

New Light News May 2019

A Word from the Rabbi

J.J. Goldberg recently wrote a book review for the New York Times in which he states: “As discouraging as these times may be for fans of liberal democracy, the mood among liberal friends of Israel - including most American Jews - is more like severe heartbreak. Look one way and there’s Israel’s right wing carousing with European despots and Holocaust deniers while fanning racism at home. Look the other way and see the cream of the intersectional left cavorting with the reactionary bigot Louis Farrakhan while young rock-star progressives in Congress set about rebranding the Jewish state from ally into enemy and its supporters - meaning, again, most American Jews - into traitors.”

You just cannot seem to win in trying to cheer on Israel in these troubled times. While America is gradually turning into an illiberal democracy with an autocrat at its head, the rest of the world is following suit including a fifth term for “King Bibi.” I am in Israel now and I hate to bring up politics with any of our friends and hosts. There was a time when loving the Jewish State came easily to both liberals and conservatives. How do you talk about Israel today? I don’t want to get into bed with Donald Trump yet here he is being praised as the greatest friend Israel has ever had. He has moved the US embassy to Jerusalem and recognized the Golan Heights as annexed territory - both moves I have always agreed should happen - yet I know the politics behind it and it makes me sick to my stomach. The Democratic Party cannot even get behind a positive statement on Israel and the Jews (substituting a bland statement on bigotry in general) and the insubordinate left on the party has accused American Jews with dual loyalty. In these times, I try to talk around politics and point out the success story of Israel, the only democracy in the Middle East (so far) and an entrepreneur supreme in electronics, medicine, cheap electricity, irrigation, religion, film and TV and lots of inventions.

This month we celebrate Yom Ha’atzmaut (Independence Day), Thursday, May 9th. I always think of celebrating the Miracle on the Mediterranean and the State at its birth. It is more than just a civil holiday for me. I like going to shul to sing Hallel in the morning prayers. I always eat shwarma at the JCC. I understand that the Federation is lining up Israeli star David Broza to sing in concert on May 23rd. There are churches who celebrate with big musical programs. I look forward to visiting with the disabled Israeli vets (always a favorite to-do project for Dan Stein, alav ha-shalom). We need to put more meaning into this holiday. In my opinion, Yom Ha’atzmaut should rank higher than Hanukkah, whose celebration was a pyrrhic victory (the Maccabean dynasty did not last very long).

At this writing I have just landed in Israel and I am looking forward to saying “This year in Jerusalem” at my Seder with my extended family. Jerusalem is our eternal home. I am looking forward to bringing my renewed enthusiasm for this land when I return!

Shalom from Israel,

Rabbi

Presidents' Report

We hope everyone had a family-filled Pesach holiday. To me (Steve), the joy of a simple matzah sandwich - choroset and horseradish - or cream cheese and jelly - are special treats to be savored for a week; and then put away for another twelve months!

The world of Passover is changing - Is rice okay? What about corn syrup? It keeps reminding me that ritual and tradition are important but must always be open to "other traditions" that are equally valid.

In the beginning of April, TOLOLS shared with us the results of our February focus group. The primary themes were: fear for the immediate future; hope for our long-term future; and a feeling of homelessness. At the direction of the Board, we met with the Beth Shalom leadership and requested three actions to help make our stay there more home-like:

1. *That we be permitted to install our sign.* They agreed that the best place for the sign is under the tree by the main entrance. It may well be installed by the time you read this. Because it does not face the street, it does not require City review.
2. *That we have access to a kitchen.* Again, Beth Shalom leadership agreed, subject to review by their House Committee. If approved, we will be able to use the kitchen off the Eisner Pavilion. The kitchen has a stove and available cabinets. We may need to purchase our own refrigerator. The intention is to move the Sunday Men's Club Minyan and Brunch to the Homestead Chapel and re-introduce a hot meal!
3. *That we install our Memorial Boards in Helfant Chapel.* I am often asked: what makes a home. To me, it is two things: your family and your belongings. As a renter, we do not own tables and chairs and substantial artwork. We own Torahs, which we have already moved; and we own seven memorial boards that still hang on the wall of our old Chapel. Beth Shalom leadership agreed to allow us to move our boards - as long as we do not mar (in any way) the beautiful mahogany walls of the chapel. We are currently investigating how to move the memorial boards.
4. *Improve the lighting in Helfant Chapel.* We are working with the maintenance staff to investigate ways to increase the brightness of the current fixtures.

