



# BAT YAM MATTERS

Number 112    May-August 2020    Iyar/Elul 5780

## BAT YAM TEMPLE OF THE ISLANDS

*A Jewish congregation serving residents and guests of Sanibel, Captiva, Fort Myers, and surrounding communities, providing a place of worship in the Reform tradition and creating a welcoming and extended Jewish family*

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### *A Note about Our Newsletter*

Beginning with this issue, *Bat Yam Matters* is under new management. Sally Sacks and Tanya Hochschild are co-editors, and we appreciate we have big shoes to fill. Longtime newsletter editor Marcia Rudin was more than generous during the transference, giving us notes, advice and back copies. We are also deeply grateful for Barbara Freeman's editing and formatting assistance on this new issue.

The speed with which we had to put the May edition to bed – two weeks – was daunting, since neither of us was familiar with what goes into producing a newsletter. One thing we are sure of, however, is the purpose of the newsletter. The title says it all: *BAT YAM MATTERS*.

In these days of the unprecedented coronavirus pandemic, the strong connection among the Rabbi, the Cantor and the members of our congregation is more important than ever. Whether you are still living in Florida or have returned to your northern home, we will strive to help maintain that connection with *Bat Yam Matters*.

~ Tanya Hochschild and Sally Sacks

#### **FRIDAY NIGHT SHABBAT WELCOME**

Please join Rabbi Fuchs and Cantor Simon for *SHABBAT WELCOME* with prayers, songs, and a comment on the *Torah* portion of the week, every Friday at 7:00 p.m., on Zoom, or as simulcast on the *Bat Yam Temple of the Islands* Facebook homepage and on our website [www.batyam.org](http://www.batyam.org).

#### **COFFEE WITH THE RABBI**

Every Wednesday morning at 11:00 a.m. on Zoom through at least May 27. Invites via email.

#### **SATURDAY CLASSES AT 9:45 A.M. IN MAY ON ZOOM**

May 2 – Our Glorious Holiness Code (Leviticus ch.19) and an important message from the Prophet Amos (Amos ch. 9)

May 9 – What You Learn from Our First Listing of Holy Days and Festivals (Leviticus ch. 23)

May 16 – A Wonderful Vision of Hope (Jeremiah 25:1 -26:2)

May 23 – A Troubling Passage, but God's Love for Israel Triumphs over Anger (Hosea 2:1-22)

May 30 – *SHAVUOT* – A Wonderful Example of Reform Jewish Thinking

#### **FOR TECH HELP:**

Email Garry Weiss at [gsw@gmail.com](mailto:gsw@gmail.com) or Ron Chaddock at [rchaddoc@gmail.com](mailto:rchaddoc@gmail.com).

## BAT YAM'S HOLOCAUST TORAH

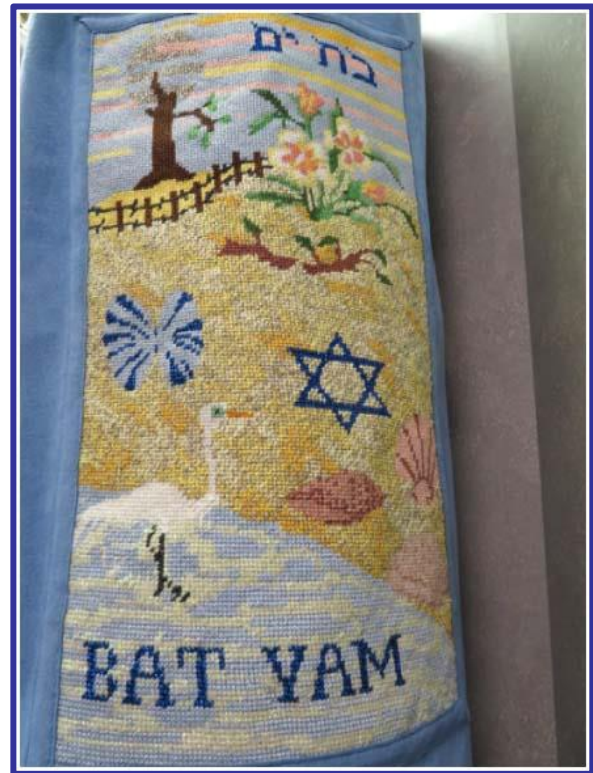
by Tanya Hochschild

How did it happen that a small Reform congregation on a barrier island off the coast of Southwest Florida, USA, acquired a Czechoslovakian *Holocaust Torah*?

The quest began in February, 1991, when 61 Sanibellians met at Sanibel Congregational UCC to develop plans and organize goals at what was the first congregational meeting. At the next meeting in March, 1991, under the skillful guidance of Leonard and Ann Arnoff, they set their goals and priorities and developed their mission statement. They voted for how they saw the congregation going forward. For the purposes of this article, three votes will be mentioned. There was a majority of votes for using their own *Torah* regularly at *Shabbat* services. They voted to hire a rabbi. They voted to affiliate with SCUCC and share the church building. One of the first decisions was to affiliate with the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, linking us to more than 850 Reform congregations in the USA and Canada.

Mel Bleiberg became the first President. Rabbi Karen Soria became the first Rabbi, but acquiring a *Torah* took a little longer. Mel was aware of "Holocaust *Torahs*." These were sacred scrolls which Westminster Synagogue in London had gathered from the disused Michle Synagogue in Prague, where 1,564 had lain in piles for more than 20 years. The Nazis had anticipated exhibiting them and other ceremonial objects as relics of a dead culture.

After the scrolls had been unpacked and numbered, a committee distributed them to synagogues around the world. They are on "permanent loan." Each scroll bears a brass tablet with a number corresponding to the number on a certificate that describes the origin of the scroll and any known particulars.



Needlepoint cover for Bat Yam's Czechoslovakian Torah by Ann Arnoff

Mel made six telephone calls to Westminster Holocaust Museum, to the offices of the Memorial Scrolls Trust, requesting a *Torah*, all to no avail. He was told the congregation was too small. But when Ingaborg Mauksch, a Holocaust survivor and a member of *Bat Yam*, visited London and told her story, *Bat Yam* was allocated a Czech *Torah*, which came from Boscovitz, a city 100 miles south of Prague. Our *Torah* was written in the nineteenth century.

