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March & April 2017
3 Adar – 4 Iyyar

Thank You to the following donors from 12/7/2016 to 2/6/2017

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I was honored to have the opportunity to speak with Abigail Pogrebin, a hero of mine for bringing together two of my favorite themes, Jewish identity and Pop Culture, in her 2007 book, *Stars of David: Prominent Jews Talk About Being Jewish*. She currently serves as the congregation president at Central Synagogue, NY, NY. She will be joining us at CBSRZ for our next Books and Bagels event on Sunday, March 5, to discuss her latest book, *My Jewish Year: 18 Holidays, One Wondering Jew*, which comes out this month.

It’s such a pleasure to talk to you. As a rabbi, having read *Stars of David* and about your own ambivalence about being Jewish, I have to ask: how in the world did you become a synagogue president?

First, and that’s a great question, I would correct a bit. I don’t think I had so much ambivalence about being Jewish as ignorance about being Jewish and what it meant. The ignorance, in a way, led to giving up before I started... assuming it

*Continued on page 4*
was too late. Either you got this stuff in your DNA, or your mother’s breast milk, or your baby food, or else you didn’t. I thought it was too overwhelming and I was too behind to start. *Stars of David* forced me to fill in the gaps because I thought that the interviews I would do would catch me in my ignorance, and that I would be interviewing people who knew more. I felt I should bone up on the tradition and its texts. When I started to study in preparation for those interviews, a door opened, which I didn’t expect. It took me on a path I didn’t expect. As you know, one door opens, then ten more open, and each one was fascinating. I wanted to keep going down those hallways.

Jewish learning itself became a priority. Because it was giving something back to me. It was deepening and challenging — it wasn’t just fixed, codified, or immovable, but it invites all of us in to engage and wrestle and refract it through our own lives today. So that was my “eureka” — that this tradition could feel so immediate. I became a rabbi groupie and a learning addict. I started auditing classes at JTS or seminars at Mechon Hadar: The Independent Seminary, and I started a Torah group in my own home.

Still, during that time, I didn’t have a Jewish home. I didn’t grow up in a synagogue that I felt like I belonged to, literally and metaphorically, and I wasn’t really looking for one. But then I went to a Bat Mitzvah at Central Synagogue, and it was one of those “clicks,” where I felt like — this is where I need to be. I started going to Shabbat services on Fridays and was drawn into some of their activities and volunteer opportunities. And the more and more they just pull you in and keep offering more and more. Suddenly, I was on the board, and then I was asked to be president.

It is absolutely not a clear path that anyone would have guessed. When I was an undergraduate at Yale, majoring in English and Theater, that was not where I thought I would end up. As a journalist, it was not my focus, but that’s really where I spend my time now, both journalistically and personally.

But that was too long an answer…

No, it was perfect! I’m very personally interested. As a rabbi, we often wonder, what is that magic “key.”

…or magic moment where things turned.

Exactly. Do you see your new book as part of that same trajectory?

Absolutely. The new book is, in a way, “Abby’s Jewish Path, 2.0.” The more I learned, the more I wanted to know. I felt like I was missing the connecting points, and that so much of the Jewish infrastructure is holiday-based and cycle-based. If you are missing these, or you don’t understand those tethers and threads, you are actually missing the scaffolding of the tradition. You look to your right and left, and there is a Jewish holiday every five minutes. What are these ancient rituals and fasts? Why are observant Jews following them? Is it just that they were raised to do it? There has to be power and meaning to them or so many people wouldn’t hold on to them.

When I spoke with Leon Wieseltier for my first book, *Stars of David*, he said this line that stuck with me. He got almost adversarial with me when I said to him, “You know, a lot of the people I am interviewing just don’t feel like Judaism ‘does it’ for them. Like, it’s not really value-added in their lives, and that’s why they don’t prioritize it or they’ve let it go.” And he said, “Talk to me about rejecting something once you understand it. I don’t really accept that decision, or respect it, without someone having taken the time to unpack it, to engage it, to fight with it. Get in the fight with it, and then tell me you’re bored by it. Then tell me it doesn’t speak to you. Then tell me it doesn’t come alive.”

To me, that was a personal gauntlet. I realized you have to put skin in the game, and it takes work. Judaism is very demanding, but it gives a heck of a lot back. He said, “I think we have no right to overthrow the rituals and traditions that made it all the way to us.” There’s some obligation we have — not that we have to be observant Jews, but we do have to engage it.

It was a challenge for me that resonated in a powerful way. I wanted to take on the whole of it, not just piecemeal, but rather through the arc of the year. Let me research and understand what the entire thing means. As you know, in Judaism, everyone has their own answer about how many holidays there are, but I was trying to be as thorough as possible, to hit all the marks, so no one could call out, “Hey, Abby, you missed this one.”
How I chose to go at these holidays was driven by my own curiosity, and my own interest. It’s not at all that I am prescribing that this is how to observe Tu B’Shevat or Shavuot, rather, I was looking for ways to make these things meaningful in 2014–2015, when I was writing the book. I really challenged rabbis, essentially asking, “Tell me why this isn’t boring or irrelevant.” Literally every rabbi I called said, “yes,” from every denomination. Everyone had a “way-in” to every single holiday. Nobody was stuck on meaning or threads of resonance. That’s the magic of this thing — that is the magic that people are missing: how rich it is, how layered it is. If I called you, Marci, every year to talk about Pesach, you’d have something different to teach me every year.

[Rabbi Michael] Strassfeld, of Society for the Advancement of Judaism, said to me, “It’s all about where you are in your life when these holidays come back around. Relevance changes. I felt this especially during Chanukah one year. The prayers didn’t change, the songs didn’t change, the menorah didn’t change, but I changed. That may not be profound for some people, but it was for me.

