

Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey



Journal



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www.jcnwj.org

November 2011
Vol. XXXVII, Issue 11

Rabbi's Message

Mark Your Calendars

Tuesday Nov 1st– 7:00pm
Conversational Hebrew
Friday Nov 4th– 7:30pm
Kristallnacht Service
Saturday Nov 5th–10:00am
AJ Kowski– Bar Mitzvah
Sunday Nov 6th– 9:30am
Jewish Book Day
Kindergarten/1
AM School (Music)
10:45 Adult Education
Monday Nov 7th– 7:30pm
Board Meeting
Tuesday Nov 8th– 7:00pm
Conversational Hebrew
Saturday Nov 12th–10:30m
Torah Study
Sunday Nov 13th– 9:30am
School
Sisterhood Meeting
Tuesday Nov 15th– 7:00pm
Conversational Hebrew
Friday Nov 18th– 7:30pm
Friday Night Service
Saturday Nov 19th–10:00am
Alex Parson–Mitzvah

You have most certainly read and heard about the release yesterday (as I write) of Gilad Shalit, an Israeli soldier who has been held captive by Hamas in Gaza for almost six years. You know that he was released in exchange for 1000 Palestinian prisoners many of whom were guilty of the deaths of Israelis in terrorist attacks. You can understand how feelings in Israel run the gamut today. They run the gamut here as well, but I think this is one of those events that is difficult for us to appreciate from afar. Gilad Shalit has long been a household name in our community in America, of course, but not in the same way he has been for the Israelis. For them, he has been both a symbol of Israeli powerlessness and also every mother's son.

Let me share with you what Israelis are saying about this decision made by the Israeli cabinet. My colleague Rabbi Mickey Boyden expressed his conflicted feelings well in an online posting:

While today is a day of celebration in Gaza and Ramallah, feelings in Israel are far more muted. There is joy at Gilead's release after over five years of solitary confinement while in captivity, but there is also the recognition that many terrorists with blood on their hands were set free instead of spending the rest of their lives in prison. It was only last night that Israel's Supreme Court ruled against the petition by families of terror victims, who tried to stop the exchange taking place.

Calendar continued on page 4

Rabbi's Message continued...

However, against that, there was the memory of how there might have been a chance of rescuing Ron Arad, but that that opportunity had been missed. Gilead Shalit had to be brought home in one piece and almost at any price.

Daniel Gordis, in Foreign Affairs, explains that Israel is living up to its traditional values, what he calls "a central tenet of old-time Israeli ideology: we do not leave our sons in the field."

It stems from the fact that the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) is a citizens' army, in which conscription is universal and every family knows that it could face the same tragedy as the Shalits. And in the army itself, the "stretcher march," in which soldiers in training are ordered to carry one of their heaviest comrades on a stretcher up hills and down valleys for miles, is a formative ritual meant to instill one message: there is never a case in which soldiers cannot bring their wounded home.

This ethic is taught in other armies, too, but it resonates differently in Israel. From the moment of his capture, Gilad Shalit has been a household name. Compare this to the silence in the United States regarding Bowe Bergdahl, the U.S. soldier held hostage by the Taliban since June 2009. Ever since Shalit's kidnapping, Israeli society has been wracked by a sense that it failed in its obligation to him.

Gordis says that saving Shalit is a way of saving Israel, of reminding Israelis of their foundation and uniting them in their deepest values.

Rabbi Danny Allen, the executive director of Arza, connected this event to values implicit in the holiday of Sukkot, the holiday during which Shalit was reunited joyfully with his family and his country:

The Sukkah in which we dwell reminds us of the frailty of life but also of the joy of celebration. Sukkot reminds us that we pray for all people to have rain not just Jews. The prayers of Sukkot, like the ancient sacrifices, remind us, if we need to be reminded, that ours is a people and a civilization that loves peace, that pursues peace, and that sees all human life as holy.

