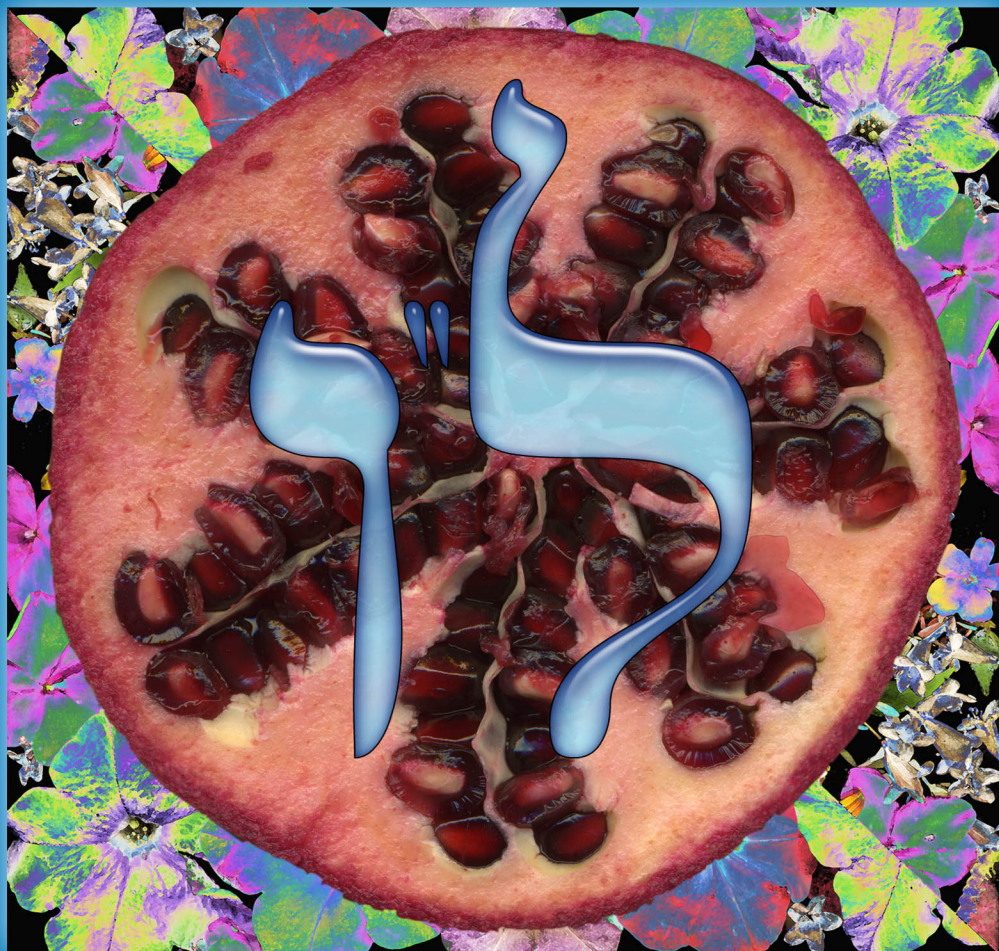


פאבראנגען
FABRANGEN



CELEBRATING
36 YEARS

NOVEMBER 9-10, 2007
29 CHESHVAN 5768

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Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information in this book. We regret any oversights or errors that may remain and invite you to report these to Fabrangen at the address below.

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Fabrangen

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The Answer Is . . . Fabrangen.

What's the Question?

Even after 36 years, essays and articles (and conversations) about Fabrangen still tend to open with the fundamental question, “What is Fabrangen?” That’s probably a good sign. For one thing, it means that Fabrangen hasn’t become some kind of well-defined, standard-issue, easily pigeonholed institution—perhaps the only kind of entity its founding members did not aspire to create.

The founding members certainly had sweeping ambitions. Fabrangen was to be “a place, a group and an idea,” Rob Agus said in 1971, as “Fabrangen, the Jewish Free Culture Center in Washington” opened its doors at 2158 Florida Avenue. The Center offered a wide range of activities, including classes on Jewish and secular topics, draft and drug counseling, and Friday night dinners and services. The *Washington Jewish Week* described what Fabrangen was after as “a Hasidic happening in which people come together to participate in a total experience”—using phrasing that now seems hopelessly dated to capture goals that in many ways are still part of Fabrangen today.

The Center was successful at drawing crowds to its programs—mostly young, urban Jews, many of them with little previous Jewish education or affiliation—and at drawing controversy. The six-month grant from the United Jewish Appeal that helped get Fabrangen off the ground was not renewed after debate that centered on whether Fabrangen was too political.

With the end of funding, Fabrangen rented space briefly at 1627 21st Street and then in 1972 moved to donated space at the Union of American Hebrew Congregations building on Massachusetts Avenue, where it remained until 1988. The move to smaller quarters over which Fabrangen had less control probably hastened Fabrangen’s evolution into a group more focused on religious services, including Shabbat morning services, and learning. In 1977, as Fabrangen became more settled, it hired its first coordinator—a move that sparked some controversy in what had always been a do-it-yourself membership group.

Even such a thumbnail sketch of Fabrangen’s origins inevitably underscores continuing themes—which is to say controversies—in Fabrangen’s history. How political is Fabrangen? Does it have a position on Israel? To

what extent should Fabragen engage in social action? Where should Fabragen be located? Would it be too “institutional,” and expensive, to have our own building? Is Fabragen getting too small and stagnant (some would say “comfortable”)? Is it maintaining its volunteer spirit?

Fabragen is defined at least as much by the questions it keeps asking about itself—and what could be more Jewish?—as it is by any of the (always provisional) answers. Fabragen is the kind of group that can debate whether it’s okay to move to a location with staff that will set up chairs for services—because, well, isn’t that something we’re supposed to be doing ourselves?—even as it worries that it’s lacking volunteers. Fabragen is the kind of group that can spend months, even years, debating what prayer book to use—because, well, isn’t the current one stodgy and sexist?—and then incorporate portions of the discarded prayer book continually in its services.

But that’s not to say that everything is always up for grabs. Fabragen has always aspired to be, and over time has become, more and more participatory and egalitarian. And Fabragen has indeed grown into a community—perhaps in ways that only the passage of time can allow—with deep friendships and networks of mutual support, a *havurah* that has celebrated marriages and births and bar and bat mitzvahs, and has endured personal tribulations, disease, and deaths.

Fabragen, and the entities that grew out of it, such as the Jewish Study Center, continue to touch and shape many lives in ways that its founding members had hoped—providing community, guidance, and accessible pathways to Judaism. And Fabragen continues to try to reach out to a now revived urban community; for many years, Fabragen has been offering free High Holiday services—no tickets necessary—that are led by more than 40 members each year and attract as many as 700 attendees (even if no one would describe that as a “happening”).

So what is Fabragen? There still may be no easy, single answer, but more and more people have their own answers as they have encountered or become part of Fabragen over the past 36 years. If all goes well, the answers will continue to proliferate as Fabragen continues to question, argue, grow and evolve, celebrate and mourn, age and regenerate.

—David Goldston, October 2007

Chronology

- 1970** “Concept Paper 1: A New Jewish Community,” written by Rob Agus and Paul Ruttkay
Proposal to the UJA Federation of Washington: “Fabrangen: A Jewish Free Cultural Center”; \$15,000 grant awarded for six months
Incorporation of Fabrangen
- 1971** January 30 (Parshat Bo): First Fabrangen service, 2158 Florida Avenue NW
Summer Institute (a six-week intensive study program) held
Anti-Vietnam War rally held, with Fabrangen’s help in organizing and providing shelter for out-of-town participants
First Fabrangen Fiddlers album (*Souljoy*) released
- 1972** Winter: Move to 1627 21st Street NW
Despite loss of funding, outreach continues with open High Holiday services, communal seder, and Simchat Torah and Purim celebrations
First Fabrangen wedding (Diana Stark and Alan Oresky)
Fall: Move to Union of American Hebrew Congregations Religious Action Center, 2027 Massachusetts Avenue NW
- 1973** Fabrangen women’s groups established
First adult b’nai mitzvah held, and first women *leyn* Torah (Chava Weissler and Sarah Elpern)
Fabrangen Cheder founded
- 1975** Tzedek Tzedek Coffeehouse
Fabrangen Tzedakah Collective established
- 1976** First Fabrangen child bat mitzvah (Toba Spitzer)
- 1977** First coordinator hired (Ira Cohen)
First Jewish Folk Arts Festival cosponsored by Fabrangen
- 1978** Jewish Study Center launched as successor to Lehrhaus of 1973
Conference organized to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the birth of Martin Buber
- 1980** National Havurah Committee founded with Fabrangen’s help
Monthly meal donations to So Others Might Eat (SOME) initiated

- 1981** 10th anniversary celebration at Temple Sinai
- 1982** Torah acquired
- 1983** Membership dues established
- 1984** Children's program started
- 1985** Community decision to customarily include *imahot* (foremothers) in the Amidah
- 1986** Involvement in Central American issues leads to support for a political refugee
- 1987** High Holiday services first held at New York Avenue Presbyterian Church (for a congregation of more than 700)
- 1988** Project Hope established to help homeless families
Move to George Washington University Hillel
- 1991** Memorial quilt created
- 1992** First budget and fiscal year
Joint annual service with Bet Mishpachah initiated
- 1995** Siddur *Kol Haneshamah* adopted
First adult bar/bat mitzvah class
- 1996** 25th anniversary celebration at Tifereth Israel Congregation
Children's tzedakah collective initiated
- 1999** Fabrangen Web site launched
- 2001** Community *mishloach manot* project for Purim launched to raise funds for the Fabrangen Children's Scholarship Fund
- 2003** *Mahzor Hadeish Yameinu/Renew Our Days* purchased and *Fabrangen Mahzor Companion* produced
Move to Washington Ethical Society; Torah procession through Rock Creek Park
- 2004** Fabrangen West (in Virginia) initiated; introduction of siddur *Eit Ratzon*
- 2005** Fabrangen Announcements e-newsletter launched
- 2006** Fabrangen sign installed at the Washington Ethical Society
- 2007** 36th (double-chai) anniversary celebration

Affiliates

Over the years, Fabrangeners have started a variety of endeavors that have developed into independent entities.

Fabringen Fiddlers

The Fabringen Fiddlers, Washington, D.C.'s original Jewish folk band, was founded in 1971 by Fabringen members David Shneyer (guitar) and Alan Oresky (violin), along with Frank Sparber (clarinet). Ken Giles was also an early member. The group started by creating Jewish liturgical music for Fabringen, but soon included all Jewish folk music and *simcha* music. Members of the group, including Sue Roemer, Theo Stone, and Larry Robinson, continue to play Jewish folk and klezmer music throughout the region, but the band mainly performs in concert now.

Fabringen Cheder

The Fabringen Cheder was founded as a school and community by Arthur Waskow and Nessa Spitzer in 1973 in order to provide an alternative form of Jewish education for their children. Over the years, the Fabringen Cheder has held a Shabbat Mincha Group, a Women's Rosh Chodesh group, a monthly Mensch Club, and High Holiday services. Today, the Fabringen Cheder continues as a parent-taught cooperative Jewish cultural school that meets regularly in Silver Spring.

Jewish Folk Arts Festival

The Jewish Folks Arts Society was founded in 1973 by David Shneyer, Stu Copans, and Sue Roemer. The first Jewish Folk Arts Festival, cosponsored by Fabringen, was held in 1977. The Festival has provided a unique opportunity to bring together local talent for the community. Am Kolel now houses the festival, with the participation of many members of Fabringen.

Fabringen Tzedakah Collective

The Fabringen Tzedakah Collective was established in 1975 to provide a forum for its members to contribute to charity in an intelligent, democratic, and involved manner. Twice each year, the group meets to learn collectively about recipient organizations and to make decisions on charitable allocations to Jewish, local, Israeli, and international organizations. Over the years, the collective has made 66 semiannual allocations, totaling over \$1.5 million.

Jewish Study Center

Founded in 1978, the Jewish Study Center (JSC) is an independent, non-profit institute of adult Jewish education in the Washington, D.C., area. The JSC offers classes in religion, Bible, arts and culture, language, ethics, history, and philosophy at multiple venues and has revitalized adult Jewish education in the region. Many Fabrangeners have participated in the JSC in many ways—as founders, board members, teachers, students, and supporters.

