



## Rabbi's Message



In one of his stories about the Town of Chelm, Isaac Bashevis Singer tells of a conversation between the leaders of the town. They have finished discussing the important issues of the town, and solved a debilitating shortage of sour cream right before Shavuot. The conversation turned to more general subjects.

Gronam Ox, the head of the community council, said "Last night I couldn't sleep a wink for thinking about why it is hot in the summertime. Finally the answer came to me. It is because all winter long the stoves are heated and this heat says in Chelm and makes the summer hot."

Dopey Lekisch [what great names!] asked, "Then why is it cold in the winter?"

"It's clear why," replied Gronam. "The stoves are not heated in the summer, so there is no heat left over for the winter."

This exchange represents perfectly the logical, yet absurd way of thinking that exemplifies the mythical town of Chelm. And it also speaks to our natural need to find out "why".

The problem with this, obviously, is that Gronam Ox, and the rest of the leaders of Chelm, find the wrong answer. We know that it is

cold in the winter and warm in the summer because of the angle of the earth with relation to the sun. It has nothing to do with residual heat from winter stoves. Of course, this could be connected to a conversation about climate change and our responsibilities, but that is not what I am interested in at this moment.

For me, this story points not only to a desire to understand why things happen, but also to have a sense of control over the world around us. It is frightening when things happen that are outside of our control. And so, like the people of Chelm, we search for ways to understand that our actions impacted the situation in front of us. We aren't trying to find ways to say that everything is our fault, only to feel like we have agency, like we are able to impact the world around us.

But a false sense that we are in control can backfire. If the people of Chelm believed what their leaders told them, and wanted to live in a world that had warmer winters and cooler summers, they would stop heating their homes in the winter. But that wouldn't solve anything, it would only make them suffer more in the cold months.

The truth is we do have agency, and we can impact the world around us. From the state of our homes to the state of our world, our actions do have consequences and we should take our abilities and our responsibilities seriously.

But there are also those moments in our lives, and those situations that we face, that don't have easy answers and aren't anyone's fault. By distinguishing between those two types of situations, we can give ourselves permission to shed responsibility for those things that are not our fault, without feeling guilty or that we did not work hard enough. And if we are able to do that, then we can work to impact the areas of our lives and our world which we are actually able to impact, making a greater difference than would have been possible before.

בשלום,

Rabbi Alex Salzberg

[TOP](#)

## In this Issue

[Rabbi Salzberg's Message](#)

[President's Message](#)

[Education Director Ana Turkienicz's Message](#)

[High Holiday 2016 -- Thank You!](#)

[Donations for Cuba Mission Trip Sought](#)

[PJC Spring Party](#)

[Sunday Morning Lecture Series](#)

[Community Seder](#)

[PJC Library News](#)

[Israel Blog by Janney Collens](#)

["Share a Simcha"](#)

[Tributes & Donations](#)

[Top](#)

## Upcoming PJC Activities & Events

### February

**7** -- Soup Kitchen/4:30pm

**25** -- Women's Group/1:00pm

### March

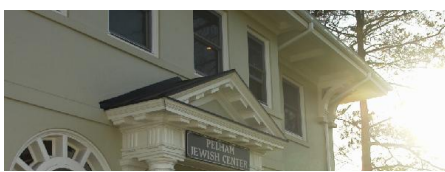
**4** -- Spring Party/6:00pm

**5** -- Book Group/11:30am

**11** -- Megillah Reading / 7:30pm

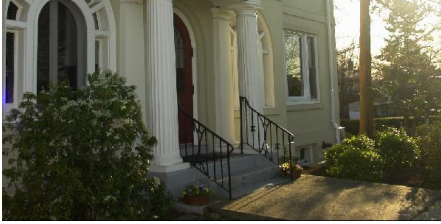
## President's Message

These last few weeks have been difficult for me. Following my father's death in December I am left to process and accept this new normal. My relationship with my father was not perfect and living for the last 30



years in a different continent only complicated matters. But he was there for me when I needed, comforting and supportive, in spite of the distance between us.

