

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 850-522-8685 / http://bnaiisraelpc.org

HIGH HOLIDAY SCHEDULE AT TEMPLE B'NAI ISRAEL

Please join us as Rabbi Alana Wasserman leads us in prayer and Daniel Sternlicht adds his voice and music to these Days of Awe

Rosh Hashanah		
Sunday September 13	Erev Rosh Hashanah	7:00 pm
Monday September 14	Rosh Hashanah Morning Service	10:00 am
	Tashlich Service for children & adults	2:00 pm
Yom Kippur ———		
Tuesday September 22	Kol Nidre	7:00 pm
Wednesday September 23	Yom Kippur Morning Service	10:00 am
· -	Children's Service	3:00 pm
	Yizkor & Neilah Service	4:00 pm
	Concluding Service	5:00 pm
	Break-the-Fast by TBI Sisterhood following conclusion of services	

We're looking forward to seeing y'all in shul. L'shana tova!

A suggested donation from non-members of \$50 per holiday is appreciated.

Help us Break-the-Fast Together

With the help of our Sisterhood, we are once again planning to have a covered dish Break-the-Fast after Yom Kippur services have concluded. If you are planning to attend the High Holidays at Temple B'nai Israel and would like to participate in the Community Break-the-Fast, please contact **Mary Starkman** at 850-708-1766 or **Cynthia Gingold** at 850-588-8734 with what you plan to bring. Each dish should be enough to serve 8-12 people. If you don't know what to bring we will be happy to give you an assignment!

Please remember that this is a dairy meal, so NO meat (or shellfish) please. Bagels and cream cheese will be provided. Some of the top favorites that will be needed: lox, herring, baked kugel, fruit & vegetables, egg salad, tuna salad and, of course, desserts.

Please bring your dishes table-ready, as our kitchen is small and services will be under way. You can bring it in the door and directly to the table, with no fuss, no muss and minimal noise. Thank you all in advance for your assistance with our Break-the-Fast. We really appreciate your help and look forward to seeing everyone during the High Holidays.

🥗 The President's Message 🛹

As we welcome the new year we need to take stock of our many blessings. Our Jewish community in Panama City is small but makes a lasting impression. We have a small but identifiable house of worship. We engage in Jewish traditions through songs and festivals, holidays and Shabbats. We help our fellow residents through *tzedakah* in energy given as well as in material gifts. We have received an anonymous monetary gift with which to continue and improve our Jewish identity in Panama City. We are a congregation of unique individuals who come together throughout the year to celebrate, pray, learn and grieve. We truly do have blessings to count and to remember.

We need to do the same on a more personal level. For what am I personally thankful? What good has come to me and my family? What good have I had a hand in causing this past year?

We also take time in these Days of Awe to examine ourselves more critically. What have we done that may have caused harm or hurt to those around us? How can we improve our own behaviour? How can we become better human beings? How can we become better Jews? It is our task at this time of year to answer these questions for ourselves. We not only contemplate our wrongdoings, we must face those whom we have wronged, tell them, apologize and seek to do better. This is not an easy thing to do. But it is a way to start fresh, to start the new year with a clean slate.

And this is true in our own community of TBI members, too. Have I reached out to my fellow Temple members who may be hurting or who may have lost a loved one, or lost a job? Have I just made a phone call or sent an email or text asking how things are going? Just to send a caring message. Have I sent a Chai card or Mitzvah card recognizing someone's birthday, new home, new job, new grandchild, successful surgery? Have I volunteered to be on a shul committee? We need to get to know each other better. We need to forgive the hurts of the past and move forward together, as a community with shared interests, shared traditions and renewed energy. We are too small to let any one of us slip. And we are too big to not reach out.

As president of TBI, this is my plea for the High Holidays when welcoming the new year. While donations of money are traditionally asked of congregants, I am asking each of us to make a different kind of "donation:" one of forgiveness and renewal of our relationships to each other, to the shul and to Judaism. Let this truly be a good year for each of us and all of us. *L'shana tova*. Have a very sweet year!

L'shalom - Sarah

This year, Sukkot is celebrated from September 27 thru October 4 -

TBI Board Changes

Sadly, two members of our Board recently resigned their positions.

