

HANUKKAH

המנוח

THIS SEASON

AT CHIZUK AMUNO CONGREGATION

WINTER 2011 | 5772



Chizuk Amuno
CONGREGATION
ק"ק חזוק אמונה

In this issue:

- Examining Jewish Identity
- Hanukkah Activities and B'rakhot

Inscribing Our Future: The *Mitzvah* of Torah

Closing Ceremony and *Torah* Dedication

Sunday, February 12, 2012 • 11 a.m.

Join us in the Sanctuary to celebrate the culmination of our year-long journey.

The Chizuk Amuno Community Choir—Back by Popular Demand

Once again, we will rock the Sanctuary!

Be a part of it! Your presence at only two rehearsal sessions is all that is required.

- For all Chizuk Amuno members, ages 4 to 100
- No prior singing experience necessary

Please plan to attend at least one rehearsal session in Group A:

Sunday, January 8, 10 a.m.

Wednesday, January 11, 10 a.m.

Thursday, January 12, 7 p.m.

Tuesday, January 17, 10 a.m.

Please plan to attend at least one rehearsal session in Group B:

Sunday, January 29, 11 a.m.

Sunday, February 5, 11 a.m.

Invite your friends to sing with you!

For more info, contact Bob Hallock, rjhallock@gmail.com or 410/653-0256.

The celebration continues over lunch in the Krieger Auditorium.

For more information, contact lfreedman@chizukamuno.org



Children in our schools will be contacted directly through their school regarding their participation.

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Hazman

זה הזמן

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On the Cover: Pictured *dreidels* are from Rabbi Shulman's personal collection and can be found in his office.

Chizuk Amuno has a long history of proud service to Baltimore's Jewish community. Dedicated to strengthening faith in our people's covenant with God, the purpose of Chizuk Amuno Congregation is to create a sacred Jewish community. Here individuals and families can find meaning for their lives from serious engagement with the texts, wisdom, and celebrations of Judaism. In pursuit of this mission, Chizuk Amuno ascribes to the rabbinic teaching: "The world is sustained through *Torah* – learning, *Avodah* – prayer and service, and *Gemilut Hasadim* – acts of loving kindness."

LaZ'man HaZeh ~ At This Season ~ לזמן הזה



by Dick Manekin
President, Chizuk Amuno Congregation



Jewish Identity

On *Hanukkah* we celebrate Jewish religious identity. We remember the Maccabee's dedication to Temple worship, their desire to maintain Judaism's distinctive ritual practices, and their rejection of Hellenism. We recognize that the Maccabees liberated Jerusalem and purified the Temple so that our ancestors could worship God according to their Jewish customs.

Marking the eight day re-dedication of the second Temple in Jerusalem in 165 BCE on *Hanukkah*, we also know that the Temple was destroyed by the Romans 235 years later in 70 CE. How do we continue to celebrate the re-dedication of a destroyed Temple? How do we continue to honor our people's covenant with God in a world very different from that of the Maccabees?

The challenge for the Jews of antiquity was to establish a working relationship with Hellenistic culture, to preserve Jewish identity while simultaneously partaking of the riches of the larger world. Substituting Western culture for Hellenistic, we seek the same thing. Our happiness on *Hanukkah* comes from consciously celebrating our Jewish identities in the larger world. Reciting the *b'rakhot* before kindling our *Hanukkiyot*, in ritual and custom, we realize that the form of Jewish identity *Hanukkah* actually reinforces is Jewish religious identity.

Before there was *Hanukkah* another festival filled this season of the year. At the time of winter solstice, when the days reach their shortest duration and the nights their longest, our earliest ancestors lit bonfires, fearful that their days were dissolving forever into darker nights. We find this memory echoed in a *Talmudic* legend.

"When Adam saw the day gradually diminishing, he said, 'Woe is me! Perhaps because I acted offensively, the world around me is growing darker and darker, and is about to return to chaos and confusion.' He then sat eight days in fast and prayer. But when winter solstice arrived, and he saw the days getting gradually longer, he said, 'Such is the way of the world,' and proceeded to observe eight days of festivity. The following year he observed both the eight days preceding and the eight days following the solstice as days of festivity."

The ancients offered up lights from the earth hoping to rekindle the light above them that shone down from the heavens. Fearful of the evils that might lurk among them in the dark they reveled on the longest night of the year, huddled around blazing hearths. In the long and fearsome darkness of solstice, they sought the protection of communal lights. This was an appealing memory and symbol to our earliest rabbis. Years after the Maccabean victory, rabbinic tradition was less afraid of physical darkness. In the solstice darkness our sages saw a potent symbol of spiritual darkness. The story of a small cruse of oil that burned eight days is a parable. A small amount of light can dispel a great deal of darkness. *Hanukkah* isn't about the oil. *Hanukkah* is about the light.

Eliyahu KiTov confirms this vision in his collection of rabbinic texts about our holidays. "Wherever oil is mentioned in the *Torah* or in the words of the Sages, with reference to lighting the *menorah*, an allusion is intended to the wisdom of the heart and the thoughts of the mind. Despite all the Greeks had done to mar the thoughts of the people of Israel, there still remained a light in their hearts, lone thoughts of true wisdom."

