The last time Rick Hodes reached Greenwich, it was through the projected images of Zemene, a film about his life-saving work with African children. For his next appearance, the Ethiopian-based JDC medical director will return in the flesh.

On Monday, December 5, at 7 pm, Dr. Hodes will serve as guest speaker at the annual meeting of UJA Greenwich. The meeting, to be held at the Bruce Museum, marks the induction of UJA Board of Directors for the coming year. This includes a formal welcome to its brand new president, and a grateful farewell to outgoing president Brian Neilinger.

“I can think of few better speakers than Dr. Hodes to inspire the Federation community,” said UJA Greenwich CEO Pam Ehrenkranz. “He embodies the Jewish tradition of repairing the world that also guides our mission.” Known to thousands of Africans as “Dr. Rick,” he will discuss his experiences of working in critical conditions while practicing tikun olam.

Beyond his JDC efforts, Dr. Hodes is the senior consultant at a Catholic mission helping impoverished sufferers of heart disease (rheumatic and congenital), spine disease (TB and scoliosis) and cancer. He has also worked with refugees in Rwanda, Zaire, Tanzania, Somalia and Albania.

Dr. Hodes has given more than 20 years to his calling. He first arrived in Ethiopia as a relief worker during the 1984 famine, and later returned on a Fulbright Fellowship to teach internal medicine. In 1990 he joined the JDC as the medical advisor for the country. His initial task was to provide health care for 25,000 potential emigrés to Israel. In 2007, Dr. Hodes was named a finalist for “CNN Heroes,” a program that profiles ordinary people for their extraordinary accomplishments.

His work is the subject of the HBO documentary Making the Crooked Straight and – as attendees of UJA/JCC Greenwich’s 2011 Education Symposium will recall – of Marilyn Berger’s book This Is a Soul: The Mission of Rick Hodes.

Information and registration for the UJA Annual Meeting are available at www.ujafedgreenwich.org. An $18 donation to the 2016 Annual Campaign is recommended.
Story Time with Miss Daisy

Got a young book lover on your hands? PJ Library thought so. That’s why the Greenwich chapter has lined up four afternoons of stories, special projects and stimulation that will delight PJ Library participants ages 5 and under. Best of all, the talented Daisy Florin aka “Miss Daisy” will lead the adventure. Story Time with Miss Daisy will feature beloved PJ Library picks accompanied by related crafts to make each read-in better than the next.

“We’re thrilled to have Daisy Florin host this year’s Story Time series,” said Tracy Daniels, director of PJ Library Greenwich. “With her wit, warmth and special way with kids, she’s an ideal person to help young children and families discover a love of reading Jewish-themed books and share cross cultural experiences as a community.”

“Story Time give families the chance to enjoy hearing stories together,” said Florin, adding, “I’m delighted to be a part of its four upcoming editions.”

“PJ Library shares Greenwich Library’s goals of nurturing lifelong readers,” remarked Deirdre Sullivan, head of children’s services and children’s librarian at Greenwich Library. “We’re honored to host this community-wide literary series bringing to life compelling story books.” Story Times will take place the the Greenwich Library, main branch.

Generously sponsored by PJ Library and UJA/JCC Greenwich, the series is free and open to the public. Parents and caregivers are encouraged to accompany the PJ child. To register, visit jccgreenwich.org or call Tracy Daniels at 203-552-1818, x17.

Thursdays • 3:30 - 4:30 pm
November 10 • January 10 • February 9 • May 11
Story Time with Miss Daisy

This year’s special guest Story Time leader, Miss Daisy, will take children ages 5 and under on PJ Library story adventures!

Daisy Florin has a master’s degree in early childhood and elementary education from Bank Street College. She is a writer whose essays about parenting have appeared in Brain, Child Magazine and Kveller, among other publications.

Story Times are a gift to the community from PJ Library and UJA/JCC Greenwich.

Special thanks to Daisy Florin (Miss Daisy) and the Greenwich Library for hosting PJ Library Story Time.

Greenwich Library
101 West Putnam Ave.

PJ Library Sukkah Party

“Is THAT OK?!”

Back by popular demand, our friend and Pediatric Behavior expert, Jennifer Smokler Zigler, will visit with moms to talk about the most common question she gets from worried parents…

“When my child does…is THAT OKAY?” This chat is perfect for parents of babies and pre-school age children. Casual environment, straight talk among friends and expert advice…join us!

When: Monday, November 21 @ 11:00 am (JBabies meets again on December 19.)
Where: UJA/JCC Greenwich/One Holly Hill Lane, Greenwich

Jennifer Smokler Zigler, MsEd, is a Behavioral Therapist and Applied Behavioral Analyst as well as a Certified General and Special Education Professor at Hunter College Graduate School of Education. She specializes in feeding, sleeping, potty training, and other behavioral facets of everyday life.

JBabies Moms enjoy another MOM’S NIGHT OUT at the Old Greenwich Social Club.

Sunday Funday Kicks Off at YWCA with CT Children’s Museum
An Evening with Lewis Bernstein

After UJA/JCC Greenwich CEO Pam Ehrenkranz attended a recent Grinspoon Foundation retreat for PJ Library communities, she couldn’t get a certain name out of her head. Among the lineup of impossibly inspiring, impressive speakers, Dr. Lewis Bernstein left her with the greatest inspiration, the deepest impression. Not bad for a kiddie TV guy.

On Thursday, January 19, at 7 pm, Greenwhichites will have a chance to see for themselves why the former Executive Vice President of Education Research and Outreach for Sesame Street Workshop is such a marvel. According to Ehrenkranz, “After Lewis Bernstein’s presentation, it was so clear why the Grinspoon Foundation brought him to Aspen. It doesn’t matter if you grew up on Sesame Street, or if your kids did, or if your grandchildren watch it now. Bernstein is articulate on the issues of values and learning and the creative ways in which the Children’s Television Workshop tackled issues such as diversity and healthy eating. He is even more impressive when he takes it to the next level helping us understand the many ways the Workshop’s approach impacts not only our children, but the adults who care for them and teach them.” Sesame Street is the art work in Bernstein’s Exhibit A, though PJ Library parents attending “An Evening with Lewis Bernstein” will no doubt be reminded of the multi-generational values communicated through PJ Library books as well.

“Dr. Bernstein has long been a devotee of the PJ Library program and its knack for bringing together families around Jewish values,” said PJ Library Greenwich director Tracy Daniels. “He’s sure to warm up this mid-January evening with his beautiful stories and meaningful insights.”

The three-time Emmy-winning executive producer will also consider the legacy of Sesame Street (which became Sesame Workshop).

What are the implications of core Sesame themes such as tolerance, kindness and respect on viewers’ emotional literacy, attitudes towards diversity and ethical choices later in life? Drawing on his more than four decades of developing and producing the beloved, puppet-fortified American series and the launch of global Sesame programming (including Shalom Sesame and Shara’a Simsim), Dr. Bernstein will engage the Greenwich community in a spirited discussion of issues close to the heart.

“An Evening with Lewis Bernstein” will take place at the Bruce Museum, 1 Museum Drive. Tickets are $15 in advance, $20 at the door. To register and obtain further details, visit www.jccgreenwich.org or call 203-552-1818.

