

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN by Holly Kingsford

As I approach the anniversary of my family's second year in Missoula, I see some areas of our life still in need of work while many things are working out just perfectly. I suspect some of you can say the same, even without a major relocation.

One thing that works well for my family is being part of Har Shalom. We are so glad to be among a warm and dedicated group of sincere G-d-seekers. Rumi said, "If light is in your heart, you will find your way home." That seems to be a truth that we are living out day-by-day.

I wanted to talk this month about meeting G-d in G-d's home. When we worship together, our energy elevates to a level where we can hear and feel the power of the Almighty. G-d's presence is like a dog whistle. It resonates at a very high vibration so that the average human cannot hear it.

What do dogs do to elevate their hearing beyond our own limited range? First, they adore their master (or mistress), and secondly, they are full of gratitude for any small kindness. I have to believe there is some biology involved as well, but that is beyond the scope of this conversation! So how can we be more like dogs and tune into the whispers and higher wisdom of the Blessed Holy One? It is with gratitude and love that we elevate our spirits into the heavenly realms.

That said, beginning very soon, our very own Laurie Franklin has agreed to work with the volunteer service leaders for small group and one-on-one enrichment so we develop the ability to elevate our shared worship to higher spiritual planes. I am very excited to experience this growth at Har Shalom. It feels like the logical next step to evolve from being courageous lay-leaders to being seasoned leaders with the skill to create meaningful worship experiences.

I know there are those among us that have not yet mustered the courage to lead a service. However this opportunity for special learning may make the difference. If this sounds like you—someone who wants to participate in a growing, living and learning journey—let's talk.

In the meantime, I send out to you blessings, power and light.

LAURIE'S LETTER by Laurie Franklin, Student Rabbi and Spiritual Leader

Davennology: The Art of Service Leading

We have a small-but-loyal cadre of folks who have stepped up to lead services, both when I was in Israel in 2012–2013, and continuing at present on the Shabbatot when I'm "off". It's a beautiful thing that has evolved by necessity and is a sign of growth and depth in our community. So, here's a shout out to Bert Chessin, Kate and Boris Soukonnikov, Lisa Carter, Holly Kingsford, Dave Jolles and Maeta Kaplan. I hope I haven't left anyone out!

Leading a service that creates a welcoming, prayerful space and inspires the congregation takes planning, knowledge and special skills. I remember when I first started in 2006; it wasn't easy, and I was nervous! I've learned a lot since then, first at lay leader seminars and later as part of my rabbinic studies. Now, I want to share more of that learning with our lay leaders, both for their personal growth and for the sake of our community.

Beginning in March, I will offer a special series of hands-on workshops for our established lay leaders and for anyone else who might like to learn more about the art of service leading. If you've been leading services already, this series will give you a chance to develop your tools and explore new approaches; if you haven't led services but would like to learn more about liturgy and prayer (and NO pressure on you to lead if you don't want to!), this will give you a chance to ask lots of questions and deepen your personal practice.

I plan to offer the workshops periodically, maybe every two months, at a day and time that works best for most or all who would like to attend. So, PLEASE get in touch with me (and expect to hear from me, too) so I can poll everyone and set dates. Call me at 546-9368 or email laurief@har-shalom.org.

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Atidaynu* News

by Sheehan Rosen

*Atidaynu means "our future."

The Tu B'Shevat Seder has become an annual tradition for Atidaynu kids and the larger community and this year we had a wonderful celebration and presentation from a visiting Israeli forester. Thanks to everyone who helped make this year's New Year of the Trees a success!

The Purim Party is right around the corner and the children are practicing a new dance; we hope you will join us. And, the Community Pesach Seder is also coming up. We are looking forward to enjoying some greens planted by our students.

Community members, do you have family history or a good story you would like to share with the children? Atidaynu invites you to share your experience with the children; stories of growing up Jewish, Hebrew school memories, family holiday celebrations or any other good story. Please let Sheehan know if you'd like to join us one Sunday morning.

As always, new students are welcome.

