

The Jewish Community VOICE

A JOINT PUBLICATION OF THE JEWISH FEDERATION OF SOUTHERN MAINE AND THE JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER ☆ 5760 DECEMBER 1999

Merger Vote Scheduled for December 14

The Task Force of the Jewish Federation of Southern Maine and the Jewish Community Center has concluded the planning process for the upcoming merger of the two organizations on December 14, 1999.

Members of both organizations are invited to participate in the formal vote for the merger. To participate in this vote, the current by-laws of each organization state that to vote for the Center's recommendation of merger approval, one must be a current member of the Jewish Community Center, and to vote for the Federation recommendation of merger approval, one must have contributed to the 1998 or 1999 Campaign.

Many sub-committees worked hard to insure an organizational structure which would allow for a smooth transition. The Legal Affairs sub-committee developed new by-laws, looked at the financial structure and served as the first nominating committee. The Task Force is pleased to bring forward a slate of

officers it believes will provide strong leadership during this transition.

The officers that will be nominated and elected December 14 are:

President	Michael Peisner
First VP	Barbara Turitz
VP	Sam Novick
Program VP	Jessica Lantos
Campaign VP	Charlie Miller
Treasurer	Mark Kaplan
Secretary	Wayne Goodman

The Task Force and the officers of the Jewish Community Alliance know that there is still work to be done and issues to solve. They are confident that as the Jewish Community Alliance evolves and develops into a stronger organization, we will be better able to provide programs and services in a more efficient manner.

The officers and new board look forward to seeing you at this meeting and encourage your participation in creating a new organization for the future of our Jewish Community.

Super Sunday a Huge Success

Sunday, November 14 was the annual "Super Sunday Telethon" of the Jewish Federation of Southern Maine. There was an atmosphere of excitement as we raised over \$6,000 more than on last year's Su-

per Sunday, for an increase of 19%. Super Sunday co-chairs, Susie Schwartz and Jodi Freedman, were thrilled with the results. Susie and

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David Unger, Charlie Miller, Ellen Maringione, Susie Schwartz, Gen Hirsch, Jodi Freedman, Pam Harding, Doris Pollack, and Melissa Greenblatt.



Important Community Meeting

Meeting of Members
Tuesday, December 14, 1999
7:30 pm
Temple Beth El
400 Deering Avenue, Portland

Agenda: Vote on the consolidation of the Jewish Federation of Southern Maine and the Jewish Community Center

Meeting to be chaired by Sumner Bernstein

Copies of the consolidation plan and by-laws will be mailed to any member upon request, and are available at the offices of the organizations.

All members of the Jewish Federation of Southern Maine and the Jewish Community Center are invited to participate in this meeting and vote to consolidate the two organizations into the



JEWISH COMMUNITY ALLIANCE

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Importance of Community

By Michael Peisner

This column is not about what I should be writing about, at least not directly. This issue of the *Voice* is coming out shortly before the vote on the consolidation of the Jewish Federation of Southern Maine and the Jewish Community Center. At the time this is being written, I am about to leave for the General Assembly of United Jewish Communities in Atlanta, and we could leave space in the *Voice* to allow for a president's column about that. But I am not going to write about either, at least not directly. In the last month, Barbara and I experienced the bar mitzvah of our oldest son, Sam, and made us feel anew, just how important our community is to us.

To quote from what Barbara said to Sam as we gave him his tallis:

"When someone asks how long we've been in Portland, I think 'how old is Sam?' because you were born 3 months after we arrived here. So why am I talking about this today? Because Portland has become our home and community and today is about home and community for you.

"This tallis, which we give you now and was lovingly made by Grandma Lila, is a physical representation of you belonging to the Jewish community as a full adult member. It is a reminder of your commitment to your faith and its mitzvot and to all that the word community means. Know that you can depend on your community for support, guidance, and love and you have a responsibility to it as well. Let your tallis be a reminder that you are linked by your heritage to generations past and future, as well as to Jews all around the world."

Southern Maine at the turn of the Christian millennium isn't the easiest place in the world to bring children up with a strong Jewish identity. It is very different from where Barbara and I grew up, and different from the way Portland was in the past — with neighborhoods that were more heavily Jewish than they are today. We rely on our Jewish communal institutions in different ways than our parents did. But one way or the



President's COLUMN

other, it is the community that makes the difference. Children feel an acute sense of needing to belong. To quote from a political figure who best remains unnamed, "It takes a village."

Barbara and I felt immense pride in Sam, not only because he did well with the ritual portion of his bar mitzvah, but also because of the feeling he put into it. He told us that he likes being different (meaning Jewish). He feels connected to his Jewish peer group — the kids in his Hebrew school class, Junior USY-ers, and friends he made in the JCC teen travel camp. It is usually unclear exactly how parents influence a 13-year-old's attitudes, but somehow, we did something right. We felt connected to the community, and we helped Sam feel it too.

In large part, it comes back to the feeling generated by the community. We had lots of family and friends come from out of town, and they could feel the cohesion of our Jewish community. They complimented us on it, just as Debbie Friedman did when she came and led our community in song last Israel Independence Day. To quote one of my Israeli cousins who was here, talking about how people participate differently in services here than in Israel, "It isn't purely *masoret* (tradition), but Am Yisrael Chai!" The Jewish people lives.

Super Sunday A Success

continued from page 1

Jodi worked tirelessly to not only make sure we were successful, but that we had fun and were well fed, too! Kudos and great big thank yous to volunteer solicitors Mike Peisner, Steve Finberg, Rick Finberg, Wayne Goodman, Mark Kaplan, Jodi Freedman, Doris Pollack, Charlie Miller, Norm Wilson, Geri Hirsch, Alan Hirsch, Eric Copperman, Isaac Shainblum, Gail Lerman, Steve Schwartz, Ellen Maringione, Rich Maringione, Eydie Pryzant, Pam Harding, Olivia Solodar, Vince

Pellegrino, Jon Freedman, Sam Novick, Amy Tinkle, and Lisa Plotkin. Extra special thanks to SPOTTY members Abe Landau, Arielle Adams and Stacey Peters and their advisor Marggi Kerness for the volunteer child care that enabled more members of our community to help solicit. The biggest thanks of all, though, goes to our donors, who eagerly gave their financial support to our community. We could not be a success without you! *Todah rabah* for helping us to "build community."

Save the Date!



May 15, 2000

The Jewish Federation of Southern Maine honors

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Watch for further details.

