

A nondenominational synagogue center serving the Jewish community in the greater Chico area

Grammy-winning Cantor Performs at CBI

FREE Concert on Sunday, May 31, 7:30 p.m.

Doug Cotler, grammy-winning composer, singer and songwriter will perform a FREE Member Appreciation Concert at CBI. From ballads to prayers to hilarious parodies, Doug Cotler touches, moves and entertains his audiences from coast to coast. For a sneak preview, go to: <http://www.dougcotler.com/>

All of our members are invited to an “end-of-year” celebration as we get ready for summer, and our new members will receive special recognition. Light refreshments will be served.

This program is sponsored by the Betty and Charles



Doug Cotler’s performances are “warm, spiritual, uplifting, delightful.”

Hilton Fund for “Head, Heart and Hand.” Donations to the fund will help us continue to offer fine programming at CBI.

Others say about Doug Cotler: “Doug Cotler took the audience on a magic carpet ride through the magical realm of Jewish music... We could not have asked for a more entertaining evening.” “Keep making Jewish music of this excellent caliber. You are taking us to new places in our Jewish identity.”

Confirmation Service for Emily Carter, Arielle Danan and Hannah Puig

Friday, May 29, 7:30 p.m.

The entire congregation is invited to join us as our fourth annual group of tenth-graders is confirmed on Friday night, May 29, at 7:30 p.m. Emily Carter, Arielle Danan and Hannah Puig will lead the service along with the younger members of the Confirmation Class. Each young woman will also give a speech and participate in reading the 10 Commandments from the Torah. The group will be recognized by the Rabbi, President and Sisterhood of CBI. They will pose for a group photo that will be added to our growing lobby display of confirmation classes.

Shavuot, the holiday that celebrates the giving of the Torah, has become the traditional time for groups of students in tenth grade (or older) to mark the public affirmation of their Jewish identity and belief as young adults, at a more mature stage than Bar/Bat Mitzvah. This ceremony was developed in the Reform movement about 200 years ago, and was later adopted in many Conservative synagogues as well.

Rabbi Danan says, “One of my first and foremost goals as rabbi in Chico was to address the issue of students ‘dropping out’ after B’nai Mitzvah, which should truly represent the beginning of one’s adult Jewish learning and practice. It can be a source of pride to our community that most of our students now participate in Confirmation class for three years after B’nai Mitzvah, and this usually leads to further Jewish involvement in youth groups, teen and college programs.”

A Delicious Event to Benefit our Community



Sisterhood Bagel Brunch

Sunday, May 3, 2009
10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Congregation Beth Israel
1336 Hemlock Street

\$18 Adults
\$7 Kids 12 & under

Mirra Stillman Bat Mitzvah, May 16

Hello my name is Mirra Stillman. I am 13 years old and I am currently attending Children's Community Charter School in Paradise as a seventh grader. I am always listening to music or singing, and I am a serious soccer player. I have played on a recreational team for six years, and I am starting my fourth year on a traveling soccer team.



I have gone to Congregation Beth Israel for four years, and I am extremely excited about my upcoming Bat Mitzvah, which will be on May 16 at 10 a.m. I hope you will join my family and me as I carry on this wonderful tradition of my family and community.

“Swimming in the Sea of Torah”: Torah Study and Pool Party May 28.

It's a tradition to study Torah late at night (or even all night) on the Eve of Shavuot, the holiday of the giving of the Torah. There's also a Sephardic tradition to splash water on Shavuot, because water, like Torah, is a life-force. These two customs will be combined with a



Torah study plus pool party at the home of Carol and Sam Edelman, [REDACTED], on the Eve of Shavuot, Thursday, May 28, at 9 p.m. Refreshments will be served. Bring your swimsuit if you'd like to take a dip under the stars. RSVP to Carol, 345-3974, cedelman@csuchico.edu.

BBYO Offers Childcare at Services

The BBYO members are providing childcare for Saturday services on May 16th.



Tikkun Olam Committee Meets May 27

The Tikkun Olam/Social Action Committee will meet at CBI on Wednesday, May 27 at 5 p.m. Come to the meeting or contact Phyllis Cullen to join the group.

