

November, 2021 (5782)

Mendocino Coast Jewish Community

MEGILLAH

The MCJC shul is located at 15071 Caspar Road, Caspar, CA.
Send mail to P.O. Box 291, Little River, CA 95456. website: <http://www.mcjc.org>

Call the MCJC at (707) 964-6146
email: sarah.nathe@gmail.com

RABBI'S NOTES



My sabbatical is three weeks old and it's had a couple of chapters already. First I slept for a week in my red chair and read four crappy mysteries. I knew that I had to rest for a week before I made any plans. On the seventh day, which was a Thursday, I suddenly found myself feeling a little restless for the first time. What do I want to do today?

I took a stitching class at the Art Center for three days. Lovely. Then I drove south to visit my parents, which was all the things that a family visit is. Now I'm out in the desert at Joshua Tree.

Today nobody needs anything from me. I can eat when I want, drink coffee when I want. I can go back to sleep if I feel like it. Even though there are beautiful walks to take all around me, no one cares if I walk or don't. No one knows where I am. Well that's not quite true, but in the minute-to-minute of the day, I am in charge of myself. No one needs anything from me.

In addition to the four mysteries, I read one and a half books that have moved me deeply. The first one was *Finding the Mother Tree* by Suzanne Simard. The second, which I'm only partway through, is *On Freedom: Four Songs of Care and Constraint* by Maggie Nelson.

Suzanne Simard is the plant biologist who has done some well-known research on the interconnectedness of plants in the forest. She began her career in forestry, helping loggers to clear-cut forests and then re-plant quick-growing monocultures. But often the replanted forests didn't do well. Simard began to ask why these new trees didn't survive. She noticed that the root tips of trees actually connect with an underground network of fungus—mycelium—that spreads broadly across the forest floor. By means of this network, water and nutrients are moved from plant to plant. It was assumed that trees do better if their environment isn't cluttered with other trees and plants sucking up scarce resources, but Simard presents a very different picture. The forest, or any plant community, is not competitive for resources; it is cooperative and communicative.



As I was reading Simard, I found myself thinking of the human community as well. Like many of us, I tend to think of society, of politics especially, as being “red in tooth and claw.” I listen to the news every day and it's easy to think this world as a battleground for scarce resources, a field upon which people compete for resources. It's a fight for sunlight in dark woods where only the tallest and most vigorous constituents have a chance at survival.

I'm rethinking that picture of the human community now. I shouldn't overlook the myriad ways in which we need each other and nourish each other. I'm thinking about all the ways that I am nourished by other people, very much including all of you. And that doesn't include the ways that I am nourished by the underground fungi that sustains the world of plants and animals, and consequently all of us.

I recognize the role of news and headlines and punditry in creating a world in which other people seem to be dangerous, either purposefully or accidentally. Humans do commit violence against each another, but there is also a great deal of mutual sustenance. It's rarely newsworthy, however, and it doesn't sell product—from home security systems to guns to gated enclaves. I'm rethinking my tendency to overlook the generosity and the plenty of human society. I am reflecting on the network of care and communication and mutual sustenance that is so much part of my everyday life.

In ***On Freedom*** the always/brilliant and astonishing Maggie Nelson probes the difference between the kind of freedom where no one needs me and no one gets anything from me, and the ethics of care. She is a complicated thinker and has no simple answers, but she talks about a space between doing whatever you want and seeing to the obligations of family and community and society. She speaks of freedom as a practice, not a condition—as a never-ending set of paradoxes and complications.

During COVID lockdown most of us felt terribly constrained. We weren't able to be free in the usual ways that we think about being free. We had to stay home. If we ventured out, we had to wear masks. When vaccines became available, they were required for entry in many settings. In response, we've been treated to childish assertions of freedom from people who do not acknowledge the legitimate needs of other people. Most of us, I hope, reject that simplistic notion of freedom.

But the needs of other people, while important, can also sometimes be very constraining. How do we find our space? Even here all by myself in my desert Airbnb, I am sustained by the innkeeper, the house cleaner, the grocery store, the groceries, the Internet, my ability to pay for this place, and by all of you who make that possible. Not to mention the air, the water, the earth, the sun.



