



BETH ABRAHAM SYNAGOGUE

Bulletin

Dayton's Voice of Conservative Judaism

Upcoming Events

August 30th: American Girl Tea and Raffle
September 11th-13th: Film Series

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The Beth Abraham Synagogue Windows

By Renate Frydman

"The windows, the windows. What is all this about the windows?" Jay Brown, architect of our new Beth Abraham Synagogue at Sugar Camp, asked me the first time we met.

He soon found out that these beautiful works of art were an integral part of the Beth Abraham psyche. As Jay Brown began to understand their meaning to us as a congregation, he used his artistic ability to recreate their beauty. He brilliantly devised a new configuration of the same precious windows into the design of our new sanctuary and chapel. When they reappeared at Sugar Camp, everyone once again marveled at their beauty.

Sitting in the new sanctuary with its muted earth tones, the vivid colors of the stained glass panels lead the eyes upward. The light, coming from the clear windows, brings in nature with its background of green trees and blue sky, giving a sense of serenity to the entire space.

So, once again these works of art enhance the Beth Abraham holy spaces. There is a long history in the design, installation and development of the stained glass which fills

a thick folder. Since their creation began with the building of the old Beth Abraham, the flow of letters back and forth covers a period of years from 1947 to 1954.

Many obstacles stood in the way, starting with the sudden

Art Stained Glass Studio in Chicago. The Drehobl Bros. Art Glass Co., also in Chicago, manufactured and installed the windows.

Since this was before the computer age, all the planning was carried out by regular mail. Endless correspondence went between Dayton, New York, (where Raymond Katz lived) and Chicago.

Most of the history of this correspondence is in a folder. It contains all the copied letters, typewritten on thin tracing paper or on handwritten note paper. Rabbi Joseph Sternstein took over the letter writing after he succeeded Rabbi Agus. Boris Sokol's name was frequently seen on the correspondence as he was chairman of the board of directors of Beth Abraham.

After wading through this historic memoir, one feels once again the

important legacy that our synagogue forefathers left to us. They never had a doubt that the windows would always remain with us. And now, we have kept that promise.

So let us again explore these stained glass treasures and their transcendent messages.

As one enters the beautiful sanctuary of Beth Abraham Synagogue, immediately the eyes are drawn to the stained



death of **Todros Geller**, designer of the first two High Holy Day windows. When he passed away in March 1949, the B.A. building committee, assisted by then Rabbi Jacob Agus, scurried to find another artist. **A. Raymond Katz** of New York City was found and commissioned to design the six remaining festival windows. He was urged to use the same colors and style as in the first two. The Ten Commandment windows, now in our lower hallway, were created by **David Bekker**, of the D. Bekker

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The Beth Abraham Synagogue Windows

Continued from page 1

glass panels high on each side of the Bimah and over the top of the Holy Ark.

The first section of three panels on the left wall depicts the holiday of Purim. Since this holiday celebrates our victory over tyranny and oppression, it shows the disgraced Haman leading the righteous Jew Mordechai on a princely mount through the streets of Shushan. The inscription surrounding this panel is



from the Book of Esther: "The Jews had gladness and joy, a feast and a good day."

The center panel depicts the holiday of Hanukkah. It shows

the ancient, seven-branched candelabra used in the Temple when the miracle happened. It miraculously kept burning for eight days, even though the cruse of oil only contained enough oil for one day. The Feast of Lights came into being with the acclamation, "And they kindled the lights in Thy sacred courts and they established the eight days of Hanukkah." This quote comes from the special prayer inserted into the Amidah during the eight days of Hanukkah.

The third panel on the left wall illustrates the lush and colorful trees and flora for which Israel is renowned. It honors Tu B' Shvat, the Jewish Arbor Day. The inscription surrounding the panel is from Genesis, "The fruit tree yielding fruit after its kind."

Facing the center of the sanctuary, above the Holy Ark, are five panels representing five important holidays in the Jewish calendar year. Together they give the drama and enormity of the Lord's mighty power.

First on the left, the panel represents Sabbath. After the Six days of Creation, on the seventh day, the Lord rested. A woman is kindling the Sabbath candles, saying the traditional prayers. The quotation surrounding this familiar act of faith is, "A song for the Sabbath Day. It is good to give thanks unto the Lord," from psalm 92. This quote suggests that there should be joy in observing the Sabbath.

