



# Congregation B'nai Jacob

Jersey City's Contemporary Egalitarian Congregation  
Congregational Newsletter May-June, 2011

**May 6th Friday Night Live!  
and Speaker  
May 7th Andy Silikovitz's  
30th Bar Mitzvah Anniversary**

Friday Evening Services  
begin at 8:00 PM followed  
by Oneg Shabbat

Saturday Morning Services  
begin at 9:00 AM, followed  
by a Kiddush Lunch

## Lazar Weiner: Jewish Cultural Catalyst, Master of Yiddish Art Song, or Both?

Few of us are familiar today with the name Lazar Weiner, a brilliant composer, musician, conductor and educator in the arena of Jewish Music over the course of the twentieth century. This unsung hero – pun intended – deserves some attention from those of us in the Jewish world who may not be familiar with his contributions. We all know the household names of American Jewish music, like Irving Berlin, George Gershwin, Leonard Bernstein and in more recent times, Bob Dylan (Zimmerman) or Michael Tilson Thomas, grandson of Bessie and Boris Thomashefsky. But Weiner's contributions I believe far exceed these 'greats' whom everyone has heard of. Why do I say that? Because his influence and reach extended into every aspect of Jewish community life in America over the course of six decades, from the 20s through the 70s. This month's column will focus on his exceptional contributions.

Born in Cherkassy in the Ukraine in 1897, Lazar Weiner emigrated with his family to America when he was a teenager. His musical abilities were recognized at an early age back in the 'old country' and his parents, of modest means, sent him to the Choir School at the Brodsky Synagogue in Kiev. He even performed with the Kiev Opera and had a small scholarship to study at the Conservatory of Music in Kiev, where all his training was in traditional Western clas-



Cantor Dubrow

sical music.

Upon his arrival in the United States in 1914 at the age of 17, Weiner quickly scrambled to find ways to make a living. His talents took him to silent movie houses, where he played the piano, then to helping voice teachers in Carnegie Hall studios as an accompanist, and even to being an assistant conductor of the Brooklyn-based Mendelsohn Symphony.

His big break came when he was invited in 1931, after conducting a number of other Yiddish choruses for a number of years, to become the conductor of the Workmen's Circle Chorus. In that era, a time of social activism and workers' labor movements in America, this chorus stood out as the chorus of the Jewish labor movement. Weiner agreed to take on the leadership offered, but only after his employers agreed to a one year hiatus for the chorus from all public performances. He insisted that this ragtag group of Jewish laborers, coming from all over Eastern Europe and Russia, align on a single pronunciation of the Yiddish language and

*Continues top of page 2*



Lazar Weiner  
1897 - 1981

## Upcoming Events

**Sunday, May 1st  
1:00 PM**

46th Annual Yom HaShoah Commemoration  
Details Page 6

**Friday, May 6th**  
Speaker Series  
Brenda Pulaski, M.Ed.  
Details Page 3

**Saturday, May 7th**  
Andy Silikovitz 30th Bar Mitzvah  
Details Page 3

**Sunday Play Dates at BJ  
Featuring Actors  
Shakespeare Company**

**May 15th** - "The Millionairess"  
**June 5th** - "The Melting Pot"  
**June 26th** - "Arcadia"  
Details Page 5

**Thursday, June 9th**  
Shavuot Observance & Yizkor  
Details Page 9

**Friday, June 24th**  
Year-End Shabbat Dinner &  
Friday Night Live!  
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The B'nai Jacob Newsletter is supported by a donation in memory of Betty Cole. We thank the "Violet Zall Hordes Foundation, Inc" for their very generous grant to be used for membership growth, educational and religious programs and community outreach.



## B'nai Jacob - Jersey City's Contemporary Egalitarian Congregation

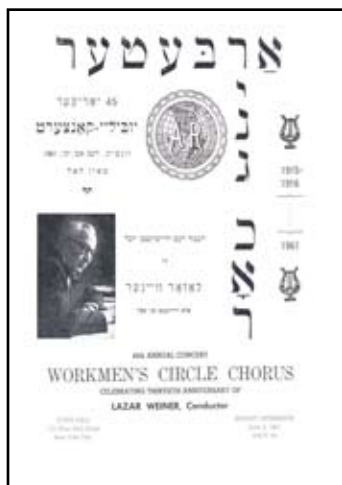
*Cantor Dubrow, continued...*

he wanted to spend that year preparing them. His employers agreed and for the next three decades, Weiner led an illustrious group of amateur choristers in annual concerts at Carnegie Hall and Town Hall, the major performance venues of those days. The Lazar Weiner archives at YIVO at the Center for Jewish History in New York City are filled with memorabilia from that era, including programs and marketing materials to sign up new members.

