

# 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 an extended Jewish family*

Number 88

October, 2017

Tishrei/Cheshvan, 5778

## *OCTOBER BAT YAM SHABBAT WORSHIP*

All *Shabbat* services will be held at the Sanibel Congregational United of Christ, beginning at 7:30 p.m.

October 6 – Rabbi Stephen Fuchs – 7:30 p.m.

October 13 – Rabbi Stephen Fuchs – 7:30 p.m.

October 20 – Lay leader - TBA – 7:30 p.m.

October 27 - Rabbi Stephen Fuchs – 7:30 p.m.

**Rabbi Fuchs will also lead a *Sukkoth* Service on Wednesday, October 4<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 p.m.**

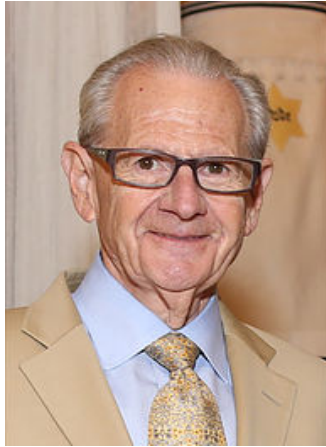
### *OUR SINCERE CONDOLENCES TO...*

...*Bat Yam* members Judith and Howard Mayer on the death of their grandson Ryan David Mayer on September 15<sup>th</sup> and to Maddy Mayor on the recent death of her partner Chip Drueding.

### *IN MEMORIAM*

Long-time *Bat Yam* member and past president Ann Arnoff died on September 24<sup>th</sup>. Condolences may be sent to her daughter Sue Spohr at 238 Shadow Wood Court, Loveland, Ohio 45140, 513-284-8232.

*[see article p. 6]*



### *President's Message*

***Shanah Tova*** to all our members and their families. This New Year, 5778 begins with a new Rabbi, Stephen Fuchs who, in just a short few days has already made an enormous impact along with his charming wife, Victoria (Vickie) Fuchs.

What kind of difference? Well, upon being hired as a rabbi, he suggested beginning the season with a *Selichot* service. Hurricane Irma altered those plans since the church, like many buildings on Sanibel, lost power. Undaunted, Rabbi and Vickie invited everyone to come to their house (having moved in just the day before). Eighteen members showed up and participated in an interactive session followed by the opportunity to socialize. All agreed it was a wonderful evening. The next innovation was to add *Tashlich* on *Rosh HaShanah* immediately following our service. Thanks go to Elissa Karasin and Michael Samet for offering their condo, just a short walk to the beach. Thinking ecologically, we threw shells into the gulf instead of bread. For those members unable

to walk to the beach, they were able to view it from the balcony. Following the brief service, twenty-six of us returned to the condo to enjoy delicious food and desserts brought by our members.

*Rosh HaShanah* services were a moving experience for me personally, as Rabbi Fuchs took time to explain why particular prayers were selected by our ancestors. These insights provided not only knowledge but an entirely new understanding of those prayers. Musically, services were enhanced by Gregg Watson, a Cantorial Soloist, and at the piano, Abigail Allison, an extraordinary musician.

One of the impressions that is ever present as we celebrate and reflect on the past year is a sense of foreboding. If we go back to the decades following World War II, we believed that the Holocaust put an end to bigotry and hatred against not only Jews but many other people in places around the world.

Unfortunately, in the past five years the period of liberalism and open borders in the European Community has gone in the opposite direction. The result is over sixty million people have fled their homes for safety; this number is staggering. Starting in Europe, leaders closing their borders and refusing to provide any assistance spread from one country to many. The extremists, who hid for decades, were emboldened and feasted on this change.

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In America we have seen these groups openly parroting their extremist views, which often carry anti-Semitic messages in addition to anti-immigrant themes. These trends are the very antithesis of the spirit we claim to present to the world.

When I get depressed at this turn of events, I come back to the words of our founding President George Washington who, in 1790 wrote to the leader of the Touro Synagogue in Newport, Rhode Island and included these famous and prophetic words.....TO BIGOTRY NO SANCTION.

As a people who have survived many Hamans and Hitlers, let us never forget the past and work in our community to foster freedom, tolerance and justice for everyone.

*Shalom.*

*Alan Lessack, President*

***THANKS FOR HIGH HOLIDAY EFFORTS TO...***

...Esta Berger and Miriam Bailey for co-chairing the *Yom Kippur* Break-the-Fast, and to all those who assisted; to Michael and Elissa Karasin Samet for hosting the luncheon after the *Taschlich* service and to all those who contributed food; to Cantorial Soloist Greg Watson, Abigail Allison, Susanna Kelly, and Kathy Zoss for their wonderful music during the services.