SAVE THE DATE! Annual Education Symposium – March 8

In today’s fight to empower pro-Israel students at American colleges and universities, Israel on Campus Coalition is developing innovative solutions that combine US military strategy, political campaign communication and grassroots relationship development. At the upcoming Education Symposium, hear ICC Executive Director Jacob Baime discuss how these tools are being used to push back the anti-Israel tide on campus.

Mark your calendars: the 2017 Symposium will take place on Wednesday, March 8, and opens with a 9:15 am buffet breakfast, followed by Baime’s keynote address. Three breakout sessions (11 am-noon) follow. In keeping with tradition, the annual teach-in will focus on Jewish enlightenment and activities.

“Stay tuned for what’s sure to be a great lineup,” said event Chair Christine Tohack. “Every year the Education Symposium nourishes the Greenwich community in body, mind and soul, and this next edition will also be a celebration of learning.”

Joining Christine Tohack as Chair will be Joan Mann as Honorary Chair.

Education Symposium is presented by UJA/JCC Greenwich. Registration and updates are available at www.jccgreenwich.org. For additional details contact Tracy Daniels at 203-552-1818.
Holiday Smiles for Children in Need

Every year, members of Greenwich Reform Synagogue help bring holiday smiles to children in need by assisting with the Holiday Gift Collection program sponsored by Inspirica, one of the largest providers of services to the homeless. During the holidays, homeless children may have no tree, no menorah, no presents. By helping Inspirica, we can help lift the spirits of both the children and their parents.

The loss is felt not only by the kids, but also by their parents who are unable to provide a normal holiday experience for their family. Now in its 27th year, the Inspirica Holiday Gift Collection provides personalized gifts to more than 3,000 children identified as homeless, living in poverty, or whose lives are affected by HIV/AIDS. Every child on the list selects two gifts, one fun and one educational, and these gifts are personalized to their specific interests. The children’s individual “gift wishes” are filled by GRS congregants and hundreds of other sponsors who shop for the children. On December 10, volunteers will gather in a “Toy Workshop” on site at Inspirica in Stamford where gifts are wrapped, sorted and readied to return to the sponsoring agency that will distribute the gifts.

If you would like to purchase gifts for a child, please contact Inspirica at 203-388-0100 or HolidayVolunteer@InspiricaCT.org.

The Connecticut Israel Opportunity Fund

For the past five years, Connecticut has been making a major effort to foster closer economic cooperation with Israel, primarily because after the U.S., Israel is the second most entrepreneurial country in the world, with more than 4,500 start-ups and many companies listed on major U.S. stock exchanges. Israeli companies are interested in addressing the larger market opportunity here with an aim at attracting U.S. venture capital.

Last spring Alan Mendelson, Dave Audibert, and Dr. Leon Pintsov formed the Connecticut-Israel Opportunity Fund to enable effective cooperation between burgeoning Israeli technology companies and our state. Alan Mendelson is the co-founder and managing general partner of the very successful Axiom Venture Fund. Dave Audibert is the founder and principal of Succession Equity Partners. Dr. Leon Pintsov, an internationally recognized expert in information security, cryptography and financial applications, was most recently the Chief Scientist and Vice President at Pitney Bowes. These three partners formed a seven-person advisory board, consisting of world class experts in the areas of cybersecurity, personalized medicine, healthcare, financial-technology, and enterprise software, where the fund expects to make most of its investment.

The fund will be a $50 million limited partnership whose investors are expected to be family offices, wealthy individuals, and Connecticut municipalities. The goal of the fund is to produce venture capital returns for its investors as well as to benefit Connecticut’s Jewish community and municipalities by generating high-paying jobs and by attracting talented individuals to the state. Its strategy to achieve these goals is to entice Israeli companies to move some of their operations to Connecticut and to act as a catalyst for their development and growth. The fund expects to have a robust flow of potential investment opportunities. Connecticut’s Department of Economic Development has hired a full-time Israeli, whose job is to find companies who might be interested in moving to Connecticut.

“Overall, we are quite excited by this opportunity,” Dr. Pintsov said. He added, “Israel is a hub of technology and entrepreneurism, and we believe we have the high quality resources and experience to be successful in this space.”

The fund is currently accepting investors. For more information contact: Alan Mendelson at 860-548-7799, ext. 4 or amendelson@connecticutisraelopportunityfund.com.
Arabs. Shelby, however, came to know how these relationship and conflict between Jews and Bedouin Ka’abiyye tribe. Lower Galilee located near the villages of more than 4,400 members of the Bedouin Ka’abiyye tribe. Volunteering was based in Harduf, a kibbutz in the Jewish activism. Shelby and her fellow Project TEN internationally development, culture, identity and volunteer work in the human rights arena. “I was offered programs in Nicaragua at UC Berkeley, where she studied psychology, Shelby wanted to go abroad to do volunteer work in the human rights arena. “I was offered programs in Nicaragua but I wanted to come to Israel,” Shelby says.

Shelby came to Israel with The Jewish Agency’s Project TEN Tikkun Olam program. Project TEN brings together young Jewish adults from all over the world, to a program that combines volunteer work with local communities, alongside service-learning in the fields of international development, culture, identity and Jewish activism. Shelby and her fellow Project TEN volunteers were based in Harduf, a kibbutz in the Lower Galilee located near the villages of more than 4,400 members of the Bedouin Ka’abiyye tribe.

Project TEN allows volunteers to study the relationship and conflict between Jews and Arabs. Shelby, however, came to know how these relationships impacted her directly. “I never knew my mother had lived in a mixed family – both Jewish and Arab. I found out that her father is a Christian Arab, and her mother is Jewish. And my grandfather has a big family in Acre. I didn’t expect to come to Israel to learn about Jewish-Arab relations and find out that this issue is directly related to my family and my life! I have a cousin serving in the IDF who is Arab and converted to Judaism and her sister is not converting. I didn’t know my cousins were Arabs until I got here,” she says.

The Project TEN volunteers at Kibbutz Harduf and the three Bedouin villages are facilitated by Sha’ar LaAdam, an international ecological Jewish-Arab center established by local residents of the kibbutz and Bedouin villages. On a more personal level, Shelby’s changes have been real and profound. “I could have lived my life without knowing what I discovered. I’ve learned here in five months things I’ve never learned in my whole life.”
Temple Sholom Selma Maisel Nursery School Welcomes New Director

When entering the Temple Sholom Selma Maisel Nursery School (SMNS) each morning, children and parents are now greeted by not one, but two smiling faces, eager for an exciting school day ahead. In September, early childhood educator David Cohen was hired as the school’s new director, following Phyllis Lyons’ decision to enter her 13th and final academic year with SMNS.

“We will deeply miss Phyllis’ daily presence with us after her retirement and are very grateful for all she has contributed to SMNS during her long tenure,” said Eileen Robin, Temple Sholom’s Executive Director. “We are excited to have David on board to uphold our play-based curriculum and to add a new dimension to our school and related programming.”

Cohen is no stranger to the Greenwich community, having worked as the Director of Educational Programs at the YMCA of Greenwich. His resume includes more than 25 years of early childhood experience and 15 years of senior management experience. He is also an adjunct college instructor, State-certified consultant and American Red Cross instructor and was previously the Men’s Club President of his synagogue.

