

Kol HaLev Happenings

Newsletter of Cleveland's Reconstructionist Community

November 2010

From Our President – Greg Selker

Every year at the end of the High Holy Days, I look back at my personal experience of davening within the Kol HaLev community and say, “This is the most meaningful High Holy Days I’ve ever experienced!” Each year that I have been a member of Kol HaLev, the High Holy Days seem to me to be richer and more meaningful than the year before, and this year was no exception! Of course, we are only able to offer this high quality experience because of the incredible amount of work, preparation, and participation in our High Holy Days that involves so many people in our community, from our wonderful rabbi, educational director, and lay service leaders, to every Kol HaLev member who participated in the myriad ways we are called upon to contribute.

In particular, for the past two years Nancy Hecht and Claudia Weissman have given of themselves, their time, good humor, and wisdom in acting as co-chairs of the High Holy Days, creating a process that has become much more manageable. This year, just before Rosh Hashanah, Nancy had a family situation to deal with which required all of her attention; and Marcia Goldberg graciously stepped forward to take her place in helping to coordinate activities. In spite of this shift mid-stream, things went smoothly.

(continued on page 2)

Women’s Shabbat Dinner

All Kol HaLev women are invited to a potluck dinner Friday, November 5, at 7 p.m. to welcome Shabbat. Come share an evening of casual conversation and camaraderie at the home of Irene Immerman, 33475 Pinetree Road in Pepper Pike (between South Woodland and SOM on the north side of the street). **RSVP** to Irene at 216-403-1891 or via e-mail at irene_immerman@keybank.com.

Bar Mitzvah

Please join us as our son
Benjamin Robertson
is called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah
Saturday, November 20, 2010

The whole Kol HaLev community
is invited to join us for
a festive Kiddush following the service,
and dancing to the music of Yiddishe Cup
Klezmer Band

RSVP is essential for catering purposes.
Please respond to Heidi at vitzrob@gmail.com
if you are able to join us!

Peter Robertson and Heidi Gorovitz Robertson

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Deadline for the December newsletter is Monday, November 15, 2010		

From Our President – Greg Selker

(continued from page 1)

This is a testament to Nancy, Claudia, Marcia and all of the other individuals who stepped forward to ensure that our High Holy Days would be the best ever, and they were! It is also a clear reminder that Kol HaLev is a community that steps forward when needed to offer assistance to each other and to the community by contributing our creativity, individualism and hard work. When this happens, something extraordinary occurs: we create a meaningful and heartfelt experience of what it means to be a Jew for ourselves and for each other. This is what occurred during this past High Holy Days season. So to the entire community, *yasher koach* and thank you for being who you are and bringing to life the magic that is Kol HaLev!

(continued on page 3)

Rabbinic Corner – Rabbi Steve Segar

Having just spent our High Holy Days focusing on spiritual renewal and communal reconnection, it has been shocking and upsetting to learn of the recent wave of suicides by teenagers who have endured long-term bullying and harassment related to their perceived or actual sexual orientation. As much as it seems that our society has taken great strides in recent years regarding its recognition and acceptance of sexual orientation as one more aspect of human diversity, these recent tragedies serve to remind us that we must not take such progress for granted. They confront us with the fact that we still need to work for the creation of safe social environments for members of the GLBT community, especially for those in their late adolescence. Many institutions and individuals within the Jewish community across the country, led by Keshet, a Jewish GLBT advocacy organization, have joined together to express outrage at what has happened. Further, they have made a commitment to ensure dignity and respect for all people within the Jewish community. Among the first organizations to sign on to this statement were the three national arms of the Reconstructionist movement.

