



Bethesda Jewish Congregation News

Hazzan Sunny Schnitzer

November 2009

Heshan 5770/Kislev 5770

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Hazzan's Call—Kriat HaHazzan

Hazzan Sunny Schnitzer

Reb Kolonimus Kalman Shapira, the Piacezna Rebbe, remained in the Warsaw Ghetto until the end, all the time teaching young people how to live, how to act, how to continue to be a Jew is the face of incredible deprivation. He was one of the last Jews to be deported.

He was known as the Ghetto Rebbe of the Children and one of his greatest teachings (all the more profound because of where he taught) was: 'Kinderlakh, taierah kinder-lakh, gedenkshe, d'grete zakh in der velt iz tzu teen emetzen ah toive (Children, precious children, remember, the greatest thing in the world is to do somebody else a favor)."

This teaching is always close to my heart. I attempt to live by it every day. It gives energy to our work.

A week before Rosh Hashanah, I received an e-mail from our friend in Camaguey, David Pernas Levy, now seventy-eight years old and one of my Cuban Jewish heroes.

The e-mail was a plea for emergency funds to replace the center truss of the ceiling in the synagogue of Camaguey. Attached were three photographs of the cracked and sagging center support. Should it collapse, the roof would come down with it, perhaps on the congregation inside.

Luckily, David was holding monies BJC had already placed in his care for the renovation and repair of the Jewish cemetery in Camaguey. It was a simple matter of granting approval for the funds to be utilized for this emergency. The center truss has been replaced, we will make another gift in the future for the cemetery, and all is

well. This rapid response was possible because BJC was ready to do a favor for someone else.

Each year BJC's visits to Cuba make a difference. Your visit to an isolated community of Cuban Jews is a mechaya—it gives life. The gifts we bring of medicine, toiletries, and cash make a real difference in the lives of individuals. Your presence at a Shabbat service, a sing along, a simple meal, can have profound meaning for the life of a community. In the wake of each BJC visit to Cuba there are changes—changes in the lives of the Jews of Cuba, changes in us.

'Kinderlakh, taierah kinder-lakh, gedenkshe, d'grete zakh in der velt iz tzu teen emetzen ah toive (Children, precious children, remember, the greatest thing in the world is to do somebody else a favor)."

This year, come with me to Cuba. Do someone else a favor.

BJC News

Bethesda Jewish Congregation
6601 Bradley Boulevard
Bethesda, MD 20817-3042
Tel: 301-469-8636
Fax: 301-469-9529
www.bethesdajewish.org
admin@bethesdajewish.org

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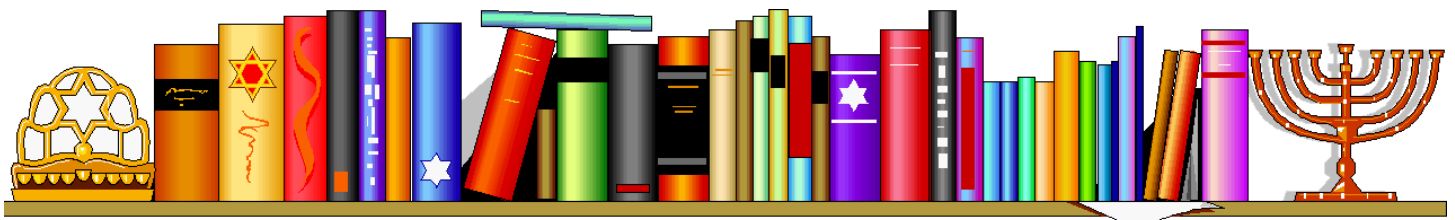
A Thought or Two . . . From the President

Edward Stern

This month I have three thoughts. I will begin by thanking again all of you whose efforts enabled us to have meaningful and beautiful High Holiday services. The orchestration of the services is not just between the Hazzan, the choir, the pianist, and the Torah readers for the liturgy and sermons—inspiring as it all was. The orchestration of the services includes issuing the press announcements; getting out the tickets; writing, assembling, and reading the supplements; guiding cars in the parking lot; bringing cake for the oneg; ushering; bringing and taking away food donations for the needy; conducting the children's service; and performing for the musical interlude. A great portion, perhaps all, of the members did more than show up for services. For the Congregation and for myself, I thank you all.

On Erev Rosh Hashanah, when Norma and I greeted old members and new, we did not know we would soon be seeing many again at our house for a memorial service for Norma's father, Isadore Frankford, who passed away this Rosh Hashanah. But this, too, is part of being in a congregation. It is a mitzvah to comfort the mourners, and BJC members have been pretty good at this over the years. Keep up the good work. To those who are unsure about going because you don't know the people well, I say: go anyway. Your being there is a comfort. Norma and I thank you for your kind words and support at a difficult time. This is one of the reasons to be a member of the Congregation.

