



The Shofar

May - June, 2023

Congregation House of Israel

10 Iyar - 11 Tammuz, 5783



Shavuot

May 26

The Book of Ruth

Thank You

We would like to thank the following donors (as of April 20, 2023)

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In honor of the 40th anniversary of Lou and Susan Siegel

Sheldon and Carol Kleinman

In memory of Sheldon's brother, Irwin Kleinman

In memory of Carol's grandmother, Annie Marcus

In memory of Sheldon's mother, Nancy Kleinman

In honor of the 40th anniversary of Lou and Susan Siegel

The Shofar

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Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience

By Sherrill Nicolosi

In the 1980's, Macy B. Hart founded a museum dedicated to exploring how Jews across the Southern United States were influenced by their southern communities, and the impact and influence they, Jews, had on their surroundings. The Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience was originally established in 1986 in Utica, Mississippi, in the URJ Henry S. Jacobs Camp, the Jewish children's camp where many of our Congregants and their children (and now grandchildren) attended.

In 2021, the Museum (MSJE) was relocated to 818 Howard Avenue in New Orleans, LA., in the heart of NOLA's Arts District. It is a beautiful museum housing more than 4,000 artifacts, archival items, and collections representing the history of Jews from thirteen American States: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia. Included are areas of the museum called the Four Galleries. Gallery One is devoted to exhibits about colonial history and Jewish immigration to the South, the Civil War, and com-

merce of the early times in the Southern States. Gallery One includes an exhibit called the Jewish Ladies Sewing Circle Crazy Quilt.

Gallery Two depicts elements of the Jewish life cycles, holidays, traditions, and displays of sacred texts and items, including The Delta Cotton Tallit.

Gallery Three looks at the Southern Jew's perspectives concerning the Holocaust, the Civil Rights Movement, and other historical events that involved and influenced Jews in America and world-wide.

Gallery Four houses temporary exhibits and events sponsored and or held in MSJE, including a Mardi Gras bagel festival.

One display, a portrait of Regina Kaplan (1887-1957), provides visitors with her history as Superintendent of the Levi Hospital in Hot Springs, where she assisted in opening the first nursing program in the South to admit men. She was a respected member of CHI's Board of Directors.

MSJE is a not-to-be-missed adventure for Jews and others interested in the history of Southern Jews.

Reb Shelly's Desk



The festival of Shavuot used to be the day on which the Jews brought their first fruits to the Temple. The fact of the matter is, ever since the destruction of the Temple, there is no specific ritual associated with this holiday ... no shofar, no succah, no matzah; seemingly nothing

at all. But if there are no Biblically dictated traditions for this day, there are many customs that have become associated with this festival. Let me tell you a couple to help prepare you for the celebration.

There is the custom of reading the Book of Ruth; and again there are lots of explanations. The Hebrew word "Ruth" has the numeric value of 606. She, as a non-Jew, was already observing the seven noahide laws and in accepting the Torah, she was taking upon herself another 606 mitzvot to equal the 613 given at Sinai. Another explanation is that Ruth was the forerunner of King David who, according to tradition, died on Shavuot. Then there is the thought that the Book of Ruth takes place, historically, at this time of the year. Others say this Book, being the story of loving kindness, is just as the Torah which "begins and ends with acts of loving kindness."

There is something else we do that is not written in any of the codes. We don't do it as a synagogue; we do it as a community. It's a modern innovation that is connected to Shavuot. We name hospitals after Mt. Sinai. Did you ever wonder why there is a Sinai Hospital in New York, and Detroit and Milwaukee and California and Florida. Why is that? What's the connection between Sinai and hospitals?

It all goes back to that first Shavuot. When the Jews stood at Sinai a miracle happened. They were all healed. According to the words of the Midrash:

"When Israel came out of Egypt the vast majority of them were afflicted with some blemish. Why? Because they had been working in clay and bricks and climbing to the tops of buildings. Those who were engaged on building became maimed through climbing to the top of the layers of stone; either a stone fell and cut off the worker's hand, or a beam or some clay got into his eyes and he was blinded. When they came to the wilderness of Sinai, God

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said: "Is it consonant with the dignity of the Torah that I should give it to a generation of cripples? If, on the other hand, I wait until others take their place, I shall be delaying the Revelation." What, then, did God do? He bade the angels come down to Israel and heal them."

Ever since, Sinai and healing go hand-in-hand in our tradition.

