

SYNAGOGUE

VOLUME XVII, NUMBER 4 WWW.SHALOMPCS.COM DECEMBER 2011

THE RABBI'S COLUMN: LIFE

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PLEASANTVILLE

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By Mark Sameth

A few years ago, PCS president Peter Schaeffer made a request. "Mark, there's a lot of wisdom in the community," he said. "When we have our monthly Family Education Shabbat discussions, why don't you make the last of the three discussion questions one just for the adults – and then you can have the adults share their wisdom with the children?" It was a great idea, and we've been doing it ever since.

With that in mind, I was struck by a project by David Brooks, columnist for the New York Times. He's calling it "The Life Report." He invited those over the age of 70 to write up a brief report of their lives so far, what they've learned, what wisdom they would want to pass on to the young. He was intending to publish a few columns of his findings around Thanksgiving (I'm writing this column just before that and so you may have read his report already).

"[T]hese essays will be useful to the young," he wrote. "Young people are educated in many ways, but they are given relatively little help in understanding how a life develops, how careers and families evolve, what are the common mistakes and the

common blessings of modern adulthood. These essays will help them benefit from your experience."

And so I thought I would use this as an opportunity to extend again an invitation to the entire PCS community - but especially those, who may not yet be 70 but whose children are grown – to join us for our next Family Education Shabbat gathering, Saturday morning, December 10, at 10 am. We'll be discussing some complex issues that arise out of the Torah portion that day, and – as always – we will leave the third question for just the grownups in the room. (Details are still being worked out, but we also hope to have at least one additional special surprise that morning.)

If you have middle school children, bring them, and their older and younger sibs, for a lively age-appropriate discussion. If you're a bit further down the road, come meet, sit, and talk with other adults – and then share your collective wisdom with our children.

Young minds want to know!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Board of Trustees of the synagogue recently began studying a proposal to establish a program for teenagers, post b'nei mitzvah. We tried this briefly a few years ago and it failed because of the small number of students who signed up, but we are hopeful that such a program could succeed if we combine our efforts with a larger group such as BBYO. What it will take is four or five young people with enthusiasm to lead this effort and eventually attract a minimum of 12 students.

By coincidence I received a study sponsored by UJA-Federation the day after our board meeting reporting on exactly this issue among Jewish students, but also comparing them to children of other religions in the U.S. In all cases there is a dramatic drop off in the educational interest from 7th to 12th grade, and that drop off is even greater among

boys. What struck me even more was the following quote: "Teens who are engaged in...religious based activities reap developmental benefits including identity development, emotional health, social skills, teamwork and adult networks and social capital." They are also less likely to be depressed, use drugs or alcohol or engage in risky behavior. However, this appears NOT to be the case for Jewish teens. I don't know what to make of this.

The study is certainly not a reason for us to forgo moving forward with our teenage program. We will explore all possibilities and hopefully find our own pathway. The real purpose to my raising this issue now, is to begin a discussion, to engage parents and students in a dialogue that promises success of some kind, even if it is purely a fun activity for them. One of the questions

that I came away with after my reading was whether there are unmeasured advantages to the various programs that were studied, whether we have to take a much longer perspective before reaching any conclusion. I use myself as an example of someone who participated in a teenage program and then rebelled against it, staying away from synagogue and Jewish life for many years before something drew me back. We often make the mistake of substituting our vision or our desire for what our children really want and need and then being surprised and hurt when they veer off into a different direction. So, as I say, I hope we pursue this further.

- Peter Schaffer





PCS ROSH CHODESH

On Sunday Oct 30, despite all the snow and the problems caused by it, six women met at the house of Eileen Jagoda for a wonderful night of art and tea! Susan Schrott, a wonderful textile artist, brought some of her amazing works for us to see and touch! The colors and designs are fabulous and Susan has had many shows. Currently, her work can be seen at the Paramount Center for the Arts, in Peekskill. Susan's works are all about strong Jewish women and she frequently uses biblical themes.





