



GETTING TO KNOW YOU

Avril Orloff

Meet Avril Orloff, member (and past chair) of Or Shalom's Tikkun Olam Working Group, enthusiastic singer and leynner, and inveterate socializer.

I'm one of the rare Vancouverites who was actually born here, and one of the even rarer ones who left. I thought Vancouver was boring and provincial when I was growing up here, and longed to move to some romantic place like Paris where I could sip café au lait in sidewalk cafes and philosophize late into the night with my fellow artists. As often happens in life, what happened instead was that I moved to Toronto, went to art school, and became a graphic designer. I did, however, spend many happy hours sipping café au lait in sidewalk cafes, and at the age of 40, I moved to Montreal to study philosophy at McGill. So you see: I did manage to realize some of my early ambitions!

Among my other adventures in those years, I lived in Israel twice (a year on a kibbutz and a year in Tel Aviv), spent 8 months in South Africa (where my mother grew up), got married and divorced, backpacked through Asia for the better part of a year, did a Master's degree in communication at the University of Pennsylvania, and never worked longer than 2 years at the same job. Self-employment R Us.

Against all expectations, I returned to Vancouver in 2003 when my mother fell ill, and discovered that contrary to what they say (whoever "they" are), you *can* go home again — and even thrive there. Since moving back here I found a compatible Jewish community at long last — first at Ahavat Olam and now at Or Shalom — a new career as a visual facilitator (self-employed, of course), a cohort of wonderful friends — and a new love, complete with travel adventures, a hangout on Hornby, and a whole new family!

These days, happiness looks like time spent talking and laughing with the people I love; curling up on a couch with a fat, juicy novel; obsessing over the garden at Hornby; and wandering around with my camera looking for beauty in unexpected places. Late nights fiddling with my photos in Lightroom also provides satisfying doses of geeky pleasure.

Ask me about bossing around my bosses when I was a sassy young sprig.