



Bethesda Jewish Congregation News

Hazzan Sunny Schnitzer

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אב אלול תשס"ט

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Hazzan Schnitzer—Greetings from Rabbi Camp!

As I write these words I am sitting in a dorm room, (wow—*déjà vu* all over again), on a college campus in Ohio, studying with seventy other rabbis, hazzanim and chaplains. The offerings of this summer's program are quite varied and many are on topics only a Torah geek or professional Jew could love. There are courses such as; "Shift Happens—Paradigm Shift in the Writings of Reb Zalman Schachter Shalomi, Guidance From Spirit—God, Rebbes, Ancestors, and Guides—Personal and Intercessory Prayer," and my favorite, "Holy Ground-Entering the Mystical Shabbat."

Actually this last course has given me a deeper understanding of some of our most basic and most important Shabbat rituals. Take the simple act of candle lighting on Shabbat:

The Holy Zohar teaches; "The commandment of the Sabbath candles was given to the women of the holy people that they might kindle lights. The sages said that because Eve extinguished the light of the world and made the cosmos dark by her sin, women must kindle lights for the Sabbath. But *this* is the real reason for it: Because the Shelter of Peace (the Shechinah) rests on us during the Sabbath, on the Sabbath Souls (the Neshama Yeterah—the additional soul each Jew receives on Shabbat making that person complete for the duration of Sabbath), it is proper for us to do below as it is done above, that is, to kindle the lights. Therefore, because in each Jew two souls shine on Sabbath, they must light two candles...by kindling the lights for the Holy Sabbath, we awaken a great arousal in the upper world. And when the woman kindles the lights, it is proper for her to do so with great joy and with a whole heart. Thus she will be privileged to have holy children who will be the light of the world...and who will increase peace in the world.

And by doing this she also increases the life of her husband. Therefore, it is appropriate to take great care concerning this."

When potential converts begin studying with me, one of the first things I ask them to make a part of their regular spiritual practice is to light Shabbat candles. When people ask me how they can bring more Yiddishkeit into their homes, I answer; "light Shabbat candles." When people ask me; "what can I do to insure that my children grow up to know the beauty and value of Judaism," I answer; "light Shabbat candles."

This Shabbat, if it is not your family's practice, give it a try. Gather the family together for a few minutes before dinner, light the candles, say the blessing (email me I'll give you a copy-if needed), and look lovingly at the smiling faces of your family.

Wow! Raise great kids and extend life—so says the teaching of the Kabbalah. Who wouldn't want to perform this simple act when our tradition teaches that the rewards are so great?

BJC News

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A thought or two . . . from the President

Edward Stern

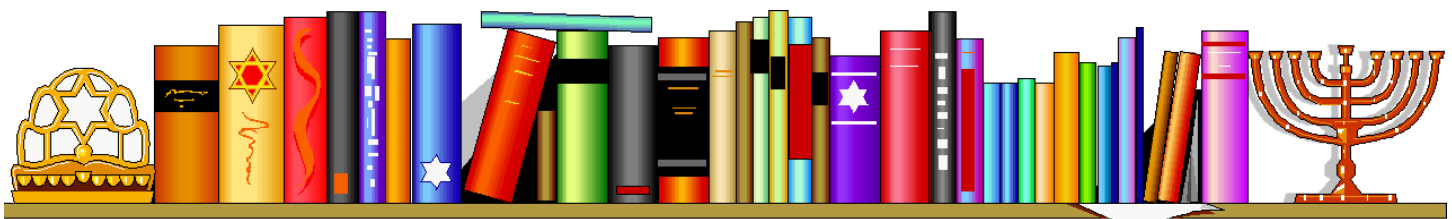
I want to share a few thoughts about you, BJC, and the Board. I will turn first to the High Holidays, since they are not far off.

We all read the same book, yet its meaning may be different to each of us, and it may mean different things to us in different years. This may be due, in part, to what we bring of ourselves to the Holidays. So, I encourage you to bring more of yourselves. In particular, if you feel strongly that you have thoughts to share at the High Holidays, please do not withhold them from us. BJC has a treasure in members with valuable insights and the talent to express them. For almost 30 years, I have enjoyed and benefited from hearing members' poems, stories, and prayers at services. (I have shared a few of my own over the years.) I look forward to hearing more. Of course, I also look forward to the Hazzan's

teachings and to the choir. It is all good. And you are part of it.

