

the Shofar



Etz Chayim Conservative Synagogue's Monthly Newsletter

APRIL, 2015

NISAN/IYYAR, 5775

**Friday evening service and Seder begin at 6:00 p.m. on April 3.
Reservations are required for the Seder.**

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

FROM RABBI KENNETH LEINWALD

Dear Friends,

During the Shabbat in mid-March, we concluded the Book of Shemot (Exodus) with the reading of the double portion of VaYakhel and Pekuday. These two portions focus primarily on the building and the furnishing of the Mishkan, the portable Tabernacle.

With the entire nation assembled before him, Moses called on B'nai Yisrael, (the Children of Israel), to donate the materials required for the Mishkan: "Everyone whose heart is moved," declared Moses, "shall bring them – gifts to the Eternal." (Exodus 35:5.) The Torah then lists the materials that were needed and reported that the people departed from Moses' presence. Later in the chapter the Torah relates, "everyone whose heart stirred him, and everyone whose spirit was moved, brought to the Eternal a donation." (35:21.)

The Netziv, Rabbi Naftali Zvi Yehuda Berlin, (1817-1893), notes that Moses spoke only of "the heart", whereas the Torah, in recounting how the people later came forward with their

generous donations, speaks of both "heart" and "spirit". When we give charity from the "heart," our motivation may be less than entirely pure. Swayed by emotions and passions, our hearts may move us to give so as to gain honor and fame. In contrast, giving charity from the "spirit" comes from an inner and deeper sense that sharing our wealth with the needy is the right thing to do.

According to our tradition, Moses spoke to B'nai Yisrael on the day after Yom Kippur, following their sin with the golden calf. He assumed that their donations to the Mishkan would come only from their hearts—accompanied by ulterior motives. But Moses underestimated them. When B'nai Yisrael left Moses, they reached a level higher than he had anticipated. They later returned with their charitable offerings. Some gave from the heart, but most gave purely from the spirit. May we, like our ancestors, especially when it comes to the support of our synagogue, strive to achieve this high spiritual level of giving time and money "from the spirit". In doing so, our giving will be a true blessing.

Shabbat Shalom!

KASHERING OUR KITCHEN FOR PESACH

Holly Kent is, once again (THANK YOU, HOLLY), kashering the kitchen for us on the weekend before Pesach begins. If you have items in the refrigerator, freezer or in the cabinets that you do not want discarded, please be sure to have them removed before Shabbat begins on March 27th.

ETZ CHAYIM PASSOVER SERVICES

April 3, Friday, 6: pm, before the Seder, Sandy Wiederecht as leader
April 4, Saturday, 9:30 am, Raven Livingston as leader
April 9, Thursday, 9:30 am, Bill Goldberg as leader
April 10, Friday, 9:30 am, Bill Goldberg as leader
April 10, Friday, 7:30 pm, Bill Goldberg as leader
April 11, Saturday, 9:30 am, Bill Goldberg & Raven Livingston as leaders. Saturday morning will include Yizkor services following the Torah reading

UPCOMING EVENTS

March 27 7:30 pm, Friday, Etz Chayim will hold Kabbala Shabbat services followed by an Oneg sponsored by the Jordan family
March 28 9:30 am, Saturday, Etz Chayim will hold Shabbat Morning services followed by a Kiddush Lunch
April TBD BBYO Team Scavenger/ Dinner/ Lock-In event to be announced
April 3 6:00 pm, Friday, a brief Shabbat Pesach service; reserved seat Seder service & dinner follows

April 4 9:30 am, Pesach AM service
April 9-11 9:30 am, Pesach AM service
April 11 Yizkor services will be included on Saturday, at about 10:30 AM
April 15 Deadline to register for BBYO Cotton States Spring Regional Weekend, see BBYO article
April 17-19 Rabbi Ira Flax, Lt.Col. USAF Chaplain, retired, will return for Etz Chayim Shabbat services
April 19 2:00 pm, JFHNA will hold a Holocaust Memorial Program including a performance of "The Diary of Anne Frank" at UAH Chan Auditorium
April 20 Men's Club meeting, 7:30 at EC
April 24-26 BBYO Cotton States Spring Regional Weekend in White Bluff, TN
May 1-3 Rabbi Ira Flax Shabbaton

MEN'S CLUB, ETC.

