



William Ungar was invited to light a candle at the U.S. Capitol in 2005 in memory of lives lost in the Holocaust. The Holocaust survivor was president of Temple Israel from 1979-1981.

Former Temple Israel President William Ungar Dies at Age 100

EDITOR'S NOTE: This story, chronicling the life of former Temple Israel President William Ungar, is excerpted from *The Voice* and the congregation's 1995 Dinner Dance Journal, which honored him and his late wife, Jerry, that year. Mr. Ungar passed away on Thursday, September 19.

By Marc Katz, Editor

Hearing the larger-than-life story of life's strange twists and turns—with countless and sometimes unexplainable adventures so bold they could easily be the plot for a grand romance-adventure story—one would think the life story of Jerry and William Ungar too packed with melodrama to make it believable.

But, somehow, their real life story is believable, true, gripping to hear and has a happy ending, too.

People sitting down to hear the story Mr. and Mrs. Ungar have to tell soon find themselves enthralled by the adventure, and wondering how that much excitement could possibly be packed into the lives of two modest, humble, unassuming, long-time Temple Israel members and Great Neck residents.

It wasn't always that way, though.

Their lives were both very much touched
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A large committee is now at work planning the congregation's annual journal dinner dance honoring Deanna and Rabbi Howard Stecker, scheduled for Saturday evening, December 7. Photo by Bob Lopatkin

Committee Planning Journal Dinner Dance Saturday, December 7 *Steckers to be Honorees*

A large committee has formed to plan the congregation's annual gala journal dinner dance, this year scheduled for Saturday, December 7 in the Grand Ballroom.

Deanna and Rabbi Howard Stecker have been selected as the honorees for the event, marking their tenth year with the congregation.

Chaired by Ronda and Andrew Bloom, Rachel and Kiumarz Geula, and Elise and Richard Kestenbaum, the committee held a meeting two weeks ago to set their initial plans. Additional volunteers are needed to work on the various aspects of the event, especially the journal, which the chairs said they expect to be the largest in Temple Israel history.

"The Steckers have provided inspired leadership to Temple Israel for a decade now, and were instrumental in moving the congregation forward and into its next phase following the loss of Rabbi Mordecai Waxman," said President Alan Klinger. "This event gives all of us an opportunity to thank them for their service to the congregation."

The Greatest Gift

By Rabbi Seth Adelson

EDITOR'S NOTE: Rabbi Seth Adelson's Kol Nidre sermon, about the preciousness of time, is excerpted in this Voice Guest Column.

Charles Francis Adams, the 19th century political figure and diplomat, was a grandson of this nation's second president, John Adams, and the son of the sixth president, John Quincy Adams. Charles Adams kept a diary. One day he entered: "Went fishing today—a day wast-

*Our time
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ed." His young son, Henry Brooks Adams, also kept a diary. On that same day, young Henry made this entry: "Went fishing with my father—the most wonderful day of my life!"

Sometimes, the smallest gifts in life are the biggest. Among the greatest gifts that we can give anybody else is our time.

Last week, on the second day of Rosh Hashanah, we read from the Torah the story of the *Aqedah*, the Binding of Isaac, among

the best-known stories in the Pentateuch. Brief recap: God commands Abraham to take his beloved son Isaac to Mt. Moriah, which will later be the location of the Temple in Jerusalem, and to offer Isaac up as a fiery sacrificial offering to God. We will leave aside the great theological challenges posed by this story to focus on a phrase which is repeated twice in the Torah's narrative: "*Vayelekhu she-neihem yahdav*," meaning "the two of them walked together." It's a three-day trip from Beersheva to Jerusalem, and Abraham and Isaac walk the whole way. We are left to wonder what they said to each other during these three days; the Torah doesn't tell us.

Abraham had three days on which to puzzle over God's confounding command to sacrifice his beloved son, Isaac. But Isaac got to spend three solid days hiking with his father, seemingly unaware of what awaits him on Mt. Moriah. Three days of talking, of walking together and enjoying the scenery

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FROM THE RABBI

Singing and Dancing Our Vision

By Rabbi Howard Stecker

I imagine that each of us could identify a number of highlights from the expansive range of holidays that we shared together over the past month. I would like to mention a few from Temple Israel's recent celebration of Simhat Torah, the day which Rabbi Yitz Greenberg describes as the "coda of joy" at the end of the fall cycle of Jewish holidays. More precisely, I want to reflect on the highlights that bring our vision to life.

On Simhat Torah night, following much joyous dancing, a large group of men, women and children gathered around one of our historic Iraqi Torahs as Simon Kashfi, a teen from our congregation, chanted passages from the final portion of the Torah. Everyone present had the opportunity to recite the blessings before and after he read each passage. At one point, I took a mental snapshot of him, pointing to the words and singing the melody while surrounded by so many of Temple Israel's children.

Over at the Youth House, Temple Israel teens hosted residents from two local group homes for adults with developmental chal-

lenges. Our teens paired up with these adults for a variety of activities and then we all danced together with a Torah scroll. At one point, Youth House Director Danny Mishkin invited everyone up who wanted to come see the inside of the Torah. We said the blessings together and read a passage

*We believe that
everyone...
should have equal
access to the Torah.*

from the Torah. Following that, everyone had dinner and our teens brought their guests over to the Sanctuary to join in the synagogue-wide celebration. I took a mental snapshot of our teens and our guests surrounding the Torah as it was read.

The next morning, we honored six members of our congregation who have

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Kol Nidre Report

By Alan Klinger

EDITOR'S NOTE: This column is adapted from remarks made by Temple Israel President Alan Klinger for the 2013 Kol Nidre Appeal.

