

THE SHUL SHOFAR

VOL. 22, NO. 4 * Congregation Beth Israel * Bellingham, WA 98225 * www.bethisraelbellingham.org * (360) 733-8890

Mitzvah Day is April 22nd

FROM THE SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE

Everyone of all ages is invited to participate! Bagels and Nosh start at 10am. You can sign up for projects of your choice. We will have a speaker from the University of Washington to discuss preserving our environment.

Work on projects will begin at approximately 11am and last until 1pm. The theme this year is Tikkun Olam, as April 22nd is also Earth Day.

Many projects will be outdoors, although a few projects for younger children will be at the synagogue.

There will also be information on our new recycling bins, and educational information on how we can further reduce waste in the new synagogue.

Bridge Builders Earth Day Interfaith Panel and Shmooze

After you've spent the day performing mitzvot throughout Bellingham, head over to Christ the Servant Lutheran Church (2600 Lakeway Drive) at 7pm for an interfaith event hosted by Bridge Builders*.

Get to know your community and find out how each of the Abrahamic faith traditions responds to the call of taking care of the Earth.

Rabbi Samuels will be speaking on the panel along with local Christian and Muslim religious leaders.

Come support interfaith dialogue and get to know your neighbors. Dessert nosh and beverages will be provided. There is no cost for entry.



**Bridge Builders recently won the Cultural Connections award at the 2017 Whatcom Dispute and Resolutions Center's Peace Builder Awards for their efforts to foster understanding and spaces of communion and connection between all faiths in Whatcom County. Rabbi Samuels is proud to be a founding member of this group.*

FROM THE RABBI

An Unexpected Spiritual Experience



A few weeks ago, I had the pleasure of sitting on an interfaith panel at Windward High School in Ferndale with four other local religious

leaders as we spoke to the World Religions class. Sitting next to me were leaders from the Sikh, Buddhist, Unitarian Universalist, and United Church of Christ communities. Before we even had the opportunity to field the first question to the class, their teacher got teary-eyed as he introduced us. He had been dreaming of this program for several years and it had finally come. It was especially meaningful since Windward is about to close its doors for good.

I have participated in several interfaith panels over the years. I love getting together with my fellow clergy peers and sharing my thoughts about Judaism while listening to their unique perspectives about faith, God, ritual, and so much more. There

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From the President ...

Great thanks!

Dear Fellow Congregants,

As a result of thousands of years of Jewish journeys, our rich history has absorbed and contributed to many languages and traditions. One word that has stuck with us from the beginning is "house" (*bayit* in Hebrew; more frequently seen in English in the construct *bet* or *beth*, "house of"). In the earliest linguistic traditions of the ancient Near East, a temple was always known as a house. This goes back to the Sumerians, who named each temple as a house dedicated to one of their many deities. We continue this tradition today and speak of temples as houses of worship. Indeed, our very name makes us the congregation of the house of Israel. This tradition arose from the notion that the family and household were the basic building blocks of community, and that the gods, too, needed to live in grand homes. Long ago we moved away from the idea of a land dotted with the homes of numerous gods; and more recently we have moved on from the ways in which these metaphors reaffirmed patriarchal authority.

The power of this idea that a temple is also a home now rests in the notion that each of our communities is a large, extended family that gathers in times of both joy and sorrow. When we get this big family together, each of us knows that we are part of something grander than ourselves. Our house, the beautiful sanctuary, school, and home that we have built on San Juan Boulevard is nearly ready to welcome our big family. Of course, we have endured frustrating delays, and we are working now to finalize compliance of both the building and the grounds with all relevant city and county regulations and satisfy our inspections. But this is not why I say that our home is nearly ready. The most important remaining step is to find a place there for everyone in our

community to feel at home. You all received an electronic survey from the executive board, and I hope you filled it out. The goal is to find better matches between the needs of our community and the services and programming that we offer. The members of a household will not always share the same goals, or even agree about the right path to achieve shared goals, and this is in the nature of big families. The scale of our congregation of the house of Israel may at times seem to magnify the discord, but I look forward to these discussions, and to the family reunions that ensue.

Our linguistic traditions continue to be enriched in the modern world. We have all likely heard the Hebrew phrase "*todah rabah*," which is often translated as "many thanks" or "thank you very much." The phrase is only attested in modern Hebrew and may not be more than 50 years old. What I love about this phrase is the second word "*rabah*," which means "great." If we go all the way back in time again to the Sumerians, they used an ancient relative of our modern "*rabah*" to describe the scale of the houses they built for their kings and their gods. In the spirit of ancient and modern, I offer great thanks to our congregation of the house of Israel. As President of CBI, I am aware of how many of you are genuinely deserving of really GREAT thanks for all that you do for our community. One of the things that I can do better is to express my gratitude for the awesome work that so many of you do to keep our Jewish traditions alive and well in the Pacific Northwest. Many congregants work quietly and behind the scenes to keep our big family well and to help us get set up in our beautiful house.

Todah rabah!

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 May/June issue is APRIL 11. Call the office for more information or email to shulshofar@bethisraelbellingham.org

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From the Keshet Center for Jewish Learning

Jewish education at the fish pond

The Talmud tells of a legend about a wise and famous rabbi who came upon a place to pray for rain, but the rain did not come. A lay leader came to the place and said the Gevurot prayer. "משיב הרוח" (*"mashiv haruach"* - You cause the wind to shift), he said and the wind blew. "ומוריד הגשם" (*"u'morid hagashem"* - and you cause the rain to fall), he said and the rain came.

