We picked up additional key members over the years: Ralph/Evelyn Lessen, Len/Rollie Langer, Zev/Karen Aelony, Lionel/Edith Davis, Barry Cohen/Molly Wilbur Cohen, Dave/Joan Barnett, Eleanor Kragseth, Dave Zarkin, and others were early members.

We officially affiliated as a congregation with the Society for Humanistic Judaism out of Detroit. We began to charge dues (lost a few over that decision). We moved our meetings to the Jewish Community Center.

On a personal level, I began to take coursework to qualify as a Madrikh. I attended many weekend seminars in Detroit, Philadelphia, Boston, Los Angeles, Chicago, etc., learning much about Humanistic Judaism and trying to bring this knowledge back to the congregation. My wife and I went to Israel with a group led by Rabbi Wine.

I think the most significant early event in our evolution was our decision to have a “High Holidays Service.” We rented a room at the St. Louis Park City Hall Building (right down the hall from the Police Department).

One of my fondest memories is sitting around my dining room table putting that original service together. Larry and I were there, along with Gail Farber. We had texts scattered all over the table and floor: Bibles, prayer books, Jewish commentary, poetry collections, Humanistic Judaism literature, sample services, etc. This was pre-word processing. We cut and pasted and then cut and pasted some more. I will never forget the moment when I had to cut a reading out of a traditional Jewish text. I had been taught in my early days that these books were sacred, literally to be kissed if dropped on the floor. Here I was snipping out a fragment!! It was painfully difficult. We realized we were almost the same as the rabbis and scholars of old who had put together their collections of readings into “services.” This idea made me feel much better. We finally xeroxed the finished product and had our service! We played a tape of Neil Diamond singing Kol Nidre. None of us had musical talent and there was no piano at the police station.

We continued to meet on a regular basis. We had annual seders at my house until we hit 50 [people] or so and outgrew that space - at least my wife Jan convinced me we had, but I loved the packed feeling.
President’s Message

The Onboarding Learning Curve

by Scott Chazdon

I am writing this message after my daughter Leah’s bat mitzvah weekend. This was the first personal Jewish humanist life cycle event in which I’ve participated and it was amazing! Working with Eva Cohen, Ellen and I were able to put together such a meaningful service. We found many resources from other Or Emet families as well as through the Society for Humanistic Judaism. It was so interesting sharing this service with our Jewish relatives, none of whom had been exposed to Humanistic Judaism before, as well as our non-Jewish friends, who were moved by the readings, music, and relevance of the material.

The “onboarding” learning curve as new President has been steep! I was already on the Executive Committee last year serving as Vice President, but I did not fully understand the scope of the President’s role and the incredible contributions made by a large number of members that keep this organization afloat. At the Annual Meeting, Janet Mayer unfurled a 9 foot long “scroll” with a list of volunteer contributors to the organization. Later several members stepped up to new volunteer roles. One of our new innovations is to have people in charge of “stage managing” our Shabbat and Sunday programs. The “stage manager” doesn’t have to do the food purchasing, literature, food, audiovisual set-up, or clean-up, but does have to make sure there are people set up to do it and make sure it gets done! We’ve had several wonderful volunteers willing to do this.

The Executive Committee, working with Richard Logan, has also been busy planning for the weekend visit of Paul Golin, Executive Director of the Society for Humanistic Judaism, from October 11th to 14th. Rich Sonenblum has graciously volunteered to coordinate the logistics for Paul’s visit.

The Executive Committee has a new at-large member – Barbara Cohen. Barbara moved from Oceanside, California, to Minnesota two years ago and immediately became active in the Or Emet community where she was thrilled to find a flourishing humanistic congregation. In California, Barbara was on the leadership team of Kahal Am, The Humanistic Jewish Community of San Diego. With degrees in Occupational Therapy and Learning Disabilities, Barbara’s career was focused on teaching and child evaluation. She continues to use her skills volunteering with adult beginning English language learners.

Finally, the High Holidays planning committee has been hard at work. Carrie Dickson and Sarah Berman-Young created a new sign-up process for readings during the services. We will have music integrated into the High Holidays service booklets this year, as well as a revitalized Tashlich service. Sean Neill, who has done a wonderful job with public relations over the past year, is stepping down, so we are still looking for a replacement for him. Thankfully, Sean is able to help us with publicity for the High Holiday season.

