



Goal of New Temple President Alan Klinger's Administration: More Membership Involvement



Newly Elected Temple President Alan Klinger

By Marc Katz, Editor

"If you want to have a stake in the decisions being made about your congregation," said newly elected Temple Israel President Alan M. Klinger, "you have to get involved."

"If you pick one of the many synagogue arms, committees or organizations to participate in," he said, "your voice will be heard."

Increasing member participation in congregational activities will be a major goal of his administration, he explained. "It can serve as a port of entry into synagogue life."

"His next goal," he added, "will be getting the committees to work together better, sharing information with each other. It will add to the vitality of the congregation."

He should know. Mr. Klinger and his wife, Susan Wagner, have been involved in the synagogue's committee structure for many years before he became president.

Besides serving recently on the Executive Committee and Board of Trustees, he has chaired the synagogue Security Committee for a number of years, as well as sitting on the Endowment Committee and assisting in special projects concerning office administration and completing negotiations with the caterer. As a vice president, he worked with the Education committees of the congregation's three schools.

His wife has served as the co-chair of the Ritual Committee in recent years and also is a member of the Finance Committee.

He filled in for Immediate Past President Richard Kestenbaum when the president was away from Great Neck. "Richie left me well prepared for assuming the presidency," Mr. Klinger said.

His "day job" is co-managing partner of a Wall Street law firm, Stroock, Stroock & Loman.

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Temple Israel Marches for Israel

Temple Israel sent its largest delegation ever to New York City's recent "Celebrate Israel Parade." More than four bus loads of congregants walked behind the synagogue's colorful handmade banners, waved Israeli flags or stood on the sidelines and cheered the marchers on.

Congregants of all ages participated, wearing tee-shirts bearing a design by Religious School fourth grader Sophia Askari.

The event was coordinated by Rebecca Yousefzadeh Sassouni and Bali Lerner and the busses and tee-shirts were underwritten by the Israel Affairs Committee, chaired by Lee Harounian.

A drawing held on the bus ride back to Great Neck for an iPod Shuffle, donated by Mike Delafraz was won by Waxman Youth House student Alana Farkas.



Out of Curiosity

By Rachel Epstein

EDITOR'S NOTE: Temple member Rachel Epstein has recently returned from a trip to Cuba to trace her family roots. This Guest Column contains excerpts from a report on her trip.

Upon the death of my father, Luis Lapsker, on December 18, 2010, I met a few of my father's oldest Cuban friends who came to pay their respects and share their stories. My mother, Doba, who was known lovingly as "Dochy," had passed away in January 1997. These conversations sparked a curiosity for me to search for my ancestry and roots.

I decided that I was on a quest to locate and meet relatives that I had in Cuba, for the first time. I had never seen nor spoken to them. Ever. But first I had to locate them. I contacted two organizations that sent out e-mails in Spanish to the Jewish communities in search of my aunt, Belisa Warman, which was my aunt's maiden name. I didn't know what her married name was—I only knew that she was approximately 70 years old.

The president of B'nai B'rith in Cuba, Ida Gutstadt, responded to the e-mails, stating that she knew my aunt well, and e-mail communication began and continued through Ida. It should be noted that the majority of Cuban

residents do not have access to the Internet. They have the "Intranet" which only allows them access to information within Cuba. I found out that my aunt has two married sons, my first cousins, Humberto and Carlos, and they each have children.

...I was on a quest to locate and meet relatives that I had in Cuba...

My next step was to make a plan for my journey to Cuba. I decided to go with the group known as Jewish Solidarity because the tour groups were smaller, and the trip would be taking place at the end of March.

All people going on this mission must

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FROM THE RABBI

Summer Reading

By Rabbi Seth Adelson

A few days ago, I was walking back from morning *minyan* and I passed a couple who are members of Temple Israel. They were out for a stroll, and clearly having a wonderful time. "Nice day for a walk," I said. "Yes," they agreed. "The kids are gone for the summer!"

Vacation time is upon us, and with it opportunities to do things that might get

... learn some of Rabbi Luzzato's approach to an ethical life.

pushed aside during the frenzy of family life from September to June. Around this time of year, various media outlets put out summer reading lists. In that spirit, I'd like to recommend a book: "Mesillat Yesharim" ("The Path of the Upright"), an early 18th century ethical work by Rabbi Moshe

Hayyim Luzzato. This is a standard text of the Jewish ethics (*musar*) movement pioneered by Rabbi Israel Salanter in the Lithuanian *yeshivot*, where he taught in the middle of the 19th century.

