



BAT YAM MATTERS

Number 102

March 2019

Adar I/Adar II

BAT YAM – TEMPLE OF THE ISLANDS

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

MARCH 2019 BAT YAM WORSHIP

All March *Shabbat* services will be held in the sanctuary of Sanibel Congregational United Church of Christ. Services begin at 7:30 p.m., led by Rabbi Dr. Stephen L. Fuchs, with prayers chanted by Cantor Murray Simon accompanied by pianist Abigail Allison.

March 1, 8, 15, 22 (*Purim* Celebration), 29 (*Simcha Shabbat*)

CELEBRATE *PURIM* AT *SHABBAT* SERVICES ON MARCH 22 . . .

. . . when Pastor John Danner will make a special guest appearance as King Ahasuerus.

(See details in Rabbi Fuchs' message on page 6.)

OUR THANKS TO . . .

. . . the Three Cantors and a Pastor Planning Committee: Judith Adler, Chair, and Janice Block Chaddock, Barry Epstein, Shirley Frank, Barry Fulmer, Elissa Karasin-Samet, Alan Lessack, Barry Roth, and Irene Skolnick. And to Judith Adler and Bluma and Don Herman for sponsoring the reception following the wonderful program.

BAT YAM PASSOVER *SEDER* APRIL 19

The *Bat Yam* Passover *Seder* will be Friday, April 19, at 6 p.m. at the Sanibel Community House. The cost per person is \$50 for members and their immediate families, \$65 per person for non-members. Children from five to fourteen years old are \$25; children under five are free. If you wish, bring a *Seder* plate, Elijah's cup, or *matzoh* cover for your table. Wine will be served, but feel free to bring your own. Volunteers are needed to make baked goods, and *charoset*. Email Annette Pacyga at Annette.pacyga@gmail.com or call her at 941-740-1650 to tell her what you will bring and to make reservations. The deadline to sign up is April 5. There is limited space. Mail your checks, which will ensure your reservations, to Annette at 3722 Coquina Drive, Sanibel. If you wish to plan your own table gathering, please send the list to her.

BAT YAM MEMBERSHIP MEETING SCHEDULED FOR MARCH 28

Bat Yam's annual membership meeting on Thursday, March 28, will begin at 6 p.m. in Fellowship Hall with a potluck dinner, followed at 7 p.m. by presentations of the budget for next year by treasurer Barry Epstein. Howard Lorsch, chair of the nominating committee, will present the committee's slate, followed by a vote for *Bat Yam* officers and trustees. A quorum of *Bat Yam* members must be present in order to vote on future officers and trustees.

Esta Berger is organizing the potluck dinner. She is asking all members to bring a food item from one of the following categories: chicken, fish, meat, kugels, green or vegetable salad, rice or potatoes, fruit salad, or dessert. This year, monetary donations in lieu of a food dish will not be accepted, as when this has been done in the past there was not enough food for everyone. If you are unable to make something, please consider buying an item from one of the above choices.

Please make your reservations with Esta (erb1882@aol.com or 239-395-1882) to let her know what you will be bringing. Reservations are necessary so the committee will know how many places to set.

Our thanks to Howard Lorsch and to other members of the nominating committee: David Berger, Annette Pacyga, Marcia Rudin, and Bob Schoen. The slate of officers to be voted on is below. One star after the name indicates that the individual is being renewed for a two-year term; two stars indicate that the individual will be new to that position. The dates following the names indicate the year of expiration of the term.

