



# Shir Notes

The Official Newsletter of Congregation Shir Ami Volume 12, Number 9, November 2014  
Affiliated with United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism

## Events of the Month

### Shabbat services at New Community Jewish High School

Saturday, November 1 - 10:30 am  
Birthday Shabbat  
Saturday, November 15 - 10:30 am  
Anniversary Shabbat

### Mitzvah Day - Sunday, Nov. 2 9:00 am at Temple Judea

Our annual Social Action event for  
School on Wheels and Operation  
Gratitude and Project MOT.  
See article on page 4 and flyer.



### Around the Rabbi's Tisch Thursdays, Nov. 6, 13 and 20; 7:30 pm at the Vorspans'

We continue our 5775 season of  
Rabbi's popular weekly discussion  
around his dining room table. Join  
us for an opportunity to learn Jewish  
wisdom and discuss current topics  
of Jewish interest. Call Rabbi at  
(818) 888-9817 or see flyer for more  
information.

### Torah and Shabbat Study Saturday, Nov. 22, 10:30 am Northridge Mobile Home Park

Stan Schroeder will lead a monthly  
study and discussion session on a  
Saturday we don't have a service.  
See article on page 7 and flyer.

Visit our website:  
[www.shirami.com](http://www.shirami.com)



## Rabbi's Column

Do you know where the word "Jew" comes from? From the tribe of Judah. *Yehuda* in Hebrew. Because we are all descendants of the tribe of Judah, we are called *yehudim*.

*Yehuda* means "to be thankful." When Leah gave birth to Judah, she said, "This time will I praise (Hebrew: *odeh*) the Lord," and so called him a form of this – Judah.

So, since we have "thanks" in our name, we should be a people who expresses thanks. And traditionally we are. Our tradition tells us that we should be making at least 100 blessings a day! Although many of these would be found in the daily services, that still leaves a lot of expressions of thanks scattered throughout the day.

But my experience has been that Jews don't seem to be any more thankful than any other religious group, and probably even less so. How many times have I sat in a restaurant and observed Christian families holding hands and bowing heads in preparation for their meal. Jews just dive in.

Jews have many prayers that can be said over food, but I rarely see Jews saying them. To begin a meal with a "*hamotzi*" seems beyond most Jewish family's regimen.

And even on Thanksgiving, I have learned that many don't begin this meal with a giving of thanks! I'm not sure why this is, but I do know it's wrong. It's wrong to be so unappreciative. It's wrong to not recognize that in a world with many in need, we have just about all we need.

I could give the statistics of how many in the world go to bed starving, who live out lives of quiet desperation as they search for food and water, shelter and companionship. But I shouldn't have to. The old line, "I wasn't content that I had shoes until I saw a man without any feet," suggests we need to stack up our lives to those less fortunate. But why can't we just be thankful without the comparisons?

We all have much to be thankful for. This Thanksgiving, let's give voice to that thankfulness.

And maybe even before a few non-Thanksgiving meals?

### Rabbi David Vorspan



Happy Thanksgiving

## President's Report

Shalom,



We had a bit of a hiccup during our Yom Kippur Services. As **Rabbi Vorspan** began his sermon, we realized that we had skipped the High Holy Day Pledge Appeal! Knowing that many members would be leaving after the sermon and Yizkor, panic began to set in. I went to the people standing at the doors and asked them to close the doors and let no one leave. (Yeah, like that was going to happen!) I went up to the bimah to tell Rabbi Vorspan that we would have to do the appeal after Yizkor and hope that people would stay. While I was hyperventilating, Rabbi Vorspan calmly asked you to stay after Yizkor for the appeal. You stayed and, as of our Treasurer's latest accounting, we exceed last year's pledges!

For a few moments, I allowed to myself to believe that it was my brilliant oratory and golden tongue that made the difference. However, after those few moments, I came to the humbling realization that it was your generosity and genuine interest in keeping Congregation Shir Ami going that won the day and I thank you all for your dedication.

