



# Monthly Newsletter

November 2013

## Contact Us

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### Upcoming Events

- SHABBAT KIDS            November 1<sup>st</sup> @ 6:45 p.m.
- SHABBAT SERVICE      November 1<sup>st</sup> @ 7:30 p.m.
- SHABBAT CIRCLE        November 15<sup>th</sup> @ 6:30 p.m.
- CHANUKAH PARTY      November 24<sup>th</sup> @ 10:00 a.m.  
Ashland Middle School

**All Congregation Services take place at the Ashland Community Center, 162 West Union Street (unless otherwise noted).**

- Book Group—November 17<sup>th</sup> @ 10:00 a.m.
- Teen Scene – November 8<sup>th</sup> @ 7:00 p.m.
- Evergreen – November 18<sup>th</sup> @ 7:30 p.m.
- Community Menorah Lighting—December 3<sup>rd</sup> @ 6:15 p.m., Montenegro Square

**It's not too late to enroll in our Hebrew School!**

**If you are a prospective family and would like to learn more about our school, please contact Lisa Clay at [school@shaareishalom.org](mailto:school@shaareishalom.org).**

## Rabbi's Letter

by Margie Klein

### Thanksgivukkah?

Because the Jewish and Gregorian calendars are calculated differently, Chanukah falls at different times each year. Though we usually celebrate Chanukah sometime in December, this year, for the first time since 1888, Chanukah falls on Thanksgiving. According to quantum physicist Jonathan Mizrahi, this won't happen again until 2070, then again in 2165, and then not until 76,695.

What are we to make of this convergence? How can we use it as an opportunity for learning and reflection, to deepen our experience of both holidays?

Well, first of all, this year brings a whole new array of holiday delectables. Some ideas from [www.todayshow.com](http://www.todayshow.com) include sweet potato latkes with cranberry sauce, challah turkey (or "Tofurky") stuffing, and cranberry raspberry sufganiyot (jelly donuts) with chocolate "gelt" sauce. Yum!

On perhaps a deeper level, we can find new meaning in both holidays by learning about their common Biblical origin. Back in the time of the Chanukah story, the Maccabees weren't able to celebrate Sukkot at the appointed time, because they were hiding from the Greeks. So, once they were free and able to rededicate the Temple, they created Chanukah, an eight-day festival of thanksgiving modeled after Sukkot. Further, they thought it appropriate to rededicate the Temple on such a festival, since King Solomon had dedicated the First Temple on Sukkot.

Similarly, when the pilgrims came to America, they wanted a way to celebrate the bounty they encountered. As deeply religious people, they looked to the Bible for a holiday that expressed gratitude, and found Sukkot, the Jewish harvest festival. So, they created Thanksgiving and held a festive meal that honored both their religious roots and their new land. Thus, celebrating our festival of lights amidst Thanksgiving reminds us that Chanukah is really also about giving thanks and appreciating the bounty that we have.

Finally, both Chanukah and Thanksgiving lift up the value of religious freedom. As the stories go, the Maccabees won their freedom to practice Judaism despite the Greeks' prohibitions, and the pilgrims won freedom from religious persecution in England. The stories remind us to celebrate *and* work for religious freedom today here in America and around the world.

Ironically, however, both of these stories are more complicated. Though the pilgrims did gain religious freedom for themselves, they were not advocates of religious freedom for others. Fortunately for America and the world, instead of following the Plymouth Pilgrim's theocratic community, which brought us the witch trials and other stories of intolerance, America wound up following the lead of another Puritan - Roger Williams. Though he was banished for doing so, Williams championed a separation of church and state, and eventually won the day.

And this brings us back to Chanukah. Contrary to popular belief, though the Maccabees were fighting for freedom from Greek occupation and oppression, they were not fighting for religious freedom. They themselves were Hellenized. They took on Greek names and ways of dressing, and the very act of dedicating a building after a military victory was a Greek, not Jewish tradition. The Maccabees were fighting a civil war with the Jews of their day that they say as even more Hellenized, whose practices they did not approve of. Like the Puritans of Plymouth Rock, the Maccabees had a narrow view of religion, of who was in and who was out.

