To Life, To Life, It’s Purim ....

Purim is one of the most joyous and fun holidays on the Jewish calendar. It commemorates a time when the Jewish people living in Persia were saved from extermination.

The story of Purim is told in the Biblical book of Esther. The heroes of the story are Esther, a beautiful young Jewish woman living in Persia, and her cousin Mordecai. The villain of the story is Haman, an arrogant, egotistical advisor to the king. Haman hated Mordecai because Mordecai refused to bow down to Haman, so Haman plotted to destroy the Jewish people. The word “Purim” means “lots” and refers to the lottery that Haman used to choose the date for the massacre.

Please join us as we proudly present the Annual CST Purim shpiel, which will be held on Saturday, March 15th at 6:15pm. Our “Fiddler on the Roof” themed celebration is not to be missed, so mark your calendar. Dress in your favorite Purim costume and don’t miss our tasty hamentaschen. See you there!

There are a few customs and traditions observed for Purim:

- The primary commandment is to hear the reading of the book of Esther. The book of Esther is commonly known as the Megillah, which means scroll. It is customary to boo, hiss, stamp feet and rattle goggers whenever the name of Haman is mentioned in the service. The purpose of this custom is to “blot out the name of Haman.”

- We are also commanded to send out Mishloach Manot, which are gifts of food or drink, and we are instructed to make gifts to charity.

- A favorite Purim tradition is eating hamentaschen. These triangular fruit-filled cookies are supposed to represent Haman’s three-cornered hat.

- Finally, one of the most entertaining components of Purim is watching and participating in the annual Purim shpiel. A Purim shpiel is actually a theatrical presentation of the events outlined in the book of Esther.

Passover Seders

A Seder for Everyone

Tuesday April 15 and Wednesday April 16

Two Seders to choose from, each with a delicious traditional Pesach meal, as we celebrate the Festival of Freedom. Our annual members only Congregational Seder is on the second night of Passover, Tuesday April 15. The Community Seder, open to all, is on the third night, Wednesday April 16. Passover at Shomrei Torah is more than the re-telling of the ancient story of the Exodus; it honors our ongoing struggle for freedom, justice and equality everywhere. There is a place at the table waiting for you. $18 per adult, $10 children 12 and under. Reservations required – call (707) 578-5519 or reserve online at shomreitorah.org.

Serving Sonoma County’s Progressive Reform Jewish Community
Rabbis’ Tisch  
**Friday March 14 – 6:15 PM**  
Our next Rabbis’ Tisch will feature Rabbi George and Rabbi Kramer. They will explore the various currents running through Purim, this most interesting of Jewish holidays. You won’t want to miss this!  

Join us for an alternative Shabbat experience consisting of a catered dinner followed by a lively discussion. RSVP to Denise in our office at 707-578-5519 or denise@shomreitori.org.

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**Business To Business**  
**Tuesday March 11 7:30 AM**

Shomrei Torah’s Business To Business group meets the 2nd Tuesday of every month at 7:30 AM in the Kolbo Room. Connect your business with others. Please bring your business cards.

Susan Daniel, of Employee Relations Consultants, gave a lively presentation about her business during the January meeting. She is a licensed attorney and knows her way around workplace audits, training on sexual harassment prevention, can be hired for smaller companies who do not have the resources for their own in-house human resources, writes policy and procedure manuals, can perform impartial outside investigation and so much more.

Joy Danzig presented her new business, ‘NJ oyBread!’ during the February meeting with edible samples. Details will be in the April Voice.

There is also an ongoing discussion about a business directory within CST.

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**Men’s Bagel Club**  
**Sunday March 2 - 9:00 AM**

A positive report on the “State of the Congregation” by Rabbi George, followed by a Bagel Club “Charlie Rose” style interview where he shared some of his thinking about the last 18 years, was enjoyed by those attending the last Bagel Club meeting. A good turnout also enjoyed the morning bagel, lox and cream cheese, along with creamed herring and a few good Jewish jokes.

On March 2, CST Congregant Victor Pacheco, D.Psy, a psychologist for the California Prison system will tell us about the mental health services available to prisoners at the Vacaville State Prison. This should be an interesting program about a major issue in California. Please RSVP at 829-1388 or email cstbagelmen@gmail.com so we’ll have enough food for you.

Plans are in the works for some interesting future programs on local, state and Jewish topics. We are looking forward to seeing you on the first Sunday of the month for stimulating programs, good food and great company.

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**Choosing an Electricity Supplier: How Will You Decide?**  
**Forum Explains New Electricity Choices**  
**Tuesday March 4 – 7:00 PM**

On March 4th, the Shomrei Torah Environmental Action Committee will host a discussion on the choices of electricity suppliers that will become available this spring. This free event will feature Geof Syphers, CEO of Sonoma Clean Power; and Tom Bottorff, PG&E Senior Vice-President for Regulatory Affairs. The event will be held at Congregation Shomrei Torah.

