



OUR TEMPLE

Notes from the president

Lack of involvement puts traditions at risk

By Scott Bram
President

What do you want from the Temple?

Slowly, over the course of the past several years, I have noticed a change in the level of involvement by congregants at our Temple. While some specific projects continue to generate a high level of interest, such as the Food Festival, some time-honored groups, committees and events have ceased to exist or exist at a minimal level. I will illustrate my observations with the following examples.

The Sisterhood, a longstanding Temple institution and successful fund-raising organization has no leadership. Past leaders

of the Sisterhood have maintained the functioning of the Sisterhood for many years. The natural progression is to pass the torch to the new and younger generation. However, this group either works outside the home or is too busy with family obligations or just has no interest in continuing the work of the Sisterhood. Consequently, Sisterhood is no longer the great fund-raiser it was in the past. In addition, the ladies of Sisterhood also planned social events such as Comedy Night. This function is not being planned for 2007 due to a lack of interest of ladies to plan the event and a decrease in attendance over the past two years. What a loss for our Temple!

Similarly the Brotherhood, previously know as the Men's Club, has had trouble attracting members for many years. If you have read the Brotherhood article in last month's bulletin you would know that the attendance at some of their breakfast meetings has been abysmal. What are the speakers at these breakfast meetings to think about our Temple when almost no one shows up to hear them speak? Once again, people are not stepping forward to relieve those gentleman who have been running the group for years. Will the Brotherhood and Sisterhood end up being visions of the past?

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From the Rabbi's study

Technology can't replace sense of community

There is a radio commercial for a local car dealership that allows you to build, price, view, and virtually test drive a car on the Internet. They brag that they are the

Rabbi Brian Michelson

only dealership that allows you to test drive a car in your pajamas. This idea got me thinking.

In today's world, with telephones, computers, and the Internet, it is possible to purchase whatever you want whenever you want it. You can order movies, clothing, groceries, and even pizza without ever hav-

ing to venture outside the confines of your own home. The more we can do at home, the more we become disconnected with others and lose that sense of community that many of us remember as children.

One of the three names for a synagogue is Beit HaKenesset, a house of meeting or gathering. It was understood that the synagogue was one of the places where people turned to find community and to enjoy being with others. Unfortunately, the modern lifestyle moves us away from being a community toward simply being a collective of

individuals.

In Pirkei Avot, the Ethics of our Ancestors, Rabbi Hillel taught, "Do not separate yourself from the community." (Pirkei Avot 2:4) To be Jewish is to be part of something that is greater than any individual. Medical science has proved that those people who are part of a community live longer and have fewer illnesses than those who remain on the outside.

Members of a community are there for each other whether they know each other or not. As a synagogue community, we have the obligation to share times of joy and times of sorrow with others. As the world that we live in continues to pull us apart, we must remember the importance of community in our lives. Besides, I don't really care if you decide you want to come celebrate with your community if you choose to wear your pajamas.

February Highlights

- Friday, Feb. 2 — Early Shabbat, 6 p.m.
- Saturday, Feb. 3 — Shabbat service, 10 a.m.
- Saturday, Feb. 10 — Tot Shabbat, 10 a.m.
- Sunday, Feb. 18 — Brotherhood meeting, 9:30 a.m.
- Saturday, Feb. 24 — Chavurah group, 4 p.m.
- Sunday, Feb. 25 — Book club, 4 p.m.

**Friday night services at 7:45 unless otherwise noted
Babysitting available for 7:45 Shabbat services.**

*Bulletin sponsored by
Sylvia Schiff
in memory of
Leonard M. Schiff Jr.*

Religious School News**Tu B'Shevat a chance to study environment****By Judy Synnamon***Religious School administrator*

Tu B'Shevat will be celebrated in our Sunday School on Sunday, Feb. 4. Jesse Goldberg, whose daughter Lauren is in our first grade class, has graciously agreed to speak to the school about environmental issues and recycling. Jesse is an environmental engineer with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. This will be a great opportunity for the children to reflect on how to use the resources G-d bestowed on the world more wisely, and the ways we can all enhance our connection to the environment.