We thank Alvin Gingold and Nate Mewhinney for their service on the Board and wish them well. We're sure they will continue to serve the Temple well in many ways.

Thanks to Stephen Sickerman for agreeing to rejoin the Board, filling the position of Secretary for the remaining term.

"If things never changed, we would not have any butterflies."

Dear Friends,

L'shanah tovah! My name is Rabbi Alana Wasserman, and I will be leading services at Temple B'nai Israel this High Holy Day season. I am very excited to be joining you this fall!

I'd like to take this opportunity to tell you a little bit about myself. I was born in Paramus, NJ, and grew up in Worthington, OH and Dallas, TX. In 1999, I graduated with a BA in English from the University of Texas at Austin. In 2004, I was ordained at Hebrew Union College in New York. After ordination, I was the Assistant Rabbi at Congregation M'kor Shalom in Cherry Hill, NJ for four years. While in my first year of Rabbinical School in Jerusalem, I met my husband, Rabbi Jeremy Master. In 2009, my family and I moved to Greenville, SC, so that my husband could be the Rabbi of the Temple of Israel. I have two daughers, Peri (7) and Dara (2).

The High Holy Day season is a time of introspection and personal growth, but it is also a time for gathering together as a *kehillah kedoshah*, a holy community. This is our chance to reconnect with old friends, and create new relationships as well. We reflect on the year that has passed, sharing both our highs and lows, and we look forward to the year ahead. As I am new to this congregation, I look forward to celebrating the New Year with all of you, and making wonderful new connections.



L'shanah tovah tikatevu v'tikateimu – May we all be inscribed and sealed for a good New Year!

L'shalom, Rabbi Alana Wasserman

SEPTEMBER CALENDAR

WED	09/09	6:00 pm	Monthly Temple Board of Directors Meeting
SUN	09/13	9:30 am	Religious School
		7:00 pm	Erev Rosh Hashanah Service with Rabbi Alana Wasserman
MON	09/14	10:00 am 2:00 pm	Rosh Hashanah Morning Service with Rabbi Alana Wasserman Tashlich for Children and Adults with Rabbi Alana Wasserman
WED	09/16	6:00 pm	Sisterhood Meeting
SUN	09/20	9:30 am	Religious School
TUES	09/22	7:00 pm	Kol Nidre Service with Rabbi Wasserman
WED	09/23	10:00 am 3:00 pm 4:00 pm 5:00 pm	Yom Kippur Morning Service with Rabbi Alana Wasserman Children's Service with Rabbi Alana Wasserman Ne'ilah and Yizkor Service with Rabbi Alana Wasserman Concluding Service - Break-the-Fast to follow
SUN	09/27	9:30 am	Religious School + Help us build & decorate the Sukkah!

Shabbat Candle-Lighting Times

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



My dear Floridian friends,

We read at the very beginning of Genesis in the Torah that God observed the created universe and affirmed that it was "very good" (*Tov M'od*). But it is clear to most people as they live their lives that very often life does not feel so good at all.

Life is full of disappointment, suffering and loss. Add to this the extra layer of oppression which history has visited upon our people. How can Jewish people agree with God's assessment in the Bible that life is very good? Pious Jews of course accept what is written in Scripture as from God. But how, in light of our people's bitter experience, as well as life's sorrows in general, can we make sense of the Divine affirmation of life? The Jewish answer has been to look for life's meaning (and goodness) beneath the surface of things. Jews have always searched for truth behind what the eye can see and what the ear can hear. To those who brought to the world the implausible belief in an invisible God, the Jewish thinker maintained the following:

Beneath the chaos of the world there was order.

Behind the suffering there was redemption.

After exile would come redemption.

After degradation would come dignity.

After despair there would be hope.

After ignorance there would be knowledge.

After indecisiveness should come meaning ful action.

If you can be patient life would eventually make sense for those who search for its meaning.

For those who believe in the Holy One and in the

covenant made between God and the Israelites at Sinai, the vocation of the Jew must be the search for Life's deeper meaning. Life lived superficially is simply not good enough.