So what do we do with these myths about both holidays, when we know that even their heroes didn't fully live out the very values their stories teach us? Well, as Rabbi Michael Cohen writes, myths are one of the vehicles by which societies safeguard their values. In the case of Thanksgiving and Chanukah, we have decided that religious freedom is sacred, and have chosen to celebrate it through both these holidays. And that is something for which we can be thankful indeed.

Warm regards,  
Rabbi Margie

p.s. For an adorable “Thanksgivukkah” video made by a local synagogue, see <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qOtVa9uMivo>

## President’s Corner

by Jane Greenstein

Just a few short weeks ago, we had our siddur consecration ceremony for our 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students and older students new to our school this year. The ceremony began as these students entered the room and walked underneath a *chupah* (canopy) created from a quilt made by children and teachers from our school. The quilt was held aloft by their parents who lined the pathway that the students walked. And the congregation surrounded them all, witnessing and giving support to this beautiful event as we all sang L’cha Dodi to welcome in the spirit of Shabbat. A simple life moment was sanctified and transformed into an opportunity for families to feel a deeper connection to each other and to tradition.

We work hard at Sha’arei Shalom to foster such meaningful events. Our efforts are the products of collaboration between our rabbi, our teachers, and our volunteers and I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who gives of themselves to make our community what it is. We invite those of you who are not directly involved in volunteering already to find ways to become more involved in assisting us. Everyone has a role to play in building our congregation and we ask you to consider what your role can be.

## Upcoming Services

On **Friday November 1<sup>st</sup>**, **join us for a traditional Friday night service at 7:30 p.m.** at the Ashland Community Center. We will be acknowledging the bat mitzvah of Sofi Murray, which will take place the following morning. As always, we also invite you to join us afterward for an oneg Shabbat.

Also on **Friday November 1<sup>st</sup>**, **we will have our first Shabbat Kids! of the school year from 6:45-7:30** at the Ashland Community Center. Shabbat Kids is our interactive, musical service for young children and their families and is geared to children ages 3-7 (older siblings of course are always also welcome). It is also a wonderful way for parents to connect with other families with young children in our community. We encourage you to bring a friend as well!

**Join us for a family-friendly Shabbat Circle Potluck Dinner on Friday November 15<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m.** at the Ashland Community Center. Relax with old friends and meet some new ones over Shabbat dinner. Attendees are asked to bring a potluck vegetarian/dairy dish to share.

[Click Here to RSVP and Sign Up for Your Potluck Contribution](#)

Sha’arei Shalom’s **annual Chanukah party will be on Sunday, November 24<sup>th</sup> from 10:00-noon at Ashland Middle School.** While this event takes place during religious school, it is open to all our members—the young and the young-at-heart! Bring your menorah so you can add your light to the community’s collective menorah lighting.

**On Tuesday, December 3<sup>rd</sup> at 6:15 p.m., Sha’arei Shalom will sponsor the lighting of the Ashland town menorah** in Montenegro Square (across from Stone’s Public House in downtown Ashland). This event is open to the entire Ashland community. We encourage members to let their friends know about this event, even if they are members of other synagogues.

Please consider volunteering to host an oneg this year...it's easy, fun and rewarding to provide refreshments for congregants, friends and family after the Friday evening service so we can enjoy the warmth and joy of the Sabbath together. Hosting an oneg is a mitzvah, and your gift of time and effort is greatly appreciated! The first oneg coming up that are in need of hosting is December 6<sup>th</sup>. Please contact Jamie Sack at [sack.jamie@yahoo.com](mailto:sack.jamie@yahoo.com) or 508-627-0387 for more information. Thank you!

