

Atidaynu* News

by Sheehan Rosen

*Atidaynu means "our future."

The Chanukah party was a huge success! There were lots of new faces at Har Shalom, glitter covered the craft room floor, and latkes and brisket were enjoyed by all. The kids had a great time and we all went home full and very happy.

As we head into winter, the children in Atidaynu are settling into their projects and studies. Most classes are "late to snack" because they are so involved in their work and discussions. Sometimes we combine groups for games and crafts, but mostly our smaller peer groups are actively engaged in their own discoveries of history, art and culture. As the kids open up to each other, share their ideas and creativity, we see some very precious bonds being made.

The younger Hebrew classes have picked up the pace and we have a number of children moving into higher levels. Our classes are much more focused this year and our kids are working hard and helping each other to learn. Obviously that work is really paying off.

This is shaping up to be one of the most interesting and successful years for Atidaynu; thank you, parents, for your continued support of Har Shalom and your children's Jewish education!



A note from the Editor, Pat Cohen

The holidays have passed and we're getting back to what we call our 'normal lives'. There have been national tragedies recently that held our attention during this season of hope. Laurie Franklin addresses the successes she sees growing within our community. Rabbi Whiman responds to the tragedy this nation has experienced. This reflects the Jewish characteristic, facing the painful reality of the world while looking for the good that also exists. I'm sure there's a Yiddish word for that. –PC.

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN by Bert Chessin

Generosity abounds at this time of year, and we grieve for all the broken families, hearts, and lives that puncture our reservoir of compassion and patience. We so easily connect with people across the country and around the world as we hear of tragedy near and far. Yet, do we know our neighbors more than to say "Good day" or "Happy holiday"? It is often easier to connect with people through internet or a television show.

We live in good places and we have more comfortable lives than many can imagine. Yes, we have cold weather, smoky skies, and long gray stretches of weather, but what is important is the fabric of community to warm and enliven our days. Congregation Har Shalom and our Western Montana community have a remarkable record of fighting the elements and finding ways to brighten the eyes, quicken the step, and smooth rough waters.

So, what does all this have to do with what is happening over the next few months? Well, we continue with the wonderful energy found on Atidaynu Sundays, with the mix of services, classes and holidays. Tu B'Shevat, our holiday that centers on trees, ecology, and from the kabbalistic tradition the "tree of life", has been observed with the children at Atidaynu the past several years. Now we are widening the experience to include the whole community and if you think a seder occurs on Pesach only, think again. January 25 is our Tu B'Shevat seder date. Then, on February 23 we remember Esther of Shushan and try to forget Haman as we welcome everyone to our Purim party. Look for additional information further down in this newsletter. Additional plans for Passover and Holocaust Remembrance Day are in the works for dates that follow the next equinox.

Each of these threads, made up of strong and bright materials, help us to weave the rugs that we walk on and the embracing shawls that connect us.

LAURIE'S LETTER by Laurie Franklin, Student Rabbi and Spiritual Leader

Ch-ch-changes

"Time may change me..." –David Bowie

American Jews live with two distinct New Years: the Jewish New Year, Rosh Hashanah, on the Hebrew calendar date 1 Tishrei and the secular calendar New Year on January 1. Today, near the transition from secular 2012 to 2013, I reflect on our Jewish community through the lens of the Jewish New Year, and in particular, I think about change.

Sometimes, change happens slowly, and from day to day, we don't notice a difference. As weeks and months pass, all the little increments add up. One day we wake up and feel the shift. We've changed.

This is what I see and sense at Har Shalom. Every act of kindness, every gesture of connection, every bit of learning, every prayer, every shared meal is slowly and steadily turning us into a stronger community. Although we come to Har Shalom for a multiplicity of reasons, in

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The Har Shalom newsletter is written entirely by volunteers. Submissions are always welcome.

Next deadline: Feb. 17 for Mar/Apr '13 Issue

LAURIE'S LETTER *(continued from first page)*

this past year, we have created fertile, new common ground. That new common ground consists of our shared experiences and our shared desire to foster Jewish life in Missoula.

We are making room for all kinds of people: people who like to dig in and be central to the effort of creating community, people who step in for special events and projects, and people who are just happy to know we are here. Our relationships are growing, so we care more about taking care of each other. Our leadership is growing because people continue to step forward to lead services and other spiritual growth activities, provide festive food, mount holiday events, make opportunities for learning, provide financial support, and volunteer to serve greater Missoula community needs. Our congregation is growing because new members have made a commitment to be part of the Jewish people. Our youth education program is growing because more parents are sending their children to us; the children are our future, and we love their energy, enthusiasm, and challenging questions.

