



The Shofar

February, 2017

Congregation House of Israel

5 Shevat- 2 Adar, 5777



In Landmark Decision, High Court Rules for Women's Western Wall Prayer

Government given 30 days to show 'good cause' why women can't read from Torah scrolls at the holy site.

Photo: Anat Hoffman, director of Women of the Wall, holds a Torah scroll at the Western Wall, November 2, 2016. (Luke Tress/Times of Israel) See complete story on page 4

Thank You

Information relative to January contributions will be posted in the March issue of The Shofar

Sisterhood



Monday, January 2nd, on a cold and dreary day, we had our January Sisterhood meeting. Our hostess was Millie Baron who prepared a delicious and weather appropriate lunch. Thank you, Millie.

We discussed the fact that we need a new Chairperson for the Holocaust Committee. This wonderful organization was started about eight years ago by Joanne Reagler. Over the years, we have had visiting Holocaust survivors who have spoken at various schools in the area as well as different churches both in Hot Springs and Hot Springs Village. It is amazing to realize that there are young people today who knew nothing about the Holocaust until they heard it first hand. If you are interested in heading up this wonderful committee, please let Sue Koppel or Ruth Sedler know.

It was definitely a mother/daughter meeting. Cindy Brown from JFAR brought her daughter, Emily. Mother/daughter CHI members, Myrna Taxer and Lori Lewis were both there. Lastly, Karen Reagler came with her delightful twins Tillie and Louis who will have their B'Nai Mitzvah, February 18th. By the way, don't forget the Sisterhood Oneg Shabbat in their honor on Friday night, the 17th.

We all sat around socializing and, as usual, the subjects were varied and everyone had a great time.

The next meeting will be on Monday, February 6th, hosted by Gail Greenberg and Patti Fleischner. Hope to see you there!!

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PO Box 20802

300 Quapaw

Hot Springs, AR 71903

(501) 623-5821

Website: <http://hschi.org>

Editors: David Kirsch, Shelly Kleinman

Webmaster: Shelly Kleinman

Editorial Assistance: Anita Williams

Email to: info@hschi.org

Mail to:

David Kirsch

23 Almazan Way

Hot Springs Village, AR 71909

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Davar

“A Matter for Discussion”



I am writing this Shofar article in Atlanta. Our family is gathered to celebrate the 97th birthday of our mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother Lila Chapin. If we ever have questions about why we need to preserve our heritage, a study of the life career of our

family matriarch will provide an answer because Lila truly represents the “woman of valor” so poignantly described in our book of Proverbs. Lila’s tenacious hold on life and her commitment to her growing progeny are exemplary. We are privileged to thank God she remains among us.

And so we continue to mature and watch over our own family scions. There is nothing more reassuring than seeing our children begin to understand the responsibilities they are to inherit as they take their own rightful place in their families and in the world. I smile as I think of the progress Tillie and Louis Reagler have made on their way to becoming B’nai Mitzvah on February 18. They are beginning to appreciate what this day means in their family and congregational life. That it is not only about “performing,” but also about becoming part of something that is bigger than themselves. I know this will be a signal moment in the life of all the Reagler *mishpocha*. We pray they will continue to go from strength to strength and blessing to blessing.

And finally, despite all our fears and anxieties, let us pray that the inauguration of Donald Trump will bring goodness and prosperity to our country. We need to believe that we can always make the world a better place, no matter what the obstacles that stand before us.

A good, healthy and happy month to all.

B’Shalom

Rabbi Chapin

From the President



Tzedakah is loosely translated as “charity.” But it’s more than that. Tzedakah means doing justice. When it comes to supporting Congregation House of Israel (CHI), are we as members of the congregation fulfilling the true meaning of tzedakah?

The Board has set a requested Fair Dues payment from each full member of our congregation to be two percent (2%) of adjusted gross personal income, with a minimum dues requirement of fifty dollars (\$50) per month. It’s important to understand that currently, dues received from the membership are not enough to even pay for our rabbi, let alone to sustain the congregation with all of its other expenses.

I do understand what it is to be on a fixed income, since Anita and I are in that situation. Being a retired school teacher in Arkansas, my personal income comes from the Arkansas Teacher Retirement System. But it is important to our household that we have a Jewish presence in the greater Hot Springs area, and I’m concerned about the viability of our congregation. As such, we personally have decided to increase our dues payment to five percent (5%). However, in so doing, that means we cut where we give tzedakah elsewhere. It is a question of priorities.

Please reflect and consider what is important to you in being Jewish, and the importance of maintaining a house of worship in Hot Springs. Please consider CHI when making tzedakah.

