

Tefilagram

February 2001

"And they shall build for me a sanctuary that I may dwell in their midst." (Exodus 25:8)

Adar 5761

ShaareyTefilah.com now on-line

Our shul's new home in cyberspace, www.shaareytefilah.com, went live on January 26. The Website has general information about the synagogue and (more importantly) up-to-date information on events and classes. The site is constantly evolving, so be sure to visit it often.

Keeping the site current is a team effort. If you know of an event not yet listed or you would like to share information with the wired community, please e-mail webmaster@shaareytefilah.com. Also, if you have any comments on additional info you'd like to see or perhaps you had difficulty finding something, let the Webmaster know.



Finally, we have some new e-mail addresses that makes contacting key people much easier. They are:

Lynda Rosenberg – office@shaareytefilah.com

Rabbi Singer – rabbi@shaareytefilah.com

Jeff Kline – president@shaareytefilah.com

Tefilagram submissions – tefilagram@shaareytefilah.com

Web and e-mail administrator – webmaster@shaareytefilah.com

Do you have a committee or group that could use its own e-mail address? Let the Webmaster know. And if you have graphic arts skills and could create quality graphics for the site, please contact the Webmaster.

We can now communicate with our members by e-mail, so if the Shul doesn't have your e-mail address, please send it to Lynda at office@shaareytefilah.com.

Vision Evening

Join us on Sunday, February 25 to help us determine the synagogue's future direction for the next five years.

Date: Sunday, February 25

Time: 7:00 PM

Place: Shaarey Tefilah

For more details, see 'From the President's Pen' on page three.

Holidays are for the adults too

By Rabbi Ross Singer

Although I usually don't like to play 'dress up,' every Purim I get a big kick out of surprising our kids with a new costume. I love that our synagogue is bursting with kids at our Purim party and during the Megillah reading. We should be very proud of the positive experience that we give our children on Purim. And almost exactly one month after, on Pesach, once again many of us turn our energies to giving our kids meaningful Passover Seders.

They work in school on the four questions. And what a pleasure it is for parents and grandparents to shepp nachus at their children's accomplishments.

We love hiding the afikomen and they love finding it. These back-to-back holidays of Purim and Pesach are very kid centered, as well they should be.

However, I want to share a concern I have over how we celebrate these holidays with our kids. There is a danger in all the focus on the next generation. We adults may end up being merely facilitators for our children and fail to celebrate

the holidays ourselves. This is regretful for at least two reasons. Firstly, Jewish holidays have profound messages that actually adults can appreciate even more deeply than children can. The important messages of taking care of the hungry through the mitzvot of mattanot

la'evyonim (gifts to the poor) on Purim and the introduction to the Seder 'all who are hungry' have greater significance for adults who actually have the means to look after the underprivileged. Judaism is an adult sophisticated religion that we should not relegate to the least mature of our people.

Secondly, our efforts at ensuring continuity are best served if

we model for our children the importance of Judaism in our own adult lives. If our children see us celebrating holidays in adult ways then they will get the message that we take Judaism seriously. In this year's 'season of redemption,' may we the adults of Shaarey Tefilah continue to bring the joy of holidays to our children and make sure to nourish ourselves as well in the beauty and wisdom of our tradition.



INVITATION from the RABBI

There will be a Purim Seudah (festive meal with alcohol) for adults and children (not the alcohol) at my home on March 9th at 2:00 in the afternoon. Everyone is invited and encouraged to bring funny songs, jokes etc.



From the President's Pen.....

Vision n. the act of seeing, a vivid concept or mental picture, a pleasing imaginative plan

This is how the Chambers dictionary defines vision and this aptly describes the opportunity that lies before us. Shaarey Tefilah has grown in so many ways since its inception almost 10 years ago. We have achieved much along the way – we have an energetic and committed congregation, we own our synagogue building, under the leadership of our Rabbi, we provide a broad range of programs and participate in community events – so we can look back with pride at where we have gone. As a learning, growing community we must also look forward and recognize the increased needs of our community. The growing youth complement within our broad demographic makeup and the constraints of our physical environment are but two of the challenges we are facing.