TuB'Shevat reminds us of the importance of trees and reminds us that G-d has given us the responsibility of caring for our world. On TuB'Shevat it is customary to eat the seven species of fruit of the land of

Israel and other varieties of fruit that grow on trees. We will be enjoying some of these fruits as part of our celebration.

Classes will not be held Sunday, Feb. 18, in honor of Presidents Weekend.

On Friday evening, Feb. 9, at 7:45 the Sixth Grade class will help with Shabbat Service and host the Oneg Shabbat. You are all cordially invited to join us.

PRESIDENT*continued from Page 1*

The Social Action Committee has been a strong presence for the Temple in our community for many years. However the formal committee has disbanded. Why? Once again a couple of people came to meetings and planned projects. There was no increase in membership and no apparent interest to continue the work of this committee. A final example concerns the Interfaith Hospitality Network. This program helps put the Temple in the forefront of the greater community, where we become known as a community-oriented, caring house of worship. Yet, the organizers of this program experience difficulty in recruiting the aid of our congregants.

It appears as though apathy has taken hold of our Temple. We should not be of the mindset that expects "the other person" to

become involved so that "I do not need to." We are at the point in our Temple's history that when the last die-hard stops doing what they have been doing, how will the Temple survive. Will anyone be there to take over?! The Board and Rabbi will be working toward developing a shared vision. The By-Laws committee has revised the By-Laws of the Temple to ensure that the congregation operates in a better manner. Your input will be needed on both of these issues. What are

your thoughts regarding life at our Temple? Do you just want a place to go to for worship? How do you think any Rabbi, let alone our Rabbi would feel about that? What kind of message are we sending to our children when a few often do the work of many? To paraphrase John F. Kennedy, ask not what the Temple can do for you but what you can do for the Temple. Think about it. Each of us doesn't have to be involved in every activity, but we all should do something.

Gift Shop News:

As a new service to our congregants, the Gift Shop will be taking orders for chocolate-covered Matzah and Matzah brittle. These treats will be available for your tasting pleasure in the Gift Shop. Stop by in February and tell Linda or Sandy that you would like to sample these wonderful Passover delicacies. They are to die for!! Order for your Seder and send some to friends and family. And don't forget to shop us first for all of your Judaic and non-Judaic gifting. Thanks for your support of this Sisterhood service.

Sisterhood Florence Frank Offering Fund**To Rosalye Yashek for a speedy recovery**

Mrs. Rhoda Rosenberg
Mr. and Mrs. Gene Friedman
Dr. and Mrs. Eric Zelnick

To Mrs. Nancy Knoblauch in memory of her husband Murry

Mr. and Mrs. Gene Friedman
Mrs. Dorothy Schlanger
Mr. & Mrs. Mark Nemirow

Hope you are feeling better to Barbara Stein

Dr. and Mrs. Eric Zelnick

To Dr. and Mrs. Michael Perilstein in honor of the birth of their first grandchild

Dr. and Mrs. Eric Zelnick

To David Greenstein and Beth Greenstein in memory of their mother Martha

Mr. and Mrs. Gene Friedman

To Mr. and Mrs. Morton Goodman in memory of her sister Martha Greenstein

Mr. and Mrs. Gene Friedman

To Dr. and Mrs. Jeffrey Driben on their anniversary

Sue Wolfe

To Howard Saidman on his birthday

Sue Wolfe

To Arthur Becker on his birthday

Sue Wolfe

To Sara Muitzel on her birthday

Sue Wolfe

To David Gavigan on his birthday

Sue Wolfe

To Miriam Gavigan on her birthday

Sue Wolfe

To Sue Wachs on her birthday

Sue Wolfe

To Pat Frankel on her birthday

Sue Wolfe

To Phyllis Symons on her birthday

Sue Wolfe

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.

Interfaith Hospitality Network update

Hospitality Network is growing

By Janine Ure and Holly Michelson

The Interfaith Hospitality Network is evolving into all we thought it would and could be. Our third week, Jan. 7-14, 2007 was a huge success. We almost had a full house of both guests and volunteers. The two families, a mother with five daughters and a young couple with two children, were gracious and easy to be with.

