

HCRJ

AUGUST 2019

HOUSTON CONGREGATION FOR REFORM JUDAISM

Models for Civility in an Age of Controversy



In today's ever-more-polarized world, there seems to be a decline in civility. The norms which dictate decent behavior seem to be eroding, as our interactions have become angrier, uglier and more vulgar. We make assumptions based on superficialities; we engage others with a diminished sense of trust and respect; we frequently jump to conclusions based on how people look, what they believe, how they vote and who they love.

In the marketplace of ideas, our engagement with each other has become a fragile, hyper-sensitized battlefield. We rarely listen to each other anymore, and when we do, we do so to find holes in the arguments of the other. A nuanced art of dialogue has given way to knee-jerk defensiveness, as a desire to find common ground and compromise has been replaced with viewing opposing opinions as an adversary that needs to be defeated. It has become almost impossible to have a reasonable conversation on any given topic of concern without having to brace ourselves for reactivity. Healthcare, public education, guns, taxes, national security are real issues which deserve discussion and debate, but instead, these topics quickly erode into vulgar, disrespectful diatribes from all sides.

The truth is that at the heart of the democratic process is civil engagement. Civility is the bridge to a place where common ground can be established, and the Jewish New Year provides us with an opportunity to consider better ways to engage those with whom we may disagree.

There is a famous parable about the ongoing disputes between the house of Hillel and the House of Shammai. According to the Talmud, God ultimately sides with Hillel on all matters of the law. This is because the House of Hillel (unlike the house of Shammai) always cited the rulings of both sides of every dispute. Hillel's rulings always gave credence to Shammai's view, demonstrating humility and legitimizing the value of the perspectives of others.

As our nation prepares for heated debates among presidential hopefuls in the months to come, and as we engage each other on controversial topics at large, we need to strive to be more like Hillel. Instead of digging in our heels, insisting we are right, we need to open our minds to alternative ways of seeing and understanding. Instead of listening for holes in arguments, we need to listen attentively to the narrative of others with curiosity and interest. We need to seek common ground (even when we know we don't agree), and we need to find ways of continuing a conversation with reason and respect.

If we can employ these strategies when we engage each other in our disagreements, 5780 will be a sweeter, kinder and more auspicious year for all.

August Calendar

- | | | |
|----|----------|--|
| 2 | 6:00 PM | Tot Shabbat |
| | 6:15 PM | Family Dinner |
| | 7:15 PM | Family Shabbat |
| 4 | 2:00 PM | Film Screening: <i>Cuba's Forgotten Jewels</i> |
| 5 | 10:00 AM | Senior Chai Yoga |
| 7 | 10:00 AM | Senior Chai Mah Jong |
| | 1:00 PM | Senior Chai Watercolors |
| | 7:00PM | Basic Judaism Class |
| 8 | 10:00 AM | Senior Chai Bridge |
| 9 | 7:15 PM | Shabbat Services (with Jerusalem Peace Builders) |
| 10 | 6:30 PM | Boomers and Friends at Pondicheri |
| 11 | 12:00 PM | HCRJ at Church Without Walls |
| 12 | 10:00 AM | Senior Chai Mah Jong |
| 13 | 11:30 AM | Knitzvah Group |
| 14 | 10:00 AM | Senior Chai Mah Jongg |
| | 1:00 PM | Senior Chai Watercolors |
| | 7:00 PM | Basic Judaism Class |
| 16 | 7:15 PM | Shabbat Services |
| 17 | 9:00 AM | Social Action Project: Restoration Team |
| | | Block Walking |
| | 10:30 AM | Bat Mitzvah of Kira Pevow |
| | 7:30 PM | Havdalah in the Galleria |
| 18 | 8:30 AM | Yom Moreh |
| | 8:30 AM | Board Retreat |
| 19 | 10:00 AM | Senior Chai Yoga |
| 20 | 10:00 AM | Senior Chai Undies for Everyone Project |
| 21 | 10:00 AM | Senior Chai Mah Jongg |
| | 1:00 PM | Senior Chai Watercolors |
| | 7:00 PM | Basic Judaism Class |
| 22 | 10:00 AM | Senior Chai Bridge |
| 23 | 7:15 PM | Shabbat Services |
| 26 | 10:00 AM | Senior Chai Yoga |
| 27 | 10:00 AM | Interest Group: Holocaust Museum |
| 28 | 10:00 AM | Senior Chai Mah Jongg |
| | 1:00 PM | Senior Chai Watercolors |
| | 7:00 PM | Basic Judaism Class |
| 30 | 7:15 PM | Shabbat Services |

