



Bet Shraga Hebrew Academy of the Capital District

December 16, 2011

Issue Number 42, Volume Number III

UPCOMING EVENTS

December 20th —
Shlock Rock 2011
6pm Call HACD office for
tickets!!

December 23rd—
-School Wide ONEG
-1st Grade Chanukah
Play

**December 26th - January
3rd**
-Winter Break

Candle Lighting times for November

Friday December 16th — Light 4:04

Friday December 23rd — Light 4:07

Friday December 30th — Light 4:12

Saturday December 17th — End 5:10`

Saturday December 24th — End 5:13

Saturday December 31st — End 5:18

Dvar Torah on Parashat Vayeshev by Rachel Anisfeld

How quickly and how far does the family of Yaakov descend in this parsha! Hatred festers unchecked among the brothers, and turns to violence against Yosef who is thrown *down* into a pit and sold “down” to Egypt as a slave. The Torah draws a parallel between this descent of Yosef’s (*hurad*) and that of Yehudah, who “goes down” (*vayered*) from his brothers in search of a wife and lands in his own trouble. Indeed, Yosef’s descent leads the whole family to descend; in the short term, it leaves his father in a permanent state of mourning and his brothers with an uneasy sense of guilt, and in the long term, it literally brings the rest of the family to descend to Egypt as well, and eventually, to be enslaved there for hundreds of years.

The midrash characterizes the family’s state of mind this way: “Yosef was occupied with his sackcloth and fasting [presumably out of distress over his enslavement]; Reuven was occupied with his sackcloth and fasting [either out of remorse for not managing to rescue Yosef or out of remorse for sleeping with his step-mother]; and Yaakov was occupied with his sackcloth and fasting [in mourning for Yosef].” What a bunch! All depressed and regretful and suffering.

But the midrash does not end there. It turns to God: “And the Holy One blessed be He was occupied with creating the light of the Messianic King.” The light of the Messianic King?! The midrash is referring to the messianic line of King David, which is traced back to Peretz, one of the twins born in this parsha to Tamar and Yehudah.

Amidst all this descent and sackcloth, the seed of the future Messiah is born! The Yehudah/Tamar story takes place right in the middle of the Yosef story. On one side of it, Yosef is thrown into the pit by his brothers, and on its other side, Yosef is thrown into another pit, the pit of jail, by Potiphar. If we imagine the parsha as one large pit, then the middle, the very bottom, is the story of Yehudah and Tamar. It is out of the very bottom of that pit of misery and descent that a tiny light of future hope emerges.

The Slonmier Rebbe, in his work, *Netivot Shalom*, speaks about this phenomenon as the *kusta deheyuta*, the “tiny speck of life” contained in a seed when it is about to sprout and blossom. A seed must first rot and almost completely disintegrate into the earth before it can sprout, says the *Netivot Shalom*. Out of almost complete absence comes this tiny spark of future life.

Chanukah’s lights, lit in the darkest part of the year, contain a similar message. Out of the blackest of nights will come light, out of the hardest of times will come life, the tiny inkling of change and hope for the future. Like Yaakov’s family, we all go through periods of intense darkness in our lives, periods where it seems that there is no bottom to the pit of despair, that the pain will simply go on forever. The seed of the Messiah, born in the pit of Yaakov’s family’s darkest moments, is a reminder not to give up hope, that it is in fact from within this darkness that seeds of future life are sprouted.

Bet Shraga Hebrew Academy Of The Capital
District Receives
Substantial Support From

Partner Agency of
Jewish Federation
OF NORTHEASTERN NEW YORK



From the Desk of Mrs. Eson,
HACD Librarian



Jewish Book Month Lists

Jewish Book Month is an annual event dedicated to the celebration of Jewish books. It is observed during the month preceding Hanukkah. Each year, just before Jewish Book Month begins, librarians from the AJL Greater Cleveland Chapter and in some years, from the AJL Southern California Chapter, compile recommended reading lists for adults and for children and teens.

The link below will allow you to access the newest lists, including the 2011/2012 list:

<http://www.jewishlibraries.org/main/BookLists/JewishBookMonthLists.aspx>

These books are carefully chosen, and listed with brief descriptions, so you can easily find a book that is just right!

Many of these books are available in our HACD library, as well as public libraries, bookstores and online booksellers. Perhaps you will find some good choices for your child, your family or yourself!



HACD Basketball

Despite playing shorthanded and despite a frenetic comeback by Duanesburg, the 7/8 Lions prevailed in their home opener, 41-40. After the game, we talked about corrections we need to make and how much better it is to work on our play after a win (rather than a loss). We evened our record at 1-1. Ari Ginsburg hit some big shots and was huge at the foul line. Matt Laniado hit 2 big free throws late and despite fouling out, Reed had 10 points.

