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Dear Friends,

Like me, you might have an ever-expanding pile of books that you would like to read. Nonetheless, we always add to said pile! This summer, here are the books I am most looking forward to reading, and I hope you'll consider joining me in checking these out.

Pirkei Avot: A Social Justice Commentary, by Rabbi Dr. Shmuly Yanklowitz and Ruth Messinger (CCAR Press, 2018)

Pirkei Avot, the “Ethics of our Ancestors,” are found in the Mishnah (c. 200 CE). Many excerpts from this text are familiar: “The world stands on three things: Torah, Worship, and Good Deeds” (Pirkei Avot 1:2), and “Hillel says, ‘If I am not for myself, who will be for me? But if I am only for myself, who am I? If not now, when?’” (ibid., 1:14). In many ways, these are some of earliest Jewish texts which teach us ethics of social justice. Rabbi Yanklowitz explores these themes in depth in this brand-new book from CCAR (Central Conference of American Rabbis) Press.


Yossi Klein Halevi, one of the leading Israeli voices of liberal Zionism, crafts a letter to the Palestinians right next door. He writes with empathy, hopes for peace, and a willingness to bridge the seemingly endless divide between two peoples. In offering this symbolic olive branch, he also attempts to explain the situation from an Israeli point of view.


This book is not yet available (but can be “pre-ordered,” and I am really looking forward to learning from it. The CCAR Press shares: “This foundational new book reminds us of our ancient obligation to bring justice to the world. The essays in this collection explore the spiritual underpinnings of our Jewish commitment to justice, using Jewish text and tradition, as well as contemporary sources and models. Among the topics covered are women’s health, LGBTQ rights, healthcare, racial justice, speaking truth to power, and community organizing.” A hint of the flavor of the book can be found in an essay by Rabbi Pesner found at http://ravblog.ccar-net.org/2018/03/moral-resistance-spiritual-authority-obligations-exodus/.

The Exodus: How it Happened and Why it Matters, by Richard Elliot Friedman (HarperOne, 2017)

The story of the Israelites redemption from Egypt is one of the most poignant and prevalent narratives in the life of a Jew. Many attempts have been made over the years to address whether or not it “really” happened. Friedman brings together the most current thinking on the Exodus with some of the most popular theories, which enables the reader to re-examine the story through new eyes. This book has already been mentioned frequently during recent Holy Scrollers sessions – come see what has intrigued so many of us!

Nurture the Wow: Finding Spirituality in the Frustration, Boredom, Tears, Poop, Desperation, Wonder, and Radical Amazement of Parenting, by Rabbi Danya Ruttenberg (Flatiron Books, 2016)

Rabbi Ruttenberg is a provocative, refreshing, and learned voice in the modern rabbinate. You can find her engaging in vociferous debates on Twitter, writing thoughtful pieces in The New York Times or The Atlantic, and now you can read her heartwarming and hilarious book on Jewish parenting. The book doesn’t tell you necessarily how to parent, but, rather, how to enjoy and conceptualize your own parenting. It has already had a wonderful impact on my own thinking!

Wishing you a bright, sweet summer filled with sunshine and good books!

L’shalom,

Rabbi Marci N. Bellows
Stephen B. Jacobs has a warning from the past for America today: It’s happening again.

At 79 years old he is among the youngest of the living Holocaust survivors and was born six years after Adolf Hitler came to power in Germany. But Jacobs can remember life in the Nazi concentration camp at Buchenwald; what the Nazis did to him, his family, his friends.

He worries about what’s happening right now in America, where he has lived and prospered since arriving a couple of years after Buchenwald’s liberation on April 11, 1945.

The American far-right appears emboldened since the election of President Donald Trump, who led an inflammatory, nationalist campaign. Since then, clashes like the one in

This article was originally published in Newsweek and is used with permission. The author is Shane Croucher. Photographs from Stephen Jacobs.
Charlottesville are becoming almost commonplace.

“Things just go from bad to worse every day,” Jacobs, a successful New York architect who designed the Holocaust memorial at Buchenwald, tells Newsweek. “There’s a real problem growing.”

So much so that Jacobs thinks there’s a “direct parallel” with Germany between the two world wars.

Perhaps more alarming than the far-right getting braver is the seep into mainstream politics of their hate, their talking points, their rhetoric. “It feels like 1929 or 1930 Berlin,” Jacobs speculated.