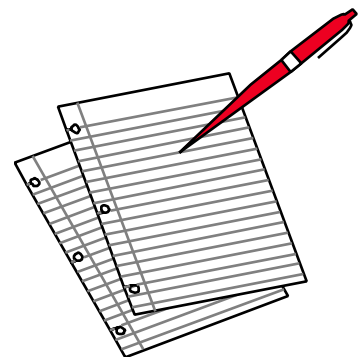
In the light of these issues, a number of members joined together some time ago for an informal 'Visioning' evening to take a look at what we want to be, the challenges we may face and the opportunities open to us.

This evening was very successful and inspiring for those involved and as a result the Board has decided to have a formal 'Vision' evening at which a similar exercise will be undertaken within our broader community.

The Vision evening is an attempt to engage the entire Shaarey Tefilah community in planning for our future in such a way as to ensure we meet our congregation's needs. The evening's discussions will

cover such areas as:

- the look and feel of our shul
- the physical space issue
- member participation in services
- the role of the Rabbi
- our place in the broader community
- financial goals



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Date: Sunday, February 25

Time: 7:00 pm

Place: Shaarey Tefilah

If the original event is anything to go by, the evening promises to be a fun event while constructing a 'pleasing imaginative plan' for our future.

See you there.

Jeff Klein

PS. This and other events are publicized on our great new Website at www.Shaareytefilah.com. Special thanks to Jay Zipursky for his efforts in setting up our new site.

The Tefilagram is the newsletter of Congregation Shaarey Tefilah. All newsworthy information concerning the membership and articles of interest to the Congregation are welcome and appreciated. Deadline for articles is the second week of the current month. Kindly forward submissions by e-mail to tefilagram@shaareytefilah.com or fax 877-2224.

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Report from the Board

Your Board continues to meet each month and the amount of programming, committee work and initiatives is truly remarkable for a small (less than 100 families) congregation. In fact, many recurrent themes at our board meetings have to do with our size.

As you may know, our congregation is fortunate to own our premises, but we are still running our annual budget at a deficit. We estimate that we need about 20 new members or member families to break even. Please continue to share your experiences at Shaarey Tefilah with your friends and especially with newcomers to our community. The membership committee headed by Ivor Levin is doing a great job, and we have welcomed five new member families in the last couple of months!

Annual dues statements have now gone out. Just as we have a voluntary fee structure, our treasurer, Dennis Frankenberg, has added a note to the effect that we will not turn down any member wishing to voluntarily remit more than the recommended amount this year to help address our shortfall. Thank you!

The Shaarey Tefilah Vision evening, convened by VP Randy Milner, will take place at the end of February. Details can be found elsewhere in this newsletter. This is an extraordinarily important undertaking. Those of you who have attended our overcrowded Shabbat

morning services and holiday celebrations, or our undercrowded Friday evening or Sunday morning services, will appreciate that we need to make some decisions about how best to manage our programs and our space. What kind of shul will we be five years from now? What will we look like and what is most important to us? Will we be in the same space?

What do we offer our children (many of whom will be Bnei Mitzvah by then)? This is a meeting for all of our members. Please make this a priority and come out on February 25th, seven pm at the synagogue.

Rabbi Singer has been spearheading our attempts to arrange for two Bnei Akivah Shlichot to join us for the next year. We have proposed that these two Israeli young women divide their time between one of the day schools (Talmud Torah) and our synagogue where they would provide youth programming and Shabbat services for our children. Stay tuned for more developments.

If members have any thoughts or input on how our congregation should or does function, don't hesitate to speak with any of our board members after services or at a

synagogue event, or e-mail our president, Jeff Klein, at president@shaareytefilah.com.

That's all for now. Shalom.

Cliff Ungar, for the Shaarey Tefillah Board of Directors



New Members

The Congregation welcomes new members Burt and Carole Chark, Helio Da Costa, Brad Freedman and Pam Wolfman, Ari Shiff and Carla Van Messel, Richard and Lisa Weidman into the Shaarey Tefillah family.

*Please make a note that there will be a **New Member Shabbat** on **Saturday, March 3rd**, a time for the congregation to meet the new members.*

Burt and Carole Chark have been members of the Beth Israel Synagogue of which Burt's late father, Max Chark, was a founding member, for 36 yrs.

Burt was born and raised in Vancouver and Carole was born in Winnipeg and moved here at the tender age of two. They have three grown children, all married in Vancouver and a bunch of wonderful grandchildren. They own Petit Fashions in Kerrisdale.

Our sincere condolences to the Chark family on the recent loss of Burt's beloved mom.

