

THE SHUL SHOFAR

VOL. 24, NO. 3 * Congregation Beth Israel * Bellingham, WA 98229 * bethisraelbellingham.org * (360) 733-8890

Jewish Bluegrass in Bellingham

Nefesh Mountain performs all-ages concert on February 24, 2020

BY MELISSA SCHAPIRO

Nefesh Mountain, an internationally acclaimed Jewish Bluegrass string band, will bring their unique style to Bellingham in a concert at Congregation Beth Israel on Monday, February 24, 2020.

The band “ingeniously blends Bluegrass and Old-Time musical stylings with cultural influences from their own Jewish heritage, re-imagining a world of American roots music that is all

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FROM THE RABBI

Interfaith experiences in 2020



Almost two years ago I wrote my *Shofar* column about an interfaith group I had been attending monthly at Copy Source on

State Street. After several meetings, we named ourselves the “Bridge Builders.” Our group consists of Jews, Muslims, Catholics, and other Christians. We share about our traditions, ask questions of each other, and chat about how our faith informs the way we view specific topics.

Our group continues to meet each month, now in different public locations around town (along with our sign and logo) so people can witness folks of various backgrounds and religions dialoguing peacefully and respectfully. In the last two years, we have organized speaking panels and were even given the 2017 Whatcom County Peace Builder Cultural Connections Award by the Whatcom Dispute Resolution Center.

In continuing our efforts to bring people of different faiths together, we have scheduled several oppor-

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From the President...

A little CBI history

Dear Congregants,

Once upon a time, there was a shul in Bellingham that was started by Orthodox Jewish immigrants. Over time, the congregation grew and evolved, and eventually joined the Reform movement.

The congregation continued to grow, until in the 1990s, a group of forward-thinking congregants realized that Congregation Beth Israel would need a bigger home. A parcel of land was bought, a plan was made, the land was cleared. Rock was blasted, a foundation was built. Then a shell was raised. The interior of the building was finished – plumbing, electric, HVAC, drywall, carpet, paint, lighting fixtures, the elevator, bathrooms. A parking lot was installed, and a playing field, and exterior lighting, and the beginnings of a perimeter fence. Attention was given to how we could be easier on the earth – so solar panels were installed, and bioretention cells (“rain gardens”) were built to handle runoff water.

All of this was done with much thought and time, and, significantly, without debt. The money – quite a bit of it – was raised before each segment of the work was done, and no loans were taken out for future members to have to repay.

In March 2018, we got an occupancy permit which allowed us to finally move in and start using the building. However, it was a temporary permit, as there were exterior projects that needed to be completed. The permanent occupancy permit comes due on January 9, 2020. I am happy to say that it appears we will meet this deadline.

While it is said to be a permanent occupancy permit, there are some conditions we must still meet. The county requires both that we plant the rain gardens to state specifications, and that we have some landscaping for the other developed parts of the property. We have one year to do it. And it is a big job. We are fortunate to

have the opportunity to do the job right.

An eloquent member observed that, right now, it is as if we have a fancy mansion, but still there is a blue tarp for a roof. We have a gorgeous building, of which we should be very proud, and for which we are grateful. But the surrounding property looks, to say the least, somewhat unfinished, and in some places, rather unkempt. Our building deserves a setting that enhances its elegance, and the county has given us one year to do it. We have a beautiful landscape plan, so we know what to do. And we have a timeline. The piece that is missing is the money.

The synagogue is our Jewish home. It is a *mitzvah*, an obligation, for all of us to contribute to caring for and sustaining our shul, just as it sustains and shelters us. This is a great time for those of us who have not had a chance to donate for the new synagogue, to do so.

If you have been a big supporter of the rain gardens, this is the time to help make them a reality. If you love gardens, this is a donation that will make your heart sing, and help us have a beautiful garden setting to enjoy every time we come to the synagogue.

Will this be the last of our financial needs? No – there is always something, isn't there? Just like your own home. But I implore you as a gardener to give as generously as you can to this project. One of our Jewish values is *Tikkun Olam*, repair of the world – let's start with our Jewish home.

More details will follow in the March/April issue of the *Shul Shofar*. Let me know if you have questions – I'm happy to have a meeting to show you the plans and talk further. In the meantime, please plan for a gift to our congregation's home in the upcoming year.

— MIRIAM SCHWARTZ,
PRESIDENT

CONGREGATION BETH ISRAEL

751 San Juan Boulevard
Bellingham, WA 98229

The Shul Shofar

Volume 24, Number 3
January/February 2020
Tevet/Shevat/Adar 5780

The *Shul Shofar* is the bulletin of Congregation Beth Israel. It is published bi-monthly and distributed to all congregation members. Nonmembers may subscribe for \$35/year. Advertising space (business card size) is available; contact the office.

Deadline for submission of all articles and calendar events for the March/April issue is FEBRUARY 11. Call the office for more information.

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Printed by Lewis Publishing Inc. in
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Beth Israel is a member of:



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From the Keshet Center for Jewish Learning

With gratitude



As you may know, December 31, 2019 was my last day as Keshet Director at Congregation Beth Israel. For the first time in 12 years, I will be walking my children into a Sunday Keshet session as a parent and not as my usual triple-duty role as a parent, teacher, and director of the program. This new shift made me think a lot about the

past 13 years and about the path that Keshet has taken during those years. From a sleepy little Sunday school on Broadway back in 2007, Keshet became a thriving program with dedicated staff serving many smiling children.

I want to thank the community for the fortune that was given to me of serving CBI since September of 2007, and to have witnessed the Keshet community grow in numbers and in *ruach* (spirit). The blessing of such growth comes with greater needs for various types of tasks. I declined to accept CBI's offer to stay in my position until June of 2020, as I feel I can no longer meet these needs and that many of them fall outside my core competencies for which I was hired for the position: an intimate knowledge of Jewish tradition and Hebrew language.

