

# Congregation Kehilat Shalom NEWS

A Welcoming Jewish Reconstructionist Community

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Newsletter of the Congregation Kehilat Shalom of Belle Mead, NJ **March 2016** Adar I — Adar II 5776

## Bulletin from the Board- Ron Lubin



In the midst of this moderate winter, with a big snow storm, but overall not as chilly as last winter, I was asked to revisit our Long Range Plan here at CKS. I bring up the point about winter and Long Range Planning to highlight the point that at CKS we never stand still, even with winters chill and an enormous snow storm.

Almost five years ago I was asked to form an ad hoc committee to help put together a plan for our synagogue that would help guide us through the year 2017. We used this plan as a road map and guide to achieve our goals. You can see our Long Range Plan at:

<http://www.kehilatshalomnj.org/leadership/board/long-range-plan/>

I would like to highlight some of our success which includes many facility improvements such as bathrooms, signage, room dividers, and extra classroom space just to name a few. We are well on our way with our land sale and with some exciting options as to what to do with our good fortune once the land is sold. We have analyzed our budget and have achieved cost savings such as having the appropriate number of religious school teachers for our class sizes. We have had donor drives to supplement our revenue. We have made great headway in documenting our various committee processes to allow us to pass on knowledge to new leaders. We continue to find new ways to communicate and educate the CKS community such as the religious school's Skype program. These are just a few items that in many cases came from doing our Long Range Plan.

We are in the fourth year of this plan, and it is now time to revisit it, modify it, and set our goals out for the next five years. I will have a meeting soon with the original and new members of this committee to review how we are doing, as well as create a new set of goals for our community. I am excited to see how our next plan comes together and what goals we will set. Our first meeting will occur at the end of February and determine the direction for this committee. Since this has not happened as I write to our community, it is still an open book on ideas and goals for our future. I ask anyone who might have some thoughts on a goal they might like set for our community to please email me at [ronlubin@yahoo.com](mailto:ronlubin@yahoo.com), so I can incorporate your thoughts into our ever evolving plan.

My goal is to have a complete plan prior to our 2017 annual meeting and be ready for our next five years here at CKS. I look forward to hearing everyone's input and sharing it with our committee, to devise an exciting next phase plan for CKS.

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All the best,  
*Ron Lubin*, Trustee

## CKS Donations

CKS gratefully acknowledges the generosity of our members and friends.

### General

- ♥ Christina & Jared Witt  
In honor of Ellie's bat mitzvah
- ♥ Phillip & Leslie Landever  
In honor of Tracey & Aaron Goldberg becoming grandparents

### High Holiday

- ♥ Robert & Judith Harrison

### 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.

### Call for Nominations:

The CKS Board of Trustees is calling for nominations to the 2016 (5777) Board of Trustees. As past president, I chair the nominating committee. I know my own experience on the board has been quite fulfilling. We have several board positions opening up this year.

Please feel free to nominate yourself or a fellow congregant, or contact us if you would like more information. The nominating committee is: Susan Waskow, Jill Fraticelli, and Judy Forster.

If you or someone you know would be interested in being on the board or have questions about what it might entail, please e-mail me at [susan.waskow@gmail.com](mailto:susan.waskow@gmail.com).

I look forward to hearing from you.

Susan Waskow  
Immediate Past President  
Chair, Nominating Committee

At the Crossroads of Change  
7 pm, Saturday, March 19



**Emily Bengels**, a middle school Gifted Education teacher in Hunterdon County and member of Congregation Kehilat Shalom, was one of fourteen educators from the

United States to be granted a TEACH fellowship (Teachers Educating Across Cultures in Harmony) from the US Arab Bilateral Chamber of Commerce. She visited classrooms, industries and cultural sites in Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar.

Emily has also been fortunate to spend a summer teaching in Uruguay under a Fulbright EdSeminar and to take part in the Shoah Foundation's "The Past is Present" trip on the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. As a teacher, Emily uses her unique travel opportunities not only to teach cross-cultural understanding to her students. She also seeks to understand how cultural values are transmitted to students within the walls of the American school education experience itself. It is Emily's belief and hope that this understanding can help bridge cultural gaps between students.

