



# Har Shalom

P.O. Box 3715, MISSOULA, MT 59806 PHONE: 406.549.9595  
WWW.HAR-SHALOM.ORG • INFO@HAR-SHALOM.ORG  
LAY LEADER: LAURIE FRANKLIN • 546-9368 ROSSFRANKLIN@MSN.COM

May-June  
'11

## THE PREZ SEZ

by Bert Chessin, President

Though winter drags on and on, there have been many signs of spring around Har Shalom over the past two months. Starting with the first Friday in March, our *Shabbat Across America* was a wildly successful gathering. Our membership committee, led by Toba Winston and supported by a number of congregants, organized a delicious and spirited event. It has already sparked thoughts about making such events an integral part of our fall and spring calendar. We obviously like to see each other, eat well, and share in the glow of community and Shabbat.

Ben Lotto and parents, Lesley and Steve, focused congregation, family, and friends one week later with a bar mitzvah service and celebration. These life-cycle events are good opportunities to recognize the meaning and joy in Jewish traditions and to see how Missoula's Har Shalom is doing in teaching our children and connecting us through time and space. Many of us know this, but I think it is wonderful to recognize how Laurie Franklin continues to grow as a teacher and valuable community resource, as evidenced by Ben's being called to read Torah and teach with his *dvar*. One Jewish, serendipitous gem was uncovered when, unbeknownst to our own Sherry Kolenda, an aunt of Steve Lotto's who came from New York for the bar mitzvah turned out to be a close cousin of Sherry's!

In April, two important events took place. Rabbi Niles Goldstein visited Missoula for over a week, starting April 15, and spent time with Har Shalom and the community in a series of scholar-in-residence events. He shared his learning and love for spirituality, early Hassidism, and Jewish learning. We came together for a Friday evening potluck and teaching, for a Saturday service and extended and interactive *dvar*-teaching, for a Missoula community talk-discussion and book signing about spirituality, and a Sunday walk and talk in the Bitterroots. In addition to time spent with Har Shalom, Rabbi Goldstein met and explored teaching possibilities at The University of Montana. The upshot is there may be an opportunity to join forces with the university in nurturing a role for a rabbi in our community. Let us know what you think and stay tuned.

Over one hundred people attended the community seder on April 19. Led by Laurie Franklin and supported with teachings by Rabbi Goldstein and food by University Catering, we read, sang, acted, drank, and ate our way through the evening in our own slightly wild style. This growing event may be straining the sanctuary's boundaries, but how gratifying to be in such a place.

Despite a long winter, I am in a warmer place because of Har Shalom.

---

### Board of Directors

President: Bert Chessin, 581-5193  
Vice President: Sherry Kolenda, 251-7995  
Treasurer: Jeff Bendremer, 498-1908  
Secretary: Kate Soukonnikov, 549-0503

### Members:

Jack Cohen, 543-4409    Marlene Hutchins, 721-2425  
David Jolles, 728-8344    Toba Winston, 777-3100

Send news, events, or letters to [info@har-shalom.org](mailto:info@har-shalom.org). Newsletters publish semi-monthly.

## LAURIE'S LETTER

By Lay Leader Laurie Franklin

Most days, I ask myself: "How are the people of Har Shalom doing?" All of us have personal strivings, yearnings, and physical and emotional ups and downs. But I'm asking a different question: I want to know if the Jewish life of our community has a positive effect on the daily lives of our members and fellow travelers.

Why is this important? First and foremost, I've learned through personal experience that Jewish practice has the power to be healing, elevating, centering, and joyful. For example, our calendar helps us celebrate times of joy: We can rejoice in our freedom from slavery (Passover, *Hanukkah*), in the bounty of the earth (the harvest festivals: *Sukkot*, Passover, *Shavuot*), in the birth, education, and marriage of our children (*Brit Milah*, Baby Namings, *B'nei Mitzvah*, Weddings). Every day, we can feel gratitude for life and savor the embrace of our blessings.

Further, the calendar leads us to encounter sadness and loss in ways that help us experience them fully and enables us to go on: we have rituals for mourning that affirm death as part of the cycle of life and help us revisit our memories and feel their sacredness (*Shiva*, *Shloshim*, *Yahrzeits*, *Kaddish*, *Yizkor*).

