



CANDLE LIGHTING

May 4 ~ 7:36 pm
May 11 ~ 7:43 pm
May 18 ~ 7:50 pm
May 25 ~ 7:57 pm

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

SPECIAL EVENTS

May 3

Celebration of the
L'dor V'dor Circle Stained
Glass Windows

May 5

Soulful Shabbat

May 10

Yom Ha'atzma'ut Event

May 20

Rabbi Nancy Flam

MEETINGS

May 6

Board Meeting

May 9

School Committee
Ritual Life Committee

May 18

Adult Ed Committee

May 23

Education Committee

BAT MITZVAH

May 19

Yael Benvenuto Ladin

SHAVUOT

May 26- 7:30 pm
Tikkun Leyl Shavuot

May 27- 10:00 am
Shavuot Services

Message from Co-President

Richard Cohen, 256-6145, ra_cohen@msn.com

In May, my wife Eliza and I will be celebrating our 36th anniversary. Double *chai*! We agreed that to commemorate and honor this milestone we would both read from the Torah at a Saturday morning service. The parsha that week is *Emor* from the book of *Vayikra* (Leviticus), which deals, among other things, with the pilgrimage holidays of Pesach, Shavuot and Sukkot. My portion focuses on Shavuot, which begins the evening of May 26. Of the three festivals, Shavuot is often the neglected one. Pesach, with its powerful theme of freedom, continues to resonate, even among otherwise non-observant Jews and non-Jews. We reenact the unforgettable story of the exodus each year during the seder. With each mouthful of matzah, maror, and harosset, we relive the experience. It touches our senses and communal memory. On Sukkot we build and decorate the sukkah, the temporary shelter that we dwell in to reenact what our ancestors experienced during their 40 years of wandering in the desert. We wave the lulav and etrog and celebrate the bounty of the fall harvest.

Both Sukkot and Pesach are infused with compelling history and imagery. You can taste the gefilte fish and matzah ball soup of Pesach. You can smell the etrog, the crisp air and fallen leaves of Sukkot. But what about Shavuot? What is distinctive about it? What grabs us? What can we taste and smell? As described in Parshat *Emor*, Shavuot is a time for presenting loaves of bread, drink offerings and assorted livestock as sacrifices to God. No wonder it's hard for us to warm up to Shavuot. Now that there is no Temple for pilgrimages or sacrifices, what is the relevance of Shavuot in the modern day? What is there to excite or even interest us?

I have two answers to that question. First of all, a number of practices and customs have come to be associated with Shavuot, such as eating dairy products (especially ice

cream and cheese blintzes with sour cream), reading the Book of Ruth and, as the *Zohar* recommends, spending *erev* Shavuot in study. Also, although the Torah does not designate Shavuot as the date when the Law was handed down at Sinai, Shavuot has come to be associated with the giving of Torah. There are distinctive and memorable ways to celebrate Shavuot, and the connection between Shavuot and the giving of Torah has elevated its significance far above the offering of sacrifices at the Temple.

The second, and for me the major point of relevance is actually the lead up to Shavuot. The beginning of my portion in *Emor* (Leviticus 23:15) reads: "You will count unto you...seven weeks...". This is the 49 days of the counting of the omer (measures of barley) between the second day of Pesach and Shavuot, which we are now in the midst of. Looking at the counting from an historical perspective, what was its purpose to the newly freed Israelites? The *Zohar* teaches that by the end of their enslavement in Egypt, the Israelites were assimilated into the evil ways of their masters. They were morally and spiritually debased and not deserving of redemption. According to *Midrash Rabbah Parshat Emor*, Moses told the Israelites when they departed from Egypt that they would be given the Torah 49 days later. The people were so excited that they kept count of the days. Indeed, during the 49 days of the counting of the omer they experienced a spiritual rebirth, and by the time of Shavuot they merited the gift of Torah. This is not merely ancient history. The Torah teaches that we should see ourselves as receiving Torah afresh each day. As God commands in the Shema, "and these words that I command you today [*hayom*] shall be upon your heart." During the counting of the omer, we are challenged to grow

May 2012
Iyar/ Sivan 5772
Vol. 11, Issue No. 5

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 Benjamin Weiner

Rabbi David Dunn Bauer (2003-2010)

Rabbi Sheila Peltz Weinberg (1989-2002)

Rabbi Emeritus Yechiael Lander

Director of Lifelong Learning: Jody Rosenbloom (256-0160 ext. 203)

Director of Teen Programming: Rachael Goren-Watts (256-0160 ext. 208)

Office Hours:

Tuesday - Friday: 10:30 - 4:00

Wednesday: 4:00 - 6:00 & Sunday 9:00 - 1:00
 (When Religious School is in session)

Board of Directors

Officers:

Co-Presidents: Richard Cohen (256-6145)

Eli Kwartler (253-2929)

Co-First Vice Presidents: Eva Rosenn (549-6672)

To be announced

Second Vice President: Michael Burkart (256-8139)

Third Vice President: To be announced

Treasurer: Jonathan Shefftz (256-1101)

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Maryann Barakso, Marcia Black, Robert Brainin, Molly Goren-Watts,
 Oran Kaufman, Fred Levine, Margaret Mastrangelo,
 Sara Schley, Andra Rose, Sarah Thomson, Phil Weilerstein,
 Janis Wolkenbreit, Guy Wood, William Zimmer

Membership: Robyn Miller (549-4060), **Oran Kaufman** (548-8139)

Office Administrator: Marcia Howard (256-0160, info@j-c-a.org)

Administrative Assistants: Susan Thomas, Eric Delisle (256-0160)

For information about using JCA space including
 renting the Social Hall, contact:

Events Coordinator: Karen Loeb (256-0160 ext. 207)

For a list of committee chairs and members, go to:
<http://www.j-c-a.org/committees.html>

Please refer to your Guidebook for contact information.
 (If you have not received your Guidebook, call the office.)

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 2012, Vol. 11, Issue No. 5

Newsletter is published 11 times per year.

Subscription price is included in membership.

Chesed Committee

The Chesed Committee assists JCA members in times of joy, sorrow and need, coordinating volunteers to help with meals, rides, errands, visits, shiva minyans, and other needs. We also welcome new members and babies! Please contact us if you would like to join the committee or be added to our list of volunteers.

Also, if you, someone in your family, or someone in the community is ill, hospitalized, or in need of assistance, please contact us right away. Even if visits or phone calls are not desired, it is important to us as a community to be aware of the health and well-being of our members and their families. We realize that providing this kind of information feels awkward to many people, but it is an important facet of being in community. We cannot help if we do not know.

Contact the Chesed Committee through the JCA office at 256-0160.

Beit Shalom Committee

The Beit Shalom Committee is available to members of the JCA congregation wishing assistance in addressing personal differences that have arisen between individuals, among committees, or with those in leadership positions within the JCA. Accordingly, if you have concerns or disagreements, or feel a desire to enhance communication with another member, a committee, or leader, please contact a Beit Shalom Committee member to facilitate this process. All such communications will be kept strictly confidential unless agreed upon differently by the participants.

Committee members are:

Eva Metzger Brown: 256-8066
 embrown13@comcast.net

Josette Henschel: 213-0186
 josette.henschel@gmail.com

Rob Okun: 253-9372
 raokun@verizon.net

Kitty Talan: 253-2248
 kittytalan@comcast.net

Haim Gunner: 549-0447
 haim_gunner@yahoo.com

Devarim:
Words from Rabbi Benjamin Weiner



I've never thought of myself as an early riser, but recently something has been getting me out of bed around six in the morning with a sense of urgency. I'd refer to it as "the call of nature", but that would give you the wrong impression.

Our coop is setup such that the ducks and chickens have a shed to sleep in and a fenced-in yard to perambulate during the day. We keep their water in the yard because the hay bedding in the shed needs to stay dry to prevent the development of mold. Since we close the birds into the house at night to protect them from predators, this means they spend the dark hours without access to water. Consequently, when I open the hatch and let them out in the morning, they go rushing straight for the water, in a frenzy of quacking and clucking.

I used to let them out whenever I happened to get up, dressed, and ready to do so. But then I began to find my rest disturbed by the thought of desperately thirsty birds, locked in a hutch, waiting on my whim. I would wake up close to dawn—open my eyes to see the first light coming through the window—and instead of rolling over and enjoying another hour or two of sleep, I would toss restlessly for a little while and then get up, put on my clothes and boots, and go out to the coop. Only after making sure the birds were watered and fed could I consider if I had any more slumber at my disposal.

