

# BAT YAM TEMPLE OF THE ISLANDS

*A Jewish congregation serving residents and guests of Sanibel, Captiva, Fort Myers, and surrounding communities providing a place of worship in the Reform tradition and creating an extended Jewish family*

Number 77

April, 2016

Adar II - Nissan, 5776

## *APRIL SHABBAT WORSHIP SERVICES*

All Shabbat services, in Fellowship Hall of the Sanibel Congregational United Church of Christ at 7:30 p.m., will be led by Rabbi Myra Soifer, with music by Music Director Douglas Renfroe accompanied by pianist Abigail Allison.

April 1, 7:30 p.m. – Rabbi Myra Soifer, Douglas Renfroe

April 8, 7:30 p.m. – Rabbi Myra Soifer, Douglas Renfroe

April 15, 7:30 p.m. – Rabbi Myra Soifer, Douglas Renfroe

April 22 – NO SHABBAT SERVICES in Fellowship Hall – *Shabbat* will be celebrated at the Passover Seder at the Community House at 6 p.m. See p. 2 for details.

April 29, 7:30 p.m. – Rabbi Myra Soifer, Douglas Renfroe

Saturday morning *Shabbat* classes continue in April. See page 2 for topics and schedule.

## *PLEASE NOTE...*

**There will be no Shabbat Services on April 22<sup>nd</sup>; Shabbat will be celebrated during the Passover Seder [See story p. 2]**

**A SPECIAL THANKS...** to The Leo Rosner Foundation in honor of June Rosner for funding *Bat Yam's* contribution to the wonderful weekend of programs presented by special guest speaker Rabbi Capers Funnye on March 11<sup>th</sup> - March 13<sup>th</sup> in Sanibel and Ft. Myers.

**MAZEL TOV TO ANN ARNOFF ON THE OCCASION OF HER 90<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY ON MARCH 8<sup>TH</sup>.**

## *APRIL SATURDAY CLASSES*

All classes are In Fellowship Hall, Sanibel Congregational United Church of Christ

Rabbi Soifer's presentations focus on the theme "What Does Judaism Say About . . . Sex, Gender, and Beginning of Life Issues?" *Bat Yam* members present the second session of discussion. This is the last month of Saturday morning classes for this season.

### **April 2**

- . 9 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.: Hebrew reading from the linear *Chumash/Devorim* – Rabbi Soifer
- . 9:30 – 10:30 a.m: Jewish Birth Rituals, Old and New – Rabbi Soifer
- . 10:30 a.m. to 11:15 a.m: Alvin Zipursky - The Global Conquest of Rh disease
- . 11:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. – Jewish Current Events

### **April 9**

- . 9 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.: Hebrew reading from the linear *Chumash/Devorim*
- . 9:30 – 10:30 a.m.: A Primer on Jewish Genetic Disease - Rabbi Soifer
- . 10:30 – 11:15 a.m.: Renee Sugar – My Life in the Diaspora - Siberia
- . 11:30 a.m. to 12:15 – Jewish Current Events

### **April 16**

- . 9 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.: Hebrew reading from the linear *Chumash/Devorim*
- . 9:30 – 11:15 a.m. - *Siyum* (End of Season Celebration) and Planning for Next Season - Rabbi Soifer
- . 11:30 a.m. to 12:15 – Jewish Current Events

**April 23** – No classes - Passover

## *BAT YAM PASSOVER SEDER ON APRIL 22*

*Bat Yam's* Seder will be on Friday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>, the first night of Passover, beginning at 6 p.m. at the Sanibel Community House at 2173 Periwinkle Way. The cost for *Bat Yam* members is \$40.00 per person, for non-members \$55.00 per person, and for children \$18.00.

The dinner will be catered and will include all of our favorite and traditional dishes, but as always volunteers will be needed to set up, clean up, make *charoseth*, and bake desserts (no flour or baking powder). When you make your reservations let us know how and when you might help. Please bring any Passover Judaica, Seder or matzo plates, and Elijah and Miriam cups you have to set on each table. Items for the Seder places will be provided. Contact Ann Arnoff at 239-472-8809, [AnnofSanibel@aol.com](mailto:AnnofSanibel@aol.com) or Miriam Bailey at 239-489-0460, [miriambailey@aol.com](mailto:miriambailey@aol.com) for reservations and send your checks to either. The deadline for reservations is April 15th. There will be no *Shabbat* service that night at the Sanibel Congregational United Church or Christ. The Seder will incorporate elements a *Shabbat* service into it, such as *Shabbat* references within the Seder text.

