

MINYAN MONTHLY

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Tevet 5751

IN SERVICE OF OUR MEMBERS --Norman Saiger

I recently had the experience of helping a friend during the period of great sorrow at the loss of a husband. The family and close friends were the mainstay of support for the bereaving family, and I noticed also how important and helpful a role the family's synagogue played during the initial days and throughout the shiva period.

While we and our families should be healthy and well for many years to come, G-d willing, there are inevitably occasions when each of us may need the support of our synagogue and the Library Minyan. I did a little bit of checking with our senior Rabbi, Rabbi Rembaum, and with our Temple's Executive Director, Sonya Silverblatt, to find out what services are available from Temple Beth Am when a member has a death in the family.

First, we should all be aware that the Temple staff is available on a

24 hour basis if a need arises. During the daytime Sonya can be reached at 213-652-7353, and in the afterhours at 213-828-8872. Rabbi Rembaum can be reached also at the temple, and maintains a 24 hour line for messages at 213-277-7918.

The rabbinic staff is available to all members to discuss needs and family wishes in the case of a death. The synagogue maintains spaces at Eden Cemetary for the use of members (arrangements for burial are done through any of the local mortuaries). The synagogue also has special prayerbooks for use by members in their homes for shiva services, and the rabbis will help arrange for the conduct of services according to the desires of the family.

The Temple is currently sponsoring a seminar on the subject of death and dying titled "To Everything There Is a Season", on Sunday, February 10, 1991, at Temple Beth Am. Rabbi
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NO MICROPHONES FOR THE MINYAN

---Joel Grossman

In last month's Minyan Monthly, Lida Baker, a dedicated Minyan member to whom all members owe a great debt, has suggested that the Minyan begin using a microphone for shabbat and High Holiday services. Lida invited those with feelings on the issue to respond to her article, and I accept that invitation. I strongly disagree with Lida's proposal, and urge the Minyan not to alter its minhag (custom) of many years to conduct services without a microphone.

The use of a microphone on shabbat or Yom Tov raises important halachic, communal and aesthetic issues. I will not address the halachic issues in this article because it is clear to me that whatever my personal views may be, the Conservative movement, and the vast majority of Minyan members, do not see the use of a microphone as a halachic problem. I will, therefore, base my argument on other issues.

The communal issue is, in my view, of paramount importance. There are a number of Minyan members who are extremely uncomfortable with the use of a microphone on shabbat and Yom Tov. At a minimum, these members would decline any role in the Minyan which would require them personally to use the microphone. They would, therefore, be excluded from serving as schliach tzibbur, Torah reader, darshan, gabbai, and even from having an aliya. Many of the people those affected frequently serve in these roles. Some feel so strongly about the issue, they would stop coming to the Minyan altogether.

I see no reason why members should be excluded from the Minyan on this issue. The minyan (not to mention Orthodox synagogues) has functioned quite well without a microphone for years. The slim

benefits outlined by Lida do not outweigh the exclusions it would bring.

Moreover, I believe microphones should be barred on purely aesthetic grounds. Use of the microphone will lead to more, not less, talking and other noise. No one will feel constrained to keep his child quiet during the Torah Service, or to refrain from talking during the K'dusha when he/she knows that a\the microphone will let everyone hear about the din anyway.

The best example of this is our service on Purim night, when a microphone is used. The microphone relieves everyone of the duty to be quiet during the Megilla reading. Putting it simply, the aesthetic argument boils down to this: our Minyan has a beautiful tradition of silence during the service, including the Torah reading. The microphone will go a long way toward destroying that tradition.

Lida's article discusses her personal voice strain caused by leading services in the Mirror Room on the High Holidays. She asserts that the Shliach Tzibbur must shout the whole service to be heard. Respectfully, while this may be true of Lida's voice, it is not true of the many others who serve in this capacity. Along with Shelly Dorph, I have been assigning High Holiday services in the Minyan for ten years. Not one other Shliach Tzibbur has complained to me about the lack of a microphone, or declined to lead services because of the lack of a microphone.

