Come ‘Bash the Trash’ at JCC Greenwich/PJ Library’s Hanukkah Party

The Maccabees stretched one day’s worth of oil to last eight days, and on Sunday, December 13, resourceful Greenwich kids and parents will behold a new Hanukkah miracle. That’s when the environmental arts troupe, Bash the Trash, will help young celebrants turn household junk into musical instruments and then mount a performance. The much-anticipated interactive show anchors this year’s JCC Greenwich and PJ Library Hanukkah Party, to be held from 3-5 pm at Carmel Academy.

Families can anticipate a dollop of educational enrichment along with their DIY fun and latkes. After learning how to build instruments from reusable materials, youth will be invited to play their creations at the centerpiece performance and then strut with them at the parade finale. Along the way they will come to embrace Bash the Trash’s message of “Science, Sound and Sustainability.” All materials will be provided with the exception of small plastic water bottles, which may be brought to the program or deposited at the UJA/JCC offices.

Bash the Trash was founded in 1988 by husband and wife duo John Bertles and Carina Piaggio, with a mission to combine science, environmental awareness and music, and to highlight how these disciplines mesh. Since then the group has performed at hundreds of schools, libraries, festivals and summer camps around the country. In 2014 they released their debut full-length album, Think Big.

“Bash the Trash’s motto is ‘think globally, act locally’ to spread environmental awareness and change. And, with responsible stewardship of our earth as a theme in many of the PJ Library titles, this is an ideal way to ring in this year’s Hanukkah,” said Greenwich PJ Library Director Tracy Daniels. JCC/PJ Library event co-chairs Lisa Small and Jamie Kesmodel agree.

“The holiday is all about maximizing – and illuminating – what’s around us, noted Small. “We can’t imagine a more meaningful update of the finiteness of the Hanukkah oil than to be creative with the finiteness of resources in today’s world,” Kesmodel chimed in. Helping to produce the event are Greenwich PJ Library chairperson Cori SaNogueiro, Jody Siegartel Lazlo, Jill Derikrava and Marissa Cohen, with support from PJ Library Parent Planners.

The Hanukkah gathering will include a PJ Library fundraiser to provide PJ Library subscriptions for children living at the Emunah Afula Children’s Center, a residential facility for children at-risk due to poverty, neglect or abuse. A collection box will be on hand with the goal of raising $1,500. Yet, this is no mere check-writing campaign. To engage young philanthropists in the process of giving, Greenwich children will have an opportunity to repurpose a PJ Library book from their personal collections for re-gifting where Jewish children’s books are needed. “We are asking our kids to give a book and to write a message as a symbol of their family contribution,” said Daniels. Donations in support of this goal can also be made online at www.jccgreenwich.org.

Hanukkah Party tickets are $18 per person. Registration and additional information is available at jccgreenwich.org or 203-552-1818.

JA Greenwich Annual Meeting Followed by an Evening with Alan Dershowitz

Meeting at 7 pm • Event at 7:30 pm
$25 per person includes book; $10 General Admission

One of the world’s best-known attorneys gives us a no-holds-barred history of Jewish lawyers: from the biblical Abraham, who argued with God on behalf of the doomed sinners of Sodom, through modern-day advocates who have changed the world by challenging the status quo, defending the unpopular, contributing to the rule of law, and following the biblical command to pursue justice.

A growing number of moms with babies are joining the JBabies network to chat and coordinate meet-ups. We are thankful to committee chairs Anne Akyuz, Jessica Rickert and Jordan Sanders for helping to launch and develop JBabies. Anne has been hosting “meet-ups” (play dates) at her Riverside home and the group will continue to meet at homes, parks and play spaces on a flexible basis. JBabies also holds a monthly speaker event at the JCC/UJA offices. In October JBabies mom and dietitian, Jessica Shapiro, spoke with the group about Infant and Toddler Nutrition. In November sleep training expert Brooke Nalle, founder of Sleepy on Hudson, was back by popular demand. In December Jen Smokler Zigler, MEd, will speak on early childhood behavior and the mysteries of our children’s thoughts and actions. (See above). We are working on the speaker line-up for 2016. If you have any suggestions, send them to tracy@ujafedgreenwich.org or any of the JBabies chairpersons - Anne, Jessica or Jordan. We look forward to seeing and hearing from you!

Jewish Rock star Shira Klein (ShirLaLa) rocked Irit & Jonathan Tratt’s house at the PJ Library Sukkot Party. The Tratts welcomed a huge crowd of playful preschoolers and made us all feel at home. ShirLaLa brought the Sukkah inside with songs and stories. BIG THANKS to the Tratt family, Event Co-Chairs Rebecca Cooper, Jen Davis and Stacey Zwilling and generous sponsors Marissa & Jarret Cohen, Jill & Michael Derikrava, Jennifer & Jeffery Davis and Jordan & Doug Sanders.

JBabies buddies, Eddie & Ryan, already sharing!
Heartfelt Thanks for Women’s Philanthropy Fall Brunch

Over one hundred women gathered for the Women’s Philanthropy Fall Brunch, honoring Suzanne Katz for her years of service to the community. The ambiance was delightful as friends and family enjoyed an elegant affair and warm, personal presentations. Following the ceremonial National Anthems led by Rebecca Cooper and Barbara Salop and the Hamotzi blessing led by Stuart Katz, Suzanne spoke with her trademark poise and grace. Her remarks aptly articulated the importance and impact of working on behalf of Jewish community locally, globally and in Israel.

Guest speaker Rabbi Sherre Hirsch, bestselling author and spiritual consultant to Canyon Ranch, established an instant bond with the group and engaged and inspired all generations with insights (based upon her latest book, Thresholds) about new ways of thinking, feeling and being during moments of life transitions. Heartfelt THANKS to Event Co-Chairs Silvina Knoll and Christine Toback and Vice Presidents Dina Klein Lunder and Yael Rosen for their time and dedication to creating a meaningful and beautiful event. Heartily thanks also go out to Event Patrons, Raffle Donors, to the many women who attended the Brunch and to families who sent gifts in honor of Suzanne for your generous support of UJA Greenwich.

Donors of Raffle Prizes

Becker Salon
Deborah Lynn Designs
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Debra Frum
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Barbara Salop
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Debra Shore
Laurie Siegel
Betty Steinberg
Carolyn Surgen
Ronna Sussman
Christine Toback
Mina Tulchinsky
Jane Weitzman
Linda Young
Nancy Zisson

Why I have been on the Women’s Philanthropy Board for nearly twenty three years...

My story really began three generations ago with my grandfather, William Shemin, who posthumously received the Medal of Honor several months ago for his heroism during WWI in France. He was brave and saved many lives. After the war, his passion and love of the forest and trees lead him to the school of Forestry at Syracuse University where he earned a degree in horticulture. My parents attended Syracuse University too with my father becoming a 2nd generation horticulturist. We had a family greenhouse/nursery business, first in the Bronx, NY and then it moved to Greenwich in the 1960’s. We were all required to work in the family business on weekends, all four daughters and our five cousins. Our Aunt Hoa, my father’s sister, was the greenhouse manager. We worked hard and developed a strong work ethic as a result.

My grandfather and father also believed in supporting the state of Israel and made this a priority. Not only were my parents philanthropists, but my father had a dream: to help promote agri-business in Israel and help make the desert green. A dream that I like to believe became true before his passing six years ago.

Not all of you know this, but our family co-owns an organic seed business in the Niger, a partnership my father created with his Israeli botanist friend, Dr. Isaac Nir. Today we sell Israeli organic seeds worldwide. Our family also has a small foundation, which annually helps fund Israeli agriculturists’ ability to travel abroad promoting global knowledge. In addition, the foundation awards an annual scholarship at the Faculty of Agriculture, part of Hebrew University. These were the seeds that were sown by my grandfather and parents.

Today, I am proud to say I am a 3rd generation horticulturist. I worked for many years in the horticulture industry. But the most outstanding legacy that has been passed on to me is the commitment to our people right here in Greenwich, worldwide and particularly in our Jewish homeland.