My work's guiding principle throughout the years has been: bringing people together to embody the joys of celebrating Jewish ritual and culture especially around the children. It has brought me a great deal of *nachas* to see the children find a second home in their cohort group throughout the years. The Jewish tradition is very wise when it comes to providing a steadfast framework for memorable community moments that form an anchor in a child's life. Jewish ritual experiences celebrated in community become a significant factor in shaping the child's social-emotional abilities to connect with others

even through adulthood, and to seek healthy comfort in human connection (Keshet). That is the gift that I envisioned Keshet would provide children and their families, and I am proud to have seen this process take place in front of my eyes, one week after another.

With the support of all of you, I had the privilege of coordinating and planning numerous Sunday School sessions, lesson plans, and community events, and I have started projects that I hope will bring our community members together to share such meaningful moments for years to come. Some of these are:

- Keshet group Havdalah nights
- B'nei Mitzvah cohort gifts
- Presentation of the Tanakh to every Bar/Bat Mitzvah (on behalf of Keshet teachers)
- *Chaverim* High Holy Days children's program
- Happy Purim *Mishloach Manot*
- Community hike (this was our tenth year!)
- Sukkah building & Sephardic potluck evening
- Yom Ha'atzmaut celebration
- The annual Hanukkah candle sale, and,
- Community Lag BaOmer bonfire.

Katie Edelstein, along with being instrumental to me, has initiated the Keshet Advisory Group – the group that I hope will help facilitate a smooth transition for Keshet into its new phase.

B'toda, with gratitude,

—SAGIT HALL

Synagogue 411

Archives: Tim Baker, (360) 305-6945
Care: Harriet Markell, (916) 207-9381; Else Sokol, (360) 393-9618
Membership: Rita Spitzer, (360) 647-7065; Ann Suloway, (360) 296-8220
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From the Care Committee

Our story - Why end of life planning is important

BY ELSE SOKOL

"We've recovered your husband," the Coast Guard captain said. Recovered. *Recovered?* I knew that was a term for bodies, not living people. They had just plucked him out of the bay when I arrived at Coast Guard headquarters. The medics were working furiously to extract him from his personal flotation device (PFD) and dry suit, obtain a core temperature, get a line started. I was hunched in the ambulance calling his name, pleading for him to show some sign of life. There was none.

At the emergency room, his colleagues were waiting for him, ready to resuscitate. As I stood there taking in the commotion, I asked them to stop. Just stop. *That's what he would want, right?* He had been face down in the bay for over 2 hours after being ejected from his surf-ski during a freak November squall. He had no heartbeat. He wasn't breathing. He was dead. My requests fell on deaf ears, ears that were not open to the idea that his life had already passed, that "no heroics" was a choice – his choice. I was told, "He's not dead 'til he's warm and dead." I grasped his cold and clammy hand as they whisked him off to the cardiac cath lab to be placed on bypass and warmed. I wanted to scream, "STOP! Please STOP!" but it was useless. No one could hear me.

Many exhausting hours later, I was able to see him in the ICU. They had gotten his heart beating again. He was hooked up to every tube possible. A machine was breathing for him. He had six IV pumps going, pumping meds into him that I knew were reserved for only the sickest of the sick. He was beyond unresponsive...not a single, purposeful movement. Not even his pupils. My 48-year-old, vibrant, super-fit husband, my kids' Daddy, who was alive and well just a few hours before, was lying there, worse than dead...back from the dead. *He wouldn't want this at all.*

The hours crawled/whizzed by. The next day his family arrived, and with them came a tremendous layer of chaos and drama that we never could have anticipated. His brother walked in, before speaking with the doctors as I

had requested, and began yelling, "Get up, get up, get off that bed." His family proceeded to take over his room, his mother napping on two rolling chairs placed side by side. The next 24 hours were a blur. The doctors were suggesting organ donation. I agreed with that *and so had he. Isn't that the ultimate mitzvah?* His family, however, couldn't let go. One more scan, they said, to see if there's improvement. The doctors said no. The hospital attorneys got involved. The family became hostile and threatening. I didn't feel safe. After a verbal threat from his brother, hospital security separated us. We had to take turns being at his bedside and could not be in the same room together. It was horrible. We desperately needed each other.

Seven years earlier in Colorado, after our first child was born, a friend had helped us get life insurance and connected us with an estate attorney. It was time to be responsible. We had both made Wills. I was my husband's Medical Power of Attorney; he was mine. We thought we had our stuff together. A few months earlier, one of his colleagues had become ill with meningitis and was now permanently disabled in a nursing home. As terrible as this was, it had spurred a conversation between us, and I knew what my husband's end-of-life wishes were. I knew his definition of "quality of life." I was so grateful that we had had that discussion, and thankful that, in my mind, disconnecting life support would be his wish and was a black-and-white decision. There was no gray area, nowhere to get stuck in the weeds of what-ifs and maybes. Even so, it got super complicated, with his well-meaning colleagues and emotional family not fully understanding the situation, not ready to let go.

Saturday, Nov. 17, 2007, after sundown, we disconnected life support. His family was not by his bedside (unbeknownst to me, the chaplain had made an executive decision not to let them attend, afraid that it would escalate and worsen the trauma/drama). The next night

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(no, morning, really) at 12:30 am, as I was lying in bed with my children, my 5-year-old asked what was going to happen next. I explained that, like with great-grandma, Daddy was going to be cremated. *This had been something we had discussed. He wanted an eco-friendly burial.* “You’re not going to burn him, are you? If you burn him, I’ll throw myself into the fire next time we go camping,” said my 7-year-old. I had such gratitude for my 5-year-old wanting to know the plan, at midnight, and for my 7-year-old, able to articulate his feelings. *Who could have anticipated that their needs were even in play here? He would not want his wishes to traumatize our kids.* My sister called the funeral home at 2:00 am. “Do not transport his body to the crematorium this morning,” she said.