This loss has required me to focus on important values that were



instilled in my youth as a way of remembering. Community and friends were always a priority. Our house was open to all for a meal, cup of tea or just a schmooze, with constant noise and laughter. Most Sunday mornings my father would be out of the house. Visiting with someone from the community, shopping for an elderly friend or meeting with his masonic lodge.

12 -- Sunday Morning  
Lecture Series/  
10:00am

12 -- Purim Carnival/  
1:00pm

14 -- Soup Kitchen/  
4:30pm

26 -- Sunday Morning  
Lecture Series/  
10:00am

[Top](#)

### Quick Links

[Donate to the PJC](#)

[Find us on the Web](#)

[2016-17 Calendar](#)

[2016-17 Board of  
Directors](#)

As I now think of my father I can't help but consider the generations that came before, those who I did not know but whose values, rituals and beliefs have been instilled in me and I now attempt to pass on to my children. *L'dor v'dor*. From one generation to the next, it is our obligation to remember and pass on. This is particularly poignant as today is January 27, International Holocaust Remembrance Day, the day Auschwitz was liberated. Today we remember the 6 million men, women and children killed simply because they were Jewish. They will remain forever in our thoughts and prayers.

We honor their memory by saying "never again". We pass on to our children the importance of standing up to bigotry, racism, xenophobia. We pass on the importance to keep our doors open to the needy and feed the hungry, at home, in our community, in our country and around the world. At a time when too many walls are being built to keep people out it is heartening to learn that Israel has just agreed to open her doors to settle one hundred Syrian orphan children. A proud moment for the Jewish state, placing humanity above geopolitical policy.

*"We cannot change the past, but if we refuse to forget we can change the future..."*

-- Rabbi Jonathan Sachs

Darren

[TOP](#)

## From the Desk of Our Education Director

*"Six days a week we wrestle with the world, wringing profit from the earth; on the Sabbath we especially care for the seed of eternity planted in the soul. The world has our hands, but our soul belongs to Someone Else." -- Abraham Joshua Heschel, The Sabbath*

A few years ago, while I was studying towards my degree at JTS, I was juggling between two jobs and some tutoring as well. A friend of mine, who studied with me at JTS, looking towards the workload expected from us, and mindful of our other professional commitments, would urge me to concede to do some of our JTS homework on Shabbat. She would say: "we are only reading articles, you can do that on Shabbat". And I would stand my ground, saying: No. Not on Shabbat. Let's do this as soon as Shabbat is over. But not on Shabbat. Shabbat is a gift I received by the merit of being born into the Jewish people. And I have no intention on returning my gift. I feel so fortunate for having being worthy of receiving this gift, I will cherish it and hold it with my two hands. It's the gift of rest; the gift that allows me to connect to my family, to my community and to my inner soul. And guess what? All my assignments were always handed on time. I graduated within two years, and I kept my Shabbat gifts with me. Many people at that time would ask me: "How can you do it?" "I can't believe you have two jobs and you still went through this..." I know that my secret is very simple and ancient: Keeping one day of rest in the week is the key for leading an accomplished life.

I think my "secret" is not only mine. It's the Jewish People's survival secret; Achad Ha'Am, a 19th century Jewish poet and philosopher would say: "More than the Jews kept Shabbat, Shabbat has kept the Jews". I believe Shabbat it's a vital component in our lives, and in our ability to set aside time for deepening our personal and interpersonal relationships: with G-d, with ourselves, our friends and the Jews in the whole world. It allowed for our ancestors to keep in constant touch with their communities, to learn about one's accomplishments or hardships; if a certain seat was empty during Shabbat morning service, someone would notice and enquire on his/her wellbeing. Meal trains were set up, recommendations given for some relative's work placement and best-recipes exchanged for holiday meals. Community members' life cycle events, births, bar-mitzvahs, weddings, deaths, yahrzeits and mourning, are celebrated and commemorated; each individual is acknowledged and accounted for. And our phones, our connectivity to the outer world, our profession and our material lives? They can rest, too. We can devote this special gift, an island in time, connecting and listening to each other, learning about the week that's passed, and the week ahead, and allowing for the 25 hours of Shabbat to help us strengthen these connections on

week ahead, and allowing for the 25 hours of Shabbat to help us strengthen those connections, an opportunity for reflection and true caring.