Now, you get to see what your efforts will reap. We continue with our new schedule of two Saturday Shabbat services per month and **Stan Schroeder**, our Ritual Vice-President will be conducting a Saturday Torah and Shabbat Study once a month on a Saturday when we aren't conducting services.

On November 2 we will be holding the jewel of our Social Action efforts, **Mitzvah Day** at Temple Judea. We will fill backpacks with school supplies in support of **School on Wheels**. Other activities are scheduled in support of **Jewish Word Watch** and other organizations that depend on Congregation Shir Ami and we won't disappoint them.

We continue with our adult education program, **Around the Rabbi's Tisch** (and on the Rebbitzin's chairs) every Thursday evening. (I'll be getting around to naming the lights in response to Rabbi's challenge.)

Although we don't have a "Thanksgivukah" this year, there is still Thanksgiving on the calendar which should encourage us all to express our thankfulness by giving food items to SOVA so that we can truly enjoy Thanksgiving knowing that we have helped to provide for others.

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

## Reflections

by Clara Rosenbluth



During services on the second day Rosh Hashanah Rabbi asked us to share things for which we are thankful.

I, along with many of our members, am thankful for Congregation Shir Ami. I am thankful for the rhythm it brings to my life, Shabbat morning services, Thursday evening thought provoking discussions **Around the Rabbi's Tisch** and being able to look forward to a variety of programs throughout the year. There is always something to anticipate, an **open house at the Rabbi's during Sukkot**, a **Lunch and Learn** with an interesting speaker, a **Hanukkah Dinner and BBQ and Barchu** with a Shabbat dinner followed by worship under the stars.

I am very thankful for the members of our congregation. A year ago the future of Shir Ami was in question. The board, with significant help from **Rabbi Vorspan**, formulated a plan which included severe cost cutting measures and a reduction in the number of Shabbat services. Our dues schedule was also revised. A plan is just a plan. Its success depends on the support of the congregation. 20 % of our members have voluntarily chosen to pay increased dues in order to help sustain our temple. 90 % of our members have made High Holy Days pledges.

We don't have an office staff and yet birthday, anniversary, and yahrzeit notices go out. We have an award winning monthly bulletin. We don't have a Sisterhood, but we are able to enjoy some schmoozing time after services because we have members willing to do the necessary shopping, setting up and cleaning up of our Kiddush.

Our **Social Action Committee** encourages all our members to donate food to **SOVA** throughout the year, donate linens to two shelters for victims of domestic violence, purchase school supplies and fill backpacks for children in the **School on Wheels** program, participate in a yearly **Walk around Lake Balboa** to raise funds for a worthy charity, and write holiday cards and donate books to be sent to our servicemen overseas. (continued on page 3)

**Reflections** (continued)

by Clara Rosenbluth

Above all, I am thankful for **Rabbi Vorspan** who inspires such devotion and dedication in our congregants.



**DONATIONS**

**Congregation Shir Ami wishes to acknowledge the following donations:**

**Yahrzeits**

- Frances Black for Dora and Morris Eisdorfer
- Ben Bloom for Hyman Bloom
- Jerry Gort for Joan Gory
- Lauren G. Levi for Marc Fremed
- Thelma Goldstein for Sheldon Goldstein

**Birthdays**

- Eddie Scharf
- Ann Potell
- Clara Rosenbluth
- Ozzie Strassner
- Fran Kobulnick
- Sam Kobulnick
- Lew Silverman
- Eitan Sela

**Anniversaries**

- Nancy and Lonny Scharf
- Phyllis and Stan Schroeder

**In Honor of Rabbi Vorspan's Sermon**

Nancy Norris

**In Honor of Bat Mitzvah**

Mary Altsman

**In Thanks for Mike Stein's Brunch & Learn**

Sandy Wiviott

**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.

**Birthdays & Anniversaries**

**Birthdays**

- Sheilah Hart..... 11/1
- Shirley Esko..... 11/9
- Susan Lipman..... 11/9
- Dan Simansky..... 11/17
- Sam Kobulnick..... 11/18
- Lew Silverman..... 11/22
- Armand Wazana..... 11/22
- Isadore Perlmutter..... 11/25
- Lou Loomis..... 11/29

**Anniversaries**

- Fay and Ed Schneier..... 11/4 58th
- Sondra and Robert Licht..... 11/10 51st
- Peg and Jerry Kovar..... 11/14 32nd
- Gerry and Sam Hochberg..... 11/24 57th
- Betty and Harvey Cohen..... 11/25 69th

**Mailbox**



Dear Congregants,

I want to thank you for your cards and phone calls to wish me well after my surgery. It is nice to be thought of and concerned for my health.

