



CONGREGATION  
**SHIR AMI**

Affiliated with the Union for Reform Judaism Congregations  
June, 2009



<b>Jun 12</b>	Shabbat Services – 8 PM Led by Stacey Zankowsky	<b>Jul 10</b>	Shabbat Services – 8 PM Led by Diana Zankowsky
<b>Jun 18</b>	Board Meeting – 7 PM	<b>Jul 12</b>	Adult Ed – Book Discussion 10 AM
<b>Jun 22</b>	Sisterhood End of Year BBQ 7:00 PM	<b>Jul 25</b>	Luncheon for Russian Speakers – 1 PM at the home of Inna and Arkady Massen
<b>Jun 24</b>	Labor Day BBQ/Raffle Mtg – 7 PM at Shir Ami	<b>Jul 31</b>	Shabbat Services – 8 PM Led by Julie Greenfield & Rose Levine
<b>Jun 26</b>	Shabbat Services – 8 PM Led by Leah Hartman & Irene Gilchriese		

## President's Message

Ruth Hartman

Dear Shir Ami members and friends,

Our Movement, the Union for Reform Judaism, is in the midst of a revolutionary reorganization. Some of you have been following these changes as they have been reported in the press or communicated via various emails, but in case it's all new to you, here's an overview of what's happening.

The URJ is the largest, fastest growing, and most vibrant segment of organized Jewry. However, many of the institutional structures of our Movement had been in place for over half a century and were seriously outdated. Even before the current economic "downturn," the URJ had been actively exploring options for organizational transformation. The crisis in the economy made the need more urgent, and the URJ moved quickly this spring to adopt and now implement sweeping structural changes.

The Union has closed its 14 regional offices (eliminating the jobs of many dedicated staff) and is replacing them with three Service Centers. Each congregation now has a "Congregational Representative" who will be the primary contact for the congregation and will be responsible for ensuring the congregation has the resources and specialists it needs. We will also have access to experts in a wide variety of specialties via the new Congregational Consulting Group.

There will be a stronger emphasis on people, relationships, and affinity, and less on geography. Congregations are being grouped by shared demographics, similar sizes, and interests through affinity groups to facilitate congregational networking and sharing of ideas and resources.

Many of the familiar URJ resources will continue, including NFTY youth programs, URJ Camp Newman/Swig and other camps, and *Reform Judaism* magazine. The Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, the seminary that trains Reform rabbis, cantors, and educators and provides our rabbinic interns, is undergoing its own budget crisis and organizational soul-searching. Although the final results of that process are not yet clear, at this time we expect the Los Angeles campus to remain open.

What does all this mean to us at Shir Ami? Even though the URJ may not be an obvious presence in our daily lives, its resources and its leadership lie at the core of our Shir Ami community. It is woven into much of what we are, from our rabbinic interns to our beautiful new prayerbooks, to our youth groups and camps, to our school curriculum, to our connection with the influential social justice work of the Religious Action Center, and more. We benefit from the support and direction that the URJ provides, and we want Reform Judaism to thrive and grow in North America, Israel, and worldwide.

Let me know if you have questions about the changes at the URJ, or visit [www.urj.org/restructure](http://www.urj.org/restructure).

Wishing you and yours an enjoyable and refreshing summer,

Ruth

## Congregation Shir Ami 2009 Achievements and Milestones

- Successful transition to two new (2<sup>nd</sup> year) Rabbinic Interns
- Successful year of Religious School with many special events
- Held two early children's services for young families
- One Bar Mitzvah; another scheduled for summer 2009
- Confirmed two teens (May 29)
- Participated in regional middle-school Rosh Chodesh program for girls
- Provided camperships for our youth to attend Jewish summer camps
- Participated in regional NFTY youth group with two of our teens serving as co-Presidents this spring
- One teen attended National NFTY Convention in Washington, DC
- One teen went to Israel on Federation High School trip; two young adults went to Israel on Birthright
- Record number of teens attending Midrasha programs
- Presented on "Jews Around the World" at CVHS Days of Diversity
- Co-sponsored regional Shabbaton; seven families attended
- Offered two monthly adult ed classes, including successful film series
- Offered adult Hebrew classes and ongoing conversion class
- Held Board development workshop with URJ Rabbi as consultant
- Two Board members attended URJ Regional Kallah
- Participated in Martin Luther King day community observances
- Hosted successful interfaith Shabbat service
- Participated in South Hayward Parish interfaith services
- Held 13<sup>th</sup> annual sisterhood retreat and monthly Rosh Chodesh meetings
- Rosh Chodesh group sponsored Chanukah party
- Held successful Labor Day BBQ and fundraiser
- Hosted successful Tu B'Shevat and Passover Seders
- Included cantorial song leader in interfaith service and Passover seder
- Held successful Bagel and Lox speaker event
- Operated all major events on break-even budgets
- Offered shivah minyanim for the bereaved
- Made visits to the sick and in nursing facilities; brought meals to families in temporary crisis
- Performed tree work; painted kitchen; installed security fencing on both sides of building
- Installed new stained-glass window in front door
- Developed new logo and letterhead