Why do you think people get the sense that the tradition is just rote repetition? Did synagogues somehow fail them?

I want to be careful indicting institutional Judaism. David Ingber from Romemu personalizes the aliya — “if anyone has been harmed by their Jewish childhood, in terms of boredom, come up for this aliya!” It’s half humorous and half true. People did get turned off by viewing it as something you just memorized. Questions weren’t welcome. The thing that makes it alive is being invited to turn it upside down. I sometimes get frustrated that the leaders are not being as honest as they could be about what people are feeling in the pews.

When I was in the Bar/Bat Mitzvah circuit, when my kids were that age, I went to a lot of Bar/Bat Mitzvah services. I would say to myself, why would any of these 12–13 year olds ever come back. I’m not talking about bells and whistles, but just explain a prayer before you say it. Explain what we’re doing. Find those moments to enliven or animate what you are doing.

I read an interview where you talked about your husband growing up in Skokie, IL. I grew up in Skokie, too, and I often think about growing up in a place like Skokie, or like Manhattan, where it is so easy to be Jewish.

It’s in the water!

Yes, exactly. I wonder if those who have to work harder at being Jewish, or those who have chosen to be Jewish, who don’t grow up taking it for granted, if they appreciate the tradition differently.

Leon Wieseltier spoke about this a lot, because his wife converted to Judaism. He was saying, he doesn’t fret over other people’s Judaism. He doesn’t lose sleep over that. But over the intermarriage or continuity questions, he said that he doesn’t need anyone to be Jewish with. He says, “I’m confident in my Judaism the way I know it and practice it. I don’t need it to be affirmed by my friends or family.” However, his partner chose it, and there’s a depth and, perhaps, a lack of complexity, because she chose it, and her observance is by design and wholly voluntary. There can be guilt, baggage, a sense of obligation that we carry with us.

What has stayed with you from your year of following the holidays?

If there’s anything that was a theme through nearly every holiday, it was, “What are you doing?” Not what are you feeling, not what are you doing for the Jewish people. The holidays demand of us — how are you helping someone today? How are you doing your part in the repair that is asked of us. Who is hungry? Who’s in trouble?

That surprised me. It was completely revelatory to me. It was a charge, over and over again. It is not just about your own personal, spiritual trajectory. Whether or not I repeat these holidays, I think, “What are you doing, Abby? How are you using your time to help someone else?” At this moment, a precarious one for compassion, with an unleashing of intolerance, that’s where the holidays’ mandate comes back to me. You might have built your good life with your wonderful family, but what are you doing right now to help others?

Abigail Pogrebin will be our guest at Books & Bagels, March 5 at 9:30 a.m.
Religious Affairs At CBSRZ

Adults and Kids – Purim is Saturday, March 11! Pull out those costumes and let’s celebrate Purim together!

We will start the evening with a social hour from 5:00 – 6:00 pm. Wine and beer will be offered for a suggested donation or you can BYOB. We might even have jello shots! Soft beverages will be available at no cost. We will also have scrumptious savory hamantaschen and other hor d’oeuvres to munch on. At 6:00 we will settle in for our Adult Spiel. Given the talent that we have in our congregation, this should prove to be very entertaining and enlightening evening. In addition to our actors, we will all be singing old Purim favorites with Meg Gister on the piano. Following the spiel, we can mingle over coffee and traditional hamantaschen and other desserts.

Rabbi Bellows will be judging the costumes and awarding prizes! So make sure you go all out in your costume design.

If you would like to be an actor in our spiel or help in any other way, please get in touch with Laura Roman, landroman@gmail.com or 860-345-3583.

Yom HaShoah

Yom HaShoah, also known as Holocaust Remembrance Day, occurs on the 27th of Nisan. Shoah, which means catastrophe or utter destruction in Hebrew, refers to the atrocities that were committed against the Jewish people during World War II. This is a memorial day for those who died in the Shoah. The Shoah also known as the Holocaust, from a Greek word meaning “sacrifice by fire.”

This year’s service, Sunday, April 23 at 7:00 PM, will be held at Temple Beth Tikvah in Madison. With the combined leadership and music of the two synagogues, it is sure to be a beautiful and moving service.
Congregation Beth Shalom Rodfe Zedek
Congregational Passover Seder
Second Night of Passover – Tuesday, April 11, 2017
Seder begins at 6:00 pm followed by dinner at approximately 7:00.
CATERED BY OUR VERY OWN….BOB & LINDA ZEMMEL AND ALFORNO RESTAURANT

MENU

Hard Boiled Egg and Salt Water
Chicken soup with Linda’s Matzoh Balls
Gefilte Fish with Two Horseradishes: Hot and Homemade Hotter
(mild also available)
Traditional Seder Plates

**Wine** BYOB
Ceremonial wine and juice will be provided. Please bring your own for dinner.

Braised Brisket Served With Its Pan Juices and Roasted Brussel Sprouts
Breast of Empire Chicken Stuffed with Wild Mushrooms
Fried Chicken Fingers a la Matzo Meal (FOR THE CHILDREN)
Roasted Seasonal Vegetables
Farfel Kugel
Arugula and Mesclun Salad with Vegetables
Grilled Asparagus and Grape Tomato Salad

Dessert
Linda’s Almond Macaroons
Assorted Coffees and Teas

Please join us as we come together to celebrate Passover – it’s always a delicious and spiritual experience. To add a personal touch to the celebration, we ask you to bring your family Seder plate (we’ll provide the ingredients). Rabbi Bellows will begin the service promptly at 6:00 pm. We recognize that it’s a week night and will strive to be done by 8:30 pm.

