



Our Temple

October 2005

Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom

Vol. 42 No. 2

Notes from the President

Resolve to help heal troubled world

By Scott Bram
President

On behalf of myself and my family, I want to wish everyone a new year of peace and prosperity.

We already have a lot to be thankful for. There are people in Louisiana and Mississippi who lost everything they had

in the recent hurricane. Some even lost their lives. The survivors suffered terribly as we all know.

There are people around the world who still endure and succumb to unspeakable horrors at the hand of nature or other human beings. We know about crime and vehicular accidents. Some

people experience layoffs or business downturns. Few of us, thank God, have suffered from being trapped in a natural or man-made catastrophe from which there was no help or escape.

I have been reading Roman Vichniac's "A Vanished World" and Martin Gilbert's

(Continued on page 3)

From the Rabbi's Study

High Holidays, Passover connected

This past spring, we gathered around dining room tables, ate matzah and recalled the Exodus. To guide us through this meal with all its

**Rabbi Brian
Michelson**

formality is the Haggadah-literally "the telling". In it, we read of

great accomplishments and the struggles of our ancestors. We are asked to remember the times of trouble and the moments of gratitude. It may seem strange to refer to Passover as we prepare for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. However, these two holiday seasons are linked in a very interesting way.

On Passover, we are commanded to gather and tell the story of our people's journey from the oppression of slavery to the freedom. It is when, in a manner of speaking, we celebrate the New Year of the Jewish people. We celebrate and recall our collective past.

During the High Holidays, we do not recall the story of our ancestors, rather, we take time to stop and tell the story of our own, personal journeys. Instead of having a Haggadah to guide our journey, we have the Machzor — the High Holiday prayerbook. The Machzor challenges us to reflect on our own lives,

our personal journeys. It gives us the opportunity to focus on our individual accomplishments and struggles.

We review our life stories, at this time of the year, as part of a much larger process: T'shuvah, repentance. T'shuvah is the spiritual practice of redirecting our lives for the coming year. True T'shuvah begins as we ask ourselves questions about the year that is ending. How have I acted in the past year? Whom have I hurt? How have I hurt myself? We must remember that our personal choices are responsible for the lives we have led. T'shuvah also reminds us that we have the power to make adjustments in our lives.

As we enter this important season on the Jewish calendar, may we each take the time to remember our lives over the past year and work towards improving ourselves, our community, and the world in which we live.

October Highlights

Monday-Tuesday, Oct. 3-4: Rosh Hashanah (see page 6)

Friday, Oct. 7: Shabbat service, 6 p.m.

Saturday, Oct. 5: Shabbat service, 10 a.m.

Sunday, Oct. 9: Service at Mount Sinai Cemetery, 1 p.m.

Wednesday-Thursday, Oct. 12-13: Yom Kippur (see page 6)

Sunday, Oct. 16: Temple Brotherhood (Men's Club), 9:30 a.m.

Monday, Oct. 17: Erev Sukkot (see page 6)

Saturday, Oct. 22: Tot Shabbat Sukkot outing to farm, 5 p.m.

Monday, Oct. 24: Simchat Torah and Consecration service, 7 p.m.

Friday night services at 7:45 unless otherwise noted
Babysitting available at all services

*Bulletin sponsored by
Rosalye Yashek*

*in memory of
Lucy and Eugen Yashek
and Jochen Jaschek*

Religious School News**School year gets off to an exciting start**

By **Beth Bruck and Cheryl Spillerman**
Religious School Administrators

It was great to see everyone gathered in the sanctuary on Sept. 11 as we began our new school year, and already a whole month has passed! Hebrew School began September 13 — it has been very exciting (and a little strange) to have five Tuesday classes instead of only three.

Unlike most years when we observe the High Holy Days in September, this year the students had a great opportunity

to learn and talk about Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur before the holidays actually arrived. Hopefully, everyone will attend services with a greater understanding and appreciation of these very special days.

In addition to the new staff members we mentioned last month, we also welcome Marla Baksic. She joins us as the Hebrew teacher for our 6th graders.