UJA helps me feel connected to our people locally and globally. I think this is why I have stayed on the board of this wonderful organization for so long. Locally there is a lot of interesting programming; be it educational, spiritual or motivational. I love how much we do work worldwide for Jews. On a family vacation to Buenos Aires several years ago, we visited an infant daycare center that UJA helps support, through the Joint Distribution Committee. This was the first time I saw, for myself, UJA’s dollars at work. Believe me, it was a very emotional experience.

Women’s Philanthropy will be leading a mission to Buenos Aires next month under the stewardship of Silvina Knoll, who is from Argentina. The money that we raise here helps support the many Jews that are living in crisis, poverty or have been otherwise forgotten. Like the elderly Jews who are still living in the former Soviet Union. UJA helps within Israel where there is an extreme need for social and financial support. An example is the Emunah Children’s Center in Afulah, a home for approximately 140 children, previously living in at risk situations with their troubled families. Day to day here at home, I love this multi-generational group of women, with whom I identify very closely. The many friendships that I have developed through UJA Greenwich make any amount of work worthwhile. The great news is that I don’t have to say goodbye, I can merely step down as Co-President, and remain on the board allowing our younger generation to lead.

Save the Dates for UJA Greenwich Women’s Philanthropy 2016 Winter/Spring Schedule

Education Symposium
March 6

UAJ Gala
April 7

JCC Comedy Night
June 2

Women’s Philanthropy Board Meeting Schedule will be delivered online.
Temple Sholom Selma Maisel Nursery School
Gives New Meaning to “Hands-on Learning”

The Temple Sholom Selma Maisel Nursery School, located at 300 East Putnam Avenue, Greenwich, has found a unique and exciting way to bring the outdoors inside for its 2s, 3s and Pre-K classes. Through a special partnership with the Stamford Museum & Nature Center, the school’s Discovery Room hosts live animals – such as turtles, lizards, hedgehogs and other small creatures – on a weekly basis. “We are the only nursery school in the area that has a dedicated Discovery Room,” says Phyllis Lyons, who became the school’s Director in 2004. “This room has evolved into a true interactive science lab where children can explore with animals as the basis.”

As part of the curriculum, students cover geography, the five senses, habitats, communication, movement, color and texture, with guidance from the museum’s wildlife educators. They also understand the values of sharing, kindness and responsibility as active participants in caring for and feeding the animals. “Along with teaching them Jewish values, we’re helping them grow socially, emotionally, academically and physically,” says Lyons. “Learning with animals can be a segue for adapting to adults and learning respect for others.”

This partnership provides an interesting educational experience for them.” Another way in which the Temple Sholom Selma Maisel Nursery School promotes hands-on learning is through its impressive after-school enrichment programs. For the first time this year, the school has added Mad Science, Yoga and Spanish to its already successful offerings in Cooking, Sports, Ballet and Interactive Theater. “I’m so happy that my three-year-old son has the opportunity to explore different disciplines through the enrichments, and to have the social component of eating lunch with his friends,” says Sarah Fradkin, an early childhood specialist who leads Temple Sholom’s free drop-in playgroup for moms and babies (under 24 months), known as Itsy BItsy. “The enrichments bring so much variety to his week with a unique planned activity after school each day. The curriculum is age-appropriate, engaging and stimulating.”

Registration is now open for the 2016-2017 school year. For more information, contact Director Phyllis Lyons at 203-622-8121 or phyllis.lyons@templesholom.com. To view a virtual video tour of the nursery school, visit www.templesholom.com/smns.

Please join Hebrew Wizards for our annual Multi-Faith Family Concert Saturday, Nov. 21st at 7PM Snacks & desserts after…

Featuring…
MAMMA DONI & ERIC, THE JON COBERT BAND, SWINGSET MAMMAS, HEBREW WIZARDS FAMILY BAND, TRINITY CHURCH, FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH & LOTS LOTS MORE…

All Ready for Summer 2016!

- Mommy & Me
- Mini Gan (2-5 yrs olds)
- Juniors (4-5 yrs olds)
- Sports Camp
- All Activity Camp
- Theatre Arts Camp
- Intensive Tennis Camp
- New expanded trip program for middle division (7-8 yrs olds)

Located at Carmel Academy
270 Lake Ave. Greenwich, CT
203.629.9059 X 22 campgan.com

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Located at Carmel Academy
270 Lake Ave. Greenwich, CT
203.629.9059 X 22 campgan.com
Davis Film Festival Brings Israeli TV Sensation “Fauda” to Greenwich

By Laura Blum

Ready for your next TV obsession? JCC Greenwich is too. That’s why we’re bringing the Israeli smash hit “Fauda” to the Bow-Tie Criterion Cinemas on Wednesday, December 16 as part of our Davis Film Festival. Don’t be surprised if this becomes the latest adaptation of an Israeli series to rock American screens, like “Hatufim” or “B’Tipul” before it. The Davis Film Festival will screen Episodes I and II. “Fauda” – named for the Arabic word for “chaos” – presents the Palestinian-Israeli conflict as heart-pounding human drama. Filled with Arabic dialogue, it follows the Mistarvim, an undercover unit of IDF soldiers disguised as Palestinians. Each episode carries the disclaimer that “Fauda” is a fictional series and not one based on reality. Yet its co-creators have a special familiarity with the elite unit dating back to their reserve army service. They are journalist and Middle East analyst Avi Issacharoff, who was stationed in the West Bank, and actor Lior Raz, who served in an actual Mistarvim unit.

The main character in the series is Doron Kavilbo (Raz), a Mistarvim veteran who rejoins his unit after learning that leading Hamas militant Tawfiq Hamed, whom he had once caught and who was thought to be dead, had outfoxed him and is indeed alive and kicking. As played by Hisham Suleiman, Hamed is a complex figure who dotes on his wife, is sharp-witted and dodges his captors. His Achilles’ heel was his wife, to whom he wrote love letters and with whom he even rendezvoused. In 2012 he was served with 45 life sentences. Both Ibrahim and Tawfiq Hamed hail from the West Bank village of Silwad. “Fauda,” however, was largely shot in Kfar Qasem, an Arab-Israeli town 40 minutes northeast of Tel Aviv. The shoot itself was something of an ordeal: much of Season One was filmed as Operation Protective Edge was unfolding. “Fauda” delves deep into the hard motives and soft underbellies of its Arab and Israeli protagonists, portraying both sides with a degree of sensitivity and humanity that’s rare to come by in any form, much less on commercial TV. Greenwich audiences will discover the authenticity and dimensionality that have kept viewers across political and national divides glued to the screen since the show’s February 2015 debut on Yes TV. Tickets are $15, or $118 for all 10 films. Festival Registration and further details are available at jccgreenwich.org.

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You Are Invited!

Sholom Center
Interfaith Lighting
Thursday, December 3, 6:00 pm

Gather in front of Christ Church to light a giant Menorah and Christmas tree, sing holiday favorites from both traditions and enjoy snacks. Event is free.

Christ Church • 254 East Putnam Avenue • Greenwich CT 06830

Chanukah “Mock Mitzvah”
Sunday, December 6, 11:30 am

DJ Adam will be here to put on a party! We will do the Macarena, Dance to Cotton Eyed Joe; play coke & pepsi and more.
Lunch is available for $5 per person/$20 family maximum.

Temple Sholom • 300 East Putnam Avenue • Greenwich CT 06830

“Latkes & Pajamas” Shabbat
for Young Families, Friday, December 11, 5:30 pm

Join Temple Sholom for a special Shabbat & Chanukah celebration with singing, dancing, storytelling, latkes & a family-friendly dinner. Wear your favorite PJs!
Event is free. Registration is requested so we know how much food to order.