This became very personal for Ann Arnoff, as her family roots were in Prague. She and Leonard sent \$1,000 to transport the scroll from London to Miami. The *Torah* needed a cover, so Ann designed and needlepointed a special mantle for this special *Torah*. The mantle tells

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## ***Continued***

a story. In the upper left-hand corner is a barbed wired fence and behind the fence is a barren tree, with one limb full of leaves. The tree is a symbol of the Holocaust and the barren limbs the loss of lives, but the living limb gives the *Torah* new life. There is a yellow hibiscus to symbolize the tropics where we live. The Star of David sparkling in gold thread lies on the sand. Ann said this meant Jews have found their place on this island. Four shells lie on the beach: the butterfly shell, which commemorates the death of the Arnoffs' young daughter, who flew away too soon; the alphabet shell for her learned husband, Leonard; the junonia shell for her daughter, Susan; and the pink scallop for Ann. A great egret denotes man's inhumanity to animals. For a while, fashion dictated egrets were to be killed for their feathers. Floating in the water is the name *Bat Yam*.

The Yad was a gift from Ken and Henny Karasin, parents of our congregant Elissa. They had found it in a bazaar in Teheran in the late '70s. It was tarnished and neglected. They returned home and cleaned it, restoring it to its original beauty. They discovered it had been made between 1865 and 1890. A Hebrew name is inscribed on it, and they felt it probably belonged to a Russian congregation. The Yad's history is unknown, but it must be assumed that the original synagogue was destroyed. The Karasins felt it was appropriate to rededicate the Yad, as a symbol of a lost Jewish Russian congregation to complement our Holocaust *Torah*.

The Rev. Ran Niehoff received the *Torah* during the summer. After speaking to Mel, who was up north, he carefully locked it up in a cabinet in his church office. This is where it stayed during the summers when the congregants

went up north. Initially, Mel thought he would carry it back and forth, but the strong sentiments of Rev. Niehoff's convictions swayed Mel, who said, "That's no way to treat a *Torah*!" The kindness and the support extended to *Bat Yam* by SCUCC was the catalyst needed for the growth of *Bat Yam Temple of the Islands*.

When the season began, the ceremony of the rededication of the *Torah* occurred. It was held in the sanctuary of the church to accommodate members of both the synagogue and church congregations.

Mel and Shirley Bleiberg wrote a moving service with the help of Bernette Jaffee and Ken Karasin. The ceremony proceeded with Ann and Susan Arnoff presenting the *Torah* to Rabbi Karen Soria and the congregation of *Temple Bat Yam*. The Rabbi described the *Torah* and its history to the congregation. Mel Bleiberg and Ken Karasin walked down the center aisle of the sanctuary, unrolling the holy scriptures from the front of the room all the way to the back. The Rabbi requested those sitting on the aisle to step forward with their hands outstretched and hold up the *Torah* scroll as it passed them. Each guest cradled it in their hands so that it could be held with reverence and joy while words of consecration were pronounced. It was a moving moment and a "once-in-a-lifetime experience" for all present. Mel remembers, "There was not a dry eye in the sanctuary."

Prior to this wonderful occasion, a number of ties bound members of both congregations; but many agree with Mel who labeled that moment as the official "bonding" of our two congregations. We are grateful and appreciative of the church's role in our history.

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The church allotted a corner of Fellowship Hall for the Ark. Irv Stein, a *Bat Yam* congregant, the architect of the Ark, had certain requirements to fulfil. The goal was a structure that safely stored and showcased the *Torah* scrolls, plus items used in services. The design should be reminiscent of Mt. Sinai (central to the story of Moses receiving the law in the Biblical tradition) – hence the “peak” toward which the Ark rises.

Upon completion, it was consecrated in Dr. E. Leonard Arnoff’s memory at services on December 11, 1992, in Fellowship Hall. Our

historic *Torah*, together with another donated by Benno and Becky Kon, had found a home.

The Holocaust *Torah* was read for the first time in 56 years during the celebration of *Rosh Hashanah*, 1995/5756. Then as now, when the *Torah* is carried through the congregation on a Friday night, in Ann’s words, “Remember it carries many generations of Jews and the memory of the Shoah.”

**Please note:** *We have a limited number of upgraded DVDs of the December 4, 1991, Torah dedication. If you would like to experience this “once-in-a-lifetime” event yourself, call Tanya at 239-482-5346.*

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## **Celebrating Earth Day’s 50th**

Riv Swartz and Rabbi Fuchs attended (virtually) an event of “Together a Way Forward,” a unique organization honoring Earth Day. Riv’s report follows:

“Together a Way Forward” is dedicated to nurturing and improving the environment as part of a local interfaith initiative. Six houses of worship from the islands, including *Bat Yam*, joined together to celebrate and care for our planet, Earth.

Wednesday, April 22, marked the historic anniversary of the first Earth Day, which took place in 1970. The Together group wished to commemorate this 50-year achievement by bringing the people of the islands together in celebration. However, the emergence of the coronavirus necessitated a change of plans.

Instead the Together group created a meaningful collection of readings entitled “HONORING EARTH TOGETHER 2020.” Rabbi Fuchs entered a meaningful contribution to this endeavor. If you wish to be inspired by these readings, please email [togetherawayforward@gmail.com](mailto:togetherawayforward@gmail.com) to request a copy.

The collection will also be posted on the Together – A Way Forward Facebook page. On Wednesday April, 22, church bells resonated throughout the islands from Saint Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church, as well as from Captiva Chapel by the Sea. Islanders were invited to ring their own bells or light a candle in unison from their own homes. Separately, they celebrated the Earth, together.



## RABBI FUCHS REFLECTS

The coronavirus crisis has confronted us with circumstances few of us could have imagined only a few months ago. Our lives have changed – radically, but one look at the news, with people standing outside in frigid weather on long lines, waiting for food, or a test, spaced at least six feet apart, should let us know how blessed we are to be here in Southwest Florida.



