



The Centre Call

GERMANTOWN JEWISH CENTRE

www.GermantownJewishCentre.org

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MARCH 2011



Seasons of Redemption

By Student Rabbi Jill Levy

Between this edition of the Centre call and the one in May we will experience several transitions. We will finally shift from the dead cold of winter into springtime. Many of us will begin to think about summer break as opposed to the busy school year. And we will celebrate the holiday of Purim and then move into Passover.

While they may not seem connected, these two holidays are joined through the theme of redemption. In the case of Purim, we are redeemed because Esther and Mordechai save the Jewish people. We are saved through people taking action and God does not appear in the story. In the story of Passover, however, it is clear

that God is the one who redeems us from Egypt. And it is Moses, or the human hand, who is noticeably absent from the Hagaddah.

This Midrash (interpretation of a biblical story that fills in the holes) helps us make sense of how Purim and Passover form a partnership even with these two very different ideas of redemption.

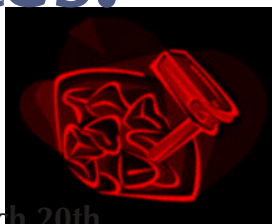
Rabbi Hiyya bar Abba and Rabbi Shimon ben Halafta were walking early in the valley of Arbel. They saw the first rays of dawn that were breaking to rise. Rabbi Hiyya said to Rabbi Shimon: So will be the redemption of Israel. Rabbi Shimon agreed: at first the dawn comes little by little, then it scatters and arrives, then it multiplies and grows, and afterward it is continually exalted.

Thus Mordecai sat in the king's gate and then it was so, when the king saw Esther the queen... so they hanged Haman... and then Mordecai went forth from the presence of the king in royal apparel, and finally the Jews had [joy and] light.

This text presents a dichotomy. Rabbis Hiyya and Shimon see dawn as a symbol for the inevitability of redemption for the Jewish people by God, similar to the redemption we celebrate on Passover. At the same time, the final paragraph quotes verses from the Book of Esther, where the Jewish people were saved only because Esther and Mordechai chose to work for their salvation. Thus we see the paradox, while Rabbi Hiyya bar Abba and Rabbi Shimon ben Halafta know that redemption is sure to occur, the Midrash also uses Esther to state that it may only happen if we help contribute to its arrival. On Purim, we are reminded that we must take action if we want to see a redeemed world. On Passover, we are reminded that when the work of healing the world feels too difficult that God is also there to help us in the process.

The transition from Purim to Passover mirrors the one from winter into spring and from school into summer. They are all reminders of the important and hard work we are called to do combined with hope and the opportunity for renewal. Chag Purim and Pesach sameach!

GJC Celebrates! Purim



Saturday, March 19th & Sunday, March 20th

Saturday, March 19

6:00 PM – GJC Celebrates!
Purim for families
8:00 PM – Dorshei Derekh festivities
8:00 PM – Minyan Masorti festivities

Saturday, March 20

9:00 AM – Morning Minyan and
Purim Service
11:00 AM – Purim Carnival

Program Highlights

Men's Club Shabbat

March 5

Blood Drive

March 6

Women's Club

Scholar-in-Residence Shabbat

April 8-9



President's Message

GJC in the Broader Community

By Chris Levin, GJC President

I have used this space quite a bit to write about the importance of community—our individual constituent communities as well as our overarching GJC community. In the recent Transition Survey that so many of you completed, we asked respondents to rank what was important to them about synagogue membership. Ninety-one percent checked “Belonging to a community.” In fact, this factor was at the top of the list. And of those 91%, 81%, on a scale from 1 to 5 (with “5” being “extremely satisfied”), ranked how we were doing in this regard as either a “4” or a “5.”

I'd like now to focus on our broader community and GJC's place in it. GJC has a strong and long tradition of involvement in the northwest Philadelphia community. I am sure others are even more familiar with this tradition than I am (I have only belonged to GJC for 28 years!) but it includes the great importance Rabbi Charry placed on maintaining the stability of northwest Philadelphia when other sections of the city were subject

to “white flight.” We most recently heard about this tradition at our annual Granger Memorial Shabbat at which our former president, Rachel Falkove, as well as Kittura Dior and Leslie Winder spoke about the 1960s and 1970s in this neighborhood. The tradition continues today with our Social Action Committee's program with the Henry School (including the generous contributions many of you made following the recent vandalism on the school's playground), with our hosting of homeless families through the Interfaith Hospitality Network and with the way in which we make our building available for meetings of the Weavers Way Cooperative or Town Watch.

Many of you are involved through venues other than GJC with making our neighborhood a better place. Many of you volunteer in our public schools directly, others work with the Neighborhood Interfaith Movement, while others have been honored by EMAN and WMAN for your work with those organizations. Still others have worked to beautify our neighborhood, most recently with the plantings in the circle at the bottom of Ellet Street.

But can we do more? Could our Religious School develop a program to establish a connection between it and other youth organizations in the area? Could we have an adult education program that focuses on community issues? Could we sponsor a clean up of Carpenter Woods or the Wissahickon Valley? Could we promote more interfaith work? Northwest Philadelphia is a remarkable area to live. It has been cited by any number of organizations as a model of how an urban community can be socially, racially and economically integrated and not only survive but thrive. We should be doing all that we can to continue our tradition of making this neighborhood a vital and welcoming place to live.

We want to hear from you! Please let us know your thoughts on what more we as a synagogue community can be doing to address issues in our neighborhood. To share your input, please email me at christine.levin@dechert.com or find me after Saturday morning services. I look forward to hearing your ideas on how we can improve this wonderful community we live in.



Keshet Program

By Student Rabbi Jill Levy



Thank you to our volunteers of all ages who helped prepare meals for our new Keshet program, which provides support to GJC families in times of need such as a new birth, illness or grief.



December – February, 2011

IN CELEBRATION...