This past December, The New York Times Book Review published Ariana Huffington's review of "[Rest](#)", a book by the author [Alex Soojung-Kim Pang](#). Her article, called "The Rest of Your Life", helps bring forth Pang's idea that keeping some downtime allows us to get more done. She writes: "*if work is our national religion, Pang is the philosopher reintegrating our bifurcated selves. (...) his central thesis is that rest not only makes us more productive and more creative, but also makes our lives richer and more fulfilling*". As I read her article, I could not stop thinking to myself: duh?!!!

Dr. Pang founded a company. Called "[The Restful Company](#)" to help organizations and people weave deliberate rest into their own lives. What a great idea! To incorporate deliberate rest into our own lives! Dr. Pang writes: "Rest is not something that the world gives us. It's never been a gift. If you want to rest, you have to take it. You have to resist the lure of busyness, make time for rest, take it seriously, and protect it from a world that is intent on stealing it." Well, Dr. Pang, as much as I enjoy seeing one of the most basic Jewish tenets become academically acknowledged as an invaluable resource for a fulfilling life, I respectfully disagree with you in one aspect: Fortunately, for the Jewish people, Shabbat IS a gift. And being a gift, it's much cherished and appreciated. And I agree with Dr. Pang - we need to "take" it, or as [A.J. Heschel](#) sees it, make space for Shabbat, an island in time.



On January 21<sup>st</sup>, the B'nei Mitzvah families had a family Shabbat dinner, where they played together a Jewish Values Game. It involved ranking Jewish Values on a scale of 1 to 10, through a family conversation. I was impressed by how many of our students and families ranked "attending Shabbat services" between 1-5 in their scales. When asked about why did they think it was important to attend Shabbat services, most of them stated the community connection being their main reason, aside of prayer. Students even said that "by attending Shabbat services, every other Jewish value falls in place, since it's through Shabbat services that they feel the ability to connect to Israel, to contribute towards Jewish causes, to use their Hebrew and to... connect to G-d. It was really mind blowing for me to hear it through the students' and parents' own perspective, and learn from their personal narratives how Shabbat helped them bond with everything Jewish.





In our Learning Center, we have a tradition of welcoming Shabbat a little earlier, on our last half hour of Religious School on Thursdays. We celebrate a "quasi" Shabbat service together in the Library, sitting in a circle around the PJC Library table. We light candles, recite Kiddush and *Hamotzi*. We sing Shabbat songs; learn about the Weekly Torah Portion. LC's students' personal life cycle events are marked and celebrated. The week's birthday celebrants are the ones who lead the Shabbat service. Our Thursday *madrivot*, Rachel Radvany, Daviel Schulman and Anna Shampanier-Bowen, lead the singing with their angelic voices, and teach the students new *Z'mirot* for Shabbat. Parents who are waiting for dismissal are invited to join in the celebration and younger siblings hop in to get their challah slice as well. The atmosphere (*avirah*) and the spirit (*ruach*) of Shabbat, our special gift, is palpable. If you are around, you are very welcome to come in and help usher Shabbat a little earlier, just for the sake of education, but also for the immense worth in it. If you cannot come on a Thursday evening, save these two special dates: **March 4th and May 6th**, when we will come together as a whole community in two "*Shabbat Mishpachah*" (Family Shabbat) bringing together all LC's families to celebrate Shabbat in the Main Sanctuary. Another gift to be cherished: the gift of diversity, and of being a multigenerational community. Until then, I am hoping to see you soon on next Shabbat!