"Mesillat Yesharim" takes the reader through a series of behavioral traits identified in a well-known *baraita* found in the Babylonian Talmud (*Avodah Zarah* 20b): Rabbi Pinhas ben Yair says:

"Torah leads to watchfulness,
Watchfulness leads to alertness,
Alertness leads to cleanliness,
Cleanliness leads to abstinence,
Abstinence leads to purity,
Purity leads to saintliness,
Saintliness leads to humility,
Humility leads to fear of sin,
Fear of sin leads to holiness."

Rabbi Luzzato lays out a map for pursuing holiness through each of the traits mentioned in the *baraita*, discussing how each plays out in our day-to-day lives, and seasoning the discussion with luscious

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The Answer To 'Why'

By Alan Klinger

In this inaugural column, it is appropriate, once again, to express our appreciation for all that Richie Kestenbaum did in his five years as synagogue president. It was not easy to have the synagogue move forward in the aftermath of "The Fire"; it required knowledge and judgment in fields ranging from law and insurance to construction and catering. Even in times of stress, Richie accomplished this with a sense of *menschlichkeit* that I hope to continue.

We should also recognize the contributions of outgoing Executive Committee members Cheryl Eisberg Moin and Alise

...my principal desire is to offer strengthened and varied portals of entry...

Kreditor, who in their years of service to the congregation brought skill and grace to their efforts in communications, marketing and membership. It is our hope that they, along with Richie, find ways in which they continue to contribute.

In seeing congregants since I've become president, invariably the first question (after offering congratulations) has been "Why?" (Some have gone so far as to frame it: "What were you thinking?")

Having decided that a better response was needed than "I was asked," I realized that over the past years the synagogue has grown in importance in Susan's and my lives. We had moved from holiday and occasional *Shabbat* service participants to more regular attendance. For me, becoming involved in the administrative affairs of the synagogue brought a greater sense of how such activities could benefit the congregation. Whether it be in improving educational offerings for the young (and not so young); in expanding social action and cultural programs; or in deepening our involvement in support of Israel and other Jewish community causes, these goals are all worthwhile, and it is my hope that, in serving as president, I can help open these doors, as well as those of the Sanctuary, to a broader group of congregants.

We have, again in part through Richie's

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IN MEMORIAM

Temple Israel extends condolences to the families of:

NORMAN FRIEDMAN

father of Rebecca Friedman-Charry

DR. STANLEY SCHIOWITZ

esteemed member of Temple Israel

HELEN SCHECHNER

mother of Mark Schechner

NANETTE RABB

mother of Patty Schneider

May their memory be for a blessing.

TEMPLE LITES . . .

• **Michael Ziegelbaum, M.D.**, of the Lake Success Urology Associates division of Integrated Medical Professionals has been named as one of only two Long Island urologists in the 2011 edition of New York Magazine's "Best Doctors in Metropolitan New York." He is currently a vice president of the Nassau County Medical Society and a delegate to the Medical Society of the State of New York.

• **Pia and Michael Shlomo** and their children Davida, Matthew and Rebecca, daughter, son-in-law and grandchildren of Temple member Francine Spilke-Epstein, are being honored by Chabad of Great Neck "for participation and involvement in Jewish Life in our community."

• **Sandy Blye**, daughter of Temple members Lottie and Bill Blye, received the 2011 Lifetime Achievement Award at the annual dinner of The Greater Fur New York Association on June 14.

Next Voice Issue, Deadline

The next issue of The Voice, the summer issue, will be published in four weeks, on Thursday, July 28, before Tisha B' Av. The deadline for that issue will be Friday, July 15.

UPCOMING EVENTS AT TEMPLE ISRAEL

July	21	Temple Board of Trustees Meeting	8:15 P.M.
August	9	Tisha B' Av	
	18	Temple Board of Trustees Meeting	8:15 P.M.
	23	Waxman High School and Youth House Geniza Project	

Become a Temple Israel

Adult Bar or Bat Mitzvah

A new Temple Adult Bar and Bat Mitzvah class is now forming for intensive study of Hebrew, holidays, theology, Israel, Siddur and prayer, among many other topics.

It is never too late for congregants to become a Bar or Bat Mitzvah, and members who have already observed this milestone are welcome for further study, too.

A 2013 completion is planned, but now is the time to sign-up!
For further information, call the Temple office at 482-7800.

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 taken from the Adon Olam prayer. What's your favorite quote? Send it to "The Voice," Temple Israel of Great Neck, 108 Old Mill Road, Great Neck, NY 11023.

