



THE RABBI'S COLUMN: HAIL TO THE (EDITOR IN) CHIEF!

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by Rabbi Mark Sameth

So much of what happens at PCS happens only because individuals step up with their talents and abilities where they are needed, and make a real difference. Such has been the case with the PCS Newsletter. In the late 1990s into the early 2000s, Eileen Jagoda ably edited the newsletter. She was succeeded by Karen Sanders – may her memory be for a blessing - who brought her professional editorial skills to bear, editing the newsletter for the better part of a decade. When Karen stepped down, there were big shoes to fill. Where would we find someone with the ability - and the commitment – to produce ten issues a year, under deadline, the old-fashioned way?

Since September 2010 this community has been enormously blessed to have had Judy Chinitz in the editor's chair. Whether you know Judy or not, you have been touched by her.

Judy told us last year that she would not be continuing in her role, but she agreed to remain on until a successor was found. As of this issue, Judy hands the reins over to Roberta Korus and Estelle Rosen-Kersh, who will co-edit the newsletter going forward.

Judy produced 43 monthly issues, and never once let us down. Utterly dependable under deadline, Judy also took the time (where did she find it?!) to add her own flourishes - illustrations, art work – which brought a delightful, added dimension. Judy's gentle way of reminding me when I was close to (or over!) deadline for my own submissions will be remembered with great fondness.

That our beloved Judy's last issue came just before our beloved Karen's passing gives us pause. There is only so much time and only so much energy. How should it be apportioned, especially when we are pulled by a myriad of obligations? We are so grateful to Judy, as we were to Karen and Eileen before her, for making the decision to give in this important way to the community; for seeing a real communal need and saying "I can do that."

Judy, thank you so, so much for all you gave. You were a joy to work with, supporting us all. We will never forget you, and bless you as this new phase of your life now unfolds. Todah rabbah! Thank you, thank you so much!



HEBREW SCHOOL HAPPENINGS

By Galit Sperling, Principal

The 3rd grade (Kitah Gimel) class had a lovely first Shabbaton on November 21, leading the PCS congregation in Shabbat songs and prayers during the Friday night service, including “Shalom Aleichem” and “Hinei Mah Tov.”

The students of Kitah Daled are exploring the meaning of being a mensch (a person of integrity, of responsible and noble character), as they welcomed their Mensch on a Bench to the classroom!

One of the projects our 5th grade class (Kitah Hey) worked on in November was beautifying the earth behind PCS by planting and gardening, and building a bird bath! We are excited for the summer, when our plants will be in full bloom. As all of our students raise money through bringing tzedakah (charitable giving) to Hebrew School, we continue our many efforts toward the Jewish value of Tikkun Olam, repairing of the world.

The 7th grade (Kitah Zayin) B’nei Mitzvah class participated in a special program through WJCS and J-Teen on the important topic of bullying, and in class the students reflected on how to use gemilut chasadim (acts of loving kindness) in their daily lives to help spread good will. Our rabbis-in-training were also introduced to the Talmud (the Mishnah and Gemara) and discussed the difference between human justice versus divine justice, as well as examining the roots of the modern Hebrew language.

With all of the great strides our students are making in class and in service, and the festive holiday of Chanukah coming up soon, we have much to celebrate!

Important Upcoming Dates:

Sunday, December 14: Chanukah Celebration

Thursday, December 18: Last Day of Class before Winter Break

Friday, December 19: Chanukah Dinner & Shabbat Service

Sunday, December 21 - Thursday, January 1: Winter Break

Sunday, January 4: No Classes (Teacher Kallah)

Thursday, January 8: Hebrew School Classes Resume

Hey Class working on an art project



Gimel students ask the Rabbi their questions



CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



Above: Zayin students acting out a skit in class.

Right: Molly and her classmates work on beautifying PCS with plants.



Join us for PCS' annual Chanukah Shabbat dinner!



Friday, December 19, 7:15 pm

*Come for the **warm and lively service at 7:15 pm** with the PCS House Band,
followed by the **festive holiday dinner at 8 pm, Friday, December 19.***

***As a special treat, Hebrew school students will be putting on an original play
to delight us with a story of Chanukah!***

*We will **sing songs, give out goodies to the kids, and enjoy a traditional meal with,
of course, lots of latkes!***



Suggested donation: \$18 per adult

*Please RSVP to Marcy Gray at mgray@shalompcs.com
or call the PCS office at 769-2672.*

Celebrate Chanukah with a "Snap" Service at PCS!



Friday night, December 12, 6:30 pm

Are you looking to welcome Shabbat with your child, but not sure where to begin? Is your child a unique learner who thrives in more intimate, personalized environments?

