



Bethesda Jewish Congregation News

Rabbi Elhanan 'Sunny' Schnitzer

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Kriat HaRav—The Rabbi's Call

Rabbi Elhanan 'Sunny' Schnitzer

Last month, we watched with trepidation events in the Ukraine, a region with a substantial Jewish population. In Southeastern Ukraine, a synagogue was torched. Immediately prior to the Russian invasion of the Crimea, a synagogue was attacked and trashed in Simferopol. Who attacked the Simferopol synagogue is unclear; some say local Ukrainian Neo-Nazis; others claim it was pro-Russian provocateurs. Indeed, Russian President Vladimir Putin claimed justification for the incursion into the Crimea as a response to acts of anti-Semitism, among other reasons.

While the revolution at the Maidan in Kiev overthrew a corrupt and despotic regime, the world should take note that one of the largest groups taking part in the riots in Kiev's central square was the "Right Sector" an ultra-nationalist, anti-Semitic political party. There are larger and more dangerous anti-Semitic parties within Russia itself.

World Jewry has acted quickly in response. The Jewish Agency has allocated \$400,000 in order to upgrade security at 97 locations in some 30 cities throughout Ukraine. The locations include synagogues, Jewish community centers, communal offices, day schools, nursery schools and yeshivot. Purim celebrations were cancelled in most Ukrainian Jewish communities. For Jews preparing to make aliyah, the process has been accelerated. For Jews thinking about aliyah, the Jewish Agency is holding information seminars and is expediting applications.

This upwelling of anti-Semitism in the Ukraine is sadly part of a growing trend in Europe and the world. In Hungary, a virulently anti-Semitic party, Jobbik, is now the third largest in Parliament. Recently one of its representatives put forth a bill (defeated) requiring a list of all Jewish legislators, to assess their loyalty.

In Austria and France, anti-Semitic political parties are on the rise. On January 28, a Paris demonstration of 17,000 people protesting policies of the Holland government, turned anti-Semitic with chants of; "Jews go home" and "Jews, France is not your country." The chilling video is available on YouTube.

A recent survey showed that 50% of French Jews do not leave their homes wearing Jewish symbols or jewelry, for fear of attack and 23% do not attend Jewish events or synagogue for the same reason. Seventy-five per cent of French Jews believe that anti-Semitism has worsened in the last five years. Fifty per cent are considering emigration.

When we consider the rise in European anti-Semitism coupled with the vicious anti-Semitism spewing from the Middle East, North Africa, and Indonesia, resurrection of the Blood Libel on television in Arabic speaking countries, and the demonization of Jews and Israel around the world, the situation becomes ever more ominous.

"I thought that the memory of the Holocaust would shame those boasting anti-Semitic opinions. I was wrong."

– Elie Wiesel

We, the Jews of the United States are far removed from these events. It is difficult to conceive, let alone empathize, with the gut-wrenching fear that

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BJC News

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so many of our people are experiencing this very day. We must consider that our perspectives on the issues challenging world Jewry today are skewed by our safety and egalitarian ethos. We must acknowledge that there are real

enemies out there who would do us fatal harm.

This is why it is more important than ever to support a strong and secure Israel as a homeland for the Jewish people. Israel was conceived as a safe haven for Jews fleeing anti-Semitism, a place where none but the Jewish people will determine our destiny. That imperative is unchanged.

The President's Column

Joan Wolf

Don't Be Embarrassed

Did you know that 'religious embarrassment' is a *thing*? It was actually termed in an article. Have you sat in services wondering about a certain ritual or word, but think that you *should* know what's going on? Have you heard references (Hebrew, biblical or otherwise) and nodded your head, but weren't truly certain of the implication? This is an actual phenomenon. People don't like to feel alienated from their own identity, yet it exists.