As you gaze upon the lights of *Hanukkah* this year seek those lone thoughts of true wisdom. Sense the religious ideals by which you can and do live. Express them to your children and grandchildren. Celebrate the light of hope, of God's goodness, and the world's promise. Celebrate the beauty of our Jewish heritage, and sense the miraculous in your own life.

In this issue of *HaZman ~ This Season*, Shoshana Cardin, Randy Getz, and Maureen Walsh David reflect on the meanings of their Jewish identities. This *Hanukkah* season, I invite you to do the same. Celebrate the holiday with added awareness that Jewish values and traditions enhance our lives with a beauty of purpose and hope; they strengthen faith in what we hold sacred and significant. On *Hanukkah* we celebrate the light of Jewish identity and religious significance.

Hag Urim Sameah!
Happy *Hanukkah!*

Rabbi Ron Shulman

As a child growing up in northwest Baltimore in the 1950's most, if not all, of my friends were Jewish. I lived a very sheltered, protected Jewish life – *Shabbat* candles and *Kiddush*, home from school for the Jewish holidays (only if we went to *shul!*), Hebrew school, and a Jewish summer camp. It was not until I went to high school that I realized I was in a minority and the concept of Jewish identity became a real issue. As I was maturing, physically and intellectually, I began to explore and challenge the thoughts and ideas that I considered to be rote. This exploration continued and expanded in college as I was exposed to a new world outside of my protected Northwest Baltimore home.

The Times They Are a Changin' was the battle cry of my generation and I was caught up in the fervor of societal change which impacted significantly on my Jewish identity. The questioning became more frequent as I witnessed the challenges humankind faced both domestically and globally. I became more of a universal soldier who was trying to put an end to war and social injustices in our country. In fact, I vividly remember a heated discussion at my parents' home after the Six Day War when I was critical of Israel for its act of aggression against Egypt. I still identified myself as a Jew, but now questioned my Zionism and my religious beliefs. *Rosh HaShanah* and *Yom Kippur* became command performances to please my father and assuage my Jewish guilt, as opposed to my own personal religious commitment.

It was not until I joined the family business and got married that I began the settling-in process which included a review of my Jewish identity. My father was extremely active in The ASSOCIATED and he suggested that I become involved in Young Leadership. The first meeting was immediately following the start of the *Yom Kippur* War and the impact of both the war and the response of those at the meeting caused a reawakening of my responsibilities as a Jew. Not only was Israel attacked, but once again Jews were threatened. Now I wanted to fully understand Jewish history and Zionism, so I embarked upon a self-study program. My reading gave me a much better understanding of the Jewish people and our response to anti-Semitism over the years, and it also reignited my interest in religious Judaism. It all clicked when I was at a Young

continued on next page

Torah תּוֹרָה

Jewish Identity, or Who (or What) Am I?

As Jews in America, members of a minority, and feeling especially so at this time of year, we continue to struggle with this question: Are we American Jews, or Jewish Americans? Are we Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, Reconstructionist, Secular, Humanists, or simply gastronomic Jews?

Determining just who we are is a mammoth, unending task that requires extensive thought and consideration, research, and study. And study is what we are all about at the Stulman Center. This year we have approached the subject of Jewish identity from a variety of viewpoints: the historical, biblical, *Talmudic*, Christian-Jewish relations, Judaism and the Human Condition.

In a brand new course, “Contemporary Radical *Torah* Commentary,” taught by Rabbi Gila Ruskin, we have explored our

continued from previous page

Leadership conference and heard Rabbi David Hartman speak passionately about how we as Jews need to focus on the covenant at Sinai as the foundation for our Jewish identity, rather than anti-Semitism as expressed by the *Shoah*. The joy of our special relationship as a people with God and the gift of *Torah* to inform our lives and roles in a contemporary world – these are anchors for

identity through a different lens. Using *The Women’s Torah Commentary* and *Torah Queeries*, our eyes have been opened to new views of Jewish identity. Because of its great success, this course will continue through March. You may join at any time.

On Monday nights, we are learning about our Jewish identity as defined by our traditional commitment to be the people who seek to repair the world. This series, “Repairing the World: Text and Context,” concludes on Monday night, January 16, at 7 p.m. You are welcome to join us for either of the remaining sessions – January 9, We Will Return to You: On Land, Agriculture, and Sustainability, taught by Yakir Manela, Director, Kayam Farm, the Pearlstone Center or January 16, Living in the Contradiction: *Tikkun Olam* as a Way of Life, taught by Rabbi Deborah Wechsler.

May the lights of *Hannukah* brighten our lives, enhance our Jewish identity, and remind us of our many blessings.

a positive Jewish identity as we see meaning and purpose in our lives. My Jewish identity has evolved and matured to enrich and deepen my life as I embrace Judaism’s unique ethnic, cultural, and religious contributions to our world. It’s never too late to take a look in the mirror and ask the tough question, “What is my Jewish identity?”

The courses and lectures below are a small representation of offerings by the Stulman Center for Adult Learning this spring. For a complete listing or more information, please call 410/824-2055/8.

Visions of Meaning, Rabbi Ron Shulman

Select Tuesdays, January 10 - March 27, 7:30 p.m.

Essence • Time; Intention; Spirituality

Existence • Love; Alienation; Happiness

Destiny • Afterlife; Messiah; Social Justice

Art in the News, Dr. Susan Vick

Wednesdays, 11 a.m.

