

A New Haven Tradition since 1892

# BEKIbulletin

April 2004

Nisan 5764 Vol. 10 Issue 4

**In this issue**



*Page 4. On 06 June, BEKI will honor Rabbi Jon-Jay Tilsen and Miriam Benson.*



*At left, below and on pages 8 and 10, pictures from the renovations groundbreaking.*



*Page 6 Passover begins on 05 April. See inside for information.*

## The congregation will mark Israel Independence Day with a concert of classical and Jewish music by the Earl Banquer Chamber Ensemble on Sunday evening, 25 April.

### **Yom HaAtzmaut Concert by the Earl Banquer Chamber Ensemble**

Please join us as we celebrate Yom HaAtzmaut – Israel Independence Day — with an evening of heavenly music on Sunday, 25 April 2004, at 7:30p, in our downstairs social hall. Proceeds will be directed to provide scholarships for youth trips to Israel and Jewish summer camping for our children and teenagers.

BEKI member Earl Banquer, who has performed and arranged music of all types since the late '30s, has arranged for a performance at BEKI by his woodwind ensemble. They will play arrangements that Earl has created especially for this group. The first half of the program will be a transcription for flute, three clarinets and bass clarinet of Felix Mendelssohn's String Quartet, Opus 44, No 2. After intermis-

sion, the group will perform a variety of freilachs and other Jewish music in honor of Yom HaAtzmaut.

Admission is \$18.00 for adults and \$10.00 for children twelve and under. Refreshments will be available during intermission. Come, bring your friends and let's celebrate! IC

Charles Ludwig, Ivan Sachs, Paul Goodwin, John Weiser, Gila Reinstein, and Rabbi Jon-Jay Tilsen in the chapel during the groundbreaking ceremony.



# Administrative Announcements

## April Schedule Changes

In April, our Shabbat afternoon services return to our "summer" schedule. Shabbat Minha services begin at 5:45p each Saturday afternoon, and is not followed by Maariv evening service at the synagogue. The winter schedule (Minha, study, Maariv & Havdala) will resume in November.

Standard Time resumes on Sunday 4 April 2004. Be sure to turn your clocks ahead one hour before going to bed Motse'ei Shabbat (Saturday night). If your clock reads 10:00p, set it to 11:00p.

No afternoon and evening services are held at BEKI on the night of the first seder. This year, the brief Minha and Maariv services will be held before the second seder, as BEKI is hosting a second seder.

## LifeCycle

- Mazal tov to Charlie & Violet Ludwig on being honored by the Jewish Historical Society of Greater New Haven on Sunday 23 May
- Mazal tov to George G. Posener on being honored by the Jewish Foundation of Greater New Haven on Thursday 06 May



Lynn Coville with Rabbi Tilsen at the Service conferring her Hebrew name

## BEKI-Bulletin

The newsletter is published monthly by Congregation Beth El-Keser Israel for the benefit of its members.

Congregation Beth El-Keser Israel is affiliated with the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism.

To contribute articles or for inquiries regarding membership, donations, or special activities, call the Synagogue office (203) 389-2108, or write to 85 Harrison Street, New Haven, CT 06515-1724

or email: [jjtilsen@beki.org](mailto:jjtilsen@beki.org)

or see our web page: [www.beki.org](http://www.beki.org)

For information about advertising, call the synagogue office. Deadline for submission of ads or articles is the 1st of the month preceding publication.

Annual subscription is \$36.00.

## BEKI-Bulletin

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A Message from Rabbi Tilsen & Dear Rabbi

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## A Message From Rabbi Tilsen: Passion Passé

I was impassioned about the film *The Passion*, and hoped the hype would be forgotten within a week of opening day. As long as it did not inspire pogroms in the streets of New Haven or the wilds of Woodbridge, my plan was to ignore the movie.

I will admit, though, that the idea of watching a movie in Aramaic appeals to me. Since Aramaic is the language of the Talmud, parts of the Hebrew Bible, and passages of the siddur, it is very much a “Jewish” language. As a cognate language to Hebrew, Aramaic is easy for the Hebrew speaker to learn. In the Jewish Theological Seminary’s rabbinical school, students are expected to acquire the language on their own, but it is offered as an elective course for language enthusiasts and specialists.

Apparently the Aramaic-Hebrew jargon sometimes provides a comic effect. When her son is arrested by the Romans, Mary says, “*Ma nishtana ha-laila ha-ze* – Why is this night different from all other nights?” But please don’t laugh aloud in the theatre, as the other viewers will not think this is funny.