We say at services that the deceased lives on in the memory of his or her loved ones. I think that is also true in a broader sense. At our house, I saw friends whose parents I knew. I spent time with and learned from the parents of friends, in and out of BJC. I remember discussions on religion and politics and more with them. I remember their graciousness and hospitality. It is not just the children, grandchildren, nephews and nieces, and other family members who remember. The friends of the family and members of the Congregation also remember your loved ones. They live on in many memories. I could tell you stories.



Sh'ma Koli—Hear My Voice

Chava Gal-Or, Director of Congregation Education

In Chapter 7, "Hebrew School Was Worthless and Boring", in the book: *How to Get More Out of Being Jewish Even If:*

- A) You are not sure you believe in God,
- B) You think going to synagogue is a waste of time,
- C) You think keeping kosher is stupid

- D) You hated Hebrew school, or
- E) All of the above!

Gil Mann lists eight points to help guide us towards growing a healthier Religious School and embracing the realities of our times. I agree with Gil Mann and realize that to proceed in the most effective way; we need to address these points. At this time, though, I want to focus on three of his points:

For Jewish education to work, parents must be supportive and reinforce Judaism at home and in life. Our children need to have a context for

coming to Religious School; our children get frustrated with their busy schedules and their inability to do whatever it is they want to do. Having your children practice their Hebrew 30 minutes over the course of the week will let your student realize that you are vested in their Jewish education. Doing mitzvot (commandments) and calling them by their Hebrew terms like Bikkur Holim (taking care of the sick), Shmirat HaTevah (guarding nature), Hachnasat Orchim (welcoming visitors), to name a few. Sitting down to Shabbat dinner once in a month or even weekly will allow children to connect with their Judaism and also give them a context for going to religious school.

Children should be shown that Judaism is relevant and valuable—for example, the wonderful Jewish values about the environment. The key here is that if we make Judaism relevant to our children's lives they will connect better to coming to school and to living as Jews wherever they are. None of us want to spend time doing an activity that doesn't have a context within our lives.

Questioning is the key to learning more about Judaism. To question is very Jewish. All of us thrive on the process of questioning or seeking out resolutions. Take the time to ask questions and then search for the answers. Ask your children to help you research the answer to your questions. Besides, our kids can find answers to both of our questions so much more quickly than we used to re-

search for answers.

Being role models who participate in synagogue life will empower our children to do the same. Consider ways to bring Judaism into your life and into your home. If you want to schedule a time to brainstorm these ideas, set up a time to talk to either the Hazzan or myself. Let me know if you would like me to set up a one or two session class so that we can try to navigate this journey together.

Also, please note the different adult education offerings including, but not limited to, Maran Gluckstein's Shabbat morning Hebrew class (8:45 to 10 a.m.) or Ed Stern's monthly class. Keep your eyes open for the upcoming Hebrew marathon and the Hazzan's offerings too!

From the Executive Director

Roz Young

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the wonderful members of our community who volunteered to help make the High Holidays such a meaningful, wonderful time at BJC. I would also like to extend a very special thanks to Warren Farb for once again being the volunteer coordinator and handling all the last

minute items that always seem to come up no matter how much we plan and try to anticipate. It was a wonderful experience and I thank all of you very much.

From Hazzan Schnitzer

Please be in touch with me in times of joy, sadness or illness in your life or in the lives of a loved one or another member of the congregation. This is particularly necessary now that the HIPAA regulations have made getting any kind of information from the hospitals extremely difficult. I greatly appreciate your help in keep-

ing me informed of the health needs of our congregation. Office Number: 301-469-8636, #3.

Congregation News

BJC Cuba Mission

The next BJC mission to Cuba is scheduled for Feb. 11-22, 2010. The deadline for reservations is Nov. 6. This trip will feature BJC'S first visit to the Jewish communities of Guantanamo and Santiago,

Shabbat in Havana and Sancti Spiritus, and a visit to Camaguey, Santa Clara, and Cienfuegos.

Continued on page 4

Take advantage of what may be a last opportunity to see Cuba before new regulations liberalizing travel to Cuba change the culture and look of the island. (Remember what happened in the last few decades to China).

Enjoy the adventure of travelling the breadth of this exotic island, the spirit of the people, the music, the dedication of the Cuban Jews, and the fact that it's 77 degrees in Feb.!

Cost includes: Round trip flight Miami-Havana and internal flight from Havana to Santiago, 11 nights hotel, all breakfasts and lunches, five dinners, air conditioned bus, full time guide and translator, restaurant tips, Cuban Religious Visas, and Miami Departure Tax.

Cost—\$2800 pp dbl Occupancy / Single Supplement \$200—plus tip to driver and guide, Cuba departure Tax of \$25 US to be paid in cash. Non-members additional \$100.

