



## “No Plastic is Fantastic”

By David Marcus

*The co-chairperson of Hod Ve-Hadar's Fundraising and Special Projects Committee reports on our new "Green" Initiative - the Eco-Judaism Project*

**K**ehillat Hod ve-Hadar recently launched its Eco-Judaism initiative. Under the slogan “No Plastic is Fantastic,” the first project involved setting up an information booth at the Arim Mall in Kfar Saba. Here, thousands of shoppers on a busy Friday morning were invited by enthusiastic Hod ve-Hadar members to learn about the initiative aimed at drastically reducing the use of plastic bags. These bags cause pollution and unsightly litter, and are responsible for creating an environmental disaster, particularly for marine life. Samples of alternative, environmentally-friendly

bags were on display and more than 50 were purchased by the citizens of Kfar Sava, a city of 90,000 people.

We believe that using these alternative bags will improve the environment in the city, a step that each one of us can take. Our Eco-Judaism campaign is a “tikkun olam” project, one of several marking our 30 years as a Masorti congregation in Kfar Sava. The project has been embraced by congregants of all ages. For example, Noam Siegel helped us design the roll-up poster for our booth as part of his Bar Mitzvah project. It’s gratifying to see congregants from ages 8 to 80 join the campaign.

At the booth, shoppers encountered two impressive six-foot tall roll-up posters highlighted by dramatic pictures, persuasive text and a beautifully designed Hod ve-Hadar Eco-Judaism logo. Our

members distributed information sheets in Hebrew, English and Russian, explaining the benefits of using the alternative, multiple-use bags. We told the public about the damage caused to the environment by the tremendous overuse of plastic bags, for example: 14,000,000 plastic bags are used every day in Israel and it takes 500 years for one plastic bag to decompose. We encouraged people to hang up the fact sheet in their apartment building or in their place of employment. In addition, our project stresses the vital connection between Jewish tradition and preservation of the environment.

“Our goal is to preserve the environment in Israel,” explained former Chicagoan Batya Malichi, who, with Anney Soronow, heads the committee of volunteers. “The booth is only the beginning.” The congregation plans on hosting a lecture series with top environmental experts whose theme will be the connection between Jewish tradition and safeguarding the environment in Israel. We hope similar booths will be set up in other places around Kfar Sava, and then in the neighboring city of Ra’anana, in the coming months. In addition, we plan to sponsor creative workshops where children will be given the opportunity to decorate multiple-use bags.

The Kfar Saba municipality has given its blessing to the congregation’s



*David Marcus & Batya Malichi man the Eco-Judaism booth at the Kfar Saba mall*

activities. "You are doing Avodat Kodesh (Holy work) and it's very important to continue your fine efforts," said Meir Elkayam, Manager of the Department of Environmental Quality in Kfar Saba. The Mayor of Kfar Saba, Yehuda ben Hamo, is also a strong supporter of our green initiative.

"We hope that these activities will generate a wave of increased awareness about the importance of protecting our environment in Kfar Saba, Ra'anana and in the entire Sharon area," said Rabbi Lionel Levy, who has delivered several excellent sermons on an Eco-Judaism theme in the past month. "Hod ve-Hadar will continue to emphasize how Judaism instructs all of us to be the guardians of our environment."

Veteran Hod ve-Hadar member Rabbi Dov Edelstein found the following quote which is highlighted in all the materials we display and hand out to the public:

*When G-d created Adam, He took him and showed him all the trees of Paradise, and said to him: See my handiwork, how beautiful and perfect they are? All I had created, I created for your enjoyment. Consider it well, so that you do not ruin and destroy my world, for if you spoil it there shall be no one after you to rectify it.* (קוהלת רבה"ס)

Last but not least, this is a volunteer effort by the members of Hod ve-Hadar. We have established an Eco-Judaism project fund and we need and welcome your financial support to properly host and run

all these activities. We are the first Conservative/Masorti synagogue in Israel and perhaps the first synagogue in the country to initiate an active campaign to bring ecological issues to the consciousness of the Israeli public. If you would like to help us and make a donation to our Eco-Judaism fund that would be terrific and most appreciated!