We cannot deny that the process to establish peace in Israel, to "spread over us the Sukkah of peace", is fraught with fear and risk. However, if we do nothing, if we do not attempt to construct our Sukkat Shalom, frail as it might be, then we are not living up to the highest ideals of Judaism and Zionism. Each time we recite Oseh Shalom, our anthem of peace, we literally take three steps back. We step back from our certainty that only we have truth on our side, we step back to allow space for others to join us in the pursuit of peace, and we step back in humility in order to include all peoples in our prayer.

I echo the words with which Rabbi Allen ends his writing: May God, who makes peace in the heavens, make peace for us, and all of Israel, and, in the universal spirit of Sukkot,

President's Message

Spirituality

What is spirituality? Without looking in the dictionary, my definition is it is something that connects you to something larger than yourself. Where do you find it? Some people find it in a synagogue or a church. Others find it fishing at a stream. Some find it scuba diving or parachuting from a perfectly good airplane. There are many ways to experience spirituality.

I had the opportunity to spend a few hours this past weekend with a friend of mine on the top of a mountain outside of Woodstock New York at a drum circle. There were about 20 of us in the chilly night air with only a bonfire around us. Cell phones had no service. There were not 432 Facebook friends who I barely know there. It was a night that reminded me of how things were years ago. If you wanted to speak with someone, you had to do it face to face. It reminded me of how things that are simple are many times the best. I didn't have a TV or computer begging me to watch it or click something or respond to a telemarketer that I didn't want to call me in the first place.

What was special was the music we made. With nothing but djembe drums, we made some absolutely great music. It was not recorded, so did it really happen, if I can't watch it on you tube? I hadn't played my drums for a few months, so the chance to get out and just play was truly incredible. All of the drummers were better than me, but I think I was able to fit in, and create some rhythms of my own that fit in well with the beat. As my friend and I were leaving, we were coming to the edge of the woods and looked up at the trees and saw about 30 flickering blue lights in the leaves. This lasted about 25 seconds and then they were gone. Neither one of us had any idea what we saw, but we knew it was something mystical.

When you look at the world with awe and wonder and it will continue to surprise and excite you.

Shalom, Howie



Calendar continued

Sunday November 20th 9:30 am

Kindergarten/1

PTO Meeting

School (music)

10:30am Confirmation

12:p.m. B'nai Mitzvah Brunch

Kristallnacht

Friday, November 4, 2011

7:30 pm

Tuesday Nov 22nd- 7:00pm

Conversational Hebrew

**Join us as together we welcome guest
speaker Dr. Robert Werner**

Sunday Nov 27th-

No school

Rosh Chodesh Kislev

Dr. Werner will recount the life of his father, Harold Werner, a Jewish partisan who risked his life fighting an underground war against the Nazi occupiers in Poland and whose memoir "Fighting Back: A Memoir of Jewish Resistance in World War II" was published in 1992, shortly after he passed away. Dr. Werner will also share his own personal experience growing up as the son of a partisan in Vineland, New Jersey.

Tuesday Nov 29th- 7:00pm

Conversational Hebrew

Wednesday Nov30-7:00pm

**Food is Medicine for the Body &
Soul**

Dec 2nd- 7:30pm

Friday Night Service

Oneg: Weiner/Margolin,

Weinstein, Smith, Applebaum,

Weiswasser

Sunday Dec 4th- 9:30am

Kindergarten/1

School (Music)

Adult Ed 10:45 am The

Sacred Table led by Rabbi Lewis

Monday Dec 5th- 7:30pm

Board Meeting

December Journal Deadline

The deadline for submitting articles, advertisements and photos to be included in the December issue is: November 19 2011. Please email articles, ideas or news items to Journal Editor, Barbara Simons at

bjbs@comcast.net

Contributions

In honor of the birth of our granddaughter, Ruby Rose,
born September 1st to parents Rebecca and Brian
Ruth and Ira Melon

In honor of Edythe Herson
June and Ira Kapp

In honor of Nancy Robins' retirement
June and Ira Kapp

In memory of Max Needleman
Jack Needleman

In memory of Esther Newman
Rabbi Ellen Lewis

In memory of Celia Robins
Nancy and Bernard Robins



Education / PTO

Hebrew School students will celebrate Jewish Book Month on **November 6th** by reading to each other.