It's that time of year again, the time when we ask you to contribute to support the synagogue. Despite the regularity of this request, it is not one we make lightly. For, while the economy has improved for many, we know there are competing demands for your discretionary dollars. But before we turn to the Appeal, I want to thank you, on behalf of the synagogue, for your contributions last year. We set a record—one I hope we can break this year. My further hope is, after hearing of our progress, you will agree your money was well spent.

*...we ask you to
contribute to support
the synagogue.*

Why should you contribute to us? Or, to use the terminology of those in the business world, what is the return on investment? I submit that, in this context, you can find value on multiple fronts.

Starting at the "personal" level, and key to a synagogue, what is Temple Israel doing to meet your spiritual needs? As mentioned previously, we made changes to our *Kabbalat Shabbat* service to make the experience more enjoyable. We have expanded our family religious service offerings. Working with the clergy, we also have a group examining the nature of our prayer services. So far, the group has learned about how the service is structured and why, and is now ready to explore whether changes should be made to enhance the congregation's experience. Members have visited other synagogues and will be relating what practices are working there. We recognize that communities differ and what succeeds in one may not be appropriate here, but it only makes sense to assess how others are meeting today's needs. If you have ideas or experience in this regard, please share them with the committee co-chairs, Sherry Husney and Brent Greenspan, or speak to the clergy or me. Once we have developed more concrete thinking, we will be reaching out to broader segments of the synagogue for discussion. Our goal is to make prayer meaningful to today's congregants all the while remembering the teaching of Rabbi Waxman of combining "tradition and change."

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IN MEMORIAM

Temple Israel extends condolences to the families of:

WILLIAM UNGAR

Past President,
esteemed member of Temple Israel
and husband of the late Jerry Ungar

DR. ARNOLD ILLMAN

husband of Lois Illman
and esteemed member of Temple Israel

SHIRLEY FLEISCHER

mother of Steven D. Fleischer, Esq.

CHARLOTTE BRAND

mother of Ellen Bronheim

May their memories be for a blessing.

CANDLE LIGHTING TIMES

Friday, October 4..... 6:15 P.M.

Friday, October 11.....6:04 P.M.

DAILY MINYAN TIMES

The Daily Minyan Needs You!

Mon. & Thur. 6:45 A.M. 8:00 P.M.

Tues. & Wed. 7:00 A.M. 8:00 P.M.

Fri., Oct. 4 6:45 A.M. 6:30 P.M.

Fri., Oct. 11 7:00 A.M. 6:15 P.M.

Sat., Oct. 5 8:45 A.M. 5:55 P.M.

Sat., Oct. 12 8:45 A.M. 5:45 P.M.

Sunday 8:15 A.M. 8:00 P.M.

MAZAL TOV TO . . .

• Sarah and Bruce Rothstein on the engagement of their son, Nathaniel, to Andi Grossman.

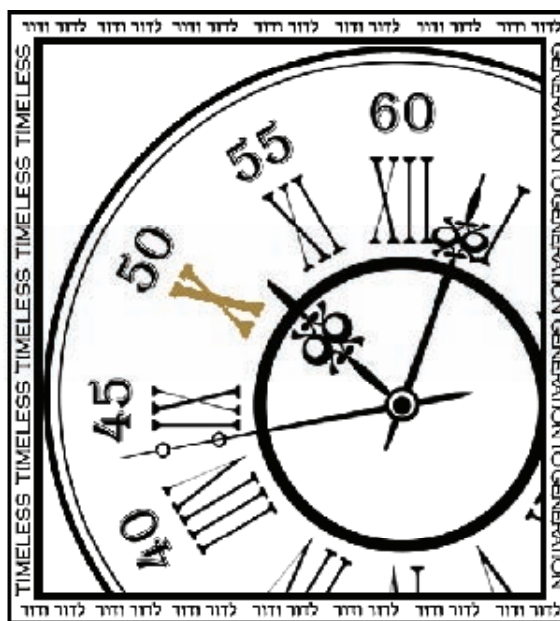
• Hon. Ronni Birnbaum Kopelowitz and Dr. Wally Kopelowitz on the marriage of their daughter, Kimberly Birnbaum, to Michael Zinger.

• Karen and Dan Covitt on the birth of their granddaughter, Isla Lindsay Covitt.

• Susan and Sidney Krugman on the birth of their twin grandchildren, Atticus Matan Papazian and Harlan Sunshine Papazian.

UPCOMING EVENTS AT TEMPLE ISRAEL

Oct. 6	Auditions for the Children's Choir	Noon
6	Shoah Remembrance Committee "Picnic"	5:30 P.M.
7	Sisterhood Board Meeting Annual Get-Together	10:00 A.M.
10	Sisterhood Book Discussion Group	7:00 P.M.
13	Men's Club Opening Breakfast	9:30 A.M.
15	EmptiNesters Program: "Conversations with Our Rabbis" on Inter-marriage	7:30 P.M.
17	Board of Trustees Meeting	8:15 P.M.
20	Shalom Club Meeting	6:30 P.M.
21	Sisterhood Fall Luncheon	11:30 A.M.
22	"Essentials Issues: Interfaith Marriage" Led by Rabbis Stecker and Adelson	8:15 P.M.
23-24	Beth HaGan Nursery School Book Fair	
24	Men's Club Meeting	7:30 P.M.
27	EmptiNesters Trip to Duckwalk Vineyards	
29	"Essentials Issues: Interfaith Marriage" Led by Rabbis Stecker and Adelson	8:15 P.M.



