

Congregation
Kehilat Shalom NEWS

Editor-in-Chief—Karen Bartels
 newsletter@ksnj.org
 karen.bartels@comcast.net
 home phone 609-921-1811

A Welcoming Jewish Reconstructionist Community

Newsletter of the Congregation Kehilat Shalom of Belle Mead, NJ **May 2017** Iyyar —Sivan 5776



CKS Social Action Group Immigration & Refugee Team Taking Action
 by Hilary Kayle Crist

In March, a group of CKS members joined Rabbi Susan Falk and Team Leaders Heather Ciociola and Shelley Parish Nord, to discuss the plans for the new Social Action Group Immigration and Refugee Team, whose formation was sparked by wanting to make a difference in the current political environment. Over the course of the first meeting, those assembled decided to focus their efforts on the local Latina immigrant population in the wider community as well as the current Muslim refugee situation. Members of the group have already taken action by signing on to the HIAS Welcome Campaign, and by helping a young Muslim man—whom we learned about through local contacts—get plugged into services in Cleveland, Ohio. The team is now looking into an array of activities in which we may participate, including: joining HIAS on the June 6th anniversary of the sailing of the S.S. St. Louis, the refugee ship that was turned away from Cuba and the U.S. in 1939; arranging for a lawyer from the Anti-Defamation League’s civil rights division to give a presentation on immigration and refugees; assisting “Make the Road NJ,” an immigration organization in Elizabeth in need of SAT/ACT college prep books, English tutors, and money to help high school students take college tours. Members of the team are continuing to reach out to the wider community to see where else we can be of assistance.

CKS ANNUAL MEETING
MAY 21, 2017
PLEASE ATTEND

<p>Congregation Kehilat Shalom 253 Griggstown Rd. Belle Mead, NJ 08502 Phone: 908 -359 -0420 Fax: 908 -359 -8848</p>
<p>Rabbi Susan Falk rabbi@ksnj.org President Robert Neusner president@ksnj.org Administrator Robin Bengochea admin1@ksnj.org robin@ksnj.org Religious School Principal s Ann Kanarek (K-7) principal@ksnj.org Karen Fridkis (8-12) kehiloftprincipal@ksnj.org Lay Cantor Kate MendeFridkis</p>
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CKS Donations

CKS gratefully acknowledges the generosity of our members and friends.

General

- ♥Jodi Mahoney
In honor of Olivia's upcoming bat mitzvah
- ♥Jeanne Schechter
In memory of Norman Schechter
- ♥Robert & Peggy Fass
- ♥Jim Ohls
- ♥Hinda Greenberg
- ♥Lisa Roe
In memory of Rachel Beymann
In memory of Trina Elkin
- ♥Larry & Karen Fridkis
In memory of Paul Ganeles
In memory of Rod Kaufmann's mother
In memory of Lorraine Anderson
In honor of Rabbi Susan
- ♥Barbara Lehman
In memory of Kurt Albu

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.

CKS Annual

Congregational Meeting May 21, 2017 at 12:15 pm

Every family is requested to send a representative. Topics will include:

- Accomplishments from the past year
- Update on land sale
- Next year's budget
- Board of Trustee elections
- Volunteer of the Year Recognitions

Food will be available. Hope to see you there!

CKS Book Club



* NOTE TIME CHANGE:

8:00 pm at CKS for all meetings

May 25: *Orhan's Inheritance* by Aine Ohanesian

June 29: *Underground Railroad* by Colson Whitehead

HomeFront Picnic June 3rd 1 – 5pm

As part of our synagogue's Tikkun Olam, for the past several years we have hosted about 35-40 children from HomeFront with an afternoon of games, fun and a great BBQ.

For members unfamiliar with HomeFront, it's a wonderful organization that works with families to help them out of homelessness. Some families live at their Family Center but others reside in HomeFront's subsidized housing.

Our great HomeFront liaison, Chris, picks up the children and brings them to the synagogue. We provide snacks, get to know each other through icebreakers, cook up a great picnic/barbecue and then all the children (ours and HomeFront's) participate in outdoor and craft activities. We send them home with small gifts, books, and stuffed animals.

