

Events of the Month

Shabbat services at Temple Ramat Zion

Saturday, April 12, 10:30 am
 Birthday Shabbat
 Friday, April 18, 8:00 pm
 Saturday, April 26, 10:30 am
 Anniversary Shabbat

Around the Rabbi's Tisch Thursday, April 24 7:30 pm at the Vorspans'

Our 5774 season of Rabbi's popular weekly discussion around his dining room table continues. Join us for an opportunity to learn Jewish wisdom and discuss current topics of Jewish interest. Call Rabbi at (818) 888-9817 for more details.



Szyk Haggadah: See bio of **Arthur Szyk** on page 6



Visit our website:
www.shirami.com

Rabbi's Column



delights!

.When I was a teen, Passover wasn't one of my favorite holidays. The seders were good enough – my father knew how to get everybody thinking and participating. I didn't mind the extra level of Kashrut – in fact, matza and whipped butter was, and is, one my favorite culinary

And my father's matza brie was unequaled. He rarely cooked during the year, but matza brie was his breakfast food to shine!

My problem with Passover was my high school. When I would take off for the first two and last two days of the holiday in observance of Yom Tov, I felt like a stranger returning to school. My fellow students continued without me, and I had a lot of catching up to do.

And during the four intermediate days of Passover, when I had to go to school, I was embarrassed to eat matza in public. I felt so...Jewish! All the more surprising because I went to Fairfax High School, which was then at least 90% Jewish!

My mother found a recipe that turned matza meal into a roll. It looked real enough that I could eat my tuna "sandwich" and no one would be the wiser. But why hide my Jewishness?

There was something about being more observant than any of my Jewish friends that bothered me. I'm not sure why. I imagined the other students would look at my level of Passover kashrut and sneer, "There's Vorspan, SuperJew! What makes him think he's a better Jew than us!"

Such are the insecurities of a teenager.

Today I can go to Universal Studios or Disneyland during Hol HaMoed Passover, and half the people there seem to be eating matza and hard boiled eggs! The observant community doesn't mind publicly demonstrating their Jewish commitments. And no one where I work today (a Jewish High School) would think twice about my level of observance.

It's become easier, in many ways, to live a public Jewish life. Where, 50 years ago, it was rare to find anyone wearing a kipa in the streets (Orthodox men wore hats), or reading a Yiddish newspaper on the front lawn, today we find a Jewish senator who, had he become President, would have established the first White House kosher kitchen!

Fresh kosher meat is being served at Trader Joe's, the Laemmle Theatre has an annual Jewish film festival, Chabad has an annual telethon, overtly Jewish characters are found on almost every TV drama and sitcom, and a Jew is now our mayor, even as Jews fill a host of public offices.

(continued on page 2)

President's Report

Shalom,

It's Seder time and I wish you all delicious matzot, tender briskets, flavorful chicken and horseradish that really clears out the sinuses. It's also the time for us to remember those who still need the very basics for Pesach, which means that SOVA needs your help more than ever to provide those items so everyone can celebrate Pesach.



As unbelievable as it may seem, we only have three months left before we take our summer break and prepare to move on to our new home at **New Community Jewish High School**. Of course, we're not going to let those three months go by quietly!

After Pesach and April, we begin our "walking season" as we join **Jewish World Watch** in their **Walk to End Genocide, on Sunday, May 4** in the Conejo Valley. Once we've stretched our collective legs, we have our own **Walk Around Lake Balboa on Sunday, June 1**.

And nothing says "end of the year" like ice cream. So, we will have our **FREE Ice Cream Social on Sunday, June 29**. Plus, we will be offering "do-it-yourself" entertainment where everyone will have the opportunity to tell their favorite Jewish joke. So start looking around for your favorite joke to tell.

Our attendance out Saturday morning Shabbat services has been outstanding, but we always have room for more. Not only do we have our full participatory Shabbat services and our Kiddush, but you can also find out what all this talk is about the "Freezer Challah."

As always, we continue our collections for **SOVA** and everything else we do that makes Shir Ami the "**Little Shul that DOES!**" And Shir Ami "DOES" because we all "DO!"

