

BEKI Bulletin

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October 2001 Vol. 7 Issue 10

ק"ק בית אל-כתר ישראל

Heshvan 5762

Festivals at BEKI

Children's Sukka Crafts Hour

BEKI and neighborhood kids are all invited to the BEKI sukkah for crafts and fun on Sunday 30 September from 10:30a to 11:50a. The program *may* be held outside unless it rains, in which case we will be inside. Dress for mess. Please feel free to invite friends and neighborhood children with their adults to join us and to help decorate the BEKI sukkah! Children are welcome to take home their creations or leave them in the sukkah.

Sukkot Observances

The Sukkot ("Booths") Festival begins on Monday night 1 October. The services that evening will be from 5:45p to 6:25p. The service may be held in the sukkah if conditions are favorable.

The Moishe Schnitman Memorial Sukka will be erected for the use of the BEKI community through the generous support of two BEKI families and

through the Men's Club. BEKI members and their guests are free to use the sukkah for their meals or for study during the festival on a first-come-first-served basis. The sukkah will be illuminated during the night to facilitate meals and study. Religious School and 20s-30s Havura events are scheduled for the sukkah at certain times, but it is a big sukkah, and members should feel welcome to use the sukkah even during these events.

Building a sukkah can be fun for the whole family, and it's a mitzva! If you've always wanted to build your own, now is the time. Sukkah Kits are available from Steve Henry Woodcraft at 919-489-7325. Members of the Men's Club can be available to help a little, too.

Order your lulav and etrog from your supplier of fine Judaica. Lulav and etrog are not used on Shabbat, but they are used on all of the other days of Sukkot, ending with Hoshana Rabba on Monday 8 October.

—Continued on page 5

Energy Star Award

The United States Environmental Protection Agency has designated BEKI as an Energy Star Congregation in recognition of the Congregation's efforts to improve its energy efficiency. The Congregation also received this distinction last year. In its national publications, the Agency notes that improving its energy efficiency is a priority at BEKI. Among other measures, the Congregation has updated some of its lighting, replaced broken windows, replaced old window air conditioners, and employed timers and staff to reduce the unnecessary operation of air conditioning and lighting on Shabbat and festivals when rooms are not in use.

—Continued on page 4

BEKI Takes Three Solomon Schechter Gold Awards

Our Congregation has been honored with three Solomon Schechter Gold Awards from the [United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism](http://www.uscj.org) (USCJ). BEKI will be presented with the awards, which are made bi-annually, at the Joint Convention in Washington, DC, in February 2002. BEKI will receive awards for excellence for its *Bulletin*, its efforts in Special Education, and in the category of Environment.

BEKI's monthly *Bulletin* presents a variety of news and information in a readable form, and is edited, produced and distributed entirely by synagogue members. In addition, an internet edition is accessible on BEKI's web site.

—Continued on page 4

No Parking

Members and visitors to BEKI are advised that parking is prohibited at all times on the East side of Harrison Street as indicated by the "No Parking" signs. Parking is usually available across Harrison Street, and ample parking is available in the BEKI lot at the rear of the building.

Planning a bar- or bat-mitzva at BEKI?

Parents planning a bar- or bat-mitzva observance at BEKI during the next three years are urged to call the BEKI office (389-2108 x14 or beki@snet.net) to reserve a date and to request a copy of the "Guide to Benei Mitzva Observance at Congregation Beth El-Keser Israel, second edition." The "Guide" is also available as a PDF document at www.beki.org/bmitzva.pdf. For more information on the Benei Mitzva program, contact Liora Lew at 389-1048 lioralew@aol.com.

Daily Services

Daily services at BEKI provide an opportunity to learn, pray, reflect, transition and center one's own spiritual life. Services provide a context for fulfilling the *mitzva* (religious obligation) of daily worship. Services are held every weekday morning and evening. See the calendar for a schedule. During this month, there will be a special need for more participants on Tuesday mornings (7:00a), Thursday mornings (8:15a) and Sunday nights (5:45p).

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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. 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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Aim Carefully at Terrorism

Wyatt Earp, who served as a US Marshal in the "Old West," is remembered as a skillful gunfighter. When asked the secret of his success, he said, "I aim before I shoot."

In the heat of a gunfight, it was not the quickest draw that won, for he was likely to waste his shot in panic. The one who took careful aim prevailed.

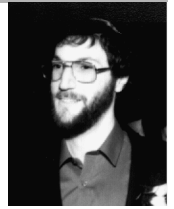
On 11 September, New York and Washington shook. America shook. And a sleeping giant was awakened.

President Bush, with the backing of Congress and the much of the public, has declared "War on Terrorism." Indeed, it is time America took the lead along with Israel and other democratic nations in the struggle against terrorism. While American presidents have declared war on drugs, war on poverty, war on AIDS, war on inflation, war on cancer and (in September 1998) war on Bin Laden, this declaration of "war" reverberates with an intensity and determination beyond the usual well-meaning rhetoric.

