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# the Shofar



Etz Chayim Conservative Synagogue's Monthly Newsletter

MARCH, 2023

ADAR/NISSAN, 5783

For information on joining  
virtual services and events, please see our website:  
<http://www.etzchayim-hsv.org>

## FROM THE RABBI

### Topsy Turvy

Judaism is a rational religion. The holiday of Purim is a challenge to rationality.

Purim means “lots.” The superstitious Haman cast lots in order to augur a time to kill the Jews. He was pleased when his lottery fell on the Hebrew month of Adar. Haman was thrilled: “Adar has no Jewish holidays. What luck for me.” [Note: Thanks to Haman, we now do have a holiday in Adar!]

So Purim means “lots.” But if we re-named the holiday, we might call it Topsy Turvy. Consider the facts. Mordecai has no status of any kind. Haman on the other hand is the prime minister of king Ahashueros. When the king decides to honor a deserving subject, we think that he intends to have Haman paraded around on a horse, with someone like Mordecai pulling the reins. In fact, it's the opposite.

In the topsy turvy world of Purim, a very suitable queen is impulsively deposed. She

is replaced by a demure Jewish girl who will stand forth to save her people.

The starkest topsy turvy event is that Haman prepared a gallows on a tree, in order to hang Mordecai. Guess what? That is the very tree on which Ahashueros orders the hanging of Haman.

Purim is characterized by merriment. But the sober message is that life is like a topsy turvy globe. That's why we wear masks on Purim. What we see isn't what we get. Who knows but that the person on top today won't be swinging from the top of a tree tomorrow? Who knows that the signs of good luck aren't really a portent of misfortune? Or maybe the reverse: Who knows but that when all seems darkest, unexpected light is waiting to burst through?

Once a year a Jew remembers that this world can be very strange. Might as well celebrate while we can. Enjoy the hot dog dinner, enjoy Max's Purim shpiel, and enjoy the holiday itself!

Stephen Listfield

**FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE, A FORM FOR SELLING HAMETZ FOR PASSOVER IS LOCATED AT THE END OF THIS EDITION OF THE SHOFAR. RABBI LISTFIELD WILL NEED TO HAVE IT BY THE MORNING OF APRIL 6.**

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We held a Congregational meeting February 7. The big news is we voted to retain the services of Rabbi Listfield and invite him back for next year. At the last Congregational meeting we said we would examine our financials and make a decision on our dues assessment at the January Board meeting. Following the Treasurer's Report, we announced there would not be a dues increase.

At the February Board meeting, however, we did form a subcommittee to study our income streams and determine possible ways to cover our future expenses. We already have received some donations to cover the cost of a defibrillator and wrist cuff. We also formed a subcommittee to determine how we might introduce live music into the service. We are looking into a new audio system to improve the in-person and virtual experience at Shabbat services.

Last month we encouraged congregation participation during the Rabbi weekend. You showed up in force with almost 100 attendees combined attending the Friday, Saturday and Sunday Shabbaton weekend.

Daylight savings time is just around the corner and begins Sunday, March 12. Be sure to set your clocks so you won't miss the next Rabbi breakfast lunch and learn.

The weather is still making my head spin with sub-freezing lows and highs in the 70s, with weekly temperature changes in late February as much as 50 degrees. Daffodils and cherry blossoms are already being seen around town, so Spring must surely be on its way.

L'shanah Tovah!

Steve Goodman, EC President



## **Come Let's Celebrate Purim**

**Sponsored by:**

**The Etz Chayim Sisterhood  
Monday, Mar. 06 at 5:45pm**

**Costumes encouraged!**

**FREE hot dog supper and beer  
with homemade hamentashen!!**



**Dinner followed by:  
a Purim Spiel (play)**

**Directed: by Max Rosenthal**

## NEW GIFT SHOP CONTACT

EC Sisterhood sponsors the Gift Shop located in the synagogue's foyer. We are grateful for the many volunteer Gift Shop

Chairs who've worked to keep it stocked over the years and for our customers!