***ONEG SHABBAT VOLUNTEERS NEEDED***

Kathy Zoss reports that the following dates are open for *Oneg Shabbat* volunteers for the coming season:

- . Dates needing one co-host: October 6 and October 13, November 17 and November 24
- . Dates needing two co-hosts: March 2 (closest to Purim), March 9, March 16, March 30, April 6 (during Passover), April 13, April 20, April 27

Please Email Kathy at [skzoss21943@gmail.com](mailto:skzoss21943@gmail.com), telephone her at 239-362-0539, or see her at services to reserve your evening.

## *RABBI FUCHS REFLECTS*



### **In the Wake of Irma: Starting With Silence to Rebuild**

**“For You, O God, silence is praise!”  
(Psalm 65:1)**

In the face of Hurricane Irma, which disrupted and devastated the lives of many, silence is appropriate. There are no words to convey our feelings. There are no words to express our relief that we are still here. Though our property may have suffered damage, we are still here.

The season we have just shared is one of renewal and atonement. *Rosh HaShanah* celebrates the creation of the world. More specifically it celebrates the values of the Genesis creation story.

For me, the “truth” of that story is that our lives have purpose and meaning. God, having created human beings in God’s image and given us “sway over

the fish of the sea and the birds of the sky, over the beasts, over all the earth, over all that creeps upon the earth,” tells me that we humans – not the alligator or the shark – are responsible for the quality of life on this earth (Genesis 1:26). God’s hope, I believe, is that we will use our individual talents to forge a just, caring, and compassionate society on this planet.

A natural disaster challenges those ideals, but also has the potential to strengthen them. We must find the strength to recreate our world. Silence and reflection help us find that strength. One of my favorite prayers serves as an appropriate reflection: “Help us O God, to distinguish between that which is real and enduring and that which is fleeting and vain.”

Our house, our car, our boat, our furniture, all mean a lot to us. They represent years of work, and pride in what we have achieved. But all these things are “fleeting and vain.” How we live and how we use opportunities and talents to help one another – these are the real and enduring foundations on which we can build a meaningful future.

Perhaps silence is the place to start. Confronted by the disastrous sudden death of his two sons, Aaron, the High Priest of Israel, was silent. (Leviticus 10:3)

Thankfully, Irma’s impact on most of us has been less devastating, but silence is still an apt response.

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Our neighbors in the Caribbean and the Keys have suffered far more profound damage than we. Our hearts and our hands and our financial support must continue even after some weeks have passed to go out to them.

Their trauma is profound. Their fate might have been ours. As God's partners on earth, we must validate and respond with caring love to their pain. We can give them the gift of silence, listening with empathy as they describe their losses. We can give ourselves the same gift, silently contemplating how we can provide the most meaningful help to those in need.

But then we must move forward and act.

One of the reasons we build *sukkot* is to remind ourselves how fragile life is. We sit in *sukkot* with minimal protection from heat wind or rain.

Because of Irma some are still at the mercy of these elements.

We cannot undo Irma's destruction, but the future is ours to shape.

As we come together as a community – no matter where we live – my prayer is that we will face that future with hope and courage and—through our silence and our strength—help others to do the same.

*Your Rabbi, Stephen Fuchs*  
stephenfuchs@gmail.com  
[www.rabbifuchs.com](http://www.rabbifuchs.com)  
twitter: @rabbifuchs6

## *RABBI FUCHS TO RECEIVE PRESTIGIOUS AWARD ON OCTOBER 17TH*

At an awards dinner in Nashville, TN on Tuesday, October 17<sup>th</sup>, Rabbi Stephen Fuchs will receive the 2017 Vanderbilt Divinity School and Graduate Department of Religion Distinguished Alumni/ae Award.

The Divinity School award is given “to someone who has demonstrated excellence and distinction in justice-making through their work in congregational ministry, religious institutions, ecumenical organizations, community-based organizations, government or other social institutions.” The Graduate Department of Religion award is given “to someone whose scholarship, teaching, or research has advanced the understanding of religion and its formative impact in the world.”

Rabbi Fuchs earned his doctor of ministry in biblical interpretation from the Divinity School at Vanderbilt University in 1992.

We extend our congratulations to our rabbi!

## *2017-2018 SHABBAT MORNING CLASSES*

Planning is underway for the Saturday morning *Bat Yam* classes that begin in November. For this season, different individuals are responsible for planning each month's lay-led classes. Volunteers are still needed to research and present each week's program within that month's theme.