So I circle back to that question of what I want to do today. For the next six months? For the rest of my life? Nelson writes, "Caring and coercion often exist in a knot, with their extrication never simple, nor sometimes even possible."

I love the feeling of being able to do what I want when I want without having to consult anybody else, without having to care. I love it for a day or two, but then I need some connection. I'm interested in that space between freedom and coercion, that place of being one tree and still being part of a large interconnected and mutually dependent tangle.

What is my soul work? As my sabbatical gets going, I remember that some of it is solo work. I tend to get lost in other people's crises and sadness and, in trying to make joy and meaning and community for other people. My sabbatical gives me an opportunity to step back from that—to focus on myself as a separate person with my own wants and my own needs. But that's not the end of this story. In order to sustain and be sustained, I need to understand the ways in which I am a separate tree and the ways in which I am part of the hundred-acre wood. I am grateful for the opportunity to go deeper into the forest and I plan to keep you posted on my discoveries.

SAVE THE DATE FOR THIS PARTY!



BIG VIRTUAL HANUKKAH PARTY

December 5th, 4:00 PM

We will light all eight candles and celebrate together with songs, stories, a learned teaching by Raven, and dance to our own local klezmer band, The Klezmishpochah.

Hosted by Harriet and Larry **on ZOOM**.

Starting on November 28th, there will be candle lighting every night of Hanukkah at 5:30 PM. Different hosts will play with fire and sing. Polish up your menorah!



Look for more information in upcoming emails.

HANUKKAH FEST 2021



Join the Jewish Film Institute for a special Hanukkah film fest: eight days of outstanding movies. Celebrate the Feast of Lights with some “Best of the Fest” titles from the most recent Jewish Film Festival, new films, and the first-ever Filmmaker-In-Residence LIVE Pitch & Kvell event!

Streaming from November 28th to December 6th; tickets on sale starting on October 28th at jewishfilm@jfi.org. For updates on all their programs, follow the JFI on social media.

SHABBAT MORNING SERVICES

A full Shabbat service is led by community members, with singing, chanting and silence, Torah teaching and reading, blessings for healing and peace, and time for mourners to say Kaddish. Zoom in for any or all of the service from 10:30 AM until about 12:30 PM. See the Zoom address in the article below

11/06/21	Toldot	Laura Goldman
11/13/21	Vayetzei	Lew Mermelstein
11/20/21	Vayishlach	Bob Evans
11/27/21	Vayeshev	To Be Announced

Members of the community are invited to give a Torah teaching (*drash*) during a Shabbat service. If you have an interest in performing this mitzvah, or would like more information about what's involved, please contact Raven Deerwater at raven@taxpractitioner.com or 937-1099.

ZOOM ADDRESS

We are using the Zoom address below for all MCJC events. You may or may not be asked to type in a password, which is *shalom*. Disregard the numeric passcode at the bottom of the invitation unless you're dialing in on a landline.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7071836183?pwd=NzFaTkpjOXVYMDNnNnprOXInZjVhQT09>

Meeting ID: 707 183 6183

Passcode: *shalom*

One tap mobile

+16699006833,,7071836183#,,,,*776001# US (San Jose)

+13462487799,,7071836183#,,,,*776001# US (Houston)

Dial by your location

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)

Meeting ID: 707 183 6183;

Numeric Passcode: 776001

SPECIAL DELIVERY

A woman goes into the post office to buy stamps for her Hanukkah cards. She says to the clerk, "May I have 25 Hanukkah stamps, please." "What denomination?" asks the clerk.

The woman says, "Oy vey, has it come to this? Okay, I need five orthodox, eight conservative, and twelve reform."

ELDERS' CONVERSATION

The Elders meet every second and fourth Tuesday of the month, 3:00-4:30 PM on Zoom. We will meet November 9th and 23rd. Each time we take up a theme we've selected at the prior meeting and explore it in a personal and honest way, sharing our life experiences and our present thoughts and feelings. People of all ages are most welcome. Use the MCJC Zoom address on page 3. If you need more information, let Linda Jupiter (jupiter@mcn.org) or Joy Lancaster (ajoylancaster@gmail.com) know.