Please send your reservation and payment to the synagogue office by Wednesday April 5th. (PO Box 438, Chester CT 06412). You may also call register online via the CBSRZ.org website, call (860-526-8920) or email (office@cbsrz.org) your reservation with payment to follow. You must have a reservation in order to attend. If you wish to sit with another family, we suggest you arrive no later than 5:30 to get seats together.

Name(s) ___________________________ Phone Number _______________________
Member Adults _____ x $36 = _________ Non-Member Adults __________ x $45 = __________
Member Kids (5 - 12) ___ x $10= _________ Non-Member Kids (5 - 12) ______ x $18 = __________
Member Kids (under 5) _____ free Non-Member Kids (under 5) _____ free

We would like to donate $_________ towards the purchase of a meal for someone who cannot afford to come to our Seder.
Connecitcut artists, Robert Jacoby and Rita Brieger, will be featured in our Main Street Gallery during the months of February, March and April.

Jacoby retired as an academic veterinarian from the Yale School of Medicine in 2004. In his more than thirty years as an accomplished artist, he has exhibited in many juried shows and shown in local galleries including Congregation Bethel Keser Israel. His work is included in two-dozen private collections and at the Yale School of Medicine. Jacoby and his wife, Marcia, have lived in Guilford since 1971 and are founding members of Temple Beth Tikvah in Madison. They enjoy the company of their two children and five grandchildren.

**Jacoby’s Artist Statement**

About seven years ago I switched from figurative to abstract painting to explore “duende,” a concept inherent to my favorite performing art — flamenco (strictly as a viewer). Duende is the Dionysian force rising in a singer or dancer that inspires blazing performance. It embodies creativity and physical artistry ranging from the subtle to the flamboyant and from the tragic to the elated, always with fiery intensity. I see duende as a universal human capability. It is not surprising, therefore, that it energizes many genres of art beyond music and dance including literature, theatre and, of course, the visual arts. Because duende has roots in the psyche, free ranging abstraction has been a rewarding means to explore it.

Robert Jacoby, *Duende 4*
My approach to painting varies in emphasis between color and marks, depending on the spontaneous dialogue that emerges between my psyche and a painting as the latter takes form. This is all in service to personal discovery about the meanings and mysteries of duende. The result, not surprisingly, is stylistic diversity that may seem confusing to viewers looking for a consistent “voice” in my work. This is a small price I pay to stay authentic to my internal compass.

Most people know Rita Brieger as a Bridge teacher or the Rabbi’s wife and are surprised to discover yet another side of her...the artist. Since Brieger’s graduation from the University of Connecticut in 1965, she has studied watercolor, acrylic and drawing, worked with four notable artists and taken workshops with Beth Patterson, William “Skip” Lawrence and Steve diGiovanni. She has also been involved with Encaustic Workshop, the Silvermine School of Art and abstract painting with Alex Razin. Brieger’s paintings have been exhibited in art shows throughout Connecticut including Oxford Cultural Art (Best in Show), the New Britain Museum of American Art (2012-2016), the Hamden Art League (35 year member, prizes 2000, 2001, 2016, Honorable Mention 2008, 2011) and Paint and Clay (2003-2016, painting purchased 2011 for permanent collection).

Having been married to the Rabbi who led Temple Emanuel in Orange, CT. for thirty-three years, Brieger jokingly refers to herself as the “Rebbetzin Emeritus.” She now resides in Bethany, CT, where she is the devoted grandmother to her five-month old, twin granddaughters.

Brieger’s Artist Statement

As an artist I have learned that the creative process is so hard and is, in fact, unique for each individual artist. A work of art is a reflection of the SOUL print of the artist. Art has taught me so much about myself, giving me a way to express myself in ways that I had never before been able to verbalize. I love to be spontaneous, yet I need structure in my life. My wardrobe is basically black, white and beige, but my paintings often explode with color. I do not like being told what to do, yet I need direction.

I have always loved abstract art. One of my favorite quotes is from author Azar Nafisi: “Never let reality get in the way of imagination.”

I work primarily with acrylic paints on canvas and paper. I often use a combination of house paint, oil pastels, charcoal, Chinese markers and acrylics. Layers of myself are painted or applied until the right colors, textures and emotions come together to

Continued on page 10
reflect my unique spirit and personality.

The Jacoby-Brieger exhibit will be at CBSRZ from February to April and can be viewed Monday through Friday from 10AM to 3PM and Sundays, 10AM – noon, when Sunday School is in session. A generous portion of the proceeds from all paintings sold will be donated to CBSRZ. An artist’s reception will take place on April 9 from 3:00 – 4:30 PM. It is open to all at no charge.
The Philip Scheffler Pursuers of Peace and Justice Award will be awarded to Andy Schatz on April 8, 2017, at a Kiddush luncheon in Andy’s honor, immediately following Shabbat services, which begin at 10:30 AM. The Pursuers of Peace & Justice Award was created in 2015 to help mark the centennial year of CBSRZ, founded in 1915, when Rodfe Zedek was formed in the town of Moodus. The name of the award is taken from the translation of the Hebrew name of our blended congregation, Beth Shalom, house of peace, and Rodfe Zedek, pursuers of justice.

On April 14, 2016, the award was renamed to honor the memory of Philip Scheffler, a longtime member of CBSRZ who passed away suddenly on April 7, 2016.