“I’m involved with New York real estate, I know this man personally,” says Jacobs, whose eponymous architecture firm celebrated its 50th birthday in 2017. “Trump is an enabler. Trump has no ideas. Trump is out for himself.

“He’s a sick, very disturbed individual. I couldn’t say that Trump is a fascist because you’ve got to know what fascism is. And I don’t think he has the mental power to even understand it.”

Jacobs calls New York, where he lives, an “island of resistance.” But he says Washington will soon realize too that fascism has to be resisted.

Fascism could have been won in Spain. It could’ve been stopped. But appeasement of fascism is what led to everything,” Jacobs warns.

This is a man who lived what happens when fascism isn’t stopped before it metastasizes.

He was born in Łódź, Poland, in 1939. His father, a physician, moved the family to Piotrków, near Warsaw, shortly after the Nazi invasion of Poland in September of that year.

Piotrków, where many Jewish refugees in Poland fled, would become the Nazis’ first ghetto.

Liquidated in 1942, a labor camp was established with two factories, where the family lived until their brutal separation in 1944.

The women—his mother, three aunts and grandmother—were taken to a camp at Ravensbrück. The men—him, his older brother and his father—to Buchenwald.

“In my case, you didn’t eat in Buchenwald unless you worked. So I was

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given an identity card that said I was 16 years old," Jacobs says. "I was five."

He worked in a shoe factory, which also got him out of roll call every day. Working made you useful to the Nazis. Those not able to work, including young children like Jacobs, were sent to their deaths.

He was told to keep his hat low and bang on a shoe if a Nazi ever entered the workshop. And, if asked his age, to lie.

Before liberation, as the Allies closed in, the situation got especially dangerous because the Nazis rushed to liquidate the camp.

One memory haunted Jacobs. His father, trying to keep him safe, entrusted him and another young boy in his care to a gentile in the camp. "That guy got scared and he abandoned us," Jacobs says. "He put us in a barrack that had already been emptied. In other words, the people had already been deported.

"And we spent that night in this barrack and I will never forget that. I had nightmares about that for many, many years growing up.

"Somehow, in the morning, my father found us—I don’t know how he made the connection—and he took us and hid us in the TB ward in the hospital."

Jacobs’ father was an orderly at the camp hospital. Nazis and German doctors didn’t enter the tuberculosis ward fearing infection, which made it a good, if risky, hiding place.

For years he wondered how his father managed to keep both him and his brother George alive. Then he realized: His father had help.

Help from the camp’s active underground resistance. Buchenwald was founded before the war in 1937 to intern political prisoners such as communists. Inevitably, the communist prisoners got organized.

They protected each other, arranged counterfeit paperwork, hid children from the camp guards. Some even held administrative posts in the camp. They ran the day to day.

“The underground decided that they couldn’t save everybody, but they would save the children,” Jacobs says, crediting the resistance with saving more than 1,100 children.

Jacobs recalls, faintly, the underground’s armed uprising against camp guards, a prelude to liberation by the U.S. Third Army.

“I have memories of when we were in the TB ward that they were shooting outside and we put mattresses against the windows, and they told us to get under the beds,” he says. “We saw people running around with weapons and red armbands.”

There’s a picture of liberation where Rabbi Schacter of the U.S. Third Army is giving a religious service to Jewish camp survivors. A young Jacobs is in the foreground along with his older brother, George. It’s hanging at the Buchenwald museum.

It wasn’t until after liberation that Jacobs found out what happened to the rest of his family.

While in Ravensbrück, one of his aunts’ names appeared on a transportation list. She was going to be sent to Bergen-Belsen.

His grandmother made the decision: If one has to go, we all go.

So all the women ended up in Bergen-Belsen “which is about as bad as it could get,” Jacobs says.

“They exchanged lists of survivors between the camps,” he says, speaking of the early days after liberation.

“And I remember we were given a room in SS barracks that were outside the barbed wire enclosure of the camp. I remember sitting in that room with my father, and my brother running in very excited because he found my mother’s name on a survivors’ list.”

Somehow, the Jacobs family survived the three camps: Buchenwald, Ravensbrück and Bergen-Belsen. Even his grandmother survived to witness liberation by the British, though she died a short time later.

Another incredible moment came after liberation. Before Buchenwald, in Piotrków, Jacobs’ father bribed an SS physician at the hospital in which he worked to help his family. At the war’s end, that same SS doctor was captured by the Russians and put on trial, facing execution.

“But my father gave an affidavit that saved his life,” Jacobs says. “I don’t know why. Even under those circumstances, he saved his life.”