During Leah’s bat mitzvah service, we sang the song “L’Shanah Haba’ah,” which we’ll be singing again at the High Holidays. The refrain from that song, given the current state of affairs in our country, resonated with me far more this year than it ever has before:

Od tir-eh od tir’eh, kama tov yihiyeh, bashanah bashana haba’ah.
You will yet see, you will yet see, how good it will be next year.
I am excited to begin my second year as director of Or Emet's Jewish Cultural School. With the cycle of a full year behind me, I will be all the better prepared for the flow of the season, the organizing of each special event, and meeting the needs of our students and teachers. I look forward to seeing your terrific kids back, starting on September 16th, and welcoming a number of new students and their families.

Happily, our wonderful team of experienced teachers is returning – Josh Kaplan, teaching the Littles (age 3 through Kindergarten), Colline Roland teaching the Middles (grades 1-3), Renee Dorman teaching the Juniors (grades 4 -5), and Eva Cohen, teaching the B’Mitzvah prep group (grades 6-7). Also returning is Sarah Berman-Young to provide mini-lessons on Hebrew language and traditional Jewish songs. We do have one new team member, Ian Zukor, who will be our teaching aide, replacing Ben Drucker who is off to college. Ian is a graduate of the JCS, and it is wonderful to have him as a terrific role model for our students.

Speaking of role models, this spring and summer I had the great pleasure of attending the B’Mitzvahs of our five “graduating” JCS students, starting with Ruby Fields last spring, Gwendolyn Rockler-Gladen in June, Aaron Lindeman in July, and both Leah Chazdan and Larissa Zukor in August. All I can say is, wow! These young people are the perfect antidote to my despair over where our country is heading. Their greatly varied B’Mitzvah projects (see page 6) each demonstrated their willingness to work hard and apply skills at organizing and presenting factual information in a clear and engaging manner. Their personal commentaries on the Torah section assigned to the week of their B’Mitzvah revealed them to be bright, insightful, and passionate about the values of humanism and commitment to making our world a better place.

Their teacher, Eva Cohen, deserves much of the credit, as do their parents, but I give most of the credit to the students themselves – Ruby, Gwendolyn, Aaron, Leah, and Larissa – for persevering and summoning the strength to stand up and make themselves heard and counted. If you have not attended any of these — the entire Or Emet congregation is always invited to the services – I encourage you to attend one or more B’Mitzvahs next year, if for no other reason than to know our future is, after all, falling into good hands.

Your support — whether or not you have children in JCS — makes a big difference to the success of our program. One way to help is to talk about our program with friends, co-workers, and neighbors who may have an interest. We are always looking for new students, especially at the youngest end to feed into the pipeline of impressive young adults who emerge as our proud B’Mitzvah candidates.

Havdalah service, potluck picnic, campfire, and games at Crosby Farm Park on July 28. Thirty people — plus uninvited mosquitoes attended.
Follow Up to Position Statement on Gaza
This past spring, members of the Social Justice/Social Action committee drafted a statement strongly opposing Israel's violent response to Palestinian protesters in Gaza, resulting in many deaths and injuries. With committee endorsement, this was sent to the Executive Committee requesting that Or Emet officially adopt this position. The Executive Committee recognized that some Or Emet members hold differing views of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and felt it needed to be vetted by the entire Or Emet community before taking action. This was done at the June 3 Annual Meeting with responses submitted by members in writing. Responses ranged from full agreement with the position statement to complete disagreement with some members on each side expressing themselves in equally forceful language. As a result of these divergent responses, the statement was not adopted. This remains perhaps the most challenging issue facing Jewish-American communities with many shades of viewpoints between the extreme positions. Or Emet can be proud of being willing to broach this issue, knowing that our shared values allow us to address controversial issues in a civil and respectful manner.

SJ/SA Shabbat program on December 15, 2018
Whither Israeli Democracy?
The Social Justice/Social Action committee will host the above program with a moderated panel. The program will address the recent law approved by Israel's Knesset declaring Israel to officially be a Jewish State. The panel will also cover the impact this law will have on Israel's ability to function as a democracy with freedom of religion and equal rights for Muslim, Christian and other non-Jewish Israeli citizens. Look for more details on this program in future email announcements.