Next is a panel that shows the Divine power leading the Israelites out of the land of Egypt, "With a Mighty hand," leading them with pillars of fire and cloud. The inscription proclaims, "In

order that you remember the day of your exodus from Egypt all the days of your life," from Deuteronomy. This verse, reiterated each year at Passover, is embodied in our historic consciousness.

The square center panel dramatically symbolizes the weighing of a person's deeds, good and evil, by Divine Judgment on Rosh Hashanah. The words which surround the scales of justice pronounce, "For the sin which we



have committed before Thee by hardening our hearts," from the Machzor.

Shavuoth, the Feast of Weeks, is the celebration of

the giving of the Law by the Lord to Israel, accompanied by awesome phenomena. The quotation from Deuteronomy says, "This is the Torah that Moses placed before the children of Israel upon the word of God."

The panel at the right front is from the striking High Holy Day window with the priestly hands stretched forth in blessing. It is surrounded by the three-fold priestly blessing from the book of Numbers, "The Lord bless thee and keep thee. The Lord make His face to shine upon thee and be gracious to thee. The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee and give thee peace."

Turning to the right wall, the first panel portrays a scene of laborers and scholars working together in close fellowship, rewarded by the vision of Jerusalem restored. Surrounding this idealistic scene is the ancient dictum, "Out of Zion shall come forth the law. And the word of the Lord from Jerusalem," from Isaiah.

The middle panel came from the Rosh Chodesh window. Blessing the New Moon upon its first appearance in the heavens is a tradition. Surrounding the panel are words from the Musaf Amidah for Rosh Chodesh,

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"Renew unto us this month for our good and blessing."

The last panel on the left represents the majesty of creation

of the universe. The origin of the Sabbath indicates our desire to emulate the Almighty in resting on the seventh day after He completed the universe from chaos. "And the heavens and the earth and all their hosts were completed," from Genesis. Thus, the Sabbath came into being and is forever our day of rest as humans.

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The Dream of the Messiah on the Fourth of July

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Rabbi Bernard Barsky

I hope you have read, or will read, Lee Schear's column in this month's bulletin, where he presents very powerfully his own vision of community



responsibility. Everyone at Beth Abraham already knows the impact which Lee's farsightedness has had on our congregation, giving us the courage first to re-imagine our future and then to actually go out and create it. But his vision is broader than just the welfare of Beth Abraham, because he understands how all the institutions and interest

groups of a community are interdependent, and to a great extent stand or fall together.

Beth Abraham's future is connected to the overall viability of Dayton's Jewish community, and specifically to the strength of its Hebrew day school, to the presence of a mikveh, to the availability of kosher foods and caterers, and even to the health and diversity of the other synagogues with whom we exist in friendly competition. It would be irresponsible to Beth Abraham's own interest to forego or ignore our responsibility to the rest of the Jewish community and its diverse needs.

The same principle of interconnectedness also applies to our situation within the larger Dayton community. None of us is unaffected by the pain our neighbors feel through loss of employment, home foreclosures, failing schools and the disappearance of local businesses. The Talmud directs us to feed the hungry among both Jews and gentiles, to tend the sick of both Jews and gentiles, to bury the dead of both Jews and gentiles. It is a delusion, especially in a multi-cultural community like America, to think it sufficient or just or moral to look only to the needs of our own tribe. We share our bread, our skills, our passion for justice, our commitment to learning, indeed every

blessing, with the whole community, in order to become, as God enjoined Abraham, a blessing to all the families of the earth. That was God's summation, in His very first words to Abraham, of the entire purpose to which that man and we his descendants were called. Forget that and we forget everything.

Tikkun Olam has become for Jews a near synonym for charity and social justice. Well and good. But we should also remember and understand its plain meaning as "repairing the world." The rabbis of the Kabbalah meant it literally in its cosmic implications: the world itself is intrinsically a broken thing, broken in and through the very act of creation; and every action, every thought, every choice a human being

men, and he meant only white men. But the words belie whatever one writer meant; they belie their time and place and original intent. Those words are a promise always yet to be fulfilled, and it is insufficient for us to be more devoted to the reality we have in this broken and devastated world than the reality we have promised ourselves. The allegiance of a free person is always an allegiance to the future.

The promise of "all men are created equal" is a secular version of "love your neighbor as yourself." Just as history has quibbled over the reach of "all men," so we have quibbled over the question of who is my neighbor. But the messianic answer in both cases is the same, that every human being is of equal and infinite value to every other, and each one of them is my

neighbor to be cherished. The Messiah does not allow for qualifications or restrictions.