Rabbi Stephen Fuchs

The numbers of lives lost and afflicted stagger us. And the thousands on the front lines fighting the virus and caring for the sick inspire us.

Numbers? No, they are real people who could easily be our loved ones or ourselves. They are the embodiment of God's image, a sacred act of creation.

Poet Hannah Senesh, who parachuted behind enemy lines and was tortured and executed at age 23 for aiding the Partisans who resisted Hitler, wrote, (Ashrei ha-Gafrur in the original Hebrew) "Blessed is the Match."

*Blessed is the moth consumed in kindling flame.*

*Blessed is the flame that burns in the heart's secret places.*

*Blessed is the heart with strength to stop its beating for honor's sake.*

*Blessed is the match consumed in kindling flame.*

We offer our profound gratitude to all who have risked or given their lives so that the flames in others will continue to burn. Victor Frankl, the famous neurologist and psychiatrist, who survived Theresienstadt and Auschwitz and later wrote *Man's Search for Meaning*, taught, "Life is never made unbearable by circumstances, but only by lack of purpose and meaning."

Yes, our lives have changed, and we all feel frustrated and powerless to make a difference. But not being able to do all we wish to do should never stop us from acting as Frankl urged, with purpose and meaning to do whatever we can.

- Let us do all we can to remain healthy. Hand washing, sanitizing and physical distancing, cannot be optional.
- Drink plenty of water, eat healthy foods and try to get sufficient sleep.
- Seek new ways – in our enforced leisure – to keep our minds occupied.
- Reach out with phone calls, emails and letters to those who are alone.
- Donate what you can to organizations that make a difference.

In recent weeks I have released \$1,000 of my Discretionary Fund to F.I.S.H. because my experience on the Island has shown me how efficiently and effectively they use the funds we contribute to them.

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As a congregation, *Bat Yam* was the first on the Island to announce a switch from in-person events to digital activities to remain connected and offer comfort to our members and the wider community.

We all owe a debt of gratitude to our technological wizards, Michael Samet, Ron and Janice Chaddock, Don Breiter, Garry Weiss and Dave Waks for making possible our *Shabbat* Welcome, *Shabbat* Morning classes and our Wednesday Coffee Hour. I shudder to think where we would be without them.

A special shoutout goes to Dave Waks, who worked tirelessly for hours with Cantor Simon and myself to ensure our Passover *seder* would go well.

The effort paid off. Our *seder* reached homes from Hawaii to Germany. Our other offerings reach far more people in more places than those who were able to attend in person before the current crisis.

Recently, many of us learned that the famous song “Over the Rainbow” was not just written to express a little girl’s hope to escape Kansas in the 1939 movie, *The Wizard of Oz*.

Rather, the song’s Jewish composers, Harold Arlen (nee Hyman Arluck) and Yip Harburg (nee Isidore Hochberg) had something greater in mind. Seeing the storm clouds gathering over Europe after *Kristallnacht* they were dreaming of land over “the rainbow” of their people’s suffering: Israel.

As we confront the changes in our lives the coronavirus has wrought, I am so proud that *Bat Yam* is looking “over the rainbow.” With people stepping forward to meet the current challenge with courage and creativity, we shall soon “wake up with the clouds far behind” to embrace a bright and sunny future.

~ *Rabbi Stephen Fuchs*



## CONDOLENCES

The congregation extends heartfelt condolences to Dorothy and Morton Zablotzky on the death of Dorothy’s brother, Harry Scharf of Cleveland, Ohio, on April 21 and her sister, Beverly Friedman, who predeceased Harry earlier this year.

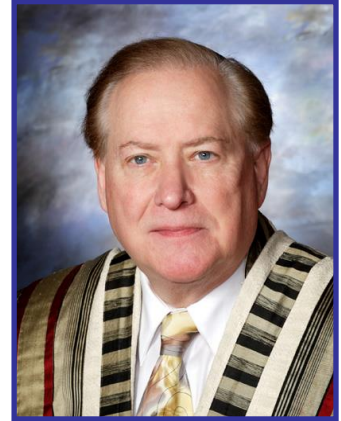
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The congregation extends heartfelt condolences to Alan and Edina Lessack on the death of Edina’s lifelong friend, Elaine Sherman.



## ***Shavuot – the Festival of Weeks*** ***“The Time of the Giving of the Torah”***

The Festival of *Shavuot* is the festival holiday occurring 50 days after Passover begins (Pentacost), on which we traditionally celebrate the giving of the *Torah* to the Jewish People standing at the foot of Mt. Sinai. It is unlike other Jewish holidays in that it has no prescribed *mitzvot* (*Torah* commandments) other than traditional festival observances of meals (especially dairy foods) and merriment and the traditional holiday observances of special prayer services and the required abstention from work. However, it is also characterized by many *minhagim* (customs). One of these customs is the recitation of *Yizkor* (Prayers of Remembrance) – which is recited only four times a year.



**Cantor Murray Simon**

My dear friend and colleague, Rabbi/Cantor Jeffrey Myers of the Tree of Life synagogue of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (yes, that Tree of Life congregation) wrote this beautiful and timely Prayer for *Yizkor* that I would like to share with you.

