

Congregation *B'nai Israel*

A newsletter for the members and friends of Congregation B'nai Israel

Jan./Feb. 2008

Coming Home

Gary Wolfman, Religious Director

For those who have a college student, we know that at the end of each semester the student comes home. They come for the great food they grew-up eating, and the warmth of their own bed. But more importantly, they come home for the love that is given unconditionally by their family. By coming home, they renew themselves and prepare to go out once again to life's challenges and the adventures of their life journey.



During the past holiday season, many of us traveled to our childhood homes to reunite once again with our parents and our siblings. It is like a ritual that somehow reaffirms who we are and how far in life we have traveled. Coming home renews that foundation upon which we have built our lives.

In the Torah, Jacob comes home many years after fleeing even though he is endangering his own life and those of his family. He is drawn back to his roots so he can become whole again. By reuniting with his brother and family, Jacob is renewed and ready to continue his travels and face the challenges ahead.

Several times as an adult, I have traveled back to my childhood home and walked the neighborhood revisiting in my mind the many events that shaped who I have become. Those few hours help to give my foundation a firmer ground upon which to make future decisions in my life. I always include visiting the cemetery and remember the adults who taught me, who gave me advice, who acted as role models for me. I was astonished on a recent trip to visit the grave of my beloved Rabbi Cohen and to discover he died at the age of 51. I always thought of him as very old and now wonder what the present religious school students think about when they see me. I go home and come back to my present home filled with spiritual fullness.

I believe the same kind of feelings occur when we gather together as a community to pray, to learn and to have fun. When we attend services and pray together, we are including God in our lives. Our prayers either spoken or sung help to revive our souls knowing that God and Judaism are giving each of us a strong foundation of values and ethics. It's like we are coming home again. When we learn together, we are reminded that we are standing on the shoulders of those who came before us. It is like we have come home and rediscovered the roots of our past. When we have fun together, we are reminded that each person has value and adds to each other's lives. Together we experience the joy of being part of a special community that supports us as we continue our own journeys. It is like we are at home.

Our temple is a special place that is God's and our community's home. It is by coming home to our temple, that we can find meaning, joy and peace for ourselves. During this dark wintertime, let us come home to the temple and bring warmth into our own and others lives.

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B'nai Israel is our home

Julie Kurutz, President

B'nai Israel has been our home for many years, and we will celebrate its 60th anniversary in the Spring of 2009. The building is gently aging, and needs attention, as most of you know. You recently should have received a letter from the temple board, telling you of our plans for many upcoming projects.

I want you all to be aware that the decisions being made, and that have been made, were thought about and talked about, and talked about again. We have spent much time on the topic of our home. Especially since we plan to stay here for a very long time. We did spend time discussing other options, moving, building a new building, etc. We decided that the "pros" to staying here and making the improvements made the most sense, was the most economical choice, and made people happy who never wanted to leave this very special place (myself included...)

Please contact Lorrene if you wish to "sponsor" a specific project or part of a project. For example, you could donate the purchase price of our new sink in someone's honor or memory. (You could wash away your guilt...) or maybe you'd like us to walk on "your" kitchen floor... you get the idea....Thanks Lorrene for your work on this, and thank you Susan Hirschberg for all your hard work.

I have always been personally "turned off" by being solicited for a donation to anything. I think that if you care about something enough, you will give. Please care A LOT about our B'nai Israel home. Enough said....

Fondly, *Julie*

From Barbara Kuhn

On Sunday, February 10, 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM a Jewish Parenting Conference will be held at the Jewish Community Center, Daniel M Soref Community Hall, 6255 N Santa Monica Blvd, Milwaukee.

Keynote speaker is Dr. Wendy Mogel, author of the New York Times Bestselling Book on parenting, *The Blessing of a Skinned Knee*. Mogel's presentation will be inspiring, humorous and effective in helping parents meet the day-to-day challenge or rearing self-reliant children.

There will be speakers, round table discussions, workshops and a gourmet brunch will be served. Email info@jewishparentingconference.com; call 414-228-8000.

From the Education Committee-

Ellyn Lahr

Happy 2008!