Amy Cohen & Mark Spiller on their 25th anniversary

Bryan Schwartzman & Amy Weinberg on the birth of their daughter, Maya Ilana Schwartzman

Gabriel Gluskin-Braun on his Bar Mitzvah

Chuck Schleifer on his 70th birthday

Kate & Geof Margo on the birth of their grandson, Elijah Maxwell Lemmen

Alexandra Frazier on her Bat Mitzvah

Shigeo Rosenzweig on his Bar Mitzvah

Samuel & Connie Katz on the engagement of their son, Phil, to Leah Greenberg

Cy Cohen on his 75th birthday

Noah Boyer on his Bar Mitzvah

IN MEMORIAM

Vivian Weinstein, grandmother of **Rachel Gross**

Edward Seltzer, father of **Gail Tunick**

Rina Goldberg, niece of **Corri Gottesman**

Marcus Bressler, brother of **Hilda Minkoff**

Nancy Isaac Kuriloff, sister of **Peter Kuriloff**

Stanley L. Moses, uncle of **Joan Silver** and **Ellen Kopeland**

Bill Conner, brother of **Chris Levin**

Selma Dzuba, mother of **Michael Dzuba**

Albert Salama, father of **Henry Salama**

Miriam Ferleger, mother of **David Ferleger**

NEW MEMBERS

- Roberta Berg
- Vilma Lieberman
- Ariel Zaslav & David Basior

WELCOME!



Shabbat Chai-Lites

March 4-5

- Carlebach Kabbalat Shabbat
- Men's Club Shabbat
- Bar Bat Mitzvah Mehina Shabbat (BBMM)

March 11-12

- Bar Bat Mitzvah Mehina (BBMM) Friday Night Family Program
- Kitah Dalet leads Ashrei in the Charry Service
- Pre-School Parent Workshop

March 25-26

- Kol Zimrah & Potluck Dinner – Service at 6 PM followed by dinner at 7:15 PM
- Mazel Tov to Reena Wolnek on her Bat Mitzvah (Minyan Masorti/Charry Service @ 9:30 AM)

April 1-2

- Carlebach Kabbalat Shabbat
- Tot Shabbat
- Kitah Hey reads Haftarah in the Charry Service
- Parshat HaShavua B'Ivrit

April 8-9

- Women's Club Scholar-in-Residence & Women's Shabbat
- Family Shabbaton (offsite)

April 15-16

- Pre-Pesach Chinese Dinner
- Mazel Tov to our Adult Bat Mitzvah Class

April 22-23

- Pesach

April 29-30

- Kol Zimrah (7:30 PM)

Kabbalat Shabbat

Fridays at 6 PM (unless otherwise noted above)

Shabbat Morning Services

Saturdays at 10 AM (unless otherwise noted above)

ISRAELI DANCING



Sundays at 10 AM

\$5 per session

For more info call Tamar Magdovitz at 215-247-9614



LOST & FOUND

Please claim items by Purim! March 19-20

If you've lost something at GJC please stop by our lost & found bin (in the Coat Room off the Charry Lobby) by Purim. After Purim we will be donating or appropriately disposing of all remaining items.

If you'd like to see a list of items (as of Feb. 1) please contact Elana Shaw, Program Director. Special thanks to GJC member Dove Rosenberg for cataloguing the items!



Tot Shabbat & Holidays

Friday, April 1 – Tot Shabbat

Welcome Shabbat with Rabbi Adam Zeff in a celebration specially geared for toddlers, preschoolers and their families!

Does your child like to....

- Sing, clap hands and play bells?
- Dance around?
- Listen to puppet stories?

Do you like to...

- Welcome Shabbat with other young families?
- Not have to worry about kids being kids?

Join us at 6 pm for a program & celebration followed by a simple yet delicious catered dinner (around 6:30 pm)

Cost is \$5 per person (adults & children)

**ADVANCED REGISTRATION
& PAYMENT NECESSARY**

Save the Dates!

4/1 – Tot Shabbat

5/20 – Tot Shabbat

6/17 – Tot Shabbat

PEOPLE OF THE BOOK

GJC's Jewish Book Reading Group

We meet at 7:15pm at Germantown Jewish Centre in the Quitman Library the **SECOND** Tuesday of the month. We read fiction and nonfiction books of Jewish interest written mostly, but not solely, by Jewish writers and chosen by the group. Volunteer group members lead the discussion.

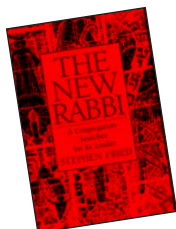
For more information, contact Dena Lake at denareva@comcast.net or 215-233-1414.

Tuesday, March 8th

A Pigeon & a Boy
by Meir Shalev



Tuesday, April 12th
The New Rabbi: A Congregation Searches for its Leader
by Stephen Fried



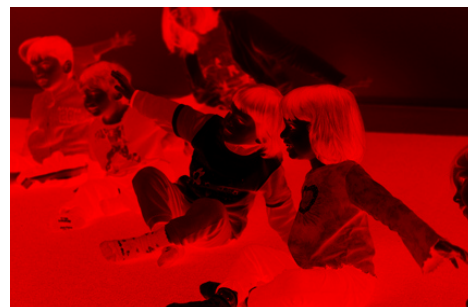
Early Childhood Program (ECP)



Photos by Shoshanna Wiesner



ECP children learn about Tu B'Shevat and have a party to celebrate. They baked trees and ate dirt! It was yummy!!!



We learn to stay healthy and practice Yoga



**With the snow melting
and spring finally here
Come enjoy our fabulous specials!**

March Special:
**10% off all
candlesticks***



April Special:
**10% off all kiddush
cups including
Elijah & Miriam's**



**Come browse our large assortment of
New Merchandise arriving daily and
Keep an eye out for the
Pesach Flea Market Sunday,
April 3rd 9:30 am**

**Early Bird Special: 10% off
purchases made between 12 pm
and 3 pm Tuesdays thru Friday.**

Hours	
Sunday	9:30 – 12:30
Monday	Closed
Tuesday	12:00 – 5:00
Wednesday	12:00 – 8:30
Thursday	12:00 – 6:00
Friday	12:00 – 4:00
<i>(Extended Friday hours until 5:00 pm begin March 13)</i>	

*Combine our monthly specials with the Early Bird Special for 20% off our already low, low prices.