New and Prospective Member Shabbat

Friday, September 13

6:15PM Wine and cheese reception

7:15PM Shabbat Services

Help us welcome our new members from the past year and prospective members to HCRJ at our New and Prospective Member Shabbat on Friday, September 13. The event starts with a Wine and Cheese reception at 6:15pm for all. Services are at 7:15pm and a special Oneg will follow services. Do you know someone that is not affiliated with a congregation? Let the temple office know so we can invite them to this welcoming event.



Save the Date: HCRJ Adult Bingo Night
Saturday, October 19

High Holy Days at HCRJ

We have already begun preparing for the High Holy Days in the temple office. A packet containing information for this season will be mailed mid-August. If you are interested in ushering for the holidays, please contact Melissa Wolfson at Melissa@hcrj.org.

Erev Rosh Hashanah

Sunday, September 29

Rosh Hashanah Day

Monday, September 30

Kol Nidre

Tuesday, October 8

Yom Kippur Day

Wednesday, October 9



Tot Shabbat: 6:00PM

Dinner: 6:15PM

Family Services: 7:15PM

August Menu: Pasta, salad, garlic bread, chicken nuggets and mac-n-cheese.

Dinner is \$5 per person over 4

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Honors and Memorials Fund

In honor of the birthdays of Buddy Susman, Don Aron, Dr. LeRoy Shaw, M.M. Feld, Larry Bernard, Stanley Doctor and Dr. Larry Rose and the anniversaries of Steve and Beckye Gross, Adam and Abbe Forman, Larry and Helen Rose, Larry and Doris Bernard, William and Madeline Podorzer, M.M. and Carole Feld, Allan and Miriam Graber and Jenard and Gail Gross

From **Larry and Kaki Buck**

In honor of the 50th Anniversary of the Bar Mitzvah of Bruce Shelby and Jay Kaplan

From **Myron Marks**

In honor of the 50th Anniversary of the Bar Mitzvah of Jay Kaplan and Bruce Shelby

From **Celine Kaplan**

In memory of Hollis Israel

From **Lynne and Richard Gaudette**

In memory of Howard Hengst, Dr. Samuel Axelrad and Hannah Hyman

From **Miriam and Allan Graber**

In memory of John Veta

From **Shirley Snyder**

In memory of Celian Lewis

From **Julia Miller**

In memory of Jacqueline Gutierrez

From **Ed and Patricia Will**

In memory of Clara Gold

From **Miriam and Allan Graber**

In memory of Phyllis Rich

From **Cindy and David Lipshutz**

In memory of Berne Black, Mark Goodman, Branard Brochstein and Julie Stokes

From **Fran C. and Alan Brochstein**

In memory of Freda Lewis

From **Julia Miller**

In memory of Anthony Texeria

From **Theresa Velez**

In memory of Frances Leff and in honor of Mansel Rubenstein's 80th birthday

From **Miriam and Allan Graber**

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

In memory of Hollis Israel

From **Lynne and Richard Gaudette**

In honor of the 50th Anniversary of the Bar Mitzvah of Jay Kaplan

From **Nanette and Barry Putterman**

In honor of the 50th Anniversary of the Bar Mitzvah of Jay Kaplan

From **Suzy and Stuart Solomon**

In memory of Sarah Shanzer

From **Gary and Mike Nathanson**

In memory of Jacqueline Gutierrez

From **Ed and Patricia Will**

In memory of Elvin Ainsworth

From **Mel and Nancy Gross**

General Operating Fund

From **Ted and Maria Johnson**

Oneg Sponsorship

From **Ted and Maria Johnson**

In honor of Isabel Schnadig's 103th birthday

From **Mike and JoAnn Innerarity**

In memory of Julian Brisco Stokes

From **The Stokes-Jerden Family**

In memory of Grace Hurwitz

From **Patti and Ed Hurwitz**

In honor of their 59th anniversary

From **Miriam and Allan Graber**

Welcome New Members

Paula and Michael Kingsley
Carly and George Walker

Brag and Boast



Mazel Tov to Lisa and Lee Herman on the birth of their grandson, Joseph Edward. Joseph was born on June 7, 2019.