January 4, February 1, March 7, April 4, and May 2

Customs and Conversations,

Rabbi Ron Shulman

Thursdays, 9:30 a.m.

January 12, February 9, March 8, April 12, and May 10

America’s Relationship

to the Ten Commandments

Glassgold Kallah

Shabbat, February 24 and 25

Meet Joey Weisenberg

The Harold and Sybil Efron Memorial Lecture

Sunday, March 25

The Phyllis and Louis Friedman

Scholar-in-Residence Weekend

Friday - Sunday, April 27 - 29

Friday, *Shabbat* Dinner, Reservations required

• Challenges and Opportunities

Facing Conservative Judaism

Saturday, *Shabbat* Morning Services and Luncheon

• Almighty, No Way!

Loving the God You Actually Believe In

Sunday

• Lessons Learned with My Autistic Son:

Welcome Includes Everyone

Avodah עֲבוּדָה

Hanukkah is a wonderful holiday for families to gather and celebrate together. Try incorporating the “gift of giving” into your celebration as a way of emphasizing the *mitzvah* of *tzedakah*. Below, we’ve listed some ideas for making your *Hanukkah* family celebration more meaningful:

Themed Nights

Friends Night

Invite special friends over to light the *Hanukkiyah* and play games or have a special activity.

Music Night

Invite friends who like to sing and play instruments to sing your favorite *Hanukkah* songs.

Tzedakah Night

Donate toys, books, or clothing to a shelter.

Book Night

Read new or old books or a favorite *Hanukkah* story.

Family Night

Invite family who live nearby or phone your favorite relative out of town.

Cooking Night

Everyone in the family participates in cooking the family’s favorite meal.

Craft Night

Provide a variety of materials (recycled and bought) for each family member to make a gift for each other.

Gemilut *Hasadim* Night

Visit an assisted living facility or make a meal or dessert to take to a shelter.

It’s All About the Light

Lighting up the World

As you light the candles, you might dedicate each one to a different problem, a dark place that you would like to light up. Example: poor sections of Baltimore.

From Flame to Page

Watch the candles burn and describe what you see. Use these words to create a poem about the *Hanukkah* lights.

Personal Dedications

Dedicate each candle to someone who has brightened your week and tell how they did it.

Family Coat of Arms

Draw your own Maccabee Shield and in the four quadrants, draw: your family; something Jewish in your home; your *Hanukkiyah*; a representation of your last name.

Fire Safety

Focus on safety procedures around candles, gas stoves, and fireplaces. Be sure to include “Stop, Drop, and Roll.”

...and some more family activities

Cooks in the Kitchen

Have the whole family take part in preparing *latkes*. After dinner, everyone can collaborate on a book about the whole experience. Don’t forget the sour cream and apple sauce!

Dreidel Maccabiah, A Twist on the Traditional Game of Dreidel

Play *dreidel* every evening of *Hanukkah*, right after dinner. Keep a running score with parents deciding (and funding) the amount of money for each point. The grand winner takes all on the last night. You might decide to donate some or all of the winnings to a charity.

Stained Glass

Cut out a *Hanukkah* shape and use the outline/main sheet of paper as a frame. Drip food coloring on a napkin/paper towel. Staple the napkin/paper towel to the main sheet of paper, using it as a frame. Hang in the window or laminate to be used as a drip tray.

Please refer to the inside back cover for the *Hanukkah b’rakhah*.



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Gemilut Hasadim

Baltimore Green & Just Celebrations Guide



The Maryland Chapter of the American Jewish Congress is working with other Baltimore-based organizations and congregations to create the *Baltimore Green & Just Celebrations Guide*.

The guide was originated by the Washington, DC-area organization “Jews United for Justice” (JUFJ) and is described on their website as “a little booklet with a big mission: to work for the day when every one of the \$30 million that Jewish families in our area spend on weddings and *bat mitzvah* celebrations every year will be spent in a way that reflects Jewish values.”

Joelle Novey, who grew up at Chizuk Amuno, was a co-writer for the Washington project.

Each section of the booklet offers specific suggestions for how families can make purchasing choices for their special day in ways that are mindful of workers’ rights and environmental impact.

The book is illustrated with Jewish teachings, and with the real-life stories from dozens of DC-area families who have made creative green and just choices for their own celebrations.

Over 5,000 copies of the guide have been printed and distributed through dozens of participating congregations in

Washington, Montgomery County, and northern Virginia. The project has also been replicated on the West Coast by JUFJ and the Progressive Jewish Alliance for the Los Angeles and San Francisco Jewish communities.

Bringing this project to Baltimore will make greener and more just choices available to the tens of thousands of Jewish families in our area. The project builds on the exciting work of the Baltimore Jewish Environmental Network, which has already engaged so many congregations in environmental stewardship.

The participation of Baltimore area synagogues will ensure that the guide reflects local sensibilities and needs and that it is, in fact, widely used and distributed once completed. By contributing financially, by designating individuals to serve on the project committee that will create the draft guide over the course of the year, by vetting the draft once it is ready, and by endorsing and distributing the guide once it is published, the Baltimore area congregations that are involved will help to insure the project’s success.

