



# OUR TEMPLE

Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom

April 2011/Adar 2-Nisan 5771

## Notes from the president

### The gym class rope and other stories

By **Rosalind Hyman**  
*President*

Recently I read a column in the *Reading Eagle* by John Forster, who is the News Editor of our local paper. His article was on gym class and his most vivid memory of The Rope and his struggle with vertigo.

His story brought to mind

my own experience with, what I still, after these many years, refer to as The Dreaded Rope. Although I did not suffer from vertigo, I suffered what was from my perspective a much more serious problem.

As a young girl I lived in a neighborhood where we were the only Jewish family. Upon

entering the eighth grade I discovered that for gym class we had to wear white uniforms, white sneakers, and have our hair pinned back and “rubber banded.”

My mother, being an immigrant, read the note with trepidation, gathered the hard-

*Continued on Page 2*

## From the rabbi's study

### The popularity of Passover

Do you know what the most broadly celebrated Jewish Holiday by American Jews is? You might think it is Chanukah with all the hoopla each year, but you would be wrong. You might expect it to be Yom Kippur — the Day of Atonement — the day that is spent fasting and in prayer. This answer, too, is incorrect. The holiday that is celebrated by more American Jews than any other is coming this month, it is Passover. Why is this the case? There are many different answers.

One answer is that Passover is almost entirely a home- and family-based ritual. We gather with friends and family around the table and we share a meal. It can be an intricate Seder full of singing,

reading, questions, and answers or it can be the 10-minute mini Seder where we dunk, moan about how hot the horseradish is and get on with the meal. Either way, we are brought together to celebrate this holiday. In fact, I have heard stories of Seders being held all over the world in some of the most unlikely places, because Jews from all over the world have found each other and gather to celebrate Passover. Trust me, if you think it is hard to find Passover items in Reading, you should try finding matzah on the Pacific Island nation of Vanuatu. I know people who have. We gather because we understand the importance of family and friends.

Another possibility is that Passover is a holiday that caters to something we respond well to: namely, food. It is often the one time of the year when we enjoy

matzah balls, or grandma's brisket recipe. It may be the one time of year that gefilte fish appears on the shelf or maybe even those multi-colored three-tiered cookies. We were taught in rabbinical school that “If you feed them; they will come.” Almost our entire celebration of Pesach focuses on food.

A third possibility is that Passover commemorates a historical happening. It does not require us to profess a very specific theology or bare our souls before God. Pesach is easy to relate to for Jews all across the spectrum of practice and belief, and we vote with our feet by showing up for Seders in every corner of the globe.

Whatever brings us to Passover table, may we build memories that are sweet and strong and may this Passover be filled with health and happiness for us all.

## April Highlights

*Services Fridays at 7:45 unless otherwise noted.*

**Friday, April 1:**  
Grade 1 Shabbat service, 6 p.m.

**Saturday, April 2:**  
Shabbat service, 10 a.m.

**Friday, April 8:** New Member Shabbat, 7 p.m.

**Saturday, April 9:**  
Tot Shabbat, 10 a.m.

**Friday, April 15:**  
Mortgage Burning Celebration, 7 p.m.

**Monday, April 18:**  
First night Seder, 6 p.m.  
Reserve no later than April 11.

**Saturday, April 30:**  
Johanna Ure Bat Mitzvah, 10:30 a.m.

**Rabbi Brian I. Michelson**

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of Kate & Nathan Gross and Betty & David Gordon  
and

**Rosalyn Yashek**, in memory of Richard J. Yashek, loving  
husband, father and grandfather

**Food festival a big winner!**  
The numbers are in. The 2010 Food Festival brought in a profit of **\$25,772**. Thanks to everyone for their hard work!

# PRESIDENT

*Continued from Page 1*

earned money and purchased all the items needed. In the third week of entering the gymnasium I saw a long rope hanging from the ceiling. I watched with fascination as the first girl in line wrapped her sneakers around the bottom of the rope, placed her hands above her head and pulled herself almost to the top. Each girl followed, knowing exactly what to do.

