



# Beth Ami

Colorado Congregation for Humanistic Judaism

Volume 3; Issue 12

Beth Ami is a welcoming community where we connect to Jewish past, celebrate Jewish present and link to Jewish future through a humanistic philosophy.

## December 2012

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

### Event Schedule

**Sunday 12/2** – JCS Session 7 & Adult Ed: By special request – a return to Yiddish history and culture

**Thursday 12/6** – Beth Ami Book Club continues study of “A Provocative People” By Rabbi Wine chapters 3 & 4 (11am at Brio's – All are welcome!)

**Sunday 12/9** – Community Chanukah Celebration (2pm – More Info Below)

**Sunday 12/16** – JCS Session 8: Romans in 1<sup>st</sup> century & Adult Ed: Sharing Jewish Authors and Musicians

**Sunday 12/23** – “Greetings”: Beth Ami goes to the theater (2pm – More Info Below – Contact Maida for more details at 303-435-2390)

**Monday 12/31** – New Year's Party (7pm – Hirsch home – 1490 Patton Dr, Boulder, 80303 – RSVP to [marti.hirsch@mail.com](mailto:marti.hirsch@mail.com) – Bring Food/Drinks)

### Upcoming Events

#### January

1/13 – JCS Session 8 & Adult Ed

1/19 – Shabbat Morning Celebration (1pm – Montview)

1/27 – JCS Session 9 and Adult Ed, Community Tu B'Shevat Celebration



### Contents

Calendar.....1

Celebrations.....1

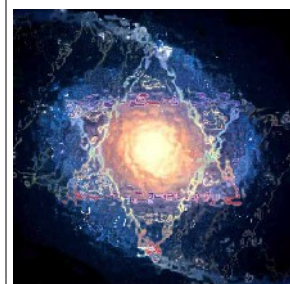
Community Chanukah.....2

Celebrating Chanukah.....2

News from National.....2

Parenting Beyond Belief Wrap-up.....3

Contact Info.....3



### Celebrations

#### Birthdays

12/1 – Ashlynn Anderson

12/4 – Michelle Davis

12/6 – Evan Wilson

12/12 – Herb Josepher

12/13 – Michael Hirsch

12/20 – Calla Stafford, Laura Moin

12/21 – Bill Baum

12/25 – Don Griss, Vic Goldberg

12/29 – David Stafford

#### Anniversaries

12/8 – Gordon & Grace Gamm

12/27 – Sheila & John Malcolm

## Community Chanukah Celebration

*All are welcome! Fun for the whole family!*

**When:** Sunday, December 9<sup>th</sup> at 2pm

**Where:** Jefferson Unitarian Church (14350 West 32<sup>nd</sup> Ave, Golden, 80401)

**What:** Candle Lighting & Service, Holiday Sing-A-Long led by Rachel Cole, Israeli Dancing, Latkes & Games

Plan to attend? Let us know! RSVP to Sheila at [sheila@bethami.com](mailto:sheila@bethami.com) or call 303-499-5933.

Please bring either canned goods to donate to the local food pantry OR hats/gloves/socks or a financial donation to Colorado Coalition for the Homeless organized by Marti Hirsch's Girl Scout troop.

Learn more at [www.bethami.com](http://www.bethami.com) or by calling 720-446-0101

Bring your menorahs! RSVP for accurate count for set-up and food. Latke-makers are wanted!



## Celebrating Chanukah in Our Crazy Lives

From Michelle Davis

Chanukah is here again! It is a fun, exciting time of year with all the holidays: Thanksgiving, Chanukah, Solstice, Christmas, the secular New Years. I don't know a single family that isn't busy with celebrations and preparations at this time of year!

Since my oldest is almost 3, the holidays and creating our traditions of celebrating is becoming more important. I grew up getting presents every single night of Chanukah and a fully stuffed stocking on Christmas morning. My husband grew up with presents Christmas eve with the family and an extended family gathering the next day.

What are we going to do for our family? Since December contains not only those holidays but also both my kids birthdays AND my own birthday, I'm trying to come up with a different way to celebrate Chanukah, a

way that doesn't involve each child getting a gift every single night.

So far my ideas are an advent-style calendar for the 8 nights, with little pockets or drawers that could have chocolate coins, small games to play or crafts to do together as a family. I really want to emphasize the family involvement and celebration and downplay the gift receiving part of the experience.

Do you have any ideas? How does your family celebrate at this time of year? Have you had great success with celebrating Chanukah in a way that did not emphasize gifts? Please share! I'd love to hear from you and if there are some good ideas, share them in the next newsletter.

Email me at [michelle@bethami.com](mailto:michelle@bethami.com) Thanks for your help! Happy Holidays!

