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**CKS BRINGS CHANUKAH TO STONEBRIDGE**

by Iris Rubenstein

As Rabbi Susan reminded us during Chanukah "...a Hasidic tale tells us that our job is to be a lamplighter, illuminating the streets of the world with wisdom, justice, and compassion." To partake of that mitzvah, CKS helps host a Chanukah celebration at Stonebridge, our local retirement community. On the afternoon of December 17<sup>th</sup>, the teens from Kehiloft showed up with their parents, their principal Karen Fridkis, Rabbi Susan, and some other congregants to sing, say prayers, light the Hanukkia, spread joy, and share a meal with residents. It was a wonderful party with lots of music, laughter, and conversation. Not to mention the most delicious latkes, which Stonebridge prepares.

About 25 residents were there, and about 25 CKS members. Karen led a program, which included asking if anyone wanted to share memories of Chanukah traditions from their families. We heard stories of the dreidel game being played with nuts, families holding hands and dancing around the lit candles, about getting and receiving gifts, or having no gifts at all.

The residents were truly grateful CKS came to help them celebrate the holiday. Many mentioned how happy they are when our teens come over and how much they like our congregation. It felt so good to share this mitzvah and we look forward to this Chanukah tradition we created.



## CKS Donations

CKS gratefully acknowledges the generosity of our members and friends.

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- ♥Heidi Brim  
In honor of Ira Sperling and Beverly Kling's wedding
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- ♥Lisa Kent  
In honor of Natalie London's birthday
- ♥Jeremy Perlmutter  
In loving memory of Kristina Wise

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- ♥Lisa Kent  
In honor of Natalie London's birthday



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## Connect with our Reconstructionist Neighbors for Tu B'Shevat

Our visiting rabbi, Rabbi Marsha Friedman, invites CKS to join with her congregation "down the road", String of Pearls in Princeton, for an early Tu B'shevat seder. Tu B'shevat falls on Tuesday, January 30. This year, but we will be ringing in the festival on Shabbat evening, combined with a short service. If you've never been to a Tu B'shevat



seder, this is a perfect time to experience the unique rituals and ideas connected with the Jewish New Year of the Trees!

The Shabbat/Tu B'shevat gathering will be held on January 26 at 7:00 pm with a Tu B'shevat seder and service.

String of Pearls meets at Unitarian Church (50 Cherry Hill Rd, Princeton, NJ 08540). Please bring a vegetarian (pareve or dairy) dish to serve to contribute to the event. Please rsvp to office@stringofpearlsweb.org to let our hosts know that you are planning to attend. While this will not be a specifically child-focused event, children of all ages are most welcome to attend!



### Celebrate Tu B'Shevat with String of Pearls!

Tu B'shevat is said to mark the rising of sap in almond and fruit trees in Israel. It has been nicknamed the Israeli Arbor Day and celebrated with tree plantings, dancing, and meals that feature the future fruit of these trees.

Our Tu B'Shevat observance will begin with a short Erev Shabbat Service, then proceed to a pot luck supper and a Tu B'Shevat Seder

Friday, Jan 26<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 p.m.

50 Cherry Hill Princeton (The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Princeton)

#### Please bring:

- ♦ A pareve main dish, salad, or dessert. As Tu B'Shevat emphasizes tree fruits and nuts, you may want to include grapes, figs, apples, pears, berries, carob, olives, dates, raisins, persimmons, stone fruits, nuts, pomegranates, avocados. Or include the remaining two of the Seven Species mentioned in Torah: wheat and barley.
- ♦ For safety sake, please bring easy-to-read tent signs/ingredient labels for those with allergies!

*We extend a special welcome to Congregation Kehilat Shalom members.*

## Bulletin from the Board- Jill Fraticelli



"Happy New Year!" We all made it through the hustle and bustle of the holiday season. The smell of the latke oil has likely dissipated and our menorahs are tucked away or displayed beautifully on a shelf until next year. It is that time of year when people initiate their New Year's resolutions (although for some of us we just did this on Rosh Hashanah!). Some of us will try to eat less and work

out more. Some of us will try to worry less and enjoy the moment.

Whatever your resolution includes, immersing yourself a little (or a lot!) more in the CKS community is one that will have returns that you will feel for a lifetime. I know this because I chose that path years ago and now consider CKS my home away from home. I wasn't raised as a practicing Jew. My family did not attend services on High Holidays and when people asked me what it meant to be Jewish, I usually responded with "we celebrate Chanukah and have dinner together on Rosh Hashanah and Passover." I always loved those family traditions, but never really felt connected to Judaism due to a lack of understanding about it. When my oldest child started second grade, I decided to enroll him in religious school. I wanted my children to learn about the meaning behind the rituals and holidays and what it means to be Jewish.

