1st Annual BEKI Picnic

Sunday 3 June 2007
11-2 p.m.

• **Where:** Lighthouse Point Park in New Haven—meet at the grassy area between the rest rooms and the Carousel

• **How:** Bring your own picnic lunch, blankets, etc.

• **Why:** Have fun, get to know other BEKI members, take a walk on the beach, play volleyball, Frisbee

Note: Parking fee for non-New Haven residents: $10 per vehicle.

Rain Date: Monday 4 June, 5-7:30 p.m.

Questions: Sharon Lovett-Graff, 387-2683  shoshmom@aol.com
Rhoda Zahler, 776-8593, rzahler@sbcglobal.net

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Hineini Comes to BEKI

Celebrate GLBT Pride month at BEKI by attending the screening of “Hineini” followed by a facilitated discussion of the film.

“Hineini (Hebrew for “Here I Am”) chronicles the story of one student’s courageous fight to establish a gay-straight alliance at a Jewish high school in the Boston area and the transformative impact of her campaign on everyone involved. Beyond the struggle to create a supportive environment for gay and lesbian students and teachers at the school, this is the story of a community wrestling with the very definition of pluralism and diversity in a Jewish context.”

10 June, 7:00p

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Annual Meeting

Wednesday 27 June 2007

6:15 to 6:45p
Refreshments

6:45p to 8:15p
Music & Presentations
A Message from Donna Levine, President of Congregation Beth El-Keser Israel

On behalf of the BEKI Board, I regret to announce that our Education Director, Dr. Lauren Kempton, has asked to step down from her position as Principal of the BEKI Religious School at the end of this academic year, in part to perform the mitzva of *kibud av ve-em* (honoring one’s father and mother, that is, to help care for her mother) and in part to pursue other academic and educational interests. Fortunately, Lauren has expressed her interest in continuing to work with our Kulanu and Saul’s Circle outreach programs for adults with special needs, to be available as a consultant for our educational programs, and to help us continue and develop Holocaust education at BEKI.

I have formed a group of concerned parents and officers to seek a new principal for our school. If you know of an educator who might be interested, they can contact me (Donna Levine) at (203) 785-8079 or president@beki.org for more information. We all wish Lauren the best in her future endeavors and are particularly delighted that she has expressed an intent to continue to be an educator at BEKI and an active member of our BEKI community.

Donna Levine

Al & Marge Barnett wish to express their well wishes to Carl & Ina & Susie

Would like to congratulate Carl, Ina & Susie. Thanks for all you do for New Haven!

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Bea Zampano, JHA Admissions ext. 237 Judy Rolnick, Director, GLADHC ext. 310
**Benei Mitzva in June**

**Dana Lew**, daughter of Yaron & Liora Lew, will lead and participate in services, and will read and teach Scripture, as a bat mitzva on Shabbat 1-2 June.

**Lital Avni-Singer**, daughter of A. Joseph & Ravit Avni-Singer, will lead and participate in services, and will read and teach scripture as a bat mitzva, on Sunday 17 June, Rosh Hodesh Tamuz.

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**HaNoladim BeMazal Tov**

Mazal tov to Berengere Gay & Perry Goodman on the birth of Adrien Harrison Goodman (Aharon Hirshel) and Mariella Rose Goodman (Miryam Rahel). Adrien Harrison was entered into the covenant through brit mila on the eighth day, and Mariella Rose was to be welcomed into the community on a Shabbat in May or June.

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**With sorrow we note the passing of**

David Sotsky, father of Raina Sotsky (& Morris Bell)

Joe Cyril May, father of CJ (& Becky) May

Rose Hodes

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**Mazal Tov to**

Robert P. Forbes, former Associate Director of the Gilder Lehrman Center and Lecturer in History at Yale, who has recently been appointed Assistant Professor of History and American Studies at the University of Connecticut, Torrington. Rob’s book *The Missouri Compromise and Its Aftermath: Slavery and the Meaning of America* has been published by UNC Press.

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A preschool program for children ages 2 to 6

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Now Accepting Enrollment

The success of the Montessori classroom is dependent on its core beliefs: freedom within limits and respect for each other and the environment. The goal of the program is to cultivate the child’s own natural desire to learn.

Congregation Beth El-Keser Israel • 85 Harrison St., New Haven

Lana Gad-Director 203.389.7445
Such a Problem: When Your Children Listen To You!

