

השופר haShofar

of DeKalb and Sycamore

Congregation Beth Shalom
820 Russell Road
DeKalb, IL 60115



Sign Up Now for the Community Seder

CALENDAR

<i>Wednesday, April 2</i>	DEADLINE: Community Seder reservations (see pg. 5)	
Saturday, April 5	Shabbat Morning Service & potluck lunch (dairy)	10 a.m.
Monday, April 14	Passover begins -- First Seder	
Tuesday, April 15	Community Second Seder	6 p.m.
<i>Thursday, April 24</i>	DEADLINE: Lox & Bagel reservations (see pg. 6)	
Friday, April 25	Shabbat Evening Service – Koleynu sings	7:30 p.m.
Sunday, April 27	Holocaust Remembrance Day speaker at Congregation Kneseth Israel, Elgin	4 p.m.
Sunday, May 4	Lox & Bagel Brunch at the Sinasons' home	10 a.m.
Saturday, May 10	Shabbat Morning Service – Sara Dial Bat Mitzvah	10 a.m.
Monday, May 12	Annual Meeting	7 p.m.
Friday, May 23	Shabbat Evening Service	7:30 p.m.

April-May 2014 Nisan-Iyar 5774

haShofar: Elizabeth Bass, editor Avi Bass, designer

FROM THE PRESIDENT: FROM PURIM TO PASSOVER

As I write this, the festival of Purim has just passed, and Passover is coming soon! I am very grateful to all the members of our congregation, especially the members of our religious school and their families, who helped organize or who participated in our fun Purim activities.

My daughters had a wonderful time dressing up as Esther and a lion (!) and helping to pick up the food items for donation in fulfillment of the Purim mitzvah of feeding the needy. It was great to share this mitzvah tradition with them and the others in attendance. I urge you all to remember that, even as we celebrate in plenty with those we love, others do not share our fortune. Many members of the DeKalb/Sycamore community need all that we can offer for succor. Donations to the food pantry or Hope Haven are always accepted.

The winter months have taken a toll on the building and our grounds, and that is even before the snow has fully melted! In addition to some professional maintenance to repair broken signs in the parking area, we will be embarking on some spring cleaning on the grounds and within the building on a date to be announced. The work is pretty light if there are more hands to share in it, so I hope you will consider answering the call.

As always, I wish all the congregation joy and health in the coming season! And I look forward to celebrating Passover in the hope that the winter will have finally made its exodus and released us from the bondage of cold.

Shalom,

--Rob Feldacker rfeldacker1@gmail.com 815-762-0204

A NOTE FROM BARBARA KAUFMANN: THANK YOU

I want to thank everyone who brought meals, fastened my seat belt, chauffeured me around town in bitter cold temperatures, visited, went above and beyond the simple, and offered to help in the most caring of ways while I could do so little for myself during the many weeks after surgery. I was not alone, and my spirit was lifted to be supported by my community. While many see assisting with these tasks as easy, accepting the help can be difficult. You are all appreciated.

--Barbara

ANY GRADUATIONS IN YOUR FAMILY?

Is someone in your immediate family graduating from high school or college (undergraduate or graduate degree) this spring or summer? For inclusion in the next issue of *haShofar*, please send information to Elizabeth Bass at ebass@niu.edu by April 15.

For high school students: Name of student and of high school and future plans.

For college students: Name of student and of college, degree and major, and future plans.

FROM THE RABBI: VIGNETTES OF RAMAT GAN

Leo and I are staying in an apartment we rented through AirB&B in Ramat Gan, Israel, while we visit our son and daughter-in-law, Jake and Michal, and their five children. Ramat Gan is a sizable city of over 145,000 inhabitants, and this particular neighborhood is mixed in several regards. New high rises with large apartments have been built among older buildings with cramped apartments or oddly affixed additions, leading to a mixture of well-off residents and those barely getting by. The Yemenite, Moroccan, and Ashkenazi Orthodox in the neighborhood co-exist with chiloni/secular residents in decidedly less modest dress. This is the first time we've rented an apartment in one of those new high rises instead of an older building. The view from our third-story apartment includes the Bnei Brak cemetery, where a large group of black-hat/black-coat adorned men were wailing at a grave this afternoon.