Lyons, who has taken on the role of Director Emeritus, has been working closely with Cohen over the past few months to provide insight on the SMNS community and to ensure a smooth transition for all. One of her focuses is to prepare the Pre-K families for Kindergarten, including school applications and evaluations.

“For the past 25 years I have dedicated myself to educating children,” said Lyons. “My love and dedication for our SMNS family is absolute. I treasure my many years working with our school community and the Temple at large, and I am extremely committed to ensuring that all future SMNS generations continue to receive a legacy of excellence.”

For more information about the Temple Sholom Selma Maisel Nursery School or to schedule a private tour, please contact 203-622-8121 or visit www.templesholom.com/smns.

Chanukah Party at Congregation Shir Ami

Chanukah is a time of celebration and giving at Congregation Shir Ami. Open to the entire community, Chanukah Live! is a multimedia Shabbat service and candle lighting. Since the first night of Chanukah is December 24, Chanukah Live! will take place a week earlier, on Friday, December 16, 6:00 pm at First Presbyterian Church. A fun party for the whole family, Chanukah Live! merges old-world charm with contemporary pop culture. “All the prayers and songs appear on a large screen,” explains Rabbi Vicki L. Axe, spiritual leader of the congregation, “so everyone’s hands are free to join in with clapping and singing and dancing.”

Following a gourmet pot luck dinner with latkes donated by Garelick & Herbs, the Shir Ami Rockin’ Band and Choirs will lead a foot-stompin’ Shabbat service and Chanukah candle lighting with traditional tunes loved by generations world-wide along with contemporary songs like “Light One Candle” by Peter Yarrow of Peter, Paul, and Mary, and “Let it Glow” (to the tune of “Let it Go”).

Chanukah fun will continue at Shir Ami Religious School on December 20 from 4:00-6:00 pm. To commemorate the miracle of oil in the ancient temple, the students will deep fry sufganiyot, an Israeli holiday treat of jelly donuts. Dahni Nisinzweig, Co-President of Shir Ami and a native of Israel will lead the students in Israeli dancing. They will also write holiday letters to Israeli soldiers. UJA Greenwich Israeli Emmissary Racheli will play the time-honored game of dreidel with everyone. And the students will act out the ancient story of Chanukah with holiday songs led by world-class entertainers Jonathan Cahr and Rabbi Axe.

For Shir Ami, the Season of Light is a time for community service in keeping with the Chanukah theme of rededication to make the world a better place. With an annual Holiday Giving Project, Shir Ami reaches out to Abilis, a Greenwich agency that provides comprehensive services for people of all ages with developmental disabilities, by underwriting a table at Chanukah Live! for adult Abilis guests to give these very special friends a lift during the holiday season.

Shir Ami will again partner with First Presbyterian Church of Greenwich, their hosts for year-round Shabbat services and religious school, for the annual Interfaith Community Holiday Blood Drive, on Saturday, December 10, 8:00 am-1:15 pm. “This time of year is always a challenge for blood banks,” points out Barbara Salop, past president and chair of the annual blood drive, “so our participation has far-reaching impact.”

“The name of our Social Action Committee says it all,” remarks David Green, past president of Shir Ami. “We call our community service committee the TIKV AH Team, which is the Hebrew word for hope and an acronym for Touching Individuals with Kindness, Vision, and Hope.”

Chanukah Live!, chaired by Sara Meiri, is open to the community and all are welcome; adults/$25, teens 13-18/$10, children under 13/Free. RSVP is required. Visit congregationshirami.org or call 203-274-5376 to RSVP and learn more about Chanukah Live! as well as all Shir Ami programs and events.
May the door of this synagogue be wide enough to receive all who hunger for love…cares to unburden… thanks to express…hopes to nurture…
May this synagogue be, for all who enter, the doorway to a richer and more meaningful life.

- Mishkan T’filah: A Reform Siddur

In late September, members of Greenwich Reform Synagogue and the larger community gathered on Orchard Street, as the final steel beam was put into place in our new congregational home. This structure represents the culmination of a journey that began forty years ago. Akin to the ancient Israelites who held dreams in their hearts, and by doing so, we can repair the broken fragments which bring about pain and destruction.

We look forward to welcoming those of all faiths and walks of life into our new home, utilizing the physical space to further the work Greenwich Reform Synagogue has undertaken for the past forty years. We hope that our magnificent new sanctuary will be a true beacon of light to all who seek wholeness, as we further pursue healing in the community and social justice in our world.

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.

Our new spiritual dwelling will fulfill many long-sought aspirations. The inherent aesthetic beauty of the building, designed to showcase its peaceful setting, will enhance religious experiences. However a house of God, no matter how magnificent, must be far more than bricks and mortar. Indeed, a house of God must be devoted to welcoming the Divine Presence, while extending such spirit to the world beyond its doors.

Despite the greatness that exists within each human being, and the bounty of resources provided by nature, there is a lack of wholeness in our world. Broken spirits have led to moral and social decay. Created in the Divine Image, we are called to seek the Divine in each and every human being; this is indeed the essence of Judaism. Torah commands us to help others discover their own Divine sparks, and by doing so, we can repair the broken fragments which bring about pain and destruction.

Our new spiritual dwelling will fulfill many long-sought aspirations. The inherent aesthetic beauty of the building, designed to showcase its peaceful setting, will enhance religious experiences. However a house of God, no matter how magnificent, must be far more than bricks and mortar. Indeed, a house of God must be devoted to welcoming the Divine Presence, while extending such spirit to the world beyond its doors.

Despite the greatness that exists within each human being, and the bounty of resources provided by nature, there is a lack of wholeness in our world. Broken spirits have led to moral and social decay. Created in the Divine Image, we are called to seek the Divine in each and every human being; this is indeed the essence of Judaism. Torah commands us to help others discover their own Divine sparks, and by doing so, we can repair the broken fragments which bring about pain and destruction.

We look forward to welcoming those of all faiths and walks of life into our new home, utilizing the physical space to further the work Greenwich Reform Synagogue has undertaken for the past forty years. We hope that our magnificent new sanctuary will be a true beacon of light to all who seek wholeness, as we further pursue healing in the community and social justice in our world.

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.

Our new spiritual dwelling will fulfill many long-sought aspirations. The inherent aesthetic beauty of the building, designed to showcase its peaceful setting, will enhance religious experiences. However a house of God, no matter how magnificent, must be far more than bricks and mortar. Indeed, a house of God must be devoted to welcoming the Divine Presence, while extending such spirit to the world beyond its doors.

Despite the greatness that exists within each human being, and the bounty of resources provided by nature, there is a lack of wholeness in our world. Broken spirits have led to moral and social decay. Created in the Divine Image, we are called to seek the Divine in each and every human being; this is indeed the essence of Judaism. Torah commands us to help others discover their own Divine sparks, and by doing so, we can repair the broken fragments which bring about pain and destruction.

We look forward to welcoming those of all faiths and walks of life into our new home, utilizing the physical space to further the work Greenwich Reform Synagogue has undertaken for the past forty years. We hope that our magnificent new sanctuary will be a true beacon of light to all who seek wholeness, as we further pursue healing in the community and social justice in our world.

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.