He was asked, "Who are you?" He said, "I am a teacher, teaching the *mikrah*

(scriptures) to

youngsters – the children of the poor as well as the children of the rich. Those that cannot afford to pay, I do not charge. And I have a fish pond so that the ones that misbehave and are not interested in reading, I bribe with that fish pond, by calming them down and appeasing their spirit until they come back and read."

The incorporation of this legend in *masekhet Taanit*, deals with drought and the yearning for rain, but it ultimately underscores the value system of the educator and his/her understanding of the educational environment. The teacher's sensitivity to



Inspiring Jewish Learning: Orly Ziv Maxim, Gan Yeladim's insightful teacher on a Tree Hugging walk with the group in honor of Tu B'Shvat

using the fish pond as an educational space for the tougher students, is the divine component or the ultimate *mitzvah* of a teacher, for which he/she was granted a direct dialogue with the heavens.

As I walk through the empty halls of the new Keshet floor in the 751 San Juan building, I try to imagine how that teacher's wisdom and pedagogical sensitivity can be embodied in our new space. It is my hope that, as a community, we will be able to

create a space that will reflect our most important values: inspiring Jewish learning, youth engagement, social action, peace and well being.

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

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Bat Mitzvah



Samantha Schwartz will be called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah on March 10th, 2018. She is the daughter of Miriam and Greg Schwartz, and the sister of Julia.

She is in the seventh grade at Whatcom Middle School and enjoys Spanish and math. Outside of school, she enjoys spending time with friends and family, but her main interest is ballet.

Samantha feels strongly about reducing society's carbon footprint, so for her mitzvah project, she is working with the Social Action Committee and the Sisterhood to create effective

signage for the new synagogue to help in efforts to recycle and compost in the kitchen, social hall, classrooms, and office.

Please join our family in celebration:

SHABBAT EVENING SERVICE

March 9th, 2018 at 7:30 pm
at Congregation Beth Israel
 751 San Juan Blvd.
 with an oneg to follow.

SHABBAT MORNING SERVICE

March 10th, 2018 at 10:00 am
 There will be a Kiddush luncheon and dance party to follow in the Social Hall.

Bat Mitzvah



Nadia Mazonson is a seventh grader at Cascade Middle School in Sedro-Woolley. She is the daughter of Alan (z"l) and Nora Mazonson.

She is an honors student, and her favorite subject is English. Nadia has been dancing at Skagit Valley Academy of Dance for almost ten years. She most enjoys ballet, which she teaches along

with tap to a younger class. Nadia also likes reading, writing, doing brush calligraphy, listening to music, and hanging out with her friends.

For her Mitzvah project, Nadia is designing, making, and selling cards on Etsy, and donating the money to charities like the Anti-Defamation League and Planned Parenthood.

Please join our family in celebration:

SHABBAT EVENING SERVICE

March 23, 2018 at 7:30 pm
at Congregation Beth Israel
 751 San Juan Blvd.
 with an oneg to follow.

SHABBAT MORNING SERVICE

March 24, 2018 at 10:00 am
 A Kiddush luncheon will follow in the Social Hall.

Bar Mitzvah



Shalem (Shay) Reed Blum will be called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah on April 21, 2018. Shay is the son of Isaac and Wendy Blum, brother of Lilah and grandson of Paul Blum and Alison Zak.

Shay is a seventh grader at Whatcom Middle School, where he enjoys playing school sports and being in the leadership club. His passion is playing basketball for

the Raiders Basketball Club and he loves being active in soccer and baseball.

Shay also enjoys improv comedy, devouring books, games, spending time with friends, and of course his cat Murphy.

Shay is excited to be a part of the first B'Nei Mitzvah class at our new synagogue. For his Mitzvah Project Shay has been making kits for the homeless population of Bellingham.

Please join our family in celebration:

SHABBAT EVENING SERVICE

April 20, 2018 at 6:15 pm
at Congregation Beth Israel
 751 San Juan Blvd.
 Pre-service nosh at 5:30 pm

SHABBAT MORNING SERVICE

April 21, 2018 at 10:00 pm

More from the Social Action Committee

We hope to collect chametz for the Food Bank through mid-March, pending our move-in date.

March 24th is the Interfaith Auction. The cost is \$65. It would be fun to have 4 tables from CBI. Please contact Linda Blackwell or Arlene Feld to participate. The auction is a great social event with live and silent auction items. The auction raises over 1/3 of the budget for the Interfaith Coalition each year.

On March 25th at 10:15 am, we will have Janie Pemble, a speaker from the Interfaith Coalition, to discuss the Family Promise program. The Interfaith website describes Family Promise "as working with

religious congregations to use their buildings and resources to provide temporary shelter, meals and companionship to homeless families. During the day, families go to a day center and work with a case manager to access housing, jobs and community resources. This grassroots approach is extremely cost-effective because it relies on existing facilities and volunteers". There are no plans to house people at CBI but there is a need for volunteers to help at the shelters and cook meals.

A big thank you to all the volunteers in our congregation. I know this is a busy and active community. A special thanks to all who helped

clean up the "little house" for a new family to move in.

