



The Shofar

Shaare Tefila Congregation

קול
השוֹפָר

Celebrating our 58th year

Vol.58 # 5

January 2010 — Tevet/Shevat 5770



FROM THE RABBI'S STUDY... What Makes a Synagogue?

As we move forward with our building plans, the question arises as to how much of the building are we going to be able to build. Will the building include a separate sanctuary and chapel? Will it be inviting and welcoming? Will it be beautiful? Will it make us competitive?

These are all legitimate questions and in one sense they distract us from the basic question - what is a synagogue. There are three words for a shul in Hebrew - *beit kneset* - house of assembly; *beit midrash* - house of study; and *beit tefilah* - house of prayer. In our history a synagogue building has served all those functions. Synagogues have been the place for the community to gather for religious and social functions; for the community to study; and for the community to pray. Simply put, if a building can serve all those functions then it is a synagogue.

But unfortunately life isn't so simple today. It would be a lot easier to find a building and transform it into those functions. But there are many competing forces at work today including trying to figure out how to attract Jews to our community. Will a beautiful building alone bring them in and make us successful?

The key to any building is the community that gathers in it. Shaare Tefila Congregation is a warm, unpretentious, and welcoming community. We are committed to praying and learning together. We are committed to strengthening our Jewish identity. We are committed to helping those in need. We are supportive of each other in times of joy and sadness. That's who we are and that identity must continue no matter what external shell we build.

We need a full building to compete in the Jewish market today, but we need to remember our identity in order to thrive in the future. A body needs a soul and let us ensure that as we design the body that we continue to work on the soul. Working on both will ensure our health and survival.

B'vracha,

Rabbi Jonah Layman



FROM OUR PRESIDENT:

You must be as excited as I am about starting up construction in this new year. The Year of our Construction. (Sounds like a movie title. If it's made into a movie, I want Angelina Jolie to play my part.)

We've been planning for this for quite a while – no understatement there. Mark Kaufman's Strategic Planning Committee finished its report and the Board will be voting on its many recommendations. After it is accepted, we'll be sharing those ideas with you.

Meanwhile, in anticipation of our construction completion (yes – we do have to think ahead), we are very lucky that **Patricia Greene** has agreed to be our Dedication Chairman. She will be the point person for our many dedication events. There will be several committees formed to work on the differing aspects of opening our new facility. Because of the shared excitement and anticipation and eagerness, there might even be more volunteers than assignments, but my thinking is that there is always the right job for the right person, so contact **Patricia** or me now or when she puts out her feelers. Meanwhile, if you have some ideas as to how to celebrate our opening, please let us know that too.

Several weeks ago, Jack and I saw the Coen brothers movie "A Serious Man" about a Jewish family in the mid-West in 1979. There was much to relate to: the husband is a Physics professor (as was **Jack** too, by the way), the family lives in a suburb, the son has his Bar Mitzvah in a possibly Conservative ceremony (lots of liberties taken with the service), with the husband having several moral decisions to make. He goes to 3 rabbis for help with his problems and that is the source of much of the humor. The 3 rabbis are not exactly ideal spiritual leaders by any standards. The Hebrew School scenes are hysterical in that they are realistic and satirical. If you've seen the movie, I'm curious how you would have felt if non-Jews would have made it and what you thought of it. I'd also like to know if you think non-Jews would appreciate the film in the way that we who are more familiar with the targets and background might. There are not too many (what was the last?) movies about Jewish families, not counting Holocaust films, so I think we have to deal with our cultural inputs and be prepared for questions our children or our office mates might ask. And we should consider if we are happy with the portrayal of Jews in America in today's movies, television and novels. When I was Sisterhood President, over a decade ago, I wrote about the poor representation of Jews in the media and I don't think it's improved since. Your thoughts?

Call me, write me, give me your ideas, your suggestions, and of course your compliments,

Bess Teller, President

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president@shaareteflia.org

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The Shofar



FROM CANTOR WENDI:

To my dear Shaare Tefila family,

On the 30th of this month, we will celebrate my favorite Shabbat of the year...Shabbat Shira, meaning Shabbat of Song. Traditionally, the name is referring to one song in particular; that of Shirat Hayam, the song of the sea. This song was said to have been sung by Miriam and the Israelite women after

they crossed the red sea. It is chanted on this Shabbat with a special trope, or tune, and commemorates our escape from the Egyptian people and celebrates our profound and difficult, yet ever evolving and loving relationship with God. This prayer is also found in our daily liturgy during the Shacharit service. So, we observe this Shabbat of song by chanting Shirat Hayam and in many congregations the Shabbat Shira theme of the weekend is expanded to include other kinds of music and entertainment as well.

This upcoming Shabbat Shira will be a very special one for us here at Shaare Tefila. We will have our 3rd alternative Shabbat program which will include instruments, both choirs, and YOU! The program is called *A Musical Shabbat Experience: Selections from Shabbat Liturgy*. This will not be a service in the traditional sense that we will follow the liturgy in order. Instead, we intend to provide an overview of prayers from all the various services of Shabbat starting from Friday night Kabbalat Shabbat and Maariv through Saturday morning Shacharit including Hallel, Torah Service, Musaf, and onto Havdalah! (We will also honor Tu B'Shevat which occurs on the same day!)

