

Maxwell Street Band to close Yiddish Festival, November 1

Debra Gombert and Carol Lessure, special to the WJN

The Maxwell Street Klezmer Band, established in 1983, is the Midwest's premiere Klezmer Band. They will bring the week-long Ann Arbor Yiddish Festival to a close during the first weekend in November. Audiences from throughout Washtenaw County will have a chance to hear the unique blend of the Maxwell Street Band on Saturday, November 1, at Eastern Michigan University and to learn from band members during a workshop on Sunday, November 2. The band will share its take on Klezmer with music that blends Eastern European cadences and African American jazz. Their songs intertwine everything from Russian dances, Chassidic drinking songs, and Hungarian gypsy sounds together with Dixieland; Jazz and Swing; and blues.

Performing throughout the United States and abroad, the Maxwell Street Band has recorded six CDs, five in the United States and one in Europe. They have appeared on movie and television soundtracks in the U.S. and Italy. Some of their tour highlights include perfor-

mances in The Barbican (London), Carnegie Hall (New York City), and nine overseas tours to Germany, Austria, England, the Netherlands, Norway and, most recently, Lithuania.

"We first heard this group on CDs that we bought because of many recommendations from connoisseurs of Klezmer music, and we were impressed and entertained. Then, last fall, we had the fabulous experience of seeing them in person, beginning with their parading into the hall while playing and their amazing enthusiasm. They are superb musicians, unbelievable talents and remarkable interpreters of a musical genre that we adore. The community will delight in their appearance," shared Henry and Harlene Appelman.

What is "Klezmer music"? A folk music originating from the Jews of Eastern Europe, Klezmer derived its name from a collusion of the Hebrew words "kley" (vessel) and "zemer" (melody) and dates back to the Middle Ages. Klezmer music was traditionally played by traveling musicians (*klezmerim*) for weddings and other celebrations. It is



The Maxwell Street Band Sextet

recognized today by its upbeat dances and its expressive melodies in which the instruments themselves can sound like they are laughing or weeping.

In the United States, Klezmer music became a melting-pot of the Jewish immigrant community. As they came to America's shores,

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Jews brought with them their musical styles that they quickly adapted to the instruments and music they found in their new home. The result became a fusion of sounds that is proudly continued by the Maxwell Street Band and other modern Klezmer musicians.

“From its quaint beginnings in the Jewish ghettos of Eastern Europe, Klezmer has driven Western music. Listen to Gershwin, to Leonard Cohen, to Coltrane, to Gogol Bordello; Klezmer is there. It was bluesy before blues, funky before funk, and rocking before rock,” said Martin Shichtman, director of Jewish Studies and professor of English at Eastern Michigan University. “No one does Klezmer better than Maxwell Street. This will be a party!”

Maxwell Street Band features singers and a seven-piece klezmer band. Their concert will not only feature music but it will also have a little bit of theater and education. Maxwell Street Band takes education very seriously and established a foundation to fund their work in Chicago area schools to bring their musical traditions to the next generation.

Musicians seeking more education can attend a free master class with Maxwell Street’s clarinetist, violinist and pianist on Sunday, November 2, from 10–11:30 a.m., at the Jewish Community of Greater Ann Arbor. All musicians are welcome, but participants should be able to read music and play their instrument at an intermediate or advanced level. The musicians will receive band arrangements and coaching to play in the klezmer style. By the end of the class, the musicians will play together as an orchestra.

Daniel Peisach, founder of local Klezmer/Contra band *Twas Brillig* and the *Mazel Tovs*, and frequent band member at AARC, is thrilled to have a chance to hear Maxwell Street Klezmer live. “I learned klezmer through lis-



Alex Koffman

tening to Maxwell Street’s recordings, and have been enjoying the recordings for many years.” And when he learned about the workshop he said, “Oh Wow! We will get to play with them? Oh, oh, be still my beating heart!”

The concert with Detroit’s *Kidz Klez* as the opening act will be held Saturday, November 1, at the EMU Student Center, main ballroom. The doors open at 6:45 p.m. with the concert and dance party from 7:30 p.m.–midnight. Tickets are \$18/adult and \$5/student and can be purchased at www.jewishannarbor.org. Children may attend free of charge.

The workshop will be held Sunday, November 2, from 10–11:30 a.m., at the JCC. To participate in this free workshop, register online at www.aarecon.org. Registered participants will be provided with MP3 recordings of music and other materials in advance that will be incorporated into the workshop.

