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# the Shofar



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Etz Chayim Conservative Synagogue's Monthly Newsletter

SEPTEMBER, 2016

AV/ELUL , 5776

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

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

I am pleased and thankful to be able to serve you as President for this year.

Services at Etz Chayim are so fulfilling, and the people that attend are the most loving group of people that anyone could want to be around.

Saturday morning is a smaller crowd than Friday evening, but either day you choose, I promise you will not be disappointed. You wouldn't be disappointed if you were able to attend both days, but of course, the key is to set aside the time for rest.

Barry Meyer

## SYNAGOGUE CEMETARY SALE

The Maple Hill Cemetery has drastically increased the price of cemetery plots from \$1,800 to \$3,000. Between now and October 1, 2016, the synagogue will offer for sale up to 16 plots for \$2,086 per plot, after that date plots will be sold by the synagogue for the cost of replacing them,

currently \$3,000. Please contact Sandra Wiederect if you are interested in purchasing plots.

## GROUNDS CLEANUP DAY

We will be cleaning up the synagogue grounds on Sunday, September 11, starting at 8:00 am. Please bring any power or hand trimmers that you have. If you don't have any tools, some will be available at the synagogue. The Sisterhood will provide breakfast food for the workers.

Max

## JFHNA

The 2016 JFHNA Campaign Kickoff will be held on Sunday, Sept 18, 2016, at 7:00 pm Lou Weiner's home. Our guest will be comedian Rabbi Bob Alper.

IMS: Deliveries are made to the Food Pantry and First Stop. Please place items in the entry way container of the Synagogue. It's a Mitzvah!

Simcha & Memorial Plaques: \$50.00 & \$75.00, respectively.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

Sep 11 Grounds Cleanup at 8 AM  
Sep 18 JFHNA Kickoff, 7 PM, at the home of Lou Weiner  
Oct 1 & 2 Rosh Hashannah

### SISTERHOOD

Greetings,

L'Shana Tova to everyone.

I think the Sisterhood is going to have a really good year. We plan to try some different activities, and our first one was a giant success. On August 21, we had a "holiday tasting" at my home. The wonderful food was prepared by Mushky Cohen, of Chabad of Huntsville and a Kosher caterer. (Thank You, Mushky, for such a wonderful afternoon). She showed us two ways to make gefelte fish starting with a fish loaf, a carrot pie (loved it), a new year's salad with mangos, dates and pomegranates, and my favorite, a super quick and easy apple strudel. Those who were not there really missed a wonderful program. Attendance was great, and we had a fun time. I want to thank Nannette, Millie, Shirley, and Holly for all the arrangements and preparations. All I had to do was clean my house!

If you haven't paid for your New Year Book entry, please send a check to Brenda Liles. The books will be in the Synagogue lobby for pickup during the Holidays, as usual.

The Synagogue Clean-up Day is scheduled for September 11, and this year we are asking the ladies to attend to help polish the silver. Diana Polin has done this "labor of love" for us for 20 plus years, but this year she has a problem with her hands and is unable to do it. However, she will be there with the necessary silver polish and cloths to help us with this task. If we have a good turnout, we can get it done quickly and have a good time as well. So, consider this to be the September meeting!

Please remember to bring a dairy or pareve snack for the Rabbi reception on Erev Rosh Hashanah.

We are open to suggestions for new programs, so please call (or email) Nannette Schwartz or me if you have any ideas. Our October meeting will be a lunch bunch. The time and place will be announced later. We usually have an art program for November, so if you know something you would like to make, please let us know. In the past we have made jewelry, painted candy jars, made cookie mixes in mason jars, and painted canvases- just to name a few things. I hope someone will suggest something new and exciting for us to make.

Natha

## DONATIONS

### Rabbi Fund

From: Janet Schindler

To: Mike & Maria Sumerall - Get well soon.

From: Millie & Max Rosenthal

To: Arlene Averbuch - In Memory of your sister, Raye Ann Greenbaum. Our thoughts and prayers are with you.

To: Stan & Diane Belsky - Hope your surgery is very successful, our prayers are with you.