Seating at the event is limited. Reserve a seat by emailing your name and email address to ElectricityForumSoCo@gmail.com. You may also include prepared questions for our speakers.

Sonoma Clean Power was created to offer a choice of electricity suppliers to residents and businesses in Sonoma County. Beginning May 1, 2014, Sonoma Clean Power will offer electricity service first to 14,000 business customers and 6,000 residential customers in the target areas of unincorporated Sonoma County, and the cities of Cotati, Santa Rosa, Sebastopol, Sonoma, and Windsor. Over the next two years, the remaining 200,000 residential, commercial and agricultural customers will be given that choice.

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**Rosh Chodesh**  
**Saturday March 8 – 7:00 PM**

This month we will focus on the approach of Purim. Our spring silliness will combine with serious study of the hidden meanings of this holiday, “the only holiday we will need to celebrate once the Messiah has come.” Bring silly hats if you have some. All women are welcome.

Held at Congregation Shomrei Torah.

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Like Congregation Shomrei Torah on Facebook
The Environmental Action Committee of Congregation Shomrei Torah invites you and your family to our seventh annual COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT DAY

SANTA ROSA CREEK CLEAN-UP
Along The Prince Memorial Greenway

Sunday, March 23, 2014
1:00–4:00 PM

LOCATION: Meet by the footbridge in Olive Park. Come early and picnic in the park. Parking is available on the street. Carpooling is encouraged.

DIRECTIONS: From Highway 101, take Downtown Santa Rosa exit. Go west on 3rd Street, past the Hyatt Vineyard Creek Hotel to Railroad Street. Turn left on Railroad Street, pass over the creek and Olive Park is on your left.

GEAR: Dress for outdoor work, wear sturdy shoes (or rubber boots for the adventurous) and long sleeved work clothes. Bring a water bottle, ideally one you can attach to clothing. Snacks, gloves, hand wipes, trash bags and trash pickers will be provided. Restrooms are available in Olive Park.

CHILDREN WELCOME with adult supervision.

HEAVY RAIN CANCELS THE CLEAN UP ~ WE WILL WORK IN LIGHT MISTY RAIN

Questions? Contact Susan Richter at 566-0996 or Ruth Robinson at 829-8462.
For more information go to www.shomreitorah.org

Supported by
THE CREEK STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM
A partnership of citizens, the Sonoma County Water Agency and the City of Santa Rosa

SANTA ROSA CREEK CLEAN-UP RSVP FORM
Yes, I (we) will participate in the March 23rd creek clean-up!

Name ___________________________ E-mail Address ___________________________
Phone (day) ______________________ Phone (eve) ______________________
Other Adults ______________________ Children (with ages) ______________________

There are three easy ways to sign-up:
1. Clip form and mail: CST, Attention Creek Clean-Up, 2600 Bennett Valley Road, Santa Rosa, CA 95404.
2. Email: CSTEnvironmentalAction@gmail.com. Please be sure to include all information above.
3. Clip form and fax it to the CST office, (707) 578-3967.

"Be the hands and feet of God".
~Rabbi George Gittleman
Chai Ball Tickets Available Now

Tickets to the April 5th Chai Ball gala fundraiser are available now on shomreitorah.org, or by using the reply card that was mailed with your invitation. You may also telephone the synagogue office and purchase tickets over the phone.

The Chai Ball is the only major Shomrei Torah fundraiser in 2014 and includes cocktails, an exquisite catered meal, a full entertainment program, and special remarks from Rabbi George, whom the ball honors for his 18 years of service to our synagogue community. In Hebrew, the letters of the alphabet are assigned numerical values, and the letters of the word chai, which translates as “life,” add up to 18.

The Chai Ball features a catered meal by Park Avenue Catering followed by live entertainment that includes a performance by internationally acclaimed pianist and composer Nolan Gasser, as well as performances by The Dan McGee Three, a jazz trio featuring our own Sanders “Sandy” Feldhorn; The Ravens, a Chicago Electric Blues Band featuring our own Stan Greenberg; and dinner music by Jeff Smoller, guitar, and Yvonne Wormer, piano, who is familiar to those who attend Erev Shabbat services.

Tickets for the Chai Ball are $144 per person, of which a portion is tax deductible. The evening begins at 6 PM on Saturday, April 5. Please purchase tickets early as this event is expected to sell out.

Chai Weekend Honors Rabbi George’s 18th Anniversary

Shomrei Torah will honor Rabbi George Gittleman on the 18th anniversary of his installation as our rabbi with a full weekend of events, April 4 – 6, 2014. At the Shabbat service on Friday, April 4, Rabbi George will be presented with a special Tribute Book containing messages from members and friends who wish to share their thoughts and sentiments. Everyone in the Shomrei Torah community is encouraged to participate in the Tribute Book, with space for your message of love and congratulations available for as little as $18. The deadline for contributing to the book is March 14. Information and order forms are available on the web site.

