



# OUR TEMPLE

March 2008

Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom

Vol. 44, No. 7

## Notes from the president

### Harriet and Bob elope

By Herb Karasin

President

This story is, once again from my past family history; but before you quit reading, allow me to say I believe it is a great story that deserves to be written. Although it is true that it may not be normal fare for a 'Notes from the President' column, there may be some redeeming message that we can discover in it. And anyway, hey, this is my column!

First, the characters. Harriet was my sister. She was beautiful, kind and lighthearted; however, she was not always totally sensible. My father, Isadore (but always called Izzy) was fiercely proud and protective of Harriet, probably overprotective. He was also very generous, gregarious, formidable and in charge; and he was very shrewd. He always got his way. Bob, as you can tell from the title, married Harriet. Although this episode began in Philadelphia,

in the early '50's, Bob's family had previously lived in Reading. The family name was Hoffman; his cousin was Judge J. Sydney Hoffman. The last character is Uncle Sam; more about him later.

Although she was still quite young at the time, Harriet had received several marriage proposals from a few young men. Each had approached my father for his permission and blessing. His answer

*Continued on Page 3*

## From the Rabbi's study

### Reach out and help a fellow member

I received a letter last month from a member of the congregation who has moved to a warmer climate. I was being thanked for an aliyah (blessings over the Torah) invitation I had sent in honor of an upcoming birthday. One of the things he commented on

**Rabbi Brian Michelson**

were the changes that he perceives, from afar, have taken place

within our congregation. He wrote of a renewed enthusiasm and a feeling of pride and the many activities that we offer. One comment he made, which really stuck with me, was that the congregation has become, in his eyes, a more caring and concerned place.

While I found the praise gratifying, it also

struck me that, at this point in our congregation's life, we need to expand and improve the way we, as a congregation, reach out to help our members. Last year, I attended a conference about helping to create a caring community within the congregation. I know that the congregation has undertaken many of these projects in the past and, I think, it is time for us to consider re-starting some of them.

Looking at the demographics of our congregation, we have two constituent groups that make up the bulk of the congregation. One group is the elderly, and in many cases, long-term members of the congregation. As they age, they are no longer able to get around as well as they could. Many have stopped

driving at night and, therefore, have been, in some ways, cut off from the congregation. A simple phone call on a weekly basis just to see how they are doing would be greatly appreciated by many. A home visit or nursing home visit can brighten someone's day. This is not to replace the visits I try to make, but, rather, to enhance the way that we as a congregation care for our members.

If you would be willing to call another member at least once a week, please let me know and I will forward the name and phone number of a member or members who could benefit from continued contact. We occasionally need some drivers to deliver meals to some of our homebound members. It is easy duty and I know that the meal recipients are always grateful for the food and the human contact. In addition, from time to time we receive requests for rides to and from services from our members who do not drive. Your help can make their day, if not their week!

If you are able to help, please e-mail me at [rabbi@ohebsholom.org](mailto:rabbi@ohebsholom.org) and I will add your name to the appropriate list of people to help.

## February Highlights

**Saturday, March 1** — Sisterhood International Bistro, 6:30 p.m.

**March 2-9** — Temple hosts Interfaith Hospitality Network

**Friday, March 7** — Community Shabbat and dinner at JCC, 6 p.m.

**Saturday, March 8** — Shabbat service, 10 a.m.

**Sunday, March 16** — Men's Club, 9:30 a.m.

**Thursday, March 20** — Purim celebration at Shomrei Habrith, 7 p.m.

**Friday, March 28** — Jazz Shabbat at Keshet Zion, 8 p.m.

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

*Bulletin sponsored by  
Mildred & Ivan Gordon  
in memory of  
Kate and Nathan Gross*

**Religious School News****It's time for Purim fun**

By Judy Synnamon

*Religious School administrator*

Purim is a fun holiday that is loved by children. We will be reading the megillah and celebrating Purim on Thursday night, March 20 at Shomrei Habrith. Please attend with your children, wear costumes and help celebrate the downfall of Haman with loud boos and noisy groggers. Part of the celebration of Purim also encourages the mitzvah of tzedukah. Is there something you can do as a family that reinforces this part of the Purim celebration? There will be a Purim Carnival at the JCC on Sunday, March 16 from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. featuring: Mini golf thru Israel, Negev Sand Art, a Jailhouse, and Kick the Soccer Ball at Haman. Children grades 3 thru 8 will be given the opportunity to make hamantaschen.

