

INSIDE

Are you smarter than...? *pages 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, and 9*

Helping Preble Street *page 5*

TBE Scrip Program *page 7*

Community Hanukkah Party *page 8*

Shofar Changes *page 4*

Adult Jewish Learning *page 6*

IN DECEMBER AND JANUARY

- 12/1, 8, 15, 1/5, 12 – Kids Kehillah
- 12/1, 7, 1/5, 21 – Kol Yeladim
- 12/2, 16, 30, 1/13, 27 – Judaism for the Curious
- 12/3, 1/7 – Walking with God
- 12/4 – 12/11 — Hanukkah (*see page 7*)
- 12/9 – Community Hanukkah Party
- 12/27, 1/24 – Wayside Soup Kitchen
- 12/12, 1/9 – USY Lounge Nights
- 1/27 – Hebrew School Talent Show



*"I ask not for a lighter burden,
but for broader shoulders."*

—Jewish Proverb

T E M P L E B E T H E L shofar

DECEMBER 2007/JANUARY 2008 KISLEV/TEVET/SHEVAT 5768

GROUNDBREAKING FOR HABITAT INTERFAITH BUILD HOUSE

by Jennifer Gregg, Interfaith Team Liaison

Rabbi Braun, along with representatives from diverse faith groups in the Portland community, celebrated the groundbreaking for a Portland Interfaith Build House on October 11. The Interfaith Build team has been collaborating to raise the funds necessary to build a Habitat for Humanity house on Demerest Street in Portland. The project was initiated in the spring of 2007 and the house is scheduled to be built in the spring of 2008 as part of a four lot subdivision on Demerest Street in Portland. Participating and supporting faith communities currently include: Allen Avenue Unitarian Universalist, Cathedral of St. Luke Episcopal, First Congregational Church of South Portland (UCC), First Parish Church, Interfaith Maine, NAACP Religious Affairs, St. Pius X and St. Patrick's Roman Catholic, Temple Beth El, and Thornton Heights Methodist.

The home will be a simple, decent and modest home of approximately



Rabbi Braun speaking at the Portland Interfaith Build House groundbreaking.

make this dream a reality.

The goal is to raise a total of \$120,000 in cash and "in kind" donations. The Interfaith Build team is holding a variety of fundraising events that, so far, have included participation in Mugglefest and a Medieval Masquerade Ball called Renaissance Revelry that was held on October 27 at the penthouse of the USM library. If you could not attend but are interested in supporting this effort, donations of any amount will be gratefully accepted.

Habitat for Humanity of Greater Portland, an affiliate of Habitat for Humanity International, is a non-profit Christian organization dedicated to eliminating poverty housing. Habitat brings people and

see Habitat page 8



Members of the Interfaith Build team at the Portland Interfaith Build House groundbreaking.

TEMPLE BETH EL

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Shofar

Lisa Berman, Editor
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"Our vision is to be an embracing, supportive and vibrant community which observes Judaism in the Conservative tradition and which is devoted to the perpetuation of Jewish values and culture. Temple Beth El honors the diversity of its members and is committed to their spiritual growth."

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Congregants are encouraged to make regular attendance at Temple Beth El a part of their lives.

DAILY SERVICES

Monday through Friday 6:50 AM
Saturday and Jewish Holidays 9:30 AM
Sunday and Secular Holidays 8:30 AM

FRIDAY EVENING SERVICES

First Friday Evening, September–June 7:30 PM
Remaining Friday Evenings 5:30 PM

"Do not separate yourself from the congregation."

—Hillel, Pirkei Avot, 2:5

CLOSURES

The Temple Beth El Office will be closed on Tuesday, December 25; Tuesday, January 1; and Monday, January 21.

The Temple Beth El Hebrew School will be closed on Sunday, December 23; Wednesday, December 26; Sunday, December 30; and Sunday, January 20.

ARE YOU SMARTER THAN A HEBREW SCHOOL STUDENT???

You may have seen the new hit TV show, "Are You Smarter Than A Fifth Grader?" Well, here's our version. Throughout this issue of the *Shofar*, we have some questions from each grade level — see if you, or your kids, can answer them! And have fun! — *Avis Smith*

Are you smarter than a second grader?

