Congregation members Stephen and Clo Davis and Suzanne Levine welcome Syrian refugee couple, Shiyam and Haytham Dalito, who will be our guests at a program about immigration and refugees on Friday evening, January 26.

Tu B’Shevat and Purim Celebrations............5  Kivvun on Retreat at Camp Jewell...........10–12
Adult Education Coming Attractions.........6–7  Full Agenda for Social Action Committee.........16–19
News from Our Librarian..........................8–9
Just a few days ago, 13 members of the CBSRZ family returned from an intensive, educational, and spiritual experience in Boston: we attended the Union for Reform Judaism Biennial in Boston.

What is the biennial? A five-day conven-tion during which time Reform Jews, from all over the world, come together to learn, network, pray, sing, and have fun together. There were more than 5,500 people in attendance over the duration of the conference, and there was something for everyone. Attendees could choose to attend workshops on topics related to Strengthening Congregations, Youth Engagement,
Audacious Hospitality, Tikkun Olam, Transforming Texts, Music, and more.

As someone who grew up in Reform Jewish camps, participated in NFTY youth group, worked in a number of Reform Jewish organizations, and serves as a rabbi, it was hard to walk more than ten feet in any direction without walking into a friend or colleague. I got to sit next to my childhood rabbi from Skokie, IL, during Friday night’s Shabbat service. I was able to catch up with a rabbinic classmate who now lives and works in London. A religious school teacher of mine gave me a huge hug hello and the decades fell away. In truth, this is a family reunion.

Those of us who work diligently in “Congregation-Land” (as Rabbi Richard Address, director of Jewish Sacred Aging, likes to call it) can often get lost in our own communities. We might get stuck in a rut, feel less than dedicated, caring, and involved Reform Jews. Coming to Biennial is the perfect antidote — we leave feeling invigorated, recharged, and reconnected. We have been reminded that we are part of something much larger than just our own synagogues — we are part of a movement, a community, and a PEOPLE.

In addition to learning about best practices and principles for all sorts of synagogue-related topics, we also had a chance to learn about many “big picture” issues, as well. During plenary sessions, we were addressed by Senator Elizabeth Warren, Governor Charlie Baker, Rev. Dr. William J. Barber, Rabbi David Stern (president of the Central Conference of American Rabbis), Rabbi Rick Jacobs (president of the URJ).

Our delegates voted on Resolutions focused on Protecting Individuals at Risk of Deportation, Religious Equality in Israel, Responding to the Global Refugee Crisis, Addressing Student Sexual Violence in Schools, Addressing the Impact of Climate Change, and Pursuit of Racial Justice.

And, then, there’s Shabbat… Imagine, if you can, praying in one room with more than five thousand other Jews who love being Jewish, and who are choosing to be there in that moment. The feeling is indescribable. We sang, danced, clapped, swayed, and prayed as one. We welcomed the Shabbat bride, took a collective deep breath together, and were carried along the waves of music and spirit. Personally, it was quite special to pray alongside our fellow CBSRZ members, rather than in front of them on the bimah. We were able to put our arms around each other and sing, and I treasured each moment.

I warmly encourage all of you to consider attending Biennial in the future. The next one, in 2019, will be held in my homeland of Chicago. Join us there!

L’shalom,
Rabbi Marci N. Bellows

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**JEWISH TRIVIA for January and February courtesy of Norman Hanenbaum**

**January 1, 1882—Ellis Island opens as an immigration center.**
**January 15, 1965—PLO founded.**
**January 20, 1943—At the Wannsee Conference the Nazis decide upon the “final solution.”**
**January 25, 1949—David Ben Gurion elected first prime minister of Israel.**
**January 27, 1945—Auschwitz Birkenau liberated by the Russian army.**
**January 28, 1916—Louis Brandeis is the first Jew to be appointed to the Supreme Court.**
**February 1, 2002—American journalist Daniel Pearl is executed by his captors.**
**February 3, 1943—SS Dorchester torpedoed. Four chaplains give up their life jackets joining in prayer as the ship went down.**
**February 5, 1997—The “Big Three” Swiss banks create a fund for Holocaust reparations.**
**February 12, 1924—Premiere of George Gershwin’s Rhapsody in Blue.**
**February 14, 1949—The Knesset convenes for the first time.**
**February 23, 1945—Joe Rosenthal takes the unforgettable photograph of American soldiers raising the flag over Iwo Jima.**