The Jewish Community VOICE

The Official Publication of the Jewish Federation of Southern Maine

Published monthly September through June by the Jewish Federation of Southern Maine and the Jewish Community Center, 57 Ashmont Street, Portland, Maine 04103.

The Jewish Federation is the social planning and fund-raising body for the Jewish Community of Southern Maine. Its representative board of directors is composed of various volunteers from the Southern Maine area. Through Federation's annual Combined Jewish Appeal, the Jewish community meets its responsibilities for local, national and overseas social needs, including the United Jewish Appeal.

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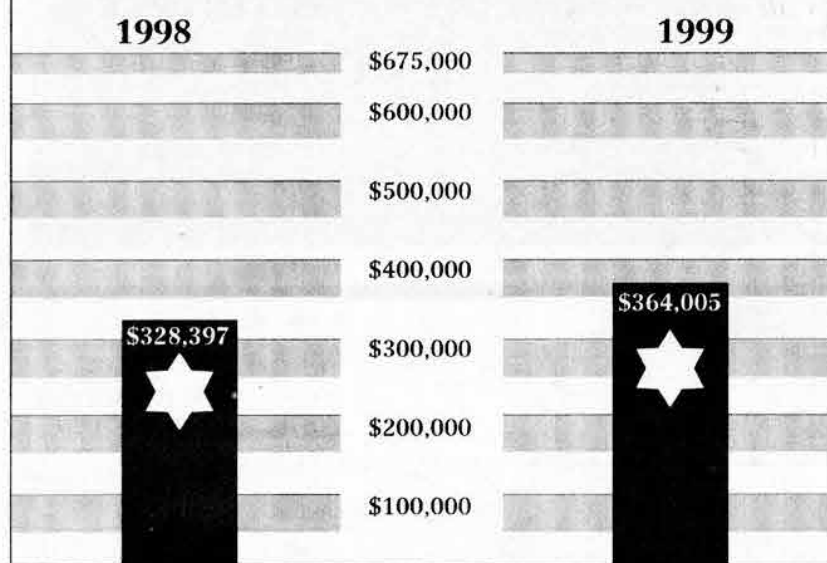
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VOLUME 4 NUMBER 4

Federation Combined Jewish Appeal Progress as of November 19, 1999



Ben Gurion Society Opening Event

On Sunday Evening, December 19, 1999, the Ben Gurion Society will welcome new members in Portland.

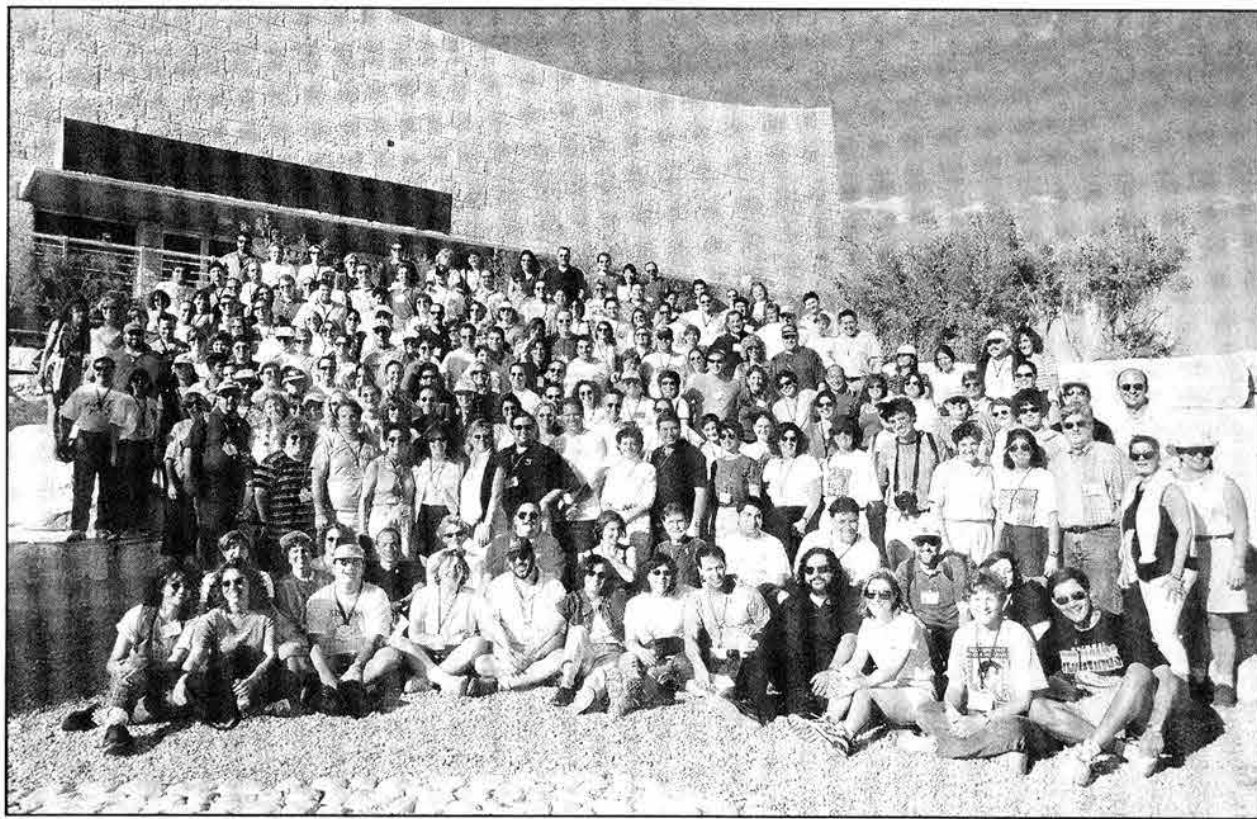
Wayne Goodman and Rick Finberg, co-chairs of the Ben Gurion Society in Maine are pleased to announce the group's inaugural event in Portland.

David Ben Gurion's single-minded passion for the Jewish people is as much a part of his legacy as the State of Israel itself. The UJC Ben Gurion Society embodies that legacy...young men and women combining their power, passion and resources to build a strong and responsible Jewish community, at home and in Israel. A year ago, as part of the Chazak 4 Mission to Israel, Rick and Wayne were inducted as Charter members of the National Ben Gurion Society.

On Sunday Evening, December 19, 1999, the Ben Gurion Society will welcome new members in Portland. Esti Moskovitz-Kalman, from the Melitz Institute, an educational consortium in Jerusalem, will be the keynote speaker. The event will be held at the Marriott in South Portland at 8:00 PM

The Ben Gurion Society is open to all Campaign contributors, ages 25-45 and whose gift is at the \$1,000 level or higher. The goal of the Society is to encourage community involvement and commitment through educational and social programming designed especially for its members.