The two men wrote to each other until the former SS doctor died though none of the correspondence survives.

“One of the things that I really regret is my parents died in the early 1980s, and at that time, we didn’t speak about this. It wasn’t something that you talked about,” Jacobs says. “They wanted to rebuild their lives and they didn’t want to focus on this.
“Unfortunately, my brother, who was older, doesn’t remember a thing. I believe that his experience was much worse than mine because I never had a pre-war conscience. I didn’t have any other framework. But he had a pre-war life.

“I really believe that he suffered some very severe trauma and he doesn’t remember. He just doesn’t want to remember.”

Jacobs returned to the camp at Buchenwald in 1995 for the 50th anniversary of liberation and the opening of a new museum. He says the camp had become a kind of “cathedral” for German communists because of the underground resistance.

A narrative of self-liberation by the underground was fomented during the GDR years. But this was now the early days of German reunification. And Jacobs says he found himself caught in the middle of a German propaganda war.

The new museum pointedly referred to the camp’s liberation by the U.S. Third Army, showing footage of prisoners praising in English the Americans. It replaced the old exhibition that focused heavily on the story of communists in the camp.

“One side’s just as bad as the other, they’re both denying history,” Jacobs thought as he realized what was going on around him.

The truth, he believes, lies somewhere in middle. The camp was undoubtedly liberated by the U.S. Third Army.

But there was also an uprising at the same time, contributing to liberation efforts, and it’s down to the communist-run underground that so many people survived Buchenwald.

By the time the Americans turned up, 21,000 inmates were still alive at the camp, though around 240,000 people had passed through its gates between 1937 and 1945.

Prisoners were starved, diseased. Beaten to death by guards. Experimented on by twisted Nazi doctors.

Continued on page 8
Including liquidation transports, where prisoners were sent to be murdered elsewhere, there were around 54,000 deaths at Buchenwald.

In the years after liberation, Buchenwald was used as a prison camp by the Soviet Union to detain Nazis.

Jacobs was asked in the late 1990s to come up with the Buchenwald Holocaust memorial by the U.S. Commission for The Preservation of America’s Heritage Abroad. He was told he is the only Holocaust survivor to design a memorial.

The memorial, in the “Little Camp” area of Buchenwald, where Jews were mostly confined, was finished in 2002. Jacobs refused to take money for the work. “To me it was, in a way, an opportunity to bring this stuff to a closure,” Jacobs says.

Thinking about his memorial design, Jacobs didn’t want to go for the heroic Soviet style or anything as abstract as Peter Eisenman's monument in Berlin.

“All the barracks were demolished and only the foundations are visible. As you walk through the camp, there’s no place to sit down.” Jacobs says.

“We wanted to create a place for quiet contemplation, where you could put your thoughts together. And the realization that we were doing this for future generations of German school kids. So, we made sure the space was big enough to fit one bus.”

They excavated down in the ruins of a barrack to create a separate space for reflection. Jacobs used stone as a primary material, symbolic of the camp’s quarry where many prisoners were worked to death. Stone seats allow visitors to sit and take in what happened around them, prompted by plaques.

The design also features two large triangles on the floor. “The triangle is an important symbol here,” Jacobs says. “The triangle is the patch people wore. Every prisoner had some kind of triangle.”


Jacobs also wanted to create a subliminal Star of David. “Some kids over the years have picked this up,” he says.

Memorials are intended to not only honor those who died yesterday, but to warn what tomorrow brings if lessons from the past are forgotten.

And its today’s generation, facing an ascendant far-right, that needs to remember.

“I’ve gotten phone calls sometimes late at night from German teenagers who were there, and they felt they had to speak to me. They wanted to know why did I do this, why did I do that,” Jacobs says.

“These are Germans. They’re not Jewish teenagers. There is a sense of gratification that, in a way, this thing works.”

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**Reflections on my: Fiftieth High School Reunion**

For our fiftieth high-school reunion my classmates and I were asked to write about what we’d been doing for the last fifty years. Here is my contribution.

— Sean Konecky

My father fell and broke his hip on his ninety-sixth birthday. At the time he was making the final arrangements for a celebration at his favorite restaurant, Le Perigord, the last of New York’s haute cuisine restaurants: a list that had at one time included the likes of Lutèce, Le Cote Basque, and Pavillon. After my mother’s death some years before, he had moved to a one-bedroom apartment overlooking the East River. He had lived in New York all his life, except for a six-year stint in the army during World War II.