The film’s use of Latin, on the other hand was a bit bizarre. Icelandic would have been an equally appropriate choice, as Icelandic was spoken in Israel about as much as Latin in that period.

Even more bizarre, I am told, is the negative portrayal of Jews in

the film. Not just the deicide – that “the Jews” are assigned responsibility for the death of the film’s protagonist – but worse, all of the Jews have crooked teeth and big noses. Outraged Jews complained that no group should suffer such negative stereotyping and racist characterization in films. Apparently, these complainants have not noticed how American Indians and African Americans are portrayed in television and film – not to mention the negative stereotyping of women. The Tarzan movie that came out a couple of years ago was a full-length picture set in an Africa devoid of (black) African people. That’s one way to avoid racist stereotyping.

The one unbelievable line in the film – direct from the Gospels – is the statement by the Jewish mob, “May his blood be upon us and our children” (Matthew 27: 25). Who would say such a thing? What Jew would utter such a curse on his or her own children? As my mother, of blessed memory, might have put it, only someone with a *goyisha kopf* (“non-Jewish mentality”) could say such a thing.



On the other hand, there are aspects of the story that may have universal appeal. Many can identify with the suffering, the perceived injustice and disloyalty. Indeed, the themes play well today in films such as “The Green Mile,” which is a replay of the crucifixion, this time with a miracle-working black man who is sentenced to death in the electric chair. As Lenny Bruce once said, if the story had taken place in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Christians would be wearing little electric chair pendants around their necks. But the movie does not develop those themes – it is merely an unending graphic display of human suffering, and if it is accurate, it was the fate of over 100,000 Jews during Roman occupation. So skip the movie, read the book.

My response to the film is to go and study Torah. After all, were the film to impel me to spend more time rereading the Gospels than studying Torah, it would be a victory for the missionaries. I am all for interfaith dialog and understanding, but that cannot happen unless I am well-grounded in my own faith and culture.

# A Message From President Gila Reinstein

## *Celebrating the First 10 Years Together.*

On Sunday evening, 6 June, BEKI will celebrate our first 10 wonderful years with Rabbi Jon-Jay Tilsen and his wife Miriam Benson.

This past decade has been a time of extraordinary growth and renewal for the congregation, bringing in more and more young families, building on our traditional programming, innovating new activities, and renewing our building and grounds. We have prayed and studied together, sung and danced, mourned losses and celebrated births, benei mitzva and weddings. Every year BEKI gets better and better, and the Rabbi and Miriam are a big reason why. It's time to celebrate them!

Anyone who has met Miriam and Jon-Jay knows they are kind, warm, funny, down-to-earth, smart, good people, with a love of Judaism and a love of life. We are lucky to have them in our community, and we hope to share our lives with them for many years to come.



The 6 June gala will give us a chance to show our love and respect for Jon-Jay and Miriam and thank them for all they do for our community. And we're going to have a great time, while we're at it.

We are planning a glorious party that will begin with a cocktail hour at 6p, followed by an elegant sit-down dinner, an entertaining program, and a chance to dance off all the delicious calories absorbed throughout the evening. Steering committee members include Sharon Bender, Gloria Cohen, Brian Kar-sif, Darryl Kuperstock, Sid Levine, Jesse Palumbo, Bryna Pauker, Jay Sokolow, Adele Tyson, Suzie Voigt and myself. Many other people are also hard at work on the event, and all will be thanked in good time

As a lasting memento of the evening, we are putting together a tribute book. The book will have biographies and photos of Jon-Jay and Miriam as well as information about the shul, our history and our vision for the future.

In addition, the book will have tribute messages and ads. This is the fundraising part of the event. We hope that every member of BEKI will want to say a few

words of thanks or congratulations in the tribute book. Notices will run from \$1,000 for a full page to \$36 for a listing. If you need help wording or designing your message, contact the office for assistance. Peggy will put you in touch with members of the tribute book committee, who will be happy to assist.



In addition to tributes from BEKI members and our friends and family, we are selling ads to local merchants and service providers. We hope that you will sell ad space to two or three businesses you patronize. Contact Tribute Book Committee members Sharon Bender, Terri Stern, Gloria Cohen, Helen Rosenberg, Suzie Voigt, Carl Goldfield or me for instructions and order forms.

Proceeds from the tribute book will help pay for the new elevator and wheelchair-accessible entrance—projects that are making BEKI even more user-friendly and open to all. Surely this is an appropriate tribute to Jon-Jay and Miriam!