As of November 28, 2011, the following organizations and congregations have signed on as sponsors of the project:

- American Jewish Congress - Maryland Chapter
- THE ASSOCIATED: Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore Sustainability Initiative
- Baltimore Hebrew Congregation
- Baltimore Jewish Environmental Network
- Beth Am Synagogue
- **Chizuk Amuno Congregation**
- Congregation Beit Tikvah
- East Bank *Havurah*
- Har Sinai Congregation
- Jews United for Justice
- Kayam Farm
- Temple Emanuel of Baltimore
- ...and a number of others are expected to sign on shortly.

A project webpage has been established at BmoreGreenandJust.org in order to facilitate the process of collecting stories and materials for the *Baltimore Green & Just Celebrations Guide*. **For more information please contact Chizuk Amuno guide project leaders: Ruthanne Kaufman, ruthkauf06@comcast.net, and Margie Simon, mbs@verizon.net.** ■

Jewish Identity

24 / 7 / 365

by Shoshana S. Cardin



For me, Jewish identity is my entire being—a second skin. I am Jewish 24/7, 365 days a year—when I thankfully awake, through the day and evening, even as I go to sleep.

For me, Jewish identity means a deep personal relationship with my family and friends. I am enriched in the presence of my family as it grows and changes, carrying on the traditions that we have created together.

For me, Jewish identity means Israel, my family in Israel, the State of Israel, the people Israel – but even if I did not have family, I would consider Israel as part of my family. Israel raised our Jewish identity immeasurably after its founding in 1948 and again after the 1967 War. American Jews—World Jewry—stood taller, straighter and with more pride than ever before.

For me, Jewish identity means when Israel suffers, I feel that pain. When Israel achieves another of its technical or medical miracles—I applaud and feel proud. Even when Israel makes mistakes, as all countries do, I am family and can disagree with the specific policies and still have a familial love. Israel’s future and mine, as an American Jew, are inexorably intertwined.

For me, Jewish identity means seeing the world and its problems through a Jewish lens. Issues, policies, actions are viewed through the lens of Jewish history, Jewish teachings, and Jewish ethics.

For me, Jewish identity means not hesitating to call the Executive Director of a secular community agency, and asking him to change the date of a board meeting, because it is scheduled for the second day of *Sukkot*. It means calling the chair of a major national event, calling for representatives from Maryland to object to the date and time of the registration, Saturday 10 a.m. - 6 p.m., effectively excluding Jewish women from registering. And after much discussion and consultation, the hours were extended until 9 p.m.

For me, Jewish identity means life long learning and remaining an advocate of Jewish learning at all stages of life. As circumstances change and leadership changes we need to be aware and strive to be informed. For me Jewish identity means using Hebrew expressions wherever they are appropriate. It was surprising to me, when upon assuming the presidency of the Council of Jewish Federations, the media

commented that I was the first president of that organization to use a Hebrew quote.

For me, Jewish identity is a source of pride and joy. My Jewish identity is the essence of my being. ■

Shoshana Shoubin Cardin, known by Presidents and Prime Ministers worldwide, served as the first female president of The ASSOCIATED: Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore, Board of Governors of the Jewish Agency of Israel, and has chaired many national Jewish organizations—she was the first female president of the Council of Jewish Federations, female chair of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, and co-founder of the Shoshana S. Cardin School, an independent pluralistic Jewish high school.

Shoshana S. Cardin: A Life Journey

On Monday, January 30, at 1 p.m., the Krieger Schechter Middle School will pay to tribute to Shoshana S. Cardin in the Chizuk Amuno Sanctuary. All are welcome to join us as we honor Shoshana’s lifetime of achievements.

Consciously Jewish

by Dr. Randal Getz



Your identity – who you are or who you aspire to be – is an intensely personal matter. I don't usually share my view of myself with others, let alone consciously with myself. When asked to write about "Jewish identity," it required some thought.

First, an experiment: How do you define who you are? If you could use only one word to describe yourself, what word would you choose? Maybe you would select a familial role: mother, father, friend. Or your line of work: teacher, accountant, engineer. My response to the question would be: Jewish. It is not necessarily the right answer or the wrong answer. But it is my answer. Perhaps it is your answer as well.

Why is it that I define myself as Jewish? While I grew up in a non-Jewish community, lived in the only house in my neighborhood without Christmas lights, and attended a Catholic high school, my parents (and grandparents) went out of their way to create Jewish connections for my brother, sister, and me.

One event that stands out (35 years later) as instrumental in helping me define who I am, was the decision to celebrate my *bat mitzvah* in Israel. Around the same time, my

parents decided to make our home kosher – so that their children would have the opportunity to make an informed decision about keeping *kosher* when they grew up. I think it was an amazing gesture.

I, as many of you, have memories of Yiddish speaking relatives from the "old country" who sipped tea through a sugar cube; of family holiday meals with *kreplakh*, *kishka*, and *kasha* and bows; of meeting Holocaust survivors and being unable to look away from the tattoos on their arms; and of the feeling of jubilation after the Six Day War. Our children and grandchildren likely will not have many of those same memories.

Since being Jewish means so much to me, I want to pass that important feeling on to my children – in part for personal and religious reasons, but also as a testament to ancestors past. While there are no guarantees, I want to increase my odds of having Jewish grandchildren by creating those Jewish connections for my children. My wife and I chose Jewish day school educations for our children. Israel will be a

regular vacation destination. *Shabbos* dinner in our home is a routine.