If you have any questions or want to provide your input, please feel free to email me at **JDPistol@aol.com**.

Thank you.

Jordan Pistol, President

Rabbi's Column (continued)

It's easy to be Jewish in public these days. The test of a true Jew, however, isn't reflected in what one does publicly, but what we do in our homes. My teen years might have caused me some anguish because public expressions of Judaism could be frowned upon, but my family's kitchen was always kosher and Shabbat was always celebrated. And Passover was observed 24/8. Our congregation doesn't have a community seder because I believe Jews belong at home on Pesach. But I sometimes worry: when a Jew is at home, is there any Judaism going on?

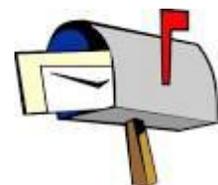
Hag Kasher v'Sameach from my family to yours.

Rabbi David Vorspan

Mailbox

Dear Shir Amittes,

I am happy to report that my shoulder replacement surgery was successful and I am well on my way to full recovery. I very much appreciate all your calls, cards, visits and especially your prayers. I am grateful for all your support and love.



Phyllis Feldman-Schroeder

Association of Jewish Educators Scholarships by Maralyn Soifer

This year's **Walk Around Lake Balboa** will benefit the **Association of Jewish Educators (AJE)** to provide scholarships for Jewish high school students to attend college. With college cost sky rocketing, it has become increasingly difficult for parents to provide funds for their children to attend college.

There are two types of scholarships that AJE provides. The "New Comers" sponsorship is specific to Jewish students who have been in the United States for less than five years. These students come here and register for school knowing little or no English. They are hard workers who maintain college prep classes while learning the language of their new country. Their stories are amazing. The other type of scholarship is for Jewish students who maintain a high grade point average, are active in their synagogue, and participate in extra-curricular school activities and community projects. They give up a lot of their time to help others. Email **paulmara1@yahoo.com** or call me at (818) 532-9237 for more information, .



DONATIONS

Congregation Shir Ami wishes to acknowledge the following donations:

Yahrzeits

Ann and Seymour Potell for Joseph Potell
Esther Perez for Josephine Paparo
Fran and Sam Koblunick for Reva Suckman
Betty and Harvey Cohen for Bertha Gottesman

Birthdays

Seymour Potell
Betty Cohen

Anniversaries

Rae and Armand Wazana
Fran and Sam Koblunick

Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays

Sylvia Hockmeyer.....	4/5
Ken Bereny.....	4/10
Gabriel Lichtman.....	4/13
Lee Dollins.....	4/16
Carol Altshiller.....	4/17
Marian Perlmutter.....	4/17
Jerry Zatz.....	4/20
Pat Michaelson.....	4/22
Ed Orens.....	4/23
Marcie Spetner.....	4/25
Betty Cohen.....	4/28
Ellie Zatz.....	4/28

Payee on Checks to Shir Ami

Our Treasurer, **Clara Rosenbluth**, was informed by our bank that all checks must be payable to **Congregation Shir Ami**, NOT CSA as some were previously abbreviated.

Our Condolences

We regret to inform the congregational family of the passing of: member **Lillian Lichtman** and **Lillian Scharf**, mother of longtime member **Lonny Scharf**. May God comfort **Gabriel Lichtman** and his family and **Lonny and Nancy** and their family during this time of their bereavement.



Congregation Shir Ami Tribute Cards

Thanks to **Phyllis Schroeder** for sending your cards celebrating *simchas* and conveying your get-well and condolence messages.



She is creative with individualized, artistic cards that include a message and color graphics. Call her at (818) 718-7466. Minimum donation of \$5 per card is appreciated.

Welcome New Member

Congregation Shir Ami welcomes new member:

Paula Mishkin
7046 Kester Ave. #103
Van Nuys, CA 91405
Phone: (818) 616-4073



Congregational News

Get well wishes *rafuah schleimah* to:



Phyllis Robinson
Fran Koblunick
Sam Koblunick

May they be blessed with a complete recovery in body and spirit.