I am doing well and getting around even better as time goes on.

Ed Orens

**Congregational News**



Get well wishes *rafuah schleimah* to:

**Paula Loomis** intestinal surgery

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

## Social Action Committee

First, I thank all of you who donated food to our **SOVA High Holiday**



**Food Drive!** I do not know whom to thank for their generous checks to SOVA for the High Holy Days, so I will thank you all on behalf of the many needy families who come to the SOVA food bank for their food. Please continue to be as supportive as you can to SOVA. SOVA accepts non-perishable and non-breakable food all year long at their Havenhurst/Vanowen location. They also accept checks; please mention you are from Congregation Shir Ami!



On November 2 at 9 am Congregation Shir Ami will be having our **Mitzvah Day** at the Temple Judea Social Hall on Lindley Avenue in Tarzana. We will again be doing the **School On Wheels Backpack Project**, having tables set up

for card and letter writing for **Operation Gratitude** and **Project MOT** as well as collecting books for our deployed military. Temple Judea has SOVA barrels available for your food donations too. We are not doing a joint Mitzvah Day with Temple Judea, but have been told that we should feel free to join them in their projects too. There is a large parking lot, but we strongly suggest everyone from Congregation Shir Ami arrive by 8:30 to find easiest parking. The Social Action Committee will be there at 7:30 to begin setting up. Please wear your Mitzvah Patrol tee shirts. We also would love for you to bring your cameras.

The Social Action committee is now collecting **TARGET \$10 gift cards for the women and children in the Domestic Violence Shelters we help sponsor for Hanukkah.** Please be as generous as possible, but each card must be \$10 so that everyone is treated equally. Please mail your cards to **Fran Kobulnick** at 5139 White Oak Ave. #13, Encino, CA 91316. Call her at (818) 345-2405 for more information.



December 19th at 1:00 p.m. sharp, our Committee and everyone-is-invited will have our annual Sabbath and Hanukkah Latka celebration at the West Valley Healthcare Center with all the residents. This is one of the most rewarding mitzvah projects we do. **Claire Silverman** leads us all in a sing-along and we bless the Shabbat candles, wine, and challah. We then all light the Hanukkah candles, spin the dreidls, enjoy latkas and dessert. We will have one-on-one



visits with all the residents and give them each a special holiday gift. We all leave knowing how appreciated our visit was, as they always ask us to come back again soon. If you would like to join us, please contact Fran for more information.

Look for more upcoming information about our annual **Linen Shabbat for the Domestic Violence Shelters** that we help sponsor.



A very special thank you to all those who sponsor Congregation Shir Ami's many mitzvah projects. We could never be as successful without your financial and emotional support! Please feel free to join our many mitzvah projects.



From all of our Social Action Committee and our families to you and yours, we wish a very warm and festive Thanksgiving! Please remember to create special memories to last for many generations to come and remember all those who are not as blessed as we are.

**Fran Kobulnick**, Social Action Vice President

## Operation Gratitude and Project MOT

by Charlene Kazel



On October 24th the sign of Scorpio appears. We could take the sting out of the Scorpion, but do we really want to do that?



There is always a need for a defense mechanism and our military personnel are our overseers and protectors most of all. But we are part of their defense mechanism. We are the ones who stand behind and support them. We do this by donating books, making scarves and hats, writing cards, and volunteering at **Operation Gratitude.**

And for us here at home the sting disappears when attend services. So the following is a No Sting menu:

- S** = Services - twice a month and holidays
- T** = *Tisch* - at Rabbi and Bonnie Vorspans'
- I** = Investment in the community
- N** = Now is the time to
- G** = Give from your heart and soul.