Israel @ 75 - Forging the Path Together

By Rabbi Jost Weinberg

In November 2006, I set out with a pack on my back to walk the Land. I knew that before I took up arms as my contribution to defending the Jewish State (which, in my case, came more in the form of office work, giving lectures and education, and guard duty), I wanted a more intimate relationship with the Land and with this country that I had made my home. I wanted to feel the topographical diversity, the geological variety, and encounter the bucolic and biblical terrain of this Old-New Land. Following the biblical mandate to “Rise, walk about the Land through its length and its breadth, for to you I will give it,” (Genesis 13:17[1]) I began my journey.

Shvil Yisrael (The Israel Trail) is a 1,025-kilometer (636.9 mi) concatenation of hiking trails, going from the North of the country in Tel Dan to the shores of the Red Sea south of Eilat. Fashioned in 1995 after the Appalachian trail, “the Shvil,” as it is popularly known, has significantly gained in popularity over the years, where some see it as a rite of passage to walk the whole thing. Many more take it in strides and break it into 2–3-day segments or weekly trips.

I embarked on this adventure with the hopes of discovering a Land, a people, and a bit more of myself. In my too-full pack, I (probably foolishly) stuffed 4 books: a TaNaKh and siddur (of course), the Israel Trail guidebook (this was pre-smart-phone and tablet), and Meir Shalev’s 1988 debut historical novel “□□□□ □□□□” / “Blue Mountain,” (gifted to me for the occasion) about the pioneering tradition that led to the birth of the State of Israel. More than the guidebook, and even more than the TaNaKh, Shalev’s masterpiece told the stories and hardships of those who came to fulfill their dreams and provided poetic captioning for the serene scenery that came before my eyes and under my feet and held true to the nourishing rootholds of the Land. This lyrical novel transcends time and place, touching on issues of universal relevance, showcasing the skill of Shalev as a master storyteller who never failed to leave us with his social commentary.

And leave us, he did, this week a few months shy

of this 75th birthday. Meir Shalev was not only a great novelist, bible junkie, masterful Hebraist, and author of dozens of children’s books, he was a symbol of the State of Israel. Born in the first Moshav Nahalal, Shalev was a combat soldier in the War of Attrition and the Six-Day War and a stalwart of modern Hebrew literature. President Yitzhak Herzog eulogized him:

“He was a man with a spirit, whose homeland and our history as a society, as a people, and as a nation, pulsed in each of his words.”

Shalev never held back his political commentary and criticism. In 2019, commenting on the Likud-led government of PM Benjamin Netanyahu at the time, Shalev said:

“Forty years after Likud came to power, they’re still whining about the left-wing elites. Who’s getting in their way from carrying out their political ideas? Likud always said that Judea and Samaria [the West Bank] was the legacy of our forefathers. Why doesn’t Netanyahu annex it? He’s concerned, he’s afraid. This man isn’t capable of making a major decision – toward the right or toward the left. He’s simply not constituted for major decisions.”

Is Shalev’s passing symbolic of something more than him as an icon? Does Shalev’s passing highlight the passing of his generation and in service of a new and different Israeli ethos?

In his 75 years, Meir Shalev represents one prototype of the Israeli ethos. He was the quintessential farmer-warrior-poet whose life spanned the State’s first 75 years. He was a secular Jew who knew the Bible inside and out but abhorred religious coercion and zealotry.

He had no problem taking up arms to defend the country but acknowledged that today he would not want his service to contribute to the defense of Jewish settlements in the West Bank and the ongoing occupation of the Palestinian people.

Is the Israel represented by Meir Shalev slowly fading into oblivion? As Israel laid Shalev to rest, is there hope that those who could be defined as liberal Zionists have a future?

Some would say that Shalev represented the Ashkenazi secular elite, those descended from the establishment personas and known as people of “culture” and letters. They have a platform and are respected, and theirs are by and large the values and principles that determined the rules of governance for the State.

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Sisterhood



The final Sisterhood meeting of the year will take place on Monday, May 1st.

In that meeting we will transition into the summer months and shift leadership for the upcoming year.

Glenda Kirsch will be our new president and without question, lead us with insight and enthusiasm.

We are so fortunate to have a committed group of ladies offering strength and commitment, year after year within our congregation. As the outgoing president, I am grateful for their support these past few years as we weathered the many challenges presented during the pandemic. We are a wonderful tapestry of individuals, each committed to the endurance of our faith and our congregational community.

