

# KEREN OR

THE NEWSLETTER OF OR SHALOM

Or Shalom Jewish Spiritual Community, Vancouver BC Kislev/Tevet/Shevat 5764 December/ January 2003/2004

The Reb Site

by the Or Shalom School

This issue, we are privileged to hear from the younger “rebs” of the community as they share with us their own Hanukah miracles and experiences.

## The Wish

by Katie Micay

Hello, my name is Rachel Weiss. I am a 12 year old girl, living in Vancouver, Canada. I have blond hair and blue eyes and I am the average height for my age. I loved to sing and dance when I had more energy. The thing that you should know about me is that this is my last year, not of school or until my Bat Mitzvah but to live. I have Leukemia and I am nearing the end of my life span.

This year is going to be the best Hanukah ever! All of my family is coming to our house for Hanukah dinner and playing dreidl. This year I was approached by the “Make a Wish Foundation” and was asked about a wish that I would like. I thought that the best wish would be not only to help ourselves but to help others. I then decided to raise money for Jewish children suffering from Leukemia.

I decided to visit the hospital. I was surprised to find out how many kids were there. Before I was the only one around that has Leukemia. I worked together with all of the kids at the hospital to find a way to raise money. We all got everyone we knew to donate money along with all of our piggy bank money and put it together. We raised \$40,000 towards Leukemia. As a present in exchange for what I had done, I received a puppy. I named her “Wish”. Signed, Rachel Weiss



## Pigs, Turtles & Chocolate

by Debbie Vogt & Ella Zetler

Once in the land of times, there was a little family of nine people. Adel, the nine-year-old went up to spin the dreidl. She moved slowly because she was soooo tired. As soon as she touched the dreidl, she fell into a magical land of pigs and turtles.

As she walked up to them, she noticed a pig and a turtle were playing a game of dreidl. She went up to the pig and asked, “What are you doing?”

He said, “I’m Bob. We’re playing dreidl. Wanna join?”

“Okie dokie pokie,” says Adel and she goes to play dreidl. She won lots of chocolate. The turtle, named Billy-joe, started crying because he didn’t get any chocolate, so Adel gave him half of hers. So all of them ate lots of chocolate and got sick.

They were having the time of their lives! Then suddenly. . . . . Adel saw her little family of nine, and screamed AHHHH!!!! She ran up to her room. Then she screamed, “What happened to Billy-joe and Bob? Her family thought she was crazy but kept celebrating Hanukah!



### It Happened Last Hanukah

by Samara Malkin

My name is Raven. I live in Toronto. Today is the first day of Hanukah. This year will never be as good as last year was. Here, let me tell you about it.

I was sitting at the table reading my book when my uncle walked in. He came over to me and gave me a present. I asked if I could open it but he shook his head no. See, my uncle isn't much of a talker. I guess I had to wait until after supper.

"Mom!" I yelled. "When's dinner going to be ready?" I could smell my mother's famous latkes – my mouth was watering.

"It's almost ready so could you set the table?" I put my book and present down on the table to get the things. Just as I was finishing, my mom brought the latkes in. "Tom, Shelly and everyone else, dinner time!" She yelled upstairs to me, little sister and Dad.

After we had dinner, we opened up our presents. (My uncle gave me a book.) I really wanted to start reading it but my mom said I had to play dreidl with my sister. After a while of arguing, I finally gave up and played. My sister won, of course. At last I got to read Uncle Dave's present.

I changed into my PJs, brushed my teeth and flopped onto my bed, book in hand. I opened my book and for some strange reason I felt a pull in the back of my head to turn the page. I kept reading the first page- the pull in my head started to hurt. I kept reading on the first page. I started to get dizzy. I felt sick to my stomach. I started to shake. I turned the page and all the pains stopped.

All of a sudden I felt myself get thrown forwards. The next thing that happened was such a surprise! I opened my eyes and found myself on the ground. When I sat up, I wasn't in my bedroom. I got up and started to wander around.

I saw a woman looking nervously around. I went over to her and asked where this place was. She didn't seem to hear. I said it over and over again and each time she didn't answer. I was wandering around and saw a little girl. Suddenly the girl ran over to me, grabbed me by the shoulders and said, "You are in 1887, March 27<sup>th</sup>. I am your great, great, great grandmother. You have managed to get to me so I can give you this."

She pulled out a cardboard box and gave it to me. And then it went all foggy and I found myself back in my room. Then my mom called up to me to go to bed.

"One minute." I opened the box and inside was an album filled with things from when great-great-great grandma was alive.

There, that is what happened last Hanukah.

### Sharing the Holidays

by Sabine Raskin

I like Hanukah because for four nights we have people over. We have latkes with apple sauce on top and jelly donuts for dessert. We have dreidls. I light the menorah and I get to stay up until nine o'clock.