In short, we can affirm that all the events of the past year amount to something. I am proud and honored to be part of a lively, good-hearted and GROWING community of Jewish Montanans at Har Shalom. We are making holy community together, and I feel it all the way across the Atlantic and Mediterranean! May our community be blessed for good in the coming year.

THOUGHTS by Rabbi David Whiman

Rabbi Whiman is offering the words he spoke right after the shooting at Newtown, Conn., spoken at the start of services on the Seventh Night of Chanukah, Erev Shabbat, December 14, 2012.

Again this night we gather in the shadow that has fallen upon our land. Again we are forced to contemplate the callous slaughter of those cut down before their time. This night we are obliged to wonder at the senseless violence that erupts all too frequently in our cities and towns. Tonight there is an awareness of an evil tragic enough to break the heart. But in faith we affirm that there is still compassion and goodness and love enough never to surrender to it. Tonight there is such bruising sadness, such wrenching pain.

This is a season of light and rejoicing, of joy to the world and peace on earth goodwill to men, of miracles and wonders, and an enduring rededication to all that is high and holy in creation. How dare this season be so profaned by the violence we encountered today. May the Sabbath candles we kindle tonight be lights of shalom and our Chanukah candles beacons of hope.

In an hour of inexplicable tragedy, there is often a rush to explanation and a search for redemptive meaning, an all too premature call for healing. Tonight before we greet the Sabbath day let us first sit with our pain and honor the memory of the innocents in the silence of this room. May it be a sanctuary where the best of our humanity is remembered and reaffirmed with renewed purpose. As we raise the cup and recall a creation that was intended to be *to v'm'od*, very good, let us also hold the grieving families of Newtown in our hearts and prayers.

Oseh shalom b'imromav—May the One who causes peace to reign in the high heavens cause peace to descend on us, on all Israel, on the good people of Newtown and on all the world.

Family Promise HOST WEEK FEBRUARY 10 – 17

Since the opening of Missoula Family Promise last May, Har Shalom has helped to house seven families. Through their own efforts and with the support of the Family Promise program, these families have been able to move to transitional and/or permanent housing.

Our next host opportunity is the week of February 10 to 17. We will work with University Congregational Church, First Christian Church, and Missoula Friends. Families will stay at UCC during this week. We need people to help with the following:

- **Evening Hosts (5:30 – 8:30)** Evening hosts eat dinner and visit with guests. After dinner, hosts might play with children, or help with homework (parents are present), continue visiting, help organize an activity (i.e., making valentines).

- **Overnight Hosts (8:30 PM – 7:15AM)** Overnight hosts pick up from evening hosts with visiting, homework, etc. Hosts help guests straighten up at the end of the evening. Hosts sleep in their own room at the church, wake guests at 6:00 AM, and set out a simple breakfast (food is provided).

- **Dinner Cooks** Dinner cooks work as part of a group to bring part of a meal for the families and hosts. Food can be prepared ahead of time or cooked at UCC. Meals are served buffet/family style. Cooks often eat with the guests. After dinner, cooks are asked to help clean up and leave the kitchen ready for the next day.

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Hebrew Lessons continue Wednesday, January 2

We've got the letters learned, now onward to words. Holly Kingsford will continue Hebrew lessons using language books borrowed from the Har Shalom library. Join her every Wednesday at 7pm this January and February (better than Bingo).

Dead Sea Scrolls class begins Sat., Feb. 9 at 1 pm

We are proud to offer a class about The Dead Sea Scrolls. We will be using a DVD and book that has twenty-four, 1/2 hour lectures by Professor Gary A. Rendsburg Ph.D. He holds the Blanche and Irving Laurie Chair in Jewish history in the Department of Jewish Studies at Rutgers University.

The course will run for 13 weeks, every Saturday afternoon (except the first Saturday of each month), beginning Feb. 9th, at 1 p.m. at Har Shalom. *(The dates for the class are as follows: Feb. 9th, 16th and 23rd; March 9th, 16th, 23rd and 30th; April 13th, 20th and 27th; and May 11th, 18th and 25th.)*

It will be open to the public and Har Shalom members. Class cost: Members \$18, Non-members \$60. Each week we will watch two 1/2 hour lectures, each followed by a discussion. The last class will be a celebration of completion and a discussion of the overall course.

If you have any questions or are interested in attending this class, please call Toba Winston, 406-531-9620 or email at tobawinston@hotmail.com

Purim Party Sat., Feb. 23

Our Community Seder is scheduled for the evening of March 27—the first in a long time without Laurie as our leader.