In addition to his role as conductor of the Workmen's Circle Chorus, it may come as a great surprise to learn that Lazar Weiner was also engaged by the Central Synagogue of New York – one of the country's leading Reform temples established by German Jews in the mid-1800s, -- as its Music Director from the early 1930s until the mid-1960s. In that capacity, he conducted a professional choir and worked with renowned cantors at the temple. He worked very closely with Rabbi Jonah B. Wise and together they created a weekly radio program, "Message of Israel" that was broadcast across America for many decades. Through Weiner's influence, sacred choral works of such composers as Darius Milhaud and Ernst Bloch were heard in some cases for the very first time. In addition, Lazar Weiner himself composed a number of 'sacred services' that were performed at Central Synagogue and other congregations following their publication.

But there was another side to this most exceptionally talented cultural catalyst, ever active in the Jewish community, be it

at a Reformed Temple or a Jewish Workers Chorus, and that was Lazar Weiner's side as a composer of Yiddish art song. Early in his American sojourn, Weiner had the good fortune to be introduced to a group of budding Yiddish poets, and from this circle, he gained a deep appreciation of the beauty of Yiddish poetry. Eventually he began setting these poems to music that singers of some training could perform with his accompanying them. The melodies and the accompaniments were highly sophisticated and



can be compared to the great art songs of such Western composers as Schubert or Schumann. As early as the late teens and early 20s, he set poems by his good friend Nachum Baruch Minkoff who studied law, but continued to write poetry in Yiddish. And in later decades, he even set some Yiddish religious poetry by Rabbi Abraham

Heschel. While Lazar Weiner always strived to create a 'Jewish music' full of Jewish references and a Jewish musical feeling, he always declared he was not an observant Jew in the traditional sense. Yet his devotion to the art form of Jewish music in all its varieties, led him to invitations in the 1960s and 1970s as faculty member of the distinguished cantorial schools of his day, both at Hebrew Union College and the Jewish Theological Seminary. Lazar Weiner received numerous invitations from all over the country to visit congrega-

tions as scholar/composer-in-residence. In 1968, Weiner was chosen to receive the Frank L. Weil Award of the National Jewish Welfare Board for Distinguished Contribution to American Jewish Culture. In his notification letter, the organization's president wrote: "You were the overwhelming choice of the Jury for this Award in recognition of your exceptional and creative achievements as a composer, conductor, lecturer and teacher." He followed in the footsteps of Leonard Bernstein and Ernst Bloch in receiving this award.

On May 12, at 7:00 P.M. in New York City, at the Center for Jewish History, 15 West 16th Street, the YIVO Sidney Krum Young Artists Concert Series will present a program of Lazar Weiner's Yiddish Art Songs. I have been invited to choose the program, to introduce it, and give a brief lecture about Lazar Weiner. Anyone interested in attending may contact me for free tickets.

Many of you know that in 2008-2009, I held a Milstein Fellowship at the Center where I researched the Lazar Weiner archive filled with numerous letters, photos, and concert programs from his long career. Among the letters I came across is one from Albert Einstein and another from Franklin Delano Roosevelt extending gracious thanks for Weiner's dedication of his choral oratorio, "To Thee America" to these important contributors to American life. Immigrant Jew, Lazar Weiner is an exemplar of American Jewish music culture to be greatly admired for his vast contributions and his deep embracing of both Jewish and American values.

Cantor Marsha Dubrow, Ph. D  
cantor@bnaijacobjc.org  
201-910-4334



### Here Comes the Honey Wagon!

5772 will be here before you know it, so get in your honey orders while the bees are busy!

**Don't miss out. Get your orders in by August 15th**

Price is \$11 per jar, postpaid to any domestic address. Make checks payable to Congregation B'nai Jacob. Please be sure to include your full name, address, and zip code when you order.

Send your order and payment to:  
Lenore Berkowitz, 28 Delmar Road, Jersey City 07305  
201-333-3682



## Sid's News and Views



On Friday evening, March 4th, we joined Temple Emanu-El and Temple Beth Am for Shabbat Across America for sabbath dinner and services. It was held at Temple Emanu-El in Bayonne.

