

# BULLETIN

Editor: Stan Schaffer

## **February President's Message**

Friends,

Somehow, the dark end of January is a time which does not engender enthusiasm. The days are getting longer, but it really isn't perceptible yet. We've had some snowy spells and some bone chilling cold. But, take heart! Spring is on the way. By the time you read this, our Tu B'Shevat seder will be past. The next big event doesn't come until the very end of February, when we will have our traditional Purim celebration on Saturday night February 27<sup>th</sup>. Join us for a fun evening. Costumes are encouraged.

In early March comes Shabbat Across America, which we will celebrate at Temple Beth Am. Passover will be here before we know it at the end of March.

Most people in our congregation have gotten out of the habit of attending Friday night services. One of the nice things about doing joint services with Beth Am is that their congregation has more people who attend services on Friday nights. If you are someone who has attended Friday night services in the past, and perhaps stopped because they were poorly attended, please come to one of our joint Friday night services. On the second Friday of the month we have joint services at Beth Am, and on the third Friday we have joint services at BHBI. You will find a friendly service with a D'var Torah which will give you something to think about. On February 12<sup>th</sup>, at Beth Am, Rabbi Goldberg will be officiating, as he also will the next morning at BHBI.

As I am writing this, our wheelchair lift has been delivered. I hope it will be installed by the time you are reading this. Please spread the word of our building's increased accessibility. It will be great to see some of the people who have been unable to attend services coming back. To date we have received about \$8,000 in donations and pledges. There is about \$3,500 to go. I'll spare you the begging and pleading, you know what to do.

B'shalom,

*Leon Metlay*



The Jewish Community Federation's population study of the Greater Rochester Jewish community can now be completed on-line. The Federation plans to survey every member of our community including those who are unaffiliated. The study welcomes everyone to contribute their opinions and input. The study, sponsored by the Federation with substantial financial support from Jewish Senior *Life*, includes several in-depth questions for those helping to make planning decisions for aging parents, as well as those planning for their own retirement needs. Additional questions will explore the needs of interfaith families, singles, teens, and other key sub-populations. And then there's the issue of our numbers: How has the size of our community changed since our community's last demographic study in 1999? Help answer these questions by completing the survey today. If you don't have a computer, call the Federation at 461-0490 to set up a phone interview.

**Complete the survey on-line at <http://www.countmeinsurvey.org/>**

## BHBI CALENDAR OF EVENTS – FEBRUARY 2010

Friday	Feb 5	7:00 PM	Shabbat Evening Service at Heather Heights in Pittsford Light candles at 5:09 PM
Saturday	Feb 6	10:00 AM	Joint Shabbat Morning Services with Temple Beth Am at Beth Am Torah: Yitro
Sunday	Feb 7	9:00 AM	Service, Breakfast and Discussion
Monday	Feb 8	7:30 PM	Monthly Meeting of the BHBI Board of Trustees
Wednesday	Feb 10	7:30 PM	Small Shul Collaborative Torah Study Session at BHBI
Friday	Feb 12	8:00 PM	Joint Shabbat Evening Service with Temple Beth Am at Beth Am with Rabbi Goldberg officiating Light candles at 5:19 PM
Saturday	Feb 13	9:30 AM	Joint Shabbat Morning Service with Temple Beth Am at BHBI with Rabbi Goldberg officiating Blessing for the new month. Torah: Mispatim
Sunday	Feb 14	9:00 AM	Service, Breakfast and Discussion
Friday	Feb 19	8:00 PM	Joint Shabbat Evening Service with Temple Beth Am at BHBI Light candles at 5:28 PM
Saturday	Feb 20	9:30 AM	Shabbat Morning Service Torah: Terumah
Sunday	Feb 21	9:00 AM	Service, Breakfast and Discussion
Friday	Feb 26	8:00 PM	Shabbat Evening Service Light candles at 5:37 PM
Saturday	Feb 27	9:30 AM	Shabbat Morning Service Torah: Tetzaveh
		7:00 PM	Purim Megillah Reading
Sunday	Feb 28	9:00 AM	Service, Breakfast and Discussion

**IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO MAKE A DONATION  
TO HELP US PAY FOR THE WHEELCHAIR  
LIFT!**

**IF YOU HAVEN'T DONE SO YET, PLEASE MAKE YOUR  
DONATION TODAY**

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**

February 2010

During this month we read *Parashat Yitro*, surely one of the most important portions of the Torah because it contains the Revelation of God and the *Aseret ha-Dibrot*, the Decalogue (Exodus 20) and the events on Mt. Sinai leading towards this momentous event. The description of the latter (Exodus 19) has fascinated our Torah commentators.