John and Bonnie Mitchell

By Jim Jessee



John Mitchell provided the Dvar Torah, *Parashat Tetzaveh*, on March 2, 2009. In a very well researched, organized, and spoken presentation, he asked us to think about decisions we may have made in our lives that have made all the difference in what our lives are today. John suggested that some decisions he and Bonnie have made over the years have been very costly in terms of careers and employment, and some have led to very hurtful episodes with their friends and families, but they have no regrets as to where they are today. At the Kiddush I asked to interview them about those watershed decisions in their lives. John and Bonnie are very modest and private, so I thank them for giving me this privilege to share a bit of their story.

John Joseph Mitchell was born March 10, 1947 and raised in Brooklyn, New York, to a Catholic family, all of whom still live there and are well practicing their faith. John, who has two sisters and a brother, admits to being the pampered child in the family. This may be due in part to the fact that he was born with a fatal birth defect. Shortly after his birth, he became the second child to ever have the emergency surgery, which saved his life (the first child had died). He was in the hospital for months, and his mother came from work to the hospital three times a day to nurse him back to health.

John was a Brooklyn boy in an “Archie Bunker”-like household, went to parochial schools and loved his music. John was a real Dick Clark fan and an American Bandstand-worthy dancer. He had acquired a collection of 45s and LP albums of the Rock and Roll era that would be enviable, if not valuable today. John was a restless and not very well motivated student, and dropped out of High School when, as he put it, he'd gotten tired of being held back and had to read

The Mitchells continues on page 11

From Our Rabbi

Rabbi Julie Hilton Danan

Mitzvah Heroes Who Honor Us

During April, members of our community had the privilege of being in the presence of different kinds of heroes, people who live by their ideals and inspire all of us to do likewise. Author and *tzedakah* activist Danny Siegel has a term for people of this kind: mitzvah heroes.

For Erev Yom Hashoah, April 20, we had a very meaningful and inspiring commemoration at CBI, thanks to the efforts of Carol Edelman. Our speaker Michael Bart gave a presentation about the lives of his parents, Leizer and Zenia Bart, who fought with the *Nekamah* Partisans of Vilna. He wrote a book, *Until Our Last Breath*, which tells their story and his discovery of it. His parents' story was one of desperation, but also of great courage and heroism. Michael generously donated his time to speak at CBI.

At the same service, we honored Magalia resident Lubertus ("Bert") Schapelhouman, who as a teenager in Holland helped to rescue Jews and combat the Nazis, only to be captured, tortured and imprisoned in a concentration camp. I write, "we honored," but in truth it is we who were honored by the presence of this hero in our midst. Now in his 80's, Bert stands tall, vigorous, and direct of gaze, as he affirms that he would endure it all again just to do what was right. We were privileged to have Mayor Ann Schwab present to give Bert a mayor's award, and CBI also presented him with a certificate of "Righteous Among the Nations," and a lifetime membership in Congregation Beth Israel. Carol Edelman and I have affirmed our commitment to continue to find ways to recognize Bert's deeds, and most importantly, to share his story with the young people in our community.

The night after our Yom Hashoah service, Avraham and I were privileged to attend a dinner reception for Greg Mortenson given by Chico State's President Paul Zingg, and then to hear Mortenson's lecture about his book, *Three Cups of Tea*, the Chico "Book in Common." The book details Greg's adventures as a climber in Pakistan, when a failed attempt to scale K-2 left him recovering in a remote mountain village. The children of the village asked that he help them build



a school so that they wouldn't have to learn outside under a tree. This simple request was the beginning of his life's work and led him to found the Central Asia Institute (CAI) and build schools for girls and boys throughout Pakistan and Afghanistan. Greg's story captured our imaginations because he is also a *mitzvah* hero. He is fostering peace and education in place of extremism and desperation. Like Bert, Greg radiates a presence of simplicity, directness and idealism that inspires others to follow his example.

Our CBI Religious school, under the guidance of director Susan Archer, participated in "Pennies for Peace," the children's fundraising effort for the CAI. For "National Volunteer Week," Mayor Schwab's recognitions included the Archer and Zeichick families on behalf of our entire Religious School. CBI children had collected pennies as their *tzedakah* project, some adult supporters chipped in, and this spring \$360 was donated by the school to "Pennies for Peace." I would especially like to recognize the Zeichick girls, Kaitlin, Joy and Audrey, who collected \$80, mostly from their allowances. I am committed to promoting "Pennies for Peace" and the CAI as one of our featured CBI *tzedakah* funds, along with American Jewish World Service and Mazon.

