



**Volume: 2 Issue: 2  
February 2011**

## ***This I believe...***

*Members of Beth Ami have been challenged to write personal essays as modeled by 'This I Believe' on National Public Radio. Several members have shared their essays at services and Adult Education. On Jan. 9, the Adult Ed session focused on taking steps to begin a 'This I Believe' essay, some of which we hope to share publicly in the near future. What a wonderful way of sharing our life beliefs and learning more about each other!*

### **A Circular Argument**

I try to ride my bicycle at few times a week, at least during the summer months, both for exercise and for fun. I have a set of routes I usually take from the house. All of them are loops or generally circular. That is, I leave the house in one direction and return on a different path. I do the same when I take a walk or travel by car. When I go walking or hiking, I search for paths that are loops. When driving I insist on going forward around the block or more when I miss a turn, rather than making a U-turn and going back the way I came. This got me thinking why. Why do I have this need to travel in circles, rather than going one way and returning on the same path?

I came up with several reasons, aside from the possibility that I am just plain neurotic.

One is my interest is observing or hearing something new and different. Around the next curve in the path may be wildlife: a hawk perched on a high tree branch, a coyote in the nearby grasslands, a goldfinch perched on a thistle seed head, a meadowlark singing its unique song. Or there may be some interesting plants: a patch of puncture vine along the trail that does what its name implies to unsuspecting bike tubes, a flower garden by the trailside that someone lovingly maintains, a linden tree in bloom with its overpowering fragrance. There may be interesting people to see: city workers may be just ahead, pruning trees or spraying for weeds. There may be an older couple up ahead, walking hand-in-hand or a family out for a stroll. I may miss these sights, sounds, and smells if I take the same way home.

I like the idea of learning something new. If I miss a turn when driving, going around the block means I might discover a new place, a neighborhood that is new to me. Or, I might get lost and have a real adventure. I truly believe that I become a little bit of a different and better person with each new encounter.

I also like the idea of discovery. One of my favorite TV programs when I was a kid was Wagon Train with Ward Bond. I loved that show and came to believe that maybe I was born 100 years too late and would have been a perfect pioneer. Likely I would never have survived the difficult trip along the Oregon Trail,

*(Continued on page 2)*

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

**Beth Ami means:  
*House of my people***

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but the idea has always been alive for me. Seeing the remnants of the Trail in Nebraska has been something of a fascination for me and made the dream come alive. Of course, theirs was a one way trip, but the sense of possibilities of discovery dictate a circle route.

There is also the idea of risk-taking and surprise. What lies ahead is unknown, unpredictable, and possibly a bit dangerous. Up ahead there may be a signage-challenged detour, there may be glass or thorns on the trail or a tree branch blocking the way. There may be a loose dog that hates bicyclists or a snake may slither across the path. On a hike, there may be an unexpected creek to ford. You always know what's behind you, but what is ahead is a mystery to be encountered and faced head on. To me, taking these calculated risks is appealing.

To a philosopher, the circular trip could be a metaphor for a year cycle or a life's journey. I visualize a year as a circle. Some view it as a line. Whatever you believe, there is no way you can turn around and go back the way you came. There is only forward motion. Certainly there are detours, with ups, downs, and side-ways movement. But nothing repeats itself in reverse order no matter how hard, sometimes, we wish it to be otherwise.

Lastly, maybe my need for circular travel is a genetic thing. Maybe I have the circular gene, evolved for the purpose of humans having a greater chance to find food or water. Maybe survival of the fittest means never retracing your steps.

Whatever the case, unless there is no choice, I prefer the route that goes forward, and returns to its starting point. I believe in going in circles.

- Barry Levene, Beth Ami board member

## At Beth Ami It's Easy Being Green!

Jewish Cultural School recycles and composts. Christie Gosch's class created a chart of compostable and recyclable items. Our paper products will all be compostable; our silverware will be washed in Countryside Rec's dishwasher. We have fun learning the right place to discard items.

Our ethnically Jewish menu from around the world will reflect our values by using locally grown, organic foods whenever possible.

## The Secrets Behind What You Eat

On Tu B'Shevat our teachers and students discussed [The Omnivore's Dilemma, The Secrets behind what you eat](#), by Michael Pollan. Mr. Pollan introduces his book in the following way:

"Before I began working on this book, I never gave much thought to where my food came from. I didn't spend much time worrying about what I should and shouldn't eat. Food came from the supermarket and as long as it tasted good, I ate it...

Now I had a big problem. I went from never thinking about where my food came from to thinking about it all the time. I started worrying about what I should and shouldn't eat. Just because food was in the supermarket, did that mean it was good to eat?...

In the past, people knew about food because they grew it or hunted it themselves. They learned about food from their parents and grandparents. They cooked and ate the same foods people in their part of the world had always eaten. Modern Americans don't have strong food traditions. Instead we have dozens of different "experts" who give us lots of different advice about what to eat and what not to eat...

I decided to become a food detective, to find out where our food comes from and what exactly it is we are eating...As a food detective, I had to go back to the beginning, to the farms and fields where our food is grown. Then I followed it each step of the way and watched what happened to our food on its way to our stomachs.

Each step was another link in a chain--a food chain."

