

KEREN OR

THE NEWSLETTER OF OR SHALOM

Or Shalom Jewish Spiritual Community, Vancouver BC orshalom.ca

Kislev/Tevet/Shevat 5763 Dec 2002-Jan 2003

THE REB SITE

For the next few issues, The Reb Site will feature writings from the many different teachers who are part of our community. Alizah Shatzky agreed to be our first, with her beautiful prose-poem on Hannukah.

THE YEARNING FOR LIGHT

By Alizah Shatzky

We are entering the darkest season now. The days are shorter, the nights are longer, the west coast winds howl at our doorsteps, a lonely music to accompany the relentless chanting of the rain. These are also dark times. Still so many homeless, so many without food, so many with tears. Israel is still in terror. Our natural environment is in crisis. These are the days when we wonder where the light has gone. We think about the sun's return. We long to feel warmth upon our faces.

A major source of light for each of us during the winter is Hannukah, the Festival of Dedication. It's a time when we celebrate the miracle that occurred over two thousand years ago when the Maccabees defeated the Greeks. The miracle of the oil that burned for eight days. As we light the candles for Hannukah, we are reminded of not only our survival, then and now, but of our yearning and hope for more light in our lives. It is as if we are calling out to G-d, wanting to touch and be touched by His light. Or is it that we are the ones being called? For whom is this light?

Parshat BeHa'alocheka begins with G-d's instructions to Aaron to light the menorah a particular way, so that the "lamps give light at the front of the lamp stand." Midrash Ba-Midbar Rabbah notes that the way the menorah was set up meant that its light was cast upon those praying. The midrash states that G-d wanted the lighting of the menorah to provide human beings with an increased ability to carry light.

To carry light that might enable us, perhaps, to discover the holy dimension in our lives; light that might permit us to open our eyes to the countless miracles that surround us; light that might mobilize us to action when faced with the suffering of others. For whom is this light we ask? Though G-d offers it to us, its purpose is to transform us. The light moves into us so that we may do the mitzvot that need to be done.

(Continued on page 2)



REB SITE (Continued from page 1)

The Baal Shem Tov used to say that he could see light in people. He maintained that every person could be a sanctuary. That the ancient temple in Jerusalem could be rebuilt by every Jew within his/her own soul. What would that mean in our current lives? How might our presence be a sanctuary to our fellow travelers from all walks of life?

Of course, the Jewish mystics have always known that inner and outer are not as separate as we may think. That the outer world can only be changed when the inside has changed. From this place of an inner sanctuary we may find ourselves more capable than we thought, of embracing diversity and allowing the complexity to speak to us of our shared humanity. We might rediscover our longing to connect to that which holds our wonder. And even reclaim our thirst for the sacred in our lives, as real and vital as the warmth of sun we crave. Each candle lights hope in radiant circles, inner to outer, a flight from fear, while remembering miracles and the light of all things.

NEW ROSH CHODESH GROUP EMERGES

By Raziel Ross and Melanie

The new Rosh Chodesh group held our first meeting of 5763 in November. Rosh Chodesh is a special service, or ritual just for women that occurs at the new moon every month.

The women who attended, with one exception, were all Or Shalomniks and we all enjoyed the warm ambience of Melanie's home. After introducing ourselves to each other, we each lit a candle and invited a female ancestor or living relative into our circle. We learned about the attributes of the month of Kislev and meditated on the letter Samech. A discussion followed during which we shared what we needed from future meetings. We agreed that in order to maintain the energy of the group we would make a commitment to each other to attend monthly meetings as regularly as possible. It was also noted that if it becomes necessary, we will find another venue that is easily accessible for women with mobility disabilities. We ended the meeting by standing in a circle and chanting *shviti adonai legedi tamid*-(*I place G-d in my consciousness always*). Before we left, we hung around noshing and chatting, and agreed to meet next on Rosh Chodesh Tevet.

The next meeting will be held Thursday December 5 from 7-9 p.m. in Melanie's home. If you would like to join in this next monthly celebration, please bring something vegetarian or sweet to nosh on, your Hanukkah and Hannukah candles. For directions contact Melanie at karmicangel@shaw.ca 604-729-7255 or Raziel at sephardi@infoserve.net.



BEYOND NARNIA

In the storybook land of Narnia
the white witch had cursed the land
so it would be always winter
And never Christmas

That was, someone told me,
like the life of a Jew

Just a drab, plain of time
unrelenting
No relief brought by baubles
Shopping
no hohoho

But today by my beaming menorah
the future is humming
with candlelight and brachas
Shabbat to havdallah
T'beshtat to pesach

I have faced the white witch

Leah

OR SHALOM HEBREW SCHOOL NEWS

By Bat-Ami Segal, Hebrew School Co-ordinator

Hebrew School Students Reveal Their Treasures

On November 17, the Hebrew school students took part in the Jewish Community Center's annual Author's Tea, which is part of the Jewish Book Fair. This year the theme was "My Special Jewish Treasure." Here are some samplings of the student's writings.

Anne Nadler, grade 7, wrote about a special Marpit, a piece of cloth that has been handed down in the family from her great grandmother who traveled with it from Europe. Her seven-year-old brother Matthew wrote about his grandmother's special stuffed derma, and what a treasure it was to eat. Samara Malkin, age 8, wrote about her mother's wonderful latkes. Naomi Vogt, grade 7 wrote about her golden dreidle, treasured because it could land on whatever letter you wanted it to. It also played whatever music you wanted, and was perfect in every way. I could go on and on.

Each one of the stories was a treasure to read. All the writings will be compiled into a booklet for the whole community to purchase. It is pure delight!