Just as this beautiful world, so ready for enjoyment and pleasure, is truly broken in its heart and in need of our constant work of redemption and healing; so too every nation, however prosperous and free and including both of ours, is a broken promise and a commandment unfulfilled. But a promise nonetheless that always calls us forward, that all men are created equal; and a commandment which never compromises its absolute authority, that you shall love your neighbor as yourself. That is what I celebrate on July 4th.

The messianic Jerusalem where all peoples will worship the one true God will be a city where the promise is kept and the commandment fulfilled and all have come to peace. It is no dream, if you will it.

"It is insufficient for us to be more devoted to the reality we have in this broken and devastated world than the reality we have promised ourselves."

makes is an opportunity for healing. In the spiritual economy of the cosmos, healing is what human beings are here for.

Tikkun Olam, in its highest sense, means so much more than simply tinkering around the edges of injustice. It is the ultimate human responsibility and the true messianic vocation to restore the world to wholeness, to *shlemut*. And that requires, as Lee writes, "a servant's heart," where one's entire identity is bound to God's service.

Right at the center of the text known as the "Holiness Code," the 19th chapter of Leviticus which begins "*You shall be holy, for I, the Lord your God, am holy,*" occurs the pivotal commandment that is the ultimate principle of *Tikkun Olam*, of messianic human action to restore wholeness to our created world: *V'ahavta l're'akha kamokha Ani Adonai. "And you shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am the Lord."* It is the foundation commandment for a community of peace.

On the Fourth of July we celebrate the America of our visionary and unfolding promise, that all men are created equal. When Thomas Jefferson wrote those words he did mean only



Treasurer's Report

Lee Schear

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When the bottom line isn't always a straight line...

We are a synagogue. But we are also a community. If we ever lose sight of the fact that we are part of something not only greater than ourselves but also greater than Beth Abraham – it becomes a slippery slope of unreality from that point on.



I bring this up because we are always directly affected by the Dayton community, the Dayton Jewish community and the financial environment in which we find ourselves. That environment is taking a beating right now as business is down, donations are down and people are worried about future financial events. The overall Dayton community is reeling with General Motors imploding, Iams leaving their hometown and NCR turning its back on 125 years of tradition and local responsibility. All of those factors affect us but few of them are within our direct province of control.

However, the Dayton Jewish community both affects us *and* we are part of its future and its impact. *And* those that live here are expected to do something about that future because the future is where we will all live.

In a Treasurer's column of some months ago, I opined that it was our responsibility to shore up the overall Jewish community and attend to institutions like Jewish Day schools, mikvahs and other tangible "benefits" that drive our ability to survive and thrive as Jews in Dayton.

We have this omnipresent obligation to protect our future in order to ratify our past. That is, our legacy is to reinforce

those foundations laid by previous generations. Can we be so oblivious to think that these building blocks were only intended for us to use – that others didn't suffer and contribute to get us to where we are now? What about the sacrifices *they* made? And what sacrifices and creative approaches must we explore before we can conclude what's best for Dayton Jewry – present and future?

That then brings up all the exciting prospects of doing great things in Dayton – looking at opportunities to expand and connect and create new lines of networking. Those new "lines" include the creative and timely possibilities that Beth Jacob and Beth Abraham have been sanctioned to explore: should we share programs or congregants or facilities? Should we consider combining our assets to better serve the greater good? Can that be done at all and still maintain our over-arching principles, our operating DNA?

We joke (?) when we say that if you hate organized religion, you will love Judaism. I am always bemused when new people come aboard our committee processes and they see those committees in their full chaos and entropy. That's just the way we are. We are like ducks swimming – seemingly peaceful above the surface but paddling like hell below the water.

But we make progress. Huge progress. And there's no time to rest on those laurels. Are we ready to stop now? I have had congregants approach me with the sentiment that, "We have finished the building. We have raised the funds. We are there! Enough already!" But Judaism teaches just the opposite. We are taught that we create and are created anew every day. That the vital element in life is perseverance – you

never reach the finish line. That in one's service of God, all exertions are past history. Judaism is an endless task without closure.

Fortunately, I don't see that as a bleak or existential landscape. I see it as uplifting – continuing our tradition of seeking challenges and seeking ways to meet them. Then moving on to the next!

