

## Congregation Beth Torah President's Column March, 2009



As I sit at my desk on February 2 to write my column this month I am still reeling from the busy weekend my wife and I just experienced all courtesy of Congregation Beth Torah. Let me review it with you.

We started out quietly enough with a Shabbat dinner at home (however, we could have participated in a wonderful program at the shul with the traveling BBYO Traveling Shabbat or if we were younger could have had our Friday night meal at the shul ).

Saturday morning it was off to shul to share in the good vibes of Phil Stayman and his son Aaron celebrating the anniversary of their respective Bar Mitzvahs. Of course, we stayed for the luncheon and the singing that followed. We had some down time in the afternoon to recharge our batteries, a normal Shabbat activity for a Saturday afternoon. Then it was off to the J to experience Jewtopia thanks to the

Chai Lights group. Jewtopia was very entertaining and if you missed it watch for the movie starring these two funny young gentlemen, Bryan Fogel and Sam Wolfson.

Sunday morning it was off to the shul to join our Men's Club and representatives from Anshai, Shearith and Temple Shalom in the World Wide Wrap. There must have been 80 or more of us in the sanctuary that morning, the majority of whom stayed for a complimentary pancake breakfast. There was just enough time to run home to pick up Linda so we could head over to Addison and participate in the marvelous Torah Fund program which recognized three of our unsung heroes (although not any longer) – Ellen Ackerman, Roz Prupes and Marty Barenblat. By now, you know why they were recognized so I won't repeat that information here.

So to recap we had two free meals thanks to Congregation Beth Torah, lots of warm fellowship and on reflection positive memories of Saturday and Sunday some old and some new.

Let me now change direction completely and talk to you about our new neighbors. By now anyone who has come to the shul on a Sunday morning has noticed that we have active neighbors. The church is called the Biblical Community Church ([www.biblicalcommunity.com](http://www.biblicalcommunity.com)). Their members are primarily of Philippine descent and there are approximately 50 families. For those of you who may not know our history, we purchased our piece of the property from the church that preceded this one. Part of the purchase agreement was sharing of the parking lot. As you enter the parking lot, the two rows closest to the church are the portion of the lot that we need to keep free for their use on their Sabbath. We ask you to remember that when you have reason to come to the shul on Sunday morning and help us be good neighbors by parking to the right of the divider. The Rabbi and a few of the Executive Committee met

with their Pastor and representatives from their Executive Committee. We had a good meeting and gave them a tour of our facility and they offered to do the same for us at any time. We did address the concern we have about the parking lot when the High Holidays include a Sunday and they were very understanding and said they would work with us to mitigate any problems. With the exception of a meeting they hold on the 1st Saturday of every month, there really should be little impact on the shared use of the parking lot.

In these troubled times it is so nice to belong to a warm, caring community and to participate in the events it sponsors. As we enter into this new month, I encourage you to start the month off with a bang – join us at the Big Night Out (March 7) and the Megillah reading (March 9). Take advantage of the Megillah reading to show your children/grandchildren how much fun Judaism can be. Also, make sure to reserve some time on March 22 to come to the Kosher Chili Cook-off and cheer for the home team.

*Chuck*