To any parent, grandparent, future parent, aunt or uncle, who is similarly inclined, whatever you do to help create those connections, big or small, will likely yield a wonderful and immeasurable impact on the next generations. I'm sure Rabbi Shulman and Rabbi Wechsler would love to see you at services with little ones in tow. Consider day school (or offer to help with a family member's Jewish day school tuition). Take a family trip to Israel. Learn Hebrew. Speak a little Yiddish.

In the distant future, when my imagined grandchildren may be asked to describe themselves, I hope that they will include the word Jewish. I can't help but feel that my great-grandparents would be proud. ■

Randy and his wife, Stacey, are members of Chizuk Amuno and Beth Tfiloh Congregations, and are the parents of one Goldsmith and three Krieger Schechter students.

With Intent

by Maureen Walsh David

Jewish identity can be external, on the surface. Based on your last name, or your first name, or maybe what part of Baltimore you grew up in, people will assume you are Jewish – or that you are not.

External Jewish identity might mean that you love bagels and lox and know the best places to find authentic deli. You know your parents expected you to marry someone who was Jewish, but you aren't sure why it was so important to them.

It gets complicated when those cultural cues don't add up as expected – when, for example, Maureen Theresa Margaret Walsh, who graduated from St. Gregory High School in Dorchester, MA, turns out to be Jewish.

Whether you make the choice to become Jewish as an adult, or were born Jewish and want more of a Jewish connection in your life, you need to figure out how to internalize your external Jewish identity. You have to begin to see the world through the Jewish lenses of values and community.

The key to creating an internal Jewish identity from an external Jewish identity, in my experience, is education – learning together with my husband as we began building a Jewish home; learning with my children, as they progressed through the ambitious programs offered by Chizuk Amuno, from GECEC, through RRS and

Netivon; learning with other women in an adult *bat mitzvah* class, then in the Melton program, and trying to take advantage of all the other opportunities for serious study at Chizuk Amuno.

But the learning has to lead to doing – and doing with intention – in order to internalize Jewish values and identity. *Kavannah* is what elevates and gives the action meaning. There is a difference in getting together once a week for a family dinner and having a *Shabbat* dinner. We have *Shabbat* dinner together, light candles, float *matzah* balls in our soup, indulge in some wine and cake, maybe even sing, because we are Jewish.

Experiential learning creates a strong emotional connection to Jewish values and rituals. For children, that learning begins in their home, when ritual is enriched with special foods and activities, like building *sukkot* out of gingerbread (check out Gloria Kaufer Greene's *Jewish Holiday Cooking*, pp. 140-6), reading a story out loud each night of *Hanukkah* while the candles burn down, or personalizing the *haggadah* with family pictures and stories.

Communal experiences are powerful reminders that our Jewish identity is both external and internal. A beautiful sunset at Camp *Ramah* while everyone is *davenen*

together. I will never forget the spiritual connections made while traveling to New York City with the Shoshana Cardin leadership program, visiting B'nai Jeshurun, each of us dancing in *Shabbat*; or standing at Robinson's Arch and on Masada with the parent-child *Netivon* trip to Israel. We create Jewish experiences for ourselves and our children so that they can create a Jewish identity that they can share with their children. *L'dor v'dor*.

Over time, our three daughters have forged their own Jewish identities, from *bat mitzvah* through college. Now they are adults who, in the midst of their busy workweeks, often find time to get together with us for *Shabbat* dinner. Because we are a Jewish family. ■



Maureen has been working on her Jewish identity since 1980. She is married to Steven David. Their three daughters, Sarah, Julia, and Katie, are graduates of GECEC,

RRS, and *Netivon*. The Davids have been Chizuk Amuno members since 1987. Maureen served on the Education Committee for over twenty years, and the Board and Executive Committee for a few terms as well. Maureen is currently the Deputy General Counsel at University of Maryland University College.

What's New?

Linking our School and Synagogue Communities

Parent Association Council of Chizuk Amuno

Schools - Have you ever heard the name and wondered what it was all about? Check us out and see how you can join in.

What is the PA Council?

Administration and parent volunteers from Chizuk Amuno and our schools – Goldsmith Early Childhood Education Center, Krieger Schechter Day School, and Rosenbloom Religious School – serve on the council.

What is our mission?

Our goal is to **link our school and synagogue communities** through community service and holiday/synagogue programs.

How do you best know us?

The PA Council plans and coordinates the Purim **Carnival** each year. Volunteers from each of the schools come together to make this festive holiday a fun family event.

What else do we do?

Last year the PA Council revived **Birthday Blessings** – each child in our schools gets a birthday card and is invited to be recognized at the monthly *Shabbat Yahad* services at Chizuk Amuno.

Is there more?

Yes, we joined forces again this December with the second grade at KSDS to hold a **Toy Drive** among all our schools. The gently used toys, books, and electronics are

distributed during the holidays to children that are part of the Baltimore Community Assistance Network.

And another thing...

Once again we helped to collect items – this year it was **gloves** – for the JVC Community *Mitzvah* Day care packages for the homeless. Our goal was 400 pair!

So when you hear our name – **PA Council of Chizuk Amuno Schools** – you will know that all three of our schools – KSDS, GECEC, and RRS – are working together with the synagogue on meaningful and unifying projects.



For further information contact Marilyn Kiner, mkiner@soink12.ksds.edu, or Sima Abarbanel, sabarbanel@soink12.ksds.edu.