1. How many levels did Noah's Ark have?
2. Who named the animals?
3. What does "Boker Tov, Chaverim" mean?
4. What prayer means "There is no one like you, God"?
5. Why did Sarah laugh when she learned she would have a baby?

Answers: 1. Three, 2. Adam, 3. Good Morning Friends, 4. Ein Keloheinu, 5. She thought she was too old.



Temple Beth El is a member of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism.



Funding for Temple Beth El Religious School has been generously provided by the Jewish Community Alliance of Southern Maine, through its Annual Campaign.

HEBREW HIGH SCHOOL: IF YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND RELIGION, YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND THE WORLD

I made a promise to my Hebrew High School students the first day of class that I would never tell them *what* to think, but that I would do whatever I could to help them *learn* to think. This year, in addition to talking about issues of power and leadership, we are direct-

EDUCATION DIRECTOR
AVIS SMITH

ing our thinking toward religion in the world around us, since religious questions underlie the main political, social, and moral issues of our time.

In our first class session I wanted to introduce students to the idea that we cannot properly understand the world around us without understanding religion—I took samples of newspaper articles from the previous day's paper (one on belief in divine healing, one on the beheading of two women in Pakistan by Islamic militants, one on the Pope's trip to Austria to honor Holocaust victims, one on the conflict between Hamas and Fatah, and one on Bin Laden's "invitation" for the world to convert to Islam to end the war in Iraq). The class divided into groups and each studied one of the articles. The groups presented their article to the class and fielded questions. We also asked ourselves what Judaism might have to say on each of these issues. In our remaining time we began to take a look at the high holiday Torah readings and how they are linked.

Because our second session directly preceded Yom Kippur, we took the figure of Azazel, an ancient demon referred to in the Yom Kippur ritual of releasing the goat carrying the people's sins into the wilderness, as our starting point. We looked at several texts about angels

and demons from the Bible and the midrash and tried to determine how these "beings" played a role in our ancestors' belief system. (Ever wonder to whom God is speaking when God says in Genesis, "Let us make man in our image"?) The goal was not just to make the liturgy make a little more sense, but to try to place it in the context of its own time. How did these ideas fit into our ancestors' understanding of the world around them?

In our third session we finished the Azazel texts and got into an interesting discussion about how to find meaning in prayer and in the texts we study. We discussed the dangers of fundamentalism in any religion and the difference between taking the Bible literally and taking the Bible seriously. We discussed how our ideas of God may change as we mature, and how our interpretations of text can evolve as well. Many were surprised to learn that some of our greatest Jewish scholars regard certain parts of the Biblical text as allegory rather than historical truth (and that it doesn't make them heretics for not being literalists!).

In our fourth session we introduced the topic of our textbook, *The Power to*

Lead, by trying to define and compare the concepts of power and leadership, and by asking ourselves who or what has power over me, and over whom or what do I have power? We also watched several film clips from the recent film *Alexander*, and the students were asked to evaluate Alexander the Great's leadership style as he conquered Babylon and continued to seek to capture the king of Persia, and when he refused to let his weary soldiers return home and faced a mutiny in his army. We will be

looking at Moses next as a leader, using both Torah and midrash as our sources.

Because Halloween was approaching, and with it the annual debate over whether Jewish children should be allowed to go trick-or-treating on a "Christian" holiday, we explored what Rabbis from eight different Jewish

movements had to say on the subject—Conservative, Sephardic Modern Orthodox, Modern Orthodox, Reform, Renewal, Humanist, Reconstructionist, and Independent. It surprised us to learn that most of the movements' spokesmen did not want to prohibit the practice. We finished our session by going back to the

see **World** page 11

... we cannot properly understand the world around us without understanding religion

