

Welcome to Temple Beth El of Augusta, Maine

embracing a spirit of community, lifelong Jewish learning, commitment to inclusiveness, and active participation in Jewish life in Central Maine

artwork by Lenora Leibowitz

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Adar I 5774/March 2014

From the desk of Rabbi Asch

When *Schindler's List* was released in 1993, my parents took my brother and me to see it. Despite the graphic depictions ghettos and executions, the film was practically required viewing for Jews and for many Americans as well. The film grossed nearly \$200 million (in 2013 dollars) and earned seven Academy Awards, including Best Picture.



Steven Speilberg's depiction of the Holocaust still stands today as a cinematic masterpiece—an important and necessary addition to American film.

This year, twenty years after the release of *Schindler's List*, another dark era in history has been vividly brought to life on the big screen. This time, however, it has not been required viewing. *12 Years a Slave* is a powerful, heart-wrenching film that has won critical acclaim (and an Academy Award for Best Picture), but many people are avoiding it. It has grossed only \$50 million dollars in the U.S., compared to nearly \$400 million for *Frozen*. Like many Americans, I did not want to see the film. While I knew it was important, I also thought that it would be difficult, even depressing, to watch. But Chris convinced me to go with him, and I am glad I did. While there were parts that were excruciating, I think *12 Years a Slave* should be required viewing for everyone old enough to go.



Perhaps *12 Years a Slave* is so much harder for us to watch because it happened here, in America, rather than "over there." It can be difficult to be reminded of our own nation's shameful past, particularly when America still suffers from the persistence of racial inequality and other legacies of slavery. In the Holocaust, we clearly were the victims; in slavery, though many Jews were active abolitionists, many others turned a blind eye to or even profited from the evil that was happening

in their backyards. While we might feel more comfortable forgetting this long chapter in American history, we, as Jews, know the danger of historical amnesia.

Tradition tells us that when we enter into the month of Adar (when Purim occurs) we increase our happiness. After all, this month we recall how Esther saved our people from destruction by the evil Haman. We will celebrate with a Purim carnival, costumes, laughter and *mishloach manot* (gifts of food). But our celebration will be all that much sweeter if we remember times when others have not been as lucky as our ancestors. Our redemption will be that much greater when we know the story of Solomon Northup and, through him, countless of our countrymen who prayed for a deliverance which never came.

As we enter into the month of Adar, may our joy increase with the recognition of our own good fortune.

What's happening at TBE

Annual Wine Tasting Brings Iberian Flavor to TBE

By Nancy Kelly

On Sunday, February 16th, TBE's Event Committee sponsored our 16th Annual Ice Storm Wine Tasting Event. Although we had to postpone from the night before due to impending snow, nearly sixty people attended.

This year's theme was wines and food from Spain and Portugal. The menu featured Saffron Fish Stew, complemented by potato tortillas and various tapas. Reds, whites, and lovely port and sherry were introduced by our now famous *sommelier*, Syd Sewall. Thanks to his extensive research on a recent visit to Spain, the gathering enjoyed a delightful variety of vintages.



Special thanks to Chris Myers Asch, Nancy Ross, Judith Plano, Deb Sewall, Sarah Shed, Sue Offer (in absentia), as well as Nearly 60 TBE members and guests enjoyed our annual fiesta.

Kim Schofield of Augusta's Uncorked, who offered fabulous wine suggestions. We thank everyone for attending and look forward to next year's event!





Sommelier Syd Sewall shows off his wine-pouring skills during the third round of wine tasting.

What's happening at TBE

Temple Teens Experience Hibachi in Waterville



By Clio Bazakas and Noah Milne

The teen group at Temple Beth El went to the Hibachi Steakhouse in Waterville, and we had a blast. The funniest moment was when Rabbi Asch couldn't catch the zucchini in her mouth, not even on the 10th try! The most awkward moment was when the chef kept calling all of the girls, "Pretty girl!" The food was great! The teen group has been very successful so far. We all look forward to the next outing!

The Temple Teens and Rabbi Asch have been having adventures all over the state. Below, Em Freed shows fine form as she prepares to catch a flying zucchini. (Take notes, Rabbi Asch!)





March 15. Eliana Brown. Bat Mitzvah. Be There.



By Eliana Brown

Hi, I'm Eliana Tova Brown. I was born in Maine and have been here my whole life, but I love to travel. I'm 12 years old, I have a brother named Garrett, a mom and a dad, a dog named Moxie, and a sister named Federica from Italy. I like to sing, dance, and act and would like to continue doing it in the future as a professional. My career is very important to me because I enjoy entertaining people. I also enjoy reading books like *Zitface* and *The Boy Project*. I like biking and playing pass with a football or baseball with my brother or sister. Even though I don't play very many sports, I enjoy being active and I might take up more later in life. I like being surrounded by my friends and family. I

have done tennis, dance, and band chorus. I take a language and play piano and I like to write. I enjoy school and the people there, but I don't mind the weekends.

Right now I would like to keep doing what I love and have a great time becoming a Bat Mitzvah and 13 years old. I hope everyone will come out for my Bat Mitzvah on March 15th. I hope you have fun!

Shabbat in the Wild Teaches Temple Members to Appreciate the Quiet Beauty of Winter

By John Agee

On a sunny Saturday in early February, a hearty group from Temple Beth El convened at the scenic home of Susan and Chris Marshall in Montville. It was a bluebird day, with not a cloud in the sky. You could see the excitement on everyone's faces as they arrived and got their winter gear out of their cars. The fresh snow from earlier in the week was soft and bright white in the mid-morning sun. Chris and Susan welcomed us into their hand-crafted yurt, which was already warmed by the woodstove. The circular room inside the yurt was



austere but cozy – with pillows and meditation cushions offering a variety of relaxing seating options – the perfect place to begin our Shabbat in the Wild service. We all sat in a circle and introduced ourselves. Many of us had travelled a distance to spend Shabbat in nature with old and new friends from Temple Beth El. We began by singing some excerpts from the shacharit service, with musical accompaniment of maracas and a bongo. The service included a number of passages specifically about nature and appreciating the outdoors. We continued our singing as we put on our boots and headed outside to begin our winter walk in the woods.



The hearty members hiked for about an hour through the beautiful woods of Montville.



Nothing beats a community pot luck after a nice winter hike.

Take It From Shira: You Too Can Be a TBE Leader!

By Shira Adams

Do you have a favorite Jewish holiday or a favorite event at the synagogue? Passover? Shavuot? Purim? The ice cream social? Are you looking for a fun a way to get involved and to contribute the life of the synagogue without writing a check? If so, here is a great idea. This is an invitation for you to take responsibility for planning and coordinating a celebration.

It is surprising how many events we have throughout the year, things that bring our community together to celebrate holidays, study, socialize, and (of course!) eat. Up for grabs are a wide range of celebrations such as coordinating our Christmas community service activities and dinner, the Lipman Kiddush at Rosh Hashanah and our Break Fast on Yom Kippur, Sukkah building, the Tu B'Shevat Seder, and such. There are little events and big events. So if Purim rocks your world and you can't wait for our synagogue's Purim celebration, jump in! If you look forward to Shabbat in the Wild each year and want to help Susan Bakaley and Chris Marshall, then grab your snowshoes and let's go! If you think you make the best matzo brie this side of the Mississippi, how about coordinating the Great TBE Matzo Brie Cook-Off?

You do not have to do this alone! I am happy to help you figure out what is needed for whichever event you choose and provide back up support. If you are interested in volunteering and making a difference in the life of our synagogue, please contact me at 215-6255 or mommagecko@yahoo.com. Thank you to those who have already stepped forward and thank you in advance for those who will.

Share Your Kitchen Wisdom in the TBE Cookbook

By Stacy Mondschein Katz

Food, family, memory. The scents, smells and tastes of holiday and Shabbat dishes often trigger strong recollections of our mothers, grandmothers, and other loved ones, as well as our important traditions.



To honor our history and document our heritage for our children and ourselves, and to celebrate the fabulous cooks and bakers in our community who make our pot luck, seder and kiddush meals such a success, Temple Beth El is requesting that you choose one or more of your favorite recipes for our soon to be produced TBE Sabbath and Holiday Cookbook. Please indicate appropriate food categories by holiday or Shabbat (such as "Golda's Famous Passover Popovers" or "Chris Myers Asch's Award-Winning Chanukah Sweet Potato Latkes"), and whether the recipe falls into the category of vegetarian, vegan or gluten-free. Meat/fish/poultry recipes are also welcome!

Send your recipes to Stacey Mondschein Katz at Stacey207@gwi.net. To ensure that recipes meet rabbinic and kosher standards, Rabbi Asch will determine whether the ingredients are appropriate for our cookbook. Please be a part of this delicious community effort!

Ask not what your synagogue can do for you...

TBE Book Club



The Brothers Ashkenazi By I.J. Singer

April 17th 6:30—8:00pm Temple Beth El

Rabbi Asch will be making her famous chocolate carmel matzah! Please email Gail Fels at gpfels@aol.com or Nancy Ross at nancyjeanneross@gmail.com to let them know about attendance and for more information.



BACK TO BASICS CLASS

Monday, March 10th 5—6:30pm Temple Beth El

The fifth in a series of classes designed for adults who did not have an opportunity to learn as children or who want a "refresher" course in Judaism. New students are welcome!

We will discuss the basics of the Jewish life cycle, holidays, history, prayers, texts and more. If you are interested in becoming an adult *b'nai mitzvah*, considering conversion, or just want to learn more, this class is for you. Bring your dinner (and some food to share) if you'd like.

ROSH CHODESH WOMEN'S GROUP

Come celebrate the new month of Adar-I!

Monday, March 3rd 5:00—6:00 pm Temple Beth El



Newcomers are always welcome! In addition to talking we love to nosh. Snacks to share are welcomed, but definitely not required. Contact Janika Eckert (207-313-1694 or jeckert@johnnyseeds.com) or Arwen Roth (arwenroth@yahoo.com) for more information.

NOSH 'N SCHMOOZE

Wednesday, March 12th 8:30—10:00am Bagel Mainea



The Urban Dictionary

defines "nosh 'n schmooze" as "a gathering of friends at a favorite local restaurant where everyone eats and shares stories with each other. Usually occurs at a place that serves bagels." That is exactly what we do! Join Rabbi Asch for bagels and conversation at Bagel Mainea. We'll discuss whatever is on your mind, Jewish or not. Come schmooze with us!

Kiddush Lunches

We are now joining together for a meal after Torah study each month. If you come to Torah study, we'd love to have you bring some food to share. Crackers and cheese, dessert or fruit are easy additions to our nosh. You are welcome to get creative as well! We hope you'll stay for a meal after study.

Mark Your Calendars

March Service Schedule

March $1^{st} - 10:30$ am Torah Study and Kiddush Lunch

We finish the book of Exodus with a discussion of the preparations for the dedication of the ark.

March 8th — 10:00am Shabbat Service

We read from the beginning of the book of Levitucus. Our discussion will involve the laws for Purim, some if which you know and some which will probably surprise you!

March 14th — 7:00pm Shabbat Services

Rabbi Asch will speak about the ancient priesthood and how it is, and is not, relevant today.

March 15th — 9:30am Shabbat Services

Bat Mitzvah of Eliana Brown, followed by Kiddush Lunch

March 15th — 7:00pm Purim Celebration in Waterville

We will meet in Waterville for havdallah, a megillah reading, and general Purim craziness. The Colby College students will be joining us, so it will be a wild time! Join in the mitzvah of celebrating Purim. RSVP to Rabbi Asch is you want to carpool from the temple at 6:30: rabbiasch@gwi.net.

March $16^{th} - 10:00am$ Purim Carnival and Megillah reading

All ages are welcome for our carnival. The B'nai Mitzvah class is planning this year's festivities, which will include hamentaschen making, games of all kinds, and a costume parade. There will also be balloon animals.

Come in costume (yes, even you, adults) and be ready to take part in our play!

March 28th — 7:00pm Shabbat Services

Guest Speaker Professor Jonathan Weiss will speak on "The New Anti-Semitism in France: The Dieudonné Affair." Dieudonné is a French comedian whose anti-Semitic jokes and comments have sparked controversy in France and have rekindled debate about the connection between anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism. Prof. Weiss is a TBE member and self-confessed Francophile who runs Colby's study abroad program.

