



# Bet Shraga Hebrew Academy of the Capital District

December 9, 2011

Issue Number 41, Volume Number III

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**December 11th—**  
Shomray Torah  
Phonathon

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

**December 23rd—**  
School Wide ONEG

### Candle Lighting times for November

Friday December 9th —Light 4:03

Friday December 16th — Light 4:04

Friday December 23rd — Light 4:07

Saturday December 10th —End 5:08

Saturday December 17th — End 5:10`

Saturday December 24th — End 5:13

### Dvar Torah on Parashat Vayishlach

by Rachel Anisfeld

Avraham is someone I could never be. He is a great model of faith, but his example is difficult to emulate. He is never scared or doubtful. He never cries or cries out. He is stoic, disciplined and obedient. That's why I'm glad we have Yaakov as an ancestor as well.

Yaakov is emotional. He cries when he meets Rachel. The commentaries try to explain why, but the Torah gives no reason, and perhaps there was no specific rational one. Isn't that the way it is sometimes, all the emotion of days on end welling up and coming out unexpectedly? He cries again, later, inconsolably, when he thinks that Yosef has died.

He cries, and he also experiences great fear. First, after his ladder dream, he awakes and has a great fear. And second, in the beginning of this week's parsha, when he hears that his brother – who wanted to kill Yaakov when they last met – is approaching him with 400 men, the Torah again tells us – *Vayira Yaakov me'od vayetzer lo* -- Yaakov was greatly frightened and distressed. He has intense emotions. The Torah says *vayetzer lo*, literally, "It was narrow for him." He is in straits, suffering deeply.

The commentaries wonder about this expression of fear. Why was he fearful when God had promised him protection? Didn't he trust in God's promise? They explain away his fear in various ways – he was worried maybe he'd sinned and so the promise didn't apply anymore – but it seems to me that the Torah is telling us that our ancestor, Yaakov, at least occasionally, had doubts. He was not an Avraham, stalwart and unwavering in his faith. There were moments when he was not sure.

And out of this doubt, out of this confusion and deep distress and struggle and fear, out of all those very human emotions, arose a new kind of religious outlook. For Yaakov is the first of the patriarchs whose passionate prayer we hear. "O God of my father Abraham . . . O Lord, who said to me . . . deliver me, I pray, from the hand of my brother . . ." (32:10ff). Avraham never asked God for anything, except to save others, in Sodom, and there he did it methodically, rationally, politely. Yitzhak entreated God over Rivkah's barrenness, but there is no description of the emotion that went with it, nor do we hear the words. But Yaakov, Yaakov is bursting with emotion, so that when he prays, it is a *shavat ani*, "cry of the afflicted." He opens his soul and pours it out to God.

That is Yaakov's way, not a clear, calm one like Avraham's, but a struggling, searching one full of turmoil and emotional upheaval. Yaakov receives a name change and a body change (the wrenching of his hip by the angel) in this parsha just as Avraham received a name change and a body change (circumcision) years earlier. But if Avraham's mark was a symbol of covenant obedience, Yaakov's is a symbol of struggle and strife. Even with God, he is locked in struggle.

They each have their place. We can hope at times to experience a little bit of the peace of Avraham's faith, but we shouldn't stop ourselves from pursuing the Yaakov route as well, the turmoil, the brokenness, the doubt, the strife, and the cry, because this, too, or perhaps, this, especially, is a route to the divine.

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

Partner Agency of  
Jewish Federation  
OF NORTHEASTERN NEW YORK





## HACD Basketball

December 4th's Game was a tough one to lose. On the road in our opener, we took Cohoes to the brink with a chance to tie and send the game in OT, only to fall short by 2, 25-23. At the same time, there were many positives to take from the loss and areas to focus on as we look to even our record next weekend. The key was our inability to make shots despite often having good looks at the basket. Sometimes there will be games like that.

Kudos to the team, as we played shorthanded (7) and hung in all the way.

Coach Richard Drucker.

