


Jewish Community of Amherst



Jewish Reconstructionist
Federation 

קהילה היהודית של אמהרסט

CANDLE LIGHTING TIMES

May 4 ~ 7:35 pm
May 11 ~ 7:42 pm
May 18 ~ 7:50 pm
May 25 ~ 7:56 pm

*Times shown are
18 minutes before sunset for
Amherst, MA*

Special Events

May 22
Tikkun Leyl Shavuot
June 10
Semi-Annual Meeting



Meetings

May 3
Board Meeting
May 6
Strategic Planning
Committee
May 9
Religion Committee
May 10
Personnel Committee
May 14
Education Committee
May 20
Strategic Planning
Committee

MESSAGE FROM CO-PRESIDENT

Kitty Axelson-Berry, 230-3271, kitty@modernmemoirs.com

Combine a desire for a world at peace with a little spontaneity and a little process and you get, or we got, nine Muslim neighbors of all ages from the Hampshire mosque as our guests at the JCA second night seder. It started organically, a connection between an Amherst high school student and an Amherst high school French teacher who is Muslim, and built upon the seeds planted by last winter's women's scarf project, friendship symbolized by gifts of beautiful scarves from JCA women to the women of the Hampshire mosque, which was just being established. As our guests were ushered into the Social Hall, there was a beautiful sight as some of our members signaled warmly to the guests and invited them to sit at their tables. "Come sit with us!" "Please sit at our table!" was heard over and over, one small step toward healing the world or at least not making it worse by inaction. Personal connections were made or deepened, connections that support mutuality, and the graciousness shown by JCA members was appreciated. Oumy Cissé, the teacher who helped arrange it, wrote in an e-mail:

"I was very honored and pleased to celebrate my first Seder with you and the entire Jewish community on Tuesday. It was such a wonderful and enriching experience! I will never forget it—I learned a lot that night and enjoyed the delicious food and company very much. I really appreciate your warm welcome, all the attention

B'nai Mitzvah

May 19 - 10:00 am
Bar Mitzvah of Gabriel Benvenuto-Ladin

May 2007

Iyar/Sivan 5767

Vol. 6, Issue No. 5

you gave us, your open mindedness and flexibility. We really ALL felt it. On behalf of everyone who were present from the Muslim community, I say SUKRAN et MERCI BEAUCOUP!"

I look forward to having you come to the Mosque and learn more about Islam, too. We will let you know about our upcoming activities. I love this idea of learning about each other, spreading love, peace, freedom and building relationship regardless of our differences."

These steps are important, I believe, in continually creating a world that is better than it would otherwise have been. Welcoming the stranger, indeed, is part of Tikkun olam.



There's continuing interest in "whatever happened with the parlor meetings?" In other words, how are the spoken thoughts of members currently informing JCA efforts and activities?

So far, I can think of the following results and they're a good start:

- * Every member now has (or should have!) a print out of contact information so that you can get in touch with other members of the JCA, and board members are now in regular conversation with members (more community)
- * Carlebach services, services for young children, masorti services, feminist-friendly services (bringing our bodies as well as our minds into the services, using

continued on next page

NEW TO THE JCA?

If you joined the JCA within the past two years, or are interested in doing so you are cordially invited to a

NEW MEMBER OPEN HOUSE

Schmooze with other new members, old members, board members and Rabbi Bauer.

Light Hors D'oeuvres and drinks will be served

At the home of Jenny Heller located at 17 Kestrel Lane Amherst

May 20th from 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM.
RSVP by May 13 to 413 253-6786

Jewish Community of Amherst, Inc.

742 Main Street, Amherst, MA 01002
(413) 256-0160, fax (413) 256-1588
Religious School (413) 256-0160 ext. 203
email: info@j-c-a.org; On line at: www.j-c-a.org

Rabbi David Dunn Bauer

Rabbi Emerita Sheila Weinberg

Rabbi Emeritus Yechiel Lander (586-1137)

Education Director: Jody Rosenbloom (256-0160 ext. 203)

Co-Presidents: Kitty Axelson-Berry (230-3271), **John Loeb** (253-0336)

Co-First Vice Presidents: Lisa Perl binder (230-3055), (to be determined),

Second Vice President: Randall Furash-Stewart (253-9754)

Third Vice President: Eli Kwartler (253-2929)

Treasurer: Alan Peterfreund (253-5485)

Membership: Jenny Heller (253-6786), **Oran Kaufman** (548-8139)

Chesed Committee: Please call the office (256-0160)

Office Administrator: Marcia Howard (256-0160)

Administrative Assistants: Bonnie Webster, Pam Cummings (256-0160)

Events Co-ordinator: Linda Cooper (256-0160 ext. 207)

A complete listing of committees and chairs can be found on the JCA website at:
<http://www.j-c-a.org/committees.html>

NEWSLETTER

Editor/Graphic Designer: Aaron Bousel

(Voice: 253-3544, Voice & Fax: 253-3846; news@j-c-a.org)

Proofreader: Sarah Thomson

Deadline for the June/July issue is May 13th

May 2007, Vol. 6, Issue No. 5

Newsletter is published 11 times per year.

Subscription price is included in JCA membership.

