

VOICES

Congregation B'nai B'rith SPRING 2019 • JOURNAL VOL. 94 NO. 1 • IYARI 5778 - NISAN 5779

FOCUS: THE HUMAN FAMILY

Building Bridges, Overcoming Barriers

Interview by Paul Zakrzewski

VOICES sat down with Rabbi Daniel Brenner and Daniel Hochman to explore a major new CBB initiative that aims to increase cross-cultural understanding and build interfaith cooperation.

Can you lay out the various parts of CBB's new Human Family Initiative?

Rabbi Daniel Brenner: Currently, we're busy with several components of the initiative. One is a monthly discussion series called the "CBB Salon Series: Can We Talk?," in which trained facilitators lead groups of CBB members in discussion around contentious issues. They do this through a dialogue format meant to create a safe space in which each side can listen to the other.

Another big component is developing strong relationships with other faith communities. This is something we've been doing for years—even before we started calling it the Human Family. It included the work we did with the Islamic Society, or traveling with First United Methodist Church on church-building missions.

But the Human Family has presented us with an opportunity to really double down on those efforts. Last year we had our Jews and Evangelicals conversation and a "Bagels & Baklava" event with the Greek Orthodox church. And earlier this spring, we put together a program with the Santa Barbara Mission where we went to their services and they came to ours. Now we're planning new events and continuing to strengthen the relationships we already have.



Tree of Life vigil at CBB, October 2018.

Continued on page 12



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CBB Resource Guide

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Congregation B'nai B'rith is a diverse, inclusive community of individuals and families building together a warm and vibrant house of living Judaism.

VOICES

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ARE YOU Hospitalized?

Our clergy would like to visit and offer their support and encouragement. Privacy policies prevent hospital staff from automatically calling the Temple. If someone you know is in the hospital, please call the Temple office at 805/964-7869.

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Photos: (1) Confirmation students and Rabbi Brenner participate in L'taken, a social justice seminar for Jewish teens in Washington, DC, Jan 2019. (2) Mitzvah Day participants build skateboards for kids in foster care for "Together We Rise," during Mitzvah Day, Nov. 2018. (3) David and Hana Holmes. (4) Oliver Wittman (5) Messages of consolation and hope created by the CBB community for the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh, November 2018.



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Introducing *The Human Family*

By Rabbi Steve Cohen

Reflecting upon the great challenges facing us right now, (and by “us” I mean the Jewish people, the American people, and the human race) I think that one of the deepest questions for us to ponder is “who is our family?”



EACH OF US BEGINS our life in a family. If we are lucky, that family provides us with everything we need. Our physical need for food, shelter, and safety. Our emotional need for love, comfort, identity, and belonging. And our spiritual need for moral guidance and meaning. In exchange, something deep within us understands

that we owe our family a debt of gratitude, of family loyalty.

As we grow older, our understanding of “who is my family” expands beyond grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins and comes to include close friends, neighbors, and community. At every stage of our lives, we enter into “family” relationships with new people, upon whom we rely for protection, for love and for guidance, and to whom we feel obligated in return.

Our congregation, like any other synagogue community, exists so that we might be extended family for each other. The Jewish people as a whole has eternally thought of itself in the same way. We are a noisy, argumentative, stiff-necked, justice-demanding, holiness-seeking 4,000-year-old family. At its best, this family gives us love, and comfort, identity and belonging. And in return, we struggle to keep this family alive, generation after generation.

But we belong also to a much bigger, even older family. **The human family.** We Jews see ourselves as **both** the children of Abraham and Sarah, **and** as children of Adam and Eve. We see no contradic-

tion between these two identities. We claim kinship with all of humanity, all of our Human Family.

That we humans are all one family has never been an easy or obvious truth. Our old story of the Tower of Babel tells of the first fracturing of the Human Family into many languages and nations. That myth speaks of the beginnings of humanity’s ancient tendencies toward tribalism, fear and hatred. Sometimes those tendencies grow quiet, and human beings discover our miraculous connectedness to each other.

But now it seems that we are living through a time in which the old tendencies have flared up again, like embers of an old fire. Here in the United States. In Great Britain. In Europe. Anxiety about the future has reawakened old fears and a retreat into suspicion and hatred. We have lost our vision of the Human Family.

In response to this loss of vision, our congregation has embarked on a bold and expansive journey we are calling “The Human Family.” We intend to be a powerful force in Santa Barbara and beyond, for curiosity and communication, for cross-cultural understanding and interfaith cooperation.

We fully intend, of course, to maintain and to celebrate our noisy and argumentative Jewish family identity. But at the very same time, we will demonstrate to our children, to our neighbors, and to ourselves, exactly what it means to be both fully Jewish and fully human.