If you are interested in attending, or would like more information about the Ben Gurion Society, please call the Federation office at 772-1559.



Inaugural Ben Gurion Society members, 1998.

Esti Moskovitz-Kalman to Speak at Ben Gurion Opening Event

The Ben Gurion society is honored to have Esti Moskovitz-Kalman as a guest speaker at the group's inaugural event in Portland, on December 19, 1999. Ms. Moskovitz-Kalman is currently a scholar-in-residence at the Baltimore JCC. From 1994 until 1997 Ms. Moskovitz-Kalman was the national coordinator for Nigunim, a Jewish Family Education project of Melitz, the primary goal of which is to initiate a meaningful dialogue between parents and their children surrounding socio-ethnic value issues. In 1997

Esti served as the director of the Jerusalem Region of Melitz and prior to that she was the project coordinator of Nigunim at Melitz.

Esti Moskovitz-Kalman was born in Jerusalem in 1969 to a modern Orthodox family and is the eldest of three children. She married Ze'ev, who is an industrial designer and they have two daughters. She has a BA in Psychology, Sociology, and Jewish Studies from Bar Ilan University and is currently working on her Masters in Sociology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.



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A Tradition of Tzedakah

By Charlie Miller, Campaign Chair

Recently, 28 members of our community volunteered to make calls for this year's Super Sunday Telethon for the 1999 Federation Campaign. They completed almost 400 cards, including many cards from new donors who had never given to Federation before this year. Our volunteer solicitors spoke of the assistance that Jewish Family Services is providing to our community by providing programs, counseling, and by delivering over 200 kosher meals a month to our elderly. They spoke about the support that Federation provides to each and every religious school program—at a minimum of—and even more for students who attend more than three hours per week. Our volunteers spoke proudly about the 5 teenagers who were the winners of our third Annual Essay Contest and whose travel to Israel last summer was subsidized by our community. They spoke of our commitment to the United Jewish Appeal for social services programs in Israel and throughout the world through the Joint Distribution Committee. They spoke with pride about the Gift of Israel Program and the 19 first and second graders who signed up in the inaugural year to participate in the joint venture among the Jewish Federation, our synagogues, and the families. They spoke about the extraordinary success of the early childhood education program at the Jewish Community Center (which has over 70 children enrolled) and they spoke about the Federation's

assistance in funding the Levey Day School director position.

Most importantly, they spoke about Tzedakah and the responsibility that we all have to one another.

At the end of the day Susie Schwartz and Jodi Freedman, the two extraordinary co-chairs of the Super Sunday Telethon met with David Unger, our Executive Director and Melissa Greenblatt, our Campaign Associate, and found that card for card our donors had given an average of 16% more than they had the year before.



Campaign UPDATE

What we found was that our donors viewed themselves as "stake holders" in our community. They underscored with action their belief that we are all responsible for one another. Their

actions proved that through unified action in our community, we can solve our community's most pressing problems.

If you have not yet donated to the 1999 Campaign, please join with us as we nurture the vital life experiences of Jewish life and learning in our community to create a compelling culture of shared meaning, shared responsibility and shared values as *Klal Yisrael*—one people in all of its diversity—with shared commitments to its future.

We do have a wonderful community and a long tradition of Tzedakah. Join in this year's Campaign by giving generously, in gladness, to our community.

Federation Youth Campaign Off to a Great Start

The Federation is very excited about the start of this year's Youth Campaign. Eight inspiring teens have volunteered to solicit their peers for the 1999 Campaign. Ben Greene (USY President), Abe Landau (SPORTY President), Katie Barr, Brendan Johnson, Josh Kanter, Miriam Markowitz, Samantha Silver and Jessica Silverman are an inspi-

ration to other area teens, as well as the adults. These students' commitment to Tzedakah is an example for everyone. Teens, be ready to make your pledge when you get the call, every gift counts. The Youth Campaign already has two lead gifts of \$25 dollars each, a hearty *todah rabah* to those teens for their generosity and example to their peers.

Loans Offered to Jewish Students

The Southern Maine section of the National Council of Jewish Women awards outright scholarships to Jewish students from the greater Portland area who are planning to continue their education.

Scholarships are awarded in the basis of academic achievement, financial need, and school and community involvement.

Applications must be received by March 31, 2000.

NCJW also offers interest-free loans to Jewish students who need a loan to further their education. There is no deadline for submitting applications for student loans.

Please contact: Linda Rogoff, Chairperson, Scholarship Committee, 27 Coyle Street, Portland, ME 04101 or Faith Elowitz, Chairperson, Loan Committee, 44 Alice Street, Portland, ME 04103



Jewish Federation of Southern Maine

From the desk of
Charlie Miller, 1999 Campaign Chair

Dear Community Members:

We have a wonderful community AND EVERY DAY OUR COMMUNITY CONTINUES TO GET BETTER. Our traditions and heritage provide us with a path for our lives to follow. It is our responsibility to preserve and enhance the soul of Jewish life by investing our time, and by our dedication to Tzedakah.

- I believe that Tzedakah means righteousness not just charity.
- I believe that the Gift of Israel Program and the Annual Essay Contest initiated by Federation will help ensure that our teenagers will be able to visit Israel and reinforce their commitment to Judaism and the Jewish people.
- I believe that Community Relations Council helps foster understanding and tolerance in our community.
- I believe that the KOSHER Meals on Wheels Program helps meet our responsibility by reaching our ELDERLY homebound.
- I believe that Jewish Education is a core value and that Levey Day School, our synagogue religious schools and adult education programs, and the Jewish Community Center's camping and educational programs reinforce and nurture the values of our heritage.
- I believe that community agencies, whether or not I avail myself of them right now, must be supported and are a part of what makes up the tapestry of community.
- I believe that I have a responsibility to my people THROUGHOUT THE WORLD—the sick, the weary, the dispossessed, those needing to be rescued, those needing resettlement—wherever they may be: whether in Maine through Jewish Family Services or in Eastern Europe or Israel through the Joint Distribution Committee of the UJC or elsewhere.

To effect those beliefs, I have agreed to chair the 1999 Federation Campaign. Ellie and I have raised our commitment to the 1999 Campaign by over 40%.