By the time it was my turn I was covered with perspiration. I fully realized, (being an extraordinarily bright eighth grader) that there was no way this kid with this tush was going to get up that rope!!

I walked over to the teacher, a tall slender young blonde, and carefully explained that I was of the Jewish faith and my faith does not permit me to climb ropes. She immediately apologized, telling me she was

not at all familiar with our special beliefs, excused me from climbing the rope and gave me an “A” for the class.

Having a Yiddishe kupf really does pay off ~~

....and now another story. Let me tell you how I got to be president of the Temple. From 2001 to 2003 the most wonderful and lovely Ellen Azrael was president of the Temple. In her monthly article she wrote that in the new year a number of board members would be needed. So I thought about it...and decided that I would like to be a more active member of the Jewish community and most especially of the Temple.

The next day I called Ellen to express interest in serving on the Temple Board. I had the pure joy of having Jake, Ellen’s most handsome other half, answer the telephone. He asked me the following questions...Was I really interested? Was I a good worker?

Would I be able to attend all the meetings? Did I work well with others? Was I really interested in the success of the Temple? How long had I been a member? And since this was 10 years ago I simply do not remember all the other questions he asked me...but I do know there were others!!

Obviously I answered all the questions to his satisfaction, because in August of the next year I was sitting on the board. So, here we are again — we need five new board members to serve from 2011 to 2013.

Should you be interested please call me...there is great joy and honor serving the Temple, and I promise to be easier on you than Jake was on me!!! And, if you serve on the board and serve on a few committees and become vice president some day you, too, may be president of our wonderful Temple.

## 7th graders get lesson in 20th century RCOS life

**By Michelle A. Mart**

On a cold January afternoon, the students of the 7th grade class — Alexa Chronister, Rachel Jeffers, JoJo Ure, Hannah Walker, and Bryce Weizer — sat down to talk with four members of RCOS who grew up in the congregation: Bruce Cohen, Jack and Jeff Gernsheimer, and Ellen Azrael. The idea for the get-together was pretty simple: one of the topics we’ve been studying this year in the 7th grade is American Jewish history, and what better way to gain an understanding of recent history than through the history of our own congregation? Hence, the invitation to Bruce, Jack, Jeff, and Ellen to come answer questions from the 7th grade students.

A couple of weeks before the meeting, I requested that students submit questions that they would like to ask. I compiled the list, divided up questions among the kids, and invited our guests to share in a

conversation. The conversation lasted about an hour and a half and covered many different topics, including the changes in service styles, prayer books, music, and the amount of Hebrew used.

We also heard about the importance of the social bonds forged among the congregation’s kids in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, how kids felt about religious school, how they related to the rabbis growing up, and what they remembered about anti-Semitism in the community.

One comment echoed by Bruce, Jack, and Jeff was how each felt his Bar Mitzvah to have been a turning point in his life. I think this made a strong impression on the 7th graders, each preparing for his or her own Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

A week after our meeting, I asked the students to recall what else they learned from our guests about growing up in RCOS back in the 20th cen-

tury. There were some recurrent themes. For example more than one student remarked on what JoJo described as “a very different dress code.” Alexa observed that “men had to wear a suit and tie, and did not wear a kippot. Women also had to dress very formally.” The kids also noted that the atmosphere of the services, not just the dress of the congregants, was more formal. Hannah wrote, “Kids had to sit quietly in their seats with their parents. Now, people don’t mind as much if a young child is out of his or her seat, or if young kids talk once in a while (in whispers).”

Alexa also wrote that music was more formal as well since “not many songs were sung by the congregation, and that there was a professional chorus that was not Jewish.”

Rachel, JoJo, and Alexa all remarked on how girls and boys were treated differently, and Rachel added that the studies seemed less rigorous in the

past: “girls didn’t (most likely) have Bat Mitzvahs, and boys didn’t learn or have to study the Haftorah.”