### **Upcoming Games**

Sunday, December 11th  
7/8 HACD vs. Duanesburg  
@ home 11:00am

### **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

# 4th Grade News!!

The fourth grade students have embarked on a year-long “Good Will” project. During a social studies lesson about regions of New York, the topic of the October storm was raised. The fourth grade had a discussion about the Schoharie region and the devastation that resulted from that storm. The children felt strongly about helping out the victims of the area. They brainstormed ideas on how to help. After much debate, they decided to collect monetary donations and non-perishable food items to donate to the victims. The children realized that it would take a very long time to rebuild the area and agreed to keep the collection going all year long. They are very proud of their efforts so far. The fourth graders have collected 2 huge boxes of food, a case of water and over \$25.

The fourth graders invite you to  
contribute to their project by  
making a donation.



**Dear Friends,**

**It is hard to believe that Turkey Day is almost upon us and the start of the Shomray Torah Annual Fund Fall Campaign is just around the corner. Please grab a few minutes over the holiday weekend to look through our Fall Campaign mailing. Big picture (for those who like the short version) the Fall Campaign is about all of us and for all of us. Every one of our children benefits from funds raised.**

**We all depend on the Shomray Torah Annual Fund to pay for the difference between tuition charged and the actual cost of educating each of our children. The fund supports new educational programs, teacher development and technology advancement. It ensures that tuition is accessible to all who desire a Jewish education. Whether it is \$5, \$500, \$5000 or an extra ad solicited, we need your support and the message it sends. It tells the rest of our extended family (alumni, parents of alumni, grandparents and community members) that our school is a winning investment, which is not so easy to find these days.**

**As the children are learning this year, we are all one team. And as any coach will tell you, in order to win you need 100% participation.**

**Thank you in advance and have a wonderful Thanksgiving.**

**Please feel free to contact us at [shomraytorah@hacdalbany.org](mailto:shomraytorah@hacdalbany.org) with any questions. Volunteers and ideas welcomed!**

### **"3rd Annual Shomray Torah Fall Campaign Phone-a-thon"**



**Kickoff : Sunday December 11th @ 9:30am to 1pm  
at the Hebrew Academy**

**We are calling for your support to help us reach our  
Fall Campaign Goal of \$200,000!**

**Volunteers, Parents and Kids needed.  
Bring your appetite, enthusiasm and phone.**

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](mailto:apiroli@hacdalbany.com)

# Parent ORG

## SHABBAT SPONSORSHIP

It's with thanks that we acknowledge the Bernhardt & Kligerman Family for their

*Shabbat Sponsorship*

For Friday December 9, 2011.

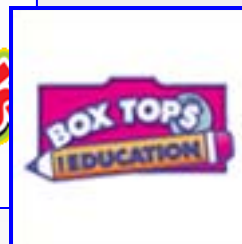
*In Honor Of*

***Sue Adler***

*For her Election Win for the Albany School Board*



Remember to send in your Box Tops!



Shop online through the Box Tops Marketplace and earn more for HACD! [www.boxtops4education.com](http://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](mailto: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.

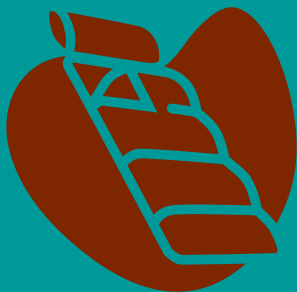
A third-grade teacher at Schenectady's King Magnet School, Scher previously taught at Bet Shraga Hebrew Academy and has represented the class of 1997 on the academy's board of education. He has advised United Synagogue Youth chapters in Albany for seven years.

