



# Chadashot Ha'am

June 2013

Sivan/Tamuz

## A Message from Rabbi Saks

I've sat down a few times to write this month's article and have struggled with how to get started. I knew the topic but wasn't sure how to capture it. Two years ago, shortly before my arrival at Bet Ha'am, Lisa Pierce began her term as synagogue president. The impact she would have on our congregation could not have been anticipated. In addition to surpassing our expectations as a leader, I am honored to be able to say that Lisa has also become my friend. Her dedication to the success of Bet Ha'am and the strength of our future have made a world of difference to me in the beginning of my rabbinate at Bet Ha'am.

In Tractate *B'rachot* 27b-28a in the *Talmud*, the community gathers to appoint a new leader. The community assesses its current situation and the skill set that they need their new leader to bring to the table to successfully move forward. That community could have been describing Lisa Pierce. After much deliberation, they approach Rabbi Eleazer ben Azariah, determining him to be the right person because of three qualities: he is wise, rich and tenth in descent from Ezra.

These qualities might raise some eyebrows for us now, and we know that they did for the rabbis of the *Talmud*, too, because they



offer explanations for each of these qualities. It was important that their leader be wise so that if anyone put a question to him, he would be able to answer it. Lisa has been a boundless resource for our congregation. She has answered questions, concerns, and requests with immediate and positive responses. Lisa's love for Bet Ha'am has enhanced every aspect of our community, from her baking for committee meetings to organizing an incredible *Purim* carnival that will make its appearance next year after being snowed out this time around.

The rabbis in the *Talmud* wanted their new leader to be rich, so he would be able to pay court to Caesar, if needed. Their new leader's wealth was not about the money that he would have, but rather his ability to offer protection and security for his community. Lisa's dedicated work with the volunteer leaders in our congregation has protected us and ensured our future. Whenever a need has come up, if Lisa wasn't the one to get the job done, she immediately engaged the people who could. She has built a strong community of volunteers and leaders in our congregation and we are stronger because of her.

The final quality that the rabbis of the *Talmud* valued in their leader

was his descent from Ezra. His ancestral merit demonstrated his commitment to the community. Lisa's involvement in our congregation did not begin with her presidency. She has been a dedicated volunteer and leader for many years and, thankfully, will continue to be someone on whom we can count for many years forward. Her dedication to Congregation Bet Ha'am has never been about the titles she has held, but rather about the love she has for our congregation.

I am very grateful to have had the privilege of working closely with Lisa as I began at Bet Ha'am, and I will be delighted to see what she has to offer us next. Thank you, Lisa, for your leadership, your wisdom, your generosity and your commitment to our congregation. Thank you, as well, for passing the baton forward. We know that Lisa Munderback brings a unique and important set of skills to her presidency - and wonderful enthusiasm about Bet Ha'am. The future is bright.

## President's Message - Lisa Pierce

### Where We've Been...

It's hard to believe that I am writing my last president's column. It has been an incredible couple of years at Bet Ha'am, and I am so pleased and honored to have served our congregation during this time.

Over the last two years, we welcomed and integrated our wonderful Rabbi Saks into our Bet Ha'am family. We hosted dozens of events, classes and musical performances. We engaged scores of new volunteers. We renewed and improved our relationship with the larger community, while also exploring partnerships and joint programming with other synagogues and local organizations. We supported the hungry by providing produce from our own garden and holding a record-breaking food drive. We helped to secure marriage equality in Maine and raised awareness for other important issues including gun violence and the needs of recent immigrants. We committed ourselves to fostering future leaders through courses and mentoring. We completed a strategic plan that will map our way for the next few years. We began important conversations about keeping our religious school program fresh and engaging, the roles of our non-Jewish members, and ensuring our financial stability going forward. Behind the scenes, we integrated new office staff, new membership software and new strategies for being as welcoming and efficient as possible. And throughout it all, we have celebrated every *Shabbat* and Jewish holiday with



energy, inspiration and a warmth and openness of spirit that our guests and members are commenting on with regularity.