For one night, we have somebody over who lives on our street. They are a Christian family. They have a three and a half year old and a one year old girl. They come to our house to celebrate Hanukah and sometimes we go to see their Christmas tree.



Sarah, it's your turn". My father passed the prayer book on to me. Every Hanukah my family passes the prayer book around and when it comes to you, you tell what you think was so great about Hanukah. I stared at the book, desperately thinking of something to say. "Sarah, hurry up!" demanded my older sister, Adelle. See, the truth is I don't believe in God. I believe in the evolution theory. Instead of giving a speech, I mumbled, "pass". My face was red and hot and my hair was sticking to it. I handed it to Adelle. "Sarah". My mom looked at me. "Sorry", I whispered and ran up to my room. It was stupid, no one would ever believe me.

Whoosh...huh? I looked around. I seemed to be in the middle of a battleground. Spears and arrows were flying around. "Stop it - somebody make it stop", I cried. I couldn't stand it. I ran to some nearby caves and stepped inside.

The cave was so dark except for one candle at the back. I walked towards it and saw that there was a pile of animal skins on the ground. I was oh, so sleepy. I collapsed on the skins and fell asleep. When I woke up someone was tapping me on the head. I looked up. A young man stood over me. "Who are you?", he asked. "What?" "I am Judah," he repeated, "a Macabee". "Oh," I exclaimed, "so this is where I am. I am Sarah Cohen." "Ah," Judah smiled. "I know where you come from".

Whoosh...I was back in my bedroom. Everything was the way I had left it. I smiled and pushed my blond hair out of my eyes. "Mom, Dad, Adelle!" I cried, running downstairs. I have so much to tell you! I finally believed in Judaism, thanks to Judah and the Macabees.

**An Illustrated Hanukah**  
by Marcus Berkowitz and Asher Zetler

Everything was peaceful one day until. . .Antiocosus came.  
They were killing all the Jews.  
Then the Macabees came.  
Oh no- one of the Macabees died!  
There was a big war.  
Finally the Macabees win.  
But there wasn't enough oil for the menorah in the temple.  
But it lasted for eight days!  
Hurray!





The colours of autumn still linger as the days become shorter and cooler, reminding us that the wheel has turned and a season is changing. And though we may spend more time indoors, there are still magnificent walks to take this time of year. We can go early in the morning to witness the coastal fog wrapping its fingers around the North Shore mountains or go in the late afternoon when an orange-bronze sun melts into a shimmering ocean. How blessed we are to find ourselves in this part of the world. As the natural light begins to fade we turn our eyes and hearts to the miracle of Hanukah.

Your Board has been very busy this past autumn. Following the splendor of our High Holiday services, our Annual General Meeting was held on October 26, 2003 and was well attended by members. Minutes were approved from last year and various committees gave their reports.

Various by-laws and motions were approved as follows:

1. Resolution 10 - Rabbi Selection

**A MOTION EFFECTIVE FOR THIS RABBI SEARCH ONLY;**

*The by-laws are currently silent on procedures for selecting a rabbi, thus leaving the decision to the Board of Directors. This proposal provides for membership ratification of the board's decision. Because of the importance of this decision and to be sure of a broad representation of members, a quorum of 25% of members in good standing is required. If a quorum is not present, the board's decision stands. In addition, to reflect the need for broad community agreement with the board's selection, a majority of 60% of those present must ratify the board's selection.*

2. Resolutions 2, 3 and 4 - Membership

Resolution 2 - Part 2, Membership, Section 4

Any person 19 years of age or older who agrees to the purposes of the society may apply to the directors or their designate and this person becomes a member upon acceptance by either the directors or their designate.

*Current section 4 reads as follows:*

*<sup>3</sup>Any Jewish person who agrees to the purposes of the society is eligible for membership in the society. Any other person who agrees to the purposes of the society may apply to the directors or their designate and upon acceptance by the directors or their designate, the person may become a member of the society.<sup>2</sup>*

*This by-law change will eliminate the distinction between Jewish and non-Jewish applicants for membership and provides a mechanism for Jewish applicants to become members.*

Resolution 3 - Part 2, Membership, Section 7

A person shall cease to be a member of the society

(d) on not having paid their dues for the current fiscal year by June 30 without an arrangement having been made with the treasurer or designate

**Vicki Robinson and Gloria Levi report on the Rabbi Search, while Carol Ann Fried takes minutes.**



## Board Report continued.

*Current section 7 reads as follows:*

*<sup>3</sup>A person shall cease to be a member of the society:*

*(d) on having been a member not in good standing for a period of time prescribed by the directors<sup>2</sup>*

*This proposal provides that a member must pay their current dues assessment or make an arrangement for reduced dues by the end of each fiscal year to maintain membership. Our fiscal year ends on June 30. Because current section 9 defines a member in good standing as one who has paid her or his dues assessment, the current by-law gives the directors discretion as to when a member loses her/his good standing and thus her/his right to vote at a general meeting.*

Resolution 4 - Part 2, Membership, Section 9

A member in good standing is a member who has been a member in the previous fiscal year and has met or made arrangements for the dues and other financial obligations for that year and the current fiscal year.