More than one student noted the different amount of Hebrew used in services and in the religious school, and that students only went to religious school on Sundays, not on Tuesdays as well. Bryce remarked on the incidents of anti-Semitism in the past, including the explosion of a small pipe bomb outside of the old temple building on Perkiomen Avenue. Bryce also was interested in how many members of the congregation participated in the creation of the temple’s current home on Warwick Drive.

I’m happy to report that the students wanted to plan such a meeting again. I hope this means that they walked away with a greater sense of connection to RCOS, and that they have something in common with people of different ages and experiences.

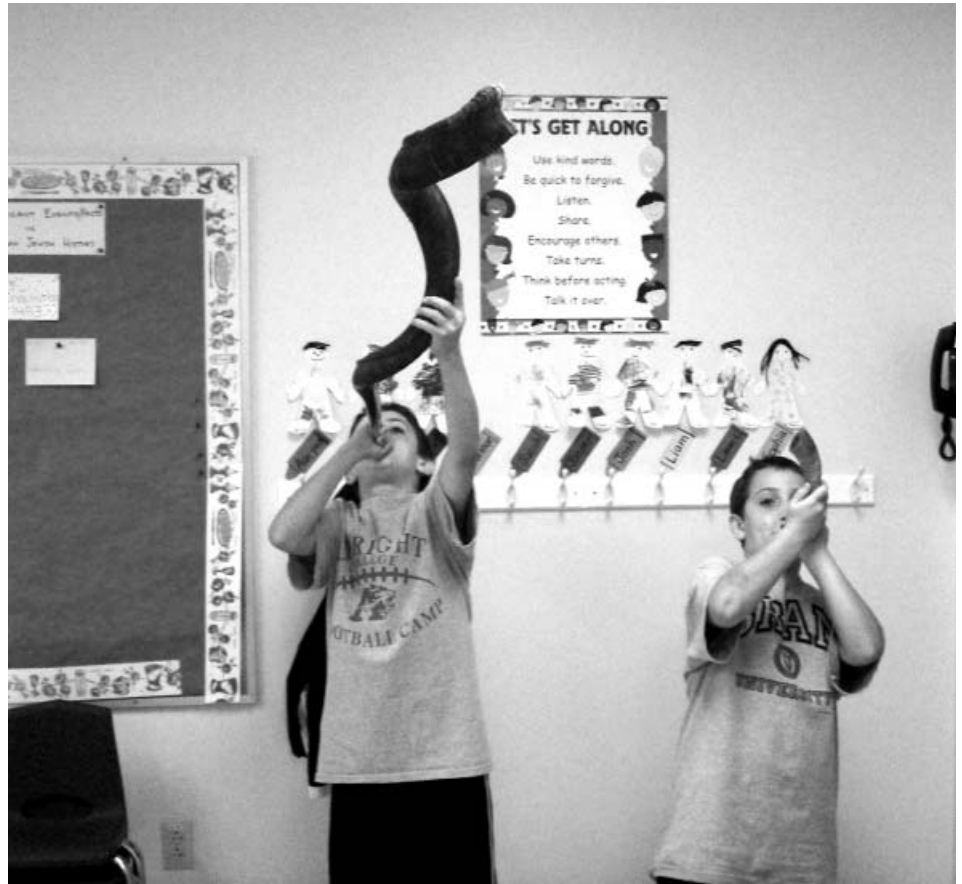
**Religious School News****4th grade focuses on holidays, Hebrew and Israel**By **Judy Synnamon***Religious School Director*

This month I will review the curriculum and activities of the 4th Grade Class, taught by Victoria Stoudt on Sundays for Religious School and Beth Bruck for Hebrew School.

In addition to the study of Israel, Fourth grade spent a lot of Sunday time learning and reinforcing the Jewish holidays. They compared and contrasted how the Jewish holidays and customs were celebrated in Israel and in the U.S. A favorite activity was when the students designed their own passports to visit and illustrate Israeli cities and regions. Another favorite activity was when Aaron Bram brought his shofar to school and shared his shofar blowing skills. They made posters that showed individual highlights of their studies. Sports, land forms and the War of Independence were featured. During the service 4th grade led, they tricked us all with a difficult game of Family Feud.