Helio Da Costa comes from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, although he left the country shortly after turning 19. He lived in Italy for two years, then went to the U.S. as a foreign student and finally came to Canada as an immigrant and graduate student. He received a master's degree in library sciences from UBC. He has worked as a janitor, letter-carrier, land title searcher, travel agent, customer service representative, and more. Helio is presently working as District Librarian for the North Vancouver School District.

His interests include the Jewish world, reading, spirituality, genealogy and travelling. He says he joined Shaarey Tefillah because of its commitment to being a traditional halachic community while still being part of the modern world.

Havdalah event magical

Magic was in the air for Shaarey Tefillah's first public Havdalah evening, celebrated in November.

Local magician, Nathan Fielder, was the star attraction with his flair for the improbable. Disappearing coins and notes, and card tricks mesmerized the large contingent of youngsters, and impressed the adults.

The event, planned and executed by the Membership committee, was developed in part to encourage members to bring new people into the community.

Ivor Levin, chair of the membership committee, says that as a result of the evening he acquired several new e-mail addresses and several new families attended other Shaarey Tefillah events.

"Of course it was also a wonderful opportunity to celebrate Havdalah as a community," says Ivor, "rather than in our homes, which we most often tend to."

Ivor extended his thanks to the Membership Committee, and those involved in catering including Michal Israel, Natalie Chark and Marla Karon.



Donations, Donations, Donations

Sincere Condolences

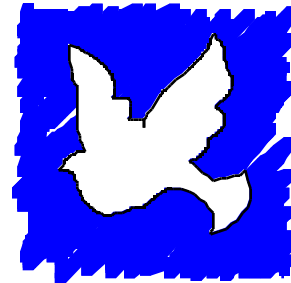
Kenny Golden on loss of brother
From Sid and Marie Doduck

Arnold Nemetz on loss of Ellie
From Sid and Marie Doduck
From Art and Arlene Hayes

Sandy Magid on loss of sister
From Sid and Marie Doduck

Murray Brisker on loss of wife Arlene
From Sid and Marie Doduck

Laverne Gelmon on loss of brother-in-law
From Art and Arlene Hayes



Mazel Tov

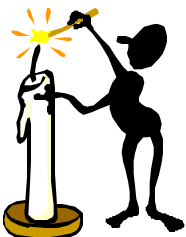
Joann Singer on special birthday
From Irwin and Corrine Woodrow

Rabbi and Mrs. Baitleman on birth of son
From Sid and Marie Doduck

Shirley and Jerry Kushner on birth of granddaughter
From Irwin and Corrine Woodrow

Get Well

Karl Taussig
From Irwin and Corrine Woodrow



Is there a special occasion coming up in your life? Consider sponsoring a shabbat kiddush in honour of a family member or special event.

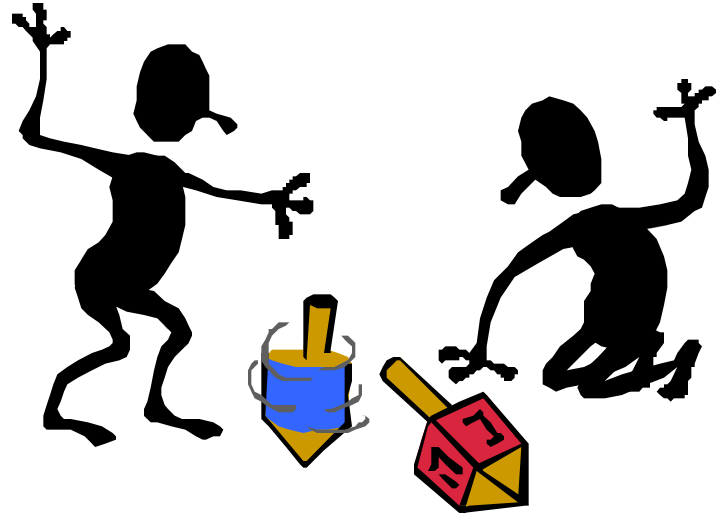
Chanuka party a success

Shaarey Tefilah's annual Chanuka party was as usual a tremendous success.

Held on December 25th, the party was well attended and provided lots of family fun including games for all ages and lots of traditional food.

Although Rabbi Singer was in Israel, the community was thrilled to have Rabbi Minervi and family attend. Rabbi Minervi led the community in lighting candles.

Thanks to Debra Youngson, and Andrea Milman, co-chairs of the Youth Committee, and their team for organizing the event.