HONORING

DEANNA & RABBI HOWARD STECKER

FOR THEIR FIRST DECADE OF INSPIRATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Saturday, December 7, 2013

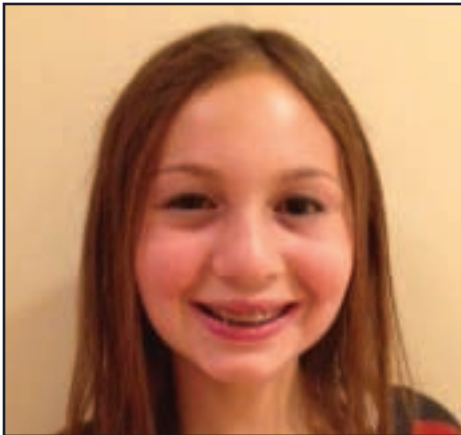
IN QUOTES

EDITOR'S NOTE: "In Quotes" calls attention to passages from Jewish prayers and writings frequently overlooked or said by rote, but profoundly written.

This issue's quote is by Yitzhak Rabin. What's your favorite quote? Send it to The Voice, c/o Temple Israel, 108 Old Mill Road, Great Neck, NY 11023

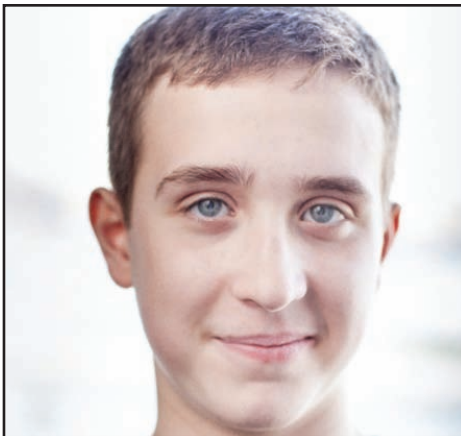
“...this is the place to which every Jew turns in prayer,
and of which generations dreamt and poets wrote.
Thus, from our perspective,
Jerusalem is ours — it was and will be ours...”

B'NAI/B'NOT MITZVAH IN OUR TEMPLE ISRAEL FAMILY



Lauren Farkas

Lauren Farkas will be celebrating her *Bat Mitzvah* on October 12. She is the daughter of Beth and Larry Farkas and has a sister, Alana, 16, and a brother, Matthew, 10. Lauren is an eighth grade honor student at Great Neck South Middle School. She enjoys playing soccer and tennis as well as singing, theater and travelling. Lauren is currently attending the Waxman High School and Youth House. She visited Israel in 2010 and plans to return with the Waxman Youth House in February.



Benjamin Kobliner

Benjamin Samuel Kobliner will be called to the Torah as a *Bar Mitzvah* on October 19. He is the son of Miriam and Dr. Kenneth Kobliner and has a brother, Joshua, and a sister, Sarah, both 10. Ben is an eighth grade honor student at Great Neck South Middle School, where he is a Peer Leader, part of the HTV production team, as well as a percussionist in the school band. He is a recipient of the METNY Keter Torah Award, given to those students who were awarded Judaic Scholar at least four times. Ben enjoys playing the drums. He is currently attending the Waxman High School and Youth House and looks forward to visiting Israel within the next few years.

FROM THE RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

Tradition! Tradition!

By Rabbi Amy Roth

This year we welcomed our new students and welcomed back our returning students after we ushered in the new Jewish year of 5774. It was therefore only natural that we gathered together to sing and cheer "Sha-sha-sha, Shana Tova!" It was as if no time had passed since we, as a school *kehillah*, community, had last gathered. The *ruach*, the spirit of the children, was palpable; the older grades enthusiastically competed to be louder than one another in wishing members of their community a *shana tova*, a good year.

One way to define community is by its traditions. As I visited each class on the first day(s) of school, I brought a sweet treat—a tasty, fun way to kick-off the new school year. Many children greeted me with, "I know, you have twizzlers. You always bring twizzlers on the first day!" I was astonished: "always" is a strong word, especially when it was only my second year. These fifth and sixth graders had already institutionalized my bringing the twizzlers into a tradition; they had internalized the meaning and power of tradition into something they expect, something that feels as if it has always been done.

Traditions bring with them a sense of belonging, of connection. As we continue to celebrate Rosh Hodesh together, our Religious School children will feel this connection to tradition and to Judaism. And as they walk the halls of the school wing and identify each month's new poster, while analyzing the "whys" and "whats" of the pictures, they are further connected to the monthly tradition.

We are beginning another Religious

School tradition: "*Hadashot*: News about Jews Around the World, featuring the Vav classes." Our Vav students will research and highlight important current events on specially designated bulletin boards. In addition, they will create a short news "broadcast" entitled "*Hadashot B'Radio*" (Radio news) to be shared with the rest of the school through our intercom system.

We are thrilled to have begun our connection with MATAN, the organization supporting special needs in religious schools. (check out www.matankids.org). Through special training and the resources of a MATAN mentor, our faculty will have resources we need to help create memorable Jewish experiences for all types of learners.

And we see technology as an important ingredient in forging a relevant, modern approach to all learning. Our school has four new ipads, complete with Hebrew apps, and they are always in use in small groups within the classes. Many of our textbooks are new as well; they have web-based companions to help enhance and reinforce classroom learning.

With all of our new initiatives, as well as some meaningful *chesed* opportunities in the works, we are well on our way to setting the stage for the establishment of even more Religious School traditions. Maintaining long-standing customs is also important; we look forward to a year of powerful learning experiences, enthusiastic participation in our new and older traditions, and of course, feeling the strength of the *kehillah*, community.

I wish you a sweet, blessed 5774. *Shalom*.



Temple Israel Religious School students spent sunny afternoons in the congregation's sukkah.

A Temple Israel Scrapbook



Temple Israel marked September 11th with a well-attended memorial service (above) sponsored by the Men's Club at the Saddle Rock bridge. Many elected officials and representatives of both the Vigilant and Alert Fire Companies attended and congregant Josh Charry (at right), a member of Vigilant, gave a moving account of his activities on the tragic day.

