

# ETZ CHAIM SEPHARDIC CONGREGATION

B"H

## NEWSLETTER

6939 Hoover Road Indianapolis, IN 46260 317-251-6220 [www.etzchaimindy.org](http://www.etzchaimindy.org)

Mailing Address: PO Box 80004 Indianapolis, IN 46280

Indianapolis, IN

Jan/Feb 2008

Shevat/Adar I 5657

Vol. 21 No. 1

# Happy New Year 2008

## Tu B'shevat? (15<sup>th</sup> Of Shevat)

By Itamar Cohen

### What is Tu B'Shevat?

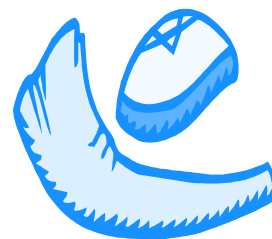
Any answer ought to start from the same place that all of our Jewish tradition flows from: Torah and Talmud.

The Torah doesn't mention the date, but it is a subject in Tractate Rosh HaShana. In fact, the tractate opens up with the following words:

"There are four new years. On the first of Nisan is the new year for kings and for festivals. On the first of Elul is the new year for the tithing of animals. R. Eliazar and R. Shimon say on the 1st of Tishrei. On the 1st of Tishrei is the New year for the years, for the shmitta (Sabbatical) and Yovel (Jubilee) years, for the sapling and for the vegetables. On the 1st of Shevat is the New Year for the tree according to Beit Shammai, Beit Hillel say on the 15th."

So, clearly, there is some religious significance to the day. But what is it?

Before we look into that question, we must digress and talk about Jewish holidays in general. Jewish tradition posits that time is both linear (we are progressing) and circular (that each time of the year Cont. page 3



## A VIEW FROM THE STREET

– W. Levy

My intent was simple, I was going to regale you with elaborate detail about Jacob Tehrani's Bar Mitzvah on Saturday, October 20<sup>th</sup>. Unfortunately I spent the morning instead at St. V's ER where they were trying to sort out my pain "stuff". A few nights prior to my visit to St. V's, my imitation of a Chinese acrobat falling from a chair while changing a light bulb ended up with me in a heap on the floor feeling very sore and very stupid. The bottom line was that after doing all kinds of tests they finally sent me home, with a couple of prescriptions, told me to stop "whining" and showed me the door. I did not manage to make the "event" however, but I can tell you without a doubt that it had to be "outstanding". No guessing here, that's all based on knowing the "man" and his family - there was no other option, plus I did talk to several attendees and they confirmed what I suspected. Jacob, congratulations, I owe you one.

I think I may have mentioned this before, but there is an "economic movement afoot" that asks the very basic

question – if you do not read this bulletin, or if you have a computer and know how to run it, wouldn't you find it simpler just to go to the web-site, read the bulletin "on-line" and print it out if you want to have a hard copy for "reading at your leisure" (means: everywhere including the banyo'). The website is [EtzChaimIndy.org](http://EtzChaimIndy.org). Currently we print out over 425 copies for our mailings. The fewer we mail, the less expense. Simple economics – you do not have to be Alan Greenspan to understand and appreciate that. If any of this describes you – let us know and we'll "kick you off" the mailing list. Plus, I'm sure Leon could use his "machines" and time for more profitable "stuff". Just passing along some random administrative info.

Welcome to brand new citizen Itamar Cohen– sworn in on Friday, November 16, 2007. We're still a country of immigrants, only now he can talk about the "mess" this country is in right now, and maybe do something about it. Israeli's are resourceful. Wait 'til he finds out what his share of the national debt amounts to, that will be an "eye-opener". Congratulations Itamar, I feel safer already.

The community was saddened to learn of the passing of Jeannie Nahmias who was involved in a tragic accident in Florida. Lives sadly, do change in an instant. Our hearts are with Joe and the family.

Our annual general membership meeting was held on Sunday, December 2<sup>nd</sup>. I am always going to wonder why we don't manage to generate more excitement about this annual "thing". It just strikes me that a Kahal with all of those people ought to have more than 30 or so that are really "interested" and "into it" to the point that they want to know what their administrators are up to; and where the Kahal is heading; and what programs are in the "offing"; and what's in store for the youth; and whatever else is on their minds. It must be my eternal optimistic approach to Etz. Join in, you have much to offer and we can't wait to hear what that is and how you can help. The preliminaries were all in line, secretary, treasurer, and cemetery.

