

North Fork Reform Synagogue

Gazette

Member of the Union for Reform Judaism

Sept-Oct 2018

Elul-Tishrei 5778-5779

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www.northforkreformsynagogue.org

On the Calendar

12th Annual Foodie Tour



Sunday September 16

10 am – 4 pm

[Foodie Tour Website](#)

Fall 5779 Holidays are Coming!



High Holidays Worship Services

Rosh Hashanah

Sunday	September 9	Evening Service	7:30 PM
Monday	September 10	Morning Service	10:00 AM
		Tashlich (approx.)	1:30 PM

Yom Kippur

Tuesday	September 18	Kol Nidre	7:30 PM
Wednesday	September 19	Morning Service	10:00 AM
		Afternoon Service	3:00 PM
		Yizkor Service	4:00 PM
		Concluding Service	5:00 PM

Break Fast after Shofar, reservations required.
Contact Linda Hill at lhill1@optonline.net

Synagogue Officers

Paul Gilman President
 Margo Lowry Vice President
 Kay Freeman VP, Treasurer
 Ellen Love Secretary
 Irwin Freeman Trustee
 Barry Mallin Trustee
 Barbara Sheryll Trustee
 Ellen Zimmerman Trustee
 Steve Hill Past President

Mission Statement

The North Fork Reform Synagogue is a small, inclusive congregation meeting spiritual, educational, social, and cultural enrichment needs of our members in the Reform Jewish tradition. We embrace families and individuals, Jews by birth or “by choice,” non-Jews and Jews regardless of ethnic or racial background, sexual orientation, or gender identity. We support the local community through outreach programs with special emphasis on social justice issues.

The Gazette is Edited by

Carol Brown
 Kay Freeman
 Joyce Friedland
 Margo Lowry
 Ellen Zimmerman

Decorate the Sukkah on Tuesday, September 25th



Fall Shabbat Worship Services

Special Sukkot Service

September 28 *Oneg sponsored by Roz & David Gordon; Rabbi Host, Ellen Love*

Regular Friday Night Service

October 5 *Oneg Host: Ellen Love; Rabbi Host: Ellen Zimmerman*
 October 19 *Oneg and Rabbi Host: Amy & Bob Deak*

Adult Ed

Saturdays 4 pm at the home of:

September 29 *Ellen Love*
 October 6 *Ellen Zimmerman*
 October 20 *Mark Lowenbeim*

Book Club

October 6 11 am at *Ellen Love*. Job by Joseph Roth. Discussion: *Jerry Levin*

From Our Rabbi

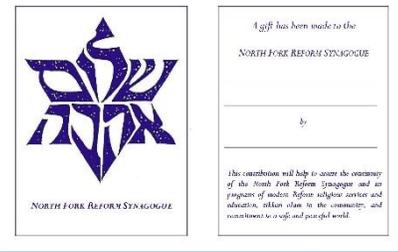
Time to Prepare Your Return!

By Rabbi Danielle Weisbrot



Chodesh tov! Welcome to the month of Elul. We are now in the home stretch of the year, building up to the High Holy Days. Rosh Hashanah is not just the best known of the four – yes FOUR – Jewish New Years, but it is also the start of the Jewish fiscal year for tithing. (I’m guessing that our ancestors needed the now-traditional apples and honey to make it through tax season!) The first of Elul is another of the New Years and is the designated time to tally up your cattle. If you don’t have any livestock, though, fear not! There is still some accounting left for you, too.

This is a time of reflection, when we listen to the wake-up call of the *shofar*, take stock of our actions over the past year, and think about the things we want to change going forward. The act of *t’shuvah* (תשובה), often translated as repentance, actually comes from the root for “return.” As we navigate this year’s spiritual tax season, repairing the relationships we may have damaged and committing to a fresh start, we walk the path back to being our best selves. Hopefully, our diligence will yield a significant return!



Acknowledge a Simcha or other event in the lives of family or friends with a hand-inscribed tribute card from NFRS.

By giving *tzedakah*, you support the synagogue while offering your congratulations or condolences. We suggest a minimum donation of \$18 (*chai*).