The award is designed to commemorate the spirit of the founders of our congregation and to reflect the commitment to religious tolerance and social justice that still animates our congregation 100 years later. Phil Scheffler was committed to these ideals throughout his career as a television news journalist that spanned more than fifty years. The first recipient of the award was Martha Stone, a CBSRZ member and Durham resident, who was honored at a service held on November 14, 2015.

As exemplified by both Andy Schatz and Martha Stone, the...
American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Connecticut (vice-president 2008-2010; president 2010-present) and as a board and executive committee member of the national ACLU. Before law school, Andy worked as a community organizer for welfare and medicaid issues. As a law student and later as a lawyer he was able to combine for-profit class action litigation involving securities, consumer and anti-trust matters with pro-bono class actions, including challenges to strip searches of female arrestees, school segregation and government intrusion, and has worked on a wide range of issues concerning prisoners’ rights, disability rights and discrimination against individuals with mental illness. In addition, as a board member and officer of the ACLU, Andy has worked toward influencing change wherever possible from litigation to legislation and education.

During Andy’s tenure as chair of the CBSRZ Social Action Committee (SAC), it has continued to staff ongoing local projects that seek to alleviate the effects of poverty, including food drives and meal sites for Shoreline Soup Kitchens & Pantries in Chester and Deep River, furnishing apartments for the homeless, clothing drives for kids and similar projects. In addition, under Andy’s leadership, SAC has come to support and sometimes lead legislative efforts aimed at gun control, children’s rights, hunger and racial justice. SAC has also worked to create more effective partnerships with other organizations. In cooperation with the Shoreline Basic Needs Task Force, SAC members have helped achieve 100% participation in school breakfast and lunch programs and summer food programs for kids in Deep River, Old Saybrook and Clinton, and the committee has launched one of the most successful implementations of the ALICE initiative (focusing on the large “Asset Limited, Income Constrained and Employed” population in our area). It is also working with United Action of Connecticut, a group of approximately ten faith communities in central Con-
necticut that have organized efforts to support legislation, including mental health initiatives, which SAC brought to their attention. SAC has sponsored forums and programs to further the impact of its work on topics such as anti-semitism, religious freedom, civil rights, the BDS movement, criminal justice and prison reform, among others. All of these initiatives, most of which are open to the broader community, are focused on embracing diverse people, backgrounds and views.

In addition to celebrating Andy’s achievements, during the morning service and immediately following the luncheon, we will be sharing stories and reflections from the fascinating career of Phil Scheffler, who was CBS News’ first television street reporter, a documentary producer and the executive editor at *60 Minutes* for many years. Phil was 85 years old at the time of his passing. He and his wife Linda lived in Manhattan and also had a home in Essex for decades. Phil retired from *60 Minutes* in June of 2003, and served as a consultant to CBS News until a few years ago. In 1980, he became the senior producer at *60 Minutes*, handling the day-to-day responsibilities of the program. In that role, he was the right hand of the broadcast’s executive producer Don Hewitt, who later named Phil as executive editor. As executive editor, Phil had a direct role in producing every report broadcast from 1980 to 2003 – a period during which *60 Minutes* was the number-one program in America five times.

In the course of the April 8, 2017 service and luncheon program, we hope to have a thoughtful discussion about the role of journalists post-election and on the breaking news of the new presidential administration. We hope you will join us to celebrate the memorable contributions of Phil Scheffler as a journalist and to honor the work Andy Schatz has done and will continue to do as chair of the CBSRZ Social Action Committee and in the broader community.

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**Books & Bagels**

**Suzanne Levine Brings Grand Canyon to Chester**

Our own Suzanne Levine reads from her new collection of verse, *Grand Canyon Older Than Thought* at a free Books & Bagels program at 9:30 a.m., Sunday, April 23. Amy Bloom, the best-selling novelist, refers to Suzanne’s book this way: “Suzanne Levine’s new collection is wry. Moving. Surprising. A little autumnal (in a Parisian way). Like Szymborska, Levine is a poet of consciousness, loving the world while seeing every dark and light inch of it. You can peer in Grand Canyon for a long time and be glad of it.”

This is Suzanne’s second book published by Antrim House. The first was “Haberdasher’s Daughter,” released in 2010.
PICTURE GALLERY

Celebrating the Festival of Lights

Cantor Belinda, Neil Gottfried and Joel Salzman get ready for the Hanukkah service.

Seth Lindenman holding Spencer who is enjoying his first Hanukkah at CBSRZ
Detroit Jazz/Soul singer Kathy Kosins poses post-concert with pianist Earl MacDonald, Director of Jazz Studies at Uconn.

Peg Palmer and her family at reception for her mother Sis Palmer’s exhibition of watercolors. Left to right: son Gabe Hornung, Peg, daughter Sarah Hornung, brother Dick Palmer, and Rick Hornung.

Bishop T. Charles Brantley and Rabbi Bellows radiate joy and fellowship following the MLK service.

Celebrating after the concert with the winners of the iCRV Radio on-air ticket giveaway, Peter and Katie Haase. Left to right: Ibby Carothers, iCRV Radio Executive Producer; Peter Haase; Kathy Kosins; Katie Haase; Maxine Klein, CBSRZ President; David Zeleznik, Music & More Producer.

Meg Gister plays the standards at the Dorothy Palmer Exhibit reception.
Oneg table laden with dishes following Tina’s recipes, made by our congregants

Cooking lesson participants listen as Tina Wasserman discusses techniques

Weekend Scholar-in-Residence cookbook author Tina Wasserman speaks about the culinary diaspora of Jewish food
Reza Mansour and Michael Price conferring during visit to the Berlin Mosque.

