

SAVE THE DATE:

**ANNUAL MEETING
JAN. 7, 2008**

Fellowship Hall at St. John's
Episcopal Church
7 pm

The Jackson Kol



NEWSLETTER FOR THE JACKSON HOLE JEWISH COMMUNITY • DECEMBER 2007

Letter *from the Presidents*

Nearly 80 people gathered at the Jackson Hole Playhouse to celebrate our 29th annual Chanukah party. It was one of the best and most fun socials events the JHJC has ever had. We lit menorahs, enjoyed Presto the magician, drank blue martinis and feasted on latkes and a banquet-full of scrumptious food. Earlier, our wonderful Chazzan Judd and Al Zuckerman led a Shabbat service and a lively discussion as a snowstorm kept Rabbi Gerry Weider hunkered down in Park City. Thanks to everyone who helped make the evening such a success.

Our annual meeting is scheduled for January 8 in the Fellowship Hall at St. John's. We urge everyone to attend this very important meeting. We will be electing new board members to two-year terms and Rabbi Steinger will be joining us from St. Louis to discuss our decision to affiliate with the Union of Reform Judaism. Rabbi will be addressing any questions and concerns and discussing the benefits and resources available to us through URJ affiliation. The following evening, the new board will hold its first meeting and elect officers.

We want to especially thank Carol and Judd for their lovely, meaningful and inspirational Shabbat service in November and Christine for her delicious Oneg. It was wonderful to meet new members Eric, Jessica, Aviram and his sister Yael from Israel, and we look forward to seeing them at many more events.

This is a time of charitable giving before the secular year's-end. Please consider a tax-deductible gift to the JHJC. Membership dues alone will not carry us through the year. We all share the responsibility for our growth and prosperity and have an important stake in our community. Whether you support a greater spiritual presence, children's education, summer camp, cultural, literary or political programming, social justice or a schmooze with other Jews, help us to realize this vision. As one small example, it is through your generosity that we are able to partner with the Teton County Library Foundation to bring renowned, award-winners Billy Collins, Michael Chabon and Mary Oliver to the valley. It was standing-room only for Billy and Michael and some 800 seats are planned for Mary in May. A donation to the JHJC in any amount earmarked for specific programming will help us to continue these important and fruitful events.

Looking ahead we have lots planned for 2008. Check out our calendar or call the office for details. We encourage you to actively participate. Consider volunteering or joining a committee to help plan an event. Your involvement is essential as we move forward. Your voice is important. As our term as co-presidents comes to a close and we pass the torch, we are always reminded of our good fortune to live among such wonderful and generous chaverim.

Directors 2007

Lisa Finkelstein, Co-President

Dava Zucker, Co-President

Rachel Ravitz Co-Vice President

Al Zuckerman Co-Vice President

Scott Stachel, Secretary

Jen Daniels

Mary Grossman

Merle Lundy

Shannon Thal

Linda Wiener

Carol Mann ex-officio

Rose Novak ex-officio

Larry Thal ex-officio

Phyllis Turtle ex-officio

Linda Weil ex-officio

JEWISH PET OF THE MONTH



Harpo Stachel

If you have a pet that you would like featured in our newsletter, please e-mail a picture to info@jhjewishcommunity.org.

CALENDAR

December 27 & January 3: Winter Break. No Bet Sefer classes.

January 7: Annual Meeting. Rabbi Lane Steinger from the Union for Reform Judaism will speak on the benefits of affiliation. 7 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall at St. John's Episcopal church.

January 8: Board Meeting. 5:15 p.m. at the home of Jen Daniels. Potluck dinner.

January 11: Shabbat with Rabbi Konheim and Chazzan Judd Grossman. 7:30 p.m. St John's Episcopal Church, small chapel. Oneg to follow.

February 1: Shabbat with Rabbi Jerry Weider and Chazzan Judd Grossman.