Two highlights for me – the announcement from Mike that all of the social hall "dome-windows" were in place and "owned". He does know about sales. The six remaining "blanks" are available if there is sufficient interest. Same price structure - \$12,000 payable on a friendly 3 year payment program if necessary. All of this window money is currently on deposit in our endowment fund. Future sales, ear-marked for the same fund.

The second highlight for me is the announcement that Scott and Soshana Roland through a relative's estate have purchased and donated a brand new Sephardic torah and case to Etz. The torah is at Itamar's home, and the case is on the way from Israel. Look for that dedication ceremony announcement sometime soon.

The highlight for Larry Greenbaum was the fact that his "championed" Mikva project has been let for final bids. That does not mean it's going to happen; it just means that they will really know what the project will cost and whether or not the unknown and unnamed "angel" is serious enough to "step-up" and underwrite all or something approaching the "lions-share" of that cost. My advice is that you should not yet buy a "mikva-outfit", but definitely stay tuned.

A new membership app from William and Loretta Rose (Joyce's parents). Welcome

The election of officers was conducted by Al Mordoh who heads the slating committee. Everyone "re-upped". TAH –DAAH!!!! In case you've not been paying attention the officers are: Alan Cohen, president, Mike Alboher, Mel Mordoh and Larry Greenbaum, all vice-presidents, Jeff Sondhelm secretary, Bob Tavel treasurer and Leon Mordoh, sergeant of arms – (not a ceremonial title currently). The Kahal remains in capable hands. Thank you gentlemen for your continued willingness to take on leadership responsibilities for Etz Chaim. Sometimes it can be a challenge.

An interesting aside - Sunday, December 9<sup>th</sup>, the same day as our honoree dinner, Shaarey Tefilla had

their Torah processional at their brand new facility. Guess what almost happened – rain. In the morning I would have bet money on a "repeat" of our experience, but alas, it stopped. Must be something about rain in Carmel, maybe not allowed. Good luck to them – they made a dramatic step "up", just as we did. Nice facility. As we are inclined to say "wear it in good health".

The honoree dinner was a success in every way. Attendance was at our maximum, around 140 plus. Don't get me started on the food – could not have been better. It was also very plentiful. Once everyone "bellied" up to the food line, "seconds" were not a problem. This year's honoree Jack "Carnes" Cohen was at his best – said all of the right things as did sister Esther speaking on behalf of the family and Jonathan speaking on behalf of the grandkids. Al Mordoh just spoke (he is a relative). I most especially liked the part where Jack "charges" the youth to "step up" and carry on the Etz tradition as he and others of our generation have done. A very important "message". The handsome honoree plaque was dutifully bestowed by our president Alan, his son Alan. The more times you attend these dinners and the more "acceptance" speeches you hear, the more impressed you are with how really special receiving this honor is. It's the pinnacle at Etz. It doesn't get any higher; except maybe if you get inscribed in "the book". No one has yet been picked for next year, start earning it. It could be you.

My hope was that I could get through this note without having to report on another passing. Unfortunately our "elder" Charlie Calderon passed away on December 17, 2007. He began to "show his age" lately and struggled with health issues the last few months. He was a robust 90 plus and was in synagogue almost every Saturday that he was able. I think that I may have called him to the Torah not long ago when he was in Kahal on an anyo of a relative, which he never missed. He handled the steps slowly but surely. He was a Sephardic icon. The community has suffered a dramatic loss, his family is in our hearts and prayers. Shalom Ben Solomon Calderon; go now to your eternal resting place. Amen.

Stay well – con alegriyas. W. Levy

Check out our website [etzchaimindy.org](http://etzchaimindy.org)  
Color Pictures of all our events !

A special thank you to the Serrat and Fartouh Families for their continued generosity of providing the Challah 's every Shabbat from Breadsmith !

