

Kol HaLev Happenings

The Newsletter of Cleveland's Reconstructionist Jewish Community

JULY 2014

COMMUNITY MEETINGS ADDRESS FISCAL ISSUES

Community meetings were held on June 10 and June 19 with the purpose of deepening and broadening member awareness of Kol HaLev's financial situation, as well as garnering input on three proposals for improving our financial situation which the finance committee had submitted to the board of trustees. In total, 36 members attended the meetings.

At the meetings, Pete Robertson (with Greg Selker at the first meeting) shared a PowerPoint presentation (available for download from the websites at <http://kolhalev.net/content/2014-2015-finances>) which outlined the current budget situation, most saliently the fact that our current income falls short of our expected expenses. They explained how we arrived at the current



Over 30 Kol HaLev members joined Greater Cleveland Congregations May 29 action. Details on [page 16](#).

challenges, and presented the finance committee's proposal to address them.

Talking about money is always difficult. We are a community of incredible diversity. We are a generous community, and very committed to [continued on page 11](#)

NEW BOARD MEMBERS INSTALLED AT THE JUNE 2 ANNUAL MEETING

More than 40 members gathered at the Kol HaLev annual meeting on June 2 to install new board members and hear about the state of the congregation through reports from outgoing treasurer Pete Robertson, values team leaders Barry Epstein, Bill



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New board members read from the congregational Ketuba during installation.

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DIRECTORY

SERVICES & PROGRAMS:

The Lillian and Betty Ratner School
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OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR:

Kelli Birch
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OFFICERS:

PRESIDENT Halle Barnett
VICE PRESIDENT Karly Whitaker
SECRETARY Karal Stern
TREASURER Bruce Fallick &
Catherine Fallick

EX OFFICIO MEMBERS:

PAST PRESIDENT Barb Truitt
RABBI Steve Segar
FOUNDING RABBI Jeffrey Schein
EDUCATION DIR. Robyn Novick

AT-LARGE MEMBERS:

Molly Berger
Kareen Caputo
Kirby Date
Barry Epstein

Voting members of the board of trustees: officers, at-large members and the Values Teams leaders listed below.

VALUES TEAMS, COMMITTEES and THEIR LEADERS**WELCOMING TEAM**– Lila Hanft

- Hessed – Robin Holzman & Martha Schubert
- Hevre Kadisha – Lois Selker & Rachel Kay
- Security Corps – *Open*
- Newsletter – Lila Hanft
- Weekly Update – Robin Holzman
- Website – Benjamin Barnett & Brian Miller
- Marketing/PR – Deena Epstein & Halle Barnett
- Tech Support – Brian Miller

SPIRITUAL TEAM – Bill Scher-Marcus

- Religious Practices – Karal Stern & Elise Hagesfeld
- Holidays – Amy Hogg
- Meditation – Nancy Rubel & Karly Whitaker
- Music – Sue Pelleg & Bruce Jennings

LEARNING TEAM - Leah Kamionkowski & Glenda Kupersmith-Kopstein

- Youth & Family Education – Sue Pelleg
- Adult Education – Maureen Hack
- Young Families/Tot Shabbat – Rachel Williams & Josh Chefitz
- Child Care Coordinator – Traci Elgart
- Torah Study – Ralph and Selma Gwatkin
- Book Group – Kevin Weidenbaum
- Lunch and Learn – *Open*

INVOLVED TEAM - Karly Whitaker

- Greater Cleveland Congregations – Allen Binstock, Dick & Donna Weinberg

- Interfaith Hospitality Network – Nancy Dudwick
- Israel Dialogue Group– Karly Whitaker & Mike Armin
- Environmental Sustainability – Miriam Geronimus

FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY TEAM – Margaret Cohen

- Fundraising – Margaret Cohen, Barry Epstein & Greg Selker
- Mock Trial – *Open*
- Cemetery – Mike Armin

PARTICIPATORY TEAM – Miriam Geronimus

- Membership – Peggy Kittala
- Greeters – Kelli Birch (Office Manager)
- Kiddush – Kelli Birch (Office Manager)
- High Holy Days – Marcia Goldberg
- Women's Group – Happy Wallace
- Interfaith Families – Leah Kamionkowski
- Leadership Development – Greg Selker & Leah Kamionkowski

COMMITTEES DIRECTLY ACCOUNTABLE TO THE BOARD

- Finance – Pete Robertson & Greg Selker
- Ratner Liaison – Mike Caputo
- Rabbi Liaison – Selma Gwatkin & Barry Epstein
- Strategic Planning – Greg Selker
- Nominating – Sue Pelleg

AUGUST NEWSLETTER DEADLINE: TUESDAY, JULY 15

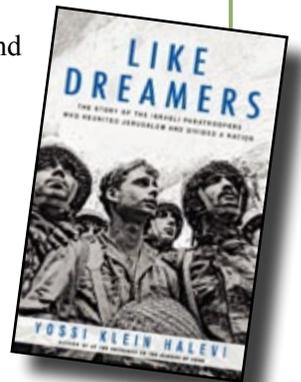
SUMMER READING

As has been my practice for a number of summers, I have gathered together a list of recently published books on themes related to Jews and Judaism. All of the books below have received very positive reviews and most of them were either finalists or winners in this year's National Jewish Book Award competition across a range of categories. As many of us search for titles to put on our summer reading lists, I submit the following selections as options to which we might give serious consideration.

Like Dreamers: The Story of the Israeli Paratroopers Who Reunited Jerusalem and Divided a Nation by **Yossi Klein Halevi**

For years, Yossi Klein Halevi has distinguished himself as one of the most eloquent and insightful journalists writing from Israel; his new book, *Like Dreamers*, is, in many respects, the brilliant culmination of his life's work thus far.

On the surface, *Like Dreamers* tells the story of seven paratroopers who fought for the liberation of Jerusalem in 1967, but who then took opposing paths, some of them becoming leaders of the peace camp arguing for returning the lands captured in the Six Day War, while others assumed leadership roles in Israel's then nascent settler movement that advocated keeping the territory forever. But with artistic subtlety, *Like Dreamers* moves through an account of those seven lives to an account of the life of Israel—its dreams and disappointments, its accomplishment and failures, and of the painful and dramatic choices it still must make.



