

Sinai Temple

BULLETIN



For Your Consideration

Rabbi Mark Dov Shapiro

Time Magazine puts "You" on the cover of its year-end issue and proclaims that a revolution is taking place in our time. We have entered the era of the individual where anyone can make a movie or publish an opinion. Where three television networks seemed sufficient for America of the 1950's, now there are 50 or 1000 options on our screens. One traditional newspaper or maybe two in a city are supplemented now by 50 blogs.

Author Chris Anderson writes, "The era of one size fits all is ending, and in its place is something new, a market of multitudes...The mainstream has been shattered into a zillion different cultural shards. Increasingly the mass market is turning into a mass of niches."

Which presents some very interesting options for the synagogue.

If one size no longer fits all, the smart synagogue is going to be one that figures out how to speak to many individuals in many different ways.

That's why Sinai is canceling services this coming Friday, March 2. Or to be more exact, that's why Sinai is experimenting with something called Showcase Shabbat. Like a multi-screen theater, we are going to present a whole weekend in March where variety is the name of the Jewish game.

If you like sports, we've got something for you. If you like yoga, rhythm, prayer, literature, laughter, or Torah, we've got something for you.

And, besides all that, the beginning of March brings us Purim with every opportunity for the spirit of a Jewish Mardi Gras.

Young, old, male, female, gay, straight, scholarly, athletic, social, or private, I think we've got a spot for you in Showcase Shabbat and The Whole Megillah weekend that follows.

If one size no longer fits all, Sinai is thinking outside the bimah. I hope you will find your niche with us.

Saturday Torah Study

WICKED -
ANOTHER READING OF
THE KING SAUL AND KING DAVID
STORY

Torah Study with a "twist"
Saturdays at 9 a.m.

Family Game Night

Saturday, February 10

The Whole Megillah

Showcase Shabbat begins a Purim
weekend

For Adults, Teens, and Kids

Friday, March 2 - Sunday, March 4

FRIDAY EVENING SERVICES - 76-88

FAMILY SERVICE at 7:00 p.m.

February 2

Songs, prayers, and it's THE JEWISH EARTH DAY -
EREV TU B'SHVAT!

KABBALAT SHABBAT at 6:00 p.m.

February 9

Veggies and snacks at 5:30 p.m.

FRIDAY NIGHT LIVE at 8:00 p.m.

February 16

Music with a special style.

FRIDAY NIGHT CLASSIC at 8:00 p.m.

February 23

Shabbat Shalom with Gates of Prayer

Mission Statement

Sinai Temple is a welcoming and inclusive Reform Congregation where our members pursue a continuing journey of Jewish growth. We are guided by the history and traditions of the Jewish people as we encounter the challenges of the modern world. We encourage participation in prayer, life-long Jewish learning, and social justice within a joyful, creative, and compassionate community.

Rummage Sale

February 25 – February 27

Look in your closets. Look under the bed. Then bring your rummage to the back door of the Temple. We're collecting clothes (and most other stuff as well). Your rummage is welcome.

If you can VOLUNTEER a day or even 10 minutes, please let the office know.

Seder Match

(Looking into April...)

You like lots of people around your Passover table....

Your kids have moved away....

You are new to the area....

Your relatives don't live close by....

Are you looking for a warm, comfortable, welcoming table to share a Passover experience on Monday, April 2, 2007?

Join Seder Match and experience Sinai's caring community!!!

Let us know if you are able to be a host or prefer to be a guest.

Send your name to Temple or call:

Denise Choquette at (413) 552-0784

or

Robyn Newhouse at (860) 668-4481

(robyn1860@cox.net)

or

Susan Goldman (413) 567-7474

(sugoldman@aol.com).

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Mark Dov Shapiro..... Rabbi
Emily Sleeper Mekler..... Cantor, Music Director

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Visit our website: www.sinai-temple.org

**A Special Thank You To:
Liz Leshine and Judy Cohen
for chairing the wonderful
and extraordinary 75th
Anniversary year.**

Shushan Idol 2007

Purim Morning The Megillah Reading Sunday, March 4

At 9 a.m.,
Religious School for all students
(Kindergarten to Grade 7).

At 10:30 a.m.,
Parents arrive.

At 11:05 a.m.,
THE MEGILLAH READING TAKES
PLACE.

Reading and chanting as it's never been done before!
Every student will have a performing role in the Megillah!
Songs from the Beatles, Music Man, Wizard of Oz & more!
Plus the crowning of the 2007 Shushan Idol!!!
It could be....any student...any parent....



