



Har Shalom

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Jan.–Feb. '09

Wake Up to Spring

by student rabbi Callie Souther

Just when you thought the holidays were over, it turns out that they are not. We can always count on Judaism to present us with a holiday just when we feel that we are getting over the last. Our next holiday, Tu B'Shvat (the 15th of the month of Shvat) provides such a unique opportunity, that it is and should be a welcome change of pace and celebration!

In contrast to the Hannukah celebration of oil and light to warm our hearts and bellies, Tu B'Shvat is a wake up call to spring. It is our first rousing from our own forms of winter hibernation, and a reminder that those snow-covered trees will once again be blossoming in no time. Tu B'Shvat is most commonly known as the "New Year of the Trees". In the Jewish year cycle we have four different new years for four different cycles upon which we had to keep an eye in antiquity. First and foremost, is Rosh Hashana, our New Year celebrated as the birthday of the world. The Rabbis of the Talmud established three other new years in our annual cycle: a new year for determining the reign of kings, the new year for tithing animals to be given as sacrifice at the Temple in Jerusalem, and the new year of the trees. It is written in Leviticus 19:23 that we are not to eat the fruit of a tree until its third year. Tu B'Shvat is then a practical construct: it allows us one day, roughly around the time when the trees would have been planted, that we can know a trees' age and harvest from it.

Originally this date was intended for our own purposes: so that we can know when we are no longer restricted from a tree's fruit. But what began as a practical issue of agricultural management has since turned into Judaism's Earth Day. The Jewish mystics of medieval times taught that, just as within each of us, within each fruit and nut lies a spark of divine — a potential for life that continues on each and every year.

There are a variety of echoes of what today is growing to be known as Eco-Judaism in the Torah and Talmudic literature. What I find most striking is an ancient understanding that our cycle as humans and our well being is intimately tied up with the well being of the land. We cannot flourish unless our land flourishes. We cannot survive if the earth around us does not survive. Our tradition is overflowing with images of Trees. We compare the Torah, our most precious text and purveyor of tradition as an *Eitz Chaim*, a Tree of Life. We cling to trees to sustain us, and we understand that we must take care of those trees so that they, in turn, will take care of us. We are not merely masters over God's creations; we are partners with them, just as we are partners with God, in the work of creation.

Todah Rabah

As always we are grateful to the volunteers who keep our congregation vibrant. Please take a moment to consider how you might serve Har Shalom and add your name to our list. And, please contact Maeta if you are aware of someone who has not been properly thanked. Pat and Jack Cohen and Boris Soukonnikov for snow removal, Jeff Kooris for help around the building and for graciously providing housing for Callie, Kate and Toba for their continuing work on the library, Kate Soukonnikov and her many helpers for planning, and bringing us the annual Chanukah party, Bert Chessin, Lizzi Juda, Paul and Jeb Rosen and Sonia Chessin for live music on Chanukah, Laurie Franklin for her ongoing commitment to the Ritual Team and the spiritual life of our congregation, Susan Cramer for her guidance to the building campaign committee.

Donors (Dec/Jan)

Suzanne Aboulfadl
Jeffrey Bendremer
Ty Brennan
Hank Butzel
Cory Davis
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Fern Glass & Lance Boyd
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(continued on next page)

Board of Directors
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Ty Brennan, 626- 4479
Sherry Kolenda, 251-7996
Toba Winston, 777-5541

Send news, events, or letters to maetadan@hotmail.com. Newsletters publish after Board meetings.

The Har Shalom newsletter is written and edited entirely by volunteer members of the congregation. You'll see a variety of writing styles, probably catch a few errors and sadly sometimes find some omissions. The purpose of the newsletter to keep you informed. With that in mind, your articles and suggestions are always welcome. Deadline for the following month is the 15th. We are DESPERATELY seeking folks to help gather articles. If you've always had a yen to wear a press pass, now's your chance. No fancy computer skills are needed. Contact Maeta for more info.

Embraced by Har Shalom

by Sherry Kolenda

Being newer to the Missoula community, and the Missoula Jewish community, I'd like to say how honored I am to have been asked to sit on the Board of Har Shalom, and now chair our Capital Campaign. I guess this evolved out of how embraced I felt and continue to feel, every time I walk into our wonderful building. Having lived my entire life in large cities, coming to a smaller city enabled me to feel like more of a participant in the community just by virtue of the numbers of people here. Somehow, in all the years I had spent as a member of a few congregations in New York and Los Angeles, I never really had a desire to do more than attend High Holy Day services, and make sure my two sons had their bar mitzvahs. Here in Missoula, I suddenly discovered something inside that spoke to my personal sense of my Jewish self. And this feeling is propelling me to wanting to see our Jewish presence here in Missoula and in Montana, grow and thrive.