We also met with Bob Schachter of the Snow Foundation concerning our request for funds to fix the gate at the cemetery. We made some minor design changes to the gate. Bob suggested we build a memorial wall near the holocaust memorial for all the plaques currently in the garage and on the gate.

Dan Rothschild has been asked to develop some preliminary ideas for the Memorial of Trees at Frick Park. The designated area is just south of the current Environmental Center location on Beechwood Boulevard.

Finally, New Light, TOLOLS and Dor Hadash were honored at the B-Pep Jazz Festival at the Heinz History Center on April 22nd. We received a standing ovation from the audience. The award "honors those who gave their lives to protect the freedom to practice their faith and the survivors who represent an extraordinary tale of resilience, courage and humanity."

- *Barbara and Stephen*

Moses in the Midrash: How the Rabbis Read the Torah

The next classes are Tuesdays - April 30th, May 14th and May 28th, each at 7:30 P.M. in Beth Shalom, room TBD.

May Meetings

Monday, May 6th, 7:00 P.M. - Board Meeting at Beth Shalom

Monday, May 13th, 7:15 P.M. - Season Ending Men's Club Meeting

Sunday Minyans

The location schedule is still alternating:

- May 5th - New Light hosts **at Beth Shalom**
- May 12th - TOLOLS hosts *at Rodef Shalom*
- May 19th - New Light hosts **at Beth Shalom**
- May 26th - TOLOLS hosts *at Rodef Shalom*

Yom Hashoah

Remember to light your Yom Hashoah candle on Wednesday night, May 1. If you haven't already done so, please get your check for your candle to the Men's Club. This year a portion of the proceeds will go to the Holocaust Center of Pittsburgh. The Holocaust center will present a Yom Hashoah commemoration ceremony focusing on Women and the Holocaust on Thursday, May 2nd at 7:00 P.M. in the JCC Katz Auditorium.

May 3rd Weekend Events and Schedule

The weekend of May 3rd will include a visit by Pastor Eric Manning of Mother Emanuel Church in Charleston, SC to TOLOLS as well as the annual joint Sisterhood/Men's Club Shabbat at TOLOLS. *Please note the following schedule and changes to our regular weekend services:*

On Friday evening, May 3rd, Shabbat services will be joint with TOLOLS at 6:00 P.M. in Levy Hall in the Rodef Shalom Building. As an alternative you may attend Beth Shalom's Friday night regular Shabbat services at 6:00 P.M. in Helfant Chapel. *There are no Friday evening services at New Light.*

Saturday, May 4th is the joint Sisterhood/Men's Club Shabbat service at 9:45 A.M. in Levy Hall in the Rodef Shalom building. Pastor Eric Manning will deliver a homily during the service. We hope everyone can join New Light there. As an alternative you may also attend Beth Shalom's Saturday morning regular services at 9:15 in the main sanctuary. *There are no Saturday morning services at New Light.*

On Sunday, May 5th, the Men's Club breakfast minyan will be at New Light, Helfant Chapel.

Yom Hazikaron and Yom Ha'atzmaut

Yom Hazikaron, Israel's official Memorial Day for her fallen soldiers and victims of terrorism, starts at sunset on May 7th and continues through May 8th. The JCC will host a ceremony on May 7th at 8:00 P.M. in the Katz Auditorium.

Veterans from Israel's military forces will visit Pittsburgh during May. On May 10th they will talk about current events and have a Q&A session with seniors at the JCC, 10:30 A.M.

Yom Ha'atzmaut commemorates Israel's Declaration of Independence. It starts at sunset on May 8th and continues through May 9th. Celebrate Israel's 71st Independence Day with a free concert sponsored by the Jewish Federation featuring Israeli musician David Broza on Thursday, May 23rd from 4:30 P.M. to 9:00 P.M at the Schenley Plaza. For more information and to register, see

<https://jewishpgh.org/event/david-broza/>.

Save the Date

On Saturday, June 1st, Gerry and George Tessler will be Haftarah readers during Shabbat services. Please join us for the service and a light Kiddush afterwards.

Adopt-a-Shabbat

We need Haftarah readers! Please contact Rabbi Perlman to for more information and to discuss options. If you remember (or need some brushing up on) your own Haftarah or want to learn a new one, pick a date and adopt a Haftarah reading for Shabbat.