But in our struggle against terrorism we must correctly identify the target. The target is those organizations and countries that use violence and threat of violence against innocents as a weapon to advance their cause. The target is those individuals and organizations that follow a creed of racism, hatred and violence.

The correct target of the anti-terror effort does *not* include the vast majority of Arabs, Muslims, and others of Middle Eastern origin, whether in America or elsewhere. Arabs and Muslims in America are peace-loving and law-abiding citizens. They are my friends and neighbors. Like in every community, there are exceptions to that rule, and those exceptions are appropriately dealt with through our police, criminal justice system and immigration services.

It is a disgrace and an affront to American values to defame or attack Arabs, Muslims and others simply because of their religious beliefs or ethnic background, or to hold them guilty by association. Like all citizens, they must be free to practice their religion and express their political views, even when they differ from those of the majority. When we defame or attack Arabs and Muslims because of their ethnic identity or religion, we emulate the very evil we abhor.



Rabbi Tilsen

It is ridiculous to blame Israel for all of the conflict in the Middle East and thereby for the violence coming from that region. Israel had nothing to do with the war between Iran and Iraq, nothing to do with Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, nothing to do with the civil wars in Yemen. While Israel shares responsibility for the conflict with Palestinians, this is only one part of a much larger set of problems. America is right to support Israel as a partner in promoting democracy and security.

We must aim carefully, and we must use the right tools. Wyatt Earp used a shotgun, not a rake or a cannon, as that seemed most suitable to his task. But we are not cowboys in the Old West. The tools against terrorism include the local, national and international police, criminal justice system, immigration system, banking system, and even diplomacy. We are fighting an international criminal conspiracy – a very dangerous one – and not a country with an army, a capital and a leader. It is this characteristic of the threat that makes it so very challenging. There is no country to invade; there is no one to bomb. Military options are likely to be very limited. Like a virus, terrorism may be suppressed but may never be eliminated. We will need to be ever vigilant.

If we must divide the world into "us" and "them," then at least let us be clear whom we mean by "them." Let us take careful aim lest we miss our target or shoot ourselves in the foot.

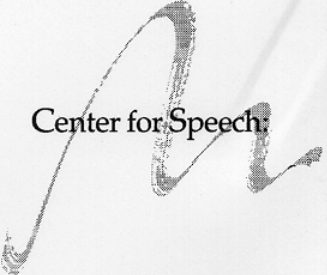
Energy Star Award

Continued from page 1


The EPA also noted that BEKI is in the process of replacing its antiquated cooling tower and boiler, updating the HVAC distribution systems, and plans to update lighting and windows to conserve energy. The Master Plan for building renovation and improvement, sponsored last year through the generosity of Prof. Paula Hyman & Dr. Stanley Rosenbaum, was created by architect David Thompson with extensive input from BEKI members. "Now is the time to implement Phase One of the Master Plan," advised President Stephen Pincus. "After extensive research and consultation with engineers and vendors, and evaluation by leaders with technical and business experience, implementation of this phase is beginning. Beyond this, the whole Congregation will need to be involved in reviewing the details of the other phases, including the installation of an elevator and the creation of an easy access route to the parking area." The estimated cost of replacing the cooling tower, chiller and boiler is \$225,000.

By all accounts, the BEKI facility is far from a model of energy efficiency. The Energy Star Award was given in recognition of the Congregation's commitment to improving its efficiency. "We get an 'A' for effort, but not for performance," noted Rabbi Tilsen. "Once the plans are implemented, our building will be much more efficient. Wasting energy transgresses the Biblical law of 'bal tashhit', which prohibits wanton environmental destruction and wasting resources, including money. There are many steps to be implemented that will pay for themselves in a relatively short period, so we can win on all fronts." Much credit for the implementation of Phase One renovations goes to Hugh Fryer, George Posener, Brian Karsif, Roger Levine and Stephen Pincus. All BEKI members and supporters contribute financially toward this process through their dues and contributions to BEKI.

For more information on BEKI's Award from the Environmental Protection Agency, see www.epa.gov/smallbiz/successstories/ss_bethel.html.



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Solomon Schechter Awards

Continued from page 1

BEKI's special education efforts include children as well as adults. In recent years, Anne Johnston has developed several creative programs for people with special needs. Those efforts are now coordinated by Dr. Lauren Kempton, BEKI's Education Director. The David & Lillian Levine Endowment for People with Special Needs at BEKI supports these efforts each year.

BEKI's efforts toward environmental awareness include its energy efficiency program (see the Energy Star article in this edition), as well as family education and Divrei Torah aimed specifically at developing greater awareness and better practices.

Festivals at BEKI

Continued from page 1

Hol HaMoed: What is it all about?