SHJ Position on U.S. Treatment of Undocumented Immigrants.
In the wake of the horrible separation of children from their parents conducted by ICE this summer, the Society for Humanistic Judaism adopted a resolution, that Or Emet endorsed, calling on our government to treat undocumented immigrants in our country in a fair and humane manner. The position statement can be found at this link:

St. Stephens | Second Harvest | Listening House
We continue to help people facing hard times in a variety of ways. On August 25th, we served supper to men staying at the St. Stephen's Social Services Shelter. We provide and serve these meals to 40 -50 shelter residents four times each year, with the next one scheduled for Saturday, October 28.

On August 28, Or Emet volunteers worked at Second Harvest Heartland to help package food for distribution to shelters, food pantries, and other programs serving people facing food-insecurity.

At Friday and Saturday morning Shabbat programs, and our Sunday JCS Programs, we will continue to collect personal care items for Listening House, a day facility for homeless individuals near downtown St. Paul. Items include hotel-size soap and shampoo, toothbrushes, women's sanitary products, empty prescription bottles used to distribute hand lotion, etc.

SJ/SA Committee Meetings
Going forward, monthly meetings will be alternated between Talmud Torah following the Sunday program and on an evening at another location. Or Emet members are welcome to attend.
• First meeting for 2018-2019
  • September 16 | 12:30 pm | after the Sunday program

To become more involved in Or Emet’s Social Justice/Social Action Committee, contact co-chairs Arty Dorman arty@oremet.org or Claire Press clairehpress@aol.com.

Reminder
We collect personal care items for clients at Listening House, a St. Paul drop-in center. Donations are gratefully accepted at all Friday and Sunday programs.
Thanks to an unprecedented snowstorm, April’s Sunday Jewish Cultural School classes were rescheduled for June 3, coinciding with the Or Emet Annual Meeting and picnic. We combined the two at the Talmud Torah St. Paul library, with a large circle of members, followed by an indoor picnic on a very windy, but not snowy day.

Richard Logan conducted the election. The following board members were elected unanimously:
- President – Scott Chazdon
- Vice President – Janet Mayer
- Treasurer - Sharon Miller
- At-Large – Barbara Cohen
- Continuing year two as at-large member - Natalie Rosinsky

Recognition and appreciation was given to outgoing co-presidents, Anna Burnstein Gillette and Janet Mayer. A nine-foot scroll was unfurled as Co-President Mayer recognized with sincere appreciation the volunteer efforts of the many active members who make up the Or Emet community.

Special honors were noted for Dr. Harold Londer, Or Emet’s co-founder and Madrikh, now Emeritus, Faith Oremland for multiple terms as at-large member of the national Society for Humanistic Judaism (SHJ) Board of Directors; Lisa Gardner-Springer as newly elected at-large SHJ board member; Sarah Berman-Young, now Or Emet wedding officiant, certified by American Humanist Association; and Eva Cohen, Or Emet Ritual Leader, newly accepted into the International Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism’s rabbinical certification program.

To celebrate the end of the season, families shared a potluck lunch to chat about the summer ahead, the year that was, and where Or Emet is headed in 2018-19.

The State of Or Emet report included some of the many highlights of the year’s accomplishments:
- Five 2017-18 B’Mitzvahs!
- Endorsements of SHJ positions regarding gun safety and humanitarian policies for undocumented immigrants
- High Holiday donations to Hallie Q. Brown Center
- Contributions to Puerto Rico hurricane relief fund
- Quarterly dinner volunteer contributions to residents at St. Stephen’s Shelter
- Donations to Listening House
- Volunteer shift commitments at Second Harvest Heartland
- GiveMN with member matching fund drive
- Or Emet representation at Jewish Federations, Young Adult Engagement, Jewish Disabilities Awareness, TCJewfolk, JPride, Jewish Community Action, JCRC
- Establishment of Ritual Leadership and Financial Transition Planning Committee
- Technology updates to website performance, security, and content
- Contribution of materials to St. Paul’s Shalom Baby! gift baskets for new parents
- New and Prospective Members’ brunch
- National Jewish Communal Directory listing
- A library of YouTube video links to Or Emet’s historic programs through 2017-18

We have much to be proud of and there is excitement in the air as we approach the October celebrations of Or Emet’s 30th year affiliated with SHJ, and SHJ’s 50th year since the founding of Humanistic Judaism; SHJ Executive Director Paul Golin will visit - October 11 through October 14 – to speak to Or Emet and to the public at venues throughout the Twin Cities. Join us at any of our holiday celebrations, programs, and events!
Pursuing humanistic rabbinical training has included some leaps of faith—none involving faith in deities, but definitely requiring faith in processes and my own ability to make this training work financially. I am happy to report that the ‘leaps’ have paid off and things continue to fall into place as I move forward with my rabbinic education.