Peggy and Frank Siegel plan November classes around the general theme of Judaism and the fine arts. On November 4<sup>th</sup>, Peggy will present a background session. Norma Kohn will present a session on music on November 18<sup>th</sup>. A volunteer is needed for the November 11<sup>th</sup> session on art.

Renee Sugar has planned sessions in December on the topic of ghettos in Europe, especially focusing on their patterns of political resistance. On December 2<sup>nd</sup>, Renee will introduce the topic. On December 9<sup>th</sup>, Judy Rubin will talk about Theresienstadt, and on December 16<sup>th</sup> Andrea Smith will discuss the Warsaw Ghetto.

For January, 2018, Edina Lessack is planning programs about Jews in the entertainment industry. Irene Skolnick is overseeing the February programs, enlisting presenters on the topic of Jews in America, beginning with the revolutionary war period and moving forward to such topics as Jews in the Civil Rights movement. The March topic will be Jews in Sports, organized by Stan Levine, and Cheryl and Barry Fulmer will organize presentations for April.

Watch the November *Bat Yam* bulletin for more details about this season's classes and for details about Rabbi Fuchs' plans for his hour of each *Shabbat* morning session.

## *A TRIBUTE TO ANN ARNOFF*

Long-time *Bat Yam* member Ann Edith Arnoff, who died on September 24<sup>th</sup>, was the wife of the late Dr. E. Leonard Arnoff, proud mother of the late Janice Arnoff and Susan Arnoff Spohr, and loving grandmother to Alex and Rachel Spohr. She graduated from Ohio State University and became a psychiatric occupational therapist. She believed in contributing fully to the communities she lived in, serving as president of *Bat Yam*, the Sanibel Community Association, Nutmeg Village Condo Association, and CROW, and serving on the board of the Sanibel Captiva Community Foundation. She was Chair for the "Taste of the Islands" fundraiser on behalf of Crow and Chair of the Sanibel Community Association's shell fair.

Ann believed that the year of your birth and the date of your death didn't mean as much as the "dash" in between. She lived her life according to the belief that the quality of your life meant even more than the number of years here on earth. Ann made the most of her long life. She touched many people and improved the communities she lived in. She will be greatly missed by the *Bat Yam* community.

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

June Patinkin, William Schlackman, Hartley Kleinberg, Orlene Shimberg, Jeanette Keyser, Roselyn Kraus, Carol Scheiber, Rosamond (Riv) Swartz, Anne Joffe, Mort Levy, Don Herman, Sue Spohr, Corinne Slegel, Esta Berger, and Martin Pokedoff

*OCTOBER YAHRZEITS*

October 5 - Hazel Hochschild, mother of Michael Hochschild

October 10 - Maurice Schwadron, father of Sandra Berke

October 12 - Mildred Fulmer, mother of Barry Fulmer

October 28 - Hank Edinburg, brother of Joel Edinburg

*A POST-HURRICANE SHABBAT*

By Tanya Hochschild

At 5.30 p.m. on Friday, September 15th, seventy to eighty people gathered in a room at the Jewish Federation of Lee and Charlotte Counties to celebrate a memorable *Shabbat*. Outside the remnants of Hurricane Irma – downed trees, pooled water, and non-working traffic lights – reminded us of the reason we were there: our sanctuaries were not yet functioning. We belonged to three congregations, each represented by our rabbis, the rabbi of Temple Judea, Marc Sack, Rabbi Nicole Luna of *Beth El*, and Rabbi Stephen Fuchs of *Bat Yam*. Rabbi Marc Sack introduced Rabbi Fuchs, pointing out he had just arrived in Fort Myers for his first season at *Bat Yam*. Rabbi Fuchs said he was thrilled to see about twenty-four *Bat Yam* members there.

A celebratory mood was palpable in the room. Our voices, loud and strong, were accompanied by a flautist and a pianist. During the service, congregants were encouraged to share their hurricane stories, and with each sharing, anxiety was diluted. The message was, "We are here, we are strong." Rabbi Fuchs referred to the resilience of Jews, forged by thousands of years of history. We could handle one hurricane. There were smiles all round when the safety of the *Torahs* was mentioned. Rabbi Luna referred to people moving in with others, "Friends became family and family became friends." Alan Isaacs of the Federation invited everyone to come together more often, not because of hurricanes, but rather for celebratory reasons. At the conclusion of the service, we all enjoyed conversations, *challah*, and wine. Not wanting the evening to end, eighteen of us arranged to meet at the Timbers restaurant on Sanibel for dinner. They were delighted to see us!

