

THE STAR

NEWSLETTER OF TEMPLE BETH TORAH ■ JULY-AUGUST 2016 ■ TAMMUZ 5776 ■ VOL 19 NO. 6

A Summer Message from Rabbi Seth

Tisha be'Av, the 9th of Av, a somber commemoration of destruction and exile, is the Jewish religious calendar's major summer event. This year it falls on Saturday, August 13, but, in deference to Shabbat, is marked on the following day. Repeatedly over our history, that date has (allegedly, at least) witnessed terrible events, among them the laying waste of the Jerusalem Temple in 586 BCE and again in 70 CE, Jews' expulsion from England in 1290 and from Spain in 1492, and the beginning of World War I (a prelude to World War II and the Holocaust) in 1914. Whether by pure coincidence, divine intention or human design, Tisha be'Av serves as a repeated point of reference for perspective on the reality of Jewish historical suffering. I ask you to keep your eyes peeled for catastrophic events—not only ones of obvious Jewish significance, but also ones affecting the wider world and having potential consequences for Jews—that might be unfolding on this upcoming Tisha be'Av.

Here are some troubles brewing right now and of concern to me: Russia's mischievous military muscle-flexing; the war in Syria, its role in geopolitical brinkmanship and Israel's occasional forays into it; Israeli-Palestinian conflict; surging anti-Semitism around the world; terrorist flare-ups everywhere; ugly political fallout from the EU's ongoing woes and its member nations' attendant resentments; the crass, volatile and at times violent, socially polarizing election season

here in America; massive wildfires in California and the southwest U.S.; more consequences of climate change. All of these are ideal breeding grounds for conditions that could lead to further disruption and destabilization and, in turn, invite scapegoating of minorities, most notably, Jews.

The pattern of human history shows that we are reactive creatures more often than we are proactive anticipators who nip problems in the bud. In order to prevent the next disaster from happening, we must change our habits of thinking and acting. This means we have to summon a willingness, a conscious determination, to act. We should be decisive but also incisive: paying attention to what's going on around us, mustering courage to look unflinchingly at—thus, to analyze—circumstances from which misfortune arises, turning foresight into action that improves the situation.

Tisha be'Av doesn't have to be the projector for screening a recurrent historical nightmare—the date on which we catalogue our past woes and anticipate future ones—but can become the occasion for careful, thoughtful observation of events occurring right now, and for wise reflection on how to do something to break the cycle of violence afflicting Jewish life and the larger society.

News and Notes

- TBT Spring Clean Up Day worked out very well. The weather cooperated and a lot of work was done. The hedge was trimmed back a foot and trimmed. Credit to **Barry Scott**. The balustrade sanding was started and will continue thanks to **Phil and Harold**. We need a painting party to paint it when the sanding is done as well as patching the front wall baseboards. Our kitchen was cleaned up by **Sallyanne, Kathi and Karen** who hope to complete cleaning out the cabinets in June.
- Israeli Pot Luck supper was a smashing success with 30 people attending. **Edo Shiloh**, our emissary was just wonderful.
- 23 delinquent dues notices went out June 1st. Have received responses. Some monies have come in. Others are questioning the amounts they owe. **Barry Goldberg** is addressing those concerns.
- A Fundraising dinner catered by **Marty Gold** and **Barry Scott** is planned for September@ \$40/person.
- **Judy's** handyman is preparing tower roof estimate.
- **Marty** checking out *Rhinoshield* for building exterior. New gutters being discussed.
- Need to recruit new board members to take over for the Scotts and the Mags next term!
- A Golden Book donation to the building fund was made by the **Scotts**.

Susan retires as Star Editor after 20 years!

■ A big round of applause for **Susan Reuben** for the incredible job she did for more than 20 years as Editor of The Star. Way back then she took over the Star from **Helena Kavalier**. Everyone should check out Susan's final edition with the wonderful pictures from Harold's brunch. We will be forever grateful to Susan for the endless hours of work and dedication she put into our TBT newsletter. We all send good wishes to Susan and hope she enjoys her retirement! As of this edition the new Star team will be **Ellen Sue Moses, Phil Lohman, Deb Hammer** as webmaster. We wish them well in their new endeavor!

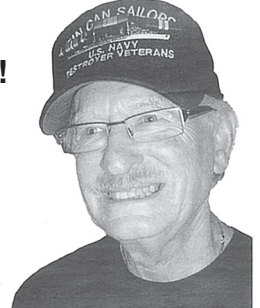
Harold and Phil paint!

Rusty hatchway scraped and painted. Front balustrade scraped though it needs a more serious belt sanding.



Our Ralph gets his medals!

Just in case you did not see the article in the July issue of **Wethersfield Life**. Please go to: https://view.publitas.com/p222-6222/wl_0716_layout/page/18-19



TEMPLE BETH TORAH

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This 8-ounce jar of delicious kosher honey arrives in time for the Rosh Hashanah holiday, decorated with a colorful label, and includes a personalized card reading "L'Shana Tova—Wishing you a Healthy

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