Our haggadah needs reviewing and revising and we call on all poets and writers and artists to help us create an even more wonderful experience.

We are planning a new template for the dinner—more home-made foods and less catering—to make it affordable and community-based. Love food? Come help!

Please email info@har-shalom.org or call Kate Soukonnikov at 549-0503 to talk more and share your ideas!

FAMILY PROMISE (continued)

Supply Bringers

We will have a list of specific supplies needed during our host week, and are very grateful to those of you who are able to shop for our guests.

If you are interested in learning more or volunteering for any of these jobs, please contact Robin Abeshaus at 542-7535 or robinabeshaus@gmail.com. You can also contact Robin if you have questions or would just like to know more about the Family Promise program.

Tu B'Shevat FRIDAY, JANUARY 25

"And when you shall come into the land, and shall have planted all manner of trees..."

—Leviticus, 19:23

Tu B'Shevat, celebrated on the 15th of Shevat (January 26 this year), celebrates the fourth 'new year' of the Hebrew calendar, commemorating Jewish ties to the land. In Israel this day falls in early spring, generally a time of rains.

In the land of Israel, in the early 1900's a movement to promote the development of Jewish farming began. Planting trees became a new way of celebrating Tu B'Shevat in Israel. School children were encouraged to collect money for trees and to help in the planting.

A plot of land between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv was selected to become a woodland, part of this "redeeming lands" movement. A fund was promoted for the purpose of planting olive trees in this area. It became the Herzl Forest and is populated with a variety of trees: pines, china berry, cypress and pepper trees, casuarinas, sycamores, plums, tamarisks, carobs, dates, and olive trees—one manifestation of the celebration of Tu B'Shevat.

For Jews outside of Israel, Tu B'Shevat is a celebration of the renewal of vision and awareness, a celebration of connections and connectedness—to our own inner-selves, to the social world of human beings, and to the natural world and its Source.

Modeled on the Passover seder, the Tu B'Shevat seder includes drinking four cups of wine (grape juice!) with varying percentages of red and white "wine". A variety of fruits and nuts are also enjoyed surrounded by songs and readings. Join us at Har Shalom on Friday.

From the Har Shalom Library by Toba Winston

Unorthodox: The Scandalous Rejection of My Hasidic Roots a memoir by Deborah Feldman (New York Times Bestseller)

This is a true memoir written by Deborah Feldman, born into a strictly religious Hasidic sect named after a Christian Saint. Satu Mare (Hungarian for Saint Mary) or Satmar in Yiddish is a city on the border of Hungary and Romania. During World War II the local rabbi was rescued and later immigrated to the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn, New York. He amassed a large following of other survivors, and formed a Hasidic sect named after his home town in an effort to preserve the memory of the communities that had been wiped out in the Holocaust.

Many Hasidic Jews in America donned traditional dress and spoke only Yiddish. Many opposed the creation of the state of Israel, believing that the genocide was a punishment for assimilation and Zionism. They focused on reproduction to replace the many who perished, the ultimate revenge against Hitler.

In this insular world, Deborah was raised by customs that governed what she could wear, to whom she could speak and what she could read. She was taught that women were not capable of independent thought. But she stole moments in public libraries, secretly reading about the literary characters of Louisa May Alcott, Jane Austin, and other characters that allowed her to imagine alternative ways of life and to eventually have the strength to break away from that world. She tells a compulsively readable, candid, and fascinating story that provides an unprecedented view of what it was like growing up inside this community and what it was like to escape from it.

Todah Rabah

To service leaders the past two months: **Laura Winston, Dave Jolles, Holly Kingsford and Trent Lowenstein.** To the First Saturday Shabbat leaders and speakers and contributors: **Bruce Barrett, Holly Kingsford, Trent Lowenstein, Marc Steinberg, Clare Bayer, Caroline Temple, Jessica Weltman, Matt Semanoff, Barb Gross, Toba Winston, Matt Erikson, Bendremer Wozniak family, and Adair Kanter.** To **Marc Steinberg** for donated miles to Rabbi David's flights from New York and for organizing Onegs. For hosting the wonderful Chanukah Party: **Maeta Kaplan and Ed Rosenberg,**

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Yahrzeits

The Yahrzeit is the Hebrew-calendar anniversary of a loved one's death. The Hebrew date is invariant and is computed on the basis of the day and time of the deceased's passing, but the corresponding civil calendar date changes each year.