There's another draw to the coop in the morning, as well. As nice as the birds are, and as fun as they are to observe, it's really the eggs that we're after. I notice that on the mornings Elise makes it out before I do and gathers up the eggs I feel a little let down. So I

make it a point to beat her to it whenever possible—to take my full selfish enjoyment of discovering a cache of freshly laid duck eggs in an indentation in the hay, or digging for treasure at a plausible location when the nest seems suspiciously light of an egg or two, or reaching up into the chickens roosting box to come away with a few of the smaller, smoother, multi-colored eggs that they give us. This is the delight that, alongside the urgency, makes the whole experience compelling.

Tradition teaches that the Israelites overslept on the morning they were to receive the Torah at Mount Sinai—that because they felt neither a restless urgency nor a beckoning delight Moses had to wake them up and tell them it was time to get ready. Because of this failing, we are supposed to perform a "tikkun"—a cosmic correction—every year around this time by staying up all night, or as late as possible, on the eve of Shavuot. This is a time for Torah study, which, in the largest sense, means delving into our texts and ourselves to figure out what it is that fills us with the delight and the urgency to greet the revelation of the dawn.

I hope this is something that each of us, in our own way, can discover. Sleep is good, but it is better to burn with a passion for being awake.

b'shalom,
Rabbi Weiner

Rabbi Liaison Committee

The committee meets monthly with the rabbi.

The purpose of the Rabbi Liaison Committee is to support and enhance the rabbi-congregational relationship by:

1. Serving as a channel to communicate comments, issues and/or complaints from congregants who would prefer not to contact the rabbi directly.
2. Meeting with the rabbi to help with processing and thinking through issues or concerns that are raised either by congregants or by the rabbi.

All congregants are encouraged to speak to members of the committee about any concerns they may have that they would like to be brought to the rabbi's attention.

All information is shared only with the rabbi and the committee and will be held in confidence.

Amy Mittelman 256-0883, amGU@hampshire.edu
 David Levit 548-1083, dblevit@crocker.com
 Aaron Bousel 253-3544, abousel@comcast.net
 Barbara Burkart 256-8139, barbruth@comcast.net
 Deb Fine 256-1572, zohar01@comcast.net
 Ted Slovin 253-3518, tslovin@acad.umass.edu



Ritual Life Committee

Paul Breyer-Charette, Co-chair, 860-559-4926, pcharette@lightingaffiliates.com
 Sarah Thomson, Co-chair, 413-253-2930, allset22@verizon.net

RELIGION CALENDAR

Shabbat Acharei Mot/Kedoshim

Leviticus 16:1–20:27

May 4, Friday

Intergenerational Family Service and potluck supper.
 Service Leader: Rabbi Weiner

May 5, Saturday

10:00 AM

Regular Service in the main sanctuary
 Service Leader: Rabbi Weiner
 D'var Torah: Rabbi Weiner

10:00 AM

Soulful Shabbat Service in the small sanctuary
 (see next page)
 Service Leaders: Felicia Mednick & Sara Schley



Shabbat Emor, *Leviticus 21:1–24:23*

May 11, Friday

6:15 PM

Service Leader: Rabbi Weiner

May 12, Saturday

9:15-10:30 AM

Shabbat Yoga

10:00 AM

Service Leader: Rabbi Weiner
 D'var Torah: Rabbi Weiner



Shacharit (morning) Minyan

The Tuesday morning minyan is a wonderful way to start the day. Join with us in gratitude for the many blessings in our lives. Your presence is a gift that allows those who are in mourning or celebrating a *yahrzeit* to be able to say Kaddish. Please join us once a month, or **every Tuesday morning from 7:30-8:30 a.m.**

Try it! It's amazing how energized your day will be!!

Meditation Minyan

Each Wednesday at 7:30 AM there is a morning service of meditation, prayer and singing. This is a very special time to sit in quiet in the beauty of our small sanctuary. You do not have to be a meditator to join the service. Come try it out and see what it can do for the rest of your day and week.

Shabbat Behar/Behukotai, *Leviticus 25:1–27:34*

May 18, Friday

6:15 PM

Farbrengen Friday (see next page)
 Service Leader: To be announced

May 19, Saturday

10:00 AM

Bat Mitzvah: Yael Benvenuto Ladin
 Service Leader: Rabbi Weiner
 D'var Torah: Yael Benvenuto Ladin



May 22, Tuesday- Rosh Chodesh Sivan



Shabbat Bemidbar, *Number 1:1–4:20*

May 25, Friday

6:15 PM

Service Leader: Rabbi Weiner
 Speaker: Michaelann Bewsee (see page 7)

May 26, Saturday

9:15-10:30 AM

Shabbat Yoga

10:00 AM

Service Leader: Rabbi Weiner
 D'var Torah: Rabbi Weiner



Shavuot

Exodus 19:1-20:22, Numbers 28:26-31

May 26, Saturday

7:30 PM

Ma'ariv Service followed by Tikkun Leyl Shavuot
 (see next page)

May 27, Sunday

10:00 AM

Shavuot Services (Yizkor)
 Service Leader: Rabbi Weiner



Check the JCA website at:
www.j-c-a.org/services.html
 for updated religion calendar information.

Kiddush and Oneg Sponsors

April 15-

Randi Stein in celebration of her birthday, and in memory of her mother, Ruth Braun

April 21-

Chavurat Reyim

May 5-

Rabbi Ben Weiner in honor of the 70th birthday of his mother, Roslyn Heafitz

May 12-

Richard Cohen & Eliza Gouverneur in honor of their 36th wedding anniversary

May 19-

Christine Benvenuto in honor of her daughter Yael Benvenuto Ladin becoming Bat Mitzvah

If you would like to help with or sponsor a kiddush, please contact Karen Loeb at: 256-0160 ext. 207

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.

Farbrengen Fridays:

The Kabbalat Shabbat (“Welcoming the Sabbath”) service formerly known as the “Carlebach Service”, is now “Farbrengen Friday.”

With this name change, we are both clarifying and enhancing the original mission of the “Carlebach Service”, and developing it into a full Shabbat evening of song, Torah, and celebration, taking place at the JCA on the third Friday night of every month.

The tradition of a farbrengen, a joyous gathering for melody and learning in honor of holy Jewish time, comes out of Chabad-Lubavitch Hasidism. The JCA’s farbrengen will begin with a Kabbalat Shabbat service in which we emphasize the singing of, and absorption in, Jewish liturgical music over and above excessive words of orientation and explanation--something that can captivate the spirit even if you don’t happen to be an expert in this music.

Following the service, we will have a potluck supper, and as we sit around sharing our Shabbat meal, we will sing zemirot and niggunim, (songs and wordless melodies) and invite people to offer words of Torah and wisdom, and maybe even explore other ways to experience our creativity in celebration of Shabbat.

We hope you will join us in the evolution of this program.

Torah Reading Co-ordination

If you are interested in reading Torah and would like to schedule a time to read, please contact:

Robert Friedman, 835-5205, robert@jewishfarmschool.org (for reading in June)

Gordon Freed, 256-0355, g.freed@comcast.net (for reading in July)

If you would like to learn to read Torah, or would like help choosing or preparing a reading, please contact **Batya Perman, 549-4853, batya1818@gmail.com**.

Soulful Shabbat

Please join Sara Schley and Felicia Mednick Shabbat morning, Saturday May 5th, at 10 AM in the small sanctuary at the JCA as we co-create a Soulful Shabbat: chanting, contemplative prayer and Torah service. Though central to the experience, chanting is not the goal of this practice, but rather a vehicle for accelerating our connection with the Divine. We follow the structure of the Shabbat morning service including traditional prayers and Torah. What is different is the use and experience of chanting, contemplation, and dialogue to arrive, via a Jewish path, to sacred states of consciousness. We’re delighted to share this time with you!

Chemical Sensitivities

A number of our members have allergies to perfumes, colognes and other fragrances. Please try to minimize the use of these products when coming to the JCA. Thank you.

Can You Lead Shabbat Torah Study?

Does the idea of leading one of our Shabbat Torah study sessions intrigue you? If you would like to lead a session, please contact Rabbi Weiner. If you’re not sure that you can do this, Rabbi Weiner can help you get started.

We meet for an hour on Shabbat following kiddush (~1:00 pm) twice a month and welcome new voices to the discussion.

Tikkun Leyl Shavuot

Shavuot celebrates the giving of Torah at Mount Sinai. In anticipation of this celebration the custom of staying awake and learning for part of, or all of, the night before has become increasingly popular in recent years.

