

Congregation Beth Am

2013-2014

Annual Report

“To Motivate and Empower Our Congregation to Live Our Lives Jewishly”

2030 West Fletcher Avenue, Tampa, Florida 33612

813-968-8511

www.BethAmTampa.org

Member Union for Reform Judaism

Professional Staff

Rabbi
Cantorial Leader
Religious School Director
Youth Director
Office Manager

Jason Rosenberg
Joy Katzen-Guthrie
Hillary Rosenberg
Lisa Cohen
Victoria Cain-Stull

Executive Committee

President
President-Elect
Immediate Past President
VP Development
VP Ritual & Education
VP Membership & Growth
VP Facilities & Operations
Treasurer
Financial Secretary
Recording Secretary

Larry Jasper
Sue Ellen Corning
Eileen Poiley
Andrew Cohen
Allan Feldman
Sarah Phillips
Ron Rinner
Bob Friedman
Steve Falkowitz

Board of Directors (Includes Executive Committee and the following)

Caring Community
Communications
Continuing Education
Finance & Budget
Financial Resources Development
Hospitality
House
Membership
Parliamentarian
Personnel
Religious School Steering
Religious School Events
Ritual
Social
Social Action
Strategic Planning
Youth
Members at Large

David Rifkin
James Allen
Vikki Silverman
Bob Friedman
Andrew Cohen
Golda Brunhild/Barbara Moudy
Lenny Zuriff
Deborah Conley
Fern Musselwhite
Eileen Poiley
Hope Buksbaum
Katie Habgood
Sarina Ergas
Dena Allen
Cathy Friedman/Joe & Marilyn Lehman
Sue Ellen Corning
Stacey Handman
Stephen Bucholtz
Dana Hansen
Nancy Himmelgreen
Jan Kernis

Board of Directors (Continued)

Affiliates:

BITTY
Men's Club
Sisterhood (President-Elect)
Zahav

Briana Bursten
Milt Orkin
Harriet Katz
Maxine Gourse

From Our President:

Larry Jasper

In this report you will hear of all the great things that have gone on during this past year. You will hear about the programs, classes, milestones, services, celebrations, fundraisers, social activities, meetings, social action projects, and new initiatives. You will hear about the enhancements to the building. You will hear about our plans for the future. You will hear about our financial challenges. You will hear all this from our dedicated Committee Chairs and Vice Presidents, our Treasurer, Financial Secretary, and President Elect, all the hard working members of your Board of Directors. I want to focus on our people – the hard working volunteers and staff who make all this possible.

We have 76 children enrolled in our religious school. Add to this the Madrachim (our post B’Nai Mitzvah youths who assist with the classes) and our teachers and it adds up to a significant portion of our congregation involved in our youth education. Collectively they provide our children with a solid foundation in Judaism. Nothing is more important to our collective future than providing for our children's religious education. If we don't do that, then how can our future thrive?

We had 16 children attend URJ camps this past summer. Lifelong friendships are made and bonded during these sessions and it is hard to return home without a more intense dedication to our religion. Jewish summer camps, while our kids are having a great time, instill a sense of Judaism in our youth, in ways that any synagogue cannot. If you have a child who has not as yet had the opportunity to attend a URJ summer camp speak with Rabbi Rosenberg or me – we can provide you with more information about the various camps and possible financial assistance.

This year we got to say hello to the newest adult members of our congregation: **Amy Tomlinson, Jordan Schwartz, Paul Saturno, Scott Buksbaum, Jordan Rafsky, and Sean Glassman** have celebrated their B’Nai Mitzvah so far this year. Upcoming this month and in June are **Bradley Jasper, Alexandra Takagishi, Matthew Kraus, and Logan Sutter**. The next four weekends are filled with these milestones. If you have not had the opportunity to come and worship with these fine young adults then please do. They are the future of our synagogue and our future leaders. You will not be disappointed. See our web site for more information on how they are helping our community through their Tikkun Olam projects.

This year, with sadness, we had to say good bye to **Katheryn Kraselsky** whose husband Aaron passed away several years earlier; **Isador Daniels**, Father of Phyllis Hart; **Chris Davidson**, husband of Madelyn Davidson; **Marilyn Winters**, mother of Bobby Winters, **Alyce Greenfield Shames**, mother of Linda Valentine; **Florence Siman**, wife of Jules Siman; **Larry Lempert**, a longtime member; **Harry Krass**, father of Tina Hager; **Margaret Jean Zeller**, wife of Bobby Winters; **Henrietta Cohen**, mother of Jeanine Cohen; and **Minnie Schwartz**, mother of Eileen O’Connell. Zichrono Livracha – may their memory be a blessing.

Adult education courses, through our new Talmud Torah Academy, have been taught this year by volunteers, all of whom dug into their collective experiences to provide world class teachings. This was the brainchild of **Vikki Silverman** who developed and managed the offerings. Thanks to **Golda Brunhild, Steve Falkowitz, Cathy Friedman, Tina Hager, Bruce Himelstein, Nancy Himmelgreen, Joy Katzen-Guthrie, Art Meier, Hillary Rosenberg, Rabbi Rosenberg, Vikki Silverman, Stefanie Wisselman, and George Zucker** for volunteering. This adds up to a very

well rounded offering of courses; if you have not as yet had the opportunity to partake of these courses, look for more to come shortly.

We all had the opportunity to enjoy the wonderful sounds of our choirs:

Dena Allen, Sheryl Bowman, Debbie Conley, Drew Falkowitz, Steve Falkowitz, Georgi Jasper, Jan Kernis, Lil Klein, David Rifkin, Mel Tockman, and Stefanie Wisselman comprised our High Holy Day choir, all under the exceptional tutelage of **Tracy Falkowitz**.

Our Shabbat Choir, led by our Cantorial Leader **Joy Katzen-Guthrie**, was comprised of **Sheryl Bowman, Georgi Jasper, Jan Kernis, Lil Klein, Debra Meister, Irma Polster, Dave Rifkin, Patty Rinner, Bruce Silverman, Vikki Silverman, and Mel Tockman**.

This year we honored **Doris Baer** as our Woman of Distinction, to recognize her many years of service and devotion to not only Beth Am, but the greater Jewish Community. We honored **Cathy and Bob Friedman** at the Israel Bonds dinner for their service and dedication to the State of Israel. This year, for the **T.A.G.** Award, named for the 3 pillars of Judaism, (**Torah, Avodah** ("service", worship), and **G'milut Chasadim** (acts of loving-kindness)), we had 3 women who have given so much of their time, talent, and treasure, that we could not narrow the choice any further. Therefore we honored **Dena Allen, Golda Brunhild, and Cathy Friedman** with this award.

There are many more people who volunteered this year in many capacities and I thank them for their time and dedication. If I missed naming someone I apologize for the omission. Our congregation would not be what it is today without all of our volunteers. You make Beth Am the great place it is!

Let us also not overlook the dedication of our incredible staff, the people who work tirelessly to provide us with a meaningful experience at all our services and events. **Rabbi Jason Rosenberg** has served our congregation for 7 years and we recently honored him with his 2nd Bar Mitzvah to commemorate his 13th year as a Rabbi. **Joy Katzen-Guthrie** has completed her 2nd year with our congregation as our Cantorial Leader and is constantly increasing her role within the congregation, further engaging our youth and bringing us many musical events and classes. **Dr. Hillary Rosenberg** has served our school for several years, first as Principal along with Vikki Silverman as the director. After Vikki's retirement, Hillary served for 2 years as the interim Director and now been confirmed as the permanent Director. She brings innovation to our already excellent school program! **Lisa Cohen** is our not so silent secret – she has brought life and vitality to our youth programming and works tirelessly to expand the program. See her and Briana Bursten's reports for lots of detail on our youth activities. Last but certainly not least, **Victoria Cain-Stull**, our office administrator, is the grease that makes our wheels turn. Without her devoted dedication, our congregation could not go forward.

When you see one of our dedicated staff and volunteers, consider saying "Thank You".