Our holidays form a spiritual map that enjoins us to engage in reflection, which in turn, leads us to reconnect with our highest ideals (High Holy Days). Our tradition teaches that each of us can live a "Torah" born of love and caring. So, I fervently wish that our congregants are learning how to live Jewishly and are experiencing the benefits.

But American society is not particularly encouraging of Jewish practice. Jewish holidays—even the Sabbath—most often collide with the secular calendar, so it requires deliberate focus and special effort to observe them. Jewish study—learning Torah, Talmud, modern commentary—is seen as the work of specialists, not you and me. If we haven't personally

experienced the fulfilling aspects of Jewish practice, we have no idea what they might be. So, each of us has to reckon with our choices about living Jewishly.

What does "living Jewishly" mean to you? Is there a place in your life for connecting more deeply with your Jewish journey? At Har Shalom, the door is open. You are invited to explore, learn, and grow.

## ATIDAYNU NEWS

by Sheehan Rosen

### ***Atidaynu* Class Creates Birthday Bags for Missoula Food Bank**

In March the *Atidaynu* preschool/kindergarten class, working with teen leaders Anna Kalm and Jeb Rosen, created birthday bags for the Missoula Food Bank. Each one-of-a-kind bag was decorated by a child in the *Atidaynu* class. The children filled the bags with a cake mix, a can of frosting, and a package of birthday candles. The bags were delivered to the Missoula Food Bank, where they will be given to clients who have a child with an upcoming birthday.

After they worked on the bags, one of the children proudly explained to her mother, "This bag is not for me." Another child said, "These bags are for people who need them more than me." Thank you to the *Atidaynu* students and their teachers for their help in repairing the world. As other *Atidaynu* classes come up with project ideas, social action committee members will be available to help implement their projects.

## Social Action Committee News

by Robin Abeshaus and Bert Chessin

### We need your Ideas

The Social Action Committee of Har Shalom works to make *Tikkun Olam* (repairing the world) an integral part of our congregation. We are always looking for ideas. If you have a social action project you'd like to see at Har Shalom, please let us know – there is a suggestion box in the lobby of Har Shalom or you can contact Robin Abeshaus at 542-7535 or [robina@imt.net](mailto:robina@imt.net)

#### Missoula Food Bank needs Har Shalom's Support

The Food Bank will have another major community food drive in May. After our very successful sorting work in December, Har Shalom has been asked to again send a crew of food sorters on WEDNESDAY, MAY 18, from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm. In December, those of us who were able to attend enjoyed our time together as well as the satisfaction of helping to stock the Food Bank shelves. No special skills are needed; we'll teach you all you need to know about the sorting job! Please contact Robin Abeshaus if you have questions or would like to sign up to work: 542-7535 or [robina@imt.net](mailto:robina@imt.net).

In addition to helping sort food, please think about the Food Bank as you restock your pantry shelves after the Passover holiday; the food bank collection bin is always in the lobby of Har Shalom to receive donations.

#### Family Promise

Har Shalom is taking steps to join other congregations to help Missoula's homeless families. A program called Family Promise is being organized in Missoula to provide shelter, food and support for one to three families at a time. Host congregations provide living quarters, food, educational and other support for families with children, something that is often lacking at existing facilities. Families stay overnight and are provided meals at the hosting congregation but spend their days at a day facility. It will take a number of Missoula congregations pulling together to make this happen, and in our initial discussions, it is realistic that Har

Shalom would be a supporting, not a hosting, congregation. The program is designed so that each participating congregation is actively involved with the families for about one week each quarter or four weeks a year. Robin Abeshaus has agreed to be the Har Shalom coordinator for the first year and the hope is to have Family Promise in place by fall 2011.

#### Montana Organizing Project

The Montana Organizing Project (MOP) is a state-wide organization of civic and community groups, faith groups, and unions that is focused on issues of health care, rebuilding Montana's economy, and maintaining vital services to Montanans. Bert Chessin has been serving on MOPs board of directors representing Har Shalom. During the legislative session in Helena, MOP brought together individuals from its organizations to meet with legislators for their support on education, health, and finances, for example, and joined with groups around the state to rally for keeping our commitment to healthy communities and the environment.

