



## CALENDAR

**Monday, October 11**  
8:00am Bring a Jewish friend  
to school  
9:00 Open House  
**Tuesday, October 12**

**Wednesday, October 13**  
Gr.5&6 Field Trip to Camp  
Olam

**Thursday, October 14**

**Friday, October 15**  
1:40pm Kindergarten Oneg

### Candle Lighting times for September/October 2010

Friday, Oct. 8th - Light 6:08pm	Saturday, Oct. 9th - End 7:06pm
Friday, Oct. 15th - Light 5:56pm	Saturday, Oct. 16th - End 6:55pm
Friday, Oct. 22nd - Light 5:45pm	Saturday, Oct. 23rd - End 6:44pm
Friday, Oct. 29th - Light 5:35pm	Saturday, Oct. 30th - End 6:35pm

### DVAR TORAH BY RACHEL ANISFELD

In the tower of Babel story, God mixes up the people's languages "so that they shall not understand one another's speech." Shouldn't we strive to understand one another? Why did God want to put distance between humans?

In the generation of the tower, there was apparently too much closeness, too much unity, too much homogeneity. The story begins by saying people had *safah ahat*, "one language" and *devarim ahadim*, "few words or things." Their problem was a lack of multiplicity; there were too few words and ideas in their society.

The sound of the text dramatizes this sense of sameness, as the modern scholar Cassuto points out. The people say to one another: *Havah nilbinah leveinim* and then *havah nivneh lanu*. It means, "Let us make brick," and "let us build for ourselves," but listen to the sound of it, *havah nilbinah leveinim/havah nivneh lanu*. This is a story about few words and it also has few words in it, the same words and sounds being repeated over and over. The words *ehad*, "one" *safah*, "language," *kol ha'aretz*, "the whole earth" and *shem*, "name" or *sham*, "there," are each repeated numerous times. The result is a story which sounds like the industrial assembly line it describes—the construction of a single tower, brick by brick, each the same as the last.

What is wrong with this model of human productivity? It is not creative. It is monotonous and immobile, building a single tower in one place. *Pru urvu umilu et ha'aretz*, says God repeatedly in these early stories -- be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. Don't have *devarim ahadim*, few ideas. Have many. Rejoice in the diversity of humanity. *Shivim panim laTorah*, say the rabbis – there are 70 different sides to the Torah, 70 ways of interpreting any one phrase, and our job as humans is to multiply meanings, to see all the colors of God's post-flood rainbow, not to reduce them all to brick brown.

Maybe the problem was there were no individuals in Babel. Before and after this story, we find long lists of genealogies with many an individual name but not in Babel; the story itself has not a single personal name, and all action and speech is done in the plural. No wonder they had "few things." The richness of many individuals had been reduced to group think. God made each individual in His image, which means, say the rabbis, that each one of us is slightly different. A society that does not prize and develop these differences to their fullest potential, a society that turns all its members into brick-layers, misses the essence of God's rich world.

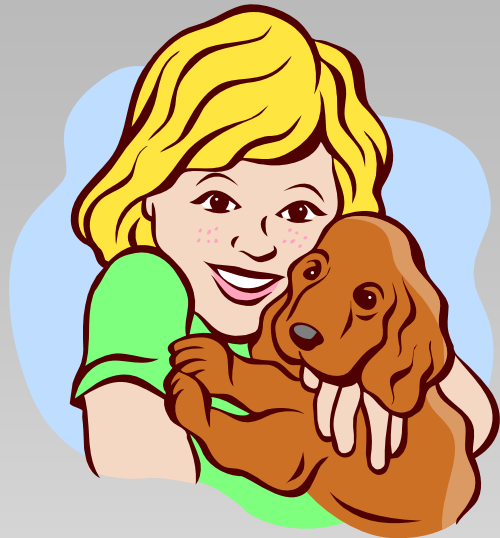
And so God comes down to the Tower builders and mixes up their languages, trying to get them *to not understand each other*, trying to get them to see that there are parts of other humans that are not the same as their own, that each person is a separate individual with his own language.