March is a busy month. Please make sure you have all of these dates written on your calendars.

**Important dates****Tuesday, March 4:** No Hebrew School

**Wednesday, March 5:** Joint Hebrew School Program at Keshet Zion, 4 – 6 p.m. featuring Museum Day. Selected members of Keshet Zion have been asked to share special Judaic belongings as well as each teacher and each student.

**Friday, March 7:** Shabbat Across

*Rabbi Benjamin Cohen, a professional Torah scribe, demonstrates his craft to students from Oheb Sholom and Keshet Zion during a joint religious school program Feb. 5.*

America celebrated at the JCC. Service: 6:00 pm, Dinner: 6:45 pm (Reservations required for dinner)

**Friday, March 14:** Grade 5 will help conduct Shabbat Service at 7:45 p.m.

**Sunday, March 16:** Purim Carnival at the JCC, 12:30 pm – 2:30 p.m.

**Tuesday, March 18 and Sunday,**

**March 23:** Spring Break, No School

**Tuesday, March 25:** Welcome Back

**NEWS FROM THE JEWISH FEDERATION****Let's Celebrate Shabbat Across America — Friday, March 7**

Shabbat Service at 6 p.m. Dinner at 6:45 p.m.

Everyone is welcome to attend the service and/or dinner. Service at the JCC will be held in lieu of services at Keshet Zion Synagogue and Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom

Kosher buffet dinner includes chicken, kugel, vegetables, applesauce, dessert & beverage. Chicken fingers for children.

**\$15 Adults \$10 Children ages 6 - 12. Children ages 5 and under are free.**

Those interested in dinner should make reservations as soon as possible.

Make check payable to the Jewish Federation of Reading. 1700 City Line Street, Reading, PA 19604.

**2008 UJA FEDERATION SUPER SUNDAY IS MARCH 16**

VOLUNTEER TO BE A SUPER SUNDAY CAMPAIGN VOLUNTEER BY CALLING THE JEWISH FEDERATION AT 610-921-2766 OR EMAIL JFRBARBARAN@COMCAST.NET  
CAN'T VOLUNTEER..... YOU CAN HELP BY ANSWERING YOUR PHONE  
AND MAKING A 2008 CAMPAIGN PLEDGE!

# PRESIDENT

*Continued from Page 1*

was always an emphatic, “No”. He told them to wait a few years, to get a better job or he gave similar rejections. Harriet became convinced she was going to become, in the then current phrase, an old maid. Then she and Bob began dating.

At the time Harriet worked at the library at the University of Pennsylvania. One Wednesday night she said that she was going into Center City with some friends after work to have dinner and go to the stores. Around 8:30 that evening our doorbell rang, and I, then 10 years old, answered it. I was delighted to see that it was a telegraph delivery man. My parents reacted differently; telegrams were always bad news. They opened it and read the following: “Bob and I got married. Wish us luck. Love Harriet” To say that my parents’ reactions were less than joyful is something of an understatement. Although this was pre-space age, they went ballistic. They were furious, angry and upset. I am sure they were also worried and fearful. For my part, I was trying to figure out how my sister had gotten married and I had missed the party.

Then my parents walked around the block to the next street where Bob lived to have a “Discussion” with his family. I was also not invited to that. However, my information is that the “Discussion” was quite lively and spirited. Bob’s family consisted of his mother, aunt and grandmother; they, and only they, were at home. This must have been very unsatisfying for Dad as this clearly narrowed the “Discussion”. Then Mom and Dad came home. Dad called a friend who was a Philadelphia detective for advice. He tracked the numbers on the telegram to Elkton, Md.