CKS was a perfect fit for my family. It was inclusive and took care of those less fortunate, two things that were a priority to our family too. Over the past eight years, I have volunteered for countless activities at CKS. Whether it be the spring event (Save the Date: 5/5/18), the rummage sale, services at Stonebridge, singing with Kol Ahava, the HomeFront picnic and many more), the sense of warmth I felt from the community was like no other. We are all busy in our lives running children around, taking care of elderly parents, working, and keeping the house in order, but the fulfillment I receive from doing for others while expecting nothing in return is just amazing! I inherited this special gift from my father and hope to pass it on to my children by setting the same example.

I'll end with a recent experience at CKS that touched my heart. I have enjoyed singing with Kol Ahava during the High Holiday services. During the Yizkor, or Memorial service, I took my spot up front with the choir to sing and became very emotional. I often use the Yizkor service as time to reflect and feel an overwhelming sadness about losing both of my parents at a fairly young age. Rather than openly grieve in front of the congregation, I decided to take a seat and allow the choir to finish the song without me. Immediately after taking my seat, I felt two soft hands, one on each shoulder. You see, Francine

Pfeffer and Amy Doelling were sitting behind me. These two amazing women knew exactly what I needed at the moment; a warm touch from people who cared. I met both of these friends through my experiences at CKS. Approximately one month later, Amy and I were the ones placing our hands on Francine's shoulder at the Shabbat Service the day after the loss of her father-in-law.

This is what life is all about. Taking care of each other with empathy, love and support. Happy New Year CKS. May all of your resolutions be successful and may the New Year bring you all the warmth I receive from the CKS community.

Jill Fraticelli- 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President



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](mailto:igrubinstein@gmail.com)  
or the synagogue office for more information

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## Tu B'Shevat—Then and Now



On the 15th day of the Hebrew month of Shevat we celebrate the holiday of Tu B'Shevat (January 31). Unlike Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Purim, or Passover, we don't often think of this holiday as a major one. However, its "roots" go back to Torah and the reason for the holiday has meaning today.

There is no reference to Tu B'Shevat in the Bible, but numerous verses have been linked to this holiday because of what it represents. Our ancestors were aware of the importance of trees and set aside the 15th day of Shevat to recognize it. The origins of the holiday may have been a folk festival marking the emergence of spring. Tithes (taxes) were levied on the fruit trees and these tithes were then sent to the Temple in Jerusalem. After the destruction of the second Temple in 70 CE, Jews were dispersed throughout the Roman Empire, but never forgot *Eretz Yisrael*, the Land of Israel. Through the centuries, eating various fruits and nuts which were found in Israel helped to keep the bond between the people and the land -- fruits such as dates, figs, raisins, and bokser, the dried fruit of the carob tree.



In modern Israel, Tu B'Shevat marks the end of the rainy season and has a renewed significance in that the "New Year of the Trees" has come to signify the rebirth of the land and serves as a symbol of hope for the rebirth and renewed strength of people everywhere.

The act of planting a tree represents an investment in the future; the holiday has also become a day to remind us of the need to preserve the earth and its natural resources. In our religious school classes, we not only talk about the holiday and its meaning, but address issues of ecology and our environment. The Jewish values of *Tikkun Olam* (repairing the world) and *Bal Tashchit* (do not destroy) are important concepts discussed age-appropriately in our classes.

### Happy New Year of the Trees!

And, best wishes to everyone for a happy and healthy "secular" new year.

The faculty and I look forward to the rest of the school year with continued excitement and enthusiasm!

### WINTER WEATHER SCHOOL CLOSINGS

In the event that it becomes necessary to cancel school due to inclement weather, school closings will be transmitted through EMAIL. PLEASE CHECK email first, before calling the school.

### RELIGIOUS SCHOOL WALL OF FLAME

Thank you to all who contributed to the Religious School Wall of Flame. It was a great success and through your thoughtfulness and generosity it will enable us to further enrich our students' experiences with extra special activities. On behalf of the Religious School staff and children we thank you for your support!

### RELIGIOUS SCHOOL REMINDERS:

- Friday, January 5:** Shabbat Mishpachah, 7:00pm **with Shabbat dinner, 6:00pm** (Please note that this date has been changed from Feb. 2)
- Sunday, January 7:** COOKING
- Sunday, January 14:** Camp Havaya (formerly known as Camp JRF ) Orientation (11:30). Parents you are welcome to come to a camp presentation and learn why our children get such joy from this great summer experience of activity, Shabbat celebration and Jewish living!!
- Sunday, January 21:** PACT 4: *Saying Goodbye to Shabbat*
- Sunday, January 28:** PACT 6: *Torah, Torah, Torah* (Please note this date has been changed from Feb. 4)
- Saturday, February 3:** Shabbat Mishpachah, 9:30am
- Sunday, February 4:** COOKING, Israeli Dancing
- Sunday, February 11:** Special program with *Tova Halpern*

## Kehiloft, the next step in your Jewish journey



Happy New Year CKS community! I am Jared Fraticelli, Co-Vice President of Kehiloft. I am also a Madrich for the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade class at Religious School on Sunday mornings. In this role, I have the opportunity to assist with Hebrew learning and any planned activities.