Through the privilege of serving on the CE21 taskforce, I have become aware of how critical it is for all of us to be able to ask questions in the Jewish context when we don't understand something. It sounds simple, but it is unfortunately true that many of us

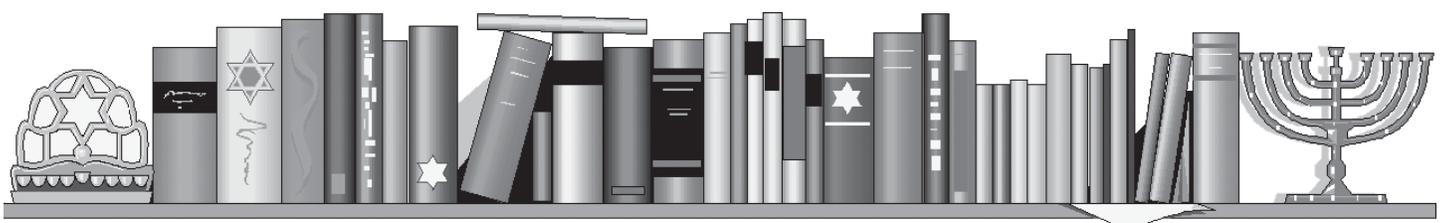
are too embarrassed to ask.

BJC strives to create an environment where it is safe to *ask*. And to that end, our devoted Rabbi, a phenomenal-teacher-and-totally-approachable (did you hear that his recent Modern Jewish History series was packed?), will create a box within this newsletter that will attempt to guess and address those items that you've been wondering about.

Whether it's:

- Does BJC have an affiliation with the Conservative or Reform movement?
- What is Midrash?
- When do we bow during various prayers and why? (See *BJC News*, February 2013)
- What is Pirkei Avot?

I am religiously embarrassed, too—in fact, I personally wrote that 'when do we bow and why' question above. Please know that BJC is your resource and spiritual home; a place where your questions will be answered, not judged. Let the questioning begin!



Director of Congregational Education

Mindy Silverstein

According to the 2013 latest Pew Research, 70% of Jewish Americans attended at least one Seder last year.

While this is a slight decline from the 2000-2001 demographic study (78%), nonetheless Passover remains a holiday which is widely celebrated.

This got me wondering, what is it about Passover that has this “pull”? I contacted several congregants who shared these responses with me. One of the comments I received talked about the importance of family and friends being together.

Maran Gluckstein: It’s about family and the passing of a story and its traditions. Passover stands out in the Jewish calendar the way Thanksgiving stands out in the American calendar.

Merry Banerji: For me, personally, in my home when I was growing up, it was an occasion to invite non-Jews to something both Jewish and non-threatening, while being historically and culturally interesting. At our Seder table, non-Jews usually outnumbered the Jews. It was a wonderful opportunity to share our cultural heritage and learn about that of the other people present. Today, I still try to make it a point to invite different people (Jews and non-Jews alike) every year to our Passover Seder. This is why Passover is definitely my favorite holiday.

Shoshana Drake: It brings back a sense of family and togetherness that few other holidays provide because of the structure of the Seder.

Sandra Walter: Passover draws me in because it is a week that encompasses everything that I love about Judaism! It’s about my family coming together, it’s about telling an often-told story we know by heart and have favorite passages of, it’s a bridge to thinking about the current state of our world, and it’s about foods that bring memories of both my childhood and my grandparents. It’s about continuing traditions my mother started and passing them on to my niece and it’s about starting new traditions that will forever connect us for generations and beyond. But mostly, it’s about my mom’s walnut cake, salami-latkes, and charoset.

I think for me, it provides an opportunity for family and friends to be together, to share stories (not only “the story”), traditions and each other’s lives; it is a way to create powerful Jewish memories.

From the Rabbi

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 keeping me in-

As you plan for your Seder, either as a host or as a guest, think about the reasons why you are gathering together. How will you create those long lasting memories?

There are many resources to assist you, some of which I have offered below:

- <https://www.pjlibrary.org/parents-and-families/reading-tips-and-resources/jewish-holidays/passover.aspx>
- <http://www.reformjudaism.org/interactive-seder-plate>
- <http://kosher4passover.com/index.htm>
- <http://scheinerman.net/judaism/Holidays/index.html>

Wishing you and your family a wonderful Pesach season.

Please Note:

- Registration Materials for the upcoming 5774-5775 (2013-2014) school year will be available shortly. Check your e-mail and the BJC website.
- April 12, 9 a.m.-10:15 a.m., BJC Congregant and Social Worker, Vicki Bailer, will discuss ways to cope with aging parents. RSVP to the BJC office.



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

Congregation News

Open Book Discussion: *Hateship, Friendship, Courtship, Loveship, Marriage*

Please join us on April 23 to discuss a number of short stories by Nobel laureate Alice Munro. We will discuss four stories in the anthology *Hateship, Friendship, Courtship, Loveship, Marriage*. The four stories are:

the title story; Nettles; Post and Beam; The Bear Came Over the Mountain.