When my sons were young I would always tell them stories. Some of the stories were whimsical, some were serious, and some contained implicit life lessons. Both of my sons were very close to my father, Laurence F. Kempton, of blessed memory. My father was a camper, and often in summers he would take my boys for a walk where they camped in Sharon, Connecticut. My dad had a withered leg, so the walks were slow and leisurely. He always had his special walking stick with him, a gnarled branch twisted at the top as a holder for him. He was a Yankee, Boston-born-and-bred, and he could spin a good yarn. He also was a church deacon, so many stories were based on the Old Testament. These stories always focused on tsedaqa and giving of your talents to those less fortunate than you.

Since my life in my twenties was influenced by John Kennedy and Dr. Martin Luther King, perhaps many of my stories had a social justice or tiqun olam slant. If I told my boys once, I told them 1,000 times, that I went to teach in Father Panik Village, a tough inner-city neighborhood, due to my belief that I could help Kennedy, personally, return hope and excellence to inner city schools.

So last week my son Brett, the newly-wed, called. My daughter-in-law Jennifer is a traveling nurse and Brett is a board-certified emergency medical technician. They live in Houston, Texas. Brett said, “Mom, you know how you always taught us to work to make America better and to help those less fortunate than us?” “Yes,” I replied. “Well, in August, Jen and I are moving to New Orleans. They have a 20% shortage of medical staff for the city.”

I caught my breath. This is my baby, my youngest. The last doctor who relocated to New Orleans was shot, in front of her child. There is a killing a day. I had a flashback to the Katrina pictures and the lawlessness and the abject despair.

And then in my imagination I saw his face and in his voice I heard absolute pride and determination and an intense love of country and tiqun olam.

And I said lovingly, “Brett I am so proud of you; both Brooks and I are. We can’t wait to visit you in New Orleans.”

In this life, in raising our children, we can never be totally sure of the seeds we have sown, whether their lives will be a reflection of our values. Did we send them to the right school? Were we home enough for their needs? Was there conversation of world affairs at dinner… actually, was there dinner?

So my heart is full and my fears are allayed for now. Watching a child act on values that you cherish, and steer their life on a course of social action is an amazing feeling.
**Women’s League Torah Fund**

Your support of Torah Fund benefits The Jewish Theological Seminary. So send special greetings to your family and friends and have Torah Fund be an additional beneficiary of your kindness and thoughtfulness.

All cards are only $4.00 each, and that includes the stamp!

Contact BEKI Sisterhood Torah Fund Chair Barbara Cushen at 407-0314 and your card will be sent our promptly.

**Mazel Tov to:**

- Zelda Keller on her 100th birthday from Harriet & Noel Barstein
- Alan & Arden Schwartz on their 50th anniversary from Barbara Cushen & Stanley Saxe
- Jason & Susan Goldfarb on their 13th anniversary from Hyla Greenberg

**In Memory of:**

- Ada Fish to Lenny & Inge Fish from Barbara Cushen & Stanley Saxe; BEKI Hesed Committee
- Yale Lidsky to Eleanor Lidsky & family from Barbara Cushen
- Alan Pels to Mrs. Alan Pels & family from Helen Miller
- Harold Harmon to Mrs. Francis Harmon from Helen Miller
- Ada Fish to Debbie Fish Kaye & family from David Wright
- Joe Cyril May from BEKI Hesed Committee; the Lew family; Sue & Vic Stein
- David Sotsky to Raina Sotsky & Morris Bell & family from BEKI Hesed Committee; the Lew family; Sue & Vic Stein

**Thank You to:**

- Muriel Banquer from Violet & Charlie Ludwig
- Herb Etkind from Violet & Charlie Ludwig

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**Benefit Congregation Beth El-Keser Israel**

Ask us about establishing a fund, trust or annuity to ensure BEKI’s future.

Charitable giving strengthens our Community and provides the donor with tax savings.

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Visit us at www.beki.org
BEKI held an elegant dinner party on 6 May to honor three of our own, who as civic leaders, devote their time to the needs of the city and community: Carl Goldfield, President of the New Haven Board of Aldermen; Ina Silverman, Alderman; and Susan Voigt, New Haven Democratic Party Town Chair.

In addition to members of the congregation and other friends and family members of the honorees, the distinguished guests included Mayor John DeStefano, Attorney General Richard Blumenthal, President of the Yale union Local 34 Laura Smith, and several members of the New Haven Board of Aldermen.