I have been officially accepted into the International Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism (IISHJ) Rabbinic Program! While I have been completing coursework in the program for two academic years, I needed to undergo a lengthy application and interview process before being formally admitted. In May, I also received wonderful news from the Department of Classical and Near Eastern Studies at the University of Minnesota, where, as a part of my rabbinic training, I am enrolled in a master of arts program following the “Religions in Antiquity” sub-plan and concentrating on Hebrew Bible and the ancient Near East/ancient Judaism. The department is giving me a Roach Fellowship for the 2018-2019 school year, which covers my tuition and provides a living stipend and health insurance! This allows me to quit my part-time job as a standardized patient trainer at the university as well as to dial back on other work and focus the freed-up time on academics. I am feeling very blessed in a humanistic sense by the people and institutions that have expressed their confidence in me as a candidate and offered concrete support for my learning.

On the ritual leadership front at Or Emet, this summer was a B’Mitzvah whirlwind! It has been a pleasure to work with students and families preparing projects, commentary, and services and leading B’Mitzvah services for Ruby Fields (May), Gwendolyn Rockler-Gladen (June), Aaron Lindeman (July), Leah Chazdon, and Larissa Zukor (August). These students’ B’Mitzvah projects have all been intellectually ambitious and inspiring! I’m so proud of these young people, their thoughtfulness and creativity, their hard work, and the ways that they powerfully express their Humanistic Jewish values.

As I think about the fall, including the fast-approaching High Holidays and Paul Golin’s visit, I’m excited to have the opportunity to continue to serve Or Emet as ritual leader. I will continue to draw on my training to enhance my work for Or Emet, and I look forward to keeping the community updated on my educational progress.

2018 Bar and Bat Mitzvah (B’Mitzvah) Celebrations

Ruby Fields
Project
Ruby critically evaluated the history and evolution of kosher dietary laws (kashrut).

Aaron Lindeman
Project
Aaron analyzed the historical treatment of how World War II and the Holocaust influenced the creation of Israel.

Leah Chazdon
Project
Leah explored the public exposure of Jewish life along with creation and impact of Fiddler on the Roof.

Larissa Zukor
Project
Larissa analyzed the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire and the questions it raises about worker safety, labor rights, and ethical fashion.

Gwendolyn Rockler-Gladen
Project
Gwendolyn wrote, produced, and performed in Crossing the Line — an original play about a Jewish girl who considers joining the partisans during WWII.
Reaching Out to One Another
by Larissa Zukor

My parsha, called Re’eh, tells what happened after the Jews escaped being slaves in Egypt. It includes the laws that God shared with Moses; keeping kosher, not worshipping idols, and celebrating Passover to remember being slaves in Egypt. My talk focused on one aspect, doing good for others. Moses explains to the Jews that God helped them when they were slaves in Egypt and that they should remember what God did for them. In other words, because God helped them, they should learn from this and help others. For us to be a community, we have to reach out to one another.

It says “If there will be among you a needy person, from one of your brothers in one of your cities, in your land the Lord, your God, is giving you, you shall not harden your heart, and you shall not close your hand from your needy brother. Rather, you shall open your hand to him, and you shall lend him sufficient for his needs, which he is lacking.” This portion continues, “For there will never cease to be needy within the land…

And you shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord, your God, redeemed you; therefore, I am commanding you this thing today.” We were once the needy people. If we were not helped, we might still live as slaves or in poverty. This means to me that everyone in our society should help people in need.

What does that mean for me as a student, teammate, friend, and family member? At school, there are many times when people feel alone or not included. It is important to help others feel like they have a place. Or on the soccer field, we have to work together to win. No one person can do it alone. We all have to put in our best effort. There are many times during a game when we are tired or frustrated. We can be there for each other by offering encouragement and setting a good example. I can help at home by cleaning up, helping with laundry, but also by helping each other when someone is having a bad day.

There are many ways we can reach out to do good deeds, whether it’s donating money to charity (tzedakah) or donating old clothes instead of tossing them. One example of helping my community was when my B’mitzvah group volunteered at a crisis nursery helping kids and making meals for them.