This is NOT a performance or concert! In putting this service together and choosing which prayers to include, I put much emphasis on finding a balance between the known and the unknown. There is so much music out there and so much I want to introduce you to! So, with that in mind, there will be tunes that you know and there will also be some that you are not familiar with. However, everyone is encouraged to participate throughout the entire "service" at all times! The choirs and instruments will be there to ENHANCE with their harmonies and also to help with the introduction of newer tunes. They will be there as guides and support for those melodies that you are less familiar with. If you do not know the tune, please try to catch on! I will provide sheet music and words in transliteration so we can all feel equally involved in the experience. I do hope that you will all come and join us for this musical celebration of Shabbat!

In one paragraph above, I mention Tu B'Shevat, the birthday of the trees. There are a few possible connections that have been made as to why these two days are intertwined in the calendar. Some say it is because of the Haftorah that was selected for this day. This text is about Devorah, the judge and prophetess who sat under a date palm and passed down judgment and justice. Some say it was selected to be chanted on Shabbat Shira because Miriam and Deborah both sang songs in celebration of God's miracles.

Here I offer my own midrash : Within the Tu B'shevat seder, we talk about three categories of fruits that we can find. First there are the **Fruits with insides we can eat and outsides that we can't eat**. Some examples are bananas, pomegranates, almonds, and oranges. Next are the **Fruits with outsides we can eat and pits inside, which we can't eat**. Some examples are olives, dates, cherries, and avocados. Finally, there are the **Fruits that we can eat**

inside and out. Some examples are grapes, figs, and carobs.

In an article on the website www.ritualwell.org, these groups of fruit are compared to different types of people or different moods we might experience. "Some people, for example, have a hard, tough shell but are soft-hearted; other people can seem to be very easy-going but they have a lot of inner resolve and conviction."

For me, the connection lies within different kinds of music. There is music that conveys meaning with a hum or a yai dai, what we call a niggun, whose message lies within the tune and allows time for self reflection. Then there is the kind of music for which the melody is there, but it takes a backseat to the words which express and force us outside ourselves to share that deeper meaning, and thirdly is the type that combine the two...music in which the melody and the words are inextricably tied together to make up an entire spiritual experience...body, heart, mind, and soul. On this Shabbat Shira, January 30th, 2010 I hope you will each come and allow yourselves to experience all these types of Shabbat music... see which one expresses the liturgy best for you... which type most helps you convey your feelings and your relationship with God and your community around you.

Hope to see you all there!!

B'shira uv'zimra,

Cantor Wendi Fried

Happy Birthday to our Youth!

Noah Becker
Paul Buckberg
Sammy Krosnick
Ilana Meltzer
Joshua Paynter
Allison Schwartz
Joshua Seigel
Jacob Weiss



YIDDUSH CLUB

Meets EVERY MONDAY

Alternates between Bresler and Neufeld Houses

See you there for a bissel conversation and a freylich time.

THE SHOFAR*Shaare Tefila Congregation

10881 Lockwood Drive*Silver Spring, MD 20901

Vol. 58 No.5 *January *Published 10 times a year

Views expressed by congregants are not necessarily the views of the congregation.

The Shofar



FROM THE SISTERGOOD

January is going to be a busy month for Sisterhood. Mark your calendars and hope the weather is mild.

Toda Raba to **Charlotte Potosky** for hosting the December meeting. Our next meeting is January 11, at **Adriana Sandler's** home. Toda Raba, **Rabbi Layman**, for the refresher course on Kashrus. We really appreciate your time and wisdom.

January 30, is our Tu B'Shevat Seder. Mark it on your calendar, more details to follow.

WL Seaboard Education Day is Sunday, January 31, at B'nai Israel in Rockville. This year's speakers are Ilana Blumberg and Sara Shalva. The cost is \$36 which includes lunch and Ilana Blumberg's book House of Worship: A Jewish Woman Among Books.

Yasher Koach and Toda Raba to **Rachel Sniffen** for facilitating a great discussion for the November Rosh Chodesh Meeting. Toda Raba to **Beth Greenfeld** for facilitating the December meeting. The January meeting is on the 16th.

Thank you to everyone who helps with Kiddush shopping, setup and cleanup. We have been eating well the past few months.

What is scrip and why are we reminded to buy it every Shabbos? I have been asked this question, so scrip is gift cards or coupons that Sisterhood buys from stores such as Giant and Shalom at 5% below face value and sells for face value. The difference is money that Sisterhood gives to the congregation. So...

And as always **buy Scrip**; it is our biggest fund raiser. This year Sisterhood has already given \$5,000 to the synagogue. Please keep eating and help us raise more funds. If you have any questions about scrip please call **Barbara Fink**.

B'shalom, *Deborah Letow*

Jay Hagler Blue Yarmulke Man-of-the-Year Shaare Tefila Congregation Men's Club 2010/5770

Seaboard Region
Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs
Blue Yarmulke Men-of-the-Year Dinner

6:00 PM, Sunday, January 31, 2010
Adas Israel Congregation
2850 Quebec Street, NW Washington, DC
Cocktail Hour & Dinner: \$75.00 per person

Please reserve _____ seats for Cocktails & Dinner.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Reservations for the dinner are on a "first-come, first served" basis, and must be made not later than January 22, 2010.