<u>OFFICERS</u>		
President	Barry Fulmer**	2021
First Vice President	Michael Hochschild**	2021
Second Vice President	Cheryl Fulmer**	2021
Treasurer	Barry Epstein	2020
Corresponding Secretary	Irene Skolnick *	2021
Recording Secretary	Lois Lorsch**	2021
Immediate Past President	Alan Lessack**	2021
* Renew for 2 yr. term		
** New to position		

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BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Annette Pacyga**	2021
Tanya Hochschild**	2021
Janice Block Chaddock**	2021
Barry Roth*	2021
Garry Weiss*	2021
Esta Berger	2020
Shirley Frank	2020
Norma Kohn	2020

*** Renew for 2 yr. term**

**** New to position**

THANKS TO THE FEBRUARY ONGAI* SHABBAT HOSTS

February 1 – Pat and Stan Levine; Renee, Len, and Norman Minsky;
Irene and Leon Skolnick

February 8 – Cheryl and Barry Fulmer, Myra Klahr, Beth and Garry Weiss

February 15 – Bluma and Don Herman, Toby and Cantor Murray Simon

February 22 – Sally and Allan Sacks, Irene and Leon Skolnick

**Editor's note: "Ongai Shabbat" is the proper way to say the plural of Oneg Shabbat.*

AND THANKS TO BEN YOKEL AND RABBI JAMES RUDIN . . .

. . . for Ben's lovely chanting of prayers at the February 8 *Shabbat* service and Rabbi Rudin's moving tribute to Al Vorspan during the *Shabbat* service of February 22.

JOINT SCUCC-BAT YAM POTLUCK DINNER ON MARCH 14

Bat Yam's host church, SCUCC, invites *Bat Yam* members to join in a potluck dinner on Thursday, March 14. At this event planned by The Green Team of the church, beverages and appetizers will be served beginning at 5:30 p.m. in Heron Hall, followed by dinner in Fellowship Hall at 6:30 p.m. There will be a \$10 charge to cover the cost of beverages and the main course, a lentil stew. Bring a vegetarian appetizer, salad, side dish, bread, or dessert and a copy of the recipe. Indicate on a sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall what you will be bringing. Please sign up before Sunday, March 10. According to Jean Chandler of the Green Team, at the dinner we will learn pertinent facts about food waste and its effect on the environment and our pocketbooks. If you have any questions, contact her at jeanchandler2@gmail.com.

SHABBAT MORNING CLASSES

Shabbat morning classes, held in Fellowship Hall at SCUCC, begin with Hebrew reading instruction by Rabbi Stephen Fuchs from 9:00 to 9:30 a.m. They continue with Bible Conversations with Rabbi Fuchs from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m., followed by sessions presented by congregants from 10:30 to 11:15 a.m. and Jewish Current Events, led by Len Minsky.

March 2

Health Tips, Tricks, and Myths – Mort Tavel

March 9

The Oppenheims of Albany (his family) and the Arrival of Reform Judaism –
Don Breiter

March 16

Expansion of Women's Rights in Classical Jewish Law – Rabbi Fuchs

March 23

Jews and the Media – Allan Sacks

March 30

Dying on Our Own Terms: How Advance Care Planning Can Put You in Control –
Daryl Isenberg – guest presenter (see bio) *

April 6

Siyyum - end of season party and planning for next year's classes

April 13, 20, 27

There will be no classes on Saturday, April 13, because there will be a *Bar Mitzvah* that morning, and no classes on April 20 and April 27 due to the Passover holiday.

Vickie Fuchs thanks everyone who presented a class this season, and we thank Vickie for organizing these sessions. Please contact her at vfuchs@gmail.com or 860-305-4876 if you want to present a future session.

***Daryl Holtz Isenberg** holds a Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology, founded the Family Cancer Support Network for children in 1980, directed a statewide clearinghouse of self-help groups, is a Certified Advance Care Planning Facilitator, and currently works to improve care at the end of life.

MEMORIAL CELEBRATION FOR DR. BARRY LITOFSKY ON MARCH 9

Dr. Barry Litfosky's son Jon and other members of his family invite *Bat Yam* members to attend a Celebration of Life social in his honor on Saturday, March 9, from 1 to 3 p.m. at George & Wendy's Seafood Grille. RSVP to Rabbi Fuchs at stephenfuchs@gmail.com.