## Sisterhood News

**By Aviva Tavel**

Chanukah has passed, but not without our Annual Dinner followed by our family night. The Chanukah dinner was a huge success. Countless days of shopping, cooking and decorating paid off..... I don't know if I'm being prejudiced or not, but I think the food this year was better than ever! Thank goodness for our honoree Mr. Jack Cohen, who gave us plenty of inspiration to make it a memorable evening. It is Mr. Cohen's continuous dedication which motivates the rest of us to follow his example and find a way that each one of us can make a difference at the Kahal.

A few days after our annual Chanukah dinner, on the last night of Chanukah, we had our family night. The kids decorated their menorahs, feasted on sufganiot (jelly-filled doughnuts) and fresh fruit, and took part in lighting the candles together. We had a few budding singers take the microphone for an impromptu improv session. This year, we had the honor to host a number of new families, including Rabbi Shuman and his family and a number of congregants from B'nai Torah. It was truly uplifting to see everyone come together for the holiday!

As my term comes to a close I want to take a moment to thank all of you who supported our projects over the last two years. I cannot thank you enough for taking your time and energy to help make Etz the warm and loving Kahal that it is!

### Tu B'shevat, Cont.

to the same point in the other years). And so, just like a place can be holy, a particular time, being simply another dimension, can be holy. Just like a place can have a certain attribute, a particular time can have a certain attribute.

To put it in larger terms, Jewish holidays are not a reenactment of an event, or simply a memorial or remembrance of an event, but rather it celebrates an appropriate time for a particular aspect of human growth.

Let me give an example: The 10th of Tishrei (Yom Kippur), according to Jewish tradition, is a propitious time for atonement. In fact, that day is so spiritually full of atonement, that a Jew atones for his sins during the year simply by living through that day. (That doesn't mean to blow off Yom Kippur, however -- for Yom Kippur alone does not atone for sins committed on Yom Kippur!) Thus, it is no coincidence that G-d forgave the Jewish people for the sin of the golden calf on the 10th

of Tishrei.

So now the question becomes: what is it about the 15th of Shevat and Trees that should relate to us?

Consider the following:

Trees are often a metaphor for humans. Many of us have heard the injunction that during war one may lay siege to a town, but one may not cut down the trees. The entire verse, Deut. 20:19, reads: "When you lay siege to a city for many days to capture it by making war against it, you shall not destroy its tree, wielding an axe against it; for you shall eat of it but not cut it down; for man is a tree of the field..."

Man is a tree?

(I should hasten to point out that halachically speaking, and you can see in this verse where it comes from, that one is only prohibited from cutting down trees that bear fruit!)

In Tractate Ta'anit (7a) we read: Rabbi Zeira explained the strange verse "Ki ha'Adam Eitz ha'Sadeh" (for a man is a tree in the field) with the seemingly contradictory verse there "Ki Mimenu Sochel, ve'Oso Lo Sichros" (for you shall eat of it and not cut it down) -- that if he is a worthy teacher, then eat from him (learn from him). Otherwise, destroy him and cut him down. Others consider the fruit of one's "tree" as the mitzvot that we do.

And, indeed, trees are often a metaphor for Torah. The most famous expression of this is in Proverbs (3:18): "It is a tree of life for those who hold fast to it."

I'd like to bring in one other tradition about Shevat:

In Jewish tradition, the entire book of Deuteronomy was Moshe's last speech, and he gave it over the last 5 weeks of his life. Tradition posits that he started on the 1st of Shevat. It is said that the average person who was there and listening to it began to feel spiritual growth on the 15th of Shevat -- Tu B'Shevat. (It occurs to me, I wonder if the dispute about the "new year for trees" between Beis Shammai (who asserted it was on the 1st) and Beis Hillel (who asserted it was on the 15th is related to this ... ?).

So, tying it all together:

We see that the 15th of Shevat is an important growth period for trees. We also see that trees, in our tradition, are related to both Torah and to mankind, and that the 15th of Shevat was a time when there was major spiritual growth among Jews.

So, Tu B'Shevat is a time for Jews to focus on "the Tree" -- the Tree of Torah and the Tree of our own spiritual growth, and our potential for growth.

And so, just as we enjoy the fruits of the trees and wish for a good year for trees, I wish you all a good year for growth in Torah (keep on studying!), and for your own spiritual growth.

