



SONS *of* ABRAHAM

LAFAYETTE, IN

Established 1889

January 2011

25 Tevat – 26 Shevat

President: Mark Lillanfeld

Send bulletin items to:

penmike@embarqmail.com

Sisterhood Co-Presidents:

Jo Gartenhaus and Heather Moskowitz

Gratitude, Condolences and Congratulations

Mazel Tov to **Eyal Barash** and **Gabrielle Cramer** on the birth of their twin sons, **Max** and **Zach**. A party was scheduled Friday, December 31, 3:00-5:00 P.M. at Temple Israel. Also, Mazel Tov to **Sonia Barash**, the proud and happy grandmother! The **Menashe Cohen family** came to the synagogue Friday night December 24 and said to say, "hello" to everyone. **Margret Robb** has been selected as chief judge of the Indiana Court of Appeals. Two new leaves have been donated to our Tree of Life. The **Lillianfeld family** honored **Becky's** Bat Mitzvah and **Earl** and **Susan Prohofsky** honored for their 50th Anniversary. **Aela Sapir**, who was a Bat Mitzvah here at the Shul, visited recently. Her brother **Hillel** came back to town and went to Purdue and showed up at services occasionally. Thanks to **Sam Harris** and **Scott Rumpza** for changing the Ark curtain and Torah mantles from the High Holiday white to the covers used the balance of the year.

Refuah Shelema

We offer prayers for health, complete recovery and long life to **Florence Lillianfeld, Johanna Gartenhaus, Marge Aronson, Joe Haberer, Madelyn Lillianfeld, Sarah Raskin, Barney Axelrod, Irwin** and **Iris Treager** and **Fritz Friedlaender**.

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Latkes Reign Supreme!

Neil Zimmerman outdid himself for our December latke party. **Neil** did all the shopping for the latke ingredients, made special latkes for those with a problem with the usual ingredients, and worked with the other "Friars" to make latkes by the dozen. Then he and the rest of the Klezmerim entertained with Chanukah melodies and typical klezmer tunes. Also thanks to **Sue Prohofsky** and **Sonya Garfinkel** who worked behind the scenes. Additional thanks to **Sonya** for handling the sale of Chanukah merchandise.

Adding to the festivities was a celebration of **Madelyn Lillianfeld's** birthday, enhanced by the beautiful and tasty birthday cake brought from Indianapolis by **Madelyn's** sister, **Suzie Jacobs**.

January Calendar

January 1: Saturday 10:00 a.m. – Shabbat Services

January 7: Friday 8:00 p.m. – Erev Shabbat Services

January 8: Saturday 10:00 a.m. – Shabbat Services

January 10: Monday: 1:30 p.m. – Sisterhood Board Meeting at the home of Harriet Diamond.

January 18: Tuesday – Noon – Sisterhood Lunch at Christos

January 20: Thursday 8:00 p.m. Board Meeting

January 21: Friday 8:00 p.m. – Erev Shabbat Services

January 22: Saturday 10:00 a.m. – Shabbat Services

January 28: Friday 8:00 p.m. – Erev Shabbat Services

January 29: Saturday 10:00 a.m. – Shabbat Services

Yahrzeits

Name	2011	Hebrew Date
Axelrod, Sara	January 5	Tevet 29
Bass, Lillyan	January 5	Tevet 29
Paul, Clara	January 6	Shevat 1
Paul, Bertha	January 6	Shevat 1
Leibovitz, Morris	January 7	Shevat 2
Krushen, Gertrude	January 9	Shevat 4
Friedman, Louis	January 10	Shevat 5
Mazor, Lolly	January 11	Shevat 6
Bercovitz, Sadie G.	January 11	Shevat 6
Spector, Chajah	January 12	Shevat 7
Feinstein, Gittle	January 14	Shevat 9
Krushen, Wolf	January 18	Shevat 13
Simon, David	January 22	Shevat 17
Urish, Florence Resnick	January 23	Shevat 18
Lipschutz, Maurice	January 23	Shevat 18
Krushen, Simon	January 28	Shevat 23
Atlass, Rachel R.	January 29	Shevat 24
Miller, Anna	January 29	Shevat 24
Klatch, Ben Zion	January 29	Shevat 24
Leonards, Gerald A.	January 29	Shevat 24
Korenstein, Isadore	January 31	Shevat 26
Moskowitz, David	January 31	Shevat 26
Grinberg, Samuel Aaron	February 1	Shevat 27
Harris, Gussie	February 3	Shevat 29

Candle Lighting Times

Source: Rabbi Rascoe

Shabbat January candle lighting times:

January 7: 5:21 PM

January 14: 5:28 PM

January 21: 5:36 PM

January 28: 5:44 PM

Save the date!