Whew! Not bad for a group of busy volunteers in a mostly member-driven organization! Thank you to all of you who have devoted time, energy, talent and resources to help our congregation thrive.

### Where We're Headed...

It is with delight and a little awe that I will hand over the position of president to Lisa Munderback at our Annual Meeting this month. I have heard some say, "Oooh, she's got some big shoes to fill." Please, let me put things in perspective by stealing a quip from Rabbi Saks - Lisa is bringing her own shoes. And they are nice ones, too. Lisa comes to this position with impressive professional skills as a seasoned leader in the non-profit sector and expertise in finance, management, and operations. She has a deep commitment to Judaism and a genuine love for Bet Ha'am. In addition, Lisa has the most contagious laugh and is a giver of generous hugs. She is a grown-up in ways I can only aspire to, and I am very much looking forward to following her lead as we move through the next couple of years. We will all benefit from her leadership, and I am grateful for her willingness to serve.

### ...and Why I'm Not Going Anywhere

We all walk in the door of a synagogue for the first time for different reasons. I suspect we all stay for the same reason: we find something about being in each other's company that feeds our souls. Wherever life takes me, I will always seek out a synagogue because many voices raised together in the *Shema* fills my heart in ways nothing else can touch. But what keeps me coming back to this particular synagogue is unique - it's each of you, the people that make up our Bet Ha'am.

Whether we see each other all the time or only have time to exchange a smile over a crowded *Kol Nidre* service, I'd like you to know that each of you has enriched my experience at Bet Ha'am. I treasure the hundreds of casual conversations and the many "been-there-done-that/I'm doing that too/what do you think of this/that's so cool" moments I've shared with so many of you on Sundays, at services, or in the produce section at Hannaford. It's the connections I've made, the relationships that have grown into life-long friendships and the friendships we haven't yet developed that keep me coming back. For me, spending time at Bet Ha'am is often like being at a party filled with interesting people whom I truly enjoy. Thank you. I can't think of anywhere I'd rather be.

**Congregation Bet Ha'am**

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**Rabbi Jared Saks**

Orly Mendelson Biggie, Religious School Director  
 Kris Dorer, Synagogue Administrator  
 Teri Berenson, Bookkeeper  
 Karen Hindall, Administrative Assistant  
 Chris Skidgel, Custodian

**Executive Committee**

Lisa Pierce, President  
 Lisa Munderback, Vice President  
 Tom Rosen, Treasurer  
 Mylan Cohen, Secretary  
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Louise Abramson  
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 Perry Newman  
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 Steve Steinbock  
 Nathan Szanton  
 Deborah Tillman Stone

**Office Hours:**

Tuesday - Friday, 9:00 AM-4:00 PM  
 The office is closed on Mondays.  
 Building Use: All meetings, events or gatherings must be scheduled with the office.

**Office extensions and email addresses:**

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## From the Religious School Director

### Orly Mendelson Biggie



Summer is almost here. The 2012-2013 school year is over. The children will have a long break from doing something Jewish on Sundays. But, as you will not be surprised, I encourage parents to continue to do many Jewish things even though school is not in session.

Many families have their own Jewish traditions, practices and values.

Here are a few new ideas to try:

- Share books with Jewish themes or by Jewish authors with your children.
- Continue using the daily blessings your children have learned, such as the blessings before eating different kinds of food.
- Say the *Shema* with your child before bedtime.
- Use the on-line center at [Behrman House.org](http://Behrman House.org) with your fourth or sixth grader to practice reading in Hebrew.
- Find more information about the summer holidays such as *Tisha B'Av* (the 9th day of Av, which falls on July 16 this year), which commemorates the destruction of both Temples in Jerusalem.
- Review the Hebrew letters with younger children and practice them to build fluency.
- Practice reading Hebrew and prayers with fourth, fifth and sixth graders.
- Attend services to celebrate *Shabbat* or celebrate *Shabbat* at home.
- Find a family *Tikun Olam* project to work on together this summer.
- Talk with your child about the Jewish things you do during the week.
- Play Jewish games as a family— we have some available in our gift shop.