Please join us at CKS as she speaks of her experiences in the Middle East, shares photos and insights, and answers questions about the current status of everyday people in the Gulf Nations.

See Cruisin' CKS – Upcoming Spring Fundraiser Info on page 5

### Judaism at the End of Life

Session 3: Body and Soul: Jewish Beliefs About the Afterlife. April 3, 2016.

Resurrection, immortality, reincarnation, heaven and hell. Do Jews believe in an afterlife? Discover what our rich tradition has said through the ages about life after death. Together we'll study Jewish prayers, teachings and stories; learn each movement's position on the subject; and grapple with these concepts and teachings for ourselves. All sessions are taught by Rabbi Susan Falk at Congregation Kehilat Shalom, 9:30-11:30 am. Members are free. Non-member suggested donation is \$7.00; \$18 for all three sessions.

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**TOT Shabbat**

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**FEBRUARY 19TH and MARCH 18TH, at 6pm**

We will welcome the Sabbath with music, prayer, movement, stories, and joy! The short service will be followed by candle lighting, cookies, and schmoozing.

Members and non-members are welcome, so bring your friends!

[www.ksnj.org](http://www.ksnj.org) 908-359-0420



## Message from the Rabbi



Purim is coming! That topsy-turvy holiday when we read the story of how Queen Esther saves the day for the Jews of Persia. Appropriately, this year Purim falls in March, when we also celebrate Women's History Month. So, in the spirit of our heroine, Queen Esther, here are some short biographies of a few other strong and accomplished Jewish women through the ages.

Hope you enjoy!

*B'Shalom and Happy Purim!*

*Rabbi Susan*

### Hannah Greenebaum Solomon (1858-1942).

Born in 1858 in Chicago, Hannah Greenebaum Solomon founded the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW) at the close of the Jewish Women's Congress of 1893. As its first president, Solomon worked tirelessly to promote education for Jewish women and immigrants, and along with friend Susan B. Anthony, was an outspoken advocate for voting rights for women. Today, the NCJW remains a leading social justice organization working for the rights of women of all faiths in the United States and Israel on such issues as reproductive health and rights, LGBT rights, immigration, and economic justice and civil rights.

### Asenath bat Samuel Barazani (1590-1670).

Born in 1590 in Kurdistan to a prestigious family of scholars, Asenath was educated to study and teach Torah – a very rare occurrence for a woman of that time period. Indeed, when she married, her *ketubah* (marriage contract) contained an unheard of clause exempting her from household chores so that she could devote herself to study. When Asenath's husband died, she assumed his position as the head of the yeshivah that her father had established in the city of Mosul (the same Mosul in the news today), and became the primary teacher and interpreter of Jewish law for the surrounding area, as well as those who sent inquiries from afar. Her son, Samuel, became a great rabbi and teacher at the yeshivah in Baghdad.

Rachel Auerbach (1903-1976). A graduate in philosophy from Lvov University in Poland, Rachel Auerbach was a Zionist and literary modernist. When WWII broke out, Auerbach was trapped inside the Warsaw Ghetto. There, she not only devoted herself to writing stories and essays for the "Oneg Shabbos Project" (the secret archive of the Ghetto), but she also directed the soup kitchen on Kovno Street, attempting to keep as many Jews as possible from starving to death. When the Nazis destroyed the Ghetto, Auerbach escaped and continued to write while in hiding. After the war ended, she immigrated to Israel where she helped found *Yad VaShem*, Israel's Holocaust Memorial. She died in Israel in 1976.