The volunteers consisted of new and

old alike. Thank you to everyone who helped us host such a wonderful week. A special note of mention to the Zimmerman Family who only recently were trained and took on not only Sunday set-up, but also Sunday cleanup, dinner, an evening, and an overnight. We had many other new volunteers as well from RCOS and the Church of the Brethren. Volunteers from Kissinger's Lutheran once

again provided dinner twice during the week.

We could not do this wonderful mitzvah without all of you.

Please remember we can always use an extra hand no matter how big or small. Our next hosting week will be March 18-25. Watch for new training dates coming soon. The Network is growing and we would love to have you join us.

Yom Kippur in January

By Jack Gernsheimer

OK, I'll admit that over the years I've become a "High Holiday Jew." Yes, I went to Sunday school for 10 years, was Bar Mitzvahed and Confirmed, but over the decades my temple service attendance has diminished.

That said, the "Holiday" I find most important and beneficial to me is Yom Kippur. No, I don't start checking the calendar in early August, eagerly awaiting the day of fast. In fact, I can't wait for the fast to end so I can look forward to 364 days of eating whatever I darn well please. And that's the point. Nothing makes you recognize and appreciate what you have as much as being deprived of it. Another way of saying "you never miss the water till the well runs dry."

Hard as we try, it's very difficult to count our blessings to the extent they deserve to be counted. Yom Kippur seems to affect me just the way I believe it was intended to. The first sip of water or bite of a bagel with lox, on Yom Kippur night, is savored like no other sip or bite in the year. So, there

seems to be real value and gain from the holiday, despite the minimal sacrifice.

That's how I felt on Tuesday morning when Sue Schlanger and I wished a bleary-eyed group of participants in the Interfaith Hospitality Network a good day as they loaded into the chilly van to be driven to their day-care facility, school, or place of employment. Marissa, the mother of five daughters ranging in age from 5 to 15, expressed such appreciation for the accommodations and wonderful meal she and her family had at the temple the night before. She had a cheery, upbeat attitude that explained why her daughters were such polite and friendly girls. I had met some of them the night before while they were playing in the makeshift playroom in the Religious School wing.

When I went across the hall to Room 2, I made up the cot and crawled in, choosing to keep the heat low to save a buck or two on the Temple's next energy bill. What I realized around 3 a.m. was that the blanket I brought was too thin for the conditions, but

in my half-sleep, I put on another shirt and crawled back into bed. I awoke around 6 a.m., shivering as I thought about the cozy bed I would return to that night, and the home I'm so fortunate to live in. When I thought about Marissa and the girls, who don't have a home or even a bed of their own, I again felt an intensified sense of good fortune.

I also resolved that, while I'm an admitted High Holiday Jew, I will continue to help serve occasional lunches at Opportunity House and spend a few nights a year hosting visitors from the Interfaith program. To me, that's the essence of Judaism, and since we're one of the lucky few generations of Jews who have been able to offer help more that we've needed to accept it, we should count our blessings and do just that.

The Interfaith Hospitality Network needs volunteers, and I urge you to get involved. Yom Kippur in January is rewarding on many levels, and it's really quite pleasant, particularly if you bring a warm blanket.

Thank you to everyone for their kind thoughts and contributions in memory of my husband, Murry.

Nancy Knoblauch

Have you considered remembering the Temple in your will?

ABOUT OUR NEWSLETTER

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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 March bulletin: Feb. 5

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Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

In gratitude for the thoughtfulness and kindness shown to me
Roz Hyman

A donation has been received from
Mimi Braverman & Brian Thompson

In memory of my father, Jacob H. Miller
Saul (Marty) Miller

In memory of Iris' mother
Iris & Leon Lonker

In memory of Murry Knoblauch
Sharon Scullin & Jim Rothstein
Evelyn & Ed Goodman
Ruth & C. Harold Cohn
Mindy and Richard Small

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In memory of Murry Knoblauch
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Nancy Hemmerich
Dr. & Mrs. Bernard Wolnak
Samuel & Sonia Briskin
James & Shirley Ullman

Building Fund

In memory of Michele Nevitt's grandfather
Norma & Marty Beckerman

To wish Rosalye Yashek a speedy recovery
Harriet Baskin

In memory of Murry Knoblauch
Rick & Debbie Zelnick
Roz Hyman
Cathy & John Badal
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Harriet Baskin
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Rosalye Yashek
Sue & Herb Wachs
Barb & Dave Bender

