and old helped open the door to conversations and learning that enhanced my commitment to serving our community here at home.

I look forward to the next biennial and I aim to help bring more of our congregants so we may all benefit and bring back new reflections.

### Communications Chair Melissa Schapiro

This being my fourth Biennial, I knew what to expect — action-packed days, very little sleep, and sensory overload. I have been looking forward to it since flying home from the last one two years ago. I am always amazed that I can sit down next to a random person at Biennial and find we have something in common — it never fails and is probably because we really are one big family. Some favorite events were:

- An offsite tour of Mayyim Hayyim, a nondenominational community mikvah and educational center that was spearheaded by author Anita Diamant. It was designed to be modern, warm, welcoming, safe, and accommodating — from physical needs, to levels of ob-



One of two bathing pools at Mayyim Hayyim, a community mikvah outside of Boston. MORE PHOTOS: page 9

servance, to awareness of the multitudes of reasons people may have to use a mikvah in the 21st century. [www.mayyimhayyim.org](http://www.mayyimhayyim.org)

- A workshop called "For the Sake of History" about preserving congregational archives, which provided great resources for working on our own Beth Israel collection as we move into our new building. It helped to put our work into perspective — another attendee was from a 260+-year-old temple in the South, with a full museum as part of its campus!

- A late-night presentation by the Jewish Plays Project, which helps artists create plays and get them onstage. The group of three short scenes were increasingly powerful — no costumes, makeup or props, just actors in street clothes presenting fresh takes on current issues. My favorite was called "Shocking, But Not Surprising," which told of increasing anti-Semitism in Budapest through the eyes of four young adults from very different backgrounds. [Jewishplaysproject.org](http://Jewishplaysproject.org)

That barely touches on all the amazing learning and musical experiences, which I hope to share. And I'm already looking forward to Biennial 2019 in Chicago — who's in?

## *Faces in our community*

# Lazaruses tackle tough issues

## Couple dedicate social service careers to solving problems

BY LINDA HIRSH

A young Mexican woman abandoned her baby to relatives. Not wanting to care for the child, they contacted the court. Nancy Lazarus interviewed the mother who, in private, confessed that her child was the product of a rape. "I was the first person she told," Nancy said. "I spent a lot of time with her," including coming up with a plan for counseling and parenting classes.

If Nancy succeeded in untying a knot for a resident of California, her husband, Gary, solved a stickler for the state of California. In his job with the federal Women, Infants and Children program (WIC), a program for pregnant and new mothers, Gary traveled to every food store in the north of the state. He found some mom-and-pop stores run by immigrants were using price gouging, graft and bribery — practices common in the owners' native lands — to profit from the food vouchers the program distributed.

Through his screening method — using Safeway prices as a base, and adding a percentage to cover slightly higher prices in the smaller stores — he identified stores asking for reimbursement over that amount and sent a letter terminating them from the program.

"I once calculated that I saved California over \$1 million," he said.

The Lazaruses shared these stories while sitting around their hearth, walls highlighted by attractive ap- pliques designed by Nancy, an avid quilter.

These two stories alone could make up part of a book on the many faces of social work. To solve riddles, Gary used a finely honed investigative sense, attacking them deductively. On the other hand, Nancy's nature is nurturing. She used induction to approach an individual's con- undrums.

Both Nancy and Gary have devoted their careers to doing good by solving problems. Gary represents a sec- ond generation of social workers, as his parents were in the field. His father taught, but also served as associate director of the local Jewish Federation and was director of a Jewish community center in St. Paul, Minn.

Gary recently told his story to the Retired Old Men Eating Out, or Romeos, who meet weekly at Arliss's Restaurant in Bellingham. "I realized how much of a free spirit he must have been," said another member, Marty



Gary and Nancy Lazarus in Glacier Bay, Alaska, in August 2016

Mitchell, whose own career illustrates the many faces of city planning.

"I can identify with his story because I was the same way," Marty said. "We were happy go lucky hippies trying to find our way in a country at war and rebellion. I loved Gary's story about running out of money, hanging out with other free-spirited folks and [doing] anything to keep from going home or working at another lousy job. Man, do we miss those days!"

