



Hakol

THE VOICE OF THE
PELHAM JEWISH CENTER
October 2018
5779 Tishrei / Cheshvan



Upcoming PJC Activities & Events

October

- 1** -- Shemini Atzeret Morning, Torah, Musaf & Yizkor Services/ 9:30am
- 1** -- Erev Simchat Torah Ma'ariv Service/ 6:30pm
- 2** -- Simchat Torah, Morning, Torah & Musaf Services/ 9:30am
- 8** -- Columbus Day/ Offices Closed
- 9** -- Learning Center for Gan & Hebrew High School Resumes
- 9** -- Soup Kitchen/ 4:30pm
- 11** -- Board Meeting/ 7pm
- 21** -- Book Group/ 11:30am
- 27** -- Women's Group/ 1pm
- 28** -- Breakfast Run/ 7:30am

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Rabbi Salzberg's Message

"I love Sukkot, I just wish it weren't so close to Yom Kippur."

I've heard this sentiment frequently over the past week - not in small part because I have said it a few times myself. Sukkot is a beautiful holiday, filled with rituals and objects that can evoke memories of years past. But it comes at a time when we are exhausted from Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur and cannot be given the attention that it deserves.

On Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur our synagogue is full, the prayers are soulful, the energy is strong. We are together as a community in a way that doesn't happen throughout the rest of the year. Sukkot lacks that overwhelming sense of togetherness and can suffer in our estimation as a result.



This is how it appears on the surface, but I believe that what Sukkot represents and provides is what allows the High Holidays to be what they are. A few moments from my day will demonstrate what I mean:

Today I had lunch with a small group of PJCs. It was meant to be in the sukkah, but the weather didn't cooperate. Undeterred, we gathered in the library and sat together for well over an hour. With no program or service to guide us, we talked about family and life. We all walked away from lunch with satisfied stomachs and helpful advice.

Later, I stepped out of my office to see two others heading to the sukkah - the weather had cleared - with a lulav and etrog in hand; I quickly joined them. We discussed the laws of sukkot and the proper way to hold and shake the lulav. Then we talked. Again family, again life, this time adding in Torah and PJC events.

Finally, I briefly joined a few more from our community in the sukkah at one of their homes. I had to pick something up and was able to spend some time sitting and talking - an impromptu moment of relationship and real interaction - until the rain returned and we all rushed home.

Each of these moments seems small in comparison to the time that we spent together for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Fewer hours, fewer people, less singing. But each allowed me to deepen my relationships on a personal level. They gave me opportunities to better understand what draws the individual into the community, and what concerns keep them up at night.

These are the relationships that make us who we are. They represent a shared commitment to the community and to one another. They are on display when we gather together for holidays and lifecycles, but they are built in between.

On Sukkot we traditionally invite ushpizin - guests - to dine with us. The traditional list draws from prominent figures in the Bible: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Aaron, Joseph and David, Sarah, Rebecca, Leah, Rachel, Miriam, Deborah, and Ruth. We connect ourselves to our past by inviting it over for a meal. This is also how we can best connect with our present.

By the time you read this, Sukkot will be over and the opportunities that it presents to be together will have passed for another year. But - as it does every week - Shabbat starts on Friday. The Shabbat table calls to each of us, asking us to put aside our cares and deepen our relationships with one another. Take advantage of the opportunity that it presents.

Shabbat is an opportunity to take a break from the breakneck pace of the week, a change to sit with family and be present. It is also an opportunity to foster connections with the community beyond our individual families. Such opportunities abound in our lives and our community, they are there for us if we are willing to take advantage of them.

It is through such meals and other intimate gatherings that we maintain the strong sense of community and commitment that defines the Pelham Jewish Center.

