



The Shofar

Seasonal News for the Synagogue of the Hills

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Seismic Revelations

During our recent trip to Iceland, Jo and I marveled at the raw, unfettered, natural beauty of waterfalls, the meeting of tectonic plates, glaciers, geysers, fjords and volcanoes; the stark emptiness of lava fields and the terrifying moments created by one-way tunnels and primitive gravel roads. In balance, there was a stark, almost eerie sense of foreboding when the clouds, wind and rain whipped up the countryside and sea to an unholy, unwelcoming landscape. In this country with such geologic and meteorologic extremes, it struck me that the common feature that persisted throughout were the sheep. Sheep were everywhere, on the hillsides, next to the roads, in the pastures and yes, even in people's backyards. How timely, I thought. One night when I couldn't sleep, I thought of the parallels between these sheep on this isolated, threatening seismic island, in the middle of the Norwegian Sea and us, the Jewish people as we approach the High Holy Days. Each one of us is both an island unto ourselves as well as a part of a greater,

ever changing community. We flourish under the watchful eyes of our shepherd, *Avinu Malkeinu*, Our Father, Our King, as we, His flock, pass before His critical eye in judgment. Just as the shepherd determines the fate of his flock, so too GD will determine who shall live and who shall die as described in the harrowing imagery of the *Unetaneh Tokef*.

Some of these changes elevate us to new and lofty heights while others submerge us to new lows – all marching us inexorably toward eternity. How sublime it is that the day-to-day changes of aging go unmarked, even as our children change before our eyes. I suppose we were not meant to be conscious of every instant of change – perhaps this is GD's way of shielding us from our own mortality and the uncertainty it implies.

As the approach of the High Holy Days casts its mystical, almost magical spell of reflection and introspection upon the Jewish community, I find the continuity of our people is marked by the reassuring predictability of our calendar and life-cycle events.

May you all and your families enjoy the blessings of *Avinu Malkeinu*, as we heed the clarion call of the shofar on these *Yamin Noraim*, these Days of Awe, 5776.

L'Shana Tova
Steven Benn
President, Synagogue of the Hills

The Shofar is how the members of the Synagogue of the Hills communicate with each other. That is, *The Shofar* is a seasonal forum for matters of interest that is a bit more formal than a remark over a cup of coffee, but a bit less formal than a written statement to the Board of Director. It could be a birth announcement, a press release, a photograph, a public service blurb, a letter to the editor (that's me, Leonard Running), a joke, a cartoon, an opinion, anything that

YOU think might be important or entertaining to our family.

Your contributions are welcome . . . no, critical to the well-being of the synagogue.

Send emails to bhshul1@gmail.com or hard copy (you know – paper) 407 North 40th Street, Rapid City, SD 57702
Let *The Shofar* be heard!

In Memoriam



Sidney Wechsler

October 13, 1934 – July 31, 2015

RAPID CITY | Dr. Sidney E. Wechsler, 80, Rapid City died Friday, July 31, 2015, at the Rapid City Regional Auxiliary Hospice House.

Sidney Edward Wechsler was born October 13, 1934 in New York City, NY to Murray and Sarah (Eckhaus) Wechsler. He graduated from Stuyvesant High School at the age of 15 and graduated from NYU at age 19. At 23, Sid was the youngest graduate of the 1958 class at NYU School of Medicine. He continued his education specializing OB/GYN. Sidney chose obstetrics because he wanted to bring life into the world, and delivered over 3,000 babies during his private practice in Los Angeles, CA.

During his private practice, he was also a professor at UCLA. Afterwards Sid accepted a commission as a Lieutenant Colonel with the Public Health Service in Rosebud, SD where he was the Senior Surgeon and Chief of Obstetrics and Gynecology.

Returning to Los Angeles in 1980, Sidney became a professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology at USC.

As exceptional as he was as a physician, he was even more so as a loving husband, father, and friend.

Sid married Sandi (Sandra Elaine Russell) on November 12, 1959, in New York City.