KSDS Alumni Update

On the afternoon of Wednesday, November 23, KSDS held an open house for alumni. It was an opportunity for KSDS graduates to visit the school and see all the amazing changes that have been made to our building. We had over 80 students stop by to tour the building and visit with friends and faculty. It was wonderful to see so many students from past years!

All alumni events and celebrations are posted on our Facebook page, www.facebook.com/ksdsalumni, as well as the KSDS website. Micah Kleid '95, our Communications and Marketing Manager, is a new addition to our staff whose sole purpose is to enhance our communications for

all the wonderful happenings in our school community. We continue to have strong ties with many of our alum.

A Paul Schneider Alumni Multi-City Tour has been planned to honor Dr. Schneider's 29 year tenure as headmaster. First stop – the DC area where we will host a brunch, **Sunday, December 18, 10:30 a.m.** at the 6th and I Historic Synagogue. Upcoming events will be held in New York City, Philadelphia, Boston, and Baltimore. And once again we will host the "Annual Alumni Dinner and 8th Grade Play," which, this year, is *Peter Pan*. We look forward to seeing many alumni at these events.

Winter Mini-mester — A Chance to Sample Netivon

The *Netivon* program, created to provide students with a comprehensive Jewish education after graduation from Krieger Schechter Day School or the Rosenbloom Religious School, offered a redesigned curriculum this year. *Netivon* classes are divided into five pillars: Hebrew Language and Culture; Rabbinics; Bible; History/Culture/Identity; and Theology/Practice.

Students in the lower division, 8th - 10th grade are required to take formal Hebrew classes, while students in grades 11 and 12 have the option of either

continuing with formal Hebrew instruction or taking one of the Hebrew Language and Culture electives. Our 8th grade students, newly graduated from the Rosenbloom Religious School, are taking part in a Hebrew *Ulpan*. All students take a core class with their grade providing them with a foundation of knowledge upon which to build. Finally, our two-day students have the opportunity to choose from a number of electives for their extra time in class.

As the fall semester winds down, *Netivon* is looking

forward to a three-week Mini-mester which will run from **January 10 - 26** and is open to current *Netivon* students, as well as students not currently enrolled in *Netivon*. During the Mini-mester, there are no core classes or formal Hebrew classes. All students will have the opportunity to choose from an exciting list of electives for the Mini-mester.

For information about *Netivon* or for a listing of Mini-mester classes, visit us online at www.chizukamuno.org or e-mail us at netivon@chizukamuno.org.

A Living Bridge: Students from Krieger Schechter and Ashkelon Explore Jewish Identity Together

by Ellen Friedman

This past October, teachers representing nine Baltimore day schools, religious schools, and preschools participated in a trip to Ashkelon, Baltimore's sister-city in Israel, as part of a teacher exchange program. The program, called *Gesher Chai*, is sponsored by the Baltimore-Ashkelon Partnership and its purpose is to establish lines of communication between students in Ashkelon and students in Baltimore, so that our children literally become the "living bridge" between our two communities.

Teachers on the *Gesher Chai* trip toured Ashkelon and saw signs of the success of the partnership between the sister cities. At a park, there were paintings made by current and former students who helped construct the park's playground equipment while visiting a few years ago. Baltimore teachers met Ashkelon high school students who are busily padding their resumes with volunteer work, not for their college applications, but to improve their chances of being chosen as *Shinshinim*. *Shinshinim* are cultural



ambassadors who spend a year in Baltimore before entering the army, working with students in Baltimore schools and teaching them about Israel.

Krieger Schechter Day School partners with *Makif Dalet*, a large public middle/high school. Every year when Schechter's 8th graders visit Israel, they spend a day with 8th graders from *Makif*

Dalet. During

Gesher Chai,

we spent most of the week at *Makif*

Dalet, sitting in on classes and working with teachers there. We worked together to design a project that will allow the students at both schools to get to know each other before their *mifgash*, get-together, in May. We used PowerPoint presentations to introduce the Ashkelon students to Baltimore and our KSDS 8th graders.

The students at each school will be creating short videos about themselves, describing their hobbies and interests as well as their family history and customs.



There will undoubtedly be some students from each school whose families come from the same countries of origin, and there will be others whose backgrounds are very diverse. Our hope is that by the time the students actually meet in person, they will already have learned quite a lot about each other – about the things they have in common as well as their differences. We hope that we can start a conversation that will allow the students to compare what Jewish identity means for American Jews and for Israelis.

Goldsmith Preschoolers Plant a Rainbow

This past summer, GECEC teachers Freda-Dale Cohen-Kruger and Susan Witte were very excited to be invited to a workshop titled *Planting Seeds - Jewish Early Childhood Garden Education*. It was a perfect opportunity for these two teachers with "black thumbs" to learn how to develop "green thumbs" and at the same time pass their knowledge and excitement to their children/partners in their classrooms. Three days and 75 more friends later, their enthusiasm was sky high. They had attended workshops on planting, nutrition, and what is Jewish about gardening.

Once school started, they proceeded to create a Rainbow Garden in their classrooms...

Both classes got together to paint the pots for the Rainbow Garden. *Planting a Rainbow* by Lois Ehlert was read to all of the children, followed by a discussion about what a plant needs in order to grow. The answers were:

sun, water/rain, air, and lots of love.

