

# Congregation Kehilat Shalom NEWS

A Welcoming Jewish Reconstructionist Community

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Newsletter of the Congregation Kehilat Shalom of Belle Mead, NJ **September 2008** Elul 5768– Tishrei 5769

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## President's Message

CKS Needs You!

You may be reading this in September, just before Congregation Kehilat Shalom's Welcome Back Barbeque, but the reality is that I'm late getting this to our editor.

Two weeks ago, when this was due, my role at work had just changed, which altered my daily responsibilities. So, I am writing this while on vacation at Long Beach Island late in August. It is evening and the Olympics are on in the background. I realized that all of a sudden everything I had done for the past five years at my "day job" ended when I was asked to take a new role. The new role is exciting and is a new venture at my firm, but is also more time critical to the mission of the company. This already has had an impact on my extracurricular activities outside the office.

Why am I telling you all of this? I'm glad you asked. It is just over a year ago that I was asked to take on the role of President of our community. It is amazing what this past year has brought to me emotionally and, dare I say, spiritually. Accepting the role changed the amount of time that I was able to commit to my family. But I know that I am richer for the experience. I'm proud of the accomplishments made this past year, but the reality is we have a lot to do in order to continue the positive momentum at CKS. The things that need to get done simply can not be facilitated without your help, because as they say in the financial world "Past performance is no indication of future performance."

How many of you chose not to volunteer to help on a committee or activity when you returned your membership paperwork? How many of you feel that you have done something in the near or distant past and therefore you are not obligated to participate in your community today, or think "it's someone else's turn"? The truth is, I can't do it alone. Your volunteer board can not do it alone. The 20% of the community's volunteers that do 80% of the work can no longer do it alone, either.

The community is only as strong as its weakest link. We need to strengthen these links and continue to grow and step forward. Please forgive me for paraphrasing another President, but I think that he really hit on something.

"Ask not what your synagogue can do for you, but what you can do for your synagogue."

*Matt*



SUMMER  
FUN-

CKS  
MEMBERS  
bottling wine at  
The Wine  
School of  
Manalapan  
7/6/07



## CKS Donations

*CKS gratefully acknowledges the generosity of our members and friends.*

### Memorial Garden:

(all donations in memory of Thelma Canty)

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In memory of Eric Ellis and Thelma Canty

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## Committee Reports

### Adult Hebrew Refresher class - Sep. 21 and Oct. 5, 9:30 – 11:00 AM

A great way to brush up your Hebrew skills just in time for High Holy Days. Taking this class will:

- Help you derive greater meaning from High Holy Day services.
- Improve your ability to help your child with Hebrew.
- Improve your ability follow along in the prayer book at services.
- Appreciate the native tongue of our ancestors and the roots of biblical concepts.
- Learn the language of modern day Israel.
- Get to know other temple members!

Note this class is sponsored and supported by the National Jewish Outreach Program's "Read Hebrew America" program. It is a reading refresher class that works well if you knew even a slight amount of Hebrew. We will meet from 9:30 - 11:00 both days during Hebrew school. If we make good progress in Session 1 we will also spend some time on Hebrew writing in Session 2. Even if you took the pre-primer class last spring or know some Hebrew already, you will really improve your skills by taking this class. This will also give you a taste of the full beginner's and intermediate Hebrew class which will most likely be offered in the winter.

For more information, go to [www.njop.org](http://www.njop.org) and click on Read Hebrew America or contact Meryl Bisberg, [mbisberg@comcast.net](mailto:mbisberg@comcast.net). To register, contact Robin Begochea, [robin@ksnj.org](mailto:robin@ksnj.org) by Sept. 10. All we need to know is that you're planning to attend, so that we can insure that we have materials in time. Note the class is open to non-members and prospective members. There is no charge for the class or for books, so make your "New Year's" resolution and get started on your way to learning Hebrew. Contact the office today to let us know that you are interested!

