

**BETH
ABRAHAM
SYNAGOGUE**

Bulletin

Dayton's Voice of Conservative Judaism

Upcoming Events

June 12: Social Action & Men's Club Brunch
June 17: Shabbat in the Park
June 24: Shabbat Under the Stars
June 26: Sisterhood Book Club

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“CHAI” TZEDAKAH!

By: Todd Shear

The Hebrew word *tzedakah* is often translated as “charity,” meaning that your heart motivates you to go beyond the call of duty. *Tzedakah*, however, literally means “righteousness” – doing the right thing and fulfilling all of your obligations, whether in the mood or not.

In the past few weeks, Beth Abraham has experienced tremendous *tzedakah* through one of our newest initiatives, the Chai Society. The Chai Society was created by the Financial Resource Development Committee, chaired by past president Susie Katz, to help Beth Abraham sustain our goals of continued expansion and to support our programs. Since the creation of this society, nine families have committed to the two year requirement of \$18,000 each year. As a result of this, Beth Abraham will begin each of the next two budget years with a generous start in

meeting the financial challenges that we know await us. Call it what you want, in my generation’s lingo this is definitely *righteous!*

In addition, the Chai Society has allowed us to finally make the transition from relying on Bingo to relying on our own *tzedakah*. We are very fortunate to have the leadership in our synagogue to accomplish this transition. For too long we have bemoaned the loss of Bingo income without taking serious action to find alternative resources – our leadership isn’t willing to wait any longer. It was said by Rabbi Bradley Shavit Artson that “It is our sacred privilege to provide sufficient food, shelter, education and care so that children grow up to be productive and healthy adults, so that healthy and productive adults are able to keep the community and their families together, and so that seniors are able to reap a rich harvest from all the years that they have already striven to make our world a

possibility.”

And the Chai Society is just the beginning. The plan to roll out additional giving societies is discussed on page seven. Please take a moment to review and commit to becoming a member of one of these three societies.

It will come as no surprise to you that the charter members of the Chai Society continue to give their time, energy and support to every aspect of our beloved Beth Abraham. Because of them and others, we are able to continue to thrive and continue to provide incredible professionals, amazing programs, inspiring services and quite simply, a synagogue that we can all be proud of even in these difficult financial times. I would encourage everyone to make a phone call or write a nice letter to these extraordinary givers to express appreciation for their leadership and commitment. Please see the listing in this bulletin.

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Standing Room Only On Mt. Sinai

By: Rabbi Barsky



The Jewish tradition for Erev Shavuot is to prepare for receiving the Torah on Mt. Sinai – which is what the festival of Shavuot commemorates – by pulling an all-nighter of Torah and other Jewish study, then davening at sunrise. Well, Conservative Judaism is about “tradition and change”. So in keeping with Beth Abraham’s unwritten rule that our congregants have to be tucked into bed by 9:30, we’ve changed tradition by coming together for dinner and learning *before* the festival begins, then light our candles at sunset (this year at 8:44pm), daven the evening festival service, and trundle home to bed for a good night’s sleep. The morning service is sensibly at 9:00am, not sunrise.

Everybody had to stand on Mt. Sinai, but there was room on that little mountain for every soul of *Am Yisrael*, including even the souls of those not yet born. The entire Jewish people, of every generation, assented to the covenant of Torah.

But who does “the entire people” include? The Book of Ruth, which is read on Shavuot, raises the

question of what makes a “Jew by choice”. Ruth never went before a Bet Din, never immersed herself in a mikveh, never got a certificate from a rabbi. This Moabite woman made herself part of Israel simply by saying to her mother-in-law Naomi, “Your people shall be my people, your God shall be my God. Where you go, I will go and where you dwell I will dwell.” And that seemed to be good enough for God, because her great grandson David became King of Israel and ancestor of the Messiah.

On the other hand, we all know other Jews, Jews by birth, but with no affiliation to the Jewish community, very little knowledge of Jewish holidays and observance, and perhaps even atheist, who yet proudly affirm their Jewishness. Will that do it? Who gets a place on Sinai?

For our Erev Shavuot discussion, we’ll study some rabbinic texts on Ruth’s conversion, then screen and discuss a portion of the documentary film *Matzo and Mistletoe* (shown here a few years ago at the Jewish Film Festival) which the filmmaker Kate Feiffer made in order to explore her own confusing identity as a secular,

unaffiliated, completely non-observant intermarried but proudly Jewish Jew.