TID BITS

JHJC Seeks Camp Director

We are looking for a camp director for summer 2008 for our two week summer day camp. The director will plan and execute the program, & hire and oversee counselors. The camp hours are 9 am – 4 pm daily for the weeks of July 21-25 & July 28-August 1. Must have experience working with children. Salary dependent on experience. Send resume to info@jhjewishcommunity.org. Contact Andrea Mazer for more information at 734-1999 or info@jhjewishcommunity.org.

Wanted: Treasurer for the JHJC

Term begins January 2008. This is a two year commitment.

Requirements:

Serve on the JHJC Board of Directors
12 hours volunteer work/month, mostly at month end to pay bills, reconcile bank accounts and prepare financial statements and an annual budget for Board meetings

Comfortable with Quickbooks and Excel spreadsheets and Internet banking

Must be a stickler for details

If you are interested, please contact Andrea Mazer at 734-1999 or info@jhjewishcommunity.org.

URJ Regional Director to visit JH

Our Regional Union for Reform Judaism (URJ) director Rabbi Lane Steinger will be in Jackson January 7-9, 2008. He will be speaking at the JHJC's annual meeting on the evening of January 7th. Come and learn what affiliating is all about! 6:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall at St. John's Episcopal church.

WEIDER'S WORDS

The festival of Hanukkah is linked to many legends, but it is really a Jewish holiday grounded in historical reality.

The first Hanukkah was celebrated by the Maccabees in the year 167 B.C.E.

when the Temple in Jerusalem was rededicated for worship. The information about this great Maccabean victory

comes to us from the Book of Maccabees, a part of the Apocrypha (those books written during the Biblical period but which were not included the holy cannon of the Jewish Bible).

Today, we often think of Hanukkah as a home based festival. The candles we light at home symbolize the menorah in the great Jerusalem Temple which was purified and rekindled by the Maccabees. For eight days of Hanukkah we acknowledge the primacy of the home in the transmission of Jewish ideas and ethics and we dedicate ourselves to the ideals of religious freedom for all of God's children as exemplified by the Maccabee's struggle.

However, even with this inspiring underlying message at this season of the year, some Jews feel uneasy. That is so because there is an emphasis on gift giving due to the influence of commercialization and the "Christmas" season. But this feeling need not make us uneasy. In fact, it can be another manifestation of how the Jewish people has adapted and used the general cultural norms for our benefit. Let me explain by sharing with you a story that I once heard from another Rabbi concerning gift giving at Hanukkah time:

"It seems that while a student at the University of Delaware, a young woman's mother sent her a gift of

pajamas for Hanukkah.....they were blue and white and decorated with little dreidels and Hanukkah menorahs. The young woman's first inclination was to toss them in the bottom of her closet — — how embarrassing would it be to be seen wearing such a thing at college! However, the package contained a note from her mother asking her to wear them

at least once during Hanukkah and send her a picture. Well, the woman agreed, and she donned the PJ's, took the requisite photo and emailed it to her mother. But, later that evening, she found herself still wearing the PJ's when a young man passed through her dorm to visit a friend. When he saw her, he was intrigued by the PJ's and asked her where she had gotten them.....and that was it! You can guess the rest of the story.....because now they are happily married. All thanks to a Hanukkah gift! "

So let's not feel uneasy or uncomfortable with the gift giving associated with Hanukkah. Rather, I suggest that we look into giving gifts that celebrate our Jewish values, our Jewish heritage, our Jewish sensitivities and our Jewish identity. Just consider the wealth of possibilities in: Jewish books, DVD's, games, art, and maybe a trip to a location of Jewish interest and life.....like Israel.

It really is OK to give that gift.....especially if it counts towards strengthening the Jewish future. If we can do this, we will make the light of Judaism shine brighter in the future and we will remain true to the struggle of the Maccabees so long ago.

Happy Hanukkah to one and all.

Rabbi Jerry Weider



LETTER from page 1

Along the way, we have made many friends and look to meet many more. We are grateful for your kind words and thank you for your support. We welcome hearing from you. Together we will continue to grow and build and flourish and celebrate

living a Jewish life in our beautiful valley. We wish you a very happy new year filled with good health and success.