Temple Sholom • 300 East Putnam Avenue • Greenwich CT 06830

To RSVP or for more information: Alice Schoen, 203-542-7165 • www.templesholom.com
Op-Ed by Rabbi David Israel, Rabbinical Dean, Bi-Cultural Day School

Is She Crazy?!

A dear childhood friend blogging about his impending Aliyah told of his recent encounter with a (typical) talkative Israeli cab driver who when hearing of his friend’s plans, not so subtly shared his opinion: “Are you crazy?!” The image of the garrulous and candid Israeli taxi driver was very familiar and brought a smile to my face. The cabbie’s reaction, however, startled me. In reflecting back on my first trips to Israel, I remember a very different response. Back then, the taxi drivers used to press me and my friends, “when are you coming to live here?”

Today, ongoing struggles with the Palestinians, the uncertainty of the Arab spring (and subsequent winter), the prospect of a nuclear-armed Iran, tensions between the religious and non-religious and a host of other domestic and political problems cloud the clarity with which we once embraced the miracle of the State of Israel. And so goes today’s shift in the philosophical discussions between Israel’s visitors and its sage taxi drivers.

Our daughter made Aliyah two years ago and entered the Israel Defense Forces where she continues to serve. When she left for her gap year in Israel, the writing was literally “on the wall.” Indeed, the day after her departure, I wandered into her empty room and, somewhat wistfully, looked around. There I noted the Israeli and B’nai Akiva flags prominently displayed. On her dresser was a pastoral water coloring of Israel, in the middle of which was written the famous statement of Theodore Herzl, the visionary of the modern State of Israel, “If you will it, it is no dream.” Had I never noticed that?

If you ask my daughter why she made Aliyah, her answer will be clarion clear: “Israel is a modern-day miracle. It is where the future of Jewish history will be written.” She might even quote the famous opinion of Nachmanides (RamBan) that it is a mitzvah to live in Israel even when under foreign rule – how much more so when we have a sovereign Jewish state.

We are of course supportive of our daughter’s choice. What are we supposed to do, tell her that all that stuff we said about our connection to Israel was only in theory? Yet, we are cautious when telling others. We are trying to avoid confronting the question asked by my friend’s taxi driver: “Is she crazy?!” Worse yet, we might be asked, “How could you let her do that?” And so, we openly share the information with our friends and like-minded individuals; others receive a more “round-about” answer.

We recognize how hard life in Israel can be and how much we will miss our daughter. We worry about her life in the IDF and the shifting geo-political scene around her. We also know that with all Israel’s problems, Israel is a modern-day miracle filled with opportunities for spirituality, family-oriented lifestyle, creativity, and entrepreneurship.

Is my daughter crazy? No, just idealistic. Are we crazy? No. We are very proud.

On occasion community members submit opinion pieces that reflect their own views on items of interest to our audience.

Carmel Academy Announces New Partnership with Mechon Hadar

Carmel Academy, a nationally recognized thought leader in day school education, is thrilled to announce a new partnership with Mechon Hadar, the internationally acclaimed center for Jewish leadership and learning. In the inaugural program of this new partnership, Mechon Hadar co-founder and renowned scholar, Rabbi Shai Held, will lead a three-part interactive lecture series exploring how Jewish texts can help answer some of life’s biggest questions. He will delve into themes such as self-worth, compassion, gratitude, grace and generosity in relation to enhancing our spiritual connections and how we can help ourselves and our children truly identify and live a good life.

“Our are delighted and honored to be in partnership with the Carmel Academy,” said Rabbi Ethan Tucker, Rosh Yeshiva at Mechon Hadar. “Both Mechon Hadar and Carmel Academy work daily to strengthen a vision of Torah that transcends denominational boundaries and connects all Jews to their birthright. In the 21st century, we need institutions that put Jewish content and community building at the center of the communal agenda. Carmel is helping to train the next generation of Jews who will lead that charge and make that vision a reality on the ground.”

Carmel Academy Announces Its New Partnership with Mechon Hadar and Proudly Presents Our First Event:

A Three-Part, Intellectually Stimulating Interactive Lecture Series
Led by Renowned Scholar Rabbi Shai Held

How can Jewish texts help us answer some of life’s biggest questions? Self worth, compassion, gratitude, grace and generosity are just some of the themes Rabbi Shai Held will delve into as part of this interactive lecture series.

- Flipping Self-Worth on its Head: A Revolutionary Jewish Approach to Human Dignity and Value
  December 10, 7:30-9:00 p.m.

- The Spiritual Life Begins With Gratitude and Culminates in Generosity
  December 17, 7:30-9:00 p.m.

- Compassion and the Heart of Jewish Spirituality
  January 14, 2016, 7:30-9:00 p.m.

All lectures are free of charge and will be held at Carmel Academy, 270 Lake Avenue, Greenwich, CT.
For more information about each of these sessions please visit www.carmelacademy.com/mechonhadar
From the Rabbi

★ In the Face of Jew-Hatred, Assemble Your Own Assembly ★

by Rabbi Yossi Deren, Chabad of Greenwich

The Mitzvah of Hakhel

And then there is a Mitzvah that’s unique to this specific year on the Jewish calendar. You may be familiar with the Mitzvah of Shemittah, the Sabbatical year that follows six years of agricultural labor in Israel, when we are commanded to let the land lay fallow. This Mitzvah is observed today in the Holy Land that G-d has given to us, as a Sabbath for the Earth when we refrain from agricultural work. What you’re probably less familiar with is the “post-Shemittah” Mitzvah called Hakhel – a Mitzvah which fell out of observance since the destruction of the Temple, the place where this Mitzvah was actually observed.

The Rebbe taught us that although this Mitzvah was observed in its literal sense only in the Temple, the spirit behind it is one that can and must still be invoked, for it emphasizes the highest values of our great heritage.

In the very last verses of the Bible (this is Mitzvah #612 of 613), Moses exhorts ALL Jewish people – “the men, the women and even the smallest of children!” – to assemble every seven years as an entire nation, to hear the word of G-d read aloud to the People by the King in the Temple. This was an awe-inspiring assembly of total unity and fear of G-d, through which the People relived the experience of the Giving of the Torah at Sinai. In stressing the integrity of EVERY individual joining these assemblies, the Torah informs us that every individual has the power of assembling others and inspiring them as well.

YOU can gather people in your circles of influence, family, friends, co-workers, for brief moments of inspiration in the course of everyone’s week or month. You can participate in an assembly – a gathering of Jewish inspiration, where people come together and refresh their souls with the life-enhancing energy of unity and inspiration.

Your Assembly

Assemble your own “Assembly” in 5 simple steps:

1. CHECK your calendar and set a date/time for a “Hakhel – A Gathering of Jewish Inspiration,” in your home or workplace.

2. CHOOSE a topic to inspire people. (Ideas: Israel, your favorite Bible story, historical figures, holidays, current Jewish issues).

3. CALL a scholar well-versed in your chosen topic or do some research yourself.

4. ORDER a Kosher lunch, dinner or light fare (from a Kosher establishment you’ll find at: www.chabadgreenwich.org/595419 or anything Kosher-certified in the local markets).

5. ASSEMBLE! E-mail or call your target audience (family, friends or co-workers) and…voila! Your Hakhel comes together!

The spirit of this Mitzvah will accomplish exactly what it is meant to – more Jews will be inspired through unity and G-d’s great gift called Torah.

Holding fast to these ideals is precisely why against all odds we – the Jewish People – are still here, alive, well and thriving… and why we will without doubt and with the help of G-d, not only endure the current onslaught of Jew-hatred, but also come through it stronger than ever. Amen!

Editor’s Note: The rabbis of Greenwich alternate in providing messages for each issue of the Greenwich Jewish News. These comments are those of the Rabbi alone and are not meant to reflect the opinions of UJA Greenwich.

Why We Support UJA Greenwich

“We support the UJA Federation because of what it has done and continues to do to help Jewish lives all over the world.”