Most recently, Donna Lyonnais has done a wonderful job with the Gift Shop responsibilities (along with several other jobs in EC and Sisterhood). Thanks to Donna for several years of her commitment! We're sorry to say she is bowing out of this particular job in order to have more time for other parts of her life.

However, we are very happy to welcome our new Gift Shop Chair, Julie Lindy! From now on, she will be the person to contact for your Judaica. Julie's phone number is 678-908-3454, and [JLindy@comcast.net](mailto:JLindy@comcast.net) is her email.

Please continue to remember the EC Gift Shop for special occasions as well as the usual supplies for a Jewish home.

### SYNAGOGUE BOOK CLUB

The Book Club will meet on Thursday, March 23 at 11:30 to review the tragic case of the execution of Julius & Ethel Rosenberg for spying for the Soviet Union during WW II.

Even if you have not read any of the books about the case, participating with us in the discussion of the events will be a learning experience, and perhaps you have insights to the case we don't have.

So come and join us.

Max

### SISTERHOOD

Hi All,

We have two big events coming up—check out the flyers in this edition of the Shofar.

First, the (FREE) Purim Hot Dog Supper & Purim Shpiel! Come in costume, enjoy the meal, and the Shpiel is bound to be another treat! If that's not enough, we will have homemade hamantaschen! We hope to see you March 6<sup>th</sup> at 5:45 PM. Thanks to our hard-working volunteers for making this a fun night!

Second, we have the EC Community Seder on April 5<sup>th</sup> at 6 PM. Reservations are required, so make yours right away by sending your check (MADE PAYABLE TO EC SISTERHOOD), and remember to choose your entrée when making your reservation. We must give our numbers to the caterer by March 13, so mail in your reservations early! The cost is as follows:  
-Adults (13 and up), \$45 each  
-Children (5-12), \$22 each  
-Young children (4 and under), free

We hope you'll join us for this big community event. Again, thanks to the many volunteers who will do so much to bring this together.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

- |           |  |
|-----------|--|
| Mar 06    | Fast of Esther is from dawn until dusk                       |
| Mar 06    | Purim Hot Dog Supper & Purim Shpiel, 5:45 PM                 |
| Mar 07    | Purim  |
| Mar 10-12 | Rabbi Listfield Shabbaton                                    |
| Mar 23    | EC Book Club meets, 11:30                                    |
| Apr 04    | Hametz selling forms sent to Rabbi Listfield by this morning |

Apr 05

Community Seder, 6 PM,  
reservations required.

## DONATIONS

### General Fund

From: Janet Schindler

In Honor of the Etz Chayim membership

From: Millie & Max Rosenthal

To: Nanci & Adam Shafran - Very Happy Anniversary

From: Sandra Maguire

In Honor of the Etz Chayim membership.

From: Natha & Scott Hancock

To: Bill Goldberg - Thank you for leading Maya's baby naming ceremony.

From: Amy Mauldin

In Honor of the Etz Chayim membership.

From: Brenda & Cliff Liles

To: Bill Goldberg - In Honor of Bill being well.

To: Natha & Scott Hancock - In Honor of the Hancock baby naming.

From: Sue & Joe Paddock

A Memorial plaque in Memory of our son. Jeff Paddock.

To: Brenda & Cliff Liles - In Memory of Gladys Liles, Cliff's mother.

To: Rabbi Listfield for a speedy recovery and continued good health.

From: Bridget & Jeff Lovinger

In Honor of our mother, Janet Schindler's 90th birthday.

From: Karen & Bob Feigenblatt

Towards the purchase of a defibrillator.