## Birds of a Feather

by Owen Delman



It all started with a bit of “bageling“. You know, that’s when you use a word or phrase vaguely Jewish in a conversation. If the response is also Jewish, you’ve identified and connected. All you know at that point is they’re Jewish. They still could be wretched people. There are no guarantees! However, Bette and I lucked out.

At the introductory meeting of our recent Central European Trip, the fifteen travelers drank some complimentary wine and smilingly eyed (assessed) each other. I was hoping there would be one or two other Jews since we were scheduled to visit places of Jewish history and heritage.

“Have you visited the breakfast buffet yet,” a fellow wine drinker asked as a conversation starter. “Smoked salmon, white fish, cheeses and great breads!”

I countered with “Lox! Terrific! Did they have onion bagels?”

“No, unfortunately, no bagels of any sort.”

And that’s how we met Jeff and Sharon and their friends, Marty and Arna.

The six of us were compatible beyond being Jewish -- they were well travelled, open to new experiences, and possessed a good sense of humor. The next evening we were invited to share a Kiddish with them and, in the hallway outside their room, recited the familiar prayers over their well-travelled candle, hotel wine from the mini bar and a *shtickel* breakfast buffet roll. Not very kosher, but very spiritual and definitely *hamish*. Once you got past the fear of burning down a lovely Prague hotel, it was also very special.

Over the next few days, as we explored the historic remnants of once rich Prague Jewish culture, our little Tribe of Six traded temple stories, ancestor reminiscences and observations on the Jewish sights, lack of a present day Jewish population and the current politics of Prague. Our guide, a young Slovakian, was wonderfully sensitive to the interests of the group and well versed in the recent history and political situation of each location. I must admit that Sharon often prompted him as to certain sites of Jewish importance which should be visited. He was always accommodating as was the rest of the group.

We soon garnered two additional Jews from the tour making our Tribe of Six a Tribe of Eight. For a non-Jewish labeled trip, it was most unusual. Obviously

the history of the major stops -- Prague, Bratislava and Budapest -- and World War II’s effect on the population was the draw for the Jewish tourists. What about the remaining seven members of the tour? For the most part they, too, had travelled extensively and were interested in learning about the area and its history. We mixed freely, our Jewish contingent not separating themselves, so at meals the whole tour sat together, exchanging thoughts on the trip. However, during quiet moments, when we weren’t in the larger group -- during a drink after dinner, walking through a synagogue or historic site - - there would be a knowing look or a short quiet insightful comment from one of our eight as we shared our people’s unique history.

These reflections of our grandparents’ stories of days in pre-WW II Europe along with what we were seeing gave further insight to the effect the war, the Holocaust and immigration had on us, the following generations. With it, our Tribe of Eight turned into a Community of Continuation. This journey into a dark past gave us, the Jewish members of the tour, a deep and personal understanding of the obligations of what it meant to survive as individuals and as a people.

Now, we are all back home and in the sharing of photos phase of the trip amongst all members of the tour. With each image comes warm commentary about our time together and, though all are friendly, comments from the Tribe of Eight sometimes carry the feeling of a slight knowing smile or a raised eyebrow of historical remembrance of a deeply felt experience unique to our lives.

Near the end of our two weeks, we discovered the “Bagel and Coffee” shop, the only such bakery in Bratislava. Buying enough for our Tribe, we passed them out as discreetly as the original “bageling” two weeks before and thus were able to end the trip with a real bagel. It seemed so fitting and was another, less serious, special shared experience.



Interior of Old-New Synagogue in Prague



Dohány Street Synagogue in Budapest



“Bagel and Coffee” shop in Bratislava

## Biography of the Month: Barbra Streisand

by Stan Schroeder

[Looking back at the over 100 bios I've written for *Shir Notes*, I've decided to republish an updated version of the first one I wrote for the April 2005 issue.]

Recently at Shabbat services when **Rabbi Vorspan** asked us to share what we were thankful for, I started to talk about a well known Jewish person who was born during the current month. I am thankful for the contributions these people have made to Jewish and American society that I enjoy today. I was encouraged to write something for *Shir Notes* that I am starting with this issue.



