



Purim Fun at
Beth Shalom



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Off to the States to study journalism



Eighteen-year-old Brenna Cukier is off to the States to study for a bachelor's degree majoring in journalism. She has been awarded a scholarship which will fund her to

attend the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She is pictured (above) with New York philanthropist Julian Robertson, the scholarship donor.

Brenna, who lives at St Heliers Bay, is the daughter of David and Deena Cukier and has two younger sisters, Elana and Jessica. Born in Arizona, she and her family have lived in Auckland for eight years.

Her proudest achievement was starting Glendowie College's student-run newspaper, the Glendowie Grapevine, which was published once a term.

"I am interested in magazine writing and television but I'm not sure yet in what direction I want to go," she says.

Last year she was Glendowie head girl, president of the student council, and elected student representative on the school's board of trustees.

She won the school's top award for "outstanding character and a sense of values," as well as for the fourth consecutive year, the Public Speaking Cup and was the first recipient of the Senior Writing Cup. She has achieved all NCEA levels 1-3 with excellence and obtained an outstanding scholarship in English. Brenna is delighted to be attending the University of North Carolina.

"I visited the top eight journalism schools in the States with my dad and found everything I was looking for at UNC," Brenna says.

"It's the right school for me, offering the best of both worlds – a great education and an incomparable campus life."

Brenna leaves in May and will be working at summer camp from June to August, before the semester starts in September.

Up to three Robertson scholarships are awarded annually to New Zealand students providing free board, tuition and a living allowance for four years.

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The Beth Shalom Buzz

Debbie Swiatek would like to hear your news about births, weddings, members who are travelling and other bits and pieces. Please contact her at swiatek@xtra.co.nz

Hello, dear readers, and welcome to the Beth Shalom Buzz! This is our little corner of Teruah where we kfell over the joys and successes of our members and their families. We will also shed a tear or two over our losses, but we will always end with a smile.

First, a warm welcome to the newest members of the Beth Shalom family: **Andrea Robinson, Robert Knight, Michelle and Nic Szecket, Ben Magrill and Bianca Kraitzick**. We hope to see you around the shul and offer a hearty Shalom in person!

On a related note, we congratulate **Noa Wittenberg** on her bat mitzvah and welcome her as an adult to our congregation. She and her tzedekah project on whales and dolphins also featured in the North Shore Times.

Mazel tov to **John and Jill Pezaro** on the arrival of their new granddaughter **Delilah Flora May**. Delilah's parents, **Ben and Ann Pezaro**, are in Rotorua with Delilah's big sister **Chloe**. Further news from the Pezaro clan - **Gaby Pezaro** and her partner **David** will travel on OE via Singapore to Israel, where they will be joined in May by John and Jill. They are travelling first to Spain to visit **Sophie, Andrew and Reuben** and then on to Israel, with the possibility of listening to *Aida* on the slopes of Masada.

We wish safe travels to several other Beth Shalom friends as well: **Lita Summerfield** and **Colin** are off to the UK and Israel, **Linda Skala** will be heading to London for the birth of a new grandchild, **Stephanie** and **Dennis Markson** are heading to Europe as are **Paul and Alison Dyson**. We all look forward to hearing about your adventures upon your return.

It is with great sadness that we learned of the loss of **Judith Hunt's** husband, **Maurice**. Our hearts and prayers are with Judith at the difficult time.

The Buzz had news from **Rita Adler** in icy and very cold Birmingham, United Kingdom. She had given a talk about Jewry in New Zealand to a monthly brunch she attends at the Progressive shul where she is a member. She reported no one fell asleep while she was talking so that was a plus. Subsequently one of the members who is a retired journalist came out to interview Rita as well.

Our fellow congregation, Temple Sinai in Wellington, now has an etrog tree, thanks to Beth Shalom's generosity and also to **Judith Hunt** who drove

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"Buzz", continued from page 2

the tree down by car from Auckland recently. It is now happily planted in **Sue** and **David Esterman's** Wellington garden.

Finally, **Joyce Baker** has recovered from a pulled tendon in her hamstring just in time to fly to London for her granddaughter Sasha's batmitzvah in St.Albans. Mazel tov to **Joyce** and **Harold**, son **Stephen** and his daughter **Sasha**.

I hope we haven't missed anything. Please let us know if you have something to share – this column is only as complete as the information that we receive. And, as promised, we end with a smile. ☺



Happy Birthday To:

David Weisz-Koves, Adi Rothman-Berman, Nathaniel Johnson, Rickie Mozessohn, George Gelb, Sarah Albom and Matan Aharon.

