

Congregation Kehilat Shalom NEWS

A Welcoming Jewish Reconstructionist Community

Editor—Karen Bartels
karen.bartels@verizon.net
fax 609-921-1899
home phone 609-921-1811

Newsletter of the Congregation Kehilat Shalom of Belle Mead, NJ **December 2008** Kislev–Tevet 5769

Congregation
Kehilat Shalom
253 Griggstown Rd.
Belle Mead, NJ 08502
Phone: 908-359-0420
Fax: 908-359-8848
Regular office hours:
M-W-Th 8:30-3:30
T-8:30-6pm F-8:30-1pm

Rabbi

Susan Falk
rabbi@ksnj.org

President

Matt Rosenthal
president@ksnj.org

**Community Engagement
Coordinator**

Robin Bengochea
admin1@ksnj.org
robin@ksnj.org

Hebrew School Principal

Dori Daus
principal@ksnj.org

Lay Cantor

Kate Mende-Fridkis

2008-2009

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Published by:

Bulletin from the Board- Andy Sokel

Having just finished an exceedingly long election campaign, I have been elected to write the newsletter message this month! The fall season has been very busy here at Congregation Kehilat Shalom. We started by having a wonderful congregational barbecue which set the stage for very well attended and enjoyable High Holiday services, very ably led by Rabbi Falk. The sukkah building went well and there was a capacity crowd for "Pizza in the Hut". Luckily the weather was good and not too chilly. Next was the congregation yard sale, organized by the Gartenberg family for Emily's Mitzvah project. Who knew everyone had so much stuff! But it either sold or was donated and a good profit made for the Synagogue Beautification Fund. In addition approximately 45 bicycles were collected for the Pedals for Peace project, which was Corey Cochran's Mitzvah project. Joanna Javeline is also working on her project, collecting donations for the local animal shelter. Our children are setting the standard for volunteerism and it is up to us adults to live up to their example and donate our time and energy also! Congregation Kehilat Shalom only exists because of this, so GET INVOLVED! There are plenty of opportunities: help out at Hebrew school on Sundays, join the rabbi's adult education classes, attend services, join a committee, suggest a project, help run the Bagel Café. There are several opportunities this month alone. On December 7th there will be an Adult Ed Interfaith Life class. On December 13th there is a Kids Movie Night so the adults can get some kid free shopping time. There is the Community Chanukah celebration on December 21 and a Chinese Dinner on December 26th. And remember you can donate money to the temple when you buy online through Amazon.com by first going through our website to get there. With the holiday season soon upon us, make your gift to our congregation the gift of yourself! You will be glad you did.

Happy Hanukah and Happy New Year, *Andy Sokel*

Kids Movie Night on Dec 13th 6pm

Drop the kids and get in some last minute shopping or perhaps a dinner out. Details TBD. Watch for weekly CKS emails.



Community Hanukah Celebration Dec 21st

Not just for kids!!! 5-8pm
A night of Blazing Menorahs!
Bring a friend or another family to join us.

Chinese Dinner December 26th

6:30-7:45pm followed by Shabbat Services.

Sunday December 14th at Noon

Capt. Kenny Elgort

Returning from active duty in Iraq
Inviting the Entire Community to welcome him back in person
and say thank you to him for his service of our country.



Calli-**Graphics**

CKS Donations

CKS gratefully acknowledges the generosity of our members and friends.

High Holiday:

Alan Bookman
Alice Bender
Alan and Meryll Traub
Claire Fridkis
Frederick and Barbara Herzog
Greg and Suzanne Corsan
Ed Krisiloff and Susan Forster
Erna Forster
Diane Heimberg
Tobie and Stanley Parnett
Eleanor and Alan Moskowitz
Naphtali Britman
Albert and Minnie Benson
Irene Simmons
L. Holtz
Stephen and Judy Underberg
Matilda Falk
Helene and Roy Horowitz
Helen Lifland
Scott Newman
Judith Edelson
Joe and Diane Wions

General:

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Judith Edelson
In memory of Thelma Canty
Joe and Diane Wions
In memory of Thelma Canty

Congregant's Assistance Fund:

Debbie Lampf and Michael Kalison
In memory of Bob Link

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund:

Bob and Peggy Fass
For High Holidays
Caryn Starr-Gates

Kehi-loft:

Karen and Larry Fridkis

Remembrance Garden:

Karen and Larry Fridkis
In memory of Thelma Canty

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ROBERT "BOB" FASS
SALES REPRESENTATIVE

CKS BOOK CLUB -

Get ahead on your reading

No December Meeting

Monday, January 12 at 7:30 PM

Meeting at Mary Weinstein's home

147 Wilson Road, Princeton

RSVP - 609-921-8059

Book - "East of Eden" by John Steinbeck

Monday, February 9 at 7:30 PM

Meeting at Sue Lerner's home - Hillsborough - Call for address and directions

RSVP - 908-904-0228

Book - "Rich Man Poor Man" by Irwin Shaw

March Book of the Month...

"March" by Sandy Mitchell

Meeting date and Place will be announced.

EVERYONE IS WELCOME AT ANY BOOK CLUB MEETING - PLEASE RSVP

HAVE A BOOK YOU LOVED AND WANT TO DISCUSS, PLEASE SEND AN EMAIL to:

BOOKCLUB@KSNJ.ORG

Invitations by Sharon

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Message from the Rabbi

CHANUKAH, JOSEPH, AND THE DREIDEL



The 18th-century Hasidic master, Rebbe Nachman of Bratzlav, teaches that the world can be compared to a dreidel, the spinning top we play with on Chanukah. Like a dreidel, the world spins like a rotating wheel, and therefore in Creation everything revolves in cycles. In this way, Nachman continues, all things interchange. Reversals of fortune, fate, and position in the universe abound. Head becomes foot and foot becomes head. The lowly are elevated and the lofty are lowered. Most importantly, when we pray or study or perform *maasim tovim*, that is, acts of lovingkindness, our prayers, thoughts, and deeds are raised on high – even as God's Being constricts itself so that God's Presence can "descend" to dwell among us in the material world. What Nachman seems to be saying with this last thought is that God travels with us into the depths of despair, as well as up to the heights of joy and gratitude.

Every year Chanukah arrives when the days are shortest and the nights are longest – another reversal as the solstice arrives and the seasons change back to longer days and shorter nights. Every year, too, Chanukah coincides with the Joseph saga in the cycle of Torah readings. Perhaps more than any other story in the Bible, the Joseph saga captures the possibilities of a change in destiny. When I think of Joseph, I think, as many do, of the young dreamer whose dreams are stolen from him as he is thrown into a pit and then sold into slavery. Joseph, however, emerges from this pit of imprisonment and servitude to become a great man and a powerful leader in the land of Egypt – the very same land of his misfortune.

One of the lessons of the Joseph saga is that although reversals of fortune are a common part of life, *it is nevertheless possible* to climb out of the pit, to emerge from those periods of stagnation or depression that we all feel from time to time – whether emotional, spiritual, or economic. At this time of year, Joseph, Chanukah, and the spinning dreidel become one. Indeed, this is part of why we light candles on Chanukah, increasing the light each evening, to help us find our way out of the darkness of Joseph's pit during the long nights of winter.

As Chanukah approaches, may we all be guided by the lights of Chanukah and may our spirits be elevated to the highest realm. *Keyn yehi ratzon*. May it be so for us and for our world.

Happy Chanukah!
B'Shalom,

Rabbi Susan

If you have names on the current Mi Shebeirach list that can be removed please contact the office. Likewise, should you need to add a name let us know.

Adult Education - Interfaith Life
Part 1 Sunday Dec 7th 9:30am-11am

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



The CKS Gift Shop
is open each Sunday
10 am - 11 am

Questions?

Susan Waskow 609-333-1113
or Harlene Rosenberg 908-874-8283



Learner's Minyan

Monthly on the third Friday 7:00 PM in conjunction with Shabbat Services

(Dec. 19, Jan. 16, Feb. 20, Mar. 20, April 17, May 15, June 19)

Have you ever wondered why we recite the prayers we do every Shabbat? Do you feel a little at a loss when your fellow congregants are bending and bowing and saying "Amen"? Make your prayer experience more meaningful by joining Rabbi Susan in a learner's minyan service. Study the origins of our prayers, learn how they evolved through time and discuss what they might mean to you. Discover the differences between the Reconstructionist Siddur (prayerbook) and its Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox counterparts. During each service, we will study one or more of the Friday night prayers in detail, progressing through the service during the course of the year.