Such a life does not square with the divine pronouncement that life is very good. It is interesting that God 'saw" the Creation and pronounced it very good but our seeing is not enough. The divine sight penetrates to the essence of things, but our seeing is superficial. In order for our sight to be profound as is God's we must investigate life deeply. Whether our investigation is scientific, philosophical, moral or spiritual, or a mixture of these, this is the heart of Jewish piety: the search for the meaningful essence of things obscured by what we see. For the Jewish sensibility, what we see is not what we get. God has always given us much more.

During the Sabbatical month of Tishre when we commemorate Creation during Rosh haShanah and celebrate it during Sukkot we should reflect on what the Creator had done. God had created time and space, matter and energy, body and mind, and our sense of right and wrong. It is this sense of right and wrong that is our focus, and the Divine concern, during the *Yamim Noraim* – during the Days of Awe. *Teshuvah* – returning to God – can be seen as our understanding that we should look more deeply for the Divine in ourselves and in the world. And when we discover life's deeper meanings, we should act differently, better and so make the world a little better too.

L'shanah Tova Tikatevu.

May you be inscribed for a Good Year.

Rabbi Richard Baroff



Shira Moskowitz

ISJL Education Fellow



On May 30th, less than a month after my graduation from college, I moved to Jackson, MS to begin working at the Institute of Southern Jewish Life. While I was excited about this new adventure, I was also apprehensive about moving to Mississippi all the way from New York. To make this transition easier, I took time to prepare. After much research, I found a place to live; I spoke to past Education Fellows to hear their advice; and I spent hours cleaning out my room to decide what to pack. My moving experience was made significantly easier because I had spent time preparing for it.

Similarly, Judaism emphasizes the preparations we take to ready ourselves for holidays and

momentous occasions, particularly the high holidays. While Rosh HaShanah, the New Year, and Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, are a chance for us to reflect and repent, Judaism acknowledges that these days in and of themselves are not enough time to accomplish all of these tasks as we enter into a new year. Therefore, It is customary in Jewish tradition to use the entire month preceding these holidays, Elul, to prepare.

The month of Elul is a chance for us to reflect on the joys and challenges of the past year; a time for us to repent and apologize to those we have wronged; and an opportunity to set goals for how we hope to move forward in our lives. Even in biblical times, the month of Elul has been used for reconciliation, atonement, and reflection. It is said that after the Israelites worshiped the golden calf, Moses went up the mountain on the first day of Elul and stayed there until the tenth day of Tishrei, which today is the date of Yom Kippur ¹.

Jewish tradition continuously teaches us that preparing for an event or a holiday makes the moment itself more meaningful. In Hebrew, the days of the week do not have names; instead they are numbered leading up to Shabbat. On Passover, we make sure that all of the chametz (leavened bread) is cleaned out of our houses before Passover starts.

Beginning on the second day of Passover we count the omer, the days leading up to Shavu-ot, to commemorate receiving the Torah at Mount Sinai. We do all of this because we need time to prepare ourselves for the day of rest; to celebrate our freedom from slavery in Egypt; and to receive the Torah on Shavuot. Judaism recognizes that when we take time to prepare, our experience is enhanced because we are ready for it.

While I have been preparing myself spiritually for the upcoming holidays, I have also spent much of Elul traveling across the South, working with congregations, like temple Bnai Israel, to prepare for the coming school year. Although the school preparation period comes with its own set of challenges, including finding teachers, calendaring, and reading curriculum, it is an important step to ensure that we are ready for an amazing year at religious school.

So whether you are preparing for a big move, the high holidays, or the coming school year, may we all prepare in meaningful ways to enhance our own experiences. I look forward to working with each of you this coming year! Shanah Tovah!

NOTES FROM SISTERHOOD co-PRESIDENT MARY STARKMAN:

At next month's meeting of the Temple Sisterhood on October 21, we are honored to have our very own Dr Michelle Kraut speak to us about Breast Cancer, in recognition of Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Come out and hear the latest about digital mammography and breast density and what this means to you!