Pleasantville Community Synagogue Mission Statement

Pleasantville Community Synagogue is a transdenominational, inclusive community, a spiritual home deeply rooted in Torah (study), Avodah (prayer), and Gemilut Chasadim (deeds of loving-kindness). We seek to facilitate lifelong spiritual growth by engaging each member wherever that member may be on life's journey, embracing all generations. We encourage Tikkun Middot (repair of the self) and Tikkun Olam (repair of the world) through Jewish education for all ages, social action, Ahavat Yisrael (love of Israel), and a commitment to the understanding and fulfillment of mitzvot. We are a highly participatory community which relies on the commitment of time and energy from all members and which aspires to become an integral part of each member's life and their family's lives.

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NOTE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

November has been a busy month. The Aleph, Bet and Gimel classes helped make a mitzvah out of Halloween. We collected extra Halloween candy (who knew that there was such a thing as "extra candy"?) and made cards for American service men

and women fighting overseas. We mailed out packages with our well wishes and almost 20 pounds of candy!

The Dalet, Hey and Vav classes have been practicing and perfecting their Ashrei. On November 20, Jordan Sabatier was our first student to lead the Ashrei during the morning tefillah class with the Rabbi! Yasher Koach to Jordan!

We also had our first challah-making session on Sunday November 20! The Aleph-Bet class and their parents mixed, kneaded and braided challah that they brought home to bake! It was fun and I am sure that it will be delicious.

After Thanksgiving, please watch for the school-wide drive to brighten Chanukah for needy families in Israel. Children will be asked to give up a night of presents and the money (\$18.00) will be donated to the American Friends of Meir Panim (AFMP). AFMP helps bring relief for the less fortunate and struggling families. For each child that makes a donation, a Chanukah menorah with his/her name on it will be hung up in the halls of PCS, acknowledging that child's mitzvah.

December is shaping up to be a fun-filled month as well!

On December 4 we have the good fortune to have the artist, Jo Ann Brody, come to help the Aleph, Bet and Gimel students create their own Chanukah menorah out of clay...not to be confused with that very famous dreidle – which will then be fired in a kiln, and will be back in time for candle lighting later in December! (The upper grades will be making their own pottery project in the spring, when Jo Ann will be back to help Dalet, Hey and Vav make Seder plates in time to be used at Pesach.)

We will also be having a school-wide Chanukah party on Sunday, December 18, 2011. We are in the process of setting up a visit to the Atrium, an adult retirement facility that morning, and upon returning to the synagogue, the children will enjoy latkes, crafts and games of dreidle!



STRATEGIC ADVISORS FOR NON-PROFITS



PLANNING, **FUND RAISING BOARD DEVELOPMENT**

Evan Kingsley Vice President and Senior Consultant

483 Tenth Avenue, Suite 530 New York, NY 10018

(212) 727 7332

Hola, ¿habla español? ¿No? ¡Qué pena!

SPANISH LESSONS

Brush up on your Spanish:

- if you're traveling
- to have a conversation
- to prepare for your school or college exams

Native Spanish speaker with an MA in Language Teaching. Call Cristina A. Martinez at 914-739-7457, or email: inspanish@optonline.net



PLEASANTVILLE COMMUNITY SYNAGOGUE OFFICERS AND TRUSTEES

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B'NEI MITZVAH PROJECTS

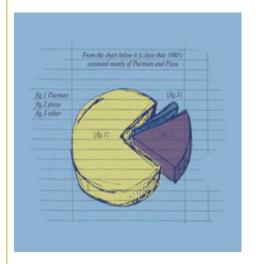
Hi, it's Ben Freedman. Here's what I'm doing for my mitzvah project.

I'm participating in the SPCA click-and-treat program. The purpose is to teach dogs good behavior in order to get adopted. If they do something right, you click the clicker and then give them a treat. I've done this for an hour so far.