When we explore, we look for truth. As Dayton Jews, we look for *institutional* truth to reprise whether our congregation reflects our needs. And we look for *personal* truth to explore the possibilities that perhaps we have changed in relationship to everything around us.

Interestingly, personal truth is neither absolute nor eternal. The mystics tell us that it might have been true "at the time". Every point contains an element of truth – but not always a straight line. Last year's truth could not stand the endurance test – it was true; now it needs to improve. When one genuinely grows, his personal truth now must surpass all his previous truths.

While finances typically govern our ability to grow, there are epochal moments in which the only restrictions might be our lack of insight, or our lack of faith, or the lack of will to live on. The Tanya, a mystical Hassidic text, talks about our service to God and that we can either view it as "a worker" (one is only involved when one is actually on the job) or as "a servant" – where your entire identity is bound to His service.

When something becomes your personal priority, it is fascinating how much you can attain. How much you can grow. When you leave yourself open to possibilities, with a servant's heart, well...

It's not a straight line. But it's going to get us there.

Surprise!

Rick Pinsky, Bernie and Brian O'Koon

You have been caught by the Mitzvah Squad doing mitzvot!

We believe that the three of you exemplify so many of the unsung heroes in our Beth Abraham family. Thanks to your consistent contribution of time and energy, the residents of Covenant House look forward to a weekly game of poker. The stakes are high... in that you have managed, without any smoke-filled rooms or illegal libations, to add laughter and joy to their weekly schedule. This fun-filled, one-on-one contact epitomizes the caring nature that you bring to every synagogue activity (and there are many) in which you participate. For all the other tasks that you each perform, the creativity and energy you bring to each, and the many kindnesses you do, we wish to thank you. Mazel Tov to all of 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.

"So, I was thinking..."

David Fuchsman, Beth Abraham President



I love a great love story. I was thinking about this a few weeks ago as I sat in the sanctuary listening to Rabbi Barsky deliver one of his masterful eulogies. For me, I always tear up when he talks about how the person who has

passed away came to meet his or her spouse, or engaged in some activity he or she loved. I remember thinking after Charlie Frydman's funeral that I wished I had known, before he died, even a tiny fraction of what I learned about him at his funeral. So I have asked questions, and learned some interesting facts about some of our congregants.

In *The Music Man*, seventy-six trombones led the big parade, but at Beth Abraham, it was the Indiana University Marching Band that led Scott and Ann Liberman down the aisle. Ann played the piccolo and Scott played the saxophone. Together, they made beautiful music, and later, beautiful daughters.

Larry Wagenfeld was in a New York gang called the Hornets. From listening to

Larry, his gang did not look for fights, but it does not sound like they shied away from them either. One day Larry and some of his Flatbush gang members went to the beach at Coney Island. There he met Sheila who was hanging out at the beach with some of her girl friends. They have made waves ever since.

Ellen Leffak's father had a furniture business. Michael Leffak's parents came to the furniture store to make a purchase. I don't know if the sale included a love seat, but when Michael's parents saw a picture of Ellen in her father's office, a discussion of eligible Jewish children ensued that ended in Michael calling Ellen for a date.

Joel Frydman and the former Angela Fazzano met at George Washington University's law school. The law school class was broken into sections, alphabetically. As a result, Joel and Angela came to know one another. One problem? They both were dating other people. In fact, Joel and Angela went on a double date, along with their other love interests. By the middle of their second year in law school, the boyfriend and girlfriend were ex-boyfriend and ex-girlfriend, and Joel and Angela entered into a partnership that has lasted decades.

Bernie O'Koon was living in

Kentucky when she met Brian, who was working at Wright Patterson. They met through E-Harmony, the on-line dating service. Ralph William's best friend was dating Diane's sister. That is how the Williams met.

Ted Cooper's great love, when he was a young 20 something, was music. He and three others formed a folk rock band in Miami, Florida and played gigs from New York to Los Angeles, where they would eventually sign a music deal. His band, The Travel Agency, nearly made music history, finishing second in a music contest to the famous rock band The Lovin' Spoonful ("Do You Believe in Magic" and "Summer in the City").

President Clinton's first initiative was to propose the military's "Don't ask, don't tell" policy. My first initiative as President is to urge my fellow Beth Abraham congregants to "Ask" and "Tell." It is a great way for us to learn about each other.