FOR THE PREVIOUS FISCAL YEAR.

*Current section 9 reads as follows:*

*<sup>3</sup>All members are in good standing except a member who has failed to pay his current annual membership fee or other subscription or debt due and owing by him to the Society.<sup>2</sup>*

*This proposed by-law provides that a person who was a member in the previous fiscal year, e.g., in the year ended June 30, 2003, will be a member in good standing in the current fiscal year, e.g. the year ending June 30, 2004, and thus be able to vote at a general meeting during the current year as long as she/he has paid dues for the current year or made arrangements to pay those dues. The current by-law requires a member to pay current year dues in order to be in good standing and thus vote at general meetings. For example, under the current by-law, members who have not paid current dues by the date of the AGM would not be able to vote at that AGM.*

The Or Shalom board thanks those who have just completed a two year term: Carol Ann Fried, Earl Goldstein, Maurice Bloch, Kevin Solomons, Rory Richards, Sandi Moussadji, and Frank Segal. Our community has been blessed by your dedication and energy. Though we are sad to see you go, we know that you will continue to inspire us with your insights and generous hearts.

We welcome the following people for and congratulate their commitment and enthusiasm on joining the board: Mary Adlersberg, Heidi Mannis, Nancy Newman, Myrna Rabinowitz (recording secretary), Tilly Schalkwyk, Hal Siden and Helen Waldstein. Completing the second year of their terms, are: Rhema Cossever, Effron Esseiva, John Fuerst, (treasurer), Barry Goodman, Lorne Greenberg (co-chair), Susan Shamash, Alizah Shatsky (Communications Liaison) and Hana Wosk (co-chair).

We look forward to working with all of you, our wonderful community, as we enter this new season. As always, our doors and hearts are open to your ideas, suggestions, concerns, and creativity. No doubt there will be exciting and challenging times ahead. Join us and get involved.

*Alizah Shatsky, for the Board*

In May of 2003 , the Or Shalom Board of Directors established the Rabbi Search Committee (RSC). We sought a gender balance and members with experience in personnel matters. Rabbi Daniel Siegel is working as a consultant and advisor.

The Committee's first task was to establish its "Terms of Reference." This document was drafted by the Committee, approved by the Board and circulated to the Community in the July bulletin issue of Keren Or. The Committee also created a budget for the Rabbi Search process and submitted it to the Board for approval.

Over the summer, the Committee gathered information about different synagogues of comparable size to Or Shalom in Vancouver and Victoria. This research provided us with valuable information about issues like salary ranges, financial arrangements, job descriptions and priorities for rabbis. Board members will benefit from this information when they negotiate the contract with the new Rabbi.

### **Committee Deliberations**

The RSC compiled the material from the survey conducted in March 2002 and visioning exercise of May 2003. This information was summarized and it forms the basis of working documents for the search. We have incorporated Or Shalom's core values, the criteria for our rabbi and the skills that will be required.

### **Recruitment and Selection Process**

We have explored the interview process and developed a recruitment timeline and were advised to delay posting the position until after the High Holidays. In September, the Committee drafted a posting to advertise our position and developed a comprehensive list of places to circulate it. Included are rabbinic programs, Jewish Renewal sites and lists, Jewish newspapers and magazines and email lists that post Jewish jobs. We also circulated the information to individuals who may know of candidates. If you have ideas about advertising the position, please speak to a member of the Committee. We can email you the posting so you can circulate it yourself.

Each applicant will receive a package containing the Rabbi's job description, information about Or Shalom, information about Vancouver and photographs of activities in our community. The posting is currently in circulation and we are now receiving applications to review and shortlist by the end of November. The Committee encourages members of the community to contact any of them at any time - see contact information below.

The RSC Committee will continue to report regularly to the Board and to the Community through Keren Or. Please feel free to contact any Committee member with your ideas.

### **Committee Contact Information**

Gloria Levi	604-873-0078	glorialevi@shaw.ca
Vicki Robinson	604-874-8978	vrobinson@hotmail.com
Peter Ballin	604-222-2354	pjballin@shaw.ca
Maurice Bloch	604-266-4204	mauricebloch@shaw.ca
Azima Buell	604-731-0572	azimabuell@aol.com
Fran Goldberg	604-734-0342	fgoldberg@sageplanners.com
Rory Richards	604-669-0641	rorrichards@shaw.ca
Bette Thompson	604-736-4317	kiwi42@shaw.ca
Joseph Tietz	604-225-0007	jtietz@jfsa.ca
Hana Wosk	604-261-5558	hanawosk@shaw.ca

## Finding Zion

My ancestors raised me an a rural protestant Irish farming community in Southwestern Ontario. I grew up attending a little country church named "Zion".