As a reminder, there will be no Hebrew School on Oct. 4 in observance

of Rosh Hashanah, as well as Oct. 18 as we celebrate Sukkot.

As always, please feel free to contact us with any concerns, suggestions, etc. that you may have — we want Religious School to be a meaningful experience for all.

Happy birthday to Hannah Glassmire and Tristan Haas on Oct. 4 and Ian Gavigan on Oct. 20!

We hope everyone will have the opportunity to share the High Holy Days with friends and family and wish you all a

Perpetual Memorials**October 2 to October 8**

Gerald Frank
Henry Phillip King
Sol Greenstein
Nathan R. Liever
Samuel Sinaink
Maurice Gumpel
Dr. Sidney J. Sondheim
Justin J. Baumann
Samuel B. Cohen

October 9 to October 15

Leon Klevansky
Geraldine G. Salpeter
Nathan Fein
Else Gerson-Simon
Hilda Bodenheimer

October 16 to October 22

Jack H. Blumberg
Jane R. Pokrass
Jacob Morris Cohn
Sadie R. Newman
Samuel J. Sondheim

Ruth G. Greenberg
Theodore Rachlin
Emanuel Jacobs
Edith Luria
Yetta Levitz

October 23 to October 29

Rebecca Liever
Anna G. Popkin
Eve Frankel
Molly Miller
Morris Eisman

October 30 to November 5

Joseph Bloch
Lily D. Heilbron
Arthur Humberg
Sig S. Schweriner
Jacob Weitzenkorn
Lea Rachel Heiman
Daniel Epstein
Eleanor Gould
Eugen Jaschek
I. G. Schneeberger

We need socks and underwear, please!**From the Social Action Committee**

When you're on your feet all day looking for a job or caring for your children, a good pair of socks and clean underwear can make a big difference. Most of us are lucky enough to take such small comforts for granted. But many people in Berks County, including guests at Opportunity House, lack the money for such basic necessities.

"If we give a pair of socks to two people, 10 people come behind looking for them too," says Delia McLendon Vice President for Shelter Services at

Opportunity House. She notes that children at Opportunity House often wear dirty socks since they don't have extras. Moreover, as the weather cools, socks become more important to keep people warm.

The good news is that you can easily help. The Social Action Committee is sponsoring a sock and underwear collection to benefit the guests and clients of Opportunity House. Please bring to the Temple, anytime until Oct. 16, new or used socks for adults or children, and new underwear for adults or children.

Collection boxes can be found in the rotunda and outside the Religious School office.

Many of us in the congregation have gotten to know Opportunity House and all of the good work that it does. Our community is fortunate to have Opportunity House which strives to meet the immediate needs of the poorest among us — providing a meal and a safe place to stay — as well as the support to build a strong future through job training, childcare, and transitional housing.

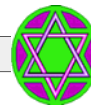
Please do your part — bring those

The Temple Online

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Sisterhood news

Helping bring the New Year to a good start

By Carol Freed and Karen Robinson

Greetings to all!! Hope everyone will be starting out the New Year both healthy and happy!! Don't forget to join us for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur services and the receptions afterwards! We look forward to having a big crowd!!

The Sisterhood will be publishing an updated RCOS Directory this year. So please complete and return the form you will receive to verify the information for the directory. For those of you who are camera-shy, it will be a relief to know that the directory will not include photos

this year.

Don't forget to support the temple by purchasing your tickets for Boscov's Friends Helping Friends Day. For a \$5 admission ticket, on Tuesday Oct. 18, you will receive 25% off your Boscov's purchases, plus be eligible to win some great prizes!! The best part.....100% of the ticket money goes to the Temple!!

Please don't forget to stop by the gift shop and check out some of our new items, including the very beautiful greeting cards made by Eve Pardo. See if you recognize some of the photos on the

front of the cards!!

We are planning a year filled with some exciting events. Here are some dates to keep open for the year:

Nov. 16 — Joint Women's Luncheon at the JCC

Dec. 18 — Joint meeting with Hadassah

March 10 — Sisterhood Shabbat

April 5 — Donor Luncheon

May 20 — Comedy Night

We will keep you updated on any new additions to our above list. Have a happy New Year!!

