

BULLETIN

Editor: Stan Schaffer

January President's Message

Friends,

December was an eventful month and there is much to look forward to in January. We had a very busy Chanukah season. Chanukah featured the Bar Mitzvah of Mark Toker on December 12. Mark did a splendid job reading a long maftir portion and an even more splendid haftorah, which he read entirely from the Navi scroll - a parchment scroll containing the books of the minor prophets written like a Torah with no vowels or musical notations. Mazel tov to Mark and his proud family! The bar mitzvah celebration actually started a week earlier when Mark had his first aliyah at a joint service at Beth Am. Rabbi Goldberg officiated at both services.

This year our building saw two Chanukah parties. On Sunday the 13th we had a joint party with Temple Beth Am. My special thanks to Steve Teitel, Judith Mercer, my wife Nina, my nieces, and to Ami Schmerl for food preparation and set up. Everyone enjoyed singing Chanukah songs, both traditional ones and some modern ones. After a grueling game of dreidl, Ami yielded his crown as dreidl champ to my daughter Hannah. Next year Hannah must be prepared to defend her crown! On Wednesday the 16th, the Rochester Jewish deaf community also had a party using our building. The party was organized by my sister Beth and by Diana Pryntz. The candle lighting blessings were done in American Sign Language. Another grueling game of dreidl, this time won by Kyle Brossoit. Beginner's luck!

I would like to welcome a "new" member, Paula Bobb. Paula belonged to BHBI several years ago, and it's good to have her back with us. In addition, we recently gained another brand new member, Tamara Strubel. Let's welcome them both to BHBI.

We started 2009 with a disaster- the flooding of our sanctuary. Repairs were mostly covered by our insurance, but significant additional expenses were incurred doing long overdue major upkeep on the building, so that we are ending 2009 with a deficit, the first one in many years. Sales of cemetery plots, through the hard work of Arthur Mercer, have kept the deficit from being much worse. Additional building work will need to be done in 2010, so that we will likely have a deficit next year as well. A significant item for 2010 will be the installation of the wheelchair lift. That should happen in February. So far we have about \$7500 in donations and pledges towards the lift. That leaves \$4000 to go. Please help with your generous donation.

Finally, on January 29th, Tu B'Shevat, the new year for trees, falls on Shabbat this year. On the evening of January 29th, please join us for a joint dinner and a Tu B'Shevat seder with our friends from Temple Beth Am at BHBI, followed by evening services with Rabbi Goldberg officiating. See the reservation form on page 6.

Have a great 2010! See you in shul.

Leon Metlay

HAVE YOU MADE YOUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE WHEELCHAIR LIFT FUND YET? MAKE YOUR PLEDGE BEFORE THE LIFT ARRIVES!

SEE THE PLEDGE FORM ON THE BOTTOM OF PAGE 2 OF THIS BULLETIN.

BHBI CALENDAR OF EVENTS – JANUARY 2009

Friday	Jan 1	7:00 PM	Shabbat Evening Service at Heather Heights in Pittsford Light candles at 4:27 PM
Saturday	Jan 2	10:00 AM	Joint Shabbat Morning Services with Temple Beth Am at Beth Am Torah: Vayechi
Sunday	Jan 3	9:00 AM	Service, Breakfast and Discussion
Friday	Jan 8	8:00 PM	Joint Shabbat Evening Service with Temple Beth Am at Beth Am Light candles at 4:34 PM
Saturday	Jan 9	9:30 AM	Joint Shabbat Morning Service with Temple Beth Am at BHBI Rabbi Goldberg officiating Blessing for the new month. Torah: Shemot
Sunday	Jan 10	9:00 AM	Service, Breakfast and Discussion
Monday	Jan 11	7:30 PM	Monthly Meeting of the BHBI Board of Trustees
Wednesday	Jan 13	7:30 PM	Small Shul Collaborative Torah Study Session at BHBI
Friday	Jan 15	8:00 PM	Joint Shabbat Evening Service with Temple Beth Am at BHBI Light candles at 4:42 PM
Saturday	Jan 16	9:30 AM	Shabbat Morning Service Torah: Vaeirah
Sunday	Jan 17	9:00 AM	Service, Breakfast and Discussion
Friday	Jan 22	8:00 PM	Shabbat Evening Service Light candles at 4:51 PM
Saturday	Jan 23	9:30 AM	Shabbat Morning Service Torah: Bo
Sunday	Jan 24	9:00 AM	Service, Breakfast and Discussion
Friday	Jan 29	6:00 PM 8:00 PM	Joint Tu B'Shevat Dinner and Seder with Temple Beth Am at BHBI Shabbat Evening Service with Rabbi Goldberg officiating Light candles at 5:00 PM
Saturday	Jan 30	9:30 AM	Shabbat Morning Service Torah: Beshalach
Sunday	Jan 31	9:00 AM	Service, Breakfast and Discussion

