



OUR TEMPLE

April 2008

Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom

Vol. 44, No. 8

Notes from the president

Class brings back Hebrew School memories

By Herb Karasin
President

My wife, Chip, and I just completed the Rabbi's mini course on Hebrew, "Aleph Isn't Tough." As you may know, the course is given in five sessions, each two hours long. For me the course was a much needed refresher of what I learned, or almost learned, many years ago. Chip had

absolutely no background in Hebrew; and so the course was all new for her. It was fun for me to have a competitive advantage in something; not that I felt competitive. Still that was fun. This brief course contained many clear explanations of rules that brought sense to what had previously seemed to be a long list of abstract memorization. I was partly attracted to the course

because of its abbreviated nature. I simply could not believe that virtually all of the necessary basics to read Hebrew could be condensed into five relatively short lessons. This seemed totally impossible when I cast my mind back to the first time I tried to learn Hebrew as a child.

At that time and looking back over the
Continued on Page 3

From the Rabbi's study

Don't lose sight of Passover's meaning

I have a cartoon, "For Better or Worse," up on my refrigerator. It's about a daughter who interrupts her mother's daily routine to stop and look at a sunbeam coming through the window. She describes all the things that she sees in the sunbeam: a slide, the side of a snowy mountain, and the light from a movie projector. Then she looks up at her mother and says: "You can see

**Rabbi Brian
Michelson**

neat things in a sunbeam can't you, Mom!" Mom agrees. In the next frame we see the mother thinking to herself: "And a few minutes ago all I saw was dust." I saw this cartoon and it reminded me that sometimes it takes someone, or something, else to show us of the wonder or beauty of some things.

In our Passover story, we read about four children: the wise, the wicked, the simple, and

the one who does not even know how to ask. Traditionally, Jews understand the children to be presented in descending order — from the best to the worst. However, this year I would like to propose an alternate reading.

The wise child asks: "What is the meaning of the testimonies, statutes, and judgments which the Eternal our God has commanded us?" The response to this question is to instruct the child in all the complexities of the laws concerning Passover. The wise child reminds me of myself sometimes. I can get so involved with all the little facts and intricacies that I sometimes lose sight of whole.

The third child — the simple one — has always been misinterpreted. The simple child asks a simple question: "What is this?" I can just see this child sitting there, a wondrous look on his face, as he observes all the

rituals and happenings around him. His mind races as he tries to comprehend all the activity of the Seder. His question is honest and true. "What is this?" The question demands an answer that is clear and well thought out.

The question of the simple child can be that bridge back to the greater reality. "What is this?" This question forces us to examine the whole. In other words the child asks "Why?" Maybe we need the help of the simple child to remind us of why we celebrate Passover. The important things are not how many matzah balls to make, or how light or heavy they turned out, or even the understanding of why we recline when we eat, rather the importance is in understanding the whole.

Like the mother in the cartoon, sometimes we get so caught up that we fail to see the beauty or the purpose of things around us. Maybe we this year with the help of the innocent child, we will be able to see all there is besides dust.

Holly, the girls, and I wish you a very happy and healthy Passover.

April Highlights

- Friday, April 4** — Shabbat service, 6 p.m.
- Saturday, April 5** — Aaron Ure Bar Mitzvah, 10:30 a.m.
- Friday, April 11** — 2nd grade Shabbat, 6 p.m.
- Sunday, April 13** — Men's Club, 9:30 a.m.
- Saturday, April 19** — First night of Passover
- Sunday, April 20** — Second night Seder at Temple, 6 p.m.
- Saturday, April 26** — Chocolate Seder, 4:30 p.m.

**All services at 7:45 p.m. unless otherwise noted
Babysitting available for 7:45 Shabbat services.**

*Bulletin sponsored by
Rosalie Yashek
in memory of
Richard Yashek
and by
Harriet Baskin
in memory of her parents,
Bessie & Sam Miller*

Religious School News**Storyteller to help share joy of Passover****By Judy Synnamon***Religious School administrator*

The celebration of Passover Seders will be held this year on April 19 and April 20. They recreate the Israelite experience for us in our own time. We read about Egyptian bondage, the harshness of slavery and the flight into freedom that our ancestors experienced so long ago. It is a mitzvah to participate in a Passover Seder, to eat matzah and no leavened products during the seven days of Passover and to participate in tzedakah for Passover.