*“I place my spirit in God's care;
my body too can feel God near.
When I sleep, as when I wake,
God is with me; I have no fear.”*

Waxman High School Philanthropy Program Marks First Year Funds Donated to Bring Israeli Technology To African Students

By Isaiah Levy and Zina Rutkin-Becker
with editorial assistance by Team Tikkun members

Last August, a small group of teens and parents gathered in the Youth House Well to learn about a new teen philanthropy program being launched through the Waxman Hebrew High School and Youth House. Conceived of by Temple Israel Trustee Zina Rutkin-Becker and sponsored in part by the Ben Ziegelbaum Memorial Trust, the goal was to give teens a hands-on learning experience about the non-profit, grant-making world through a Jewish lens.

"Team Tikkun," Temple Israel's junior philanthropic foundation, was born. With the introduction of Team Tikkun, Temple Israel joined a rapidly growing nationwide network of Jewish Teen Funders, coordinated by the New York City-based Jewish Teen Funders Network.

Team Tikkun's kick-off event was an orientation session intended to provide a taste of the program in miniature. Teens and their parents participated in an activity called "The \$50 Exercise," which utilized a series of interactive values clarification exercises. By the end of the evening, participants had jointly decided to donate a \$50 bill to the organization that combined health care with education. The recipient was Ezer Mizion, an Israel health care organization with a strong research and educational component. That evening, participants got a small taste of some of the challenges involved in articulating priorities as well as the compromises inherent in the group decision-making process.

Of the 11 teens attending orientation at the end of the summer, eight signed up for the year-long program. In addition, two teens who had heard about the program through the Sid Jacobsen JCC joined. In order to create a funding pool, each family donated \$360 and every dollar was generously matched by the Ben Ziegelbaum



Accepting a donation from the Temple High School Teen Philanthropy Program is Rachel Ishofsky, executive director of Jewish Heart for Africa, with students Marina Nebro, Josh Ratner, Isaiah Levy, Jared Horowitz, Ari Panzer, Marcus Nebro and Mandy Mazel.

Memorial Trust. The team included Alessia Grunberger, Jared Horowitz, Jonny Kashine, Isaiah Levy, Mandy Mazel, Marcus Nebro, Marina Nebro, Ari Panzer, Brian Posner, and Josh Ratner.

Using guidance from Jewish sources, Team Tikkun began by exploring issues ranging from social justice to budgeting. For example, the group discussed the difference between "charity," and "tzedakah," the latter being a Jewish obligation, an act of justice and righteousness. Participants also learned some terminology associated with social action, and discussed the overlap and differences between terms such as "philanthropy," "direct service," "advocacy," "community organizing" and "activism."

In order to fine-tune guidelines for decision-making and to hone in on the type of impact they hoped to achieve with limited funds, the teens engaged in a series of interactive exercises and group discussions throughout the year. They studied a range of sources including Rambam's "Eight Degrees of Tzedakah" and Abraham Maslow's "Hierarchy of Human Needs."

Team Tikkun's grant-making process began with a call for a "letter of intent" from a variety of charitable organizations. The range of needs addressed was broad, including Jewish and universal causes in the United

States and in Israel. The letters requested basic information about each organization's mission as well as the specific project Team Tikkun's donation would finance. By November, the team had received 13 letters of intent with agreements from each organization that, if invited, it would move to the next step of writing a full proposal.

Next, the team organized the letters into four groupings, or "portfolios:" Israeli (four letters of intent), Universal based in New York (tied with four letters), Jewish based in New York (three letters), and Universal based outside of New York (two letters). Participants selected their portfolios, worked in small groups to screen and rate each of the letters, and finally made a case to the entire team in support of specific projects they had investigated. Using a one to five rating scale, individuals voted on each organization, and then the votes were averaged. The seven organizations that received the lowest average scores were removed from consideration.

Upon the rejection of seven nonprofits, the teens wrote letters of apology to each of the "rejected"

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Jewish Teen Funders Network Executive Director Naomi Skop, with Dr. Michael Ziegelbaum, Jewish Heart for Africa Executive Director Rachel Ishofsky, Amy Ziegelbaum and Zina Rutkin-Becker.

CANDLE LIGHTING TIMES

Kindle the Sabbath Lights!

Friday, July 1.....	8:12 P.M.
Friday, July 8.....	8:10 P.M.
Friday, July 15.....	8:07 P.M.
Friday, July 22.....	8:02 P.M.

DAILY MINYAN TIMES

Attend the Daily Minyan!

Mon. & Thur.	6:45 A.M.	8:00 P.M.
Tues. & Wed.	7:00 A.M.	8:00 P.M.
Friday	7:00 A.M.	6:30 P.M.
Sat., July 2 & 9	9:00 A.M.	7:50 P.M.
Sat., July 16	9:00 A.M.	7:45 P.M.
Sat., July 23	9:00 A.M.	7:40 P.M.
Sunday	8:15 A.M.	8:00 P.M.

President Klinger Sets Goal of Greater Member Involvement

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and Lavin, LLP. That job, he says, should assist here: "The work helps you understand group dynamics."

