

KOL HALEV



קול הלב

KOL HALEV is an affiliate of JRF

September – October 2011

KOL HALEV HIGH HOLY DAYS ROSH HASHANA & YOM KIPPUR



RABBI ALEXIS PEARCE



MARCIA STERLING

News from the Kol HaLev Board:

The High Holidays are fast approaching. We are pleased to welcome back Rabbi Alexis Pearce. She will co-officiate our holiday services with Marcia Sterling who returns as our cantorial soloist. The Observances Committee is involved with the all aspects of the preparations. As of this writing, the Board is still looking for someone to chair the High Holidays. The chair is responsible for coordinating all aspects of the planning. The Observances committee organizes the shabbatonim, all holiday events as well as the monthly Shabbat services. For the September 3rd Shabbat morning service, several members will discuss their experiences with “Wage Theft” in observance of “Labor on the Pulpit.” which KHL has marked over the past several years.

The fledgling Communications Committee has been designing and submitting ads to local papers, including the Texas Medical Center Newsletter. High Holiday registration forms are now ready to be released via email. The website is being updated and will soon be revamped to a more user friendly format to ease the updating process. The Committee is also contemplating the possibility of a media presence.

The Reading/Discussion group continues to organize the monthly presentations, led by Madeleine Boskovitz and

Jeanne Saletan. We invite all interested parties to join us.
What a wonderful way to spend a Shabbat afternoon!

Madeleine Boskovitz, Newsletter Editor
Chair, Communications Committee

Letter from Rabbi Alexis Pearce

Here we are at the end and the beginning; the point in the year when the ends of the circle come together, and we roll back to the beginning to start over. We come to Rosh HaShanah 5772 on Wednesday evening, September 28, 2011. Yom Kippur arrives Friday night October 7. The sukkah goes up a few days later, and Sukkot begins Wednesday evening October 12, a week later we roll the Torah back to the beginning, and the weekend of October 21-21 brings us to Shabbat Breisheet, where the Torah portion tells us how it all began.

Thirteen years ago, my youngest child made her appearance in the world on the 4th of Tishri, 5759, just a few days after Rosh HaShanah. She first attended synagogue for Neilah of Yom Kippur that year. So we will celebrate her Bat Mitzvah on Shabbat Breisheet, nine weeks away as of this writing, but who’s counting? Consequently, I have been listening to her practice the maftir for Shabbat Breisheet, over and over, until at times I can't get it out of my head. This is not the famous part; not the seven days of Creation, which will be our Rosh HaShanah portion this year. It’s not Adam and Eve in the Garden, or Cain and Abel, or the extraordinarily long lived people like Methuselah, or the strange story fragment about the “divine beings” falling in love with “the daughters of men.” It’s a section very rarely thought of. It’s where God regrets starting the whole thing:

“And God saw that the badness of man was big on the land, and every impulse of his thought was only bad all day. And He had to console himself that He made man on the land, and was sad. And God said I will blot out the man (adam) I created from the face of the earth (adamah), from man to beast to creepers to birds, because I’m sorry I made them.” (Gen 6:5-7, personal translation). Hearing these words from my precious

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beautiful little baby girl day after day has been quite odd. On the one hand, she is the future and all our hopes and dreams are pinned on kids like her, finding their way, new to everything. On the other hand, what's true

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is true. You don't have to go far for plenty of reason to agree heartily with the sentiments expressed here by God. The list of our sins in the mahzor, the awful experiences we or our loved ones have endured, the daily newspaper, our struggles with ourselves, even at times the behavior of pretty teenagers – all of it shows this badness, deeper and creepier than you want to admit. Scandals, betrayals, cruelties; why does any of it surprise us? We've been bad to the bone since the very beginning. We stand up and admit it in public, year after year. And we'll be back next year, with another big load of confessions, just as horrible. On the other hand, we do keep starting over and trying again. For this, we have a wonderful model in God too. While God does admit Creation was a big disappointment, the character of God as drawn in Genesis does not give up so fast. The next and last line of the portion is, "But Noah found favor in God's eyes." (Gen 6:8). God saves one family and starts over. It doesn't go that well. Ten generations later, God gives up on all that and starts over again, this time with Abraham. And we know that doesn't go so well either. During the late summer while the Torah portrays Moses preparing the people for their victorious Return to the land, we also commemorate Tisha B'Av, remembering the defeat and Expulsion that followed. You start to wonder what sustained God's hope that people would ever do honor to the image they were made in.