Reservations can be made by mailing this form and a check made payable to "Shaare Tefila Men's Club" to:
Michael Binder, mjbinder@comcast.net or
1821 Cullen Dr. Silver Spring, MD 20905
For Questions or Phone Reservations Call Michael Binder at
(301) 908-2284

SHABBAT "FROM AROUND THE WORLD" DINNER MEXICO

Friday, January 8, 2010

6:00 pm Shabbat Service 7:00 pm Shabbat Dinner

Sandy Spring Bank, 17801 Georgia Ave, Olney, MD 20832 (enter at the back of the building)

Please note: We will be having Fish Tacos and other vegetarian fare. This will be a dairy meal
RSVP by January 4th. Registrations will be accepted on a first come-first served. Limit of 85 people for the dinner.



Cost:

\$18 Member/\$22 NonMember (ages 13+/adult) \$10 Member/\$12 NonMember (ages 6-12) Under age 5 (free)

Prospective Members will be invited to this event. If you have any friends, relatives or neighbors to whom we should reach out, please contact Stefanie Levy at membership@shaaretefila.org or call 301-681-3388.

Send registration form and check directly to the office to hold your spot!

ShaareTefila Congregation * 10881 Lockwood Drive * Silver Spring, MD 20901

Name: _____ E-mail: _____

_____ # Adults (13+) attending _____ # Children (5 - 12) attending _____ # Children <5 attending (free)

_____ Total # attending \$ _____ Amount enclosed _____ # vegetarians

Please volunteer to help out with: _____ set-up; _____ serving; _____ clean-up

I would like to be on the Bi-Monthly Shabbat Dinner Committee: ___ Yes ___ No

Questions, contact Fran Weiss (faoweiss@verizon.net)

The Shofar

Youth Corner

Lynn Berk, Youth Director

December was a busy month. Each of our youth groups had a Chanukah program and we also had three Family Programs. We held the first of our three winter Shabbat Game Afternoons, had the Mama Doni Concert followed by the Brisket & Latke Chanukah Dinner and then spent the evening of December 24th together as a community sharing Chinese Food and Movies. We had nice turnouts at all of these programs and hope that all who participated enjoyed themselves,

We welcome 2010 with more youth and family programming. Our 2nd Shabbat Game Afternoon will take place on Saturday, January 9th. The program begins after Kiddush in the school wing of Tikvat Israel. We will have a light lunch and a variety of table games and card games for the adults, the teens can spend time in the youth lounge and there will be games and activities for the younger children. Babysitting is available for those between 18 months and 5 years.

The Joint Youth Department won a grant from the District of Columbia Campus Kitchens project. We are the only middle school - high school group to win this grant. The grant was for an inter-faith social action program to take place on Martin Luther King's birthday to honor his memory. On Monday, January 18, our **Kadimaniks** and **USYers** will be joining a local church youth group to do a Community Service Project with the Behrend Builders of the DCJCC. We will be renovating several apartments in a Transitional Housing Development. The kids will be painting, repairing and fixing up these apartments to make them available to homeless families in DC. The program is open to anyone from 6th thru 12 grade. If you know someone who might like to participate with us, please contact **Lynn Berk**.

The 3rd Annual Youth Shabbat will take place on Saturday, **January 23. Shaare Tefila will be holding its Shabbat Service at Tikvat Israel.** The service will be coordinated and performed by the youth of both congregations. Every youth in both synagogues from kindergarten thru 12 grade is invited to participate. **USY** coordinates the service, providing the Rabbi, the Cantor, Torah readers, youth to give the sermon and **USYers** to carry the Torah, dress the Torah, etc. **Kadima** also provides Torah readers, the Haftorah reader, kids to open the ark, read English and Hebrew prayers, etc. **Kindergartners thru 5th graders** will participate together in leading several prayers and songs during the service and at the Kiddush to follow the service. Children attending the Rimonim Center for Jewish Learning will be taught their parts during religious school classes. Children attending area Jewish Day Schools will be sent their parts in English transliteration and in Hebrew, so they can work on the parts with their parents or with their classroom teachers. The Kiddush lunch following the service is sponsored by the Joint Youth Committee of Shaare Tefila and Tikvat Israel.

JANUARY CALENDAR

JANUARY CALENDAR	
Family Program	
January 9	Shabbat Game Afternoon
Bonim	
January 23	Youth Shabbat
January 31	Tu B'Shevat Program
Machar	
January 23	Youth Shabbat
January 24	Rock Climbing @ Earth Trek
Kadima	
January 9	Seaboard Region Kadima Saturday Night Live
January 10, 18, 24, 31	Regional Kadima Basketball League
January 18	MLK Social Action Project
January 23	Youth Shabbat
January 24	Ice Skating
USY	
January 10, 18, 24, 31	Seaboard Region USY Basketball League Begins
January 18	MLK Social Action Project
January 23	Youth Shabbat
January 24	8 th Grade Induction & Bowling
January 30	Seaboard Region USY Formal Dance

••SAVE THE DATE••SAVE THE DATE••

FEBRUARY

Saturday, Feb 6	Shabbat Afternoon Games Day
Sunday, Feb 7	Family Hamantashen Bake In
Sun, Feb 21	Kadima / USY Basketball
Sunday, Feb 28	Kadima / USY Basketball League



The Shofar

THE SHAARE TEFILA CHALLENGE: TAKE THE COLLEGE MOMS QUIZ!!!!!!!