Next, I want to share an exchange with a non-Jewish friend about the Board. He asked why I would want to be president of a Jewish group, and added, "I know Jews like to argue." I told him we do argue, debate, and examine ideas, and that it happens at the BJC Board meetings, too. But BJC Board members listen to one another, try hard to understand others' perspectives, and work toward a sensible consensus. I told him it was a treat to work with such people.

Later, I remembered a teaching in the *Pirke Avot* that was pertinent to this. In Chapter Four, Rabbi Johanan Ha-Sandelar said: "Every assembly which is for the sake of Heaven will in the end endure; but one which is not for the sake of Heaven will not endure in the end." (Wait, we have commentary.) A thousand years later, Rabbi Judah ben Abraham (d. 1263) explained that any assembly for the study of Torah and for the practice of good works is called an assembly for the sake of Heaven, and one where people get together merely to lord it over one another is *not* for the sake of Heaven. To be part of an assembly for the sake of Heaven, like the BJC Board, is still work but it is also a pleasure. They are great. (The saying from R. Johanan and commentary of R. Judah are from *The Living Talmud: The Wisdom of the Fathers and Its Classical Commentaries* by Judah Goldin, a book to have if you can find it.)



Sh'ma Koli—Hear My Voice

Chava Gal-Or, Director of Congregation Education

As summer continues, I am in the midst of planning for what I hope will be a phenomenal religious school year. In a few short weeks, you and your children will begin another year of learning within the BJC *kehillah* (community).

Religious School will begin again on Saturday, September 12, 2009. Ev-

eryone will come together at 9:00 AM for our new beginnings. Both students and their parents will have the opportunity to meet their teachers as we share in song and stories too. As we move through the year you will be encouraged to visit your children's classrooms frequently, whether it be for Open House on Saturday, October 24th or for any number of grade-wide family education programs and/or Jewish Holiday programs.

I am also excited to share that we are planning to create a twice a month pre-school. If you have yet to be contacted, please call me in

the office or email me if you are interested in having your child take part in this program for toddlers and preschoolers before they reach kindergarten. We are hoping to have one parent volunteer for each session along with one facilitator who will always be the same person.

Being part of the kehillah (community-wide) programs will enable your entire family to feel more comfortable as you grow within our BJC community.

This year, the BJC Religious School needs your help. I would love to have parent volunteers (or grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc.) facilitate some classroom activities from storytelling to teaching about Humane Education (activities which will empower our students to grow stronger as *mensch*es or good people), leading music, etc. Anyone who volunteers will be given the lessons to facilitate and any guidance they need. If you are able and interested in working with our students, please contact me and let me know.

We are also looking for people to facilitate some of our Tikkun Olam (Social Action) activities this year as well as some of our holiday programs too. What I learned last year is that all programs are so much better when parent involvement occurs. Let me know if you have some extra time to help for different events. We appreciate your help on the day of an event, but sometimes we need folks to assist in organizing the event as well.

I am looking forward to another fabulous year as part of this community.

Enjoy the rest of your summer!
l'Shalom, Chava

June/July Newsletter Correction

We want to apologize because we inadvertently missed some of our valuable volunteers in the list in the June/July newsletter. We want to thank:

Dee and Joel Aronson

Lisa Ganserhoff and Steve Hellberg

Israel and Elise Gotay

Ruth Rosenberg

Jason and Virginia Weidenfeld

Food for thought:

"The great Jewish institutions – the home, the synagogue, the community and the school...are environments in which we are bound to one another not by transactions of power or wealth but by hesed, covenant love. These are places where we learn the intimate grammar of reciprocity, the delicate choreography of ethical intelligence, the knowledge that love given is not given in vain, and that by sharing our vulnerabilities we discover strength. That is the point the Torah is making when it sets at key moments in its narrative, stories of hesed. Societies are only human and humanizing when they are a community of communities built on face to face encounters – covenant relationships."

Jonathan Sacks, To Heal a Fractured World

Congregation News

Program Committee Notes—Gail Weiss and Meryl Simon

Your Program Committee is at it again, working to present activities that all BJC members will enjoy. Last year our Bethesda Theatre event was a success, but we didn't get many responses for a 3-play Theatre J subscription. So for this year we are looking at one-time only theatre offerings, including Round House Theatre's "My Name is Asher Lev," an adaptation of the Chaim Potok novel, and the

Olney Theatre's "Camelot."

