
Tikvah Talk

Vol. 30 Iss. 5

Congregation B'nai Tikvah Walnut Creek, CA

January 2011

From Where I Stand...

By Rabbi Raphael Asher



Imagine Shir Joy in the light of a Shabbat morning service. Instead of shaking your egg-shakers (among other things) after dinner, imagine breakfast and coffee at home and then a music-fest surrounding a Saturday morning Torah service. Add some lox and schmears with friends at the Kiddush and you've got a pretty good start on being rested and refreshed.

Common American weekend activities can be riveting but ultimately draining. Ski-trips, kids' sports, TV football, and shopping sprees are good for an adrenaline rush, but leave us depleted by Monday morning. As a kid I remember calculating weekend time like an hourglass leaking precious grains of sand. However, Shabbat, in contrast, with its connections to time immemorial can tap into your deeper reserves. Prayer, learning, and community with an optional one-minute aliyah-rush can be a great mix before you put on your sneakers and / or take a 'gut schlaf.'

Saturday morning services without a Bar/Bat Mitzvah are usually held in the library where the cozier setting allows people to ask questions as we go along. The Torah service is less majestic but more inviting as folks can get a closer seat to the scroll and discuss the nuances of the text.

Shir Joy will be on Saturday, January 15 at 10 am. Moreover, with a Bar/Bat Mitzvah hiatus this winter, there will also be Morning Minyans for New Year's (January 1), January 22, February 12 and February 24, all from 10 – 11:30 am.

Any Religious School students who come to a minyan get double credit for their annual service attendance. Any adults that come get a triple bonus: rest, spiritual refreshment, and a morning dose of Jewish literacy.

Reflections...

By Cantor Jennie Chabon



When I was in cantorial school, I spent a lot of time—many, many hours in seminars and coaching sessions—preparing for my life as a cantor. A lot of that time was spent preparing my voice: learning our ancient melodies, studying the craft of cantorial singing, listening to old recordings of cantors from the 1950s who mastered our liturgical music so magnificently. I loved that part of my time in the seminary. I find *hazzanut*—cantorial music—to be so deeply moving and evocative, and I hoped and imagined that I would get to share it with my future congregation. In my pre-graduation understanding of the pulpit, I thought that singing would be a big part of my job—surely the most meaningful part for me!--since it is what moved me most deeply in school.

Now, 6 years into my first pulpit at B'nai Tikvah, I understand that though *hazzanut* still stirs my soul like no other music; and though people certainly associate me with my voice, it is not singing that is the foundation of my life as a cantor. It is people, the marvelous people who belong to our synagogue and who give me the opportunity to share in the most poignant moments of their lives.

I have never known this more clearly than a few weeks ago, when I took part in the conversion of a beautiful woman in our congregation. I had been studying with this woman for the past year and a half. She was my first conversion student, the first person to trust me with her journey towards becoming Jewish. What an honor! It should come as no surprise that I felt incredibly excited on the day that her *beit din* and *mikveh* finally arrived.

It is hard to describe the awe of seeing someone immerse in the *mikveh* with the intention of becoming Jewish. I have been with friends who immerse before getting married, friends who are moving into a second trimester of pregnancy, friends who are ready to move on from a difficult period in their life. But none of those immersions change someone's identity in just a few holy minutes.

(Continued on page 5)

Congregation B'nai Tikvah is a Reform congregation which, through personal attention, provides to its members an extended family. The congregation fulfills its members' spiritual needs, fosters their Jewish identity, promotes the perpetuation of Judaism and its members' Jewish education, and encourages a commitment to full participation in Temple life.

Raphael W. Asher, *Rabbi*
Jennie Chabon, *Cantor*
Stephen Richards, *Cantor Emeritus*
Judy Blum, *Temple Administrator*
Phil Hankin, *Director of Education*

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CONGREGATIONAL OFFICERS

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We're going GREEN!!

Would you like your billing statements emailed to you?

If so, please email judyblum@tikvah.org.

- Hopefully you know that you are able to
- ✓update your membership information,
- ✓look up your Yahrzeits, ✓view and pay your balances
- ✓make donations, ✓sign up for events
- ✓and look up other CBT members on-line.

