As host to two important films and the inaugural event of the Campus anti-Semitism Task Force of the North Shore, Shirat Hayam was a hub of community-wide activity this fall.

The two screenings, free and open to the public, packed the social hall with 165 people at each showing. Both had post-screening Q&A sessions.

“Forgotten Refugees,” an international award-winning documentary, reminds contemporary Jews that in 1945, there were one million Jews living in the Middle East and North Africa. The film, shown November 30, tells the story of the departure, expulsion and complete eradication of these once vibrant communities in Arab lands and Iran, emphasizing the hardship these immigrants suffered.

“Wish You Weren’t Here,” exposed Roger Waters, an international spokesperson for the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions movement, as an anti-Semite. This film, presented by the Lappin Foundation with support from the Rosenberg, Rich, Rosenthal, Tatelman, and Cooper families, offered a counter-point to Waters’ pro-BDS film screened by the Unitarian Universalist Church in Marblehead.

Rabbi Ragozin strives to be proactive in addressing anti-Semitism, particularly on preparing local teenagers to cope with the anti-Semitism they may encounter on the college campus. On October 29, the Campus anti-Semitism Task Force of the North Shore hosted its first event, “What’s Up at College,” a discussion about Jewish life on campus with panelists including college students, an alum and a former Hillel director. Significantly, three teens, Mason Friedman, Lily Gregory, and Daniel Kasten, joined the Task Force as a result of this initial event. “With these teens’ commitment, passion, and wisdom we expect an even more successful event in March,” Rabbi Ragozin said. “Stay tuned.”

Reflecting on the fall’s activity, Rabbi Ragozin added, “As the Talmud Yerushalmi says: truth, justice, and peace are intertwined. May Shirat Hayam’s pursuit of truth advance the cause of justice and peace.”
What motivates people to volunteer at Shirat Hayam? Is it out of a desire to guarantee the existence of the shul for the next generation? Is it their pathway to a meaningful life, like learning or prayer? Maybe it’s a way to share a slice of one’s expertise to assure a bright Jewish future. Or maybe it’s simply a way to connect with other Jews socially. Only one thing is certain: there is no single driving force, no one common thread. There seem to be as many reasons people become active in synagogue life as there are active people. And volunteering is nothing new to our community — in fact, it seems to be part of our Jewish DNA.

Even back in Moses’ time, there was a “volunteer explosion.” He asked the Israelites to contribute whatever time and talents they could spare to help with the construction of the Tabernacle. The response was so generous and overwhelming that Moses actually had to stop the donations, saying, “The people bring much more than enough for the service of the work... Let neither man nor woman do any more work for the offering of the sanctuary” (Exodus 36:5-6).

While Shirat Hayam is hardly turning volunteers away, the response to my Kol Nidre “call to service” has been just as awe-inspiring. More than 80 congregants (including many, many new faces) have harnessed their energy and enthusiasm to volunteer for these committees, teams and task forces: Membership, Men’s Club, women’s groups, Shabbat prep, office help, dues restructuring, CJE, 613 North (engaging young Jewish professional on the North Shore), database implementation, The Wave, Chesed, ShirArts, and more.

These teams are the backbone of Shirat Hayam, working hard to advance our strategic plan, particularly in the areas of membership, inclusion, enhanced social gatherings, and improved communication. Most importantly, however, is the feeling of connection, of belonging to something as important as the building of the first Tabernacle, that each of these volunteers feels in their own way.

Why not try it yourself? You might be surprised at how these efforts leave you feeling welcome, connected, and enriched.

**RABBI’S CORNER**

**A Volunteer Explosion**

![Image of Rabbi Michael Ragozin]

What motivates people to volunteer at Shirat Hayam? Is it out of a desire to guarantee the existence of the shul for the next generation? Is it their pathway to a meaningful life, like learning or prayer? Maybe it’s a way to share a slice of one’s expertise to assure a bright Jewish future. Or maybe it’s simply a way to connect with other Jews socially.

Only one thing is certain: there is no single driving force, no one common thread. There seem to be as many reasons people become active in synagogue life as there are active people. And volunteering is nothing new to our community — in fact, it seems to be part of our Jewish DNA.

Even back in Moses’ time, there was a “volunteer explosion.” He asked the Israelites to contribute whatever time and talents they could spare to help with the construction of the Tabernacle. The response was so generous and overwhelming that Moses actually had to stop the donations, saying, “The people bring much more than enough for the service of the work... Let neither man nor woman do any more work for the offering of the sanctuary” (Exodus 36:5-6).

