



Monthly News for the Synagogue of the Hills

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Oh Yeah, Let's Study, It's Shavuot

It's that time again folks, the snowbirds will be coming home for their annual pilgrimage to the hinterland, so it must be time to think about *Shavuot*.

On May 23, the 6 – 7th of *Sivan*, the Jewish community globally celebrated the festival of *Shavuot*. The festival of *Shavuot* is one of those holidays that many Jews in the Reform movement know little about. As a primer, *Shavuot* is one of the three festivals (the others being *Pesach* and *Sukkot*) that are known collectively as the *shalosh regalim*, or pilgrimage holidays which are historically those festivals during which Jews were encouraged to travel to Jerusalem to offer special sacrifices in the Temple. *Shavuot* commemorates the anniversary of the day that G-D gave the *Torah* to His people, *matan Torah*, although this is not explicit in the *Torah* text itself.

Of course no Jewish festival is complete without its *minhagim*, its customs, and *Shavuot* is no exception. Traditionally special liturgical poems are read in synagogue together with the reading of the Book of Ruth. The agricultural connection is celebrated by the ending of the counting of the *omer*, which began on the second night of *Pesach*, the beginning of the harvest season of barley, and ends on *Shavuot* with the ending of the wheat harvest. Probably the two most identifiable customs of *Shavuot* are the consumption of dairy products (cheese *blintzes*, ice cream, cheesecake) and the all-night *Torah* study sessions.

As I reflect back on the almost twenty years since my family relocated to Rapid City, probably that which I miss most is the SOTH's celebration of *Shavuot*. It is a little known fact that some of our deepest and most intimate relationships of our congregants were put to the test on *Shavuot*. Traditionally, Paul Strassels, Larry Small, Wayne Gilbert, Gregg Peterman, myself and others would gather around the table for some lively discussion (study?), debate (study?), agreement and disagreement (study?) of controversial topics prepared in advance by the leader. Most certainly these discussions were accompanied, dare I say facilitated, by an ample supply of nosh and spirits. And we did not hold back, not at all – the discussions were spirited, dare I say raucous – Larry would not hesitate to get in your face and Paul would not hesitate to tell someone he was wrong. Did we ever cross the line? Admittedly yes, but in the end, it was all good. One of the last study sessions we had several years ago was memorable, but not in a good way. The study session was ended prematurely when a mother and son pair used the occasion to proselytize and attempted to hijack the session for their own evangelical agenda.

In a broad sense, the festival of *Shavuot* celebrates that which may be the very underpinnings that have held us, the Children of *Israel*, together as a vibrant, living, cohesive people while others have disappeared, relegated only to the pages of history books. The festival of *Shavuot* is all about an oath and its reciprocity between G-D and His people – G-D swore eternal devotion to the Jewish people and we in turn pledged devotion to Him. And on that note, let's all head down to Armadillos or your favorite frozen yogurt establishment and celebrate.

Chag Sameach



Carl Schleicher 1825-1903

Services and Events

Calendar for Services and Events

*Check your email for upcoming services and events



Holidays

Tzom Tammuz

Jul 5 Su

Fast commemorating breaching of the walls of Jerusalem before the destruction of the Second Temple

Tish'a B'Av

Jul 26 Su

The Ninth of Av, fast commemorating the destruction of the two Temples

Tu B'Av

Jul 31 F

Jewish holiday of love, similar to Valentine's Day

*Kindle the taper like the steadfast star
Ablaze on evening's forehead o'er the
earth,
And add each night a lustre till afar
An eightfold splendor shine above thy
hearth.*

*Emma Lazarus
The Feast of Lights.*

The Shofar is how the members of the Synagogue of the Hills communicate with each other. That is, *The Shofar* is a monthly 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.

You can send emails to bhshull@gmail.com or anything in paper form to the address on page 1.

Let *The Shofar* be heard!

