



Hanukkah Gelt-a-thon

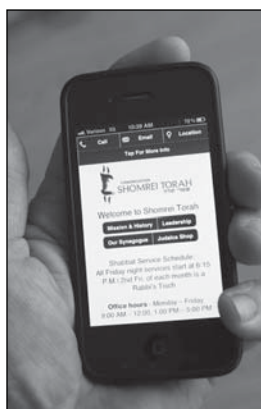
Light Up the Night

Please join us in our 4th annual Hanukkah Gelt-a-thon on **Sunday, December 16** when a group of dedicated volunteers makes calls to all of our members, asking for an annual contribution. This event not only raises much needed money for our operations and programs, it also brings us together as a community, celebrating the spirit of generosity and gift-giving for which this holiday stands.

We simply ask that you remember Shomrei Torah by including us as a recipient of one of your Hanukkah night gifts. Our goal is for each family to contribute \$118, more if you can afford it, and whatever you can afford if \$118 is too steep. You may participate by saying yes to our friendly callers or you can avoid the call entirely by contributing prior to the event. Thanks to many members who have already participated!

As always, we welcome anyone who wishes to help make calls to members. For more information please contact the Congregation Shomrei Torah office at 707-578-5519.

Holding CST in the Palm of Your Hand Shomrei Torah Web Site Goes Mobile



A new mobile version of the Shomrei Torah web site optimized for viewing on smart phones launched in late November.

The new app contains the same content as the web site, but re-formats the information for better viewing on a small screen. Anyone

accessing www.shomreitorah.org from a smart phone will be automatically re-directed to the mobile site. Once there, you will be offered the chance to install a Shomrei Torah shortcut on your smart phone's home screen, making future visits to the site even easier. You may also click on a button to access the full site from the mobile app.

The mobile app works on both Android and iPhone devices. Thanks to the Communications Committee and its newest member, **Stormy Knight**, along with consultant **Marc Harris**, for creating yet another way to access information from Shomrei Torah.

CST Hanukkah Celebration December 15

Hanukkah begins on December 8, but please plan to attend our Shomrei Torah "Night of Lights" celebration on **Saturday, December 15, at 6:15 PM.**

The evening begins with a brief Havdalah service, followed by a dairy/vegetarian potluck dinner, music and singing, activities for kids, and, of course, the lighting of our menorahs. Bring

some food to share, your favorite menorah, a friend or two, and an appetite for fun. This is a free event, open to members and non-members.



Hannukah last year at Congregation Shomrei Torah

THIS MONTH AT CST

HANUKKAH BAZAAR



**Sunday, December 2,
10:00 AM–12:00 PM!**

Check out the Shomrei Shop for all of your Hanukkah needs! We have candles, menorahs, dreidels, gelt and more. Stop by and get your holiday supplies! And mark your calendars to shop on Sunday morning, December 2 (10:00 AM–12:00 PM) during Religious School and the Men's Bagel Club, and during the Friendship Circle festivities on Monday, December 3 (11:00 AM–2:00 PM).

LIFELONG LEARNING

December 5, Wednesday 7:00–8:30 PM

Choosing a Hebrew Name Workshop, taught by Rabbi George and Rabbi Kramer

"There are three crowns: the crown of the Torah, the crown of priesthood, and the crown of royalty, but the crown of a good name is best of all" (*Pirkei Avot 4:13*). Rabbi George and Rabbi Kramer will lead an interactive workshop on the importance of Hebrew names and help guide everyone to choose their own Hebrew name. This workshop is open to people of ALL ages and is free. Please RSVP to the office or to denise@shomreitorah.org.

December 14, Friday 6:15 PM Rabbi's Tisch

"Religious Pluralism at the Wall, in Jerusalem and Everywhere": Rabbi Pam Frydman

Rabbi Pam Frydman will speak and lead a discussion about the thorniest (and most humorous) issues of religious pluralism facing Israelis. Rabbi Frydman was the founding rabbi of Or Shalom Jewish Community in San Francisco. She currently serves as Director of the Holocaust Education Project of the Academy for Jewish Religion. Rabbi Frydman co-chairs Rabbis for Women of the Wall and co-organized Women of the Wall's Legal and Education Fund. She also organized and co-chaired one of the campaigns to free Gilad Shalit. Dinner will be served, \$10 donation requested. RSVP at CST office: 578-5519.