**Avinu Shebashamayim, Our God in Heaven, COVID-19 reminds us that we are all created equally in Your image. You implanted in each of us a Divine Spark, and with it, the capacity to achieve greatness, if we would only use these gifts wisely. We mourn the immense toll that this virus has taken, and continues to take. Help us to recognize that each death represents not a statistic, but a human being who contributed to Your world, who leaves behind family and friends, and work yet unfinished. May this pandemic remind us of the sacred value of every human life, and that our answer to your question of Cain is a firm rejection of his values. We are our brother's and sister's keepers, no matter their color, faith or sexual orientation. May the bravery of all in the medical field continue to demonstrate godliness in the world, and may Your Divine Inspiration direct researchers to find treatments to restrain this virus. May Your Divine Wisdom stimulate leaders to create appropriate strategies to lead us through these days fraught with fear. May Your Divine Love comfort all those who mourn the loss of their loved ones. May all the departed rest in peace. And let us say: Amen.**

Please be well and stay healthy through these next few months until we see each other again in the fall. *Zei Gezunt!*

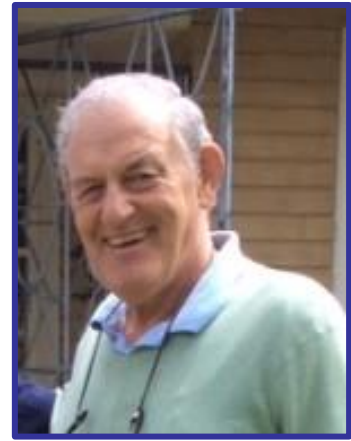
*B'Shalom,*

*Cantor Murray E. Simon.*

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Congregants,

I am privileged to bring you a largely positive report of our first month in operation as the new board. I say “largely positive” because I also need to acknowledge the discord which existed in our congregation. Congregants and former congregants alike have concentrated on their own perceptions of what happened, some on governance and management, others on philosophy or personality. Our new board believes in moving forward in harmony. I personally am making every effort to reach out to all of you, and I expect the other trustees and committee leaders to do the same. We are all living under the strain of COVID-19, but we do know that this virus will pass and the world will eventually heal. I am personally committed to doing whatever it takes to ensure that *Bat Yam* will heal too!



Michael Hochschild,  
President

Since the formation of our new leadership team, we have:

- extended our season in order to find ways to bring our community together virtually during this time of isolation;
- already enjoyed five weeks of Friday night virtual *Shabbat Welcomes*, compliments of our Rabbi and Cantor (going forward these sessions will be available via Zoom, the *Bat Yam Temple of the Islands* Facebook homepage, and the [www.batyam.org](http://www.batyam.org) website);
- continued seamlessly with upwards of 40 people attending the Rabbi’s Saturday morning *Shabbat* classes via Zoom;
- enjoyed a first for all of us, a virtual *seder*, attended “live” by 94 congregants from as far away as Hawaii and Germany, and later viewed by 156, to date, on YouTube;
- had 43 people gather at our Rabbi’s first Wednesday morning “Coffee with the Rabbi”;
- introduced our brand-new Technology Committee of six, which has not only made all of the above possible, but also has enabled many congregants to become comfortable with modern technology, allowing us to enjoy the resulting benefits; and
- published this edition of *Bat Yam Matters*, with only two weeks’ notice, which reflects the dedication of everyone involved and our new “let’s get it done” ethic.

The aim of our new lay leadership team is to be open, transparent, diverse and inclusive. We invite calls from any congregant who may have feedback, suggestions, complaints, compliments, questions or new ideas. Telephone lines to myself (917-561-7888), 1<sup>st</sup> VP Janice Block Chaddock (312-520-0603), or 2<sup>nd</sup> VP Bob Schoen (630-561-7976) are always open!

Board trustees and *Bat Yam* committee leaders meet regularly via phone or Zoom to plan new programs, solve problems, and share innovations which we may want to introduce. As we move

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on, we fully expect this menu of tasks to contain many fewer problems and much more innovation.

In real life, however, there is uncertainty and complications, and we are going to count on you for your support and ideas until we once more live in an unfettered world.

Amongst our friends and families, we have unfortunately had word of some cases of coronavirus. Those afflicted are recovering or have recovered, but tragically we know of some who have passed. Dr. Bachman, at our first virtual Coffee with the Rabbi, pleaded with all of us not to take chances and to remain safe, after reporting several cases in his own family. That is wise advice and not to be taken lightly.

May all of you and your families stay safe and healthy,

*Michael*

Michael Hochschild

President, *Bat Yam Temple of the Islands*

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## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### Committee Chairs

**Caring:** Sandy Teger

**Concert:** Maria Hochschild

**Development:** Peter Hochschild

**Education:** Vickie Fuchs

**Finance:** Peter Saltz

**Governance:** Janice Block Chaddock

**Membership:** Judy Adler, Caren Schoen

**Program:** Alan Lessack

**Publicity & Communications:**

Tanya Hochschild, Sally Sacks

**Ritual:** Tanya Hochschild

**Social Action:** Annette Pacyga, Garry Weiss

**Technology:** Michael Samet

**Tzedakah:** Vickie Fuchs

**Venue & Security:**

Howard Lorsch, Ed Greenberg

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## CARING COMMITTEE

I have been asked to fill the role of Chair of the Caring Committee. I have been blessed with wonderful volunteers to help in this, including Elissa Karasin-Samet, Caren Schoen, Edina Lessack and Sally Sacks. This group exists to provide “virtual hugs” to those who may need them. We will identify those who may benefit from phone calls, funnel information to/from the Rabbi, and make ourselves available to talk or (in the future) visit. We would be happy to have others who would like to join us. Please email me at Sandy Teger [sandrateger@gmail.com](mailto:sandrateger@gmail.com). Our other committee members and their emails are Elissa Karasin-Samet ([elissakarasinsamet@gmail.com](mailto:elissakarasinsamet@gmail.com)), Caren Schoen ([chschoen@yahoo.com](mailto:chschoen@yahoo.com)), Edina Lessack ([edinalessack@gmail.com](mailto:edinalessack@gmail.com)), and Sally Sacks ([asacks118@gmail.com](mailto:asacks118@gmail.com)).

~ Sandy Teger

## CONCERT COMMITTEE

I am excited to be chairing the Concert Committee for next year's performance. As you can imagine, there is a lot of work to be done, so I would be most grateful if anybody out there would like to be a part of this committee. Should you be interested in helping, kindly email me at [cbouloux@aol.com](mailto:cbouloux@aol.com) or call 484-213-9791. With thanks.

