

THE SHOFAR'S VOICE

B'nai Israel Receives a New Torah!

Maryland synagogue gifts a Torah scroll to our congregation



Rabbi Gerson travelled to Congregation Shaare Tikvah in Waldorf, Maryland to take receipt of one of their three surplus Torahs. He then travelled by plane, train, and automobile to bring the Torah back to its new home in Pensacola. Read more about the adventure in the Rabbi's Message on page 2.

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This newsletter and a complete archive of past issues are available on our website at:
www.bnaiisraelpensacola.org

The Worldwide Wrap is Coming in February

Once again, the Men's Club will be participating in the Worldwide Wrap on **Superbowl Sunday**, February 5th. We will be wrapping tefillin along with hundreds of congregations around the globe. Last year was our first year involved with the program and it was a huge success!

Men and women, young and old, are invited to join us Sunday morning at 10am in the Bearman building to wrap tefillin and daven Shacharit. The idea is to provide a fun and easy way to learn about this special mitzvah whether you wrap six times a week, or have never wrapped.

The service will be preceded by a short lesson on the mitzvah of tefillin and followed by bagels and coffee. So throw in an extra prayer for your NFL team and join us for a great event. RSVP to Alan Shemaria at mensclub@bnaiisraelpensacola.org by January 31st.

From the Rabbi: Chanukah

This secular New Year marks the start of an exciting time for B'nai Israel Synagogue. New opportunities for learning are beginning shortly and member participation in our services and programs is increasing! Additionally, there are two very outstanding happenings that seek to ensure our continuing success and congregational health.

The first event is the arrival of our new Torah scroll from Shaare Tikvah in Waldorf, Maryland. This generous congregation heard of our need

from our representative at the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism and offered up one of their three surplus Torah

scrolls. I made contact with a representative from their congregation and soon found myself on an airplane bound for Baltimore. After having inspected the scrolls available to us, I picked the one that appeared in the best condition and with the Sefer Torah in securely packed in Jason Rubin's Marine duffle bag, I hoped on a train headed for Atlanta where I then rented a car and drove the Torah to its new home, B'nai Israel Synagogue!

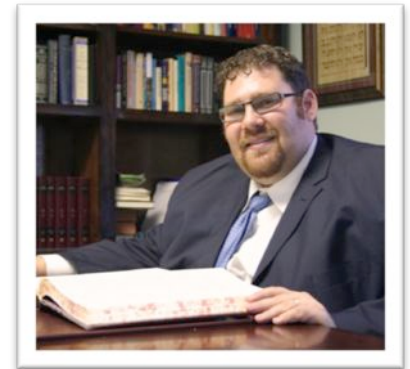


I would like to take the opportunity to personally thank Congregation Shaare Tikvah for their generosity. It is often said that Torah is the lifeblood of the Jewish people and so this gift, this transfusion, has done wonders in helping ensure our continued congregational health.

Another exciting happening here at B'nai Israel is the kick off of our New Membership Campaign. New membership is another key ingredient for the continued health of B'nai Israel Synagogue and it is up to you to reach out to those in the community and show them what they are missing by not being a part of all the B'nai Israel has to offer.

This is an opportunity for you, the members of B'nai Israel Synagogue to share what an amazing congregation we have. The only way the unaffiliated Jews of Pensacola will know of events at B'nai Israel is if they hear about it from a member. I urge you to call an unaffiliated friend or family member and invite them to one of our events, be it a Havdallah service at the synagogue or in someone's home; to hear our visiting scholar, Dr. Israeli, speak on January 5th; or to one of our Shabbat services. I hope you will all take advantage of the events January holds and call a friend to accompany you to one of our many offerings.

The 1st of January often brings with it numerous resolutions. We vow to be more attentive to our family, to be more generous to those in need and to take better care of our health. I ask that this January you make a pledge to help care for the health of your synagogue and take an active roll in our New Membership Campaign. I wish you and your families a very happy and healthy 2012 and look forward to seeing you in the new year!



From the President: On Tolerance

My message this month is in response to my observations over the past year. I think we should all resolve to become more tolerant as Jewish members of not only our synagogue, but our small Jewish community.

Unlike some religions, Judaism is not learned in one day. There is a story of a man who went to Hillel the elder (~100 B.C.E.) and asked to be taught all the Torah in the short time that he was able to stand on one leg. Hillel told him, "what you do not like, do not do to your friend. This is the whole Torah, and the rest is commentary, go and learn it." This can be interpreted in many ways.