DC to Miami travel arrangements will be made separately by each traveler. BJC will offer a group flight out of DC at additional cost.

When Crime Was Kosher—The Rise & Fall of the Jewish Mafia

Sure, you've heard of Meyer Lansky and Bugsy Siegal, but how about Gurah Shapiro, Waxey Gordon, or Little Farvel Kovalik. In 1930s New York, these were Jews to be feared. Tough Jews from Brooklyn and the Bronx who answered insults with Tommy guns. Join Hazzan Sunny Schnitzer in the Lounge on Thursdays, Oct. 29, Nov. 5 and 12 at 7:20 p.m. for films and stories of an era that our parents didn't like to talk about.

RSVP to the BJC Office

BJC Speaker Series for 5770—"Shadowing the Angel of Death"

Join us in Covenant Hall on Wednesday, Nov. 11 at 7:30 p.m. for an evening with Stephen Dachi who will share stories of his efforts to track down proof of the death of Dr. Josef Mengele and close the door on years of controversy. A real whodunit!

RSVP to the BJC Office.

Fall Cleanup and Concert at BJC/BHPC

The annual fall cleanup of the grounds of BJC and Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church (BHPC) will take place on Saturday, Nov. 14 and Sunday, Nov. 15, 2009. BJC members and their families are encouraged to come on Sunday, Nov. 15 from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. to rake and bag leaves and improve the appearance of the landscape.

Even if you are unable to participate in the cleanup, join us for refreshments and a concert, at

7:30 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 14. The BHPC Concert Series is presenting "Light and Shadow," a program of Gregorian chants, chants in Sanskrit, music by Hildegard of Bingen and settings of poetry by Elizabeth Cunningham. Ms. Cunningham creates a sound journey which utilizes her skills as a sound healer.

Open Book Discussion—*Letters from the Earth*

The BJC book club invites you to join us on Nov. 18 (note change from regularly scheduled fourth Wednesday, because of Thanksgiving) at 8 p.m. for a discussion on *Letters from the Earth* by Mark Twain.

This posthumously published book includes a series of short stories, many of which deal with God and religion. The title story consists of letters written by Satan to archangels, Gabriel and Michael about his observations on the curious proceedings of earthly life and the nature of man's religions. Other short stories in the book include a bedtime story about a family of cats Twain wrote for his daughters, and an essay explaining why an anaconda is morally superior to Man.

The stories were edited in 1939, but not released until 1962 because his daughter Clara was originally worried about public reaction to her father's controversial and iconoclastic views on religion. She was influenced to release the papers due in part to her annoyance with Soviet propaganda charges that her father's ideas were being suppressed in the United States.

Drop-ins and new members are always welcome. Contact Evelyn Ganzglass 202-966-7037 or Ruth Rosenberg 703-560-9525 for more information.

American Red Cross Blood Drive at BJC

On Saturday, Nov. 21 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., BJC will host a blood drive for the American Red Cross. Please consider donating to help someone in need. The whole process takes about one hour. We also need volunteers to register donors and to provide refreshments. Student volunteers qualify for Montgomery County SSL credit. If you would like to make an appointment to donate or are willing to volunteer, please contact Roz Young in the BJC office (admin@bethesdajewish.org) or e-mail bjcblooddrive@yahoo.com. For more information, go to www.givelife.org.



November 2009 Calendar

Day	Date	Time	Event	Location
Wednesday	Nov. 4	4:15 p.m. 6:30 p.m.	Religious School Kemach and Torah	Classrooms Library
Thursday	Nov. 5	6:00 p.m. 7:30 p.m.	Confirmation Class Adult Ed—When Crime was Kosher	Lounge Lounge
Friday	Nov. 6	8:00 p.m.	N'tivim L'Shabbat—Music Service	Covenant Hall
Saturday	Nov. 7	8:45 a.m. 9:00 a.m. 9:45 a.m. 10:30 a.m.	Adult Hebrew Religious School Religious School Shabbat Worship—Moses Hetfield Bar Mitzvah	Lunge Classrooms Classrooms
Wednesday	Nov. 11	4:15 p.m. 6:30 p.m. 7:30 p.m.	Religious School Kemach and Torah Speaker' Series-Stephen Dachi	Classrooms Library Covenant Hall
Thursday	Nov. 12	7:30 p.m.	Adult Ed—When Crime was Kosher	Memorial Hall
Friday	Nov. 13	6:30 p.m.	Fa.m.ily Service Shabbat Dinner Confirmation Class Trip to NYC	Covenant Hall Memorial Hall
Saturday	Nov. 14	8:45 a.m. 9:00 a.m. 9:00 a.m. 9:45 a.m. 10:30 a.m.	Adult Hebrew Adult Ed w/ Ed Stern Religious School Religious School Shabbat Worship	Lounge Outer Office Classrooms Classrooms Covenant Hall
Wednesday	Nov. 18	4:15 p.m. 6:30 p.m. 8:00 p.m.	Religious School Kemach and Torah Open Book Discussion- <i>Letters from Earth</i>	Classrooms Library Library
Thursday	Nov. 19	6:00 p.m. 7:30 p.m.	Confirmation Class BJC Board Meeting	Lounge Lounge
Friday	Nov. 20	8:00 p.m.	Simcha B' Shabbat—All Music Service	Covenant Hall
Saturday	Nov. 21	8:45 a.m. 9:00 a.m. 9:00 a.m. 9:45 a.m. 10:30 a.m.	Adult Hebrew BJC Blood Drive Religious School Religious School Shabbat Worship	Library Memorial Hall Classrooms Classrooms Covenant Hall
Sunday	Nov. 22	10:30 a.m.	Joint Thanksgiving Service	Sanctuary
Wednesday	Nov. 25		BJC Office Closed No Religious School No Kemach and Torah	
Friday	Nov. 27	6:30 p.m. 8:00 p.m.	Tot Shabbat Shabbat Worship	Library Covenant Hall
Wednesday	Dec. 2	4:15 p.m. 6:30 p.m.	Religious School Kemach and Torah	Classrooms Library
Thursday	Dec. 3	7:30 p.m.	Adult Ed—Living w/ Simplicity	Library