Bat Yam member Litofsky, a twenty-year resident of Sanibel, died on January 30 at the age of seventy-seven. He earned degrees in electrical engineering and computer science from New York University, MIT, and the University of Pennsylvania, where he got his Ph.D. He lived in New Jersey and worked at AT&T Bell Laboratories for 35 years. Barry and his late wife, Francine, adored the "Ding" Darling Wildlife Refuge, where he volunteered. He also worked for Tarpon Bay Explorers. His many hobbies included travel, volleyball, bird watching, scuba diving, sailing, and flying. He is survived by his sons Jonathan and Brian, his sister Harriet, and grandchildren Justin, Jason, Madelyn, and Jacob.

ST. ISABEL CATHOLIC CHURCH INVITES YOU TO A WORLD DAY OF PRAYER CELEBRATION

Sanibel's St. Isabel Catholic Church invites *Bat Yam* members to attend the World Day of Prayer service it is hosting this year on Friday, March 1, at 10:30 a.m. This year's program has been prepared by the Women of Slovenia as a call for worship considering the words "Come – Everything is Ready." With these words as a backdrop, the service will explore Slovenia's history and rich cultural diversity. The service will be followed by a reception with foods typical of Slovenia. For further information about this event, contact Shirley Bohnert at 770-7352.

SAVE THESE DATES

Next year's Shared Scholar Lecture will be on Sunday, January 26, with the Shared Scholar Seminar on Monday January 27, 2020. The Shared Scholar will be Dr. Mary Evelyn Tucker. Look for additional details in future issues of *Bat Yam Matters*.

FEDERATION PURIM PARTY ON MARCH 16

The Jewish Federation of Lee and Charlotte Counties invites you to a Queen Esther Masquerade Ball on Saturday, March 16, from 6 to 9 p.m. at Miromar Outlets, 10801 Corkscrew Road in Estero. Cocktails and appetizers will be served. Entertainment and dance music will be provided by Fretless Rock. Costumes are encouraged, but not required. The winner of best costume will be awarded a \$100 gift card for Miromar Outlets. For additional information, contact Debbie Sanford at the Federation at 239-481-4449. Tickets at \$36 per person, available in advance only, can be obtained online [at this website](#).

RABBI FUCHS REFLECTS

Rev. Dr. John Danner to “Guest Star” in Bat Yam’s *Purim* Celebration!!

Hopefully by now all of you have *Shabbat* Eve, March 22, at 7:30 p.m. marked on your calendars in big red letters for our incomparably wonderful *Bat Yam Purim* Celebration! We will tell the *Purim* story in the unique *Bat Yam* – Temple of the Islands style that so many of you enjoyed last year.

This year we have wonderful news: Pastor John Danner, will be our “guest star,” appearing in the role of King Ahasueras. His appearance in this role will mark the first time, to my knowledge, that in the entire 2,000 plus years of Jewish-Christian relations that a pastor has appeared in a synagogue *Purim* presentation.



Our other cast members and songwriters are:

Ying Przybyszewski and Barry Roth – Vashti

Sally and Allan Sacks – Bigthan and Teresh

Ben Yokel – Mordecai

Edina Lessack – Esther

Cantor Murray Simon – Haman

Special appearances by Norma Kohn and Esther Pokedoff
as the court violinists

With Abbey Allison away that night, our piano accompanist will be Toby Simon.

My role will be that of Hatach, and if you do not know who Hatach is, then you are not YET prepared for our annual *Purim* quiz, which will be one of the highlights of our experience. The good news is there is still time for you to bone up and become knowledgeable about the biblical book of Esther in which all the answers to the quiz questions are in plain sight. I encourage congregants to read the Book of Esther carefully because there will be prizes for those who identify Haman’s wife, Haman’s father, Esther’s Hebrew name, and several other obvious and obscure facts about the story of Esther in the Bible. So read the book and be ready to answer the questions as they come up.

Due to the good offices of Norman Minsky, we will have another special feature this year. During the weeks before *Purim*, the blue and white tin National Jewish Fund boxes will be available to congregants as long as our supply lasts. Rather than use store-bought groggers, here is our suggestion: Take one of the boxes, fill it with coins, preferably quarters, decorate the box if you wish, and bring it to the service to use as your grogger. They

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make GREAT groggers, and afterwards we can turn the money over to our wonderful *Tzedakah* Committee to distribute wisely, as they always do, to worthwhile causes.