Memorializing the Memorial

Laurie Zittrain Eisenberg from TOLOLS has written a warm and thoughtful article about the memorial items left in front of the TOLOLS building. It can be found here:

<http://bit.ly/MemorializingTheMemorial>.

TOLOLS is asking teens from around the world to take part in a project titled "*HeartsTogether: The Art of Rebuilding*." Young artists are invited to create "uplifting images and graphics" to print on windscreens to be hung on the temporary fence surrounding the building. More information can be found at <http://bit.ly/TOLOLS-FenceDecoration>.

Study Opportunities

Beth Kisseleff has identified some wonderful learning opportunities:

Mechon Hadar - <https://www.hadar.org/about> - in New York, is an egalitarian institution that "empowers Jews to create and sustain vibrant, practicing, egalitarian communities of Torah, Avodah, and Hesed.": Their online learning program is available to us at no cost. Use the code "pittsburgh" when registering on the Project Zug site. Contact Allie Kanter, kanter@hadar.org for more information.

The **Shalom Hartman Institute** based in Jerusalem is offering 1-2 spots for people from Pittsburgh tuition free for their Community Leadership Summer Seminar (CLP) from June 25th to July 2nd in Israel. SHI's mission is to "strengthen Jewish peoplehood, identity and pluralism and ensure that Judaism is a compelling force for good in the 21st century." More information can be found at <http://bit.ly/HartmanSummerProgram> and registration is at <https://www.tfaforms.com/4696690>.

The **Conservative Movement's Yeshiva** in Jerusalem has two three week programs, June 16th - July 3rd and July 8th - 25th. Their website says, "you can build a schedule from a menu of program offerings, including dynamic Jewish text study, eye-opening walking tours of Jerusalem, immersive Hebrew ulpan, and meaningful volunteer work." More information can be found at <https://www.conservativeyeshiva.org/summer/>.

Matan - <https://www.matan.org.il/en/> - a Jerusalem school for women that is under Orthodox auspices but an open and comfortable place for women of all backgrounds, has offered a 25% discount for anyone from our communities. Contact them through Chaya Bina-Katz at chayabk@matan.org.il.

Parkland to Pittsburgh: Three Days of Healing, Resilience and Community Building

Teens and adults from Parkland's Marjorie Stoneman Douglas High School visited Pittsburgh on the weekend of April 5th to share their support and message of healing. The visit was made possible through the JCC's Center for Loving Kindness and Civic Engagement.

The teens were here for JServe and a BBYO convention. They also had an assembly with the students from Allderdice High School. Teens and adults met with the three congregations at a ceremony in front of the TOLOLS building, met privately with the immediate families, and were honored by the Pittsburgh Pirates. On Sunday they participated in a televised town hall meeting with survivors of the Parkland and Pittsburgh shootings plus community leaders to discuss resiliency, dealing with grief and the process of healing. The resulting broadcast *Parkland to Pittsburgh Stronger Together* is part of WTAE's station-wide initiative, Project CommUNITY, to confront the divisions in western Pennsylvania and to shine a spotlight on those bringing people together. The broadcast aired on April 9th and 14th.



B-PEP Jazz Festival Honors Three Congregations

On April 22nd the Festival honored the three congregations and presented each an award. The festival is a fund raiser for the Black Political Empowerment Project (B-PEP) and celebrated the 33rd anniversary of the project. Over 70 artists performed, including Etta Cox, seen below. Sharyn can be seen with Tim Stevens, who served as president of the Pittsburgh chapter of the NAACP and who helped establish B-PEP.



PA General Assembly Establishes “Stronger than Hate Day”

Members of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives and Senate held a rare joint session on April 10th to honor the victims of October 27th and adopted resolution 214, designating April 10th as “Stronger than Hate Day.” The resolution, which mentions each victim, can be found here: <http://bit.ly/Resolution214>.

Members of the three congregations traveled to Harrisburg for the session and met with Governor Wolf and numerous representatives, including Dan Frankel, who spoke during the ceremony.



Concert

On March 25th a special concert was held for the survivors and victims of October 27th. Violinist Monique Mead and Pianist Luz Manriquez performed Beethoven’s Violin Concerto in D, Opus 61.