Another group of people who don’t feel safe are immigrants. They may not feel welcome even though this is where they want to be. My family participated in the immigration march to provide support for them. I hope it sent the message that there are many people that do support them and will fight for them.

I hope to continue to do more to help other people. I also want to encourage other people to be helpful towards their organizations. Please think about the community around you and consider ways you can help. When you see someone who needs help, I hope you realize that you can make a difference.

Loving the Stranger
by Leah Chazdon

My Torah portion Parashat Eikev, translates to “if you follow.” In it, Moses instructs Jews in the rules they need to follow when they settle in the promised land. The first verse says, “And if you do obey these rules and observe them carefully, the eternal, your God, will keep for you the covenant and the kindness that he swore to your forefathers.”

This statement made me think about how the words “observe” and “obey” are used. What does it mean to observe rules carefully? It does not say to observe blindly, but carefully. What does that signify? How do we think about these rules carefully and implement them in our daily lives thoughtfully?
**Loving the Stranger by Leah Chazdon** — continued from previous page

There are two seemingly contradictory verses in Eikev. The first says, “You shall destroy all the peoples that the eternal, your God, delivers to you, showing them no pity.” The second reads, “You shall love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.” One opinion I read was that at the time the violent statement was written, the Jewish people felt threatened by their enemies who sought to destroy them. I thought about how the second, more positive statement was written for more peaceful times.

As I reflected on these opposing statements, I thought about the current immigration debate. We had a unit on immigration at school. An undocumented immigrant came in and talked about her experiences; how she couldn’t apply for some jobs and if she were pulled over she could be reported to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). I interviewed a legal immigrant who told about being mistreated by immigration officials when she was applying to get her green card. I learned how she adapted to American life, so different from her home country of Ethiopia.

Today, we see two different groups of Americans following the two very different verses of Eikev. The U.S. government’s ICE is showing no pity to the people delivered to them. Meanwhile many Americans are fighting these policies -- trying to love the stranger. President Trump suspects that all immigrants are criminals. Children are separated from their parents. Many act as if undocumented immigrants are strangers.

Bend the Arc Jewish Action is an organization whose main goal is to build a more just society around the world. They have declared a state of moral emergency, petitioning the Trump administration’s policies. Or Emet has signed onto this petition. An excerpt reads:

> When crying children are taken from their parents’ arms, the American Jewish community must not remain silent. To those who are targeted by these cruel policies, know that the Jewish community hears your cries. We will take risks to support you, and we will demand that our nation’s leaders take action. And so we declare a state of moral emergency, and we rise to meet this moment... United by the wisdom of our tradition, we stand with immigrants, refugees and asylum-seekers, with the children, and with their parents. We declare: Not here. Not now. Not in our name.

I am planning to give a portion of my bat mitzvah gift money to support Bend the Arc.

The Torah portion has some phrases that I don’t agree with and some that I like and want to follow. We were all strangers once. We all deserve a home and must be welcoming to everyone.

---

**Where We Came From**

Submitted by Susan Weinberg

Have you ever wondered where your family came from? Well I’ve done a bit more than wonder, visiting ancestral towns in Belarus, the Ukraine and Poland. It is the Polish town of my grandfather with which I’ve developed a bond. I’ve been there several times; exhibiting artwork, traveling with a survivor from the town and developing friendships with local Poles and others of Jewish heritage whose family came from there. Not one to do things halfway, I also do the website on the town for Jewishgen.org.

In August I returned there following the IAJJGS conference in Warsaw, an international conference on Jewish genealogy. Having researched my own family in the archives, this time I was focused on the broader community. When I look at a list of Jewish names from the 1800s, I can’t help but think of their descendants, many of whom I know. Some of my discoveries included a list of Jewish properties that lay vacant after the war. I mapped them on the website to illustrate both where the Jewish community lived, but also the huge physical hole the Holocaust left within the town. Perhaps my most exciting discovery was a Book of Residents from 1827 with a listing for my great-great-great grandfather, his children and their spouses just a few years after he first took a last name.

