



Sha'arei Shalom

Monthly Newsletter

April 2014

Contact Us

www.shaareishalom.org

508-231-4700

P.O. Box 454

Ashland, MA 01721

email: info@shaareishalom.org



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Upcoming Events

- SHABBAT SERVICE April 11th @ 7:30 p.m.

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

- Teen Scene – April 12th @ 7:00 p.m.
- Religious School Model Seder—April 13th @ 10:00 a.m.
- Evergreen – April 22nd @ 7:30 p.m.
- Book Group – April 27th @ 10:00 a.m.

Membership renewal forms and dues were expected by January 31st. If you have not already sent them in, please do so asap.

[Click here for website link to the membership form](#)

Mail to: P.O. Box 454, Ashland, MA 01721.

Rabbi's Letter

by Margie Klein

A Passover Story: Shmerl the Tailor

Dear Friends,

Passover is approaching, and with it comes a Jewish season of storytelling. On Passover, we are invited to retell the ancient story of the Israelites Exodus from Egypt, and also to tell stories of struggle and liberation in our own lives and world.

This month, I want to share a Chassidic Passover story with you that I shared at our school participation Shabbat. I have adapted the story from a version told by from Rabbi Tuvia Bolton, via the Chabad.org website, which is a wonderful resource for Jewish stories and resources for Passover and the rest of the year.

About 200 years ago in the Ukraine, the great Chassidic leader Reb Levi Yitzchak of Berdichev had just finished his Passover seder, right around midnight. They had spent hours reading the Hagadah, drinking the four cups of wine, dipping parsley in saltwater, eating bitter herbs, charoset, and matzah. They retold the story of how God freed the Jews from slavery in Egypt, and discussed the laws and meanings surrounding the holiday.

Everyone agreed that this had been the best seder Reb Levi Yitzchak had ever led. And as they contemplated how holy the seder had felt, a heavenly voice came down and boomed, "Levi Yitzchak's seder was pleasing to G-d, but there is a Jew in Berdichev called Shmerl the Tailor whose seder reached even higher!" But when Rebbe Levi Yitzchak looked around, and noticed that everyone else was still talking about the seder, he realized that no one else had heard the voice.

"Has anyone heard of a great tzaddik (righteous person) named Shmerl the Tailor?" Rebbe Levi Yitzchak asked.

After a few minutes of silence, one man finally said, "Well, there is a man named Shmerl the Tailor who lives at the edge of town, but you wouldn't call him a tzaddik! He barely goes to synagogue, hardly knows anything about Judaism, and is often seen wandering drunk around town."

"Aha!" thought Rabbi Levi Yitzchak. "This must be one of the 36 hidden tzaddikim (righteous people) who, without knowing it, keep the world going even in times of evil. And he lives right here in Berdichev! We must go find him!"

So he and his Chassidim got up, and journeyed to the edge of town. By the time they got to Shmerl the tailor's house, it was almost morning. Reb Levi Yitzchak knocked softly at the door, and a woman answered.

"Good yuntiv, Rebbe! Happy holidays!" said Shmerl's wife, who had grown up in a traditional Jewish home and knew of the great rabbi's reputation. "What an honor to have you come to our home."

"Good yuntiv," said the rabbi. "I am sorry to bother you at this late hour, but is your husband Shmerl at home?"

So Shmerl's wife went to their bedroom, and poured a bucket of water over her husband's head to wake him up.

When he emerged, sopping wet, he said, "Reb Levi Yitzchak, I know I have been a terrible Jew. I am so sorry! Please don't punish me!"

"Heaven forbid!" said the rabbi. "I am not here to punish you. Please go put on dry clothes, and then we'll talk."

A few minutes later, Shmerl the tailor emerged looking warmer and drier. Rebbe Levi Yitzchak asked, "Shmerl, can you please tell me about your seder tonight?"

"Well," said Shmerl, "I'm sorry to say I didn't even realize Passover was coming until this afternoon, when a man told me the vodka I was drinking wasn't kosher for Passover and that I would have to get rid of it."