Like Dreamers charts the origins, successes, and missteps of both the settlers and their nemeses in the peace camp. But the real hallmark of Klein Halevi's portrait is its ability to illustrate the deeply Jewish and Zionist aspirations of both. He loves and admires both, and gets us, his readers, to do the same.

Theatrical Liberalism: Jews and Popular Entertainment in America by **Andrea Most**



Theatrical liberalism, as Andrea Most defines it, is “a revolutionary embrace of theatricality as a viable social mode, the prioritizing of external action over internal intention, the celebration of self-fashioning as a uniquely American form of freedom, and the construction of a theatrical community based on obligation rather than rights.” This constellation of values permeates popular American entertainment, created mostly by Jews, and derives in some measure, she contends, from their religious heritage.

That heritage is the subject of the beginning chapter – exploring the narrative of the Biblical Jacob pretending to be his brother, Esau, in order to gain the blessing and the birthright from his father, Isaac. This paradigm of “theatrical self-making” predominates, Most demonstrates in subsequent chapters, in *The Jazz Singer*, *Show Boat*, *Pal Joey*, *Death of a Salesman*, *A Funny Thing*

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Rabbi Steve is available to meet with Kol HaLev members on a range of issues by appointment on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday mornings. Contact him at 216-320-1498 or at rabbisteve@kolhalev.net to schedule a meeting.

SUSTAINING A CULTURE OF RELATIONSHIPS



When my family and I first began attending services many years ago, one of the first things I noticed about Kol HaLev was the community's tendency to think "outside the box." While Judaism in general, and Reconstructionism in particular, are adept at questioning, it seemed to me that very little was taken for granted at Kol Halev. This community was really good at asking questions at every step to build the whole, with particular regard to honoring the perspectives of the many individuals who came together to breathe this thing to life each day.

Questioning is a deep human need. But the act itself is by nature fraught with doubt. Who are we, as individuals, in the equation? It really does matter that our questions are heard by others in order for us to feel a part of the whole, whether the whole is a group project, a business partnership, a personal relationship, a congregational community, or all of humankind. How do we get our individual needs met and properly fuel the whole at the same time?

A few weeks ago, I attended a business event at which three of Cleveland's top innovators gave the audience a taste of the tools they use to harness the power of collaboration.

They spoke to how collaboration drives innovation, successfully creates opportunity, builds community, and improves lives. They discussed methods of collaboration that keeps groups continuously focused, realistic, aligned, inspired and productive. But the biggest take-away for me was the concrete evidence that "a culture of relationships trumps strategy."

"Nothing moves forward without relationships and trust," offered speaker Peter Benkendorf, a civic activist and marketing strategist with an incredible track record for catalyzing action out of purpose.

To Peter, the idea of "thinking outside the box" is a misnomer. Each of us, by simple virtue of being individuals, are in our own boxes; thinking outside our boxes is literally impossible.

However, we can compare our boxes. When we collaborate, we're not going to some neutral territory. We're going to a place to transcend our own thinking by appreciating what's inside others' boxes. If we can make ours own boxes a bit permeable, we can sometimes create a collective whole that is a tapestry that expands each of us further.

Learning to question in a group with shared principles enables us to do together what we could never do apart. But neither is collaboration possible without constant recognition of the shared principles that connect us.

The culture of trusted relationships, based on those things that matter most to the group, is what enables the birth of a strategy to perpetuate those shared principles.

Even with these mutually-held values, there will be opinions. Ah yes! Our tradition is predicated on

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Yahrzeits

They are now a part of us, as we remember them

Members of Kol HaLev will mark the following yahrzeits during the next month

- Anna Goldhirsh (Hannah)—grandmother of Judi Dash
- Ruth Fink—mother of Judy Harris
- Morton Cohen—father of Margaret Cohen
- Phillip Hack—father of Maureen Hack
- Alan Fallick (Avraham)—father of Bruce Fallick
- Martin Siegel—husband of Renee Siegel
- Julius Hirsh Smilg (Yehudah)—father of Maureen Dinner
- Herbert Rubel—father of Nancy Rubel

Kol HaLev members may include the yahrzeit of family members in *KHL Happenings* by submitting the name of the deceased, the relationship to the member, and the date of death, including the year, in either the secular or Jewish calendar to kelli@kolhalev.net. (Please specify whether you're observing the secular or the Hebrew yahrzeit date. You can find a calendar converter at <http://www.hebcal.com/converter/>).

CONTRIBUTIONS

Kol HaLev gratefully acknowledges contributions from:

- **Abe and Muriel Chasin** in honor and appreciation of the Hesed Committee for the effort and follow up during their recent difficult times
- **Mario and Roberta Tonti** in commemoration of the yahrzeit of Roberta's mother, Charlotte Dangler
- **Ami Kopstein and Glenda Kupersmith** in honor of Selma and Ralph Gwatkin's 60th wedding anniversary
- **Elinor Friedman** in commemoration of the yahrzeit of her husband, Seymour Friedman
- **Renee Siegel** in commemoration of the yahrzeit of her mother, Rose Lasky



Make a donation to Kol HaLev in honor of a simcha, in memory of a loved, or for any reason you'd like by check or online -- whichever is more comfortable and convenient for you! You can also pay for dues, Hagiga tuition, Mishloach Manot and many other things online as well as by check.

♦ **Pay by check.** Just drop a check in the mail to: Kol HaLev | 2245 Warrensville Center Road, Suite 215 | University Heights, OH 44118 You'll receive a confirmation that your payment was received.

OR

♦ **Make an online donation.** You can pay safely and securely by credit card or electronic check at Kol HaLev's PaySimple page at http://kolhalev.net/pay_simple. (Note: Kol HaLev pays a small fee for transactions processed through PaySimple).

FROM OUR PRESIDENT, *continued from page 4*

sharing opinions! How do we bring them all to the table in a way that helps further the shared values?