It's been a very sad year for a number of our members; we have lost cherished elders and precious children. When we hear the stark words of the Unetaneh Tokef, we may wonder what it would have been like to know at this point last year what the new year would bring; who would live and who would die? They are frightful words because they force us to admit that we might, that we will suffer losses. We may be more inclined to dwell on the hardships and sorrows, the defeats and failures, than to feel a rush of thrill in a new

beginning. At some point, we're too exhausted to begin again.

Sometimes the tradition can carry us when we lose our way and don't know how to keep going. The roller coaster of the High Holidays forces us through reunion and ceremony, confession, repentance, atonement, grief. Yet when the shofar finally sounds and the ordeal is over, we feel light, washed clean, forgiven, and yes, hopeful. We made it through all of this after-all; maybe we can make tomorrow a little better. Maybe wounds can heal. Maybe justice can prevail here and there. Maybe it's worth keeping at it. We can look at our lives a little like God in Breisheet, noticing that there is something here worth saving. What can be the seed of new beginning?

And we can be sure, we'll be asking the same question next year.

From the Observances Committee:

Members: Sondra Kaplan & Gail Kutin, chairs; Jeff Meyer, Rona Lesser (Liaison to Board), & Gail Toland.

News: The Observances Committee is busy at work planning for the High Holidays which begin in late September. The committee met with Rabbi Pearce and Marcia Sterling, who will return as cantorial soloist, on Sunday, July 10th.

Many thanks to all those who helped out in July & August 2011:

July 8th & 9th: Shabbaton weekend with Rabbi Pearce. Thank you to the Torah readers: **Gail Kutin & Jeff Meyer**. Special Thanks also go out to all those who helped set up and clean up the room.

August 6th: Shabbat morning service and potluck lunch. Thank you to **Gail Kutin** for leading, **Jeff Meyer** for reading Torah, and **Sara Norris** for the d'var Torah.

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August 8th: Erev Tisha B'Av. Thank you to Gail Kutin for offering her home and to both **Gail Kutin** and **Jeff Meyer** for chanting of Eicha.

August 12th: Erev Shabbat service and potluck dinner. Thank you to **Gail & Buster Toland** for hosting and **Jeff Meyer** for leading the service.

KHL Reading/Discussion Group

By Jeanne Saletan & Madeleine Boskovitz

Leadership of discussions rotates among members who choose selected readings and make them available in advance. **Phyllis Schatz** hosts our group at her home on the 3rd Saturday of each month at 4PM. Some of us go out to dinner afterwards. What a wonderful way to spend a Shabbat afternoon! **Visitors are welcome!**

Thanks to **Lisa Trimarchi** for leading an exciting discussion on July 16 on Chapter 3, "Knowledge Explosion," of David Ruderman's book, *Early Modern Jewry*; and to **Darwin Poritz** for leading the challenging August 20th discussion of several chapters of Schlain's work: *The Alphabet vs. The Goddess*.

The September 17th meeting will take place at Phyllis' home; **Suzanne Rickles** will lead the discussion of a section of Deborah E. Lippstadt's book, *Eichmann's Trial*.

The October meeting is cancelled due to our focus on High Holidays, Sukkot, and Simchat Torah.

To be added to the Reading Group mailing list or for information, email Jeanne or Madeleine: at Jeanne.saletan@gmail.com; mgboskovitz@gmail.com



Community News

Deepest Condolences:

It is with deep sadness that all of us at Kol HaLev extend our deepest condolences to:

Sondra Kaplan and Lou Geigerman, on the passing of Lou's son, Ben Geigerman.

Jeanne Saletan and her family on the passing of their son and brother, Ira Saletan.

A hearty Mazel Tov to [Rabbi Sue Levy](#)

Sue traveled to Philadelphia where she was awarded an honorary doctorate on June 12th by the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College in honor of the 25th anniversary of her ordination as a rabbi and in recognition of her service to the Movement.

Speedy Recovery to:

Suzanne Rickles who was slightly injured in a car accident on August 27, 2011.

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Dorothy Robbins who has been ailing recently and missed several events.

Barbara Wechsler's mother, Marilyn, who underwent surgery on September 1st.

Donations:

In Memory of Ira Saletan
by Dan Gordon
Naomi and Jim Rosborough

In Memory of Ben Geigerman
Naomi and Jim Rosborough

Community News

Congratulations to:

Rona Lesser, on having her piece "Back to Back" selected for The Women in the Visual and Literary Arts, a juried art show in Houston.