May we continue our work to keep our congregation strong and make our world a better place over the summer months. With our heart, with our soul, with our spirit may we return in the fall and under Glenda's leadership, continue supporting our CHI Sisterhood.

Patti

Mazel Tov



Patti and Mark Fleischner are pleased to share the happy news of their daughter **Mattea's** recent marriage to **Nigel Thompson**, of Snowmass Village, Colorado.

The couple were married at a private beachside ceremony officiated by Rabbi Richard Chapin, in El Sargento, Baja California Sur, Mexico surrounded by close friends and family.

The couple have many passions in common including hiking and mountain biking in Snowmass Village, Colorado (where they are based), and kite surfing and wing foiling in La Ventana, Mexico, where they spend several months during the winter.

We wish them much love, health and happiness as they embark on their life journey together.

L'Chaim!

Mazel Tov



On April 1, Lou and Susan Siegel celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary surrounded by friends and family. Our thanks to Cooper Bull for providing us with the photos of the happy couple.

ARZA - World Union

Continued from page 4

The hundreds of thousands of people coming out to protest the coalition government's radical legislative proposals over the past 3 months, who are unequivocally advocating and fighting for the liberal democratic Israel they believe in, preserving the state's Jewish character, safeguarding basic human rights and dignity, and not coerced by zealous ultra-Orthodox and ultra-Nationalist leaders, would hint that their liberal Zionist ethos is alive and well despite it being threatened.

Yet, it is important to understand that the symbol of Shalev was only part of the fabric of Israeli society. Israeli society is a complex composite of ethnic diversity, (Mizrachim, Russian speakers, Ethiopian Israelis, Druze, Bedouin, Palestinians, just to name a few), religious and ideological diversity, each advocating for its own vision of what a Jewish State should look like and what should be the rules under which it is governed. Social anthropologist David Graeber[2] offered a keen example of what comprises the state — children playing. There are no rules to how children play. In fact, as Graeber observes, a good portion of play between children involves negotiating the rules often with a differing understanding about what is fair and what isn't.

As Israel turns 75 it is turning towards a new chapter in its history, and without an agreed-upon constitution, it is still negotiating the rules. There is no precedent or guidebook telling us which way to turn or on what path to walk, and the current crisis has revealed the deep-seated divisions and contradictory visions of what the Jewish State should be.

75 years ago we witnessed the transition of Israel's leaders from being revolutionaries to bureaucrats. Those who stood up against the British and fought the wars against its Arab neighbors calling for its destruction now had to set up government ministries and worry about health care, welfare, education, urban planning, all while navigating the competition for its rightful place in the Jewish public square.

Today's crisis reveals a transition for those who were on society's margins. For example, the ultra-Nationalist Religious Zionism party and the ultra-Orthodox United Torah Judaism party are edging closer to majority status and are taking positions of responsibility for the whole of Israeli society

rather than being narrowly focused on their own sectoral advocacy. This change could end tragically — as the myriads of protesters legitimately fear — if those in power fail to realize that being firebrand and uncompromising advocates from the sidelines is what put them in positions of power. However, being even-keeled, moderate, and responsible for the well-being of all Israelis is what will sustain them and the future of the Jewish State beyond this 75-year milestone.

This is no doubt a moment for celebration of all that Israel is. It is a celebration of the contributions of those laureates, poets, songwriters, researchers, scientists, inventors, journalists, artists, and teachers who made their mark on the re-invention of the Jewish people as a Free People in Our Land. It is also an invitation to those Jews living outside the State to invest in the Jewish State. I'm not talking about buying Israel bonds, but investing your time, energy, intellectual capacity, curiosity, and financial resources to internalize the richness that has been created and has enhanced the Jewish identity of Jewish communities around the world.

In a 2019 admonitory speech at Jerusalem's Hebrew University, Meir Shalev concluded by calling on the public to make a choice:

“These are days of decision, days of choice. Whom to vote for? The answer is in the Book of Deuteronomy: ‘Choose life. ... Choose the Judaism of Rabbi Yohanan Ben Zakkai, of the Prophet Amos, of [Israel's] Declaration of Independence, and of the Book of Ruth.’”

As we celebrate the miracle that is Israel's 75th year of Independence, may we make the choice to invest our time, energy, and attention to the critical choices that need to be made and to the more mundane and fundamental challenges of Jewish identity. Maybe this year read an Israeli novel or study TaNaKh as the foundational corpus of Judaism. And make sure that this is the year that you travel to Israel and send your kids/students/family and friends. On this Yom Haatzmaut let us all put one foot in front of the other to discover the Land, People, and State of Israel in new and creative ways. The path is there for you to discover, now just go!

