

Federation Focus

Fall 2018

Vol.9 Issue 1

Federation Focus is published three times a year by the Jewish Federation of Central California.
“All Jews are responsible for one another.” (Talmud:Shavuot 39a)



5779

From the Director



On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Jewish Federation of Central California (JFCC) let me extend warm wishes for a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year 5779. I hope you and your families have a joyous holiday and that this will be the beginning of a peaceful year for all of us.

Sukkot, on September 24, is one of my favorite holidays; I can remember as a child living in Brooklyn's Borough Park area how exciting it was to see all the Sukkahs being put up. I hope you get to attend one of the many events taking place in the Sukkahs at the various congregations here in the Central Valley with family and friends.

SAVE THE DATE

Sunday February 10, 1 p.m. at Temple Beth Israel and join us for a play presented by Jewish Women's Theatre, **THE MATZOH BALL DIARIES** (see flyer inside). The first 50 tickets will be discounted.

The annual Allocation meeting will be held on October 14 at 11 a.m. We will publish a list of all allocations in our next newsletter.

MANY MANY THANKS to all of you for your support this year. We are sorry to say we have not achieved our goal. So PLEASE if you have not made your pledge, it is not too late. You can call the office, send me an email, or fill out the back page and mail it in (see information below). Remember your pledges help Jewish families both here in the Central Valley and in Israel.

We gratefully accept donations in memory or in honor of individuals and occasions. We notify the associates or family of those being honored or remembered.

We also accept advertisements that will be included in both our Focus publication and on our website. The cost is \$100 annually. We hope you will consider placing an ad; we encourage all of our community to support our advertisers.

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If you have any questions please call me at 432-2162 or email me at fedfresno@sbcglobal.net

Lehitraot,

Phyllis Farrow
Executive Director



Fall Events



For more information on events listed in the calendar, please contact your local Congregation:

Temple Beth Israel (TBI) 559 432-3600
Congregation Beth Jacob (CBJ) 559 222-0064
Chabad of Fresno- 559 432-2770
Congregation B'nai David (CBD) 559 732-3139
Congregation Beit Shalom (CBS) 559 308-1333

Every Tuesday & Thursday 10-11 a.m./
TBI exercise class sponsored by Jewish Family Ser-
vices as part of its "Tools for Life" program

September 1
S'lichot Services, all congregations

September 9
 Erev Rosh Hashanah services, all congregations

September 10
 First Day Rosh Hashanah, all congregations

September 11
 Second Day Rosh Hashanah,
 Services at CBJ and Chabad

September 16
 TBI Religious School- First Day

September 18
 Kol Nidre, all congregations

September 19
 Yom Kippur, all congregations

September 20
 JFS Discussion Group
 Depression & Suicide
 11:30 a.m. / TBI Library

September 20
 JFCC Board Meeting
 CBJ/7:00 p.m.

September 23
 Erev Sukkot
 Sukkot Decorating
 CBJ/11:00 a.m.

September 23
 Sukkot-Sunday School, CBD

September 24
 Sukkot

September 25
 Sukkot
 CBJ/9:30 a.m.

September 25
 Fourth Tuesday
 TBI/11:30 a.m.
 Festive lunch in the Sukkah-\$5
 RSVP Judy Haber, 431-2102/jahaber@comcast.net

September 26
 Chinese food in the Sukkah
 TBI/5:30 p.m.

September 28
 Sukkot Dinner
 CBJ/6:30 p.m. Dairy Pot Luck in the Sukkah

September 29
 Port and Chocolate in the Sukkot
 TBI/7:00 p.m.

September 30
 Hoshana Rabba
 CBJ/9:30 a.m. Services

October 1
 Shimini Atzeret & Yizkor Services
 CBJ/9:30 a.m., Family Simchat Torah 8 p.m.

October 2
 Simchat Torah
 CBJ/9:30 a.m.

(continued on page 4)



President's Message

by Murray Farber

There's a famous photo of Rabbi Joshua Heschel of Chasidic and Jewish Theological Seminary heritage walking arm-in-arm with the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., son of a Baptist minister as well as civil rights icon. Marching together from Selma to Montgomery, they represented part of Dr. King's dream of uniting humanity.