I just wanted to give a great big "THANK YOU" to all of the congregants that helped to make our annual Chanukah Program such a success. It takes a group effort to make things happen at B'nai Israel, and we have a wonderful group! Since all of that fun is fresh in your mind, you will probably want to consider chairing that event for 2009! It might be fun for a more long-time congregant and a newer member family to join together to chair the event. As you can see, everyone lends a helping hand to make the workload light. Lorrene Schreiber is our resident expert on all things Chanukah--from arranging the latke making to how many Kosher hot dogs to purchase, if you have any questions.

Congratulations to all of the Religious School students on their great performances. Dr. Ben Frank and his class of young ones got right into the spirit of the day and really seemed to have a great time--looks like some stars were born! I will welcome Mr. Wolfman back as MC next year--it's a tough job, and he's just the one to do it!!

We look forward to a great second half of the Religious School year beginning on January 6, 2008. See you all then. All of the best of health and happiness in the New (secular) Year!!

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Check out our synagogue website:

Did you accidentally throw away the last Newsletter?
Need to contact someone from the congregation?
Want to give a prospective member an introduction to our synagogue?

Login to the Internet and check out our lovely synagogue website at:
<http://www.bnaiisraeloshkosh.com/index.html>.

If you want to post something or have any comments/suggestions, please contact Sam Coe at:
samcoe123@gmail.com.

FROM THE BOARD

CONGREGATION BOARD OF TRUSTEES

OFFICERS:

President	Julie Kurutz	(920) 989-2201 Julie_Kurutz@vfc.com
Vice President	Rebecca Welch	(920) 303-9214 rpwotr@aol.com
Treasurer	Marty Finkler	(920) 735-0714 mdfinkler@netscape.net
Secretary	Avi Stern	(920) 727-9797 lstern@new.rr.com

BOARD MEMBERS:

Steve Freschl	Jeff Lipschutz
Myra Khirin	Lorrene Schreiber
Barbara Kuhn	Ellyn Lahr
Sherry Taylor	Marc Blum

From the Treasurer

Marty Finkler

Before the end of the year, please consider making a donation to Congregation B'nai Israel. Of course, you can meet your annual dues pledge and have it tax deductible in 2007. Below you will find the categories the Board established for this year.



Mishpachah (Family)	\$500.-.\$674.99
Tov Lav (Good Hearted) (Basic family membership level)	\$675.00.-.\$799.99
Nideevot (Contributor)	\$800.00.-.\$999.99
Ahmoed Hakihellah (Pillar of the Community)	\$1,000.00.-.\$1,499.99
Tzadikim	\$1,500.00.-.\$1,999.99
Chassidim	\$2,000.00 or more

Undoubtedly, you received a letter from the Board of Congregation B'nai Israel that illuminated our "60 for the next 60" building fund campaign. By 2009, the congregation will have occupied our current building for 60 years. The Board has discussed the major alternatives and determined that it's better to put money into our current building than to either move to another building or construct a new one. Exciting plans for the kitchen, new bathrooms in the lower level, and an elevator have motivated our campaign. Although the total envisioned cost of these improvements comes to \$140,000, we already have commitments of \$80,000; thus, the 60 for the next 60 plan represents terrific value. Please make your contribution to the new building fund by sending a check to our Assistant Treasurer, Steve Freschl at 2134 Sunrise Drive, Appleton, WI 54914

Have a healthy, prosperous, and spirited 2008.

BUILDING FUND AND RENOVATION

From Lorrene Schreiber



By now, you have received the letter explaining the need for donations and fundraising to make our building friendly to the handicapped, as well as update and repair parts of the building.

I have received a few ideas from people as well as a pledge for a generous donation from the Missners (thank you!). One of the ideas is to present a list of items that are needed in case someone would like to sponsor something specific. At present, this is the list that we have:

stove	microwave
kitchen countertops	kitchen sink
garbage disposal	floor for kitchen
kitchen cabinets	kitchen faucets
bathroom fixtures	
refrigerator (we could keep the one we have)	
table and chairs for library/Gary's classroom	
smaller desk for Gary's office	

Please contact Lorrene Schreiber at 725-2131 or lmschreib@aol.com if you have any questions or ideas.