We Welcome **Our New Members**

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The Courage to Engage: *Bridging the political divisions within CBB*

By Brandy Mussman

As someone who leans very far to the conservative side of the political spectrum, the election of 2016 was really hard for me, but for different reasons than those on the left of the spectrum.

My candidate won, but I feared at first that I lost my community.

IN JANUARY 2017, I was alerted to the political “heat” at CBB when I attended a CBB parents’ discussion during Sunday School that was titled, “How to Tell Your Children About a Trump Presidency.” The vitriol from those who were dismayed by our new president was real and visceral. How would they feel about me if they knew I supported his presidency?

I spent a lot of time in anxious thought about whether to “come out” as a political conservative at CBB. After that parents’ discussion I didn’t dare voice my views out of fear that I would lose the love and respect of and connection to my community, and I was concerned that my young daughters would suffer, too.

Others in our community, on both sides of the political spectrum, were also concerned. They acted faster than I did. They decided to find a way to bring people within our community to come together and talk, and listen to one another, without vitriol. With empathy. With real curiosity.

This effort eventually formed itself into the **CBB Salon Series**, headed by Rabbi Steve Cohen and Liat Wasserman, which I was invited to join. Interestingly enough, I was specifically invited to join because of my conservative views. Those were made known because I had made a decision and formed a plan of action of my own: I wasn’t going to abandon this community even though I feared it would turn its back on me and my family once the word was out on my political views. I wasn’t going to hide either. Sometimes a Jew has to stand alone, even among Jews.

I began making my conservative views known, and voicing, qui-

etly but firmly, my support for our president. I want every closet (or open) conservative in our community to know: I was not (always) rejected. Well, at least not by everyone. There were some.

But I was also sought out by others who were genuinely curious about my views, how on earth I had arrived at them and why I held them. Some even went so far as to express their admiration for me and ask me whether I would be willing to engage in conversations with them, which I have done, and it has created new friendships in ways I never could have imagined. My ties to the CBB community have, if anything, deepened tremendously.

Engagement is simply that: engaging. It’s not about agreement. It took a lot of courage for me to be willing to engage, and some of my fears were realized, it’s true. But more importantly, I was equally met by members of this community with curiosity, warmth, and engagement on their end. That has been deeply meaningful to me.

Through the open, facilitated conversations in the Salon Series, we have striven to make safe space in our community for all to feel heard and to listen to others, including those with whom they disagree. We have invited participants to engage with one another to overcome division. I believe we have been successful so far.

Our biggest limitation in this Salon Series has been the lack of



“ *But I was also sought out by others who were genuinely curious about my views, how on earth I had arrived at them and why I held them. Some even went so far as to express their admiration for me and ask me whether I would be willing to engage in conversations with them, which I have done, and it has created new friendships in ways I never could have imagined.* ”

participants who hold conservative viewpoints, which is why I am writing this piece today. I have enough faith and trust in the members of this community at this point to openly, and before this wide audience, “out” myself as a political conservative and a supporter of our president. I invite anyone who is curious about that, and willing to engage with me in respectful discussion, to talk with me about it more. I also invite those who share my views (or other minority viewpoints) to consider engaging more with our community through this Salon Series.

Our community are the people with whom we pray, celebrate, fast, repent, mourn, study Torah and so much more. Community requires many things, and my lesson for this year has been that it requires the courage to engage even when we fear the rejection and condemnation of others. It’s on each of us to take the first step, open the engagement and give our community the chance to engage back.

Brandy, her husband Ian, and their two daughters Mariam and Orelia have been with CBB since 2015. Ian is a natural-health consultant in private practice with clients worldwide, and Brandy is a full-time wife and homeschooling mom.



The CBB Salon Series: Who Is Listening?

How do we listen and speak to one another about politically contentious subjects when our political opinions, points of view, and philosophies seem to vary so widely, often resulting in hurt feelings and misunderstandings?

WE POSED THIS QUESTION to the CBB community, and a core group of dedicated volunteers responded. The CBB Salon series transformed these volunteers into trained facilitators, to moderate discussions.

In small groups, in two series and over the course of the last year, six discussion nights were held. More than 300 seats were filled with eager participants, gathering to hear and to be heard. In the first set of discussions, we chose less controversial subjects, and then moved to more contentious topics in the second series.

The format we chose resulted in good discussions and new friends. Now it is time for us to take what we have learned and adapt it for our next series to be announced in the future. We are so grateful to the congregants, our friends, who chose to participate. And we especially thank the team of hard-working and caring volunteers who facilitated and made this process possible.

Continued on next page

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In addition to the CBB Salon series, there are many other projects being considered for this piece of the Human Family Initiative. Some are ongoing, like a Conservatives' Club, while some are still in the planning stage.