Speaking of jobs almost inviting danger, Gary also worked at a fume-filled charcoal briquette company, a die-casting factory and a lumber mill.

Born in Minneapolis and bar mitvah'ed there, Gary worked nights at a nonalcoholic night club as a young teen, meeting acts such as Jimi Hendrix, Bob Seeger and The Who. Moving to Los Angeles, he graduated high school just as his parents packed for a move to Eugene, Ore. He enrolled at the University of Oregon and participated in the Vietnam antiwar movement.

After graduation, Gary signed up for AmeriCorps. The year-long federal program thrusts adults into community service work in education, public safety, health care, and environmental protection. He first worked at the Opportunity Council in Bellingham, then the Northwest Washington Legal Services as a paralegal. Finally he became a Landlord/Tenant law adviser. After his year was over, he was one of three nonnative people working for the newly recognized Nooksack Indian nation. He helped

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# BIENNIAL 2017 IN BOSTON



Some snapshots from the URJ's 2017 Biennial in Boston, Mass. (clockwise from top left): Asher Suloway-Baker on the main stage with fellow national NFTY board members; Miriam Davids' photo submission of her havurah bowling group made it onto the Biennial walls; Beth Israel's attendees Sagit Hall, Rabbi Samuels, Isaac Konikoff, Asher Suloway-Baker, Naomi Schapiro and Melissa Schapiro; Beth Israel among the hundreds of congregations represented; Sen. Elizabeth Warren speaks to the 6,000 attendees.



## THE LAZARUS FAMILY

*Continued from Page 8*

plan construction of the tribal center, which became a casino complete with totem poles. While he was there, the tribe invited him to a potlatch ceremony.

"I felt like I had just stepped back a couple of hundred years in time," he said. One woman's "face was painted in black and red; she had feathers in her hair and she wore traditional tribal clothes."

After that he roamed to Guatemala, funding the junket by selling his Volkswagen van. There, a nurse related tales of Comolapa, a village in the mountains flattened by an earthquake. She encouraged Gary, who had just completed an EMT course, to accompany her to the indigenous community. The first night, he kept watch over a baby whose respiration was uncertain, tickling its toes. By the morning, the infant was breathing on his own. The relieved parents, who had lost all six of their other offspring in the earthquake, expressed their gratitude "for being able to start a new life with a new family," Gary said.

After a few months in Central America, he headed for Sacramento State University to work on a Masters of Social Work. Enter Nancy, working as a secretary. Already steeped in ethics, she refused to date Gary until he received his MSW in 1977. Nancy finished her undergraduate work in Sacramento, and earned an Masters of Social Work as well. They married in 1982. They have two sons, Nathan, 31, and Daniel, 24, both living in Seattle.

As much as Gary's family were wanderers, Nancy, born and raised in Oakland, had never set foot out of California until she arrived in Bellingham with Gary a decade ago. She grew up in a Presbyterian family, but religion was not the center of her life. Getting her driver's permit was a teenage highlight, allowing her to

drive to Santa Cruz and ride its ancient wooden roller coaster.

She converted to Judaism when she married. One reason was to give her children "a good framework to practice the tenets of the same religion," she said. She also wanted to mark life cycle events with her children.

"The morals, ethics and spirituality of Judaism touched my heart," she said.

After receiving his master's degree, Gary worked for to the state of California in the WIC program. Then he took community college classes certified by the Department of Justice to become a Special Investigator, looking into Medicaid fraud.

Later he tracked illegal dumping of hazardous waste. He and his partner were called to one site decked with multiple 55-gallon drums and a semi-trailer full of chemical-filled glass jars in the midst of contested gang territory. They weren't shot at and were able to prevent an explosion that would have wiped out all the houses in a two-block area.

He was promoted and transferred to the Department of Corrections as a State Parole Agent. Ex-felons leave prison and see a parole officer who both suggests ways to reintegrate into the community and checks them for drug use. In spite of the oversight, recidivism is 70 percent. Gary ticked off the reasons: dysfunctional families, lack of education, illiteracy and gangs.