“Passover?” I said. “Which one is that, again? Is that the one with the matzah?”

‘Yes,’ said the man, ‘where we remember how God freed us from bondage with a strong hand and an outstretched arm. Run, go home! Passover is starting soon, and you must make a seder!’

When I got home, I arrived at a beautifully set table. My wife had the candles ready like she did growing up, set up a seder plate with parsley, a shank bone, an egg, matzah, bitter herbs, and charoset, and set out four cups of wine. She also put out a pitcher of water and a bowl for hand-washing. ‘Thank God,’ she said. ‘Every year I get ready for the seder, but every year you just fall asleep. Now, come, please lead our Passover seder.’

“Well, Rabbi, the truth is I had no idea what to do. But since the man in town had told me to lead a seder and my wife asked, too, I figured it must be a sign. So I just took everything on the seder plate, dumped it into the hand-washing bowl, and then poured all the wine on top of it.

“Then, I lifted up the seder bowl and started talking to God, just like I’m talking to you now. I said, “God, listen, I don’t know you, but you know me. You know that when I was young, my parents died, and I had to work all the time, so that I never had the time to learn. I can’t read Hebrew, and actually, I can’t read anything. And, come to think of it, I have no idea what I am supposed to do with all this stuff, either!

“But one thing I do know -- a long time ago you helped the Jews leave Egypt and become free from bondage. Now, I ask you, please help us to become free, too. You see, I have become trapped in bad routines, drinking too much, being short with my wife and children, and I need your help to become a better person, free from my bad habits. And please help my family free ourselves from quarrelling all the time. And please help us Jews remember that we must care for each other and make the world better, even though we are poor.’

“Then I gulped the whole bowl down, wine, matzah, bitter herbs, everything. And then I went to bed and passed out from all the vodka and wine. That was pretty much our seder.”

“Thank you,” said Rabbi Levi Yitzchak. “You have given a great gift to God and to Israel. I wish you a wonderful holiday. Good night.”

With that, the rabbi left, with his disciples in tow, bewildered as to why the rabbi had dragged them to see this man who had led such a ridiculous seder, if you could even call it that.

After walking in silence for a long time, Rabbi Levi Yitzchak proclaimed, “Sometimes the holiest prayers come from those who know little. For even the simple child -- even the child who doesn’t know how to ask -- can talk to God from his heart, and truly pray for freedom. We must all learn from Shmerl the tailor.”

This Passover may we all take time to talk to God from our hearts, and pray for freedom for ourselves, our loved ones, the Jewish community and the world. And may we all be blessed with a meaningful and uplifting Passover.

First night of Passover is Monday April 14th

President’s Corner **by Jane Greenstein**

Spring is arriving and with it comes one of the highlights of the Sha’arei Shalom year—Bar/Bat mitzvah season. Though certainly not a requirement, the majority of our students end up becoming b’nai mitzvah at this beautiful time of year. So as our congregation gears up to support and celebrate so many of our students, I find myself reflecting on all the wonderful ways that our school, our rabbi, and our ritual committee prepare our young people for their special transition to Jewish maturity. Time and time again I hear from guests that

come from far and wide how meaningful and accessible our services are. I hear praise for how much our students know and how comfortable they are in standing up as a leader of their own service. I hear deep appreciation for Rabbi Margie's personalized words of encouragement and wisdom for each child. And I hear words of gratitude from parents for how truly special and powerful the day was for their family. The quality of our b'nai mitzvot is one of the things of which our community is most proud.

Please join me in celebrating all our students, but especially these newly adult members of our community.

Upcoming Services and Holiday Celebrations

On April 11th at 7:30 p.m., we will have another traditional Friday night service followed by a community oneg. We will be acknowledging the b'nai mitzvah of Jason and Ben Arms, which will take place the following morning.

We are currently in need of oneg sponsors for July 25th, and August 22nd. 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! Please contact Jamie Sack at sack.jamie@yahoo.com or 508-627-0387 for more information. Thank you!