Our new spiritual dwelling will fulfill many long-sought aspirations. The inherent aesthetic beauty of the building, designed to showcase its peaceful setting, will enhance religious experiences. However a house of God, no matter how magnificent, must be far more than bricks and mortar. Indeed, a house of God must be devoted to welcoming the Divine Presence, while extending such spirit to the world beyond its doors.

Despite the greatness that exists within each human being, and the bounty of resources provided by nature, there is a lack of wholeness in our world. Broken spirits have led to moral and social decay. Created in the Divine Image, we are called to seek the Divine in each and every human being; this is indeed the essence of Judaism. Torah commands us to help others discover their own Divine sparks, and by doing so, we can repair the broken fragments which bring about pain and destruction.

We look forward to welcoming those of all faiths and walks of life into our new home, utilizing the physical space to further the work Greenwich Reform Synagogue has undertaken for the past forty years. We hope that our magnificent new sanctuary will be a true beacon of light to all who seek wholeness, as we further pursue healing in the community and social justice in our world.

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.

May the door of this synagogue be wide enough to receive all who hunger for love…cares to unburden… thanks to express…hopes to nurture…
May this synagogue be, for all who enter, the doorway to a richer and more meaningful life.

- Mishkan T’filah: A Reform Siddur

In late September, members of Greenwich Reform Synagogue and the larger community gathered on Orchard Street, as the final steel beam was put into place in our new congregational home. This structure represents the culmination of a journey that began forty years ago. Akin to the ancient Israelites who held dreams for themselves and their children, encountering many stumbling blocks along the way as they wandered through the Sinai, all who have yearned for an enduring physical presence for Reform Judaism in Greenwich will soon cross the threshold into the Promised Land.

The synagogue has been the bedrock of every Jewish community for 2,000 years, by providing spiritual, educational, communal and social nourishment. While each house of God shares such elements in common, there is always a unique tapestry woven together by the individuals of a particular community. It is the special blend of shared ideology, unique talents and expressed interests that distinguish each congregation.

Why We Chose Carmel Academy

By Bonnie and Manny Citron

We chose Carmel Academy because we are committed to Jewish education, we live in Greenwich, and we identify with the school’s approach to academic and Jewish values.

Carmel Academy focuses on the whole child. We feel so lucky that our four children attend such an excellent, local school that helps enrich them academically, socially, emotionally and spiritually. Carmel Academy has provided our family with a warm, caring and supportive community. The talented faculty and administration are attentive to our needs, and go above and beyond to maximize each of our children’s school experience.

As our oldest daughter, Sophie, approaches her bat mitzvah, we feel especially fortunate that Carmel has supported her (and all of our kids), and helped them to make lifelong connections between their identities as Jews within Carmel Academy’s diverse Jewish community, the larger Greenwich community and the world.

Carmel Academy is a private school for children of all Jewish affiliations serving students from transitional kindergarten through 8th grade. The Citron children are proud Carmel students in Kindergarten, third, fourth and sixth grades.
On Yom Kippur afternoon, Temple Sholom welcomed former NBA star and assistant general manager of the New York Knicks, Allan Houston, and UPenn student activist, Taylor Becker, to share their personal perspectives on Israel. The well-attended program was coordinated by Temple Sholom congregant and AIPAC Board Member, Betsy Korn, and was co-sponsored by AIPAC and the Amy Lipton z”l Israel Action Fund.

**Bi-Cultural Introduces Early Childhood Event Series**

Bi-Cultural Day School introduced its Early Childhood Program Series entitled, Come Play with Us! for the 2016-2017 academic year. Each event is designed for young Jewish families with children ages birth to 5 to experience the school’s full General and Judaic Studies curriculum. Events are free of charge.

The series opened in September with Music and Movement, featuring Rachel Bahar, accompanied by Peretz Gil, engaging children through song, rhyme and storytelling. In October, children created a Sukkot-inspired project with Bi-Cultural’s Makerspace Engineering team in a Tinker Toos program. December will feature an exploratory art program called Kids on Kanvas, and a Hanukkah-Hullabaloo party scheduled for early in the month.

Events continue into January through the end of the school year. The line-up features a range of dynamic and interactive activities, including mindful yoga, science, Israeli cooking and dancing.

“I’m excited for young children to enjoy these fun activities, while parents mingle with other parents, and engage with our masterful teachers, experiencing first-hand our interdisciplinary, interactive, child-centered approach to early childhood education,” said Denise Rafailov, Bi-Cultural’s Director of Admissions.

“Our series is such a wonderful way for young families to meet each other.”

For more information and to register for these events, please contact Denise at drafailov@bcds.org or 203-329-2186, ext. 1310.

**Everyone Has a Seat at the Jewish High School of CT Learning Table**

When students first visit JHSC, they are struck by the number of round table discussions in classes. At many prior schools that students attended, a large percentage of classes were lectures with rows of seats. Rabbi Elisha Paul, Head of School of the Jewish High School of Connecticut, is a proponent of round-table discussions.

“There is a striking difference in learning when people sit together to discuss topics and issues,” said Rabbi Paul. “Students are more engaged, more willing to take risks with ideas, when their peers and instructor are sitting together with them around a table. Students are also encouraged to continue their discussions after class. We have found that many good ideas for additional courses emerge as a result of inspiring conversations around a learning table.”

This method of learning called the Harkness Method of teaching, developed at Phillips Exeter in the 1930s, involves students in a discussion facing each other around an oval table. While not all tables at JHSC are oval, this methodology is utilized in almost every class at JHSC.

“Some people do not know that the model of facing each other when learning is actually found in the Talmud as an ideal classroom design. In Talmudic times students sometimes sat and sometimes stood, but whether sitting or standing, the students were traditionally organized in a ‘U’ shape format in order to be able to see each other and their teacher simultaneously to maximize interactive learning. This is the same way the Jewish Supreme Court, the Sanhedrin, was designed as well.

“The student and teacher dialogue creates an intellectual energy that encourages students to express their ideas and get excited about subjects or issues,” commented Dr. Seth Reimer. “In fact, as a result of a hearty discussion in one of my Talmud classes a couple of years ago, I ended up teaching a course on Comparative Religion.” Other courses to emerge during discussions have included Power and Society, Scriptwriting and the Military and Jewish Law.

“Everyone has a seat at the Jewish High School of CT Learning Table.”
It’s hard to believe that just 42 miles away, every day, there are hundreds of people for whom having food on their table for dinner is not a given. On Monday, October 10, a day when some schools were closed, a group of kids and parents from UJA/JCC Greenwich visited the Masbia Soup Kitchen. Masbia works to not only feed the hungry, but to provide free, wholesome, and delicious meals for people in a restaurant-style environment, with volunteer waiters serving each person with respect and dignity.

Sasha Simon, age 16, said: “It was fun getting to see and experience what it takes to help and feed hundreds of people a week.” More than 500 meals are prepared and served each day. Alongside Masbia’s hot-meal program, volunteers also give out bags of much needed groceries every week to those with not enough at home, through their weekend take-home package program.

Tabitha Bodian, age 10, said about her experience “We got to use a special machine to slice pickles and learn how to pack and weigh food. It’s important to know what it takes to get food from the farm to your table. Now I know that just because someone isn’t homeless and living on the street, they still might not have enough to eat. Sometimes they just need a little help.” Kate Friedman, also 10 years old said, “I really enjoyed going to Masbia, not only helping others but being with each other and doing it together. It was hard work, but it was really worth it to know we were helping. I would do it again!”