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the feminine as well as the masculine voice in prayers, “praying through the white spaces surrounding the text”), and choice of High Holiday services (more variety of services, more music)

* A task force is now beginning a formal, community-wide assessment in realistic terms of exactly WHAT and HOW the JCA’s educational programs should be. This includes the religious school but is not limited to traditional religious studies; it includes Jewish cultural education and social action; it includes educational needs of teens, interfaith families, middle-aged Jews, and elderly Jews. The results will be implemented for the 2008-09 school year or earlier (more community for our children, more in-depth learning for our children, more cultural and social action learning for our children, more learning for adults, more intergenerational learning, more open dialogue and discussion of issues)

* A Rosh Chodesh group now meets on the new moon of every month (more groups that meet for prayer and study)

* The 36th anniversary gala weekend in January, the intergenerational dance in February, upcoming events such as a second annual trip to Broadway in early June, a kosher-que after the semi-annual meeting on June 10 (more “plain old fun” together)

* collective participation at movies (Live and Become) and other events (meeting up for Christmas dinner at local Chinese restaurants)

* Cantabile and other performances at the JCA (more music, arts, and culture)

* the now-open library (more warmth, a more welcoming environment)

* the Muslim guests at our seder (more interfaith activities, more warmth)

* Yiddish classes, the Great Tefillin Wrap, lectures on topics such as fair trade (more learning and discussion)

What we’re sorely lacking are volunteers

continued on page 10

DEVARIM: WORDS FROM RABBI DAVID DUNN BAUER



As our co-president Kitty Axelson-Berry reports in her column, the JCA Board has fully endorsed the new start time of our Friday night services. The intergenerational Family services on the first Friday of the month will continue to begin at 5:30pm. All other Friday night services will begin at 6:15 pm. *Tefillah* -- our prayers -- will finish by 7:15 pm when, depending on the night, we will share pot-luck Shabbat dinners and enjoy a range of programming.

Now is the time to start thinking about how **you** would like to spend your Friday evening at the JCA. Is there a Jewish (maybe Israeli?) movie you would like to see and share with the community? Have you written some music or a play you would like to perform for the community? Is there a speaker we should invite to teach or present? Are you on a JCA committee that wants to share your current project with the rest of the synagogue? This schedule gives us new opportunities to build our community in a very Reconstructionist manner, finding the many aspects of Jewish civilization that draw us together.

The new approach will begin this June. We are working now to bring together the committee that will schedule the programming, and the committee to review the success of the endeavor at this time next year. If you would like to be involved in either task, please contact me or a member of the Executive Committee.

By increasing our *opportunities* in this way, we also increase our *responsibilities* towards each other. That's not a "catch," that's the positive substance of community life.

We *need* each other to take initiative on programming. We *need* each other's creativity, passion, expertise, hobbies, and curiosity about all things Jewish. The JCA constitutes one of the most educated, gifted, and varied Jewish communities anywhere; it is time to realize our potential in this regard. We also *need* each other's commitment to sampling and supporting each other's efforts. The line from Arthur Miller's **Death of a Salesman** is not "Attention *could* be paid." Rather, "Attention *must* be paid." I see that we have a communal responsibility to support our community's programming. It's the necessary response to the *Shema* -- We build community by calling each other to listen. We build community by listening attentively when our fellow JCAers call.

Can each JCA member make a commitment to being at the JCA at least one Friday night a month? Come for prayer and make a *minyán*. Come for dinner and share *kiddush* and *motzi*. Come for programming and enjoy the riches of Jewish civilization and the splendor of our particular community. Some nights come for all three.

See you in shul.



SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING

The semi-annual meeting will take place on June 10, 3-5 pm.

It will be followed by a kosher-que (kosher barbecue)

RABBI LIAISON COMMITTEE

The charge of the Rabbi Liaison Committee is:

"To provide an effective process that will expand and enhance both the functional and personal relationship between the Rabbi and the JCA community"

We encourage you to contact any member of the committee whenever you feel there is an issue that you would like them to consider with Rabbi Bauer.

Aaron Bousel 253-3544

Judy Glaser 253-9607

Haim Gunner 549-0447

Ruth Kane-Levit 548-1083

Eli Kwartler 253-2929



RELIGION COMMITTEE

Paul Charette, Co-chair, 860-559-4926, Cyclone411@charter.net

Rhonda Shapiro-Rieser, Co-chair 413-774-5796, shapiro-rieser@verizon.net

RELIGION CALENDAR

Shabbat Emor, Leviticus 21:1-24:23

May 4, Friday

5:30 PM

Family Service for everyone: Intergenerational, child-centered service and potluck supper

Service Leader: Rabbi Bauer

May 5, Saturday

10:00 AM

Reconstructionist Service in the main sanctuary

Service Leader: Rabbi Bauer

D'var Torah: Rabbi Bauer

Masorti Service in the small sanctuary

Service Leader: To be announced

(see next page for more information)



May 6, Sunday, Lag B'Omer



Shabbat Behar/Behukotai, Leviticus 25:1-27:34

May 11, Friday

8:00 PM

Service Leader: To be announced

May 12, Saturday

10:00 AM

Service Leader: To be announced

D'var Torah: To be announced



May 16, Wednesday- Yom Yerushalayim



Shabbat Bemidbar, Numbers 1:1-4:20

May 18, Friday- Rosh Chodesh Sivan

6:15 PM

Carlebach-style service

May 19, Saturday

10:00 AM

Service Leaders: Rabbi Bauer & Gabriel Benvenuto-Ladin

Divrei Torah: Gabriel Benvenuto Ladin & Rabbi Bauer



Shavuot

May 22, Tuesday

8:00 PM- Tikkun Leyl Shavuot

(see below for more information)

May 23, Wednesday

10:00 AM- Shavuot Service



Shabbat Naso

Numbers 4:21-7:89

May 25, Friday

8:00 PM

Service Leader: Rabbi Bauer

May 26, Saturday

10:00 AM

Service Leader: Rabbi Bauer

D'var Torah: Rabbi Bauer



TIKKUN LEYL SHAVUOT

Please join us for an evening of study on Tuesday May 22 beginning at 8:00 pm. We expect to have three study sessions, teachers to be announced.

Bring a snack/dessert to share.

FRIDAY EVENING SERVICES

Beginning in JUNE all Friday evening services except the first Friday of the month will begin at 6:15 pm.

The first Friday evening family service and pot luck supper will be at 5:30 pm as before. Please see Rabbi Bauer's column for more details.

Religion Committee, continued

KIDDUSH AND ONEG SPONSORS

April 14-

Alan Weiner & Laura Roberts, in honor of the Bat Mitzvah of their daughter, Eliana

May 12-

Rabbi Devorah Jacobson, in honor of the 25th Anniversary of her rabbinic ordination and her receiving an honorary doctorate from Hebrew Union College

May 19-

Christine Benvenuto and Jay Ladin in honor of their son, Gabriel

Please make sure you speak to Linda Cooper and fill out a Kiddush/Oneg sponsor form to assure that the date you want will be reserved.

