

Congregation Kehilat Shalom NEWS

A Welcoming Jewish Reconstructionist Community

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Newsletter of the Congregation Kehilat Shalom of Belle Mead, NJ **June/July 2008** Iyar – Tammuz 5768

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President's Message



Congregation Kehilat Shalom has done many wonderful things this past year. We started the year with participating at the Montgomery Fourth of July event and ended building Jerusalem with LEGOs in our sanctuary where the community raised \$625 for Tikkun Olam to support the Chai Lifeline organization.

In between we came together as community for High Holidays, built a Sukkah, created a brick walkway, celebrated Chanukah with blazing menorahs, honored Tu B'Shvat during a Progressive dinner, held a Purim Carnival, hosted an Installation ceremony in honor of Rabbi Falk and Past Presidents, and participated in Princeton's Communiversities. Interspersed with these singular events, the book club and the empty nesters gathered with regularity and the Hebrew School, Youth group and Hebrew High School continued to be taught by our educators, our Rabbi and many of you donating your time. Kol Ahava, our congregations' treasure, sang at Montgomery's Winter Holiday program as well as at the Yom HaAtzmaut event at the Flemington Jewish Community Center. Finally, CKS also embarked on a path of Sunday morning adult education programs with Hebrew classes as well as seminar discussions led by Rabbi Falk.

With all this activity, the year has certainly gone by quickly. This year's General Membership meeting which will set the tone for the upcoming 2008-09 year will be held Sunday, June 8th starting promptly at 10am with an anticipated length of two hours. Please feel free to come early for community over coffee and bagels as the doors will be open by 9am.

See you at the meeting, *Matt*



Building Jerusalem One Lego at a Time

CKS Donations

CKS gratefully acknowledges the generosity of our members and friends.

Rabbi's Installation:

Mrs. Garie Millman
Richard Cohen and Eliza Gouverneur
Lonnie Beer
Rabbi Elisa Goldberg
Paula Goldstein
Marie Berger
Heidi Lewis
Marilyn Liss
Jane Shapiro
Steve and Mary Weinstein
Jay and Judith Leiboff
Carrie and Steve Fischman
Bruce and Lorrie Millman
Audrey and Sol Starkman
Roe family

General Fund:

Andrew and Jane Pedinoff and Lee, Allie and Erik
In memory of our beloved father and
grandfather, David Pedinoff
Stuart and Sharri Kurtz
In honor of their daughter's, Nicole Schaum, Bat
Mitzvah

LASHIR in Concert!

June 8th at 2:30 pm

LASHIR, the Jewish Community Choir of Princeton celebrates the State of Israel in song at Richardson Auditorium on the Princeton University campus. LASHIR is the oldest independent Jewish choir in New Jersey and has been performing for nearly 30 years. Conducted by Ra'anah Shefa and accompanied by JoAnn Sciarrotta, the concert is free and open to the public

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GREAT SUMMERS HAPPEN BY CHOICE,
NOT CHANCE!

Annual Meeting - Save the Date!
Sunday, June 8th, 10:00 am to Noon

All member families

Elect new board members.

Discuss budget.

**Hear about all that has happened over the past year
and plans for next year.**



Kol Ahava performs at the Yom HaAztmaut Festival in Flemington, NJ.

JUNE BOOK CLUB

JUNE 30 AT 7:30 PM

UNACUSTOMED EARTH BY JHUMPA LAHIRI
at house of Susan Lerner.

Please RSVP to Susan or call for directions.

If you, or someone you know would like to be on the book club information list, please contact Robin Bengochea at the office and she will have you added to the list. You don't have to attend every month's book review. But, once you start...you may get hooked.

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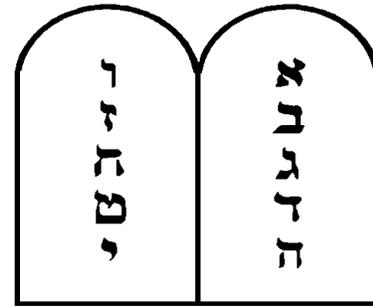
In the Bible, Shavuot, which this year arrives on the evening of June 8th, celebrates the spring wheat harvest. For the festival sacrifice, the High Priest of the holy Temple in Jerusalem presented not goats or bulls, but rather, two loaves of bread. This unusual offering, a product of human labor instead of the raw materials that come straight from the earth, was meant to symbolize the partnership between God and us in bringing food into the world.