## *PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE*

Fellow Congregants:

I am honored to have been elected your president. Edina and I were on the island twenty-five years ago when we saw the ad announcing the first service that was held on January 11, 1991. Who knew that twenty-five years later, I would be chosen to lead *Bat Yam*?

We were, and still are impressed with the welcoming spirit, the impressive services, the music, the leadership and the education both at Friday night services and at Saturday morning classes.

For a small congregation, we can be very proud of the many programs we hold during the year, including the joint lecture series with Rev. John Danner and Rabbi Soifer, the programs with Rev. Danner and Doug Renfroe, and the Annual Shared Scholar program.

Our Twenty-fifth Anniversary celebration proved to be a very moving experience. From an excellent presentation by Tanya Hochschild to the clever parody by Doug to the spirited dancing by guests and the line dance taught by Myra, every aspect was perfect.

On March 11-13, we hosted another visiting scholar weekend welcoming Rabbi Capers Funnye, Chief Rabbi of the Hebrew Israelite Community. Fellowship Hall was bursting at the seams for Friday night services. In another first, we partnered with

Temple Judea and the Jewish Federation of Lee and Charlotte Counties to sponsor this program. Thanks also to the Leo Rosner Fund, in honor of June Rosner. I hope these partnerships will engage in other events in the coming years.

We have wonderful memories knowing we have accomplished much over a quarter of a century, but we must retool, refocus and employ new social media techniques to broaden our appeal. We need to create more articles and pictures in our local press and the *L'Chayim*, letting the communities know that we represent the Jewish Presence on Sanibel/Captiva . We recognize and appreciate our members who live off Island but attend services, get involved on committees, and add immeasurably to the congregation.

I welcome your support, your constructive ideas, your willingness to say, "I will help because I believe we must look at *Bat Yam* and its members as a family". Working together will make us stronger and enhance our ability to grow our membership, provide expanded opportunities and increase the financial support necessary to accomplish these goals.

Edina and I wish everyone a Happy, Heathy Pesach.

*Alan Lessack*

**PLEASE NOTE:** The April *Bat Yam* Board meeting will be on Wednesday, April 20<sup>th</sup> at 1 p.m. in Heron Hall, the third Wednesday of the month instead of the usual second Wednesday.

## MESSAGE FROM THE RABBI



### **Parting the Darkness**

Goodness gracious, this is the April bulletin! Which means that this is the last month of *Bat Yam's* formal season and your rabbi will soon be pointing her RV westward for the summer. Where has the time gone?!?

And, this year, April also means Passover. This is a Jewish leap year, so Passover is "late" on our secular calendar: the first Seder is Friday night, April 22. You'll find all the information on our congregational Seder that night elsewhere in this bulletin.

Among the many "highlights" of our Passover Seder is the recitation of the Ten Plagues, those terrible punishments brought down upon the Egyptian people as their leader, Pharaoh, stubbornly refused to let the Israelites go. While we celebrate our liberation, we mourn – by diminishing the contents of our wine glass – that others had to suffer for us to be set free.

The Biblical wording of the next-to-the-last plague interests me. We know, of course, that the last plague – death to the first-born Egyptian sons – was the most terrible. We might imagine, then, that the 9<sup>th</sup> plague – darkness upon the land of Egypt – would be something nearly as awful. Yet darkness doesn't really seem so bad. Sure, the Egyptians might have bumped around a lot. In fact, the text tells us that "for three days no one could get up from where s/he was." But, still, that doesn't seem so ghastly bad. Surely not by comparison to the death of one's child, but even not so bad in comparison to locusts and hail and dead cattle and some of the other earlier plagues.

Perhaps the text gives us a clue to the horror of this penultimate plague when it tells us that within this God-imposed deep darkness "People could not see one another." The plague of darkness, it turns out, made real relationship impossible. It is the Egyptian community's isolation, one from another, that is, I think, the deep tragedy of this plague.