Collaborating can be tricky. And a little time-consuming. Not knowing the answers is often a place of discomfort. None of us likes to feel stuck. And it's this notion that may make us hold fast to our own individual boxes – something we do know, something over which we do have control. It's not easy to sit with ambiguity, even short term.

Collaboration can shift roles and responsibilities in unexpected ways. Each of us has been in situations where we feel challenged by being asked to reframe the way things get done. If there are questions about “who does what and when,” asking them with the “why” in mind is a useful way of ensuring stuff gets done with the valued purpose at heart, not just “done.”

Collaboration can seem like all talk, no action. Spending enough time in the sometimes-messy “what if” stage and designing solutions that work for the whole empowers subsequent expedient action.

Collaboration might bring tension. What happens if we have conflicting opinions or priorities? Conflict can make us feel uncomfortable. But avoiding conflict for the sake of comfort can limit choices and derail meaningful action. More importantly, “arguing well” can deepen our relationships. Engaging with the friction of ideas is healthy work. Just ask Mordechai Kaplan!

Collaboration might add to the work load. We're all so busy, why would we want to add demands? Group work helps all of us be accountable to each other and to the whole. More work in the short term can lead to finding new efficiencies. It also helps us focus on the value of our interconnectedness.

Collaboration might make the product mushy. There's that old saying that a camel is a horse built by a committee. If everyone is heard and everyone's contributions are equally valued, is everyone right? Do we have to employ every opinion to be fair? Does that make for a solution that lacks clarity and utility? And who is to blame? Conversely, if the solution is a solid one, who gets credit, and appreciation? Does collaboration diminish appreciation for individuals' contributions?

But collaboration does not preclude leadership. Providing direction and facilitation in an environment in which the exchange of ideas across areas of interest, demand, or value is essential to successful execution of tasks that help meet larger objectives.

Kol HaLev was wrought by bringing our permeable boxes together. An organizational structure designed for perpetuation of this delicious opportunity for personal and communal growth, our values-based governance is part of an evolving strategy that guides our priorities and focuses our intentions. Our collective spirit of co-creativity has the power to effect responsible action. It's no coincidence that working together thoughtfully also imbues a strong sense of belonging. Our interdependency is a path to meeting each other's important human needs.

The High Holy Days are fast approaching. Arguably the quintessential Kol HaLev experience, the High *continued on page 7*

High Holy Days provide a huge opportunity to build community and demonstrate our shared values in action.

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

HIGH HOLY DAYS MAHZORIM / PRAYER BOOKS NOW 40% OFF!

The High Holy Days are only a season away, and right now *Mahzor Leyamim Nora'im*, the Reconstructionist High Holy Days *siddur* (prayer book), is on sale for Kol HaLev members **at 40% off!** We own a limited number of High Holy Days prayer books which we like to reserve for use by guests attending Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur services. You can support this welcoming *minhag* (custom) by purchasing your own copies at a great price! [Order from our website](#) or follow the directions here. There are three ways to order:



1. **Mail:** [Download the order form](#) and mail it in
2. **Phone:** Order by phone by calling the Reconstructionist Press at 215.576.0800. Tell them you are a member of Kol HaLev and ask for the 40% off discount.
3. **Online:** [Click here to go to the Reconstructionist Press website](#). Place the book(s) in your cart. When you review your cart before checkout, there is a box to the right. Enter the code **investm40**. That code will apply the 40% off of the retail price no matter how many copies you order.

TISHA B'AV SERVICE IN AUGUST

At the outset of next month (Monday evening August 4 and the day of August 5), is Tisha B'Av, that challenging day in our traditional calendar which emphasizes the painful and horrific moments in our collective history. This year, we will be holding our regular evening service from 8:00 to 10:00 p.m. at the Ratner School, during which we study together a text that speaks to these themes, we hold a somber evening service and we chant from the book of Lamentations with contemporary relevant world events distributed throughout the traditional chanting. In addition to this, however, we will also be holding a gathering on Tisha B'Av afternoon at which we'll continue to study together and experience the shift from despair to cautious hope as the day comes to a close. Please watch the weekly update for logistical details related to this second event.

WOMEN'S BI-MONTHLY SHABBAT DINNER, JULY 18

All women of Kol HaLev are cordially invited to our Kabbalat Shabbat Potluck Dinner on Friday, July 18 at 6:30 p.m. at the home of Nancy Frazier. Our shared Shabbat dinners are lovely gatherings of the women of our community--wonderful opportunities to share time in a relaxed environment. Nancy has invited us to enjoy the summer evening on her wonderful outdoor deck.

Food categories are unassigned. However, if you are able, please do let Nancy Frazier know what you will be bringing. This will be helpful if others inquire about what they might bring to "fill in the gaps." Food contributions can be parve or dairy and "allergy aware" (no tree nuts or peanuts). It is most helpful to the hostess when you also bring serving dishes and utensils for your food contributions, and to prepare the items for serving. We would appreciate it if someone can volunteer to bring drinks besides wine, and if someone else could bring two challot.

Please RSVP to Nancy Frazier at art4noah@gmail.com no later than Thursday, July 17. If you need to information by phone, contact Happy Wallach at 216-410-1083.

We hope that you will be able to join us!

BOARD REPORT

The members of the old (2013-2014) and new (2014-2015) boards met June 9 at the home of Greg Selker. Rabbi Steve offered a Bracha, blessing the holy work performed by the Board to benefit our spiritual community. Following the D'var Torah, minutes from the May meeting were approved.

Introductions and Board Responsibilities: Following introductions and an orientation, Halle Barnett launched a discussion on expectations and responsibilities of board members, and Kirby Date facilitated the creation of a list of ground rules for board engagement compiled jointly by the entire group.

Treasurer's Report: Bruce Fallick discussed the deficit FY15 budget that passed at the May board meeting. The finance committee proposal for a 10% increase in membership dues to offset the \$22,790 deficit would be presented at the 6/10 and 6/19 community meetings. Collecting outstanding monies was clarified with ways to improve these procedures and enhance fundraising in the future.

