

Newsletter of Temple Beth Torah
Wethersfield, CT
Vol. 14 No. 4

Special Interest Articles:

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Rabbi Seth
Riemer
- Women's Social
- TBTeens and
TBTweens
bowling

Individual Highlights:

- Message from the Co-
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- Coffee for the Ladies

Message from Rabbi Seth Riemer

One morning our Sunday School teacher, Sarah Metzger, shared, during our regularly scheduled *tefilot* (prayer time), a new version of the *ge'ulah* blessing (*Mi Chamocha*), whose theme is our ancestors' liberation from bondage to Pharaoh in Egypt. Sarah wove, into the familiar words of our traditional Jewish blessing, lyrics of Bob Marley's "Redemption Song": "Won't you help to sing / These songs of freedom? / 'Cause all I ever have: / Redemption songs, / Redemption songs."

I was struck and moved by how perfectly these words, and Marley's stirring, reggae-pulsed melody, fit with the ancient prayer of freedom and its reminder that God is "awesome in praise, working wonders."

Also powerful is the sense that Jewish tradition can open itself to the cross-currents of world culture. We do not have to seal ourselves off in a predictable, plastic-sealed, paranoid version of Judaism. We can innovate with what we've received. (I see it happen at many of our TBT events.) We can—without assimilating (i.e., without capitulating to social pressure and the demand for cultural conformity—collaborate with friendly forces flowing around and about us. We can intertwine our style with other styles that, together with ours, sound a harmonious combination of spiritual commitments.

In the Passover story, there is a passage about a "mixed multitude"

(Exodus 12:38) of Egyptians that went out of Egypt with the Israelite people. It's not clear whether those other people were along for the ride or really identified with the Jewish liberation struggle and sought to join their fate with our people's. Our rabbis later argue, claiming from strong hints in the Torah itself, that this foreign group in our midst provoked Israel to sin and caused trouble for Moses as he sought to establish a religious community based on faith in God.

But I have come to believe that the "mixed multitude" got a bad rap. What makes Jewish experience JEWISH is its ability to resist regimented thinking (Marley sings: "Emancipate yourselves from mental slavery") and a willingness to draw strength from the endless varieties of creative connections that Jewish people make with what the world and its people have to offer. We're an interactive religious culture, and that involves a fair exchange: what we do, say and think affects our neighbors, and what they do rubs off on us.

Closing ourselves off from the resources of humanity—and other people—merely because they don't fit our preconception of what is Jewish is just plain foolish. Liberation comes, first of all, from a courageous willingness to open the mind (Marley again: "None but ourselves can free our mind") and recognize that Jewish values are compatible with much of the life we share with people of all kinds.

This is not just a matter of peaceful coexistence but of respectful, harmonious, enterprising interaction. Redemption is a process of listening to the world, experimenting with the rich diversity of melodies, flavors and accents with which the teeming garden of life abounds, and discovering ourselves anew in the light of connections we find and friendships we make as we range about, gathering the manna that

falls from heaven.

Have a beautiful, blessed Pesach seder at which you sing many *redemption songs*, and remember that God's prime command is: think for yourself.

Love,
Rabbi Seth

Message from the Co-Presidents

We've had several successful special events in recent weeks, including our annual Tu Bishvat Seder, a musical Shabbat with guest Arnie Davidson, a deliciously satisfying Rugelach Baking Workshop and a TBTeens/TBTweens Ice Cream Social and Game Night. February's Saturday morning Torah Study had a record crowd in attendance. There's more in store, and here are some of the upcoming highlights:

- Purim Megillah Reading (with noisemaking, costumes and musical surprises!)
- Sunday School Purim Carnival
- Beyond the Pale Jewish Theater Experiment's "Converted Imperfect"
- *Meet the Cast of Converted Imperfect*

- reception for donors
- Monthly Torah Studies
- TBT Women's Social
- Shabbat Israeli Pot Luck with Teen Emissary from Israel
- TBTeens/TBTweens and their adults go Bowling

Details for these services and events can be found in this edition of The Star, and also on our online Calendar page, found on the TBT website –

www.TempleBethTorahWethersfield.org

So much of what we do relies on the energy and enthusiasm of member volunteers. Thank you to all who help to make Temple Beth Torah a vibrant and enjoyable community!