In that vein, having a home, a building, a place to come to join together as Jews and share with each other, not only the liturgy we've inherited, but, equally as important, share ourselves, our families, our connection to our heritage, has filled me up. Going forward, our dream is to know that we all can ensure that our home is secure and that we can pass on to our children and grandchildren, the knowledge that they will always have a place to come to... to feel embraced... as I have felt.

Please honor yourself and your heritage, and help up build upon and grow, the legacy we want to leave to our children and all who come here to join us.

I look forward to getting to know each and every one of you in the year to come.

Something for everyone: adult education

We are quite excited by the adult education program at Har Shalom that begins in January 2009. Classes in Hebrew and a conversion class will be complemented by a series of three films hosted by student rabbi Callie Souther and an evening of discussion, demonstration, and recordings of Klezmer music spanning more than 100 years.

Conversion Class. Starting at the end of January or early February, a Beginning Conversion Class will begin. If you have any interest or know of persons who might be interested please contact Barry Good (kandb1@mac.com, 541-0528) or Callie Souther (csouther@huc.edu). Barry will conduct the regular classes, schedule to be determined, in coordination with Callie. Lively discussions and individual and group work will all be a part of this personal journey. There will be a primary text book for this class, supplemented with other materials.

Beginning Prayer Book Hebrew. A class is planned to start in February and is designed to help participation and understanding of material found in prayer books and used in Friday night and Saturday services. This is NOT a class in modern, conversational, or biblical Hebrew. Whether you are a complete novice, need a refresher or strengthening your Hebrew, this class will be of interest. Offering this class depends on the number of people interested. Please contact Barry Good or Bert Chessin (531-5193) for further details.

Film Series. Callie Souther is designing a series of three films that will explore Israeli identity over the past three generations — pioneer and early years, growth and change, and contemporary. Callie will provide insights based on her study of Israeli history and her year living and studying in Jerusalem. Mark your calendars for the following Saturday evenings: February 12, March 9, and April 11 at Har Shalom. This will be open to the general public.

What is Klezmer, really? Bert Chessin will explore and help tease out the roots and developments in "klezmer" music since it began a few centuries ago in Eastern Europe. Bert began his klezmer journey in the mid 1980's and was an early revivalist in North Carolina, playing in bands for over 20 years. Recordings will be played that date back to the turn of the 20th century in Europe and America. A few video clips will supplement the evening. We are planning this event for January 24, 2009, at Har Shalom.

Welcome to Chevruta

You choose a partner, but it's not for a square dance! Chevruta is a traditional Jewish method of study. Partners meet regularly to discuss and understand a topic or text of mutual interest. You are invited to give it a try every Wednesday evening from 7 to 9 p.m. at Har Shalom. Don't worry if you haven't identified a study partner yet; just come and we'll help make a "shidduch" (match)! Questions? Email Laurie at rossfranklin@msn.com or call 546-9368.

Todah Rabah (continued)

Matthew Semanoff &
Jessica Weltman
Maxine Stahl
Alla Leora Stevens
Joel & Esther Weltman
Roger Williams

Announcements from Kate

All of Har Shalom are invited to a **mezuzah hanging** and dinner at Ty Brennan and family's home in Huson, Saturday, January 17, at 4:30 p.m. Student rabbi Callie Souther will conduct the brief house blessing. The Brennans are at 17717 Remount Road in Huson. To RSVP or get directions, contact Ty at TyBrennan@alltel.blackberry.com or 406/626-4479. Would you like a house blessing? Email info@har-shalom.org.

Contribution letters for tax purposes will be sent out in January. Our new treasurer, Kate Soukonnikov, will be happy to answer any questions you have about your donations to Har Shalom. Contact her at katyasouk@gmail.com or call 549-0503.

Do you know someone dealing with a difficult issue in their lives? Har Shalom stands ready to help. Whether it is the loss or illness of a loved one, a personal crisis or a financial worry, we are here. We visit parents of newborns, hold memorial services, offer to listen and pray with you. Feel free to contact any board member, call the office phone or email info@har-shalom.org.

A Jewish library

by Toba Winston

Have you visited Congregation Har Shalom's library recently? By the time this reaches you, we hope to have finished un-boxing and arranging our library into some semblance of order for your use and enjoyment.

A bit of history: For years, some of these books were on shelves at the Jeanette Rankin Peace Center. When the Center needed the shelf space, our books were boxed and stored in a member's home, unused for quite a while. Then, the University Congregational Church (where we rented space for our High Holy Days) was amenable to letting us use some available shelf space there.