**Deaths of famous Jews**

**January 2, 2006—Jan Murray, actor.**
**January 3, 1974—Samuel Goldwyn, movie producer.**
**January 8, 1975—Richard Tucker, opera singer.**
**January 9, 2011—Debbie Friedman, singer and composer for the guitar.**
**January 10, 2000—Hedy Lamarr, actress.**
**January 11, 2014—Prime Minister of Israel, Ariel Sharon.**
**January 13, 1980—Andre Kostelanetz, conductor.**
**January 13, 1966—Sophie Tucker, entertainer.**
**January 19, 1990—Arthur Goldberg, Supreme Court Justice.**
**January 25, 1990—Ava Gardner, actress.**
**January 26, 1973—Edward G. Robinson, actor.**
**January 28, 1996—Jerry Siegel, co-creator of Superman.**
**February 5, 1967—Henry Morgenthau, Secretary of the Treasury.**
**February 10, 2005—Arthur Miller, playwright.**
**February 11, 2015—Bob Simon, newsman.**
**February 12, 2014—Sid Caesar, comedian.**
**February 22, 1998—Abraham Ribicoff, Connecticut Governor and Senator.**
**February 22, 1965—Felix Frankfurter, Justice of the Supreme Court.**
**February 24, 1998—Henny Youngman, comedian.**
**February 29, 2015—Leonard Nimoy, actor (Mr. Spock).**
In Israel, Tu B’Shevat, the Birthday for Trees, is celebrated at the time of year when, drawn from the roots by the warmth of the sun, sap starts running up the trees, just under the bark, carrying nutrients to the branches. In appreciation of the gifts given us by trees, we hold a seder during which we celebrate this return of life, the promise of a fruitful year. It is a treat for the senses. We celebrate with typical Israeli fruits and nuts, juices and wines, which are exquisite and varied in color, taste, aroma and texture. The fruits have strong skins we must peel or break, stones we do not swallow, and there are those that we can eat in their entirety. The tastes, blessings, narratives, songs and the company we share at this seder table bring us joy as we anticipate the reawakening of nature in the spring.

The Tu B’Shevat seder program will begin at 11:00 am on Sunday, January 28 and last approximately 1-1/2 hours. All congregants are welcome and encouraged to participate. We will all share in the responsibility of supplying many of the delicious fruits and nuts. If you would like to help with the slicing and plating of fruits and nuts and getting the table ready for the seder, please contact Liz Jones at sagenbasil@aol.com or (860) 391-3561. More detailed information will be included in the Weekly E-mails.

Celebrate Purim!

Purim is Coming! And it’s going to be our biggest and best celebration ever! Don’t miss out!

Mark your calendars for Saturday February 24! The festivities will begin at 5pm!

This year we are combining everything you love about Purim into a one-night smorgasbord of fun for all ages! We will have our carnival, Purim spiel, music, megillah and of course lots of food and drink to keep the party going!

If you would like to be involved in helping with party planning or if you would like to participate in the spiel, please contact Tracy Kleinberg at tjkleinberg@gmail.com. Stay tuned for more information via the weekly email.
Looking in the rearview mirror, the AEC’s 2017-2018 season got off to a good start with the first Books & Bagels of the year, aptly named Books & Bagels & Brunch (and what a brunch it was!) to celebrate the book launch of *HOUSE OF PEACE AND JUSTICE: The First One Hundred Years of Congregation Beth Shalom Rodfe Zedek*. A record crowd showed up and many copies of the congregation’s very own history were sold — but more are still available. So anyone who missed the event should call the office and get a copy.

On December 17, still in the planning stage as of this writing, the next installment of Noshing Our Way through Jewish History, will be held: the social hall transformed into a great Medieval Hall where Rav Avraham will hold court, and medieval Jewish life in France, England and Germany will be recreated as authentically as possible (the GOOD parts only).

On January 3, at 7 pm, we’re beginning 2018 with an audio-visual presentation on the Jews of Egypt by a young scholar, Amanda Calecas, who has lived in Egypt and Albania as well as France, Spain and Venezuela. She will document for us the story of the dwindling, now miniscule, Jewish community in Egypt.

Later on in January, date still to be determined, we hope to have a screening of *The Women’s Balcony*, a highly rated Israeli film, described as a ‘rousing, good-hearted tale about women speaking truth to patriarchal power’ in a gender rift in a devout Orthodox community in Jerusalem following an accident during a bar mitzvah celebration.

We will be joining with the Social Action Committee to welcome the Dalatis, a Syrian refugee couple now living in New Haven, who will speak at our Shabbat Service on January 26.

Both committees are also planning on the showing of another film, *Joachim Prinz: I Shall Not Be Silent*, a documentary about the leading Berlin rabbi who fled Nazi Germany and then became an important ally with, and voice for, the Civil Rights Movement and Martin Luther King. We will share this film after the Second Saturday Service on January 13, appropriately enough the Shabbat that falls on this year’s MLK weekend.