One of the most acclaimed and successful stars of popular music and film is **Barbra Streisand**. She was born April 24, 1942 in Brooklyn with her first name spelled the traditional way. Her father **Manny** had been involved in a car accident in 1930 that left him with chronic headaches. He would have epileptic seizures, which the doctor had warned could happen again at any time. After Barbara was born he decided to take on a summer job as a counselor at Camp Cascade in the Catskills to supplement his high school teaching income. After Manny began his job, his headaches became more intense and one day in August 1943 he passed out and died shortly thereafter.

Distraught and penniless, her mother **Diana** moved into her parents' small apartment on Pulaski Street in Brooklyn with Barbara and her brother. As a child, she attended the Jewish Beis Yakov School in Brooklyn. However her mother couldn't afford the tuition and she then went to public school. At the age of seven she was sent to a Hebrew health camp, but threw a tantrum and left when her mother brought a suitor during a visit.

She had a traumatic childhood and entertained herself by singing. Though her mother balked at her little girl's aspirations to go into show business, primarily because she thought her daughter wasn't pretty enough, little Barbara was adamant. She took ballet for six months. Barbara entered a talent contest while on summer vacation at a hotel in the Catskills; she won the contest and so impressed the hotel guests that two of them asked her to sing at their weddings.

In September 1955, Barbara entered the freshman class of 1300 students at Erasmus High School in Brooklyn, where she was an excellent student. After twice being rejected at auditions for the school choir, she was finally accepted. Among the choir members was **Neil Diamond** who became a lifelong friend. In April 1956, Barbara had an inspirational experience

when her mother allowed her to go into Manhattan for her fourteenth birthday to see a production of *The Diary of Anne Frank*. She decided she could become an actress. Despite being constantly discouraged by her mother, Barbara continued to pursue her dream. While in high school she apprenticed at the Cherry Lane Theater. During her internship, she met **Allan Miller**, a Manhattan acting coach. He labeled Barbara's audition as the worst he had ever seen, but was drawn to her because of her enthusiasm, inquisitiveness, and forceful personality.

Just weeks after graduation, she packed her bags and moved to Manhattan, where she could wholeheartedly pursue her dream of stardom. Her dream was not long in coming true. She took all the obstacles her mother saw - her unconventional looks, her quirky personality and her unique way of dressing - and turned them to her advantage. While Barbara was intent on acting, it was her amazing vocal gift that first thrust her into the New York performance scene. At the age of 18, she was already stunning audiences at clubs in Manhattan and other cities. She changed the spelling of her name, eliminating the second unpronounced vowel, and in doing so, made it unique - and the rest is history.

Her first film was *Funny Girl* in 1968, the biography of Jewish comedienne **Fanny Brice**. Her performance earned her a share of the Academy Award for Best Actress (along with **Katharine Hepburn** for *A Lion in Winter*). Among her many hits was *Yentl* in 1983, based on *Yentl, the Yeshiva Boy* by **Isaac Bashevis Singer**, which Barbra also directed, produced, and collaborated on the screenplay. [End of original article]



Barbra, who dropped the "a" from her name at the age of 18 as an act of partial rebellion, has had a storied and versatile career. As a singer in the 70s, she had top 10 hits such as *The Way We Were*, *Evergreen*, and *You Don't Bring Me Flowers*. She has been one of the biggest concert tour attractions. She grossed \$92.5 million in a 20 concert tour in 2006. Her movie hits ranged from musicals to screwball comedies to dramatic. And she has been involved in the business side of show business.

Barbra donated a Building for Jewish Studies at Hebrew University in Jerusalem in 1984. Through her Streisand Foundation, she has contributed over \$16 million to a variety of liberal causes. And in 2009 she gave \$5 million to Cedars-Sinai Medical Center.