"Hol HaMoed," also known as the "intermediate" days of the festival, are those days between the first two and last two days of Sukkot (and of Pesah). They have a "semi-holiday" status. The rules against *melakha* ("work") that apply on Shabbat and Festivals are not fully in force during this period, although we are encouraged to take this time as a holiday and to avoid work as much as possible. Our weekday morning services are enhanced with a brief Torah reading, the recitation of the musical "Hallel" section of Psalms, and a brief Musaf (additional) service. Weekday morning services thus take 55 to 60 minutes, instead of our usual 30 to 45 minutes. Afternoon and evening services are their usual length. The *lulav* (branches) and *etrog* (citron) are waved each morning of Hol HaMoed Sukkot (except Shabbat), and one is obliged to dwell (to live is to eat) in a *sukka*. Some morning and evening services will be held in the BEKI *sukka*.

On Shabbat Hol HaMoed we read selections from the Biblical Book of *Qohelet* ("Ecclesiastes") during the 9:15a service on Saturday 6 October. *Qohelet*, attributed by tradition to King Solomon in his old age, is a "wisdom" book that many see as being out of step with the rest of the Torah. While it includes such well-known passages as "To everything there is a season," it also contains statements that seem cynical or nihilistic. The Book will be chanted according to its beautiful and ancient melody.

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Hosanna! Hosanna!

The *Hoshana Rabba* ("Great Hosanna") morning service this year occurs on Monday 8 October. This is one of the most colorful, fun and tactile services of the year, featuring seven circuits around the shul with *lulav* and *etrog* (palm and citron) and the *hoshana* service in which willow twigs are beaten on the chairs. Special holiday melodies make this an unforgettable spiritual experience. Be sure to come to this "service for all ages." The Hoshana Rabba service begins Monday 8 October at 9:15a and concludes by 11:00a. Hoshana Rabba has been declared a Federal Holiday this year, so all schools, banks and government offices are closed.

Hoshana Rabba is a semi-festival on which work is *not* strictly prohibited as it is on the major festivals. It serves as a "closing ceremony" for the weeklong Sukkot observance in preparation for the concluding festival of Shemini Atseret.

Shemini Atseret & Yizkor Memorial Service

The Festival of *Shemini Atseret* ("Eighth Day of Assembly") serves as a conclusion to the autumn Festival of *Sukkot* ("Booths"). Hallel will be chanted, and other musical enhancements will be made to the services.

The Yizkor Memorial Service is also incorporated into the Shemini Atseret liturgy. In the Yizkor service we call upon the memories of our ancestors and loved ones who, while not physically present, are part of our "Assembly." During that memorial service, individual and communal prayers and remembrances will be offered for all of our departed loved ones. It is also appropriate to light a memorial candle on Monday night immediately before lighting the Festival candles.

Simhat Torah Celebration

Congregation Beth El-Keser Israel is the place to be for the evening and morning of Simhat Torah. Festival *Minha* services begin at 5:45p and Evening services begin at 6:00p on Tuesday 9 October. Festival Morning services begin at 9:15a on Wednesday 10 October. Goodie Bags will be presented by the Sisterhood to all the deserving children at services evening and morning.

A Message from Lauren Kempton

Education Director & Principal

My first nine days as Principal/Education Director of BEKI Religious School were spent in intense study. I attended the New Director's Institute in New York City at United Synagogue headquarters. From there, I flew to Denver, Colorado to join 1,800 Jewish Educators at CAJE (Conference on Alternatives in Jewish Education). I attended workshops on the teaching of Israeli Poetry, text study with Everett Fox, curriculum sessions, Black and Jewish dialogue, the Jews of Spain, and Prayer. I also met with the publisher representatives for Torah Aura, ARE, and Behrman House. I returned energized and with a suitcase full of new teaching materials that I shared at my initial Faculty Meeting.

The month of August was spent cleaning, painting, letter writing, and phoning in regards to BEKI Religious School. School opened on 5 September very smoothly. We welcome two new staff members, Rose Rudich for Dalet-Hei on Wednesdays and Talia Bik as a Teacher's Assistant for Dalet-Hei. Ruthie Greenblatt will be joining the staff as Music Coordinator after the High Holy Days.

Activities for Kulanu and Saul's circle were planned through Sukkot. Two special services were to be held at Fellowship House. The Shalom group, mostly Kulanu participants in a

Jewish Family Services program, will have a festive Sukkot Dinner in the BEKI *sukka* on 4 October.

Please come and visit our new Education Offices in the lower level of the classroom wing next to Abiyoyo (or volunteer to paint or Spackle on 7 October from noon to 4:00p).

I am heartened by my warm reception at BEKI, challenged by my formal Hebrew language study, and enthusiastic about the work ahead. I am excited about serving you at BEKI, full of dreams for the future of our shul, and enveloped by your warm welcome. I am inspired by a statement by educator Serene Victor, a United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism consultant: "What will it take to create the best possible Jewish experiences for our children and grandchildren so that they will be so lovingly attached to Judaism that they don't even want to imagine an adult life unconnected to Jewish Living."

