

Shir Ami News

The Monthly Newsletter of Congregation Shir Ami
4529 Malabar Avenue, Castro Valley, CA 94546
(call (510) 537-1787 for a recording of upcoming events)

Please visit our website at

www.congshirami.org

Affiliated with the Union for Reform Judaism Congregations
June, 2007



June 8	Shabbat Services – 8PM Led by Rabbi David Levinsky	July 27	Shabbat Services – 8PM Led by Diana Zankowsky
June 19	Rosh Chodesh – 7 PM	Aug 10	Shabbat Services – 8PM Led by Ricki Baird
June 21	Board Meeting – 7PM	Aug 24	Shabbat Services – 8PM Led by Diana Zankowsky
June 22	Shabbat Services – 8 PM Led by Stacey Zankowsky	Aug 25	Religious Committee Meeting 10 AM
July 13	Shabbat Services – 8 PM Led by Rabbi David Levinsky		

President's Message

Ruth Hartman

Dear Congregation Shir Ami Members and Friends,

To paraphrase the old joke, there are three things that keep our congregation thriving: volunteers, volunteers, and volunteers. As we near the end of the Jewish year 5767 and Shir Ami's 2007-2008 fiscal year, I want to acknowledge and thank our wonderful volunteers.

One of the special qualities of Shir Ami is our very high rate of member participation and involvement. Many synagogues are kept going by a relative few active members, while the majority of members appear only at the High Holidays. At Shir Ami, we see almost everyone during the year. And a large number of households are contributing time and talents to our shared project of building and sustaining sacred community.

I have been warned about the dangers of thanking certain volunteers in my column while inevitably leaving out others. However, with apologies to those treasured volunteers whom I will not list, I do want to recognize a few of the people who have given time and energy this year. These are folks who are not on the Board and whose roles may not be highly visible, but whose efforts are essential and deeply appreciated:

- **Jeff Blum** looks after the Shir Ami grounds. He mows, weeds, prunes, waters, and plants. Jeff devotes not only sweat and toil to the task, but also his artistic spirit. This past year, he planted trees representing the four species used at Sukkot: willow, myrtle, palm, and etrog, as well as an almond tree in our yard.
- **Sharon Golembo** coordinates our Shabbat onegs. She recruits hosts for each Friday night service, provides reminders and instructions, and often helps out in the kitchen. Sharon's delicious, handmade challah often sweetens our festivities.
- **Florrie Finkle** receives contributions to Shir Ami from members and friends who want to send congratulations, appreciations, get well wishes, or memorial tributes to a Shir Ami member. She sends a note to inform the person about the contribution in their honor. She gives the funds to the Treasurer and reports the gifts to the Community Page editor.
- **Hillie Levine** creates most of the lovely fliers that you see announcing our services and events in the monthly bulletin. He finds wonderful pictures and illustrations that give life to the event announcements. Hillie also maintains and updates our congregational roster.

Thank you to these four members and to all the others whose generosity and commitment keep our community vibrant.

If you are not yet volunteering in some way at Shir Ami, you may get a call or email later this summer asking you to take on a job or join a committee. We'd like you to get involved in something that matches your interests and talents, whether it be building and grounds, education, membership, communications, finance, social action, special events, etc. Please give some thought to how you might like to connect and contribute.

B'shalom,
Ruth Hartman
510-582-3379
president@congshirami.org



Thanks so much to all who participated in our end of the school year celebration, with a special thanks going to Lisa Silver for coordinating this event. Hana Hartman, Shashana Markus, and Lola Ridgell did a great job adapting, producing, and directing the school play which added such a nice atmosphere to the picnic. Special thanks as well to Ruth Hartman, Maryann Leshin, Harriet Skelly and Diana Zankowsky who served as religious school committee members this year. Their intelligent insights every time questions arose were much appreciated. I am pleased that Lori Bower has agreed to be an additional member on this committee as we head into the 2007-2008 school year.