Several Books & Bagels events are in the works, one featuring the latest book of our own David Hays, *Setting the Stage: What We Do, How We Do It, and Why*, the ultimate guide to the secrets of stagecraft magic. The second Books & Bagels events will introduce CBSRZ to Rachel Kadish and her novel, *The Weight of Ink*, which tells a fascinating tale that weaves together historical scholarship and detective work in the twenty-first century and the existence of a small but growing Jewish population in seventeenth-century Restoration England.

The Noshing series will extend into the spring with a look at the legacy of Jews living in Spain and Portugal as the Inquisition brought an abrupt end to the Golden Age of Spanish Jewry in the later 1400s. We hope to explore traditions and recipes handed down by those who fled the Iberian peninsula to settle in Asia and North Africa and southern Europe and traditions that survived among conversos down to the modern day. We will also sample recipes that have come down to us from an unexpected, but unimpeachably accurate source, the Inquisition itself.

Last, but hardly least, we look forward to another session with CBSRZ’s very own meteorologist and baker, Sam Kantrow, who will follow up on last year’s Bagels & Bagels Workshop by introducing us to the secrets of making the very best challah.
The Adult Education Committee Presents:

Visiting Scholar, Amanda Calecas, and her audio-visual presentation on The Jews of Egypt.

by Ellen Nodelman

One of my mother’s best friends came from Alexandria (not Virginia—Egypt). And one of my best friends was born in Cairo (not Illinois—Egypt) until her family was forced to leave during the regime of Abdul Nasser. There is a long history of Jews living in Egypt, from Biblical times right up into the modern era. But Jews in Egypt today?

Come to CBSRZ on Wed. evening, January 3 at 7 pm to learn about the Jewish community in Egypt and, yes, there are still Jews there. Estimates range from all of six to, maybe, twenty. We have the opportunity to find out all about the Egyptian Jewish Experience, past and present, when our visiting scholar, Amanda Calecas, comes to share her first hand knowledge with us, knowledge gleaned from not just traveling to but living in Egypt.

So start off 2018 with this look at the Jews of Egypt. As always, light refreshments will be served.
The main library has four new books, and the children's library has a new "young adult" novel. The four in the main library are grouped on the display stand and marked "New Books" (clever, huh?), along with some recent donations that the librarian has not yet reviewed. The novel is already in the hands of a reader, but it too will be placed in a "New Books" section of the children's shelf when it returns. Each book has a sign out card. There is a box for sign-out cards. It has a sign: "Sign-Out Box" (again clever). Your librarian has no convenient way to chase you for late returns, but please try to return your signed out book within three weeks.

The librarian is happy to receive suggestions for additional purchases.

1. **Groucho Marx, The Comedy of Existence** by Lee Siegel. This psychological biography of Groucho (Julius) Marx asserts that the characters he enacted in his films, in fact, were expressions of his own character (and Siegel makes the same argument regarding Chico and Harpo). In turn, Siegel traces that character to Groucho's childhood. Siegel comments on the Jewishness of Groucho's characters, who were, in fact, never explicitly Jewish nor ever spoke any Yiddish. Siegel's writing is easy to read, but the chapter breaks come at points conducive to a reader's deeper reflection about the cultural and personal questions of Groucho's life.

2. **Moses Mendelssohn, Sage of Modernity** by Shmuel Feiner (translated from Hebrew). This biography looks at Mendelssohn's narrow but acclaimed path through, on the one hand, Enlightenment Europe's first steps toward recognizing Jews as citizens and, on the other hand, the first steps of some rabbinical courts to accept the Enlightenment, and diametrically by other rabbinical courts to refute it. The author is an Israeli professor of European history. The reading is dense, almost academic. Mendelssohn's challenges, however, are to this day still only partly resolved. Feiner's description of the first generation of non-rabbinical intellects to set sail into that tempestuous sea gives the reader a historoscope for viewing some of the same storms of our own era.

NOTE: Both of these biographies are part of a collection of biographies published recently by Yale University Press. The collection is called, "Jewish Lives". Currently thirty-five biographies have been published, with additional volumes expected. The interested reader may learn more at HYPERLINK "http://www.jewishlives.org" www.jewishlives.org. All of the volumes are available for purchase from the publisher and on Amazon. Various local libraries have purchased many of the volumes (and the public libraries of the lower valley and shoreline towns are connected by an interlibrary loan service).

