

A Shul Shofar Story

BY VERMEDA M. FRED

When a community comes together from all over the world, like CBI, we create our bonds through experiences we share and through our news and stories. Stories and news are made up of words, words require people and paper, and now, digital space. This article is a story about publishing the *Shul Shofar*, this tool that organizes and informs us, that guides us through our holidays and *simchot*, that enables us to rejoice in companionship as well as to grieve together in loss, that is one place which announces every other month, "Here we are. We are CBI."

Our current publishing team is led by Rabbi Samuels with the help of Mary Somerville, who has been participating in publishing the *Shul Shofar*



Left to right: Nora Mazonson, Vermeda Fred, Mary Somerville, and Rabbi Samuels

since she came to work at CBI in 1996. Joining Mary is Nora Mazonson, our layout editor with an eye for what goes where, I'm the copy editor, and Roby Blecker is our final proofreader. We are a disparate group who have come from communities far from Bellingham—our Rabbi from San Francisco, Mary from Baltimore, Nora from Mexico City, Roby from Philadelphia and I'm from Beaumont, Texas.

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FROM THE RABBI

Your 2023/24 B'nei Mitzvah Class



There is a prayer in our *siddur* that we recite on Saturday mornings called *Eilu Devarim*. It is comprised of a series of verses from

the *Mishnah* and the first two words translate to, "These are the words/deeds/actions." The list is not long, but it does include various *mitzvot* that our rabbinic ancestors considered extremely important to follow. For example: honoring one's parents, attending the house of study daily, visiting the sick, attending the needs of a wedding couple, and being present for the dying. I would like to add one more *mitzvah* to this age-old list: celebrate with B'nei Mitzvah families.

At a time when publicly identifying as Jewish might make some feel uneasy, our community has 4 adult congregants as well as 10 young adults, and their families, who are not only proud of who they are, but want to celebrate Judaism with Beth Israel. Each of our students has been learning Jewish

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From the President...

Our Jewish Home



Recently the Synagogue Dedication Committee and Interior Design Committee installed a plaque honoring the people who contributed to the building of our synagogue.

While we have special plaques around the synagogue thanking individual families, and bricks in the memorial garden with special words, this marks the first combined dedication.

The amount of effort that was needed to create our synagogue is hard for me to fathom. The planning, discussions, fundraising, coordination, and contracting occurred over a long period of time. And to be clear, there is more to do, although the lion's share is complete, and we have a space to use without any debt.

Completing our building without any debt was no minor task. It required a team of dedicated members to reach out to our community, share a vision, and request that people reach into their personal funds to give to our building.

When thinking about all the fundraising efforts, I thought of this joke (you know I love my jokes):

One day Rabbi Shpielman picked up the phone. Special Agent Anderson from the IRS was on the line.

"Hello, Rabbi Shpielman?"

"Yes, this is."

"I'm calling to inquire about a member of your congregation, a Dr. Plotkin. Do you recognize the name?"

"Yes, he is a member of our congregation. How can I be of service?"

"Well, on last year's tax return, the doctor claimed that he made a sizable tax-deductible contribution to your synagogue. Is it true?"

"Well, I'll have to have my assistant verify this information for you. How much did Dr. Plotkin say he contributed?"

"One hundred thousand dollars," answered Agent Anderson. "Can you tell me if that's true?"

There is a long pause. "I'll tell you what," replied Rabbi Shpielman, "Call back tomorrow. I'm sure it will be."

There is no doubt that some of our members gave enormously in both time

and money. What I love about this new dedication is that it has everyone listed together. It was a community effort, and the caption from Exodus 25:8 at the top of the plaque captures this notion so well: "Build for me a sacred place that I may dwell among you." It is heart-lifting that our building was created by the energy, sacrifices, and contributions from many individuals working together. Some people are the trunks of the tree and others are the leaves, but all together we form a beautiful tree as captured in the dedication.

We are not finished yet. There is still more to be done. We are working on completing our commercial kitchen, improving the acoustics and decorations of our interior spaces and security. I suspect there will continue to be updates throughout our lifetimes.

While our membership pledges are not insignificant, it is the support beyond that donation that allows us to continue to improve. Every penny of your annual pledge goes to keeping our synagogue staffed, operating, maintained, and open for use. I want to thank all the people who have so graciously given in the past, and to those who continue to give. I am excited to see how our community will grow to even greater beauty.

JOSHUA GREENBERG



CONGREGATION BETH ISRAEL

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The Shul Shofar

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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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Chanukah Stories from CBI's Kids!

Please read on for some delightful tales from active imaginations! The first block of stories was written by students from Robin Curtis and Kellan Moss's K-2 Keshet class. They are very excited to have their stories published in the *Shul Shofar*.

The Latke That Ran Away By Avi Cohen

Once upon a time, there were two latkes that ran away. They ran because they didn't want to be made with onions. The onions will make them cry. The onions started chasing the latkes. The latkes ran away. The onions can't catch them. The latkes made friends with the onions.

Chanukah In Toyland By Lyla Attar

There were these people celebrating Chanukah in Toyland. They were celebrating with family and friends. They had a big party with latkes and other food. In Toyland you give toys to people who don't have them. If someone had someone who didn't have any toys, they'd share their lots of toys. The people in Toyland are reading Chanukah stories. That's all.

The Latke That Ran Away By Gilead Goldman

Once upon a time, a latke ran away. He went into a field with 1000 cows and got eaten. He told God to tell the cow that ate him to spit him out. But God did not listen.

The Mischievous Chanukah Candle By Maxwell Ross

At night we light the Menorah. The next day the candles ran away. Where were they? They went back to the store because they did not like Chanukah.

The Mischievous Chanukah Candle By Amaia

Once upon a time, the Jews lit the Chanukah candles but the candles did not stay. They ran away. When the Jews woke up and went to the Temple, they saw the menorah was gone. Then they remembered the legend of the menorahs being gone. Then they went to look for the candle in the forest.

The Jews got super tired and fell asleep. Once they fell asleep, the Chanukah candles saw that they were asleep and started running away again. The End.

The Mischievous Latke By Ansel Hecht

Once there was a latke but this latke was mischievous because every Chanukah night, the latke sat on a plate but then the latke jumped off the plate and ran away. Then we had to chase it.

The Daring Chanukah By Eloise Hecht

It was a dark and stormy night. Flying above the French countryside was the World War I Maccabees Flying Ace versus the Red Baron. The Maccabees sent their best man.