We will be celebrating Passover in the Religious School with a storyteller

this year. Gerald Fierst (www.Gerald-Fierst.com) will be joining our students, and other students from Keshet Zion and Shomrei Habrith at a storytelling session on Sunday, April 13, as part of our Religious School session.

Thank you to the families who have been contributing to our library cart. Our library is growing! Thanks to Michelle Mart for coordinating this effort.

Did you know that Israel is turning 60 this year? Our Berks County community will be joining many other communities to help in the celebration in Philadelphia on May 18. A Family /Class Trip is sched-

uled for this day to go into Philadelphia to attend the Birthday Event. There will be buses provided (free of charge by the Jewish Federation) to drive everyone to Philadelphia. Details will follow. We need an accurate count of people so enough buses are provided.

Important Dates to Remember:

Friday, April 11: Second Grade will be hosting Shabbat Services at 6pm Followed by Family Night Dinner)

Sunday, April 20: No School, Passover

Tuesday, April 22: No School, Passover

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE JCC

Here's what's happening at the JCC. If interested, please call 610 921-0624 or e-mail jfrjaynek@comcast.net

Thursday, April 3, 8 p.m. — 92nd St "Y" satellite broadcast. Ellen Goodman with Lynn Sherr: "What Do You Do After You've Done It All?" How to find fulfillment when the kids are grown.

Sunday, April 6, 4:30 p.m. — Matzah Ball Iron Chef/Game Night: Who makes the best Matzah balls in Berks County? Watch, then ENJOY A DELI DINNER with Matzah Ball Soup.
Members — Adults \$10.50; kids 13& under \$6.50 Non members Adults \$12.50; kids \$8

Thursday, April 17 — "Hear O Israel Concert" at the Kimmel Center in Philadelphia. \$118. Bus leaves JCC at 5:30 p.m.; Boscov's East at 5:45

Sunday, May 18 — Celebrate Israel's 60th in Philadelphia. Free bus leaves RCOS at 9 a.m.; JCC at 9:15; Boscov's East at 9:30. Bus will leave Philadelphia at 3 p.m. Please call JCC to register for the bus

Special thanks . . .

to Ellen Azrael for sponsoring the challahs in April

Save the date

*Sisterhood Shabbat, Friday, May 9
Watch for details!*

ABOUT OUR NEWSLETTER

Editor: Mark Nemirow

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To get an item in the bulletin, contact Mark at Marknem@aol.com or 610-370-2533, or contact the Temple office.

Deadline for April bulletin: April 5

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PRESIDENT

Continued from Page 1

years, those classes seemed endless. I remember those hours staring at my watch and waiting for the time that the class would end. I would look out the window as the daylight would fade and darkness would set in. This was important because we could play outside with our friends only during the daylight hours. So rather than being outside with my friends, whom I well knew were out there playing, during those precious daylight hours, I was inside attempting to learn Hebrew, with limited success. Considering where my mind was, it is surprising I learned anything.

I didn't finish the regular classes. My family moved to a different neighborhood in Philadelphia when I was 11 years old. We joined a new synagogue there. But somehow, the idea of enrolling in Hebrew school in the new synagogue was overlooked. And certainly I didn't bring it up. A couple of years later as I approached the magical age of 13, I had to take a crash course to prepare for my Bar Mitzvah. I actually enjoyed those classes.

These were taught by one of the elder's of the congregation, Mr. Greenbaum. He seemed to enjoy teaching as well as the interaction with these young boys — I don't remember girls in the classes. Mr. Greenbaum was endlessly patient with us. He had a twinkle that I still remember along with a very firm handshake. All of us preadolescent boys could not understand how this 'old' man could have such a strong handshake. None of us could come close to matching it.