Where we sought to honor a hero, we were honored. Where our kids were recognized, we were all inspired to do more for *tikkun olam*. Most of us are not called upon to be heroes, but each of us has a special mitzvah that we are called upon to do. Let us embrace it.

Rabbi Julie Hilton Danan

Mazal Tov to our Rabbi

Mazal Tov to Rabbi Danan, now Rabbi Dr. Danan. She successfully passed her dissertation defense on March 30 at the University of Texas at Austin. On May 23, she will receive her Ph.D. in Hebrew Studies at the University of Texas. Her dissertation is titled, "The Divine Voice in Scripture: *Ruah ha-Kodesh* in Rabbinic Literature." (*Ruah ha-Kodesh* means "the Holy Spirit.")

Religious School News

By David Zeichick

I am excited to announce that the Religious School received the Mayor's Award at the Chico City Council meeting on April 21st to recognize our work on the Pennies For Peace fundraiser. The kids collected over 4,000 pennies! In addition to that we received generous donations from other members of the congregation to bring our grand total to \$360! Susan Archer deserves special recognition for initiating this important tzedakah project. Thank you, Susan!

This is the last month of Religious School for this academic year. On May 31st we will have our annual end-of-year celebration at the 5-Mile. Get ready for the great watermelon-eating contest.

Todah Rabbah / A hearty thank you

To everyone who helped with Passover:

Cleaning and kashering: Michael Mulcahy, Rhonda Zisle and Mary Maupin

Preparing and cooking for the Seder: The Halimi and Pressman families

Leading: Rabbi Danan with Avraham Danan, Keren Carter, Helene Ginsberg and Andrew Sabersky, the CBI children, and Grant Levin on piano.

For help with religious school activities:

To David Zeichick and our Religious School teachers for preparing the Model Seder. Carol Edelman and all the Religious School teachers for a wonderful Religious School Family Torah service on March 28th. The children inspired everyone with their interest and enthusiasm.

To Carol Edelman for organizing our Yom Hashoah service, and Michael Bart for being our speaker. Mr. Bart gave us his presentation pro bono. To Susan Mogull for driving the Barts up from Sacramento. To Hillel and Religious Studies/Modern Jewish Studies for co-sponsoring the event.

To Mayor Ann Schwab and members of the Chico Area Interfaith Council for participating in the Yom Hashoah Service. To Grant Levin for playing piano, Rob Greenberg for technical support and Rhonda Zisle for clean-up.

To Daniel Veidlinger and Sam Edelman, for being our Shabbat Scholars in March and April.

To Terri Lind for preparing the Israel-themed Oneg in celebration of Yom Ha-Atzma'ut.

To Justin Bergson for completely updating our website. To David Bermann for taking photos at many recent events, and to Rob Greenberg for technical support in our office. Thank you one and all.

Mayor Ann Schwab honored CBI Religious School for their "Pennies for Peace" tzedakah project. The Zeichick and Archer families accepted the award on behalf of the entire school.



Pictured with the mayor are front row: Angela Archer, Joy and Kaitlyn Zeichick; back row: Susan and Niculina Archer, and David Zeichick.

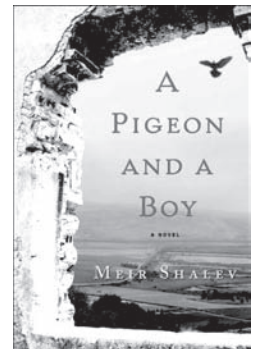
HaSifriyah & The Library Corner
"Books are made for use, not to be hidden away."
—Sefer Hasidim

CBI Reads!

By Wendy Diamond
CBI Library Chair

The CBI Book Group invites you to participate! To be notified of meeting dates and locations, contact Harriet at hspiegel@csuchico.edu.

Sunday, June 14, 2009
Pigeon and a Boy by Meir Shalev.



Intertwining two love stories with Israel's independence, the novel offers a compelling portrait of Israel's period before statehood to the present day. Written by one of Israel's most celebrated writers, it won the Brenner Prize.

Please join us!



David T Green

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MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

From the Board

By Stan Gottlieb

While attending an event in Davis honoring long-time friends for their support of Jewish youth, I examined CBI's commitment to support our young people. The theme throughout the event was that our youth are the future of Judaism, and this is true in Chico as well as throughout the world. Whatever we can do to ensure that their future includes a connection to their Jewish heritage is a mitzvah of the highest order.