Thank you,
Rabbi Alex Salzberg

November

- 2 -- Community Shabbat Dinner/ 6:30pm
- 3 -- Open Book/ 10:30am
- 8 -- Board Meeting/ 7pm
- 13 -- Soup Kitchen/ 4:30pm
- 17 -- Open Book/ 10:30am
- 17 -- Women's Group/ 1pm
- 18 -- Book Group/ 11:30am
- 18 -- Pelham Interfaith Thanksgiving Service/ 2pm
- 22 -- Thanksgiving/ Offices Closed
- 23 -- Thanksgiving/ Offices Closed

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Education Director's Message



"Do not be daunted by the enormity of the world's grief. Do justly, now. Love mercy, now. Walk humbly, now. You are not obligated to complete the work, but neither are you free to abandon it."
 Translation of Rabbi Tarfon in Pirke Avot 2:20.
 (Commentary on Michah 6:8)

On October 9 and 10, we will enter the month of *Heshvan*, the month that's squeezed between Tishrei, when we celebrated the High Holidays, *Sukkot* and *Simchat Torah*, and Kislev, when we will celebrate *Hanukkah*.

However, the month of *Heshvan* is barren, no holidays to celebrate. The rabbis have even called by a nickname: "*Mar-Heshvan*", the "bitter" *Heshvan*, since there are no rejoicing moments in this month.

Oy, what are all the children born in *Heshvan* supposed to do then? Why is their birthday on the "bitter" month? That question is especially relevant, since my Jewish birthday falls on 13 *Heshvan*.



Well, luckily, a few years ago, it was decided to turn the month of Heshvan into the Jewish Social Action Month - the Mitzvah month - I guess that's pretty cool for all Heshvan birthdays... To know that Judaism looked at the only month in the Jewish calendar that had no important dates and made it into one of the most important months in the year- a month devoted to Tikkun Olam: Hebrew for, to repair, heal and restore the world. This speaks to the shared responsibility we have with the Creator to continue to make the world a better place.

Well, that doesn't mean that on the other 11 months of the Jewish Calendar we shouldn't be taking care of the world. Actually, Tzedakah (which comes from the word Tzedek in Hebrew - Justice), is a constant in all Jewish holidays - therefore, in all other months, we are all committed to doing mitzvot, seeking to make the world a better place: On Shabbat, many families have a tzedakah box next to their Shabbat table, where the family members empty their pockets from change that will be donated to an organization of their choice by the end of the year; Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, we seek forgiveness from those around us that we might have hurt, seeking to make peace, shalom, around us; On Sukkot, we open our sukkah to welcome guests (Hachnasat Orchim) and celebrate the blessings of life; on Hanukkah, some families have created the tradition of giving to different organizations on each of the eight nights of the holiday; On Purim we give "Matanot L'evyonim (gifts for the poor), on Passover, we give "Kimcha de Pascha" (Passover flour - food to the poor). I still remember how both my grandmothers in Brazil used to prepare a meal for the poor and gave it right before the holiday started, before they fed the family with the best of their yiddish cooking.

During the High Holidays, we all recited in unison: "Ut'shuva, u'tefilah, u'tzedakah ma'avirin et ro'a hag'zerah" (But repentance, prayer and charity remove the evil decree) Rabbi Sacks says that "There is nothing inevitable in the affairs of humankind. The greatest gift G-d gave us was the ability to change." We repeat those words several times during prayer, to internalize and commit to a year when we will try to change, to improve our ways and raise our mindfulness inwards as well as our awareness outwards. After a month of introspection and reflection, the month of Heshvan comes to test our ability to keep our promises from Tishrei, that we indeed will explore more ways in which we can go out and contribute to Social Justice (tzedek) in the world.

At the Learning Center, we will start the month of Heshvan by learning about what does it mean to be a "mentsch" a fine human being. Each class will choose a charity, an organization that speaks to the students in the class and explore ways in which the class can collect donations for that charity throughout the year. Additionally, on Sunday, November 4, we will have a Mitzvah Day, which will be open to all PJC congregants, with opportunities to do good things and change the world around us. Stay tuned!

It's on us to bring this new tradition into our homes - to have a celebratory Rosh Hodesh Heshvan - in which families choose one organization to donate during the year, and decide how they will work to support that organization.

As of my friends celebrating birthdays with me during the month of Heshvan - maybe we can decide that instead of gifts, we would like people to contribute to a cause that matters to us - what a nice feeling - to know that on the happy celebration of the day we were born we are making a difference in someone else's life!