Please make your check payable to Foundation for Conservative Judaism in Israel (it is deductible for U.S. and Israeli tax purposes) and send to: Kehillat Hod ve-Hadar POB 516, Kfar Sava Israel 44104 ISRAEL. Either write on the check or send a note that the check is ear-marked for the Hod ve-Hadar Eco-Judaism project. Thank you! ♦

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## Masorti Movement holds largest Annual Conference Ever

By Jack Shochat

In late December the Masorti Movement in Israel (the sister organization of the Conservative Movement in the U.S.) celebrated its 30th anniversary with an annual conference at Kfar HaMaccabia in Ramat Gan. With over 1,000 people in attendance, it was the largest annual conference ever held by the Movement. As such, it reflected the growing strength of the Masorti Movement in Israel, which now numbers over 60 congregations and 40,000 members.

Spread over two days, the conference included a number of parallel study sessions both on Thursday afternoon and Friday morning, afternoon prayers in Sephardic style, as well as the plenary session on Thursday evening and the general meeting and elections of new officers for the coming year on Friday.

The study sessions were unusually

varied this year and included:

- Spiritual Leadership and the Image of the Rabbi in the Changing World
- Halachic Pluralism: is there such a Thing?
- Art as a Creative Midrash
- Egalitarian Sephardic Congregations (a new phenomenon)
- The Masorti Movement and Israeli Society: Will the two go Together?

At the plenary session Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Shimon Peres, President of Israel, sent their blessings to members of the Movement. President Peres stated that The Masorti Movement has succeeded in encouraging the values of renewal and creativity alongside the values of tradition and Jewish heritage ... and it is characterized by its commitment to Zionism and its adoption of modern values while at

the same time conserving the heritage of our fathers.

In addition to the addresses from the outgoing chairman and other dignitaries, the Movement gave special awards both to several outstanding individuals, as well as to one person from each congregation. Hod Ve-Hadar had selected Mordechai Zur, past president and active member of the congregation for over 20 years, to receive the HVH letter of recognition.

Besides this and other volunteer work as a long-time president of Rotary, Mordechai and his wife Ziporra were known especially for their tremendous efforts in helping new olim from all over the world get acclimated to Israel.

Unfortunately, and ironically, Mordechai finally succumbed to a long illness just a few days before the conference. The letter of commendation was accepted in his

name by two of his grandchildren, Maya and Itamar.

Barry Shlesinger, Rabbi of the Moreshet Avraham congregation in East Talpiot, Jerusalem, states that “the difference between us and Orthodox Judaism is that we look more critically at the Shulchan Aruch (the code of Jewish law). We are willing to go back to the sources,

to the Talmud, to the early rabbinic authorities to reinterpret the Halacha. The most obvious example is the role of women. They are full participants, not just in prayer and Torah reading, but also as rabbis who make halachic decisions.”

This approach seems to have gained tremendous acceptance within Israeli society, with a recent poll showing

that 87% of the Jewish population in Israel wants full equality between the genders in Halacha. Perhaps the surprising results of this survey, coupled with the tremendous energy and enthusiasm that was evident at the 30th annual conference, portend a significant growth in the Movement’s activities and membership in the coming years. ♦

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## Hod ve-Hadar: a 30 year old congregation that's growing

By Natan Brosztein and Elisabeth Guth

*Our co-chairpersons reflect on our congregation, at the conclusion of their first year in office*

**A**fter a year as leaders of our wonderful congregation, only now are we beginning to realize what a vision the founders of our congregation had. They began meeting for prayer in a family-style atmosphere at people’s homes, and were courageous in deciding to realize the dream of a building. We are today enjoying the fruits of the labor of the founder generation, with the responsibility of having our own visions and dreams.

We have to ask ourselves: Where do we stand today, what are our goals for the coming years? We must look at the past with pride, deal with the present with enthusiasm and set our goals for the future.