In the very first verse of the *sidra* we read: "On the third [new] month, *ba-hodesh ha-sheleishi*, after the Israelites had gone forth from the Land of Egypt, on that very day, *ba-yom ha-zeh*, they entered the wilderness of Sinai (Exodus 19:1)."

It has been noted that, in the Hebrew, this verse begins without the usual, *vayehi*, often translated as "it came to pass." There is no connection with anything preceding, no linkage. The intent is to make us aware that the drama we are about to witness (Revelation) stands alone and is unique. It is as though it stands alone in time.

The time is, however, is mentioned, but there is a vagueness about it. *Ba-hodesh ha-sheleishi* can mean "the third month" or (on the) "third new moon." If we take it as the latter (at the beginning of the month), if you recall that the Exodus took place in the middle of the month of Nisan, then this event would have been some seven weeks later, which is why, in later rabbinic tradition, the event the Revelation was connected to the Festival of Shavuot, the Festival celebrating the Giving of the Torah. Seven, of course, is also, according to biblical thought, a symbol of perfection, so that this was the most perfect and natural time for Revelation and the Giving of the Torah.

There is something strange about the Hebrew phrase, *ba-yom ha-zeh*. It really means "on this day" [they entered the wilderness of Sinai]. Surely the Hebrew should surely have been *bayom ha-hu*, "on that day" (a phrase you know from the Aleinu). As Rashi comments, "it ought to have been written *ba-yom ha-hu*, not *ba-yom ha-zeh*. What then is the force of the words *ba-yom ha-zeh*? To teach that the commands of the Torah should be to you each day as something new, as though God had only just given them."

In other words, although the Revelation was connected to a point in time, even though a vagueness surrounded the exact timing of that occasion, the Revelation is not something merely of the past, a one time event. The Revelation and acceptance of the obligations of that Revelation is really any day, any time, any moment when one takes on the teachings of the Torah.

Moses ascends the mountain, but despite our familiarity with the phrase "*Har Sinai*, Mount Sinai," we really don't know where this mountain is. In Exodus Chapter 19 the text merely says that the Israelites came into the wilderness of Sinai and encamped there in the wilderness. This is not by accident. As the Italian-Jewish scholar Umberto Cassuto wrote, "Just as the Torah did not desire to associate the appearance of God expressly with a specific time, it did not want to link it with a definite place...It is fitting that the event remains shrouded in the mists of sanctity." (By the way, it was not even a proper mountain, one that towered over other mountains, perhaps to teach us that God can reveal himself in the most unexpected of places and not where we necessarily think God's presence is revealed). More than a specific, identifiable place, Sinai is a concept, a symbol, the beginning of a process of God revealing Himself to Israel.

As we move to the actual Decalogue in Exodus Chapter 20, immediately before giving of the *Aseret ha-Dibrot* we read, *Vayedaber elohim et kol ha-devarim ha-eileh leimor*, "God spoke all these words, saying." The rabbis of old noticed that this verse would have worked just as well without the inclusion of the word *kol*, "all."

The Midrash tried to explain why the word "all" was included. It responded by stating that the phrase indicated that every generation has a voice in how God's word from Sinai is translated into life. "These are the souls that will one day be created,...although they did not yet exist, still each one receive his share of the Torah...not only did the all the prophets receive their prophecy from Sinai, but also each of the Sages that arose in every generation received his wisdom from Sinai." The Sages in our generation include, in the humility of their wisdom and compassion, our Conservative Committee on Law and Standards, and any Jew who studies with diligence and love the words of our tradition.

But even when we remain open and receptive to the teachings and interpretations throughout all the generations, not every Jew can necessarily fulfill the words of the Torah in the same way. It is one thing to hear the words of Torah, it is another to accept them, internalize them and practice them. The rabbis of old understood this well. They noted the verse "*kol adonay ba-koah*, with voice of the Lord is with power" (Ps. 29:4). They took *ba-koah* to refer, not to God, but to the people. According to the power of the each person is the ability to understand, practice and fulfill the words of the Torah. That is how the voice of God is heard.

# 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.

February 5-6	Shevat	February 12-13	Shevat-Adar	February 19-20	Adar	February 26-27	Adar
Sarah Maltinsky*	23	Lottie Fink*	29	Anna Ainspan	6	Charles Saul Gordon*	13
Bernard Falk*	25	Rose Ring*	29	Dora Newell*	6	Rose Riwkin*	13
Marian Bernstein*	27	Henrietta Schaffer	30	William Schwartz*	6	Marion Carton Gulack	14
Ada Goldstein*	27	Boris Schwarts	30	Anna Schiff*	9	Charles Ambush*	15
Samuel Keyfetz*	27	Sam Finkelstein*	1	Edith Berkowitz*	10	Gussie Gillenson	
		Mary Weinrib*	1	Samuel Goldstein*	10	Bernstein*	15
		Paula Lewin	2	Fanny Techler		Irvin Boyer*	15
		Werner Schaffer	2	Levinson*	10	Stanley Muszynski*	15
		Philip Schiff*	3	Max Metlay	10	Haskall Isaac Smith*	15
		Anna Solomon	3	Nachama Pincus	10	Abraham Alderman*	16
* Denotes name memorialized on BHBI Memorial Plaque		Betty Glaser	4	Shanie Rachel		Celia Engel*	16
		Anna Ruderman*	4	Robinson*	11	Max Levy	17
		Hyman Sablowsky*	4	Irving Gold	12	Edna Astrachan*	19
		Emma Sarachan*	4				
		Celia Lapides *	5				


