

# THE KEHILLA

VOLUME 4

ISSUE 12

DECEMBER 2008

5769

## **Money Matters**

*Rosalyn Baker, Chair- Finance Committee*

This month many of you are making plans for Chanukah and working on your calendars for next year. At Mt. Sinai, the Board of Directors will count their blessings, review past expenses and prepare our operational budget for 2009. We are blessed to enjoy a beautiful, mortgage-free Synagogue, a new Rabbi providing spiritual leadership, a stable and reliable group of volunteers who donate their precious time and money preparing for services, running the office administration, cooking for special dinners and overseeing the maintenance of the building and exterior grounds. The Mt. Sinai Congregation successfully functions because of the dedication of these people.

We are taught in the wisdom of Judaism that we are responsible and ultimately accountable for what we say and do, and that there are rewards and consequences for moral behavior and misdeeds. Naturally this applies to how we conduct our personal and professional lives. I suggest it also relates to our commitment to protect and promote our Jewish beliefs, values and heritage. Each of us should share in the responsibility and obligation for the future of our Synagogue and the Jewish people in our community.

Through October 31st, the expense of operations was in excess of \$35,000. This includes utilities such as electricity, heat, water, telephone, internet, insurance, legal fees, postage, office supplies, etc. In other words, if we are to share as a Congregation, it would cost each of our sixty families \$583.00 for ten months of Mt. Sinai Synagogue operations. The income for this period, collected through pledge/dues and donations was \$33,500. We have paid the shortage by depleting our reserves.

Please note, the Sisterhood and Religious Leader budgets are separate accounts.

There are a number of ways you can increase your support for our Congregation and Judaism in Cheyenne. Please do.....

1. Consider increasing your pledge/dues for 2009.
2. Make more and larger donations during the year.
3. Help pay for a specific repair or improvement.
4. Invite former members to our services and special events.
5. Introduce potential new members to our Congregation.
6. Volunteer to serve on a committee or work at an event.
7. Provide a list of non-participating Jewish people to be contacted.
8. Attend services and special events.
9. Attend a Board Meeting and make suggestions.

My sincere thanks to our Board for their support of my fund raising projects such as the Yiddish Food Festival, Stained Glass Windows Project and the Centennial Celebration. I appreciate each of your unique talents and devotion to Mt. Sinai Synagogue.

To members of Mt. Sinai Congregation,

As a past president of Mt. Sinai for over 17 years, I have seen the good times and the bad times. During my tenure, I saw membership at its peak and I watched the membership decline. When operating funds were running low, I informed the congregation and our members volunteered to increase their dues or they donated a lump sum dollar amount.

At the present time our membership has declined, and it is impossible for Mt. Sinai to meet its operating budget. It is customary at this time of the year to make contributions to our House of Worship by either increasing your dues or making a generous contribution. Your assistance in this emergency will help in keeping the doors open. It should be noted that it is a great “mitzvah” (honor) in doing this honorable deed.

As a footnote, we as members have responsibility to invite new Jewish families to visit our synagogue, attend services, and invite them to become members. Growth is an important ingredient for survivorship.

May the new year bless our House of Worship with new members and growth. My wife and I wish everyone a happy, healthy Chanukah and a Happy New Year.

Sincerely yours,  
Howard D. Gallensky

### **Centennial Committee**

To date we have received approximately 80 family biographies. This 100th Anniversary publication will be our major fund raising event 2010. We expect the book to be around 300 pages. In addition to the 150 family biographies, it will include our religious leaders, business and community leaders, as well as historical and special events over the past 100 years. In other words, a compilation of the highlights that have made us a reality for today's Jews in Wyoming.

Time is of the essence for those who have not replied with their family history. The deadline is approaching for the layout and editing. Please contact the office if you need a copy of the questionnaire or Ancestor Chart.

If we do not hear from you over the next two months, we must conclude that you are NOT interested in your family being listed in this professionally printed bound edition.

Please contact the following committee member if you have any questions: Rosalyn Kaufman, 307-632-3206 or Lila Gallensky, 307-632-1316

### **Calendar of Events**

Annual membership meeting – Sunday Dec. 14<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 a.m. (light breakfast followed by meeting)

Board meeting – Wednesday, Dec. 17<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 p.m.

Shabbat dinner – Friday Dec. 19<sup>th</sup>, 5:30 p.m.

