



January 2017 Newsletter

CONGREGATION
B'NAI ABRAHAM

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FROM THE DESK OF THE RABBI

I discovered many years after my childhood that latkes did not derive from the era of the Hasmonaeans. Judah the Maccabee, the hero of the Hanukkah story, not only never tasted a latke — he more than likely had never even eaten a potato! Potatoes are Andean tubers introduced to the Jewish populations of Eastern Europe about 200 years after Jews first arrived in that part of the world and long after the Hanukkah story.

So what's the ancient textual basis for the latke? Is there one? Don't we all feel more comfortable when we can provide a solid gastronomical theology to justify our high-fat glutinous carb-intake? I'm sorry to share with you that the Torah basis for the latke may be about as solid as trying to make a latke without matzah meal.

One modern theory suggests the textual foundation of the latke derives from an obscure retelling of the story of Judith. Judith feeds two pancakes to a Biblical character named Holofernes. Actually, this makes no real sense for a Biblical explanation for our latke because the story of Judith and the story of Judah the Maccabee have nothing to do with one another! Well, the name Judah and Judith sound similar to one another, but that's about the extent of the literary connection.

Our embrace of the latke endures despite our inability to trace our oil-filled potato origins in Torah! Nevertheless, who could imagine Hanukkah without a latke?

As an historically persecuted minority, Jews might be a little more willing to open ourselves to new ideas, new peoples and, yes, even new traditions — like the latke. At some point along the way, the latke became a part of our Jewish lives as much as the story of Judah the Maccabee. The story of Hanukah includes a dedication to an expansion of our imaginations and our hearts.

Today, we live in times when so many suffer persecution at the hands of tyrannical rulers, especially those in Middle Eastern countries. In our own country, there are many, including immigrants, women and minority groups who are concerned over a potential curtailment of their rights.

The story of Hanukkah reminds us that our faith depends on our willingness to bring light into the world. Our inspirations come from kindling our Hanukkah candles, defending the rights of the oppressed, or imagining a world where we do not exclude one another according to an authentic past that never existed — even the latke.

Rabbi Ari Plost

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We are at the beginning of a new year. As we look back on 2016, we will remember the many meaningful celebrations we shared together. Thanks to all who participated and contributed their time to make these occasions special. Your contributions were very important.

As your leadership continues its ongoing commitment to strengthen our community and recognize the sanctity of one another, we work hard to provide experiences that will bring us closer together. A special thanks to Carol Lafferman and her Committee for the Shabbat dinners and the Hanukah celebration; to the Religious Practices Committee and Music Committee for the ways they have enriched our Shabbat experience; and, the Tikun Olam Committee for their work in the community, especially during November. The Lifelong Learning Committee presented us two amazing brunches and the Membership Committee, in addition to their ongoing outreach work, provided two social events for us to get to know each other.

These committees will continue to do their amazing work in this spring semester. Coming up this month we have the opportunity to share an evening working at REACH, and the choir has some new music to share in our sanctuary. The Membership Committee has another event planned in the spring and the Lifelong Learning Committee has more brunches planned.

Go to our website to see the specific dates on the calendar. All these efforts need volunteers.

Call me at 240-291-6983 to become involved. Giving of your time to the community provides rewarding experiences.

Monda

LEGACY CIRCLE

The goal of "Planned Giving" is to help you better plan your estate and charitable giving in a way that benefits you, your family, and Congregation B'nai Abraham. There are several ways you can make planned gifts to Congregation B'nai Abraham and enjoy tax and income benefits, such as turning a 'Capital Gains Tax' on investment vehicles into a 'Tax Gift to Charity' that permits you to use your 2017 form 1040 as a deductible item.

BEQUEST**Your Goals:**

Maintain control of your assets during your lifetime.

Make a gift to Congregation B'nai Abraham after your demise.

How it works:

You designate 'Congregation B'nai Abraham' as the beneficiary of your assets by will, trust, or other instrument.

Please contact your Income tax accountant to assist you.