As I recall it, preparing for my Bar Mitzvah largely involved memorizing every section, every word I would have to say. Therefore, my performance during my Bar Mitzvah consisted mainly in 'replaying' the internal record in my head rather than actually reading anything. Now I wonder how common my experience was. I do know that at any time since, if I attempted to read anything in Hebrew that I was unfamiliar with, it would not sound pretty. I certainly would not want to have a room full of parents, aunts and uncles straining to hear every word I uttered. Thinking back

to the day of my Bar Mitzvah, I remember the fear beforehand that I would mess up big time. (Apparently I didn't.) All my relatives told me I was the best that they had heard. I now know this is the standard statement to the boy/girl, but at the time I wanted to believe it was honestly meant.

I remember the fear and trepidation that I felt in the days leading up to my Bar Mitzvah and the tremendous feeling of relief that set in immediately after the service ended that day. I now imagine that these strong emotions are felt by most Bar and Bat Mitzvah kids. Maybe that part is necessary in this "rite of passage." At any rate, all of that was a long time ago. Now, I will fast forward back to the Rabbi's course.

This time I was more focused on the lessons. Certainly I was not looking out the window, longing to go out and play and staring at my watch. Rather I remained interested in the lessons and actually learned much that I hadn't the first time around. Certainly that is a good thing, but, somehow, it would be fun to be thinking about going out to play again.



RCOS volunteers cook at Opportunity House

The RCOS cooking group (an extension of the Temple's Social Action Committee) has been busy preparing and dishing out delicious home-cooked meals at Opportunity House. Special thanks to David Walker (and his family!) for his dedication, leadership and amazing organizational skills. RCOS has provided meals for the past few years to people who are living in The Shelter at Opportunity House. Every other month, usually on the second Sunday, a group of five to eight Temple members shows up to prepare and serve lunch to anywhere from 60 to 85 members of the community who are homeless. Our Temple members do the shopping and some have even prepared dishes in advance that can be simply warmed up and served on the day they visit The Shelter.

It takes more than the handful of folks in the picture... Additional thanks go to Jake and Ellen Azrael; Harriett Baskin; Mimi, Tom and Ian Gavigan; Jeff Gernsheimer; Susan Gelb; Chip and Herb Karasin; Judith Kraines; Steven, Fran, Nick and Noah Levine; Sylvia Schiff; Catherine Schultz; Susan Sellgren; Rick and Mindy Small; Claudia Strauss; Bruce & Janine Ure and their kids.

These are a few of the RCOS members who helped prepare and serve a meal at Opportunity House the weekend of Sunday, March 9. From left, Jack Gernsheimer, David Walker, Mark Robinson, Laura Koenen, Karen Robinson and Sharon Scullin.

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

The following people made donations in memory of Rabbi Michelson's grandmother, Mildred Platt

The Haas Family
Carol & Stu Cohn
Norma & Marty Beckerman

In memory of Reba Locke
Barbara & Michael Perilstein

In gratitude for the meals delivered by the Temple
Iris and Leon Lonker

In honor of the Temple's recent Belin Outreach Award
Don Miller

In memory of Viola Schneider
Nancy Knoblauch

In memory of Joe Schlanger
Dorothy Schlanger

In memory of Larry Schlanger
Dorothy & Phyllis Schlanger
Phyllis Schlanger

In memory of William A. Miller
Saul Miller

In memory of James Mendelsohn
Susan Cherner & Martin Ranft

Building Fund

In memory of Mildred Platt
Barbara Silverberg
George & Sue Viener

For the Yahrzeit of Evelyn Levinger & Renee Zeisel
Norma & Marty Beckerman

In memory of Jimmy Mendelsohn

Gene & Shirley Friedman
Sue & Herb Wachs
Helen Rappoport
Conrad & Ruth Heisman
Sue & George Viener
Alan & Loretta Green