What this all boils down to is our Congregation is made up of people. Together we form a Community and ultimately this is what counts. Any Synagogue can offer educational courses, programs, religious services, social events, etc., but if the people do not come together everyone leaves empty. It is not about what is offered; it is about what you take away. Our goal at Beth Am is to build a community with lasting relationships. A place where we can gather with likeminded people and build relationships that last a lifetime. We do this by communicating with one another; written, verbal, and expressive. Do not look at Beth Am as a building where you come

to High Holiday services and a baby naming, wedding, or funeral. Look at Beth Am as a place where you come to fulfill your spiritual needs and to meet friends, both old and new. Build lasting relationships and your life will be more fulfilling and meaningful.

I thank you for the honor of serving as your Board President and look forward to another year of growing and improving our Congregation. I look forward to seeing all of you on many occasions this coming year.

In closing, let me say it is all about the people.

L'Shalom,
Larry Jasper

From Our Rabbi:

Rabbi Jason Rosenberg

In looking over my letter for last year's Annual Report, it occurred to me that this past year was, in many ways, very much like the one before. Joy Katzen-Guthrie is no longer our "new" Cantorial Leader, but she continues to bring passion and beautiful music to our synagogue, and we continue to benefit from her presence. Our religious school continues to thrive — Hillary Rosenberg is still running a school which is filled with energy and joy every Sunday morning and Wednesday evening (and, she'd be the first to tell you that the success of the school is in very large part because of the wonderful team of teachers which we are blessed to have). And, as it has been for several years now, BITTY remains one of the most important energy centers of the congregation — it seems that every weekend finds a group of our teens working with Lisa Cohen on a program or activity. Our affiliates are all strong and getting stronger, and seem to be finding new ways to engage their constituents.

The programs which I am personally most responsible for were, at least on the surface, more or less the same this year — there have been no major changes in our pattern of worship services, for example. Café Shabbat and Making Prayer Real, along with Shabbat morning Torah study still draw a loyal and sometimes growing cohort, as have our range of Continuing Education opportunities.

If you were to make a checklist of all of the "new things" which we did this year, it might not be that long of a list. But, that definitely wouldn't be the best way to look at our congregation. The reason that not much has changed over the past year is that we're continuing to thrive as an exciting, friendly, dynamic, challenging synagogue. Guests and prospective members almost universally comment on how warm and welcoming we are, as well as how busy we are for a congregation of our size (or, even for a congregation several times larger than we are). And, our existing members, as they always have, showing unbelievable level of support for the synagogue.

That may be the constant which is most important in our synagogue's life — the support and participation of its membership. It's true of all congregations, but it's especially true of small ones — there is no way that we could survive, let alone thrive, without a great number of people giving generously of their time, energy and spirit (to say nothing of their money). Our synagogue is led, and to a large part run, by busy people who are willing to give us so much, simply because they love this congregation. Whether it be at board and committee meetings, organizing fundraisers (such as Buddy Run, our Super Bowl team, the Arts Festival or — one near and dear to my heart — my "Second Bar Mitzvah"), setting up and cleaning up for a seemingly endless array of activities and so much more — I'm constantly amazed at, and grateful for, the dedication of the people with whom I get to work, every day.

We know that we are far from perfect — there are still areas in which we wish to grow, and in which we need to improve. Our communication is still not effective enough, especially given how much we have going on. We need to establish a Junior Youth Group for our pre-high school students, and our post b'nei mitzvah education program is not yet adequately serving the needs of our older kids. Our affiliates do an amazing job of programming, but there are still members of the congregation who haven't found their way in, yet. Our volunteer base is broader than average in the congregational world, but certain volunteers are still called on too often, and we would benefit from finding even more people who are willing to lend a hand. I could name others, and I

expect that some of the Committee Chairs will do so in their own reports. But, the details aren't important, at this moment. What's important to remember is that we are an exceptional, extraordinary congregation. And that we haven't even come close to our potential, yet.

As we draw close to the end of the programming year, and look ahead to a summer of (slightly) quieter times, followed by another year of Jewish living and exploration, I find myself feeling incredibly grateful for having the privilege of being the Rabbi to, and member of, this congregation and community. May we continue to go from strength to strength.

L'Shalom,
Rabbi Jason Rosenberg

From Our Cantorial Leader:

Joy Katzen-Guthrie

What a busy and rewarding year it has been for me with Beth Am, an opportunity to know you more closely and to discover and attempt to fulfill more of what you are seeking with the music as well as to share my musical loves and classes with you.

Over the summer, we met to prepare the year's calendar, adult education programs and High Holiday season and special events with music. High Holy Days were beautiful and uplifting. Our new Beth Am band premiered with Simchat Torah services and joined us for our Hanukkah Shabbat as well. Our Kabbalat Shabbat services have included more music and I have sought to re-introduce melodies that had been present in previous years and introduce new melodies to the congregation. Shabbat Shirah featured our Shabbat choir with an expanded musical program. Our Purimspiel was another fun night with a Wizard of Oz themed production, a great participation level and turnout, and much festivity. Our gorgeous Second Night Seder had a record attendance, a fantastic meal, and much fun and insight spiritually and musically.

Being part of this year's celebration to honor the Rabbi's Second Bar Mitzvah was truly a gift, and working with Rabbi Ethan Franzel to bring music to an extraordinary Kabbalat Shabbat service on Pass-a-Grille Beach as well as Shabbat morn at the temple brought me great pleasure. I enjoyed contributing to the Saturday night simcha's horas with the band as we watched our rabbi lifted on a chair as the man of honor. Shabbat choir has joined me most months, and it is my desire to expand the band's presence. It has been somewhat challenging in that members of the band are working musicians and have been unavailable for some services such as Shabbat Shirah and Purim, but we hope to plan quarterly "Friday night live" style services in time in addition to holiday service festivities and special services.

Something I especially enjoy is contributing to adult education; this year I presented full courses that included Shabbat liturgical music co-taught with Vikki Silverman and a four-part course on Jewish Hollywood musicals. Both received an excellent attendance. I expanded my holiday concert/lecture series with High Holidays, Sukkot/Simchat Torah, Hanukkah, and Pesach. It was uplifting to join Rabbi Rosenberg and Rabbi Judd at Kol Ami in an entertaining, informative, and insightful Shavuot night of study, discussion, and music. I was honored to give a lecture on the Jews of Turkey for Zahav. And this year's planned concert/lecture for Tu Bishvat expanded into a delightful Tu Bishvat seder with audio-visual/music program and delicious tastes of Tu Bishvat gathered lovingly for us by the ritual committee.

We continually plan for the current year and the years ahead; new High Holiday machzorim coming into use in 2015 will inspire new levels of High Holy Day prayer and music. With each festival and Shabbat, I seek to introduce and reintroduce music and to make the services both thoughtful and festive through the music. I feel blessed to be part of your family and to lift and be lifted by you and our exceptional rabbi, board, and staff.

B'Ahava,
Joy

From Our VP of Development:

Andrew S Cohen

andrewc@bethamtampa.org

Development, Fundraising, and Communication

First, thank you to the members who have given so generously during the 2013-2014 year. With our current membership dues only covering 52% of our operating expense, we greatly rely on the generosity of members who've given to our Beth Am events and fundraising programs. You all are amazing! In addition to our congregant financial donors who give "over and above" their dues, we have members who volunteer their time and provide "in kind" contributions to aid Beth Am. It is my honor to recap this year's activities and their leaders.

We started the year with our **new logo** developed by Steve Falkowitz, and our new **Beth Am website**. Armed with these new tools, we put together 5 key Social/Fundraising activities including the introduction of our Tree of Life.



The 3rd Annual Buddy Run- on November 3, 2013 was the first of our 2014 major events.



Recognized as both a fundraising and community event, the THIRD annual "Buddy Run" 5K run and a one-mile fun run was co-sponsored by Buddy Baseball and Congregation Beth Am. A special thank you to Jim Corning and Russ Oberbroeckling. For a third year in a row, they've achieved their fundraising budget of \$10,286. Even though sponsorships were down, registration revenues were up 38% from last year, with proceeds divided equally by Beth Am and Buddy Baseball.

The event was held at Lake Park in North Tampa, and included 375 registered runners and 100 volunteers.

The 8th Northern Tampa Arts Festival (formerly known as the Winter Arts Festival) on March 2, 2014. Chaired by Dana Hansen, the event was held on Beth Am campus, featuring opportunities for local area artists to display and sell their work. With the beautiful weather and outside venue, the event raised \$3,100 for Beth Am. Well done Dana and congratulations on your first fundraiser for Beth Am!



