

## BCC Enters the Home Stretch

*Ira Dankberg, Building Committee Chair*

As we near the completion of construction on our new building at 6090 Pico, there is an amazing amount of activity at our new building. The noise, dust, and commotion are most impressive. Every day a new component of the building is being installed. Concurrently, Building Committee members, volunteers, staff and clergy are making decisions and getting things done. Special thanks must go to our extraordinary Executive Director, Felicia Park-Rogers, who somehow manages to ensure our

systems from our sanctuary so our services and programs can be accessed anywhere in the world with an Internet connection. We have wired for a projector and installed a screen adjacent to the ark that allows us to display images and text during services. The classrooms have video monitors for instructional purposes and display of proceedings in the sanctuary.

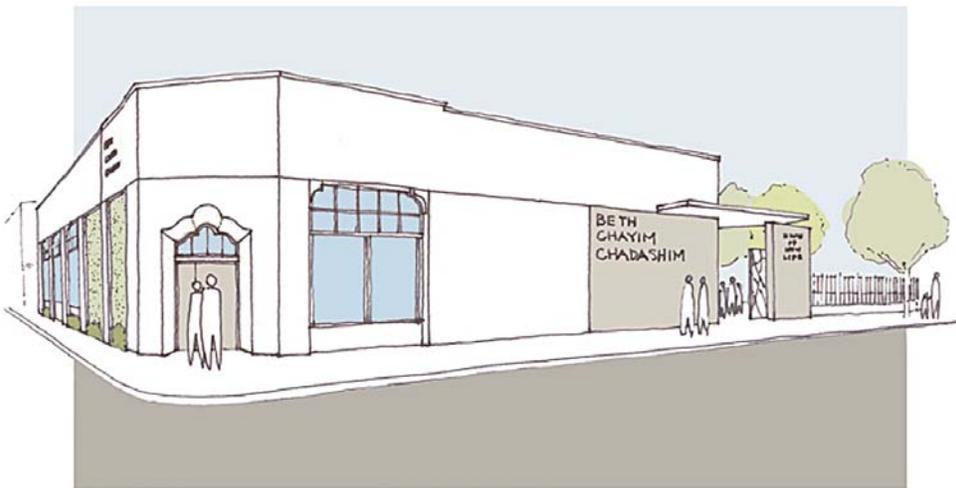
Special thanks must also go to Jerry Hanson and Davi Cheng who are working on building the leaded glass doors for our new ark. These are designed to complement our relocated stained glass windows. The steel framing for the relocated stained glass is being installed between the sanctuary and the lobby. This defines the shapes of those rooms. The stained glass will be backlit by daylight from the lobby and at night by spotlights. It will be very beautiful.

Jerry and Davi are also building a new ner tamid (eternal light) that will hang inside our ark. In keeping with our environmentally sustainable focus and thanks to a generous donation from William Korthof, our ner tamid is solar powered with battery backup. Look for its solar panel on the wall adjacent to the south entry. William also

donated the roof mounted photovoltaic panels that will generate a large proportion of our electricity and return any excess capacity to the utility grid.

The restrooms are now complete. Each is accented with brightly colored ceramic tile walls. In keeping with our LEED certification we have low water consumption fixtures, a waterless urinal, and tankless water heater. All restrooms are

*Continued on Page 2*



synagogue programs run smoothly, plan future events, and, at the same time, coordinate action plans to be certain our new building is complete and functional by our April 10 dedication date.

Thanks to the efforts of Ray Eelsing, the building has been pre-wired for state of the art computers, telephones and security connectivity. We are installing streaming video

## Save the Date - New Building Dedication

**Sunday, April 10**, Lechi Lach (let us go forth) to our new home! Meet at 2:00 pm at 6000 W. Pico and join us in saying goodbye to our home of 33 years. We'll continue on a joyous and musical march two blocks west as we carry our Torahs to our new home at 6090 W. Pico. At 2:30 we will have a ribbon-cutting and mezuzah-hanging ceremony in the back parking lot, followed by the dedication of our new sanctuary. A festive reception will follow until 4:30. See the President's Column on page 3 for more information.

disabled accessible and have proper baby changing tables.

The parking lot has been graded and the stairs, ramps and planters adjacent to the new entry are being installed. We have selected low water consumption trees to shade the south wall of the building. The existing steel security louvers currently on the front of the building are being repurposed to become enclosure screens for the new trash area and electric transformer at the rear parking lot.

We have made trips to Ikea to purchase bookshelves and cabinetry.

We are researching and ordering new seating. The commercial kitchen equipment is being ordered. The Story Lines copper strips for the ark wall are being completed and made ready for installation. Telephones, computers and re-used office furniture are being researched and selected. Final operational details are being worked out. It is both exhausting and exhilarating.

Please watch for email updates for volunteer opportunities as we approach our move in date and our April 10 dedication.

## Story Lines Enhance our New Home

In a series of workshops in January and February, BCC members participated in a unique project to beautify and give special meaning to the sanctuary in our new home. On the wall surrounding our new ark, stretching from floor to ceiling, will be a series of copper strips on which BCC members have written pieces of their personal stories. At least half of our congregation has participated and we have more than 150 strips so far! The consensus is that the workshops, ably led by Kadin Henningsen, Leslie Tuchman, Renee Lamkay, Bonnie Kaplan, and Sylvia Sukop have been a moving experience that has

brought people closer together. Our new sanctuary will indeed be blessed. We have also been receiving text from some members who live far away or have been unable to attend a workshop.