Member Spotlight

by Linda Kriger

Cherie Goren is a woman of prodigious energy and she's not done yet, not by a long shot. Her mother lived until 104. Cherie is only 85. Her older sister is still employed as a therapist. Cherie started her career at age 50 and didn't retire until she was 68. Indeed, the women in her family enjoy long, productive lives.

At 50, Cherie started her career in a beauty supply business and within a year she was managing a store. Within two years, she managed eight stores. She also started a cosmetic line, Cherie Cosmetics, which no longer exists. "Then they asked me to rep for the manufacturer in New York, and I became a traveling saleslady," she says. When she retired, she devoted considerable time to GJC's Women's Club.

She is still busy. After she retired, Cherie wrote a memoir, *A Time To Keep*, which recounts the days of her youth and the lost generations of her family who perished in the Holocaust. Besides volunteering in the Little Shop, Cherie has revitalized Hazak at GJC. Hazak is the Hebrew word for strength and is an acronym for *Hokhmah* (wisdom), *Ziknah* (maturity), and *Kadimah* (looking ahead.) The programming is designed for seniors and includes study, entertainment and opportunities to socialize. They generally meet monthly at GJC on Wednesday afternoons at 1 pm, in the Temin Canteen Room, with lunch included.

Hazak was originally founded by Rhea Shils (z"l) around 2000, when members met in their living rooms. Now the meetings are held in the Centre. "So many seniors become disconnected to the Centre," Cherie said, sitting on a settee in the living room of her apartment in Merion. "They don't drive, but the Hazak members come to meetings with friends or husbands. We seniors have been giving for 60 some years. I joined the Centre in

1957. We contributed to everything, Men's Club, Women's Club, the Centre. Now we're not in a position to give so much, so our membership to Hazak is only \$10 a year." Contributions began to come in specifically for Hazak and this gave Cherie money to create programs. "As of today, we're doing very well. We made a spectacular Hazak Shabbat, because I wanted us to be noticed. We blew all the money we had on it. It was like a bar mitzvah. At this point, I can honestly say everyone knows what Hazak is."

Cherie is insistent on the importance of Hazak being represented on the GJC board. "We built this place. And there is the commandment to honor your mother and father. Therefore, we need to be honored. Someone said, 'It's not in the (Centre's) constitution.' Then it can be amended to the constitution. This spring we will have a vote and a voice," she concluded proudly.

Last month, Hazak co-sponsored with the Women's Club a program featuring Ellen Scolnic and Joyce Eisenberg, who wrote a book, *Word Mavens* about Yiddish being woven into the English language. Hazak also has a book group that meets the first Wednesday of the month at 10 AM. March's book is David Grossman's *To the End of the Land*. There will be a program led by Rabbi Zeff on the Kabbalah on March 23.

In her younger years, Cherie was an activist. "In the 1960s, I used to picket the French embassy because they refused to deliver jets to Israel," she recalls. "I stood up to the school board in Lafayette Hill because I said there should be no Bible reading in the public school."

Cherie was born in Memel, Lithuania and came to this country in April 1939, just before the doors closed to Jews trying to flee the Nazis. Her family settled in Indianapolis because Cherie's aunt lived there. Rabbi Charry, who was a



Cherie & Joe Goren

rabbi in Indianapolis before coming to GJC, came to visit Cherie's parents three days after they arrived. "Within five minutes he had me in Hebrew school, had me joining Young Judea, and took over our lives," Cherie says.

Cherie met her husband, Joe, while volunteering to serve meals at USO. "I was still in high school, Joe was a soldier and he used to do my homework. So I felt obligated to marry him," she said, smiling.

Married in 1944, when Cherie had just turned 18, ("My mother cried the whole time," Cherie recalls) Joe went overseas, and Cherie's parents moved to New York City. Cherie and Joe moved to Philadelphia because Joe grew up in the Overbrook section of the city. In the meantime, Rabbi Charry had come to GJC, "and we joined GJC because I wanted my children to be exposed to Rabbi Charry."

"We lived in Lafayette Hill, and when my daughter crossed herself before she went into the swimming pool, I called Rabbi Charry. Then I invited my 10 Jewish neighbors and had Rabbi Charry come out and those families joined and we started the Lafayette Hill contingent of GJC, which is still going strong" as a suburban offshoot of the synagogue, she says.

"Joe and I were both raised Orthodox, and we didn't drive on Yom Kippur. I said to Rabbi Charry one day, 'I moved to Lafayette Hill, and we don't ride on Yom Tov. I made a mistake.' He had an answer for everything. He said, 'No, you live in

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Member Spotlight

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America. You were living in a golden ghetto in West Oak Lane, and you are a minority. It's a mitzvah to ride to the synagogue on Yom Tov so I give you permission."

There also has been profound sadness in Cherie and Joe's life. Their son, Neil, died seven years ago of pancreatic cancer. Cherie says that life as she knew it ended when her son died, but also that life must go on. She and Joe have always found ways to keep their lives busy and fulfilled and continue to do so.

Cherie and her older sister returned in 1993 to their hometown in Lithuania. They visited the Jewish cemetery and "our guide said that when the Russians came, they destroyed the Jewish cemetery and they ground down the tombstones. The Lithuanians later made a monument for the Jews, a half moon and a few tombstones. The first tombstone I saw was my grandparents'."

Joe Goren is now 94. He is now

completely blind, but for many years, he was a prolific Judaica painter and sculptor. His works hang in their apartment and there is a room at Gratz College called the "Joe Goren Room" which houses more of his art.

Joe was drafted into the Army during World War II, "and very luckily they decided to send me to dental school in Indianapolis to become a dental technician. That is where I met Cherie," he says. He did not continue in dental school because he felt he was too old.

