



# Beth Israel Congregation

1625 RESERVOIR ROAD  
GREELEY, COLORADO 80631  
970/353-0869  
<http://www.bethisraelcolorado.org>

**January/February 2010, No. 209**

## Calendar *(location is the synagogue for all events)*

### January 2010

- 8 Friday, 7:30 p.m.  
Erev Shabbat Services, Rabbi Sara Gilbert
- 10 Sunday  
10:00 - 11:45 a.m., Adult education  
early p.m., Rabbi's office hours
- 23 Saturday, 10:00 a.m.  
Shabbat Services, Rabbi Sara Gilbert  
Dairy potluck\* and adult education
- 25 Monday, 7:00 p.m.  
HP Sisterhood
- 31 Sunday  
5:00 p.m., Dairy potluck\*  
6:00 p.m., Annual membership meeting  
(also the January board meeting)

### February 2010

- 5 Friday, 7:30 p.m.  
Erev Shabbat Services, Rabbi Sara Gilbert
- 21 Sunday  
10:00 - 11:45 a.m., Adult education  
early p.m., Rabbi's office hours
- 22 Monday, 7:00 p.m.  
HP Sisterhood

### February 2010 *(continued)*

- 27 Saturday, 5:30 p.m.  
Havdalah/Purim  
Reading of the Megillah  
Dairy potluck\* dinner

Note: February board meeting to be announced.

### Looking ahead

- Sat, Mar 13, 10:00 a.m., Shabbat services
- Tues, Mar 30, 5:00 p.m., Seder
- Sun, Apr 11, 7:30 p.m., Yom Hashoah  
Date/time to be determined, April Shabbat
- Sat, May 8, 10:00 a.m., Shabbat services
- Tues, May 18, 7:30 p.m., Erev Shavuot
- Sat, June 26, 10:00 a.m., Arnold Bat Mitzvah
- Fri, July 16, 7:30 p.m., Erev Shabbat services
- Sat, Aug 14, 10:00 a.m., Shabbat services

### High Holy Days

- Wed, Sep 8, Erev Rosh Hashanah
- Thurs, Sep 9, 9:00 a.m., Rosh Hashanah Day 1
- Fri, Sep 10, 9:00 a.m., Rosh Hashanah Day 2
- Fri, Sep 17, Erev Yom Kippur
- Sat, Sep 18, 9:00 a.m., Yom Kippur

\*Please bring a dairy dish to share



## *From Rabbi Sara's Desk* **Why do you care?**

RABBI SARA GILBERT



*Our Jewish tradition urges us to participate in soul searching and spiritual self-examination in preparation for Rosh Hashanah and during the days of the High Holidays.*

It is interesting that in the wider world, this secular new year is to be a time for resolution and self-improvement, too, although frequently that effort concerns diets or exercise or smoking cessation, etc. Of course, our health is important.

Yet, as Jews, we are in the habit of thinking of spiritual and ethical practices that we want to enhance to become better people. (As do most religiously-grounded people, I imagine.) A Hasidic story, shared recently by Rabbi Bernard Gerson at Rodef Shalom in Denver, reminds me of that Source of our ethical concerns.

Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Kotzk was a great master and teacher of the nineteenth century. Once a student came and confessed to him, “Rebbe, I can no longer believe in God.”

“Why is that?” the Rebbe inquired.

“I cannot believe in God because the world is so filled with pain, with suffering, with ugliness, war, and evil. How could there be a God in such a world?” the young man answered.

“Why do you care?” asked the Rebbe.

“What do you mean, why do I care?” responded the student. “How could a person not care? Innocent people suffer, the cruel and the heartless seem to rule. Beauty is drowning in ugliness. Conflict goes on and

on. I care because it hurts me so. And I can’t understand why a God would let it be this way!”

Again the Rebbe repeated, “Why do you care?”

The young man grew exasperated. “Someone has to care! Someone has to witness the pain of the world and cry. If not, then all the suffering is meaningless. If no one cries, then the universe is a dark and hopeless place. I care because I want with all my heart to see a better world for my children, for all children, and for their children. I owe it to them to care.”

And again the Rebbe inquired, “Why do you care?”