You see, even though my husband and I had had the tough conversations and were both medical people — we had Wills and I was his Medical POA — this was chaos, was unbelievably stressful, and resulted in last-minute family disharmony. Even though I saw it as a black-and-white situation, in the midst of futile resuscitation, my voice was not heard. Despite all our knowledge and planning, I was unable to effectively advocate for my husband when he had no voice. He wouldn’t have want-

ed to go to the cardiac cath lab, just to gain 48 hours of existence and confuse his family. He would have wanted his family to understand his wishes and to support me as his advocate. He would have wanted them at his bedside at the end. And he wouldn’t have wanted his wishes to cause more trauma for our children.

These are my takeaways:

1. Take advantage of the death/dying education and resources available, here at CBI and in the community. Knowledge is power. Planning is important. We plan for births, bar mitzvahs, graduations, birthdays, and weddings. Why not death?
2. Have meaningful and detailed conversations with your loved ones now, while you can. It’s hard to make difficult decisions on the fly, when one is overwhelmed and emotional, in shock and everything is chaos.
3. Complete the Honoring Choices Advance Directive and have it notarized. It can then be scanned into your medical record at St. Joseph’s Hospital.
4. Share your wishes with family members, so everyone is on the same page. This can avoid a whole lot of family strife.
5. Discuss “grey areas” and different scenarios. Would you be OK if your advocate changed the plan because the original plan wasn’t feasible? Follow through with legal documentation.

End-of-Life Planning workshop

The Care and Cemetery Committees are sponsoring an End-of-Life Planning workshop on several Sundays, beginning next month. Anyone 18 or older is encouraged to attend. Having a well-thought-out plan is the compassionate and loving thing to do for your loved ones. We know it’s hard — who really wants to go there? But it’s necessary.

Sunday February 9, 10:30 am-12:00 pm: A view into palliative care and hospice services

Presenters: Dr. Anita Meyers, Medical Director of Skagit County Hospice of the NW (CBI congregant) and Dr. Angie Lee, Medical Director of Palliative Care and Whatcom Hospice, Peace Health/St. Joseph’s Medical Center (CBI congregant).

Sunday February 23, 10:30 am-12:00 pm: Realities of advanced medical interventions

Presenter: Dr. Bill Lombard, Former (retired) Medical Director, Mt. Baker Kidney Center. Dr. Lombard will discuss the meanings of these interventions and what the outcomes could mean for patients in the short and long term. Take home a copy of the Honoring Choices Advance Directive

document, think and talk about it, and bring it back for the next session.

Sunday March 1, 10:30 am-12:00 pm: How to complete the Honoring Choices Advance Directive document

Presenter: Tessa Whitlock, Certified Advance Care Planning Facilitator, NW Regional Council. Join Tessa as she assists us, step-by-step, to fill out our own Honoring Choices document. You may then have it notarized free of charge.

Sunday March 15, 10:30 am-12:00 pm: The Rabbi’s role at the end of life; Jewish burial and mourning rituals, and The Chevra Kaddisha, Jewish cemetery burial plots

Presenters: Rabbi Joshua Samuels and Janis Ban, Cemetery Committee Chair. We’ll have representatives from Sigg’s, Moles and Westford Funeral Homes for a panel discussion about their services before and after death.

This four-part workshop is free. Please invite your friends and family.

NEFESH MOUNTAIN

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their own,” according to their website. Leaders husband-and-wife team Eric Lindberg and Doni Zasloff are at the heart of the band, pioneering this new genre alongside band members Alan Grubner, Dave Goldenberg, and Tim Kiah.

“Until I heard Nefesh Mountain perform at the 2017 URJ Biennial, I was not aware that soulful, spiritual, original Jewish music existed in a modern bluegrass format,” says Isaac Konikoff, CBI board member. “I immediately purchased two of their CDs and they have been on my playlist whenever I need a break from the hectic day-to-day or when I just want to slow down and listen. I highly recommend their CD ‘Beneath the Open Sky’ and the healing tribute ‘Tree of Life’ dedicated to the congregants of the Pittsburgh Tree of Life Synagogue. The familiarity of the Jewish themes that blend in with the relaxing guitar, banjo and vocals makes for a

soothing listening experience. Their music has been a comfort to many, and I am excited that they will perform for us!” Konikoff says.

Their music, called “highly eclectic” by *Rolling Stone*, and “crisp, refined, timeless Bluegrass” by *The Bluegrass Situation* is complete with the kind of musically adept string virtuosity and composed arrangements one would hope for from a dynamic “newgrass” band. Their original songs, whether drawing influence from the Bluegrass, Old-Time, Celtic, jazz, or folk traditions are all “songs of the heart” for writers Eric and Doni, and they collectively work to spread the beautiful messages of diversity, oneness, and equality for our world today, as their website states.

The band plays worldwide with performances throughout the U.S., Canada, Israel, England, and Australia. Their mission, whether at a concert hall, festival, workshop, school, camp, or synagogue, is to spread the joy and magic of music with American roots and to help champion and reinforce the powerful messages of diversity, wholeness, and harmony for our ever-changing times, also according to their website.

The Bellingham concert is an all-ages event – bring the whole family! Music will begin at 7:00 pm. Tickets are \$20 per adult, \$10 for youths ages 12 and younger, or buy a family discount ticket for \$50.



Concert information and tickets: bethisraelbellingham.org

Read more about the group at nefeshmountain.com

FROM THE RABBI

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tunities for our communities to meet and worship with one another. Please consider attending any or all of these special experiences.

- **January 5:** 10:30 am at United Church of Ferndale (2034 Washington St., Ferndale)
- **February 1:** 7:15 pm at Islamic Society of Whatcom County (1244 Nevada St.)
- **March 6:** 6:15 pm at Congregation Beth Israel
- **April 19:** 11:15 am at Christ Lutheran Church (5904 Vista, Ferndale)

As you can see, we will be welcoming guests into our synagogue at the Family Service on March 6. I know that we will channel Abraham and Sarah’s kindness and perform the mitzvah of *hachnasat orchim* when our friends arrive that evening. I hope you will put these dates in your calendar and be open to new experiences. My clergy friends and I are excited to build bridges among our Whatcom County community.