Birthdays & Anniversaries

May Anniversaries

Jerry and Fran Rephan	May 3
Les and Diana Surfas	May 18
Dennis and Anita Williams	May 25
Larry and Carol Levi	May 27

June Anniversaries

Ira and Stephanie Kleinman	June 8
Mark and Patti Fleischner	June 12
Anthony & Sherrill Nicolosi	June 14
Mary Klompus	June 15
Ross and Ruth Sedler	June 16
David and Cheryl Cohen	June 27

May Birthdays

Ira Kleinman	May 13
Mark Fleischner	May 14
Sharon Waxler	May 14
Elaine Wolken	May 16
Patti Fleischner	May 17
Glenda Kirsch	May 23
Rachel Schulman	May 26

June Birthdays

Clarissa Kirsch	June 1
Sheldon Kleinman	June 4
Michael Richardson	June 4
Carol Kleinman	June 8
Andrea Parker	June 9
Randy Lewis	June 12
Mary Klompus	June 20
David Cohen	June 21
Yossi Baron	June 28

Refuah Shelemah

The following people are in our thoughts and prayers for healing. Please offer prayers that they have a full and complete recovery.:

- Sam Banks
- Millie Baron
- Mitch Boley
- Camy Crank
- Hy Fishman
- Oded Grenman
- Randy Lewis
- Mindy Lingo
- Pat McCarthy
- Ellen Rephan
- Mike Richardson
- Misty Stricklin
- Harry Taub
- Shep Taxer
- Steven West
- Anita Williams
- James Woodfork

Ain't Love Grand



Westley Kleinman and good friend (Westley's the one on the right) enjoying a lazy day on Lake Hamilton.

May - June Yahrzeits

Kaddish Recited May 5

Robin Rans

Niece of Fred Korngut

Mark Cohen

Father of David Cohen

Samuel Kirsch

Grandfather of Steven Kirsch

Grandfather of Mark Fleischer

Grandfather of Stuart Fleischer

Kaddish Recited May 12

Serena Kirsch

Mother of Steven Kirsch

Marvin Taxer

Brother of Sheldon (Shep) Taxer

Frances Koppel

Mother of Hal Koppel

Helen Kleinman

Mother-in-law of Betty Kleinman

Grandmother of Ira Kleinman

Leanora Ballard Haynie

Mother of Laura Castillo

Kaddish Recited May 19

Nathan Davis

Grandfather of Rachel Schulman

Grandfather of David D. Reagler

Louise Levi

Mother of Larry Levi

Kaddish Recited May 26

Morris Reagler

Grandfather of David D. Reagler

Grandfather of Rachel Schulman

Shirley Sedler

Mother of Ross Sedler

Irwin Kleinman

Brother of Sheldon Kleinman

George Thornton Ginsburg

Brother of Millie Baron

Norman "Dick" Franklin

Step-father of David Cohen

Kaddish Recited June 2

Annie Marcus

Grandmother of Carol Kleinman

Nancy Kleinman

Mother of Sheldon Kleinman

Kaddish Recited June 9

Tikva Baron

Mother of Yossi Baron

Dora Korngut

Mother of Fred Korngut

Tillie Creim

Great Aunt of David D. Reagler

Great Aunt of Rachel Schulman

Faye Kirsch

Grandmother of Steven Kirsch

Grandmother of Mark Fleischer

Grandmother of Stuart Fleischer

David Lockwood

Grandfather of Susan Siegel

Grandfather of Diane Goltz

Kaddish Recited June 16

Charles Bellin

Father of Ruth Sedler

Esteel Klompus

Mother-in-law of Mary Klompus

Kaddish Recited June 30

Vicki Seligman

Mother of Diana Surfas

Morris Nathan Bauman

Father of Cynthia Rephan

SaraLee Stark

Member of CHI

Louis Brown

Father of Betty Forshberg

Roxanne Smalley Capotosto

Sister of Kim Baron

John Hearn

Husband of Phyllis Hearn

May Parshiot

Emor

May 6, 2023

The second part of Emor lists the annual Callings of Holiness—the festivals of the Jewish calendar: the weekly Shabbat; the bringing of the Passover offering on 14 Nissan; the seven-day Passover festival beginning on 15 Nissan; the bringing of the Omer offering from the first barley harvest on the second day of Passover, and the commencement, on that day, of the 49-day Counting of the Omer, culminating in the festival of Shavuot on the fiftieth day; a “remembrance of shofar blowing” on 1 Tishrei; a solemn fast day on 10 Tishrei; the Sukkot festival—during which we are to dwell in huts for seven days and take the “Four Kinds”—beginning on 15 Tishrei; and the immediately following holiday of the “eighth day” of Sukkot (Shemini Atzeret).