I wish you all a wonderful summer!

## Schedule of Services

### Friday, May 31

Kabbalat Shabbat Service 7:30 PM

### Saturday, June 1

Torah Study 9:00 AM

Worship Service 10:00 AM

*Parsha Sh'lach L'cha*

### Friday, June 7

Kabbalat Shabbat 7:30 PM

### Saturday, June 8

Torah Study 9:00 AM

Worship Service 10:00 AM

Ella Novick, *Bat Mitzvah*, daughter of  
Gregg & Tina Novick

*Parsha Korach*

### Friday, June 14

Family Kabbalat Shabbat 6:30 PM

### Saturday, June 15

Torah Study 9:00 AM

Worship Service 10:00 AM

Jonathan Stanley, *Bar Mitzvah*, son of  
Dana & Amy Stanley

*Parsha Chukat*

### Friday, June 21

Kabbalat Shabbat Service 7:30 PM

### Saturday, June 22

Torah Study 9:00 AM

Worship Service 10:00 AM

*Parsha Balak*

### Friday, June 28

Kabbalat Shabbat Service 7:30 PM

### Saturday, June 29

Torah Study 9:00 AM

Worship Service 10:00 AM

Ella Stillman, *Bat Mitzvah*, daughter of  
Brett Stillman

*Parsha Pinchas*

**Please join the congregation  
in celebration as our students  
are called to the Torah as  
B'nai Mitzvah.**

## Religious School News

### Thank you

Our annual Teacher Appreciation was a huge success! Thank you to Kerri Berman for chairing our wonderful Teacher Appreciation Luncheon on the last day of school. Thank you to Mark Stone, Beth Lucien, Susan Caplan and Kate Hirsh for all their help with set up, serving and watching the teachers' children. Thank you to all the school parents who baked and cooked for this delicious lunch!

Thank you to Mark Carignan and Martin Lodish for organizing team-building games for our older students on the last evening of Religious School. And thank you to Glenn Israel, Susan Horowitz, Barry Yudaken, Louise Abramson and Gary & Susan Caplan for helping with the delicious barbecue.

### 2013-2014 Registration

If you have not registered your children for the 2013-14 school year, please register now so that we can plan for next year.

### Can you help teach next year?

Teachers are needed for our morning Religious School. For more information, please call Orly at 879-0028.

### Kiddush Club

*Mazel tov* to our latest Kiddush Club members: Claire Anton, Joseph Jacobson, Hayley Lewis, Levi Lilienthal, Kira Ruffner and Trevor Sandler.



## Write a Legacy Letter

"Stories have to be told or they die, and when they die, we can't remember who we are or why we were here." Sue Monk Kidd, author of *The Secret Life of Bees*

Passing wisdom and love to the next generation is a valued Jewish tradition. A Legacy Letter allows us to share our stories, lessons learned and blessings. Are you 50 or over? If so, you're invited to join a workshop to learn how to create a legacy letter.

Through the generosity of the Jewish Community Alliance's Abromson Award, *Your Write Mind, P.A.*, is offering six workshops, beginning the first week of July. Workshops will meet once a week, last two and one-half hours and include a break.

Maggie Butler, M.S.W. and Joanne Turnbull, Ph.D., co-founders of *Your Write Mind, P.A.*, are certified and experienced Amherst Writers & Artists (AWA) Workshop Leaders. The AWA method is designed to help individuals express what is most meaningful to them in a safe, nonjudgmental environment. Participants will have the support they need to record and share experiences that communicate who they really are.

Participation is limited to 24. There will be two groups of twelve writers. One workshop will be offered in the morning, the other in the evening. The evening workshop will be held at Bet Ha'am and is tentatively scheduled for Wednesdays. Time and location of the morning workshop will be announced soon.

When the workshop series ends, writers will select one or two favorite pieces for inclusion in a chapbook (a small book) of legacy letters. Writers will also be invited to read their work at Bet Ha'am during *Sukkot*. In addition, the Jewish Museum will

host an exhibit of stories and letters, along with the writers' photographs. The exhibit will include a discussion forum where writers can share their experiences with the larger community.