~ **Maria Hochschild**

## DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The Development Committee is focused on growing contributions to *Bat Yam* that will support both the mission and the purpose of the congregation. *Bat Yam's* mission is to provide a place of worship in the Jewish Reform tradition and to create a fully welcoming and extended Jewish family. *Bat Yam's* purpose is to foster the principles of Judaism and to help ensure the continuity of the Jewish people by worship, education, community service, and interfaith activities. Any congregants with fundraising ideas or who would like to join the Development Committee effort are encouraged to contact Peter Hochschild at [peter.hochschild@traxys.com](mailto:peter.hochschild@traxys.com).

~ **Peter Hochschild**

## EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Thank you to adult education presenters for the 2019-2020 season! Our adult education season was amazing this year! We had fabulous presenters teaching us about a wide range of subjects. In November we heard a report by Dr. Ellen Feingold entitled "Two Old Cases and One New Case of Infertility," and Barry Fulmer taught us about Emma Lazarus. In December, Dr. Parvis Sadighi taught us about the origins of the Muslim religion, and we were fascinated to learn what it was like for a Jewish person to grow up in a Muslim country. Sid and Jane Picker taught us about Russian perspectives on Russia-U.S. relations. In January, we learned from Alan Lessack about Ethiopian Jews fulfilling their dream of becoming Israelis, and Gil Mann taught us more about his book: *Sex, God, Christmas, and Jews*. Lewis Schneider taught us about death, immortality, and resurrection in Judaism, and the last Saturday in January we practically had standing room only when Nir Cabaretti spoke to us. Thank you, Edina, for encouraging him to teach us!

On a totally different subject, we learned about what DNA tells us about ancient migrations and interactions from Kay Sadighi. We had two wonderful sessions taught by Don Breiter and Debbie Gurman about their search for relatives in Europe, particularly the Bassano family. Dr. Mort Tavel taught us about health tips, tricks, and myths; and we asked lots of questions about snake oil! The first week in March, we were very lucky to have Rabbi Jim Rudin teach a class entitled "How Jews Invented Hollywood: An Empire of Their Own."

Unfortunately, because of the coronavirus pandemic, as of March 11 all group services and classes were cancelled for the rest of the season. We had some wonderful sessions lined up and

hope people's schedules will permit them to teach us next season. Thank you again to our lay presenters, you enriched our lives so much!

If you have an idea for a class or if you'd like to teach a class next season, please contact Vickie Fuchs at [vfuchs@gmail.com](mailto:vfuchs@gmail.com).

~ **Vickie Fuchs**

## **FINANCE COMMITTEE**

The Finance Committee recommends fiscal operation policies to the Board of Trustees. The committee also formulates a budget for the congregation for the ensuing fiscal year, which is presented, adopted and/or amended by the Board of Trustees, and later by the congregation members eligible to vote at the annual meeting. The Finance Committee also submits to the Board of Trustees an annual audit of the congregation's fiscal operations for the previous fiscal year. The members of the *Bat Yam* Finance Committee are Peter Saltz (chair), Elissa Karasin-Samet (treasurer), Janice Block Chaddock, Sue Danford, Alan Lessack, Stan Levine, and Marty Packard.

~ **Peter Saltz**

## **GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

The Governance Committee is responsible for reviewing the governance structures, policies, practices and procedures of the organization, including the bylaws, and reporting its findings and recommendations to the Board of Trustees. The Governance Committee is also responsible for monitoring compliance with nonprofit laws and governance regulation and, accordingly, providing prudent and timely guidance to the Board. Finally, the new *Bat Yam* Governance Committee will support and encourage opportunities for board development and committee leadership development. The members of the Governance Committee are Janice Block Chaddock (chair), Robyn Cook, Michael Samet, and Helane Smith.

~ **Janice Block Chaddock**

## **MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE**

The Membership Committee is eager to reach out to prospective members and invite them to join our special community. We would like to welcome newer members who may not have been given the opportunity to meet other members.

We have been updating our membership directory and in that regard are asking our members to please give us any new information such as cell phone numbers or email addresses that might have changed since the last directory was published. We would also like to include the months you plan to be on Sanibel for the calendar year 20/21. We recognize that our current pandemic is putting many of your plans in a state of flux; but thinking positively, we would like to include that information whenever possible.

If anyone knows of unaffiliated Jewish residents or snowbirds, please share their names and contact numbers with either of us: Judy at [jfadler@aol.com](mailto:jfadler@aol.com) or Caren at [chschoen@yahoo.com](mailto:chschoen@yahoo.com).

~ Judy Adler and Caren Schoen

## PROGRAM COMMITTEE

The program committee is responsible for all special events and programs. These include speakers, scholars-in-residence, holiday programs, and other events. We invite anyone interested in joining the committee to contact me at [allessack@sbcglobal.net](mailto:allessack@sbcglobal.net).

~ Alan Lessack

## PUBLICITY & COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

What news of *Bat Yam Temple of the Islands* would you like to see published in any of the Island newspapers? Or would you prefer seeing an eblast from the Chamber of Commerce, or an article in *L'Chayim*, The Jewish Federation's newsletter? Perhaps all of the above and more? Friedrich Jaeger, publisher of *Times of the Islands*, a high profile, award-winning publication, offered the services of his staff to review our monthly *Bat Yam Matters* newsletter and pull out items for his magazine.

So, read all about us in all of the above publications! For further information on deadlines, email Tanya Hochschild at [tutsie@centurylink.net](mailto:tutsie@centurylink.net).

~ Tanya Hochschild and Sally Sacks

## RITUAL COMMITTEE

I am honored to be serving as the Ritual Committee Chair with a wonderful group of committee members: Ed Greenberg, Edina Lessack, Jocelyn Saltz and Alan Fisher.

One of our tasks is to invite members to enjoy honors during our High Holiday and *Shabbat* services. To that end, please let us know when you have a *Simcha*, or when family are visiting, so we can celebrate by offering you and your family honors on your special event. Even without a special occasion, we would appreciate your letting us know if you have a wish to participate in any of the available honors.

Rabbi Fuchs has further enhanced our Jewish year by appointing the Ritual Committee to prepare talks to be given on the evening we celebrate holidays such as *Hanukkah*, *Tu B'Shvat*, and *Purim*, so together we learn the origins, purpose and current relevance of the Jewish calendar.