Elected along with Mr. Klinger at the congregational meeting earlier this month were Seth Horowitz, Dr. Parviz Khodadadian, Dr. Robert Lopatkin, Dr. Robert Panzer, Rebecca Yousefzadeh Sassouni, Gary Sazer and Steven Shepsman.

Named to a first three-year term on the Board of Trustees were Jackie Astrof and Pargol Khadavi. Trustees elected to second three year terms were Joanna Eshaghoff, Sam Husney, Robert Kahen, Marc Langsner, Zina Rutkin-Becker and Steven Smolinsky.

Mr. Klinger said he would seek to revitalize the synagogue's committee structure. "With stabilized membership numbers, increasing the involvement of our membership will enrich the experience of all," he said.

Another of the new president's goals is to make religious services more participatory. "I think that is more engaging and what people today are looking for."

He said he would also like to expand the synagogue's social action activities beyond the current participation in Midnight Run, Israel Day Parade and Chesed Committee projects. "Especially attractive would be projects involving parents and children together."

Mr. Klinger said he would also like to explore congregational activities geared toward senior members of the congregation and parents whose children have already observed their *B'nai Mitzvah*.

"My goal will be to encourage involvement," he said. "When I look back at the end of my administration, I hope to see a larger percentage of the Congregation involved in synagogue life."

Temple Staff Spotlight

Marion Stein



By Marc Katz

If you deal with Temple Israel's main office, chances are you've dealt with Assistant to the Executive Director Marion Stein. For almost eight years, she has helped guide most of the congregation's special events.

She is in charge of the massive job of assigning High Holy Day seats to members of the congregation, as well as the sale of additional seats for Temple members. She also coordinates the sale and placement of memorial plaques in the Sanctuary and Chapel.

In addition, she helps coordinate attendance and food at many activities, including Friday evening dinners, Comedy Night, the Second Night Seder, the Welcome Back Bar-B-Que, Congregational Hanukkah Party and Dinner Dance. She also records journal advertising and handles the sale of cemetery plots and Temple Israel's section at Beth Moses Cemetery, Farmingdale.

As the assistant to the executive director, she manages the office on a daily basis, handles correspondence and distributes minutes to the Board of Trustees and Executive Committee.

"I like my job because it is so diversified," she said. "I'm doing something different every day."

The Syosset resident was first told about the position she holds by her childhood friend, former Executive Director Harriet Schiff. She was interviewed for the position by Past President Sid Freedman, and began work almost immediately.

She and her husband, Jerry, have two grown daughters, Beverly and Amy.

During her years with the congregation, she has seen changes in clergy, "but among the office staff," she said, "there have not been many changes. I have worked with the same people for years and we have developed a team spirit. We are a close-knit group."

She said she has also gotten to know many members of the congregation and vendors. "So many are very nice to deal with," she said. "Temple Israel has a feeling like home to me."

From the Rabbi: Summer Reading

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quotes from the *Tanakh* and rabbinic literature.

Why this book, you might ask? And why would I sit down with an 18th century Hebrew text when I might more easily pick up a novel and a glass of red wine?

Rabbi Luzzato's perspective is traditional; that is, he writes from the position of one steeped in Torah and *mitzvot*, and he lived in ghettoized Western Europe before the Jewish Enlightenment. The issues facing modern Jews are quite different from those of Luzzato's time, and so are the choices that we make. However, our need for guidance is probably even greater; the overwhelming independence

that our culture fosters leaves some of us without working ethical compasses, and we all face many individual choices that historically nobody would have made without the help of others. As such, learning about how to pay attention to one's conduct and to establish boundaries is invaluable.

Here's the good news: you have the opportunity to study "Mesillat Yesharim" with Rabbi Stecker and I over the course of the summer, every *Shabbat* afternoon between *Minhah* and *Ma'ariv*. And, since the

kids are gone for the summer, you have time to come join us as we bid goodbye to *Shabbat* and learn some of Rabbi Luzzato's approach to an ethical life. See you there!

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bring a large suitcase consisting of medical supplies, school supplies, shampoo, toiletries, vitamins, soap, aspirin, Ziploc bags, pens, paper, etc. to bring on the trip to distribute to the various temples and schools. Everything is needed and wanted in Cuba. They don't even have access to the most basic supplies. Another interesting point was that no U.S. credit cards can be used in Cuba—only cash. I also found it interesting that only certain \$100 bills with specific serial numbers will be accepted. It also mentioned that telephone service and Internet service may be limited in my hotel and on many parts of the island. All of these details definitely alarmed me, but they did not deter me.