Chevrat Tzedakah

Chevrat Tzedakah was started in the late 1970s by Fabrangen members. Each member made a commitment to contribute ½ of 1% of his or her income, which was pooled and then distributed (as each member requested) to a number of charities, including local social service organizations. The group also started the practice of making tuna casseroles to be delivered once each month to So Others Might Eat (SOME). While the group disbanded more than 10 years ago, the tradition of monthly tuna casseroles for SOME was adopted by the community and continues today.

Project Hope

In 1988, Fabrangen established Project Hope, which offers families direct services that are designed to empower them to maintain permanent residences, expand job opportunities, and seek educational opportunities. Over the years, Fabrangen has helped several families by organizing tutoring for the children; providing money for urgent bills; donating furniture, computers, and appliances; assisting with college tuition; and organizing social activities.

“QUESTIONS AND PROBLEMS. What do we want from Fabrangen? . . . How do we create that elusive thing called community? . . . Are we satisfied for Fabrangen to be mostly a young, singles group? How do we treat families, married people?”—Fabrangen Newsletter, September 1977

Places of Worship

Shabbat Services

1971

2158 Florida Avenue NW: Fabringen: A Jewish Free Cultural Center. The entire building was open seven days a week, offering services, meals, study sessions, arts and crafts workshops, a coffeehouse, cultural events, and a counseling center.

1972

1627 21st Street NW

1972 –1988

UAHC Religious Action Center, 2021 Massachusetts Avenue NW

1988–2003

George Washington University Hillel, 2300 H Street NW

2003–present

Washington Ethical Society, 7750 16th Street NW

High Holiday Services

1971

1627 21st Street NW

1972–c. 1979

UAHC Religious Action Center, 2021 Massachusetts Avenue NW

Early 1980s

Goodwill Baptist Church, 1862 Kalorama Road NW
Sidwell Friends School, 3825 Wisconsin Avenue NW

1985–1986

Edmund Burke School, 2955 Upton Street NW

1987–present

New York Avenue Presbyterian Church, 1313 New York Avenue NW

The community gratefully acknowledges the tremendous work over the years of Clare Feinson and Jerry Stilkind, who have handled the logistics of High Holiday services with dedication, perseverance, and grace.

B'nai Mitzvah—Children

1976

Toba Spitzer

1977

David Waskow

1980

Shoshana Waskow

1982

Robert Terris (with his
father Bruce)

1989

Joseph Miller

1990

Flora Spiegel

1991

Marnie Levy
Anna Miller

1993

Ben Ticktin Nash
Micah Spiegel

1994

Yonah Levy
Daniel Lichterman
Josh Soref

1995

Aviva Braun
Tamara Spiegel
Jeremy Kresky-Wolff

1996

Abby Bellows
Laura Bellows
Jacob Grossman
Beth Soref

1997

Elihai Braun

1998

Mark Holum
Jacob Mazer

1999

Sarah LaRue
Adam McCrensky

2000

Hannan Braun
Sophia Smith-Savedoff

2001

Zack Arnson-Serotta
Ezra Deutsch-Feldman
Abby Lis-Perlis
Miriam Mazer
Nathan McCrensky
Adina Tabor

2002

Carl LaRue
Elizabeth (Bleiwess)
Wagner

2003

Anna Leah Berstein
Simpson
Molly Braun
Molly Deutsch-Feldman
Johanna Galat
Tracy Spatz O'Brien

2004

Talia Laster
Alexandra Lis-Perlis

2005

Hayley Andrews
Jordan Chacon
Jordan Hirsh
Vica Kleiner
Ness Smith-Savedoff
Anna Weil

2006

Hannah Goldman
Liana Kahn
David Kreisberg
Avery Spatz O'Brien
Benjamin Thale-Galat
Daniel Thale-Galat
Miriam Thorne

2007

Ilana Hirsh
Anat Scham

I was so relieved and proud when, after reading my bat mitzvah speech, so many people spoke up with their comments and opinions.—Anna Miller

B'nai Mitzvah—Adults

1973

Sarah Elpern
Margie Siegel
Marion Wachtel
Chava Weissler

1980

Lisa Newell (z"l)

1981

Estelle Finkel

1982

Bruce Terris (with his son Robert)

1983

Linda Beltz Glaser

1984

Cindy Arnson

1985

Sue Hoechstetter

1987

Dvora Slavin

1989

Aviva Kempner

1995

Cindy Brach
Grace Horowitz
Margie Jones
Jayne Palmer
Amy Smith
Janice Steinschneider

1996

Amy Brookman
Barbara Goodman
Michael Lindner
Rich Mazer
Nancy Roth

1998

Richard Gladstein
Zahava Heckscher
Deb Kolodny
Shira Saperstein
Dottie Weintraub

2000

Virginia Spatz

Sometimes, when I bring a friend to Fabrangen, someone not familiar with Jewish prayer, I wonder if they feel what I felt many years ago. Does it seem intimidating, as if one can “watch” and “feel” the spirituality but not participate? I’m always tempted to say that there are many ways to enter Fabrangen, many small steps to participate, and many, many people who will gladly be your teachers.—Norma Brooks

Coordinators

1971

Three paid staff, funded by a
\$15,000 grant from the UJA
Federation:

Rob Agus, Director
Peter Wendt, Counseling
David Shneyer, Programming

1972–1977

No paid staff

1977

Ira Cohen

1978–1979

Debbie Friedman

1979–1982

Michele Alperin

1982–1983

Adam Kaufman

1983–1985

Kay Elfant

Summer 1985

Shoshana Waskow (Intern)

1985–1986

Shulamit Gehlfuss

1986–1989

Morris Rodenstein

1989–1992

Deena Goldsmith

1992

Joan Hyman (co-coordinator with
Deena Goldsmith)

1992–2003

Sandy Myers

2004–present

Gloria Whitman

Children's Teachers

Susan Barocas
Laura Bellows
Shahar Colt
Malka Fenyvesi
Melissa Gottheim
Ester Greenblatt
Carol Grossman
Rachel Grossman
Joseph Isaacs

Steve Kramer
Karen Krantweiss
Yaffa Oren
Staci Rosen
Sharon Senser
Noam Susson
Ilan Vitemberg

Current and Former Fabrangeners Who . . .

. . . Are Rabbis

Leila Gal Berner	Steven Nathan
Irwin Blank (z"l)	Barbara Penzner
Sue Fendrick	Yael Ridberg
Ellen Flax	David Rosenn
Gerald Fox	Gerry Serotta
Marsha (Pik-Nathan) Friedman	Ruth Sohn
Janice Garfunkel	Toba Spitzer
Carol Glass	Michael Swartz
Pam (Liebe) Hoffman	David Shneyer
Jan Caryl Kaufman	Max Ticktin
Amy Klein	Arthur Waskow
Debra Kolodny (in process)	Tobie Weisman
Haviva (Krasner-Davidson) Ner-David	
Gilah Langner	
Jeff Marker	
David (Fleishman) Mivasair	

. . . Are Cantors

Rochelle Helzner
Sue Roemer

. . . Have Settled Permanently in Israel

Natalie Wasserman Barkan	Anna (Jaslow) Schwartz
Jonathan Bloom	Amy Klein
Laura (Cane) Berkane	Bob Nechin
Ira Cohen	Havia (Krasner-Davidson) Ner-David
Estelle Finkel	Barry Rubin
Carol Grossman	Nora Stone
Steve (Shimon) Hurwitz	

"(3) Fabrangen does not permit non-UFW lettuce or grapes, nor may Gallo wines be used."—From Fabrangen food policy, early 1970s

Ritual Artwork and Cultural Projects

The artistic and musical expressions documented here are significant because, in many instances, they represent the relationship between arts or music and tefillot (prayers), and the artists' or musicians' attempts to share that relationship. Fabrangen's experience has shown that a community does not have to be rich in financial resources to provide an aesthetic, spiritual davening space.

Ritual Objects

Yellow Torah Mantle (Me'il): Made by Shirley Waxman on the occasion of the bar mitzvah of Micah Spiegel (1993); replaced in 2005 by a new yellow mantle incorporating portions of the original silk

Parokhet (used to cover the Torah on the table): Designed by Rebecca Levine; individual pieces of the quilt made by various members (1988 or 1989)

Wimpel (Torah Binder): Embroidered by Rachel Braun on the occasion of Aviva Braun's bat mitzvah (1995)

Shabbat Table Cover: Made by Shirley Waxman on the occasion of the Flora Spiegel's bat mitzvah (1990)

White Torah Mantle (Me'il): Made by Shirley Waxman on the occasion of Tamara Spiegel's bat mitzvah (1995)

Ark (Aron Kodesh): Designed and crafted by Matt Nechin on the occasion of Carl LaRue's bar mitzvah; used on High Holidays at New York Avenue Presbyterian Church (2002)

Brass Menorah: Made by someone who was only briefly in the community; crafted during the night after he heard that his brother had died—"a source of healing light in the darkness of loss" (1970s)

Stained Glass Kiddush Cup (whereabouts unknown): Made by Bob Nechin (1970s)

Stained Glass Ner Tamid (whereabouts unknown): Made by Bob Nechin (1970s)

Embroidery and Textiles

Seven Species Shiviti (Psalm 16:8): Embroidered by Rachel Braun on the occasion of Elihai Braun's bar mitzvah (1997)

Tallit Embroidery (Numbers 15:38): Embroidered by Rachel Braun on the occasion of Hannan Braun's bar mitzvah (2000)

Gates of the East (Shabbat Morning Liturgy): Embroidered by Rachel Braun on the occasion of Molly Braun's bat mitzvah (2003)

Yom Kippur Sh'ma Kolenu and Hands: 5' x 10' mural designed by Judybeth Greene; painted by the community (1999)

Rosh Hashanah Torah Scroll and Trees: 5' x 12' mural designed by Judybeth Greene; painted by the community (2002)

Memorial Quilt: Designed by Shirley Waxman; inspired by the memory of Nina Kahn (z"l) and dedicated to the memories of families and friends; made by Rebecca Koose Levine, Nancy Alikonis, Dottie Weintraub, Matt Nechin, Sheryl Segal, and others (1991)

Yizkor Needlework Project: Conceived by Virginia Spatz and Debra Kolodny for Yizkor in 2003; designed by Dottie Weintraub; embroidered by the community, with threads representing a mitzvah or action honoring the memory of a loved one (ongoing)

Wings of the Shechinah Fabric Artwork: Created by Judybeth Greene with assistance from Dale Lupu, Dee Herman, and Fran Teplitz; inspired by Rachel Preeti Greene (z"l); made with fabrics donated by the community (2006)

High Holiday Table Cover: Made by Shirley Waxman; embroidery by Ellen Garshick, Elena Rodriguez, and Dottie Weintraub (2007)

Various High Holiday Artwork: Created by children and other members of the Fabrangen community

Music for Liturgy and Jewish Life

Kabbalat Shabbat (L'cha Dodi, Shalom Aleichem, Shiru L'Adonai, Or Zarua): Composed by David Shneyer (early 1970s)

Hesed u'Mishpat (Psalm 101): Composed by David Shneyer for Soviet Jewry demonstration in 1970; used at other demonstrations in the early 1970s

Etz Hayyim Hi (Torah service): Composed by David Shneyer (1971)

Souljoy/Simchat Hanefesh: First album recorded by Fabrangen Fiddlers (1971)

Ul'amtuye (May You Bestow; Torah service): Composed by Norma Brooks in memory of her husband, Paul Lichterman (z"l) (1984)

Yehalelu et Shem A' (O Praise the Name of A'; Shabbat liturgy): Composed by Norma Brooks in honor of Esther Ticktin's 60th birthday (1985)

Uvekhen Ten Pahdekha (Now Therefore Put Fear of You; High Holiday liturgy): Composed by Norma Brooks in memory of her grandfather, Rachmiel Rosenblatt (z"l) (1988)

BeSefer Hayyim (In the Book of Life): Composed by Norma Brooks in memory of her friend Berne Wunderlich (z"l) (1993)

Etz Hayyim Hi (It is a Tree of Life; Torah service): Composed by Norma Brooks in honor of the bar mitzvah of her son, Daniel Lichterman (1994)

Ezrat Avoteinu (Help of Our Ancestors): Composed by Norma Brooks in honor of Max and Esther Ticktin's 50th wedding anniversary (1995)

Tefila liM'dinat Israel (Prayer for the State of Israel): Composed by Norma Brooks in memory of Yitzhak Rabin (z"l) (1995)

Your Bountiful Light: CD of original liturgical music composed by Norma Brooks; sung by the Bountiful Light Choir (2002)