Join us Friday night December 12 for a joyful Chanukah "Snap" service at PCS!

Doors open at 6:30 pm for celebratory candle-lighting, juice, challah and latkes, followed by a **15-minute "Snap" service** - featuring music and movement - **at 7 pm.**

Regular Friday night services with Children's Service will immediately follow SNAP.

Everyone is welcome: all ages, levels of ability and literacy, anyone and everyone looking for a very welcoming, joyful and inclusive Shabbat experience.

For more information, please e-mail Vivian Chang-Freiheit at vivianpiano@yahoo.com or call the PCS office, 769-2672.

~ ~ ~

Jordan and Hudson Burrows' Community Service Project



We are 7th graders at Robert E. Bell Middle School in Chappaqua. For our Mitzvah project we volunteered at Neighbor's Link in Mount Kisco. Neighbor's Link is a community program for immigrants who need help adjusting to their new surroundings and new language. We were honored to have worked with the young children who came to the community center late at night with their parents who needed to learn English as a second language, as well as new skills in order to find work to feed their family. We remember the toddlers being nervous and shy, and being separated from their parents. It was our responsibility to make them feel safe and try to bring a smile to their faces and play with them late into the night, which makes us understand how not to take

our everyday lives for granted. Finally, we learned that the biggest gift we can receive is giving back to those who are more in need than us. We even got to practice our Spanish skills as a bonus!

Pleasantville Community Synagogue Mission Statement

Pleasantville Community Synagogue is a transdenominational, inclusive community, a spiritual home deeply rooted in Torah (study), Avodah (prayer), and Gemilut Chasadim (deeds of loving-kindness). We seek to facilitate lifelong spiritual growth by engaging each member wherever that member may be on life's journey, embracing all generations. We encourage Tikkun Middot (repair of the self) and Tikkun Olam (repair of the world) through Jewish education for all ages, social action, Ahavat Yisrael (love of Israel), and a commitment to the understanding and fulfillment of mitzvot. We are a highly participatory community which relies on the commitment of time and energy from all members and which aspires to become an integral part of each member's life and their family's lives.



THE AFTERMATH OF GAZA: **What happened to relations between Jewish and Arab citizens of Israel?**

**Join us for a fascinating evening
with Naomi Schacter**

Associate Director of Shatil –The New Israel Fund for Social Change



Thursday, December 4, 7:30 pm

Pleasantville Community Synagogue

219 Bedford Road, Pleasantville, NY

Naomi Schacter will discuss the challenges facing Israeli democracy in the aftermath of the war in Gaza, the current state of Israel's minorities, and the work of Shatil to promote democracy, tolerance and social justice. For those of us deeply connected to Israel and its future, this is an important opportunity to hear from someone with first-hand experience and leadership in the field of human and civil rights in Israel.

**For more information, please e-mail Israel Action Committee
co-chair Ofri Felder at ofelder@optonline.net or call the PCS office at 769-2672.**

ASK THE RABBI: Israel, God, and the Equality of Boys and Girls

On November 4, Rabbi Mark held a session of “Ask the Rabbi” with our third grade (Kitah Gimmel) class. Here’s an excerpt from that discussion:

Clara Neilson-Papish: Have you ever been to Israel?

Rabbi Mark: Oh yes, many times!

Lena Sealey-Nicotra: How old were you when you went to Israel the first time?

Rabbi Mark: The first time I went to Israel I was 19. I worked on a kibbutz (a collective farm). I remember taking the bus from Tel Aviv to Petach Tikva, and then getting on another local bus to get to the kibbutz, Givat ha’Sheloshah. And the man who got on the bus right after me had a goat with him! I’d never seen that before: a goat on a bus. The kibbutz was old and poor; it had been founded by Polish Jews escaping Europe. I lived in an old wooden bunkhouse that had been put up before the War of Independence, and was now almost falling down (the roof was almost caved in). The first job I had on the kibbutz was killing snakes. My boss was an old man named Siomka. He didn’t speak English, and I didn’t speak Hebrew or Yiddish or Polish. So to show me what my job was, he took a shovel, smacked a snake on its head, and handed me the shovel. That’s how I learned what my job was! After that I worked in the “chamama” – the greenhouse. Because it gets so hot in Israel, they’d come and knock on your door at 4 in the morning to wake you up. We’d work in the greenhouse until about 8 am, go back to the dining hall for breakfast, and then back to work until about 10. Then it got too hot.

Joseph Reinharz: Have you been to Eilat?