Instead, when Joe and Cherie moved to Philadelphia, Joe was offered a job as a debt collector. "The business owner offered me a partnership," he recalls, "and in six months I bought him out and I owned the business." It was the era of installment companies during the 1950's and '60s. "A lot of young people were building families and needed things. I was very lucky. People didn't have credit. It was something that was needed at the time."

Sitting in a chair and holding onto his walker, Joe recounted how he once

was driving down the East River Drive "and there's a big area of sculptures. I saw a man there I knew was Jaques Lipfchitz. I told him I'm a Jewish sculptor also. I had an exhibition at the old Armory in South Philadelphia and he showed up there the next day. He was very kind to me. He offered to be my mentor, but I had a family and I couldn't," he recalls. "I wanted to do more sculpture, but I lost one eye to cancer when I was 50. Then I had macular degeneration in the other eye."

Besides their late son, Cherie and Joe have a daughter and three grandchildren.

Cherie recalls how Rabbi Leonard Gordon told her of Shakespeare's seven stages of human life. In Shakespeare's view, during the last stage, "when you're 80, you don't care anymore, the fire's out." That may be true for some people, but not for everyone. It's true that Cherie isn't picketing anymore and Joe isn't painting anymore, but their flames are still flickering and shedding light, particularly at the Germantown Jewish Centre.

Men's Club News



A fun time was had by all at GJC Celebrates! Hanukkah. Rabbi Zeff led the blessings for the eighth night and then families went back inside for a hot drink. Thank you to Men's Club for sponsoring the dinner and the GJC choir for providing a musical treat.



Join the Ner Tamid Society by Making a Planned Gift to GJC

Please consider making a planned gift to the Germantown Jewish Centre's endowment fund. Planned gifts come in many forms, including for example – charitable gift annuities, life insurance, trusts, or even a bequest in your will.

For more information about how you can join the Ner Tamid Society please contact the office.

Win Trip to Israel or \$4000 in Israel Bonds!

The Annual Passport to Israel Purim fund-raiser drawing will be held at the Germantown Jewish Centre's Purim carnival, Sunday, March 20, 2011.

First prize is a trip for two to Israel — a \$4000 value — or \$4000 in State of Israel bonds. Second prize, \$360; third prize, \$180.

Tickets sales are limited to 500. No cash prize given in lieu of first prize of trip to Israel or State of Israel bonds. Sponsored by GJC Men's Club. You need not be present at drawing to win. Winning ticket valid for one year.

Enter today!

Order your Passports before they sell out! Please complete and mail the form below to the Germantown Jewish Centre, 400 W. Ellet Street, Philadelphia, PA 19119 with your \$30 payment per Passport. We will send you a numbered Passport receipt and you will be on your way to winning a trip to Israel or \$4000 in State of Israel bonds!



Please print:

Name _____

Address _____

Email: _____

Telephone _____

Number of Passports: _____ X \$30 each Passport = \$ _____

Send this completed form to GJC with your payment made out to:
"GJC Men's Club"

Proceeds benefit GJC (including general fund & youth activities),
community programs & the State of Israel. Thank you!

Women's Club News

WOW!! WAKE UP CALL!

Some Rays of Sunshine!

THERE'S HOPE!

Women's Club is offering you the next best thing to a trip to Florida to help put some snap and enjoyment back into your life.

Mark your calendar in bright red for some very exciting events...

Wed., March 30, 7 P.M. – "Your Body & You"

Our guest speaker will be Dr. Sherry Blumenthal, who is a gynecologist. She will talk about:

- Intimacy • Health • Acceptance

Friday and Saturday, April 8 & 9

Scholar-in-Residence and Women's Shabbat

Peninnah Schram will be our guest speaker. She is an internationally known storyteller, teacher, author, and recording artist. She is also Professor of Speech and Drama at Stern College of Yeshiva University as well as the author of 10 books of Jewish folktales. Peninnah will do a teaching Friday night and on Saturday her D'var will be "Boundaries, Banishment and Bad-Mouthing." There will be an Oneg Friday night and a community-wide Kiddush on Saturday.

Sunday, April 13

Israel and The Media, a panel discussion sponsored by Women's Club, Men's Club, and Social Action.

Different points of view will be presented by a group of distinguished journalists.

These blurbs are just to whet your appetite. More information will follow. BUT be sure to mark your calendar. See you at the Centre - learning, laughing, and enjoying the camaraderie of a dynamic group of people.

Judy Schwartz & Bev Somerson

Women's Club Co-Presidents

P.S. – A great thanks to Genie Ravital and her committee of volunteers who worked to make the Women's Clothing Giveaway such a success. Hundreds of women participated and found treasures in items that others had trashed. Additionally more than \$4,000 was raised to support the Darfur Coalition and all of the leftover clothing was donated to the Whosoever Gospel Mission.

SAVE THE DATE

**Sunday, May 15th
at 11:00 A.M.**

Women's Club
Torah Fund Brunch

**HONORING
JOAN SILVER**

Hazak

Programming for Adults 55+

By Hazak Co-Chairs,
Cherie Goren & Sonia Dishler

We don't have to remind you what a hard winter this has been. Hazak has had to reschedule several of our programs, some even twice. Our January 26th program with Rabbi Zeff has been rescheduled for Wednesday, March 23 at 1 PM. Join us and learn the basics of Kabbalah—there's more to it than wearing a red thread! And don't forget about our annual HAZAK SHABBAT, May 14th. At least we won't have to worry about snow!

It's never too late to join Hazak. Dues are just \$10. We always welcome new members or if you have joined in the past, please renew. We also appreciate small contributions throughout the year to offset the cost of refreshments. Thank you so much to Margery Sokoloff for stepping into Elana Shaw's shoes and helping us this winter. We are also glad to welcome Elana back.

If you do not have e-mail, please make sure we have your phone number. We are forming a telephone squad for when we have to cancel or reschedule programs.

Hazak is the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism's organization for Jewish men and women, 55 years and older. The name HAZAK is an acronym. The het stands for Hokhma (wisdom), that zayan for Ziknah (maturity) and the kuph for Kadima (looking ahead). The Rhea Shils Chapter of Hazak at Germantown Jewish Centre has offered programs that appeal to a wide audience since 2003.

