

Or Zarua in the News: BRANDING A SHUL

By Martha Mendelsohn

The following article by Congregant Martha Mendelsohn appeared in the February 2 issue of The Jewish Week (www.thejewish-week.com) and is reprinted here with the author's permission.

Macintosh has its apple. CBS has its eye. Nike has its swoosh.

And now, Congregation Or Zarua on the Upper East Side is sporting its own striking logo: the letters “aleph” and “zayin,” connected by a royal-blue band sprinkled with abstract stars—a design that conveys the meaning of the Conservative shul’s name, “Light is Sown for the Righteous,” and has little in common with the scrolls-and-tablets school of synagogue graphics.

Last week, to usher in OZ’s 18th anniversary, congregants gathered in the social hall for the opening of “In the Beginning: Transforming Emptiness,” an exhibition of digital abstract serigraphs based on the Creation, by Rudi Wolff, the artist who designed the logo.

“I particularly appreciate the many rabbinic commentaries that have been written about that magical first word of the Bible, Bereshit,” said Wolff, who has had shows at St. Peter’s Church at Citicorp Center, and at the Westbeth and Caelum galleries in Chelsea.

If, as Wolff suggests, it’s unusual for a shul to have a logo, it’s even more unusual for its social hall to look like a Chelsea art gallery.

“That was always my vision—to have a room that would serve a variety of purposes, and would be a place where you could hang creative artwork, and which would stimulate creative artwork,” said Rabbi Harlan Wechsler, OZ’s spiritual leader, after the opening.

With neutral walls that provide an optimal background for paintings and photographs, OZ’s 50-foot social hall doubles as an informal art gallery, and reflects the elegant, minimalist aesthetic of the shul’s sanctuary and its understated building on 82nd Street between Park and Lexington.

Wolff points to the ancient connections between art and Judaism. “Biblically, the construction and decoration of the Temple was given much play,” he said.

“Perhaps it’s time to embrace the arts as an integral part of the synagogue.”

Ever since the building opened five years ago with an exhibit of photographs of synagogue life around the world by photographer and OZ member Zion Ozeri, kiddush-goers have savored art with a Jewish theme (by members, or others with a connection to the congregation), along with the kichel.

Was it less than humble to compare the creation of a synagogue to the momentous events at the beginning of Genesis?

Maybe, but the metaphor was irresistible. Across from Wolff’s works, a display of photographs and articles chronicling OZ’s beginnings included a mock-up of the logo. *Continued on page 4*

ROOFTOP PICNIC, ANNUAL MEETING AND YOM YERUSHALAYIM

Tuesday, May 15 • 7:15 p.m. Picnic • 8:15 p.m. Meeting

Please join us at Congregation Or Zarua’s 18th Annual Meeting on Tuesday, May 15 at 8:15 p.m. in the sanctuary. An important agenda item will be the election of new officers and Board of Trustees members.

The meeting will be preceded by a rooftop picnic dinner at 7:15 p.m. Congregants are invited to the dinner whether or not they attend the Annual Meeting.

May 15 is also erev Yom Yerushalayim, which this year marks the 40th anniversary of the liberation of Jerusalem. OZ will honor the occasion with a program of music and reminiscences in the sanctuary following the Annual Meeting.

Reservations for dinner are essential. Please use the OZ website or call the synagogue office at 212-452-2310 (extension 39) to reserve a seat.

ק"ק אור זרוע
CONGREGATION
**OR
ZARUA**

A CONSERVATIVE SYNAGOGUE
FOUNDED 1989

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If you would like to serve on a synagogue committee, please contact the office for the committee chair's email address.

Talent Show Proceeds Delivered to Sderot Children

By Ilana Burgess

On a cold, crisp, beautiful day I drove to Sderot to meet teachers and students at Beit Sefer Gil, the Gil School. Sderot is the city closest to Gaza. It is continually

barraged with Kassam rockets. The people of Sderot have only ten seconds to run and take cover from the rockets once the alarm is sounded. How far do you think you can get in ten seconds?

Amazingly, open fields are filled with wildflowers in the south of Israel during this beautiful season. The orange groves boast delicious ripening fruit. In most Israeli cities on a day like this—after days of rain—the streets are filled with people. But not in Sderot. The city appears abandoned. There was not a soul on the road to direct us to Beit Sefer Gil.

Using a map, we arrived at the school. It was recess, so we heard the sound of music and the laughter of children. It is clear that the children are fearful, but they continue living their lives. Each one of them knows someone who has been injured or even killed. Just two days prior to our arrival, two children were injured right near the school fence. I was genuinely afraid to visit the school because of that recent tragedy, but the students and teachers welcomed me.

I delivered the school supplies and the funds we raised from our talent show. They were glad to accept the gifts, but they were even more pleased to learn that people are thinking of them and that the world has not forgotten them.



Sderot students, in the shelter for safety, accepted our gifts of school supplies and funds from our talent show.

On our way home, we were able to see Gaza City and to hear the fighting between the terrorist groups. I couldn't stop crying, thinking about the children who have ten seconds

from the sounding of the alarm to take cover from the Kassam rockets. Ten seconds to think about what will happen if they don't make it to safety next time.

Each time I go to Israel, I will visit the children of Sderot and Or Shalom to deliver our gifts. This is a most important mitzvah. We will continue to collect school supplies and tzedakah for these Israeli children.

Hebrew School Events

MARCH 2007

Fri 9	Friday Night Dinner (Grades 4-6, Middle School and High School)
Sat 17	Shabbat Class, 10:00 a.m.
Mon 19	Cooking at BJ (High School)
Tues 20	Pesah Workshop
Wed 21	Pesah Workshop
Thu 22	Matzah Factory
Mon 26	Spring Vacation (no classes)

APRIL 2007

Wed 11	School resumes
Fri 13	Friday Night Dinner (Grades 1-3)
Mon 16	Cooking at BJ (High School)
Sat 28	Shabbat Class, 10:00 a.m.

