



THE RABBI'S COLUMN: SAYING GOODBYE

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by Rabbi Mark Sameth

As many readers of this column already know, after 18 years of service I will be leaving PCS as of June 30, 2015. It has been a privilege to serve the community. This recent period has been particularly rewarding. From Fall 2012 – Fall 2014 we attracted 42 new families to membership; introduced our SNAP (Special Needs at Pleasantville) service, as well as Pajama Shabbat; inaugurated our "Judaism for Non-Jews" class (with appreciation to UJA for their support); and were the focus of national attention in the *Jewish Daily Forward*. I'm sad to be leaving, but happy to be doing so on such a very high note.

I trust you know, but allow me to say, that there is simply no way I could begin to describe what this community has meant to me, and to my family. Our kids grew up here. When they were really young they would sit on my lap as I led the Friday night service from the keyboard. Tali and the kids and I all made very deep connections here, and we have been sustained by the love and support of the community during our own times of loss. Believe me when I say, we will hold you in our hearts forever.

A number of you have written, asking where I am going next. I'm sorry for having omitted that in my e-mail communication to membership. The answer to the question "Where is the rabbi going?" is "I'm going home." I'm vital and in good health. But I have no plans right now, no idea at the moment what to do next. For sure I'm not looking for another community. PCS will always be my community.

I bless you all on this next leg of your journey. I thank you again for the opportunity to have served, and for all the Torah I have learned from you over these many years. Thank you as well for your expressions of personal concern for me and for my family. I am comforted by the words of one of the teachers of meditation whom I follow. Jack Kornfield writes, "Everything that has a beginning has an ending. Make your peace with that and all will be well."

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.



HEBREW SCHOOL HAPPENINGS

By Galit Sperling, Principal

This December we celebrated Chanukah, the Festival of Lights. As part of our celebration, students in Hebrew School made chanukiot (the special menorah used for Chanukah) out of clay, played dreidel with money later donated to tzedakah (charity), ate latkes and sufganiot (potato pancakes and jelly donuts, traditional Chanukah treats), lit the candles, and sang songs and blessings together!

Our Aleph/Bet/Gimmel students (first through third graders) also traveled to the Atria in Briarcliff Manor to sing Chanukah songs with the residents and guests there. We lit the menorah together, and shared holiday cards and chocolate gelt. A special thank you to Adam Brown for the fantastic photos and Vivian, Caleb and Jacob Freiheit for the video tribute!

We inaugurated an exciting tradition at PCS this month: Twenty-two students from Kitah Gimel through Kitah Zayin (third through seventh grade), aided by awesome madrichim (teen assistants) and alumni of the PCS Hebrew School, rehearsed and performed a holiday play recounting the story of Chanukah. The Chanukah play was performed for the students of the Hebrew School on Thursday, December 18, as well as for the PCS congregation on Friday, December 19, at the start of services. See photos on the next few pages of the Chanukah party, Atria visit, and Chanukah play performance!

Hebrew School classes resume after the winter break on Thursday, January 8. Kitah Hey (5th grade) parents, save the date of Saturday, February 7 for the Hey Havdallah ceremony!



CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



Celebrating in class...



CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



...at the
Atria...



CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



...and at services.





How many Jewish cooks does it take...?

On Sunday, December 9, we held our inaugural cookbook and recipe-sharing event at PCS.

There were many Jewish/Middle Eastern themed cookbooks to browse. As we shared cookbooks, some new and some old favorites, we talked. The cookbook *Jerusalem* by Yotam Ottolenghi was a favorite. The photographs are beautiful and the history of the various dishes are a lovely way to sit and read over a cup of tea, even if you aren't planning to cook.

We would have enjoyed having more attendees, but we understand this is a difficult time of year to schedule a program. Don't worry; while we were making and eating hummus, we made plans. We would like to have a rotating monthly/bimonthly cooking and cookbook/recipe-sharing group that would take place in members' homes. You don't have to be a gourmet cook with the fanciest kitchen. I made the hummus on a table in the back room just with the food processor! (I did a little prep before we started.) The goal for an afternoon would be to try a new recipe, share cookbooks and recipes, and make new friends over delicious food. Recipes would be collected and printed either ahead of time or emailed after.