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ANNIVERSARIES

DECEMBER 2007

- 2 Ernest and Diana Sturman (65 years)
- 4 Paul and Sarah Muscat
- 5 Sid and Sue Steinkeler
- 6 Rich and Rachel Robinov (20 years)
- 8 Bob and Barbara Brenner (54 years)
- 8 Andrea and Christopher Garland
- 9 Louis and Tina Fineberg (67 years)
- 16 David and Elizabeth Turesky
- 17 Walter and Marcia Goldfarb (52 years)
- 18 Bob and Saralee Harrisburg (52 years)
- 21 Laurence and Wendy Kane
- 21 Ken and Diane Volk
- 25 Larry and Joan Levy
- 29 Charlie and Ellie Miller
- 31 Natan and Orly Kahn

JANUARY 2008

- 1 Nachum Bitan and Sally Sandler Bitan
- 3 Gerry and Marilyn Sherry
- 6 Linda Jacobs and Joe Manning
- 7 Sam and Deb Barouch
- 7 Richard and Adele Mack (65 years)
- 15 Charlie and Eddy Dibner (30 years)
- 24 Michael and Harriet Turkanis
- 27 Michele and Ed Riley (35 years)
- 29 Gilbert and Marilyn Praver (52 years)

SHOFAR PUBLICATION SCHEDULE TO CHANGE

Please note the following important changes to the Temple Beth El *Shofar* publication schedule. We will now be publishing eight printed issues of the *Shofar* annually (formerly eleven issues). In addition, we will circulate an electronic *Shofar* supplement in the months when there is no printed issue. The electronic supplement will feature upcoming events and committee news, but will not have the regular columns and donation listings. We have made this change in an effort to reduce costs and minimize resource use. We will also use this as an opportunity to gauge our ability to transition to a mostly electronic distribution in the future. (We do not foresee eliminating the print version entirely because

we want to be able to communicate with the entire Congregation.)

The schedule will be as follows:

December/January: Print Issue

January: Electronic Supplement

February: Print Issue:

March/April: Print Issue

April: Electronic Supplement

May: Print Issue

June/July: Print Issue


July: Electronic Supplement

August: Print Issue

September/October: Print Issue

October: Electronic Supplement

November: Print Issue


If you are not currently receiving e-mails from the Temple office and would like to receive the electronic *Shofar* supplement, please let us know by e-mailing Liz Rose-Cohen at execdir@templebethel-maine.org. 

4th Annual Jewish Book Fair A Huge Success!

Thank you so much to all who supported the 4th Annual Jewish Family Book Fair! See you again in 2008! Nancy Levinsky and the Family Jewish Book Fair Committee would like to thank:


■ The Law Offices of Joe Bornstein for their generous contribution to this book fair. Joe Bornstein's kind donation will enhance the libraries of Temple Beth El Hebrew School, Levey Day School, Bet Ha'am Religious School, Biddeford Hebrew School, and JCA Preschool.

- Elaine Rosen
- Debbie Kanter
- Lynn Gass
- Andrea, Greg and Ken Levinsky
- Ellie Miller
- Avis Smith
- Bob Bradbury
- Liz Rose-Cohen

Many thanks to all of you who shopped at the fair, too! 

Lucky Day Lotto November Winners

- Judith Elowitch
- Beatrice Bornstein
- Jodi Veysey
- Jordan Klein
- Thomas Froncek
- Susan Bulba Carvulto (\$200 Thanksgiving Winner!)
- Joyce Palacci

December is the last month to buy Lotto books. Call the TBE office by December 1 to be included in the drawing. 

Are you smarter than a third grader?

1. What are the 5 final letters in Hebrew?
2. How many vowels say "ah" in Hebrew? How many say "oo"?
3. What are the shalosh regalim?
4. What is a yad and when do we use it in the service?
5. What does a sofer use to write a Torah?
6. Why do we use a round challah on Rosh Hashanah?

Answers: 1. mem, nun, tsadek, fey, chaf. 2. Four vowels say ah, two vowels say oo. 3. The three pilgrimage festivals — Pesach, Shavuot, Sukkot. 4. A pointer we use to read Torah. 5. A feather quill. 6. To symbolize the birthday of the world.

TIKKUN OLAM

Helping Preble Street During the Holiday Season

by Barbara Peisner

"The mission of Preble Street Resource Center is to provide accessible barrier-free services to empower people experiencing problems with homelessness, housing, hunger, and poverty, and to advocate for solutions to these problems."