March 29th— 10:00am Writing Ethical Wills

Join with area clergy and congregations to learn more about writing ethical wills and write your own. A potluck lunch will follow the session. Feel free to invite your friends to join us.

March 29th — 7:00pm Havdallah and Dessert

Members of all ages are invited to join at the Temple for a *havdallah* service and teaching from Rabbi Asch, followed by dessert. Rabbi Asch will be in her pajamas, and you are encouraged to wear yours as well (especially if you are in elementary school). The evening will be meaningful to our Hebrew School students and those who only vaguely remember their own Hebrew school days.



Mark Your Calendars

Hearts for Ezra to Host Second Annual Auction and Fundraiser on March 9th

The foot-tapping music of Rick Charette and the heart-stopping magic of Dana Perkins will be among the fun-filled activities at the Hearts for Ezra Foundation's Second Annual Auction and Fundraiser to be held at Hall-Dale High School at 12 noon on Sunday, March 9th. The event also will feature children's crafts, face-painting, balloon-making, baked goods, and a silent auction to raise money for the Hearts for Ezra Foundation. The event is free and open to the public, and donations are encouraged.

The Hearts for Ezra Foundation is a non-profit



organization founded a year ago by TBE members Emily and Ethan Bessey. The Besseys' son, Ezra, was born with Spinal Muscular Atrophy (SMA), a genetic disease with no cure. He was just eight months old when died in February 2013. To honor Ezra, his parents and his pediatrician created Hearts for Ezra to raise awareness about SMA and fight for a cure.

The Hearts for Ezra Foundation's Second Annual Auction and Fundraiser will raise awareness about SMA and raise money to support research for a cure. Last year's event raised more than \$13,000. "We were overwhelmed by the love and support we received from Hallowell, Augusta, and the surrounding communities last year," said Ethan. "We look forward to seeing everyone at this year's event."

Save the Date for the Maine Conference for Jewish Life

Save the date for the first annual Maine Conference for Jewish Life starting **June 4th**! This three-day conference will bring together Jews from across the region to celebrate Jewish culture, learning, and history. If you are interested in attending, you may register online and like us on Facebook:

http://web.colby.edu/mainejewishlifeconference/registration-and-cost/ https://www.facebook.com/MaineJewishLife

Purim! Purim! Purim!

Join us for our Purim Carnival on Sunday, March 16th, from 10am until 12 noon (Madrachim and B'nai Mitzvah should arrive by 9:15 to help set up). There will be a host of fun activities, including:

- Megillah reading and Costume Parade
- Face painting and crown making
- Hamentaschen
- Bowling
- "Pie" in Haman's face
- Raffle
- Balloon animals
- Prizes

All are welcome — and **everyone** should come in costume!

Todah Rabbah (Thank You!)

• Susan and Chris Marshall for hosting Shabbat in the Wild — what a wonderful morning of chanting, walking and appreciating nature!

• Nancy Kelly, Sue Offer, Syd Sewall, Deb Sewall and Sarah Shed for organizing an amazing wine tasting. Tapas, stew and Spanish wines never tasted (or looked) so good! Additional thanks to Nancy Ross and Chris Myers Asch for helping with the cooking.

• Amy Bley, Edda Briggs-Theile, Anya Goldey, Hildie Lipson, and David Offer for lending a helping hand when we were without an office manager.

• The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Augusta for letting us, once again, use their screen for a presentation.

• **Bob Katz** for his fascinating lecture about China.



Hebrew School Calendar

March 2nd 9:30am—Noon Religious school with Pre-K/K Emily Bley with B'nai Mitzvah

March 9th 9:30am—Noon *Emily Bley with B'nai Mitzvah*

March 16th 10:00am—Noon Purim Carnival 10-12 Come in costume (you too, parents!!)

March 23rd 9:30—Noon Rabbi Asch with B'nai Mitzvah students and parents

March 29th 7:00pm—8:00pm Havdallah and dessert Join the Temple community for havdallah, a teaching and dessert. This takes the place of Hebrew School for the week. See you there!

March 30th No Hebrew School or Teacher's Meeting

Mazel Tov

• Nan Salvino on her new job as our office manager. We are so glad to have you at TBE!