RIDING4REFORM A Five-Day Fundraiser In Israel for the Israeli Reform Movement

Dear Sinai -

March 18 - 22 I am traveling to Israel to participate in The Ride4Reform. This fund raiser for Reform Judaism in Israel is a 220-mile mostly off-road bike ride, climbing through the heart of Israel,

Many North Americans are not aware that the State of Israel does not support or recognize Reform congregations. For the most part, the state's support is limited to Orthodox congregations. The salaries of Orthodox rabbis are paid for by the state, but those of Reform rabbis are not.

Many feel, including myself, that teaching and living Judaism in a more liberal and egalitarian fashion will not only benefit Israeli Jews, but Jews around the world. I believe it also may help Israel one day achieve peace with its neighbors. It is important that we help the Israeli Progressive Movement if only so that congregations like our own Sinai Temple can be available to the Jews of Israel.

To that end, I am asking for your support. I have committed to raise at least \$2,000 in contributions for the bike ride, but I'm hoping, with your help, to raise much more. All the money will go directly to Israel's Reform movement. (I am paying my own expenses.)

If you would like more information about the Ride, visit www.riding4reform.org. To make a contribution, please make your U.S. checks payable to "Friends of Israel Movement Progressive Judaism."

Mail your checks to Sinai (1100 Dickinson Street, Springfield, MA 01108) or to my home, 82 Woodbridge St, South Hadley, MA 01075, before February 21, 2007. If you have more questions, feel free to email AGM@MASSMED.ORG or call me (533-9209).

Thanks so much.
Andy Moskovitz.

www.sinai-temple.org



From left to right:

Judy Schweiger, Liz Leshine, Judy Cohen

At the 75th Anniversary Gala

See other photographs of the 75th Anniversary Gala at www.sinai-temple.org/photo_album.html

Cayla Osowski deep in thought before a Chanukiah at the Eighth Night of Chanukah Service

See other photographs and a movie of the Eighth Night of Chanukah at www.sinai-temple.org/photo_album.html



From the Brotherhood President Dan Cohn

January's been a quiet month here for the Brotherhood. We had no breakfasts, boiled no hotdogs, burned no carpeting... We had a great breakfast in December, though. Professor Joe Berger took us on a video tour of the Galapagos Islands. He showed us beautiful images, and gave a well-presented and intelligent narrative. For those of you that missed it, if we are lucky Joe will come back and talk about his trip to the Amazon. Thanks, Joe.

Aaron Bloom spoke at our February 4th Breakfast. (At least I hope he did. As most of you know I have to prepare these articles a month prior to publication.) For those of you that missed it, Aaron is the president of the National Brotherhood organization, NFTB. I understand that he hasn't been home a single weekend since he took the job, but his wife really likes all those frequent flier miles.

February 27th join the Brotherhood for a Men's Night. There will be discussion led by Rabbi Shapiro, as well as a deli platter. Please try to RSVP by Friday the 23rd so we have an idea of how much food to have on hand. There will be no charge for this event, but naturally if you are not a Brotherhood member you are urged to join.

Speaking of hotdogs, Brotherhood will be providing lunch after the reading of the Megillah on Purim. What could be better than hotdogs and chips?

If you haven't yet sent in your ballots for the Rabbi Snyder Award, the time draws close. Please call the temple office to make your reservation for the Awards Dinner March 23rd.

We are also still happily accepting donations for our silent raffle which will be held May 19th. If you like to help those that help others, donate an item, service, box seats to a game, a week at a time share, a bottle of single malt scotch, a day at the races, whatever you might not miss we would gratefully accept.

Shalom, everybody!

Dan Cohn
Sinai Brotherhood President
dcohn@sinaibrotherhood.org

**You're Invited to Israel
July 1 - 13, 2007
(Reservations by March 1!!)**

Dear Friends -

The deadline for holding your plane ticket is coming close!

So...please let me know you want to go to Israel this summer.

Adult participants on the trip are eligible for a \$1,000 travel grant from the Harold Grinspoon Foundation. (This will reduce the adult cost of the trip from \$3,499 to \$2,499.) Teenagers (starting at age 13) can receive a grant of 50% of the cost of our trip.

A detailed itinerary is on our website, www.sinai-temple.org

Shalom,

Rabbi Mark Shapiro

Our Tour will include:

- Roundtrip airfare from New York to Tel Aviv
- 2 nights in Tel Aviv, 2 nights in the Galilee
- 6 nights at the Inbal Hotel in Jerusalem
- Breakfast daily & five dinners
- Transfers, entrance fees, and portage
- Roundtrip bus transportation from Springfield to airport

Now is the time to register. Call Ayelet Tours, 19 Aviation Rd. Albany, NY 12205 * (800) 237-1517 * (518) 783-6001 * FAX (518) 783-6003 * E-mail: ayelet@ayelet.com

**WICKED –
ANOTHER READING OF THE KING SAUL
AND KING DAVID STORY
Torah Study with a "twist"
Saturdays at 9 a.m.**

No two biblical characters are more real to life than Saul and David. The life of each is filled with intrigue, adventure, triumph, and sorrow. Saturday mornings this Winter, Rabbi Shapiro will lead an exploration into the self and psyche of these two men. Everyone is welcome!

