This issue of the *NATA Journal* is “The Security Issue.” We can all count the incidents in recent history that have brought security to the forefront of our thoughts and the concerns of our leadership. We remember Columbine, Sandy Hook, Clackamas, and Boston, and we worry about our own synagogues and where these incidents will happen next. The articles and resources in this Journal are just a start to the work we have already done, and to the work we need to do, in order to plan for the safety and security of those who walk in our doors every day, and for the facilities we oversee.

Inside these pages, we turn to Bob Rothman of the Los Angeles Police Department to share a professional’s point of view. Renee Higer gives us a template for creating and updating an emergency procedures manual. Elyse Hyman writes about how to train our staff. We share recommendations from the ADL regarding High Holy Day security. Eli Montague shares stories and experiences on the lighter side of security that may make you laugh. Finally, we share a page of resources from the URJ for additional guidance in making our institutions and staff better prepared for the times we are faced with an emergency situation.

As this Journal goes to press, we pass the editor’s hat to Alan Halpern. Every editor brings their own fingerprints to these pages. We learned from those who nurtured this publication before us, and we thank everyone who helped us bring the *NATA Journal* to you for the past two years. We know that we pass it to capable and caring hands.

Todah!

Betti and Jeanne
President’s Message

Livia Thompson, FTA, Senior Director
Central Synagogue, New York City, NY

Dear Friends:

It is hard to believe it has been over 11 years since 9/11 occurred. Since then, our Synagogues started to dramatically change the ways in which they thought about security and the extent to which our members began to feel very vulnerable. This concern for the personal safety and well being of our communities and our facilities has been exacerbated by a series of horrific incidences over the last 11 years in which Jewish and non-Jewish institutions were targeted by hate-mongers and unbalanced individuals. Children and adults have been killed or harmed, and property has been destroyed. Each time we learn of these incidents, we worry about whether we are doing enough to project our families and our institutions.

At the same time, we know how important it is to be open and accessible. We don’t want to create such high barriers to enter into our sanctuaries and our community houses that we end up safe, but with no one coming in at all to pray, learn, and commune with us. We want everyone in our community to be secure, but without feeling that they are entering a fortress or prison. It is a difficult balancing act, and yet something we all have to wrestle with regularly. Each time the news is filled with another horrible event, we ask ourselves again whether we have done enough, and whether we could have prevented the tragedy from happening in our own community. Alas, the answer to that is often no, we couldn’t have.

This NATA Journal addresses some concrete ways in which you can make your Synagogue safer with practical tips about security, staff training, and facility enhancements. These tools, along with ongoing vigilance and care, will, we hope, keep all of us (members and staff) safe and secure.

I hope that the year to come brings us no new tragedies that require us to rethink, yet again, our security needs.

Livia
NATA President

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Partnering with Government and Law Enforcement: A Professional’s Point of View

Bob Rothman
Officer, Los Angeles Police Department

As a sworn Officer of the Los Angeles Police Department for the past 17 years, I have been directly involved with security issues and concerns at Los Angeles area synagogues and schools for most of my career. I had a stint at LAPD’s Major Crimes Division in Counter Terrorism and at Wilshire Division. During this time, I have made it a point to reach out to the local Jewish community starting with the Los Angeles Jewish Federation and the Israeli Consulate.

Security concerns absolutely ramp up whenever a high-profile incident arises which makes the news. This is especially true when there is an incident in the Los Angeles area, and there have been quite a few. For the most part, local synagogues have gotten the message and are constantly seeking ways to improve their security. Specifically, it has been common to see thousands of protesters in front of the local Israeli Consulate in recent years. Counter-protesters also become part of the equation. The potential for violence is there.

Being an eye-witness to Hezbollah flags being waved on Wilshire Boulevard has been eye-opening. And then there have been the hate crimes and violence to local institutions. As a kid, I remember spending a lot of time at the North Valley Jewish Community Center. Many people have already sadly forgotten the shooting which took place there in 1999 by a white supremacist. As a parent, I am deeply concerned about the safety of my own children when they attend religious school or synagogue services. Security is of upmost concern, as it should be for all parents.

The Jewish Federation (of which I am also now a part of) has been especially proactive by introducing their Community Security Initiative which serves as a single point of contact for area alerts, training, information sharing, and vulnerability assessments.