The "Welcome Back BBQ," a tradition at Temple Israel, drew big crowds on a sunny Sunday afternoon (below) as the congregation kicked off the fall season of activities. The BBQ, outside the Waxman Youth House, was hosted by the Temple Israel officers and members of the Board of Trustees.

Watch this page for photos of other upcoming Temple Israel events.

Voice photos by Ofra Panzer



Former Temple Israel President William Ungar Dies

—Continued from front page
and shaped both by the Holocaust and the founding of the State of Israel.

Mr. Ungar was a teacher in a technical high school before initial Nazi aggression made him a fighter in the Polish army. When he was severely wounded, he was hospitalized in his native Poland. Surrounded by heavy fighting, the hospital was eventually conquered by advancing German troops. Because of his wounds, he was allowed to return home. But when his community fell to the Nazis, he found himself behind enemy lines once again. During the 1941-42 school year, he was allowed to teach Aryans to prepare them for work to further the German war effort. As the war intensified, a Polish Catholic student gave him his Aryan documents, enabling him to live a life of relative normalcy for a while longer.

When someone denounced him as a Jew, he was arrested by the Gestapo and sent to the Yanowska Concentration Camp in Lvov. After a short period of imprisonment, he became one of the few people to escape the death camp. He returned to his former home, an apartment building, where the Ukrainian superintendent hid him in a basement crawl space for nine months. During this period of hiding, the entire building was occupied by the Gestapo to house their members. The advancing Red Army liberated the area in June, 1944. After living for a year under Soviet rule while the war was still going on, he decided to head to the United States.

What was the toll the fighting had taken on the Ungar family alone? Other than himself, no one in the 80-member family living in Europe survived the Holocaust under the German occupation.

Landing on the shores of New York City on May 20, 1946 on the first boat of war victims to make it to the United States, he was greeted by relief workers seeking to ease the burden of the war's displaced people. Among them was his older brother, whom he met for the first time, and other members of his family. Through a cousin, he met New York City resident Jerry Schweitzer. "It was love at first sight," she recalls. They were married in 1950.

Mrs. Ungar had grown up in Harlem, the daughter of immigrant parents and the sister of a twin. The sisters were shaped by their membership in Young Judea and their parents' strong belief in Zionism. Mrs. Ungar worked clandestinely in New York for a small cell of the Haganah, the Jewish underground fighters' movement in Palestine. Her group was responsible for purchasing ammunition-making machinery, disassembling it and shipping it in pieces to Palestine, where it was reassembled, in violation of a U.S. government arms embargo.

"Looking back," she says with a feeling of accomplishment, "I feel privileged

to have had the opportunity to serve the Jewish people and play a small part in the birth of the State of Israel."

Their survival during the Holocaust years was a combination of what Mrs. Ungar calls a combination of "luck and brains," and Mr. Ungar calls "destiny."

He attended the engineering school of City College of New York evenings while working for an envelope machine manufacturing company during the day. Ultimately, Mr. Ungar was able to obtain several envelope making machines for himself. Out of those humble beginnings on Mott Street grew the New York Envelope Company and National Envelope Company, the largest privately held envelope manufacturing firms in the United States. The business has plants from coast to coast and more than 3,000 people on its payroll.

The rags-to-riches story of Mr. and Mrs. Ungar has been one of the subjects of William B. Helmreich's book, "Against All Odds." It is the tale of Holocaust survivors and the successful lives they have made for themselves in America.

The Ungars have 4 daughters and 17 grandchildren. Florette, lives in Israel; Joan,

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in Harrison, New York; Denise, in Mutton-town; and Rita, in Manhattan. Each of the daughters attended the Great Neck Public Schools and the Temple Israel Religious School. They each celebrated their *Bat Mitzvah*, marriage and the naming of their children at Temple Israel.

Mr. and Mrs. Ungar joined Temple Israel in 1962. They soon became friends with Rabbi Mordecai Waxman and the congregation's associate rabbi at the time, Harold Kushner. Rabbi Kushner introduced them to several other Temple Israel families who together formed the Shalom Club. In 1970, Mr. Ungar served as president of the group.

Shortly thereafter, he was elected to the Temple Israel Board of Trustees. He served a term as secretary and then, in 1979, he was elected president of Temple Israel. It was during Mr. Ungar's term as president that the congregation celebrated its 40th anniversary. During his years as president, a book was published on the history of the Hebrew High School, the Endowment Committee was started and the

Religious School was renovated. A Long Range Planning Committee, headed by Jacob Stein, laid major plans for the future of the congregation. A very successful pilgrimage to Israel, led by Rabbi Waxman, brought many congregants to The Promised Land. Also under President Ungar's direction, the first computer questionnaire was sent out to the rapidly growing membership to learn their occupations, in the hope of calling on their membership's expertise.

The Ungars say Rabbi and Ruth Waxman have had a major impact on their lives. "We feel privileged to have had them at the helm," Mrs. Ungar said. "The congregation has benefited by their leadership. The rabbi's sermons are outstanding."

"We consider Temple Israel our second home," Mrs. Ungar said. "What is wonderful about this congregation is that so many other people do, too. You hear so many people say: 'I love Temple Israel.' How many people do you find that say that about their synagogues? What makes Temple Israel great is not the building, it is the people and the feeling you know they have for each other."

Mr. Ungar went on to serve on the Board of United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism and became an officer of the Synagogue Council of America.

Mr. and Mrs. Ungar were major benefactors of the Temple Israel Shoah Remembrance Committee, which they helped establish with Temple Israel members Manny Bardash and Tina Tito. Through the Ungars, Raoul Hillberg was the guest speaker at a Temple Israel Shoah observance.

The Ungars travelled to Israel for a project very dear to their hearts...the dedication of Yad Layeled, a museum established to memorialize the 1,500,000 children who perished in the Holocaust. Mr. and Mrs. Ungar made major financial contributions towards the establishment of the museum, adjacent to the Ghetto Fighters' House.