Fabulous food served and eaten with smiles all around.
Legislative Action in March: Mental Health, Prison and Children’s Issues

The Social Action Committee will host a legislative forum at CBSRZ on March 8, featuring Connecticut experts in areas of prison and children’s issues and mental health. Later in March, SAC will host “lobby days” to encourage and assist CBSRZ members to speak with their state legislators about specific legislation concerning these issues.

The forum will feature three experts in social justice initiatives: Martha Stone, SAC member and executive director of the Center for Children’s Advocacy; David McGuire, executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Connecticut and an expert on prison reform; and Thomas Burr, the Communications Director for the National Alliance on Mental Illness – Connecticut. Each of these panelists has worked extensively over the past few years on issues at the legislature, and they will discuss the need and prospects for action in this critical time.

“The issues of concern to us over the years appear ripe and overlap all these subject areas,” said Andy Schatz, chair of social action at CBSRZ and board president of the ACLU of Connecticut, who will be moderating the forum. “Solitary confinement, a priority for many years at CBSRZ and with Jewish organizations such as T’ruah, is a problem of prison reform and mental health, and is especially brutal with juveniles. Legislation addressing the treatment of the 16-21 year olds at York women’s prison addresses juvenile justice — and may help address mental health. At the forum, we’ll be exploring all these issues and others that are critical to these organizations and the populations they serve — including measures to address homelessness, sexting, the rights of immigrants and their children, and the failure of our schools.”

After input from congregants, the SAC met in January and heard a detailed presentation from Ms. Stone about children’s issues (see related article). Legislative leaders of the ACLU-CT and NAMI-CT have addressed SAC-sponsored forums at CBSRZ in past years, and we look forward to welcoming those organizations back.

SAC has also set aside March 28 and 29 for legislative advocacy sessions at the State Capitol in Hartford. As in past years, SAC members will be assisting congregants in efforts to lobby for social action priorities, including the specific issues and bills discussed at the forum on March 8.

Schatz noted once again the broad reach of the CBSRZ community, which can be so helpful at this time. “In this tough budgetary environment, legislators are looking for ways to solve serious problems without incurring significant cost, and some of these issues seem tailored to this concern,” Schatz noted. “Our congregants come from so many legislative districts that we could make a real difference.”

If you would like to help by meeting with your legislator, please contact Andy@andrewschatz.com.

Going to Prison — Please Help

Andy Schatz, chair of SAC, and Linda Rigono, long-time SAC member who has been responsible for assisting with many of the arts and books programs at York, met in late January with the warden, deputy warden and a supervisor in re-in-

Bishop T. Charles Brantley leads the Restoration Springs Inter Denominational Church (Waterbury) choir at our MLK weekend service on Friday, January 13. The Social Action Committee, which arranged for an exchange of visits between CBSRZ and the Berlin Mosque in February, is also arranging for a visit by CBSRZ congregants to the Restoration Springs church in Waterbury church and similar cultural exchange visits with churches in the Middlesex County area.
reduced recidivism. Special attention is being paid to programs and interview skills, but there is a lack of support for journeys beyond the prison walls. Most important, of course, is jobs. If you can offer a position, even temporary or on an internship basis, please let us know.

Dress for Success: There is a need for good clothing for the women to wear on interviews or jobs. If you would like to donate suitable clothes, please let us know.

Books: The administrators at York were intrigued by the prospect of a book club aimed at the 16–22 year old contingent at York, to be held during 3–11pm (after they finish school). In addition, although York does not need more adult books at this time, there appears to be a need for kid’s books for the waiting rooms used by the prisoners’ families. If you would like to join SAC’s contingent for a book club, or donate a children’s book, please contact lrigono@sbcglobal.net.

Connecticut has become a leader in changing the approach to prisons. Programs instituted under Governor Malloy and Commissioner of Correction Scott Semple have dramatically cut populations and reduced recidivism. Special attention is being paid to the approach to prisons. Programs have been instituted under Governor Malloy and Commissioner of Correction Scott Semple.

Financial literacy: Many of the prisoners, particularly the younger women, have never known concepts familiar to most CBSRZ members, including maintaining a checking account, balancing a budget and prudent use of credit (not to mention any concept of retirement planning). The prison officials think such training could be critical to prevent a return to prison. SAC members have already begun working on establishing a training program and have been in touch with financial professionals. If you have a financial and/or teaching background and would help us in such a program (or a similar program in the public schools), please contact andy@andrewschatz.com.

Jobs: There is a re-integration center at York, which helps women with resumes and interview skills, but there is a lack of support for journeys beyond the prison walls. Most important, of course, is jobs. If you can offer a position, even temporary or on an internship basis, please let us know.

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Connecticut has become a leader in changing the approach to prisons. Programs instituted under Governor Malloy and Commissioner of Correction Scott Semple have dramatically cut populations and reduced recidivism. Special attention is being paid to the approach to prisons. Programs have been instituted under Governor Malloy and Commissioner of Correction Scott Semple.

Financial literacy: Many of the prisoners, particularly the younger women, have never known concepts familiar to most CBSRZ members, including maintaining a checking account, balancing a budget and prudent use of credit (not to mention any concept of retirement planning). The prison officials think such training could be critical to prevent a return to prison. SAC members have already begun working on establishing a training program and have been in touch with financial professionals. If you have a financial and/or teaching background and would help us in such a program (or a similar program in the public schools), please contact andy@andrewschatz.com.

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Stuff A Truck Event to Fight Hunger on April 30

On Sunday afternoon, April 30, please help as we once again join forces to fight hunger along the shoreline. Students from our Religious School will participate in our annual Stuff-a-Truck campaign at Stop and Shop in Old Saybrook. Following their Religious School classes and a pizza lunch, the students will be taken to Old Saybrook to appeal to shoppers to buy and donate food to Shoreline Soup Kitchens and Pantries, which will supply a list of most needed foods.