Please join us on **Saturday May 26 at 7:30 pm** for an evening of teaching and refreshment. Please bring a dairy or pareve dessert or snack to share.

More information about the evening will be posted on the JCA website and sent out in a community email when it becomes available.

Education News

Jody Rosenbloom, Director of Life Long Learning, 256-0160, ext. 203



Gunner's Receive Unsung Hero Award for Volunteer Leadership

The Unsung Hero Awards of the Harold Grinspoon Foundation honor leaders in the local Jewish community of Western Massachusetts. Each year a committee of volunteers reviews dozens of worthy nominations to select those whose achievements are most outstanding. Winners receive a \$500 cash gift and \$500 tzedakah contribution to an organization of the winner's choice. **Yaffa and Haim Gunner**, among the founders of the JCA, have donated countless hours to our community, most significantly to the World Jewish Concerns & Project Rehovot Committees organizing Israel and Holocaust educational events. The award winners will be honored at the Annual Educators' Banquet hosted by the Resource Center for Jewish Education in late May. Mazel Tov!

Our School Year Comes To An End

* **JCA School Appreciation:** We thank the caring and dedicated people who make up our school community. Along with our students, parents and congregant support, we thank **Rabbi Ben Weiner**; Director of Lifelong Learning (DL3), **Jody Rosenbloom**, and our teaching staff: **Melissa Zeitz** (Shalom Sunday), **Ruth Love Barer** (1st & 2nd grades), **Emily Landau & Talia Laster** (3rd grade), **Amy Epstein** (Sunday 4th grade & "It's a Girl Thing" advisor) & **Rebecca "Rivka" Berger** (Wednesday 4th grade), **Rebecca Meyers** (5th grade), **Andrea Olkin** (6th Grade), **Howie Feibusch** (7th grade), **Av Harris** (music), **Rachael Goren-Watts** (Director of Teen Programming), **Cara Silverberg** (Camp Shemesh Director, teaching assistant coordinator, teen & family programs staff); our teaching assistants: **Kyla Amick**, **Ellie Barakso**, **Gabriel Benvenuto Ladin**, **Rosie Black**, **Lily Blain**, **Lily Harris**, **Sophia Keins**, **Jared Kannel**, **Addie Gamliel**, **Hannah Lebowitz**, **Sarah Martin** and **Leah Parker Bernstein**; and our office staff, **Eric Delisle**, **Marcia Howard**, and **Susan Thomas**.

* **Volunteer Appreciation:** All the efforts to transform our ideas and words into action have taken a lot of hard work. Our committee volunteers 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. We gratefully acknowledge:

- Education Committee members – **Andra Rose & Ariella Schwell** (co-chairs), **Ted Trobaugh**, **Deborah Evans** (school committee chair), **Donna Baron** (adult education representative), **Jodi Levine** (camp shemesh representative), **Rachael Goren-Watts** (director of teen programming), **Cara Silverberg** (Camp Shemesh director

& teen programming), & **Jody Rosenbloom** (director of lifelong learning).

- School Sub-Committee members: **Deborah Evans** (chair), **Ted Trobaugh**, **Amy Kroin**, **Cheryl Campbell**, and **Jody Rosenbloom**.
- Grade level parents who helped facilitate community and grade level projects: **Sheri McDonald**, **Beth Ginsberg** (1st/2nd grades), **Jill Kaufman**, **Cheryl Campbell**, **Marci Lowy** (3rd/4th grades), **Anna Robbins**, **Amy Kroin** (5th grade), and **Deborah Evans** (6th grade).
- Fundraiser Coordinators: **Jodi Levine** (Dean's Beans), **Nina Kliman** (Box Tops for Education), **Lisa Blain** (Purim Carnival), **Cheryl Campbell** (Original Art) & **Michael Aronson** (Shoes).
- **Andrea Newman**, **Ariella Schwell**, & **Leah Moseman** for their leadership with Tot Shabbat & Havurah Ketana/Families with young children group.

When to Begin JCA Programs for Your Child A Jewish Journey is Lifelong

Join us for a Tot Shabbat. Consider sending children 4-6 years old (as of Sept. 2012) to participate in our monthly Shalom Sunday program. Children entering 1st & 2nd grade begin weekly programming on Sunday mornings. Enrolling a child 3rd grade or older? Smooth the way by coordinating with the office. If you know of anyone thinking of joining a

continued on next page

Calendar

Fri, May 4	Shabbat Intergenerational Service and family dinner for Shalom Sunday, 1st & 2nd graders. Concurrent Tot Shabbat. Services at 5:30 pm followed by vegetarian potluck dinner.
Sun, May 6	"Becoming B'nai Mitzvah at the JCA" from 10-11:45. Workshop for 4th Graders & a parent/guardian B'tzelem Elohim/In God's Image – Parent education & support group, 10:15 am
Wed, May 9	Omer Series – Lag B'Omer in JCA School 4-5:30, School Committee at 7pm
Sat, May 12	Last class, Torah study for 7th grade
Sun, May 20	Last day for grades 1-6, Shalom Sunday. Special year end programming for parents & their children 10-12:15.
Wed, May 23	Education Committee 7:00 pm

continued from previous page

synagogue or interested in a Jewish education for their child, suggest they contact Jody Rosenbloom, Director of Lifelong Learning, to discuss local Jewish education options at 256-0160 X203. The earlier children are enrolled, the easier it is for planning teacher, space and curricular needs for the year. Classes run from September through May.

Returning Students: Simple Registration in May

In order to plan for the upcoming school year, we need to know how many students will be attending programs. For JCA School, we separate the enrollment process into two stages. The first stage is during the month of May - filling out enrollment, confirming or denying intent to enroll for the upcoming year. There will be tables in the lobby during Sunday school to facilitate this. The second stage, the office will respond by billing tuition payment and information required by the end of August, prior to the first day of class. Teen programming is exploring the logistics of registration on-line.

The Spirituality and Social Change Interfaith Study Group Presents a New Conversation Series:

Spirituality and Political Activism: Couples Sharing their Journeys

On Wednesday May 9 at 7 PM at the JCA our guests will be

Susan and Rene Theberge.

Susan and Rene Theberge have been long time organizers in the peace and social justice movements of the last 40 years including work in communities and labor unions.

Susan is currently a professor at Keene State College and is active in the Buddhist Peace Fellowship, Fund Our Communities Not War, the Occupy movement and the Alliance for Peace and Justice.

Rene is retired from a career in medical and non-profit management and is also active in the Buddhist Peace Fellowship. He is currently pursuing his avocation of nature photography and its application to environmental causes.

When: Wednesday May 9, 2012,

7:00- 8:30 Presentation and lots of time for conversation

8:30 Refreshments.

At the Jewish Community of Amherst

For more info contact:

Tom Wolff 413 253 2646 or Ted Slovin 253 3518

To RSVP email tom@tomwolff.com

Mornings Go Better with Dean's Beans Coffee

Are you ordering your coffee through the JCA? If not, why not start now? We offer Dean's Beans fair trade organic coffee at a great price and the profit goes directly to support the JCA School.



Please be sure to get your orders and payments in on time!

Order due date: 4/29/12

Pick up on/after: 5/4/12

Visit the JCA website for the order form or contact wildchildtiedyes@comcast.net for more info and/or to get on the e list for monthly reminders.



100% Organic / Fair Trade

Friday Evening Speaker: Michaelann Bewsee

Poverty is an accident of birth

May 25, 2012, Michaelann Bewsee will speak at Friday night services at the Jewish Community of Amherst. Michaelann is a founding member and currently executive director of Arise for Social Justice, a low-income rights organization based in Springfield, where she has lived most of her life.

She is a single mother of two daughters and the grandmother of two, and a former welfare recipient. She is a former writer and office manager for the Valley Advocate and has been employed locally by Mass Shelter Providers, Springfield Walk for the Hungry and Homeless, Mass Senior Action Council. She is the current president and founder of Rainville Housing for Homeless and an active member of Stop Toxic Incineration in Springfield. She is also a published poet and organic gardener.

The issues of income inequality and economic injustice are front and center today. Come hear this courageous woman discuss her experiences working tirelessly for the poor and homeless.