Throughout the year, we have many opportunities for giving to strengthen Beth Am's financial foundation including our **Brick By Brick Campaign**. This offers congregants a commemorative brick to honor a special event or loved one. They will be forever memorialized in the beautification of our spiritual home. Led this year by Nancy Himmelgreen and Dena Allen, we've sold thirteen (13) bricks. To view the latest additions, visit the Butterfly garden in the front of our synagogue entrance. The **Torah Restoration Campaign** was an overwhelming success. The Congregation will see the benefits of their donation by the Jewish New Year 5775. **Planned giving** opportunities are available for individuals who would like to make bequests to Beth Am.

Our **Kol Nidre appeal** was also very generous this year, with many individuals signing up for the new "Tree of Life". This is our newest opportunity to honor an event and loved one while helping Beth Am financially succeed. The **Tree of Life** was donated by Steve & Tracy Falkowitz

and Andrew & Wendy Cohen. The "Tree of Life" will soon be a permanent fixture in our synagogue lobby. Beautifully crafted in Mahogany wood with engraved brass stones and leaves for our members to celebrate their joyous lifecycle events.

Beth Am's **Annual Spring Fundraiser** was in honor of Rabbi Jason's Rosenberg's second bar



mitzvah. The weekend celebration started with Shabbat services on Pass-A-Grille beach, followed by Rabbi Franzel, longtime friend and musician officiating over Rabbi Jason Rosenberg's Bar Mitzvah Saturday Morning. The weekend concluded with our Spring Fundraiser Saturday evening on April 12th, attended by 130 families. Our many sponsors made the event possible, with outstanding contributions by The Rinner Family, Silverman family, Corning Family, Eileen Poiley, Larry Wasserberger, Jerry Nepon-Sixt, Larry Jasper, Sue Ellen Corning, and Steve Falkowitz. The evening honored our Rabbi including a candle lighting tribute, Hora chair dance, and friends, family, and congregants. The event included a silent auction and raffle led by Susan Sand and Cathy Friedman. To finish out the evening, we honored three TAG Award recipients, Cathy Friedman, Dena Allen and Golda Brunhild for their outstanding contributions to Beth Am. The weekend of celebration resulted in exceeding our fundraising goal, netting \$16,500, while making a memorable event

for our Rabbi and congregation.

The unexpected **Super Bowl programs fundraiser, along with the Outback Bowl programs fundraiser**, were welcoming contributors to the general funds for Beth Am. Beth Am coordinated 400 volunteers to sell programs to Super Bowl and Outback Bowl fans to raise \$20,000. As a subcontractor, and with the recent change in program management, we were uncertain of our involvement this year. Due to the driving effort of our coordinators, Ken Young and Larry Jasper, we were fortunate to participate in this program. Thank you gentlemen and to the many Beth Am volunteers who made these critical fundraisers possible.

Our **Circle of Giving** program, allows us to celebrate our biggest financial donors throughout the year. Located in the lobby, you'll find the Circle of Giving board. We appreciate ALL our donors and wish to recognize the many who give "over and above".

As for Communications, Beth Am rolled out a new look with our Beth Am logo and website. Ron Rinner will be joining the development team in the upcoming year and will focus on our internal communications, including our newsletter and member communications. Thank you to all who continue to support our success, with your *time...talent...and your treasure*.

From Our VP of Ritual and Education:

Allan Feldman

This has been a good year for ritual and education at Beth Am. There is an exciting continuing education program with a wealth of programs that draws upon the many strengths of our congregants. The wide variety of programs has been welcomed by our community, as can be seen in the large numbers that have participated in them.

After serving as interim Religious School Administrator, we are very happy to report that Hillary Rosenberg has been appointed to the permanent Religious School Director position. Hillary continues to bring her talent, energy and great enthusiasm to this role and allows our school to maintain its high standards.

Religious School Events Committee

Chair: Katie Habgood

It has been a very busy and prosperous year for our committee. We have tried to combine planning activities with the Religious School Steering Committee. With holidays falling as they did, and with so many Sundays off from school, this year's rhythm was elusive, which also made hosting events tricky.

Some of our accomplishments this year have been:

September: We started the year with Sukkot in Religious School family homes.

November: A fundraising book sale prior to Hanukkah resulted in more than \$300 for the Religious School funds.

March: Helped coordinate and support the Purim Carnival.

April: The Religious School donated class baskets for the synagogue's annual fundraiser auction.

April: "Spirit Night" fundraiser event at Yogurtology in Carrollwood.

Another "Spirit Night" fundraiser event is planned at Yogurtology in Carrollwood on May 18.

May: We will assist with the school's Lag B'Omer field day, as well as an upcoming fundraiser at The Melting Pot. (They have revamped their community outreach and "fondue" raising program, and a new one rolls out in May. Last year's event in January was a great success.)

Goals for the upcoming year include meeting regularly with committee members and with the Religious School Steering Committee.

Religious School Steering Committee

Chair: Hope Buksbaum

This year the religious school steering committee continued serving its goals to, "In consultation with the Rabbi and the Director of the Religious School... formulate policies and procedures of the Religious School and ... formulate the Religious School curriculum."

This year we:

- Officially named Hillary Rosenberg as Religious School Director (previously an interim role held by Hillary)
- Improved the communication between the teachers and the parents
- Reviewed and improved communication of policies and procedures to the students and their families
- Reviewed our emergency plans in place for the religious school and reinforced safety procedures.
- Participated in discussion and research, that will result in pay raises for our RS staff for the 2014-15 school year.

Successes this year include:

- High enrollment in the religious school
- The addition of 18 new students
- New Academy Program for 8th-12th Grade students

For the future we plan to continue serving our goals. Some topics we are addressing are:

- Working with the Social Action Committee to find a project we can adopt as a religious school. This way we can integrate the religious school more with the temple.
- Continuing to look at our B’Nai Mitzvah program. How can we adapt it to meet individual student needs?
- Continuing to develop a mentoring program between recent B’Nai Mitzvah families and the upcoming B’Nai Mitzvah families
- Reviewing our post B’Nai Mitzvah Program. How can we retain a higher number of children/families?
- How can we improve our Religious School Program? Do we need to?

Our religious school is a thriving entity that we at Beth Am are very proud of. Many people have worked hard over the past years to make it such. Our committee continues to assist the progress of the Religious School to grow and adapt as our community requires.

Continuing Education

Chair: Vikki Silverman

This year we reinstated Beth Am’s *Talmud Torah University* program, dividing our approximately 50 continuing education classes into five major units of study: Jews around the World; Jewish Music & the Holidays; Social Action/Social Justice; Prayer, Life Cycles, & Family Concerns; and Hebrew. A huge thank you goes to this year’s instructors, including Rabbi Jason Rosenberg, our Cantorial Leader Joy Katzen-Guthrie, Golda Brunhild, Cathy Friedman, Steven Falkowitz, Nancy Himmelgreen, Hillary Rosenberg, Stefanie Wisselman, George Zucker, and Vikki Silverman. And a special *thank you* goes out to all of the dedicated “students” who attended these classes and programs. Your attendance and participation is what made our continuing education so successful this year. The complete program is on the Beth Am website.

Ritual Chair: Sarina Ergas

The ritual committee members during 2013-2014 were: Sarina Ergas (chair), Doris Baer, Robert Berlin, Claire Brunhild, Mindy Bursten, Sue Ellen Corning, Art Meier, Sarah Phillips, Irma Polster, Vikki Silverman, Bruce Silverman, Larry Jasper and Allan Feldman. Rabbi Jason Rosenberg and Joy Katzen-Guthrie regularly attend the meetings.

Following is a summary of some of the committee's goals:

- Support the Rabbi
- Educate ourselves in areas of ritual
- Keep holidays and Shabbat running smoothly
- Define the role of the committee in the ritual life of the community
- Find out from the community where they want us to go
- Increase the spiritual power of the services
- Increase participation in services
- Become a more egalitarian community
- Provide a forum for discussion and implementation of different types of services – camp style, beach, etc.
- Coordination of ritual activities undertaken by other committees – school, social committee, continuing education, etc.