Centuries later, the ancient Rabbis determined that Shavuot coincided with the giving of the Torah, the sacred moment when we stood at the foot of Mount Sinai and each of us heard God's voice and God's law. The interpretation of, the wrestling with, and the reconstruction of that law from generation to generation are also considered in our tradition to be the key ingredients of partnership. Engaging with words of Torah is our distinctly Jewish way of being in partnership with God. Moreover, standing at Sinai – for the *first* time, as well as *each* time we study Jewish text – is a peak experience, the climax of the collective Jewish story.

This year, we have been in a partnership with each other – you, as members of Congregation Kehilat Shalom, and me, as your rabbi. I want you all to know that this has been a peak experience for me – and it's not over yet! Whether learning and studying together or praying together, sitting through meetings together, celebrating or mourning together, each of you, adult and child alike, at various times have welcomed me, shared with me a piece of yourself, challenged me, taught me, made me think, and made me laugh. Thank you for sharing this partnership, this sacred trust with me. And thank you for enriching my life this year.

Finally, I would be remiss if I did not add that as members or staff of CKS, we are *all* in a partnership with each other. A sacred trust exists among *us*, binding us ritually, socially, and financially together into one community. I hope you will consider this as our annual meeting approaches on June 8th, Erev Shavuot. I look forward to seeing you there. *Chag Sameach* and Happy Shavuot!

*B'Shalom,
Rabbi Susan*



The CKS Gift Shop
is open each Sunday
10 am - 11 am
Questions?
Susan Waskow 609-333-1113
or Harlene Rosenberg 908-874-8283

Kindercapers
Now in its 14th full year, the CKS's non-sectarian pre-school for children 2-1/2 to 5 years old, offers a unique atmosphere, giving children a chance to explore, create, and, most importantly, learn to think and reason. For more information, call 908 359-0160.

Tree of Life
Purchase a leaf for \$54 to celebrate a *simcha!* Each leaf includes three lines of engraving.
Contact Shelley Nord
908-874-8464

Hebrew School Happenings



June

The Lego Event was the perfect way to end the school year. It was lots of fun and truly educational. As an opportunity to raise funds for a local charity, it taught *tzedakah*, *gemilut chasadim* was necessary to work together, and of course now we all have a really good idea of the layout of Jerusalem.

Thanks to the energy and creative minds of our teachers, parents, and teens, the Open House, Yom Haatzmaut, bake sale and car wash was a tremendous success. We welcomed many people who were



interested in our congregation, raised some money, and had a good time. The students and visitors got to play gaga (an Israeli dodgeball game), make and eat falafel, visit Mrs. Sherman's "Please Touch Museum of Israeli Artifacts", listen to stories in English about Israel, participate in stories in Hebrew and create two beautiful wall hangings designed by Zoe Gilbard and Jeremy Bilotti.

The sixth graders did a wonderful job presenting the lives of those who experienced the Holocaust first hand.

Here is one of the student's monologues:

MY GRANDMOTHER, RUTH MEISSNER THE HOLOCAUST IMPACT

BY NICOLE MEISSNER

Hello, my name is Ruth Meissner. I was impacted a lot in the Holocaust. I lived in Berlin, Germany. I just signed up for swim lessons, and was going on a school trip soon,

but one morning my family received two phone calls saying I couldn't go to swim lessons or on my school trip because I am Jewish. Then one day in 1937, when I was seven, my mother and father said to me we were going for the weekend to Cologne. Then my maid dropped us off at the train station in tears. I went up to her and asked "what is the matter?" We'll be back by Monday. Then my mother, father, and I went on the train. We were sitting down and the Gestapo came in and said, "Is everything ok?" We all replied, "Yes." Then the Gestapo closed the door. I asked my mother and father if everything was ok. Then they told me what was happening. Since they only let me take one of my favorite dolls, I asked, "Are we ever coming back?" My parents said, "Do you want to come back?" I said, "No!!!"

We got to a dock and were ready to get on a boat. For eight days I was on the boat, and for the first time ever, I saw an African American. She sat with my family on the boat to eat. This was very different because my mom grew up in a big house with a lot of maids and butlers. Then my mom and dad got sick and weren't eating food for a while. So I took food and held the food in my shirt and began walking to give the food to them. Then waiters were following me and I thought they were chasing me. So I started to run because I got scared. It turned out that

they were just going to give me a bowl to carry the food. Then we finally docked on October 21. We docked in New York. It was 80 degrees out.