Log on to our website, www.tikvah.org
 click on Member Login,
 Agree to our Terms,
 click on 'forget your ID or Password and Go!
 (copy and paste your password in the 1st time, then change it)

Lighting Menorahs on the 3rd night of Chanukah

Tikvah Talk

Tikvah Talk is published 11 times a year and is distributed free of charge to anyone expressing an interest in Congregation B'nai Tikvah. All news items are due the 10th of each month. Please submit articles electronically, if possible, to Congregation B'nai Tikvah, at office@tikvah.org (subject *Tikvah Talk*) or by mail to 25 Hillcroft Way, Walnut Creek, CA 94597, (925) 933-5397.

President's Message

By Lisa Wenger



"We are a small-to-medium-sized congregation that doesn't want to be a big congregation."

I wrote those words in my December Tikvah Talk article, as part of an attempt to identify characteristics of our CBT community. One of our congregants who disagreed with this comment was interested enough to approach me about it. He felt that this statement contradicts our usual sentiments about welcoming new members. I am so glad that he alerted me to this possible interpretation, because I certainly did not mean to imply that our doors are closed. Quite the contrary! We always want to add new members, and in fact a healthy financial future depends on our doing just that. More important than finances, however, is that we want CBT to continue to be a source of Jewish community for many generations to come.

When I wrote the words quoted above, I thought that I was just expressing the obvious. I value our somewhat intimate size, which allows us to develop close relationships with one another and with our clergy and staff and to fit comfortably in our facility. I just took for granted that everyone else likes our size too. It turns out that some CBT congregants may want our synagogue to be much bigger, perhaps because bigger synagogues can provide more programming, while still allowing for smaller, internal groups to form. Others, like the one who approached me, may feel that there is no point in deciding something like size because it isn't completely within our control.

I no longer presume to know the definitive answer to the size question or any other about who we are. Instead, the reaction of the congregant who disagreed with my comment affirms that the self-assessment process I described last month will be worth undertaking. Rabbi Alan Henkin, from the URJ, has already sent us a guidebook for forming focus groups. He will also be sending us some surveys that other congregations have used. I look forward to discussing our identity with all of you. The results of the process might surprise us.

**Thank you to Irene Korn and
her tireless work in our
Gift Shop!**

**\$10,000 of Gift Shop profits
were given to
pay down our mortgage.**

Shop B'nai Tikvah first!!

Turn It, Turn It, Turn It Again

By Phil Hankin, Director of Education



To Camp or Not to Camp?

To camp or not to camp, that is the question. You can just imagine Hamelet debating this issue with his wife when discussing what to do with the kids for the summer as January/February roles around. The debate plays out every year after the calendar turns, when summer brochures begin to arrive in the mail.

What choices do you make? What influences those choices? Sports? Money? Quality of program/education? Religion? Convenience? Staff ratios?

As a parent myself, I debate the same issues for my children. Is the camp Jewish or not? Is my child going to be watched and nurtured safely and respectfully? Is this camp experience going to fleece my wallet or is there a greater benefit for my child? Is there pre and after-care (for day camp situations)? Are there going to be any of my children's friends attending? What skills will my child learn after attending this camp? Is the camp ACA (American Camping Association) accredited? The list is endless.

As a former summer camp director and current Jewish educator, and someone who grew up attending a Jewish camp every summer since I was 8 years old, I have a certain bias when it comes to the choices parents make in determining the best program for their children. I look at summer camping through different lenses than most parents. First and foremost, I look for a safe and nurturing environment. Is there quality education and sufficient staffing ratios? Do the staff look at each individual child as special and unique or are they just lumped together and not really well supervised? How old are the staff members and what experiences/qualifications do they hold as they relate to camp and supervising young children? When referring to Jewish camps, is the camp considered a Jewish camp or is it simply a camp for Jews? Who runs the educational programming and is there a particular theme for the summer?

Once you have weighed all of your options, the hardest decisions come down to the area that many parents struggle with because it is not tangible, not in the present. What is the ultimate outcome for my child this summer? Is this going to be Jewish summer or not or a combination of both? Do I look for a camp (or series of camps) that will satisfy my immediate needs for this summer and deal with the succeeding summers as they come or do I establish a pattern that will allow my child to grow and develop every year? What do I want for my child as they leave the nest and make decisions on their own? Will they have a strong Jewish identity? Do I care? Isn't Religious School enough to give my child the Jewish education he/she needs?