The social action committee has many new activities planned through the summer. We will participate in the Relay for Life Walk. We will also again join the Bellingham Pride Parade. There will be a blood drive next fall.

Please come to our next meeting on March 3rd. Call Linda Blackwell (360-647-9519) for information and location.

— LINDA BLACKWELL,
COMMITTEE CHAIR

Yom Hashoah Ve-Hagevurah – Holocaust and Heroism Remembrance Day

Tuesday, April 10, 7:00-9:00 pm



Author Marty Brounstein

Please join us for our annual Yom HaShoah Service of Remembrance. This intergenerational event will feature leadership of our seventh grade Keshet class; music led by our cantorial soloist, Andrea Shupack; and a moving talk from our friend, CBI member and Shoah survivor Noemi Ban.

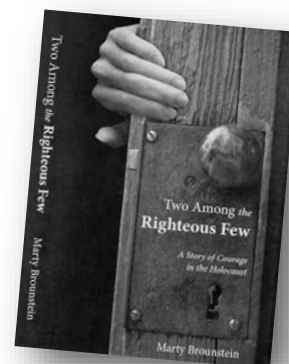
Following the service we are delighted to welcome our guest speaker, author Marty Brounstein.

Marty will share a remarkable true story of rescue conveyed in his book **Two Among the Righteous Few: A Story of Courage in the Holocaust**. It is about a Christian couple in the Netherlands who, despite great risk and danger, saved the lives of over two dozen Jews from certain death during World

War II. This interfaith story of courage and compassion also has a meaningful personal connection to our guest speaker, which Marty reveals in his engaging storytelling presentation.

There will be a Q & A session with our guest speaker following his talk and an opportunity to purchase his book.

Location TBD, watch the E-News.



CBI/Kesher Purim carnival

Sunday, March 4, 12:00-2:30 pm

Purim is a time to dress up in silly costumes, eat hamantaschen, and be merry! All ages are invited to join in the festivities at our annual CBI/Kesher Purim Carnival at our new home, 751 San Juan Boulevard. The Carnival will feature games, henna art, face painting, fortune-telling, a costume parade, and a juggler. NEW for adults and teens this year are Purim Poker (18 yrs and older) & Games, Teen Ping-Pong & Game Room, and Chair Massages. There will also be pizza by the slice, salad, sundaes, popcorn, and

hamantaschen. Tickets (2 for \$1) will be on sale for carnival games, activities, food, and drinks.

FAMILY DISCOUNT CARDS (25% off) include 1 whole cheese pizza, 1 salad, 4 drinks & 40 tickets good for games, activities & snacks. Family Discount Cards can be ordered on our website, bethisraelbellingham.com; click on "donate," then "Purim Carnival." Deadline for Family Discount Cards is Friday, March 2. Dairy-free (DF) & gluten-free (GF) pizza available only by pre-order on the family discount card.

Birthdays

MARCH 2018

3/1 Tannia Hecht
3/1 Brenda Miller
3/2 Nadia Mazonson (13th)
3/4 Renee Elder
3/4 Talya Sanger (17th)
3/5 Lev Cornwall (12th)
3/5 Manuel Emanuel
3/5 Amy Evans (19th)
3/6 Christoph Reitz
3/6 Mary Somerville
3/7 Jay Braunstein
3/7 Sara Geballe
3/8 Norman DesRosiers
3/8 Deborah Oksenberg
3/8 K.C. Sulkin
3/9 Leeya Shoshana Genut (5th)
3/9 Ryan Goldman (13th)
3/10 Mark Steinberg
3/11 Samuel Pomerantz (3rd)
3/12 Sivan Wells-Langley (7th)
3/13 Rebecca Orloff
3/13 Joan Sager
3/13 Steve Schwartz

3/14 Jordan Verkh-Haskell (16th)
3/15 Yaniv Attar
3/15 Chanan Suarez
3/19 Carol Robinson
3/19 Noah Taranow (21st)
3/20 Jody Meltzer
3/20 Matthew Schall
3/21 Naomi Pomerantz
3/21 Bonnie Quam
3/22 Jonah Attar 8th
3/22 Sonorah DesRosiers (10th)
3/22 Roy Shankman
3/23 Camille Keefe
3/23 Rachel Lowenstein
3/24 Ruth Ingberman
3/24 Michael Korner
3/25 Tami DuBow
3/26 Alex Hall
3/27 Kevin James
3/27 Debbie Raas
3/27 Marybeth Taranow
3/27 Aviva Weinstein (11th)
3/28 Celt Schira
3/28 Nancy Thomson
3/29 Rick Romito

3/30 Samantha Konikoff
3/31 Lynn Korner
3/31 Jeffrey Margolis
3/31 Gabriel Witte (9th)

APRIL 2018

4/1 Amy Kraham
4/1 Amy Margolis
4/3 Ethan Oliver (16th)
4/3 Alisa Sachs
4/4 Daniel Feller
4/4 Mary Jo Lewis
4/5 Hannah Levine (20th)
4/6 Tammy Dixon
4/6 Katie Edelstein
4/6 Hank Levine
4/6 Daniel Zagnoli
4/7 Lisa Balton
4/7 Samuel Donner (11th)
4/8 Laura Ochoa
4/10 Katie Comstock
4/10 Jeffrey Feld
4/10 Susan Katz
4/11 Lilah Blum (17th)
4/12 Cora Boothby
4/12 Sarah DesRosiers