Jewish summer camps such as Tawonga, Newman-Swig, and Young Judea provide friendship, learning, inspiration, and commitment to Jewish identity that can carry our CBI campers throughout their lives. Many of our adult members, including myself, still remember their two-week Jewish summer camp experiences. Our continuing commitment to CBI and to our Jewish heritage is proof that investing in our youth secures the future of Judaism.

Your Gert Lenner Campership Fund committee members — David Halimi, Irv Schiffman, and myself — have just awarded \$400 camperships to eight of our

religious school students to attend Jewish residential camp programs for up to two weeks this summer. This is twice the number who attended camp last year under the Gert Lenner Fund, which reflects an increasing interest and need. The programs cost about five times more than our camperships provide, with the difference coming from our Jewish Federations in Sacramento and San Francisco, the camp organizations, and the parents of the campers.

When the Gert Lenner Fund needed additional donations to provide these camperships, our CBI Haverot responded with their generous annual donation. Let's thank them properly by supporting the Bagel Brunch, which is the Sisterhood's primary fundraising event each year. In addition to supporting the Bagel Brunch, we can all take the opportunity on our Yahrzeits, birthdays, anniversaries, misheberachs, and CBI simchas throughout the year for small donations to the Gert Lenner Fund in memory of, and in honor of, loved ones for speedy recoveries, for bar and bat mitzvahs, and for adult bar and bat torahs.

Rabbi Danan Selected for STAR's Advanced Leadership Program *From Good to Great*

Beginning this June, Rabbi Julie Hilton Danan will be one of only 16 rabbis throughout the country participating in the fourth year of a pioneering program STAR Rabbis: *From Good To Great*. *STAR Rabbis: From Good to Great* is the first initiative to explore excellence in leadership with rabbis who have at least 10 years experience.

Rabbi Danan previously participated in STAR PEER, a fellowship program for rabbis in their first decade of congregational work. She is one of three PEER alumni invited back this year to participate in the more senior group. During her participation in STAR PEER, CBI received a \$10,000 innovation grant to develop the "Head, Heart, Hand" program.

The program offers rabbis at mid-career a unique way to re-energize their dreams and lead their communities with greater impact, along with a select group of colleagues from across the denominational spectrum. Inspired by the best-selling book, *Good to Great*, by business consultant Jim Collins, the program uses trusted principles of leadership to energize, inspire, and support rabbis who compare their current achievements to their future aspirations.

Through participation in two leadership retreats (the first one June 7-9 in Maryland), several on-line "webinars" and mentored project work, rabbis practice the art of leadership within their congregation. The program places special emphasis on building a more vibrant congregation through partnership with lay leadership. Faculty and guest teachers for *From Good to Great* include some of the leading rabbis and experts from the Jewish world and corporate leaders who also understand synagogues and the Jewish community.

About STAR:

STAR (Synagogues: Transformation and Renewal) is a philanthropic partnership of the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation, Jewish Life Network/Steinhardt Foundation and The Samuel Bronfman Foundation. *STAR Rabbis: From Good to Great* is funded by the Lasko Family Foundation of Philadelphia and the Byron V. Schwartz and Sondra S. and Tom Ettlinger Fund. STAR promotes renewal of the American Jewish community through congregational innovation and leadership development. Learn more at www.starsynagogue.org.

Sisterhood/Haverot News

By Donna Greenberg

"Remember your sisters, the ones here before you...Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah...They trust you to continue what they left in progress...And hope that you always will know that all of your sisters have something to give you." ("Remember Your Sisters," Jan Poscovsky, Congregation Beth El, Missouri City, TX; *Covenant of the Soul, Women of Reform Judaism*, p. 101.)

It is May, spring is in the air and that means the annual BAGEL BRUNCH! Our biggest fundraiser of the year, the Bagel Brunch, is Sunday, May 3rd from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. Mark your calendars. All Haverot/Sisterhood members should have received 5 tickets and have hopefully sold them all. Please send in your money. If you need more tickets please contact Fran Halimi at 345-9616 or halimifamily@sbcglobal.net. The more tickets we sell, the more profit goes to helping our congregation. Bring family and friends to this delicious event. Volunteers are still needed to help with the Bagel Brunch, call or e-mail Fran Halimi to offer your assistance. We will have newly-designed aprons to sell as well as tickets for the 50/50 Raffle. Any shutterbugs out there? We would love pictures to be taken — candid and staged pictures — for our upcoming cookbook as well as for keepsakes.