Just a suggestion - it would certainly make my birthday very special ;-)

Wishing each and every one of us a
Hodesh Tov - a Good Month of Heshvan,

Ana Turkienicz
Education Director
The PJC Learning Center

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Letter from Board President Leah Leonard

Many years ago the philosopher Meister Eckhart said, "If the only prayer you say in your life is thank you, it will be enough". During our recent High Holy Days, much time and focus has been devoted to prayer, yet Eckhart's simple but profound words remain so meaningful. Our PJC Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur services were beautiful, unique, and soul-filled-they reflected who we are as a community and blended your voices, personalities, and creativity. Among our community of volunteers, so many of you played a significant role in contributing to our communal prayer experience during these special days.

...and prayer experiences during these special days.

My thanks to Rabbi Salzberg for his spiritual leadership and thoughtful words [access the Rabbi's HH sermons on our PJC website [[Rosh Hashanah 1](#), [Rosh Hashanah 2](#), [Kol Nidre](#), and [Yom Kippur](#)]]. Having Avinoam and the entire Segal family share in our High Holidays is a beloved, annual PJC tradition-thanks to Avinoam for his *chazzan* role and Havi for her captivating voice-your melodies linger with us still. Special thanks to Avinoam for sharing his State of the State of Israel address on Shabbat Shuvah, infused with his personal insights.

To Marjut for skillfully organizing our extensive High Holiday programs and Jacqui for meticulously coordinating our Honors process. Larry and John tirelessly orchestrated daily Honors. Jill managed our *Yizkor* book & Scroll of Remembrance and assisted with the HH registration process. Melanie arranged greeters-with thanks to all congregants who served. Dan managed House items, especially our tent and security. Janice arranged our lavish flowers. Les & Sybil generously donated all floral arrangements. Sandra & Bob once again graciously hosted the Segal family. Darren produced our *Yizkor* book with care and pitched in on House. Andrea gave an inspiring and poignant fundraising appeal. Jack patiently taught us an uplifting *niggun*. Steve gave stirring and reflective *teshuvah* remarks [included in this issue]. Jonathan shared a personal and emotional 9/11 remembrance [included in next month's issue]. Dan P. re-imagined a beautiful *Sholom Aleichem* played by a gifted flutist to open our *Kol Nidre* service. On Yom Kippur morning Melissa shared her profound, inspiring words reminding us to be accepting of the limitations of control. At our Avodah service Ana spoke on her meaningful personal experiences practicing *Tikkun Olam*. Rebecca created our beautiful Elul Project email design, based on her own original artwork. Ben impressively played the Shofar with *ruach*. Howard, Jeremy, Sari, Brian, and Mika *leyned*. Gary, Dan, Shelley, Rabbi chanted *Haftarah*. Sari and Jeremy led Jr Congregation services on Yom Kippur. Lisa led our YK Teen Discussion. The Leonard family sponsored our community Break fast. Adam effortlessly juggled numerous, time-consuming tasks to provide a warm & welcoming space for us to gather. Julia produced our annual HH information packet and capably facilitated many of our programs.

On Rosh Hashanah, Rabbi Salzberg spoke about gratitude, how in a Jewish context it is an acknowledgement of the good and means that we must touch those people to whom we are grateful, we should strive to impact their lives in the same way that they have impacted our own. I hope that my words of thanks are touching each of our High Holiday volunteers and contributors by acknowledging the gifts they have given to our community, and that they understand how deeply they have touched us all during these holy days. As we move together into 5779, my wish for our congregation is that we will be inspired by the example of our High Holidays volunteers, getting more involved to positively impact one another's lives and our PJC community.

Leah Leonard

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Letter From PJC Fundraising Chair

Did you know that members of the Pelham Jewish Center are invited to attend the monthly Board meetings? Board meeting dates appear on the PJC website calendar.

PJC Fundraising Chair Barbara Saunders-Adams discusses her role ...

Me, Fundraising Chair? It's incongruous. I'm not particularly good at numbers or creating spreadsheets. I'm not a good speaker. I'm a writer. I wanted to serve on the PJC Board, so I agreed to take on the only position open a year ago. The deal was that I could choose someone to give the Rosh HaShana fundraising speech. I chose Andrea Rothberg - the best decision I've made.