Click [here](#) to check out the most updated pictures of the LC's Thursday evening Kabbalat Shabbat - you may find your own child lighting candles or reciting Kiddush!

*Wishing us all Shabbat Shalom,*

**Ana Turkienicz**

Education Director

[TOP](#)

## High Holiday Campaign 2016 -- Thank You!

In keeping with the PJC's established practice of publicly recognizing the generous contributions of our membership, I am pleased to present the results of the 2016 High Holiday Fundraising Campaign. We raised \$236,918 this year, all because of families such as yours. Each gift directly impacts all that is happening at the PJC, and I am grateful for the enthusiastic participation of so many members of our community. With gratitude and thanks, Lisa Neubardt, Fundraising Chair

### **Builders (\$15,000 & Above)**

Hildy & Steve Martin  
Robert Rossman

David Katz  
Karen Dukess & Steve Liesman  
Cheryl Goldstein & Marcelo Nacht  
Susan Perrotti  
Elizabeth Tzetzto & David Ploski

### **Friends (\$100-\$249)**

Anonymous (2)  
Anne Bresnick & Steve Almo  
Audrey & Hal Beerman  
Norman Bloom

### **Leaders (\$5,000-\$9,999)**

Anonymous  
Maria & Adam Abeshouse  
Diane Zultowsky & Alec Cecil  
Diane & Larry Cohen  
Jacqueline Schachter &  
David Haft  
Naomi & Marshall Jaffe  
Elaine & Marc Prager  
Jeanne & David Radvany  
Mark Singer  
Evelyn & Gary Trachten  
Donna & Michael Weissman

**Principals (\$3,600-\$4,999)**

Leah & John Leonard  
Frederica & Efreem Sigel

**Guardians (\$2,500-\$3,599)**

Judy & Leonard Cooper  
Jill & Barry Goldenberg  
Marjut & Jonathan Herzog  
Mary & Eugene Holtzman  
Beth & Joel Serebransky  
Helen Stephenson

**Promoters (\$1,800-\$2,499)**

Anonymous  
Emily Glickman &  
Howard Meyerson  
Andrea & Peter Rothberg  
Jacqueline Stein

**Benefactors (\$1,000-\$1,799)**

Anonymous (3)  
Sandy & Brad Angevine  
Ronnie & Spencer Barback  
Jennie & Jeremy Driesen  
Michelle & Michael Dvorkin  
Marijane & Richard Funes

Deborah Korenstein &  
Michael Glickman

Sally & Harold Weisman

**Patrons (\$500-\$999)**

Anonymous (3)  
Evelyn & Jack Abeshouse  
Melissa Dreyfus & Barry Erner  
Gloria & Sheldon Horowitz  
Andrea Prigot &  
Haig Hovaness  
Jack Klebanow  
Shelley & Alfred Klein  
Janice Goldklang &  
Daniel Kushnick  
Kate & Adam Lauzar  
Linda & Mark Levine  
Nora & Marc Mazur  
Michal & Tomer Meron  
Beth Starr & Laurence Reffold  
Melanie & David Samuels  
Gabrielle & David Sasson  
Barbara Saunders-Adams  
Judy Shampanier &  
Michael Bowen  
Deborah & Morris Stampfer

**Sponsors (\$250-\$499)**

Anonymous (2)  
Amy Ehrlich & Jon Backer  
Meryl & Martin Druckerman  
Melanie Stern &  
Zachary Ehrenreich  
Hnin & David Goldman  
Carey & Mark Hochberg  
Andrea DeRose & Robert Kahn  
Leah Lenney  
Diane & Alain Masson  
Lisa & Andrew Neubardt  
Alain Sasson  
Rhonda Singer