I started a new school in the United States. Even though I was ready for second grade, I went into first. I did because I only knew how to speak German, not English. In about six weeks, I learned how to speak English and got put into second grade where I belonged. But the scary part was when I got put in the first grade. I ran away to my aunt's house because I didn't know how to speak English and that made me scared. I also kept asking everyone if they were Jews or not because I was afraid.

Lastly, I had four uncles and three cousins that got sent to a concentration camp and were never found again. They didn't know how bad the holocaust would get. Another part of my family left after us and was able to go to Shanghai, China. In 1946, we located my grandmother in China. Since only grandparents were able to be transported from China to the United States at that time, she was able to travel to us. Another year later, my aunt and uncle were able to come over too.



Hebrew High School/Youth Groups



CKS YOUTH

Instead of the regular youth column, I would like to take this opportunity to thank a handful of graduating seniors who have contributed to our congregation during their high school years either through volunteering or working at CKS. These students went above and beyond the call of duty to enhance our congregation with their special talents. The students are: **Leah Bartels, Dan Krisiloff, Brian Rosenberg, Jake Fridkis, Liz Smulian, and Arielle Starkman.** There will be a plaque in the sanctuary with their names thanking them for their efforts on behalf of our community. Below is a description of each senior's many contributions.

Leah Bartels joined Kol Ahava in 2004, taking the place of her sister, Shana, the choir's first "junior member." Leah has graced CKS with her pure soprano voice each year at High Holiday services as well as sung with the choir at many special events throughout the years. During the High Holidays, she sang a solo part that highlighted her vocal abilities and her gentle presence. Leah has been an active member of the choir throughout her high school years devoting endless hours to learning new repertoire, rehearsing, and performing with Kol Ahava. Leah's YouTube video of Kol Ahava singing at a community wide winter holiday celebration is well known within CKS.

Jake Fridkis has worked in the Hebrew School for the past four years on Wednesdays and Sundays as a tutor for 5th and 6th graders. He has substitute taught several grades throughout the years, including teaching 5th and 6th grade Hebrew for a semester with Dan Krisiloff, and more recently this year substitute teaching Hebrew reading and prayers for the 7th grade. Jake also privately tutors 7th grade students preparing for their b'nai mitzvahs. A youth group leader and active Hebrew High School student, Jake has volunteered in a wide variety of ways, such as assisting in art auctions, Purim carnivals and spiels, car washes, and accompanying Kol Ahava on flute during services. Jake has been a staple in the CKS community.

Dan Krisiloff has spent many hours behind the scenes, helping build and take down the sukkah, moving High Holiday books to prepare for services, helping to set up the sanctuary for the High Holidays, running games for the Purim carnivals, setting up and cleaning up for numerous pot luck dinners, moving paintings at the art auctions, and painting various walls in our synagogue. He taught Hebrew to the 5th grade class for a semester with Jake Fridkis. A Hebrew High School student, Dan has been a constant presence in all things CKS and can be counted on to lend a hand whenever and wherever it is needed.

Brian Rosenberg is responsible for creating our beautiful outdoor classroom. Brian conceived the idea, presented it to the board for approval, made an entertaining and informative power point presentation at an annual meeting, and raised the necessary funds for this impressive project. Once the funds were raised - "Be a mensch, buy a bench!" - Brian worked throughout the summer with the help of his friends to complete the classroom. By September, CKS had a functional and lovely outdoor space to hold Hebrew School and congregational events. In addition to this project, Brian, a Hebrew High school

student, has volunteered in many other CKS events, including helping at the art auctions, Purim carnivals and spiels, car washes, and bake sales.

Liz Smulian joined Kol Ahava in 2004. She has lent her beautiful voice to our talented choir throughout her high school years. Liz spent many hours practicing and performing with Kol Ahava for the High Holiday services and the choirs many other engagements. In addition, Liz has been an active participant in the youth group, volunteering to help out with the car washes, bake sales, baby sitting, and charity walks. The lone female member of Thursday's Hebrew High school class, Liz is always ready to lend a hand with any CKS activity. Her cheerful presence is an asset to the congregation and her acting talent has made many a Hebrew High school led service or Purim spiel a special delight.

Arielle Starkman spent well over 75 hours working as the Art Specialist for our Hebrew School this year. She designed all of the art projects, purchased the necessary materials, and taught each class a different craft every month. The students were excited by her new and exciting projects and were delighted by her presentation. Organized, timely, and efficient, Arielle designed innovative art projects each month, including a baby quilt with the 7th grader class, *papier maché* head and felt body hero puppets with the 6th graders, latke frying pans for the K-2 class, and many, many more. Arielle encouraged every student to create projects in their own personal way. She always had a positive comment for each child and everyone left her class satisfied with their creation.