Uniting Jews from all branches

I have a dream, too. It's of a march that brings together rabbis marching arm-in-arm and uniting Jews from all the major branches of Judaism. The march would herald an upbeat event such as the planting of trees for Tu B'Shevat. And it would take place in Jerusalem.

But when would this happen? Currently it seems more reasonable to expect rabbis worldwide to march alongside non-Jews than spiritual leaders of their own faith. Jewish lay persons are just as split. The American Jewish Committee conducted a survey that revealed 80 percent of American Jews compared with 49 percent of Israeli Jews want to end the ultra-Orthodox monopoly of worship, marriage divorce and conversion.

Israelis more conservative

Another survey: 73 percent of American Jews favor providing space near the Western Wall in Jerusalem for mixed gender prayer. Among Israeli Jews, 42 percent favor mixing. News stories regularly report the dichotomy over such issues as modesty in clothing, full equality for all in Israel, absorbing immigrants whether Jewish or African refugees – remember “You were strangers in a strange land” (*Deut.*) Examine the conflicts among the ultra-Orthodox, modern Orthodox, Reform, Conservatives, Reconstructionist, seculars and vari-

ous forms of Humanism and you wonder: Are all these really parts of the same faith?

No wonder Dan Shapiro, former Israeli ambassador to the U.S., warning of a Jewish tragedy, blamed hatred within the Jewish community as one of the causes for the destruction of the second temple in Jerusalem in 70 C.E.

On Saturday mornings locally, Torah study at Temple Beth Israel (open to everyone at 9 a.m. combining commentary and snacks) discussion has probed the historic conflicts in Judaism ranging from the ambitious Korach who tried to overthrow Moses as the leader in the wilderness through to how heirs of King Solomon split the Land of Milk and Honey into warring kingdoms.

Ben Gurion tried to help

In modern times, there was hope that the rebirth of Israel would consolidate all factions. As the first prime minister, Ben Gurion thought he could resolve conflicts between religious and secular Jews through compromises. Today revisionists insist he worsened conditions.

Despite the controversies, the Jewish Federation of Central California currently serves all facets of Fresno area Judaism. Its executives and board members can't hope to merge the varied religious philosophies or practices at events. However, as an umbrella organization, we feel a responsibility that crosses fixed lines.



Rabbi Heschel and MLK

Federation supports all branches

In the past year, this approach has prompted Federation support for the traditional Israel Independence Day events, a Hanukkah celebration, youth activities, Israeli social needs, the local cemetery, assistance to the elderly and handicapped, and cultural programs. Decisions are not always easy. So, as I mark another term as Federation president, I want to thank the board members for their dedication, Jewish Family Service for innovative programming, Executive Director Phyllis Farrow, and the entire community for its financial and volunteer support.

ISRAELI FROM KENYA WINS FIRST GOLD

Lonah Chemtai Salpeter, a Kenyan-born Israeli citizen, won a hard-fought 10,000-meter race in Berlin, taking home Israel's first ever track gold in a men's or women's event at the European Athletics

Championships on August 8. She finished in 31 minutes, 43.29 seconds,

"I'm really happy. I dreamed of this, but I didn't believe it happened," Salpeter said. She will receive a grant of \$11,000 from Israeli sports author-

ities for her achievement.

The athlete moved to Israel in 2009, originally as a nanny for the children of Kenya's ambassador to Israel. She later met running coach Dan Salpeter and they married and have a four year old son.



Lonah Chemtai Salpeter

CALENDAR *(continued from page 2)*

October 13

Jewish Film Series Presents at TBI

6:00 p.m. Bistro; 7:00 p.m.: "The Bands Visit"

Details at www.fresnojewishfilm.org

RSVP Elizabeth Kassel 301-2350/kassel9638@gmail.com

October 14

Hoshana Rabba

CBJ/9:30 a.m. Services

October 14

JFCC Allocations

CBJ/11 a.m.

October 23

Fourth Tuesday

TBI Social Hall/1 p.m.

Adventures in Myanmar & Laos/Judy Haber

November 15

JFS Discussion Group

Handicapped Awareness

11:30 a.m. / TBI Library

November 16

JFCC Board Meeting, CBJ/7 p.m.