Rabbi Mark: Yes, but a long time ago. It’s all built up now, but when I was there it was very small. It’s a really beautiful place, right on the water, like paradise!

Joseph Reinharz: My dad goes to Israel a lot.

Rabbi Mark: Well, I hope you get to see it one day!

Joseph Reinharz: Who created God?

Rabbi Mark: That’s a great question. I know it’s hard to imagine, but God has always been. Everything else in the universe was created, but God just “is.”

Zachary Neilson-Papish: Is God still around? Is God still making stuff?

Rabbi Mark: Yes, God is still around. But God doesn’t use an invisible 3D printer to make new stuff. These days stuff is created out of other stuff.

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ASK THE RABBI, CONTINUED

Joseph Chai: Why does the Torah say that God created the human being? Didn't we evolve from apes?

Rabbi Mark: Thanks, Joe, another great question. Yes, the human being evolved from apes, which evolved from lemurs, which evolved from amphibians, which evolved from fish. Did you know that? A long time ago, we were all fish! So why does the Torah tell us that God created an "adam" (meaning an earth creature) which was "zachar u'nekeva" (both male and female) and that God then split that earth creature in two? What's the lesson the Torah is trying to teach?

Joseph Chai: That we're all one? That boys and girls are equal?

Rabbi Mark: You got it, Joe! The Torah is not teaching science or history; it's teaching lessons for life.

Lena Sealey-Nicotra: Tell us again the meaning of the Jewish star?

Rabbi Mark: Oh, good. Lena is remembering something we learned last year. This [drawing an upward pointing triangle on the blackboard] is the ancient symbol for male. This [drawing a downward pointing triangle on the blackboard] is the ancient symbol for female. Put them together and you have the Jewish Star, the Magen David. It's the same lesson: boys and girls, men and women, are equal.

Eli Neilson-Papish: What's the longest a person can blow a shofar?

Rabbi Mark: Well, I've heard someone blow a shofar for about 30 seconds. But there are trumpet players who have learned something called circular breathing: you blow the air out from your cheeks, while taking new air in through your nose. Then you can blow as long as you want!

Oliver Kreeger: Why do we wear a yarmulke?

Rabbi Mark: Yarmulke is a Yiddish word. The Hebrew word is kippah. These days I usually wear a beret. But anyway, the Jewish idea of covering your head is to show respect, to always remember that there is something above you, something more important than what you may want right now: God; being nice to other people; taking care of the people we love; living by the right values.

Sofia Zucker: What does it take to be a rabbi?

Rabbi Mark: Well, first you have to finish elementary school. Then there's middle school, and high school, and college. And then after college, there's another five years of study in something called a seminary. And then you're "ordained" a rabbi.

Clara Neilson-Papish: Do you have any kids?

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ASK THE RABBI, CONTINUED

Rabbi Mark: Yes, we do. We have two daughters.

Lena Sealey-Nicotra: Were they adopted?

Rabbi Mark: Yes, they were, Lena.

Sofia Zucker: Do you play the keyboard at the Bar and Bat Mitzvah services?

Rabbi Mark: I do.

Sofia Zucker: I remember that, from my brother Joseph and my sister Rachel's Bar and Bat Mitzvah!

Zachary Neilson-Papish: How long does it take to write a Torah?

Rabbi Mark: It depends on how many hours a day the sofer (scribe) works, but it can take a whole year. We have one Torah which was written for our synagogue not long before you were born; we have another one (the tall one) which was probably written in the mid-1800s. And then we have a small Torah with some parts that are 200 years old, stitched together with some parts that we're told may be 300 years old. It's an amazing thing for our community to have these Torahs. And when you are Bar or Bat Mitzvah, you'll get to read right from a Torah scroll yourself!

PCS COMMITTEE CHAIRS

All the committees of the Pleasantville Community Synagogue are eager for your participation and suggestions. If you'd like to get more involved in the life of the PCS community, this is the way to begin! Below are the names of the committees, their chairs, and contact information.

Adult Education

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bdoctor670@gmail.com

B'nei Mitzvah

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edsperling@gmail.com

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Youth Committee

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info@shalomPCS.com

How many Jewish cooks



does it take...?

Find out at PCS' first-ever recipe-cookbook-sharing event!

Do you have a favorite Jewish recipe? Your own or from a cookbook?

Come and share with others

Sunday afternoon, 4 pm, Dec. 7

Caution: Some light cooking might be involved.

For more information or to RSVP, e-mail Leyla Nakisbendi at leylaz@optonline.net
or call the PCS office, 769-2672.

SAVE THE DATE!

