



Bet Shraga  
Hebrew Academy  
of the Capital District



November 5 2010  
28 Cheshvan 5771

## SHABBATON

Issue Number 7  
Volume Number III

### CALENDAR

**Monday, November 8**  
**Tuesday, November 9**  
**Wednesday, November 10**  
3:15 Band  
**Thursday, November 11**  
NO SCHOOL  
Parent Teacher Conferences  
Gr. 1, 3, 4 6-8  
**Friday, November 12**  
8:00-11:00 Parent Teacher  
Conference Gr. K, 2, & 5

#### Candle Lighting times for November 2010

Friday, Nov. 5th - Light 5:26pm	Saturday, Nov. 6th - End 6:26pm
Friday, Nov. 12th - Light 4:18pm	Saturday, Nov. 13th - End 5:20pm
Friday, Nov. 19th - Light 4:12pm	Saturday, Nov. 20th - End 5:14pm
Friday, Nov. 26th - Light 4:07pm	Saturday, Nov. 27th - End 5:10pm

#### DVAR TORAH BY RACHEL ANISFELD

*Vayitzak tze'akah gedolah umarah ad me'od.* "He cried out an exceedingly great and bitter cry (Gen 27:34)." This is the Torah's description of Esav's reaction to the news that his brother Yaakov had stolen his blessing.

We can rationalize Yaakov's actions. He had in fact bartered for the first-born rights earlier in the parsha so the blessing was his for the taking. He had more foresight and was more polite and respectful than his brother. He is our ancestor, after all, and Esav is not.

But still, that cry of Esav's -- *tze'akah gedolah umarah* -- screams out to us. Whatever else Yaakov did, he hurt Esav. Esav suffered because of Yaakov's actions.

And such suffering, says the midrash, does not go unheeded by God. "Rabbi Hanina said: Whoever maintains that the Holy One blessed be He is lax in dispensing justice, may his bowels become lax. He [God] is merely long-suffering (Breishit Rabbah 67:4)." When, according to Rabbi Hanina, did God punish Yaakov for causing Esav to suffer? Hundreds of years later, during the time of Esther, when Mordecai hears of Haman's plan to kill the Jews. There we are told that Mordecai cries the same cry as Esav -- *Vayitzak ze'akah gedolah umarah* -- "He cried out a great and bitter cry (Esther 4:1)"

When you cause someone pain, it has repercussions. "Hurt people hurt people." Yaakov's actions began a long-term cycle of hatred and suffering.

What is so remarkable about this midrash is that it paints God as being on the side of Esav. Esav is the father of the nation Edom which is traditionally understood to represent Rome, and therefore considered Israel's arch-enemy. Here we have a story of God heeding the cry of Israel's enemy, and indeed, punishing Israel for that enemy's suffering. There is a famous saying that puts it this way: "More important than having God on your side is making sure that you are on God's side."

God is Israel's God, but God is also the God of the world, and most particularly, the God of those who suffer. It is their cries that draw Him into the world. "The voice of the blood of your brother is crying out to me from the earth," says God after Cain kills Abel, using that same verb *tza'ak*. And it is the *tse'akah*, the cry, of the mistreated in Sodom that draws God down to earth there too. Later, in Exodus, we are told that if we mistreat the poor, the widow or the orphan, they will surely cry out to God -- *tza'ok yitzak eli* -- and then God will come down to exact retribution (Exodus 22:22, 26).

God hears the cries of the mistreated, whatever nationality. Hagar, too, suffered at the hands of our ancestor Sarah, and there too God hears and responds. In fact, her son -- also the father of an enemy of Israel -- bears as his name the memory of God's ability to hear such cries, *Yishmael*, meaning "God hears."

Not all the deeds of our ancestors are meant to be emulated. The message here is not to act like Yaakov or Sarah, who cause the pain, but to act like God, who hears the cries of suffering. Perhaps that was the purpose of all the suffering the Israelites later endured in Egypt, to create a nation that -- because it was born out of suffering -- would always be attentive to the suffering of others.