During this holiday season, we are helping Preble Street collect items for holiday gift giving to those who use their programs. Preble Street has requested new gloves (especially large sizes), winter hats, athletic and wool socks, disposable razors, toothbrushes, travel size shampoos, conditioner, soap, deodorant, toothpaste, and lotion. They need food for holiday dinners, especially canned vegetables and fruit. Gift cards, which can be used to purchase turkeys and other fresh foods, are also a wonderful donation!

We are continuing to collect food staples for Preble Street. Please bring these items into the Temple and deposit them in the Tikkun Olam box. We will deliver them to Preble Street. Since they always need all of these items, we will continue this collection through the winter.

Shaw's is now supporting Project FEED through collecting Shaw's receipts and returning a portion of the total spent at Shaw's to this worthwhile program. Please bring in your Shaw's receipts to the Temple and place in the appropriate box or you can send them directly to Project FEED at Woodfords Congregational Church, 202 Woodfords St., Portland, ME 04103.

The fourth Thursday of the month continues to be the evening, from 5 PM to 7:30 PM, during which Temple Beth El members join with Bet Ha'am and other community members to serve dinner at the Wayside Soup kitchen. For further information, please contact Harlan Baker at 772-9640, or just show up at the soup kitchen on the 4th Thursday of the month.

The Tikkun Olam Committee meets Sunday mornings approximately monthly, and we welcome new members. Please call Barbara Peisner at 797-6651 or send an e-mail to bpeisne1@maine.rr.com if you'd like more information, or just show up at a meeting...we'd love to have you join us! 

IN OUR TBE FAMILY

Mazel Tov

To Jennifer Elowitch & Douglas Chene on the birth of their twins Marnie Claire & Jonah Solomon, on October 8. Proud grandparents are Annette & Rob Elowitch and great-grandmother is Frances Lyons!

To Lynn & Matt Goldfarb on the birth of their grandson, Andrew Yashar Goldfarb, on October 20 in Saddle River, N.J. Parents are James Goldfarb & Dr. Alyson Yashar; siblings are Lilly & Alexander.

To Leah Beth Byer, daughter of Matt & Lynn Goldfarb, and Stuart Farmelant, grandson of Pearl Gerber and son of Dr. Melvin & Phyllis Gerber Farmelant, on their engagement.

To Merrill Abramson and Beck Thompson-Greaves who have much to celebrate. First, welcome to their newest foster child, Madelin who they and their other 4 children picked up from the hospital on October 25th, at 3 days old. Second, their foster son, Jay, is having his one-year anniversary with their family on November 22, and will be adopted by Merrill and Beck soon.

We mourn the passing of:

Ralph Kodis, brother of Muriel Branz & Milton Kodis, on October 4 in Massachusetts.

Maguerite Blattner, sister of Stephen Blattner, on October 8 in San Diego.

Charles (Cuddy) Cohen, husband of Cathy Cohen, on October 13.

Jack Berenson, husband of Barbara Berenson, on November 6.

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Thanks to the following individuals:

- Jodi & Jon Freedman for hosting TBE's Sukkah Raising party and Bob Bradbury for heading up the endeavor.
- Tom Berman for his technical support of the Jewish Maine, Jewish Portland panel discussion.
- Jackie Soley, Rachel Barkin, and Joyce Palacci for delivering shiva meals in recent months.
- Debbie Barlock, Pat Reef, and Geoff Hindall for their good natured envelope stuffing.
- Andy Shur and Eric & Marc Herwitz for beautifying the Temple grounds.

see **Todah** page 8

ADULT JEWISH LEARNING COMMITTEE

by Tom Froncek

Day of Learning

"Fabulous!" That was the word used by one participant to describe the October 21 Day of Learning presentation on the Jewish heritage of Maine and Portland. "So interesting — and I don't come from Portland!" "Do more of these," said another in an informal survey taken after the program.

