



# THE JWC NEW MOON

Adar 5769  
March 2009

## Another Seder, or Not Just Another Seder?

by Laura Horowitz

What do you come for?

*I come for the music.*

Julie's songs and prayers are as dear to me as our own family melodies. And I look forward to learning new music, some of which makes it back to my own family seders.

*I come for the singing.*

The sound of our women's voices softly humming a niggun, chanting a bracha, shouting out a joyous song of freedom—those sounds stay with me through the year. I enjoy male voices too, but there is something about the sound of a group of women singing that touches my soul.

*I come for the table setting.*

I love seeing our table set with our JWC ritual cloths.



Those multicolored, many-patterned cloths tell our history and remind

me of happy times with members past and present. It's sweet to remember those occasions and those people as we celebrate our Jewish womanhood. And the seder plates, the kiddush cups of varied design, the flowers and decorations always give my eyes something in which to rejoice.

*I come for the food.*

Well, of course! No one does it better than we do. The Sephardi charoset is a special treat, since my family prefers the traditional Ashkenazi kind. No one person is responsible for the meal; we share the duties, in contrast to family seders, in which the burden usually falls most heavily on one woman. That sharing is itself part of the delight in the meal. We make the best "light" vegetarian seder in town—and "light" is a modest understatement—no one goes away from our seder hungry!

What do you come for?

Is it the intimate feel of [cont'd on p.2]

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[Seder, cont'd from p. 1] our seder, in which readings from the haggadah are interspersed with moments of personal stories? Is it to enjoy a seder free of your traditional family role, enjoyable though that may be? Maybe you come to experience a seder that didn't require you to work for hours beforehand, allowing you to bring a higher level of energy to your observance. Perhaps you like the contrast to your family seder, which may be very short and pro forma, or very long and traditional, or just not something that has particular meaning to you. Or maybe you come to find out what the theme of the haggadah will be this year. Our freedom to experiment with the text and to find new meanings in the old ritual can be a welcome difference from the haggadah you use at home. (I've got a great theme this year, but you'll have to come to find out what it is!)

The seder is a rich, multifaceted, multisensory experience that touches us all in uniquely personal ways. Your reasons for coming may be those listed above, or they may be entirely different. Whatever your reasons for coming to the JWC seder are, your presence adds to the joy of our simcha. We hope you'll join us on April 14 at 6PM at the LZC as we celebrate Pesach 5769 the JWC way!

{RSVP by April 1 that you are coming: 412-422-8044 or jwcpgh@yahoo.com. Cost: free for members; \$12 for non-members}

## **JWC PROGRAM CALENDAR: 5769 (2008-09): Celebrating the Sacred Within Us**

<b>EVENT</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>TIME</b>	<b>PLACE</b>	<b>TOPIC</b>
Women's Shabbat	Sat 3/21	10AM	LZC	Parashat Vayakhel
RH Nisan	Th 3/26	7:30PM	LZC	<i>Torah Yoga</i>
Women's Pesach Seder	Tues 4/14	6PM	LZC	[RSVPs required--see info above]]
Celebration of Iyar & Annual Meeting	Mon 5/4	7:30PM	LZC	<i>Building a "Spiritual Home"</i>
Celebration of Sivan & Shavuot	Th 5/28 (erev Shavuot)	6:30PM	LZC	<i>Shavuot study &amp; Dairy potluck</i>
RH Tammuz	Sun 6/21	Sent via e-mail	Your home	Do-It-For-Yourself
RH Av	Tues 7/21	Sent via e-mail	Your home	Do-It-For-Yourself
RH Elul	Sun 8/23	11AM-1PM	Member's home	<i>Potluck family brunch</i>

## Member News



Mazal tov to member Malke Frank and husband Ivan on the engagement of their daughter, Michal, to Derek Molover. We are all very happy for Michal.

Another mazal tov to Jean Clickner who writes: "Our son Matthew Pushinsky was married on August 30th to Heather Muldowney in Lahaska, Pa, just outside of Doylestown. Although it wasn't a "Jewish" wedding, they incorporated a gender neutral breaking of the wine glass, in that they each stamped on a separate glass. We had a weekend full of festivities, commencing with parental invitations to the bachelor and bachelorette parties on Thursday evening. Oh, to be 20-something again. Matt & Heather have returned to San Francisco where they are living, for now. Wedding pictures can be viewed at [www.collages.net](http://www.collages.net) [go to View an Event, user name: Heather and Matt (must include the spaces between the names), password: 12997]."

And we have to say mazal tov to JWC friend Ivan Frank on the occasion of his 70th birthday. Way to go, Ivan!