**HELP SUPPORT OUR EFFORTS TO IMPROVE
ACCESS TO BHBI FOR OUR DISABLED
MEMBERS – MAKE A DONATION TODAY TO
HELP US BUY A WHEELCHAIR LIFT!**

Name(s): _____ Donation Amount: \$_____

Send this form to BHBI, 1369 East Ave., Rochester, NY 14610 along with your
special donation for the wheelchair lift today!





FROM THE RABBI'S DESK

By
RABBI GEOFFREY GOLDBERG

January 2010

Anything to relieve the long and cold winters to Rochester is to be welcomed and on the last Shabbat of January we will be blessed indeed. First, this Shabbat is no ordinary Shabbat, but is known as *Shabbat Shirah*, “the Sabbath of Song,” so named because of the Torah portion’s (*Beshalah*) inclusion of *Shirat Ha-Yam*, “the Song of the Sea” (Exodus 15), sung by Moses, Miriam and the Israelites following their miraculous crossing at the Sea of Reeds. Second, this Shabbat coincides this year with the minor festival of *Tu B'Shevat*. (“Tu” is merely the numerical value of the letters Tet (9) and Vav (6), which together make 15, festival falling on the 15th of the Hebrew month *Shevat*). *Tu B'Shevat* is known as *Rosh ha-Shanah la-Ilyanot* “The New Year of the Trees.” In ancient times the tithing of produce from trees was calculated from this date.

In Israel today *Tu B'Shevat* is marked by the planting of trees. Throughout the country thousands of Israelis, especially schoolchildren, participate in the planting of trees. Years before the recent international concern with the environment Israel always understood the importance of reclaiming and preserving the land through afforestation.

Quite some years ago I lived for six months in Arad in the northern Negev, situated half-way between Beer Sheva and the Dead Sea. At that time it was a new town and had a frontier quality to it. In the winter the winter rains and storms would fill up the near-by wadis and streams that were otherwise dry most of the year. On a chilly, windy and rainy winter's day we all planted trees. I often wonder if my tree took root. Many years later, I went back to Arad, saw how the town had grown quite considerably, and was pleased to see the verdant vegetation and trees in this modern oasis in the desert.

Minor as *Tu B'Shevat* might be, it illustrates in a powerful way that Judaism is not just concerned with matters of prayer and ritual, but is concerned with every aspect of human concern, including the environment, for Judaism teaches that is our obligation to preserve the world that God has given to us.

After the Exile from Israel, *Tu B'Shevat* became a day on which to commemorate our connection with *Eretz Yisrael*, and this was performed by eating eat fruits associated with the Land of Israel. A tradition based on Deuteronomy 8:8 holds that there are five fruits and two grains associated with it, “a land of wheat and barley, of vines, figs and pomegranates, a land of olive trees and honey,” *eretẓ bittah u- se'orah, ve-gefen ut'enah ve-rimon, eretẓ zeyt shemen ve-rimon* [Honey is date honey, rather than bee honey]. Almonds are also given prominence. *Bokser*, carob or St. John's Bread, was given prominence since it could survive the long journey from Israel to the Jewish communities in Europe, the Middle East and North Africa.