## **The President's Corner**

**By Alan J. Cohen**

There are many things happening at Etz Chaim as we head into the winter season. We had our Annual General Meeting in December, with the election of our Officer's as well as a review of the past year. I am happy to serve an additional term as President along with all the existing members of the Executive Board which consists of Mike Alboher, Mel Mordoh, Jeff Sondhelm and Bob Tavel. We felt as a group that we have had a lot of success working together, and along with the Board of Directors we feel it is an important time to continue this success. **All decisions regarding Etz Chaim are made in consultation with the Executive Board, and ultimately the Board of Directors.** The Board continues to make decisions in the best interests of our Membership, and has done an exceptional job over the years. We will actively look for additional members to assist in areas of Membership and Social Committees, if you have an interest please contact me at [president@etzchaimindy.org](mailto:president@etzchaimindy.org) or call me at 513-3056.

Special thanks to Aaron Greenbaum for his help over the last few years in teaching classes every Shabbat to our younger children. We are fortunate to have had his help and will look for someone to continue this for us. If you have an interest in helping please let me know.

We have made some beautiful improvements over this past year. Clearly the most beautiful improvement has been the new Stained Glass Windows in the Social Hall. Mike Alboher headed this initiative in both the design of the windows, as well working with many of our members who have made generous donations to have a window dedication. We have 6 more windows left on the north side, which we anticipate having done in 2008, so if you are interested please contact me or Mike Alboher.

The Board of Director's has been reviewing our Security Policy for the Building and we have decided that we need to be consistent with Jewish Federation's Campus Policy on Security. With that in mind, the Board voted to have Security each Shabbat, on all Holiday's as well as any large event so we can protect our membership as well as our facility. The majority of Synagogues have a similar policy in place, and we felt the need to be consistent in this regard.

In closing, a special thanks to all the people who have volunteered over this past year. Every event we have is due to the hard work of Deborah Sisterhood and many of our members, we are fortunate to have their assistance, and we look forward the future.

## **We have a new Torah !**

**We are fortunate as a Congregation to have many members whose generosity impacts Etz Chaim and the Indianapolis Community. Scott and Shoshi Roland came to us recently and wanted to know how Etz Chaim could benefit from Scott's Parent's Advisor Fund. After discussing this with their family we were informed that we have received a charitable contribution from The Harvey and Lillian Roland Donor Advisor Fund. This contribution was used to obtain a new Sephardic Torah along with a beautiful Torah Case. We plan on having a special Oneg on January 19th to welcome our new Torah, and the entire congregation is encouraged to attend. This Torah will be inscribed in memory of Harvey and Lillian Roland and we are grateful for the generosity from Scott and his family for this tremendous honor.**

## COOKING WITH DOE –

### By Dolores Schankerman

My brother, Irv, and sister-in-law- Elaine, recently returned from a Mediterranean cruise. One of the stops was Venice, Italy where they brought me a cookbook entitled “Jewish Cakes in the Venetian Tradition.” The left hand page is in Italian and the right hand page is in English. I found the English translation interesting and am using their translation. The measurements are not in ounces or cups so if you want to use the recipe you should probably go on line and get the correct measurements.

#### APPLE STRUDEL

Ingredients for the dough:

500 g flour  
100 g sugar  
100 g vegetal margarine  
2 whole eggs  
half glass of orange juice  
the rasped peel of a lemon  
a dose of baking powder  
salt (at leisure)

Ingredients for the stuffing:

500 g apples  
100 g sugar  
250 g raisins  
100 g ground almonds  
100 g walnut kernels  
bread crumbs

Soften the raisins in a bit of warm water.

Melt the margarine in bain-marie.

Put flour on the rolling board, making a crater in it. Pour in the middle the sugar, the orange juice, the rasped lemon peel, the baking powder, the salt, the eggs and the margarine. Knead energetically until the dough will be smooth and tender. Form a ball with it and let it rest for a while.

Amalgamate in the bowl the ingredients of the stuffing; the apples cut into dices and irrorated with lemon juice, the sugar, the raisins, the ground almonds and the walnut kernels. Mix carefully the ingredient. Endly add bread crumbs enough to absorb the liquids. Take the dough again, and after kneading it again energetically, roll out a paste which must be neither too thick not too thin. It is advisable to roll the paste on a kitchen cloth spread with flower which will make rolling up easier.