I'm also in the Greenhouse Club in school and the purpose of that club is to do things that help the earth, and other people. One thing we're doing this year is helping a charity called *One Warm Coat*. In front of the school is a coat drive where you can donate coats, scarfs and hats. There's also the *Linux Crew*, which donated used laptops to needy families, and we also recycle coffee pots and spread the word with Green TV and going around talking to people.



My name is David Zweibaum and I am tutoring at the Cottage School in Pleasantville for my mitzvah project. To be more specific, I am tutoring at the Edenwald Center. The children at Edenwald Center have low IO's and emotional problems. I love the project and hope to continue doing it for many years. Each week, I work with the same child, a boy named Dayquon. When I first get to the weekly session with him, I spend a few minutes talking with him about his week. Generally, we talk about what sports he did, what TV he watched, and what schoolwork he did. Then, we work together on his homework and after that we play his favorite games, which are Sorry and Chess. Then we say goodbye and "high-five." I really like Dayquon, and I will continue tutoring him throughout May. This project makes me realize how lucky I am and how others are less fortunate, yet can still live happy lives



Year-End Tax Planning?

How About Donating Your Fair Share to PCS?

Just a quick reminder that our synagogue does not have a Kol Nidre appeal to raise money. Pleasantville Community Synagogue counts on each member to give their Fair Share to help fund the PCS operating budget. We ask our members to contribute 2% of their household income to help PCS keep its programs, staff and Hebrew school functioning.

We have been fortunate that a large percentage of our community continues to support the synagogue through generous giving. However, due to the strains of the recession we have more families on financial need than ever before, and we need your help to keep our temple's finances healthy.

We can also accept appreciated stock in lieu of cash for those who would like to take advantage of this tax-efficient method of giving. For more information please e-mail our treasurer, Oren Cohen, at orenc@optonline.net.

We need everyone's help. Please send your Fair Share to our synagogue now. Click <u>here</u> to download a credit card form; or mail your gift directly to PCS, P.O.Box 148, Pleasantville, NY 10570.

Thank you,

The PCS Fundraising Committee

JEWISH PRAYER

by Phil Paris (from David Ariel, What do Jews Believe)

In prayer, we have the opportunity to express our deepest hopes and aspirations. It is the most spiritual of all human activity. In prayer, we have the sense of belonging to a community, affirming our Jewishness in a social setting. Being together in the synagogue may at times be even more important than the meaning of the words themselves. When this connection is sustained over a period of time, it produces a sense of connectedness and spiritual fulfillment. The word "prayer" is something of a misnomer. In Hebrew, the word is tefillah, and carries a sense of hope. In prayer, that is what we are doing: we are hoping for something for ourselves or our loved ones. But what gives us the right to do this? In Judaism, our very existence is proof of God's mercy. We have been created with a pure soul, with the right and obligation to testify to God's majesty.

Jewish prayer can be confusing. While all Jewish prayers are written in the plural "we," prayer has the feeling of a solitary act during which each one of us is praying to God. What is written in our prayer book lacks the quality of spontaneity. But many of those prayers truly began as spontaneous expressions in people's own words. Chosen for us in the prayerbook are perhaps the most powerful of those assertions of faith in God and faith in the Hebrew people. Let's face it - prayer can be intimidating. The Talmud directs us in prayer, saying "When you pray, know before Whom you stand! Even if greeted by a king, even if a snake is winding itself around your heel, you may not interrupt your prayer." Who can stand before such instructions? Probably no one, but the ideal is clearly stated and something worthy of our serious attention.

Of course, prayers are not restricted to what is written in our siddur. For Maimonides, true prayer was silent, a silent meditation. If it were humanly possible, Maimonides would have asked us to completely abandon traditional prayer. He wanted only to meditate on the essence of God, something that has no words in our vocabulary. But he recognized this would be impossible without creating total havoc and disorder within the Jewish community. It would destroy those expressions of faith the people embraced. For Maimonides, traditional prayer was a compromise between truth and the human need for fixed customs.



