

AZOY

"Is that so?"

APRIL 2016
Adar II / Nisan 5776



**UNION for
REFORM JUDAISM**
האיחוד ליהדות רפורמית

SERVING REFORM CONGREGATIONS IN NORTH AMERICA

The Monthly Newsletter of Temple B'nai Israel

The Reform Jewish Congregation of Bay County

Mailing Address: PO Box 16556, Panama City, FL 32406

Located at: 1910 Frankford Avenue, Panama City, Florida

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OUR ANNUAL COMMUNITY SEDER
with ISJL RABBI MATT DREFFIN
SUNDAY ♦ APRIL 24, 2016 ♦ 6:00 pm

Reservations deadline is April 21st | See page 9 for Reservation Form



The TBI Sisterhood participated in "The Empty Bowl Project" last month, a grassroots effort to fight hunger, at Gulf Coast State College; see page 4 for photos and details. Phornsuda (Amanda), pictured above, who crafted 2 Empty Bowls, will soon become a member of the Jewish faith in a conversion ceremony on April 10 at 11:00 am at Oaks by the Bay Park, Panama City.

Save the Date! Rabbi Richard Baroff's last visit to Panama City April 8 - 10!

Rabbi Baroff's final Shabbat weekend at TBI will be the weekend of April 8. See page 2 for details.

Save the Date! ISJL Education Fellow Shira Moskowitz is coming to Panama City April 15 - 17!

Shira will be making her third and final visit to TBI the weekend of April 15. See page 5 for details.

❧ The President's Message ❧

As many of you already know, we will be saying good-bye to Rabbi Richard Baroff this month. He has served our congregation well over the last several years, taking youngsters under his tutelage for b'nai mitzvot study and helping many through their conversion process. Driving every month from Atlanta to help us observe Shabbat, share meals, teach, enjoy Havdalah on the Beach and occasionally (but rarely) get "stumped" by a clever question on Sundays. And all done with kindness and good humor.

We will gather for lunch on Sunday, April 10th at 12:30 pm to share one last nosh with the Rabbi and have a chance to thank him and wish him well. Please make an effort to join us. At that same time we will celebrate another conversion as we welcome Phornsuda (Amanda) Trunin to our Jewish family. She has been working with Rabbi Baroff to learn about Judaism, prayer, Jewish tradition, and Hebrew.

The TBI Board has formed a search committee to look for a new Rabbi for our small congregation. Liz Berman, Lisa Rahn, Mike Starkman and I are in touch with URJ and others to try to locate a part time Rabbi who will help us grow, participate in community outreach and work with our youth, as well as providing spiritual leadership. We will update the Board as we make headway and keep the congregation posted as well.

In the meantime, we will continue to welcome Shabbat on the second Friday of each month with a Shabbat dinner and service. We will continue to end Shabbat with a Havdalah service (on the Beach when possible). And we will support each other and our community as we look to the future.

L'shalom - Sarah

APRIL CALENDAR

SUN	04/03	9:30 am	Religious School Purim Party
FRI	04/08	6:00 pm 7:00 pm	Shabbat Dinner at Temple Last Shabbat Service with Rabbi Richard Baroff
SAT	04/09	12:00 pm	Lunch & Learn with Rabbi Baroff: Jewish views of capital punishment
SUN	04/10	9:30 am 11:00 am 12:30 pm	Religious School Conversion Ceremony of Phornsuda (Amanda) Trunin - Oaks by the Bay Farewell luncheon for Rabbi Baroff at Landmark Condos Clubhouse + help welcome Amanda to the Tribe!
WED	04/13	6:00 pm	Temple Board of Directors Meeting
THUR	04/14	11:00 am	Empty Bowls for Sale at Gulf Coast State College
FRI	04/15	7:00 pm	Shabbat Service with ISJL Education Fellow Shira Moskowitz
SAT	04/16	12:00 pm 6:45 pm	Lunch with with Shira Moskowitz - <i>bring your lunch, beverages provided</i> Havdalah at Rick Seltzer Park, PCB - <i>followed by dinner at local eatery</i>
SUN	04/17	9:30 am	Religious School
WED	04/20	10:00 am 6:00 pm	Day of Remembrance Ceremony at Naval Support Activity Sisterhood Meeting
FRI	04/22	7:00 pm	HAPPY PASSOVER!
SUN	04/24	9:30 am 6:00 pm	No Religious School Community Seder with Rabbi Matt Dreffin

Ha Lachma Onya. "This is the bread of affliction" we read in the Passover Haggadah in ancient Jewish Aramaic. It is the bread of affliction because it reminds us of Egyptian slavery as recounted in the Torah in *Shemot*, the Book of Exodus.