When the paste is ready, place the stuffing over it; roll up the paste and place the strudel on a baking plate, which you smeared with oil and spread with flour in advance. Besmear the cake's surface with a whisked, whole egg and bake at the temperature of 180 degrees C (356 degrees F) for approximately one full

hour.

During the coming cold weather, nothing tastes quite as good as a hot bowl of soup. I'd like to share with you a few of those soups.

#### BEEF & BARLEY VEGETABLE SOUP

1 ½ pounds cut up stew meat  
2 lUARTS water  
1 ½ tbs. salt  
½ tsp. Lemon pepper (not regular pepper)  
2 tbs. minced parsley  
½ cup barley  
1 cup carrots, diced  
½ cup diced onions  
1 #2 ½ can tomatoes  
1 10 oz. Package frozen peas  
1 10 oz. Package frozen baby lima beans  
5 parsnips, cut up

Cover tightly and cook over low heat for 4 to 5 hours. Add additional water as needed during cooking time. Can be divided and frozen. Do not omit parsnips. This ingredient gives the exceptional taste.

#### CABBAGE SOUP

2 pounds cabbage  
1 large onion  
Salt to taste  
2-3 pounds brisket of beef  
2 quarts boiling water  
1 carrot  
½ cup vinegar or lemon juice  
4 tbs. brown sugar

Shred or chop the cabbage and onion. Salt lightly and let stand about 45 minutes, or until it “sweats.” Squeeze out the moisture. Sear the meat in the pot in which soup is to be cooked. When brown on all sides, add the cabbage and continue to sear meat and vegetables. When light brown, stir in the boiling water, add grated or diced carrot and the seasonings. Cook over a lot heat about 1 ½ hours, or until meat is tender. A thickening may be made of 1 tablespoon browned flour and 1 tablespoon shortening, adding to cup soup, and stirring until smooth. Add this thickening 1 ½ minutes before serving time. Serves 6. Variation: Add 1 cup stewed tomatoes or ½ cup tomato paste, or ½ cup seeded raisins, 1 tart apple, diced or grated.