— RABBI JOSHUA SAMUELS

The Yenta speaks...

CBI congregant **Michael D. Lewis**, publisher of the *Lynden Tribune*, received the prestigious Miles Turnbull Master Editor/Publisher Award from the Washington Newspaper Publishers Association at the group’s annual convention in October 2019. The award recognizes “a newspaper executive who has worked hard, thought soundly, influenced unselfishly, lived honorably and is entitled to the highest honors and respect of our profession.” Michael, with his wife Mary Jo, is the third generation of the Lewis family to own and direct the *Lynden Tribune*. (We should note that Lewis Publishing also prints the *Shul Shofar*.) *Kol hakavod!*



Michael and Mary Jo Lewis and their son, Adam, after receiving the award.

*From the Social Action Committee***Social Action Committee news**

BY LINDA BLACKWELL

THANK YOU to all for the awesome food and cash donations for the DVSAS Thanksgiving (Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services). Our traditional donation of Thanksgiving dinner this year provided for two different houses of families. Each house has 12-14 people, and these dinners allow a safe place for clients to build new memories together. We raised over \$800 dollars for food, supplies and to rebuild a swing set. The chef who set up the dinner was impressed with the generosity and the lovely desserts provided!

Members of CBI continue to support Bellingham's homeless. Many volunteers have cooked, played and stayed overnight with families in the Family Promise Program. This program offers temporary housing and case management for families. Congregation Beth Israel is a supporting congregation with Interfaith Coalition. We volunteer at the First Christian

Church on Bakerview Rd. We will be helping out March 15-21. We could use many more volunteers. Please contact Andrea Shupack to learn how you can participate.

The Social Action Committee will focus on climate change in 2020. Our upcoming book discussion is planned on Tu B'Shvat weekend, February 8-9, in the Social Hall. We would again like to make this a congregationwide, all-age group discussion on how we can protect the environment. The book is *How to Give Up Plastic* by Will McCallum. Look for the definitive time in upcoming e-news.

The 22nd Annual MLK Human Rights Conference is taking place all day at Whatcom Community College on Saturday, Jan. 18. The website, www.mlkconference.org, has more information. At the Mt. Baker Theater, on Jan. 20, the community is invited to celebrate the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. This year's

keynote speaker is author Clyde Ford, with music by the Kulshan Chorus and directed by Mary Somerville. Both events are free of charge.

Just so all can plan ahead, the Interfaith Coalition Auction will be on March 28. It is always fun to have tables that are filled with CBI congregants. Please buy tickets online at www.interfaith-coalition.org or contact Geraldine Reitz. Please note online when you purchase tickets that you want to sit with other CBI members. Any donations to the auction can be given to Joan Wayne during February.

We have many other volunteer opportunities, from joining our knitters every Tuesday afternoon to giving donations placed in baskets in the Social Hall. We accept diapers year 'round, but during January and February, we will be collecting supplies and food for the Whatcom Humane Society. Please contact Linda Blackwell at (360) 739-1492 for answers to any questions.

Hope is on the way! Save the date for the Interfaith Hope Auction!

Interfaith Coalition's Hope Auction happens on **Saturday, March 28, beginning at 5:30 pm**. The auction will take place at the Four Points by Sheraton.

Whatcom County's friendliest 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...let your imagination soar and think of what you might be able to donate, and get in touch with us!

Buy tickets to the auction. Tickets are \$70 each, including dinner.

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

We make a difference in the lives of homeless children and their families, and with your support, we will be serving additional families through our new program, Family Promise. A father whose family stayed in Interfaith emergency housing shared his appreciation, "We want to thank Interfaith for giving me and my family a safe place to call home. It was a life-changing experience. It took us out of our darkest moments and showed us the light of people who care."

To donate an auction item and purchase tickets, please contact Geraldine Reitz, CBI's representative, or Interfaith Coalition at 360-734-3983 or through the website: www.interfaith-coalition.org

Faces in our community: Shelly and Phyllis Mazur

BY LINDA HIRSH

Shelly Mazur's pampered upbringing gave him the confidence to tackle any challenge. He couldn't settle on one career, so he sampled more than he could count on the fingers of both hands.

Wife Phyllis, who as an elementary school student helped her dad with business paperwork, has a knack for numbers, so she put that talent to work as Shelly's bookkeeper and secretary, no matter what the job was.

"I rated him as an okay boss," she said, eyeing Shelly with a sly grin. As for the variety, she said, "The opportunities kept coming up."

Opposites attract. While Shelly's parents were indulgent, Phyllis was raised more consistently, giving her organizational skills. But they also have much in common. Both were born in Chicago. They met when Shelly needed a date for a high school fraternity party and asked a friend about Phyllis. They married four years later on September 14, 1952, became parents then grandparents — all in the windy city. The couple had a Conservative Jewish background with Hebrew School, and, for Shelly, bar mitzvah, and marriage all at the same synagogue.

As the late Gea Goldfeder, a Congregation Beth Israel member, said of them, "Whatta couple!"



Shelly and Phyllis with their children and grandchildren

Phyllis spent one semester at the University of Illinois at Champaign and then attended Roosevelt University in Chicago. Shelly went to Chicago's Wilson Community College, where he developed an interest in commercial art. A well-realized sketch of a horse attests to his talent in the visual arts. Phyllis worked as a statistician at J.C. Penney for 12 years. When the company closed its credit service centers, she attended Oakton Community College, graduating with a 4.0 GPA. "I was satisfied to know my brain still functioned," she said, but "I enjoyed not being employed. Best thing I ever did in my life was marry and have my children."

Family is her priority. Son Glen, 65, and his wife, Shannon, who have two grown children, live in Washington, D.C., where he worked for the federal government and now teaches at Georgetown and Johns Hopkins Universities. Daughter Lauren, 63, and her husband, Ronny, live in Southern California. Lauren, who has

practiced yoga for 40 years, spent most of her career in the food service industry.