We hope to bring us all together by recognizing that we are all valuable members of our CBB community family, and that no voice should be spoken unheard. Please watch for our announcements in the future as we continue our efforts to bring our diverse community together, even across topics on which we disagree.

—*B'shalom from your Salon Series Steering Committee.*



Standing Stronger Together

By Steven Amerikaner

There are enduring memories of our synagogue's vigil on October 30 in honor of Pittsburgh's Tree of Life Congregation:

- *Pastors, ministers, priests, rabbis, and community leaders standing shoulder-to-shoulder, pledging with one voice to stop the madness.*
- *The lighting of thirteen memorial candles from a single braided Havdalah candle, carefully passed from one person to the next, as a deepening silence filled the hall.*
- *The powerful message we heard from Rabbi Cohen as we struggled with our grief, fear and anger.*
- *Standing room only, with over 1100 congregants and guests crowded into our sanctuary and social hall. Some had to park nearly a mile up the road.*
- *Our political leaders sharing their thoughts with us. Congressman Carbajal and Senator Jackson movingly spoke, and nearly all of our Goleta and Santa Barbara City Council Members were there, along with our own Supervisor Janet Wolf.*

SBORTY

CBB TEENS... GET INVOLVED!

SBORTY engages teens through social activities, Jewish celebrations, and giving back to our community. From bonfires, to weekend retreats with other youth groups, SBORTY teens invite you to join us.

For more information check out www.tinyurl.com/SBORTY, or email us to get involved at cbbSBORTY@icloud.com.



THE VIGIL WAS ORGANIZED IN JUST THREE DAYS by CBB’s clergy and professional staff, particularly Rabbi Daniel Brenner and Executive Director Elizabeth Gaynes, and came off without a hitch. Security was tight and effective, and there was plenty of food (notwithstanding early predictions to the contrary).

Whether or not you were “in the room where it happened” on October 30, we urge you to join CBB’s effort to confront and defeat hate and violence whenever and wherever it occurs. These are the moments that define us as a unified Jewish community. ■

While the shock and dismay of those first days has settled into memory, our commitment to confronting hate and violence is stronger than ever. CBB has now formally launched the Human Family Initiative, which is described in detail elsewhere in this issue of VOICES.

A partner at the law firm of Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck, Steven Amerikaner is CBB’s Board President.

The Human Family Initiative is one of the most significant programs our congregation has undertaken, and we owe an enormous thank you to the CBB family who has decided to single-handedly support it (and wishes to remain anonymous).



What about the CBB Salon Series? How's that coming along?

Daniel Hochman: Very well! I was very involved more at the planning stage. I worked with Liat Wasserman, and we did a lot of visioning together. At this point, we've done almost a year of events. To use a business phrase, we've gone through proof of concept. We know we've got something that works. At the same time, each round of discussions brings up issues that we'd like to improve upon (see page 9, "Where the CBB Salon Series Is Heading"). We have people in our discussions who love being there, and who show up in the spirit of the event. If there's anything we're still tinkering with, it's finding the right topics.

How did the Human Family come to be?

DH: Rabbi Steve Cohen gave a sermon just after the 2017 Charlottesville incident that really helped to kickstart the Human Family. If you recall, in the year leading up to that, the country was experiencing a year of increasingly negative rhetoric on the Internet and elsewhere. And Charlottesville felt like a physical manifestation of all this virtual hatred. It was a moment where we had to say, this could happen anywhere. So when the Rabbi took the opportunity to tell our congregation that there was something we could do in response to Charlottesville, I think we all felt challenged in a positive way.

At the same time that Rabbi Cohen was challenging the congregation, philanthropists Mark and Liz Schulhof challenged him to think as expansively as possible about what we could do right here in Santa Barbara that would be a powerful response to the rising tide of hatred.



Daniel Hochman and Rabbi Daniel Brenner

“The main thrust of the Human Family initiative is that we're all there for each other, that here at CBB we're just as concerned about what happens to a Lutheran community, or an immigrant community, as we are for ourselves.”

Why is this so important right now?

DH: What caught my attention about Rabbi Cohen's sermon is the way he talked about civil discourse. It's something he always comes back to: How can we disagree on things but still respect the person with whom we disagree? How do we talk about things that we would normally argue about? It's so important at a time when the country is gripped by partisan divide. We are now so invested, one side or the other, on almost any issue that comes up. It's important to go back to a time and a way where we can talk with compassion, with listening, with the desire to understand, the desire to listen. Once there, I think most people agree on almost everything that matters.

Switching gears, can you talk more about the importance of interfaith connections?