The parole officer calls them regularly "but sometimes it was hard to find the guys," he said. One day, though, he had no trouble. He walked into houses noting spreads on their tables, then realized families were celebrating Easter Sunday. "I never found so many at home," he said.

The job is twofold: a fully armed sworn peace officer and a counselor/social worker. He owns a gun, he said, but has never shot anyone. He regularly practices target shooting, but is all for gun control.

As Gary says of the job he held for nearly 30 years, "There was never a dull moment and plenty of action."

The same could be said for Nancy, who had an equally broad career in adoptions, child protective services, elderly counseling, hospice social work and a private practice as a behavioral cognitive therapist.

She oversaw adoptions, writing reports including psychological and social evaluations for the court's approval. After the baby was born, Nancy's task was to get the parents to sign the child over to the adopting couple. In one case, Nancy had to travel to San Quentin, where the father was languishing on death row. When she explained to him that he had to terminate the relationship, "he said, 'They're going to terminate me anyway.'"

She then focused on the elderly, working part time for home health-care agencies who would send a nurse and social worker for each case. When she entered one house, she found a woman with late-stage dementia and an absent husband. Nancy's concern was whether there was enough food in the house, so she peeked in the refrigerator and found several small containers of rotting chow. Then the husband came home.

"He was almost as demented as she was. I called the son and he told me 'Well, I've tried to tell them what to do but they won't listen,'" she said, rolling her eyes.

After that, she used her therapy license in a private practice setting, first providing home therapy for older adults, then becoming a hospice worker.

Her favorite was working with older adults. "It's amazing how at any age people can change thoughts and behavior when they want to," she said. "I often felt I learned more from my clients than they did from me."

*Linda Hirsh has lived in Bellingham since August 1998. She spent 10 years reporting for The Hartford Courant in Connecticut.*



## FROM THE RABBI

*Continued from Page 1*

Dr. Waxman's thesis is that in an era of uncivil discourse, Israel is fast becoming a source of disunity for American Jewry, which is quite at odds with the old era of solidarity that most American Jews shared. Things have changed in how we talk about Israel. With the eruption of social media sites, American Jews feel more comfortable speaking critically of Israel and, as a result, nearly any discussion can become divisive and contentious. In other words, while we might have had conversations — and heated ones at that — in the past, nowadays American Jews are taking part in shouting matches which have polarized our community even more.

Dr. Waxman reminded us how not long ago we would talk about "Hawks" and "Doves." Nowadays, that binary division seems old-fashioned and completely out of touch with our current viewpoints. Instead, Waxman sees four major positions within the American Jewish community, while the range of opinions is much, much larger.

The first group, he calls the Far Left, or the Non-Zionist Left. To some in this group, Zionism itself is illegitimate or at best anachronistic. They might even question Israel's existence, and many support the Boycott, Divestment and Sanction movement. To them Israel cannot be both a Jewish state and a democracy, since the two are in contrast to one another.

Waxman calls the second group, the Center Left. To these individuals,

*As Dr. Waxman notes,  
American Jews  
are losing the ability  
to have a civil  
conversation about  
our Homeland.*

Israel is legitimate and so is Zionism, so long as it can reconcile itself with the Palestinian situation. They believe in the equal distribution of blame on both sides and that it falls on both parties to work out a solution. Unlike the Far Left, this group is opposed to BDS because this specific movement ascribes sole responsibility to Israel.

Next, we have the Center Right. To many in this grouping, Israel is the innocent party and sole responsibility in regard to the fracture in the Middle East peace process lay with the Palestinian and wider Muslim world. Many in this group believe in a two-state solution and debate how best to criticize Israel in such a heated environment without appearing too adversarial.

And finally, Waxman describes the Far Right. Generally speaking, they reject a two-state solution altogether, not for theological reasons, but almost entirely due to security issues. In essence, a Palestinian state will pose a high threat to Israel's well-being and future. Rarely will there be any public criticism of Israel's policies coming from the Far Right.