He is survived by Sandi; one son: Robert “Rob” (Jan) Wechsler all of Rapid City; one sister: Barbara Wechsler of New York City, NY; grandchild: Adam R. Wechsler of CA; four step-grandchildren: Rick (Lisa) Hamilton, Danny Hamilton, James (Deidre) Hamilton, and Natalie (Jerry) Shaffer; and four great-grandchildren: Noah, Jhet, Layla, and Knox. Also, a dearest life-long friend: Eileen Saccheri of Virginia

The family would like to express their gratitude to the staff of Hospice of the Hills for the wonderful care given to Sidney.

Services were held on Sunday, August 2, at
Osheim & Schmidt Funeral Home

High Holy Days 5776



Please join us for traditional apples and honey following the Erev Rosh Hashanah service.

** The Kol Nidre service will have combined blessing of music from cellist, Liz Benusis and harpist, Morgan Black.*

** * Mary Ingram reminds us to bring cash or non-perishable food items to donate to Feeding South Dakota in our time of joy and prosperity.*

SEPTEMBER 13 7:30 pm - 9:00 pm
Erev Rosh Hashanah Service

SEPTEMBER 14 10:00 am - 11:30 am
Rosh Hashanah Service

SEPTEMBER 14 4:00 pm - 5:00 pm
Tashlich - Lime Creek

SEPTEMBER 18 7:30 pm - 9:00 pm
Shabbat Shuvah Service

SEPTEMBER 19 10:00 am - 11:30 am
Torah Study

SEPTEMBER 19 1:30 – 3:00 pm
Adult Education

SEPTEMBER 22 7:30 – 9:00 pm
Kol Nidre *

SEPTEMBER 23 10:00 – 11:30 am
Yom Kippur Service

SEPTEMBER 23 4:00 – 6:00 pm
Torah, Yizkor and Neilah

SEPTEMBER 23 6:00 – 7:30 pm
Break the Fast **

From the Rabbi



Shofar Sounding

Dear Friends,

Perhaps it is a byproduct of getting older, but I've been realizing that each year, the High Holidays seem to sneak up on me. In June, it is safely "on the calendar," a phrase I use to mean "sometime far, far away." I have planned out ample time to write out my sermons, go over the music and chunks of Hebrew that we only use for the holidays, and spiritually prepare myself for the marathon that is the Yamim Nora'im, the Days of Awe.

And yet, every year, I show up to shul in midsummer and realize with a shock that it is the Rosh Chodesh Elul, the first day of the month of Elul, the preparatory time for the heavy spiritual work leading up to the holidays. I panic. What happened to Tisha B'Av? What happened to my prep time for the prep time? I'm already behind, and I haven't even started yet. I'm not ready!

Each year, I take it upon myself to read a book aptly entitled "This Is Real and You Are Completely Unprepared" by Rabbi Alan Lew. It is a journey through the cycles within the High Holy days, and so beautifully written that I find myself wishing he'd kept writing endlessly. Rabbi Lew captures perfectly the gravitas and the dread and the urgency of these Days of Awe, and writes with such poignant humanity that I cannot help but journey with him.

Judaism has always been a study of cycles within cycles. Three prayer services a day, one shabbat each week, and the holidays that allow us to relive our story as the Jewish people every year. And now, we are in the middle of the most serious and awesome (to use the old meaning of the word, meaning awe-inspiring) time of the calendar.

We have just lived through the tragedy of the fall of the Temple in Jerusalem and are in indefinite exile. We are unsure of how to approach G-d but certain that it will be our death if we don't try. We rehearse that death, that moment of judgment before G-d, and we always, always come up short.

Despite this, the message of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, of Sukkot and Simchat Torah, is that there is hope. Right after the destruction of the Temple comes the creation of the world. Then comes our death, and then the crisp skies and autumn air of Sukkot. And then we realize we've made it another year as we hear *bereishit bara elohim*, the first words of Torah, and we dance for joy.

After every loss comes new life, and more than anything, this is the message of this season. Shanah tovah um'tukah! Let us all have a happy year and a sweet year!

L'shalom,

Sara Otero-Eiser



The sound of the Shofar

Here's a link to a youtube site where you can hear the sound of a shofar:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pb0A_cPIHlk

What's new?

A photograph of a new parking lot. In the foreground, there are several large, light-colored concrete curb blocks arranged in a row. The ground is covered in gravel. In the background, there is a wooden fence and a line of trees. The text "Plenty of free parking!" is overlaid in large, bold, orange letters.

