

Atidaynu* News

by Sheehan Rosen

*Atidaynu means "our future."

Things are underway for another great year of family education at Har Shalom. We will have three peer groups again this year with Jeb and Anna teaching the kids who are 6 and under, Jody and Sheehan working with the 7-10 year olds, and Paul leading the 11 and up group. We have a few new families joining us this year; it is really fun to watch the school grow and change every year.

We have asked parents to increase their level of participation in school by bringing snack once or twice during the year and helping with Hebrew and other classroom activities. Parents (and community members!) are encouraged to help even if Hebrew skills are rusty or new. The children who are still working on their beginning reading skills especially need and value the help since it's hardest for them to do the Hebrew on their own and reinforcement is really important.

Please contact Sheehan at rosens@montana.com if you would like to help or if your family would like to join our twice monthly meetings.

Todah Rabah

• To Dave and Samantha Jolles, Kate Soukonnikoff, and Lida Running Crane and for setting up the sukkah and bringing schach (sukkah roof covering). Atidaynu students and families for taking down the sukkah.

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

Annual Meeting Sunday, November 10 at 1:00 pm

November 10th is fast approaching, and with it is the Annual Meeting. We hope everyone will come enjoy companionship, nosh on delicious snacks and learn about the changes that are in the works to evolve Har Shalom into a functional model of Montana ingenuity. The board is hard at work preparing to awe and inspire you! See you there at 1 pm.

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN by Bert Chessin

What is Jewish about Har Shalom? Sure, we have weekly Shabbat services, religious school for our children, holiday celebrations, and maybe two or three bar/bat mitzvahs each year. Many of us are grounded here in Missoula, whether for a year or for a decade or more. Some of us may wonder; what is it about being Jewish here? How do we affect Missoula's or Montana's Jewish life and how does the Jewish life here affect us?

There is great value in feeling a part of a history, a culture, a tradition that is both strong and flexible. Torah opens with our creation myths which deeply influence our world views. Each of us has this creation bug or gene that expresses itself each day, week, and year. Acts of creation are built on experience and learning/studying/understanding. Incredible creative opportunities exist in each of our lives and I strongly believe that the will to create is nurtured by the waters, airs, mountains, words and actions of this place.

We should be proud of what we have and continue to build a "Jewish values" community that is like our Ponderosa pine—strong, broad-rooted, and resilient to wind and fire. Jewish religion and culture continue to withstand tremendous social forces, in large part due to the commitment to understanding these social forces while both maintaining and adapting ritual, learning, and community to this change. We still need to water, feed, and bring light to our children and their children and to this Jewish home, Har Shalom.

Our annual meeting on November 10 is an important gathering, where we will discuss ways to continue the building and strengthening of our Jewish home.

LAURIE'S LETTER by Laurie Franklin, Student Rabbi and Spiritual Leader
Feeling grateful and "Benching Goymel"

Our tradition has a special prayer for someone who has just come through a life-threatening situation, "Birkat Hagomeil" (see p. 109, Mishkan T'filah). I'm getting ready to recite it in our congregation, and here's why:

When we change daily patterns, it becomes possible to see things from new perspectives. Duh! Nothing very earth shattering here. The downtime following my surgery has been an opportunity to take a break from everyday activities and demands, and it's been instructive.

So, how IS life? Well, I noticed that I'm less patient than I thought, and it's kinda embarrassing. I mean, I'm supposed to model patience and reverence, right, and I'm qvetching instead. About two days ago, I suddenly realized that I was only a measly 10 days out from major surgery! It had seemed at least twice that long, and I had been grumbling to myself about being tired, less mobile, and less independent than usual. Time for a reality check: I'm SUPPOSED to be tired; equate that with "healing." I'm SUPPOSED to be less mobile; that's known as "rest," and I'm SUPPOSED to rely on family and friends; that's called "community"! So, I took a deep breath—ahhhhhh—and decided to lean back and feel grateful.

Gratefulness is at the core of Jewish life: we wake up in the morning and thank G!d for

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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.