Deb and Joe

Kvell Corner

Cecile and Barry Bronfin are excited to announce the arrival of their newest grandchild, Eleanor Blum on 1/7/2010. She is the daughter of Wendy and Brian Blum of Brooklyn, NY.

Thank you

We would like to thank the following generous donors:

Dorothy Daley	Sherley Dobkin
Debbie Ellenberg Gray	David Forrest
Lewis & Marlene Grower	Gerald & Joan Berg
Barry & Cecile Bronfin	Alice Burstein
Marlene Ellenberg	Carol Ann Gershenson
Gold, Marty & Judy Gold	Joseph & Debra Hammer
Cy Levine	Fred & Rhoda London
Barry & Micki Schlein	Gerald & Karen Waltman
Paul & Roberta Segal	Elliot and Kathi Mag
Ceil Zanoni	

Judy Gold and Mira Schlein had the Torah covers cleaned. Cecile & Barry Bronfin and Peggy & Alan Mendelson donated the new bimah table cover.

Todah Rabah

Thank you very much to the members who recently sponsored a Shabbat Oneg or morning refreshments for Torah Study: Abrams/McHenry, Alpert, Gold, Guzy, Hammer, Nevins and Wahnnon/Ferrebee!

Community 2nd Seder *Passed-over* this year

There was not enough interest in a Passover Community 2nd Seder this year to really make a go of it. We will *test the waters* for interest again next year!

Passover Wine Fundraiser

Here's your opportunity to fill your 4 glasses with a "class-act" kosher wine (for those who dare to venture beyond the Manischewitz), and help raise a few dollars for TBT. Member Steve Leon, owner of Wine Cellars 4 in Farmington, has offered to deliver your purchase of Barkan from Israel wines to TBT *and* donate a percentage of sales to the Temple. Retailing at approx. \$10.99, Steve reports that Barkan is "as good a kosher wine as you will find" at this price point. If interested, please contact Steve at sleon6@comcast.net or 860-677-0130. [Note: This wine will be served at the Meet the Cast Donor Reception on March 14 following the performance – you can preview it then.]

Ladies, please come for coffee and dessert

Sunday, April 11th at 3 PM
to meet and socialize
with the other women of Temple Beth Torah.

at the home of Mira Schlein
263 Hartford Avenue Old Wethersfield

RSVP 860-529-1194

Hope to see you then!

New Approach for Onegs

All of the members will be given an assigned date to sponsor the Oneg following Friday night services. Check our website www.templebethtorahwethersfield.org to see when your date is. If the date conflicts with your schedule, you can swap dates with someone else. Thanks everyone for your cooperation.

Torah Study

Each month, Rabbi Riemer holds a Torah study on Saturday morning. The next two will be on March 20 and April 17. The studies are very interesting and educational. Come join us at 9:30 a.m.

TBTEENS and TBTWEENS

(And parents)

Are going bowling

Where: *Bowl-O-Rama* 2143 Berlin Turnpike Newington, CT
(860) 666-5411

When: April 25, 2010, 11:00AM-2:00PM

Who: TBTeens in their own lane, TBTweens in their lane,
and Parents in a completely different lane.