Confirmation Class meets on **November 20th**. Also on **November 20th** we will have a PTO meeting – please plan to join us.

There is no Hebrew School on **November 27th** for Thanksgiving break.

Marsha Gross (Education Chair)

HIGH HOLIDAY THANK-YOU'S

Services on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur were inspiring and beautiful for all who participated. There are many individuals whose efforts made this possible.

On the bima: Rabbi Ellen Lewis led us in worship in her very special way and delivered a series of thought-provoking sermons. The chanting and singing of Student Cantor Elana Rosen-Brown helped lift us to a higher plane than where we normally sit. Helene Friedlander's keyboard accompaniment added grandeur, lightness, or depth at the appropriate places. Thank you also to Rabbi Kim Geringer for her d'var torah on Rosh Hashanah. We are fortunate indeed to have such gifted people to lead us.

Thank you to all the congregants who participated in the service on the bima—Torah readers, Torah carriers, Torah dressers, blessings sayers, the English readers, the ark openers—and in the pews; a full house contributes to the meaningfulness of worship.

Behind the scenes: All the members of the Religious Practices Committee—Tracey Bauer, Jeannie Berkowitz, Lois Goldberg, Debby Knobelmann, Helen Mattson, Judy May, Jennifer Rosenblum. This committee does everything to make the High Holiday services run—from selecting the honorees and producing/sending the invitations to following up on all details. Special thanks to Judy May for the Yiskor book.

Ushers: head usher Rene Marinich did an excellent job of contacting people to serve as ushers, following up with them, and overseeing the series of six adult services, plus two family services. Thanks to Rene, and to all the ushers: Jim Arvesen, Mo Bauer, Tracey Bauer, Mike Fesinstine, Brian Friedlander, Barry Kestecher, Glen Knobelmann, Bob Margolis, Paul May, Ron Seidorf, Alison Shelofsky, Andrew Shelofsky, and Mike Weiner.

Related events were also outstanding. Thanks to Jeannie Berkowitz for coordinating the luncheon following services on the second day of Rosh Hashanah and the break-the-fast that ended Yom Kippur. The food was delicious on both occasions and the simcha room looked appropriately festive. Thank you, too, to everyone else who contributed food or drink. We are delighted that so many to celebrate in the spirit of community (32 people on RH and 47 on YK).

Food Drive: Thank you to all the congregants who donated a bag of non-perishable food items. We collected about forty bags filled with canned goods (beans, peaches, pineapple, tuna), juices, soups, pastas, etc. This healthy and generous assortment went to NORWESCAP in Phillipsburg—375 pounds. Thank you to Jeannie and Jeff Berkowitz for taking all the food to NORWESCAP, and to Daniel Fleckles and Sharon Herson for helping them load the van.

And finally, thank you all in advance for giving generously in response to the appeal

The Sisterhood of the JCNWJ

Invites Everyone to Experience

The Mind-Body-Spirit Connection



Wednesday, November 30
7:00 p.m.
The Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey

Food is medicine for the body and soul

Understanding the basic nutrition needed for your body and mind to function at its optimal best can be confusing with all the information available today.

Holistic health practitioner, natural foods chef and yoga instructor, Delia Quigley delivers this vital information in simple layman's terms geared for anyone interested in understanding their relationship to food, to their body and ultimately to themselves.

You will learn how to make healthier food choices that will improve your immunity, increase your energy, help to manage your weight, and ease menopausal symptoms.

The Body-Brain-Food connection has been proven in scientific trials, and Delia will explain how you can easily make the necessary dietary changes in a step-by-step process.