The Rabbi's Corner



Greetings from Rabbi Sara Eiser

In Cincinnati, we are privileged to have the American Israelite, a newspaper that boasts the longest-running Jewish English-language newspaper in the United States. Founded in 1854, it is an aggregate in the old-fashioned use of the word, culling stories from English and Hebrew sources in both American media and now the Israeli papers as well. Combining these stories with local restaurant reviews, op-eds, and updates on synagogue life at the many congregations in the area, it also boasts dubiously honorable status as the only print newspaper that this 30-something reads cover-to-cover.

A recent set of articles in the May 2015 editions of the American Israelite tucked away a story that caused me to throw up my hands in anger and frustration. Entitled "Haredi Orthodox Israelis dodge draft law," the article laid out the new coalition between Likud and that 87% of Israeli society voted to carry in 2014 while I was in United Torah Judaism (UTJ) that is seeking to repeal a set of laws that 87% of Israeli society voted to carry in 2014 while I was in Jerusalem. This set of laws was created to correct a historical imbalance in Israeli society, enacting criminal consequences for Haredi Orthodox men who refused to honor the draft like all the other men and women in Israeli society. Now, it looks like the darker side of parliamentary politics has struck again with a new coalition between the ruling party, Likud, headed by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and UTJ, the Ashkenazi ultra-orthodox party. The laws to hold the Haredim to the same standard as everyone else will not go into effect.

In America, "draft dodger" is a pejorative term, and we still question the loyalty of those who were unwilling to even take a desk job in our volunteer army in times of war. In Israel, there has been complicit silence and inaction in enforcing the mandatory draft law fairly in this population which makes up 10% of the Israeli populace (and growing every day). While the Arab Muslim group called the Druze have an 83% volunteer rate among their men for the IDF, the Haredim refuse to even opt into the Torah Emunato program, which dedicates their time in yeshiva to praying for the safety of soldiers or into the Hesder program, which allows them to study in yeshiva for half of their term and then serve on an all-male base.

This terrifies and angers me, to be completely honest. If Israel has a mandatory draft for Jews and many ways in which to honor that draft, how is it that we as American Jews have nothing to say when a large and vocal part of the population openly defies this draft and faces no consequences? How is it that America, in many ways the "light unto the nations" when it comes to democracy, has nothing to say to her ally Israel?

As a Zionist, a Torah scholar, and an American Jew, I believe that our responsibility as American Jews is to cry out against giving so much political power and societal privilege to a group that isn't willing to throw their lot in with the Jewish state. We Americans have sent our children as volunteers for the IDF, and it is only right for draft laws to be applied evenly throughout the Israeli population.

With Memorial Day in our recent memory, I would like to honor the soldiers of both the US Armed Forces and the Israeli Defense Forces for giving their lives to service for the two countries I call home. Zichronam livrach: May their memories always be a blessing.

L'shalom,

Sara Eiser



Community News

The garden-planting event of the year will occur
Sunday, June 7, at 9 a.m.

Mary Ingram will be bringing flats of petunias, marigolds and other annual flowering plants, an extra bag of topsoil and some gardening tools. Gardeners are encouraged to dress accordingly, bring gloves and their own favorite digger/planter/cultivator tool to help plant the annuals and manage the perennials including those rambunctious sweet peas.



A garden is an appropriate and beautiful way to contemplate the past and anticipate the future. It had been suggested that the garden be called the Larry Small Memorial Garden in honor of Mary's late husband, but Mary wants it to be more inclusive - to remember all those who have gone before. Garden of Remembering, perhaps. or *Gan Zekaron* (Memory Garden). Suggestions are welcome.

Community News

After Passover these past few years, the Baken Park Safeway store has brought a pickup load of kosher food that did not sell over the holidays.



Last year members chose from a cornucopia of cultural edibles - from matzo to macaroons to gefiltefish - and then made a cash donation to the Synagogue.

This cash was in turn donated to Feeding South Dakota who may not have a taste for matzo, macaroons or gefiltefish. It was a win-win scenario.



Please come and have a look at the pride of Streit and Manichewitz and take home some properly processed potato chips, Bisli, Bambas and farfel and please, please, please take some gefiltefish.

In the News

Once in a while there is heard a note of concern – even apprehension – about the relevance of Judaism in this country’s far-flung regions. These past few months there have been several reports in the local media and the Associated Press about various aspects of Jewish life in the Black Hills of South Dakota. After reading the AP article, a writer named Jordan Teicher from Brooklyn, New York paid a visit to the Synagogue of the Hills in late March and he also asked the question – “What does it mean to be Jewish in the Black Hills of South Dakota?” and focused on the Synagogue’s youngest member. The results of his research and conversations appeared in the online magazine, *The Morning News*, and can be read in its entirety at <http://www.themorningnews.org/article/in-the-wilderness> .

Here are a couple of excerpts from his article that might bear re-reading:



Excerpts from “In the Wilderness”

by Jordan Teicher

“Certainly, it wasn’t easy to be a Jew in South Dakota back when that meant toiling over crops that wouldn’t grow and creating a sense of religious community where there was none before. But today, the challenges are still formidable: Jewish employees have to take personal days off from work on religious holidays, families hoping to keep kosher have to order meat online from places like New York or Denver, and, in Rapid City, they have only about a dozen opportunities a year to connect with fellow Jews in a formal capacity. For the community’s sole Jewish child, maintaining a sense of identity and community is a unique challenge.”

“At the Friday night potluck, I met Curtis Leonard, a man of Muskogee Cherokee ancestry, who was there with his wife, Ruth Thomas, a Jew from New York. Curtis isn’t Jewish, but he comes to synagogue every month—more frequently than I, a Jew by birth—dons a yarmulke, and eats and attends services along with everyone else.

According to the Pew study, that puts him ahead of the 21% of Jews who report having hardly any or no Jewish friends, and the 69% that aren’t members of a synagogue. He also fulfills at least three of the qualities Jews identify as essential to being Jewish: eating traditional Jewish foods, being a part of a Jewish community, and having a good sense of humor.

All things considered, I’d say he’s probably a better Jew than most. So if Curtis, and others like him at Synagogue of the Hills, is Zaidee’s model for good Judaism, then I think she will turn out just fine.”

“The strength of Rapid City’s Jews lies precisely in the particular hardships they face, the closeness of their surroundings, metaphorically, to Babylon. As Jews in strange territory, they can only do so much to observe their faith—but they do it. The small Jewish population there, I believe, fulfills Kaplan’s hope for American Jews: That they are neither deluded about the serious nature of their situation nor ‘resigned to the inevitability of a tragic outcome.’” ✨

Regional Heritage

Hard Work and Chutzpah: Jews in Black Hills History excerpted from an article published in *The Forward* by Ann Stanton

"... Nestled in the heart of the (Black)Hills, in the extreme Western part of Lawrence County, lies the little city of Deadwood, located by sturdy pioneers, lured by the discovery of gold in the early days of 1875 and 1876, approximately 14 years prior to the admission of South Dakota to statehood.

Playing an important part in the history of the Black Hills, were the pioneer and early day Jewish residents, who, like their contemporaries, followed the trail of this then undeveloped country, at the end of which trail they hoped to find the rainbow disclosing the fabulous "pot of gold..." Many of these early day Jewish pioneers became leading citizens of the community, and participated in the major developments of the then mining camp of Deadwood..."

-Blanche Coleman



Blanche Colman, Atty
Photo courtesy Al Alschuler

Yes, gaming and entertainment have replaced mining for riches, and most mercantiles have been traded for casinos; but, slots, craps, keno and roulette help keep the doors open at the Adams Museum and House, Homestake-Adams Research Center, and Deadwood History, Inc., all vital keys to preservation of the captivating Black Hills Gold Rush story.

There were multitudes of Goldbergs in the Bronx where I grew up, but here in Deadwood? How fortunate for this enigma to have found me. Few in my certifiably tiny Black Hills Jewish community knew much about this. Twenty or more years of relentless research, endlessly surprising, ensued. As I stitched their stories together, I became ever more appreciative of the importance of good historical record-keeping. There was little to be found in books about Jews of our own little corner of the Old West. Once I was able to ascertain family names, bits and pieces of microfilmed historical newspapers, cemetery records, museum archives and antiquated photos all began to weave a fascinating story... and generated a mountain of questions.

They had found a lawless frontier. Some made it really big, and some left with only stories. If there were hundreds of Jews in the Lead/Deadwood region, as Blanche Colman had said, what did they do here, how were religion and culture expressed, did they have a synagogue or a rabbi? And where did they all

go? There were beautiful Hebrew inscriptions in the cemetery. There had been two Jewish mayors during the first 50 years of settlement. Calamity Jane died leaving a balance on Goldberg's Grocery's account books. The stately Franklin home had been designed by a synagogue architect. Fully 2/3 of all business establishments on Deadwood's Main Street had been either owned, operated, or occupied by Jewish merchants. There was a Chevreh Kaddishe. There had even been a chapter of B'nai B'rith.

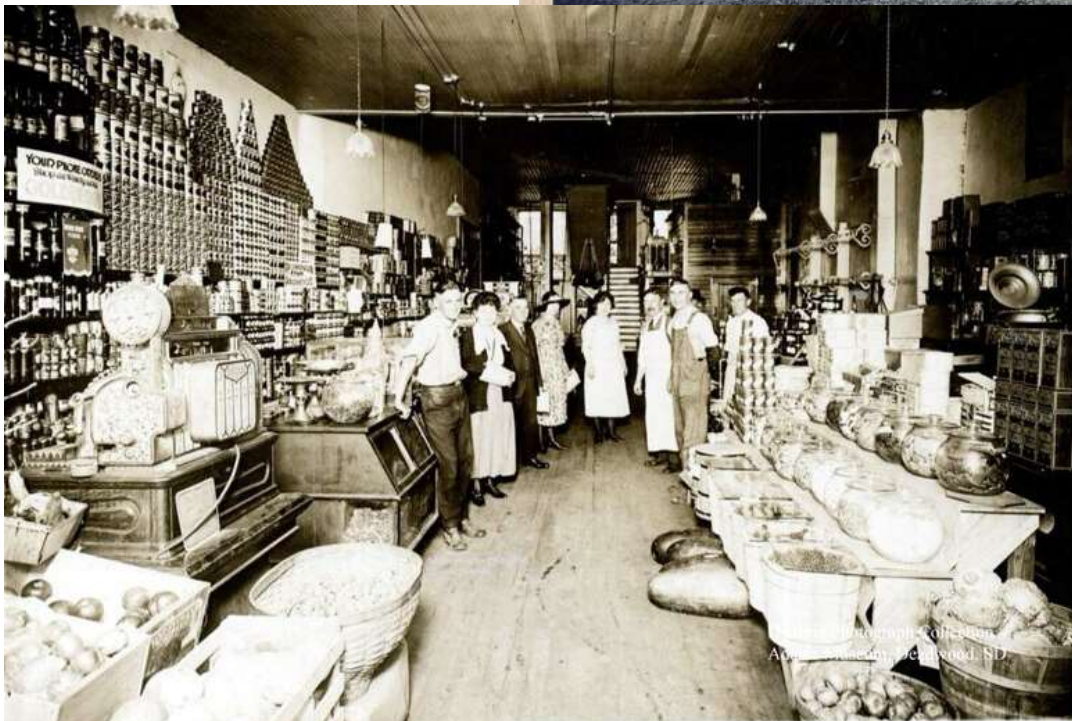
Some answers came easily, others not so much. But it was so important, and so forgotten.



Jake Goldberg
photo courtesy of Adams Museum and House



Goldberg Grocery
Deadwood
ca.1915
photo courtesy of
Minnilusa Historical Assn.