Phyllis had to be flexible to keep up with her husband's path, which included simultaneous as well as sequential jobs. To start, Shelly spent a decade in his father's green grocer business. Then came real estate and insurance for 30 years. In between, he was president of a long-haul trucking company for four years, owned a Chinese restaurant for four years, and served as a general contractor in the construction business for 35 years, where he honed his skills in design and woodworking.

Shelly then vied for Cook County township committeeman, but lost. He went to work for Cook County Forest District as a project manager. Then came work as a forensic model maker, "forensic" meaning scientific tests or techniques used in connection with the detection of crime. He repro-

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BEIT CAFÉ: A NIGHT OF STORY TELLING, AND THIS YEAR AT THE URJ BIENNIAL IN CHICAGO



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1. Richard Widerkher and Jay S. Nahani singing The Boxer. 2. Elkah Katz playing the harp. 3. Sarah Witte sharing a story about miracles. 4. Part of the Beth Israel contingent at the URJ Biennial: Eian Snyder, Naomi Schapiro, Melissa Schapiro, Miriam Schwartz, Ann Suloway, Rabbi Samuels. 5. We are proud to be a URJ Congregation! 6. Asher Suloway-Baker being called up for an *aliyah* in front of 5,000 people, the largest Shabbat service ever!



6

Ark design group update

BY VICKI JAFFE

The beautiful ark designed by Tom Lutz (www.thomaslutzdesign.com) was unanimously approved by the New Synagogue Task Force (NSTF) and the CBI board last spring. We are thrilled with this inspiring concept, which captures both the nature of our community and history of the Jewish people.

Thanks to generous donations by a handful of donors, it is now possible to make our new ark a reality and



move forward with Phase One of installation. During the winter months, the magnificent portals of the ark will be erected on the bimah. Cascade Joinery (www.cascadejoinery.com) skillfully selected, cured and shaped these premium Pacific Northwest fir timbers.



Phase Two consists of completing the construction of the Torah cabinet and inserting it into the standing portal, which we anticipate will happen by the end of spring. This structure will house our Torah scrolls, the essence of Judaism and the most important written document of the Jewish people. We feel positive that our supportive community will make this step happen.

Keep your eyes open for updates as we embark on this historic journey.

Please contact Vicki Jaffe with any questions at jaffez@comcast.net or (360) 220-5951.

Taste of the Town! Save the date for this FUN-Raiser!

When: June 7, 2020

5:00-6:00 pm VIP Wine and Beer Tasting with special appetizers (\$54 for both events)

6:00-8:00 pm Taste of the Town event (\$36)

Where: 751 San Juan Blvd.

Who: All Congregation Beth Israel adults and family, friends, co-workers. Childcare will be provided.

Why: Congregation Beth Israel is having its first Taste of the Town event to raise money for things we need to do at CBI, like finishing the commercial kitchen. The event will showcase 20 eating and drinking establishments — the best of the best in Whatcom and Skagit Counties. With admission, you can sample tastes and sips from our wonderful area restaurants, wineries, and breweries.

There will also be FUN “Pay to Play” games, including Balloon Pop, Wine Toss, Giant Jenga, and more! The decorations will be Hawaiian-themed, so dress is casual or Hawaiian-style prints.

We would appreciate anyone’s help for part of the evening! You can do set-up/decorations, sell tickets, serve wine/beer, help with food tables, or clean up.

Contact Lynn Korner lkmk1@yahoo.com or Candace Kiersky candacekiersky@gmail.com



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CONGRATULATIONS TO:

*Avi Lindner, on becoming a Bar Mitzvah
 *Ben Sommers, on becoming a Bar Mitzvah
From: Karen Sloss

CANTORIAL ASSISTANCE FUND

IN APPRECIATION TO:

Andrea Shupack
From: The Sommers Family

CARE COMMITTEE

COMMEMORATING THE YAHZEIT OF:

Pam Champagne
From: Cherryne Kravitz (Alameda CA)

CONTRIBUTION FROM:
 Marta Brand

RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

IN APPRECIATION TO:

Rabbi Samuels, for Ben's Bar Mitzvah
From: The Sommers Family

IN HONOR OF:

*Avi Lindner, on becoming a Bar Mitzvah
 *Ben Sommers, on becoming a Bar Mitzvah
From: Patrick Crane

Peter & Rhoda Samuels (Rancho Mirage, CA), for their 50th Anniversary

From: Elizabeth & Richard Jerome (Washington, DC)
 Patsy Palmer (Las Vegas, NV)
 Carl & Tammy Birnberg (Rancho Mirage, CA)
 Marilyn Marker (Minnetonka, MN)
 Paul & Terry Lubar (Rancho Mirage, CA)

Melissa Schapiro – For helping us buy our first house
From: Sarah Zarrow & David Schlitt

DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO:

Dory Rose (Minnetonka, MN) – In memory of Stephen Rose
From: Rhoda & Peter Samuels

June, Sarah, and Alex Zieve (Northport, NY) In loving memory of our dear Gary – husband, father, and cousin.
From: Stuart & Cinda Zemel

SPEEDY RECOVERY TO:

Reva Levy (Palm Desert, CA) – Get Well Wishes
From: Rhoda & Peter Samuels

COMMEMORATING THE YAHZEIT OF:

*Dora Graff
 *Esther Mazur
From: Phyllis & Shelly Mazur

GENERAL FUND

DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO:

Binnie Perper – in memory of her husband, Themeos Drossos
From: John & Georgia Lallas (Eugene, OR)

KESHER FUND

CONTRIBUTION FROM:
 Lee Shapiro

NEW SYNAGOGUE FUND

IN APPRECIATION TO:

Sarah Witte, Angie Lee, Cassie & Laura Wolfson, and Rebecca Oliver – Thank you for your support and friendship
From: Teresa Sommers

IN HONOR OF:

Ben Sommers' remarkable Bar Mitzvah
From: Richard Widerkehr

MAZEL TOV TO:

*David Goldman & Linda Blackwell, on their daughter Lauren Goldman's marriage
 *Millie & Jerry Johnson, on their son Ben's marriage
 *Nancy Lloyd – Happy Birthday!
 *Bonnie Stone – Happy Birthday!
From: Dan & Debbie Raas

DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO:

Janis Ban - in memory of her mother, Betty Bloomfield
From: Hank Levine & Corinne Gimble-Levine

Steve & Janis Ban and family – in memory of Noémi Ban
From: Lee Shapiro

Binnie Perper – in memory of her husband, Themeos Drossos
From: Nancy Davis
 Joan & Marv Wayne

IN LOVING MEMORY OF:

My beloved husband, Arnold Loober
From: Bernice Loober

Marla Finkelstein would like to thank **Kelly Jeffrey** for donating two brass menorahs to Congregation Beth Israel

So, what are *Mishloach Manot*?