As a 240 family member congregation, we are one of the five largest Masorti congregations in Israel, the biggest in the Sharon area. Our activities are daily and range from services (on Shabbat, holidays, Alternative and Children’s), to Jewish study groups in Hebrew and English, to yoga, folk dancing, bridge and many more projects for all age groups. Our latest project is being the first conservative congregation in Israel to get deeply involved in Eco-Judaism,

joining in a city campaign to become a plastic bag-free city and giving people the opportunity to learn more about the Jewish roots of how to protect our environment through lectures on the issue.

More than 60 girls and boys are called up to the Torah every year, many of them coming from the broader community. We see those Bnei Mitzva as a major outreach project, providing a Masorti Jewish family-oriented education to a population that is not generally exposed to a synagogue environment. Many of those families return for other life cycle events, choose to attend services on a holiday or to take part in some educational or social activity that takes place at Hod Ve-Hadar. They come to us out of choice, not because there is no other option.

Looking at our sizable congregation with our own building one may think: “We are established and the big work is behind us”. However, we, as leaders of the congregation, have a different viewpoint. Yes, the founders, many of them still active members of Hod Ve-Hadar, had a vision and worked hard to achieve what we are today. But, it is now our turn to ensure that we don’t forget the needs of the individual member, to ensure the feeling of belonging, thus maintaining the spirit of volunteerism. We must

enlarge our range of activities to meet the changing needs of a fast-changing society. Our goal is to reach out to people in the neighborhood, the city and the area, to make Masorti Judaism a known factor and option and not an exotic way of being Jewish.

Still today, we receive no government funding, our movement is not accepted as an integral part of Israeli society; hence, we have to constantly raise funds to enable us to develop and run programs, to maintain our building, and also to embrace potential members who are needy themselves. We try our utmost to cover these expenses with internal resources, but we are still dependent on donations and are truly grateful that in the last years we could count on many dear friends for support.

This is the place to mention, that other than part-time administration, a part-time Educational director and the Bar/Bat Mitzvah program, Hod Ve-Hadar operates as a volunteer organization. This includes leading services and writing and delivering sermons, even on the High Holidays.

Dear friends, whenever you plan a trip to Israel, please come visit us. We would be more than happy and proud to host you. It is important for us to share with you what we are doing. Hag Pesach Sameach v’Kasher! ♦

# In Memoriam: Mordechai Zur (1923-2007)

By Jeri Hahn-Markowitz



*Mordechai z"l and  
Zippora Zur*

*A congregant who was integral in life at Hod Ve-Hadar over the years will be sorely missed.*

Mordechai Zur was perhaps the person most responsible for my becoming involved in the congregation in Hod Ve-Hadar. In 1985, recently returned from a sabbatical in Argentina, he was Chairperson and approached me, asking if I'd be willing to join the Board, chairing the Education and Events committee. That year we held a study group around Mordechai's and his wife Zippora's dining room table.

Very distinguishable from all other congregants, firstly because he was our "elder statesman", Mordechai also had a unique European-sabra charm.

Orphaned in WWII, he came to Palestine with youth aliya in 1939 from Slovakia. He enlisted in the army in 1941 and, upon his discharge, Mordechai was brought to study in a seminar in Jerusalem, together with others who had not been able to take matriculation tests. There he met Zippora, and for the next few years he combined study, courting and fighting in the War of Independence. During the second pause in the war, Mordechai and Zippora were married in Jerusalem.

When their two older sons were

little, Mordechai studied mathematics and education at The Hebrew University in Jerusalem. In 1963, the family traveled to New York, where Mordechai studied at Columbia University, receiving a doctorate in mathematics education.

Upon returning to Israel, he was appointed director of The Ministry of Education in Jerusalem. In this position, Mordechai developed many teaching colleges and was in a group that determined mathematics education in elementary schools, including producing learning materials.

After a year as Visiting Lecturer at the University of Houston, Mordechai was offered the position of director of Beit Berl College. Zippora, Mordechai and their youngest son Eran moved to Kfar Saba and Mordechai was instrumental in Beit Berl's development from a seminar into a college (he was later appointed Chairman of its School of Education, a position he maintained until his retirement).