Last year's Kugel/Brisket Cookoff was cancelled due to low participation. We want to try it again, in January 2010, but this time we may add "Game Night" activities. Our Purim Shpiel always draws a big crowd, and we want to

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ensure even wider participation next year with a "dinner theatre" or "dinner-dance" motif.

We missed our chance to enjoy a Nats game together, but we will try again and hope that the Nats will present a winning lineup for the 2010 season. We will also try to schedule a visit from a Washington-area sports figure. We will work with Hazzan Schnitzer and BJC President Ed Stern to develop a "Speaker Series" that many long-time BJC members have enjoyed.

If you have some program ideas, please share them with us. We need your help – but most of all we need your participation. We promise you will make wonderful friends and you will really feel part of BJC's unique synagogue experience.

Prospective Member Open House

We reach out to strangers. We share the fact that we are a community and we encourage others to join us. We talk; we welcome; we include.

Don't keep us a secret. Share your commitment to BJC with friends and strangers.

Bring them to the Open House Reception on Friday, Sept 11 at 7 pm followed by Shabbat services. You are our best advertising!!

Open Book Discussion:

March by Geraldine Brooks

Please join us on August 26 at BJC to discuss *March* by Geraldine Brooks

March chronicles the experiences of the "Little Women's" (Louisa May Alcott) absent father, providing accounts of his travels in antebellum Virginia, his courtship of the intense and rebellious Marmee, his love for a slave woman, his attempts to retain his ideals as a soldier during the Civil War, and the difficulties of adjusting to life in Concord after he is discharged from the army. Alcott's father, Bronson Alcott, provides the blueprint for the Reverend March, and his good friends are Concord neighbors Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau.

Drop-ins and new members are always welcome. Call (301) 946-3629 for directions. Contact Evelyn Ganzglass (202) 966-7037 or Ruth Rosenberg (703) 560-9525 for more information.

The book club will not meet in September.

S'lichot—Movie and Service

Saturday September 12, 9:00 PM
Covenant Hall

Join us to view: *Praying with Lior*

An engrossing, wrenching and tender documentary film, *PRAYING WITH LIOR* introduces Lior Liebling,

also called "the little rebbe." Lior has Down syndrome, and has spent his entire life praying with utter abandon. Is he a "spiritual genius" as many around him say? Or is he simply the vessel that contains everyone's unfulfilled wishes and expectations? Lior - whose name means "my light" - lost his mother at age six, and her words and spirit hover over the film. While everyone agrees Lior is closer to God, he's also a burden, a best friend, an inspiration, and an embarrassment, depending on which family member is speaking. As Lior approaches Bar Mitzvah, different characters provide a window into life spent "praying with Lior." The movie poses difficult questions such as what is "disability" and who really talks to God? Told with intimacy and humor, *PRAYING WITH LIOR* is a family story, a triumph story, a grief story, a divinely-inspired story.

This remarkable story won awards at film festivals in Boston, Toronto, Washington, Vancouver, Seattle, and San Diego.

The film will be followed by dessert and a Selichot service.

The final hour of the Shabbat before Rosh HaShannah was deemed by our rabbis to be a time of special power. Around the world Jews gather at midnight to begin the process of repentance with special prayers and songs. Join us and experience the "hush at midnight."

Participants Needed For Yom Kippur Musical Program

The Musical Interlude on Yom Kippur afternoon is a period of quiet contemplation against a background of beautiful music. We are looking for people who sing or play a musical instrument to participate in the program, which this year will take place on Monday, Sept. 28, from 3:30 till 5:00 p.m. We would especially like to include people who have never participated before.

Each person's performance is limited to 10 minutes. We're not looking for a professional performance, but the piece you play or sing should be at a level to perform for an audience. Music with a Jewish theme would be nice, but not necessary.

If you would like to participate, if you know someone who might like to, or if you'd like more information, please call Lois Rose at (301) 587-9774 or email: loqrose@yahoo.com.