Doris-Patt & Theodore Smith  
Judy & Martin Teitell

Patricia & Daniel Cabin  
Eleanor Dreyfus  
Shayna Klopott & Michael Frankel  
Florence Grossman  
Susan Simpson &  
Stephen Handelman  
Jacqueline & Patrick Hopper  
Tatyana & Alex Jacobson  
Tina & Jonathan Kasper  
Amy Dunkin & Lawrence Kraftowitz  
Gary Mosk  
Eleanor Einzig & Daniel Perkis  
Cheryl Agris & Richard Pine  
Mona Gabbay & Carlos Salama  
Sari & Jeremy Schulman  
Ana & Neco Turkienicz  
Suzanne & Peter Wies

**Supporters (\$18-\$99)**

Paula & Edward Geller  
Virginia Herron-Lanoil  
Iris Kasten  
Maria Kogan & Eugene Lief  
Sybil & Les Rosenberg  
Heather & Steven Schneider  
Gloria Staple  
Mimi Steinberg

[TOP](#)

## Donations for Cuba Mission Trip Sought

PELHAM JEWISH CENTER HEBREW HIGH SCHOOL

&

B'nai Brith International Cuban Jewish Relief Project

**NEEDED ITEMS FOR DONATION:**

\*\*\* items with an asterisk are in high demand\*\*\*

Please bring items to LC Office

**Medicines** - Prescription and Non-Prescription

(Medical samples of prescription medicines are also highly desirable)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vitamin C, E, and complex B                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> NSAID Anti Inflammatory (Diclofenac Voltaren, Cambia, Cataflam, Pennsaid, Zipsor, Flector, Solaraze) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Multivitamins for adults and kids (include +50)              | <input type="checkbox"/> * Antihypertensives (Enalapril / Vasotec, Losartan/Sartan)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> * Omega 3  | <input type="checkbox"/> Pentoxiphiline (Trental, Pentoxil)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neosporin cream  | <input type="checkbox"/> * Bengay   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> * Antiflatulents (Gas X or similar)                          | <input type="checkbox"/> VapoRub  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Antacid tabs (tums, * Priolosec)                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Antibiotic creams  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> * Probiotics (Align or similar)                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Antifungal creams  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pepto Bismol   | <input type="checkbox"/> * Anti-inflammatory creams   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Preparation H  | <input type="checkbox"/> * Glucosamine Chondroitin Sulfate  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> * Antibiotics (Azithromycin, Cipro, Amoxicillin)             | <input type="checkbox"/> Cough, cold and flu: Dayquil/Nyquil  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asthma medication (Advair, Beclometasone spray)              | <input type="checkbox"/> Diaper rash cream (Desitin or similar)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Allergy medicines (Zyrtec, Claritin, Flonase, benadryl etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> Migraine relief products   |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> Mucinex  |

**Medical Supplies**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Walkers             | <input type="checkbox"/> * Adult Diapers (size small and medium) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Canes               | <input type="checkbox"/> Ladies pads                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> * Medical equipment | <input type="checkbox"/> * Medical equipment                     |

- \* Wheel chairs
- Cotton swabs
- Gloves (plastic)
- Reading glasses (2.50, 2.75, 3.0, and 3.5)
- Thermometers
- Pressure cuff
- Wet wipes
- Alcohol pads
- \* Syringes-- 5, 10 and 20 ml + for insulin
- Shower bench for elderly

**Food:**

- \* Powdered milk (Senior center)
- \* Canned foods and kosher bullion (tuna, chicken, soups, etc.)

**Office and School Supplies**

- Printer paper
- Post card stock
- Colored paper
- Transfer paper
- Writing notebooks
- Envelopes
- Files
- Staples/staplers
- Glue (including for paper and ceramics)

- Markers, crayons, colored pencils
- Acrylic paints and paint brushes
- \* Knitting supplies (yarn, knitting needles, etc.)
- Embroidery needles (with bi eyes) and threads - Assorted colors**

*For making jewelry:*

- Crimp tubes
- Closures
- Head pins
- Eye pins
- Other jewelry supplies
- Jewelry making tools
- Beads

