

Congregation for Humanistic Judaism

CHJ



News

Volume 43 Number 1

September 2010

President's Column

Greetings to you all.

Well, it's happened again—summer has flown by and we're about to begin an exciting new CHJ season. I'd like to welcome everyone back, and say how much I'm looking forward to seeing all of you at one of our opening events. As we all know, CHJ is a cooperative—all of our events and programs are planned and executed by our dedicated members. And while many of us have “taken the summer off,” several members have been working diligently behind the scenes to make sure our opening events (Havdalah at the beach, Sunday School & Open House, and High Holiday services and programs) run smoothly and successfully. I'd like to thank all of you who have invested your time over the summer to ensure that CHJ starts this new year with a bang.

And as always, I encourage each and every member to step up and get involved. Let's all do our share to help CHJ continue to be the most vibrant congregation that it can be!

Thanks, Dana

CHJ Annual Open House & 1st day of Sunday School

The CHJ Annual Open House Brunch and first day of Sunday School will be on Sunday, September 12th, beginning at 9:30 am.

Family, friends, and prospective members are welcome.

All High Holiday Services will be held at the Unitarian Church of Westport, and are free and open to the public.

2010 High Holidays Calendar

September 8 (Wednesday), 7:30 pm
Rosh Hashanah Evening Service

September 9 (Thursday)
Rosh Hashanah Day Programs
Family Service begins at 2:30 pm

September 17 (Friday), 7:30 pm
Kol Nidre Evening Service

September 18 (Saturday)
Yom Kippur Day Programs
Family Service begins at 2:30 pm
5:15 Memorial & Closing Service
Break-Fast follows

Upcoming Events!

Saturday, August 21, 10:00 am
Book Group

Saturday, August 21, 6:00 pm
Havdalah Service at Compo Beach

Friday, September 8, 7:30 pm
Rosh Hashanah Evening Service

Saturday, September 9, 2:30 - 5:00pm
Rosh Hashanah Day Program

Sunday, September 12, 9:30 am
Open House Brunch &
1st day of Sunday School

Friday, September 17, 7:30 pm
Yom Kippur Evening Service

Saturday, September 18, 2:30 - 8:30 pm
Yom Kippur Day Program

Saturday, September 25, 6:30 pm
Adult Sukkot at the Moons'

Sunday, September 26, 9:30 am
Sunday School & Adult Ed
Sukkot Celebration

Friday, October 1, 7:30 pm
Simchat Torah with Susan Boyar

Sunday, October 3, 9:30 am
Sunday School & Adult Ed

Friday, October 15, 7:30 pm
Jewish Guilt, Human Guilt, Your Guilt

Sunday, October 17, 9:30 am
Sunday School & Adult Ed

Sunday, October 24, 9:30 am
Sunday School & Adult Ed

Sunday, October 24, 3:00 pm
Diary of Anne Frank

Sunday, November 7, 9:30 am
Sunday School & Adult Ed

Sunday, November 21, 9:30 am
Sunday School & Adult Ed

Sunday, December 5, 9:30 am
Sunday School & Adult Ed
Annual Fair Trade Gift Bazaar

Friday, December 10, 6:00 pm
Human Rights Shabbat

**CHJ Board of Directors
& Committee Chairs**

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 Gert Albaum, Ellen Luntz
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 High Holiday Services:
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 Fran Wilder
 Break-fast: Ellie Shafer
 Life Cycle & Tributes:
 Gert Albaum
 Library: Donna Soucy
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 Rap Group: Suzanne Fried-
 man
 Phone Squad: Lynne Leib-
 owitz
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Happy Birthday to Dawn Kornfeld (July), Gert Albaum (August), and Ellie Levin, Diane Keefe, and Matthew Jacobson (September)

Happy Anniversary to Gail & Robb Sauerstrow and Diane Keefe and John Levin.

Best wishes to Paula Reens who is recovering at home from a serious illness. And to Mike Hill who is recovering from pancreatitis and subsequent gall bladder surgery.

Condolences to Sheryl Baumann and family on the loss of her father.

Condolences to the Ginsberg family; Bob passed away at home on Monday, August 16th. A memorial service will be held on Sunday, September 12th, at 1 pm, at the Norwalk Inn, 99 East Avenue, Norwalk, (800) 303-0808.

CHJ Book Group meets all year long. One need not be a regular. Please drop in.

The group will meet on September 25th at 10 am at Joan Shaw's to discuss *Wolf Hall*, a novel by Hilary Mantel.