On Saturday, April 5, at 10:30 AM the Shabbat morning service will include guest speakers who will honor Rabbi George.

The Chai Ball is a gala fundraiser on Saturday evening, April 5. This elegant dinner, catered by Park Avenue Catering, will feature entertainment headlined by internationally acclaimed composer/pianist Nolan Gasser and hosted by Leira Satlof. Check the web site for a full list of entertainers, and to purchase tickets.

On Sunday, April 6, the Shomrei Torah Religious School will honor Rabbi George with a special tribute during the 11 AM assembly, when all of the grades gather in the sanctuary.

Plan to attend at least one of these special events honoring the individual who, more than anyone else, has had a profound impact on the growth, development and direction of Shomrei Torah, and who has touched the lives and hearts of so many in our synagogue family.

Share Your Feelings in Rabbi George’s Tribute Book

All members are invited to participate in a special Tribute Book honoring Rabbi George on the occasion of his 18th year as Shomrei Torah’s rabbi. The letters, poems, short messages, and photographs from members and friends will be bound into a beautiful Tribute Book and presented to Rabbi George during the Erev Shabbat service at 6:15 on Friday, April 4. The service will be followed by a special oneg shabbat in honor of Rabbi George and his family.

Those wishing to participate in the book may purchase spaces of various sizes, ranging in price from $18 to $500. A committee of volunteers, led by Sue Lewis and Marcy Pluznick-Marrin, will insert messages into the book and decorate the pages, creating a beautifully crafted and lasting memento that represents many of the personal relationships that have marked Rabbi George’s tenure at Shomrei Torah.

Order forms and detailed instructions for creating your contribution are available on the Shomrei Torah web site, under the Tribute Book link on the Chai Weekend pull-down menu. Order forms were also mailed to every member household with their invitation to the Chai Ball.
How to Participate in Rabbi George’s Tribute Book

As part of the Chai Weekend celebration honoring Rabbi George on April 4-6, a beautiful TRIBUTE BOOK filled with loving messages will be presented to him during Friday night services on April 4. Please participate in this special honor by creating your own or your family’s tribute using letters, poems, drawings, photos and/or artwork. 100% participation will show Rabbi George how much we care.

1. Select Size of Tribute
Prices and sizes included below.

2. Use Special Paper
To ensure high quality of the book, please use heavier quality paper and not lightweight computer paper. You can find quality paper for tribute pages on the table in the synagogue lobby.

3. Create Your Tribute
Carefully use a ruler to mark off the size of tribute selected. No need to cut—we’ll do that. Compose a handwritten or computer-typed note, letter or special memory; draw a picture, write a poem, or use photographs. Please don’t use bulky objects. Be sure make it personal by signing the page. Glue down all photos, etc. Reminder: content cannot exceed selected size chosen below.

4. Deliver Tribute before March 6
Send completed tribute page, along with form below and payment by check or charge to the Shomrei Torah office, before March 6. If mailing, include a piece of cardboard for support. Do not fold your paper.

5. Art Committee to Assemble
All tributes will be adhered and bound into a beautiful book. A copy of the original book will be on display at Shomrei Torah after the event.

Questions or Help
Creating Your Tribute?
Email or call Marcy Pluznick-Marrin, marcypm@aol.com, 529-8028
or Sue Lewis, susanlewis@sonic.net, 539-7681

Please pay by check or charge through the office before March 6th

Reserve Space in Rabbi George’s Tribute Book

Name(s): _______________________________________________________
Phone: ____________________ Email: ________________________________

Check SIZE of your tribute.
Size of your tribute page must be exact.

___ eighth page: 4.25” wide x 2.75” high (horizontal) $ 18
___ quarter page: 4.25” wide x 5.5” high (vertical) $ 36
___ half page: 8.5 wide x 5.5” high (horizontal) $ 90
___ full page: 8.5 wide x 11” high (vertical) $ 180
___ FIRST PAGE in tribute book, full vertical page $1,000
___ SECOND PAGE in tribute book, full vertical page $ 500
___ THIRD PAGE in tribute book, full vertical page $ 300

CUT HERE: PLEASE SEND IN ENVELOPE

CHAI WEEKEND
Congregation Shomrei Torah
2600 Bennett Valley Road
Santa Rosa, CA 95404
(707) 578-5519
www.shomreitorah.org
SAVE THE DATE

Shomrei Torah Camping Trip
June 13 - 15, 2014
Samuel P. Taylor State Park
Share Shabbat, music with Susie and a weekend of fun with your congregational family. The cost is $10 per person (adult or child) for the weekend and the registration deadline is May 12th. Each couple/family will be responsible for helping put together one meal with 2-3 other families. Once registration is complete, a supply and contact list will be sent out to all the campers.

SPACE IS LIMITED and we expect to fill up quickly! If you would like to come, please send Ann Bacon at annbacon13@gmail.com the following information: # of Campers, names and ages. Checks can be mailed to: Ann Bacon; 2153 Grahn Drive; Santa Rosa, CA 95404.