PESAH: *This is the Bread of Now*

By Ron Meyers

World cuisines have always taken advantage of food's tendency to rot. Wine, cheese, and even bread are foods that come into being only when their raw ingredients are overtaken by microbes in a careful balance between freshness and spoilage.

It is exactly this decomposition that we rid from our foods, our homes and our lives at Pesah. The many categories of foods that we avoid are all those that have a tendency to ferment. We separate ourselves for this week of the year from things that are altered by age and experience. The egg on the seder plate reminds us that this is the season of absolute newness—the emergence of fresh young life in the spring. Even the dough for the matzah we eat can be no more than eighteen minutes old when it is placed in the oven to bake. It is the bread of affliction, but it is also the bread of freshness and immediacy, the bread of now.

Eating foods that have no history is a remarkable embodiment of the holiday's themes. Pesah celebrates the Exodus from Egypt, when we were absolutely new. We were commanded to leave nothing behind from the last meal in Egypt (Ex. 12:10), and as in eating, so in life—our ancestors emerged from a long and burdened history and left it all behind as they emerged into a radically different present. As with the matzah, the focus on now is mixed with an experience of affliction. It is extremely difficult to live without a sense of one's history, and it took no time at all before the Israelites pined for their past in Egypt rather than taking up the hard task of building a future. We have the benefit now of looking back to the Exodus as the fountainhead of our history. But the culinary strictures of Pesah allow us to reexperience the stark and liberating challenges of the new.

OZ GOES WIRELESS

Or Zarua has installed a wireless network—Internet access is now available throughout the synagogue building. Bring your laptop and try it out! The OZ library is a relaxing place to spend some time or do some work during the day.

OZY SERVICES

Each Shabbat, we have three different grade-level services:

Infant through Kindergarten

11:00 a.m. to noon

Alef Bet Corner

Grades 1 to 3

10:00 a.m. to noon

Junior Congregation

Grades 4 to 6

10:00 a.m. to noon

Each month during the school year, we have a special Hebrew School Shabbat Class, which all Hebrew School students in the third through sixth grades are expected to attend. Parents and students from other schools are welcome as well.

The next Hebrew School Shabbat Classes will take place on March 17 and April 28.

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OZ WELCOMES NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR VICKY STEIN



Or Zarua is pleased to announce that Vicky Stein has assumed the position of Executive Director as of January 1. Vicky brings us many years of administrative

experience from her service at educational and Jewish communal organizations. She has been an enthusiastic member of our Congregation since she relocated to New York from Seattle four years ago to be near her daughters, Shira and Eliana.

Vicky is an accomplished textile artist. She specializes in Judaica—look for her in a beautiful handmade tallit at services.

Welcome Vicky!

An Evening on Shiva Etiquette

By Vera Silver and Gerry Solomon

"I feel awkward making a shiva call at the home of a mourner I don't know. What should I do?"

"What—and how much—should I say?"

"I've made shiva calls, and sometimes it seemed as though a party was going on. Isn't that inappropriate?"

These are some of the questions raised at the Or Zarua Hevra Kadisha's discussion of shiva etiquette last December.

Here are the answers, in brief: (1) If you don't really know the mourner, then consider yourself a representative of the Hevra Kadisha. (2) A simple I'm sorry is sufficient. Your shiva visit is itself a gesture of sympathy. (3) Yes, partying is inappropriate. Shiva is a time for grieving and comforting, not celebration.

Rabbi Wechsler noted that the observance of shiva is not mentioned in the Talmud. From a rabbinic point of view, he explained that the shiva period—in addition to bringing comfort—limits a mourner's tendency toward self-inflicted harm

and emphasizes the presence of God.

"Bring along some seychl (wisdom) when you make a shiva call," the Rabbi added.

Dr. Sam Klagsbrun discussed the psychological aspects of making a shiva call. He pointed out that visitors should be acquainted with the family situation and the circumstances surrounding the loss. He advised that we truly listen to a mourner and be prepared to hear many different reactions to the death of a loved one. He also discussed the awkwardness most of us feel when entering or leaving a house of mourning.

Herb Shapiro spoke from the perspective of someone who frequently leads shiva minyanim. He stressed the importance of this mitzvah. Lorraine Shapiro, who lost two brothers during the past few years, spoke from the perspective of a recent mourner. She expressed the need for shiva to be a time of mourning and remembrance and described how uncomfortable she's felt when the atmosphere of a shiva seems more like that of a social gathering.

WWW.ORZARUA.ORG

Use our award-winning website to:

- View calendar and service times
- Register for meals and events
- Make donations online
- Sign up for morning minyan
- Learn about educational programs

Branding a Shul

Continued from page 1

In the early '90s, the fledgling synagogue, which was then holding services in a classroom at the 92nd Street Y, decided that elegant stationery, with more than just its name and address at the top, would lend it gravitas.

Dr. Samuel Klagsbrun, a founder of OZ, recommended Wolff, who had created the design for four W's in different directions for Four Winds Hospitals, the upstate psychiatric institution [Klagsbrun] directs.

At last week's opening, Wolff showed slides of the OZ logo's earlier incarnations. Discarding a first attempt as "too corporate" and a second as "too static," he rearranged OZ's initials vertically and linked them with a simple brushstroke.

The characters themselves were Ben Shahn's "heroic, monumental" Hebrew letters. Wolff had worked with the late artist on El Al ads in the '60s.

Simplicity is one of the hallmarks of a good logo, he said, enabling it to "stay fresh."

Author's note: What was not mentioned in The Jewish Week, but can now be revealed here (for those who were not on hand to see the artist's slides at the opening) are Wolff's conceptions for an even greater exposure of our logo—as a sculpture on a Park Avenue island, or a replacement for the Statue of Liberty's torch! The article also did not mention that the exhibition was mounted by our resident curator and art historian, Bobbi Collier, with the assistance of her exhibitions committee.