The concert and workshop are made possible in part by a grant secured by the Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation (AARC) from the Jewish Community Impact Fund of the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor. The concert and workshop are also sponsored by the Jewish Studies Department of Eastern Michigan University and the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor and are part of the week-long Ann Arbor Yiddish Festival. ■



Passover

Being creative with our sederim

Deb Kraus, special to the WJN

What do an orange, a can of beans and a tomato have in common, and what do they have to do with a Passover seder?

As Reconstructionists, we have access to a wonderful Haggadah, called *A Night*

What do an orange, a can of beans and a tomato have in common, and what do they have to do with a Passover seder?

of *Questions*, so even our “traditional” sederim turn out to be thought provoking and tradition-challenging. But over the last five years, my friends and I have conducted three sederim, which by most definitions would be considered a bit “out there.”

The first was a Rock and Roll seder. Using the tried and true seder outline, I asked friends to contribute contemporary songs for each segment. So *Unchain my Heart* (Ray Charles) was part of Maggid, *Blowing in the Wind* (Bob Dylan) asked more than four questions, and *Cry me a River* (Ella Fitzgerald) led us through Karpas. The Dixie Chicks contributed *I'm Not Ready to Make Nice* for the bitter herbs, and of course, Three Dog Night's *Eli's Coming* introduced Elijah's entrance. Finally, Eric Clapton's *After Midnight* was our Hallel Song and Bob Marley's *Redemption Song* (“Won't you help us sing these songs of freedom?”) was our closing song. Because of Youtube, we had instantaneous access to any songs we thought of spontaneously.

The second seder occurred three years ago, right in the midst of Arab Spring. I asked participants to bring a story of freedom, which most people took as a historical assignment. Contributions varied, from the story of Hannibal's attack on Rome and the Stonewall uprising that launched the gay freedom movement, to more recent struggles in Honduras and, of course, in Egypt. Two friends talked about revolutions of the spirit, and one presented the work of controversial artist Ai Wei Wei, revolutionary because he keeps making art and advocating for social change despite multiple bouts in prison and under house arrest. In a similar “revolution” themed seder last year, I was introduced by a teenaged friend of mine to the music of Macklemore while his mother shared her personal story of talking back to the Ann Arbor public schools about having extra-curricular activities on Jewish holidays.



Our most recent alternative seder featured a seder plate with the orange, the can of beans and the tomato noted above.

Many progressive Jews know the orange story as originating from a feminist perspective; as the story goes, a traditional rabbi once said that “a woman has about as much legitimacy leading a seder as an orange does on a seder plate.” The tomato and some free-trade chocolate represented the struggles of workers both in this country and elsewhere; by adding chocolate and tomatoes to our seder plate, we recognize that these groups are the equivalent of modern day slaves. And the can of beans was there to challenge the notion of *kitniyot* (beans and rice) as not being kosher for Passover; by placing this can on our plate, we defied this divisive system that pits Ashkenazi Jews against Sephardic ones, and asserted and celebrated that we are all Jews. In addition, since beans are a non-exportable staple crop, if farmers were to plant beans (which can be eaten and enjoyed by local residents, rather than non-edible cash crops which are sold overseas), the world would have much less hunger along class lines.

There were also several letters (mostly L, G, B, T and Q) on our seder plate to express our solidarity with the fight for queer rights, and we placed some Orthodox Union labels on the plate as well, in order to call into question why some ordinary foods, such as mayonnaise, need to be deemed kosher for Passover.

Not for everyone? Perhaps not. But perhaps there is something here that will spark additions to someone else's seder. And by doing a “crazy” seder once in awhile, one can keep things fresh, and still give ample time for tradition. ■

Deb Kraus is a founding member and former lay leader of the Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation (AARC). She currently trains most of AARC youth for bar/bat mitzvah. To learn more about AARC and the “Open Seder Project” offerings during Passover, visit www.aarecon.org, email info@aarecon.org or call 445-1910.

Reconstructing the bar mitzvah and bat mitzvah traditions

Carol Lessure, special to the WJN

I recently read accounts of some of the first b'nai mitzvahs hosted by the Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Havurah, as it celebrates its 20th anniversary. In the articles, written by Emily Eisbruch, one can see the roots of some practices that still exist today within what is now called the Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation (AARC). She recounts how her own family and two others came together to rethink and reimagine the bat mitzvah service for daughters Dafna Eisbruch, Sarah Kurz, and Cari Merritt. It is an American Jewish tradition for young women that dates back 91 years to when Judith Kaplan, daughter of Reconstructionist founder Mordechai Kaplan read from the Torah.