Hebrew School Happenings



December

7 art Adult Ed
14 Reconstructionism with the Rabbi
21 Mock Shabbat+ Chanukah
28 no class winter break

Our school is flourishing this year under the leadership of amazing teachers, teen

volunteers (pictured here are Ariel

Kramer, Ilana Berger and Marisa Applegate working with third

and fourth

graders who

have been

grouped by

ability and

experience with Hebrew), and adult volunteers(like Meryl

Orlando, who works for an hour every week with our seventh

graders to help guide them through a year of great mitzvah

projects. She

teaches them

that doing

mitzvot does

not end with

their B'nai

mitzvah

projects, but is a

lifelong

endeavor). Our

students are

actively

engaged in

their learning.

Whether

discussing ancient bible stories and giving them new meaning,

learning Hebrew reading, writing and conversation, singing

trope, cooking Jewish foods (with Josh Fischman, pictured

above), creating art projects to decorate the sukkah, shaking

lulav and etrog, learning about the traditional celebrations of

Shabbat, or singing prayers in the sanctuary.



Dori



Cooperative work and physical strength were key this past month as the Kehi-Loft students lifted the heavy cumbersome floor panels section by section and delicately set them back into place. The panels fit like a puzzle and it took the entire loft team working cooperatively to position each section. After each panel was

gently and precisely lowered into its spot, exuberant students stomped on it to push it in the final inch or two. Cheers erupted after each panel was successfully installed. In addition to the work on the floor, the students labored for several weeks staining the sanctuary side of the new walls and then hoisted them into place over the existing balcony railing. Watching the team work of these engaged teen students was inspirational. Their enthusiasm is priceless! More remains to be completed before the new room receives its first official guests in January. The interior balcony wall needs to be stained, carpet needs to be purchased and laid, and the room needs to be furnished. One step at a time...

The Kehi-Loft students led their second teen led service on November 14. Sam Cohen, Gabe Fridkis, Josh Kent, Nicole Shaum, and Harry Waskow led the congregation in prayer at this mid-month Friday night Shabbat service. The students and their families sponsored the oneg also. Thanks to all the students who participated and made this a meaningful evening for all. Please mark your calendars for the next Kehi-Loft led service on January 30th at 7:00. The class looks forward to seeing you there.

During the month the students helped CKS in various small ways, such as moving the Torah table onto the bima for the movie night and cleaning out the attic closet. The students consistently lend their hand when asked.

November's discussions also included an impromptu session led by Lisa Kent about the economy and the pros and cons of bailing out GM. The students talked about how the downturn made them feel (for themselves and others) and what they could do. Ideas included a fundraiser for our congregants assistance fund and/or for the community. The students believe that helping those less fortunate is a way to react to the current economic situation. Thanks, Lisa, for pitching in and leading this discussion on current events.

December's calendar is as follows:

December 3 - Congregant George Cohen will lead a moot court session.

December 10 - George returns for part two of moot court.

December 17 - Congregant Lisa Kent will lead an extended marketing session. Possible Hanukkah party.

December 20. Saturday evening to Sunday morning - shul-in. Volunteers needed to chaperone.

January 7 - Lisa Kent returns to continue the marketing session

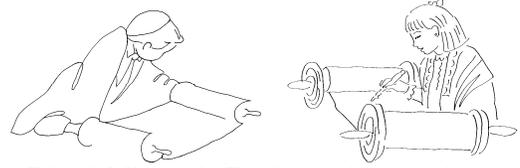
January 14 - first social session with 7th graders.

Rabbi Susan leads a discussion after dinner with the students each week unless otherwise noted. I lead an informal discussion each week with the students to go over the schedule, discuss classroom issues, and update the group on requests or CKS events.