"Praise waiteth for thee O Lord in Zion". I read that phrase over and over again, counting the letters that had been painted over the choir-loft. I knew that Zion had something to do with the Jews. I'd heard it spoken of from the Bible. I didn't really like going to church.

I remember thinking "if we just tuck away this protestant crucifix, nobody would know it's a church..." We didn't have the "photos" of Jesus like in other churches I'd been to. I looked really hard to find trinity designs on the railings inside. I didn't see any in the years I went there. I looked really hard. I wondered what made our church different.

At age ten or so, I recall watching television and seeing a little boy explaining peyes\* to a friend. Ever after that, I kept the wisp there, even when my hair was really short.

At age twelve...The brother who usually fought with me, this time supported me in my decision not to confirm, especially not to do it for my mother's sake. (He hadn't gotten confirmed either).



## by Phoenix Wisebone

I stopped going to church from 18 on mostly. I looked into Catholic conversion after my mother died, mainly because of the mysticism. I still didn't buy the whole Jesus thing, though, so I let that idea go after a year of conversion classes.

My journey took me through Buddhism, the New Age movement and neo-paganism. I settled for what I thought was fine: being spiritual without being religious.

When a series of mystical and odd coincidences began to accumulate, highlighting things Jewish, I decided I'd better find a way to learn more. I'd ridden past Or Shalom for years...I'd walked past synagogues in Ottawa; too...I'd never been inside one before...

I stepped inside for the first time in 1997. Arie Chark noted the peyes wisps. What's remarkable is that *I had completely forgotten about them for years until he mentioned it...* I had made the decision...told no one, and had just kept them as a habit.

The years of wandering seem to make sense in the way that many displaced Jews in North America go searching for spirituality. Some of us make our way back to Zion.

*\*peyes – ear-lock worn by orthodox Jewish males*



Team Dodie Runs for the Cure—October 6, 2003

## The Rabbi's Benevolent Fund Needs a Boost

by Maurice Bloch



The Rabbi's Benevolent Fund (RBF) is a fund of money set aside for the purpose of providing crisis support to individuals or families. The intent of the fund is to have money available, which may be discretely and confidentially dispensed by the rabbi to individuals or families who have emergency needs such as medical expenses, need for food or to pay their rent.

I have been administering this fund in the interim while we have no rabbi. During these eight months or so I have had a number of requests for support which I have responded to according to the circumstances. The funds in the RBF are now significantly depleted with less than \$1,000 remaining. I would like to build it up again to \$2,000 - \$3,000.

I therefore am asking the membership of Or Shalom to consider designating a donation to the RBF. All amounts from Chai (18) to Chai –million would be appreciated.

For those who may wish to make a request to use the fund please contact me confidentially at my home number 604-266-4204 or email [mauricebloch@shaw.ca](mailto:mauricebloch@shaw.ca)

## Or Shalom Phone Tree

by Myrna Rabinowitz

I am undertaking the task of organizing the phone tree so that everyone can be notified in times of urgency and would appreciate your help. Please provide any new phone numbers, email addresses or additional info. If I haven't heard from you yet, please contact me at [mrabinow@shaw.ca](mailto:mrabinow@shaw.ca) or 604 -873-8936 with the following information.

1. Do you have TELUS voicemail?
2. If you do, would you prefer to be notified by voicemail or email?
3. If you don't, would you prefer to be contacted by a personal phone call or email? Would you prefer to be left off the phone tree and not be contacted in times of urgency?
4. Would you like to volunteer to help with phoning a list of about 10 people?

Please note: only those who are on the Or Shalom email list can receive notification by email. For those who are on the list and say either voicemail or email is ok, we'll use email to notify you. It's much easier that way. Thank you for your help.





# Hip Hanukah Happenings

## Hanukah Party on Friday December 19

The Or Shalom community is holding our annual Hanukah Party on Friday Dec 19, 5:30-7:30 p.m. Come on out to celebrate Hanukah and Shabbat with food, games, and traditions. Please bring your favourite foods for a potluck dinner and Hanukkiah (menorahs) with two candles for the first night of lighting. Don't forget your dreidls!. Take 'em out for a spin! Please RSVP to Naomi @ [naomirozenberg@hotmail.com](mailto:naomirozenberg@hotmail.com) or call 604-872-1614 extension one.