Sincerely,

Dennis

ARZA - World Union

Israel High Court Rules for Women's Western Wall Prayer

In a landmark High Court decision Wednesday, the state was given 30 days to find "good cause" why a woman may not read aloud from a Torah scroll as part of prayer services at the Western Wall.

The sweeping decision, jointly addressing three petitions on related topics, ruled that assuming the government cannot find "good cause," not only may women read from the Torah at the Western Wall, but also that the government may no longer argue that the Robinson's Arch area of the plaza constitutes "access to the Western Wall." The court did not address a January 2016 government decision to build a permanent pluralistic prayer pavilion in the Robinson's Arch area, which is currently also an archaeological park.

Further, contrary to current practice under the plaza's administration by the Western Wall Heritage Foundation, women will no longer be subjected to body searches for "contraband" Jewish ritual objects by foundation staff.

If the state fails to find "good cause" for not permitting women to read from the Torah, it is yet to be determined whether they will be granted access to the hundreds of scrolls now located in the men's section of the Western Wall plaza.

"Just when it seemed the rabbinate's power was overwhelming, the court's verdict regarding our demand to read Torah at the women's section of the Western Wall reflects both courage and wisdom," said Anat Hoffman, head of the Women of the Wall activist group.

"Today, we have come much closer toward implementation of the Western Wall agreement on gender equality and religious freedom at the Wall. I am elated because when I was looking for justice, and then courage, they were missing, and now the highest court in the land has shown me both."

B'nai Mitzvah

Tillie and Louis Reagler



Tillie and Louis Reagler will be called to the Torah on Saturday, February 18, 2017 at 5 pm. CHI members are invited to join the family in celebrating this special time as Tillie and Louis begin their trek as Jewish adults.

Evan Parker



Evan Parker, grandson of Louis and Betty Kleinman, celebrated his Bar Mitzvah on December 22 at the Western Wall in Jerusalem.

Montana Police Nail Mezuzah on Station Door, Defying Neo-Nazis



The police force of Whitefish, Montana — the site of the neo-Nazi march that wasn't — has just nailed a mezuzah on the door of their station in a sign of solidarity with the beleaguered Jewish community.

During a group tour of Whitefish by Orthodox rabbis from the U.S. and Canada, Rabbi Adam Scheier, a congregational leader from Montreal, asked Police Chief William Dial if he would consider putting a mezuzah on his office door. According to public Facebook post by Scheier, Dial said, “No, I won't put it on my office door. I want to put it in a more central location, where everyone will see it.”

Scheier and Dial then nailed the mezuzah, purchased in Israel and made of Jerusalem stone, to a door that “every police officer passes upon entering the station,” Scheier's Facebook post read.

Only weeks ago, neo-Nazi blogger Andrew Anglin vowed to lead an armed march in this ski-town against members of the Jewish community. Whitefish is hometown to the white nationalist Richard Spencer, who popularized the term “alt-right.” The neo-Nazi march was organized in support of Spencer and his family, who white nationalists claimed were being unfairly targeted by Jewish activists.

Anglin's march fell through after he failed to acquire a permit, but for weeks Jews in the city were bombarded with online threats. Anglin has vowed to reschedule his march, perhaps for next month.

Democrat, Venture Capitalist, Dating a Super Model

These days, much has been written about Jared Kushner, husband to Ivanka Trump and special advisor to the president. But there is another Kushner who remains a little more mysterious: Joshua.

31-year-old Joshua is the son of Seryl Kushner and prominent real estate developer Charles Kushner. His older brother Jared runs the family real estate empire. They also have two sisters, Dara and Nicole.

Joshua Kushner is a lifelong Democrat and in August a spokesperson told *Esquire Magazine* that while he loves his brother, he won't be voting for Trump.

Joshua is dating Victoria Secret super model and Taylor Swift's best buddy, Karlie Kloss. The couple has been together since 2012, and Karlie is converting to Judaism for her beau. Before Ivanka married Jared, she also converted to Judaism.

Joshua graduated from Harvard University in 2008 and Harvard Business School in 2011. While at Harvard, Joshua founded Vostu, a popular social-gaming platform in Latin America.

Kushner founded and runs a technology investment firm — Thrive Capital — which among others has financed Instagram, crowdfunding platform Kickstarter and the e-commerce company Jet.com. For his work with Thrive, Kushner was named one of *Forbes's* 30 under 30 in 2013.

Joshua Kushner is also the co-founder of Oscar Health, a private health insurance company that was founded in 2012 and sells insurances through the Affordable Care Act aka Obamacare. In 2016, Oscar was valued at \$ 2.7 billion, but the company has been struggling lately. A complete repeal of Obamacare will/would mean bad news for Kushner's business.

In a blog post called “Our post-election thoughts” Kushner and his co-founder Mario Schlosser wrote “Oscar believes that all Americans deserve healthcare coverage that is high-quality and affordable for everyone. This is both ethically right and economically prudent.”