Mazel Tov to Kira Pevow, daughter of Stephanie and Fred, who will become a Bat Mitzvah on August 17.



Mazel Tov to Sam Frank, son of Laura and Brad, who played baseball for Lamar High School and was named district MVP.



Mazel Tov to Sage Goldman, daughter of Chris and Rachelle, who won first place in the synchronized trampoline at the 2019 USA Gymnastics Championships in Des Moines, Iowa. Sage also took home a silver medal in the double mini trampoline.

August Oneg Sponsorships

August 2: Open to sponsor

August 9: Sponsored by Melinda Neumann in honor of Gale Paschkes' birthday and by Friends of the JPB.

August 16: Open to sponsor

August 23: Sponsored by JoAnn and Mike Innerarity in honor of Isabel Schnadig's 103rd birthday

August 30: Sponsored by Patti and Ed Hurwitz in memory Grace Hurwitz

Our heartfelt condolences...

May the memory of our beloved ones always remain a blessing to those who were graced by their presence.

On the death of Shirley Shanker, aunt of Jerry Levin and his wife, Dionna, Beckye Gross and her husband, Steve, and Lisa Cashion and her husband, Hade, who passed away on June 5, 2019.

On the death of Julian (Julie) Stokes, mother of Julie Jerden and her husband, Shelby, and grandmother of Christopher, Simon and Alexander, who passed away on June 6, 2019.

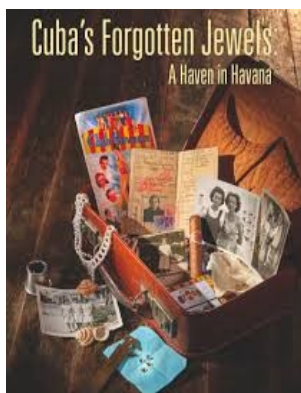
On the death of Branard Brochstein, husband of GeorgiAnne, brother of Raymond and his wife, Susan, father of Carlin, uncle of Benjamin, and uncle of Deborah and her husband, Steven Hecht, who passed away on June 13, 2019.

On the death of Phyllis Rich, mother of Lori Siegel and her husband, Jonathan, and grandmother of Alexis, who passed away on June 21, 2019.

On the death of Eric Seff, husband of Irene, father of Rachel Koenig and her husband, Dave, and grandfather of Zachary and Anna, who passed away on July 6, 2019.

Film Screening: Cuba's Forgotten Jewels – A Haven in Havana

Sunday, August 4, 2:00PM



Our August film screening is *Cuba's Forgotten Jewels – A Haven in Havana*. This film explores the little-known story of the Jewish refugees who escaped Nazi-occupied Europe and found a safe haven on the Caribbean island of Cuba.

After a wave of Jewish refugees fled to Cuba in the 1920's and 30's, the island shut its doors to immigrants, most notably to the Jews aboard the ship the *St. Louis* in 1939. In 1940, Cuba changed course and took in 6,000 Jewish refugees, including hundreds of Jewish diamond cutters and their families who, for a few years, turned the small tropical island into one of the world's major diamond-polishing centers. In the factories, women work beside men, Jews beside Cubans.

RSVP to Justin at 713-782-4162 or Justin@hcrj.org.



Saturday, August 17
7:30PM Dessert and Drinks
8:30 PM Havdalah led by Rabbi Gross

Please join us for a special evening at the home of HCRJ members, Pat and Buddy Susman. It's Havdalah in the Galleria! Meet other HCRJ families living in the Galleria area. Bring your Jewish friends to learn more about HCRJ.

Please RSVP to Justin at 713-782-4162 or Justin@hcrj.org to receive the address of the event.

HCRJ to Visit The Church Without Walls

Sunday, August 11, 12:00PM



In January of 2019, our Gospel Shabbat filled the HCRJ sanctuary with voices of praise and love. Now, for the second straight summer, we have a special opportunity to experience these powerful voices in their home church.

Please join us for an unforgettable worship experience at The Church Without Walls Queenstown Campus located at 5725 Queenston Boulevard, Houston, TX 77084. Meet at the church or carpool from HCRJ.

RSVP to Justin at 713-782-4162 or Justin@hcrj.org.