## Reggae Party on Sunday, December 21

Reggae Hanukah Party with the irresistible reggae rhythms of Dubfreque. Sunday, December 21<sup>st</sup> at Bar None, 1222 Hamilton in Yaletown. Candle lighting is at 8 p.m. followed by live music from 9 p.m. until late, including dancing, drums, latkes, sufgan-yot (donuts) and lots of happy people. There is a minimum \$10 donation. For information contact Rory Richards at [roryrichards@shaw.ca](mailto:roryrichards@shaw.ca) or 604-669-0664.

## Looking For a Special Gift?

### Awaken, Arise

From Lorne Mallin



Hanna Tiferet Siegel's inspiring album "Awaken, Arise!" makes an ideal Hanukah gift. CD \$20 and cassette \$15. Contact me at 604-222-3379 or [lmallin@telus.net](mailto:lmallin@telus.net). Your heart will soar from the opening chant of "Awaken, Arise!", to the lilting duet of Hanna and Rabbi Daniel Siegel "Gomel", to the healing song "Please God." Listen to sample tracks at [www.hannatiferet.com](http://www.hannatiferet.com)

### Musical Hanukah Gifts

from Myrna Rabinowitz

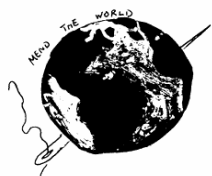
Tapes and CD's by SHIR HADASH and TZIMMES available from Myrna Rabinowitz [mrabinowitz@shaw.ca](mailto:mrabinowitz@shaw.ca) or 604-873-8936.

SHIR HADASH features Myrna Rabinowitz, Harley Rothstein and Hanna Tiferet Siegel singing niggunim often sung at Or Shalom- "Eitz Chayim Hi", "Oseh Shalom", "Sim Shalom", "Modim", "Lulei Hemanti", "Blessing For My Daughter" and many more - "OR SHALOM – Songs of the Heart" & "AND YOU SHALL TEACH YOUR CHILDREN" Tapes - \$12 CD's - \$18

TZIMMES features Moshe Denburg, Myrna Rabinowitz, Yona Bar Sever, Julian Siegel and Adel Awad – Jewish Worldbeat Klezmer – Yiddish, Hebrew, Ladino "SWEET & HOT", "A LID FOR EVERY POT", "KLEZMYRIAD" Tapes - \$10 CD's - \$15

## Moving From the Entrance to Our tent

by Helen Waldstein



A recent Parsha featured the newly circumcised Abraham sitting at the entrance of his tent when he spotted three strangers and ran to greet them. In the D'var, Reb Sheryl asked some provocative questions including the following: Now that we no longer invite complete strangers into our homes, how do we extend hospitality to the stranger ?

It is a question many of us have asked, both of ourselves as individuals and as members of Or Shalom. It is among the questions which the recently formed Tikkun Olam Committee has also been asking itself.

If you'd like to join the committee or if you have ideas about ways in which we could be reaching out to fix some of the brokenness in our community and in our world, please call me at 604-224-8080.

## Family Shabbatot at Or Shalom

by Naomi Rozenberg



Family-oriented Shabbatot are a new family program organized by Naomi Rozenberg. Youth of all ages will participate in these Shabbat morning services and partake in all aspects of a child-friendly Shacharit service. This includes opening the Ark acting in Parashat plays and leading the congregation in song or prayer. Teens are also encouraged to return on the anniversary of their B'nei Mitzvah, to sing their Torah portion, or to lead any part of the service.

The dates for upcoming Family Shabbatot are January 17, March 27 and May 12. Graduation certificates will be presented to our B'Yachad class, and Hebrew school students at the June 12th service.

Please contact Naomi Rozenberg at 604-872-1614 extension one or [naomirozenberg@hotmail.com](mailto:naomirozenberg@hotmail.com) if you plan to attend services with your children on these Shabbatot. She will ensure your child has a part in the Shabbat prayer service, or a role in our "DrashaDrama" Parsha production. There will also be spontaneous opportunities for your children to participate during the service.

## Long Live Queen Pat

by Janet Esseiva

**H**ear yea, hear yea, we have a new queen. By the power invested in me, I hereby declare that Pat Gill, is your new Kiddush monarch. God save the Queen. At this point, in the coronation, it would seem that I have become the queen mother. Thank you to all those who assisted, helped, hosted and generally put up with my nagging. (And we thank you both for undertaking the serious task of ensuring we are fed post Shabbat Services! *The Editor on behalf of the Community.*) You can contact Pat at [fuerstandgill@telus.net](mailto:fuerstandgill@telus.net) or 604-254-9234.

**More Lox, or  
lop off their  
heads!!!**



1861

The candle lights. Chava's eyes grow round with it, the light recreating a holy space she remembers in the world's dark. The light so close around her that she in this moment forgets about the danger she knows they live with.

Her Zaida nods to her, gives her his taper.

"Neshume-le, light. . ." his breath like G-d's whisper against her cheek.

