

VOLUME XX, NUMBER 7 WWW.SHALOMPCS.COM MARCH 2015

HEBREW SCHOOL HAPPENINGS

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by Galit Sperling, Principal

In the PCS Hebrew School, we began February with a celebration of Tu B'Shevat, the birthday of the trees. Maayan Leshem, a tour guide and educator visiting from Israel, led a wonderful interactive workshop on the seven species and the relevance and history of Tu B'Shevat. The students enjoyed taking part in hands-on activities exploring and tasting the seven species (figs, barley, dates, pomegranates, grapes, wheat and olives), and learning about agriculture in Israel.

The fifth grade (Kitah Hey) class led a beautiful Havdalah ceremony on February 7. The students had been studying and preparing in class for this special service, and it was a wonderful evening at PCS. Our fifth graders sang the traditional Havdalah blessings, read legends they wrote using the symbols of Havdalah, and presented recycling projects, all tying in the Jewish value of bal tashchit ("do not waste/destroy") and Tu B'Shevat.

On March I, we began challah making in Hebrew School! We enjoyed having parents join their children for this fun activity. Purim and Passover are just around the corner, so there are many wonderful celebrations ahead.

Important Upcoming Hebrew School Events:

Sunday, March 1: Challah Making for first/second, third, fifth & sixth grades (Aleph/Bet, Gimel, Hey & Vav) **Wednesday evening, March 4**: Purim Megillah Reading

Thursday, March 5 & Sunday, March 8: Purim Celebration continues for Kitah Aleph/Bet (Costumes welcome in Hebrew School!)

Saturday morning, March 14: Sixth Grade (Kitah Vav) Shabbaton

Sunday, March 15: Fourth Grade (Kitah Daled) Heritage Day Program & Challah Making

Friday evening, March 20: First/second grade (Kitah Aleph/Bet) Shabbaton

Sunday, March 22: Model Passover Seder for first/second grades (Kitah Aleph/Bet)

Thursday, March 26: Model Passover Seder for third-seventh grades (Kitah Gimel - Kitah Zayin)

Sunday, March 29 – Sunday, April 5: No Classes (Passover Break)

Thursday, April 9: Classes Resume



Tu B'Shevat workshop with Maayan Leshem...



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and the Kitah Hey Havdalah service.









Benjamin Lerman Mitzvah Project

I am doing my mitzvah project with the AFYA Foundation.

AFYA means "health" in Swahili, and the foundation collects donated items and sends them to developing countries and countries in the midst of crisis. In total, the AFYA Foundation has worked with 56 countries worldwide. For example, they are currently working on an effort to stop Ebola in Sierra Leone. I am interested in collecting soccer balls, medical supplies, water bottles, school supplies and books. There will be a box in the synagogue entrance. All donations are much appreciated.





Thoughts on religion and spirituality

In a recent column entitled "Building Better Secularists," David Brooks concludes with a prediction that in the coming years secularism "will change its face and become hotter and more consuming...and more responsive to the spiritual urge in each of us." I think he is right. Perhaps it's my advancing age, or perhaps I am more attuned to my own and others' inner feelings, but I experience spirituality in myself and in people I thought were more concerned with the material world. I believe that spirit resides in each of us; it's our human essence, and each of us experiences its manifestation. Actually, this spiritual sense is not confined to our species; it is manifest in all life. As just one example, anthropologists in Africa report numerous incidents of elephants forming circles around the bones of a dead elephant, in a meditative or prayer-like state, remaining silent and motionless for an extended period of time. Indeed, photographs of our planet taken from space voyages or pictures seen through powerful telescopes suggest that creation is more than a body of dead stars and galaxies. There is birth and death throughout the universe, and to me the cycle of birth and death suggests the presence of spirit.

The evidence for the existence of spirit used to be found exclusively in a religious context; now science is discovering hard evidence in areas as diverse as neurobiology and physical hotspots. Personally, I love the religious practices that invoke spirit, but I feel it in many places beyond the synagogue. For example, the practice of meditation enhances my awareness of spirit at the same time that it enlists both compassion for others and a reverence for life. This can be measured in the comparison of brain waves between people who meditate and those who don't; an electroencephalograph of the area around the vagus nerve shows this clearly. The same is true of specific locations on earth. Biologist Rupert Sheldrake has provided evidence for this in several books he has written. He records both animal and human reactions in different "hotspots" that do not occur in other places. And there is plenty of anecdotal evidence to corroborate his findings. I can attest to experiencing this standing by the Western Wall in Jerusalem recently. I felt my whole body charged and enlivened, as I drew close to it.