TRADITIONAL MINYAN

Tuesday mornings there is a traditional minyan meeting at 7:30 am. Please come and help make the minyan. Latecomers welcome.

MEDITATION MINYAN

The weekday meditation minyan continues to meet every Wednesday at 7:30 am in the small sanctuary.

FIRST FRIDAY NIGHT SERVICE AND POTLUCK SUPPER

Please join us on the first Friday of each month at 5:30 pm for a brief child oriented service followed by a potluck supper. Although the service is geared towards young children, it contains all the elements of a regular Friday evening service, including mourner's kaddish. People of all ages are encouraged to attend. It's a wonderful opportunity to get to know each other in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere.

MASORTI LAY-LED SHABBAT MINYAN:

This month's egalitarian masorti minyan will meet on May 5th in the small sanctuary.
(a masorti service means an older, "traditional" liturgy and includes Haftarah and Musaf.)

The service begins at 10:00 am and joins with the rest of the congregation for Kiddush at 12:15. We will use the Silverman siddur because the JCA has copies, but feel free to bring another siddur if you wish.

All are welcome to attend, including families with children, and to take leadership roles.

For details contact Catherine Madsen, 253-2930.

ROSH CHODESH TO BE CELEBRATED MAY 19TH

Women and girls over the age of bat mitzvah - come take a night free from ordinary responsibilities to explore the feminine Spirit in community. The JCA's monthly Rosh Chodesh gathering on the new moon of Sivan meets in the small sanctuary on Saturday evening, May 19 at 7:30 PM. Prayers, blessings, readings, and other practices help us open time and space to one another and to the Sacred. Please bring round food (round in circles like the moon, like the seasons) to share, and \$1 donation to help cover incidental expenses.

Because this gathering falls on a Saturday night, if you plan to come please drop a note to me at barbruth@comcast.net.

*B'shalom,
Barbara Burkart*

FOOT STOMPING MELODIES FOR WELCOMING SHABBAT

The next Carlebach-style service will be on May 18th at 6:15 PM. We have transliterated prayerbooks and buddies to help you. The melodies are beautiful, the spirit/ruach is incredible.

NEW CHUMASHIM

The process of replacing our chumashim in the sanctuary continues. Our only source of revenue for this is from your donations to the prayerbook fund. Please consider aiding this effort.

Donations of any amount are gratefully accepted, however a minimum donation of \$65.00 is required for a book dedication plate.

EDUCATION NEWS

Jody Rosenbloom, Director of Education, 256-0160, ext. 203



**Lag Ba’Omer & Family Picture Day
JCA School to Meet in Groff Park**

On Sunday, May 6th JCA School will celebrate Lag B’Omer with class and activities in Groff Park. Students will have games in class grouping for the first hour and then all school events and treats from 11-12:15. Lag B’Omer is a day of celebrations during the counting of the Omer between Passover and Shavuot. As a school fundraiser, gifted local photographer **Ellen Augarten** will be offering short sittings for family portraits from 9:30-12:30 that morning. Sittings are also available on Friday afternoon. To reserve a sitting, contact Education Committee Co-Chair, Tobi at 549-1795. Sitting fee is \$36 and prints are purchased directly from the photographer. If the weather is prohibitive, school will be held at the JCA and a rain date offered for photography.

Mazel Tov to Award Winner, Ruth Love Barer!

We are proud to announce that Second Grade Teacher, **Ruth Love Barer**, is one of four 2007 recipients of the Harold Grinspoon Award for Excellence in Jewish Education. Ms. Barer has been teaching 2nd grade at the JCA for 5 years. She also works in the Leverett Public School system. She recently completed her BA at Leslie University. The award selection process included being nominated, submitting sample lesson plans, writing a description of her educational background, and a teacher observation by representatives of the Selection Committee. Ruth Love can often be seen helping with services on Shabbat and is the coordinator for our shomrim. In June, there will be a dinner in Springfield to honor all recipients and teachers in Western Massachusetts. Previous award winners from the JCA include **Andrea Olkin** (2005), **Jody Rosenbloom** (2003), and **Lara Temkin Pisani** (1999).

Acknowledging the School Staff

At school year’s end, we like to acknowledge caring and dedicated people who make up our school community. Along with our students, parents and congregant support, we thank **Rabbi Dunn Bauer**; Education Director, **Jody Rosenbloom**, our teaching staff: **Melissa Zeitz** (Shabbat Shalom), **Miriam Rubin** (1st Grade), **Ruth Love Barer** (2nd grade), **Debra Caplan** (3rd Grade), **Sharon Rose Goldberg & Emily Sowsalsky** (4th grade), **Erik Benau** (5th grade & spark! community service teen program), **Andrea Olkin** (6th grade), **Kelilah Miller** (7th grade), **Sarah Danson** (tutor), **Ellen Gatozzi** (music), **Rachael Goren** (Teen Coordinator) **Joanna Katz** (BBYO advisor); our teaching assistants: **Eli Cohen**, **Sophie Herscu**, **Lena Amick**, **David Gamliel**, **Carla Oppenheimer**, **Daniel Hammond**, **Zachary Oppenheimer**, **Jonah Herscu**

and **Julia Freedman**; and our office staff, **Marcia Howard**, **Bonnie Webster**, and **Pam Cummings**.

Volunteer Support is Vital to Our School

Our committees are vibrant groups of volunteers whose energies help advocate for the needs of the school, develop policies that guide curriculum, and sustain the vision necessary to nurture our process along the way. Thank-you to Education Committee members: **Stacy Tobin** (Co-Chair), **Tobi Sznajderman** (Co-Chair), **Karin Kayser Hirsh**, **Karen Helfer**, **Jim Levine**, **Ted Trobaugh** (Board Liaison) and **Lisa Perlbinder** (Education Cluster Coordinator); Community Education Committee members: **Andra Rose** (Chair), **Felicia Mednick**, **Jodi Levine** and **Liz Friedman**. And a good-bye to **Hollie Kalkstein & Robyn Miller** who have moved on to other committees from Community Education, **Scott Brown** who stepped down as liaison to Families with Young Children, and to **Lisa Sussman** who retired from the Education Committee this year. Anyone interested in serving on one of these committees in the up coming year, contact one of the members or Jody through the school office.