We are inviting many people to the party, and we want to be sure that members of the congregation can attend, because space is limited. Please watch for your invitation, and as soon as it arrives, respond with your reservation, tribute notice and check. As always, you can charge your reservation and tribute. *GR*

## Leave a Legacy

*Dear Donna:*

I would like to donate to BEKI, but I cannot afford to give up the income. In fact, with current interest rates being so low, I'm struggling to make ends meet since I primarily live off the income from my savings. I guess I just can't afford to give, right?

Sincerely,  
*Struggling in New Haven*

*Dear Struggling*

I sympathize with your plight, but there may be a way you can give to BEKI, and increase your income at the same time. A charitable gift annuity through the Jewish Foundation of Greater New Haven will insure you a regular income payment at a decent interest rate, and can provide that the principal at your death passes to BEKI. Because you make an irrevocable election to donate the principal to BEKI, you are entitled to a charitable deduction on your income tax return in the year of the gift. The Foundation will accept a charitable gift annuity of as little as \$5,000. If this idea appeals to you, please contact Dennis Magid at the Jewish Foundation (387-2424 or [dmagid@jewishfoundation.org](mailto:dmagid@jewishfoundation.org)) or contact me (Donna Levine 785-8079, [sdsij@aol.com](mailto:sdsij@aol.com)) to assist you with your planning.

*Donna Levine, attorney*

## Hey, what happened to my Bulletin?

Yes, readers, after years of tweaking the appearance of the monthly *Bulletin* here and there, we decided to try a radical new design. The goal was to make the *Bulletin* more readable and attractive, giving it a fresh look, with more pictures and a clearer organization. We hope you like the results.

Thanks go to Howard Gralla, who gave helpful input early in the process, and to graphic artist

Bjorn Akselsen of Icehouse Design, who worked with Gila Reinstein to create the new look. Bjorn, who lives in Westville and whose daughter went to Abiyoyo in years past (she's now in kindergarten), donated his time and talent to the shul. We are truly grateful to him for giving us a beautiful, new look for the *Bulletin*.

Photos—both prints and digital images—will be especially welcome. Please send them by email, snail mail or in person to the synagogue office. *GR*

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## Selling of Hametz

During the eight days of Pesah (Passover), it is forbidden for Jews to eat or own edible *hametz*. Hametz is any product containing wheat, barley, oats, spelt or rye that has not been especially prepared kosher for Pesah. Ideally, one physically disposes of all hametz by the morning before Pesah (the morning of Monday 05 April 2004). In order to be sure that this has taken place, or to avoid the loss of expensive hametz such as liquor, one can sell their hametz for the period of Pesah. If you would like to authorize Rabbi Tilsen to sell your hametz to someone who is allowed to own it, please sign the form available at each daily morning and evening service beginning at Purim or sign and return the form included in the March synagogue mailing for that purpose. If you need a form faxed to you, give Peggy (389-2108 x14 or office@beki.org) your fax number or fax her at 389-5899; you can also find a form at [www.beki.org/forms.html](http://www.beki.org/forms.html). The form is a power of attorney allowing Rabbi Tilsen to sell your hametz for you, which he will do in a sale that will be effective at 10:00a on the morning before Pesah.

## KINAHARA: Kosher for Pesah

BEKI members and supporters with questions regarding Passover observances are welcome to contact Rabbi Tilsen at 389-2108 x10. Answers to frequently asked questions can also be found at the website of the Kashrut Initiative of the New Haven Area Rabbinical Assembly: [www.kinahara.org](http://www.kinahara.org).

## Kulanu – Special Needs Seder

The Sisterhood of Congregation Beth El-Keser Israel, and Kulanu, in conjunction with Jewish Family Service and Abel Catering, hosted the twentieth-second annual Adult Special Needs Model Seder at BEKI during March. Each year the Sisterhood has hosted an enthusiastic group of Jewish adults from the New Haven area with a variety of special needs. This year, a record 70 people were expected to participate.

For many, this is their only taste of Passover and one that they relish and look forward to each year. The Torah teaches of four types of children, and the Haggada

reminds us that we must tell the story of the Exodus to each son and daughter of Israel in the way that is most meaningful to him or her. Through the efforts of Sisterhood, Kulanu Director Lauren Kempton, the generosity of Abel Catering and the good offices of the Jewish Family Services, the Exodus is reenacted through song, food and story at a table set in the Passover tradition.

Kulanu is BEKI's outreach program for adults with special needs. Kulanu is supported by The David & Lillian Levine Endowment for People with Special Needs at Congregation Beth El-Keser Israel, which is managed by the Jewish Foundation of Greater New Haven.

