

BELIEFS Values

Rabbi to share Jewish humor on bookstore tour

Rabbi Arnold Sleutelberg is no ordinary stand-up comic. And when he performs at three Oakland County bookstores in June, his one-hour look at "Jewish Humor through the Ages" will bring more than just laughs.

"I'll be teaching the type of humor that each generation of Jews told to one another," explained Sleutelberg. "Literally, from the Biblical Sarah to Jerry Seinfeld." Sleutelberg will appear from 7-8 p.m. at the Barnes & Noble Bookstores at 6800 Orchard Lake Road, West Bloomfield on Monday, June 10 at 2800 S. Rochester Road, Rochester Hills, and on Tuesday, June 18. He'll also appear at 6575 Telegraph Road, Bloomfield Hills, on Thursday, June 27.

The series of performances by Sleutelberg are among prospective membership opportunities being hosted by Troy-based Congregation Shir Tikvah. A prospective members weekend will begin on Friday, June 14, at Northminster Presbyterian Church in Troy, where most of the congregation's services are held.

"It's amazing how many Jews there are in the Detroit area that don't know we exist," said Sleutelberg, the only rabbi to serve Shir Tikvah. "Some in the community call us the best-kept secret in the metro area."

We don't want to be a secret anymore. And we're finding that anyone who checks us out for membership usually joins us."

Since coming together as a congregation 13 years ago, members of Shir Tikvah have met at more than a dozen area facilities for services, programs and activities. But the days of wandering will come to an end with the construction of the congregation's first spiritual home, scheduled to begin sometime this fall.

"There are a lot of people in the metro area who would love to be a part of the process of putting up the building," said Sleutelberg, when discussing the ongoing membership drive. "It's important for us to know before we undertake the final burden of the building that we can afford it."

The proposed facility will be built in two phases on a five-acre tract on the southeast corner of Wattles and Northfield Parkway. Phase I will include offices, kitchen facilities and classrooms opening into an all-purpose room that will double as the con-

gregation's first sanctuary. The 9,500-square-foot complex is expected to cost \$1.2 million. Phase II - to be added within 10 years - will house a permanent sanctuary.

The prospective members weekend begins at 7:45 p.m. on Friday, June 14, at Northminster Presbyterian Church, 3633 W. Big Beaver.

On Saturday, congregants and guests will gather around a bonfire at 8:16 p.m. at the northwest corner of Troy's Boulton Park, which abuts the congregation's property.

After munching on s'mores, wandering the property and singing songs, the group will end the Sabbath with a spiritual service called the "Havdallah."

"We've chosen to have the service on our land so members can have a direct connection to what will become holy ground for us," said Sleutelberg.

As the smallest Reform congregation in the Detroit area with 230 households, Shir Tikvah offers an intimate spiritual experience among a caring and friendly community.

When Patti Moed and her family

moved from New York to Birmingham last year, one of their top priorities was to join a religious community.

"We came from a big metropolitan area where the sense of Jewishness was so pervasive," said Moed, "who made her home in Manhattan. Here, it's not so pervasive. You have to find it."

It wasn't long after visiting Cong. Shir Tikvah that the Moeds decided to make their spiritual home among its members. "This congregation is very welcoming to families from non-traditional backgrounds," said Moed, who was not raised Jewish. "They're a very warm group of people. Once you meet them, it's hard not to like them."

Congregants are hoping for the completion of Phase I of their facility in time for the Jewish High Holidays of Rosh Hoshannah and Yom Kippur in September of 1997.

"We're entering a very exciting time in the history of our congregation," added Sleutelberg. "Our founders have looked forward to our having a building for 13 years now, and their dream is finally coming to fruition. It's an amazing feeling."

For more information on Shir Tikvah's prospective membership events, call JuAnn Levy at (810) 619-9669.



Jewish humorist: Rabbi Arnold Sleutelberg will perform at three Oakland County bookstores in June.

COMMUNITY MESSENGER

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munity Church, Presbyterian, 5171 Commerce Road, Orchard Lake. This family of two sisters and their husbands plays 18 different instruments, both antique and contemporary. A free-will offering will be taken to support their full-time ministry. A reception will follow the concert. Call (810) 682-1718.

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be presented from 10 a.m. to noon on Saturday, June 8 in Room 308 of the J building at Oakland Community College's Orchard Ridge Campus, 27055 Orchard Lake Road, just south of I-696 in Farmington Hills. Conducted by Diane Margolis-Baum, the women's seminar will address coping skills, management of difficult behaviors and situations, support and educational resources and an overview of normal vs. abnormal aging. The program is open to the public. For more information, call (810) 471-7602.

■ ELECT OFFICERS Cong. B'nai Moshe, 6800 Drake Rd., West Bloomfield, held its annual meeting at the synagogue on June 5 to elect congregational officers and board of directors for the coming year. Nominated to serve as officers of the congregation are: Steven T. Rabinovitz, president; Jay Welford, Joel Ungar and Harold Greenspan, vice-presidents; Larry Glanz, treasurer; Susan Friedman, recording secretary; and Marc Sussman, corresponding secretary.

Nominated to serve a three-year term on the board of directors are: Dennis Deutch, Steve Fine, Kerry Greenhut, David Gunsberg, Renee Gunsberg, Nancy Kaplan and Donald Sachs. Nominated for board terms ending in 1998 are Dave Freedman and Ken Kirschenbaum. Nominated for a one-year board term is Ruthie Levy Kahn. The annual meeting will also include a report on plans for construction of a new education wing. For information, call synagogue office at (810) 788-0600.

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