Many thanks to the parents who purchased dinner for the students this month. Thank you Susan Waskow, Tom Berger,

and Sherri Kurtz. Thanks to Sherri for her recent donation to Kehi-Loft.

Shalom,
Karen Fridkis, Kehi-Loft chair



B'nai Mitzvah Project Happenings

The 7th graders are working on various projects for their B'nei Mitzvah's. All of them are great worthwhile projects that help and comfort others. For instance Zoë Gilbard is in the process of collecting food for HomeFront. She is collecting post-Thanksgiving items. Nicole Meisher has already run a successful muffin sale. The proceeds are going to Table to Table, an organization that helps needy families in Israel. She is planning another muffin sale in November. Joanna Javeline is collecting items needed for C.A.P (Companion Animal Placement) She's already made one delivery. Joanna will be putting out fliers out in her neighborhood to collect more items. Katie Roe is arranging for food to be prepared for S.H.I.P., a homeless shelter in Princeton. Emma Cohen and Nancy Weiss will be working at S.A.V.E., an animal shelter in Princeton. They will attend orientations this month. Stephanie Travers is researching a few organizations for collection and donations. She is looking at organizations that collect books and toys for children. Jon Kaufmann is in the process of organizing a food collection he's named "Food for Famished Families". It will help families in using the Montgomery Food Bank. Scott Papsin has prepared packages for and has written letters to soldiers in Iraq. Max Melnick is making arrangements to visit nursing homes to play guitar and play board games with the residents. Dylan Carson has been spending his Thursday afternoons playing piano for the residents of Stonebridge. Both he and the residents are thoroughly enjoying the experience. Ben Weinstein is considering several projects and will be making a decision very soon. Jake Varga will be running a food drive for the South Brunswick Food Pantry in early 2010. This month, he contributed to the writing of this article. Corey Cochran ran a very successful Pedals for Progress bicycle collection campaign. Here are his thoughts regarding the experience..."My feelings before my mitzvah project were intense. I was trying to organize where everything would be set up, who would be helping me, and what time I had to be there at, and yet I was still studying for my actual bar mitzvah like crazy! Then I wondered if people would really come to drop off bikes. To my amazement, the bikes started coming in, and suddenly I was removing pedals, twisting handlebars and getting the bikes ready for shipping with my friends. Finally after the bike collection was done, I felt so relieved and happy that it was over, but also because I had collected 45 bikes and \$480 dollars which would go to good use in Sierra Leone". As you can see our fellow classmates are very involved and working hard in helping many organizations that help the less fortunate. We wish them all the best of luck in running successful B'nai Mitzvah projects.

Jewish Community

Jewish LIFE

Jewish LIFE presents **Violin and Piano Duo Galina Heifetz and Mimi Stern-Wolfe Thursday, December 4 at 7 p.m.** Ms. Heifetz and Ms. Stern-Wolfe will perform Jewish, Israeli and Holocaust music. Please note the **new date for *Talking to God: The Art of Prayer* with Rabbi Ron Isaacs: Wednesday, December 10 at 1 p.m.** *Save the date...Thursday, January 29 at 7 p.m.* for **Rabbi Dr. Laibl Wolf: *Practical Kabbalah Extreme Makeover - Spiritual Edition***. The above programs will be held at the Shimon and Sara Birnbaum JCC in Bridgewater. The fee for each program is \$10/Jewish LIFE Member; \$15/Guest. The Jewish LIFE brochure, detailing all special events and synagogue courses, is posted at www.ssbjcc.org. Call the JCC at 908-725-6994 x201 to register for all Jewish LIFE programs. **Thank you for your continued support of Jewish LIFE!**

Jewish Family Services

1st Annual JFS Parents Educational Series presents:

"No More Meltdowns"

Keynote Speaker: Jed Baker, Ph.D.

- learn techniques to de-escalate out-of-control emotional reactions in children
- understand how to identify triggers to meltdowns and create effective intervention
- learn how to manage your own emotions to help your children manage theirs

Sunday, December 14, 9:30 am -12:30 pm
at SSBJCC
\$15/person

To register contact JFS at 908-725-7799 or
jfsofshw@verizon.net

Congregation Kehilat Shalom

In conjunction with

Jewish LIFE, a Community Adult Education Program,
Presents

Interfaith LIFE: A guided discussion of issues facing individuals, interfaith couples, parents of interfaith couples, Jews by choice, and Jews by birth who grapple with the meaning of Judaism and Jewish observance.