"We view our lives differently than most people view theirs," Mrs. Ungar is quick to explain. "We view our lives through the eyes of the Holocaust. So many people engage in pettiness. We overlook pettiness. It is just not important in our lives."

What is important? "Love, truth, friendship, honesty, sharing, and caring. Concern for each other and for our family is of the utmost importance. What other people take for granted, we simply don't."

Mr. Ungar reflected on his long life and his participation in a recent meeting of Jewish leaders with the Pope. "Imagine that," he said, followed by his characteristic slight chuckle. "I grew up in a small Polish village of anti-Semites and survived the Holocaust. Now, Hitler is in hell, and I get to meet with the Pope."

Congregation Thanks Kiddush Sponsors

Appreciation is expressed by the Temple Israel officers and Board of Trustees to members who have generously sponsored and enhanced the Sabbath *kiddush*.

A contribution toward the *kiddush* on September 21 was made by Shahin Siminou on the occasion of the *yahrzeit* of her husband, Joseph Siminou.

Next Voice Issue, Deadlines

The next issue of The Voice will be published on Thursday, October 17. The deadline for that issue is Friday, October 4.

The following issue will be published on Thursday, October 31. The deadline for that issue is Friday, October 18.

From the Rabbi

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contributed talent and time to important efforts within and beyond our synagogue. I took mental snapshots of each of them surrounded by friends, loved ones and the entire Temple Israel family. I have mental recordings of one longstanding Temple Israel member chanting the special Simhat Torah prayers using an ancient Ashkenazi melody and another using an ancient Persian melody. I have mental recordings of men and women chanting from the Torah using melodies from Lithuania and Iraq.

Upon reflection, I believe that these highlights and others, captured in our collective mental snapshots and recordings from our Simhat Torah celebrations, speak volumes about our vision as a congregation. We believe that everyone, regardless of age, gender or cognitive capacity, should have equal access to the Torah. We believe that the variety of our aesthetic and melodic traditions need to be shared. We believe that being Jewish can be engaging and even fun.

Mostly, we believe that the words of the Torah ought to impact how we live our lives and treat other people. So we taught our teens the verse in Deuteronomy which commands us to share our holiday with the broader community. And then they brought that verse to life by extending a degree of hospitality to our guests that would make Abraham and Sarah proud.

Etz hayim hee. The Torah is a tree of life to those who grasp it. On Simhat Torah, in our unique Temple Israel way, we reminded one another just how true this is. As more and more people are invited to grasp the Torah in keeping with our vision, I'm confident that its branches will continue to support and enrich many lives in multiple ways.

Announcing An Evening Book Club

Sisterhood is pleased to announce its newest program ~ an evening book club! The group will meet once a month 7-8:30 P.M. in the Blue Room.

Join in a lively discussion, "sisterhood" and of course, coffee and dessert.

The first session will be on Thursday, Oct. 10. Discussion will be about a wonderful book, "A Dual Inheritance" by Joanna Hershon. For further information, call Cindy Pross 498-9556 evenings

Warm A Heart!

Join The Chesed Connection of Temple Israel of Great Neck

As members of the Tikkun Alliance of the North Shore's 5th Annual

Neighbors Helping Neighbors

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Please donate the following NEW, SEALED items to the lobby bins:

Canned Tuna Fish and Canned Salmon, Canned Fruit (or plastic jars)

Canned Fruit Juices (or plastic containers), Cooking Oil (plastic bottles), Rice, Pasta, Tomato Sauce

Dried Fruit (packaged) and Nuts (packaged), Breakfast Cereals, Cereal Bars, Granola Bars, Crackers, Cookies

Peanut Butter (plastic jar) and Fruit Jams and Jellies

New or gently used:

Coats, Scarves, Hats, Mittens, Gloves and Winter Clothing

Eyeglasses

Collection will continue through November 10th

Please contact chesedtign@gmail.com with questions

Voice Guest Column: The Greatest Gift

—Continued from page 2

of singing and swapping jokes and checking out pretty flowers or funny-looking insects along the way. Perhaps, like little Henry Adams, Isaac had the most wonderful time of his life.

I am fortunate in that my workplace (i.e. Temple Israel) and my daughter's school are both within easy walking distance from our house, and so almost every day, as often as I can, I walk her to school in the morning and back again at the end of the day. It's four-tenths of a mile, about ten minutes each way. We talk about school, of course, but also friends, and we identify plants and birds, we notice the trash that we find along the way and sometimes collect it, and we occasionally discuss complex subjects (for a six-year-old) such as work and death and human relationships. We sometimes smugly pat ourselves on the back for getting a little extra exercise and sparing the atmosphere a few extra carbon dioxide molecules. Sometimes we sing; this past Tuesday morning we sang Woody Guthrie's classic, "This Land Is Your Land," followed by a rousing rendition of the first few lines of "Kol Nidrei."

Twenty minutes each school day, multiplied by roughly 150 days, is 3,000 minutes. That's 50 hours of time over the course of a single school year.

I hope that someday my daughter will look back on these times and understand that this time spent with her father was invaluable. And maybe she'll make a special effort, if she can, to spend a few quality minutes with her son or daughter every day.

Time is a simple gift that cannot be bought. It is among a short list of gifts that we can give to each other and the world that are worth more than anything available at Costco or Amazon.com: spending time with those you love, spending time performing deeds of *hesed*, charitable acts for those in need, and improving the condition of your soul by seeking holy moments in Jewish ritual.

None of these acts yields a financial return on investment. But they are all of infinite value; the time we give to others and to God is the holiest kind of time that there is. These simple gifts are returned to us many times over—in personal satisfaction, in the joy that comes with helping others and repairing the world, in the overall benefit to society, in the inner peace that comes from engaging with the Divine.