Next Meeting: April 20, Monday, 7:30 pm, EC
IMS: Please bring food and personal hygiene items to EC for Food Pantry & First Stop. Deliveries are made bi-weekly. It's a Mitzvah, especial during Passover!!!

Simcha & Memorial Plaques: still \$50.00 & \$75.00, respectively. Please see Joe Sacks for further details. 256-883-1889

Wishing all a Happy Passover.....Joe 😊

JFHNA SPONSORS A YOM HASHOAH-
HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY
PROGRAM

What: "The Diary of Anne Frank,"
presented by "Curtain and Lights
Theater Company" of Decatur,
Alabama. Directed by Heather
Anderson. There will be a brief
Introductory & Memorial program
followed by the play.

When: Sunday, April 19th at 2:00 PM.

Where: The Chan Auditorium, The
University of Alabama in Huntsville,
located on Sparkman Drive, NW,
just North of Holmes Ave.

Sponsored by JFHNA

**Free and open to the public--No
reservations required.**

SISTERHOOD

Greetings! It's hard to believe it's already April; March went by so quickly. One of the most wonderful things about Huntsville is that if you don't like the weather at the moment, you know that if you can just wait a few days it will be better. There is also something very special and unique about our congregation that I am very grateful and thankful to be a part of. I would like to take a moment to thank all the people who have worked tirelessly planning and preparing our Saturday luncheons and Sunday brunches. Even though the Sisterhood pays for the Saturday Rabbi Luncheons, many members outside of the Sisterhood step up and prepare delicious food, which has allowed us to serve up some wonderful menus. These meals have truly been a congregational effort. The people who work on the Sunday brunches have come forward selflessly and

made us truly delightful brunches, which may be sponsored by EC but are often done at their own expense. The turnouts for the Rabbi Weekends and brunches have been amazing. The Rabbi Classes and Sunday get to know the Rabbi brunches have been very well attended. It is a rare joy to get to spend time with all of the people that I do not get to see as frequently as I would like. Good food and good friends make for a great time.

The preparations for the Seder have been coming along beautifully. We have 51 confirmed reservations. The Friday night service will be abbreviated, followed by a short Seder (reservations are required and now closed) with food being supplied by a Memphis caterer. The kitchen will be kashered the week before the Seder, so no food will be allowed in kitchen until after Passover. If possible, we would appreciate it if some men would please come to the Synagogue the Sunday before Passover to help us set up tables, as well as any available extra hands to set places on tables and help with last minute preparations.

I hope you have a happy and healthy holiday. If you have any questions, please call me or Brenda Liles.

Sandra Wiederecht 256-797-4013

HAPPENINGS FROM BBYO

Wow, wasn't Purim TERRIFIC! Thanks to everyone who came to watch our rhyming version of the Megilah, the hard workers who made the delicious meal and set the joyful Purim décor, Brenda and Shirley, my beloved assistants who set up, shleped and listened to talk of Purim plays for weeks, Max and Millie. And of course, the

magnificent BBYO Purim Players: Jordan, Matise, Ethan, Lucas, Josh, Emma, Isaac and Mckenzie.

The kids came back from the BBYO Execs weekend full of ideas. The following are our upcoming programs. If you would like further information, please contact Ethan Smyth at 256 542-8175. He would be happy to speak with you (or txt u).

--TBD in April, Team Scavenger Hunt/ Dinner/ Lock-In: This is going to be great fun. If you are in 8th -12th grade, even if you've never participated before, you can get to know your local BBYO kids. The Scavenger Hunt will start at Bridge Street Shopping Center-all on foot. Call to sign up and get the rest of the juicy details for the evening.

--April 24-26, Cotton States Region Spring Regional Weekend in White Bluff, TN. Go to b-linked.com to register by April 15th

--May, BBYO Just For Fun Soccer Tournament. Stay tune for more details, date and who the guests will be.

DONATIONS

General Fund

From: Michal & Gary Hall

From: Maria & Mike Sumerall

To: Janet Schindler - Wishing you a complete recovery.

