



Chai Times

Temple of the High Country

Volume 1, Issue 18

President's Message....

Dear Congregational Members:

I would like to start my message by telling you about the fantastic Chanukah party and Hillel celebration we had in December. Rabbi Roberts lead the service for over 50 people; approximately 20 of them were Hillel students. We went through 20 lbs of potatoes in making the latkes.

Since becoming president I have tried to focus the temple in a direction of change, growth and positive experiences. When we speak of change, I realize many people feel uncomfortable. People tend to like how things used to be. However, I hope everyone feels that we can't go back to what we used to be. We have a gorgeous temple, and the building has changed our community forever.

I look at our amazing build-

ing. Who would not want the building we currently have?

We are the Jewish presence in the community and we have been accepted, and the building has helped us to gain that acceptance. Now it is so common to have guests of different faiths at our services. Sometimes there are church groups, sometimes ASU students needing to experience our service for a class, sometimes individuals exploring Judaism. The building is the magnet that attracts them, to learn about Judaism, and what we stand for. This helps to increase awareness of our religion and reduce prejudice and bigotry. We are an active and viable part of the Boone religious community. I am so proud of the community, our Jewish community and the community at large that has embraced us. We are a holy community.

All of our current changes have evolved due to the physical

structure of our Temple. We have hired people, we have bills, and we have an active growing congregation that wants more.

Let me walk you through the various changes we have experienced.

Hiring a Rabbi - Hiring a rabbi was both a bit scary and unsettling, such as: How were we going to pay for the rabbi? And it was such a drastic change from the past. Bringing in a rabbi says to the greater community, yes we are here, we are permanent. The reality is the building kick started a need to consider a rabbi, and many people in the congregation also wanted one.

Needs assessment - It has never been done here before, and it was a very important step to hear what the congregants had to say and use that data to *continued on page 2*

Inside this issue:

<i>President's Message continued</i>	2
<i>Joy's & Celebrations</i>	2
<i>Sisterhood News continued</i>	2
<i>Rabbi's Message</i>	3
<i>Just for Laughs</i>	3
<i>Recipe</i>	3
<i>Save the Date</i>	4

Sisterhood News....

The TOHC Sisterhood has had a winter filled with snow, wind, and ice as well as educational and delicious meetings. We enjoyed learning about the Blue Ridge Women in Agriculture and Sustainability in Nov., our Dec. meeting was our usual fun Chanukah Party

with gift exchange game and potluck lunch. Then in January we began the year off with an exciting Bingo game meeting with white elephant prizes. The proceeds of that game day went into our Oneg Fund. Our book discussion meeting in Feb. was a thought provoking

discussion of Markus Zusak's book, *The Book Thief*. Sisterhood members have been volunteering to assist in the purchasing of the Oneg supplies for 4 weeks at a time this winter. This has worked out well and we will continue that into the spring. *Continued on pg 2*

President's Message continued....

move forward. 42% of the congregation responded to our Needs Assessment. That is a phenomenal percentage in survey research, and the comments clearly talked about change. We need to listen to our congregants for where we will head next.

Strategic planning- We are in the beginning stages of Strategic Planning and we have already had two strategic planning sessions with the able assistance of Dr. Rachel Shinnar and Dr. Bonnie Marmor. This will help us determine where we are moving in the future.

This past year there has been a great working relationship between the TOHC and Dr. Simon Sibelman, Director of the Holocaust, Peace and Judaic Center.

There seems to be an interest in starting a Brotherhood, and there will be an organizational and kickoff event in June.

The Temple is attempting to reach out to unaffiliated Jews in the community and winter residents. Our first Adult Purim

Social on March 22nd a welcome to these folks.

Preparation for the Community Seder (April 15th) is under way under the talented leadership of Erika Siegel.

Your Temple Board continues to work towards making TOHC a vibrant, compassionate and inclusive house of worship. Being president has afforded me the opportunity to meet some phenomenal temple members who have stepped up and have helped grow and create positive change:

Leonard Hayet has been instrumental in helping to fix the AC system in the temple.

Frank Girard has always been there to fix, repair whatever needs to be done at the temple.

