



Seabreeze

THE BULLETIN OF THE MALIBU JEWISH CENTER & SYNAGOGUE
A MEMBER OF THE JEWISH RECONSTRUCTIONIST FEDERATION



There is always something fun going on at MJC&S.



PLANTING THE SEEDS OF CHANGE

I am writing this from Israel, on Tu B'shevat, aware that you will not read this until late February just as we welcome Purim and look forward to Pesach. It seems strange to be thinking about masks and merriment, or even Haggadahs and seders, in the midst of these winter rains. But the seeds for spring, for new growth and change have been planted, and now we must wait and nurture them into spring.

This is the time of year, in late January and early February, when we read the story of the Exodus from Egypt. Why, we ask, do we read this torah portion now, months before we celebrate Passover? Perhaps it is to plant the seed, to let the story of our freedom from slavery incubate long before we set our tables for the seder.

Passover is not only Z'man Herutenu, the time of our Freedom, but Hag HaAviv, the holiday of spring. On Passover, we renew our faith in life after the dead of winter.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6



CELEBRATING JEWISH LIFE WITH MUSIC

Dear Community:

It is a busy time of year for us as we begin our preparations for Purim & Passover. Make sure to come to hear the hilarious new Purimspiel, "The Sound of Purim" written by our very own Steve Krashen and performed by members of our Choir. You have two opportunities, Friday night February 26th at 7:30 pm or during the Purim Carnival on Sunday, February 28th at noon. You are sure to have lots of fun!

Passover will soon be here and it is a time when we connect with those whom we love as well as the stranger. It is a time when we also remember those who are not with us.

When we sit around the Passover table, whether it is in our home or someone else's, we realize how important human connection is and how we all touch one another directly or indirectly. At this time of the year, I also realize how

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

CELEBRATING OUR FREEDOM



From Purim to Pesach and beyond.

It's hard to believe but Purim is already here! Time to drag out the costume box and celebrate our freedom of religion, to rejoice in our victory over oppression, to drink, to dance to laugh. Right on the heels of Purim comes Passover.

The name "Pesach" (PAY-sahch, with a "ch" as in the Scottish "loch") comes from the Hebrew root Pei-Samekh-Cheit, meaning to pass through, to pass over, to exempt or to spare. It refers to the fact that G-d "passed over" the houses of the Jews when he was slaying the firstborn of Egypt. In English, the holiday is known as Passover. "Pesach" is also the name of the sacrificial offering (a lamb) that was made in the Temple on this holiday. The holiday is also referred to as Chag ha-Aviv, (the Spring Festival), Chag ha-Matzot, (the Festival of Matzahs), and Z'man Cheiruteinu, (the Time of Our Freedom). Again we celebrate our freedom, our redemption from slavery. But unlike the Purim feast which celebrates a victory over our enemies, Pesach frees us from slavery but leaves us wandering in the desert.

This time of wandering is remembered through the counting of the Omer. According to the Torah (Lev. 23:15), we are obligated to count the days from Passover to Shavu'ot. This period is known as the Counting of the Omer. An omer is a unit of measure. On the second day of Passover, in the days of the Temple, an omer of barley was cut down and brought to the Temple as an offering. This grain offering was referred to as the Omer.

Every night, from the second night of Passover to the night before Shavu'ot, we recite a blessing and state the count of the omer in both weeks and days. So on the 16th day you would say "Today is sixteen days, which is two weeks and two days of the Omer." The counting is intended to remind us of the link between Passover, which commemorates the Exodus, and Shavu'ot, which commemorates the giving of the Torah. It reminds us that the redemption from slavery was not complete until we received the Torah.

From Purim to Shavuot we will celebrate, learn, count, dance and grow. Our students are planning and practicing for their Purim skits and pageants. The 2nd and 3rd graders are learning the blessing to lead Shabbat and Pesach dinners. Our 5th grade class is busy learning about the holidays and preparing the prayers and blessing for Shabbat and Yom Tov morning services. The 7th graders are gearing up for their Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Confirmation will continue to meet on Tuesdays this spring they will be learning and working on projects that deal with Anti-Semitism and religious tolerance, and working with Beit T'Shuva on addiction, prevention and Jewish living.