DIVRAY CHINUCH

...a few words from the GJC Education Department

Generously supported by the GJC Women's Club

Maybe it's just me.....but it comes as a relief, when we add an extra month to our Jewish year, this year we have Adar I and Adar II. Though the purpose of the calendar adjustment is to make our lunar calendar coincide with the seasons of the year, it also seems to provide a brief respite, a breath of air that serves as a break in a very hectic year schedule!!

This break always serves to give us a little "extra time" to get ready for Purim. The three words that describe Purim are, fun, fun and fun. This is a large part of the charm of Purim. We will soon be planning and practicing our Purim shpiel, the Purim skits and plays which are the highlight of our kid-friendly GJC Celebrates! Purim (March 19 at 6:30 PM). I strongly suggest that all of you get in on this action, and begin to plan and discuss the very serious subject of costume design. This year

is especially sweet considering that Erev Purim is Saturday night. We get a nice day of rest prior to the evening, and then most of the entire next day (Sunday) to attend the Purim carnival, visit with each other, and maybe take the opportunity to attend morning Purim services – usually just as raucous and wild as the night before, but shorter!! We look forward to seeing you there!!

There are two additional entries in our usual Education Department section of the Centre Call. Leah Corsover, the Kadima advisor, has provided an article about this year's incredibly successful Kadima group. In addition, the second installment of the "Young Adult GJC Israel Correspondent" column is provided by Tamar Friedman, and well worth the read!!!

Looking forward to seeing all of you in the building,

Rabbi Kevin

IMPORTANT FUTURE PROGRAM DATES

**MARCH 19TH,
SATURDAY NIGHT –
GJC Celebrates! PURIM,
6:30 PM**

**BBMM
(Bar Bat Mitzvah Mehina)**

- Shabbat Sessions
March 5th and April 2nd
- Friday evening, April 11,
Erev Shabbat session for
Parents and Students

**KADIMA
(Youth Group for 4th
and 5th graders)**

- April 10th –
our next activity, details to follow

Young Adult GJC Israel Correspondent

Tamar Friedman, graduated in 2010 from Lower Moreland High School. She is currently attending the Nativ College Leadership Program in Israel, sponsored by the Conservative movement. She is this month's Young Adult GJC Israel Correspondent and provides the following insights: *Todah Rabba Tamar!!!!*

During the rise of the Zionist movement, a big question arose among Jewish philosophers: what is more vital to Judaism — the "book" (Scriptures) or experience? Ahad Ha-am, a prominent Zionist thinker, took a fairly moderate position, insisting that both were necessary. In his essay, "The Law of the Heart," he writes, "Only in that way, as it seems to me, can the Jewish soul be freed from its shackles and regain contact with the broad stream of human life without having to

pay for its freedom by the sacrifice of its individuality." Here Ahad Ha-am argues that while Jews needed to be freed from the constraints of Scriptures and re-introduced to the importance of Jewish experience, they could not at the same time afford to lose those elements from Scriptures which made them uniquely Jewish. Therefore, a balance must be reached.

When we studied this Ahad Ha-am text in my Modern Jewish Thought class at the Conservative Yeshiva, I realized that this balance very much sums up my experience so far participating in the gap-year program, the Nativ College Leadership Program in Israel. At the Yeshiva, I have been learning about Judaism through intense text study, and outside of Yeshiva, I have been enhancing my Judaism through meaningful Jewish

(and specifically, Israeli) experiences.

At the Conservative Yeshiva, I take a whole range of classes. The main class is Talmud, which we have four mornings a week. This is really my first experience studying Talmud, and not only have I learned a lot of content, I have also learned the unique art of Talmudic logic. I can already see how my reasoning skills have been enhanced by my studies. In addition to Talmud, I also study Bible, Midrash, Modern Jewish Thought, Kabbalah, Contemporary Issues in Conservative Halacha, and Pirke Avot. Learning Jewish values and practices through textual study is helping me decide what role I want Judaism to play in my everyday life.

Outside of my classes, spending a significant amount of time in Israel (and specifically in the heart of

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Young Adult GJC Israel Correspondent

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Jerusalem), I constantly feel that I am LIVING Judaism. In the U.S., my religious life sometimes felt like a separate entity from my "normal" life. It was possible to go a whole day without thinking of my Judaism. Yet here, Jewish culture and history confront me every day. For example, on Yom Kippur, when the streets of Jerusalem were empty of cars, I, along with other members of my program, sat in the middle of one of the biggest intersections in Jerusalem and sang Hebrew songs. People from all different backgrounds—from ultra orthodox Jews to non-Jewish tourists—joined us in singing. Although experi-

ences like this are especially memorable, it is often the subtle details that remind me of my Judaism. Whether it be the man selling me rugalech who asks how good of a deal I got on my lulav and etrog, the candles glowing in every window as I walk through the streets on Hanukkah, or going to the Kotel at 2:00a.m. just because I live nearby, there is always something here that reminds me of my identity and why this identity is so important to maintain. I already feel a stronger connection to the people, language, and history of the land. What I have learned from my text study is not separate from these experiences, but rather serves to make them even more meaningful. I am, of course, still struggling and searching for my relationship to Judaism, but I'm pretty sure

the secret lies in this balance.

Though the topics of religion and God can be very intimidating, I have chosen not to hide from the challenge, but rather to devote an entire year to facing these topics and learning about them. Through this process, I am learning a lot about myself, and I think I am better preparing myself for college.

Ahad Ha-am, along with other early Zionists, wanted to reconnect Jews with the land of Israel in the hopes that it would revitalize the Jewish community. I know that coming to Israel this year, and having my own Zionist experience is already revitalizing my life, and I cannot wait to see what the rest of this incredible year will bring.