Sunday afternoons seem to be good for those who attended. I'm happy to take requests for days and times, recipes and themes. Hopefully we can time these programs to coordinate the food with holidays. We could make hamantaschen for Purim, matzoh meal muffins for Passover, rugelach for Rosh Hashanah, etc. We don't have to always have dessert type foods. All suggestions are welcome.

Please contact me, Leyla Nakisbendi, at info@shalompcs.com with questions, suggestions or to open your house to this new event.

Jacob Taboh's Mitzvah Project

My Bar Mitzvah is coming up on January 10, 2015 and for my Mitzvah project, I chose two organizations that were important to me.

First, I volunteered at the **Adopt-A-Dog** animal shelter in Armonk. I volunteered there because two years ago my family adopted a dog, Cooper, from this shelter. I learned about cats and dogs and helped to feed them and just played with them. I also found out that this is a no-kill shelter and that the animals are usually adopted in less than three months.

Also, I held a bake sale at my school, the Pleasantville Middle School, on December 13 to raise money for the **Lone Soldier Project**. I was interested in this charity because last year my family hosted a soldier from Israel, and he taught me all about the Israeli Army. The Lone Soldier Project supports soldiers in Israel who do not have family or friends nearby. The money goes to supplies and food for the soldiers. I raised about \$500 for this charity.

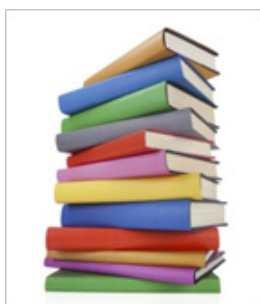


Bella Friedman's Mitzvah Project

For the last couple of years, I have been very interested in learning about Japanese culture. For my Bat Mitzvah project, I decided to combine this interest with my Jewish heritage. In Hebrew School last year, Morah Karen read the book *Hana's Suitcase* to us. It is about a young Jewish girl, Hana, who perished in Auschwitz, at the age of thirteen, during the Holocaust. Hana's story, and the story of a present-day Japanese woman named Fumiko Ishioka, who wanted to teach Japanese children about the Holocaust, are joined together in this book.

Through this book, I learned about the Tokyo Holocaust Education Resource Center (THERC). THERC originally began as a small Holocaust Museum in Tokyo. Since it began 15 years ago, it has become an educational outreach program which has now reached almost 1,000 schools in Japan, educating Japanese school-age children about the Holocaust. Many did not know about it before. I am raising money to support this outreach program by bookbinding journals and sketchbooks and then selling them.

This coming summer, my family and I plan to go to Tokyo where we will visit the Tokyo Holocaust Education Resource Center's main office and give them the money I have raised to support their work.



“THE AFTERMATH OF GAZA” – a very interesting evening at PCS

By Estelle Rosen-Kersh

Naomi Schacter, Associate Director of Shatil-The New Israel Fund for Social Change, presented the difficult challenges facing Israeli democracy.

Shatil works in the areas of Arab/Israeli relations, wage/gender gap, racism, public housing, immigrant and refugee issues, and internal Israeli politics. “For every negative there is an equal amount of positive, and we do not get enough information about this in Western and American news,” stated Ms. Schacter.

The event was well-attended, and provided a lively and provocative discussion.

With a show of hands, it was noted that most everyone at the event had been to Israel.

Our thanks to Ofri Felder, with the assistance of Marcy Gray, for this important opportunity to hear from Ms. Schacter, someone with first-hand experience and leadership in the field of human and civil rights in Israel. Her informative talk emphasized the complex issues, and the positive initiatives by Shatil to provide support and guidance services for social change.

For more information, please e-mail the Israel Action Committee, co-chair Ofri Felder at ofelder@optonline.net or call the PCS office at (914) 769-2672.