**Monthly Morning Service
Wednesday, February 7
at 7:30 a.m.**

We meet on the bimah for a service of 20 minutes. Breakfast follows. Those who need to leave for the rest of the day are free no later than 8:15 a.m.

Future "morning minyan" services will take place on Wednesdays, March 7, April 4, May 2, and June 6.

**First Thursdays (mostly):
Lunch and Learn
Thursday, February 8
12:00 – 1:15 p.m.**

Bring your lunch to the Oneg Shabbat room for a discussion of contemporary Jewish concern with Rabbi Shapiro. . Future discussions are March 8, April 5, May 3, and June 7.

**The Gilded Chamber:
A Sumptuous Novel of Queen Esther**

If you liked The Red Tent, a new novel in the same spirit has just appeared. The Gilded Chamber by Rebecca Kohn fills in the Bible's gaps and imagines who Esther, the young Jewish woman, might have really been. What did Persia look like to her? How did she enter the world of the palace? How did she win the heart of the king?

The Gilded Chamber is available for sale in our Temple office from Monday to Friday and in the Temple library on Sundays.

Rebecca Kohn will be at Sinai Temple to discuss her book on Friday, March 2 as part of this year's Showcase Shabbat. Read the book now and be ready to meet the author of this fascinating saga. See you Friday, March 2 at Showcase!!!

Join Brotherhood for a Men's Night!

Tuesday, February 27 at 6:30 p.m.

Join us for a lively discussion led by our own illustrious Rabbi

A delicious Deli Dinner will be served!!

There will be no charge for this event provided you RSVP to the Temple office no later than February 23rd



SHOWCASE SHABBAT

☆ A New Way to Experience Shabbat! ☆

☆ A New Way to Experience Purim! ☆

☆ Friday, March 2– Sunday, March 4 ☆

Like a multi-screen theater, Sinai Temple presents a variety of settings for a great weekend. Sports, laughter, food, drumming, yoga, prayer, and Torah will give everyone his or her own way to be at home in the Temple.

Why this weekend?
Because Purim 2007 takes place over the first weekend of March.
Because Purim is funny and fun.
Because Purim isn't just for kids.

Come to Temple once, twice, or three times when March arrives.

You won't want to miss

★ THE WHOLE MEGILLAH. ★

(This Showcase Shabbat inaugurates our first participation in Synaplex.)



Reservations please (Deadline February 21)

For Friday evening's dinner (We've only got room for the first 150 people)

Name(s) _____ Phone # _____

Adults _____ (\$15.00 each) # Children Ages 12-18 _____ (\$5.00) # Children Under 12 _____ (Free)

For Saturday evening's Comedy Night (adults only)

Name(s) _____ Phone # _____

People _____ (\$5.00 includes admission & two drink tickets)

Please send your check to Sinai Temple, 1100 Dickinson Street, Springfield, MA 01180

Thanks to the family of ARTHUR AND ARLINE ROGERS for underwriting Friday evening's Showcase events in their parents' loving memory.



THE WHOLE MEGILLAH— *A Purim Weekend for Adults, Teenagers, and Kids*

Friday, March 2

5:30 p.m. Wine, Cheese, & Veggies

6:00 p.m. **YOU CHOOSE...**

A Shabbat service Featuring drums and drumming as a means to spirituality

Yoga with Lynne Greene, Heartsong Yoga Center

The Gilded Chamber: A Sumptuous Novel of Queen Esther

A book discussion with Rebecca Kohn, author of *The Gilded Chamber*. If you liked *The Red Tent*, this new novel will bring you into the world of Persia, Esther, and court intrigue. The book is for sale at the Temple.

Spring Training: It's Time to Watch Baseball When America needed heroes, a Jewish slugger stepped to the plate. We'll watch the movie, *The Life and Times of Hank Greenberg*. Temple member, Hal Haberman, will lead the conversation.

7:00 p.m. All of us together for the candle lighting, kiddush, and motsi. Followed by Shabbat Dinner with seating for adults, children, and our youth groups.

7:45 p.m. **YOU CHOOSE...**

For Kids – Arts & Crafts and a Tzedakah Project

For our Youth Groups – Activities of all sorts

For Adults – The Not Ready for Prime Time Purim Players

Improvisation at its best! Sinai members as you've never seen them!