If you share these beliefs, and agree to either: double your gift if you are currently pledging under \$1,000; raise your pledge by \$1,000; raise your pledge by 10% if your current pledge is \$3,500 or over; or if you are currently giving \$10,000 or more and agree to maintain your current contribution, please join me by signing this open letter below.

Please give generously, give in gladness, and celebrate our community.

Spide & Joel Abramson Charlie Miller
Vince and Mary Pellegrino
Salma W. Block
Eileen Brainin Lisa Plotky
Joan & Bob Long G. Miller
St. John G. Rosenberg
Joel A. Freedman Long M. Shapiro
Melissa Aboutefel Greenblatt
David J. Plotky Barbara J. Tuck
Elinor Miller Susan E. Wilson
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Michael Persing Guie Lerman
Havaue Elowitz Jean Lerman
V. Sord Maud & Zell
Stanley P. Plotky A. Plotky
Barbara & Jeff Plotky Ken Lerman
Rand Hardy Debbie Kanter
Miria Sordan

As of November 15, 1999

Anti-Jewish Violence: NCBI and Equity Institute Sponsor Protest

By Amy Tinkle

It was my distinct pleasure and privilege to represent the Jewish Federation on October 24th at a gathering to protest anti-Jewish violence. This event was co-sponsored by the Maine chapter of the National Coalition Building Institute (NCBI) and the Equity Institute of Maine. Over 100 people attended the gathering held at Woodford's Church on a gloriously sunny Sunday afternoon.

We heard from individuals who represented other communities whose members have also been the victims of hate violence, including local Moslem, Asian-American and gay/lesbian groups, as well as the National Organization for Women, the Maine Council of Churches, the City of Portland's Diversity team, and others. Their words were alternately moving, reassuring and eye-opening. Some of the most eloquent speakers were recent immigrants. One said: "It is unfortunate that we should gather not to celebrate, but to mourn. It is unfortunate that here in America, hatred still exists."

Although the pre-publicity reached us too late to notify the entire Jewish community, there were enough of us there to hear and appreciate what our allies (as they called themselves) had to offer. The

common theme, re-iterated by almost every speaker, was that they will not stand by silently while Jews are attacked.

Rabbi Paul Cohen and former Assistant Attorney General Steve Wessler, who now directs the new Center for the Study & Prevention of Hate Violence at USM, also spoke on behalf of the Jewish community. We should all appreciate how lucky we are to live here in

Portland, among allies against hate violence and prejudice. On behalf of the Jewish community, I thanked everyone there for this show of support. I expressed gratitude that they are prepared to stand with us when we are victimized and assured them that we will be there for them, if and when they are the victims of hate violence.

We hope people will come out and volunteer on Christmas eve day, Friday, Dec. 24th, along with members of the CRC for our Spirit of Giving Job Exchange program. It is being held this year a day early, since Christmas day falls on *Shabbat*. Jewish volunteers will be helping out at United Way recipient agencies so our Christian friends can spend the holiday with their families. If you want to help, too please call the Federation office at 773-7254.

Community RELATIONS

Lion of Judah Luncheon to Be Held December 2, 1999

The Lions of Judah of the Jewish Federation of Southern Maine cordially invite the women of the greater Portland Jewish community to attend a luncheon and presentation Thursday, December 2, 12:45 p.m. at the Woodlands Club, Falmouth, Maine.

Our special guest speakers that day will be Rabbis Carolyn Braun, Susan Bulba-Carvutto, and Ruth Smith, speaking about "Women in the Rabbinate". In addition, a brief presentation by Lion Chair, Eleanor Brainin and Campaign Chair, Charlie Miller

will address the mission and purpose of the Lion of Judah program.

The Lions of Judah are a special community of Jewish women devoted to the concept of *tikkun olam*. A consideration of a minimum contribution of \$5,000 annually is required to become a Lion of Judah.

The cost of this luncheon is \$15 per person. To RSVP or ask questions, please feel free to call Eleanor Brainin, Lion Chair, at 791-5505 or Marcy Pellegrino, Federation staff, at 773-7254.

Volunteer for the Spirit of Giving Job Exchange December 24

As we get closer to Chanukah and we are focused on preparing for the upcoming holiday with anticipation of the joy that it brings us to celebrate with our own families, we are also reminded that there are some whose lives are not brightened with thoughts of the upcoming holidays. United Way, through its many agencies in Portland cares for numerous people's needs throughout the year. Last year, the Community Relations Council decided that one way for us to demonstrate our concern for the greater Portland community, as a Jewish community, was to volunteer in a "job exchange" on Christmas day, in order to give United Way agency employees more time to spend with their families. The project was a resounding success, so in the true "Spirit of Giving", we will

be volunteering once again. This year the date is Friday, December 24, Christmas Eve day. There are still a number of volunteer spaces left but the slots are filling quickly. Requests from the Salvation Army, Wayside Community Kitchen and Shalom House have included cooking, serving dinner, answering phones, singing and handing out presents.

The JCC will be used that day as base of operations with hot chocolate for everyone! We would love to have you come join us for a very worthwhile effort of community involvement and service on Christmas Eve day. For more information, call Marcy Pellegrino at 773-7254. To volunteer please complete and return this form by Friday, December 17 to the address and/or fax below.

Volunteer Information Form

Yes! I would like to volunteer to local United Way agencies on Christmas Eve Day, Friday, December 24, 1999.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Time Available: from _____ to _____

Special skills/talents _____

Please return this form by December 17 to:
Marcy Pellegrino, CRC Director
Jewish Federation of Southern Maine
57 Ashmont Street, Portland, ME 04103
FAX: 772-2234

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Kosher Meals on Wheels Program

By Joanne Rosenthal

In last month's column, I recognized the volunteer drivers, without whom the Kosher Meals on Wheels program would come to a standstill.

In a partnership with Cedars Nursing Care Center, a wide variety of nutritionally balanced Kosher meals are delivered to senior citizens 5 days a week throughout the year, including holidays. Since the program is supported by the public, non-profit and governmental agencies, it is, by definition, a bit of an organizational maze to make sense of. But fortunately, Kosher Meals on Wheels are very simple to access, involving a minimal amount of "red tape" for those applying.

Originally conceived of as a safety net program for those persons defined as "homebound" but not requiring out of home institutionalization, the Meals on Wheels programs receive government support from the USDA and Area Agencies on Aging. At this time the government subsidy equals \$1.77 towards each meal delivered. The remaining cost of \$3.98 for each kosher meal is paid for through donations and Federation funding.