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We meet at 8 p.m. in the Library. Drop-ins and new members are always welcome. Contact Evelyn Ganzglass, 202-966-7037 or Ruth Rosenberg, 703-560-9525 for more information.

The Jewish Way of Death and Mourning

When loss assails us, rituals bring comfort with their surety and rhythm. Modern life has blurred for many of us the ancient path of Jewish wisdom for healing the heart during and after the loss of a loved one. This course will allow us to reclaim that knowledge and prepare us to be truly present for the members of our community when death enters our lives.

This course, held on Thursdays April 24 and May 1 and Tuesday, May 6 at 7:30 p.m., consists of three parts: 1. The rituals of death, funeral, shiva, and shloshim; 2. The function of Jewish cemeteries and memorials; and 3. The Jewish funeral home and Chevre Kadisha (to take place at Torchinsky's Funeral Home on May 6). Upon completion of the course BJC members will have the opportunity to form a BJC chevre kadisha (holy burial society) to serve our community.

Time Change: Shabbat Evening Service of Meditation at 8 p.m.

Join us on the second Friday night of the month at 8 p.m. for an hour of peace, tranquility, and guided visualizations designed to put you in touch with your soul.

Looking for a Summer Intern

Do you know a high school junior or senior, interested in communications or mass media, looking for a summer internship? BJC needs a motivated capable young person to work with the staff to populate our Facebook and Twitter feeds as well as update information on our website.

We will happily work with your student's school to arrange community service credit or in some cases, course credit. Please contact Executive Director Roz Young or Rabbi Schintzer.

CE—The Design Phase Begins!

Harri j. Kramer, chair

By now you've received a letter from Board President Joan Wolf and me outlining just a few of the ideas we're implementing as result of the great input from BJC members from Identity Day and from our Congregational Conversations. Many of these suggestions, such as nametags and cooking events, are relatively easy to implement.

Others will take time and thought. The Congregational Education for the 21st Century (CE21) process is



now advancing to the next phase of work—the Design Phase. The Task Force met for an all-day retreat in March to begin the process, and now a Subteam will begin to develop a new model for the congregation's educational programming. And to

restate an important point: we're not talking about redesigning the school; we're focused on education programming for the very youngest to our senior-most congregants. As our foundation, we are using the Visionary Description we developed and shared in the Congregational Conversations. If you missed it, the Visionary Description is at www.bethesdajewish.org/visionary-statement.

Lest we sound too bureaucratic, the Subteam will take its drafts to the Task Force, and once we're ready we'll be sharing our ideas with you, the Congregation.

This segues to another point—communication. We have heard from you that we're not communicating as well as we could. What would work better? Each month, I've proffered the CE21 email address. Alas, only two of you have written in the past year!

While we are trying to keep everyone up to date with our progress, if you would like to know more, don't hesitate to get in touch. The easiest way to find us is at ce21bjc@gmail.com or 301-469-8636. Of course, feel free to stop Joan or me in the halls of BJC. We'll know who you are become you're wearing your nametag. Right?

Prayer for Pets

We invite you and your pets to join Rabbi Schnitzer on Saturday, May 3 at 1:30 p.m for a very special afternoon of blessing your animals.

All pets are welcome (must be leashed or caged) for an afternoon of sharing and fun.

Many organizations will be onsite with information for you. All ages are welcome.

We will be in the front parking lot closest to Bradley Blvd., rain date Saturday June 7.

Yahrzeits

יארצייט

Larry Adlerstein, Father of Maran Gluckstein

Jack Blagman, Father of Diane Blagman

Leo Blumberg, Grandfather of Linda Blumberg and Mark Blumberg

Nancy Brenits, Mother of Don Brenits

Dorothy Coplan, Mother of Lois Rose

Rose Werner Dubrow, Mother of Laurie Dubrow

Grace Ertichek, Mother of Debra Aronson

Suzanne Frank, Aunt of Roz Young

Annette Franzel, Aunt of Maran Gluckstein

Rose Krettmeyer, Mother of Nancy Glassman
 Lily Laufer, Mother of David Laufer
 Alice Lieberman, Mother of Ruth Rosenberg
 Duane McMillen, Father of Dale McMillen
 Sidney Robbins, Grandfather of Rich Kochman
 Laurence Rosenberg, Husband of Ruth Rosenberg
 Louis Singer, Father of Marlene Zakai
 Leon Sukin, Father of Hope Klauber
 Nettie Yockelson Weinstein, Mother of Milton
 Weinstein
 Leonard Weinstock, Father of Tara Blanchard

Thank You תודה רבה

Bruce and Wynne Busman for their generous donation to the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund in memory of Ileene Hoffman.