One more thought: "Tikkun olam" is not merely a mitzvah; it is an essential outcropping of our spiritual nature. When Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel felt that his feet were praying as he marched alongside Martin Luther King, he was infused with spirit, a spirit he took out of the synagogue into the world of action. It was not merely the deed that helped change America's attitude toward race, but the underlying spirit that the two men, and thousands of others, carried with them. And it is my belief that all of us, especially we who have been blessed with so much abundance, need to keep this spirit flowing. Spirit is our essence; it is the real energy of the world.

Peter Schaffer, Committee Chair, Spiritual Life



PCS PROGRESSIVE DINNER

Many delicious memories were made when more than 50 members of our PCS family came together on a cold, wintery night, to enjoy our annual Pleasantville Community Synagogue Progressive Dinner.

The evening began with greetings and conversation, when we gathered for delicious H'ors D'oeuvres and beverages at the warm and comfortable home of Jackie and Steven Zucker.

We drew our hosts' names and moved along to enjoy sumptuous entrees at the homes of Amy and Bruce Gutenplan, Jan and Bernie Gordon, Elizabeth McGoldrick and Mark Bertin, Evan Kingsley and Dara Meyers-Kingsley, Isabel and Jeff Rachlin, and Vivian Chang and Mark Freiheit. The result of the planning, shopping, cooking, setting the table, etc., was much appreciated by each of the guests, who enjoyed a great dining experience, and the pleasures of good company.



Cristina Altieri-Martinez's Flan

The "icing on the cake" were the desserts served at the home of Leyla Nakisbendi and Michael Mayers, where "the butler did it," as their son Aydin took our coats, and made and served espresso.

Leyla commented, "It was a lovely evening. I think we sometimes underestimate the importance of just hanging out with people from the synagogue. Also, getting mixed into dinner groups, with people we may not normally gravitate to, creates a great opportunity to broaden our relationships."

Jan Gordon further expressed the feelings of all, "Day to day, it seems like we rush around everywhere, including meals. In contrast, this was a time to slow down, share a relaxed candle-lit meal, acknowledge that we share the same commitment to PCS, and enjoy our lovely guests."

We all extend our sincere thanks and special kudos to Marlo and Eric Klein for their great effort in organizing and arranging this wonderfully successful shared time!



PCS members enjoy each other's company...and dessert...at the home of Leyla Nakisbendi and Michael Mayers.







A splendid time was had by all!





Thanks, Marlo and Eric!

From the PCS Bookworm... Eileen Jagoda

Village of Secrets: Defying the Nazis in Vichy France by Caroline Moorehead



Vichy France (also known as Nazi France), officially the French State, was the government of Marshal Petain's regime, 1940–44, during WWII. It was based in the small city of Vichy, but Paris remained the official capital. The newly formed French State maintained nominal sovereignty of the whole of French territory; this is important to the following story related by the author:

High up in the mountains of southern Massif Central in France, lie tiny remote villages, and there, up on the Plateau of Vivarais-Lignon, they have a long and interesting history. During WWII, the inhabitants of Le Chambon-Sur-Lignon and its parishes saved thousands wanted by the Gestapo. They were mainly Jews, many of them orphans whose parents had been deported to concentration camps. During raids, the children would hide in the woods, with their packs on their backs, waiting to hear the farmers' songs that told them it was safe to return.

Many people of these mountain parishes were Quakers, Catholics, clerics and just ordinary people who helped thousands of children. After the war, Le Chambon became one of only two places in the world to be honored by Yad Vashem as "Righteous among Nations."

The story of Le Chambon and the villages of the Plateau was known and talked about in Israel in the 1950's, but it was not until the 1970's that serious efforts were made to identify individual rescuers.

The author, Ms. Moorehead, in her research for this story, visited many regions in France, and spoke with many survivors who still remember the rescue and saving of thousands of children. She is also the author of *A Train in Winter*.

These books are available at your local library, Amazon, Bas Bleu or your favorite bricks-and-mortar or online bookseller.

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ON THE HORIZON AT PLEASANTVILLE COMMUNITY SYNAGOGUE...

The **PCS Vision Committee**'s kick-off meeting included a large, multi-generational group, all excited and energized to respond to the needs of our membership. There was a lot of really good discussion where we reviewed objectives and discussed our past vision/mission work, and the foundation we are starting from.

We are developing a community survey to reflect the vision and goals of our membership, which should be ready for distribution in the next few weeks. Please look for this survey and take this important opportunity to express your ideas and respond to us a.s.a.p.

We are planning to arrange intimate discussion groups to build on the information and feedback gathered from the survey.