Adult help is needed between 11:30 and 3:30 for transportation and supervision. Please put it on your calendar to shop at Stop & Shop that afternoon to help us maximize our food drive. You will be able to join in the community’s fun, while fulfilling the Mitzvah to feed the hungry.

Stuff-a-Truck is part of a comprehensive SAC program to fight hunger. In addition to the successful annual High Holiday food drives, food collection year-round and meal sites in Deep River and Chester, SAC is working with the Shoreline Basic Needs Task Force and other area groups to address the causes of food insecurity throughout Middlesex County.

Please contact debbytrautmann@comcast.net or (860) 434-3623, with questions or to volunteer.

SAC TO AGAIN HOST EXTRA CHESTER MEAL SITE ON EASTER SUNDAY

Congregation Beth Shalom Rodfe Zedek, which sponsors meal sites both in Deep River and Chester every three months, has agreed to sponsor a special Easter Sunday meal site in Chester on April 16. “This is our second Easter, after having been asked to fill in last year — it was a Sunday meal site that was canceled in prior years,” noted Andy Schatz, chair of social action at CBSRZ. Johanna Schaefer, who supervises the Chester meal sites, which take place at the United Church of Chester, added: “Just as we helped out with the Christmas meal site in Old Saybrook, it’s great that we are able to free up many of our Christian friends on Easter to spend their holiday with their families and still make sure that we feed those people in need in our community.”

Jeff Ward, Volunteer and Program Director of SSKP agreed: “The wonderful thing about congregation groups supporting meal sites is the human connection that they form with the guests and also with one another. Fellowship is every bit as important for a meal site as food, and the meal sites are blessed to have diverse groups that provide both in abundance.”

Following the Easter event, CBSRZ will host meal sites in Chester on Sundays June 11, September 3 and November 5; if you would like to volunteer at the Chester Easter Dinner or later Sundays, please contact Johanna Schaefer at johan-nadschaefer@gmail.com. To volunteer at the Deep River Thursday meal site at the Deep River Congregational Church, please contact Debby Trautmann at debbytrautmann@comcast.net.

SAC MEMBERS TO ATTEND CONSULTATION ON CONSCIENCE

Rabbi Marci Bellows, Andy Schatz and Johanna Schaefer will attend the biennial Consultation on Conscience social justice leadership conference April 30 to May 2, 2017 in Washington, D.C. The conference is sponsored by Reform Judaism’s Religious Action Center to empower the Reform Jewish Movement through leadership development and opportunities for network and community building, learning and active dialogue. The goal is to become proficient at approaching advocacy initiatives on the national and state levels, with the final day of the conference focusing on advocacy at Capitol Hill. Past speakers have included elected officials, activists, journalists, diplomats and other community leaders.

In 2017, there will be a special focus on issues of racial justice. Sessions will include a focus on how to improve organizing for voter suppression and the staggering problem of mass incarceration in America. “We share concerns about many of the issues with our sister congregations all across America,” said Andy Schatz, chair of social action at CBSRZ, “and it should be helpful and instructive to work together on some approaches to these problems.”

Further details about the Consultation on Conscience can be found at
Kids’ Counsel – Martha Stone Helps Direct SAC Actions on Children

Martha Stone, executive director of the Center for Children’s Advocacy and a member of the Social Action Committee, urged action this year on many children’s issues. Martha, whose organization uses the moniker and internet address “kidscounsel.org,” spoke at the January meeting of SAC, sharing facts as well as ideas for legislative and administrative reform.

Martha noted that the backgrounds of kids they represent make failure likely. Schools are bad, and kids are “socially promoted” despite failing grades and no evidence of learning. The kids bounce from foster home to residential facility and back, without real homes — sometimes their lawyer is the only consistency in their lives. Most do not receive adequate food except when they see their lawyers (and then seek to bring food home to their siblings).

And the results confirm Martha’s observations. She cited studies showing that kids in facilities run by the Department of Children and Families (DCF) have the biggest education gap — 71% cannot read at third grade level in third grade, and 65% don’t do math at that level; older kids do even worse, as 77% cannot read and 92% cannot do the math. Some proposals seek to address these problems, including use of “electronic educational passports” so the educational record follows the child, even if kids are moving or homeless.

Much of CCA’s legislative agenda is tilted toward cost-neutral measures in light of the state budget crisis. Current proposals include extending immigrant juvenile status to age 21, ensuring any DCF discharge is to a setting rather than to homelessness, collecting police racial profiling data relating to youth, and re-categorizing sexting, which currently can lead to more serious (felony) charges against those under 14 years of age than the (misdemeanor) charges against those 14-16.

The children’s rights agenda will be addressed along with other, and often overlapping, issues at a forum on legislative advocacy on March 8 (see related article).
Even the most casual observer must notice that there is a whole lot shaking at CBSRZ. For much of that we have to thank the individuals and committees that have given their time and energy to making our synagogue the lively cultural center that it is. But we could always use more hands. In service of that we have decided to provide a brief run through of the current committees and committee chairs over the next few issues. If you see any areas that interest you or are in need of your special skill set, please contact the chairs. I know that they want your input and support.

Music & More

DAVID ZELEZNIK

David and his wife Maxine Klein have been members of the congregation nearly ten years. David’s interest in music goes back to his grandfather who was a jazz drummer and booked acts for shows for the military. In addition to playing the banjo he has had a career in project management. So he has been able to use both halves of his brain booking and arranging for the great music that we have been enjoying. He tells us that ticket sales for The Maccabeats, coming March 19, are particularly brisk with a lot of interest coming from outside the congregation. So members should buy tickets soon; it looks like it’s going to be a sold-out show. The committee meets every other month. As spring approaches it will be deciding on what acts to book for 2018. David would particularly like the input of younger members. Whether your tastes incline to Murray Perala or the Flaming Lips, the Music & More Committee wants to hear from you.