Community Meetings: Halle Barnett acknowledged the varied sensitivities and attitudes concerning money in our diverse community. It was hoped that the community meetings would address the FY 2015 budget and open the channels of communication.

Issues arose in terms of acknowledging donors with a need to clarify past policies and practices. Plans for outreach, education, and discussion pertaining to money and ways members contribute will be developed during the upcoming year.

Insurance Coverage: Halle reported that we are now bound for directors and officers and employment liability coverage. As for our general liability insurance, we are still negotiating coverage at more appropriate levels.

Leadership Task Force: The Leadership Task Force convened to examine our structural issues with the goal of making strategic recommendations to the Board with regard to leadership development. The initial meeting, attended by a diverse group of members, went well; the next meeting will be in mid July.

High Holy Days Update/Torah Siyyum: (Halle reported for Bill Marcus) In anticipation of the High Holy Days, values team leaders (VTLs) are making plans for the High Holy Days, with input from various committees. They're also collaborating on the preparation of mailing and other written material. Plans for the Torah Siyyum (the culmination of our Year of the Torah) are also underway. There's renewed energy among VTLs for ensuring that plans involve as many of our values areas as possible.

Announcements: Rabbi Steve shared the idea of the Board looking at traditional texts geared towards enhancing communication skills. He will bring the material and it will be presented every other month in place of the D'var Torah. This will begin at the August meeting. Also, the Board will be holding two all-day Board Retreats later in the year. In addition, committee chairs not on the Board will be invited to participate. A major activity will be revising the strategic plan and similar material. Dates to be announced.

The next board meeting is Mon., July 14 at 7:30 p.m. at the home of Glenda Kupersmith. All Kol HaLev members are welcomed to attend.

Respectfully submitted,
Karal Stern, Secretary

[ANNUAL MEETING, *continued from page 1*](#)

Scher-Marcus, Sue Kisch, and Karly Whitaker, and new president Halle Barnett.

In the annual treasurer's report, Pete reported improved record-keeping with the recent hiring of a part-time bookkeeper. He encouraged all Kol HaLev members to be attentive to financial health of the community, and to attend community meetings scheduled to provide members with a better understanding of fiscal issues and the reasons for the proposed dues increase.

Spiritual Values Team Leader Bill Scher-Marcus reviewed highlights of the year and changes in leadership for the coming year. A major initiative will be the training of lay leaders for the second Shabbat service of each month. Bill also identified two areas in which volunteers are needed: first, the Holiday committee, chaired by Amy Hogg, needs members to help plan our intergenerational holiday celebrations and second, the Music Committee needs new leaders because of the recent relocation of Hannah and Daniel Baxter.

Values Team Leader Karly Whitaker reported on the various ways the Involved Team facilitates Kol HaLev's tikkun olam activities. Of special note was the role of Kol HaLev members helping Greater Cleveland Congregations (GCC) reach goals in the areas of health care, criminal justice and education.

Barry Epstein and Margaret Cohen reported for the Democratic and Fiscally Responsible Values Team on the importance of fundraising to keep the community viable and healthy. They thanked the Kol Halev community for supporting the Year of the Torah/Campaign for Kemach (Sustenance), but noted that while we'd anticipated 100% participation in the campaign, only 51% of the congregation participated; there was a brief discussion about why that may have been so. Pointing out that Kol HaLev is in a deficit position for the year, Barry encouraged any individuals who have not yet sent in a contribution or made a commitment to the fundraising campaign to please do so now.

Values team leader Leah Kamionkowski reported on the activities of the Partipatory values team, noting high attendance at the Women's Groups events, and an increase in outreach activities for new and prospective members, including a brunch; Shabbat Welcome Challah and Wine Gift after joining; telephone contact for Tishrei members; and continual outreach after services. Disseminating information to facilitate transitions for new and prospective members was a major undertaking this past year. Jean Miller worked on developing a High Holiday Information packet and additional materials to enable a stronger sense of community. Finally, Leah reported that there is interest in a creating a group comprised of Kol Halev members and their families who are Jews By Choice or are interfaith.

Reporting for values team leader Jean Miller, who was absent, Halle Barnett outlined some of the Welcoming values teams' activities for the past year which focused on streamlining communications, being mindful and supportive of the needs of all Kol HaLev members, and finding the most effective ways to communicate news and issues. In addition, the Hesed committee continues to play an extremely active role fostering loving-kindness and support in the community.

After these reports, Steven Kanner moved to accept the slate of nominations for the 2013/14 Board and Benjamin Barnett seconded the motion. The motion carried by acclamation. The new board of trustees was installed with the board's reading of the congregational ketubah, the congregation's blessing of the new board, and the joint recitation of the Shehecheyanu.

In an acknowledgement of outgoing board members, outgoing president Barbara Truitt expressed gratitude

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COMMUNITY MEETINGS, *continued from page 1*

making our sacred community work. We value everyone's contributions no matter how large or small, monetary or non-monetary. Our situation is not unusual for an organization of our age: it is good that we are talking about it openly now.

We currently have a dues structure with specific suggested amounts payable for adults, families, and single parent families, with the option for any member to "self-adjust" on an honor system. This means people can choose how much they can afford to pay. Dues account for \$3 out of every \$5 in our budget, which Pete explained is a lower percentage than we want, but not atypical of congregations; we and most congregations raise the balance of operating funds from fundraising efforts (and in our case, some grants for educational programming thanks to Robyn Novick's efforts.). Our expenses, on the other hand, are basic and fixed: rabbi, rent, and the education program. So, we depend on fundraising to provide 25% of our budget.

This past year was the Year of Torah and included the fundraising Campaign for *Kemach* (sustenance). The initiative pursued three concurrent goals: to repair our current Torah, to purchase a new scroll, and to improve our community's financial sustainability. We had hoped the prospect of purchasing a new Torah would generate excitement and encourage donations totaling \$160,000 over three years, which represents \$55,000 over and above the amount we typically raise from our annual campaigns over a three-year period. The additional \$55,000 would be used for sustaining operations (rent and salaries), not for Torah expenses. While we did raise \$10,000 more in this first year of the Campaign for *Kemach* than we normally do in a typical annual campaign, we did not receive 3-year commitments for the total of \$160,000 we had hoped to raise.