Social Action Project: Restoration Team

Saturday, August 17, 9:00AM to 12:00PM



As we come upon the 2 year anniversary of Harvey, HCRJ is teaming up with The Restoration Team and Westminster United Methodist Church to assist families in their recovery. Volunteers will canvas the Westchester neighborhood to find families still in need of disaster assistance. Please meet at St. John Vianney Catholic Church (625 Nottingham Oaks Trail, 77079) at 9:00AM or carpool from HCRJ. The Restoration Team will provide a t-shirt for each volunteer, materials for each team and a map of the area for the block-walk. This project is best suited for ages 14+. Sign up with Justin at 713-782-4162 or Justin@hcrj.org.

Basic Judaism Class in August

This four-week course is designed for adults who wish to deepen their knowledge and appreciation of Jewish history, beliefs and practices. Basic Judaism is an ideal course for everyone at HCRJ and serves as a wonderful overview for newcomers to our faith.

Each week we will address an independent course topic, so you may pick and choose the classes according to your needs and interests. Topics and dates are listed below. RSVP to justin@hcrj.org

Wednesday Evenings — 7:00 - 8:30

August 7: God, Torah and Israel:

The Foundations of a Faith

August 14: The Evolution of Values and Laws

August 21: Jewish Prayer and Ritual Practice

August 28: High Holy Day Workshop

Interest Group:

Holocaust Museum Houston

Tuesday, August 27 at 10:00am

HOLOCAUST MUSEUM HOUSTON



For the August Interest Group, Alyssa Weinstein-Sears from the Holocaust Museum Houston will visit HCRJ to present on the museum's new building, current and forthcoming exhibits, and an update on educational programming. She will also discuss about ways to get involved with the Museum through membership, affinity groups, and public programming.



Join our Boomers and Friends group for an Indian meal at Pondicheri Cafe on Saturday, August 10 at 6:30PM!

Pondicheri Cafe is located at 2800 Kirby Drive, Suite B132. Reserve your seat for the dinner by contacting Justin at 713-782-4162 or Justin@hcrj.org.

Boomers and Friends is a social group for HCRJ members born between 1946 and 1964.



The Senior Chai program is dedicated to enriching the lives of those 60 and above. Your input is valuable to us in shaping a calendar of events that meet your interests, so please send any programming ideas to hcrj@hcrj.org. This program is underwritten by the Barg and Shelby families in memory of David & Mozelle Barg and Robert & Esther Shelby. Please RSVP for all Senior Chai programs to Melissa Wolfson at hcrj@hcrj.org.

Yoga Class

Mondays, 10:00AM to 11:15AM, No cost to attend.

Taught by Suzy Shapiro, a certified yoga instructor, this class will focus on strength and stamina, balance and flexibility, and a new sense of well-being.

Mah Jongg

Wednesdays, 10:00AM to 12:00PM, No cost to attend

Join us for a weekly game of mah jongg! Coffee and light snacks are served. Instruction provided on request.

Watercolor Wednesdays

Wednesdays, June 26 - August 14 (no class July 10 or 17), 1:00PM to 3:00PM

This 6-week class is suitable for those who have never painted before and for those who have some experience.

Pastels

Wednesdays, August 21—September 25, 1:00PM to 3:00PM

As our watercolor series comes to an end, artist Noelle Shawa will begin a class on chalk pastels.

Bridge

Thursdays starting June 6, 10:00AM to 12:00PM, no cost to attend

HCRJ has started a bridge group that will be held weekly on Thursdays. Coffee and light snacks will be served. Beginners are welcome and instruction will be provided on request.

Undies for Everyone Social Action Project

Tuesday, August 10, \$10 fee covers purchase of underwear and lunch

10:00 AM to 12:00PM Pack Underwear

12:00PM to 12:30PM Lunch

Undies for Everyone is an organization that collects and distributes underwear directly into the hands of Houston students and others in need. Join us and help organize and pack new pairs of underwear with our neighbors from the YMCA. A light lunch will follow.

Torah Tots

10:00AM to 11:00AM EVERY Sunday
there is Religious School
(beginning September 15)



We are so excited to share that we are expanding our HCRJ Torah Tots (for 1 - 4 year olds) program from once a month to weekly! That's right! Every week during the HCRJ school year we will have our youngest learners together to sing, dance, snack, create, and have fun.