Contact Kay Freeman to send a card:
631-722-5712
kaywin316@earthlink.net

Mail your check, payable to North Fork Reform Synagogue, Tribute Fund
PO Box 1625
Southold, NY 11971

Include recipient's name, mailing address, occasion, donor's name, address, phone and the amount of the contribution, if you wish to include it.

From Our President

Share Your Comments and Ideas for the Upcoming Year

By Paul Gilman



Please join me in thanking Steven Hill for his caring, dedicated, and insightful leadership during his six years as our President. One of his latest accomplishment, complementing his love of music, was appointing Soprano-Cantor Ilana Davidson as our Cantor for the High Holidays as well as securing her talents for concert performances for NFRS.

As is our sustaining tradition of the North Fork Reform Synagogue, we had much *nachas* in 5778. The spirit of our Synagogue's membership and committee leadership led to our offering a wide array of engaging spiritual, educational, community, and social events. And remember our upcoming 12th annual North Fork Foodie Tour on Sunday, September 16th. Join us as a volunteer docent or attend with friends and family.

Rosh Hashanah starts the first of Tishrei 5779, the evening of September 9. As we reflect on the past year during the High Holidays, we can use these lessons as a guide in moving forward in the New Year. With the talent and creativity of our membership, and the dedication of our Board, I am enthusiastically looking forward to my first year as President of NFRS. As our Synagogue is a collegial partnership between us, its members, I cannot wait to hear your comments, thoughts, and ideas for the year.

I encourage you to follow our bi-monthly Newsletter and Synagogue e-mails for announcements about Holiday Celebrations, Adult Education, Book Club, movies, and other Synagogue events.

L'shanah tovah tikatevu, *Paul*

Board Notes

New Leader, New Year, New Format!

By Ellen Love



Sunday, July 15th was the penultimate Board Meeting under the leadership of our intrepid President, Steve Hill. The Board discussed the transition to the incoming president, Paul Gilman. Steve Hill steps down from his Presidency and an incredible run as editor of The Newsletter. A new Newsletter team has been formed and is publishing the September/October issue. Team members are: Carol Brown, Margo Lowry, Joyce Friedland and Ellen Zimmerman.

Excitement builds toward Cantor Ilana's concert Aug. 25 at 8:00 PM. An added attraction is renowned pianist, Alex Ruvinstein. The Board discussed the issues in presenting an event to the community, i.e. costs and publicity.

The High Holidays are fast approaching and the Board is working out details to insure a smooth and welcoming environment for the congregants and guests. Security is a prime concern. The Board formed a committee to review and update the NFRS website.

The next Board Meeting will be September 22 at the Gilmans.

**This Edition of the
Gazette is graciously
sponsored by**

Phyllis and Jim Rubin,
in honor of their grandson
Jagger Samuel Kimmel's
Bar Mitzvah on August 18.
Jagger is the son of Andrea
and Jason Kimmel,
brother to Natalie Anne and
Charlie Alexandra.

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Programs & Events

12th Annual Foodie Tour

By Carol Brown



If it's September, you know that the Foodie Tour is just days away. This is the major fundraiser for our Synagogue and we appreciate everyone's efforts in making this an awesome day for both our members, friends, and the visiting public. Sunday September 16th is the day, falling between the Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur holidays. In addition to many of the venerable venues that participate year after year, this year's twenty sites include several new ones such as Shared Table Farmhouse in Southold, Raphael Vineyard in Peconic, Craft Master Hops in Mattituck, Treiber Farms in Southold, and North Fork Flower Farm in Orient.



Several notable Speakers will present at Charnew's Farm in Southold throughout the day. Joining veteran speaker/chef John Ross are Chef Taylor Knapp from Peconic Escargot, Leslie Merinoff from Matchbook Distilling Co., Ken Schneider of Really Good Fruit Spreads, and Brent Robertson of North Fork Authentic.

It's a modest \$25/person for the day, children under 12 are free. Please share this delightful program with your friends and families. And we hope those of you who are not volunteering at one of the venues this year will buy tickets and take a tour! [Buy Tickets here](#). Foodie Tour [Location Map](#).

Families Belong Together

By Margo Lowry



In response to the zero-tolerance immigration policy of the Trump administration, over 700 *Families Belong Together* rallies were held across the country on Saturday, June 30. Greenport Village was one Long Island location participating in this day of action to denounce the separation of migrant children from their families and to demand they be reunited.