You can reach me at BEKI at 389-2108 x13 or lkempton@beki.org. Alternatively, just stop by my office on the lower level of BEKI's classroom wing.



Dr. Lauren Kempton

LifeCycle

With sorrow we note the passing of

Laurence Ira Olmer, son of Morris & Ruth Olmer

Julius Falk, husband of Dorothy Falk

Albert Reifler, father of Michael (& Sara Kohane) Reifler

Ida Bettigole

Mazal Tov to **Hugh Fryer** on being awarded a Ph.D. in neurobiology from Yale University. Hugh is currently working at Curagen.

COOK & CARE WALKATHON

Food Fun and Entertainment

Sunday 14 October 2001

Join the three mile walkathon sponsored by the Interfaith Cooperative Ministries, Inc. The walkathon begins at 2:00p, with registration beginning at 1:00p at Edgerton Park in New Haven. Donations will support the Community Soup Kitchen at Christ Church on Broadway, the Downtown Evening Soup Kitchen, Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers and FISH of Greater New Haven. More information is available at 776-9526 or visit the website at www.cookandcare.com. BEKI is a member of the Interfaith Cooperative Ministries and our participation is one expression of our commitment to *Tiqun Olam* – Social Action.

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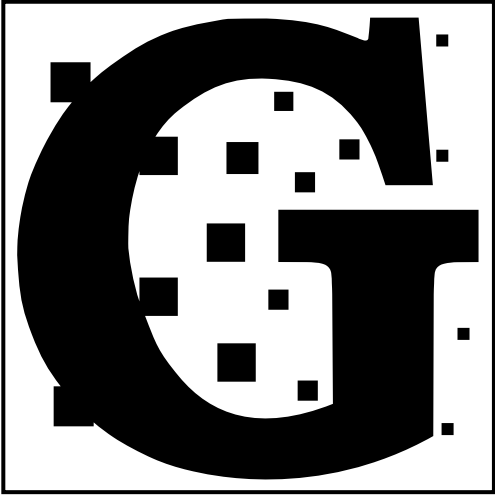
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Thanks to Membership Helpers

Many thanks to the hardworking membership committee, Mary Ellen, Rabbi Tilsen, and various members of the synagogue who helped out with our open house events in August. The open house event attracted a number of new people from the community to BEKI, and the publicity for the event also helped to put BEKI in the forefront of Jewish activity in Greater New Haven. Thanks again to all.

Sharon LG

Need a letter for Employer or School?

Shul members occasionally need letters to employers or principals explaining the nature of the Jewish holiday observance. Despite the high level of understanding in our community, there is still a need for education and information. It is important that our children be in shul for all of Yontiff.

If you would like such a letter for Sukkot, call Rabbi Tilsen at 389-2108 ext. 10 or jjtilsen@beki.org.



Service Schedules and Candle Lighting Times

Information on service times at BEKI and other Conservative synagogues as well as candle lighting times for the upcoming months can be found at BEKI's website, www.beki.org, under the headings "Service Times" and "Candle Lighting." Our website contains a wealth of information on BEKI, Torah, Judaism and related topics. Explore!



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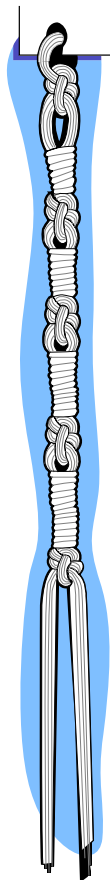
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Darshanim in October

David Kuperstock will serve as *darshan* (Torah commentator) on Shabbat Hol HaMoed Sukkot, 6 October, at BEKI during the 9:15a morning service. David is married to Darryl Kuperstock. David & Darryl live in Woodbridge. David & Darryl are sponsoring the qiddush following services.

William Hallo will serve as *darshan* (Torah commentator) on Shabbat Noah, 20 October, at BEKI during the 9:15a morning service. Bill is married to Nanette Stahl. Bill & Nanette live in Hamden.



BEKI Youth Eligible for Free Israel Trip

KOACH, the College Outreach Department of The United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, invites students ages 18-26 to participate in the KOACH Birthright Israel 2002 program. Students who have never been to Israel on a peer educational program are invited to apply for this free 10-day travel and study mission, scheduled for early January 2002. (A required deposit of \$250 is refundable following the return from Israel. Covered expenses do not include travel to and from New York from other American cities.)

This is a marvelous opportunity to experience Israel through the prism of ancient and contemporary texts, walk in the footsteps of our ancestors and have first-hand experience with the Masorti Movement. The trip will observe Kashrut and Shabbat and the group will *daven* (pray) regularly.