Our spring will be a busy and fun time for our students and families.

RABBI CARRIE

OFF TO A WONDERFUL START!

The 2010 year is off to a wonderful start. We would like to welcome our new students, Espen, Maverick, Niki, Noah, and Shane.

Art Without Borders continues in our Art Studio where the children are working with all types of materials and mediums. For the preschool child, the freedom to use materials, without restriction, always leads to greater levels of creativity and understanding. Teacher Yael is introducing the techniques of Michelangelo, Monet, DaVinci and Van Gogh. Please stop by and see the very large (7' by 4') canvas which is a beautiful work in progress.

"Brown Bear Brown Bear" is a favorite book with the 2 year olds. They are mixing their own colors to make a brown bear, purple horse and green frog. They are using their fingers, sponges, brushes, sticks, cotton balls anything you can find to mix colors.

Right now we are learning about the wonderful world of animals. The teachers are busy answering children's questions about which animals hibernate, where they hibernate and what they eat. The children are working together to construct a place for their animals to live. The children have decided that some of the animals live in beautiful castles, that have been constructed out of toilet rolls, small boxes, water bottles, and other recycled materials. In April we will witness the life cycle of the butterfly.

We have just celebrated Tu B'Shevat (the birthday of the trees). We had a picnic with games and our children played instruments. Our preschoolers are hard at work in the garden; digging, shoveling, seeding and don't forget the watering. We will soon be eating our organic vegetables. It's wonderful to see our children taking responsibility every day as they watch their garden grow. They have found many interesting bugs. With a magnifying glass in hand the children are learning about the bugs and reptiles in our own back yard.

We have two holidays coming up that we are busy preparing for. Our noisiest holiday is coming at the end of February – Purim! We will be making groggers, costumes, cooking and eating delicious hamentashan. With the help of Teacher Jennifer, we will be presenting a Purim play, which tells the story of Queen Esther, King Ahashvarosh, beautiful maidens and of course mean Haman (boo)...

At the end of Purim we begin the preparation for Passover (The Festival of Freedom). The children will be singing the Passover songs and making the symbols of Passover for our Model Seder on March 26th. Our 3- and 4-year-olds will be going to the Matzah Factory where they will make their own matzah and hear the story of Passover.

We always end our week with lighting the Shabbat candles and singing with Cantor Marcelo.

LAUREN ABRAMOWITZ



BAR & BAT MITZVAH...

EMILY SZILAGYI April 24, 2010

"Most people don't know that there are angels whose only job is to make sure you don't get too comfortable and fall asleep and miss your life."

~Brian Andreas



As we prepare for this special moment in our lives, when our daughter, Emily, is called to the torah to celebrate her Bat Mitzvah, we would like to share some thoughts with everyone about who Emily is.

What Emily would like everyone to know about herself is that she loves hanging out with her family and friends, loves music and the outdoors, and especially loves being near the ocean, in the mountains, or sitting by a river.

What her family would like everyone to know about Emily is that she is the sweetest, bravest and most loving person that we know. Emily has taught us to cherish every moment and to treasure the people in our lives, and she brings us unimaginable joy every day. She is our angel.

EXCERPTS FROM KAREN YORK'S BAT MITZVAH SPEECH, NOVEMBER 28, 2009

**Torah portion: Genesis 28:10-16
Jacob's Journey/Jacob's Dream**

So...What was *THAT* all about? And what is *THIS* all about?

First, I want to thank you all for sharing this evening with me. Especially, my dear friend, teacher, counselor and our Rabbi, Judith HaLevy, Our wonderful Cantor, Marcelo Gindlin (in the dictionary, next to the phrase loving-kindness) there's a picture of Cantor Marcelo! And, my Hebrew teacher, my Morah, Yarden Barzilay, who encouraged me to enjoy my every success and took responsibility for all of my mistakes.

And, of course my dear husband Arnold (who practically knows my Torah portion better than I do), having spent a year listening to me learn it.

To my esteemed mother Dorothy, my children, family and dear friends. Thank you for being here today.