The midrash says that after God mixed up their languages, the people started arguing. "I said to bring me a brick, not a hammer, you idiot!" The scenario sounds unpleasant, but may be exactly what they needed. Without conflict, ideas cannot blossom and grow. Jewish learning is traditionally suffused in argument, in the back and forth of Talmudic reasoning and all its rabbinic disagreements. Maybe what God was teaching the generation of the Tower was the value of conflict, the value of sometimes not agreeing, of creating a society of growth and variation, where there exist more than *devarim ahadim*, "a few things."

## Administrators Corner

**Patricia Balmer, Lower School Principal**

### Kiley: A Lesson in Administration and Teaching



This summer my family bought me a puppy for my birthday. She was the cutest little ball of fluff that I had ever seen. I named her Kiley. The first day I had her home I realized that my cute, little puppy was very much like a baby. She demanded my attention, she cried all through the night, she did not behave very well and she wasn't potty trained.

Now that she is a few weeks older she reminds me of a young child. I taught her my expectations, and with some training and reminding she is able to behave better. I learned that she behaves better when she knows the expectations, when I am consistent with her, and when she is rewarded for a job well done. Much like a child!

As I started back to school, as a teacher and administrator, this year Kiley helped me remember that children and puppies are very much alike. As with my puppy, I need to make sure the children know my expectations, children may need some training, children need consistency and it is a good idea to reward good behavior. I never thought a puppy would give me a lesson on administration and teaching!

## Mrs. Crom's Second Grade Class

### Second Grade Game

For "Meet the Teacher Night," the students in Second Grade gave their parents a test. Prior to this night, each student had five nice things said about them by the class that they wrote down and I hung on a bulletin board. No names were put on the front, but a tiny name was on the back. Their parents were supposed to figure out which comments were about their child, and could check by looking on the back of the paper.

This year's class became very excited by the idea of fooling their parents! They became highly clever and devious to disguise their work. The students switched pronouns, so that "he" became "she" or the other way around. One student used both pronouns! They misspelled words if they were good spellers, and wrote in less than neat handwriting if their penmanship was good. Others chose colors of paper to write on that they felt their parents would never expect them to choose.

Many parents were at least initially confused, and some searched a long time before they found the correct comment paper. It was all in good fun, and the students' creativity amazed the Second Grade parents!



# SUKKOT



## Recruitment efforts for 2011 incoming students are in full swing.

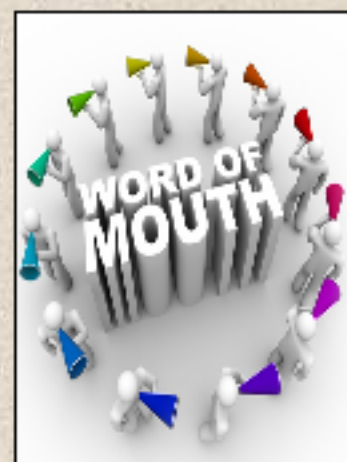
### Here's how you can help:

Spread the good word!

Talk about positive aspects of Bet Shraga:

1. Warm & welcoming community
2. Outstanding integrative curriculum in General & Judaic studies
3. Nurturing Jewish environment
4. Strong math & science at all levels
5. Older children care for the younger children
6. Trust among school community members
7. Students develop self confidence – character building
8. Inclusive environment
9. Lifelong friendships – strong lasting bonds between classmates
10. Inter-generational programs with the school & greater community
11. Find our promotional video on YouTube:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-TwqyIJzIt8>



Invite families to attend our Open House  
for next year's Kindergarten and First Grade

**Monday, October 11, 2010**

**9:00-11:00am**

*Special 2 hour program for parents and children*



Students in Grades K-6 are invited to  
Bring a Jewish Friend to School

**On Monday, October 11, 2010**



Invite families with young children to "Meet a Beekeeper"