Congregation Shomrei Torah's

Fourth Annual Posada Toy Drive

We are collecting new or very gently used toys to donate to the children in need of our local community this holiday season.

Please bring wrapped gifts to the synagogue lobby where there will be a bin labeled TOY DRIVE through mid-December. Each gift should have a tag indicating gender (girl, boy or either) and age range (baby, 3–5, 6–10, 10–14, 15 & up)

Sponsors: STaRS and the Social Action Committee.

To help volunteer, please contact the Shomrei Torah office at 707-578-5519.



Babies and Bagels

Join us **Sunday, December 23rd** as we get together once again to celebrate the joys of parenthood and community.

RSVP to the Shomrei Torah office at 707-578-5519. Looking forward to celebrating a great holiday season with you!

SCTribe: Latkes and Vodka

It's that time of year we all love... Yep, that's right! It's the 2nd annual Latkes and Vodka celebration presented by SCTribe!

Join us at Shomrei Torah on **Saturday, December 8th at 6:00 PM** as we kick off the first night of *Hanukkah* in style. Bring your favorite recipe (for latkes or vodka cocktail) and join in the fun.

RSVP to the Shomrei Torah office at 707-578-5519. Looking forward to celebrating a great holiday season with you!

SCTribe: Shabbat Dinner

Not only is it *Hanukkah*, but it's also Shabbat! Why not join SCTribe as we celebrate both on **Friday, December 14th at 6:00 PM!** This FREE Shabbat dinner is a great way to meet some fellow "Tribe" members and enjoy a delicious meal at Shomrei Torah.

Our last events have been a lot of fun, come see what you might be missing, and have a free meal while doing it!

RSVP to the Shomrei Torah office at 707-578-5519. Looking forward to celebrating a great holiday season with you!

"Like" Congregation Shomrei Torah on

facebook

SAVE THE DATE

Adult B'not Mitzvah: January 12, 2013, 10:30 AM

Please join us as we are called to the Torah for our *B'not Mitzvah*. A kiddush luncheon will follow.



Front Row (L to R): Mariya Rosenbaum-Cree, Nancy Caldwell, Raleigh Fohrman, Sue Lewis,
Back Row (L to R): Deborah Waller, Tracy Candiotti, Ann DuBay, Adele Pickar,
Dorothy Schwartzberg, Sharon Giller Landeck, Anne Levy Howson

Santa Rosa Interfaith Ministerial Association Blood Drive

Sunday, January 27, 9:30 AM – 2:00 PM at CST

One out of every three people will need a life-saving blood transfusion. And you never know when you or someone you love might be that one. To schedule your appointment, visit www.bloodheroes.com, click “donate blood” and enter sponsor code: CST. Please come well-hydrated, nourished and bring a photo I.D.

Celebrating the 40th Anniversary of Women Rabbis

Shomrei Torah's morning Shabbat service on April 13, 2013 will celebrate the equal inclusion of women on the *bimah*. If you would like to participate in the service, please contact the CST office at 578-5519 by December 31st.

Social Action Goes to the Movies



SATURDAY, JANUARY 19

Hiding and Seeking: Faith and Tolerance after the Holocaust

A powerful and moving adventure of three generations of a Jewish family who discover the Polish couple that many years earlier had risked it all to hide their family from the Nazis. A deeply spiritual post-Holocaust road movie.

The Social Action Committee hosts the 2nd Season in 2013 of films about human rights and social



SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 9

Crime After Crime

A riveting journey of two lawyers striving for justice for a woman of indomitable spirit wrongfully in prison for decades. It all began with a brutal domestic violence case.

justice. All movies will be shown at 7:00 PM in the CST sanctuary. They are free and open to the public.