She has been so afraid of the fires, but he takes her hand in his steady cool one and guides her to the wick.

"Forever and ever may we be blessed together, moment by moment Neshume-le. May we bring in love, the miracle of miracles all our lives . . ."

This time, she is braver. She takes the taper and kindles the first light of Hanukkah. Her smile rises up to his.

The first light, he taught her, was the brightest of them all, so full of G-d's love that the flame exploded and tiny sparks of lovelights like stars came into being and lit the world that was to be ours with their promises.

"Look, Neshume-le," her grandfather points out to the night sky. "Look up there to G-d's promise. Whenever you are frightened or sad or hopeless, whenever you think that G-d has forgotten you, look up and see the lights that remind you of what you are."

And Chava of six looks up and loves the nearness of her grandfather and his meaning, and she tucks that night into her pockets with her hands so that she will not forget about G-d's promise in the stars.

1871

She thought that she had never seen eyes as beautiful as the eyes of the boy on the horse's back. They were like the stars her grandfather had pointed to when she was small. He is riding by,

and he is alone this time. His eyes are blue like hers. They catch her on this spring day when she stands outside her door. "Forbidden" is what she hears, but this is not the word his eyes whisper to her.

She sees the boy take from around his neck a gold chain and drop it for her there on the ground. "My name is Ivan." he whispers. "Chava," she whispers back.

Then, "Chava!" and from behind she feels her skirt pull back hard into the house. And the front door shuts bang! Hard against her cheek is her grandfather's hand. Chava's face burns.



Chava standing at the window looks out through the shutters. The boy is still there. Chava sees the stars' promise in his eyes, and he on his horse looks up to a face that he is sure is an angel's, there in the window of the house where he will never be welcome.

1881

Chava looking through the window sees them all, the others, their horses steaming riding like thunder out from the shtetl gates, their red jackets fire in the night, her heart pounding like the hooves. Chava, sobbing on this the first night of Chanukah ten years too late. Chava there at the window wringing her hands because she cannot see a light at all in her grandfather's house. The village too dark.

She feels her anger rise up against them, against him especially, the one with the eyes that sang to her, the one that she knew she must never speak to, the one who has kept her heart with his promise that no one else might find her.

Chava takes her coat, opens the door, stands in the dark alone with the smell of the horses strong and terrible, and the wind fierce with the chill of fear. In her hand the gold chain.

*Photo from <http://www.jewishwomenexhibit.org/inside14.asp>.*

## The Promise continued

Down she runs down to save whatever she might. Into her grandfather's house she goes. Chava puts her hands in her pockets and touches the night her grandfather gave her the stars.

And in that moment when the remembrance of the light makes a place of hope in the dark, she sees him come. The man comes, his red coat like fire, open, so that he may breathe. She sees him come to her grandfather's door. She sees him enter.

From her pocket, she takes the star that lights the promise. She lights the lamp.

And Chava sees the Russian man named Ivan bending over then rising up to hold her grandfather and seat him carefully. She sees him kneel and bow his head. She sees her Zaida seated there at the table nodding, his hand on the head of the enemy and she sees the eyes of the boy with the stars promised turning to her there standing by the window. Down she kneels beside the man named Ivan. She takes his hand, awkward beside the other, the forbidden one she has held in her heart for all those years.

"What good is our love if we cannot bestow it?" she asks.

What will come from all of this, we cannot know, but here in this small house is the miracle light of lights that was promised from the first, the light that shines as a promise in the dark between the two most unlikely of all G-d's basherte. May G-d bless them and keep them, may G-d shine the Holy countenance upon them, allowing them to be the one light for all our sake, to be the promise of G-d's miracle of love in this, our broken world.

They will try.

neshume-le: *little soul*

basherte: *predestined beloveds*

Zaida: *Grandpapa*

Chava: *Eve*

stetl *a small Jewish town*

## Quilts—the Fabric of Community



*Sheryl Sorokin has curated a fine display of quilts made by and belonging to Or Shalom Members. Take a moment to stop by the shul to view these wonderful works of art.*

### Uriel's Quilt

Thank you all for the beautiful and loving creations which adorn Uri's quilt. We are mesmerized by the rich and intricate handiwork; the stories will bring us much learning for many years to come. We are deeply moved, and feel very blessed. *Wendy Oberlander and Uriel*



### In Memory

Bobbie Faye Gill, mother to Pat Gill, died on October 4, 2003. Pat was in Texas, to accompany her mother on this final journey.

Our hearts and love go to Pat, John and their entire family. Bobbie Faye Gill's memory will forever be a blessing .





I have recently returned from an 18 day trip to Crete with stop-overs in Athens and was saddened by what I found of Judaism there. In Athens I visited the Jewish museum and had a long talk with the curator, a woman originally from Thessalonica who was hidden and saved as a child at the time of the Nazi round-up of the Jews.