We had 25 of our members sign up for the event. The food was great and plentiful and the hospitality perfect. After the meal we went upstairs for services. Cantor Dubrow and Rabbi Gladstone (from Temple Beth Am) joined Rabbi Miller (from Temple Emanu-El) in conducting the service. All went very well with no rehearsal! Each participating synagogue was invited to make announcements of their coming events from the Bima. It was a great evening shared by the Jewish community.

And while we are on the subject of services - will the members of our Board of Trustees please make an effort to come to shabbat services a few times a month so we can have a minyan. It would be appreciated especially by those who have Yahrzeit.

Our wonderful Purim services were on Saturday night, March 19th. Photos of people attending, several in costume and some without, are posted in the Rubin Lobby for you to see. After Havdalah we began the Megillah reading. Several children came and participated in the arts and crafts set up in the back of the sanctuary. They also joined in singing and playing musical instruments, brought by Cantor Dubrow and David Rosenberg. The music took place after reading the Megillah, read by our Cantor and several members, in English and Hebrew. Fun, fun, fun for all. Delicious goodies were prepared by Min Natovitz and Pauline Danton for us to enjoy afterwards. Adults and children alike had a memorable Saturday night.

On Sunday, March 6th, as a part of our Lox 'n Learning Sunday series, we had a wonderful presentation by Florette Lynn, translator from the Yiddish of the Yizkor book of Ivanets, Poland. On April 10th we had another in our Lox 'n Learning breakfast series. Deborah Ugoretz, an award winning artist taught us about the art of Jewish Paper Cutting. After a slide show she passed out the

necessary equipment for us to do paper cutting of our own; cutting mats, patterns. Xacto knives and colored paper to back our creations. Lenore Berkowitz and Jessica Lemmon finished their beautiful projects quickly. In addition to a learning experience it was fun and has given birth to the idea of having an art group meet regularly at Bnai Jacob - but more about this in the future.

On Sunday, May 1 we are having our 46th annual Yom Hashoa observance at our synagogue in commemoration of the Holocaust, in conjunction with Temple Beth El and United Synagogue of Hoboken. The Hoboken choir will sing. Please attend. A flyer with further information has been mailed.

Saturday, May 7th, Andy Silikowitz, who davens for us on the High Holy Days each year, is going to chant his Bar Mitzvah Haftorah. There will be a lavish luncheon/Kiddush for all and we hope you join us that morning.

On June 4th Jessica Lemmon will recite her Bat Mitzvah Haftorah so let's help her celebrate that shabbat also. And if you would like to chant a Haftorah or participate in services please let me or Cantor Dubrow know.

Shavuot comes in June. See further information in this issue about the exact schedule. Shavuot, the feast of weeks, completes seven weeks from the second day of Pesah on which the Omer of barley was brought to the Temple. This holiday celebrates the early wheat harvest in Israel. It commemorates the covenant at Sinai between God and Israel and the giving of the Ten Commandments. Join us at services and for those who observe a Yizkor please see the schedule.

We offer our sincere condolences to Irene Peck on the recent loss of her brother. May she know no further sorrow.

A plaque in memory of Beatrice Mazur has been placed on the George Ehrlich Memorial Wall in our sanctuary. To order a plaque in memory of someone or to reserve one please call me at 201-435-1172.

I hope you all had a zissen Pesah. Jane and I spent our in Los Angeles and we are still full from all the delicious goodies but it was wonderful being with our family.

*Sid Canter*

## Upcoming Events

### Congregation B'nai Jacob Speaker Series

**Friday Evening  
May 6th, 8 PM**

Friday Night Live! Musical Service followed by

***"The Challenge of Housing the Homeless"***

A presentation by  
**Brenda Pulaski, M.Ed.**

Division Director of Housing & Residential Services for Catholic Charities

Brenda Pulaski has a M.Ed. in counseling and over 35 years experience working in human services, in both mental health and substance abuse settings. For the past 17 years she has worked in programs that serve homeless, HIV+/AIDS populations. Since 2001 she has worked for Catholic Charities Archdiocese of Newark (CCAN) where she is now the Division Director of Housing and Residential Services.