At the same time it is the bread of liberation, for unleavened bread is not what the Hebrew slaves normally ate. Despite their miserable lives of deprivation they were able usually to bake bread with yeast. But not on the day of freedom. On that day they hastily left with the unleavened bread. Ironically then the bread which was lacking the crucial ingredient - leaven - became the matzo, which defined the holiday.

Chametz, that is leaven, became central to the entire Passover festival; so much so in fact, that it became known as the Feast of Unleavened Bread - *Chag Ha Matzot*. *Pesach* is also known as the Feast of the Time of our Freedom - *Chag zeman Cheruteinu*. As a result, in Jewish theology, Matzo and Freedom are conjoined as concepts. In fact, in the *Ha Lachma Onya* prayer at the beginning of the Seder, we recite that "this year we are slaves, but next year we will be *B'nai chorin* - free people.

The eating of matzo is a mitzvah - a commandment - for *Pesach*. It is specifically commanded at the Seder/s. No food is more important in the Jewish tradition. Indeed, Jews spend the day before Passover cleaning the house of any leaven (*Bedikat*

Chametz) and then the next morning burning the leaven found (*Biur Chametz*).

The strictness with which the *Halacha* (rabbinic law) treats the need to be utterly pure of leaven is legendary. Different dishes for the *Chag* - Holy Festival - are required at the minimum. Many traditional Jews go much further than that.

Also these cracker like cakes made of unfermented flour and water became central to Christian theology and practice - particularly in the Orthodox and Roman Catholic traditions. In these traditions the Eucharist is performed with unleavened wafers. The Last Supper took place during the Passover week and so the bread was unleavened.

Matzo is also prominent in Jewish life during the Passover season. Not too many people like to eat matzo plain, or even with butter/margarine or jam/jelly, and so matzo *Brei*, chocolate covered matzo, matzo brittle, matzo ball soup and many other ways have been discovered and invented over the centuries by creative cooks to allow we poor Jews to eat our matzo a little more happily.

May the children of God all be free in our own lifetimes.

Chag Samayach -

Rabbi Richard Baroff

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Shabbat Candle-Lighting Times for April 2016

Take a break from the hectic work week and mark the Day of Rest with lighting of the candles.

04/01 | 6:44 pm 04/08 | 6:48 pm 04/15 | 6:52 pm 04/22 | 6:57 pm 04/29 | 7:01 pm

NOTES FROM SISTERHOOD

We are pleased to announce that Lisa Rahn is our new president. We're currently busy planning for the TBI Community Seder. Our Pass-over Committee – Alma, Lisa and Sarah – has been able to reduce the cost for each attendee so please make your reservations as soon as possible. A reservation form can be found on the last page of this issue of *The Azoy*. Sisterhood members, under the able leadership of Tammy Marinuzzi and her crew shared in making clay bowls for the Empty Bowl Project. Enjoy the photos of “the Sisters of the Mud.” A great time was had by all and it serves a great cause.

SISTERHOOD BOWLS ‘EM OVER!

Crafty members of TBI Sisterhood got a chance to help a worthy cause, “The Empty Bowl Project,” by forming clay into usable bowls. Tammy Marinuzzi, Associate Professor of Visual Arts at Gulf Coast State College, invited the group to participate and many of us did. Tammy was kind enough to give us a few quick lessons before we began so our bowls wouldn't leak and might actually be used by someone.

The Empty Bowl Project has been around for more than 25 years and is a worldwide charitable endeavor. Artists, clubs, classes, etc. create their own “art community” to produce bowls that will later be sold to make money towards the goal of ending hunger. In our case, GCSC donated the clay and other materials needed to make bowls, Tammy and her crew donated their time and expertise, and the women of the Sisterhood got to be creative.

After firing and glazing, the bowls are filled with soup and sold for \$10 each. We'll have a chance to buy our bowls back on April 14 at GCSC. All of the proceeds go to a hunger-related local charity. Thanks to Tammy, GCSC and all the folks who participated and donated. It was great fun!



Shira Says:
Shira Moskowitz
ISJL Education Fellow



Shalom! I am so excited for my third and final visit to Panama City! For those of you who I have not had the pleasure of meeting on my previous trips, my name is Shira Moskowitz and I am Temple B'nai Israel's Education Fellow from the Institute of Southern Jewish Life. The ISJL is a trans-denominational organization which strives to ensure that every child has access to an excellent Jewish Education.

We are hard at work planning the visit for the weekend of April 15th – 17th. We would love to see you at any or all of the events! The weekend will begin with Friday night services on April 15th at 7 pm. Join us for a spirited and musical Shabbat prayer experience.

On Saturday April 16th, we will meet at the temple for a discussion about Women in the Passover Story. Bring your own lunch and learn about the integral role that women played during the Exodus from Egypt.

Later that evening, we will end Shabbat together with Havdalah on the beach. Please join us at Rick Seltzer Park, Panama City Beach.

