

B'nai Butte Buzz

East River Valley Jewish Community
December, Kislev 5778

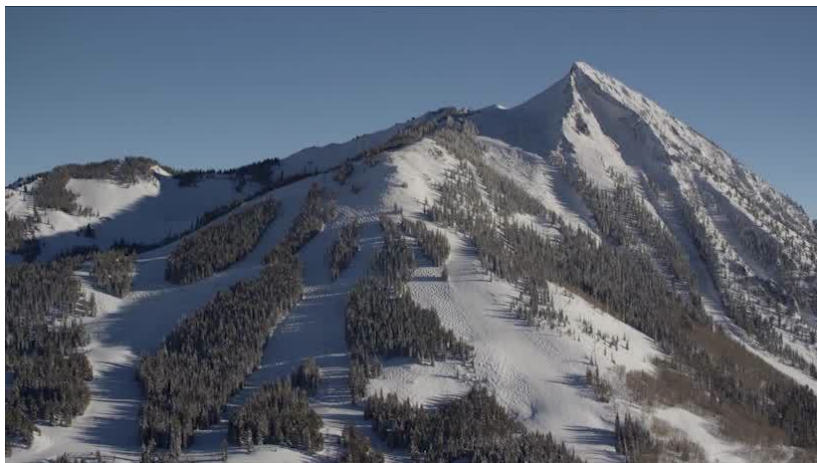


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Upcoming Events:

**December 12
Hanukkah Celebration at
the Brick Oven**

**December 12- December 19
Nightly Hanukia Lighting at
the Brick Oven**

**December 15
Shabbat/Hanukkah Pot Luck
Celebration**

**December 28
Coffee with Rabbi Robbi at
BWC Cafe**

**December 29
Coffee with Rabbi Robbi at
BWC Cafe**

**December 29
Shabbat Pot Luck Dinner**

**January 24-28
Rabbi Robbi Visits**

**March 8-11
Rabbi Robbi Visits**

Delight in December

Tuesday, December 12

6:00 PM Come celebrate the first night of Hanukkah with fellow Jews of B'nai Butte at the Brick Oven Pizzeria. We will light the Hanukia outside and continue with our traditional festive pizza party inside. Pizza and non-alcoholic drinks are on us!

Tuesday, December 12 - Tuesday, December 19

6:00 PM Join B'nai Butte board members for nightly lightings of the Hanukia and prayers at the Brick Oven.

Friday, December 15

6:15 PM Following the lighting of the Hanukia. Join us for a Shabbat/Hanukkah Celebration and Pot Luck dinner following the lighting of the Hanukia at the Brick Oven at Queen of All Saints Parish Hall. Bring a generous dish or drink to share with the group.

Thursday, December 28 & Friday, December 29

9:00AM - 12:00 PM Take a break from skiing and riding and grab a hot drink with Rabbi Robbi at the BWC (previously Camp4Coffee) in Mountaineer Square on the mountain.

Thursday, December 28

Evening Activity TBD Enjoy an evening activity with Rabbi Robbi, maybe a movie or dinner. Watch your emails for more information to come. Contact Rabbi Robbi at rabbirobbi@gmail.com

Friday, December 29

6:00PM Join us for a festive Shabbat celebration and potluck dinner at the home of Ynette and Jim Hogue. Please bring a generous dish or drink to share with the group. Directions: 16 Morning Glory Way, Mt. CB. Take Gothic Road from town to Mt. CB Pass Ski Area entrance on the right (Treasury Rd.) Next left is Marcellina and take that left up the hill, then right onto Morning Glory. House is on the left at top of hill. Questions call 349-1103.

A Few Words From Rabbi-Cantor Robbi

Vayishlach – It's Never Too Late to Have Enough

Recently, my “long-lost” cousin, Amy and her 8 year-old daughter, Elissa, came to visit me for the first time ever. We met again just two years ago, when Sababa played a concert at their shul in Alexandria, Virginia, and Elissa was in the kids’ choir that backed us on a few songs. When the band was introduced, my cousin Amy, who had been sitting in the audience looking at me (“I know her from SOMEWHERE” she was thinking,) turned to her husband and daughter, and said: “Holy crap! That’s my cousin up there.” She came up to me as we were signing autographs, and introduced herself. I recognized her from my childhood, and I burst into tears.

Our, mothers, who are both gone now, grew up as sisters, although they were first cousins in New York, born of first generation Jews who came with nothing to this country. Through very hard work, our grandparents built successful businesses – an awesome story of immigrants in America. Amy and I were *long-lost* cousins because of a huge disagreement in our family over the estates of our grandmother and great aunt. It had to do with the financial “birthright” in our family – I had heard for years that her Dad had stolen the estate; Amy had heard that my uncle had stolen the estate. This rift had nothing to do with us, the kids, but it permeated the lives of our mothers – we had no contact for 40+ years.

