



Temple Israel Program to Look at World War II Jewish Bulgaria

By Marc Katz, Editor

During World War II, the advancing Nazis killed more than 11,000 Jews in Northern Greece and Yugoslavia, but almost 50,000 were saved in neighboring Bulgaria through the efforts of that country's king, Boris III.

Among the survivors were the parents of Dr. Joseph Benatov, now a professor at the University of Pennsylvania, who has made a study of how and why the king took heroic actions to save the Jewish community.

Dr. Benatov will tell the story of the Bulgarian Jews in a special presentation by TILL, Temple Israel Lifelong Learning, the congregation's adult education program, next Monday, January 11, at 8:15 P.M. in the Blue Room. There is no charge for the presentation, which is open to the community. The talk is co-sponsored by Temple Israel's

Shoah Remembrance Committee.

"When I first contacted Dr. Benatov," said TILL Chair Rebecca Friedman-Charry, "he was in Bulgaria. His knowledge of the Bulgarian Jewish experience extends beyond his extensive scholarship on history and reaches into the 21st century. His lecture will be fascinating."

Dr. Benatov's study of Bulgarian Jewry was brought to the attention of the TILL committee by Temple Israel members Anne and Stanley Lupkin, who heard him speak at a conference they attended last year. "We were staggered by what he had to say," Mr. Lupkin said. "Many people have the impression that Eastern Europeans turned against their Jewish neighbors. But, this was not the case in Bulgaria where many residents protected their Jewish countrymen."

Before World War II the Bulgarian Jewish community numbered 49,000. Bulgaria, officially a German ally, successfully resisted Nazi pressure to deport the Bulgarian Jews, and the entire community survived the war. At the same time, Bulgaria allowed the deportation of more than 11,000 Jews from occupied territories in Yugoslavia, Macedonia and Northern Greece to their death in concentration camps. Many Bulgarian intellectuals, politicians and church officials acted bravely in defense of the Jewish community. Between 1948 and 1950 about 42,000 Bulgarian Jews immigrated to Israel, including Shulamit Shamir, the wife of Israel's seventh prime minister, Yitzhak Shamir. After 1989, another 1,500 made *aliyah*.

Contemporary Jewish life in Bulgaria is very lively. There are two active synagogues

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Getting Ready for the Dinner Dance



A large committee has formed to start making plans for Temple Israel's 51st annual journal dinner, to be held on Sunday, June 5.

Leading the effort are chairs Rebecca and Sasson Sassouni and Susan and Robert Lopatkin, seated. Watch for details soon!

11 Months of Warmth, Support, Learning Sanctuary Changes

By Alise Kreditor

By Rob Panzer

EDITOR'S NOTE: Temple Israel member Alise Kreditor has completed the 11 months of saying *kaddish* for her father, but the experience of attending the congregation's daily *minyan* during that time will stay with her for a lifetime, as she explains in this Voice Guest Column.

People handle mourning in many different ways. For me, it was the harsh reality of saying *kaddish* for the first time in my life, hoping I could honor my father's memory by completing the full 11 months. Now that I have finished the process it comes with

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mixed emotions; however, what I didn't realize when I began was that this would also be a period of great learning for me.

I now understand fully why the *kaddish* prayer requires a *minyan*. The diverse community of minyan attendees offers support in so many ways, and you end up becoming a part of this very special group who are there to help you whether you say *kaddish* for a week, a month or the full 11 months. I began to look forward to the warmth and camaraderie that greeted me each morning and night, and I also learned many new prayers and a few new customs from my Persian friends, which I have now incorpo-

rated into my personal ritual.

Before my father passed away, I was a once a week attendee on Sunday night to keep him company, yet I didn't assign any importance to my presence in the small chapel. I merely saw it as a way of doing something special with my dad. Retrospectively, I now know that all those Sunday nights were not only a father/daughter activity, but we were also doing a *mitzvah* allowing others to say *kaddish*. During my 11 months, a day didn't go by without a feeling of extreme gratitude for all the men and women who were there and didn't stand for *kaddish*. As strange as this may sound, this period has also permitted me to get to know my father even better as I now appreciate what he did for the last 20 years of his life when he attended morning *minyan*. This new respect and admiration for my father has also spilled over to all the regulars at the Temple Israel *minyan* who can be counted on day after day after day.