## We Are Mentschen slide show on February 27th at 11:00am

JCS students are creating a slide show of "Kodak moments" - photos demonstrating the deeds they have done that demonstrate a principle. A principle does not tell you what to do. A principle tells you how to think about what to do.

**Parents:** please email Lenore your photos by February 13th [bethamicolorado@gmail.com](mailto:bethamicolorado@gmail.com)

# February 2011

| SUN               | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI         | SAT |
|-------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------------|-----|
|                   |     | 1   | 2   | 3   | 4           | 5   |
| 6 JCS & Adult Ed  | 7   | 8   | 9   | 10  | 11 Shabbat* | 12  |
| 13 JCS & Adult Ed | 14  | 15  | 16  | 17  | 18          | 19  |
| 20                | 21  | 22  | 23  | 24  | 25          | 26  |
| 27 JCS & Adult Ed | 28  |     |     |     |             |     |

## Schedule of Events February

6th - 10am Jewish Cultural School & Adult Education at Countryside Recreation Center, 10470 Oak St. Westminster

11th- 7:30pm Shabbat at Montview "What's love got to do with it? Judaism & Intermarriage" by Michelle Davis\*

13th- 10am JCS & Adult Ed, Countryside Rec

27th- 10am JCS & Adult Ed, Countryside Rec, slideshow, "We are mentschen."

## Upcoming:

### March Purim 3/20

Friday 11th -7:30 pm Shabbat Service at Montview Topic: Jonas Salk, Humanist of the Year

Sunday 13th -10 am Jewish Cultural School Session 6 and Adult Ed at Countryside

Friday 18th -5:30 pm Family Shabbat service, dinner and Purim Carnival at Countryside

### April Passover 4/19

Sunday 3rd -10 am Jewish Cultural School Session 7 and Adult Ed at Stratford at Flatirons.

We will conduct a model Seder for the residence of The Stratford.

Sunday 10th -10 am Executive Committee Meeting

Sunday 17th -4 pm Community Seder at Jefferson Unitarian Church

### May Yom HaShoah 5/1, Israel Independence Day 5/9 – Join with Federation in Denver

Sunday 1st -10am Jewish Cultural School & Adult Ed at Countryside, celebrate Israeli Independence Day

Fri-Sun 6-8th – 2nd Annual Beth Ami Retreat at YMCA of the Rockies

Fri-Sun 27-30th Limmud 2011 - Part conference. Part festival. All worthwhile.

Information at: [info@limmudcolorado.org](mailto:info@limmudcolorado.org) or 303.908.2785

### June

Sunday 12th -11 am Boulder Jewish Festival on Pearl St. Mall

## **Earth Guardians to present at JCS on Feb. 13<sup>th</sup>**

***"You give but little when you give of your possessions. It is when you give of yourself that you truly give."***

Earth Guardians, a project of GAYA-Global Alliance of Youth and Adults in action will present at JCS and Adult Ed. Earth Guardian Youth wants us to think to the future when we are making decisions that are going to affect generations to come.

**\*February 11th Shabbat, "Intermarriage - What's Love Got To Do With It?" Michelle Davis will speak at the Shabbat service on 2/11 about Intermarriage, just in time for Valentine's Day! How do the different branches of Judaism respond to intermarriage? Is it really the end of the Jewish people? Or is it a chance, an opportunity for future growth and change? Join us on Friday February 11th at Montview Presbyterian Church for this exciting program!**

"The earth is at a tipping point because of the decisions we and generations before us have made...together let's think to the future and make decisions on behalf of leaving a better world for all the children that will inherit it..."

Earth Guardians will present a three part presentation. First, there will be a short video about their history and local impact. Second Earth Guardian youth will present the Bring your own Bag PowerPoint. Third, they will share the vision of the IMattere Kids-vs.-global warming Campaign and show a video with Robert Redford.



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## Seminar in Sarasota



Over MLK weekend in January, Michelle and Calla flew to Sarasota to attend a seminar taught by Rabbi Adam Chalom, titled "Isaac and Ishmael: Jews and Muslims Then and Now". The weekend was great, the information was very interest-

ing and the community was warm and welcoming. Michelle's sister and wife flew down to babysit so she could attend the classes, and Calla had a wonderful time at the beach with her Aunts! It was the last class that Michelle needed for her program, now to finish the homework and graduate next spring! Thank you for your support in attending this program. Enjoy the picture of Calla enjoying the sun at the beach!

- Michelle Davis

## February Birthdays and Celebrations



|                    |    |
|--------------------|----|
| Happy birthday to: |    |
| Sam Budoff         | 2  |
| Zoe Goldman        | 10 |
| Dawn Anderson      | 12 |
| Mitch Goldman      | 17 |
| Ren Margolis       | 18 |
| Tom Margolis       | 18 |
| Natalie Tatar      | 19 |
| Suzy Wilson        | 21 |
| Sheila Malcolm     | 22 |
| Travis Miller      | 23 |

Happy anniversary to:  
James & Suzy Wilson 19



### Remember to buy your King Sooper's Cards!

Do you shop at King Soopers?

Maida Deborah is now selling \$100 King Soopers cards. If you shop at King Soopers, please see her to purchase your cards. Just bring a check made out to Beth Ami. It makes shopping easy, and every \$ you spend at King Soopers benefits Beth Ami. No extra cost to you!