3. **The Whipping Man** by Matthew Lopez (playscript). Captain Caleb DeLeon returns to his home in Richmond immediately after the surrender at Appomattox. His entire family is gone, his house is severely damaged, and he has a gangrenous bullet wound in one of his legs. Two of his family's house slaves, Simon and John, are in
the house; of course, officially, they have become free. Captain DeLeon's experiences in war have led him to reject his religion, but DeLeon and his family taught their slaves Torah and prayers. Simon insists on having a seder. Caleb objects and explains, "It's because I was at Petersburg and He most decidedly was not." Simon replies, "War is not proof of God's absence. It's proof of His absence from men's hearts." The three men grapple, sometimes literally with each other, and throughout with the problems of violence, lies, faith, service, and servitude. One is crippled by injury and he and one of the former slaves are crippled by guilt and fear; the third man is afloat with a hope that we, all these years later, know is almost certainly a vain hope. The play ends with its conflicts hanging in the air of an unresolved moment, leaving the reader (or viewer) to assay the answers left unstated.

4. *The Great Shift, Encountering God In Biblical Times* by James Kugel. Kugel notes that, in ancient times, if we read Torah literally, some of our ancestors literally saw and heard God, and at Sinai the whole people saw and heard. Then some centuries hence, only prophets directly heard and saw. Then God did not come directly to people, but people reached out to God through prayer, blessings, and above all through Torah. In Torah, the word of God was always with us. Kugel notes that the rules of the Qumran community, some four centuries before the first collected writings of the post-temple rabbis, already require daily study of Torah. Looking at modern times, when we do not accept claims of direct observation of God and often doubt the value of the written law, Kugel sees yet another relationship; we can only connect to God when we push aside ourselves.

5. *Beyond Lucky* by Sarah Aronson (*Young Adult* novel) This is the story of a boy's U-12 travel soccer team's struggle to deal with the arrival of a girl who plays better than them. The story is told through the eyes and decisions of Ari, a Jewish boy who is immersed in the search for good luck and the avoidance of good luck. Although the author has not quite captured the way twelve year old children speak to each other, and her knowledge of soccer is shallow, the plot and the resolution of the boy-girl tension is realistic. Although there are bits of wisdom from Ari's rabbi sprinkled throughout the book, this is not a specifically Jewish book. At the time of this review, a boy of our community is reading it, and the librarian looks forward to his review.
Kivvun Connects

Our first Kivvun “Quest” is about to come to a close. From September through early December on Sunday mornings our young Kivvunites have been exploring the question “What makes a strong Jewish community?” Following a newly designed format, our students have been examining the impact of Prayer, Hebrew, Holidays and Values on the formation of Jewish community. Mornings start off with “Kehillah-T’fillah” (Community Prayer) which incorporates prayer service with discussions about praying alone vs. praying together. This is followed by Ivrit (Hebrew) where all students now have an individualized Hebrew “track” that meets them at their current skill level. They are paired with Madrichim as tutors. Through drill and games, our students advance their skill sets. Students then race through for the halls for “Chatiff” (a grab and go snack) and onward to Limmud (Judaica Study) where our Morim teach the content in ways that connect to our Quest question about community. After this period of study, students move again to their “Chug” (Club Projects) where they express their ideas through either Cooking, Legos, Storytelling, or Art. All assemble one last time at the end of the morning for “Siyyum” – (Ending Celebration) to recap the successes and challenges of the morning.

On Wednesdays, we continue with Snack, Kehillah-T’fillah, Ivrit and Limmud. The very special part about Wednesdays is that Limmud is spent with Rabbi Bellows. All ages gather in the conference room for “Holy Scrollers Jr.” Watching the room come to life with enthusiastic, wildly waving hands in the air is a sight to behold. The conversations yield incredible insight, imagination, and plenty to say on every verse in text discussed. In fact, in typical Holy Scrollers fashion, the group spent several weeks just on the first word of text, “b’reishit!”

Along the way, we’ve had remarkable discussions together. In studying Rosh Hashana, Tashlich, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, Simchat Torah, Shabbat, Chanukkah, B’reishit, B’tzelem Elohim (image of God), Teshuva (return), and G’vurah (strength), harvesting potatoes, and learning from our Israeli Emissaries, our students noted how our tradition brings people together who agree, disagree, cook together, eat together (a lot!), create together, do mitzvot together, and so much more.

Upon this reading, all will have gathered on Dec. 17 for our first Kivvun Quest #1 Gallery where parents and peers from each Chug will get to see and hear about the interpretations and understandings our students gained about the role of community in Jewish life. Through storytelling, artwork, lego construction, and yummy samples from cooking, we will get to know our students ideas about Jewish community and how connections get strengthened.

Last but not least, we have used Kivvun as our “lab” to investigate what works well and what we can do better to strengthen our own Jewish youth community. We will hear what our young people have to say about that and see which of their recommendations we can integrate into our program to make it even stronger. I look forward to sharing our discoveries in the next edition of Megillah. Stay tuned!