The Sisterhood of Temple B'nai Israel has chosen Family Services Agency (FSA) as its *tzedakah* project this year. Please see page 10 of this issue for FSA's current Priority Need list. Won't you please consider bringing a donation to the collection box at the shul?

¹ Kitov, Eliyahu. The Book of Our Heritage: The Jewish Year and Its Days of Significance

October 16 is fast approaching. The TBI Sisterhood is asking each of you to save your unwanted stuff - clothes, toys, books, appliances, furniture, whatever and donate it for the 2nd Annual Rummage Sale. You'll be able to drop off your stuff on October 4th and 11th before the sale and we will sort and price it. Specific instructions will be posted in the October issue of The Azov.

We also need plastic bags and some sturdy boxes for packing purchases. Please give us your unwanted clothes hangers too. And if you have a garment rack that we can borrow we would be most appreciative.

Save it! Donate it! Help Us Raise Funds! Friday, October 16

8 am - 4 pm Temple B'nai Israel

And one more very important request: We need volunteers to help us on the day of the sale and the pre-sale sorting and pricing days. If you can give a few hours of your time and energy, it will be greatly appreciated.

Please call: Cynthia at 850-588-8734 or Mary at 850-708-1766.



START THE NEW YEAR SWEETLY!

It's going to be a very sweet year—especially if you treasure those apples dipped in honey.

We have three distinctly unique honey dishes for sale at the shop. Each one with its own charm.

One is classic in design made with glass inside a brass frame.

One is made from delicate porcelain and Jerusalem stone.

And one is so modern it is stunning to behold!

All come with their own sweet spoons. All of them are made in Israel. They range in price from \$25 to \$60.

We also have a nice selection of



Jewish New Years cards to send sweet greetings to family and friends. Come check us out and buy local!

We Need You! Yes — YOU!

We are a small congregation with many needs. No one person can accomplish all that needs to be done. If only a few people give their all, burnout is the result. Many of you have given a lot of time, sweat and tears to build our shul and maintain this Jewish community in Panama City. And now we need you again.

Please sign up for one (or more) of the committees that interest you. A sign-up sheet can be found on the bulletin board in the shul's entryway. We will collect names through the holidays, then each committee will have a chance to meet, choose a leader and set some realistic goals. Remember, there are never too many people on any one committee. We need you all!

Committees forming now include: Building Maintenance/Beautification, Chevra Kadisha/Caring, Fundraising/Development, New Ark, Newsletter, Outreach, Policies/Rules, Programming/Entertainment, Religious School, Ritual, Budget, Website/PR, Youth and other interests like Music, Library, Adult Learning, etc.

COMMITTEE DESCRIPTIONS:

Budget: Members of this committee will review the budget and make recommendations to the Board.

Building Maintenance/Beautification: Keep the outside and inside of the shul in good condition (not a cleaning committee). For example, maintain the sign outside, hang pictures inside, etc.

Chevra Kadisha/Caring: Develop a handbook for guidance regarding death and burial in our community. Offer those services to Jews in our community. Reach out to sick and needy Jews in our community.

Fundraising: Search out grants and other possible ways to raise funds for the shul. Make recommendations about fundraising activities to the Board.

New Ark: Research ark styles and costs. Raise money for a new ark.

Newsletter: Publish a monthly newsletter to communicate TBI events, activities, programs, services and other news to TBI members and friends.

Outreach: Look at ways to reach out to the broader community, to engage unaffiliated Jews in the area.

Policies/Rules: Review past Board minutes and shul history to compile a handbook of approved rules and policies regarding the shul and its members.

Programming/Entertainment: Develop adult and children's programs beyond the school curriculum and established services. Utilize the shul for enhanced Jewish education and entertainment.

Religious School: Develop and deliver Jewish education to our youngest members

Ritual: Prepare for Jewish Holidays, distribute honors for services, help to set dates for Bar & Bat Mitzvah and other Jewish life cycle events.

Website/PR: Resurrect the TBI website and maintain an on-line presence for the shul.

Youth: Seek ways to re-engage post Bar & Bat Mitzvah kids in Jewish life and activities.

For more information, please contact Sarah Farkas at 507-990-6724 or farcott@gmail.com.