To honor the honorees in a very special way, the congregation donated a basket of 35 books on Jewish topics to the New Haven Public Library. The collection ranged from children’s picture books, to fiction, non-fiction, and reference works.

Leaves for the BEKI Tree of Life were engraved in honor of the occasion, and will be placed on the tree in the coming days.

During the cocktail hour, the Drake Smith, Jr. Ensemble played a sophisticated program of jazz, and the E.S. Express, a jazz band from the Edgewood and Sheridan middle schools, performed during dinner. The honorees were presented with historic maps of the City of New Haven.

Rabbi Jon-Jay Tilsen delivered a thought-provoking and inspiring devar Torah, and family members of the honorees were called up to say ha-motzi.

“What a thoroughly enjoyable evening!” Darryl Kuperstock said afterwards. An important member of the planning committee, Darryl noted, “It was actually exciting for me to see the entire process develop, each person working on his/her particular task with dedication and passion. It made for an event that reflected the true personality of the congregation: dignified and humble, respectful and celebratory, intelligent and humorous, tasteful and frugal, and valuing every aspect of the best the community has to offer.”

Ellen Cohen called it “a wonderful evening! The food, decor, music, program and company were all spectacular!!”

All the honorees are deeply connected to the city in which they live and work. Ina says, “New Haven is a world-class city, and I couldn’t do much better for a place to call home.” Susie applauds New Haven’s “Tremendous diversity—in people, neighborhoods, and restaurants!” and Carl enjoys the cultural resources and entertainment opportunities of a much larger city, “Thanks to the presence of Yale.”

When asked about their connection to the synagogue and Judaism, all of the honorees said that BEKI was like an extended family that provides companionship in good times and support in bad, as well as intellectual stimulation (and occasional aggravation). As for the role of Judaism in their lives, Carl noted, “I’m a Jew. Every moment of my life is imbued with that consciousness.” Susie explained that her sense of social justice came from her mother, of blessed memory, who instilled in her a strong sense of the importance of “Tiqun Olam.” Ina expressed appreciation being able to participate in “such a wonderful community where so many families share the same values,” and where she has learned from people “who live active, successful lives in secular society, while at the same time honoring their religious heritage.”

Originally from Connecticut, Carl Goldfield earned his undergraduate degree from Northwestern University in Illinois, his law degree from the State University of New York, Buffalo, and his LLM degree in taxation.
from Georgetown University. He is a partner in MeneoGoldfield, LLC where he specializes in real estate, trusts and estates, and general business law. In 1993 Carl was elected Alderman of the 29th Ward in Beaver Hill, and in 2006 he was elected President of the New Haven Board of Aldermen by his aldermanic colleagues. Although the Board of Aldermen takes a considerable amount of time, Carl also serves on a sub-board of Tower One – Tower East. He is married to Gaylord Bourne, director of Connecticut Operations for Achievement First, the parent organization for the Amistad Charter Schools. She is also very active in New Haven and State politics, serving as a member of the Democratic Town Committee and the New Haven Board of Zoning Appeals. They have two children, Hannah and Nora.

Ina Silverman, a New Haven native, graduated from Yale College and earned a master’s degree from the Yale School of Medicine. She earned her law degree from University of Connecticut School of Law, and for a time, practiced law with a litigation firm, before working for the New Haven Board of Aldermen. Ina returned to school for teacher certification, and taught language arts in a Jewish day school for several years. She now teaches in the BEKI Religious School. Ina is serving her second term on the New Haven Board of Aldermen representing the 25th Ward. Her father also represented Westville as an alderman, which puts her in that exclusive club of second-generation elected officials. Ina also sits on the Board of Directors of the New Haven Legal Aid Association, the Tennis Foundation of Connecticut, and the Baseball Foundation of Connecticut. In past years she sat on the boards of the Jewish Federation, Women of Vision, and the Greater New Haven Community Loan Fund. She is married to radiologist Jay Sokolow and they have two children, Shai and Avital.