On September 18 and 25 we will gather to bring in a good and sweet New Year and explore Rosh Hashanah one of our favorite Jewish Holiday's. There is no cost to attend Torah Tots, but please email mike@hcrj.org to register!

Religious School Opening Day **Sunday, September 8 at 9:00AM**

Religious School Opening Day is coming up on September 8! Are your kids registered?! If not call the HCRJ office at 713-782-4162 or email Mike Mason at mike@hcrj.org. We are going to have a great year with learning and experiences in cooking, Torah, eco-Judaism, art, Hebrew, music, and so much more. At HCRJ we pride ourselves in offering something for all types of learners. Also watch for fun and different learning opportunities for families and parents as well. We are looking forward to seeing you on September 8.



Jerusalem Peace Builders Shabbat **August 9 at 7:15PM**

Join us for a moving service as a group of teens from Israel and the Palestinian territories share their stories after having spent the previous week at a camp called "Kids 4 Peace". The purpose of this camp, which takes place outside of Houston, is to promote transformational encounters through a residential camp for Israeli, Palestinian and American teenagers. Dialogue is facilitated by United States diplomats, former Israeli and Palestinian combatants, artists, and religious leaders from each faith. These brave souls have committed themselves to learning from each other despite the ongoing context of hatred and violence that surround them every day. Learn about this groundbreaking camp and how it has transformed these peace-minded teens as our guests will share their experiences.

Interfaith Youth Houston **August 6, 1:00PM to 4:30PM**

HCRJ high school students have been working to build and strengthen ties between the various high school faith communities in the Houston area. We have been lucky to partner with Jerusalem Peace Builders and are pleased to continue to be a part of Interfaith Youth Houston.

HCRJ students who participated last year had an exceptional opportunity to learn about other religions, engage in meaningful community service projects, and engage in face to face dialogue with other High School students from diverse backgrounds. The first event of the school year is August 6th at Interfaith Ministries (3303 Main St).

To register Your high school Student email mike@hcrj.org.

BIRTHDAYS

8/1 John Landa
8/1 Jack Burleigh
8/2 Annalee May
8/2 Sheldon Isman
8/4 Adam Forman
8/5 John Cosgrove
8/6 Gloria Herman
8/6 Marcia Chaffin
8/6 Leslie Lovett
8/6 Emily Weinstein
8/6 Cristopher Pye
8/8 Gale Paschkes
8/8 Frederick Pevow
8/8 Paula Goldstein
8/9 Julia Miller
8/9 Philipp Meyer
8/9 Lewis Fram
8/9 Bruce Weiner
8/9 Sandra Fogiel
8/11 Bill Tonn
8/11 Zane May
8/11 Barbara Friedman
8/11 Rachel Kramer
8/11 Patricia Susman
8/11 Barbara Friedman
8/12 Charlotte Robinson
8/13 Beverly Painter
8/14 Maryellen McSweeney
8/15 Randy Smith
8/16 Kristin Helfand
8/17 Dawn Rubinstein
8/17 Ross Davis
8/17 Stephanie Wise
8/17 Lila Shain
8/17 Susan Krovetz
8/18 Stephen Lapin
8/19 Gail Davis
8/19 Tevin Marks
8/20 Joel Kravitz
8/20 Jim Rosenthal
8/20 Isabel Schnadig
8/20 Judith Segal
8/21 Galya Nichamoff
8/21 Lilly Lerner
8/22 Zhanna Golodryga
8/24 Jill Morgenstern
8/25 Jill Ferguson
8/25 Bill Helfand
8/25 Jane Wagner
8/25 Brent Speer
8/26 Doris Kalmin
8/26 Starr Borden
8/27 Randolph Ney
8/28 Warren Krams
8/28 Karen Brooks
8/28 Rachel Koenig
8/30 Evelyn Lazear
8/30 Cindy Lipshutz

CHILDREN'S BIRTHDAYS

8/6 Roman LoPreto
8/6 Elijah Tenny
8/7 Zoey Weinstein
8/11 Erandy Alvarez
8/11 Karen Hoff
8/13 David Hoff
8/14 Phoebe Cosgrove
8/15 Pierce Cohen
8/15 Ryan Beckelman
8/16 Ellie Sondock
8/19 Geoffrey Lore
8/21 Allison Kabin
8/21 Kira Pevow
8/25 Ned Silverman
8/25 Roberto Salomon
8/26 Francesca Farris
8/26 Evan Danek
8/26 Charlie Maltz
8/28 Samuel Frank
8/28 Sara Frank
8/31 Simon Gross
8/31 Ethan Maltz