## Sofi Murray Bat Mitzvah

Sofi Murray will be called to Torah as a bar mitzvah on Saturday morning, November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2013. Her mother, Mindy Murray, has this to say about her and this upcoming event:

Last month at services, when the third graders marched down the aisle to receive their siddurim, I had to choke back my tears. It seemed like only yesterday that Sofi received her siddur and the idea of her becoming a Bat Mitzvah seemed so far away. Sofi has attended the Sha'arei Shalom Religious School since she was in Pre-K. She has treasured the entire learning process, enjoyed all of her teachers along the way and although sometimes it seemed unfair that she would have to skip a sleepover or miss a Girl Scout event because of Sunday morning classes, she never once complained about it. Her siddur is now well worn in with pages tabbed and ready for the big day.

I want to thank the teachers, Rabbi Margie and all of the volunteers on all of our committees who work so hard to make sure that we provide a great Jewish education for our children. I have been very involved since the day we joined Sha'arei Shalom. I know how much we all put in, and for me has all been worth it... not only for what Sofi and I have learned, but for the great friends we have made.

One more big thank you to my husband, Jim, who is not Jewish and does not participate himself, but who has always encouraged and supported Sofi and me in our Jewish life.

Sofi will become a Bat Mitzvah on Nov 2. We are extremely proud of her accomplishments. I have no doubt that this is not the end of Sofi's Jewish learning. We look forward to many more years of celebrating holidays and mitzvahs with our old friends and new ones at Sha'arei Shalom.

**Sha'arei Shalom sends a big Mazel Tov to Sofi, Mindy, and Jim on this simcha!**

## Siddur Donations

Thank you to the Margot Podtburg who donated a siddur to the congregation in honor of The Adult B'nei Mitzvah Class 2012.

**If you would like to donate a siddur in honor of/in memory of someone or in celebration of an event, please contact Jane Greenstein at [president@shaareishalom.org](mailto:president@shaareishalom.org). The cost is \$36 per Siddur.**

## Healing Prayers

We wish a full and speedy recovery to Linda Hecker and Judy Ernest, both of whom continue to heal after injuries.

We send prayers for strength to Jake and Renee Giller and Martin and Judy Shapiro.

We also send healing prayers to former member and board member, Elissa Naiman, who is continuing to undergo treatment for lung cancer.

## Religious School Update

by Lisa Clay

We have had a great start to school. With a good 2 months under our belts, we are pleased with the energy and learning happening in our classes. Rabbi Margie was able to spend some time in Grades 2, 3-4 and 5 in October and connect with the students and answer questions. November is a short month with the Veterans Day and Thanksgiving holidays. We will end this month with our Chanukah celebration on November 24. Look out for more information about the Chanukah celebration to come soon - just know that we have something a bit different planned this year. We plan to engage all students and parents in a new way. So plan on attending with your children.

November/December Schedule Notes:

- Sunday, November 10: No Hebrew School - Veterans day weekend
- Sunday, November 24: Chanukah celebration 10:00 am - Noon (after Learners Service 9:00-9:45 am)
- Tuesday, November 26: No Hebrew School - Thanksgiving holiday week
- Sunday, December 1: No Hebrew School- Thanksgiving holiday weekend
- Sunday, December 22: No Hebrew School - School vacation
- Tuesday, December 24: No Hebrew School - School vacation
- Sunday, December 29: No Hebrew School - School vacation
- Tuesday, December 31: No Hebrew School - School vacation

## Teen Scene Movie Club

By Zak Weinstein and Alyssa Dver

Our social group for post-b'nei mitzvah teens will meet on **Friday, November 8<sup>th</sup> from 7:00 -10 p.m.** at the Weinstein's house (30 Chestnut Street, Westborough). The group is for all Sha'arei Shalom members ages 13-16. We look forward to seeing the return of last year's members as well as welcome new participants from last year's bar/bat mitzvah class.

For more information about the group, contact Alyssa via text (7742450181) or email ([alyssadver@verizon.net](mailto:alyssadver@verizon.net)).