Read more about my research and travels at my blog: http://sgweinberg.blogspot.com in [Exciting Discoveries](http://sgweinberg.blogspot.com) and [Phantom Presence](http://sgweinberg.blogspot.com).
While Paul is here, members will celebrate Or Emet’s 30th anniversary with special recognitions for Dr. Harold Londer, Or Emet’s first Madrikh and co-founder, as well as Lionel Davis, pianist through 2011 and continuing as recorder soloist. Additional toasts will be offered to Or Emet volunteers in SHJ level positions and to our ritual leadership team.

Paul Golin will deliver three presentations that are free and open to all:

**Thursday, October 11**
*How Do We Envision and Build a Thriving Humanistic/Secular Future*
7:00 pm First Unitarian Society, Minneapolis
Polls show an increasing percentage of Americans leaving traditional religion. So why does it feel like our nation is becoming a religious theocracy? The fundamentalists have a clear vision for a “Christian America.” What is our vision for a positive secular society? Join a panel of leaders for an interactive conversation exploring visions of a future in which many more Americans will identify as humanistic/secular/ freethinker/ atheist/agnostic/none.

Panelists
Moderator: Paul Golin
Rev. David Breeden, Senior Minister, First Unitarian Society of Minneapolis
Audrey Kingstrom, President, Humanists of Minnesota

**Friday, October 12**
*Religion Out of Government! Jews for a Secular Democracy*
7:30 pm Sabes Jewish Community Center, St. Louis Park
The surest safeguard of all U.S. citizens’ rights is a government neutral to religion including those with no religion. Jews have a unique role in this effort. Jews for a Secular Democracy is a new, pluralistic initiative for Jews, friends and family, who are deeply concerned about the growing influence of religious fundamentalism on government policy-making.

Panelists
Moderator: Paul Golin, program lead on Jews for a Secular Democracy
David Schultz, constitutional lawyer and Professor, Department of Political Science, Hamline University
They will discuss the unique role we have in defending the First Amendment’s separation of church and state.

**Sunday, October 14**
*The Light Within Us: What Humanistic Jews Want Their Children to Know About Being Jewish*
10:00 am to 12:30 pm at St. Paul Talmud Torah — (program is concurrent with Jewish Cultural School)
How is Secular and Humanistic Jewish education different from traditional Jewish education? Paul Golin will lead a discussion about secular Jewish vs. traditional Jewish education, drawing on participant experiences with their own religious educations (or lack thereof) as well as the experiences of their children. We’ll talk about the goals of education as a means to build our children’s ethical foundations, critical-thinking skills, and as a way to understand where they fit into the broad sweep of Jewish history.

On **Saturday evening, October 13**, Or Emet members will celebrate many organizational milestones (location TBA), with Paul as a special guest. Following a Havdalah service, we will have a potluck dinner to commemorate Or Emet’s 30th anniversary, talk about plans for the April 2019 festivities in Michigan to honor SHJ’s 50th anniversary as well as toasts to Harold Londer, Lionel Davis, and Or Emet’s ritual leaders along with SHJ leadership for their many contributions to the Or Emet community.

We hope you will join us for this October weekend of provocative and engaging events!
In Memoriam

Our condolences go to Harold Londer and his family on the passing of his brother, Gregory Owen Londer, aged 69, on August 5, 2018, in Glendale, AZ. A private family memorial service has been held.

Greg grew up in North Minneapolis, helped out in the family’s Standard Upholstery Company, and graduated from St. Louis Park High School. After high school, he traveled the country working in the racehorse business and carnival life. Greg’s interest in the Civil War made him a local expert. He spent his last seventeen years in Arizona, as he put it, “enjoying my cats, gardening, and discovering the beauty of the desert.”

Lionel Davis is pretty much house-bound these days due to some back troubles, and would appreciate keeping in touch with Or Emet members either on the phone or in home visits; and, for those inclined to go an extra step, he would also appreciate getting out occasionally.

➢ Contact David Fox, Or Emet Care Committee, (651) 699-6302, if you are able to help with these endeavors.

Condolences to Carrie Dickson and her family on the loss of Carrie’s mother — Toby Roberta Stahl — on August 19, 2018. Toby led a remarkable life as a scientist, volunteer, political activist, baseball fan, and loving mother and grandmother. “In her memory, please vote, then Do More Than Vote!” Toby was memorable whenever she attended Or Emet events. Her scooter displayed banners and stickers promoting progressive positions and candidates — and she was always ready to engage in discussion.

