

*Special program
6:30 p.m. Saturday
(See Page 2)*

SIM SHALOM

OUR NEWSLETTER

Tamuz-Av 5770

June-July 2010

TEMPLE BETH ISRAEL

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BACK FROM ISRAEL



Dyan Banks at the Western Wall.

By Janet Wilder

Israel was fabulous! Visiting there was the fulfilment of a life-time dream. The minute the wheels of the airplane hit the tarmac, I said the *shehechianu* blessing, thanking G-d for keeping me and bringing me to this auspicious time. I also made Dyan and Gail say it with me in the terminal.

I felt that I was home. Even though my Hebrew is rather rudimentary and incorrectly accented, I never felt as though I was in a foreign country. I always felt completely

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Join Janet and Dyan at services Friday, when they will talk about their trip.

From the President

First things first:

Congregants, let's get our dues paid up AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. We only have funds to last through mid-July — so pay up!

The treasury will have a shortfall of \$6,000 to \$9,000 in July and August. We still hope for over \$7,000 in dues — great! — but when will

this come? No more time for dallying — we don't want to, but soon we will need to send the dreaded E-letter (EMERGENCY!). There are 18 member households (that's *chai* = life) that still owe some or all dues: you know who you are!!!

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CALENDAR

FRI., JUNE 25

Shabbat Service, 7:30 PM

SAT., JUNE 26Shabbat Service, 9 AM
Program, 6:30 PM: Poet
Eugene Novogrodsky**FRI., JULY 2**

Shabbat Service, 7:30 PM

TUES., JULY 20

Tisha B' Av

FRI., JULY 23

Shabbat Service, 7:30 PM

SAT., JULY 24Shabbat Service, 9 AM
Havdallah/Basic
Judaism Class, 6:30 PM**FRI., AUG. 6**

Shabbat Service, 7:30 PM

FRI., AUG. 27

Shabbat Service, 7:30 PM

SAT., AUG. 28Shabbat Service, 9 AM
Havdallah/Basic
Judaism Class, 6:30 PM**SUN., AUG. 29**Religion School registra-
tion/program, 10 AM**FRI., SEPT. 3**

Shabbat Service, 7:30 PM

WED., SEPT. 8

Rosh Hashanah 7:30 PM

THURS., SEPT. 9

Rosh Hashanah 10 AM

FRI., SEPT. 10

Rosh Hashanah 10 AM

SAT., SEPT. 11

Shabbat Shuvah 10 AM

FRI., SEPT. 17

Kol Nidre 7:30 PM

SAT., SEPT. 18

Yom Kippur 10 AM

NEWS AND NOTES

Spend a night in the Catskills

Saturday, June 26, 6:30 p.m.

"A Night in the Catskills," poetry by Eugene Novogrodsky and reminiscences of life in the yiddish speaking Catskills of the 1950's. Eugene is a teacher, writer, and poet from Brownsville. He grew up on a chicken farm in the Catskill Mountains in New York. Program to be followed by Havdalah services.

Help the temple raise funds to offset our shortfall.

Honor a loved one! Memorialize a family member! Donate a pew just to help out the temple!

Pews
\$1,250 each with plaque

Memorial Plaques
\$250 each

Donate a pew or memorial plaque this summer and see a permanent tribute when you come to the temple this fall for the High Holidays.

■ Hadassah will be gearing up over the summer for Check It Out in October. This is our breast cancer awareness program that is presented to juniors and seniors in local area high schools. We are hoping to include the two Harlingen high schools, but we need volunteers to help. If you are interested in working on this project, please send an email to emilyalpert@aol.com.

ONEGS

Checklist:

- ☐ Decaf coffee
- ☐ Cream & sugar
- ☐ Decaf cold drinks or juice and ice
- ☐ Cups for coffee and drinks
- ☐ Plastic ware, napkins, plates
- ☐ Kosher wine
- ☐ Small wine cups
- ☐ Unsliced challah
- ☐ Table cloth (if one is used from the Temple, please launder it and return it to the Temple as soon as possible)
- ☐ Table decoration
- ☐ Desserts for about 40-50 people (choices of cookies, cakes, nuts, fruit, coffee cakes, or flan)

SPONSORS**JUNE**

Dyan Banks*
Shirley and Jerry
Sondock
Lillian Cohen

JULY

Jan Cassidy and Joel
Smith*
Sofia Shirazi
Dena and Lewis
Levine

**Oneg coordinator is responsible for organizing the group and its duties (who brings and does what, when and where).*

BACK FROM ISRAEL

Continued from Page 1

and utterly safe even when Dyan, Lois, Gail and I got lost in the streets of Tel Aviv and Jerusalem (we got lost alot, but always managed to find our way with the help of very kind people).

