



Adult Orphans Friendship Circle

By PAISHA ROCHLIN-LEHRMAN

"Adult Orphans" accurately and concisely captures the situation in which more and more of us are finding ourselves. Rarely do folks imagine themselves alone in their old age, yet many are increasingly confronted with the reality of living the later years of life without the love and support of family or close friends.

Neither my husband, Marvin, nor I have family in the Bay Area with whom we are in contact. We found ourselves on our own after my sister died, as Maggie was the glue that kept our loosely knit, very small family in Berkeley together. When we were so warmly welcomed by the SZ community two years ago, we rushed in to become part of our new chosen family.

Shortly after joining, Marjorie Hilsenrad and I discovered we shared similar concerns and believing there must be other older congregates with little or no family in the Bay Area, we created the "Adult Orphans Friendship Circle" with the strong support of Rabbi Copeland.

Our chavurah has become a meaningful part of all our lives and we feel strengthened to be among those who actively identify as "elder orphans," a term that has become part of our common vernacular. Many major institutions and publications use this name to acknowledge and address issues of our growing population, including 9,000 of us "elder orphans" on Facebook. Recently, Sherith Israel heard about our group and invited me to do a presentation to help create their own Adult Orphans Chavurah.

Our Adult Orphans Friendship Circle at SZ meets monthly for informative and inspiring presentations, to share resources, and to enjoy lively discussions at potlucks. Our intention is also to be supportive to one another as needs inevitably arise.

We warmly welcome SZ members and non-members on the second Wednesday night of each month at 6:30 in the oneg room. Please check the online SZ weekly newsletter for the upcoming program. We hope you will join us and bring a friend who may be interested as well.

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The Seventh Sense

By CANTOR SHARON BERNSTEIN



I was thinking lately, with my pun-riddled brain, about how we say “sense of humor.” We’ve got sight, hearing, touch, taste, smell, intuition (sixth sense), and then there’s our seventh sense -- humor!

A sense of humor is not only endemic to us as human beings,

it’s built into the fiber of Judaism. Our sacred texts abound with humor: wordplay in the form of puns and alliterations, irony, kvetching (which, if not humor in and of itself, gave birth to entire comedic personas), and quasi-comic interchanges.

When three angels say to 90-year-old Sarah that she is going to bear a child, she laughs, and then, when God calls her on it, denies it, only to be told by God, “Nay, but you did laugh.”

The upcoming Purim holiday is, by commandment, a time of joy, and historically full of jokes, pranks, and merriment. The core text – Megillat Esther – reads like a Shakespearean comedy, with absurdities, plot twists, drunken

parties, sexual innuendos, a buffoonish king, and a sudden happy ending in which the villain is hoisted on his own gallows. There are entire genres of Purim humor: the Purim Shpil, a comic rendition of the Purim story; and Purim Torah, humorous and satirical writings based on or in the style of Torah, explained by a “Purim Rabbi.”

Humor is also portrayed in the Talmud as a tool. Rabbah (4th century Talmudist) used to open his lessons with a joke to put everyone in a good mood before starting to teach. Elsewhere, there is a story in which Elijah the Prophet tells Rabbi Beroka Hoza’ah that two particular men would merit the world to come.

When Rabbi Hoza’ah asked them, the two men said that they were jesters, and that when they see someone who is depressed they try to cheer them up. Also, they said, that they always try hard to make peace between quarreling parties. It is written in Psalm 126 that when the Messiah comes, our mouths will be filled with laughter. But we don’t need to wait until the Messiah comes; that seventh sense of ours can be put to use now. To celebrate. To help us learn. To lift our spirits. And to help make peace.

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Sha’ar Zahav is a member of the Union for Reform Judaism, the World Congress of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Jews, California Power & Light, and the San Francisco Interfaith Council

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My Congregant Story

By KELLY THIEMANN

I had a lot to learn about Judaism. I started late. When my spouse Ann first brought me to services, it all was new. Something spoke to me when I attended High Holy Day services. I wanted to learn more and thus began my journey to Judaism.