8:30 p.m. Back together for ice cream sundaes, hamantaschen, home-made desserts, and coffee

Saturday, March 3

9:00 – 10:00 a.m. **A Bawdy, Boisterous Torah Study**

An hour of "adult" exploration into the "real" story behind Queen Esther.

7:30 p.m. **Comedy Tonight!** For adults

From The Marx Brothers to Sid Caesar, Alan King, and Billy Crystal, we'll watch some films and tell some jokes for the perfect Purim evening. Costumes are optional but welcome (Real prizes for the best costume.)

Beer, wine, soda, and munchies. Home-made hamantaschen for dessert.

★ Sunday, March 4 – Purim Day! ★

The Megillah gets read! Shushan Idol is our theme!!

9:00 a.m. One session of Religious School for all students (Kindergarten to Grade 7)

11:00 a.m. **The WHOLE MEGILLAH**

Reading and chanting as it's never been done before!

Every student will have a role in the Megillah!

Songs from the *Beatles*, *The Music Man*, *The Wizard of Oz* & more

A pie in the face for??

12:00 p.m. Purim lunch is served...Thank you Brotherhood

Reflections at the Yom Kippur Afternoon Service About the Mission Statement and Its Creation

During the Yom Kippur afternoon service, Marlene Gordon shared the following thoughts about our new Mission Statement with the congregation. Marlene co-chaired the Mission Statement committee.

When we began the process of creating our mission statement, I have to admit - I had moments of doubt. Are we really unique? Or were we just trying to put a unique spin on our version of Reform Judaism?

But each time I asked myself these questions, my gut told me that we are unique. Over the last 20 or so years that my family has been part of Sinai, we have visited maybe 8 or 10 other Reform congregations around the country. Each visit revealed a distinct congregational personality. Some felt cold and choreographed; some were warm and folksy, some reflected quiet decorum, and some were noisy and busy. Some were just plain boring. But each and every visit elsewhere left me feeling that something was missing - and that Sinai has some powerful elements that set us apart and make us unique.

As a young adult, my Judaism was in large part defined by my family and by the Holocaust and the creation of Israel. My memories of holidays consisted of wonderful extended family dinners with matzo ball soup and brisket, and my Jewish identity was largely cultural - Jewish friends, Jewish food, the mutual horror of the murders at the 1972 Olympic Games, and the mutual pride watching a young Israel defend herself against her enemies like David against Goliath. Those things are all important and I do not want to diminish them. But no Shabbat or holiday services stand out in my childhood and young adult memories- not one. My Judaism was much more about eating and current events than it was about celebrating or synagogue.

All 3 sentences of our mission statement ring true for me: Sinai is inclusive, our membership is diverse, and we try to be warm and welcoming to everyone. We are accepted here with open arms at any point along our individual Jewish journeys, with any level of Jewish knowledge, and with opportunities to choose 100 different ways to explore and continue that journey. Like most Reform congregations, we are guided by Jewish history and Jewish traditions to help us deal with the challenges of living Jewish lives in the 21st century. But it is the last sentence - in fact, the last phrase of the last sentence - that speaks to me most powerfully. "We encourage participation in prayer, life-long Jewish learning, and social justice within a joyful, creative, and compassionate community."

A joyful, creative, and compassionate community

- For me, these are the powerful elements that set us apart and define our uniqueness. Since my family became active at Sinai, my Judaism has been redefined. It continues to be centered around my family, but in a positive, energetic way that revolves around the Jewish calendar and celebrates the values of life and joy, creativity and compassion that are so basic to Judaism.

Happily, my Jewish memories now go beyond chicken soup and brisket. They are flashes of joyful, beautiful, compelling moments within this congregation. There is an image of the entire congregation standing in front of the open arc singing Avinu Malkeinu while Boris Kogan - a man who was at one time denied the freedom to be Jewish - plays soulful Jewish music that gives me goose bumps; or Jeff Cossin blowing the shofar and holding an inhumanly-long tekiah godola that makes me feel bursting pride in the strength of all the generations of Jews that came before me. There are moments when an exceptionally moving Shalom Rav or Mishaberach makes me cry; and when the joyful, wonderful silliness of Purim, with sword fights and pies in faces and the rabbi in tights creates memories that children and adults will carry for a lifetime. There is an image of our Bimah on Yom Kippur morning, claustrophobic and overflowing with people chanting an aliyah together. There is the image of the entire Torah stretched around the auditorium and supported by the hands of congregants as 13 year-olds read from their own special niche in the Torah, and the feeling of connection when a child I don't know reads the first verse of the Torah portion my daughter read 14 years ago and someone else will read 14 years hence. There are images of challahs flying at the Tashlich service, and tens of chanukiahs burning in the darkened sanctuary on the 8th night of Chanukah. There are sad images, too, when we have shared together the loss of a congregational or family friend; and there are picture postcard images like 100 of us lighting Shabbat candles together in the darkened Oneg Shabbat room last winter while giant snowflakes fell just outside the window.