Space will be reserved for additional strips which current and future members may wish to add, and there will be an interactive website where the text on the strips can be viewed and, if members so choose, the complete stories from which the text is taken may be read as well.

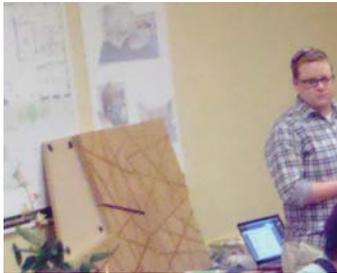


PHOTO: SYLVIA SUKOP

Story Lines coordinator Kadin Henningsen with sample of copper strips

**In this Issue...**

- New Building Dedication . . . . . 1
- Story Lines Project . . . . . 2
- President's Column . . . . . 3
- Rabbi's Column . . . . . 4
- BCC Live, Purim . . . . . 5
- Awards Brunch, 20s/30s Havurah . . 6
- Cantor's Column, New Pushkes . . 7
- Men's and Women's Havurot . . . . 8
- Ohr Chayim, Rabbi Sightings . . . . 9
- Virtual Minyan, Book Group . . . . 10
- Calendar . . . . . 11

## G'vanim Advertising Rates

### Rates

(Rates in bold are discounted 20% for BCC members)

**1 issue                      3 issues: 10% disc.                      6 issues: 20% disc.**

#### 1/8 PG:

\$50                      \$135                      \$240  
**\$40                      \$108                      \$192**

#### 1/4 PG:

\$100                      \$270                      \$480  
**\$80                      \$216                      \$384**

### Specs

**1/8 PG or BUS. CARD:** 3.625" W x 2.218 H (live area and trim)

**1/4 PG:** 3.625" W x 4.685" H (live area and trim)

Artwork specifications available upon request.

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website: [www.bcc-la.org](http://www.bcc-la.org)

Rabbi Lisa Edwards is available for private appointments. Please call at least a week in advance, if possible, to schedule.

### STAFF

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 20s/30s Havurah . . . . . (no chair at this time)

### G'VANIM

G'vanim "Hues (of the rainbow)" is the monthly newsletter of

#### BETH CHAYIM CHADASHIM

6000 West Pico Blvd., L.A. CA 90035

Founded in 1972 as the world's first gay and lesbian synagogue, today BCC is an inclusive community of progressive lesbian, gay, bi, trans, and heterosexual Jews, our families, and friends. Everyone is welcome to attend weekly Friday evening services at 8:00 p.m.

Editor: Larry Nathenson. Graphics & Layout: Lentini Design. Articles submitted should be typed, emailed or attached as Word documents to [Larrynath@aol.com](mailto:Larrynath@aol.com), by the 15th of the month before publication. To subscribe to G'vanim, send name and address and a check or money order for \$18 per year, attention: Subscriptions. Free to members.

**BCC is affiliated with the Union for Reform Judaism, World Congress of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Jews: Keshet Ga'avah and the Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles.**

## President's Column

# A Few Words from Bruce...



Spring always bring us the promise of new life. And at BCC, the House of New Life, we are poised to start this Spring of 2011 with the anticipation and excitement of moving into our new home!

As I write this column, our contractor is putting the finishing touches onto the construction of

6090 Pico and preparing to hand over the keys to us very soon. We still have some additional work to be completed outside the scope of the general contractor's work, including finishing the installation of the ark and bimah Story Lines project walls, built-in bookcases and furnishings, and the kitchen cabinetry, appliances and fixtures. Once these are complete, we are ready to open up the building to the membership and community at large when we hold our grand Building Dedication event on Sunday, April 10, 2011, from 2:00 pm to 4:30 pm.

As we approach this special Building Dedication, we have so many people to be thank for all their efforts to get us through the process of raising funds, looking for a new location, purchasing that property, renovating the building, financing the renovations, selling our current building, and soon, actually moving from our old and comfortable place into our new space. We will be honoring many of these people during that day of festivities — long-time members and new members, our children and our most chronologically gifted members, donors to the building and the builders themselves. Make sure you arrive right on time at 6000 for a brief closing service as we take the Torahs out of our ark for the last time in that space. We'll carry our Torahs in a procession along Pico as we go west to our new LEED Silver certified "green" building at 6090. I promise you a day so exciting and meaningful that you will not soon forget it.

There are three people I would like to mention now, however, because if it were not for any one of these three individuals, we would most certainly not be moving into our new space. They have put countless hours agonizing over the details, sweating over the minutia and agonizing over how we were going to accomplish what we are about to accomplish. And then, they each set about to do whatever it took to overcome the many obstacles we faced, making sure we were always moving forward and making progress toward our goal of moving into our new home. Anyone involved in our new building project knows exactly which three people I am

talking about, because they will have first-hand knowledge of what they have done. For the rest of us, I can say only that Ira Dankberg, Brett Trueman, and Felicia Park-Rogers have sacrificed so much of themselves, and have contributed so much of their time accomplishing so many tasks and that they have done all of this just for the rest of us, the membership of BCC. Please when you see any of these three, stop them, thank them, give them an extra hug, and let them know how much you appreciate all that they have done and are still doing for BCC.