In Hebrew Class, the 4th Graders are learning many blessings. They are reading a lot of Hebrew and are learning many new words every week. They have homework almost every week to review their newfound knowledge. Sometimes they play games, even silly ones.

The 4th Grade hopes to get permission to weed the front garden at the Temple for their Mitzvah project.



*Aaron Bram brought in his shofar to the fourth-grade class in an activity that was a big hit with the children.*

**About our bulletin****Editor:** Mark Nemirow**Assistant Editor:** Donna Oaks

To submit an article, e-mail Mark at [Marknem@aol.com](mailto:Marknem@aol.com) or call him at 610-370-2533.

**Deadline for May-June issue: April 5**

**The Temple Online**

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### Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

In memory of Renee Zeisel  
Norma & Marty Beckerman

In memory of Rose Knoblauch  
Nancy Knoblauch

In honor of Rabbi Michelson  
Sandy & Andy Sigal

**Landscaping Fund**  
In memory of Joseph Nelson by  
Bob & Kaye Ullman

In appreciation of all the  
Uniongrams sent to me for my  
80th birthday  
Kaye Ullman

### Building Fund

In memory of the Yahrzeit of  
Evelyn Levinger  
Norma & Marty Beckerman

### Greater Temple Fund

In memory of Phyllis Imber  
Bernard Kalban

In memory of the Yahrzeit of  
Harry & Belle Edelstein  
Lois & Irv Cohen

### Religious School Fund

In memory of Laurie Waxler's  
great aunt  
Jeff & Lynn Driben

### Music Fund

A donation has been made by  
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In honor of Kaye Ullman's  
special birthday  
Sue & Herb Wachs

### Jane Henry Memorial Fund

The Jane Henry Memorial  
Fund will help anyone in need,  
particularly young people.

In honor of Sue & George  
Viener's granddaughters' Bat  
Mitzvahs  
Edna Pollak

In memory of Herman &  
Phyllis Imber  
Dick & Maxine Henry

## Book Group

May 1  
at 4 p.m.

We are reading  
"Homesick: A Novel"  
by Eshkol Nevo;  
translated by Sondra  
Silverston.

## Perpetual Memorials

### April 1-9

Henry Herman  
Bertha Goldsmith  
Edward Miller  
Anne Coopersmith  
Amalie Schulhoff Feist  
J. Thomas Sher

### April 10-16

Irma Camperlik  
Olga S. Lurio  
Bertha Hammel  
Louise C. Wolper  
Sandel Bernheimer  
Ruth W. Frank  
Ella L. Goldsmith  
Richard Yashek  
Hildegard Weinberg

### April 17-23

Meyer Liefster  
Herman Bodenheimer  
Jacob Weil  
Sara Ada Cohn  
Arthur Hammel  
Charles Hyman  
Herman Lightman

### April 24-30

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

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We need volunteers to help with dinner at  
Kennedy House

### **Easter Sunday, April 24**

Adults and teenagers are encouraged to  
volunteer. Volunteers are needed from  
9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monetary donations  
would be appreciated to help offset the  
cost of the meal.

Please contact Barbara Rosenzweig,  
610-775-5383

or at Barbara.Rosenzweig@gmail.com  
if you can volunteer on Easter or if you  
are able to help with food preparations.

**Sandy Gelb** would like everyone who  
stopped by, sent donations and called her  
during her recovery. Everyone has been so  
kind and caring. All of the attention has  
helped in her recovery. Sandy is back in  
action and is looking forward to having a  
great time with her friends.  
Thank you all so very much!

*Have you considered  
remembering the Temple  
in your will?*

**Stock up on Passover  
supplies at the  
Sisterhood Gift Shop**

Sisterhood happenings

## Thanks to share and a big announcement

We have to say thank you very much to Anne Seltzer for being the perfect hostess for our Passover Tasting evening on Thursday, Feb. 24.