Registration for Next Fall

We have begun planning for school next year! Registration information was sent to families with students currently enrolled in JCA School in late April. If you are interested in beginning JCA School, call 256-0160 for registration information. (A gentle reminder: registration is processed only if you are current in fulfilling your financial obligations to the JCA.)

Thank-You To:

Matzoh Brei Breakfast Volunteers: Cooks **Ken Bernstein**, **Andra Rose & Abby Coren**; Helpers **Ruth & Solomon Goldstein-Rose**, **Asa Parker Bernstein**, **Karen Helfer & Rachel Madowitz**; and shopper, **Jessica Wolff**.

Calendar

Sat, May 5	Last Shabbat Shalom class (children ages 4-6) 10:30 am
Sun, May 6	Lag Ba’Omer Activities, Family Portraits & Picnic at Groff Park
Mon, May 14	Education Committee Meeting 7:30pm
Wed, May 16	Last day for 7 th grade
Sun, May 20	Last day for grades 1-6. Parents invited. 10am-12:15pm

JCA RELIGIOUS SCHOOL FUNDRAISER!

BEAUTIFUL PHOTOGRAPHIC PORTRAITS
IN BLACK AND WHITE

By Locally Famous Photographer
ELLEN AUGARTEN

Two Dates in May:
FRIDAY, MAY 4TH, 2:30-5:30
SUNDAY, MAY 6TH, 9:30-12:30

LOCATION: GROFF PARK
(there will be a rain date)

SITTING FEE (100% donated to JCA): \$36
PRINTS ARE PURCHASED DIRECTLY FROM
ELLEN AUGARTEN

(print prices available—call Tobi)

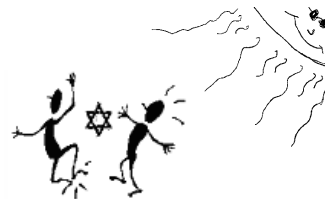
CALL TOBI TO RESERVE A TIME SLOT: 549-1795

CAMP SHEMESH 2007

Registration forms for JCA’s Camp Shemesh 2007 season will be distributed this month and will be available online. Camp will be held at Amherst College and is open to campers ages 6-11. *To provide optimal accommodations for family schedules, an 8 week program will be offered this year*, and campers now have the option to sign up for a one week session or more.

One week sessions available this summer are:

- Week 1: June 25th
- Week 2: July 2nd
- Week 3: July 9th
- Week 4: July 16th
- Week 5: July 23rd
- Week 6: July 30th
- Week 7: Aug. 6th
- Week 8: Aug. 13th



Registration forms are available online on the JCA website www.j-c-a.org. You may print out and mail in or drop off forms at the JCA office. For further information, please leave a message for Julie Rosenshein, Camp Shemesh Director, on her voicemail: 253-0561 x 250.

THE YOUNG CHILDREN’S HAVDALAH GROUP WILL MEET ON SATURDAY MAY 12TH.

To be added to the group’s list or for more info, folks should contact: Jeanne Friedman, jfriedma@mtholyoke.edu

ANNUAL CAMPING TRIP FOR FAMILIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

Tully Lake, Royalston, MA (45 minutes away)
July 20th - 22nd

Join us for a wonderful weekend of storytelling, singing, and convening with nature and friends. Those of us who went last year had a fantastic time and our children have been talking about it ever since. This will be a wonderful opportunity for us all to spend time with each other, relax, splash in the water and celebrate Shabbat.

David Arfa, a dynamic storyteller and environmental educator dedicated to celebrating Judaism’s vibrant storytelling heritage and ancient environmental wisdom, will be joining us for the weekend with his fantastic tales.

If you have participated in the Havdalah Gatherings for Families with young children (or have wanted to) then this is for you!

Registration Form due by May 25th

If you RSVP’ed, now’s the time to register!

Reserve your spot now! Space is limited!

Please send your registration form to:

JCA – family ed camping trip
742 Main Street
Amherst, MA 01002

Parent/s name: _____

Children’s names and ages: _____

Deposit of \$35.00 enclosed (Please make it out to JCA – camping trip): _____

Email address of all adults: _____

Phone number: _____

Contact Liz Friedman at lizfriedm@gmail.com for more information.



MAY 2007 JCA TEEN PROGRAMMING

Tuesday, May 1st, 6-8pm, Leadership Meeting, Rachael Goren's house, 133 Bay Road, Amherst

Come help plan upcoming events, eat dinner, and hang out with the crew. Free to anyone interested.

Sunday, May 6th, 2-430pm; Center for Extended Care, Amherst: spark! FINAL SESSION!!!

Volunteer for the Center for Extended Care. RSVP to Erik at ebenau@comcast.net.

Saturday, May 12th 7:30-10pm Havdallah Bonfire- Jonathan Harris-Eisen's house, 180 Aubinwood Rd, Amherst

Come spend havdallah with your friends and enjoy a bonfire with kosher s'mores and songs around the campfire. Bring a musical instrument! Come and hang out and learn more about your friends. Chai-free, Alef, 7th graders and new members- \$5

Thursday, May 24th- 6-8pm- Yamaha Yamulke, JCA

You will not want to miss this. We will be designing and creating our very own crazy yamulkes while listening to your favorite tunes. Bring a CD or tape with your favorite song and come prepared to make a kippah that will blow your friends away. Chai- free, Alef, 7th graders, and new members- \$8



RSVP to any of these awesome events by contacting Rachael at 256-0160 x208 or rbgoren@gmail.com

These programs are partially funded by the Harold Grinspoon Foundation Teen Initiative & spark! and Sponsored by JCAT, SPARK & BBYO.