The Greenport rally was organized by the North Fork Spanish Apostolate with support from the Southold Town Anti-Bias Task Force and various faith groups of the North Fork.

Our own Rabbi Barbara Sheryll gave a very poignant speech. "Leviticus 19:33 states - When a stranger resides with you in your land you shall not wrong them. The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as one of your citizens. You shall love them as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt." Barbara called for "humane and compassionate" immigration reform that protects the security of our country while protecting asylum seeking families and children.

How Can I support NFRS?

NFRS is grateful for membership dues and additional contributions. They help pay for our Rabbi and Cantor, rental of the Cutchogue Presbyterian Church, and the expenses of running a congregation. There are other ways you can support NFRS and help guarantee our future. Several members already chose one (or more!) of these ways to give to the synagogue.

Gift of Stock: a gift of publicly traded stock (long term) that appreciated in value allows you to take an income tax deduction for the full market value while avoiding capital gains taxes.

Gift from your IRA: Gifts directly from your IRA to NFRS (up to a certain amount) provide you an income tax deduction and avoidance of ordinary income tax on an IRA distribution.

Bequest in your Will: A bequest is a way to ensure that our synagogue continues, while costing nothing now. And if your circumstances change, you can always modify your will.

By selecting one or more of these options, you can impact the future of NFRS. Contact Kay 631-722-5712
Kaywin316@earthlink.net.



Sister Margaret Smyth from the Apostolate talked about local families being affected with one case of parents looking for their child who was kept in the detention center. According to the organizers of the event, it was one of the largest rallies in Greenport history and our Synagogue was well represented.



2nd Annual NFRS Dine Around - In Case You Missed It!

By Kay Freeman



"Thanks and kudos to all the hosts. It was a lovely evening." *Sandy and Joel*

"[This was] our first *Dine Around* and we had a wonderful time. Warm friends and delicious food, a grand combination for a lovely evening.

Thanks so much to our generous hosts!" *Ellen and Henry*

"We really enjoyed it. So nice meeting those we did not know. Thanks for all the excellent food and great company." *Roz and David*

"It was a terrific night filled with great food, good conversation, and getting to know more about our wonderful NFRS family of friends. Let's make this a bi-annual event if possible." *Linda and Steve*

These are just a few of the reviews from the 2nd Annual *Dine Around* on July 21! Hors d'oeuvres and drinks at the Hills + Entrees at the Friedlands and the Gilmans + Dessert at the Lowrys = a terrific evening of great food and conversation. Thanks to Paul Gilman for bringing us the event and chairing it.

See you next year? You don't want to miss it!

Celebrating Diversity

By Mike Furst



Every cloud has a silver lining and this year's Southold Town Anti-Bias Task Force Unity Picnic on Saturday, August 11, co-sponsored by the NFRS, was the silver lining of what otherwise would have been a dreary rainy day.

Joan and Mike Furst enjoyed conversing and sharing food with a diverse group of people. Entertainment included children's activities, the Peconic Landing Ukulele Group, and the stylish and graceful Shinnecock Family Dancers.



Challahs for Dollahs

Take home a round 'Love' challah for the holidays

With a donation to NFRS of \$50 or more.

Available for pick up on Sunday, September 9th.

Call Ellen Love - 917-446-7112

Birthdays & Anniversaries



Happy birthday to:

- Sept. 2: Jan Bennett
Fred Cohen
- Sept. 6: Margery Auerbach
- Sept. 20: John Nicholson
- Sept. 21: Cara Slotkin
- Sept. 27: Doreen Levine
- Oct. 4: Kate Hoffman-
Eisenberg
- Oct. 6: Chad Gilman
- Oct. 10: Russell Hearn
- Oct. 16: Irwin Freeman
- Oct. 17: Gail Kriegel
- Oct. 27: Jackie Rogers
- Oct. 27: David Gordon

Anniversary wishes to:

- Sept. 3 Rosalind and David
Gordon
- Sept. 11: Nohra Corredor and
Ronald Hellman
- Oct. 21: Sharna and John
Nicholson
- Oct. 25: Charles and Doreen
Levine
- Oct. 28: Phyllis and James
Rubin

Hebrew School

The 5779 Hebrew School Year is Here!