Ah, family dynamics. When it comes to family, you can’t live with ‘em and you can’t live without ‘em. We all have the funny aunt, the crazy cousin or the selfish sibling. In Jewish families, there is a negative - but sometimes also a positive stereotype - of the pushy Jewish mother. “Things” and money can cause huge rifts in families. Promises broken can take on a lifetime of guilt. The “haves and “have nots” can live diametrically opposed lifestyles. Can we ever have “enough stuff?” Misunderstandings and third-party interference can destroy family harmony. Life is a soap opera.

One of my favorite soap operas in the Torah takes place this week in Parasha, Torah portion, *Vayishlach* (and he sent) which opens with Jacob sending messengers to contact his twin, Esau, 20 years after a rift in a family of Biblical proportions. A little history before we get to Jacob reaching out to his brother:

When we last heard from Esau, he was in a terrible state. He was hurt, shocked and devastated after Jacob stole his blessing and birthright from their father, Isaac. Esau vowed to kill his brother, Jacob. These words were reported to Rebecca, the complicit negatively stereotyped Jewish mother, who had conceived and carried out the trickery of the stolen blessing and birthright. Rebecca warned her favored son, Jacob to flee for his life to the house of Laban, her cousin. She told him to lay low and choose a wife from among Laban’s people. Jacob, terrified, ran away and appeared with absolutely nothing at the house of Laban, who took him in, and in return, Jacob helped build Laban’s flocks and wealth.

We know that Jacob was in love with the younger daughter, Rachel and was tricked into marrying Leah, the older sister, after working for Laban for seven years. Jacob then had to work ANOTHER seven years to be able to marry his love, Rachel.

In addition, Jacob dedicated six MORE years to Laban's wealth through hard work, demonstrating some incredible prowess in goat breeding techniques. (This Torah portion even discusses those breeding techniques.) Out of fear, guilt and love, Jacob was tied up working for someone else for a very long time – how much is enough?

Fast-forward those twenty years, and comfortably wealthy in his own right, Jacob sends a message to his brother, outlining the many gifts that he wishes to give his brother to buy back his favor. The messengers return, letting Jacob know that Esau himself is coming to see Jacob - with four hundred men. Assuming the worst, a terrified Jacob splits his camp and family in two – he thought that just in case one of them is attacked, the other camp can flee. Jacob undergoes the single most important event in his life, the nighttime struggle with the mysterious stranger that concludes with him being given a new name, "Israel," which has been interpreted as a "God Wrestler." Jacob's life has already been a soap-operatic series of events and adventures, but he leaves this physical struggle with the stranger with a damaged hip socket and a sense of who he is reflected by his new name. How much is enough?

So, the Jacob that deceived his father and devastated his brother is a now new man. He sends messengers with many gifts to Esau, hoping for the best, and is pretty well exhausted by the time the two brothers meet. Has he done enough to earn the forgiveness he so desperately craves?

Oooh... Sibling rivalry. Guilt. Intrigue. Revenge. Redemption. Forgiveness – this Torah portion has it all!

Taking a very subservient stance, at last they meet and Jacob greets his brother Esau for the first time in 20 years. To his surprise, Esau runs to his brother, kisses him, and they weep. Esau admires Jacob's wives and children and Jacob offers Esau an amazing array of riches in return for his favor – really, in return for his forgiveness.

Esau's response: *Yesh li rav, achi*: "I have enough, my brother."

What does it mean to HAVE enough? What does it mean to DO enough to make reparations, to ease guilt? How much is enough in material gain to pay for past deeds? Is making up with "stuff" enough?

My cousin Amy and I talked about the rift in our family and how incredibly unimportant it was in the scheme of things now. We looked at old photos, shared some jewelry, told old stories, laughed and cried. I said: "Do you want THIS of Nana's?" She said: "Can I give you THAT of Papa's?" No, we decided. Our reunion meant more to us than things – we had enough "stuff." What we needed was to fill in the past and move forward towards the future, just like Esau and Jacob. Although hardly as dramatic, we compared our reunion to theirs. We are another generation and even though half our lives are gone, we look forward to years of being a part of each other's lives. As with Jacob and Esau, we put the past behind us, forgave our parents for keeping us apart and are exceedingly grateful to have the ability to move forward and start our own family history together.

I lost my mother six years ago, and my father, who is healthy but mostly blind from macular degeneration still lives among a lot of things that they acquired in their years together. If you haven't already heard, or experienced this yourself – our kids don't want our things, and they especially don't want their grandparents things. They want to live their lives with LESS, be more mobile – and the collections and hobbies that seemed so important to us mean nothing to them. The web is filled with sterling silver tea sets and Hummels and Lladro sculptures – they are only worth something if someone is willing to pay for them, right? I think we can learn a lot from this generation of our kids and grandkids – its time to let go of things, live with less, and connect to each other more. My cousin, Amy and I realized that leaving behind the baggage was easy – because it was never ours to begin with – but we still have some unpacking to do.

In this season of excess, we hope that we can move more away from the excesses of things and into an excess of light - letting go of things that hold us back and waiting more than 20 years to make some important repairs. May we all understand that it is never too late to say: "I have enough."

It's Chanukah, so bring on the light! It doesn't take up much room and it permeates everything.