Registration will take place on-line now through mid-October 2001, on the KOACH website, www.koach.org. For questions and more information, check the KOACH website or contact Rabbi Elyse Winick at winick@uscj.org or 781-784-8434.

"This is a wonderful opportunity for our youth," commented Rabbi Tilsen. "My second cousin went on the Birthright Israel 2000 program and thought it was tremendous. I encourage any eligible BEKI youth to go."



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BEKI Events

October - Tishri - Cheshvan

5762

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	15 Tishri 1	16 Tishri 2	17 Tishri 3	18 Tishri 4	19 Tishri 5	20 Tishri 6
Shaharit=Morning Minha =Afternoon Minha-Maariv=Evening SSLM=Shabbat Shalom Learners' Minyan TNS=The New [Religious] School		<i>Sukkot</i> <i>Sukkot</i> <i>Office Closed</i> 9:15a Shaharit 5:45 Minha-Maariv	<i>Sukkot</i> <i>Office Closed</i> 9:15a Shaharit No Religious School or Benei Mitzva Program 5:45p Minha-Maariv	8:15a Shaharit 5:45p Minha-Maariv 8:00p A.A.	7:00a Shaharit 6:00p Minha-Maariv 6:30p 20s/30s Havura Group Dinner 6:12p Candles	<i>Chol Hamoed</i> 9:15a Shaharit 10:45a Children's Programs 10:45a Cosmic Conversations <i>Darshan: David Kuperstock</i> <i>Kiddush Sponsors: David & Darryl Kuperstock</i> 5:45p Minha
20 Tishri 7	21 Tishri 8	22 Tishri 9	23 Tishri 10	24 Tishri 11	25 Tishri 12	26 Tishri 13
9:00a Shaharit 9:00a Religious School 5:45p Minha-Maariv 6:15p Early Prophets 7:30p Nite Lites	<i>Hoshana Rabah</i> <i>Columbus Day</i> <i>Office Closed for Vacation</i> 9:15 Shaharit 5:45p Minha-Maariv	<i>Shemini Atzeret</i> <i>Yizkor</i> <i>Office Closed</i> 9:15 Festival Morning Service 5:45p Festival Minha 6:00p Festival Maariv	<i>Simhat Torah</i> <i>Office Closed</i> 9:15a Festival Morning Service No Religious School or Benei Mitzva Pgm 5:45p Minha	8:15a Shaharit 5:45p Minha-Maariv 8:00p A.A.	7:00a Shaharit 6:00p Minha-Maariv 6:00p Candles 8:00p Late Service	9:15a Shaharit 10:45a Children's Programs 10:45a Cosmic Conversations 5:45p Minha
27 Tishri 14	28 Tishri 15	29 Tishri 16	30 Tishri 17	1 Cheshvan 18	2 Cheshvan 19	3 Cheshvan 20
9:00a Shaharit 9:00a Religious School 5:45p Minha-Maariv 6:15p Early Prophets	7:00a Shaharit 5:45p Minha-Maariv 7:45p General Board	7:00a Shaharit 5:45p Minha-Maariv	7:00a Shaharit 4:00p Religious School 4:15p Benei Mitzva Pgm 5:45p Minha-Maariv	<i>Rosh Hodesh</i> 8:15a Shaharit 5:45p Minha-Maariv 8:00p A.A.	7:00a Shaharit 5:49p Candles 6:00p Minha-Maariv 8:00p Late Service	9:15a Shaharit <i>Darshan: William Hallo</i> 10:45a Children's Programs 10:45a Cosmic Conversations 10:45a SSLM 1:00p-2:30p Book Group 5:45p Minha
4 Cheshvan 21	5 Cheshvan 22	6 Cheshvan 23	7 Cheshvan 24	8 Cheshvan 25	9 Cheshvan 26	10 Cheshvan 27
9:00a Shaharit 9:00a Religious School 5:45p Minha-Maariv	7:00a Shaharit 7:45a Rashi Study Grp 7:30p Executive Board	7:00a Shaharit 5:45p Minha-Maariv	7:00a Shaharit 4:00p Religious School 4:15p Benei Mitzva Pgm 5:45p Minha-Maariv	8:15a Shaharit 5:45p Minha-Maariv 8:00p A.A.	7:00a Shaharit 5:38p Candles 6:00p Minha-Maariv 8:00p Late Service	9:15a Shaharit 10:45a Children's Programs 10:45a Cosmic Conversations 5:45p Minha
11 Cheshvan 28	12 Cheshvan 29	13 Cheshvan 30	14 Cheshvan 31			
9:00a Shaharit 9:00a Religious School 9:30a Congr. Brunch 5:45p Minha-Maariv	7:00a Shaharit 7:45a Rashi Study Grp 5:45p Minha-Maariv	7:00a Shaharit 5:45p Minha-Maariv 7:45p Sisterhood General Mtg	7:00a Shaharit 4:00p Religious School 4:15p Benei Mitzva Pgm 5:45p Minha-Maariv	BEKI phone numbers: (203) 389-2108 Fax (203) 389-5899 Mary Ellen-Office x14 Religious School x13 Rabbi x10 Dr. Lauren Kempton x 13	Office Hours: Mon 9a-12 & 1p-3p Tue by appt. only Wed 10a-12 & 1p-6p Thu 9a-12 & 1p-3p Fri 9a-2p	Office: beki@snet.net Rabbi: jjtlsen@beki.org Religious School/Education Director: lkempton@beki.org website: www.beki.org
13 Tishri 30						
9:00a Shaharit 9:00a Religious School 5:45p Minha-Maariv						

