



## WHAT'S INSIDE:

**2** • President's Message

**3** • ECO Volunteers  
• From the Israeli Committee

**4** • Upcoming Events

**5** • Global Day of Jewish Learning

**6** • From the Educational Director  
• First Suburbs Project Event

**7** • Are You Green?

**8** • Social Action News  
• From the Administrator

November/December 2010 • Volume 28, Issue 2 • Elul/Tishrei 5570

## From Rabbi Roni

"Hasidis explains that everything in this world, everything in this life has an inner essence, an inner soul. And when it started out before the soul was reincarnated into this life, into this body, and time and place that we find ourselves, it was basking above in the rays of Godliness. And it comes into this world for one reason, that it should transform the darkness into light. It should take the darkness of this world and make it light. So lift up, lift it up..."

This teaching comes from the Hasidic-reggae-hip hop star, Matisyahu, from his song, *Warrior*, on the *Live at Stubb's* soundtrack. Hasidic thought holds that our world is filled with divine sparks; points of light that exist within each of us and within all things in this world. Our mission in life is to raise up these sparks, reuniting them with their divine source, reuniting them with God.

Transforming darkness into light is also what we are literally doing when we light the candles each night of Chanukah. Each night when we add one additional candle to our menorah, we bring an ever-increasing amount of light into the world. And we do this precisely at the darkest time of the year. December 21, 2010 marks the Winter solstice, the longest and darkest night of the year. With each night of Chanukah the evening becomes darker, and we transform this darkness into light through the lighting of our Chanukah menorahs.

While there are few laws related to the holiday of Chanukah, one of the imperatives we learn in the Talmud (*Masekhet Shabbat*) is that we are supposed to light our Chanukah candles in public view. The instruction is to advertise the miracle, "*persum ha'nesh*." In Israel this means that as one walks the streets of Jerusalem, Chanukah menorahs are visible in countless apartment and store windows, similar to the feeling in America as holiday lights fill our streets and shopping malls. Advertising our light serves as a reminder that we are not only transforming light for our own benefit, or for the benefit of those who live in our house, but that we must bring light into the darkness that exists throughout the world.

But the transformation of darkness into light must not only be a symbolic gesture. The lights of Chanukah should serve as a reminder of the *tikkun*, or repair, that is needed in our world, and an encouragement for us to dedicate (the literal meaning of the work *Chanukah*) ourselves to taking part in this healing, to bring light wherever there is darkness.

This year as we light our Chanukah candles each night, I encourage you to include these additional blessings (<http://www.ritualwell.org/holidays/chanukah/primaryobject.2008-12-15.2629505893>) along with the traditional Chanukah blessings. These blessings highlight the areas of our world that so desperately need our help in transforming the darkness into light. For example, the blessing for the first night is for "Clean City Air: Blessed are You, Spirit of the World, who has given us the gift of life through breath. May we be able to continue to breathe in fresh, clean air, reminding us of humanity's creation." These blessings were composed as part of a project of Georgia Interfaith Power & Light in cooperation with the Reconstructionist Congregation Bet Haverim. The subsequent nights include blessings for a peaceful world, stabilized climate, clean water, and a safe food chain, to name a few.

As we kindle our Chanukah lights this year, may we remember the prayer that we say every morning as part of the *Shacharit*, or morning, liturgy – *Or hadash al tziyon ta'ir venizkeh hulanu bimherah le'oro*. This year may a new light shine not only on Zion, but on the entire world, and may we each do our part in heeding the Hasidic call to transform the darkness of this world and make it light...to lift it up.

B'racha, Rabbi Roni

Newsletter of Or Hadash  
A Reconstructionist Congregation  
190 Camp Hill Road  
Fort Washington, PA 19034  
215.283.0276 Fax 215.283.4822  
[office@orhadash.com](mailto:office@orhadash.com)  
[www.orhadash.com](http://www.orhadash.com)



## President's Message

### *The Many Faces of a Synagogue*

By Janet Karp

In my years at Or Hadash, I have come to realize that the most important component of our synagogue is you. A synagogue is nothing without a community. It is the people, the synagogue members that inspire everything that happens. Recognizing that Or Hadashers find meaning in doing what helps people in need propels us to participate in *tikkun olam*/repairing the world. Brainstorming about what programs to offer and deciding what events will be fun for people to attend are not possible without people coming together to plan, and the events not worthwhile without people to enjoy them. When I celebrate Shabbat at Or Hadash, it is the congregation coming together that makes me return again and again. While I love to sing and I find meaning in the siddur/prayer book, the shared experience of Saturday morning makes it Shabbat.