It was hard to say good-bye to his wife and children. Ella was the oldest. She was 16. Next was her brother Tom age 12. Jill was the youngest. She had red hair and blue eyes.

The father was in the war. One month later, the mother received a letter. She opened the envelope and read the letter. She told the children what the letter said. "Your father broke both his arms. He won't be able to fight or come home for Chanukah. Someone has to take care of him but there aren't any doctors nearby."

"I have an idea," said Ella. We can go to father and take care of him, plus we can celebrate Chanukah with him."

What they did not know was that right now, the Evil King of the country wanted all of the Jewish people to celebrate only all of his holidays and read only his Bible.

And with the Maccabees best man gone, the Maccabees were hopeless.

By now the flying ace's family had walked a mile. "This is a bad idea," said Tom. "But we have to help Daddy," said Jill.

"I guess you are right," said Tom. "Yes," said Ella.

Through the forest of Laseyom they went. They met lots of creatures. They met a hippogriff. It is a horse but the top part of it was an eagle. The hippogriff asked if they would like for him to fly them where they would like to go. They told him where they needed to go.

"All right," it said. They flew and flew and flew. "I can't go any farther, so this is where I leave you," said the hippogriff.

"Bye and thank you," said the children.

"Only 2 miles left," said Tom. So they walked to the army campsite and they saw their father. He looked great. While Ella, Tom, and Jill were on their journey, his arms had recovered. "Hooray," said the children.

But then the Evil King's army came. "Quick," said their father. "Grab a sword." Everyone fought with all their might and with all their effort. They fought the Evil King's army away.

"Oh no," said Jill. "The Temple is destroyed. At least the menorah still has a little jar of lamp oil. So they lit the menorah and then a miracle happened. It stayed lit for 8 days, just enough time to make more oil. That is why there are 8 days of Chanukah. The End.

The Latke That Ran Away By Samuel Pomeranz

Oh no! Get the latke! Oh no! It's gone into a volcano. Inside of the volcano is the Land of Love! To be continued...

The Latke That Ran Away by Adina Diamond

Once upon a time, someone was making a latke. The latke ran away. The person chased it. The latke hid. The person couldn't find it. Then, the latke jumped out. The person chased it again. And the person ate it. Yummy.

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A SHUL SHOFAR STORY

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How did we wind up here doing this work together?

As with most everything else that happens at CBI, our beginning springs from Mary Somerville. When she arrived at CBI, she was responsible for putting the *Shul Shofar* together, writing copy, collecting articles from others, and with her team of volunteers, editing, printing, folding and mailing them every month. Mary recalls, "It was wonderful working with my 'folding team' back in the day, which included Harriet and Lou Fine, Cliff and Andrea Haas, Jill Elkayam, and Marcia Lippman (among others)." Mary also brought the newsletter into the modern times by purchasing a bulk mail permit for nonprofits. Prior to her wise decision, our newsletters had been mailed first-class every month to every CBI member. *Oy gevalt*.

In 2014 Melissa Schapiro, then Secretary of the Board of Directors, took over the publishing process, redesigning the newsletter into a new format using MS Publisher, and changing it to an every-other-month delivery with the help of the Lynden Tribune. Melissa came with 20 years' experience writing and editing in the newspaper industry. She was again a one-person publishing process from start to finish for five years, but in her reworking of the *Shul Shofar* into its new digital state, she was already planning on how the newsletter could be handed off more easily to a new team at some point in time.

That time arrived in February 2019. I remember reading an announcement about the *Shul Shofar* needing publishing assistance. I contacted the Rabbi who told me that Melissa would be stepping down, and help was indeed needed. Having earned an MFA in Creative Writing from Queens University at Charlotte in 2006, I felt this job was within my wheelhouse. As a child growing up in Beaumont, I had watched my parents in their printing company, the Beaumont Letter Service, producing newsletters and other products for various businesses,

churches, our local synagogue, and civic organizations. At the time, my mom and my dad could both type over 100 words a minute with no mistakes, using carbon paper with the originals to make the first round of copies, from which the typesetting would develop. Later they used mimeograph machines and eventually Xerox. My Dad was also a highly skilled calligrapher, and happened to be ambidextrous. He favored his right hand, but could perform equally well with his left, his hands swooping gracefully across linen paper. I loved the oily smell of the ink, the clicking of the keys and machines, and long before attending school, I came to fully understand and respect India ink, for its ability to never be erased. My parents produced perfection in printed form, every day, for many years.

But when I spoke with the Rabbi, I knew that, unlike my parents, as well as unlike Mary and Melissa, I could not take on the publication of the *Shul Shofar* on my own. I knew about editing; I did not know about layout. Welcome, Nora Mazonson!

Nora is the perfect person to take on the creative side of the *Shul Shofar*. She studied graphic design in Mexico City and worked as a graphic designer from 1989-2002, specializing in Annual Report and Corporate Identity Design. Nora says, "Then I moved to the U.S., got married, but still continued working for the same studio from home, when working from home was not a 'thing'. Then, in 2017, I switched my career into real estate." Nora says it was a different process to work as part of a team, but that she has deeply enjoyed this change.

"I enjoy this process very much. I've gotten to know my team better, although I wish we could have had more in-person interactions. We used to have 'live meetings' but then Covid hit and like the rest of the world, we turned our meetings into emails. I recognize that it's been effective to do it this way, but I also miss seeing my team. I especially enjoy my bimonthly check-ins with Roby to go through the final edit-

ing. I have learned so much from her! (English is not my first language)."

We had found two new team members, but we still needed a fearless leader. Thank you, Rabbi Samuels! Rabbi Samuels says that his only prior experience in the field of publishing was serving on the yearbook committee in high school, where he gained some editing and layout design experience. Working on the *Shul Shofar* began with his first contract in 2012. "I love this aspect of my job even though it isn't a traditionally 'rabbinic' role. I feel that my writing has improved since I started a decade ago. It still isn't where I would like it to be, which is why I try and read good writing as often as possible. This is the advice that my rabbinic school senior thesis adviser gave me years ago: when you read something well-written, you just know."

The Rabbi states that through our work together, we have become a "well-oiled machine." He remembers when we transitioned to having the *Shul Shofar* published by the Lynden Tribune in full color, and thinking "what a great product we were giving our community!"