Currently administered by Jewish Family Services, the Kosher Meals on Wheels program is a strictly needs based program for persons 60 and over living in their own homes, apartments or congregate housing. If meal preparation is difficult or not possible for any reason, individuals qualify for the program. Every six months recipients are re-assessed for continued service. Federal policy

dictates that all Meals on Wheels programs are administered as a donation only program, which means that no fees are charged to recipients.

At the same time, Jewish Family Services gratefully acknowledges the KJOW donations received on a regular basis. To that end, JFS will soon provide meal recipients or their family contacts with a monthly postage paid envelope, in which to mail a voluntary donation toward the meals received that month. We are emphasizing that the ability to contribute will in no way effect eligibility for the program.

It is our hope that the Kosher Meals on Wheels program will continue to grow and better serve our community. If everybody who reads this article would stop for a minute and think about the people they know who might benefit from a daily hot meal, please contact Jewish Family Services with your thoughts. We will then follow up in the most appropriate manner.

We cannot over-emphasize the importance of this program, which not only guarantees one balanced Kosher meal each day, but along with that meal, the neighbor to neighbor contacts that one may not otherwise experience. Most of us share the common desire to remain in our own homes and at times need extra support to make that possible. Thanks to all of you who make this life sustaining program so successful.

For more information on Kosher Meals on Wheels or other JFS services, please call 871-0508.

Jewish Family SERVICES

Happy Chanukah



We wish you and your family a joyous holiday season.

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Languages a Success at the JCC!

Two new programs have been having phenomenal success at the JCC! In October, we offered a Hebrew Reading Crash Course sponsored by the National Jewish Outreach Program and the Jewish Federation of Southern Maine. The response was so overwhelming that we had to add two more classes to accommodate all of the people who wanted to sign up. The first session, which has been meeting on Thursday evenings with teacher Teri McRae (and substitute Jay Pollack) is already continuing with part two of National Jewish Outreach's program. A second introductory class has been meeting Tuesday mornings

with the JCC/Federation program director, Reuven Meir, and a third introductory class will be meeting on Sunday afternoons, with instructor Marcy Pellegrino, beginning December 12. Please call Melissa Greenblatt at the Federation office, 772-1959 for more information.

At the same time, the JCC is lucky to have teacher Julie Goell instruct a variety of students in the many facets of the Yiddish language. Julie's many talents are being utilized to broaden the scope of her student's knowledge. This class has been a fascinating addition to the JCC's adult programming schedule!

Letter to the Editor

Dear Jessica Lantos and Michael Peisner:

I am writing this letter because I care deeply about our Jewish community and want to see its organizations thrive.

Last night's community meeting was frustrating for me—and I'm sure for those of you who worked so hard to create the "Jewish Alliance of Southern Maine".

I have some reservations about the new organization's administrative structure, but those reservations are relatively unimportant for the future success of the programs the new organization proposes to provide.

I am primarily concerned about the name of the new organization and what it says—or doesn't say—about the mission of the new organization. The programs and services of the Jewish Community Center and the Jewish Federation have always had the underlying goal of building community. I believe it is essential for the name of the new organization to reflect that goal.

I also believe that name recognition is important for our community. It provides a sense of continuity with the past and a feeling of trust in the future. Our community—both Jewish and non-Jewish—is familiar with and has trust in the *Center* and the *Federation*. Our community has no experience with the "Alliance." That designation creates a sense of strangeness and mistrust.

Furthermore, an "Alliance" has no link to our national organizations, the JCC Association and the United Jewish Communities.

I shall not suggest a specific name for the new organization, but I hope you will take my comments into consideration when you discuss the consolidation proposal at your next board meetings.

Sincerely,
Cecelia E. Levine (Chichi)

Editor's Note: The Task Force received this letter and took under advisement these criticisms and has made some changes as suggested.

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Family Programs at Bet Ha'am Religious School

By Orly Mendelson Biggie, RJE

Involving parents in the religious education of their child/ren is an important part of our religious school program. To start with, our faculty consists of mostly all parents, and in addition, throughout the year, special programs include and encourage parent participation.

During the past couple of months, our second graders and their parents studied about the Torah and the synagogue as part of this grade's Family Connection Program. The parents enjoyed "an adult session" with Rabbi Cohen on the above topics. All three of our second grade classes studied these subjects with the help of their teachers, Eileen Arsenaault, Jodi Welch and Shai Levite. Parents and students later met for a joint session in which beautiful hand-made Torahs were created. Additional sessions of the Family Connection are scheduled for the second graders during the school year.

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Bet Ha'am Religious School receives funds from the Jewish Federation of Southern Maine.



Second graders and their parents studied about the Torah and the synagogue as part of Bet Ha'am's Family Connection Program.

Miracles, Now and Then

By Gale Davidson, Educational Director, Levey Day School

One of the most wonderful things about Judaism is its intrinsic value as an educational tool. I have often thought that G-d must have been first and foremost a master educator to have fashioned a tradition so rich in affective events and customs, each with its own important timeless lesson.

Chanukah is a good example of G-d's pedagogical genius. When we think of Chanukah we think of the miracles associated with this holiday. The victory of the few Maccabees over the many mighty Greeks and the burning of the oil for eight days are central themes of the story. These events are the type of miracles that we see in other chapters of Jewish history. Like the parting of the Red Sea, or the sudden appearance of the ram in the Akedah story, these unusual occurrences belong to a category of miracles that I like to call the big "ah's". Big "ah's" are extraordinary occurrences which fill us with wonder and emphasize the uniqueness of the Jewish people and our relationship with G-d. They are supernatural.

The Chanukah story teaches us about another kind of miracle, the kind which allows us to experience a natural occurrence as miraculous. This kind of miracle is not of the cataclysmic variety. It does not always involve thunder, lightning, or rainbows. This kind of miracle is quiet. It reminds us to look at each day and appreciate its beauty.

As we light the Chanukiah we add one candle every night. As the

light increases, so does our joy. Each evening the faces of friends and family are illuminated more brilliantly, and we are able to see our blessings more clearly.

Recently, Levey Day School experienced a bout of the fall flu. One day both of our classroom teachers were absent and I became a full time teacher for a day. I had the opportunity to see what classroom teachers see each and every day - the miracle of a child's endless discovery while learning about his or her world. In the rush of all of our usual tasks we often forget to look for these special moments. Children have the ability to experience so many things anew each day. For them life is a continuing miracle. As adults we seldom see the world this way.