ANNIVERSARIES

8/2 Mike & Roberta Tucker
8/4 Michael & Jennifer Siegel
8/6 Gregg & Betsy Goldstein
8/6 Bill & Gayle Tonn
8/6 Andy Edison & Donna Lax-Edison
8/7 Sidney & Ione Moran
8/8 Jonathan Hook & Katharine Newman
8/9 Jeff & Karen Kabin
8/10 John & Yvonne Cosgrove
8/10 Stephen & Debbie Lapin
8/11 Michael & Madeleine Appel
8/12 Aaron & Jaime Perkins
8/13 Herb & Mary Silberman
8/13 Bruce & Harriet Spain
8/15 Moise & Joan Levy
8/17 Jeffrey Fleisher & Elizabeth Vann
8/21 Ed & Patricia Will
8/23 Christopher & Elisa Pye
8/24 Bruce & Carol Appelbaum
8/25 Gary & Susan Rachlin
8/29 Marvin & Ann Lerner
8/29 Randall & Cynthia Anhalt
8/30 Jimmy Jones & Fran Brochstein
8/31 Theodore & Joan Helfgott
8/31 Stuart & Stephanie Rosen

YARZEITS

8/1 Sara Bronstein
8/2 Seymour Goldstein
8/3 Irving Selber
8/3 David Smith
8/4 Louis Shain
8/4 Adrian Levy
8/4 Richard Beckelman
8/6 H.J. (Ray) Bernard
8/7 Milton Krams
8/7 Max Markoss Nathanson
8/7 Selma Motley
8/8 Gertrude Frost
8/9 Harry Gordon
8/11 Egon Paschkes
8/12 Stanley Cohen
8/13 Isabelle Novitt
8/14 Eleanor Sondock
8/14 David Weisenberg
8/15 Filmore Sondock
8/16 David Fried
8/16 Herbert Rosenthal
8/17 Paul Nagel
8/18 Keith Frank
8/18 Bettie Farfel
8/18 Jeffrey Graber
8/19 Alexander Kaminsky
8/20 Edna Soifer
8/21 Ida Gordon Lerner
8/21 Grace Huwiz
8/22 Sophia Goldfield
8/22 Joan Parmet
8/24 Leon Nathanson
8/25 William Shapiro
8/25 Francine Isaacs
8/25 Leland Shain
8/26 Ida Leben
8/26 Murray Gidseg
8/26 Alfred Mowery, Jr.
8/27 Thomas Spain
8/27 Helen Oppenheimer
8/28 Loretta Hawkins
8/28 Alvan Wolfe
8/28 Phillip Markman
8/30 Ellouise Michaels
8/30 Jean Levinson
8/30 Augustus Drake
8/30 Violet Mesinger
8/31 Mickey Markman

You are invited to join HCRJ
for our monthly



August 2, 2019
Dinner 6:15 pm
Sabbath Services 7:15 pm

\$5.00 per person

Please feel free to bring a side dish to show off your culinary talents.

August Family Shabbat Menu

Pasta, salad, garlic bread, chicken
nuggets and mac-n-cheese

Steven M. Gross, Senior Rabbi
rabbigross@hcrj.org

Michael P. LeBurkien, Rabbi Emeritus
rabbileburkien@sbcglobal.net (private email)

Melissa Wolfson, Executive Director
melissa@hcrj.org

Michael Mason, Director of Lifelong Learning
mike@hcrj.org

Justin Deutsch, Program Coordinator
justin@hcrj.org

Marna Meyer, High School Principal
marna@hcrj.org

Adam Weinstein, President

Adam Forman, Vice President

Jaime Perkins, Secretary

Debbie Barrash, Treasurer

Bruce Shelby, Past President

Rochelle Sinderbrand, Bookkeeper
rochelles@hcrj.org

Jaime Perkins, Membership Chair

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Newsletter articles, suggestions for articles and corrections are welcome. Deadline for submission is the 15th of the month.