Shema' Koleinu (Yom Kippur liturgy): Composed by Cindy Arnson, Yamim Noraim (2003)

Psalm 27 (High Holiday liturgy): Composed by Cindy Arnson (2005)

Yismach Moshe (Shabbat Amidah): Composed by Rhonda Weiss on the occasion of the bar mitzvah of Jordan Hirsh (2005)

Etz Hayyim Hi (Torah Service): Composed by Rhonda Weiss on the occasion of the bat mitzvah of Ilana Hirsh (2007)

Ashreyanu (Shaharit Amidah): Composed by Norma Brooks on the occasion of Fabrangen's 36th anniversary (2007)

Potpourri

A Hopeful Passover: Passover cookbook compiled and edited by Rachel Braun, illustrated with original monotypes by Judybeth Greene; produced as a (successful) fundraiser for Project Hope (1991)

Shabbat Tablecloths: Designed by Ellen Garshick, Judybeth Greene, and Bracha Laster; facilitated by teens; made by Fabrangen children (2002)

Fabrangen High Holiday Reader: Readings, prayers, and transliterations (to the Silverman *mahzor*) compiled by Barbara White and Fran Teplitz; contributions by many members of the community (1997)

Fabrangen Mahzor Companion: Compiled by Ellen Garshick and Martin Weil to accompany *Mahzor Hadeish Yameinu/Renew Our Days* (2003)

Fabrangen is:

*beautiful music,
thoughtful drashes,
positive attitudes,
warm sentiments,
theater in the round,
scholarship in religion,
participatory democracy in worship,
Proof that Harry Caray was right—
if I sing along, enough good voices
will make the whole still sound good.
Fabrangen is where I found a kippah
on Yom Kippur over a decade after I lost it.—Steve Yaffe*

Of Blessed Memory

ז"ל

Over the years, Fabrangen has mourned the loss of some members of the community. We have asked people close to the individuals listed here to share brief personal thoughts about those individuals and their connection to the community.

Fabrangen acknowledges the compassionate and caring work of all those who have participated in the work of the Chevra Kadisha.

Rabbi Devora Bartnoff

Devora lived in Washington from 1974 to 1976 while she attended social work school at Catholic University. She later served as a Hillel director in Miami, then went on to the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College and to a diverse career as a rabbi before her death from breast cancer in 1997 at the age of 44. Devora had enormous creative talents. She had a gift for both music and midrash, but she also had a profound appreciation of the holy moments of everyday life. Her experience as the mother of four children, including a son with Down Syndrome, and even the experience of her own illness, led her to begin to reinterpret traditional rituals and explore new ones, including the concept of Jewish healing. Fabrangen was Devora's first real experience of a creative and organic Jewish community, and it had a major influence on her career choices.—*Judith Bartnoff*

Irwin Blank

Irwin came to Fabrangen after many years as a congregational Reform rabbi and scholar. He was a gregarious and jolly storyteller who was also known to offer fresh insights at Torah discussions, bringing to bear on the central questions of life his training in theology and psychology and his life experience. Irwin lived as he preached. He filled his life with meaningful intellectual work, strove to improve the lives of others, surrounded himself with loving family and friends, and took sensual enjoyment in life's pastrami sandwiches. Through his work to promote Torah, his service, and his acts of lovingkindness, he can truly be said to have lived up to the precepts of Simon the Just in Pirkei Avot. Those who knew Irwin as friend, teacher, colleague, and student were highly privileged. May his name be remembered for a blessing.—*Manny Thorne*

Larry Blonder

Larry was a member of Fabrangen from the mid-1980s through the early 1990s. Through Fabrangen, Larry met his future wife, Sheri Taub (now Blonder). An outstanding contribution that Larry made to Fabrangen was that, more than any other nonparent at that time, Larry played a leader-

ship role in the children's programming. Larry grew up in Silver Spring, Maryland, and later he and Sheri raised their children—Aviva (now 11 years old) and Chaya (now 7 years old)—in Silver Spring. Larry died in 2001 at the age of 50.—*John Spiegel*

Ed Cohen-Rosenthal

Ed was a member of Fabrangen from the late 1970s through the early 1980s, when he moved to Baltimore. He was a loving husband to Ellen and father to Janna (born the same day as Josh Soref), Mollie, and Jacob. He had a deep commitment to social action, which he demonstrated through his work on environmental, labor, and social issues. He was a creative, energetic force for good.—*David Smith*

Warren Glick

Warren passed away on December 20, 1997, having just celebrated his 47th birthday. A reference librarian at the Martin Luther King Jr. Library for many years, Warren concentrated his enormous intellectual prowess on Franz Kafka and the most difficult modern European philosophers and theologians. Warren taught a few courses at the Jewish Study Center and loved to draw on his wide literary interests to talk and talk and talk to his many friends. He wanted so much to live; he held on to the very end to his cherished dreams of marrying and starting a family and a long life of reading and of writing many books and articles on all he knew and loved for the whole world to read.—*Grace Horowitz*

Shirley Gould

Shirley passed away in 2007 at the age of 81. She had been a Fabrangen regular for many years, although declining health and arthritis prevented attendance at WES due to limited accessibility. Shirley was happy to be able to attend Kol Nidre and Yom Kippur services in 2006, the last time we saw her. Her generosity was legendary among Fabrangers who knew her. Examples are her many years of financial contributions to the congregation and, most of all, her regular habit of inviting a couple of us to join her for the pre-Kol Nidre meal at the Cafe Mozart, where she would pay not only for those of us with her, but for the many Fabrangers sitting at other tables in the restaurant.—*Grace Horowitz*

Rachel Preeti Greene

We hold you in our hearts, remembering forever your radiant smile, generosity of spirit, and gentle teachings. Your life and gifts brought love, healing, and joy to so many, and we are better off for having known you. The color, light, laughter, and wisdom you shared lives on. Namaste.—*Fran Teplitz*

Bernie Hamilton

Baruch ben Avraham ve-Sarah (husband of Mirilee Pearl) (1945–2005)
A renowned human rights scholar and activist, Bernie joined Fabrangen while he was director of the Washington office of Minority Rights Group International from 1990 to 1995. Bernie participated fully in Fabrangen and cherished the opportunity it gave him to express the Jewish values of justice and defense of the weak and powerless. Back in England, Bernie continued teaching and was president of the Leo Kuper Foundation, an anti-genocide NGO. The University of Essex Centre for human rights established the Bernie Hamilton Human Rights Archive based on his personal library. Bernie was kind, thoughtful, generous, highly intelligent, blessed with a wonderful sense of humor, open-minded, and interested in everyone and everything about human lives, a man who met people in their humanity.—*Rose Berstein*

Evelyn Harris (1919–2004)

In the days of long, open-ended Torah discussions, Evelyn would always bring the cultural and political events of her week into the mix, at times even hijacking or confounding the conversation but always enlivening it. She was constantly questioning, with curiosity, passion, and commitment, linking the leftie New York Jewish world of her youth, Fabrangen, Garrett Park, and the latest book, movie, or political moment. Evelyn was one of a handful of “senior” members of Fabrangen who, in the early years, enriched and authenticated the community.—*Norman Shore*

***Lisa Newell (1955–2000), Sol Jacobson (1938–2003),
Ben Jacobson (1992–2001)***

Losing our beloved friends Lisa Newell and Sol Jacobson and their eight-year-old son Ben Jacobson still feels beyond our grasp. Lisa, who died in January 2000, was an accomplished lawyer, a passionate defender of gender equity and the Jewish people, and a devoted—at times besotted!—mother. She happily gave up her law practice to spend full time with Ben, living fully, spontaneously, and with determination, building a life of grace and simplicity around friends and family. She had found a perfect partner in Sol, who shared a love of the unconventional, a passion for serving the underprivileged, and a knowing intelligence. Sol had a hilarious and always irreverent sense of humor, finding something to laugh about even in the darkest hours. He had a special and wondrous magic with children and young people, entering into their world and becoming a cherished ally and mentor. Sol’s devotion to his son Ben was legendary.

It’s hard to imagine a child more passionately hoped for and deeply loved than Ben Jacobson. Wise beyond his years, alive with a love of Cub

Scouts, dinosaurs, Star Wars, soccer, Legos, Mel Brooks movies, and breakfast with his dad at the local steak and eggs joint, Ben was an inquisitive and enthusiastic student at Janney Elementary School. Although he was robbed of his childhood by cancer, Ben still lived each day with optimism, trust, and his own sweet gentleness.

We hold them in our hearts. In the words of their epitaph: Lisa, Sol, and Ben: Snuggling Together Forever.—*Cindy Arnson and Gilah Langner*

Regina Gerst Kleiner and Max Kleiner

Regina Gerst Kleiner and Max Kleiner, parents of Lydia and grandparents of Vica and Vitaly, celebrated many *simchas* with Fabrangen and participated in High Holiday and other services from the 1980s through 2005. As forced laborers imprisoned in the Lodz (Poland) Ghetto and sole survivors of large families, they felt it was important to include a reference to the Holocaust in some of our services. As a native Yiddish speaker and translator of Yiddish poetry, Regina presented selections at services that highlighted poets and writers who are part of our Yiddish cultural heritage. Regina and Max both appreciated the davening, the music, the open discussions, and the informality of Fabrangen. Although both dressed quite formally, especially for services, Max explained once to Regina about our casual clothing style, “They dress up during the week, so this is relaxing for them.” Regina and Max passed away months after their granddaughter Vica’s bat mitzvah (May and July 2005).—*Lydia Kleiner*

Paul Lichterman

Paul was the beloved husband of Norma Brooks and joyful father of Daniel Lichterman. He died tragically in December 1983 at the age of 38. Paul left his family and friends a legacy of kindness, joy in being a Jew, passionate concern for the oppressed, love for sacred text, and talent for bringing people to meaningful prayer and a deeper connection to nature. As a legal services attorney, he was steadfastly committed to building a collaborative national network for changing social policy for older adults. As a teacher, he welcomed Jews from all backgrounds into his Jewish Study Center course, The Living Talmud. Paul’s humor and playfulness were contagious.—*Norma Brooks*

Malcolm Morse

Malcolm and his wife Trudy were members of Fabrangen who brought a very different sensibility and series of life experiences to Fabrangen. Malcolm was a scientist who was committed to a rational understanding of the world. At the same time, he was an extremely passionate and loving

person who always brought a gentle intensity to our Torah discussions. Although not formally Jewish, his *neshamah* was bright, his thoughts were insightful, and his love for Trudy was a reflection of God's greatest gift—the ability to love.—*Rob Agus*

Rita Poretzky

Rita Poretzky was an important founding member of Fabrangen, but unlike many of the other early members, she came to it not as a leader trying to influence others and promote her views of God or Jewishness, but as a lonely searcher. As such, she was powerful in her demands on us. But she was rarely satisfied with the prophetic-allegorical-political-feminist approaches we were offering. She spent a few years in Israel, studying, writing, painting, and photographing. When she returned, she moved to Philadelphia, continuing her spartan poverty lifestyle. In her last few years, suffering from an aggressive cancer, she found some inner peace in meditation and nonparticularistic spirituality. She left her considerable inheritance to a foundation bearing her name, to which she appointed Fabrangen and National Havurah members as board members.—*Esther and Max Ticktin*

Charles Risborg

Charles, Chuck, Charlie, Dad, and D, he is remembered fondly for the spark he shared with us. Charles was a regular attendee at Fabrangen services in the late 1990's and he deeply appreciated the help and caring of the community during those last years of his life. He shared his passion for music: his love of Rachmaninoff and the Beatles, Pavarotti and Whitney Houston, and the piano music of his great-aunt Paula. When surrounded by an intense discussion of world politics, culture, and history, his eyes would start to sparkle, his face glow, and with a smile and then laughter, he would begin to join in the conversation and share his love of world issues and knowledge of history. He was a kind person, warm and loving to his family, and we remember him with much love. To us he was “true music,” in the words of his epitaph.—*Molla Sarros*

Bill Spitzer (1939–2003)

Bill was not a regular shulgoer, but he clearly expressed his spirituality in his work and play. For the National Park Service, he lobbied passionately for years for the conservation of rivers, trails, and public lands, which led to the implementation of a number of national conservation programs. In his retirement, he delighted in his gardening, cooking, reading, and his collection of classical music (nothing past the 19th century!), and especially in his favorite outdoor activities—biking on trails and kayaking on

his beloved Potomac River. His family was deeply important to him, and we have Fabringen to thank in part (and Arthur Waskow in particular) for providing the impetus for the founding of the Fabringen Cheder in 1973. This small group, organized and led totally by parents, provided a solid base for our children's Jewish education and their strong and positive connection to Judaism.—*Nessa Spitzer*