GREETINGS FROM THE RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

Our students had the pleasure of a private meeting with Barbara Gordon prior to the Life Long Learning brunch on December 4. They learned about where Ethiopia is located and why they were so anxious to return to their homeland of Israel. Mrs. Gordon explained how successful the new Israeli immigrants have been since leaving the extreme poverty of Ethiopia for the vibrant, nurturing atmosphere of Israel. After the adult brunch began,

we worked on world maps to learn where we and our extended families come from and then we made *injera*, the traditional Ethiopian flat bread.



DONATIONS

Endowment Fund

- In memory of Lois Levin Holstine from Kam & Steve Feld
- In memory of Lois Levin Holstine from Carol & Howard Mendelsohn
- In memory of Lois Levin Holstine from Debby & Harvey Weinberger
- In memory of Thelma Gordon from Barbara Schwab

DATES TO REMEMBER

Wednesday	January	11	Executive Meeting	7:00 PM
Saturday	January	14	Movie Night	7:00 PM
Wednesday	January	18	Board of Trustees Meeting	7:00 PM
Friday	January	29	Books & Bagels	1:30 PM

ONEGS - JANUARY SCHEDULE

Friday	January	6	Nadine Fox, Chair; Ben & Dee Chlebnikow
Friday	January	13	Jerry & Marlene Falke, Chairs; Bruce & Edith Edwards
Friday	January	20	Howard & Carol Mendelsohn, Chairs; Sharon Wagshal
Friday	January	27	Steve & Kam Feld, Chairs; Mike Fitzgerald, Bob & Linda Ginsberg

DIRECTORIES

There are Directories in the office if you need one. Please stop by and pick one up. Michelle will be there Monday, Tuesday and Friday 8:30 am - 1:30 pm.

Yahrzeits**January 6, 2017**

Frank Hollin
 Ray Kruger
 Albert H. Lehrman
 Albert Yoselowitz
 Bernard Levit
 Herman Rosenwald
 Israel Silverfield
 * Hyman Kronstadt
 * Rudolph H. Mendelsohn
 * Beatrice Brener
 Esther Selis Hurwitz
 Milton Wulk
 * Nina Rosenthal
 Hilda Stein

January 13, 2017

* Albert L. Kurtz
 Edward E. Oppenheim
 * Carroll P. Abrams
 * Harry G. Kaplan
 * Ethel Schindler
 * Ethel Simon
 Anna Greenwald
 * Ruth K. Kopp
 * Naomi Macht
 Isadore Bowers
 Benjamin Wagshal
 * Rose Gerber
 Hazel Becker
 Violet Pevenstein
 * Harry Levin
 Edward Rosenblatt
 David Strumpf
 * Lydia Levovitz
 Louis Rosen
 Lee Mitchell Schlossberg

January 20, 2017

Frieda Brull
 Stanley A. Chatkin
 Helena Sorkowitz
 * Mary Berkson
 Gladys M. Eaton
 Sally Lehrman
 Freda Pashen
 Blanche Salod
 Florence Samel
 * Bertha Rosenberg
 Sarah Kronenberg
 Rebecca Messer
 Gertrude Sorkowitz
 * Joseph Brenner
 Alvin Reed
 Max Apfeldorf
 Eva Dubin
 Bertha Langenstein
 * Abraham Meyers
 * Justin N. Scharf
 William Fifield

January 27, 2017

* Jennie Kaufman
 * Lena Meyers
 Ida Ginsberg
 Ray Rosenbloom
 * Dr. William J. Falk
 Milton Weidenfeld
 * Abraham Saltzman
 Irene Raitzyk
 Bruce T. Jerney
 * Dine Cohen
 Evelyn Goldman
 Joseph B. Kross

* Denotes
 Yahrzeit Plaque
 in Sanctuary

FAMILY DISASTER KIT

Your Family Emergency Disaster Kit should include:

Water – one gallon per person per day, non-perishable food, First Aid supplies, clothing and bedding, tools, battery-powered radio and extra batteries, flashlights and batteries, soap, water and bleach. Plan to have a three-day supply on hand. For a complete list of what to include, contact the Washington County Emergency Management Office at (240) 313-2930.

Contact Julie Ferron at (301) 791-4871 for more information as well.