SPRING ADULT EDUCATION COURSE

Between Pesah and Shavuot: April 8, 15, 22 and 29

Congregant Marc Ashley will offer his annual spring course exploring pivotal issues in classical Jewish thought. Classes will meet on four Sunday mornings in April, between Pesah and Shavuot.

The course, "Torah and Knowledge: Should We Accept the Truth from Whoever Says It?," will explore the range of sources Jewish thinkers have traditionally relied upon to shape their views concerning God, history, and even Jewish law.

How broadly should we construe the scope and self-sufficiency of "Torah"? In the pursuit of truth and religious faith, how extensively should we consult gentile wisdom and secular disciplines? Through these questions, the course will focus on how Judaism has interacted and grappled with the outside world while struggling to preserve its own integrity and distinctiveness.

Classes will be held in the synagogue library at 10 a.m. on April 8, 15, 22 and 29. All Congregants are welcome, and no prior knowledge is required.

Join us for a stimulating historical survey and discussion of these crucial issues in Jewish thought. To register, please call the synagogue office at 212-452-2310 (extension 39) or use the OZ website.

HESED COMMITTEE EVENTS

HESED IS THE EXPRESSION OF LOVING-KINDNESS.

Pirkei Avot says that gemilut chasadim is one of the three pillars on which the world stands and in which it is incumbent upon every Jew to participate. The Or Zarua Hessed Committee promotes hesed through various projects in the Or Zarua and local communities and through projects that provide for needs in Israel and around the world. *Please remember to donate generously to the Hessed Fund so we can continue and expand our programs.*

HELP DECORATE THE NEWLY RENOVATED NCS RESIDENCE AT EAST 81ST STREET.

Clean out that overstuffed closet! Do you have any framed prints, posters or art in good condition for donation to the Neighborhood Coalition for Shelter Residence? They have seven floors of freshly painted, blank-walled hallways and client rooms to decorate. Keep an eye out for flyers and announcements regarding the exact dates.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR ONGOING PROGRAMS:

Monday Night Pizza Delivery for NCS. Our regular Monday Night Pizza Delivery to the Neighborhood Coalition for Shelter Residence at East 81st Street has begun, now that the facility has undergone nearly three years of renovation. If you can commit to one hour on one Monday evening per month, please participate by being a server. Enjoy rewarding interactions with the residents while doing a wonderful mitzvah! Servers must attend an orientation and tour of the residence run by NCS before they commence service. To volunteer, contact Richard Stadin (212-879-0448; stadin1@aol.com).

Computer Roundup. Help disadvantaged adults in our neighborhood and recycle your equipment by donating unwanted laptops and printers that are less than five years old. The Neighborhood Coalition for Shelter welcomes the

donations for its formerly homeless clients who are now in permanent housing. Twenty computers have been donated so far! For more information, contact Richard Stadin (212-879-0448; Stadin1@aol.com). OZ volunteer "techie" Noah Eisenbruch will help arrange delivery, delete your data, and install the computers for NCS clients.

Donation Deliveries. The Neighborhood Coalition for Shelter needs volunteers to pick up donations and transport supplies to volunteer events in various locations in Manhattan. Volunteer drivers are notified in advance, and shifts are based on volunteers' availability. Willingness to carry boxes is a plus, but is not required. This is a great opportunity for people who have very little free time but who want to volunteer. For details, contact Millicent Cavanaugh, Director of Volunteer Services (212-861-0704, option 1, extension 407; mcavanaugh@ncsinc.org).

ILANA BURGESS TO BE HONORED

Our own Ilana Burgess will be honored on Sunday, April 29 at a Jewish Theological Seminary reception marking the completion of a Leadership Institute for School Principals.

Ilana has dedicated her entire career to Hebrew education. She came to OZ in 2003 after working at Solomon Schechter High School in Manhattan. Our Hebrew School has grown and developed under her guidance—Shabbat dinners, student participation in Shabbat services, and overnights in the Sukkah are among her innovations.

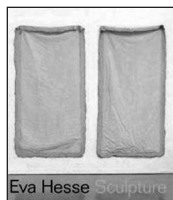
Another mazal tov will soon be in order: Ilana's son, Nathan, his wife Dena, and their son Noah, who live in Manhattan, eagerly await the arrival of Noah's baby brother in April.



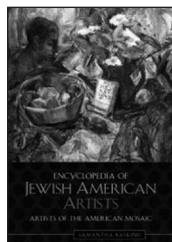
Israeli Night at Ronald McDonald House. Folk dancer Danny Pollack greets one of the Ronald McDonald House residents at Or Zarua's Sixth Annual Israeli Night event. Volunteers from OZ sang and played Hebrew and American folk tunes, served a scrumptious Israeli buffet, and watched the incredibly talented Danny Pollack mesmerize patients and their families with Israeli folk dances and interactive teaching. Many thanks to Danny, and to Crumbs Bakery, which donated dozens of cupcakes for the event. Please remember to support our donors! And thanks also to all the volunteers who year after year make this a fabulous and festive event, bringing joy and friendship to the young residents and their families during their stay in New York!

New Books in the OZ Library

The OZ library is a welcoming place to spend some free time. Our wide selection of books includes histories, biographies, novels, encyclopedias, biblical commentaries, and more. Here are some recent acquisitions:



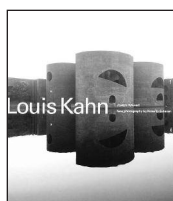
Eva Hesse: Sculpture
by Elizabeth Sussman,
Fred Wasserman,
et. al.



*Encyclopedia of Jewish
American Artists*
by Samantha Baskind,
Ph.D.