Bonnie Marmor has provided her expertise in Strategic Planning to help set the stage for positive direction and growth in the temple.

Elena Romagni has provided her expertise in fund raising to help set the stage for our August 23rd Kruger Brother's concert at Rosen Hall.

Medina Roy has provided her expertise in organizing and creating our temple library.

Rachel Shinnar has provided her expertise in Strategic Planning, along with conducting Sunday School for the temple.

Arlene Solomon has stepped forward to start and lead our brand new choir.

Pat Wisch and Bill Yancey have provided their skills in constructing and helping to develop the temple Needs Assessment.

We are looking forward to the return of our summer residents shortly. Please mark your calendars for our fund raising concert with the Kruger Brothers at Rosen Hall on the campus of ASU Saturday evening August 23rd. Details will be forth coming. Please feel free to contact me if there is anything you wish to discuss.

Joys and Celebrations and other news....

There will be an inaugural Brotherhood meeting with a program on Sunday June 22nd...details to follow.

The temple gift shop is open and we have a wide selection of items for purchase such as Shabbat candles, Yahrtzeit candles, Seder plates, Kiddush cups, puzzles and Mezuzahs.

The Sunday school led by Rachel Shin-

nar has been meeting once a month. The Purim Party was attended by more than 10 children who made Purim masks, puppets and heard the Story of Purim. The following dates have been scheduled and Rachel invites all children who wants to attend. For more information call Rachel at 828-406-0516

April 13 Passover
May 18 Lag Ba-Omer
June - last one, date TDB

Our condolences go out to Teri Bonomo, daughter of Laurel Wolf who passed away, long time resident of Seven Devils and a member of our temple.

Sisterhood News continued.....

We voted to increase the amount spent on each Oneg to \$25 and we encourage everyone to consider donating the food for a Friday or Sat. in honor or memory of a special person or occasion. Leigh has made up a list of all the items that might be needed for an Oneg and Renee, our temple secretary has a copy of the list. We have volunteers for March, but we do need volunteers for other months. This is fun to do with a friend! Our upcoming meetings this spring/summer will include a hamentashen cooking class with Erika Siegel on Mar. 9th at 1 p.m. The hamentashen will be served at the

Temple Purim Social on Mar. 22. On April 6th we will have our annual Sisterhood Seder at noon at the temple. Everyone is encouraged to bring a non-dairy dish to share and tambourines or bells! On May 4th at 1 p.m. our program will be a class to learn about our Defibrillator and review CPR. This will be taught by the local ambulance company. All temple members are invited to join us for this class. We hope to have our Welcome Back Tea on Sunday, June 29th at noon at the temple. A program for July has not been decided until the dates of the App Summer Festival and the Holocaust

& Peace Studies Symposium have been published. Our August election meeting will be on the 17th and we hope to see lots of different members thinking about being sisterhood officers! We have voted to have all positions have 2 people elected...Co-Presidents, Co-Vice Presidents, Co-Secretaries, and Co-Treasurers. Hopefully, some of our part-time members can help in the "Co" positions. We look forward to seeing all our members, new and returning friends, at one of our meetings soon

Rabbi's Column: Endings and Beginnings

I am writing my first column for the TOHC newsletter a couple days after the one year anniversary of my father's death. We gathered as a family shortly before the anniversary for the tombstone unveiling.

Judaism encourages us to spiritually mark and commemorate both beginnings and endings. We celebrate new lives though the ritual of baby namings, and if the baby is a boy, also with a bris. We celebrate the beginning of emotional and ethical maturity through the bat/bar mitzvah celebration. This celebration marks when a child has gained enough knowledge, wisdom and ethical maturity to begin to be held accountable for the actions they take. In Judaism it is only once someone has reached the age of bar/bat mitzvah that they can become witnesses in a court and are expected to begin to perform the mitzvahs on their own – such as fasting. We celebrate new love and new families by marking the occasion

with a wedding. The wedding is a time for families and friends to come together and pause, the wedding acknowledging a change in a two people's relationship through love, and to celebrate the commitment of these two to share their lives together.

