
the Shofar



Etz Chayim Conservative Synagogue's Monthly Newsletter

OCT, 2017

TISHREI/CHESHVAN, 5778

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

A MESSAGE FOR SUKKOT FROM RABBI LISTFIELD

October is a busy month in which to be Jewish. I hope it will be a most blessed month for each of us as well. October begins as we emerge from the spiritual cleansing of Yom Kippur (the last day of September), and then on October 4 we begin the joyous festival of Sukkot.

Sukkot carries dual messages. On the one hand, by leaving our homes and going into a hut for a week we are reminded of the fragility of our lives. Everything is so evanescent. On the other hand, even as we leave our reliable and comfortable home in order to sit outside amidst the tenuousness of existence, we take in hand an array of colorful branches and fruits and wave them in all directions. That is, we are blessed with much bounty and we are so grateful that we are

able to enjoy and appreciate it all. In truth, we are so fortunate to enjoy a cornucopia of blessings. We are further blessed to be able to enjoy all this with each other, as a proud and tight-knit community here in Huntsville. May we all enjoy a colorful and rich Sukkot festival, and may we rejoice together in Torah as the holy day season concludes with Simchat Torah on October 12-13.

Stephen Listfield

ABOUT SUKKOT

When is Sukkot this year?

Sukkot 2017 (5778) begins at sunset on Wednesday, October 4 and lasts through the evening of Wednesday, October 11. The conclusion of Sukkot marks the beginning of the separate holidays of Shemini Atzeret and Simchat Torah.

What is Sukkot?

Sukkot is known as the “Festival of Tabernacles” and the “Feast of Booths.” It is one of Judaism’s three central pilgrimage festivals, along with Passover and Shavuot. It is a holiday of special joy, and we call it “z’m’an simchatenu,” the Season of our joyousness.

What are some Sukkot customs and practices?

It is a mitzvah to build a sukkah, a temporary hut to dwell in during the holiday. The Torah tells us to dwell in booths during this period of time, as a reminder that “I [the Lord] had the children of Israel dwell in booths during their journey through the desert of Sinai after I brought them forth out of the bondage of Egypt.”.

It is a mitzvah to buy a lulav and etrog and shake them daily throughout the festival. Sukkot is a harvest festival and we express our gratitude, as summer comes to its end, for all the bounty of the earth with which God blesses us.

(From Myjewishlearning.com with additional comment by Rabbi Listfield)

FROM THE PRESIDENT

This is a building month as we complete constructing our sukkah and prepare for celebrating the receiving of the Torah. It is great to

be doing this within our community. We are so blessed within our community to have special resources that help us maintain our Jewish heritage. Ted Roberts shares his thoughts in stories that he presents us with each month, right here in our Shofar. Raven Livingston shares her voice with us on most Shabbat mornings. Though many of us don’t find the time to get to our Synagogue on Saturday morning, it is comforting to me to know the opportunity is there.

Barry

CONCERT IN THE SUKKAH

Please join in the mitzvah of shaking the lulav & etrog, eating in the Sukkah, and gathering food to stock the Food Pantry shelves prior to the Thanksgiving holiday! The Huntsville string ensemble, Consort l’ancienne, will present a special concert of Popular Jewish, Liturgical, and Klezmer music at Etz Chayim Conservative Synagogue to benefit the Food Pantry. Collection of food will begin at 4pm followed by a brief Sukkot service, then music during refreshments (weather permitting we will be in the Sukkah). Please bring a donation of 4 items for the food bank.

Admission: donation of 4 food items for the Food Pantry.

Dinner: Vegetable or cheese pizza in the sukkah or veggie/dairy option if raining

Concert: by Consort l'ancienne.

Date and Time: Sunday, October 8, beginning at 4pm.

Location: Etz Chayim Synagogue, 7705 Bailey Cove Road, Huntsville, AL 35802.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Oct 01 Complete building our sukkah at 10 AM
- Oct 4-11 Sukkot
- Oct 08 Concert in the sukkah, 4 PM
- Oct 12 Shemini Atzeret
- Oct 13 Simchat Torah
- Oct 16 Lunch Bunch, Walton's Southern Table, at 11:30 AM
- Oct 21 Bar Mitzvah of Noah Rush
- Oct 24 Book Club at EC, 11:00 AM

SYNAGOGUE CLEAN-UP THANKS

A big "thank you" to all the folks who showed up on Sept 10 to help clean up the Synagogue for the Holidays.

Grounds Clean-up: Jeff Zelickson (who came at the crack of dawn) David Rush, Noah Rush, Jon Berger, Shoshanna Rosenthal, Fred Kolchin,

Howard Ross, Lydia Honan, Howard Polin and Charlie Fisher.

Inside Clean-up: Janet Schindler, Millie Rosenthal, Diane Polin, Shirley Roberts, and Shoshanna Rosenthal (who worked both of the jobs). Notice how our silver ornaments really shine.

A special thanks to Millie for organizing the wonderful breakfast.

Max

SISTERHOOD

Greetings All,

Soon the holidays will be over, but many thanks to Bill and BJ Brigadier for once again sponsoring the Break-the-Fast. I know everyone will enjoy it. Also thanks to Millie Rosenthal and Janet Schindler for preparing refreshments for the workers at the Synagogue clean-up last month. The property looks very nice for the holidays. As does all the silver on our Torahs in the Ark. Thanks to Diana Polin and Shirley Roberts for their fine polishing.

The Sisterhood is planning a "lunch bunch" on October 16th at 11:30 at Walton's Southern Table (Whitesburg/Airport). We have several new members who I hope will attend so that we can all welcome

them to our Sisterhood and to the Synagogue. We are also planning a Hanukkah Craft Night in November, so be on the lookout for the info.

The Bar Mitzvah of Noah Rush will take place on Oct. 21, 2017. He has been studying very hard, and we want to wish him well. So please come support Noah.

The Synagogue plans a lot of activities when Rabbi Listfield comes to visit us. The Sisterhood sponsors a luncheon that Saturday with a different volunteer(s) preparing each one. You do not have to be a Sisterhood member to prepare the luncheon, and the Sisterhood will reimburse you for your expenses. We are still in need of someone to prepare the lunch on April 21 and again on May 12. If you are not already on the list, please find a friend and volunteer (call me). Also, call Millie Rosenthal if interested in preparing a Sunday morning Brunch during Rabbi visits. The synagogue will reimburse you for your expenses. We all like to come, eat and schmooze, so please volunteer.

The final decoration of the Sukkah is to be completed on Sunday, October 1. The Sisterhood will provide veggie and cheese pizzas for those in attendance.

On October 8th at 4:00 PM, there will be a concert in the Sukkah performed

by Consort l'ancienne. Four non-perishables for the food bank are requested for entry. Everyone is welcome.

We would like to welcome the following new members to the Synagogue: Toby & Risa Mendelson and Jonathan & Michelle Pearson. We look forward to having Risa and Michelle as new Sisterhood members, and as always, Sisterhood membership is complimentary for your first year as a Synagogue member.

Natha

BOOK CLUB WILL MEET ON OCTOBER 24

The Etz Chayim Book Club is reading a nonfiction book that reads like fiction. "The Angel: The Egyptian Spy Who Saved Israel," is exciting, quick-paced, and true.

"The Angel" was written by Uri Bar-Joseph, professor at the University of Haifa and a world-renowned expert on Israeli intelligence. The information and the story are up-to-date, published within the last year.

We'll discuss it at 11:00 am on Tuesday, October 24 at the Synagogue.

For more information contact Jon Berger at 256-457-0277 or jonaberger@gmail.com.

MAZEL TOV!

Thomas Jones, EC member and our BBYO advisor, was recently presented an Undergraduate Award in Physical Chemistry by UAH and the American Chemical Society. The award is in recognition of his outstanding achievements in the field of Physical Chemistry.

DONATIONS

Rabbi Fund

From: Diana & Howard Polin
To: Max Rosenthal - May you be up and around and feeling well soon.
To: Rabbi & Mrs. Listfield - Wishing you both a L'shana Tovah. There is a loving feeling that good health will be blessing #1 for you.

From: The Family of Max Rosenthal
To: Max - We are glad that you are feeling better. Looking forward to seeing you "around the town" soon.

From: Janet Schindler
To: Max Rosenthal - Glad your surgery is over and that you are on the road to a very good recovery.

From: Shirley & Ted Roberts
To: Kelley Zelickson - Thinking of you and hope you continue to do well.
To: Leslie Listfield - Hope all goes well with your surgery.

From: Millie & Max Rosenthal
To: Kelley Zelickson - Just to let you know that you are in our thoughts for a total and permanent recovery.
To: Leslie Listfield - Our thoughts and prayers are with you as you go into surgery. May G-d bless you and keep you in good health.

Joe Sacks Memorial Fund
Sandy & Marvin Kalachman

General Fund
Sue & Joe Paddock

Sandy & Marvin Kalachman

Paulette Goldstein

Lauren & Steve Goodman
In Honor of the High Holidays

From: Raven Livingston
For: EC security system

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

Irv Sainker Memorial Fund
Sandy & Marvin Kalachman

Sisterhood Fund

From: Howard & Ellie Levingston

To: Ted & Shirley Roberts-to sponsor a Kiddush while sending you both get well soon wishes.

From: Sandra Wiederecht

From: Alan Sacks and Family

For: Bill Goldberg and Sisterhood, in appreciation for making my dad's unveiling a loving experience.