I cannot predict how often I will continue to attend *minyan*, but if I set a goal of trying to give back each day I was able to say *kaddish*, I will be coming for a very long time.

FROM THE RABBI

Emphasizing the Adult in Young Adults

By Rabbi Daniel Schweber

As children we often rush to grow up and as adults we wish to be young children again. Logic should then dictate that being a young adult provides the best of both worlds. At Temple Israel, through the Waxman Youth House and our youth organization, USY, we strive to achieve and give our teens ways to experience adulthood while still enjoying the innocent joy of being kids.

When I was a teenager I had the privilege of being part of Hagesher, the suburban Philadelphia region of USY. One the greatest highlights in my time in USY was attending the international convention at the hotel in the middle of Interchange 9 of the New Jersey Turnpike in East Brunswick.

USY International Convention, or IC as it is affectionately called, is a world unto itself that comes into existence for five days at the end of each December. IC brings to-

gether over 1,000 Jewish teens filling hotel ballrooms with *ruach*, prayer and adult-like leadership and discussion. USY IC is an experience that lasts a lifetime, guiding its del-

...you can live a Jewish life in virtually every type of profession.

egates Jewishly throughout their lives.

USY demonstrates this idea by bringing back alumni who have gone into many different types of professions. The goal is to show that you can live a Jewish life in virtually every type of profession. There are USY alumni in the armed forces, the entertainment industry. There are novelists

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One of the issues that has come out of our strategic planning process is the question of how we make decisions and how these decisions are communicated to the congregation. Rather than have information filter out, we would like to inform our members in a more organized fashion. Periodically, there will be information on Board decisions placed in the Voice.

One of the important decisions made recently was to leave the Sanctuary in the "new," more centralized configuration. There was a robust discussion about this issue at our Board of Trustees meeting in November. Rabbi Stecker and I attended a workshop at the recent United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism convention that

One of the...decisions made recently was to leave the Sanctuary in the "new," more centralized configuration.

spoke to this very issue, and he was able to speak eloquently to the Board about the merits of this style for the Sanctuary. This configuration allows for a more intimate feel to the room, bringing the clergy off the existing *bimah* and making them more a part of the congregation. As the clergy has reported, this creates a more intimate feel to the room.

For those who may be interested, minutes of the Board of Trustees meetings will be available for all members of the congregation in the synagogue office. Board meetings are open to any who might wish to attend and observe, although there may be occasions when we have a sensitive topic to discuss. In that event we will go into executive session, allowing only voting members of the Board to remain.

I hope everyone had a happy secular new year and I look forward to working with all of you in the coming months.

As always, I can most easily be reached at <robpanzer18@gmail.com>.

Next Issue of The Voice

The next issue of The Voice will be published on Friday, January 22. The deadline for that issue is Monday, January 11.

IN MEMORIAM

Temple Israel extends condolences
to the families of:

ESTELLE NADLER

mother of Andrew Nadler and
esteemed member of Temple Israel

GEORGE TORODASH

husband of Marilyn Torodash and
esteemed member of Temple Israel

HANNAH BERMAN

mother of Judy Litner and
esteemed member of Temple Israel

May their memories be for a blessing.

MAZAL TOV TO . . .

- **Karen and Daniel Covitt** on the birth of their grandson, Ethan Reuben Field.
- **Edna Nouvahian and Behrooz Hedvat** on the birth of their daughter, Scarlett.

CANDLE LIGHTING TIMES

Friday, January 8..... 4:26 P.M.
Friday, January 15..... 4:33 P.M.

DAILY MINYAN TIMES

Attend the Daily Minyan!

