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# The YI/Merrick NEWS

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**\*\* Sivan 1999 – SHAVUOT ISSUE \*\***

Renee's opening lines go here.....

## **A Message from Rabbi Marc Volk:**

*When is your Shavuot?*

Shavuot is unique among all the Yomim Tovim which are mentioned in the Torah. The Torah does not state on which date it is to be celebrated. For all the other festivals, the Torah is very precise. It says, for example, that Pesach is to be celebrated on the fifteenth of the first month, Rosh Hashana on the first of the seventh month, etc. But for Shavuot, all it says is that it should be celebrated seven complete weeks after Pesach. In fact, this imprecision led to several bitter fights between various ancient Jewish sects and Rabbinic Judaism as to just when, in Pesach, the counting of the seven full weeks should begin. Furthermore, when the Bnai Yisroel arrived at Har Sinai to receive the Torah, the Torah again specifies no precise date. The Torah simply says that they arrived at Har Sinai bayom hazeh, "on this day" What is the reason for the Torah's imprecision?

It seems to me that the Torah, by this omission is teaching us something very important. The day celebrated as Shavuot is

known in our siddur as the time of the giving of the Torah and not as the time of the receiving of the Torah as it should be. This, as the Kotzker Rebbe points out, is because the giving of the Torah took place on one day, while the receiving of the Torah takes place every day. This too, I believe is why no date is mentioned in the torah for Shavuot. It is to teach us that the Torah is necessary and that we must receive it every day if we want to implement the teachings of human dignity and freedom we learned from Pesach. This we do by studying and practicing it.

Jeryl and I wish you and your family a Chag Sameach as well as a meaningful Kabbalat Hatorah on this beautiful Yom Tov of Shavuot.

Rabbi Marc S. Volk

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## **Shavuot Schedule:**

Who says that miracles don't happen in our lifetime? The shul, (thanks to the organizing efforts of Rabbi Volk and a hearty Yasher Koach to David Ritholtz, our Education Chairman for coordinating this event,) has its Shavuot speaker-

list in place and ready for your perusal. The following brave, learned, and wide-awake individuals (bring on the caffeine and sugar) will, IY"Y, be participating in the Tikun Layl Shavuot during the first night of Yom Tov, starting at midnight, May 20 (Thursday night) - May 21 (Friday):

**Rabbi M. Volk:** "Halachic Positions of Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik - Part II."

**Judah Fish:** "Gemara Bava Kama"

**Steve Hamburg:** "An Overview of the Aseret Hadibrot".

**Jack Lockspeiser:** "Insights into the Book of Ruth"

**Avi Abikzer:** "Introspection of Sefirat Ha'omer".

**Aron Rattner:** "Living a Kosher Life in non-Kosher Times"

**Chesky Wertman** "Chassidic perspectives on Shavuot".

A gala breakfast will served hot and fresh by none other than our resident "davening gourmet", **Arthur Ritholtz**, to all

participants who earned it by learning all night. Shacharit for those who are still coherent will take place at 4:45 a.m.

For the rest of us who have to make do with a bowl of cereal for breakfast, here is the schedule for the rest of Yom Tov.:

**Erev Shavuot, Thursday, May 20:** Candle lighting: 7:50 p.m. .  
Mincha : 8:00 p.m.

**Friday, May 21:** Shacharit is at 4:45 a.m. and (relax there is another minyan) 9:00 a.m..  
Friday night candlelighting is at 7:51 p.m. and Mincha is at 8:00 p.m.

**Shabbat, May 22:** Shacharit : 9:00 a.m. During Shacharit, Yizkor will be recited and Megillat Ruth will be read. The Rabbi's class will be at 7:20 p.m. , Mincha at 7:50 p.m., followed by Shalosh Seudos sponsored by Stan Fish and family. Shabbat ends at 9:01.

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## Introduction to the book of Ruth

“What is the connection between Ruth and Shavuoth, that it is read on Shavuoth, the time of the giving of the Torah? To teach you that the Torah was given only through affliction and poverty, and so Scripture states (Ps.68:11): “Your congregation dwelt therein; You prepare with Your goodness for the poor, O G-d. The Torah said before the Holy One, blessed be He, “O Lord of the Universe, place my

lot with the staff of poverty, for if the rich engage in me, they become haughty, but when they are poor, they engage in me, and they know that they are hungry and humble.” Therefore, “Now it came to pass in the days of the judging of the judges, that there was a famine in the land.” The judge would say to a person, “Take a splinter from between your teeth,” and he would retort, “ Take a beam from between your eyes,” (i.e., they judged the judges and did not accept their rulings.) Why does it say “Va’yehi” twice? Once for a famine of bread and once for a famine of Torah. This is to teach you that a generation bereft of Torah will be beset by hunger.