*B'Slalom
Dava and Lisa*

SURVEY RESULTS

This summer we sent out a community survey to find out the community needs and wants. We thank the 40 individuals who thoughtfully filled out our survey.

1. Sabbath services are presently held on one Friday per month, typically followed by a Torah study session on Saturday. Does the present frequency meet your needs?

Yes: 34 **No: 4**
Omit: 2

Would you attend more than one Friday night service per month?

Yes: 10 **No: 24**
Omit: 6

Would you attend a Saturday morning service?

Yes: 10 **No: 27**
Omit: 3

Does the present content of the Sabbath service satisfy your religious and spiritual needs?

Yes: 28 **No: 1**
Omit: 11

How often do you attend Sabbath services?

Never: 5
Less than twice/Year: 13
6 times or more/year: 22

2. The JHJC presently observes High Holidays, Chanukah, Passover, Simchat Torah, Purim & Sukkot. Do you generally like the way these holidays are observed?

Yes: 38 **No: 2**



Larry Thal & Gerry Aronowitz say the blessings over the lulav and etrog during Sukkot.



Members of the JHJC decorate the community Sukkah this fall with fruits and vegetables.

The JHJC Gratefully Acknowledges the Following Donations:

General Fund

To: **Sandy Wiener**
In memory of your beloved brother Sidney
From: **Stuart** and **Maryann Abrahams**
To: **Norm Wolff**
In memory of your beloved mother Mildred
From: **Stuart** and **Maryann Abrahams**
To: **Norm & Elissa Wolff**
In honor of the Bat Mitzvah of your granddaughter Maya.
From: **Ed** and **Merle Lundy**
To: **Sandy Wiener**
In memory of your beloved brother Sidney
From: **Ed** and **Merle Lundy**
To: **Norm Wolff**
In memory of your beloved mother Mildred
From: **Ed** and **Merle Lundy**
To: **Michael Gellis & Mary Sue Levin**
In honor of your August wedding.
From: **Keith Price**

Many Thanks:

Scott Stachel & Christine Schuller for hosting the November Oneg.
Carol Mann for leading our November Shabbat service.
Susan Foster for stepping back into the role of treasurer for the past 5 months.
Mazel Tov:
Elissa and **Norm Wolff** on the Bat Mitzvah of their granddaughter **Maya**.
Julie and **Paul D'Amours** on expecting their second child in March.
Dava Zucker on the adoption of her new cat.

Dave Bergart on being elected Victor City Councilman.

Prayer for Healing:

Joel Lundy
Linda Wiener's father, Lee Breen
Karuna Thal

Deepest Condolences

Sandy Wiener on the loss of his beloved brother **Sidney**.

Eve Scofield on the loss of her beloved nephew **Levi**.

JHJC Wish List:

Help underwrite the cost of the Chanukah Party: \$500

Synagogue Database program for our office computer: \$2750

Underwrite the Rabbi for February: \$1500



JACKSON HOLE
JEWISH
COMMUNITY
P.O. Box 10667
JACKSON, WY 83002

Phone: (307) 734-1999
Fax: Same by arrangement
info@JHJewishCommunity.org
www.JHJewishCommunity.org

The office is at 480 S. Cache St.,
Suite 6, Jackson Hole
Office hours are by arrangement.



The Jackson Hole Jewish Community is committed to creating a diverse Jewish presence that unites us, celebrates our faith and promotes tolerance in the greater Jackson community. We strive to engage all families and individuals in spirituality, education, tzedakah and the joys of Jewish life.



ANNUAL MEETING

Our annual membership meeting will be held the evening of Monday, January 7, 2008. We will vote on new board members, discuss the State of the Congregation, and hear about the benefits of affiliating with the Union for Reform Judaism from our Regional Director Rabbi Lane Steinger. 7:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall at St. John's Episcopal church.