The communal embrace of the common Jewish values of *tzedakah*/justice, *tefillah*/awakening the divine in ourselves, and *gemilut hasadim*/giving loving-kindness, forms the foundation of Jewish community. Educating all of our children, life-long learning for everyone, and supporting those in our midst who are suffering from hardship, illness and loss are what makes us a sacred community.

At every executive board and board of directors meeting we begin with a blessing that says: *Blessed are You, Source of Connection whose mitzvot add holiness to our lives and who enjoins us to work for the benefit of our sacred community.* The recitation of these words sets the *kavannah*/intent of all around the table to keep in our minds and in our hearts the central theme that we need each other to really make our community holy.

So thank you all for being part of Or Hadash, for renewing your membership, and for making the decision to join this very special place.

### Beautiful Or Hadash cards now available



Or Hadash al Liyron la'Ir  
אור חדש על לירון הארץ  
Let a new light shine forever upon Zion.



A donation has been made to Or Hadash in honor of \_\_\_\_\_  
by \_\_\_\_\_

Or Hadash donation card front cover design and inside note area.



May God console you among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.  
by \_\_\_\_\_



Or Hadash in memory of cover design, and inside note area of card.

**These special cards are now available for a donation of \$20.00 for 5 cards, to benefit Or Hadash.**

(+ \$2.00 shipping and handling)

Send in honor of a special occasion or in memory of a loved one and support Or Hadash.

Call Laurie Albert 215-283-0276 or Amy Grossman 610-828-7725

OR HADASH



OR HADASH

A Reconstructionist Congregation  
[www.orhadash.com](http://www.orhadash.com)

190 Camp Hill Road, Fort Washington, PA 19034  
Phone: 215-283-0276

...shedding new light on Jewish Traditions

## CONDOLENCES

- To **Rosalind Fudell** on the loss of her mother, Beatrice Tauber, mother-in-law of Steve.
- To **Sarah Kaplan** on the passing of her father John Reinhold, father-in-law of Don and grandfather of Hannah and Benjamin.
- To **Penny Levin** on the passing of her mother, Goldie Levin, mother-in-law of Phil Rosenberg, grandmother of Sarina and Brenna Rosenberg.
- To **Barry Bell** on the passing of his aunt, Ruth Goldberg.
- To **Marty Savitzky** on the passing of his step-father, Sidney Fisher, father-in-law of Carolyn and grandfather of Robyn.
- To **Scott Crespy** on the passing of his sister, Sandee Kline, sister-in-law of Gayle and aunt of Hannah and Leah.
- To **Louise DeSimone** on the passing of her mother, Bernice Alberts, mother-in-law of Giuseppi, grandmother of Jess, Hannah and Alexander.

## Wissahickon Restoration Volunteers



*The 10th grade Confirmation class and some parents worked with Wissahickon Restoration Volunteers in Fairmount Park on September 19, 2010. Pictured are (standing, l to r) Sarah Kravinsky, Zoe Adler, Marianne Adler, Alex Rubin, Julie Jacobson, Sydney Mann, Sarah Rosenbaum, Maxine Mann, Meredith Davis, Ann Davis, (kneeling l to r) Zachary Schwarz, Hannah Rifkin, Sam Jacobson, Jahnia Wright (WRV volunteer), and Ruth Mermelstein.*





**Spring  
Into  
Judaica!**

**Shop Our Online Judaica Store**

## From the Israeli Committee

*By Elley Rosenberg  
Israeli Committee Chairperson*

The Israeli Committee is looking for volunteers to help plan events for our Or Hadash Community as well as to participate in larger community wide programs.

In the past the Israeli Planning Committee has co-sponsored events with Adult Education to bring in speakers such as Yossi Alpher, a renowned journalist on Israeli Palestinian issues, the Israeli Scout performance with Congregation Beth Tikvah B'nai Jeshrun, and participation in Israel's 60th Birthday Celebration in Philadelphia. In addition, the committee sponsored "Images of Israel" during our Staircase Gallery Art Exhibit.

This month our own Or Hadash member, Jed Margolis, Executive Director for Maccabi USA (Sports for Israel), will be speaking about the Maccabiah Games held in Israel every four years and will be showing a video presentation of the actual games.

