

SPRING / SUMMER 2015 NEWS

Laurie's Letter: The Number "7" and Journeys of the Spirit

The number "7" looms large in Jewish tradition. Here are some examples: We celebrate Shabbat on the seventh day of the week, mirroring the story of creation in B'reishit (Genesis). So, the number "7" reinforces gratitude for our existence, and reminds us to care for ourselves and for all life. We count 7 weeks between Pesach and Shavuot, signifying the journey from freedom to Torah, a celebration of the journey from redemption to revelation. We also count seven weeks from Tisha B'Av, which marks the destruction of the First and Second Temples, to Rosh Hashanah, the New Year, a journey from desolation to rebirth and renewal.



Laurie Franklin

This year, we mark the Shmita year, year of release, observed every seventh year. In contemporary times, Shmita has become a way to re-assess our patterns of living with the Earth and a time to rededicate ourselves to a positive, earth-centered path. In addition, the Hebrew calendar month of Sivan, this year from May 19 to June 17, is associated with the Hebrew letter zayin, which has the numerical value of 7. Some say that the Five Books of Torah are really seven because the Book of B'midbar (Numbers) consists of three books, a special section bracketed by inverted Hebrew "nuns", plus the sections before and after it.

The Kabbalists, medieval Jewish mystics, saw special significance in the number "7" because they associated it with a model of the flow of Divine energy into the human plane. Their model proposes seven sefirot, aspects of the Divine, that manifest in human life: Chesed (lovingkindness); Gevurah (strength, structure and limits); Tiferet (beauty, harmony, kingship); Netzach (eternity, endurance, constancy); Hod (splendor, prophecy); Yesod (foundation, covenant); and Malchut (Shekhina, queenship, community of Israel). The Zohar, the 13th century Book of Radiance, contains tales of a brotherhood of spiritual seekers who wander, ponder, and sit up late into the night, reflecting on the interplay of the Divine with human through the sefirot.

The derivation of word "sefirot" is rich. The Hebrew three-letter root of sefirot is samech-pey-resh, whose meanings include "to tell" and "to count", similar to the English way of using the word account (a story) and count (to number). "Sefer", which shares the same root, means book, and a sifria is a library. But the mystical meaning of the root goes deeper: In Hebrew, sapir means "sapphire", and in Sh'mot (Exodus) 24:10, G'd stands on a brilliant, clear pavement of sapphire stone. The glowing of a multi-faceted gemstone and its ability to reflect and refract light, corresponds with the mystical concept of sefirot as emanations of the Divine.

So, you can see that the patterning of letters and numbers in Hebrew and our beautiful traditions about them give us a foundation for personal and communal growth toward meaningful, intentional lives.

President Holly Kingsford's Column: Dreaming and Planning

Har Shalom Strategic Visioning (No Yawning Matter!)

In December, a group of Har Shalomians met with Heidi Wallace of National Coalition Building Institute to start the process of defining where we are and to dream about where we want to be in the next one to two years. We used the session to strengthen our sense of shared community and purpose among the Board and leadership as well as to assess guiding principles and values for Har Shalom.



Holly Kingsford

After breaking into small groups, we focused on our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (also known as a SWOT analysis). The categories we focused on were sustainability and space, education and justice, oneness and inclusion and finally engagement and nourishment.

As a result of this work, these are the strategic priorities that we came up with:

- To develop a big picture plan (or a wish list) for additions or remodel of the building
- To cultivate a legacy to make the impossible possible
- To make our space a functional Jewish space reflective of the diverse needs of the calendar year
- To have a long term financial plan
- To develop educational programming for the teen through adult years
- To build in opportunities for communication at all gatherings

To create more opportunities for leadership within Har Shalom for Atidaynu children
Other strategic priorities and objectives to consider as part of a three- to five-year plan include:
Immediate and long term financial "ask" systems, develop leadership capacity, develop fiduciary mechanisms, adding a mentoring responsibility to the B'nai mitzvah contract, more adult education on practices and beliefs, explore opportunities for outreach and collaborations, using tzedakah boxes for all ages and activities, including the social justice activities in our b'nai mitzvah contract with our youths.

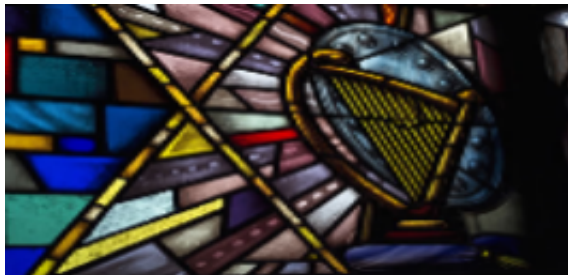
Since that session, I have been impressed with the actions that have been taken by the leadership to implement some of these priorities. It has helped us grow stronger and accept responsibility for the direction we are taking.

I hope that as you read this article and you have come up with your own ideas about where you think we as a community should be in the future, that you will send me an email to tell me about your thoughts. Soon we will get together for the second step in the process, which involves defining the specific activities, responsibilities, resources needed, performance measures and timeline to make the impossible possible. Together, we can do it.