Each one of you has demonstrated your encouragement and support throughout this process – even those of you wondered the FAQ, Most Frequently Asked Question – Why?

Well, for those of you who are still wondering, this is why:

It was *ABOUT TIME!*



Karen York and Rabbi Judith

- Not only was it *ABOUT TIME* that I had a Bat Mitzvah – a ritual more commonly celebrated by 13 year old girls...

But it was *ABOUT TIME* itself

- *TIME PASSING* too fast – One day it is Thanksgiving and then it's Thanksgiving again!
- *TIME* – The reality of mortality and vitality is writ large in the frailties, illnesses and deaths of family and friends – so if not now, when?
- *TIME* – The gift of time. There appeared, last fall, a rare gap in my work and family obligations.
- Plus, good health all around, including my dear Mother's – 95 years old! I had the *TIME*.

It was during this *TIME* that it occurred to me that the personal goal that I had put off so long, of becoming a Bat Mitzvah – might hold some solace, some answers for me – it was *THE TIME* to find out.

And finally, it was about the *TEST OF TIME*.

The Torah portion that I read to you today in Hebrew – is the narrative of Jacob's Journey and Jacob's Dream:

My reading begins as Jacob leaves – *Va-yetzei*.

He journeys through the desert, wending his way north. As the sun sets he arrives at a "certain" place, he stops there for the night. Making a pillow out of a stone, he lays down his head and dreams. In his dream a ladder reaches to heaven and on its rungs are angels – God's messengers, going up and coming down. And, standing beside the ladder is none other than God, who speaks to Jacob!

Identifying himself as the God of his grandfather Abraham and of his father Isaac, He promises that Jacob will be the father of a great nation and his descendants will be as numerous as the dust of the earth and will be a blessing.

Jacob awakes from his dream – and proclaims – Surely God is in this place and I did not know it!

Karen's Midrash

This is a simple bible story but there many things the narratives of Torah don't tell us. This is where midrash comes in. To write a midrash is to fill in the blanks, to offer an interpretation and to try to discover its meaning for our own lives. So, here is my midrash, my interpretation of Jacob's Journey and his dream.

For me it comes down to this:

Wherever you are in your own journey – no grain, no gain – Yes, I said grain – G-R-A-I-N – not pain, GRAIN.

I'll explain.

I believe that we are made in such a way that we strive heroically and mightily for control of every eventuality in a vain attempt to create stasis (no surprises, no drama) in our lives.

This is not a bad thing, of course, as it enables us to provide for our families, our children's education, money for health insurance, life insurance and fire insurance, this insurance, that insurance – an attempt to mitigate every foreseeable risk.

But the lesson of Jacob is that stasis is an illusion – to paraphrase the more explicit bumper sticker - stuff happens! When it does, and when our carefully crafted efforts to maintain the status quo are threatened, damaged and even destroyed – we feel pain. We're fortunate if the pain is no more than a blister or sunburn – temporarily uncomfortable but quick to heal.

But there are times when the pain is severe – it burns like the desert heat or freezes us like the desert night, it can drive us to wander aimlessly in the glare of the sun or to fall flat on our face in the darkness; we can

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

DEF JEW POETRY SLAM

One People, One Book

Wednesday April 14 and May 12

7:00 pm

One People, One Book traditionally engages more than 500 people from every movement of Judaism in a year long study of a single book. This year, the Board of Rabbis of Southern California chose to introduce the community to two books – works by defining Jewish poets, Yehuda Amichai and Zelda.

Poetry tells the story of our people. To honor the work of ancient & modern poets, the Board of Rabbis kicked off One People, One Book 5770 with the Def Jew Poetry Slam in November. Join us at MJC&S for 2 evenings of poetry Wednesdays April 14th and May 12th at 7:00 pm.

April 14th will feature local poets, including two of our members.

Florence Weinberger is the author of *The Invisible Telling its Shape, Breathing Like a Jew and Carnal Fragrance*, and the forthcoming, *Sacred Graffiti*. Her poetry has appeared in many publications.