As part of the process of planning for next year, I am interested in getting feedback from families regarding communication. We had some misses this year, and I am looking for ways to make improvements. This year, communications were made through the Shir Ami calendar, through this column, through the Shir Ami website, through email, through fliers sent home on Sundays with the children, and through announcements at Shabbat services. If you feel that one of these methods of obtaining information was more or less useful to you please send me an email letting me know.

Bruce Skelly has volunteered his services to set up our school registration forms on the Shir Ami website. I am hoping it will be possible to get registration and health forms out sometime in the summer so that the registration process can be completed prior to the start of the school year. My plan is to email families as more information on this is available.

Thanks again to all of our families. You make Shir Ami a very special place indeed.

Sincerely,

Jodi Switzer Blum
education@congshirami.org

Adult Education
Diana Zankowsky

I have received several booklets from the National Jewish Outreach Program (the organization that sponsors Shabbat Across America) titled "A Gourmet Shabbat: Recipe for a Friday Night Experience." The 36-page booklet includes recipes, prayers, songs, and explanations appropriate for a family Shabbat experience. These are available for your home library on a first-come, first-served basis, and the quantity is limited. Please email Diana Zankowsky at dzankowsky@aol.com to get a copy.

Youth Group News
Leah Hartman

Hey Everyone,

On the youth group front: we just had our Shavuot sleepover on the 18th after the Confirmation service; it went very well. Thanks to everyone who came, and a huge thank-you to Barb Haber for being an amazing chaperone.

Events for this year are winding down, but we still have a few more before summer. On Friday, June 1st, Beth Emek is holding a service to honor seniors. If you want to say goodbye to this year's seniors or get to know next year's, this is a perfect opportunity. On June 10th EDJY is invited to babysit during Beth Emek's annual board meeting, always a good way to get to know other teens, followed by free Chinese food for dinner.

Events will also resume next school year so keep an eye out. If anyone is interested in being on board, even just as a grade representative, please let us know.

Thanks for a great first year, and we hope to see you soon!

Leah Hartman
Social Action Vice President

Sisterhood/Rosh Chodesh Group

Jan Dombrower



Last month's Sisterhood activity at the Cheesecake Factory was a great way to celebrate Shavout. Twenty strong, we gathered to visit while we awaited our table. Then, we were seated at our banquet style table. A variety of cheesecakes were ordered, tasted, and shared. It was delicious. We reviewed the reasons for eating dairy on Shavout and read about the holiday: the giving of the Torah. This activity or one similar to it, gathering to indulge in dairy, could become a happy annual tradition.

This month, we will have our end-of-year Sisterhood picnic at Deerview Park on Columbia Drive in Castro Valley on June 19 at 7:00 pm. This year we will barbeque; kosher hot dogs and hamburgers will be provided. Please bring one side dish to share. Paper items will be provided. We will bring in the new month of Tammuz. Daughters are welcome. Please RSVP to help us know the proper amounts of food and supplies.

Directions: From Castro Valley Blvd
Go East on Crow Canyon
Turn Left on Cull Canyon Rd
Turn Left on Columbia Drive
Deerview Park is one mile up the hill on the left.

The Tzedakah Box

A Social Action Column

Sara Lamnin

Daryl Berman

In light of recent events, we offer the following from the Random Acts of Kindness Foundation (www.actsofkindness.org)

“These Activity ideas for individuals and groups provide a wealth of kindness ideas for people, organizations, communities, and groups who want to do kindness in their area. Feel free to adapt these ideas to your own environment!”

- ☯ Plant a Kindness Tree or Garden
- ☯ Walk to a nearby park and pick up trash, then have a picnic there.
- ☯ Have each member of your family choose someone outside the family who has made a positive difference in his or her life. Write short thank-you notes, and mail the letters together.
- ☯ Discuss the best things about the area where you live, the best places to shop and have fun, etc. Have someone take notes. Then type up the ideas to give to new neighbors who move in.
- ☯ Volunteer with your family.
- ☯ Leave a bouquet of flowers on a neighbor's front step anonymously.

Upcoming Event

Help students in your community through fun and games!