With all the hoopla and celebration of our new building, please pay attention to the exciting and new programs that are being planned for our new space. Bracha Yael writes of our exciting new "BCC Live" programming elsewhere in this issue. We will have cooking classes, new educational and learning opportunities, new musical programs, film screenings, lectures and discussion groups, new fun events sponsored by our 20's & 30's Havurah, and other new events brought to us by both the Women's and Men's Havurot as well. Our Rabbi Lisa Edwards and Cantor Juval Porat will be on hand to welcome each of you to our new home with exciting and dynamic and musical and thought-provoking services each Friday night and for other holidays and festivities.

Truly, BCC is where you ought to be!

Warmest regards,

Bruce Maxwell



*Dave Parkhurst and Diane Shatz prepare their copper strips for the Story Lines project*

PHOTO: SYLVIA SUKOP

# Are we Ready for our Big Move?

Rabbi Lisa Edwards



PHOTO: KENNA LOVE

Change is endemic to Judaism's character and essential for its survival — Abraham Geiger, "father" of Reform Judaism

<http://www.forward.com/articles/129225/#ixzz1Eb9mujLm>

Rodney Dangerfield used to quip: "When I was a kid my parents moved a lot, but I always found them."

BCC's new home is a mere two blocks from our current home, so

I don't think many of us will get lost on our way there, but I know some of us are worried we'll be lost when we get there. Although our phone numbers, website, and Facebook page will remain the same, and our street address will barely change – add a tail to the middle zero and voila! 6000 becomes 6090 — in some ways our new home and our old will be worlds apart.

Are we ready for it or will we be lost in our new space? When most people move out of a home they've lived in for 33 years, they're downsizing – kids grown and gone, maybe a spouse gone too, or just time to reduce the number of stairs to climb or the costs of maintenance. But on the eve of BCC's 40th anniversary (2012), after 33 years in one home, we're upsizing – yikes!

Many years ago my brother brought home a brand new car unannounced. He thought his three-year daughter would be so excited; instead she climbed screaming into the backseat and nearly kicked a hole in the back of the front seat. "I HATE this car," she yelled, without even looking at it. "I want our old car back." That event happened almost as many years ago as BCC moved into 6000 W. Pico, yet I still think about it whenever I see or experience dramatic change in what's familiar, beloved, comfortable. I remember that little kid screaming – and I remember too that by the next day she loved the new car and couldn't wait to show it to her friends.

Our move is exciting to be sure, yet I'm well aware that even a carefully planned, years in the making, group effort like ours will cause more than a little emotional distress and physical stress (it has already). Newness, change, difference inevitably bring with them some uncertainty and anxiety. Most of the faces at 6090 will be familiar, but even as we hope the

familiar faces will bring some new friends with them, to share the space and the possibilities, we worry. What if we don't like the new people? What if they bring new ideas we're not comfortable with? What if it's not the same as it was – not as cozy, not as warm, not as haimish, not as fun? Oy, more square feet to worry about — so much could go wrong! I see it in people's faces, hear it in their voices, feel it in my own anxiety dreams – change, change, change – OY!

And then I remember why we decided to do this. A myriad of reasons. Community is one – how do we live in community if not everyone can fit in the house? I particularly look forward to the opportunity to have many things happening at once in our new building – a wedding couple meeting in my study while the choir rehearses in the sanctuary, a community meeting takes place in the large classroom, and a cooking class with children and parents fills the kitchen with delicious smells.

And whenever we're feeling overwhelmed by the size or the newness or the change, we can re-focus on community by walking into the sanctuary to view the copper Story Lines strips – our own stories written by our own hands from our own hearts — on the wall behind the ark housing our old familiar Torah scrolls, and then look south to BCC's jewels – our stained glass windows reset in a framework that will show them off in new and unexpected ways. There in our sanctuary – our safe haven – will be these precious and constant reminders of where we came from and who we are.

Over the next few weeks I encourage you to come to 6000 W. Pico – our old familiar, comfortable, durable, stable home of 33 treasured years – and look around, take it in, remember some good times there (and some sad too), and say good-bye – gently. While you're there think of a memory, a word, a hope, a prayer that you can take with you from that sacred space into our new one. And then be sure to join us on Sunday April 10 at 2:00 pm for one last look and a prayer at 6000 before we dance our way together to the new place – 6090 W. Pico, BCC's new house of life.

# Introducing BCC Live

The Union for Reform Judaism (URJ) recently awarded BCC an Incubator Grant, part of an initiative to jumpstart creative and bold synagogue programs in member congregations. One of 20 chosen from 170 applications, BCC is the only award recipient from the western US.

Funds from the grant will help launch a new program, *BCC Live*. By taking advantage of technology planned for BCC's new building, *BCC Live* will provide a variety of innovative ways for you to access our services, classes and events during those times you cannot physically be at BCC.

*BCC Live* puts us on the cutting edge of re-envisioning synagogue life. It will furnish streaming video and audio for our most popular services, so you can be part of the

congregation via your computer or telephone. Afterward, Rabbi Lisa Edwards' sermons and Cantor Juval Porat's music will be available on our new YouTube channel and by podcast.