*Midrash Lekach Tov* gives another reason for the connection between Ruth and Shavuoth: the Scroll of Ruth is composed entirely of kindness, and the Torah, which was given on Shavuoth, is composed entirely of kindness, as it is said: “And the Torah of kindness is on her tongue”.

*Besorat Eliyahu* writes that according to tradition, the souls of all the Jews were present at Mt. Sinai when the Torah was give. The souls of future proselytes were also present at that memorable moment. As an allusion to this, we read the Book of Ruth, which embodies the narrative of Ruth the proselyte, on Shavuoth.

*Hatza'ath Ruth* teaches that Ruth serves as an example for the Jewish people. If Ruth, a

member of a rejected nation [Moav - editor], a nation with which intermarriage is forbidden, merited that G-d draw near to her to such an extent that she became the matriarch of the Davidic royal family, how much more so will G-d draw near to a Jew who draws near to His Torah! This lesson is appropriate for the Festival of Shavuoth, the time of the giving of the Torah.

We learn additionally (Zohar Harakia, Meshiv Nefesh) that just as Ruth accepted 606 commandments [the numerical value of Ruth - editor] in addition to the seven that she had previously been obligated to observe, so did the Jews accept 613 commandments.”

- *The Books of Esther, Song of Songs , Ruth*” - *The Judaica Press - introduction to Ruth, page xiv.*

Statements and opinions presented in signed articles are those of the respective authors, and do not necessarily reflect official opinions of the Young Israel of Merrick.
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## Recipes:

Sick of dairy and cheesecake? Well, actually me, neither, but how about some vegetarian recipes for a change?

**Garlic Pasta:** 1 whole garlic bulb; 1/2 cup olive or vegetable oil; 1/2 cup chopped fresh parsley; 1/4 cup chopped fresh oregano or 4 tsps. dried oregano; 1 tsp salt; 1/4 tsp

pepper; 1 lb. pasta, cooked and drained.

Separate garlic into cloves; remove papery skins. In a large skillet over low heat, sauté garlic in oil for 20 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from heat; add parsley, oregano, salt, and pepper. Toss with pasta; serve immediately. Yield: 4 servings.

**Barley and Corn Casserole:**

3 garlic cloves, minced; 1 cup chopped onion; 2/3 cup chopped carrots; 1 Tbsp cooking oil; 3 cups vegetable broth; 1 cup barley; 1/4 tsp. salt, optional ; 1/8 tsp. pepper; 2 cups frozen corn, thawed, 1/2 cups chopped fresh parsley. In a skillet over medium heat, sauté garlic, onion and carrots in oil until tender. Transfer to a greased 2 qt. Baking dish; add broth, barley, salt if desired and pepper. Mix well, Cover and bake at 350 degrees for 1 hour. Stir in corn and parsley. Cover and bake 10-15 minutes more or until barley is tender and corn is heated through. Yield: 12 servings.

Oh, okay., I give in, here are 2 dairy recipes:

**Spinach Potato Soup:** 2 cups cubed peeled potatoes (1/2 inch pieces); 1 1/2 cups water; 1 Tbsp dried minced onion; 1 tsp. instant bouillon granules; 1/2 tsp. garlic salt; 1 cup thinly sliced fresh or chopped frozen spinach; 1 cup whipping cream; 1/4 tsp. ground nutmeg. In a saucepan, combine the potatoes, water, onion and bouillon; bring

to a boil. Cook until potatoes are tender, about 10 minutes. Add the remaining ingredients and cook until spinach is tender and heated through. Yield: 4 servings.

