



BURT LITMAN PHOTO

CENTRAL OREGON JEWISH CEMETERY—From left, Jerome Daniel of Deschutes Memorial Garden; Alice Huskey and Rabbi Jay Shupack of the Jewish Community of Central Oregon; and Rabbi Glenn Ettman, Harriet Richard and Ralph Uri of Temple Beth Tikvah stand on the grounds consecrated as the first Jewish cemetery for central Oregon.

Central Oregon's Jews consecrate cemetery

BY HARRIET RICHARD

Temple Beth Tikvah

On a beautiful Sept. 18., Temple Beth Tikvah and Shalom Bayit Synagogue consecrated Gan Shalom, Garden of Peace, the first Jewish cemetery for all of Central Oregon. From North to Madras, South to Chemult, East to Burns, and West to Black Butte, Jews now have consecrated ground for burial.

The cemetery is located at Deschutes Memorial Chapel and Gardens on North Highway 97 in Bend. Lauren Olander played the flute accompanied by violinist Jo Booser. Rabbi Jay Shupack chanted an ancient melody that floated across the empty ground containing 104 burial plots. Rabbi Glenn Ettman led the service. Congress-

man Jason Conger arrived to become part of the group of 30 people that at the end of the short service chanted Kaddish for those souls yet to be placed in the ground.

The process began when a synagogue member emailed me with the words, "There is no place in Bend for mother to be buried!" This shocking sentence, led me to contact Jerome Daniels, owner of Deschutes Memorial Chapel and Gardens, that very day. After explaining to him that the Jews of Central Oregon had no place to bury their dead, he and his board agreed to give us eight plots. I came back to him stating, "That's not what I had in mind." As we negotiated, Jerome began to realize the depth of the problem and we agreed on 50 plots. Then after a long weekend, he called me. He had been looking at census numbers and decided that there were many more Jews in Central Oregon than we originally thought and thus raised the number of plots to 104.

The cemetery is open to anyone with Jewish ancestry living in Central Oregon. As families purchase their plots, a committee made up of members of Temple Beth Tikvah and Shalom Bayit Synagogue/Jewish Community of Central Oregon determines the eligibility for Jewish burial; the guidelines are anticipated to be broad and inclusive. A surcharge from each plot purchased is collected and used for burial of the indigent. This new cemetery is being created because the Jewish section of the Pilot Butte Cemetery in Bend is at capacity.

At the consecration, Daniels said, "My heart is open to your presence. We will strive to make this hallowed ground special for the entire Jewish community."

Deschutes Memorial Gardens is multifaceted, catering to the needs of the entire community with nine separate Gardens, each serving a specific group by faith or affiliation.

"A specific cemetery for the Jewish community is a sign of the permanence, continuity and strength in the area," declared Rabbi Glenn Ettman of Temple Beth Tikvah. "By consecrating this land, all members of the Jewish community no matter what level of observance or affiliation, will have a little place of property to call our own forever."

As we go into the High Holidays let us realize with great joy the process that brought us our own Jewish cemetery in Central Oregon—a place of peace and closure and love. I hope some of you will take the time to drive north on 97 past the mailboxes on the right and turn into Deschutes Memorial Gardens. Ask to see our consecrated ground. It will make you feel peaceful and still.

You're Invited!

a for two agencies

day, November 6, 2011
2:00 - 3:30 pm

el, 614 SW 11th Avenue, Portland

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