Open Exchange at Hebrew School Open House

The school recently held an open house for teachers, staff and committee members. It was a very successful evening as most of the parents attended. Everyone had a chance to get to know each other a little better, aided by a glass of wine and some delicious munchies. Teachers were able to display the newest texts and learning aids, and parents were able to ask curriculum questions. The meeting was chaired by Phillip Moses, who is also the Chair of the Hebrew School. Philip managed to facilitate in a way that provided everyone with a chance to voice their feelings and praise for the school as well as voicing any concerns. Ideas for future plans were also expressed. We plan to have another meeting in the spring.

Hebrew School Hails Hannukah

The Or Shalom Hebrew School would like to invite the Community, to a family oriented Hannukah potluck celebration, December 4, 6 p.m. at the Bayit. People will gather until 6:15. The candle-lighting ceremony will take place from 6:15 to 6:30, followed by a potluck supper until 7 p.m. Then we will move on to community singing with Nomi Fenson. At 7:15, we will enjoy the Hebrew school presentations and storytelling. Cassandra will lead us in Theatresports at 7:45. At 8:30 there will be a rousing round of Quiz-a-mania, a team activity based on our knowledge of maccabia. There will be lots of fun, surprises and prizes for everybody!

Please bring a Hannukah Menorah and six candles to light for the fifth night of Hanukah. We will also need you to bring an entré or dessert to share at the potluck supper. To co-ordinate food contributions or for more information, contact Bat-Ami Segal at 604-875-6560 or bfsegal@telus.net.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

We held the latest monthly Mahtovu Shabbat Service for small children in the Bayit. Melanie and I were delighted to see some little ones who had attended the High Holyday services return to the monthly service. We decorated the space to create the impression of a tent, as in Avram and Sarai's, according to the Parshat of the week, *Vayera*. Our intention is to familiarize the little ones with some of the primary prayers and niggunim that can be heard in the main sanctuary as well introduce them to the Parshat of the week, through bibliodrama, and to end the service with a mini kiddush. The kids, Melanie, and I had a blast, and we very much look forward to creating a safe and fun space that welcomes the kids and their parents each month to Jewish Renewal. The next two Mahtovu Shabbat Services will be held on December 21 and January 25, 10:30 a.m.- 12 noon. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us at: Raziel sephardi@infoserve.net 604-897-0682 or Melanie karmicangel@shaw.ca.

SYNAGOGUE LIFE

Announcing Yeshivat Or Shalom

By Susan Shamash

A group of us have realized that we want to study in an advanced, committed and focused way within Or Shalom. It is with great pleasure and excitement that we announce the creation of Yeshivat Or Shalom as the vehicle to achieve these goals. We will study every Tuesday night at Or Shalom from 8-10 p.m., and we started on November 26, 2002.

Our focus will be on Hebrew source texts and commentaries. We will begin with Pirkei Avot. The group members will choose the next and subsequent topics and texts. We will study Beit Hamidrash style, which means in hevrutah (small groups of two or three) for three weeks, and on the fourth week we will bring in a teacher to enlighten, deepen, and guide us.

We have not finalized arrangements with our teacher for Pirkei Avot, and will make that announcement as soon as we know. We want to learn from a broad range of teachers who live in the lower mainland who may be rabbis of other congregations or teachers in the Jewish day schools and at the universities and colleges. The idea is to engage a different teacher for each text we study.

This course is available to any person who is over Bar/Bat Mitzvah age who has a good reading knowledge of Hebrew, a background in Jewish learning, and is willing to commit to attendance on a regular basis for a minimum of six months.

This is a cost recovery program. The participants will share the cost of the teacher which we estimate will be about \$40 per month. There may also be the cost of purchasing books.

If you are interested but unable to make a commitment at this time, you will have the chance to join the group in the first few weeks of study, or when the topics change. For more information, call Susan at 604-222-1980 or e-mail susan.shamash@gems3.gov.bc.ca

Ritual Committee

Effron Esseiva and Susan Shamash, Co-chairs

Or Shalom's ritual life is our heart and soul. This is going to be an exciting and challenging year and the Ritual Committee needs you. Become a volunteer. There is much to do. We need leaders and visionaries and you.

**Or Shalom Ritual Committee Meeting
December 8th, 2002—3 Tevet 5763
7:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m., Or Shalom**

Shalom chevre,

Susan Shamash and Efron Esseiva are your new co-chairs of the ritual committee and have been doing some preliminary thinking about practices, activities and programs that we might be embarking on/starting/stopping over the next period of time. We'll deal with questions like; why we won't have two Purim Spiels even though we're in a leap year. On December 8th, we will kick-off the first ritual committee meeting. Are you passionate about the direction we're going in? Have you got ideas that you want to invest your energies in and make them a reality? Can you regularly dedicate some of your time? This is a commitment of approximately once a month, unless special circumstances require more time -- please note the fine print. You are invited to join us at the Bayit on December 8.

The ritual committee is not just about davenning. There are many different aspects of ritual that touch us as individuals and as a spiritual community in our daily/weekly/yearly lives, and need our focus and attention.

If at any time you wish to bring anything to Susan's or my attention, please send us an e-mail.

Kol tov b'shalom

Susan Shamash

604-222-1960 susan.shamash@gems3.gov.bc.ca

Efron Esseiva

604-469-6981 effron_esseiva@yahoo.ca

Kabbalat Shabbat

Welcome the Sabbath Queen with sweet davenen and your community on December 20 2002 and January 24, 2003 at 6 p.m.