To be fair, some members have complained that the acoustics in the Mirror Room are poor, and some have suggested that a microphone would help. To respond to this genuine concern, the committee has changed the logistics. I believe it helped

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MINYAN COMMITTEES/RESPONSIBILITIES

Chair, Steering Committee
 Robert Braun 838-4272
 Minyan Treasurer
 Norm Green 938-8110
 Reading Torah or Haftorah
 Lida Baker 934-3663
 Gabai'im-Shabbat/Holiday Services
 Torah Honors
 Michael Beals 657-5172
 Alan Broidy
 Sharon Kushner
 Dan Wolpe
 Drashot:
 Julia Arango 276-5083
 Torah Gabai'im
 Norman Saiger 837-5927
 Evan Greenspan 818-760-0774
 Ark Opening
 Betsy Hahn 657-8271
 Child Care
 Mark Bodenstein 937-7443
 Rachel Siegel 473-2029
 Judy Massarano 551-0162
 Kiddush
 Elka Tenner 932-0688
 Sharon Kushner
 Robin Moss
 Laurie Wallock
 Membership
 Michael Rogson 939-5124
 Mailing List
 Eddie Rabin 286-9567
 Minyan Guide
 Carl Sunshine 934-7889
 Minyan Monthly
 Susan Grinel 395-2572
 Ritual Committee
 Stan Goldstein 813-8100
 Scheduling Events-Master Calendar
 Lida Baker 934-3663

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR PURIM CARNIVAL

The 1991 Purim Carnival will be Sunday, March 3, 1991 (no parade this year--to give focus to a successful, exciting carnival environment). Volunteers are needed for the following:

1. Construction of newly-designed modular Purim booths;
2. Environmental design--we want to set up the area to look like a carnival "village";
3. Signs;
4. Costumed jesters (we supply the costume; you make a fool of yourself for a specified time slot);
5. Show up early and help set things up;
6. Stay (or come) late and help take things down and into locked storage area--so we have everything to use again the following year.

If you can help either before the Sunday event (items 1-4) or at the event (items 5 or 6), please call Barry Rosenblatt: (213) 939-4767 (h) (213) 922-5337 (w)

 subject, it seems that there are some of our members, and there may be others, who are willing to be available to help other families and members when the need arises at a death. If you wish to participate in such a program, or want to offer ideas on organizing committees in the service of the Minyan or the Temple, call either the Rabbi at the above number, or call me at home 213-837-5927, or at work 213-858-4634. The chances to perform some great mitzvot are possible.

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 Rembaum is the Keynote Speaker, and workshops will be held on a number of related topics including Jewish medical ethics, views on death and afterlife, steps to healing and contemporary views on death and dying. (More information is provided elsewhere in this mailing, or will be sent in the mail shortly). In my discussion with Rabbi Rembaum on this

--microphones cont'd
this year. There are other changes that could be tried, such as an elevated bima, before a microphone is introduced. Again, I think use of a microphone on the High Holidays would encourage talking, because the talkers would feel that their neighbors could hear anyway. Now, those who wish to talk are driven by k'vod hatzibbur to go outside first.

Finally, I invoke the concept of "minhog Yisrael K'din hu", an established custom is tantamount to a law. We in the Minyan have established the minhag of conducting a service without electronic amplification for many years. It is a lovely minhag, which hearkens back to a simpler, non-technological era, linking us to the thousands of communities who davened without microphones before microphones were invented. The members of those communities trained themselves, like the members of our Minyan have trained themselves, to be quiet so the Shliach Tzibbur, darshan or Torah reader could be heard. (Yes, I know, those communities also davened without air conditioning in the summer. I do not object to technology per se, only to technology which carries with it a significant human cost.)

To sum up: (1) We do not need a microphone; (2) The microphone's introduction will cause some members, for halachic reasons, to stop leading the service or even to stop coming to the Minyan; (3) Use of the microphone will destroy the self-discipline that keeps people quiet during davening and Torah reading; and (4) Our community has an established minhag of not using a microphone. For all these reasons, I urge the Minyan not to change its minhag on this important issue.

CHILD CARE NEWS
---Judy Massarano

Thank you to everyone who has been volunteering their time to help out with child care. A special thank you goes to the non-parent volunteers who realize that Shabbat and holiday child care is a community responsibility! These little ones are our future.

Generally, response to my phone calls for volunteers has been positive. A recent problem, though, is that occasionally someone will commit to a date and not show up. Though parents are in and out of the child care areas periodically, it is very important that there be an adult there for the entire timeslot of 10:30-12:00 on Saturdays and holidays. The babysitters, parents, and children need to know there is someone they can count on to remain in the room and in the yard during this time. So when you commit to a date, please mark and check your calendars, and SHOW UP!