For Joe Goldstein's continued recovery
Barbara Nazimov

In memory of Anita Reuben, Jimmy Mendelsohn & Ruth Harrison
Stu & Carol Cohn

Student Cantor Program

In honor of Mike Pardo's birthday
Vivian Moscovitz

Religious School Fund

In memory of our beloved cousin, Jimmy Mendelsohn
Zelda & Bill Cherner

In memory of Jimmy Mendelsohn
Ethel & Larry Merson
Norma & Marty Beckerman

Music Fund

In honor of Neil Hoffman's semi-retirement
Barbara Silverberg

In memory of Jimmy Mendelsohn
Phyllis Schlanger

Library Fund

In memory of Jimmy Mendelsohn
Susan Schlanger
Edith Blanck

Holocaust Garden

In memory of Jimmy Mendelsohn
Bob & Kaye Ullman

Landscaping Fund

In memory of Jimmy Mendelsohn
Hilde Gernsheimer

In honor of Marion Kozloff's special birthday
Hilde Gernsheimer

Greater Temple Fund

For the Yahrzeits of Belle & Harry Edelstein
Lois Cohen

Life of the Temple Fund

In memory of Jimmy Mendelsohn
The Besser Family
Annabel R. Klein
Fred & Barbara Boesch

Congratulations to Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Shore on their 50th wedding anniversary

Perpetual Memorials

April 1-5

Henry Herman
Bertha Goldsmith
Edward Miller

April 6-12

Anne Coopersmith
Amalie Schulhoff Feist
Olga S. Lurio
J. Thomas Sher
Louise C. Wolper
Edward L. Berger
Sandel Bernheimer

Bertha Hammel
Irma Camperlik

April 13-19

Ruth W. Frank
Richard Yashek
Hildegard Weinberg
Ella L. Goldsmith

April 20-26

Arthur Hammel
Jacob Weil
Sara Ada Cohn

Meyer Liefert
William A Miller
Herman Lightman
Herman Bodenheimer
Charles Hyman

April 27-30

Mary P. Isaacs
Beatrice Hammel
Jodi Robin Juceam
Joseph Weinberg
Karl Camperlik

The Jane Henry Memorial Fund

The Jane Henry Memorial Fund is not just a camp fund for youth. It will help anyone in need, particularly young people.

In memory of Jimmy Mendelsohn

Dick & Maxine Henry
Roger S. Schein
Frances Mendelsohn

In memory of Ruth Harrison

Hilde Gernsheimer

Wishing everyone a happy, healthy, and sweet

Passover season
Saul "Marty" Miller

In memory of Jane Henry
Jodi, Kelsi, and Lindsi Stoudt

Have you considered remembering the Temple in your will?

April Simchas

Anniversaries

Mr. & Mrs. David Kozloff	April 7
Mr. & Mrs. Gerald Fogelman	April 15
Dr. & Mrs. Seth Rosenzweig	April 18
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Shore	April 19
Mr. & Mrs. Blair Hogg	April 27

Birthdays

Amy White Berger	April 2
Sidney Spillerman	April 3
Dr. Jeffrey Horowitz	April 4
Jeri Kozloff	April 4
Boris Lyudmirsky	April 5
Dr. M. Herbert Wachs	April 8
Janice Livingood Goldshtain	April 9

Marilyn Frank	April 11
Sue Viener	April 12
Allison Althouse	April 14
Nathaniel Ehrlich	April 14
Rosalind Hyman	April 17
Beth Bruck	April 19
Phyllis Goldstan	April 19
Ivy Schlechter	April 20
Harvey Seidel	April 20
Gerald Fogelman	April 22
Debra Weiland	April 22
Audrey Sagel	April 24
Lynn Salpeter	April 24
Neal Schneider	April 25
Sharon Hrabak	April 27

Florence Frank Offering Fund

To Mrs. Edith Mendelsohn in memory of her son

Mrs. Dorothy Schlanger.
Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Symons
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Brok

To Kay Ullman in honor of her birthday anniversary

Mrs. Helen Rappoport
Mr. and Mrs. Gene Friedman

To James Harrison in memory of his mother, Ruth Harrison

Mrs. Sylvia Schiff
Mr. and Mrs. Gene Friedman

Kindly send Florence Frank Offering Fund contributions to Mrs. Marilyn Frank, Phoebe Village, 9 Reading Ave., Wernersville, PA 19565; or Mrs. Shirley Friedman, 107 Primrose Lane, Wyomissing, PA 19610.