Summary of this year's accomplishments:

- There has been good coordination between ritual and the social and adult education committees and the men's club, which has been facilitated by having several ritual committee members who serve on these committees.
- In general, holiday and Shabbat services have been running smoothly. Some changes have been made in some elements of the services; such as the way members are called to stand for Kaddish and opportunities for participation during high holy days. We celebrated Tu B'shevat with a well-attended Seder. We had a successful Havdallah on the Beach and a Shabbat on the Beach on April 11th. A monthly catered pre-Shabbat service dinner has been implemented. These have been well attended, the food has been good and they work well with the flow of services. A Friday night service with a more spiritual focus is planned for July 18th.
- The committee reviewed the pilot version of the new URJ HHD Machzor. Mock Yom Kippur services and discussions of the books were organized to gain feedback on the Machzor, which was overwhelmingly positive. People especially liked the more accessible and beautifully written translations, transliterations of the Hebrew, gender-neutral language, additional readings, and the fact that "everyone will literally be on the same page." The committee made a recommendation that we order the books in time to receive a substantial discount from the publishers. The president and treasurer have moved forward with this after a substantial donation toward purchase of the books was made by an anonymous member. The committee has developed a plan for introducing the book to the membership and has made suggestions for additional fund raising.
- Arrangements have been made for a Sofer (scribe) to repair our Sefer Torahs and a plan for an educational program for the community about this before Rosh Hashanah 2014. This was facilitated by a major fund raising effort by the fundraising committee.
- There was outreach made to the University Village Retirement Community, under the leadership of Jan Kernis. Through our livestreaming, the residents were able to view services during the High Holy Days and our Shabbat Services the first Friday of every month.

Youth Committee

Chair: Stacey Handman

This past year the youth committee helped Lisa Cohen and Beth Am's BITTY youth group plan Hatikvah Kallah for 7th and 8th graders from all over Florida, and it went very well. Our main goal for next year is to increase youth activities for junior BITTY.

Youth Director Report

Youth Director: Lisa Cohen

April 6, 2014 - I stood outside a circle as over 60 High School Seniors faced out to the over 300 teens at NFTY-STR Spring Kallah while they said their goodbyes to their NFTY experience with tears streaming down their faces. I realized that these seniors, in particular our Beth Am 2014 graduating seniors, were freshman in high school the year my son said his good-byes to his NFTY experience. It is hard to believe that four years after my son graduated, four years after many of you asked if I was going to continue as Beth Am's Youth Director, that I am still standing here.

So let us look at BITTY's year! Last July our BITTY Board asked if they could renovate our youth lounge. Funny how just 4 years earlier our BITTY Board asked if they could reclaim our youth lounge, buy new furniture, and repaint it. BITTY lounge has a new soothing paint color, lamps and wall decorations.

BITTY has seen some bumps in the road this year. As our Board geared up and initiated planning Hatikvah Kallah one of the Board members resigned their position. It was amazing to watch as the Board all came together and several stepped up to the plate to ensure all programs for Hatikvah Kallah were completed. Under the amazing leadership of Briana Bursten, over 20 BITTY teens implemented and ran an amazing Hatikvah Kallah in January as we hosted over 100 7th and 8th graders from across Florida. BITTY's goal is to again host Hatikvah Kallah in 2 years.

We have had record numbers of teens participating with our events this year. We began the year with our Labor Day weekend Shul In with over 20 teens. We went bowling in February with 15 teens having a great few hours just hanging out together. May 17th we end our year with our Annual Mystery Bus Ride partnered with Scharaai Zedek.

What are some of the things our teens can be involved in at Beth Am:

- Youth Group
- Madrachim Program
- Post B'nai Mitzvah Program- Academy
- Beth Am Social Action Events

Where have our teens gone this year?

- 12 BITTYites went to NFTY-STR Fall Kallah
- 10 BITTYites participated in NFTY-STR Winter Regionals
 - ★ Andrew Jasper recognized with the Rising STR award. This is a recognition from NFTY-STR's regional board awarded to a freshman that they believe has great leadership potential.
 - ★ Kelsey Oberbroeckling won the NFTY-STR award for best T-shirt design
- 20 Jr. BITTYites attended NFTY-STR Hatikvah Kallah here at Beth Am

- 12 BITTYites participated in NFTY-STR Spring Kallah
- 6 BITTYites applied and 5 were accepted to be Camp Counselors at Camp Jenny Memorial Day weekend.
- Kelsey Oberbroeckling and Michelle Tomlinson will be spending their summer at URJ's Kutz Teen Leadership camp.
 - ★ Kelsey applied to and was accepted as a Kutz Fellow. A Kutz Fellow is a select group of up to ten highly motivated Reform Jewish high school students interested in taking their Kutz experience to the next level. In addition to the general Kutz program, Fellows engage in special programming throughout the summer, and then work during the year to apply what they have learned at camp to a self-directed project in their home congregation.
- Many of our teens continue to support Beth Am's Social Action activities and other community volunteer activities at Beth Am.

As we say goodbye to our graduating seniors - they are heading off to FSU, UF, Elon, Northeastern, Lincoln-Memorial, Barnard, UCF, we say hello to 15 new high school Freshman and we look to the future of BITTY.

Next year NFTY Convention will be in Atlanta, Georgia during President's day weekend. I will be encouraging all of our High School teens to attend this great event. The event is projected to draw thousands of other Reform Jewish teens from around North America. If you would like to help us make this trip a reality please donate to our NFTY Convention or Bust fund!

Next year, NFTY is incorporating 6th grade into their Hatikvah Kallah weekend. So I will be taking 6th-8th graders to Hatikvah Kallah.

NFTY celebrates their 75th year this next year. If you are NFTY alum I would encourage you to go to www.nfty75.org and reconnect with your NFTY friends.

Three of our former BITTY teens went to Israel this past year through Birthright. Two of them are actively working on returning for longer stays in Israel in the near future.

My goal as Beth Am's Youth Director is to make our entire group of teens feel like they are an integral part of the structure of our amazing community, and to keep them engaged. Join me as I continue to work with our teens to feel good about themselves and to be a part of Beth Am.

For more information about BITTY's activities, see Briana Bursten's report on page 28.

From Our VP of Membership and Growth: **Sarah Phillips**

The Membership and Growth committee chairs and committee members have been coordinating many events to bring the Beth Am community together. Thank you to each of the committee chairs and everyone who has been involved. If you would like to get involved, please reach out to me or any one of the committee chairs.

Membership Committee: **Chair: Deborah Conley**

The focus of the Membership committee is three-fold: Recruitment, Retention and Integration, with an emphasis on supporting Diversity in our Community.

At the time of this report, Beth Am has 221 member families, with approximately 30 families having joined since July 2013.

The Membership committee, in partnership with the Beth Am Board, organized a phone tree to personally call and wish all CBA member families and prospective members a happy new year and remind them of upcoming services in advance of the High Holy Days. We plan to continue this model for next year.

We held a new member break-out group during Café Shabbat, which was attended by a mix of older and newer members, who shared thoughts on what was needed, wanted and appreciated in a synagogue community, as well as what drew them to Beth Am.

We are currently looking for a facilitator to revitalize the Interfaith family programs, which have been well received and attended in the past couple of years. If interested, please contact either Deb Conley or Sarah Phillips.

A new member dinner was held on May 3rd, to welcome our many new families, and give them a chance to socialize with each other, meet with the clergy and lay leadership of CBA, and learn about some of the events and opportunities for involvement at Beth Am. Approximately 60 people attended. The Membership Committee extends its sincere thanks to Larry and Georgi Jasper for graciously hosting the event in their home.

The Membership Committee hosted a table at the Israel Independence Day event at the JCC campus on May 4 where we had Beth Am information and a welcoming committee to encourage people to try us out.

Social Action Committee:

Co-Chairs: Cathy Friedman, Joe & Marilyn Lehman

The Social Action Committee involvements included the following:

- Third Annual Buddy Run: ***Jim Corning & Russ Oberbroeckling-Coordinators***. On November 3, 2013, Buddy Baseball & Congregation Beth Am held the 2013 “Buddy Run” at Lake Park in Lutz, FL. This included a 5K, a 1 mile Fun Run, plus a *Buddy Dash* for runners with special needs. The event focused on community building, getting fit and community service, and was supported by every committee at Beth Am! A special *Todah Rabah* - Thank you very much to ***Jim Corning & Russ Oberbroeckling*** for their vision and leadership in making this incredible event a huge success for the third year in a row! ***Gary Richey*** offered personal training starting a few months prior to the Buddy Run. Due to his efforts in coaching and encouragement, many first time runners crossed the 5k finish line! Mark your calendars for Sunday, November 2, 2014 for the 4th Annual Buddy Run!