Happy Special Birthday To: Dan Weinstock and Tanya Thomson

The ZFNZ is proud to host and invite everyone to join us for our annual Israel community Commemorations and Celebrations for 2011.

PLEASE SAVE THESE DATES

1. YOM HASHOAH CEREMONY

When: Sunday May 1st at 7.30pm

Where: AA Hall, Greys Avenue

2. YOM HAZIKARON CEREMONY

When: Sunday May 8th at 7.30pm

Where: Beth Shalom Hall, Manukau Road

3. YOM HA'ATZMAUT CELEBRATION

When: Sunday May 15th

Details to be announced soon!

For more information go to our updated website:
www.zfnz.org.nz Join our face book page too!



Sanctuary Loan Approved

Beth Shalom members authorised the raising of a loan of up to \$200,000 for the sanctuary refurbishment secured by a first mortgage against its properties, at a well-attended annual general meeting on Sunday, March 20.

"There have been three feedback sessions to discuss the refurbishment designs of the sanctuary," president Rob Bernstein said. "Community feedback has been incorporated into the designs and the proposal.

"The board has been very mindful that it does not overspend or deplete hard-earned reserves but at the same time it provides a modern and pleasant spiritual home for the community."

At the meeting, Alison Dyson spoke about the proposal to raise a loan and all present received a document outlining the details.

The total estimate for the refurbishment is \$175,000 with the key items being a new ark and a more functional bimah with improved access, a raised ceiling and new lighting, comfortable seating with book rests and new feature doors to separate the sanctuary from the social hall.

She said the board had considered various ways of funding the project, while ensuring that the Endowment fund was not impacted in any way, and to maintain flexibility so that the congregation could meet its other commitments, including the hiring of a new rabbi.

The favoured option was raising the necessary amount through a loan secured against the existing Beth Shalom properties.

"Historically low interest rates make this a suitable time to fund a community project in this way," she said.

Already members have endorsed the project by total donations of more than \$80,000 to be paid in monthly instalments over three years from the start of the project.

She said this money would amply cover all interest costs and repay a significant amount of the principal.

"This is just the beginning of fund raising and we look forward to contributions from additional members. Some may also wish to offer loans to the community on terms that may be more favourable than are available from the banking sector," Alison Dyson said.

Anyone interested in helping this project is welcome to contact the president Rob Bernstein or treasurer Neil Rothbart to discuss it confidentially.

Community hears about the year's achievements

Despite the disasters in Christchurch, Japan and China as well as the financial meltdown, our community has had an amazingly successful year, Beth Shalom president Rob Bernstein said. at the annual general meeting on March 20.

The Shabbaton was the spiritual, intellectual and community high point of the year, he said.

Amongst the achievements he listed the Pesach seder and the Tu B'shvat seder, the completion of the biblical garden, the launching of the bequest programme and the introduction of the Chai curriculum at the Hebrew School.

Other achievements included the new administration system, the launching of *Mishkan T'fillah*, the successful conversion programme, and the pot-luck and ma'ariv dinners for the elderly.

"We can pride ourselves that we have a very effective and functioning community," he said.

There are some challenges too. Rabbinic input is about to come to

an end when Rabbi Dean's contract ends in June.

"However I hope we are able to twist his arm to remain for a few extra months," he said.

Other challenges are that money collected from subscriptions is down because a lot of people are in financial trouble, some security issues and the relatively small group of people who drive projects in the community.

"These people should be helped and recognised so they are not burnt-out at the end of their tenure."

At the annual general meeting, two new board members were elected, Shane Sampson and Paul Wilton. Debbie Swiatek was elected vice president. Other members were re-elected. The full list is on page 7 of this issue.

New rabbi for Wellington

Rabbi Adi Cohen has accepted the position of Temple Sinai's rabbi. His wife Gila and three young boys are expected to arrive at the end of March.

Products for Pesach

Products for Pesach will be on sale at the Beth Shalom Hall

Matzah, matzah meal, grape juice, kiddish wine, horseradish root, olives, pickles

Sunday April 3, 10-12.30

Sunday April 10, 10-12.30

Or by contacting the office, phone 524-4139.

Please bring your own containers to carry goods purchased

Chuppah for hire

Beth Shalom has a beautiful chuppah which can be hired for weddings at the cost of \$100, with another \$100 for a bond when the wedding is outside of the progressive synagogue.

The board agreed to the policy for hiring the chuppah at its March meeting. It can be hired for weddings except for those of two non-Jewish people, may not be used by non-Jewish clergy except where one of the wedding party is a member, nor at a non-Jewish site, or on a Shabbat or a festival.