Chanukah challenges us to recapture that capacity for wonder, for seeing the "ah" in our daily lives. As we take the time to light our Chanukiot each evening, we should use these moments to think about our people's miraculous history and our family's miraculous present. As each night brings a stronger glow we will find more in our lives to be thankful for. The Chanukiah is the ultimate teaching tool. May we use it well in this Chanukah season. The letters on the Chanukah dreidl stand for the phrase "nes gadol haya sham" - a great miracle happened there. As we light our Chanukiot, let us also remember "nes gadol haya po" - a great miracle happened here.



Levey Day School receives funds from the Jewish Federation of Southern Maine.

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Levey Day School

invites you to join us for...

Hanukkah on Wheels

a truly different way to celebrate this joyous holiday



Monday, December 6th

6:00-8:00pm

Happy Wheels Center

331 Warren Avenue, Portland



(You may bring your own skates)

Bring your whole family and skate your night away!

Admission cost: \$2.00/person or \$5.00/family



The "Ah" of Jewish learning at Levey Day School.

Family Programs at Bet Ha'am Religious School


By Orly Mendelson Biggie, RJE

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6:00-8:00pm

Happy Wheels Center

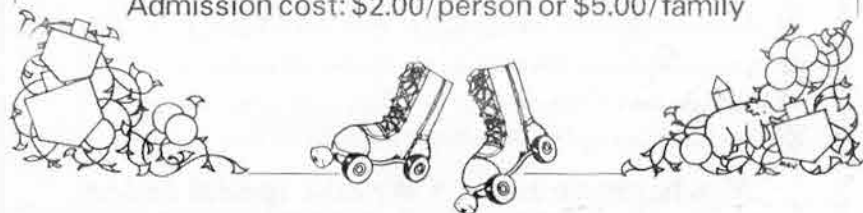
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(You may bring your own skates)

Bring your whole family and skate your night away!

Admission cost: \$2.00/person or \$5.00/family




Students Welcome Shabbat at Dinner

By Avis Smith, Education Director

More than 200 guests joined together to welcome the Sabbath at Temple Beth El Hebrew School's first Shabbat Dinner of the year on November 5. Students led participants through the steps of Shabbat preparation with songs and posters. Our youngest students offered a rousing chorus of "Bim Bam" to begin the evening, followed by candlelighting led by the second grade. Fifth graders decorated the social hall with posters explaining the themes of the Kiddush, and then led us all in the blessing over the wine. Third graders explained the reasons for handwashing, and second graders helped lead *Hamotzi*.

After a wonderful dinner prepared by Rachel Robinov and her able crew, the sixth grade performed a skit depicting the Torah portion of the week, and the Children's Choir led by Cantor Ruth Ross-entertained with shabbat selections and sing-alongs. Second graders also shared some of the adventures of Shabbat Bear by reading entries from the second grade journal. Fourth graders assisted the Cantor with *Birkat Hamazon*, the blessings after the meal. It was a meaningful and festive Shabbat experience for all!

 Temple Beth El Hebrew School receives funds from the Jewish Federation of Southern Maine.



Sixth Graders at Temple Beth El rehearse their Torah skit. (L to R) Ben Bornstein, Steven Segal, Scott Korobkin, Hannah Wertheim, Mierka Ross, Ruth Asch, Jacob Siegel, Stephanie Hague, and Shana Tinkle.

Jr. USY Members Very Active

By Adam Tinkle

Yes, it's that time again. The Junior USY had a great month and five of our members celebrated their *b'nai mitzvot*. Mazel tov to Paul Shapiro, Hannah Marcus, Sam Peisner, Elliot Cohen and Jake DeLois. Congratulations! You all did a great job. We would also like to thank all of the members who made presentations on behalf of the Jr. USY. One of the Junior USY's functions is to give a kiddush cup or set of candle sticks to every Bar or Bat Mitzvah, and a humorous speech never hurts. The Lefebvre and Scarpino families each hosted Shabbat dinners.

On November 6, the first night of the JCC Book Fair, the Junior USY showed up en masse to volunteer. We did everything from babysitting to wrapping gifts to setting up books. The Book Fair drew a huge turnout, and we were happy to help out. We had a lot of fun. If your organization needs slave labor with a smile, we will be happy to help out as part of our ongoing *Tikkun Olam* project. Call either Nicole Skalina at 878-3638 or Paulie Dibner at 883-3206, our *Tikkun Olam* co-chairs.

We are looking forward to another great month of cool events and charity projects. See you next month!



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Clinical Counseling Associates of Maine, P.A.
1863 Washington Avenue, Portland, ME 04103
(207) 797-0110 or (207) 786-3556

Denise Fuhrmann, MS, RN, CS, CS
Nurse Psychotherapist
24 Portland Rd., Kennebunk, ME 04043 (207) 985-1743

David L. Reed, Ph.D., Licensed Clinical Psychologist
80 Exchange St., Suite 22, Portland, ME (207) 773-1290

Lynne Unger, ACSW, LCSW
85 E Street, South Portland, ME 04106 (207) 799-9198

DENTISTRY

Jeffrey B. Finegold, D.M.D.
612 Brighton Ave., Portland, ME 04102 (207) 772-4359

HEALTH & HEALING

Jill Siegel, LMT, CPT
Holistic Massage and Polarity Therapy
23 Ocean Ave., Portland, ME 04103 (207) 772-4255

The Directory of Professional Services is published for the convenience of our readers. Inclusion in the directory is available at the cost of \$150/year (11 issues of *The Voice*). To have your listing included in the next issue, fill out the coupon below and send with payment to *The Voice*, 57 Ashmont St., Portland, ME 04103 or call Cheryl Miller at 772-1959.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Funeral Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Legal Services |
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Temple Beth El Brings Rabbi Moshe Edelman to Portland

Rabbi Moshe Edelman, a dynamic speaker and director of leadership development of The United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, is coming to Temple Beth El as Scholar-in-Residence on December 10-12.

At Friday evening services (7:30 P.M.), Rabbi Edelman will introduce his weekend series with "Women for

all seasons: Judaism Through The Eyes of Biblical Women." At Shabbat morning services (9:00 A.M.), our guest will teach us about the lessons of faith, family, and friendship as seen in the Book of Ruth. Shabbat afternoon after lunch, we will study the book of Esther and discuss the issues of assimilation, acculturation and

anti-Semitism. With wonderful enthusiasm and an infectious sense of humor, Rabbi Edelman will share his wisdom as together we participate in contemporizing the ancient texts.

On Sunday, Rabbi Edelman will conduct a leadership-training seminar for Temple Beth El's Board of Directors.