December was a busy month at Kehiloft. We planned and led our first Shabbat service of the year. In preparation, we read Parsha from the Torah, discussed and analyzed it among ourselves, and then created a unique skit based off the section we decided to present as the D'var. During our interactive service our skit presented a flashback to Jacob stealing the birthright from Esau and then a flash-forward to Jacob wrestling with an angel and reuniting with Esau. We then led a thoughtful discussion with the CKS community. We appreciate your input and insights!

We had the pleasure of having several members of the Empty Nesters attend one of our meetings. They shared their childhood stories of their experiences as Jews and we learned that many experienced prejudices against them for being Jewish. It was really touching and interesting to hear about their individual journeys and it is impressive to us that they are all still so actively involved in CKS. We are thankful that they took the time to meet with us.

We were also busy preparing ideas for the Hanukkah crafts we created with the Hebrew School students. It was fun to watch them create their own unique crafts, including menorahs and dreidels, and put their own special touches on them. By the time you read this, we will have also celebrated Hanukkah with the Stonebridge residents. This is always a special event that includes yummy latkes and gelt! In the New Year, we will reveal our annual project idea and look forward to sharing it with you.

Jared Fraticelli



### JANUARY 2018

**Wednesday, January 17 - NEW DATE** Purim spiel rehearsal #1

**Wednesday, January 24** - Shabbat service prep

### FEBRUARY

**Wednesday, February 7-TENTATIVE** - If needed for Purim game prep and spiel rehearsal

**Friday, February 9** - 7:30 - 9:30 Kehiloft leads Shabbat services

**Wednesday, February 14** - Purim spiel rehearsal #2

**Wednesday, February 21** - Purim spiel rehearsal #3

**Saturday, February 24 - NEW DATE** 6:30 - 9:00. CKS Family Movie Night/Havdalah

**Sunday, February 25** - 9:30 - 10:30 - Kehiloft Players perform Purim Spiel

**Sunday, February 25** - 10:30 - 12:00 Kehiloft runs Purim games

**The Student Board meets on Wednesdays from 8:00 - 8:30.**

Karen Fridkis, Principal of Kehiloft



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## Adult Education



Our CKS Adult Education and Ritual Committees have organized several events for the month of January, which are open to all. Highlights are listed below. We also hope you will check our weekly

emails for more information.

### MLK Weekend Events:

Friday January 12 is a lay-lead service with a theme of Social Action Shabbat in honor of MLK weekend.

### "The Ethics of Speech"

Sunday morning Adult Ed on January 14th from 10 am – 11:30 am

Please join Rabbi Marsha Friedman, visiting rabbi, for an adult education study session on "Teachings on the Jewish Ethics of Speech." We will look at some important texts about what our tradition teaches us about how to use the power of our tongue in how we speak to and about others, and what implications this may have for our relationships and community.

Guest Rabbi Marsha Friedman will be leading the Shabbat service on Friday night on **January 19th at 7:30 pm.**

### Torah service/Torah Study – January 27

9:30 am

Saturday morning Torah Study is Shabbat Shira. Torah portion Beshalah.

Come for a Torah service in honor of Shabbat Shira/Parshat Beshalah. Join us for the retelling of the crossing of the Red Sea. We will take out the Torah and examine the unusual way that it is written in the scroll, to be followed by Torah Study lead by Rabbi Marsha Friedman.



## Snow Doesn't Stop Hanukah at CKS

On Friday, December 15, CKS congregants, family and friends joined to celebrate the fourth night of Hanukah. The falling snow slowed down the arrivals of both our latkes and our attendees. Once the event began, it took on the feel of a snow day celebration with friends. Candle lighting was followed by a brief Shabbat service and a delicious potluck dinner. Songs were sung, dreidels spun, and Hanukah songs and videos were played on the big screen. A highlight of the evening came when Rabbi Susan Falk and President Steve Weinstein announced the celebration of the burning of the mortgage. Cheers were heard all around on this festival of lights. Special thanks to both the Education and Ritual Committees for organizing the event, and to the many volunteers who helped with setup and cleanup.



Abby Stillman displays the Smortgages.

# JANUARY 2018



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 Mah Jongg	2	3	4	5 Shabbat Mishpachah Catered Dinner Shabbat Mishpachah	6
7 Religious School	8 Mah Jongg	9	10	11 Board Meeting	12 Shabbat service (MLK Social Action)	13
14 Religious School Adult Education – Teachings on the Jewish Ethics of Speech	15 Mah Jongg	16	17 Education Committee Meeting	18	19 Shabbat service led by Guest Rabbi Marsha Friedman	20
21 Religious School	22 Mah Jongg	23	24 Kehiloft	25	26 Shabbat/ Tu B'Shevat gathering with our Reconstructionist neighbors, String of Pearls	27 Torah service / Torah Study
28 Religious School	29 Mah Jongg	30	31 Kehiloft			

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

Deadline for next newsletter:

**January 15<sup>th</sup>**

**January 2018**

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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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