Havdalah and Movie – Saturday Dec. 20<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 p.m.

Hanukkah party – Sunday Dec. 21<sup>st</sup>, 5:30 p.m.

Dance class – Sundays at 1:30 p.m.



Dear Congregants,

In just three short weeks the holiday of Hanukkah begins. Spinning dreidls, chocolate gelt and glowing menorahs make this festive occasion a delight for young and old. We recall with pride the heroism of the Maccabees – how they overcame the much stronger Syrian-Greek army and defeated the people who had defiled the holy Temple in Jerusalem. They found just one cruse of sanctified oil – enough to last one day. It wasn't enough to last until more could be produced. But then a miracle occurred, and the oil lasted for eight days. Today we light a candle for each night of the miracle to remember not only the bravery of the soldiers but the presence of God who held out hope and courage.

The word “Hanukkah” means rededication. The Maccabees rededicated the Temple to God after it had been used for pagan purposes. How does this relate to us today? We too can participate in rededication. Perhaps there are ways in which our good intentions have fallen by the wayside. We procrastinate and don't attend to the things we know we should get done. Maybe our Jewish observance is not what we would like it to be. We want to make a nice meal for Shabbat or attend services more regularly but somehow the time slips away from us. Perchance we have let down our guard when it comes to the words we say about others. We engage in gossip or speak less than kindly about the people around us.

These are all opportunities for change. We can rededicate ourselves to engaging in more productive behavior; to becoming better people. Let the holiday of Hanukkah become a springboard for making the changes in our lives that we have been contemplating. Where do we begin? We can start with something manageable: finish a long-awaited project, begin volunteering to help people in need, or get more involved in synagogue activities. We can all take a few extra moments to monitor our speech and make sure we are not saying something hurtful about someone else. Those words can never be taken back.

As we enter into the shortest days of the year, let us remember that the dark comes before the dawn. Our greatest triumphs come after we have struggled; after we have made mistakes. As we contemplate the meaning of this season in our lives, let us rededicate ourselves to overcoming our bad habits and moving forward with faith and hope that we can change. May the lights of the Hanukkah menorah shine brightly for all of us and give us the courage and conviction we need to create a better future.

*Hanukkah sameach!*

Rabbi Arinna Moon

### **December Birthdays**

Zoltan Gancz  
Joe Golden  
Heather McLoud  
Harlan Ribnik  
Lester Weinstein

How to reach the rabbi. In December I will be in Cheyenne Friday, Dec. 19 through Monday, Dec. 22. I am available to meet with you on Friday afternoon or all day Monday. I'm also available to meet with you over a meal at any point during my visit. You can reach me at (307) 630-1926 anytime, whether I am in Cheyenne or not or by email at ravleahshira@gmail.com

Study with the Rabbi. Study sessions with the Rabbi take place on Shabbat afternoon at 3:00 when the rabbi is in town. We are in the middle of a four-part series on Primeval History – Gen. 1-11. The stories of creation, Adam and Eve, Noah and the flood and the Tower of Babel were not written in a vacuum. They were designed specifically to differentiate Israelite theology from that of the other peoples of the ancient Near East. In our study sessions, we are reading and discussing not only our own literature, but that of other cultures. Come join us on Dec. 20 when we take a look at the flood narratives which are found in every culture of the ancient Near Eastern world. No prior attendance is necessary.

Introduction to Judaism. This year-long course is designed for people considering conversion as well as those who just want more information about Jewish faith and practice. The class meets on Sundays at 10:00. You are welcome to drop in.

December 7<sup>th</sup> the topic is Kashrut. Join guest lecturer Dorothy Feldman as she takes you on a tour of the synagogue's kosher kitchen and then on a field trip to Safeway to identify kosher foods.

December 21<sup>st</sup> join Rabbi Moon for a presentation on Hanukkah and Purim. Learn about the history, customs, music and food of these holidays.

January 4<sup>th</sup> Professor Mark Elliott will teach Jewish history and introduce some of the major personalities, like Rashi and Rambam, who contributed so much to Jewish learning.