It was almost time to paint the flower pots. "Paint! Make yourself magical!" This was the command the children shouted - and it happened! The paint became magical and the children stuck feathers, tissue papers, and foam shapes onto the pot while they were painting them with brushes and sponges. The pots are magnificent! Plus, the kids had a great time painting their hands and making handprints.



After all the *haggim*, it was time to plant. The students (and teachers!) all had a blast planting seeds in miniature pots which will later be transferred to their beautifully decorated pots.

And now we wait for the rainbow to bloom.

Ask the Rabbi

By Rabbi Ron Shulman

One of my favorite hours of the year is the question and answer session on *Yom Kippur* afternoon in the Sanctuary. Congregants ask about theology, Jewish tradition and customs, current events, and any other pertinent questions they want to ask the rabbi. For some it's try to stump the rabbi! I have to think "standing on one foot." The questions are always better than the answers, but I have the most fun.

The questions I don't expect produce the most interesting discussion. I wish we did this more often. In synagogue now and again, perhaps we should pause to see if anyone has a question about the weekly portion, or another curiosity appropriate to discuss for a few minutes.

In the meantime, Rabbi Wechsler and I are happy to receive your questions. Feel free to e-mail us at rshulman@chizukamuno.org or dwechsler@chizukamuno.org. We'll try to answer some of your questions in future issues of *HaZ'man ~ This Season* and in our Chizuk Amuno website blogs.

Kol Rinah Celebrates Chai

Kol Rinah, Chizuk Amuno's volunteer, adult, a cappella choral ensemble turns 18 this year! It is a community among the many and varied Chizuk Amuno communities that has matured, literally as well as figuratively, since it was established under the baton of Dan Henkin, assistant to the principal of the Rosenbloom Religious School in 1993. Always evolving, its eclectic brand of music runs a gamut of genres, from Israeli pop to easy listening liturgical pieces to a pareve gospel style. The ensemble

has performed annually at Chizuk Amuno's *Tikkun Le'il Shavuot* and at a variety of *s'mahot*, including weddings, *b'nei mitzvah*, holiday celebrations at the malls, at assisted living and nursing facilities, and even at a Baltimore mayoral inauguration. That inauguration was the ticket to a gospel fest invitation from the "Sons of Abraham," an African-American group from an East Baltimore Church. Each Tuesday evening from 8 to 10 p.m., the choristers gather to rehearse in the Krieger Schechter Day School

music room, under the leadership of Evan Tucker.

Have we gotten your interest? Do you want to join us? Sight reading and formal music training is not a requirement. If you can blend your voice with the others, you can join. Check us out on the Chizuk Amuno website, under Synagogue Life. If you're interested in either singing or engaging us, please contact Dr. Susan Vick, 410/486-6400, ext. 291.

Chizuk Amuno's Annual Campaign

As 2011 comes to a close, please remember to include Chizuk Amuno in your charitable giving.

As members of Chizuk Amuno, we find strength, sustenance, and growth in the collective. At the same time, every individual here has different points of contact in our community. Parents of young children, teenagers, seniors, interfaith couples, gay and lesbian Jews, new members, and fifth-generation families all have multiple

avenues for participation. Members find meaning through worship, learning, and volunteering in the synagogue and beyond our walls. Whichever path you walk, as a member of Chizuk Amuno, you belong here.

The Annual Campaign provides funds to cover about 6% of the operating cost of our annual budget and supports congregational life and Jewish education for all ages. It bridges the gap between dues and the full cost of synagogue membership.

Chizuk Amuno relies on the Annual Campaign. The success of the Annual Campaign relies on you. We invite you to participate, thereby providing for our current needs and strengthening the promise of our future.

To make your pledge before the end of the calendar year, visit the Giving section of our website, www.chizukamuno.org, or call Laurel Freedman at 410/824-2054.

Club Hatikvah— Off to a Great Start!

Our 2011-2012 season kicked off at a September dinner with members of Beth El and Beth Israel at Beth El. There was a large and enthusiastic group of seniors and we were dazzled with the entertainment. Ricky Pen, an Israeli entertainer, sang current show and Israeli songs as well as told stories and jokes. Club *Hatikvah* was off to a good year!

By the time we had our second event in November, our membership had increased and we were happy to greet so many new people. The entertainment, *Two For*

The Show, starring Paula and Tom, was really terrific. They have a unique and innovative style and we didn't want the evening to end.

The rest of the year promises to be very exciting as well. In December Cantor Kim Komrad will entertain us with a variety of popular show tunes and Jewish songs. She will lead sing-alongs, accompanied by Doris Sugar at the keyboard. Everyone that has heard Cantor Komrad sing knows that a wonderful evening is in store.

We also have wonderful programs scheduled for

January 22, February 19, and May 6. Our May 6 program will be the closing meeting for the year and will take place at Chizuk Amuno, joined by Beth El and Beth Israel seniors.

Club *Hatikvah* is the Chizuk Amuno's social club dedicated to providing our members with fellowship and outstanding monthly dinners and entertainment. If you are over fifty and not currently attending our programs, please call Leonard Fox, 410/484-6260, and get involved!