There will be a Sisterhood Lunch Out at the Christos restaurant in West Lafayette, on Tuesday, January 18th, at noon.

All Sisterhood members are urged to attend.

Sisterhood Board Meeting

The Sisterhood Board will meet Monday, January 10 at 1:30 p.m. at the home of **Harriet Diamond**.

Correction

The correct email for **Penny and Mike Adler** is penmike@embarqmail.com. Please take a moment to correct your 2010 - 2011 Calendar & Directory. (The one with the orange cover.)

Rabbi's Reflections:

T"u Bishvat and Blessing

T"u Bishvat means the fifteenth [day of the Hebrew month] of *Shevat*. In Hebrew, letters also indicate numbers, so *T"u* means 9+6. We do not use 10+5 since the Hebrew letters *yod* and *he* together form one of God's names.

In Leviticus 19:23-25, we may not eat fruit from trees until the fifth year (we may not use the fruit for the first three years; we dedicate the fourth's year harvest to God). In the Talmud, *Rosh Ha-Shanah* 1:1, we calculate a tree's age on the fifteenth of *Shevat* (following Hillel's School, not Shammai's School who picked the first of *Shevat*; we also reckon produce tithes using this date). If you plant a tree on the fourteenth of *Shevat*, its birthday is the next day, but if you plant a tree on the sixteenth of *Shevat*, its birthday is the following *T"u Bishvat*, a year away. Since all produce belongs to God, only after we acknowledge God may we use it.

For years I told a story at LJCRS about all the bad things that befell a man in a short period of time. With nothing left, the desperate man left town. Tired and hungry, he saw a tree by the roadside, ate some fruit without blessing, and slept. He heard a voice calling, "Robber! Robber!" He looked around, saw nothing, and went back to sleep. After two more times, he realized that the tree was calling him a robber for taking its fruit and not thanking God.

The Talmud, *Ta'anit* 5b-6a, has another story about a tree and blessing. Rav Nahman asked Rabbi Yitshaq to bless him. Rabbi Yitshaq replied with a parable. A hungry, tired and thirsty man traveling in the desert came on a tree with fruit and shade by a stream. He ate, drank and slept. When he awoke, he said, "O Tree, how shall I bless you? If I say, 'May your fruit be sweet, your shade pleasant, and you be by a nice stream, all of this exists,' so I will

say, 'May it be God's will that all the shoots taken from you shall be like you.'" Rabbi Yitshaq blessed Rav Nahman similarly. Since Rav Nahman had learning, riches and children, Rabbi Yitshaq blessed Rav Nahman, "May it be God's will that your offspring be like you."

These two stories about trees and blessing convey a number of ideas. We should thank God for our blessings, no matter our straights. Riches are not the only blessing; learning and children are too. We do not wish for what is, or to change what is, for it already exists, but we can wish for a foreseeable, realistic future. The future, by the way, for which we wish, we are required to help happen for wishing in and of itself is not sufficient.

Though I could write more, the final points I wish to make concern continuity. Some see life as to be lived for ourselves, and, maybe, our children. The first story points out that without God, and someone to plant, the future would not happen. The second story teaches that continuity requires children and grandchildren like us, living with and committed to the values we hold and imbue in them.

T"u Bishvat is a minor holiday, meaning we can work on it. On it we do not say *tahanun*, prayers of supplication (its meaning). In a positive way, we eat traditional Israeli produce (wheat, barley, grapes (vines), figs, pomegranates, olives and dates (honey) mentioned in Deuteronomy 8:8, and some add modern Israeli produce like oranges), from Israel when possible. Courtesy of the *qabbalists*, some make a *seder* of it. A new custom is to plant trees in Israel (Zionism and ecology are important values as I have written in the past). Planting trees is more important this year than usual due to the major fire in Northern Israel. Though a "minor" holiday, *T"u Bishvat's* ideas are major.

LJCRS News

Shalom! I hope that everyone is surviving the cold weather! Our students have accomplished a lot this semester, and I can't wait to start up again on January 9th. We have a lot planned for the winter, and I hope to get lots of parent and community participation.