In the sixteenth century, the Kabbalists, the Jewish mystics, infused new meaning into Tu B'Shevat. For them, trees were symbols of human beings, as it says in Deuteronomy 20:19, “For a human is like a tree of the field,” *ki ha-adam etz ha-sadeh*. In line with their devotion to *tikkun olam*, spiritually repairing the world, the Kabbalists regarded eating a variety of fruits on *Tu B'Shevat* as a way of improving our spiritual selves. More specifically, they believed that eating fruit was a way of expiating the first sin, eating of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge in the Garden of Eden. Similarly, trees were symbolic of *the tree*, the Tree of Life, which carries divine goodness and blessing into the World. To encourage this flow and to effect *tikkun olam*, the Kabbalists of Safed created a Tu B'Shevat *sefer* loosely modeled after the Passover *sefer*. It involved drinking four cups of wine and eating many different fruits while reciting appropriate verses.

Temple Beth Am and BHBI will be continuing this tradition by observing a *Tu B'Shevat* dinner and *sefer* on Erev Shabbat, January 29. I know it will be a joyous and meaningful occasion, a perfect way to celebrate Shabbat, the Sabbath of Song and the New Year of the Trees. And of course, a wonderful way of triumphing over the Rochester winter!

Rabbi Geoffrey Goldberg

Yahrzeits


At the following Shabbat Services, we will read the names of our late loved ones whose Yahrzeits will occur on that Shabbat or during the following week.

January 1-2	Tevet	January 8-9	Tevet	January 22-23	Shevat	January 29-30	Shevat
Nathan Garver	16	Goldie Simon*	23	Max Springut	8	Gidda Strauss*	16
Dorothy Lapides	16	Leah Keyfetz*	24	Herman Strauss*	8	Morris Gurian*	17
Henry Orbach	16	Joseph Morris*	24	Dvora Brodie*	9	Stanley Clark	18
Fannie Sablowsky*	17	Esther Sanzel*	24	Samuel Goldman*	9	Samuel Spencer	18
Philip Sanzel*	17	Samuel Meilstein*	26	Daniel Hirsch*	10	Gitla Perkal*	18
Joseph Schiff*	17	Ida Boyarsky*	27	Hyman Aaron		Bessie Gold	20
Hannah Sanzel*	17	Philip Hershkowitz	27	Nusbaum*	10	Benjamin Lapides*	20
Jeannette Fink		Jack Glazer	28	Miriam Weinberger	12	Alexander Phillips	21
Snyder	17	Joe Lazarus*	28	Abraham Newell*	13	Simon Pogal*	21
Louis Bernstein*	18			Anna Sanow	13	Jacob Rubinstein*	21
Carl Kleinstein*	18	January 15-16	Shevat	Rose Salzberg	14		
Rose Needler*	18	Jean Spencer	1				
Estelle Hirsch*	19	Morris Weinstein*	2			* Denotes name memorialized on BHBI Memorial Plaque	
Shie Schnidman*	19	Etta Levinson*	4				
Anna Buff*	21	Ida Silver*	4				
Benjamin Dvorkin*	21	Sidney					
		Appelbaum*	6				
		Jacob Komenski*	6				
		Morris Suskind*	7				

We pray that our mourners will be comforted among all the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem and that the memory of the deceased continues to be a blessing to all who knew them.

AMAZON.COM

The next time that you want to buy something from Amazon.com go to the BHBI web page at www.BHBIRochester.org and click on the Amazon.com link. Each time you make a purchase after linking to Amazon.com from our web page, BHBI gets a percentage of the purchase. Buy gifts or something for yourself or your family and support BHBI at the same time!!

