



Beth Ami

Colorado Congregation for Humanistic Judaism

Volume 6; Issue 6

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

June 2015

Contents

| 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 | | | | |

Beth Ami Event Schedule

Sunday 6/7 – 21st annual Boulder Jewish Festival (11am – 5pm, Boulder Country Courthouse & Pearl Street Mall – see more below)

Sunday 6/14 – Beth Ami Arts Group sees “Detroit” (2pm, Curious Theater – see more below)

Sunday 6/28 – Welcome Coffee/Tea for Beth Ami (10–11:30, Basemar Shopping Center Whole Foods – see more below)

Other Community Events

Sunday 6/14 – Newish & Jewish event (Boulder JCC, 11am-1pm)

Celebrations

Birthdays

6/2 – Sasha Gorokhovskiy

6/4 – Steve Langer

6/7 – Debra Goldberg

6/19 – Jon Budoff

6/21 – Roz Budoff

Upcoming Events

August

Saturday 8/22 – Beth Ami Shabbat picnic & hike – Save the Date!

September

Sunday 9/13 – Rosh Hashanah (4pm, JUC)

Wednesday 9/23 – Yom Kippur (5pm, JUC)

Sunday 9/20 – JCFS Session (10am, Countryside Rec Center)

October

Sunday 10/4 – Sukkot

- Calendar.....1
- Celebrations.....1
- Detroit.....1
- Welcome Coffee.....2
- Newish & Jewish....2
- 2015 Boulder Jewish Festival.....2
- Jewish Family Services.....2
- Jewish Together Boulder.....2
- News From National.....3
- SHJ Meeting.....3
- Event Planning.....3
- Arrest.....3
- Family News.....4
- Getting Married?....4
- Support Beth Ami...4
- Contact Info.....4
- Eli K Interview.....5

Submission Deadline
11:59pm, Fri 6/26

Denver Premiere of “Detroit”

"A smart, tart critique of the country's fraying social fabric." - The New York Times

Ben and Mary, a typical family living in a typical suburb, welcome into their lives the enigmatic couple that moves in next door. But as this foursome bonds over backyard barbecues, their hospitality turns incendiary, reducing the facades they've built to ashes.

As hilarious as it is menacing, Pulitzer Prize finalist Detroit implodes the American Dream, revealing a dangerous and barren new landscape.

By Lisa D'Amour

Directed by Producing Artistic Director Chip Walton

Featuring John Ashton, Brian Landis Folkins, Josh Hartwell, Karen Slack, and Amanda Berg Wison

[Get tickets here!](#)



Welcome Coffee/Tea for Beth Ami

Join a Beth Ami gathering to connect with friends and welcome those who have recently signed up to learn more about Beth Ami and Humanistic Judaism.

Meet on Sunday, June 28, 10-11:30 am at Whole Foods in the Basemar Shopping Center, 2584 Baseline Rd. & Broadway, Boulder 80305.
RSVP to Sheila at 303-588-0236.

Newish and Jewish

If you are 60 or older and have moved to the Boulder area in the past couple of years, or have recently experienced a change-of-life event, join us for a special brunch to meet new people and learn about area programs and services.

Brought to you by Boulder Jewish Family Service, the 32 organizations that make up Jewish Together-Boulder, and Women of the J.

Sunday, June 14 11:00 am – 1:00 pm
Boulder Jewish Community Center

Please RSVP by June 9 to Jodi Ansell [303-415-1025](tel:303-415-1025) or jansell@jewishfamilyservice.org.

Boulder Jewish Festival 2015

Save the date for the 21st annual Boulder Jewish Festival!

Sunday, June 7, 2015, 11am – 5pm at the Boulder County Courthouse Lawn and Pearl Street Mall.

Great food, fabulous music, Judaic art, kids activities and community organizations in the largest Jewish event in the West!

[To volunteer at Beth Ami's booth](#), contact Lenore at bethamicolorado@gmail.com.

For more info on the festival, visit: <http://boulderjewishfestival.org>

Jewish Family Service – Lunchbox Express

Jewish Family Service is launching its 2015 Lunchbox Express program on May 26. This mobile food delivery service brings free lunches to low-income children all summer. Lunchbox Express will deliver to 15 locations every weekday, serving more than 40,000 meals.