Over these years, our collection of books grew. We received many donations of books from members, boxes of books from Stephen S. Wise Temple in Los Angeles, CA, and from the Santa Cruz Hillel Foundation in Santa Cruz, CA. A partial list of our books can be found on our web site www.har-shalom.org, but books were often hard to locate. Not anymore! (We need to update that list and are looking for volunteers who are willing to do so.)

Then, with the donations of many people, loans from two members, the seller, and the First Security Bank we bought our building at 3035 S. Russell. Once again, the books were boxed and stored in a closet at the synagogue. At last, after years of wandering, our books have found a home. We now have the largest collection of Jewish books in Western Montana available for children and adults to enjoy. There is fiction, non-fiction, prayer books, biographies, memoirs, history, humor, and more. We owe a debt of gratitude to Joan Kuchel whose generous donation helped us get the library set up.

We hope you enjoy using our library. You may check out books or periodicals and enjoy reading them, donate books to the library, and/or donate money toward the purchase of new books to enable us to add current relevant books to our extensive collection.

Ritual Team creates and leads services

You might have noticed that our January-February calendar lists "Ritual Team Shabbat Service" on 1/2 and 2/6. So, what IS a Ritual Team service? It's a Friday evening service led by a group of congregants who meet once a month to plan it! We usually meet one additional time to learn music. If you would like to be part of this adventure in liturgy and song, please come to the Ritual Team meetings on Sundays 1/18, 2/1 and 2/15. No experience is necessary; we are learning together. For more information, please email Laurie Franklin at rossfranklin@msn.com or call 546-9368.

Bat Mitzvah invitation

Robin Abeshaus and Stephen Kalm invite everyone in the Har Shalom congregation to join us as we celebrate our daughter Anna's Bat Mitzvah. Please note the location of each event — we will celebrate both at Har Shalom's home on South Russell as well as at the University Congregational Church ("UCC").

Friday night Shabbat services: On Friday, January 16, there will be Shabbat services at 7:30 p.m. at Har Shalom. Services will be led jointly by student Rabbi Callie Souther and Rabbi Daniel Wiener from Temple DeHirsch Sinai in Seattle. Oneg Shabbat follows services.

Saturday morning Torah service: Anna will be called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah on Saturday morning, January 17. Services begin at 10:30 a.m. at UCC, 405 University Ave.

Israeli film director to make third visit to Missoula

Einat Kapach, the Israeli film director will be visiting us once more with her new program, *The Jewish Year In Hollywood and Israeli Cinema*. What is the connection between Yom Kippur, Shabbat, Chanuka, Sukkot and Hollywood? We will together enjoy trigger films and try to understand the power of the Jewish year.

And, in honor of Tu BiShvat we will sit together at a "Seder Tu B'Shvat" with songs, content, and dried fruits that symbolize the Land of Israel during this season. Monday, February 9, 2009, 7 p.m. at the synagogue. Spread the word about this wonderful event.

Yahrzeits

The Yahrzeit is the anniversary of a loved one's death according to the Hebrew calendar. The civil date varies from year to year. The Hebrew date is listed first, followed by the current year's civil date in parentheses. Yahrzeit candles should be lit the evening before the date specified. This is because the Jewish day actually begins at sundown on the previous night.

TEVET

- 12 (01/08) Anna Glass
(Fern Glass-Boyd's Mother)
- 13 (01/09) Bert Genstel
(Robbin Kusia's Father)
- 18 (01/14) Doris Rosenberg
(Ed Rosenberg's sister)
- 24 (01/20) Leonard Moon (Julie Moon's husband, Bei Ruetten's father, Madison and Julia Ruetten's grandfather)
- 24 (01/20) Clemence Klein
(Lance Klein's father)
- 28 (01/24) Beatrice Nashel
(Elizabeth Howard's grandmother)

SHEVAT

- 17 (02/11) George Shulman
(Joy Earls' father)
- 21 (02/15) Lillian Shapiro Tuchinsky
(Toba and Laura Winston's mother/grandmother)

ADAR

- 2 (02/26) Michael Hendricks
(Z'eva Singer's husband)
- 3 (02/27) Ethel Cohen
(Jackie Cohen's mother)

We send our condolences to the family of Irving Tatz, father of Janet Tatz, who passed away recently in Helena. He was a strong presence in the Montana Jewish community and will be missed by his family and by all of us.

EVENT CALENDAR

* indicates activity led by student rabbi Callie Souther. Note time/details below for our weekly Friday evening Shabbat services and Saturday morning Torah study. Snacks are provided before our Shabbat service; if you arrive early you are invited to have a nosh with us.