With all the frivolity and fun that we shall surely share, it is easy to dismiss *Purim* as merely a fun holiday for children. In reality *Purim* is much more. The *Purim* story – and we shall emphasize these lessons on March 22 – confronts the mature reader with vital philosophical questions: the place of women in society, the phenomenon of prejudice, and the very meaning of life itself.

Too seldom do we ponder the courage of Vashti, King Ahasueras' first wife. In the story, the world's most powerful man commands her to display her beauty for his drunken friends. But she refuses. She is a worthy role model and a good person about whom to begin a discussion with our daughters and granddaughters about their value as human beings. Vashti refused to simply be a sex object. Hopefully all of us can learn from her courage.

A second vital lesson – this one about prejudice – presents itself when Mordecai refuses, as commanded, to bow down before Haman. Haman is understandably angry, but as the Bible records: "...it was not enough for him to punish Mordecai alone, for they had told him the people of Mordecai (Esther 3:5)." No, because of his anger at one man, Haman sought to destroy all the Jews.

The third vital lesson speaks to our purpose as creatures "created in God's image" and to human destiny. When Mordecai read Haman's decree condemning the Jews of Persia to death, he sent a message to Esther to intercede for her people. Esther's response was that she dared not enter the presence of the king because he had not summoned her, and the penalty is death for anyone – even the Queen – who appears unbidden before the king unless he holds out his scepter as a sign of acceptance.

Mordecai responds to Esther's reluctance to go to the King by asking a question we should all frequently ask ourselves: "Who knows if you have not become Queen for just such a time as this?" (Esther 4:14) Mordecai's response speaks to all of us. Are we on this earth just to enjoy life? Is our own pleasure the primary purpose of our existence? Jewish tradition and the Book of Esther say, "No." Esther could have lived out her life in selfish luxury. She could have ignored the plight of our people. But she risked everything to save them. All of us like Esther have moments when our action or inaction can make a vital difference in someone's life. We can seize these moments or turn away from them. Esther swallowed

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her fear and seized her moment. Her example and her courage commend themselves to all of us when the times come for us to step up and make a difference.

So, as Purim approaches let us enjoy the fun, but let us also study the serious issues the story raises. What we learn about the dignity of women, the phenomenon of prejudice, and the very meaning of life itself can make for wonderful conversations with our children and our grandchildren and enrich our Jewish souls long after the celebration is over.

Your Rabbi, Stephen Fuchs
stephenfuchs@gmail.com
www.rabbifuchs.com
twitter: @rabbifuchs6

I invite you to follow my blog at www.findingourselvesinbiblicalnarratives.com

(Please note: My website (www.rabbifuchs.com) has a *Bat Yam* tab that leads to a number of wonderful photos of some events that took place during the past season, including my summer activities in Germany.)



**Rabbi Fuchs' class on the Minor Prophets,
attended by many *Bat Yam* and SCUCC members**

**Please note: The Birthright Israel program scheduled for Sunday,
March 10, has been cancelled.**

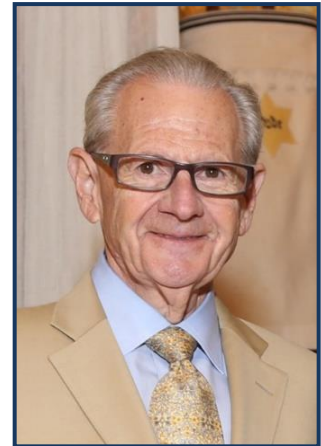
PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It has been my honor and privilege to have served as your president. Coming into office I set a number of goals, many of which have been achieved.

During my term we hired an outstanding rabbi and cantor who have made our Friday night services a rich experience.

We greatly enhanced our programming, and the quality and breadth of our Saturday classes, which attract a large group of our members.