BEKI Online

Need to contact someone at BEKI? A phone directory of staff members and program chairs is available at www.beki.org/phones.html. A directory of email addresses of members is available www.beki.org/members.html.

Need a form? Selected office forms are on the website for 24-hour access. Go to www.beki.org/forms.html. The forms are in Acrobat .pdf format.

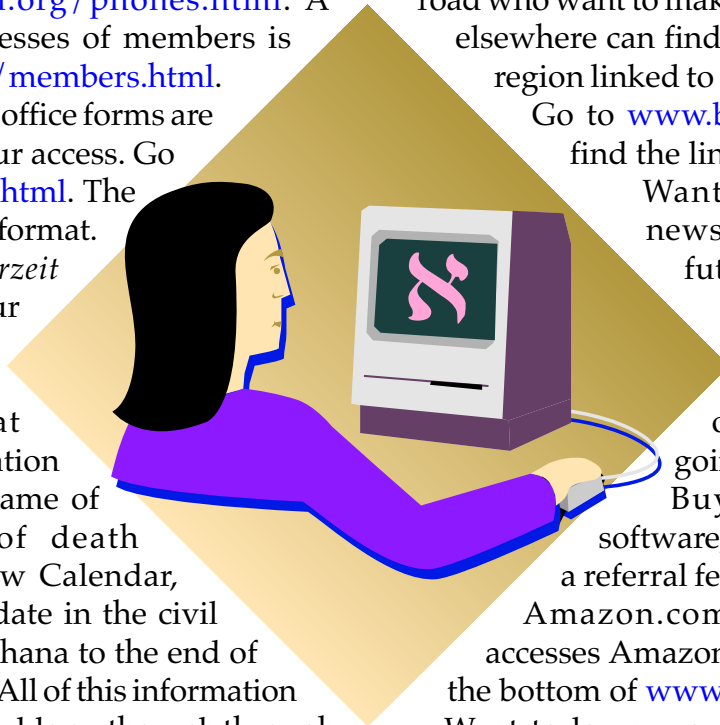
Need to know a *yahrzeit* (death anniversary)? Our *yahrzeit* records are now available at www.beki.org at "yahrzeits." The information available includes the name of the deceased, date of death according to the Hebrew Calendar, and the corresponding date in the civil calendar from Rosh HaShana to the end of the current Hebrew year. All of this information and more is already available on the web through public sources. There is no private information displayed.

Want to pray elsewhere? BEKI members on the road who want to make a daily or Shabbat service elsewhere can find a minyan schedule of our region linked to our Service Schedule page. Go to www.beki.org/schedule.html to find the link.

Want to preview the next newsletter? Past, current and future editions of the BEKI Bulletin are available at www.beki.org/newsindex.html. Find out what happened or is going to happen.

Buying books, music, software, or electronics? BEKI earns a referral fee for purchases made from Amazon.com when the purchaser accesses Amazon from the Amazon icon at the bottom of www.beki.org/links.html.

Want to learn more about Judaism or about BEKI and its programs? A wealth of information is available at BEKI's website. Go explore!



Corporate Donors

Corporations and S-corporations paying Connecticut State income tax may be eligible for significant tax credits (in addition to federal and state charitable deductions) for contributions to approved programs at BEKI. Projects include programs for adults with Special Needs and Energy Conservation. In some cases, permanent named Endowments are available.

An individual or corporation can contribute toward any of these programs even if they are not able to take advantage of the tax credits. If you have a connection to a corporation that might be willing to contribute toward any of these programs, or if you might like to contribute in an individual capacity, please contact Rabbi Tilsen at (203) 389-2108 x10 (jjtilsen@beki.org). The State deadline to apply for the tax credits is 15 October.

Plan Ahead

Veteran BEKI member Marvin Missan has joined George Posener and Rabbi Murray Levine as guarantors of the Congregation's future by including BEKI as a beneficiary in his estate plan. The Congregation's long-term vitality can only be assured through the support of forward thinking members and supporters.

