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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

or see our web page: www.beki.org

For information about advertising, call the synagogue office.

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BEKI Bulletin

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A Message from Rabbi Tilsen & Dear Rabbi

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**garinim
montessori**

A preschool program for children ages 2 to 6

Celebrating Jewish Tradition

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

The New Sofas: A Sequel to the Old Sofas

This was quite a summer and fall for BEKI staff and volunteers. The lobby renovation involved drilling, sanding, hammering, painting, spackling (on bungee stilts) and demolition. Then more sanding, carpeting installed, tarps. Entrances changed, the chapel moved, walls up, walls down, entrances redirected....

Then Fall and the promise of the High Holy days, the Days of Awe. Rosh Hashana is a time of newness.... A sweet new year... new clothes... new hats... a new chance.

And our beloved BEKI, in the past personified as an aging woman of faded grandeur, perhaps a dowager; now redone, bright and vibrant in her new garb – recessed lighting, bright white walls like the clothes of a Shabbat bride... light wood and moldings... a new coat room ... a grand foyer . But what was missing? Oh yes, the old sofas.



Dr. Lauren Kempton

So during one Shabbat Morning Cosmic Conversation, a group of teens were ensconced on the rag-tag sofas; one orange and itchy, one flowered and well worn. The teens proclaimed their wish list for the “New Sofas.” They were very thoughtful in their deliberations. The new sofas must be soft, not scratchy, be comfortable and have pillows. I casually mentioned that the “Decorations” meeting was to be held the next Monday evening and the teens said, “We’ll be there.” There was a mention of signs and banners , and for just an instant I was back in the Sixties, witnessing young people committed enough to voice their views.

Well, show up they did. John Weiser, Renovations Chair opened the meeting. He asked for the “teen report from the Sofa Lobby” of Liora Cohen-Fraade, Yael Grazier-Zerbarini, and Hannah Rosner. He intently listened to the teens and recorded their suggestions. He took their suggestions when he made the sofa purchases, capably assisted by his daughter Ariel Zax Weiser.

The sofas arrived the next Friday. What utter excitement! And the ensuing commentary by all who entered sounded a little like a revision of “Goldilocks and the Three Bears”... They’re too light... they are too dark... they are too soft – no they are just right!

But for the High Holidays, they *are* just right. The lobby is now welcoming and inclusive for all. But still to me, these three sofas and their symbolism are the heart and soul of BEKI. They represent the symbolic frame of organization and leadership for our synagogue. The new sofas signify and symbolize the voices of all of us at BEKI. They signify a place of respite, for our resident teens, visiting teens, returning teens, worshipers needing a break, Cosmic Conversationalists and others. The sofas are as welcoming as we are as a congregation.

BEKI Religious School

The month of October presented many challenges for Religious School since most of the holidays fell on Sunday. So on Sukkot, we decided to hold Religious School in the BEKI sukka. Since many of our families do not build a sukka, this was the perfect opportunity to learn of Harvest Festival while seated in the sukka. We learned of the tradition of Ushpezin, inviting guests into the sukka, both biblical and family. The children especially enjoyed using the etrog and lulav.

Kulanu and Saul's Circle

The participants of Kulanu and Saul's Circle joined with the members of the Shalom Group for their fifth annual Sukkot dinner in the BEKI sukka. Each year the group explores a different aspect of the holiday of Sukkot. This year we explored the statement by King Solomon found in Proverbs about the four species for Sukkot: "Three things are beyond me: four I cannot fathom." We then studied the symbolism of the four species and the etrog.

Food and the Environment

On 22 October congregants and Religious School parents gathered to hear a presentation by Becky May on Food and the Environment. The presentation was a gift purchased at the BEKI Auction and donated by Sid and Donna Levine. Becky May gave an enlightening presentation on the desirability of purchasing food locally

and the reasons that we should support local farmers. The participants brought recipes that they matched with their favorite recipes using local foods. The presentation ended with a "field trip" to the City Seed Farmer's Market in Edgewood Park.

Veterans' Day Observance



Lou Hodes on Veterans Day

On Friday 10 November, Veterans' Day, daily services will be held at the Federal Holiday time, 9:00a. The office is open by appointment only.