You will also learn a sequence of gentle yoga stretches designed to calm

and de-stress your Body-Mind.

Delia has been teaching people the importance of eating a whole foods diet for 30 years.

She conducts on-going yoga, nutrition and cooking classes, and is the author of 7 books on health and nutrition.

She writes for the Care2.com website and can be viewed at: www.deliaquigley.com.



Learning Is For Everyone

Jewish LIFE kicks off November with, *A Taste of Judaism, A Second Helping: The Foundations of Jewish Ethics* offering insight into the essence of Judaism and its moral striving. The program will explore the basics of the extraordinary gift of Judaism to human civilization, with uncompromising commitment to goodness, justice and compassion. *A Taste of Judaism* will be offered throughout November at three locations: Temple Sholom in Bridgewater with Rabbi Ron Isaacs, Mondays at 7 p.m. November 14, 21, and 28; Temple Beth-El in Hillsborough with Rabbi Arnie Gluck, Tuesdays at 7:15 p.m. November 15, 22, and 29; and at Or Chadash in Flemington with Rabbi Joe Forman, Wednesdays at 7 p.m. November 2, 9, and 16. These programs are free to the community and open to anyone who is interested in learning about Judaism, Jewish or not. Please call Laura Friedman at 908-725-6994 x213 to register; LFriedman@ssbjcc.org.

Falafel & Films: Israeli Short Films, presented by Ma'aleh School of Television Film and the Arts in Jerusalem, takes place Thursday, November 3 at the Shimon and Sara Birnbaum JCC in Bridgewater. Dinner will be at 6:30 p.m. followed by films at 7 p.m. The event includes three award winning films: "A Shabbos Mother" the story of three sisters reconnecting with their roots and religion when they gather at their mother's house for the Jewish Sabbath; "Evacuation Order" the story of a complicated romance between a settler living alone in her caravan, and the soldier ordered to have it dismantled; and "Elyokim" the story of a devout orthodox and brilliant Talmudic student who, despite his social conventions, falls in love with the daughter of his Rabbi. The fee for the evening is \$10/person in advance or \$15/person at the door.

The Bridgewater JCC will be hosting Global Day of Jewish Learning with Rabbi Noam E. Marans Sunday, November 13 at 4:30 p.m. Rabbi Marans is AJC's Director of Interreligious and Intergroup Relations, overseeing national interfaith outreach, dialogue and advocacy. In his multi-faith work, Rabbi Marans develops and strengthens relationships with a wide variety of religious and ethnic groups to enhance mutual understanding, freedom of religious expression and support for the State of Israel and Middle East peace. This program is free to the community.

Arthur Schwartz makes an encore appearance at Jewish LIFE presenting, *The Southern Italian Table: Authentic Tastes from "Traditional Kitchens"* Wednesday, November 30 at 12 p.m. at the Birnbaum JCC in Bridgewater.

Arthur Schwartz has been around food and the art of cooking his entire life. He has embraced his passion for cooking and is recognized as an author, food critic, and radio and television personality. Come learn a few cooking tricks to spice up your kitchen from the man that *New York Times* magazine called “a walking Google of food and restaurant knowledge”! Program will follow lunch. Fee: \$18/person in advance or \$22/person at the door.

Upcoming December Jewish LIFE programs include Dan C. Kurtzer, former Ambassador to Israel, Thursday, December 8, 7 p.m. at Temple Beth-El, Hillsborough. Jewish LIFE also offers courses taught by area Rabbis at the participating Jewish LIFE synagogues. For a complete listing, go to www.ssbjcc.org to view the Jewish LIFE brochure.