### Save the Date Come Celebrate!

**Saturday, May 7th  
9:00 AM**

***Andy Silikowitz, our Rosh Hashana Torah Reader, is Celebrating the 30th Anniversary of his Bar Mitzvah.***

*Please join Andy, his folks, and his friends in our sanctuary for this 30th Anniversary of his Bar Mitzvah.*

*Services will be followed by a festive Kiddush luncheon.*

B'nai Jacob - Jersey City's Contemporary Egalitarian Congregation

May-June 2011/Nisan-Iyar-Sivan 5771

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
May 1 27 Nisan Yom HaShoah Community Observance 1 PM CANTOR	2 28 Nisan Yom HaShoah	3 29 Nisan	4 30 Nisan Rosh Hodesh Iyar	5 1 Iyar	6 2 Iyar Candles 7:37 Friday Night Live! Speaker Series CANTOR	7 3 Iyar Parsha Emor Andy Silikovitz's 30th Bar Mitzvah Anniversary CANTOR
8 4 Iyar	9 5 Iyar Yom Hazikaron	10 6 Iyar Yom Ha'Atzamat	11 7 Iyar	12 8 Iyar	13 9 Iyar Candles 7:44	14 10 Iyar Parsha B'Har  CANTOR
15 11 Iyar ASC @ B'nai Jacob "The Millionaires" 1 PM CANTOR	16 12 Iyar	17 13 Iyar	18 14 Iyar	19 15 Iyar	20 16 Iyar Candles 7:51	21 17 Iyar Parsha B'Hukotai  Haftarah Yael Israel
22 18 Iyar Lag B'Omer	23 19 Iyar	24 20 Iyar	25 21 Iyar	26 22 Iyar	27 23 Iyar Candles 7:57	28 24 Iyar Parsha B'Midbar Birkat Hahodesh
29 25 Iyar	30 26 Iyar	31 27 Iyar	June 1 28 Iyar Yom Yerushalyim	2 29 Iyar	3 1 Sivan Candles 8:02	4 2 Sivan Parsha Naso Haftarah Jessica Lemon  CANTOR
5 3 Sivan ASC @ B'nai Jacob "The Melting Pot" 1 PM CANTOR	6 4 Sivan	7 5 Sivan Erev Shavuot	8 6 Sivan Shavuot	9 7 Sivan Shavuot Observance 9 AM Yizkor 10:30  CANTOR	10 8 Sivan Candles 8:07	11 9 Sivan Parsha B'Ha'Alotekha
12 10 Sivan	13 11 Sivan	14 12 Sivan	15 13 Sivan	16 14 Sivan	17 15 Sivan Candles 8:10	18 16 Sivan Parsha Shelah-Lekha
19 17 Sivan	20 18 Sivan	21 19 Sivan	22 20 Sivan	23 21 Sivan	24 22 Sivan Candles 8:11  Friday Night Live! Shabbat Dinner CANTOR	25 23 Sivan Parsha Korah Birkat Hahodesh Haftarah Yael Israel CANTOR
26 24 Sivan ASC @ B'nai Jacob "Arcadia" 1 PM CANTOR	27 25 Sivan	28 26 Sivan	29 27 Sivan	30 28 Sivan	July 1 29 Sivan Candles 8:11	July 2 30 Sivan Parsha Hukat Rosh Hodesh Tammuz

## Mark Your Calendars & Save the Dates!

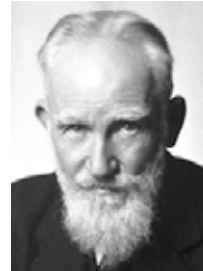
*"The Play's the Thing!"*

Actors Shakespeare Company @ B'nai Jacob – Spring Series  
Presents:

*Certainly Not Shakespeare #1:*  
**"The Millionairess"**

By George Bernard Shaw  
May 15, 2011

1:00 PM Pre-play Discussion  
1:30 PM Performance



Project Director and ASC at NJCU company member Michael Hajek delves into Shaw's fantastic venture into the world of money and a quest for love by the world's richest woman. The brilliant dialogue and perceptive social insight makes for a delightfully irreverent take on the differing views and experiences of the "haves" and the "have nots."

*Oy, Absolutely Not Shakespeare #2:*  
**"The Melting Pot"**

By Israel Zangwill  
June 5, 2011

1:00 PM Pre-Play Discussion  
1:30 PM Performance



In the wake of the 1903 Kishinev pogrom and the death of his family, David Quixano emigrates to the U.S. and composes "The Crucible," a symphony full of hope for a society where people of all ethnicities form the "melting pot." The presentation is a one-day event celebrating the diversity of our community and the struggle to find one's place in the world.