National "Have a Minyan at Home" Day

Beth El-Keser Israel will join with other *shuls* in observing "National Have a Minyan at Home" day on Thursday evening 23 November. In marking this occasion, no afternoon-evening service will be held at the *shul* so that participants may have services in their own homes. For this purpose, plenty of *kippot* are available in your suit pockets or auto glove compart-

ments where you have been stuffing them. Years ago, when this program was initiated, skeptics predicted it would be a real turkey and would be axed, but our actual response has been positive, for which we offer thanksgiving.

Weekday morning services on Thursday 23 November are on the Federal Holiday schedule, from 9:00a to 9:45a.

Important Tax Information

Taxpayers are reminded that synagogue dues, paid pledges and contributions are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law. BEKI is a recognized 501(c)3 organization by the US Treasury. For many people it is advantageous to pay dues, pledges and contributions before the end of the tax year (for most people 31 December). It is also helpful to BEKI to receive your payment at an early date. Deductions for charitable contributions may not be subject to the Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT), and additional benefits may be realized by contributing appreciated securities. Please consult your tax advisor for more information.

Leave a Legacy: Where There's a Will...

There's no end to the good you can do.

BEKI has joined a statewide effort to promote charitable giving through estate planning called Leave a Legacy Connecticut. This effort is organized by the Connecticut Council for Philanthropy. Leave a Legacy Connecticut encourages individuals to leave a gift in their wills for causes they care about.

Connecticut's Leave a Legacy program urges people to leave their mark on the community. Our synagogue comforts the afflicted, teaches our children, and empowers people to repair their lives. Our mission of teaching and living Torah, honoring and worshipping the Almighty, and serving humanity depends on financial support.

The Jewish community of Greater New Haven has lagged far behind many other American cities in its philanthropy, including support of Jewish institutions such as BEKI. This is the unfortunate truth, despite the emphasis our tradition places on Tzedaka as a religious obligation, and despite the generally civic-minded orientation of our community.

In Connecticut, only 5.7 percent of decedents leave charitable bequests in their wills. The number one reason for this gap: most people say they were never asked, or did not think about it.

Leave a Legacy Connecticut is a statewide public awareness effort to promote charitable bequests. The campaign encourages people to make

gifts from their estates to their favorite nonprofit organizations such as BEKI. We urge people to discuss their intentions with financial and estate planners who specialize in this field. Many estate-planning professional organizations are a part of Leave a Legacy's collaborative efforts, as are more than 500 Connecticut nonprofit organizations.

"Everyone can help, regardless of income, and each gift makes an impact," says Lyn Walker, co-chair of Leave a Legacy Connecticut and a partner at Day, Berry & Howard.

BEKI members **Paul Goodwin, George G. Posener, Rabbi Murray Levine, Marvin Missan, Sid & Donna Levine** and **Rabbi Jon-Jay Tilsen** are among those who have included the Congregation in their estate plans, and welcome the opportunity to encourage others to do so as well. "I love BEKI," says Rabbi Levine, "and I want to do what I can now to support it, and to insure its strength in the future."

Consider including BEKI and other organizations in your will, so that you can continue to make a difference for generations to come. By remembering nonprofits in your estate plans, you can help improve the lives of generations of Connecticut residents. To find out more, contact BEKI President and



estate planning attorney Donna Levine at 785-8079 (sdsij@aol.com) or Rabbi Tilsen at 389-2108 x10 (jtilsen@beki.org).

If you already have a will, Attorney Donna Levine will prepare a free codicil designating your gift to BEKI. If you plan to leave 25% or more, or \$25,000 or more to BEKI, Donna will prepare your will at no cost.



David B. Margolis, CIC

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Shabbat Mincha Afternoon & Maariv Evening & Havdala on Winter Schedule

Shabbat afternoon and Saturday evening services follow a winter schedule from November through March. Services on Shabbat (Saturday) afternoon begin about 20 minutes before sunset. As the time varies, please check the calendar in this Bulletin for exact times for each week. All other services at BEKI remain at their usual times.

Following Shemini Atseret, we began including the phrase “mashiv ha-ruah u-morid ha-gashem” (“You cause the wind to blow and the rain to fall”) in all recitations of the *amida*. Beginning Monday night 4 December in the Maariv service, we use the phrase “ve-ten tal u-matar li-verakha” (“give winter dew and rain in proportion”) in each daily *amida*.