Jason and Ben Arms B'nai Mitzvah

Jason and Ben Arms will both be called to Torah as b'nai mitzvah on Saturday morning, April 12th. Their parents, Marcy and Todd, have this to say about them and this upcoming event:

The B'nai Mitzvah of Jason and Ben is April 12th. We are very proud of the hard work they have done to prepare for this special day in their lives and are looking forward to seeing both our boys become B'nai Mitzvah together. We thank the Sha'arei Shalom Hebrew School and their teachers throughout the years for the education you have provided as they learned about Jewish tradition, culture and how to read Hebrew. We are amazed at how quickly they were able to learn their Torah, Haftorah and new prayers – and attribute this to the dedication and talent of the Hebrew school teachers. Jason and Ben are both avid basketball players and sports enthusiasts. We are proud of their accomplishments both on and off the courts and field. They are responsible, diligent students, and thoughtful caring young men. We know that the foundation of Jewish tradition and culture they have received in the Sha'arei Shalom community will guide them throughout their lives.

Sha'arei Shalom sends a big Mazel Tov to Jason, Ben, Marcy, and Todd on this simcha!

Religious School Update

by Lisa Clay

March was a busy month of learning and fun. We had a wonderful Purim Carnival and a full month of classes. The month ended with the 3rd - 5th graders participating in the Shabbat service on March 28th. They did a great job and it was great to see what they learned and see their development as a group. Thank you to all for your contributions and congratulations to all students and our teachers Toni, Abby and Steve!

April is a short month due to school vacation and Passover. Here is the schedule for the month:

Tuesday April 1: 4:30-6 pm for Grades 3-6

Sunday April 6: 10:00 am - Noon for grades 1-6

Tuesday April 8: 4:30-6 pm for grades 3-6

Sunday April 13: 9:00 - 10:00 am Learners Service for grades 3-7,

10:00 am - Noon **Model Seder** grades 1-7 - Parents are welcome but not required.

April 15-April 27: NO Hebrew school - April Vacation

Tuesday April 29: 4:30-6 pm for grades 3-6

PASSOVER CANDY SALE: We will be selling Passover Candy as a fundraiser for the Hebrew School on the following dates:

Tuesday April 1

Sunday April 6

Tuesday April 8

Sunday April 13

Make sure to stop by and buy some so you are ready for Passover!

Link to homework for the school: <http://www.shaareishalom.org/hebrew-school/homework-assignments/>

Teen Scene Movie Club

By Zak Weinstein and Alyssa Dver

Our social group for post-b'nei mitzvah teens will meet on **Saturday April 12th from 7:00-10:00** at the Weinstein's house (30 Chestnut Street, Westborough). As usual, we will be watching a movie and discussing it afterward. This time we will enjoy ice cream sundaes as well. Bring a topping to share!

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).

Monica Weinstein Women's Book Group

by Cindi Muller

A big event upcoming for our Sha'arei Shalom Book Club. This month we will be doing a book & a movie. In light of the upcoming Passover season, our Book Club will delving into the subject of slavery. Our book this month is "**Twelve Years a Slave**" by **Solomon Northup**. We will be meeting on **April 27th** at the home of Jane Greenstein at 10am. This will be a potluck brunch during which we will discuss the book and enjoy watching the acclaimed movie made from the book just this past year. As it is a potluck, we ask that all those who are planning on attending to please RSVP ahead of time to Cindi Muller at cindimuller@hotmail.com. Also please let us know what you would like to bring for the potluck.

Upcoming book, "The Seduction of Water" by Carol Goodman will be our book when we meet the following time on June 1st, location to be determined.

Evergreen

by Sheila Watnick

At the March 26th meeting of Evergreen at Lucy Tannen's home, members celebrated Sheila Watnick's birthday. They also welcomed Diana Cohen back from three months in Florida. Members were in great moods as they caught up on everything from family to work to the weather.