First some important reminders: The weather now being what it is, we wanted to remind everyone of our inclement weather policy, with some corrections from our newsletter.

Before 8:00 AM, based on the available information, Rabbi Pollack and Elana will determine whether to cancel school. In case of cancellation, families will be phoned by LJCRS staff between 8:00 and 8:30 AM. Also, WBAA and local TV channel 18 will be notified.

Of course we realize that not all families live within the West Lafayette area. Please use your own discretion in determining whether it is safe to come to school. We understand that even if school is open not everyone may be able to attend.

Also, just a quick reminder about parking: It is important that we leave the doors of the school clear for students to enter and exit, so please do not park directly in front of the doors. Thank you for your cooperation in this.

Onto some class news:

Our 7/8/9th class has finished its photography project! These students worked very hard all semester to analyze and then compose their own photographs that express some aspect of Jewish values or identity. If you get a chance, take a look at their final photographs, which are hanging on the bulletin board outside their room. We are hoping also to make a book of these photos to keep for future years. Special thanks to guest teacher Heather Dominick, a photographer and photography teacher, who shared her incredible knowledge and helped our students perfect their photos.

Next semester this class will be starting a new minicourse that deals with relationships, sexuality and choices. This is the first time this course has been offered at LJCRS, and we are very excited to finally bring it. It will be taught by Phil Subeck and Elizabeth Justice, with assistance by Lori Stein-Sabol.

Also, congratulations to our consecrated students! Consecration took place on December 5th. Students received Torahs and blessings, and led the school in prayer and song. We look forward to their work in the years to come.

Some upcoming events:

Our Tu B'shevat seder will take place on January 16, 2011. It is perhaps a good thing that in the middle of winter we celebrate Tu B'Shevat, reminding us about our love and respect for the natural world. We hope that many parents will participate with their children in this event.

Our next Parent-Tot Time will be January 21, 2011, from 10:30 to 11:30 in the multipurpose room. We will do songs, stories and crafts with some emphasis on the Tu B'Shevat holiday. All children aged 0-3 and their parents in the Jewish community are welcome to attend.

Everyone have a good break, be careful driving, and we will see you in January!

L'vracha,

Elana Salzman

Happy Day Cards

To commemorate any simcha or recognize any other event call or **Iris Treager** at 463-2468. They will send your card for a minimum donation of \$5.00. Send your check, made out to Sisterhood Sons of Abraham, to **Sonya Garfinkel**, Sisterhood Treasurer, 2229 Carberry Drive, West Lafayette, IN 47906.

Seems right to us...

A reporter interviewed a 105-year-old man whom he had had interviewed 5 years before.

Reporter: "What has changed since I last interviewed you?"

Man: "Less peer pressure." (Thanks to **Geri Horwich**, who passed this on from her doctor.)

Deadline for February

Monday, January 24 is the deadline for submission of material for the Sons of Abraham Bulletin. Please send material to penmike@embarqmail.com

“But he was good to his mother...”

Jewish mobsters were a product of their times (1920s and 1930s) and did not continue their legacy after that one period, while other gangsters handed their “profession” to each succeeding generation.

What follows is a side of Jewish history you may have missed.

There are few excuses for the behavior of Jewish gangsters in the 1920s and 1930s. The best known Jewish gangsters — Meyer Lansky, Bugsy Siegel, Longy Zwillman, Moe Dalitz, David Berman were involved in the numbers rackets, illegal drug dealing, prostitution, gambling and loan sharking. They were not nice men.

They proved staunch defenders of the Jewish people during the rise of American Nazism in the 1930s and when Israel was being founded between 1945 and 1948. The roots of Jewish gangsterism lay in the ethnic neighborhoods of the Lower East Side; Brownsville, Brooklyn; Maxwell Street in Chicago; and Boyle Heights in Los Angeles. Like other newly arrived groups in American history, a few Jews who considered themselves blocked from respectable professions used crime as a means to “make good” economically. The market for vice flourished during Prohibition and Jews joined with others to exploit the artificial market created by the legal bans on alcohol, gambling, paid sex and narcotics.

Few of these men were religiously observant. They rarely attended services, although they did support congregations financially. They did not keep kosher or send their children to day schools. However, at crucial moments they protected other Jews in America and around the world.