*The Emergence of Jewish
Artists in Nineteenth-
Century Europe*
edited by Susan
Tumarkin Goodman



Louis Kahn
by Joseph Rykwert;
new photography
by Roberto Schezen



*Luminous Art:
Hanukkah Menorahs of
The Jewish Museum*
by Susan L. Braunstein



*The Israel Museum,
Jerusalem*
edited by the
Israel Museum Staff

CONGREGATIONAL SEDER

WE INVITE YOU, YOUR FAMILY
AND FRIENDS
TO SHARE THE SECOND SEDER
WITH US

TUESDAY, APRIL 3, 2007

Services will start at 7:15 p.m.

*Our Congregational Seder, led by
Rabbi Wechsler and
his son, Rabbi Ezra Amichai,
will begin at 8:05 p.m.,
immediately following services*

Watch your mail for an invitation.

Purim Celebrations

SATURDAY, MARCH 3 • 7:00 P.M.

Congregation Or Zarua, 127 East 82nd Street

Ma'ariv and Megillah Reading in the Sanctuary
Refreshments in the Social Hall

SUNDAY, MARCH 4 • 8:45 A.M.

Lycée Français, 505 East 75th Street (just east of York Avenue)

Shaharit and Megillah Reading
Children's Costume Parade and Purim Spiel
Food and fun following the Spiel

Sail the Bounding Main as the OZ Players Present

**CAPTAIN SHNOOK AND
THE ISLAND OF
THE FARLORYN KINDER**

Adults and children, come in costume!

R.S.V.P. 212-452-2310 (extension 39)

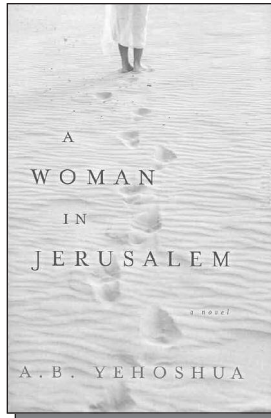
Keep us up to date. Please be sure that the OZ office has your current mailing address, phone numbers, and email address. Contact Lidiya (212-452-2310, extension 10; lidiya@orzarua.org) to update your contact information. Please also notify us of family events—marriages, births, illnesses, or other news—that you would like to share with the Congregation.

Or Zarua Book Discussions

Congregants and their friends are welcome to join our Sunday evening book discussions. We meet about once every six weeks in the OZ library at 7:30 p.m.

At our next meeting on March 11, we will talk about *A Woman in Jerusalem* by A. B. Yehoshua. Pat Davidson will lead our discussion of the acclaimed Israeli writer's compact and masterly novel.

The novel's original title, translated from the Hebrew, is *The Mission of the Human Resources Manager*. The heroine, Yulia Ragayev, a lovely, lonely cleaning woman in a large Jerusalem bakery, is mortally wounded in a terrorist bombing and is left in a hospital morgue, unidentified and unmourned. A pay stub leads a reporter back to the bakery. He publishes an exposé entitled



"The Shocking Inhumanity Behind Our Daily Bread." To make amends and fend off bad publicity, the bakery owner tells his human resources manager to find out what went wrong and to provide Yulia with a proper burial. But Yulia remains a mystery: Why did she come to, and cling to, Jerusalem when she wasn't Jewish? *The Washington Post Book World* observed that the novel is always aware of the sorrows of modern Israel, but it "soars on wry, wise wings far above the battered landscape."

For more information about Or Zarua book discussions, please contact Reed Schneider (212-860-8611 or arlm1199@aol.com).

Please note: Our next discussion will be on Sunday evening, May 6.

OR SHALOM: A Wonderful Organization

By Ilana Burgess

On my most recent trip to Israel, I was so impressed with my visit to Or Shalom! I believe that Bar and Bat Mitzvah students should consider adopting Or Shalom as a mitzvah project.

Or Shalom is an organization dedicated to caring for children and teenagers who have been rescued from homes in which they suffered neglect. These children and teenagers are placed in foster homes where families provide them with a supportive environment and prepare them for the army, which is a first step towards integrating them into Israeli society.

There are foster homes throughout the nation in cities, towns, and communities from Haifa to Eilat. There are different types of homes available, and the placement of a troubled child depends both on age and emotional disposition. The setting I visited was a family home including a father, a mother, and three children. This family hosted twelve foster children ranging in age from eight to fourteen. The father works outside the

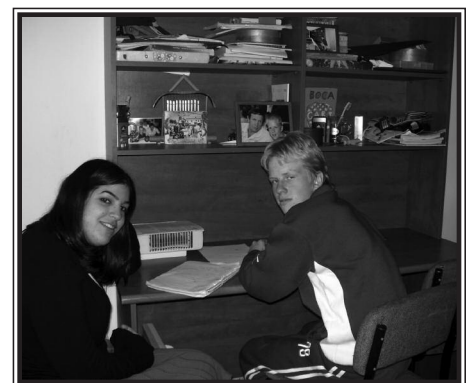
home while the mother takes care of the home and children.

This foster family is supported by a psychologist, teachers, university students, and two young women from Sherut Leumi, Israel's national service program. The social service team also works with the foster children's natural parents—the ultimate goal is to return the children to their original homes.

On the day I visited the family, I was privileged to see the children arriving home after school. Standing beside a beautifully set table, the mother welcomed each and every child with a hug and a kiss and asked how the day went. The love in the room was palpable and I couldn't tell which were the foster children. The food was delicious and plentiful. After the snack every child helped wash the dishes and then quietly went in his or her own direction: to after-school programs, to do homework, or to take an afternoon nap. It was heartwarming to see such well-behaved children, and at

the same time heartbreaking to realize that they receive only the most basic necessities from the government—nothing more.

I propose that we share some of our good fortune with these children on their Bar or Bat Mitzvahs by providing them with some extras for celebrating this lifecycle event. We can help give them the experience, for the first time in their young lives, of what it's like to have more than the basic necessities.