ONEGS

Sep 29 Erev Yom Kippur
Oct 06 Thomason/Kirshtein
Oct 13 Kalachman
Oct 20 Rush
Oct 27 Lapidus
Nov 03 Berry

BIRTHDAYS

Oct 02 David Wiederecht
Oct 03 Zev Roberts
Oct 03 Marc Zelickson
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
Oct 24 Thomas Jones

ANNIVERSARIES

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

YAHREZITS**

Oct 01	Tishrei 11	Murray Rosenthal*
Oct 03	Tishrei 13	Bernard Fisher
Oct 04	Tishrei 14	Terry Lee Green*
Oct 06	Tishrei 16	Capt. Robert Secher*
Oct 10	Tishrei 20	Randy Sacks*
Oct 10	Tishrei 20	Alex Greenbaum
Oct 10	Tishrei 20	Mariam Wertheim
Oct 17	Tishrei 27	Louis Klazmer
Oct 17	Tishrei 27	Steve Sokolow
Oct 18	Tishrei 28	Bella Flank*
Oct 19	Tishrei 29	Leo Krell
Oct 19	Tishrei 29	Rose Natt*
Oct 20	Tishrei 30	Harold Pizitz
Oct 23	Cheshvan 03	Sarah Golstein*
Oct 23	Cheshvan 03	Sara Osovsky*
Nov 01	Cheshvan 12	Martin Goldner*

* Plaque

**Light Memorial candle sunset of previous evening

THE POWER OF TORAH

By Ted Roberts

On Simchas Torah, lovers of Torah never fail to tell the old midrash of Rebbe Avram and his beautiful Torah.

The Rabbi lived by himself in a one-room, wood frame structure that held

a table for studying, a bed for sleeping, and a stove for cooking. "What else do I need?" he asked his friends and student.

One night the Rabbi looked up to see the door swing open. A menacing figure stood in the doorway; a robber armed with a knife that flashed in the candlelight as he waved it to and fro.

"Your money. Quick. Your money, old geezer, before my knife takes your few remaining years." Amazing, the Rabbi thought. I am unafraid. What evil can befall a man as he studies the words of Moses?

"I have no money, no gold, no coins. In fact, no possessions except the bare furniture of this room."

"Liar, there must be something of value here."

"Oh there is," said the Rabbi. "Far exceeding rubles."

"Get it," said the man with the sword.

"But it's already there right in front of you. I didn't mention it as a possession since it is not exclusively mine, and it cannot be exclusively yours. The Torah is a part of the Creator's world like hills and rivers. Like love and truth. Owned by all and none."

In front of Reb Avram, on a bare

table, sat the object of his admiration. A Humash. And what a Humash it was. Bound in a garnet red velvet, its pages were edged in gold. It stole all the light from the dim room and caught it in red and gold fire on the gray table.

The robber scooped it up and turned to leave. But an unexpected shout from the Rabbi stopped him at the door. "Wait," said the victim. "Beware, the Humash has power. The Book under your arm has both uplifted and destroyed nations and individuals. This is power and it always will be, forever and ever."

The robber laughed. "THIS is power and it always will be forever and ever, old man," he said as he swung his sword within a whisker of the old man's head. And he was gone with his loot to the village where he lived with a wife and small daughter.

For several weeks, he tried to swap or sell his prize, but the typical buyers had no interest in books of any kind. And the Jews he contacted had qualms about a "hot" Humash. Even Labe, the butcher, who once bought and resold a case of stolen Tallithim, wouldn't touch this deal.

For years the Humash laid on the table with a jumble of stolen goods that were never exchanged for rubles. Many a violent plot was conceived in that room. Drunken

brawls and licentious acts were commonplace.

But the brigand's eight-year old daughter, Elsie, also noticed that big book in the corner. It was open at a picture of Jacob, with Dinah at his side, blessing his sons. She loved the parade of strange characters pictured in the book, and the camels, donkeys, and palm trees so alien to the flat lands of Poland. They set her mind on fire. To open it was to enter another world.

One day, around the time of her tenth birthday, she told her mother the stories. And she told her the rules imposed on humanity by the Creator. The mother, a kind but ignorant woman who dutifully served her husband, slowly awoke to the nature of his rude and violent life. She, too, opened the book.

Often the thief saw his daughter engrossed in the book. "Good," he said, "read and read some more." It must be said that the thief loved his daughter. Such things are possible. Saul, the bloodthirsty soldier with rage in his heart towards David, loved his Jonathan. Even the slave-master Pharaoh, it is written, loved his son. And it is well known that the human heart has sections like an orange.

The brigand talked to his daughter as though she was a son. "We are not

put here to live in a hut and eat fish and dark bread. Power is our ladder to climb out of this pit. I use what I have - strength and rage. This is power," he shouted as he waved his sword. "And it always shall be. But you are only a woman. So, read the red book."

Meanwhile, his fortune grew and it attracted many followers. His small band grew to an army of criminal rabble that controlled the countryside. Many rubles filled the treasure of the bandit chief. And he rode upon pure blooded steeds and wore silken clothing. But his life was barren because his good wife and daughter had fled, taking with them the book with the red velvet cover. They left a note. "This is power and it always will be forever and ever."

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