**Apple Cheesecake:**

2 envelopes unflavoured gelatin; 1/3 cup cold water; 1 3/4 cups apple juice; 1/2 cup sugar; 3 egg yolks beaten; 3 packages (8 oz. each) cream cheese, softened; 1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon; 1/4 tsp. ground nutmeg, 1 cup whipping cream, whipped. Topping: 1/2 cup chopped dry roasted peanuts; 2 Tbsp butter or margarine; 1 cup applesauce; 1/3 cup packed brown sugar; 1/4 tsp. ground cinnamon; additional whipped cream, cinnamon and peanuts, optional. In a small bowl, soften gelatin in water; let stand for 2 minutes. In a saucepan over medium heat cook and stir apple juice, sugar, egg yolks and gelatin mixture until gelatin is dissolved. Cool to room temperature. In a large mixing bowl, beat the cream cheese, cinnamon and nutmeg until smooth. Chill until slightly thickened, about 20 minutes. Fold in cream. Pour into an ungreased 9 inch springform pan. Chill 4 hours or overnight. In a saucepan over medium heat, brown peanuts in butter for 2 minutes. Add applesauce, brown sugar, and cinnamon; cook and stir for 5 minutes. Cool. Spread over top of cheesecake. If desired, garnish with shipped cream, cinnamon and peanuts/ Yield: 12-16 servings.

**Thank yous:**

1) Thank you to Rabbi Rhodes for an inspirational Scholar-in-residence Shabbat. Many people really enjoyed and gained from his teachings and lectures.

2) Thank you to Gail and Richie Stamler for once again running an outstanding Garage Sale. No one knows how to market and move merchandise like Gail (and her apprentice in training, Cara). The Garage Sale was a huge success thanks to Gail and Richie's hard work. Thanks to all the volunteers who helped set-up, maintain, and clean up after it was all done. Yasher Koach!

**Mazel Tovs:**

1) Mazel Tov again to Sheri and Joseph Fisch on the birth of their baby girl, Jillian Emily. Mazel Tov to siblings, George, Daniella, and Sophie, and to all the grandparents and family. Only good health and nachas until 120!

2) Mazel Tov to the Daitch family on the upcoming Bat-Mitzvah of their daughter, Jillian, on June 5th.

Best wishes to Loren and Stuart, and to siblings, Zachary, Alexander, and Sydney, as well as the grandparents and all assorted family members. Jillian is a wonderful kid with so much to offer, we wish her and her family, good health, happiness, and nachas for many years until 120!

## Bye-bye:

Shalom U'lihitra'ot to our youth director, Avi Stein. Avi, as you all know, is engaged to be married to his lovely Kallah, Dina Weintraub. They will be moving to St. Louis where they will both be completing their degrees.. We wish him and his kallah only the best until 120 and we sure will miss him.

So now starts the search for a new Youth Director. In other words, it's time to raid Canada again. We need someone dynamic, intelligent, creative, fun, or to put it in the words of our esteemed President., "We need someone who is Jewish, breathing, and doesn't mind missing minyan".

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## Quick Jokes:

- 1) What do you call 10 Jews eating steak? A fillet minyan.
- 2) Netscape and Yahoo are merging and will be forming a new company. This company will be based in Israel. It's new name will be Net'n'Yahoo.

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## Board Elections:

Hopefully, by the time you receive this, you will have received your mailing concerning Board elections. No, time does not fly when you having fun. It just flies. However, now is the opportunity for those of you who kvetch about how things should be run, and what they

think should happen for the shul - well, baby, now it's time to put your money (or your vote) where your mouth is. Run for something. If not, then at the very least make sure you show up to vote. Get your nominations in by the end of the month, and let other people drive you crazy for 2 years.

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## Women's class:

As many of you know, Varda Baniliv, has been running a Pirkei Avot class on Shabbat afternoon. There will be a class on this Shabbat/Shavuot. The new topic has not as yet been decided but the class will continue each Shabbat, beginning at 6 pm.

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## Board Minutes Review:

- 1) The General Membership Meeting has been set for Monday, June 14. Letters will be sent out asking for applicants.
- 2) We will be putting up a new fence on the side of the shul. It has to be 6 feet high by 25 feet.
- 3) There is a need to redo the shrubs and evergreens at the back of the shul.
- 4) We met with the Town of Hempstead officials who had received complaints from neighbours concerning Tikun Layl Shavuot.
- 5) The budget for 1999-2000 was discussed concerning

expenditures and revenues. The budget will be discussed in detail at the General Membership Meeting.

6) The importance of the revenue from Bingo was discussed. It was also discussed that the lack of participation from the shul members could seriously affect Bingo's success. More people need to commit to helping run Bingo as it is such a money maker.