To learn more about Masbia or to volunteer or support their work contact Leah Schechter at leah@jccgreenwich.org or 203-552-1818.
Are you considering taking a class or attending a lecture this Fall or Early Winter? Look no further!

Here is a list of what’s going on right here in the Greater Greenwich Jewish Community.

November 17: Will the Real Ten Commandments Please Stand Up? Rabbi Jonathan E. Blake. We examine three textual sources, each vying as authentic Ten Commandments.

November 24: Thanksgiving, no class.

December 1: What Did We Hear at Sinai? Rabbi Jonathan Jaffe. Deepen your mystical understanding of Revelation.

December 8: Positive Psychology and Judaism: How ancient Jewish wisdom relates to the contemporary field of psychology. Rabbi Fred Hyman.

December 15: Rabbi Jason Rubenstein.

Hanukkah and Other Miracles: What does the Talmud say about surviving close calls?


January 5: Rabbi David Kalb. Back for another crack at the Talmud’s take on sex, food and politics, not necessarily in that order.

January 26: Rabbi Menachem Feldman. The Mystery of the Garden of Eden: Explore the many layers of meaning in one of the Bible’s most fascinating stories.

February 2: Dr. Carmella Abraham. Game of Dethrones: From debates to depositions to political derring do, bow was dominance asserted in Talmudic times?


For more information, please check the JCC calendar for updated schedule.
JTAC members are pictured here packing toiletries into Emergency Shelter Bags, following their month-long collection drive for Domestic Abuse Awareness Month. The emergency bags will be given to clients from the Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty and the YWCA Greenwich Domestic Abuse Services. A huge thank you to everyone in the community who donated toiletries to the project!
Women’s Philanthropy

Mother Can You NOT!

Hosted by Robin Leader and Held on Sept. 29 at the Home of Her Mother, Nancy Zisson

Israel, Zionism and Anti-Zionism – A Presentation by Gil Troy
at Carmel Academy on September 15

Co-sponsored by UJA Greenwich and AIPAC
PJ Library Back Together Family Picnic
on September 18 at the home of Rebecca and Jonathan Tipermas
What's the connection between Judith and Hanukkah? Discover a swashbuckling biblical heroine and why she graces 18th-century Hannukiot.

Purim celebrates the grit and gumption of a young Jewess tapped to save her co-religionists from annihilation. Savor the Feast of Esther through some of art history's most evocative and haunting images.

To register for any of these events, visit JCCGreenwich.org
Carmel Academy Opens *Gan Chalomot, Playground of Dreams*

When Carmel Academy’s youngest students began the school year this September they were in for a wonderful surprise – a brand new playground that puts their imagination, creativity and sense of discovery center stage. “Carmel Academy’s *Gan Chalomot, or Playground of Dreams, is truly a one-of-a-kind play area,” said Carmel Academy early childhood specialist Julie Thaler, the brainchild behind the project.

“Inquiry-based learning, discovery and approaching the world with a sense of wonder is paramount to Carmel Academy’s early childhood program,” said Head of School Nora Anderson. “Our *Gan Chalomot* is a natural and wonderful extension to our school’s teaching philosophy, and it is inspiring to watch our youngest students creatively play and learn in this unique outdoor play space.”

Thaler, who is the lead teacher for the school’s Shorashim Transitional Kindergarten program, uses the Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood education, a philosophy that considers the surrounding environment to be a third teacher for children. And it’s this approach that inspired *Gan Chalomot*, she said. “The children just love it,” Thaler said. “And as an educator, it is so exciting to see the type of learning that is taking place during recess as the playground encourages children to think about how to use the materials, and they draw upon their real-life experiences and imagination.”

The new playground is just outside the school’s Early Learning Center, which houses Carmel Academy’s Shorashim class and kindergarten classes. *Gan Chalomot* is built upon natural beauty, authentic materials and toys that spark imagination and play. Specially cut tree trunks, a teepee crafted from tree branches, and play equipment mostly made from wood, give children a nature-themed slate to explore. Playground equipment include a music wall made up of pots and pans, a maze of tubes where children can use marbles or water to explore the concepts of motion, a pyramid made from tires, a sandbox, log balance beam and a life-size scale for students to experiment with object weight and measuring.

**Teen Wizards Celebrate High Holidays and Chant Torah**

**Physics at Jewish High School of CT**

JHSC’s honors physics class engaged in a simple activity to demonstrate their understanding of the relationship between velocity, distance and time. Dr. Paul Castle, JHSC’s physics teacher, conducts this activity every year on a warm fall day. It gets the students out into the fresh air, and helps build team spirit among them. JHSC focuses on providing their students with an academically rigorous environment and a safe place to grow into adults.

Pictured from left to right in the back row: Gabriella Lieberman, Kori Bodek, Doug Herman, Noam Haron, Andrew Yakhovich, Danny Goldblum; front row: Sarah Hannah, Nate Herman, Zoe Jaffe-Berkowitz, Jacob Sigman.
JFS Jewish Health and Healing Center
Spreads Holiday Cheer, Brings Generations Together

Believe it or not, Chanukah is on its way, and so are the celebrations all around town. We’ll be visiting all the “usual” senior residences in Greenwich as well as hosting, in partnership with Greenwich Hospital Chaplaincy, candle lighting at Greenwich Hospital for each of the eight nights. We will also be continuing our Shabbat visits and monthly discussions. See all the great things we’re up to at www.jfsgreenwich.org.

Jewish Health and Healing is proud to continue our intergenerational book club and partnership with Carmel Academy. Last year we matched 7th graders with adults 60 and over to share perspectives on books, short stories, and poetry. The “Better Together Book Club” was such a success that the now-8th graders are enjoying another year with the friends they got to know so well last year. If you’re interested in joining, it’s never too late! Contact Lisa Goldberg at lmgoldberg@jfsgreenwich.org.

JFS Volunteer lights the Chanukiah at River House. Greenwich Reform Synagogue celebrates Chanukah at the Greens.

Last year we created the Supermarketing for Seniors (SFS) Shopper of the Year Award as a way to encourage our shoppers with public recognition based on feedback from our shopping clients. We thought our judges would pick out one outstanding shopper who stood head and shoulders above the rest.

However, what we learned through our clients' testimonies this year was something we’d come to realize from our interactions in the office – we have so many wonderful shoppers we can’t single out just one. The judges all agreed that each one nominated is outstanding and deserving of recognition.

Our clients tell us that SFS shoppers look out for them more often than just the one day each week they do grocery shopping. They bring open hearts and moments of sunshine; they are concerned for their clients’ well-being and stay in touch between shopping trips; they make sure their clients are prepared for inclement weather, and don’t leave them stranded if there is a problem. Our shoppers call or visit when their shoppees are hospitalized or in rehab; they are generous and thoughtful, and are always willing to go the extra mile. SFS shoppers are the heart of Supermarketing for Seniors, and we could not fulfill our mission without their commitment.

Beginning this month, Supermarketing for Seniors will highlight one of our shoppers each month, because we want their service to be acknowledged and the community to know just how special they are. We will feature them on the SFS web page at jfsgreenwich.org, and in our SFS client newsletter so our shoppees can get to know more about the people who put their hearts into Supermarketing for Seniors.