THEATER TRIP TO NEW YORK

The JCA has finalized plans for a theater trip Sunday June 3rd to see the matinee performance of a Jew Grows in Brooklyn. In addition, the JCA will provide transportation and there will be a box lunch as well. The cost of the trip is only \$79. Please contact Jeff Cohen if you are interested as we have room on the bus for 29 people. Jeff's email address is jeffroystella@comcast.net

WAKE UP AND SMELL THE COFFEE...

Organic, Fair trade, Kosher, Fresh, and a Such a Deal!

Support the JCA by ordering Dean's Beans Organic Coffee each month (September through June). It's a fundraiser for us and a bargain for you (\$8.50/lb and \$9.50/lb for decaf). Chai tea and chocolate covered coffee beans are also available.



For details, pick up an order form in the JCA lobby or contact susanweinstein1@yahoo.com (413-548-9552) to get on the e mail list.

The next order date is: May 6th.

Pick up will be May 13th, or thereafter (contact Sue -see above- for more details)

ANNUAL FOOD COLLECTION AT STOP & SHOP

The JCA will be conducting its Annual Food Collection at the Amherst/Hadley Stop and Shop on **Thursday, May 3, Friday, May 4 and Sunday, May 6**. JCA volunteers are needed in 2 hour shifts to make this effort a success as it has been in the past. Food is collected to help stock the Amherst Survival Center's Emergency Food Pantry at a critical time, as summer approaches. Food collections and donations to the Survival Center are reduced significantly during the summer but the need continues, especially for children out of school meal programs. These monthly collections by the different faith communities in town are a main source of food for the Pantry and the JCA's collection was last year's largest. We need your help to continue this outstanding Community project.

Please call Arnie Alper at 549-0438.

TIKKUN OLAM COMMITTEE NEWS BRIEF

The ‘Genocide Olympics’

By Ronan Farrow and Mia Farrow

March 28, 2007; Page A17

“One World, One Dream” is China’s slogan for its 2008 Olympics. But there is one nightmare that China shouldn’t be allowed to sweep under the rug. That nightmare is Darfur, where more than 400,000 people have been killed and more than two-and-a-half million driven from flaming villages by the Chinese-backed government of Sudan.

That so many corporate sponsors want the world to look away from that atrocity during the games is bad enough. But equally disappointing is the decision of artists like director Steven Spielberg -- who quietly visited China this month as he prepares to help stage the Olympic ceremonies -- to sanitize Beijing’s image. Is Mr. Spielberg, who in 1994 founded the Shoah Foundation to record the testimony of survivors of the holocaust, aware that China is bankrolling Darfur’s genocide?

China is pouring billions of dollars into Sudan. Beijing purchases an overwhelming majority of Sudan’s annual oil exports and state-owned China National Petroleum Corp. -- an official partner of the upcoming Olympic Games -- owns the largest shares in each of Sudan’s two major oil consortia. The Sudanese government uses as much as 80% of proceeds from

those sales to fund its brutal Janjaweed proxy militia and purchase their instruments of destruction: bombers, assault helicopters, armored vehicles and small arms, most of them of Chinese manufacture. Airstrips constructed and operated by the Chinese have been used to launch bombing campaigns on villages. And China has used its veto power on the U.N. Security Council to repeatedly obstruct efforts by the U.S. and the U.K. to introduce peacekeepers to curtail the slaughter.

As one of the few players whose support is indispensable to Sudan, China has the power to, at the very least, insist that Khartoum accept a robust international peacekeeping force to protect defenseless civilians in Darfur. Beijing is uniquely positioned to put a stop to the slaughter, yet they have so far been unabashed in their refusal to do so.

But there is now one thing that China may hold more dear than their unfettered access to Sudanese oil: their successful staging of the 2008 Summer Olympics. That desire may provide a lone point of leverage with a country that has otherwise been impervious to all criticism.

Whether that opportunity goes unexploited lies in the hands of the high-profile supporters of these Olympic Games. Corporate sponsors like John-

son & Johnson, Coca-Cola, General Electric and McDonalds, and key collaborators like Mr. Spielberg, should be put on notice. For there is another slogan afoot, one that is fast becoming viral amongst advocacy groups; rather than “One World, One Dream,” people are beginning to speak of the coming “Genocide Olympics.”

Does Mr. Spielberg really want to go down in history as the Leni Riefenstahl of the Beijing Games? Do the various television sponsors around the world want to share in that shame? Because they will. Unless, of course, all of them add their singularly well-positioned voices to the growing calls for Chinese action to end the slaughter in Darfur.

Imagine if such calls were to succeed in pushing the Chinese government to use its leverage over Sudan to protect civilians in Darfur. The 2008 Beijing Olympics really could become an occasion for pride and celebration, a truly international honoring of the authentic spirit of “one world” and “one dream.”

Mr. Farrow, a student at Yale Law School, traveled to Darfur as a UNICEF spokesperson in 2004 and 2006. Ms. Farrow, an actor, has traveled twice to Darfur and twice to neighboring Chad. She has recently returned from Darfur’s border with the Central African Republic.

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200 Triangle Street
Amherst, MA 01002-2143
(413) 549-3700 Ext. 156
Outside MA: (800) 343-0688



Ann J. Hastings

REALTOR®, ABR, CRS, GRI, SRES
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Co-president's column, continued from page 2 to do all the work BUT thanks to Eva Goldwater we now have a wonderful database up and running, and I'm inputting your names and the committees you've expressed an interest in on membership forms that I've been given. Please volunteer by calling the front office or contacting John Loeb, me, or the chair of the committees you're interested in.