Kol HaLev would have run a deficit for the most recent fiscal year (FY14) and did not only because we spent less than we had intended:

1. We postponed purchasing the new Torah scroll we had budgeted for (and which we will purchase in FY15)
2. We didn't use all of the hours we had budgeted for our office manager
3. Rabbi Steve didn't spend all of his professional development allotment
4. Value Team Leaders spent less than we budgeted for programming.

The proposed budget for this year, FY 15, however, is a deficit budget, meaning that we project that our projected expenses exceed our projected income. Given that our major costs are fixed (rabbi, rent, and the education program) and cannot be reduced, if we don't take action -- by increasing dues and/or finding a longer term solution to address inflation -- we are set on a trajectory of deficit budgets that will require us to dip into and eventually deplete our reserves (which are currently approximately \$150,000).

The Finance Committee proposal includes three recommendations to reverse this trajectory:

1. **Increase dues by 10%**
2. **Create a matching grant fund for self-adjust members to encourage them to raise their dues commitment**
3. **Create a new dues category for young adults under 25 to help get them in a habit of giving a minimal amount (\$18)**

Here are some of the questions, feedback and suggestions that emerged from the community meetings:

Improve administration and follow-through on dues and fundraising commitments: It was

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COMMUNITY MEETINGS, *continued from page 11*

suggested that we don't do enough follow-up on commitments from our congregants, both in terms of submitting invoices and sending thank you/acknowledgements. We have a new bookkeeper and very competent office manager, and roles and responsibilities are becoming better delineated. The invoicing and the statements should be more efficient going forward.

Expand the matching grant to apply to any increase in dues for next year: It was suggested that the matching grant may be too targeted at self-adjust members. It should apply to anyone who raises their dues commitment for next year.

Will raising dues affect contributions/fundraising? It was suggested that raising dues would have a negative impact on fundraising. The Finance Committee believes those paying full dues now will be able to afford the 10% increase, and have modified the fundraising goals for the Campaign for Kemach for the next two years.

Should we be more proactive in trying to increase member households? A few people suggested taking deliberate steps to try to recruit new members. An earlier Kol HaLev committee, however, concluded that increased membership creates more service needs and requires additional staffing, a conclusion in keeping with the research for non-profits which indicated that increasing membership does not necessarily increase solvency. This research was also referenced in our 2010 brand study.

Concerns about dues structure itself: Single adults pay 80% of what families pay, which may be lopsided, especially for those going through divorce. There was a proposal to create another category for senior couples (empty nesters) who may make less use of facilities and possibly subsidize dues for families with kids. It was noted that families have additional fees – Hagiga, b'nai mitzvah, Hebrew lessons for children, and in any case, the self-adjust option is always there.

Finding a long-term solution: Several people noted that they support the current proposal for a dues increase but prefer creating a sustainable model that takes into account the almost inevitable increase in expenses. Inflation is a societal phenomenon, and perhaps we should be raising dues incrementally every year or setting a baseline dues structure at 2% of income. It was suggested that we add a corollary to the Finance Committee proposal to the Board: to come up with system to address this gap in a sustainable way.



Both meetings concluded with an informal straw poll to gauge support for the current proposals that are on the table. The results indicate that there is majority support for the proposed 10% dues increase. However, there are still questions about the way the other two recommendations would be implemented and what inadvertent impact they might have, so it seems that further discussion is warranted.

The community meetings were followed up a week later by an email from Rabbi Steve, inviting those who couldn't attend one of the two community meetings to email Kelli Birch by Monday June 30 to set up an in-person discussion (the board will move as quickly as possible to coordinate a third meeting [continued on page 13](#))

HESED

We send wishes for a *refuah shleimah*, a complete and speedy healing, to **Muriel Chasin, Jayne Jones, and Jean Miller**.

Todah rabah, thank you, to **Anna Kelman** who was the Monthly Coordinator in June.

We are currently signing up people to be Monthly Coordinators for the coming year. This role is at the heart of what we do as a committee, serving as the primary contact between members who need support and our committee or volunteers. Robin and Martha are always available to advise and support the Monthly Coordinators, and with the Lotsa Helping Hands website, things really work smoothly and easily. We encourage you to think about taking on this role. We are available for private training sessions to anyone who is interested in exploring the opportunity to become more involved. If you are interested, please be in touch with Martha Schubert or Robin Holzman.

If you know of anyone who may need the support of our committee, please contact Rabbi Steve or Robin Holzman (robinholzman@gmail.com) and Martha Schubert (marthaschubert@mac.com), Hesed Co-chairs.

ANNUAL MEETING, *continued from page 10*

for the many contributions made by the outgoing board. Gifts were handed out to members who will be rotating off the Board: Elise Hagesfeld, Sue Kisch, Lynn Liebling, Jean Miller, Julio Pelsmajer, Pete Robertson and Greg Selker. Rabbi Steve paid special tribute to Barbara Truitt for her dedication, knowledge, and hard work throughout her term as Kol Halev President.

Newly installed president Halle Barnett closed the meeting by sharing her hopes for going forward as a community. She offered a reflection on recent remarks by Rabbi Deborah Waxman, the President of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College who maintained that fostering a sense of belonging and interconnectedness was key to Jewish identity and participation. Halle invited members to become more engaged and connected to one another and to our work as a community. She stressed the importance of acknowledging our history yet seeing the possibilities of moving forward together to create new structures..

COMMUNITY MEETINGS, *continued from page 12*

date if there is enough interest, or, alternatively, arrange one-on-one conversations). Rabbi Steve's email also encouraged members who hadn't seen it yet to download the presentation material from the Kol HaLev website (<http://kolhalev.net/content/2014-2015-finances>).

The next step: All comments and concerns arising from community meetings and subsequent conversations will be fully explored and considered as the board deliberates passage of the proposed recommendations. That discussion will continue at the July board meeting (Mon., July 14 at 7:30 p.m. at the home of Glenda Kupersmith). All Kol HaLev members are welcomed to attend.