### Outdoor Lighting Fund

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




**Etz Chayim Seder  
Haggadah Led  
by: Gary Hall**

**Date: Wednesday, April 05, 2023  
Time: 6:00pm  
Location: 7705 Bailey Cove Rd., SE  
Huntsville, AL**

**Price: \$45.00 per adult - children 5-12  
years \$22 .00 (ages 4 and under free)**  
Please make your reservations with your  
choice of entree' and mail a payment no  
later than **March 13**  
to: Brenda Liles at 12 Preserve Loop Rd.,  
Huntsville, AL 35803



**Happy Passover**



**ETZ CHAYIM  
SEDER MENU**

**MAIN COURSE**

Matza Ball Soup  
Gefilte Fish  
Tossed Salad  
Choice of Roast Beef  
or Fillet of Salmon  
Mashed Potatoes with  
Sauteed Onions  
Asparagus & Sweet Carrots

**Dessert**

Fresh Fruit, Sliced Cake or  
Macaroons



## ONEGS

Mar 03 Goodman  
Mar 10 Roberts  
Mar 17 Gettleman/Lyonnais  
Mar 24 Schwartz  
Mar 31 Stora  
Apr 07 Kolchin

## LUNCHEONS

Mar 11 Goodman/Persons  
Mar 12 Lyonnais

## BIRTHDAYS

Mar 01 Jonathan Ralston  
Mar 02 Claudia Cerezo  
Mar 02 Michael Hall  
Mar 03 Myles Johnson  
Mar 08 Millie Rosenthal  
Mar 09 Ginger Nelson  
Mar 20 Maryn Liles  
Mar 22 Julie Lindy  
Mar 25 Sharon Roberts  
Mar 25 Harrison Sacks  
Mar 27 Stephanie Hancock Gerlak

## YAHREZEITS

Feb 26 05 Adar Stanley B. Brown  
Feb 26 05 Adar Benjamin Bierstein  
Feb 27 06 Adar Ted Roberts\*  
Feb 28 07 Adar Helena D'Acosta Weingarden\*  
Feb 28 07 Adar Philip Aronowitz\*  
Feb 28 07 Adar Mary Hoffman Baker\*  
Feb 28 07 Adar Rose Leites\*  
Mar 03 10 Adar Sarah Rachel Schindler  
Mar 06 13 Adar Lou Harrison\*  
Mar 06 13 Adar Max Moiseev\*  
Mar 06 13 Adar Sam Okeon  
Mar 06 13 Adar Joseph Sacks\*  
Mar 07 14 Adar Hannah Rosen

Mar 08 15 Adar Jeffrey Tillman\*  
Mar 09 16 Adar Bernard Flank\*  
Mar 09 16 Adar Goldie Merzon Ludmer\*  
Mar 10 17 Adar Joe Brown  
Mar 10 17 Adar Anna Fleishman  
Mar 11 18 Adar B. H. Ledbetter\*  
Mar 13 20 Adar Cynthia Kopman  
Mar 14 21 Adar Melvin Harris Kirsch\*  
Mar 17 24 Adar Sarah Cantos Honan  
Mar 18 25 Adar Rebecca Sacks\*  
Mar 19 26 Adar Diana Sidel  
Mar 20 27 Adar Rose Freeman  
Mar 20 27 Adar Phillip Makower\*  
Mar 24 02 Nissan Hersh Tzvi Bayers  
Mar 25 03 Nissan Robert Lukin\*  
Mar 29 07 Nissan Paul Schlein\*  
Mar 29 07 Nissan Gertrude Schlein\*  
Mar 30 08 Nissan Morris Wittenstein\*  
Mar 31 09 Nissan Cecile Hollenberg\*  
Apr 01 10 Nissan Irwin Goldstein\*

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

## EC CONGREGANT AND AUBURN ALUMNUS, MARTIN FREEMAN, ESTABLISHES FUND TO COLLECT WORK BY JEWISH ARTISTS

The following, published on October 06, 2022, is from the Office of Communications & Marketing of Auburn University:

Through a major gift to Auburn University, the Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art at Auburn University has established the Martin Moss Freeman '77 Fund for Excellence in memory of Shirley and Dr. Alfred Freeman.