(Continued on page 6)

Sisterhood has picked the recipient of proceeds from the CBT Tzedakah box for this January through March. We picked the Adopt-a-family program from Children's Hospital in Oakland as this is one of our favorite charities.

If you are interested in watching episodes of the Israeli series, Shurgim episodes, let me know. We are targeting Tuesday evening, January 11 for our next series at my home.

Sunday morning Mah Jongg is being coordinated by Marcie Unger. If you are interested contact Marcie Unger at

Upcoming Events:

Sunday, January 9, 11:30 am – MOMA tour

We are planning to see the Henri Cartier-Bresson exhibit at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. \$14 general adm/\$8 seniors. *Henri Cartier-Bresson was a 20th Century Photojournalist. His work was innovative and ranks among the most accomplished in the history of Photography. His images of the early 1930's helped define the creative potential of photography, and his ability to capture life on the run made his work synonymous with "the decisive moment" - the title of his first book. Cartier-Bresson produced major bodies of work on India and Indonesia at the time of Independence, China during the revolution, the Soviet Union after Stalin's death, the United States during the postwar boom, and Europe as its old cultures confronted modern realities.*

This exhibit will take a fresh look at his career.

To confirm a reservation for this outing, please email Susan Friedman at:

Friday, January 14, 6:30 pm – Sisterhood Shabbat

Cantor Chabon will be leading the *Sermon in Song* this Shabbat. Sisterhood members will have an opportunity to participate in the service. Please try and come as this is our chance to be together at Shabbat Services.

Tuesday, January 18, 6:30 pm - Book Sisters

We will have a potluck dinner and a discussion of "The Love Ceiling" by Jean Davies Okimoto. Bring a vegetarian or dairy dish to share in our Social Hall. RSVP to me at .

Sunday, January 30, 10:30 am – Chair Yoga

Leah Eskanazi, our Sunday Yoga teacher has graciously volunteered to lead a special Yoga session for us. This is the kind of Yoga anyone can do, balancing is not necessary. It is a fun workout.

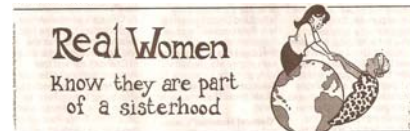
March 5-11 – Contra Costa International Jewish Film Festival

Sunday, March 13 - Kids and Internet Security

Sunday, March 27 – Aromatherapy workshop

Sunday, April 10 – Women's Seder

TBD – No Sew Blankets



Rayna Ravitz



Idelle Lipman lighting the menorah during Rosh Chodesh and Sisterhood's Chanukah dinner. Kathy Berger and Dana Cohn looking on.

A CD cover for "Shir Joy" by Cantor Jennie Chabon, featuring a large stylized flower and the text "Congregation B'nai Tikvah".

CD available through the Temple Office and Gift Shop.
\$18 donation requested per CD.
To have CD mailed, order on-line in the Members Only section of our website under "Events."

Reflections...

(Continued from page 1)

A *ger*, a convert, enters the waters on the brink of conversion and reemerges as a Jew. All of the months of preparation and study lead up to that moment: the descent into the waters, the realization that the waters are warm and soothing, the deep breath before the body disappears under the water, staying there, submerged, for a few timeless seconds. And then, the trembling voice reciting the words of the Shema, claiming our heritage in that moment as their history and destiny.

I have witnessed many beautiful ceremonies in my time as a cantor, but none quite as exquisite as a person becoming Jewish.

What a gift to our community--what a blessing!--to have someone choose, in such an intense and powerful way, to become part of the Jewish People.

BEGINNING HEBREW CONTINUES

Monday evenings 7:30 – 8:30 pm
at CBT

January 3, 10, 24, 31, February 7, 14

\$36 session members / \$54 non members

Contact Zvia Bitansky

Youth Group at Qzar

Shalom Connection

Condolences to:

Ron Hendel and family on the loss of his mother,
Marjorie Hendel

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION:

I, (INSERT YOUR NAME HERE),
WILL ATTEND AT LEAST 1 MORNING
MINYAN THIS YEAR,
AND
I CAN FULFILL THIS OBLIGATION
SATURDAY, JANUARY 1, 10 - 11:30 AM.