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



# Administrators Corner

Mrs. Balmer

## Did You Do Your Homework?



I have always had mixed feelings about homework. As a kid I hated homework. Hanging out with friends is where my desire was, but homework was meant to improve my grades, and I liked that! From the parent point of view homework was a window into my children's day at school, but it was a source of friction between me and my children at home. Nagging questions were constantly flying from my mouth, "Did you do your homework? Why did you wait to the last minute to do that project?" Professionally, I thought that assigning homework would lead the children to a better understanding of the material, but I really did not like hearing the children grumble about having homework and I didn't like asking the children, "Did you do your homework? Why didn't you do your homework?"

These mixed feelings inspired me to do some homework myself. I researched the pros and cons of homework. I found that at the elementary level there is no data that supports the positive effects of homework. Harris Cooper, a Duke University psychology professor, compiled six studies that were conducted between 1987 and 2003 in his book, The Battle Over Homework. He states that for elementary school children, "the average correlation between time spent on homework and achievement...hovered somewhere around zero." After reading that study I went in search of data that would support the positive effects of homework for elementary students. I thought I was on to something when I revisited a book that I read a while back called, Classroom Instruction That Works: Research-Based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement by Robert Marzano, Debra Pickering and Jane Pollock. This book cited five sources that stated the benefits of homework. However, as I continued my search I read, The Homework Myth by Alfie Kohn and realized that Kohn tracked down each of those studies and noticed that the data included in the Marzano et. el. book was misleading and incorrect. Kohn states, "I was frankly stunned by the extent of misrepresentation here. It wasn't just that one or two of the cited studies offered weak support for the proposition. Rather, none of them offered *any* support." I was not able to find any research that proved that there was a correlation between homework and academic achievement in the elementary grades.

In wrapping up my "homework" my feelings changed. I now wonder since there is no data to support the positive effects of homework should children in elementary school be given homework on very limited basis? In elementary school, should it be the exception not the rule? What do you think?

I must note that the findings are a bit different once children enter middle school. Mr. Miller will share his view with you in two weeks.

# ***HACD SPORTS ROUNDUP!!!!***



HACD's Cross County team (the Flyin' Lions) had a great season. All races were one (1) mile long; but some miles were longer than others. Races were held at The Crossings Park in Colonie; Schenectady's Central Park; the Menands School; the Parker School and Bethlehem Town Park. Runners this year were Yoni Israel; Isaac Rosen and Zach Waldman (8th Grade); Ari Levy (6th Grade) and Aaron Ashery; Jonah Goldstein; Nick Honen; Eitan Kaziyev and Noah Waldman (5th Grade). Although many of these races included 30 or more runners, HACD consistently had top 10 finishers including a first place finish by 8<sup>th</sup> grader Isaac Rosen.

The Hebrew Academy soccer team ended its inaugural season with a sweeping victory against Parker (11-1). This team was a model of perfect team-work: each individual player putting forth tremendous effort to contribute to the final successful outcome. These players should be very proud of their success and effort. The Hebrew Academy should be very proud of how this team represented itself in The Friendship League.

We look forward to seeing each of these players for a spring season of soccer!

***Coach Miller***



**Capital Region Friendship Circle to hold their first Extraordinary Friends and Heroes Event!**

On at 6 p.m. the Friendship Circle will be holding their first ever Extraordinary Friends and Heroes Event. The fundraiser will be held at the College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering. The Friendship Circle will be honoring several very deserving individuals, based on their commitment to the community.

The honorees include:

**John Mason & Karen Cavanagh**

- CEO of the Sabre Companies and Co-Founder of Play for Power - The Water Project
- General Counsel of the Sabre Companies and Co-Founder of Play for Power - The Water Project

**Bob & Susan Neudel**

- Teacher at the Albany Academies and Owner/Operator of Bob Neudel Photography
- Community Volunteer and Retired Teacher

**Jonathan Phillips** — President and Owner of Phillips Hardware  
**Mary Ellen Whitney** — CEO & founder of STRIDE Adaptive Sports, Inc.