Buddy Baseball is a non-competitive recreational league for boys and girls with special needs. Each player is paired with a “Buddy” to assist the player as needed. The league allows friendships to form and barriers to be dissolved. Players enjoy the thrill of participating and get to experience team play and camaraderie.

- Lopez Veterans Nursing Home: Congregation Beth Am volunteers visited the veterans at Lopez Veterans Nursing Home in Land O’Lakes. The volunteers helped the residents play Bingo and served cookies. The event created a few lasting friendships with the veterans. Thank you to ***Lois & Bill Young*** for helping to coordinate the day! *2014 volunteer opportunities are:* June 8th, Sept 14, and Dec 14 from 1:45 – 3 PM. Please contact *Lois Young* at sanguinelo48@gmail.com to sign up to help!

Mitzvah Activities: ***Cathy Friedman-Coordinator***

- We had a meaningful and successful Fall Mitzvah Day! Thank you to all who attended, donated, helped in the planning and contributed to making this event possible! We had the support of approximately 60 “hands on” volunteers plus the help of those who made contributions! We started with a delicious breakfast and inspiration from ***Rabbi Rosenberg***. In the morning, we created Thank you cards for the US & Israeli military; cards of caring for our Beth Am family; made treats to help train companion dogs with Kids & Canines; created pillow cases; provided hundreds of children’s books to homeless families; and clothing and blankets were donated to help the families. In the afternoon, volunteers provided a carnival of fun activities for approximately 25 families with their children who are currently living in the Metropolitan Ministries Family Center.

HUGE thanks! *Todah Rabah* to ***Golda Brunhild*** and her team that coordinated and served breakfast.

Thank you very much to: ***Patty Cohn*** for taking the lead with the children's books and other donated items. ***Eileen Poiley*** for taking the lead on the Cards for Caring. ***Dena Allen*** for baking dog treats for the Kids & Canines Program. ***Katie Habgood*** for continuing the Sweet Dreams Project/creating pillow and pillow cases for people living in a shelter. ***Larry Jasper & Milt Orkin*** taking on the cleaning up our Beth Am home. ***Elyas Himmelgreen*** was

our event photographer. **Deanna Oberbroeckling** for managing the volunteers. A special thank you to **Eileen Poiley & Joel Poiley** for creating "The Afternoon of Fun" at Metropolitan Ministries, along with around 40 volunteers who helped out there.

- Tampa Jewish Family Services: **Jennifer Allan-Coordinator**. We are continuing to collect non-perishable food for the Tampa Jewish Family Services Food Bank located at the Jewish Community Center. **Jennifer** has taken on the leadership of this project for the past two years! Jen has taken many car loads of food and holiday gifts to the TJFS food bank from Congregation Beth Am's generous donations! Volunteers are needed to organize and bag the food. Please watch the weekly email for upcoming dates. Please contact Jennifer Allan at jallan10@verizon.net to sign up!
- **Katie Habgood** orchestrated a special Thanksgiving food drive for the TJFS Food Bank. Our Oneg wall sported many turkeys, pumpkin pies, potato latkes and cans of cranberry sauce! Thank you to all who made donations!
- The Social Action Committee selected homelessness prevention as a focus. The decision was made to help support a small agency where our contributions can really make a difference. We are supporting Positive Spin, Inc. located on 5118 N. 56th Street Suite 224 Tampa, Florida 33610 Office: (813) 977-7677 www.positivespinfl.org www.facebook.com/positivespininc.
- Congregation Beth Am's Social Action Committee has been able to build an emergency food pantry due to the generosity of the **Dr. Harold & Ella Brehm Social Action fund** and the building skills of **Larry, Andrew and Bradley Jasper**.
- Eleven volunteers helped to sort and organize the storage unit for Positive Spin, Inc. on Easter morning.

In addition, the Social Action Committee helped to arrange the following events:

- A guest speaker from the Guardian ad Litem Program arranged by **Deb Conley**
- An educational and sign up event on the Affordable Care Act arranged by **Cathy Friedman**
- The promotion and education of St Baldrick's "Shave for the Brave" coordinated by **Dena Allen and Sarah Phillips**
- Gift of Life - Bone Marrow Swabbing on the High Holidays and at the 2014 Spring Fundraiser led by **Jennifer Allen & BITTY**

We are requesting items to support Camp Jenny, Positive Spin, Inc., Dress for Success and TJFS. Please see the weekly email for details.

Under the leadership of **Joe and Marilyn Lehman**, Beth Am has participated in two blood drives, in August and March, performing the lifesaving mitzvah of blood donation. Joe and Marilyn also coordinated our Christmas Eve efforts to feed the homeless and hungry in partnership with Metropolitan Ministries, as well as the ongoing collection and delivery of books, magazines, toiletries, and DVDs for the Veteran's Administration Hospital.

Thank you to all the members of Congregation Beth Am who have donated items, funding and time to help us serve our community!

Please let us know about any other suggestions involving social action projects and social justice concerns. We welcome you to come and volunteer! Please feel free to contact us to get involved or to offer input!

"How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world." By Anne Frank

Social Committee:
Chair: Dena Allen

This year the Social Committee has worked hard to organize a range of fun and family friendly social events for the Beth Am community, under the leadership of Dena Allen. If you have an idea or event you'd like to see happen, or you just want to be part of the action, contact Dena Allen or Sarah Phillips for info about upcoming meetings.

- We began the year with a hike through Hillsborough River state park on October 20th.
- This year we experienced Thanksgiving and had the annual Chanukah dinner on black Friday.
- The monthly Crafting Clinic has become a wonderful relaxing way of completing your craft projects or learning new ideas with friendly company. Sarah Phillips and Katie Habgood have led a pillowcase sewing project that has made and donated many pillowcases to various charities, including ConKerr Cancer, a group that collects cheerful pillowcases for children in long term hospitalization situations. Thank you to everyone that has donated fabric. Additionally, Rachael Stern and Vivian Mills provide instruction in knitting and crocheting. This event began in November and has occurred monthly with the exception of April.
- "What's a Jew to Do?" was an event to bring people together on December 25th for Chinese food and a couple of movies. Blazing Saddles and The Frisco Kid (provided by Oren Shahaar and Rachael Stern) were shown in the sanctuary while kids' TV programming was playing in the Youth Lounge.
- Family game night in February was a huge success with many requests to have more in the future. The next game night is scheduled for June 28th.
- The Social committee organized the Purim carnival this year and with the help and hard work of the Men's club there were new games and old to play. There were also parent-child competitions, face painting, cotton candy, a costume contest and prizes.
- The end of March there was a walk in the park at Lettuce Lake Park. Many people had the chance to observe nature up close, including alligators, snakes, fish, and owls. Attendance was great, and we are considering future events there, such as canoeing and cookouts.
- Social Committee and Social Action Committee teamed up to support Rabbi Rosenberg in raising money for St. Baldrick's foundation. We hosted a watch party on April 2nd to include games, coloring, a silent auction and watching the shaving of the Rabbi's head in support of children's cancer research. In total, we raised over \$800.

Many thanks to our incredibly engaged and active social committee for all their work making these events happen.

Caring Committee:
Chair: David Rifkin

In 2013 the caring committee asked our Beth AM community to assist us in meeting the needs of our congregation. The caring committee created and distributed a commitment form to all of our families during Rosh Hashanah to help provide funds, raising over \$900, plus additional meal commitments, to provide meals for members of the Beth Am Community. To date we have provided approximately 50 meals, and we thank the congregation for its support in making this happen. If you would like to assist in preparing a meal or occasionally delivering meals, please contact David Rifkin or Sarah Phillips for information on how you can be a part of this important aspect of Beth Am life.

The Caring Committee has also begun partnering with Sisterhood and Men's Club to assist as needed with Shiva services.