Atidaynu News *Atidaynu means "Our Future"*

Welcome Spring! We hope that soon it will be warm enough to spend part of our mornings outside in the garden, it is something that everyone really appreciates. As the children continue with their lessons, projects and time to just be Jewish together, perhaps the most pressing upcoming endeavor is evaluating our current curriculum and considering possible changes that parents and teachers feel accurately represent the current needs of our community. Lauren Weinstock, the education chair, and I invite interested parents and community members to join us in late April or early May to discuss everything from the number of Atidaynu meetings per month to specific Hebrew learning materials. Please contact me, Sheehan, at rosens@montana.com or Lauren at EsthersGirls@gmail.com if you would like to participate.



What's Happening at Har Shalom? *Read the minutes!*

We heard you and responded! Some members of our community who are not directly involved with the board or operating committees told us that they would like to know more about our month-to-month governance and activities. So, we are now posting [minutes](#) from our Board and Operating Committees meetings on Har Shalom's web site under "[News](#)" at har-shalom.org. The operating committee minutes for April and May are already posted, and the board minutes will be posted beginning in the third week of May. We invite you to check the minutes, see what's being discussed, and weigh in on the issues that are important to you. Our meetings are open to all: the Board meets on the third Tuesday of each month and the Operating Committees on the second Tuesday, both beginning at 6 pm. Please double-check the Har Shalom [calendar at har-shalom.org](#) for occasional schedule changes. You are welcome to participate and share your ideas. Also, please get in touch with any of us about projects you would like to initiate or support.

Coming up this Spring and Summer

Shavuot walk and picnic Sunday May 24
Shavuot Yizkor Monday May 25
Rosh Chodesh Tammuz June 17, 18
MAJCO Shabbaton June 6-28, Butte
Roah Chodesh Av July 17
Tisha B'Av July 26
Rosh Chodesh Elul August 15
Selichot September 5

(see the [Calendar at har-shalom.org](#) for details)

Rosh Hashanah
Erev Sept 15
Rosh Hashanah I Sept 16
Rosh Hashanah II Sept 17
Shabbat Shuva Sept 19
Yom Kippur
Kol Nidre Sept 22
Yom Kippur Sept 23

Todah Rabah

To **Kate Soukonnikov** for paying Constant Contact, so we can issue our announcements, and for continued work to send out a colorful and complete weekly. To **Toba Winston** for moving ahead to mount the Ner Tamid with the help of **Bert Chessin and Dave Jolles**. To Passover seder helpers par excellence, **Batya Odom and Karen Bagley**. To **Sherry Kolenda** for Passover seder dinner oversight. To **Bob Marshall** for seder wines and desserts. To **Matt Ereksen** for affikomen silver dollars. To **Marlene Hutchins** for ongoing aesthetic advice on everything from stationary to Ner Tamid placement. To **Greg Guscio** for Ner Tamid consulting. To the **Ruach Committee** for arranging and planning inspiring services. To **Atidaynu kids, teachers and parents** for providing meals and snacks for Family Promise. To **Lesley Lotto** for leading wonderful Rosh Chodesh yoga sessions. To **Rabbi Allen Secher and Sigrun Kuefner** for excellent book donations to the Har Shalom library. To **Garden City Montessori** for adorning our grounds with flowers and a beautiful garden.



Yahrzeits

ADAR

14 (March 5) Victor Tevah

Anita Aronofsky's father

14 (March 5) William

Rosenberg

Ed Rosenberg's father

19 (March 10) Dr. Zangwill H.

Freed - Joan Kuchel's father

21 (March 12) Sophie Goren

Carolyn Goren's mother

27 (March 18) Gabriel Jolles

David Jolles' father

28 (March 19) David Kooris

Jeff Kooris' father

NISAN

21 (April 10) Edward Cohen

Jackie Cohen's father

IYAR

17 (May 6) Meyer Tuchinsky

Toba and Laura Winston's
father and grandfather

20 (May 9) Gary Glass

Holly Kingsford's father

27 (May 16) Devorah

Shoshana

Larry Stineford's wife

SIVAN

4 (May 22) John M. Winston

Toba and Laura Winston's
spouse and father

Donations & Tributes

Honors and Memorials

Craig R. and Joan Kuchel,

in memory of Dr. Zangwill

H. Freed

Capital Campaign

Suzanne Aboulfadl

Matt Ereksen

Film Festival

Bert and Carol Chessin

Paul and Holly Kingsford

Catherine Tucker, in memory of

Chris Tucker

Rabbi Fund

Anonymous

Melissa Baggett

Event Donation

Mona Bachmann

Ed Rosenberg and

Trina Valencich

Toba M. Winston

Rabbi Fund

John and Tzofiya Harris

Michael and Marcia Heydt

Joyce Latimer



Laurie Franklin and Administrative Office Hours

Laurie's office hours are Tuesdays, 1-4 pm and by appointment. Call Laurie to make an appointment at 546-9368 or email laurief@har-shalom.org

Office Hours with our Administrator, Ari, are Tuesdays and Fridays, noon to 4 pm.
Contact him at 406-549-9595 or email ari@har-shalom.org

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