For more information and to help

Michaelann and Arise for Social Justice,

<http://ariseforsocialjustice.blogspot.com/>

JCA Adult Reading Group

The 4th meeting of the year of the ARG will be on Thursday June 14, 2012 at 7:30 PM in the JCA library. We will be discussing the novel, *The Brothers Ashkenazi* by Israel Joshua Singer. It is in paperback and has received very positive reviews. Come join us; new participants are always welcome! Any questions, please call Ken Talan, 253-2248.

Dean's Beans Organic Coffee
Great Coffee Great Cause Great Price

Yom Ha'atzmaut
Israel Independence Day Celebration



OPERATION SOLOMON: WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

How Thousands of Ethiopian Jews
 Were Saved by a Secret Airlift to Israel



May 10, 2012, 7:30 pm

Jewish Community of Amherst
 742 Main Street, Amherst

Former U.S. Ambassador Herman J. Cohen, who also served as Assistant Secretary of State during the years of negotiation for the release of 14,000 Ethiopian Jews, will reveal the complicated details of this modern Exodus, labeled Operation Solomon.

As the official international mediator in the thirty-year civil war between the government of Ethiopia and the Eritrean secessionists, Ambassador Cohen discloses the diplomatic twists and turns, involving international intrigue, arms deals, blackmail, peace negotiation and ransoms, which led to 36 non-stop airlifts by Israeli aircraft of all those Jews who had been waiting for years under extremely difficult conditions to be taken to the land of their forefathers.

Ambassador Cohen is the author of *Intervening in Africa; Superpower peacemaking in a troubled continent* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2000).

The event is free and open to the public. It is co-sponsored by the World Jewish Concerns and Action Committee of the JCA, Northampton-Amherst Chapter of Hadassah and the Jewish Historical Society of Western Massachusetts.

Adult Education Opportunities - Spring, 2012

Lunch and Learn with Rabbi Weiner

The History and Future of Halakha (Jewish Law)

Every Wednesday beginning on March 28, 2012

12:15 - 1:15 PM in the Small Sanctuary

Halakha, Jewish law, is a core aspect of the Jewish tradition, and yet it is a problematic subject for the contemporary progressive Jewish community. How much do we see ourselves as bound by Torah and rabbinic law? Do we understand where it comes from and how it develops? If we define ourselves as non- or post- halakhic Jews does this material still hold relevance for our individual and communal Jewish lives?

Come, bring your lunch and explore these topics with Rabbi Weiner in a series of informal, lunch-and-learn sessions. Together we will learn about and study from some of the classic halakhic texts, like the Talmud, the Shulchan Arukh, and the Mishneh Torah, as well as later writing about the subject, all the while developing an understanding of how Halakha functions. We will also have ample opportunity to discuss our own relationship toward this way of being Jewish.

This is not a class in the traditional sense. Though you may find it a richer experience if you are able to attend consistently, drop-ins are always welcome.

Richard S. Ellis

Mindfulness of the Torah

April 24, May 1, 8, 15

7:30 - 9:00 PM in the JCA Library

Mindfulness is the calm and direct awareness of what is now happening in our bodies, in our minds, and in the world around us. In the context of Buddhist meditation, mindfulness is a skillful approach to dealing with life and its challenges. As I hope to show in this course, it is also a skillful approach to discovering the profundity of the Torah.

The profundity of the Torah is revealed when it is read with a sensitivity to the original Hebrew, to which a gentle introduction will be given (no background necessary). When we read the Torah in this way, we experience a fertile ambiguity, a fluidity of language, theme, and character pregnant with possibilities and unavailable in any translation. By being mindful of the Torah's artful use of words, literary devices, the interplay of themes, narrative point of view, imagery, and the like, we become aware of the open-endedness, multiple interpretability, and vast reach of the original Hebrew. This discovery inspires us to face our lives with the same awareness of interdependence and infinite possibilities.

Buddhist meditation uses mindfulness to go beyond words. We will use mindfulness to play and wrestle with the words of the holy Torah. In so doing, we become God's partners.

The optional text for the course is my book, *Blinding Pain, Simple Truth: Changing Your Life Through Buddhist Meditation*. We will read chapter 4 on Jacob and chapter 5 on the creation and the Garden of Eden. The book is available at

local bookstores and at amazon.com: <http://alturl.com/ztabb>. Information about the book can be found at <http://RichardSEllis.com>. Please come to class with a translation of Genesis. Different translations will be compared and discussed.

Prerequisites. None. In particular, no knowledge of Hebrew is required. I will provide any information that is needed. In case of any questions, please email me at rsellis@math.umass.edu.

Summary of the four classes:

Class 1. Mindfulness and the Torah; introduction to Biblical Hebrew; Jacob's youth

Class 2. Jacob, Esau, and wrestling with the nameless adversary at the Yabboq River

Class 3. The creation story

Class 4. God, Eve, and Adam in the Garden of Eden

Richard S. Ellis, a member of the Jewish Community of Amherst, is a professor of mathematics and an adjunct professor of Judaic studies at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. He has taught courses on the Torah at the JCA, at UMass, and in the Florence Melton Adult Mini-School. He also has extensive experience with Buddhist meditation.

Pre-registration is encouraged.

Contact Barbara Burkart at 413-687-0316

or barbruth@comcast.net

Suggested donation: \$36.00

Josh Price

Introduction to Yiddish Language, Literature, and Culture

Wednesdays April 25, May 2, 16, 23, 30, June 6, 13

7:00 - 8:30 PM in the JCA Small Sanctuary

This class will serve as an introduction to Yiddish language, with the goal of reading texts. Grammatical material will come largely from Uriel Weinreich's *College Yiddish* and Dovid Katz's *Grammar of the Yiddish Language*. In addition, this class will offer a broad sketch of Yiddish literature and culture through discussion of primary sources in translation and secondary sources in English.

Josh Price studied Yiddish literature and modern Jewish history at Yale. Now he works as a fellow at the National Yiddish Book Center, overseeing various digitization projects. He is grateful to have found such a heymish community at the JCA. This is a one-time opportunity as Josh will be leaving the area this summer.

Below is a rough outline, subject to much change.

1. The Yiddish Alphabet; Differences with Hebrew; Orthographic Traditions; Dialects; Component Languages / Shmeltsshpakh
2. *College Yiddish* text (henceforth CY); Nominative Case; Basic syntax
Pre-History of Yiddish: Benjamin Harshav *Meaning of Yiddish* 1; Katz *Words on Fire* 1-2
3. CY; Accusative Case; Nominative Personal Pro-

continued on next page

Adult Education Opportunities - Spring, 2012

(continued from previous page)

- nouns; Present Tense
Old Yiddish literature: Katz 3-4; selections from Jean Baumgarten *Introduction to Old Yiddish Literature*; Tsene-rene excerpts [in translation]
4. CY; Dative Case; Personal Pronouns in all cases; Negation
Hasidism: Katz 6; Roskies *Bridge of Longing* 2; Nakhmen Sipurey-mayses
 5. CY; Possessives; Past Tense; Numbers; Analytic Verbs
Haskalah: Katz 7-8; Howe-Greenberg *Treasury of Yiddish Stories* excerpts
 6. CY; Other Tenses: Future, Conditional, Habitual Past, Pluperfect Past, Future Perfect; Prefixed Verbs
20th century: Katz 9; Chapters from David Shneer *Soviet Yiddish Culture*; Tony Michels *A Fire in Our Hearts*; Harshavs' *American Yiddish Poetry* (introduction and selections)
 7. CY; Relative Pronouns; Periphrastic Verbs; Comparative & Superlative Adjectives
Postwar / Beyond: Katz 10-11; Jeffrey Shandler *Adventures in Yiddishland* (selections)

Pre-registration is encouraged.

Contact Barbara Burkart at 413-687-0316

or barbruth@comcast.net

Suggested donation: \$36.00

Nancy Flam

Prayer as 'Revelation of the Soul' -- A Contemplation for Shavuot

May 20, 2012

1:30 - 4:30 PM

We don't usually think of prayer as revelation, but the Piasezner Rebbe taught about prayer as *gilui nefesh*, as "revelation of the soul." During this afternoon of study and practice, we will investigate the meaning of "prayer as revelation," as well as conditions that would inspire the soul to reveal herself, and what such a revelation might communicate.

Suggested donation: \$18.00

*All donations go toward supporting future
JCA adult education programming.*

*No JCA member will be denied access to
programming because of financial need.*

*Your participation in the JCA is more important
than the amount of your donation.*

JCA Auction- 2012

WE NEED YOU! Calling one and all - please help with the JCA's Grand Auction! The Auction is a FUN fundraiser and a very important one for us. To pull it off we will need many volunteers for many different types of tasks. You can volunteer to do a little or a lot - anything from helping with a mailing to creating the catalog to helping on the night of the event.