DB: One of the most compelling moments that came out of Charlottesville was an interfaith vigil where community leaders in Virginia stood up to hatred and said, 'what happened here is not a representation of who we are. It is not a representation of our faith.' Part of what we're doing with the Human Family is to lay the groundwork for that kind of network right here. The Tree of Life vigil we held last October (see page 10) shows how effective such a network can be. Even though the Human Family initiative was very new—and even though we had to pull together the vigil very quickly—our work had generated a lot of support and many people were aware of what we were doing. The vigil itself was attended by lots of local dignitaries, 60+ clergy members, and hundreds of our non-Jewish neighbors wishing to show their love.

DH: The concept of tikkun olam—to repair the world—doesn't allow us to simply stick in our heads in our shells, to look out only for ourselves. It requires us to take care of one another.

And as we've grown over the past 5, 10, 15 years, we've had so many occasions to step up. One of our first efforts was getting involved in helping to build the Ubumwe Community Center and Preschool in Rwanda. I mean, what better statement could we make about the importance of this work?

So the Human Family initiative has already helped CBB?

DB: The first action we took as part of the Human Family Initiative had nothing to do with CBB. It involved an incident of vandalism at the Santa Barbara Mission on Columbus Day, or Indigenous People's Day depending on your point of view, last year. There was a window broken, red paint splashed on the front doors, and other graffiti. In response to that CBB put out a very strong statement. We acknowledged there is pain in this community based on the Mission's history—something the Mission also recognizes, and is working to fix. But vandalism and other acts of destruction of hatred are not the right way to communicate that message. The Mission used our language in part of their statement.

What did that tell you?

DB: That the main thrust of the Human Family initiative is that we're all there for each other, that here at CBB we're just as concerned about what happens to a Lutheran community, or an immigrant community, as we are for ourselves. It's recognizing that we as Jews we are no better or no worse than anyone else, and have responsibilities to those other people.

What are the plans for 2019 and beyond?

DB: Well, in terms of the interfaith collaboration, we do a lot of service projects. Our opinion is the best way to build relationships is working together to help others. We did an interfaith service project back in January over the Martin Luther King Jr. weekend. We worked with the Montecito Bucket Brigade to do native plant rehabilitation. In May, we've partnering with the First United Methodist Church to travel to Northern California on a service trip to help rebuild communities devastated during the huge fires we've had recently.

DH: We've been in the beginning stages up to now. We're learning to be an institution that endorses, condones, or administers this wider view of our responsibility to our community. But as we move past that we're going to see big changes.

DB: Absolutely. We're trying a lot of new things for the first time, so there's obviously going to be growing pains. Or as Daniel says, the need for proof of concept. So for now we're really seeing where these current initiatives end up. Because the long-term goal for us is that the Human Family become more than a CBB project, but rather a gift for the greater Santa Barbara community, something for the greater community to run with. During the congregational assessment survey we did last year, the URJ helped us highlight the words that came up most often. They were "warm," "caring," and "community." That speaks to who we are and who we want to be. So with all these efforts both inside and out of CBB I think we're doing something right. And something we want to continue doing. ■



L: Rabbi Brenner and volunteers at MLK Jr. Bucket Brigade in Montecito, January 2019. **R:** Sarah Dent volunteers with Rabbi Brenner.



Sukkot 2018

Inspired by Rabbi Cohen's Sukkot workshop, many CBB and BHY families built their own homemade sukkah for the first time, creating memories and new traditions.





Mitzvah Day 2018

On Sunday, November 18, 2018, 300+ volunteers gathered at CBB and elsewhere in Santa Barbara to complete 20+ service projects. Check out cbbsb.org for more photos and news coverage.



**ALTHEA STROUM &
PAT GLAZER MEMORIAL**

Family Camp

From November 9-11, 2018, over 35 families joined us at Camp Ramah in Ojai for a weekend of fun, unplugging, reflection, and connection.





MLK Jr. Shabbat

On Friday, January 18, hundreds turned out to attend our Community-wide Musical Celebration of Freedom with the Unity Inspirational Ensemble, in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



February 10, 2019





Beginning with the Red Comb:

My Impression of Israel

By Sue Levine



Above (L-R): Carol Spungen, Lynne Altschul, Merith Cosden, Debbi Spungen, and Robin Cerf. **Opposite (L to R):** (1) Street in Jaffa. (2) Diane Zipperstein, Merith Cosden, and Marian Cohen. (3) Leo Baeck School, Haifa, with former counselors from Camp Haverim. (4) Our group included Rabbi Steve and Marian Cohen, Steve and Diane Zipperstein, Dan and Robin Cerf, Fima and Jere Lifshitz, Bob and Sue Levine, Richard Silver, Lauren Katz, Louise Wyner, Carol Spungen, Debbi Spungen, Merith Cosden, Pamela Larsson-Toscher, with guide Amos Davidowitz.