–Yael and Josh Rosen and their children, Eitan, Eli, Asher and Ayla

GILA LEWIS
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HOULIHAN LAWRENCE
HOULIHANLAWRENCE.COM/GREENWICH
Turkey, mashed potatoes and green beans are just a few of the holiday favorites that will be prepped, cooked and packaged at Temple Sholom on Tuesday, November 24 at 6:30 pm. More than 30 teens in grades 8 through 12 are expected to participate in this annual volunteer program, which will provide more than 100 meals to low-income senior residents at McKinney Terrace. “Our teens will break up into groups and work together at specific stations set up around the kitchen,” said Temple Sholom Youth Director and Rabbinic Intern Yoni Nadiv. “One group is peeling potatoes while one is chopping vegetables. Another is mixing the batter for cornbread or cutting and washing the green beans.”

This event, which has become a yearly tradition at Temple Sholom, serves as an example of tzedakah and teaches the importance of justice and fairness toward those less fortunate in a hands-on approach. Once the meals have been prepared, the teens will form an assembly line to fill the containers. The following day, volunteers will drive the food to McKinney Terrace to be distributed.

Over the next few months, Temple Sholom’s teen program will continue its work within the community, particularly through Greenwich BBYO, a Jewish youth movement that engages teens regardless of synagogue affiliation in fun and meaningful experiences. “We will be doing food drives throughout the year and hosting a Project Ezra Senior Luncheon,” said Nadiv. “BBYO will also identify a stand-up cause for each chapter, which serves as their outreach project for the year.”

If you are interested in learning more about BBYO, or are in need of community service hours, please contact Yoni Nadiv at yoni.nadiv@templesholom.com.

Carmel Academy Act of Kindness Honored by Japanese Visitors

It truly is a small world after all. At least that is what it felt like at Carmel Academy when a group of students from the Fukushima region of Japan visited with members of the Greenwich school’s Student Council to present them with a special thank you card. Acts of chesed, big or small, are an integral part of a Carmel Academy education. One of those acts of kindness was honored by the visiting Japanese students in recognition of Carmel Academy’s response to the 2011 Japanese earthquake and tsunami.

Five years ago, immediately following this disaster in Japan, Carmel Academy's students and staff bonded together and folded 1,000 origami cranes to give to the Greenwich Japanese School, which leases space on Carmel Academy’s Greenwich 17-acre campus. The cranes, as per the Japanese tradition, symbolized Carmel’s wishes for a swift and smooth recovery. The effort was spearheaded by alumnus, Michael Adler, who knew how to create origami and shared that skill with the school community. Carmel also raised and donated $6,000 to relief efforts.

In planning their trip to the U.S., the students from Fukushima wanted to acknowledge Carmel Academy’s generosity and the healing spirit sent their way via the cranes. Three of Carmel’s Student Council 8th-grade co-presidents met with the Japanese visitors and graciously accepted a beautiful handmade card that included short thank you notes written in English as well as several origami cranes. “It was a wonderful lesson for our students to see how one never knows how an act of kindness truly impacts others,” said Erica Sokoloff, Carmel’s Director of Jewish Life, who accompanied the Carmel Academy students to meet with their Japanese peers.

Temple Sholom Teens Continue Thanksgiving Tzedakah Tradition

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If you are interested in learning more about BBYO, or are in need of community service hours, please contact Yoni Nadiv at yoni.nadiv@templesholom.com.
Students at Jewish High School of Connecticut Benefit from Internship Opportunities

The President, The Donald and The Pope all have one thing in common: Jewish High School of Connecticut’s (JHSC) Sophomore Natalie Shclover has sung for all three of them. Natalie is part of The Young People’s Chorus of New York City. The chorus is a collection of the finest young singers in the region. They perform at numerous events and occasions, the most recent one being the Pope’s visit to the 9/11 Memorial in New York City.

The Weitzmann Institute, Yale Discovery for a Cure, Brandeis Summer Institute, Cytec, Young People’s Chorus of New York City, AIPAC, and Tanglewood Summer Institute are just some examples of internships JHSC students participated in this summer. “We encourage our students to develop the full measure of their potential – and the way we do that is to encourage every student to discover and deeply explore his or her interests,” said Rabbi Elisha Paul, Head of School.

Inspiration Strikes for Bi-Cultural “Makers”

For students who thrive on learning by doing, the opening of a “Makerspace” lab at Bi-Cultural Day School is an exciting milestone for the school and the community. Makerspace is a forum for hands-on invention and creation; melding DIY (do-it-yourself) methods with modern technology. The teaching format combines STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) and STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art and math), with hands-on building and discovery. Makerspace at BCDS is the inspired creation of third-grade teacher Beth Fritz and middle-school teacher Adrienne Robinson, who promise that parents can expect their children to bring home Makerspace projects ranging from crafts to circuitry and from woodworking to wearable technology.

“The Makerspace Movement encourages student exploration, collaboration and forward thinking. Students will be able to fine-tune their problem-solving skills in an environment where there are no limits to their creativity. Each session asks students to question the world around them. These students are going to be the artists and engineers of the future,” said Robinson.

Students will be able to take classes in robotics, coding, fashion technology, knitting and circuitry during Bi-Cultural’s Lunch and Learn period, with projects designed according to grade, curricular units and the students’ own interests, explained Robinson.

“We have assembled a Makerspace team of teachers who are excited to participate in this groundbreaking program. Also, several of our parents have approached us, eager to help by donating their talents for our projects.” The first Makerspace project will be the upper school students planning, creating and building the actual worktables for the lab.

“The space itself was renovated with a little old-fashioned elbow grease and a few late nights with a paintbrush in hand,” explained Robinson. “When we announced the launch of this Makerspace initiative, we were overwhelmed by the generosity of our parent body. Within the first 24 hours, one family donated the funds for us to purchase our 3D printer. Donations continue to come in through Home Depot gift cards, cash, web allocation and even tools.” Currently, Bi-Cultural is one of only two Jewish day schools with this type of lab.

Youth Programs at
Greenwich Reform Synagogue

Holiday Happenings and More!
Fun and enriching drop-off program for kids ages 3-4, Sunday mornings from 9:30-11:30 twice monthly.

Shabbat Yeladim
Services for kids ages 2-6, with songs, crafts, and snacks on Friday nights, once a month.

Generation J: Exploring Judaism Together
Active, flexible learning environment teaches Jewish values and builds community, Sunday mornings from 9:30-11:30, for kids age 5-14. Plus weekly, flexible, one-on-one Hebrew tutoring, monthly junior youth group and family education programs.

Programs for Teens
Monthly Confirmation Academy; GRSY Youth Group for grades 8-12; Madrachim class volunteers and leadership training for grades 8-12.

For more information and to register, go to www.grs.org or call 203-629-0018.
ADULT EDUCATIONAL OFFERINGS

Carmel Academy
Inspirational Adult Lecture Series with Rabbi Shai Held
Thursdays, Dec. 10, 17 and Jan. 14, 2016; 270 Lake Avenue, Greenwich; 7:30-9pm
Chabad of Greenwich

Early Morning Torah Study
Monday-Friday, 6:30-7am
Sunday Morning Torah Study
9:30am-10:30am
Email RabbiFeldman@ChabadGreenwich.org for info.

Parsha with Classic Commentaries
Thursday, 9:45am-10:45am
Chassidic Philosophy Class
Shabbat, 8:45am-9:30am

Fairfield University Carl & Dorothy Bennett Center for Judaic Studies

Jacoby-Lumin Humanitarian Lecture:
“Donors Choose: Expanding the Possibilities of Education,”
Charles Best, Founder & CEO, DonorsChoose.org
Wednesday, Nov. 18, 8pm; Regina A. Quick Center for the Arts. “Tickets: $45

Adolph and Ruth Schnurmacher Lecture in Judaic Studies:
“Germans Who Stood Up to Hitler: The Resistance Movements of Nazi Germany”
Anne Nelson, author, former war correspondent, adjunct faculty at Columbia University School of
International & Public Affairs
Tuesday, Dec. 1, 7:30-9pm; Dolan School of Business Dining Room
Please call the Bennett Center to reserve your seats at (203) 254-4000, ext. 2066 or email
bennettcenter@fairfield.edu.