In addition to nourishing the bodies of the children we serve, we want to nourish their minds by offering free books. To succeed in this new exciting initiative, we need your help!

We are seeking gently used children's books to give to children in need. Many of these kids have never owned a book and they love the opportunity to read and learn. We need books suitable for children from age 3 to 13. We'll be collecting books from now until June 7. Please bring your books to Jewish Family Service, 3201 S. Tamarac Drive in Denver, during regular business hours. If you have 25 books or more, we would be happy to pick them up at your home or office.

For more information, contact Dawn Richard at 720.248.4605. Thank you!

Jewish Together Boulder

Representing 30 Jewish organizations in Boulder County, including Beth Ami, Jewish Together Boulder has now added a B'nai Mitzvah and Teen Initiative Guide to its growing list of Life Cycle Resources,

including New Baby, Wedding, End-of-Life/Bereavement offerings.

Please visit at <http://jewishtogetherboulder.org>

News From National

The American Humanist Association Conference convened in Denver from May 7-10. The following members braved the weather and represented the Society for Humanistic Judaism and Beth Ami at this national event: Kathy Kane, Michelle Davis, Steve Greenspan, Lenore Kingston and Sheila Malcolm.

We made new friends, recorded an audio piece about Humanistic Judaism, and attended some interesting sessions. Next year's conference will be held in Chicago.



SHJ Board Meeting

Kathy Kane and Sheila Malcolm attended the spring SHJ Board Meeting in Farmington Hills, MI. We're proud to participate on the Education and Leadership Committees, respectively, and provide input at the national level. Coming soon to SHJ affiliates around the country are a youth education Facebook page so schools can share ideas and accomplishments, and a video series called "SHJ Talks: 5 Tips in 5 Minutes" promoting best practices in leading congregations and communities.



Event Planning

The Beth Ami programming committee will be meeting in early June to plan upcoming events for the congregation. Lenore, our school director, will be deciding upon the dates for Jewish Cultural Family School. We plan to continue our pattern of alternating between practical classroom learning and outreach mitzvah projects.

If you have any event ideas for either JCFS or the general congregation, please contact one of the committee members: Sheila Malcolm, Michelle Davis, Lenore Kingston, and Marti Hirsch. They would be excited if you want to take charge of organizing an event!

Arrest Made in White Powder Threats

[from the Boulder Jewish News, May 10, 2015]

On May 7, Sheriff's and Boulder Police Department detectives arrested 32 year-old Jeffrey Klinkel for two counts of Felony Menacing, Explosive Hoax, and Interference with a School Facility. This joint investigation with the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Boulder Police Department started after the Boulder Jewish Community Center, located at 3800 Kalmia Avenue received an envelope with a white

powdery substance in it on April 6, 2015. On the same day, Congregation Har HaShem, received a similar letter. The powdery substance in the letters was chemically analyzed by the Colorado Department of Health and the contents were determined to be corn starch and/or white flour. No one was injured in either incident. Forensic evidence linked Mr. Klinkel to the letters and resulted in Klinkel's arrest.

Family News and Events

If you or someone you know is experiencing important and life-altering events, please share the news with Beth Ami. In times of need, Beth Ami members can offer support. In times of happiness, we can help celebrate. To share your news, please contact Sheila Malcolm, Madrikha, or Michelle Davis, Madrikha

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elia Gorokhovsky was one of about 60 Colorado middle school, high school and college students who had been invited to Denver on May 12th to receive a Colorado Mathematics Award for outstanding performance in mathematics. He was one of the top ten among over 1600 Colorado middle school students who participated in the AMC 8 math competition. Congratulations, Elia! | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rachel Hirsch was selected for the Edward G Goman Memorial Scholarship award from the University of Puget Sound Mathematics and Computer Science Department. • Beth Ami congratulates Don Griss for his wonderful tikkun olam volunteer work with Jewish Family Service! (read more here) • Thanks to Barry Levene for spotting an article about our own Ely Karasik in the Mayfair neighborhood newsletter. The full article can be found below. |
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Getting Married?