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THE CHEMISTRY OF TESHUVAH



The ancient Greek philosopher, Socrates, once said: "The unexamined life is not worth living." In the twentieth century, Rabbi Irving Greenberg re-wrote this Socratic saying as he imagined the Torah would have phrased it. He wrote: "To live the unexamined life is not really living." In Greenberg's version, life is not tossed aside when considered unworthy; rather, it is the living of it that is the focus. And the way to live is to act; to be reborn each year; to allow oneself to change and to grow – whether spiritually, intellectually, physically, or emotionally.

Over the last few months, the CKS Board of Directors and I have gathered together to embark on a training and visioning process that will help us to be stronger, more efficient leaders. While much of this training is geared toward organizational structure and function, an equal amount is about self-examination. Who are we as a community? What are our strengths and our weaknesses? How can we improve what we don't do well, and make even better what we are doing well?

This process that we are and will be engaged in at the community level is not unlike the process of teshuvah that we as individuals practice in preparation for the High Holidays – a kind of Jewish self-examination. As the month of Elul begins, and the Ten Days of Repentance, Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, edge ever closer, it is good to remember what all the soul-searching and praying are about.

Teshuvah is not just about sitting in schul and mumbling prayers. Teshuvah is about action. The word itself, from the Hebrew meaning "to turn" or "to return" implies motion. Without motion, without action, we cannot improve ourselves or our community. We cannot re-imagine ourselves. We cannot be reborn. But how do we get there when we are already dashing from place to place? First, paradoxically, we must stop moving.

In Judaism, teshuvah is a very particular process following a very particular formula. According to Maimonides, the medieval rabbi, doctor, philosopher, and codifier of Jewish law and practice, first we regret our wrongdoing; then we actively reject it; finally, we move toward resolution – emerging (we hope) both changed and renewed.

To put it another way, teshuvah is like a chemical reaction. Each year, during Elul, we turn down the heat under the bubbling cauldron of life, we allow the temperature to drop, and we slow down as we turn inward to re-examine our lives, to reacquaint ourselves with our own souls. This inward-turning, this turning down of the heat, culminates on Yom Kippur when we ignore our physical needs altogether by abstaining from food, water, bathing, and sexual activity – and we come together as a community to pray. Then, slowly, the heat is turned up, and like newly vibrating, dancing, and colliding atomic particles, we form new bonds, new chains of molecules, within ourselves and with those around us.

It is the community interaction that gives teshuvah its heat. Teshuvah is the energy that was there all along, tied up in unproductive bonds, reorganized and restructured and ready to unlock the frozen inertia of the familiar and the routine. Teshuvah is the antidote to the numbness of apathy and inaction. Teshuvah is where action is conceived.

So, as the summer comes to a close and the temperature outside begins to drop, turn down the temperature inside yourself as well. Allow some time for the molecules to slow down. Allow some time for teshuvah, for re-imagining yourself and your community. Rediscover who you are and rediscover Congregation Kehilat Shalom. Then turn the heat back up. We need your talents. We need your feedback. We need your ideas. We need your energy.

I hope to see each and every one of you during High Holidays and in the coming year. Leshana tova tikateivu! Happy New Year and may we all be inscribed for life!

B'shalom uvracha,

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 15th full year, CKS's non-sectarian pre-school for children 2½ 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 908-359-0420

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



September 2008

7

14 cooking

21

28 music k-4/trope 5-7

This month we welcome our new Third and Fourth Grade Teacher, **Shari Rothstein**, to our staff. Returning teachers, Karen Fridkis (K-2), Robynn Mann (Jewish Studies 5+6), Sima Sherman (Hebrew 5+6), Eli Ungar (grade 7) are anxiously awaiting the new school year. Each class will have a set "special" period, so that there will be plenty of fun in addition to traditional classroom learning time. We have added specials to our list including "Reconstructionism with Rabbi Susan", an informal discussion of Judaism and how our movement interprets tradition, and Trope, for fifth through seventh graders to become used to the idea of the cantorial marks necessary to chant Torah. Of course, we will continue to have music with Debbie Grauer, cooking with Josh Fischman, and arts and crafts with various toranim and adult volunteers. We will also have Mock Shabbat every seventh class, in which we begin the day with the Friday night table blessings and end with Havdalah.