To: Nannette Schwartz - In Memory of your sister, Lynda Citron Siff.

### Randy Sacks Memorial Fund

In Memory of Randy Sacks

From: B.J. & Bill Brigadier

From: Linda & Fred Kolchin

### Prayer Book Fund

Ron Goldberg

### Joe Sacks Memorial Fund

In Memory of Joe Sacks

From: B.J. & Bill Brigadier

From: Linda & Fred Kolchin

### General Fund

From: Rose Schindler

In Memory of Morris Schindler on his Yahrtzeit. Thanks to the congregation for the support you gave to my Dad.

### Rabbi Fund

From: Shirley & Ted Roberts

From: Millie & Max Rosenthal

From: Diana & Howard Polin

From: Michal & Gary Hall

### Outdoor Lighting Fund

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

### Rabbi Discretionary Fund

From: Fred Kolchin

### Jewish Education Fund

From: Fred Kolchin

### Sisterhood

From: Lynne & Steve Edmondson

From: Nannette Citron Schwartz

From: Brenda & Cliff Liles

To: Nannette Schwartz-for Lynda Citron Siff-May her memory be a blessing to you and the family.

## ONEGS

Aug 26	Kalachman
Sep 02	Edmondson
Sep 09	Thomason/Kirshtein
Sep 16	Thompson
Sep 23	Berger
Sep 30	Sacks & Schindler

## BIRTHDAYS

Sep 06	Janet Schindler
Sep 08	Arlene Polin White
Sep 14	Robin Slomka
Sep 15	Larisa Thomason
Sep 18	Sara Brigadier
Sep 18	Rudy Sainker
Sep 19	Russell Roberts
Sep 23	Jesse Kalachman
Sep 24	Katja Kay Stone
Sep 26	Molly Lapidus

## ANNIVERSARIES

Sep 03	Sandy & Marvin Kalachman
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## YARZHEITS\*\*

Sep 01	Av 28	Sarah Fink
Sep 01	Av 28	Morris Martin Singer
Sep 02	Av 29	Dolores D'Acosta Hein
Sep 06	Elul 03	Belle D'Acosta*
Sep 08	Elul 05	Adolph Goldstein*
Sep 09	Elul 06	Caryl Hollenberg
Sep 09	Elul 06	Grete Goldstein*
Sep 09	Elul 06	Milton Levitt
Sep 09	Elul 06	Roland Jordan Krantz
Sep 14	Elul 11	Milton Baum*
Sep 15	Elul 12	June Rothfeder
Sep 15	Elul 12	Leonard Flank*
Sep 16	Elul 13	Alvin Jack Bulgatz
Sep 17	Elul 14	Albert Goldner*
Sep 18	Elul 15	John Goldstein*
Sep 20	Elul 17	Molly Silver Rodkin*
Sep 21	Elul 18	Edward Kahn*
Sep 24	Elul 21	Phil Wiederecht*
Sep 25	Elul 22	William Karmiol*
Sep 25	Elul 22	Beatrice Sainker*
Sep 26	Elul 23	Alfred D. Freeman
Sep 27	Elul 24	Abe Goldberg
Sep 28	Elul 25	Percy Sacks*
Oct 04	Tishrei 02	Daniel Flank*
Oct 07	Tishrei 05	Louis B. Lepp*

\* Plaque

\*\*Light Memorial candle at sunset of the previous evening

## FOR THE LOVE OF G-D AND MAN

By Ted Roberts

Our bible, according to my concordance, tells us repetitively to love G-d. How can we comply with this mandate - Love G-d? I love my wife, kids, a few highly select friends who owe me money, even the cat. And I love lamb chops with garlic and lemon. But my Creator and Judge? We live in different dimensions. That's much like asking the tree to love the seed. So inappropriate. They are of different

matter. Maybe a better analogy is the squirrel's love of the tree. Still, far-fetched. There's an inter-dimensional enigma here. An emotional warp. How can it be?