Wedding season is here! If you hear of anyone needing a secular and/or Jewish officiant for their event, please send them to Michelle and Sheila!



Support Beth Ami With An Honorary Donation

To honor or remember family or friends with a donation to Beth Ami, please email our treasurer at treasurer@bethami.com. A notice of the contribution will be sent to the honoree or family. Our congregation will express its gratitude in the newsletter for donations received in the previous month.

Contact Information

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

I am the editor of the Beth Ami newsletter this year, and plan on continuing for as long as possible (I am currently a student at the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, WA).

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

-Rachel

From the Bronx to Mayfair, via Normandy

Mayfair Neighbor Profile of Ely Karasik

By Sara Visser, MNI Board Member

New York Bronx native, first generation immigrant, World War II veteran, teacher, musician, composer, leader, longtime Mayfair resident and friend of many – just a few ways to describe Ely Karasik.

Karasik was born and raised in the Bronx, playing in the street with kids whose parents came through Ellis Island from Germany, Italy, Poland and Russia (now the Ukraine), like his own parents, Dora and Benjamin. Born in 1924, Karasik and his younger brother, Leonard, heard both Russian and Yiddish in their childhood home.

"If my parents spoke Russian, it was a private conversation, not for my ears," he said. "If it was Yiddish, it was meant for my brother and me." In fact, at the school he attended, classes were taught in Yiddish only.

"At the age of 14 years old, my father gave me his mandolin and started sending me to classes for 10 cents a lesson," Karasik recalled. So began his passion for music – one that has followed Karasik his entire life. He was talented – good enough for his instructor to recommend private lessons for 50 cents each and to put him in his orchestra with musicians of all ages. The group gave programs for audiences and within several months, Karasik took over the first chair. "I was pretty young for that," he recalled. "It was fun!"

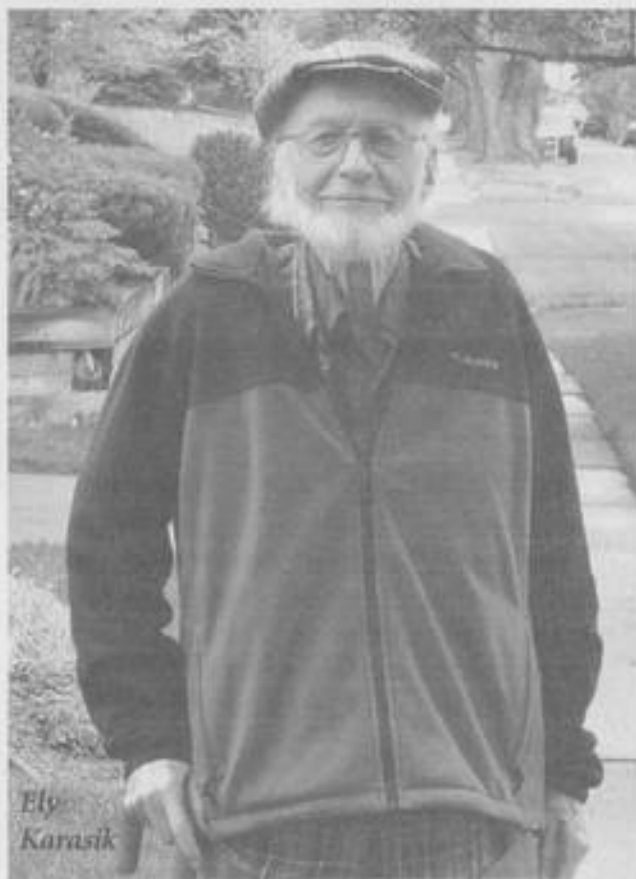
When he finished high school in 1941, a new chapter began. He worked during the day in a machine shop and attended night school at City College of New York. He also played his mandolin in the orchestra.

Pearl Harbor had just been bombed by the Japanese and the pull of military service rippled through his neighborhood.

"Initially, I was thinking of the Navy, but I took the test and flunked because of my glasses," Karasik said. In 1943, he was drafted into the Army Air Corps.

