
the Shofar



Etz Chayim Conservative Synagogue's Monthly Newsletter

OCTOBER, 2014

TISHREI/CHESHVAN, 5775

Friday evening services begin at 7:30 p.m.
Saturday morning services begin at 9:30 a.m.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Shalom,

From the Scriptures: **On the eighth day there shall be an assembly for you**

(Numbers 29:35) Shemini Atzeret marks the close of the holiday season of the month of Tishrei. (Simchat Torah is merely an extension of Shemini Atzeret observed in the diaspora. In Israel, Simchat Torah is celebrated as Shemini Atzeret.)

The literal meaning of *atzeres* is "restraint," and various interpretations have been given for the use of this term to designate the eighth day of the festival.

Perhaps the idea of restraint in this context refers to holding on to the spiritual joy and holiness experienced during this month, beginning with the repentance of the awesome days of Rosh Hashanah and culminating in the joy and love of Torah and *mitzvos* manifested during Succot. There is a great risk that once the holidays are behind us and we return to the daily life of work and business transactions, we may become so absorbed in those activities that we may dissipate all the spiritual wealth we had acquired during the month of festivals.

Just as one tightly seals a bottle of fine wine so that it does not lose its bouquet, so we should make this last day of the festival an *atzeres*, a tight seal that will retain all that we have harvested during Tishrei. Just as it is foolish to earn and not to conserve, so it would be foolish to achieve spirituality and not retain it. (Growing Each Day, Twerski)

Today I Shall: ***...concentrate on how I can continue the self-improvement of the Days of Awe and the joy of the festive days throughout the entire year.***

Shanah Tovah,

Michelle

On October 16, we will celebrate Shemini Atzeret/Simchat Torah with a pot luck. Y'all come!

THANKS TO CLEAN-UP CREW

We may be a small congregation, but when there is work to be done, you can count on our members to turn out and get the job done.

September 14 was a Cleanup Day to prepare the synagogue for the High Holidays. We had a grounds crew comprised of Kevin Thompson, Steve Goodman, Daniel Goodman, Marvin Kalachman, Fred Kolchin, Joe Sacks, Howard Polin, Charlie Fisher, Bill Goldberg, and Jon Berger.

The inside crew, fixing breakfast for the workers and doing kitchen and sanctuary cleaning, were Shoshanna Rosenthal, Lauren Goodman, Diana Polin, Harriet Sacks, Janet Schindler, Millie Rosenthal, Christie Berry, and Shirley Roberts. Richard Berry took down and cleaned every sanctuary light and Ethan Hall, with the help of his father, Gary, moved chairs and removed all the items on the Bema in preparation for carpet cleaning.

Thanks to all, it was a good day's work.

Max Rosenthal

SISTERHOOD

Greetings,

Shana Tova!!! We have started this year with a bang. Our Membership Tea was a great success. We had 37 attendees, Sarah Brigadier gave us a wonderful menu and a good time was had by all. We passed out our activity survey, and as a result we are starting with one of the two activities tied for your first choice: we'll go on a trolley ghost tour of Huntsville the evening of November 1. The trolley leaves Harrison Brothers hardware promptly at 6 pm, so be sure to be there early. Reserve one of the 24 seats available by contacting me at sandra.wiederecht@gmail.com or by calling 256-797-4013. Leave a message if I don't answer the phone—I will respond to your

call. Tickets are \$12 each. The other activity that tied for first place, Game Night with Mexican Train and Bunko, will be scheduled next. Our third place winner was a tour of Belle Chevre and lunch in Elkmont. Watch your Shofar for upcoming dates of these events.

I know the Holidays are a busy time for everyone, but I hope you enjoyed the Kiddush Lunch we had for our first Rabbi Weekend. It was a great opportunity to spend some additional time getting to know Rabbi Freundlich and his family. After Yom Kippur, the Break the Fast will again be sponsored by the Brigadier Family (thank you for your generosity!), with Shirley Roberts heading up the cooking team.

Our Simchas Torah Pot Luck Dinner will be October 16. I have been asked to pass on the request that you **bring your kosher dairy pot luck dinner in a kosher container along with kosher serving utensils** for this fun event. The intention is for you to take your dish and utensil home instead of using the kitchen.

I hope everyone has a happy and healthy new year and that everyone will take these wonderful opportunities for us to spend this time together.

Sandra

MEN'S CLUB, ETC.

Men's Club: Next meeting---October 28, Tuesday, 7:30 PM at Synagogue

IMS: Deliveries made to Food Pantry and First Stop bi-weekly. Let's make a special effort during the High Holidays to support these important needy programs. It's a Mitzvah.

Simcha & Memorial Plaques: \$50.00 & \$75.00 respectively. See Joe Sacks for further info. 256-883-1889

Wishing all a New Year of Health, Happiness and Peace.....Joe 😊

HEBREW READING FOR BEGINNERS

Etz Chayim Synagogue will again offer a class in Hebrew Reading for Beginners, sponsored by the National Jewish Outreach Program (NJOP).