PRESIDENT

(Continued from page 1)

"A History of the Jews in the 20th Century." The pictures and the stories that accompany them are heartbreaking. Praying for peace in a world like ours doesn't seem to be enough to bring about change. We need to speak out and act and support others who are willing to try and

change things for the better and truly stand up for what is right.

We seem to live under a very thin veil of civilization that crumbles into chaos when the normal forces of law and order are removed. Respect for individuals or even nations still often rests on being stronger than the ever present opponent. Therefore, I

would say that this year we should also pray and resolve to be strong where we can, defend the weak, speak up for what is right and, thereby, ultimately protect ourselves. Then we can truly remain thankful, not only for the blessings we enjoy now, but also those we help to create in the future.

L'Shana Tovah.

Brotherhood News

Growing beyond yourself - An unending challenge

By David Goldstein

Brotherhood President

It is funny. We are all forever trying to grow, to change ourselves, to make ourselves better people and to treat each other better. G-d demands it of us and we demand it of ourselves. Hillel put it best when asked to recite the entire Torah while standing on one foot. He replied, "What is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbor: that is the whole Torah while

the rest is commentary; go and learn it." Have we learned that basic lesson yet?

No, not really. We are still hateful in most things. We are derisive in our politics, we are quick to anger, and we are hateful in our interactions with others. And whether it is conscious or not, I am not sure it matters. I guess what matters in the end is that we have hope. Hope that we will evolve as a species and not take each other for granted. That is what is so wonderful about this time of year.

G-d is giving us the day of Yom Kippur to stop and say "Snap out of it! Think about what you are doing!" Every year, we are given the opportunity to think about how we can make this planet we call home a better place. How can we impact our neighbor? How can we impact ourselves? When I look at the scenes from New Orleans, that is what I think about. On that note, I would like to thank all those involved in collecting supplies for those afflicted by the hurricane. Just a thought for the High Holidays.

This month, your Temple Brotherhood (formerly Men's Club) to encourage personal growth, will be presenting a video on the Kabbalah as well as a discussion on how the Kabbalah seems to be impacting secular society. This presentation will be at our Oct. 16 meeting at 9:30 a.m. All are welcome to attend.

NEWSLETTER STAFF

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Sidney L. Symons — Advertising/Sponsorships Manager

To get an item in the bulletin, call Mark, 610-370-2533 (Marknem@aol.com) or

Temple office, 610-375-6043.

Next deadline, Oct. 5



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. This fund will consider aiding someone during difficult, needy periods.

In honor of Richard Henry's special birthday
Shirley & Norman Greenbaum

In memory of Irvin Balis
Bob & Kaye Ullman
Maxine & Dick Henry

Best wishes for a speedy recovery to Lee Katz
Maxine & Dick Henry

In memory of Edward Rosner
The Beck Family

We want to thank all of our friends who sent us good wishes For Our 55th wedding anniversary. Your thoughtfulness is deeply appreciated.

Phyllis and Sid Knoblauch

The members of RCOS Sisterhood would like to say a SPECIAL THANK YOU to **Nancy and Murry Knoblauch** for their donation to our organization.

Focus on the Food Festival

It takes all types to make a successful festival

By **Jeri Kozloff**

Have you heard the one about the two fonts that walked into a bar and ordered drinks?

"Sorry," said the bartender, "we don't serve your type."

Well at the RCOS Food Festival we serve ALL types of people all types of Jewish delicacies. The question is, what

type are you?

Are you the type who:

Placed or obtained an ad in the program book?

Sells platter tickets?

Puts up posters in local businesses and offices?

Invites friends to join you for the festival?

Bakes and cooks festival goodies?

Comes to help set up, serve, and clean up during the festival weekend?

If your answer to these questions was "yes" than you're our type of RCOS member.

If not, there's still time to become one before Nov. 6.

Sharing warm thoughts with a dearly departed friend

By **Nancy Knoblauch**

In October last year, Gerry Frank left our congregation for the Eternal One. The dedication of his headstone took place — in the rain, at graveside, on Sunday, Aug. 28, about 11 months after his passing, as is our custom. I wrote a poem for the occasion.