In that spirit, Randi and I met on a blind date. She came to my home for dinner for our first date. Being so suave, I offered her a glass of White Zinfandel (she would later call it sugar water). She wanted Scotch instead; straight!! I knew immediately, I was out of my league. 20 years later we compromise by sharing a bottle of Cabernet Sauvignon.

Board Approves Merger Exploration

By David Fuchsman

At the June 24, 2009 Board meeting, the Beth Abraham Synagogue Board of Directors unanimously voted to approve exploring a merger with Beth Jacob Synagogue. The Beth Jacob Board of Directors approved the same motion at their Board meeting held earlier this month.

Although all logistical details of how the exploration process will be carried out have not been determined, it was agreed that both synagogues would appoint eight of its members to serve on a joint merger exploration committee. Additionally, the two Presidents would serve in an ex-officio manner. Each synagogue, through its respective Presidents, will appoint a co-chairperson to help guide the process. The names of those appointed to the exploration committee will be announced on or before the July Board meeting, and will be published in next month's Bulletin.

There was some question raised whether having a committee composed of at least 16 people would be too large. However, once it was pointed out how many sub-issues there

are that would compose the overall merger exploration (i.e. Ritual, Religious School, Financial, Personnel, Governance, etc), the size of the committee was deemed appropriate. In making the merger exploration committee appointments, as President, I will be choosing people who I believe will first and foremost act in ways that puts a premium on Beth Abraham Synagogue's best interest. I will look for people who I believe have exceptional abilities to problem-solve, to look for reasonable ways to compromise, and to build relationships.

It was clear from the Board discussion that the Board is sensitive to potential benefits and potential drawbacks of a merger. It was equally clear from the Board discussion, that regardless of the ultimate outcome of the exploration, it was of paramount importance that the process proceeds in a way that both congregations feel comfortable, and that both congregations continue to respect and appreciate the other synagogue and its congregants.

Going forward, the Board will try to

communicate as much information to the congregation as reasonably possible so that everyone feels invested in the process. In addition, it is likely that at some point in the process, there will be a congregational meeting so that everyone's opinions, thoughts and concerns can be heard; much like what was done before voting on the resolution to move.

Finally, although this merger exploration is not without precedent for Beth Abraham and Beth Jacob, it is a unique historical moment nonetheless. As the 1960s folk song rejoiced, "The Times They Are A Changing." The Jewish community has changed over the past few decades, especially in terms of demographics. One of the questions the exploration committee will need to determine, and ultimately both synagogues, is whether the changes are such that merger, at this point in time, makes sense for our respective synagogues, and in a sense, the community as a whole.



Library News-Off the Shelf

Allan Spetter

The synagogue library book collection contains a study that will tell you everything you ever wanted to know about the history of Yiddish theater in the United States. In The Yiddish Theatre in America, David Lifson, who received a Ph.D. from New York University and established a reputation as a foremost expert on Yiddish theater, provides every last detail about an institution that played a significant role in American Jewish history from the 1880s through the early 20th century.

As is the case with much of Jewish culture in the United States, the Yiddish theater flourished in New York City and particularly along Second Avenue in Manhattan. What we know as Yiddish theater began, however, in Romania in the mid-1870s. The actors of the time moved back and forth from Romania to Russia, and Yiddish theater would spread across Galicia in Austria-Hungary and across Poland to Western Europe and to the United States.

Abraham Goldfaden, born in the Ukraine in 1840, is recognized as the individual who launched what became Yiddish theater. Goldfaden wrote poems, songs, including the Yiddish classic "Royzhinkes mit Mandlen" (Raisins and Almonds), and plays. Goldfaden, who lived for only a brief time in the United States, brought with him a reputation as the "Yiddish Shakespeare," according to the New York Times. When Goldfaden died in New York in 1908, 75,000 people attended his funeral.

The performance of the first Yiddish play in New York took place in August, 1882. For the next 35 years, until 1914-1918, the period of World War I, Yiddish theater would not change much at all, but it provided entertainment for the masses of immigrants pouring into New York from the various countries of Eastern Europe. Lifson describes the theaters as meeting places where the immigrants could have a communal experience, watching plays with themes that reminded them of home.

Those involved in Yiddish theater knew they played to an unsophisticated audience. Lifson says Yiddish theater provoked laughter or tears, not thought, and did not attempt to represent art or culture. In the early years, actors would

talk to the audience. At every performance, Lifson emphasizes, there would be "prodigious amounts of eating." On various occasions, after a performance of a play by Shakespeare in Yiddish, there would be cries from the audience of "author, author."