Ralphs Rewards Program
Re-registration Required
by Maralyn Soifer



Registering for the **Ralphs Community Contribution Program** is an easy way to support our congregation. **Everyone currently registered**

must re-enroll for the next year on or after September 1. Follow the directions on page 10. If you haven't already enrolled, there are directions for you, also.

Shir Ami receives a quarterly check based on our purchases. Thank you for participating.

Social Action Committee

Passover is almost here and Congregation Shir Ami is again asking for your help in donating 250 5 lb packages of Passover matzah to **SOVA!**

Sima Schuster (818) 774-1951,

Fiona Taylor (818)-903-6381, and

Leon Nachenberg (818) 885-6736

will arrange to get your bulk donations of Passover matzah. You may

also bring them to weekly Shabbat services or temple events before Passover. You can also drop off non-perishable food donations in our SOVA barrel in front of rooms 7, 8, 9 at TRZ.



Mother's Day is almost here too. We are NOW collecting **Target \$10 gift cards** for the moms and



children in the **Domestic Violence Shelters** we help sponsor for Mother's Day. Please mail the Target gift cards to **Fran Kobulnick**

5139 White Oak Ave. #13, Encino, CA 91316 or give to **Claire Silverman, Fiona Taylor, or Ann Potell** at services or events.

We will visit the **West Valley Healthcare Center** at 7057 Shoup Ave. in West Hills Friday, May 9 to bring in Shabbat and celebrate **Mother's/Father's Day** with all the residents. Please come join us in our sing-a-long led by **Claire Silverman** and the Social Action Committee as we light and bless the Shabbat candles and bless the wine and challah. We then have one-on-one visits with the residents and anticipate being able to give them all beautiful plants too. This truly is a special mitzvah project that brings everyone much happiness.

Save the date **Sunday, June 1** for our annual **Walk Around Lake Balboa**. Members and friends have received a letter and flyer in the mail. If you haven't received one, please call **Ellie Zatz** at (818) 883-9924. Also see the flyer with this *Shir Notes*.

See the right hand column for details of the **Jewish World Watch Walk to End Genocide**.

From the Social Action Committee and our families, we wish you and your family a very special Passover with meaningful seders that create beautiful memories that will last generations to come.

Shalom,

Fran Kobulnick, Social Action Vice President

Operation Gratitude and Project MOT

by Charlene Kazel



April showers bring May flowers, Merci Bouquet to you and a shower of kudos for all that you do.

It is that time of year when some are scurrying their home and paid their [quarterly] income tax. Well, we are over-achievers and have exceeded our quarterly gifts to **Operation Gratitude**. Our accounts to date show 278 books delivered. We have also given 169 cards, 16 gufts, 46 books, and 176 yarmulkes to **Project MOT**. We have "passed over" one hurdle and on to the next. Our voyage is simple and freely we give as we travel along life's path.

There is no need to enumerate all your mitzvot. It's just time to celebrate and to wish you and your loved ones a very Happy Pesach!

Jewish World Watch Walk to End Genocide

by Rae Wazana



Please join our Shir Ami team in participating in the **JWW 2014 Walk to End Genocide**. This year, we are doing the **Walk in the Conejo Valley on Sunday, May 4th**. The theme of this year's Walk is: **Ten Years. One Life at a Time**. The Walk begins at 11:30 am and starts at **Temple Etz Chaim** (1080 E. Janss Rd. in Thousand Oaks). It is a little over a mile of walking. There will also be displays of the many projects JWW supports to help victims of widespread violence and genocides in such places as Darfur, Congo, and South Sudan. So far, we have several Shir Ami members who have signed up for our Walk Team. Our Team co-captains are **Fiona Taylor** and **Rae Wazana**. If you are unable to walk, please consider making a donation to Jewish World Watch and mention that you are supporting Congregation Shir Ami. You can register on-line at: **www.walktoendgenocide.org** or call Rae at (818) 881-5549 or Fiona at (818) 903-6381 if you have any questions.

Please don't forget about the **JWW Tzedakah cans** that many of you took on Mitzvah Day. We will collect your donations before Passover. The money donated will go to JWW and be credited toward Shir Ami's fundraising goal. We are stepping up our efforts to raise awareness, support, and hope for the survivors of genocide and mass atrocities. Thank you for your support.