So what is the takeaway from all of this? It is not simply that there are many divergent ways of thinking and talking about Israel and our sacred relationship to her. The main challenge, as I see it, is that it has become too hard to even have a conversation about Israel. We hear either shouting or silence. Some of us feel that those "in the know" lecture us about what we don't understand and then for those of us who have a deep connection, it's challenging when our friends share inaccurate information from unreliable sources. As Dr. Waxman notes, American Jews are losing the ability to have a civil conversation about our Homeland.

My friends, in the current environment let's continue the commitment to have the conversation. Even though it might be contentious at times, it must be ongoing. We don't need to agree. Perhaps we mistake community for homogeneity, but we all know it's not what community is.

Our wonderful Beth Israel community is the place where bonds of shared faith are so deep that they can sustain disagreement, even when it comes to discussing Israel.

My hope this year is that we can find commonality with our neighbors, while at the same time listening to and respecting their voices, which will, and should be, different from our own. I look forward to engaging with you and ultimately celebrating Israel's special birthday on April 18.


— RABBI JOSHUA SAMUELS



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## Artist gift

Congregant Leonard Berman presents an original oil painting he made, of Jews celebrating Sukkot, to Rabbi Joshua Samuels, to be hung in

the new synagogue. Berman is the father of congregant Kim (Marty) Mos-



## Anniversaries

### JANUARY 2018

Jan. 1 Ella & Alan Barney (#5)  
 Jan. 4 Jack & Ruth Schneider (#49)  
 Jan. 4 Alan & Bonnie Stone (#65)  
 Jan. 6 David Goldman and  
 Linda Blackwell (#34)  
 Jan. 8 Lindsey & Jordan Genut (#9)

### FEBRUARY 2018

Feb. 7 Rob & Kathy Grossman (#12)  
 Feb. 17 David & Carol Robinson (#38)

*Did we miss your anniversary?  
 Call the office at (360) 733-8890 or  
 email [office@bethisraelbellingham.org](mailto:office@bethisraelbellingham.org)  
 with the month, day & year  
 of your special day.*

## Special Fund Donations

### RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY

#### IN APPRECIATION TO:

Rabbi Samuels  
 From: *Sage Waters*

#### COMMEMORATING THE YAHREZIT OF:

\* Dora Graff  
 \* Esther Mazur  
 From: *Phyllis & Shelley Mazur*

#### DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO:

\* Ruth Shuster, on the loss of her sister, Nancy Zisook  
 \* Anne Brown, on the loss of her son, Rob Brown  
 From: *Toby Sonneman*

### GENERAL

#### IN APPRECIATION TO:

Rabbi Samuels and congregants for all your kindness and care for our parents, Aaron & Lilly Weiss  
 From: *Laura Winds and Cara Wilson-Granat*

#### CONTRIBUTION FROM:

*Patrick Crane*  
*O. David Farrar*

### NEW SYNAGOGUE

#### IN APPRECIATION TO:

Rabbi Samuels and the entire CBI community for bringing such joy to our lives  
 From: *Kristin Sykes-David & Joel David*

#### IN HONOR OF:

Jonathan Mayers, on his recovery  
 From: *Lynn & Michael Korner*

Mel Damski, patron of the arts  
 From: *Paul Blum & Alison Zak*

\* Lou & Marcia Lippman's 52nd wedding anniversary  
 \* Joan & Marv Wayne's 46th wedding anniversary  
 \* Terri Weiner & Rob Lopresti's 40th wedding anniversary  
 From: *Bonnie Quam*

Bonnie & Alan Stone's 65th wedding anniversary  
 From: *Anne Brown*

#### SPECIAL GREETINGS TO:

\* David Goldman – in honor of his milestone birthday (and retirement)  
 \* Lindsay Wells and Langley – in honor of baby Orilev  
 From: *Karen Sloss*

\* Nancy Lloyd – Happy Birthday!  
 \* Bonnie Stone – Happy Birthday!  
 From: *Debbie & Dan Raas*

DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO:  
 Ann Brown, on the loss of her beloved son, Rob Brown  
 From: *Janis & Steve Ban*

*Nancy & Don Davis*  
*Elka & Myron Fink*  
*Lynn & Michael Korner*  
*Marcia & Lou Lippman*  
*Debbie & Dan Raas*  
*Karen Sloss*  
*Bonnie & Alan Stone*  
*Joan & Marv Wayne*  
*Emily Weiner*  
*Shelley & Jay Wolfman*