—Morah Belinda
The happy group unloaded sleeping bags and overnight bags from the cars, and began to spin tales of a weekend of fun, challenges, team building, good food... and a few surprises. It was the annual Camp Jewell retreat for 6th and 7th graders, led by Rabbi Bellows and chaperoned by Michele Adinolfi-Fishman. Stories of Sarah’s favorite goat, Alfred (later altered to Alfredo), the poor rooster the group called Forrest (because he got bullied and left out like Forrest Gump), and the big, fat pig, were recalled and brought renewed laughter. The animals were definitely one of the favorite parts of the weekend, along with archery and the Super Ninja Championship Battle. The crate climb, during which each kid balanced on a growing pile of milk crates as they soared to greater and greater heights, sounds like it was a highlight as well. Though several kids mentioned technology withdrawal as something they had to overcome, the hike to the mountaintop with a panoramic view, team-building games, late-night Apples to Apples rounds, and a Saturday evening of progressive desserts seems to have helped them forget, if temporarily, the world they left behind. As for surprises...well, let’s just say the fire alarm system was not prepared for the power of a CBSRZ havdalah! When asked to sum up the weekend in a word or phrase (unfortunately Sadie was not there at the time of this interview), this is what the Olim had to say:

Sarah: “Just Jew it.”
Bella: “Caffeine”
Orr: “Alarm clock”
Erin: “No civilization”
Leo: “Fat goats”
Michelle: “Great teamwork and fun”
Rabbi Bellows: “The best reason to be a rabbi”

If it doesn’t all make sense to you, you know who to ask for clarity, or let your imagination create it’s own picture of a middle school weekend in the Berkshires.
When we think of our community thriving, we think of many things. An inclusive spirit, an engaged congregation, thoughtful and meaningful services led by our wise and kind Rabbi and, perhaps most importantly, a dynamic and solid Jewish education.

Our Kivvun program’s sole purpose is to help our young people cultivate their self-awareness and confidence in their Jewish identity. We believe Jewish knowledge, tradition, responsibility and community will be a guide to their growing minds, bodies and spirits from now and in their futures. It is a testament to our Kivvun program that so many of our bar mitzvah and bat mitzvah children return to become Madrichim. Along with our wonderful educators, this group leads our young people along this Jewish journey.

As part of our values at CBSRZ, we make the commitment that no student at any learning level will ever be excluded due to financial adversity. We do this by offering scholarships through the Samuels Scholarship Fund, named in honor of Rita & Harold Samuels, the first female president of the Deep River Synagogue, and one of the founders of our religious school. We ask you that you consider making a gift to the Samuels Scholarship Fund by mailing a check or contacting our office. Please help a child with their Jewish education while helping our community continue to thrive and grow. Our young members truly are the future of this congregation.

Happy Birthday!
Yom Huledet Sameach!

January
Gloria Conley January 23
Morah Stu Baker January 22

February
Jack Conley February 7
Joe Mercier February 13
Kaitlyn Burzin February 22

Samuels Scholarship Fund
Kierstin Pupkowski

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Samuels Scholarship Fund
Kierstin Pupkowski
PICTURE GALLERY

Attendees at the 2017 URJ Biennial wine and dine. (From left) Sue Peck, David Zeleznik, Maxine Klein, Andy Schatz, Michael Price, Jo-Ann Price, Carol Lewitt and Brad Jubelirer.
BOOK LAUNCH

Adult Ed Committee member Deb Rutty stands before a photo display of early Jewish farmers.

Sandy Herzog, of the Adult Ed Committee, in front of vintage resort photos.

Author Ellen Nodelman reads excerpts from her book *House of Peace and Justice: The First One Hundred Years of Congregation Beth Shalom Rodfe Zedek* at the Book Launch October 29. Guests and speakers shared vivid stories of our synagogue’s history.

A living reminder of CBSRZ’s early chicken farmers greet people at door for Ellen Nodelman’s Book Launch.
Artists Rick Silberberg and Ashby Carlisle shared honors at the Main Street Gallery reception held on November 12.
Community/Action Group Proposes “One Congregation, One Book” Process

You may have heard of “One Town, One Book,” in which residents of a town all try to read and discuss the same book. We would now like to try that at CBSRZ.

This past fall, following a call for participants in the Whole Megillah, a group of eight congregants (seemingly from across the political spectrum) and Rabbi Bellow’s met to discuss what we might do to further the concept of “community” and tikkun olam (the Jewish concept of assisting God in repairing our world). We agreed the world needed repairing and a broad sense of dialogue and community had been challenged over the past year. But what if anything could be done? We decided to first examine whether we had common core values – as Jews, as Americans, as members of CBSRZ. How might we identify them? How might they aid tikkun olam?