As I Remember It

by Owen Delman

This story is probably mostly true but is dependent on my memory which may be affected by nostalgia, years and love. The names have been changed to avoid family feuds.



It was a day of both the agony of failure and the glory of victory. Who would have thought that a simple family backyard BBQ could have so much drama?

The party was at Uncle Bob's and it was to celebrate his first house with Bubbe and all the uncles, aunts and cousins in attendance. As these events often are, it was a combination BBQ and potluck food fest and as each family unit arrived, aluminum foil wrapped platters began to cover the card tables set in the



center of yard. Before the appointed hour, Cousin George and I would furtively lift a foil corner to reveal such delicacies as a doughnut shaped mound of egg salad, a Himalayan peak of potato salad with olives, a small mountain of chopped liver and a large cup of onion dip surrounded by Lincoln Logs of orange carrots and pale green celery. These silvered treasures sat next to wicker baskets of bagels, kaiser rolls, onion rolls and sliced challah. Unfortunately, an aunt doing guard duty near the dessert card table, was an effective deterrent to any investigation of that particular food area. All these offerings would be supplemented by Uncle Bob demonstrating his chef skills and over cooking kosher hot dogs on his new charcoal grill whose strategic placement managed to smokily camouflage, at times, one end of the yard from the other.

Shortly after the families got settled, Uncle Bob brought out his new toy, a wire recorder. In the '50's, many years before tape recording was available for home use, wire recorders were the only way to preserve sound memories. Bob, a musician, had brought one home from the studio for his party. He lined up all the children (adults got to sit) and, holding the mic at just the right distance, exhorted each to say something for posterity. As the mic worked its way down towards me, I felt a growing numbness.



Most of the vocal offerings were compliments on Bob's new house, comments on how quickly children

grow and such. Bubbe, in a style reminiscent of a political campaigner, challenged anyone to find a finer looking family. I was near the end of the line, right after George. This was an unfortunate pairing, though anywhere else would probably still have spelled the same disaster.

George was fresh from his television appearance on "The Morris B. Sachs Amateur Hour," which Jewish parents of Chicago viewed as promising another career choice for their children. "If you're not going to be a doctor or a lawyer, maybe you could go into show business!" It was on the Amateur Hour where George's singing lessons had been put to good use for all to see as, indeed, the entire extended family did following the phone instructions of not only his mother but from Bubbe, herself! For this backyard event, he reprised his television performance to, as they say, thunderous applause. Oy, then it was my turn.

Frozen with microphone phobia and lack of talent, I'm sure I looked like an additional face on Mt. Rushmore. After many, many moments of silence, during which the focus of the entire world was on me, Uncle Bob suggested maybe I would like to recite a familiar poem. My literary offering was my hurried first thought, that timeless classic, "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star". So George belted out a popular song and I stumbled through a child's poem! Unfortunately, the ground did not open up and swallow me at that moment.

Then, Bob had brought out another symbol of home ownership -- a shiny, new croquet set. As he set out the hoops and distributed the red, yellow and blue mallets and matching lacquered balls, I was still smarting from my humiliating microphone disaster. As the game started I tried to concentrate on the intricate angle shots and subtleties required to propel the ball toward the hoops through Uncle Bob's tall grass -- hit too gently it moved but a few inches, whacked too hard it rose up on its own and flew over the grass many feet beyond my planning. It seemed like I was going to experience my second humiliation of the day. And then a number of events happened at once.



"Where is she? Has anyone seen My Debby?" The cries came from Aunt Sophie, the mother of the three year old and the most emotional of the aunts. It set in motion a tumultuous series of events involving many supervisors and few workers. Though Uncle Bob tried to be the calming voice, he was unable to lower the volume of Sophie's exhortations which drowned out his attempts in her tsunami of emotion. (continued on page 7)

Biography of the Month: Arthur Szyk

by Stan Schroeder

I originally wrote this bio for the June, 2008 *Shir Notes*. Since Passover is this month, I am republishing it in memory of the artist who created the most celebrated Haggadah of the last century. **Arthur Szyk** (pronounced "Shick") was born June 3, 1894 in Łódź, Poland to Jewish parents. The precocious lad started drawing portraits of guests in his parents' home at the age of four. Considered a child prodigy, he studied art at the Academie Julian in Paris in 1909 and in Kraków in 1913. The next year he visited Palestine with other young Polish-Jewish artists and writers. Upon his return, he was drafted into the czar's army but deserted when the Russian army abandoned his native Lodz.