Congregation House of Israel Board of Directors

Rabbi Richard Chapin
501-623-5821
info@hschi.org

Dennis Williams, President
870-230-3529
jwmensch1@gmail.com

Hal Koppel, Treasurer
501-525-3238
hjkkrew@yahoo.com

Susan Siegel, Secretary
501-282-8666
susuhotsprings@gmail.com

Barbara Morgan
501-767-1459
barbara.morgan@mygait.com

Sue Koppel, Sisterhood
501-624-3986
suebob@cablelynx.com

Ira Kleinman
501-520-1323
irakleinman@hotmail.com

Ruth Sedler
806-789-9362
sedlerlbk@aol.com

David D. Reagler
870-208-4495
david@arkansasrecords.com

Patti Fleischner
501-262-1198
fleischnerp@gmail.com

David Kirsch
281-458-2655
dayno90@hotmail.com

Jerry Tanenbaum, ARZA-World Union
501-262-9772
jerryhotsprings@usa.net

Stuart Fleischner, Immediate Past
President
501-617-1761
toothshucker@hotmail.com

Life and Legacy Plan

Time is running out! CHI and Jewish Federation of Arkansas (JFAR) have been engaged in a partnership program with the Harold Grinspoon Foundation to secure after-life legacy gifts. The program (called Life and Legacy) is designed to increase the level of post-death legacy gifting to CHI and/or our Jewish community. The program asks that you commit to making a gift after you pass away through a bequest in a Will or Trust, or through a beneficiary designation on an IRA, annuity, life insurance policy or other form of gifting made after one's death. **No funds are currently requested.**

The Letter of Intent you execute simply declares your intention to provide a future gift after you pass away. There are no contracts, no present gifts, and no minimum amounts to be pledged. JFAR offers a monetary incentive: A \$5,000 gift will be given to CHI if we receive 18 Letters of Intent by March 30, 2017. We are so close now. A second and final gift from JFAR will be given to CHI if an additional 18 Letters are received by March, 2018.

This month we are spotlighting **Jerry Tanenbaum, Ian Nicolosi** and **Barbara Morgan**, who each signed their Letters of Intent.

Barbara Morgan has been involved with CHI since 1987, and currently serves on the Board of Directors. Her efforts on the Caring Committee and handling of our Yahrzeits are instrumental in keeping our Jewish families connected.

Ian Nicolosi was raised in CHI. Through our religious school, he became involved with Camp Jacobs, attending from age seven through high school. Thereafter, he was a counselor and Unit head, where lifetime friendships were developed. Ian's L&L pledge will help secure a Jewish presence in HS.

Jerry Tanenbaum's commitment to the local Jewish Community and beyond is well known. As the Chairman of Jacobs Camp, Jerry became acutely aware of how important small Congregations are to the survival and growth of Reform Judaism in the South. He is a lifetime Emeriti member of the Boards of URJ and HUC-JIR, and the founding Chair of ARZA-World Union and member Emeriti of its Executive Board, to promote Progressive (Reform) Judaism globally. Jerry and his late wife, Pat, served in multiple positions for CHI, and L&L appreciates Jerry's commitment to this program.

For pledge information, contact Karen Reagler, Sherrill Nicolosi, or Stuart Fleischner.

February Yahrzeits

Kaddish Recited February 3

Ira Gershner

Husband of Jean Gershner

Lewis Goltz

Father of Susan Siegel and Diane Goltz

Harriette Korngut

Wife of Fred Korngut

Milan Mandel

Step-father of Lenny Mendel

Kaddish Recited February 10

Pinhas Grenman

Father of Oded Grenman

Eric Ross

Father of Elaine Wolken

Julia Levine Bauman

Mother of Cynthia Rephan

Rose Ginsburg

Grandmother of Millie Baron

Jason Kandel

Cousin of Stuart Klompus

Kaddish Recited February 17

Max Singer

Father-in-law of Lenny Mendel

William Boswell

Father of Anita Williams

Anni Hannah Grenman

Mother of Oded Grenman

Kaddish Recited February 24

David Staffin

Father of Myrna Taxer

Birthdays & Anniversaries

February Anniversaries

Barbara Bushee Feb 11

February Birthdays

Ken Baim Feb 1
Louis Reagler Feb 2
Tillie Reagler Feb 2
Katherine Klein Feb 10
Carol Gartenberg Feb 12
Diane Goltz Feb 12
Elan Grenman Feb 13
Joanne Reagler Feb 17
David D. Reagler Feb 18
Imy Marcus Feb 21
Ian Nicolosi Feb 21
Mark Koppel Feb 22

Oneg Sponsors

Thank you to the following for sponsoring an Oneg during the month of February:

Feb 3 Goltz Girls: Madeline Bull, Diane Goltz, Lou and Susan Siegel
Feb 10 Jerry and Fran Rephan
Larry and Carol Levi
Feb 17 Sisterhood Sponsored Oneg
Feb 24 Lynda Kass
Michael and Sharon Waxler

Reminder: If you are scheduled for an upcoming Oneg and need to change dates, please find someone to switch with and then let Ruth Sedler know so the information printed in the bulletin will be correct.