Laura Winds and Cara Wilson-Granat, on the loss of their father, Aaron Weiss  
 From: *Lynn & Michael Korner*  
*Debbie & Dan Raas*  
*Joan & Marv Wayne*

Iris Berman (Edison, NJ), on the loss of her husband, Paul Berman  
 From: *Amy Kraham & Gib Morrow*

#### IN MEMORY OF:

\* My dear son, Nathan Loober  
 \* My beloved husband, Arni Loober  
 From: *Bernice Loober*

My son, Rob Brown  
 From: *Anne Brown*

#### CONTRIBUTION FROM:

*The Kenneth L. Kellar Foundation*  
*Jeff & Amy Margolis*

### TREES FOR ISRAEL/JNF

#### IN LOVING MEMORY OF:

James Hanka  
 From: *Joan & David Sager*

# Participate in Mishloah Manot, support Keshet

**Question:** What's sweet and fun and shows up at your door at Purim?

**Answer:** Mishloah Manot!!

For the fourth year, we present the Mishloach Manot project as a fun and easy way to fulfill one of the Purim mitzvot while supporting Keshet, our religious school. Mishloach Manot, the sending of food gifts to friends and family, is one of the four mitzvot traditionally performed on Purim. Through this project, you can participate in the sending of a lovely gift bag to your friends and family that will be delivered during the week of Purim.

Our first three years were very successful in raising significant funds to

support Keshet's operating costs and scholarship program. Each year we have sent Mishloach Manot baskets to EVERY CBI congregant! What will this year's theme be? Here's a hint – it has to do with a Jewish home, but not the one on San Juan Blvd. Have no fear, there will be delicious Leah's Hamantaschen included!!

Here's how it works:

For just \$3 per recipient, you can participate in the sending of a Purim gift bag to anyone on our membership list and Beth Israel staff. Every membership unit & staff will receive one gift bag, along with a Purim scroll that lists all the people who participated in their package. Mem-

bers who do not live within our delivery area will receive a festive card wishing them a Happy Purim and noting those who are sending them Purim greetings.

You will soon be receiving instructions by email on how to participate. Your email will include a personal log-in code. If you have questions, or if you would like a paper order form, please contact Joan Wayne 676-8939 or [jawayne2@gmail.com](mailto:jawayne2@gmail.com).

We will soon be in our new home, and Keshet needs our support as we get our 10 classrooms ready for our kids, as well as help with operations and scholarships. Please join us in this fun Purim festivity.

## The Yenta speaks ...

### Welcome to our new members:

- \* **Patrick Crane** — Bellingham
- \* **Michal Retter** and daughter **Liberty Amit Schoelss** (age 6) — Bellingham

### Welcome Back to:

- \* **Michele & Aaron Sanger** and daughter **Talya** (16) - Bellingham

### Scholarships

Mazel Tov to **Jaime Korner** and **Naomi Schapiro** on being awarded grants from the Rabbi Gartner Scholarship Fund. Jaime is pursuing a Ph.D at the University of Victoria, and Naomi is in her second year at Western Washington University pursuing a teaching career.



The calendar page for October features children at a Simchat Torah celebration.

## Art calendar sales benefit new building

CBI congregant and local artist Adelle John has created a special 2018 calendar featuring her artwork to raise funds for the new synagogue building.

You can preview and purchase it online at <http://www.artwanted.com/artist.cfm?ArtID=9998&Tab=Calendar>. Adelle will donate all the profit from each calendar to the New Synagogue Building Fund.

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## Hanukkah 2017

The annual Hanukkah Party, held this year on the sixth night of Hanukkah, Sunday, Dec. 17, 2017, at Bloedel-Donovan Park's Multipurpose Room, included latkes, doughnuts, a dreidel spin-off, crafts, and performances by Beth Israel's Keshet classes.

At left, the kindergarten class performs an Israeli dance, Nigun Atik, accompanied by Morah Miriam.