We are preparing to launch a free loaner program offering congregational use of a Donjoy Ice machine to assist in recovery or foot, knee and shoulder surgery. This ice machine helps reduce swelling and pain after surgery. Information on this device and the program are available in the lobby during the annual meeting.

During the Fall Mitzvah Day, Caring Committee worked with the Religious School to make personal get well cards, which were used along with phone calls and visits, to reach out to dozens of members recovering from illness or injury over the year.

As always, to do the best possible job of reaching out to CBA members who might appreciate a homemade meal or a friendly call, we need your help and information. If you know of a member of our congregational community with a need we can meet, please contact David Rifkin, the rabbi, or a member of the Caring Committee, so that we can continue Beth Am's tradition extending warmth and support wherever it is needed.

From Our VP of Facilities and Operations:
Ron Rinner

We have continued to be as frugal as possible in use of Congregation funds on the facility. We would not have been able to do this without significant help and volunteer effort from the congregation. In particular I would like to thank President Larry Jasper and former VP of Facilities and Operations Milt Orkin for their guidance and assistance, and a special thank you to Larry and Georgi Jasper (and their kids) for the many tasks they voluntarily take on to keep our facility up and running; you can be sure that the majority of the labor that went into many of the projects that were implemented over the course of the last year was directly provided by Larry, whom I cannot thank enough for his enormous generosity in terms of time and labor. Thank you, Larry!

I would like to thank all the members of the committees reporting to me for their cooperation and diligence in holding our costs while improving our congregation.

The Facility & Operations reports are as follows:

- House Committee Chair: Lenny Zuriff
- Exterior Chair: Sheryl Bowman
- House Interior Committee: Georgi Jasper, Wendy Cohen, Terri Gainsburg, Jay Frenchko
- Oneg Shabbat Committee Co-chairs: Barbara Moudy and Golda Brunhild

Exterior Report

Sheryl has coordinated the on-going grounds maintenance work around the Temple, mowing the lawn, trimming branches, spraying and weeding out invasive plant life where necessary.

The Beth Am Buy-a-Brick program has continued. If you have not already done so, please purchase a brick in honor or memory of a loved one or some other special commemoration. In addition to honoring that person you will be helping support Congregation Beth Am and helping to beautify our landscaping.

Interior Report

Our facilities were upgraded this year so that Congregation Beth Am has now fully integrated sound throughout the building and DVD video in the sanctuary, allowing us to play movies projected on to the large projection screen. Enormous thanks go out to Mark Guthrie, Cantorial Leader Joy's husband, for his help in making this project a reality, and of course Larry Jasper for all of his help.

The new stove and high speed dishwasher were purchased and installed further increasing our capability to offer full catering infrastructure in the building. Thank you to Jules Siman and his wife, Florence Siman (z"l), for their generous donation to fund these kitchen purchases.

The Interior Committee met and selected paint colors for both the foyer and the oneg room. The foyer wall painting has been completed; baseboards in the foyer and painting the oneg room are on hold until all flooring issues are resolved. A special thank you to Larry Jasper for painting the foyer. Also we extend thank yous to Andrew and Wendy Cohen and family for generously donating the funds to do the foyer project.

Ongoing issues with restroom plumbing have been addressed and will continue to be monitored. Other projects include installation of a switch for the hallway lights, updating the doorbell, and repairing the front and back doors of the synagogue.

Hospitality

Oneg Shabbat Committee co-chairs Barbara Moudy and Golda Brunhild organized and helped facilitate over forty-two Friday Night Oneg Shabbats for Congregation Beth Am. Many valued members stepped up to do their part in making the after-services social hour a pleasant time for all. Thank you to all those who have sponsored Shabbat Onegs.

A special thank you must go to Larry Jasper (along with his wife Georgi and sons Andrew and Bradley) for ongoing assistance with set-up and cleaning. The Jasper family's help, along with a number of other regulars, was deeply appreciated.

Greeters: Larry Wasserberger did an outstanding job coordinating the greeters for the High Holiday services – thank you, Larry.

Our ongoing Shabbat Greeters program will soon become active again, and we are looking for friendly faces to commit to helping us greet both new and established members at Friday evening services. If you are interested, please contact Ron Rinner.

From Our Treasurer:

Bob Friedman

Congregation Beth Am has been on a see-saw for the past four years—one year we have a surplus in our operating budget, then the next year a deficit, and then again a surplus followed by another deficit. More specifically, in Fiscal Year 2010-2011 we had a small surplus of \$2,042, followed in 2011-2012 with a deficit of \$10,205. Last year (2012-2013) we projected a deficit of about \$17,000, and ended up with a surplus of \$13,661.

Sure enough, keeping to form, I anticipate that when we conclude our current fiscal year in June 2014, we will have a deficit in the range of \$5,000 to \$15,000. Last year at this time we projected a deficit of \$17,000 so this is better than we anticipated. As in the past, any deficit will be covered by dipping into our reserve funds. We are fortunate to have some reserve funds but the amount is modest and it is certainly a concern when we have to reduce the amount of reserve funds we have rather than increase it.

Our revenue this year was aided by a better than expected response to the Kol Nidre appeal, combined with an opportunity to purchase leaves for our new Tree of Life. We also did well in dues collection because of the addition of new members, and our Buddy Run and spring fundraiser were successful as predicted. Our revenue from our Religious School was slightly higher than we had projected.

However, our Outback Bowl fundraiser was rained upon, reducing the amount we made, and we also came in below projections in general donations, our Arts Festival, cemetery payments, and the Super Bowl. As you may remember, neither last year nor this year did we include the Super Bowl in our projections because we were not certain that we would have the opportunity to work it. Both years we were fortunate to be able to work it and although we earned less this year than we would have liked, still we made almost \$16,000 which was a huge help.

At the same time as our operating budget is in the red, Beth Am members have generously given to support special needs. Last spring, in just a few days, we raised over \$8,000 to support funeral expenses for members who need assistance. We still have \$4,881 in this restricted fund. In the fall of 2013, Rabbi Rosenberg sent out a special letter asking for contributions to help repair our Torahs. Within just a couple of months we had received over \$16,000 for this important cause. Within just the past month, we received a generous donation of \$5,000 from an anonymous donor to help cover the cost for the purchase of new High Holiday prayer books, and we received another donation of \$5,000 from Betty Howard in memory of her husband, Al Howard. Also, Andrew and Wendy Cohen, and Steve and Tracy Falkowitz joined together to purchase our new Tree of Life, which will soon enhance the beauty of our lobby at the same time as it creates an ongoing fundraising opportunity.

The responsiveness of our members for these special needs and projects is very touching and certainly demonstrates the commitment our members have to Beth Am. As treasurer I wish to thank all of you who have made Beth Am a priority of your philanthropic efforts.

With all that said, it is projected that Beth Am will again have a deficit in our operating budget for FY 2014-2015. As shown below, we are projecting a deficit of \$14,085. The budget has been developed based on our revenues and expenses during the current year, and several years before that. The prediction of expenses is relatively easy because the expenses are primarily for personnel, utilities, insurance, membership in the Union for Reform Judaism, and maintaining our facility. Although we would like to be more generous with our outstanding Beth Am team, we will be giving very modest increases to staff this year because of the projected deficit.

It is more difficult to predict our revenue because that depends on how we do in increasing our membership and in our fundraising activities. The 2014-2015 budget again does not include any revenue from working the Super Bowl. We will not know until the fall whether we will have an opportunity to work the Super Bowl this year so we took the conservative approach of not including it in our budget. Obviously, if we do have an opportunity to earn money through the Super Bowl this will be a great help in changing a projected deficit to a surplus.

The Board takes seriously the fact that we will have a deficit this year, and are projecting a deficit for next year. We pledge ourselves to work diligently to reduce expenses where possible, to increase our membership, to increase the amount of money that each of our members contributes, and to look for opportunities throughout the year to either add to our revenue or reduce our expenses.

If the projected deficit is not reduced, and especially if it were to get larger than projected, then we realize that we will have to give serious consideration to raising dues or fees, and possibly reducing salaries in the future. We welcome any suggestions that you may have and request your continued support during the upcoming year.