Please email Volunteer Coordinator Marcia Black at marciablack@comcast.net or Auction Coordinator Maryann Barakso at m.a.barakso@gmail.com. They will tell you more how you can meet great people and support the JCA by participating in this event.

Visual Arts Committee

The Visual Arts Committee is proud to announce that **Julius Lester** will be the next exhibitor in the Hall Gallery. We are looking forward to his photography which has not been shown for some time. It will be installed in the last week of April and Dr. Lester will address the congregation at Friday night services on April 27th. Please join us then.

The Gallery took part for the first time in the Amherst Art Walk. It was a small beginning but we hope that more people will soon venture down Main Street. We would like the Hall Gallery to be a viable venue for the larger community.

Create Your Jewish Legacy...

What will be your legacy?

Bring your charitable dreams to life with a planned gift to the JCA through the Create a Jewish Legacy of Western Massachusetts program. There are many different ways to leave your own legacy. Your legacy can reflect everything that is most important and meaningful to you. The act of creating a legacy empowers you to complete the work of your heart, and to enjoy the peace that it brings. You are assured that your work will continue and the Jewish future will be bright.

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To learn more, please contact
David Sharken, chair of JCA's
Ldor Vdor committee at
413.297.5500 or
ledorvador@j-c-a.org
or go to
www.jewishlegacywesternmass.org



**Leave a
Jewish Legacy**

Co-President's Column, continued from page 1

and mature spiritually and emotionally; to prepare ourselves, as did the Israelites, day by day, step by step, for the receiving of Torah at Sinai.

The counting described in *Emor* is unique in Judaism. For example, there is a counting of the 49 years between Jubilee years, but that counting is the responsibility of the *beit din*, the court of Torah law. The counting of the omer, on the other hand, is the only counting that is incumbent upon each individual Jew. But what is the significance of the counting? In everyday life, we might count the number of days to a vacation, birthday, retirement or other important occasion. We might countdown to the launch of a spacecraft. Counting demonstrates our excitement and urgency; it creates drama and anticipation. It makes something in the future seem real to us. When we assign a quantity to something, it conveys the significance of the thing and helps us understand it. Counting the omer is, at the least, a display of our excitement at the prospect of receiving Torah. It also represents a challenge: to internalize the experience of Pesach, to change ourselves in a meaningful way and live up to the new spiritual freedom bestowed by God in the form of Torah. It is a time of study, self-reflection and refinement of the heart and mind.

It is particularly appropriate that it is the omer to be counted. In Biblical times, barley was considered an animal food. The work of the 49 days is to elevate the animal soul, dominated by physical desires and the ego, to a state worthy of receiving Torah. While Pesach is the time of our physical freedom from slavery, it is only by mastering ourselves and our emotions that we can achieve the true spiritual freedom represented by Shavuot. So the lead up to Shavuot is seen as a period of challenge and opportunity, the chance to look deeply into ourselves and to refine and improve ourselves. As Rabbi DovBer (? - 1772), the Maggid of Mezeritch, noted, "The word *sefirah* [counting], also means 'luminance'. On each of the 49 days of the counting of the omer, we refine, rarify and illuminate another of the forty-nine traits of our souls."

According to Kabbalah, the number 7 represents wholeness and completion. Thus the 7 weeks (7 squared) of counting is seen as a propitious time to seek personal wholeness. There is a concept in Kabbalah of 10 *sefirot*, representing attributes or modes through which God is manifest, and that these *sefirot* are also reflected in the spiritual makeup of people. Each of the 7 weeks of the counting of the omer corresponds to one of the 7 lower *sefirot*: *chesed* (kindness), *gevurah* (strength, strictness), *tiferet* (beauty), *netzach* (victory, endurance), *hod* (splendor), *yesod* (foundation) and *malchut* (majesty). Moreover, each day of the week is associated with one of those 7 *sefirot*, making the 49 permutations of the traits of the soul referred to by Rabbi DovBer. So the first day of the first week of the counting is *chesed* in *chesed*. The second day is *chesed* in *gevurah*, and so on. Each of the 49 days is dedicated to exploring and refining one of those 49 traits. For example, during the week of *netzach* we might ask

ourselves how committed we are to our values, to what extent would we fight for them and what price would we be willing to pay. An excellent list of such "spiritual prompts" for each day of the counting can be found at:

http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/276672/jewish/Spiritual-Guide.htm

http://www.meaningfullife.com/torah/holidays/8b/Your_Guide_to_Personal_Freedom_-_Week_1.php

<http://www.aish.com/sp/pg/48901787.html>.

Other resources are at:

<http://www.peelapom.com/wheel-of-the-year/counting-the-omer/omer-week-chesed-5770>

<http://neohasid.org/resources/omer/>


<http://www.ritualwell.org/ritual/five-steps-counting-omer>

<http://homercalendar.net/Welcome.html>.

It is also traditional during the 49 days of counting to read *Pirkei Avot*, Sayings of the Fathers, a wonderful source of wisdom and understanding that can help us refine and elevate ourselves.

Many Jews consider the 10 days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur as the time most amenable for *teshuvah* and soul-searching. However, an argument can be made that the period between Pesach and Shavuot is equally as important. If you're anything like me, 49 days is far preferable to 10 for working on self-improvement. I can use all the time I can get. And the ice cream and blintzes can't hurt either.

*b'Shalom,
Richard*



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Havurot are in the air....and on the ground!!!!

The following Havurot are looking for new members. Please consider joining one or starting your own!!!! The Havurah Initiative Committee will help create the make-up of these groups in a way that works for all involved!

Singing Havurah

The singing Havurah will emphasize expressing participants' spirituality and connection to Judaism through singing and music. You certainly do not have to be a good singer or a musician to be in the singing Havurah. If you want to learn new Jewish songs and melodies, then this group is for you. All you need is your voice, ears, and perhaps, a musical instrument. We plan on meeting once a month for a Shabbat meal and celebration. The rest will be determined by the interests of members. Contact Dan Price drdanprice@hotmail.com; Bonnie Diamond health@bonniediamond.com

Ritual Havurah

Participants meet once a month on Friday night for a Shabbat eve dinner with blessings, zimrot (songs) and prayer. Options to meet for Shabbat lunch or Havdalah instead or in addition to Shabbat eve. We hope to create these havurot with adults who want to include children, and adults who would prefer to meet without children. Please let us know what composition you would prefer, and the ages of your kids. Contact: Marcia Black at marciablack@comcast.net

Text Study Havurah

Participants meet once a month on Shabbat to discuss the parasha of the week, a religious text, a book with a Jewish theme, or Jewish philosophy. Group will be comprised of mainly adult members or families with older children. Havurah may decide to include elements of Jewish Ritual as well as singing, dancing, meals and drinking kosher wine.

Contact: Jan Levy janislevy@verizon.net

Secular Havurah

Participants meet once per month to socialize, nosh, and just hang out with other Jews in the community. One must eat bagels, lox and cream cheese (preferably all together) in order to join. There will also be opportunities to discuss issues of the day pertaining to Judaism, Jewish Culture, Israel, and Humanism.

Contact: Eli Kwartler elikwartler@gmail.com

Gardening Havurah

Participants will get together to help in each others' gardens, as well as to can, pickle, make pesto, etc. We will also help out in the JCA Garden as a group activity. We will feast together occasionally on Shabbat with homegrown food, home-made challah, and maybe drink some home-made wine.

Contact: Helena Donovan fhdonovan@yahoo.com

Vision For The Havurah Initiative At The JCA

The JCA Havurah Initiative has two guiding principles, each one important: to form new havurot within our community, and to help strengthen the lived-experience of community within the JCA as a whole. In Rabbi Weiner's words, we

hope to strengthen the **connective tissue** that creates vibrancy and meaning in our community. We hope, through this Initiative, to help you feel like you are among friends when you walk into the JCA.

A **havurah**, from the root of the Hebrew word meaning "friend" is usually a small group of 8-14 adults, or a small cluster of families, who meet together regularly. Although each havurah is different, each shares a common purpose: to build deep and lasting relationships between the members of each havurah.

There are new havurot being formed at the JCA, and there are also pre-existing havurot and Shabbat dinner groups. We hope to include all of these in the Havurah Initiative, as we explore how to create a community where all members feel they are welcomed, and where they belong. We hope, through this Initiative, to help people feel like they are part of a community, not just a member of a synagogue.