Speaking about the various parts of the newsletter, the Rabbi offers, "I absolutely love Linda Hirsh's 'Faces in the Community' articles. I remember suggesting that it would be wonderful to highlight different congregants throughout the year, and Linda just took this on, and it's continued to be my favorite part of each issue. Thank you Linda!"

Nothing goes to the press without the keen eye and input of our most professionally experienced team member, Roby. When asked what her prior experience has been in the world of publishing and editing, her first response was, "Oh, Lordy. Been writing since I was 9 years old."

Roby went on to say that she has written and published six books (which we can all find on Amazon or from Re-Animus Press), that she has written devotionals for Guideposts (Norman Vincent Peale's company) since 1995, worked for 14 years for an academic

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From the Keshet Center for Jewish Learning

Our Keshet Helpers

As I write this article, it's the holiday season, traditionally a time to be grateful for what we have, with our homes providing a loving space where we embrace family gatherings. This last year has not been easy for the Mayers family. Therefore, I haven't felt particularly grateful nor motivated to celebrate. However, in just these circumstances Mr. Rogers offers his famous advice to "Look for the helpers." So I began to revise my thinking and started to focus on all the support Keshet has received from CBI. I've decided that I wanted to use this opportunity to express my gratitude for the helpers who have assisted Keshet over the last several months.

Katie Edelstein first listened, then organized my vision, and finally, led the charge in creating the MASSA program. She is the co-chair of KAG, serves on the preschool task force, and even agreed to co-lead an adult trip to Israel with me. I am grateful she continues to accept my calls and answers my texts.

Rita Spitzer spent days during the summer sorting, organizing, and ordering curriculum. Her educational experience set the tone for identifying key teaching concepts and her drive kept us on task. She led the team that wrote the Moving Traditions grant and she continues serving as KAG's co-chair.

Dan Ohms agreed to donate a full day of CPR and first aid training for our Keshet staff. He later returned to conduct a fire drill for the school, thereby keeping us in compliance.

Robin Curtis serves on several committees, mentors new teachers, and endlessly volunteers her time. We are grateful that she is on our Keshet team.

Terri Weiner joyfully comes in to bake Challah with our students. The smells and aromas coming from the small kitchen are amazing.

Nicky Naiman is a parent of a MASSA student. She volunteered to keep our records updated because she



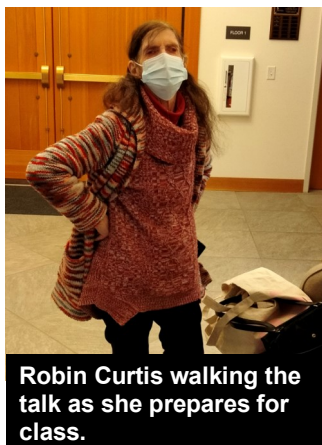
Katie Edelstein attends a Samis two day workshop on behalf of CBI's MASSA program.

wanted "to take that off Victoria's plate." It's a huge responsibility that she carries with such grace and professionalism. I really appreciate her taking that responsibility on for me.

Ray Wolpow returned to Keshet to support me as a new administrator. Our check-ins enable me to be a better supervisor for our staff. He has made a year-long commitment, and our eighth-grade families, students, and team are grateful for his contributions.

So as we begin 2023, I want to reflect on my new year's resolution. I am determined to continue looking for and appreciating the helpers. I will keep encouraging everyone to consider volunteering their skills, talents, or sweat equity to our educational programs. If not you, then who and if not now, then when? Keshet can always use more volunteers like you. Thank you for your consideration.

VICTORIA MAYERS
CO-DIRECTOR, KESHER



Robin Curtis walking the talk as she prepares for class.



Warren Rosenthal shares his knowledge about outer space.



Ray Wolpow listening during Keshet's Tefillah service.

Presenting *Hanukkah in Little Havana* by Julie Anna Blank

Julie Anna Blank (aka Julie Hunter) came to Keshet on December 4 to present her new book *Hanukkah in Little Havana*. She was born in Kansas to a military family, promptly moved to Caracas, Venezuela and later happily lived a Caribbean childhood until she was five years old. When the family moved to the Washington, D.C. area, she was cold, lonely, and not good at speaking English. Trips to visit her grandparents in Miami, where she could speak Spanish, play on the beach, and enjoy her favorite tropical flavors were a special treat.

After a childhood of moving every few years, she has enjoyed staying put in her Lummi Island home for 30

years and commuting to town in her electric car. She has been a school librarian at Wade King Elementary School for 7 years (taught in Ferndale for 23 years) and a member of Congregation Beth Israel for 23 years. She and her husband hit the road for van-life adventures in their Sprinter, most often to visit their two grown sons, Louie and Sam.

In 2019 Julie predicted there would not be many tales about Chanukah, the beach, or Spanish-speaking Jewish people, so she entered a poem in a "Tales of December" writing contest at Village Books. The poem was one of many winners performed around Bellingham. During the Covid shut-



down Julie reworked it as a picture book, submitted it to a publishing house, and months later was surprised to be offered a book deal! Having been a storyteller all her life, Julie is thrilled to see her words in print. *Hanukkah in Little Havana* is her first published children's book.

BAY Events

BY LEAH BORDMAN

Our CBI teen group, BAY, has had two successful events so far this year! Our kickoff event in October was apple launching and a pumpkin-carving competition, and our second event was a Friends-giving potluck. I've been

having a great time getting to know our teen community, and I hope to be able to draw in more teens throughout the year. We hope to have a Chanukah event, as well as a few social action events throughout the Spring.



Jewish Medical Ethics

Teacher: Rabbi Joshua Samuels
Wednesdays at 7:00 pm
March 15, 22, 29
Beit Midrash
Course Fee: \$36
Register through the Beth Israel website

Join Rabbi Samuels in exploring the complicated world of Jewish medical ethics. In these three sessions, students will learn about the positive, negative, beneficial, and questionable aspects of new technologies in the medical field and the wisdom Judaism offers us in our encounters with them. Topics will cover issues pertaining to the beginning and end of life as well as measures taken to prolong life. The class will use Elliot Dorff's *Matters of Life and Death: A Jewish Approach to Modern Medical Ethics* as the main textbook, as well as various Reform and Conservative responsa* literature. We hope you will join us with your thoughts and questions!

* Responsa are the answers given by authorities in Jewish law to questions put to them (in Hebrew *she'elot u-teshuvot*, 'questions and answers').

CHANUKAH STORIES FROM CBI'S KIDS

Continued from Page 3

The next group of stories was written by the third-fourth grade class, led by Jason Benheim. Enjoy!

