

**Simchat Torah and
Shabbat with
Rabbi Jerry Weider and
Chazzan Judd Grossman**

**October 5
6:30 p.m.**

Teton Science School,
Jackson Campus
(700 Coyote Canyon Rd.)

The Jackson Kol



NEWSLETTER FOR THE JACKSON HOLE JEWISH COMMUNITY • OCTOBER 2007

Letter from the Presidents

As a physician and an active participant in the JH community I am often asked, "How many Jews are there in Jackson?" The answer is; we are ever changing. We are a dynamic, growing, and active Jewish community. Over the year, there has been constant dialogue with new-comers to the community. People who want to get involved in some way. Our community is now made up of old members and new members . . . But really, it does not matter if you just joined, or if you have been here for years. Your participation with the JHJC demonstrates that you are a part of people who want to rekindle the connection with Judaism, and with our community.

However, with the growth of the Jewish community here in Jackson, comes growing pains. Dava and I would like to put this into perspective because we are very aware that some people want things to stay as they were. But, this is just not realistic. We have heard many wonderful stories about how our community welcomed everyone without question and without asking for any contribution of resources because people who moved to Jackson just wanted to get away from the demands of organized religion. But that was a much simpler time.

But you know, and I know, reality has a way of intruding into our lives and we cannot wall ourselves off from it. As our community grows, our needs are changing. Today, there are more children, young adults, and part timers who are now full timers. There are more lifecycle events that require spiritual leadership, and we, as a community,

have a responsibility to answer these needs. A year ago, we realized that we were not meeting our full potential as a Jewish community. But really, this is nothing new. In fact, this has been an ongoing theme, that every president and board has tried to address. We are a work in progress; continually trying to read our community, assess its needs, and respond with compassion. Larry Thal, Linda Weil, Carol Mann, Phyllis Turtle and Rose Novak can all attest to this process and these challenges.

Now let me fast forward to the recent past: Rabbi Mike informed us about a skiing Rabbi who lived part time in Park City, Utah. Mike suggested that he may be a good resource to help us find a leader who could help us with a vision for our growing community. Rabbi Jerry Weider came in February 2007 with many ideas. One suggestion was to go to Park City and meet with their Rabbi and executive board. We went and realized that we are not alone in our current situation. Park City and other mountain communities struggle with the same growing pains. We came back excited with a new understanding of the possibilities for the future of the JHJC, and of what we need to do to actualize those possibilities.

The board met and solidified a vision that will allow us to realize the potential which is lying at our doorstep. There were 4 main priorities which we focused our efforts:

Surveying the community to figure out our wants and needs

Affiliating - which was confirmed with the survey results

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



GARY EIDEMILLER

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

CALENDAR

October 3: Board Meeting. 5:15 p.m.
Downstairs conference room, 480 S.
Cache St.

October 4: B'nai Mitzvah class with
Rabbi Jerry Weider. 4:30 – 6:00 pm. LDS
church.

**October 5: Simchat Torah and Shabbat
with Rabbi Jerry Weider and Chazzan
Judd Grossman.** 6:30 p.m. Teton Science
School, Jackson Campus (700 Coyote
Canyon Rd.).

November 7: Board Meeting. 5:15 p.m.
Downstairs conference room, 480 S.
Cache St.

**November 16: Shabbat with Carol
Mann and Chazzan Judd Grossman.**

November 22: No **Bet Sefer** classes.
Thanksgiving break

TID BITS

JHJC's New Ark

This New Year, Temple Har Shalom in Park City, UT generously donated an ark to the Jackson Hole Jewish Community. We are blessed to have received this generous gift, and we are forever grateful to Dan & Josh Forman for spending their Labor Day in the car to pick up the ark. Having the Torah in front of the community at High Holidays and Shabbat services gives an added sense of sacredness and spirituality while we pray together. If you haven't had a chance to see the ark, come to an upcoming Shabbat service this fall and check it out!



Educators take part in a Holocaust workshop at the National Museum of Wildlife Art sponsored by the Jackson Hole Jewish Community on September 23.

A NOTE ON SIMCHAT TORAH FROM RABBI JERRY WEIDER



Dear Friends,
This week we will celebrate Simchat Torah at our Shabbat service. We will unroll the entire Torah (with every person in the room holding up the Torah scroll) and I will have the privileged of reading the concluding verses of Deuteronomy to be immediately followed by the first verses in Genesis. This is one of the great celebratory occasions in synagogue life because it reminds us that the teachings of Torah are eternal and never ending. Then, we will have the opportunity to pass the Torah from generation to generation and dance with it while Chazzan Judd Grossman leads everyone in song.

By the way, in our Jewish tradition, the Gates of Repentance are still opened a very very small crack. That's right, you still can repent and ask forgiveness for wrong deeds until the end of Simchat Torah. As such I think that the following words, that were written by Rabbi Sydney Greenberg of blessed memory,

may inspire your last minute acts of repentance. He once wrote:

*On holidays, we run away from our duties
On Holy Days we face up to them*

On holidays we seek to let ourselves go

On Holy Days we try to bring ourselves under control

*On holidays we empty our minds
On Holy Days we attempt to replenish our spirits*

On holidays we look forward to a change of scenery

On Holy Days we seek a change of the heart.

I hope you will be with us for Simchat Torah, the last Holy Day of the fall Jewish holy day cycle.

*Chag Sameach,
Rabbi Jerry Weider*

Simchat Torah

Here is some information that will help you understand and appreciate Simchat Torah a bit better.

Simchat Torah (Tishri 23) literally means "rejoicing in the Torah" and represents the culmination of Sukkot and Shemini Atzeret. It is a joyous celebration which concludes the annual cycle of the reading of the Torah, the first five books of the Bible.