As part of the conversion process, I learned about Friday night Shabbat services: the melodies and the prayers. It took several more years before I decided to have a bat mitzvah. I had many excuses – the language was too hard; I didn't have time to study. Finally, the time was right. Phil Charney was patient enough to teach me Hebrew and the Saturday morning service.

I started Torah study with Rabbi Angel in the year leading up to my bat mitzvah. One thing I asked to do was to write drash for the Torah portions we studied. I like finding a word, an idea related to the current events, a larger theme in Judaism or finding an answer to a question and weaving together the various pieces of information.

When I co-led the Friday Shabbat service recently with Rabbi Copeland, she asked me what melody I would like to use for a particular prayer. I said, "there's more than one?" The two times I co-led services — with Martin



Tannenbaum for my bat mitzvah and with Rabbi Copeland — both took time to go over the entire service with me. Both gave tips on how I could make myself more comfortable and feel more confident, for example: "start out boldly and the congregation will carry the melody."

Based on my recent experiences, I would like to continue service leading and drashing. Converting to Judaism has opened a whole new world for me to explore, and I still have a lot to learn.

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Specifications supplied upon request.

You Can Influence Israeli Politics

By RON LEZELL

Vote Now In WZO Elections!

In 1992 and 1996, I was a delegate to the World Zionist Organization. Delegates to the WZO make decisions about the fate of \$5 billion that goes to Jewish organizations and programs in Israel and around the world. Election for delegates to the World Zionist Organization is held every five years. Voting takes place online between January 21 and March 11.

Voting is open to any adult Jew who is a U.S. citizen, who pays \$7.50 online and signs an online statement affirming that they are someone who “views a Jewish, Zionist, democratic and secure State of Israel to be the expression of the common responsibility of the Jewish people for its continuity and future.” Israel, the United States and the rest of the Jewish diaspora will each be sending about a third of the delegates. The American delegates are decided through a system that works like elections in Israel. In each election, there are parties that make a slate of candidates.

The overall vote determines how many people from that list get into power. Whichever party gets the most votes will have the most say over what happens at the WZO when it convenes in Jerusalem in October. Israel's delegates will be determined by the results of its parliamentary elections in March. In the last election in 2015,

the Reform Movement in the U.S. received 39% of the American vote. Together with the Conservative Movement's 17% and the major non-religious liberal Jewish groups, the American progressive voice and power exceeded that of the Orthodox delegation (16%), with the remainder split among smaller parties.

The Reform Movement challenges the Jewish National Fund's efforts to buy properties in eastern Jerusalem and build settlements in the West

Bank, which many liberal Jews think makes the prospect of peace with Palestine more difficult.

The Reform Movement and its coalition partner, including the Reconstructionists, want money to go toward progressive Israeli groups and away from West Bank settlements.

Many right-wing and Orthodox groups are pushing back in response, wanting to

protect their causes, including yeshivas or settlement expansion. There are 15 parties running in the U.S. this year, three more than in 2015. I urge you to vote the party called Vote Reform, the largest vote-getter in 2015. The slate will oppose racism and discrimination and push for a two-state solution, in addition to recognition of non-Orthodox Judaism in Israel.

Go online at azm.org/elections to see the complete platform and candidates for the Reform Movement.



MAKE A NOTE: The annual congregation meeting is **Wednesday, May 20, 2020**

Sha'ar Zahav Is And Will Always Be My Community

By JAN HALF

Since the early 2000s, when I first heard of Sha'ar Zahav, I wanted to attend services and experience this unique synagogue, even though I was a member of, and occasionally attended, synagogues on the Peninsula. Because I was the executive director of a statewide educational technology nonprofit and busy with family activities, I just didn't have the time until...



I retired in 2015 after a 40-year career in education and technology, and also came out as a lesbian. I had been going to various women's singles events, including one at Sha'ar Zahav in March 2016. I had the pleasure of meeting board member (now president) Nancy Levin, and when I mentioned that I had wanted to attend Sha'ar Zahav and loved music, she suggested Shabbes Beat with Cantor Bernstein and the chorus.