SEPTIEMIBER JOYS & INEMIEMBRANCES

	YAHRZEITS - THEIR MEMORIES ARE FOR US A BLESSING		
08/18 08/21	JUDY CHAMBERS HEYMAN - WIFE OF CHARLES HEYMAN TOM GELMON - SON OF JOSEPH GELMON		
09/02	Louis Farkas - Father of Sarah Farkas		
09/05	Louis Silver - Father of Anita Skoula		
09/09	STEPHEN THEBERGE - FATHER OF STEPHEN THEBERGE JR		
09/11	AARON HORWITZ - NEPHEW OF SARAH FARKAS AND JUDITH SCOTT		
27 ELUL	Fajele Wajsfelner - Grandmother of Michael Starkman		
09/14	YETTA LEVY SICKERMAN - GRANDMOTHER OF STEPHEN SICKERMAN		
09/20	NORMA LIST - MOTHER OF JUDITH SCOTT		

	BIRTHDAYS		ANNIVERSARIES						
08/30	Marsha Kraselsky	09/02	Alvin & Cynthia Gingold						
09/04	STEPHEN SICKERMAN								
09/05	Joan Prows								
09/13	Aviva Mallary								
09/14	ALVIN GINGOLD								
09/27	Mark Hyman								
09/28	LINETTE STERNLICHT								



TEMPLE B'NAI ISRAEL HIGH HOLY DAYS FOOD DRIVE

We will be holding our customary food drive for the hungry this year during our High Holy Days. *Tzedakah*, commonly translated as charity, is the obligation to see to the needs of fellow human beings who are unable to meet their own needs. In that spirit, please bring non-perishable foods - such as canned goods, spaghetti, cereals, dried beans, and soups - to any of our *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur* Services. Your donations will be delivered directly to the Family Services Agency of Panama City.

49 million Americans and nearly 25% of Israelis struggle to put enough food on the table every day.



If we work together, we can change their lives.

Each year, the High Holy Days give us an opportunity to accept responsibility for the world we've created and commit to transforming it for the better.

Help us end hunger. Please donate today.



Family Service Agency's current priority need list

The non-profit **Family Service Agency** is located at 114 East 9th St, Panama City. They list needs and services weekly. All donations are tax-deductible and can be delivered to their office only during office hours of Monday - Thursday 8:00 am - 3:00 pm (closed Fridays). For more information, please call 785-1721.

FOOD PANTRY: Our shelves are getting bare in many of the things we use regularly when building our food boxes and homeless backpacks. Items currently needed are: Jam/Jelly, Pudding (boxed & individual), individual-size cereal, and packet-sized grits. Canned foods: Tomatoes, Raviolis, Potatoes (white or sweet), salmon, mackerel, sardines, chili, beef stew, chicken & dumplings, hash, and fruit.

Our homeless veteran project is nearly complete but we still need:

Chapstick, Toothpaste, Men's Aftershave/Cologne, plastic soap containers and Backpacks (new or gently-used). We also need ballcap-type hats.

SCHOOL UNIFORMS: School starts on Tuesday and we are in need of boys and girls school uniform polo shirts in white (all sizes) to fill our last few orders. This will help us help the families with school-aged children meet the dress codes of their schools.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES NEEDED: School started in August and we are still putting together our last few orders for school supplies in an effort to help parents who struggle with these costs. Items needed desperately right now are: Wide-Ruled Loose-Leaf Notebook Paper, Color Pencils, #2 Pencils, Highlighter Markers, and Flash Drives – which are now being required by the schools.

ADULT INCONTINENCE SUPPLIES: Needed items right now are Large and Extra-Large Pullup-type adult diapers and disposable bedpads.

PERSONAL HYGEINE: Children's Toothpaste and Children's Toothbrushes are needed.

CLEANING SUPPLIES AND HOUSEHOLD ITEMS: We are in need of Windex, Dish-Drainers and Drink Pitchers.

SMALL INK CARTRIDGES: Family Service Agency recycles the small ink cartridges that you use in personal printers so please drop them off at the agency. (Sorry we cannot use the toner type cartridges.)