For more information, please contact Joanne Turnbull ([turnbulljoanne@gmail.com](mailto:turnbulljoanne@gmail.com) or 831-0310) or Maggie Butler ([mgb100@gmail.com](mailto:mgb100@gmail.com) or 730-0084).

*"No one has seen the night sky from exactly your trajectory. No one has loved exactly the people and places you have loved. Who will tell that part of the earth's story, if you do not?"*

Pat Schneider, Founder, Amherst Writers & Artists Workshop Method



Maggie Butler & Joanne Turnbull

### Mazel Tov

- Mazel tov to Kirk Boettcher, who will be playing Clifford in Lyric Music Theater's production of *Deathtrap* on June 21-23 & June 28-30!
- Julia Gmeiner completed her Masters Degree in Voice Performance at the University of Texas. This summer she will perform two leading opera roles in Wichita Falls, Texas before moving to New York City to pursue a career in opera. Mazel tov, Julia!

## Successful Gala Event

The Starry Night Gala on April 6 lived up to expectations – and exceeded them. This wonderful evening honored Ken Lehman for his community involvement and leadership. His friends, colleagues and family had a blast recognizing him for all he does for Bet Ha'am. The Time Pilots rocked the house and folks danced the night away. There was even a collection to encourage the Rabbi to sing with the band. And yes, he did sing!

The auction items were terrific: everything from Bon Jovi tickets to a Hamsa Door Harp from Israel to an airplane ride courtesy of Al Lukas! There were awesome class baskets and even a month of sleep away camp, courtesy of Andy Lillienthal and Camp Winnebago. Thank you to all who donated items and those who helped solicit them. A huge shout out of appreciation goes to D.L. Geary Brewing, Matthew Tabenken, Moet Hennessy USA, Pete Leavitt and Leavitt & Sons for underwriting and supplying the beer and wine for the evening.

Thank you to everyone who made this event such a success - those who planned it, those who funded it and those who attended it. Not only was it wonderful to spend time with the Jewish community, but we also raised more than \$21,000 and exceeded our fundraising goals both for the event and for the newly created Lehman Fund for Gardens and Grounds. Special thanks to our organizing committee: Deborah Stone, Sherri Carignan, Ben Grant, Jill Epstein, Karen Lukas, Marie Leavitt, Louise Abramson, Emily McEntee, Jane Snerson, Mylan Cohen, Tom Rosen, Kris Dorer, Teri Berenson, Emily Brocks, Amy Stanley, Laura Kittle, Rabbi Saks, Lisa Pierce, Matthew Young and Karen Hindall for their tireless efforts in making this event such a success.

## Garden Notes - Toby Rosenberg

The Garden Committee began its 2013 season by planting spring wheat with our fifth graders. We planted one local variety called Red Fife and an ancient Egyptian variety called Camut. We look forward to involving students in the harvesting and threshing in the fall.

The next event was our annual plant sale. Even with our slow, cold spring and a rainy Mothers Day, we got many gorgeous donations and had the most profitable sale to date. Thanks to everyone who donated plants, to those who volunteered and to the Bet Ha'am staff who helped everything run so smoothly.

As you read this article, we will have just planted our raised beds with produce and flowers for us and our local food pantries. If you would like to help tend and harvest these raised beds, please contact Toby Rosenberg at [toby@qwi.net](mailto:toby@qwi.net).

And here is what is coming next:

### June Weedathon: Sunday June 9, 9:00 AM to noon

Please join the Garden Committee and other volunteers as we decimate dandelions, cancel out the crabgrass and whack those weeds.

Many hands make quick work! Bring your favorite weeding tools or use ours.

Refreshments will be provided.

In case of pouring rain, please join us on Sunday, June 23 - same time same place.

Mazel Tov to the  
Confirmation Class of  
5773/2013!



Adult night out at the lanes



The fifth grade planted wheat behind the synagogue.