I think we can be proud that at Kol HaLev we have taken a number of steps in recent years to ensure that our particular corner of the Jewish community is both a welcoming and safe environment for all of our members, free from discrimination and bigotry. Some of our teens have attended and spoken at the annual Pride celebration; we have sponsored the showing of the film *Hineni*, which explores the challenge of being a gay high school student in a Jewish day school; and we have adopted an official policy of welcome and inclusion for members of Kol HaLev regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. But even as we recognize our communal successes in this area, we are called, in light of these recent events, to redouble our efforts to work at building a culture of inclusivity that values each person as a unique treasure created in the divine image. That is the most powerful way we can pay tribute to the legacy and memory of these lives cut short too soon. Any Kol HaLev member who is interested in signing the Jewish community pledge can find it online at <http://jewishcommunitypledge.org>.

Rabbi Steve

From Our President – Greg Selker

(continued from page 2)

As many of you know, we began our annual fundraising drive early this year and, in fact, timed it with the High Holy Day season. An initial letter was sent out, and the Board committed to contacting every member household to encourage 100% participation. These calls are just beginning to occur, and we have two member households that recently committed a challenge grant of \$10,000 through the end of this calendar year to move along our fundraising efforts. The hard facts are that approximately 35% of our budget each year needs to come through fundraising, which amounts this year to \$44,000. The challenge grant, combined with what we have already raised, would take us about 40% of the way there.

This month, as our Board of Trustees reaches out to you either to thank you for the contribution you have already made or to see what you may be able to donate, I encourage you to look within your heart as well as your checkbook. Please make a meaningful donation that will enable us continue to deliver the quality experience that defines our Kol HaLev community. Thank you.

Greg

Board Report

At their September 20 meeting, Board members shared the feedback they were getting when they made Tishri check-in calls to the membership. Updating the format of the Weekly Update with hyperlinks to important information on the website was one of the suggestions they heard. One Board member got the sense that people are not going to the website, so a discussion followed about the website and its usefulness and accessibility. Other concerns gathered from the phone calls were confusion about the role of the Value Team Leaders and members' inability to be as involved as they would like to be due to many other obligations.

The meeting also included a report of the initial Congregation Based Community Organizing (CBCO) meeting that was held at Fairmount Temple on September 14, which was attended by six KHL members. The 350 attendees from 40 congregations broke into 30 smaller groups to discuss the CBCO goal of empowering the community to enact social change in the Cleveland area. The two predominant ideas proposed for action were education (broadly construed) and economic disparity. KHL has committed five members to participate in the three October training sessions. Depending on how the process works out, KHL will decide by next summer whether or not to participate.

The Board approved a request from the Youth and Family Education committee for \$1500 to hire babysitters for Shabbat mornings from October through June.

At the October 11 Board meeting, Halle and Benjamin Barnett presented a summary of the marketing report that they prepared for Kol HaLev. They identified four descriptors that represent KHL values and distinguish us from other area congregations: co-creative, mindful, abundant, and spirited. Halle suggested that focusing on retention of current members is a better strategy than working toward numerical growth, since member enthusiasm will attract others.

The other main item of discussion at the October meeting was a proposal to combine the Jewish Reconstructionist Federation (JRF) and the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College (RRC). This will not be a merger, rather the creation of a new organization. Leah Kamionkowski, a member of the JRF Board, noted that this proposal will lead to a stronger organization which will be able to provide better and more services to congregations. The Board voted unanimously to authorize our representatives to vote in favor of the proposal at the upcoming JRF convention.

Creating a Men's Group at Kol HaLev

On Wednesday, November 17, at 8 p.m. there will be a gathering for the men of the Kol HaLev community at the home of Rabbi Shawn Zevit to discuss the possibility of launching an ongoing men's group. No prior experience in men's groups is expected or required. Rabbi Steve and Rabbi Shawn will facilitate an inquiry into the level of interest that exists for this kind of group and the various forms that such a group might take. Please **RSVP to Rabbi Steve** at rabbisteve@kolhalev.net

Rabbi Steve is available to meet with Kol HaLev members on a range of issues by appointment on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday mornings. Please contact him by phone at the office (216-320-1498) or by email (rabbisteve@kolhalev.net) to schedule a meeting time.
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Hagiga Happenings

