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# the Shofar



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Etz Chayim Conservative Synagogue's Monthly Newsletter

OCTOBER, 2019

Tishrei/Cheshvan, 5780

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

## RABBI'S MESSAGE

### SAUL, SOCRATES AND THE SELF

The distinguished biographer James Atlas died last month. His biography of Saul Bellow, published in 2000, runs almost 700 pages. I haven't read it. But part of the book was excerpted in a newspaper and I have pondered that excerpt for the past 19 years.

Here's what Atlas wrote:

*"Bellow is famed for his formidable intellect and insight....But in his own life, he could be amazingly dim-witted. I'm thinking of his marriage to Sondra and her affair with Bellow's close friend Jack Ludwig. At one point, Sondra insisted that Bellow see a psychiatrist four times a week — presumably so she and Jack could be together....Yet Bellow never figured out that they were having an affair. How do you explain such blindness?"*

Atlas goes on to quote Bellow himself: *"Knowing and not knowing,*

*that's the human way. We suffer from massive denial."*

In one way or another, all my preparation for the Holy Days revolves around Bellow's rueful comment. We are meant to change ourselves for the better. Our tradition expounds on that virtue in numerous ways. But first a person has to honestly see him or her self. Our enemy is not only our *yetzer hara* ("evil inclination"). Our real enemy is our capacity for *denial*. To a greater or lesser degree, we all tend to excuse some of our faults, rationalize some of our shortcomings, and blame others for our problems. We look in the mirror and we see someone else. We say that Raizel is stubborn while we have the courage of our convictions. Yankel is a cheapskate while we are frugal. Saul observed the whole world but he had a blind spot for himself. And on and on we go.

Knowing and not knowing. That's the key, dear friends. On some level we know ourselves. But it's easier to not know. That's the human way. But denial

doesn't lead to personal improvement. Of all the sage notions about repentance, here is the first one: Let us take a deep and honest look at ourselves.

"Know thyself" is attributed to Socrates. He knew what he was talking about! May the New Year bring more self-awareness and deeper personal improvement to us all. Leslie and I wish everyone a shanah tovah!

Stephen Listfield

### FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings,

It is great to be back home. I have missed my Etz Chayim family. I would like to take this moment to thank my wonderful board for stepping up and taking care of business while I was in Denver. You are a pleasure to work with and very much appreciated. Sometimes we forget that we have people who show up every month, taking time from their very busy days, to keep our synagogue functioning smoothly. These people are planning and contributing in order to get things accomplished.

As usual, our congregation came together to clean up the grounds and building before the High Holidays. Millie and her crew fed our fellow workers, and it was good to see our new and experienced members working together. This month, it will be a pleasure to welcome back Rabbi Listfield and his wife, Leslie. We will have a dairy desert Reception after services on Erev Rosh Hashana, so please bring a kosher dairy/pareve dish to share. We have

made arrangements for the Huntsville Police Department to be present at all of our High Holiday services.

You will start to see many security improvements over the next couple of months. Our Board of Directors and our Security Committee have been working tirelessly to move forward with improving our security so that we will feel more comfortable and safe while attending any event at our synagogue.

I hope that I will have the pleasure of seeing you at the High Holidays, as well as at all of our services.

LASHANA TOVA,

Sandra Wiederecht

### NEW MEMBERS

You may notice a couple of new faces! When you do, please introduce yourselves to Carlos & Nadia Campos. As our newest members, we welcome them to our congregation.

### BOOK CLUB MEMBERS ARE READING LETTERS TO PALESTINIANS

The book club is currently reading "Letters to my Palestinian Neighbor" by Yossi Klein Halevi.

In this powerful series of letters, published in 2018, Dr. Halevi endeavors to untangle the ideological and emotional knot that has defined the Israeli-Palestinian conflict for nearly a century. (The 2019 paperback printing of the book

includes an extensive epilogue of Palestinian responses.)