Sincere thanks for all the messages of condolence I received in memory of my son Jim. Every word was meaningful and deeply appreciated.

Edith Mendelsohn

NEWS FROM THE UNION

Free newsletter

Want to receive a weekly update of news of the Jewish World? Now, as a benefit of our congregation's membership in the Union for Reform Judaism, you can receive a free subscription to the Weekly Briefing, an e-mail of news about the Union and the greater Jewish world. Produced in cooperation with JTA: The Global News Service of the Jewish People, the Weekly Briefing is delivered to your inbox every Friday. To subscribe, go to www.urj.org/subscribe.

Passover resources

Each spring Jews around the world sit down together at the Passover seder. The Union for Reform Judaism has pages of resources, new and innovative haggadot, and more online to help you and your family celebrate this Pesach. Log on to www.urj.org/holidays/pesach to learn more.

Get everything you might

need from haggadot to Passover Music CDs to Texts Studies for the table from URJ Books and Music. Log on to www.URJBooks.com and search for Passover.

Cover the Uninsured

Join activists around the country from April 27 through May 3 to confront the health care crisis in the United States during the annual Cover the Uninsured Week. To get involved please visit www.covertheuninsured.org or contact Jessica Weiser, Legislative Assistant at the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism at jweiser@rac.org.

Adult study retreat

Join Reform Jews from across North America this July 8-13 for the Summer Adult Study Retreat (formerly known as Kallah), at Franklin Pierce College in Rindge, New Hampshire. For more information please call Rabbi Joan Glazer Farber at 212-650-4086 or e-mail jfarber@urj.org.

Fair-Trade Treats

Stop by the office for delicious Fair-Trade coffee, tea, cocoa and chocolate bars.

Proceeds from the sales allow us to serve fair-trade coffee at our functions.

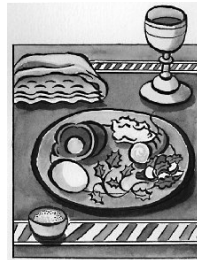
SECOND NIGHT COMMUNITY SEDER

Sunday, April 20th, 6:00 PM
at Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom
Boscov's Ala Carte Catering
\$25.00 adults / \$17.00 Children (12 and under)

Hoping to see all of you as we gather together as a community to share our Seder meal, which includes:

Served at the Table:

- Matzo Ball Soup
- Gefilte Fish w/ Horseradish
- Matzah
- Harosset
- Hard Boiled Eggs
- Wine



Buffet:

- Apricot Chicken
- Roasted Potatoes
- Green Beans Almondine
- Passover Desserts
- Coffee/Tea

The Jewish Federation has made funds available for those who feel they may need assistance paying for the seder. Contact Sari Incledon of Jewish Family Service at 610-921-2766.

For reservations, please send your check to RCOS office by April 11, 2008.

For more information or if you need transportation to and from the Temple please call: 610-375-6034.

We will be attending the Sunday, April 20, 2008 Seder Meal at RCOS, 555 Warwick Drive, Wyomissing, PA 19610 and we are returning our Reservation Form and Check, made out to RCOS.

Deadline for Reservation is Friday, April 11, 2008



SHANKBONE

No. of Adults _____ x \$25.00 each = _____

No. of children (12 and under) _____ x \$17.00 each = _____




AFIKOMAN


NAME: _____

**1st Night Seder will be held Saturday, April 19, 7-9 p.m. at Keshet Zion.
Reservations deadline is April 7.
Contact the KZ office for details: 610-374-1763**

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Bulletin published monthly, September through May. Items are due **no later than** the 5th of the month prior to publication.