## News from National

The next issue of the SHJ journal, Humanistic Judaism, will focus on humanistic parenting. Please share your wisdom! In 100-300 words, tell about a way you've taught your child about being a Humanistic Jew or an experience that showed you that your child is

beginning to understand his/her Humanistic Jewish identity. Deadline: December 15. We will print as many submissions as space permits. E-mail vignettes to SHJ at [info@shj.org](mailto:info@shj.org) – please use the subject line “Humanistic Parenting.” Thank you!

## Parenting Beyond Belief Wrap-up

From Michelle Davis

The weekend of November 3rd and 4th we hosted author Dale McGowan for his Parenting Beyond Belief: On Raising Caring, Ethical Kids Without Religion. There were two events, one in Boulder and one in Highlands Ranch. We advertised through our own website and newsletter, and our events were featured in both the Boulder Camera and the Highlands Ranch Herald. They were also posted to 10 different groups listed on the site [meetup.org](http://meetup.org), all different secular parenting groups that are located throughout the Front Range area. The combined events drew over 50 individuals! Both events featured lots of questions and discussion with Dale, the presenter, and all who attended felt they had gained valuable knowledge and many useful tools to apply in their own lives.

Dale emphasized the importance of raising children to be religiously literate so that they understood the religion around them and were not taken in by the unknown. He advocated taking all opportunities that present themselves to speak to your children about all kinds of religion, and encouraged exploring the world of ancient myths as well, so that the children grow up realizing how pervasive and human it is to create stories and myths to explain the unknown.

Each participant left with a workbook that included lists of helpful movies and books, both for kids and adults, to help families learn more. Another helpful

aspect was the discussion of how there are many ways for non-theistic families to connect. Becoming involved in service organizations, finding groups on [meetup.org](http://meetup.org) or through facebook, exploring the network of Camp Quest, a freethinking summer camp for kids, there are many, many ways for families to connect. Luckily, as part of Beth Ami CCHJ, we have a great way to connect already! Our events are family friendly, non-theistic but enthusiastically Jewish and our school and adult education program are fantastic!

Lastly, the most important thing that I drew from the workshop was the idea that in order for my children to grow up open minded, religiously literate and comfortable being known as non-theistic, \*I\* and Ben need to model it for them! If we are closed-minded about what our friends and family believe, or if we remain ignorant about various religions, or if we are uncomfortable and at all "closeted" about our non-theistic beliefs, the kids will get that message! So we cannot just talk the talk, we need to walk the walk!

All in all, the weekend was a great success and we hope that the individuals that attended will consider returning for future events and tell their friends and family about Beth Ami CCHJ and Humanistic Judaism. The best advertisement is word of mouth, so consider who you could tell about Beth Ami and invite to a future event!

### Contact Information

#### Beth Ami Colorado Congregation for Humanistic Judaism

Phone: 720-446-0101  
Email: [info@bethami.com](mailto:info@bethami.com)  
[www.bethami.com](http://www.bethami.com)

#### New Newsletter Editor!

#### Board members:

Jon Budoff – President..... [jmb@colorado.edu](mailto:jmb@colorado.edu)  
Ron Kingston – Treasurer..... [ronkbethami@hotmail.com](mailto:ronkbethami@hotmail.com)  
Sheila Malcolm – Madrikha,  
Adult Ed Director..... [smalcolm280@gmail.com](mailto:smalcolm280@gmail.com)  
Michelle Davis – Madrikha..... [mdavisz@yahoo.com](mailto:mdavisz@yahoo.com)  
Maida Deborah – Membership.... [maidadeborah@comcast.net](mailto:maidadeborah@comcast.net)  
Lenore Kingston – JCS Director.. [bethamicolorado@gmail.net](mailto:bethamicolorado@gmail.net)  
Kathy Kane – Secretary..... [kkane7403@aol.com](mailto:kkane7403@aol.com)

#### Members at large:

Terry Fleisher..... [terryfleisher@msn.com](mailto:terryfleisher@msn.com)  
Gerrie Karasik ..... [lgkara@aol.com](mailto:lgkara@aol.com)  
Barry Levene..... [blevene@ecentral.com](mailto:blevene@ecentral.com)

#### Newsletter Editor:

Rachel Hirsch..... [rvhirsch@comcast.net](mailto:rvhirsch@comcast.net)

#### Webmaster:

Christie Gosch..... [christiemgosch@yahoo.com](mailto:christiemgosch@yahoo.com)

Hi, all. I'm Rachel Hirsch. I was a student at the Beth Ami JCS until I had my Bat Mitzvah in 2008.

I am the editor of the Beth Ami newsletter this year, depending on how it affects school (I graduate at the end of this school year).

I welcome any input you have, so feel free to email me any articles or information that you want to see in next month's newsletter.

-Rachel