I believe that my father’s military service was the formative experience of his life. He had been called up in 1939 and was just about to be discharged when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. He attended OCS and served as a combat engineer in the European theater. Late in the war he became affiliated in some way with SHAEF (Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force) and army intelligence, although I’m not sure in exactly what capacity. I still receive bulletins from SHAEF addressed to him.

After the war he spent a few months in Tucson, Arizona playing golf to reintegrate himself into civilian life. He rarely talked about that period, though he did say he golfed with Barry Goldwater, and though their political views diverged, he was impressed by him. Returning to New York, he resumed his career in the printing trades. My grandfather was a printer, and my dad had worked for him before the war. Now he started his own business as a printing broker for book publishers. At this time New York was the center of the printing industry, and manufacturers specialized in various book components. Aside from printers and binders, there were strippers, who laid out negatives in sheets, platemakers, jacket printers, small out-of-the-way shops that only made the dies for foil stamping book covers, cloth and paper merchants, even companies that specialized in head and footbands. So publishers relied on the expertise of brokers to manage all these moving parts.
In 1949 he married my mother, the daughter of a whiskey maker, who had made a lot of money during and after prohibition. (There is letter from the mob boss Frank Costello to my grandfather setting forth a purchase of some property for $1.00. The circumstances behind the deal remain cloudy.) I was born in 1950 and my sister Evan three years later.

In the early fifties New York was the center of the world. Pollack and De Kooning, Kline and Rothko hung out at the Cedar Tavern; Monk and Miles played at the Vanguard and Blue Note; Leonard Bernstein conducted the New York Philharmonic; musicals such as South Pacific, Guys and Dolls, and Paint Your Wagon were box office smashes. My parents became friends with a jazz pianist named Don Shirley, and through him made the acquaintance of show business black aristocracy. Geoffrey Holder, Bill Warfield and Leontyne Price all came to their parties. My sister can boast that she was once sung a lullaby by Ms. Price.

If blowing up bridges in Europe was a shaping experience for my father, my formative explosions were interior ones brought on by LSD, Mescaline, and other magical substances. One episode is emblematic of the shifting perspectives of different generations. While my mother was in labor with me, my father was out drinking with a friend at the Brussels, a French restaurant on East 55th Street. The sommelier Victor agreed to put down a bottle of wine to be drunk on my eighteenth birthday. And eighteen years later we convened at the Brussels to have that bottle of wine. Ironically I was on a day pass from the Psychiatric Treatment Center where I had been confined for excessive indulgence in a panoply of mind-altering substances.

At that point my relationship with my father was at kind of a low point. Sometimes we would watch golf together, but the occasional “Good shot,” was pretty much the extent of our conversation. Ten years later in graduate school at CUNY, working as a TA at Queens College, he offered me a job working for him. It was not something I had envisioned for myself. I was kind of lost and kind of broke, but in retrospect I see that the main reason I accepted was to try to repair our relationship.

I have now worked in this business for forty years. Over time it morphed from printing into book publishing. Though not the most remunerative, it has had its rewards. I met my wife, the daughter of a German publisher, at the Frankfurt Book Fair and have been able to maintain the business in the face of radically changing circumstances. In the late 1990s my dad suffered from a series of small strokes and at a painful, but necessary, family meeting I assumed the reins of the company. My father, however, continued to be active. In 2012 at the Barnes & Noble Christmas party, he confided to his old friend Len Riggio that he was formally retiring. He was then 94 and aside from his military service, he had been in the industry for 75 years.

My father could not bounce back from the broken hip. He could no longer walk and soon lost all mobility. At this point he came to live with my wife and I in Connecticut, where we were able to take care of him for the last six months of his life. We enrolled him in hospice, which in Connecticut provides services in the home, in exchange for which we agreed not to seek hospitalization to extend his life. The people were great. I’m very grateful to them. I recall early on taking him to the doctor. I bent down to tie his shoes and had a piercing recollection of his doing the same for me more than sixty years before.

Soon my dad was not only bedridden, he could not even roll over on his own. He would at times become querulous. He would complain that the lamb chops were overcooked, or the TV was not loud enough. But he never complained about his helplessness, loss of dignity or his imprisonment in his own body.

Early in September of 2014 my dad had an attack. His nursing aide called 911 — which according to our agreement with hospice we weren’t supposed to do — and he was given oxygen by the EMTs. We were told that in order for them to continue to administer it he would have to go into the hospital. I told him that as far as I was concerned we could forget about hospice and do that. The choice was his. He whispered to me that he had had enough. He died the next day.