~ Tanya Hochschild

## SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE

Our Social Action Committee is highly engaged in helping the Immokalee farmworkers, F.I.S.H., and the Southwest Florida immigrant community during the COVID-19 crisis. Committee co-chairs are Annette Pacyga and Garry Weiss, and committee members thus far include *Bat Yam*

congregants Janice Block Chaddock, Alan Fisher, Beth Weiss, and local church congregants James Davis and Michael Miller. Rabbi Stephen Fuchs provides significant time and support to the Social Action Committee. Please contact Annette or Garry if you would like more information or to join us.

Congregants have asked Garry to publish links where they can donate or contribute in some way. [Candid.org](https://candid.org) has compiled a list of pandemic relief funds from around the country with local search capability: <https://candid.org/explore-issues/coronavirus/funds>. The specific relief fund for Southwest Florida is <https://floridacommunity.com/swflrelief/>.

~ Annette Pacyga and Garry Weiss

## TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT COMMITTEE

The *Bat Yam* we know and love today is not the *Bat Yam* that was started in 1991. To be sure, neither is the state of the world, nor the challenges we face in running our congregation. To meet these challenges, we, like the rest of the world, need to rely on the newest, most powerful digital technologies.

Over time, *Bat Yam* has increased its technological capabilities. As you know, we already make use of the audio and video projection system at SCUCC to enhance our Friday *Shabbat* service during the winter months. Our Rabbi, President and Board of Directors communicate with the members via the regular use of email. *Bat Yam*, as an organization, communicates with the rest of the world via the Internet and its website, [www.batyam.org](http://www.batyam.org).

Just a few short years ago, *Bat Yam* hardly used email, and our website was just a direct post of the newsletter. Nevertheless, those two pieces of technology were deemed sufficient to meet most of our internal and external communications needs.

But today, both external events and internal growth and innovation require us to place greater reliance and emphasis on new digital technologies. Our newest use of technology includes Zoom conferencing and Facebook Live for live *Shabbat Welcome* broadcasts and Zoom for Saturday morning *Torah* classes and Coffee with the Rabbi on Wednesdays.

Clearly, it is imperative that we continue to improve and upgrade our use of these technologies, both for your benefit and the administration of the synagogue. To that end, *Bat Yam* has created a new Technology Support Committee, reporting to the Board of Directors. The committee consists of Don Breiter, Ron Chaddock, Janice Block Chaddock, Mike Samet (Chair), Dave Waks, and Gary Weiss. These individuals bring a broad array of tech knowledge and capability to the table. Our goal is to create a formal way of providing *Bat Yam* members, clergy, and administrators with the technology and support that will make the organization run efficiently, powerfully, productively and enjoyably, focusing on technologies for the running of religious services, classes, meetings, and events; communications and Internet applications; and the administration of the institution.



Of course, we are continuing to run our email and [batyam.org](http://batyam.org) website services, and we look forward to seeing continuing improvements there. Over the next few months, the committee will be looking at various technologies to enhance all aspects of our *Bat Yam* experience, including Internet service within the SCUCC building; video, computer and Internet access during Saturday classes; and other electronics for various events during the year. We will be exploring the setting up of some form of “Help Desk” for all of this technology.

Finally, for those who would like to join the Rabbi’s Friday night *Shabbat Welcome* but are not familiar with Zoom or do not have a Facebook account and need assistance in setting one up, please contact Ron Chaddock at [rchaddoc@gmail.com](mailto:rchaddoc@gmail.com) or Garry Weiss at [gsw211@gmail.com](mailto:gsw211@gmail.com).

We look forward to making *Bat Yam* even more enjoyable through the use of technology.

~ **Michael Samet**

## **TZEDAKAH COMMITTEE**

The *Tzedakah* committee, which includes Nancy Greenberg, Nessa Adelson, Debbie Gurman, and Vickie Fuchs, would like to thank all those congregants who made donations to the *Tzedakah* fund during the 2019-2020 season. With your help, we were able to make donations on behalf of *Bat Yam Temple of the Islands* to the following:

- **Yad La Kashish**, an organization that provides food, transportation and art activities to elderly citizens of Israel.
- **Leket Israel**, an organization that benefits Israelis and particularly children who are at risk. The money will be used toward an initiative that rescues surplus meals from IDF bases, corporate cafeterias, and Israel hotel chains for redistribution to high schools and after-school programs for children at high risk. The children get food that would otherwise be wasted.
- **NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness)**. The project our donation will go toward is mental health first aid classes for one youth, one adult and one public-safety person.
- **Jewish War Veterans of Southwest Florida**. Our funds will go toward visits to VA hospitals, care for homeless veterans and care packages for Jewish soldiers.
- **Holocaust Museum and Education Center**, which works with youth to teach about prejudice and to prevent antisemitism.
- **ACT (Abuse, Counseling and Treatment)**, which provides safe, confidential and free services to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking and their children. Services include safe emergency shelter, individual and group counseling for adults and children, a 24-hour hotline, and educational outreach in schools and children’s programs.

- **The Harry Chapin Food Bank of Southwest Florida** operates an In-school Pantry Program on 10 school campuses. Schools are selected based on the highest percentages of students qualifying for subsidized meal programs. The food bank stocks the pantry with shelf-stable foods and, when possible, fresh produce.
- **Quality of Life Center** provides youth development programs for at-risk students. They use a research-based model and track each student to provide tutoring in areas of individual need.

~ Vickie Fuchs

## VENUE AND SECURITY COMMITTEE

The Board of Directors has decided to bolster our security efforts, given the importance of our ongoing needs, and focus on providing a safe and secure environment for all *Bat Yam* events and gatherings. As such, a new Venue and Security Committee was formed to plan, lead and manage all safety, security and logistical concerns for our congregation. The committee is being co-led by Eddie Greenberg and Howard Lorsch but also consists of Bob Schoen, Ron Chaddock and Michael Hochschild.