Questions? Problems? Help? In any and every way we are available:

Laurie Hirsch Schulz Eileen Jagoda
Kiersten Zweibaum Mark Silberblatt
Leyla Nakisbendi Hannah Greene
Malcolm Netburn Merrie Teitel-Greene
Shelley Weiner Peter Schaffer

Estelle Rosen Kersh Michele Fleischer Deborah Spanierman Ben Serebin

Please feel free to e-mail Committee Chair Laurie Hirsch Schulz lhirschschulz@gmail.com with any questions or concerns.

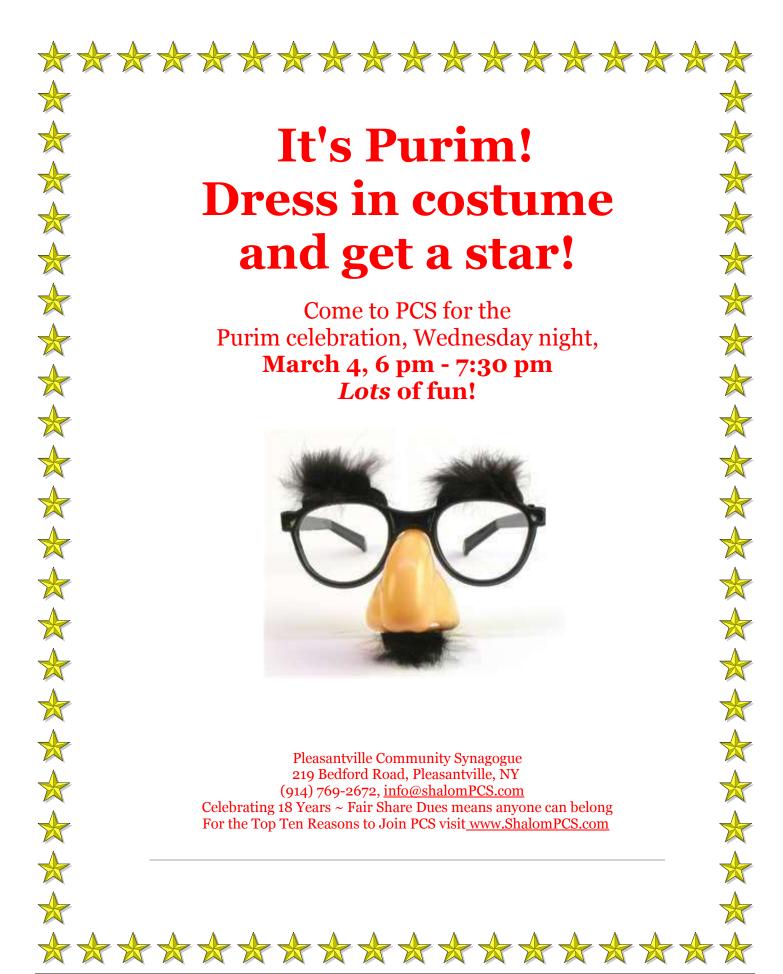
The newly formed **Rosh Chodesh Group** event is a program about ridding ourselves of negativity, parallel to cleaning our homes before Pesach. The date is Wednesday, March 18th at 7:30 p.m. Contact Group Chair Robin Berman awake.robin@gmail.com.

In our April issue, **PCS Bookworm**, Eileen Jagoda, will review *Pitching My Tent* by Anita Diamant.

The Jacob Burns Film Center – 2015 Westchester Jewish Film Festival – April 8-30 This promises to be an extraordinary event, so get your tickets before they are sold out!

The **PCS Newsletter** Editors are requesting photos taken in Israel, that include you and your family, from either past or current travels. Please send as attachment via email to:

Estelle Rosen Kersh - eaststar18@optonline.net Roberta Korus - robertakorus@gmail.com



PCS Palooza Week!

There's something for everyone at the Fifth Annual week-long "PCS Palooza" Open House:

Model Seder ~ Hebrew School in Action ~ Yoga ~ Meditation ~ Friday Night Dinner ~ And Much More!



Sunday March 15 – Sunday March 22

Complete schedule at www.ShalomPCS.com

Pleasantville Community Synagogue...with members from 20 towns, villages and cities all across Westchester.

Come find out what "Joyful Judaism" is all about!

Long-time members, new members prospective members, and everyone else!

Please join us for another joyful

Pajama Shabbat!

Part of our week-long Open House Palooza Week

Friday night, March 20

5:45 pm doors open ~ 6:00 pm Pajama Shabbat Service (up to age 6) 6:15 pm Dinner* (all ages) ~ 7:15 pm Family Service featuring our Hebrew School First and Second Graders ~ 8:30 pm Festive "Oneg Shabbat" Refreshment Hour *The dinner is free but RSVPs are a must and donations are welcome!