Jewish Meditation Shabbatons Resume with Yehudah

Dear friends,

It is with pleasure that I invite you to rejoin and join anew the Jewish meditation Shabbatons beginning November 23, 2002. All are welcome to come and discover the joys of Jewish meditation, song, and affirmation blessings for Shabbat, for the whole of the Shabbaton, which runs from 9 a.m.-3 p.m., or for parts of it, as suits your needs. All are welcome and there is no fee. This takes place in the meditation space, ground level, entrance at back of Leonard Yehudah Angel's, 865 Durward Avenue, Vancouver (just northeast of Fraser and E. 33rd Ave). Please bring a vegetarian-dairy lunch. You can arrange to bring this the day before to accommodate your Shabbat observance. The program also includes Ancient Jewish Yoga, and Torah study.

Upcoming dates: ongoing until Dec 14, then resuming again Jan. 11. To learn more please call Leonard Yehudah Angel, 604-876-6925, SLEangel@telus.net. Looking forward to seeing you.

All blessings,
Leonard Yehudah Angel

(Editor's note. I would like to congratulate Leonard on his great recovery and the resumption of his teaching. Leah)

Who Will Say Kaddish For Me?

By Hillel Goelman

Sometimes people die and there is no immediate family, partner, or child who takes on the responsibility of saying kaddish for the person who dies. I believe that as a community we should be prepared to step forward and say kaddish for such an individual in the 11 months after the death and on *yahrzeits*. Certainly, people can take on these responsibilities individually. If you are personally concerned about who will say kaddish for you after you die, I am prepared to have a confidential discussion with you about how we can work this out. If you wish to be available to take on the responsibility of saying kaddish for someone, also please let me know.

May our souls be forever connected to souls of all creation.

Join the Community in Celebrating Tu B'Shevat at Louis Brier

By Susan Shamash

Tu B'Shvat, the new year of trees, is a time when we express our appreciation for the beauty and utility of trees, and also for what they symbolize – growth and renewal.

Come to the Louis Brier Home and Hospital, 1055 West 41st at Oak Street, on Sunday January 19, 2003 at 2 p.m. People of all ages are invited to join in a traditional Tu B'Shvat seder created by the mystical Kabbalists of medieval times. Eating the traditional fruits and nuts on this day has symbolic, ritual, spiritual and ecological dimensions that will be explored.

This event is sponsored by Adam va-Adamah Environmental Society, B.C.'s Jewish voice for the environment. Adam va-Adamah is the regional affiliate of the Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life (COEJL). For more information, visit Adam va-Adamah's website at www.av-a.org. If you are interested in helping plan this event, please call Susan Shamash at (604) 222-1960.



Or Shalomniks Involved in Planning Bellingham Kallah

By Lorne Mallin

Or Shalom is playing a central role in planning the 10th International ALEPH Kallah, the week-long Jewish Renewal retreat that will be held from June 30 to July 6 in Bellingham, Wash. This gathering of Jewish Renewal communities will be held on the Fairhaven campus of Western Washington State University, 60 minutes south of Vancouver. The week includes workshops Monday through Friday, morning and afternoon, with the most inspiring teachers in Jewish Renewal. In the early morning there are many davenning choices from traditional egalitarian to chanting to yoga. In the evening there is a cabaret and other programs. The

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SYNAGOGUE LIFE

KALLAH *(Continued from page 5)*

week culminates in beautiful Shabbat rituals with several choices of services. Fueling the week is excellent Kosher food.

Kallah co-ordinator Cindy Gabriel met with 24 Or Shalomniks on Sunday, Nov. 3, to explore planning and workstudy opportunities. Cindy said that people taking positions on the planning committee will be co-ordinating functions that range from registration to electronic logistics to dining room liaison. Planning committee members will get half their fees paid, which can make a considerable difference. Cindy estimated that the cost of the week, including meals and six nights of accommodation, will be about \$740 US, which is about \$1,170 Cdn. Workstudy is the other way to reduce the cost of the Kallah. I have done workstudy at the four Kallahs that I've attended, doing tasks that included setting up a dining-room handwashing station, assisting at registration, running errands and taking photographs. The jobs range from 2 to 20 hours and pay from \$10 to \$20 an hour. I recommend the registration jobs - 10 are needed to work 10 hours at \$12 an hour - because your work is done before the Kallah begins.

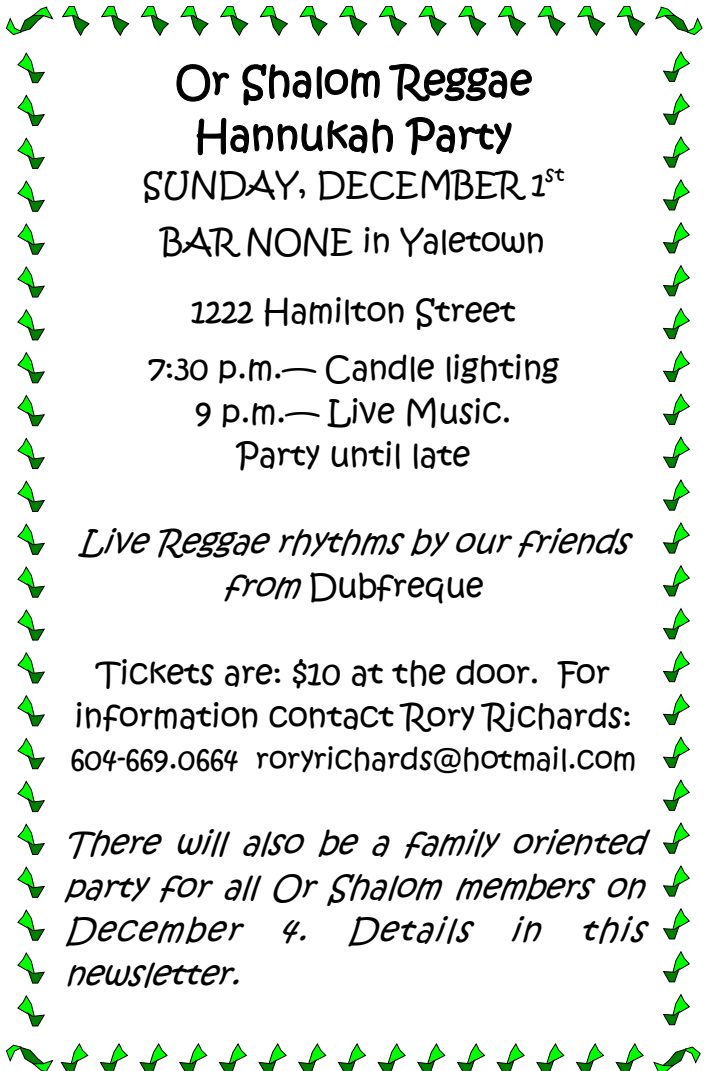
Please contact Cindy directly at KallahAJR@aol.com or by mail at 765 Gilpin Dr., Boulder, CO 80303. for more information about the planning committee and workstudy. Cindy is also the contact for those who want proposal packages for teaching classes at the Kallah – the deadline for applications is Dec. 1.