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.

## 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](mailto:stanschaffer@frontiernet.net)

## AMAZON.COM

The next time that you want to buy something from Amazon.com go to the BHBI web page at [www.BHBIRochester.org](http://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!!

<p>Rochester's Jewish Funeral Home</p>  <p>Establishing a New Tradition</p> <p><b>BRIGHTON MEMORIAL CHAPEL, INC.</b> Graveside, Temple or Chapel Services. Now respectfully maintaining the PARSKY records.</p> <p>Jarrod M. Krieger owner &amp; 4th generation Rochesterian <a href="http://www.BrightonMemorialChapel.com">www.BrightonMemorialChapel.com</a></p> <p><b>427-8520</b> 3325 Winton Road South S/W corner of Jefferson &amp; Winton Rds</p>	<p><b>RUHL FUNERAL HOME</b></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><b>DOUGLAS M. RUHL</b> FUNERAL DIRECTOR</p>
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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](mailto:stanschaffer@frontiernet.net)**

**TO OUR DONORS -- THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!**  
**WHEELCHAIR LIFT FUND**

*Harry Rogachefsky*

*Ken and Mollie Traub*

*Tamara Strubel*

*Ira Cohen*

**RABBI GOLDBERG FUND**

*Tamara Strubel*

*Helen Arditi*

*Ira Cohen*

**GENERAL FUND**

*The Wolk Foundation*

*Paula Bobb*

*Nina Klionsky and Leon Metlay*

In memory of:

Joseph Teitel

Ingeborg Vogelstein

Dianne Hooker

Herbert Hirsch

*Leslie Toker and Jeff Nidetz*

In memory of Lottie Fink

*Jack and Sondra Fink*

**THE RABBI GOLDBERG FUND**

Contributions to the Rabbi Goldberg Fund enable us to engage Rabbi Goldberg to lead additional services at BHBI during the year. Whenever the funds in the Rabbi Goldberg Fund reach a predetermined level, we will schedule an additional service with Rabbi Goldberg. This month, contributions to the Rabbi Goldberg fund have resulted in us adding an additional service with Rabbi Goldberg on Saturday morning, February 13<sup>th</sup>. To contribute to this purpose, please send a check in to BHBI with a notation that the contribution should be used for the Rabbi Goldberg Fund.

**THANK YOU TO OUR KIDDUSH SPONSORS  
FOR THE MONTH OF JANUARY**

January 9	Steve and Ruth Teitel in memory of Ruth's father, Jack Glazer
January 16	Phil and Annette Garver in memory of Phil's father, Nathan Goldberg
January 23	The Congregation
January 30	Leon Metlay and Nina Klionsky in honor of Tu b'Shevat and their nutty friends and Paula Bobb in honor of her birthday

**CONGRATULATIONS**

To Katie Metlay on her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday!

To Aviva Schaffer who will be attending the University of Rochester in the fall. Aviva has been chosen as a recipient of a 4-year Dean's Merit Scholarship from the university in recognition of her academic achievements.

**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, February 10<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 p.m. The discussion is always lively and engaging!

**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!!



## Bar Mitzvah Thank You

On Shabbat Hanukkah (December 12, 2009) Mark Jacob Nidetz Toker was called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah. He marked this occasion by choosing to participate in the service in ways that were most meaningful to him. It was his choice to read the Hanukkah Maftir portion of the Torah. However, he asked BHBI members who had helped him learn to read Torah to share his special day by also reading.

Each reader contributed to Mark's confidence in learning to read. This included reading his Haftorah directly from the Navi (prophet's) scroll of Zachariah (see picture). Also honored to read Torah were his mentors for his D'var Torah speech. To honor his Hebrew teacher, Mark chose to lead the Torah service and become his first student to lead a full repetition of the Musaf.

Thus thanking and honoring each person who had fulfilled the words of Rabbi Hillel: "Be of the disciples of Aaron, loving peace and pursuing peace, loving your fellow creatures, and bringing them near to the Torah." (Pirke Avot 1:12).

When not studying Hebrew, Mark can usually be found at his Karate DoJo. He's won awards at Karate Tournaments and recently received his Junior Black Belt. A member of the local chapter of the Society of Young Magicians Mark participates in club activities. As a homeschooled student, Mark's current favorite areas of study include Ancient Greece and Rome. Other special activities are piano, Boy Scouts, reading, listening to music, playing games on his DS, and especially spending time with friends. Mark's parents are Leslie Toker and Jeffrey Nidetz and he is the grandson of Peg Toker.



## UPCOMING EVENTS IN THE JEWISH COMMUNITY

**The JCC's Live from the 92<sup>nd</sup> Street Y Series** - The series continues with Tony-winning actress Patti LuPone discussing the Broadway life with Leonard Lopate on Thursday, February 4<sup>th</sup> at 8:15pm. Journalists and writers Malcolm Gladwell and Adam Gopnik will be featured at the next Live from the 92<sup>nd</sup> Street Y event on Tuesday, Feb. 16<sup>th</sup> at 8 pm. Tickets for these events can be purchased at the JCC or at [jccrochester.org](http://jccrochester.org)

**Israel 2010** – Daniel Gordis, visiting professor of political science at Harvard University and a commentator on Israeli politics will speak as part of the Israel 2010 lecture series on Sunday, February 7th at 7:00 p.m. at Temple Beth El. The event is free and open to the public.

**3 Men and the Bible** – Join authors Benyamin Cohen (author of My Jesus Year: A Rabbi's Son Wanders the Bible Belt in Search of His Own Faith), A.J. Jacobs (author of The Year of Living Biblically: One Man's Humble Quest to Follow the Bible as Literally as Possible) and David Plotz (author of Good Book: The Bizarre, Hilarious, Disturbing, Marvelous and Inspiring Things I Learned When I Read Every Single Word of the Bible) for a discussion at the JCC on Tuesday, February 9th at 7:30 pm. Tickets are available at the JCC.

**Dinner and a Movie with Chef Brian Frank** - Enjoy wine braised chicken with red pearl potatoes, grilled asparagus, foraged mushrooms and caramelized pearl onions. This entree is served with sliced grilled French baguette to soak up the delicious sauce. Stay after dinner for a screening of Julie and Julia starring Meryl Streep and Amy Adams. Saturday, February 13th at 6pm at the JCC.

**Colonel Ron Rabin: A Professional Jewish Soldier's Prospective** - Join retired US Army Colonel, Ron Rabin as he presents an informative lecture that will focus on national security and selected international relationships, a Department of Defense overview, declarations of war and our involvement in Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan. Thursday, February 18th at 7pm at the JCC. This event is free. Pre-registration is required at the JCC Main Desk.

**Saturday with the Classics** - Enjoy exciting classical guitar sounds in a Spanish Flamenco tradition with duo Mathew Colbert and Ryan Carey. Saturday, February 20th at 7pm at the JCC. Free and open to the public. Registration is required at the JCC Main Desk.

**An Informal Look at the Q'uran and the Torah** – The Jewish Community Federation and the Islamic Center of Rochester are jointly sponsoring an event about the life of Joseph on Sunday, February 21st from 3:30-4:30 p.m. at the Islamic Center, 727 Westfall Road. The event is free and open to the public. Light refreshments will be served.

On March 5<sup>th</sup>, tens of thousands of Jews across America will come together to eat, drink, relax, dance, enjoy, debate and celebrate at the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual ...

# SHABBAT ACROSS AMERICA/CANADA



On Friday night, March 5, 2009 hundreds of synagogues across the continent will take part in an historic national Jewish event to celebrate what unifies all Jews -- Shabbat! Everyone is invited... singles, couples, families -- all ages.

Invite your friends—all are welcome!

## Shabbat Across America Dinner

March 5, 2010 • Dinner: 6:30 PM • Services : 8:00 PM

Adults \$12 • Children (under Bar/Bat Mitzvah) \$6

Send RSVP, with number of adults and children, and Payment in advance to:

Temple Beth Am  
PO Box 177  
Henrietta, NY 14467

Must be in Temple Office by February 26<sup>th</sup>



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Please detach and mail in with check to Temple Beth Am, POB 177, Henrietta, NY 14467 to reach office by February 26<sup>th</sup>

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_ email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City, St., Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

#Adults @ \$12 \_\_\_\_\_ #Children @ \$6 \_\_\_\_\_ Total Amt for Dinner \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Dietary restrictions: \_\_\_\_\_ (a committee member will contact you to discuss)

**Note: This year Temple Beth Am and BHBI will have a joint Shabbat Across America celebration at Beth Am**

**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](http://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](mailto:stanschaffer@frontiernet.net)

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