Rabbi Fund

From: Harriet & Joe Sacks

To: Ana & Seth Spraggins - In Honor of their new baby boy, Aryeh Willem.

To: Jon Berger - In Honor of the naming of his granddaughters.

"Outdoor Lighting Fund

In Memory of Gertrude and Perry Schlein from their daughters Natha Hancock and Robin Slomka and their families."

ONEGS

Mar 27	Jordan
Apr 03	No oneg. EC Seder (Reservations Required)
Apr 10	Roberts
Apr 17	Rosenthal/Reece
Apr 24	Polin
May 01	Fisher

PURIM CELEBRATION

Our many thanks to the people who came to the wonderful, fun filled Purim celebration at the synagogue, and our special thanks to the workers who made the evening the success that it was. It was the largest Purim crowd that we have ever had. They came to eat, to laugh, and to have fun.

Our thanks go out to Brenda Liles for the excellent food.

To Lauren Goodman and Shoshanna Rosenthal for the Hamentashen (even the "burnt" ones were delicious).

To Shirley Roberts for the decorations.

To Amy Bandis for supplying us with new graggers.

To Shoshanna Rosenthal for preparing and directing the BBYO Purim Players.

And to the BBYO Purim Players:
Jordan (MC) Hall; Ethan (King) Smyth; Lucas (Haman) Copeland; Matisse (Vashti) Copeland; Josh (Mordecai) Hovanes;

Emma (Esther) Hovanes; Isaac (Sound Man) Young; Mckenzie (narrator) Sanders.

Thank you all and Hag Sameach.

BIRTHDAYS

Mar 27 Stephanie Hancock
Mar 27 Lucy Fisher
Mar 28 Seth Spraggins
Apr 02 Dr. Arthur Polin
Apr 04 Diane Belsky
Apr 04 Dorothy Goldberg
Apr 06 Eli Sacks
Apr 10 Tatjana Copeland
Apr 15 Sandy Kalachman
Apr 15 Howard Polin
Apr 17 Lynne Edmondson
Apr 17 Jacob Sacks
Apr 19 Joshua Brigadier
Apr 19 Gavin Hancock
Apr 21 Blake Zelickson
Apr 21 Megan Polin
Apr 22 Lisa Roberts Harris
Apr 23 Susan Levitt
Apr 27 Gary Hall

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

As well as editing the Shofar, I am responsible for the first page of the EC website updates. If you have pictures from recent EC events, and permission from everyone in the pictures to post them, I would be glad to receive them in order to choose a few for the website. Also, if you are planning a Board approved event at EC, please provide me with the information so I can include it in the "upcoming events" sidebar. You may reach me by phone at 256-883-2283 or email at bailabat@comcast.net .

Brenda

ANNIVERSARIES

Apr 03 Leigh & Randy Miller
Apr 15 Helen & Robert Woodham
Apr 30 Sharon & Jeff Yalowitz

YARZHEITS

Mar 29 Nisan 09 Cecile Hollenberg*
Mar 30 Nisan 10 Irwin Goldstein*
Mar 31 Nisan 11 Norman Greenbaum
Apr 04 Nisan 15 Yakov Cszerny Drake
Apr 04 Nisan 15 Yolanda Cszerny Drake
Apr 05 Nisan 16 Marvin M. Schreiber*
Apr 05 Nisan 16 Lilian Jaffee
Apr 08 Nisan 19 Martin Bandas
Apr 09 Nisan 20 Henry Sevin
Apr 11 Nisan 22 Simon Blum*
Apr 12 Nisan 23 Jeffrey Weinman*
Apr 12 Nisan 23 Leo I. Goldberger
Apr 18 Nisan 29 Joseph Goldstein*
Apr 19 Nisan 30 Leo Ginsburg
Apr 20 Iyyar 01 Frieda Margol Katz
Apr 30 Iyyar 11 William Polin*
Apr 30 Iyyar 11 Rose Harrison*
May 01 Iyyar 12 Harriet Herbin
May 01 Iyyar 12 Eidele Sainker

* Plaque

**Light Memorial candle at sunset of the previous evening

ELIJAH IN MANHATTAN: A LOVE STORY

By Ted Roberts

Her name was Rachel - his was Nathan. And even though separated by two bar stools, they struggled through twenty minutes of awkward conversation before their last names appeared. Greenberg went with Rachel; Cohen with Nathan.