April Board Meeting: A Summary

It's now customary for this column to feature a report about the board's discussions and actions because members want to know. To summarize April's board meeting (meetings are open to members and take place on the first Thursday of each month, 7-9 pm in the library):

(1) Alan Peterfreund reported on finances and plans to review the Fair Share Plan. At that time 227 members had committed \$242,510, averaging \$1,083 per household, 63 members were very difficult for us to reach (and we truly don't want to be nagging anyone so please send in your forms and financial

commitments);

(2) Oran Kaufman facilitated a discussion about our way of organizing committees into groupings called clusters, each under the purview of a board member, and why it isn't working very well;

(3) Michael Burkart reported on the progress of the group that is charged with creating a new Strategic Plan. The new plan will be based on what members said at parlor meetings, in the context of fund drives, at last year's annual and semi-annual meetings, and on the former (1992) strategic plan, especially education, membership, finances, and participation. Members will be sent a draft in advance of the June 10 semi-annual meeting for discussion at that time;

(4) Together, we set dates for the semi-annual meeting. It will be June 10, 3-5 pm, followed by a kosher-que and a performance piece by visiting Jewish peace activist David Gerbi, and for the annual meeting, which will be December 2 from 10 to noon.

(5) Merle Feld, on behalf of the Task Force on Educational Programming, re-

ported on its first meeting with outside consultant Billy Mencow, with a preliminary report and recommendations about how to proceed to come before the board at the May 3 meeting;

(6) The board officially supports changes in the timing and flavors of our Friday evening and Saturday morning services, and endorsed experimentation that will be reviewed in April 2008. For the next year, expect Friday evening services to be at 6:15, followed by a pot luck dinner and an activity or event (e.g. a Jewish-themed film or lecture, or a dance party) but Family Services will continue to be held at an earlier time on the first Friday of each month, followed by pot luck dinner, etc.. On some Saturday mornings, expect simultaneous services: regular Reconstructionist services will still be held in the main sanctuary but other services, such as all-Hebrew masorti services, feminist-friendly services, and so on, will simultaneously take place in the small sanctuary.

We adjourned promptly at 9:30 pm.

*B'shalom,
Kitty Axelson-Berry*



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**Jewish Community of Amherst
TRIP TO ISRAEL,
leaving July 1 and departing Israel July 13, 2007
Led by Rabbi David Dunn Bauer**



This is a fabulous opportunity to experience with members of your own Jewish community a very exciting, educational and fun trip. Highlights include:

- A visit to Kibbutz HaGoshrim, situated in a Nature Reserve in the heart of the Hula Valley between the tributaries of the Jordan River. Meet and talk with kibbutzniks.
- Descend via cable car to view the natural grottos hewn in the cliffs at Rosh Hanikra.
- Participate in a special seminar at Givat Haviva on Arab & Jewish co-existence in the Galilee. Lunch in an Arab-Israeli village.
- Visit Masada and the caves where the Dead Sea Scrolls were found. Float in the Dead Sea.
- Take part in a dialogue on Israel's Political Reality with a Senior Lecturer from the Hebrew University Political Science Department.
- Take part in an active archeological dig at the Beit Guvrin caves.

The complete itinerary and budget is online at www.j-c-a.org. Click on JCA trip to Israel from menu on the left-hand side of the home page.

This is a family-friendly trip. Non JCA members welcome



IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

The Harold Grinspoon Foundation is now offering an incentive grant of \$1000 to each person regardless of age to go on the trip to Israel.

All individuals and families residing in Western Massachusetts are eligible—an incredible opportunity for families to taken advantage of this amazing and generous offer.

Go to <http://www.hgf.org/> and click on incentive grants.

For more information or to receive itinerary updates, contact Karen Loeb at: kloeb@comcast.net or call (413) 253-0336.

WORLD JEWISH CONCERNS AND ACTION COMMITTEE NEWS BRIEF

The World Jewish Concerns and Action Committee submits articles each month with the intention of presenting varying viewpoints on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The viewpoints expressed are not intended to represent the opinions of the Committee or of the membership of the JCA.

A War of Narratives

By DAVID BROOKS,
Op-Ed Columnist, *New York Times*,
April 8, 2007

On the Dead Sea, Jordan

I just attended a conference that was both illuminating and depressing. It was co-sponsored by the Center for Strategic Studies at the University of Jordan and the American Enterprise Institute, and the idea was to get Americans and moderate Arab reformers together to talk about Iraq, Iran, and any remaining prospects for democracy in the Middle East.

As it happened, though, the Arab speakers mainly wanted to talk about the Israel lobby. One described a book edited in the mid-1990s by the Jewish policy analyst David Wurmser as the secret blueprint for American foreign policy over the past decade. A pollster showed that large majorities in Arab countries believe that the Israel lobby has more influence over American policy than the Bush administration. Speaker after speaker triumphantly cited the work of Stephen Walt, John Mearsheimer and Jimmy Carter as proof that even Americans were coming to admit that the Israel lobby controls their government.

The problems between America and the Arab world have nothing to do with religious fundamentalism or ideological extremism, several Arab speakers argued. They have to do with American policies toward Israel, and the forces controlling those policies.

As for problems in the Middle East itself, these speakers added, they have a common source, Israel. One elderly statesman noted that the four most pressing issues in the Middle East are the Arab-Israeli dispute, instability in Lebanon, chaos in Iraq and the confrontation with Iran. They are all interconnected, he said, and Israel is at the root of each of them.

We Americans tried to press our Arab friends to talk more about the Sunni-Shiite split, the Iraqi civil war and the rise of Iran, but they seemed uninterested. They mimicked a speech King Abdullah of Jordan recently delivered before Congress, in which he scarcely mentioned the Iraqi chaos on his border. It was all Israel, all the time.

The Americans, needless to say, had a different narrative. We tended to argue that problems like Muslim fundamentalism, extremism and autocracy could not be blamed on Israel or Paul Wolfowitz but had deeper historical roots. We tended to see the Israeli-Palestinian issue not as the root of all fundamentalism, but as a problem made intractable by fundamentalism.

In other words, they had their narrative and we had ours, and the two passed each other without touching. But the striking thing about this meeting was the emotional tone. There seemed to be a time, after 9/11, when it was generally accepted that terror and extremism were symptoms of a deeper Arab malaise. There seemed to be a general recognition that the Arab world had fallen behind, and that it needed economic, political and religious modernization.