I flew to Miami on Wednesday night, March 30. There I met two more cousins, Belinda Behar Gelen Rudnikas, her husband,

*This was
my last chance
to find out more
about my own
family history.*

Rolando, and their daughter, Loretta, all of whom I was able to reunite with because of Tia Belisa. I found out that Belinda's grandmother, Maria (Yacha), and my grandmother, Sophia (Szejna), were sisters. I couldn't believe it. Especially when I went on Belinda's facebook page and I saw a picture of my grandma with Belinda's grandma, along with our great-grandparents. Amazingly, at this point, I had already made contact and spoke with more relatives in one night than I had in a long time.

We all went out for dinner that first night of my journey, in Miami, which led me finding out more historical family facts. I found out that Rolando, Belinda's husband, and his father were held in prison for three years for trying to escape from Cuba to the United States. He was released when Castro released all political prisoners with the requirement that they leave Cuba right away. Rolando now writes for the Miami Herald, occasionally discussing Cuba Jewish-Israeli politics. I also found out that Belinda's sister, Alina, and parents, Isaac Gelen (deceased in 2004) and Sarah Rudnikas (deceased in 1999), weren't able to leave Cuba. Isaac was president of B'nai B'rith and was extremely involved in the Jewish Community in Cuba. Alina still lives in Cuba and is a professor at the university there.

I could hardly sleep that night, excited about all that I had learned and I hadn't even reached Cuba yet! The mission had a total of 13 people including me. Of course we all

Out of Curiosity

got along well, and took care of each other throughout our journey. The adventures began as soon as we landed in Cuba. While going through security, Stuart Graber, the dentist we were travelling with, got stopped for bringing approximately 150 toothbrushes to donate to schools and synagogues. They thought that he was going to sell the toothbrushes on the black market. I rose to the occasion, as Stuart called me over, to use my Spanish and translate for him to the police officer. After approximately half an hour, I managed to get him out of further trouble. Soon after, Michael Stokamer got stopped. Although he is a U.S. citizen, he was born in Cuba. They were questioning his passport and proper documentation. After interrogating him for what seemed to be an hour (and his wife Charlene crying), they released him. We were finally on our way. It was already becoming emotional.

As we stepped outside of the airport, Raul, the tour guide greeted us happily. He was fluent in English and was well-versed in Cuban history and facts. We were so intrigued by the antique cars all over. From pink 1956 Chevrolets to light blue 1950s Oldsmobiles, it was definitely a sight to see.

Our first stop was the Sephardic Center, and I couldn't believe what was awaiting me. My Aunt Belisa, first cousin Carlos and second cousin Alina along with Ida, the president of B'nai B'rith, were anxiously awaiting my arrival. It was very emotional. I invited them out for dinner with the mission group that night, along with my two cousins who I had not yet met. Being taken out to dinner for my relatives was a definite treat because of the poor financial system in place. Cubans primarily live on rationed food allotments, which gives them barely any freedom to eat out because it is beyond their means. For example, they might be allotted two dozen eggs a month and two pounds of dark meat chicken for a week and they go to special stores to pick up their allotments.

Most household incomes are approximately \$15 a month. Cubans have their own currency, which is different than the currency that tourists receive when our money is converted. Their currency is known as the peso, whereas tourists convert their money into CUCs (Cuban Convertible Peso).

Although Cubans receive very little as far as salary and income, they feel that one benefit of the Communist society is that they do receive all of their medical treatment and continued education for "free." I was surprised to find out that most Cuban residents have college degrees, but almost none of them practice in their field, mostly because there are no jobs available. Lots of people come to Cuba to study to become a doctor because there is no cost for the education. You might have to return and give them years of service instead. The Cubans all think that this is a great life-style, mostly because they were never exposed to anything else.

After dinner I asked two of the cousins to come up to my hotel room to help carry the supplies I brought. They were stopped by security and were told that I am the only one allowed up. It puzzled me to know that they were able to tell who was from Cuba and who was not. Apparently, Cubans are not allowed anywhere in the hotel, other than the lobby. I brought down the supplies and they were so appreciative of everything—pens, pencils, paper, sewing materials, toothpaste, and especially the ramen noodles.

The next day, we proceeded to the Orthodox temple, Adath Israel Synagogue. There we met with Jacob Berezniak, who is the leader of that temple. He is the butcher, the rabbi, the cantor, the moil. The congregants make items such as dolls and *kippot* to use as fund-raisers for the temple. They mostly survive on donations from tourists and visitors to the synagogue.

For *Shabbat*, we went to Temple Beth Shalom, which is also known as El Patronato. This synagogue is the Conservative temple and the most beautiful temple in Cuba. I found out that this synagogue has special meaning for me. I went to look at a plaque of the original contributors. To my big surprise, I saw a plaque with my grandfather's name on my father's side, Pedro Lapsker, listed as one of the original sponsors. I had tears in my eyes and I was in shock all day. My father had told me very little of his time and experiences in Cuba, before he immigrated to the United States. I'm not sure if he even knew that his father had such a prominent role at this synagogue.