New havurot are forming at the JCA along the themes of religious observance, musical celebration, text study, Jewish cultural identity, and gardening. Havurot will be formed in an ongoing way as other JCA members come to us with the wish to become part of a havurah. Sharing meals, community/social action, attending JCA events together, planning outdoor activities, gardening, celebrating Shabbat, havdalah, and holidays are all possible activities for havurot.

We encourage all havurot, new and old, to **interact with the larger JCA community**. This can be done in a number of ways, such as hosting a Kiddush, participating in a Shabbat service, leading a Torah study after services, helping in the garden, leading a hike, etc. The possibilities are endless!

The Havurah Steering Committee will also sponsor activities and events that can bring together people in newly formed JCA havurot, along with JCA members already in pre-existing havurot or Shabbat groups. Some possibilities are shared text study, community service activities, food preservation (canning, pickling), and a yearly celebratory dinner.

If you would like to be part of this initiative, please let us know!!!

If you would like us to know about a havurah/Shabbat group that you are already in, so that we can include your group in future activities, please email Bonnie Diamond or Daniel Price. Please feel free to contact any member with thoughts and ideas, or if you would like to join a havurah or join our committee.

Havurah Initiative Committee members

Marcia Black marciablack@comcast.net

Bonnie Diamond health@bonniediamond.com

Helena Donovan fhdonovan@yahoo.com

Jackie Katz jkatz111@gmail.com

Roger Magnus magnurog@yahoo.com

Daniel Price drdanprice@hotmail.com

David Rabinovitz dmrtv@comcast.net

**From JCA Volunteer Coordinator Marcia Black
413-256-4715, or at marciablack@comcast.net.**

**Gemilut Hasidim.....Acts of
Loving-Kindness.....**

Thank You to.....

The JCA Board of Directors would like to thank **Amy Rothenberg** for coordinating volunteers for **Craig's Door**, as well as all the JCA volunteers who came forward to help. Craig's Door is now closed for the season, Amy writes "Thank you all for your willingness to volunteer at the shelter. If you have any thoughts about your time there that you want to share, I would love to hear them. Personally, I have found this work, coupled with weekly volunteering at the Survival Center, to really speak to me at this moment in my own life-- to see the fragility of people's lives right alongside the resilience. As in much of my work, I seem to gain more from the experiences, than I could possibly ever give!

So todah rabah to the cot shelter volunteers, **Sharon Dunn, John Clayton, Robin Diamond, Ted Diamond, Jordan Diamond, Larry Goldbaum, Kitty Talan, Ken Talan, Susan Zarchin, Amy Mittleman, Lynn Bowmaster, Josh Goldman, Jaymie Chernoff, Michael Chernoff, Deborah Neubauer, Sue Morello, Irma Gonzalez, Aaron Bousel, Patience Bousel, Jayne Pearl, Judith Souweine, Paul Herscu, Amy Rothenberg, Jan Eidelson, Marcie Sclove, Bob Kumin, Joe Laur, Aaron Berman.**

The Ritual Life Committee would like to thank March Torah readers: **Aaron Bousel, Marvin Ellin, Devorah Jacobson, Rebecca Meyers, Dan Price, Josh Price, Deliah Rosel, Elissa Rubinstein**

Also, thank you to Purim Megilah readers **Felicia Mednick** and **Ilana Schmidt**, as well as Purimspiel writers/performers **Nathan Margalit, Helena Donovan, Jayne Pearl, Marian Wolfson, Sharon Vardatira, Suzanne Arnopolin, Ronnie Williams, Danielle Kadinoff, Rebecca Fisher, Catherine Madsen.** And a SPECIAL THANK YOU TO **Oran Kaufman** for initiating and organizing the Purimspiel.

Spring adult education programs are underway, and fall planning has begun. Elsewhere in the newsletter and in weekly emails you can see the fruits of the work done by the **Adult Education Committee.** The vision and logistical efforts required reflect the contributions of every committee member, each of whom has taken on responsibility to ensure all goes smoothly. Co-chairs **Barbara Burkart** and **Sam Gladstone** thank committee members **Janis Wolkenbreit** (our publicity maven), **Boris Wolfson, David Glassberg, Margaret Mastrangelo, Phyllis Herda, Ted Slovin, Donna Baron,** as well as **Rabbi Weiner.**

The **Chesed Committee** would like to thank **Eva Metzger Brown** and **Ariella Schwell** for preparing meals (yum!) for two of our JCA members this past month.

Do you want to Get Involved?????

The **JCA Fundraising Committee NEEDS A CHAIR** and some more members. The Committee coordinates and supports all fundraising efforts, including events, annual giving, special appeals, and the Guidebook. *Our mission is to integrate giving and volunteering into the fabric of the JCA experience to allow all to practice philanthropy at some level in their own way.* If interested, please be in touch with **Richard Cohen** at ra_cohen@msn.com.

The **Personnel Committee** could also use one or two new members. If interested you can email **Richard Cohen** at ra_cohen@msn.com.

The **Gardening Committee** has started up again this spring and writes that everyone is welcome regardless of experience. Be in touch with **Ruth Kane-Levit** at dblevit@crocker.com, **Bob Winston** at comincomb@yahoo.com or **Danielle Barshak** at danielle@stobierski.com

Hadar Grabel would love to be have some new volunteers to help with the **Judaica Store**....then the store could have regular hours to be open without burdening the office as much. You can reach her at hgrabel@uhs.umass.edu

The **Scholar in Residence Committee** is starting to plan for next year and would welcome new members. Be in touch with **Michael Chernoff** at michaelchernoff97@gmail.com.

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<p>PIANO TECHNICIANS GUILD</p> <p>REGISTERED PIANO TECHNICIAN</p>		

JCA Business Owners and Professionals Advertise in the Guidebook

Our annual Guidebook is a great way to let the community know about your business or profession! Ads are reasonably priced and include listing in the Classified yellow pages section. About 500 Guidebooks go out to all JCA member households, prospective members, and Guidebook advertisers. Members refer to their Guidebooks all year long for member contact info, dates, holidays, committees, and of course, local businesses and professionals who support, and are supported by, the JCA.

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Order forms may be downloaded at www.j-c-a.org/guidebook, or email us at guidebook@j-c-a.org.

Steve Woolf and Aaron Bousel, for the Guidebook Team.

The JCA Guidebook– Be Part of It!

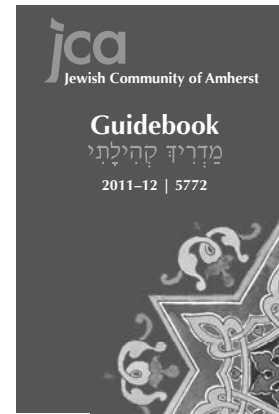
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Guidebook production is fun and a great way to learn more about the JCA and the greater community -- Join the Guidebook Team! Email guidebook@j-c-a.org for more information.

Steve Woolf, for the Guidebook Team
The Guidebook is distributed free to all JCA Members and all advertisers.

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Camp Shemesh Registration is NOW OPEN!

Sunday, June 3 - We Be Jammin' CAMP SHEMESH FAMILY KICK-OFF EVENT!

Join us at a local farm for a morning of strawberry picking with your family and this year's Camp Shemesh staff, followed by games, schmoozing with other camp families, and strawberry jam-making! RSVP to shemeshdirector@gmail.com for details. (Raindate: Sunday, June 24.)



Camp Shemesh is in its 26th year of offering a joyful, creative, spiritually rich and educationally sound Jewish summer day camp experience.



Dates:

July 2 – August 10

6 one-week sessions for K-8th grades (ages 6 and up)

3 two-week sessions for 9th-10th grade

NEW! 7th-8th grade Tzofim (Scouts)

A leadership development program designed for entering 7th-8th graders to enjoy the fun and adventure of camp through camp activities, field trips and sleepovers, while also exploring what it's like to be a role model and leader at camp!

NEW! 9th-10th grade Bonim (Builders)

Our enhanced (CIT) leadership development program, offering workshops on counseling skills, self-designed projects to contribute to camp, and time spent directly with campers.



PLUS! August 13-17: 5-day Adventure Trip Medley for 7th-9th graders

A series of day trips to rock climb, paddle, hike and more! Includes a one-night campout. Contact jcateengroup@gmail.com for details or to pre-register. Spaces are expected to fill up quickly!

A collaboration of Camp Shemesh and JCA Teens.