Mon. & Thur.	6:45 A.M.	8:00 P.M.
Tues. & Wed.	7:00 A.M.	8:00 P.M.
Friday, Jan. 8	7:00 A.M.	4:30 P.M.
Friday, Jan. 15	7:00 A.M.	4:45 P.M.
Sat., Jan. 9	9:00 A.M.	4:05 P.M.
Sat., Jan. 16	9:00 A.M.	4:15 P.M.
Sunday	8:15 A.M.	8:00 P.M.

Nominating Committee Looking for Candidates

Temple Israel Nominating Committee has begun to consider candidates for the Board of Trustees for election at the June 2016 General Membership meeting. The committee is currently seeking suggestions of Temple Israel members who have demonstrated a commitment to the *kehillah*, the holy community, and the potential to help lead the congregation into the future.

The committee expects a trustee to:

- Have a strong personal commitment to Conservative Judaism,
- Actively participate in committee work and projects to strengthen the Temple Israel *kehillah* in a secure and well functioning facility, and
- Serve as a liaison to others and to help nurture a warm and spiritually uplifting environment.

If you believe that you or a member that you know would make an excellent candidate to help govern and forge the future direction of Temple Israel, contact Leon Silverberg at the synagogue office, 482-7800.

UPCOMING EVENTS AT TEMPLE ISRAEL

Jan.	10	Family <i>B'nai Mitzvah</i> Workshop Led by Cantor Frieder	9:30 A.M.
	10	Shalom Club New Year's Celebration	6:00 P.M.
	11	Sisterhood Board Meeting	10:00 A.M.
	11	TILL Program: "Who Do You Save? The Real Story of Bulgarian Jewry and the Holocaust"	8:15 P.M.
	17	New Member Welcoming Ceremony	9:30 A.M.
	17	Martin Luther King Jr. Service At AME Zion Church	3:30 P.M.
	20	TILL Program: iEngage Israel Series: "Religion and People"	8:15 P.M.
	21	Board of Trustees Meeting	8:15 P.M.
	22	Congregational Tu Bishevat Seder	6:30 P.M.
	24	Family <i>B'nai Mitzvah</i> Workshop Led by Rabbi Schweber and Danny Mishkin	10:30 A.M.
	25	Tu Bishevat	
	25	Beth HaGan Tu Bishevat Seder and Celebration	
	28	Men's Club Meeting Featuring Rabbi Schweber	7:30 P.M.
	31	Family <i>B'nai Mitzvah</i> Workshop Led by Rabbi Schweber and Danny Mishkin	10:30 A.M.
	31	TILL Film Series: "Regina"	7:00 P.M.
Feb.	4	Beth HaGan Torah Science Fair	
	7	Men's Club World Wide Wrap	9:00 A.M.
	8	Sisterhood Board Meeting	10:00 A.M.
	11	Beth HaGan Nursery School Parenting Workshop	
	11	TILL Presents: "Jewish Life on Campus: Engaging the Next Generation of Jews"	8:15 P.M.

You can play a role in shaping Temple Israel's future...

*Temple Israel's Strategic Planning Committee
invites you to join a Task Force to plan
for the congregation's future:*

- Community Building and Outreach
- Intermarriage and Inclusiveness
- Youth Engagement
- Membership Outreach & Experience
- Chesed & Social Action

Each Task Force will develop strategies and
recommendations culminating in a written report
that will be incorporated into the final
Strategic Plan for Temple Israel.

To join a Task Force and for additional information
contact chairs:

- Lynn Weitzman at 773-2814
- Larry Greengrass at 466-6296

B'NAI/B'NOT MITZVAH IN OUR TEMPLE ISRAEL FAMILY



Emily Greiff

Emily Greiff will be celebrating her *Bat Mitzvah* on January 16. She is the daughter of Brenda and Lance Greiff and has a sister, Sarah, 19, and a brother, Jordan, 16. Emily is a seventh grade honors student at Great Neck North Middle School. She enjoys tennis and piano. Emily is a recipient of the Temple Israel Religious School Judaic Scholar Award. She is attending the Waxman High School and Youth House and plans to visit Israel with her family in the near future.