The Mischievous Chanukah Candles By Avigail Ravitsky

Once upon a time there was a family who were setting up their candles.

"Wait," the mom said right before they lit the candles. "It's family tradition to eat before we light the candles."

Once they went to eat, the candles grew big and grew arms and legs.

"Finally, they're gone!" the middle candle said. "Now, who wants to jump on the bed?"

"Me me me me!" the other candles said. So they all went upstairs and jumped on the bed, and they all laughed so hard that they fell on the floor.

The family heard something so they went to go check on the candles, but they weren't there. "We must've gotten the mischievous candles!"

They went upstairs and found the candles, and then they went to the store to quickly switch them out for normal candles. But they can remember what happened, and they are still laughing about it.

The Mischievous Chanukah Candles By James Barney

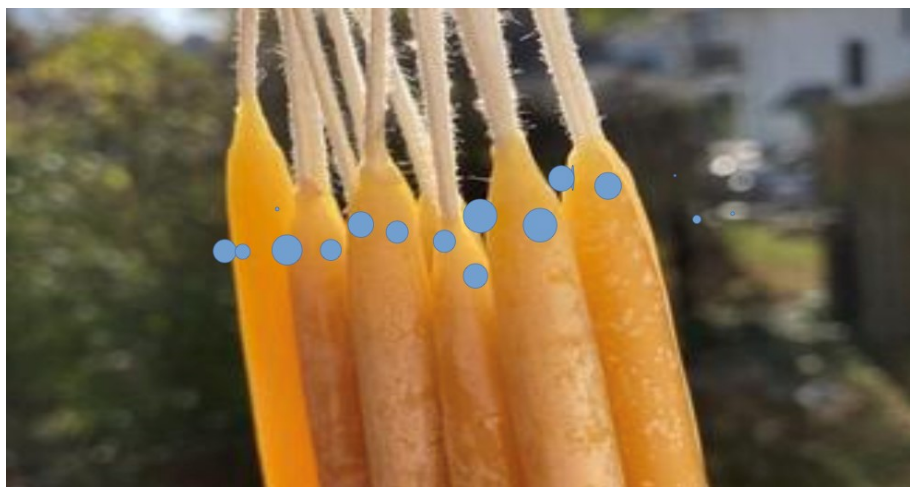
The Silverwood family bought Chanukah candles...but little did they know the Chanukah candles were mischievous. The first Chanukah candle jumped out and threw a shoe at a window and broke it. After that, all the other candles came out. One opened the refrigerator and knocked out all of the food. The other candle threw all of the dishes, and two of the candles threw the food on the dishes. Then one of the candles knocked down the menorah, and one of the candles put the moon on fire and dumped water on the sun.

The Latke that Ran Away By Urtica Goldman

Once upon a time an old man was making latkes. Right as he opened the oven, one of the latkes ran out of it! "You'll never fry me!" yelled the latke. "Come back here, you silly latke, I'm hungry!" yelled the man. The latke ran out the door! People screamed and fled from him. "A walking, talking latke! Run!" The latke ran down an alleyway. He got stilts and a cloak on and went out into the world as a latke disguised as a man.

The Latke That Ran Away By Leo Cohen

Once there was a latke named Larry. He was running away from a guy named Frank. It was Chanukah, so that was the



The mischievous Chanukah candles!

time for latkes, and it was the night for latkes, and that was bad for Larry. And he was allergic to oil. Larry was running as fast as he could, and he said it's Chanukah, I should not be eaten! It's not nice to eat a latke named Larry. I'm cute! And then he hid in the bathroom, hoping Frank would not find him. So he opened the door, looking to see if Frank was gone. Phew, he was back in the kitchen to cook more latkes. But Frank's son was walking down the hall, so Larry ran to the son's room. The sign said, "Keep Out!" But he had nowhere to go, so he had to go in the room. It had so many toys it was like Toyland. So he ran into the room and hid in the toys. But Frank's son found him in the toys, and he got so scared that some of his onions fell off. Frank's son asked, "Why are you scared? You're supposed to be eaten!" Larry said, "But but, I'm so cute! Please don't eat me." Frank's son said, "Okay, let's go eat some food together and light the menorah."

The Mischievous Chanukah Candle By Paxton Gentry

One night there was a family. One year on Chanukah they lit their candles and went to go eat their dinner. But when they went back, they saw one of the candles try to escape under the front door! Then the youngest of the family said, "Hey, come back!" But the candle did not stop, and it ran outside. But when the candle got outside, he wished he had stopped when the boy said to stop. It was so cold, he wanted to back inside. But he didn't. To be continued...

The Mischievous Chanukah Candles By Diana Dixon

The mischievous candles were up to no good. They were going to play a prank on their owners, so they got to work. They "borrowed" some money from their owner and went to the store. They asked the shopkeeper where the gold coins were. He told them in row seven, but when they started walking one of them got stepped on so he took off the person's shoe and got up and walked with the others. When they got to row seven they couldn't reach the gold coins so they climbed on each other, but as soon as the top one got hold of the gold coins they all toppled over. They hit their heads, but they just got back up and went to the shopkeeper and bought them. They went back to their owner's house and switched out the chocolate coins for the gold coins so when the owners tried to unwrap the coins, they couldn't.

The Wish By Lucita Galbraith

There once was a boy named Henry, and he hated Chanukah. He hated it so much that one night he wished that Chanukah wasn't a thing. The next morning, he got up and it was Chanukah—well, it wasn't. He asked his mom, "Is it Chanukah?" His mom said, "What is Chanukah?" Henry said, "Yay!" But that night he had a craving for latkes. "I want latkes," Henry told his mom. "What are latkes?" she asked. So after dinner he went outside and wished for Chanukah to be a thing again, and the next morning he asked his dad, "Is it Chanukah?" His dad said, "Yes!" Henry said, "Yay!" And that night he had latkes for dinner.

Faces in Our Community: Danny and Marla Finkelstein

BY LINDA HIRSH

Ever wonder how immigrants face a new country that comes with a new language? Israeli Danny Finkelstein brought English words he learned in school to the U.S. Living in Los Angeles, he picked up more.

His wife, Marla, taught him words he needed for his business as an electrician and she studied with him for his contractor's license exams. Most of all they speak to each other in English.

"We are a team," Danny said. "After 36 years, she tells me I am pretty good."