Contact rosens@montana.com

Todah Rabah

- To Rabbi Allen Secher and Ina Albert for book donations to Har Shalom's library.
- To Oneg bringers in January and part of February (up to press time): Marc Steinberg, Bert Chessin, Magda Podlipny, and Lida Running Crane.
- To Marguerite Thurlo for re-arranging furniture in the lobby and office to make more inviting and useful spaces.
- To Jeff Bendremer for providing guitar at the Pete Seeger Memorial Shabbat Shacharit on February 1 and Kabbalat Shabbat on February 7.
- To Marc Steinberg and Jeff Bendremer for providing rides to services and other events for congregants in bad weather.
- To Daniel Azaryahu, John and Tzofiya Harris, and Batya Odum for Har

(continued on last page)

The Har Shalom newsletter is written entirely by volunteers. Submissions are welcome.
Next deadline: April 17 for May/June '14 issue
 Send corrections or comments about this newsletter to Pat Cohen, editor, at cohenpc@aol.com

Two P's: Purim and Pesach by Laurie Franklin

As snow falls, I see hints of spring in the coloring of the willows branches and the lengthening of the days. March and April bring us two beloved holidays: Purim (14 Adar II) and Pesach (15–22 Nissan). Both holidays mark salvation of the Jewish people: Purim, the defeat of Persians Haman and King Achashverus by Jews Mordechai and Queen Esther, as told in the Megillat Esther (Book of Esther); and Passover, the redemption of the People of Israel from slavery in Egypt.

In the Megillat Esther (Book of Esther), Esther's name means "hidden." Our tradition teaches that on Purim, we remember that nothing appears as it truly is, hence the custom to wear costumes and imbibe. King Achashverus' advisor Haman turns out to be a selfish con- niver who gives the king bad advice, and Mordechai, who refuses to bow to royalty, is a better friend to the crown. Queen Esther dramatically reveals her hidden Jewish identity and con- vines the King to save the Jews. G'd, who appears to be absent and is never mentioned by name, acts implicitly to support the People of Israel. Our sages say that at the "end of days," joyful, playful Purim will be the only surviving holiday of the Jewish calendar.

Pesach is the most celebrated of Jewish holidays, by both religious and ethnic Jews alike. The universal theme, release from slavery, speaks to us at every time in human history: release from social and economic oppression, from internal barriers to personal and spiritual growth, and from domination on the basis of race, ethnicity, creed, and gender. The multiplicity of haggadahs (books that tell the story of leaving Egypt) attests to the creative outpouring of our people to connect the ancient story of liberation and G'd's protection with today's world.

Join us to celebrate both holidays at Har Shalom! (*See calendars and related articles.*)

It's the Annual Purim Party! Saturday, March 15

March 15, 2014, 6 pm into the night. Har Shalom celebrates its third annual community Purim gathering. Our big masquerade party will be filled with a Book of Esther reading or re-reading or re-creating, live music with Missoula's Chutzpah! with dancing, food, and other entertainment. Come dressed in your Persian best. Please bring a dish for our potluck dinner that begins at 6 pm. Activities are planned for both children and adults. We will celebrate together and enjoy the holiday of "finding the hidden and crossing boundaries." Prizes awarded for best costumes and Purim characters. This is open to the public and a small donation is suggested at door.

Purim Bags – Shalach Manot Calling all hamantashen bakers and volunteers for bagging and delivering. Friday, March 14 we will put together bags of Purim goodies for Har Shalomers, Garden City Montessori families, and other community groups. Delivery of bags will be done on days following the party. Please call Marguerite Thurlo at the office (549-9595) or Bert Chessin (531-5193) to help out. Hamantashen recipes and ideas available.

Community Passover Seder Wednesday, April 16, 6 pm

Har Shalom hosts our community seder on Wednesday, April 16, the third night of Pesach. Led by Laurie Franklin and using a new Haggadah for all participants, this seder should prove to be a very satisfying event. Catered by Bravo Catering, the meal is sure to complement the retelling of our most powerful story. Be sure to reserve your place at the table early, because we have limited space and have sold out in the past few years. A full meal, juices and wines are provided for the seder. After April 1 the price will increase by \$5, so send in the reservation form (found in this newsletter) soon. Questions? Call the office at 406-549-9595.

Come Join Har Shalom Work Days March 27 through April 3

Har Shalom's annual repair/maintenance week will take place during Garden City Montessori's spring break, Thursday, March 27 through Thursday, April 3. This year's deferred main- tenance will focus on the exterior soffits (those dilapidated sheets of particle board attached to the roof overhangs).

We need all you Mr. and Mrs. Fix-its to bring your hammers and pry-bars (not to mention your ladders and sawzalls) and help us complete these long over-due repairs. Please contact Dave Jolles (728-3344) or e-mail at dmjolles@gmail.com if you're able to help during the week.