Participating Jewish LIFE agencies and synagogues include: Chabad of Greater Somerset County; Chabad Jewish Center of Southern Somerset County; Chabad of Hunterdon County; Flemington Jewish Community Center; Congregation Kehilat Shalom, Belle Mead; Jewish Family Service of Somerset, Hunterdon and Warren Counties; Jewish Federation of Somerset, Hunterdon and Warren Counties; Or Chadash, the Reform Temple of Hunterdon County, Flemington; Shimon and Sara Birnbaum Jewish Community Center, Bridgewater; Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey; Temple Beth-El, Hillsborough; Temple Beth El, Somerset; and Temple Sholom, Bridgewater. Jewish LIFE Patron and Benefactor opportunities are also available. The Patron fee for the Jewish LIFE program is \$180/person and includes 1 ticket with reserved seating for each event. For a \$360 contribution to Jewish LIFE, a Benefactor receives two tickets for all special events and reserved seating.

To register for programs, to become a Jewish LIFE Benefactor or Sponsor, and for further information, please contact the Shimon and Sara Birnbaum Jewish Community Center at 908-725-6994 x201;

LFriedman@ssbjcc.org.

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Jewish LIFE Media Contact: Debbie Golden, Director of Marketing & Public Relations

Shimon and Sara Birnbaum JCC 908-725-6994 x210;

E-mail DGolden@ssbjcc.org

Editor's Note: Photos attached

Photo Caption: Rabbi Noam E. Marans will be the guest speaker at Jewish LIFE's Global Day of Jewish Learning on Sunday, November 13, 4:430-7:30 p.m. at the Birnbaum JCC in Bridgewater. Rabbi Marans is AJC's Director of Interreligious and Intergroup Relations. This program is free to the community. Call the JCC at 908-725-6994 x201 to register.

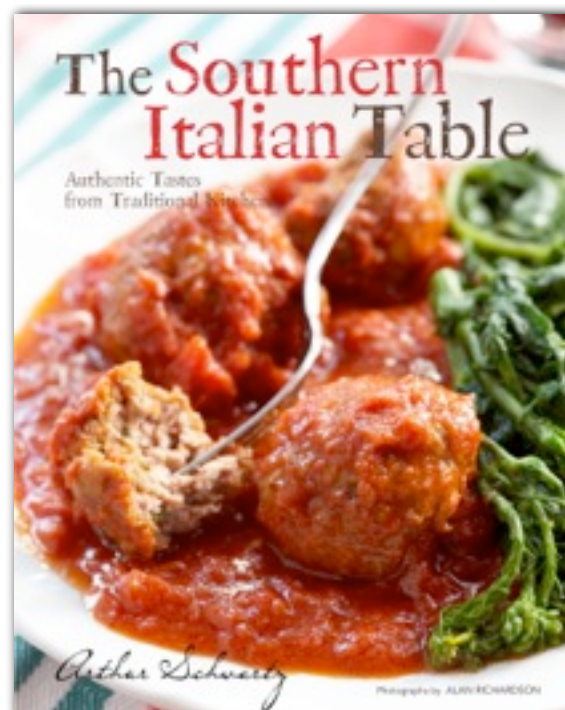
Photo Caption: Award winning author and food connoisseur Arthur Schwartz will be visit the Shimon and Sara Birnbaum JCC in Bridgewater as part of the Jewish LIFE (Learning Is For Everyone) community wide education program. Mr. Schwartz will discuss his book, *Jewish Italian Cooking...The Southern Italian Table: Authentic Tastes from "Traditional" Kitchens* on Wednesday, November 30 at 12:00 p.m. As one of the country's foremost experts on food and restaurants, Arthur will be talking about his passion for cooking and offering tips to help spice up your kitchen. Call the JCC at 908-725-6994 x201 to register (\$18/person in advance or \$22/person at the door).

Debbie Golden



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What gets in the way of achieving your goals?**

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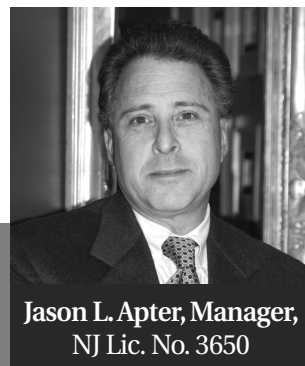
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