Applications should be made through the office.

Chris Berman honoured

The contribution of Chris Berman to Berman's Buzz is to be recognised with a leaf on the Tree of Life tree, in the foyer at Beth Shalom.

For the last six years, Chris Berman has written the Buzz column, an integral part of the monthly newsletter Teruah. The Buzz provides news about community people. The board decided to honour her in this way at its last meeting.

Update for policy document

Beth Shalom now has an 87-page updated policy document. The policy document, first compiled in 2005, covers everything about the progressive synagogue from budgets and employment to the bar and bat mitzvah programmes, the running of the Hebrew School to the conversion policy. Every board member receives a copy.

Secretary Judith Marks said a committee had spent many hours going through previous minutes and correcting policy where changes have been made through motions at board meetings. Barbara Hill processed the document and Chris Berman read through pages of minutes. Other committee members were Judith Hunt, Roger Reynolds and Judith Marks.

The Beth Shalom office will now keep the document up-to-date and the committee will meet each year to check through the changes. Letters of thanks are being sent to Barbara Hill, Chris Berman and Judith Hunt.

To the editor

Five months in New Zealand

Udi and I arrived here five months ago and this is a great opportunity for us to update you a little bit on what we have been up to.

We arrived at the end of the school year and the beginning of camp time; we jumped right in to the water mentally and physically. We also went to visit and run a programme for the BA camp as well.

We were very impressed by the two camps. From what we have observed so far, the madrichim of both youth groups play a significant part in Jewish education.

Now we have lots of ideas and projects that we want to accomplish, twinning with schools in the region and in Israel, Project Sabina, Yom Hashoah and the list goes on.

All of these projects will aim for connection in two directions. The first direction will be to connect

within the community and the second is to create a connection with other communities and Israel. One of the first we are working on is the connection with Yad Va'shem. In May Sabina Schweid will visit. She is a survivor of the Holocaust, and was hidden on a farm in Poland for two years with her mother. After the war, and an extended period in a refugee camp she had the opportunity to go Israel. She was 14 when she got to Israel, alone, with no parents, and no education and only her survival story and a wish to start a new life.

Sabina has published a book through Yad Va'shem telling her story. This month the book was translated and published in English, the publication of the English version being done at this time because of Sabina's visit to NZ.

At the end of February we had an excellent hadracha seminar.

This seminar was provided by the ZFNZ to enrich the madrichim of the youth movements as they are the central to informal education in the community. This is another way to build connections within the community with the two youth groups sharing a common purpose.

Osnat

Thanks!

Nothing but Nets Rachel Rich-Dennyss in honour of the 50th birthday of her nephew Rabbi Danny Rich.



I would like to express my deepest thanks to Rabbi Dean and the Beth Shalom community for their overwhelming love and support during this past distressing time for Kerry-Anne and for me.
Terry Haffern

HABONIM DROR PRESENTS...
PESACH TRIVIA NIGHT
PUT YOUR FAMILY TO THE TEST

7PM APRIL 20TH
BETH SHALOM

CONTACT LAURA KRANZ
0210 336565 - LAURA.KRANZ@GMAIL.COM

A phone call is all that is needed



Stephanie Markson

In the last year, Senior Outreach worker Stephanie Markson visited 75 different people needing help, travelling 4900 kms to do so. Stephanie, who is a long-time member of Beth Shalom, has worked for the Senior Outreach service since it started six years ago.

"We are commanded to perform mitzvot including visiting the sick, consoling the bereaved and welcoming the stranger. These are daily privileges," Stephanie says. The Senior Outreach service was initially started by Freda and Bob Narev funded by \$15,000 which Bob received as reparation for his two and a half years in Theresienstadt.

Now costing about \$40,000 a year to run, it is funded by a committee with Bob Narev as treasurer. It



Tali Mozessohn

receives a third of its budget from contributions from the burial and benevolent societies of the Orthodox and Progressive communities and the B'nai Brith, and small donations.

The service is now a registered charitable trust and is free to the elderly.

"Imagine you are in your eighties, living alone on the fringes of Auckland with no immediate relatives who are able to keep an eye out for you. Your health is deteriorating, it is difficult to shop, clean, reach the doctor. Earlier I have helped you access services you are entitled to, taken you to the doctor.

"It is Boxing Day and you have no food in your fridge or cupboard. You receive a call from the

Outreach worker to say 'hello.'" Stephanie, assisted by Tali Mozessohn, and volunteers, says the role of the Outreach worker is to connect people in need to people who can meet those immediate needs.