BY JOAN WAYNE

In the story of Purim, when Jews were saved from Haman's evil plan to destroy them, they celebrated by giving sweet treats – *Mishloach Manot* – to the people they loved. We continue this tradition at Beth Israel with our *Mishloach Manot* Project. This fund- and fun-raiser benefits the Keshet Program at Beth Israel. It's easy to participate and all CBI members will receive instructions by email soon.

This is the fifth year that our amazing team has helped with this annual event. Thank you to Miriam Davids, Deborah Oksenberg and Miriam Schwartz for helping and making this fun. We're ready to train the next team. Contact Joan Wayne, jawayne2@gmail.com, if you would like to help in continuing this wonderful tradition!

Sustainability tips

BY SAMANTHA SCHWARTZ

Invest in a reusable produce bag. They're quite cheap and will last you a long time. Did you know you can purchase biodegradable trash and compost bags at most local grocery stores?

News from Interfaith Coalition

By Janie Pemble, Outreach
Manager, Interfaith Coalition

So many generous people responded to ensure warmth for everyone this winter by donating to Interfaith Coalition's Winter Warmth Drive. The CBI Knitting Group, which meets at the synagogue every Tuesday afternoon, also contributed hand-knitted hats and scarves to the drive. THANK YOU for the wonderful items you helped provide to neighbors throughout Whatcom County! Over 2,500 coats, and 1,200 items like hats, scarves, and gloves, were distributed in Blaine, Ferndale, Bellingham, and Deming in October because of your generosity and through the work of many volunteers. There were a lot of smiles and "thank you's" from our guests, and many pitched in to help haul bags, set up, and clean up distribution events. The camaraderie and fellowship reminded us all of our human connection. Blessings and thanks from all.



Long-time Coat Drive volunteers
Patty Yust and Jeff Popp

Birthdays

JANUARY 2020

1/1 Elias Anderson (14th)
1/1 Jeaninne Kahan
1/1 Binnie Perper
1/1 Alison Zak
1/3 Tahlia Somers (13th)
1/4 Julia Ban
1/4 Linda Blackwell
1/4 Wolf Pomerantz (8th)
1/4 Asher Stoane (17th)
1/5 Jewels Ramras (4th)
1/5 David Sager
1/5 Jack Schneider
1/6 Isaac Konikoff
1/6 Tom Maxim
1/8 Candace Kiersky
1/8 Victoria Mayers
1/9 Helen Feiger
1/9 Lexi Zantkovsky
1/10 Lou Lippman
1/11 John Schapiro
1/12 Talia Clarke (16th)
1/15 Diana Dixon (6th)
1/15 Nora Mazonson
1/15 Kathi Paluch
1/16 Maya Cornwall (17th)
1/17 Julian Booker (18th)
1/17 David Elkayam
1/17 Jodi Litt
1/18 Dashka Garretson
1/19 Lauren James (14th)
1/20 Gayle Kay
1/21 Arturo Flores (3rd)
1/21 Alyson Kassen
1/22 Stuart Berman
1/23 Joshua Greenberg
1/25 Marc Weinstein
1/26 Leo David Cohen (7th)
1/26 Mitch Press
1/26 Geraldine Reitz
1/28 Angie Lee
1/30 Wendy Blum
1/30 Gib Morrow
1/31 John Bruns

FEBRUARY 2020

2/1 Bill Freeman
2/2 Andrea Evans
2/4 Bonnie Zell
2/5 Elizabeth Weinstein
2/6 Laura Wolfson
2/7 Elan Maxim (20th)
2/8 Samantha Schwartz (15th)
2/9 Ruth Evans
2/10 Jacob Bishop (18th)
2/11 Leo Banks Strich (2nd)
2/11 Ella Barney
2/11 Shalem Blum (15th)
2/14 Bob Goldman
2/14 Ted Schuman
2/15 Gloria Lebowitz
2/16 Aniko Folk (19th)
2/17 Dan Ohms
2/18 Tom Oliver
2/18 Sarah Zarrow
2/19 Anne-Marie Kroitzsch
2/20 Don Fenbert
2/20 Sagit Hall
2/20 Susan Schneider
2/20 Elijah Wolfson (11th)
2/21 Gregg Orlik
2/21 Ben Sokol (20th)
2/21 Kristin Sykes-David
2/22 Frank Corey
2/22 Teva Corey-DuBow (13th)
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
2/25 Nancy Auerbach
2/25 Avi Brennan (13th)
2/25 Genny Cohn
2/25 Lenore Shankman
2/26 Orly Ziv-Maxim
2/27 Conor Keefe (1st)
2/27 Ken Levinson
2/27 Teresa Sommers

Anniversaries

Jan. 1	Ella & Alan Barney	(# 7)
Jan. 4	Jack & Ruth Schneider	(# 51)
Jan. 4	Alan & Bonnie Stone	(# 67)
Jan. 6	David Goldman and Linda Blackwell	(# 36)
Jan. 8	Lindsey & Jordan Genut	(# 11)
Feb. 17	Rob & Kathy Grossman	(# 14)
Feb. 17	David & Carol Robinson	(# 40)

*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.*

Maintenance report for the Synagogue: a great way to stay fit and happy!