Mazal tov also to Larissa Myaskovsky and husband Russell on the birth of their son, Nathaniel Myaskovsky Goldstein on November 19th. Larissa writes, " He is already 3 months old, and I have no idea where the time went. He is a really sweet baby with lots of fluffy brown hair and amazing blue eyes. I'm already back at work, so we are all doing great. Big brother Ephram is generally nice to his baby brother, but of course he is only 2 1/2, so the occasional object gets lodged at the baby!" We wish Larissa and Russell and their newly-expanded family well.

And we were very saddened by the deaths this fall and winter of:

*Harriet Newman*, mother of Julie Newman

*Ruth Pearl*, mother of Sydelle Pearl

*Harriet Phillips Colavita*, mother of Jamie Phillips

May their memories be for a blessing.



# In Case You Missed Them....

by Malke Frank

## Tu B'Shvat Seder



Our annual Tu B'Shvat Seder was held on Sunday, February 8, 2009 at the Labor Zionist Center. It was organized by D e b b e y A l t m a n - Diamant and Julie Newman led us in song. We enjoyed a bountiful assortment of fruits and nuts, combined with wine, grape juice and HeBrew beer as we read the Haggadah. The Seder culminated with a chocolate fountain for dipping fruit.

## Rosh Hodesh Adar

On Wednesday evening, February 25, 2009, women from the Jewish Women's Center, Beth Shalom Sisterhood and the Rosh Hodesh group of Rodef Shalom Congregation gathered at Beth Shalom to celebrate Rosh Hodesh Adar. The evening was an opportunity for us to meet other women, learn about our commonalities, and share this holiday designated for women. Rabbi Sharyn Henry discussed her recent trip to Israel with Rabbis for Human Rights through a video presentation and her personal experiences. A tasty variety of chocolate desserts capped off a delightful evening. Thanks to Stefi Kirschner and Malke Frank who planned this interesting program.



*AJWC meeting without chocolate is like..... (I'm at a loss for words).*

## Our Next Programs...

*Rosh Hodesh Nisan* will be celebrated on Thursday, March 26th at the Labor Zionist Center. The 7:30PM program will be led by Sheri Sable, who will introduce us to Torah Yoga. It will be experiential—an opportunity to connect within and experience Torah in a new way. Plan on a 45-minute session and wear comfortable clothing. Bring a yoga mat or a towel to lie on and a light blanket to cover up with during deep relaxation. You might want a bottle of water, too. Torah Yoga connects the quiet, clear peacefulness of hatha yoga movement with text study and Torah wisdom. Diane Bloomfield pioneered this form. For more on Torah Yoga, go to [www.torahyoga.com](http://www.torahyoga.com).

"Every Spirit builds itself a house, and beyond its house, a world, and beyond its world, a heaven. Know then that a world exists for you." ...Ralph Waldo Emerson. Please join us on Monday, May 4th, at 7:30PM at the LZC for a *Celebration of the month of Iyar* and our annual meeting. We will create and build our own "spirit houses" to hold what is special to us.

# The Queen Esthers of the Sudan

Excerpted from an e-mail from Ruth Messenger, President  
American Jewish World Service

Purim [arrived this year] just one day after International Women's Day. Recently, I had the opportunity to work with 100 modern-day "Queen Esthers" [when] I served as advisor to the Sudanese women's Forum in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Like Queen Esther, the heroine of the Purim story, most of the Sudanese women I met with fear for their lives, but nevertheless they carry on tirelessly with the work of protecting their communities.

These women know that once serious peace negotiations in Darfur finally begin, the issues that will ultimately be settled—including land rights, stewardship of water resources and access to health care—will acutely affect them, and their perspectives are vital in helping to rebuild their country.

They know that if women are represented at the negotiating table, they have much greater reason to hope that deep-rooted problems like gender-based violence, a lack of income-generating ventures for women and gaps in children's education will be addressed.

Before the forum ended, the Sudanese women made a commitment to meet again in six months time. Since then, they have already drafted a mission statement and presented it to the African Union. This is a remarkable demonstration of women cultivating power from the ground up to create a better future for themselves, their families, and their communities.

Queen Esther's role in the Purim story was an early precursor to these brave women's work. Like Esther, the women of Sudan are negotiators and peace makers, standing up against the authorities and demanding to participate in charting the course for their people. Their success will go a long way toward ending the first and, hopefully, only genocide of the 21st century.

*Chag Sameach!*



# Jewish Women's Center of Pittsburgh

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**[** We're on the web:  
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TO:



## The JWC Mission:

The Jewish Women's Center is a community of women of all backgrounds that provides educational opportunities and spiritual experiences rooted in Jewish values and feminist ideals. The JWC is a supportive environment for broadening our knowledge and involvement in Jewish life. The programs and resources of the JWC create opportunities for Jewish women's learning, leadership, spiritual growth and ritual practice.

