



# OUR TEMPLE

Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom

September 2011/Elul 5771-Tishrei 5772

## Notes from the president

### Some thoughts on our past, future at RCOS

By Scott Davis  
President

I've been president of RCOS for two months. I don't feel the awesome responsibility and pressure that President Obama is experiencing — thank goodness. However, I do think about RCOS and its congregants essentially on a daily basis. In my first article

for the Temple bulletin I thought it would be relevant for you to know something about the person you elected as president. I wanted to provide you with a brief review of my involvement at RCOS and some thoughts I have about the future of RCOS.

My wife, Sandy, and I have been members of RCOS almost

30 years. During this time I've had different levels of involvement at RCOS.

First there was taking Adam and Joshua, our two sons, to religious school. The vision was to help our sons develop, enhance and learn about their Jewish identity (Beit Midrash-House of Study.)

*Continued on Page 2*

## From the rabbi's study

### An education to be proud of

I do not normally like to brag, but something happened this summer that made me have a bit of pride in what we are doing at Oheb Sholom. It is something I think all our members should know.

Every summer I go up for two weeks to work at URJ Camp Harlam. Many of you have heard me talk about how much I enjoy my time at camp working with young people from all across the Mid-Atlantic States. As a rabbi, I go to teach, play, and be with the campers and the counselors as a Jewish presence and role model. It is also an opportunity to work with and meet new colleagues and old friends. This is the only two weeks of the year that it is acceptable for me to show up to work in shorts and

a T-shirt. This year Holly and I worked with the unit called Kineret, the incoming sixth graders. We had four Temple children in our unit.

Each unit takes responsibility for putting together and leading either an Erev Shabbat service or a Saturday morning service. This year, Kineret's service was the very first Friday night, only two days after camp started. The staff and campers worked hard and put together a really wonderful service full of original readings and beautiful music. After the service, it dawned on me that three out of our four students had actively participated in the service and had volunteered to read sections in Hebrew. They could have done something as simple as work on the art projects and welcome signs, but they chose

to stand up in front of more than 700 people and help to lead the service.

The next morning Gabriella's unit led services and one of our students, Brett Driben, volunteered to read Torah. During the service (I know it's terrible the Rabbi having a conversation during the service. What can I tell you, we are human too.) Holly pointed out to me that 75 percent of our students who were eligible to read Torah had done so over the past two years.

Recently one of our parents took a group of our students to a Bat Mitzvah in the Philadelphia area. He told me that our kids knew the entire service and were able to sing along and participate. He also told me that the conversation in the car on the way home focused on the

*Continued on Page 2*

## September Highlights

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

**Friday, Sept. 2:**  
Shabbat service, 6 p.m.

**Saturday, Sept. 3:**  
Shabbat service, 10 a.m.

**Saturday, Sept. 10:**  
Tot Shabbat, 10 a.m.

**Saturday, Sept. 24:**  
Selichot program, 8:30 p.m., service 11 p.m.

**Wednesday, Sept. 28:**  
Rosh Hashanah, 8 p.m., followed by reception

**Thursday, Sept. 29:**  
Rosh Hashanah, 10 a.m.; Family service (up to grade 2), 4 p.m.; Tashlich, 5:30 p.m., creek at Reading Public Museum)

**Sunday, Oct. 2:**  
Cemetery Service, 1 p.m.

**Rabbi Brian I. Michelson**

### THIS ISSUE SPONSORED BY

**Rosalind Hyman**, in loving memory of my husband, Lee and

**Kaye & Bob Ullman**, in loving memory of Dorothy K. Rosenthal and Jacob Charles Goldsmith

### ATTENTION HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS!

Join our new Youth Group for a special movie night on Saturday, Sept. 17, at 7 p.m.. Watch for details.

# PRESIDENT

*Continued from Page 1*

Second was the post Bar Mitzvah phase. As a family we did not come to Temple very often at this time. I can acknowledge that I lacked a clear vision in my relationship with RCOS. However, we did regularly attend High Holiday Services (Beit T'Filah - House of Prayer.)

Thirdly, since the transition of RCOS moving from Reading to Wyomissing and Rabbi Michelson joining RCOS I have become increasingly more involved at RCOS. Yes, this has meant a greater commitment of time and resources, but also a deeper connection with Judaism and my congregational family, a sense of making a difference, and most satisfying a lot of laughter. The vision was wanting a more spiritual connection. The caveat for not getting involved was the concern would there still be a Reform congregation (Beit Ha-Kneset-House of Gathering.)