The museum is her passionate attempt to preserve something of what was at one time a flourishing and influential Jewish presence in Greece and especially in her home city. I had not realized that this was at one time so important a centre. It was able even to influence the pope of the day to rescind some negative regulations. Now there is little left.

The museum preserves some beautiful treasures and also memorabilia and the story of the Shoa (Holocaust) in Greece. It also houses a tiny shul. My narrator told me that a small group comes together just on the major festivals. There is just one other shul in this large metropolitan city. You may like to check out their website at [www.jewishmuseum.gr](http://www.jewishmuseum.gr)

Chania is the second city of Crete. The community, at one time the biggest in Crete, was rounded up in April 1944. My narrator recalled a tragic irony. Their boat was torpedoed by an allied submarine while enroute to the camps. She believed this quick end was something of a blessing rather than the dragged-out agonies of the camps but then, of course, there were no survivors. But the Jewish quarter and the synagogue were ransacked and looted and, as a final blow, nearly destroyed by an earthquake some years later. I saw pictures of the ruins and there was little left. However large financial contributions from the Rothchilds and other foundations have done an amazing job of restoration and it is quite beautiful today both in the building and the furnishings.

We actually stayed in a funky little apartment in a part of the "old city" that was at one time the Jewish quarter. The narrow, twisting, cobbled streets were a delight to explore, and there I discovered this beautiful, recently restored little Sephardic synagogue, called Eitz Hayyim.

Going through the shul one enters a second inner courtyard. In one section there are burial plots of three of their most distinguished rabbis of the past. There is also a fine mikvah just off this shady, peaceful, lovely spot. They do get visitors in the tourist season, but unfortunately there is no viable community or minyan and the overall impression left is that of a lovely but sad museum. I went round Shabbat morning for Shacharit but found only two elderly men there. Each man was davenning silently on his own because there was no minyan.

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## **The Oops Department**

My apologies to Shannon Malkin and his family. I erroneously put "Bat Mitzvah" on the Saturday October 11 square of the Keren Or calendar. Shannon (pronounced Shah-none – long "o") is actually a young man who celebrated his Bar Mitzvah. *The Editor*

I want to correct a mistake in The Reb Site for the last Keren Or. Under Rosh Hashanah it incorrectly mentions. Yizkor at this time (tishrei) is at Yom Kippur and following shemini atzeret.  
*Barry Goodman*

March, 2003.-Ruth and I land in Lisbon to begin a two month journey through Portugal and Spain. We certainly weren't the first Jews to Iberia. They probably arrived over 1700 years ago during the Roman times. Judaism arrived and was practiced at the same time as Christianity. By the time Islam conquered the peninsula, Jews had a long history there. But under the Islamic rulers Jews flourished in the professions, in philosophy and in communal life.



Even as Islam was beaten back by the steady advance of armed Christianity over 400 years, the Jewish community in Christian territory remained relatively strong and independent. Only in the last hundred years before expulsion did the Jewish communities of Spain (but not of Portugal) come under pressure to convert or leave. Expelled by Ferdinand & Isabella in 1492, Jews went to many places, but the largest group moved to Portugal. For reasons of political alliance, the Portuguese king followed suit several years later and expelled his Jews. In both countries, many Jews went underground and the legacy of being Conversos (secret Jews) was carried by families for 500 years.

The major Portuguese cities like Lisbon and Oporto have small active Jewish communities today. However it is not there that the vestiges of old Sfarad or of the Conversos are to be found. Rather they exist in the small towns of the interior, away from the heavy hand of the 16<sup>th</sup> century Inquisition, and away from the hand of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century urban redevelopment. There

the ancient links can be seen. For example, in the town of Castello da Vide we found an ancient unused synagogue, with space inside for Torah and Eternal Light.

There are no Jews today in Castello da Vide and only two in Tomar. These two are from a family who had been Conversos for 490 years and just "came out" about 20 years ago. They have located the old synagogue and they raise the funds for its restoration. It is as a small museum. In Portugal, where old neighbourhoods still survive, it's possible to seek out the narrow streets and look for the rundown buildings with the arched doorways. You can still find the telltale notch in the doorway that betrays the 500 year old location of a former mezuzah. *Next issue of Keren Or – Spain.*

*(For our full travelogue, with many photos and thoughts, visit our album at [ARDolgin.com](http://ARDolgin.com))*

### Welcome to our Newest Member!



Those of us who marveled at Carol's "bump" (and stamina) during the High Holidays are pleased to learn that it emerged in the form of Sophie Ida Fishman- Hebrew name Simcha- on October 15, 2003 and weighed in at 8 pounds, 3.4 ounces. She is the first child of proud parents, Carol Konkin and Jan Fishman and a grand-daughter for Jim Konkin of Kamsack Saskatchewan and Amelien and Kris Boe of Vancouver, B.C. Mazel Tov and joy to the family from this lovely baby girl!