The book for October is *The Bastard of Istanbul* by Elif Shafak. The group will be hosted by Ruth Windsor on October 16th at 10 am.

A Person of Interest, a novel by Susan Choi, is the group's choice for November. The group will meet on November 20th at 10 am at Libby Miller's.

We will end the calendar year on December 18th with a short story to be chosen by Susan Boyar.

This CHJ group is open to all members. Interested prospective members please call Membership Chair Michelle Tomarkin at 203-259-0621 or email her at tomarkin@optonline.net.

Joan Shaw
 Book Group Coordinator
JSmsw@optonline.net 203-849-8978

Sunday School News

Sunday School classes are held at the Bedford Middle School in Westport, beginning at 9:30 am.



We are looking forward to another fantastic year of Sunday School!

The core of our successful program is our teachers. For the first time in recent history, almost all of our teachers are CHJ-affiliated. Rachel Rockwell, mother of G and an active Sunday School parent, joins us this year as the Kesev 2/3 class teacher. Karen Berman will move up with daughter Jessica to teach the Pre-Mitzvah 4/5 class. Donna Soucy (a former CHJ Sunday School director) and George Rockmore (former CHJ president) return to co-teach the Mitzvah 7/8 class. In the Zahav K/1 class, Taffy Koenig will continue introducing our youngest students to Humanistic Judaism in her uniquely warm and responsive way. Laura Snow will continue as our Hebrew teacher. Laura may hold the record for most children attending CHJ's Sunday School! Three of her daughters have graduated so far, and son Bradley is currently enrolled. We send out a big Thank You to all our teachers for their commitment to our school.

We are pleased to announce that Adam Feder will return as guest music teacher for 10 Sunday School sessions this year, thanks to the generosity of one of our families. If you have not had an opportunity to hear Adam in action, feel free to stop by the Sunday School pod at 9:30 when school is in session. The children's voices combined with Adam's make a beautiful sound. For those of you who love our own home-grown CHJ Sunday School music, we will continue to teach and sing holiday and folk songs in keeping with our humanistic Jewish traditions. Although officially "retired," Jenny Ginsberg has volunteered to return this year to teach a few music sessions and also coordinate programming for the Hanukkah party and Model Seder!

Sunday School News, cont'd.

The beginning of our school year will be busy with Sukkot at the Moons' home on September 26th (including a stop at a local farm beforehand to pick our own produce) and Mitzvah Day on October 24th. We plan to once again make brown bag lunches for a local shelter. This will be a joint Sunday School & Social Action Committee activity. All are welcome to participate and we encourage you to contribute food as this is a CHJ activity and not funded by The Jewish Federation. Details about what we need will be in the October newsletter..

Please add all the Sunday School dates to your calendar now! **See you on September 12th, our first day of Sunday School!**

The Admin Committee

2010-2011 Sunday School Calendar

9/26 Sukkot Celebration	2/6
10/3	2/13
10/17	3/6 ***
10/24 (Mitzvah Day)	3/20 Purim Party
11/7	3/27 (snow make-up day)
11/21	4/3
12/5 (Fair Trade Gift Bazaar)	4/10 Model Seder
12/12 (Hanukkah Party)	5/1
1/9	5/15 (Israeli Fair)
1/23	5/22 Sunday School Graduation

*** There will also be Sunday School on 3/13

Programming & Adult Ed News

Saturday, September 25th, 6:30 pm Adult Sukkot! And Taegun's cooking!

An irresistible combination. AND Taegun Moon has agreed to share his Korean/Jewish recipes and skills with anyone who wants to come early to help him cook. We'll have a chance to help build the Sukkah for the Sunday School celebration the next day, and we'll talk about the origins and spirit of this harvest holiday. We'll also contribute fall dishes to the menu and tell tales of our gardening history. Last but not least, in keeping with ancient traditions, we'll bring parts of our own harvests for the food-banks.

Please RSVP to Taegun Moon and Rachel Dreyfus, Rachel.dreyfus@yahoo.com, 203-254-1298. Watch for more details on the list server.

October 1st, 7:30 pm Simchat Torah with Susan Boyar

"The books I never got to finish."

October 15th, 7:30 pm

"Jewish Guilt, Human Guilt, Your Guilt"

Sunday, October 24th, 3:00 pm

"The Diary of Anne Frank" will be performed at the Westport Country Playhouse this fall. We have a great opportunity to get discounted tickets and also participate in a discussion after the show.