I am proud of our Sinai Temple mission statement. I think it captures our character, our hopes, and our aspirations in realistic and tangible ways. I hope that 100 years from now the Board of directors will rely on it as they hire a rabbi or design a new building or determine programming for the congregation. I believe the mission statement is a snapshot of us in our greatest moments, and I hope it will be an ongoing inspiration in the daily life of the congregation for decades to come.

Reflections at the Yom Kippur Afternoon Service About the Mission Statement and Its Creation (Continued)

During the Yom Kippur afternoon service, David Gang shared the following thoughts about our new Mission Statement with the congregation. David was an active member of the Mission Statement committee.

I never expected that I would be standing here today to admit to you that I am delighted to have been asked to take part in the creation of the Sinai Temple Mission Statement. As a physician with a somewhat cynical nature, I have always considered such efforts to be a waste of time. To my surprise, this was not at all the case.

Working with the committee members and many different Sinai congregants, I learned about the extraordinary range of opportunities and services that Sinai provides across the generations. I have also made some new friends and discovered that there are some very bright and interesting people here that I might otherwise not have gotten to know. From interacting with the focus groups, we collected enough adjectives, verbs, and nouns to write a ten page Mission Statement. The purpose, of course, was to develop a short summary of who we are and what we stand for in an accessible format designed to inspire and remind us of our Mission. Over many weeks, those long word lists were whittled down as both our committee and the board distilled out the key concepts that define this Reform Jewish Congregation in the early 21st century. It was fascinating, but not surprising, that no matter what the generational make-up of each focus group seemed to be, the core values voiced by the different groups were very similar. Although we were aware of other Mission statements from other congregations, we really put ours together from the words of our own congregants - it is our work, it is original, it is Sinai.

The final product is an amazing piece of work, considering that everything we do is contained in just 58 words. It's all there: prayer, learning, tradition, growth, joy, compassion, community, and social justice. For me personally, however, it's the first sentence with the words "welcoming" and "inclusive" that have the greatest impact. You must remember that Sinai is a blend of two populations: those who have grown up in the Springfield area and those who have come from everywhere else. The challenge, as I see it, is to make all congregants feel included, particularly the new arrivals, as well as potential members, and guests attending services and lifecycle events here. Sinai did not always do as good a job as it does currently.

When my family first moved here, we experienced many Oneg Shabbats where we stood around with no

one to talk to, and services where we slid into our seats feeling unnoticed and ignored. This has dramatically changed, however, and for us not just because we now know a lot more people. At Temple services, Sinai has made a tremendous effort to provide greeters at every entrance who engage attendees both before and after the services. It's working, because it makes me want to greet back and engage other people. We are all friendly and caring people or we wouldn't be here. We just forget or get distracted. The Mission Statement reminds us to "welcome and include," to be who we really are.

If our Temple members are to want to remain here, long after their children have graduated Sunday School and completed their B'nai Mitzvahs, there must be something to draw them in. They must feel at home here in order to choose to pursue their "continuing journey of Jewish growth" and to "encounter the challenges of the modern world" at Sinai. In my view, we should stay on because being part of the Sinai family enables each of us to partake of numerous opportunities to learn, to pray, to celebrate, to support our community, and to engage in social justice. Sinai is a conduit for all these things and we have so much more impact when we act together.

I have two final thoughts.

Thought 1) I would like to thank Sinai for doing such a great job in making our son Jon feel "welcome and included" and comfortable in his Jewish identity. We were delighted to get a call from him the other day asking us if it would be O.K. to put up a Mezuzah in his dorm room at Colorado College, a school where Jon is part of a tiny Jewish minority.

Thought 2) When you are asked to serve on a Sinai committee, it can be a very positive and rewarding

Let my people eat!

It's never too late or too early to think about good cooking and baking. If you were stumped over what to make and how to organize the kitchen side of last year's Seder, the library has got the perfect Passover gift for you. It's called PASSOVER SEDERS MADE SIMPLE. The author is Zell Schulman. The book is published by IDG Books Worldwide, Inc. It not only contains recipes for Passover, but a full listing of sample menus for seders of all sorts from Ashkenazic to vegetarian to ecumenical potluck! Other Passover materials are waiting to be consumed in the Temple library.