## Hagada Workshop

Get ready for Pesah with a new look at the *hagada* with R' Moshe Meiri. The workshop will be held on Sunday 28 March 2004 at 9:30a, immediately following the 9:00a morning service. There will be two sessions, one beginning at 9:30a, the second beginning 10:45a. Come for one or both.

## Hagadot and Seder Plates at Giftshop

*Hagadot* (do-it-yourself guide and service books) for Pesah, including the Rabbinical Assembly's *Passover Haggadah: The Feast of Freedom*, are available at the Sisterhood Giftshop and wherever fine Judaica is sold. The Giftshop also offers a significant collection of decorative seder plates.



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## Bediqat Hametz & Biur Hametz

On the night of Sunday 04 April 2004 (the night before the first seder), it is customary to perform *Bediqat Hametz*, the final check for leavening before Passover. This procedure can be done as a spiritual or fun ritual with children or adults. The next morning, Monday 05 April (the morning before the first seder), it is customary to perform *Biur Hametz*, a final "search and destroy" mission for leavening, to insure compliance with the rule against possessing or eating hametz during the festival. Instructions for *Bediqat Hametz* and *Biur Hametz* can be found in most *Hagadot*, including the Rabbinical Assembly's *Passover Haggadah: The Feast of Freedom*.

## Siyyum Bekhorot

The Fast of the First Born is Monday 05 April 2004 beginning at dawn. Firstborn who attend the Monday morning service at 7:00a may conclude their fast by partaking of the *seudat mitzva* (obligatory feast) celebrating a *siyyum*, the conclusion of a study project. Services and *siyyum*



will end by 8:25a. All may attend. That time will also be the last opportunity to authorize Rabbi Tilsen to sell your *hametz* (see "Selling of Hametz" in this issue).

## Let All Who Are Hungry...

The Seder of Pesah is a wonderful opportunity to welcome others into our homes. Our congregation comprises many people who may

not have extended family locally, do not have Jewish relatives, are new to the area, or who otherwise would benefit greatly from a seder invitation. If you are able to open your Seder to additional guests, please contact Rabbi Tilsen at your earliest opportunity at 389-2108 x10 ([jjtilsen@beki.org](mailto:jjtilsen@beki.org)). If you are able to host an adult who is a mental health services consumer or who has developmental disabilities, please contact Education Director Dr. Lauren Kempton (389-2108 x33 or [lkempton@beki.org](mailto:lkempton@beki.org)). If you would like to pay for a seder meal for one person (\$25), please send your contribution to the office designated as "seder meal donation."

## Service & No Service Schedule for Pesah

Please note that there is no evening service at BEKI on the first night of Pesah. Festival morning services

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begin at 9:15a on Tuesday 06 April, Wednesday 07 April, Monday 12 April and Tuesday 13 April. For a more complete listing, see the calendar page in this issue or [www.beki.org/schedule.html](http://www.beki.org/schedule.html).

### **Conservative Community Second Seder**

We are hosting a Conservative Community Second Seder, which is presented by our congregation along with Congregation B'nai

Taking down the memorial plaques to prepare for renovations.

Jacob, Temple Beth Shalom, and Congregation Or Shalom. For information or reservations contact Peggy at 389-2108 x14 or [office@beki.org](mailto:office@beki.org). Advance reservations are required and due by 30 March. Participation is \$36 per adult or \$18 per child age twelve or under. Vegetarian and non-vegetarian entrees are offered. The seder meal is served under the strict supervision of KINAHARA: The Kashrut Initiative of the New Haven Area Rabbinical Assembly.

### **Shir HaShirim Song of Songs**

The Biblical love poetry of *Shir HaShirim - Song of Songs* will be read on the morning of 10 April 2004 during the Shabbat Pesah service. Tradition ascribes the work to King Solomon himself, writ-

ing 2,900 years ago. Celebrate the spring holiday of Pesah with this beautiful and moving reading.

### **Yizkor Memorial Service**

The Yizkor Memorial Service will be held during the 9:15a Festival morning service on Tuesday 13 April 2004. The Festival service includes a *Shaharit* morning service, *Hallel* (Psalms of praise), a Torah reading and *Haftara*, and the *Musaf* additional service, and concludes by noon. The Yizkor memorial service is one of four such services during the year that help us recognize our feelings of loss, which are often especially intense during the Pesah season, and to honor the memories of our loved ones.