A soldier in the Polish army during World War I, Szyk fell prisoner to the Germans but received lenient treatment because his captors admired his artistic talents. After the war, Szyk traveled to Ukraine, where he witnessed pogroms that devastated Jewish communities. Deeply moved, Szyk returned throughout his career to Jewish themes and struggles for freedom. From 1919 to 1920, during the Polish-Soviet war, he served as artistic director of the Department of Propaganda for the Polish army in Łódź. He fought as a guerilla during the Polish-Bolshevik War in 1921 to save Jews.

While growing as an artist in the 1920s and 1930s, Szyk enjoyed life in "warm-hearted" Lodz and fondly remembered all-night parties with famous musicians and actors in his parents' home, accompanied by his singing mother and piano-playing father. In 1921 Szyk moved to France where he resumed his art studies. He experimented with various contemporary styles before being deeply influenced by the intricate and decorative style of illumination (art of decorating a text, page, or letter with ornamental designs, miniatures, or lettering)

This resulted in Szyk being commissioned to produce the 45 page Statute of Kalisz, which glorified the 13th century edict granting rights of citizenship to Jews in Poland. Szyk's work included miniature scenes and portraits, illuminated initial letters, decorative and symbolic border patterns and calligraphy. In 1931 he was commissioned by the League of Nations to illuminate its charter. That year he also began a series of 38 miniatures dealing with the American Revolution entitled *Washington and His Times*. These would be purchased by **President Moscicki** of Poland, and presented by him to President **Franklin D. Roosevelt**.

Szyk is best known in the Jewish world for his ornate Passover Haggadah. He began work on it in the mid 1920s, completing to it upon his return to Poland in 1934. Unable to find a publisher in Europe who would take on the production of a book with so many anti-Nazi symbols, he moved on to England in 1937, where the internationally regarded Jewish scholar **Cecil Roth** embraced the project. In London Szyk supervised the printing of *The Haggadah*. When published in 1940, it was dedicated to **George VI**, the King of England, who was presented with the first copy.



When the Nazis overran Poland in September 1939, Szyk immediately began contributing illustrations to the war propaganda campaign. In July 1940 Szyk toured his works in Canada and then the United States at the suggestion of Great Britain and Poland in order to heighten American awareness of the war in Europe.

Living in Connecticut, Szyk became the editorial cartoonist for the New York Post and contributed a steady stream of anti-Nazi cartoons and illustrations to major magazines. He also designed military badges and "Buy War Bonds" billboards. Szyk thought of himself as "Roosevelt's soldier with a pen." While he would have preferred to continue doing illuminated manuscripts and other forms of art, he observed, "We are not entitled to do the things we like today." **Eleanor Roosevelt** once remarked, "This is a personal war of Szyk against Hitler, and I do not think that Mr. Szyk will lose this war!"

Szyk's devotion to the Allied war effort was matched by his growing concern for Jews trapped in Nazi-occupied Europe. In 1941 Szyk joined forces with the Bergson Group, a band of Jewish activists who lobbied the Roosevelt Administration to rescue endangered Jews.

In 1948 Szyk created an Illuminated Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel. On May 22, 1948 he became a U.S. citizen. His death of a heart attack occurred September 13, 1951 following an investigation by the Un-American Activities Committee for being assumed a member of a Communist front organization. He was survived by his wife Julia, son George, and daughter Alexandra. **Alexandra Bracie** [who recently turned 92] still promotes his work, and recently [2008] authorized a new luxury limited edition of *The Haggadah*.