I gaze at the indistinguishable red item on the first page of one of my favorite picture books, Zoom, by Istvan Banyai. It is not until I turn the page that I realize that the red object is the comb on top of the head of a rooster.

ON SUCCESSIVE PAGES I recognize that the rooster is in a barnyard, the barnyard is in a farm scene, the scene is on a poster, the poster is pasted onto the side of a bus and the bus is in a city.

With each page turn my view broadens.

So it is with Israel. As one of our speakers on our recent Israel trip with Rabbi Cohen so aptly pointed out, simply focusing on any one part of Israel fails to paint the whole picture.

The goal of the eighteen B'nai B'rith congregants participating in our trip was to get as full a picture of Israel as possible in a mere ten days. We met with a myriad of speakers ranging from journalists, members of the Knesset, professors, an ambassador, and Middle East analysts, to Arab and Israeli citizens. We observed, listened and questioned as we visited a refugee camp in Ramallah, a settlement on the West Bank, a moshav on the



Israeli-Gaza border, a city being created, and several grass-roots projects aiming to build relationships between adversarial groups.

Through all this we had the benefit of hearing the perspective and strong opinions of our extraordinary guide, Amos Davidowitz. This multi-faceted husband/father and lieutenant colonel fought in three wars and, as a kibbutz resident who gave up his home in order to provide more comfortable accommodations for another growing family, he epitomizes some of the best in Jewish principles and values.

Converting our packed days into a few paragraphs isn't possible but here are a few facts we learned:

According to Tel Aviv University professor Paul Liptz, Jews make up only .2% or 14.4 million of the world population.

More than 57% of all Jews live outside Israel. The remaining 43% make up three-quarters of the 8.8 million Jewish, Arab and other citizens of Israel.

Unlike the American two party candidate-centered government, Israel adopted a party-centered parliamentary system, according to Reuven Hazan, political science professor at Hebrew University. Israel's primary focus is not on politics, economy or even climate change. Rather, it is forced to prioritize its resources on

security, especially in facing its latest, most lethal threat, Iran.

Because party members vote as a bloc and no single party has a majority of elected representatives, smaller parties are courted in order to form coalitions and push through the most important elements of their own agendas.

Of the Israelis we met, many are resentful of the powerful Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox Jews who seek government support in terms of actual benefits and maintain religious authority on who can perform marriages, divorces and conversions, all to the consternation of secular taxpayers.

They do little to elevate their financial situation since their schools often shun core subjects that could prepare them to earn a living. Most do not serve in any way in the Israel Defense Forces.

To compound the resentment, the birthrate of ultra-Orthodox is 6.9 versus 3.16 for other Jewish citizens. And it is predicted that if this staggering birthrate continues, then by 2030 this segment of the population will represent 30% of the total Israeli population.

The installment of the security barrier has successfully made terrorism less of an issue in Israel. Large panels of concrete as well as greater lengths of electronically sensed chain-link fences protect at-risk Jews.

Military service appears to be an anticipated “rite of passage” among Israeli youth. Troops learn social responsibility (we saw some soldiers cleaning litter from highways and others visiting the Holocaust Memorial, Yad Vashem) and many appreciate the opportunity to pick up marketable skills. In addition, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) recruits form connections to other people who can catapult their careers.

Moshav Netiv Ha’asarah borders on the Gaza Strip. Hovering above are drones surveying Hamas offensives. Each home has a requisite bomb shelter as protection against mortar and chemical warfare. The recreation room doubles as a safety zone as are surrounding concrete bus shelters. When alarms sound, men, women and children have approximately 5 seconds to take cover.

In contrast to the primitive tin structures used for years as “temporary” housing for early immigrants to Israel, Palestinian “refugees” in Ramallah live in multi-story stone buildings some with patios separated by narrow alleyways easily accessible to the bustling city of Ramallah. Flags demonstrate allegiance to revolutionary groups and placards glorify sons either as terrorists or prisoners in Israel.

Technology is regarded as the crown jewel of Israel’s economy. According to journalist Viva Sarah Press, Israel has registered more patents than Canada and the United Kingdom combined. Israel has pioneered computers in cars. It is expert in cyber security and antivirus software. It is working on ultrasound equipment that kills tumors and sniff phones that can diagnose disease from your breath. Handheld printers, cordless chargers, breast cancer detector sensors, brain surgery practice simulators, cameras in pills are part of Israel’s technology wave.