*(continued on p. 3)*

And now the young man lost his composure altogether and he wept. "I care. I have to care. I must. It's what and who I am."

"Well, then," said the Rabbi Menachem Mendel, if you care that much, then God exists.

*Blessings to all the Beth Israel community  
for a new year 2010  
filled with caring, fulfillment and happiness!*

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## *Beginning January 10, 2010* Sunday Morning Adult Education Come and Learn!

RABBI SARA GILBERT

Interested and curious adults and teens are invited to participate in Jewish learning. While enjoying Sunday morning coffee with friends, we'll delve into text-based conversations from our sacred books.

The topic will be "Timely Topics in Talmud," discussion about a variety of *sugiot* (thematic sections) from the Talmud. Topics will include ethics, business dealings, interpersonal relationships, and personal moral and spiritual development.

It will be fascinating to see how these ancient Talmudic teachings have relevance in our lives today. All readings and discussion will be in English!

Come to every session or just one. Classes will be held from 10:00 to 11:45 a.m. on:

January 10, February 21, March 21, April 18, May 16, and June 6.

Participants may choose the number of classes to attend, based on your schedules and interest. Purchase your "pass" and come when you are able. Fees are as follows:

6 classes	= \$70
3 classes	= \$36
Single or additional class	= \$15

Payment is requested in one or two payments at the first and/or second class attended, with checks made payable to Beth Israel.

Write ([sgilbert772@msn.com](mailto:sgilbert772@msn.com)) or call (303/832-4051) Rabbi Sara if you have any questions. I look forward to study with you!

**NOTE:** It is very important that everyone participate in Torah study! Scholarship assistance will be available. Please be sure to speak to the rabbi about your need. No one will be turned away due to financial concerns.



## *From the President*

# Annual Membership Meeting

BARRY SHELOFSKY



Well, it's that time of year again. No, not the upcoming Super Bowl, but Beth Israel Congregation's Annual Meeting. This year's meeting is scheduled for **Sunday, January 31, 2010, 5:00 p.m.**

The purpose of the annual meeting is to elect trustees and officers and for the transaction of such other business as may come before the meeting (Article 3, Section 1). On page 5 is a schedule/agenda. Also, enclosed is a proxy card in the event you are unable to attend.

I look forward to seeing all members at this meeting.

## Hebrew Progressive Sisterhood

DOROTHY RESNICK

This year, HP organized the Break-the-Fast and the Chanukah potluck and white elephant auction. We are planning our Community Passover Seder, Tuesday, March 30, 5:00 p.m. Scott Randel has agreed, once again, to cater our Seder, that is, cook the turkey, make the salads, clean up, etc. We will do our own set up, soup, gefilte fish, and desserts.

HP paid for the invitations and flowers for our Beth Israel 100-year celebration.

Our 2010 HP goal is to plan the three big events: Break-the-Fast, Chanukah potluck, and Community Passover Seder.

### Upcoming Meetings

7:00 p.m.  
Beth Israel

Monday, January 25

✓ Our own Dr. Joyce Ackerman will share an interesting and educational presentation.

Monday, February 22

✓ Michelle Sauder will present our program.

We will also assist with the planning and set up/clean up of Onegs and Friday night services. In addition, we will provide baby items for Promises for Children (part of Weld County United Way). We hope to raise money to meet our synagogue's needs with various material things and meaningful programs and events. Sisterhood truly wants to support our Beth Israel Congregation and our community of Greeley. Thank you all for helping make a difference.



If you have any questions or suggestions, e-mail Dorothy Resnick at [dorothyresnick@yahoo.com](mailto:dorothyresnick@yahoo.com)

# Beth Israel Congregation Annual Membership Meeting

Sunday, January 31, 2010

## Schedule/Agenda

- 5:00 p.m. Dairy potluck dinner
- 6:00 p.m. Annual Meeting begins
- Welcome/Introductions
  - Overview of Long Range Planning Initiative
  - Presentation of Mission Statement
  - Board elections
    - We will be electing a treasurer, secretary, and two trustees
  - Data gathering
    - Members will be asked to complete a survey focused on various aspects of the congregation
  - Standing committees
    - Review committee membership
    - Signup to serve on committee(s)
    - Standing committee reports
- 7:30 p.m. Adjourn

## January 23 Shabbat Afternoon Study

RABBI SARA GILBERT

Israeli writer Shai Agnon, winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature, was one of the greatest Hebrew novelists and short story writers. His work represents irony, mysticism, and most significantly, a love of Jewish tradition and Israel.