November 17

Jewish Film Series Presents at TBI

7:00 pm-"The Testament"

Details at www.fresnojewishfilm.org

RSVP Elizabeth Kassel 301-2350/kassel9638@gmail.com



November 22

Thanksgiving

December 2

Hanukkah, First Candle

Hanukah Bazaar

TBI/10:00 a. m.

December 2

Hanukkah celebration

CBD/11:30 a. m.

December 4

Fourth Tuesday

Annual Hanukkah Latke Party, TBI/11:30 a.m.

RSVP Judy Haber, 431-2102/jahaber@comcast.net

December 7

Hanukkah Pot Luck Family Service

TBI 7 p.m.

December 8

Jewish Film Series Presents at TBI

"Simon and Theodore"/7 p.m.

Details at www.fresnojewishfilm.org

RSVP Elizabeth Kassel/301-2350/kassel9638@gmail.com





Thanks to the generosity of Gae Werfel and the funds that she left to Jewish Family Services, we are continuing to provide expanded services to meet the many needs of our community.

Our major focus is on the Tools For Life program. The program started when we introduced our Tuesday and Thursday senior exercise class. This program continues to grow, in part due to the excellent instructor, Dawn Owen.

Our monthly calendar is busy and interesting. We now are offering a monthly discussion group on topics such as All About Wills, which will be held on August 30.

On September 20 the discussion of Suicide and Depression in Seniors will be led by a representative from Hinds Hospice.

In October, for the one year anniversary of the exercise class, we will be hosting a special lunch for the participants.



On November 15 Jose Mendoza will be coming to present information about resources for the handicapped.

Some of our future plans include possible day trips; we are open to your suggestions.

Email: fedfresno@sbcglobal.net

Phone 559 432-0529

The JFS Committee:

Carol Reba, Chair; Rabbi Paul Gordon; Phyllis Farrow, JFCC Director; Linda Nahin, Community Outreach; Leslie Briney, Rita Karsh, Elizabeth Kassel, Jenny Mann, Amy Schmidt



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TOOLS FOR LIFE

Presented by Jewish Family Services

at Temple Beth Israel

Senior Fitness Program

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10-11 a.m.

Chair exercises with qualified instructor



DISCUSSION GROUPS

September 20 at 11:30 a.m.

Suicide & Depression in Seniors

Brandy Lidbeck, LMFT, Program Coordinator, Hinds Hospice

October 11 at 11:30 a.m.

Lunch and First Annual Celebration of our Exercise Class

November 15 at 11:30 a.m.

Handicapped Awareness

Jose Mendoza, Advocate Disability Rights, California



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LETTER FROM ISRAEL by Vic Rosenthal

Comments?

K2vco.vic@gmail.com



I've read about the terrible fires all over the western United States and I still remember how the smoke would displace the air in the valley whenever there were wildfires.

Here in Israel – well, not exactly here, but in the south of the country – we have been having a similar problem. Our fires are all manmade, started by balloons and kites carrying flaming payloads sent over our border from Hamas-ruled Gaza. Tens of thousands of acres of farmland and nature reserves have burned, including crops, animals, beehives – I don't have to tell people in California what that's like.

It's been going on for months now. Just this week a ceasefire agreement with the friendly folks of Hamas is being negotiated, and the attacks seem to be stopping.

If the fires in California were being openly started by a group of terrorists, I think you would do whatever it takes to stop them. So you may ask, "Why does Israel allow it to continue?" Many Israelis are asking the same question. The short answer is that we would have to kill people to stop it, it would precipitate a bloody war and, despite what some say, we very much prefer peace. On the other hand, you don't have real peace when you give in to blackmail, or not for long anyway. By the time you read this, either there will be a longer-term ceasefire, or there will be tanks rolling into Gaza, yet again.

Since there can never be a dull moment, our Knesset has passed a "Nation State Law." You will certainly hear a great deal about this and how it is a horrible racist, theocratic law, but in my opinion that is nonsense. The law does not affect in any way the *individual* civil, political or human rights of minority group members in Israel. Nobody's right to vote, to

employment, to housing, or to eat at a lunch counter or ride on a bus is affected by this law. It does clearly reserve the *collective* right of national self-determination in the state to the Jewish people, which is a fundamental principle of Zionism. You can read all about it in my recent posts at abuyehuda.com.