Dad thought about this information for a bit and said, “They were married in Elkton and they are driving. They’re going to go to Miami for their honeymoon. And, if they are going to Miami, they will stop in Washington tonight.

This conclusion prompted a call to my mother’s brother in Washington, Uncle Sam. They explained what had occurred and then gave him an assignment, “Find them! And do it quickly, before.... (Although this is a Reform Temple, there are limits.) Uncle Sam, who was a prince of a man, opened the Yellow Pages to ‘Hotels’ and began calling. Meanwhile, Harriet and Bob pulled into Washington (I told you Dad was shrewd) and randomly chose a hotel, the Ambassador. Remember the name. They went up to their room and 10 minutes later the phone rang. Bob hesitantly picked up the phone, mistakenly believing no one

knew where they were. So he was no little bit surprised to hear, “Hello Bob, this is Uncle Sam.” (“Ambassador Hotel begins with the letter ‘A’; it was the first place he called.)

He told them that Dad and Mom were worried and asked Harriet to call home. She was too scared to do it. He assured them he would not tell my parents he had found them. But they checked out anyway and continued driving south.

The rest of the story is denouement. After this rocky start, their marriage lasted longer than most. They had four children. Dad finally reconciled with them a year later when their first son was born; Mom had, of course, not waited that long. And although I had thought I wouldn’t get to go to a party, with the birth of a baby, there was a party.

## Shomeir Yisrael Guardian of Israel

a contemporary Sabbath service  
composed by Ben Steinberg

featuring

Cantor Mark E. Kushner  
and  
The Longacre Quartet

Congregation Keshet Zion  
Main Sanctuary  
1245 Perkiomen Avenue


Friday, March 28, 2008

8:00 PM

Reception following the concert.  
The community is welcome.



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## Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

I thank the following members who made donations to the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund in memory of my grandmother Mildred Platt

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Sue & Herb Wachs  
Barb & Dave Bender  
Susan Schlanger  
Lorri & Yoni Oziri  
Edith Mendelsohn  
Donna Oaks  
Kaye & Bob Ullman

In memory of her husband, Larry Schlanger  
Susan Schlanger

In memory of her husband, Ralph  
Pauline Griesemer

In honor of the Temple's URJ Belin Award  
Edith Mendelsohn

In gratitude for my visits  
Judy & Scott Kaneff

In memory of Sylvia Feuerbacher  
Marjorie Wolf & family

## Building Fund

In memory of Mildred Platt  
Harriet Baskin

## Religious School Fund

In memory of Mildred Platt  
The Driben Family  
The Egolf Family

## Landscaping Fund

In honor of the Gernsheimer Family  
Anonymous donor

## Music Fund

In memory of George J. Balchunas  
David & Jeri Kozloff

## Florence Frank Offering Fund

To Mrs. Rae Rudnick on her birthday anniversary  
Mrs. Dorothy Schlanger

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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.

## Perpetual Memorials

### March 1-8

Frances Silberstein  
Betty Herman  
Rachel Loeb  
Adeline Reidenberg  
Isaac L. Scherck  
Bessie Meyer  
Roy P. Hirshland

### March 9-15

Jeanette Miller Brenner  
Jean Gilbert

### Irving Popkin

Kathryn H. Soltau  
Rachel Loeb Stein

### March 16-22

Solly L. Katz  
Esther Aal  
Jane Henry  
Eugene H. Meyer  
Emanuel Hammel  
Henry Loeb

### March 23-31

Darcy Lou Spinrad  
Jettchen Katz  
Hilda Klevansky  
Raymond Hammel  
Lucy Jaschek  
Evelyn Imber  
Joseph Schlanger  
Jochen Jaschek  
Harold I. Miller

## Updates on Michael Levy

We would like to thank you for your continued care. If you would like to follow up with Michael's progress you can do so by visiting and registering at a Web site designed for this purpose.