This specially discounted matinee performance will be followed by a discussion for the whole family exploring the fascinating history of how Jewish traditions, practices and artifacts were preserved during the Holocaust. There will also be a pre-show reception of light refreshments in the lobby. On this day all student tickets are discounted (18 yrs and younger) to \$15.00.

PRICE: \$15 students, \$35 adults, all seats (this is discounted from \$41-\$49)

Please let Beth Ulman know ASAP if you are interested in attending the performance, and how many students and adults, so we can reserve seats. (FYI, we do have Sunday School in the morning.) Please email back to ulmans@alumni.princeton.edu.

Adult Ed News

Adult Ed will begin on Sunday, October 3rd, with coffee and bagels at 9:30 am and program at 10 am.

Adult Ed for October 3rd will be a 10:00 am slide show presentation by Dave Shafer about polio vaccine pioneer Jonas Salk, CHJ and SHJ Humanist of the Year. Nobel Prize winner Salk's colorful career had both scientific and personal drama (his second wife was Picasso's former mistress). Come for an entertaining and informative morning.

5771 High Holiday Schedule

Wednesday, September 8th 7:30 pm Doors open 7:00 to the public

Evening service --led by Marcia Kosstrin

Speaker Alan Katz Ph.D. "Humanism and the High Holidays: Still Guilty After All These Years"

Thursday, September 9th, 2:30 - 5:00 pm

2:30-3:15 Family Service

led by Theodora Benezra and Sam Bednarski

(all children welcome)

3:30-5:00 Workshops

(supervised activities for children)



Workshop 1: The Journey to Humanistic Judaism: Many come to Humanistic Judaism from traditional Jewish homes, some are raised in it, and some come from other religious backgrounds. Whatever the origins of the choice to become a Humanistic Jew, the decision involves extensive personal exploration and self evaluation. Come hear some of our members talk about their individual journeys. Panel: Ellie Shafer, Abby Ulman, John Franklin, Donna Soucy, and Gail Ostrow.

Workshop 2: Letting Ourselves off the Hook: On Kol Nidre, we are released from vows and promises made the previous year. We will learn the origins of this liturgy and discuss its relevance to Humanistic Jews today. Led by Saul Haffner and Susan Boyar

Friday, September 17th, 7:30 pm Doors open 7:00 to the public

Kol Nidre Evening Service led by Marcia Kosstrin. Speaker David Schmidt, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Business Ethics at Fairfield University, "Doing Good but Feeling Bad: Responsibility and Guilt."

Saturday, September 18th, 2:30 until finished

2:30-3:15 Family Service led by Lucy Katz and Beth Ulman

(all children welcome)

3:15-3:45 Tashlich, led by Gloria Moldow

4:00-5:10 "An Ethics Workshop: Making Decisions We Can Live With," led by David Schmidt, Ph.D.

(supervised activities for children)

5:15 Memorial and Concluding Service, led by Gloria Moldow

(supervised activities for children continue)

6:15 (time approximate) Break-Fast

Please note our new venue!
All High Holiday Services will be held at
the Unitarian Church of Westport 10 Lyons Plains Road



Social Action News: Living Our Values!

Fighting Hunger Locally and Globally!

As much as it makes us feel good to fill bags with food and bring them to CHJ events, there is a much more efficient way to fight hunger and make your dollars go farther. Please donate directly online to the CT Food Bank at <http://www.ctfoodbank.org/financial.php> or you may write a check and mail it to the Connecticut Food Bank, P.O. Box 8686, New Haven, CT 06531. Be sure to write CHJ on the check somewhere so they can keep track of what we have donated.

Clothing Drive

We are not collecting coats and clothing, but if you have gently used clean clothing to donate, please consider bringing it to the following locations:

Woodfield Family Services Community Closet at 475 Clinton Avenue, Bridgeport, (888) 616-4673

Christian Community Action (CCA) at 98 South Main Street Norwalk, (203) 899-2485

Gillespie Center at 45 Jesup Road, Westport, 203) 226-1191

Operation Hope of Fairfield at 50 Nichols Street, Fairfield, (203) 254-2935

If you know of any other suitable places, please let us know and we will list them in the next newsletter.

If you need any additional information, please contact Elsa Cantor or Gail Ostrow, or anyone else on the Social Action Committee.

Teen Tzedakah Group

The newly formed **Teen Tzedakah Group** was to meet for the first time at the Westport Library on August 25th and prepare 24 backpacks for children in kindergarten to third grade who come to the Mercy Learning Center in Bridgeport with their moms.

