

Congregation
Kehilat Shalom NEWS

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A Welcoming Jewish Reconstructionist Community

Newsletter of the Congregation Kehilat Shalom of Belle Mead, NJ **April 2015** Nisan – Iyyar 5775

Congregation
 Kehilat Shalom

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Bulletin from the Board- Amy Rosenthal



Welcome back, Spring! The snow has (hopefully) all melted, the bulbs are peeking through, and solar panel monitoring charts are headed upwards. No more shoveling, no more icy roads, and the promise of warm days is all around. For me, this spring also brings the fabulous CKS annual gala, Cadbury mini eggs, and the end of the crazy college application process.

It's been a long year for high school seniors and their families, with enough college tours, essays, score reports, FAFSAs and PROFILE forms to make one's head spin. My house has finally settled as we wait patiently for those cruel April Fools' Day decisions. Best of luck to the Kehiloft seniors and everyone

who is hopeful this season.

It just wouldn't be spring without the CKS gala. *Treasures of the Blue Grotto* turned our sanctuary into a treasure cave and it was a fun and successful event! There were so many great contributions from our fantastic community, ranging from auction items to decorations to culinary treats. Thanks to everyone that supported and/or attended the event, which raised over \$13,500 for the synagogue. Special thanks to our fearless leader Debbie Gartenberg, who always keeps us all on track and is our rock. If you've never joined us for this event, please consider it next year. It's always a good time where you can at least find a crazy auction caller and smiling checkout girls.

Yes, I know that those Cadbury eggs were created for another holiday, but they are treasured like diamonds at my house. They arrive just in time for my birthday (and my girl's). Remember, Judaism values eggs as well. They play a key role in our Passover Seders, simultaneously representing both mourning and strength. I love coming together on Passover. I was that kid who decorated placecards for everyone who joined us on the first night. My dad would make me lead services, mostly because he didn't know what to do himself. My Uncle Ted was the first one to start kvetching "Can we eat yet?" until we finally got to enjoy Grandma Ruth's matzoh ball soup and mom's peach kugel. On the second night, we wolfed down jelly rings, fruit slices, and Aunt Sylvia's specialties like chopped liver and meatballs. I love that my homemade Passover Haggadah has been reprinted many times over the past 20+ years, shared amongst not quite hundreds of family and friends.

To me, spring means valued traditions, whether it's family gatherings or community events. This is the start of a new time at my house, too, as the boy gets ready to head off to college, wherever that might be. To my boy, and to all of you: Hold on to your memories, have amazing new adventures, and soak up that sun.

Amy Rosenthal, Trustee

SAVE THE DATE!

CKS' Comedy Night is coming!
 Saturday, April 25 7:30 - 9:30pm
 \$20 in advance per person; \$25 at the door

CKS Donations

CKS gratefully acknowledges the generosity of our members and friends.

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Kehiloft Donation

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Remember CKS when you donate:

Dues only cover a portion of the CKS operating budget. Consider making a donation in memory of a loved one, honoring an accomplishment, or recognizing a friend or colleague.

BIMA BEAUTIFICATION

Since joining CKS four years ago, we have enjoyed the many services, ceremonies, and activities in the sanctuary. But I must confess that many times I would find myself gazing at the bimah, dreaming up ways to unify the space with the rest of the sanctuary. I mentioned the idea out loud – first to Rabbi Susan, then to our Board President Susan Waskow, and then to Debbie Gartenberg. Their enthusiasm was inspiring, and so over a few days in February and early March, we were able to corral a handful of volunteers to give the bimah a make-over. The core element of the project – repainting the back wall – turned out to be rather ambitious, and we could not have done it without the help of Meryl Bisberg, Vitaly Brukman, Debbie Gartenberg, Jim Ohls, Jason Rosenthal, Matt Rosenthal, and Susan Waskow. Many thanks to them for their hard work, wall scrubbing, ladder climbing, furniture moving, and painting! We hope you enjoy the results.

-Mara Isaacs, Seth Mellman and Renee Mellman

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Committees

The Treasures of the Blue Grotto – Success!

After so many weeks of e-blasts with pleas for help in securing auction item donations and ads, as well as invitations to attend the event and purchase raffle tickets, we just want you to know that our congregation pulled through! *Treasures of the Blue Grotto* was a terrific social as well as financial success with total income reaching \$13,500!

Many, many thanks to everyone who made contributions to the event, donated items/services for the auctions, sold ads, attended the party, purchased raffle tickets, and so much more. Without everyone contributing in some way (or many ways), we could not have had such a terrific night and successful event!