Match the name of one of our 51 undergraduate and 7 graduate students to his/her school. (Warning: some schools have more than one Shaare Tefila student, for example the University of Maryland has 12 students from our congregation.)
Good luck to all of you and to our students!

STUDENTS:

Steven Abraham	Elisheva Layman
Josh Akman	Nathan Lefler
Noah Arber	Daniel Levine
Julie Balin	Zachary Levitt
Sharon Byer	Sarah Levitt
Amy Byer	Ben Lorber
Zachary Carroll	Jake Lorber
Max Carroll	Jesse Marder
Alex Federman	Rebecca Morgenstern
Mark Federman	Daniel Norken
Daniel Froehlich	Elana Plotkin
Benjamin Green	Talia Plotkin
Daniel Green	Molly Rochester
Daniel Grosberg	Daniel Ronis
Dara Grosberg	David Rosenberg
Aaron Gross	Evan Rosenberg
Beth Hagler	Michael Rosenberg
Daniel Hagler	Ben Ross
Cara Hedgepeth	Sheri Sagall
Sarah Ifft	Hedi Sandberg
Melissa Kahn	Willeke Sandler
Madison Kantzer	Rachel Schotz
Marc Katz	Ravid Tilles
Brian Kaye	Sari Wieser
Dennis Kelner	Victoria Yedlin
Lauren Kensky	Lauren Yedlin
Julia Kraut	Rachel Zarney
Aaron Kraut	Renie Zitomer
Saul Krosnick	Stuart Zitomer

Schools Attending:

Bard College	Tufts University
Carnegie Mellon	UCLA
College of Charleston	UMBC
North Carolina School for the Arts	United States Naval Academy
Duke University	Emory University
University of Delaware (3)	Hofstra University
University of Florida	Interdisciplinary Center in Herzliya
University of Maryland (12)	Jewish Theologic Seminary(3)
University of Michigan	Kent State University
University of Pittsburgh (2)	Lesley University
University of Tampa	Mitchell University
University of West Virginia (2)	Montgomery College (6)
University of Wisconsin	Wagner College
Northeastern University	West Chester University
Pennsylvania State University(2)	Wooster College
Towson University (4)	Young Judea Year Course

[Answers on Page 6]

SHAARE TEFILA ADULT EDUCATION 2009 – 2010

Adriana Sandler

Rabbi Jonah Layman's classes:

Weekly Torah Class - Fridays 9:30am-10:30am - Bresler House

The Torah serves as the foundation for all aspects of Jewish practice and belief. In this class we study the medieval commentaries on the Torah. Though they lived 1,000 years ago their psychological and religious insights are just as relevant and provocative today.

Weekly Talmud Class - Sundays 11am-Noon - home of Barbara

Fink. Judaism as we know it today was developed by the rabbis over 1,500 years. Most of their thoughts and interpretations are found in the 20-volume work known as the Babylonian Talmud. Much of the Talmud focuses on social behavior and we will continue our study of the laws of deposits. Though it may sound esoteric, it resonates with business and neighborly practice today.



Mitzvah Initiative

The Mitzvah Initiative is a facilitated dialogue, reflection, and study about the concept and practice of mitzvah in the lives of Conservative Jews today. On selected Shabbatot during the year, Rabbi Layman will discuss a Mitzvah--the unique Jewish expression of daily responsibility, obligation and inspiration which connects people to their families and communities--as well as the dynamic process of Mitzvot, a way for Jews to infuse their lives with ongoing energy, creativity and holiness.

Wednesday Night: Adult Ed Night!

The Ten Commandments, February 24 - March 24 Minyan - 7:45pm; Class 8pm – 9pm at the Bresler House. Many see the 10 Commandments as the basis for Jewish legal practice. Is that so? How have the commandments been interpreted and how many of the 613 are based on them? We'll look at two a week and see how they have been interpreted and expanded over the centuries.

Cantor Wendi Fried's classes:

Hebrew—Fridays 10:30—11:30 am, Bresler House. From the basics and beyond. Designed for the adult b'nai mitzvah group, anyone can join in. Contact Cantor Wendi for more information.

Monthly Megillah Class— 9:30 am 4th Wednesday of the month.

Where: Frances Berger's Home.

Shaare Tefila Middle East Study Group

Interested in a broad discussion of Israeli and Middle Eastern issues with fellow congregants? Then join the recently formed Shaare Tefila Middle East Study Group, which meets once a month. January & February meeting dates will be posted on the listserv. Email **Jesse Stiller** at stiller.jesse@gmail.com for more information or to express your interest to attend.

Next The Big Read (Discussion on a pre-selected topic.)

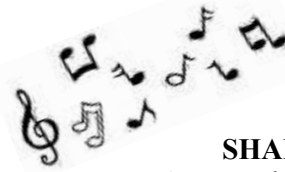
Shabbat, February 6: "I am Jewish" *Personal Reflections*, based on the book: "I am Jewish, Personal Reflections Inspired by the Last Words of Daniel Pearl" **Facilitated by Rabbi Layman.** Background articles about the topic will be posted on the Shaare Tefila website in the beginning of January. Hardcopies will be available at Shabbat Services three weeks before the Big Read date.