This two-part class may be supplemented with in-home Shabbat dinners hosted by families who celebrate Shabbat on a regular basis. For those who are in an interfaith relationship, it is suggested that couples come together, but the class is open to all adults.

December 7 and March 1, 9:30 – 11:00 AM at CKS
CKS Members -**\$10** for the series, Non-members -**\$18** for the series. Fee includes bagel café at each session.

**Session 1 – Seeing Judaism Through Different Lenses:
Panel Discussion - December 7**

A group of CKS congregants and leaders who come from different paths to share their stories followed by open discussion. Moderated by Rabbi Susan Falk.

Session 2 – Contemporary Judaism – Are We All Jews by Choice? – March 1

As Judaism has moved through the millennia from its roots as a people of ancient Israel, through the Diaspora and into a post-modern secular world, how have we all, in a sense, become Jews by choice? What implications does that have for Jewish practice and the incorporation of "non-Jews" into it, especially in the most liberal branches of Judaism? Led by Rabbi Susan Falk.



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DECEMBER 2008

4 Kislev 5769 - 4 Tevet 5769

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 4 Kislev 7:02AM/4:33PM	2 5 Kislev 7:03AM/4:33PM 7:00 pm - Religion Committee Meeting	3 6 Kislev 7:04AM/4:33PM 6:00 - 8:00 PM - Kehiloft / Hebrew High School	4 7 Kislev 7:05AM/4:33PM	5 8 Kislev 7:06AM/4:33PM 7:00 PM - Family Shabbat Services	6 9 Kislev 7:07AM/4:33PM Vayetze Gen 30.1 - 30.43 Hosea 12.13-14.7
7 10 Kislev 7:08AM/4:33PM 9 - Noon - Hebrew School 9 - 11:30 AM - Interfaith Life, Part 1	8 11 Kislev 7:09AM/4:33PM	9 12 Kislev 7:10AM/4:33PM 7:30 PM - Board Meeting	10 13 Kislev 7:11AM/4:33PM 6:00 - 8:00 PM - Kehiloft / Hebrew High School	1 14 Kislev 7:11AM/4:33P M	12 15 Kislev 7:12AM/4:33PM 7:45 PM - Shabbat Services	13 16 Kislev 7:13AM/4:33PM Vayishlah: Gen. 34.1 - 35.11 Hosea 11.7-12.12
14 17 Kislev 7:14AM/4:34PM 9 - Noon - Hebrew School	1 18 Kislev 7:14AM/4:34P M	16 19 Kislev 7:15AM/4:34PM	17 20 Kislev 7:16AM/4:35PM 6:00 - 8:00 PM - Kehiloft / Hebrew High School	1 21 Kislev 7:16AM/4:35P M	19 22 Kislev 7:17AM/4:35PM 7:00 PM - Shabbat Learner's Minyan Service	20 23 Kislev 7:17AM/4:36PM Vayeshev: Gen. 38.1 - 39.6 Amos 2.6-3.8. Kehiloft Shul - In
21 24 Kislev 7:18AM/4:36PM EREV HANUKKAH 9 - Noon - Hebrew School 5:00 PM - Community Hanukkah Celebration	2 25 Kislev 7:18AM/4:37P M HANUKKAH I Num. 7.1-17.	23 26 Kislev 7:19AM/4:37PM HANUKKAH II Num. 7.18-29.	24 27 Kislev 7:19AM/4:38PM HANUKKAH III Num. 7.24-35.	2 28 Kislev 7:20AM/4:39P M HANUKKAH IV Num. 7.30-41.	26 29 Kislev 7:20AM/4:39PM HANUKKAH V Num. 7.36-47. 6:00 PM Chinese Dinner 7:45 PM Shabbat Services	27 30 Kislev 7:20AM/4:40PM ROSH HODESH - HANUKKAH VI Miketz: Gen. 42.1 - 43.10 Num. 7.42-47. Zechariah 2.14-4.7. Num. 28.9-15. Isaiah 66.1-24.
28 1 Tevet 7:20AM/4:41PM ROSH HODESH - HANUKKAH VII Num. 7.48-53. Rosh Hodesh Num. 28.1-15. NO HEBREW SCHOOL	2 2 Tevet 7:21AM/4:41P M HANUKKAH VIII Num. 7.54-8.4.	30 3 Tevet 7:21AM/4:42PM	31 4 Tevet 7:21AM/4:43PM			