Technology trends include the latest in surveillance and information sharing. Whether it’s by using smart phones to deliver real-time information or technology fairs (for example, the Jewish Federation just held its first-ever for the local Jewish Community), locations need to be assessed their weaknesses and strengths. There is a huge demand for this.

Synagogues have created a much more active partnership with law enforcement for security concerns. Hate crimes and terrorism have had a long history in both synagogues and churches, but even more so for synagogues in the local community. As a result, it has been my experience that synagogues have much more robust security than churches, and tend to participate in more training and law enforcement meetings than churches.

Executive Directors tend to focus on their budgets and, too often, security is the first thing to be cut. This is problematic since good security is crucial for business as well as for the safety of all members. This is especially true of those locations that have schools on site. Active shooter training has really taken off because of so many recent tragic incidents around the world. Executive Directors sometime focus on the bottom line and hire companies with an emphasis on savings, rather than quality. This is simply not acceptable in this day and age. Parents and students pick up on things that most people wouldn’t notice. Suspicious activity reporting, observational skills, documentation, report writing, technology use, and basic verbal judo are all important skills. People need to be aware of what’s going on around them at all times and also be aware of what’s happening around the world. I always suggest using the Four Seasons Hotel model.

Security and customer service should go hand-in-hand. Yet security must be competent and professional and often pick up on things that most people wouldn’t notice. Suspicious activity reporting, observational skills, documentation, report writing, technology use, and basic verbal judo are all important skills. People need to be aware of what’s going on around them at all times and also be aware of what’s happening around the world. I always suggest using the Four Seasons Hotel model.
Security is enhanced by challenging people in a friendly manner. For instance, ask if people need directions or where they are headed, and who they are there to see. There are many ways to be effective in a customer service-like manner.

I strongly encourage Executive Directors to get to know their local law enforcement partners. Everyone has to have a stake in this. Attend meetings. Offer to host training. Invite officers to your facility. Get to know the Captain of the area. I have always had strong partnerships with the local Jewish community as a result of offering training, information-sharing, reporting suspicious activity, and much more. My current Commanding Officer, Captain Eric Davis, has made it a point to team up with the local Jewish community. The Orthodox Jewish community is particularly established in the area, so there are not only security issues but basic customs and behaviors that need to be understood and respected. Wilshire Division exceeds at that.

In addition, I would like to see Executive Directors look at resources that are already available to them. The Department of Homeland Security maintains online material and training opportunities, as do most state government agencies. I have personally worked hand-in-hand with Executive Directors to host some terrific training. I’ve covered everything from surveillance detection to responding to suicide bombers, from protective measures to screening of persons by observational techniques. And everything has been offered at no cost. I strongly urge Executive Directors to seek these things out and partner up with law enforcement and other government agencies to make it work.

Officer Robert Rothman has been an active member of the Los Angeles Police Department for 17 years. He has an extensive background in working with the Jewish community and has also worked with Diplomatic Security Services (United States Department of State), Secret Service, FBI, fire departments, and many other government agencies. He has partnered with the private security sector in order to enhance relationships through the years. He has two children and was born and raised in the Los Angeles area.

2013 Annual NATA Conference
October 19 - 23 • Dallas, Texas

Please plan to join us October 19 - 23 for the 2013 NATA Conference in Dallas, Texas. We will be staying at The Adophus Hotel, and will explore Creative Collaboration through five days of education, community and collegiality. You will not want to miss this very special program.

Watch your email for registration information. Scholarships will be available for regular and senior members. Registration opens on July 1.

Questions?
Contact the NATA Office at 800-966-NATA or visit www.NATAnet.org
Today’s Synagogue: Warding Off the Threat Utilizing an Updated Emergency Procedures Manual

Renee Higer, Executive Director
Temple Emanu El, Orange Village, OH

In August 2008, Temple Emanu El opened its doors in Orange Village, Ohio, in a new state-of-the-art facility. During our three-year building process, the Construction Committee worked closely with Steve Levy, International Security Associates consultant, and Harvey Freiman, then-Jewish Federation of Cleveland Vice President of Operations, to ensure that the new building would be as safe and secure as possible. Although we elected not to install the “pink and purple polka-dotted” exterior cameras that Steve recommended to deter those who may want to do harm to a Jewish institution, his other suggestions were implemented.