The group will also be participating in other activities throughout the year, such as Mitzvah Day on Sunday, October 24th and the Fair Trade Bazaar on Sunday, December 5th. Contact Laura Snow if you want to participate, contribute, or just come and hang out and help—this means adults too!

Mark Your Calendar!

October 24th, 10 am, we will reprise our Mitzvah Day sandwich making extravaganza with our Sunday School children, Teen Tzedakah group, and Adult Ed attendees. This will be self-funded, meaning that we need food and money contributions to make 100 or so lunches. Bread, cheese, cream cheese, jelly or preserves, apples, cookies and/or brownies, brown lunch bags, and napkins are all needed. Also, people who will write notes and decorate the lunch bags. We will deliver to a local shelter. Come join the fun and do a mitzvah.

Social Action News, cont'd.

Books-for-Zim

Collection at High Holidays services

- School supplies: scissors, rulers, calculators, pencils, erasers, other light-weight items
- New and gently used books
- Balls (soccer, basketball, volleyball)
- Cash donations always welcome (make check out to CHJ, mark BFZ in memo)



Mapakomhere Secondary School students with David, Sharon & Relly Coleman

Sweeten Someone's Life

To cover Books-for-Zim costs, we will again sell local, organic, raw, wildflower honey
\$10 per 8 oz jar
Let me know how many jars you would like.
Shanna Tova,
Relly 203-226-8739



Jewish Community News & Programs

JEWISH FAMILY SERVICE OF WESTPORT, WESTON, WILTON, NORWALK PROGRAMS

JEWISH FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION Jewish Family Service is currently preparing programming for the fall. Watch for upcoming announcements, check website at www.ctjfs.org or contact Laurel Schwartz, Ph.D. at 921-4161 X214 or LSchwartz@ctjfs.org.

BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP – FRIDAYS 10:30 -11:30 AM. At the Stamford JFS office, 733 Summer Street, 6th Floor. Open to those coping with the loss of a loved one. For more information and to register, contact Eve Moskowitz at 454-4992 ext. 122 or email emoskowitz@ctjfs.org.

SENIORS2WORK. Employers in lower Fairfield County who are looking to hire dedicated, skilled 50+ year old workers can list full and part-time opportunities. Jobs may be permanent, temporary, or for a specific project. JFS pre-screens candidates, matches them to appropriate openings, and follows-up. Free of charge. For more information, employers and candidates should contact Ilene K. Locker (iklocker@ctjfs.org) or Jodi Maxner (jmaxner@ctjfs.org) at 454-4992 or visit www.seniors2work.org.

BOOT CAMP COLLEGE READINESS Summer program designed for college bound teens to prepare for the college planning process. Four sessions during the week of July 12th, August 16th and August 23rd will be held at Jewish Family Service, 733 Summer Street, 6th Floor in Stamford. Small groups will deal with general information and specific assessments for each attendee. For fee, schedule and more information, contact Claire Friedlander, JFS College Consultant at 921-4161 X109 or email at cdfriedlan@aol.com.

VOLUNTEERS PROVIDE PET CARE FOR THE ELDERLY- Know someone who is having difficulty taking care of their pet? Call Gilda Simpkin, Manager of Volunteer Programs, 454-4992, ext. 124 or email gsimpkin@ctjfs.org

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED – “DO A MITZVAH”- ON-GOING. Volunteers are needed for various activities such as visiting the infirmed, driving to events or appointments, secretarial work and just companionship. Project ideas and suggestions for other mitzvah recipient projects are welcomed. Call Gilda Simpkin, Manager of Volunteer Programs, at 454-4992, ext. 124 or email gsimpkin@ctjfs.org

TZEDAKAH BASKETS: Bring Tzedakah to every Simcha by adding beautifully decorated baskets for the Bima, tables or guests for B’nai Mitzvoth and other special occasions. Donations are tax deductible to the extent possible and support JFS Programs. Call Gilda Simpkin at JFS 203-454-4992, ext. 124 or email gsimpkin@ctjfs.org for information.

B’NAI MITZVAH STUDENTS MITZVAH BRIGADE. Identifies opportunities for teens to engage in meaningful community service. Call Gilda Simpkin, Manager of Volunteer Programs at 454-4992, ext 124 or gsimpkin@ctjfs.org for information and an application.

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**Congregation for Humanistic Judaism
Of Fairfield County**

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www.humanisticjews.org



**May the new year bring you and your loved ones the sweetness of having
enough of everything you need.**