*WHERE IN THE  
WORLD IS RABBI  
MYRA SOIFER?*  
My Short-Term “Plan B”  
By Rabbi Soifer

Well, it's unfortunately official. Here is the email message from the Peace Corps: “Thank you for your patience and cooperation throughout the process of legal clearance for Peace Corps service. Unfortunately, we have not yet received the results of your background investigation, and you will not be able to attend the September 17, 1017 Rwanda staging. We know this is difficult news, and deeply regret the delays in administrative processing across federal agencies...”

And so, it's on to Plan B. Back before the Presidential election, I idly pontificated that if Trump won (never imagining such a thing could actually come to pass, of course) I would flee to Cuenca, Ecuador. I had heard about Cuenca on my trip to the Galapagos; it is apparently a favored city of American ex-pats. When Trump did win, I felt compelled to do something more worthwhile than hang out as an ex-pat. Hence, the Peace Corps.

So...after the Peace Corps officially

threw me into bureaucratic limbo ...and after I got tired of moping about it...I thought about Cuenca again. I googled my way to the Yanapuma Spanish school, which offers a program of community volunteer service in the morning followed by afternoon Spanish classes. As I've wanted to improve my Spanish for some while, this seemed perfect.

So, I head to Cuenca on October 7<sup>th</sup>, returning on November 8<sup>th</sup>. I won't know for another week or so just what volunteer work I'll be doing. But the options include underprivileged and special needs children, abused women, and seniors. In the meantime, the Peace Corps is still on the table, though I'm rather disenchanted with them right now. I'm also still pursuing some longer term Plans B.

But for now, I have a studio Air BnB in the heart of Cuenca. It's not large, but it has two beds. So, if you're in the neighborhood, give a holler.

My most sincere wishes for a *Shana Tovah u'Metukah* (a good and sweet Near Year). May 5778 be a blessed her for us all and for the world. I know that my New Year is starting out unpredictably interesting, for sure!

You can follow Rabbi Soifer's adventures — whatever they may be – on her blog. You can reach it by going to [WhereintheWorldisMyra.wordpress.com](http://WhereintheWorldisMyra.wordpress.com). According to Rabbi Soifer, when you get there, you'll find a "follow" button at the bottom right-hand corner of the page. If you click on that, you'll be prompted to enter your email address. Once you do, you will automatically be sent a link to any new postings. You can click on that link to read the latest blog post.



*SHARED SCHOLAR  
PROGRAM SET FOR  
JANUARY 14<sup>TH</sup>.*

The Interfaith Shared Scholar committee announces it has chosen Dr. J. Clinton McCann, Jr. as the 2018 Shared Scholar. He will present a program at the Sanibel Congregational United Church of Christ on the afternoon of Sunday, January 14<sup>th</sup> focusing on Psalms as a bridge to interfaith cooperation. A reception will follow the program. He will also offer a workshop on Tuesday, January 16<sup>th</sup> dealing with music in the life of religious congregations.

Dr. McCann is Evangelical Professor of Biblical Interpretation at Eden Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri. He earned a Ph.D. from Duke University in 1985 and joined the Eden Seminary faculty in 1987. His research and writing focuses on the Psalms. A noted biblical scholar, his publications on the Psalms include *The Shape and Shaping of the Psalter*; *A Theological*

*Introduction to the Book of Psalms: The Psalms as Torah; The Psalms commentary in The New Interpreter's Bible (Vol. 4, 1996; Preaching the Psalms; and Great Psalms of the Bible.* He is active with CROP/Church World Service, Bread for the World, Heifer International, and International Partners in Mission and especially interested in the intersection of religion and culture. Committed to the importance of multicultural education, he has led groups of students to Guatemala, Costa Rica, and El Salvador.

Watch future *Bat Yam* bulletins for more information about this event. The Shared Scholar program is co-sponsored annually by *Bat Yam*, the Sanibel Congregational United Church of Christ, St. Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church, First Church of Christ Scientist, and Captiva Chapel by the Sea. *Bat Yam's* sponsorship is provided by the Leo Rosner Foundation in honor of June Rosner. Reneed Sugar and Marcia Rudin represent *Bat Yam* on the committee.

*ARE YOU INTERESTED IN ROUND TRIP  
TRANSPORTATION FROM SHELL POINT FOR  
SHABBAT SERVICES?*

Island Taxi has offered to provide a limo for Friday night *Shabbat* services from Shell Point to the Congregational Church on Sanibel. It will hold five people and will cost \$50.00 round trip. That is \$10.00 per person round trip. If interested, please call Mel Bleiberg at (239) 693 3016 or e-mail him at [shirlmel1@yahoo.com](mailto:shirlmel1@yahoo.com).