The families began to share ideas and support each other in part because they were affiliated with a small lay-led *havurah* that had no rabbi, no building and even too few prayer books for its members. The task ahead seemed daunting, but to quote one of the parents, Keith Kurz: "The idea was not that we'd come up with the same plans for each, but that we'd meet and talk together, share ideas, and share our progress, so that we'd all get support in creating a special experience."

These Reconstructionist families were particularly close-knit because their daughters all attended the Hebrew Day School of Ann Arbor from kindergarten to fifth grade. The families recruited a young Torah tutor to work with the girls on a weekly basis. They also defined a community mitzvah project—creating a Torah cover that reflected their Torah portions, and that the AARC still uses today. The families created their own service booklets and came up with very unique and personalized services.

Today, the Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation members still create their own personalized services and groups of parents continue to support each other. Families build a sense of community as they attend monthly Learners Services developed by Aura Ahuvia, a founding Havurah member who has served as rabbinic intern for the congregation for the past four years. The Learners service brings together parents and middle school students with other adult members of the community explore the Jewish historical, geographical and political traditions reflected in the siddur to bring greater meaning to the Saturday morning service. Aura Ahuvia has acted as both rabbinic and song leader at dozens of AARC b'nai mitzvahs.

Most AARC members work with another long time Havurah member Deb Kraus as Torah tutor, and she enjoys helping young people in Reconstructionist Congregation truly wrestle with the text. Questions and commentary that make the ancient texts relevant are encouraged. A young woman took issue with the fact that Lot's wife had no name,

and a young man questioned the whole basis of Torah as divine inspiration with a very well thought out argument that it was a way the ancients set down their laws and made them stick. Both discussions were made in the spirit, even mandate of the congregation to question and grapple with Jewish teachings.

The congregation has made the Jewish



Leila and Harry Bagenstos, February 2013

Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor its permanent home and transforms its lounge area into a sanctuary on a regular basis. AARC also uses the JCC for its Sunday religious school, festival celebrations and a low-key celebratory meal and celebration following a bar or bat mitzvah. The group has made simplicity a guiding principle of its bar and bat mitzvahs, so it's not all about the party.

After a decade of collecting additional beautiful hand-crafted objects to adore the temporary Reconstructionist sanctuary in the JCC lounge, the congregation encourages young people to engage in mitzvah projects in the community, often connected to their *parsha* or havtorah readings. A recent bat mitzvah worked as a tutor at Peace Neighborhood while another wrote for an online community blog to raise awareness about the dangers of fracking to extract natural gas.

Today, the congregation also has plenty of Reconstructionist *siddurim* (prayer books) *Kol Haneshamah* for its members and guests for a bar or bat mitzvah. Family members still create their own service booklet, and an archive of past booklets has been created to inspire the next generation to approach this milestone with creativity and thoughtfulness so that it can continue to make their bar and bat mitzvah experiences spiritually fulfilling.

The Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation hosts services and programs throughout the year. Over the summer there will be three Fourth Friday Kabbalat Shabbat services and potlucks at the JCC: June 26, July 28, and August 23, starting at 6:15 p.m. Kids' pizza starts at 6 p.m. RSVPs are greatly appreciated for kids' pizza and/or childcare. Newcomers are welcome. The group will also host an end of summer BBQ on Sunday, August 25, at Bandemer Park, 4–9 p.m. To learn more about the Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation, visit www.aarecon.org or email info@aarecon.org or call 445-1910. ■

Thanksgiving: A Jewish reconstruction

Carol Lessure, special to the WJN

As we sit down to the bountiful Thanksgiving, there are many ways to elevate this traditional celebration beyond the immediate, filling communal meal. Ritualwell.org, an online project of Kolot: The Center for Jewish Women's and Gender Studies of Reconstructionist Rab-

Kol Haneshamah Daily Prayerbook as appropriate to the holiday. If someone is looking for a modern twist, Ritualwell offers Psalms such as *Thanksgiving Day: A Modern Psalm* by Debbie Perlman, z"l.