Strangely, Leigh Hunt, an English poet who probably never met a Jew answered the question with a Jewish slant. He was a Londoner who lived two thousand miles West of Chasid Headquarters in Poland. He was an aristocratic Englishman who, unlike his Polish contemporaries, wore a frock coat and did his best work on the Sabbath. Leigh was a good Episcopalian, but somehow saw the world through Jewish eyes. The poet, in an inspired mood, wrote a poem of 18 short lines; singing the same love-thy-neighbor theme that's in our prayer book. Unintentionally, it is a very Jewish poem: An angel alights in the room of Abou Ben Adhem, an exemplary soul who "... saw within the moonlight in his room making it rich like a lily in bloom. An angel writing in a book of gold the names of those who love the Lord."

Abou Ben Adhem, in a flash, sits up in his bed only half awake, but alert enough to know that his visitor is not his cousin from Cincinnati. Am I in your Golden Book, he wants to know? ("Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold.") The angel sadly shakes his head.

But the man with a heart for humanity is not disheartened. "Well," he says, "put me down as one who loves his fellow man."

The angel notes the words of Abou Ben Adhem and disappears. Next night he's back in the dim bedroom "with a great wakening light" and his fateful list of those who love the Lord.

“And lo, Ben Adhem’s name led all the rest.”

Loving your fellow man is like loving G-d, an insight initially proclaimed by our Tanach.

I’ve heard it said that the hardest part of being a good Jew is loving your fellow man. Now I didn’t originate that - it’s probably in the Talmud or maybe in the Tanach from some bitter prophet like Jeremiah. But sadly, it’s true. Didn’t G-d, himself, tell us we’re a stiff-necked people? Easy going, sweet, lovable people don’t cure polio, don’t split the atom, and don’t win Nobel prizes. They’re too busy displaying their love. There’s some furnace going in the core of great people that keeps them from election as most popular kid in school or fraternity/sorority presidency. You wouldn’t have enjoyed a beer and a bowl of pretzels with Einstein. Your Uncle Louie was probably much better at small talk.

In all the English vocabulary the hardest word to define is love. It has no synonym - only an antonym. It thinly communicates when it describes our relationship with our fellow creatures - even the four-legged ones. But it miserably fails to describe our feeling to our Creator. Even though my concordance counts it over 150 times in the Tanach. In nature, love flows down, not up. A river originating in a mountain peak flows down to water the animal and plant life at its base. I’m convinced that mothers love children more than kids love their moms. Survival of the species demands it. Our limited human understanding comes closest to defining Divine love by loving our fellow human creatures. And while we’re talking about love and G-d and man and English poets,

let me remind you of Alexander Pope - another famous English Bard. He’s clearly on my side: “The proper study of mankind is man,” he says. “Presume not G-d to scan,” which to my understanding says the Creator lies beyond our telescopes.

What is love? Biblically - I say - that’s not an irrelevant question since our bible tells us countless times to “love” the Lord your G-d. We understand friendship - we know all about lust, we understand why your heart glows when your wife makes kreplach in chicken soup, your favorite. And even closer to your emotional warmth is the sensation of holding in your arms your newborn child. But words fail when we try to cozy up to the Lord. There is awe, respect, and reverence - but love! How to love G-d?

I’ve never met anyone who loved G-d and could explain that exotic emotion. It cannot be expressed any more than a fish expresses his love for water - his medium. A cat will die fighting to defend its kittens. But does it love them? The cat must have something in her we call love; a very imprecise word. Its offspring - like its kindred mammal, man - never gives, only takes. Maybe the prophets and Leigh Hunt were onto something. The word for “love” of G-d, as the passion itself, is not in our lexicon. Love thy fellow man. That, itself, is an awesome challenge.

Ted Roberts, “The Scribbler on the Roof,” is a syndicated Jewish columnist and longtime member of our Synagogue.

Ted welcomes your comment and/or critique and can be emailed at: [shirlr@hiwaay.net](mailto:shirlr@hiwaay.net)

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Buy Ted’s collected works at the Sisterhood Gift Shop or at <http://www.lulu.com/content/127641>