CARING COMMITTEE

The Caring Committee provides care, companionship and assistance to members of our congregation and their immediate families in need due to ill health, age or non-financial crisis or catastrophe.

Chair: Sharon Metzner - receives initial calls from the rabbi: sharonmetz@aol.com (301) 739-2972
 Robbie Greenberg - for meals, as needed: robbieg56@gmail.com (301) 797-7265
 Barby Weiss - for transportation needs: barby@myactv.net (301) 791-6098
 Sharon Wagshal - for home visits or outings: sharwag@aol.com (301) 797-3220



AED UNITS

The Security Team is looking to purchase two AED units (defibrillators) for the synagogue and religious school buildings. These units come with foolproof step-by-step instructions and, as such, can be used by anyone in the congregation. In a cardiac emergency any one of us could save the life of a loved one.

These units are very expensive, so we plan to purchase refurbished units at a cost of \$600-\$800 each.

If you are interested in making a donation towards the purchase of these units, send your contribution to the synagogue and earmark it for the "AED units."

Help us to help you live a healthy and happy life.

Thank you,

Your Security Team

Women of CBA

December 7 at the home of Janet & Mansoor Emral Shaool

The 'Women of B'nai Abraham' share camaraderie and delicious eats. Ought to do this more often.



At events like this, everyone participates in games, laughter or just plain talk with friends that you rarely get the opportunity to sit and chat with ... in a friendly family atmosphere. Thanks Janet for your ever-present hospitality.

Photos courtesy of Carol Metzner



LIFELONG LEARNING

MOVIE NIGHT January 14 7:00 PM Social Hall

The movie is *THE FRISCO KID* Refreshments served. Feel free to bring additional 'stuff'.

BOOKS & BAGELS January 29 1:30 PM Place: TBA

The book is *KAROLINA'S TWINS: A Novel* by Ronald H. Balson

Our brunches have been very exciting. Stay tuned.

We look forward to hearing our own Bill Hollin in March and Paul Waldman in May.

MONTY HALL'S BEST DEAL

by David Suissa, published 2012



For over 30 years, starting in the early 1960s, Monty Hall hosted “*Let’s Make a Deal*,” one of the most popular game shows in television history. He was not only the show’s impresario, he created and produced it, and today, at 91, (now 95) he is still involved with its creative evolution. But while Hall has fond memories of the thousands of “*deals*” he made on his show, when I met him for lunch the other day at the Hillcrest Country Club, he had other deals in mind. In particular, he told me about a deal he made more than 75 years ago with a Jewish man named Max Freed.

Hall had dropped out of college after his first year because he couldn’t afford to continue. He was living with his family in Winnipeg, a city of long winters in western Canada that attracted many Jews from Ukraine. The Hall clan spent many years struggling financially and living in close quarters. Max Freed, on the other hand, was anything but struggling. He was a 29-year-old playboy with a thriving clothing company who wore fancy suits and had a reputation around town for living the good life.

One fateful day, Freed bumped into Hall’s father, a kosher butcher, and asked him: “*Was that your boy I saw yesterday washing the floors of a warehouse?*” The father responded that yes, that was his son. “*Well,*” Freed said, “*tell him to come by my office tomorrow.*”

When Hall showed up the next day, Freed made him an offer. If Hall returned to college, Freed would pay for all his schooling expenses, but with three conditions. One, Hall’s grades had to be B-plus or higher. Two, Freed wanted a monthly report on his progress. And three, Hall had to promise that one day he’d do the same for another kid. (Freed also asked him to keep the deal confidential, a request Hall gladly ignored nearly 75 years later at our lunch.)

Hall, with the support of his family, jumped at the deal, so Freed asked him to get back to him with a budget. As Freed reviewed the budget, which included tuition and living expenses, he noticed that Hall had put in only 25 cents for lunch. “*Don’t you want a drink with your lunch?*” he asked. “*Go ahead and add 5 cents for a Coke, and throw in something for haircuts, too.*”

Once they agreed on the budget, Hall promptly resumed his studies at the University of Manitoba. For the next three years, Hall thrived. He was the first Jewish student to become president of the student body, a prestigious position. He had excellent grades and reported regularly to Freed, who kept a close eye on his progress. Hall’s accomplishments, however, were not enough to get him into medical school, so after graduation he moved to Toronto and began a career in radio broadcasting. Hall had a restless personality and was always on the lookout for new opportunities. He moved to the United States and began working in television, creating and producing shows. His big break came when he sold “*Let’s Make a Deal*” to a major network.