Everything about the event was amazing. The food was so good, everyone was chatting and having a great time and the surroundings were beautiful. We could not have imagined a more perfect scene. Janine had a great idea and it came together like a charm. We believe that there will be more events like this because everyone enjoyed this type of get together so much.

We cannot go any further without thanking our Temple secretary extraordinaire, Donna Oaks. The Passover Tasting Cookbook that she "authored" turned out so cute. Donna has the

magic touch as far as we are concerned and this cookbook will be such a nice memory of a wonderful evening. Thanks again Donna for your special and loving touch.

Sisterhood has a wonderful announcement. The Executive Board of the Temple asked Sisterhood to purchase new china, silverware and glassware for the Temple. After a vote by the membership of Sisterhood and the diligent hard work of Sharon Hrabak and Janine Ure, we are able to announce that undertaking has been completed. In a few weeks the Temple will take delivery of 250 place settings of beautiful white china, 250 place settings of silverware and 250 each of water and wine glasses. We will have soup plates

and soup spoons too. So, if you are planning a simcha or have a simcha in the future remember that the Temple will be able to help you set a beautiful table.

We will be having fundraising events in the near future to offset the cost of these beautiful new place settings. If you would like to make a donation at any time please feel free to call Barbara Bender, our assistant treasurer.

We hope this update finds you all ready for spring! We are ready for flowers and sunshine.

Our Best to You Always,  
Janine Ure  
Susan Gelb

## Join us May 1 for a walk in the Labyrinth

By Nancy J. Knoblauch

For the past two years, in the spring, it has been the privilege of your reporter to represent Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom at the Interfaith Labyrinth program held at Epler's United Church of Christ in Leesport.

What, you may wonder, is a LABYRINTH. It's not the one you learned about in school from Greek mythology wherein the Minotaur lurked. The labyrinth maze concept has been adapted for spiritual purposes, and a quiet walk within one invites us to take time away

from the grip of daily life, to walk a prayer that engages us physically, intellectually and spiritually.

The labyrinth is a series of connected circular paths, typically placed in a natural setting. It's a quiet place. The one in Leesport is located on the expanse of country land in back of Epler's UCC. Visitors who have gone there alone have reported occasionally seeing deer on its perimeters. Birds, flowers and foliage abound there in season. Sometimes it rains, but hardly ever when there is a group event planned.

Walkers of labyrinths such as this have reported finding answers to questions for themselves while walking — of experiencing an increase of self-understanding, of comfort in sorrow, of healing, of joy.

Our congregation is invited to participate at Epler's annual Interfaith Labyrinth event this year — Sunday, May 1, at 2:30 p.m.

For more information, directions, etc. you can contact me at 610-779-0858 or njknob77@gmail.com.

### SISTERHOOD ANNUAL MEETING AND INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

**Sunday, June 5, at 9:30 a.m.**

*Please note Temple annual meeting starts at 11 a.m. the same day*

*The Ure Family  
invites everyone in the community  
to join them for  
Johanna's Bat Mitzvah ceremony,*