As we expanded our activities, you responded by increasing your donations, supporting our mission of representing the Jewish community on Sanibel-Captiva and nearby Fort Myers.



This year, for the first time, we brought to the Island one of the Jewish film festival movies, and 80 people attended the film.

Cantor Simon suggested a musical tribute as a fund raiser. The result of his efforts and those of a dedicated group of volunteers resulted in an attendance of 400 people and raising needed funds for the Temple.

One of the best ways we serve our members is the annual *seder*, which drew more than 170 attendees last year.

We will end our season with a trip to Israel with the Congregational church. Rabbi Fuchs and Pastor Danner will lead a group of 43 on what I know will be a life-enhancing experience.

We have been able to achieve many of our goals because of a wonderful Board and many dedicated members who participate – from hosting Onegs to setting up the room for Friday services, to assisting at the membership table, and to a dedicated corps of individuals who are committed to our social action programs.

If you view these past three years as a success, it is not the work of one individual but of many who say Yes when asked. It is one of the things that makes *Bat Yam* a warm, loving, caring place, and I am proud of what we have been able to achieve working together toward common goals.

In closing, I want to pay special tribute to my wife, best friend and supporter without whose help I would not have been able to reach those lofty goals.

In a few weeks, new leaders will be installed; and I know you will want to give them your strong support as we continue to grow and expand. Please join us in welcoming them at our annual meeting/pot luck dinner on Thursday, March 28.

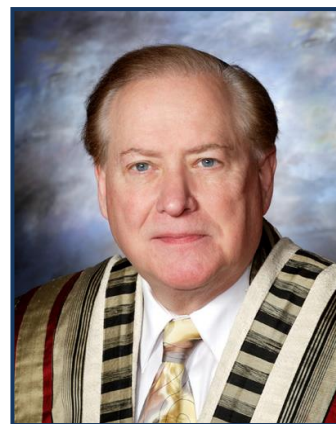
Shalom,

Alan Lessack

FROM OUR CANTOR

Dear friends,

I write this message to you the day after the "Three Cantors and a Pastor" concert took place. The concert is now history and is, I hope, lovingly written into the annals of *Bat Yam* – Temple of the Islands. May I say that I am personally and professionally indebted to so many people without whose support and participation this event would have never taken place.



Left to right: Cantors Randy Herman, Murray Simon, and Elizabeth Shammash.

First, thank you to Judith Adler and her wonderful Concert Committee who accomplished so much. Second, thank you to the talented artists – the cantors, our pastor and instrumentalists alike – who performed beyond our expectations. Finally, my deepest appreciation to my wife, Toby, who served as the Musical Director and who worked so hard to assure that the program met the highest possible musical and artistic standards.

I am grateful to all of you who attended and supported this wonderful program. I hope that you enjoyed it and left with a smile and a song in your heart. If so, then my highest expectations for this concert were fulfilled.

Cantor Murray Simon



Left (l.-4.): Reverend John Danner, Cantors Elizabeth Shammash and Randy Herman, Toby Simon, and Cantor Murray Simon after the wonderful program on February 24.



Right: Pastor Danner and Cantors Simon, Herman, and Shammash

SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE TO HOLD “KNOW YOUR RIGHTS” PRESENTATION AND WORKSHOP MARCH 29

On Friday March 29 at 2 p.m. in Fellowship Hall of the SCUCC, the *Bat Yam* Social Action Committee will host a “Know Your Rights” presentation and workshop to train people who are interested in learning more about the topic or interested in delivering “Know Your Rights” presentations to immigrants in our community. The presenter/trainer will be Adonia Simpson, a lawyer for and Director of the Family Defense Program of Americans for Immigrant Justice in Miami. Some knowledge of Spanish or Creole is helpful but absolutely not necessary.