**Clothing—In Cuba clothing is very expensive.**

- \* House dresses (sizes medium and large)
- Pajamas for men (sizes medium and large)
- Socks for men
- Under shirts/camisoles for men and women (medium, large, and extra-large)
- Underwear for men and women (sizes L and XL) and children (all ranges)

**Religious Materials**

- Books in Spanish about Jewish life or by Jewish authors
- DVDs in Spanish or subtitled in Spanish about Jewish life or with Jewish actors
- Candles (Shabbat, Havdallah, Yahrzeit)



[TOP](#)

## PJC Spring Party -- Save the Date!



It's coming! The **PJC Spring Party** will be held on Saturday, March 4th. Details and invitations will be coming shortly. For now, we can tell you there will be a very special guest performer and it will be brilliant. Trust us, really "brill"iant. Stay tuned ...

The event will begin with lively dinners in congregants' homes, followed by everyone gathering at the PJC for the remainder of the evening's festivities. If you would like to volunteer to host a dinner, are interested in helping or have any suggestions for this year's event, please contact [Lisa Neubardt](#).

See you on Saturday evening, March 4th!

[TOP](#)

## Sunday Morning Lecture Series Returns

The PJC **Sunday Morning Lecture Series** with Sheldon & Gloria Horowitz returns in mid-March. Please mark your calendar and plan to join us in the Library from 10:00 am-12:00 noon for the following lectures:

- March 12th -- Sheldon Horowitz: "American Jewish Gangsters in New York Part 1"
- March 26th -- Sheldon Horowitz: "American Jewish Gangsters in New York Part 2"
- April 23rd -- Gloria Horowitz: "Literature of the Jewish Immigrant Experience Part 1"
- May 21st -- Gloria Horowitz: "Literature of the Jewish Immigrant Experience Part 2"

[TOP](#)

## Community Seder -- Save the Date!

Enjoy the second **Passover Seder** with your extended PJC family On Tuesday, April 11th!





Rabbi Salzberg will lead a family-friendly Seder, appropriate and relevant for adults & children of all ages and all levels of engagement. Details including time and cost will be available soon. Everyone is welcome... open to non-PJC guests ... invite your family, friends, and neighbors.



Please RSVP to **Mimi Steinberg** if you are interested in attending and how many in your group. At this point, a response is not a commitment -- we just want to be able to estimate the size of our first-ever Community Seder!

[TOP](#)

## PJC Library News



The PJC Library is proud to announce several new acquisitions. We have a set of *Metsudat Rashi* for those preparing *D'var Torah*. There are also two new works of Adult Fiction: *Judas* by Amos Oz and *Here I Am* by Jonathan Safran Foer. In addition, Rabbi Salzberg has an autographed copy of Ben Gurion's autobiography in his office. He would be pleased to show it to you.

Thank you for all the wonderful book donations to our Library. We now have quite a varied collection. Please put future donations in one of the two blue bins for processing. There is a bin in the PJC Library to the right of the window seat, and another in the office. If you need to keep books longer than two months, please let PJC Librarian **Barbara Saunders-Adams** know. If not, you will receive a gentle reminder. Please return books to the above mentioned blue bins so they can be re-shelved.

The young adult book, *The Cross By Day; The Mezzuzah By Night* is missing. Whoever borrowed it did not leave his/her name on the green card. Hopefully it will be returned to the PJC Library soon.

[TOP](#)

## Israel Blog by Janney Collens

PJC congregant Janney Collens is currently studying in Israel as part of the Alexander Muss High School in Israel Fellowship program. While there, she is writing a regular blog -- two posts are shared below. To access all of Janney's blogs, click [here](#).

*Bruchim Habayim L'Yisrael* (Welcome to Israel!) Even though I have only been here for a few days, many things have made impressions on me already.