RSVP: Josh Ferrebee by phone or text 860-202-6478

Or Jan Wahnnon Ferrebee by phone or text 860-989-4592

Temple Beth Torah

130 Main Street
Wethersfield, CT 06109
(860) 529-2410

Rabbi Seth Riemer
(860)665-8014

Co-Presidents:
Deb & Joe Hammer
Co-Vice Presidents:
Judy & Marty Gold
Treasurer:
Barry Schlein
Recording Secretary:
Carol Gershenson
Corresponding Secretary:
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Mira Schlein – Trustee
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and Means
Bruce Kaplan – Men's' Club
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Susan Sackler Reuben –
Grounds
Debra Trueax – Membership
Linda Levinson – Publicity
Harold Nevins – Memorial Park
Barbara & Bruce Kaplan -High
Holidays

Star Editor:
Susan Sackler Reuben
Webmaster:
Leonard Slutsky

Next issue – May/June;
Deadline April 15

Website:
TempleBethTorahWethersfield.org

Purim Carnival – new record set

The record for time standing on one foot was broken by a wide margin by Sam Veilleux – 37 minutes and 44 seconds! Congratulations, Sam. (The game is a reference to a famous story about how Hillel could teach someone the Torah while standing on one foot.)

This was one of many fun games played at this year's Purim carnival. The school participated in the game show – Who wants to be a Mlnyonaire, plus tossing games, paddle ball, Apple to Apple, hamantaschen baking, bay bee bah bow boo tongue twister, fortune telling and face painting. Thank you to Heather, Jan, Josh, Lori, Cindy and Neil for running the games.

Fundraising while Shopping

Our simplest fundraiser is GIFT CARDS. The list of stores to buy from is long and includes most of the chain stores in our area – groceries, clothing, gasoline, restaurants, toy stores, etc. You buy them at face value for your own shopping or as gifts. We make a percentage on each. The full list can be found in the January edition of the Star. Take a look at the website.

www.TempleBethTorahWethersfield.org

Next order - March 10. Send your order and a check made out to Temple Beth Torah to Susan Reuben.

Stew Leonard's has a \$1000 minimum. Let's try for a June 1 order. If you are interested, let Susan R. know.



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Israeli Emissary Visits

April 4 – Young Israeli Emissary will visit the school and teach about Israel while playing games with the students.

April 16 – Israeli Pot Luck Dinner will be held with an Erev Shabbat Service where the young Israeli Emissary will speak about life in Israel.

Breaking News about Rabbi's Play

Three additional performance times have been added to the production – March 18 at 7:30 pm, March 20 at 8:00 pm and March 21 at 2:00 pm at Temple Beth Torah. See the latest production of Rabbi Riemer. The flyer has more description.

TEMPLE BETH TORAH
130 Main Street
Wethersfield, CT 06109



COME SEE A NEW COMEDY AT TEMPLE BETH TORAH

BEYOND THE PALE
JEWISH THEATER
EXPERIMENT

PRESENTS

CONVERTED
IMPERFECT

WRITTEN BY SETH DANIEL RIEMER
(THAT'S RIGHT, OUR RABBI!)

Cutting Edge, Challenging, Outrageous, Irreverent, Chutzpadik!
Judge for yourself! Spread the word & come for a fun-filled evening of laughter!

Cheer us on as we launch an exciting theatrical venture
right here at Temple Beth Torah in the heart of Old Wethersfield!

Performances:

Thursday, March 11/7:30 p.m. Saturday, March 13/7:30 p.m. Sunday, March 14/2:00 p.m.

\$10 general public \$7 seniors and students \$5 TBT members

For reservations, call 860.895.8180 or 860.432.1741

or

To order tickets directly, send your check to BTPJTE c/o Seth Riemer, 100 Northwood Rd., Newington CT 06111
Tickets also available at the door

A percentage of proceeds from ticket sales will benefit TBT.

Donations for any amount would be gratefully accepted!

If you wish to place an ad or message in our playbill, contact Rabbi Seth.

You may reach him at 860.665.8014 or sethriemer@aol.com
and send donations to BTPJTE at 100 Northwood Rd., Newington CT 06111

This play, an out-of-the-box satirical comedy, is appropriate for adults and older teens.
Not recommended for children under 13.

For all donors and advertisers, a meet-and-greet reception with cast and crew will follow the Sunday show.
Donations received after our playbill has gone to print will be acknowledged on our next production's playbill.