DECEMBER 2011 YAHR ZEITS





To All PCS Members:

If you or another member suffer personal tragedy or loss or are otherwise in need of help, please immediately call Rabbi Mark at 769-2672, and Michael Gold at 238-9219.

NEWSLETTER ACCEPTS ADS!

The PCS Newsletter is published monthly, online, from September through June, and it is emailed to every member family as well as to prospective members and some Jewish organisations.

If you provide professional or business services in the area, the PCS newsletter might provide some extra, valuable visability. To arrange for your ad to appear in the newsletter, here's what you need to know:

* Deadlines:

Ads should be submitted by the 15th of the month. They can be emailed to Judy Chinitz at judyhope@ optonline.net or cristina@lightbodymusic.com.

* Ad Specifications:

Ads will be published in one size only: one-quarter page, which is approximately 3 $1/2 \times 4 \times 3/4$ inches. The artwork should be provided by the advertiser.

*Advertising Rates:

The cost per ad (for 10 issues - no bulletin published in July and August) is \$100 for 1/4 page. Note: Checks preferred. Can be mailed to Pleasantville Community Synagogue, PO Box 148, Pleasantville, NY 10570 with "newsletter ad" in the memo section. To pay by credit card, please call the synagogue office at 914-769-2672.

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Missed the lottery? Didn't get picked?

No problem! You still have a great opportunity to compete in some of New York's most popular and exciting sporting events while helping people in need.

Spots are available for the New York City Triathlon with UJA-Federation's Sports for Youth Team.

Sunday, July 8, 2012

Join the second annual UJA-Federation of New York and Sports for Youth triathlon team in the New York City Triathlon to raise money for UJA-Federation and Sports for Youth. If you join our charity team, you'll commit to raising a minimum of \$2,200, which quarantees you a spot to compete while helping those in need.

Sign up for the New York City Triathlon!!!



PCS COMMITTEE CHAIRS

All the Committees of The Pleasantville Community Synagogue are eager for your participation and suggestions. If you'd like to get more involved in the life of the PCS community, this is the way to begin! Below are the names of the committees, their chairs, and contact information.

Adult Education

David Felder info@shalomPCS.com

Emma Reisman info@shalompcs.com

B'nei MitzvahEileen Jagoda
ejagoda@shalomPCS.com

Phil Paris pparis@shalomPCS.com

Building CommitteeRichard Levine
rlevine@shalomPCS.com

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Cristina Altieri-Martinez cmartinez@shalomPCS.com

Jewish Education

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Human Resources

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llipkin@shalomPCS.com

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Israel Action Committee

Ofri Felder ofelder@shalomPCS.com

Seth Rutman srutman@shalomPCS.com

Tikkun Olam

Michael Gold mgold@shalomPCS.com

Youth Committee

Evan Kingsley

ekingsley@shalomPCS.com

CONTRIBUTIONS

We appreciate the thoughtfulness of those who support the Pleasantville Community Synagogue by remembering and honoring their friends and loved ones through their generous contributions.

ED SPERLING FUND

JAN AND BERNARD GORDON
AUDREY RABINOWITZ AND JEFF TURKEL

GENERAL FUND

ELSE & DAVID SCHNUR 2009 CHARITABLE LEAD ANNUITY TRUST POTTER'S WHEEL FOUNDATION

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ABOUT THE NEWSLETTER

The PCS Newsletter is published monthly, online, from September through June. Articles and photos should be submitted by the 15th of the month. They can be e-mailed to Judith Chinitz, Editor, at judyhope@optonline.net or dropped off at the newsletter box in the Synagogue office.

Pleasantville Community Synagogue * 219 Bedford Road * Pleasantville, NY 10570

phone (914) 769 - 2672 fax (914) 769 - 1795

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FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR YOUR SUPPORT

General Fund

Finances any need of the synagogue considered necessary by the Board of Trustees. All unspecified gifts are credited to the General Fund.