## Monica Weinstein Women's Book Group

by Cindi Muller

After many months apart, our Book Club is back up and running. We had a wonderful turn-out for our September meeting when we welcomed back old members and rejoiced in welcoming new members to our group. The November meeting will be on November 17<sup>th</sup> at 10am at Bodacious Bagels. We will be discussing "The Aviator's Wife" by Melanie Benjamin. Any questions please contact Cindi Muller at

[cindimuller@hotmail.com](mailto:cindimuller@hotmail.com)

## Evergreen

by Sheila Watnick

At the October 24<sup>th</sup> Evergreen meeting, members celebrated the October birthdays of Elissa Naiman and Diana Cohen. One member shared that her new part-time job was challenging and going extremely well, and she was looking forward to more hours. A second is looking forward to her annual jaunt to Florida for three months. A third was very excited about her oldest niece's wedding in a converted bank in upstate NY the following weekend.

The next meeting will be an early Chanukah party on **Monday, November 18<sup>th</sup>, at 7:30 p.m.** at the home of Lucy Tannen. Female temple members 60 and over are welcome. Please contact [evergreen@shaareishalom.org](mailto:evergreen@shaareishalom.org)

## Comfort and Caring Shawls

by Margot Podtburg

The Helping Hands Committee has introduced a new way that we can help one another during times of serious illness and challenges. A Comfort and Caring Shawl can be a thin scarf, a shrug, a wide shawl or a lap blanket. What makes it a comfort and sharing shawl is the intentions of the creator. Shawls are made with love and care by a volunteer within our Sha'arei Shalom community for someone within our community. They represent prayers for the recipient's health, joy and peace as well as hopes for comfort for the recipient. The shawls would be delivered to recipients either by the Rabbi or by someone with Helping Hands accompanied by a note explaining the shawl.

If you knit or crochet, you, too, can help by making a shawl. If you are unable to make a shawl, you can still help by providing a gift card so that those of us who can so that we may purchase yarn to create a shawl. Our hope is to have several shawls on hand in case of an immediate need, and then to replenish the shawls as they are distributed. We also have a newly created knitting circle (see below) who can help you learn to knit/crochet and can help you make a shawl for someone you know. If you would like help making a shawl or would like to donate a gift card for supplies, please contact Margot Podtburg at [mpodtburg@hotmail.com](mailto:mpodtburg@hotmail.com)

Many thanks to Cindi Muller for creating a beautiful shawl for our collection!

## Donate Your Used Wii and Xbox360 Games

By Gary Greenstein

My company, AMD, which helped make the Wii and Xbox360, is preparing to donate used game systems to **Danny's Place Youth Services** in Acton and the **Boys & Girls Club** in Maynard. While these devices are "old news" to us here at AMD, they will be very well used outside our walls, and are eagerly anticipated by these local teen centers. Our donation of these devices would be much more meaningful, however, if we could send some games along with them.

If you have any **XBox 360** or **Wii games** that you and your family have grown tired of and do not use anymore, please consider **donating them** as part of the package to these teen centers. Games must be in original packaging that is in good condition.

You can bring any donations to Hebrew School with you on Sunday, November 3<sup>rd</sup>. Thank you in advance for your contributions.

*Danny's Place  
Youth Services*

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Danny's Place Youth Services is an umbrella organization that

- supports and enriches groups already serving the youth of our community
- provides a relaxed, dedicated space where youth can socialize
- develops and implements youth programming not available elsewhere



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS**  
OF ASSABET VALLEY

*The Mission of the Boys & Girls Club of Assabet Valley is to promote the growth of young people in our community by empowering them to become productive, caring, responsible citizens.*

## Bracelets for a Cause

This summer Sha'arei Shalom 4<sup>th</sup> grader Abby Gordon (daughter of Ethan and Jen) set a goal of raising \$1,000 for sea turtle rescue. With help from her dad, she launched the website [www.braceletsbyabby.com](http://www.braceletsbyabby.com) and has been hard at work fulfilling orders. If you want to help her meet her goal, please visit her site to order bracelets or make a donation. Half the price of each bracelet (and 100% of donations) will go to the New England Aquarium Marine Animal Rescue team.