It takes behind-the-scenes effort and time to maintain a synagogue that is welcoming, clean, and functional. Mondays we have a professional cleaning service that does a lot, but we are looking for a small group to take turns at making sure the building is ready for Friday, Shabbat, and weekend activities.

The entry may need to be swept and vacuumed, bathrooms tidied up and resupplied, garbage removed as needed. Everyone likes to do this stuff, right? We will need help with the inevitable snow shoveling (walks near the building) and fix-it projects as well. If you are looking for a physically active, not too time-consuming, highly appreciated way to contribute and have fun, call or text me! Thank you! Marta Brand (360) 510-0826.

FEAST OF LEARNING

JOIN US FOR A WHOLE DAY OF MUSIC, ART, & CLASSES FOR ALL AGES

Saturday, January 11th

For schedule, full details, and scholar bios, please see the insert in the Shul Shofar, and visit our website at bethisraelbellingham.org

The Day of Learning is free & open to all
Please RSVP For Dinner through the website or email

office@bethisraelbellingham.org

Concert tickets on sale on our webpage



Scholar / Artists in Residence

Hillel Smith & Laura Berman will be joining us for the whole weekend!

Laura will bring her music to both Friday and Saturday services, as well as a concert Saturday evening. Hillel will offer classes on Saturday and Sunday.

SHELLY AND PHYLLIS MAZUR

Continued from Page 8

duced, in model form, accident scenes, industrial complexes, and new building sites.

The thread running through his forensic work is his woodworking ability – evidenced by a beautifully designed and executed chest of drawers in their dining room. Shelly handed down those craftsman genes to his grandson, who just took a job with George Nakashima, an extraordinary Japanese furniture designer and maker in Bucks County, PA.

Shelly also served as a press photographer for the *Chicago Tribune*. But his c.v. doesn't stop there. He and a group of military restorers

were contacted by Universal Studios to supply vehicles for the filming of "The Blues Brothers" movie. He and one of his jeeps were hired to appear in the film.

And his labors didn't cease upon retirement. He volunteered for the Bellingham Police Department's Citizen Patrol. He also built train layouts for both the Bellingham and Skagit Valley Model Railroad Clubs, and stage sets for the Bellingham Senior Center.

The Mazurs settled in Bellingham in 2001. The town's size, climate, and Jewish community drew them. The late Congregation Beth Israel member Esther Kahn knew Phyllis's family from Chicago, and an "instant

comfort level was achieved," Phyllis recalls.

Phyllis grew up with stories about Israel. Among her relatives were its founders and pioneers. She pointed to their photographs on the fragile pages of a 72-year-old book containing accounts of the first settlers. Phyllis traveled there with her parents for the first time in 1947. She remembers its ruggedness. She returned in 1951, and after that with Shelly in 1973, 1977, and 1993.

She said she feels a strong connection: "Where would we be as Jews in the Diaspora," she asked, "without the dignity and respect we receive because of Israel's very existence?"

Vermeda M. Fred, MFT, MFA



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Recognizing Congregation Beth Israel's New Synagogue donors

From the outset of the project in the year 2000, donors to Congregation Beth Israel's New Synagogue have given generously to make our new home a reality. Hundreds of congregants and friends of CBI have contributed. Our fundraising efforts are ongoing, and we hope many more folks will continue to join and support the completion of this project so that it can be our home for generations to come. Among other items, extensive landscaping, perimeter fencing, the commercial kitchen, and new furnishings for most rooms still need funding...and soon!

As part of the fundraising program, a "Donor Recognition and Dedications Policy" was formulated to honor donors to the New Synagogue project. In this policy, all donors of \$1,000 and above* will be recognized in a central artistic display to be located in the main foyer. This Community Display will list family names on a structure such as a "Tree of Life."

In addition, for gifts of \$5,000 and above, contributors may dedicate a specific room or piece of equipment or furniture as a way to recognize their family's contribution, to honor someone, or in memory of a loved one. Items available for dedication can be selected from a Board-approved list. Such dedications will be recognized with a modest plaque that is placed on or near the dedicated item. The Donor Recognition Policy and the list of availa-

ble dedications can be viewed on the CBI website under the "Our Building/Building Fundraisers" tab. A copy can also be provided via email by contacting the Synagogue office.

The form included in this issue is for donors to let the Dedications Task Force know their preferences regarding recognizing their family's donation. Each donor will also receive an email within the next few weeks detailing their total donation to the New Synagogue and any of the dedications they have selected to date. **PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM NO LATER THAN JANUARY 31.** This form confirms whether or not you want to be publicly recognized as a supporter of the New Synagogue. Please indicate on the accompanying form your preferred wording for the Community Display and/or the Dedication Plaques.

Thanks so much for your incredible support in making our new home a reality!

The Capital Campaign and Dedications Task Force

**Purchases of bricks and other tangible goods at fundraising events are not counted towards the \$1,000 qualifying level.*

A note from the Keshet Parent Committee:

Beginning January 5, on the first Sunday of each month, Keshet will be combining the Tefilah services into one family service at the start of Keshet. Parents are encouraged to join their children and participate in this opportunity to bring our community together. The service will be followed by a monthly Keshet Parent Committee (KPC) meeting, where coffee and bagels will be provided.

Annual CBI/Keshet Purim Carnival Sunday, March 8, 12:30 - 2:30 pm

Purim is a time for all ages to dress up in silly costumes, eat *hamantaschen*, and be merry. What better way to celebrate than to attend the Purim Carnival in our Social Hall on March 8?

The Purim Carnival will feature carnival games with prizes, a costume parade, face painting, henna art, balloon animals, jugglers who do magic, chair massage, and a teen ping pong/game room.

In lieu of groggers, we invite you to bring boxes of nonperishable foods to be donated to the Bellingham Food Bank.

Pizza by the slice, salad, sundaes, popcorn, *hamantaschen*, and bever-

ages will be available for purchase with carnival tickets. Tickets for games, activities, and food will be 2 for \$1 at the door.

We will be offering Family Discount Cards (25% off), which include: 1 whole cheese pizza, 1 salad, 4 drinks (non-alcoholic), & 40 tickets - good for games, activities, and food. 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 6.