Susie Voigt was born and raised in Stoneham, Massachusetts. Her parents were Holocaust survivors who came to America after the war. She attended Barnard College, where she majored in history and became involved in the anti-Vietnam war movement. When she moved to New Haven in the late 1970s, she was one of the charter members of Yale’s clerical and technical workers union, Local 34, and served on the first negotiating committee that led to Local 34 and Yale reaching agreement. For the past 14 years, she has been Business Manager of the Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History. She became active in Democratic politics, served as a member of the city of New Haven Charter Revision Commission in the early 90s and served for 10 years on the City Plan Commission. Another of her distinctions is that she was the first woman in New Haven County ever appointed sheriff, in 1998, and is now a Connecticut State Marshal. Susie was Co-Chair of Mayor DeStefano’s mayoral reelection campaign in 2001 and in 2002, assumed her current position as the first woman to be head of the Democratic Town Committee in New Haven. Susie was married to Alderman Philip Voigt, of blessed memory. She has four children, Cloe, Claudia, Carlos, and Clararose.
Eder Leadership Retreat held for BEKI Leaders 18 March 2007

On Sunday morning 18 March, thirty-two BEKI members participated in a “Leadership Retreat” sponsored by a grant from the Eder Leadership Institute Board Development Program. The three-hour retreat was the second part of an initiative begun by the BEKI Executive Committee in December, 2006, to identify priorities for BEKI for the coming years. The retreats were facilitated by John Weiser of Brody and Weiser.

The group, which included equal numbers of Board and non-board members, identified four general areas for attention, and raised questions to discuss within each area. These included:

I. Issues regarding community diversity and tolerance

A. How can we be comfortable in a community with different levels of observance
B. How can we be known as a community that promotes Social Action - Tiqun Olam as an integral part of our religious observance?
C. How can we accommodate strong interests in having some “Havura” types of services with the desire not to splinter our community?

II. Issues regarding BEKI’s financial situation

A. Do we need to re-examine our dues structure?
B. Are there additional fund raising projects, we can undertake, building on our successes with Purim Baskets, tribute dinners, auctions, etc.?
C. How can we build up an endowment to protect BEKI’s future?
D. Who else in our community would like to assist in these efforts?

III. Issues regarding community building (See summary below)

IV. Issues regarding keeping our youth involved and interested in Jewish life and learning

A. Should we try some “pre-Kadima” programming?
B. Can older children take on leadership roles with younger children?
C. How can we encourage Religious School families and children to participate in other aspects of BEKI life?

The entire BEKI community is invited to share their thoughts on these topics over the coming months. On Wednesday 27 June at the BEKI Annual Meeting, there will be opportunities for everyone who is interested to become involved in these priority areas. Meanwhile, if you are interested in helping, please contact Donna Levine, BEKI President, or Rhoda Zahler, BEKI Secretary.

In next month’s BEKI Bulletin, we will include more detailed summaries of the recommendations generated from the retreat. Here is the summary of the conversation of the group that focused on “building community”:

continued next page
The Building Community Sub-Group generated a number of ideas to both integrate new members into the BEKI community and to continue to keep current members informed.

- One idea is to create a **directory or organizational chart** that highlights all of the activities, opportunities and committees at BEKI and the person to contact for more information. It is recommended that this directory or chart be centrally located near the lobby, be posted on the website and be published in the newsletter.
- Another idea is to create a **member directory** that lists all members with a picture and their interests, occupations, etc. This directory can be listed alphabetically but also provide an index that sorts by interests or activities to help facilitate member interactions.
- It was also suggested that a **Hospitality Committee** be created with the goal of helping to link new members and existing members. One role of this committee could be to have a “Dinner Invite Bank” where those who want to be invited get matched with those who are interested in having guests.
- It was also recommended that a **New Member Shabbat** be held at least yearly.
- It was also recommended that we revisit our practice of having a full Kiddush each Shabbat and consider having a monthly or quarterly “**Invite a BEKI friend home for lunch**” Shabbat, the first of these is happening on 12 May.

This Sub-Group also felt that it was important that we work to **further integrate Religious School and Garinim families into the synagogue community** perhaps through hosting events that will facilitate this goal. Finally, we found that some members of the Sub-Group did not fully understand the role of the BEKI **Hesed Committee** and in light of that felt that an article in the Bulletin that outlines the role of the committee and how to access the support of the committee would be helpful along with information regarding the committee in **new member information packets**.

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**Solar Cookers for Darfur**

The response to our appeal to raise money for the refugees from Darfur has been heartwarming. We have raised four hundred dollars which will buy six solar cookers and guarantee their safe delivery. Thank you so much for your support. The campaign is ongoing. If you want to learn more please go to: www.savedarfur.org. LK

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**Youth Announcements**

At the recent regional USY convention, the BEKI/BJ USY chapter won two regional awards.