February Parshiot

Bo

February 4, 2017

The last three of the Ten Plagues are visited on Egypt: a swarm of locusts devours all the crops and greenery; a thick, palpable darkness envelops the land; and all the firstborn of Egypt are killed at the stroke of midnight of the 15th of the month of Nissan. The death of the firstborn finally breaks Pharaoh's resistance and he literally drives the Children of Israel from his land. Before they go, they ask their Egyptian neighbors for gold, silver and garments, draining Egypt of its wealth.

The Children of Israel are commanded to observe the anniversary of the Exodus each year by removing all leaven from their possession for seven days, eating matzah, and telling the story of their redemption to their children.

B'shalach

February 11, 2017

Soon after allowing the Children of Israel to depart from Egypt, Pharaoh chases after them to force their return, and the Israelites find themselves trapped between Pharaoh's armies and the sea. G-d tells Moses to raise his staff over the water; the sea splits to allow the Israelites to pass through, and then closes over the pursuing Egyptians.

In the desert, the people suffer thirst and hunger and repeatedly complain to Moses and Aaron. G-d miraculously sweetens the bitter waters of Marah, and later has Moses bring forth water from a rock by striking it with his staff; He causes manna to rain down from the heavens before dawn each morning, and quails to appear in the Israelite camp each evening.

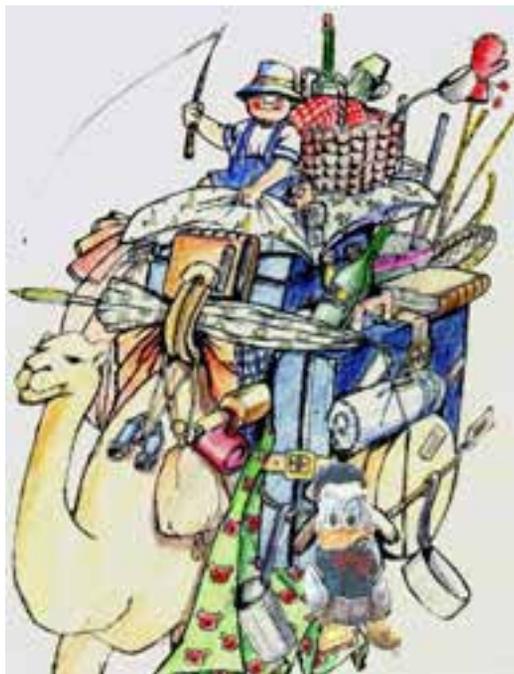
Yitro

February 18, 2017

Moses' father-in-law, Jethro, hears of the great miracles which G-d performed for the people of

Israel, and comes from Midian to the Israelite camp, bringing with him Moses' wife and two sons. Jethro advises Moses to appoint a hierarchy of magistrates and judges to assist him in the task of governing and administering justice to the people.

On the sixth day of the third month (Sivan), seven weeks after the Exodus, the entire nation of Israel assembles at the foot of Mount Sinai. G-d descends on the mountain amidst thunder, lightning, billows of smoke and the blast of the shofar, and summons Moses to ascend.



G-d proclaims the Ten Commandments, commanding the people of Israel to believe in G-d, not to worship idols or take G-d's name in vain, to keep the Shabbat, honor their parents, and not to murder, not to commit adultery, not to steal, not to bear false witness or covet another's property.

The people cry out to Moses that the revelation is too intense for them to bear, begging him to receive the Torah from G-d and convey it to them.

Mishpatim

February 25, 2017

Following the revelation at Sinai, G-d legislates a series of laws for the people of Israel. These include the laws of the

indentured servant; the penalties for murder, kidnapping, assault, and theft; civil laws pertaining to redress of damages, the granting of loans, and the responsibilities of the "Four Guardians;" and the rules governing the conduct of justice by courts of law.

The Parshah of Mishpatim contains fifty-three mitzvot -- 23 imperative commandments and 30 prohibitions.

G-d promises to bring the people of Israel to the Holy Land, and warns them against assuming the pagan ways of its current inhabitants. The people of Israel proclaim, "We will do and we will hear all that G-d commands us." Leaving Aaron and Hur in charge in the Israelite camp, Moses ascends Mount Sinai and remains there for forty days and forty nights to receive the Torah from G-d.