At Rabbi Bellow’s suggestion, we all read Arthur Green’s book, Judaism’s Ten Best Ideas, and discussed some of the questions it raised about core (Jewish) values. We are recommending that all members of CBSRZ read Judaism’s Ten Best Ideas (only 113 pages long). We would then discuss (as a congregation and in the smaller committees/groups that form so much of CBSRZ life) how those ideas shape our common ideals and values, including tikkun olam.

Our goal is to start the process this winter and have consensus – including proposed synagogue-wide social justice projects – by the June 2018 CBSRZ annual meeting.

A book would be provided free to each family, with the cost covered by the Social Action Fund supervised by the Social Action Committee.

Green’s “ten best ideas” run the gamut, from religious to secular, from inward to outward, from individual to community. Chapters include:

Simchah – Joy – Happiness as a Religious Precept
Jews and African Americans Together – January 13 Event

The CBSRZ Social Action Committee, along with the Adult Education Committee, will host a program to honor and remember Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on Saturday, January 13, 2017 and the role that Jews have played in the civil rights movement – and might play going forward. The program will include a documentary and discussion with an African American historian.

After the 10:30 am Saturday Shabbat service, which will include civil rights themes, there will be a showing of the 50-minute film Joachim Prinz: I Shall Not Be Silent. This remarkable documentary film is about Rabbi Joachim Prinz, the leading rabbi in 1930’s Berlin, Germany, who immigrated to the United States and became one of Dr. King’s closest confidantes. Rabbi Prinz spoke just prior to Dr. King at the march on Washington at the Lincoln Memorial in 1963. Rabbi Prinz’ speech is most remembered for its contention that in the face of discrimination, “the most urgent, the most disgraceful, the most shameful and the most tragic problem is silence.”

Continued on page 18
Social Action Committee News  Continued from page 17

about Constance Baker Motley which may be viewed upon appointment by calling 860-526-5781.
A light lunch and refreshments will be served. This event is open to the public.

SYRIAN REFUGEES AT CBSRZ JANUARY 26
CBSRZ will host Haitham and Shiyam Dalati at and after Shabbat services on Friday, January 26. Services will begin at 7:30 pm. The public is invited to join us for services and the reception and discussion about Syria and refugees that will follow.

The Dalatis are grateful that our CBSRZ congregation would like to meet with them, and that they have had the friendship and support of Lary Bloom and Suzanne Levine, two members of CBSRZ. Lary submitted this report:

Haitham Dalati and his wife Shiyam owned a villa in Homs, which was destroyed in the siege by Syrian troops between 2011 and 2014. Prior to this time, Haitham worked as a lab technician in health clinics, mostly in Saudi Arabia. His career in labs spanned more than twenty years before he, Shiyam, and their daughter, son-in-law, and grandchildren fled to Lebanon. There, all eight family members applied for entry to the United States.

In February of 2017, in a departure from the Trump Administration.

Suzanne and I have introduced them to the local culture by taking them to museum exhibits, tailgating at a Yale game, restaurants that serve food they're familiar with, and some they were not (lobster, for example, at Lobster Landing), but mostly have shared meals with them (many times Shiyam has cooked for us her specialties, all delicious).

We introduced them to our children and grandchildren, and to our friends, who have lined up interviews for work. Haitham has also been hamstrung by lack of a driver's license. When he went to the DOT for his road test, it never even started because the official found that one of the electric windows in the car that Haitham had borrowed didn’t function properly.

For Suzanne and me, the experience of being “cultural companions” to them has been greatly rewarding and frustrating. We have learned a great deal from them even as they have learned from us. We know much more about Ramadan, real life in the Middle East,
the history of the Arab culture, and its traditions. We are of course deeply disappointed that we have not been able to deliver the bulk of what they need, even though that’s IRIS’s job, not ours. We can’t help but become passionately involved. It’s inevitable with all IRIS cultural companions.

We did this work in the first place because we felt helpless in the face of ignorant and obnoxious policies coming out of Washington. What could we do, after all? What we could do is try to help in some small way. Haitham and Shiyam are grateful, mostly for the psychological support we can supply, but of course we feel as if there’s much more to be done.

The fact that our congregation is interested in meeting them has moved them both.

**CONCERT FOOD SALES SUPPORTS DIAPER BANK AND KIDS’ RIGHTS**

The Social Action Committee has split the net proceeds it raised through food sales at the CBSRZ concert in June between Bare Necessities, a local diaper bank, and “Speak Up! The Legal Rights of Youth in Out of Home Care,” a program run by the Center for Children’s Advocacy that advocates for kids throughout Connecticut. The net amount raised from the sale of food at the concert was about $600.

Bare Necessities is a Clinton based organization that provides diapers for those struggling to make ends meet and advocates for changes in law and regulations. Day care providers require disposable diapers. The lack of diapers might preclude some adults from gainful employment or training programs. Yet SNAP (food stamps, a federal program) and WIC (the state welfare program for women, infants and children) do not permit those grant moneys to be used for diapers.