ברוכים הבאים

B'ruchim Habaim • Welcome to Our New Members

David Blank	Jeffrey Komins	Linda Rabinovich	Nancy and Barry Solomon
Kimberly and Martin Brandwin	Ben Miller	Brenda and Philip Rever	Sonja and Ben Sugarman
Barbara Scott and Jonathan Bromberg	Ezra Miller	Frances and Stephen Rosenberg	Randi and Harel Turkel
Ann and Arnold Cohen	Sarah and Amit Nadiv	Marci and Brian Scher	Amy Finkel and Mitchell Weinberg

We are happy to welcome those who have most recently chosen to join our Chizuk Amuno family.

If you have friends or family who may be interested in joining Chizuk Amuno, please call our Membership Coordinator, Cheryl Snyderman, 410/486-6400, ext. 300.

Celebrating the Meaning of *Hanukkah's* Light חג אורים שמח

B'rakhot for *Hanukkah's* Lights

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם,
אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו להדליק נר של חנוכה.

*Barukh Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melekh haOlam asher kid-sha 'nu
b'mitz-votav v'tzi-vanu l'hadlik ner shel Hanukkah.*

Blessed are You, Eternal our God, Sovereign of the Universe,
who sanctified us as a people through God's commandments,
and commanded us to kindle the lights of *Hanukkah*.

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם,
שעשה נסים לאבותינו בימים ההם בזמן הזה.

*Barukh Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melekh haOlam,
sh'a-sah nisim la'avo-tei-nu ba-yamim ha-hem baz'man ha-zeh.*

Blessed are You, Eternal our God, Sovereign of the Universe,
who performed miracles for our ancestors during those days
at this season.

On the first night only:

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם,
שהחיינו וקיימנו והגיענו לזמן הזה.

*Barukh Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melekh haOlam,
sh'he-he-ya-nu v'ki-y'ma-nu v'hi-gi-a-nu laZ'man haZeh.*

Blessed are You, Eternal our God, Sovereign of the Universe,
for the gift of our lives, for all that sustains us,
and for enabling us to reach this season.

How the lights are kindled:

One candle is lit in the *Hanukkah menorah* for each night. For the first night, one candle, the second night, two candles, and so on until eight candles are kindled on the eighth night. The candle for the first night is placed on the right side of your *Hanukkiyah*. On each subsequent night an additional candle is placed to the left of the preceding night's candle. The lighting proceeds from left to right so that the new candle is kindled first

On *Hanukkah* we remember the miracles of faith, of our people's perseverance, and of life's daily wonders. We remember the *Maccabees* and the conflict of ancient days while we honor the victory of faith, and of Judaism's ideals. *Hanukkah's* light represents spiritual strength, not only physical prowess. Our *Hanukkiyot* represent God's light, a path of peace and goodness that must endure for all time

הנרות הללו אנחנו מדליקים על הנסים
ועל הנפלאות ועל התשועות ועל המלחמות,
שעשית לאבותינו בימים ההם בזמן הזה,
על ידי כהניך הקדושים. וכל שמונת ימי חנוכה
הנרות הללו קדש הם, ואין לנו רשות
להשתמש בהם, אלא לראותם בלבד,
כדי להודות ולהלל לשמך הגדול
על נסידך ועל נפלאותיך ועל ישועתך.

*HaNerot Hallalu anahnu madlikim, al ha-nisim, v'al ha-nif-laot,
v'al ha-t'shuot, v'al-ha milhamot, she-a'sita-la'avoteinu*

ba-ya-mim ha-hem,

bazman ha-zeh al y'dei kohanekha hak'doshim.

V'khol sh-mo-nat y'mei

Hanukkah haNerot hallalu kodesh hem,

v'ain la-nu r'shut l'hish-ta-mesh

ba-hem, eleh li'rotom bilvad, k'day l'hodot u'l'halel

l'shimkha ha-gadol

al nisekha v'al niflotekha v'al y'shuatekha.

each night. No practical use may be made of the *Hanukkah* lights such as illuminating the room. Therefore, according to Jewish tradition, a special extra candle known as the *Shamash* is used to light the others and to provide light. On Friday night the *Hanukkah* lights are lit before the *Shabbat* candles, prior to sunset. On Saturday night, be sure the sun has set before lighting the *Hanukkah* candles.





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We are stocked and ready for **Hanukkah**.

Check out our new selection of *menorot*, *dreidels*, toys, games, and gifts.
 Everything you need to celebrate in style.

Sunday ~ 9:15-11:30 a.m.

Monday ~ 9:30-11:30 a.m., 2-6 p.m.

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday ~ 10 a.m.-Noon, 2-6 p.m.

Friday ~ 10 a.m.-Noon

For information or to volunteer, please call Anne King
 at 410/303-7716 or 410/484-5813.



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Friday - Saturday, January 27 - 28

Join us for a magical journey as we experience *Shabbat* together.



**Friday
 4 - 9 p.m.**

"Boarding", *Kabbalat Shabbat*,
 dinner, activities/learning for adults
 and kids of all ages

9 p.m.

All families return
 to their homes

Saturday

9:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Breakfast, services/activities
 for all ages, lunch,
 and more fun!

2:30 p.m. - 5 p.m.

Shabbat Menuha -

All families return home for rest

5 p.m.

Dinner, *Havdalah*, closing ceremony

Cost: \$40/adults, \$25/children 6-12,
 free for children 5 and under,
 \$118 maximum/family (payment assistance available)

RSVP by Monday, January 9

Vegetarian meals are available upon request.



For more information, please contact yfc@chizukamuno.org.