Once we were settled in the new “digs,” we began work on an Emergency Procedures Manual. So as not to re-invent the wheel, I originally used information from a booklet written by Congregation Beth Tikvah Executive Director Suzanne Parr. The original manual focused on the location of our AED, first aid kits, and weather related emergencies.

What we thought was a significant piece of work became null and void as we listened to and watched television coverage of the Sandy Hook incident. In the aftermath, we quickly engaged the Orange Village Police Department, under the direction of Chief Christopher Kostura, to add intruder and lock-down procedures. Many in the police department had been called to the scene months before at the Chardon High School shooting, just a few suburbs away, so they had new expertise from that horrific experience.

Without our knowledge, their first piece of business was to try to “break into” our building to see if the safety procedures we had put in place were working. Although the police tried this with other religious and non-religious institutions in the area, Temple Emanu El was the only building in which they were unable to gain access. While that was comforting, it was just a small piece of a bigger puzzle.

Over the next several weeks, we included our IT and security vendors in determining where new interior cameras should be located and what new procedures should be put into place. Together, we utilized new knowledge of what worked and what did not, to essentially rewrite the entire manual.

Our first order of business was to update our terminology to include:

- **Person in Charge:** Person in Charge begins the chain (Executive Director, Preschool Director, Education Director or Senior Staff Person on Site).
- **First Responder:** Person trained in CPR and first aid.
- **Intruder:** Person who enters building with intent to harm people or building.
- **Lockdown:** Emergency safety procedure of going to or remaining in a “safe” room that has a LOCKING DOOR, until “all clear” signal.
- **Pre-Assigned Outside Meeting Place:** a safe, predetermined place outside of our building.

Next, evacuation procedures were put in place as follows:

1. **Note Chain of Command.**
2. **Via intercom, the Administrative Assistant alerts people in other parts of the building.**
3. **ONLY if safe to do so, Torahs should be retrieved and removed from building.**
4. **Await further instructions from the Person in Charge.**
5. **When Religious School or Preschool are in session:**
   a. Line children up at classroom doorway.
   b. Teachers take attendance records with them.
   c. Pre-assigned teachers check bathrooms and nearby classrooms.
   d. Primary Evacuation Route: The exit closest to the classroom as above under Fire Drills.
   e. Proceed with students to front or back parking lot as above under Fire Drills
   f. Take attendance as soon as possible.
   g. Report any missing children to the Person in Charge, Preschool Director or Education Director.
   h. Keep all children away from emergency vehicles.
   i. **Await further instructions from the Person in Charge or the Orange Village Police Department.**
   j. **If it is necessary for the Orange Village Police Department to evacuate everyone to another location, Orange Village School buses will be dispatched and all present will be taken to the Orange Village City Hall on Lander Road.**
Finally, we reworked our **intruder and lockdown procedures** as detailed below:

1. All staff and faculty members will wear an elastic wristband with the master key on it and doors will be locked if paged that an intruder is in the building.
2. All classrooms windows will have a covering next to it and will be put in place if paged that an intruder is in the building.
3. If an intruder gains access to the building, the Person in Charge will call 9-1-1.
4. Lock yourself (and students or other staff) into the room that they are closest to in case an intruder comes into the building and you have been paged with the following: “**All Staff/Faculty, be informed that we have a Code XXX**” (Note: Each Congregation must determine what their paging message should be).
5. An intruder is the most frightening security problem we can anticipate. While there are security procedures to deter an intruder, it remains the most difficult security problem for which to plan.
6. There are no simple responses to an attack from an intruder. You may need to modify the suggestions below to fit your situation.
7. If an intruder comes into the building, do not take a life-threatening risk, but do the following:
   a. Person in Charge will call 9-1-1.
   b. If you hear the following code: “**All Staff/Faculty, be informed that we have a Code XXX**,” please continue through the following steps:
      i. Lock yourself (and students or other staff) in either the room you are in or the room that is closest to you, put the covering over the interior door window, close the windows and blinds, turn off lights, move yourself and students in a location in the room that is away from the windows (getting students in cabinets or closets is acceptable), and remain silent.
   ii. Await further instructions from the Person in Charge or Orange Village Police. You are not to unlock your door until you hear Orange Village Police using the following all-clear code: “**Code XXX**.” (Note: Each congregation must determine their own code.) No door is to be unlocked until you hear this code, even if you hear the fire alarm going off.
   iii. If it is necessary for the Orange Village Police Department to evacuate everyone to another location, Orange Village School buses will be dispatched and all present will be taken to the Orange Village City Hall on Lander Road.
   