According to Garry Weiss, Chair of the Social Action Committee, this program came about because in January, he, Janice Block Chaddock, Barry Fulmer, and James Davis visited the contractor-run ISAP (Intensive Supervision Appearance Program) Check-in Center in Ft. Myers. They spoke directly to a number of “clients,” all from Guatemala and all wearing ankle monitors. They eventually spoke with a “Deportation Officer” who “politely” asked them to leave and not return, claiming they were on “private property.”

One of the clients told them he arrived in the US in Arizona with his two children and that his wife remained in Guatemala because of the dangers of the journey. He came here because there is no work in Guatemala and hoped when he left the office that day he’d be able to work. He mentioned beatings he received in Guatemala and showed the delegation a form he signed in Arizona. It was in English only; he did not understand English at all. He said there was no official in Arizona who spoke Spanish. All he knew was that if he signed the form, he could get into the US and get to Ft. Myers. “Obviously,” Weiss points out, “he had no idea what he had signed.”

The clients also appeared to have the basic necessities of life. “But,” according to Weiss, “It appeared they had little or no understanding of the ‘process’ or of their rights and need for representation or knowledge that such services could be obtained for little or no cost. The Deportation Officer made sure we knew all the clients had been arrested because they had entered the US ‘illegally’. He also said they had no need of legal representation until they had their hearings, which would be in Miami or Orlando, the only two cities with immigration courts in the state of Florida, and they would be advised there. We believed this is too late, even if it did really happen. Again, he mentioned we were soliciting on private property if we were to return with the ACLU ‘Conozca Sus Derechos’ (‘Know Your Rights’) international handouts provided by the ACLU and other immigrant activist organizations.

We decided to address the need for legal resources by helping to outreach and organize ‘Conozca Sus Derechos’ (Know Your Rights) programs in the area that would also include local legal assistance sources.”

Please respond to Garry Weiss at GSW211@gmail.com if you want to attend the March 29 workshop, and invite others who might be interested to come.



Rabbi Fuchs with Drs. Jacob Shammash and Parvis Sadighi. Dr. Shammash, the father of guest cantor Elizabeth Shammash who appeared in the Three Cantors and a Pastor program, is from Iraq; Dr. Sadighi grew up in Iran. They are both thoracic surgeons who knew each other in Massachusetts many years ago and met again at Dr. Sadighi's *Shabbat* morning class presentation on February 23.

JOINT SCUCC AND BAT YAM ISRAEL TRIP SOLD OUT WITH WAITING LIST

Rabbi Fuchs and Pastor John Danner of the SCUCC will lead "Growing and Learning Together," an exciting trip to Israel from April 29 through May 10. The trip will feature visits to numerous historical sites, as well as an examination of Israel's place in the modern world. The cost of the trip is \$3,070 plus airfare. The trip is sold out; however, if you wish to join the waiting list in case there are cancellations, please send your name, phone number, and email address with a \$250 per person check (made out to Sanibel Congregational United Church of Christ and marked "Israel Trip") to Ms. Sandy Simmons, SCUCC, 2050.

For questions regarding the trip, please call Barry Roth at 239-313-9591 or email him at barryalanrothatlaw@gmail.com or contact Alan Lessack at allesack@sbcglobal.net or via telephone at 773-251-8862.

BAT YAM GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP UNDERWAY

In response to needs expressed by members of the congregation, *Bat Yam* has started a Grief Support Group to meet the first Wednesday evening of each month from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. in the library at SCUCC. This is a lay group, so all group matters will be determined by consensus.

The dual goals are healing and companionship. Rabbi Fuchs is the group facilitator. Please mark your calendars for Wednesdays, March 6 and April 3; dates thereafter TBD. Everyone is welcome. Please encourage those you feel could benefit to attend. For questions, contact Ellen Feingold, 302- 345-7187 or by email at ellenfeingold@gmail.com.

AN OPEN LETTER TO BAT YAM FOUNDATION STOCKHOLDERS

To keep you informed, we want you to know that all supporting documentation for a 501(c)(3) designation by the IRS was submitted in September. A reply should have been received in late December, according to the IRS. The letter has not been received; we presume it was not processed prior to the shutdown. We are holding all funds in *Bat Yam* until we can legally move the money to our account to protect the tax-free value of your contributions. We hope you understand and ask for your patience. Thank you.