Most of those attending our meeting Nov.3 offered to get involved. For example, I will be on the planning committee as the publicity co-ordinator. Rabbi Nomi Oren will be the international advocate/liaison. The planning committee includes other familiar faces at Or Shalom – Denise Guren, of Bellingham, is the Bellingham liaison and Caren Monastersky, of Seattle, is co-ordinating Shabbat.

Affordability has always been an issue for Canadians wanting to attend the Kallah. I have unsuccessfully asked in the past for Canadian money to be accepted at par. Now, Reb Nomi has made considerable headway to help us out. She is a member of the ALEPH board and reported to the Or Shalom e-mail list after a November

meeting: “The board clearly recognized the problems and concerns expressed by non-U.S. folk wishing to attend Kallah; and approved, in principle, the availability of a subsidy to make Kallah more accessible to those penalized by currency exchange and the strength of the U.S. dollar.” The specifics will be made available when fee structures and registration packages are finalized. It remains to be seen whether there will be opportunities to attend the Kallah just for the Shabbat weekend or what arrangements there will be for commuters who will not be staying on campus.

More details will be available on the Kallah, including class descriptions, on the ALEPH website, www.aleph.org, after Feb. 1. The Or Shalom membership will be mailed detailed brochures with registration forms.



**Or Shalom Reggae
Hannukah Party**
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 1st
BAR NONE in Yaletown
1222 Hamilton Street
7:30 p.m.— Candle lighting
9 p.m.— Live Music.
Party until late

*Live Reggae rhythms by our friends
from Dubfreque*

Tickets are: \$10 at the door. For
information contact Rory Richards:
604-669.0664 roryrichards@hotmail.com

*There will also be a family oriented
party for all Or Shalom members on
December 4. Details in this
newsletter.*

DEAR CHEVRA,

Shalom uvracha to each and every one. I'm writing because I want to clear up as much as possible the confusion in the community regarding my role during the coming months.

In late September, I held a discussion with the executive committee of the Or Shalom board, Kevin Solomons, John Fuerst, Maurice Bloch and Carol Ann Fried to reach a shared understanding of what my roles and responsibilities at Or Shalom would be from that time on. We agreed that:

- I will continue to be available to any Or Shalom members who wish me to be involved with their life cycle ceremonies, are interested in counseling with me or would like me to visit them in the hospital or at home if they are, *has ve-shalom**, ill or injured.
- I will take care of the current year's bnei mitzvah and their families as I have in past years. This means that I'll help them with their planning, will offer the BiYahad program on Sunday mornings and will be available to guide the bnei mitzvah in learning and preparing their divrei Torah. I won't be responsible for the bnei mitzvah being planned after the end of my time at Or Shalom but will refer them to two board members, Sandi Mousadji and Barry Goodman.
- I will participate in Shabbat davenning at my own discretion and will not consistently be involved as I have been in the past. I'll coordinate well in advance with the gabbai'im who schedule the davenning (Bat-Ami Segal and Avi Dolgin) so they will be clear when I'm leading and when I'm not.
- I'll stay closely in touch with Richard to monitor calls to the Or Shalom office and ensure that requests are directed or handled appropriately.
- I'll continue to plan and lead the Shabbat morning Family Davvening when both my own personal schedule and the Or Shalom calendar provide.
- I will no longer be responsible for involvement with the Or Shalom School, Keren Or, planning and participating in holidays, planning the retreat, teaching adult classes or responding to requests by non-members.
- I will not organize or lead any public activities of a political nature related to Israel outside of Or Shalom without the consent of the board.
- I will not provide rabbinic services to any other group or organization in the Lower Mainland and
- I will not be involved in planning or organizing a new community or congregation.
- I may end all my activities at Or Shalom any time after December 31, 2002 by giving 30 days notice.

I hope this clarifies for everyone in the community what to expect of me during the next few months. If you have any questions or comments for me, I'm certainly interested in hearing from you.

B'Shalom,
David

--

* "God forbid"

INFORMATION FROM THE OR SHALOM BOARD

The Buzz From The Board

By Hana Wosk

We had the first meeting of our newly elected Board of Directors last Thursday and are beginning to organize the tasks which lie before us. We have been able to head up the major portfolios with people who are keen, talented and willing to serve. We feel confident in our ability to guide our ship through the waters ahead. At the same time we are aware of the many complexities which we face. In order to align ourselves as a working team, the Board will be having a daylong retreat on November 17, where we will clarify our major tasks and priorities. This includes our desire to embrace our entire community as we come together to clarify and articulate our vision as a spiritual community.