As I Remember It (continued)

by Owen Delman

Bob came over to us, as we were watching the action trying to stay out of way. "Boys, stop your playing help by looking under all the bushes. She's too little to unlock the gate so she's still here." An opportunity to crawl in the dirt under low hanging bushes seemed made for our talents. I whacked my blue striped croquet ball one more time, just to get it out of the way. It skittered across the grass to the edge of the lawn. I bent down under a bush where I thought it had gone. "Nuts," I said, since it wasn't there. But there was Little Debbie who whispered to me as our eyes met, "Shhh, I'm hiding!"

"Uncle Bob, I found her! I found her! She's right here!" Giving no recognition for luck and poor croquet skills, I took full credit and garnered all the accolades which child rescuers receive. The aunts were all over me, especially Sophie. I had erased my previous humiliation and was the hero of the afternoon. Finally, to reward me, Aunt Sophie, who had been its guardian, led me to the dessert table where I was allowed to have my pickings long before everyone else. Victory can be very sweet, especially when it is served with Bubbe's strudel!

Feast of Freedom Haggadah Conservative Movement Haggadah

by Stan Schroeder

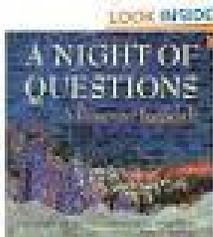
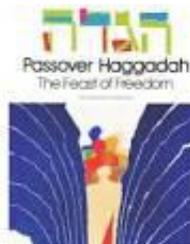
THE PASSOVER HAGGADAH: THE FEAST OF FREEDOM, edited by **Rachel Rabinowicz**, prepared by the Rabbinical

Assembly of the Conservative Movement (\$14.95) is a feast of fine material and commentary. It contains as much useful historical information as any Haggadah and neatly solves the problem of how to keep the text a reasonable length by using copious marginal notes. The service is mostly in Hebrew with only some English.

For those preferring the Reconstructionist Movement philosophy, their Haggadah is **A NIGHT OF QUESTIONS: A Passover Haggadah** edited by Rabbi **Joy Levitt** and Rabbi **Michael Strassfeld** (\$24.00). It is a

unique four-in-one Haggadah that includes outlines for customizing a Seder for the people present at the table. The four menus include a Seder for young children, a Seder for older children with adults, a Seder for groups of diverse backgrounds (including those who are not Jewish), and a Seder focusing on the role of women.

It also features special color-coded graphic icons that highlight the different types of readings such as *kavanot*, which are introductions to the text that set the tone for the text, and readings for children.



Purim Carnival at Temple Ramat Zion

by Stan Schroeder

Ramat Zion, as most synagogues, held their Purim carnival Sunday, March 16. The food was prepared by their caterer **Hovav Ben-Tov**, son-in-law of our members **Barbara and Neil Hattem**. I happened upon Barbara and Neil and their daughter **Marla Ben-Tov** and the Ben-Tov sons as they arrived for the festivities. I was able to take the pictures below with my iPad. I stayed for lunch and had Hovav's delicious food with **Rabbi Sela** and his family. A good time was had by all.



Marla and 5 year old **Noah Ben Tov**



Marla and almost 3 year old **Eli Ben Tov**

Jewish World Watch (JWW)- Hear Her Voice Advocacy Conference, February 2014

by Fiona Taylor

In January this year, **Rae Wazana** and I attended a JWW meeting at AJU regarding the **2014 Walk to End Genocide**, which marks the 10th year since the founding of the organization by **Rabbi Schulweis**. One of the topics discussed was the conference "Hear Her Voice" to be held in Washington DC on February 23-25, 2014. After hearing the details, I immediately decided that I would like to attend to represent our congregation and to learn more about being an advocate for this unbelievably important organization.



I have never participated in this sort of event in my life. While, like many of us at Shir Ami, I do as much as I can to support causes that I deem worthy of my time, energy and donations - actually going to Capitol Hill to lobby for a cause had never been on my radar!

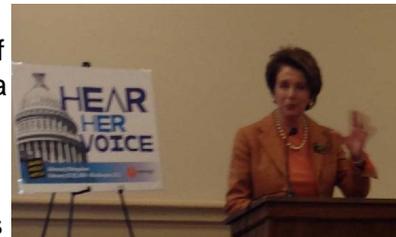
The conference was a joint event for JWW and the Enough Project, an advocacy group based in DC that focuses on Sudan and South Sudan, eastern Democratic Republic of Congo and other areas in Africa that are suffering under tyrannical genocidal regimes. I was so fortunate that, when I registered at the event on the first evening, I ended up sitting next to one of the featured speakers, **Dr. Mukesh Kapila**.