While Shirat Hayam is hardly turning volunteers away, the response to my Kol Nidre “call to service” has been just as awe-inspiring. More than 80 congregants (including many, many new faces) have harnessed their energy and enthusiasm to volunteer for these committees, teams and task forces: Membership, Men’s Club, women’s groups, Shabbat prep, office help, dues restructuring, CJE, 613 North (engaging young Jewish professional on the North Shore), database implementation, The Wave, Chesed, ShirArts, and more.

These teams are the backbone of Shirat Hayam, working hard to advance our strategic plan, particularly in the areas of membership, inclusion, enhanced social gatherings, and improved communication. Most importantly, however, is the feeling of connection, of belonging to something as important as the building of the first Tabernacle, that each of these volunteers feels in their own way.

Why not try it yourself? You might be surprised at how these efforts leave you feeling welcome, connected, and enriched.

**CENTER FOR JEWISH EDUCATION**

**From Shabbat Ragomuffins to Hanukkah...**

Pre-K through Grade 4 children were invited for a Shabbat Ragomuffins breakfast at the Rabbi’s house.

(Above) Sivan Hod lights a menorah at the sold out Hanukkah celebration.

(Left) 6th grade girls meeting guest author Dori Weinstein, who happily autographed their books. Pictured from left: Samara Krawitz, Jasmina Kurtovic, and Lily Heller.
Cantor’s News

The Chai Notes, live on the popular radio show, “Chagigah.”

For 37 years, Chagigah (“celebration”) has been a staple of WERS’ Family Friendly Weekends. The popular Sunday morning American Jewish music program, now hosted by Hal Silfer, invited the CSH teen choir, the Chai Notes, and myself to perform three Hanukkah sets on the December 10th show.

It was the second time the Chai Notes had the chance to perform on the live radio show this year and we were all thrilled. We performed together for the first two sets and I sang solo on the third. Lautaro Mantilla (guitar) and Jeremiah Klarman (percussion) accompanied us.

The best part for me was that we simultaneously broadcast the performance on Facebook live. If you look at the picture above, in the bottom left you can see the comments of congregant Murry Rich and Michael Margolis.

I love that Facebook live lets us actually have a conversation with people who are watching us live at home!

Cantor Elana and the Chai Notes performed live on the WERS radio show, “Chagigah,” hosted by Hal Silfer. Pictured from left: Lola Seligson, Anna Levenberg, Gefen Finn, Cantor Elana, Bella Seligson (hidden) and Abby Robinson

(C Above) From left, front row: Ilan Hod, Noam Ragozin, Noah Smerka, Josh Tapper and Levi Crockett play “bite the sufganiyah (donut)” at the CSH Hanukkah celebration.

(Top right) Second- and third-graders playing dreidel. Pictured in the foreground from left: Evan Eisen, Max Gregory, Kay Mahler and Eliana Young. Background: Katherine Abate.

(Bottom right) The CEE toddler program participated in the Hanukkah celebration, making latkes, reading a Hanukkah story and playing dreidel. Here teacher Alie Ramos helps Walter make his first latke.
The Interview

**CONGREGATIONAL SPOTLIGHT**

**Bethany Roditi Shares Thoughts on CSH**

Every month, The Wave will spotlight a congregant as a way to help us get to know each other better. This month, new member Bethany Roditi shares her thoughts and fills us in on her background.

**Was synagogue a big part of your childhood?**

I grew up in Marblehead and Swampscott until 3rd grade, when we moved to Winthrop, which is where I started Hebrew School and became Bat Mitzvah. One of my favorite memories was walking along the beach from school to Hebrew School twice a week and feeling part of a vibrant Jewish community.

**When did you move back to the North Shore?**

In mid-January of this year, Moshe and I moved to Salem when I retired after 43 years as a developmental psychologist and teacher, specializing in learning differences and special education.

Our daughters and son-in-law live in Boston and Cambridge: Dr. Rachel Roditi and Michelle and Jayme Mendal.

**Why did you choose Congregation Shirat Hayam?**

It was SO daunting to walk into a temple for Shabbat services for the first time, not knowing a soul. We felt almost immediately Shirat was the perfect fit for us!

My husband, Moshe, born in Cairo, Egypt, came to this country after the 1967 Israeli war. For years, he would attend traditional Sat morning services without me. Now, I get to shul every week even earlier than him.

I have never felt so connected to G-d and to my community — ever — as I do during the renewal service. I love Cantor Elana’s voice and the Renewal prayer music, and I connect with Rabbi Michael’s words of wisdom and metaphors for living and loving ("Ragozisms") so much that I refer to them throughout the week.

After yoga, I join Moshe in the traditional service and lunch with the warmest, most welcoming community.

**Thoughts for next year?**

I would like to invigorate our “Chesed” community to reflect the lovingkindness I feel at Shirat so the whole congregation can “CARE” for one another.

---

Left: Bethany with husband, Moshe. Right: Bethany with her dad, Melvin Naseck in Rockport, in May 2016.