During the evening of Simchat Torah, the last chapter of Devarim (Deuteronomy) is read aloud by a member of the congregation who is called the Bridegroom of the Law. This reading is

immediately followed by another member of the congregation called the Bridegroom of the Beginning. He/she reads the opening verses of Bereshit (Genesis). This continuous reading of the Torah demonstrates that there is no end to the Torah.

Afterward, all the scrolls of the Torah that a synagogue owns are removed from the Ark for seven hakafot or processions around the Synagogue. Singing children, and sometimes adults, follow the processional with banners and candles.

Theology and Themes:

Simchat Torah conveys a clear message about the centrality of Torah in Jewish life. It is both a source of Jewish identity and a precious gift from God. Simchat Torah is the day on which the whole community gathers to come into direct contact with the Torah and to express our joy in having received it.

*Please join the JHJC for Shabbat and Simchat Torah at the Teton Science School, Jackson campus (700 Coyote Canyon Rd.) at 6:30 p.m. on Friday, October 5.

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Rabbinical leadership (part time or full time)

Having a small space we can call our own and consistently know where we gather together to pray, have Hebrew school, meetings and of course EAT.

We all do not agree with all of the issues, and the reality is that we will never ALL agree. After all, if there are two Jews, there are usually three opinions! We are genetically and culturally opinionated people. However, your Board is united in the fact that we must move forward into the future and not remain hamstrung by the past...a past that we do not want to ignore because it is good past, a meaningful past and a past that will always influence our future...but we are going to move forward! And as we move forward we want you to join us because we need everybody and we want everybody to be a part of the community. Each and every voice, and everybody's help and support is crucial for the sustainability of a Jewish presence in JH.

Everything we do costs money. Rabbi services, holiday celebrations, Bet Sefer, camp, literal and cultural programming, staff, teachers, office, our wonderful chazan, venues, rent, and on and on and on.

By becoming a member of the JHJC you are supporting a Jewish presence in JH. What else do you get for your money? You get: Shabbat services, a great newsletter, staff, Bet Sefer, camp, office, young adult activities, speakers, advertising, Bar/Bat Mitzvahs, births, deaths, marriages, cultural events, tzedakah and on and on and on. Does everyone need or use everything all the time? Probably not. But we are a community within a community. A big mishpucha. We are here for each other.

I would like to end with a story....This is

about Mr. Cohen who was a pillar of his synagogue. He was at every activity; large or small. He was always at services and participated in many events. One day, Mr. Cohen didn't show up. It was very unusual. The congregants let one day pass; then two days passed. They wondered if he was sick. Or maybe something was wrong. So one friend went to visit him at his home. There he was. Sitting in front of his fireplace, just staring into the fire. He wasn't sick at all. But Mr. Cohen wouldn't speak. Many people went to visit to ask him why he would not come to services and join in the activities of the synagogue. But he just wouldn't say. They were puzzled. What to do? One day a traveling teacher came through the village. The people asked the man to go to Mr. Cohen and see if he could find out what was going through his mind.

The teacher found Mr. Cohen staring into the fire. They sat for 20 minutes without saying a word. Then the teacher reached into the fire with a poker and pulled out a log of fire. It whooshed up brightly and burned in front of them. Eventually, it slowly burned out until it was stone cold. The teacher got up and left. The next day, Mr. Cohen was at synagogue with the people of the village.

To keep the fire burning bright we need every log. Every little stick and twig keeps the flame going. No matter what. Every element nourishes the community. You may need a break from time to time, but always come back. The Jewish community needs all of you to be supportive in your own way to make us burn bright.

B'Shalom,

*Lisa Finkelstein & Dava Zucker
Co-Presidents*



Esther Grossman meets Matisyahu after his Labor Day weekend concert at the Jackson Hole Mountain Resort



Susan Blasko and Anne Moskoff enjoy the potluck after Rosh Hashanah

The JHJC Gratefully Acknowledges the Following Donations: General Fund

To: Our Grandson **Baby Jack**
In honor of your first steps
From: **Phil & Cindy Cohen**
In memory of **Jim Petersen**
From: **Debbie Petersen**
In memory of **Nettye & Ben Bruck**
From: **Ali Shafranek**

Many Thanks:

Dan & Josh Forman for driving to Park City to pick up our new ark.

Temple Har Shalom in Park City for donating an ark to the JHJC.

Mike Gellis for donating chupa poles to the JHJC.

Al & Charlene Zuckerman for hosting our September Oneg.

Russel Scott for his help cleaning up after Rosh Hashana services.

Al Zuckerman for his help cleaning up after Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur services.

Al Zuckerman, Josh Kleyman and Kalen Ritz for helping clean up after Shabbat Shuva services.

Loretta Scott for watching our children during the High Holidays.

Carol Mann for leading our Yom Kippur workshop on forgiveness.

All those who helped contribute to our 10th annual food drive.

Mazel Tov:

Deb & Dan Ochstein on moving into their new house.

Rachel Ravitz on hiking to the top of the Grand Teton.

Josh Kleyman & Kalen Ritz on their recent engagement.

Rachel & Wendell Stam on the birth of their son **Benjamin Austin Stam**.

Get Well Soon:

Ariel Bergmeyer

Deepest Condolances:

to **Rabbi Mike Comins** on the loss of his beloved mother



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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.

SNAPSHOT



Welcome Benjamin Austin Stam

Top: Rachel and Wendel Stam consult with Dr. Lisa Finkelstein before Benjamin's bris on September 30.

Right: Meet the newest member of the Jackson Hole Jewish Community. Benjamin was born September 21, 2007 at 7:25 pm 7 lbs 1 oz Mazel Tov Rachel & Wendell!