Kolot also directs readers to Emma Lazarus, an American Jew whose stirring

poem adorns the Statue of Liberty.

Her writings, poem or personal immigrant story could be shared around the Thanksgiving table and prompt an intergenerational conversation about one's own family journey to resettle in the United States. Ritualwell contributors Doris Dyen and Reena Sigmund Friedman encourage intergenerational dialogue at Thanksgiving and offer a set of questions to spark and facilitate conversations across the generations gathered



PHOTO CREDIT: JORDAN CASSWAY

Ushpizot, from the Ritualwell website

binic College, offers a number of ways to blend Jewish traditions and innovations to bring another dimension into this quintessential American holiday.

Kolot notes that many communities use Thanksgiving as a time for "for multi-faith services of prayer and thanksgiving." The members of Ritualwell offer alternatives and adaptations to the *Birkat Hamazon* as well as Psalm 100 that praises the abundant one and Psalm 128 "Song of the Ascents" from the

around the Thanksgiving table. They suggest questions such as: "If you could talk to a former self, which one would you choose? What would you say to that former self?" or "When you were young, what was the central issue for you? How is that different from what is central for you now?" ■

To explore other rituals or suggest ones of your own, visit <http://www.ritualwell.org>.

Congregations

Reconstructionist services blend traditional and contemporary music

Karin Ahbel-Rappe, special to the WJN

Music has always had a special place in Reconstructionist Judaism. Mordecai Kaplan, the founder of Reconstructionism, suggested that tradition have a vote, but not a veto. The congregation of the Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Havurah (AARH) has its own unique take on that tradition under the leadership of its rabbinical intern, Aura Ahuvia. Music enriches all of the Havurah's services—Kabbalat Shabbat, Torah, Learner's Service, High Holiday services, B'nai Mitzvot. And each week, the AARH religious school includes a rousing period of Shirah.

Ahuvia, known as a gifted guitarist and vocalist, places emphasis on facilitating musical experiences that the congregation creates and shares together. "Participation is my guiding light," she says. Ahuvia chooses melodies that are easy to learn, easy to sing, and that sponsor spontaneous harmonizing.

AARH services use a flexible blend of traditional and more contemporary melodies. Ahuvia weaves in prayers sung to the nusach, the traditional melodies that are specific to



Aura Ahuvia playing guitar

each prayer and holiday. "As I teach my congregation, chanting within nusach is like riffing on jazz. Once you have the sense of the melodic ideas fixed in your mind, there are no wrong notes", she suggests. On the contemporary side, songs of Debbie Freidman are favorites. An interesting hybrid of the old and the new starts with the 18th century form of niggun. Niggun is a form of prayer with origins in 18th century Hassid that uses repetitive sounds—such as "bim-bim-bam"—instead of words. Ahuvia uses niggunim when introducing new melodies to the congregation before lyrics are added.

Most importantly, Ahuvia emphasized, "All the music is in the service of expressing the spiritual meaning of prayer."

AARH offers musical Kabbalat Shabbat services the fourth Friday of every month, and Torah services the second Saturday. These services take place at the Jewish Community Center and are open to all community members. Check the website to confirm the date, time, and schedule of AARH services at www.aarecon.org. ■

American Jewry

The 90th anniversary of the bat mitzvah, a Reconstructionist innovation

Carol Lessure, special to the WJN

It was 90 years ago that an American Jewish tradition was born, the bat mitzvah. What began as a radical act by Judith Kaplan and her father, Rabbi Mordecai M. Kaplan, would gradually become an expected rite of teenage passage for many American Jewish females. Rabbi Kaplan, the founder of the Reconstructionist movement, often sought to take cues from Jewish history and tradition but modernize them to be relevant to the current population of Jews.

On March 18, 1922, Judith stepped to the *bimah* of her father's synagogue and recited the opening blessing, read a portion of the Torah *sidra* in Hebrew and English and concluded with the closing blessing. "That was enough to shock a lot of people," she later recalled, "including my own grandparents and aunts and uncles." Kaplan reflected upon her radical act years later, noting that: "No thunder sounded. No lightning struck."

Rather, Judith Kaplan and her father, founder of Reconstructionist Judaism, set the model for what has now become a widespread American Jewish practice performed weekly in Reconstructionist, Reform and Conservative congregations across the United States. Many modern Orthodox girls will also mark the day by speaking to the women of their congregation about the Torah portion of the week.