B’har - Bechukotai

May 13, 2023

On the mountain of Sinai, G d communicates to Moses the laws of the Sabbatical year: every seventh year, all work on the land should cease, and its produce becomes free for the taking for all, man and beast.

Seven Sabbatical cycles are followed by a fiftieth year—the Jubilee year, on which work on the land ceases, all indentured servants are set free, and all ancestral estates in the Holy Land that have been sold revert to their original owners. Additional laws governing the sale of lands, and the prohibitions against fraud and usury, are also given.

Bamidbar

May 20, 2023

In the Sinai Desert, G d says to conduct a census of the twelve tribes of Israel. Moses counts 603,550 men of draftable age (20 to 60 years); the tribe of Levi, numbering 22,300 males age one month and older, is counted separately. The Levites are to serve in the Sanctuary. They replace the firstborn, whose number they approximated, since they were disqualified when they participated in the worshipping of the Golden Calf. The 273 firstborn who lacked a

Levite to replace them had to pay a five-shekel “ransom” to redeem themselves.

When the people broke camp, the three Levite clans dismantled the Sanctuary, and transported the Sanctuary, and reassembled it at the center of the next encampment. Before the Sanctuary’s entrance-way, to its east, were the tents of Moses, Aaron, and Aaron’s sons. Beyond the Levite circle, the twelve tribes camped in four groups of three tribes each. This formation was kept also while traveling. Each tribe had its own nassi (prince or leader), and its own flag with its tribal color and



(c) Sarah Kranz

emblem.

June Parshiot

Naso

June 3, 2023

Completing the headcount of the Children of Israel taken in the Sinai Desert, a total of 8,580 Levite men between the ages of 30 and 50 are counted in a tally of those who will be doing the actual work of transporting the Tabernacle.

God communicates to Moses the law of the *sotah*, the wayward wife suspected of unfaithfulness to her husband. Also given is the law of the *nazir*, who forswears wine, lets his or her hair grow long, and is forbidden to become contaminated through contact with a dead body. Aaron and his descendants, the *kohanim*, are instructed on how to bless the people of Israel.

B'haalot'cha

June 10, 2023

A "Second Passover" is instituted in response to the petition, "Why should we be deprived?" by a group of Jews who were unable to bring the Passover offering in its appointed time because they were ritually impure. God instructs Moses on the procedures for Israel's journeys and encampments in the desert, and the people journey in formation from Mount Sinai, where they had been camped for nearly a year.

The people are dissatisfied with their "bread from heaven" (the *manna*), and demand that Moses supply them with meat. Moses appoints 70 elders, to whom he imparts of his spirit, to assist him in the burden of governing the people. Miriam speaks negatively of Moses, and is punished with leprosy; Moses prays for her healing, and the entire community waits seven days for her recovery.

Shelach

June 17, 2023

Moses sends twelve spies to the land of Canaan. Forty days later they return, carrying a huge cluster of grapes, a pomegranate and a fig, to report on a lush and bountiful land. But ten of the spies warn that the inhabitants of the land are giants and warriors "more powerful than we"; only Caleb and Joshua insist that the land can be conquered, as God has commanded.

The people weep that they'd rather return to Egypt. God decrees that Israel's entry into the Land shall be delayed forty years, during which time that entire generation will die out in the desert.

Korach

June 24, 2023

Korach incites a mutiny challenging Moses' leadership and the granting of the *kehunah* (priesthood) to Aaron. He is accompanied by Moses' inveterate foes, Dathan and Abiram.

Joining them are 250 distinguished members of the community, who offer the sacrosanct *ketoret* (incense) to prove their worthiness for the priesthood.

The earth opens up and swallows the mutineers, and a fire consumes the *ketoret* offerers. A subsequent plague is stopped by Aaron's offering of *ketoret*.

Aaron's staff miraculously blossoms and brings forth almonds, to prove that his designation as high priest is divinely ordained