Dateline: Revival at Shaarey Tphiloh

The famous quote "Reports of [our] death is greatly premature.." is certainly appropriate here. We are seeing a fresh new wind prevailing here. The Saturday and Sunday prayers have had a steady quorum (minyan) since the beginning of the summer and we have a new core of younger members that have joined recently. The Shul is undergoing a facelift in many areas and will soon sport a fresh appearance.

We have held many new activities and much more is planned! A brief summary of the December calendar follows—please inquire at the office for reservations and information.

December 12, 9:00 Services, 9:45 Breakfast: Family Style post-Hanukah breakfast featuring a round table discussion on Hanukah and a delicious menu of latkes and all the trimmings.

December 24, "Cantorial Weekend": We are having the famous Cantor Samberg who will treat us with his powerful baritone throughout the Shabbat prayer services.

December 25, 7:00 pm: A unforgettable evening featuring Cantor Samberg who will conduct a Cantorial concert in his warm and dynamic style.

December 31, 5:00 pm: "Millennium Meal": a traditional Shabbat meal held right on the cusp of the new millennium and a discussion whose topic will be "Transition into the new millennium...a Jewish view"

We have services every Friday evening just before sundown (just about 4:00 pm in December), Saturday morning at 9:00 am and Saturday afternoon also just before sundown. We also have Sunday morning services and breakfast starting at 8:00 am (9:00 am when it's a family breakfast). Please join in for a prayer...all are welcome!

What Were the Greeks and the Jews Really Fighting About?

Chanukah celebrates the liberation of Israel, the victory of the Jews over the Greek-Syrian oppression. The military triumph was miraculous, yet our celebration focuses on the miracle of oil, which we commemorate by kindling the lights of our menorahs.

To better appreciate the meaning of Chanukah, let us go back to the source of the story in the Talmud, in the tractate of Shabbos, and carefully examine its wording: "When the Greeks occupied the land of Israel, they entered the Holy Temple and defiled all its oils. But later, when the Hasmoneans defeated them, renovated the Temple and wanted to kindle the Menorah, they searched, and could find only one cruse of oil which was not touched by the Greeks. Its oil was sufficient to last for one day only. The Menorah was rekindled, and the oil lasted miraculously for eight days."

The oils were rendered ritually unfit because the Greeks handled them. Was this defilement accidental or intended? The Talmudic text uses the words "they...defiled," which indicates that this defilement was not unintentional, but direct and purposeful. This poses an obvious question: if the Greek intention was to extinguish the Menorah and prevent it from being rekindled, they should have removed it from the Temple, taken it home and made good personal use of it. If they wanted to be destructive, they should have broken the bottles and poured out the oils. Is it not strange that the Greeks did not damage the oils physically, causing only Torah-defined, ritual defilement? The Talmud is indicating to us that the Greek objective was not to prevent the physical rekindling of the Menorah. The intent was far deeper, more sophisticated; they wanted the Menorah to be rekindled, but with defiled oil. This was why

they purposely left a supply of defiled oil in the Sanctuary.

Chanukah was not merely physical warfare, but a conflict of ideologies, a collision of two worlds. On one side was the Jewish faith based on a Divine Torah, with a unique concept of holiness that sanctifies the details of daily life. The purity of Jewish monotheism was being challenged by Hellenistic culture and its materialism. An advanced culture and sophisticated civilization, the Greeks were devoted to the arts and obsessed with aesthetic beauty.

The Jews believed that "right was beautiful," while Greek philosophy taught that "beautiful was right." The Greeks were willing to recognize the Torah as a literary creation, a beautiful work of wisdom and poetry. They could appreciate the stories of Genesis as an extension of their own mythology, Exodus as part of their historic perspective and much of a Jewish law and costume as part of their humanistic philosophy. They did not want to eliminate the Torah entirely; they were opposed to the claim that Torah and Mitzvos were G-d's word. They were not opposed to the moral and ethical values contained in Judaism, but they challenged the Divine statutes, the "super rational" precepts which distinguish Judaism and make it holy.

As such, the Torah could be changed and modified from time to time, to harmonize with the character of the ruling class and the prevailing ideas and morals of the period. This would, in turn also undermine the permanence and immutability of such Mitzvos as Shabbos and circumcision, which the Greek forbade the Jews to observe.

The Greek appreciation of art and light allowed the rekindling of the beautifully designed Menorah of gold, which was truly a masterpiece. Centrally located in the Temple, the

Greeks desired the Menorah's light to contain the Greek "touch"—the alien factor that defiles the uniqueness of the Jewish light. The Menorah, kindled with pure and consecrated oil, was a visible symbol of the unique Jewish way of life, and its perpetual light flashed this message from the Temple to every Jew, wherever he might be. The Greeks were resolved to change this. Indeed some Jewish Hellenists also felt that a "touch" of the more "modern" Greek culture should be applied to the Torah. Only a handful of dedicated Hasmoneans, whose vision had not been blurred, recognized that this "touch" would deal us a fatal blow, striking at the inner sanctum of Jewish life.

Divine Providence saw to it that one little cruse of oil, pure and intact, was spared to rekindle the Menorah. This little bit of purity prevailed. It not only held its own, but continued to grow from day to day, to keep the perpetual light of Judaism burning in those days and in our time. Today, too, we must protect our little cruse of Judaism and keep it unadulterated, by observing our Mitzvos purely for the sake of Heaven.

Submitted by Chabad House



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Updated November 15, 1999

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Dr. and Mrs. Stanley Weinberg, in honor of Adrien and Gabriel Libby and Leslie Cohen, in honor of Harvey Berman's & Jamie Broder's birthdays
David Rudnick and Laura Thurston
Molly Cinamon
Federation and JCC Staff, thanks to Greg & Tonya Shapiro for use of home
Barbara Riegelhaupt and Mo Mehlsak
Lynne and David Unger, for Jacki Alpert's speedy recovery
Kenneth A. Rodman
Fred and Carol Rosenthal
Nadine and Richard Weinberg
Silverman Family: Harvey, Kathy, Jessica, and Joshua
Sharon Newman, in honor of Debbie Bornstein

Federation Campaign

Charlie and Ellie Miller, in memory of Natalie Paris
Charlie and Ellie Miller, in memory of Mrs. Sheldon Nussinov's sister, Natalie
Charlie and Ellie Miller, for a speedy recovery, Amy Tinkle's mother
Charlie and Ellie Miller, for a speedy recovery, Jacki Alpert
Charlie and Ellie Miller, in honor of the birth of Scott and Sara Kramer's daughter, Danielle
Charlie and Ellie Miller, for Steve Hirshon's speedy recovery
Charlie and Ellie Miller, for Gerald Pollack's speedy recovery
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Charlie and Ellie Miller, for Selma Black's speedy recovery
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Youth Federation Campaign

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Cecelia Levine Fund

Dr. and Mrs. Joseph Sclar, in memory of daughter Deborah
Rochelle and Jerry Slivka

The Deadline for the January Issue of *The Voice* is



We request that you submit news items and articles on disk, saved as text only.