Mead always wanted to play the difficult Concerto but did not take it on till last year, in part as a tribute to Beethoven’s upcoming 250th birthday. She has an initiative called Beethoven in the Face Of Adversity. Her goal is to perform the piece 50 times over the

course of a year. Each of the fifty performances will not only include the Concerto, but engage the audience in a dialogue about overcoming challenges.

Cooking Demo

The women of Rodef Shalom invite us to a cooking demo and dinner by Chef Nikki Heckman from Bistro to Go on May 2nd - wine and hors d'oeuvres at 5:30 P.M., cooking demo at 6:00 P.M., dinner at 7:00 P.M. Please see the attached flyer for details and reply instructions.

Kippah Sale

TOLOLS is offering Stronger than Hate kippahs for sale. Please see the attached flyer for purchasing details.

Squirrel Hill AARP Meeting

Squirrel Hill AARP will host their May meeting, May 15th at 1:00 P.M. in the Falk Library at Rodef Shalom.

In addition to the general business meeting, election of chapter officers by the general membership will be held. The slate includes Marcia Kramer, President, Marsha Stern, President, Marilyn Honisberg, Treasurer, Andrea DiBello, Recording Secretary, Hilda Goldhammer, Corresponding Secretary, and Gerri Linder, Financial Secretary.

In honor of Memorial Day, attendees and guests are asked to bring donations of large bottles of body wash, stick deodorant, denture adhesive and cleaners, body lotion, combs and brushes, belts, tee shirts with pockets, umbrellas, rain ponchos, and gift cards. All donated items will be distributed to our local veterans' administration.

Bob Cahalan, lifetime local resident, substitute teacher and active volunteer admissions officer for the Air Force Academy will present a stimulating audio-visual program celebrating Pittsburgh. As always all meetings are open to senior population of our community.

Refreshments will be served. For further information contact Marcia Kramer at 412-731-3338.

Joyce Fienberg Book Club

The next meeting of the Book Club is Monday, May 6th at 7:30 P.M., location TBA. The book will be **"The Lost Girls of Paris: A Novel"** by Pam Jenoff. Vividly rendered and inspired by true events, New York Times bestselling author Pam Jenoff shines a light on the incredible heroics of the brave women of World War II and weaves a mesmerizing tale of courage, sisterhood and the great strength of women to survive in the hardest of circumstances. Please reply to sisterhood@tolols.org if you plan to attend.

May Birthdays

Merle Blumenfeld
Marvin Feldman
Naomi Greenblott
Rachelle Grobstein
Fay Neft
Nadine Reck
Sheldon Reck
Reva Simon
Jo-Ann Tuckfelt

May Anniversaries

Carol & Marvin Feldman
Jenny & Steve Swerdlow
Gerry & George Tessler
Brenda & Barry Werber

May Onegs

Eileen and Myron Snider

New Logo Design

Since October we have had many requests for a “logo” from other organizations who want to print our name in their publications. The following is a draft design. What do you think?



Reminders

- To purchase Memorial Plaques, Simcha Tree Leaves or Stones contact Ileen Portnoy 412-683-7985
- To sponsor an Oneg in honor of that special person/event or for no reason at all call Hugh Casper at 412-421-7619
- To purchase bricks for our “Garden of Freedom” or sponsor a Kiddush luncheon contact Barbara Caplan 412-521-4332
- To purchase Giant Eagle gift cards contact Marilyn Honigsberg at 412-521-7174
- For information on our cemetery contact Stephen Cohen at 412-421-3999

NEW LIGHT CONGREGATION

5915 Beacon Street

412-421-1017

www.newlightcongregation.org

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Co-President/Social VP/ & Yizkor	Barbara Caplan	412-521-4332
Co-President	Stephen Cohen	412-421-3999
Administrative Assistant	Marilyn Honigsberg	412-521-7174
Membership	Debbi Salvin	724-444-6324
Sisterhood	Sharyn Stein	412-521-5231
Men’s Club	Harold Caplan	412-521-4332
Onegs	Hugh Casper	412-421-7619
Simcha Tree & Memorial Plaques	Ileen Portnoy	412-683-7985
Treasurer	Harold Caplan	412-521-4332
Cemetery	Myron Snider	412-235-7085
	Stephen Cohen	412-421-3999
Religious	Carl Solomon	412-421-2165
Corresponding	Janet Cohen	412-512-0949
Calendar	Janet Cohen	412-512-0949
Yahrzeits	Barbara Caplan	412-521-4332
Website	Stephen Cohen	412-421-3999