Any questions? Please contact the CST office. We look forward to sharing a fun weekend.

6th Annual Santa Rosa Walk to End Genocide
Family Friendly 3 Mile Walk Will Begin and End at CST
Sponsored by the Social Action Committee of CST benefiting Jewish World Watch

Sunday, April 27th, 2014
Registration begins at 8:00 am/Event begins at 9:00
On Sunday, April 27, Let’s say “Never Again!” and put action behind our words. In previous years, CST has helped congregant Gabe Ferrick raise over $150,000, allowing vital resources for so many who are suffering from terrible atrocities. We are pleased to announce the Walk will continue for its 6th year, as teen co-chairs Noah Bacon and Jake Matalon, in cooperation with CST’s Social Action Committee, take the lead.

Please join Noah, Jake and the many CST and outside community supporters for this special event. There will be speakers, music and activities for children before the walk. Together we can continue to make a difference.

Registration and donations can be made at www.walktoendgenocide.org Your support is greatly appreciated.

Interested in volunteering (baking cookies, helping with registration, being crossing guard) or have any questions: Please email WalktoEndGenocideSR@gmail.com

Yom Ha’atzmaut – Israel Independence Day
Monday May 5th
Join us in celebrating Israel’s 66th birthday.

4:00-6:00PM Viewing and discussion of the classic Israeli film about the chaotic early years after independence, “Salach Shabbati” starring Chayim Topol.

6:00 – 6:45 – a free catered Israeli feast brought to us by Leira Satlof & Nature’s Serving

Includes Israeli Dancing

Please RSVP to the Temple office at 707-578-5519 or email denise@shomreitorah.org

RABBI MESSAGE

Opening the Tent to the Invisible Among Us

Not too long ago we read parashat V’tro, from Shemot, the book of Exodus. It’s renowned for the Eseret Dibrot, the “Ten Commandments”, but I have a different focus this time; the opening verses of the portion, Exodus 18:1-7:

1] Jethro priest of Midian, Moses’ father-in-law, heard all that God had done for

2] So Jethro, Moses’ father-in-law, took Zipporah, Moses’ wife,

3] and her two sons of whom one was named Gershom, … 4] and the other was named Eliezer, … and Adonai delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh.”

5] Jethro, Moses’ father-in-law, brought Moses’ sons and wife to him in the wilderness, where he was encamped at the mountain of God. 6] He sent word to Moses, “I, your father-in-law Jethro, am coming to you, with your wife and her two sons.”

7] Moses went out to meet his father-in-law; he bowed low and kissed him; each asked after the other’s welfare, and they went into the tent.

Moses and for Israel His people, how Adonai had brought Israel out from Egypt. 2] So Jethro, Moses’ father-in-law, took Zipporah, Moses’ wife,

after she had been sent home, 3] and her two sons of whom one was named Gershom, … 4] and the other was named Eliezer, … and Adonai delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh.” 5] Jethro, Moses’ father-in-law, brought Moses’ sons and wife to him in the wilderness, where he was encamped at the mountain of God. 6] He sent word to Moses, “I, your father-in-law Jethro, am coming to you, with your wife and her two sons.” 7] Moses went out to meet his father-in-law; he bowed low and kissed him; each asked after the other’s welfare, and they went into the tent.

So, what is happening here? Jethro, Moses’ father-in-law, hears the news of “all that God has done for Moses and B’nei Yisrael” (the Children of Israel). What had God done? You remember the plagues, the splitting of the sea, manna from heaven, etc. Now Jethro heard all about the many miracles God wrought for the Israelites, and he was coming back to meet Moses and reunite him with his family. He gathers up his daughter, Zipporah, Moses’ wife, and their two sons, Gershom and Eliezer, and hits the road toward the Israelite camp. Now comes the part quoted above. What is striking, if you read these
seven verses carefully, is the repetition, especially of the fact that Jethro is coming with Zipporah and her sons in tow. In fact three times in seven verses the text makes this explicit. If you know anything about numbers in the Torah, both three and seven are special, magical, mysterious numbers. When they come up when reading Torah, you should wake up, because it’s telling you that there is something there that you will miss if you don’t read carefully. So, three times in seven verses – which is practically shouting – it says, “Hey! I’m coming with Zipporah and your two sons.”

“You know, sometimes the Torah teaches by what it says, and sometimes the Torah teaches by what it doesn’t say, what is omitted.”

One would think that with all the build-up there would be quite a reunion. You know, Moses running to greet his family, scooping Zipporah up in his arms, the boys shouting, “Abbah, Abbah!” (“Daddy, Daddy!”) Right? We even have biblical precedent for emotional homecomings or reunions with Jacob and Esau, and Joseph and his brothers. But not this time. Moses goes to greet Jethro. Verse seven: “Moses went out to meet his father-in-law, he bowed low to the ground and kissed him. Each asked the others’ welfare, and then went into the tent.” WHAT ABOUT ZIPPORAH? Seriously, what about Zipporah and his sons, Gershom and Eliezer? Where are they? Don’t they count? Don’t they matter? It’s astonishing, really.