More than sixty people turned out to hear three prominent scholars explore Portland and Maine's rich Jewish history. Michael Cohen, a doctoral candidate at Brandeis, spoke about the challenges of founding a Conservative Jewish community in a remote New England outpost, far from the thriving centers of Jewish life in Boston and New York. Abe Peck, of the University of Southern Maine and co-author with his wife Jean of the recently published book, *Maine's Jewish Heritage*, introduced us to some of the founders and builders of Maine's Jewish community. Harris Gleckman outlined the features of the exciting new database, Documenting Old Portland Jewry, where Portlanders, old and new, are invited to search for their own family history and to contribute their own stories and those of their forebearers. (Check out dopj@mindspring.com.)

Special thanks from the Adult Jewish Learning Committee to Tom Berman for setting up the electronics used during the program.

Tolerance and Prejudice: Portraits from the Age of Shakespeare

During October and November, Sanford Freedman, Associate Professor at Bates College, explored early expressions of tolerance and anti-Semitism through an examination of the plays of Christopher Marlowe (*The Jew of Malta*) and Shakespeare (*The Merchant of Venice*). More than a dozen attendees had the pleasure of studying with Dr. Freedman, who was fresh from lecturing at Cambridge University.

Autumn Shabbaton

Temple Beth El was privileged to host

the esteemed Bible scholar and translator, Dr. Everett Fox, for a Shabbat of learning and inspiration on November 2–3. Dr. Fox, a professor of Judaic and Biblical Studies at Clark University, led a lively and engaging series of discussions on aspects of the Bible, including an examination of the sagas of King David and King Saul.

Walking with God

"Walking with God," a monthly series of discussions on the nature of our relationship to God and such issues as faith and doubt, will be led throughout the year by Avis Smith. Classes are held on the first Monday of each month, beginning at 6:30 PM. Please register in the office.

Read Hebrew America

An introduction to Hebrew literacy was taught throughout the fall by Ellen Froncek.

And coming soon to Temple Beth El:

Watch the *Shofar* for announcements of our spring programs. They will include a spring Day of Learning, Sunday, May 4, which will celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the State of Israel with an exploration of the shared national aspirations focused on Jerusalem. We are assured of a lively discussion presented by scholar-in-residence Stephanie Gerber Wilson of Brandeis University.

Are you smarter than a fourth grader?

1. What is a shoshet?
2. Israel is about the size of what U.S. state?
3. Who took over leadership from Moses?
4. What is Hachnasat Orchim?
5. What does the root alef-heh-vet mean?
6. Did Gideon defeat the Amelekites, the Midianites, or the Philistines?
7. What are your ketefayim?
8. What is Yom HaZikaron and why is it linked to Yom HaAtzmaut?

Answers: 1. A root (word). 2. New Jersey. 3. Joshua. 4. Greeting visitors. 5. Love. 6. Midianites. 7. Shoulders. 8. Israel remembrance day to honor soldiers who lost their lives fighting for independence.

TBE Scrip Program

by Liz Rose-Cohen, Executive Director

I hope you've read in weekly announcements or the *Shofar* about Temple Beth El's new "Scrip" fundraising program. If you are not familiar with the term "scrip," it is basically the equivalent of buying a gift certificate – once purchased you can use it for yourself or give it away. By buying scrip through Temple Beth El, you can turn purchases you would make anyway (gas, groceries, gift certificates) into donations to the Temple.

By now you should have received registration information in the mail so that you can start using this program. Typically, we will be making scrip orders from the Temple on the first Friday of each month (December 7, January 4). Payment for your order can be made in cash or check and should be made at the time of the purchase.

Here are some examples of how you can use this program:

Travel: Taking a trip? Before you buy your American Airlines tickets, buy American Airlines scrip from Temple Beth El and, at no additional cost to you, the Temple will get to keep 8% of your purchase. Making hotel and rental car reservations? Buy scrip for these services as well and the Temple will keep between 4% and 12% of your purchase. If you plan ahead for these kinds of purchases you could easily earn the Temple between \$100 and \$300 on a week's vacation.


Gifts: Buy gift cards for clothing, dining out, electronics, gas, movie passes, and more. Retailers will donate between 4% and 18% of your purchase to the Temple. If you'd rather give a gift than a gift card, just order scrip in advance for your favorite retailers (L.L.Bean, Gap, Old Navy, Express, Best Buy, Borders, Barnes & Noble, Bed Bath & Beyond, Harry & David, etc.) and then you'll have it on hand when you are ready to go shopping. Do you spend

\$200, \$400, \$1000 on gifts every year? That could easily generate \$20 to \$100 for the Temple with a little planning.