Kadima Korner

By Leah Corsover, Kadima Advisor

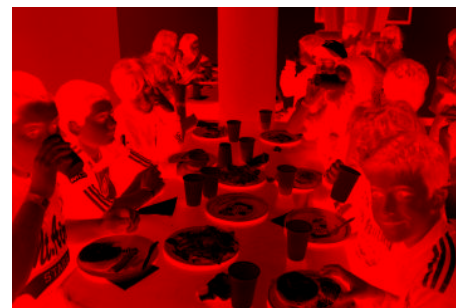
Kadima is back! After a push from parents and the education department, Germantown Jewish Centre has re-established a youth group, with amazing results. Between 20-28 fourth through sixth graders have come out for each of the four events so far, and we have received rave reviews from both the participants and their parents.

At our kick-off event, we made delicious personal pizzas from scratch, watched a Wallace and Gromit movie, and many of us had to be dragged away from the board games at the end of the evening. We also voted on future events for the year (with almost unanimous results!), and discussed why a youth group is different from religious school. This resonates with me because I treasured my experience with GJC's high school USY group. Although I grew up in the congregation, USY created a social bond that had nothing to do with my parents or any obligation to participate in religious ritual. When my friends and I organized USY activities, we were making an independent choice to be part of the community.

This sort of self-regulated connection is invaluable to the future of our community, and I am excited to help provide a similar opportunity for our current synagogue youth.

Our second activity, a trip to Bounce-U in Cherry Hill, was fun to participate in and fun to watch. The Bounce-U rooms are filled with super-sized inflatable activities: giant slides, basketball hoops, and bouncing obstacle courses with dodge balls, among others. You've never seen a more active bunch of kids - I'm surprised they didn't all pass out from exhaustion on the drive home! Perhaps it was the treat-filled table at the end that kept them awake...

In January, the regional Kadima representative brought her own version of the popular "Minute To Win It" game show to GJC. We organized into teams of three, and competed in such tricky events as "pasta threading" (no hands allowed), building a house of cards, apple stacking, shaking ping pong balls out of boxes tied around the waist, and my personal favorite: knocking over cups with a pantyhose "wrecking ball" worn on our heads. Needless to say, there was a lot of laughter in the room!



Kadima enjoys lunch a Bounce U

Most recently, in early February, the group took a trip to Brunswick Zone in Feasterville to participate in a few Laser Tag games and some arcade action. Highlights of the trip included the playful humiliation of GJC Vice President Matt Shapiro and Rabbi Kevin. (Perhaps next time, we'll explain how the games work before we begin.) Coming up in the future is a swimming party at the local rec center. I hope to have one of the Kadima-niks provide the next report on these activities.

If you know of a 4th-6th grader who would like to be included on our mailing list, please send their information to Rabbi Kevin, the education director, at education@germantownjewishcentre.org.

Social Action Update

Gasland and Genesis

By Dr. Andrea Brockman

If you haven't yet directly experienced the effects of the gas drilling industry, does it mean that you are unaffected? Ignorance of the population is certainly bliss for the powerful gas and oil giants steamrolling over our Pennsylvania landscape.

That's why the natural gas industry reacted so scornfully to news of the Academy Award nomination of Director Josh Fox's film "Gasland" for best documentary film. First aired on HBO and now available on Netflix, the controversial film that won best documentary at the Sundance Film Festival turns a harshly critical eye on the threats to our health and environment from natural gas drilling. This brave director found a way to expose to the masses what has been intentionally squelched in Philadelphia newspapers and local news stations. What? Is poisoning Philadelphia's drinking water not news? It's certainly news in Sullivan County, PA, a once pristine mountainous sanctuary where I own a home - right on the epicenter of the Marcellus Shale.

It has felt like an invasion ever since the gas drilling companies arrived in Sullivan County three years ago. Instead of tanks, there were rigs plowing through our roads and forestland. Instead of dropping radioactive bombs, they were drilling deep holes and releasing radioactivity from the earth. Instead of killing us with germ warfare, they were using chemicals to poison our water. Wellpads started springing up in plain sight. One day there was a lush green forest, and the next day there was an unsightly clearing on the mountainside with hundreds of bright blue and orange trucks. The harsh stadium lighting at the well tower burning throughout the night now obscured our once star filled

sky. The relentless noise of the trucks on our previously quiet country roads drowned out conversation and the beautiful sounds of nature.

For the past three years, the gas landmen have been knocking on the doors of our 20-home community to lease our mineral rights. Holding them at bay proved useless as our contiguous neighbors that included a 2200 acre landowner, 400 acre private park, and lake and gamelands owned by the PA Fishing Commission all leased their land to Chief Oil and Gas.

Our community well water is located on the park across the street where the owner who leased the mineral rights to Chief Oil and Gas sanctioned seismic testing just a few hundred feet away from our well and reservoir. When we received a notice from Chief Oil that they were going to use 3-5 million gallons of water a day from our neighbor's aquifer for fracking, we vehemently objected and wrote letters to our legislators and the DEP. It was to no avail. The political climate was strong in support of the gas industry. To protect our water, our Lotowners Association hired legal counsel to draft a gas lease with provisions of no surface rights of building wells, no pipelines on the property, and no seismic testing. The lease stipulated frequent monitoring of our well and pond waters with reservoir water replacement if contaminants appear.

Philadelphia is not on the Marcellus Shale and therefore has no land to lease for gas extraction. But just because the wells are not here in Philadelphia, does not mean that we're not greatly affected by what our upstate neighbors are planning. After all, our mountain house well water and reservoir were on our neighbor's property. The difference is that Philadelphia water supply comes from the Delaware River Water Basin where much of the Marcellus Shale is located. Our municipal water treatment plants cannot remove the chem-

icals used in fracking. With more than 10,000 wells planned on our watershed, the toll on wildlife, the flora, and human health will be devastating. Philadelphians can't sign leases with gas companies to protect our water, but we do have leverage collectively with our numbers of voting citizens.