Often with a question like this one can go to the Midrash (Sacred Jewish Legends) and find the answer. So I looked there and I found… nothing! As far as I can discern, Jewish tradition is silent on this issue. It’s simply not concerned. In this instance, Zipporah and her sons are merely a means to an end, exchangeable property for cementing the bond between the men that possess them, Moses and Jethro. Ouch! That doesn’t feel good. You know, sometimes the Torah teaches by what it says, and sometimes the Torah teaches by what it doesn’t say, what is omitted.

It’s troubling, and it begs this question: how does it feel to be invisible? How does it feel to be brought from the wilderness to the very edge of the tent, to the very edge of the tent but not let in; to be left out, as it were, at the edge holding a heavy emotional bag?

Who is at risk in our community for this kind of treatment? There are lots of candidates, but the folks on my mind as I write this blog are the at-risk kids and young adults that the folks at SAY (Social Advocates for Youth) work with: kids without families who age out of foster care; homeless youth, victims of violence and/or abuse, kids without the skills they need to make it on their own, kids whose only crime is being dirt poor.

As many of you know, Sutter Medical Center of Santa Rosa has offered to donate the former Sutter Warrack Hospital building to SAY with the goal of expanding SAY’s capacity to serve more of Sonoma County’s youth and families. The proposed facility is being called the Dream Center with a focus on four core areas of services: affordable housing, job training and employment, educational support, and health and wellness. The Center would house SAY administration, low-cost counseling, youth employment services, affordable apartment-style housing, short term housing, family therapy, education programs and bilingual family advocacy. The building also provides office space which SAY could rent to partners offering complementary services to youth.

Not everybody is excited about the Dream Center. Neighbors have questioned the ability of SAY to manage such a large facility. Others are concerned that the kids that SAY serves will bring a criminal element to the neighborhood, making it less safe and bringing down property values.

As far as I can discern, reasonable people can be on either side of this issue. No doubt the Dream Center could pose some risks to the neighborhood if it is not managed well. And I don’t believe one can fault homeowners for being concerned about what happens in their back yard. Nevertheless, I believe that the benefits far outweigh the risks and that’s why I added my name to the growing list of SAY supporters.

If we don’t lend these kids a hand, who will? If there is not a place for them in our community where will they be welcome? Let’s not bring these kids to the very edge of our tent and not let them in. We say we care about our youth and we want them to have a chance to succeed. Now is the time to live our values, open our tent, and welcome them inside.

B’shalom,
George
Chag Purim!

Each year during Purim, I try a new hamantaschen recipe. I have fond memories of making the triangular treats with my mother when I was a child. She would roll out the dough and let my four siblings and myself cut out circles with drinking glasses, fill the centers and pinch the edges before they were popped into the oven. Her prune and walnut filling with bits of orange zest is my all-time favorite. But the dough recipe was too dry for my liking. So, I’ve been on a quest to find the “perfect” hamantaschen. I’ve tried dough recipes that are too tough, too soft, too thin, too thick, and the worst — flavorless. So each year I experiment, I test, and I fail. But I haven’t given up! Like so many of our stories, we will (eventually) find success through perseverance. When I was a child, Purim was celebrated with a raucous reading of the M’gillah. Adults were encouraged to drink and kids vigorously shook their gragers. My sister and I always dressed as Queen Esther and my three brothers were either Mordechai or King Ahashveros (never Haman!). As a child, Purim was about dressing up in costume, cheering, booing and eating cookies. Hearing the story as an adult, Purim’s story is dark and sinister with unlikely heroes and heroines. The holiday of Purim celebrates the bravery of Esther and Mordechai and the deliverance of the Jewish people from the cruelty of oppression. Yet, we are commanded to observe Purim with “feasting and merry-making.” How Jewish! We are also commanded to pursue justice and give gifts to the poor, matanot l’evyonim. Here are a few simple ways to help others during Purim:

• Donate food or money to support Elisha’s Pantry
• Volunteer for the Soup Brigade sponsored by the Social Action Committee
• Donate warm clothing to distribute to the homeless
• Prepare a dinner meal at Giffen House for women and children living in transitional housing

During this time of revelry and fun, let us also remember that we have the power to transform the lives of those who are suffering. I look forward to celebrating with you on Saturday, March 15 at Shomrei Torah for the Fiddler on the Roof Purim Spiel.

B’shalom,
Rachael

LEGACY NEWS

Meet Legacy Circle Members
John Weinstein & Heidi Stewart

John Weinstein and Heidi Stewart joined Congregation Shomrei Torah sixteen years ago. They feel that CST has been a central part of their lives ever since. Their two children celebrated their b’nai mitzvot at CST and, though not currently involved with Shomrei Torah, their children know that it is a place to which they always can return. John and Heidi enjoy their “wonderful friends” at CST, together with whom they have actively helped to build the synagogue and Jewish life in Sonoma County.