By Rabbi Barbara Horowitz-Sheryll

Shalom. L'shana Tova! Once again NFRS will have a year filled with learning Hebrew, Jewish Values, Prayers, Holidays, Tikun Olam and more! Whether it is learning with our beloved Hebrew school teacher Renee and Rabbi, making challah with congregant Ellen Love, picking apples, collecting food for CAST, or being a part of the Group of The East End's beach cleanup, our children are enriched by the NFRS's loving caring educators, members and the community in which we are so blessed to live!



High Holidays Food Drive: Please bring donations to any High Holiday service.

Sukkah Decorating: Do you have an item that you think would look good in our Sukkah? Please bring it to any of the High Holiday services so that we can use it to decorate our Sukkah and make it look beautiful! Join us to decorate, shake the lulav and Etrog, pray, read stories and eat apples honey on September 25th at 3:30 pm.

Hebrew School Open House: For information contact bsheryll@optonline.net

Save the Dates:

Friday, November 16 Shabbat Family Dinner
Sunday, December 2 Menorah Lighting on the Cutchogue Village Green

May the final weeks leading up to the High Holidays be ones that touch the recesses of your mind and soul. May the New Year be a time to renew and refresh!

Jewish Holidays

Teshuvah. What's It All About?

By Rabbi Barbara Horowitz-Sheryll



The month of Elul is a time of retrospection; a time to think about our thoughts and actions. Yes, Yom Kippur is a time to ask forgiveness from our family, friends and God, but in actuality, it is an opportunity to perform Teshuvah. Teshuvah, which means "return," is a process of turning away from the ways in which we missed the mark so we may come back to right relationships with others, the Divine, and ourselves." – *The Art of Teshuvah*- My Jewish Learning.

The practice of teshuvah involves looking inward, as we are challenged to admit our transgressions, make amends, and resolve to do better in the coming year. The art of teshuvah requires one to stop and pause. According to the Hasidic master Rabbi Kalonymous Kalman Shapira, teshuvah is a kind of creativity. It is not a simple return to what has been, it is a process of remaking ourselves by starting off fresh.

How do we do that? In the words of psychologist David Richo, "Hidden in everything negative is something alive and beautiful that wants to belong to us."

It is when we come face-to-face with the less desirable part of ourselves and are willing to do the work we begin to understand and emulate the divine creative process.

Here are three great opportunities to let the creative juices flow! *Paint & Sip Night*, *Write your Torah- The Story of your Life* and *Wake Up and Be Present - Become Mindful of What you Say and What Do*. Dates and times TBA. Interested!? Please contact me at bsheryll@optonline.net.

More ways to support NFRS

Why not support NFRS when you shop amazon.com? Every eligible purchase equals a donation to us!



Visit AmazonSmile (<https://smile.amazon.com>) and type in North Fork Reform Synagogue. That's it! Every time you order, go to the smile.amazon.com. The site remembers your selection and a donation will come to NFRS.

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Questions? Contact Margo Lowry; margolowry@gmail.com. She can walk you through the process.



Our Members

Susan Hearn and Her New Tasting House

By Linda Hill



I first “heard” Susan Hearn when she sat in back of me at many Friday Shabbat services. I noticed that she was proficient in Hebrew and added her voice to all the songs and prayers. Sue was the first B’Nai Mitzvah in her family’s Temple in Acton, Ma. She moved to Seattle during High School and continued onto confirmation. Susan belonged to the Mastic Beach Hebrew Center where her two daughters were Bat Mitzvahed. When the temple closed, she joined NFRS. She loves the warmth of our members and enjoys watching our student rabbis grow and progress throughout the year.



Susan and her Australian husband Russell Hearn, who she met 40 years ago while traveling in New Zealand, are winemakers and own a North Fork vineyard and Tasting Room featuring their two wine labels, Suhru Wines and T’Jara Vineyards.



Russell has been producing wine on the North Fork for over 30 years. Suhru wines opened in 2008. In 2018, Susan opened the Suhru Tasting House on the Main Road in Cutchogue. “We call it the ‘Tasting House’ because we want people to come in and feel comfortable, like they’ve stepped into our home.”