At this time we want you all to know of our desire to hear your voices. We encourage you to get involved with us and to share in the work required to make our precious Or Shalom all that we hope and pray for. We have many committees, which are essential for the ongoing operation of our Shul. All committees need interested community members to join and lend a hand. We invite you all to consider how you would like to get involved in serving your fellow members. Our intention is to be there for each other in times of joy and in times of need. Please call any of us with your ideas and with your desire to participate. We will gladly help you to find a place to serve which suits you best.

We hope to be true to our name- 'Or Shalom' Light of Peace, Wholeness. We hope to find light, peace and wholeness as individuals, and as a community. It is our hope that everyone who is devoted to the community will pick up a paddle and join us as we journey together.

Below are the committees and their chairs, as well as the executive positions, which have begun to be filled. All committees need interested community members to join and share the work. Please think about what you would like to do and feel free to contact any member of the board or to come to our board meetings, which are open to all members. Board meetings are generally held on the fourth Thursday of each month at 7:30 at the Bayit. The December meeting will be held on the third Thursday, December 19.

The following list of standing committees includes Board liaisons, and in some cases committee chairs:

Executive:

Co chairs	John Fuerst & Hana Wosk
Treasurer	Maurice Bloch
Secretary	Carol Ann Fried
Communications	Alizah Shatzky

Committees:

Adult Education	Barry Goodman
Bayit	Frank Segal
B'nei Mitzvah	Barry Goodman & Sandi Moussadji
Finance	Maurice Bloch & John Fuerst
Fundraising	Rory Richards & Kevin Solomons
Gemilut Chesed	Earl Goldstein (Board Liaison); Pat Gill & Bat Ami Segal (co-chairs)
Membership	Earl Goldstein (Chair); Steve Barer & Lorne Greenberg
Personnel	Rhema Cossever & Carol Ann Fried
Retreat	Rhema Cossever

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INFORMATION FROM THE OR SHALOM BOARD

BUZZ (Continued from page 8)

Ritual Effron Esseiva & Susan Shamash
School Sandi Moussadji
Tikkun Olam/Tzedakah
Position is open. Community members welcome! Call Hana.

On behalf of the board, we look forward to joining with all to do the holy work of our community.

Shalom u'vracha,
John Fuerst and Hana Wosk

Here is how to reach us:

Steven Barer		steven@oakbaysoftrends.net
Maurice Bloch	604 -266 4204	mbloch@telus.net
Rhema Cossever	604- 731 0023	rhema@shaw.ca
Effron Esseiva	604- 469 6981	effron_esseiva@yahoo.ca
Carol Ann Fried	604 -736 4110	friedom@ca.inter.net
John Fuerst	604 -254 9234	fuerstandgill@telus.net
Earl Goldstein	604 -738 5283	earlpearl@shaw.ca
Barry Goodman	604- 876 1492	bgood@vcn.bc.ca
Lorne Greenberg	604 -732 1403	lornegreenberg@shaw.ca
Sandi Moussadji	604 -875 8791	moussadji@primus.ca
Rory Richards	604 -669 0664	roryrichards@hotmail.com
Frank Segal	604 -875 6560	franksegal@hotmail.com
Susan Shamash	604- 222 1960	susan.shamash@gems3.gov.bc.ca
Alizah Shatzky	604 -947 2246	wolfsong@telus.net
Kevin Solomons	604- 739 2040	solomons2040@shaw.ca
Hana Wosk	604 -261 5558	hanawosk@shaw.ca

Décor Policy Defined

The first meeting of the 'new' Bayit Committee was held on Nov.10th. One of the areas of discussion was a policy regarding the decor of the Bayit. For several reasons it was decided that in the future, anybody wishing to hang anything in the Schul should first approach this committee for approval of the décor, and guidance as to where to hang it. In general, such décor would be rotated every 6 months. The members of the Bayit committee are:

Frank Segal: bfsegal@telus.net

604-875-6560

Micah Waskow: m_waskow@uniserve.com

604- 255-9291

Bette Thompson: bette_thompson@telus.net

604-726-4317

Plans to Revamp Membership Policies

By Earl Goldstein

The Membership Committee will soon commence its work to review, revise and develop new policies regarding membership in Or Shalom. Over the past few months, it has become clear that our current policies are somewhat vague, inconsistent and out-dated. The committee has room for three new members to join at this time as we begin this important work. Written submissions are welcome and should be sent to us by Dec. 31. So far, the committee comprises three Board members:

Earl Goldstein: earlpearl@shaw.ca

604 738 5283

Lorne Greenberg: lornegreenberg@shaw.ca

604 732 1403

Steven Barer: steven@oakbaysoftrends.net

Please contact any of us if you are interested.

INFORMATION FROM THE OR SHALOM BOARD

From The Board

By Alizah Shatzky

On Sunday, November 17, the new Board met for an all-day retreat with a full agenda of items to be considered. While some of the time in the morning was spent team building and getting to know one another, much of the day was devoted to examining the Board's priorities for the upcoming year. As you can imagine, a wide range of goals emerged when we looked at what needs to be done at Or Shalom. The present and future priorities appeared to cluster around three main categories: Community Visioning & Healing, Religious & Spiritual life, and Governance & Organization Matters.

In the Community Visioning and Healing category, a primary goal emerged from our discussions. This goal is to work with the Or Shalom community in order to discover and articulate "what is the heart of Or Shalom?" and "what direction are we moving toward.?" Another goal is to ensure that active, open, and accessible communication exists between the community and the Board. There is also the idea that we need to come together to move forward while at the same time learning from past mistakes. A goal for the long term in this category will be to eventually begin a rabbi search.