Greenwich Reform Synagogue

New! Crash Course in Hebrew Reading
Thursday evenings at 7:00 pm with Rabbi Andrew R. Sklarz.

Intro to Judaism
Sundays 9:30am with Rabbi Andrew R. Sklarz

Jews in the News
Sundays at 10:30am with Rabbi Robert Rothman
To register for these free classes, call 203-629-0018 or email info@grs.org

JCC Cinema
Bow Tie Cinema, 2 Railroad Ave, Greenwich

Like Brothers
Wednesday, November 18, 7pm, $15

Fauda—See article on page 5
Wednesday, December 16, 7pm, $15

Felix and Meira
Wednesday, January 13, 7pm, $15

Living with Courage, Spirit and Gratitude after Breast Cancer
with Geralyn Lucas
Feb. 3, 10am, Vince, 161 Greenwich Ave.

Shir Ami

Boomers and Beyond, Sacred Aging
Monthly conversations with Rabbi Vicki L. Axe and Friends
Dec. 2, Jan. 6, Feb. 3, March 2, March 30, May 4, June 1

Temple Sholom

Shabbat Study
with Temple Sholom Clergy, Saturdays, 9-10am

Lunch & Learn
Tuesdays, 12-1pm. Kosher lunch provided

Jewish Meditation
Wednesday, Nov. 18; Tuesday, Dec. 1 & 15 and Jan. 5 & 19, 7:15pm-8:30pm
Contact Cantor Asa Fradkin at cantorasa@templesholom.com

Adult Learning with Rabbi Mitch
Sunday, Nov. 22 and Dec. 13, 9:30am-10:15am
Sunday, Jan. 31, 10:15am-11:15am

Are you considering taking a class or attending a lecture this Fall or Winter?
Look no further!
Here is a list of what’s going on right here in the Greater Greenwich Jewish Community.

Sponsored by Rita Edelston

November 19 .................................................................Rabbi David Schuck
November 26 ............................................................................Thanksgiving
December 3 .................................................................... Dr. Mark Weisstuch
December 10 ................................................................... Rabbi Adam Mintz
December 17 ................................................................... Rabbi Jack Bemporad
December 24 ................................................................... Rabbi Simcha Berger
January 7, 2016 ...................................................................Rabbi Greg Walt
January 14 ...................................................................Rabbi Eric Hoffman
January 21 ...................................................................Rabbi Yaffa Epstein

Check JCC calendar for updated schedule
A Focus on JCC Teens

For more information about JCC Teen Action Committee Meetings and Events, visit JCCGreenwich.org/TAC or call Leah Schechter at 203-552-1818.

On Sunday, October 4th, 16 JTAC Teens and Parents served breakfast to about 50 homeless men and women in NYC through the MidnightRun Organization. A huge thank you to Dunkin Donuts at 271 W. Putnam Ave. for donating all the coffee and bagels that were served.

JCC will be traveling to New Orleans for a spring visit to this exciting city! We will learn about Southern Jewish history and have an insider’s look at the vibrant Jewish community living there today. Our action-packed agenda will include tours of all New Orleans’ most famous sights, plus lunch with a well known Jewish historian at the beautiful new Tulane Hillel, and a jazz dinner!

Don’t miss out on this opportunity to savor the sights, sounds, and great tastes of New Orleans!

For more information or to register, contact Pam Ehrenkranz, pam@ujafedgreenwich.org.

Like Brothers
Comme des frères
Hugo Gelin / Drama, Comedy, Adventure / France / 104 min.
A box-office sensation in France, this comedy follows a trio of mismatched Frenchmen as they try to honor the dying wishes of the woman they all love. A successful entrepreneur in his forties, a cynical screenwriter in his thirties, and a young man on the cusp of adulthood still living with his parents, reeling with grief after her funeral, embark on a spontaneous trip together to a summer cabin in Corsica—a trip she originally planned for all of them. But becomes a journey of both tribute and discovery.

Fauda
Chaos
Assaf Bernstein / TV Drama, Israel / 40 min. per episode
The latest TV sensation from Israel gives an unprecedented look at a special IDF unit, IDF combat soldiers disguised as Arabs.
Episode I & II.
"More than a television event... Fauda is also a political event" - Yadid Amselov

Educate
Stimulate
Motivate

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Women, Wine and Wisdom Event
Featuring Author Robin Berman, MD on October 15
Hosted by Stephanie & Marc Esquenazi

Ambassador Michael Oren and Ambassador Dennis Ross
Recently Addressed Sold-Out Crowds on the Iran Deal and U.S./Israel Relations
UJA Women’s Philanthropy Fall Brunch 2015
Honoring Suzanne Shemin Katz with Guest Speaker Rabbi Sherre Hirsch
Sruli and Lisa have been featured on PBS and NPR, and the Family Band has headlined at world festivals from Krakow to Toronto in addition to playing at CitiField for the NY Mets. Their mix of traditional music, song, dance and mischegas (Yiddish for “fun”) will have you clapping, singing and dancing in the aisles.

Sruli and Lisa’s Family Band Klezmer Concert!
Carmel Academy Students Tap into Their Inner Genius

School Launches Innovative Genius Hour Program

Once a week, Carmel Academy fifth-grader Sophie Citron puts aside her math, science and Hebrew learning to explore what it takes to publish a book. Classmate Annie Mozer does the same, as she delves into research about the Medieval period and why people wore such strange clothing in the Middle Ages. Sophie and Annie, along with their classmates, are taking an hour each week from traditional classroom learning to explore their own passion and creativity as part of a new Carmel Academy program called Genius Hour.

“Genius Hour has a variety of roots but it is largely based on a concept started by Google,” said Dr. Cindy Mann, Carmel Academy’s Director of General Studies Curriculum & Professional Development. Google allows its developers to spend 20 percent of their time working on projects that interest them. The philosophy of allowing people to pursue their passions has been extremely successful, with both G-mail and Google News.

The same principles apply at Carmel. Students from 4th through 8th grade have a set amount of time to immerse themselves in projects as they explore their personal interests, choose a topic and craft a driving question that will guide their inquiries. While students gain a tremendous sense of autonomy, the teachers help facilitate the projects to make sure the students stay focused. The final result is a project that can be shared with classmates and even the world.

For 5th grader Elie Madof, that means exploring a topic he is extremely passionate about, yet doesn’t necessarily fit into the parameters of the daily academic curriculum — sports. After working with his teacher to focus his interest, Elie’s driving question is to figure out why taller professional basketball players miss more free throws than their shorter counterparts. Who knows, perhaps his findings could be useful for the NBA? It’s been a terrific experience for the students,” said 5th grade teacher Toby Ring, adding that student topics range from technology and culture to art and sports. “Because they are so interested in the topics, they are not likely to just settle for the first answer they find. It really empowers them to be an expert about something.”

For Annie, who is researching the purpose and design of Medieval clothing, she is excited to become the resident expert about her topic. “I probably still will not know everything about it, but I will know a lot about it,” she said, adding that she is currently deciding how she plans to share her research and findings with her classmates. Sophie says she plans on sharing her research on book publishing by writing a book and creating a business plan to market it — something she says she is very enthusiastic about, given her passion for reading.
Update from the Online Support Group Project

By Naomi Kohl, LSW, Project Manager

Jewish Family Services of Greenwich is proud to be one of the first social services agencies in the U.S. to widen its therapeutic reach via its pioneering Online Support Group Project (OSGP). The online groups are run by experienced, licensed social workers and offer the same supportive group dynamic as do in-person sessions. Online video support groups are terrific for people who cannot easily leave their house due to caregiving responsibilities, as well as for those who are chronically ill. Our groups make it possible for people in similar situations to create a caring community right from their own home.

This fall has been busy! We have been working hard to widen the reach of this wonderful resource by partnering with outside organizations. Our partnership with the ALS Association of CT has been successful, and they are already on their fifth round of groups offered to their members. Many other partnerships are in the works including a group for Children of Holocaust Survivors, and groups for seniors – some of whom may be homebound.

The OSGP provides vital emotional support without sacrificing much-needed energy and travel time. Groups are available to those of any religious background, and sliding scale fees are also available. The services are provided via secure, state-of-the-art live video conferencing technology. Anyone with a computer and Internet access can join an online support group.

Presently we are running online support group programming for those with chronic illness and for caregivers. If you know of anyone who could benefit from one of these support groups, please have them contact Naomi at nkohl@jfsgreenwich.org or check out our website, www.jfsgreenwich.org.

Supermarketing for Seniors Celebrates Grandparents Day

Jewish Family Services of Greenwich’s Second Annual Supermarketing for Seniors Celebrates Grandparents event held on Sunday, September 20th was a huge success. The event was conducted in partnership with neighborhood supermarkets, including A&P, Kings, Stop & Shop, and Balducci’s, as well as with the Senior Center of Greenwich, JFS Board members, members of the Greenwich High School Generation to Generation Club, the JCC Teen Action Committee, and shoppers from the Supermarketing for Seniors program. Volunteers were stationed across the community raising awareness and funding for the non-discriminatory Supermarketing for Seniors program. A highlight of the day was when Elyse Brown, SFS Program Director, presented the first Supermarketing for Seniors Shopper of the Year Award, to Chris Bisciegia, of Port Chester. The award was based on client nominations and recognizes the best example of a shopper who makes his or her clients feel safe, cared for, and connected.

Supermarketing for Seniors has served our elderly neighbors of Greenwich since 1986, and currently provides free grocery shopping and case monitoring services to 180 seniors throughout the year. The program was designed to meet the physical, emotional, and social needs of housebound Greenwich citizens 60 years of age or older. Although there are no income requirements to participate in our program, 90% of the seniors for whom we shop are considered low income by Community Development Block Grant guidelines, and many do not have other support systems in their lives for visiting and monitoring on a regular basis. Over the course of a year, JFS hears the following repeatedly, “I don’t know what I would do without Supermarketing for Seniors; you are so important for my life.”

For more information about Supermarketing for Seniors, please contact Elyse Brown, SFS Program Director, at 203-622-1881 or ebrown@jfsgreenwich.org. You can also visit our website at: jfsgreenwich.org/services/supermarketing-for-seniors/
JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES OF GREENWICH

Fall/Winter Programming

PARTNERING WITH YOUR PARENTS THROUGH THE AGING PROCESS (FREE)
Learn about the emotional, legal, and financial aspects to protecting your parents (and yourselves) through the aging process. Our panelists include: David Sleipan, Board President, CT Chapter of the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys; Roni Lang, LCSW, Greenwich Hospital Center for Healthy Aging; Richard E. Norman III, Financial Representative, The Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company. See JFS website for details and to register. Tuesday, November 10, 7 pm

BETTER TOGETHER BOOK CLUB: A MONTHLY INTERGENERATIONAL EXPERIENCE
This unique initiative spearheaded by Carmel Academy, and in partnership with JFS of Greenwich, offers participants a chance to get to know a different generation—for adults to look at books, concepts, and historical events through the eyes of today's Jewish youth, while the youth get to know the generation that came before them. To join, contact Lisa Goldberg at JFS. See our website for details. Wednesdays, 11/18; 12/16; 1/26; 2/24; 3/16; 4/13; 5/8; 6/15. 10:30-11:30 am

BOOK BEAT: A WOMAN’S NIGHT OUT
A thought-provoking book club with themes relevant to Jewish women of all ages. Facilitated by Judi Margolin; meets at JFS. 12/2; 1/17; 3/2; 4/6; 6/1. Our next book is The Boston Girl, by Anita Diamant. Dec. 2, 7:30 pm

GREENWICH HOSPITAL SHABBAT
Every Friday, JFS leads a Shabbat Service in partnership with the Greenwich Hospital Spiritual Care Department, at 1:00 pm in the hospital’s Chapel. The service is broadcast LIVE on Channel 6 in all patient rooms. Joan Mann, Spiritual Care Counselor at JFS, Lisa-Loraine Smith, Executive Director of JFS, and Rabbi MJ Newman, Jewish Chaplin of Greenwich Hospital, lead the service.

INTERFAITH CONVERSATIONS
This series meets on Monday evenings and gives people a way to explore the opportunities and challenges associated with interfait living. 11/30; 2/29; 4/18; 6/6. Meets at 7 pm in a private home.

RENEWAL OF BODY, RENEWAL OF SPIRIT
JFS, in partnership with the Greenwich Hospital Spiritual Care Department, conducts a Healing Service for the community in the hospital’s Chapel. Joan Mann, Spiritual Care Counselor at JFS; Lisa Goldberg, Program Director Jewish Health and Healing Center of JFS; and Rabbi MJ Newman, Jewish Chaplain of Greenwich Hospital, lead the service. Mondays, 11/16; 12/21; 1/12-12:45 pm

Volunteer Opportunities

Bikkur Cholim/Friendly Visitors/Grocery Shopper
Do a mitzvah! Get involved! JFS urges you to make a difference in the life of a Greenwich senior. Volunteers are needed to visit and/or grocery shop for home-bound and nursing home residents. The time commitment can be as little as one hour per week. The rewards are immeasurable!

B’nai Mitzvah Resource Center
This unique program provides young people with a carefully selected list of bar/bat mitzvah volunteer ideas and arranges one-on-one meetings with program participants and their parents to design and implement projects that cater to the child’s individual interests and personal goals. No charge.

For current & upcoming programs, please call 203-622-1881 or visit www.JFSGreenwich.org for more information.

Fall/Winter Counseling and Support Groups

Bereavement Support Group (JFS office)
For those who have lost a family member or friend within the past five years. Facilitated by Lisa-Loraine Smith, LCSW, and by a member of the Greenwich Jewish Clergy. Tuesdays, 10:30-11:30 am

NEW!
Support Group for Separating and Divorcing Individuals (JFS office)
For adults whose lives are impacted by divorce. Facilitated by Lisa-Loraine Smith, LCSW. Wednesdays, 5:30-6:45 pm

After-the-Divorce Support Group (JFS office)
Now that the practical details of separating are complete, there is emotional work to do. It is time to develop a new identity and a new beginning. This group will provide a confidential space to reflect on the life you are living and the life you would like to live. It will be an opportunity to grow, develop, and learn from others! Facilitated by Linda Schlaper, LMFT. Wednesdays, 5:30-6:45 pm

Living Well in Later Life (JFS office)
For individuals 70+ to talk with peers about the opportunities and challenges this stage of life presents. Topics covered will include how to: maintain and manage health, manage independence with family members including adult children, continue to be involved in meaningful activity, and cope with mourning and loss. Facilitated by Lisa Mounts, LCSW. Thursdays, 2-3:30 pm

Reversal of Fortune Support Group (JFS office)
Financial challenges bring with them stressors that can affect everything in your life — your relationships, your self-esteem, your outlook, and even your marriage. In these tough economic times, you are not alone. Come and share your thoughts; get some ideas, tips, and strategies to cope with the practical as well as the emotional issues associated with reversals of fortune. Facilitated by Mary Karlan, LCSW. Tuesdays, 5:30-6:30 pm — NO CHARGE

Support Group for Those Who Are Chronically Ill (ONLINE)
Today, chronic illness affects nearly half of the adult population, according to the Federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Connect with others to reduce your isolation, and bond with people who really understand what you are going through. Learn strategies and tips for coping and make new friends at the same time. Facilitated by Lisa-Loraine Smith, LCSW, and by a member of the Greenwich Jewish Clergy. Wednesdays, 4-5 pm