But there was nothing defensive or introspective about the Arab speakers here. In response to Bernard Lewis's question, "What Went Wrong?" their answer seemed to be: Nothing's wrong

with us. What's wrong with you?

The events of the past three years have shifted their diagnosis of where the cancer is — from dysfunction in the Arab world to malevolence in Jerusalem and in Aipac. Furthermore, the Walt and Mearsheimer paper on the Israel lobby has had a profound effect on Arab elites. It has encouraged them not to be introspective, not to think about their own problems, but to blame everything on the villainous Israeli network.

And so we enter a more intractable phase in the conflict, which will not be a war over land or oil or even democratic institutions, but a war over narratives. The Arabs will nurture this Zionist-centric mythology, which is as self-flattering as it is self-destructive. They will demand that the U.S. and Israel adopt their narrative and admit historical guilt. Failing politically, militarily and economically, they will fight a battle for moral superiority, the kind of battle that does not allow for compromises or truces.

Americans, meanwhile, will simply want to get out. After 9/11, George Bush called on the U.S. to get deeply involved in the Middle East. But now, most Americans have given up on their ability to transform the Middle East and on Arab willingness to change. Faced with an arc of conspiracy-mongering, most Americans will get sick of the whole cesspool, and will support any energy policy or anything else that will enable them to cut ties with the region.

What we have is not a clash of civilizations, but a gap between civilizations, increasingly without common narratives, common goals or means of communication.



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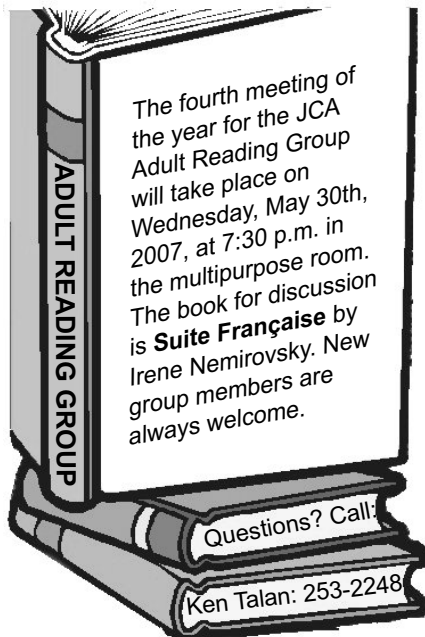
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Mak'hela The Jewish Chorus
of Western Massachusetts

מקהלה

Mak'hela,

The Jewish Chorus of
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announces its

Annual Spring Concert

to be held Sunday, June 3, 2007 at 3:00 p.m.
at Northampton High School
in Northampton, Massachusetts.

*Featured will be works of local composers
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The concert will be a celebration of Jewish
music from around the world, as well as songs
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*Special Guests include "The Dance Project"
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Mak'hela is directed by Kayla Werlin.

Advance Tickets are
\$8.00 for adults
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Did you know???

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*includes JCAT, spark, BBYO & B'nai Tzedek based on 2006 statistics



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In Memory of Anna Cohen (Mardelle Cagen)
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Prayer Book Fund

In Memory of Harold Cagen (Mardelle Cagen and Jane & Daniel Giat)

Tzedakah

In Memory of Morris Kleinman (Mardelle Cagen)



BEIT SHALOM COMMITTEE

The Beit Shalom Committee was created to provide a place to resolve rare and particularly difficult conflicts that impact the life of the JCA Community and its members. It is available to hear complaints of any individual or group with a grievance that cannot be resolved through the normal (formal and informal) channels. Any individual or groups of individuals with such a concern can contact any Committee Member: Eva Metzger Brown, chair: (256-8066; embrown13@comcast.net); Haim Gunner (549-0447; haim_gunner@yahoo.com); Josette Henschel (549-5059; jhenschel@verizon.net); Melanie Lewis (323-4155; ivechos@aol.com); Rob Okun (253-9372; raokun@mrcforchange.org) Names will be kept confidential, unless released by the complainant. Further information regarding the grievance process and the issue of confidentiality is available from Eva.

If someone in your family, or someone you know in the community, is ill and/or in the hospital, please contact Rabbi Bauer or the Chesed Committee by calling the office (256-0160). Even if visits or phone calls are not desired, it is important for us as a community to be aware of the health and well being of our members and their families. We cannot help if we don't know.



The Deadline for the June/July Newsletter is May 13th

All submissions **MUST** be made either by e-mail or e-mail with a file attached. If you do not have access to a computer or email, please contact the editor.

PLEASE RESPECT THE DEADLINE!

Thank you,
Aaron Bousel,
news@j-c-a.org 253-3544

CHESED COMMITTEE

The Chesed Committee assists JCA community members in times of joy, sorrow and need. We coordinate volunteers who provide the following services to the community: welcoming new JCA members with a Challah; welcoming new babies with a menorah; providing meals, rides to appointments, errands, and visits for those who are ill or in need. In addition, when there has been a death, we transport prayer books for Shiva minyans and provide a fruit platter or bagels and cream cheese. If you have a need, know of someone in need, would like to join our Committee or be added to our list of volunteers, please contact the JCA office at 256-0160 and a Chesed Committee member will be in touch with you.

Have you checked out the JCA Judaica Store lately?

Books by JCA members and others, siddurim, chumashim, tallitot, mezzuzot and many lovely gift items.

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Community Announcements

National Yiddish Book Center

Shtreiml in Concert

The National Yiddish Book will present the music of Shtreiml in concert on **Sunday, May 6, 2007 at 2:00 pm**. Reservations are suggested. Tickets are \$8.

Founded by harmonica innovator, Jason Rosenblatt, and named for the traditional fur hat worn by Chassidic Jews, Shtreiml blends elements of klezmer, gypsy music and jazz to create a vibrant sound that is at once Eastern European Folk Music and Down-Home Blues

Leah Enters Late

The National Yiddish Book Center in collaboration with Enchanted Circle Theater of Holyoke, presents the return engagement of Leah Enters Late. The play, written by Priscilla Kane Hellweg and Rachel Kuhn Daviau, will run from May 12 – 20, 2007. Reservations are suggested. Tickets are \$18/adults, \$10/students.