"My family had concerns – they knew we had a right to be in that war and fighting the Nazis in Germany was a good thing. They didn't like me being drafted, but they weren't against it," he said. "I felt like I had to do it. I would have been ashamed to be deferred."

After a short stint in Air Corps training in Miami and Nebraska, he made the decision to transfer to the Army



Ely
Karasik

Specialized Training Program where he could seek higher education. Karasik studied at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis for three terms before "the Army changed its mind and took us all out." Next stop, infantry boot camp in Arkansas.

"The other guys there had already gone through boot camp, and they were tan and tough looking," he laughed. "We looked like weaklings."

Sent overseas, Karasik and his division landed in Cherbourg, France, in Lower Normandy shortly after D-Day. "We stayed in a camp and dug foxholes," he recalled. "The Germans were close; there was nightly shelling – there was always a danger."

After two weeks, his division was sent across France in train boxcars with notices on the walls reading "quarantine hommes, ou huit vaches." (40 men or 8 cows). They arrived in Nancy, France, and fought in the foothills of the Vosges Mountains in some of the fiercest fighting of the War. Karasik was in a machine gun company with a WWI heavy machine gun. "My fingers were always frozen," he said. His division lost few men.

but stories of injury, death and danger were common.

As 1945 began, his division crossed the Rhine River at Mannheim, Germany, turned south, liberated several slave labor factories and found themselves on the border

of Austria when peace was declared. Per orders, he remained in Germany through the summer of 1945, "doing nothing...flirting with the ladies," he said.

After a transatlantic journey on the Queen Elizabeth, Karasik returned to the Bronx and his family. "We came into New York past the Statue of Liberty – that was exciting." Several months later, he was discharged. The rest of his life lay ahead of him.

After transferring from City College to Columbia University, he earned a Bachelor of Arts in Music Education through the GI Bill. He wanted to teach music. During the war, his father sent his mandolin to him, but Karasik sent it back after a month because it was unsafe to keep it. Even so, his passion for music stayed with him.

During a few years teaching music in Sumner, Ill., Karasik fell in love with and married a fellow faculty member, Leonore. It was an interfaith marriage – not commonly accepted in such a small town. He and his bride moved to Denver.

Then came a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. He and his wife and young son Randy moved to Climax, Colo., to start the school band program from scratch. "A teacher's dream," he said. During his three-year tenure in Climax, his second son Keith was born.

Beginning in 1956, and for the remainder of his teaching career until he retired in 1979, Karasik taught science at Kearny Jr. High School in Commerce City, living in Denver near Colfax Avenue and Cook Street.

During this time, he did not play his mandolin very often. After all, he and his wife were busy raising two children. However, when he left teaching, he began performing at private parties, playing the mandolin in a trio or quartet.

In 1976, Karasik helped the newly founded Denver Mandolin Orchestra get off the ground. He continues his commitment to the group today as he nears his 91st birthday. The group includes mandolin, guitar and cello players of all ages, from 11 to 96. He points out, with a laugh, that he is not the oldest player.

In 1976, Karasik helped the newly founded Denver Mandolin Orchestra get off the ground. He continues his commitment to the group today as he nears his 91st birthday.

Making music brings him "joy, motivation, challenges and camaraderie," he said. The group holds occasional concerts throughout the year, usually at the Wynkoop Brewing Company. His original works are performed

regularly, along with other favorites. He has released several CDs of his original compositions.

In 1988, Karasik, now single, moved to Mayfair, where he enjoys his relatively quiet street and friendly neighbors. "I like the city and the people," said Karasik, who has never considered returning to New York. "This feels like home. It feels right."

Throughout his eventful life, Karasik has traveled the world for the Army and for fun and has seen his share of discrimination and intolerance – personally and through the eyes of others. Whether it was racism, teachers who were unfairly fired or anti-Semitism directed at him or his friends and family, he has been sensitive to the plight of others and stood up for them.

Sharp, with a great memory, a quick smile and a musical talent he loves to share, Karasik is a noteworthy and remarkable member of our Mayfair Neighborhood.

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