<div style="text-align: center;"> <p><i>Rochester's Jewish Funeral Home</i></p>  <p><i>Establishing a New Tradition</i></p> <p>BRIGHTON MEMORIAL CHAPEL, INC.</p> <p><i>Graveside, Temple or Chapel Services.</i></p> <p><i>Now respectfully maintaining the PARSKY records.</i></p> <p>Jarrold M. Krieger <i>owner & 4th generation Rochesterian</i> www.BrightonMemorialChapel.com</p> <p>427-8520 3325 Winton Road South S/W corner of Jefferson & Winton Rds</p> </div>	<div style="text-align: center;"> <p>RUHL FUNERAL HOME</p> <p>2793 CULVER ROAD ROCHESTER, NEW YORK 14622</p> <p>TEL. 585.342.8111 IF NO ANSWER 585.739.2655 DMRUHL@ROCHESTER.RR.COM</p> <p>DOUGLAS M. RUHL FUNERAL DIRECTOR</p> </div>
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**So far our TOPS Gift Card fundraiser has been quite successful.
Remember, TOPS Gift Cards are now available through BHBI in \$50 denominations.**

**To purchase TOPS Gift Cards, contact Stan Schaffer
at 473-8072 or by e-mail at stanschaffer@frontiernet.net**

TO OUR DONORS -- THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!

WHEELCHAIR LIFT FUND

Jill Clark

In memory of Herbert R. Hirsch, Daniel Hirsch and Stella Hirsch
Phyllis Hirsch, Susan Hirsch and Debi Boyer

GENERAL FUND

Moris and Terri Amon

Paula Bobb

In memory of Harold Krinsky
Rosemary Hyland and Linda Krinsky

In memory of Dianne Hooker
Linda Haynes
Nelya Vishnagorsky

THE RABBI GOLDBERG FUND

We have recently started a Rabbi Goldberg Fund to enable us to engage Rabbi Goldberg to lead additional services at BHBI during the year in addition to the previously scheduled 16 joint services that he will be leading for BHBI and Temple Beth Am. Whenever the funds in the Rabbi Goldberg Fund reach a predetermined level, we will schedule an additional service with Rabbi Goldberg. To contribute to the Rabbi Goldberg Fund, please send a check in to BHBI with a notation that the contribution should be used for the Rabbi Goldberg Fund.

DO YOU KNOW ANYONE WHO IS UNAFFILIATED AND INTERESTED IN JOINING A CONGREGATION?

Let them know about BHBI's special free 3 month trial membership (available to prospective first-time new members only). Have them contact BHBI at 244-2060 or BHBI@frontiernet.net and we will be happy to give them information about BHBI and this great offer!!



Volunteers are needed to assist members of the community who want to complete the 2010 survey of the Jewish community but need help with the computer data input. The Federation needs volunteers who are willing to interview survey respondents over the phone and input their responses using a home computer; and volunteers with laptops who are willing to meet with respondents at pre-arranged times and input their responses face to face. If you can volunteer during a 6-8 week period in January – February 2010, please contact Susan Gagnon at the Jewish Community Federation, 461-0490, ext. 242 or sgagnon@jewishrochester.org.

TORAH STUDY

Join congregants from Temple Beth Am, Temple Beth David and BHBI for our monthly Small Conservative Shul Collaborative Torah Study session at BHBI on Wednesday evening, January 13th at 7:30 p.m. The discussion is always lively and engaging!



PLEASE VISIT OR CALL OUR ELDERLY MEMBERS!

Many of our elderly members are no longer able to come to shul and would love to hear from their BHBI friends. Please call or visit them.

MEMORIAL PLAQUES

Memorialize a friend or loved one by purchasing a BHBI memorial plaque. For more information, contact Stan Schaffer at 473-8072 or stanschaffer@frontiernet.net



THANK YOU TO OUR KIDDUSH SPONSORS FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER

- December 12 Jeff Nidetz and Leslie Toker in honor of Mark's bar mitzvah
- December 19 The Congregation
- December 26 Leon Metlay and Nina Klionsky in honor of Hannah's 16th birthday

JOIN US FOR THE JOINT BHBI – BETH AM TU B'SHEVAT SEDER AT BHBI ON JANUARY 29th



The dinner starts at 6 p.m. followed by the seder and service.

Cost \$10 for adults and children age 13 and over; \$6 for kids under 13
Family max = \$30

Reservations required by Wednesday, January 27th

Make your reservation now!