We would like to sum up the evening with a note from Meryl and Lou Orlando who attended the event:

Dear CKS Members,

Last Saturday night we attended the "Treasures of the Blue Grotto" fundraiser. What a fantastic night!!! From the creative and perfect theme-related decorations to the delicious food to the incredible array of great auction items to the great music and...my personal favorite - the crowd who danced every dance with contagious joy - the evening was pure fun!!! Our thanks to all the hard-working committee members who spent countless hours making last night the special night that it was. We've been going every year and it just keeps getting better! Can't wait until next year's event!!!

Meryl and Lou Orlando

Thank you, Congregation, for your support.

From the *Treasures of the Blue Grotto* Planning Committee



Jill Fraticelli, Barbara Berger, Bonnie Kramer, Vitaly Brukman (with help from daughter Jennifer Brukman), Debbie Gartenberg, Christine Witt, Monica Schneider, Bill Ries (with help from son Ethan Ries), Jeff Barth, and Juliet Strauss. Not pictured are Natalie London, Sue Forster, Amy Rosenthal, and Karen Cohen.

CKS Book Club

Do you love reading new books and sharing what you discover with others? We welcome you to join the CKS Book Group.

Upcoming meetings are scheduled as follows:

Thursday April 23- *The Warmth of Other Suns* by Isabel Wilkerson

Meetings will be held at Gayle Holtzman's house at 16 Spruce Lane in Belle Mead.

Please contact Gayle with any questions or if you are planning to attend. Hope to see you there!



Message from the Rabbi



Passover is a story with a guaranteed happy ending. Though we recite that 'we were slaves in Egypt', and dwell on that oppression for the duration of the seder, even the smallest child at the table knows what the ending will be – liberation, longing fulfilled, and a journey to a promised land.

This is our collective story. But a story of a people neglects the narratives of individuals: how does each of us feel as we leave our own 'Egypt' – a place that has grown comfortable, despite its narrowness – as we venture into a space vast and unfamiliar? In Marge Piercy's poem *Maggid*, named after the core of the Passover seder, Piercy entwines the story of collective Jewish redemption with the gut-fear of the individual émigré, and speaks of the courage necessary to leave behind the known:

The courage to abandon the graves dug into the hill,
the small bones of children and the brittle bones
of the old whose marrow hunger had stolen;
the courage to desert the tree planted and only
begun to bear; the riverside where promises were
shaped; the street where their empty pots were broken.
The courage to leave the place whose language you learned
as early as your own, whose customs however dan-
gerous or demeaning, bind you like a halter
you have learned to pull inside, to move your load;
the land fertile with the blood spilled on it;
the roads mapped and annotated for survival.
The courage to walk out of the pain that is known
into the pain that cannot be imagined,
mapless, walking into the wilderness, going
barefoot with a canteen into the desert;
stuffed in the stinking hold of a rotting ship
sailing off the map into dragons' mouths,
Cathay, India, Siberia, goldeneh medina
leaving bodies by the way like abandoned treasure.
So they walked out of Egypt. So they bribed their way
out of Russia under loads of straw; so they steamed
out of the bloody smoking charnelhouse of Europe
on overloaded freighters forbidden all ports—
out of pain into death or freedom or a different
painful dignity, into squalor and politics.
We Jews are all born of wanderers, with shoes
under our pillows and a memory of blood that is ours
raining down. We honor only those Jews who changed
tonight, those who chose the desert over bondage,
who walked into the strange and became strangers
and gave birth to children who could look down
on them standing on their shoulders for having
been slaves. We honor those who let go of every-
thing but freedom, who ran, who revolted, who fought,
who became other by saving themselves.

As we enter this season of our liberation, may we each find the courage to become other.

Ora Nitkin-Kaner
Sabbatical/Student Rabbi



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Contact CKS Office
908-359-0420



Now in its 21st 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



The CKS Gift Shop
is open each Sunday
11 am - 12 noon

Questions?
Susan Waskow 609-333-1113
or Iris Rubinstein 609-947-2633





CELEBRATIONS AND COMMEMORATIONS

April is chock full of Jewish holidays, both those where we rejoice, and those that are of a different nature. Each of the days is significant in our lives, and we observe each in a unique way.

We begin the month celebrating **Pesach, Hag HaMatzot**, the **Festival of Unleavened Bread**. The name reflects the centrality of Matzah in the celebration. Passover is also called *Z'man Cheiruteinu*, a **Season of our Freedom**, and marks the freedom from Egyptian bondage by the ancient Israelites. The **seder** is filled with symbolism. Each part of the Seder service is interpreted on many levels and by participating in a seder, each of us symbolically relives the exodus from Egypt.

Not quite one week later, on the 27th day of Nisan (Thursday, April 16) we will mark the occasion of **Yom HaShoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day**. On that day, we will pay respect and mourn the loss of six million Jews.