Jewish Summer Camping Can Make All the Difference in Preparing a Jewish Child for the Future

Our Reform movement runs two remarkable summer camps in the Berkshires. One is called Eisner; the other is called Crane Lake. Last year several Sinai students attended each of the camps. Your child would love either camp. Scholarships are available for sessions in July or August. Please speak to Rabbi Shapiro as soon as possible.

Scholarships for Free

If your son or daughter is planning to attend any kind of Jewish program this summer, please take advantage of the Temple scholarship program. Thanks to the Joseph Emanuel, Rabbi Herman Eliot and Adele Biederman Snyder Memorial Fund, scholarships are available in small and larger amounts. We are also thankful to the family of Edna Simon and Judy and Michael Cohen who support summer scholarships as well.

Your confidential request should go to Rabbi Shapiro

Mazal Tov to:

Linda and Jack Stone on the engagement of their daughter, Sara, to Richard Farbman.

Arthur H. Zalkan, on the birth of a granddaughter, Sophia Barbara Zalkan. Proud parents are Brett and Megan Zalkan. Sophia Barbara carries in her name the memory of her grandmother, the late Barbara F. Zalkan.

Ronda Parish on the birth of a granddaughter, Natalia Rose. Jaime is the proud mother.

2007–2008 Sinai Engagement Calendar

We have begun working on the 2007-2008 edition of our wonderful Sinai engagement calendar. I carry mine with me all the time and refer to it if I need a service or product. I hope that you also find it valuable.

We need your help. Do you have someone with whom you do business who gives you terrific service that you'd also like others to know about? Please call me with the information and I'll contact them.

How about you? Do you have a business or a profession? Would you like fellow Sinai members to know how to contact you? Call Belle Rita Novak at 737-1724 or bellerita@verizon.net.

From the Director of Education Sheila Shear

Shalom Chaverim,

We are well into our second term and all is going well. There are many exciting activities and important learning yet to be done. The 8th graders have begun their SPARK/HeartAction program, are loving their meetings with our own Sinai Seniors, and learning about what Judaism says about growing older. There are many wonderful projects that they and their adult partners will be working on. Coming on the 13th the 8th graders will be joining the 7th graders at the JCC for a Game Night. I would like to welcome Erica Stetchenberg Brunette to our teaching staff. Erica is facilitating this wonderful and exciting program. Our 9th graders are busy preparing for their March trip to the Religious Action Center in Washington D.C. They meet weekly with their teacher, Alina Bricklin, to learn about Reform Jewish responses to current political issues. The fifth graders are once again participating in the Yachdav, cultural exchange program with fifth grade students in Afulah, Israel and the list goes on. Our new Hebrew program is going well and getting great reviews, even from the students! If you are interested in helping out, extra eyes and ears are badly needed. You don't need to be a Hebrew scholar, but do need to know the alef-bet and be able to read the siddur prayers. Please call the religious school office to volunteer, an hour, a day, a day a month or each week.

Please Save the Date: Sunday, March 4th. PURIM! We will have Religious School for all grades K-7 from 9:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m. and the Megillah Reading at 11:00 a.m. for everyone. Parents of religious school students and congregants who do not have children in the religious school should be here for 11:00 a.m.

The Andy Berger Art Contest 2007 For Young People From Kindergarten through Twelfth Grade

You are invited to participate in our Seventh Art Contest in memory of Andy Berger. All subjects in all areas of Judaism from holidays to the home to Israel are welcome. Possible media include water colors, paint, markers, collage, or clay. There will be separate categories for different age groups with age appropriate prizes. Submit your work by mid-March. Prizes awarded at our Family Service on Friday, April 6.



Mazal Tov to our Adult Bnot Mitzvah

From left to right - Susanne Simon, Pamela Kalman, Laurie Weinberg, Jackie Neiman

Scroll of Life



The Scroll of Life is a work of art in the Oneg Shabbat Room. It was created by Presentations Gallery of New York. The Isaiah quote at the bottom of the Scroll was taken from the Yom Kippur Haftarah as an expression of hope.

The Scroll has space on it so that Sinai members can commemorate either joyous events or memorialize loved ones. Each contribution of a plaque on the Scroll will be used to enrich the life and strength of Sinai.

The cost of each plaque is \$200. The inscription may be 3-4 lines with a maximum of 27 spaces per line.

Sinai Alumni News

All Sinai alumni received two packages in the month of December plus something special for Tu B'Shvat. Another mailing will be going out in mid-March for Purim. Thank you to all parents of 18-30 year olds who sent or called in their son or daughter's updated addresses. We would love for our mailing list to continue to grow. To add/update your son or daughter's address, please call Stacey Osowski, our Program Director, at the office (736-3619) or log onto our website. You'll find Alumni registration at the bottom left of the home page. Fill out the form and send your child's information to the office electronically.