SATURDAY, MARCH 9

One Day After Peace

Could you forgive someone who murdered your child? A bereaved mother-turned-peace activist, looks for solutions to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict after her son is killed by a sniper.

The Shomrei Torah Voice is a periodical issued monthly except for the combined June/July issue.

It is published by Congregation Shomrei Torah, 2600 Bennett Valley Road, Santa Rosa, CA 95404 and is distributed free of charge to members and supporting advertisers. Subscriptions are available for \$30 per year. Please direct inquiries to the Shomrei Torah office, 578-5519; office fax number 578-3967.

RABBI KRAMER'S MESSAGE

I Love the December Spirit



By Rabbi Stephanie Kramer
Assistant Rabbi
and Education Director

I don't really have a December dilemma. In fact, I love Christmas-time. I have never had a tree, put up lights or celebrated Christmas, but I really love the fervor that comes though during the month (or months) leading up to Christmas. The aisles are decked out with toys and decorations, the shopping mall attendees offer friendly greetings and the stores are all wrapped up like perfect packages with bigger than life bows cascading

down. I really do love the December spirit, a time of people helping other people, for no reason other than a joyful spirit.

During this time of year, many people volunteer for a food pantry, donate clothes to keep others warm or buy extra gifts for others who are less fortunate than we are. This year I hope to inspire you to give!

*...a time of people helping
other people, for no reason
other than a joyful spirit.*

Shomrei Torah is teaming up with a wonderful organization called Heifer International whose program is called Heifer at *Hanukkah*. Their perfect *Hanukkah* gifts are always the right size, will never be returned and

help make the world a better place. Please take a moment to log on to www.heifer.org/hanukkah to check out the many animals you can donate to poor families to help lift them out of poverty. The organization's philosophy is that a cow or other animal is a renewable gift that will ensure that the children in the family will always have fresh, nutritious milk. In addition, recipients agree to give their first female offspring to another family in need. Not only will you be donating an animal, but your gift will continue to multiply.

Get into the holiday spirit by doing your part in repairing our broken world. Happy *Hanukkah*!

B'shalom,
Rabbi Kramer

Another Way to Celebrate *Hanukkah*

Dear Shomrei Torah Congregant—

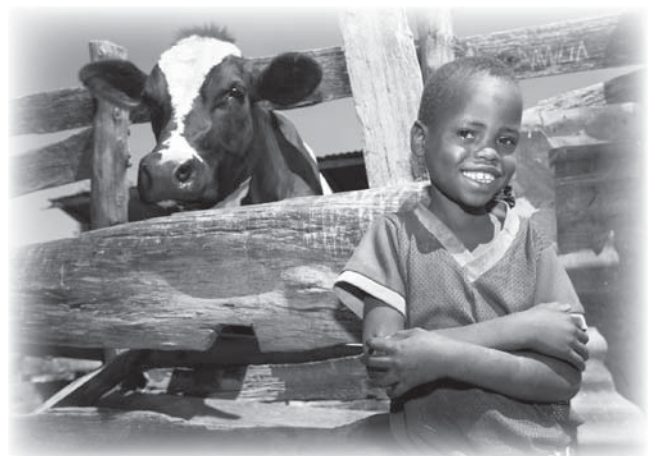
We recently learned of another way to celebrate *Hanukkah* that honors the Jewish concepts of *tzedakah* (economic justice) and *tikkun olam* (repair the world).

Instead of buying toys for your kids and grandkids, why not consider “adopting” a cow, a goat or another animal that would actually be sent as a long-term potential source of food in lands far away that are in much greater need than many of us in America?

Heifer International's mission is to work with communities to end hunger and poverty and care for the Earth. Heifer at *Hanukkah* provides you a chance to donate a unique *Hanukkah* gift that keeps on giving. The animals don't just provide project partners with a reliable source of food, but also a reliable source of income. Excess agricultural products, such as milk from cows or goats, honey from bees or eggs from chickens, can be both shared within the community and sold at market.