The bat mitzvah gave female congregants more equal standing with their male coun-

terparts. Women who engaged in this rite of passage would go on to further study and become Jewish educators both at home and in the broader community. Within two generations, some of the first women to partake in a bat mitzvah have gone on to be Jewish leaders in philanthropy (Judith Ginsberg of the Nash Family Foundation), education (Rabbi Naamah Kelman of Hebrew Union College) and social action (Ruth Messinger of the American Jewish World Service).

Judith Kaplan went on to forge a career as a Jewish musical educator. She taught at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, founded by her husband Ira Eisenstein. She and Eisenstein co-wrote and published seven Jewish cantatas. She wrote and published a widely used songbook for children, *Gateway to Jewish Song*. Her other published works

include *Festival Songs* and *Heritage of Music: The Music of the Jewish People*.

Reconstructionists have a long history as innovators, experimenters and spiritual seekers. The small movement connects with efforts by other Jewish denominations and movements to evolve Jewish ritual and observance so that is has greater meaning and relevance to contemporary Jews.

PHOTO COURTESY OF ARCHIVES, RECONSTRUCTIONIST RABBINICAL COLLEGE



Judith Kaplan Eisenstein at her second bat mitzvah on the 70th Anniversary of her first one, 1992.

Kraus, "from *l'asok b'divrei Torah* (occupying ourselves and even wrestling with Torah), to learning egalitarian and inclusive prayers, to chanting the Haftorah in English (because

prophets are best understood in the language of the people) to finding mitzvah projects that go beyond the basic requirements of *g'milut chasadim* (acts of loving-kindness) into things that truly matter to them."

This year, several projects have been launched to commemorate the anniversary of the bat mitzvah and examine what its success says about the evolution of modern Jewish practice.

The National Museum of American Jewish History launched an exhibit based on the interviews of 150 pioneering women about their bat mitzvah experiences: <http://bat-mitzvahcomesofage.com>.

Moving Traditions collected many bat mitzvah first stories over the past five years and have been looking for clues on how the spread of the bat mitzvah ceremony has contributed to the changes of ritual and its innovation contributed to American Jewish life. See movingtraditions.org and the article "You Didn't Have a Bat Mitzvah?" by Sally Gottesman in Contact, the The Steinhardt Foundation for Jewish Life. ■

Note: This article drew content from these resources as well as Chapter 77, "The First American Bat Mitzvah," from Chapters of American Jewish History from the American Jewish Historical Society and "Judith Kaplan Makes History" from the Jewish Reconstructionist Federation website.

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Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Havurah's Simchat Torah
Brayan Zivan studies the Torah, part of the Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Havurah's Simchat Torah celebration, which took place at its annual retreat. Havurah member Debbie Field looks on, as she helps hold up the scroll.

Community

Jewish/Muslim dinner promotes understanding and communication

Emily Eisbruch, staff writer

Have you ever tasted candied figs? Ever pondered how the Koran depicts the story of Moses? Ever had a chance to talk with an Imam and his wife? I hadn't done any of these, until in October I was invited to participate in a Jewish/Muslim dinner at the home of Aaron and Aura Ahuvia.

According to Aaron Ahuvia, a founder of and leader in the Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Havurah, "The dinner was chance to break the Ramadan fast for the Muslim participants and a chance to celebrate Shabbat for the Jewish participants. The ultimate goal was to share traditions, get to know each other better, and increase understanding."



The kids table was a fun place to be

Rituals observed

After informal greetings and introductions, the evening began with the Moslem end-of-fasting prayers and the breaking of the day's Ramadan fast with a drink of water and a taste of dried fruit. The Muslims then stepped outside for the Muslim sunset prayers. When the Muslims finished those prayers, the group came back together, and the Jewish participants lit the Shabbat candles, chanted the *Kiddish* over grape juice so all could participate if they wished, and recit-

ed the *HaMotzi* prayer over the Challah. For many of the Muslims this was their first taste of fresh baked challah, and by all accounts it was well received.

Dinner discussion

Dinner included kosher chicken, potatoes, kabobs, and salad, with dessert featuring many middle eastern treats, such as the candied figs, baklavah, and sesame cookies, (as well as refreshing, though not Middle Eastern, strawberry sorbet). I was seated between two friendly and interesting people: seated on my right was Wayne State sophomore Nayeem Amin. On my left was Eastern Michigan University political science master's degree student and mother of two, Heather Jackson. Her husband, Dr. Sherman Jackson, University of Michigan professor of Arabic and Islamic Studies, was also a participant.