So, if you have a love for Israel and great ideas to make this a fun and active committee, please contact me at Eir312@verizon.net or by phone at 215-646-5390 to volunteer your time.

## A Heartfelt Thank You To All Involved

*By Doug Smithman*

Thank you, thank you, and thank you to all of those involved in The Great Schlep of 5771. Machzorim in three flavors, (adult, teen and family), kippot, head coverings, pins, tallitot, candles, candlesticks, mitzvah cards, pledge cards, Yahrzeit candles, matches, baskets, signs, easels, banners, duct tape, flyers, flyers and more flyers, will-call items, tablecloths and Torah covers. Sometimes these things need to be at Gratz, other times they need to be at Or Hadash. Schlepping is truly a group effort and thanks need to be given to all of those who made it possible. For shear muscle, we need to thank those who bent backs and paid the price for the cause. Babette Zemel, Dan Schwarz, Jeff Alper, Jon Shapiro, Ken Rosenberg, Rich Davis, Sharon Starr, Steve Starr and the choir all deserve thanks for picking up and cleaning up whatever and whenever needed. There were others, too. It is a true testimony to the congregants at Or Hadash when I have to politely decline one offer of help after another on Yom Kippur because so many are willing to pitch in; but that is the nature of our institution.

Not to take away from the “schlepping muscle,” but these are not the only people who deserve a big thank you for making sure that everything was there to make your High Holidays pleasant. Laurie Alpert went above and beyond her duties in making sure that all of the items we needed were identified and in boxes ready to be moved. Most importantly, thanks should go to Beth Alper, the High Holiday coordinator. It is a brutal position that requires many hours of planning, scheduling, coordinating, re-planning, re-scheduling, re-coordinating, and then going home and banging your head on the wall when there are no matches to light the Yahrzeit candle. (We haven’t done that in two years!)

Are you an  
unemployed or  
underemployed  
Jewish individual  
under 65  
living in the  
Delaware Valley?

*helpinghands*

may be just what you're  
looking for...and it's FREE!

We can help you positively change your life.  
Program benefits include:

One-on-one contact and support with a  
team of dedicated professionals

Assessment that helps pinpoint what you  
can do to make changes

Access to an array of  
community resources

Job readiness and placement assistance

Call 215-854-1834 to learn more about this  
exciting program and to see if you qualify.

Funded by the Jewish Federation  
of Greater Philadelphia

Speaking for the  
schleppers, thank  
you, Beth, for a  
job well done.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Friday, November 5th

#### Three-Part Harmony

We will have our Tot Shabbat at 6 p.m., dairy/veggie Pot Luck Dinner at 6:30 p.m., and Family Service at 7 p.m., and will celebrate November birthdays.

Friday November 12th we will have a special program on energy conservation during erev Shabbat Service.

### Sundays, November 14, February 27, January 23 and April 3, 9 a.m.

#### "Rap with Rabbi Roni"

Mark the dates on your calendar and come share coffee and conversation those Sundays at 9 a.m.

### Friday, December 3rd

#### Three-Part Harmony

We will light the 3rd light of Chanukah together, observe Human Rights Shabbat, and celebrate December birthdays.

### Sunday, December 5th

#### Chanukah Party — Or Hadash “Latke Idol”

Latke cook-off with prizes for traditional and non-traditional latkes and gifts for the kids. Contact Gyl Zelesnick at 215-675-7865 or GZelesnick@aol.com for contest details and registration.

### Friday, December 10 RRC Shabbat Service

Join as we celebrate Shabbat with students from the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College. Hear the winner of the George Goldman Or Hadash D’var Torah Scholar competition at the Erev Shabbat Service. Reservations are required for the catered dinner before the service.

### Friday, December 24, 5 p.m. YULE at the SHUL

Join us for Kabbalat Shabbat with Chinese food and a movie.

*There will be no service on December 31st. January 1st is Sleep-in Shabbat. Torah study and services will be an hour later than usual.*

Or Hadash has been the recipient of many gifts from our congregants, for which we are grateful. However, we are requesting that all donations of treasured items such as books, tapes, videos and other Judaica be placed on hold. We appreciate your cooperation at this time.