Jonathan Yuresko has worked as a tutor for the 3rd and 4th graders throughout his high school years. He taught Hebrew reading on Sunday mornings and helped out wherever needed in the school. An active member of the youth group and Hebrew High School, Jon has helped in many CKS events. He assisted at the art auctions, car washes, bake sales, Purim carnivals and spiels, and numerous fund raising walks. If you come to High Holiday services on the night of Yom Kippur, you can hear Jon on shofar way up in the balcony. You can't miss him. He's the one who always lasts the longest! Jon has participated extensively in the our CKS community through the years, at Hebrew school, youth group, and Hebrew High.

Best of luck to the above seniors. We thank you for your generous contributions to our community over the years. You are the role models of our younger students. Good luck to you in your college studies. May you continue to contribute your special talents to the wider world.

Shalom, *Karen Fridkis*

Hebrew High news cont'd on page 7

 <p>DESIGNS FOR DENTAL HEALTH</p> <p>Richard M. Nadler DMD, FAGD, PA</p> <p>www.designsfordentalhealth.com</p>	<p>425 Arwell Road Suite 104 Hillsborough New Jersey 08844 tel. 908.359.6655 fax 908.359.1291 rmndmd@aol.com</p>
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Ohr Tikvah Jewish Healing Center

Somerset * Hunterdon * Warren Counties

Upcoming Events...



Living Hopefully with a Chronic Illness or a Physical Challenge

When: Wednesday, June 11, 2008, 7:30-9:00 PM

Where: Jewish Family Services, 150-A High Street, Somerville, Fee: \$10.00

Rabbi Robin Nafshi invites members of the community to join her for an informal discussion about living with a chronic illness or physical challenge. Rabbi Nafshi will share her own story (she lives with four chronic illnesses!), welcome others to share their stories, and explore how Judaism can help us cope. Chronic illness can disrupt our lives in many ways. In addition to pain, fatigue and other physical symptoms, we may suffer from a host of emotional ones: low self-esteem, depression, fear, stress, anxiety, anger, and more. The divorce rate among the chronically ill is over 75%, and depression is 15-20% higher for the chronically ill than for the average person. Nearly one half of all Americans has some kind of chronic condition. Sixty percent are between the ages of 18 and 64. According to a recent study, those patients with a deep, internalized faith recover faster from the depression than those without faith, even when their physical condition wasn't improving.

Hebrew Chanting Circle

When: Thursday, June 19, 2008, 7:30-9:00 PM

Where: Temple Sholom, 594 N. Bridge Street, Bridgewater

Looking for a way to clear your mind of clutter, relieve yourself of stress, and feel a sense of inner peace and wholeness? Then chanting may be just the thing! Led by Ronnie Weyl, who has studied Hebrew chanting with Rabbi Shefa Gold, the chanting circle learns simple Hebrew phrases from psalms or the Torah and sings them in repetition. The vibration of the words and the energy from singing aloud with others has the power to transform and uplift the spirit. You need no prior knowledge of singing, chanting, or Hebrew language to join us and have fun.

Shabbat Superstars

Name		Grade
Anderson	Kelly	3
Anderson	Zach	5
Applegate	Ben	5
Cige	Adam	5
Cochran	Corey	6
Dalpe	Derek	7
Gilbard	Zoe	6
Goldhammer	Lea	2
Goldhammer	Josh	K
Javeline	Joanna	6
Javeline	Melissa	3
Kowalski	Tess	3
Murphy	Ian	4
Orlando	Jeremy	4
Rosenthal	Jason	5
Rosenthal	Allison	2
Schaum	Nicole	7
Sokel	Jackie	4
Underberg-Davis	Rachel	5
Varga	Jacob	6
Waskow	Dorothy	3
Weinstein	Cecily	1
Weitze	Scott	6
Weitze	Jason	5
Weitze	Jack	3
Weitze	Marc	1