## ANYOS

### January/February

Jan. 3	Abraham Perez Camhi	25 Tevet	Jan. 31	Morris P. Nahmias	24 Shevat
Jan. 3	Angie Nefuse	25 Tevet	Feb. 1	Bella Rosinus	25 Shevat
Jan. 5	Betty Sandler	27 Tevet	Feb. 1	Pauline Meshulam	25 Shevat
Jan. 7	Shmuel Cohen	29 Tevet	Feb. 2	Frieda Black	26 Shevat
Jan. 8	Rayno Friedman	1 Shevat	Feb. 3	Julia Jack Mordoh	27 Shevat
Jan. 9	Louis Ronald Sandler	2 Shevat	Feb. 4	Norma Nahmias	28 Shevat
Jan. 10	Dora Nahmias	3 Shevat	Feb. 4	Luna G. Cohen	28 Shevat
Jan. 10	Joseph Taurel	3 Shevat	Feb. 5	Albert Chaim Passo	29 Shevat
Jan. 11	David Eskenazi	4 Shevat	Feb. 6	Samuel Albert Camhi	30 Shevat
Jan. 11	Morris Meshulam	4 Shevat	Feb. 6	Rachel Meshulam	30 Shevat
Jan. 11	Sam Passo	4 Shevat	Feb. 7	Haim Nisim Calderon	1 Adar I
Jan. 11	Herbert Goloff	4 Shevat	Feb. 8	Hananya Cohen	2 Adar I
Jan. 11	Esther Sampson	4 Shevat	Feb. 8	Harold Zuckerman	2 Adar I
Jan. 12	Louis Profeta	5 Shevat	Feb. 9	Haim Calderon	3 Adar I
Jan. 12	Robert Calderon	5 Shevat	Feb. 9	Celia Klein	3 Adar I
Jan. 14	David Nahmias	7 Shevat	Feb. 10	Avraham Camhi	4 Adar I
Jan. 14	David Glazier	7 Shevat	Feb. 12	Yehuda Slomo Lew	6 Adar I
Jan. 14	Sally Rubenstein	7 Shevat	Feb. 12	Ann Abraham Yosha	6 Adar I
Jan. 16	Tzivia Greenblatt	9 Shevat	Feb. 18	Isaac Meshulam	12 Adar I
Jan. 17	Isaac Sarfaty	10 Shevat	Feb. 20	Ahara Ezrah Dayan	14 Adar I
Jan. 17	Sarah Camhi	10 Shevat	Feb. 21	Israel Nahmias	15 Adar I
Jan. 17	Paul Levy	10 Shevat	Feb. 21	Buena BatGracia Gray	15 Adar I
Jan. 17	Jack Alboher	10 Shevat	Feb. 21	Anne Nikki Nedelman	15 Adar I
Jan. 18	Anthony Nahmias	11 Shevat	Feb. 22	Howard Greenlee	16 Adar I
Jan. 20	Moshe Ben Avraham Cohen	13 Shevat	Feb. 23	Rachel Pinto Toledo	17 Adar I
Jan. 22	Morris Calderon	15 Shevat	Feb. 24	Louis Meshulam	18 Adar I
Jan. 23	Rose Greenburg	16 Shevat	Feb. 24	Sarah Eskenazi	18 Adar I
Jan. 24	David Joseph Calderon	17 Shevat	Feb. 24	Sue Yosha	18 Adar I
Jan. 24	Mazel Tov Calderon	17 Shevat	Feb. 24	Rachel Passo	18 Adar I
Jan. 24	Allegra Baruch	17 Shevat	Feb. 25	Rachel Nahmias	19 Adar I
Jan. 24	Molly Passo Nahmias	17 Shevat	Feb. 27	Bessie Mordoh	21 Adar I
Jan. 27	Albert Camhi	20 Shevat	Feb. 28	Simon Shmuel	22 Adar I
Jan. 27	Clara Bohard	20 Shevat	Feb. 29	Alber Sham	23 Adar I
Jan. 27	Donald Maurer	20 Shevat			
Jan. 27	Estraya Calderon	21 Shevat			
Jan. 31	Yomtov Cohen	24 Shevat			

**Complete list available at [etzchaimindy.org](http://etzchaimindy.org)**

**Please let us know if you are not getting a reminder Postcard**

**Contact Sisterhood if you wish to sponsor an Oneg !**

## **Interested in making a Donation to Etz Chaim?**

Sisterhood offers donations for Prayer Books as well as the opportunity to send messages of happiness or condolences. If you have an interest in learning more about Sisterhood options please **contact Carol Cohen at 317-334-9810 or mail to PO Box 80004, Indianapolis, IN 46280**

**If you are interested in making donations to our operating accounts call 251-6220 or email to [president@etzchaimindy.org](mailto:president@etzchaimindy.org)**

**The Hymen A. Cohen Cemetery Fund**  
(used solely for the operations of our Cemeteries)

**The Libby Fogle Building Fund**  
(used solely towards the Building Fund Obligations)

**The Leon M. Mordoh Endowment Fund**  
(used solely for future endowment activities)

**The Mikveh Fund**  
(used solely for the future Mikvah)  
)

## **Upcoming Social Events**

### **January 19th Shabbat Oneg Honoring our New Torah**

Join us on Saturday, January 19th as we honor the donation of a new Sephardic Torah from The Harvey and Lillian Roland Donor Advised Fund. Scott and Shoshi Roland and The Roland Family have made a gracious and long lasting donation to Etz Chaim Sephardic Congregation from their Parent's Estate. Help us welcome our new Torah on this special day by attending Services and attending this Special Oneg.

### **Super Bowl Party Sunday February 3rd !**

Save the date for our Annual Super Bowl Party. As always, food, drinks and snacks, and if we are lucky, The Colts !

**Etz Chaim**

6939 Hoover Road

Indianapolis, IN 46260

317-251-6220

Email: [kahal@etzchaimindy.org](mailto:kahal@etzchaimindy.org)

[Etzchaimindy.org](http://Etzchaimindy.org)

**Nonprofit Organization**

**US Postage**

**PAID**

**Indianapolis, IN**

**Permit No. 8256**