The Hearn’s daughters, Shelby and Kylie, are in the family business. Shelby is Director of Sales and Marketing, a skill she honed as a marketing professional in NYC. Shelby used her skills for last year’s Foodie Tour when she oversaw our digital ads and advertising. Kylie is a Webmaster and computer programmer. “Family is an extremely important aspect of my life,” says Susan. “It means the world to me to produce the wines we love while showcasing the skills and strengths of my entire family.”



To learn more about Susan, come to Shabbat services or visit her at the Suhru Wines Tasting House.

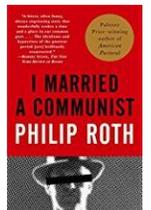
Photos for this article, Courtesy of Madison Fender Photography

Book Club Corner

I Married a Communist by Phillip Roth (1998)

By Barry Mallin

“The stars are indispensable,” ends Philip Roth’s, “I Married a Communist,” the August NFRS book club selection. Roth says, “You see the inconceivable... with your own eyes... a galaxy of fire set by no human hand.” But in Roth’s cynical portrayal of the 1950s McCarthy era, on earth all is antagonism created by human hand. The novel chronicles the rise and fall of Ira Ringold, an American roughneck who was a teenage ditch-digger in 1930s Newark, joins the Communist Party with Johnny O’Day, a fellow WWII soldier, becomes a big-time 1940s radio star known for his impersonations of Abraham Lincoln, and then is destroyed in the 1950s McCarthy witchhunts. This book is the second of Roth’s trilogy examining major conflicts in America since WWII; the first, “American Pastoral,” dealt with the Vietnam War protests.

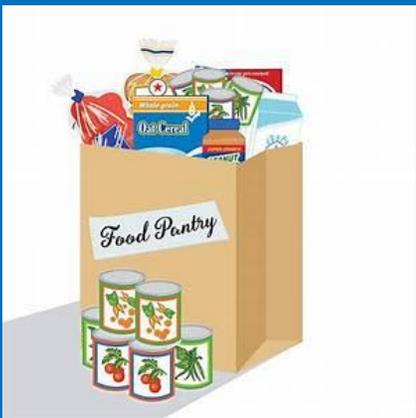


New Members

Welcome
Roz and David Gordon.
And Maxine.



Remember to bring
a food donation to
any of the
High Holiday Services.



Book club members were intrigued by the extent that Roth let his own anger against his former wife, actress Clair Bloom, intrude on the themes shaping this novel. After their marriage collapsed, Bloom wrote a scathing memoir, “Leaving the Doll’s House,” where she paints Roth as “a self-centered misogynist.” In Roth’s novel, Ira’s downfall is ignited by the betrayal of his movie-star wife, Eve Frame, when she writes a bestselling expose denouncing him falsely as “an American taking his orders from Moscow.”

For club members, the novel reminded them of politicians who fuel their careers by invoking voters’ anxieties. In the 1950s, it was the so-called threat of a communist takeover; today it is the threat of immigrants. Roth wrote this book in 1998, but his ability to discern recurring and troubling themes in American political history is graphically displayed in his description of the funeral of Richard Nixon, another politician who launched his career on the fears of a communist take-over.

Sound familiar?

Chef’s Corner

Very Easy Dine Around Peach Blueberry Crisp

By Margo Lowry

A friend gave me this easy recipe for a Peach/Blueberry Crisp which I served at the Dine Around with a few changes to make it even easier. No sugar was added to the peaches and the topping came from Trader Joe’s.

For the Filling

- 6 -8 peaches, peeled and cut into wedges
- 1 cup blueberries
- 3/4 cup granulated sugar (optional)
- 1 TB lemon juice
- 4 tspns cornstarch
- Ground cinnamon



For the Topping (if you choose to make it)

- 6 TB unsalted butter, room temperature
- 1/4 cup light-brown sugar
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 tspn coarse salt
- Ground cinnamon, for sprinkling

Directions

Preheat the oven to 350 F.

For the filling: Peel the peaches and cut into wedges. Place in bowl with sugar, cornstarch, lemon juice, and stir in blueberries. Set aside for 5 minutes.

For the topping: Whisk together flour, sugar, cinnamon, and salt. Using your hands or a mixer, mix with softened butter until it is a coarse crumble.

Put the fruit mixture in a 9 x 13 baking dish and sprinkle evenly with topping.

Bake for 1 hour until the top is browned and the juices are bubbly.