IT HAS BEEN SAID

It has been said as we die the last sense we lose is our hearing

Surely, then, souls can hear - are listening

Our thoughts and prayers can be directed to them especially when we gather, as we do on days of remembrance with family and community

We wish our departed loved ones rest, but perhaps they're dancing about like kids and singing (even if they never did) in the beyond we cannot see or working crossword puzzles or playing soccer or playing chess

Remembering the best we offer our thanks for what we've shared and for the blessing of our loves

The curious thing was, as I wrote the poem and was thinking about what pleasant activities souls might be enjoying, crossword puzzles simply popped into my head, first thing, though I seldom do them myself. I don't play soccer or chess, either, but leaving that aside, later that morning of writing, I spoke with Marilyn, Gerry's widow, and she mentioned in passing she had lately taken up doing crossword puzzles because doing them was something Gerry had always enjoyed. I never knew that about him.

Make of this what you will. I choose to think Gerry's chuckling over it, that we all stay connected. I like the idea of spiritual mailboxes in which we are able to put messages of greeting and remembrance for friends and loved ones when thoughts of them come to us as we go through our living days. It's just a notion, but who can say?

Our traditional morning prayers assert, or perhaps remind God, "...the soul which Thou hast set within me is pure ... and Thou preservest it within me. Thou wilt reclaim it from me; but Thou wilt restore it to me in the life to come."

Nothing mentioned here about spiritual mailboxes, but isn't this sort of speculation also part of our tradition?

Remember our Mitzvah Projects:

To aid the Hurricane Katrina relief effort, send donations to Union for Reform Judaism, 633 Third Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017 or <http://urj.org/give/>

Won't you pick up a few extra items for our Food Bank Barrel in the Rotunda area of the Temple? During the summer we collect far less food for the less fortunate.

Also, don't forget the items we collect for Opportunity House. Travel size shampoos, hand lotions, soaps,



Money matters: Off to a good start

By **Judith Kraines**

Treasurer

We are starting our financial year on good footing. Many thanks to the 120 families who made their pledge promptly. The total pledges at the end of August were \$170,034, down \$166 from a year ago. If you haven't yet sent in your pledge, please do so now. We really need to know how much income to expect this year. We budgeted \$255,000, and we really need to hit that goal to stay in the black.

We ended last year with more money than anticipated. However, most of it was for the new year. For the year just ended, we had \$15,800 in unfulfilled pledges. The finance committee is working to lower this figure. Where there is hardship, amounts will be adjusted.

The finance committee made two crucial decisions at its fall meetings. We have worried for several years because we had no reserve for maintenance of our beautiful building. We are asking the Board of Trustees to designate New

Member Assessments for a maintenance/capital improvement fund. About \$28,000 has accumulated so far, and this is a good start. (Just painting our sanctuary will cost upwards of \$20,000.)

Outstanding New Member Assessments total \$34,580. Portions of this are due yearly. If your family owes a New Member Assessment, please try to budget a payment toward it each year. That will keep our reserve healthy.

Our second decision is to begin paying down our two building loans at a faster rate. Finance Committee member Herb Wachs computed that for every \$100 we pay now, we save \$185 at the end of the loan!

The balance due on our two loans was \$455,600 at June 30. If we make just the scheduled payments through May, 2008, the payoff amount will be \$375,290. I'd like to reduce that payoff to \$250,000 (which we can refinance).

We will keep on hand enough money (from our prior capital campaign) to make the payments on our loans for the next three years. Any additional funds will be

applied to principal as they are available.

Our first check to pay down the loans - for \$4,000 - has already arrived! It's from our Food Festival ad book committee. They did a fantastic job! Their contribution cuts \$7,400 from our final loan payment. Way to go ad book committee! Please congratulate and thank them.

If you have any questions about the

Don't forget our fund-raising programs

Food Certificates — purchased through Carole Kutscher, Barbara Rosenzweig, and Sue Wolfe

Panera Coupon Strips for bagels, purchased through the Temple office.