We'll get together to discuss this book at 11:30 am on Thursday, October 17, at the synagogue, so there's plenty of time for new members to join in.

For more information contact Jon Berger by phone or text at 256-457-0277 or email him at [jonaberger@gmail.com](mailto:jonaberger@gmail.com)

## SISTERHOOD

Ladies,  
I know everyone is busy getting ready for the holidays, and some of them will be over by the time you get this. I want to thank Amy for all the work she did for the movie in August. We had a nice crowd, and I heard the movie and refreshments were really good. I also want to thank those who attended the Lunch Bunch at Kona Grill in September. Once again I was out of town and missed one of my favorite restaurants.

Thanks to all of you who participated in our main fundraiser, the New Year Book. If you placed an entry in it, members will find their books in the foyer near the front door and non-members will receive theirs by mail. We appreciate each entry!

I want to remind you of the Rabbi's Reception on September 29 after services. Please bring a dairy snack already on a plate. If you don't have a kosher platter, you can pick up a plastic plate at the dollar store.

Also please remember our Break-the-Fast. It is a wonderful meal prepared by the Sisterhood and donated by BJ and Bill Brigadier. Please plan to stay for this.

Since we have several new members of the Synagogue, I want to remind the ladies that your membership in the Sisterhood is free the year that you join the Synagogue. You should receive a note about it, but if not, please contact Millie Rosenthal. Also, for the others, it's time to pay your dues. They are still \$18, and we use them to pay for so many things (like the new floor in the entry foyer, the new carpet in the sanctuary, and even to help pay to have the tree branches removed from the roof!)

Natha

## ONEGS

Sep 27	Goodman
Oct 04	Reece/Schindler
Oct 11	Hall
Oct 18	Berry
Oct 25	Lyonnais
Nov 01	Thomason/Kirshtein

## GROUNDS CLEANUP THANKS

We wish to thank those members who came out on a hot September morning to help clean up the Synagogue grounds in preparation for the High Holidays. To Jon Berger, Bill Brigadier, Manya Fuerst, Eric Jackson, Jonathan & Michelle Persons, Charlie Fisher, Fred Kolchin, Natha & Scott Hancock, Lydia Honan, and Gary Hall – you people are the best!

Thanks to Janet Schindler, Shirley Roberts, and Millie Rosenthal for preparing the breakfast for the workers, and to Diana Polin for polishing all the silver and Shirley for cleaning the sanctuary chairs. A special thanks to Millie, for sponsoring the Breakfast.

Max

## DONATIONS

### General Fund

From: Natha & Scott Hancock

From: Janet Schindler  
In Honor of the High Holidays

From: Arlene White  
A generous donation in Honor of the High Holidays

From: Shirley Roberts & Millie Rosenthal  
To: Tatjana Acker, PA – We are thinking about you and hope that the New Year will bring good news to you and your family.

### Rabbi Fund

From: Shirley Roberts  
To: Sue Paddock – Glad your surgery is over and you are starting to feel better.

From: Janet Schindler  
To: Sue Paddock – Glad your surgery is over and you are feeling better.

From: Diana & Howard Polin  
To: Sue Paddock – So glad that you are on the road to recovery!

From: Millie & Max Rosenthal  
To: Sue Paddock- Looking forward to you feeling better and on the road to full recovery.

### Sisterhood Fund

From: Alan Sacks & Family  
To: Sisterhood - Thank you very much for hosting the brunch at my mother's unveiling. The brunch was beautiful and delicious, it was a labor of love. The Sacks family really appreciates all of your loving kindness.

From: Sandra Wiederecht  
To: Sue Paddock – Glad your surgery is over, hope you are feeling much better.

### Outdoor Lighting Fund

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

## UPCOMING EVENTS

For detailed information, please refer to the Etz Chayim Schedule of Services at the end of this publication.