Getting to Know----->Matt Rosenthal

Name: Matthew Ian Rosenthal

Occupation: Municipal Bond Evaluation Group at Bloomberg L.P.

Family: Married 15yr to Amy Rosenthal, Communications Web Technology and Production Director, at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and webmaster for CKS website. Son Jason, 6th grader at Montgomery Lower Middle School. Jason, plays trumpet and participates in recreation Flag Football and Basketball and recently went to Space camp and tried Hang Gliding. Daughter, Allison, 3rd grader at Village Elementary School. Allison plays the piano and participates year round in dance and recently attended an acting class at McCarter Theater called Journey into Imagination.

Community activities: Current President of CKS. Assistant coaches Jason's sports teams and has been a Dancing Dad for three years at Allison's dance recitals. Sets up the CKS Sunday morning cafe.

Hobbies: Collecting comic books (over 8,000 books, statues and action figures), Wine making (since 1999) and Outdoor Barbequing

Motto: Win if you can, lose if you must, but always be willing to play the game.

Bad habit: Habitual knuckle cracker

Favorite Movies: Star Wars, Meatballs, Sneakers

Favortie TV shows: Any NFL game I can watch on a Sunday or Monday

Favorite Music: 70' & 80's including Billy Joel, Styx, REO Speedwagon, Boston, Asia, Journey, Steve Miller, Tom Petty and Zebra. Also enjoys A Cappella music including Ball in the House, Blue Jupiter, Cadence, Da Vinci's Notebook, House Jacks and M-Pact

Favorite Books: A Game of Thrones, Ender's Game and almost everything written by Neil Gaiman.

Favorite Foods: Baby Back Ribs, "Lemonade" chicken (beer can style), Fondue, Aunt Sylvia's Meatballs

Best Childhood Memory: Going to Disney world in 1976

If I had more time: I would relax and read my backlog of books. I have a lot of old friends to catch up with and many new friends to meet.

Whom to contact for...	
Adult Education	Meryl Bisberg- 908-874-8970
Beautification	Rhonda Wynston-Krafft 908-864-0046 Audrey Starkman 908-904-0432
Billing/Payments	Robin Bengochea- 908-359-0420 ext. 1 admin@ksnj.org
B'nai Mitzvah (helpers, celebrations)	Meryl Orlando- 732-329-8945 Shelley Nord- 908-874-8464
Board of Trustees 2 nd Tues.	Matt Rosenthal- 908-874-0787
Building/Grounds/Décor	Andy Sokel- 609-466-8749 andsok@aol.com
Building Usage/Access	Robin Bengochea- 908-359-0420 ext. 1 admin@ksnj.org
By-Laws	Victor Elgort- 908-874-8535 vselgort@nmmlaw.com
Congregants' Assistance Fund	Rabbi Falk- 908-359-0420 ext. 2 rabbi@ksnj.org
Education 1 st Wed.	Lisa Kent- 908-578-2972 lisa@luminationsgroup.com
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Hospitality (Kiddush and Oneg)	Natalie London- 908-874-6952
Kindercapers	Susan Schatzman, director- 908-359-0160 Debbie Lampf-908-466-4165 Peggy Fass- 609-466-0146
Life Cycle (Caring for each other)	Sheryl Rosenberg- 908-253-7049 swellcourt@verizon.net
Long Range Planning	Joseph Weiss josephhobartweiss@verizon.net
Membership	Leslie Kowalski 609-275-4644
Men's Club	Eric Applegate 908-904-0457
Pastoral Emergencies	Rabbi Susan Falk 908-359-0420
Personnel	Dave Campeas 908-904-4917
Publicity	Janis Todd- 609-799-8384
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