The Shofar

COLLEGE QUIZ ANSWERS

Steven Abraham	The Jewish Theological Seminary
Josh Akman	University of Maryland
Noah Arber	College of Charleston
Julie Balin	Montgomery College
Amy Byer	University of Delaware
Sharon Byer	University of Wisconsin
Max Carroll	University of Tampa
Zachary Carroll	Northeastern University
Alex Federman	Pennsylvania State University
Mark Federman	Wooster College
Daniel Froehlich	Kent State University
Benjamin Green	Towson University
Daniel Green	North Carolina School for the Arts
Daniel Grosberg	University of Maryland
Dara Grosberg	University of West Virginia
Aaron Gross	Carnegie Mellon
Beth Hagler	West Chester University
Daniel Hagler	Towson University
Cara Hedgepeth	University of Maryland
Sarah Ifft	The Jewish Theological Seminary
Melissa Kahn	Towson University
Madison Kantzer	Pennsylvania State University
Marc Katz	University of Pittsburgh
Brian Kaye	University of West Virginia
Dennis Kelner	Montgomery College
Lauren Kensky	University of Maryland
Aaron Kraut	University of Maryland
Julia Kraut	Interdisciplinary Center in Herzliya
Saul Krosnick	University of Maryland
Elisheva Layman	University of Maryland
Nathan Lefler	University of Maryland
Daniel Levine	University of Maryland
Sarah Levitt	Lesley College
Zachary Levitt	University of Delaware
Ben Lorber	Bard College
Jake Lorber	University of Maryland
Jesse Marder	United States Naval Academy
Rebecca Morgenstern	University of Maryland
Daniel Norken	Hofstra University
Elana Plotkin	University of Florida
Talia Plotkin	Young Judea Year Course
Molly Rochester	Wagner College
Daniel Ronis	University of Maryland
David Rosenberg	University of Michigan
Evan Rosenberg	UMBC
Michael Rosenberg	University of Pittsburgh
Ben Ross	Tufts University
Sheri Sagall	Mitchell College
Hedi Sandberg	Towson University
Willeke Sandler	Duke University
Rachel Schotz	University of Delaware
Ravid Tilles	The Jewish Theological Seminary
Sari Weiser	UCLA
Lauren Yedlin	Montgomery College
Victoria Yedlin	Montgomery College
Rachel Zarney	Emory University
Renie Zitomer	Montgomery College
Stuart Zitomer	Montgomery College

SAVE THE DATE!
SHABBAT—JANUARY 30, 2010



SHABBAT SHIRA
*A Musical Shabbat Experience:
Selections from Shabbat Liturgy.*

This is our 3rd alternative Shabbat program
and it will include instruments, both choirs, and
YOU!

SHAARE TEFILA CEMETERY

A Reminder—Shaare Tefila has Jewish burial sites available in its own section at Mt. Lebanon Cemetery.

Areas for stone markers and for flat plaque markers.
Beautiful and Accessible.
All at well below market rates.

Contact **Jill Goldwater** for more information.
(301) 593-3410, ext. 101
or jgoldwater@shaaretefila.org

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OUR SHULE CELEBRITIES

Marshall Weissman is making the rounds of You Tube with his cycling class for exercise. He teaches his class in the morning on his way to work. It is keeping him fit both mentally and physically. A message to us all.

And our glamorous **Ed and Honey Neufeld** graced the front page of many regional Gazette newspapers and Washington Jewish Week. They like to spend one day a week at the local court sitting in the audience and observing different trials. On the way home, they share their opinions of the discussion and the results. Fascinating hobby.

The Shofar

THEY'RE SAYING Florence Gersuk Lipsky

Sadie Blicher had another very special trip to Minneapolis to visit and enjoy the Bar Mitzvah of **Bradley Kaplan**, her great grandson. **Bradley** read Torah, the first three portions on Saturday and on Monday and Thursday, plus other parts of the service on Monday and Thursday. **Bradley's** grandparents are **Sadie's** daughter **Charlotte** and her husband **Richard Kaplan**. **Rabbi Kravitz**

has met and seen **Sadie** at so many Simchas that he made a speech about her, her age, etc. She felt quite important and proud on October 24. It was a special time. Much naches to the families. **Sadie** is nearing 100 yrs of age. If she can pick up the phone to call me and tell me the news, so can each of you. Please share your news with all of us; we'd love to print it. How about it?

Dorothy Kaufman's son, **Sam Kaufman**, is married to **Mindy**. Their son **Josh**, **Dorothy's** grandson, married **Laura Zendel** on September 6, 2009. Hope I got it right. We wish her much mazel. Everyone deserves a "mazel tov." They were all part of Shaare Tefila at one time or another. Really exciting news.

Ellie and **Larry Alpert** now drive to Short Hills, NJ, to visit their son **Joel** and **Monica** plus 10 year old twins **Abbie** and **Emily**. Three and one half years ago they left Lima, Peru, for Pasadena, CA and now reside in New Jersey. They can visit by car! The girls spent 2 weeks with Grandma and Grandpa sightseeing and have already asked for a return engagement next summer. They are so happy to have them close by. Sounds like lots of fun in the future for **Larry and Ellie**. They deserve all the good in their lives.

Lydia Gordon's granddaughter, **Allison Goodman**, passed her bar exam and now can be addressed with Esquire following her name. **Allison** is the daughter of **Dr. Michael and Marlene (Lydia's daughter) Goodman**. **Dov F. Weiner**, born August 30, son of Rayna and Isaac, is **Lydia's** first great grandchild. The grandparents are **Steven and Shelley Gordon**. **Lydia's** son **Steven** was USY President at Shaare Tefila many years ago. It's great to hear all the good news. Thanks and mazel tov on all counts.