As our last full month of the season winds down, I reflect upon a *Bat Yam* community that has this year been truly vibrant. That vibrancy has certainly been about all manner of programs and worship and study and other activities. But the greatest strength of our congregation is when we truly see one another and, in seeing, we come together as a community of caring and support, of joy and sorrow.

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As we celebrate our people's liberation in the Passover story, let us likewise celebrate our congregation's communal success in this, its twenty-fifth year. Whatever our success, it is surely about community . . . about truly seeing one another. Seems to me that this has been a very good year indeed!

Your Rabbi, *Myra Soifer*  
775-721-5508 (cell);  
[myrabbims@gmail.com](mailto:myrabbims@gmail.com)

*Rabbi Soifer has changed  
her e-mail address to  
[myrabbims@gmail.com](mailto:myrabbims@gmail.com).  
Please adjust your  
records.*

## *NEW BAT YAM OFFICERS AND TRUSTEES ELECTED*

The 2016-2017 budget for Bat Yam was presented at the annual Bat Yam membership meeting on March 17<sup>th</sup> and the membership approved the following slate of officers and trustees. The year of term expiration follows each name.

### **Officers**

President: Alan Lessack – 2018  
First Vice - President: Barry Fulmer – 2018  
Second Vice-President: Michael Hochschild – 2018  
Treasurer: Leonard Minsky – 2017  
Corresponding Secretary: Irene Skolnick – 2017  
Recording Secretary: Annette Pacyga - 2017  
Immediate Past President: Marty Pokedoff – 2018

**Board of Trustees:** Jeanette Keyser – 2017; Stan Zell – 2017; Miriam Bailey – 2018; Norma Kohn – 2018; Barry Epstein – 2018; Shirley Frank – 2018; Cheryl Fulmer – 2018; Kathy Zoss – 2018

Rabbi Myra Soifer installed the new trustees and officers at the meeting. Incoming president Alan Lessack thanked outgoing president Martin Pokedoff and outgoing board members Renee Sugar, Frank Siegel, and Salessa Berk for their service to *Bat Yam*.

Thanks also to Peggy Siegel for chairing the nominating committee and to the committee's other members Leonard Skolnick, Jack Kohn, Bluma Herman, and Marcia Rudin. Special thanks also to Paula Raboy and Paulette Lotstein for organizing the delicious potluck dinner that preceded the membership meeting, and to all who contributed food and financial resources.

*PFLAG INTERFAITH CONVOCATION TO BE ON  
SUNDAY, APRIL 10<sup>TH</sup>*

The Ninth Annual Interfaith Convocation of PFLAG (Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) will take place at 3 p.m. on Sunday, April 10<sup>th</sup> at The Current Ecumenical Center, 975 Imperial Golf Course Blvd. #11, in Naples. (Located in Imperial Square Mall between Passage To India and Jack's Seafood Bar and Grill.) A reception will follow the interreligious worship ceremony. *Bat Yam* is one of the twenty-three Welcoming Houses of Worship in the Southwest Florida area. For further information, contact [www.pflaginterfaith.com](http://www.pflaginterfaith.com) or 239-206-3267.

*JEWISH FEDERATION ISRAELI  
INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION*

On May 12<sup>th</sup>, Jewish Federation of Lee and Charlotte Counties will hold a community-wide Israeli Independence Day Celebration beginning at 6 p.m. at the Century Link Sports Complex (Hammond Stadium) during a Miracle baseball game. There will be live music, Israeli folk dancing, children's activities, and Israeli food and drinks. Admission is \$5.00 per person or \$20.00 per family if you purchase tickets in advance. If purchased at the event, admission is \$7.50 per person. To order tickets in advance, or for more information, go to [www.jewishfederationlcc.org](http://www.jewishfederationlcc.org), call Leni Sack at 239-481-4448, ext. 3, or e-mail [lenibsack@jfedlcc.org](mailto:lenibsack@jfedlcc.org).