We are thankful for our shoppers’ collective decades of service to Supermarketing for Seniors and look forward to sharing their stories with the community in the months ahead.

If you or someone you know could benefit from the free Supermarketing for Seniors grocery shopping and case monitoring service, please contact program director Elyse Brown at 203-622-1881 or ebrown@jfsgreenwich.org.

All JFS Supermarketing for Seniors Shoppers are Super Stars!

SPECIAL DONATIONS to Jewish Family Services

In Honor of:
Barbara Salop, by Lucy and Robert Krasnor, Elyse Brown, Naomi Tamerin, Rita Edelston, Helen and Bob Stark, Tatiana Nichiforova, Joan and David Green, Bunny and Stan Rosen, Sandy and Stephen Soule, Yvette and Morley Kahn
Arik Deren, by Susan and Jerome Davis

In Memory of:
Josef Macy, by Susan and Jerry Davis
Faye Genin, by Phyllis Shapiro and Marty Flashner

If you would like to honor or memorialize someone special in your life or community, you may do so by making a donation to Jewish Family Services, and we will send a note of acknowledgment to the person or family involved, informing them of your generosity in their honor/memory. You will have the satisfaction of knowing that your gift will help make it possible for us to continue to provide the highest quality programs, resources, and services to all who come to us for assistance.

In Honor of:
Barbara Salop, by Lucy and Robert Krasnor, Elyse Brown, Naomi Tamerin, Rita Edelston, Helen and Bob Stark, Tatiana Nichiforova, Joan and David Green, Bunny and Stan Rosen, Sandy and Stephen Soule, Yvette and Morley Kahn
Arik Deren, by Susan and Jerome Davis

In Memory of:
Josef Macy, by Susan and Jerry Davis
Faye Genin, by Phyllis Shapiro and Marty Flashner

If you would like to honor or memorialize someone special in your life or community, you may do so by making a donation to Jewish Family Services, and we will send a note of acknowledgment to the person or family involved, informing them of your generosity in their honor/memory. You will have the satisfaction of knowing that your gift will help make it possible for us to continue to provide the highest quality programs, resources, and services to all who come to us for assistance.

In Honor of:
Barbara Salop, by Lucy and Robert Krasnor, Elyse Brown, Naomi Tamerin, Rita Edelston, Helen and Bob Stark, Tatiana Nichiforova, Joan and David Green, Bunny and Stan Rosen, Sandy and Stephen Soule, Yvette and Morley Kahn
Arik Deren, by Susan and Jerome Davis

In Memory of:
Josef Macy, by Susan and Jerry Davis
Faye Genin, by Phyllis Shapiro and Marty Flashner

If you would like to honor or memorialize someone special in your life or community, you may do so by making a donation to Jewish Family Services, and we will send a note of acknowledgment to the person or family involved, informing them of your generosity in their honor/memory. You will have the satisfaction of knowing that your gift will help make it possible for us to continue to provide the highest quality programs, resources, and services to all who come to us for assistance.

In Honor of:
Barbara Salop, by Lucy and Robert Krasnor, Elyse Brown, Naomi Tamerin, Rita Edelston, Helen and Bob Stark, Tatiana Nichiforova, Joan and David Green, Bunny and Stan Rosen, Sandy and Stephen Soule, Yvette and Morley Kahn
Arik Deren, by Susan and Jerome Davis

In Memory of:
Josef Macy, by Susan and Jerry Davis
Faye Genin, by Phyllis Shapiro and Marty Flashner

If you would like to honor or memorialize someone special in your life or community, you may do so by making a donation to Jewish Family Services, and we will send a note of acknowledgment to the person or family involved, informing them of your generosity in their honor/memory. You will have the satisfaction of knowing that your gift will help make it possible for us to continue to provide the highest quality programs, resources, and services to all who come to us for assistance.

In Honor of:
Barbara Salop, by Lucy and Robert Krasnor, Elyse Brown, Naomi Tamerin, Rita Edelston, Helen and Bob Stark, Tatiana Nichiforova, Joan and David Green, Bunny and Stan Rosen, Sandy and Stephen Soule, Yvette and Morley Kahn
Arik Deren, by Susan and Jerome Davis

In Memory of:
Josef Macy, by Susan and Jerry Davis
Faye Genin, by Phyllis Shapiro and Marty Flashner

If you would like to honor or memorialize someone special in your life or community, you may do so by making a donation to Jewish Family Services, and we will send a note of acknowledgment to the person or family involved, informing them of your generosity in their honor/memory. You will have the satisfaction of knowing that your gift will help make it possible for us to continue to provide the highest quality programs, resources, and services to all who come to us for assistance.
Fall/Winter Programming

BEETRER 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 60 and over to look at books, concepts, and historical events through the eyes of today's Jewish youth, while the youth get to know the generations that came before them. To join, contact Lisa Goldberg at JFS. See our website for details. Wednesdays, 11/16; 12/21. 10:30-11:30 am

JFS BOOKBEAT: FOR THOSE WHO LOVE TO READ
A thought-provoking book club with themes relevant to Jewish women of all ages. Facilitated by Judi Margolin; meets at JFS. Wednesdays, 1/25; 3/22; 2/26; 6/7. 7:30 pm
Our next book is The Best Place on Earth, by Ayelet Tsabari.

JFS MOVIEGOER’S SERIES
An inter-generational, afternoon film series for members of our Jewish community, screening feature films and documentaries with themes relevant to today’s Jewish families, and pertaining to important world issues. Movies are shown at the Merry-Go-Round Mews, and refreshments are served. The series is facilitated by Lolly Raphael, an experienced film moderator. See JFS website for dates.

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 75 in all patient rooms. Joan Mann, Spiritual Care Counselor at JFS; Lisa Goldberg, Director Jewish Health and Healing Center of JFS; and Rabbi MJ Newman, Jewish Chaplain of Greenwich Hospital, lead the service.

INTERFAITH CONVERSATIONS
This Wednesday-evening series gives people a way to explore the opportunities and challenges associated with interfaith living. Wednesdays, 11/16; 1/18; 3/1; 5/24; 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, 11/14; 12/12. 12-12:45 pm

Volunteer Opportunities
Bikur 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!

All program information is available at www.JFSGreenwich.org or call 203-622-1881 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

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 provides a confidential space to reflect on the life you are living and the life you would like to live. It is an opportunity to grow, develop, and learn from others. Facilitated by Barbara Lehrman, LCSW. 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 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 Barbara Lehrman, LCSW. Thursdays, 2:30-3:45 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

Children of Holocaust Survivors Support Group (ONLINE)
Participants discuss how the Holocaust, after 70 years, continues to impact their lives today. We explore the behaviors of our families, and its influence on our own behaviors and relationships. We also touch on how the legacy of being a child of a survivor can be a burden or a gift. And lastly we discuss the resilience in our families and ourselves. Facilitated by Dr. Judith Zackson, Ph.D. Tuesdays, 2-3 pm

Caregiver Support Group (ONLINE)
Caring for a loved one can be rewarding, challenging, and often, emotionally draining. This group addresses issues in a non-judgmental environment and discusses the opportunities and challenges of caring for a loved one. Facilitated by Lisa-Loraine Smith, LCSW. Wednesdays, 2-3 pm

For more information or to join a group, 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.
Better Together—Mitzvah Moments Project

Hebrew Wizards proudly received a 2-Year Grant from Legacy Heritage to promote intergenerational friendships and learning with seniors from River House.