**New Event: Torah and Shabbat Study with Stan Schroeder**

by Stan Schroeder

Congregation Shir Ami is downsizing to two Shabbat services a month for ten months as of the current fiscal year July, 2014. There are no services in July or August. To make up for part of the missing



Shabbat services, I will lead a Shabbat study session one Saturday morning a month at 10:30 at the Northridge Mobile Home Park Rec Room, 19120 Nordhoff St. We will discuss the weekly Torah portion, the Shabbat prayers that are included in our Contemporary service, and various subjects relevant to Conservative Judaism.

Our next session will be November 22. The Torah reading will be parsha *Toldot* (Genesis 25:19 - 28:9), the story of Jacob and Esau. Those of us at the first session October 11 had an engaging discussion of the giving of the Torah at Sinai and the *misheberach* prayer for healing. We are commanded "*la asok b'divrei torah*" (to engage in the study of Torah). Join us and fulfill the mitzvah.

Call me at (818) 718-7466 for more information.

**Ritual Committee**

This last month has been our busiest of the year for praying, celebrating Sukkot and the ensuing holidays, Jewish learning, and enjoying **Cantor Mike Stein's** delightful presentation of Jewish music at our annual Brunch and Learn. Let's start with Yom Kippur. It concluded with the blessing of the children at the *neila* service. We are blessed with the many grandchildren who walked under our upraised *tallit*. Thanks to **Armand Wazana** and **Leon Nachenberg** for moving our stuff at the Vineyard to our storage area.



Sunday, October 12, we were educated and entertained by Mike Stein and his shofar, guitar, and violin following a delicious brunch prepared by **Sheilah Hart**. Mike even adapted Jewish music to yodeling and *Comin' Round the Mountain*.

Tuesday evening, October 14, we fulfilled the mitzvah of waving the lulav at the **Vorspans'** annual Sukkot neighborhood party and enjoyed **Bonnie's** homemade treats in their sukkah.



And Thursday evening, October 23, was the first *Around the Rabbi's Tisch* of our 5775 season around the Vorspans' dining room table. Among other topics, we began a discussion of Jewish values in the upcoming election propositions. This month's schedule is November 6, 13, and 20. See the flyer in this *Shir Notes* for more information.

**Stan Schroeder**, Ritual Vice President

**Chanukah Dinner December 23**

by Sherry Dollins, Chairperson



Be sure to save the date of Tuesday December 23rd and plan to join us at the annual Shir Ami **Chanukah Dinner** as we celebrate together at 6:30 pm in the Recreation Room of the Northridge Mobile Home Park at 19120 Nordhoff St. in Northridge. We will once again enjoy a delicious catered holiday dinner (from Hovav Catering) of chicken, latkes, applesauce, roasted vegetables, fruit, beverage and dessert. Bring your Chanukiah and candles for the community holiday candle lighting and join us as we sing and celebrate this joyous holiday together. A highlight of the evening will be Rabbi's presentation of a special Chanukah story.

Please see the *Shir Notes* flyer for details and to R.S.V.P. We must receive your reservation, with payment enclosed, by Friday, December 19th. Let's



make this our most memorable Chanukah Dinner yet.

I hope that you will share this special program with my family and me.

## Side Trip in France - Archachon

by Fiona Taylor

At the beginning of September this year, **Stan [Goodman]** and I went on a trip to France that included a river cruise in and around Bordeaux, visiting many chateaux, historic sites, and museums. One of the side trips that was offered was to a small seaside town called Arcachon. We elected not to go on the trip because, in addition to the fact that it seemed ridiculously expensive, the main focus seemed to be that it offered oysters as the highlight of the tour - obviously not something in which we had much interest! Our interest was piqued, however, because it sounded quite different from any place we visited on the trip and, since we had several days on our own after the cruise, we decided to drive the 90 minutes or so and explore the town ourselves. We were not disappointed.

The town was charming, somewhat reminiscent of the seaside towns that I visited as a child in England. As we drove into the center of town and parked near the railway station, we noticed what looked like an old-fashioned amusement park train parked in the street. It advertised a tour of the town later that afternoon for a nominal fee - 5 euros per person I think. We walked down to the beach, had a leisurely lunch, admired the view and returned to the starting point for Le P'tit Train. The driver apolo-



for the fact that the commentary would be only in French, but gave us a laminated brochure in English so that we could follow along (I do speak French so I could translate for the others in the party when necessary). The ride was about 50 minutes through the small streets, parks, gardens and very impressive villas built up and down the hillsides.

