

# ***The Builders' Bulletin***

Congregation Habonim's Monthly Bulletin—Your Community Guide!



***INSIDE:***

A message from Rabbi Gelber -

A roundup of last month's events -

A spotlight on our latest Bar Mitzvah -

Upcoming events — and more!

# *Rabbi Gelber's Monthly Message*

March 24, 2023/2 Nisan 5783

Dear Friends,

As offered in this year's Hadar Passover reader:

"The first mishnah in Pesachim tells us that, before Pesah begins, we must search for hameitz specifically by the light of a small, handheld lamp or candle—as opposed to a much stronger light source, such as a torch. But why opt for weaker light? Why insist upon a candle's single flame when there are stronger lights available? The Gemara (Pesachim 8a) records many possible reasons. Rav Nahman bar Yitzhak (ultimately codified by the Mishnah Berurah 433:1) states that a candle's flame is superior in being small enough to enter tight spaces. A little, handheld flame forces us to come closer, to make a more thorough examination. It enables us to look more closely into all the minute holes in the landscape and to notice all the finer details. By doing so, we'll do a better job looking around and finding what there is to discover. It might be counterintuitive, but we'll actually see much better with a candle than with a torch."



As we welcome spring and celebrate the new month of Nisan, the month in which we march to freedom, we are mindful of what it means to notice growth, how beauty emerges when we least expect it, and the strength that hibernates quietly within. These days call us to search deliberately inside and out. What hametz do we want to discard to make room for liberation from thoughts, feelings and practices that hold us back? How might we encounter



the world and the everyday with space for surprise? What light can we shine on difficult places and know we'll find resources and support not only to survive but to thrive? On Hanukkah we imagine ourselves as a little light urged on and sustained by others. As we approach Passover, let us rekindle that light to offer questions and engage within and beyond ourselves.

While we use a little light for our Passover searching, torches have their time and place. The Havdalah candle is noted for its entwining of more than one light source to represent a torch lighting its way into the new week. You're invited to join us for Havdalah each week as our combined light shines brightly. Check your email or the website for service times.

*Shabbat Shalom and Hodesh Tov,*

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Postcard illustrating the search for hametz in a German Jewish household. by Hermann Junker, late 19th century.

# *Last Month at Habonim, We ...*

## *Went Back to the Nineties!*



Following months of planning and preparation on the part of the Parents Association, we enjoyed a wonderful night of fun and festivities to celebrate and honor The Nursery School. Everyone got out their flannel best and enjoyed the '90s theme (and music!) as we gathered with parents, teachers, Education Director Rina Cohen Schwarz, Synagogue President Susan Grant, Board members, other members of the Habonim community, and our clergy - Rabbi Gelber, Cantor Halev, and Cantor Jessica.

We shared a toast and reflected on the many contributions to the Nursery School and Congregation, enjoyed delicious food, chatted with friends, bid on silent and live auction items, and raised additional funds to support the Nursery School's Clara Zeitlin Fund and other initiatives.



Special thanks to everyone who generously gave their time –Marc Mehl, Jennifer North, Elissa Wachs, Ashleigh Wishen, Stefanie Tudor, Jessica Sandler, Kate Zecher, Mollie Fox, Lauren Pack, Abbie Marshall, Amanda Winters, Adina Lemeshow, Goldie Oren, Amy Zelcer, Lindsey Gal, Assaf Gal, Marc Lessner, Jeffrey Gurwin, Michelle Szpilzinger, Chelsea Anderson and all whose efforts contributed greatly to the evening's success.







## *Last Month at Habonim, We ...*

### *Toured the Treasures Exhibit—Again!*

One of Habonim's own treasures, our member Hilda Jaffe, led a repeat tour of the Polonsky Exhibition of The New York Public Library's Treasures. We first held this tour in January, and it proved to be so



popular that we just had to schedule a second one! A whole new group of members got to experience the richness of the collection, with Hilda's insights and knowledge enhancing the experience for our attendees. Thanks again to Hilda for leading yet another successful tour!