After ten days of observing, questioning and celebrating, we identified some nagging issues and some profound advances:

- Bolstering better public relations for an often-misunderstood nation.
- Plugging the income stream to the terrorists and families of terrorists who benefit from terrorist acts.
- Being vigilant about Iran’s intentions.
- Keeping a strong military presence.
- Encouraging women, particularly Orthodox and Arab women, to get higher education.
- Backing enterprises that enlist both Jews and Arabs as volunteers to help the greater community.
- Promoting economic alliances between Israel and other nations, particularly Arab countries, even if diplomatic efforts are failing.
- Opposing BDS.
- Applauding non-government organizations that break down walls of fear and build trust among Israelis and Palestinians.
- Supporting Reform Jewish interests in order to promote a multi-dimensional Jewish perspective.

Above all, we need to include Israel in our prayers and in our discussions with family, friends and community to help the world better understand this amazing, vibrant, evolving country. ■

A former synagogue and school librarian, Sue Levine currently serves as co-president of Women of B’nai B’rith.

TODAH RABAH!

Our campus was built over 50 years ago, and as gorgeous as it is, there are shortcomings in terms of accessibility. This becomes especially clear when the summer services begin in the Abrahams Outdoor Chapel, as some congregants struggle with making the trek from the outdoor chapel services up to the front patio for our Oneg Shabbat. Thankfully, last fall congregant Adam Liff decided that there is no better mitzvah than to help those who need help with mobility. He generously donated a brand-new golf cart to CBB to help improve campus accessibility. Adam dedicated the golf cart donation in memory of Nina Liff, Noah Liff and Daniel Liff. Thank you, Adam, for making a difference! – Ron Gleiberman



Above: Margaret Singer (z"l) awaiting a drive in our new golf cart during the 2018 High Holy Days.

Finding My Roots: New CBB Genealogy Club Helps Solve Family Mysteries

By Jane I. Honikman



Childhood curiosity got me interested in exploring family history. I was fascinated that my maternal grandmother came from Russia and my grandfather from Germany in the 1890s. I was intrigued that my father's family has been in America since the late 1690s. It was exciting to learn I descend from survivors of both the Revolutionary and Civil Wars.

I DISCOVERED THERE were family mysteries and I wanted to solve them. I irritated my mother but pleased my father by asking lots of questions. She had no answers, but he had photo albums and family trees. Mother could not understand my eagerness to dig into the past. Father proudly boasted about his lineage.

I do have a set of small, black and white photos of German family members. One has a stamp on the back of a Jewish Star, surrounded by the words BERLIN and "James Levy, Kantor u. Religionslehrer". He was my mother's uncle but no one knew what had happened to him.

During a visit to Berlin in 2001, I learned that great uncle James and his wife Johanna had been transported from Berlin to the Theresienstadt Concentration Camp. Records revealed that she died on September 17, 1944, but Uncle James was liberated on May 2, 1945, and listed in the Swiss Red Cross records as a displaced person.

What happened to him? My big break came in 2010 after I submitted an application to the International Tracing Service (ITS) based in Germany. They informed me that James arrived at a

reception camp in St Gallen, Switzerland, on February 7, 1945. Through the American Red Cross, I contacted the Holocaust and War Victims Tracing Center based in Baltimore. I discovered my "missing" family! Great Uncle James died in 1961 at age 85, a widower, but reunited with his children and grandson. He outlived my grandfather, who had died in 1942, before I was born.

My experience is not unique. I have made friends with like-minded family detectives. Ten years ago, Gayle Rosenberg and I met while on this journey. We had attended genealogy classes provided by the Santa Barbara County Genealogy Society (SBCGS) through Adult Education. Together we shared our successes and frustrations.

While what we learned was useful, we wished for more specific information about our Jewish past. We formed a Jewish Special Interest Group that meets prior to SBCGS's general meetings on the third Saturday of every month. In addition, with the Society's support, we launched monthly lectures at their library. But we wanted more.

Our new CBB Genealogy Club was launched in the fall of 2018. An enthusiastic gathering of eager individuals confirmed the need to meet at CBB on a regular basis. Our most recent speaker was Rabbi Steve Cohen. He shared his family's heritage through photos of his relatives, explaining how his mother's passion has passed to him. Rabbi Cohen's research successes have brought him satisfaction through meeting new branches on his tree and traveling to the cities of his ancestors.

Please join us at any point in your own search and research. There are no expectations or commitments. Come when you can, drop in, share and connect. We know where to direct your questions to the experts in the local genealogy community. It is free and open to all levels, beginners, sometime searchers and those with extensive experience.

Our club continues to work collaboratively with SBCGS. Their amazing volunteers are the experts.

Join the adventure to:

- Dig into your heritage
- Explore your roots
- Hear stimulating and inspirational speakers
- Make new connections
- NO EXPERIENCE IS NEEDED!