My experience at the April 15, 2016 Shabbat Service was "love at first sight" for 90 minutes of music, the welcoming community, and meeting longtime member Sharyn Saslafsky, my now lifetime partner. After a year of attending monthly Shabbes Beat services, High Holy Day services at the Herbst, and special musical programs, Cantor Unplugged and Music in the Mishkan, I joined Sha'ar Zahav in April 2017.

"My experience at Shabbat Service was "love at first sight." - Jan Half

My reasons for wanting to join Sha'ar Zahav, increasing my annual financial support and "Gift from the Heart," and leaving a percentage of my assets as a 'legacy gift' include:

- 1) Welcoming LGBT community including many non-LGBT members
- 2) Participation by members as well as clergy at services
- 3) Variety of Jewish and interfaith backgrounds
- 4) Monthly Shabbes Beat Musical services
- 5) Music and other special programs

The fact that I met Sharyn was unexpected and wonderful! Although Rabbi Copeland was not the rabbi when I joined, she has added enthusiasm, joy and inspiration: another reason for me to want to support Sha'ar Zahav now and into the future.

SHA'AR ZAHAV NEW MEMBERSHIP

DECEMBER

Randy Heilbraun
Daniel Vainish

FEBRUARY

Sen Talley
Rebecca Fenn
Julie Panda

Franco Martinez

Isa Elfers & Amanda Killian

Scott Bergman

Arthur Meirson & Thomas Tolerico

Maelis Perlman

Bat Mitzvah

Maelis Perlman will be called to the Torah as a bat mitzvah on May 30. Maelis lives in San Francisco with her parents, Ezra and Shireen, and her little sister, Marella. Maelis is a 7th grader at Katherine Delmar Burke School.

Her friends would describe her as extravagant and bright. She enjoys singing, dancing and listening to music in her spare time. She is

a member of her school's vocal ensemble and was just in a musical production of Newsies, produced by Musical Theatre Works.

She is funny and energetic and makes all her friends laugh. Her mitzvah projects include volunteering at the zoo to help teach people about animals.

Issac Lachter

Bar Mitzvah

Isaac Lachter will be called to the Torah as a bar mitzvah on May 2, much to the relief of his parents, Joel Lachter and Jill Ludwig. Isaac is very



adept at whatever he puts his mind to - which generally involves avoiding tasks that he does not find sufficiently entertaining. Thus, his parents were surprised and thankful that he

continued with his Hebrew practice, writing a drash, and the long drive to Sha'ar Zahav from Mountain View on Saturday mornings. The friends he has made at Sha'ar Zahav, and the interesting conversations with his teachers and mentors make it all worthwhile to him.

Isaac and his family would like to thank Rabbi Copeland, Frank Yellin, Michael Chertok, Sue Bojdak, Cantor Sharon Bernstein, Geneva Rust-Orta, Andrea Guerra, George Rubin, and Andy Fyne for all the time and energy they devoted to help him prepare and making him feel at home at Sha'ar Zahav.

Isaac quickly learned all the nooks and crannies of his new home; you may have stumbled across him hiding in one. Isaac's favorite part of Beit Sefer is playing hide and seek afterwards with his friends.

Back in Mountain View, Isaac enjoys playing games, watching videos, and developing various projects on his computer. He goes on walks with his father, and has begun toting a garbage can and reacher to collect trash as they go. But most of all, Isaac enjoys cuddling up in bed with a book and one of his four cats.

Reuben Michael Friedman

Bar Mitzvah

Reuben Michael Friedman will become a bar mitzvah on March 21 (Adar 25). His Torah parsha is Vayakhel, which is about Bezalel building the Mishkan. Reuben lives in the Russian Hill district in San Francisco with his younger sister, Zoe; his older brother, Noah; his parents Brad and Irene; and his grandmother, Brenda. Reuben is a seventh-grade student at Francisco Middle School.

His hobbies are creating drawings and playing piano, but Reuben refrains from these on Shabbat. In addition to these, he also likes biking and hiking. He wants to be an architect when he grows up. He is very enthusiastic about Judaism because prayer is meaningful and meditative. Reuben would like to thank his mentor, Avi Goldberg, for helping him learn prayers and prepare his drash.



SHA'AR ZAHAV MAZEL TOV TO:

NOVEMBER

Allan Berenstein on the birth of his great-granddaughter, Kinsley Berenstein and his granddaughter, Lainey Berenstein!