On Sunday morning, I will conclude my visit by leading a mock Passover Seder for the Religious School students. We would love to have parents join us to celebrate and learn about the Passover traditions!

See you soon!

NEWS FROM RELIGIOUS SCHOOL
by Cynthia Gingold

The Peanuts Friday Night Service was a complete success! For those of you who did not attend because you thought it might be a children's service, it wasn't. It followed the elements of a traditional Friday night service. The difference lay in the inclusion of the children. They added much to the service: Humor, Songs, Dialogue, and much spirituality through the usual Peanuts Characters.

For the past three weeks, the children have made file folder reports on Famous Jewish Americans. They ranged in history from the American Revolution to present day. In addition to a mini-biography, a timeline, and a stamp representing the person to report on, the children made three dimensional figures of their people. The children loved creating their projects and they even learned about their persons.

With Purim right around the corner, our Purim party on April 3rd will include a costume contest, a few games, pizza, and hamentashen. And "Not for all the Hamentashen in the Town!," a rollicking Readers' Theatre. The cost for each congregant will be five dollars. The children are adamant that adults must wear costumes.

To make sure we have enough pizza and hamentashen, please e-mail Cynthia at cynthia_gingold@yahoo.com or call 588-8734. We will have food for only those who make reservations. Proceeds will go to a charity of the children's choice.

Caring Committee is Ready to Help

Responding to the needs of the lonely, ill, dying and grieving is a vital part of Jewish life in our community. The Caring Committee is available to all Jews in our area. If you or a family member or friend is in need of support, a caring phone call, a friendly visit, a prayer or just a chat with another Jew, please call us at 850-522-3685. A member of the Caring Committee will return your call.

Caring Committee responders for the first 6 months of 2016 are: Nate Mewhinney, Judith Scott and Heather Mewhinney. We will be happy to hear from you how we might respond to your needs and the needs of the Jewish community in any other ways. Just give us a call. The warm hand of a friend can carry us through the hardest of times.

APRIL JOYS & REMEMBRANCES

Y A H R Z E I T S - THEIR MEMORIES ARE FOR US A BLESSING

03/20	CHARLOTTE MINKOWITZ - CONGREGATION FOUNDER & CHARTER MEMBER
04/06	STANLEY SILVERBOARD - FIRST HUSBAND OF HELAINE NORMAN
04/08	BERNARD WETCHLER - FATHER OF GAYLE PAINTER
04/08	MARY BELLA GELMON - MOTHER OF JOSEPH GELMON
04/13	RUDOLPH F. RIGANO - FATHER OF MARY STARKMAN
04/14	EVELYN DRESNER NASH - MOTHER OF LOIS OSWALD
04/25	SAM GINGOLD - FATHER OF ALVIN GINGOLD
04/26	IRWIN SICKERMAN - FATHER OF STEPHEN SICKERMAN



BIRTHDAYS

04/01	ELIZABETH SUTTON
04/03	JOSH SOSTHEIM
04/03	JAKE SOSTHEIM
04/07	RON FELDSTEIN
04/11	ELIZABETH SICKERMAN
04/16	JACOB SICKERMAN

ANNIVERSARIES

04/13	BRIAN HUMBOLDT & GAYLE PAYNTER
04/13	MARK & CHERYL HYMAN
04/20	STEPHEN & CAROLYNN SICKERMAN

SHABBAT BEHIND BARS

For the past couple of years, Nate Mewhinney and Harold Prows have been visiting the Calhoun County Correctional Center to give Jewish prisoners a chance to practice their religion. Recently, since Harold has been occupied with a full time job, Mike Starkman has volunteered to help Nate. The prison authorities and chaplain have welcomed the lay leaders and make time and space available to them.

On Friday nights, Nate leads a Shabbat service for the men including a discussion about the Torah reading for that week. Temple B'nai Israel was happy to donate unused siddurs for the men to use. An offer to borrow the small ark in storage at the shul went by the wayside for lack of space at the prison – but, perhaps that will change in the future.

In addition to Shabbat services, Nate and friends visit the inmates on two Tuesdays each month. These visits offer a more free form discussion where the men are encouraged to talk about anything they wish. The discussions sometimes get quite personal. This helps the men to feel more connected with the world. For many of the men, these visits are their only connection to the outside.

For Nate and his fellow lay-leaders, it's rewarding to help the men find some rays of hope and connect or reconnect spiritually. The men are always happy to see Nate (and crew) and glad to participate. We, at TBI, are proud of our volunteer lay leaders and want to support their work in any way we can. They are performing a mitzvah for which we are all grateful.

Please Volunteer to Help with the Seder (or Risk Being Volun-told)

Listed below are the tasks that are in need of volunteers.

Black indicates that those jobs have been filled. **Green indicates that volunteers are still needed.**

The Sisterhood's Seder Committee – Alma, Lisa and Sarah – has already taken care of many of the pre-Seder jobs.