## Sefira – Counting the Omer

At the second seder (Tuesday 06 April), we began daily *sefirat ha-omer* (counting of the omer), a counting of days to Shavuot, the next major festival. The counting, preferably done each night for 49 nights, is an expression of eager anticipation, commemorating the period of expectation and preparation we experienced in the Exodus from Egypt until the revelation at Sinai.

The simple home ceremony is printed in most *siddurim* (prayer books), including *Sim Shalom*, immediately after the weekday evening service. While it is a mitzva prescribed for adults, *sefirat ha-omer* can also be a fun, artistic and joyous ritual for families with children.

In the days before printed calendars, calendar watches and daily newspapers, the *sefira* served to keep the liturgical calendar of the Jewish People synchronized, no simple accomplishment given dispersion and isolation of much of the community. The term *omer* refers to the measure (one handful) of grain that was used to create a physical relic of the counting. With a physical reminder, even illiterate people could do a recount in case they forgot the day's number.

Families with young children may use this opportunity to help their children understand and experience anticipation, planning, counting and hope.

*Teach us to number our days,  
that we may attain a heart of  
wisdom – Psalm 90:12*

## Yom HaShoa – Holocaust Memorial Day

Yom HaShoa will be on Sunday night 18 April and Monday 19 April 2004. This day will be recognized at BEKI in the liturgy at morning services and will be explored in the Religious School. Some in our community observe Monday as a fast day.

## Kadima & USY

### BEKI Youth to Participate in Community Yom Hashoa Service

BEKI-BJ Kadima and USY Youth groups will participate in a march and service for Yom Hashoa on Sunday 18 April. BEKI member Liora Lew is on the Planning Committee.

To help parents prepare for Yom Hashoa with their children, BEKI Religious School has established a lending library in the Religious School office. There is a bibliography in the literature rack listing sources on "How To Speak To Your Child About The Shoa."

LK



Ariel and Daniel help relocate chapel sacred scrolls at renovation groundbreaking.

# Dear Rabbi

*An occasional column of answers, advice and helpful household hints*

## Dear Rabbi,

The following notice appeared as a "special alert" in *Kashrus Magazine* (March 2004 p. 7): "Manischewitz Chocolate Coins ('OU-Pareve') bear the words: 'In G-d We Trust.' A number of leading *rabbonim* have *Paskened* that one may not eat them nor throw away the chocolate and wrappers, if they too have those words. Consult your rabbi."

So rabbi, I am consulting you. What should I do if we have those coins?

*Signed,*  
*In R-bbi We Trust*

## Dear Trust,

Our *halakha* (law) holds that there are five basic Hebrew names of the Almighty that are so sacred that they may not be treated casually or erased. Among those are the tetragramaton, the four-letter name beginning with yud, which is unpronounced and is usually replaced by "Adonai" ("my Lord") when reading or praying aloud, and is sometimes replaced with "HaShem" ("The Name"). It is sometimes symbolized as a *hei* apostrophe or as a double *yud* in Hebrew.

Another sacred name is the Hebrew equivalent of "Allah" and its variations. This name begins with the letters *alef lamed* and ends with a consonantal *hei*, or, in the most common variations, ends with

the *im* or *enu* suffix. This name is most often translated as "God." It is the generic name used to describe both God and false gods (as in, "You shall have no other gods before me").

Some people wish to transfer that sanctity to the common English word "God" (hence, "G-d"). Although there is no basis for this in law, who am I to stand in the way of popular or personal piety. If you have such coins, especially if the chocolate is still there, and especially if it is milk chocolate, please bring them to my office and I will dispose of them properly. If the chocolate is already gone, and you have only the foil wrappers, recycle them.



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## Shabbatot

### Darshan in April

Howard Needler will serve as darshan (Torah commentator) on Shabbat *parashat* Tazria-Metsora, 24 April 2004.

### Shabbat Shalom Learners' Minyan

The "Shabbat Shalom Learners' Minyan," which meets every other Saturday morning at 10:45a in BEKI's Rosenkrantz Family Library, is an ideal setting for veteran and novice shul-goers alike to become more comfortable and proficient in the Shaharit (morning) and Torah services in a supportive setting. Expertly led by Steven Fraade, Rabbi Alan Lovins and others, the Shabbat Shalom Learners' Minyan is a nurturing exploration of practice and theory presented in a participatory, non-threatening and multi-generational setting. Many members who take advantage of this unique offering feel a deeper sense of awe born of increased understanding and appreciation for the services.

The SSLM meets on the 3rd & 17th of April. Everyone is welcome to participate.