What I can do is rally volunteers to help me out, write letters and other communications, keep tabs on the pledges and received fund, and make decisions about how our Spring Gala will best serve our community. But although the High Holiday Fundraiser and Spring Gala are our major fundraising events, there are other ways to support our PJC community throughout the year.

There are many ways to help sustain our PJC community, including:

- Dedicate a Mahzor (\$54)
- Buy a Memorial Plaque (\$300)
- Donate to our Learning Center
- Donate to our Library
- Donate to the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund
- Donate your time or expertise
- Gift Securities to PJC
- Name PJC in your will or estate plan
- Participate in synagogue events
- Donate items such as computers to the LC
- Sponsor a Kiddush
- Participate in our tag sale

Wherever your strengths lie, there is a way to sustain our beloved PJC community. I also encourage you to be creative in your gifting-if you identify a particular need, or want to focus on a particular area, speak with me or Rabbi Salzberg directly to discuss. Please contact me **Barbara Saunders-Adams** at any time-I look forward to

hearing from you and discussing your ideas. Donations may also be made directly to the PJC via our website <https://thebjc.org/donate>.

Sincerely,
Barbara Saunders-Adams

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Steve Martin's Rosh Hashanah Remarks

I want to do tshuvah, but it's so hard. It ought to be so much easier. After all, I am painfully aware of my shortcomings. The least I could do is own up to them, acknowledge them, ask for forgiveness from those I have hurt, pray to God for forgiveness, pledge to do better, and move on. So why are my efforts at tshuvah this year are identical to those of last year, and the year before, and the year before and the year before?

I'm not sure I have the answer to this, but I have an inkling, and I'd like to share some thoughts with you that I hope will serve as a kavanah as we approach davening Avinu Malkeinu. The central problem, I think, is that using a cognitive approach to tshuvah is doomed to failure. We can't intellectualize our way to redemption.

I was recently struck by the beauty of some words of Torah by Dr. Shaiya Rothberg, a faculty member of the Conservative Yeshiva. Rothberg teaches that the Rambam explains the purpose of human existence is to embody the holy spirit or *ruach hakodesh*. In kabbalah, the symbolic ladder that connects us to God ascends from ruach, to kol, voice, before we turn to study.

Ruach is not just spirit, it is also wind and it is also breath. They are beautifully intertwined in Hebrew, because they are different faces of the Torah in our lives. We need to physically feel how ruach flows in and out of us, filling our bodies with life. As we feel the rhythm of our breath, our fears and desires recede.

After breath comes voice. In Unetaneh Tokef we pray that "*V'kol dmamah dakah yishama* - the still small voice will be heard." For me the singing we do here together is how we amplify that still small voice so that it is heard, so that we can truly hear each other and that God will hear us.

Twice in Dvarim we are called upon to circumcise our hearts - to cut away the hardened, thickened skin that encases our hearts and prevents tshuvah. I don't think you can use cognition to circumcise your heart. I have this vision of a man standing with a scalpel in front of himself, trying to persuade himself, "Don't worry, it's good for you, you just have to cut open your heart and trim away the bad stuff, without harming the good stuff."

When Avinoam and Chavi sing to us, my heart is pierced, and then it fills with joy and hope and belief. My heart explodes and I pray that the explosion tears away the leathered skin of the past year. It will never be as neat as the scalpel, but it's all I've got.

Shana Tovah,
Steve Martin

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PJC Breakfast Run

The Pelham Jewish Center

We Will Participate in a Breakfast Run on Sunday, October 28th from 7:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

The PJC is going on a **Breakfast Run** – an early morning version of a Midnight Run – in New York City. The **Breakfast Run** involves distributing a hot breakfast, clothing and toiletries to the homeless at a location designated by midnightrun.org. We will meet at the PJC at 7:00 a.m. and caravan to the location.

Volunteers are welcome!