The Talmud teaches that a person should always consider themselves at the center of a balanced scale. If you sin once, you could tip yourself and the entire world to side of negativity. If you perform one good deed, you could tip the scale in the world's favor. So, everything could very well depend on the action you do right now. Most likely you want the world to be in a positive state, and so you want people to do good deeds, to bring the world to a positive state. And, since that is what you want you should do the same for others.

Think about what you say, think about whom you're saying it to, and think about why you're saying it. We are a small community; we can't afford to throw stones, in our own house or anyone else's. Begin by talking, and don't make idle threats. These simple thoughts can go a long way towards a stronger congregation.



Men's Club: A Wonderful Year



As Chanukah approaches and 2011 comes to a close, I look back on the accomplishments of the Men's Club this past year.

Beginning with the first combined Shul/Temple, Men's Club, Brotherhood/Sisterhood event, the Chanukah celebration of 2010. This joint event was an overwhelming success. I was excited by the prospect of working hand in hand with our friends from the Temple on additional projects.

The Worldwide Wrap, special mitzvah, was another wonderful collaboration. Whether you wrap six times a week or had never wrapped at all. The turn out on Super Bowl Sunday was great. This leads us to PURIMPALOOZA. It took many hours and hard work to bring the event to fruition. Wonderful food, music, and costumes helped us mark the Feast of Lots.

Through Passover and Shavout, our congregations continued to help one another. Summer came and went. As summer came to an end, we said good-bye to some VERY special people. Shaked,

Continued on page 6

Religious School: Back in Action

After more than two weeks of winter break, Yachad is back in session. On January 8, Yachad meets to begin our second semester at B'nai Israel. Teachers have been busy getting their rooms ready and transferring their books and supplies to their new space. Spring semester is always completely packed with holidays and activities. Please watch your "inbox" for information regarding all events.



Our 9th grade teacher, Sarah Chen, had her baby on November 30. His name is Andrew. Mazel tov, Sarah! While Sarah is at home with her new responsibilities, her class will be taught by several individuals covering the cultural topics in the curriculum. Shai Yakobowich will begin the semester talking about Israeli current events. Our 8th grade class will also have a new teacher for the second semester. Chuck Listner will take over for Enid Sisskin. After wrapping up the unit on the Holocaust, Chuck will teach the Jewish studies piece of the curriculum. All other classrooms and teachers will remain the same.

This month we will also begin a fundraising program for the school. We will sell the "Promise Haggadah". It is a personalized family Hagaddah that will sell for \$11 each. More information will go home with your child in the next few weeks. Sample copies will be on display in the morning during breakfast. Several of our families ordered these Hagaddahs several years ago and have really enjoyed using them for their seders!

I am actively looking for 2 individuals who can cook breakfast for us starting in January. I have a few people who have volunteered to fill in when needed but cannot be there each week. Please call me if you can help or would like more details, your assistance would be greatly appreciated!!

Please note that our ISJL fellow, Erin, will be back in town February 3-5. Among other activities, she will plan a Tu B'Shevat program for the school. Watch for more information regarding the agenda for that weekend! Please see the calendar for school dates this month.

On a final note, the Chanukah play was a great success. The kids did great and fun was had by all!



Yahrzeits

Tevet	Jan	
6	1	Al Kahn
7	2	Rosalie Jaslow
8	3	Annie Sloan
9	4	Thomas H. Davis
11	6	Mima Benchetrit Mollie Klastorin
12	7	Issac Goodman Marvin Joseph Rifkin Anna Rosenbaum
13	8	Samuel Fuhr
16	11	Bella Asch Edward Bernstein
17	12	Ida Soclof
18	13	Rebecca Snyder Kurt Herman Fannie Wilenzik
19	14	Irvin Kramer Helen Wilenzik
21	16	Mollie Klastorin Alan Kroll Annie Lefkowitz Bennie Rosenbaum
22	17	Allen Levin
23	18	David Levin Molly Kahn
24	19	Dov Eliezer Ben Tzvi (Dr. Leonard Pock)
25	20	Isabel P. Pearlman
26	21	Frances Finkle Bear Max Chassin Lena Saffer
27	22	William Wilenzik
28	23	Mollie Rifkin
29	24	Gertrude Tucker
Shevat	Jan	
1	25	Jerome Edward Beck
2	26	Molly Kahn Jerome Himan Kiva Oberstein
4	28	Ida Rosenbaum
5	29	Louis Goldstein Dorothy B. Bubis
7	31	Michael Bear Lefkowitz