In memory of —
Greg Londer, brother of Harold Londer
Janet Mayer and Paul Petzschke
David and Joan Barnett

David and Margo Fox
Steve and Faith Oremland
Carol and Richard Logan

In memory of —
Toby Stahl, mother of Carrie Dickson
Janet Mayer and Paul Petzschke

In Celebration of —
Carol and Richard Logan’s 50th wedding anniversary
David and Joan Barnett

In honor of —
Or Emet’s thirty-year affiliation with the Society for Humanistic Judaism
Janet Mayer and Paul Petzschke
Harold Londer’s decades of dedicated service as Or Emet’s inspired visionary and leader
David and Joan Barnett

Mazel Tov! Elana Max Dahlager (daughter of Laura Melnick and Mark Dahlager) and Adam Bursi were married in a family wedding in the front yard “Goat Room” at the Melnick-Dahlager house at the end of June. The couple are living in the Netherlands for the next two years while Adam does post-doctoral research at Utrecht University. Elana, a lawyer, doesn’t know what she’ll be doing for the next two years, but whatever it is, she’ll be doing it in Holland.
**Member News**

**Don Larsson** will be performing in an upcoming play at Theatre in the Round in St. Paul, "Grand Opening," based on a novel by Minnesota author Jon Hassler. Don will play the adult version of the central character, teen-aged Brendan Foster. The play will run for four weekends in October and early November. [http://www.theatreintheround.org/on-stage/opening/](http://www.theatreintheround.org/on-stage/opening/)

**Richard and Carol Logan** recently enjoyed the “trip of a lifetime.” They celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with a trip to Israel. Richard and Carol are shown at the Western Wall in Jerusalem.

**Laura and Mark Dahlager — Creating Prize Winning Crop Art for 20 Years!**

By Joan Barnett

Laura recently revealed fun facts about their many years of producing amazing crop art.

- They attended a crop art party in 1998 that got them started. They even enticed their children to join in so it became a family affair.
- After the first few years, they discovered many different seeds and that the judges favored works using smaller seeds. Celosia (a beautiful black shiny seed) became a game-changer. Laura now uses celosia for most outlining.
- Laura bases her art on current progressive political issues. Producing topical pieces delays planning until spring (or later). She uses the seed-by-seed placement method.
- Mark starts working on his pieces a couple of weeks before the Fair. This year he either didn’t have many ideas or had too many. He uses the "pour and tamp" method.
- What keeps them doing crop art? Laura says it’s the fun. She enjoys figuring out how to incorporate various textures and colors and is attracted to the challenge of planning and creating humorous artistic pieces based on current political events.
- Laura’s favorite part of the process is delivering the piece to the Fair before it starts and sneaking into other buildings to find cool things before everyone else does. After the Fair begins she says “it’s super-fun to see what other crop art pieces are out there — I’m always amazed by the talent and creativity.”

**I Got Nothing...**
By Mark Dahlager
Won Second Place

**Swampiest Busy Town EVER**
By Laura Melnick
Won Best in Show and First Place

![I Got Nothing...](image1)

![Swampiest Busy Town EVER](image2)
One night we went as a group to the Chanhassen Dinner theatres. We saw a Neil Simon play - not sure I remember what it was. When we went to the ticket office, the reservation was under “Twin Cities Congregation for Humanistic Judaism.” We decided that night we needed a name! Another night around my dining room table, with lots of laughs tossing around names ensued!! Muriel Sterne kept us on task. She suggested Or Emet (Hebrew for “light of truth”). We all thought it sounded good. I am sure many of us did not know what it meant.

To this day, I think “Light of Truth” sounds like an afternoon soap opera. It may sound a bit condescending but remember that Harvard’s motto is: Veritas (“truth” in Latin). Seeking truth does not mean we are sure we have found it.

Both of my children had Humanistic bar/bat mitzvot with the congregation (in 1990 and 1993) along with traditional services. My daughter Jolie reviewed a book entitled “The Other 1492” describing the Spanish Inquisition. My son, Noah, put together a talk on how sports were used to “Americanize” the European Jews arriving en masse to New York City in the early days of this century. Both of my kids still joke about my techniques to cajole them to get these papers done, but both still remember the topics and the evenings. I invited all my relatives to the Humanistic services on Friday night at the JCC - the traditional Bar/Bat Mitzvot were the next day at the synagogue. This was my personal “coming out” as a Humanistic Jew. Only one guest stomped out upset!