## Mahjong Anyone?

Jenine Pollack is looking to form a mahjong group. If you know how to play, or are interested in learning, please email her at [jeninepollack@hotmail.com](mailto:jeninepollack@hotmail.com)

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## Babysitting!

My name is Lexi Maher. I live on Pennock road and I love children. I am 14 years old and have taken the Red Cross babysitting course. I can babysit on weekends and various weekday nights. Contact me with any questions at:

508-231-0883 or 774-279-6647  
leximaher@hotmail.com

### **American Red Cross Babysitter Training Class**

***To provide youth who are planning to babysit with the knowledge and skills necessary to safely and responsibly give care for children and infants. This training will help participants to develop leadership skills; learn how to develop a babysitting business, keep themselves and others safe and help children behave; and learn about basic child care and basic first aid. The recommended age for this course is 11-15 years old.***

***Please contact Michelle Levenson for more information (617-529-0429, [mlevenson@verizon.net](mailto:mlevenson@verizon.net))***

## WONDERFUL OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUNG FAMILIES

PJ LIBRARY IS A JEWISH FAMILY ENGAGEMENT program implemented on a local level throughout North America. We mail free, high-quality [Jewish children's literature and music](#) to families across the continent on a monthly basis.

PJ Library is a program of the [Harold Grinspoon Foundation](#), made possible through partnerships with philanthropists and local Jewish organizations. Today, families in hundreds of communities across the United States and Canada are able to explore the timeless core values of Judaism through books and music.

All families raising Jewish children from age six months of age through five, six, seven or eight years (depending on the community) are [welcome to enroll](#).

<http://pjlibrary.org/>

## DO YOU LOVE TO SING? CHECK OUT SHIR JOY!

Whether you sing professionally or have only sung in your shower, this is your chance to join with other adults who love to sing Jewish music. Shir Joy is a Jewish choir that started up in the fall of 2011. We practice on Sunday evenings from 7-9 pm right at Congregation B'nai Shalom in Westborough. In our first year we had over 35 members from 14 central MA towns & cities. Rehearsals this coming year will begin on October 14 following the High Holidays. Choir participants are not required to be Jewish nor do members need to be affiliated with a Jewish organization to join. We hold several concerts over the year in the Central MA area.

Shir Joy will be directed again this coming year by Jonathan Rappaport, an experience choral conductor with over forty years of experience. Dues of \$75 per year. love of Jewish music, and ability to keep in tune with your neighboring singers are required. Although we do make beautiful music together, we also build strong community bonds. We welcome new members. If you are interested in participating or want additional information, check out our website [www.shirjoychorus.com](http://www.shirjoychorus.com), or email [ShirJoyMA@gmail.com](mailto:ShirJoyMA@gmail.com). Shir Joy is partially funded from a generous grant from Jewish Federation of Central Massachusetts.

# First Annual Mini Golf Event!



**TEE OFF TO END HOMELESSNESS**

**November 2-3, 2013**

**Save the date!**

**Tee Off to End Homelessness is a two-day event to raise awareness of family homelessness in our communities as well as funds for the Family Promise Metrowest Shelter and Transitional Housing Program.**

**Saturday evening, from 7 to 10 p.m., will be adults-only, featuring mini golf, appetizers and beverages from area restaurants, a silent auction and swing analysis by a Golfer's Warehouse golf pro.**

**Sunday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., is open to all ages and will feature fun family activities like face painting, crafts, raffles, mini golf, and big screen demonstrations of new Microsoft gaming toys. Join the fun while raising money for a great cause!**

**To purchase tickets visit our website at [www.familypromisemetrowest.org](http://www.familypromisemetrowest.org).**

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# MetroWest Jewish Day School

## MAZEL TOTS

Engaging children ages 2 - 4



Crafts, stories, music & snacks!... Free Admission!