From the Lakeview Memorial Park Committee

Congregation B'Nai Israel has available internment rights for 33 grave sites in Lake View Mausoleum and Memorial Park, 2786 Algoma Boulevard. This location is directly north of the Synagogue on the west side of Algoma Boulevard (Highway 45) on the way to the Highway 41 interchange. Single internment rights may be purchased from the Congregation for only \$650 for members and \$850 for nonmembers. This compares with buying directly from the Memorial Park in the non-sacred areas for \$1,495!

Please seriously consider this purchase as an investment in peace of mind for your or your parent's future needs. You may contact Marc Blum at drmarcblum@gmail.com or 920-231-9684 to discuss the location of available sites or for a tour the Congregation B'Nai Israel area within Lake Mausoleum and Memorial Park. Other committee members include Lowell Louis, Ed Klug, and Ken Friedman.

Sponsor an edition of the Newsletter!

For \$50-\$100, you could be our first sponsor for the Congregation Newsletter! Because of our swelling membership (and Newsletter pages), donations are being sought to help with the printing and mailing of this Newsletter. Please send a check to Steve Freschl at 2134 Sunrise Drive, Appleton, WI 54914

Sisterhood News

From Lorrene Schreiber

We had a very successful and fun Hanukkah Bingo at Char Sigman's home. Thanks so much, Char. With 18 of us there, we began with a pot luck dinner before moving on to the fun of playing bingo and opening and stealing gifts. There was a lot of laughter and camaraderie.

There seems to be a lot of interest in learning to play Mah Jong, so stay tuned to hear when there will be a meeting for this purpose. I still have a list of people who are planning to host a meeting, so we should begin having more regular meetings again.



The annual retreat will be held the last weekend of January at Lorrene Schreiber's cottage. This is all day Saturday and as much of Sunday as people can manage. You are asked to bring a dish, appetizer, or dessert to share and plan to have a relaxing and fun time. In the past we have had a massage therapist come, and last year we had 2. If you are interested in a massage, please make sure to let me know when you RSVP. For those of you who haven't been, you are missing games, walks on the lake, snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, casino trips, hot tubbing, all kinds of crafts that our talented ladies have shared, good food, and great company. If you choose to hide away with a good book, that is fine too. Please RSVP to Lorrene at 725-2131 or lmschreib@aol.com before the 20th.

Brotherhood News

We kick off the (secular) New Year at Primo's restaurant in Oshkosh at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 16th.

Our last few gatherings have been loaded with laughs, deep conversation (deep by "brotherhood" standards) and the kind of biting wit that makes our group unique in all of Northeast Wisconsin.

Join us.

What's Nu?

Mazel Tov to ...

Linda Kessel whose son, Ben Roovers, graduated with honors from UW-Madison in December. He is applying for admission to law school for next Fall. Meanwhile, he's working as a researcher at The School for Workers, UW-Madison Extension, and he is pursuing an internship opportunity with a labor organization in Washington, DC. Ben also became engaged to be married to Kathleen (Kat) Horton last May; they are planning a Fall 2009 wedding -- after they know more about Ben's future plans.

Welcome to...

New Members, Jeff Kent and Julie Sheehan-Kent with Maia & Jenna. We look forward to seeing you!!

The congregation gratefully acknowledges the following contributions...

In honor of **Steve Freschl's** birthday from Michele and Marshall Missner.

To the B'nai Israel Building Fund in memory of **Carol Tipler** (Carol Shapiro's sister) from Lorrene Schreiber and Steve Freschl.

For High Holy Day services from **Elaine Levy Stogsdill** with the following note:



"In all my travels I have never seen such a welcoming congregation. I have truly appreciated attending your services..."

Thank you to...

Lorrene Schreiber for chairing the wonderful Hanukkah party and to all the "latke ladies," especially Keith (notably not a "lady") & Debbie Spritz,

Next Newsletter

Liz and Avi Stern, Editors

Please submit your article(s) for the **March/April 2008** newsletter to us by **February 23rd**. Be sure to include information about events taking place during (or close to) March, April and even May.