4/13 Steve Ban
4/13 Karen Fisher
4/14 Jeffrey Probst
4/16 Mia Clarke (12th)
4/16 Elizabeth Witte (6th)
4/17 Paul Blum
4/17 Benjamin Sommers (12th)
4/18 Navah DesRosiers (13th)
4/18 Liza Jane Price (10th)
4/18 Linda Read
4/18 Alexandra Verkh
4/23 Leora Roberts (8th)
4/24 Leah Lippman
4/24 Aniel Wells-Langley (9th)
4/25 Margaret Bikman
4/25 Jason Stoane
4/26 Spencer Jantzen (13th)
4/27 Alan Kendal
4/28 Joel David
4/28 Andrew Orloff
4/28 Shoshana Samuels (6th)
4/29 Abigail Comstock (10th)
4/29 Richard Widerkehr



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WWU - Tournées French Film Festival focusing on World War II

SUBMITTED BY SANDRA ALFERS, DIRECTOR
RAY WOLPOW INSTITUTE, WWU

The French Section of the Department of Modern & Classical Languages, in conjunction with the Department of History, the English Department, and the Ray Wolpow Institute for the Study of the Holocaust, Genocide, and Crimes Against Humanity at Western Washington University, is proud to host the **Tournées French Film Festival** during Spring Quarter of 2018.

The festival will feature six films (five recent and one classic), which deal with various aspects of the Second World War, and the time periods just before and after the war. It will run for three weeks in April with screenings taking place on Mondays and Wednesdays at 7pm in the Viking Union, Room 552 on the campus of Western Washington University. Admission to the festival is free.

The names and dates of the films to be shown are as follows:

- *Franz* by François Ozon – Monday, April 9th at 7pm
- *Parce que j'étais peintre* by Christophe Cognet – Wednesday, April 11th at 7pm
- *Le Dernier des Injustes* by Claude Lanzmann – Monday, April 16th at 7pm (pre-show at 6:30)
- *Diplomatie* by Volker Schlöndorff – Wednesday, April 18th at 7pm
- *Francofonia* by Alexander Sokurov – Monday, April 23rd at 7pm
- *Panique* by Julien Duvivier – Wednesday, April 25 at 7pm

All screenings also include brief pre- and post-show discussions led by various members of Western's faculty, to include: Professors Sandra Alfery, Amanda Eurich, Cécile

Hanania, Scott Taylor, Greg Youmans, and Sarah Zarrow. Please note that due to the length of the April 16th screening, the pre-show discussion will start at 6:30 pm and there will be no post-show discussion.

The Tournées Film Festival is made possible with the support of the Cultural Services of the French Embassy in the U.S, the Centre National du Cinéma et de l'Image Animée (CNC), the French-American Cultural Fund, Florence Gould Foundation and Highbrow Entertainment.

Contact Professor Scott Taylor for any questions or for disability accommodations (Email: Scott.Taylor@wwu.edu, Phone: 360-650-4536).





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Bearing fruit through communication and change



Faces in our community

Two Hearts, One Goal: to Volunteer

BY LINDA HIRSH

Who would conduct services in a tiny, tight-knit congregation minus a rabbi? Answer: Sometimes student rabbis, but other times, the members themselves take turns.

That was the story in Isaac Konikoff's now 65-member shul in Lafayette, LA. Isaac assisted his father during services at Temple Sholom until he came of age.

Then at age 14, he went solo.

"Everyone volunteered," Isaac said. "It was a family thing, not a big deal."

Being bred to volunteer, he does so naturally. And when he married Samantha, she caught the spirit, too. In the annals of synagogue activism, they rate multi-gold Magen Davids.

"Isaac encouraged me to want to learn and do more and more," Samantha said.

Their two families hail from every section of the country: Isaac's dad from Saratoga Springs, N.Y., his mom from Chicago, Samantha's family from Houston, although she and her mother lived in many towns throughout New Jersey. Samantha graduated from a West Windsor, N.J., high school.

Isaac's parents headed to Cajun-French Lafayette, LA, when his father, a biology professor, joined the staff at the University of Southwestern Louisiana. Isaac grew up with Acadian/French and Jewish culture side by side. It was like dancing alternately to zydeco and to klezmer.

Sometimes the secular and the religious mixed. The synagogue had a booth at the town's Mardi Gras and Isaac marched in the parade with his school band.

Secular also meant Isaac playing school soccer. It meant acting the Christmas play role of alien come down to earth to learn about the holiday. As for his family, it meant banning pork at home but making an exception for crawfish, a shellfish commonly found in Cajun cuisine.

On the religious side, a team of rabbis, including one of the first women in the field, tutored Isaac for his bar mitzvah to which he invited his Christian classmates. His early contributions to *tikkun olam* included working at a soup kitchen and visiting the elderly at an assisted living facility. When older, he assisted teachers in Sunday school.

Isaac was the only Jewish child in his public school; two others his age attended other schools. He did not



The Konikoffs: Samantha, Isaac, Evan, and Emma.

feel any pressure to be a model of Judaism, but knew how to satisfy his Christian pals' curiosity about his religion. One easy question was, "At what holiday do you eat those big crackers?"

There was little anti-Semitism. "The Catholic presence was strong and they valued interfaith," he said, remembering only a couple of incidents when vandals spray-painted the synagogue.