Summer 2018 Beach Services Revisited



My Two Cents

Dear Members, We Want You!

Might you have something of interest to share with our community? Can you write an article for the Gazette? Let Margo margolowry@gmail.com or Carol brownie@optonline.net know.



News From URJ

Take Time to Look at the Sky: Sage Advice for Summer Shabbats

By Rabbi Rick Schechter 8/02/18



Our lives can get so hurried and hectic sometimes. With long hours of work, responsibilities at home, errands, bills, the breakneck speed of life set by the modern technologies that we love and can't seem to live without, at times we need moments just to catch our breath.

“Summertime, and the livin’ is easy,” wrote Ira Gershwin in “*Porgy and Bess*.” Even now, there is still some truth to this great lyric. If the livin’ is not easy, perhaps at least, it’s *easier*. Our burdens may lighten. The pace may slow a few notches. Nature may beckon us toward repose. These are things we desperately need during our fast and frenetic lives. For thousands of years, Judaism has recognized such an ongoing need for rest and renewal. This is the purpose of *Shabbat*. On Shabbat, we let go of the burdens of labor and constant doing, so our bodies and souls can be refreshed and renewed.

The wise Rebbe Nachman looked out his window one day to see his friend scurrying about in the marketplace, running this way and that way, frantically engaged in his labors and responsibilities. After watching his friend carry on this way throughout most of the day, Rebbe Nachman opened his window and called out to his friend, “Joseph, have you seen the sky today?”

Joseph stopped for a moment and replied, “What! The sky! Who’s got time for that? I’m busy taking care of business.” To which Nachman responded: “Joseph, look around you. All the people you see here running around the marketplace, including yourself, will be gone in less than a hundred years. Everyone and everything in this marketplace will pass away. So why not take the time to look at the sky?” It’s sage advice. Nachman saw clearly what Joseph and we sometimes miss: the rushed pace of constant *doing* crowds out the necessary and nourishing time for just *being*. Just being in nature, just being with loved ones, just being with the people and things that are most important to us. These renew us and restore our perspective on life.

Shabbat affords us a weekly opportunity to do so. As Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel wrote in his classic work *The Sabbath*: “The seventh day is like a palace in time with a kingdom for all. It is not a date but an atmosphere ... [Shabbat] is a day on which we are called upon to share in what is eternal in time, to turn from the results of creation to the mystery of creation; from the world of creation to the creation of the world.”

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Like our weekly Shabbat, summer offers us a seasonal opportunity to slow down and focus upon what is eternal in time. So, during these summer months, when the livin' is easy – or easier, may we take the time to look at the sky: admire a clear blue expanse of day or a burst of sunset, gaze up at a starlit night, contemplate a majestic mountainscape, marvel at the tumbling waves of an ocean, smell the redolent scent of a flower, listen to a beautiful piece of music, view beautiful works of art and architecture, be inspired by the goodness of others, and give and receive love – taking time to turn toward the mystery and wonders of creation.

Jerry's Reflections

Biking Puglia at 80

By Jerry Levin



Since going on a VBT bike tour in Italy's Dolomite Mountains, I've had my eye on a similar outing in Puglia, the heel of Italy's boot. Sure I'd be a year older, but Puglia should be far easier, flat biking along the Adriatic Sea, or so I thought. It turned out Puglia's reputation for flatness is considerably exaggerated. True, it's hardly the Alps, but Puglia's rolling hills definitely roll, and the cliffs along the edge of the sea are anything but level. But I did it.

I flew to Bari and got a ride to Matera. Cut by a deep ravine, Matera sits on series of hillsides, open and steep, making it essentially an amphitheater, punctuated by caves that were inhabited until the 1950s. Matera has been continuously inhabited for over 10,000 years, making it one of the oldest known human settlements.

Even walking in Matera was physically challenging, especially with a severely arthritic ankle. There were steps everywhere and uneven, often loose rock. With my climbing boots and walking stick, I managed to navigate this amazing town. My accommodations were in a cave, my bed occupying the space where the donkey would have slept. The gorge, with its one-person-wide suspension bridge and switch-back trail that passed innumerable caves, reminded me of trekking in Bhutan. The Matera cave dwellings were dug out of the soft limestone and were communal, being connected by courtyards where the cave dwellers enjoyed a rich social life. When the Italian government forced them to relocate to modern houses, many experienced a profound sense of loss, not mitigated by the conveniences of modernity.