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

Supports various individuals, organizations and/or programs at the discretion of the Rabbi.

Building Fund

To preserve the beauty and functionality of our physical plant, and to build reserves for future expansion.

Hebrew School Emergency Scholarship Fund

Provides scholarships to children who would like to attend our Hebrew School and may not currently have the financial resources to do so.

Kiddush Fund

Your donation provides lunch after services on Shabbat morning: salads, bagels and pastry.

SPECIAL FUND: ED SPERLING

Pleasantville Community Synagogue continues to collect funds for Ed. Please keep Ed in your prayers. His Hebrew name is Asher David ben Miriam.

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nd:			
nount:ease send me an acknowledgement of this gift.	Yes 🔲	No 🔲	

PLEASE NOTE: To help our bookkeeper, please issue separate checks for dues or other special events. All donations should be made payable to Pleasantville Community Synagogue (please indicate which fund in the memo section of your check).

KISLEV - TEVET 5772

December 2011 - PCS Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
NO HEBREW SCHOOL	Yoga Class at PCS, 7:15 pm	29	30 Learn to Lead Shabbat Service, 7:30 pm	1	Children's service, 7:15 pm PCS House Band Birthday blessings	Morning Meditation, 9 am; Shabbat Service, 9:30 am Bar Mitzvah - David Zweibaum
Committee breakfast meeting, 10 am, at JCC. Kita Zayin class, 11am-1pm Introduction to Judaism, 11:30am-1pm	Yoga Class at PCS, 7:15 pm	6	7 Learn to Lead Shabbat Service, 7:30 pm	Hebrew High School, 6:15 pm - 7:30 pm	9 4:08pm-4:26pm - Candle lighting	Morning Meditation 9 am; Family Education Shabbat 10 am Parashat Vayishlach 5:38pm-5:39pm - Havdalah (72 min)
Introduction to Judaism, 11:30am-1pm Executive Committee meeting, 7:30pm	Yoga Class at PCS, 7:15 pm	13	Social Action Committee meeting, 7 pm	PCS Board meeting, 7:30 pm	Children's service, 7:15 pm Shabbat dinner celebrating Hannukah and new members PCS House Band 4:09pm-4:27pm - Candle lighting	Morning Meditation, 9 am; Shabbat Service, 9:30 am Parashat Vayeshev Bar Mitzvah - Benjamin Freedman 5:40pm-5:41pm - Havdalah (72 min)
Pre- and Post-Adoptive Parent Group at PCS - 7pm Hannukah Party Kita Zayin class, 11am-1pm Introduction to Judaism, 11:30am-1pm	Yoga Class at PCS, 7:15 pm	20 * 1st Night of Hannukah	Rosh Chodesh Mother-Daughter event at PCS, 7 pm Hannukah 2	Hebrew High School, 6:15 pm - 7:30 pm Hannukah 3	Hannukah 4 4:12pm-4:30pm - Candle lighting	Morning Meditation, 9 am; Shabbat Service, 10 am Hannukah 5 5:43pm-5:44pm - Havdalah (72 min)
Hannukah 6 NO HEBREW SCHOOL	Yoga Class at PCS, 7:15 pm Hannukah 7	Hannukah 8 Rosh Chodesh Tevet	8th Day of Hannukah	NO HEBREW SCHOOL	30 Birthday blessings 4:17pm-4:35pm - Candle lighting	Morning Meditation 9 am; Shabbat service 10 am Parashat Vayigash 5:48pm-5:49pm - Havdalah (72 min)

Note: Times and dates of events may change after the newsletter has come out. To get the latest information on any possible changes, please check the calendar on our website: www.ShalomPCS.com. Future months are also on the website.

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WJCS JEWISH HEALING CENTER

(SELECTED PROGRAMS)

Spiritual Journeying Groups

The Literature of Grief (6:00-7:30 PM)

Writers of all genres (poetry, fiction, memoir, playwriting) have explored the universal theme of grief in their work. In this group, we will read a variety of literature and discuss the work and the writer's experience of bereavement.