Our time is the greatest gift we can give to others. And what is the greatest gift that you can give to yourself? Torah.

Judaism is not an ascetic tradition. On the contrary, we are instructed to enjoy the fruits of God's Creation. There are no Jewish orders of celibate monks, at least for the last 2,000 years. We do not take vows of poverty or silence (not that any Jewish person could

actually be silent for very long anyway). We are created to enjoy life, and live according to the principles of the Torah such that they are enjoyable, and not burdensome.

Nonetheless, it may be necessary on occasion to distinguish what is important and valuable from what is merely a distraction. *Bar Mitzvah*, for example, is important and valuable as an acknowledgment of a young person's stepping up to inherit the mantle of Torah, our primary Jewish legacy. It's about being called to the Torah as a Jewish woman or man, and demonstrating in the context of the larger community that this child is now one of us, ready to be welcomed and counted as an integral member in the ancient line of Jewish adults.

The gift of Torah is the most valuable gift that we have. But it is also a gift that we can continue to give to ourselves, and it will continue to give back. *Bar Mitzvah* is not the end of Jewish life; it is really only the begin-

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ning of the odyssey of intellectual and spiritual development known as adulthood.

What keeps us coming back to the synagogue, year after year? Many of us who come on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are not necessarily regular synagogue-goers during the rest of the year. Although I might remind you that you're always welcome to join us here at Temple Israel for the second-holiest day of the year, *Shabbat*, or at any other time to engage in more holy moments.

But the essential *mitzvah* of Jewish life, the one thread that ties everything together, the item that the ancient rabbis declared that God wants from us the most is not prayer. It's not *kashrut* or *Shabbat* or fasting or hearing the shofar or eating matzah or even honoring our parents or circumcising our sons or being fruitful and multiplying.

The one thing God wants the most from us is to learn. It's learning. Learning Torah, that is, the Torah itself and all of the centuries of commentary and discussion and argument that come with it. And Yom Kippur, like every other day of the year, is a day on which we learn.

If there was one message I would want all of us to take home with us from our experience here, it would be that Yom Kippur teaches us simplicity. When we afflict our souls, when we deny ourselves physical comforts, we learn humility, we learn to separate our needs vs. our wants. We learn to distinguish food for sustenance vs. food

for comfort or boredom or social purposes. We learn about our own strength of will and empathy for those who truly live in fear of starvation.

But rabbi, you might be thinking, what about forgiveness? What about sin? What about *teshuvah*, repentance? What about second chances? *Tzedakah*?

Yes, all those things are integral to this day. But the message I think that we can all take home this evening, after the shofar sounds is:—focus on the essentials, the simplest gifts. Spend more time on the relationships with the people you love. Don't worry about work when you're out fishing with your child (literally or figuratively). Look for the ways in which we can apply the Torah's lessons to our lives today.

What do we learn from Yom Kippur? Simplicity. By not eating, or bathing, and by avoiding pleasures of the flesh, and wearing leather shoes, we achieve a simple state, a state in which we may approach God and ask for forgiveness. What should we take away from these 25 hours of self-denial? That true wealth is measured in time that we invest in others, in improving our world, in volunteering, in learning the valuable ancient lessons that our tradition offers. Think about those things this day, and perhaps we will all return to them next week, next month, and throughout the coming year.

Our relationships with God, with all the people around us, and particularly those in need, are these essential things. These outweigh all other things on this day and every day. Simple.

On this day of simplicity, Isaiah reminds us that we fast to remind ourselves to work for good in this world, to reach out a hand to those in need, to pull them up from homelessness and hunger and oppression. Such a simple, straightforward idea, and yet one which we routinely ignore in favor of, as Ecclesiastes puts it, "striving after vanity."

These gifts, the simplest gifts, are the greatest miracles we can offer. That's not just God's work; we make those daily and hourly miracles happen. Every time we make an effort to reach out to somebody who needs a hand; every time that we opt for meaning over substance; every time we put effort into building better relationships with the ones that we love. Those are little, daily miracles that you can create.

How do we know that God is a benevolent force in our lives? Because God, in creating humans in the Divine image, gave us the ability to work together, with and for each other, for the benefit of humanity. We can reach out to others in need. Therein lies our own divinity; we have the God-given ability to effect change, to give the simplest gifts to ourselves and to others.

It's up to us to act on that ability.

From the President: A Kol Nidre Report

—Continued from page 2

In addition to prayer, we also make a “personal” connection through education programs for our children and ourselves. We all recognize the importance of involving our children in meaningful Jewish learning if we expect them to be involved in the Jewish world as adults. And we all recognize how hard that is to accomplish. Last year, we informed you about beginning the process to make needed changes. We brought in a new director of congregational schools, Rabbi Amy Roth, who, based on years of working with children and teens, would bring that knowledge to bear. I am pleased to report we’re making progress. Rabbi Roth has re-energized our Religious School program and is working with Beth HaGan Director Rachel Mathless and Youth House Director Danny Mishkin to bring a coherent approach so that we have a better path from nursery school to Religious School to high school. Our nursery school is fully subscribed and our Youth House, with Danny in his third year, is, once again, growing and involving students in both academic and *tikkun olam* activities.

Education, of course, is not only for the young. We have continued the traditional adult classes on Jewish texts and prayer. But we’ve also broadened our offerings to include congregational book readings, notably the controversial Peter Beinart book “The Crisis of Zionism,” where we had frank exchanges among congregants on the issues raised, and an Israeli film series that highlighted issues in Arab-Israeli relations. Recognizing disparities in levels of knowledge in our adult community, we have continued to sponsor an adult *b’nai mitzvah* program for those who desire this learning experience; the current class will culminate at the November 9th *Shabbat* service and we invite you to celebrate with this dedicated group. We also offer the opportunity for congregants to learn how to lead the *Shabbat* service. This year it is the men’s turn to lead, with a date tentatively set for this May. Look for the announcement and join us in this experience.