We went to Santa Clara and met with David Thatcher, President of the synagogue there. The temple is under total construction. We then went on to see the cemetery in Santa Clara which has a Holocaust memorial.

Afterwards, we traveled to Cienfuegos where we met Rebecca Langos, a community leader and president of the Cienfuegos Jewish community. We met with Rebecca at her house, which is used for all services, as

*I could hardly sleep
that night,
excited about all
that I had learned...*

well as all Jewish events.

The last night, I invited my aunt and cousins out to dinner to bid them farewell. I asked them to pick a restaurant that they would enjoy. They chose La Flor de Loto in Chinatown, Cuba. This was a Cuban Chinese restaurant that turned out to be delicious. I did wonder where the Asian Cubans were. I was told that the owners of the restaurant were Asian, but the entire serving staff was Cuban.

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Get Involved!
Join a Temple Israel Committee Now.

COMMITTEE PREFERENCES

NAME: _____

PHONE: _____

E-MAIL: _____

- | | |
|-------|---|
| _____ | Adult Education |
| _____ | Bar/Bat Mitzvah |
| _____ | Bikor Cholim |
| _____ | Catering |
| _____ | Cemetery |
| _____ | Chesed / Gemilut |
| _____ | Culture – Performing Arts |
| _____ | Education |
| | _____ Beth HaGan |
| | _____ Religious School |
| | _____ Waxman High School & Youth House |
| _____ | Finance and Budget |
| _____ | Fundraising and Development |
| _____ | High Holiday Ushers |
| _____ | House / Green |
| _____ | Israel Affairs |
| _____ | Membership |
| _____ | Pastoral |
| _____ | Publicity and Publications |
| _____ | Ritual |
| _____ | Security (including High Holidays) |
| _____ | Shoah |
| _____ | Strategic Planning |
| _____ | Technology |
| _____ | Waxman Lecture |
| _____ | Other _____ |

Rank Top 5 Choices with 1 Being First Choice

**COMPLETE THIS FROM AND SEND/BRING IT
TO THE SYNAGOGUE OFFICE,
OR E-MAIL YOUR SELECTIONS TO lsilverberg@tign.org**

Waxman High School Philanthropy Program

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organizations, a common practice in the philanthropy world. Next, Team Tikkun issued a “Request for Proposals” (RFP) to the remaining six organizations, requesting further details about the organization including its overall budget and a more specific account about how each dollar would be used towards the proposed project. By January, Team Tikkun had received six detailed proposals, still representing a broad range of causes.

By March, the team’s goal was to further wean the six proposals down to two. At this juncture, the group had to resolve some differences of opinion before moving forward. A discussion ensued about whether or not to stick with the original plan of donating to only one charitable organization, or to consider other options. The teens debated the merits of the original plan versus dividing the funds so that two organizations could each receive a portion. Another idea floated was not donating to any organization this year, instead building up the size of the funding pool over time. The team ultimately decided that it would have more impact if it stuck to only one project. The teens also wanted to set an example of a completed project, from requesting and vetting proposals to allocating funds.

At this point, the team consulted with Temple member Nina Mogilnik, who serves as executive director of the Child Welfare Fund and has a great deal of experience with all aspects of the grant-making process. Nina had taken the time to read each proposal under consideration, and she helped the teens assess the opportunities and limits of each of the projects proposed. Nina was very encouraging and helped to clarify the teens’ thinking about the type of impact they would be able to have with limited funds. She particu-

larly stressed the importance of assessing the sustainability of the chosen project over time.

Team Tikkun’s final deliberations led to a decision to donate \$5,000 to Jewish Heart for Africa, an organization which brings Israeli technology to African villages. Team Tikkun is excited that Jewish Heart for Africa combines universal and Jewish concerns. The team’s contribution will furnish two solar panels for a school in a Ugandan village, opening up many new learning possibilities for people of all ages.

On May 24, Team Tikkun held a formal allocation ceremony at the Youth House. The ceremony was well-attended by representatives of the Temple Israel community, and also included Rachel Ishofsky, executive director of Jewish Heart for Africa, and Naomi Skop, program associate of Jewish Teen Funders Network. Ms. Ishofsky described the horrific conditions under which Ugandan children and adults often struggle to get an education in the most daunting of circumstances. The donated solar panels will replace kerosene lamps, which are extremely dangerous and have resulted in numerous injuries and deaths. Ms. Ishofsky

expressed her appreciation for Team Tikkun’s contribution, adding that together, and with the help of Israeli technology, the teens have improved the lives of impoverished people on the other side of the world. An added bonus is that the school where the solar panels are to be installed will be named after Michael and Amy Ziegelbaum’s son, Ben, who was an active member of the Youth House until his untimely death in 2006. Ben was an avid champion of social action, and the team is certain that he would have fully supported this project!