Joan Freeman – “While pursuing careers as a lawyer and, later, as a clinical social worker, Joan Freeman has written poetry primarily for her own pleasure and self-expression. Although her poetry has never been formally published, it has been extensively shared with friends and used in creative services.”

Dinah Berland is a poet and book editor with a background in art. Her book *Hours of Devotion: Fanny Neuda's Book of Prayers for Jewish Women* is published by Schocken Books. Her poems have appeared in many publications.

Sherman Pearl is a retired journalist and publicist who came to poetry in his senescence. Since then he has published four books and is working on a fifth. He is among the founders of the L.A. Poetry Festival.

May 12th will feature Israeli poets & poetry.



SECOND NIGHT PASSOVER SEDER

Tuesday, March 30, 2010 at 5:00 pm

Celebrate the 2nd night of Passover with your family at MJC&S and the best part is you don't have to clean up after!

Please join Rabbi Judith and Cantor Marcelo in an upbeat and lively Seder experience for adults and children.

A complete Kosher Passover Seder will be catered by Starlite Caterers.

Dinner Reservations are required by March 16th.
For more information please call the MJC&S office at 310-456-2178



KAREN YORK CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

lose our way, and perhaps even our selves. Now, imagine for a moment, that each of these pains is a grain of sand – like the grains of sand that so plagued Jacob on his journey.

Hold this image for a moment while I tell you about those angels in Jacob's dream

You will recall that Jacob is so captivated with God's promise and its implications that he doesn't acknowledge or even wonder aloud about them. I believe that is because he lacks the life experience to realize their significance.

In fact, our sages have written that the angels ascending to heaven are those that have protected Jacob in his youth, and are the ones coming down from heaven who will protect him as he matures.

Remember those grains of sand – one grain for each pain –

Now envision, if you will, each ascending angel carrying one of your pains to heaven. And, each descending angel bringing down a "grain of sand" received in exchange for your pain. Each of these pains, be they simple irritations or agonizing defeats or anything in between, has changed us in some way;

Raising our defenses,
Sharpening our edges,

Creating fissures and cracks in our relationships
And dangerous irregularities of all sorts

But the grains they have been traded for – they are God's gift to us. Rubbed together, their friction creates warmth and light, our sharp edges and roughened surfaces are smoothed by their abrasion. They polish us to a mirror-like finish wherein we see ourselves anew.

Not all at once, of course, but very slowly one pain and one grain at a time, that certain place is created,

A certain place deep within ourselves
A certain place from which to contemplate the heavens
A place for dreaming, healing and hope:

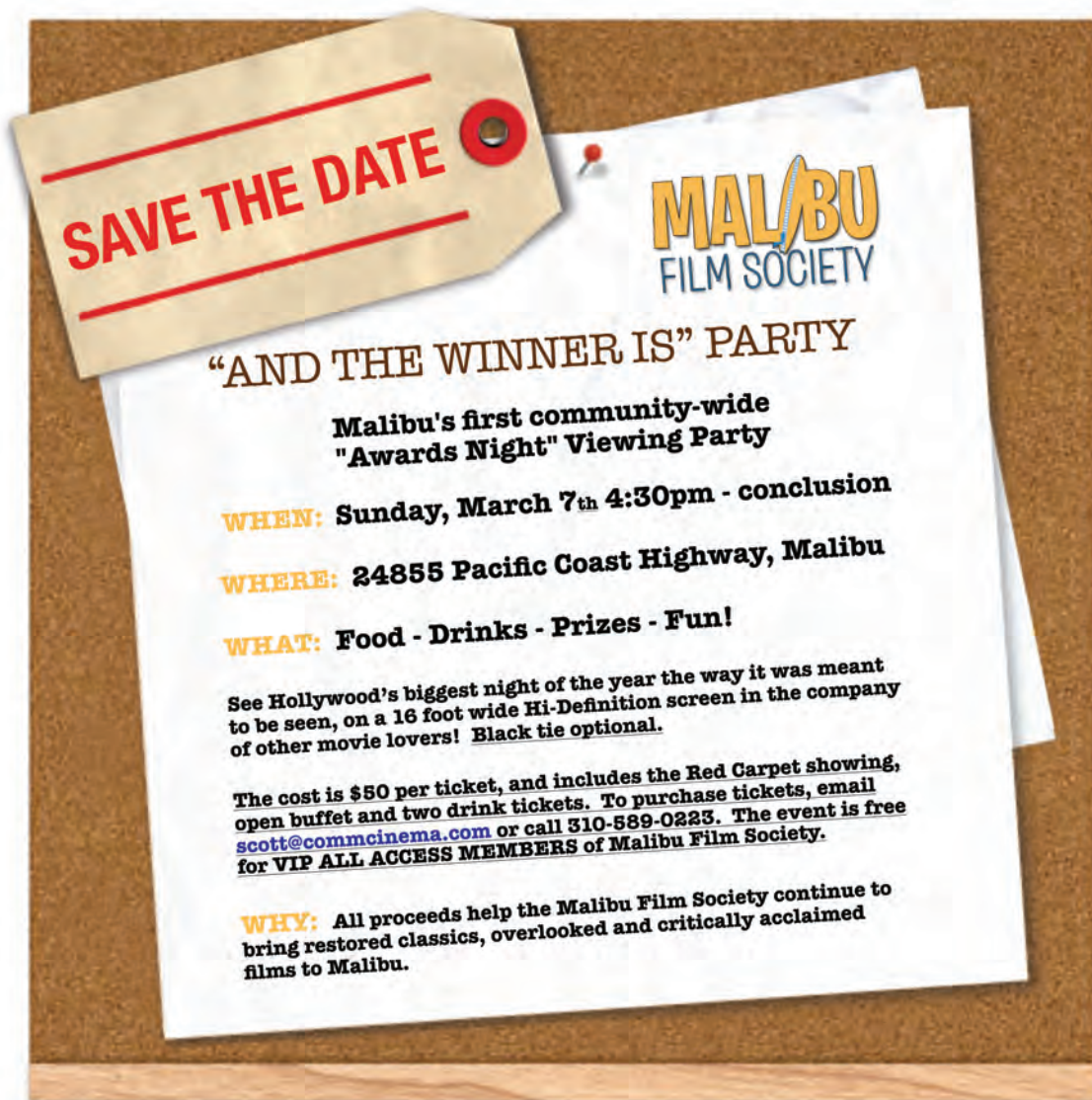
Informing our behavior,
Renewing our strength – confidence -and- courage,
Confirming our values,
Substantiating our self worth,
Enabling us to love again (and again)
Even, providing small glimpses of our future and our fate.

And, Surely, God is in *THAT* place!

Save the Date & Join the Celebration

**Our Upcoming
"Gala by the Sea"
Sat., May 15th**

call for more information
(310) 456-2178



important each and every one of you has touched my life in many ways. From the choir to the B'nai Mitzvah class, to the pre-school kids, to the religious school children, to the Board of Directors, to the special staff and to the Rabbi. It is a privilege and an honor to be able to share a spiritual connection of prayer and music with all of you.

Please join us as we continue our Jazzed Up Shabbat series. Friday, March 19th we celebrate a Gospel Shabbat with our very own Eli Lester. Come stomp, clap & exuberantly welcome the Shabbat with Eli Lester & friends. Friday, April 23rd we welcome back Fredi Shiftan & Noa Dori as we celebrate Yom Haatzmaut together, featuring Israeli music in an up-to-the minute rendition of traditional favorites. You don't want to miss this! And we conclude our series on Friday, May 7th as Larry Steen joins us again for a Jazz Shabbat.

The best is yet to come!
Come with us!

B'shalom,
CANTOR MARCELO

I looked at a tree outside of my window today that seemed moribund from a distance. The leaves were brown, rustling on the branches. But at the top there was a crown of small green leaves, the Tu B'shavet promise of spring. By Passover, this tree will be in full bloom.

Sometimes, it takes a long time for a community to blossom. Ideas planted years ago come to fruition slowly. Imagine how long it took to construct our building! The nucleus of the idea was planted over twenty years ago, and the actual building process took over ten years to complete. We are still in the final phase of completion of our kitchen and finishing our interior. The good news is that we have been living in our light-filled space for three years now. It would not have happened if a group of visionaries had not planted the seed.