Viva's Sunday 10% donation — Just present a current copy of the newsletter and the Temple gets a donation.

Empties4Cash - recycled empty, used cartridges and earn extra dollars for our Temple.

Greater Temple Fund

Wishing everyone a Healthy, Happy, Prosperous New Year
Lynn & Tiff Bates

In memory of Irvin Balis
Mildred Ruttenberg
Norma C. Dashe

In memory of Andrew Brenner Nelson, nephew of Sue and George Viener
Bob & Kaye Ullman

Rabbi's

Discretionary Fund

In memory of my husband, Irvin Balis
Ruth Balis

In memory of Jean Wolf
Mildred & Ivan Gordon

In memory of Irvin Balis
Ruth & Hal Cohn

In thanks to RCOS for use of the building
World Affairs Council of Reading

& Berks County

New Building Fund

General donation

Richard D. & Carmen D. Fisher

In memory of Sarah Halperin
Harriet Baskin

In memory of Irvin Balis
Eric & Deborah Zelnick

Helen J. Rappoport
Conrad & Ruth Heisman
Hilde Gernsheimer & Fred Jakobs
Norma & Marty Beckerman
Harriet Baskin

In memory of Sue Viener's nephew
Barbara & Michael Perilstein

In honor of Ryan Bram's Bar Mitzvah
Rosalye L. Yashek

Sondheim Floral Fund

In memory of the Yahrzeit of Milton Mendelsohn, Gertrude, Benjamin Mendelsohn, and Lena Bideman

Edith Mendelsohn

Landscaping:

Holocaust Garden
In honor of Philip Perilstein's engagement
Sue & Herb Wachs

Wishes for continued recovery to Lee Katz
Sue & Herb Wachs

In memory of Marvin Lerner
Sue & Herb Wachs

In memory of Irvin Balis
Sue & Herb Wachs

Shirley K. Jacobs Religious School Fund

In memory of Irvin Balis
Murry & Nancy Knoblauch

Katrina Relief

The following have donated gift cards to the Temple's Katrina Relief collection:

Herb & Phyllis Jacoby

Anne Missan

Joyce & Paul Pottash

Jeffrey & Ilene Weizer

Tandy & David Goldstein

Lisa & Jeffrey Nemeroff



Sisterhood Florence Frank Offering Fund

To Mrs. Ruth Balis in memory of her husband Irvin
Mr. & Mrs. Gene Friedman
Mrs. Dorothy Schlanger
Mrs. Sue Schlanger
Mrs. Edith Blanck

To Gary Pearlman in memory of his brother
Mrs. Dorothy Schlanger

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

NEW DIRECTORY

Sisterhood is in the process of putting together a new directory for the Temple. Please fill out the information form you have received and return it to the Temple office.

Get to know our student cantor "up close and personal"

Providing home hospitality for Leah Holland is a wonderful way to share in our congregation's exemplary student cantor program.

For information and/or to volunteer call Jeri

High Holidays Schedule

Erev Rosh Hashanah: Monday, Oct. 3, 8 p.m.

Rosh Hashanah: Tuesday, Oct. 4

Morning service: 10 a.m.

Family service: 4 p.m.

Tashlich: 5:45 p.m., Stone House, Wyomissing

Mt. Sinai Cemetery Service: Sunday, Oct. 9, 1 p.m.

Yom Kippur Kol Nidre: Wednesday, Oct. 12, 8 p.m.

Yom Kippur: Thursday, Oct. 13

Morning service: 9:30 a.m.

Children's service: 1:30 p.m.

Study session: 12:15-2:15 p.m. (approximately)

Afternoon service: 2:30 p.m. (approximately)

Yizkor service: 4:30 p.m. (approximately)

Concluding service: 5 p.m. (approximately)

Sukkah decorating and meal: Monday, Oct. 17

Decorating: 5:30 p.m.; Service: 7 p.m. (RSVP by Oct. 10)

Simchat Torah/Consecration service

Monday, Oct. 24, 7 p.m.



REFORM CONGREGATION OHEB SHOLOM

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