Tuesday, September 24 - Celebrate Sukkot

Wednesday, October 16 - Shabbat

Tuesday, November 19 - Chanukah

Wednesday, December 18 - Havdalah Happens

Tuesday, January 14 - Tu B'Shvat

Wednesday, February 12 - I Love Being Jewish

Tuesday, March 11 - Purim

Wednesday, April 9 - Preparing for Passover

Tuesday, May 13 - Israel

Tuesday, June 3 - Shavuot

10:00 am

Please R.S.V.P. To

[ceceley.chambers@mwjds.org](mailto:ceceley.chambers@mwjds.org)

300 Pleasant Street  
Framingham, MA 01701  
(508) 620-5554  
[www.mwjds.org](http://www.mwjds.org)

Get up to \$18,000 toward  
K-8 tuition! [See if you qualify](#)

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MetroWest Jewish Day School  
300 Pleasant Street  
Framingham, Massachusetts 01701  
508-620-5554



Prozdor of Hebrew College has a long and storied history. Dating back to the late 1920s, Prozdor's rich tradition of excellence in Judaic and Hebrew studies continues well into the 21st century. While the four-day-a-week model of after-school Jewish education is a thing of the past, Prozdor remains the central address for teen learning and engagement in the Jewish community of Boston and southern New England. Prozdor's vision of excellence in teaching, a rigorous text-based curriculum, a wide menu of informal education experiences, and committed and energized students who own their Jewish education remain central to our mission. As Prozdor enters its ninth decade, we continue to refine and update our programs, curriculum and technology-based teaching methods to serve our students and the Jewish community in the most meaningful and compelling way. Whether you are a student, parent, educator, donor or graduate, welcome to Prozdor!

Dan Brosgol, MEd'04  
Director

<http://www.hebrewcollege.edu/prozdor-forms-and-important-information>

- 2013-14 Prozdor calendar
- Flyer for the Grades 8/9 Shabbaton in October
- Registration form for the Grades 8/9 Shabbaton
- Counselor application for the Grades 8/9 Shabbaton (for 11th and 12th graders)
- Flyer for AIPAC teen leadership summit,
- Form for December 9th grade Israel trip
- Form for 10th grade hosting of Israelis from Reali
- Flyer for August new student orientation
- Branch dinner registration form (Tuesday and Wednesday)
- Havayah Fellowship Information

## **Dror Leadership High School**

This is a semester study abroad program for 10th and 11th graders which will take place in the lovely northern town of Karmiel. The American students will have their own English speaking classes within an Israeli high school in order to encourage them to create bonds with Israeli peers and understand life in Israel. Along with their academic studies students will learn Hebrew, Jewish History, Israeli Society, and take part in a weekly field trip as well as regular volunteering projects. Our aim is to have students connect to Israel and develop as Jewish leaders during their time here which they can then bring to their home communities.

If you would like more information, visit our website at [www.drorleadership.org](http://www.drorleadership.org).



The Boston Jewish Film Festival

November 6th- November 18th, 2013

September 23, 2013

Stay up to date with  
The Boston Jewish Film Festival  
at [www.bjff.org](http://www.bjff.org)

Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)

View life through a  
different lens

**добро пожаловать!**

## **Engaging Metrowest Russian Jewish Families in Jewish Community Life**

A grant from the Genesis Fund is enabling us to reach out to Russian Jewish families throughout Metrowest. By developing collaborative relationships, we are identifying and connecting with members of this large and vibrant community through engaging programming and activities.

As part of this program, JFN is also doing special **"Privet Malish"** visits -- **Welcome Baby!** visits with gift baskets and resources tailored for Russian Jewish families.

If you are interested in learning more about our programs or "Privet Malish," or if you know someone who is, please contact our Russian community connector, [Luba Olshan](#), for more information.