7) Youth Committee - Avi Stein is leaving and the committee is currently interviewing candidates.

8) The idea of having a shul credit card was brought up. This would be a card that would enable members to pay their shul dues. You can also get mileage by the use of this card. It will be brought for discussion at the general membership meeting.

9) It was discussed where to hang the menorah that was donated in honor of Jillian Daitch's bat-mitzvah. Will probably hang it in the women's section.

10) The idea of sending the newsletter and various flyers and information by e-mail was brought up (see following article).

11) The current board will meet for the last time on June 14 at 8:00 p.m. The General Membership Meeting will begin at 9:00 p.m. and the new board will meet after the membership meeting is over.

## **E-Mail -- Young Israel enters the new millennium.:**

*by Renée Maynard*

I brought this idea up at the Board Meeting. Since we do not have an official office with a secretary (I'm the Board Secretary, not the Shul Secretary), and since, we very often organize events last minute and without enough warning, the need to transmit information is vital. Yes, the phone squad is great but sometimes messages get lost. Yes, I put together the newsletter but it is enormously time-consuming between the information gathering, typing and typesetting. Also by doing it on a monthly basis, very often the news is a little old. So I would like to propose to the congregation that the newsletter be sent out bi-monthly, via E-mail, on alternate Monday mornings. No fancy typesetting (that is, until I really learn how to use Microsoft Word), but the news will be more up-to-date, no getting lost in the mail, no missed phone calls. I propose to keep the phone squad because it serves a vital part in relaying really current events. As computer-illiterate as I am, even I can retrieve my e-mail (as long as there is someone in the house upon whom I can call on in a panic to help me). If you do not have e-mail, then if you have access to a fax machine, I have a fax machine in my home and I can fax you the new and improved newsletter. If you have neither then the information will be mailed to you.

Please be assured that if you are concerned as to the security of your e-mail address, no one, and I mean no one will have access to it but me. I will be calling all the members to get their feedback on this. If you like the idea you can call me directly (223 0186) and leave your e-mail address with me. I hope that most of you will agree to this change. It will allow us to get information and happenings in the shul to you much more quickly and efficiently.

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### **Bingo:**

The importance of your participation in this vital fund raising function cannot be overstated. We need you a few hours a month to help raise these important funds for the shul. Bingo is such a winner for the shul that you cannot ignore the need for you to join in. When Sherri Bell (623 2309) calls you, or if anyone of the Trinity (Allen, Michael, or Steve) asks for your help, you have to help.

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### **This Month's Web Sites:**

*(contributed by Jeff Maynard)*

<http://www.torahtots.com/holidays/shavuot/shavuot.htm> Shavuot - the story - Fun & Games - Coloring Pages. Hear the music - Parsha on Parade!

[Http://www.gefiltegreetings.com](http://www.gefiltegreetings.com)

This site features free electronic cards for all Jewish occasions.

<http://www.bluemountain.com/eng/jewish/Jshavuot.html> And this is the url for the rather more well-known Blue Mountain Arts greeting card site. Electronic Greeting cards with music.

<http://www.torah.org> Presumably you are participating in the Shul project to have each family learn a Parsha. Here is where you find your material. From Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky to Rav Frand, here are the droshas and commentaries.

<http://www.geocities.com/Paris/Bistro/8765/> The Matzo Girlz Club. Claims to include 937 beautiful Orthodox women and 1853 handsome Orthodox men! Orthodox Jewish Singles Schmooze and links to "Moshe's Frum Shidduch Database", "Will your Grandchildren be Jewish?", "Orthodox Jewish Matchmaker Database", Shidduch Survivors' Club" etc.

<http://web.wt.net/~cbenton/hoj.htm>.com House of Jews - a celebration of all things Jewish. Includes the Texas Talmud, Lone Star Kabbalah, The Random Talmud Server, Cool Zohar and more. A YIM cool site of the month.

[Http://www.jewsforjudaism.org/jawbsite/index.html](http://www.jewsforjudaism.org/jawbsite/index.html) Jews for Judaism is the only full-time counter-missionary, educational outreach and counseling network spanning North America. It is dedicated to countering the multi-million dollar efforts of the missionary and cult groups that target the Jewish Community for conversion. Some people may remember seeing my Jews for Judaism tee-shirt.

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