Dr Richard Menkis  
introduced Hassidism  
October 20, 2003

We are delighted to announce a new lecture series that will focus on “Halacha”. Literally, *Halacha* means “the way” or “the path” and refers to the collective body of Jewish law, custom and practice that have come down to us today. In this lecture series we will explore the roots and assumptions about *Halacha*, including what has shaped *Halacha* and how *Halacha* is currently being manifested and practiced today. We will study the subject as both a noun (the body of law and practice) and as a process of engaging with our tradition. We will provide learners with a broad exposure by inviting speakers with different approaches and understandings of the issues. The following speakers and dates have been confirmed as of press time and more will be added shortly.

Wednesday, January 21 Rabbi Ross Singer on “An Introduction to Halacha”.

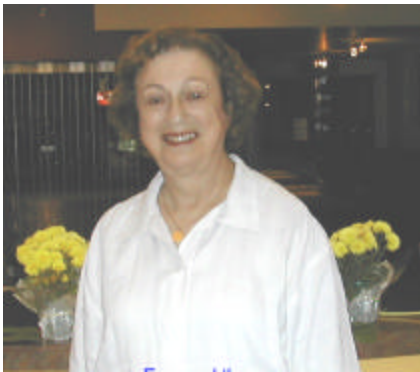
Wednesday, February 18: Rabbi Daniel Siegel on, “Jewish Renewal Approaches to Halacha”

Wednesday, February 25: Rabbi Daniel Siegel on, “Meta-Halacha in Today’s World”

A donation of \$18 is requested for each of the lectures in the series. For information, contact orshalom@telus.net or 604-872-1614.

## High Holiday Glimpses

Our greatest appreciation is due to those who put together our beautiful and moving Rosh Hashanah services. To our holy shleppers, to those who gave divrei torah, to the flower arrangers, to the shofar blowers, to our shlichim tzibbur (prayer leaders) who opened our hearts in prayer and to Reb Hillel, who put together a fabulous line up—many thanks. *John Fuerst on behalf of the Community and Board.*



Fran Ritch. Grand Organizer,  
Amid the Mums



Meditative Walker  
Muses on Images



Penny Ponders



The Madrigals Make Meditative Music



The Davening Space at the JCC



Heschel Meditation



## Donations

### Community Fund

In honour of The Holy Schleppers  
In honour of upcoming Bat/Bar Mitzvahs  
In honour of Veronica & Ron Swartz becoming permanent residents of Canada  
In honour of Sol Kauffman's Bar Mitzvah  
In memory of Bobbie Faye Gill z'l  
In honour of Simcha (Sophie Ida) Fishman's safe arrival  
In Honour of Bat Ami's Birthday  
In honour of the birth of Carol and Jan's Daughter  
In memory of Hal Siden's father, Franklin D. Siden z'l

### East Side Food Fund

In memory of Walter Tietz  
In honour of the marriage of Ruth Byron Winnick  
In memory of Marianne Rev's father, John Rev z'l  
In honour of Evelyn Rankin's 80th birthday (x5)  
In honour of Myrna Rabinowitz's birthday

### Rabbi's Fund

In honour of Roma and Andy Katz  
In memory of Bobbie Faye Gill z'l

### Len Ryant Memorial Fund

In honour of Len Ryant's Yahrzeit

### Tzedakah Fund

In memory of Bobbie Faye Gill z'L  
In honour of the birth of Carol and Jan's daughter

Thanks also to the kind folks who donated the monitor that greatly facilitates the production of Keren Or. *The Editor.*

*To donate in someone's honour or memory or for the full choice of Or Shalom Funds contact Richard at orshalom@telus.net or 604-872-1614 .*



### Keren Or – A Beam of Light

Published six times a year  
by the Or Shalom Jewish Spiritual  
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## Credits

Keren Or is available on our website, [www.orshalom.ca](http://www.orshalom.ca), or it can be sent by email by contacting the editor at [unbeldi@shaw.ca](mailto:unbeldi@shaw.ca). It is available both as a word document or as a PDF file.

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### Submission Guidelines

*Submission must be submitted electronically by email 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. Items can be submitted as attachments if they are word documents or written into the body of the email. Send to [unbeldi@shaw.ca](mailto:unbeldi@shaw.ca) Here is a check list of my expectations:*

- Have I put "Keren Or" in the subject of my email?
- Is there a phone number and /or address as well as an email 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 organization, have I included contact information for it?
- Have I included my phone number ?
- Have I included complete details of any event? (time, place, date, costs, supplies needed etc)
- Have I put 604 in my telephone numbers?

*Thank you for your cooperation.*

Next Deadline  
January 13, 2004