Everyone is welcome to submit articles. Send yours via e-mail to lstern@new.rr.com or through the USPS to:

Avi and Liz Stern
764 Kensington Rd.
Neenah, WI, 54956.
(920) 727-9797 ★

January 2008

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6 Religious School 9:00 a.m. Board Mtg	7	8	9	10	11 Soup 6:30 pm Shabbat Service 7:30 p.m.	12
13 Religious School 9:00 a.m. Adult Ed. 10 a.m.	14	15	16 Brotherhood Mtg 6:30 p.m. Primo's in Oshkosh	17	18	19
20 Religious School 9:00 a.m.	21	22  Tu B'Shvat	23	24	25 Shabbat Service 7:30 p.m.	26
27	28	29	30	31		



February 2008

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3 Religious School 9:00 a.m. Board Mtg	4	5	6	7	8 Soup 6:30 pm Shabbat Service 7:30 p.m.	9
10 Religious School 9:00 a.m. Adult Ed. 10 a.m.	11	12	13	14	15	16
17 Religious School 9:00 a.m.	18	19	20	21	22 Shabbat Service 7:30 p.m.	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	



Y A H R Z E I T S

This Yahrzeit list is a work in progress. It currently reflects all the information I have received from members and some from the synagogue Yahrzeit plaques. Please forgive any errors or deletions – just let me know and it will be corrected. You can contact me (Liz Stern) at: 920-727-9797 or lstern@new.rr.com. I would be glad to hear from you!

January 2008

Date	Loved One	Member	Relationship
1/1	Alex Passen	Sidney Hirschberg	Father-in-law
1/1	Bertha Homsky	Member	Member
1/2	Goldie Levin	Member	Member
1/2	Max Zolkowitz	Member	Member
1/3	Manfred Friedman	Claire Round	Brother
1/5	Leonard Tegley	Paulette Glassheim	Grandfather
1/6	Mrs. Yocha Pump	Member	Member
1/7	Samuel Urdan	Member	Member
1/8	Morey P. Horwitz	Member	Member
1/8	Louis Wolf Liebenson	Member	Member
1/9	May Yablon	Stuart Yablon	Mother
1/10	Irving Keshner	Helene Yablon	Father
1/14	Sidney Dintenfass	Mark Dintenfass	Father
1/17	Ernest Gloyd	Sally Gloyd	Husband
1/22	Hilda Goldstein	Member	Member
1/23	Rebecca Rakita	Member	Member
1/24	Carrie Busch	Member	Member
1/24	Harry Horwitz	Member	Member
1/24	Lewis Fusfeld	Stephen Fusfield	Father
1/26	Esther Gorwitz Palmer	Member	Member
1/26	Elsie Fritz Schulman	Phyllis Dintenfass	Mother
1/28	Dorothy Freschl	Stephen Freschl	Wife
1/28	Aaron Shaffer	Julie Shaffer	Father

February 2008

Date	Loved One	Member	Relationship
2/1	Morris Segal	Member	Member
2/1	Joseph Jacob	Member	Member
2/1	Esther Deitch	Jeffrey Glassheim	Grandmother
2/2	Si Slafsky	Member	Member
2/2	Carl Blum	Dr. Marc Blum	Grandfather
2/3	Ida Berman Zuckerman	Member	Member
2/6	Ben I. Louis	Lowell Louis	Father
2/9	Lucille Lipschutz	Jeff Lipschutz	Mother
2/10	Dr. Harry Friedman	Ken Friedman	Father
2/10	Edith Feldstein	Brian Schreiber	Stepmother
2/15	Ralph Leslie Shapiro	Dr. Marc Blum	Uncle
2/15	Laurence Glassheim	Jeffrey Glassheim	Brother
2/16	Anna Kagan	Member	Member
2/17	David Balkansky	Member	Member
2/18	Samuel Balkansky	Member	Member
2/19	Max Cooper	Member	Member
2/20	David Leibenson	Member	Member
2/21	Sam Pachefsky	Sandy Anfield	Father
2/21	Gertrude Neuman Brown	Lisa Weiner	Mother
2/23	Robert Gordon	Baylee Gordon	Husband
2/26	Benjamin Kline	Member	Member
2/26	Bette Finkler	Marty Finkler	Mother
2/29	Jodi Lynn Sigman	Bob and Char Sigman	Daughter



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