Go to [www.carepages.com](http://www.carepages.com). Follow the instructions to register with carepages by assigning yourself a member name and password. You will have an option of Visiting a Care Page and Michael's page is: MichaelLevy2008.

Whenever we do an update on Michael you should get an e-mail informing you of an update on his page. It really has been a great way for family and friends to keep informed. Please continue to keep Michael in your prayers.

Jeanine, Alison and Jessie Levy

## ABOUT OUR NEWSLETTER

**Editor:** Mark Nemirow

**Assistant editor:** Donna Oaks

To get an item in the bulletin, contact Mark at [Marknem@aol.com](mailto:Marknem@aol.com) or 610-370-2533, or contact the Temple office.

**Deadline for April bulletin:**  
**March 5**

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

## The Temple Online

[www.ohebsholom.org](http://www.ohebsholom.org)

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# March Simchas

## Anniversaries

Dr. & Mrs. Alan Weisberg	March 5
Mr. & Mrs. Albert Schneider	March 20
Mr. & Mrs. Rick Flynn	March 26
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Henry	March 29

## Birthdays

Neil Eisenberg	March 1
Mark Nemirow	March 3
Kaye Ullman	March 5
Steve Gelb	March 8
Blair Hogg	March 9
Sandra Fishman	March 10
Mack Gibson	March 11
Barbara Bender	March 13
Dr. Mildred Gordon	March 13
Renee Seidel	March 15
Dr. Scott Kaneff	March 16
Dr. Seth Rosenzweig	March 16
Dr. Benjamin Schlechter	March 20
Norma Beckerman	March 21
Louise Wiener	March 21
Evelyn Goodman	March 22
Helen Rappoport	March 23
Judy M. Schonberger	March 23
Scott Stein	March 23
Nan Kurlancheek	March 25
David Spillerman	March 25
Jonathan Primack	March 29
Albert Schneider	March 31

# Saturday morning service a secret too well-kept

By Nancy J. Knoblauch

As old age has crept up on me while I wasn't looking, and since I'm still living on the other side of town (in Exeter Township, a whole 20 minutes away from the Temple!), I've become a less and less frequent participant in Friday night services.

Besides that, I've long believed a Shabbat morning service is preferable to one held the evening prior to Sabbath day. I am fully aware of the difficulties coming on Saturday morning presents. Some of them are even logical.

This being the case, I have been quite regular in attendance at the one Sabbath morning service we have on our schedule — the morning after the first Friday of each month. And it is a joy.

Here's the paradox. On the one hand, I'm sorry we seldom have

more than 20 in attendance at this service, and frequently there isn't a minyan. When we lack the traditional 10, Rabbi Brian holds a Torah study/discussion session in place of service.

G-d forgive me, but I like those sessions better than a regular service, but obviously, that's not the point.

We are, whether we like to admit it or not, invariably enriched by attending worship services with fellow congregants, even if conducted by someone who's not very good at it. We are blessed to have someone as our rabbi who *is*.

I sometimes think the first Sabbath/Saturday morning is something congregants don't know about, as if it's a best kept secret. Part of me hates to think of it getting popular, because, well, you get the point.

And it's *not* the point.



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- Week 1: Scholars present two positions. (Learners may submit questions)
- Week 2: Scholars rebut and challenge.
- Week 3: Scholars respond to submitted questions.
- Week 4: The Last Word.

These and those are the words of the Living God,  
*Eruvim 13b*

Sign up for *Eilu V'Eilu* at [urj.org/torah/ten/eilu](http://urj.org/torah/ten/eilu)

# Moving?

A nearby Reform congregation is eager to welcome you to your new community

Sign up yourself, friends and/or family at [www.synagoguematch.org](http://www.synagoguematch.org) or send your new contact information to your current Reform congregation. Synagogues located near your new address will be notified of your arrival to welcome you to your new home.