A woman from Sherut Leumi (left) helping an Or Shalom resident with his homework.

March Calendar

April Calendar

Guidelines for Passover

The guidelines below were prepared for the Rabbinical Assembly Committee on Jewish Law and Standards by Rabbi Mayer Rabinowitz. They were accepted by the Committee on December 12, 1984 and are updated annually by Rabbi Wechsler. Remember that the kosher for Passover home is a unique and transcendent experience for adults as well as children. Pesah feels different to the extent that it is different, and special foods and practices are the source of the special experience.

The Torah prohibits the ownership of hametz (leaven) during Pesah. Therefore, we arrange for the sale of the hametz to a non-Jew. The sale—mekhirat hametz—is accomplished by appointing an agent, usually the rabbi, to handle the transfer. The transaction is a valid and legal transfer of ownership. At the end of the holiday, the agent arranges for the reversion of ownership of the now-permitted hametz. If ownership of the hametz was not transferred before the holiday, the use of this hametz is prohibited even after the holiday (hametz she-aver alav ha-Pesah).

The Torah also prohibits the eating of hametz during Pesah. We often need guidance when shopping and preparing for the holiday because many common foods contain some admixture of hametz.

During the eight days of Pesah, hametz does not lose its identity, even in an admixture. Therefore, the minutest amount of hametz renders the whole admixture hametz, and its use on Pesah is prohibited.

Following are some general guidelines. Consult Rabbi Wechsler when there is any doubt about the status of a product. Examine the Kosher le-Pesah label: If it does not bear the name of a rabbi, does not contain one of the recognized symbols of rabbinic supervision, or is not integral to the package, check with the rabbi.

FOODS

● **Prohibited foods:** leavened bread, cake, biscuits, crackers, cereal, coffee containing cereal derivatives, wheat, barley, oats, spelt, rye, and all liquids containing ingredients or flavors made from grain alcohol.



Baking matzah for the Passover holiday.

According to Ashkenazic custom, the following foods—kitniyot—are added to the prohibited list: rice, corn, millet, and legumes (beans and peas; but string beans are permitted). The Committee on Jewish Law and Standards has ruled unanimously that peanuts and peanut oil are permissible. In contrast, Sephardic authorities permit the use of *all* kitniyot on Pesah.

● **Permitted foods that DO NOT require a Kosher le-Pesah label:** fresh fruit, fresh vegetables (for legumes, see above), and eggs.

● **Permitted foods that DO require a Kosher le-Pesah label:** all baked products (matzah, cake, matzah flour, matzah farfel, matzah meal, and any

other products containing matzah), canned or bottled fruit juice (often clarified with kitniyot, which are not listed among the ingredients), canned tuna (often processed in vegetable broth and/or hydrolyzed protein, even when packed in water), wine, vinegar, liquor, oil, dried fruit, ice cream, yogurt, and soda.

The following processed foods (canned, bottled, or frozen) DO require a Kosher le-Pesah label *if purchased during Pesah*: milk and milk products, butter, juice, vegetables, fruit, spices, coffee, tea, fish, and meat.

NON-FOOD ITEMS

● **Detergent.** If permitted during the year, powdered and liquid detergents DO NOT require a Kosher le-Pesah label.

● **Medicine.** Because many pills are made with hametz binders, follow this guideline: If the medicine is required for life-sustaining therapy, it may be used on Pesah; if it is not for life-sustaining therapy, some authorities permit, while others prohibit the use of the medicine. Consult Rabbi Wechsler.

KASHERING

● **Utensils.** The process of kashering utensils depends on how the utensils are used. According to halakhah, leaven can be purged from a utensil by the same process through which it was absorbed into the utensil (ke-voleo kakh polet). Therefore, utensils used in cooking are kashered by boiling, those used in broiling are kashered by fire and heat, and those used only for cold food are kashered by rinsing.

● **Earthenware.** China, pottery, etc. may not be kashered. However, fine translucent chinaware that has not been used for over a year may be used for Pesah if scoured and cleaned in hot water.

● **Metal.** Utensils made entirely of metal and used in fire (such as a spit or broiler) must first be thoroughly scrubbed, cleaned, and then heated to the highest possible temperature. Utensils used for cooking or eating (such as silverware or pots) must be thoroughly scrubbed, cleaned, and then completely immersed in boiling water. Pots should not be used for a period of at least 24 hours between the cleaning and the immersion in boiling water. Metal baking utensils cannot be kashered for Pesah.

● **Ovens and ranges.** Every part that comes into contact with food must be thoroughly scrubbed, cleaned, and then heated to the highest possible temperature for a half hour. For ovens with no self-cleaning feature, use the broil setting; for self-cleaning ovens, use the self-cleaning feature to achieve the highest temperature. Continuous-cleaning ovens must be kashered in the same manner as regular ovens.

● **Microwave ovens.** These do not cook food by means of heat. After the interior is cleaned, place a cup of water inside. Keep the oven on until the water disappears. A microwave oven that has a browning element cannot be kashered for Pesah.

● **Glassware.** Drinking glasses and stemware require only a thorough cleaning, by hand or in a dishwasher, before Pesah.

● **Glass cookware.** There is a difference of opinion as to whether glass cookware should be kashered. One opinion is that it must be kashered—after a thorough cleaning, boil water in the cookware so that it overflows the rim. The other opinion is that only a thorough cleaning is required.

● **Glass bakeware.** Like metal bakeware, glass bakeware may not be kashered for Pesah.

● **Dishwashers.** Clean any food trap or filter and leave the dishwasher unused for 24 hours. Then, complete a full wash cycle with detergent.

● **Electrical appliances.** If parts that

come into contact with hametz are removable, they can be kashered in the appropriate way (if metal, follow the rule for metal utensils). If the parts are not removable, then the appliance cannot be kashered. However, all exposed parts should be thoroughly cleaned in either case.

