

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 **March 2010** Adar – Nissan 5770

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
Shari Rothstein
principal@ksnj.org
Lay Cantor
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Bulletin from the Board

The role I've taken within the synagogue for the last few years has been a great honor for me. I'm honored by both the trust you've placed in me, and by the group of people within whom I've been included. This is a role I fell into by accident and circumstance and it is a role that has not come easily to me. I find it much more comfortable to blend into the background, pay my dues, drop my kids off for Hebrew school and show up for services on the high holidays and generally try to be inconspicuous and anonymous. (for those of you asking "how is today any different, Mark?" stay with me, I'm doing my best here.) I grew up going to a temple where that anonymity was the rule not the exception.



But Andrea and I choose to be members of a synagogue where that anonymity is not easily found. We are a community that is small enough and lacking in sufficient resources for any of us to slack off too much. That aspect of our community is compelling enough to get even me involved, and has put me in a position to have the honor of sitting at the table with some people whom I respect a great deal. Many of them speak of their role here in terms of "giving back," but that has not been a characterization that resonates with me. Personally, I have been motivated more by a sense of taking ownership.

This is a place that we have the ability to influence to meet our needs, but which also requires our sweat and equity to survive. It really does depend on each of us for its survival. What does it mean to take ownership? There is a discernable cause-and-effect relationship between what we do and the state and basic nature of our community. The way we want the things to be and the way they actually are here really is determined by our vision, our commitment, and our actions.

To me, I view my role here most palpably in term of building the Jewish community within which I want my children to grow up. I recognize that I must depend foremost on myself to create that. And I am not an anonymous stockholder in this community, but rather a full partner with a real ability to influence what this community creates and what I can take from it.

Mark Goldhammer

"An Enchanted Evening" CKS Auction and Casino Night

CKS' first Annual Spring Event will be held on **Saturday, March 13th from 7:30 - 11pm**. This year's Auction and Casino party, An Enchanted Evening, will be a wonderful congregation-wide social event with something for everyone. Great international Hors d'Oeuvres and desserts, wine and Kehili-tinis, music and entertainment, door prizes, auction, casino games, Mystery Wine Station, Flat Screen TV raffle, and loads of fun!

If you would like to donate an item for the auction, please contact Lisa Roe at lisandmike@aol.com or Carrie Fischman at ladyfisch@comcast.net. If you would like to donate wine for the Mystery Wine Station, please contact Debbie Gartenberg at dgart1518@gmail.com. Don't forget to sell your raffle tickets (contact Shari Burack-Murphy at slb3458@msn.com for more). Most of all, plan on joining us on March 13th for a great evening! Any questions, please contact Debbie Tesser at dbtesser@embarqmail.com.

CKS Donations

CKS gratefully acknowledges the generosity of our members and friends.

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Marc and Harlene Rosenberg
In Memory of Abram Milich
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In Memory of Seymour Kalison

Enchanted Evening Donations

Jim Ohls
Michael and Norma Arons

Special Shabbat Services at CKS

The Ritual Committee invites the entire CKS community to two upcoming special Shabbat Services.

Our CKS Community will celebrate **Shabbat Across America** on **Friday, March 5th** with a potluck dinner held in the CKS sanctuary starting at **6 pm**. Shabbat Across America is a national event conceived and organized in 1997 by the National Jewish Outreach Program (NJOP). Led by Rabbi Susan Falk, we will celebrate the weekly day of rest with an interactive Friday night service and a Potluck Shabbat dinner with many rituals, prayers and customs explained. Please contact Robin Bengochea in the office to RSVP by February 26 for this very festive event.

Yom HaShoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day, is April 11th. Along with members of the entire Jewish Community, we at CKS will also remember the victims, survivors and heroes of the Holocaust. The Ritual Committee is exploring ways we can commemorate Yom HaShoah and we welcome your suggestions as we plan for a special Shabbat service to be held on April 9th.

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UNDERSTANDING AND ENJOYING THE PASSOVER HOLIDAY & SEDER

Sunday March 14 9:30 am
CKS Sanctuary No charge

Hosting a Seder for the first time this year? Going to a Seder? Just want to understand more about the Seder so you can enjoy it more and participate more?

Passover is the most observed holiday by Jews worldwide. Many of us at CKS will attend a Seder this year either as a host or invitee – as veterans of decades of Seders or maybe as first time guests. This Adult Education session is being presented in response to requests made during last year's interfaith discussion. It will be of special interest to interfaith families and those newer to Judaism and a good refresher for those wanting to enrich their experience and knowledge of Judaism.