NEW! Fractured Families, Healing Hearts
As the holidays approach, this group allows participants an opportunity to talk about strained family relationships — whether it is with a parent, a sibling, a grandparent, a son, or a daughter. These relationships, when stressed or tense, are painful to endure because family means so much to us. If you cut the ties, or someone in your family has cut you off — this group will help you explore your issues of grief, anger, regret, and forgiveness in a safe environment, with other people who understand. Facilitated by Randye Zerman, LCSW. Wednesdays, 11 am-12 pm

Caregiver Support Group (ONLINE)
Caring for a loved one can be rewarding, challenging, and often, emotionally draining. This group will address all issues in a non-judgmental environment and discuss the opportunities and challenges of caring for a loved one. Facilitated by Jan Mittleman, LCSW. Wednesdays, 10-11 am

NEW! Midrash: Retelling Your Story, Reframing Your Life
In this group we will study the great characters from the Torah in order to understand the skills the Rabbis used to reframe and interpret their stories. Through learning this ancient and deeply Jewish skill, we can make our own lives and all that has happened to us and our families, more meaningful, clearer, and more joyous. Facilitated by MJ Newman, Rabbi, Greenwich Hospital Spiritual Care Department, and Lisa-Loraine Smith, LCSW. Four Fridays, beginning 11/13, 12-1 pm in the Greenwich Hospital Chapel.

For more information, please call Lisa-Loraine Smith, LCSW, at 203-622-1881 or email llsmith@jfsgreenwich.org

All you need for our ONLINE groups is a computer, smart phone, or tablet with WiFi access.
Congregation Shir Ami of Greenwich, CT is offering monthly conversations for Boomers and Beyond to discuss “sacred aging,” while facing the reality of our own mortality. “How we view our mortality,” notes Rabbi Vicki L. Axe, “impacts the way we live our lives. Human existence has a beginning and an end, and I believe that if we can accept the raw truth that life as we know it is finite, that, at the appointed time, we will die, then we can live more fully.” Rabbi Axe will facilitate all conversations with speakers invited to share their wisdom and expertise on a variety of topics that impact the “third act” of life.

Rabbi Richard F. Address, who will speak on December 2, is the Founder and Director of www.jewishsacredaging.com. This project on Sacred Aging has been responsible for creating awareness and resources on the implication of the longevity revolution with emphasis on the aging of the baby boom generation and its impact on all aspects of Jewish communal and congregational life.

Jewish High School of Connecticut Guides Its Students According to Their Unique Interests

Dan Haron and Kamal Haron joined JHSC and Rabbi Elisha Paul for the school’s L’Chaim which took place at the end of the summer at JHSC.

“The summer is an ideal time to take these explorations to the next level and many of our students did fascinating internships this summer,” said Guidance Counselor Elizabeth Lustbader. “As part of our guidance program, we help our students find summer programs or opportunities that enable the student to attain hands on experience. This is part of encouraging students to delve deeper into their areas of passion, talent and interest.”
Bi-Cultural Welcomes New Israeli Emissaries

Bi-Cultural Day School recently welcomed Chaim and Lior Helman as the newest Shlichim, unique emissaries dedicated to promoting Jewish life and helping the community make deep and personal connections to Israel. Chaim, originally from the northern coastal city of Nahariya, and Lior, from Ma’alot near the Lebanese border, both have extensive experience in education and service. Lior, 28, performed two years of Israel National Service teaching in a Midrasha (learning institute for women). Chaim served as a sergeant in the Golani Brigade as part of the Yeshivat Hesder (Israeli yeshiva program which combines Talmudic studies with military service in the Israel Defense Forces). He has taught computer science, math and Judaic studies.

Originally placed in a Jewish day school in Springfield, Mass., where they taught for two years, Chaim and Lior then decided to seek a school located in a larger Jewish community. Lior said, “We found out about the opening at BCDS and decided that it was a great fit for us.” At Bi-Cultural, Chaim is teaching middle school Judaic Studies and Lior is teaching fourth-grade Judaic Studies. They both hope to help students connect with Israel in a personal and spiritual way, and focus on teaching Hebrew language skills, holidays and Jewish core values. “We want to teach Jewish history and explain about real life in Israel today. Israel has a strong tradition and we also have a future,” said Chaim.

Joining the Helmans are two, newly-appointed B’not Shurat (young women in the service) fulfilling their Israel National Service at Garin Katzrin and the Centre for Jewish Identity, where she taught Judaism and Israeli culture. Lior Shimon, 19, grew up in Petach Tikvah, close to Tel Aviv. She served her first year of Israel National Service at Kfar Hasidim Religious Youth Village with at-risk children, serving as a mentor and planning social and cultural programs. Lior also guided teens in a B’nai Akiva youth chapter.

“We are fortunate to have such a talented group of faculty members joining us directly from Israel,” said Rabbi David Israel, Bi-Cultural’s Rabbinic Dean. “They have many exciting programs planned this year, and what they bring to the school is beyond measure.”

Fridays
6:00-6:45pm
November 6
December 4
January 8
February 5
March 4
April 1
May 6
June 3

Students at Carmel Academy commemorate 9/11 at the Garden.

Placing a stone on a steel beam at the 9/11 Memorial Garden, which Andrew Nitkin (shown here with his mother Helen) helped create as his Eagle Scout project.

Noam Bloch and Lior Shimon (Photo by Dora Salm)

Congregation Shir Ami
Shabbat Songs and Stories
with Rabbi Axe

To learn more * www.congregationshirami.org * 203.274.5376

Carmel Academy 9/11 Commemoration in UJA Memorial Garden

Students at Carmel Academy commemorate 9/11 at the Garden.
Carmel Academy’s fifth grade has come full circle. Last spring, as 4th graders, the students planted a plethora of vegetables, herbs and flowers in Carmel Academy’s organic garden as part of their life sciences curriculum. Now, as fifth graders, the same students are harvesting the fruits of their labor. Their autumn garden is bursting with more than 20 different fruits, vegetables, herbs and flowers. Not only are the students continuing the life cycle learning, they are also using the organic produce as part of their health curriculum.

“It’s been an amazing learning experience for my students,” said Carmel’s fifth grade teacher Darren Bahar. “They are seeing firsthand how the small seeds they planted have grown, and now that the vegetables and fruits are ready for harvest, the students are incorporating these organic healthy foods into their diets.”

“I was so surprised when I saw how big they grew,” said 5th grader Ela Dynner. “Trying the new vegetables has been fun. This is first time I tried eggplant right from the garden. It was really amazing. I had never tried radishes before, and now I love them.” The organic garden, which sits between the school’s lower and upper school campuses, was created two summers ago by Carmel Academy alumus and current Greenwich High School senior Elias Boyer for his Eagle Scout service project. Over the course of many days, Elias cleared the site’s overgrown vegetation and debris. He and other volunteers then built garden beds, lay down weed tarp and top soil, and created wood chip paths. “The garden has been a wonderful addition to our campus,” Anderson said. “Students of all ages now have an opportunity to tend a garden, learn first-hand about ecosystems, life cycles and nature.”

Temple Sholom Celebrates the High Holidays, Sukkot and Simchat Torah
On Sunday, October 18, despite the cold weather, 97 bikers raised just shy of $10,000 for the Solomon Schechter school’s annual fund at the “Tour de Schechter.”

Shabbat at Congregation Shir Ami Torah TOTs and Shabbat Dinners

“Shabbat is for families at Shir Ami where everyone feels welcome.” said Rabbi Vicki L. Axe, Spiritual Leader of Congregation Shir Ami. “Families in the 21st century come in a variety of forms, and in just thirteen years since we were founded in 2003, we are known for attracting families representing a diverse mix of young parents with preschoolers, families with school-age children, single parents, boomers, seniors, interfaith, and LGBT. Our services invite everyone to come together as a sacred community and participate fully in the music, the readings, and the movement of worship.”