● **Tables, closets, and countertops.** If they have come into contact with hametz, surfaces should be thoroughly cleaned and covered before use.

● **Kitchen sinks.** Metal sinks must be thoroughly cleaned and then doused with boiling water. Porcelain sinks must be thoroughly cleaned and outfitted with

a sink rack. Items may be soaked in a basin placed inside a porcelain sink.

● **Hametz and non-Passover items.** In order to prevent accidental use, all non-Passover kitchen items and hametz whose ownership has been transferred should be separated from Passover items, marked, covered, and placed in a locked area.

An ever-increasing variety of Kosher le-Pesah products is available in local markets as well as in the specially dedicated Pesah stores that appear each year. Patronize these special Pesah stores, for they provide an important service to the Jewish community.

OMER BASICS

WHAT'S AN OMER? An omer is a unit of measure for cut sheaves of a grain crop. The 49-day period between the second day of Pesah and the day before Shavuot is referred to as the period of sefirat ha'omer—the counting of the omer.

WHY DO WE COUNT IT? The Torah tells us in Parashat Emor (Leviticus 23:15-16) that an omer of barley was brought to the Temple on the second day of Pesah as a “wave offering.” This omer of barley consisted of newly harvested grain, and new barley could not be eaten until the omer offering was brought. Starting on the second day of Pesah, 49 days were counted, at the end of which Shavuot was celebrated and an offering was brought to the Temple from the early summer's wheat harvest. The counting, sefirat ha'omer, is done at nightfall each day during the seven weeks. The counting of the omer connects the Exodus from Egypt with the giving of the Torah at Mt. Sinai. In eagerness, we count the days of waiting for the revelation.

HOW DO WE OBSERVE IT? For a period of time during the counting of the omer it is traditional to observe certain semi-mourning customs, such as postponing weddings and foregoing haircuts. This tradition may have an agricultural origin in that the period leading up to the summer harvest is a time of concern for the continuing safety of the crop. But also during this time of year in the second century CE, some 24,000 of Rabbi Akiva's students perished—they were most likely killed by the Romans.

WHAT IS LAG B'OMER? Lag B'omer is the 33rd day of the counting—“lag” is an acronym made up of lamed (30) and gimel (3). The massive fatalities of Rabbi Akiva's students halted on that day, and the customs of semi-mourning are suspended. Lag B'omer is observed as the *yahrzeit* of Rabbi Shimon bar Yohai, the person said to have authored the mystical book, *The Zohar*. This year Lag B'omer falls on the night of May 6, and we shall spend that evening studying *The Zohar* in Rabbi Shimon's memory.

PARTICIPATE IN OR ZARUA'S Pesah Meal Match

First Seder Night, Monday, April 2

Let us increase our joy in this z'man heiruteinu—the season of our liberation—by hosting other Congregants or by joining a host family on the first seder night, Monday, April 2.

If you would like to be a host or a guest, please complete the form on page 13 and send it to the synagogue office no later than Wednesday, March 28, 2007, or register online at www.orzarua.org.

Ma'ot Hittim Fund

The Hagaddah tells us that every Jew must experience the Exodus from Egypt, and the Mishnah tells us that a Jew should drink four cups of wine at the seder, even if they come from the public dole.

We therefore raise special funds each year to assist less fortunate Jews who cannot afford to prepare for Passover. We forward the funds, called ma'ot hittim (wheat money), to two communal organizations—the Joint Passover Appeal in New York and the New York Board of Rabbis—for distribution to needy Jews. Ma'ot hittim funds also enable Or Zarua to host at our Congregational Seder a number of Jews who would not otherwise be able to attend a seder that night.

Please give generously to the fund. Many will benefit from your kindness.

Sell Your Hametz

Before Passover, we are required to “sell” any hametz in the household to a non-Jew. The transaction is normally arranged by the rabbi, to ensure compliance with the requirements of halakhah.

Please complete the form on page 13 and send it to the synagogue office by Friday, March 30, 2007. It is customary to enclose a contribution to Or Zarua's Ma'ot Hittim Fund with your authorization.

TORAH READING CLASS

Begins Thursday, February 22 • 7:30 p.m.

Can you read the Torah? Mark Somerstein is confident that you will be able to say YES! after attending his Torah reading class at OZ.

Ten one-hour sessions will be held in a seventh-floor classroom on Thursday evenings at 7:30 p.m. The first session is February 22.

Hebrew reading is required, but the only other prerequisite is eagerness to learn. All ages are welcome. To register, please call the synagogue office at 212-452-2310 (extension 39).

SCHEDULE OF PASSOVER SERVICES 5767/2007

Monday, April 2

Erev Pesah (First Seder)

Shaharit, Siyyum Bekhorim 7:15 a.m.

Candlelighting 7:01 p.m.

Tuesday, April 3

First Day of Pesah (Second Seder)

Shaharit 9:00 a.m.

Minhah-Ma'ariv 7:15 p.m.

Candlelighting 8:04 p.m.

Congregational Seder 8:05 p.m.

Wednesday, April 4

Second Day of Pesah

Shaharit 9:00 a.m.

Thursday, April 5

Hol Hamoed

Minyan 7:00 a.m.

Friday, April 6

Hol Hamoed

Minyan 7:00 a.m.

Minhah/Kabbalat Shabbat 6:15 p.m.

Candlelighting 7:06 p.m.

Saturday, April 7

Shabbat Hol Hamoed

Shaharit 8:45 a.m.

Sunday, April 8

Hol Hamoed

Minyan 8:45 a.m.

Minhah/Ma'ariv 6:15 p.m.

Candlelighting 7:08 p.m.

Monday, April 9

Seventh Day of Pesah

Shaharit 9:00 a.m.