# Superheroes on the last day of Religious School



## Join the Bet Ha'am Donor Gallery

We invite you to join the Bet Ha'am Donor Gallery today! We have many needs and many ways for you to contribute. If you have an event you would like to celebrate, a person you would like to honor, a *yahrzeit* to remember, or you just want to help support our programs, please fill out the form and send it along with your check to Bet Ha'am. Include an address if you would like an acknowledgement to be sent.

Our Donor Gallery listing should read:

Please acknowledge to: \_\_\_\_\_

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Check enclosed for \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Fund choice (please check one):

- Annual Fund
- General Fund
- Rabbi's Discretionary Fund
- Adult Library Fund
- Berkowitz Open Door Fund
- Building Capital Campaign
- Cohen Fund for Worship & Learning
- Goldfinger Fund for Israel Travel
- Lehman Fund for Gardens & Grounds
- Religious School Library Fund
- Rosalyne S. & Sumner T. Bernstein  
Scholar in Residence Fund
- Sandmel Education Fund
- Tutor Fund
- Youth Fund

### ***Bet Ha'am Donor Gallery***

#### **We thank our generous contributors**

##### **Rabbi's Discretionary Fund**

- In appreciation by Michael Messerschmidt
- In appreciation by Duane & Evie Polisner
- In appreciation of Rabbi Goldfinger's class by Lee Broder

##### **General Fund**

- In appreciation by an anonymous donor
- In appreciation of Rabbi Saks by Robert & Wendy Morrison
- In memory of my mother, Kathryn Rooks, by Ki & Bill Leffler
- In memory of Minda Gold's father by Mindy Novick
- In memory of Murray Rosen by Carl Lerman & family
- In honor of Rabbi Goldfinger's class by Lee Broder
- In memory of Cecilia Saks by Arleen & Mitch Lebe

##### **Sandmel Education Fund**

- In honor of all of Elinore's wonderful teachers by the Kosak family

#### ***Zecher T'zaddik L'vrachah***

- Condolences to Joshua & Lesley Levy on the loss of Josh's grandfather, Jack L. Levy.

# June 2013

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						<b>1</b> Torah Study 9:00 AM Worship Service 10:00 AM
<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> Office Closed	<b>4</b> Annual Congregational Meeting 6:30 PM	<b>5</b> Morning <i>Minyan</i> 7:00 AM Strategic Plan Committee Meeting 6:00 PM	<b>6</b> Library Volunteers 1:00 PM	<b>7</b> Membership Committee "Shabbat in the Neighborhood" 5:30 PM <i>Kabbalat Shabbat</i> Service 7:30 PM	<b>8</b> Torah Study 9:00 AM Worship Service 10:00 AM Ella Novick <i>Bat Mitzvah</i>
<b>9</b> Weed-a-thon 9:00 AM	<b>10</b> Office Closed	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> Morning <i>Minyan</i> 7:00 AM Education Committee 6:30 PM	<b>13</b> Library Volunteers 1:00 PM Adult Learning Committee 7:00 PM	<b>14</b> Family <i>Kabbalat</i> <i>Shabbat</i> Service 6:30 PM	<b>15</b> Torah Study 9:00 AM Worship Service 10:00 AM Jonathan Stanley <i>Bar Mitzvah</i>
<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> Office Closed	<b>18</b> Garden Committee 5:30 PM Board Meeting 6:30 PM	<b>19</b> Morning <i>Minyan</i> 7:00 AM	<b>20</b> Library Volunteers 1:00 PM	<b>21</b> <i>Kabbalat Shabbat</i> Service 7:30 PM	<b>22</b> Torah Study 9:00 AM Worship Service 10:00 AM
<b>23</b> Rain Date - Weed-a-thon 9:00 AM	<b>24</b> Office Closed Membership Committee 7:00 PM	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> Morning <i>Minyan</i> 7:00 AM	<b>27</b> Library Volunteers 1:00 PM	<b>28</b> <i>Kabbalat Shabbat</i> Service 7:30 PM	<b>29</b> Torah Study 9:00 AM Worship Service 10:00 AM Ella Stillman <i>Bat Mitzvah</i>
<b>30</b>						