Our volunteers are the key this year. Arts and Crafts will be led by adult volunteers, trope classes will be assisted by adult volunteers, our office will be manned by parent volunteers this year, and as usual our big events such as the Purim carnival, Passover Seder and Yom Haatzmaut (Israeli Independence Day) programs will be led by parent volunteers. Thanks to everyone in advance for contributing to make our community a great place to work, play, pray, and schmooze.

I have been in the building for the last couple of weeks preparing for the year. The books are checked in. The toranim are trained. The supplies are inventoried. The new trope curriculum is written. While we won't see each other quite as often this year, I am sure that the year will be brimming with activities and teaching that will educate and inspire. I cannot wait to start.

Please check the website for our Parent Teacher Handbook, if you have any questions about policies or curriculum. The Hebrew School email is [hebrewschoolksnj@embarqmail.com](mailto:hebrewschoolksnj@embarqmail.com) and our phone number is 908-359-0420 x 4.

I will see you all very soon! *Shana Tova oometukah!* *Dori*

### **SUMMER FAMILY SHOTS- WHERE ARE YOURS?**



Allison Rosenthal performing at the Somerset Patriots Game (8/16/08) Jason Rosenthal juggling on stage at the Rocking Horse Ranch 6/08

## Hebrew High School/Youth Groups

### Busy "Back to School" for students of all ages at Congregation Kehilat Shalom.

What do a smart, resourceful, and passionate group of teens do when they decide they want something? They usually find a way to get it. The Hebrew High School students of Congregation Kehilat Shalom in Belle Mead felt very strongly about continuing and expanding their post bar mitzvah education program to include not only once weekly classes and discussions on various Jewish topics, but also a vibrant Jewish youth group with a real home base. They immediately started planning how they could use the limited space inside the synagogue to have a teen classroom/lounge that they could call their own. After approval of their plan by the synagogue's Board of Directors, they set out raising money to convert the choir loft of the synagogue to a semi-private classroom/lounge that could serve as dual use when needed for overflow at services.

With all their fund raising activities such as the car wash shown in the photo, and with the help of Hebrew High Director Karen Fridkis and member architect Joe Weiss and



volunteer Eric Weitze, they plan to have the building modifications completed by the end of August in order to be able to kick off the new program in September. It will be called "Kehi-loft", combining the symbolic Hebrew name of the synagogue ("Kehilat" means community in Hebrew), with the real physical space of the loft. Mazel Tov to the CKS Hebrew High students for working so hard to make their vision a reality!

The effort of the Hebrew High students to continue their Jewish education is a testament to the Kindergarten thru 7<sup>th</sup> grade Hebrew school, where exciting things are also happening. Principal Dori Daus has made some innovative improvements to the curriculum and activities at the Hebrew School. Children have the opportunity to experience firsthand the rich cultural heritage of Judaism by participating in Jewish cooking, crafts, and music as part of the regular Hebrew School program.

Experienced teachers and small class sizes are the core of Kehilat Shalom Hebrew School, which meets on Sundays from 9 am - 12 pm. Class time often involves education and discussion about Jewish history and culture, current events, and modern Israel. Students are learning to read, write and speak Hebrew as early as 1<sup>st</sup> grade, even beginning the all-important preparation for their bar/bat mitzvah by learning the songs and prayers of the Shabbat service and

practicing trope as part of the 5<sup>th</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum. And there is no charge for Kindergarten tuition!

CKS also has a non-sectarian weekday pre-school, Kindercapers, that features nurturing, caring experiences for the littlest learners, as well as an extended program which runs until 2 PM on selected days of the week and includes enrichments such as cooking, art, movement, and science. Director Susan Schatzman adds, "We also had a very successful first-year summer camp program and are looking forward to returning to our regular school program, which begins on Monday, September 8."