We encourage everyone to volunteer on June 3rd. It's a great way to help others as a family or as an individual. If you cannot attend, you can participate by donating food, gently used stuffed animals, and children's books in good condition.

To sign up or to make any kind of donation, please contact Janis Todd at jbtodd26@verizon.net.

Janis Baroness Todd

Kehiloft announces the second Movie Night at CKS!

Come see

UP

on Saturday, May 20 from 6:30 – 9:00.

Kehiloft will lead a short Havdalah service before the movie.

Snacks will be provided and the price* is pay what you can

Join us for this spring event that is perfect for the whole family!

*The money collected will support Kehiloft activities

Bulletin from the Board- Greg Corsan



Having just celebrated Passover with family once again, I am reminded that Jewish life is rich with many different milestones and occasions; it could be a bris, the start of Hebrew School for a child, a wedding, a bar mitzvah, or a Yahrzeit. Suzanne and I have nearly completed one of the

longest and most sacred rituals for a Jewish family: getting your high school student into a college and out the door! We, like several families in our community, have a child who is making their final decision about their college choice at this moment: deposits are due May 1st! We can hardly believe that the last of our kids is ready to move on to the next stage in her life and will be leaving home in just a few months. According to a study by the Pew Research Center, Jews are the world's most-educated religious group. Historically, Jews immigrating to the US have valued education highly. In America, education became the great leveler; it is the one thing that Jewish Americans embraced as a path to opportunity for themselves and their children. Every Jewish family wants to give their children the best opportunities available through education, and a college education is the way Americans often do it in the 21st century.

Every parent wants their student to get into a top university. However, what I've observed through the college application process is that many students and parents are overly obsessed about perfect SAT scores and getting into that "one" college that will guarantee success, however you define it. All the strategizing and diligence that kids and families put into getting their student into an elite college doesn't guarantee that the student will do well, or ultimately produce a life worth living. Sometimes we forget that where we go to college is far less important than whom we chose as our life partner, and how we interact with our family and community. What matters is not the name on the diploma, but what efforts your student makes both in and out of the classroom. Rabbi Salkin says it perfectly: "We need to emphasize the real purpose of education. As I am fond of saying to kids: Knowledge is more important than grades, and wisdom is more important than knowledge. The goal of education is not only to be "smart"; it is to become whole, to have your soul sing, to reach for something higher and deeper." So, for those parents and students soon facing the challenge of the college admission process, my advice is to take

a deep breath, calm down, and realize there are many paths to success in life.

A few brief reminders of upcoming events:

- Sunday, May 21 is our **religious school end of year event**. That same day at 12:15 PM is the **CKS Annual Membership Meeting**. Please come out to hear what's going on at CKS and voice your opinion about decisions that will impact the CKS community.
- Saturday, June 3 is the **HomeFront Picnic** event at CKS.

Greg Corsan

Treasurer

Kindercapers

Now in its 23rd 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

when Religious school is in session or by special request

Questions?

Susan Waskow 609-333-1113

or Iris Rubinstein igrubinstein@gmail.com

or the synagogue office for more information



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



COUNTING THE OMER

We are now in the midst of the time of year known as the Omer. We are commanded in Leviticus to count each day from the 2nd day of Pesach to Shavuot, a total of 49 days.

It is a very odd time of year. The beginning of the "omer," which was tied to the wheat harvest, also is associated with a time of mourning, remembering the death of Rabbi Akiba's students during a horrific plague. Some Jews refrain from parties, weddings, shaving or cutting their hair. During this time, we have Yom Ha Shoah and remember the Six Million lost as well as Yom Ha'Atzma'ut – Israel's Independence Day. Lag B'Omer is on the 33rd day of the Omer and it's also a day of happiness. But for me, in addition to the commemorations and celebrations, it's all about the counting. There is no other time in the year that we do such a

thing. It is an opportunity for mindfulness, remembering and appreciating our blessings on a daily basis.

Let's take a moment each night, to enjoy our freedom, the Spring, our good fortune, and count the Omer!