The dominant factor that helped them decide to become members of The Legacy Circle involves insuring that the time and resources they have invested in building the Shomrei Torah community remain strong. They feel that this is the quest for assuring their own legacy as well as that of CST. John has served as a member of the board of directors and treasurer in the past. He understands how financially important it is for synagogues to have successful legacy programs—nothing else is more important. John says that just as our generation paved the way for other generations in getting our synagogue built, CST members need to do all that they can to build a successful legacy program that will be expanded by, as well as benefit, future generations.

John and Heidi say that Rabbi Michael Robinson impressed them from the start with his personal warmth and overall charm. However, it was not until they learned more about him and his story, including his deep commitment to social justice and tikkun olam, both in word and deed, that he became a hero to them. They are proud to have the honor of establishing an endowment fund that will memorialize both his name and his spirit. They sincerely hope that others will feel moved to contribute to this Fund as well. John and Heidi would like their Legacy contribution to help sustain this Fund.

The hope John and Heidi share for the long term future of CST is the wish that members of Shomrei Torah continue their commitment to building a thriving and involved Jewish community in Sonoma County that will justify and keep the commitment they all made to “our beautiful site on the hill.”
Sharing Spirit, Soul, and Symbols: The Art of Nina Bonos
January 24 through March 30
First Presbyterian Church

With a rich palette of jewel-tone colors, Shomrei Torah congregant Nina Bonos’s Joyous Judaica explores traditional and modern Jewish themes, blessings and symbols. Also included in the current exhibition at First Presbyterian Church are some of Nina’s Wine Country Landscapes.

States the artist about her work:

My vivid watercolor and mixed media paintings reflect my joy of living in beautiful Sonoma County, as well as my family history and life journey that has been guided by decades of meditation and prayer. Studying architecture at UC Berkeley trained my designer’s eye, and being Jewish provides further inspiration for my artistic expression. My family worships at Congregation Shomrei Torah in Santa Rosa. I am Vice President of the American Guild of Judaic Art, a 25-year member of ARTrails Open Studio and a member of the City of Santa Rosa Art in Public Places Committee. My Judaica, or Jewish art, is exhibited and sold across the United States.

The Gallery provides space —at the entrance of the sanctuary— for visual discovery, inspiration, and growth. First Presbyterian Church is a congregation whose presence in Santa Rosa dates back to 1855— one of the city’s first five established churches which continue today. The Gallery is open Sundays and during our usual weekday business hours: Monday through Friday 8:30 to 4:30.

Environmental Action Committee Tip of the Month

According to the Rabbis every person must say the entire world was created for me. If the world was created for me, it follows that I must always examine how I can rectify the world and fulfill its needs and pray for the world.

~ Rabbi Nachman of Bratslav, Likutei Mo’HaRaN, 1:5:1

“The year that just ended will be remembered as the worst on record for rainfall.”

~ Press Democrat, January 3, 2014

And still we haven’t received enough rain. What can we do? When it comes to conserving water, small adjustments can have a big impact. A few examples:

- Collect the water you use to rinse fruit and vegetables and water houseplants with it.
- Dishwashers, set on light, generally use less water than washing dishes by hand.
- Toilet leaks can be silent! Test your toilet for leaks.
- Use a WaterSense labeled showerhead. They’re inexpensive, easy to install, and can save up to 750 gallons a month.
- Consider replacing some or all of your lawn with xeriscape or a garden on drip irrigation.
- Wash your car from a bucket and use the hose minimally.

Check out hundreds more tips at these and other websites:
- environment.nationalgeographic.com/.../freshwater/water-conservation- tips/
- eartheasy.com/live_water_saving.htm
- www.savingwaterpartnership.org/tips/

If you haven’t RSVP’d for the March 23rd Santa Rosa Creek Clean-Up, we hope you and your family will join us: shomreitorah.org/community/environmental-action/

Hanukkah Gift Baskets

Hanukkah gift baskets, filled with gelt, dreidels, and winter treats, were sent to two dozen of our college kids, with holiday good wishes from their congregational family. They got rave reviews and were much appreciated!

We’re getting ready to send Passover goodies soon. If you have not yet submitted their names, call the office at 578-5519 or email shomre@shomreitorah.org to let us know your children’s current campus address, so we can include them in our next round of Shomrei Torah Cares packages.

Nancy Ferrick and Melissa Kort
Dear STaRS Parents,
The last month has been incredibly full!! What an exciting time at STaRS! Classes are going well, we have heard enthusiastic feedback about the progress reports that were sent out and we had a very full New to STaRS brunch. Additionally we have added an intergenerational Hebrew tutoring program on Wednesdays between 4-6pm. The mosaic for Rabbi George’s Chai (18 year) celebration is beautiful!!! Please make sure to mark your calendars for the wonderful weekend April 4th-6th.