And finally, to round out all ages and stages of life, CKS sponsors a very extensive adult education program that includes Hebrew language, torah study, Shabbat service worship leadership, Jewish history in films, and Jewish life issues such as interfaith families. Join us as we kick off our busy 2008-2009 year on Sunday mornings, September 21 and October 5, for a Hebrew language refresher to get in shape for the upcoming High Holy Days!

If you would like to learn more, come to a Welcome Back Barbeque the first day of Hebrew School, September 7, from 12

- 4 PM at the synagogue. If you are interested in the Kindercapers preschool, please call Director Susan Schatzman at 908-359-0160.

For more information on CKS Education, complimentary high holy day tickets, or to RSVP for any of the above events or to find out more about the synagogue, please call the main synagogue office at 908-359-0420 during business hours, and speak with Robin Bengochea, or email her at [robin@ksnj.org](mailto:robin@ksnj.org). Rabbi Susan Falk, spiritual leader of CKS, may also be reached at the temple office. More information about the synagogue can also be found on the synagogue website, [www.ksnj.org](http://www.ksnj.org).

*Invitations by Sharon*

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## Jewish Community



New Season Begins Tuesday, September 9 With Rabbi Donniel Hartman Lecture; Israel and The Challenges Of Jewish Identity: The New Tribes Of Israel

The Jewish LIFE season kicks off on Tuesday, September 9 at 7:30 p.m. with a lecture by Rabbi Donniel Hartman on *Israel and the Challenges of Jewish Identity: The New Tribes of Israel*. The last two decades have shown Israel's progress taking a new direction, the understanding of which is critical for the future of Israel and its relationship to world Jewry. Rabbi Hartman is the Co-Director of the Sholom Hartman Institute in Jerusalem. He has founded some of the largest and most extensive education programs as well as training and enrichment programs for educators and rabbis in Israel and North America. Rabbi Hartman is the author of *Good Fences: The Boundaries of Judaism* and is the Editor of *Judaism and the Challenges of Modernity*. The fee for the Rabbi Hartman program is \$10/Jewish LIFE member and \$15/Non-Member.

Additional Jewish LIFE programs scheduled throughout the season include: Barry Shrage: *The Future of the Jewish Community*, Sunday, October 19 at 11 a.m.; Rabbi Ron Isaacs: *Talking to God - the Art of Prayer*, Wednesday, November 12 at 1 p.m.; Author and radio & television personality Arthur Schwartz: *Jewish Food in America*, Sunday, November 16 at 10:30 a.m.; Documentary film *Praying with Lior* followed by Q & A with Director Ilana Tractman: Wednesday, November 19 at 7 p.m. (at Temple Beth-El, Hillsborough); Violin and piano duo of Galina Heifetz and Mimi Stern-Wolfe featuring Jewish, Israeli and Holocaust Music, Thursday, December 4 at 7 p.m.; Rabbi Dr. Laibl Wolf: *Practical Kabbalah Extreme Make-Over Spiritual Edition*, Thursday, January 29, 2009 at 7 p.m.; Sports writer and author Bob Wechsler: *Day by Day in Jewish Sports History*, Sunday, February 22 at 10 a.m.; Rabbi Sheldon Zimmerman: *Book of Genesis*, Thursday, March 5, 2009 at 7 p.m.; and Yom Hashoah Observance: *Voices of the Generations*, featuring Julie Kohner, Sunday, April 26 at 7 p.m. The Yom Hashoah observance will be held at Temple Beth-El, Hillsborough and there is no admission fee.

The fee for each Jewish LIFE program is \$10/Jewish LIFE Members and \$15/Non-Member. The fee for the Arthur Schwartz program, which includes brunch and a copy of Mr. Schwartz's book, is \$36/Jewish LIFE Member and \$39/Non-Member. (The fee for brunch only is \$18/Jewish LIFE member and \$21/Non-Member. The fee to purchase the book at the event is \$25.)