After high school, Isaac decided it was time to go beyond Louisiana's borders, westward to the University of Arizona in Tucson.

"I left the swamp and landed in the desert," he said.

There he studied electrical engineering and upon graduation in 1997, landed a job as a systems technology engineer in Phoenix. Traveling to sites around the country, he helped businesses "to set up programs and solve

Continued on Page 10

NFTY-NW KALLAH IN BELLINGHAM

February 2-4, 2018



Some snapshots from the NFTY-NW Kallah in Bellingham (clockwise from top left): Saturday morning tefillah with community members; all of the CBI teen participants — *back row*: Alyssa Diller, Julia Schwartz, Lilah Blum, Rafi Schapiro, Noam Richmond, *front row*: Aniko Folk, Shoshana Schapiro, Samantha Sommers, Isaac Schapiro, Elan Maxim; evening closing circle; Havdallah with all 130 participants.

THE KONIKOFF FAMILY

Continued from Page 8

or work around problems.” His next job was in avionics—that is, creating software for airplanes. After that, he joined a startup that failed.

Around that time, Samantha also left New Jersey for the desert, to study business and communications at Arizona State University. She graduated in 2000 and worked for a nonprofit in Tucson until she moved to Houston to tend to her grandmother.

Diametrically opposed to Isaac’s experience, Samantha’s school was so crowded with Jewish students that the schools closed on high holidays. She became a bat mitzvah and attended regularly until her parents divorced.

“But I kept my Judaism going,” she said.

After returning to Phoenix in April 2004, Samantha met Isaac through eHarmony—although because of coincidences, both swear their paths had crossed before that. In any case, they were meant to be.

Then in 2006—“forty-eight hours after living together,” she said—a friend of Isaac’s asked him to move to Bellingham to join a network he had started. They did. Two weeks after that, they got engaged, then married in Phoenix in 2008. They now have two children, Evan, age 8 and Emma, 5.

The couple’s early backgrounds differed, yet two life experiences assured a bond, summer camp and visiting Israel. Isaac attended summer camp in Mississippi—a magnet drawing youngsters throughout the south. The Museum of Southern Jewish Experience grew out of this camp and is now located on the site. Samantha’s camp was in the Poconos

where she spent eight weeks each summer.

The other commonality was visiting Israel. After attending a wedding, Isaac was driven around the country for an exclusive, insider’s tour of the country. Samantha visited through the Birthright Foundation, enabling her to tour the land at a comparatively peaceful time to see “the *Shuk*,” a famous Jerusalem marketplace, as well as Masada, allowing her to observe Jews interacting with Palestinians.

Since joining Congregation Beth Israel, both work and play have been intensive for the Konikoffs. Their first activity here was on Christmas Day, making peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for homeless people. There they met their now close friends, Danny and Marla Finklestein.

“Our ‘young couple’ evolved into a committed family who gives time and energy to Congregation Beth Israel and all they are part of,” Marla said. “Samantha, Isaac, Evan and Emma remain our dear friends.”

They also bowled with Gea Goldfeder, Harriet Fine, Sylvia Glass and Miriam Davids. Miriam and Jill Elkayam were “aunties” to their kids. Alan Stone with Mark Steinberg helped Isaac step into the Brotherhood chair so efficiently that its members—Todd Witte, David Strich, George Farkas and Kevin Donner—now call it the Alan Stone Appreciation Committee.

Isaac has also served on the board and Samantha on the religious school committee. Both have contributed to early Jewish education, Samantha by teaching Sunday School kindergarten, Isaac by visiting their children’s public school, Silver Beach, to introduce the youngsters to the gambling game of dreidel.

As more of their peers with young children arrived, the Konikoffs have found several couples including the

Samuels and the Wittes, who have children the same age.

After a stretch of blues following one pregnancy, Samantha now volunteers for education on post-partum depression.

“I do a few different things,” she said. “I am the patient advocate on the Maternal Mental Health task force through the Whatcom County Department of Health and I am co-facilitator of a new mom support group called The Village Circle which meets weekly, here in Bellingham.

Busy as she is, she also works three mornings a week at Emma’s school, Gabriel’s Art Kids.

Both are steadfast in giving their two red-headed youngsters a Jewish identity. And the children have caught their parents’ enthusiasm. While Emma loves singing Jewish songs, Evan enumerates a whole list of goodies:

“I really like class,” he said. “We are focusing on communities in Israel and putting stickers on a map. I learn Hebrew words and I know a lot of prayers,” naming the *Sh’má*, the blessing over wine and the *Shehechianu*.

With their whirlwind mix of activities, the Konikoffs face having to balance between the religious and the secular. Both agree that Reform Judaism is right for them and their family.

“Judaism is hands-on,” Isaac said. “I have enjoyed being part of the Reform movement. Israel means struggle with God. We are free to define the range of Judaism. I was allowed to question. This helps define what kind of Jew you are going to be.”

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*

have been times when some of the discussions took a wrong turn. Not surprisingly, this happens when religion is the focus. However, this experience wasn't like that at all. It was truly exceptional.