In the list below, the Hebrew date appears listed first, followed by the current year's civil date in parentheses. Yahrzeit candles are traditionally lit the evening before the specified date because the Jewish day begins at sunset of the previous day. At Har Shalom, we read our congregants' Yahrzeits and recite the Mourner's Kaddish at the Shabbat service before the Hebrew calendar Yahrzeit date.

If you would like to add a Yahrzeit to the Har Shalom list, please contact our office at 549-9595 or email info@har-shalom.org.

TEVET

24 (January 6) Leonard Moon
Julie Moon's husband, Bei Ruetten's father, Madison and Julia Ruetten's grandfather

24 (January 6) Clemence Klein
Lance Klein's father

28 (January 10) Beatrice Nashel
Elizabeth Howard's grandmother

28 (January 10) Marcia Fields
Robbin Kusia's mother

SHEVAT

14 (January 25) Harold Lurie
Diana Lurie's father

17 (January 28) George Shulman
Joy Earls' father

20 (January 31) Sharon Auerbach,
Richard Auerbach's wife

21 (February 1) Lillian Shapiro
Tuchinsky
Toba Winston's mother, Laura Winston's grandmother

ADAR

2 (February 12) Michael Hendricks
Z'Eva Singer's husband

2 (February 12) Frank Spector
Ellen Silverglat's father

3 (February 13) Ethel Cohen
Jackie Cohen's mother

3 (February 13) Albert Belsky
Jill Belsky's father

5 (February 15) Peter Weil
Susanne Woyciechowicz's uncle

14 (February 24) Victor Tevah
Anita Aronofsky's father

14 (February 24) William Rosenberg
Ed Rosenberg's father

Donations and Tributes

We are grateful to our current and past contributors. Every donation, regardless of size, is deeply appreciated. Making tributes and memorials is a wonderful way to honor someone and support the Jewish community.

To make a donation, pay membership dues or religious school fees, visit us online at har-shalom.org and click on the "NEW: Make secure credit card payments here" link. Or, use your bank's FREE "Bill Pay" feature. Or mail your payment to Har Shalom at PO Box 3715, Missoula 59806. Please specify the intention of your donation: Memorial; Honor; Membership; Capital Campaign; school, camp, or special event fee. If you use a credit card, please consider adding 2% to your donation to cover our credit card fees.

General Donations

Melissa Baggett
David Jolles
Daniel Reisenfeld
Matthew Semanoff and
Jessica Weltman
Sue Silverberg and
Jerry Knuchel

Honors and Memorials

Jack Cohen—in memory of Joseph Cohen
Jack Cohen—in memory of Jacob Cohen
Reisa Kahn and George Masnick—in memory of
Mollye Davis Kahn
Peter Rosten—in honor of Laura Winston

Capital Loan Reduction—Carolyn Goren

Capital Campaign Donations

Matthew Semanoff and Jessica Weltman

A "Thank you" for Rabbi David

Har Shalom has a "Rabbi David Fund" to which anyone may donate in thanks or honor to Rabbi David Whiman. Checks may be sent to Har Shalom, PO Box 3715, Missoula, MT 59806. Please mark "Rabbi David Fund" on your check.



TODAH RABAH (continued)

for coordinating, **Bob Marshall and crew, Sherry and Richard Kolenda, Trina Valencich, and Jack Cohen** for latkes, **Charlie Byrne and Alice** for storytelling, **Sonia Chessin, Bert Chessin, Jeff Bendremer, Paul Rosen, Laura Hibbs, and Lizzi Juda** for live music, **Jake Koplen, Hannah Fradken, Ellie Bendremer, Sol Bendremer, Anna Kalm, Jody Jakob and Hannah Jakob** for craft activities, **the Rosen family, the UM Hillel association** for dreidel "mastering", **Pat Cohen, Dan Wilcox and Erin Craney** for set up, **Lisa Carter** for help with clean-up, and everyone who contributed to the potluck lunch. And our appreciation to anyone who gave their time and energy but whose name may inadvertently been left off this list.

Support Har Shalom with a tax-free gift from your IRA by Toba Winston

Looking for the way to make the most tax-effective gift to Har Shalom? Congress recently extended a law that allows people 70½ or older to make tax-free charitable gifts using funds transferred directly from their IRAs. You can transfer up to \$100,000 through the end of the year.

Every donation, large or small, is greatly appreciated. To learn more, contact Har Shalom's Treasurer.

Every circumstance is different; Har Shalom is not giving out tax advice. Each potential donor should consult a personal tax professional before making an IRA transfer to Har Shalom.



P.O. Box 3715, Missoula, MT 59806

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED