

“Transcend the Ordinary”

Elul 5782 - Kislev 5783

September 2022 - November 2022

ALL OF OUR MUCHNESS

By CANTOR SHARON BERNSTEIN



At the beginning of the V'ahavta, we are told to love God with all our heart (b'chol l'avvcha), all our soul (uv'chol nafsh'cha), and all our might, or muchness (uv'chol m'odecha). It occurred to me recently that these actions correlate beautifully with flow, a term coined by psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (CHEEK-sent-me-HIGH-ee) to describe a state of being in which we are fully immersed in what we are doing.

Entering into flow can be a little elusive. It often seems to just happen. I'm wondering if these words of the V'ahavta can be used towards flipping the flow “on” switch; whether we can engage different parts of ourselves in something step-by-step, eventually gathering our full forces and focusing them towards a particular point. Starting with our heart, or our soul, or our left pinky, and eventually working towards the muchness, the everything.

entering our full forces and focusing them towards a particular point. Starting with our heart, or our soul, or our left pinky, and eventually working towards the muchness, the everything.

I'm thinking about this in particular as we enter the season of High Holy Days. High Holy Days can be a new beginning, a chance to look at the book of our life and think about the next chapter. Our liturgy talks about being written into that book, but the reality is that we do a lot of our own writing. Could that be done in flow? Could we do it with all our heart, all our soul, all our... everything? What would that look like?

We're going through tough, often overwhelming, times. It may feel like we don't have a lot to put into thinking about our lives or the next year. That's okay. It doesn't have to be a lot. It can be just a moment here and there, a moment in which we fully engage all parts of ourselves and let everything else fade into the background.

High Holy Days can provide opportunities for that. Closing our eyes during the sounding of the shofar, breathing it in so that it undulates through us, thrumming in all the corners of our mind and body. Focusing on a word or phrase in the prayer book, and marinating ourselves in its texture and meaning. Gazing at the waters during tashlich, visually imbibing their ebb and flow. Reaching out and being of deep service to someone or something.

Csikszentmihalyi talked about losing oneself in a transcendent purpose. In this New Year, may we each find moments of such transcendence, infused with our heart, soul, and muchness.

**Meet The
B'mitzvah pg. 5**

Keeping Up With The Va'ad

By DEBORAH LEVY



Shana tova and chag sameach everyone! Happy New Year and happy holidays. How sweet it will be to gather together, most of us again in the Herbst Theater and many of us joining on Zoom for Rosh Hashana evening and first day, and Yom Kippur. We

also look forward to gathering together for Zoom-only services on Selichot and second day Rosh Hashanah services.

The Va'ad - our Board of Directors - is hard at work, focusing on our stewardship role, supporting our fundraising efforts, and examining and suggesting revisions to our bylaws.

This summer and fall, we'll explore and address the structures in our community that need changing for us to become more welcoming and inclusive to Jews of all backgrounds, focusing on our committee structure and our mission statement, to reflect our commitment to racial equity and accessibility.

We are now supported by the wonderful Susie Idzik in her new role of Executive Director – a huge step for Sha'ar Zahav. The Rabbi, Susie, and I are working together in a “leadership triangle,” as explained to me years ago by Paul Cohen, z”l. How much he would love that the triangle is happening.

Soon, Va'ad agendas and documents will be available through ShulCloud, our membership portal, so now is a good time to be sure you can use ShulCloud. Contact the office if you need assistance with this, or want to see meeting materials and attend meetings. And, we've started planning a congregational trip to Israel in 2023! Let me know if you're interested, or have questions or comments. If you want to learn more about Israel and its neighbors, join a meeting of the L'havin Committee on the fourth Monday of each month.

Thanks to all of you for building community with your presence and your service, offering support, study, Torah, and opportunities to work towards social justice within our community and beyond. If you'd like to be more involved – even in a small way – contact me (president@shaarzahav.org) and we can look for the right fit.

I'm honored by your trust.

Sha'ar Zahav

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San Francisco CA 94103

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WEB <http://www.shaarzahav.org>

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Adam Pollack, Ruth Schoenbach,
Martin Tannenbaum, Alyss Weissglass

SZ's New Executive Director

By SUSIE IDZIK

As of July 1, I am now the Executive Director (ED) of Sha'ar Zahav. I am excited to be stepping into this role as the congregation's first ED in many years.

There is a subtle shift in how the ED's role differs from that of an Administrator, though much of the day-to-day work remains the same and my ultimate responsibility is still to ensure effective management of all things administrative and fiscal. In an administrator model, the job is to find efficient ways to get the day-to-day work done. In an ED model, I work with a long-term vision for the

sustained health and growth of SZ. And the most significant change - I am very excited to be part of the new "leadership triangle" that Deborah mentions, working in close partnership with the Rabbi and the Va'ad President. In the office, I continue to work closely with Kerasa Tsokas, who is invaluable for her first-rate administrative support.

I hope you join me in my excitement about this new structure at Sha'ar Zahav. I look forward to reassessing and refreshing the vision as we work to make it as effective as possible.

Hostx With The Mostx

By ANN DANIELS

If you've been on Zoom at a mixed-presence (aka hybrid) service lately, you've met SZ's "hostx," our gender-neutral shorthand for "hostx with the mostx." We created this new program to make the online experience more haimish (Yiddish for friendly, warm, comfortable) - the hostx welcome people, invite visitors to introduce themselves, guide the discussion at key points, help people feel seen, heard, and acknowledged, and give Zoomers the chance to participate in a more active way. Many of our members have said they rely heavily on Zoom to keep connected with our SZ community, and Zoom atten-

dance at services is consistently high. But after more than two years, we know screen fatigue is real. For those of us who can't, or choose not to, gather in person, the hostx are here to promote a little extra joy and togetherness for our online community.

All are welcome to join the hostx. It isn't a lot of work, you get to work with the fabulous Zoom tech team, and it's a great way to become more closely connected to our wonderful community. Contact Sara Haber at sara.fay.haber@gmail.com to volunteer or for more information.

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extension 304.

Specifications supplied upon request.

Where You Are Known

By SUE BOJDAK



There's a Berkeley cafe I've been frequenting for five years or more. Once or twice a week I stop in for chai; they make the best chai. Today, the line was long when I got there and even though I was wearing a hat and a mask and my sunglasses, the owner saw me through a pile

of people and started making my chai - because I am a regular. And he knows me.

When I talk about Beit Sefer Phyllis Mintzer, I extol the blessings of being small – the first of which is that everybody knows you. And your parents, and your pets. To be known, to be seen, is the key to a deep sense of belonging. And isn't that the kind of place your synagogue should be? That "third place" (after home and school/work) where you are anchored in community life? I often tell prospective families how much I love watching our kids interact at recess. It's like a group of neighborhood kids or cousins. Everyone finds their way in, or comfortably to the side. Kids play across ages. They try out different activities depending on their mood or the group energy. And they build a seamless community that includes everyone.

This impulse to inclusion crosses generations. While parents are not required to lean in, most do and they are robustly welcomed and made to feel at home. And the kids are the same. They fluidly welcome new kids, accept each other's foibles, work together, and make space for each other. Yes, there are moments of friction. And when they happen students are reminded that everyone matters. The contributions of a first grader are as important as those of a sixth grader. And we practice honoring each other in real time. Yes, Beit Sefer is creative and

engaging and forward-thinking and queer-positive and joyfully experimental in all the ways that make learning compelling. And what makes us magical is being a small community where everybody matters and is seen and honored for exactly who they are. If you or people you know might be interested in joining this magical community this year, visit <https://shaarzahav.org/religiousschool/> to register, or contact Sue Bojda at education@shaarzahav.org to learn more.

SHA'AR ZAHAV MAZEL TOV

MAY

Brandie Solovay

on her conversion

Sondra, Brandie, and Lilia Solovay

on their wedding

Yuridia Ruhama Yisraeli

on her reaffirmation

JULY

Jan Half and Sharyn Saslafsky

on their wedding

M Eifler

on receiving the Ford Foundation Disability Futures Fellowship for their "Prosthetic Memory" project

Joe and Anna Harkman

on the birth of Ramona Edith Harkman

SHA'AR ZAHAV NEW MEMBERS

JUNE Joan Toledo Lisa Danzig

AUGUST

Shaina Hammerman, Octavio Di Sciullo, Massimiliano (Max) and Ariana (Ari) Di Sciullo
Aviel (Avi) McDermott
Hale Smith
Reva Luftman, Adam Luftman, Riley and Nora
Jane Kenner

Meet The B'mitzvah

Soli Steinfeld

Solomon Davis Steinfield (Soli), son of Liz Steinfield and Janell Fischer, will be called to the Torah as a b'mitzvah on October 15. Soli lives in Berkeley with his parents and dog Jaxon, and is a seventh grader at East Bay School for Boys. He loves soccer, parkour, music, art, and games. He plays the guitar and drums, break dances, beat boxes, and creates many a Minecraft world. Energetic, funny, warm and social, Soli is a true extrovert who will talk to anyone.

Soli loves his community at Sha'ar Zahav and with his family is very grateful to his mentors and teachers, Sue Bojdak, Ron Lezell, Arthur Slepian, Deborah Levy and Cantor Bernstein.



Sadie Post

Sadie Post, child of Susan Leff and Brad Post, and sibling of Frank and Lilah, will be called to the Torah as a b'mitzvah on November 12. Sadie is a lifelong member of Sha'ar Zahav, most recently attending Beit Sefer online from Nevada City.

Sadie is in seventh grade at Seven Hills Middle School. Sadie enjoys reading, studying Korean martial arts, and playing music. She recently enjoyed performing onstage with the Nevada City Youth Circus.

Sadie would like to thank Nancy Levin, Frank Yellin, Beth Ross and Isabel Lahn-Schroeder for their support and dedication. Sadie was also lovingly assisted with her drash by her Uncle Paul Cohen z"l.

Jonah Goldstone

Jonah Goldstone, the elder child of Vicki and Gary Goldstone, will be called to the Torah on November 5 after several years of learning with Beit Sefer at Sha'ar Zahav. Jonah is a seventh grader at Presidio Middle School, where he enjoys singing in the choir and doing science and gardening projects. At home, Jonah loves using Minecraft to co-create digital worlds with friends in other parts of the country. Always one to jump at opportunities to explore what could be, he also thrives in the theater and enjoys improving his acting skills in camps and classes.

Jonah would like to thank his mentor Michael Chertok, Nina Wouk, Cantor Bernstein, and all the Beit Sefer teachers who have dedicated their time to developing and nurturing his Jewish identity.



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and his uncle, Ron Carlson

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in memory of Joseph Wiseman

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in memory of Brian Ellis

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in celebration of Beit Sefer's amazing madrichimot
Sadie, Anshel, Gabby & Frank

Deborah Levy

in honor of Deldep Medina's significant birthday
in honor of Marc Lipschutz's devoted service
as Va'ad president

Ron Lezell

in memory of his mother, Sophie Stulberg Lezell
in celebration of the wedding
of Sharyn Saslafsky and Jan Half
and in memory of Brian Ellis

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in honor of Deborah Levy on her installation

Herman Rosenbaum

in honor of Steve Elman's 75th birthday

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brother of Tiela Chalmers
in honor of Kathleen and Ernest Friedlander
for an extraordinary oneg in celebration of
their wedding
and in honor of Tiela Chalmers for her drash
and co-leading Shabbat aufruf service
in celebration of their wedding

Yo Schneeman

in memory of her mother

Karen Schiller

in honor of Ramona Edith Harkman's birth
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Karen Schiller
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and Evan Arnold-Gordon**

in honor of
Jan Half and Sharyn Saslafsky's marriage

Dodi Walker Gross

in celebration of
Jan Half and Sharyn Saslafsky's marriage

Janice Oldak

in memory of Paul Cohen

Sharyn Saslafsky and Jan Half

in appreciation for Cantor Bernstein's music
for their wedding

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in honor of Deborah Levy's presidency

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in memory of Alan Harap

Machzor Bookplate**Ann Rubin**

in memory of Brian Mailman
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marriage

Jonathan Pannor

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in appreciation of Rabbi Copeland
officiating at their wedding

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in celebration of Brandie's conversion
in honor of and with thanks to
Rabbi Mychal Copeland for officiating
at their wedding

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in honor of Marc Lipschutz's
service as president

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with gratitude to Rabbi Copeland
in loving memory of Gerald S. "Jerry" Gordon

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their Shabbat aufruf service

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in honor of Bettie Cymrot

Ann Daniels and Jonathan Zingman**Sophia De Anda**

(continued on next page)

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in memory of Lynne Hessel and Daniel Fox

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 and in memory of Ray Bernstein

JULY

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 in memory of Ilse Steirman

SHA'AR ZAHAV / CONDOLENCES

**Sha'ar Zahav mourns the loss of our members,
 and extends our sympathy to their loved ones:**

Brian Ellis,
 partner of Steve Farmer
Suzie Langdon,
 wife of Irene Ogus
Sam Thal
Trudi Hauptman,
 wife of Stephen and mother of Zach Hauptman
Patty Ryan,
 wife of Aaron and mother of Sam and Carly

In Memoriam

The congregation notes with sorrow the deaths of:

MAY

Toby Emmer
 friend of Yo Schneeman
Christine Johnson
 friend of Larry Best

JUNE

Gerald S. Gordon
 father of Bob Gordon
 and father-in-law of Juan Patiño
Rita Buchta
 grandmother of Michael Rosenberg
Lewis Weinfeld
 chosen family uncle of Clarissa Kripke

JULY

Ann Biderman
 former member and friend of Laura Lowe
Scott Levine
 friend of Laura Lowe

AUGUST

Laura Moss
 sister of Shawn Rosenmoss

SEPTEMBER

John Golebowski
Lee Giersen
Kevin Johnson
Bernard Pechter
Elliot Klein
David Pierce
Penny Dachinger
Mike Rankin
Jeffrey Lewis Cohen
Rabbi Benjamin Marcus

OCTOBER

Jeffrey A. Miller
Duane Kearns Puryear
Annye Bone
Andrew Zysman
Harry Clint Bigglestone
Henry Mautner
Harvey Levine
Richard D. Wright
Glenn Murray Miller
Michael Mohr

NOVEMBER

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Donald Albert
Bruce Apter
George Mintzer
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Elul and High Holy Days

In person. Online. Together.

Saturday, Sept. 17, 8pm - S'lichot (Zoom)

Other Elul events and classes listed in
weekly emails and on the SZ website

ROSH HASHANAH:

Sunday, Sept. 25, 7:30pm

Erev Rosh Hashanah (Herbst & Zoom)

Monday, Sept. 26, 9:30am

Rosh Hashanah (Herbst & Zoom)

Monday, Sept. 26, 2pm

Tashlich (Crissy Field)

Dates and times for Zoom and
East Bay Tashlich TBD

Tuesday, Sept. 27, 9:30am

Second Day Rosh Hashanah (Zoom)

Sunday, Oct. 2, 10am

Kever Avot v'Imahot/Cemetery
Visitation (Hills of Eternity, Colma)

YOM KIPPUR:

Tues, Oct. 4, 7:30pm

Kol Nidre (Herbst & Zoom)

Wed, Oct. 5, all day

Yom Kippur - multiple services
(Herbst & Zoom)

**More information and registration
links in the weekly emails and on
the Sha'ar Zahav website**

www.shaarzahav.org

**Sha'ar Zahav High Holy Days
services and events are free
and open to all.**