So, come in on Sunday morning, get a bagel from the café (while you can still eat "hametz"), and get together for about an hour to share experiences and learn about:

- The Passover story and origins of the Seder.
- Basics of the Seder from the first glass of wine to "Next Year in Jerusalem!"
- Elijah's cup
- Honoring old and creating new traditions
- Tips for hosting and being a Seder invitee
- Sample Haggadas, readings, seder plates and ceremonial items to browse, including haggadot for children and from Israel

The more varied the attendees in terms of Seder knowledge and experience the livelier our discussion will be. Please let the office know (robin@ksnj.org) if you are planning to attend, but also feel free to just show up. Adult Ed committee looks forward to seeing you on the 14th!

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Message from the Rabbi



Judaism often reminds me of the story of the therapist who says to the client, "So, what you're telling me is that you're indecisive." And the client replies: "Well, sometimes yes and sometimes no." When someone asks me "What does Judaism say about X?" my usual response is: "Which Judaism?

First-century Rabbinic, mystical, modern Orthodox, French Sephardic, American Reform? Even with these refinements, most questions are impossible to answer without at least a 10 minute lecture filled with a lot of disclaimers. You have to be patient and a good listener to be Jewish!

Our most beloved holiday of Pesach, or Passover gives us a prime example of the inherent contradictions found in much of Jewish tradition. Matzah! Matzah, the flat, unleavened bread that we are commanded to eat throughout the eight-day festival of Passover, is known as both the "bread of affliction" (*lechem oni*) and the "bread of freedom" (*lechem herut*). How can both be true?

Toward the beginning of the Passover Seder, we hold up the matzah and say:

This is the bread of affliction that our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt. Let all who are hungry come in and eat. Let all who are needy come and make Passover. Now we are here, next year may we be in the Land of Israel. Now we are slaves, next year may we be free.

You may ask, isn't the common wisdom that we ate matzah *after* we were free? Because we left Egypt in such haste that our bread had no time to rise? Well, yes... and no.

In the Talmud, the Ancient Rabbis explained the contradiction this way: *Lechem oni* is **lechem she-onim alav harbei devarim**, "the bread about which we say many words." The Rabbis were great punsters, and here they are exchanging the word *oni* (afflicted) for the word *onim* (answer or say). In other words, for the Rabbis, matzah is used during the Passover Seder to stimulate discussion about the enduring and overarching theme of the holiday, namely, the ongoing struggle from slavery to freedom. In this way, matzah becomes both the bread of affliction and the bread of freedom.

Rav Abraham Isaac Kook, the first Chief Rabbi of the Land of Israel (then Palestine), said this about the matzah dilemma: "There is suffering in freedom." That is, when we are free we have to take responsibility for our actions and confront things that are not in our control. Freedom isn't always easy.

Thus, eating unleavened bread or matzah – and of course *not* eating *chametz* (foods with leaven) – is a symbol to remind us that we must raise ourselves up

THE MATZAH DILEMMA

as free beings. We must find ways to elevate our own existence, to serve a higher purpose in our lives. There are many ways to do this from donating food to the local soup kitchen to speaking out against injustice or intolerance; from enhancing your own personal growth and spirituality by taking classes or learning meditation to serving on the Board or a committee right here at CKS.

Judaism teaches that we must pursue justice. It also tells us: "Do not separate yourself from the community." Whatever you choose to do, remember: Passover, the Festival of Matzah, arrives with the full moon on the evening of March 29th. Don't forget to come to our second annual Shabbat Across America celebration on March 5th, our Enchanted Evening fundraiser on March 13th, and our special adult education session on understanding and enjoying the Passover Seder on March 14th.

Chag Sameach!

Rabbi Susan



Tree of Life

Purchase a leaf for \$54 to celebrate a **simcha!** Each leaf includes three lines of engraving.

Contact CKS Office
908-359-0420



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is open each Sunday
10 am - 11 am

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

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Now in its 16th 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





SPOTLIGHT ON.... Morah Tracey's K-1 Class

Morah Tracey's class has been busy learning to recognize their Alef-Bet. With each letter come new words for their expanding Hebrew vocabulary. Sometimes they have field trips around the building to search for the vocabulary words. They get so excited when they hear a word they know used in a prayer or in music. They seem to see Hebrew letters everywhere! The students have been learning about various *mitzvot* and *tikkun olam* (repairing the world) is a big part of the curriculum. They made their very own tzedakah boxes and have been diligently bringing in the monies they collected. In March they will be learning about symbols Passover in fun and different way. They are looking forward to the seders.

PURIM HIGHLIGHTS

At the very end of February, the entire school dressed in costume (teachers included) and enjoyed a Purim Shpiel performed by our very own members! It was a great way to hear the Story of Purim. After school many enjoyed the annual Purim Carnival.