“Speak Up! The Legal Rights of Youth in Out of Home Care” is operated by The Center for Children’s Advocacy; CCA provides legal support and other programs for children throughout the state. The Speak Up Project has developed a curriculum that helps youth involved with Connecticut’s juvenile justice or child welfare systems to learn self-advocacy skills and speak up to secure the services and supports that are critical to their safety and success.

SAC wishes to thank the many CBSRZ members and friends who purchased food at the concert and made these donations possible.

**Welcoming Muslims from Berlin Mosque February 10 and 11**

On Saturday February 10, members of the mosque in Berlin Connecticut come to CBSRZ. A reception and Kiddush luncheon with some discussion will be held immediately following Shabbat services that morning. “This was originally scheduled last February, along with a visit the same weekend to the Berlin Mosque,” said Andy Schatz, chair of the Social Action Committee, which has arranged the visit along with the Adult Education Committee. “Unfortunately, the visit to CBSRZ was cancelled due to snow, although a large group from CBSRZ was able to go to the Mosque.” Please watch for details in the weekly email or contact Andy Schatz at 860-202-2690 or andy@andrewschatz.com.

And on Sunday February 11, youth from the Berlin Mosque will visit CBSRZ and Kivvun. Details will be provided to Kivvun parents by Belinda Brennan.

Please join us in welcoming our Muslim guests.

**Please Donate to Provide Warm Clothing for Hartford School Students**

For the past three years, we have sponsored a clothing drive for Parkville Community School. This school which currently has 535 students in Grades Pre-K through fifth grade, has 83% of its students from low income families. Parents struggle to keep food on the table. There is often not enough for warm winter coats.

The staff, administration and families have expressed their deep gratitude to CBSRZ members for their kindness in the past. We ask that you please remember the children of the Parkville Community school again this year. They are in need of jackets and coats - sizes 6 to 16 - which can be dropped off in the box on the left as you enter the school wing. Cash/check donations are also gratefully appreciated, please note “Parkville” in the memo of your check and send or drop off to the CBSRZ office.

In addition, we have also set up an Amazon.com website for this project. Please see the weekly email for a direct link for purchases or contact the CBSRZ office. You should be able to purchase a coat or jacket online and it will be sent directly to the school.

Thank you for your continued generosity, and for helping these children who are counting on us to help keep them warm this winter.

In appreciation,
Sandy Herzog
Social Action Committee
Sandherz2003@yahoo.com
Whole Megillah
Communications Survey Results for the JanFeb 2018

AND THE SURVEY SAID
Thank you to everyone who filled out the communications survey in September 2017, our first, and the communications committee found the information most valuable. Here are the highlights of the results from thirty-five respondents.

- The Whole Megillah, the weekly eNewsletter, and the website are utilized and helpful as sources for information.
- The majority of respondents read the Whole Megillah, 70% in print and 18% read it online on the CBSRZ website.
- Social media especially Facebook are being used as information sources.
- The heaviest engagement from the responses are on the website- calendar, events, services – and the eNewsletter and indicate usage based on schedules and happenings that directly affect them.

The communications committee’s next step is to take what we learned from this survey and develop a plan to improve engagement and outreach to our community.

Mavens

Thank you to everyone who filled yesterday, we had a very productive meeting. Clo has graciously offered her house for our next meeting on Thurs. Jan. 11th at 6:00. It will be a pot luck and you can bring your own beverage of choice. It was decided not to have a women’s seder this year but to start planning earlier for one next year. At the next meeting we plan to further discuss future meeting times and places, the possibility of showing films, of a secret seder, of a special meal where we invite our non-Jewish friends. We also talked about having smaller groups of interested people get together for things like planning an arts and crafts show, learning canasta, mah jongg or knitting. We will also discuss what the name of our group will be. Thanks for all your input and ideas. Hope to see you next month.

All of you who came to the meeting and those who couldn’t come but asked to be on the list are now receiving our email. Please let me know if you would like to be added to the Women’s Club email list.

Thanks, Linda Irigono@sbcglobal.net

Choir

Have you ever heard a snippet of a song that captured your heart for a moment as you walked by an open door, or have you ever heard some pleasing notes that wafted in on a soft breeze? Have you ever heard a melody you’d swear you’d never heard before but whose every note you knew and keenly felt as it resonated in that most peaceful part of your soul?