Administrators will use funds to acquire work by Jewish artists, and artists currently in the collection include Diane Arbus, Marc Chagall, Louise Nevelson and Ben Shahn. New acquisitions and more than 3,000 objects support the fluid exchange of ideas

through exhibitions and collection studies by faculty and students.

“The Jule’s collection spans 16th to 21st centuries,” said Aaron Levi Garvey, the museum’s Janet L. Nolan Director of Curatorial Affairs. “As its stewards for our statewide constituents, we recognize gaps in representation. Because of great investments like Mr. Freeman’s, we ensure that Jewish artists’ vital contributions to the arts and humanities narrative are a significant part of student and faculty work at Auburn.”

Garvey added that the university collection currently features work by 18 Jewish artists, many of whom are deceased.

“A foundation of the collection includes works from Advancing American Art, a historical survey of modernists, many of whom were Jewish and immigrants,” he said. “The goal of this fund is to bolster the collection with living artists such as Paul Weiner, Rachel Libeskind and Talia Levitt, among others, but also those within the artist community and their respective careers who have made significant strides such as Eva Hesse, Judy Chicago and Sol Lewitt, to name but a few.”

Martin Moss Freeman hails from Miami Beach, Florida, where he grew up thinking all universities had art museums because of his regular visits to the University of Miami’s Lowe Art Museum. As an Auburn student, he was surprised to learn that there was no place on campus to exhibit the important Advancing American Art collection regularly. Today, he serves on the museum’s advisory board, as well as regularly participates in charitable giving at the university.

In addition to his family’s early exposure to

museums through visitation and volunteerism, their influence extended to service and philanthropy in higher education during one’s lifetime to witness the difference that investments can make.

Shirley and Alfred Freeman made legacy gifts to their alma mater, Temple University, including contributions to the Schools of Education and Medicine. They believed strongly in education and that everything they became was an extension of their education.

“Martin Freeman’s generosity and service on our advisory board exemplify the example set by his beloved late parents,” said Cindi Malinick, executive director of Auburn’s museum. “By expanding the collection in this area, Auburn students receive a complete and well-rounded education, scholarly research is enhanced locally and nationally, and the collection’s reach extends far beyond our walls through loans and campus partnerships.”

Located on Auburn’s campus, the Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art is the cultural heart of an Alabama public research institution serving students, faculty and the constituents of the Southeast. The university art collection includes works spanning the 16th to 21st centuries and is comprised of photographs, works on paper depicting the South, ceramics and Southern visionary art. For more, visit [www.jcsm.auburn.edu](http://www.jcsm.auburn.edu).

Submitted by: Charlotte Hendrix



This piece, titled "Hunger," was painted by artist Ben Shahn (1898-1969) in 1948 and is part of the Advancing American Art Collection acquired by the Jule Smith Collins Museum of Fine Art at Auburn University through the 1948 Advancing American Art acquisition.

## CHILDREN CHEER FOR PURIM

By Ted Roberts, (1930-2020), the *Scribbler on the Roof*



On a cloudless, heavenly morning, well before the Almighty turned the dust of the earth into man, He announced the Holydays to the assembled Heavenly

Hosts. The angels listened solemnly, especially to Yom Kippur. And after a few moments of meditation, they burst into a perfectly sublime harmonious Hallelujah. The Holydays were fashioned; a string of pearls to decorate creation.

There was Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur for the pious and meditative; Tu B'Shevat for the nature lovers; Simchat Torah for the joyous chasids; Chanukah for the chauvinists. Passover pleased several groups; the bright-eyed lovers of matzoh balls, and the historically minded. Yes, all the angels and cherubim and sages yet to be, thundered a mighty "Amen" as the Almighty announced the holiday lineup. All except one, that is. One

of the younger angels – his wings still fluffy with down.