The responses from Beth Abraham congregants who saw the film here in 2007 were heated and perplexed. But Feiffer spoke about her visit to Dayton in an interview a few months later, and said that “people at the screening in Dayton were definitely saying that this was their story, that when they first came to Ohio they identified as secular Jews, but slowly started attending synagogue because of being such a minority.” So maybe her story is more ours than we let on. I confess, in my earliest childhood my family exchanged gifts on December 25, had a big turkey dinner that day, and never celebrated Chanukah until my sisters and I discovered it at Hebrew School. And look how I turned out!

Who merits a place on Mt. Sinai? Let’s learn together and share our own stories.

Join us on June 7th: Mincha at 6:00pm. Dairy Dinner at 6:15pm (\$7.00 adults, under 13 free). Discussion and Study, 6:45-8:45pm. Candle lighting and festival service 8:45pm. (Home and in bed by 9:30pm, as promised.)

The Cantor's Corner

Cantor Andrea Raizen

Although it can probably be said of any given year, the weather we have experienced recently hardly makes one feel that summer is arriving. Several people shared with me how they switched from heat to air conditioning and back again, in attempts to keep up with the changing weather patterns. But, despite it all the calendar indicates that summer is indeed upon us.

For most of us involved in synagogue life, summer usually implies a slowing down of the busy programming schedule. Families and individuals take time off for vacations or just time off to kick back and relax. As those of us who envision much of Beth Abraham's programming looked towards the summer months, we decided this year to offer some new options for our members during these months, in addition to other tried and true programs from the past.


We will continue our successful monthly "Shabbat Under the Stars" services beginning on Friday, June 24 at 7:30 p.m. at the home of Diane and Ralph Williams. What better way to usher in the Shabbat than to gather outdoors with friends and raise our voices in song as we greet the Shabbat bride, reminiscent of the *kabbalists* in Sefad so many years ago. Following the service, enjoy a refreshing *Oneg Shabbat* of sweets, fruits and a cool drink. We will meet again on Friday, July 22 at the home of David Rothschild and once again on August 19 at the home of Bernie and Brian O'Koon. All services begin at 7:30 p.m. Bring a friend and, if you're like me, bring some bug spray.

We have also decided to try a new type of service this summer, primarily aimed at families with children, but certainly open to anyone young at heart. We have scheduled

our first "Shabbat in the Park" for Friday, June 17 at 5:30 p.m. at Hills & Dales Metropark. That evening will begin with a family-friendly, fun and casual Shabbat service. The service will be filled with music and movement to engage even the youngest of participants. Families are asked to pack a dairy or pareve picnic dinner and bring a blanket and/or camp chairs. We'll supply the challah and grape juice for the blessings. Some picnic ideas might include cheese or veggie pizza, salads, mac & cheese, tuna or veggie sandwiches. We will meet at White Oak Camp that has nearby play equipment and restrooms. Call me for more details or directions.

I know how much our congregants appreciate culture and the arts as is evidenced by the numbers of you I see when attending a philharmonic concert, theatrical performance, the film festival or the opera. With that in mind, we are presenting screenings of two filmed performances from the Metropolitan Opera this summer. We have chosen two operas that have a Jewish connection. The first will be Verdi's *Nabucco*, and the second Saint-Saens' *Samson and Delilah*. These programs are scheduled on Sunday afternoons at 2:00 p.m. for July 17 and August 21. In case you are unfamiliar with these operas, we have engaged two of Beth Abraham's pre-eminent opera aficionados to introduce and discuss them prior to the screenings. Dr. Mike Jaffe will join us in July for *Nabucco*, the story that follows the plight of the Jews as they are assaulted, conquered, and subsequently exiled from their homeland by the Babylonian King Nabucco (Nebuchadnezzar). And in August, Cantor Jerome Kopmar will enlighten us

BETH ABRAHAM GIVING SOCIETIES



JOEL AND ANGELA FRYDMAN
STEVEN AND LINDA HORENSTEIN
DAVID AND SUSAN JOFFE
EDDIE AND SUSIE KATZ
TERRY AND MARLENE PINSKY
BERNIE AND CAROLE RABINOWITZ
EUGENE AND DORIS SCHEAR
LEE AND PATTI SCHEAR
MARTIN AND SUSAN SCHEAR

regarding *Samson and Delilah*, based on the Biblical tale recounted in chapter 16 of the Book of Judges.

I hope to see many of you at these events and wish you all a relaxing and refreshing summer.