### *Mondays* Rashi Study Group

Each Monday morning from 7:45a to 8:30a adults meet in the Rosenkrantz Family Library to read Rashi's commentary on the Torah. It is possible to join the study group for a single meeting or to begin at any time. Knowledge of Hebrew is not necessary. Rashi purported to explain the *peshat* of the text, i.e.,



the meaning in its historical, literary and linguistic context. Visitors and new participants are welcome. The Rashi Study Group meets immediately following the 7:00a *shaharit* morning service. The RSG will not meet on 5 April due to Taanit Bekhorot (see article in the Pesah section) nor on 12 April due to the seventh day of Pesah.

### *Monday 05 April* Siyyum Bekhorot

The Siyyum Bekhorot (see article in Pesah section) includes a brief period of Torah study. The siyyum will be on Monday 05 April following the 7:00a *shaharit* service and concludes by 8:25a. All are welcome.

### *Wednesdays* Berakhot Talmud Study Group

A Berakhot Talmud Study Group meets weekly on Wednesday mornings from 7:30a to 8:00a. The Study Group focuses on the original text and the issues that arise from the Mishna and Gemara, with attention to the technical aspects of the text. A knowledge of basic Hebrew is very helpful but

not required. The Group is open to all. The study group will meet *not* meet on 7 April due to the second day of Pesah, nor on 14 April due to *Isru Hag* (the day following the festival), nor on 21 April due to Rosh Hodesh services.

### Rabbis' Study Group

*Wednesdays with Murray* is a weekly study group exclusively for rabbis, facilitated by Rabbi Murray Levine. The Wednesday study group affords local rabbis an opportunity to pursue their own *talmud torah* (Torah study) in a "safe" setting and with opportunities to learn from each other's experience and insight. For more information, call Rabbi Murray Levine at (203) 397-2513.

### *Thursdays* Sanhedrin Talmud Study Group

The "Sanhedrin Talmud Study Group" meets weekly on Thursdays during the lunch hour at a downtown New Haven professional office for Talmud study. The Group has met weekly since 1999. For some participants, this is their first direct experience with Talmud text. The Group focuses

# Torah for the Hungry Mind - Adult Studies

on the issues raised in the Talmud, with less attention to the technical aspects of the text. Knowledge of Hebrew or Aramaic is helpful but not required. For information contact Marc Schwartz at 562-9873 or mschwartzmd@hotmail.com.

## AA Meeting

A Thursday night AA meeting is held at BEKI every Thursday night at 8:00p. The weekly Meeting has been held at BEKI since May 1997. Open to any person who can benefit from a recovery program, the meeting is held according to standard AA procedure. This is not a specifically Jewish recovery group, although a large proportion of participants are Jewish. For

information on the weekly meeting call Jay at (203) 387-6019 or email Jay at sokolow@snet.net.

## Every Day

### Divrei Torah on the Web

A collection of Divrei Torah (Torah commentaries) and essays by members and Rabbi Tilsen is posted on BEKI's website under "Adult Studies" and "Meet Rabbi Tilsen."

### Editions Additions

Our Rosenkrantz Family Library now has the Harry Potter books (first five) in Hebrew, in the "New Books" section.

### Video Library News

Our Hebrew Video Library now has two Harry Potter DVDs in Hebrew (*Chamber of Secrets* and *Sorcerer's Stone*). These are Region 2 DVDs which will *not* play on standard American DVD players or computer DVDs. You can watch them in the BEKI media room or obtain special software to enable home computer DVD players to read Region 2 DVDs

### Audio Library on Web

Various blessings and prayers are recorded for educational purposes on BEKI's web site. Shabbat, Festival, and daily liturgical selections are presented. To hear the selections, go to [www.beki.org/audio.html](http://www.beki.org/audio.html).



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When I was a little girl my mother, Daisy, taught me to love flowers. We lived in Bridgeport in an eight-family house, and I do not remember our garden. However, I do remember the garden of Mrs. Swenson who lived downstairs. I learned at an early age that flowers went on the dining room table and were very special.

One day, I wanted to give flowers to another neighbor, Mrs. Wall. She lived behind us in a single house and always shared her lilacs. I went to Mrs. Swenson's garden without permission and picked all her bleeding hearts. I tied them up in a red ribbon and marched them up to Mrs. Wall's.

That night in our third floor apartment with my family, I remember doors slamming and my mother and father speaking about Mrs. Swenson being upset that her beloved flowers were gone. She had brought the cuttings from her homeland of Sweden. She kept shouting about the Kempton girl, but she blamed the wrong one, my younger sister Mary Beth.