Team Tikkun is committed to continuing next year and beyond. One of next year’s goals is to deepen the connection between participating teens and the broader synagogue community. Toward this end, the program is actively seeking sponsors for the upcoming school year. Sponsoring participants is a fabulous way for congregants to develop and deepen their connections to some wonderful, energetic and earnest teens, while simultaneously making a difference in the world. Anyone interested in sponsoring one or more team members, should contact Dr. Rutkin-Becker at <zinarutkin@gmail.com>.

Guest Column: Out of Curiosity

—Continued from page 6

This was my last chance to find out more about my own family history. I really wanted to know why my Aunt opted to stay in Cuba when her parents (my grandparents and her sister (my mother) left for the United States. Aunt Belisa started her story by telling me that my mom left Cuba first, by herself, to the United States on June 16, 1961, followed by my father, Luis, and then my grandparents approximately six months later. Grandma Sophia told her that she was leaving for the United States the next morning at 8 A.M. and she

urged Belisa to come with her. Belisa, who was only 18 years old at that time, was married to her husband, Humberto, who had a prominent position with the Castro regime in the Cuban government. They were only married for about a year then and they did not have children yet. My grandmother continued by saying that she starved in Poland with no food and she would never ever starve and live through that again!

Tia Belisa knew where she stood. She had to make an important decision that would affect her whole life. She was in love with her husband, who was not Jewish and extremely involved in the Communist/rebel government. He believed Castro was the messiah and the best thing ever to happen to Cuba. Obviously, this created lots of tension within the family.

She had made her decision to stand by her husband. She stayed in Cuba, worked for the government in a senior diplomatic position, speaks six languages and is well respected by her peers. I asked her if she regrets her decision now, and in hindsight would she have left Cuba with her parents and sister? Her answer was “No!” Her rationale was that she has free education, free food (rationed, of course) and free medical care. She doesn’t really need anything more. It may not be the best life, but it’s the only life she has ever known.

We went back to the hotel with my aunt and cousins, hugged, and said good-bye. Who knows if I will ever see them again.

I am glad that I went on this mission. I will remember it for the rest of my life. I knew that I had to go to Cuba, meet and see my remaining family out of curiosity.

The Answer To ‘Why’

—Continued from page 2

stewardship, that of our talented clergy and the hard work of lay leaders, seen our membership numbers stabilize these past few years, no small feat with the recession and the changing demographics of Great Neck. While we will strive for new members (and devote new resources to that effort), my principal desire is to offer strengthened and varied portals of entry so that a greater percentage of our 900-plus family units become more active in synagogue life. To that end, I’ve expressed to clergy and lay leaders an interest in our services becoming more participatory.

Also, picking up on efforts started by Richie, Executive Director Leon Silverberg, and interested lay leaders, we’ve begun a restructuring of our committees to bring more

direction and diversity to them, with reporting lines to individual members of the Executive Committee so that these efforts are increasingly coordinated. In this regard, we welcome congregants’ participation in committees. This is a ready way to become acquainted with the synagogue and your fellow congregants. To that end, page 7 of this issue of The Voice contains an insert listing various committees. If you’re so inclined, please complete it with your areas of interest and return it to Leon. Finally, let the Board and me know how we could improve your synagogue experience—new ideas are welcome. (And, once in awhile, it’s okay to say that you liked something.) The best way to reach me is through e-mail: <aklinger@stroock.com>.

I hope to hear from you and see you at the synagogue.

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For the recovery of:

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The birth of her fourth
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their many years of
commitment and service

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becoming a *Bat Mitzvah*

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Marc Langsner being
named "Man of the Year"
by the Federation of
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Wendy Carnel and Dr.
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Lisa Beth Daskal on her
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Geraldine Wohlstadter's
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St. Louis

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Adrienne Husney,
daughter of Sherry and
Sam Husney, to Aaron
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Jacob, Rachel, and
Samuel

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This Dinner Dance contribution was received too late for inclusion in the Journal.