Oct 01 Rosh Hashannah II  
Oct 09 Yom Kippur  
Oct 14 Sukkot begins  
Oct 21 Shmini Atzeret  
Oct 22 Simchat Torah

## BIRTHDAYS

Oct 02 David Wiederecht  
Oct 03 Zev Roberts  
Oct 03 Marc Zelickson  
Oct 03 Ellie Meyer  
Oct 10 Leigh Miller  
Oct 13 Max Rosenthal

Oct 14 David Rosenthal  
 Oct 16 Jonah Roberts  
 Oct 20 Marvin Kalachman  
 Oct 20 Zachary Persons  
 Oct 21 Ethan Hall  
 Oct 21 Frederick Kolchin  
 Oct 23 Paulette Goldstein  
 Oct 23 Marla Polin  
 Oct 24 Thomas Jones  
 Oct 27 Carolyn Palermo

Oct 28 Tishrei 29 Leo Krell  
 Oct 28 Tishrei 29 Rose Natt\*  
 Oct 29 Tishrei 30 Harold Pizitz  
 Oct 31 Cheshvan 02 Adele Krigelman  
 Nov 01 Cheshvan 03 Sarah Golstein\*  
 Nov 01 Cheshvan 03 Sara Osovsky\*  
 Nov 06 Cheshvan 08 Ruth Harris

\* Plaque

\*\*Light Memorial candle sunset of previous evening

### ANNIVERSARIES

Oct 09 Nannette & Gary Schwartz  
 Oct 09 Susan & Larry Levitt  
 Oct 24 Carolyn & Bob Palermo  
 Oct 26 Michelle & Jonathan Persons  
 Oct 27 Millie & Max Rosenthal

### YAHARZEITS\*\*

Sep 30	Tishrei 01	Leon Beck
Oct 01	Tishrei 02	Daniel Flank*
Oct 04	Tishrei 05	Louis B. Lepp*
Oct 05	Tishrei 06	Sylvia Zarovsky
Oct 06	Tishrei 07	Sam Natt*
Oct 06	Tishrei 07	Walter Ford
Oct 07	Tishrei 08	Jerome Gaftman
Oct 08	Tishrei 09	Rose Schindler
Oct 09	Tishrei 10	Harriet Sacks
Oct 09	Tishrei 10	Shirley Irene Jacobs*
Oct 09	Tishrei 10	Zachary Fuerst
Oct 10	Tishrei 11	Murray Rosenthal*
Oct 12	Tishrei 13	Bernard Fisher
Oct 13	Tishrei 14	Terry Lee Green*
Oct 15	Tishrei 16	Capt. Robert Secher*
Oct 19	Tishrei 20	Randy Sacks*
Oct 19	Tishrei 20	Alex Greenbaum
Oct 19	Tishrei 20	Mariam Wertheim
Oct 26	Tishrei 27	Louis Klazmer
Oct 26	Tishrei 27	Steve Sokolow
Oct 27	Tishrei 28	Bella Flank*

### THE MASK, A HIGH HOLIDAYS FABLE

By Ted Roberts

My friend, Herb, likes to get an early start. On the golf course, he stands twenty feet in front of the tee. When he eats out, he brings a drink from home so he doesn't have to wait for a turtle-speed server to bring one. And as the months slip by before the High Holidays, he uses a similar philosophy. Why wait for those awesome ten days to be engraved in the Book of Life? Why not get a head start and begin now in July or August to rack up mitzvah points? And Herb is no minor leaguer when it comes to mitzvahs. So, in early July he gives \$25 to the Rabbis discretionary fund. Later in the month he skips the All Star game on TV to help the kids with their geography homework. He even passes on the Auburn/Tennessee game so he can visit his aging aunt in Memphis. No sacrifice is too much to get a head start on those ten days of awe. He even takes his wife out for supper, and I don't mean kosher hamburgers.