## PURIM AND WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Dona Gracia Nasi (1510-1569). Born under the birth name of Beatrice de Luna after the Expulsion of the Jews from Spain and then Portugal, Dona Gracia became known as a liberator of Jews from their lives of secrecy and fear during this dark time. Raised by a prosperous Jewish family who chose to become *Conversos* (outwardly Christian, secretly Jews), Dona Gracia used her own and her husband's wealth to help other Jews in hiding. After she and other family members were arrested by the Inquisition, they fled Portugal, eventually settling under the protection of the Duke of Ferrara in Italy. It was then, at age 35, that Dona Gracia finally began to live openly as a Jew. She expanded both her business and rescue activities and also became a renowned patron of Jewish letters. The *Ferrara Bible*, a 1553 translation from Hebrew to Spanish, is dedicated to her, "the Very Magnificent Lady" whose "merits have always earned her the most sublime place among our people." You can read her full biography, *Dona Gracia of the House of Nasi*, by the well-known historian Cecil Roth.

# Kindercapers

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



## 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





## HOLIDAYS ARE FUN!

Jewish holidays are like raisins in a challah or chocolate chips in a cookie: something extra sweet to make the rest of the year taste better. Our Jewish holidays are special and engaging and spread out in such a way that it is neatly spaced throughout the year. Our calendar provides us with something to look forward to practically every month. Granted, some holidays tend to be more exciting and fun than others.

Purim, on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Adar (this year, Thursday, March 24) is one such holiday! We all know the story—that a brave and beautiful Jewish woman, **Esther**, who along with her devout uncle **Mordechai**, saved the Jewish people from being killed by a cruel anti-Jewish villain, **Haman**. Traditionally, when we hear Haman's name we make a lot of noise. No other holiday is as joyful, rowdy, or fun! We parade in costumes, enjoy parties, and Purim shpiels. From the youngest to the oldest congregant, Purim has something for everyone.

Like all other Jewish holidays, we are not only commanded to celebrate, we are also commanded to do Mitzvot, give Tzedakah and do gemilut chasadim- acts of kindness. In addition to the mitzvot— Purim's message is simple:



*Get out from under your winter gloom;  
Grab a grogger and get into costume.  
All you Jews...we want you to get into the groove...  
Come listen to the Megillah story...it's a bit funny and a little gory.  
In a word...the King brought Haman to the gallows with his ten sons  
And turned them all into "swingers" one by one  
The Jews defended themselves on Adar 13.  
Against the nastiest "shmedriks" you have ever seen!  
And that's why on the 14<sup>th</sup> day there is a celebration  
To rejoice over their national salvation!  
So every year all the Jews from Belle Mead to Durham  
You are commanded to enjoy a noisy little bash that we call Purim*

*And BTW...No one is commanded to eat Hamantaschen, but how could you turn one down?!  
So enjoy and have fun!  
Chag sameach!*

### RELIGIOUS SCHOOL REMINDERS:

- Friday, March 4:** Shabbat Mishpachah, 7:00pm (5<sup>th</sup> grade)
- Sunday, March 6:** Daylight savings time begins, turn clocks ahead 1 hour; COOKING; Grandparent Day in K-2 class
- Sunday, March 13:** Regular school session, Purim is celebrated: MUSIC  
Purim shpiel and Purim carnival sponsored by the Kehiloft teens
- Sunday, March 20:** **NO RELIGIOUS SCHOOL**, Spring break
- Sunday, March 27:** **NO RELIGIOUS SCHOOL**, Spring break
- Friday, April 1:** Shabbat Mishpachah, 7:00pm (4<sup>th</sup> grade)
- Sunday, April 3:** Regular School session

### 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 2016-2017 school year.

Please call the school office (908-359-0420 x2) or email me ([principal@ksnj.org](mailto:principal@ksnj.org)) if you would like an application to enroll your child in our school.

## Kehiloft, the next step in your Jewish journey

Hi everyone! February has been pretty busy for Kehiloft. In the beginning of the month we had another meeting with Rabbi Susan. We talked about immigration in preparation for our field trip in June to the Museum of Jewish Heritage in New York. This museum was created as a living memorial to those who perished in the Holocaust. Our discussion involved talking about Jewish immigrants coming to America in World War II, and how that compares to issues in the modern world regarding immigration.