The *Bat Yam* membership committee needs volunteers to help staff the welcome table at the door during next season. If you are able to help, contact Cheryl Fulmer at 732-780-2016.

## *MISCELLANEOUS...*

. To make changes in your contact information on the *Bat Yam* membership roster, contact Brandon Minsky at [Brandon@bitservicesfl.com](mailto:Brandon@bitservicesfl.com). Please keep your information current.

. Email Cheryl Fulmer at [Fulmer.Cheryl@gmail.com](mailto:Fulmer.Cheryl@gmail.com) with any *Bat Yam* news you wish to have published in *L'Chayim*, the Federation newsletter, and/or local Sanibel newspapers. The *L'Chayim* deadline for any month's issue is midweek of the first week of the previous month. *The Island Reporter* deadline is the beginning of the week before the desired issue.

. Contact Irene Skolnick at [irkul42@gmail.com](mailto:irkul42@gmail.com) or 239-472-2217 with additions or corrections you have to the *Yahrtzeit* list.

. Email articles for the November *Bat Yam* bulletin to editor Marcia Rudin at [marciarudin@aol.com](mailto:marciarudin@aol.com) by October 15<sup>th</sup>.

. In addition to contributions for general *Bat Yam* operations, congregants can now donate to four special funds – The Rabbi's Discretionary Fund, The Music Fund, The President's Discretionary Fund, and the Social Action Fund.

. The *Bat Yam* Mahjong Group welcomes new members. Games are on Friday afternoons from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., alternating sessions at members' homes. If you wish to join, please contact Linda Edinburgh at [wedodit@comast.net](mailto:wedodit@comast.net).

. Adele Anish reminds us to save metal snap tops from cans to help support Ronald McDonald Houses and the families they assist. Watch especially for items from General Mills, Ziploc, Kleenex, Lysol, and Finish. Put these items in baggies and give them to Adele. Also save 1" x 1" box tops and give them to her. These help purchase school supplies for the Sanibel public school.

. *Tzedakah* cards that can be used for many occasions may be purchased from Renee Sugar for \$45.00 for five cards. Your donations contribute to *Bat Yam's* *Tzedakah* funds dispensed in the Spring to worthy organizations in the U.S. and Israel by the *Tzedakah* committee. Contact Renee at [rsugar05@gmail.com](mailto:rsugar05@gmail.com).

## *SAVE THESE DATES*

- . Wednesday, October 4 – 7:30 p.m. – *Sukkoth* service
- . Sunday, January 14, 2018, afternoon – Interfaith Shared Scholar program and reception featuring speaker Dr. J. Clinton McCann – time TBD
- . Tuesday, January 16 - workshop dealing with music in the life of religious congregations given by Dr. J. Clinton McCann – time TBD
- . Sunday, January 28 - Sanibel-Captiva Heart Walk

## *SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES*

Bat Yam Social Action Committee Chair Garry Weiss reports that according to his research, the best way to help local Irma hurricane victims is through the Harry Chapin Food Bank of Southwest Florida in Ft. Myers. Its website is [www.harrychapinfoodbank.org](http://www.harrychapinfoodbank.org). Plans for the Social Action Committee's upcoming season include a paper drive (such items as toilet paper, paper towels, diapers, feminine hygiene products, etc.) for F.I.S.H. (Friends in Service Here) of Sanibel-Captiva. Says Weiss, "Food pantries generally receive little or no contributions of these items, which are a large expense for F.I.S.H., and are thus often in very short supply."

## *DONATIONS TO BAT YAM*

*A sincere thank you to Jeanette Keyser, Susan Rosenberg, and Ken Gerson for their special donation*

### **General**

Adele and Steven Anish  
Esta and David Berger  
Sue and Peter Danford  
Louise Freeman  
Maida Hoffman  
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Norma and Jack Kohn  
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Edina and Alan Lessack  
Renee and Leonard Minsky  
Norman Minsky  
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Jane and Sidney Picker  
Peggy and Frank Siegel  
Andrea and Jan Smith  
Arlyn and Irwin Stein  
Linda and Marc Weissbluth  
Arnee and Walter Winshall  
Martha and John Wolf

### **Yahrtzeits**

Kathy Zoss in memory of Emeterio Escandon and Zalmon Zoss

### **In Honor of Rabbi Stephen Fuchs**

Edina and Alan Lessack

### **In Memory of Ryan David Mayer**

Edina and Alan Lessack  
Marcia and James Rudin

### **Social Action Fund - Adele Anish**

**BAT YAM, TEMPLE OF THE ISLANDS**

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Cantor: Murray E. Simon

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**BAT YAM**

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