June 2nd, Golden Gate Recreation Center, 1075 - 62nd Street

Oakland, CA 94608. Midday. For more details, contact Sara Lamnin (510) 583-8026

Have an event? Shared a kindness? Have an idea about how to help the community? Share it here! Contact Sara (510) 733-5114 or ledorvdor@yahoo.com

SHIR AMI BULLETIN BOARD



Interested in Learning Hebrew?

Some of our members have expressed an interest in learning to read Hebrew. If you would like to participate in a beginning adult Hebrew class, call or e-mail Judy Ganz, 581-6268, Jbganz@AOL.com and we will meet to discuss the possibilities.

Used Cell Phones Wanted

Barbara Heimowitz is still collecting used/old cell phones that you leave at Shir Ami and to send them in for cash. You can bring in your cell phones to Shir Ami anytime – just leave them in the box in the kitchen. Any questions? Please call Barbara

Used Ink Cartridges Wanted

Bruce Skelly is collecting used ink cartridges to trade in for reams of copy paper and other supplies for Shir Ami. Please bring in your used ink cartridges and place them in the box in the kitchen (by the cell phone box). Any questions? Please call Bruce.

The Community Page

June 2007

Yarzheits

June 8, 2007

Ted Balmforth, son-in-law of Ann and Sam Blank

Jerry Becker, early active member of Shir Ami and husband of Verla Becker

George Berenstein, father of Judy Ganz

Sarah Blank, mother of Sam Blank

Robert Levinson, lay leader of Shir Ami for many years

June 22, 2007

Helen Bennett, mother of Henry Bennett

Clint Carter, father of Bruce Carter

David Teferi, father of Rahel Ruiz

Kaddish List

Hyman Abraham Rebotsky, grandfather of Jonathan Zimmerman

Gordon Greenfield, father of Julie Greenfield

Keith Carter, brother of Bruce Carter

Syd Kramer, uncle of Jan Dombrower

Leon Meier, long-time member and founder of Shir Ami

Martin Michelson, brother-in-law of David Schulberg

Blanche Rose Berman, mother of Daryl Berman

May their memory be a blessing...

Ever wonder how the names read aloud for yartzheit and kaddish at Friday night services get on that list? If you're a Shir Ami member, and want a personal reminder for the yartzheit of a loved one, just send Toni Schulberg the following information: the name of the deceased; the relationship of that person to the Shir Ami member; the full date (month, day, year) that person died; and whether you want to use the Hebrew or English calendar for their yartzheit (Toni will look up the Hebrew date for you).

Questions? Call or email Toni (278-1695); toniaps@comcast.net.

Today Rabah

Thanks to the following for their generous contributions to Shir Ami:

- Bruce Carter, in memory of his brother, Keith Carter and in honor of Matthew Beckman's Bar Mitzvah and Kaitlin Beckman for being a super student

- Judy Ganz, in memory of Keith Carter and Gordon Greenfield, the father of Julie Greenfield, and wishing a speedy recovery to Florrie Finkle and Ingrid Weinberg
- Marion Kramer, in gratitude for a happy and positive answer to prayers
- Hillie and Rose Levine, with get well wishes to Florrie Finkle and in memory of Keith Carter and Gordon Greenfield
- The Seideman Family in honor of their daughter Olivia's Bat Mitzvah and in honor of Diana Zankowsky
- Edith Speceal, for the general fund

A contribution to Shir Ami is a great way to honor, remember, or show appreciation for someone special. It's easy: just send a check and a note to Florrie Finkle, 18730 West Cavendish, Castro Valley, 94552. Florrie will send a card to the person you are honoring, and your dedication will appear on this page.

Thank you to our Oneg Shabbat hosts:

- May 4th: Diana Zankowsky and Sharon Golembo
- May 11th: The Seideman Family
- May 18th: The Blum Family and Barb Haber

Thanks also go to those who hosted our Rabbinic Interns:

- May 4th – 6th: Massen Family
- May 11th – 13th: Barb Haber

Religious School Year End Party Thank You to Lisa Silver for organizing a wonderful luncheon. It was a huge success! And thanks to everyone who brought food and helped set up and clean up.

Thanks to Ruth Rosenthal for coordinating the Shabbat Across America dinner.