Visit www.j-c-a.org/shemesh.html for more information on age-specific programming and to download registration forms.

Partial scholarships are available through generous grants from the Harold Grinspoon Foundation and the JCA. Financial hardship should not deter anyone from applying to camp.

For questions regarding registration and scholarships contact:

Camp Registrar Eric Delisle at edassist@j-c-a.org or 413-256-0160 x250 (voice message line only).

For questions regarding programming contact:

Camp Director Cara Michelle Silverberg at shemeshdirector@gmail.com.

Camp Shemesh is a program of the Jewish Community of Amherst.

Holocaust Memorial Observance- Yom Hashoah

On Saturday, April 28, 7:30-9:30 pm, We Will Observe Yom Hashoah in the JCA Sanctuary

After a short candle-lighting ceremony, we will screen the wonderful and uplifting documentary film, "The Final Victory." The documentary describes how Felix Zandman (1927-2011), who lost most of his family during the Holocaust, succeeded not only to survive, hidden in a cave, but also to learn mathematics under these impossible conditions.

After the Holocaust destroyed his world, he managed to rebuild his life and to achieve extraordinary scientific and fi-



Felix Zandman

nancial success as the founder and chief technology officer of Vishay Intertechnology, one of the world's largest providers of electronic components, among them the temperature-resistant resistor which he invented.

Felix Zandman's story is interwoven with the heroic endeavors of the Righteous Gentiles who saved his life, embodying the triumph of the human spirit.

The event is hosted by the World Jewish Concerns and Action Committee of the Jewish Community of Amherst, and by the Northampton-Amherst Chapter of Hadassah.

Have you checked out the JCA Judaica Store lately? Books by JCA members and others, siddurim, chumashim, tallitot, mezzuzot and many lovely gift items. You can shop whenever the office is open or shop online at: <http://jca.judaicabeautiful.com/store/>

2012 Reconstructionist Rabbinical College Annual Report Available On Line

The 2012 RRC Annual Report is available on the RRC website at: <http://www.rrc.edu/2012AR/>

Click "Next" in the lower right corner to see the table of contents where each item is a link to an article.

The JCA Membership Committee Invites You to Join us in Welcoming New Member:



Elaine Walsh

Elaine has relocated to Amherst from Swampscott, MA, for retirement. She is an Acupuncturist and also enjoys drawing and watercolor painting, as well as walking and hiking, reading, and attending concerts and the theater. She has a cat named JJCoolCat!

Say Hi to Elaine at the JCA!



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Reasonable rates.

Photos on Facebook at 'Abe Naki.' JCA member
Eliza Gouverneur: 256-6145 or elizagouv@msn.com

JCA Omer Series

"Traditionally, between the holidays of Passover and Shavuot, Jews count the Omer....What is the Omer to you?"

Thursday, April 5 from 6pm to 8:30pm:

A Workshop for Teens: From Pilgrimage to Paycheck

The Omer was historically a time for bringing agricultural tithes to Jerusalem to help keep the community running smoothly. In today's world, how can we support our communities and make money at the same time? This workshop will explore how teens can identify and offer their skills and services to the community, and will also introduce how they can submit an ad for their services in the 2012-2013 JCA Guidebook. Pizza dinner (a last bit of chametz before Passover) will be served. Bring a canned food item for tzedakah. Part of the JCA Omer Series.

Age: Current 9th-12th graders

Cost: Free for JCAT members; \$10 non-JCAT members; non-JCA members and friends welcome.

Location: JCA

To register: RSVP by email to jcateengroup@gmail.com and specify food allergies. Bring payment day of.

Questions? Contact jcateengroup@gmail.com.

This program is largely funded by the Harold Grinspoon Teen Initiative.

Monday, April 16 (Patriots Day, no school) from 10am to 3:00pm:

Wild Edible Extravaganza

Join us as we harvest the Spring's "first fruits," make and mash tasty wild edible treats, and create plant ID recipe cards to take home.

Age: 6th-8th graders

Cost: \$18 JCAT members; \$36 non-JCAT members

Location: Meet at the JCA – van transportation to site will be provided.

To register: Register at <http://wildedibles2012.eventbrite.com> **NO LATER THAN Sunday, April 8.**

Questions? Contact jcateengroup@gmail.com.

This program is largely funded by the Harold Grinspoon Teen Initiative.

Friday, May 4 from 5:30-6:30pm:

Tot Shabbat

Come explore all of nature waking up around us. Storytelling, movement and a nature exploration will help us observe this Shabbat of the Omer together and appreciate the new life of Spring! Followed by a vegetarian potluck with the JCA community. Please bring a NUT AND SEED FREE dish to share with 10-15 people.

Age: For parents, grandparents and households with children up to 5 years old.

Location: JCA.

Registration: Free, no pre-registration required.

Questions? Contact Ariella Schwell at ariellachef@yahoo.com.

Generous funding provided by the Harold Grinspoon Foundation's Family Education Initiative.

Wednesday, May 9 from 4-5:30pm (during JCA School):

Lag B'Omer Celebration!

Have you ever celebrated Lag B'Omer? Each class will explore a different aspect of the Omer and its implications for the festival of Lag B'Omer, and then all students will celebrate together!

Age: 3rd-7th grades.

Location: JCA.

Registration: None required; non-JCA School children welcome.

Questions? Contact Jody Rosenbloom at eddir@j-c-a.org.

Saturday, May 26 – Sunday, May 27: Shavuot Services

Join us for an evening service followed by Tikkun Leyl – a late night study session with teachers from the community. In the morning, we will join together for Hallel, Yizkor, and the reading from the Book of Ruth.

Age: All welcome to attend.

Location: JCA.

Registration: None required.

Questions? Contact the JCA office at 413-256-0160.

Dear Friends of Project Rehovot,

As a token of our thanks for your support of Project Rehovot, we invite you to a donor reception on Thursday, May 10 at 5:30pm at the Jewish Community of Amherst. The reception precedes a talk-- *A Behind-the-Scenes Look at how Thousands of Ethiopians' Lives were Saved by a Secret Airlift to Israel*--at 7:30pm, by former U.S. Ambassador Herman J. Cohen. The Ambassador, who also served as Assistant Secretary of State during the years of negotiation for the release of Ethiopians, will speak at the reception about the Obama administration's current approach to the Middle East.

We hope that you will be with us for this Yom Ha'atzmaut Celebration! Refreshments will be served.

The Project Rehovot Committee

RSVP by May 4: mkushick@music.umass.edu or 413 253 0336



Co-President Areas Of Responsibility

Through this division we hope to respond to your suggestions and concerns more promptly. Please feel free to contact either of us with your concerns and/or suggestions

Richard Cohen

- Agendas
- Beit Shalom
- Building & Grounds
- Chesed
- Chevra Kadisha
- Education & School
- Camp Shemesh
- Fundraising
- High Holidays Planning
- Ritual Life
- Shomerim
- Tikkun Olam

Eli Kwartler

- Administration
- Cemetery
- Finance
- L’Dor v’Dor
- Membership
- Nominating
- Leadership
- Personnel
- World Jewish Concerns

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

Don’t Forget The Food Collection Box

As you enter the JCA, between the outside and lobby doors, there is a food collection box. The next time you’re going shopping, why not pick up a few extra non-perishable items for the box. Items will be delivered to The Amherst Survival Center.

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email: elroyek@gmail.com

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Business Card - 2 x 3.5

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Non-Member	\$ 40.00	\$ 135.00	\$ 300.00
<i>rate per issue</i>		\$ 33.75	\$ 27.27
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 In memory of Jonathan Soueweine (Ted & Barbara Slovin)

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Tzedakah Fund

For chametz (Fran Saed)
 For chametz (Kip & Judy Fonsh)

New or Returning Members

We warmly welcome the following people to the JCA community:
 Elaine Walsh

Celebrating Babies

Know any new babies in the community?
 The JCA’s Chesed and Membership Committees have teamed up with Havurah K’tana (Little Friends Circle) to welcome new babies into our community with a Shalom Baby Basket.
 Please contact us when you learn of families with a new baby (JCA members or potential members).
 We will stop by with a decorated basket containing a menorah, PJ Library book, and a card made by children in the JCA Religious School as well as information about area Jewish resources for families. We’ll also bring a meal and a plate of goodies for the family!
 Please contact Ariella Schwell at ariellachef@yahoo.com or 230-3694 or Reed Alper at reedmangels@comcast.net or 549-0438.

If someone in your family, or someone you know in the community, is ill and/or in the hospital, please contact 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.