   *It is important to note that a number of Chardon High School teachers and students stayed in their lockdown locations for several hours because there was no all-clear code in place.*

8. If you are the one who sees the intruder, take the following steps:
   a. If you can contact someone safely, please page your immediate supervisor who will call 9-1-1 if necessary.
   b. Attempt to put a door between you and the intruder. Once out of sight, lie down.
   c. If you are outside and can’t get to a safe location, run away in a zigzag pattern. Do not lie down.
   d. If you cannot get to the Person in Charge to call 9-1-1 and you can do it, then make the call yourself.
   e. After all is safe, do your best to describe the intruder.

In case of an intruder and you are in the following rooms, please take the following steps**.

**The manual goes on to describe where those within each section of the facility should go for lockdown. The important thing to note in writing one’s own manual is to lock yourself in the room/closet in closest proximity to where you are when the lockdown is called.**

Within weeks of the completion of the new manual, I facilitated trainings for all staff, religious school and preschool faculty, and ushers. Copies were distributed as well as keys to all staff and faculty so that they can lock themselves and their students in a room in case of a lockdown situation.

The last line of our manual as well as the last item shared at all the trainings is as follows: “It is imperative that staff and faculty members understand that security measures are not to be shared with those not associated with Temple Emanu El.”

Tailor your emergency procedures manual to your own facility and location. Our job is to ensure that we constantly evaluate the measures in place and to help our members, children, staff and faculty feel as safe as possible. Sadly, if someone is determined to cause us harm, they will find a way to do it. As executive directors, we need to do everything in our power to prevent this.
Training Staff for Crisis Situation

Elyse Hyman, Temple Director
Temple Beth Avodah, Newton Centre, MA

Security for our Temple and our Religious and Nursery schools is a high priority especially in light of the tragedies in our country over the past several months.

A year ago, I would have said the likelihood of something happening at one of our Temples was very low, and I still believe that, but these recent events weigh on us all. Who would have thought that Sandy Hook Elementary School would be a household word or that we would witness the events at the Aurora Theatre in Colorado and at the Clackamas Mall in Oregon?

Following the Sandy Hook shooting, I received numerous calls from parents of children in our school programs: “What is in place to ensure the safety of our kids?”

As the Director of a Temple in Newton, Massachusetts, I am creating an institution-wide security preparedness plan with the nursery and religious schools as top priorities. The primary goal is for every teacher and staff member be able to safely evacuate and shelter-in-place if there is an emergency.

As an emergency preparedness consultant prior to my position in the synagogue, I learned: It isn’t the plan, it’s the planning; it’s about practice and knowledge. The more informed we are, the less chaos and panic there will be during an emergency. We need to learn and understand what we need to do to keep ourselves and our children safe.

True Story
In February of 1993, a truck bomb exploded in the basement of the World Trade Center, filling the building with smoke, and leaving everyone in total panic. It took the Morgan Stanley folks over an hour and a half to evacuate. The Director of Security for Morgan Stanley, Rick Rescorla, was appalled. He spent the next eight years working on an emergency plan, educating the Morgan Stanley staff and practicing evacuations. He drove everyone crazy with these drills. They argued with him and teased him: “Enough! We get it! No more practicing.”

On 9/11, Morgan Stanley had 2700 people in Tower Two and 1000 in Building Five from the 44th – 72nd floors. As soon as the first tower was hit, Rick began evacuating his staff from their offices. The Port Authority gave the all clear and all safe signals and instructed employees to stay at their desks in Tower Two, but Rick Rescorla’s well-rehearsed crisis plan called for complete evacuation. Within 45 minutes all Morgan Stanley employees had evacuated the buildings. They did so quickly and in an orderly fashion – just as they had practiced. They did not veer from their plan despite orders to the contrary. What could have been thousands of deaths for Morgan Stanley, was reduced to 13 because they had a plan and the knowledge to execute it.