THANKS FOR A WONDERFUL YEAR

As the school year comes to a close, it is gratifying to look back at all that our students have learned and accomplished. It is thanks to our devoted group of teachers that all our students have had such a wonderful year.

Teaching is crucial to our Jewish future and without our teachers Judaism would quickly evaporate. As we mark the end of the school year I would like to invite you to acknowledge the hard work and effort of our teachers on Sunday, May 21 at 11:15am. Many thanks to our esteemed faculty:

Sharon Diamondstein Rabbi Susan Falk Karen Fridkis Sabrina Gutwilik
Joanna Javeline Rena Gitlitz Sharon Taub Tracey Weingarten

On behalf of the faculty and school, I would like to thank the parents for all your support and most especially, for giving us the pleasure of working with your children.

Thank you to Religious Education Chairperson, **Lisa Ries** and her committee for their encouragement, support and efforts all year. Many thanks to all the parent volunteers for helping us with our special activities and programs.

SPECIAL "SIYUM" CEREMONY

SUNDAY, MAY 14, 11:15am

Seventh grade commencement service

On Sunday, **May 14**, we all have an opportunity to celebrate with our seventh grade class at their Siyum ceremony. This special service marks the completion of one segment of our students' Jewish education here at CKS, and the beginning of another, the High School - Kehiloft program.

This is an exciting event for which our seventh graders have been eagerly working. As a culmination of their studies, students will be sharing thoughts on how to be good to their friends and to others. The theme this year is how we learn and live Judaism. Their presentation "Kineh Lecha Chaver," *Find Yourself a Friend*, beautifully explains how each one of us can reach out to others all over the world and help to make it a better place to live.

Please join us as our seventh grade students "graduate" from Nesiyot-religious school and share their thoughts with the congregation.

CONGREGATION KEHILAT SHALOM

extends heartfelt good wishes to the members of the

2017 Religious School 7th grade class:

ETHAN BERLIN JULIE EDELSTEIN OLIVIA MAHONEY EVAN SURACI

THANK YOU TO OUR MADRICHIM- OUR KEHILOFT TEENS

The Madrichim (High school aides) have been excellent role models for our younger children. You can find them around on a Sunday morning either in the School office or in a classroom. They have been a wonderful asset to our staff, helping in every capacity. I am really proud of the high level of commitment demonstrated by these fine young people. Despite the complexities of their busy schedules, it's wonderful to see how seriously our *madrachim* take their roles in our school. Our *madrachim* provide our synagogue with a genuine source of pride and joy. This year's *madrachim* are:

Madrichim

Charlotte Birnbaum Josh Goldhammer Lea Goldhammer Tess Kowalski Aaron Orshan
Ethan Ries Ally Rosenthal Dorothy Waskow Jack Weitze turn to page 6 for Reminders

Kehiloft, the next step in your Jewish journey



It's hard to believe another month has gone by; spring is finally here!

Kehiloft has been very busy this month. We began the month with a meeting with Rabbi Susan. We had a very interesting discussion about gun violence.

Next, we read the Parsha Tzav, which focuses on animal sacrifices, dressing the priests, and keeping the fire burning. Then, we created a skit to tell this story at the Friday night family service we led. There was also a very fun ice cream social!

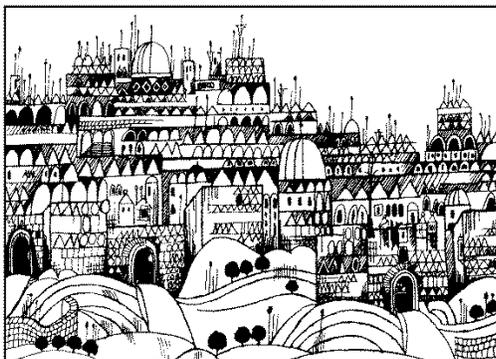
This month was also the annual Tourette Syndrome Walk at Mercer County Park. Many Kehilofters and congregants participated in the walk, a great fundraiser for TS.

Kehiloft also has many upcoming events, so get your calendars ready! On May 7th we will be hosting our second annual Lag B'Omer field day. The festivities will begin at 11:00 am during the last hour of Religious School, and continue until 1:00 pm. Please join us for this fun day of outdoor games and activities!