In keeping with the synagogue trend to open the tent wide, Congregation Shir Ami is introducing two new Shabbat initiatives. First, all Shabbat services will begin at 7:00pm, followed immediately by a fully catered Shabbat dinner. This will be hosted by the Shir Ami Board with Sara Meiri, current secretary, and Susan Nisinzweig, a past secretary making all the arrangements.

The second Shabbat initiative is a monthly “Torah TOTs,” Shabbat services designed for families with preschoolers. Beginning at 6:00pm prior to the regular 7:00pm service, Rabbi Axe will share Shabbat stories and songs with tots followed by their very own oneg.

Both Torah TOTs and Shabbat Dinners premiered on Friday, November 6, in Shir Ami’s home for worship, First Presbyterian Church in downtown Greenwich. For more information about worship, education, and all Shir Ami events and programs, visit www.congregationshirami.org or call 203-274-5376.

To celebrate the end of Sukkot, Greenwich Reform Synagogue (GRS) held a brief service at its future home at 92 Orchard Street in Cos Cob. Rabbi Andrew Sklarz led the service, and Greenwich First Selectman Peter Tesei spoke, saying: “I’m happy to be with you today to consecrate this very special land and recognize your perseverance and dedication to the establishment of a permanent home for your congregation – a long, hard-fought cause. Your achievement speaks to the strength of the Greenwich community, embracing and supporting our multi-cultural society, with its reputation for inclusion. Thanks for being a part of the Greenwich community, contributing to its richness, and fulfilling our goals to serve each other and those who are less fortunate.”

Ground-breaking for the new home of GRS began in October, and it is hoped that the new building will be ready in time for the 2016 High Holy Days, marking the 40th anniversary of the synagogue’s founding. Hard-hat tours will be available to interested members of the community as the construction proceeds.

This will be only the second purpose-built synagogue in Greenwich’s 375-year history. It will include a sanctuary, social hall, classrooms, and offices in just over 12,000 square feet of space. The architectural firm of Mark B. Thompson Associates LLC created the design.
SAVE THE DATES

Saturday, November 21
Hebrew Wizards

Multi-Faith Family Concert
United Methodist Church, Greenwich, 7:30pm

Tuesday, December 1
UJA Greenwich
Annual Meeting
An Evening with Alan Dershowitz
Greenwich Library Cole Auditorium, 7:30-9pm

Sunday, December 6
Temple Sholom
Chanukah “Mock Mitzvah”
Temple Sholom, 11:30am-1pm

Friday, December 11
Temple Sholom
Latkes and Pajamas
5:30pm

Sunday, December 13
PJ Library
Hanukkah Party with Bash the Trash
Carmel Academy, 3-5pm

Friday, December 17
Chabad of Greenwich
Mega Challah Bake 500
Hyatt Regency, Old Greenwich, 7pm

Friday, January 8
Temple Sholom
Celebration of the 50th Anniversary of Nostra Aetate With Bishop Frank J. Caggiano
Dinner $15 per adult. RSVP to Alice Schoen at 203-542-7165 or alice.schoen@templesholom

Sunday, January 10
Temple Sholom
Party Planning Showcase
11am-1pm

Thursday, January 14
Chabad of Greenwich Women’s Circle
Rekindle the Romance With Rivka Slonim
Private home, 7pm

Saturday, January 23
Chabad of Greenwich
Annual Gala
Belle Haven Country Club

Sunday, January 24
JCC Greenwich
Big Day Out
Fenom Fitness, 67 Grant Ave., Harrison, NY, 3-5pm

Sunday, February 21
JCC Greenwich
Curiosity Concerts
Greenwich Arts Council, 299 Greenwich Ave., 2-3pm and 4-5pm

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Jewish Senior Services provides care throughout Southern Connecticut.

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New Focus On Innovation in the North and South of Israel Making an Impact

A few words from JCC Israeli Shaliach, Avihu Rachamim

While the media coverage of Israel is not always positive, Israel continues to show that a small middle-east country has a lot to contribute to the world. The new “Silicon Valley” is emerging in the Negev Desert and the people of Israel to make something out of the desert will eliminate the desert. Today, after more than 60 years of independence, the Negev is blooming, in the south of Israel. In his 1955 book called, The Meaning of the Negev, David Ben Gurion wrote: “If the country doesn’t eliminate the desert, the desert will eliminate the country.” With this, he was calling for the people of Israel to make something out of the desert wasteland. Today, after more than 60 years of independence, the desert and the people are fulfilling Ben Gurion’s vision by creating amidst the desert the new Israeli hi-tech industry. This development and that of the Negev and the area around Be’er Sheva are the result of a combined effort by Ben Gurion University, the Mayor of Be’er Sheva, Rivik Danielovich and the Ministry of Development of the Negev and Galil regions. Previously many IDF bases had already moved to the Negev, but now they will be neighbors of the new building park for major tech companies, such as Deutsche Telekom, EMC, Jerusalem Venture Partners, Oracle, Lockheed Martin, IBM, Elbit Systems, Ness Technologies, and the list goes on.

At the same time that the Negev is blooming, in the North, Israel is flourishing. A new partnership between Rutgers University in New Jersey and Tel Hay Academy (that I can proudly say is my alma mater), has recently been formed. This collaboration will focus on formulating and producing advanced edibles used to tackle obesity and to manage diabetes, food allergies and other nutrition-related issues, which have spiked to epidemic proportions in developed countries. These two initiatives taking place now are turning Israel’s desert into a blossoming garden by literally creating jobs, building a stable and strong economy, and encouraging investments in areas of Israel that were formerly out of the mainstream when it came to development. And most importantly, these projects are showing the world that Israel is a leader in innovation and is making a major impact on the world.

GHS Israel Club Bake Sale Raises Money for Shanti House

Members of the Greenwich High School Israel Club have chosen to support Shanti House. Shanti House was founded in 1984 and serves both as a temporary home and long-term support resource for runaway, homeless youth at risk aged 14-21 from all population strata and sectors, regardless of religion, race, sex or gender. The Shanti House Association operates two separate homes: Shanti House in Tel Aviv and the Desert Shanti Youth Village. Altogether 75-105 youth stay in both homes on any given day.

The GHS Israel Club meets on Thursdays after school. Members plan to continue to raise money for and awareness about the work Shanti House does for at risk youth in Israel throughout the rest of the school year. For more information about Israel Club, contact Avihu Rachamim, JCC Greenwich Israeli Emissary at avihu@jccgreenwich.org.

Try the PJ Library for a new way to connect!
Your New Emissary Out in the Community

Avihu and the JCC Teen Action Committee while serving breakfast on Midnight Run. Working with teens in the community! Teens and Avihu volunteering with Supermarketing for Seniors on Grandparent’s Day.

Lunch on October 27 with Miriam Peretz, bestselling author of “Miriam’s Song,” who tragically lost two sons in two different wars, and has become a symbol of Israel’s strength and resilience.

A special invitation to join the PJ Library

Bubbles, Books and Beyond:
How we influence the Jewish future of our Grandchildren

Did you know...
Greenwich is a leader in the PJ Library community and the gift of award-winning PJ Library books has more impact than you might think.

We invite you...
to become a part of the Greenwich Grandparents Circle and join with others who are influencing the Jewish future in a significant way by building community and sparking imagination through books and music whether your grandchildren live near or far.

Want to learn more, share ideas or help plan the inaugural breakfast event in May?

Contact:
Nancy Zisson (nnszisson@gmail.com) or Tracy Daniels (Tracy@ujafedgreenwich.org)

"Through PJ Library, Jewish values, goals, traditions and connections are preserved for current and future generations."

Grandparents Circle Chairs
Rita Edelston, Deborah Simon and Nancy Zisson

With deepest appreciation to Rita & Marty Edelston, B’10, thefirst and founding Greenwich Grandparent PJ Library Partners.

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You can put food on the empty table of an elderly couple in Ukraine, help a single mother who has lost her job and much more. You can bring hope to Jewish lives at home, in Israel and in over 70 countries around the globe.

Please give to UJA Greenwich today.