Judaism does not shy away from the fact that death is a key part of life. Thus, we are encouraged to commemorate the deaths of those close to us and to acknowledge the loss in our lives. We not only have the ritual of a funeral. The funeral is then followed by shiva and then an additional period of mourning. When we mourn for a parent the period lasts 11 months. We set up markers on graves and then gather for unveiling ceremonies. We light *yahrzeit* candles every year on the date of the death. We say *kaddish* not only on the *yahrzeit* but also four other times during the year when we recite the *Yizkor* prayers.

Why does Judaism encourage us in

this fashion? I believe that we find meaning in life through both the joys and sorrows we experience. Judaism slows us down at the times of joys and sorrows so we can pause long enough so that we remember and in the memories, we find meaning regarding living life and experiencing death. Judaism constantly reminds that while life may be short in the years we live, it is full of meaning by the way we live. We are encouraged to never forget that loss will be part of life and we are encouraged to live life to fullest and to hold on and celebrate the joyous times of our lives.

With Purim and Passover approaching, I encourage each of us to celebrate the joys of life and family which these holidays encourage so that when we do find ourselves mourning, as my own family has just done, we find meaning and closeness to family and to God.
Rabbi Stephen Roberts

Just for Laughs....

The Jewish Bear

A man is out in the woods when he comes across a bear.

Frightened for his life, he runs as fast as he can to escape the bear and hides in a cave. He is horrified to find that the bear has run after him into the cave, and now the man is trapped. He closes his eyes and begins to recite "Sh'ma Yisrael" in anticipation of his final moments.

When he is finished, he opens his eyes and is surprised to see the bear in front of him with his eyes closed - also praying. The man thinks to himself "how lucky am I to be cornered by what must be the only Jewish bear! We're *mishpocheh* - I'm saved!"

He then listens more carefully to the bear's prayer:

"...hamotzi lechem min haaretz."

"Oy Vey!"

Four Jewish ladies are playing a game of cards in Miami Beach.

The first lady sighs and says, "Oy..."

The second lady nods, sighs, and says, "Oy vey!"

The third lady says, "Oy veys meer!"

The fourth lady chimes in: "Enough talk about the children already. Let's get back to the game."

Recipe... Hamentashen

4 cups flour
4 eggs
3/4 cup sugar
1 cup margarine, softened
1 Tbsp. Orange juice
2 tsp. Baking powder
1 tsp. Vanilla extract
Pinch of salt
1 tsp. Orange rind

FILLINGS

1-pound strawberry or apricot preserves

Preheat oven to 350°. Grease cookie

sheets.

Place all ingredients in a large mixer bowl and beat together. You may add a drop more juice or flour, depending on consistency of dough.

1. Roll dough into a ball. Divide into four parts.

2. On a floured board roll out each portion to about 1/8-inch thick. Using a round biscuit or cookie cutter cut 3-inch circles.

3. Place 1/2 to 2/3 teaspoon of de-

sired filling in the center of each circle.

4. To shape into triangle, lift up right and left sides, leaving the bottom down and bring both side to meet at the center above the filling.

5. Bring top flap down to the center to meet the two sides. Pinch edges together.

6. Place on grease cookie sheet 1 inch apart and bake at 350 degree preheated oven for 20 minutes.

Temple of the High Country

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ghcountry.org**

CHAI TIMES



We are adopting a Winter schedule for Shabbat services, mainly to avoid weekly nighttime driving.

From January through April:
Friday night services at 7:00 PM will ONLY be on the First Friday of each month.

All the other weeks of the month- Saturday morning services at 10:30 AM. These services will include a short Torah service.

If you check our website.
www.templeofthehighcountry.org, you will see the schedule for the current month.

Save the Date....

EXCITING NEWS SAVE THE DATE

The Temple of the High Country presents "An Evening with the Kruger Brothers" on Saturday August 23 at the Rosen Concert Hall at Appalachian State University. This magnificent trio is acknowledged as one of the most innovative ensembles active in Americana music today.

Dates for Rabbi Roberts Services

April 25 - 27
May 23 - 25
June 27 - 29
July 25 - 27
Aug 22 - 24 (Kruger Brothers Fundraiser)
Sep 12 - 14
Sep 24 - 26 Rosh Hashanah
Oct 3 - 5 Yom Kippur
Oct 24 - 26.