JANUARY

Arthur Slepian, who was elected board chair of the San Francisco Jewish Community Federation. He is the first gay-identified chair in their 100+ year history

SHA'AR ZAHAV CONDOLENCES

NOVEMBER

- 5 **Spencer Nilson,**
father of Rachel Nilson Ralston
- 29 **Samuel Haber,**
father of Sara Haber
and father-in-law of Beth Sousa

DECEMBER

- 15 **Diane Hendricks,**
sister of Nathan & Jacob Robinson
- 28 **Charlotte Fischer,**
mother of Donald Fischer
and grandmother of Spencer Fischer

JANUARY

- 12 **Dr. Libbe Hale,**
mother of Annye Bone
- 16 **Brian Gottlieb,**
friend of Phil Charney
- 23 **Lola Wiesner,**
mother of Steve Wiesner
- 27 **Howard Bobren,**
friend of Phil Charney
- 29 **David Kinstle,**
brother-in-law of Sara Haber and Beth Sousa
- 30 **Lea Sneider Poats,**
friend of Ann Daniels

General Fund**In Honor of Amy Schustack's Birthday:**

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 Deborah Levy
 Marc Lipschutz
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in memory of Irene Tannenbaum

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in memory of Myrtle Carlson, Charlotte Fischer,
 Samuel Haber, Rita Roginski

Paul Cohen and Bob Gutterman

in memory of Samuel Haber, Diane Hendricks
 and Spencer Nilson

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in memory of Charlotte Fischer, Samuel Haber
 and Diane Hendricks
 and in honor of Phil Charney's milestone birthday

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in memory of Spencer Nilson, Niel Josephs,
 Leo Terr, Bernice Wiseman

Joan Goldman**William Goldstein and Christopher Archuleta**

to help defray building security costs

Jan Half**Nancy Ingersoll**

in memory of Irene Tannenbaum

Ben Kram and Sharon Kudo**Marc Lifschutz**

in honor of Amy Schustack
 and Michael Tyler's birthdays

Mark Mackler and Wendell Choo

in honor of Phil Charney's milestone birthday

Richard Meyerson

in memory of Samuel Haber

Irving Mintzer and Amber Leonard

in support of Beit Sefer Phyllis Mintzer

Jeff Piade and Martin Tilzer

in memory of Samuel Haber

Ora Prochovnick and Rena Frantz

in memory of Charlotte Fischer and Diane Hendricks

Ari and Kimberly Rubenfeld

in honor of Paul Cohen and in support of
 the Journey to Judaism Program

Sharyn Saslafsky and Jan Half

in memory of Samuel Haber
 and Charlotte Fischer

Karen Schiller

in memory of Charlotte Fischer and Jay Schiller
 and in honor of Spencer Fischer

Steven Shotland**Arthur Slepian and Gerry Llamado**

in memory of Irene Tannenbaum
 and in honor of Spencer Fischer

Howard Steiermann

in celebration of the engagements of
 Michael Chertok and Anthony Sauler,
 and Jeff Piade and Martin Tilzer

Dan Wohlfeiler

in honor of Martin Tannenbaum,
 "mensch among mensches!"

Judith Wolfe and Jenny Hughes

in memory of Samuel Haber, Richard Sousa
 and Irene Tannenbaum

Terri Yeckley

in honor of Martin Tannenbaum

Ami Zusman

in memory of Samuel Haber

High Holy Days 5780**Roy Bateman****Ann Bauman and Kelly Thiemann****Robert Katz****Elliot Sprehn and Rachel Nancollas**

in memory of Helen Lund

David Zusman**Rainbow 2019****Joe Harkman****Tony Harris****Nancy Levin****Irene Ogus****Steven Polsky and Mark Oliver****Yo Schneeman****Kelly Thiemann and Ann Bauman****Judith Wolfe****Rainbow 2020****Marc Lipschutz**

in memory of Aaron Martin Lipschutz
 and Renee S. Lipschutz

Cantor's Discretionary Fund**Jonathan Funk and John Arnold****Judith Wolfe and Jenny Hughes****Anonymous**