The next meeting will be on **Tuesday, April 22nd, at 7:30 p.m.** at the home of Barbara Kleinberg. Female temple members 60 and over are welcome. Contact evergreen@shaareishalom.org

Tikkun Olam Opportunity – Coming Soon

by Lisa Freedman

The United Way serves dinner to individuals in need at the Pearl St. Cafe in Framingham on Tuesday and Thursday nights. The 6th grade Hebrew School class has volunteered twice during this past year. I thought that we could open up this opportunity to the Sha'arei Shalom community (appropriate for 5th grade and older). Usually one evening requires 15 volunteers, so it would be on a first come first serve basis. Watch the newsletter for an upcoming date and details. Lisa Freedman LNFkitty2@aol.com

3000 Year Later—(A Passover Story)

By Martin Shapiro

It was spring of 1954. We were on a tropical island west of the International Date Line and 10 degrees north of the equator. This island and the others near it had a history of activity. In recent years, German agriculturalists had cultivated coconuts, and the Japanese used these islands to further their war efforts. Some of the bloodiest battles of World War II were fought here. Now these islands were the scene of another page in world history. They were covered with Americans conducting scientific tests. Civilian as well as military engineers and scientists with numerous people in supporting positions were engaged in a King Size experiment called "Operation Castle". This was the code name for the 1954 nuclear bomb test series, which took place in the Marshall Islands.

I was an engineer working for the Boston / Las Vegas firm of "Edgerton Germeshausen and Grier" better known as "EGG". We were under contract to the Atomic Energy Commission and the Department of Defense. I had been in the Marshalls long enough to have seen one of the most beautiful and at the same time, one of the most frightening sights that any man has ever seen. Some unfortunate Japanese fishermen had described this same sight as another sunrise.

I had watched this detonation from one of the more comfortable islands where I lived in a metal house on the ocean side of the island and shared a room with three other "EGG men". We ate well. Our cooks were mostly Hawaiians working for another firm also under contract with the Atomic Energy Commission. We had an excellent beach on the lagoon side of the island. The sand was soft and white and the water was warm and clear. Except for the fact that there were no females to share this with, the beach would rate as one of the finest in the world.

Most of the trees had been removed so that the trade winds could help cool the island at night after the brutally hot sun roasted each and every one of us during the day. The island was sprayed on a regular schedule to keep us free of insects. We had movies every night and various facilities to keep us comfortable. In general, this was considered to be "good living".

Some of our people were not as fortunate. They worked on islands that lacked many facilities. They lived in tents or aboard ships. Trees blocked the trade winds. Flies swarmed about in dense black clouds. Lunch was frequently dry sandwiches or K rations. The beaches were loaded with sharks.

The time came for me to relieve someone on one of the less desirable locations. I knew the routine, having been through it once before. I was to take a small boat over to another island the following morning and there I would take an airplane to still another island where I would be transferred to a ship by helicopter. I had a lot of last minute work to do besides my packing. To help complicate matters, my mail was especially heavy that evening, including several letters and a package from my parents. I didn't have time to open the package so I packed it with my clothes.

(2)

On other nights the splashing waves, the rain on the metal roof or the sound of the winds would put me to sleep. That night I fell asleep from plain and simple fatigue. The next morning, up bright and early, I turned in my bedding and boarded a small boat along with people from other civilian firms and the military services.

The lagoon water was calm as usual. The trip between the islands was pleasant, although we may have been a bit wet from salt spray, but that was something we expected.

We were met by a truck on the second island and taken to an airstrip. Here we were briefed for our flight and most of us listened to a colorless recitation that we had heard on numerous occasions before. After this briefing covering life vest and lifeboat usage, we donned our life vests and boarded the airplane.

Eventually we reached the third island. A few months ago this island had a good airstrip and a few buildings, which housed communications equipment and a mess hall, but not anymore. Now we were lucky to be able to find an airstrip. The island had been accidentally swept clean by an oversized nuclear bomb blast. Some rubble remained and had been arranged to give some protection from the sun while we waited for the next phase of our journeys.