Note: Written by Karly Whitaker with contributions from Bill Scher-Marcus, Halle Barnett and Lila Hanft.

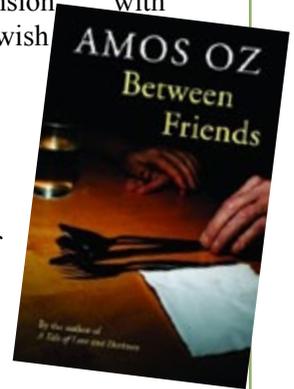
[RABBINIC CORNER, continued from page 3](#)

Happened on the Way to the Forum, My Fair Lady, West Side Story, Funny Girl, Fiddler on the Roof, Hair, Young Frankenstein, Zelig, Armies of the Night, The Counterlife, and Angels in America.

Theatrical realism manifests itself in this work, Most exemplifies, by embodying “Judaic values about freedom, performance, action, and communal obligation in productive tension with Protestant liberal ideals. . . .while effectively distancing itself from the specifically Jewish rituals and practices that would impede acculturation.”

Between Friends by **Amos Oz**; **Sondra Silverston**, trans.

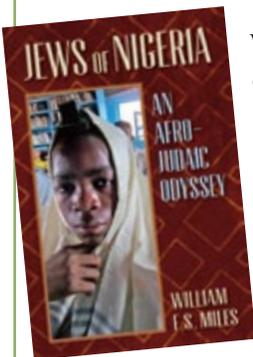
Amos Oz returns to his roots: the kibbutz of Israel’s second decade. It was a time when Israel struggled to build a state and to merge socialist ideals with the realities of daily living with real people; the Jewish nature of the Jewish state and the challenges of borders and populations lie decades in the future. Oz presents us with eight short stories—one of which could stand alone—which are intricately interconnected.



Oz introduces us to Yoav Carni, who had been the kibbutz’s first baby and grew up to become the first secretary of the kibbutz to have been born there. Like every member of the community, he takes a turn serving guard duty at night. Oz describes how he enjoys the peacefulness of that role in contrast with the politics of his day job. He encounters a woman who is leaving her husband in the middle of the night, and their interaction goes beyond the simple solving of a family problem, painting broad-stroke images of the life of the community and its struggles through the lens of two people.

We see the life of individual kibbutznikim, their joys and sorrows, their triumphs and failures. We feel the pain of a father who leaves things unsaid and the frustration of a utopian idealist who wants to teach everyone to speak Esperanto. Together they become interwoven strands of a tapestry that beautifully portrays a snapshot of a fascinating period in our people’s history. This may not be the most important book Amos Oz has written, but it is among the richest in terms of character and imagery, and one of the most enjoyable.

Jews of Nigeria: An Afro-Judaic Odyssey by **William F.S. Miles**



William F.S. Miles presents a thought-provoking story of religious discovery in Jews of Nigeria: An Afro-Judaic Odyssey. Miles sheds light on a small group of Nigerians from the Igbo tribe who have recently come to adopt rabbinic Judaism, a people he refers to as “Jubos.” Miles provides a fascinating look into the Jubos’ spiritual and religious journey finding Judaism within predominantly Muslim and Christian surroundings. This quest is rooted in their desire to answer the age-old question of how to determine their true religious and ancestral identity. This path includes a history of Christian practice, a turn towards messianic Judaism, and finally the enthusiastic embrace of rabbinic or “normative” Judaism. The Jubos’ enthusiasm in observing Rabbinic Judaism stems from their belief that God has chosen and guided

them on this path. Throughout their discovery of Judaism, the Jubos compare their Igbo customs with Hebrew ones, finding many commonalities, reflecting an ancient Israelite ancestry. Not being universally accepted by the larger international Jewish community, the Jubos turn to the internet for

[continued on page 15](#)

HUG HASEFER: BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

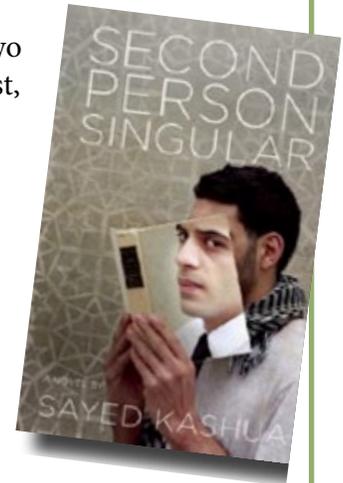
The July book group meeting will be Thursday, June 24, at the home of Deena and Dick Epstein. We will discuss *Second Person Singular* by Sayed Kashua. (352 pages, a Kindle version exists)

A brief book description from Amazon: *Second Person Singular* follows two men, a successful Arab criminal attorney and a social worker-turned-artist, whose lives intersect under the most curious of circumstances. The lawyer has a thriving practice in the Jewish part of Jerusalem, a large house, a Mercedes, speaks both Arabic and Hebrew, and is in love with his wife and two young children. In an effort to uphold his image as a sophisticated Israeli Arab, he often makes weekly visits to a local bookstore to pick up popular novels. On one fateful evening, he decides to buy a used copy of Tolstoy's *The Kreutzer Sonata*, a book his wife once recommended. To his surprise, inside he finds a small white note, a love letter, in Arabic, in her handwriting. *I waited for you, but you didn't come. I hope everything's all right. I wanted to thank you for last night.*

It was wonderful. Call me tomorrow? Consumed with suspicion and jealousy, the lawyer slips into a blind rage over the presumed betrayal. He first considers murder, revenge, then divorce, but when the initial sting of humiliation and hurt dissipates, he decides to hunt for the book's previous owner—a man named Yonatan, a man who is not easy to track down, whose identity is more complex than imagined, and whose life is more closely aligned with his own than expected. In the process of dredging up old ghosts and secrets, the lawyer tears the string that holds all of their lives together.

The book for August will be *The Last Jews of Karala: The Two Thousand Year History of India's Forgotten Jewish Community* by Edna Fernandes.