On February 7, we met with the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade religious school students and their parents to introduce them to Kehiloft. Hopefully, they were excited as we portrayed the fun and interesting activities we do in Kehiloft. We showed them a video from prior years and some of the special effects in this video resulted in much laughter. The kids and parents watched, listened and asked questions as many members of Kehiloft spoke about their experiences and shared how much fun we have. The students are starting to see that we enjoy being part of Kehiloft and we like learning, teaching and doing projects together. It didn't hurt that while this presentation was happening, everyone could smell the delicious cheesecakes being made in the kitchen for Religious School. Well, of course that wonderful aroma led to the discussion of the many jobs that kehilofters have, including cooking, madrichim, board members, etc. Just to clarify, we explained to students and parents that these jobs are for participants of Kehiloft and we can't wait for them to join!

Coming up in the beginning of March, (the 13<sup>th</sup> to be exact,) is our annual Purim Spiel during Religious School. We have been practicing it for the last three weeks. The entire congregation is invited and encouraged to come watch as we portray the tale of Esther and King Ahasuerus. At the end of Religious school, and after our performance, will be the Purim Carnival with games, prizes, and food so come and have fun!

Over the next few months, we will continue planning our annual project and field trip. I hope you can come out and see the Purim Spiel! *Jack Weitze*

### MARCH

**Wednesday, March 2** - Purim spiel rehearsal  
**Sunday, March 13** - 10:30 - 12:00 - Purim spiel performance in Religious School  
**Sunday, March 13** - 12:00 - 2:00 - Purim carnival  
**Wednesday, March 16** - **NEW** Regular session  
Spring break

### APRIL

**Sunday, April 3** - 1:00 - 4:00 TS Walk in Mercer County Park  
**Wednesday, April 6** - Rabbi Susan leads discussion #5  
*Wednesday, April 13* - tentative session  
**Wednesday, April 20** - Shabbat service prep  
Passover break  
**Friday, April 29** 7:15 - 9:30 Kehiloft leads Shabbat services

### Cruisin' CKS - Upcoming Spring Fundraiser - April 9<sup>th</sup>

We have a very dedicated and creative committee working hard behind the scenes to make this fundraiser happen. For this fundraiser to be successful, we need everyone's help. Here is what you can do:

1. Join us at the event! If you have never attended, please try and come this year. Invitations will be mailed soon.

2. Contribute something to our silent and live auction. Following are auction-worthy ideas:

- Gift certificates for restaurants, theaters, hair salons, personal trainers, pet sitters, food, summer camp, and so much more
- Vacation home; services like home decorating or auto detailing
- Instruction for activities like beer preparation or knitting - Jewelry, ceramics, artwork, home furnishings and handbags. (Consider re-gifting a gift you can't use to CKS.) - Items to be included in baskets organized by the Religious School - "Externships"

3. Donate bottles of wine (minimum cost \$15) to our Mystery Wine Station. We sell these for \$15 per bottle.

4. Buy raffle tickets for to win a \$400 Visa Gift Certificate. Sell the tickets to everyone you know. Tickets are \$10 each and will be included with your invitation.

Finally, ads are also being accepted for the event catalogue. This is a terrific way for businesses to support CKS in lieu of donating an item or service. Prices start at \$25.

Please go to the website for all donation/ad forms, solicitation letters as well as more information and contact information. [KSNJ.org](http://KSNJ.org).

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# Jewish LIFE

Please join Jewish LIFE for these upcoming programs in March:

The Jewish Film Series at Temple Beth-El, Hillsborough will be showing the film *Epilogue*, **Saturday March 5 at 7pm**. Suggested donation \$5/person. Call Temple Beth-El to register at 908-722-1339.

**Steven Ray Gimbel** will discuss *Einstein, His Space and Times* on **Sunday, March 6**, 10:30am hosted by Or Chadash, Flemington. Fee: \$10/person. Call Or Chadash at 908-806-2122 to register.