You've read about us in *The New York Times*.
You've heard about us from friends & neighbors.

Pleasantville Community Synagogue...with members from 20 towns, villages and cities all across Westchester.

Joyful Judaism!



Come to PCS to Celebrate

ROSH CHODESH!

Wednesday, March 18, 7:30 pm

at Pleasantville Community Synagogue

Women and girls, come join us for a free and creative ritual to help celebrate Pesach. Refreshments will be served.



To RSVP or for more information, call Marcy Gray at PCS at 769-2672 or e-mail Robin Berman at info@shalompcs.com.

PROJECT EZRA

PCS will once again be collecting Passover food for Project Ezra, an organization that provides services to the frail elderly on the Lower East Side.



In many cases, this food is the only source of Passover food for Ezra's elderly.

The following list comprises a Passover package. You can contribute any or all of the items on the list. Please pay close attention to the **FOODS IN BOLD** that are most often missing from the packages; we would appreciate your paying extra attention to obtaining these items:

2 BOXES MATZO
1 CAN OR JAR OF SOUP
1 JAR BORSCHT
1 JAR OR CAN OF GEFILTE FISH
JAM OR JELLY
1 DESSERT ITEM (CAKE, COOKIES, MACAROONS, ETC.)
2 CANS OF TUNA, SALMON OR SARDINES
1 BOTTLE GRAPE JUICE
1 BOTTLE VEGETABLE OIL
1 BOX MATZO FARFEL
INSTANT COFFEE OR TEA
1 SMALL JAR OF HONEY
2 CANNED FRUITS
2 CANNED VEGETABLES
NUTS OR DRIED FRUIT (Or anything special you'd like to add)

All food must be current, marked **KOSHER FOR PASSOVER** (e.g., UP) and 2015. The kosher sign only is not acceptable for Passover use. Items must be brought to **PCS by noon on Sunday, March 22** and placed in the boxes in the last row of pews that are marked for this purpose. **If you are interested in helping to pack the food at Congregation Sons of Israel in Briarcliff or to help make deliveries to Project Ezra recipients on the Lower East Side on Sunday, March 29, please e-mail Dalia Abott at daliakabott@gmail.com.**

Thank you for responding generously!



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

Estelle Rosen Kersh in memory of Lillian Levine
Marcy Gray in memory of Lillian Levine and Karen Sanders
Carren and Gerald Kaufman in memory of Lillian Levine
Laura and David Colletti in memory of Karen Sanders
Sonia and Paul Kleinman in memory of Karen Sanders
Amy and Dr. Stanley Small in memory of Karen Sanders
Rhea Wolfthal in memory of her beloved uncle Barney Etkin

Kiddush and Shabbat Dinner Fund

Susan and Alan Friedman in honor of the occasion of their daughter, Bella, becoming a Bat Mitzvah Lisa Nicotra and Lenora Sealey in honor of the occasion of Laila's baby naming Peter Volgyes

Building Fund

Sonia and Paul Kleinman in memory of Lillian Levine Eileen Jagoda in memory of Lillian Levine

MARCH 2015 YAHRZEITS

Sidney Dulberg, grandfather of Lisa Lipkin	March 1
Ervin Golod, father of Gaby Golod Greenwald	March 4
Sheila Kerper, mother of Jeff Kerper	March 6
Joan Fixler, mother of Karen Fixler	March 7
Sarah Havazelet, mother of Tali Havazelet	March 7
Barney Etkin, uncle of Rhea Wolfthal	March 9
Charles Lubelsky, father of Janice Sandbank	March 9
Saul Reinharz, father of Larry Reinharz	March 10
Pearl Sheinkopf, mother of David Sheinkopf	March 12
Morris Fuchs, father of Audrey Lenoff	March 15
R. Meghan Rosenshine, daughter of Dawn and Ben Rosenshine	March 15
Marion Rosenberg, mother of Jonathan Rosenberg	March 17
Harold Altman, father of Barbara Altman Bruno	March 18
Marvin Wachnin, uncle of Mark Silberblatt	March 19
Charlie Sandbank, husband of Janice Sandbank	March 19
Martin Neuburger, father of Jerry Neuburger	March 22
Arthur Zucker, father of Steven Zucker	March 24
Elizabeth Wehrle, mother of Douglas Wehrle	March 28
Herman Spiegel, father of Robert Spiegel	March 28
Roberta King, mother of Margaret Coleman	March 29

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.