Besides streaming Shabbat services, another goal of *BCC Live* is to provide interactive experiences. For instance, during Yizkor and Yom Hashoah services you'll have the opportunity to share the names and memories of your loved ones, and during Shavuot study and HHD preparation classes you'll be able to take part in the discussion—just as if you were at BCC.

*BCC Live* will insure that—Anywhere, Anyway and Anytime—you'll be able to find a way to be "in the house" at our "House of New Life."

As a leader in this new frontier, *BCC Live* needs leaders. If you're a techie,

YouTube enthusiast, social media lover, website maven, writer or just someone who desires to join in on the fun, we want you! We'd like people who can or would like to be trained to video services, edit and upload footage onto YouTube, make podcasts, maximize virtual traffic onto our website, write stories for our Facebook page, or work with online and traditional media to get the word out. Too busy? You can still make a difference—we can give you a "one-and-done" task!

Please help *BCC Live* come alive and volunteer your skills or develop new ones; you can contact the BCC office or Bracha Yael at [bracha18y@gmail.com](mailto:bracha18y@gmail.com). Please watch our e-bulletin and website for upcoming events.

## Passover 5771/2011 at BCC

Join us for vegetarian matzah ball soup, our exciting Freedom Poetry Slam, and our Pesach Yizkor Service on Sunday, April 24 at 6090 Pico. Yizkor will be at 4:00 pm. The poetry slam will begin at 5:00 pm. Given the proximity to the new building dedication and the expense, we will not have a community seder, but if you are hosting a seder at your home and have room for a BCC member or two, please let Victoria know. BCC members who would like to attend a seder, please also let Victoria know! [Victoria@bcc-la.org](mailto:Victoria@bcc-la.org).



## Our Last Purim at 6000 W. Pico!

Save the date, **Saturday, March 19**, for our last Purim at 6000 W. Pico Blvd. Celebrate with music, costumes, diversity and lots of hilarity. Wear your costume and bring a big napkin for a no muss no fuss dinner (okay, a little muss, a little fuss as it's a "bring your own" dinner!) from 6:00 to 7:00 pm. Everyone's invited, and family and children's activities will begin at 6:00 as well.

From 7:00 to 9:00 pm we'll enjoy a hilarious Havdalah followed by multilingual megillah reading frequently interrupted by exclusive acts by the extremely talented, as well as the 100% talent-free performers of BCC! Want to book an act or read part of the megillah? Contact Davi Cheng! [davi18@ca.rr.com](mailto:davi18@ca.rr.com) - the booking deadline is March 5!



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# 2011 Awards Brunch Planned for May 22

Lauren Schlau

Spring at BCC is not only a time to dust off your Purim costume and to prepare your home for Pesach, but also time to prepare for our annual Humanitarian Awards Brunch. If you've attended in the past, you know how special this event always is. An exciting venue, elegant silent auction, delicious food, entertaining emcee, and of course, inspiring honorees. This year is expected to be most memorable as "The Year of Building," recognizing not only our new physical home but also the building of community at which BCC has always excelled.

Save the date of Sunday, May 22, for this year's festivities. The place is the beautiful Arcadia ballroom at the oceanfront Loews Santa Monica Beach Hotel. Our Humanitarian Award honorees are long-time BCC members Diane Goodman and Nicolasa Nevarez. Diane, an attorney, has been a trailblazer in the area of LGBT family rights, in particular adoption law. Nicolasa is a recognized educator and "teacher's teacher," both in and out of the classroom. This year's Presidents Award will be bestowed upon Ira Dankberg who, in acting as de facto project manager for BCC's new temple home, has devoted endless hours and effort to facilitate its successful completion. There will be some surprises including other honorees, a moving history of the new building and ... (you will have to attend the Brunch to find out)!

This year's brunch co-chairs Lauren Schlau and Kenna Love and the Brunch Committee are very excited that

the event is celebrating the new building and expect everyone to have a feel-good experience with all that is being planned. This year's Champagne Silent Auction will further add to the festivities according to its co-chairs Kadin Henningsen and Eric Kamm. They will be in contact with members to ask everyone to get involved to solicit items to make this the best auction yet.

BCC's Herman Humanitarian Award was established in 1985 for BCC's b'nai mitzvah year and has been given nearly every year to deserving individuals or organizations for outstanding contributions to the Jewish and LGBT communities. The award is named for Rabbi Erwin and Agnes Herman, who were instrumental in helping BCC become a member of its parent entity, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (now Union for Reform Judaism) in 1974, making BCC the first GLBT congregation of any religious denomination to be accepted by its parent group. The Presidents Award was established in 2003 to honor BCC members for their outstanding contributions to BCC and the wider community.

The annual brunch has grown over the years in stature, attendance and importantly the funds raised, which now represent approximately one-quarter of BCC's annual operating budget. Please mark your calendar and plan to attend the 2011 BCC Humanitarian Awards Brunch. Formal invitations will be sent soon.

## 20s/30s Havurah Plans Runyon Canyon Hike

The BCC 20s/30s Havurah has been reinvigorated and has exciting events coming soon! The group had a great start to 2011 at the February Ruach Chayim service and Coffeehouse schmooze, and next we will be getting together for a hike at Runyon Canyon in Hollywood on **March 6th** at 10:00 am.

Runyon Canyon Park begins at the north end of Vista Ave (north of Franklin) in Hollywood (zip code: 90028). Participants should park anywhere near the intersection of Franklin and Vista. Be very careful of parking restrictions! We will meet at the North End of Vista Ave.

Full details are available in the events section of our Facebook group:

<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=126149987405171> Be sure to join the Facebook group to stay up to date with all our future events.

We are always looking for new people to come join our 20s/30s Havurah steering committee. If you are interested in helping us plan innovative, exciting events for the group, please email us at [2030havurah@gmail.com](mailto:2030havurah@gmail.com) and one of the committee members will be in touch.



# Cantor Sightings, from BCC's Busy Cantor

Cantor Juval Porat



PHOTO: KENNA LOVE

Sometimes there's just so much going on, that certain things (like this column) require a different approach. So, without further introduction, here's a partial list of things that have kept me on the go as well as things to look forward to in the near future.

The BCC choir is busy with rehearsals for Purim, BCC's new building dedication and, well, ultimately also for the High Holidays. With new music by the likes of Debbie Friedman, Steve Dropkin and Michael Skloff, we constantly look forward to greeting new choir members.

Friday night on Dolores Street – In January I had the privilege of leading Kabbalat Shabbat at Temple Sha'ar Zahav in San Francisco. It was great to get to know new friends and make some music together with Cantor Sharon Bernstein. Thanks to Rabbi Camille Angel and Arthur Slepian for making my stay at the Golden Gate so pleasant!

Fiddler in the Groove – an introductory class on klezmer music that has exposed me and hopefully all those who attended, to the music's rich history and its emotional, political and social impact on American society. A lot of thanks to Albert Winn and Rabbi Dev Noily (who was able to join us via Skype), for their insights on queer klezmer music and shared stories about their time in KlezKamp over the years!

Milken High School – BCC member Rabbi Heather Miller, Dean of Student Life at the Milken Community High School, has invited me to speak about my experience as a cantor at BCC. The talk will take place in March and I look forward to sharing some experiences and stories about the very special place BCC holds in Reform Judaism's landscape and in people's lives.

Valley Beth Shalom Havurah event – I was invited by Sy Maxwell (father of BCC president Bruce Maxwell) to speak about my [Jewish] life in Germany and the renaissance of Reform Judaism in Germany in particular.

Dedication Concert – a first concert, in what hopefully will become an annual tradition, celebrating BCC's new physical home at 6090 Pico, will take place on August 14 with guest cantors and friends from all over the area congratulating BCC with beautiful music! Thanks to Maggie Anton for helping me out in organizing that!

Purim – It is really fun going over vintage costumes in trying to figure out what I'll show up as this year. Songs are still being selected and I look forward to some exciting collaborations with the talented BCC writers (wink wink Heather, wink wink Estaire!).

New guest musicians – chance encounters have introduced me to some lovely people, who happen to also be lovely musicians who will share their talent at BCC's Friday night services. Edrei Whittemore on folk harp, Claire Bergen on violin, Jessica Ruiz on clarinet are a few among the hopefully long-lasting musical collaborations to take place at BCC and beyond.

Passover in Tzfat – I look forward to spending seder night with my family in the north of Israel. For BCC's first Friday night service in the new building I'll be preparing some special video-messages from Tzfat - the city in which L'cha Dodi was initially written and performed!

Dedication ceremony – I'm very grateful for the talented musicians among the BCC membership. Together with them, Rabbi Lisa, the BCC officers, planning committees and I hope the dedication of our new building on April 10 will be an unforgettable, fun and inspiring affair.

That's a partial list of things that I'm working on at the moment. Hopefully some of them will spark an interest in some of you. If so, don't hesitate to show up to one of these upcoming events. And don't hesitate to make comments, suggestions and requests. Once more though, it looks as if the upcoming months at BCC will be exciting ones!

## They're Here!



They're not so queer! (the bottoms won't fall out!)  
They're the new BCC Pushkes\*!  
And they've arrived!  
They're plentiful!  
And they're available at BCC now, and at the Dedication!  
So out with the old (bring in your worn pushkes filled!)...  
and in with the new (trade up!)

\*Pushke - פּוּשְׁקֵה \PUSH-ke\ Noun:

A tin can, particularly an alms box

Brought to you by the BCC Tzedakah Council

## Men's Havurah Plans for Spring

BCC's Men's Havurah sponsored the following very successful event during February 2011:

### Wine Tasting & Havdalah on February 12th

Hosted by BCC's President Bruce Maxwell, we had ten people who sampled several types of French wines including whites: Alsace Riesling, Loire Valley Chardonnay, and a Bordeaux Sauvignon Blanc, reds: Burgundy Pinot Noir, Rhone Syrah, and a Bordeaux Merlot, and a dessert wine: a classic Bordeaux Sauternes all under the guidance of wine connoisseur and BCC member Mark Brown. Paired with each individual wine were spectacular light refreshments prepared by our very own President Maxwell. Between sampling the white and red wines we performed outdoors a very warm havdalah service to usher in the new week.