Other important dates to remember

Saturday March 1st 6th grade Morning Service
All 6th graders will lead the Shabbat Morning Services and deliver the D’var Torah giving them the opportunity to lead the congregation in prayers. This program is an integral part of the B’nei Mitzvah process.

Friday March 7th 2nd and 3rd grade Family Shabbat
Please join our community in prayer at 6:15pm. Our 2nd and 3rd graders will have a special part in the service. The service will be followed by a delicious pizza dinner for the classes, as we build our community!

Sunday March 9th 5th grade Field Trip
This year our fifth graders and their families will embark on a field trip to Daniels Chapel of the Roses Funeral Home, 1225 Sonoma Avenue, Santa Rosa, California 95402. From 3:45 till 5:15 we will meet for a funeral service for our beloved television icon Barney the Dinosaur. Together we will experience a Jewish funeral, explaining step by step what happens when a loved one dies. Educationally this is a very beneficial experience for our children to learn about a life cycle event which is more difficult to handle. We hope every 5th grade family is able to join us! Parents or Guardians are required to stay for the entire time.

Sunday March 30th 4th Grade Field Trip
We ask that all 4th graders and a parent or guardian meet Rabbi Kramer, at Lodge at Paulin Creek, 2375 Range Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA 95403. Our families will engage in an educational afternoon performing the Mitzvah of Kibud Z’keinim, honoring the Elderly. Please try and show up at 11:15 and we will end by 12:45. This schedule is designed to allow families with multiple children to get their other children to and from STaRS at CST on time and also participate in our 4th grade field trip.

B’shalom,
Rabbi Kramer

Babies & Bagels
March Date TBD
Do you have a baby? Do you like bagels? If you answered yes to the previous questions then this group is for you! Join us for a light nosh and some refreshing adult conversation, while you watch your child/children interact and play with others in their age group. Come for the bagels, stay for the community! Please contact Nicollette Weinzev for more information. We would love to see you there!

SCTribe
This month SC Tribe is celebrating Purim with “Pitchers for Purim” on Sunday, March 16th. Join us for some beer, noshes, and merriment.

Also, save the date for our March Shabbat dinner, Friday, March 7th.

Keep an eye out for e-mails with more details. For questions, comments, or RSVP’s please contact us at sonomacountytribe@gmail.com.

Scenes from the Religious School
Students preparing the mosaic for Rabbi George’s Chai (18 year) celebration.

Photos by Anne Matalon
JCC Chaverim News

Shalom All,

Chaverim, Sonoma County’s teen education program has reached the midpoint of the year. We’ve enjoyed some delicious community dinners and some compelling discussions. One of the most powerful evenings we’ve had so far was one in which members of the JCC’s Friendship Circle joined the 11/12th graders for a lively intergenerational discussion. Warm thoughts, as well as lots of laughter, memories and comments were shared at this event which helped to connect our teen community to the senior community. Everyone said “let’s do it again.”

Our 8th grade class is amazing this year. We have very high attendance, often in excess of 30 students. This group has the distinction of having had 100% of last year’s B’nai Mitzvah class attend Chaverim this year. Many students enjoy our homework club which meets before class, giving them a chance to finish their work early, and then enjoy the evening.

Our 9th and 10th grade recently enjoyed a great discussion in which they learned a bit about their future college decisions and opportunities, which although far-off, sometimes feels as if it’s just around the corner. These two classes will enjoy a joint Shabbat service and sleepover Shabbaton on Friday night, March 28-9.

We are so proud of all our students for all the great leadership they show in our own Jewish community as well as the larger Sonoma County community. We are having much “naachas” as we find out about the exciting plans for post high school education and experience, and summer plans as well.

Please go to jccsoco.org to learn about all of our programs at the JCC as well as our teen program. It is never too late to join. We welcome all Jewish teens - affiliated or not - and look forward to adding this year’s 7th grade religious school class to our next year’s 8th grade. Information will be forthcoming.

Thanks and Shalom.

Rick Concoff, JCCSOCO Chaverim Teen Director, and Camp Chai Director
707-8233916
concoff@yahoo.com

Chavurah Groups Attention members!

New Chavurah groups are starting up. If you are interested in joining one, now is the time to sign up!

Chavurah’s concept has very ancient roots. The Talmud describes Chavurah as a group of people with similar interests who gather together to socialize, celebrate holidays, and engage in other activities of interest. Members meet in other members’ homes, restaurants, museums, parks, or other places decided upon by the group.

Questionnaire forms are available from the Shomrei Torah office. Please complete a questionnaire, leave it in the office, and a Chavurah Committee member will acknowledge receipt of the form and will call you back to talk further. Currently we have a “Parents with Children” group; an “Empty Nester’s” group, and a “Senior Empty Nester’s” group currently adding members and newly-forming.

From experience, we can both tell you how enriching and rewarding a Chavurah can be. Feel free to contact the CST office with any questions.

Volunteers at the Chai Weekend stuffing party preparing the invitations for mailing.