On May 20th, we are having our second Family Movie Night from 6:30 to 9:30pm, starting with a brief Havdallah service followed by our featured movie "Up". There will be free snacks, but contributions are welcome to help Kehiloft fund activities. Bring the whole family!

Finally, we will be having our Graduation service led by Kehiloft on Friday, June 2nd. We hope you can join us. It's hard to believe Kehiloft is coming to an end for me after five great years. I've truly enjoyed learning from so many different people, both from the school and from the community, and teaching cooking, working on skits, carnivals, projects, car washes, and just having fun! Good luck to all of you in Kehiloft next year and remember to learn what you can, teach what you can, and have fun!

Jack Weitze



MAY

Sunday, May 7. 11:00 - 1:00 NEW TIME Second annual Lag B'Omer field day

Sunday, May 14 - 7th grade bridge ceremony approximately 11:00

Wednesday, May 17 - Rabbi Susan leads discussion

Saturday, May 20. 6:30 - 9:00 CKS Family Movie Night - **UP**

Sunday, May 21. 10:00 - 12:00. Siyum (closing ceremonies)

Wednesday, May 31 - Dinner in Princeton

JUNE

Friday, June 2 - 7:30 - 9:30 Kehiloft graduation Shabbat service

Sunday, June 11 - tentative field trip

The student board meets before each CKS Wednesday session from 5:30 - 6:00.

Shalom,

Karen Fridkis, Principal of Kehiloft

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Adult Education

The Sabbath: Why We Need it Now More Than Ever

This multi-session class is a book discussion of Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel's masterpiece, "The Sabbath." For centuries, the Sabbath has been the centerpiece of Jewish life. As we read and discuss sections of the book together, we are learning about the history and development of this remarkable concept. We are examining the value of rest and the sacredness of time in our lives. The first session, held on January 11, featured both an introduction to the book's key concepts and an introduction to the life and works of Abraham Joshua Heschel. In our final session, we will incorporate our new perspectives into a Sabbath experience on Saturday, May 13, 2017 at 9:30 am. Suggested donation \$5 per session for non-members. All are encouraged to attend, even if you were unable to attend the first session.

JRF WELCOME POSTERS

The Jewish Reconstructionist Communities has created a poster for synagogues to display. It is an affirmation of our Jewish values of welcoming everyone. This link leads to the article explaining. <http://us6.campaign-archive2.com/?u=e8dc2f2d9405f4a028431548a&id=391d7d83fa&e=bd5ce5ec88>

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RELIGIOUS SCHOOL REMINDERS:

Friday, May 5: Shabbat Mishpachah, 7:00pm

Saturday, May 6: Bat Mitzvah, **OLIVIA MAHONEY**, 9:30am: Everyone is welcome to join us for Shabbat services and share this special morning with Olivia and her family.

Sunday, May 7: Cooking, **Lag B'Omer Field Day** games and activities (11:00am-1:00pm)

Sunday, May 14: 7th grade siyum and bridge ceremony, 11:15am

Saturday, May 20: Bat Mitzvah, **JULIE EDELSTEIN**, 9:30am: Everyone is welcome to join us for Shabbat services and share this special morning with Julie and her family.

Sunday, May 21: Last day of Religious School; Teacher recognition and Shabbat Minyannaire awards.

All parents are invited to join us for our end of the year events, 11:15am - 12:00pm

Jewish LIFE (Learning Is For Everyone)

Below is an update on programs coming to Jewish LIFE in May-June!

The Temple Beth-El Jewish Film Series presents *She's Coming Home*: **Saturday, May 6, 7pm** at Temple Beth-El, Hillsborough. At the end of a lengthy relationship, Michael, 33, returns to her parents' small, cramped apartment. Suggested donation: \$5/person.

White Walls: a Memoir about Motherhood, Daughterhood and the Mess In Between. Author Judy Batalion, **Tuesday, May 16, 7pm** at the Birnbaum JCC. Judy's account of stuff and survival explores navigating the messiness of motherhood, how trauma passes through generations and the indelible marks that mothers and daughters make on each other's lives. Fee: \$5/person.