In 1980, as Eran's Bar Mitzvah approached, the Zur's looked for a non-Orthodox synagogue to join. Their neighbor Dena Matmon told them

about a very small, young congregation: Hod Ve-Hadar.

They became involved immediately, offering their home for

study sessions and meetings, enriching the cultural content of holidays and services and Mordechai served as the congregation's chairperson twice.

He was an open-minded, gentle yet diplomatic leader at a time when the congregation was addressing volatile issues. He helped us to remain a cohesive group and arrive at fair decisions.

Over the years, Mordechai and Zippora, known for their Open House policy, were models of *hachnasat orchim* (welcoming guests), bringing countless new immigrants from the world over to Hod Ve-Hadar. More than a handful of our members work in Beit Berl and were brought to the synagogue initially by Mordechai and Zippora.

Despite Mordechai's numerous serious health problems, he remained active until the end, reading books and receiving guests on a daily basis in the hospital. He was honored for his contribution to the national Masorti movement one week after he passed away in December. We will miss Mordechai, who gave so much so selflessly to his Hod Ve-Hadar family and we will forever honor his memory. ♦

# Now We're Cooking!

By Carol Novis

*The Jewish tradition of breaking bread together and sharing recipes happens at Hod Ve-Hadar.*

Anyone who has been at Hod Ve-Hadar on Saturday mornings has certainly noticed that as well as lively services, we generally provide a full kiddush spread. Providing a kiddush is considered an excellent way to celebrate occasions such as Bar/Bat Mitzvah, engagements, anniversaries, birthdays and baby namings, and those in attendance are always happy to share their joy by digging in!

Our congregants come from varied backgrounds and the kiddushim they provide often reflect this. Over the years, our kiddush spreads have ranged far beyond the traditional herring, kugel and cake. We have partaken, with gusto, of vegetarian cholent from Eastern Europe, chili from Guatemala, curried vegetables from India, kichel from South Africa, local hummous and much more – all reflecting the rich heritage of our members. Some of the dishes that feature regularly on the tables have become so well known that members

beg for them: Rafi's Jerusalem kugel and Esther's chocolate cake are but two examples of dishes that have become a part of the congregation's gestalt.

Soon, members and friends from abroad will be able to share, in a sense, those delicious kiddush spreads. We are planning to publish a cookbook, with members contributing their favorite Kiddush-friendly recipes, in order to raise funds for our new, much-needed kitchen and also to commemorate the 30th anniversary of our kehilla. The cookbook is to be called "Not Just Kugel – 30 Years of Kiddush at Hod Ve-Hadar."

As Rabbi Ed Treister points out, the Kiddush was known even in Mishnaic times: The Mishnah (Rosh Hashanah 2:5) tells that in order to encourage people to come to Jerusalem to testify to seeing the new moon, the court set out huge meals for the potential witnesses. And it worked! The Mishnah reports that people came from all over the country, were even allowed to travel on Shabbat to Jerusalem in spite of Shabbat restrictions, and that in some cases, had to be held up in Lod because of the press of their numbers. Now, that was a kiddush!

Kiddush is not just a way to

express the sanctity of the Shabbat, but also a means to experience the warmth of community and love of life.

We hope that when the cookbook is ready, you will order a copy and share with us our enjoyment in this most Jewish of traditions. In the meantime, here is one recipe as a preview. It is not for the fainthearted or cholesterol-conscious, but is a staple of our kiddushim and is absolutely delicious. B'teivon! ♦

## Rafi Tamari's Kugel Yerushalmi

400 grams thin noodles (one package, not egg noodles)

1/2 cup oil

1 cup sugar

4 eggs

2 tsp salt

1 tablespoon pepper

Waxed paper

Prepare noodles according to package instructions. Drain and cool. In a large bowl, mix the noodles and eggs. Add salt and pepper.

In a saucepan, mix sugar and oil and prepare caramel. Take care not to scorch the caramel. Add caramel to noodles mixture and stir well, preferably using a wooden spoon. Line baking pan with waxed paper, pour mixture over the paper, and bake at 120°C for at least four hours.