My group of 21 kids from all over the US has become really good friends. We started bonding immediately in the airport. Last night we all hung out in our *moadon* (rec room) and bonded for 4 hours until lights out. The *madrichim* (counselors) had to come in and tell us to go to bed. The *madrichim* are great. We also met a school group from Australia who share our dorm. The first thing they said to us was, "Guys, we ride kangaroos to school. It's true." It has been so fun hanging out with them and hearing about their lives and about Australia. All this has me thinking that, even though we're so

them and hearing about their lives and about Australia. All this has me thinking that, even though we're so different, we have a lot in common. I've never thought about what I could have in common with kids from Australia. We're all Jewish. We all love Israel. It makes me realize that I have to think more about this.

I also have some first impressions about the land and history of Israel. We went into Hod HaSharon as part of our orientation, and we got caught in a rain storm. Everyone was so happy about it. It was the first rain of the season and was much needed. Israel has been so dry that it has caused really bad forest fires around the country.

We have had two classes so far in our Core Israel class. They have been really interesting, but really long, so I know it will be hard work. We are starting with biblical Israel and reading the *Tanakh* (Torah, Prophets and Writings). So far, I know some of the material from Hebrew School, but learning this again has refreshed my memory and given me a new perspective. The teacher calls herself a history nerd. She taught us that in some ways you can read the Bible as a history book of the land and the people of Israel. Sometimes there is archaeological evidence of the events in the Bible but it's also interesting how sometimes there is not. In addition, we discussed how some people believe that everything the Torah says actually happened, and others take the stories as a moral guideline.

These are just some of the things that have stuck out to me in the first few days. The people I've met from all over the world, the rain, and the Bible as a history book: these may seem random, but they are all things that I am trying to tie together now that I am in Israel. I am really excited for what is to come. Tomorrow and Tuesday we are going on our first *tiyulim* (field trips), and I can't wait to see the places we are learning about.

As part of our *tiyul* to Tel Aviv this week, we were split up into groups and set off on a mission to interview people on the street. We asked them various questions about what it means to them to be Jewish, and how they identify with their Judaism. I know that Tel Aviv is a fairly secular part of Israel, but I was surprised by many of their answers. When asked about their Judaism, most of the people said that they are secular. When asked whether they identify more with being Jewish or being Israeli, they said Israeli. They seem to be more connected with the modern state of Israel and not connected to the thousands of years that Jews have lived in the land. And certainly not connected to religion. This had me reflecting on what it means to me to be Jewish. For me, being Jewish has two parts: Judaism as a religion and being a part of the Jewish people. In terms of the religion of Judaism, to me, the most important aspect of Judaism is based on Hillel's famous quote, "love thy neighbor as thyself." In my opinion, Judaism and the Torah are about moral guidelines. Judaism teaches you to be a good person and treat others the way you want to be treated, loving-kindness, social welfare and the ideals of peace and political freedom. To live my life and follow the moral aspects of Judaism are more important to me than observing all 613 *mitzvot*. But I do realize that many *mitzvot* can help us find the gratitude to be a good person and treat others well. So I need to figure out how important *Halacha* is to me.

The second part of being Jewish that I mentioned is being a part of the Jewish people. One of the reasons I wanted to come to AMHSI and Israel was to be surrounded by Jewish people. And that part of the experience has been everything I hoped. There is a lot of comfort in being around people who are all like you and share the same culture and holidays. It was really amazing to spend Hanukkah in Israel this past week.

I don't think that the people I interviewed in Tel Aviv realized that living in Israel is part of what it means to be Jewish. The land of Israel is a key part of Judaism. A lot of *Halacha* is tied to the land of Israel, and can only be performed there. The Talmud talks about how the land itself is so holy that walking in it is a *mitzvah* and can gain you a spot in the world to come. And whether you are religious or not, in Israel it's easier to observe Shabbat because the whole country shuts down. It's easier to eat kosher food because it's so available. It's easier to marry someone who is Jewish, because basically everyone is Jewish. So, even though the people I interviewed said they were secular and Israeli, I think they are more Jewish than they realize. And Israel is more important to my being Jewish than I realized before I came here.