Amelia Blumberg

Amelia Blumberg will be called to the Torah as a *Bat Mitzvah* on January 23. She is the daughter of Nataly and Stephen Blumberg and has a brother, Alec, 10. Amelia is a seventh grade student at Great Neck North Middle School, where she enjoys English and Spanish. She plays tennis and basketball, and participates in the school chorus. Each summer she takes time to discover Jewish life, and has visited synagogues in Croatia, Italy, and Spain. She also hopes to make her first visit to Israel in the near future. Amelia is currently attending the Waxman High School.

FROM BETH HAGAN NURSERY SCHOOL

Getting Ready for Torah Science Fair

By Rachel Mathless

We've returned from winter break and have already begun to work on our exciting projects for the Torah Science Fair, which will be held on Thursday, February 4, from 5:30 – 7 P.M.

The Dolphins have decided to make the *Mishkan* and are studying desert life. They are learning about how mountains were formed and about the survival of the Jewish people in the desert for 40 years.

The Butterflies divided into four teams of scientists for an in-depth study about the animals that appeared during the plague of wild beasts. They will learn about their natural habitats, how they find food, how they prey on other animals, and how their appearance in Egypt affected life there.

The Pandas have invited a doctor to teach them about human anatomy while studying how *Hashem* created Adam, the first human. All the classes have chosen themes that can be studied from both a Torah perspective and scientific analysis.

Our Hanukkah toy drive was overwhelmingly successful. Thanks to the generosity of all our parents and students, Chai Lifeline was able to distribute hundreds of toys to hospitalized children.

In honor of Tu B'shevat, our children have begun planting all kinds of seeds. We will be using some of the greens and spices grown at our Passover model seder.

We are preparing for our Tu B'shevat seder on Monday, January 25. We will feast on exotic fruits, drink "wine" and celebrate nature's rebirth in Israel. That *Shabbat* is also *Shabbat Shira* and all classes will make bird feeders to honor the *Midrash* where the birds ate the *manna* in the desert and helped Moshe out of an uncomfortable situation.

Parsha study is going strong in all the classes. We finished the book of Genesis and have begun Exodus. *Parsha* time is one of the most beloved parts of the day—every story is full of drama and excitement. The children can't get enough! Some of our *parsha* books are on display in the classrooms.

We are opening our second tiny toddler class next week. The success of this program is astounding and we have a waiting list for a third class.

Emphasizing the Adult in Young Adults

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and small business owners. Of course, USY leadership has produced its fair share of rabbis and Jewish professionals, too.

Thanks to Facebook, I was able to remotely experience 2015's IC at the Marriott in downtown Baltimore. This was the 65th annual convention and with a lot of tradition behind it, much has stayed the same. However, as to be expected, some things have changed. From a personal perspective I don't really know many teens attending. However, I know a lot of the adult leaders including Rabbi David Levy, who is the national director of USY. Rabbi Levy was a classmate of mine at JTS Rabbinical School. He is also a native of Great Neck and taught at the Waxman High School and Youth House!

As the convention kicked off, Rabbi Levy published an op-ed on the JTA website: (<http://www.jta.org/2015/12/28/news-opinion/opinion/op-ed-the-force-is-strong-with-conservative-movement-teens>) about the traditions and changes in USY.

Reading Rabbi Levy's article and recalling my experience from 21 years ago, I can't help but think of the phrase "the more things change, the more they stay the same." Sure

a Jewish teenager in 2015 is going to have a different experience than a teenager did in 2005, 1995, 1985, etc. Technological and societal changes make this fact a certainty.

There are also plenty of similarities. At the IC I attended we shared our devotion to Zionism, we collected *tzedakah* and grappled with the complicated issues of the time, which at the time included AIDS. As I witnessed on my Facebook feed, this year's convention focused on gender identity, Israel on campus and intense social action. There was, of course, fun and *ruach* with a concert by the Israeli band Hatikvah 6.