Music can hold you; it can comfort, refresh and restore your spirit. Liturgical music can do more than that. Despite its somewhat heavy-handed image and the sound of the word (sounds like surgical, doesn’t it?), the music we associate with prayer and worship can be as uplifting as a Monarch butterfly and as soothing as the embrace of a loved one. More than that, Jewish liturgical music connects us to everyone and everything that makes us who we are: keepers of the flame of hope, survivors of all that life (and death) can throw at us, positive thinkers and doers in a world often designed to defeat both.

If any of the above words entice you to want to learn more and to participate with like-minded individuals, please consider joining the CBSRZ choir. You will find people who laugh as much as they sing and whose bonds of friendship and love flow into every note and song we share with the congregation. Each choir member has his own voice and her own song. Amazingly, and with the gentlest, kindest and most incredibly capable and collaborative touch, Meg Gister, our choir director, weaves from our voices and experiences a musical tapestry to create an uplifting experience for all of us, on all sides of the bema.

Choir represents an opportunity to support, sometimes lead, and always be an active participant in healing the world through the emotional sinew of music that binds us all. Our weekly rehearsals represent a wonderful way to escape and vent from the pressures most of us feel, especially these days. When you’re singing and enjoying the camaraderie of fellow choir mates, it’s nearly impossible to feel down or discouraged by the outside world. Come and see for yourself. Feel the power that is in your soul. Share your voice and know the satisfaction of singing til your soul’s content. No audition. No test of musical background or the need to read music. All ages are welcome. If you can listen with your heart as well as your ears, and you enjoy rehearsing with friendly, seriously giggle-prone folks, come. Stop by most any Tuesday evening and see for yourself. All you’ll feel is better.

Sincerely, The CBSRZ Choir
Our Chesed Committee is here to help.
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<td>Office closed</td>
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<td>5:30pm Facilities Meeting</td>
<td>8:00am Morning Minyan</td>
<td>7:00pm Board of Directors</td>
<td>7:30pm Erev Shabbat Service</td>
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<td>6:30pm Communications Committee</td>
<td>4:15pm - 5:45pm Kadima (Gr 4-7)</td>
<td>7:00pm Religious Affairs Committee</td>
<td>7:30pm Erev Shabbat Service with Piano; followed by Social Action/Refugee program</td>
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<td>3:00pm SSKP Board meeting</td>
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<td>8:00am Morning Minyan</td>
<td>12:00pm Lunch and Learn</td>
<td>12:00pm Adult Ed. Jews of Egypt</td>
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<td>4:15pm - 5:45pm Kadima (Gr 4-7)</td>
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<td>6:00pm Mavens at Davis’ residence</td>
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<td>7:30pm Erev Shabbat Service in honor of Norman Hanenbaum</td>
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<td>9:00am - 10:15am Hatchala (Birth to 4 Years)</td>
<td>9:00am - 12:00pm Kadima (Gr K-7)</td>
<td>5:30pm Facilities Meeting 6:30pm Communications Committee</td>
<td>8:00am Morning Minyan 4:15pm - 5:45pm Kadima (Gr 4-7)</td>
<td>12:00pm Religious Affairs Committee</td>
<td>7:00pm 1st Friday Fun 7:30pm Erev Shabbat Service</td>
<td>9:00am Torah Study</td>
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<td>12:00pm - 1:00pm Gesher (Gr 8-9)</td>
<td>12:00pm - 1:00pm Makom (Gr 10)</td>
<td>8:00pm Adult B’not Mitzvah Class</td>
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<td>No Kivvun Winter Break</td>
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<td>Office closed</td>
<td>8:00 am Morning Minyan</td>
<td>7:00 pm Executive Committee</td>
<td>7:30pm Erev Shabbat Service with Piano</td>
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<td>9:00 pm Erev Shabbat Service with Piano</td>
<td>9:00 am Torah Study</td>
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<td>5:00 pm Purim celebration with Carnival and Purim Spiel</td>
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The Whole Megillah
may be viewed
in color on the web at
www.cbsrz.org

Many thanks to these recent Oneg sponsors:

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<tr>
<th>Corpuel Family</th>
<th>Barbara &amp; Eric Infeld</th>
<th>Barbara &amp; Stephen Mason</th>
<th>Johanna Schaefer and Stuart Baker and Mar-C Peraza Baker</th>
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<tr>
<td>Beth &amp; Chris Mercier</td>
<td>Ethan Goller &amp; Rona Malakoff</td>
<td>Maxine Klein and David Zeleznik</td>
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Mama Loshen  By Marilyn Kalet

A shmek un  A LEK
A lick and a promise

A Shvartz YAR
A Black year

Fun Yener Zayt
From the other side, In the rear

Farikt
Crazy, cracked, “off his rocker”

Farshloginer
“beat-up” darned, damned, blasted (one)

Nu?  Well? Growing impatience makes for nu-nu?
u is also used before a host of other questions,
like nu vos zogstu?  (well, what do you say?)