*Definitely Not Shakespeare #3:*  
**"Arcadia"**

By Tom Stoppard  
June 26, 2011

1:00 PM Pre-Play Discussion  
1:30 PM Performance



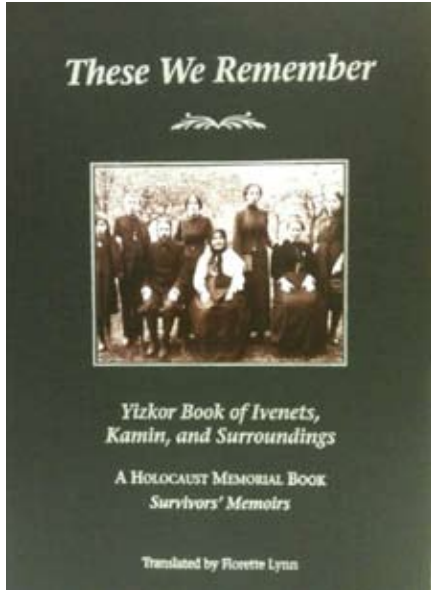
Set in a single room of one English country estate – but during two very different time periods – Arcadia weaves two interconnected story lines, revealing the consistency and persistence through history of human nature and human endeavor. Through sex, comedy, mathematics and more, the play muses on what fate takes away and what time can – and cannot – restore. Project Director and ASC founding member Bethany Reeves leads this exploration of one of Britain's most gifted, influential and knighted playwrights.

**All events are free and will take place in B'nai Jacob's beautiful sanctuary  
to be followed by a Wine & Cheese reception.**

176 West Side Avenue, Jersey City, NJ 07305 Always Off-street Parking.

## Recent Event Update Lox 'n Learning March 6th "These We remember"

On March 6th, Florette Lynn presented "These We Remember". She discussed the Yizkor book of her mother's Shtetl of Ivanetz, Poland, and what led her to translate it from the Yiddish. A feature of her talk was the presentation of a video



which documents a family trip she made to Ivanets and her discoveries and insights about the nature of history and memory. As always, a nice breakfast spread gave everyone the fuel for the morning.



Florette Standing and Delivering



## Join us for our 46th Annual Yom HaShoah Commemoration

Presented by  
Congregation B'nai Jacob  
&  
Congregation Beth El

Sunday, May 1st  
1:00 PM in the B'nai Jacob  
Sanctuary

Program:  
Film: "Loboml"  
Pre-Holocaust Through the  
Eyes of Survivors

\*\*  
Holocaust Readings  
\*\*

Music of the Holocaust  
\*\*

Memorial Candle Lighting for  
the Six Million  
Led by Rabbi Kenneth Brickman  
and  
Cantor Marsha Dubrow, Ph.D.  
Reception Follows the Program

## Recent Event Update Purim, March 19th

Here are just a few of the more than 100 pictures from our Purim blast. Many of these are posted on the corkboard in the synagogue entrance lobby.



Delicious Champagne Punch



Olive Oyveh and Popeye



Jessica Lemon at Crafts Table



Doing Havdalah



Big, Medium, Small



Super, Girl!



Take two tablets and call me..



Miriam haNiveah: Tof M'Od

## Recent Event Update Lox `n Learning April 10th "The Art of Jewish Paper Cutting"

Our April 10th Lox `n Learning was packed with eager knife-wielders ready to learn about the venerable art of Jewish Paper Cutting. The lecture/hands-on class was led by Deborah Ugoretz, a fine artist renowned for her exquisite works using cut paper as the medium. The program started with a slide show and was followed by a hands-on lab, where participants created their own works of art. It was just as it was supposed to be: instructive and fun! Here are some photos from the event:



One Side of the table....



...And The Other Side



Satisfied Customers!



Listening and Learning



Deborah Ugoretz with a sample of work



From the slide show



Sid and Jane go at it



Girl Talk! And Lots of Smiles.



More Satisfied Customers!

# Tributes and Donations

## TORAH FUND

From Pauline Danton to Irene Peck on the loss of her beloved brother  
 From Min Natovitz to Irene Peck on the loss of her beloved brother  
 From Claire Silverman to Irene Peck on the loss of her beloved brother  
 From Betty Arenson to Irene Peck on the loss of her beloved brother  
 From Helen Berman to Irene Peck on the loss of her beloved brother  
 From Sophie Oliver to Irene Peck on the loss of her beloved brother  
 From Pearl and Sam Pepose to Irene Peck on the loss of her beloved brother  
 From Congregation B'nai Jacob to Irene Peck on the loss of her beloved brother

From Betty Arenson to the Brass Family in memory of Joe Brass,  
 beloved father, grandfather, and great-grandfather

## DANIEL STRULOWITZ BIMAH FLOWER FUND

From Gloria and Abe Langer to Mr. and Mrs. Jack Seibenberg on the birth of their grandchild  
 From Gloria and Abe Langer to Suzie Peyser on her very special birthday