Leonard Minsky, Chair of the Board

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

Adele Anish, Russ Bilgore, Joel Edinburg, Ron Golden, Jeanette Keyser, Edina Lessack, Lois Lorsch, Martin Pokedoff, Alan Saltz (son of Jocelyn and Peter Saltz), Carol Scheiber, William Schlackman, Orlene Shimberg, Frank Siegel, Arlyn Stein, Irwin Stein, Joel Sugar

SUBMIT ITEMS FOR THE APRIL ISSUE OF BAT YAM MATTERS. . .
to *Bat Yam Matters* editor Marcia Rudin before March 15 (marciarudin@aol.com).

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO SET UP SHABBAT SERVICES

Please contact Cheryl Fulmer at 732-780-2016 or Fulmer.Cheryl@gmail.com if you wish to take a turn setting up Friday night *Shabbat* services. The housekeeping tasks include turning on and off the lights, preparing the wine, *kiddush* cup, and *Shabbat* candles, and carrying the *Torahs* into the church sanctuary when services are held there. A brief period of cleanup after services concludes the duties.

MARCH YAHRZEITS

March 4 – Dr. Berton M. Rudin, brother of Rabbi James Rudin

March 7 – Walter Neuhauser, father of Anne Walter

March 7 – Lucille Manning, friend of Kathy Zoss

March 9 – Bess Minsky, mother of Leonard and Norman Minsky

March 14 – William Lubetkin, father of Bernard Lubetkin

March 21 – Dr. Philip G. Rudin, father of Rabbi James Rudin

March 23 – Sam Hollander, friend of Kathy Zoss

March 30 – Lillian Hecht, mother of Helane Smith

Our apologies to Martin Pokedoff for omitting the February 18 Yahrzeit of his mother, Bertha Pokedoff, from the February issue of Bat Yam Matters



WHERE IN THE WORLD IS RABBI SOIFER?

February, a month in the middle of summer vacation that was supposed to be altogether boring, turned anything but! The first week of the month, I joined volunteers to assist a Christian medical group from Colorado who came to Torti – in the far eastern end of Panama – to offer free general medical care and cataract and pterygium surgeries. I was with the general medical folk, and my job was to hand out the meds and tell folks when to take how many. Turns out we handed out 225,000 pills and saw nearly 1,200 people. The eye surgeons performed 164 cataract surgeries and 100 other eye procedures. The one-day later “reveals,” when the eye patches came off and formerly blind (from a simple unattended cataract) locals could actually see, were bring-you-to-tears amazing! Great work, and I managed to dodge the heavy You-Know-Who theology!!

From the sublime to the truly ridiculous...I came home to Cowboy/Cowgirl Camp – a kind of western-style “vacation camp” that I put together for my local school kids, figuring that they and their parents were probably all going a little stir-crazy with still another month before school resumes. A total of thirty students passed through the camp, with a daily average of about nineteen, ranging in age from five to twelve. We learned line dances, made puppet horses, learned “Home on the Range,” and demonstrated what they’d come to understand as cowboy values by completing (in Spanish) the English phrase “I would like to be a Cowboy/Girl because....” “Howdy” and “Yippee” were the most used new vocabulary. A great, fun time was had by all. But by Friday, this old Cowgirl was exhausted. *Shabbat Shalom indeed!*

Rabbi Myra Soifer

[You can follow Rabbi Soifer’s Peace Corps activities in Panama on her blog: WhereintheWorldisMyra.wordpress.com or Instagram at #ThisisWhataRabbiLooksLike.]

PAPER GOODS DRIVE

There will be bins outside of the SCUCC Church at the first *Shabbat* service of the month for donations for the joint *Bat Yam* and SCUCC Paper Goods Drive. Please donate toilet paper, paper towels, napkins, diapers, etc. to F.I S.H.