This year, on Shabbat afternoons, we will read Agnon's stories. Following services and lunch on January 23, adults and teens are invited to stay to read together and discuss Agnon's inspiring ideas and insights into our heritage. Reading Agnon is Torah study at its most creative!

Plan to be with us. There is never a charge for Shabbat learning.

### PURIM

*Saturday, February 27  
5:30 p.m.*



*Havdalah and Potluck Dinner*

*Reading of the Megillah*

*Contests and Fun*

*Come in Costume*

WATCH FOR DETAILS SOON

### Greeley Interfaith Association

JULIE GIVAN-WITTOW

The Annual Chili Supper Fund Raiser is scheduled for mid-February.

Watch for announcements and information to be forthcoming when the date is finalized.

Contact Ron Wittow, 330-6598, if you wish to donate items for the bake sale or silent auction or to purchase tickets in advance.



# Tu B'Shevat – The New Year of the Trees

RABBI SARA GILBERT

**T**u B'Shevat is not mentioned in the Torah, but the Mishnah (Talmud) does contain an early reference to a new year for trees. It is the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month of Shevat on the Jewish calendar. This year this Hebrew date falls on January 30.

It is the season in which the earliest-blooming trees, usually the almond tree in the Land of Israel, emerge from their winter dormancy and begin a new fruit-bearing cycle. Like we have fiscal years in our lives, these cycles related to the various tithes that were separated from produce grown in the Holy Land, and the time that these tithes were to be submitted at the Temple.

Tu B'Shevat is traditionally marked by eating fruit, particularly from the kinds that are mentioned in the Torah as the bounty of the Holy Land: grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives and dates.

A popular observance of this minor holiday has been the Tu B'Shevat seder, conceived by the mystics about 500 years ago. A Tu B'Shevat seder includes biblical reflections on nature and tastings of various produce and wines from Israel.

We will not be able to gather for a Tu B'Shevat observance this year at Beth Israel, but there are enjoyable and educational ways to remember the holiday in your own home.



## Ways to remember Tu B'Shevat in your home

- ✓ Use the day as a specific time to consider and discuss our ecological concerns, conservation, the choices we all make as stewards of the earth.
- ✓ Stop and consciously enjoy fruits of the trees and a good wine, particularly an Israeli wine.
- ✓ Purchase some products from Israel that week to affirm your connection to the Land – candy, body creams, coffee, foods such as soups or olives, Judaica, jewelry, clothing, CDs of music, etc. Enjoy!



## Office Hours at the synagogue

Sunday, January 10  
Sunday, February 21

(early afternoon,  
both days)

## Rabbi's Office Hours

During monthly office hours, Rabbi Sara is available at the synagogue to meet, chat, counsel and listen. A service provided by the congregation, there is no charge to individuals. Please make an appointment in advance (sgilbert772@msn.com or 303/832-4051).

Please note that Rabbi Sara is available by phone or e-mail whenever you need to contact her, and other appointment times can be arranged.

## Library

NAOMI JOHNSON

If you would like to purchase a book in honor of someone's birthday or other special occasion, please let me know. We have decorative bookplates to place in the book commemorating the event. This is perfect for children as they can choose their own book or you can choose one for them. The honor will also be announced in the *Greeley Jewish News* and at services.

Be creative. You might thank your child's religious school teacher, recognize a child for a great report card, or honor someone for a good deed. Your honoree and the Beth Israel library will be grateful.



Three lists are available on the Beth Israel Web site and on the desk in the library. The lists include suggested reading by:

- ✓ American Jewish Library Association. All are books published in the past year.
- ✓ Sydney Taylor Award Winners. This award has been given annually since 1968 for outstanding Jewish-content books (youth, K-12).

## People

**Rachel Weil**, granddaughter of Jerry and Nancy Weil, was chosen as one of two student representatives from Boston University to go to Copenhagen, Denmark, in December 2009 for the global climate conference.

One of her two major programs at B.U. is environmental studies.