In the Religious and Spiritual Life category, some other goals emerged: to teach/mentor new and experienced davenning leaders and to deepen our experiences at

Shabbat services; to build and strengthen our Hebrew School; to co-ordinate and develop rich learning programs at Or Shalom for all levels; to create more meaningful roles for our elders.

In the Governance and Organization Matters category, items such as fundraising, membership policies, by-laws, and renovations became just a few of our goals.

These are samples of some of present and future goals that require the Board's attention. However, we all agreed that one of the most immediate priorities for the Board is the Community Visioning and Healing, which ultimately may well set the pace for some of the other goals. We therefore agreed to the following: The Board resolves to engage in a forward-looking, inclusive visioning process combined with active community participation as a mechanism of community building/healing.

Community meetings will be scheduled in the near future to begin this process. We wish to remind you that our doors are always open to your ideas, perspectives, and input. Our strength and vitality as a community depends upon hearing all the voices. As we move forward, let's continue to talk, listen, and create together. And may we all be blessed with the wonder, warmth, and lights of Hannukah, now and always.

One Day Restorative Yoga Workshop

at Tikkun Yoga Centre

Sunday December 1, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Workshop instructor: Evelyn Neaman, Tikkun Yoga Centre

Workshop Cost: \$80.00 includes light lunch

Location: 3256 West 26th Ave. Van

To register call 604-738-9295

tikkunyoga@shaw.ca

www.members.shaw.ca/tikkunyoga

For a musical Hannukah gift - remember the wonderful music produced locally by Shir Hadash and Tzimmes available from Myrna Rabinowitz 604-873-8936 or at mrabinow@shaw.ca

Shir Hadash albums of spiritual Hebrew music, prayer and niggunim - many of these are prayers we use at Or Shalom - beautifully recorded by Hanna Tiferet Siegel, Harley Rothstein and Myrna Rabinowitz

Or Shalom - "Songs of the Heart" and "And You Shall Teach Your Children" CD's - \$18 Tapes - \$12

Tzimmes albums of Hebrew, Ladino, Yiddish, Klezmer and Sephardi music by Vancouver's own Jewish World Music Band "Sweet and Hot", "A Lid For Every Pot" and "Klezmyriad" CD's - \$15 Tapes - \$10

IN OUR COMMUNITY

"If you save a single life, it's as if you saved the entire world"

By Bat-Ami Segal

Two years ago, a group of people from the Jewish Community came together in a forum to discuss poverty in the Jewish Community. Representatives came from the various Synagogues, the Jewish Federation, Canadian Jewish Congress, Jewish Family Services, and many other Jewish organizations.

Currently almost one-fifth of all Jews in the Greater Vancouver area live in poverty. The people involved in the forum agreed that this was just not acceptable. Individuals, community members and agencies have a moral, religious and ethical obligation to help alleviate poverty and to assign resources to reach that goal.

This is how Yad B'Yad came to be. During the two years that it has been operating, much work has been done. At the original forum, working groups were formed to accomplish several goals. These groups are: Advocacy, Employment, Food & Nutrition, Health & Welfare, Outreach & Advocacy, and Communication & Marketing. All groups share the same central philosophy:

1. All members of our Community should be treated with dignity.
2. Our Community should be accessible to all.
3. Our community should be inclusive of all.

Currently Jewish Family Service Agency designates \$200,000 annually for emergency poverty relief. This provides limited

relief to only the very neediest members of our Community. We must find a way to increase this. The Jewish Food Bank provides 1100 people with food for only one week out of the month. We need to expand the Good Food Box and Community Kitchen programs. The Council of Presidents has passed a motion agreeing to make free tickets available for non-fundraising community events, and many synagogues provide free High Holiday tickets through JFSA.

The Coalition has accomplished too many successes to mention them all here. However, Yad B'Yad recognizes that while many community dollars currently go to provide scholarships and subsidies, the needs of a significant part of our population are simply still unmet at the current levels of funding. 17% of our community is still living below the poverty line, and we must be prepared to allocate additional community dollars. For example, if our community is successful in providing affordable housing to its low-income members, then they will have more disposable income to meet other needs.

Yad b'yad is committed to welcoming everyone who should be part of our Kehillah (community). We must create a better life for those who are poor. Yad b'yad is committed to building a stronger community in Vancouver and has proven it can do so by attracting people from all walks of Jewish life. This diverse group has worked together productively over the last few years, and we hope to involve more people. Please consider joining a working group.

For more information, call the Jewish Federation at 604-257-5100 or contact Bat-Ami Segal, bfsegal@telus.net or 604-875-

Team Dodie a Winner

By Helen Waldstein

A belated but sincere Yasher Koach to all the wonderful Or Shalomniks and friends who participated in the CIBC Run for the Cure, and to all the equally wonderful people who could not be there in person but who supported us with generous donations pledged to the walkers. Yes, Or Shalom walks. How else could we find time to schmooze en route? Besides, our goal is to raise money, not to be the first across the finish line.

This is the second year in a row that Team Dodie has raised money for this cause that seems to touch so many families. Our inspiration for this is Dodie Katzenstein who honours us by allowing our team to carry her name. Last year, Team Dodie raised hundreds of dollars. This year, we raised thousands. Final totals from the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation are not yet in, but we are confident that we not only had the largest team of any of the Jewish communities who challenged us, but that we also raised the most money. Far behind us was Har El followed by Beth Israel as a distant third.

Next year, G-d willing, with Dodie at the helm, we will again walk. And every year, until the cure is found, Or Shalom will join in this important walk.