Jewish LIFE Benefactor and Sponsorship opportunities are available. For a \$360 contribution to Jewish LIFE, a Benefactor receives two tickets for all special events and preferred seating at selected events. A Jewish LIFE Sponsor contributes \$100 for an individual event and receives two tickets to the sponsored event.

The Jewish LIFE 2008-2009 brochure -- including fees for special events, as well as course offerings at participating Jewish LIFE synagogues -- is available at the JCC and at participating Jewish LIFE synagogues. The brochure is posted on the Shimon and Sara Birnbaum JCC website: [www.ssbjcc.org](http://www.ssbjcc.org). To register for programs, to become a Jewish LIFE Benefactor or Sponsor, and for further information, please contact the Shimon and Sara Birnbaum Jewish Community Center at 908-725-6994 x201; [LFriedman@ssbjcc.org](mailto:LFriedman@ssbjcc.org)

## Ohr Tikvah Jewish Healing Center

Somerset \* Hunterdon \* Warren Counties



### Upcoming Events...

#### A Time for Reflection for the New Year

**When: Sunday, September 14, 2008**

**3:00**

**PM - 4:30 PM**

**Where: Labrynth Garden, North Lane, Warren**

**No fee**

In the month of Elul, we reflect on the past year and search our hearts as we prepare for the High Holidays of Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur. During this time of repentance, we also begin the process of seeking forgiveness for wrongs we may have done to others, and engage in the process of healing. This season is a time of *teshuvah*, when we "return" to our better selves and to our connection with G-d.

To support this process, Ohr Tikvah invites you to join us for a walk through a beautiful garden labyrinth in Warren, as Rabbi Robin Nafshi leads us in prayers, reflection and song. We will take a gentle walk through this lovely flower-strewn maze, moving around in a circle to the center and then returning back to where we began.

Please call Ohr Tikvah at 908-725-6994 to receive directions to the labyrinth, or to let us know if you'd like to meet us at JCC for a shared van ride to the labyrinth. The van will leave the JCC at 2:30 PM. Please call as soon as possible to reserve a place on the van, or visit our website at [www.ohrtikvahjhc.org](http://www.ohrtikvahjhc.org).

#### Volunteer Opportunity: Helping the Elderly

**When: Fall 08**

Jewish Family Services of Somerset, Hunterdon and Warren Counties and Ohr Tikvah Healing Center both focus on healing of the mind and spirit through a variety of programs and services for people of all ages. Embedded in the mission of the two organizations is the power of Jewish wisdom and values to bring comfort and healing. L'Chaim: Nourishing the Mind and Soul of the Elderly is a new Volunteer Visiting Program that matches volunteers with older persons living in the community or in a senior residence to provide emotional and spiritual connection to enhance the quality of their lives.

Volunteer involvement can consist of friendly home visits to older persons living in the community or facilitating small groups of residents in senior living around topics of Jewish interest, including Kabbalat Shabbat or celebration of holidays. Materials and ideas are shared among all volunteers. All of the older persons receive a geriatric assessment by a licensed clinical social worker from JFS prior to being matched with a volunteer.

Orientation and training for volunteers interested in working in this program should contact Ruth Edelman, LCSW, Program Coordinator, at 908-725-7799. Please call now to be part of a wonderful mitzvah.