**Tuesday, October 19, 2010 - 1:15pm**



Beekeeper :  
Nissa Armstrong



**Shabbat Sponsor October 8, 2010**

**Dr Eliot Rich and Dr. Marla Eglowstein  
In Honor of**

**Sophie Rich's Birthday!**

**School Wide  
ONEG Dates**

**November 19**

**December 3**

**January 21**

**February 18**

**March 18**

**April 15**

**May – 13 or 20 TBD**

**June 17**

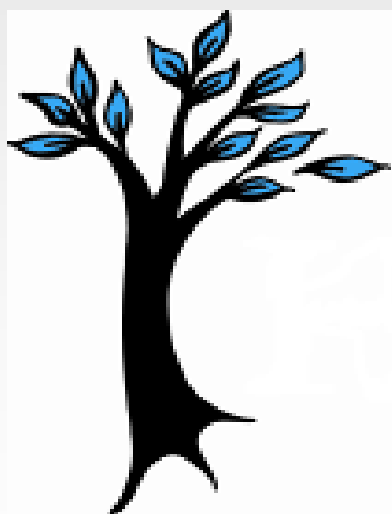


The Bet Shraga family mourns the loss of Esty (Rubin) Cohen (age 33 and mother of six children) after a month-long medical struggle. She is the daughter of Rabbi Israel and Rochel Rubin. Rabbi Rubin is the principal of Maimonides Hebrew Day School in Albany.

The funeral and burial were in Manchester, England.

May her memory be a blessing for her husband Mendel and children, parents and family.

Rabbi & Mrs. Rubin can receive condolence emails at [rabbirubin@saratogachabad.com](mailto:rabbirubin@saratogachabad.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**

## **October 10, 2010**

Jewish Girls Unite Event for girls in grades 3-8.  
Empowering Jewish Girls to imagine, Dream, Unite, Connect, Lead...  
**2-4 pm, MHDS. 404 Partridge St. Albany, NY**

Divisions: YALDAH- Focus on Friendship, Creativity & Jewish Pride (grades 3-4)  
BAT MITZVAH CLUB- Discover Bat Mitzvah and the power in you. (grades 5-6)  
TEEN LEADERSHIP CLUB - Focus on Leadership and Teen Talk. (grades 7-8)  
Separate programs for each age group with professionals and guest counselor, Leah Larson - Publisher of YALDAH magazine.

Topic: Are u Going in Circles?  
A workshop on Jewish Unity & Individuality.

Creative Art Clubs: Spiral Art, Spiral Culinary arts, Circle Dancing & Games, Food, Friendship, Fun.....

check out: [www.jewishgirlsunite.com](http://www.jewishgirlsunite.com) for more info. JGU - it's not the same without u!

Membership: \$48.00 includes free subscription to YALDAH magazine, Unity Forum, Journal, One JGU event.

Cost per monthly event: \$8

Next Event: For Women & Girls of all ages.  
Sat. Night Live Unity Concert with Ruth Devorah at MHDS, 404 Partridge St. at 8:00 pm  
Cost: \$10 pp /JGU member: \$8

## **October 16, 2010**

Jewish Girls Unite (a.k.a. Bat Mitzvah Club) and Bnos Chaya  
invite all Women & Girls to a Unity Melave Malkah starring Rus Devorah  
8 pm. at Maimonides, 404 Partridge St.

**Rus Devorah Wallen** fits the description of a true Renaissance woman. Multi-talented, with a Bachelor's of Music Education from the College Conservatory of Music in Cincinnati, Ohio and an M.S.W. degree from the Wurzweiler School of Social Work in New York, she has lectured, performed and developed unique educational programs for Jewish women, college youth and girls. Her journeys throughout the United States, Canada, Israel, Europe Australia and the former Soviet Union, have shaped the extensive musical repertoire of this multi-lingual, inspiring performer. Audiences respond enthusiastically to Rus Devorah's warmth, sensitivity and humor as she sings songs and explores meaningful Jewish concepts and themes.

Admission: \$10, JGU member or Senior Citizen \$8  
For more info. call Nechama Laber at 518-727-9581 or e-mail [nlaber@jewishgirlsunite.com](mailto:nlaber@jewishgirlsunite.com)

## **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).