## B'NAI MITZVAH

### NOVEMBER 13

Bar Mitzvah of **Lev Kravinsky**, son of Emily and Zell Kravinsky

### NOVEMBER 29

Bat Mitzvah of **Laura Marmion**, daughter of Jill and Jim Marmion

## Yashir Koach — And a Big Thank You

*By Ken Rosenberg*

Once again, Or Hadash has expressed its support for Israel through the purchase of Israel bonds. While we fell a little short of last year's record-setting investment, those congregants who were able to invest made a statement that, when combined with the thousands of Americans who do likewise, tells Israelis and the world at large that we support our brothers and sisters in Israel and will continue to do so in the future.

Thank you to all who purchased a bond, and for those who were undecided, it is never too late to contact Israel Bonds at 215-545-8380. Just tell them "Or Hadash sent me".

## GLOBAL DAY OF JEWISH LEARNING

*By Herbert E. Mandell MD, Chair, Adult Education*

*Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz of Jerusalem, Israel, has been called an outstanding educator of this millennium. On Sunday, November 7th, he will complete 45 years of a groundbreaking initiative to translate and explain the entire Talmud, thus making it accessible to all. The Global Day of Jewish Learning will honor that achievement by bringing together over 300 Jewish communities from around the world in a historic, unifying experience: the simultaneous study of that week's Talmud tractate, Ta'anit. This specific tractate addresses in remarkable ways some of today's most vexing issues.*

*In the Philadelphia area, Or Hadash will serve as one of the registered sites, serving Montgomery, Bucks Counties and environs. Of the seven themes identified in the tractate, we have chosen to focus on two: The Environment and God. The former is particularly relevant as it is our congregational theme this year. We have created a program that is open to the public, and should prove both enlightening and provocative.*

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

**11-11:15 a.m.** — Registration in Community Room  
(Coffee and Refreshments available)

**11:30-11:45 a.m.** — Overview and video  
(in the sanctuary)

**11:45 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.** — First discussions on the Environment and G-d (in the sanctuary)  
Facilitators: Rabbi Roni Handler on the Environment  
Rob Klotz and Marty Jacobs on G-d

**12:30-1 p.m.** — Lunch (pizza)

**1-1:45 p.m.** — Second discussions on Environment and G-d (in the sanctuary)

Facilitators: Rabbi Nathan Martin on "Understanding the Mitzvah of 'Do Not Destroy/Bal Tashchit' — Implications for our Jewish lives today"  
Aliza Green on "The Environment – Food"  
Rich Malkin and Jeff Chebot on G-d

**2-2:20 p.m.** — Siyyum, the sign-off ceremony, live from Jerusalem via the Internet

**2:20-3 p.m.** — Presentation via Internet by Rabbi Steinsaltz, discussion and closing

Please note that there will be a small charge, about \$4 per person, for lunch. Interested persons may register at [office@orhadash.com](mailto:office@orhadash.com), or call the synagogue at 215.283.0276 for further information. Or Hadash is located at 190 Camp Hill Road in Fort Washington PA 19034.

Should you have any questions, do not hesitate to call me at 215.572.6018. We certainly do appreciate any coverage that will encourage the public to attend this program.

## From the Education Director

*By Lori Rubin*

During the High Holiday season, we often reflect on our behavior. In past years, I have spoken about creating “sacred time,” “looking and really seeing,” and “listening but not really hearing.” This year, during High Holiday family services, we spent some time “reconstructing” a prayer to find modern meaning in it. While the choice of the words we used was “interesting” to say the least, I found it wonderful to see so much participation while creating a new version of the Sh’ma. Parents and children together were figuring out what words make sense to them. The words in our siddur, our prayer book, were written not by us, and not so recently. How can we find meaning in the words spoken from generation to generation? So, this year, I invite us to continue to think about our rituals and prayers can hold meaning in our busy lives.

Last week, during Sunday services, we looked at the sign of the covenant that we learned G-d gave to us after the flood that destroyed the earth - the rainbow. Using seven prayers for the seven colors of the rainbow, together, we came up with one word or phrase that can be used to describe each prayer. For example, for Mi Chamocha, we chose “miracle.” Then, we talked about how we are created in G-d’s image, B’tzelel Elohim, and if G-d is inside us, what kinds of miracles should we acknowledge? The fact that we were able to wake up this morning and not miss the bus? The fact that we have sight that can behold the beautiful foliage? The idea behind this exercise was to see that our prayers in the siddur could inspire us to make relevant

### “Leaders: Building Our Future Together”

#### A Southeastern Pennsylvania First Suburbs Project Event

**Thursday, December 2, 2010 from 6-8 p.m.**

**Twentieth Century Club, Lansdowne, PA**

Or Hadash is a member of this progressive organization that includes congregations, agencies and municipal governments in the suburbs. Tickets to the event are available at the member price of \$75. For more information, tickets or advertising opportunities, please contact Michael Golden at [magolden1@aol.com](mailto:magolden1@aol.com).