So much has come to fruition in our synagogue in these past few years. Small seeds were planted, ideas that did not immediately "take," that are now pillars of our community. When I came here almost fourteen years ago, only the Rabbi, and one community member, Walter Young, (Z"l) could read Torah. Now, our bimah is filled with adults and teens that read Torah, week after week. There was no Saturday morning service without a bar/bat mitzvah. At this point, Torah study and Shabbat prayer are such a part of our synagogue life that we cannot imagine it any other way. The Cantor has transformed our High Holiday Choir from a few paid vocalists to an enthusiastic congregant choir that can hardly fit on the bimah. Our experimental Jewish Ethics class at 7:30 am on Thursdays has grown from a seed into a sapling that can't be moved. Morning? In Malibu? Who knew?

Long ago, we planted the idea of a "homegrown" organic Purimspeil. This will be the second year that the Cantor produces an original play written by Steve Krashen, performed by our brilliant ensemble. Some trees lie dormant for a while, and return. We are thrilled to have our Purim Carnival back on the premises on February 28th, upholding a long tradition of community participation.

The Torah instructs the Israelites to tell the story of Passover to their children and their children's children, planting the seed of our Seder at the very beginning of our history as a people. Each generation must then nurture and retell the story in its own way, preserving and incubating the idea of freedom for the next generation. It is Tu B'shevat and the rains are here. May all of the seeds, which you have planted, bloom into an incredible Passover season.

Hag Sameach

Rabbi Judith

**JOIN US FOR
JAZZED UP
SHABBOS**

see page 7

Friday, March 19 @7:00 pm
Friday, April 23 @7:00 pm
Friday, May 7 @7:00 pm

No Jew Left Behind

*Announcing A New Bar/Bat Mitzvah Program
For Special Needs Youth & Adults.*

A personalized, individual program with Cantor Marcelo Gindlin, MA in Music Therapy and Rabbi Judith HaLevy. Verbal, non-verbal, all have gifts to share and deserve the honor of a Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration with your family.

No matter how slowly we progress, no Jew should be left behind.

*for more information,
please call 310-456-2178*

Malibu Jewish Center & Synagogue
Early Childhood Center
(310) 456-2296 www@mjc&s.org



Baby and Me, Toddler and Me and Tot Shabbat and Me

Enjoy play, music, art, cooking and discussions incorporated into the weekly program. A great opportunity to meet other parents and make friends.

Wednesdays 9:15 - 10:15 3 months - 11 months
Wednesdays 10:30 - noon 12 months - 24 months
Fee includes lunch and supplies

Tot Shabbat and Me

Fridays 10:15 - 11:45 (includes our Musical Shabbat with Cantor Marcelo)

Call Lauren for more information

TRIBUTE CARDS

IN HONOR OF...

LINDA & BILL ANDROLIA
KAREN YORK'S BAT MITZVAH

from Phyllis Alden Truby
from Karen & David Gray, Leah & Dennis Seider, Tamar Freeman, Leslie Donald, Donna Lucas, Emily & Sheldon Lodmer, Roger & Marilyn Wolk, Carole Lieber Wilkins, June Carson

MARJORIE & ALLEN LINDEN

from Nancy & Allan Bernard

CANTOR MARCELO
IN APPRECIATION
FOR THE CONCERT

from Lori & Larry Gray

IN MEMORY OF...