Marla, who met many Israelis including Danny when she worked in the Los Angeles Jewish community, says although she does not speak Hebrew, "I have picked up words and phrases and can understand some conversation," she said. So a rich cultural exchange happened with this couple and they brought the results of that to Bellingham.

Miriam Davids, Congregation Beth Israel member, said, "I feel lucky to call them good friends, great bowling buddies and a part of my Bellingham family. I met Danny and Marla on Rosh Hashanah. We invited them for dinner to meet some of our CBI friends. They made connections with ease, becoming involved in the community."



Danny and Marla Finkelstein

Marla's parents, New York City natives, loved being California transplants. Marla and her two sisters grew up in the San Fernando Valley near Los Angeles, hearing stories about her parents walking in the snow to school.

Few Jewish children attended her elementary school, but after redistricting, the population grew. A highlight was joining the B'nai Brith Youth Organization where she found many close friendships.

Marla may not have been drawn to the nearby conservative synagogue with its services in Hebrew, "but I liked the cookies at the *onegs*," she said.

She studied psychology and child development at the University of California at Santa Barbara and San Diego State University; upon graduation she taught at a Jewish nursery school and a childcare center in a

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FALL FUN AT CBI!



1. Fifth-grade teaching team and students leading *tefillah*. 2-8. Chanukah party fun. 9. Milo Levinson, Aniel Wells-Langley, and Evan Konikoff with their B'nei Mitzvah class's gifts to the congregation.

A SHUL SHOFAR STORY

Continued from Page 4

publisher, continues to provide professional editing for both fiction and nonfiction, and now teaches fiction and copyediting at Whatcom Community College. Roby says, “My newsletter contribution is one of the ways I can give to my synagogue community, and I am happy to do it. Besides, I really love working with Nora!”

You might wonder, with all of our backgrounds and professional experience, what goes into producing the *Shul Shofar* every two months. Most important, we would not have a *Shul Shofar* without our contributors. Each and every edition, the Rabbi, our Board President, the Keshar team, often our Cantorial soloist, and many committee

chairs submit articles for your information and enjoyment. These pieces connect us with what is going on both within CBI and in the wider Bellingham community, or how we are bringing the Bellingham community to us. There are Joan Wayne’s Library News, Linda Blackwell’s Social Action Committee articles, WWU Hillel’s updates, descriptions about our concerts or a master-in-residence event or shared religious services with other faiths, just to name a few examples. Once these dozen plus a few extra documents arrive in my inbox, I provide the first round of editing on each piece. Announcements about new babies, new graduates, and any other honors, as well as the losses we have experienced, all go to Mary. Then everything goes to Nora. It takes just under two weeks to receive and to edit

all submissions, and several more days to finish the layout and final editing.

From our beginnings in various worlds of editing, publishing, writing, graphic design, and one printing company, we have become the *Shul Shofar* team, and we really do work similarly to a “printing company” without doing the actual printing. The five of us, from such different communities, histories, even native languages, have (nearly miraculously) wound up here to volunteer to do this work together. For our team, compiling the contributions from across our community has been a fantastic experience. We hope that you, our congregation, feel that the *Shul Shofar* has been a gift to the CBI community, just as much as our collaboration has been a gift to the five of us.

January/February 2023 Shabbat Service Schedule

PLEASE NOTE: Friday evening services and Saturday Torah study will be *hybrid*, allowing congregants and visitors to worship or study in person, or attend via Zoom. **All Saturday morning services will be in person only.** It is no longer required to show proof of vaccination or to wear a mask while in the building, although both vaccination and masking are strongly recommended. This schedule is subject to change, so please watch the weekly *Timbrel* or the Beth Israel website for updates.

| | | | |
|-------------------|--|-------------------|---|
| Friday, Jan. 6 | 6:15 pm Kabbalat Shabbat Family Service | Friday, Feb. 3 | 6:15 pm Kabbalat Shabbat Family Service, featuring the Keshar 6th/7th Grade class |
| Saturday, Jan. 7 | 9:30 am Torah Study on Zoom only (<i>Parashat Vayechi</i>) | Saturday, Feb. 4 | 9:30 am Torah Study on Zoom only (<i>Parashat Beshalach</i>) |
| Friday, Jan. 13 | 6:15 pm Kabbalat Shabbat Service | Friday, Feb. 10 | 6:15 pm Kabbalat Shabbat Service |
| Saturday, Jan. 14 | 9:30 am Torah Study (<i>Parashat Shemot</i>) 10:30 am Shabbat morning service – in person only | Saturday, Feb. 11 | 9:30 am Torah Study (<i>Parashat Yitro</i>) 10:30 am Shabbat morning service – in person only |
| Friday, Jan. 20 | 6:15 pm Kabbalat Shabbat Service | Friday, Feb. 17 | 6:15 pm Kabbalat Shabbat service |
| Saturday, Jan. 21 | 9:30 am Torah Study (<i>Parashat Vaera</i>) 11:00 am Tot Shabbat service – in person only | Saturday, Feb. 18 | 9:30 am Torah Study (<i>Mishpatim</i>) 11:00 am Tot Shabbat service – in person only |
| Friday, Jan. 27 | 7:30 pm Kabbalat Shabbat service, with leadership from the Ma’Ayan Shir ensemble | Friday, Feb. 24 | 7:30 pm Kabbalat Shabbat service, with leadership from the Ma’Ayan Shir ensemble |
| Saturday, Jan. 28 | 9:30 am Torah Study (<i>Parashat Bo</i>) 10:30 am Conservative-style, lay-led minyan – in person only | Saturday, Feb. 25 | 9:30 am Torah Study (<i>Parashat Terumah</i>) 10:30 am Conservative-style, lay-led minyan – in person only |

The Kvelling Corner

Welcome to our new members!

- **Jaz Balasa** – Bellingham
- **Gayle Cloud & Jeff Crollard** – Bellingham
- **Solomon & Emily Falk** and daughter **Abigail** (age 3)
- **Keren Gott** and daughters **Ariel** and **Tahlia** (both age 4) - Bellingham
- **Laura Hudgins** – Bellingham
- **Debbie Whitney** – Burlington



Ian McCurdy and Kayla Schott-Bresler welcomed **Hannah Lael McCurdy** on October 25, 2022. Everyone is doing well, and big sister Mira is full of joy and excitement at Hannah's arrival.