Donations

General Fund

- Charlotte & Julius Goos
- Carol Graham
- Elaine Katz-Hanish & Martin Hanish
- Kala Ladenheim & Robert Saunders
- Susan & David Offer

<u>Building Fund</u> • Charlotte & Julius Goos

<u>Rabbi's Discretionary</u> <u>Fund</u> • Stefani Berkey & Daniel Tandy



- Yahrzeit Donations • Richard Dana, in memory of Jacob Dana • Patricia & Allen Davis, in memory of John Stanhope • Patricia & Allen Davis, in memory of Meyer Muller • Ellen Grunblatt & Stephen Bien, in memory of Jacques Grunblatt
- Elizabeth Koopman, in memory of Jane Bridgman Koopman
- Yale, Deborah, and Dale Marienhoff, in memory of Bernard Marienhoff
- Yale, Deborah, and Dale Marienhoff, in memory of Yetta Marienhoff
- Nancy & Bruce Schatz, in memory of Beatrice Schatz

Rose Golden Mitzvah Fund

Email Joan Freiman at joanandlowellfreiman@gmail.com or call her at 845-2544 to send a Mitzvah Card, with a suggested donation of \$18, but any amount will do. Mitzvah cards with the beautiful design by Lenora Leibowitz shown above can be sent to express condolences or to share in the joy of a Bar Mitzvah, wedding, birthday, anniversary, graduation, or any notable event or accomplishment. If you wish to send a card but do not want your name to be listed publicly, just let Joan know.

An Alternative Way to Honor a Loved One

We will help you customize a bookplate to be put in our prayer books. The suggested donation is \$18. A book plate in honor or memory of a loved one will be inserted into any new books that you wish to donate to our reference or children's library. Please contact Rabbi Asch (rabbisasch@gwi.net) for our book wish list. Please email bethela@gwi.net and let us know how you would like your bookplate to read. Making a donation to Temple Beth El is a special way to honor family and friends.

General Fund

This fund now includes the former Rabbi's Fund and covers temple operating expenses including Rabbi and staff salaries.

Capital Improvements Fund

Your contributions to this fund will be put towards general building and grounds maintenance.

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

This fund helps Rabbi Asch meet special needs in the greater community.

Memorial Plaques

Remember a loved one with a memorial plaque in the synagogue. Donation: \$200 *Payment due at time of order.*

Tree of Life

Acknowledge a milestone in someone's life by adding an inscribed leaf to the Temple's Tree of Life Donation: \$36. Payment due at time of order.

Please make checks payable to Temple Beth El. Indicate the fund to which you want to contribute and mail to TBE, Box 871, Augusta, ME 04332. Undesignated checks will go to the General Fund.

Temple Beth El accepts Visa & Mastercard. Please contact the office with any questions.

Temple Beth El

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March Yahrzeits

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Keep in Touch

March Service Schedule

Saturday, March 1st at 10:30am Torah Study and Kiddush Lunch

Saturday, March 8th at 10:00am Shabbat Service

Friday, March 14th at 7:00pm Shabbat Service

Saturday, March 15th at 9:30am Bat Mitzvah of Eliana Brown

Saturday, March 15th at 7:00pm Purim Celebration in Waterville

Sunday, March 16th at 10:00am Purim Carnival and Megillah reading

Friday, March 28th at 7:00pm Shabbat Services Guest Speaker Jonathan Weiss

Saturday, March 29th at 10:00am Writing Ethical Wills workshop

Saturday, March 29th at 7:00pm Havdallah and Dessert

Don't forget to grab a green Clynk bag for your returnable bottles! We raised more than \$600 last year with our Clynk program. Thank you to all who participate!



Upcoming Events

Tuesday, April 15th Second Seder at the Temple

Saturday, April 19th Matzah Brie Cook-Off, followed by Torah Study

Tuesday, April 22nd Yizkor Service at the Temple



The Montell Brown family invites you to join them for Eliana's Bat Mitzvah at 9:30am on Saturday, March 15. It will be followed by a kiddush lunch.

> Temple Beth El P.O. Box 871 Augusta, ME 04332 207-622-7450 www.bethelaugusta.org

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