**Rick Silverman** recently broke his leg while on a walk with his dog.

We wish him a speedy recovery.

Bonnie Rohn's father, **Lawrence Berlin**, has been ill recently.

We send good wishes for his recovery and prayers of support to Bonnie's mother, Miriam.



## *The Yiddish Corner* chachma

SUBMITTED BY NANCY WEIL

**P**ronounced KHAWKH-*meh*, rattling those two *kh*'s with uvular abandon, the way an Edinburghian would.

Hebrew: "Wisdom."

1. The divine spirit of Wisdom, which, according to the Midrash, existed long before the creation of the world and was the blueprint and ground plan for the creation.

(This resembles the Christian mystical use of *Logos*, the word, as in John I: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.")

2. A wise, profound, or astute saying.

3. The reservoir of erudite, wise, philosophical knowledge. And, since Jews are fond of paradox, knowing life to be full of it.

4. A jocular or clever remark.

5. A tricky, wily, cleverly concealed ruse, tactic, or arrangement.

6. (Derisive) A foolish move or performance.

From: *The Joys of Yiddish* by Leo Rosten. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968.

# Contributions

## Mitzvah fund



In honor of the 100-year celebration of Beth Israel Congregation:  
From Robert and Monica Kahn.

In honor of Rabbi Sara Gilbert:  
From Laura Manuel.

In memory of Tony Moya:  
From Jerry and Elizabeth Goodman.

In memory of Harold Winograd:  
From the Winograd Foundation.

In honor of Michael Shelofsky's graduation from the University of Colorado, Boulder:  
From Barry and Lucie Shelofsky.



A general donation:  
From Jonathan Bellman and Deborah Kauffman, Michael Gilbert, Ida Goldberger, Jerry and Elizabeth Goodman, Robert and Monica Kahn, Charles Karowsky, Lynn and Beverly Karowsky, Laura Levine, Mari Mutter, Barry and Lucie Shelofsky, LouAnn Strube, Mildred Terrill, Jerry and Nancy Weil, Ron Wittow and Julie Givan-Wittow.

In memory of Lee Kerchner, Kathy Flug's mother:  
From Hilda Moskowitz.

In memory of Irving and Beverly Metz:  
From Jerry Metz.



## Building fund

A general donation:  
From Michael Gilbert, Jeanne Lipman, Laura Manuel and Criss Clinton, Barry and Lucie Shelofsky.



## High Holy Days

For the High Holy Days services:  
From Barry Bloom, Ken Hailpern, Nina Judd, Norman and Rosalyn Provizer.

A gift for the New Year:  
From Barry and Margie Rothaus.



## Resnick fund

In honor of Dorothy Resnick's birthday:  
From Phillip and Jo-Ann Mullen.



## Newsletter



The *Greeley Jewish News* is now available electronically, that is, both by e-mail and on the Beth Israel Web site.

Let us know if you would like your newsletter e-mailed to you at the e-mail address you provide. Help save postage and paper costs if you can. Just let any member of the *Greeley Jewish News* publication board or any board member know.

Please accept my donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for the indicated fund. (Check one)

In Honor of     In Memory of

\_\_\_\_\_

If yahrzeit, date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name and address of person to be notified of contribution (if applicable):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Your name and address:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Check here if you do not wish to have your contribution publicized in the *Greeley Jewish News*.

For any of the following funds, make checks payable to Beth Israel Congregation and mail along with this form to Jeff Goodman, P. O. Box 867, Greeley, CO 80632

- Mitzvah
- Aliyah/Youth Scholarship
- Dinner Memorial Torah
- Building
- Resnick Endowment
- Singer Memorial Garden
- Leaf (\$54)
- Stone (\$500) -- In Memory of
- Other

The *Greeley Jewish News* is published by Beth Israel Congregation as a service to the Jewish community of Northern Colorado.

Subscription costs:

Members of Beth Israel: free

All others: \$20.00 per year

For membership in Beth Israel Congregation, call (after 6:00 p. m. and before 9:00 p.m.):

President Julie Givan-Wittow (330-6598)

or

Treasurer Jeff Goodman (352-7229)

Or mail to: P.O. Box 867, Greeley, CO 80632

### Publication Board

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