Above: PCS’s Ofri Felder (left) with Shatil’s Naomi Schacter



Photo credit: Adam Brown

PCS Congregational Meeting Sunday, 4 pm, January 11, 2015 at PCS

We look forward to seeing you at the meeting.

PCS Board of Trustees

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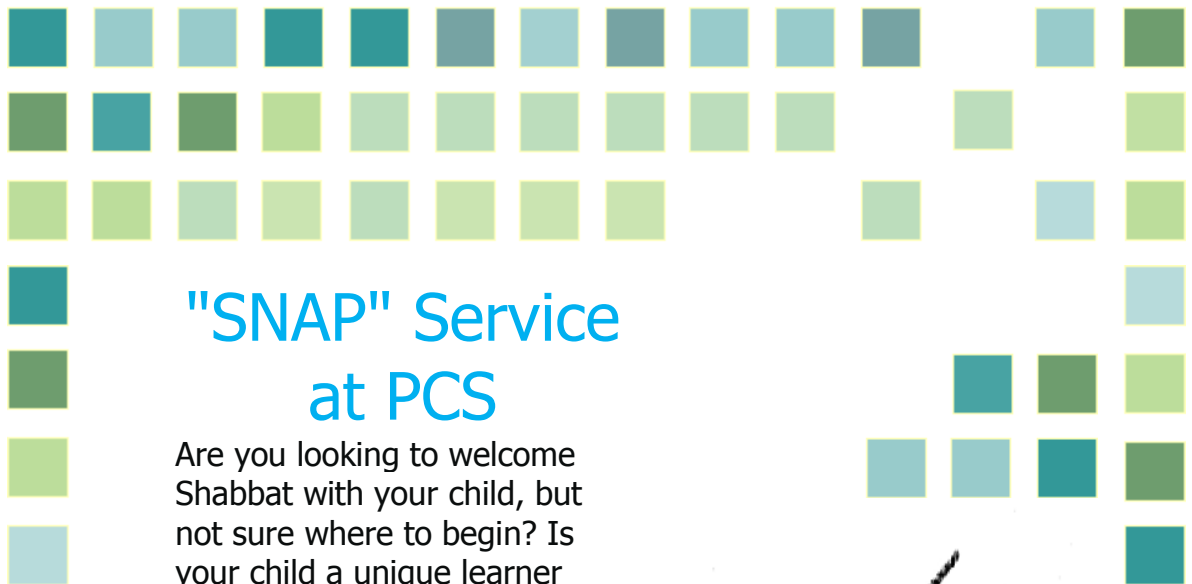
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"SNAP" Service at PCS

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
January 23, 2015 for our
next "SNAP" service!**

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

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

We hope to see you!

Rabbi Mark



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

Mark Ipri

Karen LaPorta, in memory of Stella LaPorta

Audrey Lenoff, in memory of her beloved husband, Jerry Lenoff, on the occasion of his third yahrzeit

Lillian and Richard Levine

Karen Neuberger

Monte Silberger

Deborah Spanierman

Rhea Wolfthal, in memory her beloved uncle, Samuel Tessler, beloved father, Max Gitelson, and beloved uncle, Louis Etkin

In memory of Karen Sanders

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Audrey Lenoff

Pleasantville Country Club home community

Don Stevenson

Maxine Sugarman and David Hoffman

Myra Tattenbaum

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.

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Seth Rutman

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Tikkun Olam

Michael Gold
mgold@shalomPCS.com

Youth Committee

Laurie Hirsch Schulz
info@shalomPCS.com

SAVE THE DATE!

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

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Dinner at Members' Homes
Fabulous Dessert Reception*

Volunteer as a Host

or

Come as a Guest

(couvert for guests – \$20)

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We all start together at the same home for appetizers. We then draw names for dinner assignments and proceed to our host homes for the entrée. At the end of the evening we gather together once again for dessert at another member's home.