This man was the UN Resident Coordinator for Sudan and, because of the events that he witnessed there and the lack of response he received from the UN and its member countries, he eventually became the whistle-blower who brought the genocide in Darfur to world attention. I can highly recommend his book "*Against a Tide of Evil*", which tells the story of his decision to sacrifice his own career to do what was right when others would not and, as a consequence, to live with the constant fear of death-threats. If you decide to buy the book, you should know that the proceeds are donated to this cause.

During the first two days of the conference, we learned about the history of the conflicts and also about how we could go about educating others. Of course, the main focus was to learn how to best lobby Congressmen to support the various bills that are slowly making their way through the House and Senate. On Tuesday, we all went to the Hill in small

groups of 4 to 6 people (we numbered about 80-100 attendees total), each with our list of scheduled meetings with staffers in the various offices. Before we left for our visits, Congresswoman **Karen Bass** (D-CA), ranking member of the House Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights and International Organization spoke to us.

Our little group of 4 was well received at all the offices we visited: this is a truly bi-partisan issue, because obviously nobody likes genocide! At the lunchtime break, we reconvened at our home base for the day in the Rayburn Building (one of the three main office buildings that houses member of Congress): there was a reception with several speakers, including **Ed Royce** (R-CA) from Orange County, who is



a Chairman of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs and who has led a number of delegations to Rwanda, Sudan, Darfur, etc. He handed off the microphone to former Speaker **Nancy Pelosi** (D-CA). They both mentioned a hearing that was scheduled for the following day at which Hollywood luminaries were expected to testify along with many others. Unfortunately, I couldn't stay over to attend.

After lunch we made our way under the Capitol building, using the subway cars that are usually reserved only for those who work in the Government offices - I kept my official badge as a souvenir as this may have been a one-time event for me! It was snowing outside, so we were blessed to obtain permission to use the tunnels. It is truly an experience to walk through the Halls of Congress, to see the statues and artifacts that are on display there - I was particularly impressed by the bust of **Winston Churchill**, proclaiming him as "Statesman, Defender of Freedom, Honorary U.S. Citizen" - (of course, I would be, having grown up in England with him as a hero).

It was a wonderful, tiring, inspiring, educational, awesome experience. I can only plead with all of you to support the Congregation Shir Ami team, by participating in the **JWW Walk to End Genocide in the Conejo Valley on Sunday, May 4**. You will get a T-shirt and will have the satisfaction of knowing you have done a great deal of good. If you can't walk yourself, please encourage others to participate and/or send in a donation, no matter how large or small.

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TREE OF LIFE

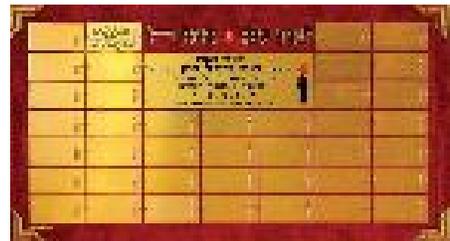


This beautiful Tree of Life, with leaves priced at \$100 and rocks at \$250 (one remaining), makes a perfect way to celebrate family occasions and support Congregation Shir Ami.

The Tree is on a rosewood background and consists of gold-colored leaves and rocks. It is displayed at all Congregation Shir Ami services and events.

For more information or to place an order, call Sherry Dollins at (818) 886-7590.

Congregation Shir Ami Memorial Board



If you would like to honor the memory of your loved ones by dedicating plaques on our new Memorial Board, please call Clara Rosenbluth at (818) 348-1498 so she may mail you an order form. The cost of each plaque is \$36.

Each plaque may contain up to three lines of engraving: English name, Hebrew name, and the years of birth and death. Both of our Memorial Boards are displayed at all our services.