General Donations

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Todah Rabah (continued from page 1)

- To Anna Kalm and Adair Kanter for treats for oneg after Rosh Hashanah services. Maeta Kaplan for organizing the break fast. Bert Chessin, Keith Jacob, Holly Kingsford, Nate Levtow, Matt Semanoff for High Holiday Torah reading.
- To Bert Chessin and Laurie Franklin for organizing the Montana Shabbaton this year in Missoula. To Chutzpah! musicians, for Simchat Torah and Shabbaton merriment. Rabbi David Fine, Rabbi Barbara Block and Rabbi Ed Stafman for Shabbaton presentations and service leading. Melissa Baggett for Shabbaton administrator, Trina Valencich for help at the Shabbaton welcoming table, Bert Chessin and Dave Jolles for Shabbaton food shopping and preparation, Barb Gross for Shabbaton cleanup.
- To Esther Chessin for adding Arbonne soap and lotion to the Women's bathroom. To Erin Craney for providing Atidaynu snacks for the past several years. To all potluck and oneg providers, too many to mention!

Community News

- Har Shalom recently lost community members Ellen Silverglat and Arnold Finklin. Our thoughts and prayers go out to their families.
- Member Lida Running Crane has been working to provide students at Lowell Elementary fresh food to take back to their families. Every Friday children take home vegetables along with a recipe for preparing them. Lida received the Health Hero award in recognition of her work on this program.

LAURIE'S LETTER *(continued from first page)*

returning our souls. We say prayers of thanks throughout the daily liturgy, before and after eating, after seeing natural wonders, after reaching a new season! It's a no-brainer to frame Judaism as a "gratefulness" practice. When we pause and feel grateful, we elevate even the smallest moments of the day: light glowing in golden leaves; a child's laugh; the aroma of soup; the taste of a good apple; the feel of the first frozen grass under the soles of our shoes. Thank you. G'd, thank you!

Even more so, when we go through big life events: I'm so grateful that I survived surgery, the surgeon is an expert, the nursing staff at the hospital is skilled and dedicated, my body is working and mending as it should, and my family cares for me so much. I am grateful that the Holy Blessed One has allowed me to reach this moment.

In the Temple times, a thankful person could bring a Korban Todah, a thanksgiving sacrifice, as described in Torah (see Vayikra [Leviticus] 7:12). After the destruction of the second Temple, the sages of the Talmud discussed the practice of the thanksgiving blessing and tied it to verses of Psalm 107 in which the People of Israel cry out for G'd's help. On the basis of these Talmudic discussions, the rabbinic tradition advises us to offer the Birkat Hagomeil when we have crossed a sea or a desert, been released from captivity, or healed from a serious illness. It's not a "must do" mitzvah; it's a "good-on-ya-if-you-do-it" one. So, in a few weeks, I hope you'll join me as we bench goyamel together, and I hope you'll tuck it away as an option for yourself, depending upon the twists and turns of your life.

Laurie's Office Hours

Laurie will resume regular office hours after her recovery, possibly in mid-November. Office hours will be Tuesdays, between 1:30 and 4 pm, at Har Shalom. If you'd like to drop in for a chat, or better yet, make an appointment (because times fill up quickly), please contact me directly at laurie@har-shalom.org. I'm available at other times by appointment. Office hours schedule will continue through the end of 2013 until my fall semester classes end.

It's Thanksgivukkah This Year

The 25th of Kislev falls on Thursday, November 28th which happens to be the fourth Thursday of November—Thanksgiving Day. So prepare the oven for the turkey and the griddle for the latkes, we're having the Wampanoags and Maccabees for dinner. And join the Har Shalom party on Sunday.

Hanukkah Party 4:30 – 7 pm, Sunday, December 1

Our annual Hanukkah party with hanukiah lighting, food (meaning a full dinner), latke contest, music, entertainment, and plenty of socializing will warm everyone from the bottom of our snow boots to the tops of our earmuffs. Games for kids and adults. Chanootenany. Dancing. Aromas and tummy-filling fare. We challenge you to explore re-valuing Thanksgiving leftovers, melted candlewax creations, and rededication to community and traditions (new and old). We're looking for a few volunteers to help with latke-making, party planning and publicity. Call Bert at 531-5193 or email at bchessin@aol.com.