## **Congregation Shir Ami 2009-2010 Board**

President	Ruth Hartman
First Vice President	Julie Greenfield
Secretary	Harriet Skelly
Treasurer, Receivables	Toni Schulberg
Treasurer, Payables	Maryann Leshin
Membership Chair	Barbara Heimowitz
Religious Committee Co-Chair	David Schulberg
Religious Committee Co-Chair/ Trustee	Diana Zankowsky
School Co-Chair	Jodi Blum
School Co-Chair/Trustee	Barbara Haber
Building & Grounds Chair	Noah Markus
Member At Large	Bonnie Frey
Member At Large	Jon Zimmerman

## Adult Education

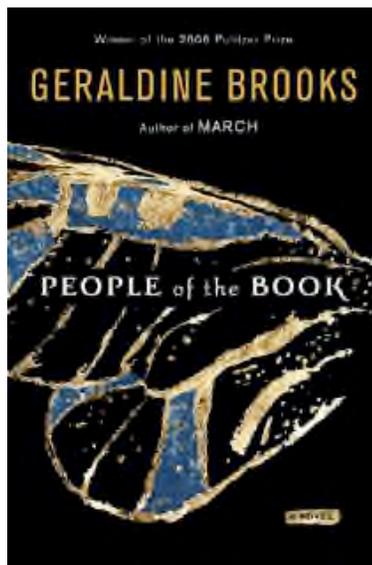
Diana Zankowsky

It's summertime in Castro Valley and the adult education offerings will swing into a different gear.

Congregation Shir Ami will offer a book discussion session on Geraldine Brooks' latest novel, "People of the Book", published in 2008.

Here is a brief summary of the novel:

Inspired by the true story of a mysterious codex known as the Sarajevo Haggadah, *People of the Book* is a sweeping adventure through five centuries of history. From its creation in Muslim-ruled, medieval Spain, the illuminated manuscript makes a series of perilous journeys: through Inquisition-era Venice, fin-de-siecle Vienna, and the Nazi sacking of Sarajevo.



In 1996, Hanna Heath, an Australian rare-book expert, is offered the job of a lifetime: analysis and conservation of the famed manuscript, which has been rescued once again from Serb shelling during the Bosnian war. Priceless and beautiful, the book is one of the earliest Jewish volumes ever to be illuminated with figurative paintings. When Hanna, discovers a series of tiny artifacts in its ancient binding—an insect wing fragment, wine stains, salt crystals, a white hair—she becomes determined to unlock the book's mysteries.

We'll meet at Shir Ami on Sunday, July 12<sup>th</sup>, from 10:00 to 11:30 am for a nosh and a discussion of this amazing tale, available in audio, paperback and hardcover.

Our on-going monthly class for adults interested in conversion to Judaism will continue to meet. Contact Diana Zankowsky, [dzankowsky@aol.com](mailto:dzankowsky@aol.com), for more information or if you are interested in joining.

Judy Ganz continues to teach the weekly "Learning Hebrew through Prayer" class, for those who already have basic literacy skills. Please contact Judy at [jbganz@aol.com](mailto:jbganz@aol.com) if you are interested in joining.

# Sisterhood/Rosh Chodesh Group

Jan Dombrower



## Sisterhood:

Last month's Rosh Chodesh we brought in the new month of Sivan. Sivan is rich with meaning as it holds the holiday, Shavuot, which celebrates the giving of the Torah, the abundance of harvest, and the ending of the counting of the Omer. We welcomed a first time member to the gathering, Pat Palmer and look forward to her continued participation

We brought in the new month with a reading, prayer, and candle lighting. We discussed the many aspects of Shavuot. Each group took a segment of the holiday including why we eat dairy, Torah and the Omer, and the Story of Ruth. That group shared the meaning of their topic and asked a question to the group for further discussion.

We ended the evening with the tasty delights of blintzes, cheese cake, and fruit in the spirit of Shavuot.

Next month we will have our end of year barbeque on Monday, June 22.. We will meet at Deerview Park off of Columbia Dr in Castro Valley. The Barbeque starts at 7:00. We will have burgers and Kosher hot dogs. Please bring a side dish to share. We will bring in the new month of Tammuz. Watch for an email for the reminder of this event.