The Men's Havurah Planning Committee is planning many events in the next several months. Here's a thumbnail sketch of these upcoming events:

- Purim brunch and hamentaschen-making party at 11:00 am on Sunday, March 20th in a member's home
- Member Moving Day to our new home on Sunday, March 27th
- Downtown L.A. Art Walk on Thursday, April 14th
- Architecture and garden tour at the Getty Center on Sunday, May 15th
- Movie night at Outfest 2011 during the film festival held July 7 - 17
- Hollywood Bowl production of the Broadway musical Hairspray on Sunday, August 7th
- Pool Party during the August/September time frame

As soon as details are finalized, event announcements will be sent out via e-mail, BCC's e-bulletin, and Friday evening's seat bulletin.

There are two ways you can stay in touch with us:

- Through e-mail: [bcc.menshavurah@gmail.com](mailto:bcc.menshavurah@gmail.com)
- Through our Facebook page ("BCC Men's Havurah") where we post event details and share pictures from events

We can use everyone's help and very much encourage

- Your ideas for additional types of events that would be of interest to the Men's Havurah, and
- Volunteers to plan and host events, naturally tailored to the size of your home.

BCC Men's Havurah Planning Committee: Mark Miller and Neal Weisenberg (co-chairs), Mark Brown, Ira Dankberg, Jay Jacobs, Adam Kulbersh, and Richard Lesse

## Women's Havurah Spring Calendar

*Donna Quigley Groman*

Please join the BCC Women's Havurah for these upcoming events:

### Sunday, March 6, 12 pm – 3 pm. Lunch at Natalee Thai.

Join us for lunch at Natalee Thai (998 S. Robertson, just north of Olympic) followed by an optional city walk up Robertson Boulevard (and back). Women Only.

### Sunday, March 20, 1 pm – 4pm. Yiddish Sing-along.

Join us for a Yiddish sing-along at the Hollywood home of BCC friend, Helena Lipstadt. Helena will provide music and lyrics. Bring a snack and beverage to share, and a musical instrument if you want to play along. Women Only.

### Sunday, April 24, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. Trip to the Lancaster Poppy Reserve!

This will be an all day event given the approximately 90 minute travel time each way. There is an optional lunch following the trip to the Reserve. We will make our best efforts to carpool, as it is a long drive and the parking fee is \$8 per car at the Poppy Reserve. Everyone is Welcome.

**Saturday May 14, 8 pm – midnight. Dancing!** Dance and Socialize at Oil Can Harry's in Studio City. Our hosts are BCC dancing machines, Sylvia Weisenberg and Irene Nunez. Everyone is Welcome!

For more information or to RSVP, e-mail Donna at [dlgroman@hotmail.com](mailto:dlgroman@hotmail.com) or call the BCC office at (323) 931-7023.

## Volunteer Thanks

We have finally relocated all our old drashot (sermons) from our old website to our new website. A major accomplishment! Many thanks to those who helped make it happen:

**Davi Cheng** for creating the archive of drashot.

**Brett Trueman** and **Cantor Juval Porat** for designing an easy and accessible look to the new drashot page.

**Helen Brand** for outlining the laborious instructions for transferring all the drashot in a concise and easy manner.

**Mike Halstater** for transferring the majority of the drashot to the new website and creating identifiable titles to help researchers.

**Victoria Delgadillo** for her coordination and support.

# BCC's Young Torah Scholars

*Leah Zimmerman, Education Director*



Each week at Ohr Chayim we study Torah with the students. This winter we have taken a few weeks to investigate more deeply a few chapters of text. We have been slowly reading through the beginning of Exodus. We read the actual text, mostly reading directly from the

English, occasionally translating more closely from the Hebrew. As we read, we encourage students to ask questions, respond or comment. Along the way we ask them questions so as to engage them more in thinking about the text.

We do this because our goal isn't only that our students will be well acquainted with the stories in the Torah, but also we want them to be familiar with the ways in which we study Torah. When Jews study text, we ask questions, comment, argue, and work through problems to find new meaning. In our Ohr Chayim program we model this way of studying text for our K-5 year old students by providing an opportunity for them to actively engage in the text. The teachers take copious notes, recording what the students have said. We learn a lot about the text and the students from listening to their comments and their questions.

In the first chapter of Exodus, Pharaoh commands the midwives to kill the sons of the Israelites. We asked the students to imagine that they were the midwives. What would they do? Here are some of their answers:

Eliana (8yr): Make the boys look like girls and cover it up.

Dora (8yr): Build a house for all the boys, but keep it a secret.

Benji (8yr): I wouldn't follow the rules.

Ashira (9yr): I wouldn't know what to do. I would want to save the boys, but I wouldn't want to go to the dungeon.

Recently we read about God talking to Moses at the burning bush. God tells Moses to go confront Pharaoh and to bring the Israelites out of Egypt. Here are some of our students' reactions:

Benji (8yr) - How am I going to get Pharaoh to do that?

Eliana (8yr) - If God says we need to go that I would go.

Dora (8yr) - [Thinking as Moses] How do you get them [Israelites] to believe? Doesn't God know where the land is? Who am I to have the power to do it?

AJ (5yr) - How will Moses take the people?

James (6yr) - If I was Moses, I would take the people and follow God's orders.

Dora (8yr) - God will be with Moses "and be a partner with you" - this sort of helps Moses.

I could comment on their comments, but I think their voices speak for themselves. Even our youngest students ask questions and share reactions. To each question and reaction, I find myself also discovering new questions and reactions.