A series of actors, playwrights and entrepreneurs, all from the Ukraine and all "prima donnas," began arriving in the United States in the 1880s and would have a lasting impact on Yiddish theater. Boris Thomashefsky, born in 1868, perhaps the greatest actor and singer in the history of Yiddish theater, came to the United States in 1881. Thomashefsky, who performed Hamlet in Yiddish, became the first celebrity in Yiddish theater and lived accordingly, with three residences and a chauffeur-driven limousine.

Jacob P. Adler and Jacob Gordin would collaborate off and on to try to bring realism to Yiddish theater. Gordin wrote The Jewish King Lear and Mirele Efros, one of the biggest hits in the history of Yiddish theater, about an older widow locked in a struggle with her daughter-in-law over the family fortune. Adler starred in The Jewish King Lear and played the role of Shylock in The Merchant of Venice in Yiddish while the rest of the cast performed in English.

The actor Maurice Schwartz, who came to the United States in 1902, emerged as the most important entrepreneur in the history of Yiddish theater. Schwartz thought he understood the secret to success: perform plays with box office appeal. Schwartz opened the Irving Place Theater in 1918 and launched the Yiddish Art Theater in 1926. Schwartz presented one of the most beloved of all Yiddish plays, A Farvorfen Vinkel (Neglected Nook) about life in a Lithuanian shtetl.

Yiddish theater went into decline as early as the 1920s. The United States closed the door to immigrants from Eastern Europe, and the children of immigrants abandoned Yiddish for English. The audience for Yiddish theater began to disappear. Yiddish productions began to mix English into the performances. Then came the depression of the 1930s. A lucky few performers would move on to Broadway, radio and

the movies. Others had to resort to entertaining in the Catskills or at weddings and Bar Mitzvahs.

The Yiddish theater produced one of the great movie and stage actors of the mid-20th century. Paul Muni came to the United States in 1902 as Meshilem Meier Weisenfreund. Nominated for an Oscar five times, Muni is best remembered for his roles in historical dramas such as The Story of Louis Pasteur, for which he won the Oscar in 1936, The Good Earth, The Life of Emile Zola, and Juarez. Muni also won a Tony in 1956 for his performance on Broadway in Inherit the Wind.



GO GREEN TIP OF THE MONTH

Bonnie Beaman Rice,
Co-chair

It is the season for luscious, fresh fruit and vegetables. **Buy fresh**, instead of canned, whenever you are able. Fresh tastes so much better, and the process involved in canning these items is at least ten times more energy intensive than picking fresh. If, during the summer months, every U.S. household used one pound of fresh fruit or vegetables, instead of canned, the total energy saved could operate the kitchen appliances of over 21,000 households for an entire year. And if you buy from your local farmer's market instead of the grocery store, you reduce the amount of petroleum consumed in transporting the food by as much as 95 percent. So, this summer be a member of our Green Team and THINK FRESH!

Board of Directors Meeting June 24, 2009

The Board of Directors met on June 24, 2009 and the following people were present: Rabbi Barsky, Cantor Raizen, Jody Blazar, Alan Chesen, Ted Cooper, Mark Feuer, Steve Fraim, Mike Freed, Annette Fredenburgh, Joel Frydman, David Fuchsman, Marc Katz, Cheryl Levine, Norman Lewis, Bernie O'Koon, Marlene Pinsky, Bernie Rabinowitz, Lee Schear, Mary Rita Weissman.

President, David Fuchsman called the meeting to order. He welcomed new board members and presented the agenda.

Rabbi Barsky gave a brief update on his community activities for the last few months. In April he presided at a Seder for Friendship Village and offered the benediction at the dedication of the new assisted care wing. In May, he did the benediction at the Annual dinner of the Urban League and also at Senior Citizens Day at Hara Arena. He is a member of the Montgomery County Task Force for Ex-offender Re-entry, participating in both the Clergy Caucus and the Employment Work Group. Rabbi is negotiating with UD to co-teach a graduate seminar in the theology department next spring, to be held at Beth Abraham..

Lee Schear presented the Operating Budget for the fiscal year ending May 31, 2009. He also presented the 2009-2010 Budget. Because of a severe shortfall in bingo revenue, the budget for 2009-2010 will show a significant deficit. In an effort to bring in more revenue, and protect the Foundation, a Planned Giving Campaign is being put in place, under the guidance of Chuck Wolfe. There will also be an Endowment Campaign, with Steve Horenstein as Chair, to raise more immediate funds.