The first class in this Hebrew I Course (6 classes) will meet on Wednesday, October 29th at 7:00PM, at Etz Chayim Synagogue, which is located at 7705 Bailey Cove Road SE, Huntsville, AL. Classes will meet weekly for 1.5 hours, and the course will finish in December. Students are asked to make a \$20 donation to cover the cost of extra class materials. No prior knowledge of Hebrew is required to take this course.

Please call ([256-882-2918](tel:256-882-2918)) or email me at zevgold@yahoo.com to register.

Your registration by October 22 will be greatly appreciated. You can find out more about the beginning Hebrew Crash Course at www.NJOP.org

Regards,

Bill Goldberg

ONEGS

10/03	no oneg (fasting)
10/10	Millie & Max Rosenthal
10/17	Linda Maier Kolchin & Fred Kolchin

10/24	Michal & Gary Hall
10/31	Susan & Larry Levitt
11/07	Sue & Joe Paddock

RABBI HOSPITALITY

The following 6 spots are available to “Bake or Take a Rabbi Dinner.” This is time that you can spend with one of the visiting Rabbis in an informal setting with few people. Please contact Lynne Edmondson at etzchayimoneg@gmail.com to sign up.

Student Rabbi Shira Rosenblum, November 1 or December 6
Rabbi Kenneth Leinwand, January 10 and March 14
Rabbi Pamela Gottfried, January 31 (with Edmondson family)
Rabbi Ira Flax, February 21 and April 18

DONATIONS

General Fund

From: Marie & Mike Sumerall
In Honor of the High Holidays

Natha & Scott Hancock

From: Dorothy & Bill Goldberg
To: Karen Lewter-Our deepest sympathy on the death of your mother.

Rabbi Fund

From: Millie & Max Rosenthal
To: Jon Berger- Mazel Tov on the birth of your twin granddaughters. May the new little ones have good health and much happiness.

Sisterhood Fund

From: Janet Schindler
To: Ted Roberts - Glad that your surgery is over, continued good health.

From: Sandra Wiederecht
To: Jon Berger - Our best wishes to your daughter and her new twin daughters.

From: Sharon & Jeff Yalowitz

From: Nannette Schwartz
To: Christie & Richard Berry- Thank you for cleaning the synagogue for the High Holy Days.

Jewish Education Fund
Jon Berger

Outdoor Lighting Fund
In Memory of Gertrude and Perry Schlein from their daughters, Natha Hancock and Robin Slomka and their families.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Oct 04 Break the Fast for Yom Kippur Service attendees
Oct 05 Build the Sukkah @ 2:30 PM, Decorate the Sukkah @ 4 PM.
Oct 9-16 Kiddush in the Sukkah at 5 PM
Oct 16 Shemini Atzeret 9:30 AM, Yizkor at approximately 10:30 AM
Oct 16 Simchas Torah Pot Luck Dinner @ 5:45 PM, Hakafot services and Consecration @ 6:30 PM
Oct 28 Men's Club meeting @ 7:30 PM
Nov 01 Sisterhood Ghost Tour, 6 PM, Reserved seats, \$12 each

ANNIVERSARIES

Oct 09 Nannette & Gary Schwartz
Oct 09 Susan & Larry Levitt
Oct 27 Millie & Max Rosenthal

BIRTHDAYS

Oct 02 David Wiederecht
Oct 03 Zev Roberts
Oct 03 Marc Zelickson
Oct 10 Sheri Bulgatz
Oct 13 Max Rosenthal
Oct 14 David Rosenthal
Oct 16 Jonah Roberts
Oct 20 Marvin Kalachman
Oct 21 Ethan Hall
Oct 21 Frederick Kolchin
Oct 23 Paulette Goldstein
Oct 23 Marla Polin

YARZHEITS

Oct 01 Tishrei 07 Sam Natt*
Oct 02 Tishrei 08 Jerome Gaftman
Oct 03 Tishrei 09 Rose Schindler
Oct 04 Tishrei 10 Shirley Irene Jacobs*
Oct 05 Tishrei 11 Murray Rosenthal*
Oct 07 Tishrei 13 Bernard Fisher
Oct 08 Tishrei 14 Terry Lee Green*
Oct 10 Tishrei 16 Capt. Robert Secher*
Oct 14 Tishrei 20 Randy Sacks*
Oct 14 Tishrei 20 Alex Greenbaum
Oct 14 Tishrei 20 Mariam Wertheim
Oct 21 Tishrei 27 Louis Klazmer
Oct 21 Tishrei 27 Steve Sokolow
Oct 22 Tishrei 28 Bella Flank*
Oct 23 Tishrei 29 Leo Krell
Oct 23 Tishrei 29 Rose Natt*
Oct 24 Tishrei 30 Harold Pizitz
Oct 24 Tishrei 30 Irvin Shelman
Oct 26 Cheshvan 02 Adele Krigelman
Oct 27 Cheshvan 03 Sarah Goldstein*
Oct 27 Cheshvan 03 Sara Osovsky*
Nov 01 Cheshvan 08 Ruth Harris

* Plaque

**Light Memorial candle at sunset of the previous evening

HOW THE POSSUM GOT HIS NAME

By Ted Roberts

No one knows the possum population of Huntsville, Alabama – not even the Chamber of Commerce, who you would think keep up with this kind of thing. We do know that every Huntsville back yard has at least one, where they live in luxury – rent free: and dine off the cat's food and any groceries you've left on the patio. Have you ever seen a possum? Maybe not. But they come to my back door every night and eat the cat food. The Possum is so ugly she scares the cat. The cat jumps up in the tree and watches while Miss Possum eats her supper. This story explains how Possum got his name.