CAMP JRF

Also at the end of February we had Rabbi Jeff Eisenstat join us to tell us all about Camp JRF in Sterling, PA. Camp JRF will fill your child's summer with fun, friendships, and Jewish living. Campers make lasting friendships, experience a safe and fun summer, explore Jewish tradition, forge their own Jewish identity, and participate in creating a Jewish culture in which our values are lived each day. If you missed the presentation or for more information go to www.campjrf.org

5th & 6th GRADE FAMILIES

Don't let your child miss out on a fabulous 5th & 6th grade retreat with other Reconstructionist students from the East Coast. The retreat will be held at Camp JRF on April 20th – May 2nd. Packets were sent home – forms are due by April 1st. We hope to have most of our students attending!

PASSOVER

This month we will celebrate Passover with Model Seders. We will have 2 seders on Sunday March 21st: one seder for the younger students and one for the older students. If you are available to help, please email Shari at principal@ksnj.org. To add to our celebration, we will be making MATZAH with Morah Carrie on March 14th! See below for the recipe.

Shari Rothstein



MATZAH RECIPE

2 cups flour
1 cup water

Mix flour and water to form a dough. Knead dough by hand and roll out dough to 1/8 inch thick. Place on baking sheet and prick with a fork all over. Bake in 500 degree oven for approximately 5 minutes. From the time the water and flour come in contact until the matzah goes into the oven can be no longer than 18 minutes.

Kehi-Loft

The frigid weather hasn't put a damper on Kehi-Loft! On January 29th, we had the honor of leading another service and presenting the D'var Torah. Before the service, we brainstormed ideas and created a skit about the story of Moses and the Jewish people's escape from Egypt as well as their first years in the desert. Leading the service were Scott Weitze, Gabe Fridkis, Emily Gartenberg, Zoe Gilbard, and Jeremy Bilotti. Everyone performed the skit like true actors, with Gabe playing G-d, Jeremy playing Moses, Emily playing Miriam, and narrating the entire skit. After the skit, we led the congregation in a discussion by posing some questions about the morality involved during the Jewish exodus from Egypt. For example, why did G-d choose to let the Jews live while letting the Sea of Reeds drown Pharaoh's army? Thanks to the congregants who came and to all of the Kehi-Loft members who led a thought-provoking service! The next Kehi-Loft led service will be on Friday, March 12th so mark your calendars!

Steve Weinstein also came to two of our meetings to discuss personal finances with us. As we enjoyed pizza and soda, we discussed ways to earn and to use money; we focused on how to invest money. Steve proposed that Kehi-Loft participate in a project where we purchase stocks and follow their progress in order to become more finance savvy. For the spring, we will start this stock project with fake money, but hopefully, by next year we will be able to buy real stocks (and maybe make some money ☺)! Thank you so much, Steve and we hope you will continue to help us!

On February 21st, we held another social night for the seventh graders. There were massive amounts of great (unhealthy) food to accompany the fun time we had as we played ice-breaker games supplied by Ilana Berger and listened to music supplied by Lindsey Rosenthal. Thanks to everyone who brought food and drinks and thanks to the seventh graders for making the night that much better! The seventh graders are the future of Kehi-Loft and we hope that they enjoyed that night as much as we did. We are excited to have you join Kehi-Loft next year and to see what new and interesting ideas you bring with you! Listen for the next seventh grade social, everyone!

The Purim carnival is on February 28th and many of the Kehi-Loft members will be helping with different, fun activities.

Keep your eyes peeled for more Kehi-Loft activities!

March's schedule:

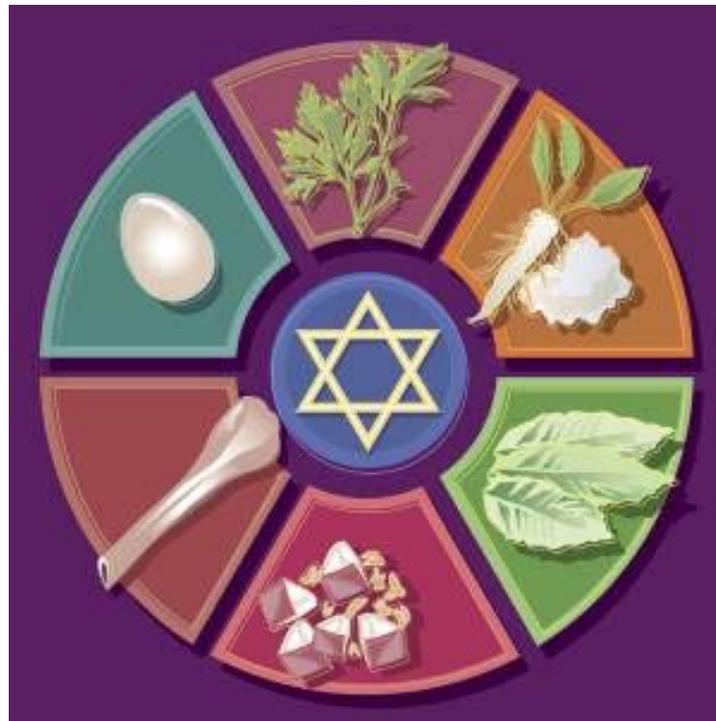
Wednesday, March 3 - Rabbi leads a session preparing for the next Kehi-Loft service

Friday, March 12 - Kehi-Loft leads Shabbat services

Wednesday, March 17 - Lisa Kent will lead a discussion about the economy

Sunday, March 21 - Social evening

Shalom, *Ariel Kramer*



CKS Youth – Tom Sawyer Theater Event

Join us for a fun afternoon!