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Community Announcements

Yiddish Book Center

Ilan Stavans in Conversation:

Return to Centro Histórico:

A Mexican Jew Looks for his Roots

The Yiddish Book Center presents novelist and culture-commentator Ilan Stavans in conversation with Rachel Rubinstein, Associate Professor of American Literature and Jewish Studies at Hampshire College, on Sunday, May 13 at 2 PM at the Yiddish Book Center in Amherst, MA.

In his recently published *Return to Centro Histórico: A Mexican Jew Looks for his Roots*, author Ilan Stavans, award-winning writer and the Lewis-Sebring Professor in Latin American and Latino Culture at Amherst College, revisits his Mexican Jewish roots. But rather than seeking his roots in the Mexico City neighborhood where he grew up, he heads to the Centro Histórico, the downtown area where conversos were burned at the stake and where, centuries later, Jewish immigrants made their homes as peddlers. In a sense, Centro Histórico is to Mexico what the Lower East Side is to the United States: a platform for reinventing one's self in the New World.

With the same linguistic verve and insight that has made him one of the most distinguished voices in American literature today, Stavans invites listeners along for a personal journey that is not only his own, but that of an entire

culture, making it possible to understand the intimate role that Jews have played in the development of Hispanic civilization.

Meditation Group

Thursday Morning "Lecha Dumiyah Tehillah"* Meditation Group

Every Thursday in the CBI Library, from 8:00 to 9:00 a.m.

Led by Rabbi Nancy Flam

Please know that is not an instructional group. Rather, each of us comes with our own silent meditation or prayer practice and draws strength and affirmation for our deep, inner work by being together in community.

- Arrive & Settling In:
8:00 – 8:15 a.m.
- Setting of Kavvanah/Teaching:
8:15 – 8:25 a.m.
- Bell to begin silent meditation:
8:25 a.m.
- Bell to end silent meditation:
8:55 a.m.

* "To You silence is praise."

Psalm 65:2

Lander-Grinspoon Academy

A Night Around The Table

Dinners & Conversations

with Local Luminaries

Sunday, May 6, 6-9pm

Choose from nine homes hosting interesting and engaging speakers. Enjoy drinks, hors d'oeuvres, dinner and intimate conversations in the company of friends. Speakers include Rabbi Albert Axelrad; Alex Morse, Mayor of

Holyoke; Abbie E. Goldberg, expert on lesbian- and gay-parent families; Josh Silver, CEO of United Republic and media-reform executive; Julia Mintz, documentary filmmaker; Peter Hellman, award-winning journalist, author, and wine expert; Judith Gordon, acclaimed pianist; Samuel Norich, Publisher of *The Forward*; and Byam Stevens & Daniel Elihu Kramer, Artistic Director of the Chester Theater Company & award-winning playwright and director. Proceeds benefit Lander-Grinspoon Academy. \$100/person, seats limited. Visit www.LGASchechter.org to download the invitation, or contact aritter@lgaschechter.org, (413)584-6622, for more information.

The Play,

"Present Company Excluded" at The Yiddish Book Center

Present Company Excluded, is a play based upon the childhood of Herbert Roth, a Jewish teen in Nazi Germany. Herbert Roth is the father of JCA member Deborah Roth-Howe and his story and that of the small Jewish community in his village of birth is illustrated in the exhibit "A Reason to Remember: Roth, Germany 1933-1942," housed at the Institute for Holocaust, Genocide and Memory Studies at UMass Amherst.

"Present Company Excluded" will be performed at the Yiddish Book Center May 4th, 12:00pm; May 5th, 7:30pm and May 6th, 2:00pm.

Please reserve tickets online at <http://www.yiddishbookcenter.org/>.

Questions? Call The Drama Studio at (413) 739-1983.



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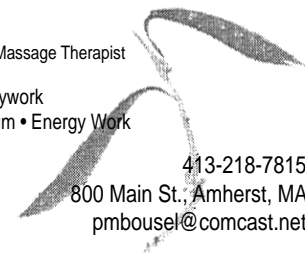
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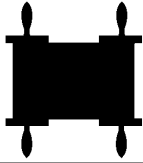
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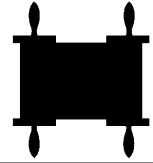
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JEWISH COMMUNITY OF AMHERST

May 2012

9 Iyar ~ 10 Sivan



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 ^{9 IYAR} 7:30 am Shacharit Minyan 7:30 pm R Ellis-Torah Mindfulness Class	2 ^{10 IYAR} 7:30 am Shacharit Meditation 12:15 pm Lunch and Learn with Rabbi Weiner 7:00 pm J Price-Yiddish Class	3 ^{11 IYAR} 5:30 pm Legacy Circle-Stained Glass Display	4 ^{12 IYAR} 7:36 am 5:30 pm Intergenerational Shabbat Service and Potluck Supper Tot Shabbat hosted by Havurah Ketanah	5 ^{13 IYAR} Emor 10:00 am Regular Shabbat Service in main sanctuary Soulful Shabbat Service in small sanctuary 10:00 am 7th Grade
6 ^{14 IYAR} Pesach Sheini 10:00 am Board Meeting 10:15 am In God's Image Support Group	7 ^{15 IYAR}	8 ^{16 IYAR} 7:30 am Shacharit Minyan 7:30 pm R Ellis-Torah Mindfulness Class	9 ^{17 IYAR} 7:30 am Shacharit Meditation 12:15 pm- Lunch and Learn with Rabbi Weiner 7:00 pm School Committee 7:00 pm- Spirituality and Political Activism-Couples Sharing Their Journeys (see page 7) 7:30 pm Ritual Life Committee	10 ^{18 IYAR} Lag BaOmer 5:30 pm Project Rehovot Donor Reception 7:30 pm Yom Ha'atzmaut Event: Former U.S. Ambassador Herman J. Cohen speaker (see page 8)	11 ^{19 IYAR} 7:43 am 6:15 pm Shabbat Services	12 ^{20 IYAR} Behar - Bechukosai 9:15 am Shabbat Yoga 10:00 am Shabbat Services 10:00 am 7th Grade
13 ^{21 IYAR}	14 ^{22 IYAR}	15 ^{23 IYAR} 7:30 am Shacharit Minyan 7:30 pm R Ellis-Torah Mindfulness Class	16 ^{24 IYAR} 7:30 am Shacharit Meditation 12:15 pm Lunch and Learn with Rabbi Weiner 7:00 pm J Price-Yiddish Class	17 ^{25 IYAR}	18 ^{26 IYAR} 7:50 am 12:00 pm Adult Ed Committee 6:15 pm Farbrengen Friday	19 ^{27 IYAR} Bemidbar 10:00 am Shabbat Services Bat Mitzvah: Yael Benvenuto Ladin
20 ^{28 IYAR} Yom Yerushalayim 1:30 pm Rabbi Flam-Prayer as Revelation of the Soul (see page 10)	21 ^{29 IYAR}	22 ^{1 SIVAN} Rosh Chodesh Sivan 7:30 am Shacharit Minyan	23 ^{2 SIVAN} 7:30 am Shacharit Meditation 12:15 pm Lunch and Learn with Rabbi Weiner 5:30 pm Education Committee 7:00 pm J Price-Yiddish Class	24 ^{3 SIVAN}	25 ^{4 SIVAN} 7:57 am 6:15 pm Shabbat Services	26 ^{5 SIVAN} Naso 9:15 am Shabbat Yoga 10:00 am Shabbat Services 7:30 pm Evening Services Tikkun Leyl Shavuot (see page 5)
27 ^{6 SIVAN} Shavuot 10:00 am Shavuot Morning Services including Yiskor	28 ^{7 SIVAN} Memorial Day	29 ^{8 SIVAN} 7:30 am Shacharit Minyan	30 ^{9 SIVAN} 7:30 am Shacharit Meditation 12:15 pm Lunch and Learn with Rabbi Weiner 7:00 pm J Price-Yiddish Class	31 ^{10 SIVAN}		

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May 3

**Celebration of the
L'dor V'dor Legacy Circle Stained Glass Windows**

May 5

Soulful Shabbat (see page 5)

May 9

Spirituality and Political Activism (see page 7)

May 10

Yom Ha'atzma'ut Event (see page 8)

May 20

**Rabbi Nancy Flam-
Prayer as Revelation of the Soul (see page 10)**

May 26

Tikkun Leyl Shavuot (see page 5)

May 27

Shavuot Services (Yiskor)