**Mark your calendar
For the Annual Israel Bonds Dinner
Tuesday, June 5**

Sinai Temple will be joining with all the other synagogues of the Pioneer Valley this coming June for the annual Bonds Dinner. This year's honorees from Sinai will be Mike and Judy Cohen. Details will follow.

**Mark your calendar a second time
For the Annual NCCJ Dinner
(The National Conference for
Community & Justice)
Wednesday, June 6**

We are so proud to announce that Rabbi Shapiro will be honored at this year's NCCJ Dinner. The Rabbi will be receiving the 2007 Human Relations Award. This award is given as part of NCCJ's ongoing program to fight bias, bigotry, and racism in order to promote understanding among America's different races, cultures, and religions.

**The Sustaining Membership Program
2006-2007**

At Sinai Temple, we have always welcomed everyone regardless of financial situation. No one is turned away from our synagogue because he or she lacks the means to pay full dues. To be as fair as possible, we have taken great care in granting dues abatements, recognizing that a reduction for one must be subsidized by an increase to others. In order to assure that membership remains available to all, and to continue meeting the operating expenses of the Temple, we have reinvigorated our Sustaining Membership program.

This fiscal year (2006-2007) we have turned to congregants who were already paying full dues at their category level and asked them to assume their fair share of sustaining Sinai by voluntarily increasing their financial commitment to the congregation. The results have been gratifying. As of January 1, 2007, 90 households have joined the Sustaining Membership program (paying amounts ranging from \$250 to \$5,000 over their required dues). These households have committed a total of \$53,225. We are so grateful for their generosity. Recognition for their sustaining membership support can also be seen on the plaque which is in the Temple lobby.

Mmmmm Food!!! A Tasty Opportunity for Purim!!!

*Would you like to eat freshly baked
hamantaschen?*

Bake hamantaschen?

*Help mail hamantaschen to members of the
congregation?*

If you can say **yes** to any of the above, here's something sweet to anticipate for Purim next month!!

It's called the **MITZVAH OF MISHLOACH MANOT – THE SENDING OF FOOD!**

This year we're going to fulfill the mitzvah of Mishloach Manot* by preparing food baskets for our Alumni (Sinai young adults ages 18 to 30) plus new Temple members plus a healthy selection of Temple's empty nesters! We'll also be baking enough hamantaschen for the entire Religious School.

So....here's your chance. You can be part of this great event in several ways....

1. Make a recipe of dough and bring it unbaked to the Temple refrigerator. (We'll give you an easy recipe. See below. OR
2. Come help bake in the Temple kitchen later this month.
3. Help package Mishloach Manot food baskets on a Sunday at the end of this month. Come to the Temple that morning and we'll give you directions for packaging.

For information, recipes, questions, and if you're free to package the goodies, please call Stacey Osowski at Sinai...736-3619, ext. 13.

P.S. No experience is needed! Just good spirits

Birthright Israel: A "Free" Trip to Israel that's "Worth" a Lot!

Evan Souliere

(Evan Souliere just returned from a ten-day trip to Israel sponsored by Birthright Israel. Over 100,000 young Jews from around the world have taken advantage of the Birthright program. It's a free trip to Israel. If you are interested, please contact Rabbi Shapiro. Here are some of Evan's thoughts about his experience.)

Having just returned from my first visit to Israel, I have a lot to digest. The country is beautiful, the history is dramatic, and the culture is both so foreign and so familiar. At first, I thought it would be like visiting any other foreign country (that happened to be full of Jews) and I would appreciate it as such because I have no tangible ties to Israel. I soon realized, however, that

when our program director greeted us at Ben Gurion International Airport by saying "welcome home", there was some validity to his cheesiness.

I found that Israel really is our home as Jews and we have ties to it no matter how distant it may seem. Learning about the country's history had a personal feel to it like I was hearing about my own family's history. So when I sat in Independence Hall listening to a recording of the orchestra playing "Hatikvah" following Ben Gurion's proclaiming Israel an independent nation, I had a strong sense of pride.

It is this pride that I will continue to feel even as the passion from the trip inevitably diminishes. It is hard to convey in (so few) words how proud every Jew should be to have Israel as a home and have such a powerful history. I can only encourage others to be pro Israel in a world where support is hard to find. (Few of the region's inhabitants feel that the Jews should have even a square foot of our own land and world opinion has turned against Israel, too, in the wake of poor reporting and skewed facts.)