A year or two before his death my father said to me: “Sean, I am not immune to the ravages of time.” That remark struck me at the time. No one is. My religion, Judaism, does not talk a lot about the afterlife. When the Biblical heroes die, the text says that they are gathered to their fathers. Perhaps that is enough.
A rthur Meyers was one of the honor- ees at the annual Middletown Arbor Day celebration. The following is taken from their program.

Art Meyers retired as Director of Russell Library in 2016, after 19 years of dedicated service to the library, to his community and to book lovers throughout the City of Middletown. During almost two decades under Art’s leadership, Russell Library made the transition to a fully digital catalogue, saw the expansion of services to include many new and improved opportunities for the community, including the Russell Writers program, resume-writing workshops and innumerable cultural programs.

At the same time, Art oversaw the major renovation plan begun in 2014 which repaired a leaking roof, installed a plexiglass roof to brighten portions of the structure, rehabbed the old church portico, and improved the safety of the pedestrian crosswalk to the library.

One of the exceptional programs that began under Art’s direction is the annual naturalization ceremony, which he has organized for many years. In 2014, The Middlesex County Bar Association honored Art with the Liberty Bell Award for his work with the annual naturalization ceremony.

Art is also the author of “Democracy in the Making: The Open Forum Lecture Movement”, published in 2012. An active member of the Rotary Club, Art was honored as “Rotarian of the Year” in 2016. Art was also awarded the Middle- town Commission on the Arts 2016 Arts Advocacy Award.

Although a transplant to Middletown, Art exemplifies the very best of caring member of our community.

A white dogwood is dedicated to Arthur Meyers which will grow and flourish for decades to come.

Recognition for CBSRZ’s very own book

I t will come as no surprise to anyone who has looked at House of Peace and Justice: the first one hundred years of Congregation Beth Shalom Rodfe Zedek, that the book, written by Ellen Nodelman, designed by Lynne Stiles and printed by Essex Printing, has just been awarded the Award of Recognition in the Print Industry of New England’s (PINE) Awards of Excellence competition.

Essex Printing’s President, William McMinn submitted the book for the annual Awards of Excellence competition and notified us after House of Peace and Justice received the award on April 4, 2018. A panel of judges with extensive experience in printing and print production examined the works submitted. The judging criteria included: registration, clarity and neatness, sharpness of halftones and line drawings, richness and tonal qualities of color, paper and ink selection, ink coverage, difficulty of printing, effective contrast or softness, overall visual impact and bindery.

If you haven’t yet had a chance to see the book for yourself, there are still copies available for purchase through the CBSRZ office. Just call the office at 860-526-8920 to purchase your copy.
It was only three years ago, with CBSRZ in the throes of celebrating its 100-year anniversary, that a commodious tour bus pulled out of the driveway with a busload of passengers inside and made the rounds of the historical places where CBSRZ history had been made. With Mary Donohue our guide, we visited the sites in Moodus, Chester and Deep River where our unusual and unique congregation had its beginnings: farms, resorts and (former) synagogues. We dined at the East Haddam Historical Society and were entertained by Ken Simon, ‘birthright’ member of the original Rodfe Zedek and Moodus native who regaled us with tales (and images) of growing up Jewish on a chicken farm in Connecticut.

And we’re ready to do it all over again. So next fall, on October 14th, 2018, another bus will be pulling out of the CBSRZ driveway and giving a new audience a chance to catch up on what it missed last time. We will be seeing the original synagogue and its successor in Moodus, along with some of the farms and resorts that sustained the families that built that synagogue so early in the 20th century. We will then go on to sites in Chester and Deep River where others, including farmers from that area along with business owners and professionals, created still another Jewish organization which ultimately joined together with the earlier to create today’s CBSRZ. Retracing our roots will give us a sense of the unusual factors and founders that make CBSRZ such a distinctive place.

We will leave CBSRZ at 9:30 that Sunday morning, and make our way to Moodus first, wending our way through the places where CBSRZ history was first made: the farms, resorts and (former) synagogues before lunching at the East Haddam Historical Society. After lunch, we’ll make our way back to Chester and Deep River before disembarking at CBSRZ. The lunch, plus snacks and beverages, will be included in the $50.00 price.

Reserve your place for this trip back into time and place: call CBSRZ (860-526-8920) and make your reservation. See you on October 14!