We are also mindful of the changing role of the contemporary synagogue. While prayer and Jewish learning is of course important, today’s synagogue, if it is to be successful, needs also to serve a broader function. To this end, we are working with groups to foster community-building. This takes many forms. We are supporting affinity groups, like TI Bonds and EmptiNesters, those in the throes of child-rearing and those whose homes are now quieter, to help deepen connections. And we, of course, benefit from the path blazed by the Shalom Club, which recently celebrated its 50th year of existence.

To foster our programs, we must refurbish this building along with that of the Youth House. While the maintenance staff did a remarkable job getting us ready for the High Holidays, just walking through our premises underscores the need to modernize. We are in the early stages of meeting with groups to assess needs. But think for a moment how much better our experiences would be if, for example, we had a comfortable room to better enjoy lectures and movies, if we had a media center available for our teens to pursue their interests and a basketball court to attract our children.

We also are looking beyond our four walls, to involvement with the larger Jewish community. A great proponent of this involvement was Jack Stein, who passed away this year. In addition to being a former president of Temple Israel, Jack served as the president of United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism and was Chair of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations. As part of a broader outreach, this past year we participated in events with USCJ, METNY and UJA. We had speakers from Mercaz USA and Friends of the IDF present their vision to our Board of Trustees. We have joined other groups in support of the “Women of the Wall,” which argues for the importance of Jewish pluralism in Israel. A number of our congregants are scheduled to attend the USCJ Centennial Convention this October. Susan and I will be among them, and we would welcome your added participation to hear the leading thinkers of our movement address the issues of the day.

In considering community, we need to recognize the challenges we face in Great Neck. The demographics of our area are changing. Rather than just bemoan this, we need to take steps to ensure that we are the foremost Conservative Jewish institution in the area. For if we falter, we risk losing the voice of our movement, where women and men pray equally, where the evolving nature of modernity is recognized. We have real reason for optimism. We have talented clergy who excel in their fields. We have committed lay leadership. It is truly amazing how much volunteer work is done to meet the congregation’s needs. A strong sign is that for the second year in a row each member of the Board of Trustees already has pledged to support this appeal. New members are joining us. Just this summer we’ve added 27 new family units (with applications out to several others). We have a growing cohort of people involved in synagogue activities. And, to better plan for the future, we applied for and were accepted, into a USCJ program to train emerging leaders. We have a lot of reason for promise. But to bring it all together, we need your assistance.

So, please contribute as generously as your circumstances permit to help us be meaningful to you.

TEMPLE LITES . . .

• **Dr. Michael Ziegelbaum** has been appointed president-elect of the Nassau County Medical Society. A member of the Temple Israel Board of Trustees and a former vice president of the congregation, he is a urologist at the Lake Success division of Advanced Urology Centers of New York, and an assistant clinical professor at Hofstra North Shore-LIJ School of Medicine.

• **Stanley Goldfarb**, a 50-year member of Temple Israel, was honored in Washington, D.C. last weekend at a special ceremony for Armed Services Veterans. Mr. Goldfarb volunteered and served in the Merchant Marine from 1945 to 1947. He trained at the base in Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn, and at age 17 boarded a ship to Europe. He worked his way up from ordinary seaman to pursuer. He says that one of the highlights of his service was being responsible for bringing war brides from England to the U.S.



Seaman Stan Goldfarb: Not in the Navy now!

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www.uscj100.org
or speak to any of
Temple Israel's clergy.

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for their support and
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Daryl Schulman and
family

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The engagement of
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son of Toby and Gary
Noren, to Kimberly
Goodman
Debra and Steve
Shepsman

In memory of:

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Anne and Jerry Hirsh

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In honor of:

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Emily and Isaac Taitz

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Dr. Ellenmorris and Joseph
Farber, Rachel Geula,
Miriam Kobliner and
Hennie Scolnick
Rebecca and Sassan
Sassouni
The marriage of Adam
Shatzkamer, son of Ronnie
and Larry Shatzkamer, to
Heather Rehns
Leila Sassouni, daughter of
Rebecca and Sassan
Sassouni, becoming a
Bat Mitzvah
Joyce and Burton
Weston
The engagement of Rachel
Husney, daughter of
Sherry and Sam Husney,
to Jonathan Saat
The *Auf Ruf* of Ariela
Rutkin-Becker, daughter of
Drs. Zina and Robert
Rutkin-Becker, and Harris
Goldman
Drs. Madelyn and
Robert Gould

Contribution:

Susan Smith

From Generation to Generation



Temple Israel Gratefully Acknowledges The Following Contributions

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Morris Danzig
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Chana Tilles
Raine Silverstein
Heshmat Sameyah
Shlomo Sameyah
Dr. Sol Schwartz
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For the recovery of:

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Helping those in need
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Carol and Paul Burstein

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Adler

In appreciation of:

Yad B'Yad's support and
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period
Daryl Schulman
Yad B'Yad's assistance
after her knee surgery
Natalie Levine

In honor of:

Mel Dubin's special
birthday
The upcoming wedding of
Ariela Rutkin-Becker,
daughter of Drs. Zina and
Robert Rutkin-Becker, to
Harris Goldman
Leila Sassouni, daughter of
Rebecca and Sassan
Sassouni, becoming a
Bat Mitzvah
Brenda and Dr. Natie
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WAXMAN HIGH SCHOOL AND YOUTH HOUSE FUND

In memory of:

Leonid Shkolnik
Randi Zuller

Memorial Fund Established In Memory Of Father of Temple Israel Member

Rahmatollah Vahidipour ran a small clothing store in Flatbush, Brooklyn, for more than 20 years. When word reached family and friends in Great Neck that he was gunned down as he was closing his store last November, all were in shock.