On Shabbat morning, the teachers bring new texts to the students and the students bring new meaning to us. Through the eyes and the words of our students, we also learn to see nuance and details. We revisit the questions of the texts from a point of discovery, not only of knowledge. We are lucky to have such engaging young "teachers" to remind us of how to ask and react in simple and awe inspiring ways. Perhaps the commandment "v'shinantem l'vanecha v'dibarta bam..." "and you shall teach your children these things..." isn't only because it is important for our children to learn, but also because we learn from teaching our children.

On March 19th we celebrate Purim. Come in costume! BCC families are invited to come at 6:00 pm to eat dinner together, make groggers and participate in other Purim activities.

## Rabbi Sightings

Here are some of Rabbi Lisa Edwards's recent and upcoming activities that help to raise BCC's profile in the larger community.

Panel presentation at HUC on the subject of Jews choosing not to be parents, followed a couple of weeks later by a text study entitled: "Be fruitful and multiply — But what does Judaism say about Jews who do not become parents?"

Speaker at a USC on campus rally on February 17, 2011 on Marriage Equality organized by the USC Social Action Committee

Panel presentation at the URJ West Coast Forum on February 26: "Brit to Huppah: Welcoming individuals and families into congregational life thru lifecycle celebrations"

Panel presentation at MCC LA's all day March 5 conference: "Suicide in the Queer Community: A Day of Faith, Healing & Hope." Open to the public; for details go to [mccla.org](http://mccla.org).

# BCC's Virtual Minyan Connects

Bracha Yael

The Virtual Minyan is a unique BCC 'meet-up' that provides support and connectedness for people who are ill, homebound, out of town, living elsewhere including abroad, unaffiliated, or just looking for a small, welcoming community no farther away than their phone.

Primarily lay-led, grass roots and experimental, the Virtual Minyan provides an invigorating environment through Torah study, discussion topics, religious services, and social gatherings for exchanging ideas and personal stories. Events are held during the day by conference call, which is free—excluding any long distance charges from your personal carrier. To join in just dial 702-851-4044, when prompted punch in 2, then our pass code, 22252#.

We hold a weekly Torah study on Thursday afternoons from 4:00 to 5:00 pm. We now feature a guest scholar once a month from different parts of North America. On February 17, former BCC Rabbinic Intern, Rabbi Daniel Mikelberg kicked off this new tradition from his synagogue in Vancouver, Canada.

Rabbi Joe Hample, the Jewish chaplain at Pelican Bay State Prison near Crescent City, California (and also a former BCC Rabbinic Intern) leads our March 3rd study. Other upcoming guest scholars include Rabbis Lisa Edwards, Larry Edwards and Heather Miller along with Maggie Anton, best-selling author of the Rashi's Daughters trilogy.

Virtual Minyan classes include 'Passover Traditions and Remembrances,' a two-part series to be held April 5th and 12th, both from 2:00 to 3:00 pm. We'll discuss common Passover observances and share our favorite Passover memories.

Our lay-led fully participatory Shabbat and High Holy Day services are highlighted by personalized siddurim and machzorim (prayer books). We encourage you to submit a prayer, poem or other writing that you find particularly meaningful and would like included. The Virtual Minyan's first Shabbat service will be held later this spring; this year's HHD schedule is Rosh Hashanah first day, Sept. 29th, and Yom Kippur day, Oct. 8th.

Moving from 'virtual' to 'reality' for the first time, we inaugurated "Coffee 'n' Schmooze" on Valentine's Day, February 14th. It was a great success as ten of us kibitzed for almost two hours at the Colony Café in West LA. Due to its popularity we'll offer this every other month. Watch the BCC e-bulletin and website for upcoming dates of these and other happenings.

For additional information on how to participate or lead a Virtual Minyan event, please contact me at [bracha18y@gmail.com](mailto:bracha18y@gmail.com).



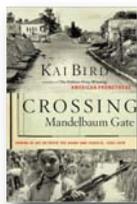
PHOTO BY TRACY MOORE

The Virtual Minyan coffee 'n' schmooze on Feb. 14, left to right: Evelyn Poplawski, Bracha Yael, Sarah Trutt, Jeanelle LaMance, Raquel Zabronski, Marsha Epstein, Ray Eelsing, Lea Rosendahl, Bob Adels.

## BCC Book Group

Larry Nathenson

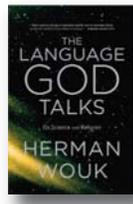
For more than fifteen years, BCC members and friends have gathered in private homes for monthly potluck brunches and discussion of books selected by the group. Fiction and non-fiction, historical and contemporary, American and Israeli, the books read by the group include something for everyone's tastes and interests. We welcome new members to the group, as well as occasional visitors who may be interested in discussing a particular book. Our next two meetings are:



Sunday, March 27, 10:00 a.m.

**Crossing Mandelbaum Gate, by Kai Bird**

Subtitled "Coming of Age Between the Arabs and Israelis," this memoir of an American diplomat's son examines his experiences and the wider history of the Arab-Israeli conflict in the years 1956-78 and beyond.



Sunday, April 24, 10:00 a.m.