This educational program will be an informal, intergenerational education model, where there is an inherent learning partnership between the teacher, the learner, and the subject matter. The students will be brought into the learning process as active, valued participants. The subject matter will be linked to the real life situations of the learners. The learning spaces will be flexible and there will be cooperative learning groups engaging in experiential activities which include drama, art, music, dance, games, creative writing, role-playing, and activities outside the walls of the classroom. Learning will involve families and at times other members of the Kol HaLev community. Madrichim shall be volunteers, if possible, trained and supervised by our director of education. Where possible, this program will be coordinated with the educational products/efforts of JRF, Noar Hadash, and Camp JRF. We envision that Kol HaLev will attempt to engage our youth from preschool through the college years. – Hagiga Vision Statement

I always feel inspired every time I read the Hagiga Vision Statement. What an amazing vision! Can you see it? Children living Judaism through activities, relating Judaism to real life situations, being lovingly led by volunteers within our community, and experiencing it in all elements of their lives. The picture that it conjures in my mind is spectacularly beautiful!

Unfortunately, we have not quite achieved this vision yet, but we are working on it. You will notice that there are a few changes this year. As we work on an annual theme, the focus of our curriculum changes each year. This year, in honor of Kol HaLev's eighteenth anniversary, we will be focusing on the gematria equivalent of 18: *Chai*, life and the ways that we choose life. It should indeed be a rich and interesting topic to delve into.

We have several new madrichim (teacher/guides) this year. Other changes include the schedule (we are always looking for what works best) and participating in the conclusion of the service with the community. There will be several conversations about our guiding Shabbat Principles, and we will look to the participants of the educational program to help us interpret what they mean to them and how they wish to implement them. This will be our children engaging in a values-based Reconstructionist process, utilizing information that they are gaining in their individual groups. I look forward to sharing their results.

I feel so honored that families have chosen to partner with Kol HaLev in their children's education. I deeply believe that parents are the primary educator in their children's lives and that we have been blessed to be able to work with the parents in providing a Jewish Reconstructionist education. This year, we hope to strengthen this partnership with parents as we work together in new ways to provide an even stronger education for our children. I will be talking with you soon about these initiatives.

Thanks to the many who share their thoughts and ideas about educational opportunities at Kol HaLev. If you have some to share, please contact me at robyn@kolhalev.net or 216-320-1498.

Robyn

Contributions

Kol HaLev gratefully acknowledges the following contributions from:

- Irwin Weinberger and Meg Manny in commemoration of the yahrzeit of Irwin's mother, Irene Weinberger
- Eda Weiss in commemoration of the yahrzeits of her husband, Alfred Weiss, and of her parents, Rose and Harry Beckerman

Kol HaLev thanks the following members for their contributions to the High Holy Days Appeal:

Dan and Nan Arian
Benjamin and Halle Barnett
Molly Berger
Allen Binstock
Michael and Kareen Caputo
David and Elizabeth Conn
Nancy Dudwick
Frederick and Beth Friedman-Romell
Gil and Marcia Goldberg
Joyce Goldstein
Bruce and Brenda Goodman
Jonathan Gordon and Paula Klausner
Peter Gray and Judy Vida
Ralph and Selma Gwatkin
Maureen Hack
Dick and Jayne Jones
Leah Kamionkowski

Sam and Anna Kelman
Dan Klein and Nancy Rubel
Ron Kohn
Ami Kopstein and Glenda Kupersmith
David and Lynn Liebling
Richard Litwin and Kirby Date
Brian and Jean Miller
Allan and Sandy Rosenfield
Jeffrey and Debby Schein
Steve Segar and Andy Getz
Barbara Truitt
Happy Wallach
Kevin and Sue Weidenbaum
Alan Weinstein
Eda Weiss
Jeff and Claudia Weissman

Dear Friends,

We are excited and feel blessed to be able to announce that two Kol HaLev families have joined together to offer a \$10,000 matching funds challenge to the community as part of our current fundraising drive.