Leah Enters Late will be presented on **Saturday, May 12 at 7:30 pm; Sunday, May 13 at 2:00 pm; Thursday, May 17 at 7:30 pm; Saturday, May 19 at 7:30 pm; and Sunday, May 20 at 2:00 pm**. Funding for this play has been provided by the Arts and Culture

Initiative of the Harold Grinspoon Foundation and the Massachusetts Cultural Council.



Food for the Survival Center

There is a food collection box in the entrance to the JCA. Please remember those among us who are hungry and bring non-perishables to leave in the box when you are coming to the JCA.

Thank you



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Invitation to follow

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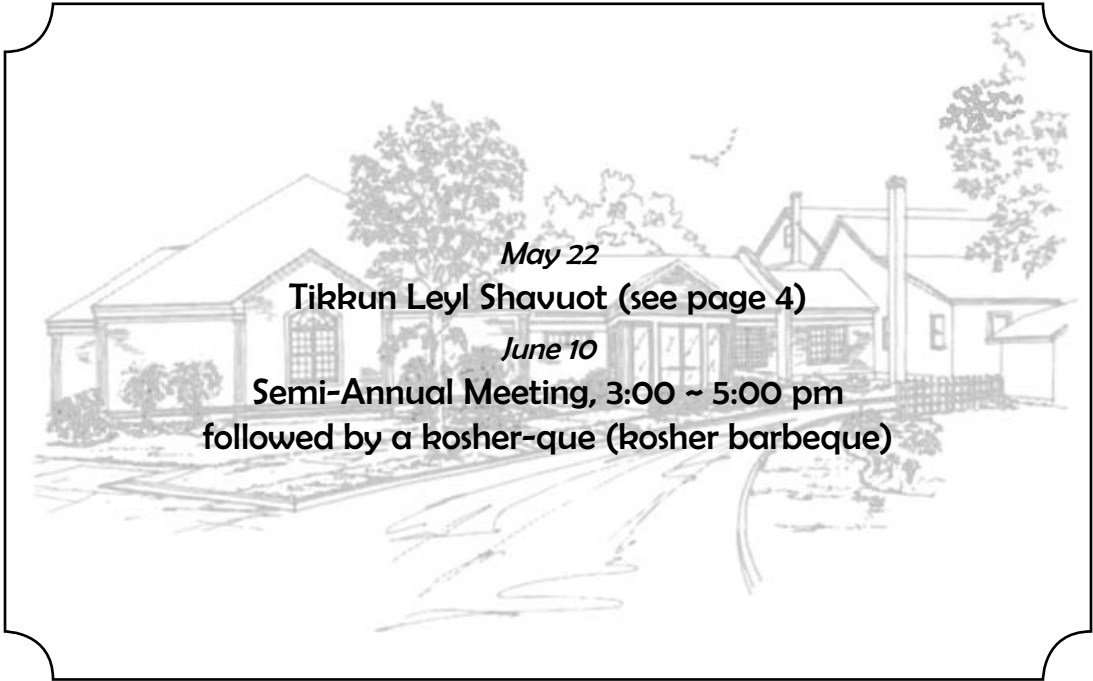
Jewish Community of Amherst

May 2007

13 Iyar ~ 14 Sivan 5767



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 13 IYAR 7:30 am Shacharit Minyan	2 14 IYAR ✠✠Pesach Sheini 7:30 am Shacharit Meditation 7:30 pm	3 15 IYAR 12:00 Noon Text Study 7:30 pm Board Meeting	4 16 IYAR ✠✠7:35 5:30 pm Family Service for all ages followed by potluck supper	5 17 IYAR ✠Emor 10:00 am Reconstructionist Service 10:00 am Masorti Service 10:30 am Shabbat Shalom for enrolled 4-6 year olds
6 18 IYAR ✠✠Lag BaOmer Religious School activities at Groff Park. Rain location JCA. See School page. 1:00 pm Strategic Planning Committee	7 19 IYAR	8 20 IYAR 7:30 am Shacharit Minyan	9 21 IYAR 7:30 am Shacharit Meditation 7:30 pm Religion Committee	10 22 IYAR 7:30 pm Personnel Committee	11 23 IYAR ✠✠7:42 8:00 pm Service	12 24 IYAR ✠Behar - Behukotai 10:00 am Service
13 25 IYAR June/July Newsletter Deadline	14 26 IYAR 7:30 pm Education Committee	15 27 IYAR 7:30 am Shacharit Minyan	16 28 IYAR ✠✠Yom Yerushalayim 7:30 am Shacharit Meditation 7:30 pm Adult Ed - Prayer	17 29 IYAR 12:00 Noon Text Study	18 1 SIVAN ✠✠Rosh Chodesh Sivan ✠✠7:50 6:15 pm Carlebach-style Service	19 2 SIVAN ✠Bemidbar 10:00 am Service Bar Mitzvah of Gabriel Benvenuto-Ladin 7:30 pm Rosh Chodesh Group
20 3 SIVAN Last Day of Religious School 12:30 pm Strategic Planning Committee	21 4 SIVAN 7:30 pm Adult Ed - Prayer	22 5 SIVAN ✠✠7:53 pm 7:30 am Shacharit Minyan 8:00 pm Tikkun Leyl Shavuot	23 6 SIVAN ✠✠Shavuot 10:00 am Service OFFICE CLOSED	24 7 SIVAN	25 8 SIVAN ✠✠7:56 8:00 pm Service	26 9 SIVAN ✠Naso 10:00 am Service
27 10 SIVAN	28 11 SIVAN ✠Memorial Day	29 12 SIVAN 7:30 am Shacharit Minyan	30 13 SIVAN 7:30 am Shacharit Meditation 7:30 pm Adult Reading Group	31 14 SIVAN		



May 22

Tikkun Leyl Shavuot (see page 4)

June 10

**Semi-Annual Meeting, 3:00 ~ 5:00 pm
followed by a kosher-que (kosher barbeque)**

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