#### Hadassah News

##### Save the Date: 2011 Annual Montana Hadassah Chapter Meeting

Friday evening, June 17 through  
Sunday morning, June 19, 2011  
Ursuline Retreat & Conference Center,  
Great Falls, Montana

<http://www.ursulinecentre.com/>

For more information, contact  
[montana.hadassah@gmail.com](mailto:montana.hadassah@gmail.com)

## Montana Association of Jewish Communities (MAJCO) UPDATE

### Save the Date: MAJCO *Shabbaton* in Glacier Park

Friday through Sunday, July 15-17

Gather with Jews from all over Montana at our annual statewide *Shabbaton*, with community, hiking, and Jewish learning. Our special guest and keynote will be Rabbi David Saperstein from Washington, D.C., head of the Reform movement's Religious Action Center and, according to Newsweek's rankings, the third most influential rabbi in the United States.

### Repairing-the-World-One-Stitch-at-a-Time

by Roslyn Pinson

Knitters, crocheters and wannabes are welcome to join us for the upcoming gatherings of Repairing-the-World-One-Stitch-at-a-Time. There has been such a positive response to this group that we are now meeting twice a month, usually on the first and third Tuesdays of the month (check the calendar for any changes). We are making blankets and other needed items for shelter and foster children in the Missoula community. Bring scrap yarn and needles, if you have some at home. We will teach you how, if you don't now know.

If you or anyone you know has yarn to donate, please bring it to Har Shalom and leave it in the Library.

When: Tuesday, May 3rd, May 17th, June 28th, 6–8pm

Where: Har Shalom Library

Please bring something to nosh on. If you have any questions, call 546-3831 or e-mail [roslynpinson@yahoo.com](mailto:roslynpinson@yahoo.com)

### ***Pesach to Shavuot: From Freedom to Torah***

*Shavuot* Study and Celebration, Tuesday May 7, 8:30 pm

*Shavuot Yizkor*, Thursday May 9, 7:30 pm

By Laurie Franklin

I heard someone say recently that *Shavuot* is a celebration of cheesecake. That may indeed be true, but it's also much more! Beginning the second day of *Pesach*, we count the *Omer*, the Hebrew name for a measure of barley, for 49 days. On day 50, it's *Shavuot!* *Shavuot* means "weeks", and the name of the holiday corresponds to the seven weeks between *Pesach*, the time of the first barley harvest in Israel, and *Shavuot*, the time of first wheat harvest. Both *Pesach* and *Shavuot* are harvest holidays, and the ancient people of Israel were expected to walk to the Temple in Jerusalem and make gifts of the first fruits of the harvest. But both festivals also mark major events in the life of the people. *Pesach* celebrates the redemption from slavery in Egypt, and *Shavuot*, the handing down of the Torah. Thus, our holiday tradition links freedom with responsibility: You're free now, kids? Here's the law!

Traditionally, some groups sit up all night, re-enacting the handing down of the Torah by studying Torah, joyously, into the wee hours. At Har Shalom, we'll meet in the library at 8:30 pm, eat our cheesecake, wash it down with some wine or grape juice, and engage in fascinating text studies. Hope you can come!

On Thursday, we will hold a *Ma'ariv* (evening) and *Yizkor* memorial service in the library, beginning at 7:30 pm. *Yizkor*, the memorial prayer, is recited at the conclusion of each of the three harvest festivals (*Pesach*, *Shavuot* and *Sukkot*) and on *Yom Kippur*.

### Notices: Good News!

Former members Michael Parrish (the mom) and Patrick Watson (the dad) welcomed Asher Parrish Watson born Dec 26, 2010 in Urbana IL. Three weeks early at 7.5 pounds! We sent a card to them on behalf of everybody at Har Shalom.

---

## Calling all Foodies & Kuchers!

By Kate Soukonnikov

Har Shalom will begin creating our first-ever Jewish Heritage Cookbook this summer. We hope to collect recipes from members and your friends and family along with brief stories and anecdotes connected to the recipes.

We need your grandmother's Passover rolls, your favorite chicken soup and that cake you make for your best friend's birthday. We will hope to get oodles of *kugel*, *challah* and *latke* variations, along with brisket and *tsimmes*! It's a chance to preserve the food you love and remember the people who taught you how to make it.