Sisterhood wishes a Mazel Tov to Angie Ross on her conversion to Judaism.

## Sisterhood Sponsored Camperships

Did you know that the Sisterhood awards \$100/camper in camper scholarships? Did you know that Camp Kadima is now open for online registration for this summer's sessions? If you have any questions regarding the camper scholarships, please contact Jan Dombrower.

Click on the link below to register online for Camp Kadima:

<http://campkadima.bethemek.org/signup.html>

# The Community Page

## June 2009

### Yahrzheits:

#### June 12 , 2009

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  
Robert Levinson, lay leader of Shir Ami for many years

#### June 26 , 2009

David Teferi, father of Rahel Ruiz

### Kaddish List: (to be read at both services in June)

Jack Skelly, father of Bruce Skelly  
Jean Skelly, mother of Bruce Skelly  
Bridget Laky, past president and long time former member of  
Shir Ami  
Zac Cohen, long time member of Shir Ami  
Sheila Arthur, long time former member of Shir Ami  
Lazarus Lewis, father of Peter Lewis

May their memory be a blessing...

Ever wonder how the names read out loud for Yahrzeit and Kaddish at Friday night services get on that list? If you are a member of Shir Ami, and want a personal reminder for the Yahrzeit of a loved one, just send Toni Schulberg the following information: the name of the deceased; the relationship of that person to the member of Shir Ami; the full date (month, day, year) that person died; and whether you want to use the Hebrew or English calendar for their Yahrzeit (Toni will look up the Hebrew date for you). Questions? Call Toni at 278-1695 or e-mail her at [yarhzeit@congshirami.org](mailto:yarhzeit@congshirami.org).

### **TODAH RABAH FOR THESE GENEROUS DONATIONS:**

- From Muriel Small: in Memory of Harold Small at his Yahrzeit,
- From Henry Bennett: in Honor of his son, Aaron's graduation from UCLA,
- From Nancy Storch: in Memory of Harriet Troy at her Yahrzeit,
- From Judy Ganz: in Honor of Katie & David Carter's new baby, Brody Ellis Carter, brother to Cameron,
- From Judy Ganz: To wish Harriet Skelly a speedy recovery,
- From Ruth Hartman: in appreciation of Bruce Carter, for his many years of service on the Shir Ami Board,
- From Ruth Hartman: in Honor of Angela Ross on her conversion to Judaism,

- From Ruth Hartman and Gary Wolff: in Honor of the Confirmation of Shashana Markus and Hana Hartman.

A contribution to Shir Ami is a great way to honor, remember, or show appreciation for someone special. It's easy. Send a check and note to Florrie Finkle (her address is in the Shir Ami roster). Florrie will send a card to the person you are honoring and your dedication will appear on this page.

## Thank you to our Oneg Hosts:

- May 1<sup>st</sup> : Oneg provided by a generous contribution from the Goldgeil Family (Miron, Nurgul and Miriam)
- May 15<sup>th</sup> : Diana and Fred Zankowsky
- May 29<sup>th</sup>: The Wolff-Hartman & The Markus Families, with Kudos to the parent volunteers who helped set up and clean up!

## What's Nu?

- Mazel Tov to Angie Ross on her recent conversion to Judaism.
- To Nancy Storch: a speedy recovery from pneumonia.
- Congratulations to Harriet Skelly on her successful hip replacement surgery on May 6<sup>th</sup>.
- Congratulations to Michelle Ross on her graduation from Tri-Valley/Tri Cities Midrasha, and to Lisa Carmack and Lola Ridgell on their graduation from Oakland Midrasha.
- Shir Ami's talent was seen in Spencer Blum's role of Kurt Von Trapp in the recent CVHS production of "The Sound of Music".
- Ruth and Leah Hartman presented a program on Jews and Judaism to 90 sixth graders at Hayward's Park Elementary School on May 14<sup>th</sup>. The PowerPoint is available if anyone else wants to use it for a school presentation.
- Leah Hartman and Gary Wolff traveled to Costa Rica, where they visited friends, enjoyed tropical wildlife and brushed up on their Spanish.
- David Schulberg traveled to Roatan, Honduras in May for a scuba diving adventure.
- Hillel, the world's largest Jewish campus organization, has named six individuals to the position of Senior Jewish Educator for six different campuses across North America, including our **former student rabbi, Joel Nickerson, appointed to the University of Pennsylvania**. Rabbi Joel Nickerson, who was ordained at Hebrew Union College in Los Angeles, CA, this past May, began his professional career with Hillel at Stanford University, serving as a Steinhardt Jewish Campus Service Corps Fellow working to engage uninvolved Jewish students with the Hillel. After his two year fellowship with Jewish youth during rabbinic internships at several synagogues in California. Nickerson has a magnetic personality and love of learning, a valuable asset for a senior Jewish educator.
- Rabbi David Levinsky passed his dissertation defense on May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2009. He is now Rabbi David Levinsky, Ph.D., Rabbi Doctor David Levinsky, the Good Reverend Doctor David Levinsky, or as Prince would have it "Doctor"!
- Mazel Tov to Michael Markus and Amy Bohan (now Amy Markus) on their wedding January 2, 2009.
- Best wishes to Sydney Simpson, who was injured in a horseback riding accident on Cheyenne on April 25. Her horse tripped and Sydney went down breaking her right leg. Expected recovery time is 6-8 weeks.
- Mazel Tov to Tyler Dean on his graduation from UC Irvine on June 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Temple Shir Ami by Sophia Silver dated 4/22/09 (written for her fifth grade class at Independent Elementary School)**