The 2011 Women of Valor and the two co-chairs.
From left to right: Susan Katz (co-chair), Renee Rubin Handel, Marilyn Klaben, Marsha Froelich, Carole Rabinowitz, Bonnie Rice, Darlene Gutmann, and Melinda Doner (co-chair)



Checking in



Sold out luncheon

Becoming Visionary

3

Rabbi Bernard Barsky

A few weeks ago Mary Rita Weisman mentioned in passing a book she presumed I



would know about, *Sacred Strategies: Transforming Synagogues from Functional to Visionary*. A week later I read the column Lee Schear submitted for this bulletin,

whose final words are “We are struggling to make the change from a ‘functional’ congregation to a ‘visionary’ congregation, concepts wonderfully explained in a book called *Sacred Strategies*.” So I figured I better read this book.

The book examines the experiences of eight synagogues across the country which have gone through transformations from ordinary, successful, efficient, cash-for-service, but oh-so-boring congregations into vibrant, spiritually rich, engaging communities

with a sense of sacred purpose that speaks to both heart and mind. Although I didn’t know the book was out yet, I had been aware of the study and the synagogue renewal initiatives it refers to. My previous congregation participated in the three-year “Synagogue 2000” project, and I am acquainted with several of the rabbis whose communities are discussed. One of those congregations happens to be my home town synagogue, Beth Shalom in Kansas City.

Lee surely noticed what I also noted, that the book gives scant attention to the finances of a visionary synagogue. I was struck by this because I know that one of the congregations described in the book has been badly hurt recently by poor financial planning and is going through a crisis of confidence which certainly threatens the viability of its vision.

Our own Beth Abraham would well qualify to be included in such a book about transformational synagogues, and if we had been, it surely would have included that missing chapter about visionary financial planning. One of the things about transformation that we can learn from the book or just from examining our own experience is that it must be continuous, ongoing, constantly renewing itself. Beth Abraham’s financial planners didn’t stop after our miraculous \$7,000,000 building campaign was completed. The years since then have seen ongoing and innovative financial vision that is now beginning to bear excellent fruit in the work of our new Financial Resources Development (FRD)

committee and the successful launch of our Chai Society. Crudely but accurately put, money is the rock on which we either build or founder. What hopefully makes a difference for a visionary synagogue is that it becomes so wrapped into the hearts of its members that they will ensure it has whatever it needs to succeed.

Two things seem apparent to me from our own recent history. First of all, transformation is a *rolling* experience for the community. It may start in one area of synagogue life but it soon infiltrates every other. I love recounting the stages of Beth Abraham’s transformation over the past eight years, most of which happened not with a “vision committee” or a grand strategy, but at the instigation of individual congregants who thought we could do this or that a little differently, a little better, and were willing to help guide an innovation.

“A visionary congregation is one to which we come with our whole hearts, because our hearts need to be there, because the strength of soul and community and of covenant with God which nourishes us can be found no place else.”

Before the huge events of moving and building, which engaged and inspired so much energy and so many of our people, we began to transform ourselves subtly, first through changes in our Shabbat services, with more singing, more lay participation, more intellectual stimulation. Shabbat at Beth Abraham became a new-found pleasure. That led to the innovation of our Saturday lunches which did so much to intensify our sense of community and family. We came to know each other better and build friendships. Synagogue programs became more innovative and engaging. When the idea of relocating arose, the Beth Abraham community had already begun to feel a new strength and pride in itself, and you were ready to be encouraged to move.

Then we felt bold enough to break with the past and create our own religious school and hire an outstanding educator-cantor. Congregants interested in social action work saw that our community was receptive and generous, and gradually introduced the principle that every holiday celebration should include a social action component aligned with the spirit of the festival and season. A nearly defunct Sisterhood rose to new life almost out of its own ashes. And I think a subtle transformation of our Men’s Club is underway now, too, as it allies itself more and more with the work of social action, continually experiments to improve the quality of its Sunday brunch programs, and partners to support our scholar-in-residence and film series programs. Change is contagious.

The second thing that our experiences in self-transformation should teach us is that once touched by the spirit of innovation, there is no such thing as *stasis*, or status quo. No matter how good something is today, it may be stale and complacent by tomorrow. We have to keep growing from our strengths. Vision is not something fixed in committee; it is always a process of becoming.

Our social action committee began by expanding food and clothing collections, then prom dresses, used eyeglasses, books and toiletries and everything you can think of. Then through our contact with the DECA school we began to actually move into personal community service so that now many congregants are leading book groups at the school, editing student papers and mentoring. Some congregants are active in the new community action organization known as Lift Greater Dayton and others are interested in mentoring in the ex-offender re-entry movement gaining ground in Montgomery County. Engagement in the social justice issues of the broad

community is one of the pillars of a visionary community, and I think we are just beginning to dip our toe in that water.