Carmel Academy Students Create Sukkah City

Carmel Academy’s students transformed the school’s Lower School courtyard into a Sukkah City. In this hands-on, experiential lesson about the laws that govern building a sukkah, students from transitional kindergarten through grade 4 used creativity, problem solving, team-work, engineering, math and art to create a grade-wide sukkah using everyday materials.

International Math at JHSC

One of the biggest challenges of 21st century education in the United States is remaining competitive with international achievement standards of global excellence in mathematics. This is one of the reasons that international baccalaureate programs have steadily gained in popularity in some North American schools.

The Jewish High School of Connecticut has addressed this issue by expanding a U.S. based math curriculum and adding some new international approaches to teaching mathematics.

Ms. Natasha Cohen brings her expertise from the elite Russian mathematics program to her students with a focus on proving and mastering in-depth mathematical concepts. Dr. Yidi Zhang blends the best of his training at the Stevens Institute of Technology with his mastery of the Chinese mathematics approach for his students.

“As technology makes the world a ‘flatter’ place, it is critical to provide our contemporary students with the most sophisticated approaches and global best practices to education that are available. In this way, they will be prepared to compete successfully on the emerging global playing field of interconnected business and commerce,” commented Rabbi Elisha Paul, JHSC Head of School.

Gearing Up for B’nai Mitzvah at Greenwich Reform Synagogue

Time goes by so quickly. Although it may feel like your child just learned to walk, talk, and read, his or her Bar/Bat Mitzvah date will be here before you know it! Making this special day beautiful and memorable for everyone involved – from children to parents, grandparents, friends and family – is a team effort.

Greenwich Reform Synagogue wants to make this process meaningful and enjoyable. The goal is to have all family members, whether Jewish or not, feel included and comfortable with the rituals, language, and celebration. Parents with children in Grades 3-7 meet one evening a month to discuss the path to becoming a Bar or Bat Mitzvah, while learning and sharing together. Topics include discussion of the mechanics surrounding the Bar/Bat Mitzvah process, (overview of Torah/Haftarah portions and crafting a d’var Torah); learning the blessings, and more detailed conversations about such areas of interest as Jewish history and holidays, life cycle traditions, prayer and liturgy, interfaith issues, as well as concerns specific to the B’nai Mitzvah itself.

Karen Beiley, a mother of four, explained: “Parental involvement allows parents to feel that their children are in good hands. So far for me, the whole experience is warm and not forced. At our meetings we talk about the learning part as well as the ideas, experiences, and information that helps prepare for this special day, including such details as venue options, caterers, DJs, etc.” Robin Bartholomew, another mother of four, shared her thoughts: “GRS has done an amazing job for our mixed-faith family, making the non-Jewish parent and his family really feel part of the process. We have been active members for 15 years, enjoying three B’nai Mitzvah, with the last one around the corner in June.” According to Rabbi Sklarz, “this is a wonderful opportunity for parents to get to know one another and the rabbi in a relaxed setting.” For more details on preparing for a Bar or Bat Mitzvah at GRS, please contact Rabbi Sklarz at RabbiSklarz@GRS.org or call 203-629-0018.

GRS Cooking Series

Love to cook? Join us on January 20, when Greenwich Reform Synagogue hosts the first of their Jewish cooking series, open to the community. Perhaps a challah baking lesson, maybe Purim hamentaschen, or another favorite Jewish recipe! What we can promise you is that you’ll have fun, learn more about making Jewish food, and make some new friends. For more details, please contact Nancy Korobkin at memberservices@grs.org.

GRS Cooking Series

Love to cook? Join us on January 20, when Greenwich Reform Synagogue hosts the first of their Jewish cooking series, open to the community. Perhaps a challah baking lesson, maybe Purim hamentaschen, or another favorite Jewish recipe! What we can promise you is that you’ll have fun, learn more about making Jewish food, and make some new friends. For more details, please contact Nancy Korobkin at memberservices@grs.org.

GRS Cooking Series

Love to cook? Join us on January 20, when Greenwich Reform Synagogue hosts the first of their Jewish cooking series, open to the community. Perhaps a challah baking lesson, maybe Purim hamentaschen, or another favorite Jewish recipe! What we can promise you is that you’ll have fun, learn more about making Jewish food, and make some new friends. For more details, please contact Nancy Korobkin at memberservices@grs.org.
Bi-Cultural Day School has been increasingly integrating mindfulness and quiet meditation into all facets of student life, helping students relieve stress and anxiety in a comfortable and relaxed setting. In this photo, Judaic Studies teacher Robert Abrams practices mindfulness during a 5th-grade Tefillah class, combining practiced breathing techniques with interpretation of the well-known work of art, “The Philosopher in Meditation” by Rembrandt.
CALLING ALL TEENS!
Community Service Trip to Charleston, SC, January 13–16, 2017

Chilling rain did little to dampen the high spirits of a crowd of more than 60 people at the GRS Topping Off ceremony held on September 30, 2016. Brief remarks were made by GRS co-presidents Marc Abrams and Wendy Schreiber, Selectman Drew Marzullo, and Rabbi Andy Sklarz. All present signed the beam, then watched and cheered as a giant crane raised the beam high into the sky, before it was set into place in the building.

Next steps include roofing the building, installing the windows and siding, followed by the completion of all interior elements by the spring of 2017.

For a two-minute video of the event, search online for “GRS Topping Off Video” or go to https://grs.org/events/hardhat-tours/.

For a personal hard-hat tour of the construction site, please contact the GRS office at 203-629-0018 or info@GRS.org.

Shalom!
Are you thinking about taking a family trip to Israel? We’re planning a family Israel adventure! Watch your email for an invitation to an information session or email tracy@ujafedgreenwich.org to let us know you are interested.
Creative Writing by
Your Israeli Emissary, Racheli Ben Shimol

A Letter From a Young Man To His Future Granddaughter, 1955

My Dear Granddaughter,

I’m writing you this letter without knowing your name or what kind of person you will be. We came here a few months ago, to this wilderness. Our life before wasn’t easy; we suffered from poverty and harassment from our neighbors. In the Promised Land we hoped to live a better life. Our friends talk about and we dream about a Jewish homeland that will be a safe home for our children and grandchildren. This was our Zionistic dream.

Now we are here in the South and the desert is all around us. I wonder how we will make anything grow? How will we build a life here? We came filled with hope and we see so many challenges ahead.

I try to imagine what your life will look like. What are the things you will hope and dream for? What will you be talking about with your friends? Will our struggles be your struggle too?

I hope the challenges we face will build the future for you we dream about.

Filled with hope for a better future,
Your Grandfather

A Response From a Granddaughter, 2016

Dear Grandpa,

If you were here with us today, you would be proud of our Negev. It has become a wonderful and innovative place. The sandy landscape that was here 60 years ago has been replaced by tall buildings, people walking and children’s laughter that fills the streets. I wish you could see how the Negev has evolved. However, it is still hot here because it is the desert after all. We don’t see camels on the streets or large transit camps of temporary housing for new immigrants anymore. Today, the Negev is home to Ben Gurion University, many high-tech businesses and the leading companies in the field of agriculture. There are new towns and communities being developed here. Young people my age still dream and talk about Zionism. They talk about moving to the Negev and making the desert bloom, just like you did, more than 60 years ago. Because of you, we have made so much progress, but there is more to do.