Lee and Mark Feuer also presented some changes to the current Beth Abraham Foundation. One-third of the existing Foundation balance has been re-invested into safer instruments. They should get a return of three to four percent. Mark proposed a resolution to approve the following people as Trustees of the Foundation: Bill Schoenfeld - term expires May 31, 2012; Felix Weil - term expires May 31, 2010; Steve Horenstein - term expires May 31, 2014; Mark Feuer - term expires May 31, 2011; Susie Katz - term expires May 31, 2013.

Mary Rita Weissman moved to accept the resolution and Bernie Rabinowitz seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

David Fuchsman told the Board that Beth Jacob has voted to form an exploratory committee to begin looking at the possibility of a merger of the two Synagogues. Bernie Rabinowitz moved to form a committee of eight to begin discussions with Beth Jacob. Mary Rita Weissman seconded. The motion passed unanimously. David will appoint the members of the committee and will announce them at the next board meeting.

David gave a report from the dues committee. The committee members are David Fuchsman, Scott Liberman and Susie Katz. The synagogue will not increase dues this year, but the hope is, those who are able will pay at least a 10% increase on a voluntarily basis. He also explained the current dues categories and reported the committee will evaluate these with some possible changes next year. Dues statements will be going out next week. The committee also recommended that the "first year free membership" rule be eliminated. Lee Schear moved to accept this recommendation and Bernie Rabinowitz moved to second. The recommendation passed unanimously.

David announced the members of the current Executive Committee: David Fuchsman, Scott Liberman, Ralph Williams, Joel Frydman, Lee Schear, Bernie O'Koon, Mark Feuer, Susie Katz, Steve Horenstein and Ellen Leffak. He also announced the following committee chair people: Building – Matt Arnovitz; Membership – Meryl Hattenbach; Personnel – Mary Ritz Weissman; Finance – Mike Freed; Congregational Learning – Norm Lewis and Mark Feingold; Cemetery – Steve Fraim. He asked the Board to approve the appointment of Matt Arnovitz and Meryl Hattenbach because, contrary to the constitution, these two chairs will not be board members. Steve Fraim moved to accept the appointments and Alan Chesen seconded. The motion passed unanimously. David also announced the membership of the Finance Committee: Joel Frydman, Bernie Rabinowitz and Steve Horenstein. More of the committee membership will be announced next month.

David announced the formation of an Evaluation Committee to oversee the yearly evaluations of the Rabbi and the Cantor. Mary Rita Weissman will chair the committee as part of her personnel chair responsibilities, which will be made up of six people, three chosen by the Rabbi and the Cantor and three chosen by David. There will be two committees, one for the Rabbi and one for the Cantor. Jody Blazar moved to accept this recommendation and Bernie O'Koon seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

David adjourned the meeting.

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Times for Shabbat and Yom Tov Candle Lighting & Services

Friday, July 3

Shacharit 9:00 a.m.
Candle Lighting 8:50 p.m.

Saturday, July 4

Shacharit 9:00 a.m.
Havdalah 9:53 p.m.

Friday, July 10

Kabbalat Shabbat 5:30 p.m.
Candle Lighting 8:49 p.m.

Saturday, July 11

Shacharit 9:00 a.m.
Havdalah 9:51 p.m.

Friday, July 17

Shabbat Under the Stars 7:30 p.m.
Candle Lighting 8:45 p.m.

Saturday, July 18

Shacharit 9:00 a.m.
Havdalah 9:47 p.m.

Friday, July 24

Shacharit 9:00 a.m.
Candle Lighting 8:40 p.m.

Saturday, July 25

Shacharit 9:00 a.m.
Havdalah 9:42 p.m.

Friday, July 31

Mincha 6:00 p.m.
Shabbat with a Beat 6:15 p.m.
Candle Lighting 8:34 p.m.

Saturday, August 1

Shacharit 9:00 a.m.
Havdalah 9:36 p.m.

FREE RIDES TO SHABBAT SERVICES AND EVENTS

If you need transportation to any Beth Abraham Shabbat service or Shabbat event, please call the office (293-9520) at least a few days before the service or event and the synagogue will help you find a ride. If you would like to volunteer to be a driver either on a regular basis or for a particular event, please contact the office at 293-9520. This is a project of the Beth Abraham Social Action Committee.