Goldberg Rapid City Wholesale
photo courtesy of Adams Museum and House

Gift Shop

Autographed copies of *Jewish Pioneers of the Black Hills Gold Rush* written by our talented member, Ann Stanton, are on sale for \$21.20, which includes tax. Part of your purchase is *tzedakah* - \$5.00 from each copy will go to the Synagogue. You are welcome to shop anytime you are in the building. Please remember to add 6% sales tax to your total (there is a tax chart on the wall in the gift shop). Payments may be left in the black payment box on the desk. Thank you!

THE CIRCLE OF JEWISH LIFE IN DAKOTA TERRITORY

WEDDINGS: D. Holzman Building, 647 Main St., Deadwood. "The first Hebrew marriage ever celebrated in the Black Hills occurred in Deadwood Sunday evening... it was one of the most prominent social events since the settlement of this country. ... 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... The Hebrew marriage ceremony was performed by the bride's father, which was subsequently sanctioned or legalized according to our laws by Judge Colman. " Black Hills Daily Times of April 11, 1879

BRIT MILAHS: Felix Poznansky's Montana Store, 600 Main St., Rapid City. Felix Poznansky, owner of a dry goods and clothing store in Rapid City, was a skilled tailor and well-educated mohel. Traveling throughout western South Dakota, Felix performed the prescribed mitzvah of ritual circumcision for infant Jewish boys.



Photo courtesy Minnilusa Historical Assn.

"A religious man is a person who holds God and man in one thought at one time, at all times, who suffers harm done to others, whose greatest passion is compassion, whose greatest strength is love and defiance of despair."

