
the Shofar



Etz Chayim Conservative Synagogue's Monthly Newsletter

MAY, 2019

NISAN/IYYAR, 5779

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

THE RABBI'S MESSAGE

The Death of My Friend

Henry Sosland died last month. He wasn't a celebrity, and you wouldn't know of him. But I shall tell you, because with the death of Henry Sosland there is one less *tzadik* in the world.

Rabbi Sosland was ordained at the Jewish Theological Seminary, class of 1958. He was the founding rabbi of the New City Jewish Center in Rockland County, NY. He led the congregation for 47 years, bringing it from its humble birth to regional prominence. He leaves a wonderful wife, three children including a psychiatrist and a rabbi, and two grandchildren. He was a graduate of Harvard University. He wrote a scholarly book about medieval preaching. None of this explains why I am writing about the death of my friend right now.

I'm writing about the death of Rabbi Henry Sosland because he exemplifies to me a life lived on the principle of "what can I do for other people?" It's a powerful

way to live. It makes life worth living. But few people master that art and I need to linger on the fact that my friend was one of them.

In my early years in the rabbinate I knew of Rabbi Sosland but I had not met him personally. Our paths first crossed at a rabbinical conference in 1988. I mentioned to him a professional issue that I was wrestling with. He took an immediate and all-encompassing interest in my story. Most people would listen. Henry *listened*. He listened deeply and helpfully. After this encounter we became friends, and as I think back on the past three decades I keep summoning to mind so many of the kindnesses and favors that Henry cheerfully did for my family and me. He would call regularly just to see how you were — although first he would apologize for not having called sooner(!). Before discussing anything else he would genuinely want to know what was going on in your life. His voice was gentle, his words were wisely chosen, his manner always calm and kindly. He was, as are all saintly people, modest to the point of

self-effacing. The main feature that I am trying to convey, though, is that when you were with Rabbi Sosland you felt yourself spiritually elevated because you knew you were with someone who filled his life with the goodness that he could do for other people.

His congregants loved him. Adored him, really. When I met people from Rockland County and asked if they happened to know my friend Rabbi Sosland, the answer was frequently a resounding, "RABBI SOSLAND!! Yes, he's my rabbi! We all love him!"

Dear friends, William Butler Yeats wrote that "all knowledge is biography." I am trying in this article to convey the heart of Jewish living through a brief biography. Words and books are the basic medium of Jewish communication. This month I write not of books — not even our sacred Books — but of a biography. It's about a man, a rabbi, a sweet and loving soul, who lived life to the fullest because of his genuine and boundless kindness for others. A life nobly lived is the best Jewish sacred book.

When I learned of Henry's death, I wrote to all my colleagues in the Conservative rabbinate (we have an email list of about 1,000 rabbis). I expressed myself in just a few sentences. And I concluded with the following: Henry was made of flesh and blood like all people. But I think he was really made of *kindness*.

See you May 3-5,

Stephen Listfield

MEGA CHALLAH BAKE

Interested in joining us for the Mega Challah Bake May 16? Here are SEVERAL ways that you can pre-register:

1. You can copy the URL below to go to the registration site directly: <https://hadassahub.wufoo.com/forms/m12w7k850czyvkq/> or for info copy huntsvillechallahbake@gmail.com
2. Mailing a check is another option. Make checks payable to Huntsville Hadassah and send to Michelle Persons, 113 Tumbleweed Drive, Madison, AL 35758.
3. Finally, you could also hand deliver cash or a check (made payable to Huntsville Hadassah) to one of the event's committee members: Amy Mauldin, Michelle Persons, Mushky Cohen, or Risa Mendelson.

Registering ahead of time will ensure your place at our challah table and save you from paying a higher couvert at the door. We also encourage you to bring friends as we are attempting to make this a grand event with 100 women from our community joining together for an evening of fun and spirituality.

Please see the flyer below, and let me know if you have any questions and/or concerns. Call 256-325-1339.

Thanks!

Michelle

HUNTSVILLE

MEGA CHALLAH Bake 100

Join women from all around Huntsville for an evening of unity and inspiration. Experience the power of our Jewish community as we mix, knead, and braid together.

Thursday
5.16.19
Doors Open at 6:30pm

The Mill Room at
Lincoln Mill
1300 Meridian Street, Huntsville

Preregistration requested.
Cost: \$12 per person
in advance;
\$18 at the door.

For registration instructions, send an email to
huntsvillechallahbake@gmail.com

Program Sponsored By

HADASSAH
Huntsville

Temple B'nai
Sholom Sisterhood

Chabad

Etz Chayim
Sisterhood

That's a lot of work and a lot of time. I also want to thank Gary Hall for leading the service. He always does a good job! Finally, thanks to those who gave the extra donations to help defray the cost to the Sisterhood.

Reminder to all of the ladies: The Mega Challah Bake is coming up on May 16, and it is being sponsored by all of the local Jewish women's organizations: Huntsville Hadassah, Temple B'nai Sholom Sisterhood, Chabad of Huntsville and Etz Chayim Sisterhood. It should be a lot of fun, and I hope everyone attends. The price is only \$12 for pre-reservations or \$18 at the door. Please contact Michelle Persons to make a reservation, to pay or for additional information. See the article and flyer elsewhere in this publication.