Name(s): _____

Number Attending: _____ adults; _____ children Amount enclosed: \$ _____

Send your reservation to BHBI, 1369 East Avenue, Rochester, NY 14610

UPCOMING EVENTS AT THE JCC

International Dining

Visit local eateries with an international flair and then critique your experience. Order from the menu or choose from a list of pre-selected dinner options. Spaces are limited at venues. Pre-register at the JCC Main Desk. Each participant covers the cost of their lunch and tip. This event is not kosher.

Saturday, January 23 at 6pm

The King and I

1455 E. Henrietta Road, Rochester NY (585.427.8090)

Saturday with the Classics

FREE and open to the public. Registration is required at the JCC Main Desk.

Saturday, January 9 at 7pm

An evening of violin concertos with Julia Siegl, MA, BA, Eastman School of Music. Enjoy the works of Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven, and Brahms.

Saturday, February 20 at 7pm

Enjoy exciting classical guitar sounds in a Spanish Flamenco tradition with duo Mathew Colbert and Ryan Carey.

Classical Music Appreciation

Mondays, January 11 - 25: 7pm- 9pm

In this three-part series, you will learn to listen to classical music the way a musician does. Each evening the group will focus on one "great work" and compare it to a modern piece. No musical background is needed.

Instructor, Dave McCarthy holds music degrees from McGill University in Montreal, the Eastman School of Music and Houghton College. He teaches music history at RIT and ear training and theory at Nazareth College.

Register at the JCC Main Desk. JCC Members \$30, Non-Members \$40.

American Jewish History - The Series

Tuesdays, January 12 - February 9: 7pm- 8:30pm

This class will offer an in depth examination of the American Jewish experience, looking at major themes, events, and personalities. We will look at the contribution of American Jews to all aspects of our society. We will also seek current trends and future challenges likely to confront American Jewry. JCC Members \$35, Non Members \$40

January 12: *Humble Beginnings, Massive Achievements*

January 19: *Tragedy, Tribulation and Triumph*

January 26: *American Jewish Religious Movements*

February 2: *Jews in American Society*

February 9: *Assimilation: Blessings and Burdens*

About the Instructor:

Rabbi Simeon Kolko is a native of Rochester, NY and graduated from Oberlin College graduating with a dual degree designed to prepare students for careers in Jewish Communal Service. He received an MSW from the University of Maryland School of Social Work and a Masters in Jewish Studies from the Baltimore Hebrew University.

OTHER EVENTS IN THE JEWISH COMMUNITY

An Informal Look at the Q'uran and the Torah

Free and open to the community.

Sunday, January 17

Moses

Rabbi Matt Field and Dr. Muhammed Shafiq

3:30-4:30 PM

Jewish Community Federation

441 East Avenue

OFFICE: The synagogue office is checked regularly for mail and messages. The synagogue phone is 244-2060. For urgent issues, call Steve Teitel at 473-5741 or Stan Schaffer at 473-8072. You can also e-mail us at BHBI@frontiernet.net

WANT TO REMEMBER OR HONOR SOMEONE OR A SPECIAL OCCASION?

Consider sponsoring a kiddush or making a donation to any one of our funds (General Operating, Kiddush, Library, Torah, Rabbi Aaron Solomon Scholarship, Our Youth, Special Events, Rabbi Goldberg Fund or the Sam Malina Memorial Fund). Please indicate which fund you would like your donation to go to and we will send out an acknowledgement card as you indicate and print an announcement in this bulletin. A standard sponsored kiddush at BHBI costs just \$40 while a larger enhanced kiddush is just \$50.

BULLETIN CONTENT

What do you enjoy reading in the BHBI Bulletin? Is there something that you would like added (or taken out)? If so, please let Stan Schaffer know. We always appreciate feedback.

DID YOU MISPLACE YOUR BULLETIN?

Don't worry. BHBI Bulletins going back several months can now be found on our web page: www.BHBIRochester.org

WANT TO GET YOUR BULLETIN HOT-OFF-THE-PRESS? Consider having us e-mail it to you!

Contact Stan Schaffer at: stanschaffer@frontiernet.net

Congregation Beth Hamedresh-Beth Israel
1369 East Avenue
Rochester, NY 14610