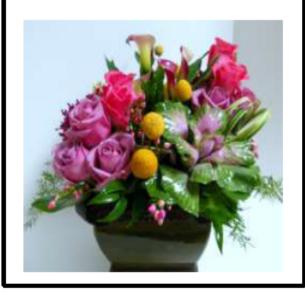


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NEWSLETTER ACCEPTS ADS!

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 $3\frac{1}{2}$ x $4\frac{3}{4}$ 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.



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.

Pleasantville Community Synagogue * 219 Bedford Road * Pleasantville, NY 10570 phone (914) 769 - 2672 fax (914) 769 - 1795

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.

PLEASANTVILLE COMMUNITY SYNAGOGUE OFFICERS AND TRUSTEES

Officers 1

President/Secretary: Michael Safranek VP/Treasurer: April Lasher Sanders

Vice President: Kiersten Zweibaum Vice President: Laurie Hirsch Schulz Vice President: Mark Freiheit

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cmartinez@shalomPCS.com

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Richard Solomon info@shalomPCS.com

Kiersten Zweibaum

kzweibaum@shalomPCS.com

Rabbi Mark Sameth rabbi@shalomPCS.com

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
Barbara Doctor
bdoctor670@gmail.com

B'nei MitzvahEd Sperling
edsperling@gmail.com

BuildingRichard Levine
rlevine@shalomPCS.com

Jewish Education Kiersten Zweibaum info@shalomPCS.com Communications

Cristina Altieri-Martinez cmartinez@shalomPCS.com

Spiritual LifePeter Schaffer

pschaffer@shalomPCS.com

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Fundraising
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 $\underline{kfuirst@shalomPCS.com}$

High HolidaysRichard Solomon
info@shalomPCS.com

Human Resources Karen Neuburger info@shalomPCS.com Membership Engagement

Laurie Hirsch Schulz Ihirschschulz@shalomPCS.com

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Israel Action

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ofelder@shalomPCS.com

Seth Rutman

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Tikkun Olam

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mgold@shalomPCS.com

Youth

Laurie Hirsch Schulz info@shalomPCS.com

To contact PCS: Phone (914) 769-2672; Fax (914) 769-1795; Website: www.shalomPCS.com

Marcy Gray, Synagogue Administrator: (914) 769-2672; mgray@shalomPCS.com Galit Sperling, Religious School: (914) 773-0043; principal@shalomPCS.com

Barbara Doctor, Member Accounts: (914) 747-3017; Accounts@shalomPCS.com



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 futureexpansion.

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:									
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Credit Card #			Exp. Date:/						
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Name as it appe	ears on card:								
Phone number i	n case verific	ation is needed:							
			_						
Your Signature			Amount to charge:						
Print Name									

<u>PLEASE NOTE</u>: **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.

ADAR - NISAN 5775

March 2015 - PCS Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
11:00am Rabbi Mark's class	7:15pm Yoga class	3	6:00pm Services Erev Purim	5 Purim	7:15pm Services 5:33 pm - Candle lighting	9:00am Morning Meditation; Shabbat Service, 9:30 am Parashat Ki Tisa 7:04 pm - Havdalah
9:00am Ask the Rabbi, 1st/2nd grades 11:30am Rabbi Mark's class	7:15pm Yoga class	10	11	12	7:15pm Services 6:41 pm - Candle lighting	9:00am Morning Meditation; Family Education Shabbat service, 10 am Kita Vav Shabbaton Parashat Vayakhel-Pekudei 8:12 pm - Havdalah
11:30am Rabbi Mark's class Palooza Week begins! Executive Board meeting, 7 pm	7:15pm Yoga class	Board of Trustees meeting, 7:30 pm	7:30pm Rosh Chodesh program	7:30pm Sarah Tauber talk and discussion	7:15pm Services PJ Shabbat Dinner Alef-Bet Shabbaton 6:49 pm - Candle lighting	9:00am Morning Meditation; Shabbat Service including Bar Mitzvah of Benjamin Lerman, 9:30 am Rosh Chodesh Nisan Parashat Vayikra 8:20 pm - Havdalah
11:30am Rabbi Mark's class Alef-Bet Model Seder	2 7:15pm Yoga class	24	25	Hebrew School Model Seder	7:15pm Services 6:56 pm - Candle lighting	9:00am Moming Meditation; Shabbat Service, 9:30 am Parashat Tzav Shabbat HaGadol Shabbat before Pesach 8:27 pm - Havdalah
No Hebrew School	7:15pm Yoga class	31	1	Ta'anit Bechorot (Fast of the First Born) No Hebrew School	Erev Pesach 7:04 pm - Candle lighting	10:00am Passover I service No morning meditation 8:35 pm - Havdalah

<u>Note</u>: 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.