"Hey, you must be Jewish," blurted out Nathan. A lonely bachelor whose only other date was Channel 15 on a cold, rainy night

in April.

“I bet you’re Jewish, too,” she responded.

Well, things were looking up thought Nathan. He now sat beside her and she responded with a smile at his aggressive move. He’s Jewish, no stranger, she thought.

“What a night for two Jewish buckaroos to be sitting in a western bar in the middle of Manhattan,” said the lonely girl. “It’s the first night of Passover, you know.”

“Yeah. I’m afraid I’ve neglected ‘my heritage’ as my father puts it. He lives here in the city - only a few blocks down 57th. My family has a Seder every year. They sit around the table - sing childish songs - stuff themselves on a 5-course meal and wait for Elijah, the heavenly visitor to drop by. I go to a bar. Usually the one over on 8th and 52nd. This year my mood took me here. Don’t know why. It’s a heck of a coincidence that I’m sitting next to a Jewish buckaroo.”

“Well, I’m alone in the city. My family is back home in Louisville, Kentucky. Like yours, about now they’re sitting down to a huge meal with a week’s supply of calories and cholesterol. Kosher, but still deadly. And I’m sure they’re singing silly songs, as you put it. Wish I was there.”

“How seriously do they play out the Elijah game? You know the legend. His visit to every Jewish home on Seder night. I remember my old man. He’d put down his wine glass, get all serious and open the front door. ‘Hey Pop,’ the eight year old who was then me, would shout, ‘if the ubiquitous Elijah can pop up at 6 million Jewish homes in a single night, he can get through that wood paneled front door without your help. A decent burglar can do it in a few minutes.

Why not challenge the Prophet?’ My old man hated it.”

An old gentleman at the end of the bar looked up with a pained expression.

“I guess so,” remarked Rachel. “Sure I know the Elijah story - our Rabbi calls it a Midrash - a Rabbinic parable - which elevates it a level or two above a legend. It’s one of those unifying articles of faith that every Jew - even the lost ones - enjoy believing. A sweet story, you know. In fact, my Rabbi believes that besides visiting many millions of Seders on the first night of Pesach, he’s there - on Passover night - wherever two or more Jews are together.”

She had been a little loud. She noticed the old gentleman at the end of the bar had looked up from his drink, a dark purple wine in an ornate silver wine glass. Wonder what they called that drink? Wonder if you get to keep the glass?

The wine drinker at the end of the bar, the one with the fancy cup looked toward her and her new companion. He smiled good naturedly.

Nathan, his arms folded loosely across his chest, had fixed his eyes on her as she talked. She’s got some spirit, he reflected. How his father’s eyes would gleam with passion to hear her declarations of faith.

Rachel brushed her hair back from her face. “Sorry, I got a little carried away - didn’t mean to preach to you. Let’s talk about something else.”

“No, no, I understand. That first night of Pesach is magic, my old man used to say. Makes you remember who you are. Every

Jew, he used to say, had a progenitor - an ancestor - in his direct line who walked dry shod on the bed of the Red Sea. If he had perished under Egyptian whips or drowned beneath the waves - I, for example, wouldn't be sitting at this glitzy bar in 21st Century America talking to a young Jewish lady who believes in a resuscitated prophet who makes a million house calls in one Spring night."

"You know what?" she said suddenly. "I'd love to go to a Seder tonight. And there's no lamb shank, charoseth, parsley or bitter herbs at your place or mine - but there is at your father's place. Why don't we surprise him? We'll be just in time to greet Elijah."

Nathan blinked. And nodded. With her, he had a chance. So, linking his arm in hers, he set out on the longest journey any man can undertake. A journey home.

And at the end of the bar, the dignified, but poorly dressed patron held up his wine goblet. "There are no coincidences," he whispered to the goblet. He glanced hurriedly at his watch and left. He had many calls to make.

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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