- Lavish Hors d'oeuvres
- Silent Auction

Tours will be given of the NanoFab North Viewing Corridor

For more information about reservations for this event or joining the Friendship Circle as a participant, volunteer or supporter please contact DALE KATZ at 518-765-5772, 518-441-6341 or [RKATZ@NYCAP.RR.COM](mailto:RKATZ@NYCAP.RR.COM)



**BABYSITTING SERVICES  
PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCE DAY  
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2010**

The eighth graders will again be offering babysitting for Parent Teacher Conf. on Nov. 11. As part of the activities, we will be making Hanukkah greeting cards for Jewish Troops. If you would like to donate some gifts for the troops to go with the cards, we will collect new or gently used DVD's of movies or TV shows, paper backed books, magazines, crossword puzzle and sudoku books and decks of playing cards or small games. The package will be mailed that evening, so please bring any donations with you to parent teacher conferences.

Also, remember the babysitting is a fund raiser so, please contribute generously towards our trip!

Looking for families to light Hanukkah candles at area nursing homes and assisted living facilities. Instructions, blessing and song sheets available.

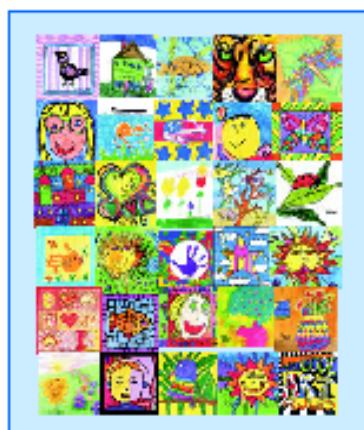
Some days at Daughters of Sarah (around 3:30 or 4:00); other possibilities in Rensselaer or Schenectady Counties.

Contact Rabbi Bev Magidson, [ravbev5760@yahoo.com](mailto:ravbev5760@yahoo.com) or 783-7800, ext. 228



## Be a Part of the Art

### *Our Children – Our Hope – Our Future*



The children of Bet Shraga Hebrew Academy are creating a tapestry – a lasting handcrafted work of art – that will travel to various community venues over the next year, providing outreach to the community and highlighting the students' love of their school. After the exhibit has traveled, it will be on permanent display at Bet Shraga Hebrew Academy. This beautiful tapestry is being created in honor of art teacher Amy Rosenstrauch, whose dedication and creativity has helped foster a love of the Arts in Bet Shraga students.

#### *How is this tributary work of art being created?*

Each student will draw a picture with the sentiment: "To me, Hebrew Academy is..." that will be converted into a "Tapestry Square." The tapestry will be completed under the supervision of a textiles artist and will incorporate felting projects Mrs. R has done with Bet Shraga students.

#### *What can I do?*

For just \$25 per square, YOU CAN SPONSOR A BET SHRAGA STUDENT to help create this tapestry. All contributions will be noted on a dedication panel. Please complete the form below and return it to the office, attention "Tapestry."

Thank you for your support!

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***Yes! I want to Be a Part of the Art with a square on the Bet Shraga Tapestry!***

Number of students to sponsor: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of sponsor \_\_\_\_\_

Name of sponsor \_\_\_\_\_

Here is my check for \$\_\_\_\_ (\$25 per square) payable to HACD, Total # of Squares \_\_\_\_\_

Charge my  VISA  MasterCard  Discover  American Express

Card No. \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_ Security Code \_\_\_\_\_

Cardholder's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

# Temple Israel Celebrates Shabbat in Dance & Song!



**FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 12**

**5:30 p.m. Special B'yachad Kabbalat Shabbat  
6:30 p.m. Dinner \* & "Dancing Oneg"**

Adults (13 and over) \$17

Children (6-12) \$9 5 & Under free

Enjoy a special and engaging Shabbat  
experience at TI with dance and song!

(please be aware that regular time for Minchah/Kabbalat Shabbat will be 4:15 PM)

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 13**

**9 a.m. Shabbat Morning Services  
followed by  
Shabbat Lunch & Learn  
with Elana Silton Moskowitz  
and Rabbi Paul and Faye Silton**

Adults (13 and over) \$10 Children (6-12) \$6

5 & Under free

The spirit of Shabbat shines through movement  
inspired by an understanding of Jewish text.