Candlelighting 8:14 p.m.

Tuesday, April 10

Eighth Day of Pesah / Yizkor

Shaharit 9:00 a.m.

Festival ends 8:15 p.m.

Pesah Meal Match

I would like to participate in a first-night seder as a:

(check one)

☐ GUEST

Are you planning to bring children? _____ If yes, how many and what ages? _____

Are there any food restrictions? _____

☐ HOST

How many people will you host? _____ How many children will be attending? _____

What are their ages? _____ Do you welcome children as guests? _____

Name _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____ Best time to call _____

Please mail or fax completed form **by Wednesday, March 28, 2007**, to:

CONGREGATION OR ZARUA, 127 EAST 82ND STREET, NEW YORK, NY 10028, FAX: 212-452-2103

Authorization for the Sale of Hametz

Dear Rabbi Wechsler: In accordance with Jewish law, please sell all hametz in my possession at the locations listed below. Enclosed is my contribution to Or Zarua's Ma'ot Hittim Fund.

Name _____ Apt. No. _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Other Locations (vacation home, office, etc):

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Please complete and return this form **before Friday, March 30, 2007**, to:

DR. HARLAN J. WECHSLER, RABBI

CONGREGATION OR ZARUA, 127 EAST 82ND STREET, NEW YORK, NY 10028, FAX: 212-452-2103

THE OR ZARUA COMMUNITY

MAZAL TOV

Marjorie Gad, on the birth of her daughter,
Andi Allison Bley
Catherine and Eldad Isaac, on Ortal's Bat
Mitzvah
Judith and Herb Lukashok, on the birth of
twin granddaughters to Judith's son and
daughter-in-law
Brooke and Richard Rapaport, on Elliott's
Bar Mitzvah
Amy Wolf, on Daniel's Bar Mitzvah

CONDOLENCES

Our deepest sympathy to:
Shelley Binder, on the death of her mother,
Riva Binder
Linda Haberman, on the death of her
mother, Miriam Waldman
Anne Mayer, on the death of her mother,
Clara Winston
Ann Joy Newton, on the death of her
husband, Charles Newton
Ruth Perelson, on the death of her father,
David Cohen
Evelyn Sucher, on the death of her father,
Harry (Chaim) Sucher
*May they and their loved ones be comforted
among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.*

CONTRIBUTIONS

*All contributions listed were received between
December 1, 2006 and January 31, 2007.
Capital Campaign contributions are not listed.*

GENERAL FUND

Marcel and Sheldon Adler, in honor of
Sheldon's parents' yahrzeits and in
memory of Sharon Seiler's father, Jerome
Saul Seiler
Willi and Arthur Aeder, in memory of
Ruth Perelson's father
Susan and Stanley Alt, in honor of their
50th anniversary
Ethel and Barry Weintraub, in memory of
Ethel's mother, Anita Bass, on her yahrzeit
Phyllis Brochstein, for the speedy recovery
of Jack Iteld, father of Elise Strauss, and
in memory of Shelley Binder's mother,
Riva Binder
Dina Bromberg and Barrett Sinowitz
Evan Brownstein, with love and gratitude
to Hashem
Betsy Chock, in memory of Shelley Binder's
mother, Riva Binder

Gail and Robert Clark, for the kindness
shown by the Yaillen family, Jane Rogul,
and Congregation Or Zarua during
Robert's illness

Bobbi and Barry Collier, in memory of
Bobbi's father, Harold Gelfand, on his
yahrzeit; in memory of Ruth Perelson's
father, David Cohen; and in memory of
Shelley Binder's mother, Riva Binder
Rebecca Danziger
Juliet Diller, in honor of her grandson,
Gabriel Brill, on his Bar Mitzvah
Marjorie Gad, in honor of Andi Bley on
her baby naming
Carol and Philip Goldsmith, in memory of
Carol's brother, Jerry Kaufman, on his
yahrzeit
Daniel Goldberg, in honor of Elizabeth
Goldberg
Susan Linder, in memory of Miriam and
Edward Jacob
Allen Mayer, in memory of Ethel Skurman,
Esther Mayer, and Eva Mayer, and in
memory of Lina Mayer and Clara
Okrainetz, on their yahrzeits
Jonathan Merrill
Helen and Jack Nash
Ann Richman, in memory of Shelley
Binder's mother, Riva Binder
Charlotte Schwartz, in memory of her
father, Jacob Simon, on his yahrzeit; in
memory of her mother-in-law, Ida Kaplan
Schwarz, on her yahrzeit; and in memory
of Miriam Frankel's sister, Tziporah
Heckelman
Ellen and Donald Simon, in memory of
Ellen's father, Herman Perlman, on his
yahrzeit, and in memory of Donald's
father, Milton Simon, on his yahrzeit
Jason Tanny

HEBREW SCHOOL FUND

Eleanor and William Cohen, with thanks
to Ilana Burgess for the warmth and
encouragement she gives to her students
and in honor of our granddaughters,
Adriana and Nadia Sisley

HESED FUND

Marilyn Butler
Ron Meyers
Ruth and Samuel Perelson
Judith and Barry Schneider
Linda and Jerome Spitzer, in memory of
Shelley Binder's mother, Riva Binder

KIDDUSH FUND

Gwen and Brett Cohen, in honor of their
10th wedding anniversary
Pat and Alan Davidson, in memory of Pat's
mother, Sylvia Baris, on her yahrzeit
Nancy Friedman and James Margolin, in
honor of Mark Somerstein
Ellen and Said Hawa, in memory of Said's
father, Salim Hawa, on his yahrzeit, and
in honor of Tammi and Leila's Bat
Mitzvahs
Deborah and Steven Katz, in memory of
Steven's grandfather, Joshua Yunger, on
his yahrzeit
Mark Lowenthal, in honor of the birth of
his grandson, Jonathan Francis
Judith and Herb Lukashok, in memory of
Herb's father, Samuel Lukashok, on his
yahrzeit
Ron Meyers, in honor of the 101st birthday
of his grandmother, Belle Dumbroff, and
in memory of his grandfather, Samuel
Dumbroff, on his yahrzeit
Laura Resnikoff, in memory of her father,
Israel Resnikoff, on his yahrzeit
Linda and Jerome Spitzer, in memory of
Linda's father, George Kirsten