Purpose of Emergency Response Planning:
- To reduce panic
- To protect occupants
- To organize resources
- To reduce damage

There are several steps involved in preparing staff for emergencies. It doesn’t matter if there are two professional staff or 32 professional staff, each person needs to understand his/her role and responsibilities should an emergency occur.

Step #1
Obtain organizational buy-in. The most senior level leaders (pro and lay) need to understand and support preparedness planning. When an organization does not properly plan, they are abdicating a moral responsibility to the community and placing the institution in a vulnerable situation.

Step 2
Form a Crisis Team. Regardless of the number of staff people, you need to form a team that will be able to handle a crisis or emergency. If you need to recruit lay leaders to assist you, invite them to join the team. A Crisis Team should be comprised of the people who are most capable of completing the tasks.

Characteristics of Successful Crisis Team Members:
- Knowledgeable about the functioning of the institution.
- Able to give and follow instructions and work as a team player.
• Available and familiar with the community or ability to establish rapport and trust quickly and meaningfully.
• Flexible.
• Willing to accept responsibility.
• Able to handle stress with a minimum of other stressors present in their personal lives.
• Able to remain calm when others are upset and emotional.
• Willing and able just to “be with” survivors who may be suffering tragedy and enormous loss without being compelled to “fix” the situation.

**Essential Roles and Responsibilities of the Team**

Your Crisis team can include two people or ten people depending on how many staff you have. The following positions are essential, and in some cases, one person may be responsible for a number of tasks. Every person chosen must understand his/her role.

• **Operational Team Lead** (not always the Director or President)
  - Declares the emergency.
  - Manages overall response.
  - Moves the organization toward state of recovery.
  - Security.
  - Functions as the public face of the organization.
  - Declares emergency over.
  - Coordinates recovery plan.

• **Crisis Communication Lead**
  - Internal Communications – Notifies all stakeholders, issue progress reports regularly, rumor control, deliver “all clear.”
  - External Communication – Notifies all external stakeholders, issues press release, develops messages to media, communicates through technology following event, collects all information and records about the event which can be used for debrief and improving the current plan.

• **Facilities Coordinator**
  - Communicates with first responders regarding all aspects of facility.
  - In case of shelter-in-place, is responsible for HVAC system and all other working systems and structural issues related to the building.

• **HR Lead**
  - Provides updated personnel rosters with emergency contact information.
  - Tracks and records all personnel at work during the event.
  - Maintains a file of injuries and/or illnesses that are results of the event.
  - Oversees investigation of injury claims arising from event.
  - Coordinates next-of-kin notifications.

**Evacuation**

One of the most important parts of training is evacuating the staff, and if you have a school, the students and faculty. It is the responsibility of the Crisis Team to:

• Create an evacuation route.
• Walk through the facility, follow the route and make sure to eliminate bottlenecks.
• Create a secondary route.
• Create a secure assembly point (may need two or more points depending on size of facility).
• Practice walking each route.
• Determine which exit each area of the building should be used.
• Put clear signs up in classrooms, hallways and near exits.
• Assign staff and faculty roles and responsibilities during an evacuation:
  - Class leaders
  - Floor leaders
  - Floor sweep
  - Communication
  - Critical objects (Torah scrolls)
  - Headcount
  - Someone to help any disabled staff or student
• You may need walkie-talkies for communication
• Prepare Go-Kits for each room which should include a roster, water, energy bars, first aid, flashlight, protection from the elements (i.e. sunscreen, mylar blankets).
• Conduct both planned and surprises drills.
• During one of your drills, create an obstacle to one of the exits and see how everyone reacts and gets out to the assembly point (i.e. fake fire in stairwell). This drill prepares faculty and crisis team to be flexible.
Shelter-in-Place
- Determine how the SIP will be communicated. Create an unusual statement that is that will be recognized as the signal to SIP. (i.e. “Shabbat is cancelled” or “The sanctuary is full”)
- Determine type of lockdown. Is it necessary to stay in place or move to basement or secure area?
- Turn off HVAC (if necessary).
- Close all windows and doors.
- Make sure there are emergency supplies (Go-Kit is accessible).
- Assign responsibilities to others:
  - Coordinator of well-being while in lockdown
  - Coordinator for communication with external stakeholders
- Drill with staff and faculty.