MCJC JUSTICE GROUP



The Justices meet on the second Thursday of each month. The next meeting is on Thursday, November 11th from 5:30 to 7:30 pm on Zoom. If you would like to be on the Justice Group mailing list or attend meetings, please contact Judy Stavely at judyst@mcn.org or Nancy Harris at nancyh@mcn.org. Everyone is welcome to attend.

We want to describe the process the group uses to decide on a project and detail some (not all) of our accomplishments over the last five years.

From Passion to Project: how we get organized to take on an issue

A person comes to a Justice Group meeting with an area of concern, however developed or undeveloped, and shares it with the group and get an initial sense of the general interest. If it seems that there is some interest, the person can ask for one or two people to collaborate with during the next month, or proceed alone to answer these questions:

- Describe the need(s) that this project addresses;
- Define the concrete objectives of the project;
- How does it link with the Justice Group's Statement of Principles?
- Can it be done? What are the main obstacles anticipated?
- Task list and timeline of major activities;
- Budget.

At the next meeting, two questions will be asked:

- Who is committed enough to work on this?
- Who will be on the CORE COMMITTEE responsible for completing the project?

If it is clear that there is enough general interest AND core leadership, the project is approved.

Five years of accomplishments and actions

- The Citizen Scholarship Project raised over \$40,000 for scholarships, awarded 35 \$725.00 scholarships and has funds for 18 more
- Sponsored two public events with Judy Stavely recounting her experiences on the 75 mile walk on the Migrant Trail from Sásabe, Sonora, Mexico to Tucson, Arizona;
- Wrote letters and helped coastal residents write letters to protest the draconian changes to the Public Charge Rules and to protest the roll back of the 1997 Flores Agreement which protects children from detention in unsafe and jail-like conditions;
- Wrote letters and helped coastal residents write letters demanding changes to the policy of separating children from their parents at the U.S./Mexican border;
- Raised funds for, and sent supplies to *Cajitas Calientitas* (Shoeboxes of Warmth), a project that helped asylum-seeking children living in tents on the Rio Grande River at the Matamoros Encampment in Mexico.
- Raised over \$4,000 for Safe Passage during the pandemic;
- Wrote postcards and made phone calls for Reclaim Our Vote, a non-partisan organization empowering under-represented voters by fighting voter suppression.
- Secured free firewood from the Little River Airport for those in need of wood for heat.

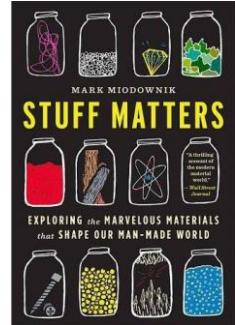


HAVE A CUP!

Join your friends for a virtual cup of coffee or tea every Wednesday at 10:30 AM. Check in with community members and chat about anything and everything from your recent trip and the state of the union, to memories of briskets in your past. Leslie Krongold is the host and welcomes your questions and comments any time at elkrong@yahoo.com. Use the Zoom address mentioned on page 3.

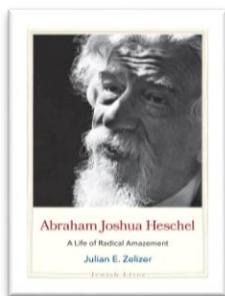
BOOK GROUP

We will meet Monday, November 15th at 2:00 PM on Zoom, and in person at the shul, to discuss ***Stuff Matters: Exploring the Marvelous Materials That Shape Our World*** by Mark Miodownik. Why is glass see-through? What makes elastic stretchy? Why does any material look and behave the way it does? These are the sorts of questions that the materials scientist Miodownik constantly asks himself. He studies objects as ordinary as an envelope and as unexpected as concrete cloth, uncovering the fascinating secrets that hold together our physical world. In ***Stuff Matters***, Miodownik explores the materials he encounters in a typical morning, from the steel in his razor to the foam in his sneakers. Full of enthralling tales of the miracles of engineering that permeate our lives, ***Stuff Matters*** will make you see your world in a whole new way.



Please contact Fran at franbschwartz@gmail.com for Zoom invitations and/or directions to the meetings. More copies of the book will arrive shortly at the Gallery Bookshop.