Shoshana Schapiro, daughter of Melissa and John Schapiro, graduated December 10, 2022 from Western Washington University with a Bachelor's Degree in Human Services. She has been working with children with special needs during her time at Western. She is excited to move to Israel in January and explore her options there.



Anniversaries

| | | |
|---------|-----------------------------------|--------|
| Jan. 1 | Ella & Alan Barney | (# 10) |
| Jan. 6 | David Goldman and Linda Blackwell | (# 39) |
| Jan. 8 | Lindsey & Jordan Genut | (# 14) |
| Feb. 17 | Rob & Kathy Grossman | (# 17) |
| Feb. 17 | David & Carol Robinson | (# 43) |

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

Special Fund Donations

CAMP/YOUTH ACTIVITIES FUND

IN HONOR OF:

Orion Dixon, on becoming a Bar Mitzvah

From: *Karen Sloss*

CONTRIBUTION FROM:

The Milton & Miriam Waldbaum Family Foundation

RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

IN HONOR OF:

Orion Dixon, on becoming a Bar Mitzvah

From: *Patrick Crane*

IN APPRECIATION:

To Rabbi Samuels, with thanks

From: *Terri Weiner & Rob Lopresti*

IN LOVING MEMORY OF:

My beloved mother, Dora Graff

My beloved mother-in-law, Esther Mazur

From: *Phyllis Mazur*

GENERAL FUND

IN APPRECIATION:

To Rabbi Samuels, in honor of the baby naming of our son Mitchell Batterman

From: *Jordan Batterman*

CONTRIBUTION FROM:

*Patrick Crane
Steven & Vicky
Garfinkle*

*Daniel Ingberman & Renee Elder
Jodi Litt
Fred & Myrna Loceff
Gregory Peterson*

ISRAEL TRIP SCHOLARSHIP FUND

IN HONOR OF:

Orion Dixon, on becoming a Bar Mitzvah

From: *Rita & Steve Spitzer*

KESHER RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

IN LOVING MEMORY OF:

Michael Golden

From: *Henry Zemel*

CONTRIBUTION FROM:

Patrick Crane

NEW SYNAGOGUE FUND

IN LOVING MEMORY OF:

My beloved husband, Arni Loober

From: *Bernice Loober*

CONTRIBUTION FROM:

*Marta & Craig Brand
Lynn & Michael Korner
Marcia & Lou Lippman
The Milton & Miriam Waldbaum Family Foundation*

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DANNY AND MARLA FINKELSTEIN*Continued from Page 8*

Jewish Community Center. After she obtained her master's degree, she became the director of the Bureau of Jewish Education's state-funded Childcare, a program for the influx of Russian, Iranian, and Israeli families moving to the area in the late 1970s.

"It was like a Jewish United Nations with teachers who spoke all the languages of the children," she said. One of the teachers introduced her to Danny in 1984. "I was always around Israelis and enjoyed their warmth, spontaneity, and approach to life. Danny fit right into my family."

Married in 1986, they had two daughters, Rachel and Talia, who now live in Seattle and Portland with husbands and two sons each. They grew up in a life reflective of Marla's experience.

Danny, a Haifa native, said he had a happy childhood. "Everyone knew my family, and our neighborhood was small and close. Neighbors would help me cross the street as if I were their child."

Danny's parents were brought from Germany and Austria to Israel in 1938 through a program to save Jewish Children in Eastern Europe. They met on a *kibbutz*. His father, who owned a grocery store, was popular in their town, while his mother was known for her kindness. Danny had an older brother and a sister who "would try to be my second mother. She was more strict than my mother and I called her my 'mean Ima.'"

After his stint in the Israel Defense Forces, he took a gap year to travel and visit relatives in New York, but California—specifically the San Fernando Valley—drew him. "It was filled with Israelis and it felt more like home,"

he said. He returned to Haifa when his mother was dying of breast cancer, but came back after her death. An electrician taught him the trade; he got his contractor's license, then developed a successful business.

In 2004, when their neighbors sought a new place to move, Danny and Marla went with them on a Washington State exploration for fun.

"It was early November, and I was prepared for the cold, but not prepared for how much we both loved Bellingham." They moved in 2005 and say they still love it here. Marla said that Danny quickly met every Israeli in town. They were also drawn by the "small, cozy synagogue and its friendly members," she said.

Now the Finkelsteins have leisure time. Marla, who has practiced yoga for 30 years, also enjoys interior design, oil painting, and movies. Danny works with a trainer twice a week and walks with Marla and their dog, Max. They both love to travel. Danny sometimes spends time in Mexico in winter, enjoying the food, the people, and the weather. But Israel is their favorite destination. They pick a stopover each time they go, for instance, Amsterdam, Berlin, or Rome. They also visit friends in Los Angeles and Palm Springs.

"At this point in time, Danny and I have time to travel and enjoy our family," Marla said. "We love Bellingham as a base and never tire of its beauty and funkiness. It has become home."

"The Best Advice I Didn't Take"—Beit Café Is Back!

If you love storytelling, then you won't want to miss this Beit Café event. In the past, congregants have shared stories of love, adventure and miracles. Come be a part of this experience again and learn things about your friends you never knew! There will be some music and plenty to eat and drink, too. If you would like to share a story, inform Rabbi Samuels as soon as possible to get your name on the list.

Where: The Encore Room at Mount Baker Theatre

When: Saturday, February 18, 2023, 7:00 pm

Purim Festivities

Purim Carnival

Sunday, March 5, 12:30 to 3:00 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 5. The Purim Carnival will feature games with prizes, a costume contest, face painting, yummy food, a fortune teller, and balloon animals.

Megillah, Shpiel, and Hamantaschen Debate

Monday, March 6 at 6:30 pm

Purim isn't really Purim without the boisterous chanting of *Megillat* Esther, the ridiculous shpiel, and a good ol' debate that won't sway you one way or the other. More info in upcoming *Timbrels*.