Table Top Exercise
Once the evacuation and SIP plans have been reviewed, learned and practiced, you should consider one additional step in training staff. A simple tabletop exercise is a facilitated simulation of an emergency situation in a stress free environment. It is designed to elicit constructive discussion as participants examine and resolve problems based various elements of a preparedness plan. The success of the exercise is largely determined by group participation in the identification of problem areas. For assistance in creating your own exercise, check online for some helpful resources, or you can hire a consultant to help you through the process if you have the funds available.

Do not view this exercise as a test to “grade” your performance, it is an opportunity to understand how to better prepare, better communicate and learn about the areas that need attention. During the debrief session, it is important to discuss where something fell short or what can be tweaked that would work better in an emergency situation.

Steps for creating a Table Top
1. Determine what you want to test:
   - Parts of your plan
   - Individual competence
   - Team competence
   - Communication
2. Identify hazards that will address the elements listed above.
3. Create a storyline that incorporates the elements.
4. Define how participants receive information.
5. Create stages to the storyline (moments in time when something new occurs or a specific item needs attention).
6. Create “injects” (when participants will receive new information).
7. Create a real timeline – calculate how much time will be needed to go through the exercise, debrief and questions. Most Table Tops run from 2½ to 4 hours.
8. Seat participants in a deliberate way (by crisis team, faculty members, staff, department, etc.), all which will help the exercise move along.
9. You will need facilitators who understand their roles. The storyline should be shared with only the facilitators.
10. Check-list:
   - Need the “injects” with timing and who will receive which “injects”
   - Flip chart
   - PPT projector
   - Round tables
   - Copies of the preparedness plan
   - Snacks and water
   - Ask for help from organizations that have completed Table Tops

Everyone Knows His/Her Role in a Crisis:
Educate all employees in security measures and procedures. Assign responsibilities to everyone. Written guidelines will be concise but comprehensive and written in a style that is easily understood, indexed, and possibly color-coded for quick reference. Unabridged versions of the guidelines should be available for crisis team members (and one should be stored at a safe and accessible location). An abridged version of these guidelines should be circulated throughout the institution to all members of the community. Each staff member should have a written copy of his/her own responsibilities during an emergency. And the most important component of any plan is to PRACTICE, PRACTICE, and PRACTICE.
Security for the High Holy Days
Adapted from Anti-Defamation League

The High Holy Days and other special events raise certain security concerns for the Jewish community. This article is designed to help Jewish community institutions prepare for holiday security in a calm and rational manner. Enhanced security does not have to come at the expense of an open and welcoming environment, and it doesn’t have to come at the expense of a balanced budget. It requires a commitment from the institution’s management and constituency to make security a part of that institution’s culture.

General Recommendations
1. **Think Security.** Bear in mind that it is everyone’s responsibility to keep a watchful eye on their community institutions. We must all take responsibility for security.
   a. **Leadership** should assess the risks and realities facing the institution and develop a security plan – seeking professional guidance, if needed. Of course, not all institutions run the same risk, but all run some risk.
   b. **Congregants and community members** must care about security and let others know that they do. Security procedures and your powers of observation are two of the most important assets you have.
2. **Have a security** (prevention) and an **emergency** (reaction) which includes (but is not limited to):
   a. Notifying and evacuating attendees, if necessary.
      Designate a meeting place to ensure that everyone is safe.
   b. Having a phone handy in case you need to call for help from outside the facility.
   c. Having a person in charge of security – and vesting that person with the authority to direct a response during an incident.
3. **Speak to local law enforcement** about High Holy Day schedules and special events. Invite officers and the fire marshal to the facility for a security review – especially if the facilities are not the ones you usually use. Ensure that patrol officers are aware of the times during which you will be holding events when large numbers of congregants will be walking on the local streets. Consider presenting copies of schedules for distribution at your police department’s roll call. A previously developed relationship with law enforcement will help facilitate this.
4. **Coordinate ushering and security staff.** This is especially important when you are bringing in outside help for the holidays (e.g., off-duty police or a security guard). Note: ushers and security should be placed in reasonable proximity to each other so that ushers can quickly alert security to a problem.
5. **A facility should have as few entry points as possible** (ideally, one). However, remember to obey all fire codes and ensure adequate routes for exiting the building.
6. **Ensure that existing safety devices are working and useable** – especially if you are renting a facility. Video cameras should have tape, parking lot lights should work, etc.
7. **Ensure that ushers understand** that they play a critical role in security matters (even where there is a security staff) as they are often used to control access to the sanctuary (e.g., by taking tickets) and are in a position to spot trouble early. Meet with your ushers prior to services to make sure everyone understands his or her role and security procedures.
8. **Pre-event publicity** for upcoming events should be reviewed in light of security. Potential gains in audience numbers must be weighed against the security concerns created by “going public.”
9. **For special events where tickets are inappropriate,** you may choose to use a guest list or a sign-in book. Regardless of what you choose to use, no one should enter your facility without being greeted and observed. An usher will usually function in that role.