*I've always remembered this place ever since I moved to Castro Valley, and I always will. This place is a small, white house. It's called Temple Shir Ami. I have been going there ever since I started elementary school and it has been an amazing adventure. I have met so many new people and they have become part of my family. Memories and discoveries have been here and a lot of celebrations.*

*Shir Ami has a unique history. It used to be a sailor's home but somehow it turned into a temple. As you walk into the cozy place, you would smell the previous baking of challah that were cooking and burning candle wax. To me it's a magical place. We have a lot of fun celebrations for a lot of fun holidays.*

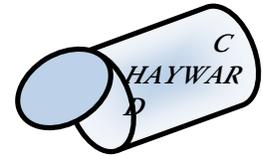
*I got to Shir Ami for a lot of reasons. One of them is because I am Jewish. Another reason is that Shir Ami prepares me for an event called a bat mitzvah. That's when a thirteen-year old girl becomes the daughter of commandment. I also go to Shir Ami because two important people teach me things that prepare me for life. These people are called the rabbis. They are basically the leaders of any service, event or anything else that has to do with Judaism.*

*Like a church or any holy place, you meet a lot of people. I go to Shir Ami about two times per week. One of these times is for a Shabbat service. On Shabbat we call it our resting day because in our religion when God created the world, his last day the week was when he rested. Another time I go to Shir Ami is for Hebrew School. Hebrew School is so much fun! I have two classes with some of the most amazing people in the world. Sarah, Kaitlyn, Adam and Ryan have been supporting me, teaching me and being such good friends to me ever since I was in Kindergarten. Seeing them every Sunday is like being around my brothers and sisters.*

*Spending time at Shir Ami is like being at my second home. It has brought memories and friends. I am so glad I came there when I moved to Castro Valley because the people there are not only friends, but they are family. I love Temple Shir Ami.*



**The Tzedakah Box  
A Social Action Column  
Daryl Berman, Julie Greenfield, Sara Lamnin**



**INTRODUCING ...HAYWARD COMMUNITY ACTION NETWORK**

**WHAT IS HAYWARD CAN?**

A collaboration of individuals living on the street, faith, business, law enforcement, and social service communities developing sustainable solutions.



**WHY?**

Local feeding programs have been serving 20 to 100 local residents, but could operate more effectively and promote progress for participants through centralized efforts.

**HOW?**

Hayward Community Action Network is a program of South Hayward Parish, established to develop relationships with existing service providers and communities. By better utilizing existing resources, facilitating strategic conversations, research and implementing best practices, and developing new community leaders directly addressing issues, Hayward CAN is.

**HAYWARD CAN STRATEGIC PLAN**

- f* Develop safety and security strategies for members of our community on the streets
- f* Identify opportunities to share resources, avoiding waste, spreading resources further, and supporting all food programs.
- f* Ensure that feeding programs continue functioning in compliance with City, environmental, and community standards.
- f* Develop a training system and resource bank for feeding program volunteers and participants.
- f* Research existing homelessness resource center models, gathering best practices and cautionary tales.
- f* Open and maintain Homelessness/ Low Income Service Center

In Alameda County, 6,215 people are homeless on any given night.  
28% of the county's homeless population is children.  
43% are families.

**BE PART OF THE SOLUTION!**

Long-Term Planning Meeting  
2<sup>nd</sup> Mondays 7-8pm  
All Saints Church

Short-Term Planning Meeting  
3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays 7-8pm  
First United Methodist Church

Help prepare and serve food. Donate socks and supplies for showers (toiletries, towels). Help with administrative, technical, and outreach tasks. Call Sara Lamnin, Program Director, for details (510) 432-7703 saralamnin@sbcglobal.net

## SHIR AMI BULLETIN BOARD



### **Labor Day BBQ/Raffle Committee**

The Labor Day BBQ/Raffle committee will meet on Wednesday, June 24 at Shir Ami at 7 p.m. We are looking for volunteers to help with this once a year fundraiser. We need donations for the raffle, volunteers to help solicit donations in the community, publicity help and help on the day of the BBQ. Please contact Barbara Heimowitz if interested and if you plan to attend the meeting.

### **Shir Ami's Store on CafePress.com**

Our latest and greatest fundraiser is our very own store on [CafePress.com](http://www.cafepress.com).

Thanks to the talents of Jeff Blum who designed the stained glass panel in our front door, and David Holsey who developed Jeff's design into our new logo, we have items for sale that have the official Congregation Shir Ami logo.

You may have seen a small sample of them at the end year picnic where the teachers were given their very own Shir Ami mugs. But wait there's more. If you go online to our store at <http://www.cafepress.com/CongShirAmi> you will find a wide variety of products, including t-shirts, sweatshirts, hoodies, not to mention cool gift ideas like mugs, travel mugs, note cards, journals, tote bags, and more.

When you purchase an item from our store, 25% of the purchase price goes directly to Shir Ami. Do yourself a favor, and do Shir Ami a favor, by taking a few minutes to go to our online store and start shopping.

### **Used Cell Phones Wanted**

Barbara Heimowitz is still collecting used/old cell phones that you leave at Shir Ami to be sent 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.

## Shir Ami Contacts

President:

Ruth Hartman  
[president@congsHIRAMI.org](mailto:president@congsHIRAMI.org)

Membership:

Barbara Heimowitz and  
Danielle Keil  
[membership@congsHIRAMI.org](mailto:membership@congsHIRAMI.org)

School:

Jodi Blum and Barb Haber  
[education@congsHIRAMI.org](mailto:education@congsHIRAMI.org)

Religious:

David Schulberg and Diana  
Zankowsky  
[religion@congsHIRAMI.org](mailto:religion@congsHIRAMI.org)

Oneg Shabbat:

Sharon Golembo  
[oneg@congsHIRAMI.org](mailto:oneg@congsHIRAMI.org)

Newsletter:

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Newsletter mailing:

Lily Erickson  
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Scrip/eScrip:

Danielle Keil  
[escrip@congsHIRAMI.org](mailto:escrip@congsHIRAMI.org)

Community Page:

Lori Knopf Santora  
[community@congsHIRAMI.org](mailto:community@congsHIRAMI.org)

Dues:

Toni Schulberg  
[treasurer@congsHIRAMI.org](mailto:treasurer@congsHIRAMI.org)

Invoices/Payables:

Maryann Leshin  
[treasurer@congsHIRAMI.org](mailto:treasurer@congsHIRAMI.org)

Rosh Chodesh/Sisterhood:

Jan Dombrower  
[sisterhood@congsHIRAMI.org](mailto:sisterhood@congsHIRAMI.org)

Social Action:

Daryl Berman  
Julie Greenfield  
Sara Lamnin  
[socialaction@congsHIRAMI.org](mailto:socialaction@congsHIRAMI.org)

Yahrzeit Listings:

Tonia Schulberg  
[yahrzeits@congsHIRAMI.org](mailto:yahrzeits@congsHIRAMI.org)

Donations:

General Funds, Special Funds,  
Wall Plaques  
Florrie Finkle  
<mailto:donations@congsHIRAMI.org>

Would you like to honor or memorialize someone at Shir Ami? Are you celebrating a special occasion or life cycle event? Have a plaque added to the Memorial Wall.

Each 2" x 5" plaque will be engraved on satin finished brass, with 3-4 lines of information. You can add a plaque to our Memorial Wall for a donation of \$150.

**Sample #1:**

Tonia Schulberg  
In Memory of my parents  
Tyler & Georgie Brooke  
1912-1997; 1914-2007

**Sample #2:**

IN HONOR OF  
BROOKE PLEASANTON  
BAT MITZVAH  
MAY 22, 1990

**Sample #3:**

IN MEMORY OF  
ZAC COHEN  
1948 - 2009

**Sample #4:**

Ruth and Gary  
In Honor of Our  
20th Anniversary

Complete the form (Please print clearly) and send it, along with your check made out to Congregation Shir Ami, to Florrie Finkle (see roster or email [president@congshirami.org](mailto:president@congshirami.org) for her address).

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Line 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Line 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Line 3: \_\_\_\_\_

Line 4: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Your email or phone #: \_\_\_\_\_