WHEN: SUNDAY, MARCH 21, 2010, 2:00PM

WHO : CKS Youth and their families

WHERE: Kelsey Theatre, 1200 Old Trenton Rd.,
West Windsor, NJ 08550

COST: \$16/14/12 per person (adults, seniors,
children) + \$1 transaction fee, less 15% for our
group rate

R.S.V.P. You must call the Kelsey Theatre by
26 February 2010, by 1pm and purchase
your tickets in advance and provide my
name, Karyn Waller, to ensure that you
receive the discount and that we are all
sitting together. The Kelsey Theatre phone
number is 609-570-3333. Please let me know as
well that you will be attending by calling me at
732.216.8106 or nyrak2003@yahoo.com

DIRECTIONS:

http://www.mccc.edu/welcome_directions_wvcampus.shtml

Sharon Underberg in Fiddler on the Roof

Sharon Underberg will be appearing in Fiddler on
the Roof at Kelsey Theater on the weekends of
February 26-28 and March 5-7. If you would like to
see the play, tickets are available at the Kelsey
website -

<http://www.kelseyatmccc.org/fiddlerontheroof.shtml>

and are apparently going fast. Of course, don't miss
the Purim Carnival or Shabbat Across America
scheduled for those weekends at CKS.

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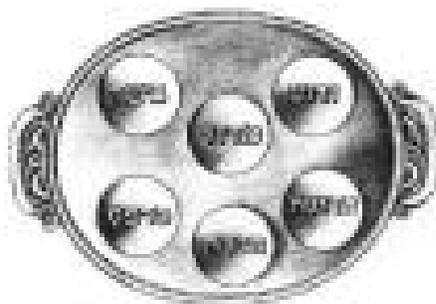
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MARCH 2010



15 Adar 5770 - 16 Nisan 5770

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 SHUSHAN PURIM	2	3 6-8 PM Kehi-loft	4	5 6:00 PM Shabbat Across America Pot Luck Dinner and Family Shabbat Service	6 Kee Tissa: Exo. 31.18 - 33.11 Shabbat Parah Num. 19.1-22. Ezekiel 36.16-38.
7 9 - Noon - Hebrew School	8	9 7:30 pm - Board Meeting	10	11	12 7:45 PM - Shabbat Service led by Kehi- loft	13 Vayakhel: Exo. 36.8 - 37-9 Pekude: Exo. 39.22 - 40.38 Shabbat Hahodesh Exo. 12.1-20. Ezekiel 45.16-46.18. 7:30 PM - "An Enchanted Evening" CKS Auction and Casino Party
14 9 - Noon - Hebrew School 9:30 AM - Adult Education Understanding the Passover Seder	15	16 ROSH HODESH Num. 28.1-15. 7:30 PM - Membership Committee Meeting	17	18	19 7:00 PM Shabbat Service and Learner's Minyan	20 Vayikra: Levit. 1.1-3:5. Isaiah 44:1-23. 9:30 AM - Bar Mitzvah Justin Corsan
21 9 - Noon - Hebrew School 6-8 PM - Kehi-loft social evening	22	23 7:00 PM Religion Committee Meeting	24	25	26 7:45 PM - Shabbat Service	27 Tzav: Levit. 6.1-7:10. Shabbat Hagadol Malachi 3,4-24.
28	29 EREV PASSOVER	30 PASSOVER I Exo. 12.21-51; Num. 28.16-25. Joshua 3.5-7, 5.2-6.1, 6.27.	31 PASSOVER II Lev. 22.26-23.44; Num. 28.16-25. II Kings 23.1-9, 21-25.			

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
Board of Trustees 2 nd Tues.	Matt Rosenthal- 908-874-0787
Building/Grounds/Décor	Andy Sokel- 609-466-8749 andsok@aol.com
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By-Laws	Victor Elgort- 908-874-8535 vselgort@nmmlaw.com
Congregants' Assistance Fund	Rabbi Falk- 908-359-0420 ext. 3 rabbi@ksnj.org
Education 1 st Wed.	Andrea Lass 609-799-3536 Judy Weitze 609-466-9214
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Fundraising	Lisa Kent 908-578-2972
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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
Pastoral Emergencies	Rabbi Susan Falk 908-359-0420
Personnel	Dave Campeas 908-904-4917 Jeff Barth
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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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March 2010

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