Budgets for 2013-2014 and 2014-2015

Submitted on May 10, 2014

By Bob Friedman, Treasurer

Below is a comparison between our current budget (2013-2014), our projected actual revenues and expenses for this year, and our budget for the new year (2014-2015). As this table shows, we are currently projecting a deficit for 2013-2014 of \$12,337. With about six weeks to go in the fiscal year, it is certainly possible that we will receive more revenue than anticipated in dues and donations and be able to reduce this deficit.

We are also projecting a budget for 2014-2015 with a deficit of \$14,085. This budget does not include any Super Bowl revenue. We hope to be able to earn revenue from the Super Bowl again, and also to increase our revenues, particularly in donations and fundraising this coming year. If you have any questions, please contact me at: bobfriedman43@gmail.com

Revenues

<u>Category</u>	<u>2013-14 Budget</u>	<u>Projected</u>	<u>2014-15 Budget</u>
Dues	\$210,000	210,000	225,000
Donations	57,000	57,000	60,500
Religious School	31,000	34,000	34,000
Fundraising	35,000	57,000	43,000
Other	33,600	19,000	24,750
<u>Total Revenue</u>	<u>\$366,600</u>	<u>\$377,000</u>	<u>\$387,250</u>

Expenses

<u>Category</u>	<u>2013-14 Budget</u>	<u>Projected</u>	<u>2014-15 Budget</u>
High Holiday	\$2,000	2,463	2,500
Religious School	42,200	38,350	40,700
Building/Grounds	35,300	34,700	35,300
Clergy	173,600	180,850	181,200
Technology	1,150	800	800
Office	70,500	70,560	71,060
Committees	11,600	19,000	20,100
Finance Charges	16,400	15,575	16,775
Other	31,100	27,033	32,900
<u>Total</u>	<u>\$383,850</u>	<u>389,337</u>	<u>401,335</u>

From Our Financial Secretary: **Steven Falkowitz**

This year, as Financial Secretary and in consultation with the Board of Directors and the Dues Relief Committee, it was my distinct honor and privilege to serve Congregation Beth Am in helping congregants to honor their financial obligations to the synagogue. In my capacity, I worked with numerous member families not only to meet those financial obligations but to also, in some cases, actually raise their level of giving to the ongoing needs of our community.

At Congregation Beth Am, we honor our commitment to our members by not turning away anyone from our synagogue demonstrating a legitimate financial need. Our Dues Relief Committee, comprised of the President, President-Elect, Treasurer, Vice-President of Development and me, met numerous times during this past fiscal year to ensure that we are living up to that commitment. Thank you to the committee members for maintaining the confidentiality of those discussions and to their sincere efforts in making membership happen for those members who could not otherwise afford it.

We had to utilize some of our existing Religious School Scholarship funds to help a number of families provide a meaningful Jewish religious educational experience for their children this year as well. This scholarship fund provides the necessary dollars to ensure that all of our congregation's children receive the needed instruction to help live their lives Jewishly, and without those contributions coming in from our members, we would be underserving our community.

We still have a long way to go at Congregation Beth Am to put us on a truly healthy footing going forward into the next fiscal year, so I encourage those of you who can to provide additional needed funds for both our Circle of Giving and our Religious School Scholarship Fund so that we can continue to provide the outstanding dynamic and vibrant programming for our Northern Tampa Jewish community.

From Our Affiliates:

BITTY:

Briana Bursten, President

As I sit down to compose this board report, I am struck with pride upon realizing all that BITTY has accomplished in the past year. Our business and our success began over this past summer, when we embarked on our project of renovating the BITTY youth lounge. We re-painted, cleaned and re-arranged the furniture, bought and installed new lamps, and added some meaningful accessories. While the renovation was spearheaded by BITTY seniors, it was a group effort that allowed for members to become acquainted with one another through design and collaboration. Though small in size, we were able to maximize space and achieve a mature, comfortable look that allows for all youth-groupers to generate ideas in a beautiful physical environment. As a senior, I know this renovation will remain significant in the upcoming years.

At the beginning of the year, we held our annual Kick-Off Shul-In, with twenty-three participants spending the night at Beth Am. This was a record high number of participants, and started the year on a great note. Though it is important that BITTY members are involved in our own youth group, it is particularly important that BITTYites are involved on the regional level. This year, BITTY brought eight participants to Fall Kallah in Boca Raton, ten participants to Winter Kallah in Orlando, and eight participants to Spring Kallah in Parkland.

Our first semester was spent carefully planning for January's Hatikvah Kallah, a regional event facilitated by NFTY-STR and hosted by our Temple Youth Group. During this first half of the year, BITTY met numerous times (both as a youth group and as an executive board) in order to run through logistics, preliminary ideas, and concerns we had surrounding this major event. Though we lost our Programming Vice President in the midst of our planning time, numerous BITTYites stepped up to the plate and worked together to create meaningful programs, plan numerous mixers, and compose thought-provoking Shabbat services. The event was seamless; we successfully hosted over ninety participants and provided facilities for over twenty teenage leaders and over twenty youth advisors. Though this event was primarily planned by Lisa Cohen, our glorious youth director, and the BITTY board, Hatikvah Kallah could not have occurred without the support from the entire Congregation Beth Am community. On behalf of the BITTY board, thank you to all volunteers who opened their homes, spent numerous hours at the synagogue in preparation, and served food for this event. We truly appreciate your efforts.

Since Hatikvah Kallah, BITTY has slowed down its pace a bit. In February, we held an afternoon bowling event for both high school students and eighth graders. It was a very successful event with nearly twenty participants. Moving forward, I feel as though small events such as bowling and laser tag should be incorporated frequently in order to consistently build a community through short, contained, yet fun events. For the remainder of the year, we have a few more events in store. This May, we will be teaming up with SchZFTY (the youth group at Congregation Scharaii Zedek) to participate in our annual Mystery Bus Ride. Though I do not know where we will be going, I know our path will lead us to fun.

It has been an honor serving as the BITTY president for the 2013-2014 school year. I know BITTY is on the path to success, as I leave my post with an incredibly competent incumbent board under the leadership of Kelsey Oberbroeckling. Further, there are approximately 11-13 rising eighth graders who are involved in BITTY and who possess the potential to be wonderful

leaders and high school BITTYites. For these reasons, I know the future of BITTY is exceptionally bright. Personally, BITTY has been a community that has provided me with leadership experiences on both a local and regional level. Further, it has allowed me to form wonderful friendships with like-minded teens throughout the state. The skills I have learned through my involvement in BITTY will undoubtedly translate into my future scholastic and extra-curricular endeavors. I thank the Beth Am board for its continued support, the fantastic BITTY board for their innovation, creativity, and friendship, and Lisa Cohen for continuously pushing me to realize my potential as a leader and as a Jewish teen. For this experience, I am eternally grateful.

Men's Club

Milt Orkin, President

This past year was a successful and active year for Men's Club in our Beth Am Community.

The three pillars of Beth Am Men's Club are spirituality/fellowship, service, and support of the temple.

The Men's Club contributed a great deal of time and energy to all of these activities in the past year, participating in a number of Temple-wide fundraisers and projects at Beth Am. That included assisting in the ongoing work needed to keep things running smoothly and providing a number of spiritual and social activities.

Several initiatives were implemented this year:

1. More use of social media. We established a Men's Club Facebook page to get information disseminated to our members aside from the usual email blasts. In addition, we have begun posting our activities on the Beth Am Facebook page as well. Future plans include using Twitter and creating a conversation area.
2. A more diverse range of offerings to our members and potential members. A sampling of the activities that we have organized or have planned in the coming months include:
 - + Baseball and hockey game outings (open to the entire Congregation) with group discount tickets.
 - + Family bowling day: One of our more successful events this year, we had more than 25 participants. Special thanks to Steve Gerstein for organizing this event.
 - + Bucs watch party: We have had several of these weekday evening outings that included pool, darts, great food and fun cheering on our Buccaneers in an upscale, safe, smoke-free establishment.
 - + We have coordinated with the Rabbi and will be offering an educational session geared to fathers about raising children "The Jewish Way".
 - + We have reached out to other temple men's groups to find ways to coordinate activities. This is an ongoing initiative.
 - + We have reinstated the Men's Club Shabbat, coordinated this year by Alan Feldman, with assistance from Art Meier and Bob Berlin.
 - + New excursions, including a beer brewing class and a fishing outing are planned for later in the spring of 2014.
 - + Men's Club VP, Joel Poiley, once again coordinated the team for the JCC Softball Tournament and this year's team came home with the 1st place trophy.