The primary mission of this new committee will be two-fold: to liaise with the Sanibel Police to ensure their presence at all Temple services, gatherings and events and to ensure that logistical coordination and preparations are completed for smooth operations at Temple throughout the year. We welcome any and all input and ask that you please contact either Eddie at [nanedg3377@gmail.com](mailto:nanedg3377@gmail.com) or Howard at [howardmlorsch@gmail.com](mailto:howardmlorsch@gmail.com) if you have any questions or concerns, or wish to assist with these important functions.

~ Ed Greenberg and Howard Lorsch

### **REFUAH SH'LEMA BEST WISHES FOR HEALING TO...**

Jeanette Keyser, Paulette Lotstein, Howard Meyer, June Patinkin,  
Esther Pokedoff, Carol Scheiber, Arlyn Stein, Irv Stein, Donald Sherman.

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Caring Committee members are also calling other congregants regularly to check in with them.



# MESSAGES



## **FROM TRUSTEE ALAN FISHER**

Thank you for allowing me to be a new Trustee of *Bat Yam*. I have been working together with the new Officers and Board of Trustees for a short time and am excited to be an active part of such a smart and dedicated group of people. I have quickly become the recipient of a tremendous outpouring of support from our Rabbi, a few old friends and a whole lot of members I'm just getting to know.

I see the future of *Bat Yam* being very bright due to the impact of this new positive energy among the Officers and Board. I truly believe this will be a significant and timely turning point in the history of *Bat Yam*. The feeling I get seeing warm and caring members moving in the same direction has given me the desire to serve *Bat Yam* in any way I can.

*Shalom,*

*Alan Fisher*

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## **FROM CORRESPONDING SECRETARY SANDY TEGER**

I was thrilled to be asked to join the Board as Corresponding Secretary. I am hoping that through this new role I will get to know more of you.

The Corresponding Secretary's job is to attend to all correspondence of the congregation and the Board of Trustees. In practice, this includes tracking *yahrzeit* dates and notifying the family during the preceding month. In addition, the job entails mailing letters of appreciation and tax receipts for donations made by members and non-members.

Several members have pointed out that there may be mistakes or omissions on the current list of *yahrzeit* dates. In the near future, I'll be emailing the list of the information we have on file, with a request to send updates to me. For those not comfortable replying by email, Riv Swartz will assist by calling those we have not heard from.

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## **FROM RECORDING SECRETARY NANCY GREENBERG**

I am so honored and pleased to be serving as Recording Secretary on the *Bat Yam* Board. I am inspired by this group's dedication, energy and love for the Temple. I've had to dust off all my writing and editing skills...who says "you can't teach an old dog new tricks"??!



## ***From the Green Team***

The Green Team is an official committee of Sanibel Congregational UCC dedicated to helping the congregation keep the church covenant, which says in part, “We will serve and support each other and do all we can to protect as well the birds, animals and plants on this fragile barrier island.” Congregants from Bat Yam work on the Green Team’s programs, and more are welcome to engage in educational and advocacy efforts.

**Jean Chandler** of SCUCC’s Green Team submitted an excerpt from an April 13, 2020, *New Yorker* article by Kate Brown, “The Pandemic Is not a Natural Disaster.” Included below are some of the article’s salient points.

COVID-19 is an ecological disaster, as well as a public health crisis. The interconnectedness of our biological lives is pushing us to reconsider our understanding of the natural world. Our picture of the human body is shifting, too. It seems less like a self-contained vessel, defined by one’s genetic code and ruled by a brain, than like a microbial ecosystem swept along in atmospheric currents, harvesting gases, bacteria, phages, fungal spores, and airborne toxins in its nets.

Infectious diseases are only one aspect of a larger, ongoing health emergency. Two-thirds of cancers have their origins in environmental toxins, accounting for millions of annual fatalities; annually 4.2 million people die from complications of respiratory illnesses caused by airborne toxins – 45,000 in the U.S. alone. Pollution from the shutdown of factories in Wuhan has been shown to have saved between 51,000-73,000 lives in China – twenty times more people than the virus has killed in Hubei province as of March 8.

This is an occasion for thinking in broad terms – pesticides from tropical banana plantations end up in Lake Superior. The air helps pollinate our plants; it also transports radioactive particles, fungal spores, bacteria and viruses. The quality of our air matters; reducing pollution in Manhattan by just one unit of particulate matter could have saved hundreds of lives.

Self-isolation is key if we are to stop the pandemic. Isolation is in itself an acknowledgement of our deep integration with our surroundings. Ms. Brown ends by saying, “To fully respond to what’s happened, we need to reflect on the worldwide ecological networks that bind all of us together.”

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## MAY - AUGUST YAHRZEITS

If you would like to have a loved one's *yahrzeit* commemorated in future issues of *Bat Yam Matters*, please send details to Sandy Teger at [sandrateger@gmail.com](mailto:sandrateger@gmail.com).