Not far from our home, there is an agriculture research organization called the Gilat Center. In recent years, the Center has become a pilgrimage site for experts from around the world. They have managed to do the unthinkable. They developed a citrus species that can grow in the desert heat. Now, most of the citrus fruit grown and eaten in Israel, are grown in the desert at the Center. Can you believe we grow crops, which need the most water, in the Negev Desert?

After serving in our Israeli Defense Forces, everyone my age thinks about what they will study at university. At Ben Gurion University in Be’er Sheva, a group of three talented students developed the MiniDesktop in 2011. It is a thought-controlled, hands-free computer for the disabled. It enables people to operate a computer without using a keyboard or mouse – only by their “thoughts”. We are proud that our university in the Negev is making such a positive impact in the sciences.

Grandpa, when you spoke about Zionism, I am reminded of something David Ben-Gurion said. He believed in settling down the in Negev and said, “It is in the Negev where the Israeli people and state will be tested.” You, grandfather were among the first Zionists to settle the Negev. Today, Zionism is alive in the desert, but has evolved. People continue to move here and develop the land, technology and all the possibilities of life here. The people who live and work here believe that the future of Israel will be entwined with the future of the Negev.

Your Granddaughter

Carmel Academy Teacher Brings the Power of Yoga and Wellness to Students and Faculty

As a group of Carmel Academy Middle School students enter Rachel Mann’s classroom on a recent afternoon, she asks them each to describe how they are feeling.

“Tired, sleepy, stressed,” some of the students say. Mann then turns on relaxing music as the students roll out yoga mats. She proceeds to take the group through a variety of yoga poses, meditation and breathing exercises as part of a Yoga and Meditation elective class. At the end of the session, Mann reassesses her students.

“Happy, energized, refreshed” are the new words the students use to describe their frame of mind. Mann, Carmel Academy’s lead Middle School humanities teacher, said she is not surprised by the immediate benefits that the class offers. In fact, that’s exactly what she experienced this past summer as one of 50 educators trained by the “Breathe For Change” program.

“Breathe For Change” is a wellness and yoga teacher-training organization that empowers educators to take care of themselves, their students, and their school communities through wellness practices such as yoga and mindfulness. The 16-day workshop gave Mann 200 intensive hours in training that she is now bringing back to the Carmel community in a variety of ways that she hopes will impact students and teachers alike.

Mann calls her experience with the organization transformative and she is sharing her new skills with Carmel colleagues. Mann trained alongside several other teachers who teach in Jewish day schools.

“Naturally we began having conversations about how related this is not only to prayer, but to Judaism as a whole,” Mann said. “We talked about the idea that there is a deep and natural connection between the mind, the body, the breath and the soul.”

Mann also offers Meditation T’fillah once a week, as part of a new initiative at the school where Middle School students supplement their traditional prayer services with individual prayer. Students choose between a variety of options that include art, singing, discussion, and yoga, to name a few.

Carmel Academy Middle School Teacher Rachel Mann leads a Yoga and Meditation elective class for a group of Carmel students.
**Private Tour: Judaica and Israeli Art at Sotheby's New York**

By Laura Blum

The winter holidays are fast approaching. For Sotheby's New York, that means the annual auction of Judaica and Israeli Art. On Wednesday, December 14th, JCC Greenwich will enjoy an exclusive preview with Jennifer Roth, Senior Vice President of Israeli Art and Judaica, together with Rivka Saker, Managing Director of Sotheby's Israel.

On the block are significant works spanning a century of Israeli art. Among those that have the cognoscenti readying their bids are several canvases by the pioneering Eretz Israeli legend, Reuven Rubin. Rubin, who died in 1974, has emerged as Israel's most sought-after 20th-century painter. With mounting demand and prices, his works can be expected to generate competitive bidding at the December 15th sale.

For connoisseurs of contemporary photography and video, there's a considerable selection of desirable works from cutting-edge makers. According to Roth, Ori Gersht’s photograph *Chasing Good Fortune: Tokyo Imperial Memories, After Dark* is sure to compel attention.

Marc Chagall's *Juif à la Thora* (pictured here) leads the sale of this year’s Important Judaica, at an estimated $1.5 to 2 million. “The painting evokes his abiding love of the Jewish traditions he grew up with in Vitebsk,” Roth observed. Other Judaica highlights hail from the Shlomo Moussaieff Collection. Shlomo Moussaieff was a prominent Israeli businessman of Bukharan descent who primarily collected antiquities of the Bible and ancient Near East. At the time of his death last year at the age of 90, he had amassed an estimated 60,000 artifacts, specializing in early manuscripts and personal seals from the First and Second Temple periods.

Standouts include menorahs and candelabras encompassing the history of the Jewish Diaspora. Of Moussaieff’s fine art offerings, Simeon Solomon’s 1871 painting entitled *Rabbi Carrying the Scrolls of the Law* has its auctioneers especially excited. Last December’s sales of Judaica and Israeli and International Art at the Upper East Side auction house came to $22.6 million. Just as many of last year’s significant works ultimately exceeded their estimate, Roth and her colleagues are hoping that this year’s international contingent of private bidders will once again drive up the price tags. More about art and commerce at Sotheby’s when JCC Greenwich goes to York Avenue next month.

The Greenwich High School Israel Club kicked off the year with a fun community service project: tie dying t-shirts for Israeli children at risk. This project was made possible with the help of UJA and JCC Greenwich. Club members each tie-dyed t-shirts, all of which are on their way to the Emanah Sarah Herzog Children’s Center in Afula, Israel. The Center is a residential and day-care intervention program that provides a continuum of therapeutic and educational services to more than 200 children ages 3-18 years old, primarily from Afula and Israel’s north. It serves as an oasis of serenity and stability for some of Israel’s most needy children. Greenwich and the city of Afula are connected through a partnership program, aiming to strengthen ties between the two communities. Israel club member Juliette Wilder reflects, “I’m so glad I was able to participate in an event that connects me to Israel while making a difference.”

Israel Club also welcomed Paul Friedman, tri-state high school coordinator and keynote speaker, of StandWithUs to speak with members about Israeli innovations. StandWithUs is a non-profit Israel education and organization. It is a pro-Israel organization dedicated to educating people of all ages about Israel and to combating the extremism and anti-Semitism, which often distort serious discussion of important issues.

The GHS Israel Club meets every Thursday after school, at 2:15 pm in Clark 210 at GHS. Any student is welcome to come check out the club and learn more about Israel. For more information contact Racheli@jccgreenwich.org.
The Miracle of Hanukkah in Odessa

Your Donation to UJA Greenwich Is Making a Difference!

A brutal winter is coming to Ukraine, and many Jews—including 2,800 displaced by conflict—would be left out in the cold if not for our Federation partner JDC. Through our network of social service centers spread throughout the region, we are providing the food, clothing, shelter, medicine, warmth and hope needed to give vulnerable Jewish children and families a happier Hanukkah.

Please help us help Jews in Ukraine, at home and around the world. Make your contribution now.