I will report next month on our morning clean-up that was held on April 26th at CBI in preparation for the Bagel Brunch.

Watch your mailboxes for an invitation to the end-of-the-year brunch. Mark your calendars now for June 7th at 10 a.m. at Caffe Ricci. I hope many of you can attend,

as we will have the installation of our new officers for next year.

It is once again time to present to you our slate of officers for the coming year. We will be voting by e-mail (regular mail for those without e-mail) for next year's officers. Voting may have taken place by the time you receive the newsletter.

As well as the end-of-the-year brunch scheduled for June 7th, Haverot/Sisterhood is planning another event in June. We are happy to announce another Jewish Meditation Day in June. The exact day has not been decided, but as soon as the day is known, an announcement will be sent to all Haverot/Sisterhood members.

Sisterhood Onegs: We still need helpers from our Sisterhood members for June 8. Please step up to the plate and contact me at 891-6439 or drg@mv.mv.com. There are now Oneg instructions posted in the CBI kitchen.

Is there anyone who enjoys sewing and embroidery who would like to sew and embroider the leaves for CBI's Tree of Life? You do need an embroidery attachment on your sewing machine. Contact me if interested at drg@mv.mv.com or 891-6439. Our current seamstress, Rose Clark, is retiring after many tireless years of providing this wonderful service.

Shalom,
Donna

Sisterhood Upcoming Events

Bagel Brunch **May 3**
End-of-the-year Brunch..... **June 7**
Jewish Meditation Day **June (TBA)**

Sisterhood Board

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Sheri Trimboli



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Donations

We would like to thank the following *nadvanim*.

Betty and Charles Hilton Fund

Matthew & Isabel Fine: In honor of Jim Jessee's Bar Torah
Michael & Wendy Diamond Mulcahy

Tree of Life

Rick & Sandy Finkle: In memory of Sheldon Musick
Jeremy & Amy Miller: In honor of Zia Danielle Miller
Inge Schmidt: In honor of Loretta Steinke's Bat Torah

BBYO Donation

Loretta Steinke: In appreciation of their support

Gert Lenner Fund

Harold & Anne Eisenberg: In honor of Stan Gottlieb's Birthday
Matthew & Isabel Fine: In honor of Loretta Steinke's Bat Torah

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

Al & Sandy Abrams
Marilynn Belmonte: In honor of Loretta Steinke's Bat Torah
Robert & Donna Greenberg: In honor of Rabbi Danan for
leading the Shiva service for Sybil Breslauer
Loretta Steinke

Rabbi's Scholarship Fund

Al & Sandy Abrams
Polly K. Greenberg: In memory of Julius Konigsberg

Religious School Fund

Al & Sandy Abrams: For the Purim Basket

Yahrzeit

Derek & Magdalena Baum: In memory of Maria Neder
Inge Schmidt: In memory of Else & Hans Schmidt

If I am for myself alone, what am I then?

Anniversaries

Andrea Lerner and Marshall ThompsonMay 2
Magdalena and Derek Baum.....May 8
Sara and Michael Leitner.....May 17
Fran and David HalimiMay 22
Jean and Norman Corwin.....May 23

Tree of Life

To honor or memorialize a person or to celebrate an occasion by adding a leaf to the Tree of Life quilt, which hangs in the synagogue, send a \$25 donation to:



CBI Tree of Life, PO Box 3266, Chico, CA 95927

Yahrzeits

Ethel Altman May 1
Remembered by Wendy Diamond & Michael Mulcahy

Mildred Spritz May 1
Remembered by Helen T. & Mark Levine

Mollie Naiman May 2
Remembered by Maria & Steven Naiman

Dr. Marcus Arginteanu May 3
Remembered by Selda & Louis Arnoff

Jacob Grossman May 3
Remembered by Deborah Shapiro

Alice Hightower May 4
Remembered by Loretta Steinke

Morris Gottlieb May 5
Remembered by Anne & Stanley Gottlieb

Everett Levison May 5
Remembered by Helene Ginsberg & Andrew Sabersky

Sylvia Bauer May 15
Remembered by Beverly & Michael Paull

Erno Szaberszky May 15
Remembered by Helene Ginsberg & Andrew Sabersky

Marion Corwin May 16
Remembered by Jean & Norman Corwin

Anna Resnick May 16
Remembered by Rose & Joe Clark and Sheri & Larry Trimboli

Matilda Simon May 16
Remembered by Shirley Puritz

Merton H. Breslauer May 17
Remembered by Donna & Robert Greenberg

Leonard Shapiro May 18
Remembered by Deborah Shapiro

Charles Naiman May 20
Remembered by Maria & Steve Naiman

Ben Cole May 23
Remembered by Sandy & Al Abrams

Eshgah Halimi May 25
Remembered by Fran & David Halimi

Edward Kahn May 26
Remembered by Robin Black

Esther Brownfield May 27
Remembered by James & Nelda Jessee

Bernard Evens May 27
Remembered by Nancy Evens & Peter Straus

Mazal Danan May 29
Remembered by Julie Hilton Danan & Avraham Danan

Zion Danan May 29
Remembered by Julie Hilton Danan & Avraham Danan

Estelle Bermann May 31
Remembered by Dave Bermann



Refuah Shlema

We wish a good and speedy healing to Jay Dakof who is recovering from surgery on his leg and to Helen Edelman who recently broke her arm.

Birthdays in May

Samantha Levine.....May 1
Kristy Bergson.....May 2
Angela Archer.....May 3
Jessica LeitnerMay 6
Ryan Carter.....May 7
Renee EverettMay 8
Karen Rogers.....May 8
Wendy Diamond Mulcahy.....
.....May 10
Jonathan TrimboliMay 11
Janice GagermanMay 12
Bonnie Megibow.....May 12
Samuel EdelmanMay 13
Loretta SteinkeMay 13
Russell Shapiro.....May 15
Casey Rubinoff.....May 20
Zadok PanuntoMay 21
Elizabeth Fine.....May 23
Marjorie KremerMay 24
Ricky Jackson.....May 26
Jay DakofMay 27

May 2009 ✨ - Iyar - Sivan 5769

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 NO Mishpachah	2 9 a.m. Adult Study Group 10 a.m. Torah Service
3 10 – 1 p.m. Bagel Brunch 3:30—5:30 p.m. Religious School	4	5 6:30 p.m. Mah Jongg	6 5:30 p.m. Confirmation Class	7	8 7:30 p.m. Kabbalat Shabbat	9 9 a.m. LAST Adult Study Group—Breakfast Party 10 a.m. Torah Service
10 <i>Mother's Day</i> NO Religious School!	11	12 6:30 p.m. Mah Jongg <i>Lag Ba'Omer</i>	13	14	15 7:30 p.m. Kabbalat Shabbat	16 10 a.m. Mirra Stillman's Bat Mitzvah
17 3:30—5:30 p.m. Religious School LAST Day of classes	18	19	20 11 a.m. Sages meet for Brunch at Country Waffle on Cohasset. 5:30 p.m. Confirmation Class	21	22 NO Friday Service <i>Yom Yerushalayim</i>	23 10 a.m. Torah Service
24 <i>Rosh Hodesh Sivan</i> NO Religious School	25 <i>Memorial Day</i>	26 6:30 p.m. Mah Jongg	27 5 p.m. Tikkun Olam Committee	28 <i>Erev Shavuot</i> Torah Study (and Pool Party!) at the Edelmanns, 9:00 p.m.	29 <i>Shavuot</i>	30 10 a.m. Torah Service 2nd Day of Shavuot
31 5:30 p.m. Religious School Picnic at 5 Mile <u>Doug Cotler Concert</u> <u>7:30 p.m. at CBI</u>						

Shabbat and Holiday Services in May

CBI celebrates Kabbalat Shabbat on Fridays at 7:30 p.m., often accompanied by instrumental music. An Oneg Shabbat follows. Shabbat Saturday morning services generally begin with a brief guided meditation. The first hour of the service consists of prayer; the second hour is a Torah reading and a Torah study. About noon we have a Kiddush and socialize over a light lunch.