All KHL members are welcome to attend. For more information about the group, look at our web page (http://www.kolhalev.net/book_group) and contact Kevin Weidenbaum (KJW@oberlin.net) to be added to the group's email list.



RABBINIC CORNER, [continued from page 14](#)

education on how to practice their faith.

The story of the Jubos is certainly one worth telling and Miles does an excellent job of keeping the reader engaged. Miles includes not only his own reflections on his Judaism and identity, but also personal anecdotes from various Jubos as they describe their spiritual journey and passionate commitment to Judaism. Miles provides the reader with first-hand accounts of the Jubos in their homes and synagogues, reading Torah, celebrating bar mitzvahs, and negotiating their path through the strict observance of Jewish Law. Miles challenges the reader to think about the issues surrounding the intersection of ethnicity, religion, spirituality, sense of belonging, and acceptance by others, and provides an opportunity for the contemplation of what determines religious identity.



Three years ago, on June 6, Greater Cleveland Congregations (GCC) had its founding assembly with 2000 people in attendance at the Masonic Auditorium. This year, on May 29, GCC – now the largest inter-faith, multi-racial organization in Greater Cleveland – mobilized 971 people from 40 congregations, schools and associations in a meeting at Olivet Institutional Baptist Church to confront two major problems in the criminal justice: drug abuse criminalization and gun violence.



With more than 30 Kol HaLev members in attendance, the GCC issued a call to shut down the "felon factory" in Cuyahoga County and stop the flow of illegal guns into our communities. "Until now we have given our silent consent for a culture that sends our youths, our families, our neighbors to prison for non-violent, low-level drug abuse – and they are labeled as felons on their life resume" said Rabbi Josh Caruso, GCC Co-Chair. "Until now we have given silent consent to the proliferation of guns in our society. Until now we have given silent consent as guns are illegally trafficked from the suburbs to the city – and back again."

As a result of GCC's action, federal, county and local law enforcement leaders have agreed to meet no later than June 30th. **At that meeting, GCC will press these leaders to devise and execute an action plan to attack the flow of illegal guns into our communities.** As Pastor Richard Gibson from Elizabeth Baptist Church said, "It is not enough to seize guns at the crime scene- halt the flow." He compared the gun crisis to a burst in a pipe, saying that it is "not enough to clean up the spill. Fix the leak."

At the May 29 action, County Prosecutor Timothy McGinty agreed to meet with GCC within 45 days. **GCC will press Prosecutor McGinty to report specifically what he will do to end the practice of pursuing felony charges for persons arrested for low-level, non-violent drug abuse by sending these cases back to the appropriate city prosecutors, who can charge these offenses as misdemeanors.** We also will insist on Prosecutor McGinty's specific plans for dismissing all charges upon successful completion of diversion, probation or a stay at a community-based correctional facility in the extraordinary instance where low-level, non-violent drug offenses are charged as felonies.



Bishop Douglas Miles of the Industrial Areas Foundation Board of Directors, who traveled from Baltimore for the Action, called on GCC "to continue to move away from the shore and into deep waters" where there is more risk but even greater reward.

To unite our power to build a greater Cleveland, GCC took the following next steps:

[*continued on page 17*](#)

[GCC REPORT, continued from page 16](#)

- Sent a letter to public and law enforcement officials to share the expectations of our specific requests.
- The Gun Violence Team met on June 17 to prepare for our meeting with law enforcement officials and plan specific next steps.
- The Criminal Justice Team met on June 26 at Olivet to plan our meeting with County Prosecutor McGinty and specific next steps.

The May 29 action received a lot of attention from the press, including a story WKYC (<http://www.wkyc.com/story/news/crime/2014/05/30/greater-cleveland-congregations-fights-gun-supply/9751131/>) and one on cleveland.com (http://www.cleveland.com/opinion/index.ssf/2014/06/the_smoking_gun_cuyahoga_count.htm).

Kol HaLev member Donna Weinberger was interviewed about gun violence reduction on WCPN's "The Sound of Ideas," (<http://www.ohiochannel.org/MediaLibrary/Media.aspx?fileId=143865>). Congratulations to GCC leaders and speakers for an outstanding event and to our Issue Action Teams for all their work.



Upcoming GCC Team meetings:

Mental Health Research: will meet Tuesday, July 1 at 7 p.m. at Trinity Cathedral, 2230 Euclid Ave. We will be continuing to explore how mental health connects with GCC's current issue areas of Education and Criminal Justice/Gun Violence. If you have questions or would like to be more involved in this research, please contact **Sue Pelleg** on the Mental Health leadership team at suelisw@aol.com or (216) 531-6355.

Education: We had some major victories at our Action on May 15 with Cleveland Schools CEO Eric Gordon. We had almost 250 people in attendance, and collected more data to contribute to our Listening Campaign. Present were GCC Partner Schools Anton Grdina, Artemus Ward, Campus International, Case, Marion-Sterling, Miles Park and RG Jones. Guest schools Iowa-Maple, Mound, Riverside, Tremont Montessori and Willow, as well as many GCC members from our 40 congregations, also attended. In our group break-out session, each group came up with one actionable priority or dream for their school.

As we continue to develop teams of united teachers, parents, administrators, and community members, we can begin to organize around the specific issues in schools. Our next Education Meeting will be held on July 15 at 6 p.m. (location TBD).

GRADUATIONS | ANNIVERSARIES | BIRTHDAYS | NEW GRANDKIDS | AWARDS . . .
Send email & photos to newsletter@kolhalev.net
Share the news! **Kvell!** Spread the joy!

SIGN UP TO SPONSOR A KIDDUSH AND BE A GREETER

At least once in the course of a fiscal year, all Kol HaLev members/member families volunteer to 1) sponsor a Kiddush (a small meal which takes place directly after Kol HaLev Shabbat and holiday services) and 2) serve as a Greeter (a member who stays at the door to welcome and give directions to other members and guests).

Both services embody Kol HaLev's commitment to being a participatory and democratic community. Both provide a great opportunity to meet and mingle with members and to demonstrate the warm, welcoming and inclusive nature of our congregation.