The apparent robbery gone bad—which took place as he was rushing to get to his Great Neck home for *Shabbat*—made national news. The 76-year old was a devoted family man known for his high sense of values. “My father was robbed several times before, but each time he told the robbers to take whatever they wanted—and they left him alone. This time was different,” said the youngest of his four children, his daughter, Marjan Vahidipour-Malekan, a member of Temple Israel.

“He was my father,” she said tearfully. “And he was also my best friend. What makes it so sad,” she said, “is that I never got to say goodbye to him.”

In his memory she has established the Rahmatollah Vahidipour Women and Children at Risk Memorial Fund, a charitable fund to help widows and orphaned children. “These were causes dear to my father,” his daughter said. “Through this fund I can keep his ideals alive.”

All contributions to the fund will be donated to Temple Israel, the United Mashadi Jewish Community of America, and an or-

phanage in Israel, Yad Eliezer Widows and Orphans. For further information about the fund and to make a contribution, contact his daughter at <RVahidipourMemorialFund@gmail.com>

In a brochure about the fund, Mrs. Vahidipour-Malekan wrote:

My eyes filled up with tears when I heard the news,
It never occurred to me how much I can lose,
I find myself wishing that it wasn't real,
Every time I think about it, pain is all I can feel.

Tears fall from my eyes, I can barely see
But my heart tells me he'll always be with me.
I'm glad he lives in a perfect land,
I can still feel the soft touch on my shoulder of his loving hand.

I lie in bed and cry at night
And I don't feel any better in the morning light.
And I will love him and miss him forever,
Until the day we are again together.

But until that day comes, I will wipe my tears away,
And hopefully see him again some day!

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Marc Katz, Editor

Associate Editors:

Rabbi Marim D. Charry, Paula Charry, Angela Jones, Ronnie Katz
Photographers: Dr. Robert Lopatkin, Ofra Panzer, Milton Putterman

TEMPLE ISRAEL OF GREAT NECK
108 Old Mill Road, Great Neck, NY 11023

Phone: 516-482-7800 • Fax: 516-482-7352 • E-Mail: info@tign.org

Web: www.TIGN.org

Published bi-weekly by Temple Israel of Great Neck, New York,
from mid-August to mid-June. Periodicals postage paid at Great Neck, NY.
Postmaster: Send address changes to Temple Israel Voice at address above.
Publication No. USPS 078-740. Subscription \$5.00 per annum.

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D'VAR TORAH

By Rabbi Marim D. Charry

Noah

Saturday, October 5

In this portion we read of the destruction of the world by the great flood and the re-creation of the world. By the tenth generation after Adam, human evil has sunk to such depths that God can no longer tolerate it and the world must be purged of its corruption. Noah and his family alone of all mankind are saved along with seven pairs (male and female) of all clean animals and one pair of unclean animals found on earth. The description of the flood is in many respects a reversal of the process of creation. When the waters subside and the occupants of the ark emerge on dry land, the narrative parallels the creation story. Noah is portrayed as a second Adam, but the world after the flood is a significantly different place. Although Noah's sons become the progenitors of a world full of people, the complete harmony of all creation is gone. This change is symbolized by the permission given to mankind to eat meat, albeit with the prohibition of eating the blood. God establishes the rainbow as a sign of His promise that the earth will never again be destroyed by flood. The account of the Tower of Babel shows how that unity is shattered by mankind's pride. God's plan is again thwarted, but this time He responds by narrowing His focus to one segment of mankind, which will be the instrument of achieving His purpose. The reading concludes with an account of the line of Noah's son, Shem, which brings us—after generations—to Abraham.

Lekh Lekha

Saturday, October 12

We meet Abraham, who, at 75, leaves his home in Mesopotamia, at God's command and travels to Canaan with his wife, Sarah, and his nephew, Lot, to become the father of a great nation, in this portion. Abraham meets a number of challenges which test his faith in God and his resourcefulness. He has a son with Hagar, Sarah's handmaid, since Sarah appears to be barren. He also enters into covenant (*b'rit*) with God, which is symbolized by circumcision (*b'rit milah*), thus laying the ground for the development of the Jewish people and its special relationship to God.

SABBATH SERVICES

Friday, October 4 - *Rosh Hodesh Heshvan*

Evening Service 6:30 P.M.
Kabbalat Shabbat Service and Dinner 7:30 P.M.
For College Grads and Friends

Saturday, October 5 - *Rosh Hodesh Heshvan*

Morning Service 8:45 A.M.

Weekly Portion: *Noah*

Genesis 6:9 – 11:32; Numbers 28:9 - 15

Haftarah: Isaiah 66:1 – 66:23

Sabbath Service Officers:

Burton Weston and Rebecca Yousefzadeh Sassouni

Bar Mitzvah

JORDAN SHAVOLIAN

son of Roya and Binesh (Joe) Shavolian

Shabbat Up Close and Personal 10:30 A.M.
Junior Congregation 10:30 A.M.
Toddler Service 11:00 A.M.
Minhah and *Ma'ariv* 5:55 P.M.

Friday, October 11

Evening Service 6:15 P.M.

Saturday, October 12

Morning Service 8:45 A.M.

Weekly Portion: *Lekh-Lekha*; Genesis 12:1 - 17:27

Haftarah: Isaiah 40:27 – 41:16

Sabbath Service Officers:

Sam Husney and Robert Kahen

Bat Mitzvah

LAUREN FARKAS

daughter of Beth and Larry Farkas

Havurah Service 10:00 A.M.
Junior Congregation 10:30 A.M.
Toddler Service 11:00 A.M.
Minhah and *Ma'ariv* 5:45 P.M.