Perhaps you can relate to part of my involvement with RCOS or with a synagogue with which you were previously a member. I've gone through a transition in which I depended on others to provide a House of Study, Prayer and Gathering to helping to ensure the same opportunities for all RCOS congregants.

I'm grateful for the leaders and members

that preceded my joining RCOS as well as those since I've been a member. They understood the function of RCOS being a House of Study, Prayer, and Gathering. In short, they understood why RCOS "exists." Why we/RCOS exists is called a Mission Statement.

This year the Board of Trustees approved a Mission Statement developed by the Long Range Planning Committee:

"The mission of Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom is to strengthen our Reform Jewish Community through fulfilling religious, cultural and social experiences."

Please take a moment to reflect about how you have been grateful that RCOS, this house, exists.

I believe that we have all heard that attracting and maintaining membership to religious institutions regardless of denomination is the challenge with rare exceptions. Some of the reasons for this include the following: wondering if attending synagogue will make a difference in my spiritual life; with today's economic concerns does it make sense to commit part of my finances for membership; and in our hurried, harried society what is the attraction to gather at synagogue?

Fortunately the RCOS membership has

been relatively stable for the past few years. However, what does the future hold for RCOS? Part of the answer is the completion of the work by the Long Range Planning Committee, but that is the topic for another article. Another part of the answer is knowing how we want to look in the next few years. Being able to articulate how we want to look is called a Vision Statement. At the same board meeting the RCOS Mission Statement was approved the same process occurred to approve an RCOS Vision Statement.

"The vision of Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom is to continue to be a growing Jewish congregation that has strong congregant participation and dynamic programs that meet the needs of the Temple and the Jewish Community.

It's hard to believe that the High Holy Days are coming up. If not now then as you sit in synagogue during Rosh Hashanah, please think about what the RCOS vision can mean to you. In these Days of Awe please take a look at how you can be involved and continue your journey for the coming year at RCOS. Should you embrace the RCOS mission and vision I trust that you will experience the benefits of membership at RCOS.

Sandy and I wish you all a Happy and Healthy New Year.

# RABBI

*Continued from Page 1*

differences between what our students do and what they do in many other congregations. They saw the differences and they were proud to be doing so much.

I think it says a great deal about the education that we have been able to provide our students with, even being in a small, rural congregation. Each year the Education Committee; our administrator, Judy Synnamon; and I work to tweak and improve the quality of the educational program that

Oheb Sholom provides. There is always room to improve, but I think we have reason to be proud of the educational experience we are giving to our students.

Along with this news, I am happy to report that beginning this fall that the six younger students from Keshet Zion Synagogue will be joining our students for one day of Religious School each week. These six students will be attending the Sunday Judaic session with the RCOS children. This will enable the children from both congregations to get to know each other and work

together as a class. Despite challenges with a number of past attempts, this time we have been able to come to an agreement that was acceptable to both rabbis and boards with minimal negotiations. I see this as yet another positive step for RCOS and the greater Berks County Jewish community.

As we start this New Year, let us start it with pride and the knowledge that there is still a great deal for us to do. May 5772 be a year of health and blessing to you all

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

**Religious School News****Getting our year off to a good start****By Judy Synnamon***Religious School Director*

Welcome back to Religious School. The summer has flown by. The first day of Sunday Religious School will be Sept. 11 for Grades Pre-K through 7 from 9 a.m. – noon. The first day of Tuesday Hebrew School for Grades 3 through 7 will be Sept. 13 from 4:15 – 6 p.m.. I hope you all have received your registration packets and welcome letters in your email and will return them before the first day of school.

Please plan on staying in Temple for at least a portion of the morning on Sept. 11 for a school orientation. You will receive a School Year Calendar for this year's classes, services and events and a Religious School Manual during this orientation.

Please read and become familiar with the manual. It includes our policies, protocol and curriculum. You will be reminded of special events by my monthly articles in the Temple newsletter, flyers and emails. (Please make sure I have your most recent email address). The bulletin board outside the school office has the daily curriculum for each class and announcements for the school. Please review these items so you have the knowledge to discuss with your children what they accomplished in school that day and what will be happening in the future. Teachers also send home periodic emails with assignments and special events to keep you abreast of school happening. Remember, you are your child's greatest Jewish role model.

Also, families, please note that the Religious School will be selling grocery certificates during Religious School hours. If you don't buy GIFT CARDS from our synagogue, this is your chance to join the crowd. The cards come in \$25, \$50 and \$100 denominations and any Temple member can purchase them from Judy Synnamon during Religious School hours which are Tuesday from 3:30 p.m. to 6:15 p.m. and Sundays from 8:30 a.m. to 12:15p.m. Checks (made out to RCOS) or cash will do.