For those who are not able to participate in the work but would like to contribute, we'll need to supply food and beverages during the week; so please consider helping in any way you can. (We won't be working on Shabbat but will definitely be working on Sunday, the 30th.)

The more people we can get to help the quicker we can get the work done!

Social Action Update

A couple of projects are in the works including an Earth Day Clean-up. Please watch the weekly email for details on the event time and place. Boris Soukonnikov and Lida Running Crane have agreed to be liaisons to the Missoula Interfaith Collaborative. Thank you Boris and Lida!

We are still looking for a person to take over the position that Robin Abeshaus has so gracefully filled as the Family Promise Volunteer Coordinator. Duties for this position include: set-up and take down of kitchen and living areas at the University Congregational Church (our partner organization) on the first and last Sunday of our host week, determine what food is needed for the week, meet families and volunteer to spend time with them during the week. If you are at all interested, please get in touch with Laurie, Holly or Lida for a job description. We are all very grateful for Robin's commitment to this important project and hope that someone will step up to fill her shoes in June.

Lastly, Har Shalom hopes to begin a monthly movie night this spring. Do you have any suggestions for movies that would generate good discussion around contempo- rary Jewish issues? If so, please let Lida know (829-1697) or email at lidarunningcrane@yahoo.com.

Congratulations to Marguerite and Shane Thurlo who were married by Laurie Franklin on February 3.

Har Shalom joins Missoula Interfaith Collaborative (MIC)

In an historic move, the Har Shalom Board voted unanimously to join the Missoula Interfaith Collaborative (MIC) as a full member. The vote followed a presentation by Casey Dunning, MIC Director. As one board member said, "How can we NOT do this!" We join with St. Paul Lutheran and First Presbyterian as full members plus a host of other Missoula congregations across the religious spectrum who are cooperating as supporters.

For a small congregation like Har Shalom, one big advantage of membership is that we join forces with other congregations to get things done; our Har Shalom volunteers don't get burned out and have greater effectiveness, all while fulfilling the mitzvah to help others.

MIC currently trains volunteers to work as homeless advocates, participates in the City of Missoula's coalition effort to end homelessness, coordinates content of monthly donations to the Missoula Food Bank, and works with people who have recently been released from jail to help them find homes and jobs and decrease recidivism (return to crime and jail). In addition, MIC works to map resources within Missoula's faith communities that can be used to address local needs. MIC is also forming faith community, government, and nonprofit alliances to aid ongoing projects and initiate new ones.

Another beauty of MIC is the broad spectrum of religious groups participating: Roman Catholic, mainline Protestant, Evangelical, Latter Day Saints, Jewish, Quaker, Buddhist, Muslim, and Native American traditional. Working together and with governmental and nonprofit agencies is an exercise in trust building. As we get to know each other better, our mutual respect and admiration grows, and it translates into tikkun olam for greater Missoula.

Toba's Book Review

RASHI A PORTRAIT BY ELIE WIESEL

This is the shortest book (107 pages) I have reviewed for the Har Shalom Newsletter. It is amazingly well written and thought provoking. The book jacket begins: "From Elie Wiesel, ... comes a magical book that introduces us to the towering figure of Rashi—Rabbi Shlomo Yitzhaki—the great biblical and Talmudic commentator of the Middle Ages."

Rashi lived from 1040 - 1105 C.E. He was aware of, and his writings reflected, the dark and dangerous times for Jews during the political unrest of the Crusades.

This little book explains that Rashi was so successful and popular because of his personality. He is described as having five character traits: humility and simplicity, the pursuit of the truth, respect for his fellow man, confidence in his own creative inspiration, and the feeling of accomplishing the mission of a community leader. His commentary on the Bible was the first Hebrew book to be printed: around 1470. His acceptance by nearly all the Jewish thinkers and their disciples remains unique. The same is true of his writings on the Babylonian Talmud.

Christian scholars also benefited from his commentaries. Nicholas of Lyra translated his work into Latin. Through Nicholas of Lyra, Rashi had a powerful influence on Martin Luther, whose German translation of the Bible owes much to him.