Soon after Yom HaShoah, **Yom HaZikaron** (Wednesday, April 22), *Israel's Memorial Day* arrives. On this day we commemorate the heroes who lost their lives fighting to establish a safe homeland for the Jewish people. Israelis visit Mt. Herzl (Israel's equivalent to Arlington National Cemetery) and have a moment of silence and reflection.

A day later, we celebrate **Yom HaAtzma'ut**, which is *Israel's Independence Day* (Thursday, April 23). We rejoice in the fact that a tiny minority of people, who survived centuries of persecution, have their independence and their own homeland. For us, Jews who are living in the Diaspora, these April days give us a chance to think about the importance of Israel in our lives.

During the month of April, with these days of emotional highs and lows, let us not forget where we came from. Four separate holidays – each having significance in our history and each celebrated or remembered by Jews all over the world. It's important that we, as American Jews, and the students in our Religious School learn about them and understand their significance.

To everyone in our CKS family~~
I wish you all a "Zeesen" and Happy Passover!



IT'S NOT TOO EARLY TO START THINKING ABOUT GRADUATION!

If you wish to make a contribution to honor individual graduates or the entire graduating class, please fill out the accompanying form. A card will be sent out to the individual graduate.

Thank you for your support!!

RELIGIOUS SCHOOL REMINDERS:

Sunday, April 5 - Sunday, April 12: NO RELIGIOUS SCHOOL, *Spring Break and Passover*

Sunday, April 19: Religious school resumes; Yom HaShoah commemoration

Sunday, April 26: Regular school session; Yom Ha' Atzma'ut

Friday, May 1: Shabbat Mishpachah with ICE CREAM oneg; 7:00pm

ATTENTION PARENTS OF K-3

If you have a child that is between the ages of 4 and 8 years old who is not yet registered in our Religious School, consider joining our religious school program. It offers activities that develops a child's Jewish identity and stimulates their Jewish involvement through music, art, cooking, and storytelling.

We make the most of the hours that your child is with us. The children participate in extensive enrichment programs throughout the year as they get acquainted and become part of our religious school life. Many exciting events are already planned for the upcoming 2015-2016 school year.

Please call the Religious School office (908-359-0420 x2) if you would like an application to enroll your child in our school.

Kehiloft, the next step in your Jewish journey

Hey All!



So far this year, Kehiloft has been involved in lots of new exciting activities and events!

Last month we celebrated Purim with our annual Purim Shpiel, which was tons of fun and went really well! Our theme this year was pirates and I especially enjoyed playing Queen Esther.

(and not just because I could get off without doing a Pirate accent, which I can't do very well). We had fun rehearsing and then performing for the congregation.

A few weeks ago Kehiloft met with Rabbi Ora who led a yoga session for all of us. We had a great time trying our best to do the challenging yoga poses she gave us and keeping our balance. This was the first time we have done something like this and it was a big success! Rabbi Ora also led us in a round of meditation and chanting which added a level of quiet and peace to our day. We chanted in Hebrew repeating the one word "Hineni" over and over again.

On April 1st, we are excited to welcome the seventh grade to visit Kehiloft for a session with us! We look forward to getting to know them, playing games, talking, and just having a great time in general.

This year we have decided to raise money to build a gaga pit for the synagogue out back by our outdoor sanctuary. We are looking forward to building this for CKS to create a fun environment for everyone to play gaga in after religious school or at the picnics or barbecue!

Have a good Pesach!

Tess Kowalski

PLEASE NOTE SCHEDULE CHANGES

APRIL

Wednesday, April 1 - **NEW!** Tentative 7th grade student orientation

Pesach break - April 5-12. Possible week to build gaga court

Wednesday, April 15 - Shabbat service prep

Friday, April 24 - Shabbat service #3

MAY

Wednesday, May 6 - Tentative - Rabbi Susan leads discussion

Sunday, May 10 - 11:00 - 12:00 **NEW!** Talent Show during Religious School

Wednesday, May 13 - Regular session

Sunday, May 17 - 9:00 - 12:00 Car Wash

Sunday, May 17 - Siyyum/Closing ceremonies for Religious School

Got Talent? Sure You Do!

Calling all singers, dancers, actors, jugglers, comedians, musicians, fencers, cart wheelers, pogo stick jumpers & other talented congregants

Come one, come all to the
rescheduled
Kehiloft Talent Show

Sunday morning
11:00 – 12:00 during Religious School
May 10

Sign up here:

<http://goo.gl/forms/arqBPkkG24>

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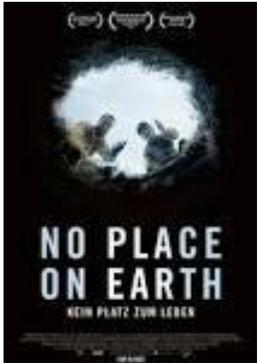
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Jewish LIFE

Upcoming Special Events



The Jewish Film Series presents *No Place on Earth*, **Monday, April 13 at 7pm**. This film tells the harrowing story of a group of families during World War II who seek asylum underground to evade being caught by pursuing Nazis. The film will be followed by a discussion led by Chris Nicola, the explorer who discovered the caves featured in the film. Hosted by the Shimon and Sara Birnbaum JCC, Bridgewater. (Fee: \$5/person.)