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

Joint Thanksgiving Worship with BHPC & The Al Jaferia Mosque

Join us on Sunday, Nov. 22 at 10:30 a.m. for this annual morning of inspiration and music with our spiritual siblings, the members of Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church (BHPC). Again this year we will worship together with the members of The Jaferia Islamic Center of Burtonsville for our celebration of America's abundance. The service will be led by Hazzan Schnitzer, Rev. David Gray, Rev. Scott Wynette, and Imam Sayed Naqvi.

BJC Hebrew Marathon

Originally scheduled for Nov. 14, the marathon has been rescheduled for Jan 23, 2010.

Yahrzeits

יארצייט

- Evelyn Adlerstein, Mother of Maran Gluckstein
- Kermit Bailer, Father of Byron Bailer
- Esther Blumberg, Grandmother of Linda Blumberg and Mark Blumberg
- Gerald Carp, Husband of Lisa Carp
- Martin Cohen, Father of Donna Goldberg
- Dave David, Father of Susan David
- David Friedman, Father of Hannah Friedman Elson
- Theresa Friedman, Mother of Michael Friedman
- Miriam Gleberman, Mother of Ellen Gleberman
- Harry David Haber, Father of Miles Haber
- Bessier Lieberman, Mother of Ellen Lieberman
- James Meehan, Father of Elizabeth Short Friedman
- Eric Neisser, Father of Michelle Neisser
- Ruth Osherwitz, Mother of Elaine Brenner
- Morris Poogach, Father of Robert Poogach
- Roman Poogach, Grandfather of Robert Poogach
- Jack Scott, Father of David Scott
- Louis Sharfman, Father of Bernard Sharfman
- Mitchell Stearn, Husband of Sylvia, Father of Olivia and Anna Stearn
- Adele Sukin, Mother of Hope Klauber
- Sidney Tahler, Grandfather of Rori Kochman
- Naomi Walders, Mother of Larry Walders
- Abraham Hirsch Warshawsky, Grandfather of John Warshawsky

Special Thanks

A very special thank you to Warren and Naomi Lichtenberg for their donation of the beautiful new tablecloth for the large table in the sanctuary.

Thank you...

תודה רבה

Dee and Joel Aronson for their generous donation in honor of the Yahrzeit of Joel's father, Jacob Aronson.

Dee and Joel Aronson for their generous donation to the Hazzan's Discretionary Fund as a thank you to Joan Wolf for her help with Dee's BJC Choir debut.

Dixon and Susan Butler for their generous donation in honor of Joan Wolf and Steve Chiaverini.

Lorrie Van Akkeren for her generous donation to the Hazzan's Discretionary Fund as a thank you to the Hazzan for all he does.

Mitch and Julie Kraus for their generous donation to the Hazzan's Discretionary Fund in honor of all the Hazzan does for BJC

Marvin and Diane Schntizer for their generous donation.

Ed and Norma Stern for their generous donation to the Hazzan's Discretionary Fund in memory of Norma's father, Isadore Frankford.

Edward and Norma Stern for their generous donation in memory of Stephen Lev.

For their generous donations to Enhancing The Flame

Mark Greenstein

Larry Slifman and Barbara Ranagan

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.



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Newsletter Editor: Anita Farb—anita.farb@gmail.com

**Design Layout and Desktop Publishing:
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The deadline for submitting articles for the Dec. newsletter is Nov. 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 Dec. newsletter, mail it to the BJC office with your check made payable to BJC.

Deadline: Nov. 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.