### *Shared a Little (More) Magic*

We were delighted to welcome guest speaker Dr. Sharon Keller to deliver the final part of her lecture series, *Oracles, Omens & Execrations: Magic & Sorcery in the Bible* over Zoom. The presentation—complete with slides—was a huge success, and attendees enjoyed learning about how magic was viewed in the ancient world, by the Jewish people and their neighbors.





## *Had a Purimpalooza!*

From the pizza feast, roving games, projects, special sips and delicious Sisterhood hamentaschen, to our Royal Shpiel, it was all SO MUCH FUN!

Kudos to the many volunteers who stepped up to help out in so many different ways, with a special shout-out to our teen volunteers. The man behind our Royal Sips was the very awesome Noah Halperin, who teamed up with his brothers to create “Royal Icy treats & Sips” for the kids. Three cheers for all who helped!



Our shpiel was a HUGE hit and we want to thank each and every member of our cast, crew, and pit (and their supportive parents)! There was SO MUCH joy experienced by all in attendance.

## *... and Purimpalooza Junior!*

We had a Musical Puppet Show for our littlest ones led by the incredible Karen, with Rina and our Cantorial Soloist Jessica Futran as the puppeteers.

Our building was absolutely bursting with joy on Purim - there were well over 100 people gathered together for each of our Purimpaloozas! We are grateful to all who attended for being part of the happiness at Habonim!



## *Had a Teen Deli Outing*

*A message from Wendy Halperin:*

I am thrilled that the Kickoff Event of the Erwin Greenwald Fund was a success! Alan and I created the Erwin Greenwald Fund to honor the memory of my father, who died of pancreatic cancer 25 years ago. My father would have been very pleased with the theme and the turnout of this inaugural program. The Habonim teens toured “*I’ll Have What She’s Having*”: The Jewish Deli exhibit at the New York Historical Society, and then feasted on deli delights at Pastrami Queen. And they all took home a goody bag filled with treats!



Ever since my oldest son (Noah, age 26) was a teenager, I have recognized that the teens are an integral, yet often overlooked, part of the Habonim community. My hope for the Erwin Greenwald Fund is that it allows Habonim to make the teens a priority. Through programming and other perks, we can give our teens a strong sense of Jewish identity, that they can take with them to college and ultimately into adulthood. We can also provide them with lasting friendships among one another and a feeling of belonging to our wonderful Habonim community.



I want to acknowledge our education director, Rina Cohen Schwarz, who stepped up and took on the mission of the Erwin Greenwald Fund wholeheartedly. Rina, thank you for planning and chaperoning, and for being an awesome role model for our teens!





# *Celebrating Our B'nai Mitzvah*

## *Henry Gray*

On March 11, 2023 Henry Gray was called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah. Henry has been a part of the Habonim community from the day he was born. His first trips out of the apartment were to take his big brother Harris to and from Habonim Nursery school.

Henry is currently a 7<sup>th</sup> grader at West End Secondary School (WESS), located on the Upper West Side. He started his educational career in the yellow room at Habonim nursery school. After graduating in 2015, he moved on to PS199, and then to WESS.

Henry is an avid baseball player, roaming centerfield for the Empire Baseball Club, and an avid follower of the NY Yankees, NY Jets and Wisconsin Badgers. He loves hanging out with his friends from school, sports and camp and is always excited to travel.

Last month Henry and 18 members of his family traveled around Israel, learning about its history and culture.

Henry's D'var Torah was about equality, and treating people alike. Henry discussed how his involvement with Coalition for the Homeless helped him realize how unfortunate some people are and that no matter how much people might have or not you should treat everyone with the same respect and kindness.