Florence Perman's 90th birthday was a terrific celebration. She looked beautiful. Son, **Dr. Gerald's** (Jerry) poetry story about her life was fantastic and **Cantor (daughter) Chasha Musha** sang the Haftorah with "gusto." The "Die Freyliche Knaidlach" gave us a show and the Kiddush was delicious. We look forward to the next Simcha. As the Rabbi said, "biz a hundert und tzvanzig."

The Italian Dinner was well attended, sumptuous, and fun. **Fran Weiss** and family deserve all the credit. For fear of leaving others out, I'll let her thank them. We are lucky to have her—"Todah Rabah."

Fran and **Stan Alper** celebrating their 59th anniversary in December; she called to share her good news with us. **Fran** is enjoying our Yiddish class on Monday mornings and still lives near the Bresler House. Many more happy years together.

Fran and **Julian Leidman** finally made my column. I

am so happy to announce that their daughter **Robyn** was married to **Philip Maslan** on November 22 at the Links in Gettysburg, PA. The best man was 3 year old son Cameron. **Robyn** is a stay at home mom. **Philip** is a finance officer with the Government. Our Rabbi and Cantor also took part in the ceremony. Much happiness to the whole family.

The Men's Club Blue Yarmulke Man of the Year Honoree on January 31, 2010 at Adas Israel will be **Jay Hagler**. Hope many will attend to celebrate with his family.

Sharon Kaye and **Cathy Plotkin** celebrated 50th birthdays, separately with Shaare Tefila friends and family. **Cathy** was truly surprised and a great time was had by all. Stay well and continue to celebrate. Happy, happy birthday!

Cantor Gershon Levin celebrated the 63rd anniversary of his Bar Mitzvah by chanting the same Haftorah and more on November 28. He and **Susan** also celebrated their 8th anniversary and the birth of their new grandson **Zev Yuval (Will Jaron)**. They sponsored the Kiddush in honor of all the happy occasions. It was great to hear his melodious voice again. All good things are what we wish for you both, and especially good health.

Hope you all had a fun Chanukah.

Call a sick member! Buy scrip! Give to charity! Support the Shul! Travel to Israel! Happy New Year! "Zei gesundt"

See you in Shul.

Love you all. L'Hitraot Zipporah

Die Freyliche Knaidlach

A quick hello from **Susan Goldsamt**

Here we are. **Die Freyliche Knaidlach** have finally been recorded and are on the Internet (<http://yiddishlives.com/home/fk/>)!

Please feel free to laugh, it's encouraged. Our name means "The Happy Matzoballs." Believe me, from us, you won't get "shturm und drang!" This recording took place in **Rita's** apartment, and we didn't have an audience. **Ruth Newhouse**, our expert accompanist (she wasn't shown), had to use a portable keyboard, and we really couldn't move around. However, you get the idea of who we are. Just in case you might be confused as to which Knaidle is which, we are left to right on the screen: **Rita Rubinstein, Susan Goldsamt, and Michele Peck!**

BRIEF INTRO TO DIE FREYLICHE KNAIDLACH

Here's a little about the group: we sing mostly in Yiddish and Hebrew with a little Ladino mixed in. Since our start at the Yiddish club at Holiday Park over 10 years ago, we've entertained in among other places: The US Holocaust Museum, the Israeli embassy, Montgomery College-Rockville, the University of Maryland, the Myerberg Senior Center and Baltimore JCC, Congregation B'Nai Tikvah of Chicago, different shuls, private parties, and in many senior facilities that have a large population of Jewish residents. Believe it or not, to show you how Yiddish has gone mainstream, we sang at Catholic University, NIH, and as featured singers with the Gaithersburg Community Chorus for December holiday programs, all to enthusiastic receptions.

ARE JEWISH SETTLEMENTS ILLEGAL?

Al Kliman

Jewish Settlements in Judea and Samaria, and Jewish building in East Jerusalem have been in the news in recent months. There are two major accusations that have been made about them.

(1) That they are "illegal," that is in the sense that they violate international law as stated in the Geneva Convention;

(2) That they are "an obstacle to peace."

The second question is a matter of opinion, in which we will state our own opinion. The first question is – or should be – a matter of what the law is.

To address the question of legality, the Israel Affairs Committee has invited Professor Malvina Halberstam of The Benjamin Cardozo School of Law to speak. This will be an event co-sponsored by us, the Jewish Residents of Leisure World, and the Louis D. Brandeis district of the Zionist Organization of America. If you haven't heard anything yet by the time this article is published, watch for it. It should be very interesting.

Now for our comments:

The provisions of the Geneva Convention adopted after WW II prohibit the forcible transfer of any part of the population of one state to the territory of another state which has been occupied as a result of war. This is the principle on which the critics of Israel denounce the settlements as illegal. But this principle was intended to protect local populations from displacement, as the Soviets and Germans had done with forced transfers of Poles, Czechs and Hungarians during the war. Our reading of the Geneva Convention is that it does not prohibit individuals and groups from moving to land which is not and was not part of a "state," and is not privately owned by any individual. In that sense, Israelis moving to and establishing settlements is voluntary, not forced, and no evidence has been brought forward that those settlements are meant to displace anyone living there.