IN OUR COMMUNITY

Jewish Community Develops Services That Respond to Domestic Violence

By Azima Buell

Domestic Violence is a real issue in the Jewish community of Greater Vancouver. We know that across Canada and the United States twenty to thirty percent of women experience violence in their lives. These alarming statistics are the same for the Jewish community as well. There is one difference between the secular and Jewish community. Women in the Jewish community tend to stay longer in abusive relationships.

Domestic abuse can be found in all parts of the Jewish community. The idea that it occurs only to the ultra orthodox, or to the very poor and uneducated is a myth. It is found in all domains: among professionals, secular families, orthodox families, and everything in between.

Domestic abuse is a pattern of coercive behaviors used to establish power and control over an intimate partner. This abuse can include elements of emotional, psychological and verbal attacks, as well as physical and sexual abuse and economic coercion. Emotional, psychological and verbal abuse is somewhat more prevalent than physical abuse. However these forms of abuse are often described as even more debilitating. This type of abuse includes the use of humiliating or derogatory language, isolating partner from friends, family and the outside world, yelling, put downs and humiliation, taunting, manipulating, threatening and the "silent treatment." Women often report that they don't believe the Jewish community will support or even believe them if they tell anyone about the violence.

These women also don't see the Jewish community as a resource for them. This is one of the important reasons for the development and maintenance of a Jewish safe house apartment and a Domestic Violence Response crisis line. Jewish women and children will not only have a safe place to go, but they will see that their own community recognizes the importance of their safety and is prepared to help them.

ASTEh House (Alternative Short-Term Emergency Housing of Greater Vancouver) is a collaborative effort between several organizations. Jewish Women International (JWI) has developed ASTEH Houses in Toronto and Montreal, and an ASTEH House is currently being developed here in Vancouver through the collaborative efforts of several organizations. With financial assistance from the Jewish Community Foundation, the donation of the apartment by an anonymous donor and the ongoing support of JWI, Jewish Family Service Agency staff and volunteers are able to provide the emotional support and advocacy for women and children fleeing from family violence.

A successful shower for the house was held on November 13th with over 40 generous donors coming forward to outfit the apartment. Through the generous donation of air mile points by one of our community members, I was recently able to visit the ASTEH house in Toronto. At that house, I was immediately aware of a sense of "home" when I walked in the door - a table cloth and flowers on the kitchen table, a bookshelf full of kids' toys, games and videos in the living room, a cozy comforter in the bedroom and other touches that make starting a new life seem a little less daunting. We are confident that our Vancouver ASTEH house will have a similar feel to it.

We are also in the fourth week of training for the DeVoRa (Domestic Violence Response) crisis line. Twelve women have expressed interest in helping cover this crisis line when the JFSA office is closed and we are hopeful that both ASTEH House and the DeVoRa line will be in operation by the end of December.

If anyone would like to volunteer with either of these projects, or would like further information, please contact either Azima Buell, Selina Robinson, or Jacqueline Walters at Jewish Family Service Agency at 604-257-5151.

*Some of the information in this article is from the latest publication from Jewish Women International, published in 2002, and entitled "Healing and Wholeness: A Resource Guide on Domestic Abuse in the Jewish Community".

Milestones

David and Michal invite the entire community to share in the simcha of our son Yehuda becoming a bar mitzrah on Shabbat Tisareh, February 15, 2003. After davenning all are invited for kiddush lunch.

At this time of year we remember Len Ryant - Benyamin Leib z'l , beloved friend, father, community member and finder of our present building, on the 5th Yartzzeit of his passing -November 17th, 1997. His warmth and smile live on in all our hearts. May his memory be a blessing and an inspiration.

IN OUR COMMUNITY

Bits & Bytes

From the Or Shalom Mailing list

A group of parents of Jewish gays and lesbians from our Vancouver community is getting together. At this stage, it is more of a network than a support group. We were requested to spread the word out. If you know people that would be interested in this group please refer them to Selina Robinson at the JFSA - 604-257-5151 or online at: srobinson@jfsa.ca. You can also contact me at jewpride@shaw.ca or call me at 604-818-0446

from Derick Steven

The Steven Spielberg Jewish Film Archive holds over 3,000 titles on film and video, constituting the largest collection of Jewish documentary film footage in the world. The vaults contain material shot in Israel before and after the establishment of the State in 1948, motion picture records of many Jewish communities in the Diaspora, and two special collections relating to the Holocaust. Many of the films are available for viewing, free, over the internet at <http://www.spielbergfilmarchive.org.il>

from Carol Ann Fried

For Menorah Repairs

There are 2 places that I know of. One is The Silver Shop on Dunbar near 41st. The other is Acme Plating. I had some silver work done by Acme Plating and they do excellent work. They are near Granville on 6th.

from Myrna Rabinowitz

An elderly Jewish man in Miami calls his son in New York and says, "I hate to ruin your day, but I have to tell you that your mother and I are divorcing; forty-five years of misery is enough." Pop, what are you talking about?" the son screams. "We can't stand the sight of each other any longer," the old man says. "We're sick of each other, and I'm sick of talking about this, so you call your sister in Chicago and tell her," and he hangs up. Frantic, the son calls his sister, who explodes on the phone. "Like hell they're getting divorced," she shouts, "I'll take care of this. "She calls Miami immediately, and screams at the old man, "You are NOT getting divorced. Don't do a single thing until I get there. I'm calling my brother back, and we'll both be there tomorrow. Until then, don't do a thing, DO YOU HEAR ME?" and hangs up. The old man hangs up his phone, too, and turns to his wife.