A Project of the Union for Reform Judaism-CCAR Commission on Outreach and Synagogue Community

UNION FOR REFORM JUDAISM

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Connecting Jews Who Move

## NEWS FROM THE UNION

### Celebrate Pesach

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. Logon to [www.urj.org/holidays/pesach](http://www.urj.org/holidays/pesach) to learn more.

### Shabbat Sha-blog!

Do you try to make Shabbat different from the rest of the week? Are you looking for ways to make that happen? Log onto the Shabbat Blog and join the Reform Movement-wide conversation about Shabbat. Read, comment on the posts and send us your ideas. Logon today at [www.blogs.rj.org/shabbat](http://www.blogs.rj.org/shabbat) to start "Sh-blogging."

### Cracking the DNA Code

The spring *Reform Judaism* magazine's cover story on what cutting-edge DNA research can tell us about who we are as a people raises as many questions as it answers. To help you discuss the article's ramifications with your family and others, log on to the discussion and study guide. You'll also find guides to previous articles from the magazine on issues ranging from Outreach to Israel's Fence, Drawing God Near to Truth or Consequences. Visit [www.reformjudaismmag.org/discussion\\_study\\_guides](http://www.reformjudaismmag.org/discussion_study_guides).

### Summer Mitzvah Corps for Teens

Mitzvah Corps provides opportunities for young people to provide hands-on programs based on Jewish social and ethical issues to communities that need the energy, dedication, and love that only comes from helping others. Open to high school students entering sophomore through senior year, Mitzvah Corps programs will take place in Atlanta, Costa Rica, New Jersey, New Orleans, San Francisco and the URJ Kutz Campus. For more information, visit [www.mitzvahcorps.org](http://www.mitzvahcorps.org) or 212.650.4071.

### Summer Learning Retreat for Adults

Ready for some high level, intensive study this summer? Then the Union's Adult Study Retreat is for you! This year's retreat at Franklin Pierce University in Rindge, N.H., will focus on Israel@60, with wonderful faculty including Mira Angrist, Rabbi Sue Levi Elwell, Lisa Grant, Anat Hoffman, Rabbi Jan Katzew, Rabbi Michael Morgan, Rabbi David Nelson, Rabbi Marc Rosen-

stein and Rabbi Mark Washofsky. Act now, because registration fills quickly. For more information please visit [www.urj.org/educate/adultstudy/summer/](http://www.urj.org/educate/adultstudy/summer/) or contact Rabbi Joan Glazer Farber at [jfarber@urj.org](mailto:jfarber@urj.org).

### Israeli Summer School for Adults

Why should the kids have all this fun? This summer, for the first time, the Union for Reform Judaism will offer an EIE-Adult Summer Institute in Israel, July 13-August 3, 2008. Stay on the beautiful Kibbutz Tzuba. Travel throughout Israel as we take an historical journey from Biblical times to the present. Registration is now open. Visit [www.urj.org/educate/adultstudy/eieadult/](http://www.urj.org/educate/adultstudy/eieadult/) or contact Rabbi Joan Glazer Farber at [jfarber@urj.org](mailto:jfarber@urj.org) for more information.

### The Reform Family Experience: Israel Beyond the Tour Bus

You are invited to a unique Israel Encounter Aug. 13 - 23. Designed for individuals, couples or families, the program provides a taste of Reform Jewish life and an insider's view of Israel. It can serve as a great prelude for those considering aliyah, a sabbatical year or other long-term experience in Israel. Stay at a kibbutz, enjoy hiking, kayaking and wine-tasting in the Golan, participate in tikkun olam projects in Tel Aviv and Yafo, explore Jerusalem and more. For more details and registration visit [www.arza.org/rfe](http://www.arza.org/rfe) or contact Liran Gazit, Shlichat Aliyah for the Reform Movement at [lgazit@arza.org](mailto:lgazit@arza.org) or 212-339-6069.



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Who: Harlam Alumni and Families (22 and older)  
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To receive an invitation, send your contact information to  
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