You see, on the sixth day of Creation, the Lord looked down and smiled at the creeping, crawling, running, swimming, flying creatures he had made; they filled every corner of the Universe. But yet all were different.

The Lord looked down with warmth on His new creatures. And so did His new sun that He put in the sky. It was hot. The animals squirmed and sweated under his strong rays. They need some shade, the Creator thought. So He made big Oak trees. But each tree dropped thousands of acorns - and only one or two found a home in the dirt to grow into another Oak. Why waste good acorns, thought the Lord. What I need is a small, quick little animal to eat those acorns. And he can hide from his enemies in the branches of the Oak tree. Kinda like a squirrel - that was the idea.

But, His first try at this new creature didn't turn out too good. Its nose was too big - it had a long, ugly snout. And the eyes were so close together they crossed. The body

was wrong, too. Much too big; with a long, hairless tail. Ugh, he looked like a four foot rat. Something like a creation that Steven Spielberg would put in a horror movie.

Even worse, this big-nosed, cross-eyed, overweight thing hated acorns. And remember that's why he was made - to eat acorns.

"No way I'm gonna eat acorns," said the Giant Rat as he sat alone in a corner of creation while the other creatures just stared at him. This rat-tailed animal was sassing his Maker!!

The Lord was about to destroy it and start all over again on another design with the same material - why waste - when He heard a roar from the big tiger that He had made the day before.

The mama tiger was unhappy. She was thinking about supper. So, she looked around Creation. She saw deer who could run like the wind (they could kick, too), she saw flying eagles (with sharp beaks) and she saw wolves with teeth. Oh sure, there were small things like squirrels and rabbits, but the mama tiger could spend all day and all night filling up her big belly with these bite-size appetizers. So when would there be time for the long naps she had already learned to love?

She spoke to the Lord: "Maker of Oaks and acorns and spiders and perfect tigers like me," she pleaded, "please don't destroy this slow, dumb, overweight creature that looks like a big rat. If he cannot decorate your world, he shall feed my young ones. We will eat him. He'll be breakfast, lunch and supper."

"Not so fast," said Old Pointy Nose, who

wasn't near as dumb as he was ugly. "Before you use me to stuff the stomach of that big cat, I have two requests. First of all, give me a sporting chance and put some orange or black stripes on that hungry cat so I can see her well enough to scoot up a tree."

And the Lord did it - bam - just like that the tiger got her stripes.

Then the overgrown rat said, "OK, now, if I've got to carry around this pointy nose in between beady eyes much too close together - not to mention a hairless, ratty tail (I mean I'm so ugly!) - I want a special name. A pretty name for poor, ugly me."

All the other animals, who were sitting around waiting for names, laughed to think of this gray creature with a "beautiful" name. It was the first laugh of the fresh, new world. The hyena and the jackass - neither one of them beauty contest winners - laughed much too loud. The Creator was angry. After all, they were making fun of one of His children. So the Lord ruled that the Jackass and Hyena would always laugh that obnoxious braying laugh. Yes, that's why they sound like clowns.

And the Lord felt sorry for the poor, ugly, gray thing without a name. But what was his name to be? All the really pretty names had been used to describe flowers.

I know, I'll use one of the flower words twice, He thought. "You shall be called BLOSSOM," He announced, "so that your image shall always be one of beauty. Blossom, a beautiful name - just like My flowers."

All the animals made polite approving whinnys and growls and peeps except, of course, the Hyena and Jackass, who could only make that embarrassing noise.

"Adam, do you hear?" called out the Creator, who was drilling our great, great, great (do a thousand more "greats") grandfather on all the animal names he must memorize. "Call her Blossom."

But Adam wasn't listening well at all. Instead, he was staring at a new, two-legged creature who looked just like his reflection in the lake - almost. Her name was Eve.

"Possum? Is that what you said? A fine name," said the first man, looking away from the world's first woman, with only a quick look at the pointy-nosed, whip-tailed ugly thing that rubbed against his leg. He thought the Lord said POSSUM! They DO sound alike don't they?

Oh well, thought the world's first POSSUM at least I'll be able to see that tiger a mile away. And I'd rather be called a POSSUM than the GIANT RAT.

And that's how the Possum got his name, and that's how the Tiger got her stripes and the Jackass got his laugh. That's how I put my granddaughter to sleep every night.

Ted Roberts, "The Scribbler on the Roof," is a syndicated Jewish columnist and longtime member of our Synagogue. Buy Ted's collected works at Amazon.com or the Sisterhood Gift Shop. Ted welcomes your comment and/or critique and can be emailed at: shirlr@hiwaay.net

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