In late January, I testified at a City Council meeting to support Resolution 100864 introduced by Councilmember Jones to adopt the report issued by the Council's Joint Committees on Transportation and Public Utilities and the Environment on the economic and environmental impacts that hydraulic drilling of the Marcellus Shale will have on Philadelphia and the surrounding region. Just imagine the economic impact from a downturn in tourism, college student residents, business, and residential population if the water is not fit to drink or bathe in. Revenues from the surrounding agriculture, dairy, and meat industries will decline. Food and water prices will escalate. This does not take into account the consequences of overwhelming healthcare expenses and the reduction of our tax base. Should we be concerned? You bet!

I hope everyone sees "Gasland" and gets the motivation to do something before it's too late for us. In this world of chaos, creation began when G-d said, "Let there be light." While the gas industry has spent millions of dollars lobbying our government to stop any effort to rein in pollution and keep us in the dark, "Gasland" has managed to shed some light and G-d saw that the "light was good."

To stay informed about our advocacy efforts and upcoming events, we encourage you to sign up for the SAC list serve by sending an e-mail to gicsocactionssubscribe@yahoogroups.com.

Social Action Update

Continued from page 11

By Coleman Poses

In the last issue of the Centre Call, Josh Peskin explained why the Marcellus Shale is such an important issue in Pennsylvania. In this issue Andrea Brockman writes how the Marcellus Shale drilling has affected her personally since she owns a home in the Marcellus Shale drilling area.

As we have learned about the Marcellus Shale, we have also become acquainted with another term, "hydraulic fracturing," or "fracking," which is a process of injecting water, sand, and chemicals into a wellbore for the purpose of extracting natural gas. Understanding what the possible long term effects of this type of gas extraction will mean for both Philadelphia and Pennsylvania, City Council voted unanimously to adopt a resolution by Councilman Curtis Jones, which included the following recommendations.

1. A moratorium on all drilling in the Delaware watershed until all cumulative impact studies performed by such groups as (a) the Delaware River Basin Commission; (b) the U.S. Geological Survey; (c) The Academy of Natural Science; and (d) Temple university, are completed. The release of these studies should then be followed by public debate.
2. Council has a greater moral obligation to prevent future environmental disasters than to fix them.
3. An economic impact study, including what the long range net impact will be on job creation from the drilling, must be performed. Provisions must include training for Philadelphia high school residents.
4. Thirty percent of any severance (i.e., gas extraction) tax will go toward ameliorating any environmental damage caused by fracking (which seems, in some ways to contradict (2) above).
5. Hydraulic fracturing technology should not be exempt from Federal environmental laws.
6. All chemicals used in hydraulic fracturing should be made public.
7. The Philadelphia Gas Commission should continue to avoid purchasing Marcellus Shale gas.
8. The Water Department should adjust its testing to include known substances used or produced by the hydraulic fracturing process, including soluble radioactive materials.

In order to educate ourselves more extensively on hydraulic fracturing in the Marcellus Shale the Social Action Committee plans to show the film *Gasland*, on March 15. *Gasland* is a film about the Marcellus Shale, which, at the time of this writing was nominated for best documentary by the Motion Picture Academy. Damascus Citizens, the group to whom the film is dedicated, will be in attendance. We hope to have a well balanced discussion on the topic, and to implement an action plan by the end of the evening.

Sponsored by the Germantown Jewish Centre Social Action Committee and the Weavers Way Education Committee
NIM - Neighborhood Interfaith Movement, Unitarian Society of Germantown Green Sanctuary Committee

GASLAND



ABOUT THE FILM

"The largest domestic natural gas drilling boom in history has swept across the United States. The Halliburton-developed drilling technology of "fracking" or hydraulic fracturing has unlocked a "Saudi Arabia of natural gas" just beneath us. But is fracking safe? When filmmaker Josh Fox is asked to lease his land for drilling, he embarks on a cross-country odyssey uncovering a trail of secrets, lies and contamination. A recently drilled nearby Pennsylvania town reports that residents are able to light their drinking water on fire. This is just one of the many absurd and astonishing revelations of a new country called GASLAND. Part verite travelogue, part expose, part mystery, part bluegrass banjo meltdown, part showdown."

**Tuesday,
March 8
7:00 p.m**

**Germantown
Jewish Centre**

**Marcus Auditorium
400 W. Ellet Street
(near Lincoln Drive)**

**QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD
FOLLOWING THE FILM.**

The deadline for comments on proposed Pennsylvania legislation on gas drilling is March 15.

For information: program@germantownjewishcentre.org

Adult Education 2011/5771

Please review the chart below for our courses at a glance. Complete details can be found on our website or in our printed brochure.

Advanced registration is requested for all courses. Contact the office to register.

Title	Instructor(s)	Timing	Dates	Cost GJC Members/ Non Members
The land of Israel in Kabbalistic Literature	Guest Teacher Rabbi Mira Regev	Tuesdays 7-8:30 pm	Feb 22 Mar 1, 8, 15, 22, 29	\$80/100
From Birth to Death: The Cycle of Jewish Life in Text & Practice	Rabbi Adam Zeff	Sundays 10-11:30 am	Feb 27 Mar 6, 13, 27 Apr 10 + TBA	\$75/100
Feeding the Soul: Making, Tasting & Studying Holiday Favorites	Rabbi Fredi Cooper	Tuesdays 7-9 pm	Mar 29 Apr 5 May 17, 24	\$80/100 (2 holidays) \$50/60 (1 holiday)

Special Thanks to the Wolfe Family Foundation for generously supporting programming at GJC.

Shavuot Memorial Plaque Dedication

Throughout the ages, Jews have responded to the loss of loved ones by committing themselves to remembering those who have died and to perpetuating their memories through devotion to the values that they held dear in life. Memory, that most insubstantial of experiences, is in fact the thing that stays with us the longest; it is truly our most lasting possession. The customs of mourning – including the recitation of the kaddish prayer, the observance of yahrtzeit on the yearly anniversary of a death, and the yizkor memorial service on holidays – are all intended to help us keep the memories of those whom we have loved and lost alive in our hearts and in our lives.