The goal and purpose of our Jewish Youth group is to give our teens a place to grow up Jewishly and to explore, like we adults do, how to incorporate our Jewish identity into the way we live our lives.

Please support our teens and our teens programs. If you know teens, encourage them to participate in the Youth House and in USY. We have many ways to engage on a regular or occasional basis. Thank you to Danny Mishkin for all he does to make our Youth House successful. We are continuing to make Temple Israel a place where teens can grow into the Jewish adults they are already becoming.

Temple Israel's Film Series Beginning January 31st

Opening Presentation Telling the Story of First Woman Rabbi

By Marc Katz, Editor

Regina Jonas, the first woman rabbi in the world, is the subject of the opening presentation in Temple Israel's TILL Film Series on Sunday, January 31, at 4:30 P.M. in the Crystal Ballroom.

Growing up in a German slum as the daughter of an Orthodox Jewish peddler, she was ordained in Berlin in 1935 where her incredible religious devotion brought hope and encouragement to many persecuted German Jews. Despite many of her contemporary rabbis emigrating due to Nazi persecution, she continued to work tirelessly in concentration camps until she was murdered in Auschwitz in 1944 at the age of 42. The movie "Regina" pays tribute to the inspiring woman, using the only surviving photo of her.

The award-winning documentary is filled with amazing archival footage showing the rich Jewish life and culture that formed the backdrop of her times. The film traces her life from her upbringing in Berlin through her studies for ordination. During the Nazi era and the war, her sermons and her unparalleled dedication brought encouragement to the persecuted German Jews.

Rabbi Daniel Schweber will lead a discussion about Regina Jonas and the film following the showing. The picture had a special screening before the Library of Congress in Washington in 2014 as well as at the International Holocaust Remembrance Day in Paris in 2014. It has been a feature of many film festivals, including the New York Jewish Film Festival at Lincoln Center in 2014.

Judit Szigeti, the coordinator of the Temple Israel Film Series, said she was moved by the film and was sure the story would resonate with members of the congregation. As a young student in Hungary, Ms. Szigeti got to know the picture's Hungarian director, Diana Groo, who has since become known for

Temple Israel Program to Look at Jewish Bulgaria

—Continued from front page

in the capital, Sofia, where 5,000 Jews live, and in Plovdiv, home of the country's second largest Jewish community.

Professor Benatov regularly leads summer tours of the Balkans and Bulgarian Jewish community. He lectures widely and will answer audience questions following his talk.

"People interested in Jewish history will find Dr. Benatov to be an engaging speaker telling a story that is poignant and unknown to many," Mr. Lupkin said. "It is an interesting look at Jewish history that is largely unknown."

her provocative independent films.

On March 6 the series will present "Rashevski's Tango," a film about a French Jewish family in the 1990s, which depicts what life was like for Jews in Paris before the recent tragic events in the city. The program begins at 7 P.M.

The final film in the series, "Gett," tells the story of an Israeli woman who wants a divorce, but her husband would not agree to it, preventing a rabbinic panel from legitimizing their divorce. The drama shows the difficult coexistence of rabbinical courts and modern Israeli society. It will be shown on Sunday, March 20, at 7 P.M.

Refreshments will be served at all presentations. There is no admission charge for the films and discussions.



First woman rabbi Regina Jonas

Celebrate Tu Bshevat at Temple Israel's Shabbat Shirah Celebration Friday, January 22 & Saturday, January 23

Tu Bshevat, the birthday of the trees,
and Shabbat Shirah, when we read the Song of the sea,
are always near each other. Join Temple Israel to celebrate both.

Friday Evening

An enhanced N'Ranenah service at 6:30 P.M.

in the Multipurpose Room

followed by a Communal *Shabbat* Dinner at 7:30 P.M.

in the Crystal Ballroom

featuring separate Tu Bshevat celebrations
for children and adults.