Hannah Ticktin

Hannah Ticktin, daughter of Esther and Max, died in 1991. Hannah lived in a big world: She loved Israel and, while there, became a member of Kibbutz Gezer. From Israel she went to England, where she received her nursing degree. She then came to Washington and became director of the Women's Medical Center and later found her dream job as a nurse in the labor and delivery unit at Washington Adventist Hospital. When she married in 1977, Fabringen volunteers really "made the wedding." When her son, Ben, became a bar mitzvah in 1993, Fabringen helped considerably in the celebration. Her gentleness, devotion to family and friends, humor, loving honesty, and appreciation for the simple pleasures of life filled our lives with joy. She lived life to its fullest no matter where she was, and we still feel the presence of her guiding hand in our lives. Hannah's greatest happiness came from her two children, Benjamin and Sarah Nash.—*Esther and Max Ticktin*

Leah Zahler

Leah was a member of Fabringen when she passed away in 1998. She was a multitasking, caring individual who became active in the community in leading Torah discussions and assisted in producing the 1997 High Holiday supplement. Leah was an excellent editor who had expertise in eastern religions, particularly Tibetan Buddhism.—*David Smith*

Abbie Ziffren

Abbie was a lay Reb for many of us, a Shomer Shabbat Jew whose heart turned to India as much as to Jerusalem. Abbie shared the riches of Judaism and Hinduism in her work on the faculty of the Religious Studies department at George Washington University. She shared the riches of her heart as a beloved friend and presence to many of us. Her memory, now almost 11 years since her passing, continues to be a source of comfort, joy, and inspiration.—*Larry Goldsmith*

What's in a Name? Fabringen's Missing R

(excerpted from an e-mail discussion in October 2007)

Virginia Spatz: My understanding is that, in Yiddish—*farbrangen*—means “gathering.” (Fabringen materials say “gathering in joy,” but Yiddish speakers I know claim you can have a *farbrangen* for any reason.) The midrash that has come down to me, from Sinai I suppose, is that it’s “Fabringen”—with one less *reish*, or *r*—because we have no need for a rabbi. So, when we were discussing the Torah purchase and how some people have the custom of “buying” a letter, Tracy suggested that we buy Fabringen that missing *r*.

Norman Shore: My favorite version of why there’s a missing *r* in Fabringen is that Rob Agus learned the word from his mother (my aunt) and she spoke Yiddish with a Boston accent and dropped her *r*’s. Or perhaps there are no *reshayim* (wicked folks) in Fabringen and so no *r*.

Clare Feinson: I heard that leaving the *r* out of Fabringen was a typo, but I like the story about Rob’s mother and her Boston accent much better—excuse me—“bettah.” But howevah we lost the “ah,” Fabringen has become the unique name of a unique community, and requiahs no correction.

Laurie Krieger: When I told my mother, who spoke Yiddish without a Boston accent, that I was going to Fabringen, she asked me to repeat it and finally to spell it. After I spelled it, she corrected me: “The word is *farbrangen*,” she said. I told her that no, we spelled it with only one *r*. “But that’s incorrect,” my mother informed me. I responded that, right or wrong, that was the name of the *havurah*. Then my mother came to her first Fabringen service and loved it. She couldn’t get herself to mispronounce Yiddish, so for the rest of her life she affectionately referred to our community as “Fabrangie.”

David Smith: Perhaps the missing *r* in Fabringen was intentional to arrive at the nine letters needed for the brass Chanukah menorah that, during our years at 2027 Massachusetts Avenue, graced the mantelpiece of the fireplace in the room where we held services. With the correct spelling (Farbrangen, with ten letters), we would either have had to add a night to Chanukah or have instituted a two-shamash custom.

Rob Agus: As for the spelling of Fabringen, our lawyers called one day and said they needed to know how to spell the word for their filing that day. I called home to speak to my parents, *olav ha shalom*, both of whom were native-born Yiddish speakers. My mother told me how to spell it, and I simply did not hear the first *reish*. However, in a midrashic sense, I did not hear it because we were building a community with no single authority, or rabbi. Norman’s explanation of no *reshayim* represents a hope—may it be so.

Note: For a full explanation of the selection of the name “Fabringen,” see page 40.

36th Anniversary Fund Contributors

Fabrangen established the 36th Anniversary Fund in 2007 to strengthen the community's next 36 years. The campaign will make it possible for Fabrangen to acquire a Torah (the campaign's centerpiece), acquire needed ritual objects and books, enhance its engagement in the community, and build its reserves. The listing of donors below is accurate as of October 15, 2007. We appreciate each donor's generosity. Additional donations are welcome; please see the Fabrangen Web site for information.

Anonymous (14)	Kay Flick Elfant, in memory of Martin
Anonymous, in honor of our beloved	M. and Sylvia Flick Elfant
Fabrangen community	Sue Fendrick
Anonymous, in honor of Fabrangeners,	Serena Fox, in honor of Dr. and Mrs.
past, present, and future	Sheldon and Anitta Fox
Carol Aaronson	Dick Frankel and Sheryl Segal
Rob Agus and Rochelle Helzner	Arthur, Diane, and Zoë Friedman
Paula Amann, in memory of Dora Iranyi	Judy Galat and Geoff Thale
Amann, my extraordinary grand-	Deborah Gale, in honor of my loving
mother	and beloved father Manny Gale
Cindy Arnson and Gerry Serotta, in	Larry Garber and Gayle Schwartz
memory of the Newell-Jacobson	Gerald Garfinkel and Doris Hamburg
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Laura Bellows	ory of Geoffrey Erb
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Glaser	L. Goldman and in honor of Ruth
Alan and Elinor Berg	Goldman
Rose Sue Berstein and Anna Leah Ber-	Fran and Hannah Goldman, in memory
stein Simpson	of Harold L. Goldman and in honor
Rachel and Steven Braun	of Ruth Goldman
Norma R. Brooks and Daniel Lichter-	Ruth Goldman, in honor of Debbie and
man, in memory of Paul Lichter-	Fran Goldman
man (z"l)	Deena and Larry Goldsmith, with love
Jonathan Cedarbaum and Alice Winkler	and gratitude
Marcia and Jan Chaiken	Heidi Goldsmith
Alan Cohen and family, in memory of	David Goldston
Joseph Bernard Cohen	Mark Graboyes
Alys Cohen and Doug Wissoker	Judybeth Greene and Ron and Zoe
Melissa Crow and Victor Katz	Fagnani
Alix Davidson, in memory of my grand-	Shulamit Gehlfuss
mother Rachel Davidson	Sue (Shosh) Hoechstetter, in memory
Anne-Marie Deutsch, Steven Feldman,	of Rachel (Preeti) Greene
Ezra, and Molly, in memory of	Grace Horowitz, in memory of my par-
Ferenc Feldman	ents, Mary and David Horowitz
Emily DeVoto	Toby R. Hyman
Barbara Drosnin	Margie Jones

Miriam Isaacs, in memory of my mother, Peki Tabak	Samantha Schasberger
Melissa and Liana Kahn, in memory of Max Kahn and his parents, Otto and Frederike Kahn	David Scheim
Victoria Kahn	Len Schreiber
Lydia Kleiner, in memory of Regina Gerst Kleiner and Max Kleiner	Diane and Larry Seidenstein
Roger Kohn, in honor of Steven and Rachel Braun	Joni Seidenstein, in honor of Diane and Larry Seidenstein
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Ronnie Kweller	Norman Shore
Rabbi Gilah Langner and David Drelich Bracha, John, and Talia Laster and Laura and Abby Bellows, in memory of Vera Plotkin, Selma Bellows, and Elsa Laster and in honor of Fran Goldman, Rachel Braun, and Kay Elfant	Carol Simon and Art Cohen, in memory of Carol's parents, Rose and Louis Moses, and her brother, Lester Moses; in memory of Art's parents, Moses and Frances Cohen, and his sister, Elise Cohen Lowe
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Andrea Nelson	Marilyn Vegh
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Paul and Sandra Scham, in memory of Sylvia Scham (z"l) and in honor of Anat Scham's bat mitzvah	Shulamit, David, Barak, and Natan Widawsky
	Mark Wolff and Marilyn Kresky-Wolff

Fabrangers, 1971-2007

^M indicates Fabrangen member as of October 2007

^E indicates early Fabrangen member

The definition of "member" in this list is purposefully broad. In the initial years, there was no fixed sense of membership. People came and participated in whatever form and with whatever level of energy, funds, and commitment they wished. Fabrangen was founded, and continues, as an open community with a true sense of welcoming people at whatever level they want. A few other notes:

- *As is the Fabrangen custom, each Fabranger is listed as an individual, not as a couple or a family.*
- *Not listed here are the many people who have been an important part of the community through their participation in High Holiday services.*
- *This list does not include children; it does include individuals who grew up in the Fabrangen community and have maintained an affiliation as adults.*

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information in this list. We regret any oversights or errors that may remain and invite you to report these to Fabrangen.

Carol Aaronson	Devora Bartnoff (z"l)	Dan Borson
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Roberta Ain	Judy Beltz ^M	Rachel Braun ^M
Jodi Albert	Lauryn Beltz	Steve Braun ^M
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Stephanie Aldort	Laura (Cane) Berkane	Amy Brookman ^M
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Art Cohen	Zahava Fish ^E	Debbie Goldman ^M
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Diane Cohen	Deborah (Hittleman)	Paul Goldman
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Ira Cohen	Shalom Flank	Heidi Goldsmith ^M
Kathy Cohen	Ellen Flax	Larry Goldsmith ^M
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Ed Cohen-Rosenthal (z"l)	Serena Fox ^M	David Goldston ^M
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Perry Dane	Debbie Friedman	Josh Greene
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Anne-Marie Deutsch ^M	Richard Friedman	Larry Greenfield
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Max Tickin ^{E, M}	Chava Weissler ^E	

Reminiscences of Fabrangen

In Brief

Clare Feinson: An individual once commented to me that she couldn't possibly join Fabrangen because she rejected the concept of organized religion. My immediate response was that she could certainly join Fabrangen because we are anything but organized!

Manny Thorne: One of the things I like about Fabrangen is that nobody discusses real estate.

Huppah

Ellen Daniels and Adam Frank: Soon after we started coming to Fabrangen, we got engaged. Although we were very new to the community, as soon as some members heard about our engagement, we were invited to have an *aufruf*. We didn't have any family members who could attend, but the warmth and caring of everyone who celebrated with us made it a day to remember. Several years later, we were happy to celebrate our daughter Zahava's naming at Fabrangen. We appreciate everyone who helped us in designing a meaningful ceremony and celebrating with us. Another day we will never forget.

Richard Gladstein: Dale and I are a Fabrangen couple. This is how we met. During Sukkot in 1981, Fabrangen held a camping trip retreat at Assateague Island National Seashore, organized by Arthur Waskow and Carol Simon. Dale and I went on the retreat but did not know each other. At the retreat, Dale and I were curious about and attracted to each other. But we did not say anything to each other for most of the retreat because each thought the other was involved in a relationship with someone else at the retreat. Dale saw another woman sleeping in my tent. Little did she know that I only shared my tent because the woman said we had nowhere else to sleep. I saw Dale walking arm in arm and hugging another man. Little did I know that Dale's other man was her brother Jerold. At the end of the retreat, Arthur and Carol encouraged me to get a ride home with Dale, and Jerold prodded Dale to offer me a ride home. Dale and I rode home together and had a special kiss after dropping off Jerold and before parting that evening. We were married with many Fabrangeners in attendance in 1985.

Phil Karmel: I lived in Washington, D.C., in the early 1990s and was a Fabbrangen regular in those years. Having grown up in the Reform movement, Fabbrangen was my first introduction to neo-traditional davening. My wife Barbara Landress and I celebrated our *aufbruch* at Fabbrangen in 1994. (Yes, we're still married and we have two children.) I remember Max Ticktin's learned passion and having a Shabbat lunch after services at Norman Shore's home. I remember meeting Craig Sumberg and other friends there. The services were participatory and meaningful.