Toda Raba

**THE LIBRARY MINYAN EXTENDS ITS
HEARTFELT CONDOLENCES TO:**

**RONNIE COHEN ON THE PASSING
OF HIS FATHER**

**TERI COHAN LINK ON THE PASSING
OF HER FATHER**

**PLEASE SEND YOUR ARTICLES
OR STORIES TO THE
MINYAN MONTHLY**

Submission Deadline
January 20, 1990

Mail to: Susan Grinel
1127 11th St. #204
Santa Monica, California
90403

**LIBRARY MINYAN SPONSORS SOVIET
JEWISH FAMILY**

The Library Minyan was recently asked by Jewish Family Service (JFS) to sponsor a Soviet Jewish family that is currently living in Moscow and wishing to come to Los Angeles. Because the acceptance had to be given to HIAS and the State Department very quickly, I polled the Executive Committee of the Minyan and announced it at the Minyan on Shabbat.

Lyudmilla Orlovskaya and Roman Zverev

I am pleased to inform you that the Minyan will be sponsoring Lyudmilla Orlovskaya and her 18 year old son Roman Zverev. Lyudmilla and Roman have wonderful skills which should assist them in their resettlement in Los Angeles. Lyudmilla is an English teacher and speaks fluent English. Roman is a very talented artist/political cartoonist who has already had a number of his cartoons published in the South Bay's newspaper Easy Reader. That paper also did a feature story on Roman. Anyone wishing to see the story can contact Miriam Prum Hess.

The family has already been granted Refugee Status by the U.S. State Department and are only awaiting our invitation in order to come to the U.S. (a process which will take approximately 6 months.)

Committee Forming

Sponsorship of a Soviet Jewish family is a serious commitment that entails both financial as well as human resources. Thirteen Minyan members have already volunteered to serve on a committee to assist with their resettlement. Additional people are needed. Please call Miriam Prum Hess at (h)839-5574 or (w)653-8410 to let her know if you are interested in joining the committee and if you can join us at the first committee meeting which will take place:

Wednesday, January 9, 1991

8 PM

home of Miriam and Mark Hess
8963 W. 25th St. (E. of
Robertson and N. of
Beverlywood)

Everyone's Assistance is Needed

Sponsorship entails a financial commitment of between \$5-7,000. Norm Green, the Minyan's treasurer, will be collecting sponsorship contributions. Please mail your donation today (made out to the Library Minyan) to:

Norm Green
1172 Hi Point Street
Los Angeles, CA 90035

If every family contributes between \$25 and \$100 we will be able to reach our goal.

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Please mail to: Norm Green, 1172 Hi Point, Los Angeles, CA 90035

Yes, I would like to help resettle the Orlovskaya/Zverev family.

___ Attached is my contribution in the amount of \$_____.

___ I would like to serve on the committee.

Name_____

Address_____ City_____ Zip_____

Phone (h)_____ (w)_____

SOVIET JEWISH FAMILY (continued)

Listed below is the cost breakdown:

- 1) \$3,350 is needed by JFS as a guarantee for the family. This money is held in trust until the family arrives and is then distributed to them for their living expenses over a 4 month period. (\$1,400 the first month and \$650 each of the following three months.)
- 2) \$100 in fees are required to certify the U.S. letters of invitation.
- 3) Approximately \$1400 will be needed for apartment rental expenses (i.e. first month's rent and deposits.)
- 4) It is possible that additional funds might also be needed if we do not receive donations of furniture and household items to help them set up their apartment.

Resettlement Responsibilities

Listed below are the non-financial obligations that we will have toward the family's resettlement:

- 1) Securing an apartment for the family and connecting all utilities.
- 2) Setting up the apartment with basic furniture and household items.
- 3) Meeting the family when they arrive at the airport.
- 4) Transporting them from the airport to their apartment.
- 5) Providing transportation to Jewish Family Service appointments and to referral appointments for medical screening, job counselling, Social Security, etc.
- 6) Helping them to actively look for jobs and understand the Los Angeles job market.
- 7) Helping them to acculturate to life in Los Angeles.
- 8) Inviting them for Shabbat and Holiday meals and celebrations.

As you can see the responsibilities are numerous, which is why a strong and large committee is so important.

With everyone's help at the Minyan, we will truly be able to participate first hand in the "mitzvah of Pikuach Nefesh" saving a life.