The Jewish Film Series presents *Restoration* (Boker Tov Adon Fidelman) **Saturday, April 18, 7pm**. Hosted by Temple Beth-El, Hillsborough. (To register contact Temple Beth-El or e-mail bakerec@comcast.net.)

Everyone is encouraged to attend the community wide **Yom Hashoah Remembrance Day Observance on Sunday, April 19 at 10am** hosted by the Flemington Jewish Community Center (5 Sergeantsville Road, Flemington). The morning will feature a presentation by Valerie Thayer, Ph. D entitled, *Never Forget: How Do American Jews Remember the Shoah*. This program is free to the community.

On **Monday, April 20 at 7pm**, a screening of *The Other* will be shown at the Birnbaum JCC, Bridgewater. This film features Tova Friedman -- one of the youngest children to survive Auschwitz -- who discovers that her daughter, Taya (also featured in the film) has hired (Stephanie) a nanny from Germany. The film also features Taya, Stephanie and Reinhold, a staff member at Raritan Valley Community College, whose father was an SS officer during the Holocaust. This film challenges the participants to confront difficult questions about co-existence. This program is co-sponsored by the Raritan Valley Community College Institute of Holocaust and Genocide Studies, Shimon and Sara Birnbaum Jewish Community Center and Jewish Family Service of Somerset, Hunterdon & Warren Counties. This program is free to the community.

The Irma Horowitz Film Series on Thursday, April 30, 6:30pm at the Birnbaum JCC. The evening features a Falafel Dinner, and Israeli Short Films presented by the Ma' Aleh School of Television Film and the Arts in Jerusalem. Films shown include: *And Thou Shalt Love*, *Fair Fight*, *A Woman Laughed* and *Memory Game*. Hosted by the Birnbaum JCC, Bridgewater (Fee: \$12/person in advance or \$15/person day of event).

Coming up in May...Celebrate Israel Parade in New York City, Sunday, May 31. A bus will be taking spectators into New York for the annual Celebrate Israel Parade on 5th Avenue in New York City. Show your support of Israel...The bus will leave

from two locations: Flemington Jewish Community Center, 5 Sergeantsville Road, Flemington and the Shimon and Sara Birnbaum Jewish Community Center, 775 Talamini Road, Bridgewater. [More details to come on timing and the bus fee.] Thank you to the Jewish Federation for sponsoring the bus.

To register for programs unless otherwise noted, please contact the Shimon and Sara Birnbaum JCC at 908-725-6994 x201 or register online at www.ssbjcc.org.

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CALL FOR 2015-2016 BOARD NOMINATIONS/ANNUAL MEETING

This is an exciting time in the life and growth of our community. In order to continue to sustain our positive direction, we ask for everyone's participation and support. Consider nominating yourself or someone you know for a Trustee position, and join us on May 17th at 12:30 pm for the Annual Membership Meeting where you can voice your opinion about decisions that will impact our synagogue and community.

Stacey Anderson, chairperson 908-359-0593,
sanderson@marketingwize.com
Gary Gartenberg, 908-428-7345
GGartenb@ITS.JNJ.COM
Tom Berger, 732-329-6916, tberger14@verizon.net

APRIL 2015



S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1 6:00 PM Kehiloft	2	3 First Seder	4 2 nd Seder
5	6 7:30 PM Mah Jongg	7	8	9 7:30 PM Board Meeting	10 7:30 PM Shabbat Services	11 9:30 AM Renée Mellman Bat Mitzvah
12	13 7:30 PM Mah Jongg	14	15 6:00 PM Kehiloft 7:30 PM Education Committee	16	17 7:30 PM Shabbat Services	18 9:15 AM Scott Reichg Bar Mitzvah
19 9:00 AM Religious School	20 7:30 PM Mah Jongg	21	22	23	24 7:30 PM Shabbat Services led by Kehiloft	25 7:30 PM CKS Comedy Night
26 Communiversit 9:00 AM Religious School	27 7:30 PM Mah Jongg	28 7:00 PM Ritual Committee Meeting	29	30		

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Fulfilling the religious, educational and social needs of our Jewish community since 1982.

Current resident or:

April 2015

Deadline for next newsletter:
April 15th

Whom to contact for...	
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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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