In our view, the charge that the settlements are illegal cannot be justified legally and can only be regarded as political. With an automatic anti-Israel majority in the UN, the charge is repeated often. During World War II, Heinrich Himmler developed the theory of the "big lie" which, when repeated so often and widely, comes to be accepted as truth. What a search of the historical record would show is that the "so-called" occupied territories are not part of any other state but are simply areas over which there are competing claims. Jordan occupied it from 1948 to 1967 having won it in a war to attempt to defeat the new Jewish state. But Jordan never claimed it or annexed it, and it came under Israeli control as a result of another war. What faces the world now are competing claims to the land. In the opinion of the authors, the issue is not really one of "legality." The issue is that World politics is dictating that there be some resolution of the competing claims. In the opinion of the authors, the situation would have a better chance of resolution if facts replaced fantasy in the ongoing dialogue.

Notwithstanding the legality issue, the question remains--are the settlements an obstacle to peace between the Israelis and the Arabs? Again, the statement is repeated so often that it has come to be accepted. But, before the settlements existed, the Arabs were unwilling to make peace with Israel. In the opinion of the authors, it is the very existence of the state of Israel that is the obstacle to a peace that would satisfy the Arab nations. Even before the state of Israel existed, the Arabs were unwilling to live in peace with the Jewish residents of the British Mandate in Palestine. But that is history for another article.

The President of the Palestinian National Authority, Mahmoud Abbas, has stated that any new peace negotiations can only be

conducted if the Israelis stop building settlements in the Palestinian territories. But what exactly are the Palestinian territories? They claim all the land, every inch of what the United Nations set aside for them when it partitioned one quarter of the Palestine Mandate into two parts, the smaller part for the Jews and the larger part for the Arabs. (Three quarters of the Mandate area had already been given to the Arabs for their own state, now known as Jordan.) The Arabs immediately went to war to eliminate the Jewish state, and lost part of their original parcel in their defeat. Now they want it back, despite their defeat in the war they started. Settlements, which did not exist then, do not appear to have anything to do with it. In any case, in various agreements between Arabs and Jews, the question of the settlements was to be left for discussion in the final status negotiations. It was also agreed that the Arabs would have no jurisdiction regarding the settlements until the conclusion of a permanent Status agreement. It is important to note that all the settlements in the Sinai were uprooted and their residents relocated when Egypt signed a peace treaty with Israel.

Even if the Israelis were to stop building or even adding on to settlements, what do the Arabs offer in return? They have spurned President Obama's request for confidence building measures. Meanwhile, Arab building continues and accelerates. For example, a new housing project is proceeding in Ramallah, which is planned to house some 10,000 people. And thousands of Arabs are moving into Jewish sections of Jerusalem, though the Arabs object strenuously when the Jews move into the Arab sections. There are more than a million Arabs living in Israel, some 20 percent of the population, enjoying all the rights and benefits of citizenship. It is a cliché, but it is also true, that the Israeli Arabs enjoy greater freedom and opportunity than they have in any of the Arab countries of the Middle East. The Arabs of Palestine, on the other hand, want no Jews in their territories and condemn the settlements as intruding on their land.

In Gaza, the Israelis decided not only to stop building new settlements but to remove their existing settlements entirely, forcibly removing all the settlers and relocating them in other parts of the country. Did peace ensue? Hardly. Instead, an unceasing rain of rocket and mortar fire continued and intensified from Gaza into the cities and towns of southern Israel--more than 12,000 over an eight year period, before Israel finally decided to retaliate. Did the UN condemn the ceaseless rocket fire from Gaza into civilian communities in Israel? No. But it condemned Israel for finally fighting back in an effort to stop the bombardment. In the face of this evidence, how can anyone seriously claim that the settlements are an obstacle to peace?

Correction

In the November issue of the Shofar, we stated that the Arabs were on the side of Germany in WW I. We were mistaken. A sharp-eyed reader called our attention to the fact that the Arabs hated the Turks and, since the Turks were on Germany's side, they therefore tended to side with the French and British. We also misspoke when we said that the British and French set up the Arab countries of the Middle East. We should have made it clear that we meant the Arab countries close to Israel---Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Iraq. This is exactly the kind of feedback we want and we would urge anyone who spots a factual error in any article to bring it to our attention. Or if you simply want to state an opposing point of view, please do so. Send your comments to **Al Kliman** or **Harry Zubkoff**.

In addition to trying to set the record right and bring the facts before the Congregation, we have researched out local opportunities for investment in Israel.

(continued on Page 9)

The Shofar

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Thank you to our donors!

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(continued from Page 8)

For those interested in investment opportunities in Israel, we have found two Clubs in the area.

1. The Heritage Beth Investment Club
Contact: David Firestone
14801 Pennfield Circle #309
Silver Spring, MD 20906-1363
2. The Habonim Investment Club Aleph
Contact: Jack Serber
7425 Democracy Blvd #105
Bethesda, MD 20817-1207

If anyone knows of additional clubs or opportunities, please let us know. —Israel Affairs Committee

The Shofar

THE JOKES PAGE

COCA-COLA IN ISRAEL

A disappointed salesman of Coca-Cola returned from his assignment to Israel. A friend asked, "Why weren't you successful with the Israelis?"

The salesman explained, "When I got posted, I was very confident that I would make a good sales pitch.. But I had a problem. I didn't know how to speak Hebrew. So I planned to convey the message through three posters:

First poster : A man lying in the hot desert sand, totally exhausted and fainting.