## Sunday morning walking group

Let's go for a walk! A new Sunday morning walking group has been meeting in the gym at Larrabee School, joining Keshet for tefillah at 10 a.m. and leaving around 10:15 a.m. for a walk across Old Fairhaven Parkway up the Interurban Trail. Round trip is about three miles; dogs on leash are welcome. If the weather is terrible, we can skip the walk and go for coffee.

The group's first walk Oct. 22 included (from left): Joan Wayne, Miriam Schwartz, Ann Suloway, Gail Gordon-Martin, Melissa Schapiro and Emily Weiner.



## Interfaith plans Hope Auction for March 2018

Interfaith Coalition's Hope Auction will begin at 5:30 p.m. Saturday, March 24, 2018, at the Four Points by Sheraton.

The Whatcom County benefit features fellowship, inspiration, hope, and lively bidding on great auction items. Please join us as we continue in our work of ensuring that all children have a safe, warm place to call home. You can help in these ways:

- Do you have an auction item to donate? A service you offer, your own artwork, gift certificate, tickets to popular sporting events, vacation home getaway ... think of what you might be able to donate, and get in touch with us!
- Buy tickets to the auction. Tickets are \$65 each, including dinner.
- Become a business sponsor or

ask your favorite businesses or employers to support Interfaith with a dedicated donation.

To donate an auction item and purchase tickets, contact Arlene Feld, Beth Israel's Interfaith liaison, or Interfaith Coalition at (360) 734-3983, [www.interfaith-coalition.org](http://www.interfaith-coalition.org)

### Coat drive a success

Your generous donations provided winter coats as well as hats and scarves to many of our neighbors. It was heartwarming to see parents find warm coats for themselves and their children. Several children beamed as they showed how nice they looked in their new coats and hand-knit, colorful hats. Some homeless individuals were able to find layers of sweaters and coats to help on the coldest nights.

We appreciate your commitment to this program and are humbled to experience the gratitude in words or expressions of those who benefit from your efforts.

Beth Israel's participation with Interfaith Coalition makes so much possible! Eleven homes to help families, bringing Family Promise to Whatcom County to help even more families; providing children's books that mean more than just a good story; winter coats, warm hats and scarves, food, and basic toiletries for those living on the streets; and the dignity and hope that powers all of us through hard times. Thank you and blessings to you all.

— Laura Harker, Interfaith Coalition Executive Director; and Janie Pemble, Outreach Director



# Yahrzeits

Observances follow the Hebrew calendar, unless secular date is requested, and are read on the Shabbat prior to the observance date.

## Friday, January 5

Martin Katz	1/6
Florence Weintraub	1/6
Henry Jantzen	1/7
Louis Lebowitz	1/7
Ben Thal	1/7
Irwin Wapner	1/7
Aimee Lewis	1/8
Arnold Loober	1/8
Anna Winefield Fox	1/9
Felice Bourne	1/10
Brian House	1/10
Joyce Landau	1/10
Barney Cohn	1/11
Bette Levy	1/11

## Friday, January 12 and Saturday, January 13

Earl Krauzer	1/13
Maurice (Maury) Schwartz	1/16
Marion Glassman	1/17
Shirley Spiegel Jacobson	1/17
Philip Studen	1/17
Morris Kalman Patinkin	1/19

## Friday, January 19 and Saturday, January 20

Harry Suslow	1/20
Lawrence Weintraub	1/20
Leo Damski	1/21
Victorie Haislip	1/21
Irving Lackowitz	1/21
Sylvia Goldman	1/22
Jerome Selznick	1/23
Magda Dorman	1/24
Eleanor Scharff	1/24

Arabelle (Chaya) Schlanger	1/24
Sandor Garfinkle	1/25
Libby Hildes	1/25
Harold Earl Perper	1/26
Joel K. Rubenstein	1/26
Norma Schwartz	1/26

## Friday, January 26

Morris Faber	1/27
Fred Graff	1/27
Lillian Mauer Pravda	1/27
Florence D. Shain	1/28
Florence Kleinfeld	1/29
George Markell	1/29
Sylvan Rosenthal	1/29
Helen Stone	1/29
Jerry Kleinfeld	1/30
Daniel Weis	1/30
Laura Ann Bourne	1/31
Sally Evans	1/31
Rabbi Samuel Gartner	1/31
Sidney David Resnick	1/31
Peter Bayliss	2/1
Celia Zak	2/1
Leona Chorney Sondik	2/2