In honor of:
Elise and Hon. Richard Kestenbaum
Susan and Steven Glaser, Andrew and Stephanie

D'var Torah

—Continued from back page

Pinhas

Saturday, July 16

We read that Pinhas, the grandson of Aaron, is rewarded for his zeal in dealing summarily with the idolatry of *Baal-peor* by having the priesthood become the possession of his descendants for all time, in this portion. We now turn to the preparations for the conquest of the Promised Land. Moses takes a census of the generation born in the wilderness to determine the number of fighting men and the number of families who would share in the division of the land. God gives Moses instructions for apportioning the land, and we learn of a decision affirming the right of daughters to inherit property when there are no sons. Moses is told to ascend the mountain to prepare to die and to designate Joshua as his successor. The reading concludes with a calendar of the Festivals of the year and the public sacrifices that are to be offered daily and on every *Shabbat* and Festival after the Israelites have entered the land. Maintaining this calendar is to be a means of tying together God, the land and the People of Israel.

Mattot

Saturday, July 23

The portion Mattot relates to the final events proceeding the entering of the Promised Land. It deals with three separate matters. The first section sets out the rules for the annulment of vows and oaths made by women. In the Torah, words have great power. God accomplished His creation with words, and what we call the Ten Commandments is called in the Torah the ten words or statements. An oath, vow or promise is a very serious matter. A pledge made by a man in the name of God must be fulfilled. However, a woman's pledge may be annulled by her father—if she is unmarried—or by her husband. While this distinction may make some of us uncomfortable, it reflects the social structure of Biblical times. In the second section, we read of the war against the Midianites. All the men are slain, as well as those women involved in the apostasy at *Baal-peor*. Spoils are divided, and a section of Trans-Jordan is occupied. This leads to the third part, where we learn that the tribes of Gad, Reuben and half of Manasseh wish to stay in that land because it is good for cattle grazing. This request presents a problem because it seems to reject the national goal of occupying and settling the Promised Land. After detailed negotiations with Moses, a compromise is reached. The Men of these tribes will settle their families and livestock in Trans-Jordan, then join the other tribes in effecting the conquest.

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D'VAR TORAH

By Rabbi Marim D. Charry

Hukkat

Saturday, July 2

We cover the 38 years of the wilderness wandering in this portion. The reading opens with instructions for the most peculiar ritual in the Torah—the slaughtered red cow whose ashes mixed with water are used to purify anyone who comes in contact with a corpse. In the purification process, people who are already pure and touch the mixture become impure and must themselves undergo a different process of purification. The reading skips over most of the events of the wilderness wandering without comment and continues in the land of Moab. The people again complain of lack of water, and God tells Moses and Aaron to speak to the rock and produce water. Moses, however, strikes the rock with his staff. Water comes forth, but God declares that this action shows lack of faith, and neither Moses nor Aaron will be permitted to enter the Promised Land. The Israelites wage several battles and win, thus demonstrating that the new generation is ready to attempt the conquest of the land. However, the problems of obedience to God and understanding the responsibilities of leadership have still not been completely resolved.

Balak

Saturday, July 9

In this portion, Balak, King of Moab, becomes alarmed at the victory of the Israelites over the Amorites. Fearing that the Israelites are too powerful to defeat in battle, Balak sends messengers to the renowned prophet Balaam in Mestopotamia to summon him to Moab in order to curse the Israelites. At first, God instructs Balaam that he is not to go. Balak, however, sends a second set of messengers to plead with Balaam, and God agrees that the prophet can go to Moab on the clear understanding that he will only speak as God commands him. Once in Moab, Balaam blesses the Israelites three different times instead of cursing them. Balak is furious and sends the prophet home, but Balaam first prophesies the destruction of Moab and the neighboring countries. The future of Israel now seems bright indeed, but the promise is immediately dashed when the people are enticed to participate in the idolatrous cult of Baal-peor. The unique relationship with God is still not firmly enough established.

—Continued on Page 11

SABBATH SERVICES

Friday, July 1

Evening Service 6:30 P.M.

•

Saturday, July 2 - Rosh Hodesh Tammuz

Morning Service 9:00 A.M.

Weekly Portion: *Hukkat*; Numbers 19:1 – 22:1

Haftarah: Isaiah 66:1 – 24, 23

•

Friday, July 8

Evening Service 6:30 P.M.

•

Saturday, July 9

Morning Service 9:00 A.M.

Weekly Portion: *Balak*; Numbers 22:2 – 25:9

Haftarah: Micah 5:6 – 6:8

•

Friday, July 15

Evening Service 6:30 P.M.

•

Saturday, July 16

Morning Service 9:00 A.M.

Weekly Portion: *Pinhas*; Numbers 25:10 – 30:1

Haftarah: I Kings 18:46 – 19:21

•

Friday, July 22

Evening Service 6:30 P.M.

•

Saturday, July 23

Morning Service 9:00 A.M.

Weekly Portion: *Mattot*; Numbers 30:2 – 32:42

Haftarah: Jeremiah 1:1 – 2:3

Junior Congregation 10:30 A.M.

Toddler Service 11:15 A.M.