Conversation at our part of the table ranged from chatting about raising kids, social norms at various schools, and the Muslim social and cultural scene in the Detroit suburbs (Amin grew up in West Bloomfield and Bloomfield Hills and attended Andover High School). Amin also filled us in on his studies at Wayne State, where he is taking pre-med and Near Eastern studies courses.

Planning the evening

Hosts Aaron and Aura Ahuva had invited 12 members of the Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Havurah to participate in the evening along with 12 members of the Muslim community. On the Muslim side, the point person was Mr. Dawud Walid, executive director of the Michigan chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations and associate Imam at Masjid Wali Muhammad Mosque in Detroit.

According to Walid, "I had been involved in some events with the Ann Arbor Recon-



The adult table at the Jewish/Muslim dinner

structionist Havurah in 2006. We had a discussion about the story of Abraham and his son in the Quran and the Torah, and then some members of our community were invited to a break-the-fast together with the Havurah at Yom Kippur. I was eager to continue the connection and dialog. We came up with the concept for this dinner, and I reached out to people I thought would be interested. We found a high level of interest in participating."

Once the date and attendees were set, a subcommittee was formed, consisting of two Jewish and two Muslim participants, to focus on structuring the evening and identifying a topic for the after dinner discussion.

After dinner program

There was a consensus that the hosts and planning committee did a great job creating a worthwhile evening in which polite awkwardness gave way to genuine communication. The after dinner program involved a discussion comparing the story of the early life of Moses in the Koran and the Torah. All adult participants were divided into five subgroups, and each group was directed to read

translated portions of the two Moses stories aloud and then talk about the similarities and differences we discovered. We were specifically asked to look at the role of mercy and compassion in both stories.

Afterwards, the entire group reconvened around the Ahuvia's dinner table (which was supplemented by the cherry wood "Megiddo" peace table on loan from Alan and Odile Haber, two of the evening's participants). As each smaller group reported on the highlights of their discussion, it was clear that all had enjoyed a fruitful discussion about the story of Moses and the many fascinating themes in the two accounts of Moses's early life.

In addition to the learning, sharing and enjoying that took place among the adults, another highlight of the evening was observing the seven kids who were present, who all seemed to get along and enjoy themselves. According to Isaac Ahuvia, who, at 13, was charged with being the kids' activity supervisor, "All the kids had a good time playing with one game where we'd build a structure and then roll a marble down it. It was fun. I met some new people." ■

JEWISH NEWS

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Retreating to the sukkah of the world

Marcy Epstein and Evelyn Neuhaus, special to the WJN

The Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Havurah will host its seventh annual Sukkot retreat September 28-29, at Camp Talahi, 25 minutes from Ann Arbor. This year's theme is "Guests in the World," encompassing the idea that we are walking the earth as revered guests and gracious hosts, aware and blessed in both our transience and stewardship of creation. Guests from other congregations in Ann Arbor, Lansing, greater Detroit, and northern Michigan are invited to attend.

New this year will be two options for celebration: a day-long retreat with the additional option for a Shabbat overnight. For Friday, there will be the opportunity for Havurah members to mix more informally in prayer,

sukkah building, supper, and song. Overnight bunk accommodations will be available for individuals and families. Saturday begins the formal retreat, with early morning Torah Yoga and two options for worship, a Sabbath in the sukkah and a walk-meditation, led by the Havurah's JuBu group.

There will be several workshops offered throughout the afternoon, including the exploration of prayer, film screening and discussion, nature hike, folk dancing to live Klezmer music, and a lively roundtable on the concept of "shelter" in contemporary Israel. Local cook and gardener Chava Israel will conduct a workshop on Jewish cooking of Calcutta, including some history and recipes from the

Iraqi-Jewish community that settled there centuries ago. Israel will prepare a Judeo-Indian feast for dinner.

Allison Stupka will coordinate child care for the event. Kids will learn about the four species and holiday practices, and explore the ethics and customs of being a good guest. Their afternoons will include cookie baking with Jen Cohen, Israeli soccer, Steal the Bagel, sukkah decorating and a nature art class. ■

For more information or to register, contact Allison Stupka at 913-9705 or email info@aaarecon.org. The brochure, with directions and more, will also be posted on website at www.aaarecon.org