Shop at Ralphs - Earn Money for Shir Ami

by Maralyn Soifer

Here is an easy way to earn money for our Temple. We

are now officially a **Ralphs' community agency**. All you have to do is follow these simple instructions to help earn money for Congregation Shir Ami.



1. If you don't have a Ralphs' rewards card already, go to the store or go to website **www.ralphs.com** and select **Order a Ralphs reward card**.
2. Once you have your card, go to the website: **www.ralphs.com** and select **Create an account**
3. If you have an account, your email address is your account ID. If you forgot your password, select **Forgot your password?** and you will receive an email with instructions to reset it. Follow the instructions to enter your email address and create a new password.
4. If you already have a Ralphs' reward card and an account, you will see Account Summary when you login. You can change to our Temple by clicking on **Edit** within **Community Rewards**.

You can do a search for Congregation Shir Ami by putting in the number **92785**. Our congregation will pop up and click on the button next to the name. Click on the button that saves the changes.

5. You should also check the bottom of your receipt when you shop. It should say "**At your request, Ralph's is donating to CONGREGATION SHIR AMI**".
6. If all else fails, call me in the evening at (818) 704-0306. I'll be happy to walk you through it.
7. Start Shopping!

Make sure that the clerk swipes your card each time you shop. Verify that your receipt shows a contribution to Congregation Shir Ami at the bottom.

Important Note: All participants must confirm their selection annually starting in September. On or after September 1, sign into your account and reconfirm Community Rewards selection.

Congregation Shir Ami
P.O. Box 6353
Woodland Hills, CA 91365



Let's go for a walk around Lake Balboa!

Join Congregation Shir Ami's Social Action Committee on **Sunday, June 1st at 9:00 am.**
 Registration required starting at 8:30 am

All Proceeds go to Association of Jewish Educators Scholarship Fund

Minimum donation: \$10 per person, NO MAXIMUM! Following the walk, a brunch will be provided by our Social Action Committee near the lake. Please bring vegetarian salad, side dish, or dessert to share, and remember to wear your Mitzvah Patrol shirt. Pets are welcome.



Also please bring non-perishable and non-breakable food for SOVA.

Sit-down activities are available for those who don't walk. Call **Ellie Zatz** at (818) 883-9924 or **Paullette Pistol** at (818) 389-1892. Sign up by returning this tear-off with your check for \$10 (or more) per person to Congregation Shir Ami, P.O. Box 6353, Woodland Hills, CA 91365. Make check payable to **Congregation Shir Ami.**

Total Donation \$ _____

Walker Names: Brunch (y/n)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Donation Amount: \$10 [] \$18 [] \$36 []
 \$72 [] Other []

Phone no. _____

Number of participants _____

I will bring: Salad [] Dessert [] Side dish []

Congregation Shir Ami Contract for the Sale of Hametz

Know ye that I, the undersigned, fully empower and permit Rabbi David Vorspan to act in my place and stead, and in my behalf to sell all Hametz possessed by me (knowingly or unknowingly) as defined by The Torah and Rabbinic Law (e.g. Hametz, doubt of Hametz, and all kinds of Hametz mixtures). Also Hametz that tends to harden and to adhere to a surface of inside of pans, pots or cooking and usable utensils, and all kinds of animals that have been eating Hametz or mixtures thereof. And to lease all places wherein the Hametz owned by me may be found.

Rabbi David Vorspan has the full right to sell and to lease by transactions, as he deems fit and proper and for such time which he believes necessary in accordance with all detailed terms and detailed forms, as explained in the general authorization contract which have been given this year to Rabbi David Vorspan to sell the Hametz.

This general authorization is made a part of this agreement. Also do I hereby give the said Rabbi David Vorspan full power and authority to appoint a substitute in his stead with full power to sell and to lease as provided herein. The above given power is in conformity with all Torah, Rabbinical regulations and laws, and also in accordance with the laws of the State of California and of the United States. And to this I hereby affix my signature on this _____ day of _____, 2014.

Signature _____

Address _____ City _____

Please note additional locations (summer home, cottage, work place) where Hametz might be located:

You may deliver in person or mail to: Congregation Shir Ami
P O Box 6353
Woodland Hills, CA 91365