SISTERHOOD

Since most of you receive the Shofar before the end of the month, I want to remind you of the nutritionist from Huntsville Hospital who will speak to our Synagogue on April 29 at 7:00 PM. The charge is \$5 per person. She will give us suggestions on healthy eating. It would be nice to have a crowd, so bring your spouse, your significant other, or a friend.

The Synagogue Seder took place on April 19. I heard that everyone enjoyed themselves, and the food was very good. Thank you to Nannette who was in charge and coordinated everything, to Millie and Shirley for all the shopping and to Brenda for collecting payments. Also, thanks to Millie, Shirley, Lauren, and Sandra for setting up for the Seder.

The election/installation of officers for the Sisterhood Board will be on June 10 at 11:30 in conjunction with our last lunch bunch of the year. Please save the time and date. The location will be provided in the June Shofar. I hope to see everyone there.

We also plan to sponsor a social activity this summer for the congregation. It will probably be a Baseball movie with popcorn (and maybe hot dogs)! Be on the lookout. This will be for the entire family.

Natha

BOOK CLUB MEMBERS ARE
LEARNING ABOUT AMERICAN
JEWISH WOMEN

Members of our book club are the most fortunate of people. We learn. We learn some of the most fascinating stuff. Right now we're reading "America's Jewish Women: A History from Colonial Times to Today" by Pamela Nadell, an accomplished writer on women's and Jewish issues. Brand new, the book was published within the last month.

It's already on its way to becoming the authority in this field. PLEASE join us and don't miss this. If you stay on the outside here's a smidgen of what you'll miss: "that air of freedom, it's opportunities and challenges, emboldened America's Jewish women and inspired their activism and deep commitments to changes they thought would make this world a better place. Their history became one of remarkable political engagement. In their neighborhoods they rioted against the high cost of kosher meat. Picketing outside factories, they demanded safe working conditions and a living wage. Their Jewish organizations campaigned against the perils of white slavery and championed Zionism. Jewish housewives combatted antisemitism. Jewish lesbians decried homophobia."

"Years ago a Jewish woman asked 'what is the difference between a bookkeeper and a Supreme Court Justice?' 'One generation' quipped Ruth Bader Ginsburg.'

Come with us. Our next meeting will be at Etz Chayim on June 13th at 11:30 AM.

For more information contact Jon Berger at 356-457-0277 (call or text) or jonaberger@gmail.com.

SAVE THE DATE

Friday, May 10, Birthday Oneg

Diana,90 Howard,95

Please come to share our joy
in celebrating the ninth DECADE
of our birthdays.

Our 60 years in Huntsville have been
blessed with your friendship, camaraderie
and caring.

ONEGS

May 03 Brigadier
May 10 Polin, Birthday Oneg
Mar 17 Hall
May 24 Fisher
May 31 Meyer
Jun 07 Meyer

DONATIONS

General Fund

From: Andrea Rosenthal
A generous donation in Honor of Millie Rosenthal's birthday. The Synagogue has brought such joy to the entire Rosenthal family. I look forward to many more joyous occasions with Etz Chayim.

From: Susan & Alan Sacks
A generous donation in Memory of Joe Sacks

From: Arlene White
In Honor of Howard Polin, her daddy and hero, for receiving the U.S. Flag presented by congressman Mo Brooks.

From: Sandy & Marvin Kalachman
In Memory of Phillip Makower.

From: Michal & Gary Hall
To: Yossi Drake - In Memory of Sarah Drake.

From: Brenda & Cliff Liles
To: Howard & Diana Polin – In Honor of their birthday celebrations.

Rabbi Fund

From: Millie & Max Rosenthal
To: Kelley & Jeff Zelickson – Mazel Tov on the birth of your new granddaughter, Zoe Charlotte Zelickson. We celebrate with you as you become happy grandparents.

To: Karen & Bob Feigenblatt – Praying with you that Karen's father, Jim Stull, will be out of MICU and recovered.

To: Lou Weiner – In Honor of Lou's Birthday.

From: Shirley & Ted Roberts
To: Kelley & Jeff Zelickson – Mazel Tov and welcome to your new granddaughter, Zoe Charlotte Zelickson.

To: Lou Weiner – Thinking of you and wishing you a very happy birthday.

From: Lucy & Charlie Fisher

Greenbaum Fund

From: Lauren & Steve Goodman
A generous donation for Synagogue security.