Coach Richard Drucker.

Upcoming Games

December 18th

4/5 @ 10am
Watervliet @ HACD

7/8 team @ 11 am.
St. Johns @ HACD

2/3 team @ 4pm
HACD @ Sacred Heart of
Castleton

Practice Schedule

7/8 Boys

Sunday- 9-11
Thursday- 4:30-6 Fridays - 2:30 –
4:00

4/5 Coed

Tuesdays - 3:15 – 4:30
Sundays – TBD (to be determined)

2/3 Coed

Thursdays 3:15 – 4:30
Sundays - TBD

On the 1st Night of Chanukah



Hebrew Academy
Presents



SHLOCH ROCK

December 20, 2011

Congregation Beth Abraham-Jacob
380 Whitehall Road, Albany

Doors Open at 6:00 pm

Pizza & Other Refreshments Will Be Available for Purchase

Candle Lighting & Concert at 7:00 pm

Limited Seating Available

Advance Concert Tickets: \$10
Family Package: \$45 for 5 tickets
Children 4 and under are free
Tickets at the Door - \$13

Special Thanks to:

Rabbi Rena Kieval and Rabbi Dan Ornstein
Rabbi David Eligberg
Rabbi Moshe Bomzer
NCSY

Please send reservations and payment to **HACD 54 Sand Creek Rd., Albany, NY 12205**
Credit Cards are accepted, please call Amy Piroli at HACD 482-0464 x128 or apiroli@hacdalbany.com

Parent ORG

SHABBAT SPONSORSHIP

It's with thanks that we acknowledge the Malsan-Rockwood Family
for their

Shabbat Sponsorship

For Friday December 16, 2011.

In Celebration Of

Mya Malsan

Happy Birthday!



Remember to send in your Box Tops!



Shop online through the Box Tops Marketplace and earn more
for HACD! www.boxtops4education.com

Shabbat Sponsorship



DATE: Every Friday

WHERE: Each and every classroom

WHY: To celebrate a birthday, honor a teacher, highlight a special day, or *JUST BECAUSE!!*

WHAT: \$36 covers challah and grape juice for the entire school

HOW: Fill out the Shabbat Sponsorship form and bring to the office

Only 2 open dates left for 2011 --
Reserve your dates now!!

Questions? e-mail Jodi Eligberg at abbaeema@nycap.rr.com



Scher to direct Camp Givah

Daniel Scher of Delmar will direct Temple Israel's Camp Givah for the 2012/5772 season, camp chairpersons Alan and Sharon Rosenblum have announced. He previously occupied the post in 2004 and 2005. The camp in East Berne returns next summer after a hiatus in 2011.

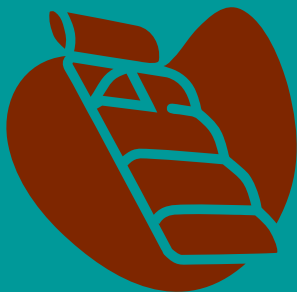
A third-grade teacher at Schenectady's King Magnet School, Scher previously taught at Bet Shraga Hebrew Academy and has represented the class of 1997 on the academy's board of education. He has advised United Synagogue Youth chapters in Albany for seven years.

He holds a master's degree in childhood education from The College of Saint Rose; and a bachelor's in history with a minor in Judaic studies from The George Washington University. He is a graduate of Voorheesville High School.

Scher has worked at Camp Givah for seven years in total. He spent two years as a first- and second-grade boy's junior counselor; one summer as a third- and fourth-grade boy's senior counselor; and two seasons as programming and Judaic education director.

"Programs at Givah balance the ruach, or spirit, of an authentic Jewish experience and traditional summer camp activities, including overnights, theme days and trips," Scher says.

Scher and his wife Aliza, nee Halpert, are parents of Ellie and Evan. They are members of Congregation Ohav Shalom in Albany.



Community Event Calendar

Daughters of Sarah is looking to update its current mailing list for “Kosher Night Out,” which are full course kosher dinners hosted at the Massry Residence, periodically throughout the year. If you would like to receive early notification of these dinners, please contact Paula Ginder, at 518-724-3400 or ginderp@dossc.org to have your name and contact information added to the list.

Thank you!

Hebrew Academy is now offering tutoring for adults in Hebrew Language.

If you are interested,

please call **Sharon Strosberg** 377-2510.

To put a community wide event in our e-shabbaton, please email a text only version to apiroli@hacdalbany.com by Wednesday.

Look in the coming weeks for our Community News Bulletin featured on our new website!



SHOMRAY TORAH ANNUAL CAMPAIGN DONORS 2011-2012

Todah Rabah to our extended family for your support. We are well on our way to reaching our goal for the fall campaign!

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Names listed reflect
those whose
payments have been
received.