Adult Education

ELLEN NODELMAN

Ellen was a member of the adult Bat mitzvah class. From that memorable experience the idea for the Adult Education Committee was born. Ellen says it provides the opportunity for those with interest in a particular aspect of Jewish life to organize a program around it. Right now the committee is in the middle of a program exploring Jewish cooking through the ages. The next event on February 26 offers a taste of Jewish cooking from the time of the Bible.

Adult education in coordination with the Social Action Committee also sponsored last year’s enlightening series of introductory classes to Islam. Together they continue the outreach to the Muslim community with a program on Islamophobia and an exchange of visits between Beth Shalom and the Berlin Mosque on February 11, and there is an ongoing dialogue with black churches in the area. Members of the committee will also be assisting Rabbi Bellows as she launches a new adult bat mitzvah class and is organizing the intro to Judaism she is presenting jointly with Rabbi Mark Ekstrand of Temple Emanu-El in Waterford.

Ellen has been a member of CBSRZ since 2007. She is now retired from teaching, where she was academic dean of an independent high school in Rockland County. The Adult Education Committee meets monthly on Sunday mornings and is always looking for fresh faces and new ideas.
Chesed

LINDA SHERMAN

Linda has been a member of CBSRZ since 2010. She moved up from the D.C. area, where she worked for 32 years primarily as a national bank examiner and then for Freddie Mac, to be close to her father Art, a member of the synagogue. She describes her background as suburban Jewish and remembers her bat mitzvah with great pride. She loves to sing and has been a member of the choir since she joined the CBSRZ.

Linda’s involvement with the Chesed Committee stems from her early days here when she was living in New London and had fallen ill. Meg Magida and Marilyn White Gottfried surprised her by showing up at her door with food and comfort, and their visit meant so much to her that she decided that she would like to help others in the same way. She has been the chair of the committee for the last three years. Her first action was to convince the board to purchase a database program. Until that time Rabbi Goldenberg had used a word document to keep track of congregants in need. Using her considerable analytical skills, honed at spotting dodgy banks, Linda created a database that includes the synagogue’s complete membership and is continually being updated. She notes that the congregation’s wide geographical spread posed a particular challenge for the committee. By referring to the information in the database she has been able to match those who need help with those nearby who want to help. Linda sees her role as a facilitator. According to the latest monthly report there are 13 people who are currently being served by the committee as well as 24 people who have long-term issues. She also has a list of nearly 40 people who are ready to volunteer to reach out to congregants in need. Chesed has also taken on the responsibility of being of service in end-of-life issues. The committee helps with arranging shivas and taken on the role of chevra kadisha (preparing the body for burial). The committee is always looking for volunteers. Linda asks that anyone interested visite its page on the CBSRZ web site. There you will find information on the work of the committee as well as an easy form for those who want to volunteer as well as for anyone who needs help.

Cemetery Committee

STU BAKER

Stu Baker has been chairing the Cemetery Committee for over fifteen years. The Committee instituted the chevra kadisha to organize and help congregants navigate the funeral process. Originally, the committee made sure that someone accompanied the body in the period before burial, although this function has now been assumed by the Chesed Committee. Its primary concern is caring for burial sites in the Deep River and Moodus Cemeteries. Presently the committee is negotiating with the town of Deep River to arrange for an expansion in the area reserved for Jewish graves. Stu relayed something that Rabbi Doug told him many years ago: There is no greater mitzvah than to do something for someone who can’t thank you.

Stu and his wife Mar-C moved up from Maryland in 1989 and joined in 1990. He continues to work full time for the APT Foundation in New Haven as an addiction and substance abuse counselor. He teaches the shevet ahim class in Sunday school and has served on the last two Rabbi search committees. You can hear his fine baritone at choir performances.

Education

KAREN BURZIN

Karen and her husband Jeff have been members for 23 years. Although she is not Jewish all three of her children have gone through religious school here and her daughter Katie is in the gesher class and is a madricha. Karen says when she first arrived and met with Rabbi Doug she received such a warm welcome that she immediately felt connected to the community. In addition to her role as chair of the Education Committee, she acts as facilitator for the play group that meets on Sunday morning twice a month.

The Education Committee meets once every six weeks Sunday morning. Members discuss activities such as celebrations for Hanukkah. Currently it is looking for volunteers to help with the upcoming Purim carnival. The committee prepares the school budget each year and presents it to the Board for approval.
Continuing Our Culinary Excursion Through Jewish History

If it’s spring, it must be ... Rosh HaShonah? Well, it may sound strange but on March 26th, we will be celebrating a joyous New Year, Medieval French style. Noshing Our Way Through Jewish History is turning the clock back and hosting a medieval Rosh HaShonah Banquet to show how Jews in 12th and 13th century France celebrated the holiday despite the often parlous times in which they lived. We will have a wide ranging assortment of historically accurate medieval Jewish dishes for your delectation, plus wine to toast in a sweet new year (prospects for the new year and many of the dishes will be sweet, the wine not necessarily so). We encourage you to don your best medieval apparel for the occasion.

This will be the third Noshing session for this year, following the kick-off Tina Wasserman Weekend in December and our Biblical Food session in February. But it’s not the last trip back into time – we’ll be sampling Spanish and Converso Cookery from the late Middle Ages/early Renaissance on May 7th and catching a glimpse of the way of life that changed so radically for Spanish Jews in 1492. Some of our recipes come from records kept by the Inquisition; others have been handed down in Converso families.