The High Holidays, which in Israel refers to a period that is almost a month long during which nothing happens, are coming up. I want to build a permanent structure on my part of the roof of our apartment building that will be a sunshade in the summer and a Sukkah in the Fall, but it requires a permit and it requires a contractor to come and look at the roof before the Holidays, and I can't believe it will happen in time for this Sukkot.

My youngest child, Judah, has passed the age of 40 and is no longer required to do reserve duty every year. So now I have 6 six years to relax, until his oldest son Ilai is eligible for the draft.

The weather is warm and humid – we are a few miles from the sea here – but as the days get longer the sky is beginning to have more and more clouds every day. We have had some lovely wet winters here in the past few years, and are looking forward to another one.

May all our friends in Fresno get a good soaking that will put out the fires and clean up the air.

**TRANSITIONS****Counseling Center**

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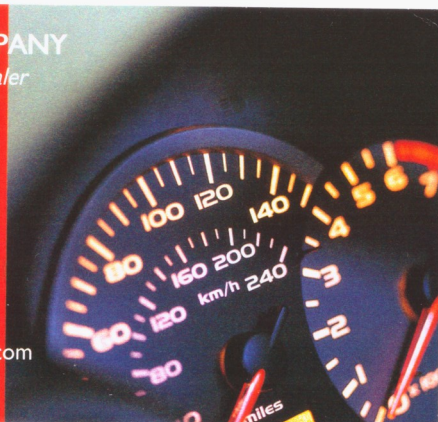
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SYNAGOGUE IN KOLKATA, INDIA

Kolkata is the largest city in the state of West Bengal, India. In the 19th and 20th centuries it had a thriving Jewish community including actors, politicians, bankers and journalists, as well as Pramila, a famous model and actress who was the first Miss India in 1947. Her real name was Esther Victoria Abraham.



Pramila

Esther Victoria Abraham

After World War II, most of the Jews moved abroad leaving a few synagogues, cemeteries and schools, as well as a number of streets named after Jews. Surprisingly, the caretakers of the city's two most notable synagogues, Beth El and Magen David (pictured) were Muslims.

The 116 year old Nahoum and Sons bakery still exists and once supplied challah as well as a Christmas fruitcake to townspeople.

CHASSIDUS CORNER

The Torah wants us to beware of your heart misleading you, ending up worshipping false gods. Baal Shem Tov interprets this to mean that the moment a Jew turns away from God, he is already serving idols. Moshe explains the stages in which this occurs and links them to insects and snakes.

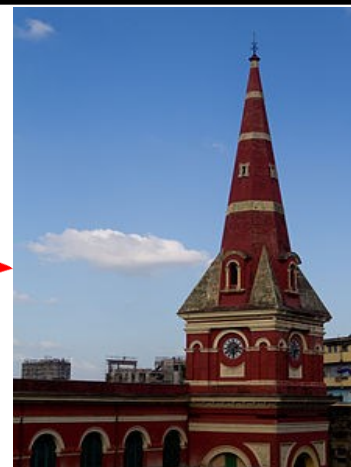
Initially you overestimate your own power and knowledge of this world. You say "I am a scientist, and this is not logical." As a result, you fail to develop your own powerful spiritual methodology

So you replace your spiritual energy with worldly pursuits. Your desire for money and power takes over your life. Your enthusiasm for worldly things burns like the sting of the viper.

Eventually, your worldly pursuits leave you bored and you become cold and deadened to the joys of the world. This is symbolized by the scorpion's cold venom.

In our community, we can and must light a lamp in another Jew to awaken their soul. A Jew who prevents another Jew from doing mitzvahs is compared to a snake and its venom. If you see this happening around you, make this year a year to say No.

- David ben Hirsch HaCohen



Temple Magen David

Congregation Beit Shalom

www.congregationbeitshalomvisalia.com
 congregationbeitshalom@yahoo.com
 559.308.1333

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www.congregationbnaidavid.com
 559.732.3139

L'Shanah Tovah Um'tookah - to our many friends and acquaintances! We hope to see you again as we pray for repair and a deeper connection to a Jewish life and our Creator.

