

THE CAS NEWSLETTER March 2018

Upcoming Services and Events

Thursday, March 1 : Purim

Sunday, March 4, 10am: Study Session at the home of Spiritual Leader Barbara Cohen. Bagels and coffee included so a commitment is needed for planning. Firm RSVP by Thursday before to barbaracohen14@gmail.com.

Saturday, March 10, 10 am: Shabbat service followed by coffee, tea, pastry and conversation

Monday, March 19, 5:30pm: Board Meeting. Congregants are welcome to attend. Please email Sandra Flannery at smflann@ix.netcom.com for more information.

Saturday, March 24, 10 am: Shabbat service followed by coffee, tea, pastry and conversation

Thursday, March 29, 9:00am – 1:00pm: People's Pantry at St. James Place. Generally 2 hour shifts: contact Walter Orenstein at ptcpa@roadrunner.com to participate. If schools in Great Barrington are closed for snow ... so is the Pantry.

Saturday, March 31, 5:30pm – 7:30pm: CAS Community Seder at Apple Tree Inn, 10 Richmond Mountain Rd, Lenox, MA 01240 [Click for more info](#)

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CAS Community Seder at Apple Tree Inn

Congregation Ahavath Sholom has a long tradition of hosting a community seder on the second night of Passover. This year, the second night of Passover is on Saturday evening, March 31, 2018. We warmly invite you, your family, and friends to gather at 5:30 p.m. at the Apple Tree Inn in Lenox.

Our spiritual leader, Barbara Cohen, will lead the seder using the "Night of Questions" haggadah. As we celebrate this beloved ritual, along with the return of Spring to the Berkshires, we hope you will join us in coming together in community and partaking in the songs, thoughts, good food and blessings.



Last year's seder at the Apple Tree Inn

Photographs by Lee Rogers

The cost of the multi-course meal is \$48 for adults and \$24 for children under twelve. The meal includes ritual plates and wine, but you are welcome to bring a favorite bottle of your own to share. Two meals are available: grilled salmon with potatoes and vegetables, or a vegetarian mezze plate. The Apple Tree Inn is located at 10 Richmond Mountain Rd. Driving directions are available at www.appletree-inn.com.

In order to reserve a place at the seder, please contact the synagogue by March 15. Mail reservations and payments, with the names of those attending, can be made using [this form](#). You may also **email** this information to the synagogue to make your reservation and make payment by credit card (Visa or Mastercard) or sign up and pay through the **CAS website** using the Donate button on our home page. All emails will be confirmed. Checks should be made out to Congregation Ahavath Sholom. If you have questions or need additional information, please call the synagogue at 413-528-4197.

We look forward to sharing a sweet Pesach with you,

Spiritual Leader Barbara Cohen and the Ahavath Sholom Religious and Spiritual Life Committee

Special CAS "Save-the-dates"

Congregation Ahavath Sholom has a number of important events planned for the Spring and Summer seasons. As we move forward toward warmer weather, please make note of the dates for the following programs and events.

April 13 at 5:30 pm: The first of the year's Friday Evening Shabbat Services, including a Pot Luck dinner.

Our new Thursday Evening Series:

May 10 at 7:00 pm: Daniel Elihu Kramer, Artistic Director of the Chester Theatre Company, will discuss "Using Theatre to Extend Community and Deepen Empathy."

June 7 at 7:00 pm: Genealogist Keren Weiner will speak on how "Genealogy Research Uncovers Love Stories in a Family of Jewish Immigrants."

July 19 at 7:00 pm: Judith Schumer, teacher and author of Esther's Journey, A Holocaust Memoir, will present her new book, In the Presence of My Enemies.

Please be sure to refer to future newsletters for further announcements.

Barbara's Ordination and Celebration

On **Saturday, June 30 at 7:00 p.m.** our beloved Spiritual Leader Barbara Cohen will become Rabbi Barbara Cohen at an ordination ceremony in Stony Point, New York. The congregation is currently looking into possible bus or van rentals for those in the community who would like to attend the event. Details will follow, so check the CAS online newsletter in the coming months.

We will also be having a celebration to honor Barbara on **Sunday, July 8 at 5:00 p.m.** at the Apple Tree Inn in Lenox. This is the venue where we held Barbara's 10-Year Anniversary Party and our recent Passover events. Information about this cocktail party, including costs and other details, will also be discussed in future newsletters

Milchidika with Marty: "Mr. Streit Meet Mr. Manischewitz"

When I was 8 or 9, my parents sent me to Sunday School at a nearby synagogue. Rather than hating to give up my free time, I loved it. The Sunday School teacher was a young college girl, and very, very pretty. She told such great Bible stories. I wanted to marry her, she seemed so nice, but how much could a cub scout earn to support her?