Sign-up instructions: Click on the link to go to an online sign-up sheet. There you'll find more detailed descriptions of the roles of both Kiddush Sponsor and Greeter, and you can sign up for a date to volunteer from among those dates available. *Keep in mind as you're choosing your dates that if for some reason you are unable to serve as a Kiddush Sponsor or Greeter on the date you selected, you are responsible for finding a substitute.*

- To sign up for date [to be a Kiddush Sponsor, click here.](#)
- To sign up for a date [to be a Greeter, click here.](#)

Please contact Kelli with any questions at (216) 320-1498 or kelli@kolhalev.net.

Save the date!

Saturday, November 15, 2014

THE PEOPLE

vs.

JOSEPH'S BROTHERS

With an exciting new format and players!
Stay tuned for details!

Sponsorship Opportunities Available:

Call Halle Barnett or Greg Selker for more info

Tickets on sale early September

CALENDAR

Tue., July 1	7:00-8:30 p.m.	GCC Mental Health Research Team at Trinity Cathedral, 2230 Euclid Ave. We will be continuing to explore how Mental Health connects with GCC's current issue areas of Education and Criminal Justice/Gun Violence. If you have questions or for more information, please contact Sue Pelleg
Sat., July 5	10:30-12:30 p.m.	Shabbat Service, in the Ratner Chapel. Parsha: <i>Balak</i> ; Service and discussion leader: Beth Friedman-Romell. Kiddush sponsor: Robin Holzman Please note: Due to the holiday weekend this service will not be our usual format for the 1st Shabbat of the month
Mon., July 7	7:30 p.m.	Executive Committee Meeting.
Tues., July 8	7:30 p.m.	Membership Committee Meeting , location TBA. We will be beginning to plan High Holy Days. (Already! I know!) All Kol HaLev members welcome. Contact Peggy Kittila for more information
Wed., July 9	7:30-9:00 p.m.	Value Team Leader (VTL) Meeting , at the home of Bill Scher-Marcus. This meeting is open to all Kol HaLev members
Sat., July 12	10:30-12:30 p.m.	Member-led Shabbat Service, in the Ratner Chapel. Parsha: <i>Pinchas</i> ; Service and discussion leader: Larry Solomon; Kiddush sponsor needed. Sign up at http://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0e4bada828a1f85-kolhalev1
	3:30-5:00 p.m.	Torah Study at the home of Selma and Ralph Gwatkin. Discussion lead by Leah Kamionkowski will look at Chapter 2 of Pirke Avot, which deals with "What is the Proper Path"
Mon., July 14	7:30-9:30 p.m.	Board Meeting at the home of Glenda Kupersmith. Check the weekly update for the agenda. All Kol HaLev members welcome
Tues., July 15	Deadline for the June issue of Kol HaLev Happenings	
	6:00-8:00 p.m.	GCC Team Meeting: Listen. Act. Win. Education Follow-Up , at Trinity Cathedral, 2230 Euclid Ave.
Wed., July 16	7:30-9:00 p.m.	GCC Core Team Meeting. Contact Allen Binstock for more information.
Fri., July 18	6:30 p.m.	Women's Shabbat Dinner , at the home of Nancy Frazier. Enjoy the summer evening on her wonderful outdoor deck! Food categories are unassigned, but please let Nancy Frazier know what you will be bringing. Food contributions can be parve or dairy and "allergy aware" (no nuts). Please also bring serving dishes and utensils and prepare the items for serving. Please RSVP to Nancy Frazier no later than Thursday, July 17
Sat., July 19	10:30-12:30 p.m.	Shabbat Service, in the Ratner Chapel , preceded by Torah discussion at 9:30 a.m. in the Ratner Library; Parsha: <i>Matot</i> ; Discussion and service Leader: Rabbi Steve. Kiddush sponsor needed
Mon., July 21	7:30-9:00 p.m.	Leadership Development Task Force meeting. Location TBA

CALENDAR

Wed., July 23	7:00-8:30 p.m.	Mindful Jewish Practice , at the office of Nancy Rubel. We will begin with a 10 minute sit, then a member of the group will offer a brief Kavannah (intention) before a longer 30-40 minute sit. Those who wish may then remain for an optional check-in and schmooze until 8:30 p.m. Those who prefer not to are welcome to leave at 8 p.m. Please RSVP to Karly Whitaker
Thurs., July 24	7:30-9:00 p.m.	Book Club Meeting , at the home of Dick and Deena Epstein. We will discuss <i>Second Person Singular</i> by Sayed Kashua. For more info see page 15 or go to http://www.kolhalev.net/book_group
Fri., July 25	6:00-8:30 p.m.	Kabbalat Shabbat and Potluck at Ratner. The dishes should be vegetarian/dairy or parve and SHOULD NOT CONTAIN NUTS . Please bring enough for 8 - 10. In keeping with our goal of becoming a more sustainable community, we encourage members to bring their own reusable plates, cups, utensiles, and napkins to our potluck. Kiddush sponsors: Arthur Lieberman A-H - Main Dish; I-P - Appetizer or Salad; Q-Z - Dessert or Drink
Sat., July 26	10:30-12:30 a.m.	Musical Shabbat at Ratner . Parsha: <i>Massei</i> ; Service leader: Rabbi Steve; Kiddush sponsor needed. Sign up at http://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0e4bada828a1f85-kolhalev1

For members' addresses or contact info, [log into the website](#) or check the Weekly Update.

The newsletter calendar is accurate to the best of our knowledge at the time of publication. For the most current information, check Kol HaLev's [website calendar](#) and the Thursday Weekly Update email.

ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

Kol HaLev Happenings is the newsletter of Kol HaLev, Cleveland's Reconstructionist Jewish Community. This digital newsletter can be read onscreen in Adobe Reader or printed out on paper. Please email newsletter@kolhalev.net with comments, complaints, corrections, suggestions, or notices for upcoming issues. [Back issues of Kol HaLev Happenings](#) can be downloaded from the [Kol HaLev website](#).

Kol HaLev Happenings

The Newsletter of Cleveland's Reconstructionist Jewish Community

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