After we landed, most of us were met by helicopters or small boats going to various locations. Three or four Air Force enlisted men and I were going to the same ship, but our helicopter appeared to be missing.. I spoke to one of the pilots who agreed to come back as soon as he could to transfer us. We sat under a makeshift shelter and waited. We were not quite alone. Another small group of military people were doing some work nearby.

Time passed by. The other group ate their rations. We waited. The helicopter pilot was very slow. I questioned the other group about transportation. They didn't know anything that would help us.. I asked them about communications. They said that there was none available. We waited another helpless hour. While we waited, I dug around the rubble and found one of our "EG and G's" waterproof radios that had been placed there after the island had been swept clean by the nuclear blast. I turned it on. The receiver worked. I pressed the transmitter button and spoke, "This is Martin Shapiro of E G and G. Do you read me?" I was answered by cold empty silence and then about a very long minute later, I heard, "This is -----, we read you." I told the voice that we were stranded and asked for help. The voice came back 15 minutes or so later and told us that we were the victims of a foul up and as soon as a helicopter and a pilot could be located we would be taken off the island. This would take at least two hours. We felt better. Even if this promise were broken, we had communications to help us.

(3)

It had been a long day. We were up earlier than usual. Some of us had no breakfast and lunch was way overdue. The other group had long since eaten and had no additional rations. Everyone gets very hungry in the tropics even under "normal" conditions. Now under stressful conditions we felt close to starvation. We had no way of knowing when we would be able to eat, which made the situation even worse. We talked about it for a while which didn't help much except it kept me thinking and I remembered the unopened package that I had packed with my clothes earlier. My parents had been sending cookies. Maybe this package had more of them. I opened my bag and then tore open the package.

There on a hot desert-like island isolated from the world, I opened a box of Passover Matzos. None of the airmen were Jewish, but they all appreciated the Matzos and my rendition of the story of Passover. Sometime later, as a result of my radio call, a helicopter took us to an aircraft carrier and we were eventually transferred to our assigned ship.

This story is true. It happened some 3000 years after Moses led his people from Egypt through the burning desert where they ate Matzos. It happened on the other side of the earth where I led my airmen through the tropics to our destination and by a series of events that suggests God's hand, I found Matzos for "my people".

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

Bracelets for a Cause

This summer Sha'arei Shalom 4th 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 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

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)

FRAMINGHAM'S TEMPLE BETH SHOLOM PRESENTS TWO NEW PROGRAMS FROM NEW YORK'S 92ND STREET Y

Robert Wagner with Liz Smith: You Must Remember This



Sunday, March 30, 2014 at 3:00 PM
Temple Beth Sholom, 50 Pamela Road, Framingham, MA 01701
Admission \$5, Refreshments Available
Emcee: Jordan Rich of WBZ Radio

The legendary actor and bestselling author takes a nostalgic look back at Hollywood's golden age—the mythic figures, the legendary stars, the houses and haunts of the elite. With a career spanning more than five decades, few actors are more qualified to recount this glamorous Hollywood era than Robert Wagner, the star of such films as *A Kiss Before Dying*, *The Longest Day* and *The Pink Panther*. Liz Smith calls herself "the 2000-year-old gossip columnist." She has worked in celebrity/show biz for 57 years. Join us in this pre-recorded program from March 11, 2014

Now, you can enjoy lectures, interviews, panels and readings featuring newsmakers, political figures, opinion-shapers and authors right here at Temple Beth Sholom, the MetroWest home of Live from NY's 92nd Street Y™. Join some of the world's most fascinating people for compelling and thought-provoking discussions on the issues and events that affect our lives. While some programs we present are pre-recorded, others are broadcast live with opportunities for questions and answers as if you were in the New York audience. Close to 200 people attended our first 92nd Street Live program in December. Join us on March 30th for our third viewing.

**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, or email ShirJoyMA@gmail.com. Shir Joy is partially funded from a generous grant from Jewish Federation of Central Massachusetts.