Now, besides his own fate, he's also concerned about his dear wife. Why not teach the same philosophy. No need to wait for Rosh Hashonah. She can begin this very morning. Instead of plain scrambled eggs for breakfast, she can

show her bountiful love for Herb by adding sliced salami and onions to the mix. And better yet, take out the garbage (usually Herb's job). A wife wheeling out a 100-pound garbage can to the street must be mentioned somewhere in the Talmud. But the awesome and admirable thing about Herb is his concern for his wife. He shares his spiritual philosophy with her. Why restrict yourself to ten days? So little time to correct so many moral missteps since last Yom Kippur. If you only pretend to be good – go through the motions – an evil heart that simulates goodness is credible.

A great essayist/philosopher, Max Beerbohm, tells a fable: An evil man lusts after a fair and virtuous maid. But everybody knows he's a world-class philandering louse. And besides this weakness of the flesh, he's a dishonorable, lying, cheating, all 'round nogoodnik. His reputation as a scum bag is so well known that even his naïve beauty of a target is aware of his evil heart.

So, how to seduce the object of his lustful attention? Ah, he's got it!! He'll wear a

mask – a mask that glows with goodness. He'll also trick the world and even his Creator. All who look upon him will admire the radiance of his false face. He wears it so long and he wears it so well that his villainous nature turns saintly. His real face becomes the face of the mask. "The mask worn long enough becomes the man," says Joseph Epstein, who tells us the Beerbohm fable. And maybe the heart too. The ex-sinner throws away the now superfluous mask. It momentarily lies in the grassy meadow – then melts in the rays of the morning sun. Sometimes you become what you pretend to be. And maybe that's good enough.

The syndicated humor of Ted, the Scribbler on the Roof, appears in newspapers around the US, on National Public Radio, and numerous web sites.

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](mailto:shirlr@hiwaay.net)

# Huntsville Conservative Synagogue

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## **L'ShanahTovah!** **High Holy Day Services** **2019 -5780**

### **Rosh Hashanah**

Evening Services & Welcome Rabbi Listfield	Sun	Sept. 29	7:30 p.m.
Morning & Shofar Services	Mon	Sept. 30	9:45 a.m.
Tashlich Service (weather permitting)	Mon	Sept. 30	1:30 p.m.
Evening Services	Mon	Sept. 30	7:30 p.m.
Morning & Shofar Services	Tues	Oct. 1	9:45 a.m.

### **Shabbat Shuvah**

Evening Services	Fri.	Oct. 4	7:30 p.m.
Morning Services	Sat.	Oct. 5	9:45 a.m.

### **Yom Kippur**

KolNidre Service	Tues.	Oct. 8	6:15 p.m.
Morning Services	Wed.	Oct. 9	9:45 a.m.
Torah Services (approximately at)			10:30 a.m.
Mincha, Yizkor & N'ilah Services			5:00 p.m.
Maariv & Final Shofar Blast			7:00 p.m.
Break the Fast Dinner			7:20 p.m.

### **Sukkot**

Build Sukkah Frame at Etz Chayim	Sun.	Oct. 6	10:00 a.m.
Complete & Decorate Sukkah at Etz Chayim	Sun.	Oct.13	10:00 a.m.
Morning Services	Mon-Fri	Oct 14-21	9:45 a.m.
Evening Services	Fri.	Oct.18	7:30 p.m.
Morning Services	Sat.	Oct.19	9:45 a.m.
Hoshanah Rabah Morning Services	Sun	Oct.20	9:45 a.m.
Sukkot Huntsville String Concert & Food Donations	Sun	Oct.20	3:30 p.m.
Kiddush in Etz Chayim Sukkah daily at noon			

### **Shemini Atzeret**

Morning Services	Mon	Oct. 21	9:45 a.m.
Yizkor (approximately at )			11:00 a.m.

### **Simchat Torah**

Evening Congregation Pot Luck Dairy Dinner	Mon.	Oct. 21	5:45 p.m.
Evening Hakafot Services	Mon.	Oct. 21	6:30 p.m.

***"IT IS A TREE OF LIFE TO THEM THAT HOLD FAST TO IT"***