Taken from Anti-Defamation League publication Protecting Your Jewish Institution: Security Strategies for Today’s Dangerous World.
Let me say this up front: Security is a serious matter! But it is something we constantly deal with, so I wanted to share the “lighter side” with a few short stories. I apologize in advance if anyone is offended by what follows. If you know me, you won’t be.

The Mysterious Package

It was around the time of the first ricin scare. We had just held a training session for staff led by a local FBI agent. We were discussing the handling of mail and especially, packages. I don’t think the Unabomber had been captured, as of yet. The FBI agent told us about leaking packages, packages that “rattle” or “tick,” and those without return addresses or from persons we didn’t recognize; even those with funny smells. We made a plan on how to handle suspicious packages of various types. Of course, the Executive Director would be the one to decide to call out the bomb squad, etc.

The training session put us all on high alert. Several days later, there it was ... a box was delivered with a return address to a “mailing service” company. After several attempts – the internet was not that robust yet – I was able to reach the mailing company by phone. “Can you tell me who sent this package?” I asked. “There is no name, and no one here ordered anything from New Jersey.” They looked up the number stamped on the package. “It is from a printing company,” they replied. I didn't recognize the name. “It is printed matter,” I was told. After the mailing house told me they had sealed the packages in their store and assured me the weight was indicative of printed matter, I carried the box, carefully, to the mail room. It was quite heavy. With no one around, I gently cut open the box’s sealing tape and peered inside. Oh! They were the new congregational directories from the (then) UAHC. How wonderful!

I called the “home office” in New York and spoke with the head of communications. I relayed the story of our “training” and asked how, given the “environment,” the URJ could send out a box without a proper return address. They were appropriately embarrassed and reported that they had used a new mailing house for this year’s updates and had neglected to instruct them on a proper return label. “Good point,” I was told. “We will be more careful next time.”

Another Surprise

This story was related to me by the recipient of the box. It seems the rabbi found a leaking, stinking package sitting on his desk upon his arrival. No return address (of course). Being a police chaplain as well as a congregational rabbi, he immediately called the local gendarmes. A squad arrived and removed the offending delivery. It was taken to the “bomb chamber” and detonated. The contents were then revealed. The box was filled with dirty diapers. There’s a statement for you!

How Sweet It Is!

This story was provided by a co-worker of the “victim.” Sadly, the rabbi’s mother passed away back in his hometown. Many letters and expressions of grief were received, as one could imagine. One such expression arrived in the form of a small, sticky package with a return address from back home, but no name. Failing to recognize the return address and being ever vigilant, the rabbi called the police. After due diligence, the police opened the package. Inside was a homemade offering of strudel from back home, sent by an elderly, close friend of the rabbi’s mother.

My First High Holy Days

Having started in May, I was appropriately apprehensive as my first High Holy Days approached. I went to the rabbi to go over, in meticulous detail, all I needed to do. We went over the procession of the Torahs, the participant lists, pulpit guests, usher assignments and placement of security staff. At last, we came to the matter of how the rabbi might get my attention if, God forbid, he noticed something untoward during the service. Knowing I might not be in the worship space every
moment, we walked into the sanctuary and looked at the fully expanded, 2,000 seat abyss. After some thought, we agreed I would sit at the end of a pew toward the back of the sanctuary where I would be “in line of sight” with the rabbi during the service. (Look, I was a novice – I didn’t know the Executive Director doesn’t really sit during the High Holy Days!)