The Rabbi Julius & Pearl Funk Musical Events Fund

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in memory of Rabbi Julius and Pearl Funk
and Minnie Wiseman

Nina Gordon

in honor of Jonathan Funk

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

InterfaithFamily

Leonard and Marcelle Joffe

in appreciation for the wonderful
Yom Kippur services

Jamie Copperman

in appreciation for allowing Interfaith Families
to use the building for training

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in memory of Rabbi Julius and Pearl Funk

Sen Talley

in honor of Allan Bernstein,
Rabbi Mychal Copeland,
Alan Ferrara and Allan Gold
and in memory of my parents,
Naomi Levy and Manuel Nachman

Michael Tyler, Amy Schustack and Scott Kramer

in memory of Charlotte Fischer

Judith Wolfe and Jenny Hughes

Bookplates for Machzor

Beth Ross and Laurie Trupin

in honor of Amy Schustack's birthday

Music in the Mishkan

Diane Shear

Chai Fund (Building)

James Carlson

in honor of Irene Ogus and the Security Task Force

Laura Lowe

Irene Ogus

Jane and Michael Rice

Chai Fund (Cantor)

Barbara Cymrot

David Gellman

Chai Fund (General)

Karen Schiller

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Jan Half

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NOVEMBER

22-23 Flowers by Pierre Adida

in memory of my father,
Salomon Adida

Oneg by Ira Hirschfield

in memory of my father,
Howard Hirschfield

DECEMBER

13-14 Flowers by Mark Mackler and Wendell Choo

in memory of Mark's mother,
Phyllis Mackler

Klezmer Shabbat and Oneg

by Martin Tannenbaum and Alex Ingersoll

in memory of Martin's brother,
Larry Tannenbaum

Kiddush Lunch by Ellen Press

in memory of her father,
Dr. Marvin Press

20-21 Oneg by Jonathan Funk and John Arnold

in memory of their parents,
Rabbi Julius and Pearl Funk
and Robert and Frances Arnold

27-28 Oneg by Wayne Bender

in memory of his father,
Herman Bender

JANUARY

24-25 Oneg by Miriam Menzel

in memory of her parents,
Roslyn Ludwig Menzel and Herbert Menzel

31-1 Oneg by Janet Klein

in memory of her grandmother,
Fannie Klein

MARCH

3 Batya Kalis
 6 Pearl Lewin
 6 Rabbi Sanford Lowe
 7 Isabel Fishman
 7 Rabbi Jason Gaber
 8 Seth Charney
 1 Paul Nemrow
 16 Theodore G. Mendonca, Jr.
 20 Jamie Rosen
 23 Noah Nacamulli
 26 Michael Lipson
 28 Neill Rosen
 31 James Harris Freedgood
 31 Marvin Steele

APRIL

1 Adam Harris
 1 Howard Rinkoff
 2 Ronald Gertz
 3 Abraham Cohen
 6 Dennis Mitchell
 21 Robert Sterman
 23 Michael Randall
 24 Norma Faini-Pick
 26 Sanford Bernstein

MAY

1 Eugene Bender
 9 Richard Inlander
 9 Jack Jacobs
 13 David Delroy
 14 Thomas Yazman
 17 Steve Goldstein
 17 Nanci Stern
 19 Allan Altman
 20 Robert Coffman
 21 James Perkins
 24 David Loeb

PURIM will be celebrated on Monday evening, March 9th with a puppet spiel, mask making, hamantaschen baking, followed by a raucous chanting of the Megillah Esther.



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Celebrate Passover in Community!

First Night, Wednesday, April 8:

Can you welcome one or two Sha'ar Zahavniks to your first night seder? Do you need a place to go on first night?

Contact Sue Bojdak (education@shaarzahav.org)
by April 1 if you can host or need a place to go.

Second Night, Thursday, April 9, 5:30 pm:

CSZ's Homemade Seder

led by Rabbi Mychal Copeland

Our building is filled with storytelling, singing, laughter and lots of spirit as our community gets together to recount the Passover tale. We each bring a dish to share, and there's always good food and good company.

Bring your friends and family!

Advance registration is required, so watch your email for registration information.