Friday, May 1 Light Candles at 7:43 p.m.	7:30p.m. Note Schedule Change!	Kabbalat Shabbat Led by our B'nai Mitzvah Students Oneg sponsored by the Dakofs
Saturday, May 2	9 a.m. 10 a.m.	Adult Study: Women of the Bible Torah Service Parashat Acharei Mot/Kedoshim Potluck Kiddush
Friday, May 8 Light Candles at 7:50 p.m.	7:30 p.m.	Kabbalat Shabbat Oneg is sponsored by the Naimans in memory of Steve's parents Mollie and Charles Naiman
Saturday, May 9	9 a.m. 10 a.m.	Last Adult Study: Women of the Bible "Siyyum" Breakfast Party Torah Service Parashat Emor Kiddush sponsored by the Carters
Friday, May 15 Light Candles at 7:57 p.m.	7:30 p.m.	Kabbalat Shabbat led by Mirra Stillman Oneg sponsored by the Stillmans
Saturday, May 16	10 a.m.	Bat Mitzvah of Mirra Stillman Parashat Behar/Bechukotai Kiddush is sponsored by the Stillmans
Friday, May 22 Light Candles at 8:03 p.m.	NO Service Enjoy Erev Shabbat at Home	NO Service
Saturday, May 23	10 a.m.	Torah Service led by Keren Carter Parashat Bemidbar Anonymous Kiddush sponsor prepared by the Mitchells
Thursday, May 28 Light Yom Tov Candles at 8:08 p.m.	"Tikkun Leil Shavuot" Late Night Torah Study (& Pool Party!) At the Edelman's 9 p.m.	Erev Shavuot Holiday of the Giving of the Torah "Swim in the Sea of Torah" (and the Pool) at the Edelman home RSVP to Carol Edelman, 345-3974
Friday, May 29 Light Candles at 8:09 p.m.	7:30 p.m. Confirmation Service For Emily Carter, Arielle Danan And Hannah Puig	Kabbalat Shabbat 2 nd Night of Shavuot Traditional Confirmation Service led by the entire Confirmation class. Traditional Dairy Oneg sponsored by the Confirmation Families.
Saturday, May 30	10 a.m.	Torah Service and Yizkor 2 nd Day of Shavuot (Traditional) Kiddush sponsored by the Danans in honor of all the graduates.

Thank you to all who sponsored Kiddushes or Onegs in the month of April: The Mitchells, the Sisterhood, Loretta Steinke, the Paulls, Harriet Spiegel and Social/Cultural Committee.

Thank you also to our band and musicians for providing music, and to Nitsa Schiffman for flowers.

If you would like to celebrate a birthday, anniversary, or any special event with the community, **please sponsor a Friday night Oneg or a Saturday Kiddush**. Either bring your own treats or make a donation of \$25 (Saturday Kiddush, \$50). Call the CBI office for more information. 342-6146.

Graduation Announcements for Newsletter

Got a graduate in the family—high school, college, graduate or professional school? Send his or her name, school (and future study or work plans if desired) to Nelda Jessee, Nelda@Jessee.org, by May 15, for the CBI June-July Newsletter. We would love to offer them a Mazal Tov!



Congratulations Knitters!

A special cheer for our beginner knitters Fran, Liz, and Loretta. They have passed with flying colors having completed a sweater, handbag and a shawl. If you would like to join our group, we meet Mondays at 10 a.m. For more information, call Debby 894-3024.



2008-2009 CBI Board

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CBI News

Free to members, \$18/year for non-members.

Call Liz Bohn at the CBI office, 342-6146, to subscribe.

Newsletter items are due the 15th of each month for the following month's publication.

Submit items to Nelda Jessee, nelda@jessee.org.

Layout design by Carla Resnick.

Silas Marner for the third time.

In one of his first life-changing decisions, John joined the Army in 1966 and took basic training in South Carolina. He volunteered for Alaska, as he hoped it might be so unpopular that he would actually get sent there and not to Vietnam. It worked. He spent 2 ½ years in Alaska as a small arms repairman, but worked in administrative assignments that took advantage of his considerable math and organizational skills. John's Army work experience and skills later led to career opportunities with the Alaska National Guard, where he became a sergeant and developed an easier and more efficient way to track work orders at the repair facility, for which he was commended.

In Alaska, John made another of those life-changing decisions. Ever looking for a religious foundation that fulfilled some absence or missing piece he sensed, he left the Catholic Church and joined the Nazarene Church, where he became a faithful member of their community, studying hard, and volunteering his service wherever he could. In a decision John said he later regretted, he also got rid of his Rock and Roll collection, being the devil's work and all. After he was discharged from the Army, he took the advice of his pastor, and applied to a Nazarene College in Nampa, ID. He only stayed there one semester, and said it was one of the worst decisions he ever made, but it did immediately lead to another life-changing decision about which he feels most blessed.