How could I be sure this spot would be available when I sat down? I then got the brilliant idea to put a sign at the end of the pew in the chosen aisle which said, “RESERVED FOR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.” Perfect!

I arrived early on Erev Rosh Hashanah only to be greeted by our out-of-breath, usher chair who said, “Mr. Levy is in the Sanctuary. He is very upset with you and wants you to come see him right away!” Worried that something was wrong truly amiss, I hurried into the sanctuary looking for this Mr. Levy. At first, all I could see were rows of pews and stacked chairs stretching out to the horizon. But no Mr. Levy. I scanned the cavern again and there he was, standing near the exit far in the back. I came up to him, smiling, “La Shana Tova! My name is Eli Montague. You wanted to see me?” “Young man,” the diminutive older gentleman said with much bravura, “I have been coming to this Temple for 50 years and YOU are in my seat!” I slowly scanned the empty sanctuary, and then turned to look at Mr. Levy. “I am so sorry!” I said. “It is my first year at the High Holy Days. I did not realize ...” my voice trailed off. I picked up my little sign and placed it on the end of the next pew. Mr. Levy appeared satisfied, so I hurried off to the first task on my list.

“The food is just so-so, but the security is fantastic.”
Congregational Safety and Security Resources

The URJ is a member of the Secure Community Network (SCN), the national homeland security initiative of the Jewish Federations of North America and the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish organizations. The URJ is committed to helping congregations become more secure. The links for the articles listed below can be found on the URJ website at http://urj.org/cong/facilities/security/. These resources are specific to Jewish institutions.

Congregational Security and Safety

Anti-Defamation League: Can Jewish Institutions Be Secure and Welcoming at the Same Time?
Information from the ADL about maintaining safe and welcoming synagogues

Anti-Defamation League: Protecting Your Jewish Institution
The ADL’s on-line publication "Protecting Your Jewish Institution"

Anti-Defamation League: Security Awareness
A central portal for all Anti-Defamation League security-related information

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security infrastructure protection report series on religious facilities

Department of Homeland Security: Security Funding for Synagogues
DHS Funding of Synagogue Security

Making Congregants Feel Safe and Secure While Participating in Congregational Life

Responding to Vandalism
Compiled by Rabbi Edythe Held Mencher, LCSW

URJ’s Communicate! Program Resource Bank
More than 2,300 ideas and programs that have been successfully implemented in Union congregations. Use the key words safety or security to find examples of congregational emergency manuals and security procedures
NATA'S MISSION STATEMENT

The National Association for Temple Administration (NATA) is an active professional network of Reform Jewish Synagogue Executive Directors committed to Judaic principles of ethics and integrity.

NATA's mission is to support its members by:
• providing educational and training activities and standards,
• providing its individual members and their URJ congregations with access to NATA resources,
• advocating for and promoting the profession of Temple Administration,
• serving as the professional partner with the Union for Reform Judaism.

NATA PLACEMENT

NATA Placement posts job listings on the NATA website and alerts the membership whenever there is a new posting. While we do not match congregations with job candidates, we can offer sample job descriptions, give general advice to congregations regarding salary, benefit packages, and how a congregation may benefit from having a top level professional on staff. The how-to-manual, “A Guide for Congregations Going into Placement for a New Executive Director” is available for download.

Congregations looking to hire and individuals seeking jobs are encouraged to check the NATA website often, as new positions are posted from time to time. Please visit www.natanet.org and click on “For Congregations” on the left for more information.

Ellen Franklin, FTA
NATA Placement Chair

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The NATA National Office is headquartered in Ridgefield, Washington, adjacent to the Columbia River and about 15 minutes north of Portland, Oregon. The office is managed by Kathy Small of Small and Associates, which prides itself on providing top-quality customer service to the NATA membership. The national office provides the day-to-day administration of membership, convention, education and placement services, as well as support to the NATA Executive Team and Board of Directors. Kathy Small has been managing the NATA office since 1998.