Aleen and Herb Chabot for their generous donation in honor of the Yahrzeits of Aleen's mother and brother, Minnie Kerwin and Donald Kerwin and Herb's mother, Esther Chabot.

Alan Lichter for his generous donation in honor of the Yahrzeit of his father George Lichter.

Todd and Ruth Magin for their generous donations to the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund and the Cuba Fund in

memory of Ruth's mother, Shirley Chersonson.

Lorrie Van Akkeren for her generous donation to the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund in honor of the Yahrzeit of her mother, Ida Goldstein.

Lorrie Van Akkeren for her generous donation to the Maran Gluckstein Family Education Fund in honor of her Bat Mitzvah.

Elsa Weinstein for her generous donation in honor of the Yahrzeit of her mother, Reve Madeoy Sugarman.

For Their Generous Donation to Enhancing the Flame

Lorrie Van Akkeren

Community News

Darfur Vigil

On Sunday, April 27, 1:30 to 2:30 p.m., BJC and Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church are holding a vigil at the Sudanese Embassy (2210 Massachusetts Ave. N.W., nearest Metro Stop, Dupont Circle, Q Street exit) to urge an end to genocide. Please plan on joining us in this moving inter-faith effort.

Rabbi Sunny's College of Jewish Knowledge

- Tanach—An acronym for the three collections of the core texts of Judaism.
 - Torah—the Chumash—the five books of Moses, Bereisheet (Genesis), Sh'mot (Exodus), Vayikra (Leviticus, Bamidbar (Numbers), D'varim (Deuteronomy)
 - Nevi'im—Books of the Prophets (a prophet is a Navi, (pl.) Nevi'im—Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Samuel 1 and 2, etc.
 - Ketuvim—Writings (Psalms, Proverbs, Kings 1 & 2, Chronicles 1 and 2, and more).
- Mishnah—First major written redaction of Jewish law called the *Oral Torah* and is considered the first major work of *Rabbinic literature*. Compiled between 200–220 CE by Rabbi Yehudah haNasi.
- Gemara—Rabbinic analysis of and commentary on the Mishnah. After the Mishnah was published, the work was expanded for changing times by generations of rabbis. There are two versions of the Gemara. One version was compiled by scholars of Roman Occupied Israel between about 350-400 CE. ("Yerushalmi") The other by scholars in Babylonia, which was published about 500 CE. ("Bavli") By convention, a reference to the "Gemara" or "Talmud," without further qualification, refers to the Babylonian version.
- Talmud—The combined Mishnah and Gemara in a single continuous volume. The whole Talmud consists of 63 tractates, and is over 6,200 pages long. It is written in Rabbinic Hebrew and Aramaic.
- Midrash—A body of stories told to explain or expand passages in the Tanach. The earliest of these appear in the Mishnah, but even modern stories interpreting events in the Torah are considered Midrash. Often Midrashim (pl.) fill in gaps left in the biblical narrative regarding events and personalities that are only hinted at in the text.

Send me your questions for future inclusion in this feature.