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 14**

2-5 PM

**Israeli Dance Party with Ruth Goodman & Danny Uziel  
Open to the community!**



*\*Full Shabbat Dinner  
with Vegetarian Option,  
Dessert & Drinks*



Yes! I/we will be attending the following:

Reservations must be received no later than Monday, November 8

Friday, November 12

# adults @\$17 \_\_\_\_\_ # children (6-12) \$9 \_\_\_\_\_ # under 5 (free) \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

# of vegetarian meals requested \_\_\_\_\_

Saturday, November 13

Shabbat Lunch & Learn (vegetarian menu)

# adults @\$10 \_\_\_\_\_ # children (6-12) \$6 \_\_\_\_\_ # under 5 (free) \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total due = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is check # \_\_\_\_\_ OR Please charge my credit card\*  Visa  MasterCard  AMEX  Discover  
# \_\_\_\_\_ exp \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ Security Code \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to Temple Israel, 600 New Scotland Avenue, Albany, NY 12208. 518-438-7858, ext. 126

\*When using your credit card, please write your name exactly as it appears on the card.

*You may also register at [tidance@hotmail.com](mailto:tidance@hotmail.com).*



**Exciting  
educational programs for  
*Preschoolers  
And  
Little Siblings***

**Bet Shraga  
Hebrew Academy of the Capital District**



**Thursday, November 18  
1:30 PM**

*Bet Shraga teacher, Terry Frazer, of the  
Oneida and Cayuga tribes, will tell stories  
of her people and lead activities to  
experience aspects of this  
beautiful culture.*

**Monday, December 6  
1:30 PM**

*Join the kindergarten students for a  
Chanukah party.  
Singing with Rabbi Rami  
Stories, Dancing, Games,  
Refreshments*



*Shabbat Sponsor November 5, 2010*

**Nanette and Artie Brenner  
Lianna (class of 2004)  
Misha (class of 2005)  
Camille (class of 2008)  
Ravi (class of 2011)**

**In Honor of  
Ravi Brenner's Bar Mitzvah!**



**Grandparents and Special Friends Day  
will be held in May 2011.**

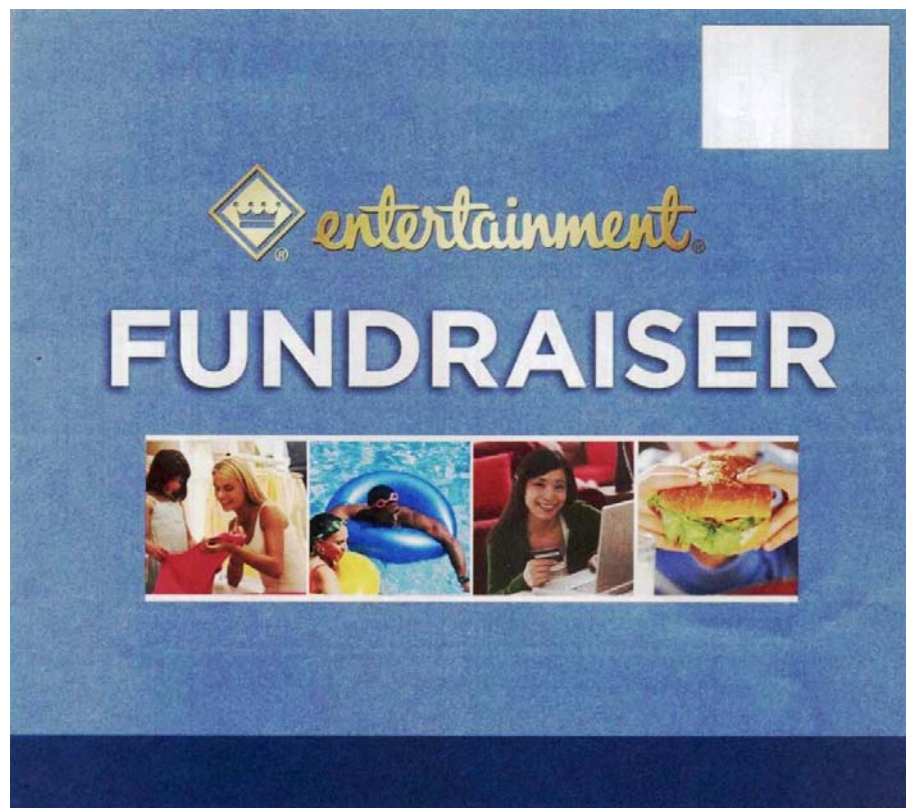
**Stay tuned for details!**

**LOST BRACELET**

**A sterling silver bracelet, with other details was found outside  
the HACD building ... someone must be missing it...**