LED BY RABBI ASHER and CANTOR CHABON

LOX, BAGELS, SHMEARS, and COFFEE!!

Have you visited the Tzedaka Box in our lobby recently?



SISTERHOOD selected the next
Tzedaka Box recipient

Donations made by March 31 will
Benefit the Adopt-a-Family program at
Children's Hospital in Oakland.

UPCOMING ONEG SPONSORS

January 7 - Family Shabbat service
Gewing, Paul, Constantine/Ravid, Zweigbaum

January 14 - Sisterhood Shabbat service
Grossman, Sandler/Hersh, Sisterhood

January 21 - Shir Joy
Almy, Arnold/Noble, Palitz, Samuels

January 28
Sponsors needed!



*Thank you to our members
for sponsoring these Onegs.*

CBT PRESCHOOL WORKSHOPS

Come and explore Judaism with your pre-schooler and discover fun and creative ways to learn together through a series of monthly workshops on Sunday mornings.

Tu B'Shevat - January 9
Torah Stories Part I - February 6



Workshops begin at 9:30am on Sundays with our Religious School students for T'fillah, and then move to the library, ending at 11:40am.

While we do not charge for the preschool workshops, we appreciate a \$10 donation per session.

Your RSVP allows us to plan for wonderful mornings.

RSVP to facilitator Jordana Green at XXXXXXX or Phil Hankin, Director of Education, at 925.933.5397 or philhankin@tikvah.org.

Please let us know if you would like a monthly e-mail reminder of preschool workshops.



For more information, call the Temple office at 925.933.5397 or contact Jordana Green at XXXXXXX

During the Religious School's Chanukah Zimriah, each of the grades sang a song.

Turn It, Turn It, Turn It Again...

(Continued from page 3)

Various reports over the years reflect how effective Jewish summer camping has on individuals. For many Jews, attending a Jewish summer camp is often the single most formative Jewish experience that they have had. Camp is critical in forming identity, teaching about Jewish culture and institutions, and – most importantly – socializing young Jews into the Jewish community. Camp is a holistic immersion experience. It is a socializing experience much more than it is an educational experience. Camps are isolated and insulated. They have their own cultures and campers quickly develop their own internal tribes. The relationships formed are intense and life-long. Camp environments show young children what it is like to be in a 100% Jewish community. This is foreign to most and was the most striking and impressive aspect of camp for my when I was 8. The language is “Jewish”, the daily schedule is “Jewish”, the food is “Jewish”; everyday is eat, sleep, and play “Jewish”. Your camp counselors are not only your de-facto parents but also perform the vital function of being a Jewish role model. I would not be the Jew I am today if it was not for my Jewish summer camp experiences. The relationships I formed with bunkmates and fellow campers are cemented with the shared memories of the bygone days playing ga-ga, swimming, singing, dancing, Shabbat, Havdalah in the Redwood Grove, escaping from Russia to Palestine, hikes to the Star of David on the hill, late-night raid attempts on the girls' cabins, etc.

My hope for you is that you attempt to make decisions for your children that have as lasting an affect on their Jewish future as the one my parents made for me.

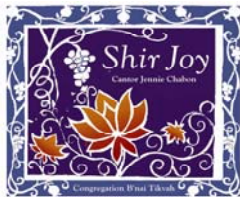
Camperships are available through the Jewish Community Federation of the Greater East Bay or here at B'nai Tikvah. Please contact Judy or Lance in the Temple Office if you are in need of some financial help. **Also, please mark your calendars for Sunday January 23 when a representative from URJ Camp Newman will be here to talk to the students and parents about attending this summer.** They will be here at 9:45am that morning. I know that spaces are filling up fast so this is a must to find out more about our regional Reform residential summer camp in Northern California (the camp is located in Santa Rosa).

As an added bonus, I will be attending Camp Newman this summer from June 21-July 3. I will be serving in the capacity of “Jewish professional faculty” during that time. If your child attends camp during that 2-week period, I will be hosting a gathering in my cabin at some point during that time for all CBT campers.