The purchase of these gift cards will support the synagogue and the Religious School. If you do use gift cards but run out or need an instant gift card, stop by and purchase one before your shopping.

**Help needed for Opportunity House lunches****By Lynn Driben**

Each year, members of our congregation graciously donate their time to help prepare and serve lunch at Opportunity House, a shelter in Reading which provides services to at-risk adults and children. I have scheduled five Sundays to provide

lunch. Religious School students will help on three of the dates. I am looking for five or six volunteers from the congregation to help prepare and serve lunch on the other two Sundays between 10 a.m. and noon.

1. Lunch dates and volunteers needed are as follows:

**Oct. 30:** 7th grade class**Dec. 18:** CONGREGATION VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**March 18:** 6th grade class (half of the class)**March 25:** - 6th grade class (the other half of the class)**April 15:** CONGREGATION VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

2. Volunteers are also needed to prepare Spanish rice and fruit salad prior to each of our five lunch dates (I take care of buying the ingredients). Please let me know if you can prepare the rice or fruit salad.

3. The Temple budget covers only part of the cost of the food. If you would like to help cover the food cost, please make out a check to the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund and PLEASE WRITE 'OPPORTUNITY HOUSE' IN THE MEMO SECTION OF YOUR CHECK. Any amount is welcome.

Contact me at lmdriben@com-cast.net or 610-775-7880 to volunteer and/or mail donations to the Temple office. Thank you!

**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 October issue is Sept. 5*

**The Temple Online**

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

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### Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

Thanking everyone for the Uniongrams, cards and good wishes we received on our special birthdays  
Jeff & Robin Lupowitz

To thank the rabbi for attending Evan's Bris  
Rich & Julie Alweis

In loving memory of Ruth Goldser & Phyllis Goldstan  
Hilde Gernsheimer

In loving memory of Ruth Goldser  
Scott & Sandy Davis

In loving memory of Howard Katz  
Scott & Sandy Davis

In loving memory of Faye Dombeck  
Scott & Sandy Davis

In loving memory of Harry Friedman  
Scott & Sandy Davis

In loving memory of Phyllis Goldstan  
Scott & Sandy Davis

Best wishes to Pat Frankel in her new home  
Helen Rappoport

In appreciation for the kindness & generosity shown us at the time of our mother's death  
The Goldstan Family

### Greater Temple Fund

To honor Adrienne Cardinal & Sue Wagner, the hard-working Rummage Sale Team  
Nancy Knoblauch

### General Fund

In honor of the Bat Mitzvah of JoJo Ure  
Scott & Sandy Davis

In honor of the Bar Mitzvah of Bryce Weizer  
Scott & Sandy Davis

In honor of the Bat Mitzvah of Rachel Jeffers  
Scott & Sandy Davis

In honor of the Bat Mitzvah of Hannah Walker  
Scott & Sandy Davis

In honor of the Bat Mitzvah of Alexa Chronister  
Scott & Sandy Davis

In loving memory of Phyllis Goldstan  
Nancy Knoblauch

### Music Fund

In honor of the special birthdays of Neil Hoffman & Marj Shearer  
Dave and Barbara Bender

### Landscaping Fund

Thanking everyone for the Uniongrams, cards, & good wishes I received for my graduation  
Jeremy Lupowitz

In loving memory of Ruth Goldser

Glenn & Gaye Corbin  
Mr. & Mrs. Elliott Tuckel  
Nancy Knoblauch  
Jim & Roseline Gehman

### Religious School Fund

In loving memory of Howard Katz  
The Driben Family

## Jane Henry Memorial Fund

The Jane Henry Memorial Fund will help anyone in need, particularly young people.  
In loving memory of Phyllis Goldstan  
Edna Pollak

## Florence Frank Offering Fund

To Mr. & Mrs. Bruce Cohen in memory of her mother  
Shirley & Gene Friedman

To Mr. Matt Goldstan and family in memory of his mother  
Shirley & Gene Friedman

To Drs. Leonard and Barbara Frank in memory of her mother  
Shirley & 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.

## Book Group

Sunday, Nov. 20,  
at 4 p.m.

We are reading "*Wherever You Go*" by Jon Leegant.

It's time for the High Holidays.  
Check out what's in store at the  
Sisterhood Gift Shop

for your gift-giving and religious needs.