B'nai Butte Announcements

Shahna Lax, who does Judaica arts and has a shop on Etsy called [Moresca](#), is offering to donate 13% from sales made by member of B'nai Butte or anybody who wants to donate to B'nai Butte. In addition to the current listings, anyone interested can click on the orange "**Request Custom Order**" on the entry page and customize or create anything according to their needs and desires. In all events, every piece is handcrafted per order. Her studio is not that far from Crested Butte. If anyone from our community would actually like to come to Crestone to pick up their purchase instead of having it shipped, use **coupon code PICKUP**, that will **eliminate shipping charges**. **To earmark the 13% donation**, the buyer simply indicates at checkout in the box that says "**Add a note to Moresca**" the name of B'nai Butte.

B'nai Butte is looking for hosts for Rabbi Robbi and Shabbat Dinners for January 24-28 & March 8-11. If you would be interested in hosting contact Ofra at 970-349-5211

Long-time B'nai Butte second homeowner, frequent visitor and friend, Idelle Abramson, of San Antonio, Texas, past away at her home, surrounded by her loved ones after a brave battle with lung cancer. Idelle was a life-long Texan, and the ultimate gracious Southern Jewish hostess, who always had a kind word to say, a delicious dish in her hands and a twinkle in her eyes. Idelle would have been 90 in February, and has shared with her husband, Norman, the joy of raising two sons, Phillip (Lisa) and Mark (Marilyn Mears), two grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. Messages of condolence will be welcomed by Norman and the family at: 1511 Spanish Oaks Drive, San Antonio, Texas, 78213-1635. May the soul of Idelle Abramson be bound up in the embrace of eternal life and may her memory be for a blessing.

To keep up to date check out our website at www.bnaibutte.org or like us on Facebook.

Hosts Needed!

We need volunteers to host our shabbat dinners and host Rabbi-Cantor Robbi for her visits. Please help us! We are dependent upon the generosity of our community to provide locations in order to continue to have Rabbi-Cantor Robbi make visits to Crested Butte. Please call Ofra at 970-349-5211 or email bnaibutte@gmail.com to volunteer or further information. Thank-you

Still In Need Of New PJ Library Contact

B'nai Butte is STILL looking for someone to be the point person for the PJ Library. We prefer someone who's kids are still enjoying the books. They don't have to be local. Contact Ofra at ofrarey@gmail.com, if interested.

BBYO

BBYO is working on invigorating the newly starting Crested Butte Chapter. If you know anyone interested please contact Rena Elfenbein at Elfenrena123@yahoo.com or Ben Wright at Benjamin.wright@western.edu.

Thank-you

Thank-you to ***The Hagues*** for hosting our December Shabbat Dinner.

Thank-you to ***Josie and Steve Rochell*** for hosting Rabbi Robbi this month.

Fundraising for new Torah

This year, we have a special donation request. The beautiful (and historical) Torah that B'nai Butte has been using for years, graciously shared by the Adelman family, has been relocated to Montana to be with other family members. B'nai Butte wants to thank the Adelman family for allowing us to use the Torah for so many special holidays and B'nai Mitzvot. We are currently in the process of purchasing a Torah, an Ark, a yad, and silver adornments. The Alpern family has generously agreed to fund the purchase of the Torah, and the Rolfe family has also generously agreed to match any donations for the adornments up to \$5000. Our fundraising goal of \$10,000 will provide B'nai Butte with a special Torah to be part of our congregation now and for future generations. Please consider the Torah fund as a special part of your continued financial contributions.

Contributions

Bnai Butte greatly acknowledges the following generous contributions. Won't you please join them? Remember you can donate on our website now as well as send contributions.

Barbara and Alan Lipkin

Barbara Sherman & John Kozyak

Barbara Kolter

Becky and Joe Williams in honor of Hogues Anniversary

Beverly Fitzpatrick and Joseph Fitzpatrick

Cathy Collins

Claire and James Woodcock

Dayle Ann Schechter and Jame Mathis

Debbie and Lawrence Brannian

Donna and Scott Fishman

Dr. Elizabeth Ann Roistacher and Mr. Steven Marc Polan

Dr. Gloria Beim and Erik Klemme

Emily and David Rothman

Francis and Henry Lipowitz

Harvey Castro

Joan Binkow

Johnna and Bob Bernholtz

Lillian and Dr. Joseph Elfenbein

Linda Fialkoff

Laurie and Dan Goetz Family Philanthropic Fund of the Dallas Jewish Community Foundation

Laura and Michael Werner

Leslie and Allen Levinson

Leslie and Dr. David Elfenbein

Mary and Mark Greenbeurg

Marla and Ken Drucker

Marsha Goldstein and Robert Fine

Maxine and Jack Zarrow Family Foundation

Michael Barnard

Monica Ariowitsch

Ofra and Chuck Reynolds

Paule and Dr. Richard Stiefler

Richard Saperstein

Rabbi Robbi Sherwin

Roberta Reinhardt

Ruth and Michael Freeman

Robert Silverman

Stephan Quentzel

Steven Fink

Suzanne Ewy

Wendy and Jon Waltman

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