Take Care of Your Cemetery Need

The time to take care of your cemetery need is before there is a need. Now is the perfect time to select your sites... while there is a good selection. BEKI cemeteries are located in Hamden and West Haven, within minutes of the synagogue and with easy access to main thoroughfares. Member discounts are available.

We can help you select a site and discuss payment terms. Contact the BEKI Cemetery Association office today at 389-2108 x57 or cemetery@

beki.org and arrange a meeting with one of the officers of the cemetery association. For directions to the cemeteries see our website at www.beki.org under “Directions.”

Weekday morning services at BEKI

Begin your day in fellowship and with a spiritual direction. Sunday morning services (9:00a to 9:30a) provide a convenient hour for the drivers of religious school students as well as for people whose work or sleep schedules preclude attendance on other days of the week. Monday morning services (7:00a to 7:50a) include a brief Torah service, and is followed by the Rashi Study Group (7:50a to 8:30a). Tuesday mornings (7:00a to 7:30a) are attended by a unique mix of people. Wednesday mornings (7:00a to 7:30a) feature a continuing group of friends. Thursday mornings (8:15a to 9:00a) are ideal for people who either may not wish to rise earlier or who take children to school, and include a brief Torah service. Friday morn-

ings (7:00a to 7:30a) present an ideal setting for someone wishing to help develop a cadre of dedicated daily *daveners*. Regular participants in these services are always glad to welcome additional worshippers. Call our office at 389-2108 x14 or see www.beki.org/schedule.html for a complete schedule.



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HaNolad BeMazal Tov

Mazal tov to Amy Marx & Robert Schonberger, and to Sophie, on the birth of their son and brother Jacob Marx Schonberger in October in New Haven. A brit mila (rite of circumcision) was celebrated at BEKI according to law and tradition.

Mazal tov to Michael & Caryl Kligfeld on the birth of their granddaughter Dafna Sassona Novick to Jennifer & Steven Novick of Framingham, MA, in May 2006.

We Welcome New Members and Their Families

Jim Carloni and Mansell Carloni
Mark & Cyd Oppenheimer

Benei Mitzva in November



Matt Lebow, bar mitzva

Lauren Buckman, daughter of Ken & Linda Buckman, granddaughter of Ivan & Rita Sachs, niece of Mark & Ilene Sachs and of Robert & Betsy Sachs, will lead and participate in services as a bat mitzva on Friday 3 November at the 6:00p service and on Shabbat afternoon 4 November at the 4:30p mincha and maariv services.

Matt Lebow, son of Bruce & Laurie Lebow, will lead and participate in services as a bar mitzva on Shabbat 17-18 November 2006.

With Sorrow We Note the Passing of
Ted Klein,
father of Jennifer Klein (& James Berger)

Samuel Singer,
father of A. Joseph (& Ravit) Avni-Singer

Gertrude Mosher Koenig,
sister of Inge (& Leonard) Fish

John "Jack" Gerken, Jr.,
father of Ann (& Don) Green

Harry Leikind,
father of Robert Leikind (& Ellen Jawitz)

Max Teitelman

Norma Granoff

May the Almighty Comfort Those Who Mourn

Our gift shop has many new items for Hanuka gift giving. We can also order items for you – your patronage supports our synagogue.

Sisterhood will also be sponsoring a Hanuka Party for all – watch for our flyer!

Torah Fund

The Torah Fund Campaign of Women's League for Conservative Judaism offers the opportunity to participate in preserving, promoting and perpetuating Conservative Judaism. A donation of \$180 (Benefactor) or more entitles you to a specially designed pin in appreciation. This year our benefactors are Caryl Kligfeld, Violet Ludwig, Mimi Glenn, Ruthie Greenblatt, Diana Friedman-Opton, Margot Roten, Rachel Sutin and Barbara Cushen.

All donations and sale of cards are sent directly to New York to support programs and needs of our Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS) now in its 113th year.

Thanks to everyone who supports Torah Fund - - Cards for all occasions can be ordered by calling Chairwoman Barbara Cushen at 407-0314. They are \$4.00 each and this includes the stamp!