[TOP](#)

## "Share a Simcha"!

**simcha!**

"Share a Simcha" allows congregants to share their news with our PJC community. Please submit news about family members -- engagements, births, job updates, kid

achievements, community acknowledgements and any other

milestones to **Leah Leonard**. This will continue to be a regular *Hakol* feature, so keep your news and updates coming!

- *Mazel Tov* to Jonathan & Marjut Herzog and family in honor of the *Bat Mitzvah* of their daughter Eliana on January 28th.
- *Mazel Tov* to Alex & Tatyana Jacobson and family on the occasion of their daughter Rebecca becoming a *Bat Mitzvah* on February 4th.

[TOP](#)

## Tributes & Donations



### Tributes to the PJC in Honor of ...

- Our wonderful High Holiday Services, by Ronnie Lynn Bader
- Our 2016 Programs & Services, by Anne Field

### Tributes to the PJC in Memory of ...

- Marilyn Dvorkin, by Martin Dvorkin
- Elaine Goldenberg, by Robert & Sandra Goldman
- Martin Vogelfanger, by Robert & Sandra Goldman
- Elaine Goldenberg, by Adam & Kate Lauzar
- Martin Vogelfanger, by Adam & Kate Lauzar
- Benjamin Lee, by Steve & Hildy Martin
- Elaine Goldenberg, by Marc & Elaine Prager
- Benjamin Lee, by David & Jeanne Radvany
- Lawrence Levitz, by Deborah Ruskin
- Martin Vogelfanger, by David & Melanie Samuels
- Benjamin Lee, by Barbara Saunders-Adams
- Charles Saunders, by Barbara Saunders-Adams
- Benjamin Lee, by Ana Turkienicz
- Martin Vogelfanger, by Ana Turkienicz

### Donations to the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund from ...

- Ronnie Barback, in honor of Spencer's birthday
- Martin & Meryl Druckerman, in memory of Benjamin Lee
- Martin & Meryl Druckerman, in honor Ana Turkienicz obtaining her U.S. citizenship
- Barry & Jill Goldenberg, in memory of Benjamin Lee
- David & Hnin Goldman, with appreciation to Rabbi Alex Salzberg, for the support given to Josh and their family in preparation for Josh's *Bar Mitzvah*
- David Haft, in memory of his father, Abraham Haft
- Jonathan & Marjut Herzog, in honor of Eliana, on her *Bat Mitzvah*
- Jonathan & Marjut Herzog, in memory of Martin Vogelfanger
- Robert Kahn, in memory of Benjamin Lee
- Jonathan & Tina Kasper, with appreciation to Rabbi Alex Salzberg, for the support given to them following the passing of Tina's mother, Olivia Passarelli
- Alfred & Shelley Klein, in memory of Shelley's parents, Esther & Herbert Taub
- Alfred & Shelley Klein, in honor of Eliana Herzog, on the occasion of her *Bat Mitzvah*

- Barbara Saunders-Adams, in memory of her mother, Selma Saunders
- Barbara Saunders-Adams, in memory of Martin Vogelfanger
- Jacqueline Stein, in memory of her father, George Stein
- Helen Stephenson, in memory of Lawrence Levitz

**Make Tributes & Donations [ONLINE!](#)**

At any time, if you wish to pay by check, please make it payable to **"The Pelham Jewish Center"** and mail it to our bookkeeping firm at: The Pelham Jewish Center, P.O. Box 150, Montvale, NJ 07645. All donations to the **Rabbi's Discretionary Fund**, at any time throughout the year, should be made payable to **"The Pelham Jewish Center -- Rabbi's Discretionary Fund"** and mailed directly **to [Julia Coss at the PJC office.](#)**

Thank you!

[TOP](#)

**The Pelham Jewish Center**  
451 Esplanade  
Pelham Manor, NY 10803  
Phone: 914-738-6008 ~ Fax: 914-931-2199  
Email: [office@thepjc.org](mailto:office@thepjc.org) ~ Web: [www.thepjc.org](http://www.thepjc.org)