We began our stay with an invitation to the congregation of Myriam Caro, who some of you remember as Letty. She had a nice gentleman come and pick us up at the hotel and take us to Rishon L'Tzion where they had a small Conservative congregation. All the women lit the candles together. They gave us a transliteration of the Friday night *Kabbalat Shabbat* service, but my Hebrew was good enough to follow without it. After a beautiful service (I am still amazed that no matter where I go, the *Aleinu* is always the same tune), they moved the chairs, brought in the tables and put out a feast with chicken soup and matzo balls, salads, turkey and all kinds of other goodies. It was delicious and we much enjoyed the company of the congregants. Myriam sends her love to all. She is doing well. We chipped in and gave them a nice donation. They gave us those ubiquitous Hamsa bracelets and tiny little copies of something Myriam called "psalms" but I think is something Cabalistic and superstitious. Israelis seem to have many superstitions.

Our tour took us to some wonderful places. We climbed about the ruins of ancient civilizations. Treading upon stones that ancient people walked upon mind-boggling centuries ago was just plain incredible.

We got to see many aspects of modern Israel, too, including the museum of the "Af Al Pi Chen," one of the "Exodus" boats. The museum is in the hull of the actual boat. We were inspired by the courage and tenacity of the people who had suffered so greatly during the Holocaust only to find more tribulation on their journey "home" to Eretz Yisrael.

We visited the Golan Heights; saw the Jordan River, which is quite small as most of the water is diverted for drinking and agriculture; spent two nights in a lovely hotel run by a Kibbutz in the Galeel; and then we went to Jerusalem.

What can I say about Jerusalem? In all of us there is a tiny piece of our hearts that, once we enter the plaza of the Western Wall, grows larger, swells our hearts and whispers to us to remember where we are and why we have come.



Lois Day, Gail Green. Myriam Caro (Letty Elizondo), Janet and Dyan in Israel.

We visited the Kotel several times, with the tour guide and on our own on Shabbat. We even got to go through the tunnel that takes you to the closest spot to the former Holy of Holies. It was during one of those visits that I had a transforming experience. I guess you could call it an epiphany.

I was standing in the plaza on a Thursday, when the Torah is read (the Torah is read Shabbat, holidays, and every Monday and Thursday). A man with a tallit took a Torah from the ark and was walking with it to a bimah somewhere in the men's section. Out of habit, I began to quietly chant: "*ki mi'tzion tay tsai Torah*" ("from out of Zion shall come the Torah") "*u' devar Ha'shem mi yerushalayim*" (and the word of G-d from Jerusalem). All of a sudden I gasped. I was standing right there in Zion and the word of G-d was in the arms of that man right there in Jerusalem. I felt as though someone had punched me in the chest. I could not breathe. The experience was overpowering. I am filled with emotion as I type this, and I can't relate the story without crying. It was among the most powerful and meaningful moments of my life. The entire trip was wonderful, but that moment was the reason I came to Israel.

We also went to Haifa, Safed, the Dead Sea, Massada and other interesting places, so come to services on Friday night, and Dyan Banks and I will share more about our trip to Israel.

L'hit'ra'ot, (see y'all soon),
Janet Wilder

From the Gabbai

I would like to take this opportunity to thank and congratulate Laurel Steinberg for stepping up to be the president of Temple Beth Israel. I think she is doing a great job.

I also would like to thank everybody who supported me in all of the undertakings, projects and goals during the years I led the Temple as president. I will continue working to support the Temple and Laurel.

To all of you, Thank You, Thank You, Thank You.

— Fernando A. Russek

DONATIONS TO THE TEMPLE

TO THE GENERAL FUND

- From Leah Gensberg
- From Susan Ander
- From Geoffrey & Rossan Bogorad, in honor of Eryn Jones's Confirmation
- From Bill Berg & Laurel Steinberg, in honor of Eryn Jones's Confirmation
- From Geoffrey & Rossan Bogorad, in honor of Laurel Steinberg being named Temple President
- From Bill Berg & Laurel Steinberg, with thanks for being elected Temple President
- From Geoffrey & Rossan Bogorad, in appreciation of Charlene Moskal, for taking Joseph to Temple and home every Sunday
- Thank you to Joel Smith and Jan Cassidy for your generous donation.

TO THE RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

- From Rollie and Amie Koppel

TO THE EMERGENCY FUND

- From Abby Warshowsky

From the President

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Meanwhile it's summer "vacation" and everything is slower and hotter. But let's remember that our temple is still running with services as usual, two weekends a month. On Saturday, June 26, at 6:30 please attend a special poetry evening — it may even inspire the poet in you. Eugene Novogrodsky of Brownsville will read from his original poems on Jewish themes and

introduce us to the Yiddish-speaking world of the Catskill mountains in the 1950's. Havdalah services will follow the program.

Look for next year's calendar, holiday schedule, and school schedule in early August, and have a great summer.

B'Shalom,
Laurel Steinberg