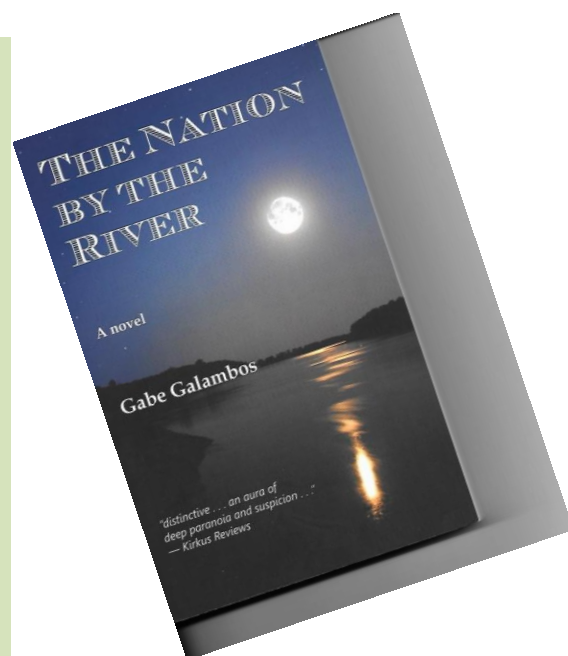
Plenty of free parking!

Flashy like a new fuel pump – but so beautiful! And so practical! A new improved parking lot. Something the whole congregation can use. Come try it out – you'll notice the difference!

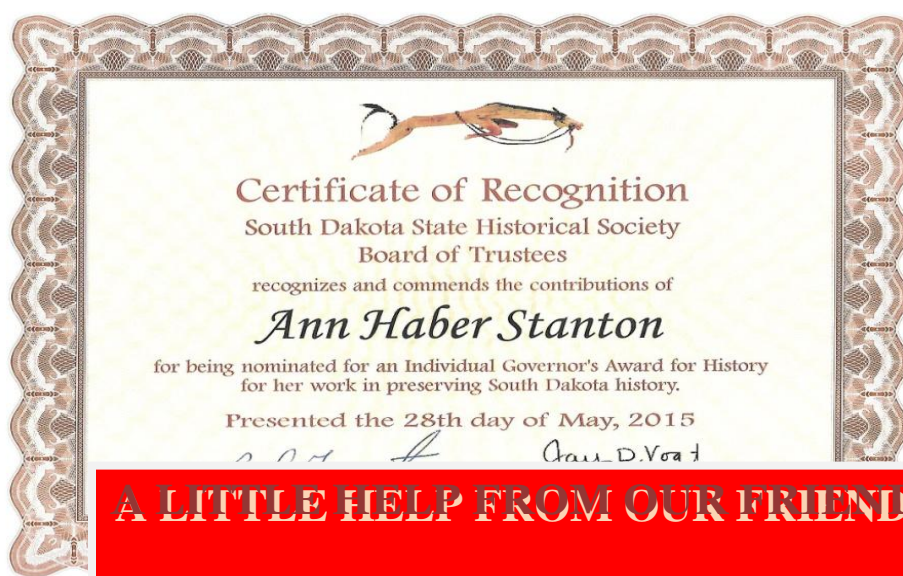
Galambos speaks at Synagogue

Gabe Galambos, born in Romania, imprisoned or detained in countries such as Austria, Sudan and Zaire, currently lives and writes books in Brooklyn. While travelling in Europe, Gabe met some non-Jews from South Dakota who told him about their home and that the local synagogue might be interested in his stories and his new book, **The Nation By the River**, about Crypto-Judaism in the Americas.

On a Saturday evening in July, Gabe came to the Synagogue and read from his book, answered questions on his book and his experiences, ate some cookies and said he 'had a really great time.' So, reportedly, did everyone else who was there.



It's touch and go for the little peace lily at the office – sporadic watering, very little attention. But it finally bloomed! It was just for a couple of days, but it helped me to think about peace, hope for peace, pray for peace – a lasting peace lily.