Gilah Langner: At our *aufbruch* before our wedding in 1994, David and I decided that we would do the *d'var Torah*. The *parashah* was Noah, and we wanted to demonstrate that two different flood narratives had been intertwined in the *parashah*, one from the J writer and one from the P writer, and that one could interpret this as the Torah preserving two separate voices in dialogue with each other—much like a marriage can be. We decided that the best way to convey this was to start telling the flood story and to keep contradicting each other with the different numbers of animals, the different number of days in the ark, etc. We thought it would be amusing, but of course no one else knew where we were going with this, and so for a short while, there was a mortified silence in the room as Fabbrangeners (and our families) sat there stunned, hoping against hope that we were not actually having an argument in front of the entire community the day before our wedding. We didn't realize the effect we would have . . . but we still get a kick out of it!

Bracha Laster: A diamond ring and some mean-looking bedsprings on a cot in a cabin are the items I remember from a Fabbrangen retreat in June 1990. (I still happily have the former.) This particular cabin, in fact, had a rickety wooden porch on which the elementary-aged Spiegel and Bellows kids were playing cards on the first day of the retreat. I broke up the card game in mid-hand because I had something really important to tell Laura and Abby. We went inside the cabin. Abby sat on the edge of the cot and fell backward onto those rusted metal bedsprings when I told my daughters that I had just become engaged to John Laster. There were a few tears, but Laura and Abby gleefully ran into the middle of the classes and workshops being held in the next building and with great commotion announced, "Mom and John are getting married." Folks responded with "John, who?!" (as we had been dating for more than a year but had kept that private) and a general breakout of dancing and singing.

Rosalyn Soref: While I was a graduate student at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York City and a member of the Westside Minyan, my friends Beth Levine (z"l) and Anne Mintz convinced me to attend a Weiss's farm interhavurah retreat, where I met David Smith, who was with Fabrangen. I later moved to Washington, D.C., and we were married in June 1977. Our children, Josh and Beth, were welcomed into the community, developing strong friendships and an attachment to Judaism and the *Ha-vurah* community. We shared many family moments with the community, including their b'nai mitzvah at Fabrangen.

Roz Timberg: I grew up on Porter Street (up the hill from Adas Israel), left for college and travels in 1969, and (since finishing college in New York City) have been back since 1980. Whenever I was in Washington for visits or to live, I went to Fabrangen—though irregularly. I even remember the original Rob Agus, Arthur Waskow, Fabrangen Fiddlers days and a great Shabbaton with Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi. My husband, Fred, and I met at Fabrangen and had our *aufruf* there. Now that my work schedule has settled down, I am trying to be more active. It has been an anchoring community for me. (By the way, I have a picture of the Fabrangen softball team that I was on in 1986.)

Debra Weiner: It's no exaggeration to say that I have Fabrangen to thank for my family. Hillel Weinberg and I met at the one and only (at least in my time) Fabrangen New Year's Eve party at Georgetown University on the eve of 1981. As I remember it, I was working the door when he walked in and the rest is history. (He thinks HE was working the door.) Fabrangen community meetings, services, etc. helped things along by providing a sure way to run into each other. Max Ticktin and Jan Kaufman signed our *ketubah*, and the Fabrangen Fiddlers played at our wedding. And then there was Sarah and her baby naming at Fabrangen in 1992. As if this were not enough, Fabrangen gave us close friends to share in these special events and to share in the special joys (and sometimes grief) in their lives. Who knew that all of this could start with a party on a snowy New Year's Eve?

Tefillah

Anne-Marie Deutsch: My first contact with Fabrangen, as it was for many people, was at High Holiday services. Mine were in 1982 at Goodwill Baptist Church, at the recommendation of a friend who knew about these things. My main memory of that Rosh Hashanah was that one of the leaders in the participatory service was a person who sang with gusto but for whom

carrying a tune was clearly too heavy a burden. I looked around: no one seemed to notice; the crowd was wholeheartedly singing along. Then gradually it came to me: if this energetic but tuneless person could stand on the *bima* and be accepted, even encouraged by this congregation, then maybe there was room for me, too—a young woman whose feelings about Judaism were not always “in tune” but who was searching to be part of a community of equals. It’s 25 years later, and Fabrangen has never let me down on that score.

Dick Frankel: In mid-December 1974 I came to D.C. to locate housing for my move here at the start of January. I was still in the (previously unusual for me) habit of davening regularly, since I had recently finished shiva for my father, and somehow I was told about a minyan called Fabrangen that met Friday nights. Having traveled widely the past year, I was used to ad hoc minyanim, usually quite *frum*, which met in many cities. So I went to the designated address and was bemused to find I was at an apartment house with a doorman. I guessed, from the name, that I was looking for a Hasidic group, and described such to him: “a bunch of traditional Jewish men, likely in long black coats and possibly also big black hats.” He clearly thought I was crazy, said no such thing ever occurred there, and I was apparently lost. Somehow—possibly some other folks entering who heard me and figured out my misconception—I was led to what was actually a very loose, friendly Kabbalat Shabbat service at Rob Agus’s apartment. And the rest was the start of history for me.

Arthur Friedman: When I first arrived in D.C. in 1978, I needed a place to go for High Holiday services. A friend said Fabrangen held services and was open to everyone. That sounded great. When I asked him whether the service was Orthodox, Reform, or Conservative, he replied, “Well, not really any of them.” Then he described it as “hippie orthodox.” “What’s that?” I asked. He said, “Well, it’s different but enjoyable.” I went to services on Massachusetts Avenue. The room was packed, and it was very hot. Suddenly, a woman grabbed a guitar, got up, and yelled, “Rock me, Lord.” Then I knew. Over 29 years, I have watched the High Holiday service mellow and gain a rhythm to what it is today. The service has been very stable for the last 11 years, and each year’s service has become more meaningful without getting bogged down in long-winded speeches or too many songs that no one knew. The service now helps each participant to focus and stay focused on important High Holiday themes. Even “the pitch” has acquired a rhythm that keeps the service moving. This makes the High Holiday service an experience that everyone can enjoy.

Arthur and Diane Friedman: We were honored to have Zoë's Hebrew baby naming ceremony at a Fabringen Saturday morning service. It was wonderful. My mother and mother-in-law were there and enjoyed it a lot. Before the ceremony, Norman Shore was a huge help to our family and helped us select two of Zoë's four Hebrew names. Bob Rovinsky gave us ideas for her third Hebrew name. We will always be grateful to both of them.

Ellen Garshick: "You should go to Fabringen." "Why?" "Just go." After months of having the same conversation with Harvey Iglarsh, whose office I passed each week on my way to class, I decided to find out why he was so insistent. It was Simhat Torah 1978/5739, and I hadn't been to a service that made me want to go back for more than four years. I walked into 2027 Massachusetts Avenue (a little late, to make sure I could get lost in the crowd if I needed to) to find these surprises: a small room with colorful pillows and a small ark on the floor, a table full of bottles of schnapps, and people who seemed intent on making the most of the bottles and the holiday. Each *hakafah* lasted until it seemed no one had the energy to go on—and then they'd do the next one, extending the celebration outside and into Dupont Circle. Late in the evening, when it was finally time to read in the Torah, came the biggest surprise of all: a woman (Rose Berstein) was going to read! To me at the time, this was a revolutionary and wonderful sight, and the best part was that no one in the room thought twice about it. Many things about that evening amazed me, but what drew me back to Fabringen for a Kabbalat Shabbat service the following week was the idea that in this place, Jews were Jews, period.

Sue (Shosh) Hoechstetter: I hardly knew Estelle Finkel, but when she handed me the Torah, I took it without speaking and then promptly began to cry. I hoped no one would see my tears, as everyone all looked so comfortable dancing and carrying the Torah on that Simchas Torah about 27 years ago. Growing up, I had attended services, Sunday school, and Hebrew school at an Orthodox synagogue. Touching the Torah in that world was, like many important things, forbidden to females. More experience with holding the Torah came the following year. I had started attending Saturday services at Fabringen in addition to holiday participation, and Fabringen service leaders asked me to hold the Torah during Kol Nidre. After accepting, I was told that I had to stand with the Torah for the whole service. And, by the way, dropping the Torah would require all in attendance to extend their fast. That was the longest Kol Nidre of my life. So many times, when I looked into the crowd, I thought I was going to fall over. Did these Fabringeners understand that they had entrusted the Torah and the health of hundreds of people to

the hands of a complete novice? I made it through Kol Nidre. Carrying the Torah made me feel more accepted in the religion. Pushy Fabrangeners and the Torah helped me find the Jewish spiritual, communal, intellectual, enjoyable home I had searched for for many years.

Tobie Hoffman: It was at a Fabrangen retreat that I discovered, or rediscovered, that singing joyously was definitely part of the Jewish spiritual experience. Then I joined the post-Shabbat-davening folk singing in the park and knew that this was the place for me. I've since moved to Philadelphia, where that joy continues at Pnai Or and Germantown Jewish Center.

Rick LaRue: In 1983, I was considering converting to Judaism. My first-ever Jewish service was at Fabrangen. It was daunting: long, interactive, in-the-round, and foreign in language and in style. Quite a change from everyone facing forward in pews for no more than an hour! It's hard to be anonymous in such a group of 40 or 50 people, but I was trying. And then, halfway into the service, I looked up to see a dark-haired man with a warm but intent face walking toward me. He was beckoning me with a few crooks of his finger. Was I being summoned for some strange ritual? Was he mistakenly thinking I might actually know how to do something? I was nervous bordering on downright scared, but I rose and followed him. We left the main sanctuary (then the boardroom of the UAHC headquarters building at Massachusetts Avenue and 21st Street) and went into the hallway where the answer lay. He had asked me to do perhaps the one thing, the only thing, that a non-Jew could do in the service: help carry the table back into the sanctuary so the Torah could be placed on it. Two decades later I still don't feel I can ever repay John Laster's welcoming act of kindness. But whenever I need a reminder that much goodness can come from simple gestures, or what Fabrangen means to me, I think of what he did. What a heartening way to begin! *(A version of this reminiscence originally appeared in the Oct. 9, 2005, issue of The Washington Post Magazine.)*

Bracha Laster: The mahogany paneling, rich and dark, was filled with the community's singing when Fabrangen met at 2027 Massachusetts Avenue. (My tears as I prayed for a child for five years were rubbed into that dark surface, too.) Eventually, the Fabrangen community helped me celebrate a baby naming—in fact, two baby namings—in that room. For years we sat on large pillows scattered round the room. In the same space now, but polished and renovated, is an enormous conference table still surrounded by the same paneling. The place is now used by the 20s generation that meets there for Tikkun Leil Shabbat. Melodies and prayers must exude from that paneling.

Trudy Morse: In the early 1970s, I was proud to be a member of a synagogue without walls. Although many members were professionals, it was sheer luxury to discard dress-up work clothes and come in jeans and colorful shirts to sit on the floor and seriously study Torah on Shabbos. There seemed to be no rabbi, ritual, or dogma, but there was intimate knowledge of Jewish tradition: Art Waskow, even then the group prophet; Max Ticktin, brilliant scholar and rabbi; and Rob Agus, cantor from a brilliant line of scholars. Malcolm Morse, professed reformed agnostic, knew the Bible by heart and sat in the lotus position. Our weekends were spent bathing nude at a farm in New Jersey, arguing the meaning of Torah in all-night sessions, and sleeping with Bible in hand. The Torah was on a blanket on the floor. My aged mother's comment on this rather scruffy group who appeared in outrageous costumes, always without shoes: "So they look a little peculiar, but the same as davening as in my old synagogue, on Second Avenue. But maybe they should wear shoes, so easy to catch cold." And quietly, she announced that the Torah should not be on the floor. "How much to get a table?" We found one at Montgomery County Thrift for more than \$15. "Buy it," she says to me, "and I'll send a check later." There were no objections, and soon after, a lovely, elegant table worthy of the precious Torah adorned our synagogue without walls.

Ellen Simon: Fabrangen was my first spiritual home. It was the first community I participated in as an adult and, in many ways, it became my ideal I judged every place else against (do I still?). It's where I first wore a *kipah* and tallit, it's where I became comfortable with the Torah as an object, not just an ideal or holy book. I remember when the Torah cover was torn and I volunteered to take it home to mend. As I sat in my living room with my sewing kit, I was in awe. But the fun part was going to Hillel one evening to put the now-mended cover back on the Torah. There was an introduction to Judaism class upstairs that hadn't begun. I asked someone to help me "dress" the Torah, and I watched as these students were almost afraid to help. I remember the first Yom Kippur (I believe it was Yom Kippur) when John Spiegel stood in the front of the church and explained how we would pass the Torah around so that everyone would hold it. Was it Ronnie who demonstrated that holding the Torah was like holding a baby? Some of the more jaded regular Fabrangers rolled our eyes until we saw older men cry that they hadn't touched a Torah since their bar mitzvah, older women ask if it was OK to touch it, and mothers and fathers explain what a privilege it was to their children. These are just some of my memories of Fabrangen.