AN ASTONISHING LIFE



The ink is still wet on the newest addition to the excellent *Jewish Lives* series from Yale University Press: a comprehensive biography of Abraham Joshua Heschel. From his 1965 march with Martin Luther King Jr. in Selma to this day, Rabbi Heschel has been a symbol of progressive Jewish values relevant in the secular world. In ***Abraham Joshua Heschel: A Life of Radical Amazement***, author Julian E. Zelizer explores Heschel's early years and foundational influences: his childhood in Warsaw and early education in Hasidism; his studies in Berlin in the late 1920s and early 1930s; the fortuitous opportunity that got him out of Germany in the nick of time and brought him to the United States to study at Hebrew Union College and then teach at the Jewish Theological Seminary. This complex portrait places Heschel at the intersection of religion and social justice in mid-twentieth-century America. Zelizer is professor of history and public affairs at Princeton. They will happily order copies of the book at the Gallery Bookshop.

CONTRIBUTE TO MCJC

At this time of year, we reach out to everyone who is a member of our Jewish Community, either here on the coast or Zooming in from all over the country, to remind you that we rely greatly on your generosity to help keep MCJC strong. Please make a financial contribution before the end of the calendar year.

This year your support is especially important. Because we were not able to hold our annual fundraising dinner and silent auction, we are likely to end the year with a deficit. If you have already given, **thank you** very much, but if you ever felt like adding a bit more to your donation, this would be the perfect time. If you normally attended the fundraiser, you might consider a special donation to replace the amount you might have spent at the event. If the annual dinner wasn't your thing, it's still lotsa fun to put a few shekels in an envelope for dear old MCJC.



You can mail your donations to MCJC, Box 291, Little River, CA 95456, or use PayPal on the MCJC website. When you make a donation in memory or honor of someone, an acknowledgment card will be sent to the individual or family if you include their name and mailing address when you inform Donna Montag at montag@mcn.org

MCJC BOARD MEETING

The MCJC board meets monthly at 5:00 PM, these days on ZOOM. The November meeting will take place on Tuesday, the 16th. If you wish to attend part of the meetings, please contact board member Susan Tubbessing at 962-0565, or susan.tubbessing@gmail.com, and efforts will be made to patch you in.

NEWSLETTER THANK YOU

We are very grateful to Julie and Bob Melendi and their daughter, Amy Easton, for preparing the October **Megillah** for mailing. Many hands make light work! If you volunteer for a future folding, stamping, and mailing project, you can do it at your desk or dining room table, or another spot of your choosing, in about two hours. Please contact Sarah at 962-0565 or sarah.nathe@gmail.com

MEGILLAH SUBSCRIPTIONS

The Mendocino **Megillah** is published in three formats: hardcopy, emailed PDF, and online. You can subscribe to the hardcopy version and have it mailed to you or receive it by email. The online **Megillah** is posted on the newsletter page of the MCJC website: www.mcjc.org/newsletter.

Any information on changes in mailing address, changes in email address, and changes in email notifications should be sent to Sarah Nathe at sarah.nathe@gmail.com. If you choose not to be a contributing member of MCJC, we request a \$25 annual fee for the **Megillah** hardcopy or email.

GREAT THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING DONORS



Diana Corbin; Jane Corey; Rachel Lahn & Jim Young; Tracy Salkowitz & Rick Edwards; Linda Jupiter; Ronnie James; Diana Douglas; Sandy Glickfeld; dobbby sommer; Devora Rossman; Merry Winslow & Teddy Winslow; Bob Evans; Lew Mermelstein; Kath Disney Nilson; Dorothy Asbury; Joan & Paul Katzeff; Myra Beals; Marinela Miclea; Marc & Jan Wasserman; Henrietta Bensussen; Fran Schwartz; Clare Bercot Zwerling; Harvey Hoechstetter & Lari Shea; Mary Fineman; Julie Byers; Elias Steinbuck; Rosalie & Art Holub; Dawn Hofberg & Bob Schlosser; Lilian Cartwright; Linda Leyva; David Minkus; Linda & windflower Shear Townley; Joy Lancaster & Marty Friedman; Laura Goldman & Dennak Murphy; Margaret & Eric Super; Ronnie Kemper & Lance Johansen; Estrella Allen; Yarrow Rubin & Miles Clark; Chaya Mandelbaum;

Fran Schwartz in memory of Ruth Alpern Leipziger, her mother, on her 40th yahrzeit.