A LITTLE HELP FROM OUR FRIENDS

Last spring, Barb and Ruth began a process of gathering and submitting recommendations and examples and supporting materials for the purpose of recognizing Ann's prodigious contribution to the realm of South Dakota history – especially pertaining to the Jewish culture. We've known about it for decades; now everybody in South Dakota knows it.

Cool or what?

In July, Steve got a call out of the blue asking him if it were possible for him to complete a minyan for a Jewish family traveling through the Black Hills.

THAT VERY EVENING!

So Steve, his son, Aaron and Bill Bogard made a quick trip to Deadwood where they carried on the ancient ritual of remembrance.

Steve and Aaron and Bill are on the left while the remaining men are the very generous and observant sons and members of the Israeli community.

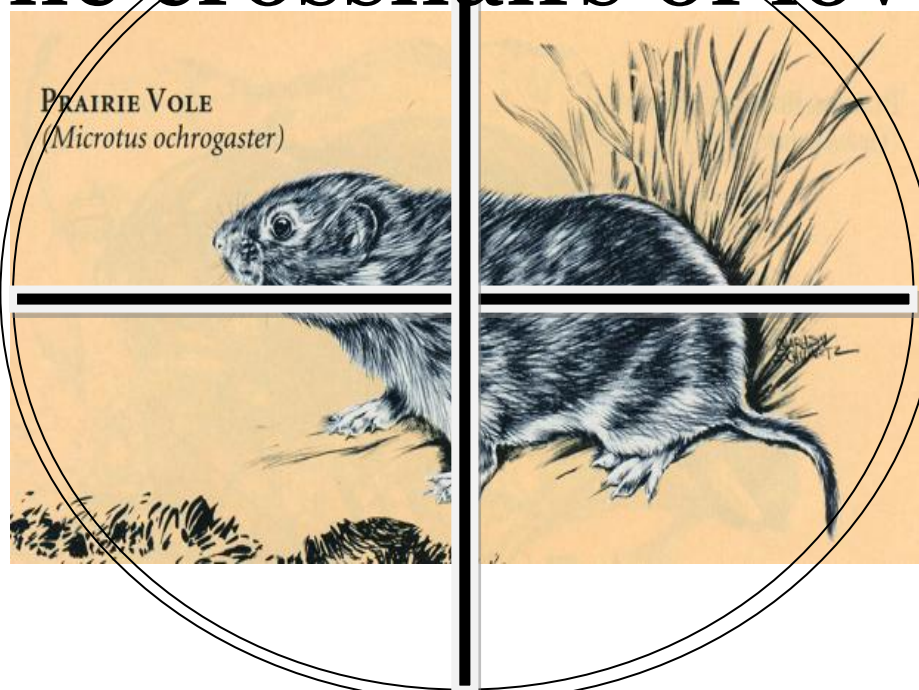


NEW MEMBERS!

The Synagogue of the Hills is delighted to welcome three new members into its family: Morgan Black and Nicholas Kelly; and Barbara Annan.

“Our congregation is small in numbers but mighty in reach. We look forward to welcoming and seeing you during the High Holy Days and at other times throughout the year.”

The crosshairs of love



nocturnal, vegetarian, prolific, exceedingly cute, eats marigolds, seeks out Jewish flower gardens

Mistaken Identity

On their trip to Iceland, Steve and Jo Benn experienced considerable culture shock – from the language (both spoken and written), the food, the topography, the weather, the customs, the roads – all of these and more a tax on their feelings of peace and normalcy.

When they spotted a building with a six-pointed star, Steve and Jo thought they had found a place

where they might find a few moments where they did not feel so alien.

They approached a passerby and, gesturing to the star, asked if it were a synagogue. The person smiled and told them that it was a Christmas decoration and it was difficult to take it down so they leave it there for the summer.

Heck, light is light.