1) Best Kadima event of the year - a Kadima Shabbaton co-sponsored by the USYers
2) Best Israeli Affairs event - a program run by the two Israeli emissaries from Afula

With our modest youth budget and volunteer staff, we are proud that we consistently turn out award-winning youth programming. For those who don’t know, our youth programs currently run from 6th grade to 12th grade, and we hope to explore the possibility of expanding them to younger children.

*Rena Cheskis-Gold*
Youth Commissioner
**Shabbatot**

**Darshanim in June**


Dana Lew will serve as darshanit on Shabbat morning 2 June 2007, parashat BeHa’alotekha, as a bat mitzva

Judi Janette will serve as darshanit on Shabbat morning 9 June 2007, parashat Shelah Lekha, Sisterhood Shabbat

Rabbi Lina Zerbarini will serve as darshanit on Shabbat morning 16 June 2007, parashat Qorah, Rosh Hodesh Tamuz

Sherry Rothman will serve as darshanit on Shabbat morning 23 June 2007, Huqat, honoring Dr. Lauren Kempton

**Shabbat Shalom Learners’ Minyan**

The “Shabbat Shalom Learners’ Minyan,” which meets every other Saturday morning at 10:45a in BEKI’s Library Chapel, 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, Rabbi Murray Levine 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. Everyone is welcome to participate regardless of religious status or background.

**Mondays**

**Rashi Study Group**

Each Monday morning from 7:45a to 8:30a adults meet in the Library Chapel 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.

**Wednesdays**

**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: Now Recruiting**

The “Sanhedrin Talmud Study Group” meets weekly on Thursdays during the lunch hour (12:30p to 1:30p) at the downtown New Haven professional office of Isaiah Cooper 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 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. Copies of the text are available. Currently, we discussing issues of capital punishment in Hebrew law and in the Noahide laws. It is possible to join the group at any point, inasmuch as the Talmud has no beginning and no end. For location or information, contact Isaiah Cooper at 233-4547 or icooper@cooperlaw.net.

**AA Meeting**

The Here We Are Group of AA meets 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. It is currently engaged in a 12 & 12 Study – Discussion. This is not a specifically Jewish recovery group, although a large proportion of participants are Jewish. For information on the weekly meeting contact Jay at (203) 387-6019 or 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.”
News

BEKI Israel Trip, Feb. 2007, on Mt. Gilboa

BEKI Israel Trip: The Torah is my Map

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Visit us at www.beki.org
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**Service Times**

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<td>8:00pm Candle Lighting</td>
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**BEKI Picnic at Lighthouse Point Park**

17 Sivan

7:45am Rashi Study Group

18 Sivan

8:30am Rabbi’s Study Group

19 Sivan

12:30pm Talmud Study Group

20 Sivan

8:00pm A.A.

21 Sivan

8:05pm Candle Lighting

22 Sivan

Sisterhood Shabbat Darshanit: Judi Janette

23 Sivan

10:45am Children’s Programs

10:45am Learner’s Minyan

Giddush: BEKI Sisterhood

**Rashi Study Group**

7:30pm Executive Board Meeting (off-site)

**Rabbi’s Study Group**

8:30am Rabbi’s Study Group

12:30pm Talmud Study Group (off-site)

8:00pm A.A.

**Talmud Study Group (off-site)**

8:08pm Candle Lighting Rosh Hodesh I

**Candle Lighting**

Darshanit: Sherry Rothman

10:45am Children’s Programs

8:11pm Candle Lighting 10:45am Learner’s Minyan

**Darshanit: Rabbi Lina Zerbarini**

Qiddush: Perkal/Graham, Rothman & Stoll

11:00am Lital Avni-Singer Bat Mitzva

**Rosh Hodesh II**

8:08pm Candle Lighting 10:45am Learner’s Minyan

**Candle Lighting**

Darshanit: Sherry Rothman

Qiddush: In honor of Dr. Lauren Kempton

**Rosh Hodesh II**

9:00am Lital Avni-Singer Bat Mitzva

8:08pm Candle Lighting 10:45am Learner’s Minyan

**Candle Lighting**

Darshanit: Sherry Rothman

Qiddush: TBA