As Hall became one of the best-known names in television, Max Freed was becoming very proud of his “investment.” The two always kept in touch, becoming so close that Freed’s son once said to Hall: “*I think he loves you more than he loves me!*”

But it wasn’t just Hall’s fame and success that made Freed proud — it was also his charitable work. Hall went way beyond his original promise to help another kid get an education. In fact, he became one of America’s most celebrated fundraisers, helping charities of all stripes raise more than \$1 billion. In the charity world today, Hall is known as the man who doesn’t say no.

A few years ago, Hall heard from a doctor that Freed, by then 99, was nearing the end. He took the first flight to Winnipeg to be near him. When Hall got to his bedside, he moved his face “nose to nose” with Freed, who was now “mostly blind and mostly deaf.” They talked and reminisced for about 20 minutes.

Finally, putting his mouth close to his friend’s ear, Hall said to the man who had picked him up 75 years earlier while he was washing floors in Winnipeg: “*Max, you gave me a life.*” Max Freed, the former playboy who invested in that little Jewish boy he hardly knew, replied, in a barely audible voice: “*No, Monty, you gave me a life.*”

David Suissa is president of TRIBE Media Corp./Jewish Journal and can be reached at davids@jewishjournal.com

MAKE A CONTRIBUTION TODAY

Donations to the Congregation are a meaningful way to congratulate friends on Simchas or to show that you care in times of sorrow.

Contributions may be designated to any of our funds (see below). If a specific fund is not designated, the money will go into our General Fund.

For a minimum contribution of \$10.00 a printed card is sent. An individually hand-calligraphed card will be sent for any contribution of \$18.00 or more.

The minimum contribution to the Endowment Trust Fund is \$10.00

To make contributions to ANY FUND, including the CHAI CAMPAIGN, please mail or call:

*Mrs. Renee Kramer
1102 Oak Hill Avenue
Hagerstown, MD 21742
(301) 733-2093*

General Fund, Endowment Fund, Cemetery Fund, Rabbi's Discretionary Fund, Young Adult Fund, Harold & Jeanne Jacobs Fund, Youth Group Fund, Sharon Wagshal Religious School Fund, 'Tree of Life', and the Adolph & Hannah Baer Trust Fund

PLANT A TREE IN ISRAEL



Planting a tree in Israel is the perfect way to show you care. You can plant trees for all occasions and help green the land of Israel while sending a special gift to a friend or loved one. For each order, a beautiful certificate of your choice is mailed to the recipient with your own personal message. Plant trees for all of these occasions: birth, Bar or Bat mitzvah, graduation, wedding, birthday, get-well wish or in memory of someone special. Over the past 100 years, JNF has planted over 250 million trees in the land of Israel. The cost per tree is \$18 with the check made out to Congregation B'nai Abraham. We have an EZTree account at JNF and Carrol will place the order for your tree(s).

For more information & to order a tree, contact Carrol Lourie at: (240) 818-7555 (cell phone) or email her at: cglourie@gmail.com

Contact Monda Sagalkin to learn how you can plan a self-sustaining gift to B'nai Abraham. (240) 291-6983 or monsansagalkin@aol.com

REGULAR OFFICE HOURS: Monday, Tuesday, Friday 8:30am - 1:30pm

Michelle Jardine, Office Administrator Email: bnaiabraham1@verizon.net Office phone: (301) 733-5039

DIRECTORY - WHO TO CALL

CONTRIBUTIONS

Renee Kramer (301) 733-2093
terrace708@myactv.net

PULPIT FLOWERS / TREES

Carrol Lourie (240) 818-7555
cglourie@gmail.com

TREE OF LIFE

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falkeq@hotmail.com

Yahrzeit Plaques

Ben Chlebnikow (301) 791-6590
bchleb77@aol.com

DOR L' DOR

Joan Becker (301) 791-7175

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