Yahrzeits

Pearl Aronson, Mother of Joel Aronson
Jack Barsky, Brother of Lisa Strauss

יארצייט



August 2009 Calendar



Day	Date	Time	Event	Location
Wednesday	August 5	6:30 PM 8:00 PM	Kemach and Torah Choir Rehearsal	Library Choir Room
Friday	August 7	8:00 PM	N'tivim L'Shabbat-Music Service	Covenant Hall
Wednesday	August 12	6:30 PM 8:00 PM	Kemach and Torah Choir Rehearsal	Library Choir Room
Friday	August 14	6:30 PM	Kabbalat Shabbat	Covenant Hall
Wednesday	August 19	6:30 PM 8:00 PM	Kemach and Torah Choir Rehearsal	Library Choir Room
Friday	August 21	8:00 PM	Shabbat Worship	Covenant Hall
Wednesday	August 26	6:30 PM 8:00 PM 8:00 PM	Kemach and Torah BJC Book Club Choir Rehearsal	Library Library Choir Room
Friday	August 28	6:30 PM 8:00 PM	Tot Shabbat Shabbat Worship	Lounge Covenant Hall
Wednesday	Sept 2	6:30 PM 8:00 PM	Kemach and Torah Choir Rehearsal	Library Choir Room
Friday	Sept 4	8:00 PM	N'tivim L' Shabat-Music Service	Covenant Hall

For the latest updates and weekly E-news, please refer to the BJC website.

Copel H Cholok, Father of Alec Cholok
 Lucille Cifarelli, Mother of Mike Cifarelli
 Herman Cohen, Grandfather of Donna Goldberg
 Noah Cohen, Nephew of Nancy Glassman
 Adrian Curtis, Sister of Richard Fogel
 Maxwell E Davidson, Father of Ginger Silvers
 Minnie Druckman, Grandmother of Linda Blumberg
 and Mark Blumberg
 Simon Feldman, Father of Peter Feldman
 Lester Frank, Uncle of Roz Young
 Evelyn Friedman, Mother of Michael Friedman
 Morris Jacob Heller, Father of Carrie Schaefer
 Charles Hollander, Father of Jill Camp
 Samuel Kline, Father of Norman Kline
 Helen Kohn, Mother of Elise Kohn
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 A Joseph Levy, Grandfather of Roz Young
 Elizabeth Puchert, Sister of Joanna Schlesinger
 Charles Salkind, Father of Dee Aronson
 Norman Samuelson, Father of Douglas Samuelson
 Shirley Samuelson, Mother of Douglas Samuelson
 Lillian Rosenberg Silbert, Mother of Earl Silbert

Nathan Sanders Wall, Husband of Charlotte Wall-
 Bluestone

Eva Weinstein, Mother of Lois Weisman
 Anna Weistrich, Aunt of Barbara Sosnick

Thank you to...

תודה רבה

Debra Aronson and Alexander Waddell for their generous donation to the Hazzan's Discretionary Fund in memory of Herb Finkelman.

Rochelle Banta for her generous donation to Bethesda Jewish Congregation in honor of the Yahrzeit of her father, Arthur Barrios.

Bruce and Linda Baum for their generous donation to Bethesda Jewish Congregation in honor of the Yahrzeits of Linda's mother, Beatrice Schwartz and sister, Marla Schwartz.

Bruce and Wynne Busman for their generous donation to the Hazzan's Discretionary Fund in honor of the birthday of Mae Weiss.

Warren and Anita Farb for their generous donation to the Cuba Fund at Bethesda Jewish Congregation in

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honor of the visit of Rebeca Langus.

Warren and Anita Farb for their generous donation to the Maran Gluckstein Family Ed Fund at Bethesda Jewish Congregation in honor of the Yahrzeit of Anita's mother, Rose Brucker.

Karen Finkelman for her generous donation to the Hazzan's Discretionary Fund in memory of her husband, Herb Finkelman.

Stuart and Michelle Frank for their generous donation to the Hazzan's Discretionary Fund as a thank you for all the Hazzan does for BJC.

Edwin and Susan Gaynor for their generous donation to the Hazzan's Discretionary Fund in honor of the Bat Mitzvah of their daughter, Alison.

Jim and Liz Korelitz for their generous donation to the Hazzan's Discretionary Fund.

Mitch and Julie Kraus for their generous donation to the Cuba Fund at Bethesda Jewish Congregation in honor of the visit of Rebeca Langus.

Stacey Rose-Blass for her generous donation to the Hazzan's Discretionary Fund.

Bernard Sharfman and Susan David for their generous donation to the Hazzan's Discretionary Fund to honor all his efforts with the Jewish communities in Cuba.

Ed and Norma Stern for their generous donation to Bethesda Jewish Congregation in honor of the birthday of Mae Weiss.

Dr Howard Teitelbaum for his generous donation to the Hazzan's Discretionary Fund.