Corinne Martch, on being invited to Phi Theta Kappa, the National Honor Society.

Birthdays:

Oct 27 – Rosalind Rotman

Oct 30 – Sara Norris

Oct 31—Phyllis Schatz

Nov 8—Edith Zinn

Nov 12—Marc Sawaya

Yahrzeits:

Oct 3—Maya Boskovitz remembered by Madeleine Boskovitz

Oct 28—Solomon Kutin remembered by Gail Kutin

Nov 10—Charlotte Himmel remembered by Andrea Turner

29 Cheshvan—Sam Falk remembered by Edith Zinn

Nov 29—Julius Poritz remembered by Darwin Poritz



Meet new members: Judy & David



New members Judy Margolin and David Kahne have lived in Houston since 1994, but only learned about Kol Ha Lev last Passover. They have two daughters, Shoshanna (in college at Tufts) and Eviva (at Carnegie Vanguard High School). Judy, from Cincinnati, Ohio, practices pediatric hematology and oncology at Texas Children's Hospital. David, from Lexington, Massachusetts, has his own legal practice focusing on individual rights, usually representing people and groups

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in disputes with governments or homeowner associations.

Both Judy and David love to read. Her books are more fun (even if they are often electronic), David's books tend toward the incomprehensible, but they are real and he keeps trying to learn something. When not reading or working or supporting their families, they like outdoor activities, but never have enough time. Even though they watch the news at the gym, both Judy (cheerfully) and David (grumpily) remain optimistic that we can leave the world better than we found it.

Judy Margolin and David Kahne

Calendar – September & October 2011

Sat., Sept. 3rd at 10 AM. Shabbat morning service and several members to speak on their experiences with Wage Theft for the "Labor on the Pulpit" program. Leader: **Gail Kutin**, Torah Reader: **TBA**, Dvar: **Jerry Wald**. A vegetarian/dairy potluck lunch after services at JCC Merfish Teen Center, 9000 S. Braeswood, Houston, Texas.

Fri., Sept. 9th at 7 PM. Kabbalat Shabbat Service & Pot Luck Vegetarian/Dairy Dinner at the home of **Gail Kutin** Leader: **Rona Lesser**.

Sat., Sept. 17th at 4 PM. Reading Discussion Group at the home of **Phyllis Schatz**. Reading: chapter in **Deborah E. Lipstadt's, The Eichmann Trial**, to be led by **Suzanne Rickles**.

Sat., Sept. 24th at 8 PM. Selichot Service, Film & Discussion at JCC Merfish Teen Center, 9000 S. Braeswood, Houston, Texas.

Wed., Sept. 28th at 8 PM. Erev Rosh Hashanah Services at JCC Merfish Teen Center, 9000 S. Braeswood, Houston, Texas.

Thurs., Sept. 29th at 9:30 AM. Rosh Hashanah Day 1 Services at JCC Merfish Teen Center, 9000 S. Braeswood, Houston, Texas.

Fri., Sept. 30th at 9:30 AM. Rosh Hashanah Day 2 Services at JCC Merfish Teen Center, 9000 S. Braeswood, Houston, Texas.

No Shabbat Service on October 1, 2011

Fri., Oct. 7th at 6:45 PM. Kol Nidre / Erev Yom Kippur Services at JCC Merfish Teen Center, 9000 S. Braeswood, Houston, Texas.

Sat., Oct. 8th at 9:30 AM. Yom Kippur Morning

Services;

4:00 PM Yoga & Meditation;

5:15 PM Mincha & Yizkor Services;

6:30 PM Ne'ilah Service

7:30 PM Havdalah;

7:50 PM Break-the-Fast Dinner.

At JCC Merfish Teen Center, 9000 S. Braeswood, Houston, Texas.

Fri., Oct. 14th at 7 PM Sukkot / Erev Shabbat Service & Pot Luck Dinner in the Sukkah at the home **Sara & Peter Norris**.

Sat., Oct. 15th at 4 PM. Reading Discussion Group cancelled due to Holiday celebrations.

Thurs., Oct. 20th at 7 PM. Simchat Torah celebration at member home. Location & program **TBA**.

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High Holidays 5772

Sept 24th -- Selichot

Sept 28th – Erev Rosh Hashanah

Sept 29th – Rosh Hashanah Day 1

Sept 30th – Rosh Hashanah Day 2

Oct 7th – Kol Nidre / Erev Yom Kippur

Oct 8th – Yom Kippur