The CBB Genealogy Club meets every fourth Wednesday at 10:30am at CBB. See the eNews and monthly guide for updates about our topics. ■

Jane Honikman and her husband Terry moved to Santa Barbara in 1970 and she co-founded Postpartum Education for Parents (PEP) in 1977. The Honikman family includes three adult children, their spouses, and eight grandchildren (and a cat).

Mazel Tov! *In Our Lives*

May 1, 2018- April 30, 2019



1

1. To Sonia & Jarrod Rifkind on the arrival of Theo Rifkind, born on May 14, 2018.



2

2. To Monica & Michael Steiner on the arrival of baby Mike, born on May 25, 2018.



3

3. To Jessica Hambright and Lani Ballonoff, on the arrival of Annabelle Ballonoff, born on September 25, 2018.



4

4. To Jillian & Mordechai Juni, on the arrival of Aviva, born on November 13, 2018.

5. To Shira Kronfeld Young & Jared Young, on the arrival of Carmel-Rose Young, born on January 27, 2019.



5

6. To Danielle & Louis Drossel, on the arrival of Bo Drossel, born on February 2, 2019.



6

8. To Nathalie Chavez & Roberto Chriqui on the arrival of Henry Chriqui, born on May 27, 2018.



8



7

7. To Allison Shore & Austin French, on the arrival of Amelia French, born on February 25, 2019.

To Elisabeth Schreiber & Steven Wolff, on the arrival of Jadin Davie Schreiber-Wolff, born on January 22, 2019.



May Their Lives Be For A Blessing

May 1, 2018 to April 30, 2019

Dahlia Edelstein Gabert, mother of Daryl West.

Sally Sims

Howard Weinstein, father of Alex Weinstein.

Charles Gelman, father of Nina Gelman-Gans.

Esther "Fira" Kovalik, mother of Mark Kovalik.

Doris Stein, mother of Michael Stein.

Ida Malki, mother of Alan Malki.

Harry Heithaus, father of Ruth Rassler.

Phyllis Glick Braverman, mother of Stuart Braverman.

Sylvia Camiel, wife of Jack Camiel.

Carmelo Arreola, father of Nancy Glasman.

Karen Lola Schryer, sister of Abe Schryer.

Murray Welkowsky, husband of Cheryl Welkowsky.

Angela Torin

Wilma Chortkoff, wife of Burt Chortkoff.

Burt Rayden, father of Joel Rayden.

Samuel Nevel, father of Sharyn Stone.

Ethel Scar, wife of Howard Scar.

Sidney Ackert, husband of Harriet Ackert.

Robert Marshall, father of Jamie Shaw.

Ron Feldman, father of Jill Feldman.

Janice Baxter, wife of Ralph Baxter.

Meryl Winnikoff, wife of Marc Winnikoff.

Jaan Karsh, mother of Heather Karsh.

Linda Goldbloom, mother of Jana Brody.

Andrea Gropper, sister-in-law of Elaine Jacobs.

Alan Maurice Leroy Greer, father of Ruth Rassler.

Chaim Rogner, father of Yifat Nahmias.

Bradley Palley, son of Madeline and Jeff Palley.

Maurice Abrams, father of Bonnie Gerstenfeld.

Kiki Phillips, mother of Dian Pulverman.

H. Stanley Rassler, father of Michael Rassler.

Lawrence William Raphael, father of Dave Raphael.

Joyce Fienberg, sister-in-law of Lorne Fienberg.

Jesse Gross, father of Laurie Gross-Schaefer.

Bob Katz, father of Amy Katz.

Sheldon Braverman, father of Stuart Braverman.

Robert Kohn

Gloria Lederhandler, sister of Burt Bernstein.

Michael Bloom, son of Pearl Bloom.

Sue Preston, sister of Alan Anderson.

Lorraine Dellheim, sister-in-law of Ken Hartoch.

Sonia Elias

Arnold Mindick, brother of Laura Smith.

Byron Eakin, husband of Linda Albert.

Rickey Farbman, mother of Jay Farbman.

Ha'Makom yenakhem etkhem betokh she'ar avelei Tziyon v'Yerushalayim.

May God console you among the other mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.

Remembering

Myrna Childs

BY CANTOR MARK CHILDS

My mother was not a ritually observant Jew. She grew up in the heart of Jewish Brooklyn in the '30s and '40s. For her, Yom Kippur meant "shul-hopping" around her Ocean Parkway neighborhood with her friends and raiding their refrigerators to nosh some of the food meant for break fast while the parents were at the synagogue.