**Please contact Paula Binyamin directly. We want to return it to  
the rightful owner.**





**ENTERTAINMENT BOOKS ON SALE NOW!**

**Funds raised help support each grades  
8th grade trip to Israel**

**The Albany Book is \$30**

**Please send your orders in by 11/19/10  
(make checks payable to HACD)**

**They make great Chanukah gifts!**

**All books not sold must be returned by 11/19/10  
(HACD Families)**

**To order online (prices vary by region and include shipping  
cost) email Liz Goldstein at [Lgoldstein@hacdalbany.com](mailto:Lgoldstein@hacdalbany.com) or  
[emgold@nycap.rr.com](mailto:emgold@nycap.rr.com)**



COMMUNITY-WIDE  
CHANUKAH  
SHOPPING BAZAAR  
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 21,  
4-6PM



Looking for the perfect gift for family & friends on your Holiday List?

Look no further than the Mifgash Chanukah Bazaar.

Temple Israel, 600 New Scotland Avenue, Albany,

Mifgash community-wide Hebrew high school will host their first annual Chanukah Bazaar to help you find the perfect gifts. From jewelry, toys and crafts, to electronics and unique gifts, Chanukah shopping will be in full swing for the whole family. Great prices and selection!

Beautiful local & internationally crafted gifts will be plentiful just in time for your Thanksgiving family travel where many celebrate the holiday season.

Chanukah may be early this year, but, you'll be completely ready with this opportunity for one stop shopping and early Chanukah spirit.

Mifgash community-wide high school is sponsoring this wonderful afternoon filled with Chanukah treats as well delicious potato latkes, falafel and more with all the trimmings.

Vendor booths are still available. Vendors interested in participating in this event who sell: toys, bags, electronics and games, crafts and gift cards are welcome. Please contact Wendy Schaffer @ [hwschaffer@aol.com](mailto:hwschaffer@aol.com) or call 439-4765 if you would like to participate or have questions.



## **Community Event Calendar**

### **November 13, 2010**

The Daughters of Sarah Mystery Challenge is a whimsical and adventurous 'night at the museum' that will challenge your mind with exhilarating, friendly, team-based contests of wit and imagination, all while enjoying elaborate hors d'oeuvres, delectable desserts and a fabulous silent auction on at 7:30PM at The NYS Museum. All proceeds benefit Daughters of Sarah Senior Community, offering adult day care, assisted living, and award-winning skilled nursing. Tickets are \$85, or \$50 for persons under 40. To register, call Kim at (518) 724-3261, email her at [pappk@daughtersofsarah.org](mailto:pappk@daughtersofsarah.org) or respond online at [www.daughtersofsarah.org](http://www.daughtersofsarah.org).

### **November 21, 2010**

Jewish Girls Unite Presents:

**Light up the Night Star Show!** for girls in grades 3-8 (Yaldah, BMC, TLC Clubs) 1-3 pm.

Discover the Power you have to be a STAR!

Enjoy a fascinating Star show with Carol Ann Margolis at the Henry Huson Planetarium in Albany, NY.

Star Treats, Star Art, Star Fun!  
Bring your Friends.

\$8 for JGU member - \$12 guest

JGU membership & YALDAH magazine subscription: \$48.00

Looking forward to seeing you there!

RSVP: Nechama Laber by e-mail or call 518-727-9581



**To put a community wide event in our e-shabbaton, please email a text only version to [klinehan@hacdalbany.com](mailto:klinehan@hacdalbany.com) by Wednesday.**