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## Adult Education at Hod Ve-Hadar

By Batya Malichi

*A vital component at Hod Ve-Hadar is adult education, evidenced by these two popular activities.*

### Beit Midrash

The backbone of our adult education program is our Monday night Beit Midrash series which has been designed by our educational director, Rabbi Lionel Levy, together with Beit Midrash coordinator, Ilana

Kraus. When choosing topics, we are fortunate to be able to take a homegrown approach to the series whereby we tap into our members' educational expertise and willingness to share their knowledge.

On a very cold and rainy night in

January, twenty brave souls gathered together in our library to participate in the Beit Midrash program on Martin Buber and his book "I and Thou". Natalie Barkan presented the material over the course of two sessions. The dedicated group tackled Buber's ideas,



*Naomi Leitner explains similarities between laws described in Parshat Mishpatim and modern Israeli law.*

reading the text in Hebrew, English, German, and French. Together we were able to work through and understand Buber's basic principles.

### **Parshat Hashavua**

A more recent addition to our adult education activity is the weekly Torah portion study session held in English. The study sessions are

scheduled every Friday morning at 9:00 a.m. and led by a different Hod Ve-Hadar member each week. The rotation of teachers offers the participants a variety of approaches to interpret the text including linguistic, historical, halachic, and comparative commentaries. Of course, the participants bring their own personal and professional experience to the

table when discussing the text which adds dynamic dimensions to the discussion.

We are now in our second year and the participants are committed to continue even though this requires rearranging our hectic Friday morning schedules. Starting off Friday morning with Torah study has a positive impact on us all. ♦

## Dance to the Music!

*By Dena Matmon*

*Our folk dance class has produced a dance corps that recently made its debut.*

**F**or the past three years, a small but dedicated group has been having fun learning Israeli and international folk dances on Tuesday nights at Hod Ve-Hadar. We really have improved; we no longer trip over our own (or anyone else's) feet!

So when Shlomo, our dance teacher (who is also a physical education teacher and soccer coach and knows every folk dance ever created), told us about a regional meeting of folk dancers organized by the Histadrut (Israel Federation of Labor) that would be suitable for our level, we decided to join the party. He distributed T-shirts for us to wear, our uniform for the day.

We met at a community center not too far from the synagogue on a



very wet and rainy evening, walked into the hall and discovered, to our surprise, that our group had lowered the average age by about 15 years (and not many of us are spring chickens). The entertainment for the evening included two groups of youngsters who performed some wonderful

dances and motivated us to get up and dance, which we did. There was also an adult group in Yemenite dress who managed to get everyone on the floor to dance with them.

Who knows? Perhaps we will host, or perform at, a future regional dance festival. The sky's the limit! ♦

## Meet Our Members

# The Colonel who Danced: Emmanuel Nishri

By E. S. Welber

Long-time member Emmanuel Nishri belongs to the Friday night crowd, where, from time to time, he leads the service. When he began appearing on Saturday mornings last summer, I asked why he was changing his customary attendance, and he told me that soon he would celebrate his Bar Mitzvah, times five, and wanted to be at the Shabbat morning service before being called to the Torah and delivering his 5 x Bar Mitzvah drasha.

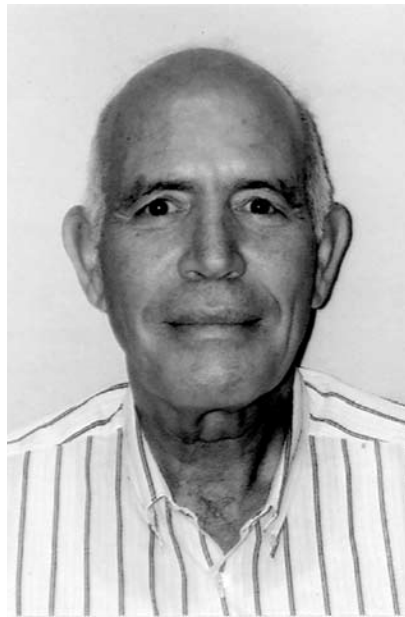
"And where did you celebrate your first Bar Mitzvah?" I asked.