Birthdays

01 Elaine Wilson
03 Betty Sue
06 Faye Rickoff
08 Elizabeth Anne Davies
09 Sharon (Rosenbaum) Seabrook
11 Alan Shemaria
12 Elizabeth Hermel
13 Joshua Goldstein
16 David Allen
Carla Wilenzik
19 Adam Efland
Jeanette Cooper
Carole Masters
22 Nicko Robinette
25 Benjamin Nettles
25 Herman Lefkowitz
Marty Lebowsky
Stephanie Gaffney
29 Jane Kates
30 Adam Wenc

Anniversaries

20 Mark & Joan Robinson

Men's Club (continued from page 3)

was one of a kind and truly became a part of our family. We will miss her. Rabbi Vana touched each of us in his special way. He was an amazing educator and guide to all. He was there when you needed him. Rabbi Vana holds a special place in my family as he bar mitzvah-ed my son Philip, and was with Marci and I in Israel to bat mitzvah our daughter, Cara.

We have had a lot of wonderful and exciting things happen this year. The welcoming of Rabbi Gerson and his lovely family is just the beginning. The LAG-BA'OMER/YOM HAAZMAUT PICNIC CELEBRATION was a great success. As was the Veteran's day ceremony and dinner honoring all those who served in the United States Armed Forces where our guest speaker, Major David Allen (US Army), gave an inspiring message.

In closing I would like to thank a few people for their hard work and for making my job as president easier. Bill Allen, Al Shemaria, Jason Rubin, Arny Pock and Lou and Gerry Goldstein.

PJ Library



Deborah Buchalter, Chair of the Pensacola Jewish Federation's PJ Library Program, hosts a Chanukah Party at Barnes & Noble bookstore. For more information on the PJ Library Program, contact Deborah at derbuch@aol.com.

Notes & Messages

Special Thanks

To Lou & Vikkie Goldstein for the generous Oneg they sponsored.

To Sue and Ed Feigenbaum for donating supplies for our Hanukkah party.

To Alan Shemaria and the Men's Club, for sponsoring our Hanukkah.

To Mr. Bill Allen for the gold coins of chocolate.

Donations

Religious School Fund

We would like to thank Mrs. Elaine Wilson for her donation in honor of Michelle & Michael Bearman's B'nai Mitzvah.

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

Delores Livingston

Sherri Tebo

L'Dor V'Dor Fund

In Memory of Jan Lefkowitz by Earl Rickof

Baby Changing Station

A baby changing station has been installed in the Women's restroom in the Bearman building. Please return it to the folded position when not in use. Adults, please advise children that this is not to be played with.

Appointments With Rabbi Gerson

Please be considerate of the rabbi's time and make an appointment if you would like to speak with him during the week.

Torah Readers Wanted!

Torah reading classes will begin shortly after the New Year and will be held on Thursday evenings with Rabbi Gerson. Please check the website and calendar for more information.

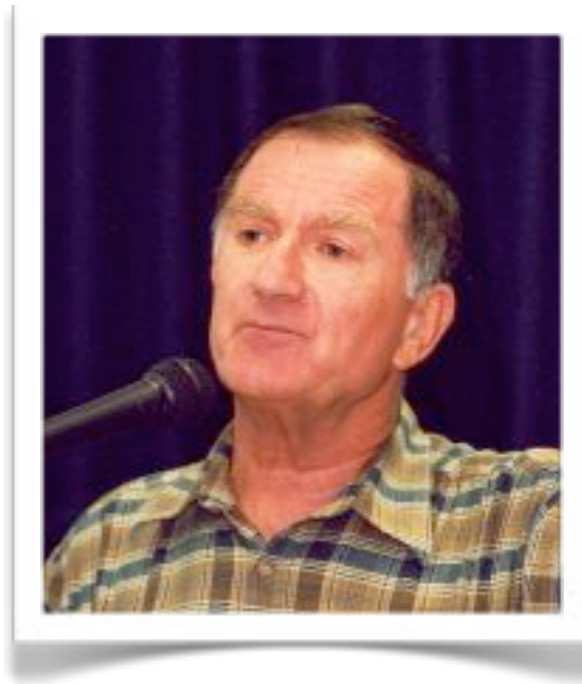
Babysitters Wanted!