I especially like her story about this guy named Solomon who said, "Cut the baby in half" and couldn't believe that Adam and Eve were actually completely naked in the Garden of Eden. Wow.

But the best story was about this other guy named Moses, who when he was a little baby, was found floating in a basket in a river, and who later said to the pharaoh, that he, and all his people were tired of building pyramids, and wanted to go home.

Well, the pharaoh said OK, and when Moses and his people started to leave Egypt, the pharaoh changed his mind and sent his soldiers after them, to bring them back to Egypt. I think in those days I mixed up Moses with John Wayne, so I sort of envisioned that Moses and all his people were on horseback riding across the desert, followed by the Egyptian bad guys who were also on horseback. The bad guys always wore black cowboy hats.

In any case, after riding for a long time in the desert, one of the good guys said to Moses "I'm hungry, can we stop for a little lunch?" Moses said "OK, but we don't have time to make regular bread, so we'll have to mix together flour and water and put it on a hot stone in the sun to bake." When it looked like it was finally cooked, Moses asked one of the cowboys to try it, and see how it tasted. Moses asked, "How does it taste?" And the cowboy replied, "It tastes like dreck." Moses said, "Never mind, we'll simply call it Matzah." And that's how it all began.



For thousands of years, the story of matzah remained relatively unchanged. It was only made by hand in irregularly shaped discs, made from a dough that was not allowed to rise. Orthodox Jews went a step further eating only "shmurah" or "guarded" matzah made from grains that had been watched by a Jewish official from the moment of harvest to ensure that the grains never came in contact with a liquid that would lead to accidental leavening.

I also discovered that there is a difference between Passover matzah and Non-Passover matzah besides the label on the box. Passover matzah can be made only from five specific grains; wheat, spelt, barley, rye, or oat. The flour is to be mixed with water which is at room temperature, and the only other possible ingredient is either salt or

eggs. The entire process being supervised by a rabbi with a stop watch.

In 1838, a Frenchman named Isaac Singer invented a matzah dough rolling machine that cut down on the dough's prep time and made mass production possible. But, changes to a 3,000- year-old religious tradition of

making matzah by hand does not come easily. Some argued that handmade matzah provided kneading jobs for the poor. Others argued that machine-made matzah was less expensive so that even the poor could afford it. And so, the argument went on and on, and was never resolved quickly. And, in some orthodox communities not at all.

In 1888, a Lithuanian immigrant named Dov Behr opened the first matzah-making factory in Cincinnati, Ohio. Behr adopted the name Manischewitz and developed an entirely automated method of matzah production. He was the world's largest matzah producer--at 1.25 million rectangular, sheet-like matzah per day. Other companies sprang up: Streit's, Horowitz and Margareten, Yehuda and a number of other smaller companies, but Manischewitz is the most popular matzah in the world.



Today you can buy flavored matzah, spiced matzah, chocolate-covered matzah, organic matzah, gluten-free matzah and sundried tomato matzah. But not for Passover.

I couldn't find any good matzah jokes, so these will have to do:

Moishe went on a date with Rebecca--without a doubt the most beautiful girl that poor Moishe had ever dated. At the end of their time together Moishe was so overcome with Rebecca that he said, "Rebecca will you marry me?" "Moishe," Rebecca replied with a smile. "I have good news and bad news for you."

Moishe said "Tell me the bad news first."

"The bad news is that I will not marry you," said Rebecca.

"So, what's the good news?"

"The good news is that you have impeccable taste."

Sid Schwartz is on his death bed, knowing that his time is near. He is with his nurse, his wife, his daughter, and his two sons.

"So," he says to them "Bernie, I want you to take the Beverly Hills houses."

"Sybil, you take the apartments over in Los Angeles Plaza."

"Hymie, I want you to take the offices in City Center."

"Sarah, my dear wife, please take all the residential buildings downtown."

The nurse is just blown away by all of this, and as Sid slips away, she says, "Mrs. Schwartz, your husband must have been such a hard-working man to have accumulated all this property."

Sarah replies, "Property? This schlemiel had a paper route."

News from the People's Pantry: "Am I My Brother's Keeper?"

CAS members continue to be wonderfully generous in support of the People's Pantry in Great Barrington, which serves the southern Berkshire community. When I first started volunteering, we would average about 20-25 shoppers; since the recession in 2008 it is more like 50-60. Many of the people who come are elderly, or ill, and unable to work. Others work seasonally and need help during their off season. The Pantry helps anyone, without any means testing, with the belief that we are, indeed, each other's keeper.