For more information, check out www.heifer.org/hanukkah.

Sincerely,
Rabbi George
Rabbi Stephanie
Social Action Committee



**Give the gift of Heifer International
to help feed our friends in poor countries**

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

A Holiday Built For Giving



By Bruce Falstein
CST President

H*anukkah* may well be the most misunderstood of all the Jewish holidays. While scholars debate its religious and historical significance, there is no question that *Hanukkah* looms large in Jewish life and lore.

Whether you think of *Hanukkah* as the commemoration of a miraculous event, or merely a good reason to light up the long, dark nights of winter, *Hanukkah* is above all an opportunity to give. Not only gifts to loved ones, but the kind of charitable giving that supports causes and institutions you value.

It's no coincidence that the annual Shomrei Torah Gelt-a-Thon, now in its fourth year, occurs during the Festival of Lights. On December 16, a team of volunteers will call every Shomrei Torah household to ask every member to include the synagogue

on their *Hanukkah* gift list. Your gift of \$118 — more if you can afford it, or whatever amount you can manage — is vital to the synagogue's ability to provide the programs and services our congregation has come to rely on. This fundraising is not "gravy" — it's built into our budget, so we're counting on our members to supplement their annual pledges with a generous Gelt-a-Thon donation.

Last year, a majority of member households stepped up and contributed. And a majority

*...Hanukkah is above all
an opportunity to give.*

of those never even answered the phone on Gelt-a-Thon Sunday. They successfully avoided the call by donating early, which you can do any time before December 16 by mailing a check to the office, phoning in your donation, sending an e-mail to Denise with your instructions, or — easiest of all — clicking the Donate button on the home page of our web site and making your Gelt-a-Thon gift online.

Then the only thing you'll receive that

Sunday morning is our congregation's deepest gratitude.

Speaking of gratitude, a great deal of it goes to **John Weinstein**, the chair of our Fundraising Committee, and **Reed Ferrick**, co-chair of the Gelt-a-Thon, and to **Jeremy Olsan**, who makes the offices of Perry, Johnson, Anderson, Miller, and Moskowitz available as Gelt-a-Thon headquarters.

If you'd like to join them, and earn a delicious lox-and-bagel breakfast for your effort, the Gelt-a-Thon welcomes volunteer callers. And the Fundraising Committee, which formulates Shomrei Torah's overall fundraising strategy, is looking for more members. Contact John or Reed if you would like to help with this event or participate on this important committee.

Thank you in advance for supporting the Gelt-a-Thon, and best wishes for a *Hanukkah* season filled with light and miracles.

L'shalom,
Bruce

Post a response to this message at www.shomreitorah.org/author/brucefalstein/.

The Purpose of This Congregation:

- To worship God in accordance with the beliefs and teachings of Reform Judaism.
- To cultivate and nurture in ourselves and our children a love and understanding of Jewish heritage.
- To develop a sensitive, caring and supportive congregational community where all are welcome and included.
- To act with responsibility and compassion in our community.
- To support the principles of equality, freedom and shalom among all peoples.

TEMPLE NEWS

Environmental Action Committee

Environmental Action Committee

Tip-of-the-Month

“Blessed shall be your basket
and your kneading trough.”

—Deuteronomy 28:5 NIV



As Sonoma County gets ready to roll out a plastic bag ban, and as you get ready to shop for the holidays, here are a few tips on how to remember to take your reusable bags:

- ➡ Keep reusable bags in the back seat or trunk of your car;
- ➡ Hang a few reusable bags on the coat rack or door knob;
- ➡ Keep a reusable bag at your place of work;
- ➡ Keep compact reusable bags in a purse, pocket or back pack;
- ➡ If you save coupons, put them in your bag and keep the bag by the door.

Congratulations Shomrei Torah!