Everyday Living: Buy scrip in advance for businesses you use everyday and then use your gift card as cash when you make purchases. At Shaw's 4% of your purchase will come back to the Temple; Shell will give 2.5% of your gas purchase; Ace Hardware and Lowe's will give back 4%; Home Depot will give 3%; and Rite Aid will give 4% (including prescriptions). A month of your family's regular living could easily generate \$30 for the Temple.

We hope you will take a look at the information you receive in the mail and give it a try. The important thing is that we don't see this as just a holiday fundraiser, but make it something we can incorporate into our lives year round.

If you receive your registration forms in the mail and you are confused about how to use them, please contact Jodi Veysey at 774-2649.

Thank you to Patty Weber, Dan Dunitz, and Jodi Veysey for putting this program together. With their hard work and your participation, we will be able to create a steady stream of revenue at no expense to our membership. 



Are you smarter than a fifth grader?

1. How many of Columbus's crew had Jewish roots?
2. What country did most of the first large Jewish immigration to America come from?
3. How do we say "I have" in Hebrew?
4. By the Civil War, were there 150, 15,000, or 150,000 Jews in the United States?
5. What are the Avot and the G'vurot?
6. What does it mean to be in covenant with God?

Answers: 1. Three. 2. Germany. 3. Yesh. 4. 150,000. 5. The first two paragraphs of the Amidah. 6. We have a binding agreement – each party has responsibilities.

HANUKKAH: CANDLE LIGHTING, BLESSINGS

Each evening we put the candles in the Chanukkiyah or menorah from right to left (the way we read Hebrew), but we light them from the opposite direction – newest one first.

ברוך אתה יי, אלהינו מלך העולם, אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו להדליק נר של חנוכה.

Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu melech ha-olam Asher kideshanu b'mitzvotav Vitzivanu L'hadlik ner shel Chanukah.

Praised are You, Our God, Ruler of the universe, Who made us holy through Your commandments and commanded us to kindle the Chanukah lights.

ברוך אתה יי, אלהינו מלך העולם, שעשה נסים לאבותינו בימים ההם בזמן הזה.


Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu melech ha-olam Sheh'asah nissim la'avoteinu Ba-yamim ha-heim Ba-z'man ha-zeh.

Praised are You, Our God, Ruler of the universe, Who performed wondrous deeds for our ancestors in those ancient days at this season.

(Third Blessing is on first night only.)

ברוך אתה יי, אלהינו מלך העולם, שהחננו וקיימנו והגיימנו לזמן הזה.

Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu melech ha-olam shehecheyanu v'ki-y-manu v'higiyanu lazman ha-zeh.

Praised are You, Our God, Ruler of the universe, Who has given us life and sustained us and enabled us to reach this season. 

National Council of Jewish Women Southern Maine Section Scholarships

The Southern Maine Section of the National Council of Jewish Women will again be awarding scholarships to Jewish students from the Greater Portland area who plan to continue their education. Scholarships are awarded on the basis of financial need with consideration for academic achievement, Jewish commitment and general community involvement. Applications must be received by March 31, 2008.

Please contact:

Gail J. Volk, 62 Bartley Avenue,
Portland, ME 04103, gjvolk@aol.com
Chairperson, Scholarship Committee

Secondary contact:

Jodi Freedman, jodi.freedman@verizon.net

NCJW Mission Statement

The National Council of Jewish Women is a volunteer organization, inspired by Jewish values, that works through a program of research, education, advocacy and community service to improve the quality of life for women, children and families and strives to ensure individual rights and freedoms for all.

Todah continued from page 6

- John Barlock for updating the Web site every week!
- Natalie Ladd for heading up the Hebrew School Shabbat Dinner.
- Tom & Ellen Froncek and the Adult Learning Committee for sponsoring and coordinating the Shabbaton with Dr. Everett Fox.
- Barbara Peisner and the Tikkun Olam Committee for organizing the first Tikkun Olam Fair.