Our Shabbat religious services are widely admired by congregants and visitors for being participatory, informal, full of song, and stimulating for mind and spirit. For a congregation of our size, attendance is fairly strong and consistent. But how quickly what is new can become stale. And why do most congregants skip the first hour and the most important prayers of our three hour service? How much change will habit and tradition allow us?

Some say our programming is the best in the Jewish community, but what about our adult learning? How many of our congregants are engaged in regular Jewish learning or even reading. Almost every time a congregant mentions a “Jewish” book to me that he or she is reading, it’s about Israel or the Holocaust. What about the previous three thousand years of our rich civilization, its wide-ranging history, vast literature, profound spirituality and wisdom? Beth Abraham has barely begun to open that treasure. If not now, when?

A functional congregation is one to which its members come for the sake of some limited purpose – to drop off the kids at Hebrew School, have a Bar Mitzvah, own a burial plot. A visionary congregation is one to which we come with our whole hearts, because our hearts need to be there, because the strength of soul and community and of covenant with God which nourishes us can be found no place else.

That’s my vision, and we’re always just getting started.

Lee Shear



Treasurer

Accounting for our past operating year

The historical tradition around here is that as soon as we are in the final throes of counting the omer, we start our a-counting of the last fiscal year for BAU. The numbers are always the easy part. The explanations are where we have to get particularly creative!



Fiscal year 2010-2011 might have been the *least*

creative year in my tenure as your Treasurer. Despite attempting to hold the line on merger-related expenditures, we still had either special expenses or we postponed changes that would have enhanced our P&L. A much more specific and disappointing impact on the bottom line occurred as the result of a precipitous drop in bingo revenues. That accounted for nearly \$150,000 lost in revenues (we have two games associated with the synagogue...). That's tough on an organization that only has \$750,000 or so in total revenues to begin with.

While we made up some of the difference with our NOW Campaign final collections, we even had a shortfall there; with individual issues that prevented us from collecting the full anticipated amounts. Finally, we had no bequests again this year, which is certainly a

"plus" on the mortality side of the ledger but unfortunately meaningful in its impact to our deficit. As a small digression here: If you haven't signed on to participate in our estate planning "Assuring Our Future" campaign, quit reading this column and give us a call already!

Back to the counting. We spent most of the past year strategizing as to how we would overcome an anticipated deficit of as much as \$200,000. Fortunately, the Now Campaign made up for our run of two shortfall years back-to-back. But we needed a better plan than that for the *next* two years and, thus, we sanctioned the kickoff of the Financial Resource Development committee. Beth Abraham now has a better-than-breakeven budget with just one caveat: we will need you to "step up to the plate" when your number is called.

All this talking about money every month often seems so prosaic and antithetical to the spiritual basis of a synagogue, right? In fact, Abraham Maslow put at the top of his discussion of the hierarchy of human needs that "man cannot live by bread alone." But it is important to note that he later amended that sweeping generalization – in order for theory to match reality – by stating that "Man lives by bread alone when there is no bread." To translate that into Yiddishkeit, we say: "Where there is no bread, there is no Torah. And if there's no Torah, there will be no bread." (Ethics of Our Fathers)

We are planning for both bread and Torah. In our new financial "master plan," we expect to balance the synagogue budget and sock away more money into our foundation; with as few as sixty participating congregants. Obviously, if you are one of those sixty, we will be calling upon you to be part of the funding support going forward, while we wait for yet more new programs to take root and to flourish. We are fighting both the good fight and against the not-so-good trend amongst Conservative Jewry, as we find ourselves suddenly on the wrong side of denominational "fashion." But it is a fight worth fighting as Beth Abraham remains the staunchest ally of traditional Jewish values and worship in the Dayton community. Better to struggle forever than to die once...

We are focused. We know what needs to be done and the urgency with which we need to *get* it done. As Samuel Johnson observed more than 200 years ago, "Nothing focuses one's attention quite so much as knowing he is to be hanged in the morning." We are still hanging in here at Beth Abraham, though. And as you can read elsewhere in this bulletin, the FRD committee is off and running and is in the midst of one of the most important ventures we have undertaken since the building campaign.

Finally, we have to recognize we are doing things right, here at Beth Abraham. We are struggling to make the change from a "functional" congregation to a "visionary congregation", concepts wonderfully explained in a book called *Sacred Strategies*. Survival, by the way, is certainly a sacred strategy!