Would you like to help put the cookbook together? We need recipe collectors, proofreaders, copy editors, Har Shalom historians and Jewish food mavens. For more information, call Sherry Kolenda 544-5677 or Kate Soukonnikov at 549-0503 or send an email to [info@har-shalom.org](mailto:info@har-shalom.org).

---

## From the Har Shalom Library: Books, books, books!

You will find reviewed books on the hall bookshelf. Members can borrow them.

From Kate Soukonnikov: ***Annie's Ghosts: A Journey into a Family Secret*** by Steve Luxenberg

Luxenberg, a journalist, learns late in life that his mother had a sister, something the family hadn't even hinted of. His mother always told everyone she was an only child. Why the secret? What happened? In this memoir-detective story, he investigates what happened to Annie Cohen, who was born in Detroit with disabilities and ended up spending her life in institutions. He resurrects her life story and that of countless others who suffered the same fate. The Washington Post calls the book, "A wise, affecting memoir of family secrets and posthumous absolution." Jewish immigration to the US and a relative who arrives after surviving the

Holocaust add to the richness of this family story.

From Toba Winston: ***Not by the Sword*** by Kathryn Watterson

This is a true, chilling and inspiring story of the amazing power of love. Despite the dangers, Michael Weisser, a Cantor, and his concerned Jewish family refused to be intimidated, responding instead to hate with kindness. The love they showed Larry Trapp, Grand Dragon of the Nebraska Ku Klux Klan, transformed Trapp from a hardened and bitter American Nazi Klansman into a crusader who sought to redeem his past life by apologizing to his victims and speaking out publicly against bigotry and racism.

Morris Dees, chief trial counsel for the Southern Poverty Law Center, author of *A Season for Justice: The Life and Times of Civil Rights Lawyer Morris Dees*, stated: "Watterson's book is a powerful reminder that love and forgiveness can truly conquer hate, and that there is good in everyone—even a Klansman."

---

## Adult Hebrew Going Strong

As I write this, we are entering week 7 of our 12-week introductory Adult Hebrew class, and the group is progressing well. We've been learning to write and read both block and cursive letters using pencil and paper, pipe cleaners, finger paints, songs, and charades! We've also been learning about the mystical character of each letter through the writings of Rabbi Lawrence Kushner and others. In the next weeks, we'll be reading passages from the *siddur* (prayerbook) and trying our hand at the craft of the Torah scribes. The final class on 6/1 will be a *siyum*, a celebration of the conclusion of study. We'll do some learning and have a festive meal!

If you are interested in learning to read prayer book Hebrew, please contact Laurie Franklin me at [info@har-shalom.org](mailto:info@har-shalom.org) or 549-9595. The next series begins fall 2011.

---

## **Torah Study Every Saturday at 10 am**

Study of Torah is the center of Judaism. Har Shalom has been holding Torah study sessions every week for as long as anyone can remember. If you attend Torah study, you already know that it is lively, participatory, and illuminating! Those who have not yet dipped a toe into these waters are encouraged to give it a try. So, please join us—no experience necessary—each Saturday at 10 am. Most Saturdays, we meet for two hours, read and discuss the *parsha* of the week and various commentaries. One Saturday each month (5/14 and 6/11), we meet for one hour only because Torah study is followed by a Saturday morning service. Each of us can encounter Torah and learn something valuable.

---

## **Shabbat Across America and Canada**

by Toba Winston

On Friday Night, March 4, hundreds of synagogues across the continent took part in a Jewish event celebrating that which unifies Jews everywhere: **SHABBAT!** About 90 guests filled the Har Shalom sanctuary for this wonderful event. Thanks for coming and sharing in a delicious and fun time!

I have a long list of people to thank for helping to make *Shabbat Across America and Canada* the success it was. I hope I have not left anyone out:

Laurie Franklin played smallpipes, led service and song, Elizabeth Howard did publicity, Adair Kanter and Sigrun Kuefner were the chief cooks of the delicious dinner! Ariel Barrett, Toba Winston, Maeta Kaplan, Rhonda Stahl, and Kate Soukonnikov assisted with the cooking. Melissa Moore arranged flowers, and Bert Chessin put together the wonderful band, baked *challah*, bought wine, and helped with set up. Laurie Harris compiled the list of guests and helped with organization. Ryon Brewer, Roger Dowdy, Merce Zingmark, Elizabeth Howard, Adair Kanter, Laurie Franklin and Toba Winston worked as the cleanup crew (until we ran out of hot water). Band members were: Bert Chessin, Marlene Hutchins, Jeff Bendremer, Laura Hibbs, Sonia Chessin, and Kate Soukonnikov.