IT'S A COMMUNITY HANUKKAH PARTY!

- 🕒 Sunday, December 9
- 🕒 12:00-3:00 PM
- 🕒 Temple Beth El



Join Us For:

- 12:00-12:30 Jewish Youth Chorus
- 12:30-1:00 Light Lunch
- 1:00-3:00 Games, Crafts, and Activities

The Sisterhood Gift Shop will be open and additional vendors will be present.

Sponsors: Jewish Community Alliance, Levey Day School, and Temple Beth El




Temple Beth El

Habitat continued from page 1

resources together to build simple, decent, affordable homes. These houses are then sold to partner families at no-profit through a no-interest loan. HFHGP was founded in 1985 and has built 46 houses in Cumberland County.

The ultimate goal of Habitat for Humanity is to eliminate poverty housing homelessness from the face of the earth by constructing and building adequate and

basic housing. Furthermore, all our words and actions are for the ultimate purpose of putting shelter on the hearts and minds of people in such a powerful way that poverty housing and homelessness become socially, politically and religiously unacceptable in our nations and world.

For further information, please feel free to contact Habitat for Humanity of Greater Portland (772-2151) or the Habitat Interfaith Team Liaison, Jennifer Gregg (781-2665). 

Are you smarter than a sixth grader?

1. What is the mitzvah of Ometz Lev?
2. What is K'lal Yisrael?
3. By what names are people called up to the Torah?
4. How old is the custom of reading Torah?
5. What is peticha?
6. What part of TaNaCh does the haftarah come from?
7. What was the role of the prophets?
8. When did the Romans destroy the second Temple?

Answers: 1. Courage. 2. The unity/community of the people Israel. 3. Your name and your parents' names. 4. More than 2000 years old. 5. Opening the Ark. 6. Nevim (Prophets). 7. To deliver God's messages to the rulers and the people of Israel. 8. 70 CE.


KADIMA UPDATE

by Natalie Ladd

Thanks to Mr. Bagel on Forest Avenue, and to a great turnout on a sunny afternoon, our annual Board Games and Bagels event was a huge success. We had two new members, a sibling, and a Kadima alum join us for Monopoly, Clue, Battleship, Life, and a few rounds of geography trivia. The Rabbi also posed with us for a group picture – see if you can find her with all the Kadimaniks!

All Jewish kids of Kadima age (4th, 5th & 6th grade), regardless of affiliation, are invited to check out at least one Kadima activity this year.

With an event per month, there truly is something for everyone. The

list of upcoming Kadima activities is posted on the Temple Beth El bulletin board. Please call if you would like to join us, or have any questions. 



Front Row (L to R): Eric Herwitz, Renata Levine, Lynnea Harding, Emma Hindall, Kayla Berg, Eliana Finberg, Rabbi Braun, and Rebecca Goodman.

Back Row: Natalie Ladd, Jessica Goodman, Carly Ladd, Zach Hindall, Sam Freedman, Zack Sandberg, and Steve Berg.



Kol Yeladim Hanukkah Program & Shabbat Dinner

Kol Yeladim families (any family with children 5 and under) are invited to join us for a family program on Friday, December 7 at 5:00 PM followed by a festive family dinner sponsored by the Kol Yeladim Committee. Please RSVP to the Temple Office, 774-2649, by December 3.



Upcoming Kids Kehillah Dates:

- December 1 — 6th grade leading
- December 8 — Kindergarten/ First grade leading
- December 15 — 4th grade leading
- January 5 — 5th grade leading
- January 12 — 3rd grade leading
- February 2 — 2nd grade leading
- February 9 — 6th grade leading

Are you smarter than a seventh grader?

1. What does jihad mean?
2. Give two explanations of the term "blood libel."
3. Which member of Hitler's cabinet had a birth defect, and what was it?
4. Who first originated ghettos?
5. What is the "matzav"?

Answers: 1. Holy war. 2. Jews accused of murdering Christians, and for using their blood to make matzav. 3. Goebels has a club foot. 4. Eastern European countries in the middle ages. 5. The "situation" in the Middle East.