In memory of Martha Greenstein
Gene & Shirley Friedman

For the speedy recovery of
Nancy Linton
Harriet Baskin

General Fund

In memory of Murry Knoblauch
Marilyn Frank
Edith Mendelsohn

Library Fund

In memory of Joel Gilbert
George & Sue Viener

In memory of Murry Knoblauch
Susan Schlanger

Holocaust Garden Landscaping Fund

In memory of Joel Gilbert
Hilde Gernsheimer & family

In memory of Murry Knoblauch
Hilde Gernsheimer & family
Bob & Kaye Ullman

To wish Rosalye Yashek a speedy recovery
Hilde Gernsheimer & family

To wish Joe Goldstein happiness in his retirement
Hilde Gernsheimer & family

To wish Rosalye Yashek a speedy recovery
Bob & Kaye Ullman

In memory of Fred Jakobs
Jim Rothstein & Sharon Scullin

Music Fund

A contribution has been received
Mimi Braverman & Brian Thompson

In memory of Murry Knoblauch
David & Jeri Kozloff

Arthur Hammel Endowment Fund

To wish Rosalye Yashek a speedy recovery
Shirley & Bob Kauffman
Sylvia Schiff

In memory of Murry Knoblauch
Sylvia Schiff

February Simchas

Anniversaries

Naum Ger	Feb. 8
Richard Tomlinson	Feb. 8
Neal Nevitt	Feb. 9
Rae Rudnick	Feb. 14
Marjorie Wolf	Feb. 21
Deborah Cooper	Feb. 23
Dr. Glenn Freed	Feb. 23
Amy Saidman	Feb. 26
Dr. Ilene K. Weizer	Feb. 26
George P. Viener	Feb. 27

Birthdays

Dr. Neil Hoffman	
& Ms. Judith Kraines	Feb. 14
Ruth Cohn	Feb. 3
Ivan Gordon	Feb. 4
Howard Saidman	Feb. 6
Susan Gelb	Feb. 7
Michael Pardo	Feb. 7

Perpetual Memorials

Feb. 1-3

Ernest E. Israel
Leon Reidenberg, MD
William Bash
Valena R. Cohen
Julia Ehrlich

Virginia Smith Sinaink
Rebecca Bash
Isaac Goldsmith

Feb. 4-10

Ruth Y. Ruttenberg
Franklin A. Herman
Natalie Folkman
Nathan Marcus
Mildred H. Lurio
Susie Marcus
Hattie Horowitz
Irving Steinberg

Feb. 18-24

Emanuel B. Friedman
Irwin Kins
Henrietta Camp
Fred Stein
Sylvia R. Ball
Meyer Lurio
Ralph Brok
Abram B. Luria
Hannah Bash
Carye L. Loewenstein
Samuel L. Shaffer
Rudolf Abrams

Feb. 11-17

Goldie Schachter
Josef Goldstein
David Grotta
Jacob H. Miller
Leonard Schiff Jr.
Thelma Garfinkle

Feb. 25-28

Stanley Folkman
Lawrence Schlanger
Harry Edelstein
Belle Edelstein

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.

To wish Aunt Mac a happy birthday
Jodi, Kelsi, & Lindsi Stoudt

In memory of Murry Knoblauch
Lynn & Norbert Salpeter
Maxine & Dick Henry

In memory of Joel Gilbert
Lee & Trudy Katz

To wish Maxine Henry a happy birthday
Barbara Schneiderman
Bob & Kaye Ullman
Shirley Blacker & Arthur Peskin
Norman & Shirley Greenbaum
Leatrice Kaliner
Bobbie Singer & Ed Lichtenberg

RCOS BOOK GROUP

Sunday, Feb. 25
at 4 p.m.

We are reading
"The Sunflower: On the Possibilities and Limits of Forgiveness"
by Simon Wiesenthal

Chavurah

Saturday, Feb. 24
at 4 p.m.

Join Rabbi Michelson for an informal Torah study, something to eat, and Havdalah. There will be a special program for children while adults are studying.

Save the date
Temple Blood Drive
March 25
9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Watch for details and please sign up to share the gift of life

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