JEWISH TRIVIA FOR JULY AND AUGUST COURTESY OF NORMAN HANENBAUM

July
July 12, 1906 Alfred Dreyfus, a French military office, is freed from prison after being falsely accused of sharing French military secrets with Germany.
July 19, 1937 Buchenwald Concentration Camp established by Nazis, located near Weimar, Germany.
July 4, 1976 Israel Defense Forces rescues 103 persons from Air France jet hijacked by Palestinian terrorist. The raid was led by Lt. Col. Netanyahu.
July 31, 2010 Former President Bill Clinton’s daughter Chelsea marries Mark Mezinsky in a Jewish wedding.

Deceased
July 2, 2007 Beverly Sills—opera singer
July 2, 2006 Jan Murray—comedian
July 2, 2016 Elie Wiesel—writer
July 3, 1904 Theodore Herzl—political
July 8, 2012 Ernest Borgnine—actor
July 10, 1979 Arthur Fiedler—symphony conductor
July 11, 1937 George Gershwin—composer
July 12, 1998 Sid Luckman—quarterback Chicago Bears
July 12, 1991 Isaac Bashevis Singer—writer
July 13, 2006 Red Buttons—actor
July 16, 2016 Bess Meyerson—former Miss America
July 21, 2015 Theodore Bikel—singer, actor
July 25, 2014 Bel Kaufman—writer
July 28, 1969 Frank Loesser, composer

August
August 24, 1896 What is now referred to as Jewish War Veterans was founded in New York City.
August 25, 1918 Birth of composer and conductor Leonard Bernstein
August 26, 2004 Gail Friedman became the first Israeli to win the gold medal in windsurfing at the Athens Olympics.

Deceased
August 1, 1991 Michael Landon—actor
August 4, 1999 Victor Mature—actor
August 6, 2012 Marvin Hamlisch—composer
August 10, 2013 Edie Gorme—singer
August 11, 2006 Mike Douglas—television personality
August 12, 2007 Merv Griffin—television personality, producer
August 12, 2014 Lauren Bacall—actress
August 14, 2016 Fyvush Finkel—actor
August 19, 1977 Groucho Marx—actor, comedian
August 20, 2017 Jerry Lewis—actor, comedian
August 20, 2006 Joe Rosenthal—photographer
August 21, 1940 Leon Trotsky—Russian politician
August 22, 2011 Jerry Lieber—composer
August 24, 1980 Peter Sellers—actor
August 25, 1967 Paul Muni—actor
August 31, 1951 Abraham Cahan—editor
Religious Affairs At CBSRZ

Shabbat at Cedar Lake—Friday July 13th, 5:30pm

On Friday July 13, please join us for a beautiful Shabbat service with friends and family under the Pavilion at Cedar Lake. We will meet at 5:30pm for a short but sweet Shabbat service led by Rabbi Bellows surrounded by the beauty and serenity of Cedar Lake. Please bring a brown bag dinner to enjoy with our group after services conclude. We will bring all of the Shabbat necessities plus some soft beverages, all you need to do is show up with your brown bag dinner, utensils and a bathing suit and towel if you plan to take advantage of the lake! Floaties and sand toys for kids are also welcome and encouraged! We only sponsor Shabbat at Cedar Lake once a year, please don’t miss it! We would love to see you there!

Cedar Lake is located in Chester on Route 148, next to Camp Hazen. From Old Saybrook or points south, take route 9 North to exit 6. When you exit the highway, turn left onto Route 148. Follow 148 for approximately 1.5 miles. Immediately after passing Camp Hazen, you will see the lake entrance on your right.

Parking is directly across the street on the left. From Middletown or points north, take Route 9 South to exit 6. When you exit the highway turn right onto Route 148. Follow 148 for approximately 1.5 miles. Immediately after passing Camp Hazen, you will see the lake entrance on your right. Parking is directly across the street on the left.

We will meet under the pavilion at 5:30 pm for services. If it is raining, we will have Shabbat services and dinner at CBSRZ also at 5:30 pm. Hope to see you at Cedar Lake!

Welcome Back Shabbat with Annual BBQ

Mark your calendars for Friday August 24 at 6pm for our Welcome Back Shabbat and Annual BBQ! Please join us as we reconnect after a summer of fun, sun and vacations before our New Year Festivals get underway in early September. RAC will supply burgers, all beef hot dogs, soft beverages and dessert, you just need to bring a non-dairy side dish to share at our potluck. There will be giant bubbles and sidewalk chalk for little ones and teens alike! We look forward to seeing you at the Annual BBQ!