Social Action Action Har Shalom helps at the Missoula Food Bank:

We talk about the number 8 a lot in association with Hanukkah. Eight years ago, a member of Har Shalom organized the first "Christmas Work Day" at the Missoula Food Bank. Members of Har Shalom came together to sort donations, bag groceries for Food Bank clients, and visit with one another while many of the Food Bank's regular volunteers were on their own holiday vacations. Out of that single act has come 8 years of Har Shalom support for the Missoula Food Bank. We collect food throughout the year in the Har Shalom lobby; we hold High Holiday and Passover food drives (our High Holiday Food Drive this past September brought in a record-breaking 310 pounds of food); some Har Shalom members have become regular Food Bank volunteers; and through our membership we have filled a December work shift almost every year.

We are looking for a volunteer to coordinate this year's December work shift. It is an easy job! It involves calling the Food Bank Volunteer Coordinator, picking a time, and then getting the word out for volunteers. Pat Cohen and Robin Abeshaus have both done this in the past but are not available this year. If you would like Robin to talk you through the process, give her a call at 542-7535 or send an email to robinabeshaus@gmail.com.

Hebrew Anyone?

If you've had a vague desire to learn Hebrew, or refresh and improve what you've previously learned, join us. Keith Jakob is teaching the Hebrew I class Wednesday evenings at 7:30 pm at Har Shalom. This class teaches the Aleph Bet and phonetic reading. You can contact him at 406-396-8277 or keith.jakob@business.umt.edu.

Holly Kingsford teaches the Hebrew II class, also held on Wednesday evenings at 7:30 pm at Har Shalom. We're learning vocabulary and grammar from prayers in the Siddur. She can be contacted at 406-207-2078 or holly@kingsfordcommunications.com

Project Homeless Connect

Here comes the number 8 again: Project Homeless Connect is an event in its 8th year here in Missoula. It is an event that offers those in our community who are homeless a place to come for haircuts, medical services, clothing, and more. This year Project Homeless Connect is looking for clothing to have available at its January 2014 event. The following items are needed: new or lightly used winter coats, hats, scarves, gloves, mittens, warm socks, long underwear, adult heavy duty pants, and blankets and sleeping bags. Large and extra-large adult sizes are particularly helpful. We will have a collection bin for Project Homeless Connect in the Har Shalom lobby by the time of the Hanukkah party. Perhaps your family would like to consider one night of giving gifts to others with a donation to Project Homeless Connect.

Family Promise News

Missoula Family Promise is in its second year of operation, and Har Shalom is in its second year as a support congregation. Family Promise is a national program of faith congregations dedicated to providing temporary housing and support to families experiencing homelessness.

Since our last host rotation one mom has found a job and she and her son have moved out of the program. We wish them luck, and they express their gratitude.

The Missoula Interfaith Collaborative

The following article is from an interview Joyce Latimer had with Casey Dunning, creator and director of the Missoula Interfaith Collaborative. Laurie Franklin was an active supporter of Casey's work from the beginning. She has passed that baton onto others, and now Boris Soukonnikov is the Har Shalom representative in this program.

Casey Dunning and the Birth of the Missoula Interfaith Collaborative

by Joyce Latimer

According to Casey Dunning, there was an initial whisper coming to him through his work at group homes and mental health facilities. The whisper came through his growing awareness of an isolation experienced by such beautiful people; an isolation that could be solved by learning how to build relationships. They sometimes had overwhelming anxiety because they felt different, apart from others. From spending time with them and hearing their stories, Casey became aware of the impact of that isolation. At the same time he was studying scripture as it speaks to living life with the outcasts and those who are marginalized; and he was moved to help them develop relationships with other human beings—to learn that isolation was not their only choice.