Join Jewish LIFE for *The Irma Horowitz Film Series featuring Falafel and Films* **Thursday, March 10, 6:30pm** at the Birnbaum JCC, Bridgewater. Three Israeli short films will be screened, with discussion to follow after each film. Fee: \$12/person in advance or \$15 day of the program.

Chabad Jewish Center of Hunterdon County is hosting a community **Shabbat Dinner Friday, March 18 at 6:45pm**. The evening will be featuring Sassy Reuven, an IDF Veteran who took part in Operation Entebbe. Fee: \$18/person. To register, call 908-238-9002.

**Register Now!... 4th Annual Celebrate Israel,**



**Tuesday, April 12 at 6:30pm** to benefit Israel Bonds and the State of Israel. The event will be held at Raritan Valley Country Club in Bridgewater. This year's honorees are Marjorie & Jonathan Slass, and Evan Gottesman, a Rutgers Hillel Student. Distinguished guest speaker is Malcolm Hoenline, Executive Vice

Chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations. The evening will include a special remembrance of Rabbi Evan Jaffe ז"ל. The registration fee is \$50/Adult and \$18/Student and includes full buffet. Cash bar available. You can register by mailing payment (check payable to "JCC") to the Shimon and Sara Birnbaum JCC, 775 Talamini Road, Bridgewater, NJ 08807, online at [www.ssbjcc.org](http://www.ssbjcc.org), or by calling the JCC at 908-725-6994 x201.

**Looking ahead...**

Chef and cookbook author **Paula Shoyer** presents **The New Passover Menu, Wednesday, April 6, 12**



**Noon** at the Birnbaum JCC. Passover has never been so easy or delicious! Fee includes program and lunch: \$18/person in advance or \$22 day of the program. The Jewish Film Series at Temple Beth-El, Hillsborough will be showing the film *Three Mothers*, **Saturday, April 9 at**

**7pm**. Suggested donation \$5/person. Call Temple Beth-El to register at 908-722-1339.

Join Jewish LIFE for a **Kosher Food Excursion in Brooklyn with Arthur Schwartz, Thursday, May 2.**



Nobody knows kosher cooking and shopping like Arthur Schwartz, and we are very fortunate to have him for our guide for the day! **Register early. Trip is limited to 12.** Call the Birnbaum JCC at 908-725-6994 x201.

If you have any questions regarding Jewish LIFE, and to register for special events, please contact the Shimon and Sara Birnbaum JCC at 908-725-6994 x201. To register for synagogue-hosted classes and special events, please register directly through the host synagogue.



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when you call!!

# MARCH 2016



March						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
		1	2 Kehi-loft 6 pm	3 Exec Committee 7:30 pm	4 Shabbat Mishpachah, 7:00pm (5th grade)	5 Bat Mitzvah, ELLIE WITT 9:30am
6 Daylight Savings Begins, turn clocks ahead 1 hour Religious School 5th grade parent meeting COOKING	7 Mah Jongg 7:30 pm	8	9	10 Board Meeting 7:30	11	12 Torah Study/Shabbat Services 9:30 am
13 Religious school 9 am MUSIC Purim shpiel and Purim carnival (with Kehiloft teens) 12 noon	14 Mah Jongg 7:30 pm	15	16 Kehi-loft 6 pm	17	18 Tot Shabbat 6 pm Shabbat Services 7:30	19 At the Crossroads of Change 7 pm
20 <b>NO RELIGIOUS SCHOOL, Spring Break</b>	21 Mah Jongg 7:30 pm	22	23 Ritual Committee 7 pm	24 PURIM	25 Shabbat Services 7:30 pm	26
27 <b>NO RELIGIOUS SCHOOL, Spring Break</b>	28 Mah Jongg 7:30 pm	29	30 Membership Committee 7 pm	31		

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

**March 2016**

Deadline for next newsletter:  
**March 15<sup>th</sup>**

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