So I say: hey - we had a tough year. Here's to many more tough years to come!

Lift Greater Dayton News

By: Helen Abramovitz

Lift Greater Dayton, the national community development organization with a growing branch in Dayton, is currently focusing on several different issues. With that in mind, Beth Abraham is sponsoring and participating in two June events.

On Sunday, June 12, the Social Action Committee and the Men's Club are hosting a brunch at 10:00 a.m. to conduct a listening campaign to encourage our membership to express feelings related to Senate Bill 5. The bill includes the elimination of collective bargaining. Lift's goal is to encourage congregations to engage its members in a frank and respectful discussion regarding this complicated topic. We want to hear both sides as expressed by our congregants. Please RSVP by calling the office. Cost for the brunch is \$5.00.

On Thursday, June 16, at 7:00 p.m. (location to be announced), Lift will sponsor a panel discussion by experts in the field of dealing with children ages 0-3 born with special needs. The panel will address problems in the community related to the extreme budget cuts and consequential drastic reductions in staff experienced by multiple organizations.

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"So, I was thinking..."

David Fuchsman, Beth Abraham President

I was watching one of the Sunday morning news shows a few weeks ago, shortly after the killing of Osama Bin Laden. The military expert was asked whether the killing of Bin Laden would result in an immediate end of our involvement in Afghanistan. In response, the expert remarked that there is a theory referred to as "Reinforcing Success." The expert went on to explain that now was the time to step up our efforts in the war on terrorism, not to take a break. In other words, build on the successful elimination of Bin Laden.



The term "reinforcing success" resonated with me. For I believe when reflecting on the past two years during which I have had the honor of being President of the synagogue, it was "reinforcing success" for which I strived, and "reinforcing success" which together we have accomplished. The reality is that after the three years or so that elapsed between deciding to move from Salem Avenue, and fulfilling that dream marching up Far Hills during our Torah march, it was tempting to cease our efforts, sit back and enjoy the fruits of that three year labor.

Fortunately, our congregation and its leadership knew better. We knew that this was not the time to take a break, but rather to double our efforts in all aspects of synagogue life. We knew to build on the success that our new home could surely help generate. And so we did.

After our move to Sugar Camp, we began holding an annual programming meeting in order to schedule all religious, social and education programming for the upcoming year.

And as a result of that effort, not only has the programming continued its meteoric rise in both quality and quantity, we have also had the ability to better promote that programming to the Dayton Jewish community and thereby trumpet our renewed vitality at Beth Abraham Synagogue.

We could have sat back and simply assumed that new members would join, solely as a result of occupying our beautiful centrally located structure. But Meryl Hattenback and her Membership Committee did no such thing. The Committee has been very proactive in reaching out to potential new members, as well as addressing the needs of our current members. And through the Committee's efforts, our membership numbers have continued to flourish. Those new members "reinforce our success."

We could have chosen to make the use of our beautiful new synagogue limited to just Beth Abraham. But we chose just the opposite approach. We made it financially feasible for Hillel Academy to partner with us in the use of our third floor. And with Hillel came the sounds and sights of many children, young families and educators each Monday through Friday; at times the building would have otherwise slumbered. Hillel's presence has "reinforced our success." And although the merger with Beth Jacob did not meet with their congregation's approval, Beth Abraham emerged from the process stronger financially, and more unified as a congregation. And in that regard, the merger process "reinforced our success."

Under the leadership of Cantor Raizen, our USY has been transformed from a one child USY chapter in name only, to a group that hosted a regional convention (one of the most satisfying sights for our congregation over the past two years). We now have a chapter that boasts ten members (and not

just from our congregation), and a chapter that recently earned a number of awards from the regional authorities that recognized our chapter's efforts. USY has helped "reinforce our success."

We have continued to address our financial challenges in ways other synagogues simply have not achieved. During the past two years, we initiated the very successful NOW Campaign that enabled us to cover the years of shortfall brought on by the loss of bingo income. We saw the beginnings of the Assuring Our Future Campaign that has already raised approximately two million dollars, and will continue in earnest in the months ahead. We have seen a change in bingo management resulting in growing net income. And we have formed a new committee entitled the Financial Resources Development Committee which will dramatically change our fund raising efforts. Without money, we cannot continue to thrive. The efforts that have been initiated to raise our income and allow us to not cut our programming have allowed us to "reinforce our success."

The dictionary defines the word "period" as "a punctuation mark at the end of a sentence to indicate finality." Conversely, the dictionary defines the word "comma" as "a punctuation mark indicating a pause between sentences." It was my hope when I accepted the very flattering request that I serve as President, that there would be no period between Susie's term and mine. Rather, I hoped that there would be simply a comma between our terms.