Bonnie Lee (Birks) Mitchell was born November 30, 1948 in Detroit Lakes, Minnesota but moved to Wenatchee, Washington, where she grew up, the eldest child with four brothers and a sister. She had a very strict Nazarene Church upbringing, although she indicated she would get into trouble for some of the questions she asked. In her senior year at the Nazarene College in Nampa, ID she met a brand new freshman, albeit older man, John Mitchell. It was love at first sight, and they were engaged after knowing each other only six days. John returned to Alaska after the fall semester, but returned to Wenatchee, WA for their marriage twelve days after Bonnie's graduation in June. Bonnie has a degree in Home Economics that led to a teaching career with a Montessori School in Alaska.

John and Bonnie began their family of three children, Jennifer, Christina, and John Jr., in Anchorage, Alaska. John joined and pursued a very successful career in the Alaska National Guard. They were active members of the Nazarene Church, until, as Bonnie put it, her continuing

questions got them "kicked out." They then joined a Pentecostal Church, where they devoted their time and energy. In another of those life-changing decisions, to which John alluded, in 1977 they decided to join two other families, leave good jobs and futures in Alaska, and move to Chico, California, to help start a new church. They started in the home of their lay minister, and built a congregation from scratch. Seeing the amount of volunteer time and attention John and Bonnie give to CBI today, and the depth and sincerity of their study and practice of Judaism, one can well imagine their importance as stalwarts of their church communities during those years.

In 1979 they were taking part in a program at Richardson Springs with an inspirational speaker known for his insightful and deeply personal messages. In a room with over 100 people, he singled out John and Bonnie, saying he had felt their presence all weekend and that he a special message for them. He saw them as a spiritual couple, "soul mates," who really had all the pieces of their life puzzle in place, save one. That last piece of the puzzle would be found and fulfill their lives within 24 hours.

John and Bonnie pursued that piece of the puzzle for 24 more years with extensive Bible study and self-educational pursuits. They raised their children in Christian schools and contributed their hearts, time, and fortune to their church, but still they had questions and a feeling of being incomplete. Increasingly they found more meaning and solace in the Old Testament, and became interested in Judaism. Their journey led them to Rabbi Yitzhak Nates, and in 2003 they were formally converted to Judaism. As Bonnie described it, as she dipped three times in her conversion Mikvah, she felt that last piece of their life's puzzle fall into place, she felt whole and complete.

This last life-changing decision has not come without real pain and pressure for John and Bonnie. Virtually all of their former Christian friends and both of their families, Bonnie's parents, several of their brothers and sisters, not to mention one of their own children, believe they are going to hell. With John's very dry sense of humor, not to mention a good reflection on his scholarship, he said, "at least, according to the Rabbis, it is a short sentence." John does have the scholarly temperament of a Rabbi along with the humor of a Leprechaun in that Irish soul of his. As John concluded in his Dvar Torah, "Even though some of our life's decisions proved to be costly and even painful, we are where G-d wants us to be."

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Mark your calendar for Spring Holidays and Observances

- May 3 Bagel Brunch
- May 16 Mirra Stillman Bat Mitzvah
- May 28 Torah Study and Pool Party
Eve of Shavuot
- May 29 Confirmation Service
- May 31 Doug Cotler Concert

Congregation Beth Israel

Congregation Beth Israel is an independent, egalitarian Jewish community whose roots date back a century. The synagogue is both nondenominational and unaffiliated. Our guiding principle is K'lal Yisrael, the unity of the Jewish people. True to that spirit, CBI embraces a diverse membership of Jews from all backgrounds as well as interfaith couples and those exploring Judaism. We serve nearly 100 families in the greater Chico area with a wide range of programs for toddlers, tweens, teens, adults, and seniors. Our Religious School is very strong, and our Sisterhood is very active. Services are held Friday nights at 7:30 p.m. (6 p.m. on the first Friday for the monthly family service) and Saturday mornings at 10 a.m.

We also hold services on all major Jewish holidays.

The ideal to which we strive is Mordecai Kaplan's concept of the "synagogue center," in which a congregation serves both as a house of worship and as a community center. Rabbi Julie Hilton Danan provides the inspirational leadership for our Jewish values: study, *Torah*; worship and practice, *Avodah*; social action, *Tikkun Olam*; acts of kindness, *Gemilut Hasadim*; and connection with the Jewish People, *Am Yisrael*.



Passover 2009 photo by David Bermann