For High School and College students A Summer Program Making Money; The Susan M. Broh Tikkun Olam Award

This summer Sinai Temple invites students to get involved with tikkun olam – repairing the world. We would like to underwrite students who choose to spend their summer in a project that enriches the world. Interested students can get involved by thinking of a project or an area of interest. (For suggestions, please see below.) An application should be in the mail soon. Those who are selected will be paid a salary of approximately \$7.50 an hour. (College students living outside the Pioneer Valley are welcome to find a project wherever they'll be spending the summer.)

Why is the Temple offering this program? We began this program several years ago to honor the memory of Susan M. Broh, a Temple member who died in September 2001. Susan began her career of "tikkun olam" by dedicating two years of her life to the Peace Corps. After that, Susan devoted her professional and volunteer life to making this world a better place. She believed passionately in the Jewish obligation of pursuing justice. Susan's friends and family have created this program to honor her memory and to encourage other Jews to strive for holiness as Jews must always do.

A full application is available by calling the Temple office.

From Yom Kippur Afternoon Remarks from Lisa Braun, A Recipient of the Susan Broh Tikkum Olam Award

During the Yom Kippur afternoon service, Lisa Braun shared the following thoughts about her experience as a recipient of the Susan Broh Tikkum Olam Award. The award is available to High School and College students who want to pursue a summer of volunteer work. The award offers a stipend for the summer that allows students to pursue the work of tikkun olam that was so central to the life of Sinai's member, Susan Broh, who passed away in 2001.

Susan Broh was an inspirational member of the Jewish Community. She lived her life in constant pursuit of helping the less fortunate and making the community a better place. She could not see people at a disadvantage and not led a hand. Tikkun Olam caring for the world was her motto. Throughout her life she was involved in countless public service organizations and projects including the Peace Corps, the Springfield Housing Project which renovates homes in Springfield and sells them at a lower cost to first time home owners, and she was also the Director of Jewish Family Service, amongst many other activities.

A scholarship was created in her memory for high school and college age students who want to spend a summer working proactively with a public service organization that Susan herself would deem important.

This past summer I was honored to receive the Susan Broh Tikkun Olam award. I used the opportunity to volunteer with the Literacy Volunteers of Massachusetts in downtown Boston. The Literacy Volunteers is a state-wide non-profit organization that was founded in 1972. It has two training programs. One is a basic literacy program that trains volunteers how to teach basic reading and writing to adults. And the other is a program that teaches English to adult Speakers of Other languages commonly known as ESOL.

I attended one of the 18 hour intensive trainings in basic literacy. Although as a Spanish major it would seem that I would be more keen to be trained in ESOL, I have been tutoring an employee of the UMASS dining services in basic literacy for a couple of semesters and I appreciated the opportunity to acquire some applicable skills.

The training session opened my eyes to the realities of literacy issues and heightened my awareness of the advantages that I have being able to read and write. Adult literacy is an issue in the United States that is greatly overlooked. There are millions of people nationwide who have limited literacy; many who attended

school but did not get the attention and aid that they needed and others who never had the access to proper education. As of 2006 there were 25,000 adults enrolled in basic education programs funded by the Massachusetts Department of Education however there were over 24,000 still on a waiting list because the lack of tutors and funds (never mind those not even on a waiting list).

Please think for one second about all the things you read or write on a daily basis; email, commercials on the television, directional signs, bills, holiday cards, warning labels on medication, and books to your children. Now imagine not being able to do this and the great impact that it would have on your life.

The Literacy Volunteers of Massachusetts also sponsors other tutoring programs in a joint effort with local Boston shelters. In the later part of the summer I became involved with one of the shelters, Casa Myrna Vazquez, a shelter for women victims of domestic violence. I met several times with a couple of the Latina women living in the shelter who needed help with English and Medical courses they were taking. The experience gave me the opportunity to briefly put myself in the shoes of these women. It made me appreciate even more the advantages that I am blessed with. Beyond the fact that I can be a fully functional member of society, because of my literacy, I have a loving family and a safe living environment. The women thanked me for taking time out of my work schedule to meet with them, but it felt insignificant in comparison to the experience they gave me.

I prepared myself for my work this summer by thinking about Susan and how she would have taken advantage of working with a literacy program. I knew that I had been given a unique opportunity and that I should utilize it and learn as much from it as I could. Although it was only a three month long experience, I gained skills that I was able to bring back and apply to my community.

I hope that I have been successful in educating you about the issue of adult literacy in our nation and community, and I encourage you to use the skills that you have and become tutors yourselves. I also want to encourage any other high school or college age student interested in being proactive in community outreach programs to consider applying for the Susan Broh Scholarship this year. Most of all, I would like to thank Sinai temple and the Susan Broh committee for allowing me this incredible learning experience.

Sinai Temple BULLETIN

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