To that end, and with no political poke intended, I think we as a congregation can boast "Mission Accomplished." And now under Mary Rita's leadership, and without pause, let us continue to "reinforce our success."

JEWISH FEDERATION RECOGNIZES BETH ABRAHAM MEMBERS FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE

At the annual meeting of the Greater Dayton Jewish Federation on May 18, five Beth Abraham congregants were singled out for their outstanding contributions over many years to the Dayton Jewish Community. Carmen Appel and Louise Tanis were two of three recipients of the Robert A. Shapiro Award, in recognition of their outstanding long-term service to Covenant House and the Covenant House Guild. Lynn Mantel received the DJCC Volunteer Award for her energetic volunteer work with the Jewish Community Center. Marshall Weiss received a JFGD Staff Recognition Award for fifteen years as editor of the Jewish Observer. And Pam Schwartz was recognized twice, with the Jack Moss Creativity Award and the Dorothy B. Moyer Young Leadership Award, both in recognition of her outstanding work organizing and archiving the historical records of the Dayton Jewish Federation. The JFGD's Archives Collection was established in 2009 in anticipation of the Federation's centennial celebration last year and has now been deposited with Wright State University's Special Collections and Archives.

Congratulations to all of them. They make Beth Abraham proud!



Library News-Off the Shelf

By: Allan Spetter

Could there be a more appropriate title than *Vision: A Biography of Harry Friedenwald*, the life story of one of the most prominent ophthalmologists of the first half of the 20th century and an ardent Zionist, in the synagogue library book collection? Friedenwald, a classic example of the German Jews who led the American Jewish community until some two million Jews from Eastern Europe came to the United States, mingled with every important Jewish leader over a period of almost 50 years.

Born in 1864 in Baltimore, Harry Friedenwald followed the path of his distinguished father in every way. Aaron Friedenwald, one of a generation who pioneered in the medical specialty of ophthalmology, went to Europe to develop his skills by working with the best men in the field. Aaron Friedenwald pioneered as well as a Zionist from the beginning of the movement in the United States, and he emerged as the unofficial leader of the Jewish community of Baltimore. Aaron Friedenwald visited Palestine in 1898.

Harry Friedenwald grew up among the elite of the Baltimore Jewish community. His friends included Cyrus Adler and Henrietta Szold, two of the most important figures in the history of Judaism in the United States. He graduated from Johns Hopkins in 1881 and finished medical school in 1884. He then left for Germany in 1887, where he studied the most advanced techniques in ophthalmology. The medical profession has come a long way since Friedenwald at one point asked, "Can I make a living of it?"

With the death of his father in 1902, Harry Friedenwald became the unofficial leader of the Baltimore Jewish community. In that capacity he issued a call for a mass meeting in 1903 to protest the outrageous

pogrom in Kishinev in Czarist Russia. Some 3,000 people responded. That same year Friedenwald attended the Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland where the delegates would be faced with the momentous question of whether to accept a British offer to establish a Jewish homeland in East Africa.

Friedenwald took his place among the national leaders of the American Jewish community when elected president of the organization then known as the Federation of American Zionists in 1904. He visited Palestine for the first time in 1911, and he made a lifelong commitment to lend his medical expertise and to provide a health care system for all the people of the future Jewish homeland. As a start, he worked with Henrietta Szold and others to send the first trained nurses to Palestine.

Friedenwald returned to Palestine in 1914, where he performed various medical procedures, but he had to scramble to find transportation back to the United States with the outbreak of World War I. He began a long relationship with future justice of the Supreme Court Louis Brandeis, who would be recognized as the leader of American Zionists, when both spoke at a mass meeting in Baltimore on September 15, 1914 on the topic, "The War as it Affects the Jewish People."

Most of the Jews of Europe had been caught in a precarious situation during World War I, living between the contending armies of Germany, Austria-Hungary and Russia. The Jews of Palestine found themselves in the middle of the struggle between Great Britain and Turkey. The crisis led to formation in the United States of the Provisional Executive Committee for General Zionist Affairs, with Brandeis as chair and

including Friedenwald on the 12-man committee.

As part of the ongoing contest between the German Jews and the Eastern European Jews in Baltimore, as an example, Friedenwald served as president of the Federated Jewish Charities, run by the German or "Uptown" Jews. A rival organization, the United Hebrew Charities, would be organized by the Eastern European or "Downtown" Jews. The American Jewish community could not afford such divisions, but Friedenwald became involved in two even more serious divisions.