# SEPTEMBER 2008



September 2008  
1 Elul 5768 - 1 Tishri 5769

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 1 Elul 6:26AM/7:31PM <b>ROSH HODESH II</b> Num. 28.1-15. Labor Day - Office Closed	2 2 Elul 6:27AM/7:29PM	3 3 Elul 6:27AM/7:27PM	4 4 Elul 6:28AM/7:26PM	5 5 Elul 6:29AM/7:24PM Shabbat Services - 7:00 PM	6 6 Elul 6:30AM/7:23PM <b>Shoftim: Deut. 16.18-18.13.</b> <b>Isaiah 51.12-52.12.</b>
7 7 Elul 6:31AM/7:21PM 9AM - Noon Hebrew School Noon - 4:00 PM Welcome Back/Membership BBQ	8 8 Elul 6:32AM/7:19PM	9 9 Elul 6:33AM/7:18PM 7:30 PM Board Meeting	10 10 Elul 6:34AM/7:16PM 6:00 - 8:00 PM Hebrew High School	11 11 Elul 6:35AM/7:14PM	12 12 Elul 6:36AM/7:13PM Shabbat Services - 7:45 PM	13 13 Elul 6:37AM/7:11PM <b>Key Tetze: Deut. 21.10-22.21.</b> <b>Isaiah 54.1-10.</b> 4:30 PM Jaclyn D'Andrea Bat Mitzvah
14 14 Elul 6:38AM/7:09PM 9 AM - Noon Hebrew School	15 15 Elul 6:39AM/7:08PM	16 16 Elul 6:40AM/7:06PM	17 17 Elul 6:41AM/7:04PM 6:00 - 8:00 PM - Hebrew High School	18 18 Elul 6:42AM/7:03PM 7:30 PM - Education Committee Meeting	19 19 Elul 6:43AM/7:01PM Shabbat Services - 7:00 PM	20 20 Elul 6:44AM/6:59PM <b>SELIHOT</b> <b>Key Tavo: Deut. 28.1 - 28.6.</b> <b>Isaiah 60.1-22.</b> 9:30 AM - Justin and Taylor Summers B'nei Mitzvah
21 21 Elul 6:45AM/6:58PM 9 AM - Noon - Hebrew School 9:30 AM - 11:00 AM - Hebrew Reading Refresher	22 22 Elul 6:46AM/6:56PM	23 23 Elul 6:47AM/6:54PM 7:30 PM - Religion Committee Meeting	24 24 Elul 6:48AM/6:52PM 6:00 - 8:00 PM - Hebrew High School	25 25 Elul 6:49AM/6:51PM	26 26 Elul 6:50AM/6:49PM Shabbat Services - 7:00 PM (led by Hebrew High School)	27 27 Elul 6:51AM/6:47PM <b>Nitzavim: Deut. 29.9-30.20.</b> <b>Isaiah 61.10-63.9.</b>
28 28 Elul 6:52AM/6:46PM 9 AM - Noon - Hebrew School	29 29 Elul 6:53AM/6:44PM <b>EREV ROSH HASHANAH</b> Erev Rosh Hashanah Services - 7:00 PM	30 1 Tishri 6:54AM/6:43PM <b>ROSH HASHANAH I</b> <b>Gen. 21.1-34, Num. 29.1-6.</b> <b>I Samuel 1.1-2.10.</b> Rosh Hashanah Services - 9:30 AM Children's Service - 10:30 AM (concurrent with Morning Service) Tashlikh hike to Pike Creek - 4:15 PM (hiking dress)				

## HIGH HOLIDAY SERVICES

### Rosh Hashanah

Monday September 29  
Erev Rosh Hashanah--7pm

Tuesday September 30  
Rosh Hashanah 1st day --9:30 am  
Children's service--10:30 am (concurrent with morning service)  
Tashlikh hike to Pike Creek--4:15 pm (dress for hiking)

Wednesday October 1  
Rosh Hashanah 2nd day --9:30 am

Friday October 3  
Shabbat Shuvah services--7pm

### Yom Kippur

Wednesday October 8  
Kol Nidre--6 pm

Thursday October 9  
Yom Kippur Morning--9:30 am  
Children's service--10:30 am (concurrent with morning service)  
Yizkor--1 pm  
Neilah service--6 pm  
Shofar blowing--7:08 pm  
Break Fast to follow.

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Gift Shop	Susan Waskow 609-333-1113
Hospitality (Kiddush and Oneg)	Natalie London- 908-874-6952
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Membership	Leslie Kowalski 609-275-4644
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Pastoral Emergencies	Rabbi Susan Falk 908-359-0420
Personnel	Dave Campeas 908-904-4917
Publicity	Janis Todd- 609-799-8384
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