Diane Tepfer: I remember the first time I climbed the steps to New York Avenue Presbyterian Church in preparation for High Holiday services in 1987. After years at the welcoming Goodwill Baptist Church, followed by stops at the Sidwell Friends and Edmund Burke schools, Fabrangen needed a more reliable, easily accessible, spacious, and air-conditioned venue. As a member of the steering committee, I helped find a suitable venue. Thanks to Norman Shore's then-housemate, Terry Lynch, executive director of the Downtown Cluster of Congregations, Fabrangen approached New York Avenue Presbyterian Church. The Church wanted more than a financial arrangement, so Jerry Stilkind—then our High Holiday logistics beadle—I, and a third person whom neither of us can identify attended a Sunday service and were warmly welcomed by the clergy during the postservice tour of the historic building. The reverend proudly showed us the original of a Gettysburg Address draft in their Lincoln Parlor and let us know that Barney Balaban, a Hollywood Jew, had donated it to the church. It seems as if the church values our presence because we add to the spirituality of this open and social-activist downtown sanctuary. During the first few years, I made an annual excursion to textile artist Shirley Waxman's studio to select one of her painted silk Huppa cloths to cover the church's handsome but prominent Celtic cross. Jerry devised a method from his rock-climbing days to hoist that cloth over the cross, a mitzvah now passed to a younger and more nimble generation.

Shoshana Elkin Waskow: One of my favorite memories of my youth at Fabrangen is from the first year after my dad moved to Philadelphia. Since I attended Fabrangen when at my dad's home but not when at my mom's, once the Yamim Noraim had passed that year, I didn't come to Shabbat services. Then in early winter, I got a call from Norman Shore. "I need someone to *leyn* Chapter 10 of Megillat Esther for Purim this year. Can you do it?" I tried to say no, but Norman didn't let me—he promised to get me a tape and reassured me it was a short section. I was able to learn all THREE verses before Purim, and being back at Fabrangen for that celebration reminded me that this was not just Dad's community; it was mine as well. And I had been missing it without realizing it. For the rest of high school, I had the great gift of functioning as a full member of the community without a parent around. It truly cemented my commitment to having an active involvement in *Havurah* Judaism—which has been a central part of my life ever since in every place I've lived. I never went through a phase of questioning that piece of my life, and I owe that to Norman's persistence and to the community, which welcomed me as a full participant.

Rabbi Tobie Weisman: I came to Fabrangen when I was just out of college. It was Simchat Torah. Little did I know what a great impact that night would have on my life. It was such a warm, inviting, supportive, and caring community that I kept coming back week after week. The following year, right before Rosh Hashanah, I was asked if I would lead Shacharit for Rosh Hashanah. Even though I grew up with my father as a *hazan*, I had never lead davening before. My father made me a tape, and, with much trepidation, I led Shacharit. I was then asked to lead Shacharit for Yom Kippur. After leading those services, I realized that I had a passion for leading a community in davening. That year, people at Fabrangen encouraged me to go to rabbinical school. Even though I had a passion for Hebrew and Jewish learning, I had never given that idea any thought at all, being raised in the Conservative movement, where until 1984 women were not given *s'micha*. I ended up going to Pardes in Jerusalem that next fall, which led me on to rabbinical school. For the past 14 years, I have been living in Vermont with my husband David and our two daughters. We started the Yearning for Learning Center for Jewish Studies, where we teach and bring teachers of Jewish spirituality for classes and workshops for adults. This year, as part of the Yearning for Learning Center, we started the Apples and Honey Hebrew School, a place for children and families to learn together in a story, music, and movement-filled environment. I attribute much of what I do today to my beginnings at Fabrangen, and I keep my Fabrangen experience with me as I continue in my journey.

Rhonda Weiss: I first attended a Fabrangen High Holiday service in 1980, or 5740, the year I relocated from Philadelphia. Three weeks before the holidays, the haftarah reading for the first day of Rosh Hashanah still had not been assigned, so I volunteered to do it. During the service, I was awestruck. I listened to a variety of service leaders with strong voices and a good command of Hebrew and to people commenting on the Torah portion with authority and affection. When the time for the haftarah reading arrived, a tallit mysteriously was draped around my shoulders. Virtually no one had any idea that I knew Hebrew, that I knew how to chant haftarah trop, or that I could sing. And there I stood, before several hundred people, with a Braille *machzor*, chanting *vay'hi ish echad haramatayim tzofim*, continuing without hesitation. That was the first of many Fabrangen services in which I have taken part over the past 27 years. Moments like those are rare, and the memory has sustained me over the years, particularly during challenging times. But something else far more important came of that moment. I trusted that Judaism could be a powerful part of my life and began to form a deep commitment to our liturgy, to its text and melodies. Also, over the past 27 years, I have borne witness to that special moment for so many others participating for the first of what became multiple times in leading communal prayer. And for all this I say *baruch hashem*.

Chava Weissler: A few snapshots: Friday nights during the first year when we had our own building, with a brief Kabbalat Shabbat, a potluck dinner, and singing and dancing. Shabbat morning Torah study, no davennnen. Classes during that first year; I remember teaching Hebrew. Putting up Fabrangen's sukkah that first year; I had built it myself out of plywood a year or two earlier at my parents' house in Chevy Chase. The "Stalinist show trials" at which the organized Jewish community decided to take away Fabrangen's funding. They had dreamed we would be a place that the Jewish hippies of Dupont Circle would come, throw away their drugs, and dance the hora. Instead, we had the nerve to criticize economic injustice and Israeli policies. Fabrangen became very controversial. During those early years, I was invited to speak about Fabrangen and the *Havurah* movement at Washington Hebrew Congregation. As I recall, my parents got into a screaming fight afterwards with critics of Fabrangen. My mother's classic retort was something like, "Without Fabrangen, where will my daughter find someone to marry?" Other memories as well: a long and powerful Yom Kippur in 1972 or 1973 when idle words seemed unnecessary, and prayer was all that mattered. The wonderful Yiddish course Max Ticktin taught in 1974. Long, long, long Torah discussions that lasted until 3:30 on Shabbos afternoons.

Kehillah

Rob Agus: As I remember, I selected, with David Shneyer's concurrence, the name Fabrangen for several reasons:

1. It means "together" or better "a coming together" and that is what we wanted to create—a coming together in a place, in a community, and in a vision. It would be a physical reality, people would come together from many backgrounds and orientations to form a community, and out of this, a vision of a new social reality would grow and guide the community and its impact on the larger Jewish and non-Jewish world.
2. The phrase "coming together in joy" was a midrashic translation. We were adopting a demanding path of creating community and culture and social change, but all creation should be done in joy—*lvdu es ha shem b'simcha*—"serve God in joy."
3. I wanted a Yiddish word, as opposed to a Hebrew word, like *havurah*, to emphasize the connection to the holistic communities and lifestyles of Eastern Europe. Based in the passionate and guiding search for *Kedushah*, those communities and their desire to serve God in all aspects of life was a model and challenge for us. Yiddish also sounds more *heimish*.

4. I did not want to use the term *havurah* since we were open to all and wanted as many people as possible to become involved and lend their unique creative energies to the task.

Michele Alperin: Coming off a destructive marriage that had pretty much decimated my sense of self-worth, I stumbled on Fabrangen at an interhavurah retreat. I started coming to services and was soon tapped, in an almost mystical way, to be Fabrangen coordinator—not something I would have sought on my own. Yet the experience really launched me as a human being and as a Jew. Before Fabrangen, I was more of a loner, with only a small circle of close friends; through Fabrangen, I came to love and appreciate a community of distinctive individuals who became like family at its best. Before Fabrangen, I always thought of myself as being a little different, both Jewishly and socially, of not ever really fitting in; at Fabrangen, we had all carried that burden and were able, together, to finally put it down. Before Fabrangen, I felt strongly Jewish but had trouble reconciling that with a view of God that was, at least, agnostic; then in a Fabrangen workshop where we shared our feelings about God, I was relieved, and, yes, freed, to realize that I wasn't alone. At my first Fabrangen community meetings, I was so nervous my voice was either too loud or too quiet, but soon I was comfortable leading High Holiday services for hundreds. Let me end by thanking Fabrangen for continuing to live the values of the 60s—community, consensus, creativity, egalitarianism, political activism—the values that formed me and remain at the core of my being.

Judy Beltz: In the late 1970s my teenage daughter decided we needed to be part of a Jewish community. She figured that alternative-style Fabrangen fit well into our alternative lifestyle. We all went to services, mostly on Massachusetts Avenue, although I remember High Holy Days at the Sidwell Friends School. My most poignant memories are of the young people . . . Ellen Garshick before she married Rick . . . quiet and pensive; Bracha Laster and her two “little” daughters before John Laster proposed; all the bachelors who used to come to our parties—Norman Shore, Sheldon Kimmel, Jim Gollin, Larry Goldsmith, Larry Somers—many of whom who are now fathers; the fabulous wedding of Mike Tabor and Esther Siegel; Adina Tabor's birth and her incredible bat mitzvah. The Rosh Chodesh gathering at Dale Lupu's, when Richard Gladstein called to say he was returning to D.C.—the start of something special; the awful day when I was at my daughter's and the call came in to form a search party for Paul Lichterman (*z"l*). I belong to many congregations, but Fabrangen is my heart place. I love the people and the politics. I always enjoyed Rob Agus' chanting and Norma Brooks' singing. The

most memorable service for me was at the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church, where we wrote down our sins on paper, put them in a balloon, and sent them away over New York Avenue.

Rachel Braun: From 1996 to 2001, we ran a children's tzedakah collective during community meetings. Here's how it worked: adults collected their coins in jars, plastic bags, and even milk jugs, and brought them to community meetings at GWU Hillel. The kids (mostly elementary school aged) collected the coins in bowls and even schnorred a few more out of people's pockets. Then the kids and I (and occasionally others and, once, one of the teens) sat in the downstairs pit and ran a collective. The kids began the evening by rolling their hands through the coins, delighted to see so many and astonished at how filthy their hands became. Soon, all got down to work, counting out and rolling the coins in coin wrappers. We collected hundreds of dollars at a shot! Each child had researched a tzedakah recipient, and brought an addressed stamped envelope to the meeting. After the counting, each presented a few sentences introducing the tzedakah recipient. The money was totaled and split evenly among the recipients. I'd have the checkbook from the Children's Scholarship Fund and write the checks. The following week, the adults dragged the coins to the bank (after making last minute furious corrections to the lopsided coin wrappers—some were obviously too full, some not enough), and deposited them in the Children's Fund. Our goal was to train our kids in *Havurah* ideas, such as tzedakah collectives, and to introduce them to philanthropy.

Norma Brooks: When I came to Fabrangen in 1979 with Paul Lichterman (*z"l*), I was in awe of the people who could *leyn*, lead services in Hebrew, *daven*, and share thoughts during a Torah discussion. But through our shared love of music—and Paul's joy in being a Jew—Paul helped bring me into the realm of prayer and slowly enter the community. Three events speak to Fabrangen's generosity and care. The year before our wedding, Paul and I studied with Max and Esther Ticktin and were embraced by their Jewish knowledge, sensitivity, and love. The wedding day was only a small piece of the journey with Fabrangen at the center. The second event was when Rob Agus, along with his wife, Cantor Rochelle Helzner, generously encouraged me to lead some of the singing at services. With Paul's tragic death at the age of 38, though, the Jewish world of joy that had belonged to Paul, to me, and to our son, Daniel, became one of grief, mourning, and loss. But there was Fabrangen, walking every step with us, from the first moments to *sheloshim*, with a commitment as a community to watch over Daniel and me. No words can adequately express how much this support meant. Sometimes, when I bring a friend to Fabrangen, someone not familiar with Jewish prayer,

I wonder if they feel what I felt many years ago. Does it seem intimidating, as if one can “watch” and “feel” the spirituality but not participate? I’m always tempted to say that there are many ways to enter Fabringen, many small steps to participate, and many, many people who will gladly be your teachers.