In medieval times, people began

inscribing the names of those who had died on the walls of their synagogues so that they would be remembered by succeeding generations. This custom, which grew out of the losses of the Crusades and other hard times for the Jewish people, finds its modern counterpart in the memorial plaques that hang on the walls of the Charry Sanctuary. The names on these plaques, dear to so many of us, serve as a reminder of those who have come before us and the many blessings they have passed on to us. The lights beside their names are lit on the week of the yahrtzeit and at the yizkor memorial service on holidays as a mark of love and respect.

Please consider adding the name of a loved one to those on our memorial plaques. We will hold a dedication ceremony for the new plaques on

Shavuot (Thursday, June 9, 2011) when we remember the encounter of the people with God at Mt. Sinai. As we stretch our minds back to that moment, we encompass all of the generations that have lived between then and now, as we continue to uphold the values of their lives in our own time.

Y'hi zichronam livrachah – may the memory of our loved ones always be a source of blessing and strength in our lives.

You are welcome to order plaques at any time, however **in order to guarantee that your plaque has arrived for dedication on Shavuot, please place your plaque order by March 31, 2011.** Please contact the office for more information or you can find an order form on our website.

The fastest way for your contribution to be processed is for you to fill out a Contribution Form (available in the office or on our website) and return it to the office along with a check. Or just send in a check with a note.

Contributions For the period ending mid-December, 2010 through mid-February, 2011

Todah Rabbah!

Sincere thanks and appreciation to those who remember to honor their friends and loved ones through their generous contributions.

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in honor of Chuck Schleifer, on his special birthday

in memory of Marcus Bressler, brother of Hilda Minkoff

in memory of Nancy Isaac Kuriloff, sister of Peter Kuriloff

in honor of Cy Cohen, on his 75th birthday

in honor of Sam & Connie Katz, on the engagement of their son,
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in honor of Rabbi Zeff, on his special gifts and skills

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in memory of Irene Kogut Laster, mother

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in honor of the birth of their granddaughter Risa Horn Pulzetti,
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in memory of Miriam Ferleger, mother of David Ferleger

in memory of Stanley Sapon, father of Daniel Sapon

in memory of Stanley L. Moses, uncle of Joan Silver and
Ellen Kopeland

in memory of William Steinlauf, father

in honor of Ari Shalom Trey-Masters, on becoming Bar Mitzvah
refuah shleimah to Myriam, neice

in memory of Rachel Nadjar, mother

in memory of Bernice Weiss, mother

in memory of George Cohen, father

in memory of Stanley Sapon, father of Daniel Sapon

in memory of Ruth Seldin, mother of Alex Seldin

in memory of Edward Seltzer, father of Gail Tunick

in honor of Rabbi Zeff

in memory of Elinore Arnold, great-aunt

in memory of Stanley Sapon, father of Daniel Sapon

in memory of Bill Conner, brother of Chris Levin

in memory of Bill Conner, brother of Chris Levin

in honor of Cy Cohen, on his 75th birthday

in memory of Bill Conner, brother of Chris Levin

Contributions *Continued*

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in honor of Rabbi Adam Zeff
in memory of Jules Orlove, husband
in memory of Ignaz Spitzer, grandfather
in memory of Robert Rosenthal, son
in memory of Arthur Shore, father
in honor of Chuck Schleifer, on his special birthday
refuah shleimah to Peninah Berdugo
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Phil, to Leah Greenberg
in memory of Nathaniel Feldman, nephew of Maurice &
Maxine Feldman

in memory of Lillian Stearman, grandmother
in memory of Miriam Ferleger, mother of David Ferleger
in memory of Sylvia Buyum, grandmother
in honor of Howard & Ronit Treatman, on the Bar Mitzvah of
their son, David
in memory of Marcus Bressler, brother of Hilda Minkoff
in memory of Stanley Moses, uncle of Joan Silver & Ellen Kopeland
refuah shleimah to Marcy Bacine

in memory of Freda H. Ladenheim, mother
in memory of Stanley Moses, uncle of Joan Silver & Ellen Kopeland
in memory of Marcus Bressler, brother of Hilda Minkoff
in memory of Stanley Moses, uncle of Joan Silver & Ellen Kopeland
in memory of Marcus Bressler, brother of Hilda Minkoff
in memory of Stanley Moses, uncle of Joan Silver & Ellen Kopeland
in honor of Cy Cohen, on his 75th birthday
in honor of Amy Cohen & Mark Spiller, on their 25th
wedding anniversary
in memory of Nancy Isaac Kuriloff, sister of Peter Kuriloff
in memory of Marcus Bressler, brother of Hilda Minkoff
in honor of Steve & Patty Segal, on the birth of their grandson,
Asa Max Shapiro
in memory of the mother of Michael Dzuba
in memory of Sidney Sivitz, father
in memory of Irving Stein, brother
in honor of Chuck Schleifer, on his special birthday
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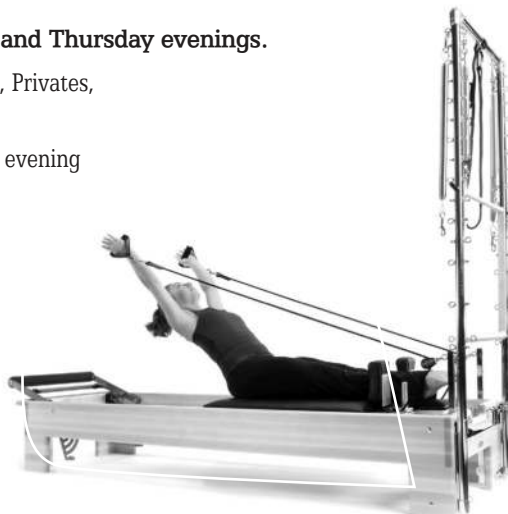


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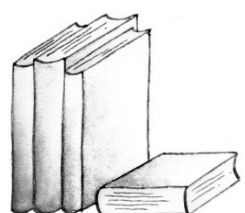
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Save the Dates

Purim Bash
March 12

Purim
March 19-20

Israel & the Media
April 3

Women's Club
Scholar-in-Residence Shabbat
April 8-9