See you this summer! My goal is to have all CBT students attend a Jewish summer camp at some point this summer, and specifically have at least 35 attend Camp Newman. Let's see how close we can get!!

JANUARY 2011 Tevet - Shevat 5771

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 * Vaera HAPPY NEW YEAR! Morning Minyan w/Rabbi & Cantor 10:00 am
2 Religious School Yoga Class 9:00 am Youth Group to Sky Hi Sports 12:30 pm	3 Hebrew Class 7:30 pm - 8:30 pm	4 Religious School	5 Religious School	6 Religious School	7 Family Shabbat Service 6:30 pm	8 * Bo Morning Minyan w/Rabbi 10:00 am
9 6th Gr. Rosh Chodesh Religious School Yoga Class 9:00 am Preschool Workshop - Tu B'Shevat 9:30 am Men's Group 11:00 am Sisterhood to MOMA 11:30 am	10 Executive Board Meeting 6:00 pm Hebrew Class 7:30 pm - 8:30 pm	11 Religious School	12 Religious School	13 Religious School	14 Shabbat Service - Sisterhood Shabbat - "Sermon in Song" 6:30 pm	15 * Beshalach/Shira "SHIR JOY" for Shabbat Morning 10:00 am
16 NO Religious School	17 (Office closed) Martin Luther King Jr. Day	18 Religious School Book Sisters @ CBT 6:30 pm	19 Religious School	20 Religious School TU B'SHEVAT	21 Shabbat dinner 6:15 pm Shir Joy 7:30 pm	22 * Yitro Morning Minyan w/Rabbi 10:00 am
23 Religious School - Tu B'Shvat Celebration Yoga Class 9:00 am Camp Newman presentation 9:45 am	24 General Board Meeting 6:30 pm Hebrew Class 7:30 pm - 8:30 pm	25 Religious School	26 Religious School	27 Religious School	28 Shabbat Service 6:30 pm	29 * Mishpatim Shabbat Service - 4th graders participating 10:00 am
30 Religious School Yoga Class 9:00 am Chair Yoga 10:30 am	31 Hebrew Class 7:30 pm - 8:30 pm					



SHIR JOY 7:30 pm FRIDAY, JANUARY 21

Dinner 6:15 pm catered by Wilma Lott

Dinner reservations due Friday, January 14. Adults \$16 / children \$7.50.

Grilled chicken with rosemary/Dijon sauce, grilled vegetables, baby potatoes.

Mail your check to the Temple Office or reserve on-line!

FEBRUARY 2011 Shevat - Adar I 5771

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Religious School	2 Religious School	3 Religious School	4 Shabbat dinner 5:30 pm Family Shabbat Service 6:30 pm	5 * Terumah Shabbat Service - Bar Mitzvah of Zachary Scherman 10:00 am
6 Religious School Yoga Class 9:00 am Preschool Workshop - Torah Stories Part I 9:30 am Book Group 3:00 pm	7 Hebrew Class 7:30 pm - 8:30 pm Ritual Committee Meeting 7:30 pm	8 Religious School	9 Religious School	10 Religious School	11 WUPJ in SF Shabbat Service 6:30 pm	12 * Tetzaveh Morning Minyan w/Rabbi Groesberg 10:00 am
13 Midrasha Fundraiser @ CBT Religious School Yoga Class 9:00 am	14 Executive Board Meeting 6:00 pm Hebrew Class 7:30 pm - 8:30 pm	15 Religious School	16 Religious School	17 Religious School	18 Shabbat Service - Shir Joy 7:30 pm	19 * Ki Tissa Shabbat Service - Bat Mitzvah of Danielle Goldman 10:00 am
20 NO Religious School	21 (Office closed) PRESIDENTS' DAY	22 Religious School	23 Religious School	24 Religious School	25 Shabbat Service 6:30 pm	26 * Vayakhel Morning Minyan w/Rabbi 10:00 am
27 Religious School Yoga Class 9:00 am Simcha Faire! 11:00 am - 1:00 pm	28 General Board Meeting 6:30 pm					

FEBRUARY'S SHABBAT "PIZZA" DINNER at CBT

Join Us Friday, February 4

Dinner 5:30 pm
Family Shabbat service 6:30 pm

Adults \$10 / Children \$5
Reservations due Monday, January 31

Please send your check into the Temple Office with
"Pizza Dinner" and date in the memo section
or sign up on-line in the Members' Only section.