RED LACHMAN

from Nessa & Jerry Perman, Emily & Sheldon Lodmer

DISCRETIONARY FUNDS

We thank the following people for their generous donations to the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund (through 1/25/10):

Debbie & Jonathan Markiles	Betsy Shapiro
Josh Socolow	Josh & Melissa Malina
Jeffrey Light	Lin Wendkos
Steven & Irinka Schwimer	Robert & Roslyn Zimmerman
Randy Weil Foundation	Marc & Eva Stern
Milton Bienenfeld	Dennis Duban
Sharon Weil Aaron	& Kevin Montgomery
Lois & Bob Rubin	Carolyn & David Mandel
Laya Tamar & John LaBrecque	Gerald & Nessa Persman
Bobbie Miller & Jeff Barton	Allen & Marjorie Linden
Lester Miller	Laura & Richard Ziff
Michael Berger	Declan Joyce
Tamar Freeman	Constance Martinson
Ruth Weil	Leonia Kurgan

We thank the following people for their generous donations to the Cantor's Discretionary Fund (through 1/25/10):

Debbie & Jonathan Markiles	Betsy Shapiro
Greg & Lauren Sills	Dennis Duban
Jeffrey Light	& Kevin Montgomery
Steven & Irinka Schwimer	Ellen Wolf
Tamar Freeman	Eli & Shayna Lester
Carole Lieberman	Gerald & Nessa Perman
Leonia Kurgan	Judith & Adam Sommerstein
Michael Berger	Michael Berger
Meredyth Alpert	
& Barry Leafman	

SAVE THESE IMPORTANT DATES

Sunday, February 28 Purim Carnival
Tuesday, March 30 Community Seder
Saturday, May 15 Dinner Dance

Jazzed Up Shabbos!

SHABBAT is a time for love and delight. What could be better than an evening of candles, wine, a little cheese and music? This ongoing series takes us from winter through spring with an innovative, soulful song in our hearts.

Friday, March 19 @7:00 pm

Gospel Shabbat with our very own **ELI LESTER**. If you know the movie "Keeping the Faith," you will understand the importance of gospel on Shabbat. Come stomp, clap and exuberantly welcome the Shabbat with Eli Lester and friends.

Friday, April 23 @7:00 pm

Yom Haatzmaut Celebration with **FREDI & NOA**, featuring Israeli music in an up-to-the minute rendition of traditional favorites.

Friday, May 7@7:00 pm

A giant of the not-too-distant future" declared the *LA Times* of bassist/composer/producer **LARRY STEEN**. He has performed live and in-studio with such artists as Mel Torme, Ella Fitzgerald, Stevie Wonder, Gladys Knight and many others. He has recorded extensively for film, - television, radio & CDs.



For more information,
call (310) 456-2178
www.mjcs.org

Malibu Jewish Center & Synagogue

24855 Pacific Coast Hwy
Malibu, California 90265

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



פורים פורים

Fun for all ages!

MALIBU JEWISH CENTER & SYNAGOGUE

PURIM CARNIVAL

PONY RIDES PRIZES CRAFTS

February 28, 2010
11 am to 3 pm

Free Admission

RIDES KOSHER FOOD GAMES

24855 Pacific Coast Highway
Malibu, CA 90265
for more information
please call
310-456-2178
www.mjcs.org

MALIBU JEWISH CENTER & SYNAGOGUE

PURIMSHPIEL

2 PERFORMANCES

FRIDAY NIGHT

FEBRUARY 26TH @ 7:30 PM

& SUNDAY

FEBRUARY 28TH @ NOON

DURING THE PURIM CARNIVAL

Don't miss this year's Purimspiel "The Sound of Purim," with music from "The Sound of Music" (by Rodgers and Hammerstein). It is a fun musical for all the family to enjoy. The Purim story is played and sang in a way you have never seen before!

Mordecai is accused of not bowing down to Haman and is put on trial! The big surprise occurs when Queen Esther herself comes to the witness stand. Added surprise: Finally we find out what happened to Vashti!

Our play this year is brought to you by Shayne Ponim Face Cream, Good Hair Day Shampoo, and the Metzger Clinic for a better body. And you will never guess who does the commercials!

The Purimspiel stars are our very own members of the MJCS choir. The script was written by our own Steve Krashen, is directed by Cantor Marcelo, with Dan Redfeld at the piano.

Come with your family and sing with us, celebrating "The Sound of Purim!"



Seabreeze is published bimonthly by
Malibu Jewish Center & Synagogue
TEL (310) 456-2178 FAX (310) 456-6578
WEB www.mjcs.org
e-mail: pam@mjcs.org or lauren@mjcs.org