And just as many of the French Jews made their way to then-friendlier territory in Eastern Europe and brought some of their recipes with them to become part of Ashkenazi cooking, so Spanish Jews took their recipes (and language) with them as they fled Spain for refuge in the Ottoman Empire, forming the foundation for Sephardic cooking. Something we will explore in our second year when we travel in space, rather than time, and sample the different sorts of Jewish cuisine to be found in different parts of the world.

Happy Birthday! Yom Huledet Sameach!

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<tr>
<td>Bryce Connelly</td>
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<td>Sadie Applegate</td>
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<td>Julian Randall</td>
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<td>Rabbi Bellows</td>
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Memorial Plaques
Adar 3, 5777 to Nissan 4, 5777
Rosa (Mimi) Amaran - mother of George Amaran
Frank Baker - father of Stu Baker
Josiah Baker - uncle of Stu Baker
Adelia Bellows - grandmother of Rabbi Bellows
Alfred Bernstein - father-in-law of Rabbi Bellows
Sarah Bernstein - mother of Irwin Braverman
Irwin Braverman - father of Barbara Infeld
Alfred Bernstein - father of Jeff Bernstein
Morris Breslow - father-in-law of Estelle Breslow
Sarah Breslow - mother of Estelle Breslow
David Bellows - father of Rabbi Bellows
Seth Lindenman and Rabbi Bellows, on the loss of Seth's uncle, Marvin Hochberg
Please remember to inform Linda Sherman, chair of the Chesed Committee, if you or someone you know is ill, in need of help, or has experienced a death in the family...

Yahrzeits
Adar 2, 5777 to Nissan 4, 5777
Please remember to inform Linda Sherman, chair of the Chesed Committee, if you or someone you know is ill, in need of help, or has experienced a death in the family...

Condolences are extended to:

Corrine & David Weber and Marcia & Arthur Meyer, on the loss of Corinne's uncle and close friend of the Meyers, Henry Landauer

Seth Lindenman and Rabbi Bellows, on the loss of Seth's uncle, Marvin Hochberg

Please remember to inform Linda Sherman, chair of the Chesed Committee, if you or someone you know is ill, in need of help, or has experienced a death in the family...

...Our Chesed Committee is here to help.

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<td>11:00 am Religious Affairs Committee</td>
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<td>12:00 pm Lunch and Learn</td>
<td>3:00 pm SSKP Board meeting</td>
<td>9:00 am Torah Study</td>
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<td>7:30 pm Erev Shabbat service with Lay Leader</td>
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**Erev Purim**
- 9:30 am - 10:15 am Hatchala (Birth to 4 Years)
- 9:30 am - 12:00 pm Kadima (Gr K-7)
- 5:30 pm Facilities Meeting
- 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm Social Action Committee
- 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm Social Action Committee
- 8:00 am Morning Minyan
- 4:15 pm - 5:45 pm Kadima (Gr 4-7)
- 4:15 pm - 5:45 pm Kadima (Gr 4-7)
- 5:00 pm Erev Purim Spiel and Carnival
- 7:30 pm Erev Shabbat Service with Piano

**Purim**
- 9:30 am - 10:15 am Hatchala (Birth to 4 Years)
- 9:30 am - 12:00 pm Kadima (Gr K-7)
- 9:30 am Purim Spiel and Carnival
- 3:00 pm SSKP Board meeting
- 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm Choir Rehearsal
- 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm Choir Rehearsal
- 8:00 am Morning Minyan
- 4:15 pm - 5:45 pm Kadima (Gr 4-7)
- 4:15 pm - 5:45 pm Kadima (Gr 4-7)
- 7:30 pm Erev Shabbat Service with Choir

**Rosh Ha’Shanah**
- 9:30 am - 12:00 pm Kadima (Gr K-7)
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<td>7:00 pm Religious Affairs</td>
<td>7:00 pm 1st Friday Erev Shabbat Service</td>
<td>9:00 am Torah Study 10:30 am 2nd Saturday Shabbat Service &amp; Kidush Luncheon honoring the Philip Schaffter Pursuers of Peace and Justice Award recipient</td>
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<td>1:00 pm Lunch &amp; Learn 7:00 pm Board of Directors</td>
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<td>9:30 am - 10:15 am Hatchala 9:30 am - 12:00 pm Kadima 11:30 am - 1:30 pm Gesher 11:30 am - 1:00 pm Makom 12:00 pm - 3:00 pm Staff-A-Truck 7:00 pm Joint Erev Yom Hashoah Service (Madison) with Choir</td>
<td>No Kivvun - Spring Break</td>
<td>7:00 pm - 8:30 pm Choir Rehearsal</td>
<td>8:00 am Morning Minyan 4:15 pm - 5:45 pm Kadima (Gr 4-7)</td>
<td>8:00 am Morning Minyan 4:15 pm - 5:45 pm Kadima (Gr 4-7) 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm Adult B’nai Mitzvah</td>
<td>5:45 pm Early Erev Shabbat Service, followed by Shabbat dinner in Congregants’ homes (RSVP Required)</td>
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<td><strong>27</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>9:30 am - 12:00 pm Kadima (Gr K-7) 2:00 pm - 3:30 pm Adult B’nai Mitzvah 5:00 pm Music &amp; More with Dalia Lazar</td>
<td>9:30 am - 12:00 pm Kadima (Gr K-7)</td>
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The Whole Megillah
may be viewed
in color on the web at
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