## Making Quilts as a Bat Mitzvah Project

Carly Plotkin became a Bat Mitzvah on June 19, 2010. For her Bat Mitzvah project, she made quilts for children who are homeless, ill, or in transition through an organization called “Quilts for Kids.” Carly met with a quilting circle in Bensalem where she learned that making quilts “takes a long time” and that it “feels really good to finish a quilt and give it back.” She commented in her reflection questions that she learned that “some people work faster and some people work slower and that is OK.” We are proud of the work Carly has done and wish her the best of luck in the future. For more information on Quilts for Kids, please visit <http://www.quiltsforkids.org/>

personal connections. Next time, you are in synagogue, try it yourself. If you want more information on how we make our prayers meaningful to our everyday life, come visit our services either on Shabbat, or during school from 10:45-11:15 a.m. on Sundays or 5:30-6:00 p.m. on Tuesdays. We would love to have you with us.

Our school program is full of exciting new programs. We are continually looking to make the curriculum as meaningful, relevant, and experiential as it can be. Our second-to fifth-graders will be holding a special edition of Global Day of Jewish Learning on November 7th during regular class time. Just like the rest of our community, we’ll be exploring two issues: Tzedakah and the Environment. Parents will be welcome and encouraged to come to class with their children as we explore texts and respond to them with our thoughts just like the Talmud. We’ll also create handmade bags with which to store canned goods and non-perishable food items to donate to local food pantries as we discuss Tzedakah and why Jewish tradition teaches us to help others.

One of our goals for this year is to build community. During the year, we will try to bring families together for informal gatherings outside of school. We also are providing opportunities for congregants to get together without children. Our second annual “Martinis in the Hut” gathering was an excellent example of building community. A similar event, Warm Winter Cocktail Fun, is scheduled for January 29. Save the date!

As always, please feel free to contact me with any questions, comments, concerns, or suggestions.

## Are You Green?

By Doug Smithman

Before you answer that question, let me ask you another one. What does it mean to be green? It has become very trendy in recent years to advocate “being green.” To some, it means separating out recyclables in their daily trash. To others, it means actually taking the time to program a thermostat. Some simply walk in the woods and enjoy the sights and sounds of nature.

And then there is sustainability. Many of us realize that our lifestyles are not sustainable. We can't keep creating landfills. We can't keep using the atmosphere and the rivers as a dumping ground in the hope that what we put there will eventually be filtered away or somehow swept under a rug or, more appropriately, behind a bush.

But what can you do about it? What can you do to be green? Fortunately, you belong to Or Hadash. **You can volunteer to work with ECO.** You mean to say that you've never heard of ECO??

ECO (Environmentally Concerned Or Hadashers) is the Or Hadash committee that is concerned with all things green. We have grand ideas for things that our community can do to make a real impact in the environment. Rabbi Roni, who is extremely interested in all things green, gave us a nice plug during her High Holiday sermons. She laid out a few ideas for projects.

- Converting the Ner Tamid (light over the Ark) to solar power
- An energy audit for Or Hadash
- A November lecture on home energy
- Stickers for classrooms and common areas to remind folks of green issues like turning off lights
- Coordinate a Sunday school trip to Pennypack farm or a similar destination
- Coordinate car pooling for school
- Coordinate a CSA

I am personally working on the first three items on this list. (And please come to the home energy lecture - it's free!) That said, ECO is in great need of other ideas and volunteers willing to spend a little time to implement them.

This is particularly important because our board has declared that the theme of this year at Or Hadash is the environment. We, that is, the membership of Or Hadash, need to do things to show our concern in the environment and green issues. It also has the potential to generate publicity in the community and may even help membership. If we can get some things done on our beautiful building, we could also reduce our notorious energy bills and save a few bucks.

But we need YOU. ECO needs people to help with all of this. We need thinkers and doers - people who understand how important these issues are to us and to our children; people who are willing to give a little time and make a big difference. So please, find the time in your busy schedule to become involved in your community and do something that will make you feel good while helping the environment.