Hard Work and Chutzpah

Jews in Black Hills History:

*being a periodic narrative companion to the book of
photographs entitled Jewish Pioneers of the Black
Hills Gold Rush by Ann Haber Stanton*

NATHAN COLMAN

In a late April
afternoon of 1877, a stagecoach
bumped and clattered its way north along a
rutted trail on the eastern edge of the Black Hills.
The coach had left Sidney, Nebraska, early that
morning, and was bound for Deadwood, Dakota
Territory. The cramped passengers, those who'd been
fortunate enough to secure inside spaces, were tired
and disgruntled, their bottoms aching from long hours
on the horsehair-stuffed seats. Able-bodied men who
hadn't been able to secure seats inside, clung to the
sides or rode on top. These stagecoach lines were kept
busy night and day, transporting would-be
millionaires into the Black Hills. With the Gold Fever
at its peak, the stagecoach companies could barely
keep up with the demand for space.

Nathan Colman's life was a Jewish Odyssey. Born in Hoof, Germany, in 1850, Nathan came to America as a young man. Nathan immigrated from Germany, and traveled to Fort Sumner in New Mexico Territory, where he stayed for a brief time. Drawn by the opportunities for success on the western frontier, Nathan had made his way from New Mexico to Denver, Colorado, where he met Amalia.

Amalia Oppenheimer, born in 1852, was herself a German émigré. Her family lived in the small town of Schluchtern, Germany, near Frankfurt am Main. Michel Oppenheimer, her father, was a writer and translator of Hebrew and Jewish religious works. At the age of 17, Amalia displayed the

characteristics of a plucky young woman. Following the death of her mother, Amalia traveled to the United States where she stayed with relatives in Baltimore, Maryland. After a short stay in the east, she made the long journey across the United States to Denver, Colorado, where she had other relatives. When they met,

Nathan and Amalia knew they were kindred adventurous spirits. They were married in Denver in 1874. Prophetically, their first child, daughter Anne, was born in 1876, the year of the Black Hills Gold Rush.

Reports of happenings in the Black Hills were irresistible to the young couple. What opportunity awaited those bold and

unwavering enough to reach for it! The Colmans began to make plans to travel to Deadwood. Nathan would travel first, making the winter journey into Dakota Territory. Amalia and baby Anne would follow a few months later by stagecoach. By 1877, with Nathan aged 27, and Amalia aged 25, little baby Anne, and enormous reserves of daring, the couple would travel separately to the Black Hills. They could never



Nathan, Amalia and baby Anne

have anticipated the degree of difficulty, or just how much their decision would help shape the future of their chosen destination. The Colmans hadn't expected the life of the pioneer family to be easy, but they no doubt were never prepared to confront the hardship they encountered. Little Anne Colman was the first of what might have

been a large family of brothers and sisters, had her siblings not been stricken with deadly childhood diseases, so common in that era. Amalia would bear 3 sons and 4 daughters, but only three of her children, Anne, Teresa, and Blanche, would survive the epidemics of smallpox, diphtheria, measles, typhoid, and other early-day diseases that ravaged Deadwood's children and filled its cemeteries.

In September of 1879, when Deadwood was almost totally destroyed by the Great Fire, both their home and their business were in the path of the fire. Amalia Colman and her first son, who was only a few days old, had to be rescued from their home. Another son was stillborn in 1880. Time after time the Colmans were tested. They dealt with the raw realities of life on the frontier as they were forced to cope, almost biblically, with fire and flood, illness and death. Just as the Colmans repeatedly looked to the future and chose to start over after the fire of 1879, they had to make the same choice once again when a fire in 1894 destroyed both their home and business. Each new structure was stronger, more fireproof, more resilient. Despite the hardship and the pain, Nathan and Amalia Colman kept their family and their faith strong.

Nathan Colman was an observant Jew, devout and learned in Jewish ritual and tradition. His skills and education were welcomed by his fellow Jews in the remote outpost, and true to the spirit of frontier Judaism, he was called upon to lead the little Jewish community in religious services, for holidays, and other religious functions. Nathan's service to Deadwood as its lay rabbi, respected as leader of the

Jewish community, would be a position he would hold for the rest of his life. Nathan officiated at most of the Jewish rites and celebrations in the community, conducting High Holiday services and leading Passover Seders, weddings and burial rituals. On Nov. 4, 1879, Nathan officiated at the first "Hebrew" wedding in the Black Hills. This was one of the first Jewish events of record in Deadwood, and was described as "beautiful and unique."