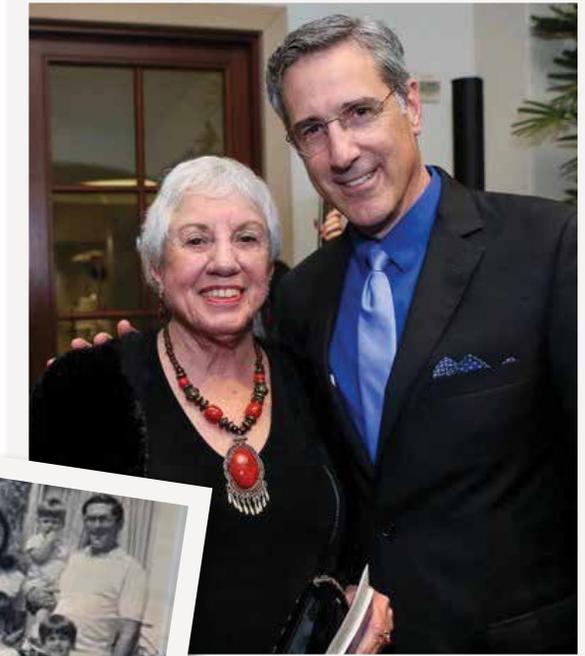
BEFORE MY MOTHER PASSED AWAY in December 2017, she said "I never believed in it, so don't feel like you need to say kaddish for me". I replied, "I know, mom. But I hope you won't mind if I say kaddish for me."

Myrna Childs passed away so beautifully. Diagnosed with colon cancer a year before she died. Visited regularly by her six kids, sons and daughters-in-law, grandchildren, friends. Cared for in her final weeks by her daughters in her own home. Surrounded by her family as she breathed her final breath. Her funeral attended by her family and large community of friends in Santa Rosa.

And now, it was time for my own personal mourning. After observing the seven days of shiva and 30 days of sheloshim, I continued, despite her permission otherwise, to recite kaddish in her memory and I did so through the traditional eleven months. What has this meant for me?

I had plenty of time to say goodbye to my mother, but when she was gone I found that letting go wasn't so easy. Saying kaddish for me has been a long and gentle release. With each recitation, I rose and closed my eyes and focused on my memories of her.

The beautiful young lady in old photo albums; the laughing mother; the angry mother; the tired mother; the stylish mother on a date with my father; the proud mother; the anguished



mother; the mother on the phone who wondered why it took so long for me to call; the dying mother.

Kaddish gave me a moment for each of these, daily, until I was ready for that release. I know it won't be a final letting go...the memories will still come... but I'm glad for the regular time that I spent with her. ■

Above (T-B): Mark and Myrna at the Dreamer's Ball, January 2017; the Childs Family (Cantor Mark bottom right); Ted & Myrna Childs.

Leadership Giving

We are grateful to those who make significant financial contributions to provide a solid operating foundation for CBB. CBB remains committed to being open and inclusive, welcoming all and providing extra assistance where needed. Thank you for your support this past year.



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The CBB Endowment giving wings to our future

Income generated by our endowment supports CBB's operations bridging the gap between what our members contribute and our annual operating needs. **Currently at \$7M, our goal is to reach sustainability with a \$20M endowment.**

Through **Children of the Covenant**, you may include CBB in your estate plan, name CBB as beneficiary of an IRA or life insurance, leave property to CBB, or establish a gift annuity. We also deeply appreciate in-lifetime gifts to the CBB Endowment.

Contact Executive Director Elizabeth Gaynes to learn more.
elizabeth@cbbsb.org / 805.964.7869 x111



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***It is not about how much I give,
 it's about WHY I give.***

The choice I made to leave a legacy gift to the Children of the Covenant goes back 54 years ago to WHY I chose Santa Barbara for my home.

As a young girl living in Utica, New York, Culture and Synagogue were both very much part of my life. My gentle father taught me to appreciate and engage in both.

He and I spent many nights around our small Philco radio listening to opera and Broadway musicals. He was one of the founding members of our Temple in Utica and my early social life evolved around the activities in religious and cultural life.

Fast forward to My Life in Santa Barbara. Fifty years ago my family moved to Santa Barbara and I was fortunate to include my father in the move. The vision of him sitting near the front row of the sanctuary wearing a kippah that I bought him in Israel constantly brings to mind the teachings that he taught me of TIKKUN OLAM, a Jewish concept defined by acts of kindness performed to perfect or repair the world. It is that concept that I learned throughout the years that has led me to be actively involved in many great local and national and international organizations. My choice to leave a legacy gift to the Synagogue is filled with gratitude for my life work, the return, and for allowing me to understand WHY I give.

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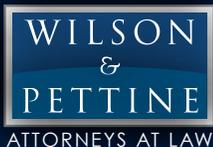
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October 9 Yom Kippur