Barbara Drosnin: I came to Fabringen in October of 2006, having just moved to the D.C. area for work purposes. My daughter, who had lived here for a while and had attended Fabringen High Holy Day services, suggested that I come to Fabringen because I would enjoy both the service and the congregation. She was right on both accounts. I am now a happy member of Fabringen. I find the davening and Torah service and *drash* rich and meaningful, and I find the values that Fabringen holds as a *havurah*/congregation to resonate with my own. I have learned so much and felt so welcomed.

Kay Flick Elfant: In the 1970s, I attended interhavurah retreats at Weiss’s Farm in New Jersey, planned by the Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Washington communities. There I got to know Fabringeners. I helped organize three retreats and the first Havurah Institute. Years back, I visited Fabringen twice, once for a service before an antiwar rally (Vietnam) and once for a Friday night potluck (consisting of six excellent bean pies brought by Arthur Waskow and one other item!). In 1983, when I attended the Shabbat service with three other coordinator job finalists, 1½-year-old Aviva Braun crawled right into my (stranger’s) lap! My Fabringen/Jewish Study Center position began in November 1983. While we were working on Study Center business at Norman Shore’s on December 26, he got the call about Paul Lichterman (z”l) being missing. Later that day, Marcel Infeld and I were one of the search teams sent to an area public park. Losing Paul was a wretched tragedy for his wife and son, Norma Brooks and Daniel Lichterman, and for numerous other communities. Many details remain etched in my mind. Astonishing compassion was shown and mitzvot conducted, reflecting the very best of the Fabringen community during crisis and loss. My tenure as coordinator ended in June 1985. I remember some some difficult times, the loss of many special people, countless davening and community experiences, the creation of Purim shpiels with Michael Gross and others, and precious moments with your children and my toy bag. The funniest moment was Molly Braun’s surprise combined viola/hula hoop performance at a retreat, with her mother, Rachel, sitting stunned at the piano. What a wonderful 25 years.

Diane Friedman: My first impression of Fabrangen was surprise at how welcoming everyone was to me and my family. Fabrangen has mastered acceptance and nonjudgment, and certainly understands that there is strength in diversity. The congregation also understands that there is comfort in consistency. I love that people habitually sit in the same general seating area for High Holiday services year after year.

Linda Beltz Glaser: Fabrangen has touched my life in so many ways that it's hard to separate out the threads. I found Fabrangen when I was 14. It felt like the Jewish home I'd been seeking for so long. Even after I moved away from D.C. permanently, I kept track through family members who have remained Fabrangers. At Fabrangen, I first braved public exposure by leading services. I never could have done it without John Laster, who empowered me to make the service my own. I still think of him when singing the beer-swilling tune for *Alenu*. Fabrangen offered so many role models of strong, educated, women that I was inspired to follow their example. At age 21, I had the bat mitzvah I'd missed at 13. Through Fabrangen, I met the man with whom I thought I'd spend my life. When that brief idyll ended, Fabrangen was also a part of my healing. Even now, when things go wrong, I think of the kick in the pants Rachel Braun gave me that helped me get on with my life. My hunger for formal Jewish learning was whetted at endless Torah discussions and in conversations over Shabbos lunches with Norman Shore, Sheldon Kimmel, and many others. Fabrangen inspired me to go and learn at the Pardes Institute of Jewish Studies in Jerusalem. When I think about how Fabrangen shaped my life, I think of the people who are Fabrangen. I am a better person for knowing all of you.

Fran Goldman: Mazel tov to Fabrangen on its 36th anniversary. I am honored and blessed to have been part of Fabrangen for over 20 years. The strength and support of the community has been incredible in ways large and small. Joyous life-cycle events—Hannah's baby naming in 1993 and her bat mitzvah in 2006—have been enriched immeasurably by individual members and the community as a whole. When my father died unexpectedly in March 2005, while I was in the hospital recovering from surgery, the embrace of the community helped me through a difficult period. But it's the small things that are just as important—sitting between two musical, spiritual daveners at *p'sukei d'zimra* one Shabbat; a particularly insightful comment at a Torah discussion that answered a question I didn't even realize I had; the sweetness of the apples after *Ne'ilah*; and the joy of hosting Sukkot dinners, study sessions, and sleepovers. May Fabrangen continue to struggle and learn and question and enlighten for many years to come!

Sheira (Cheryl) Greenwald: I first moved to Washington in the summer of 1975. I had college classmates there, but in the fall they went back to college. I had graduated, so I didn't. I tried to locate the Community of Micah, which was listed in the Jewish Catalog. I eventually spoke to Max Ticktin, who told me that I wanted Fabragen. I went there for the High Holidays and didn't leave until I moved to Boston for graduate school two years later. What I loved about Fabragen was the *chevra* and being close to the Torah for the first time in my life. Although I love to sing (hence the name Sheira), I never had an aliya until I went to Fabragen. When I did, it was magical! It was as though the handwritten letters danced on the page! In Boston, I met Elihu Davison, whom I had first seen at the wedding of Paula Freedman and Jeff Marker—a Fabragen wedding. We've now been married 18 years! The first dance at our wedding was the Fabragen Fiddlers' Shalom Aleichem Waltz, which (I think) was also the first dance at the wedding where we met. When we visited Washington, Elihu and I sometimes went to Fabragen. Once, when someone took him for a newcomer, he explained that he "helped found Fabragen." (That way, years later, we got to meet each other!)

Grace Horowitz: I remember well the first Fabragen service I attended. It was August 1978, and I had just celebrated my 40th birthday. My religious background was mainly my Zayde's shul in Crown Heights, where old men droned on and old women sat quietly to the side. Then, later, Reform and Conservative synagogues, where a male rabbi led services in front of the audience. I had heard a little about the changing role of women in Judaism, but it was not until I came to Fabragen that I actually saw and heard a woman reading from the Torah. It changed my whole Jewish life. People were so friendly to me after services that I immediately decided to return and become a member. Someone told me about the coming fall retreat, and I immediately decided to go. Davening, singing, cooking, eating together definitely made me feel a part of their *chevra*. Many years later and many Jewish Study Center courses later, I was able to celebrate my bat mitzvah with Fabragen. Later, I had the honor of coordinating the good work of many other Fabrageners in caring for Warren Glick (z"l) in his final illness. Since then I've enjoyed many other coordinating and organizing experiences with my *chevra*. Now, over 29 years later, I think back on the rich network of friends I've made through Fabragen, all I've learned, all the other Jewish connections I've made, and I am grateful to the Fabragen and Jewish Study Center founders, all our service leaders, all our organizers, and especially all who welcomed me into the *chevra*.

Spider Kedelsky: For the seven years I lived in the DC area, Fabrangen was an important part of my life. It nourished my soul, provided me with wonderful friendship, challenged me intellectually, allowed me to lead and actively participate in its activities, and sustained and advanced my Jewish identity. I am delighted that Fabrangen is celebrating a double *chai*, and from faraway Seattle I send a heartfelt *mazel tov* from me and my wife Joan.

Marilyn Kresky-Wolff: Alienated from Judaism throughout college (Oberlin, anti-Zionist Marxist discussion groups). Fabrangen opened up a world of ritual, Hebrew prayer, spirituality, action, and community. In Baltimore, Charlottesville, Virginia, and back in the D.C. suburbs, trying to recreate those early heady days. Met many life long friends, now we daven in different places. Fabrangen brought me back to my heritage. Highlights:

- Meet Jonathan Blum at Quaker House discussion on Israeli-Palestinian relations in 1977, go to Kehillah study group at Harold White's house: Max, Esther, Arthur, Rob, Ronnie, Richard, Judy Bartnoff, Margie and Jeff Siegel, Larry Somer (whom I had not seen since junior high), and Mark, among others! I got hooked in more ways than one right then and there.
- Baby group: Laura Bellows, Aviva Braun, Jonah Agus, and our Jeremy
- Ed Cohen-Rosenthal's (z"l) Purim schpiels
- People on the floor at UAHC, sick from too much fruit at a Tu B'Shevat seder
- Rochelle Helzner singing for Mark and me at Kosher Kitchen
- Hebrew with Ira Flatow at Jewish Study Center (with fellow student Lisa Newell, z"l)
- Pam Hoffman's davening; we all left the galaxy with her
- First Jewish Folk Festival, money raised for Washington Association for Ethiopian Jewry (Bruce Heppen and I represented Fabrangen)
- A wonderful community when we married at Woodend, when my father died, when I was laid up in the hospital before Jeremy was born (Norman, thanks for the words from Jeremiah for his birth announcement)
- Many of us were together when the Camp David accords were announced ... we were ecstatic!

Do we still retain the hopefulness of those days?

Bracha Laster: “Pop-ups” were part of the first generation of children’s programming. In the early 1980s, Rachel Braun, Diane Lehman, and I took turns teaching the under-five crowd on Shabbat morning. To conform to Shabbat prescriptions but still have something interactive for the kids to do, we would cut out Jewish symbols or objects and glue them onto cardboard so that when appropriate in the story or lesson, the children would make the visuals pop up.

Bracha Laster: When the main Project Hope family acquired a newly renovated four-bedroom apartment during the mid-1990s, Fabrangeners donated vivid, pastel-colored, checked or flowered, neatly folded sheets and kitchen towels. Fabrangeners also contributed beds, tables, lamps, and many other useful household goods. This same large family occupied other apartments and houses before and after that time, but I remember this one in particular because the whole community physically pitched in. I think Martin Weil drove the rented U-Haul, and we went around to Fabrangeners’ houses to pick up a bed here, a sofa there. Richard Gladstein, as he has done since he started Project Hope in 1988, did the legal and advocacy work to make the apartment accessible, but it was all of the donations that furnished it.

Ruth Lis: I have been a Fabrangener for 29 years. I have been a single, working Washingtonian, a feminist, a bride, a wife, a committee woman, a service leader, a Jewish Study Center teacher, and a mother of two b’not mitzvah, all in the Fabrangen community. In 1982, Mark Perlis and I celebrated our *auftruf* with a younger Fabrangen at 2027 Massachusetts Avenue, and the Fabrangen Fiddlers played at our wedding. Max and Esther Ticktin officiated. Because of his membership in Fabrangen, Mark, in spite of having come from a “lightweight” Jewish background, has reinvented himself as a committed participant in Jewish life. Our children, Abby and Alexandra, have had the privilege of celebrating their b’not mitzvah with people in Fabrangen who have known them since they were born. I have come to respect and appreciate the warm and personal way our community supports members when they suffer the loss of a loved one. Our community and *chevra kadisha* have found ways to help members through difficult times, respecting Jewish tradition while leaving room for personal expressions of grief at our losses and joy in celebrating the lives of our loved ones. For these things and more, I am grateful beyond words, and I credit and thank Fabrangen for allowing me to live a rich, spiritual Jewish life imbued with humor, honor, and *chesed*.

Dale Lupu: I am grateful to Fabrangen for providing me a base and a home for my spiritual explorations. The list of “experiments” that I have unleashed on my *chevra* over the years—who can count them. Do you remember the dancing Torah *drashes* by the Dancing Dybbuks? The yoga-Torah explorations? The silent Torah *drash*? The introduction of Rabbi Shefa Gold’s chants? The giant puppets of Jonah and the whale and the people of Nineveh? The placing of stones on nests of green for Yizkor? Thank you, friends, for helping me delve into the richness of our heritage and explore it in these not so conventional ways.

PS: I think we might still have a stack of old Fabrangen cushions in our attic. I hate to think what mounds of dust and mildew they now contain.

Anna Miller: My memories of Fabrangen stretch back to when I first have memories. My dad tells me that my brother and I were some of the first children to be brought to services. When I think back, these are some of the things that come to mind:

- climbing the tree in front of the Religious Action Center; people passing by, looking up, seeing me, gasping with terror and calling me a monkey (something that made me proud)
- picnics by Rock Creek; making mud castles with whoever wanted to play with the kids that week
- potlucks after services—one of my favorite memories, I could sneak junk food without my father seeing
- going to the Rose Garden after shul; playing games with adults
- Torah portion discussions; I was so relieved and proud when, after reading my bat mitzvah speech, so many people spoke up with their comments and opinions
- Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur at a church, with the Jesus on the cross just visible under a beautifully made covering
- waiting just beyond the doors as the shofar was blown on Yom Kippur, chocolate purchased at the German store across the street at the ready
- Hanukah parties: kids, games, chocolate coins
- Passover seders: interesting interpretations of the Haggadah at shul seders and at the many homes we were invited to

With every new city I go to, I look for Fabrangen’s equivalent. I want to go to services in jeans, sing the prayers with new, interesting tunes, talk to people who really want to get to know me, and, of course, eat from the huge potluck at the end. I think I’ve been spoiled.