February Voice Correction

In the February issue of The Voice, the recognition of the Gelt-A-Thon volunteers inadvertently omitted thanks to Shirley Liberman and Margaret Livingston. If anyone else was missed, please accept our apologies and thanks for all of your hard work making the Gelt-A-Thon a great success.
Board of Directors

The Board of Directors met on January 9, 2014. Highlights included:

- Approving 5 new families for membership
- Approving the expenditure of $10,000 for a necessary sound system upgrade and purchase of a third projector
- Discussing our Strategic Plan and how we are performing relative to the goals we set in 2011
- Discussing the mechanism currently in place for vetting public relations items representing CST on potentially controversial topics
Social Action Committee

Help for the homeless:
Currently we are helping to feed the homeless at the Emergency Winter Shelter, operated by Catholic Charities. We are committed to providing hot, nutritious soup for 40+ people each Monday through the end of March. We encourage everyone to volunteer to help on our “Soup Brigade”. For more information please contact Enola Nelson (nelha@sonic.net).

Dream Center:
SAC joined with the SAC of Congregation Beth Ami to write a letter to the Planning Commission declaring support for the proposed Dream Center. We believe that we must help vulnerable young people who face many obstacles by offering crucial assistance at a pivotal time in their lives. Many SAC members attended the Jan. 23rd Planning Commission Meeting to discuss this issue. We were proud to hear Rabbi George speak eloquently in support, as also did Asher Sheppard (SAC member and Bennett Valley resident). We appreciated a letter by Sue Lewis to the PD in support.

Trust Act:
Signed by Gov. Brown last October, this is California’s effort to reduce deportations and family separations based on minor offense. This Bill has been actively supported by Reform Congregations and Rabbi George and Rabbi Kramer. In January the Sonoma County Commission on Human Rights, in conjunction with Sheriff Freitas, held a forum to obtain input about local implementation. Several SAC members attended and took this opportunity to thank the Sheriff for his openness and collaborative spirit in formulating local policy.

Save The Dates:

**Sunday, June 29 – 3:30 to 5:30 p.m.** Joshua Safran “Free Spirit” CST Sanctuary. Joshua Safran will discuss his new book “Free Spirit” which includes living as a kid around domestic violence. Panel on domestic violence, co-sponsored by Copperfield Books. Joshua is the Orthodox Jewish lawyer who fought for years to help free Deborah Peagler, subject of SAC’s film series movie “Crime After Crime”. Don’t miss this one!

**Friday, August 8 – Rabbi’s Tisch, 6:15 p.m.** – Rabbi Michael Robinson Annual Memorial Lecture.

SAC meetings are held on the first Monday of each month, at 7 pm in the Kolbo Room. Anyone interested in joining us, or just checking out what we do, contact the CST office.

Environmental Action Committee

volunteers weeding our Synagogue property.

Photos by Phyllis Nesbitt

L to R: Judy Watts, Roy Sparrow, Bill Skoonberg, Rick Reisman

Like Congregation Shomrei Torah on Facebook.

Cancer Resource Team At Your Service

If you were recently diagnosed with cancer, there are other members of the congregation who have experienced similar challenges and want to help. Would you like someone to talk with you and/or members of your family? We are here to listen, answer your questions and hold your hand. Contact the CST office to be paired up with a member of the team.
Whatever your reason to belong, **Shomrei Torah** belongs to you!

**When you renew, please pledge your fair share.**

**You can advertise in The Voice...** Advertisements shall be limited to one-half page maximum size; advertisement positioning in *The Voice* will be on a rotating basis; the appearance and content of the advertisements shall be in good taste. Because this is a subjective assessment, final approval of any advertisement shall be at the discretion of the executive director, the Rabbi and/or the editor of *The Voice*.

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Ads and payment must be received in the temple office by the 5th of the month to start in the next month’s issue.

*For more information, please call the temple office at 707-578-5519.*

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**MARCH SERVICES**

**Saturday, March 1**
8:45 am  
*Torah Study led by Rabbi George*
10:30 am  
*Shabbat Service*

**Friday, March 7**
6:15 pm  
*Shabbat Service*

**Saturday, March 8**
8:45 am  
*Torah Study led by Marcia Gladstone*
10:30 am  
*Bar Mitzvah of Caleb Weil*

**Friday, March 14**
6:15 pm  
*Rabbi’s Tisch –*

**Saturday, March 15**
8:45 am  
*Torah Study led by Rabbi George*
10:30 am  
*Shabbat Service*

**Friday, March 21**
6:15 pm  
*Shabbat Service*

**Saturday, March 22**
8:45 am  
*Torah Study led by Rabbi George*
10:30 am  
*Bat Mitzvah of Eva Hodes*

**Friday, March 28**
6:15 pm  
*Shabbat Service*

**Saturday, March 29**
8:45 am  
*Torah Study led by Stan Roodman*
10:30 am  
*Bat Mitzvah of Eva Hodes*

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**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.