The years went by and we moved to Trumbull. In our garden, I learned about cosmos, daisies, forsythia, roses and jonquils. When I married and had my own homes

in Bridgeport and Monroe, I lovingly tended my gardens. I grew rubra lilies, New Guinea impatiens, dahlias, and hyacinths. Each time my mom visited, we would go outside and talk of flowers. When my father died in 1982, I was adamant there be no gladiolas at his Memorial Service. He hated those flowers. Instead I requested wild flowers, the ones he would pick for my mom as they camped each summer.

The years went by and my mother went from dementia to Alzheimer's as she approached her 90th birthday. Last Sunday she was admiring my birthday flowers – lovely, long-stemmed yellow roses. She said, "What beautiful daffodils, Lauren Jayne." I said, "Mom, you know they aren't daffodils, they're roses." One minute later, she

touched the petals and said, "What beautiful yellow daffodils."

I went in the next room and wept, for the loss of her memory and the names all gone of the hundreds of flowers she had taught me over fifty plus years.

Alzheimer's makes your mind into something like a Long Playing record that is stuck in the same groove. So I heard "daffodils" at least twenty times that same afternoon. I smiled and said, "No Mom, they're roses."

I have never written a column for this space about a topic that was not synagogue-related but I believe there is a Jewish truth in my story... Honor your mother and your father...respect your parents. Now I am the mother and my mother is the child so I will take her hand and walk in the garden and teach her the names of the flowers as she did for me so many years ago. Over and over.

## Garinim Montessori

A preschool program for children ages 2 to 6 will be opening in September 2004 under the direction of Lana Gad at BEKI. For information contact Lana Gad at 389.7445.



## Kulanu – Public Service

Participants in Kulanu, our outreach program to adults with special needs, are continuing to work with Interfaith Cooperative Ministries to shop for and deliver groceries to the elderly. Two Kulanu participants have been helping our office prepare bulk mailings.

## Saul's Circle

Our outreach program's Director, Dr. Lauren Kempton, has been named to the Center of Excellence Steering Committee by the Department of Mental Health. Fellowship Place, which has hosted some of our Saul's Circle outreach programs, has been named a Center of Excellence in Supported Community. BEKI has provided holiday and Jewish content events to the Fellowship House program.

Telephone (203) 776-1243  
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# Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				<b>1</b> 10 Nisan 12:30p Talmud Study Group (off-site) 8p A.A.	<b>2</b> 11 Nisan 6p Candle Lighting	<b>3</b> 12 Nisan 10:45a Children's Prgrms 10:45a Learner's Minyan Qiddush: Seth & Bryna Pauker
<b>4</b> 13 Nisan No Religious School	<b>5</b> 14 Nisan EREV PASSOVER 7:45a Rashi Study Group No Minha-Maariv 7:02p (EDT) Candle Lighting-Pesah	<b>6</b> 15 Nisan PASSOVER I Office Closed 9:15a Shaharit 6:30p Minha-Maariv 7p Community Seder after 8:03p Candle Lighting-Pesah	<b>7</b> 16 Nisan/1 L'Omer PASSOVER II Office Closed 9:15a Shaharit No Religious School No Minha-Maariv	<b>8</b> 17 Nisan/2 L'Omer HAL HAMOED PASSOVER 12:30p Talmud Group (off-site) 8p A.A.	<b>9</b> 18 Nisan/3 L'Omer HAL HAMOED PASSOVER II 7:08p Candle Lighting	<b>10</b> 19 Nisan/4 L'Omer HAL HAMOED PASSOVER III 10:45a Children's Prgrms
<b>11</b> 20 Nisan/5 L'Omer HAL HAMOED PASSOVER IV No Religious School 10a Exec. Board Meets 7:10p Candle Lighting-Pesah	<b>12</b> 21 Nisan/6 L'Omer PASSOVER VII Office Closed 9:15a Shaharit 8p Candle Lighting-Pes	<b>13</b> 22 Nisan/7 L'Omer PASSOVER VIII (Yizkor) Office Closed 9:15a Shaharit	<b>14</b> 23 Nisan/8 L'Omer 7:30a Talmud Berakhot Study Group 8:30a Rabbi's Study Group 4p Religious School & Benei Mitzva Prgrm	<b>15</b> 24 Nisan/9 L'Omer 12:30p Talmud Study Group (off-site) 8p A.A.	<b>16</b> 25 Nisan/10 L'Omer 7:15p Candle Lighting 8p Late Service	<b>17</b> 26 Nisan/11 L'Omer 10:45 Children's Prgrms 10:45a Learner's Minyan Qiddush:Rabin/Katz 0
<b>18</b> 27 Nisan/12 L'Omer 9a Religious School (special program)	<b>19</b> 28 Nisan/13 L'Omer YOM HASHOAH 7:45a Rashi Study Group 7:30p Ritual Committee Meeting	<b>20</b> 29 Nisan/14 L'Omer	<b>21</b> 30 Nisan/15 L'Omer ROSH HODESH I 8:30a Rabbi's Study Group 4p Religious School & Benei Mitzva Prgrm	<b>22</b> 1 Iyar/16 L'Omer ROSH HODESH II 12:30p Talmud Study Group (off-site) 8p A.A.	<b>23</b> 2 Iyar/17 L'Omer 7:23p Candle Lighting	<b>24</b> 3 Iyar/18 L'Omer Darshan: Howard Needler 10:45a Children's Prgrms Qiddush: Foodim/Forbes
<b>25</b> 4 Iyar/19 L'Omer YOM HAZIKARON 9a Religious School (special program) 7p Yom HaAtzmaut Classical Concert	<b>26</b> 5 Iyar/20 L'Omer YOM HA'ATZMAUT 7:45a Rashi Study Group 7:30p General Board Meeting	<b>27</b> 6 Iyar/21 L'Omer	<b>28</b> 7 Iyar/22 L'Omer 7:30a Talmud Berakhot Study Group 8:30a Rabbi's Study Group 4p Religious School & Benei Mitzva Prgrm	<b>29</b> 8 Iyar/23 L'Omer 12:30p Talmud Study Group (off-site) 8p A.A.	<b>30</b> 9 Iyar/24 L'Omer 7:30p Candle Lighting	