The 1930s were a period of rampant anti-Semitism in America, particularly in the Midwest. Father Charles Coughlin, the Radio Priest in Detroit, and William Pelley of

Minneapolis, among others, openly called for Jews to be driven from positions of responsibility, if not from the country itself.

Organized Brown Shirts in New York and Silver Shirts in Minneapolis outraged and terrorized American Jewry. While the older and more respectable Jewish organizations pondered a response that would not alienate non-Jewish supporters, others—including a few rabbis—asked the gangsters to break up American Nazi rallies.

Historian Robert Rockaway, writing in the journal of the American Jewish Historical Society, notes that German-American Bund rallies in the New York City area posed a dilemma for mainstream Jewish leaders. They wanted the rallies stopped, but had no legal grounds on which to do so. New York State Judge Nathan Perlman personally contacted Meyer Lansky to ask him to disrupt the Bund rallies, with the proviso that Lansky’s henchmen stop short of killing any Bundists. Enthusiastic for the assignment, if disappointed by the restraints, Lansky accepted all of Perlman’s terms except one: he would take no money for the work. Lansky later observed, “I was a Jew and felt for those Jews in Europe who were suffering. They were my brothers.”

For months, Lansky’s workmen effectively broke up one Nazi rally after another. As Rockaway notes, “Nazi arms, legs and ribs were broken and skulls were cracked, but no one died.”

Lansky recalled breaking up a Brown Shirt rally in the Yorkville section of Manhattan: “The stage was decorated with a swastika and a picture of Hitler. The speakers started ranting. There were only fifteen of us but we went into action. We threw some of them out the windows.... Most of the Nazis panicked and ran out. We chased them and beat them up.... We wanted to show them that Jews would not always sit back and accept insults.”

In Minneapolis, William Dudley Pelley organized a Silver Shirt Legion to “rescue” America from an imaginary Jewish-Communist conspiracy. In

Pelle's own words, just as "Mussolini and his Black Shirts saved Italy and as Hitler and his Brown Shirts saved Germany," he would save America from Jewish communists. Minneapolis gambling czar David Berman confronted Pelley's Silver Shirts on behalf of the Minneapolis Jewish community.

Berman learned that Silver Shirts were mounting a rally at Lodge. When the Nazi leader called for all the "Jew bastards" in the city to be expelled, or worse, Berman and his associates burst into the room and started cracking heads. After ten minutes, they had emptied the hall. His suit covered in blood, Berman took the microphone and announced, "This is a warning. Anybody who says anything against Jews gets the same treatment. Only next time it will be worse." After Berman broke up two more rallies, there were no more public Silver Shirt meetings in Minneapolis.

Jewish gangsters also helped establish Israel after the war. One famous example is a meeting between Bugsy Siegel and Reuven Dafne, a Haganah emissary, in 1945. Dafne was seeking funds and guns to help liberate Palestine from British rule. A mutual friend arranged for the two men to meet.

"You mean to tell me Jews are fighting?" Siegel asked,

"You mean fighting as in killing?" Dafne answered in the affirmative. Siegel replied, "I'm with you."

For weeks, Dafne received suitcases filled with \$5 and \$10 bills — \$50,000 in all — from Siegel.

No one should paint gangsters as heroes. They committed acts of great evil. But historian Robert Rockaway has presented a textured version of Jewish gangster history in a book ironically titled *But He Was Good to His Mother*.

Some have observed that, despite their disreputable behavior, they could be good to their people, too. A little interesting bit of Jewish history....

I am Israel - Yerushalayim Version

An outstanding video dealing with the current conflict in the Middle East may be viewed at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w4bM2QG3r-I> Thanks to **Irwin Treager** who included this touching (and anything but funny) video in his listings of jokes sent during December. It lasts 5:48.

Shul Board Solicits Donations to Special Purpose Funds

The **Chosnek Fund**, named for **Sam and Edith Chosnek**, is for ritual. For example, the fund could be used to repair such things a Torah covers and the like. The **Elkin Fund**, named for **Barry Elkin**, is for educational purposes. It might be used to pay part of the cost of bringing in a speaker. The **100th Anniversary Fund**, established by **Ed Simon**, is for capital expenses related to building maintenance. The **Ha Gomel Fund** is to celebrate recent recoveries from illness.

Sons of Abraham Special Funds Donation Form

Enclosed please find my check in the amount of

\$_____.