I loved the cave dwellings, the underground churches, the sense of the ongoingness of life, the faded frescoes, and the natural beauty of Matera. The food was terrific too, but it was time to move on to start biking. At the same time, now a month short of 81, I wondered if MGM would lend me the Tin Woodsman's oiling can for the progressive aches and pains.

The next stop was Arborobello, "beautiful trees," justly famous for its white conical houses known as trulli, composed of a cone sitting upon a round whitewashed structure. Originally grain storage containers, they were converted into houses in the hope of avoiding paying taxes to the Spanish king. As night fell, the city had an almost mystical feel with its twisting streets and conical dwellings. During World War II, the trulli served as refuges for Jews facing deportation to "camps" and deserters from the American army. The people of Arborobello protected a considerable number of Jews and not a few deserters, as did the people of Matera.

Host the Rabbi & Saturday Adult Ed



Choose your date

November	16-17
December	7-8
December	21-22
January	4-5
January	18-19
February	1-2
February	15-16
March	1-2
March	15-16
April	5-
April	26-27
May	3-4
May	17-18
June	7-8

Call or e-mail Ellen Love
to book your weekend:
917-446-7112
Ejrlove@aol.com



Subjected to frequent raids from the sea in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the farmers of Puglia built walls—substantial fortifications—around their land, enclosing well, livestock, stable, church and home. Many of these ‘masserias’ are now resorts or repurposed in other ways.

Finally on our bikes, we did a warm-up ride—about a 10-mile round trip—to a Roman ruin, part of it on the Via Traiana, used by the Crusaders on their way to the Holy Land. The next day we got serious, going 35 miles to the ancient seaport of Monopoli. The ride to the coast had a few challenging uphill as we passed through groves of 800-year-old olive trees. Then we started going north along the Adriatic: beautiful, serene, still undeveloped, and unbelievably windy. For 15 miles, we fought strong headwinds pushing through the charming fishing village of Savelleteri on to Monopoli, a gem with battlements, fort, ancient harbor, crystal-clear water, and the best gelato.

Back at the masseria, I hopped on the shuttle to its private beach. The Adriatic proved a delight—translucent, warm, just wavy enough to be fun, and having an exotic feel as I realized that I was looking out towards Albania. Back at the masseria, I plunged into *The Odyssey*, translated by Emily Wilson -- perfect reading and a page-turner for a journey by the Mediterranean. Homer’s Aegean was not too many miles from the sea in which I had just swam.

The four Canadians and sixteen Americans on the trek got along splendidly. During dinner in a seaside restaurant, I was surprised to hear the Chicago contingent discussing the difficulty of finding a synagogue at home that provided a sense of community and historical continuity without being “overly religious,” a sentiment shared by the Catholic professor and his wife who contribute to their church but rarely attend, paralleling the feelings of the Jewish contingency.

In the morning, we shuttled south to another part of Puglia. The Apennines, the mountain chain that formed the horizon to the west as we drove south through Puglia, were gone. Instead of rolling country, we pedaled along cliffs hugging the sea, picturesque grottoes, and spectacular scenery. After a long downhill, we came into Otranto and another swim in the Adriatic. Otranto has a famous cathedral, complete with a huge floor mosaic of a 12th century Tree of Life where the bones of 500 martyrs who refused to convert to Islam after a Turkish conquest are preserved. I am not much for martyrdom, agreeing with Maimonides who, quoting Deuteronomy, advised “Choose life,” when confronted with a choice of compulsory conversion or death.

After another day with one extraordinary hill and punishing heat, the cycling part of the trip ended and we were bused to Lecce, the Baroque City. The local stone, Lecce’s building material of choice, is soft, easily carved, pinkish-white, and hardens with time, creating spectacular architecture. The high point was the Duomo, rather restrained for a baroque building. Its stained-glass windows with the brilliant sun shining through are among the most beautiful I’ve seen.

Now that I’ve retired from long-distance cycling I don’t understand how the VBT catalog keeps showing up on my bedside table. Perhaps, like Ulysses, I’m fated to leave Ithaca once again.