"I talk to GPs when asked, contacted the District Health Board social workers. I've raised money to help with funeral costs, arranged help to negotiate with a bank manager to sort out an overdrawn account, helped people network to overcome loneliness and isolation.", Stephanie says she tries to have ears to pick up on cues where support is needed.

"However a phone call about people who are sick, lonely, needing financial assistance is all that is required," she says.

Another service provided is the Silver Club which meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 10.30 at Beth Shalom. Silver Club meetings include a speaker and book review.

"It's very popular," she says, "And we only ask a gold coin donation."

Bricks Donated to Shalom Court

The following bricks have been donated since the last report.

Judy Koningham: with thanks for the tennis, from Sylvia and Arnold Treister (25).

Mazeltov and every good wish to **Joe Burns** from all associated with Shalom Court, with thanks for his support over the years.

Joe Burns donated 75 bricks to mark his 75th birthday. Judy and Alan Spalter also donated 25 bricks, Valerie and Dan Cohen (50), Margot and Andrie Hart (50), Theo Roland (25), Merle and Olly Newland (25), Claudia

and Monty Baker (18).

In honour of the **Levy, Schwarz,** and **Shabbat** families' wedding celebrations, and **Diane Levy's** birthday....Sylvia and Arnold Treister (18).

Levy and **Schwarz** families: On their happy occasion: Tanya, Raymond, Mia, and Arie Dobbe (25). Shalom Court acknowledges, with thanks, an anonymous donation of 15 bricks Mazeltov to **Jannis** and **Colin Cohen** on their Golden Wedding anniversary.

Jannis is on Shalom Court's man-

agement committee and both she and Colin are great supporters of Shalom Court. A large number of bricks have already been donated in their honour and a full list will be published in our next report. \$2442 was donated from the following: Claudia and Monty Baker, Joyce and Harold Baker, Mark, Elsa, and Valeria Benjamin, Rose Benjamin, Valerie Bermel, Hannah Brodsky, Ronny Bruell and Pam Hayward, Rosemary and Jeff Cook, Tanya, Raymond, Mia, and Arie Dobbe, Shelley and Simon Elkinson, Annette and Nigel Faigan, Ruth Filler, Jona *continued on page 7*

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Burial & Benevolent Society
President, Stuart Reuben
For burial or benevolent emergencies, please call
Stephanie Markson (524 5647) or Helen Levin (278 7756).



Senior Outreach Service

Community Seniors
Something on your mind?
Call Stephanie Markson, Outreach Worker, Tel. 524 5255 for a free chat or home visit.

INTERESTED IN JUDAISM?

Beth Shalom is considering launching an Introduction to Judaism course—a year-long study of the fundamentals of Jewish culture, thought and worship. The course is ideal for anyone considering conversion to Judaism, for the partners of Jews, or for Jews seeking a better understanding of the fundamentals of their people.

Sufficient numbers are required; please let us know whether you (or a friend!) are interested in learning with us.

The Introduction to Judaism Course is a requirement for anyone planning to convert to Judaism under Progressive auspices. If you know anyone who might be considering Judaism, please put them in touch with Sally Natan, chair-person of Beth Shalom's conversion committee, via the shul office.

No prior knowledge of Hebrew or Judaism is required. All are welcome. Introduction to Judaism is free to all members of Beth Shalom and their partners; there is a fee for non-members.

"Bricks" continued from page 6 and Denis Goldman (Melbourne), Barbara Goodman, Andrea and David Greenberg (Melbourne), Margot and Andrie Hart, Helen and Kim Heppner, Adele and Wally Hirsh, Beatrice and Nate Jaffe, Bessey Joshua, Judy Koningham, Larissa Liebman, Sonia Meltzer, Natalie Miller, Freda and Bob Narev, Merle and Olly Newland, Philip, Yasmine, Rafi, and Sascha Newland, Andrea, Sophie, and Harriet Parker, Carole Paykel, Theo Roland, Estelle and Stan Rose, Dian, David Ross, Fiona and Robert Ross, Wendy and Clive Ross, Helen and Anatoly Scholten, Tamara Feinstein, Judy and Alan Spalter, Madeline and Gordon Stern, Inge Woolf

For information on Shalom Court bricks, or to arrange a donation with accompanying gift certificate, please contact Merle Newland, 524-5288, or Suzanne Abel at Shalom Court, 521-7325.

To order bricks, or for more information, please phone **Merle Newland**, 524-5288, or contact **Suzanne Abel** at Shalom Court, 521-7325.

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