All events, unless otherwise noted, are at Congregation Har Shalom, 3035 S. Russell.

Student rabbi appointments: Call or e-mail student rabbi Callie Souther, 503-944-9030, csouther@huc.edu

JANUARY

Friday, 1/2: 6 p.m. Ritual Team Shabbat Service & Kiddush (no potluck)
 Saturday, 1/3: 10 a.m. – noon, Torah Study
 Wednesday, 1/7: 7 – 9 p.m., Chevruta Night
 Friday, 1/9: 6 p.m. Shabbat Service & Kiddush (no potluck)
 Saturday, 1/10: 10 a.m. – noon, Torah Study
 Tuesday, 1/13: 6 – 8 p.m., Har Shalom Board of Directors meeting
 Wednesday, 1/14: 7 – 9 p.m., Chevruta Night
 *Friday, 1/16: 7:30 p.m. Shabbat Service (NOTE special time)
 Led jointly by Callie Souther and Rabbi Daniel Wiener. Oneg follows.
 *Saturday, 1/17
 10:30 a.m. – Bat Mitzvah of Anna Kalm, University Cong. Church
 *4:30 p.m. – Mezuzah Hanging at the home of Ty Brennan
 *Sunday, 1/18
 10 a.m. – noon, Atidaynu religious school
 11 a.m. – noon, Ritual Team
 Wednesday, 1/21: 7 – 9 p.m., Chevruta Night
 Friday, 1/23: 5:30 p.m. Vegetarian Potluck, 6:30 p.m. Family Service
 Saturday, 1/24: 10 a.m. – noon, Torah Study
 Wednesday, 1/28: 7 – 9 p.m., Chevruta Night
 Friday, 1/30: 6 p.m. Shabbat service & Kiddush (no potluck)
 Saturday, 1/31: 10 a.m. – noon, Torah Study

FEBRUARY

Sunday, 2/1: 10 a.m. – noon, Ritual Team
 Wednesday, 2/4: 7 – 9 p.m., Chevruta Night
 Friday 2/6: 6 p.m. Ritual Team Shabbat Service & Kiddush (no potluck)
 Saturday, 2/7: 10 a.m. – noon, Torah Study
 Monday, 2/9: 7 p.m. – Israeli film director, Einat Kapach, presents
The Jewish Year in Hollywood and Israeli Cinema
 Tuesday, 2/10: 6 – 8 p.m., Har Shalom Board of Directors meeting
 Wednesday, 2/11: 7 – 9 p.m., Chevruta Night
 *Friday 2/13: 6 p.m. Shabbat Service and Tu B'Shvat Seder
 *Saturday, 2/14
 9:30 a.m. – Torah Service
 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., Torah Study
 *7 p.m. – Jewish Film series with Callie and Bert as your guide
 *Sunday, 2/15
 10 a.m. – noon, Atidaynu religious school,
 11 a.m. – noon, Ritual Team
 Wednesday, 2/18: 7 – 9 p.m., Chevruta Night
 Friday, 2/20: 6 p.m. Shabbat service & Kiddush (no potluck)
 Saturday, 2/21: 10 a.m. – noon, Torah Study
 Wednesday, 2/25: 7 – 9 p.m., Chevruta Night
 Friday, 2/27: 5:30 p.m. Vegetarian Potluck, 6:30 p.m. Family Service
 Saturday, 2/28: 10 a.m. – noon, Torah Study

We extend a very happy and healthy birthday to:



JANUARY

2 Florence Chessin
 5 Michael Silverglat
 6 Bei Ruetten
 12 Jareth Darling
 13 Michael Parrish
 14 Shan Gusinger
 14 David Jolles
 19 Sarah Natelson
 21 Gail Wilder

26 Sarah Willstein
 27 Jeff Gabster
 (Carolyn Goren's son)
 29 Max Jakob

FEBRUARY

2 George Weisz
 3 Sydney Sweitzer
 3 Trina Valencich
 3 Kevin Mcauliffe

5 Meyer Chessin
 5 Arnold Finklin
 11 David Aronofsky
 13 Ben Rosenzweig
 14 Jill Belsky
 15 Leah Schnall
 22 Clarence Emil Beltz
 (Dori Gilels son)
 25 Lynne Willstein
 28 Manuela Aronofsky

If your birthday is missing from this list, or a Yahrzeit of a family member is missing from that list, it is because we do not have your info. If you wish a birthday greeting or a Yahrzeit remembered, please send us the info and we will be more than happy to include it in the newsletter. Call or email Beth Jaffe at 728-1052 or beth@cedarmountainsoftware.com



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