I want to leave you with just one of the many Biblical commentaries in this book. One of the most controversial aspects of the Abraham story is his traumatic walk with his son Isaac up the mountain. Rashi says: "Abraham, who knew he was going to slay his son, walked with the same willingness and joy as Isaac, who knew nothing." Rashi, who usually likes brevity and simplicity suddenly quotes a Midrash, cited by Rabbi Abba, between Abraham and God: "Abraham says: 'I would like to talk to you. Yesterday you told me that Isaac would be my descendent; then you told me to take my son (sacrifice him to you) and now you tell me not to lay a hand upon the lad!' And behold, God answers him and his answer is simply astounding. 'I did not change my commands; it is you who have misunderstood me! I asked you to take your son and climb up the mountain with him. I didn't ask you to slay him!'"

Every page is filled with gems that will provide you with more understandings, whether you are a scholar of Torah or are new to Torah study. Elie Wiesel, whose genealogy is traced back to Rabbi Shlomo, son of Yitzhak, writes with great love of Rashi; "Sometimes, in my small town, it seemed to me that Rashi had been sent to earth primarily to help Jewish children overcome loneliness. And fear."

Yahrzeits

The Yahrzeit is the Hebrew-calendar anniversary of a loved one's death. The Hebrew date is invariant and is computed on the basis of the day and time of the deceased's passing, but the corresponding civil calendar date changes each year.

In the list below, the Hebrew date appears listed first, followed by the current year's civil date in parentheses. Yahrzeit candles are traditionally lit the evening before the specified date because the Jewish day begins at sunset of the previous day. At Har Shalom, we read our congregants' Yahrzeits and recite the Mourner's Kaddish at the Shabbat service before the Hebrew calendar Yahrzeit date.

If you would like to add a Yahrzeit to the Har Shalom list, please contact our office at 549-9595 or email info@har-shalom.org.

ADAR II

2 (March 4) Frank Spector
Ellen Silverglat's father

19 (March 21) Dr. Zangwill H. Freed
Joan Kuchel's father

21 (March 23) Sophie Goren
Carolyn Goren's mother

27 (March 29) Gabriel Jolles
David Jolles' father) April 3, 2000

NISAN

21 (April 1) Edward Cohen
Jackie Cohen's father

Fundraiser for Ukraine – Homemade Soup Lunch

Sunday, March 23, noon to 2 pm

There will be a fundraiser for Ukraine. It will be a "Homemade Soup Lunch" at Har Shalom with a free-will donation to help families who had people injured or killed during the uprising. Boris Soukonnikov will share his experience and thoughts.

Donations and Tributes

We are grateful to our current and past contributors. Every donation, regardless of size, is deeply appreciated. Making tributes and memorials is a wonderful way to honor someone and support the Jewish community.

To make a donation, pay membership dues or religious school fees, visit us online at har-shalom.org and click on the “NEW: Make secure credit card payments here” link. Or, use your bank’s FREE “Bill Pay” feature. Or mail your payment to Har Shalom at PO Box 3715, Missoula 59806. Please specify the intention of your donation: Memorial; Honor; Membership; Capital Campaign; school, camp, or special event fee. If you use a credit card, please consider adding 2% to your donation to cover our credit card fees.

Capital Campaign

Richard Auerbach
Melissa Baggett
Jack and Pat Cohen
Carol Cone Douglas
Robert and Carol Fischer
Barry and Kathy Good
Carolyn Goren
John and Tzofiya Harris
Jack and Shelly Meyer
Rachel and Deborah Schaffer
Peggie and Ed Schlesinger/
Brunsvold
Bernard and Janice Silverman
Gary and Miriam Wolf

Honors and Memorials

Meyer and Flo Chessin – in Honor of Bert Chessin



Todah Rabah *(cont'd from front page)*

Shalom’s storage room re-organization.

- To everyone who put on a great Honoring Party; Lida Running Crane who put the party together; Marc Steinberg for providing clown shoes (?!), Magda Podlipny who spent hours making the tee shirts, the Chutzpah band (Bert Chessin, Paul Rosen, Marlene Hutchins, Sonia Chessin, Jeff Bendremer, Mitch Hall, Laura Hibbs). To Kate Soukonnikov for baking the bread and the other Board members who provided the food and the poetry.
- To Bert Chessin, Dave Jolles, Sherry Kolenda, and Toba Winston for giving us a great excuse for a terrific party honoring your service to Har Shalom as Board members.

Support Har Shalom with a tax-free gift from your IRA

Looking for the way to make the most tax-effective gift to Har Shalom? See if you qualify to make tax-free charitable gifts using funds transferred directly from your IRAs.

Har Shalom is not giving out tax advice. Consult a tax professional before making an IRA transfer to Har Shalom.