Jonathan & Annette Lehan in memory of Jean Garrett;

Benna Kolinsky and Danny Mandelbaum in honor of Rabbi Margaret Holub and her team;
Robert & Carol Kafin in honor of Alicia, Peter, Ben & Toby Kafin;

Theresa Glasner Morales: in appreciation of Rabbi Margaret Holub, the Board and the community of MCJC;
Carol Wilder in honor of Rabbi Holub.

EDITORIAL POLICY

The **Mendocino Megillah** is published monthly. The deadline for article submission is the 15th of the month before publication. The editor will include all appropriate material, space permitting, with the exception of copyrighted material lacking the permission of the author. Divergent opinions are welcome. Material printed in the **Megillah** does not necessarily represent the policy or opinions of the MCJC Board of Directors.

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Karen Bowers Studio: Painting workshops and studio gallery. Website: karenbowersstudio.com
Email: hightp@mcn.org Tel: 707 937-3163.

Frankie's Pizza and Ice Cream Parlor: Homemade pizzas, Cowlick's ice cream, and other yummy things to nosh on. Beer and wine available. Open every day but Monday from 1:00 pm - 7:00 pm at 44951 Ukiah Street, Mendocino, 937-2436. www.frankiesmendocino.com

Out of this World: Telescopes, binoculars, & science toys. 45100 Main Street, Box 1010, Mendocino. 937-3335. www.OutofThisWorldShop.com. Serving all your interplanetary needs since 1988.

Rainsong Shoes: Shoes & accessories for men & women. Two locations: Mendocino and Healdsburg. 937-1710 (Mendocino), 433-8058 (Healdsburg). www.rainsongshoes.com

Raven Deerwater, EA, PhD: Tax practitioner. Specializing in families, home-based & small businesses, & non-profit organizations. 45121 Ukiah Street, Box 1786, Mendocino. 937-1099. Email: raven@taxpractitioner.com Website: www.taxpractitioner.com

Rhoda Teplow Designs: Original jewelry created with beads from around the world, specializing in brass from Ghana, silver from Israel, and lapis, turquoise and coral from Tibet/Nepal. Box 453, Mendocino CA 95460. 964-2787. Email: rteplow@mcn.org

Thanksgiving Coffee Co: Local roasters on the Mendocino Coast for over three decades. Certified organic, shade grown coffee & Fair Trade Coffees. Box 1918, Fort Bragg, 95437. (800) 462-1999. www.thanksgivingcoffee.com

Tonk's Tree Service: Hazardous removals, spurless pruning, arborist reports, stump grinding, 60' aerial lift, view and sun improvement. Owner-operated, licensed & insured. Tatanka Russell, certified arborist WE-9236A, lic. no. 798911. 964-6209, Email: tonk@mcn.org

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MCJC Board & Useful Numbers (* = board member)

Rituals and Holidays (including Chevra Kadisha/cemetery)	Joan Katzeff	964-9161	jkatzeff@mcn.org
Outreach (new to the community), Finance Committee, Chai on Coast	Susan Tubbesing*	962-0565	susan.tubbesing@gmail.com
Culture & Education (films/ speakers/ classes/ Women's Retreat/ Chai on Coast)	Harriet Bye*	937-3622	bysawyer@mcn.org
Treasurer (finance and donations)	Donna Montag*	877-3243	montag@mcn.org
Kabbalat Shabbat coordinator	Mina Cohen	937-1319	mcohen@mcn.org
Volunteer Coordinator	Susan Levenson-Palmer	882-1750	slevensonpalmer@gmail.com
Building Maintenance	Marnie Press*	937-1905	marniepress@gmail.com
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Name & Address, Subscription Changes	Sarah Nathe	962-0565	sarah.nathe@gmail.com
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Rabbi	Margaret Holub	on sabbatical	