Rabbi Tilsen tells this story: "Once a man said, 'After I'm gone, I know my children will make a donation in my memory. It's for *them* to do.' But when he died, his children said, 'If Father had wanted to leave something to charity, he would have, but he didn't; we will respect his wishes.' In that way, this man and his children missed the opportunity to fulfill a great mitzva and lost their share in creating a vibrant future for the synagogue. If we want to teach our children and demonstrate to others the importance of Jewish continuity, of responsibility to the community, and of the mitzva of *tsedaqa*, then we have to do it ourselves in a significant way."

During the next decade, BEKI will need to raise at least \$5 million to \$10 million to provide for its basic operations and building maintenance. Beyond that, another \$5 million to \$10 million would need to be raised in that same period to provide for the basic capital needs of the Congregation and to improve our facility. For our Congregation to thrive in the coming years, forward-thinking supporters must make provisions now.

"People like Marvin Missan are essential to our present and future. Marvin – may he live to 120 years – is very involved in daily services, contributes financially as a member, and has helped to pro-

vide for our future through his estate planning. While all dues payers and donors get the benefit of a tax deduction for their donations, they are also able to actively participate in the numerous activities of the synagogue if they so choose. They might attend the classes, services or other programs offered, or they may feel proud that their generosity helps people in need by providing education and/or insuring the vibrancy of Jewish life among our community. But givers who generously bequeath funds for use after their days in this world have ended, are sure to feel satisfaction in the knowledge that they are giving a gift for others and for the future. It is a gift of faith, trust and love," commented Rabbi Tilsen.

There are many ways to include the Congregation in an estate plan. Besides a simple bequest, one might name BEKI as the beneficiary of an annuity, insurance policy, or charitable remainder trust or gift annuity.

For some people, the "charitable remainder gift annuity" is an ideal way to help the Congregation in the future. The annuity allows the donor to enjoy interest distributions during his or her lifetime (and that of a spouse or partner), and to receive tax benefits, and then to leave the principal to the synagogue after death. For information on this and other ways to include BEKI in your estate, or to learn more about helping BEKI now or in the future, please consult your own financial planner or attorney or call estate attorney and BEKI officer Donna Levine at 785-8079, Rabbi Tilsen at 389-2108 x10, or Jewish Foundation Director David Tein at 387-2424 x304.



New Programs in Family Education at BEKI

Betsy Chorney Rosenberg, better known in school circles as *Morah Brucha*, is serving as our Jewish Family Educator this year. Her position is partially funded by Keshet L'Mishpacha, made possible by a grant from the Jewish Federation of Greater New Haven and the Jewish Foundation of Greater New Haven. Last year, under the same grant, Betsy assisted Anne Johnston with some of her innovative Jewish Family Education programs. Rosenberg will now be working directly with our BEKI Family Education Committee, to create additional meaningful Jewish learning experiences that go beyond a classroom, into the home. The first program, about Sukkot, is on Sunday 30 September 2001 from 10:30a – 11:50a at BEKI.

Many people wonder what makes Jewish Family Education programs different from any other family learning event. Naturally its programs are designed to provide a means by which families can learn together about Jewish subjects. But more than that, they provide learnings that “go home” with its students: to be used, practiced, and embedded in Jewish family and community life. That is the difference, and this is one of the purposes of the Jewish Family Education program at BEKI.

Many activities are planned to dovetail with the Religious School curriculum, particularly around holiday observances. Beyond School families, it is important to note that participation by *any* community family that would like to share these experiences is welcomed and encouraged – even “families of one,” who enjoy the company of others while expanding Jewish learning. What larger family wouldn't have room for a temporary ‘aunt’, ‘uncle’, ‘cousin’, or ‘grandparent’?!

Rosenberg feels that “Jewish learning should never be stagnant – even the wisest Jewish learner can learn something new from every experience.” Throughout the coming year, she will be sponsored by Keshet L'Mishpacha, to attend training meetings and (Hebrew College) classes. When not away for those sessions, Betsy will usually be available at BEKI while Religious School is in session, and Wednesdays from 11a until 2p. Messages may also be left on the Jewish Family Education voicemail, by calling BEKI at 389-2108 x25, or with Education Director Dr. Lauren Kempton, at x13. Please call if you would like more information on attending the 30 September program.

BCR et al



Hakhnasat Orhim — Welcoming Guests

By Valerie Sandler

One of Judaism's most beautiful mitzvot is the commandment to welcome guests into our home. The mitzvah of *Hakhnasat Orhim* (welcoming guests) instructs us to open up our homes not only to good friends and family, but even more importantly, to strangers who might have nowhere else to go. Judaism asks us to move beyond mere etiquette. We open our homes because it is our religious obligation to the surrounding community. Indeed, the most famous of our "hosts" are Abraham and Sara, who graciously welcomed three "strangers" – who would turn out to be messengers sent from God — into their home.