CELL PHONES: Family Service Agency recycles cell phones. If you have some please drop them by the agency don't throw them out as they are worth money for the agency.

ALUMINUM DRINK CANS & DRINK CAN TABS: We are collecting aluminum drink cans to be recycled. Please do not throw away those cans; just drop them off at our agency and we will recycle them to help pay utility bills, rent, mortgages, buy fresh fruits, meats and cheese. We also send the drink tabs to Ronald McDonald House so parents have a place to stay while visiting a sick child in the hospital.

COUPONS: Many of us get coupons in the newspaper and magazines and don't use that coupon but we have many people who come in and go through our basket of coupons and get what they need to help stretch their food budgets. Please drop off your unwanted manufacturer coupons to our office.

United Way of Northwest Florida makes such a difference in so many lives and supports many organizations, such as Family Service Agency. We ask you to take the time to find out all it does in Bay, and surrounding Counties. When asked to make a donation please donate. It really is for a good cause. For more information call United Way at 785-7521.

Recap of August 2015 TBI Board Meeting

Meeting opened with a D'var Torah given by Mike Starkman.

Treasurer's report reflected the generous donations from the TBI Sisterhood and Chai Minded.

Ritual Committee:

- presented the High Holiday Schedule for year 5776 and placed copies in the entryway
- Rabbi Alana Wasserman will lead services with cantorial aid from Dan Sternlicht
- Harold Prows has ensured police security for the holidays
- Stephen Sickerman will again publish a TBI Yizkor Book
- Sisterhood will host Break-the-Fast
- Pledge cards will be distributed using those left over from previous years
- Bob Goetz prepared and sent a press release regarding the holidays
- Nate Mewhinney will supervise the building of our Sukkah Sunday, 9/27; school kids will decorate it
- Simchat Torah service will be held on Oct. 6th
- Rabbi Baroff weekend Aug. 14 16. Lay led service Aug. 28 by [Mary & Mike Starkman]

Website is being redeveloped by Bob Goetz. Progress is being made, so watch for it.

Judith Scott reported that the Chevra Kadisha/Caring committee was looking for a Board member as liaison and is moving forward on projects. Marsha Kraselsky volunteered to act as Board liaison.

Religious School starts Sunday, August 30 with 7 children.

Committees covering various topics and interests are being established. Sign-up sheets are posted on bulletin board in the TBI entryway and will remain up through the Holidays.

The Board has entertained suggestions for how to use the money donated by Chai Minded. They will pare down the list at their September meeting and report to congregation.

A Board Workshop is planned for Sunday, October 25th from 10-4, facilitated by URJ at no cost.

Sisterhood continues to collect items for Bay County Family Services – check list posted in entryway. Sisterhood needs donations of dairy food items for Break-the-Fast.

Sisterhood 2nd Annual Rummage Sale fundraiser is scheduled for Friday, Oct. 16.

Cynthia Gingold requested and was granted permission to set up informational tables in public places to educated folks about Jewish holidays and Judaism.



TBI Welcomes Kay Stripling

The warm and friendly family of Temple B'nai Israel welcomes our newest member Kay Stripling. Kay recently converted to Judaism in a beachside ceremony encircled by the colors of a beautiful Gulf sunset and by the appreciative hugs of her new spiritual family. Rabbi Baroff performed the **Conversion Ceremony** immediately following **Havdalah**, at Richard Seltzer Park, Panama City Beach. How fitting it was that the first task after a day of rest was to greet a new Jew in our small community. Kay is very enthusiastic about and dedicated to her chosen spiritual path. Be sure to introduce yourself to her and help her feel at home.















NOTE FROM AZOY co-EDITOR:

If you would like to have the names of your loved ones placed in the 2015 Yizkor Book, to be read by our Rabbi during the Memorial Service on Yom Kippur, then contact Stephen Sickerman at 814-2610 or sickerman@comcast.net no later than September 15. The requested donation amount is \$18 for 1-3 names and \$36 for 4-8 names. Please indicate the names of your loved ones. You can direct your check to Treasurer Michael Starkman c/o Temple B'nai Israel, PO Box 16556, Panama City, FL 32406. Thank you!



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