Tisha B’av Lay Led Study Session

Tisha B’av, the fast of the ninth day of Av, is a day of mourning to commemorate the destruction of the first and second Temples both of which occurred on the ninth of Av. On Sunday, July 22 at 10am, there will be a lay led study session which will be centered around the themes of this day of remembrance.
Congregation Beth Shalom Rodfe Zedek invites you to our

Selichot Program

An evening to welcome the High Holy Day season with community, reflection, friendship, discussion & dessert!

Defending Your Life
Saturday, September 1
6:30 pm

Our feature movie, Defending Your Life (1991), stars Albert Brooks and Meryl Streep, in a film which beautifully, and entertainingly, captures the themes of the High Holy Days. Daniel Miller (Brooks) has died in a car accident, and he finds himself in “Judgment City,” a way-station in the afterlife where he must re-examine his life in a courtroom setting, evaluating how much he grew, what kinds of decisions he made, and how much fear ruled his life. He meets Julia (Streep), and surprises himself by falling in love with her. Will he do what it takes to live out his afterlife with her? As the tagline says, the film is “the first true story of what happens after you die.”

Our evening includes:
Havdalah, Film Screening & Discussion, Snacks, & Worship Service, including the changing of the Torah mantles to white.
It was a new year, and a brand new format! It was a year of venturing into new terrain. You may be asking “how did things go”? Well, I think things went great! We undertook a grand adventure that hinged on a “Quest Question”. We embarked on two Quests this year.

Starting in September, the first Quest Question was “What makes a strong Jewish Community?” We explored this question through the content areas of Holidays, Values, Hebrew, Prayer, and Torah study. Kivvun students then had the opportunity to express their findings through either Cooking, Legos, Storytelling, or Art. By the time we concluded this Quest in December, our students had a lot to share in a gallery that displayed their findings.

In January, the second Quest Question to explore was “What do you bring to our Community?” Knowing that we would be operating within “concentric circles,” before branching out to see how we can connect to the wider community, it was important for each student to become aware of the unique talents and skills that each person brings to the table. In May, once again students shared their discoveries in a gallery for all to view.

We also discovered how talented and dedicated our Madrichim (Teaching Assistants) are as they were handed the huge responsibility of delivering our Hebrew Program to our students. Each student was paired with a teen, and each student had his/her own individual Hebrew program to follow. Our teens were fully in charge of teaching Kivvun Hebrew! Our teens were also tremendous forces during Quest Connects (Kivvun discussions about the Quest), preparers of snack, assistants in our Chugim (Club Projects), and leaders during Services. The quest never ends for new and creative ways to build community, build friendships, teach Judaica and forge strong Jewish identities. We have an amazing group of Teachers who wholeheartedly stepped together into our new adventure, and I am very grateful for their dedication and many talents. We will be meeting shortly to plan for September’s Quest #3. We will have a new Quest Question to explore, one that will potentially begin to take us beyond the walls of CBSRZ. The possibilities are endless, I can’t wait to see where we go next!

—Morah Belinda
Never Ending Quests

Gloria Conley shares her Art Chug experience

Moreh Eric describes his L’Taken experience chaperoning teens in Washington

Israeli Emissaries Rotam and Talya say thank you and farewell

Bar Mitzvah celebrant Orr Teva

Happy Birthday! Yom Huledet Sameach!

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Jackie McKown, Maxine Klein and Liz Rosenblum-Jones used our mitzvah project as an opportunity to make a difference in the lives of local families. Each of us has her own reason to support The Diaper Bank: Jackie as a parent; Maxine as an obstetrician; and Liz as a provider of birth to three services; all know first hand how important it is for families to have access to basic hygiene needs. Diapers are expensive and are not covered by WIC or SNAP (“food stamps.”) The proceeds collected from our drive will directly benefit families in CT.
Adult B’not Mitzvah celebrants Maxine Klein, Jackie McKown, and Liz Rosenblum-Jones, flanked by Cantor Belinda and Rabbi Bellows.