Perhaps the most fitting time in which to welcome guests into our home is Shabbat or on other *Haggim* (holidays). Traditionally, a newcomer to some Jewish congregations could be assured of having a place to go for a Shabbat meal. As a first-time visitor to Israel several years ago, I was delighted to find that my congregation offered this service. I became acquainted with a number of wonderful new friends during Shabbat dinners and lunches. Later in the year, one close friend of mine declared that no one she knew would ever spend Shabbat alone; she made sure — like the *shamash* (sexton) of Jewish tradition — that everyone had a place to go.

Our congregation is known in this area for its warmth and welcoming atmosphere. As a new member of BEKI three years ago, I was immediately struck by the number of people who approached me after a Shabbat service and later responded to my personal desire to create a havura for singles and couples in their 20s and 30s. This receptivity to new and different ideas is often hard to come by in congregational life.

BEKI's Membership Committee wishes to encourage everyone in the Congregation to welcome a new person into their homes at some point in the New Year. Fulfilling the mitzva of *Hakhnasat Orhim* is not only a wonderful service to new folks in the community; it also presents an opportunity for the whole family to get involved in fulfillment of one of Judaism's oldest and most important mitzvot.

Thanks to Rabbi Samuel Stahl for his explanation of Hakhnasat Orhim in a November 2000 sermon.

Budget Balanced at BEKI — Again

The BEKI Board of Directors is pleased to announce that the synagogue balanced its budget for the fiscal year ending 30 June 2001. This is the second consecutive year that BEKI has balanced its budget.

"BEKI's continued fiscal well-being is largely due to the generosity of BEKI members and supporters to the annual Renaissance Campaign," said BEKI President Stephen Pincus. "Without the Renaissance Campaign, BEKI would be continuing to run large deficits or would be required to raise dues significantly." Last year's Renaissance campaign raised \$125,000, which averages about \$500 per membership unit.

In addition to all of its members and financial contributors, the Board offers its thanks to Robert Forbes and Marc Schwartz (Renaissance Campaign co-chairs), Natan Weinstein (BEKI Treasurer), Bud Volain (BEKI accountant), and Mary Ellen Mack (BEKI Office Manager) for their work in helping raise funds and monitoring BEKI's fiscal health throughout the year.

The current year presents its own challenges. The Phase One renovations (air conditioning and heating upgrade), which cost about \$250,000, will be paid or serviced through the operating budget. This is taking place during a year when some BEKI members are experiencing sharp declines in their income due to the business climate or job dislocation. "Many members have given very generously – and most members have participated in the Renaissance Campaign. This year, we need *everyone* to participate in the Renaissance Campaign, and those with relatively stable incomes may want to give even more," said Pincus.

"By any standard," observes Rabbi Tilsen, "BEKI runs a very efficient operation. Whether you measure it in dollars spent per member, per student, or per square foot, we do much more with our resources than your typical synagogue. That, in part, is attributable to good management. We are fortunate that there are many dedicated leaders who care about our Congregation and are committed to seeing it do well year to year. It bodes well for our future."

SP et al.

Torah For the Hungry Mind - Adult Studies

Book of Joshua with Nadav Sela

The multi-week text-based study of the Book of Joshua with Nadav Sela continues on Sunday nights in October from 6:15p to 7:30p in BEKI's Rosenkrantz Family Library. For information on joining the class in progress contact Nadav at nadav.sela@snet.net or call the BEKI office at 389-2108 x14.

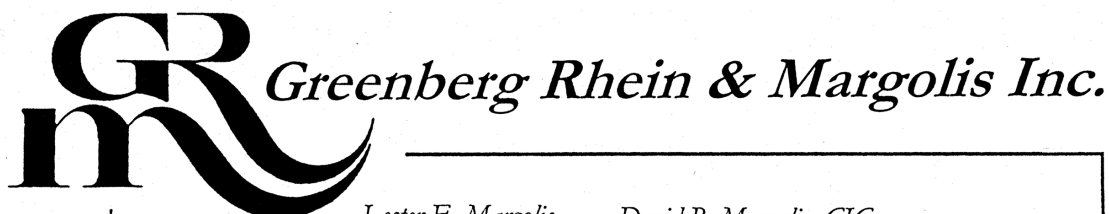
Shabbat Shalom Learners' Minyan

The Shabbat Shalom Learners' Minyan for adults meets in BEKI's Rosenkrantz Family Library every second *Shabbat* (Saturday) morning year-round from 10:45a to noon. The SSLM meets on the 6th & 20th of this month. Everyone is welcome to participate regardless of religious status or background.

Rashi Study Group

Each Monday morning from 7:45a to 8:30a a small group of adults meets in the Library to read Rashi's commentary to the Torah. It is possible to join the study for a single meeting or to begin at any time. Knowledge of Hebrew is not necessary. For more information, don't call; just come once and find out what it is about. Coffee and tea are available.

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