We will be implementing a children's service and babysitting program for most Friday night and Saturday morning services in the near future. If you or someone you know, would be interested in babysitting, please contact the secretary at help@bnaiisraelpensacola.org or at (850) 433-7311

B'nai Israel Synagogue Presents

Jews and Christians in Muslim Lands

A talk by Raphael Israeli, Professor of Islamic and Chinese History at Hebrew University



January 5, 2012 at 7:00PM

B'nai Israel Synagogue 1829 North Ninth Avenue in Pensacola

For directions and **RSVP** call 850-433-7311 or email help@bnaiisraelpensacola.org

About Professor Israeli

A native of Fes, Morocco who emigrated to Israel in his teens, Professor Israeli is a graduate of Hebrew University in History and Arabic Literature and earned a PhD in Chinese and Islamic studies from the University of California at Berkeley. Author of 30 books and some 100 scholarly articles on the Modern Middle East, Islamic terrorism, Islam in Asia, and the Opening of China by the French.

He is fluent in several languages including English, French, Arabic, Hebrew, and Chinese. He has also held several visiting professorships in Australia, Belgium, Canada, Japan and the United States.

Special Thanks to the Bearman family for sponsoring this event.

B'Nai Israel Sisterhood Program

The theme for Sisterhood this year is Hiddur Mitzvah – beautifying or embellishing a mitzvah, and in that vein we have a program planned to create Challah platters for the use at the upcoming Sisterhood Shabbat Luncheon on January 21, 2012 and for future functions.

Please join

B'Nai Israel Sisterhood

at



Kil'n Time Studio

6103 Tippin Avenue, Pensacola, FL 32504

On

January 8, 2012

From 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

***Cost \$34 Per Person**

Platters are to be donated to B'Nai Israel Synagogue

RSVP: rosemary@micrcflc.com – 973-515-2260

*B'Nai Israel Sisterhood is asking participants to defray the per person cost; but member participation is more important! Whatever is due after donations are collected will be paid by Sisterhood. To participate if you are not a member or prospective member or you would like to keep an item (cannot be one of the platters); you may choose from available stock and pay the \$4 participation cost to Kil'n time. Objects at Kil'n time start around \$10.

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January 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4 4pm Hebrew School	5 Fast of 10th of Tevet 7pm Prof. Israeli Talk	6 6pm Family Dinner 7pm Shabbat Services	7 9:30am Services
8 9am Religious School 2pm Sisterhood Event at Kil'n Time	9	10	11 4pm Hebrew School	12	13 7pm Shabbat Services	14 9:30am Services
15 9am Religious School	16 M.L.K Holiday	17	18 4pm Hebrew School	19	20 7pm Shabbat Services	21 9:30am Services 12pm Sisterhood Luncheon Birchat Hahodesh
22 9am Religious School	23	24	25 4pm Hebrew School Rosh Hodesh Shevat	26 7pm Yachad Board Meeting	27 7pm Shabbat Services	28 Shabbat Services 9:30am
29 9am Religious School 1pm Federation Mtg	30	31				

NOTES

Religious School

Remembers that religious school will be held at B'nai Israel Synagogue starting in January.

Family Shabbat

This month's family Shabbat dinner will be sponsored by the B'nai Israel Men's Club.

Guest Speaker

January 5th, B'nai Israel will be hosting a talk on Jews & Christians in Muslim Lands by Raphael Israeli, Professor of Islamic and Chinese History at Hebrew University.

B'nai Israel Synagogue

- **Rabbi:** Jordan Gerson
- **President:** Brian Sontag
- **Vice President:** Sam Bearman
- **Secretary:** Vikki Goldstein
- **Treasurer:** Jerry Gordon
- **Sisterhood:** Marci Shemaria & Rosemary Lieberman
- **Men's Club:** Alan Shemaria

Have a story for the newsletter? Email submissions to Dr. Arny Pock at newsletter@bnaiisraelpensacola.org by the 20th of the month.

B'nai Israel Synagogue

P.O. Box 9002
Pensacola, FL 32513-9002