David Shneyer: I fondly recall working with Rob Agus to create Fabrangen in 1970–1971. Rob’s vision was to create a Jewish Free Cultural Center in D.C., a place where young Jews could celebrate Jewish life, gather for learning, spiritual nourishment, receive counseling (draft and drug) and a place to meet other progressive Jews. The vision included giving birth to other projects, a kosher restaurant, a school, a place in the country and *havurot*. I remember getting excited about Rob’s vision at a Jews for Urban Justice Shabbat gathering in late August or September of 1970, walking the streets around Dupont Circle looking for a location, and planning the components of the early Fabrangen, including giving the project a name. I fondly remember our wonderful four-story former convent where I lived, the waves of people that soon came to our services and programs, the packed Friday night services and ecstatic dancing, the dozens of antiwar protesters who sought shelter at Fabrangen during the May Days, the several weekends with Shlomo Carlebach (z”l), classes in silk screening, photography, and Hebrew and Kfar Out, the farm in Orlean, Virginia where we held a few retreats. I remember tense board meetings and the battles with the United Jewish Appeal Federation, their decision not to renew funding, the resulting impact on our outreach work and decision to become a *havurah*. I will always cherish those years, the people, and the joy so many of us experienced.

Carol Simon: I think of Fabrangen as one of the best “discoveries” of my life. I first learned of and started attending services about 32 years ago. It was easy to become absorbed by the spirit, the intellectual stimulation, the sense of community, and, what was new to me at the time, the valuing of interested, educated, and participating women. Fabrangen has a winning combination of attributes and strengths that have enriched my life to a tremendous extent. Thanks to all of you for the blessings that you’ve provided to me over all these years.

Ellen Simon: I remember:

- Deena Goldsmith asking me to join the Board when I still felt like a newcomer (I declined the first time).
- A potluck of desserts—what to do? Claire Feinson, my co-chair, and I said in unison, “BAGELS,” as she ran to the Watergate Safeway to buy lots of bagels and cream cheese.
- The first sukkah on Bob Rovinsky and Renana Brooks’ terrace, where no one even knew what an Allen wrench was! Why don’t Jews know how to build anything?
- The community meetings where the main topic was always “we aren’t friendly enough to newcomers.”

David Smith: In 1974, while a law student at UCLA, I was about to start an internship in Washington, D.C., around Passover. Rabbi Richard Levy, who was part of the Westwood Free Minyan, said, make sure you look up Fabrangen while you are there. I was welcomed to a communal seder and became a part of the community. I rejoined the community after graduating and have been with Fabrangen continuously since that time. Fabrangen has been my spiritual center and an important part of my and our family's life. The community's struggle with our Jewish texts have been an important part of my Jewishness. The new music that it encourages and the many voices that give life to that music have been part of the *kavanah* that has been part of my davening experience. Thanks to Fabrangen for the friendship it has enabled me to form. *L'chaim.*

Toba Spitzer: While I don't think my family were ever officially members of Fabrangen, my mother—Nessa Spitzer—cofounded the Fabrangen Cheder with Arthur Waskow and others, and I was the oldest kid among that first cohort. My bat mitzvah, in the spring of 1976, was the first associated with Fabrangen, and I remember it as a very special event—including candy throwing after my haftarah (a custom I was then completely unfamiliar with—I recall getting beamed in the forehead with a Hershey's kiss by Shoshana Waskow!), receiving my first tallit, and dancing during lunch with the Fabrangen Fiddlers. Although we were not regular shulgoers, I was always drawn to the mix of intensity, tradition, and innovation that was Fabrangen in those days, back in the UAHC building on Massachusetts Avenue. I remember very powerful High Holy Day services, dancing in the middle of Massachusetts Avenue with the Torah on Simhat Torah, and the ways in which local political events—the defeat of a tax on bread and milk in D.C., the death of Ronnie Moffit—reverberated both in the community and in the services. I am sure my youthful exposure to Fabrangen helped set me on my path towards the rabbinate (even though, being affiliated with a *havurah*, I really had no idea what a rabbi did) and toward the Reconstructionist rabbinate in particular. *Mazel tov* on the anniversary!

Lucy Y. Steinitz: My first visit to Fabrangen was in 1974, while I was still a member of Havurat Shalom and I started dating a guy from Fabrangen, whose name I won't disclose. (Hint: Together we edited *Kesher*, an early newsletter of the *Havurah* movement, in case anyone remembers that!) When my husband (a different man) and I moved to the Washington area in 1980, it already felt like coming home. And so it has remained over the years, although our visits have become much less frequent since 1997, when we started living in Namibia. I have learned and loved so much from Fabrangen, but the best part is the friends I have made—who are still my closest friends, I am happy to say (except for the ex-boyfriend, that is).

Jerry Stilkind: Not remembering what about the notice on a telephone pole in Woodley Park attracted me to come to Fabrangen, it's no wonder that I also cannot remember when and how I came to lead the setup for the High Holidays. Both did happen in the late 1970s or early 1980s, I'm certain. Once I got to Fabrangen, my attraction to the services and the people was immediate. The intensity brought me back to my parents' shul in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. Seeing women wearing yarmulkes and tallises shocked me. Neither made me more observant, neither did I learn to *leyn* or lead the davening. At some point, someone suggested or I felt I could contribute brawn. So, I took charge of setting up for the High Holidays. That seemed to please a lot of people. First, as I recall, we crowded into the social hall of the Goodwill Baptist Church on Kalorama Road in Adams-Morgan. The head of a rental company offered us a discount when he heard why we wanted folding chairs if we would supply a crew to unload the chairs from the delivery truck. Year after year we got the discount. Diane Tepfer reminded me recently—she has been inscribed in the book of those who shall have a memory—that the two of us and someone else were given a wonderful tour of the church by its officials, after which we recommended to our Steering Committee that we use it for the High Holidays.

Shoshana Elkin Waskow: I have an entire childhood of memories of Fabrangen, and I want to share a few images that particularly stand out:

- Kabbalat Shabbat with David Shneyer leading davening at our first location on Florida Avenue
- a darkened room at UAHC filled with song when Reb Shlomo Carlebach came to visit us
- many Shabbatot spent reading underneath the Torah table as my participation in davening
- getting ice cream with Rose Sue Berstein and John Laster (my tutors) to celebrate the week after my bat mitzvah was over
- being the first woman to blow shofar at Fabrangen
- playing poker on December 24 when I came home from college.

Chava Weissler: I was a member of Fabrangen from February 1971 until I moved to Philadelphia to attend graduate school in August 1975. I consider myself a founding member, although I missed the very first meeting, held in January of that year. And in fact, I was the first president of Fabrangen, when we came around to having officers. The early years of Fabrangen—and of the *Havurah* movement—were tremendously exciting. The early 1970s were still “the sixties,” and we were a part of the larger social revolution that was

occurring at that time. We felt we were creating a new and revolutionary form of Judaism, one that included equality for women, renewed spirituality, and taking charge of our own Jewish lives.

Chava Weissler: Fabragen was the place I learned to lead *davvenen*, to read Torah, and to cry at meetings. We were all in our 20s (before the Tickins arrived) and had the intensity of that time of life. Between Fabragen and Jews for Urban Justice, which at that time were closely intertwined, we met at least once a week, maybe more. I no longer remember what it was we cried about, but I do remember that we were always making each other cry. (When I moved to Philly in 1975 and joined the Germantown Minyan, I was amazed to discover that community meetings could be held without anyone bursting into tears.) The ties among us were intense: friends, enemies, couples, ex-couples. The Women's Group, founded in 1973 or thereabouts, was one center of intense and creative energy. We were exploring what it meant to be Jewish women, to gain access to traditionally male roles, and to create new women's prayers, rituals, and consciousness. We also shared our deepest secrets, confronted our fears, and tried to work out our place in Fabragen and the larger Jewish community.

Gloria Whitman: When I interviewed for the job of Fabragen coordinator, I was a member of a local, Conservative, and very large congregation. It was during that interview that I felt for the first time that I was "home." I was asked during the interview how I could possibly be a member of the large congregation and find myself interviewing for the job. It was a matter of community, I said. By being on the phones, I knew most members of the other congregation, just as I knew I would become familiar with members of the Fabragen community! I felt good about my response, and evidently, so did the community.

Act I

Shabbat Shuva 1974, stranger in town from Chestertown visits strange group of Jews
Pre-fast next week at Food for Thought—hippies and carrot cake, Perfect.
Women lead davening, unique, exhilarating,
Reason d'etre not Holocaust survival, makes one whole, wholesome holy
New friends open homes, thanks Art, Irene, Andy, Rose, Ruthie

Act II

Move to DC
Kalorama/Adams-Morgan, Max and Esther, Rob, Ronnie, Richard, Art, many more
Max's Talmud classes
Steering Committee
All night Tikkuns at Milldale retreats
Breira
Hire Ira as first coordinator
Dad dies, Rob and others surprise me driving up to NYC shiva house
Richard organizes once a week morning minyan in my apartment for Kaddish

Act III

Meet Marilyn at Jonathan apartment Rabbi Weiss House Kehillah study group
Larry and Marilyn are junior high school friends,
Mark and Marilyn pottery in Art's basement
Milldale retreat, wine tasting to decide worst Kosher wine
John wins our case for Carmel Vin Hoch
Double Dating Rob Rochelle, Marilyn Mark weddings follow
Tzedakah collectives I and II Bruce, tuna casseroles So Others Might Eat
Move to Baltimore, gifted with Havdalah set, More thanks
Interregnum—*East Bank Havurah, Ben born, help found Congregation Chevrei*
Tzedek with Ed, Ellen and Debbie—not quite Fabrangen North

Act IV

Return to area
Jeremy's Bar Mitzvah
Back with many great friends

Some great sadness, Paul, Hannah, Lisa, Ed
Much learning, great joy
Thank you all

—Mark Wolff

Toda Rabba

*We thank the following for their efforts on behalf of
Fabrangen's 36th anniversary.*

36th Anniversary Celebration

Chair

Fran Goldman

Logo Design

Lloyd Wolf

Memory Book

Fran Goldman and Ellen Garshick,
co-chairs

Cindy Arnon

Sue Hoechstetter

Norman Shore

David Smith

Kabbalat Shabbat Coordinators

Fran Teplitz, chair

Melissa Crow

Roz Timberg

Kabbalat Shabbat Hosts & Service Leaders

Amy and Philip Brookman

Renana Brooks and Bob Rovinsky

Melissa Crow and Victor Katz

Deborah and Shalom Flank

Debbie Goldman

Deena and Larry Goldsmith

Ayah and George Johnson

Lydia Kleiner

Deb Kolodny

Gilah Langner and David Drelich

Dale Lupu and Richard Gladstein

Marsha Rozenblit and Ken Holum

Sandra and Paul Scham

David Shneyer

Fran Teplitz and Mike Zielinski

Roz Timberg and Fred Hoffman

Rhonda Weiss

Shulamit and David Widawsky

Shabbat Morning Service

Norma Brooks

Ellen Garshick

Deb Kolodny

Steve Marcus

Norman Shore

John Spiegel

Shabbat Lunch

Laurie Krieger

Shabbat Afternoon Reminiscences

Mike Tabor

Saturday Night Gala

Judy Beltz, chair

Emily DeVoto

Judy Galat

Debbie Goldman

Fran Goldman

Ronnie Kweller

Ruth Lis

Barbara Hess McCrensky

Jay McCrensky

Gwen Rubinstein

Esther Siegel

David Smith

Roz Soref

Mike Tabor

Gloria Whitman

WES Landscaping

Allen Hirsh

Steve Marcus

36th Anniversary Fund

Rick LaRue, co-chair
Bracha Laster, co-chair
Fran Goldman
Dale Lupu
Michael Pinck

Torah Finders Committee

Bracha Laster, chair
Rachel Braun
Art Cohen
Dale Lupu
Norman Shore
John Spiegel

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of the Fabrangen Fiddlers in providing music
and of the Lis-Perlis family in donating beverages.
Catering by Busboys & Poets.***

“WHAT IS FABRANGEN? Fabrangen is a community of Jews who take their Judaism and its expression seriously. We listen to both Jewish tradition and our own experience, and try to bring the two together in a Jewish way of life. This way of life is expressed by each of us as individuals, and by all of us as a community.”—September 1974

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