What we immediately learned was that the town had been founded in 1857 by brothers **Emile and Isaac Pereire**, who were Sephardic Jews from a family originating in Portugal. The Pereire family resided in Bordeaux and, at the time, had a banking empire rivaling the **Rothschilds**. These two brothers decided that Arcachon would be an ideal spot to promote as a resort or spa for sick people in recovery, many of whom were suffering from tuberculosis. Up to that time, Switzerland had been the destination of choice

for such patients but the sea air and surrounding pine forests of Arcachon were found to be just as beneficial, especially since the bay is well protected from strong winds.

**Emile Pereire** became a major stockholder of the railway line that ran from Paris to Bordeaux and built an extension to Arcachon to enable tourists and TB patients to reach the town more easily. Many villas were constructed in a way that specifically catered to the sick residents: they were located on the hillsides, secluded with pine trees around them, each villa with 3 stories to facilitate housing not just for the patients but for their family members, doctors and nurses. These are situated in what is known as the Ville d'Hiver (Winter Town): there are 215 villas, built in many different styles. In the mid and late-1900s, the town had many famous visitors including **Napoleon III, Alexandre Dumas, and Toulouse-Lautrec**. The success of the town as a favorite destination was of course bolstered by such patrons.

The villas stand to this day, many of them bearing the original names: Villa Alexandre Dumas, Villa Faust, Villa Toledo, etc. Our little train tour around the area paused briefly near many of the most interesting villas, while the commentary explained the architecture and history pertaining to each. As the tour ended, we curved around and back towards the station - and there we saw a synagogue, also built by the Pereire brothers. Unfortunately, we were unable to go inside but it was very small, probably no bigger than one large room.

(continued on page 9)



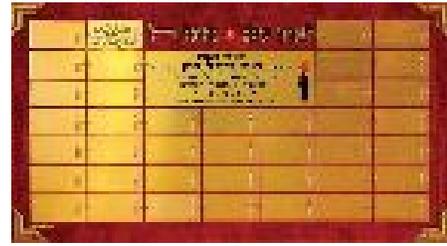
## Side Trip in France - Archachon (continued)

The information we were given on the train ride was in great detail but, unfortunately, we had to return it to the driver as he only had one copy! I have done some research on the internet: I found it very interesting that, on the tourist websites, Wikipedia, etc. absolutely nothing was mentioned that the Pereire family was Jewish, nor that there is a synagogue (it is well sign-posted in the town, however). I suppose, given the current climate in France (some things never change), it further demonstrates that there is no love lost between the French and their Jewish neighbors.

The most information I found out about the family was on [Jewishencyclopedia.com](http://Jewishencyclopedia.com). It seems that earlier members of the family were conversos who never gave up their Judaism - they left Spain for Portugal and eventually came to Bordeaux. The brothers' grandfather (or possibly great-grandfather), **Jacob Rodrigues Pereire**, was the first teacher of deaf-mutes in France in the mid-1700s. In 1777, he also secured the right for Portuguese Jews to settle in France, and worked his whole life for the welfare of Jews of southern France, Spain and Portugal.

A day trip to a small seaside town became an exploration of history that I have enjoyed immensely.

## 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.

## An experienced, professional and trusted Realtor is closer than you think...

- 15 years of multimillion dollar sales
- Valley resident for nearly 35 years
- Focused, local expertise
- Competitive commissions
- Always at no charge:

Buyer's Home Warranty / Seller's Pest Inspection

  
ESTATE REALTY  
GROUP

5959 Topanga Canyon Blvd. Suite 220  
Woodland Hills, CA 91367



**Owen Delman**  
Vice President and Realtor®  
c. 818.645.7606 / w. 818.887.4518

## 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.**

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



# Congregation Shir Ami Annual Chanukah Dinner



**Tuesday, December 23rd**

**6:30 pm**

**In the Recreation Room of the Northridge Mobile Home Park**

**19120 Nordhoff St., Northridge**

**Enjoy delectable CHICKEN,**

**Luscious LATKES and APPLE SAUCE**

**ROASTED VEGETABLES**

**FRUIT**

**BROWNIES and JELLY DOUGHNUTS**



**Come and share in a wonderful evening that will include great food (catered by Hovav Catering), songs and a Chanukah story told by our own Rabbi Vorspan.**

**Bring your Chanukiah and candles for the community candle lighting**

## Chanukah Dinner

**Must R.S.V.P., with your enclosed check,**  
**by Friday, December 19th to Congregation Shir Ami**  
**PO Box 6357, Woodland Hills, CA 91365**

**Adult(s) @ \$21.00 \_\_\_\_\_**

**Sponsor(s) @ \$25.00 \_\_\_\_\_**

**TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**NAME \_\_\_\_\_**

**PHONE NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_**

## Thursdays November 6, 13, and 20, 7:30 - 8:30 pm “Around the Rabbi’s Tisch” at the Vorspans’

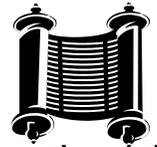


This popular Shir Ami educational series continues its 5775 season. Come join us for our weekly discussion of Rabbi Vorspan’s selected topics of Jewish interest. We discuss Jewish texts and current events as they relate to Jewish values and our lives as Jews. This is a unique opportunity to learn and share in an informal format around the Vorspans’ dining room table.

The Vorspans’ home is located at 22320 Philipprimm St. in Woodland Hills. Call Rabbi Vorspan at (818) 888-9817 for more information.

## Saturday November 22, 10:30 am New Event: Torah/ Shabbat Study at Northridge Mobile Home Park

Stan Schroeder will lead a Shabbat study session one Saturday morning a month at 10:30 at the Northridge Mobile Home Park Rec Room, 19120 Nordhoff St. We will discuss the weekly Torah portion, the Shabbat prayers that are included in our Contemporary service, and various subjects relevant to Conservative Judaism.



Our second session will be November 22. The Torah reading will be parsha *Toldot* (Genesis 25:19 - 28:9), the story of Jacob and Esau. Those of us at the first session October 11 had an engaging discussion of the giving of the Torah at Sinai and the *misheberach* prayer for healing. We are commanded “*la asok b’divrei torah*” (to engage in the study of Torah). Join us and fulfill the mitzvah.

Call Stan at (818) 718-7466 for more information.

# Congregation Shir Ami Mitzvah Day Sunday, November 2 at 9:00 AM sharp Temple Judea Social Hall 5429 Lindley Ave., Tarzana



**Our Social Action Committee will once again organize our congregation to fill school backpacks for the School on Wheels program.**

Every week, hundreds of School on Wheels' volunteer tutors give hope, educational assistance and support to the thousands of homeless children living in Southern California.

**School on Wheels** provides one-on-one tutoring for homeless kids who live in shelters, motels, group foster homes and on the streets. In addition to weekly tutoring and mentoring, every student receives a backpack, school supplies, and uniforms; students get assistance enrolling in school and with locating and filing school records; and each student receives a toll-free phone number for around-the-clock School on Wheels' support.

They do all this with no government funding. They survive through the donations of people like you who believe as we do that every child has potential and every volunteer makes a difference.

Other Mitzvah projects will be available to those who must sit down. Please bring non-breakable/non-perishable food for the SOVA food drive. For further information call Mike Easley at (818) 625-4281 or Leon Nachenberg at (818) 885-6736 .

-----  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail this tear-off to sign up for Mitzvah Day 2014**

Number of backpacks @ \$15 each: \_\_\_\_\_

Other donation:  \$18  \$36  \$54  \$72  \$108  \$216

I will attend: YES  NO  Number of people attending: \_\_\_\_\_

Checks must be payable to Congregation Shir Ami (put Mitzvah Day in the memo) and mailed to P.O. Box 6353  
Woodland Hills, CA 91365

Community Service School  
credit for students