Erev Rosh Hashonah will begin with a community education program on bees and beekeeping by Darren Hess of Kingsburg Honey Co. This hands on program begins at 5 p.m Sunday, September 9— Adults \$5 Children FREE. A brief Children's Rosh Hashonah service will follow.

Rabbi Avivah Erlick and husband Jay Vandendorp on guitar will blow Shofar for High Holiday Services. You are invited to a Kol Nidre dinner before Yom Kippur begins on Tuesday, September 18. RSVP by September 10 at 308-1333 for details.

Every Friday/Shabbat we continue the study of Torah with Hebrew class at 5:30 p.m. in the library. Candle lighting and Kabbalat Shabbat begin at 7 p.m. Please join us for study, questions, and friendship.

Over the summer we have received many boxes of buttons from all over the United States. We are happy that La Sierra Military Academy students will volunteer to count our significant stacks of donated buttons. The number is nearing the four million mark. Our goal is 6 million buttons which will represent the six million Jewish lives lost in the Shoah. Please see our Facebook page: californi-aholocausteducation&resourcecenter.

Lehitraot and L'Shana Tovah !

-Cynthia Simonian Fischer

Now that the High Holy days are upon us, we are looking forward to a healthy and happy New Year.

CBD is looking forward to starting the New Year with a new Student Rabbi, Ariel Zitny, from Hebrew Union College in Los Angeles, who will be with us for the holidays.

Sunday School starts September 16. Classes meet from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. There are also classes in Hebrew and Confirmation.

This past Summer CBD celebrated the Bat Mitzvah of Harper Dutton.

CBD has suffered the loss of several former members this past summer - Steve Kabet, Vickie Plough and Herb Schwartz. Herb was a lay leader and teacher for many years with us. We extend our condolences and sympathies to their families. May all their memories be for a blessing.

Our Spring Cake Auction was very successful with lots of deliciously sweet entries. We will have Honey from the Heart for the high holidays in our Gift Shop

We welcome anyone from the community who may be interested in attending Friday evening services or in learning more about Judaism.

Marsha Brooks-Smith



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JFCC ALLOCATIONS 2018

Israel/Overseas

Jewish Federation North America	\$15,000
Honest Reporting Media Central	500
Israel Independence day	5,000
Guest Speakers Israel	1,500
Krembo Wings (youth program)	1,941
Total Israel/Overseas	23,941

Local

Jewish Family Services	\$20,000
Interest free loans	3,000
CBJ/Yom Hashoah	1,000
Jewish Community Relations Committee	500
CBD/Holocaust Project	1,800
Prison Project	600
Camperships	1,500
"New Cemetery"	2,500
TBI/ Cemetery	8,000
Manchester School Holocaust Program	1,000
FYBGI	2,000
Camp Shalom	1,000
TBI-4 th Grade Class/B'nai B'rith Dinner	280
Jewish Studies Program	\$5,000
Play "Hold Me Heal Me"	\$3,500
Total Local	\$51,680

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Our Mission

The mission of the Jewish Federation of Central California is to build and strengthen the Jewish community locally, overseas and in Israel, by

- ◆ *Raising funds and allocating them to identified Jewish community needs and priorities at home and abroad*
- ◆ *Providing education and cultural programs to promote community awareness of the Federation and its mission*
- ◆ *Listening to a broad spectrum of opinions from throughout the community to assure all Jewish voices are heard*
- ◆ *Evaluating efforts to ensure that Federation human and fiscal resources are used most effectively.*

For your convenience we accept Visa/Master Card for your pledges and donations. We appreciate your adjusting your gift to accommodate our 4% bank charge. Thank you.

Federation Offers Youth Scholarships

The Jewish Federation of Central California provides subsidies for Jewish youth to travel to and attend recognized Jewish camps and other programs in U.S. And Israel. Applications or requests must be received 30 days prior to need. For information call the Federation at **432-2162**.

Jewish Federations of North America protects and enhances the well-being of Jews and Jewish communities in North America, Israel and around the world. We strive to realize our core values of *chesed* (caring and compassion), *Torah* (Jewish Learning), *tikkun olam* (repair of the world) and *tzedakah* (social justice). As the focus of the federations, JFNA acts upon these values through philanthropy, strategic initiatives, and collective leadership—in partnership with local communities, national and international agencies.

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AND CALENDAR LISTING

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