### **The Synagogue Board Meeting**

The third Wednesday of the month

### **Cemetery News**

Over the past three months, the Cemetery Committee has been working with Rabbi Moon on new guidelines for interment in our cemetery. The committee has drafted guidelines allowing the burial of non-Jewish spouses and close family members in a portion of our cemetery and also allowing the burial of cremated remains. Rabbi Moon has researched these two issues and this information can be found on our web page under the Rabbi's Page, Rabbi's Articles and Sermons. We are seeking comments on these guidelines at the general membership meeting on December 14. If you are unable to attend the meeting, but wish to comment, please contact Don Gerstein, Morris Gardner, or Jeff Weinstein.

**YOU ARE INVITED**  
**TO MT. SINAI SYNAGOGUE'S**  
**CHANUKAH PARTY**  
**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2008**

**AT 5:30 PM**



**BRING YOUR MENORAHS AND CANDLES**  
**AND YOUR FAVORITE DREIDEL**

**WE WILL PROVIDE LATKES AND MANY OTHER**  
**GOOD THINGS TO EAT, CHANUKAH GELT, AN**  
**ASSORTMENT OF DREIDELS, AND ENTERTAINMENT**

An apology to the Stark families for the typo in the last issue. The donation from Irene (Stark) Kalman should have been in memory of her mother Dora Stark. An apology to Norman Stark and his son Dr. Doran Stark for the typo of Irene's donation in memory of Dory Stark.

Recent Donors

- Backer family
- Rosalyn Baker - pledge
- Arline Cohen-Harris in memory of her mother, Ida Pasternack
- Morris & Harriet Gardner in memory of Libby Weinstein, Eugene Zigmond & Dave Veta
- Ruth Langley - pledge
- Rose Levin - in memory of Isaac Levin
- Radine Pepper - in memory of mother, Sadie Veta
- Harlan Ribnik
- Pat & Steve Rose
- Anna Slutzky - pledge & in memory of mother, Frances Novick
- Norman Stark - cemetery & aliyah
- Norman Veta & Radine Pepper - in memory of parents, Sadie & Sam Veta - cemetery fund
- Marv & Dorothy Wolf

- Donations made in memory of Joe Gardner
- Marv & Millie Goldhammer
- Leslie Ann Klein - building fund
- Phyllis & Robert Sherard
- Michael Smith
- Marv & Dorothy Wolf

*Thank You*  
*Thank You*  
*Thank You*



I would like to make the following donation to Mt. Sinai Congregation:

My name \_\_\_\_\_

In memory of \_\_\_\_\_

In honor of \_\_\_\_\_

anniversary • birth • graduation • appreciation • birthday • marriage • bar or bat mitzvah

The contribution amount \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to Mt. Sinai Congregation and mail to P.O. Box 1012, Cheyenne, WY 82003

The following is a list of funds to which contributions can be made. Please circle your choice.

B'nai B'rith • Gift Shop • Library • Yiddish Food Festival • Rabbi Fund • Rabbi's Discretionary Fund


Endowment Fund • Trust Fund • Building Fund • Cemetery Fund • Uri Neil Window Fund

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Please send acknowledgment to \_\_\_\_\_

To donate to Sisterhood, Hadassah, or Jewish Women International contact Lila Gallensky.





Mt. Sinai Congregation  
P.O. Box 1012  
Cheyenne, WY 82003

This Pledge/Dues form is for the year 2009.

Dear Member:

Your Board of Directors is in the process of creating a budget for the operations of our Synagogue. Please advise the dollar amount you expect to contribute, by pledge and/or donations during the year. Your contributions will help us immensely to sustain the current operations of Mt. Sinai and to have our Synagogue financially secure for those who come after us.

It is suggested that each family contribute a minimum of \$500.00. If you need to make special arrangements, please contact Jeff Weinstein.

It is our pleasure to have you as an important part of the Mt. Sinai Congregation family and we thank you for your cooperation.

Board of Directors

With this Pledge form, I/we commit to the recommended \$500.00 in donations.

PLEDGE AMOUNT \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Annual \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Quarterly \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Monthly  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Mt. Sinai Membership

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

<p>Mt. Sinai Synagogue Located at 2610 Pioneer Avenue 307-634-3052 On the web at: <a href="http://www.mtsinaicheyenne.org">www.mtsinaicheyenne.org</a> e-mail: <a href="mailto:info@mtsinaicheyenne.org">info@mtsinaicheyenne.org</a> Website Provided by: David Lerner and Wyoming Network</p>
---