KOL NIDRE APPEAL

Leslie Berger and Kenneth Drucker
Brett and Gwendolyn Cohen
Frances Freedman
Susan Gotbetter and Henry Berry
Joan and Stuart Gross
Irving Hoffman
Joy and Louis Kimmelman
Maud and Neal Kozodoy
Mark Lowenthal
Judith Kaye Nadler
Jeremy and Paulette Posner
Laura Sebi and Ira Glauber
Roberta and Yaakov Shechter
Elise Strauss
Naomi Friedland-Wechsler
and Rabbi Harlan J. Wechsler
Helene and Michael Wolff

LIBRARY FUND

Lorraine and Herbert Shapiro

MINYAN FUND

Frances Freedman
Miriam Wallerstein, in honor of Sheldon
Adler and in memory of his parents

THE OR ZARUA COMMUNITY

PURIM SPIEL FUND

Marcel and Sheldon Adler
Barbara and Gilbert Bach
Elaine Blum, in honor of Gerry Solomon,
producer
Rosalie Goldberg
Diana and Harrison Goldin
Vivian and Fred Kenvin
Francine and Samuel Klagsbrun
Evelyn Kenvin and Arthur Rosenbloom
Terry Krulwich and Paul Posner
Ellen and Michael Schwartz

Linda and Jerome Spitzer, for all the hard
work put into its success

RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

Evan Brownstein, with love and gratitude
to Hashem
Frances Freedman
Mina Greenstein, in appreciation for the
concern and prayers given to me by
Rabbi Wechsler and Congregation Or
Zarua during my illness
Susan March and Louis Barash

Anne and Charles Mayer, in memory of
Anne's mother, Clara Winston, and in
memory of Chuck's father, Kurt Mayer,
on their yahrzeits

Judith and Barry Schneider, in honor of
Lillian Elgart's 99th Birthday
Audrey and Richard Stadin, with thanks
to Rabbi Wechsler for officiating at
the marriage of our son, Jonathan, to
Kim Krawitz

Vicky Stein, in honor of Rabbi Wechsler
Miriam Wallerstein, in memory of her
father, Abraham Patt, on his yahrzeit

Israel Day Parade, Sunday, May 6



Calling all Israel Supporters! As always, Or Zarua Congregants will march as a group in the Israel Day Parade on Sunday, May 6. If you'd like to get involved in planning for the parade, please contact Ilana Burgess at 212-452-2310 (extension 15) or Aliza Kaplan at akaplan@clal.org.

FEW FIRSTBORNS FAVOR FAST BEFORE FEAST

WHAT IS THE FAST OF THE FIRSTBORN?

Ta'anit bekhorim, the Fast of the Firstborn, is a custom observed on the day before Pesah to commemorate our gratitude for surviving the pre-Exodus tenth plague, which smote all firstborn Egyptians but spared all firstborn Hebrews. It is a dawn-to-dusk fast, which this year falls on Monday, April 2.

WHO IS CONSIDERED A FIRSTBORN?

A firstborn is a male child who is the first child born either to his mother or to his father. Even if he is the first male born to either parent, having an older sister precludes his firstborn status—he is not the first child.

WHY ONLY THE MALE FIRSTBORN?

In the ancient world, male firstborns were subject to Temple service. It was this hierarchy that was the target of the tenth plague.

HOW CAN A FIRSTBORN AVOID FASTING?

The mitzvah of attending a siyyum—a completion of the reading of a tractate of Talmud—overrides the mitzvah of observing this fast. Firstborns can opt to attend a siyyum, which is followed by a festive meal. The meal is part of the deal, so the fast is legitimately broken. Synagogues facilitate this choice for firstborns by scheduling a siyyum for the morning before Pesah.

SHABBAT ACROSS AMERICA

By Diane Okrent

Or Zarua is proud to participate in the celebration of Shabbat Across America! On Friday night, May 4, we will join hundreds of congregations across the United States and Canada in welcoming Jews from the community to a traditional Friday night service and dinner. The National Jewish Outreach Program (NJOP) has reached thousands of "unaffiliated or alienated" Jews through its Shabbat Across America project, which turns eleven years old this year.

OZ members are our best advertisement for the event, so please help us make OZ's community outreach program

a success. Talk it up. Be creative. Invite someone you know who might be receptive. Recruit at least one person to attend services and then enjoy a delicious Shabbat dinner with joyful singing.



We welcome people who have never set foot in a synagogue and regular attendees alike. Learn about the prayers, the rituals, and the meaning of Shabbat. Act now. Space at dinner is limited. Please use the OZ website or call the synagogue office at 212-452-2310 (extension 39) to reserve a place. Services begin promptly at 6:30 p.m., followed by dinner.

Der Yiddishe Vinkel

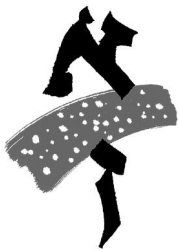
Some fifteen OZ members and their friends got together on January 29 to speak and sing in Yiddish. This was the first meeting of our new Yiddish Club—Der Yiddishe Vinkel.

Those interested in our mame loshen are welcome to attend the next meeting. Join us in the OZ library on Monday, March 26 from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. to converse in Yiddish and "Yinglish," sing Yiddish songs, and listen to Yiddish poetry.

If you plan to attend, please call the OZ office at 212-452-2310 (extension 39).

CONGREGATION OR ZARUA

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