Dinner Cost:

Early bird special until Friday, January 15

\$25/adult; \$12/for children 12 and under

After Friday, January 15

\$35/adult; \$20/for children 12 and under

(children 2 and under are free)

RSVP for Friday night dinner is a must by Wednesday, January 20

Call Marion at 482-7800 ext. 1106.

Reservations will not be taken after Wednesday, January 20

Saturday Morning

9 A.M. in the Sanctuary in celebration of

Shabbat Shirah, "The Shabbat of Song"

Cantor Raphael Frieder will be joined by a group
of professional singers adding even more song to the service.

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From Generation to Generation



Temple Israel Gratefully Acknowledges The Following Contributions

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 Judy Litner being named
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 Year" by the Great Neck
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 Judy Litner
 Hannah Berman
 The engagement of their son,
 Nathan, to Shana Miles
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D'var Torah By Rabbi Marim D. Charry

Va'era

Saturday, January 9

In this portion, God reiterates His pledge to redeem His people from slavery and promises severe punishment for the Egyptian people. Moses and Aaron make another appeal to Pharaoh and in the process humiliate his magicians. The appeal, however, is again rejected. There follows the first seven of the ten plagues which God must inflict on the Egyptians in order to achieve the release of the Israelites. The plagues of blood, frogs, lice, swarms of insects, pestilence, boils and hail (as well as locusts, darkness and the slaying of the first-born, which are related in the next portion) demonstrate God's ability to manipulate nature and to protect His people. Since a number of the plagues were directed against Egyptian divinities, also present here is the beginning of the war by the Israelites on polytheism.

Bo

Saturday, January 16

We continue the account of the ten plagues with the last three, in this portion. The plagues of locusts and darkness are described and then the account is interrupted in order to record a detailed set of instructions which God gives to Moses and Aaron to prepare the Israelites for freedom. They are first directed to establish a calendar starting with the month of liberation, Nisan. The calendar is meant to provide social and religious cohesion as well as to symbolize the free man's ability—indeed responsibility—to make time. Then follow directions for offering the paschal sacrifice (to be eaten in haste) and for smearing blood on the door posts and lintels so Israelite houses will be spared the final plague. God then passes over the land and kills all the first born sons of the Egyptians, whereupon Pharaoh finally sends the Israelites out and they begin their journey toward Sinai. The Exodus is the key event in all Jewish history, and the instructions given here are by way of assuring that we remember God's role as redeemer to eternity.

Worship at Temple Israel This Week!

SABBATH SERVICES

Friday, January 8

Evening Service 4:30 P.M.

Saturday, January 9

Morning Service 9:00 A.M.

Weekly Portion: *Va'era*; Exodus 6:2 - 9:35

Haftarah: Ezekiel 28:25 - 29:21

Bat Mitzvah

BARRETT KANFER

daughter of Debra and Abraham Kanfer

Sabbath Service Officers and Greeters: Moji Pourmoradi,
Audrey Itzkowitz, and Ellen and Mark Birnbaum

Havurah Service 10:00 A.M.

"Unlocking and Enriching Jewish Prayer" 10:30 A.M.

Junior Congregation 10:30 A.M.

Toddler Service 11:00 A.M.

Minhah 4:05 P.M.

Ma'ariv 5:12 P.M.

Havdalah 5:27 P.M.

Friday, January 15

Evening Service 4:45 P.M.

Saturday, January 16

Morning Service / *Shabbat* Morning Group *Aliyah* 9:00 A.M.

Weekly Portion: *Bo*; Exodus 10:1 - 13:16

Haftarah: Jeremiah 46:13 - 28

Bat Mitzvah

EMILY GREIFF

daughter of Brenda and Lance Greiff

Sabbath Service Officers and Greeters: Harold Citron,
Toby Katz, Eleanor Askari, and Hal Rothbaum

Junior Congregation 10:30 A.M.

Toddler Service 11:00 A.M.

Minhah 4:15 P.M.

Ma'ariv 5:19 P.M.

Havdalah 5:34 P.M.