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JUNE 2008

June 2008
27 Iyar 5768 - 27 Sivan 5768

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 27 Iyar 42 L'Omer 5:30AM/8:23PM	2 28 Iyar 43 L'Omer 5:29AM/8:24PM YOM YERUSHALAYIM	3 29 Iyar 44 L'Omer 5:29AM/8:25PM	4 1 Sivan 45 L'Omer 5:28AM/8:25PM ROSH HODESH Num. 28.1-15.	5 2 Sivan 46 L'Omer 5:28AM/8:26PM	6 3 Sivan 47 L'Omer 5:28AM/8:27PM Family Shabbat Services - 7:00 pm	7 4 Sivan 48 L'Omer 5:28AM/8:27PM Naso: Num. 4.21-5.10. Judges 13.2-25.
8 5 Sivan 49 L'Omer 5:27AM/8:28PM EREV SHAVUOT 10 AM to Noon - General Membership Meeting	9 6 Sivan 5:27AM/8:28PM SHAVUOT Exo. 19.1-20.23, Num. 28.26-31. Ezekiel 1.1-28.3.12.	10 7 Sivan 5:27AM/8:29PM SHAVUOT II (YIZKOR) Deut. 15.19-16.17, Num. 28.26-31. Habakkuk 3.1-19.	11 8 Sivan 5:27AM/8:29PM	12 9 Sivan 5:27AM/8:30PM	13 10 Sivan 5:27AM/8:30PM Shabbat Services - 7:45 pm Hebrew High School Graduation	14 11 Sivan 5:27AM/8:31PM Behaalotekha: Num. 8.1-9.14. Zechariah 2.14-4.7. 4:00 PM - Jacob Lowenthal Bar Mitzvah
15 12 Sivan 5:27AM/8:31PM	16 13 Sivan 5:27AM/8:32PM	17 14 Sivan 5:27AM/8:32PM	18 15 Sivan 5:27AM/8:32PM	19 16 Sivan 5:27AM/8:33PM	20 17 Sivan 5:28AM/8:33PM Shabbat Services - 7:00 pm	21 18 Sivan 5:28AM/8:33PM Shelah: Num. 13.1-14.7. Joshua 2.1-24. 9:30 am - Nicole Travers Bat Mitzvah 4:00 pm - Jeremiah Blitz Bar Mitzvah
22 19 Sivan 5:28AM/8:33PM	23 20 Sivan 5:28AM/8:34PM	24 21 Sivan 5:29AM/8:34PM 7:30 PM Religion Committee Meeting	25 22 Sivan 5:29AM/8:34PM	26 23 Sivan 5:29AM/8:34PM	27 24 Sivan 5:30AM/8:34PM Shabbat Services - 7:45 pm	28 25 Sivan 5:30AM/8:34PM Korah: Num. 16.1-22. I Samuel 11.14-12.22 4:00 PM - Zachary Burke Bar Mitzvah
29 26 Sivan 5:31AM/8:34PM	30 27 Sivan 5:31AM/8:34PM					

HEBREW HIGH SCHOOL NEWS

Wednesday's 8-th - 10th grade class

There's a revolution under foot at the Wednesday Hebrew High school class. The students have been enthusiastically brainstorming ways to improve the program. In fact they are so excited about their program that we've extended the school year for the last two weeks in May to give them time to work together! The first decision the students made was to create a new space for the sessions. They will no longer be meeting in the K-2 classroom. The second decision was to form a new identity by renaming the group. Gone is Hebrew High School. The new name will soon be revealed.

We'll keep you posted to all the ideas the post b'nai mitzvah students have in the next newsletter. Or better yet, come to the annual meeting on June 8th and hear them present their proposal to the congregation. Many thanks to Lisa Kent and Susan Waskow for their help with the class in April.

Thursday's 11th-12th grade class

The Thursday class wrapped up their year with a session at Joe Wion's on "Effective Listening". The session covered why listening was important, issues that often interfere with listening, an examination of common communication roadblocks, and behaviors that enhance listening. They students were given a chance to practice what they learned and were surprised to discover how challenging it can be to listen well. The students left the session with a heightened awareness of the challenges and opportunity that lie ahead, and the potential rewards of stepping up the quality of their listening. Many thanks to Joe for this important session.

2008 - 2009 Hebrew High School program

Next year there will be only one session for Hebrew High School. All students in the program in grades 8 - 12 will meet on Wednesdays from 6:00 - 8:00. Please note the new time. As usual, each session will begin with a pizza dinner (\$5.00). Tuition is \$200 for grades 9 - 12. Incoming 8th grade students are free. For more information or to register, please contact me at kfridkis@comcast.net.

Shalom,

Karen Fridkis, Hebrew High School chair

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Every effort will be made to publish contributed items, but due to space restrictions, placement and format are at the discretion of the editor.

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