# *Upcoming Events in April:*

## **Bat Mitzvah of Arielle Kaufman at Redeemer**

Saturday, April 1<sup>st</sup>

150 W 83<sup>rd</sup> St

## **Junior Congregation at Redeemer**

Shabbat, Apr 1<sup>st</sup> at 10:45am

150 W 83<sup>rd</sup> St

## **Passover Morning Service**

Thursday, Apr 6<sup>th</sup> at 9:30am

## **Passover Morning Service**

Friday, Apr 7<sup>th</sup> at 9:30am

## **Passover Morning Service**

Wednesday, Apr 12<sup>th</sup> at 9:30am

## **Passover Morning Service (With Yizkor)**

Thursday, Apr 13<sup>th</sup> at 9:30am

## **YomHaShoah Reading of the Names**

Monday, April 17<sup>th</sup> at 11:00pm

at Ansche Chesed

## **Women's League Torah Fund Dinner**

Thursday, Apr 20<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm

at Sutton Place Synagogue

## **Spring Fling Shabbat Dinner**

Friday, Apr 21<sup>st</sup> at 7:00pm

## **OneBlock Community Cleanup**

Sunday, April 23<sup>rd</sup> at 10:30am

Meet outside of Habonim

## **Book Group**

Monday, April 24<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm

On Zoom

## **Israel 75 Live featuring Joel**

## **Chasnoff + Benji Lovitt**

Thursday, April 27<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm

At Stephen Wise Free Synagogue

## **Bar Mitzvah of Benjamin Zaretsky at Redeemer**

Saturday, April 29<sup>th</sup>

150 W 83<sup>rd</sup> St

## **Junior Congregation at Redeemer**

Shabbat, Apr 29<sup>th</sup> at 10:45am

150 W 83<sup>rd</sup> St

## ***Find Out More***

For up-to-date information on all  
our upcoming events, including  
registration links, visit:

**[www.habonim.net](http://www.habonim.net)**





## **Casino Night: Habonim Is All In!**

**Thursday, May 4 at 7:00pm**

**West Side Redeemer Loft (150 W 83rd St)!**

**Registration Deadline: April 14<sup>th</sup>**

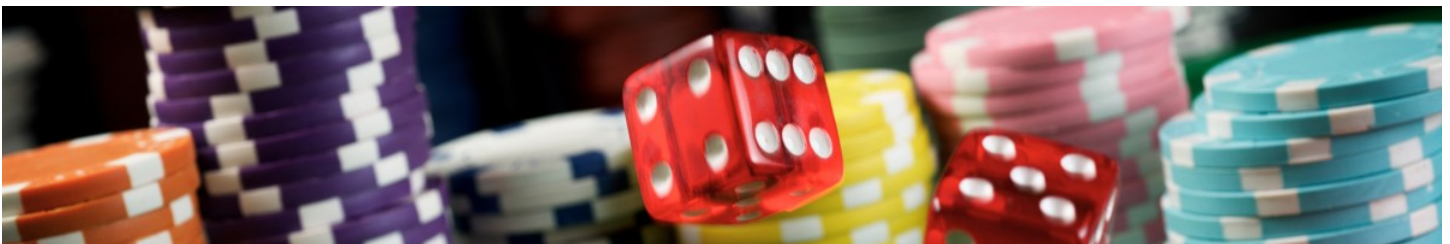
Join us for a fun-filled night of casino games, cocktails, & cuisine!

Discounted Casino Cash play money available for pre-purchase!

Sponsorship opportunities & space in our Digital Journal available.

**Learn more and register at**

**[habonim.net/casinonight](https://habonim.net/casinonight)**



## ***The Builders' Bulletin Has A Name!***

The Habonim Office Staff, and particularly Communications Manager Chelsea Anderson, are pleased to announce that the previously-untitled publication you're reading has become titled!

Thank you to member **Joe Teig** for his suggestion of the name "The Builders' Bulletin." We love that the name reflects the meaning of *Habonim*—builders—honoring the hard work of our founders and the synagogue's past, as well as looking forward to all we hope to build for future generations. Plus, it's pretty catchy!

## ***Thank you for your support!***

*from the Habonim Board of Trustees & Office Staff*

Your ongoing support helps us continue to provide weekly services, loving pastoral care, a thriving religious school, fun and educational programs for congregants of all ages, our beloved nursery school, and the support of our professional office staff.

In the following pages, we would like to acknowledge and thank our donors from March 1<sup>st</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup>. *Todah rabah*—thank you—for keeping Habonim alive and thriving from generation to generation!

### **GENERAL DONATIONS**

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*In honor of Allan Altman's Megillah reading, Purim 5783.*

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*We strive to acknowledge all of our generous donors. If you think there has been an oversight, please contact our office at [office@habonim.net](mailto:office@habonim.net)*

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