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Birthdays

JANUARY 2023

1/1 Jeaninne Kahan
 1/1 Binnie Perper
 1/1 Alison Zak
 1/2 Cierra Burkill
 1/2 Bella Gentry (17th)
 1/3 Tahlia Somers (16th)
 1/4 Julia Ban
 1/4 Linda Blackwell
 1/4 Elijah Fay (15th)
 1/4 Wolf Pomerantz (11th)
 1/4 Asher Stoane (20th)
 1/6 Isaac Konikoff
 1/6 Tom Maxim
 1/8 Judy Diamond
 1/8 Candace Kiersky
 1/8 Victoria Mayers
 1/9 Helen Feiger
 1/10 Lou Lippman
 1/11 John Schapiro
 1/12 Talia Clarke (19th)
 1/15 Diana Dixon (9th)
 1/15 Audrey LaPlante (14th)
 1/15 Nora Mazonson
 1/15 Kathi Paluch
 1/16 Maya Cornwall (20th)
 1/17 Julian Booker (21st)
 1/17 David Elkayam
 1/17 Jodi Litt

1/18 Miriam Buckman
 1/18 Dashka Garretson
 1/21 Arturo Flores Pritchett (6th)
 1/21 Alyson Kassen
 1/22 Stuart Berman
 1/23 Joshua Greenberg
 1/24 Benjamin Stratton (11th)
 1/24 Nathan Tableman
 1/25 Marc Weinstein
 1/26 Leo David Cohen (10th)
 1/26 Nate LaMont (2nd)
 1/26 Mitch Press
 1/26 Geraldine Reitz
 1/28 Angie Lee
 1/30 Wendy Blum
 1/30 Gib Morrow

FEBRUARY 2023

2/1 Bill Freeman
 2/3 Adina Diamond (6th)
 2/4 Bonnie Zell
 2/5 Matthew Kinney
 2/5 Elizabeth Snyder
 2/6 Laura Wolfson
 2/8 Elan Maxim (23rd)
 2/8 Samantha Schwartz (18th)
 2/10 Bob Friedman
 2/11 Ella Barney
 2/11 Shalem Blum (18th)
 2/11 Leo Banks Strich (5th)

2/14 Bob Goldman
 2/14 Ted Schuman
 2/15 Gloria Lebowitz
 2/17 Dan Ohms
 2/18 Tom Oliver
 2/18 Sarah Zarrow
 2/20 Don Fenbert
 2/20 Susan Schneider
 2/20 Elijah Wolfson (14th)
 2/21 Gregg Orlik
 2/21 Kristin Sykes-David
 2/22 Frank Corey
 2/22 Teva Corey-DuBow (16th)
 2/22 Corinne Hecht
 2/22 Arthur Ingberman
 2/22 Karen Sloss
 2/22 Jeannette Stephens
 2/23 Sabrina Stratton
 2/24 Todd Haskell
 2/24 Robert Meltzer
 2/25 Nancy Auerbach
 2/25 Avi Brennan (16th)
 2/25 Genny Cohn
 2/26 Alex Jeffers
 2/26 Robin Kodner
 2/26 Orly Ziv-Maxim
 2/27 Conor Keefe (4th)
 2/27 Ken Levinson
 2/27 Teresa Sommers
 2/28 Lillia Ingram-Monteiro (4th)

Who Will Write Our History? Hosted by Dr. Sarah Zarrow



Dr. Sarah Zarrow, Endowed Professor of Jewish History at WWU, will be speaking about the documentary *Who Will Write Our History?* This documentary is based on a scholarly book about the secret archive project based in the Warsaw Ghetto. Sarah, who is also a CBI member, is requesting that

people watch the documentary before attending her presentation. Viewing is available on streaming platforms and through the WWU library (which is accessible to non-WWU community members as well.)

The presentation will be held at CBI on Thursday, January 26 at 6:30 pm in honor of International Holocaust Day. This presentation is appropriate for ages 10 and beyond. Families are encouraged to come at 5:30 to share a potluck meal. Please bring a dairy dish, vegetarian dish, or dessert to share. At 6:30 everyone will transfer to the sanctuary. After Sarah's presentation, there will be an open mic for questions and discussion.

There will be surveys available for folks in attendance to complete. We are really motivated to know what topics interest our community, what events are appealing to you, and how we can provide experiences that attract members to come out and participate at CBI.

VICTORIA MAYERS
CO-KESHER DIRECTOR

From the Social Action Committee

The Needs of Refugees Are Our Priority

BY LINDA BLACKWELL

Thanks to all the congregants who donated items for the Jewish Family Service's Refugee Resettlement Project (Seattle). We reached our goal of supplying all the essential household items for a newly arrived refugee family of four. Members of the knitting group, the CBI book group, and the Board donated items. We had many anonymous donors who helped to complete the task. We will be delivering the donations to Seattle on January 10. Jewish Family Services plans to highlight our contributions in their next blogpost.

The ongoing needs of refugees and immigrants will remain the top priority of the Social Action Committee in 2023. We hope to focus on the needs of refugee families who are arriving in Whatcom county. There are plans to have a Shabbat dedicated to the refugee crisis on February 10 along with other Jewish congregations in sponsorship with HIAS.

Information about HIAS from their website notes, "HIAS is the world's oldest refugee agency. Originally set up by

Jews to help fellow Jews, now HIAS is a multi-continent humanitarian aid agency dedicated to helping refugees in keeping with the organization's Jewish ethical roots. HIAS dedicates this Shabbat experience to refugees and asylum seekers. The fastest-growing European refugee crisis since World War II is still ongoing. People seeking asylum are being turned away at borders around the world. And this year, for the first time ever, the total number of displaced persons globally is over 100 million." Future plans on how we can assist refugees will be coming out in the *Timbrel* in the upcoming months. However, this is a time for individuals to ask our legislators to finally pass the Dreamer Act of 2021.

At the local level, the Social Action Committee has helped clean up the "Little House" for the Interfaith Coalition of Whatcom County (ICWC) for the last 13 years. This house provides a temporary home for families experiencing homelessness.

Kristin Sykes-David, Peggy Hanley, Minda Rae Amiran, and I prepared the house, and a new family moved in December 9. It was rewarding to pick up this project after a pandemic pause. Also in association with the Interfaith Coalition and other faith communities, CBI congregants donate coats to the fall coat drive which collected a total of 1300 coats. These were distributed to over 700 families and individuals. Please consider how to assist the Interfaith Coalition when you do any "attic" cleaning. If you have large furniture you want to clear out, then this can be taken to the Habitat for Humanity. Please ask for any sale profit to be earmarked for the Interfaith Coalition. Any dishes, gently used sheets, blankets, and household goods can be donated to the Fresh Start program at the First Congregational Church on Cornwall. You can contact the Interfaith Coalition directly for information or discuss with Linda Blackwell. If you want to be active in social justice, contact Linda for information.

FROM THE RABBI

Continued from Page 1

texts, prayers, Hebrew, trope, Torah commentaries, and so much more this past year.