Look for invitation coming in the mail

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

Marlo Klein 914-238-0082

pcsprogressivedinner15@gmail.com



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Frederick Berman, Father of Roberta Berman
Milton Turkel, Father of Jeffrey Turkel
Nathan Blackman, Father of Jonathan Blackman
Fay Singer, Mother of Sharon Friedman
Fanny Goldman, Grandmother of Dorian Goldman
Julius Strauss, Father of Fredric Strauss
Samuel Weiner, Father of Shelley Weiner
Alexander Gordon, Father of Bernard Gordon
Marvin Levine, Father of Richard Levine
Ruth Kloogman, Mother of Helen Kloogman
Philip Wolfthal, Husband of Rhea Wolfthal
Regina Fisher, Grandmother of Dorian Goldman
Kenneth Wolf, Father of Michael Wolf
Helen Arenwald, Mother of Elaine Barella
Louis Etkin, Uncle of Rhea Wolfthal
Aaron Netburn, Father of Malcolm Netburn
Joel Serebin, Father of Ben Serebin
Celia Lubelsky, Mother of Janice Sandbank
Stuart Kleinman, Father of Jennifer Taboh

January 1
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January 31



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 (914) 769-2672, and Michael Gold at (914) 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 by emailing them to mgray@shalompcs.com.

*** Ad Specifications:**

Ads will be published in one size only: one-quarter page, which is approximately 3½ x 4¾ inches. The entire ad (both text and artwork) should be provided by the advertiser in GIF, JPEG, PDF or TIFF format ONLY. Please proofread your ad before sending.

*** Advertising Rates:**

The cost per ad (for 10 issues - no bulletin is published in July and August) is \$125 for ¼ page. Note: Checks preferred; please mail checks 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.



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
<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: Checks preferred. To help our bookkeeper, please issue separate checks for dues or other special events. Checks should be made payable to "Pleasantville Community Synagogue." Please indicate the fund to which you are donating in the memo section of your check and **mail your check to** PCS, PO Box 148, Pleasantville, NY 10570.

If paying by credit card, please email this form to Accounts@shalomPCS.com, fax it to (914) 769-1795, or call Barbara Doctor at (914) 747-3017, or PCS, (914) 769-2672 to provide your credit card information.

TEVET-SHEVAT 5775

January 2015 - PCS Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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 Vayechi 5:51 pm - Havdalah
4 NO HEBREW SCHOOL	5 7:15pm Yoga class	6	7	8	9 7:15pm Services Children's Service 4:26 pm - Candle lighting	10 9:00am Morning Meditation; Shabbat Service including Bar Mitzvah of Jacob Taboh, 9:30 am Parashat Shemot 5:57 pm - Havdalah
11 11:30am Rabbi Mark's class 4:00pm Congregational Meeting	12 7:15pm Yoga class	13	14	15	16 7:15pm Services 4:34 pm - Candle lighting	17 9:00am Morning Meditation; Shabbat Service, 9:30 am Parashat Vaera 6:05 pm - Havdalah
18 NO HEBREW SCHOOL Executive Board meeting, 7 pm	19 7:15pm Yoga class Martin Luther King, Jr., Day	20 Board of Trustees meeting, 7:30 pm	21 Rosh Chodesh Sh'vat	22	23 6:30pm SNAP Service 7:15pm Services Children's Service 4:42 pm - Candle lighting	24 9:00am Morning Meditation; special musical presentation, 9:30 am; Family Education Shabbat service, 10 am Parashat Bo 6:13 pm - Havdalah
25 11:30am Rabbi Mark's class	26 7:15pm Yoga class	27	28	29	30 7:15pm Services Children's Service 4:51 pm - Candle lighting	31 9:00am Morning Meditation; Shabbat Service including Bat Mitzvah of Isabella Friedman, 9:30 am Progressive Dinner Parashat Beshalach 6:22 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. Calendars for future months are also on the website.



SAVE THE DATES:

Sunday, January 11: Congregational Meeting, 4:00 pm

Saturday, January 31: Progressive Dinner, 6:15 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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