Contact me by email, [dougsmithman@gmail.com](mailto:dougsmithman@gmail.com), if you'd like to lend your expertise and a little energy to helping Or Hadash in this, our green year. Thank you.



### RECYCLING AT OR HADASH

There are recycling cans in the office, in the kitchen, and on both school floors. We have just received word that our township will now accept plastics #1 – 7 as well as paper in our single stream recycling. So when you are here, please put your bottles, cans, and paper in the designated containers and help our environment. Thank you.

## Social Action News

*By Debbie Bernstein & Alisa Belzer, Co-Chairs, SATO*

In November, Or Hadash host guests from Interfaith Hospitality Network. We have several families living in our classrooms each evening. Thank you to Lori Rubin, students, and teachers who are so very cooperative and understanding with the transition between bedroom to classroom and back again. Thank you to Rabbi Roni, Laurie Alberts, and office staff who work around air mattresses, keys and make helpful calls for the month. An additional thank you goes to Sharon Starr and Cheryl Kripke-Cohen for preparing the synagogue to welcome our guests and to the Starr family for providing back-up whenever necessary!

Very special thanks go to the coordinators who schedule and reschedule all of the volunteers. Thank you to Diana Brody, coordinator of the dinners. Sharon Starr and Alisa Belzer make sure our guests are safe and comfortable by coordinating our overnight volunteers. Debbie Bernstein and her team of volunteers make the necessary shopping trips for supplies and food for our guests. We also provide transportation for our guests. Thank you to Jill Seeherman and Jennifer Hoagland who schedule and direct the volunteer drivers. Susan Wisch continues coordinating the laundry crew, as well as the big move at the end of the month.

None of this could happen without the volunteers who give their time, talents and energy everyday so that our community may provide an inviting place for our guests.

Again, we want to thank each and every volunteer for your kindness and generosity of time and resources. The families will flourish because of your work. That is a mitzvah.

## Ha-Kesher Now Accepting Advertising

Thank you for your interest in advertising in our synagogue newsletter, *Ha-Kesher*. We have “gone green,” and *Ha-Kesher* is now a bimonthly online publication available at our web site, [www.orhadash.com](http://www.orhadash.com). We will be publishing quarter-page ads at a rate of \$30.00 per issue or reproducing business cards at a rate of \$20.00 per issue. Please contact me if you have general questions. If our terms are acceptable, please email photo-ready ads to [debra.schaeffer@gmail.com](mailto:debra.schaeffer@gmail.com) for evaluation. If your ad is accepted for publication, we will invoice you through email and forward your ad to our printer. Please contact our printer, Guy Homer, at [homer@homergroup.com](mailto:homer@homergroup.com), for more specific information regarding printing specifications.

## From the Administrator

*By Laurie Albert*

Recently, two very dear friends, Marilyn and Alex, were killed in a car accident. This sudden tragedy has left a large hole in the hearts of my family and our mutual friends. It also reinforces an important life lesson that Marilyn taught by example every time I saw her.

Marilyn never missed the opportunity to tell the people in her life that she loved them. Every time she greeted someone, she told them that it was good to see them. And instead of saying goodbye, she said, “I love you and I care.”

Most of us are too busy with the mundane daily activities to bother saying things like this. We always think that there will be a better time or opportunity to say these important things. No one ever thinks that this might be the last time you will see someone, and then we wish we had said them. I treasure the memory of hearing her say that she loved me and I am glad I responded in kind.

Let Marilyn be your teacher, too. Let those special people in your life know how much they mean to you. There is no time like the present.

## Mentors Needed for Local Robotics Team

The robotics team, Simple Machines, is composed of students from several area high schools including Cheltenham High School, Springfield High School, and Eastern Center for Arts and Technology. The team works throughout the school year, but especially from January to March. During this time, they build a robot that will participate in two exciting competitions held by FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology; see [www.usfirst.org/](http://www.usfirst.org/) for more information). If you have never seen one of these competitions, you should consider attending one of the local events!

The student members of Simple Machines work closely with adult mentors in many fields including electronics, mechanics, machining, engineering, programming, business management, advertising, and art. Our team is currently in need of more mentors in any of these areas. Any amount of time or services you could offer would be a huge asset to the team!

To volunteer or find out more, please email to Nancy Schek at [na\\_schek@comcast.net](mailto:na_schek@comcast.net) or call me at 215-635-2023.