The main takeaway I had is that our traditions share a whole lot more in common than things that divide us. For example, one student asked whether or not doubt and skepticism are discouraged when talking about our deity. Much to the students' surprise, nearly all of the panelists answered the same way. While Jews are called *Yisrael*, or the "Ones who struggle with God," each of the religious leaders expressed a similar perspective. There are some congregants who have deeply held beliefs about God, and others who don't. But no one, in any of our communities is shamed about what they hold to be true or pressured to believe in any dogma. Each religious leader encourages their parishioners, students and members to figure out for themselves what role a deity may or may not play in their lives.

These engaged students also asked: How do we view those who practice religious traditions different from our own? What do we believe happens after we die? In what ways is our tradition misunderstood?

Throughout my time with this class, I found myself agreeing with most of what my colleagues said. "That could be my answer, too!" was a common thought in my head as I learned alongside the teenagers. One of my colleagues on the panel recently wrote about this experience to his community and said the following: "I repeatedly found myself inspired by their (the panelists') articulation of concepts that I affirm and promote... but I don't always have the language to express. I guess that's the benefit of diversity. I mean, the unity felt great... but the diversity-of-expression within that unity made it possible to reach people for whom any particular articulation might not resonate."

One of the final questions was, "What has been your most profound religious experience?" I responded without hesitation, "Being present with all of you in this moment and learning from my friends." Most people chuckled. Perhaps I said this since I couldn't think of that one moment of spiritual bliss or revelation that many have written about. But there was truth in my statement. Making genuine connections with others, or as Martin Buber taught us, having that I-Thou moment, is a religious experience like no other. As a Jew, I don't need angels, harps and sunshine to point out that something significant is "going down." What I've learned is

The whole experience reinforced how important interfaith dialogue can be and how necessary it is to foster an environment where we encourage people to express their beliefs, ask questions, and listen.

that sometimes the ordinary moments, such as sitting in a high school classroom, can be just as spiritual as any religious moment.

I am grateful for participating on this panel and teaching high school students about Judaism. The whole experience reinforced how important interfaith dialogue can be and how necessary it is to foster an environment where we encourage people to express their beliefs, ask questions, and listen.

In his thank you note, the World Religions teacher wrote, "For these students, to have the validity of their existence affirmed by you was a precious gift. Maybe at the core, as I've tried to express it, we are all more alike than different... and that there are many paths to greater awareness and love."


— RABBI JOSHUA SAMUELS



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Rabbi Samuels, for his kindness

From: *Nancy Kaufman (Mequon, WI)*

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IN LOVING MEMORY OF:

Aunt Sandy Hoffman

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My parents, Joel & Edith Corman

From: *Rita Spitzer*

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GENERAL

DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO:

Michele & Talya Sanger, on the loss of husband/father, Aaron Sanger

From: *Margaret Willowmoon (Corvallis OR)*

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Greg Peterson

NEW SYNAGOGUE

IN APPRECIATION TO:

The CBI community, for the love, compassion and support shown to our family following the loss of our son-in-law, Aaron Sanger

From: *Ted & Penny Schuman*

Everyone who has nourished us in these first months of our being a family of five

From: *Lindsay Wells & Langley*

Ahuva Scharff, for her leadership in creating and mentoring learning groups

From: *Miles Bryant & Sarah Bauman*

IN HONOR OF

Floyd Kind & Leigh Squires, and Bruce & Becki Van Glubt — Patrons of the Arts!

From: *Paul Blum & Alison Zak*

Rabbi Samuels

From: *Miles Bryant & Sarah Bauman*

Bonnie & Alan Stone's 65th wedding anniversary

From: *Jay & Donna Solomon Karen Sloss*

The wedding of Vermeda Fred & Rodney Shainbom
From: *Judy Osman*

Mark & Judy Konikoff's 50th wedding anniversary

From: *Isaac & Samantha Konikoff*

IN CELEBRATION OF:

The 90th birthday of my brother, Ernest Wolf

From: *Anne Brown*

DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO:

Rita Spitzer, on the loss of her father, Joel Corman

From: *Steven Globerman
Debbie & Dan Raas
Karen Sloss
Joan & Marv Wayne
Shelley & Jay Wolfman*

Rita Spitzer, in memory of her parents, Edith & Joel Corman

From: *Warren Rosenthal & Amy Whiting*

Daniel Zagnoli, on the loss of his mother, Carol Zagnoli

From: *Debbie & Dan Raas
Karen Sloss
Joan & Marv Wayne*

Nancy Miller and family, on the loss of beloved husband and father, David Miller

From: *Debbie & Dan Raas
Karen Sloss
Joan & Marv Wayne*

Michele & Talya Sanger and Ted & Penny Schuman, on the loss of their husband/father/son-in-law, Aaron Sanger

From: *Debbie & Dan Raas
Karen Sloss
Joan & Marv Wayne*

The Jacobs Family (El Cajon, CA), in memory of Minnie Dement and in celebration of her life

From: *Martha Greenstone*

IN LOVING MEMORY OF:

My beloved husband, Phil H. Miller

From: *Eileen Miller*

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First annual CBI Intergenerational Camping Trip

The first annual Beth Israel Intergenerational Camping Trip will be June 22-24 at the Excelsior Group Campground on the Nooksack River just below Nooksack Falls. Come and enjoy true Shabbat *menucha* (rest) in community, play board games, make art, hike, bike, and explore. The cost includes campground rental, compostable plates, flatware, cups, napkins, and all food—two dinners, two breakfasts, one lunch, and abundant snacks—with gluten free (celiac friendly) and vegan options.