## ARTHUR D. SMITH MEMORIAL FUND

"In memory of Robert Barry Ull" from his loving mother, Florence Ull

## YAHARZEIT DONATIONS

<i>Member</i>	<i>Deceased</i>	<i>Relationship</i>
SONIA AZAROW	MORRIS KURTZ	FATHER
SONIA AZROW	MICHAEL AZAROW	SON
LENORE BERKOWITZ AND ANNE GELB	CHARLES BERKOWITZ	FATHER
MIRIAM BERNSTEIN	HARRY BERNSTEIN	HUSBAND
ALVIN CANTER	MINA CANTER	MOTHER
YNN HAIM	HARRY COHN	GRANDFATHER
GLORIA LANGER	SOPHIE STRENGER	MOTHER
MINNIE NATOVITZ	LOUIS DAVES	BROTHER
MINNIE NATOVITZ	ROSE PFEFFER	SISTER
MINNIE NATOVITZ	ANN DAVES	SISTER
MATTEE POLIN	HARRY BADEN	FATHER
JANET REITNER	ELEANOR SCHUTZ	MOTHER
BARBARA RICCIARDI	ROSE COHN	GRANDMOTHER
BEA RUBIN	FRIEDA SCHWARTZ	MOTHER
RENEE SCHWEBER	LEONARD ROSMAN	FATHER
MORT SILVER	MAX SILVER	BROTHER
CLAIRE SILVERMAN	DAVID WALLACE	FATHER

**MAY YAHRZEITS**

DATE	NAME
1ST	ZANVEL ICKOWICZ
1ST	YENTA ICKOWICZ
1ST	GERSHON ABENSTEIN
1ST	ESTHER ABENSTEIN
1ST	KLARA D. BLASS
1ST	JENNY LEWIN
3RD	SALLY BADER
3RD	ADELE EHRLICH
4TH	LIONEL KRONBERG
5TH	LOUIS ZLOTOWTCH
7TH	MARTIN BRODY
7TH	PASY SERVETZ
9TH	FANNIE BADEN
10TH	SHIRLEY PRATT
12TH	ALBERT POMERANZ
12TH	MANNY CANTER
12TH	FAYE BAUMGARTEN
12TH	MARIAN HAUPTMAN
14TH	EDWARD KREISLER
14TH	JOSEPH EHRLICH
16TH	HERBERT NELSON
22ND	ROSALINE LOSS
22ND	ISMAR REICH
25TH	WILLIAM HAUPTMAN
26TH	CLARA WEINMAN
27TH	ANA KAPNER
27TH	JACK KIKEN
30TH	HENRY BERMAN

**JUNE YAHRZEITS**

DATE	NAME
4TH	SALLY BERMAN
4TH	NATHAN WEGODSKY
5TH	MARGERY STERN
5TH	MARJORIE WALKER
5TH	THELMA FINKEL
6TH	ROSE RINKELSTEIN
6TH	MARVIN MURASKIN
7TH	MINNIE SCHIMEL
7TH	GEORGE LERNER
10TH	OLGA KAPLAN
12TH	ANNE PURVIN
13TH	ISRAEL WEGODSKY
14TH	DORA DAVES
16TH	SAMUEL LEVIN
16TH	MORRIS LEVIN
17TH	YOUSSEF TAMAN
18TH	JOSEPH SCHNEIDER
19TH	FANNIE LANGER
20TH	ARTHUR KLEINMAN
21ST	JACOB ARONOFF
21ST	MARTIN ARENSEN
26TH	MARTHA ROSENBLUM
29TH	THEODORE ROOG

***We have a Busy  
2011-12 Planned!***

*Here are some (and only some)  
of our previous and coming events:*

- *Lox & Learning Breakfast and Programs on Sunday mornings*
- *Friday Night Live! Monthly Services*
- *Friday night Speaker Series*
- *Holiday dinners*
- *Purim celebration with Arts and Crafts program for kids of all ages*
- *Actor's Shakespeare Company performances on our Bimah!*
- *Shabbat and holiday services*
- *Fighting hunger: Tikkun Olam community programs*

***Shavuot Observance***  
**Thursday, June 9th, 9 AM**  
 Day II with Yizkor, 10:30  
 Dairy holiday  
 kiddush immediately  
 following services

**Save the Date!**  
**June 24th**  
**Year-End Shabbat Dinner  
 & Friday Night Live!**  
 Musical Service  
 with Cantor Dubrow

**Details to Follow!**