+ We also worked a concession stand at the Gasparilla Children's Parade to raise money for the Men's Club coffers that is used to provide funds for camp scholarships and memorial donations.

3. Closer coordination with the Facility and House committee.

Men's club consistently assists with VP of Facilities Ron Rinner and House Committee Chair Lenny Zuriff (both of whom are active Men's Club members) on any projects they need to have done. Lenny and Ron, as well as Larry Jasper, have come to us for assistance with set-up, teardown, cleanup and repair projects.

Yearly Activities

We started the year with a joint breakfast with Sisterhood and the Membership Committee, which enabled us to combine resources to provide a well-appointed breakfast prior to the High Holidays. This also provided a good turnout for this opening welcome event so that when prospective new members arrived they could meet current members and give a livelier feel to the events.

We once again had excellent turnout for our Sukkah building and tear down, which included Men's Club members and their children.

Men's Club assisted in the planning and setup for the highly successful 3rd Annual Buddy Run to support Buddy Baseball and Beth Am.

A number of Men's Club members helped with Fall Mitzvah Day, raking leaves, clearing the roof gutters and trimming foliage.

The annual Latke Bash was successful as always. Steve Wolbarst continues his coordination of kitchen activities for a more uniform latke presentation and close to 20 men contributed time preparing, cooking and cleaning up. Some 500 Latkes were made. 200 were served to Hebrew School students on the day of the event, 120 went to the Veteran's Nursing Home in Land O' Lakes and the rest were served at the annual Hanukkah dinner.

The Spring Arts Festival event had Men's Club members spending many hours setting up and tearing down, parking cars and keeping watch on the Temple. Men's Club also sold a wide variety of food items for the festival. It was once again a privilege to be a part of such a well-organized and highly successful fundraising event for Beth Am. Some of the proceeds from the sale of food will be used to purchase new picnic benches for the grassy area where we hold Sukkot services. Special thanks to first year Men's Club member Mo Battino and his wife, Cheryl, for their outstanding work from before dawn until the end of the festival.

Men's Club members participated with many other members of the congregation in both the Super Bowl and Outback Bowl fundraisers. A number of Men's Club members are involved in organizing the program-selling events that raise so much money to benefit our temple.

The annual Purim Carnival was done in conjunction with the fabulous Social committee. Larry Jasper created FANTASTIC new games. We assisted with setup and running of the games and provided lemonade, iced tea and mac and cheese to the kids and parents that attended.

Perhaps our most visible activity for students is the regularly scheduled hot dog sales. We have sometimes added hamburgers and veggie burgers to the mix as well. This is a consistently successful event that raises money for the Beth Am Religious School scholarship fund.

This year Men's Club sponsored a Shabbat Oneg, April's Café Shabbat (with special program "The Jewish Superhero" led by Josh Newhouse) and helped out with donations to support various Beth Am functions.

Men's Club also coordinated with Sisterhood and Rabbi Rosenberg to sponsor the "Bagels & Bonds" Luncheon with a presentation by Reva Pearlstein, Assistant Director of Greater Florida Israel Bonds. It was a great presentation and special kudos to Men's Club member (and former President) David Rifkin for going above and beyond in preparing some outstanding food. I would urge everyone that is looking for a way to support Israel to consider Israel Bonds.

We have many more exciting fellowship and service opportunities for our membership in the future. Please contact any one of us to find out more about being a part of Men's Club. Or give your name and email address to Victoria in the Beth Am office or Hillary in the religious school office and they will make sure we receive your contact information.

Sisterhood

Report submitted by Harriet Katz, President-Elect

Sisterhood Executive Team: President Elect-Harriet Katz, Membership VP-Linda Valentine. Program VP-Judy Oliveri, Program VP- Eileen O'Connell, Treasurer-Jill Hekkanen, Recording Secretary-Eileen Levine, Corresponding Secretary-Judy Plavnick, Immediate Past President-Lisa Friedman

This year Sisterhood has been conducting business without an elected president. Because of this situation we have rotated who conducts board meetings and who attends CBA Board meetings. This format has been working well and has helped us become a strong team of leaders. We will continue operating with this format for another year.

Here are some of the year's activities: The Book Club continues to meet every month. The club now meets the second Tuesday of the month 10:30am at Barnes & Noble, Carrollwood. For Book Club information contact **Rosemary Wise**. **Linda Valentine** leads a knitting group and there is also an embroidery group organized by **Doris Baer**. We sponsored 5 Itty Bitty holiday programs, led by **Dana Terrigino**. We published a New Year greetings card and revamped the Membership Directory to a simplified version now available for \$8 per copy. The Judaica Shop, run by **Harriet Katz** and **Meg Zeigler** is the backbone of our fund raising. **Sara Stone** saw that our college students were remembered for the holidays. **Sherry Wolbarst and Maxine Gourse** organized the Breakfast Club. **Judy Plavnick and Marilyn Lehman** ran the always-successful Chanukah bake sale. We awarded three students **Justin P. Katz Israeli Experience Scholarships** and we look forward to hearing about their experiences. Donations to the Scholarship fund may be made directly to Sisterhood. We also have started a Sisterhood Singles Support group and have discussed starting a Women's Torah Study group. Please contact **Harriet Katz** to learn more about any of these activities.

Last summer **Judy Oliveri and Eileen O'Connell** organized a meeting and put together a list of fabulous programs for the year. Here are the year's highlights: Open Meet & Greet for all members, Movie Matinee, Paid-up Member Wine Tasting, a trip to the Leepa-Ratner Museum in Tarpon Springs, cooking demo by Chef from Wharton High School, a visit to Inkwood Books in

Hyde Park, Healthy eating from Nutrition S'Mart and the end of year Tea. We have all been enriched by this diversified year of events.

The Sisterhood board spent several board meetings examining the Sisterhood image and looking for new ways to re-brand and become more involved in CBA life and the greater community. The result of those meetings led us to design a new logo (Thanks to the help of Megan Oliveri), review and update the bylaws, work on job descriptions, review Policies and Procedures and get involved in a Social Action project.

With the help of **Jill Hekkanen** and **Elizabeth Carter** Sisterhood now has a core of volunteers working at Dress For Success, Tampa Bay. Dress for Success, Tampa Bay promotes the economic independence of disadvantaged women by providing professional attire, a network of support and career development tools to help women thrive in work and life. Many of us have donated business attire and **Katie McGill**, executive director, was the guest speaker at the Sisterhood Shabbat Service in January. This is a wonderful worthwhile organization and we encourage everyone to consider becoming a volunteer as a personal shopper, career coach, or inventory assistant. Clothing collections will be ongoing.

Sisterhood has also donated funds and school supplies to Joshua House. We have donated clothes and funds to Dress For Success and collected food for the Food Bank. We also make an annual donation to CBA to help fund the religious school. We plan to put together goody bags at the end of year Tea for our Veterans at the VA Hospital.

We continue to support Women of Reform Judaism (WRJ) by paying dues to the North America office and the WRJ Southeast District. In addition we donate a minimum of \$5 per sisterhood member to the WRJ YES fund to help support Rabbinical scholarships.

It has been a full year. This summer we will begin to plan for next year, look for new programs, special interest groups and volunteer opportunities. With all our diverse activities and programs we hope to offer something of interest for **YOU!** If your passion is not represented let us know and we will make it happen.

We are strong bright capable women leaders; we are sisters stronger together, inspired by the past and committed to the future; we are Women of Reform Judaism.



The Zahav Group
Maxine Gourse, Coordinator

The Zahav Group of Adults at Leisure meets the second Tuesday afternoon of each month, with a break in the summer. We brown bag lunch at the temple and after socializing have a guest speaker or see a film. We alternate one month at Beth Am and the following month meet for lunch at a local restaurant. We are open to anyone who has some free time.

We offer "Honey for Rosh Hashana" for our congregants to send sweet greetings to their family and friends. This has proven to be very popular and we will continue this tradition. This enables us to raise money for the congregation.

We are always looking for more faces to join us. Contact Maxine Gourse for further information.