Brandeis began to call for a democratically elected American Jewish Congress. The American Jewish Committee, representing the elite of the German Jews, opposed enlarging the number who could speak for American Jews. Friedenwald resigned from the AJC in 1916 and said, "A class of Jewry is ranged against the overwhelming masses which have so long been silent." The resignation meant Friedenwald would never speak to Cyrus Adler again, though Adler had married Friedenwald's cousin.

In 1919 Friedenwald served as chair of the Zionist Commission created by the British as a link between British authorities and the Jews of Palestine. He endured the bitter clash in 1921 between Brandeis and Chaim Weizmann over the direction of the Zionist movement. Friedenwald made his last visit to Palestine in 1929. He died in 1950. His son, Jonas Friedenwald, continued the tradition as one of the most outstanding ophthalmologists in the nation. Sadly, he died in 1955, just five years after his father.

Surprise!

Cantor Andrea Raizen and Ari Vandersluis

You have been caught by the Mitzvah Squad doing mitzvot!

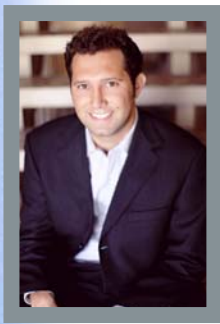
You have been named by the Mitzvah Squad as this month's Mitzvah Heroes. There's been an undeniable movement afoot in our synagogue that has increased the unmistakable sound of laughter in our midst. Thanks to your attention and hard work, we now have an active and award-winning USY presence. Nothing pleases the rest of us 'slightly older' adults more than to bask in your enthusiasm and participation at synagogue events. Cantor, your dedication to working with our youth has been longstanding. Ari, it was through your outreach that led to the start of a solid 'core' group. We applaud all that you both have done towards this endeavor and we salute you. Mazel Tov to you, this month's Mitzvah Heroes!

If anyone knows of others within our Beth Abraham community who quietly and routinely perform mitzvot, please contact our Mitzvah Squad by calling Bonnie Beaman Rice (409-2880) or Helen Abramovitz (223-2891), your Social Action Co-Chairs.

New Giving Societies Announced

By: Todd J. Shear

Imagine this scenario – I'm sharing the specifics of our new Chai Society with a member of our congregation, and I watch as a pained look slowly overtakes his expression. I'm a little surprised. After



all, wouldn't you think that it would be exciting to any one of us to find out that some of our co-members are willing to step up to gift \$18,000 per year for the next two years to support our synagogue? So, I do what comes naturally – I ask where the "pain" is coming from. And this is the even more surprising answer I get: "If only I could afford to do that. I would be so proud to be a part of Chai – but my finances would never permit it. I wish there were another way that I could be recognized for stretching my resources for the benefit of Beth Abraham." Really? You want to give more?

In a nutshell, that is what distinguishes our congregation. We see religious institutions all around us who fall short of campaign goals, who are bleeding finite

resources to a point of no return, who are shutting their doors. But that is not us. Since the beginning of our capital campaign for our new building in 2005, our congregants continue to give more than their dues, give increasingly larger amounts to our Yom Kippur Appeal, give to the NOW campaign, respond to specific requests for capital improvements, sponsor a Kiddush, and on and on. We love what we have at Beth Abraham, and we are willing to do whatever it takes to protect the integrity of what we have created.

So, in response to the congregant referred to above and others like him, the Financial Resource Development committee is excited to announce the roll out of two additional giving societies: the President's Circle and the Rabbi's Minyan. Soon you will be getting a letter that will explain the specifics of these wonderful opportunities to belong to a group of congregants who want to give from abundance to support our beloved shul. From the conversations that I have been privileged to have with congregants since I began my work at Beth Abraham, I know that there are many of you who will welcome these unique societies and what they will offer you.

When I accepted my position with Beth Abraham I have to say that I had a bit of trepidation about my chances of being successful...but, given this congregation, wasn't that ridiculous?!

Sisterhood News...

By: Helen Abramovitz

Thank you to Melinda Doner and Susan Katz for a most wonderful and successful Women of Valor luncheon. You and your committee outdid yourselves honoring seven exemplary women at a luncheon for over 300 people.

Beth Abraham Sisterhood thanks outgoing officers Jody Blazar and Bea Burke for their hard work and service. Sisterhood welcomes Melinda Doner, vice president of development and Dena Briskin, corresponding secretary.