Thanks to Barb Haber for donating the lightweight folding tables in honor of son Matt's Bar Mitzvah. This gift is allowing us to retire our heavy tables and save our backs! And thanks Barb for chaperoning the May 18th EDJY Shavuot sleepover at Shir Ami.

Thanks to Sophia and Jeff Blum for the beautiful photo collage capturing highlights of the 2006-07 year at Shir Ami. It is on display in the kitchen.

A HUGE thank you to Maryann Leshin for pulling together the Community Page for this bulletin on time every month! (the Editor)

Mazel Tov!

Mazel Tov to Olivia Seideman on the occasion of becoming a Bat Mitzvah on May 12th. The congregation is very proud of you and the accomplishment of reaching this wonderful milestone in your life.

Mazel Tov to the Shir Ami Confirmands:

On May 18th, Irene Gilchriese and Lola Ridgell were confirmed at a service co-led by the Shir Ami confirmation class, teacher Sara Tunik and Diana Zankowsky. Mazel Tov on a job well done!

Thank you to Rachel Brott for helping the Confirmation Class students prepare to read Torah at the May 18th service and for serving as Gabbai at the service.

Mazel Tov to All Our Shir Ami Graduates!

Congratulations to High School graduates:

- Michael Markus, graduating from Hayward High School. Michael will be joining the United States Air Force, starting his basic training in Texas.
- Brenda Mori, graduating from American High School in Fremont. Brenda will be going to San Francisco State University in the Fall to study nursing.
- Evelyn Carmack, graduating from Venture High School in San Ramon. Evelyn will be attending community college in the Fall with plans to transfer to a state university.
- Ashley Benson, graduating from Bishop O'Dowd High School. Ashley will be attending college in the Fall.

And.....more congratulations to our College graduates:

- Marat Massen, graduating from Emory University. Marat will be attending Law School in the Fall at University of Southern California.
- Michael Heimowitz, graduating from CalPoly in San Luis Obispo. Michael will be moving to Los Angeles, with plans for a future in the entertainment industry.
- David Firestone, graduating from University of Southern California. David has been hired by Lockheed Martin in Menlo Park, in an engineering management program.

And, even more congratulations....for our Master's graduate:

- Deborah Heimowitz, graduating from Stanford with a Masters in Education.

More Mazel Tov's in order:

- Evelyn Carmack graduated from Midrasha in May, following four years of participation. In addition, Evelyn was a speaker at the "Ed Night" in Berkeley honoring Jewish Educators.
- Joaquin Ridgell will be transferring to the California College of the Arts for the Fall semester.

Get Well Wishes go out to Shir Ami member Inna Massen.

Condolences to Jan Dombrower on the loss of her beloved pet, Buster. Here is a tribute to Buster from Jan: *My "forever puppy" boy was so spirited, energetic, hyper alert on walks. Always on the look out for critters. He was a wild one, very strong, frisky, and unmanageable at times outdoors. But, at home he was loving, playful, needy, and assertive. He would follow me around to whatever room I was in to be with me. He rapped on my leg with his front paw to get my attention to pet him. He starred at me with dreamy eyes. He was quite the Jewish boy eating challah on Friday nights and opening presents on Hannukah. He was the cutest thing. I loved him so much. He will be missed.*

PLEASE NOTE: New Community Page Contact.....Much thanks to Lori Knopf-Santora for taking on the responsibility of reporting for the Community Page, as Maryann Leshin will be taking on the Treasurer – Payables position. ***Please send items for the Community Page to Lori at: LJKSant0@aol.com or 510-614-5929. Deadline is the 26th of the month.***

Shir Ami Contacts

Area code is (510) unless specified

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582-3379

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537-2066

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Toni Schulberg
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Maryann Leshin
635-2898

Rosh Chodesh/Sisterhood:

Jan Dombrower
(925) 462-3205

Social Action:

Daryl Berman
538-6022

Sara Lamnin
733-5114

Yahrzeit Listings:

Tonia Schulberg
276-6100

Donations:

General Funds, Special Funds,
Wall Plaques
Florrie Finkle
538-9660



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