Upcoming Events

(Please see the enclosed calendar. In fact, please pin it to your fridge!)

- February 13: Davenology 101, 7:30 pm at the shul
- February 15: Everything you always wanted to know about Judaism and aren't afraid to ask, 7:30 pm at the shul
- February 20: 12:15 pm class cancelled as Rabbi is out of town
- February 25: Vision meeting, 7 pm at shul
- February 26: Hebrew Level 2 (Hagadah), (also March 5, 12, 19) 7:30 pm
- February 27: Membership Committee meets, 8 pm
- March 3: New Members' Kiddush
- March 15: Everything you always wanted to know about Judaism and aren't afraid to ask, 7:30 pm at shul
- March 23: Shabbat Across Canada, at shul time TBA
- March 26: Laws of Passover class (also April 2) 7:30 pm at shul
- April 7: First Seder at shul, time TBA, Pre-registration mandatory
- April 19: Everything you always wanted to know about Judaism and aren't afraid to ask, 7:30 pm at shul

Yartzheits:

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| Feb. 25 (2 Adar): | Ivor Levin
Arlene Hayes |
| March 1 (6 Adar) | Charles Savedoff |
| March 8 (13 Adar) | Lorna Balinsky
Susan Hector |
| March 25 (1 Nissan) | Marie Doduck |
| April 1 (8 Nissan) | Dennis Frankenburg |
| April 5 (12 Nissan) | Lorna Balinsky |
| April 7 (14 Nissan) | Norman Fages |
| April 13 (20 Nissan) | Shirley Kaplan |
| April 26 (3 Iyar) | Michael Zaitzow |
| May 7 (14 Iyar) | Roman Raivich |
| May 10 (17 Iyar) | Sid Doduck |
| May 14 (21 Iyar) | Philip Swartz |
| May 19 (26 Iyar) | Rubin Zilberman |

Upcoming Yartzheit Minyans

- Feb. 25, 9 a.m.-- Ivor Levin

Pinchus Sez!

It would have been so nice to have a Vice-President who could speak Yiddish, but take heart, all is not lost lovers-of-mamaloshin.

This meinseh (story) goes back to the South Bronx in the 1950s when it had a predominantly Orthodox Jewish community with all the comforts of synagogues, mikvas, kosher butchers and bakers. There was a post-war baby boom and the Bronx had its own baby equipment store called Sickser's, owned by Mr. Sickser and assisted by Lou Kirshner, his son-in-law. The language of the store was primarily Yiddish even though many of the customers were not Jewish.



It was a thriving business and it got so busy that one spring morning they simply could not handle the throng of customers. Desperate for help, Mr. Sickser ran out of the store and stopped the first young person he spotted on the street. "Young man," he panted, "how would you like to make a little extra money? I need some help in the store. You want to work a little?" The tall African-American boy flashed a toothy smile back. "Yes sir, I'd like some work." "Well then lets get started," said Sickser and the boy followed his new employer into the store.

Impressed with the boy's good manners and demeanour, his diligence, punctuality and eagerness to learn, Mr. Sickser made him a regular employee. Young Colin performed general labour unloading trucks, assembling merchandise and appreciated not only the steady employment but the warm and friendly atmosphere at Sickser's. Until his sophomore year in college, he continued to put in 12 to 15 hours a week at the store for 50 to 75 cents an hour. During this time he picked up a good deal of Yiddish and was soon able to converse fairly well with his employers and the Jewish customers not fluent in English.

At age 17, while still working part-time at Sickser's, he began his first semester at City College of New York and knowing their ways and their language, he fit in just fine with his mostly Jewish classmates. He chose engineering and later geology, a very heavy course load which proved quite challenging. In retrospect, Colin would recall that Sickser's offered the one stable point in his life those days.

In 1993, two years after the Gulf War, General Colin Powell, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, visited Israel. Upon meeting Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir in Jerusalem, he greeted the Israeli with the words "Meir kent reden Yiddish" (We can speak Yiddish). As Shamir, stunned, tried to pull himself together, the current Secretary of State of the United States continued chatting in his second favourite language. He had never forgotten his early days in the Bronx.

Nu, maybe not a Vice-President, but at least the first Secretary of State vos kent reddem Yiddish !

--Pinchus

Notice to Members

Have you sent in your membership dues yet? For those who can make payment at once, thank you very much. If you have any query about this, please call Dennis Frankenburg at 732-7518