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.

COMBINED JEWISH PHILANTHROPIES SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Combined Jewish Philanthropies awards grants and interest free loans to students who reside in the Greater Boston CJP service area.

Awards...

Awards generally range between \$1,000 and \$6,000. Applicants are considered on the basis of economic need and are expected to have exhausted all other available resources including college financial aid awards as well as federal, state and other private funds.

Who...

Undergraduate students attending two-year or four-year accredited institutions as well as vocational certificate programs are eligible to apply. Under certain circumstances, some one-year Israel programs are considered. Greater Boston residency requirements apply, and independent students must have spent at least two full years as a resident of the area. Primary consideration is given to Jewish students. International students qualify to apply if they have an I-551C, I-551 or I-94 status. (Student visas are not acceptable.)

When...

The application deadline is **April 30th** for undergraduate students entering their sophomore, junior or senior year. For fall freshmen, the deadline is **May 15th**.

How...

To request an application please go to:

<https://careermoves.wufoo.com/forms/request-for-cjp-scholarship-application-20142015/>
or email scholarship@jvs-boston.org

Administrative Offices:

Jewish Vocational Service

29 Winter Street, 5th floor

Boston, MA 02108

Phone: 617.399.3100 Fax: 617.451.9973

TTY: 617.451.1469

<http://www.jvs-boston.org>

Scholarship@jvs-boston.org



**JEWISH
NATIONAL
FUND**

Your Voice in Israel

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The Taglit-Birthright Israel program has expanded eligibility for its free 10-day trips to Israel for Jewish young adults ages 18-26. Teenagers who went on an educational trip to Israel during high school were previously not eligible for Birthright trips, but can now participate!

Explore Israel on a Taglit-Birthright Israel: Shorashim-JNF Israel Adventure Trip. Put your name on our JNF Friends and Family list and we'll send you more information as registration begins. Email us at education@jnf.org.

With Shorashim and JNF you experience the awesome adventure of Israel from the inside, through the eyes and hearts of Israeli peers. Travel for 10 days with Israeli friends and staff who share the beauty, excitement and complexities of their country with you.

Shorashim is also the official trip provider for Alexander Muss High School in Israel alum! Make sure you go back to Israel with your AMHSI friends!

Registration for this FREE spring or summer trip opens at 10AM EST on February 19, 2014.

This trip is a gift from Taglit-Birthright Israel. For more information or to sign up, visit israelwithisraelis.com.

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/>

A Super Sensational Passover Seder with PJ Library

Sunday, April 6

10-11:30 a.m.

For families with children ages 2-5

\$15 per family/\$5 extra for walk-ins

Pre-register by April 3.

Passover tells the story of liberation from slavery and of individuals finding the strength to overcome hardship. It's traditional for families to celebrate Passover with a

meal called a **seder**, meaning "order." At our own interactive, sometimes silly seder, JFN will tell the story of the Jewish people fleeing Egypt, filled with songs, movement, crafts, and, of course, food!

Children can decorate their own afikomen bag, and the snack will consist of tasty Passover treats.

@ [Natick Community Senior Center](#)

117 East Central St., Natick

For more information, contact metrowest@jccgb.org or 508-879-3300.

PJ Library Topsy-Turvy Pajama Shabbat

Friday, April 25

5:30 p.m.

For families with children ages 0-5

Register [here](#).

No charge. Instead, please bring a pair of new pajamas to benefit [The Pajama Program](#), an organization providing children in need with new pajamas and new books.

Let your kids learn about the beauty of Shabbat and the beauty of tzedakah (charity) in one fun-filled evening.

Celebrate a silly Shabbat with friends and family in your PJs! Unwind after the work week and relax while we read Shabbat-themed stories, sing songs, and enjoy "breakfast for dinner" -- bagels and cream cheese, cereal, and more.

@ [Whitney Place Community Room](#)

3 Vision Dr., Natick

For more information, contact metrowest@jccgb.org or 508-879-3300.