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**Sisterhood News****Happy New Year from Sisterhood****By Eve Pardo**

It's a new year, and with this year comes your first new Sisterhood presidents since "Susan and Janine" took over in 2007. I put that in quotes because Susan Gelb and Janine Ure are a unit. We are very lucky to have had such a wonderful pair leading our organization for four years. They accomplished so much during their tenure, and they put countless hours into every project that they initiated.

Carol Freed and I have huge (but dainty) shoes to fill. We were vice presidents for two years under these excellent role models. We saw what a busy Sisterhood looks like. We saw what it takes to have a successful barbeque, a glorious Rosh Hashanah Oneg, a scrumptious Chanukah dinner, and an evening of fun during the part of the

year when we all need a lift. We also saw how women work together to buy the congregation new china, silverware, and glassware so our congregants don't have to go elsewhere to celebrate a large simcha, and how polishing silverware can turn into an evening of laughter and entertainment!

Carol and I invite you to join us, continuing what our former leaders began, and some things that may be new and different. We ask you to work with us for the good of the congregation and for the fun and friendship that it brings to each of us. We ask you to realize that when we ask for volunteers, we want you to step up, even if you've never done anything for Sisterhood before. Today might be a simple job to help the barbeque run more smoothly or to fry some latkes for the Chanukah party, but to-

morrow you will realize that "hey, I could be a LEADER!"

That brings me to my next request. Women of Reform Judaism's 48th Assembly is coming up from Dec. 14-18, near Washington, D.C. It will bring Sisterhood members from all over the country, Canada, and Israel together to pray, study, have fun, and learn to be leaders. Please think about going. It's never easy to make plans to go to one of these conventions; I know that. Maybe two of you could think about going together. I went to a smaller regional convention, and it was terrific. Contact me at pardofam@fast.net or by phone at 610-370-0761 if you are interested in going, or if you want to know how to get involved in Sisterhood.

L'Shanah Tovah! May the new year be a sweet one for us all.

## ***HEADS UP, RELIGIOUS SCHOOL MOMS AND DADS AND EVERYONE ELSE!***

You can buy **groceries, gas, prescriptions** and all those other **gift cards** dangling from the kiosks in the grocery stores with GIANT and REDNERS gift cards purchased from our congregation. It costs you nothing extra, but 5 percent of the proceeds go to RCOS.

**SO**

If you don't already buy GIFT CARDS from our synagogue, this is your chance to join the crowd. The cards come in \$25, \$50 and \$100 denominations, and any Temple member can purchase them from Judy Synnamon during Religious School hours — Tuesday from 3:30 to 6:15 p.m. and Sundays from 8:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. Checks (made out to RCOS) or cash will do. Use them and feel good knowing you are **ACTIVELY SUPPORTING** your **RELIGIOUS SCHOOL** and your congregation.

If you do use gift cards sold by Barbara Rosenzweig or Carole Kutscher but happen to run out or need an instant iTunes gift card, well, just stop by the Temple before you hit the grocery store.

It's easy, it works, it doesn't cost you a cent and your purchases generate thousands of dollars each year for the Temple. All fundraising should be so simple!

# Meet the new member: Jeri Diesinger

**About my family:** My husband, Russ Diesinger, and I live in Exeter Township. We have four adult children between us. Russ has two daughters and I have two sons. We have four grandchildren and two foster grandchildren.

**Personal background:** Born in Queens, lived in suburban Philadelphia and Pittsburgh before moving to Berks County. Professional geologist, worked for 15 years in the environmental consulting industry, primarily Superfund investigations. Second career - 12 years in municipal government - currently Kenhorst borough

manager. Like to read, travel and sing in the Temple choir.

**What attracted you to RCOS?** As a new member it is wonderful how welcoming the other congregants are to new faces and how truly at home I felt the moment I stepped through the doors of RCOS three years ago as a conversion candidate.

*The bulletin is inviting new members of RCOS to introduce themselves to the congregation through this feature.*

*Please contact Mark Nemirow at [Marknem@aol.com](mailto:Marknem@aol.com) if you'd like to be included.*



## SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

Mr. & Mrs. Scott Stein	Sept. 2	Mr. & Mrs. Jeffrey Gernsheimer	Sept. 5
Mr. & Mrs. Sidney Spillerman	Sept. 3	Russell Farbiarz & Ms. Alexa Antana	Sept. 6
Dr. & Mrs. Adam Spiegel	Sept. 3	Mr. & Mrs. Gerald Jeffers	Sept. 18
Mr. & Mrs. David Goldstein	Sept. 4	Steven W. Levine & Frances Komisar	Sept. 30
Mr. & Mrs. Mark Nemirow	Sept. 4		

## SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Merryl Eisenberg	Sept. 2	Julie Alweis	Sept. 10	Evelyn Jacobs	Sept. 24
Gene Friedman	Sept. 3	Margery Gilbert	Sept. 10	Tandy Goldstein	Sept. 26
Laurie M. Waxler	Sept. 3	Carole Kutscher	Sept. 10	Rosalye Yashek	Sept. 26
Allison Kohn	Sept. 5	Cantor Gerald Miller	Sept. 11	Irvin Cohen	Sept. 28
Meyer Weiner	Sept. 6	Trudy Katz	Sept. 14	Frances Komisar	Sept. 28
Deborah Zelnick	Sept. 6	Dr. Andrew Waxler	Sept. 18	Richard Roeberg	Sept. 28
Gerald Jeffers	Sept. 8	Susan Wagner	Sept. 20	Robert Wool	Sept. 29
Roberta Kozloff	Sept. 8	Robert Brok	Sept. 21	Barbara Nazimov	Sept. 30
Adam Pross	Sept. 8	Sharon Zamrin	Sept. 21	Sidney Symons	Sept. 30
Nimrod Goldshtain	Sept. 9	Albert Boscov	Sept. 22		

## Perpetual Memorials

**Sept. 1-3**  
 Bernard L. Simmons  
 Jack Loeb Stein  
 Rosa Weil  
 Alan Baskin  
 Dr. Joseph A. Liefster

**Sept. 4-10**  
 Osker Hekler  
 Dr. James Holzman  
 Anna Stern  
 Solly Gernsheimer  
 Robert Katz

**Sept. 11-17**  
 Sadie Gilbert  
 Josephine Katz  
 Dr. Frederick P. Pokrass  
 Vivian Schachter  
 Rhoda Small  
 Florence E. Frank  
 Marsha Salpeter  
 Bertha Whiteson  
 Lawrence Diamond

**Sept. 18-24**  
 Albert Fried  
 Sitta Goldstein

Joseph Marcus  
 Sara Holzman

**Sept. 25-30**  
 Isabel Sondheim  
 Malcom Spinrad  
 Manfred Jakobs  
 Dennis Deutsch  
 Bertha Eisman  
 N. John Kelner  
 Theresa R. Cohn  
 Charlotte F. Levy  
 Ignatz Whiteson

# September 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						
<p>4</p> <p>First Day of Religious School 9:00 AM Ritual Cmte. Mtg. 9:30 AM</p>	<p>5</p> <p><b>Labor Day</b> OFFICE CLOSED</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Adult Educ. 7:00 PM A Touch of the Sacred</p>	<p>7</p> <p>First Day JCC Pre-School 7:30 AM</p> 	<p>8</p> <p>Volunteers' Safety Meeting &amp; FF Captains' Meeting 6:00 PM</p> 	<p>9</p> <p>Shabbat Service 6:00 PM</p> 	<p>10</p> <p>Tot Shabbat 10:00 AM</p> 
<p>11</p> <p>First Day of Religious School 9:00 AM Men's Club 9:30 AM</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Torah Study 12:00 Noon Exec. Committee Mtg. 7:00 PM</p>	<p>13</p> <p>1st Day Hebrew School 4:15 PM</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Sisterhood Meeting 7:00 PM</p> 	<p>15</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Shabbat Service 7:45 PM</p> 	<p>17</p> <p>Movie Night 7:00 PM</p> 
<p>18</p> <p>Religious School 9:00 AM Men's Club 9:30 AM</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Torah Study 12:00 Noon</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Hebrew School 4:15 PM</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Shabbat Service 7:45 PM</p> 	<p>24</p> <p>Selichot Program 8:30 PM Service - 11:00 PM</p> 
<p>25</p> <p>Religious School 9:00 AM Long-Range Planning Cmte. Mtg. 9:30 AM</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Torah Study 12:00 Noon Board Meeting 7:00 PM</p> 	<p>27</p> <p>Hebrew School 4:15 PM</p>	<p>28</p> <p>Erev Rosh Hashanah Service - 8:00 PM</p> 	<p>29</p> <p>Rosh Hashanah AM Service - 10:00 AM Children's Serv. - 4:00 PM Tashlich Service - 5:30 PM</p> 	<p>30</p> <p>Shabbat Service 7:45 PM</p> 	<p>Dates/times are subject to change. Office closing 2:00 PM September 2nd.</p>

**REFORM CONGREGATION OHEB SHOLOM**

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