When you see the job you want, don't hesitate. Please call Lisa right away at 503-338-0449 or email her at laraohn@gmail.com. THANK YOU! Now let's get our matzo going.....

1. P.R., local paper, email, facebook, etc: Bob G. and Lisa
2. Purchase items for Seder plates, etc: Alma
3. Make Chopped Liver: Sharon Y. and Judith S.
4. Make Charoses: Aviva M and Linette S.
5. Make Matzo Balls: Anne M and Marsha K.
6. Order and pick up flowers: Sarah
7. Greeters at the door (Sun. 5:15 pm): Bob G, Sonny G.
8. **Pick up groceries at Publix (Saturday 4/23): _____, _____**
9. **Stack chairs (Sunday am 4/24): _____, _____, _____, _____**
10. **Set tables (Sunday am 4/24): _____, _____, _____, _____, _____, _____, _____, _____**
11. **Fill bowls w/charoses, liver, horseradish, salt water, cover (Sunday pm 4/24): _____, _____, _____**
12. **Arrange gefilte fish in pans from jars (Sunday pm 4/24): _____, _____**
13. **Assemble Seder plates for each table (Sunday pm 4/24): _____, _____**
14. **Clean-up/fold tables: _____, _____, _____, _____, _____, _____, _____, _____, _____, _____, _____, _____, _____, _____, _____, _____**



CALL FOR BOARD NOMINATIONS

The 2016 Nominating Committee is conducting a search for qualified nominees for the next slate of officers and trustees. Any member in good standing of the Congregation wishing to run for office should submit his or her name and the office for which you wish to run in writing to Temple Secretary Stephen Sickerman, Temple B'nai Israel, PO Box 16556, Panama City, FL 32406. Your letter must be received no later than May 11, 2016.

Nominations will be closed following the regularly scheduled Board of Trustees meeting next month – May

11, beginning at 6:00 pm – to allow for notification to the congregation, prior to the Annual Meeting, of the nominations, including the Board's recommended slate. The election of officers and trustees shall be held at our Annual Congregational Meeting, to be scheduled in June 2016. No nominations may be made from the floor.

If you wish to discuss the possibility of your nomination, please contact Stephen Sickerman, Nominating Committee Chair at 814-2610 or sickerman@comcast.net. Remember, it's a mitzvah to serve on the Board!

Need a note for the IRS? Any member wishing to receive an annual donation statement for their 2015 taxes may contact Temple Treasurer Mike Starkman at: treasurer.templebnaiisrael@knology.net.



On Friday, March 25, **Sarah Farkas** led a Shabbat Service, followed by a Purim Trivia Quiz officiated by a masked **Judith Scott**, who queried the group of adults and children on their collective knowledge of the Book of Esther. Correct answers to the Purim Challenge Questions were rewarded with one of many tiny, toy gifts; incorrect answers received no toys at all and minor derision! Of course, we all made lots of noise whenever Haiman's name was mentioned. As you can see from the images on this page, all taken by photographer **Heather Mewhinney**, the table was beautifully set with sparkling beverages, fruit-filled hamantaschen and fresh fruit. An enjoyable and delicious time was had by all. Thanks to Sarah and Judith, who organized this event.

PASSOVER SEDER

Our Community Seder Service will be conducted by ISJL Rabbi Matt Dreffin

*In order to give everyone plenty of time to make reservations
please review the details and use the RSVP Form below.*

*For more information, call or text: Sarah Farkas at 507-990-6724
or e-mail her at farcott@gmail.com*



DATE: Sunday, April 24, 2016
TIME: 6:00 PM
PLACE: Temple B'nai Israel, 1910 Frankford Ave
SEATING: Limited to 110

Please note that **TICKET** prices are greater if you are not a member of Temple B'nai Israel

MEMBERS	Adults: \$30.00	Children under <i>Bar/Bat Mitzvah</i> : \$10.00	MEMBERS
NON-MEMBERS	Adults: \$40.00	Children under <i>Bar/Bat Mitzvah</i> : \$15.00	NON-MEMBERS

RSVP Deadline : Payment with form must be received by **April 21, 2016**

Printed Name: _____ Phone: _____

Signature: _____ e-mail: _____

Address: _____

MEMBERS _____ # of Adults @ \$30.00 _____ # of Children @ \$10.00 _____ TOTAL

NON-MEMBERS _____ # of Adults @ \$40.00 _____ # of Children @ \$15.00 _____ TOTAL

Form of payment: _____ Cash _____ Check - payable to: Temple B'nai Israel

Additional donation: _____ **AMOUNT ENCLOSED:** _____

Please complete and photocopy or cut out
this RSVP form and mail with payment to:

SARAH FARKAS
 2100 W BEACH DR APT K101
 PANAMA CITY FL 32401-1609