Second poster : The man is drinking Coca-Cola.

Third poster : Our man is now totally refreshed.

And then these posters were pasted all over the place."

"Terrific! That should have worked!" said the friend.

"The heck it should have!" said the salesman.

"No one told me they read from right to left!



Thanks to **Judy Bresler**

KEEPING THE CUSTOMER HAPPY

At a restaurant, Froma Pinkowitz kept bothering the server, first complaining that it was too hot and demanding that the air conditioning be turned up, then about ten minutes later, complaining that it was too cold and demanding that the air conditioning be turned down, and again about ten minutes later complaining that it was too hot and demanding that the air conditioning be turned up!

This continued at approximately ten minute intervals for the whole time Froma was in the restaurant; surprisingly, the server was very patient; each time walking back behind the bar to make the adjustment and never once appearing angry.

When Froma left, another customer who had been sitting at a nearby table remarked that the patience displayed by the server was extraordinary.

"It was no problem at all," said the server with a smile. "We don't have air conditioning."

Thanks to **Dan Weiss**

BRAVERY

General Marshall is in charge of the American Army, and he is visiting his colleague General Goldstein, who is in charge of the Israeli Army. Marshall arrives at the military camp and is greeted by Goldstein. They both walk around the place, and Marshall asks: "So how are your men?"

"Very well trained, General."

"I hope so. You see, my men over at the United States Army are so well trained, you see, they're the bravest men in the world."

"Well, I'm not so sure about that General," replies Goldstein. "My men are very brave, too."

"I'd like to see that," says Marshall.

So Goldstein calls private Barak and says: "Private Barak! I want you to stop that tank simply by standing in front of it!"

"Are you crazy?" says Private Barak. "It would kill me! Are you some kind of fool?"

Goldstein turns to a Marshall and says, "You see? You have to be pretty brave to talk like that to a general."

Thanks to **Susan Goldsamt**

LOST AGAIN

A police car pulls up in front of Grandma Bessie's house, and Grandpa Morris gets out.

The polite policeman explained that this elderly gentleman said that he was lost in the park... and couldn't find his way home.

"Oy, Morris," said Grandma, "You've been going to that park for over 30 years! How could you get lost?"

Leaning close to Grandma, so that the policeman couldn't hear, Morris whispered, "I wasn't lost... I was just too tired to walk home."

Thanks to **Art Berlin**

January 2010 15 Teves 5770 - 16 Shevat 5770

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 15 TEVES  New Year's Day  4:39 OFFICE CLOSED 6 pm Service at Buffington	2 16 TEVES  וירחי  מוצאי שבת 5:50 9 am Hazak Shabbat Service, Olney ES
3 17 TEVES	4 18 TEVES  Choir practice Board Meeting	5 19 TEVES	6 20 TEVES RS	7 21 TEVES Religious Committee Meeting	8 22 TEVES  4:45 9:30 am Torah w/ Rabbi Layman 10:30 Hebrew w/Cantor Wendi 6 pm Shabbat Service and Dinner, Sandy Spring Bank	9 23 TEVES  שמורת  מוצאי שבת 5:56 9 am Shabbat Service, Olney Elementary School Membership Shabbat Regional Kadima
10 24 TEVES RS 11:00 am Talmud Class w/Rabbi Layman USY Kadima BB	11 25 TEVES  Choir practice Sisterhood Board Meeting	12 26 TEVES	13 27 TEVES RS	14 28 TEVES	15 29 TEVES  4:52 9:30 am Torah w/ Rabbi Layman 10:30 Hebrew 6 pm Shabbat Service, OES	16 1 SHEVAT  ראש חודש שבט  וארא  מוצאי שבת 6:03 9 am Shabbat Service, Olney Elementary School Sisterhood Rosh Chodesh Jr. Congregation
17 2 SHEVAT 11:00 am Talmud Class w/Rabbi Layman	18 3 SHEVAT  Martin Luther King Day  Choir practice USY Kadima BB	19 4 SHEVAT	20 5 SHEVAT RS	21 6 SHEVAT Finance Committee Meeting	22 7 SHEVAT  5:00 9:30 am Torah w/ Rabbi Layman 10:30 Hebrew w/Cantor Wendi 6 pm Shabbat Service, Olney ES	23 8 SHEVAT  בא  מוצאי שבת 6:11 YOUTH SHABBAT 9 am Shabbat Service, Tikvat Israel
24 9 SHEVAT RS 11:00 am Talmud Class w/Rabbi Layman USY Kadima BB	25 10 SHEVAT  Choir practice	26 11 SHEVAT	27 12 SHEVAT RS	28 13 SHEVAT Education Committee Meeting	29 14 SHEVAT  5:08 9:30 am Torah w/ Rabbi Layman 10:30 Hebrew w/Cantor Wendi 6 pm Shabbat Service, Olney ES	30 15 SHEVAT  ט"ו בשבט  בשלח  מוצאי שבת 6:19 9 am Shabbat Service, OES/Alt. Shabbat Shira Service Sisterhood Tu B' Shevat Lunch Regional USY Dance
31 16 SHEVAT RS 11:00 am Talmud Class w/Rabbi Layman USY Kadima BB Sisterhood Education Day Jay Hagler - Blue Yarmulke Dinner						

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