Facilities are minimal, but very nice, with potable water and clean, bright vault toilets. There are numerous campsites, many of which have sandboxes for perfect tent setup, and many are very private. We'll also have room for a few RVs or tent trailers, but be forewarned that there is no electricity and no hookups, and generators are discouraged.

This will be a community effort, so a list of kitchen and housekeeping equipment—from firewood to tarps to stoves—will be provided so everyone can pitch in and volunteer equipment they may have. Each family will be required to volunteer at least one person to help prepare, serve, and clean up one meal. Other than that, you are off the hook. All reservations must be received and paid for in full by June 5.

Age 12 and over: \$25 paid before May 15;
\$35 May 15-June 5

Age 6-12: \$15 paid before May 15;
\$20 May 15-June 5

Age 5 and under: FREE!

We ask that you please leave all pets at home.

Registration forms will be available at services and religious school, and online. Watch the E-News for updates! If you have questions, please contact Cora Boothby: kavahni@yahoo.com, or (360)527-2704.



From Netivot to Bellingham: The Journey of a Young Israeli in America

Thursday, March 8 at 7 pm
Refreshments following talk.

Please welcome Udi Asaraf, of Stand With Us, as he shares his unique story about growing up in Israel in a traditional Mizrahi family, serving in the IDF, working as a chemical engineer, getting drawn to politics and then making his way to

the Pacific Northwest. What a journey!

This is sure to be an engaging evening. Location TBD, watch the E-News.

For more information about Stand With Us, visit their website (www.standwithus.com).

Brotherhood meeting

Tuesday March 20, 2018 at 6:30 pm
Location TBD... hopefully at the new Shul!
Refreshments provided.

We will meet to enjoy a presentation by Kevin Donner about his screenwriting career, and we'll also discuss our upcoming plans for the year.

Anyone interested in Brotherhood is welcome to attend!

Lunch Bunch

Lunch Bunch at Joan Wayne's at 12 pm on Tuesday, April 17th.

Anniversaries

MARCH/APRIL 2018

Mar. 15	Isaac & Samantha Konikoff	(#10)
Mar. 18	Nancy & Don Davis	(#34)
Mar. 19	Robert & Jody Meltzer	(#18)
Mar. 24	Alan & Susan Kendal	(#70)
Mar. 24	Laura & Cassandra Wolfson	(#14)
Mar. 26	Leah & Jeffrey Grossman	(#7)
Mar. 29	Joel David & Kristin Sykes-David	(#37)
Apr. 2	Harold & Susan Katz	(#51)
Apr. 5	Marty & Kim Moskowitz	(#37)
Apr. 6	Kristan & Mike Brennan	(#22)
Apr. 16	Michael & Jay Braunstein	(#18)
Apr. 20	Danny & Marla Finkelstein	(#32)

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

Sisterhood News

BY MIRIAM DAVIDS

On January 28th, the Sisterhood held the first official meeting in many years. We met at the new building where we held a "New Kitchen Shower," the brainchild of Joan Wayne, implemented by Joan and Miriam Davids. We made a "Wish List" of items through Amazon for the lower-level kitchen... (new space, new stuff) and sent out the list to all current and potential Sisterhood members.

The response was overwhelming and we had to adjust and expand the list due to the amazing generosity we received. We even have monies available to fill in as needed! The gifts ranged from a big supply of sponges to spatulas, baking sheets, coffee makers, kitchen carts and tons (seriously!) of kitchen goodies in between!

At our meeting we displayed all the wonderful gifts, gave a bit of Sisterhood history, noshed and

toured the new building. It was wonderful to share the space and day with a variety of new and more seasoned members!

We want to thank everyone who contributed and participated. It takes a whole village to build and fill a sacred place.

We are looking forward to growing our Sisterhood!



The Yenta speaks ...

Congratulations Shultzie Willows!

Lynne and Mark MacDonald are the proud parents of Shultzie Willows, who as Community Engagement Director of Lydia Place, was awarded Bellingham/Whatcom Chamber of Commerce's Young Professional of the Year. She received this award in November 2017. At Lydia Place, Willows helps the nonprofit in its

mission of ending homelessness for Whatcom County families. She also volunteers on committees for the Downtown Bellingham Partnership and ReUse Works, a local nonprofit, and she curates the art at the Honey Salon and Gallery in downtown Bellingham.

Welcome to our new members:

- * **Wendy Miller** — Bellingham
- * **Lenore D. Shankman** — Bellingham

Yahrzeits

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

Friday, March 2

BJ Elder	3/3
Harry Skinner	3/3
Herman Weill	3/3
Jessie Edinger	3/4
Saul Faber	3/4
Walter von Hollander	3/4
Henry Edwards	3/6
Millie Greer	3/6
Fred Fragner	3/7
Emma Gartner	3/7
Carole Bajema	3/8
Benjamin Goldberg	3/8
Sol L. Shure	3/8
Archie Fine	3/9
Felicia Elizabeth Romito	3/9
Elaine Fox Suloway	3/9