We are collecting:

- ✧ **NEW** men's underwear, undershirts and socks
- ✧ **Men's clothing** (especially jeans, sweatshirts and sweaters)
- ✧ Winter coats, hats, gloves, boots and sneakers
- ✧ **Blankets and Bags**



There will be a collection bin in the front hall closet to drop off donated items. This bin will be available **beginning Monday, October 8th**. If you would like to participate in the **Breakfast Run**, make a financial donation or have any questions, please e-mail **Michael Dvorkin** at **mkdvorkin@gmail.com**. Please also contact Michael if you would like clothing or toiletry donations picked up.

All financial donations should be made payable to the **PJC**.

The PJC Board would like to thank Jonathan and Tina Kasper for their generous and most thoughtful gift of a stone bench that has been placed in the memorial garden at the front of the synagogue. This bench adds a classic and respectful addition to this space and offers an area for members to reflect and remember.



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Open Book Program

The Pelham Jewish Center

OPEN BOOK

The

Kabbalat

The Kaddish

11/3

11/17

12/15

Kabbalat Shabbat

2/9

3/9

3/23

Have you ever felt lost in synagogue on Shabbat?

Do you wish that you understood the prayers better?

**Come learn the intention and meaning of the prayers,
and how to participate with the community.**

Saturday mornings at 10:30 in the Library

(During Junior Congregation)

451 Esplanade

www.thepjc.org

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New PJC Adult Education Program 2018-2019

It's Time to register for this year's PJC Adult Education class!

Rabbi Alex Salzberg will be teaching "Living Judaism" on Tuesdays in two sessions:
Afternoon (4-5:30pm) and Evening (7:30-9:00pm).

Judaism is in constant evolution. The Jewish lives that we lead today are different from those led by our ancestors, each generation is different from the one that came before it. Changes in Jewish law and practice can be seen in the Torah itself, and the development has continued ever since.

In the modern era, the Conservative Movement has adopted a particular approach to Jewish practice, attempting to strike a balance between traditional approaches and modern sensibilities. We will look at some of the teshuvot (Jewish legal opinions) that make the Conservative Movement stand out from other streams of Judaism in modern times and attempt to understand the process and values that led to particular positions. This will lead us to examine texts from throughout Jewish history, and discussions of values and ethics.

The class dates will be: 10/23, 10/30, 11/13, 11/20, 11/27, 12/11, 12/18, 1/22, 1/29, 2/12, 2/26, 3/12, 3/19, 3/26, 4/9, 4/30, 5/14 & 5/21.

Please email Julia Coss at office@thepjc.org to register. The course fee is \$200 for members/\$250 for non-members with an annual cap of \$350 for couples.

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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 [Lisa Yelsey](#). This will continue to be a regular *Hakol* feature, so keep your news and

updates coming!

- *Mazel Tov* to Lisa Yelsey, who is moving to Boulder, Colorado for a new job at Google at the end of October. Don't worry - she will still be editing *Hakol*!
- Wishing *Mazel* to Rob Rossman on the engagement of his daughter Talia to Brendan Graham on July 28th.
- Double *Mazel* to Lester & Rosalie Kravitz on becoming grandparents of twins Eve Isabel & Levi Samuel born to daughter Lisa & husband Isaac Mamaysky on August 2nd.

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Tributes & Donations



Make Tributes & Donations [ONLINE!](#)

Donations to the PJC from...

- Martin Dvorkin, in honor of Michael & Michelle Dvorkin
- Adam & Kate Lauzar, in honor of Joel Peck & Shelli Goldberg-Peck, on the occasion of Harrison's marriage to Ekka
- Adam & Kate Lauzar, in honor of Jack Klebanow & Marcela Hoffer, on the occasion of their marriage
- Adam & Kate Lauzar, in memory of Paul Stepner, stepfather of Sandra Goldman & Elaine Prager
- Ira & Jo-Anne Weinberg, in honor of Marty & Judy Teitell

Technology Donations to the PJC Learning Center from...

- David Haft & Jacqueline Schachter

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

- Theodor & Vivian Brown, in memory of Jeremy Beyth's wife, Elizabeth
- Eleanor Einzig, in memory of her son, Aaron Benjamin Einzig
- Lisa Neubardt, in honor of Darren Lee

Donations to the Maot Hattim Fund, through the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund from...

- Mitchell & Julie Cepler

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 418, 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!

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