For adults only, there will be a Purim Casino Room, with beer and wine available for purchase.

Yahrzeits

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

Friday, January 3

Dale Allison Harriman	1/4
Lynn Shuster	1/4
Barry Zell	1/4
William Aron Dorfman	1/5
Nathaniel Jacob Hirsh	1/5
Sherwood Jacobson	1/5
Mary Vermeda Paschetag	1/5
Dorothea Zimmerman	1/5
Mona Helms	1/6
Martin Katz	1/6
Lois Looney	1/6
Florence Weintraub	1/6
Henry Jantzen	1/7
Louis Lebowitz	1/7
Cecile R. Gordon	1/8
Morris Tall*	1/8
Regina Tein	1/8
George Garmo	1/9
Ivan Senzon	1/9
Haskell David	1/10
Brian House	1/10
Joyce Landau	1/10

Friday, January 10 and Saturday, January 11

Pearl Turovitz	1/11
Miriam Cohen	1/12
Earl Krauzer	1/13
Solomon Thal	1/13
Rosalie Yacknin	1/13
Abraham Sanft	1/15
Dorothy Mazel Spiro	1/15
Charles Abraham Wolfson	1/15
Leo Damski	1/17
Edwin Arthur Fischer	1/17
Ben Thal	1/17
Irwin Wapner	1/17
Aimee Lewis	1/18
Arnold Loober	1/18

Friday, January 17 and Saturday, January 18

Anna Winefield Fox	1/19
David Miller	1/19
Aaron Sanger	1/19
Felice Bourne	1/20
Lillian Stiglitz Heller	1/20
Lawrence Weintraub	1/20
Barney Cohn	1/21
Irving Lackowitz	1/21
Bette Levy	1/21
Jack Siegel	1/22

Friday, January 24

Sandor Garfinkle	1/25
Maurice (Maury) Schwartz	1/26
Norma Schwartz	1/26
Marion Glassman	1/27
Shirley Spiegel Jacobson	1/27
Philip Studen	1/27
Morris Kalman Patinkin	1/29
Helen Pecarsky	1/29
Frances Poplack	1/29
Helen Stone	1/29

Harry Suslow	1/30
Daniel Weis	1/30
Laura Ann Bourne	1/31
Victorie Haislip	1/31

Friday, January 31

(No Shabbat service – will be read on January 24)

Sylvia Goldman	2/1
Mary Bayer Koplowitz	2/2
Samuel Orloff	2/2
Jerome Selznick	2/2
Rachel Adirim	2/3
Magda Dorman	2/3
Eleanor Scharff	2/3
(Arabelle) Chaya Schlanger	2/3
Libby Hildes	2/4
Hally Vernon	2/4
Hannah Jacobson	2/5
Harold Earl Perper	2/5
Joel K. Rubenstein	2/5
Morris Faber	2/6
David Fine	2/6
Fred Graff	2/6
(George) Gabriel Krauzer	2/6
Lillian Mauer Pravda	2/6
Steven R. Rivkin	2/6
George Markell	2/7
Florence D. Shain	2/7

Friday, February 7 and Saturday, February 8

Florence Kleinfeld	2/8
Sonia Kohl Krauzer	2/8
Sylvan Rosenthal	2/8
Jean Beverly Blank	2/9
Jerry Kleinfeld	2/9
Sally Evans	2/10
Samuel (Rabbi) Gartner	2/10
Peter Bayliss	2/11
Lloyd Fisher	2/11
Clara Lazarus	2/11
Celia Zak	2/11
Leona Chorney Sondik	2/12
Frieda Blank	2/13
Albert Lebovich	2/13
Judy Holtzman	2/14
Claire P. Mayer	2/14

Friday, February 14 and Saturday, February 15

Lou Fine	2/15
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Frank Kraus	2/15
Ken Biggin	2/16
Dorothy Ramras	2/16
Meyer Wolpow	2/16
Cassandra Champagne	2/17
Derrek Jeremy Adelstein	2/18
David Shain	2/18
William E. Whiting	2/18
Robert Baker	2/19
Simcha Hayim Miller	2/19
Jerome Glass	2/20
Rhoda "Ronnie" Stahlberg	2/20
Paul Sondik	2/21

Friday, February 21 and Saturday, February 22

Nelson Beller	2/22
Leonard Berman	2/22
Rita Gordon	2/22
Phil H. Miller	2/22
William Freeman	2/23
Burton Sklar	2/23
Sarah Baron	2/24
Gloria Perper	2/24
Elinor Pravda	2/24
Rachel Zacharia	2/24
Rochelle Blum	2/25
Isadore Graff	2/25
Michel Oksenberg	2/25
Mel Adelstein	2/26
Ruth "Bubbles" Berman	2/26
Judith T. Sklar	2/26
Steve Sokol	2/26
Clarence Weiner	2/26
Beth R. Curtis	2/27
Lillian Heller	2/27
Linda Kaplowitz	2/27
Benjamin Solomon	2/27

Friday, February 28

Richard Evans	2/29
Barton Frank	2/29
Betty Goldberger	2/29
Gene Adelstein	3/1
Robert Fife	3/2
Mitchel J. Lazarus	3/2
Sadie Gordon Schiller	3/2
William Schwartz	3/3
Herman Weill	3/3
Eleanor Goldner	3/4
Robert W. Lippman	3/4
Henry Edwards	3/6
Ruth Lippman	3/6

In Memoriam

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

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

Harriet Fine on the loss of her brother, **Dick Eigen**, who passed away on December 6, 2019 at his home in Santa Barbara, California.

Miriam Davids on the loss of her brother, **Frank Zderic**, who passed away on December 8, 2019.

THE SHUL SHOFAR

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COMMUNITY SEDER ON APRIL 9, 2020

***Mark your calendar for the
Community Seder on April
9, 2020 at 5:30 pm***

This event has been popular for all
ages—from babies to *bubbes*.

*Registration will open online
on February 3*