CST is the first religious organization in Sonoma County to become a member of North Bay Corporation's "Green Family" — Partners in Food Waste Recycling*. To date, 26 businesses are participating, 15 of which are either

restaurants or food markets. *Todah Rabah* to all for taking time to read the signs, to ask us your questions, and to teach each other to practice, via our new waste management program, Judaism's environmental values. We are truly becoming *Shomrei Adamah* (Guardians of the Earth) at Shomrei Torah.

**Complete list can be found in Fall 2012 issue of Santa Rosa Recycling News*

Social Action Committee

Winter Warmth Piles Up

The Social Action Committee's Winter Warmth drive collected hundreds of pounds of gently used coats, blankets and other warm items for those in need. This year's drive surpassed what was collected last year. Thanks to all who donated items to the drive, and to the

generous volunteers who sorted through and packaged the mounds of useful items. Volunteers are still needed to distribute the clothing and other items collected. Contact **Madeleine Rose** or **Stephen Harper** of the Social Action Committee to find out how you can help.



Hard-working members of the Social Action Committee and a friend sorted through bags of donated warm clothes items for neighbors in need.

Participating in this effort are (L to R): Esther Weissman, Beverly Schapp (Bethlehem Lutheran Church), Larry Carlin, Judy Carlin, David Salm, Madeleine Rose, Susan Daniel, Ed Berger, Galya Bayreuther. In front, Ann Sterin.

TEMPLE NEWS

My Leadership Training Institute Experience

By Jacob Matalon



This past October, NFTY (North American Federation of Temple Youth) had

an event at URJ Camp Newman. NFTY, on a national scale, is a huge group of high school aged teens. CWR is the Central West Region that includes northern California, Oregon, Washington and Hawaii. NFTY has 5 regional events a year with around 120 to 200 people for CWR and bigger events with more people that include more than one region. LTI is the Leadership Training Institute. My LTI was fabulous, and here was my experience:

Our group, SHORTY (SHOmRei torah Temple Youth group) arrived on a Friday, after a long week of school. Since we were the closest temple youth group to Camp Newman, we arrived first. Then busses came filled with all of the other frantic teens, very excited to see their old friends and for the first event of the year. This energy flowed all throughout dinner, and then we had a dance, which was really fun, as it was a big pile of people jumping up and down and filling the excitement through the halls.

Saturday was the main day. There was a breakfast, and then

a wonderful teen led service. The event then split off into a leadership tract of a participant's choice. (For example, if a person chose president, he or she would learn what being a temple youth group president means, and how to

getting better, as a wonderful dinner was next.

The most anticipated part of any NFTY event is "big fun", a two hour time block where the CWR board plans an event like a dance or pool party. For LTI big fun, there was a survivor

night, where the leadership tracts split off and competed in several events. Then, there was an extremely powerful closing circle, and off to a cabin full of new friends for a fun experience.

Sunday was short with just a breakfast, event recaps, then the busses left and the SHORTY teens were driven off. The event



Alex Ike, Jake Matalon and friend at regional NFTY event.

do it more effectively.) Then, I went to some programming on several different topics that I had a choice in, like how to talk to adults, or how to be a more time efficient person.

My personal favorite time came next, just two hours to wander around and see friends, or play sports, or get a snack. I liked this because the unstructured time was really where I met people, and made really good connections. The day just kept

Bat Mitzvah



ALANA CARMEL CREE

Dec. 8, 2012 24 Kislev 5773

With great joy, I invite you to join our family as my daughter Alana is called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah, followed by a Kiddush luncheon.

—Mariya Rosenbaum-Cree

recap was bittersweet, with a slideshow of the event, a hand-in-hand closing song circle, and a NFTY bead pass out to wear upon a necklace to signify how many events a person has been to.

LTI was a blast and I met some really awesome new friends. I, and the rest of SHORTY, will be at Fallinter, the next event in Lafayette.