*Saturday, April 30, 10:30 a.m.*

*Please note there is no kiddush following the service.*

## APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

Mr. & Mrs. David Kozloff — April 7

Mr. & Mrs. Gerald Fogelman — April 15

Dr. & Mrs. Seth Rosenzweig — April 18

Mr. & Mrs. Blair Hogg — April 27

Mr. & Mrs. Lewis Cohen — April 15

Dr. & Mrs. Adam Rubin — April 17

Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Shore — April 19

Mr. & Mrs. Lee Katz — April 30

## APRIL BIRTHDAYS

Evelyn Drezner	April 2	Brenda Diamond	April 11	Beth Bruck	April 19
Ellice Gunter	April 2	Marilyn Frank	April 11	Harvey Seidel	April 20
Sidney Spillerman	April 3	Jeffrey Sternlieb	April 11	Neal Jacobs	April 21
Dr. Jeffrey Horowitz	April 4	Elaine Gilbert	April 12	Gerald Fogelman	April 22
Jeri Kozloff	April 4	Sue Viener	April 12	Dorothy Schlanger	April 22
Allen Charney	April 5	Allison Althouse	April 14	Debra Weiland	April 22
Boris Lyudmirsky	April 5	Meghan Ehrlich	April 14	Audrey Sagel	April 24
Donald Miller	April 6	Nathaniel Ehrlich	April 14	Marilyn Salpeter	April 24
Lisa Blecker	April 8	Andrew Pinkard	April 16	Sharon Hrabak	April 27
Dr. M. Herbert Wachs	April 8	Rosalind Hyman	April 17	Rabbi Eliot Marrus	April 27
Janice Livingood Goldshtain	April 9	Anne Welsh	April 17	Marni Arragon	April 30
Judith Katz	April 10	Phyllis Goldstan	April 19		

## Library program to feature talk on trip to Cuba

Take a photo journey with Mary Rebecca Freymoyer, Wyomissing School District Spanish teacher, as she recounts the experiences of her recent educator's trip to Cuba. See the sights of Havana, the countryside, and

Trinidad, a UNESCO World Heritage site. View Cuba's National Parks and learn about the history of Cuba and the resiliency of the Cuban people.

The program will be held **Wednesday, May 25**, at 7 p.m. in the Com-

munity Room at the Wyomissing Public Library. Registration is requested but not required, and walk-ins are welcome. Please call the Circulation Desk at 610-374-2385 for information or to register.




# Praise the God of . . .

## LESSONS ON JEWISH THEOLOGY AND FINDING YOUR PLACE IN IT

*with Rabbi Brian I. Michelson*

*Sundays, April 3, 10, 17 & May 1*

*10:30 am - 12:00 pm*

*\$10 members/\$20 non-members*

*Call the Temple to reserve your spot!*

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# April 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>Religious School 9:00 AM</p>	<p>Torah Study - Noon</p>	<p>Hebrew School 4:15 PM Adult Hebrew 7:00 PM</p>			<p>Grade 1 Shabbat 6:00 PM <i>Community Pot Luck Dinner</i></p>	<p>Shabbat Service 10:00 AM</p>
<p>Religious School 9:00 AM LRP Cmte. Mtg. 9:00 AM Gratz Kids w/Rabbi - 6 PM</p>	<p>Torah Study - Noon Exec. Cmte. Mtg. 7:00 PM</p>	<p>Hebrew School 4:15 PM Adult Hebrew 7:00 PM Finance Cmte. Mtg. - 7:00 PM</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>New Member Shabbat 7:00 PM <i>Membership Cmte. Sponsoring Oneg</i></p>	<p>Tot Shabbat 10:00 AM <i>TOT SHABBAT</i></p>
<p>Religious School 9:00 AM Men's Club 9:30 AM</p>	<p>Torah Study - Noon <b>First Night Seder at RCOS</b> 6:00 PM <b>EREV PASSOVER</b></p>	<p>Office Will Be Closed NO Hebrew School</p>	<p>20 <b>HAPPY PASSOVER</b></p>	<p>21</p>	<p>Shabbat Service 7:45 PM</p>	<p>23 <b>PASSOVER</b></p>
<p>NO Religious School <b>PASSOVER</b></p>	<p>Board Meeting - 7 PM <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b></p>	<p>NO Hebrew School</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28 Jennifer Goss, Director of Albright's Holocaust Center will be speaking at the April 29th Shabbat Service</p>	<p>Shabbat Service 7:45 PM <i>The Ures Sponsoring Oneg</i></p>	<p>Johanna Ure Bat Mitzvah 10:30 AM <i>Bat Mitzvah</i></p>

**Dates/times are subject to change.**  
**Cantor Josh Weekend - April 8-10.**  
**Office will be closed April 19 & 25**



**REFORM CONGREGATION OHEB SHOLOM**

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