Friday, March 9 and Saturday, March 10

Shirley Boman	3/10
June Krauzer Mazonson	3/10
Floyd Pritchett	3/10
Monica Zderic	3/10
Muriel Anzman	3/11
Luke Friedman	3/11
Thomas Josiah Boothby	3/12
Corey Skelton	3/13
Lylyan Wick	3/13
Dorothy Brody	3/1
Max Lazarus	3/14
Marcelline Naparty	3/14
Bernice Rappaport	3/14
Gordon Eli Stolzoff	3/14
Harry Zemel	3/14
Charles Blackwell	3/15
Marcia Landau	3/15
Morrie Feller	3/16
Eliezer Spiro	3/16

Friday, March 16

Amy Louisa Blank	3/17
Loren Lund	3/17
Ben Zderic	3/17
Lucia Mastbaum	3/18
Leonard Price	3/19
Megan Guppy	3/20
Mabel Berman	3/21
Barry Evans	3/21
William A. Gordon	3/21
Lou Mazel	3/21
Arthur Koplowitz	3/21
Naomi Stone	3/22
Fred Oscar Wigren	3/22
Nathan Landau	3/23
Norma Soode	3/23

Friday, March 23 and Saturday, March 24

Anna Kushner	3/24
David Benjamin Miller	3/24
Leah Rachel Shapiro	3/26
Justin Scharff	3/27
Herbert Sulkin	3/27

Jose Weill	3/27
Lois Oksenberg	3/28
Burl Ives	3/30
Ray Schapiro	3/30
Joyce Zvenia	3/30

Friday, March 30

(No Shabbat service – will be read March 23 & 24)

Dorothy M. Fine	3/31
Arthur Feld	4/1
Martin Spigelman	4/1
Angus Campbell Walker	4/1
Norma Edwards	4/2
Harry M. Eisner	4/2
Beatrice Lazaroff	4/2
Sue Ohms	4/2
Robert Korner	4/3
Dennis Scharff	4/4
Jack Mazur	4/5
Manfred Vernon	4/5
David Alper	4/6
Esther Suloway	4/6

Friday, April 6

Leon Julius Mendelsohn	4/7
Emanuel M. Lindheimer	4/8
Max Wolfman	4/8
Naomi Lazarus Barnes	4/9
Arnold Behrstock	4/9
Violet Shaw	4/9
Samuel Midwood	4/10
Norma H. Bernstein	4/11
Fragner Family	4/12
Selma Lebovich	4/12

Friday, April 13 and Saturday, April 14

Marcelo Lindner	4/14
Yochevad Katz Zimmerman	4/14
Lena Horwitz	4/15
Jennie Shuster	4/16
Max Swartz	4/16
Thelma Weiner	4/16
Rabbi Frederick S. Gartner	4/17
Glen Myers	4/17
Edward Stone	4/17
Rose Sondik	4/18
Karleen Press	4/19
Morris Fischel	4/20

Friday, April 20 and Saturday, April 21

Benjamin Shapiro	4/21
Elayne B. Weiner	4/21
Mary Widerkehr	4/21
Hy Zimmerman	4/22
Abraham Morton	4/23
Joanne M. Lund	4/24
Esther Siegel	4/24
Felicia Keller	4/25
Sergio Shwabsky	4/25
Ray Jay	4/26
Helen Victoria Richmond	4/27

Friday, April 27

Elaine Greenberg	4/29
Alan Raas	4/30
Saul S. Spiro	4/30
Rachel Kaplan Tartak	4/30
Leonard Halpern	5/1
Manly Spigelman	5/1
ErmaFlora Haughawout Boothby	5/3/
Etta Fine	5/3
Margaret Horwitz	5/4
Louis Suloway	5/4

In Memoriam

Zichronam l'yvrachah ~ May their memories be for a blessing

Our deepest sympathy goes out to Larry Stahlberg and family on the loss of his mother, **Rhoda "Ronnie" Stahlberg**, who passed away at the age of 93 on February 9, 2018 in Loma Linda, California. Heartfelt condolences to Larry and his wife Melissa, their children Mischa and Max, and to all of their family members.

Our congregation mourns the passing of three members of the Beth Israel family:

David Miller, who passed away in hospice care on January 9, 2018. He is survived by his wife, Nancy, children Rana, Pam, Shushana, Mia, Elisa, Jeremy, Davida and Dianna, eleven grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Aaron Sanger, who passed away following a long illness on January 9, 2018. He is survived by his wife, Michele, their daughter Talya, Michele's parents Ted & Penny Schuman, Aaron's children Daron, Daniel and Narra, and two grandchildren.

Leonard Berman, who passed away on February 12, 2018 at his home in the Spring Creek Retirement Community in Bellingham. He is survived by his three children - Kim (& Marty) Moskowitz, Kerry Berman, and Jerri Weiss - and five grandchildren.

THE SHUL SHOFAR

Congregation Beth Israel

2200 Broadway

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CONGREGATIONAL 2ND NIGHT SEDER

Everyone is welcome to attend Congregation Beth Israel's Community Seder, which will be on the **Second Night of Passover, March 31st, 2018**. Seder will begin at **5:30 pm** at **Bellingham Technical College's Settlemyer Hall**.

*** Delicious Passover buffet dinner ***

*** Vegetarian, gluten free, dairy free options ***

*** Manischewitz wine ***

Join us for a fun, lively and upbeat retelling of the Exodus story, sure to please young and old alike, led by Rabbi Joshua Samuels and cantorial soloist Andrea Shupack. We hope to see you there!

Cost: \$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.

To register online or to download a registration form, go to our website www.bethisraelbellingham.org.