Antoine and Emily Van Agtmael for their generous donation to the Hazzan's Discretionary Fund in honor of their daughter's wedding.

Lorrie Van Akkeren for her generous donation to the Hazzan's Discretionary Fund in honor of the Yahrzeit of her father, Gordon Goldstein.

A very special thank you to all of those who "rounded up" in their synagogue support payments.

For their generous donations to Enhancing the Flame:

Jonathan Eig and Karen Jerome

Warren and Anita Farb

Richard Fogel

Stuart and Michelle Frank

Allan and Anne Gold

Joseph Gootenberg and Susan Leibenhaut

Israel and Elise Gotay

Russ Hogya and Harri Kramer

Gary Sampliner and Ling Chin

Larry Slifman and Barbara Ranagan

**Mark Your Calendar
High Holy Days**

Selichot

Saturday, Sept. 12, 9 p.m.

Rosh Hashanah

Friday, Sept. 18, Evening Service, 8 p.m.

Saturday, Sept. 19, Morning Service, 10 a.m.

Children's and Pre-K Service, 1:30 p.m.

Tashlich, Location to be announced,
3:30 p.m.

Yom Kippur

Sunday, Sept. 27, Kol Nidre, 8 p.m.

Monday, Sept. 28, Morning Service, 10 a.m.

Children's and Pre-K Service, 1:30 p.m.

Yom Kippur Discussion, 2:30 p.m.

Musical Interlude, 3:30 p.m.

Reading of the Book of Jonah, 5 p.m.

Yizkor and Neilah Services, 5:30 p.m.

Sukkot

Wednesday, Sept. 30, Build Indoor Sukkah,
5 p.m.

Saturday, Oct. 3, Sukkot Service, 10:30 a.m.

Simcha Torah

Friday, Oct. 9, Light Dinner, 6:30 p.m.

Service, 7:30 p.m.

Tickets for non-members: \$195 per person for services are available in the BJC office now. Tickets for Children's and Pre-K Services are only \$75 for families. Baby sitting is available at no charge for all adult services (excluding Yizkor and Neilah)

Tickets will be available after July 15, 2009.

BJC does not furnish the High Holy Day prayer books, but they are available for sale in the office now for \$25 per book.

Edward and Norma Stern

Stephen Turow and Linda Blumberg

Lorrie Van Akkeren

BJC Office Hours

Tues.-Thur 9:30-4:30 p.m., Fri. 9:30-3:00 p.m. Closed Sat., Sun., Mon. and Jewish Holidays. Messages won't be returned when the office is closed. p.m. Closed Sat., Sun., Mon. and Jewish Holidays. Messages won't be returned when the office is closed.

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so you don't have to

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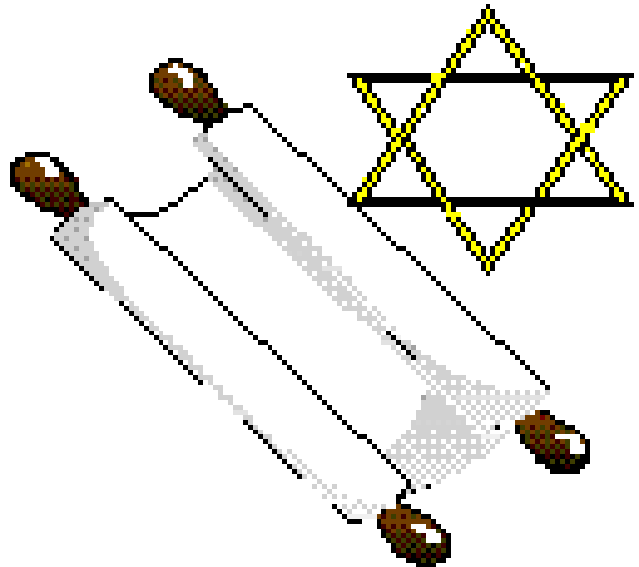



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**Newsletter Editor: Anita Farb—abfarb@
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**Design Layout and Desktop Publishing:
Yvonne Bryant**

The deadline for submitting articles for the
Sept. newsletter is Aug. 7.

Please email your article in an MS Word
attachment.

Put your ad in the BJC Newsletter

To place your card or other-sized ad in the
Sept. newsletter, mail it to the BJC office with
your check made payable to BJC.

Deadline: Aug. 7. Rate structure for a
business card: \$20.00 per month, 3-month
minimum. Rates are slightly higher for cards
that are not camera-ready art.