Black Hills Daily Times Nov 04 1879, "Mr. David Holzman, one of our bonanza clothing dealers, and Mrs. Rebecca Reubens, the beautiful and accomplished daughter of Mr. Louis Reubens, were joined in the holy bonds of wedlock. The interesting ceremony took place at the residence of the bride's parents in Ingleside, in the presence of at least 60 ladies and gentleman of our best Hebrew society and of all other nationalities..."

Upon forming a community, traditionally one of the first activities of a Jewish group is formation of a burial society, a Chevreh Kaddishe, literally a "group of the holy." Deadwood's first Chevreh Kaddishe, called the Hebrew Benevolent Society, was formed on April 17th, 1879; Nathan Colman was the newly elected Secretary. The Chevreh Kaddishe was charged with purchasing cemetery land on Mt. Moriah, performing the requirements of Jewish burial, including preparation of a deceased for burial and oversight of the interment in accordance with Jewish law.

Another uniquely Jewish organization appeared in 1893, when the Jews formed the Deadwood chapter of B'nai Brith, an international association dedicated to preserving Jewish heritage and performing

acts of service. Nathan, one of the 24 charter members, was once again elected to office. According to family history, Nathan's mother was a Hattenbach, which would have made him a relative of the Hattenbachs, another Deadwood pioneering family, also charter members of the local B'nai Brith.

Black Hills Daily Times, June 27, 1893, p.2, col.3. *"Order of B'nai B'rith instituted with 24 charter members; officers elected. Israel Cowan, Nathan Colman, Jacob Goldberg, M. Stern, Gus Cohen, Louis Minzer, Joseph Hattenbach, Ben. Blumenthal, Aaron Hattenbach, Jonas Zoellner, M.J. Werthheimer."*

Like so many of his Jewish neighbors,

Nathan was a naturalized

American citizen and extremely patriotic. These people

welcomed the opportunity to participate in community leadership and were found at all levels of civic responsibility, from jury duty to City Council to county commissioner,

all the way to state legislature. In 1878 Nathan was appointed Postmaster of the Beaver precinct,

adjacent to Deadwood. Noted for his fairness and honesty, Nathan was referred to as Judge Colman, a title earned through his role as Deadwood's Justice of the Peace, an office he was elected to in 1879 and continued to hold for life. In 1880 he was appointed probate judge and held that position well into the 1890s. He had a strong influence on his youngest daughter, Blanche, who followed closely in her father's footsteps, turning to law as a career, with a special interest in probate law.

The community was well satisfied with Nathan's work. When he ran for re-election as Justice of the Peace in 1879, the Black Hills Daily Times took a position strongly



Nathan Colman in front of his store. (Note spelling)

in support of Judge Colman, affirming that he was an honest "western man," well suited for the job. *"If you want a man to settle your little difficulties in an honest and comprehensive manner, elect Judge Colman [who] ... is familiar with the practice of this Territory. In fact he is no slouch of a lawyer himself... Mr. Hall, the old gentleman running [as Colman's opponent]... is comparatively a stranger to the frontier and on account of his extreme age, his foggy notions... would make a good Justice down East where puritanical and blue laws are still in vogue. Mr. Colman is a western man and consequently better fitted out here."*

Colman assumed a wide variety of positions of civic responsibility. In 1881 he was elected secretary of the fire department. He later acted as one of the judges of the territorial election in 1889, the year South Dakota achieved statehood. In 1891 he sat on the Lawrence County commission, whose job it was to decide on issues regarding taxes, bridges, and roads, as the county laid down its infrastructure. Nathan inevitably became involved in politics, casting his lot with the Republican Party. He was sent as a delegate to state Republican conventions representing South Deadwood in 1880 and 1882. In 1890 he was one of the census enumerators.

Energetic and unafraid to try his hand at a new undertaking, Colman embarked upon one commercial venture after another, all widely disparate. His first business was a tobacco and confectionery shop, to which he added groceries. He later introduced ice and coal into his business.