Left to Right: Alex Ike, Jake Matalon, Zach Hyman

TEMPLE NEWS

STARS SCHOOL SCHEDULE

K-3rd Grade
Sundays • 9:00-11:15 AM

4-7th Grade
Sundays • 11:00 AM-1:00 PM

4-6th Grade
Wednesdays • 4:00-6:00 PM

Dear Families,

The temple is truly alive with the sounds of kids learning and celebrating as one community. This past month was packed with informative family programs and field trips. I am so excited to get to know all of our new religious school families. Please make sure to introduce yourself to me (maybe more than once). We are certainly off to an excellent start!

L'Shanah Tovah,
Rabbi Kramer

Sunday, December 2, 10:00 AM-12:00 PM: **Hanukkah Bazaar**

The Festival of Lights is coming soon! Be prepared and get all of your holiday supplies from the Shomrei Shop — candles, *menorahs*, *dreidls*, *gelt*, games, jewelry and beautiful gifts.

Friday, December 7, 6:15 PM: **2nd and 3rd Grade Family Shabbat**

Please join our community in prayer as our second and third graders have a special part in the Shabbat service. Afterwards we will have a yummy dinner for second and third grade families to share as a community. Each family is asked to contribute \$10 and please RSVP to Vikki at strsasst@shomreitorah.org, 707-578-5519.

Sunday, December 9: **1st Grade Family Program**

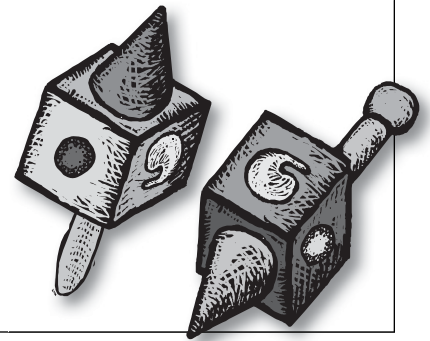
Parents, please join your first graders to learn about the uniqueness of Shabbat. First grade families will learn what makes Shabbat a true day of rest. They will learn about the candles, wine, *challah* and *tzedakkah*. It is a program that is not to be missed!

Sunday, December 9: **5th Grade Family Program**

During this program, families will get to meet prophets who changed history. It is through their prophecy and inspiration that we are so engaged in social justice today. After learning about biblical prophets, families will learn about 21st century prophets and how each of us can be a little more like the prophets through engaging in social justice.

Saturday, December 15, 6:15 PM: **The Night of Lights**

Join the whole congregation for a joyous celebration of *Hanukkah*. We will have a potluck, singing and *menorah* lighting.



Seventh Grade at STaRS



TEMPLE NEWS



Dear Families,

Thank you for participating in our November joint Tot Shabbat/STaRS celebration of Read Day with the PJ library. We hope you enjoyed the fabulous show.

We look forward to seeing you on Friday, December 7 at 5:00 PM for our December Tot Shabbat which will focus on *Hanukkah*. Please join us and bring your family, friends and neighbors for a vegetarian potluck dinner

and a fun take home Hanukkah art activity. We encourage you to join us for a child-friendly Shabbat service for the whole family following the Tot program.

Special thanks to Lacey, our Tot Shabbat liaison, for organizing our fabulous Hanukkah Art activity.

Love and blessings,
Tot Shabbat Lauren

Scenes from the "Read Day with the PJ Library", November 2012



TOT SHABBAT CALENDAR • DECEMBER 2012–JUNE 2013

Friday, December 7, 2012	5:00 PM	<i>Hannukah Harry</i>
Saturday, January 12, 2013	9:30–11:00 AM	<i>Teaching Tzedakah</i>
Friday, February 15, 2013	5:00 PM	<i>Preparing for Purim</i>
Sunday, March 24, 2013	9:00–11:15 AM	<i>Passover Seder with K–3rd Grade Religious School</i>
Saturday, April 13, 2013	9:30–11:00 AM	<i>Exploring Israel</i>
Friday, May 10, 2013	5:00 PM	<i>Temple Scavenger Hunt</i>
Saturday, June 1, 2013	9:30–11:00 AM	<i>Tikkun Olam Planting</i>

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SCENES FROM THE WOMEN'S RETREAT OCTOBER 2012

Thanks to the many volunteers who made this event possible!