*TZEDAKAH COMMITTEE DISTRIBUTES FUNDS*

Thank you everyone for your contributions to this year's *Tzedakah* fund. We have distributed the total contributions of \$4500 to the following agencies:

*Yad LaKashish: Lifeline for the Old (Israel)*  
SalusCare (including the former SWFAS) (Fort Myers)  
*Emunah* Sarah Herzog Children's Center (Israel)  
Jewish Federation of Lee and Charlotte Counties – Indigent Fund  
Abuse Counseling and Treatment, Inc. (Fort Myers)  
Gladiolus Learning and Development Center (Fort Myers)  
Jewish War Veterans

The members of the committee are appreciated for their diligence and commitment to the responsibility of distributing these funds. They are Jeanette Keyser, Beverly Lubetkin, Shirley Boscov, Renee Sugar, Peggy Siegel, Arlyn Stein, and Judith Mayer. It is our hope the fund will grow so that additional agencies will benefit from your generosity.

With my thanks, *Salessa Berke*,  
Chair, *Tzedakah* Committee

## *ONEG SHABBATS NEXT SEASON*

It is not too soon to be planning for next season. If you have a special date for which you want to sponsor/co-host an *Oneg*, please contact Kathy Zoss with your preferred date. You can be assured of having the date you prefer if you lock it in now. Even if you do not have a preferred date, you can sign up now for next season. Check your calendar and contact Kathy to sign up. Telephone numbers are 239-362-0539 (home), 239-900-4576 (cell), or 828-369-3018 (North Carolina home). E-mail is [skzoss21943@gmail.com](mailto:skzoss21943@gmail.com). Thanks to everyone who has helped by co-hosting an *Oneg* this year. Your participation helps to make our *Shabbat* services special.

## *LAST SCHMOOZE WITH THE RABBI ON APRIL 8*

Rabbi Myra Soifer will be at the Sanibel Deli this month on Friday, April 8<sup>th</sup>. This will be the last opportunity of the season (and the only time in April) to meet with her. Beginning at 10:30 a.m., she will remain for as long as there are folks wanting to schmooze. If no one shows up by 11:00 a.m., she'll head out for the rest of her day. If you can't make it by 11:00, call (in advance, on her Sanibel landline, 239- 472-1047; after 10:00 a.m. on that morning, call or text her cell phone, 775- 721-5508). And if you'd like to speak with the rabbi at any other time, just contact her for an appointment.

## *APRIL YAHRZEITS*

- April 2 – Reva Kasdan, mother of Bonnie Kasdan
- April 7 – Lillian Schwadron, mother of Sandra Berke
- April 7 – Lillian Levine Hecht, mother of Helane Smith
- April 22 – Joseph Raboy, husband of Paula Raboy
- April 25 - Esther Agtas, aunt of Martin Pokedoff
- April 28 – Esther Lazarovitz, mother of Dorothy Renfroe

## *SPECIAL THANKS TO....*

Miriam Bailey and her helpers Kathy Zoss, and Cheryl Fulmer for providing the reception after Rabbi Funnye's program on March 13<sup>th</sup>.

I want to thank the Membership Committee for providing the delicious food for the *Oneg Shabbat* on February 26<sup>th</sup>. And a special thank you to Linda Drasnin, who decorated the beautiful table and purchased the candle sticks, candles, and small challahs for the new member bags. Another special thank you to Leon Skolnick, who was able to reproduce the pretty labels on the bags and printed fifty of them for us . We are very fortunate to have these talented and generous people at *Bat Yam*.