SAVE THESE DATES

Wednesday, March 6, 7:00 p.m. – Grief Group session
Saturday, March 9, 1:00-3:00 p.m. – Celebration of Dr. Barry Litofsky's life
Friday, March 22, 7:30 p.m. – *Purim* celebration during *Shabbat* services
Thursday, March 14, 5:30 p.m. – Joint SCUCC-*Bat Yam* potluck dinner
Thursday, March 28, 6:00 p.m. – *Bat Yam* annual potluck dinner membership meeting
Friday, March 29, 2:00 p.m. – “Know Your Rights” Presentation and Workshop
Wednesday, April 3, 7:00 p.m. – Grief Group Session
Friday, April 19, 6:00 p.m. – *Bat Yam* Passover Seder
April 29 to May 10 – Joint *Bat Yam* and SCUCC trip to Israel
Sunday, January 26, 2020 – Shared Scholar Lecture
Monday, January 27, 2020 – Shared Scholar Seminar

BAT YAM MEMBERS IN THE COMMUNITY

Rabbi James Rudin will deliver a BIGArts Talking Points lecture at the Strauss Theatre on Tuesday, March 12, at 10 a.m. The topic will be “Why the Civil War Never Ended: New Perspectives on Robert E. Lee.” The price is \$25. He will also teach a series of classes on the topic “The Roosevelts” on Wednesdays, March 6, 13, and 20 from 9:30 to 11:00 a.m. The price for the three-week course is \$80 for BIGArts members and \$100 for non-members. Contact BIGArts at 239-395-0900 or www.BIGARTS.org for tickets for these events.

Irene Skolnick will speak about her experiences as a Holocaust survivor at FSW on March 27. The program will start at 9:30 a.m. in Building U, room 102. She will participate in a round-table discussion during the lunch hour. Irene is the author of *In the Shadow of Majdanek: Hiding in Full Sight – A Holocaust Survivor's Story*.

IF YOU HAVE ANY SPARE YARMULKES . . .

. . . Please bring them to *Bat Yam* to distribute to those attendees who wish to wear one during services. Because of the increased attendance during this season, some of those given out were not returned, and we are a bit short. Thank you.

A MESSAGE FROM EDINA LESSACK

Bat Yam truly is a loving and caring community. Thank you for your calls, emails, cards, gifts and your love during my recuperation from knee surgery. It has enhanced my healing.
Love, Edina

MISCELLANEOUS...

- The *Bat Yam* membership committee needs volunteers to help staff the welcome table at the door during the season. If you are able to help, contact Cheryl Fulmer at 732-780-2016 or Fulmer.Cheryl@gmail.com.
- To make changes in your contact information on the *Bat Yam* membership roster, contact Brandon Minsky at Brandon@bitservicesfl.com.
- Email Cheryl Fulmer at 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 or 239-472-2217 for changes to your *Yahrzeit* list or if you have donated to *Bat Yam* but have not received an acknowledgement.
- *Tzedakah* cards that can be used for many occasions may be purchased for \$45 for five cards. Your donations contribute to *Bat Yam's Tzedakah* funds. Contact Renee Sugar at rsugar05@gmail.com.

Please check that your contact information on the *Bat Yam* membership list is up to date. To access the go to the *Bat Yam* website (<http://www.batyam.org/>) and click onto the membership list.

BAT YAM, TEMPLE OF THE ISLANDS

Rabbi: Stephen Lewis Fuchs

Cantor: Murray E. Simon

Officers

President: Alan Lessack – 773-251-8862

First VP: Barry Fulmer – 732-780-2016

Second VP: Michael Hochschild

Treasurer: Barry Epstein

Corresponding Secretary: Irene Skolnick

Recording Secretary: Annette Pacyga

Trustees

**Miriam Bailey*, Esta Berger, Shirley Frank, Cheryl Fulmer, Norma Kohn,
Lois Lorsch, Barry Roth, 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**

* deceased

BAT YAM

Temple of the Islands

PO Box 84

Sanibel, FL 33957

batyamsanibel@gmail.com

<http://www.batyam.org>