"Eleven of our Mavens pose with Lena Pacheco, Director of Education for CT Women’s Hall of Fame, following her presentation "Remarkable Jewish Women" at the Old Saybrook Acton Library"
Over fourteen years ago, a group of folks and I started gathering every Wednesday for an “earlybird” morning service (originally starting at 7:30 then moving to 8:00am). We prayed together, sang together, listened to the words of a “drash” (Torah interpretation) together, and most importantly, broke bread together following the service. Hidden in the fridge and wine cabinet were minyan “specialties” such as herring in cream or wine sauce and cherry herring schnapps. The gathering would always culminate with a l’chayim” before tossing back a shot of whiskey. Morning minyan was a place to come and support one another in sickness and in health, a place to say Kaddish in memory of a loved one, and a place to find personal “centering” in the midst of a week jammed with the frenzy of work and other obligations.

The Minyanaires (as if was affectionately dubbed by Bernie Slater, our fearless leader, along with Susan Peck) had another special component. A wooden “pushke” (tzedakah box) was brought out of its secret hiding place each week for all to donate whatever spare dollars or change were at hand. These dollars somehow always managed to amount to significant donations to the congregation such as a Bibles for our Confrimands or funds to help our teens participate in their L’Taken Social Action trip. I will personally always be grateful for the generosity of this group in providing the congregational luncheon on the occasion of my daughter’s Bat Mitzvah.

As the Minyanaires celebrated it’s “Bar Mitzvah” after 13 years together, we knew that it’s cycle of life would be coming to a close. Everything has a season. I feel very blessed to have been able to pray, break bread, and hear about the lives of such wonderful people each week (come rain or shine) for all of these years. We made memories that I will always treasure. Perhaps one day a new group will form. I wonder though, will they still want herring and schnapps?
Minyanaires in the kitchen: (left to right) Front row: Rita Fink, Joel Pear, Morty Pear, z’l. Back row: Henry Gottlieb, Bernie Slater, z’l, Norman Hanenbaum.

Bernie Slater tallying donations.
Ms. Sisson highlighted how our desire to reduce this dependency by continuing to increase our use of solar and wind power can make a long term difference in slowing down the warming of the atmosphere.

In response to Ms. Sisson’s presentation, CBSRZ congregants and other members of the audience discussed the benefits of roof-top solar panels, hybrid and electric cars. The discussion also included a review of some of the relevant state and federal programs that provide incentives or disincentives to convert from fossil fuels to renewable sources of energy.

The Climate Reality Project, founded by Nobel Laureate and former Vice President Al Gore, includes over 5 million members. It has trained over 11,000 Climate Reality Leaders, who train people to provide education about the changing climate and possible actions. For more information, go to climaterealityproject.org.

If you are interested in getting involved in climate action projects, please contact Rick Hornung.

Social Media Aids Social Action

There is an easy way for you to let our CBSRZ community members know about social justice rallies, vigils, forums, solidarity events and more.

By joining the CBSRZ Community on Facebook, you can post events and social justice organization activities you are involved with to encourage involvement. All you need to do is to search for “CBSRZ Community” while on Facebook and request to become a member.

Once you are a member you can post away on happenings related to social justice. Simply go to the “write something” box and type in the information. You can add a photo or image by going to the icon below the box. Click on this icon and you can upload an image from your computer or smart phone.

You will also learn about events that have been posted by others. Each time an event is posted, all who have joined the Facebook CBSRZ Community will receive notice of the posting.

Johanna Schaefer, SAC member and board chair of United Action Connecticut, photographed the rest of her UACT team in the annual NAMI Walk on May 12 to help raise funds and awareness for the National Alliance on Mental Illness. From left, Mark Kosnoff, UACT executive director, Michael Verrett, UACT board member, Susan Kosnoff, and Ocean Pellet, UACT board member. Linda Rigone, another member of SAC, also serves on the board of UACT, of which CBSRZ is a member along with various churches in central Connecticut.
Condolences are extended to:

Pamela Crair, on the loss of her mother, and grandmother to Benjamin and David, Gloria Betty Peterson

Linda Sherman, on the loss of her aunt, Betty Lavender

Please remember to inform either Beth Brewer or Shelley Sprague, co-chairs of the Chesed Committee, if anyone 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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Many thanks to these recent Oneg sponsors

Jeff & Karen Burzin
Jon Claude & Caitlin Haines
Daryl Meninsky
Shelly Sprague & Steven Barasz

Mama Loshen By Marilyn Kalet

Meshugass
Crazy antics or actions

A Meshugeneh Velt
A crazy world

Klemt bein hartz
Clutched at the heart-strings

Platsn
Burst with frustration

Rachmones
Compassion

The sparrow brings home too many worms for her young.
"Force yourself," she chirps.

—From Haikus for Jews