"At K'vutsat Ginnegar," he smiled, "and it was nothing like what happens here. We had thirteen challenges which we had to meet, like plowing a furrow with a horse, shooting straight with a rifle..."

Emmanuel's background was so special; it should be shared with the English-speaking majority in our Conservative synagogues.

He was born in Petach-Tikva, just as his parents, together with the entire Yishuv, breathed a sigh of relief as General Montgomery stopped the threatening and seemingly invincible advance of Rommel at El Almein and so was named: EMMANUEL, (God is with us). His parents joined Ginnegar, a kibbutz in the Yizre'el Valley, soon after his birth. There, with all the other boys and girls of the kibbutz, he met the 13 challenges that constituted his Bar Mitzvah.

In addition to plowing and handling a rifle, each youngster was asked to do a three kilometer hike on his own at night, in preparation for carrying messages for the army, if needed. Each one had to make a solo



bus trip, handling the connections required to go about 100 kilometers to a destination where they were to meet and make contact with strangers. They had to know how to kindle a fire and they had to contribute their efforts to helping in the maabarot (camps set up to receive the influx of immigrants from North Africa). And, jointly, they had to put on a show! We haven't yet come to 13, but any one of them makes learning the Haphtarah look easy.

At the end of his high school years Emmanuel used his expertise and enthusiasm for folk dancing to become a folk-dance leader, taking groups from the local to the national level. He entered the IDF in the Paratroops, serving in the most elite, and covert, group, the Sayeret Matcal, sometimes referred to as The Unit. During his career in the army, where he reached the rank of colonel, he married Tami, whom he met during her army

service, and they have a daughter and a son. When he retired from the army in 1984, he opened an insurance agency in Kfar Saba and became a member of Hod Ve-Hadar.

I asked him how he found the Kehilla. He told me that he found us in a search for a non-Orthodox service for their son's Bar Mitzvah.

"Many secular people do that," I said. "But you stayed. Why?"

"I have always felt the importance of the rhythm of a week to be six days work, and Kabbalat Shabbat."

I said, "Emmanuel, you are the living example of the saying 'More than that Israel has kept the Shabbat' ...and he joined me saying, 'the Shabbat has kept Israel.'"

Emmanuel brings elements of his past into his hopes for the future. In the time he devotes to his grandchildren he encourages them to gather acorns and start a grove of Tabor oaks, so that they can see their trees growing with them. He hopes to have the youth who celebrate their Bar Mitzvah at Hod Ve-Hadar participate in programs of service to the unfortunate, and has persuaded more than half of the current students to participate in Melo Hateneh, a program bringing food to the poor. He would like to see them visit old folks, contribute efforts to the "Nature Society - SPNI", to new immigrants. Emmanuel knows that while they may mark their Bar Mitzvah by showing their accomplishments in the Synagogue service, the golden thread which binds the 13-year-olds to their people is service to the infirm, to the elderly, to the poor, and service to the land itself. ♦

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***Our Tree of Happy Occasions is blooming!***



*Donations can also be made to the Tamar Dvoskin Youth Activities Center.*

*As members and supporters purchase leaves (\$250) and pomegranates (\$1000) to mark their family births, weddings and other smachot, the colorful tree is filling up and becoming even more beautiful and meaningful. Help support Hod Ve-Hadar by commemorating your simcha or good wishes on our tree and becoming part of the Hod Ve-Hadar family.*

We invite you to join in the development of  
***Hod Ve-Hadar Synagogue!***

*I/We would like to support Hod Ve-Hadar Congregation in the following manner:*

- ◆ \$50 provides a Tot Shabbat program.
- ◆ \$100 supports a pre-holiday workshop for children.
- ◆ \$250 subsidizes an Adult Education series.
- ◆ \$500 pays for a month of programming for high school students.
- ◆ \$1000 provides a learning series for B'nei Mitzvah and their parents.
- ◆ \$1000 underwrites one winter series concert.

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and sent to: **Congregation Hod Ve-Hadar, P.O.B. 516, Kfar Saba 44104, Israel**

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