Sisterhood invites you on Monday, June 13 at 1:00 p.m. to an afternoon of Mahjongg and good fellowship. Penney Fraim is chairing this event. Beginners, experts and those who want to learn are welcome. Bring a friend or two and enjoy a fun afternoon. Refreshments will be served.

Sisterhood book club will meet Sunday, June 26 at 10:00 a.m. at Beth Abraham. The book to be discussed is the *Faith Club* by Ranya Idliby, Suzanne Oliver and Priscilla Warner. This is a fascinating true story of three women of different faiths; a Jew, a Muslim and a Christian, who joined together to write children's books about each others' holidays. In the process they became close friends.

SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE NEWS & UPDATES

By: Bonnie Beaman Rice

Prom dress collection: Thanks to your generosity, and with an assist from Clothes That Work, we were able to deliver 105 prom dresses, five tuxedos and multiple purses and accessories to the students at the Dayton Early College Academy (DECA) for their recent prom. As in years past, you helped to make a young person's dreams come true. There is no better group of congregants anywhere else! Thank you.

Personal care items collection: as a component of the Women of Valor luncheon, hundreds of personal care items were collected and they have been donated to the women at Mercy House, Artemus and St. Vincent's. Thank you so much to our Sisterhood for providing the venue to support this endeavor.

Aluminum cans collection: Keep them coming! We earned \$112.00 for the synagogue this past month. Thanks again, Joel Frydman.

Mitzvah Day, Mitzvah Heroes: I don't know any other congregation that would answer a call to come to the synagogue and clean the kitchen...but you answered that call! Thanks to your efforts, everyone working in the kitchen will be greeted by a clean and organized work space. We thank everyone who participated: Elaine Arnovitz, Sharon Cohen, Irwin Dumtschin, Arlene Furst, Bernie O'Koon, Irene and Michael Perevozchikov, David Rothschild and Pat Brickweg, Minnette Weiss and Diane Williams. You all worked tremendously hard, but a few went above and beyond the call of duty; so special thanks are owed to: Helen Abramovitz, Celia Diamond, Ray Furst, Ann and Andrea Liberman, Ira and Evan Levine, Lynn Mantell, MaryAnn Oppenheimer and Mary Rita Weissman.

Social Action Project for Shavuot: Because Shavuot is a time for study, it seems particularly appropriate to fund a book club project for the Dayton Early College Academy (DECA). So many of our congregants have been supportive already by volunteering to lead book discussion groups. Our heartfelt thanks go to those who have volunteered: Helen Abramovitz, Judy Chesen, Marc Katz, Bob and Sarah Leventhal, Norm Lewis, Bonnie Beaman Rice, Ruth Scheuer and Diane Williams. For an opportunity to participate in this worthwhile endeavor, please see the insert in this bulletin.

Beth Abraham Synagogue
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Dayton, OH 45409

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Cantor	Andrea S. Raizen
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Times for Shabbat and Yom Tov Candle Lighting & Services

Friday, June 3		Saturday, June 18	
Kabbalat Shabbat	5:30 p.m.	Shacharit	9:00 a.m.
Candle Lighting	8:41 p.m.	Havdalah	9:52 p.m.
Saturday, June 4		Friday, June 24	
Shacharit	9:00 a.m.	Shabbat under the Stars	7:30 p.m.
Havdalah	9:45 p.m.	Candle Lighting	8:50 p.m.
Tuesday, June 7 – Erev Shavuot		Saturday, June 25	
Mincha	6:00 p.m.	Shacharit	9:00 a.m.
Dairy Dinner	6:15 p.m.	Havdalah	9:54 p.m.
Discussion	6:45 p.m.		
Candle Lighting & Shavuot Ma'ariv		Friday, July 1	
8:44 p.m.		Kabbalat Shabbat	5:30 p.m.
		Candle Lighting	8:51 p.m.
Friday, June 10		Saturday, July 2	
Kabbalat Shabbat	5:30 p.m.	Shacharit	9:00 a.m.
Candle Lighting	8:46 p.m.	Havdalah	9:54 p.m.
Saturday, June 11		DAILY MINYAN	
Shacharit	9:00 a.m.	Monday – Friday	Sunday
Havdalah	9:49 p.m.	6:50 am* & 5:30 pm*	8:30 am
Friday, June 17		*Friday, June 4	*Friday, June 24
Kabbalat Shabbat	5:30 p.m.	Rosh Chodesh Sivan	6:50 am & 7:30 pm
Shabbat in the Park	5:30 p.m.	Candle Lighting	
Candle Lighting	8:49 p.m.		

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