Daniel Jones
enjoyed
chaperoning
Youth Group
outing to
Qzar

Contributions

GENERAL FUND

In memory of Max Barat
Pat and Ken Barat

In memory of Ester Shepievker
Regina and Oleg Tachkov

In memory of Marion Sirota
Ann and Stuart Lutzker

In memory of Sue Rattner and Clara Medvin
Deborah and Alvin Medvin

In memory of Bob Rosenberg
Marcia and Harvey Maslin

RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

In memory of Frank Lerner
Jill and Kevin Wilk

In honor of Max's Bar Mitzvah
Christin and Andrew Pienkny

In memory of Jack Dauber

In memory of Jack Levine

In memory of Lillian Newmark Dauber
Paulette and Lewis Dauber

In memory of Lawrence Shaw
Idelle Lipman

In memory of Sidney and Marti
Cindy Turner and Brian Schwartz

In memory of Fritzi Gewing
Anna and Walter Gewing

In memory of Doris Levine
Lynn Freedman

In memory of Bob Rosenberg
Melanie and John Sandler

GENERAL FUND FOR CANTOR'S MUSICAL PROGRAMS

In memory of Hilda Bloom
Susan and John Rubenfeld
Florence and David Miller

In memory of Nathan Jacobson & Richard Shinozaki
Irene Jacobson and Rick Shinozaki

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

In memory of Ron Goodman
Judy and Walter Blum
Randi and Todd Goldman
Kathy and Marc Berger

In memory of Harry Maslow
Michael Fischer

In memory of Marc David Kemna
Gloria Kemna

SAM USATIN MEMORIAL FUND

In memory of Bruce Macrae
Lynette and Alan Scharlach

RELIGIOUS SCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION FUND

In memory of Bob Rosenberg
Ronna and Barry Slavin
Susan and Joel Friedman
Shirley and Paul Kadden
Nancy and Arthur Solomon
Barbara and Bill Almy
Robin and Lawrence Gordon
Randi and Todd Goldman
Judy and Walter Blum
Lynette and Alan Scharlach
Allyson and Michael Lachman
Lisa and Howard Wenger
Miriam and Stanley Newman
Paula Reinman and Sandy Gross
Carol and Allan Tobias
Pat and Chuck Eisner
Lance and Bob Canter
Kathy and Marc Berger

TREE OF LIFE - A leaf has been added

In Living Memory - Ben Medvin
Debbie and Al Medvin

Religious School's Chanukah Zimriah

TRIBUTE CARDS

***In memory of Bob Rosenberg
Donna and Arnie Hoffman
Sharon Brandes***

I've been thinking a lot about blessings in the last few weeks. The recent passing of a beloved aunt of mine has probably planted the seed for this reflection. I think this life experience made me see blessings in a new light.

In Judaism we start most formal blessings as, "Baruch atah adonai eloheinu melech ha-alom" and insert your blessing here. In daily life this is not how we express the appearance of a blessing, though it often does include a reference to G-d. For example, this Fall I've been particularly stunned by the beauty of the turning colors of the leaves. When I experience that kind of moment I often hear myself say, "Oh my G-d!" I'm often not even 100% conscious of saying it.

Maybe the point of the formal blessing is building up our consciousness of the blessings that are all around us? Upon returning from my bereavement leave in mid-November, it happened that a Wednesday night of Midrasha was also the appearance of the annual Leonid meteor shower. I love meteor showers – they fill me with awe, wonder and a sense of being blessed. This made me wonder, "is there a Jewish prayer for a meteor shower, or a falling star?" A Google search lead me to a book by the British Rabbi, John D. Rayner, entitled, "A Jewish Understanding of the World." Rabbi Rayner cites two prayers, one that ends with praise of G-d as the "author of Creation." The second praises G-d as one whose "power and might fill the world." So, that night we closed Midrasha as a community with these three elements:

1. We sang "Eili Eili" by Hannah Senesh. The lyrics are so simple and are a kind of prayer about awe - "Oh Lord, my G-d, I pray that these things never end, the sand and the sea, the rush of the waters, the crash of the heavens, the prayer of the heart."
2. I explained that our teens could be awed by the Leonid meteor shower that night – if they chose to wake up to see it. I invited them to close their eyes and think of a time in their lives that "filled them with wonder." Together, with a memory in their head and the community surrounding them, (many had their arms around each other) we said the prayer for wonderment in Hebrew and English. The words are - Baruch ata adonai, eloheinu melekh ha-olam, oseh ma'aseh b'reshet. Or in English, Praised are you, G-d, ruler of the Universe, source of Creation.
3. Lastly, we sang Israel Kamakawiwo'ole's version of "Somewhere Over the Rainbow," which combines that song with Louis Armstrong's "What a Wonderful World."

During the ceremony our students were reflective and Seeing our teens close their eyes and their faces shine brightly while they remembered a special moment of their lives, made the room feel magical. As we ended our closing ceremony in mid-November one teen came up and gave me a really big hug. "What was that for?" I asked her. "I just thought that you needed it," she replied. I felt blessed by that teen. To top it all off, I was awoken that next Thursday morning to the beeps of a text message on my cell phone. Here's what the text said, "I totally woke up at 3am to see the meteor shower... it was overcast. Haha." Even though it was overcast - so she couldn't see the shooting stars – she gave me a blessing – the knowledge that Midrasha makes an impact on our teens and our teens make an impact on our community as well.

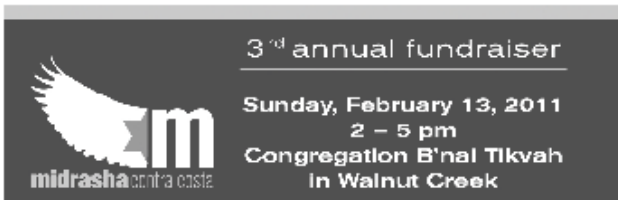
We can't always say the formal *Baruch ata adonai, eloheinu melekh ha-olam, oseh ma'aseh b'reshet* prayer when we are struck by life's beauty and awe, but it doesn't hurt to try.

51 ways to see the world



SATURDAY, MARCH 5 –
SUNDAY, MARCH 13

www.eastbayjewishfilm.org



3rd annual fundraiser

Sunday, February 13, 2011
2 - 5 pm
Congregation B'nai Tikvah
in Walnut Creek

The Business of Bagels and Blessings

an interactive conversation with



noah alper
OF NOAH'S BAGELS

and

sue fishkoff

AUTHOR OF "KOSHER NATION"



Purchase Tickets or More Information
at ccmidrasha.com
or 925/944-4701

AN ALTERNATIVE SHABBAT TORAH SERVICE

Come join us and be part of CBT's alternative Shabbat Torah service.

Saturday, February 12 at 10 am
in our Social Hall

Lots of community singing,
music by the 5-member Shabbatones band,
some Jewish learning,
some dancing if you're up to it,
even a bit of guided mediation.

We'll conclude with a delectable Kiddush.

Interfaith and unaffiliated families
especially welcome! Kid friendly!

CBT Is Reading.....

Book Sisters

"*The Love Ceiling*" by Jean Davies Okimoto will be discussed Tuesday, January 18 at 6:30 pm over a pot luck dinner in our Social Hall.

CBT Book Group

The next discussion will be a compilation of Yiddish short stories on Sunday, February 6 at 3 pm. Contact the Temple Office to pick up your copy.

Religious School's Chanukah Zimriah

Need a little help sending your child to a Jewish camp this summer?

Contact the Temple Office for an application for the **James Cohen Memorial Fund**.

Applications due February 15.

Congregation B'nai Tikvah
25 Hillcroft Way
Walnut Creek, CA 94597

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit No. 71
Walnut Creek, CA

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

For membership information, please contact the Temple Office.

SHAKING IT UP ON SATURDAY MORNINGS

10 - 11:30 am

Saturday, January 1

Morning Minyan with Rabbi Asher and Cantor Chabon

Saturday, January 15

Shir Joy w/guitarist Lisa Zeller

Saturday, February 12

Shabbat Shalom ala Groesberg



No RSVPs needed