This morning, Leo went on a fieldtrip with Chananya's (6½) class, and I left the apartment and headed down the hill through the park. Being a weekday, the park was inhabited by babies in strollers pushed by parents, grandparents or nannies; retirees and second-shift workers using the equipment in the exercise area, including a frail woman walking the perimeter supported by the surrounding rail, with her health aide close beside her; and wheelchair-bound elderly men and women pushed by health aides or relatives.

This is not a tourist area, so the shopkeepers do not speak much English. Yesterday, I attempted to buy measuring cups at a small shop in the mall, but I didn't know the term in Hebrew, and the shopkeeper didn't understand the English term. She went across to the coffee bar and asked if anyone spoke English. The manager came over; and when he did not know the term "measuring cup," whipped out his phone and had me key it into his translation app. Voila: "cos m'dida"! It didn't help in the short run as she didn't have any.

But today I headed over to the hardware store, and when they asked if they could help me find something, I asked for "cos m'dida" and swiftly completed my purchase. Emboldened, I went searching for a belt (chagorah) in several stores until I found what I was looking for.

After a late breakfast in an outdoor café, I headed back through the park. This time I noticed four people in wheelchairs lined up across from each other. Making up the bottom of the U-shaped configuration were three young men on a bench in earnest conversation, whom I presumed to be their caretakers. Elsewhere in the park I came upon three women on a bench conversing in Russian, their three wheelchair-bound clients lined up facing them.

As I headed over to pick up Amiel (almost 4) from pre-school at 2 p.m., children were everywhere heading home from school, some accompanied by a parent or a grandparent, some on bikes, and some in chatty groups. I introduced myself as "savta shel Amiel"(Amiel's grandmother), and they half asked/half commented that I am with the saba (grandfather) who picked him up yesterday. Later, coming back from the super-kosher grocery store (where everything is glatt kosher and the Purim chocolates are all on sale before the chametz is cleared out for Pesach), Amiel was on his scooter while I pushed Noam (14 months) in the stroller and Binyamin (11) lagged behind reading a religious comic book he asked me for in the grocery store.

Amiel rode ahead and stopped at the curb. Suddenly a man darted out of the shwarma place at the corner to where Amiel had halted at the curb and looked one way down the street, turned the other way and saw me, and was visibly relieved ("Ah, at ito"/you are with him) that this wasn't an unattended child about to get hit by a car. This is something I have noticed here before-- everyone pays attention to the children!

Tomorrow being Friday, the children have a half-day of school, and then it will get very quiet in the evening while everyone is home for Shabbat dinner, very few cars in the street. Later that night, the chilonim/secular residents will go out dancing.

--Rabbi Maralee Gordon

UPCOMING SHABBAT SERVICES

► Saturday morning, April 5, at 10 a.m.: A dairy potluck lunch follows services. If you can't stay for lunch, come just for the service. A minyan is needed.

► Friday evening, April 25, at 7:30 p.m.: A musical Shabbat with our wonderful choir, Koleynu, joining Harvey Blau to sing many of the prayers. There will be familiar melodies, for easy congregational singing and a few unfamiliar tunes as well. Carol Zar will co-lead the service with Harvey.

► JOIN US FOR A BAT MITZVAH



At Shabbat services on Saturday morning, May 10, Sara Dial will be called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah. All members of Beth Shalom are invited to attend to welcome Sara as a full adult member of our congregation. The service will be held at the synagogue at 10 a.m.

HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY IN ELGIN

Through the Prairie Jewish Coalition, to which our congregation belongs, we have received an invitation for our members to attend a talk at Congregation Kneseth Israel (330 Division Street) in Elgin. For Holocaust Remembrance Day, CKI will be presenting San Francisco-area author Marty Brounstein speaking about his book *Two Among the Righteous Few: A Study of Courage in the Holocaust*. The book is about a Christian couple who saved at least two dozen Jews during World War II. The talk will be at 4 p.m. on Sunday, April 27. For more information, you can contact CKI at 847-741-5656.

FEEDING OUR COMMUNITY

Thank you to all of our wonderful volunteers!

Our core group of Salvation Army and Hope Haven workers are terrific! Every month they shop and prepare dinner for 50 hungry residents at DeKalb County's homeless shelter. Some spend a morning at the food pantry, filling shelves and shopping carts with donated groceries for those in need. I only need to show what dates are open and these people sign up. We are one of many church and service organizations that provide volunteers to this community, and I am consistently complimented on how reliable, helpful, and appreciated our members are.

Please join us. It isn't hard work, it doesn't take hours of your time, and you will be truly helping those less fortunate right here in our town.

Thanks to Robin Schoenburg, Lizz Brookshire, Abby Chemers, Sandi Splansky, Rivka Baker, Penny Shavit, Linda Mogren and Jenny Gelman for providing dinners for Hope Haven. Thanks to Michele Silverstein, Liz Blau, Ellen Hein, and Rivka Baker for their help at the Food Pantry.
--Karen Sinason, social action chair

ANNUAL SECOND-NIGHT SEDER

Come join many of your fellow congregants of all ages at our annual Second-Night Community Seder.



The seder will be led by Avi Bass, with Harvey Blau leading the singing, and with everyone invited to participate if they wish. Friends and relatives are welcome to join you.

The seder takes place on Tuesday, April 15, at 6 p.m., at the synagogue and will again be catered by Louis Schoenburg and his team of culinary artists.



Please send this reservation form and a check made out to Congregation Beth Shalom to Louis Schoenburg, 813 Somonauk, Sycamore IL 60178. **Reservation deadline: APRIL 2.**

Name(s) _____

Number of adults ___x \$16 (members) / ___x \$18 (non-members) \$_____

Number of children ___x \$8 (members) / ___x \$10 (non-members) \$_____

TOTAL \$_____

LOX & BAGEL BRUNCH



Sunday, May 4, 10 a.m. to noon

*Karen & Dave Sinason's home
1530 Crayton Circle West, DeKalb*

*Come eat and schmooze at for our
annual Lox & Bagel Brunch,
a delicious meal in good company.*

Brunch is \$15 per person for members and \$18 for non-members (adults only). Checks should be made out to Congregation Beth Shalom and mailed to Meryl Domina, 1121 Loren Drive, DeKalb, 60115. They must be received by April 24. Meanwhile, you can reserve a place with an RSVP to Meryl at merylkgd@aol.com.

If you can help with clean-up or grocery shopping or can make a brunch dish – kugel, egg dish, coffee cake, fruit salad -- please contact Meryl ASAP but by April 24.

REPORT FROM THE ELBOW-GREASE CREW

Bravo for a job well done to the crew who cleaned up and organized our kitchen: Carolyn Haber, Karen Sinason, Jackie Gorman, Liz Blau, and Elizabeth Bass. Drawers and shelves were emptied and scrubbed; dusty items washed and dried; unneeded items discarded, needed items organized, and supplies inventoried.

When you use the kitchen, please remember to clean up and put away whatever you use. Do not leave items out on the counters or on the drain board. As the sign says, "Your mother doesn't work here anymore."

We also ask that if you have anything you wish to donate to the kitchen, please don't abandon it at the building. Rather, check with a board member first as to whether or not it is needed.

INTERESTED IN A TRIP TO ISRAEL?

Some members of the regional Prairie Jewish Coalition, to which our congregation belongs, are considering putting together a trip to Israel. It is in the planning stages right now. If you might be interested, please contact Nina Finn, a member of the Elgin congregation, at finnina@sbcglobal.net.