Sisterhood

From: Lynne & Steve Edmondson
A very generous donation in support of the EC Seder

From: Manya Fuerst
A generous donation in support of the EC Seder

From: Linda & Fred Kolchin
A generous donation in support of the EC Seder

From: Donna Lyonnais
A generous donation in support of the EC Seder

From: Ginger Nelson
A generous donation in support of the EC Seder

From: Michelle & Jonathan Persons
A generous donation in support of the EC Seder

From: Nannette Schwartz
A generous donation in support of the EC Seder

From: Jada Wilder
A generous donation in support of the EC Seder

Outdoor Lighting Fund

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

UPCOMING EVENTS

May 01 10 AM, Holocaust Program at Redstone Arsenal, Sparkman Center Jones Auditorium, sponsored by US Army

6:30 PM, Holocaust Program sponsored by the Rock and JFHNA, Rock Family Center main auditorium on Holmes

May 3-5 Rabbi Listfield Shabbaton

May 16 Challah Bake, \$12/person

May 19 3 PM, Yom HaAtzmaot Community celebration sponsored by JFHNA, at TBS

May 23 Lag B'Omer

May 26 Jewish War Veterans Post 111 Breakfast meeting and place flags at cemeteries for Memorial Day

May 27, Memorial Day ceremony at Veterans Park

BIRTHDAYS

May 04 Caiden Johnson
May 04 Sandra Anderson
May 05 Jonathan Persons
May 08 Diana Polin
May 15 Sandra Wiederecht
May 18 Eric Jackson
May 20 Glenn Polin
May 21 Amy Mauldin
May 21 Susan Cooke
May 22 Gina Yalowitz
May 23 Jordan Hall
May 25 Larry Levitt
May 26 Warren Novick

May 28 Jeff Yalowitz
May 29 Joe Johnson
May 30 Jon Berger
May 31 Sarah Sacks

ANNIVERSARIES

May 20 Shayna & Joe Johnson
May 24 Lauren & Steve Goodman

Yahrzeits**

May 04 Nisan 29 Joseph Goldstein*
May 05 Nisan 30 Leo Ginsburg
May 06 Iyyar 01 Frieda Margol Katz
May 07 Iyyar 02 Goldie Fuerst
May 08 Iyyar 03 Robert F. (Bob) May
May 10 Iyyar 05 Alvin Hollenberg
May 14 Iyyar 09 Mitchell Fuerst
May 16 Iyyar 11 William Polin*
May 16 Iyyar 11 Rose Harrison*
May 17 Iyyar 12 Harriet Herbin
May 17 Iyyar 12 Eidele Sainker
May 19 Iyyar 14 Perry M. Schlein*
May 20 Iyyar 15 Sarah Kauffman*
May 21 Iyyar 16 Ruth Cohen*
May 21 Iyyar 16 David Kopkin
May 23 Iyyar 18 Al Meyer
May 24 Iyyar 19 Anna Polin*
May 24 Iyyar 19 Alex E. Streit*
May 25 Iyyar 20 Jack Greenberg
May 26 Iyyar 21 Irwin M. Schindler
May 26 Iyyar 21 Richard Harris
May 28 Iyyar 23 Aaron Rodkin*
May 29 Iyyar 24 Betty Kamisher*
May 29 Iyyar 24 Elaine Ornstein
May 30 Iyyar 25 Morris J. Green*
May 30 Iyyar 25 Rita Fleishman*
May 31 Iyyar 26 Linda Lindy*
May 31 Iyyar 26 Lawrence Kamisher*
Jun 01 Iyyar 27 Renee Fisher

* Plaque

**Light Memorial candle sunset of previous evening

SPRING HAS SPRUNG— A HOMEMADE MIDRASH

By Ted Roberts

Huntsville should have a new name: Myrtleville. Crepe Myrtle and all of its relatives hang out here in the Rocket City like no place on earth. The Crepe Myrtle population may exceed that of the human species. And notice how clever they are – they are never deceived by a brief February warming. They never break into bloom prematurely, and fatally like the dumb Dogwood does. So does the uninformed Bradford pear. But not the wise Crepe Myrtle who knows he'll pay the price later. But he also knows spring when it finally comes and celebrates with flags of leaves and blossoms. Thereby calling your attention to nature. And infinity of the soul.

Rely on the Crepe Myrtle to signal the true arrival of the season resuscitation – when nature revives and laughs at its seasonal pseudo-death of winter.

The Torah doesn't tell us of Adam, who lived in G-d's first garden, winter. Even the flighty birds who fled must have been repulsed by the desolated scene. That first winter everything died – trees, flowers, and the grass at his feet. It's the end, he thought. Sadly he didn't know a midrash I just made up. "G-d certainly wasted a lot energy on a short-lived me." He prophesized his own termination in the death of the natural world around him. Who knew of spring in that first cycle of seasons? Life, so short.

The Creator started in disappointment at his newly made creature, and then with a powerful anesthesia still unknown to us

put him to sleep and made Eve. Let's see if she grasps the idea of spring and eternity, thought the Creator of an infinite repetition of the programmed seasonal cycle and their meaning to humankind.

Eve communicated this knowledge to a distraught Adam – explaining carefully its meaning to their life span.

"See, there's more" she told him, thereby originating an expression to be worn out by marketers. "Just as the trees and their kin revive and thrive in spring. We too triumph over death and winter of the soul."

It's an old legend. I hope a true one. Are we not an integral part of nature? So says my legend.

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:

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