The decision to start our children’s program was another key development. We could never have done it without several early key parents: Laura Melnick/Mark Dahlager, Amy Stubenhaus/Prentiss Cox, Sally Silk/Tom Wolfe. Their enthusiasm and acceptance of our group and its philosophy were remarkable. I personally loved interacting with both parents and the kids. We initially met in homes.

I learned how much fun it could be to teach a class, but so much more difficult to write a curriculum!
**Shabbat Programs**

Programs meet at the Sabes Jewish Community Center, 4330 South Cedar Lake Rd, St. Louis Park. The programs include a brief Humanistic Shabbat service and oneg reception.

**Saturday Programs are at 10:00 AM**

**Friday Programs are at 7:30 PM**

**Friday, October 12 at 7:30 pm**
**Program:** Religion Out of Government! Jews for a Secular Democracy
**Presenters:** Paul Golin, Executive Director of the Society for Humanistic Judaism
— more details on pg 9.

**Friday, November 16 at 7:30 pm**
**Program:** Political Humor
**Presenter:** TBA

**Saturday, December 15 at 10:00 am**
**Program:** Whither Israeli Democracy?
**Presenters:** Moderator and panelists TBA
Hosted by Or Emet’s Social Justice/Social Action Committee — more details on pg 4.

**Sunday Programs**

Sunday programs are at the St. Paul Talmud Torah, 768 Hamline Ave. South, St. Paul.

Adult programs meet from 10:00 am -12:30 pm (concurrently with Jewish Cultural School classes).

**September 16**
**Program:** Reflecting on Thirty Years: A Wall of Wondering Jews
**Presenters:** Scott Chazdon and Susan Weinberg, Or Emet members

**October 14**
**Program:** Keeping the Light Within Us Alive: What Humanistic Jews Want Their Children to Know About Being Jewish
**Presenter:** Paul Golin, Executive Director of the Society for Humanistic Judaism

**November 11**
**Program:** Communicating With Family and Others
Discussion will be spun off from “A Conversation with My Father” by Grace Paley, SHJ Humanist of the Year. Paley’s book is an often-funny conversation about making fiction and distinguishing it from fact.
**Presenter:** Don Larsson, Or Emet member, former English professor at MN State University, Mankato

**December 2**
**Program:** Crossing Borders: How Immigration Involves Us All
**Presenter:** Michal Moskow, professor at Metro State U, graduate adjunct faculty at Hamline U, teaches/leads social justice, human/immigrant rights projects.

---

In keeping with High Holiday tradition, Or Emet will collect non-perishable food and personal items at all High Holiday services. Donated items will be shared with Hallie Q. Brown Community Center.

Most needed: canned meat, peanut butter, dry beans, rice, personal hygiene/feminine care items, bathroom tissue.
High Holiday Service Schedule - details on page 13

**Sunday, September 30 | Sukkot Celebration and Fall Festival | St. Paul Jewish Community Center**
11:00 am - 12:00 noon | Or Emet Sukkot Celebration | includes a humanistic Sukkot service, readings, music, food
12:00 pm - 3:00 pm | Fall Festival co-sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Greater St. Paul and the Minneapolis Jewish Federation | there will be music, children’s activities, food trucks, and tours of the remodeled St. Paul JCC. Representatives from a variety of Twin Cities Jewish organizations will have information available.

**October 11 - 14 | A Celebratory Weekend with Paul Golin, Executive Director, Society for Humanistic Judaism**
Complete information is on page 9.

**Saturday, October 27 | 7:00 - 8:30 pm | St. Stephen’s Shelter dinner**
In the spirit of *tikkun olam*, Or Emet volunteers provide and serve dinner to Shelter guests. Or Emet members and friends, including children over 8 years old, are invited to participate.

**Sunday, October 28 | 10:00 am - 12:00 noon | New and Prospective Members Brunch**
An opportunity to visit with Or Emet leaders, connect with other interested/new members, get questions answered, and learn more about the different kinds of programming and events Or Emet offers. For further information contact president@oremet.org or phone 612.787.7812.

**Sunday, November 18 | 10:00 am - 12:00 noon | Or Emet Leadership Team Meeting**
Members are welcome to attend. Contact presidents@oremet.org for further information.

**Saturday, December 8 | 5:00 - 7:30 pm | Hanukkah Party**
Neighborhood House at the Paul and Sheila Wellstone Center, St. Paul
More information will be available closer to the event.