- May 4 (10 Iyar) – Helen Rebon, mother-in-law of Kathy Zoss  
May 7 (13 Iyar) – Hy Bergstein, uncle of Linda Edinburg  
May 10 (16 Iyar) – Hazel Hochschild, mother of Michael and Peter Hochschild  
May 13 (19 Iyar) – Clara Bergstein, aunt of Linda Edinburg  
May 13 (19 Iyar) – James Kasdan, father of Bonnie Kasdan  
May 18 (24 Iyar) – Alan Berke, father of Stuart Berke  
May 23 (29 Iyar) – Richard Ulrich Steinberg, father of Vickie Fuchs  
May 24 (1 Sivan) – Margaret Reese, aunt of Kathy Zoss  
May 29 (6 Sivan) – Tillie Berger, mother of David Berger
- June 1 (9 Sivan) – Frances Amdur, mother of Judy Adler  
and grandmother of Janice Chaddock  
June 6 (14 Sivan) – Helen Kramer, wife of Ron Kramer  
June 8 (16 Sivan) – Oscar Hoffman, uncle of Kathy Zoss  
June 8 (16 Sivan) – William Wallitzer, uncle of Elissa Karasin-Samet  
June 9 (17 Sivan) – Syd Ruth Zoss, mother of Kathy Zoss  
June 11 (19 Sivan) – Bogdana Zoss, grandmother of Kathy Zoss  
June 17 (25 Sivan) – Gerrit Vossen, friend of Kathy Zoss  
June 24 (2 Tamuz) – Margaret Lloyd Davis, friend of Kathy Zoss  
June 27 (5 Tamuz) – Frances Weisman, mother of Cheryl Fulmer
- July 2 (10 Tamuz) – Leo Pokedoff, father-in-law of Esther Pokedoff  
July 4 (12 Tamuz) – Orlene Shimberg, wife of Steve Shimberg  
July 5 (13 Tamuz) – Will Bergstein, father of Linda Edinburg  
July 11 (19 Tamuz) – Paul Kline, uncle of Esther Pokedoff  
July 12 (25 Tamuz) – Emma Heyman, grandmother of Jack Kohn  
July 12 (25 Tamuz) – Samuel Zoss, father of Kathy Zoss  
July 12 (25 Tamuz) – Joseph Sharf, father of Dorothy Zablotzky  
July 20 (28 Tamuz) – Fred Adler, husband of Judy Adler  
and stepfather of Janice and Ron Chaddock  
July 31 (10 Av) – Beatrice Rudin, mother of Rabbi James Rudin  
July 31 (10 Av) – Simon Hochschild, brother of Michael Hochschild
- August 4 (14 Av) – Dr. Max Kaplan, father of Marcia Rudin  
August 4 (14 Av) – Leon Lessack, father of Alan Lessack  
August 10 (20 Av) – Anna Hoffman, grandmother of Kathy Zoss  
August 12 (22 Av) – Lewis Edinburg, brother of Joel Edinburg  
August 18 (28 Av) – Sara Kline, aunt of Esther Pokedoff  
August 24 (4 Elul) – Solomon Wallitzer, grandfather of Elissa Karasin-Samet  
August 26 (6 Elul) – Leonard Hochschild, father of Michael and Peter Hochschild  
August 27 (7 Elul) – Lillian Kohn, mother of Jack Kohn  
August 28 (8 Elul) – Dorothy Lubetkin, mother of Bernard Lubetkin



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## CONTRIBUTIONS TO *BAT YAM*

**Note: Any recent contributions not yet listed will be in the next issue of *Bat Yam Matters*.**

### General

- From Michael Hochschild on behalf of a sick friend, Derek Raphael
- From Barbara & Ronald Lipman
- From Morton & Betty Tavel
- From Sandy Teger & David Waks
- From Beverley & Frank Zweiman

### Celebrations

- From Judy Adler in honor of:
  - the milestone birthday of her granddaughter Francesca Block, named after Judy's mother
  - the milestone birthday of her granddaughter Sara Block, named after Judy's grandmother
  - her son-in-law Ron Chaddock, who will be celebrating a milestone birthday in June
- From Janice Block Chaddock and Ron Chaddock in celebration of:
  - the milestone birthday in March 2020 of their daughter Frannie Block
  - the milestone birthday in March 2020 of their mother Judy Adler
  - the milestone birthday in May 2020 of their daughter Sara Block
  - the milestone birthday in June 2020 of Ron Chaddock
  - the April anniversary of Peter and Jocelyn Saltz
  - the March birthdays of Nancy Greenberg, Beth Weiss, Michael Hochschild, and Caren Schoen; the April birthdays of Allan Sacks, Alan Lessack and Toby Simon; and the May birthdays of Elissa Karasin-Samet and Edina Lessack
- From Robyn & David Cook in celebration of birthdays of Elissa Karasin-Samet, Edina Lessack, Caren Schoen, Beth Weiss and Judy Adler
- From Nancy & Ed Greenberg in celebration of goddaughter Emma Knapp's graduation from the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis, Maryland
- From Howard Lorsch in honor of Allan Sacks' 92nd birthday
- From Alan & Edina Lessack in honor of Allan Sacks' 92<sup>nd</sup> birthday
- From Peter & Jocelyn Saltz in honor of the 18<sup>th</sup> birthdays of their grandchildren Callie and Hannah
- From Sandy Teger to celebrate the wonderful people so committed to Bat Yam
- From Garry & Beth Weiss in celebration of:
  - Beth's mother Minna Rosen Perlow's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday, June 3
  - their granddaughter Charlotte Rossi's 6<sup>th</sup> birthday, July 23

### In Memory of:

- From Howard Lorsch in memory of Lois Lorsch
- From Paula Raboy in memory of Joseph Raboy

### Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

- From Adele & Steve Anish
- From Janice Block Chaddock and Ron Chaddock in honor of the March birthday of Rabbi Stephen Fuchs and the June anniversary of Vickie & Rabbi Stephen Fuchs

### Yahrzeits

- From Judy Adler in memory of her mother, Frances Amdur, whose *yahrzeit* is June 1
- From Janice Block Chaddock and Ron Chaddock in honor of Janice's grandmother Frances Amdur's *yahrzeit*
- From Elissa Karasin-Samet in honor of her father Ken Karasin's *yahrzeit*

## **BAT YAM TEMPLE OF THE ISLANDS**

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[www.batyam.org](http://www.batyam.org)

### **Rabbi**

Stephen Lewis Fuchs

### **Cantor**

Murray E. Simon

### **Officers**

President: Michael Hochschild

First VP: Janice Block Chaddock

Second VP: Bob Schoen

Treasurer: Elissa Karasin-Samet

Corresponding Secretary: Sandy Teger

Recording Secretary: Nancy Greenberg

Past President: Alan Lessack

### **Trustees**

Alan Fisher, Stan Levine, Howard Lorsch, Annette Pacyga, Garry Weiss

### **Past Presidents**

Mel Bleiberg, Ann Arnoff\*, David Crown\*, Lois Medinets\*,  
Steve Greenstein, Marty Packard, Al Kaplan, Jack Cohen, Bernard Lubetkin,  
Michael Raab, Allan Silberman, Martin Pokedoff\*, Alan Lessack, Barry Fulmer

\* Deceased