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@dosscc.org](mailto:ginderp@dosscc.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](mailto:apiroli@hacdalbany.com) by Wednesday.**

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



# Bet Shraga Hebrew Academy Of the Capitol District Participates in the 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Chanukah Toy Drive

The annual Chanukah Toy Drive, a unique opportunity to bring the joy of Chanukah to Jewish children less fortunate than our own, is underway. Presents are distributed in our area at Chanukah parties held by organizations such as **Tomorrow's Children Institute, Jewish Family Services, Project Ezra, Tomchei Shabbos, UJC, Bikur Cholim, Bris Avrohom, Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty, Ohel Children's Home, OTSAR, Tikva-Odessa, The Ukraine, Sharsheret, Emunah, Chai Lifeline, Shelter Our Sisters, Shaare Tzedek Hospital.**

**WHAT WE'RE COLLECTING:** As many new, unwrapped items that can fit in your car (or within your budget!) Electronic and board games, arts and crafts supplies, books, dolls, sports equipment, and toys with Jewish themes and content. While this is called a "toy" drive, please keep in mind when selecting presents that many recipients are older children and young teenagers. Ideas for this age group include mp3 players, boom boxes, jewelry, watches, stationery, cosmetic kits, books, Blokus, puzzles, pocketbooks, Old Navy or Target gift certificates, and sports equipment (e.g., baseball gloves, hockey sticks, footballs), etc. Hebrew music tapes are especially appreciated for all age groups. **Remove all price tags and, please, no used items!**

Remember -- this is a terrific mitzvah for your kids to participate in -- they'll love picking out the toys to give away and learn the true meaning of Chesed, at the same time!

**WHEN WE'RE COLLECTING:** A.S.A.P. so that they can be delivered to the children in time for Chanukah.

We thank you in advance for participating in this important Mitzvah. **Happy Chanukah!**



[www.bctoydrive.com](http://www.bctoydrive.com)



# Chanukah Bazaar & Family Fun

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11<sup>th</sup>, 11 – 4 pm**

**Congregation Beth Abraham-Jacob**  
380 Whitehall Road, Albany

**Kids Corner**

**BOUNCITY BOUNCE, CHANUKAH PROJECTS,  
DUCT TAPE CRAFTS, JEWELRY MAKING, LEGO  
BUILDING CORNER, FACE PAINTING,  
BALLOONS & GAMES...**



**Enjoy Lunch with your Family:**  
Delicious falafel, pasta, Israeli salad, desserts and drinks

**\$3 Adult Admission fee**  
includes side Israeli Salad  
**\$5 Children's Fee**  
supervised unlimited play & crafts  
**\$18 max per Family**



**Holiday shopping – featuring local vendors of jewelry, crafts,  
toys, clothing, handbags & Judaica gifts for all ages.**

**All proceeds raised will benefit Mifgash Community Jewish High School scholarship & programming**

Contact Wendy Schaffer @ [hwschaffer@aol.com](mailto:hwschaffer@aol.com) with questions

## 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!**

### **Grandparents**

Mirian Biskin  
Leo Koppel  
Barbara and Howard Levine  
Norma Rosen  
Margo and James Strosberg  
Ruth and Herbert Swift

### **Alumni**

Annette Kriegel Davidoff and  
Ravin Davidoff  
Sophie, Harry and Aaron Friedman  
Mindy Greene Huber and Josh Huber  
Aliza and Daniel Scher

Names listed reflect  
those whose  
payments have been  
received.

### **Alumni Parents**

Nanette and Arthur Brenner  
Barbara and Karl Brodsky  
Morris Cohen  
Judy and Martin Goldman  
Nancy and Elliott Greene  
Gail Kendall  
Estate of Hannah Lorch  
Rona and Louis-Jack Pozner  
Anita and Ken Rabinoff-Goldman  
Ruth and Steven Rich  
Pearl and Harris Sanders  
Roberta and Richard Seiden  
Barbara and Les Stein  
Joyce and Melvin Toub  
Barbara Wachs

### **Current Parents**

Shelly L. Goldman Black and  
Johnny Black, Jr.  
Ana Sobel and George Bizer

### **Community**

Helene S. Ainspan  
Joyce and Sanford Bookstein  
Dorice Brickman  
Selma Goldberg  
Neil, Jane, William & Estelle Golub  
Family Foundation, Inc.  
Karen and Gerald Hausler  
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