## Daily Services

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
9a Shaharit 5:45p Minha-Maariv	7a Shaharit 5:45p Minha-Maariv	7a Shaharit 5:45p Minha-Maariv	7a Shaharit 5:45p Minha-Maariv	8:15a Shaharit 5:45p Minha-Maariv	7a Shaharit 6:00p Minha-Maariv	9:15a Shaharit 5:45p Minha

# Children's Shabbat Havura

The Children's Shabbat Havura meets every Shabbat morning at 10:45a in the Claire Goodwin Youth Room. Designed to address the spiritual and social needs of preschool children, the Havura meets concurrently with K-2 Kehila, Junior Congregation, Cosmic Conversations, the Shabbat Shalom Learners' Minyan and the main Sabbath service. Following the half-hour of songs, stories, prayers and dance, the children have their own qiddush refreshments and then enjoy supervised play until they join the adult worship for the Concluding Service and qiddush.

The Havura enjoys strong support from parents and the Synagogue. Currently about 70 children and their parents actively participate in the Havura. Visitors have come from across New England to observe this program as a model for their own synagogues.

Meeting the spiritual and social needs of preschool children is an obligation of the Jewish community and an important part



of the Synagogue's mission. The Havura (Friendship Circle) links the children to one another, to other concerned Jewish parents, and to the Synagogue. The Havura enjoys the active participation of parents who themselves are enriched by the experience. For many adults, the Children's Shabbat Havura serves as their introduction to active participation in the Synagogue Community.

If you are interested in learning more about the BEKI Children's Shabbat Havura, come any Shabbat (Saturday) morning at 10:45a and see for yourself. Or contact Miriam Benson at 389-6137 or mirbenson@aol.com, who, along with Ellen Cohen,

coordinates the program. You can also contact Education Director Dr. Lauren Kempton at 389-2108 x33 or lkempton@beki.org, the staff person who supports this parent cooperative.

## Friendly Face?

If you might like to serve as a "Greeter" on a Shabbat or Festival morning, to welcome guests, direct visitors, and assist those with special needs, please contact Ritual Committee Chairperson Steven Fraade at 397-9430 or steven.fraade@yale.edu, or Rabbi Tilsen at 389-2108 x10 or jjtilsen@beki.org.

## Torah Scroll Restoration

*Our Torah scrolls are all about 100 years old and in need of restoration. Some of the scrolls were restored in the 1980s, but the passage of time and daily or weekly use has taken their toll. All of the scrolls need lettering cleaned, replaced and treated. Some need sewing and taping of parchment, and some need a new set of etz hayim (spools).*

*The cost of restoring our best scrolls is \$3,600 to \$6,000 each; a fund of \$50,000 would provide for the permanent regular maintenance of the scrolls. If you would like to learn more about the condition of our scrolls or about the restoration process, or would like to fund the restoration of one or more scrolls, please contact Rabbi Tilsen at 389-2108 x10 or jjtilsen@beki.org.*