1999 COMMUNITY CALENDAR



DECEMBER

- 1 WEDNESDAY** • Rabbi Braun's Downtown Study Group, @100 Middle Street, noon
Community Relations Council Meeting, JCC, 5:30 pm
Cedars Board of Directors Meeting, 7:00 pm
Federation Board Meeting, 7:30 pm
- 2 THURSDAY** • Jewish Education Night
Lions of Judah & Guests Luncheon, The Woodlands, 12:45 pm
NCJW Board Meeting, TBA
Hebrew Reading Crash Course Level II, 7:00 pm
- 3 FRIDAY** • Scholar-in-Residence Merle Feld, Bet Ha'am
- 4 SATURDAY** • Scholar-in-Residence Merle Feld, Bet Ha'am
Benjamin Fenton Bar Mitzvah, Temple Beth El, 9:30 am
Kol Yeladim Shabbat Service for 1-5 year olds, 11:00 am
- 5 SUNDAY** • Scholar-in-Residence Merle Feld, Bet Ha'am
Rabbi Braun's Judaism for the Curious Class, 10:30 am
Torch Run and Community Candlelighting, 3:00 pm
JCC family Chanukah Dinner, Beth El, 5:30 pm
- 6 MONDAY** • Levey Day School-Chanukah on Wheels, @Happy Wheels, 6:00 pm
Jewish Family Services Committee Meeting, @JFS office, 7:00 pm
- 7 TUESDAY** • Levey Day School Sings for Chanukah, @Maine Mall, 6:00 pm
Temple Beth El B'nai Mitzvah Meeting, 6:00 pm
Temple Beth El Sisterhood Meeting, 7:15 pm
- 8 WEDNESDAY** • Temple Beth El Sisterhood Chanukah Party for Children, 5:30 pm
Cedars Auxiliary Board Meeting, 7:00 pm
Temple Beth El Executive Board Meeting, 7:30 pm
- 9 THURSDAY** • Jewish Education Night
Hebrew Reading Crash Course Level II, 7:00 pm
- 10 FRIDAY** • Scholar-in-Residence Rabbi Moshe Edelman, TBE
Chabad Chanukah Shabbaton
- 11 SATURDAY** • Scholar-in-Residence Rabbi Moshe Edelman, TBE
B'nai Mitzvah - Emily, Paul, and Sam Sandberg
- 12 SUNDAY** • Scholar-in-Residence Rabbi Moshe Edelman, TBE
Rabbi Braun's Judaism for the Curious, Temple Beth El, 10:30 am
Temple Beth El Board of Directors Retreat
Winter Sunday Funday, @JCC, noon
- 13 MONDAY** • Hadassah Program - Exercise: An Approach for Every Woman, 7:00 pm
- 14 TUESDAY** • NCJW Program, @TBE, 6:00 pm
Judaism as a Civilization with Rabbi Sky, Bet Ha'am, 7:00 pm
Hadassah Board Meeting, 7:30 pm
Community Merger Meeting, @TBE, 7:30 pm
- 15 WEDNESDAY** • Temple Beth El Board of Directors Meeting, 7:30 pm
- 16 THURSDAY** • Jewish Education Night
Hebrew Reading Crash Course Level II, 7:00 pm
- 18 SATURDAY** • Elizabeth Gelassen Bat Mitzvah, Temple Beth El, 9:30 am
Women's Minyan Worship Service, Bet Ha'am, 10:00 am
- 19 SUNDAY** • Rabbi Braun's Judaism for the Curious, 10:30 am
Hebrew Level I Crash Course, JCC, 4:00 pm
- 20 MONDAY** • Ben Gurion Society Event, 7:30 pm
- 21 TUESDAY** • Temple Beth El B'nai Mitzvah Meeting, 6:00 pm
USY Lounge Night, 6:30 pm
Bet Ha'am Board of Directors Meeting, 7:00 pm
- 23 THURSDAY** • Jewish Education Night
Vaad Hakashruth Meeting, Shaarey Tphiloh, 7:00 pm
- 24 FRIDAY** • CRC Spirit of Giving Program
Healing Service, Temple Beth EL, 6:50 am
- 25 SATURDAY** • Temple Beth El Jr. Congregation Shabbat Service, 11:00 am
Havdalah Service, Israeli Dancing, Temple Beth El 4:00 pm
- 26 SUNDAY** • Hebrew Level I Crash Course, JCC, 4:00 pm
- 27 MONDAY** • JCC Board Meeting, 7:00 pm
- 28 TUESDAY** • Healing Service, Bet Ha'am, 7:00 pm
- 30 THURSDAY** • Jewish Education Night

JANUARY

- 3 MONDAY** • Jewish Family Services Committee Meeting, @JFS office, 7:00 pm
- 4 TUESDAY** • Temple Beth El Sisterhood Meeting, 7:15 pm
- 5 WEDNESDAY** • Cedars Board of Directors Meeting, Temple Beth El, 7:00 pm
- 6 THURSDAY** • Jewish Education Night
NCJW Board Meeting, @MMC Scarborough, 6:30 pm



December 3-4

24-25 Kislev
Candlelighting: 3:47
Parsha: Vayeshev

December 10-11

1-2 Tevet
Candlelighting: 3:46
Parsha: Miketz

December 17-18

8-9 Tevet
Candlelighting: 3:48
Parsha: Vayigash

December 24-25

15-16 Tevet
Candlelighting: 3:51
Parsha: Vayechi

December 31-January 1

22-23 Tevet
Candlelighting: 3:56
Parsha: Shemot

January 7-8

29 Tevet-1 Shevat
Candlelighting: 4:03
Parsha: Va'era

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Concord
Grape Wine**

3⁹⁹

6 Oz.
**Carmel
Potato
Pancake Mix**

1⁸⁹

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We reserve the right to limit quantities and correct typographical errors. Prices and items effective November 7 - December 11, 1999