Thanks to the following who have purchased cards in the past few weeks - -

Mazel Tov to:

- Mr. & Mrs. Roy Schragar on their granddaughter's Bat Mitzva from Harriet & Noel Barstein
- Doris Sagerman on her milestone birthday from Bea & Milton Smirnoff; Adele Tyson

Happy New Year to:

- Mr. & Mrs. Alan Weichbrodt; Mr. & Mrs. Michael Weichbrodt; Ms. Sally Weichbrodt and Esther Rose from Hyla Greenberg

Get Well to:

- Bernice Gilman from Hyla Greenberg
- Michael Moscovitz from the BEKI Hesed Committee

In Memory of:

- Steven Ehrlich to Barbara & Ben Ehrlich from Barbara Cushen
- David Eisenstein to Miriam Helfer from Barbara Cushen
- Daughter Shoshana to Judy & Arnold Carmel from Ruthie Greenblatt
- Abe Fish to Lenny Fish from Ruth Greenblatt; David Wright
- Ida Fewes to her family from Shirley Mattler
- Morton Greenblatt to Ruthie Greenblatt from Sue & Vic Stein; David Wright
- Marcel Gutman to Mimi Glenn from the BEKI Hesed Committee, Barbara Cushen, Stanley Saxe, Ruthie Greenblatt, Adele Tyson, Harriet & Noel Barstein, Sue & Vic Stein, Mikki

- Ratner, Rachel & Allan Sutin, Sylvia Zeid
- Ted Klein to Jennifer Klein & Jim Berger from the BEKI Hesed Committee, Vic & Sue Stein

Sisterhood Event

“A Sunday Special – Dolls for Democracy”
Sunday 12 November – JCC
Community Room at 2:30p

We've planned a special Sunday afternoon for our Hadassah members, National Council of Jewish Women members and members of the Beth El-Keser Israel Sisterhood. Please join us at the JCC Community Room on Sunday 12 November at 2:30p for our combined meeting and social. Guest presenters Dr. Barry Herman and Joseph Finioia will be accompanied by 17 dolls whose likenesses depict famous people in history.

John F. Kennedy, Eleanor Roosevelt, Danny Kaye, Helen Keller, Abe Lincoln, Jackie Robinson, Golda Meier and others will come to life as we learn about their accomplishments and contributions to humanity.

Support your fellow members by attending our annual Sunday afternoon meeting. Spouses and friends are welcome. We look forward to seeing you all. (Light refreshments will be served.)

November 2006

10 Heshvan 5767 - 9 Kislev 5767

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 8:30am Rabbi's Study Group 4:00pm Religious School 5:00pm Benei Mitzva Program 10 Heshvan	2 12:30pm Talmud Study Group (off-site) 2:00pm Writing Group 8:00pm A.A. 11 Heshvan	3 4:27pm Candle Lighting 12 Heshvan	4 10:45am Children's Programs Qiddush: Buckman's 4:30pm Lauren Buckman Bat Mitzva 13 Heshvan
5 9:00am Religious School 9:45am MAKOM 3:00pm USY Pie Baking 14 Heshvan	6 7:45am Rashi Study Group 15 Heshvan	7 16 Heshvan	8 8:30am Rabbi's Study Group 4:00pm Religious School 5:00pm Benei Mitzva Program 17 Heshvan	9 12:30pm Talmud Study Group 2:00pm Writing Group 8:00pm A.A. 18 Heshvan	10 Office Closed/Veteran's Day 9:00am Shaharit 4:20pm Candle Lighting USY Regional Fall Kinnus (off-site) 19 Heshvan	11 USY Regional Fall Kinnus (off-site) 10:45am Children's Programs 10:45am Learner's Minyan Qiddush: Shragis & Abramovitz 4:20pm Minha-Maariv 20 Heshvan
12 USY Regional Fall Kinnus (off-site) 9:00am Religious School 9:45am MAKOM 21 Heshvan	13 7:45am Rashi Study Group 7:30pm Executive Board Meeting 22 Heshvan	14 5:30pm USY Pie Baking 23 Heshvan	15 8:30am Rabbi's Study Group 4:00pm Religious School 5:00pm Benei Mitzva Program 24 Heshvan	16 12:30pm Talmud Study Group (off-site) 2:00pm Writing Group 8:00pm A.A. 25 Heshvan	17 4:13pm Candle Lighting 6:00pm Matt Lebow Bar Mitzva 26 Heshvan	18 Matt Lebow Bar Mitzva 10:45am Children's Programs Qiddush: Lebow 4:15pm Minha-Maariv 27 Heshvan
19 9:00am Religious School 9:45am MAKOM USY Ice Skating (off-site) 28 Heshvan	20 7:45am Rashi Study Group 29 Heshvan	21 Rosh Hodesh I 5:30-7:00pm USY Pie Pick-Up 30 Heshvan	22 Rosh Hodesh II 8:30am Rabbi's Study Group No Religious School - Food Bank Only No Benei Mitzva Program 1 Kislev	23 Office Closed/Thanksgiving 9:00am Shaharit No PM services 2 Kislev	24 Office Closed 4:09pm Candle Lighting 3 Kislev	25 10:45am Children's Programs 10:45am Learner's Minyan Qiddush: TBA 4:10pm Minha-Maariv 4 Kislev
26 No Religious School No MAKOM 5 Kislev	27 7:45am Rashi Study Group 7:30pm General Board Meeting 6 Kislev	28 7 Kislev	29 8:30am Rabbi's Study Group 4:00pm Religious School 5:00pm Benei Mitzva Program 8 Kislev	30 12:30pm Talmud Study Group (off-site) 2:00pm Writing Group 8:00pm A.A. 9 Kislev		