*Renee Sugar, Chair, Membership Committee*

## MISCELLANEOUS...

- . The Talmud-for-Lunch-Bunch classes have ended for this year. A new Thursday class will meet next season. Watch for details in a later *Bat Yam* newsletter.
- . To update your address, telephone numbers, or e-mail address in the *Bat Yam* membership roster, contact Brandon Minsky at [Brandon@bitservicesfl.com](mailto:Brandon@bitservicesfl.com).
- . In addition to contributions for general *Bat Yam* operations, congregants can now donate to three special funds, The Rabbi's Discretionary Fund, The Music Fund, and The President's Discretionary Fund. Mark your checks to assure that the funds reach the desired destination.
- . The art that that hangs on the walls of Fellowship Hall is arranged by UCC member Carol Good. There are available exhibition dates for the upcoming summer months. If you are an artist and who would like to have a display in Fellowship Hall, contact Carol at 618-201-6252 or [carolgood12@gmail.com](mailto:carolgood12@gmail.com).
- . Please contact Irene Skolnick at [irkul42@gmail.com](mailto:irkul42@gmail.com) or 239-472-2217 with any additions or corrections you have to the *Yahrtzeit* list. Please note her new e-mail address.
- . E-mail articles and suggestions for the May-August *Bat Yam* bulletin to Marcia Rudin at [marciarudin@aol.com](mailto:marciarudin@aol.com) by April 15<sup>th</sup>.
- . E-mail Cheryl Fulmer at [Fulmer.Cheryl@gmail.com](mailto:Fulmer.Cheryl@gmail.com) with any *Bat Yam* news you wish to have published in *L'Chayim*, the Federation newsletter, and/or local Sanibel newspapers. The *L'Chayim* deadline for any month's issue is midweek of the first week of the previous month. *The Island Reporter* deadline is the beginning of the week before the desired issue.
- . The documentary made by Bat Yam member Judith A. Rubin, "Lessons from Mister Rogers' Neighborhood", will be shown on April 8<sup>th</sup> at 10 a.m. at Alliance for the Arts as part of the Ft. Myers Film Festival. Dr. Rubin appeared as The Art Lady on the popular children's TV show in the mid-sixties.

## SAVE THESE DATES...

- . Sunday, April 10, 3 p.m. – Ninth Annual PFLAG Interfaith Convocation [see article p. 6]
- . Friday, April 22nd, 6 p.m. - *Bat Yam* Passover Seder [see article p. 2 ]
- . Thursday, May 12<sup>th</sup>. - Jewish Federation of Lee and Charlotte Counties' community-wide Israeli Independence Day Celebration [see article p. 6]



## *CONTRIBUTIONS TO BAT YAM*

### **General**

Laurie and Martin Merel

Corinne Siegel

Helane Smith

Rebecca Kon, in memory of Marge and Herb Kallman

Reva and Aaron Leizman (guests), thanks for *Shabbat* service and *Oneg Shabbat*

Ann and Alan Levinsohn (guests)

Rochelle and Lewis Masters (guests,) thanks to Bat Yam for its hospitality

Mark Sternheimer, Sr. (guest)

### **In Honor of Bernie Lubetkin's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday**

Ann Arnoff

Jack Cohen

Linda Drasnin

Cheryl and Barry Fulmer

Carol and Philip Scheiber

Helane Smith

Esther and Martin Pokedoff

Arlyn and Irwin Stein

### **In Honor of Ann Arnoff's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday**

Carol and Philip Scheiber

### **Yahrzeits**

Evelyn and Herbert Clark for *Yahrzeits* of Benjamin Clark and Frieda Leaf

Linda and Joel Edinburg for *Yahrzeit* of Leona Bergstein

Helane Smith for *Yahrzeit* of Lillian Levine Hecht

### **Rabbi's Discretionary Fund**

Helane and Alan Smith; **Music Fund**, Helane and Alan Smith; **President's**

**Discretionary Fund**, Helane and Alan Smith

### ***Tzedakah* Fund**

Salessa and Marvin Berk

Bluma and Don Herman

Parvis Sadighi

Helane Smith

Arlyn and Irwin Stein

### **Bat Yam's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

Helane Smith

Patricia and Davis Thurber

**BAT YAM, TEMPLE OF THE ISLANDS**

Rabbi: Myra Soifer

Music Director: Douglas Renfroe

**Officers**

President: Alan Lessack - 239- 579-0296

First VP: Barry Fulmer - 732-780-2016

Second VP: Michael Hochschild

Treasurer: Leonard Minsky

Corresponding Secretary: Irene Skolnick

Recording Secretary: Annette Pacyga

Immediate Past President: Martin Pokedoff

**Board of Trustees**

Jeanette Keyser, Stan Zell, Miriam Bailey, Norma Kohn, Barry Epstein, Shirley Frank,  
Cheryl Fulmer, Kathy Zoss

**Past Presidents**

Mel Bleiberg, Ann Arnoff, David Crown, Lois  
Medinets, Steve Greenstein, Marty Packard, Al Kaplan,  
Jack Cohen, Bernie Lubetkin, Michael Raab, Allan Silberman, Martin Pokedoff

**BAT YAM**

Temple of the Islands

PO Box 84

Sanibel, FL 33957

batyamofsanibel@gmail.com

<http://www.batyam.org/>