In 1879 a "great bonanza" was discovered on the hill that overlooked Deadwood from

the east. A tunnel was run from the area opposite Star and Bullock's Hardware Store (now Bullock Hotel) toward the hill to access the gold strike. Nathan staked his claim and got to work, becoming one of the first to prospect in that hill. Because of the number of Jewish citizens owning claims there, it picked up the name of "Hebrew Hill." Although the town at large couldn't see the harm in the name, the Jewish community took offense at the name Hebrew Hill and voiced their objections. Despite their protests, the name stuck. The hill that later would bear Mt. Moriah Cemetery, kept the name of Hebrew Hill, although it was mainly applied to the Jewish section of the cemetery. Colman was still working his claim as late as 1884.

In 1880 Nathan started a shoe repair shop in addition to his law practice. In 1881 he dropped all his judicial duties to open a billiard hall/saloon on Sherman Street. For a while he dealt in marbles such as those used in tombstones and construction projects. In 1882 he opened a curiosity shop on Sherman Street. Following this, he started the Berlin Bakery on Sherman Street in 1883, advertising a "full line of goodies," which was quite successful, and later that year he opened a branch of the bakery on Main Street.

In addition to doing some of his own prospecting, like many of Deadwood's merchants, Colman held mining shares. He was an investor in the Carbonate Mining Company, which included among its many investors Harris Franklin, Ben Baer, and Jacob Goldberg.

Colman also went into the second-hand business, but in 1886 he sold his entire stock of new and used goods, disposing of

everything including the showcases and shelving, and opened a real estate and brokerage firm. Already experienced in collections, he added a loan and collections agency in 1890. By this time Nathan was 43 years old, and his eldest daughter, Anne, was 14. In the space of less than 14 years he'd already started at least 10 different businesses and he was far from through.

One of the ways the Colmans participated in the social life of the community was through their enjoyment of music. Nathan played the cornet and with some of his fellow musicians organized a brass band in 1880 that played at concerts around the area. His German roots ran deep, and in

1890 he helped establish the Deadwood branch of the Liederkrantz Society, a club for those with an interest in German music, arts, language and culture. Other charter society officers included pharmacist Julius Deetken and business partner John Treber. The German-American folks held a congenial picnic at Nelson Park on September 13th of 1882, with German festivities and food. Nathan's performance on the cornet brought less than rave reviews, probably mostly tongue-in-cheek, from the reporter at the Black Hills Daily Times, Nov 04 1880. *"More hideous noise from Colman on silver cornet."*

Special thanks

. . . to Haim for taking several boxes of diverse kosher products from our Passover windfall from Safeway to the Jewish Family Services organization in Denver.

Don't worry; there is still plenty of gefiltefish and matzoh ball soup mix.

Also . . . thanks to Dan for standing on his head cleaning out the sump pump pipes this summer. It's a dirty job . . .

. . . **and** . . . to Michelle B. for stepping up to organize the Break the Fast for this year's High Holy Days.

. . . **and** . . . to everyone who make this job so much fun.

Remember

Challah and the Oneg

The Colonial House has challah available on any Friday after 12:00 noon. It is very helpful for someone to volunteer to pick up the challah and prepare the oneg after services.

If you want to help out by picking up the two loaves and set up the oneg in our synagogue kitchen please notify Leonard at 348-0805. You could even bring your own homemade challah or specially purchased oneg snacks.

If you have something special to celebrate, commemorate, or just want to bring something for the joy of it, there is an oneg sign-up sheet on the bulletin board, or you can call or email by Wednesday, noon, of the week for which you wish to volunteer.

THANK YOU!

Yahrzeits

"to remember is to keep alive"

The following *yahrzeits* will be observed:
Attendance at services is encouraged so *Kaddish* may be recited.

Marshall Morris 10 Elul 5739
Father of Ruth Thomas

Leo Benn October 8
Father of Steve Benn

Renee Benn 10 Elul 5763
Mother of Steve Benn

Frances Edgerton October 17
Mother of Robert Edgerton

Sharareh Baghelai 7 Tishrei 5743
Daughter of Kathy Kovar

Robert Rock 26 Tishrei 5739
Father of Janet Sanders

Mildred Rock 5 Tishre 5750
Mother of Janet Sanders

Louis Bober 29 Tishrei 5735
Father of Haim Bober

Death is merely moving from one home to another. The wise man will spend his main efforts in trying to make his future home the more beautiful one."

-Rabbi Menachem Mendel Morgenstern
of Tomashov (the Kotzker Rebbe)