Donations of food and money are welcome, and we are especially grateful for those who volunteer their time on a Thursday morning to set up, stock shelves, help shoppers, and tidy the place for the following week. We are one of seven groups that trade off staffing the pantry, and if you would like to be part of the team, please contact Walter Orenstein at ptcpa@roadrunner.com.



Being each other's keeper entails just a little more, though. Have you ever had food poisoning? I have, and I can tell you it isn't pleasant. When you donate food, please check the date, and donate only unopened, packaged or canned food that is still in date. This week I picked up a very generous load of food at CAS, but many of the items were anywhere from 3-5 years out of date, and some had been opened and partially used. Imagine if one of our community members took that home and served it to a child or someone who is already ill. And while you're imagining that, imagine that a volunteer has to throw out that food, carrying it first from CAS to the Pantry, or home, then to a dumpster or out with our own trash. Lots of old cans get heavy fast.

So, thank you for your continued support of the Pantry, and thank you for making sure that you are considering everyone's safety when you donate.

Irene Goldman-Price

Amazon Smiles (Revisited)

CAS has recently received its first yearly check from the **AmazonSmile** program, so it seemed like a good opportunity to remind everyone to register as a CAS supporter. What this means is that when you purchase from Amazon using smile.amazon.com you will be contributing to the synagogue! We have an Amazon Smile button on the home page of the CAS website to make this even more convenient!

Here is some information from their website about this program:

What is Amazon Smile?

AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support your favorite charitable organization (CAS) every time you shop, at no cost to you. When you shop at smile.amazon.com, you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to your favorite charitable organization.

How do I shop at AmazonSmile?

To shop at AmazonSmile simply go to smile.amazon.com from the web browser on your computer or mobile device. You may also want to add a bookmark to smile.amazon.com to make it even easier to return and start your shopping at AmazonSmile.

Which products on AmazonSmile are eligible for charitable donations?

Tens of millions of products on AmazonSmile are eligible for donations. You will see eligible products marked "Eligible for AmazonSmile donation" on their product detail pages. Recurring Subscribe-and-Save purchases and subscription renewals are not currently eligible.

Can I use my existing Amazon.com account on AmazonSmile?

Yes, you use the same account on Amazon.com and AmazonSmile. Your shopping cart, Wish List, wedding or baby registry, and other account settings are also the same.

How do I select a charitable organization to support when shopping on AmazonSmile?

On your first visit to AmazonSmile smile.amazon.com, you need to select a charitable organization (list Congregation Ahavath Sholom) to receive donations from eligible purchases before you begin shopping. We will remember your selection, and then every eligible purchase you make at smile.amazon.com will result in a donation.

How much of my purchase does Amazon donate?

The AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price from your eligible AmazonSmile purchases. The purchase price is the amount paid for the item minus any rebates and excluding shipping & handling, gift-wrapping fees, taxes, or service charges. From time to time, we may offer special, limited time promotions that increase the donation amount on one or more products or services or provide for additional donations to charitable organizations. Special terms and restrictions may apply. Please see the relevant promotion for complete details.

Can I receive a tax deduction for amounts donated from my purchases on AmazonSmile?

Donations are made by the AmazonSmile Foundation and are not tax deductible by you.

March Donations

In memory of Joe Enzer

Arthur and Louise Hillman

In loving memory of Helen and Edward Weiner

Keren Weiner

In memory of Dr. Mark Cohen

Richard and Marcie Simons

In appreciation of Barbara's help

Jane Kavanau

Annual Year-End Fundraising Campaign

Michele Waldman

March Yahrzeits

“Much of our experience of divine goodness, grace and love has come to us through those whose lives have touched our own.”
Kol Haneshamah

Anna Tickner Adar 14 5740	3/1	Hyman Stein Adar 27 5716	3/14
Joe Enzer Adar 16 5742	3/3	Hilda Reiskin Adar 27 5745	3/14
Wilhelm Brill Adar1 16 5708	3/3	Nehama Nager Adar2 29 5706	3/16
Roberta Rudin Adar1 19 5774	3/6	Kenneth Kaplan Nisan 01 5772	3/17
Benjamin Letofsky Adar2 20 5765	3/7	Lena Bissel Nisan 04 5712	3/20
Lillian Westerman Adar1 21 5749	3/8	Raye Steiner Pozefsky Nisan 4 5734	3/20
Ernest Waller Adar 21 5753	3/8	John Gellert Nisan 06 5726	3/22
Meyer Spiegelman Adar 22 5764	3/9	John P. Hammond Nisan 06 5763	3/22
Sanford Halberstadter Adar 25 5762	3/12	Sidney Ungar Nisan 11 5734	3/27
Oscar Slote Adar2 25 5727	3/12	Edward Alec Weiner Nisan 12 5766	3/28