"Okay," he says, "they're coming for Rosh Hashana. Now what do we tell them for Passover?"

from Yom Shamash

You're undoubtedly aware of the importance of cultural institutions to Jewish survival. As co-host of Anthology of Jewish Music, broadcasted on CFRO-FM 102.7 (Vancouver Cooperative Radio), I urge you to consider joining the station as a member. The non-commercial station, now located at 360 Columbia St., is available across British Columbia and Northwest Washington. It continues to provide programming for Jewish and other communities with no other access to the airwaves.

from Ethan Minovitz



Tikkun Community Meets In Vancouver

By Leonard Angel and Leah Rankin

Dear friends,

Please join our Tikkun-Vancouver meetings, Monday nights at 7:30 p.m., or 8:00 p.m., if more convenient. They are held at 865 Durward Avenue, near Fraser and 33rd in Vancouver. Between 7:30 and 8 p.m. we sit for a half hour of silent meditation. At 8 p.m. we begin our discussions, and at 9:10 we conclude with evening blessings and tea.

All are welcome who share Tikkun's values: interdependence; revisioning corporate values; human rights everywhere; Israel/Palestine by '67 boundaries with slight changes by agreement; and spiritual cultivation.

For further information, consult Tikkun.org or call Leonard Yehudah Angel 604-876-6925 or e-mail Leah at unbeldi@shaw.ca. It is a good idea to call or e-mail if this is your first visit, as sometimes the meetings are changed. If you would like to be on our e-mailing list, e-

*Jenny Puterman wrote this poem about her grandmother, Min Puterman,
who died in Florida in August at the age of 92.*

STITCHES *For Grandma*

The blanket she knit
her hands knowing, counting
purple blue stitches into snowflake reindeer
green white sweaters into striped mittens
a scarf and a hat to match

each stitch sliding off the needles fluid, effortless
senseless sitcoms in the background

the woman who raised my father
who watched the world changing
(in ninety years a lot changes)

knitting a vest for her young son
a cardigan for her husband

she watches wars happen
her son grow
grandchildren
computers

her needles click
a ball of yarn
transformed

alone and strong and peaceful
having perfected her place

she accepts life as it comes
grows old matter-of-factly
with blunt acceptance

(April 1998)

In sticky Florida heat
I sit on the floor
wrap gold edged dishes
crystal candy bowls in paper
pack her life into boxes

(Continued on page 15)

we find a dozen rolls of tape
unused erasers
nylons she never wore
pencil stubs

a bottle of shampoo, unopened
we find the details of her life

in the hospital bed
she looks small

beside her
tea roses (her favorite) spread slowly
in the cool room

when I say goodbye the surprising softness
warmth of her forehead against my lips

Now I hold our last conversation
the fisherman sweater
the cardigan with the wood buttons
the little blue booties

I wrap myself in a blanket
in the thousands of stitches that slid off her fingers
in the thousands and thousands of stitches that make up a life

(August 2002)

Submission Guidelines

Submissions must be submitted electronically by e-mail or on disk. Contact me if you have any problems with this, and we will problem solve. Articles should be 500 words maximum, and will be edited for brevity, clarity and readability. Articles can be submitted as attachment if they are word documents, or written into the body of the e-mail. Here is a check list for submission, and my expectations:

- Is there a phone number and /or address as well as e-mail address if I am naming a contact person?
- Have I provided explanations for any Hebrew/Yiddish words, rituals, etC
- If I am using an acronym, have I used the full name at least once?
- If I name an agency, or organizations, have I included contact information for them?
- Have I included a phone number even if I am e-mailing, in case the editor wants to talk to me?
- Have I included complete details of any event? Time, place, date, costs, sliding scales etc.
- Is my event accessible? Is there a contact person with full contact information?
- Have I put 604 in my telephone numbers?
- If I'm submitting a poem, have I faxed a hard copy to the editor, so she can ensure the form is right?
- Have I saved this check list, and will read before submitting?
- Your co-operation is appreciated.

NEW DONATIONS
to Nov. 13, 2002

Community Fund

In appreciation of Reb David & Reb Hillel
In appreciation of Martha Barker
In appreciation of Sue Ackerman
In memory of Wilhelmina Puterman z'l
In memory of Jenny Wright's parents, Raphael and Nita
Collins z'l
In honour of the marriage of Aliza Rothman & Arik
Labowitz
In memory of Josef Adlersberg z'l
In honour of Annaliese Wexler's Bat Mitzvah

Len Ryant Memorial Fund

In honour of Hillel and Sheryl
In memory of the 5th Yartzheit of our beloved friend
Len Ryant
In memory of Josef Adlersberg

Tzedakah Fund

In memory of Josef Adlersberg z'l
In memory of Manuel Lazar z'l

Building Fund

In memory of Josef Adlersberg z'l

Refugee Fund

In memory of Joe Adlersberg z'l

East Side Food Fund

In honour of Rabbi David

Lisa Nemetz Education Fund

Adam va-Adamah

Book Fund

School Fund

B'nai Mitzvah Endowment Fund

Rabbi's Fund

KEREN OR
(A BEAM OF LIGHT)

Published six times a year by the Or Shalom Jewish
Spiritual Community, 710 East 10th Ave., Vancouver,
B.C., Canada V5T 2A7. Tel: 604-872-1614. Fax: 872-
4406.

Keren Or is available on our website, orshalom.ca, or it
can be sent by e-mail by contacting Michael Corber:
kerenor@instanetservices.com. Adobe Acrobat required.
If you require a copy in a regular word document to
work with voice recognition software, or a taped version,
contact the Editor.

E-mail: orshalom@telus.net Website: orshalom.ca.

February/March issue deadline 3 p.m., Tuesday January
14, 2003.

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Proofreader and Second Opinion: Miriam Eguchi
Layout: Heidi Mannis

Special thanks to Lorne Mallin, Michael Corber ,and
Richard Abrams for help with the transition to the new
crew! And thanks Michael for teaching my computer to
talk!

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