



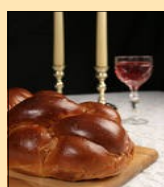
The Shofar

Congregation Beth Ahavah @ Rodeph Shalom Newsletter

A GLBT synagogue welcoming people of all gender and sexual identities since 1975

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Shabbat Services

January 21st

8:00 PM

Tu B'Shevat Seder

(in lieu of services)



February 18th

8:00 PM

Join us for lay-led services, followed by an oneg and shmoozing.

BA Board Meeting



Next Meeting on...

Tuesday

January 4 ✨ 7:00 PM

All BA members welcome

Dear Members:

Please be sure to let a BA Board member know if you do NOT wish your full last name to be published either in the Shofar or on our website. We strive to protect and respect your right to privacy.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



In the news we hear about violence, killings, and disturbing news events locally and around the world. I find this barrage of news extremely disturbing and sad. It makes me shake my head from side to side with disappointment. I may be a relic, but I still get most of my news from the daily paper, not always getting a chance to read it, but often skimming the headlines and getting the "print bites" of news from around the world and region. Does [BA@RS](#) offer some opportunity for answers and comfort in this world of wild news?

On Christmas Eve, we had our annual food fress at Charles Plaza. Twenty-two BA'ers and friends attended along with a coincidence of a table of twelve seated right next to us. This table of twelve was the over 50's group from Kol Tzedek, a start-up Reconstructionist synagogue in University City. Many former members (and founding members of BA) were seated at this table right next to us. Their dinner also began at 7 PM. We all were able to join together for lighting the candles, blessing the wine, and touching the challah or touch someone who is touching the Challah for the Motzi. The dinner was complete immersion in great food, lots of selections for each course, and lively conversation.

As is my tradition for several years now, I attend the Christmas Eve mass planned and carried out by Dignity, the church for GLBT folks of the Catholic faith. Father Ron Hoskins has led the service for the last few years. His message is always about the love for G-d, and the love we provide for each other as a faith community. My reasons for attending are to pray be with friends of faith, and to bridge gaps and bring our faith community's closer together. In fact, after our first years of founding, we met for several years in Dignity's space at 252 South 12th Street in center city. I attend these services and events because in this world of today, I find it so important to turn to Judaism and my sense of spirituality to get through the world of disturbing events and the general stress and anxieties of daily life. The sense of community is very important to me. Here is my request: plan to join us some Friday night in this New Year of 2011, look to spend a Shabbat with us and join us for a BA outing. It may just be the answer to help navigate through this world we live in and make it a better place for you. Our annual Tu B'Shevat Seder is planned for 1/21, followed by services scheduled for 2/18 and our Equality Forum service in the main sanctuary on 4/29. All BA services begin at 8 PM. If you plan to go to any other service at RS, please let me know and I will meet up with you.

I wish all a healthy and happy New Year!

B'Shalom,

Jeff

Jeffrey Strauss

YAHARZEITS



Bela Hollander
January 3, 2003
29 Tevet/January 5 2011
Beloved grandfather of
Gloria Becker

Ruth Finn
January 3, 2000
25 Tevet/January 1, 2011
Beloved kin of
Larry Finn

Jack Silverman
January 14, 1997
7 Shevat/January 12, 2011
Beloved father of
Jerry Silverman

Beatrice Segal
February 9, 1996
20 Shevat/January 25, 2011
Beloved mother of
Jay Segal

George R. Wilson, Jr.
February 17, 1960
22 Shevat/January 27, 2011
Beloved brother of
Carol Fisher

BIRTHDAYS



January 10
Linda Thomas

January 24
Jerry Silverman

January 25
Michael Valoris

January 31
Carol Fisher



TU B'SHEVAT SEDER FRIDAY, JANUARY 21st • 8:00 PM

For reservations, call 215-923-
2003

Tu B'Shevat is one of the four new years in the Jewish calendar. These are times for hope and new beginnings. The *Mishnah* proclaims the 15th day of the month of *Shevat* as the New Year for Trees. Two thousand years ago, *Tu B'Shevat* marked the beginning of a new year for calculating the agricultural *ma'asrot* (tithes - one tenth of each person's harvest). Part of the *ma'asrot* went to the *Levites*. Depending on the year, part fed the poor, and part was used in a festive celebration in Jerusalem.

After the Temple was destroyed and the Jews were exiled from the land of Israel, we no longer gave *ma'asrot*. Still, Jews marked *Tu B'Shevat* by eating *shiv'at haminim*, the seven grains and fruits that are Biblically associated with *Eretz Yisrael* (wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives, and dates). In 16th century Tzefat in northern Israel, Rabbi Isaac Luria, a mystic, seeded a transformation of *Tu B'Shevat* by developing a festive Passover-like Seder featuring teachings, wine, and the fruits of the Land of Israel.

We adapt this tradition as we have done for many years at Beth Ahavah. We will be celebrating in spirit and song, nurturing our Jewish identity, the Jewish state of Israel and the Jewish soul.

COMING SOON



Jewish Museum Tour

Saturday, April 9 (tentative)

Save the date for dosin guided group tour

URJ Resources & Responses to Gay Teen Suicides

[When Jack Pushed Jill Down the Hill; Helping Kids - from Tots to Teens - Deal with Bullying Behavior](#)

RJ Magazine editors ask Rabbi Edythe Mencher, clinical social work psychotherapist, author, organizational consultant, about how parents and their children can respond to bullying behavior.

[Reform Jewish Movement Condemns Homophobic Bullying; Provides Resources for Congregations, Teens, Parents](#)

In response to the spate of recent suicides, including that of Tyler Clementi, related to homophobic bullying, Rabbi Eric Yoffie, President of the Union for Reform Judaism, issued the following statement.

[Sacred Choices High School Curriculum](#)

In this curriculum for teens that teaches sexual ethics, a session focuses on sexual orientation, and offers the opportunity for the participants to learn about the experience of being a lesbian, gay, bisexual, straight or questioning Jewish teen in North America.

[Webinar Dec 12, 2010: Cyberbullying & Sexting - How can we respond & what can we do to prevent it?](#)

Sign up for this webinar to explore the topics of cyberbullying and sexting and how they affect our teens. You will get ideas on what you can do in your congregation to help educate about and combat these serious problems.

[Do Not Stand Idly By: A Jewish Community Pledge to Save Lives](#)

Join the Reform Movement in signing the Anti-Bullying Pledge sponsored by Keshet



[Resilience of the Soul: Developing Emotional and Spiritual Resilience in Adolescents and Their Families](#)

This book provides essential information for Jewish communities responding to the realities of depression, eating disorders, binge drinking, substance abuse, and self-inflicted violence among teenagers. It is grounded in Jewish text and tradition, and draws upon the wisdom of clergy, Jewish educators, pediatricians, mental health professionals, youth workers, lay leaders, and young people, themselves.

[Kulanu: A primer for LGBT inclusion in Jewish communities](#)

Includes personal reflections, insightful essays, blessings and texts, Reform resolutions and responsa, three classroom lessons, an extensive bibliography and glossary, and much more.



New Jersey's Lesbian & Gay Havurah
A Circle of Friends Celebrating Our Jewish Heritage

Winter Getaway Weekend

at

Rainbow Mountain Resort, Marshall's Creek, PA

Friday, February 4- Sunday, February 6, 2011

Dear BA Members,

Some of you were "on the mountain" with us last year and we hope we can count you in for the fun this time, too. You can reserve your room on our website, although we are not taking online payments.

This year, there are TVs in some of the Cherry House rooms, and Regina Sayles will perform after services on Friday night. Check out the Rainbow Mountain website to see how happy they are to have us back.



Thanks to all who planned, fried up latkes, purchased food, brought the music, and attended our annual Hanukkah party/Latke cook-off contest. It was a tight two hours of eating, schmoozing and fun.

FYI:

Spectrum (Jewish gay group for those in their 20s and 30s) **BYO** wine tasting event is scheduled for 6:00 PM, January 13th. Location TBA. Contact Evan Weiner via email to learn more, njmed24@aol.com.

RODEPH SHALOM CONTACTS

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Director	

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Director	Nurit Shein

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A MEMBER OF...