RESCHEDULED DATE: Author Mache M. Seibel, MD: *The Estrogen Window: The Breakthrough Guide to Being Healthy, Energized and Hormonally Balanced - Through Perimenopause, Menopause and Beyond*. **Thursday, May 10, 7pm** at the Birnbaum JCC. Fee: \$5/person

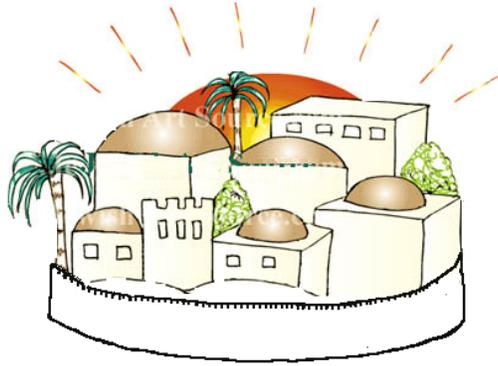
Lag Ba'omer Family Fun Day at Chabad Jewish Center of Southern Somerset County on **Sunday, May 14, 11am**. BBQ, Bonfire, Face painting, Bounce house, and more! Free to all.

Land Twice Promised: An Israeli Woman's Quest for Peace with author Noa Baum: **Sunday, May 21, 10am** at the Flemington JCC. *A Land Twice Promised* delves into the heart of one of the world's most enduring and complex conflicts. Fee: \$10/person, includes lite bagel lunch.

2nd Annual Jewish Music Festival & BBQ on **Sunday, June 11, 6:30pm/Cocktail Hour 7:30pm/Dinner**. Featuring the renowned Chillent Band, with local opening act and the Chosen Cholent BBQ Truck. Vendors, arts & crafts, face painting and more. Fee: \$15 at the door, \$10 in advance/person.

Thank you to everyone who attended and supported Jewish LIFE programs during the 2016-2017 calendar year. The new Jewish LIFE season begins in the Fall. Watch for details and the new brochure!

MAY



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 Yom HaZikaron (Memorial Day) Mah Jongg	2 Yom HaAtzmaut (Independence Day)	3	4 Social Action Group – Interfaith Meeting	5 Shabbat Mishpachah	6 Olivia Mahoney’s Bat Mitzvah
7 Religious School Lag B’Omer field day	8 Mah Jongg	9 Adult Education Committee Meeting	10 The Sabbath: Why We Need it Now More Than Ever	11 Board Meeting	12 Tot Shabbat	13 The Sabbath: Why We Need it Now More Than Ever (final session)
14 Religious School	15 Mah Jongg	16	17 Kehiloft	18	19 Shabbat Services	20 Julie Edelstein’s Bat Mitzvah CKS Movie Night – hosted by Kehiloft
21 Religious School Annual Meeting	22 Mah Jongg	23	24 Yom Yerushalavim (Jerusalem Day) Ritual Committee	25 CKS Book Club: “Orhan’s Inheritance” by Aline Ohanesian	26	27
28	29 Mah Jongg	30	31 Shavuot (Pentecost)			

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

May 2017

Deadline for next newsletter:

May 15th

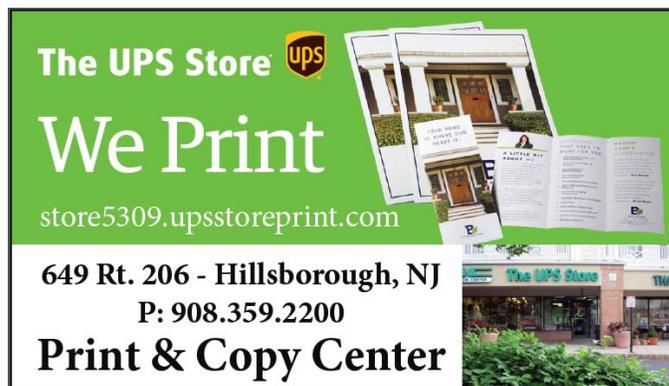
Whom to contact for...	
Adult Education	Susan Waskow susan.waskow@gmail.com
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Ritual	Susan Waskow susan.waskow@gmail.com
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