Beginning October 1, any contribution toward our \$44,000 fundraising goal will be matched dollar for dollar up to \$10,000 by the challenge grant sponsors. We have raised \$6,000 so far through the High Holy Days Fundraising drive. This is a great opportunity for us to energize this drive and help bring us within striking range of our goals. To enable us to take better advantage of end-of-year giving the challenge grant will be valid through December 31, 2010.

It is our dream that everyone of you will dig as deep as you are comfortable doing to take advantage of this opportunity to multiply your contribution by participating in this challenge grant. We understand that every family will do their best to keep our precious community healthy and vibrant.

B'Shalom,

Barry Epstein
Values Team Leader, Democratic & Fiscally Responsible

Greg Selker
President

Join KHL on Facebook

Kol HaLev has a group page on Facebook. If you would like to join, go to <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=103599450383>

In addition to staying in touch with KHL friends, if you RSVP to a KHL event on the group page, you will get a reminder about it on your Wall. This is a helpful way to remember upcoming events that you are interested in attending.

If you have any questions, please contact Robin Shell at rshell@bernssockner.com or 216-482-6100.

Hug HaSefer – Book Discussion Circle

The next book group meeting will be Thursday, December 2, at 7:30 p.m. at the home of Ruth Ness. Anne Adamson will lead a discussion of Amos Oz' book, *To Know a Woman*. The novel is an account of eighteen months in the life of a retired Israeli Secret Service agent who is trying to sort out his life after the accidental death of his wife.

All KHL members are welcome to attend.

For more information contact Kevin Weidenbaum (KJW@oberlin.net).

Hesed

Condolences to Chuck Hersch and Shahin Afnan on the loss of Shahin's father, Hassan Afnan

R'fuah sh'leymah, a complete and speedy recovery from knee replacement surgery to David Liebling

R'fuah sh'leymah, a complete and speedy recovery to Frank Maris



***Wishing you a very
happy Thanksgiving!***

Please join us for a potluck Shabbat
dinner on Thanksgiving weekend
at the home of

The Scher-Marcus Family
3362 Maynard Rd, Shaker Hts.
Friday, November 26th at 6:00 pm

RSVP to scher.marcus@gmail.com

The Delights of Shabbat

Come learn and celebrate "The Delights of Shabbat". The first Lunch and Learn session will be on November 6th immediately following Kiddush. We will be looking at the role of song and music in Shabbat. Jean Miller will lead a study session on music and Shabbat and then Rabbi Shawn, Simcha, Greg and Jean will lead us in singing some of the traditional and modern songs associated with Shabbat. Children are welcome. Participants are asked to bring a drink or side dish to share. Adina Davidson will provide a simple main course for anyone who RSVPs by October 30th. (If you don't RSVP come anyway and brown bag your lunch) Please RSVP by October 30 to judy@kolhalev.net.

Yahrzeits

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

Members of Kol HaLev will mark the following yahrzeits during November:

Asnat Kelman – mother of Sam Kelman

Betty Kohn – stepmother of Ron Kohn

Barney Lasky – father of Renee Siegel

Estelle Paul (Esther) – aunt of Shawn Zevit

Zelig Resnick – grandfather of Linda Gross

Susan Romell -- mother of Frederick Friedman-Romell

NOVEMBER 2010 KOL HALEV CALENDAR

- Friday 5 7:00 p.m. - **Women's Group Shabbat Potluck Dinner** at the home of Irene Immerman, 33475 Pinetree Road in Pepper Pike (between South Woodland and SOM on the north side of the street). All Kol HaLev women are invited. **Please RSVP** to Irene via e-mail at irene_immerman@keybank.com or at 216-403-1891
- Saturday 6 10:15 a.m. - **Shabbat Service** preceded by Torah discussion at 9:30 a.m. at Ratner Chapel; *Toldot*; Service leader: Rabbi Steve; Discussion leader: Barbara Epstein; kiddush hosted by Kirby Date and Richard Litwin in honor of their 25th wedding anniversary
- Saturday 6 10:15 a.m. – **Hagiga**
10:45 – Tot-Parent Shabbat Program for families with children in preschool and under in the We Care Room. The program is about a half an hour, led by Rachel Williams. Babysitting is available before and after Tot Shabbat, also in the We Care Room
- Saturday 6 12:45 p.m. – **Lunch and Learn Series: The Delights of Shabbat – Song** at Ratner School; we will be looking at the role of song and music in Shabbat.
- Sunday 7 7:30 – 9:30 p.m. – **Recon 101** at the home of Dick and Deena Epstein, 20949 Colby Road, Shaker Heights, 216-321-9218
- Thursday 11 – Sunday 14 – **JRF Convention**
- Saturday 13 10:00 a.m. – **Creative Shabbat; Vayetzei**; location TBA

(continued on page 9)

NOVEMBER 2010 KOL HALEV CALENDAR

(continued from page 8)

- Saturday 13 3:30 p.m. - **Torah Study** at the home of Ralph and Selma Gwatkin, 25460 Bryden Road, Beachwood, 216-765-8109; Ralph will lead a discussion of Psalms. All members of Kol HaLev as well as Tishri members are welcome.
- Tuesday 16 8:00-9:00 a.m. – **Schmooze With the Rabbi** at the Stone Oven, 28601 Chagrin Boulevard; Beachwood
- Wednesday 17 8:00 p.m. – **Men’s Group** at the home of Rabbi Shawn Zevit, 2669 Green Road, Shaker Heights, 216-292-1137; RSVP to Rabbi Steve at rabbisteve@kolhalev.net
- Friday 19 6:30 p.m. - **Kabbalat Shabbat Musical Collaboration with Congregation Bethaynu** at Ratner School; kiddush starts around 7:45 p.m.; Service leaders: Rabbi Steve & Rabbi Rona & Cantor Danielle; kiddush co-hosted by Leah Kamionkowski and by Irwin Weinberger and Meg Manny in memory of Irwin’s mother, Irene Weinberger
- Saturday 20 9:30 a.m. – **Shabbat Service and Bar Mitzvah of Ben Robertson** at Ratner Chapel; *Vayishlach*; Service leaders: Rabbi Steve and Ben Robertson; Kiddush hosted by Pete and Heidi Robertson in honor of the bar mitzvah of their son, Ben
- Saturday 20 10:15 a.m. – **Hagiga**
10:45 – Tot-Parent Shabbat Program for families with children in preschool and under in the We Care Room. The program is about a half an hour, led by Rachel Williams. Babysitting is available before and after Tot Shabbat, also in the We Care Room
- Thursday 25 **Thanksgiving**
- Friday 26 6:00 p.m. - **Potluck Shabbat Dinner** at the home of Bill & Michal Scher-Marcus, 3362 Maynard Road, Shaker Heights, 216-752-1713
- The dishes should be vegetarian/dairy or pareve 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 reuseable plates, cups, utensils and napkins to our potluck.
A-H - Dessert or Drink
I-P - Main Dish
Q-Z – Appetizer Salad
- Saturday 27 **Service at a congregant's home; Vayeshev**; Watch the update for location

Cooking With Kol HaLev Recipes from the Heart

\$18.00 per book or \$15.00 each for 5 or more books

To order contact Leah Kamionkowski – leah@bepure.com or call the Kol HaLev office at 216-320-1498

See our website calendar and weekly email for additions and changes

Kol HaLev Happenings

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Kol HaLev

Cleveland's Reconstructionist Community

An egalitarian, participatory spiritual community

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