"What about the children?" he blurted out. "What about a holiday for the children? It should be a happy day of games and of course, some special delectable food. And most of all, NOISE. It should be the one day in the year when kids may shout to their hearts content without a giant, adult hand muffling their mouths."

Herb may be right. Esther is one of the great triumvirates of Jewish heroines. Her two sister heroines are, who else? The militant Yael and Judith. The latter two you'll recall, dispatch two of Israel's enemies to that special Gehenna where Amalekites sing Hatikvah on our holidays. This daring, dynamic duo was simple straight shooters like Annie Oakley. But Esther – ah there's a woman of subtlety as well as valor. You won't find Hadassah ruining her manicure with tent pegs or swords. She's behind the scenes orchestrating, scheming, directing. Totally invisible to her antagonists, she's the ghostess with the mostest, you might say. Once Cousin Mordechai alerts her to the peril facing her people, she swings into action. Two lavish banquets – not one, but two – she throws for the king; and Hamen of all people. It's the first Purim Oneg. And although the megillah does not spell out the menu, I'm sure Esther laid out a nice Kosher spread with plenty of Persian slivovitz and followed by platters of those crisp, little layered honey cakes. Esther's eyes caress the king – those succulent cakes melt in his mouth. They're eating high on the Challah, so to speak. The Holy One listened with compassionate attention. Then he pronounced, "Yes, I shall invent a happy day just for the children. I shall create a historical situation that seems destined for tragedy, but at the last minute dissolves into deliverance.

(“Just like the Red Sea and the Exodus,” whispered the excited Heavenly Hosts in unison.) There shall be the essence of evil in the form of a tyrant. (Good, thought the angels – even children must know about evil.) And the young shall eat triangular cakes and shout as loud as they like at the evil name.” (“If they’re going to be loud and noisy, they may as well holler at evil,” said the Hallelujah Chorus.)

So, on the festival Megillah – the great scroll of the holidays, HE who made time itself, inscribed Purim. A holiday for children.

My friend, Herb, a childlike celebrant who’d swap two Passovers and a Chanukah for one Purim, says that if Purim occurred daily, he’d attend Shul – all year round – as faithfully as the Ner Tamid – the eternal light that shines on the Bema. Purim’s got it all, says Herb. “A love story like Ruth, but spiced with suspense. And all the joy of Simchas Torah, with a plot line.”

Hamen, the quintessential Amalekite – Hitler, in a warp of time, sits in a corner daydreaming of the gibbet for the Jew, Mordechai. Esther, the supplicant who fantasizes a special gehenna for Hamen in which he eternally grates potatoes for all the Chanukahs yet to come, pleads with the king for her people, Israel. She gazes tearfully at the king like he’s a titanic honey cake. In the background, we can almost hear a silvery “Taps” – with a klesmer lilt – for Hamen the Aagegite.

My good friend, Herb, loves to hear this Megillah. As I say, he’s a Purim regular. There he is – every year with his own gragar – just like the Minyon Club members have their own Tallis and Tefillum. And he’s carrying one of those neat, silvery hip flasks just to make sure he obeys the Talmudic injunction to be sufficiently zonked so you can’t tell Hamen from Mordechai. Over the whole year –

613 mitzvah opportunities available to him – this is Herb’s finest moment of observance.

Well, I love Purim as much as Herb. On what other holiday can you make obnoxious noises and even talk more than the rabbi without being shushed. I guess, like Herb, I’m a Purim Jew.

### HAMETZ SELLING FORM

Shtar Harsha’ah ~ Authorization to Sell Hametz

I, the undersigned, empower Rabbi Stephen Listfield to act in my behalf to sell all hametz possessed by me and my household – knowingly or unknowingly – as defined by Torah law. This transaction takes effect Tuesday morning, April 4 at 11:30 am and will be in effect for the duration of Pesach.

Signature

Name (print)

Home Address