To that end, Casey began to envision a possible solution, in spite of our cultural reactions to people who don't fit in according to our preconceived notions about them. At the same time he was beginning to see the discrepancy between faith values and how hard congregations were struggling to come to terms with their desire to become more involved in the lives of others in our Missoula community.

Facing the question, "What is my role in this?" Casey applied to Princeton Theological Seminary. He was accepted and during the period of discernment (*a Christian process of exploring ones personal relationship with G'd within the church community – ed.*) he was offered a job as the director of a mental health center. During the mutual process of discernment and consideration of their two (now three) pre-school age sons, his wife, Dayel, confided to Casey that she was not going to be married to a pastor! With this realization, the discernment process led Casey to apply to the Graduate School of Social Work at the University of Montana where he met John Lund, Campus Minister of Emmaus House. And thus began the development of a research model asking a very important question.

The question involved finding out what the congregations felt strongly about, what missions did they want to pursue, how were they willing to help. From their answers Casey had enough information to develop the model which identified leadership teams from the congregations, and best practices began to take form. The next step was to design a system of resource mapping to assess the real needs of the community and what resources were already available both in the community of Missoula and in the interfaith congregations.

Having earned his M.S.W. and done the foot-work and heart-work, Casey was able to put together a sustainable and inclusive program which is now the Missoula Interfaith Collaborative. Several concerns are already officially being addressed with more to come. At present there is the Homeless Outreach Team working with the Poverello Center; the Mentoring Program working in tandem with the Montana Department of Corrections; the Faith-Based Response to Sexual Violence program working with the county and the university to raise awareness of this problem and to train faith leaders to become first responders. There are other programs of similar magnitude waiting to be announced.

Enough sustainable funding has been attained, with the expectation of commitment from the participating congregations and friends, for an MIC office at St. Paul's Lutheran church with a full-time director and a half time person. There is an established network of 22 congregations with various levels of buy-in and relationships. Perhaps the most exciting aspect of MIC is the resulting collaboration of different congregations, social work graduate students, and agencies empowering each other; learning from each other; and answering the question, "what can I do to live out the faith I profess?" To that question, MIC and Casey Dunning have a lot of concrete answers!

Har Shalom Fund Raiser The Loft, Wed., Dec. 4, 5:30–8:30 pm

Please save the date for the next "It's Raining Rhinestones" and Arbonne Winter event with Toba Winston and Esther Chessin. Part of the proceeds from sales will be donated to Har Shalom's Building Campaign. We plan to light Chanukkah menorahs and have a party, so bring your menorahs and join us! It is a great opportunity to do your holiday shopping with us. The Loft is at 119 W. Main St., Missoula. Hope to see you there!

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.

CHESHVAN

29 (November 2) Jacob Cohen
Jack Cohen's grandfather

KISLEV

3 (November 6) Harry Arthur Saroff
Steve Saroff's father

8 (November 11) Joseph Cohen
Jack Cohen's father

12 (November 15) Irving Tatz
Janet Tatz's father

14 (November 17) Cherrie Steinebach
Tyler Steinebach's mother

15 (November 18) Mildred Shulman
Joy Earls' mother

18 (November 21) Bill Weisz
George Weisz's father

19 (November 22) Barbara Lumpkin
Candy Miller's mother

24 (November 27) Morris Leibowitz
Gary Leibowitz's father

TEVET

1 (November 4) Jonathan Kast
Sigrun Kuefner's son

4 (December 7) Fanny Rosenberg
Ed Rosenberg's mother

12 (December 15) Anna Glass
Fern Glass-Boyd's mother

13 (December 16) Bert Genstel
Robbin Kusia's father

18 (December 21) Doris Rosenberg
Ed Rosenberg's sister

24 (December 27) Leonard Moon
Julie Moon's husband, Bei Ruetten's father,
Madison and Julia Ruetten's grandfather

24 (December 27) Clemence Klein
Lance Klein's father

28 (December 31) Beatrice Nashel
Elizabeth Howard's grandmother

28 (December 31) Marcia Fields
Robbin Kusia's mother