You need not be bereaved to attend, but you do need to read the assignments before class!

3 Wednesdays, November 9, December 14, January 11, 6-7:30 PM (\$25)

Spiritual Support Groups

Bringing Light into Darkness - a Chanukah Bereavement Program
Celebrate the 2nd night of Chanukah with other bereaved Jews. How can we find light in dark times? Food, songs, storytelling, candle-lighting, and discussion of relevant Chanukah themes. For those with any kind of loss at any stage of the grieving process.

Wednesday, December 21, 6:30-8:00 PM

Fractured Families – a workshop for those dealing with family estrangements

You may be a sibling, a parent, or an adult child. You may be the one who cut off relations or you may be the one who was cut off by another family member. If there is an estrangement in your family-of-origin for which you desire healing, join us as we explore issues of anger, grief, and forgiveness in a safe environment. Familiarity with the Book of Genesis is highly recommended for this session.

Monday, January 9, 2012, 6:00-9:00 PM

Kumi Ori - Contemplative Sundays

We will be offering a variety of programs from 10:00 AM - 12:00 noon on Sundays once a month, integrating modalites such as meditation, chanting, yoga, text study, and writing exercises. Starting in October, there will be an optional meditation circle preceding each program from 9:15-9:45 AM

The upcoming dates for these programs will be Sundays, November 20, December 11, January 8, February 5, March 4, April 1, and May 20.

December 11: A Personal Chanukah: Rededicating Ourselves to Living Our Truest Selves

For further information on these or our many other programs, or to register, please contact:

Rabbi Pamela Wax
Spiritual Care Coordinator
Westchester Jewish Community Services
845 North Broadway
North White Plains, NY 10603
914-761-0600 x149
fax 914-949-6778
www.wjcs.com



The Westchester Jewish Council wishes all of you a Happy Hanukkah!

SAVE THE DATE!

The 36th Annual (Double Chai) Westchester Jewish Council Gala
Saturday, February 11, 7 PM, honoring
The Honorable Martin Rogowsky and Toby Rogowsky, Fred and Joyce Claar
Featuring the comedy of the Chicago City Limits
Westchester Jewish Center, Rockland & Palmer Avenues, Mamaroneck

For more information call the Westchester Jewish Council (914) 328-7001 info@wjcouncil.org visit us at www.wjcouncil.org (Formerly the Westchester Jewish Conference)

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FINE DINING ATTENTION TO DETAIL SUPERIOR SERVICE

To arrange a visit with our event planner, please contact us at 914-235-4400 or by email at info@fountainheadcaterers.com



PAINTING FROM THE INSIDE OUT

Guided by Eve-Marie Elkin Schaffer, LCAT, LMSW

Painting from the Inside Out uses paint as a catalyst for growth and exploration....encouraging adults and children to express spontaneously, without judgment or concern for outcome. The paintbrush is a tool; whether it is a color a dot, an outline or an image, a gesture appears from within. Spontaneity is awakened for exploration and play.

No training is involved. No skills required; just the desire to experience a sense of freedom and joy.

More info: www.evemarieelkin.com eveelkin@yahoo.com, 914 909 6292



REMINDER!!!!!

ISRAEL DAY PARADE JUNE 3, 2012

BE THERE!!!!



SAVE THE DATE:



Saturday, December 10: A very special Family Education Shabbat with SPECIAL GUESTS to be announced.

Sunday, January 22: "Under One Roof" joint Pleasantville Community Synagogue and Upper Westchester Muslim Society dinner.

Friday night, December 16 at PCS

Come for dinner! All are welcome!

PCS Celebrates Channukah, Shabbat and Our New Members!

For more information or to RSVP, call the synagogue office at 769-2672

or April Lasher Sanders at alasher@mtb.com