Please apply to: _____

Ha Gomel (recovery) of: _____

100th Anniversary (Building) _____

Elkin Fund (Education) _____

Chosnek Fund (Ritual) _____

Donation in Honor / Memory of _____

Is the donor's name to be held in confidence?

Send check with this form to:

Sons of Abraham

P.O. Box 2671, West Lafayette, IN 47906-2671

Donations will be acknowledged

And now – a word from Jerusalem “correspondent” Cyrelle Simon

I recently heard a lecture at my Rosh Chodesh group, based partly on the book *Start Up Nation*. Some facts, which I cannot verify, include: every cell phone in the world has a microchip developed in Israel. There's a law in the Knesset for models to have to pass a weight test so that they avoid anorexia and bulimia. Israel is producing innovative hearing aids. Scientists are working on a simple blood test to diagnose some forms of cancer. Israel, in conjunction with scientists at Harvard developed an injection to combat macular degeneration. On the railway from Modiin to Tel-Aviv weekly courses are offered. (I don't know in what subjects.) Drip irrigation designed by Israel is used in many countries. Forbes magazine lists Israel as the 22nd best place to live. Bill Gates of Microsoft announced, “The brains of this company are in Haifa”. The CT SCAN and MRI tests were developed in Israel. I found the talk uplifting.

When I learned of the outrageous, raging fire in the north, I called several friends, to verify that they were all right. **Channah** and **Menashi Barak**, who lived in Lafayette, told me all residents were instructed to keep their windows closed to avoid smoke inhalation, and **Channah** added that they could see the fire from their windows. In regard to the need for rain, the north had a plentiful rainfall shortly after the fire. The Rabbis, in addition to adding more prayers for rain at the Kotel and during the daily davening, also declared a fast day. I read that it's been 50 years since the month of November did not have a drop of rain. There was almost no rain in October and very, very little since Pesach. There was a real drought here.

Bat Mitzvah Customs, Celebration

When a Jewish girl turns twelve, she becomes obligated in all the commandments of the Torah, and is therefore a full-fledged 'Bat Mitzvah' (daughter of the commandments). As far as I know there is a wide variety of rituals celebrating a girl's Bat Mitzvah. I believe the custom was initiated about 60 years ago. As a girl growing up in Conservative religious circles, I knew no one who had a Bat Mitzvah party. The rite

of passage was the Sweet Sixteen Party. Since I'm now part of the Israeli Chareidi world, I recently had the chance to participate in my granddaughter **Channie's** special event. The occasion was commemorated on her 12th birthday, which is typical in religious circles. In many schools the girls are not allowed to invite any of their classmates to the celebration, the reason being that the classes are large 35-40 students, and most girls will be 12 during the same year. A Bat Mitzvah girl would generally invite the entire class and that would cost a lot of money for expenses. In addition, the school puts on a big production with all the girls in the Bat Mitzvah age class. My daughter, **Shira**, planned a charming afternoon event. About 18 guests came including **Channie's** older sister, sister in law, aunt, cousins, neighbors, and family friends. The program was creative, entertaining and inspiring. **Channi** gave an eloquent speech, thanking in detail all her relatives and expressing her feeling upon assuming the role of adulthood. One of the neighbors gave a stirring D'var Torah, mentioning that now that **Channie** was Bat Mitzvah her prayers would be included in those of all the Congregation of the Jewish people. **Channie** and her younger sister, **Miraleh** performed some original dances. There was a demonstration of carving vegetables to make a very attractive platter. I played some festive music of **Channie's** favorite songs on the keyboard; there was some spontaneous singing and some very tasty food. Challah dough was brought in and **Channie**, for the first time, made the blessing of taking the challah, which was followed by a heartfelt prayer. Now that she is bat mitzvah, and considered an adult in Jewish law, she was able to fulfill the important commandment of separating a portion of dough. In Temple times, the dough would be gifted to the kohanim (priests). Since the month of Kislev has 2 days Rosh Chodesh, **Channie** and her mom came up to Jerusalem to pray at the Kotel, then met me and a cousin for lunch. Following lunch our cousin, **Tchayah** treated **Channie** to some exceptionally pretty clothes, purchased in the very religious neighborhood of Mea Shearim. A piece of gold jewelry is a traditional gift for a Bat Mitzvah. Channie's parents presented her with a lovely gold necklace.