April 2014 Calendar

Day	Date	Time	Event	Location
Friday	Mar 28	8:00 p.m.	Shabbat Service	Covenant Hall
Saturday	Mar 29	9:00 a.m. 9:00 a.m. 10:30 a.m.	Adult Hebrew Religious School Shabbat Worship—Hudis Bar Mitzvah	Lounge Classrooms Covenant Hall
Sunday	Mar 30	3:00 p.m.	BJC Speaker Series—Marvin and Deborah Kalb	Covenant Hall
Wednesday	April 2	4:15 p.m. 6:30 p.m.	Religious School Kemach and Tanach	Classrooms Library
Friday	April 4	6:30 p.m. 8:00 p.m.	Tot Shabbat N'tivim L'Shabbat Music Service	Lounge Covenant Hall
Saturday	April 5	9:00 a.m. 9:00 a.m. 10:30 a.m.	Adult Hebrew Religious School Shabbat Worship—Kirschner Bar Mitzvah	Lounge Classrooms Covenant Hall
Tuesday	April 8	6:30 p.m.	Tichon Class	Youth Lounge
Wednesday	April 9	4:15 p.m. 6:30 p.m.	Religious School Kemach and Tanach	Classrooms Library
Thursday	April 10	7:30 p.m.	BJC Board of Directors Meeting	Lounge
Friday	April 11	8:00 pm	Service of Meditation— <i>Time Change</i>	Covenant Hall
Saturday	April 12	9:00 a.m. 9:00 a.m. 10:30 a.m.	Adult Hebrew Religious School Shabbat Worship—Fechter Bar Mitzvah	Lounge Classrooms Covenant Hall
Monday	April 14		First Night of Passover	
Tuesday	April 15	6:30 p.m.	2nd Night Seder	Memorial Hall
Wednesday	April 16	4:15 p.m. 6:30 p.m.	BJC <i>Office Closed</i> No Religious School No Kemach and Tanach	
Friday	April 18	8:00 p.m.	Simcha B'Shabbat All Music Service with band	Covenant Hall
Saturday	April 19	9:00 a.m. 9:00 a.m. 10:30 a.m.	No Adult Hebrew No Religious School Shabbat Worship	Lounge Classrooms Covenant Hall
Tuesday	April 22	6:30 p.m.	Tichon Class	Youth Lounge
Wednesday	April 23	4:15 p.m. 6:30 p.m. 8:00 p.m.	Religious School Kemach and Tanach Open Book Discussion: <i>Hateship, Friendship, Courtship, Loveship, Marriage</i>	Classrooms Library Library
Thursday	April 24	7:30 p.m.	Jewish Way of Death and Mourning	Library
Friday	April 25	8:00 p.m.	Shabbat Service	Covenant Hall
Saturday	April 26	9:00 a.m. 9:00 a.m. 10:30 a.m.	Adult Hebrew Religious School Shabbat Worship—Schaefer Bar Mitzvah	Lounge Classrooms Covenant Hall
Sunday	April 27	1:00 p.m.	Darfur Rally	
Monday	April 28		Yom Hashoah	

Wednesday	April 30	4:15 p.m. 6:30 p.m.	Religious School Kemach and Tanach	Classrooms Library
Thursday	May 1	7:30 p.m.	Jewish Way of Death and Mourning	Library
Friday	May 2	8:00 p.m.	N'tivim L'Shabbat Music Service	Covenant Hall
Saturday	May 3	9:00 a.m. 9:00 a.m. 10:30 a.m. 1:30 p.m.	Adult Hebrew Religious School Shabbat Worship—Zimmerman Bat Mitzvah Prayer for Pets	Lounge Classrooms Covenant Hall Front Park'g Lot

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



Join Us!

BJC's Annual 2nd Night Seder

Tuesday, April 15 at 6:30 p.m.

Cost: \$40 per adult, \$18 for kids 7-12; free for those under 7. We ask that last names beginning with A-L bring a Kosher for Passover dessert and those M-Z bring a Kosher for Passover side dish.

Please RSVP to the BJC Office at admin@bethesdajewish.org or 301-469-8636.
Reservations by April 8, 2014. After April 8, the cost will be \$50 per person



Be sure to check BJC's website & weekly E-News for schedule updates

GREAT NAMES Lecture Series

Sundays • 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm

Marvin & Deborah Kalb, co-authors
Haunting Legacy: Vietnam and the American Presidency from Ford to Obama
MARCH 30

Steve Luxenberg, author
Annie's Ghosts: A Journey Into A Family Secret
JUNE 1

Member,
Secretary of State John Kerry's Israeli-Palestinian Peace Negotiations Team
in SEPTEMBER

Earl Silbert, BJC member
First Watergate Prosecutor & Prominent Attorney
NOVEMBER 2



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The deadline for submitting articles for the May newsletter is April 4.
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 May newsletter, mail it to the BJC office with your check made payable to BJC.
Deadline: April 4. Rate structure for a business card: \$30.00 per month, 3-month minimum. Rates are slightly higher for cards that are not camera-ready art.