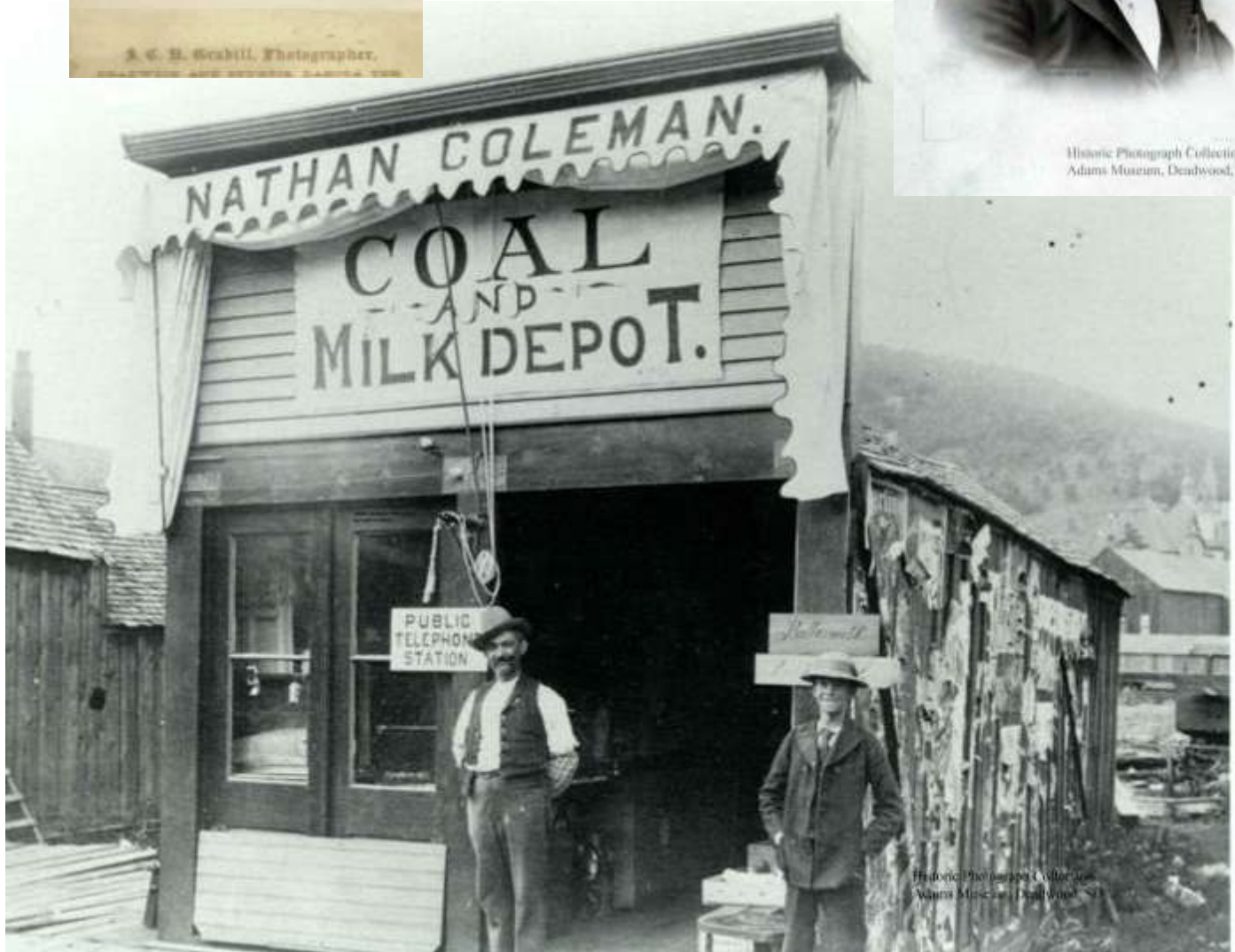
— Abraham Joshua Heschel

BURIALS: MOUNT MORIAH CEMETERY, Washington Ave hilltop: Purchased by the Hebrew Cemetery Association on August 20, 1896, lovely Mt. Zion holds the graves of some, but not all, of Deadwood's many respected pioneering Jewish citizens. Among those represented here are members of the Franklin, Colman, Schwarzwald, Blumenthal, Levinson, Fink, Keimer, Wertheimer and Jacobs families, who together with their Jewish brethren contributed to the civic, commercial, and social life of early Deadwood in ways that helped to stabilize and develop the community.



Sol Star
1st Jewish Mayor
of Deadwood
Photo courtesy of
Adams Museum and House

Nathan Franklin
2nd Jewish Mayor
of Deadwood
Photo courtesy of
Adams Museum and House



Nathan Coleman
First Lay Rabbi of Deadwood
Photo courtesy of Adams Museum and House



Sol Star (center) Seth Bullock (right)
on bridge over Redwater Creek
Photo courtesy of Deadwood Public Library



Star & Bullock Hardware-Deadwood 1877
Photo courtesy of Adams Museum and House

Editor's note:
This is the first in a series of profiles of prominent,
unforgettable Jews in the history of the Black Hills.

Yahrzeits

"to remember is to keep alive"

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

In Memoriam:

Terry Fredricks 29 Iyar, 5756
Friend, member, leader
Synagogue of the Hills

Max Schuchmann May 6, 1997
Father of Bernie Schuchmann

Nikki Bogard 8 Iyar, 5757
Wife of Bill Bogard

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)



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!



TREE OF LIFE DONATIONS

You may purchase a leaf in honor of, or in memory of a loved one or special occasion. Leaves cost \$100.00, each. Please provide the wording you would like inscribed on the leaf (29 characters and 4 lines maximum).

Please send acknowledgment to _____

All donations are tax deductible; please consult your tax expert for details.

Your continued support of Synagogue of the Hills is greatly appreciated!

I would like to make the following donation to Synagogue of the Hills:

My Name _____

In memory of _____ In honor of _____

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

Donation amount _____

Please make check payable to: Synagogue of the Hills and mail to 417 N 40th St, Rapid City, SD 57702

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

Building Fund ~ General Fund ~ High Holy Days Flower Fund ~ Oneg Fund ~

Endowment Fund ~ Tzedakah Fund ~ Other _____