USY News

by Rebecca Canter

In the past months we had some successful events...USYers along with Jr. USY went to the Rabbi's and enjoyed snacks and pizza under the Sukkah. In November USYers participated in a Shabbat Service at Cedars followed by a Luau Shabbat Dinner. Also in November our co-presidents Nicole and Max went to Leadership Retreat with other NERUSY (New England USY) USYers in Palmer, MA.


Upcoming events for December and January:

- 12/12 — Continue painting the lounge during lounge night
- 12/14 — Leading a Shabbat Service at Cedars
- 1/9 — Lounge night
- 1/11 — Leading a Shabbat Service at Cedars
- 1/19 — Dinner and a movie

Other dates down the road not to forget about:

- 3/7 — Friend Raiser Dinner
- 5/3 — T.O. Bingo Night fun for the entire family.

Also I would like to take the time to thank the parents of Senior USYers for their continuous generosity and support.

For more information about Senior USY please feel free to contact Rebecca at rcanter@maine.rr.com. 

DONATIONS TO TEMPLE FUNDS

We are grateful for the following gifts to our Temple Funds. Donations not designated for specific funds will be placed in the General Fund.

Donations to a Temple Fund provide a wonderful opportunity to remember loved ones, honor friends and family and continue to bring strength to our Temple Beth El community. We encourage your donations and welcome your thoughtfulness.

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Susan & Paul Trusiani, In Honor of Rabbi Braun's Birthday

Marilyn Westerfield & Bob Fried, In Honor of the 25th Wedding Anniversary Verne & Tracey Weisberg

Norm & Judy Wilson, In Honor of Dan & Phyllis Dunitz's 50th Anniversary

Norm & Judy Wilson, In Honor of the birth of Kim & Andy Shur's baby, Mason.

Norm & Judy Wilson, In Honor of Jenny Elowitch & Doug Chene's twins, Marnie & Jonah

Norm & Judy Wilson, In Honor of Rob & Annette Elowitch's grandchildren, Marnie & Jonah

Norm & Judy Wilson, In Honor of Jean Sampson Award at USM

Norm & Judy Wilson, In Honor of Cantor & Sonja Messerschmidt's great grandson

Linda Abromson, In Memory of Yudy Elowitch

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Helen Schwartz & Adele, David, & Bennett, In Memory of Adam Schwartz

Harriette Small, In Memory of Irving Small


Donations listed were received at Temple Beth El by October 25, 2007.

World *continued from page 3*

week's news for an article on God "speaking" to Oral Roberts Jr., and the controversy over President Bush's statements about Christians and Muslims worshipping the same God.

The following week we shared in the Adult Jewish Learning Committee's program on Jewish Maine and Jewish Portland. Although many of our students do not trace their family histories back to this community, it was important for our kids to learn how we all as immigrants

found our places in this nation, and what challenges were faced by the early Jews who chose Maine as their new home. Their struggles made it possible for our students to have a synagogue and a Hebrew School, and that debt should be recognized. One of the presenters, now a PhD student at Brandeis, was a former student of mine in Hebrew School and for Bar Mitzvah — watching him now teach a new generation of students brought home to me the importance of linking ourselves with our past, and our future.

In every class session and activity, we always keep the big questions in mind — What is God? How can I understand Torah? What do I do with this Jewish life of mine? How does my piece of the truth fit with others? How and where can I find meaning? Together each week, we are exploring these questions and eagerly looking forward to seeing what insights arise. And even if, despite our best efforts, we can't find answers, it is still a great journey to take with one another. 

shofar

Temple Beth El

400 Deering Avenue
Portland, ME 04103



Hebrew School Raffle!

Prize is a gourmet pizza cooking class on Sunday, February 24th, 2008 at the Stone Turtle Cooking School in Lyman, ME (just off Biddeford Turnpike exit 32). Ten winning tickets will be drawn for a reserved spot in the class!

Tickets \$4 each/3 for \$10
Drawing will be on Sunday, December 19, 2007.
Tickets are available at the TBE office.

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Shofar Deadlines – February issue is December 28; March/April issue is January 28.

Please submit material via e-mail as text included in the body of the message or as an attached Microsoft Word document to lisab@maine.rr.com. Submissions on paper will also be accepted.