The term we give to those who convert into Judaism is "Jew by choice." However, I believe we are all "Jews by choice" even if you are born into the tribe. We all make decisions about how we want to live our lives and whether or not Judaism plays a role in it. These 14 students have chosen Judaism. They have chosen the challenges of being Jewish, and they have chosen the beauty, too.

Please put these dates in your calendar so you can add to the joy of their special day. Let them know that they have community members who are supportive of their choice to live Jewish lives.

Thank you.

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| March 11, 2023 | Harriet Markell, Emily Weiner, John Cook, Henry Curme |
| May 6, 2023 | Chiara Horton |
| May 27, 2023 | Sabrina Gentry |
| June 24, 2023 | Lea Donner |
| July 1, 2023 | Jonah Attar |
| August 19, 2023 | Eytan Samuels |
| August 26, 2023 | Nóra Seltz |
| September 30, 2023 | Max Naiman |
| October 21, 2023 | Max Braunstein |
| November 25, 2023 | Sylvan Weinstein |
| August 24, 2024 | Kobe Ravitsky |

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 6

| | |
|---------------------|------|
| Louis Lebowitz | 1/7 |
| Pearl Turovitz | 1/7 |
| Brian House | 1/10 |
| Stanley Litt | 1/10 |
| Dorothy Mazel Spiro | 1/11 |
| Miriam Cohen | 1/12 |
| Simon Rosen | 1/13 |
| Ben Thal | 1/13 |
| Irwin Wapner | 1/13 |

Friday, January 13 and Saturday, January 14

| | |
|-------------------------|------|
| Aimee Lewis | 1/14 |
| Arnold Loober | 1/14 |
| Anna Winefield Fox | 1/15 |
| Aaron Sanger | 1/15 |
| Felice Bourne | 1/16 |
| Lillian Stiglitz Heller | 1/16 |
| Steve Zabinsky | 1/16 |
| Herman "Hy" Brownstein | 1/17 |
| Barney Cohn | 1/17 |
| Jack Diamond | 1/17 |
| Bette Levy | 1/17 |
| Jack Siegel | 1/18 |
| Lawrence Weintraub | 1/20 |

Friday, January 20

| | |
|--------------------------|------|
| Irving Lackowitz | 1/21 |
| Harry V. Welch, Jr | 1/22 |
| Marion Glassman | 1/23 |
| Shirley Spiegel Jacobson | 1/23 |
| Sandor Garfinkle | 1/25 |
| Morris Kalman Patinkin | 1/25 |
| Harry Suslow | 1/26 |
| Victorie Haislip | 1/27 |

Friday, January 27

| | |
|----------------------|------|
| Sylvia Goldman | 1/28 |
| Mary Bayer Koplowitz | 1/29 |
| Jerome Selznick | 1/29 |

| | |
|----------------------------|------|
| David Kaplowitz | 1/30 |
| Eleanor Scharff | 1/30 |
| (Arabelle) Chaya Schlanger | 1/30 |
| Daniel Weis | 1/30 |
| Laura Ann Bourne | 1/31 |
| Harold Earl Perper | 2/1 |
| Joel K. Rubenstein | 2/1 |
| Morris Faber | 2/2 |
| Fred Graff | 2/2 |
| Lillian Mauer Pravda | 2/2 |
| Alvis E. Swindell | 2/2 |
| George Markell | 2/3 |
| Florence D. Shain | 2/3 |

Friday, February 3

| | |
|------------------------|------|
| Hally Vernon | 2/4 |
| Hannah Jacobson | 2/5 |
| David Fine | 2/6 |
| Steven R. Rivkin | 2/6 |
| William Schwartz | 2/6 |
| Roy Athol Thomas | 2/7 |
| Celia Zak | 2/7 |
| Leona Chorney Sondik | 2/8 |
| Jean Beverly Blank | 2/9 |
| Judy Holtzman | 2/10 |
| Mishra Stephen Suloway | 2/10 |

Friday, February 10 and Saturday, February 11

| | |
|-------------------------|------|
| Frank Kraus | 2/11 |
| Clara Lazarus | 2/11 |
| Meyer Wolpov | 2/12 |
| Frieda Blank | 2/13 |
| Albert Lebovich | 2/13 |
| Mark Luster | 2/13 |
| Derrek Jeremy Adelstein | 2/14 |
| David Shain | 2/14 |
| Lou Fine | 2/15 |
| Debbie Haskell | 2/16 |
| Paul Sondik | 2/17 |

Friday, February 17

| | |
|--------------------------|------|
| Rita Gordon | 2/18 |
| William E. Whiting | 2/18 |
| Robert Baker | 2/19 |
| William Freeman | 2/19 |
| Burton Sklar | 2/19 |
| Gloria Perper | 2/20 |
| Elinor Pravda | 2/20 |
| Rochelle Blum | 2/21 |
| Isadore Graff | 2/21 |
| Michel Oksenberg | 2/21 |
| Mel Adelstein | 2/22 |
| Nelson Beller | 2/22 |
| Phil H. Miller | 2/22 |
| Ninfa Short | 2/22 |
| Judith T. Sklar | 2/22 |
| Steve Sokol | 2/22 |
| Clarence Weiner | 2/22 |
| Linda Kaplowitz Copeland | 2/23 |
| Beth R. Curtis | 2/23 |
| Benjamin Solomon | 2/23 |

Friday, February 24

| | |
|-----------------------|------|
| Betty Goldberger | 2/25 |
| Luise Wikes | 2/25 |
| Robert Dixon | 2/27 |
| Mitchel J. Lazarus | 2/27 |
| Sadie Gordon Schiller | 2/27 |
| Gene Adelstein | 3/1 |
| Sandra Glazer Lake | 3/1 |
| Robert W. Lippman | 3/1 |
| Sandra (Sandy) Miller | 3/1 |
| Robert Fife | 3/2 |
| Bernie Kaufman | 3/2 |
| Jonathan David Mayers | 3/2 |
| John H. Bruns | 3/3 |
| Ruth Lippman | 3/3 |
| Howard Little | 3/3 |

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Community Seder

Mark your calendar for **April 6, 2023** because the community seder is coming back! This all-ages event will include a fun, lively and upbeat retelling of the Exodus story.

Bring your friends and family to enjoy a catered Seder dinner with vegetarian, gluten-free, and dairy-free options.

Look for more information on how to register coming out in January.