---

## **CAMPS!!!!**

**Shalom Soul Train Summer Camp, Aug 1 to 5**

*Call Bert Chessin for more information 531-5193*

**Montana Summer Camp in Bozeman for Jewish Youth Ages 11 & up**

*Monday, Aug 8 to Friday, Aug 12*

Congregation Beth Shalom in Bozeman, in association with Soul Train from Israel, and the Montana Association of Jewish Communities, is pleased to announce our FIRST ever state-wide summer program.

The Summer Camp at Beth Shalom is designed to give young people who are being raised as Jews, from Montana and surrounding areas, an enriching opportunity to learn more about Judaism, Israel and Jewish cultures and traditions, while getting to know youth from other parts of the state, making friends, having fun, and practicing some Hebrew!

Two camp counselors from Soul Train in Israel will facilitate the program, with support from Beth Shalom families. Participants from outside Bozeman will be billeted to stay with the families of Bozeman participants. Questions? Call Jenny Rassaby Ryan at (406) 579 3846 or email [rassabies@gmail.com](mailto:rassabies@gmail.com).

## 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 wonderful way to honor someone and support Jewish community.

To make a donation, pay membership dues or religious school fees, go to [www.PayPal.com](http://www.PayPal.com) and send your payment to [HarShalomMsla@gmail.com](mailto:HarShalomMsla@gmail.com). Please specify the intention of your donation: Memorial; Honor; Membership; Capital Campaign; school, camp, or special event fee. Your donation will be deposited directly into the synagogue account. If you use a credit card, please consider adding 2% to your donation to cover our credit card fees. If you send a donation by conventional mail, please remember to use Har Shalom's new post office box: PO Box 3715, Missoula 59806.

## Memorial

Craig and Joan Kuchel      In loving memory of my father, Dr. Zangwill H. Freed,  
Peoria IL (March 26)

## Passover Donations

Jack and Pat Cohen  
Toba Winston  
Kate Soukonnikov  
Jackie Cohen  
Diana Lurie

## 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](mailto:info@har-shalom.org).

## IYYAR

17 (21 May) Meyer Tuchinsky *Toba and Laura Winston's father/grandfather*

## SIVAN

18 (20 June) Gloria Belsky *Jill Belsky's mother*  
18 (20 June) Belle Zamosky *Roslyn Pinson's mother*  
19 (21 June) Al Rosenthal  
22 (24 June) Dora Frankel Gross *Barbara Gross's mother*



P.O. BOX 3715, MISSOULA, MONTANA 59806

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

---

***Todah Rabah Thank you very much!***

Har Shalom is grateful for your acts of support!

Jeff Bendremer and Danielle Wozniak for donation of the nice blue couch in the lobby; Scholar-in-Residence weekend with Rabbi Niles Goldstein: Bert Chessin for arranging the events, the Friday evening set-up crew, Toba Winston for hosting the after-hike meal and providing a car for R. Goldstein, Trina Valencich and Ed Rosenberg for providing home hospitality to R. Goldstein; Robin Abeshaus for coordinating and expanding Har Shalom's volunteer hours at the Missoula Food Bank; Dave Jolles for building the Taj Mahal of storage shelving in the Har Shalom storage room; Marlene Hutchins for professional services to design a logo and create a message for Har Shalom; Anonymous book and music donors to the Har Shalom library; Cedar Mountain Software for support services to revise and refine our website; Damien Margo for professional consultation on web site improvement; The Lotto family for a generous Oneg in honor of Ben Lotto's Bar Mitzvah; all the Friday evening Oneg providers and Challah bakers; Seder: Jackie Cohen for assistance at the door; Bert Chessin for delicious charoses; clean-up crew: Laurie Franklin, Bert Chessin, and others, Pat Cohen for newsletter editing.

---