Shabbatot

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 Shoharim (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 of the services. Everyone is welcome to participate regardless of religious status or background.

Sundays

MAKOM Beit HaMidrash at BEKI: "Introduction to Talmud" & "Talmud Berakhot, Chapter II" with Moshe Meiri

Beginning & Intermediate Sections

Serious youth are invited to dive into the "sea of Talmud" on Sunday mornings with Moshe Meiri. Two sections will be offered; one for beginning students, and another for continuing students. Students are expected to have studied some Mishna and be able to read Hebrew. An acquaintance



Moshe Meiri

with Rashi's commentaries is helpful. The text, the *El-Am* edition, will be supplied. This text is vocalized for easy reading and is accompanied by an English commentary and translation. The classes meet Sunday mornings from about 10:00a to 11:00a and 11:05a to noon. Students wishing to enroll should speak with Arnold Carmel at MAKOM. The classes are open only to students in grades 8-12. This is an honors program class and will be taught in an academic Jewish Studies style. Disciplined attendance is expected. Moshe may be reached at moshe@snet.net.

MAKOM Beit HaMidrash at BEKI: "The Genesis Chronicles" with Margolit Kern

Margolit Kern will be teaching *Miqra* (Scripture) for youth at two challenging levels on Sunday mornings. The classes are part of the MAKOM honors program at BEKI for students in grades 8-12. The classes meet Sunday

mornings from about 10:00a to 11:00a and 11:05a to 12:25p. Students wishing to enroll should speak with Arnold Carmel at MAKOM. This is an honors program class and will be taught in an academic Jewish Studies style. Disciplined attendance is expected.

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. The Rashi Study Group has met weekly since 1994 and is currently reading the book of Numbers. Visitors and new participants are welcome. The Rashi Study Group meets immediately following the 7:00a *shaharit* morning service.

Thursdays

Sanhedrin Talmud Study Group

The "Sanhedrin Talmud Study Group," hosted by Isaiah Cooper, meets weekly on Thursdays during the lunch hour (12:30p to 1:30p) with Rabbi Tilsen 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 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 location or information, contact Isaiah Cooper at 233-4547 or icooper@cooperlaw.net.

Writing Group

The Writing Group meets each Thursday in the Chapel Library from 2:00p to 4:00p. Interested writers gather to share the short pieces that they have written: memoirs, poetry, children's stories and short stories. The goal of the group is to encourage writing, critique of written pieces, and publishing. Each week the participants bring a piece of their writing. The writer then has a "Read-Aloud" and the group provides feedback. This community aims to generate writing and provide support and feedback for published pieces. For more information please contact Ruth Silver at bergida@yahoo.com or Dr. Lauren Kempton at 389-2108 x13 or lkempton@beki.org

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. 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.

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