PCS Progressive Dinner
Saturday – January 31st at 6:15pm

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or

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Look for invitation coming in the mail

Want to Host, help or have questions? Call or e-mail:

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Event is free. Only 25 spaces available.

Reservations are required at
buildingcommunitylectures@gmail.com.

For information,
please contact 914-948-2800 ext.145

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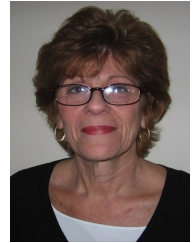
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James Strauch, father of Helen Harrison	December 3
Arthur Jackson, father of Sharon Friedman	December 3
Tina Gambino, daughter of Janice and Tony Gambino, and sister of Isabelle Gambino	December 6
Howard Needleman, father of Karen La Porta	December 6
Ellie Baumwald, mother of Nancy Krakaur	December 7
Eugene Brody, father of Rachel Brody	December 12
Andrew Rosenberg, father of Debbie Rosenberg	December 12
Rose Marie Marra, mother of Rob Marra	December 14
Walter Wehrle, father of Douglas Wehrle	December 19
David Grekin, grandfather of Peter Grekin	December 21
Louis Israelow, father of Marvin Israelow	December 22
Victor Chiarizia, father of Maria Levine	December 22
Margaret Sperling, mother of Edward Sperling	December 23
Pauline Alt, grandmother of Audrey Rabinowitz	December 24
Irving Epton, father of Arli Epton	December 26
Jay Polansky, father of Debra Schor	December 27



To All PCS Members:

If you or another member suffer personal tragedy or loss or are otherwise in need of help, please immediately call Rabbi Mark at 769-2672, and Michael Gold at 238-9219.

NEWSLETTER ACCEPTS ADS!

The PCS Newsletter is published monthly, online, from September through June, and it is emailed to every member family as well as to prospective members and some Jewish organizations.

If you provide professional or business services in the area, the PCS newsletter might provide some extra, valuable visibility. To arrange for your ad to appear in the newsletter, here's what you need to know:

*** Deadlines:**

Ads should be submitted by the 15th of the month. They can be emailed to Marcy Gray at mgray@shalompcs.com.

*** Ad Specifications:**

Ads will be published in one size only: one-quarter page, which is approximately 3 1/2 x 4 3/4 inches. The artwork should be provided by the advertiser.

*** Advertising Rates:**

The cost per ad (for 10 issues - no bulletin published in July and August) is \$125 for 1/4 page. Note: Checks preferred. Can be mailed to Pleasantville Community Synagogue, PO Box 148, Pleasantville, NY 10570 with "newsletter ad" in the memo section. To pay by credit card, please call the synagogue office at 914-769-2672.

CONTRIBUTIONS

We appreciate the thoughtfulness of those who support the Pleasantville Community Synagogue by remembering and honoring their friends and loved ones through their generous contributions.

General Fund/Fair Share

Barbara and Don Stern, in thanks for "accepting us warmly into your synagogue and for inviting us for Shabbat" dinner

Carren Kleinman and Gerald Kaufman, in honor of the first yahrzeit of their cherished mother and mother-in-law, Gladys Marcus Kleinman

Estelle Rosen-Kersh, in memory of her beloved brother, Martin Rosen, on the occasion of his yahrzeit

Rhea Wolfthal, in memory of her beloved grandmother, Jennie Etkin, on the occasion of her yahrzeit
Hirsh Cohen

Lynn Hock, in honor of her beloved father, Edward Saravis, on the occasion of his yahrzeit

Douglas Wehrle, in honor of his beloved father, Walter Wehrle, on the occasion of his yahrzeit

Nancy and Lester Mayers

In memory of Karen Sanders

Rachel and Andy Tuomey

Hedi Sperling

Carren Kleinman and Gerald Kaufman

Carole and David Leinwand

Kay and David Krebs

Betty and Jay Reba

Patricia and Leslie Weinstock

The Edgemont Condo Book Club

Denise and Steven Frenkel

Valerie and Sandy Scher and Carol Weiss

Kiddush and Shabbat Dinner Fund

Rhea Wolfthal, in memory of her beloved husband, Philip Wolfthal, and on the occasion of his fourth yahrzeit

Hedi Sperling, in memory of her beloved parents, Dov and Elizabeth Weiss, on the occasion of their yahrzeits

Paula and Ethan Burrows, in honor of the occasion of their daughters Jordan and Hudson becoming B'not Mitzvot

Ed Sperling Fund

Paula and Ethan Burrows, in honor of the occasion of their daughters Jordan and Hudson becoming B'not Mitzvot

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

Paula and Ethan Burrows, in honor of the occasion of their daughters Jordan and Hudson becoming B'not Mitzvot

Daniel Goodman, in honor of his beloved father, Irving Goodman

Robin Henry and Jonathan Goodman, in appreciation for the rabbi's service

Anonymous



Pleasantville Community Synagogue

FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Building Fund

To preserve the beauty and functionality of our physical plant, and to build reserves for future expansion.

General Fund/Fair Share

Helps to finance any need of the synagogue considered necessary by the Board of Trustees. All unspecified gifts are credited to the General Fund.

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

Supports various individuals, organizations and/or programs at the discretion of the rabbi.

Hebrew School Scholarship Fund

Provides scholarships to children who would like to attend our Hebrew School and may not currently have the financial resources to do so.

Yahrzeit Memorial Board Nameplate (\$360)

A nameplate with the name and date of departed loved ones will be lit in their honor on the anniversary of their passing. Please contact the office for appropriate form.

Name and fund selected: _____

Donation in honor/memory of (please specify which): _____

Donor contact information (if not a PCS member): _____

Name and address of third party for acknowledgement of your donation if applicable:

<input type="checkbox"/> Check enclosed payable to <i>Pleasantville Community Synagogue</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Bill my credit card	
Credit Card # _____	Exp. Date: ____/____
Circle One: VISA MasterCard	
Name as it Appears on card: _____ -	

Phone number in case verification is needed:	

Your Signature _____	Amount to charge: _____
Print Name	

PLEASE NOTE: To help our bookkeeper, please issue separate checks for dues or other special events. All donations should be made payable to Pleasantville Community Synagogue (please indicate which fund in the memo section of your check).

KISLEV - TEVET 5775

December 2014 - PCS Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30 NO HEBREW SCHOOL	1 7:15pm Yoga class	2	3	4 7:30pm "The Aftermath of Gaza" - lecture and discussion	5 7:15pm Services PCS House Band Children's Service 4:09 pm - Candle lighting	6 9:00am Morning Meditation; Shabbat Service including B'nei Mitzvah of Jordan and Hudson Burrows, 9:30 am Parashat Vavishlach ...
7 11:00am Rabbi Mark's class 4:00pm Cooking event at PCS Executive Board meeting, 7 pm	8 7:15pm Yoga class	9 Board of Trustees meeting, 7:30 pm	10	11	12 6:30pm SNAP service 7:15pm Services Children's Service 4:09 - Candle lighting	13 9:00am Morning Meditation; Shabbat Service, 9:30 am Parashat Vayeshev 5:39 pm - Havdalah
14 11:00am Rabbi Mark's class	15 7:15pm Yoga class	16 Chanukah: First Candle	17 Chanukah	18 Chanukah	19 Chanukah Chanukah Dinner PCS House Band 4:10 pm - Candle lighting	20 9:00am Morning Meditation; Shabbat Service, 9:30 am Chanukah Parashat Miketz 5:41 pm - Havdalah
21 11:30am Rabbi Mark's class Chanukah NO HEBREW SCHOOL	22 7:15pm Yoga class Chanukah Rosh Chodesh Tevet	23 Chanukah	24	25 NO HEBREW SCHOOL	26 7:15pm Services 4:14 pm - Candle lighting	27 9:00am Morning Meditation; Shabbat Service, 9:30 am 5:45 pm - Havdalah
28 NO HEBREW SCHOOL	29 7:15pm Yoga class	30	31	1 Asara B'Tevet Fast commemorating the siege of Jerusalem NO HEBREW SCHOOL	2 7:15pm Services 4:20 pm - Candle lighting	3 9:00am Morning Meditation; Shabbat Service, 9:30 am Parashat Vayeichi 5:51 pm - Havdalah

Note: Times and dates of events may change after the newsletter has come out. To get the latest information on any possible changes, please check the calendar on our website: www.ShalomPCS.com. Future months are also on the website.



SAVE THE DATES:

Friday, December 12: "Snap" (Special Needs at Pleasantville) Chanukah/Shabbat service, 6:30 pm

Friday, December 19: Pajama Chanukah/Shabbat service, 6:00 pm; dinner, 6:30 pm; Family service, 7:15 pm

ABOUT THE NEWSLETTER

The PCS Newsletter is published monthly, online, from September through June. Articles and photos should be submitted by the 24th of the month. They can be e-mailed to Roberta Korus or Estelle Rosen-Kersh, Editors, at robertakorus@gmail.com or eaststar18@optonline.net, or dropped off at the newsletter box in the Synagogue office.

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