## Friday, February 2

Claire P. Mayer	2/4
Hally Vernon	2/4
Hannah Jacobson	2/5
Frank Kraus	2/5
David Fine	2/6
(George) Gabriel Krauzer	2/6
Meyer Wolpow	2/6
Derrek Jeremy Adelstein	2/8
Sonia Kohl Krauzer	2/8
David Shain	2/8

Jean Beverly Blank	2/9
Simcha Hayim Miller	2/9

## Friday, February 9 and Saturday, February 10

Clara Lazarus	2/11
Paul Sondik	2/11
Rita Gordon	2/12
Frieda Blank	2/13
William Freeman	2/13
Albert Lebovich	2/13
Gloria Perper	2/14
Elinor Pravda	2/14
Rochelle Blum	2/15
Lou Fine	2/15
Isadore Graff	2/15
Michel Oksenberg	2/15
Mel Adelstein	2/16
Ruth "Bubbles" Berman	2/16
Ken Biggin	2/16
Dorothy Ramras	2/16
Steve Sokol	2/16
Clarence Weiner	2/16

## Friday, February 16 and Saturday, February 17

Cassandra Champagne	2/17
Lillian Heller	2/17
Benjamin Solomon	2/17
William E. Whiting	2/18
Robert Baker	2/19
Richard Evans	2/19
Barton Frank	2/19
Betty Goldberger	2/19
Jerry Glass	2/20
Mitchel J. Lazarus	2/21
Sadie Gordon Schiller	2/21
Nelson Beller	2/22
Phil H. Miller	2/22
Dr. William Schwartz	2/22
Eleanor Goldner	2/23
Robert W. Lippman	2/23

## Friday, February 23

Ruth Lippman	2/25
Irwin Weiner	2/26
Paul Zentner	2/26
Alice Duckworth	2/27
Jack Eigen	2/27
Joseph Sonneman	2/27
Gea Goldfeder	2/28
Elsa Zentner	2/28
Gene Adelstein	3/1
David Boman	3/1
Ida Chia Kahn	3/1
Jack Kahn	3/1
Gilbert Orlik	3/1
George Schwartz	3/1
Harold Shepard	3/1
Robert Fife	3/2

## In Memoriam

*Zichronam l'vrachah ~ May their memories be for a blessing*

Our congregation offers heartfelt condolences to the following individuals and their families:

**Ann Brown** on the loss of her son, Rob Brown, who passed away on October 29, 2017 at his home in Seattle, following a long illness.

**Daniel Zagnoli**, whose mother Carol Zagnoli passed away in Allentown, Pennsylvania on December 17, 2017 after an extended battle with cancer.

**Rita Spitzer** on the loss of her father, Joel Corman, who passed away on December 19, 2017 at home in Lexington, Kentucky at the age of 93.

We mourn the passing of long-time Beth Israel congregant, **Aaron Weiss**, who passed away peacefully in Hospice care on November 4, 2017, one day before his 99th birthday. Our deepest condolences go out to his daughters, Laura Winds and Cara Wilson-Granat, and to all of their family members.

# THE SHUL SHOFAR

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## CELEBRATE PURIM WITH BETH ISRAEL

### MEGILLAH AND SPIEL

6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 28, 2018

Location TBA

*A Purim Spiel full of music will be performed at the evening Purim celebration and again just before the Purim Carnival. Rehearsals will begin in mid-January.*

*We also need several people to be part of the opening protest scene, requiring coming to only one rehearsal.*

email Andrea Shupack at [cantor@bethisraelbellingham.org](mailto:cantor@bethisraelbellingham.org)  
if you are interested in being in the play, helping with costumes, props, sound, etc.

### Purim carnival

Noon to 3 p.m. Sunday, March 4, 2018

Location TBA

Questions? Contact the Beth Israel office, (360) 733-8890