**The Language God Talks, by Herman Wouk**

Described by LA Times reviewer Jonathan Kirsch as a philosophical memoir of Herman Wouk's attempt to reconcile Bible and Talmud with modern physics, both of which are "languages God talks."

BCC members and non-members alike are invited to attend. Because the discussions are held in members' homes, space is limited. Please RSVP to the BCC office early to guarantee your seat at the table, or contact Larry Nathenson at [Larrynath@aol.com](mailto:Larrynath@aol.com).

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3 4:00 pm Virtual Minyan Torah Study Rabbi Joe Hample 7:00 pm Torah Study Rabbi Edwards	4 6:00 pm Pre-Shabbat Dinner 8:00 pm Shabbat Service Robin Berkovitz Jeff Bernhardt	5 10:00 am Ohr Chayim 12:00 pm Family Shabbat
6 10:00 am 20s/30s Havurah Runyon Canyon hike/lunch 12:00 pm Women's Havurah Lunch (Natalee Thai) 6:30 pm Hebrew Class Todd Shotz	7	8	9 7:00 pm Executive Committee Meeting	10 4:00 pm Virtual Minyan Torah Study 7:00 pm Torah Study Rabbi Edwards	11 8:00 pm Shabbat Service Cantor Porat Elissa Barrett Gershick	12 9:15 am Parent and Me 10:00 am Ohr Chayim 12:00 pm Family Shabbat
13 8:00 am cook, 11:30 deliver Project Chicken Soup 3975 Landmark	14	15	16	17 4:00 pm Virtual Minyan Torah Study 7:00 pm Torah Study Rabbi Edwards	18 8:00 pm Shabbat Service Rabbi Edwards Cantor Porat	19 10:00 am Shabbat Morning Service and dairy potluck Purim Celebration 6:00 pm Family dinner 7:00 pm Havdalah, Megillah reading, etc.
20 PURIM 11:00 am (private home) Men's Havurah Purim Brunch 1:00 pm (private home) Women's Havurah Yiddish Sing-along	21	22	23 7:00 pm Board of Directors Meeting	24 4:00 pm Virtual Minyan Torah Study 7:00 pm Torah Study Rabbi Edwards	25 Ruach Chayim 7:00 pm Refreshments and schmooze 8:00 pm Shabbat Service Rabbi Edwards Cantor Porat Guest Musicians	26 10:00 am Ohr Chayim 12:00 pm Family Shabbat
27 8:00 am cook, 11:30 deliver Project Chicken Soup 10:00 am (private home) BCC Book Group Crossing Mandelbaum Gate Men's Havurah Moving Day	28	29	30	31 4:00 pm Virtual Minyan Torah Study 7:00 pm Torah Study Rabbi Edwards	<i>All events at BCC unless otherwise noted</i>	

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<i>All events at BCC unless otherwise noted - 6000 Pico until April 10<sup>th</sup>, 6090 Pico after April 10<sup>th</sup></i>					1 6:00 pm Pre-Shabbat Dinner 8:00 pm Shabbat Service Rabbi Edwards Cantor Porat	2 10:00 am Ohr Chayim 12:00 pm Family Shabbat
3 8:00 am cook, 11:30 deliver Project Chicken Soup 3975 Landmark	4	5 2:00 pm Virtual Minyan Passover Traditions and Remembrances	6	7 4:00 pm Virtual Minyan Torah Study 7:00 pm Torah Study Rabbi Edwards	8 8:00 pm Shabbat Service Rabbi Edwards Cantor Porat	9 9:15 am Parent and Me 10:00 am Ohr Chayim 12:00 pm Family Shabbat
10 2:00 pm New Building Dedication (start at 6000 Pico)	11	12 2:00 pm Virtual Minyan Passover Traditions and Remembrances	13 7:00 pm Executive Committee Meeting	14 Men's Havurah Downtown Art Walk 4:00 pm Virtual Minyan Torah Study 7:00 pm (at 6090 Pico) Torah Study Rabbi Edwards	15 8:00 pm (at 6090 Pico) Shabbat Service	16 10:00 am (at 6090 Pico) Shabbat Morning Service and dairy potluck
17 8:00 am cook, 11:30 deliver Project Chicken Soup 3975 Landmark	18 EREV PASSOVER FIRST SEDER	19 PASSOVER SECOND SEDER BCC Office Closed	20	21 4:00 pm Virtual Minyan Torah Study 7:00 pm (at 6090 Pico) Torah Study Rabbi Edwards	22 8:00 pm (at 6090 Pico) Shabbat Service Rabbi Edwards Cantor Porat Guest speaker Andrew Ramer ("Queering the Text")	23
24 9:00 am Women's Havurah Lancaster Poppy Reserve 10:00 am (private home) BCC Book Group 4:00 pm Yizkor Service followed by Pesach Poetry Slam and Matzo ball soup	25 PASSOVER - LAST DAY BCC Office Closed	26	27 7:00 pm Board of Directors Meeting	28 4:00 pm Virtual Minyan Torah Study 7:00 pm (at 6090 Pico) Torah Study Rabbi Edwards	29 Ruach Chayim (at 6090 Pico) 7:00 pm Refreshments and schmooze 8:00 pm Shabbat Service Rabbi Edwards Cantor Porat Guest Musicians	30 10:00 am (at 6090 Pico) Ohr Chayim 12:00 pm Family Shabbat