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November 2024

NOVEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

Rabbi Schultz shares his eulogy for Rabbi Arnold Sher. Front cover and Page 3.

Cantor Harris explains how Hatikvah and its message of hope became the national anthem of Israel.
Page 5

Alexa Cohen shows us how Bonim and Kehilah students will celebrate animals, stuffed and real, during the month of November.

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Congregant Al Dressler instructs us on the importance of yoga in everyday life and invites us to his weekly yoga sessions.

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REMEMBERING RABBI ARNOLD SHER BY RABBI EVAN SCHULTZ



Rabbi Arnold Sher was truly one of the greats. I recall as a young rabbi meeting Arnie for the first time, sensing immediately I was standing on the shoulders of a giant here at Congregation B'nai Israel, where Arnie served as Senior Rabbi for twenty-two years. His kindness, warmth, gentleness, wisdom, sense of humor, thoughtfulness, and love were evident from the moment that I met him.

Seemingly everywhere I went after he died, friends of Arnie Sher had similar reflections and experiences with him throughout his life. I can't

tell you how many folks have said to me, you know, I used to have breakfast with Arnie every morning, or I had lunch with Arnie every afternoon. You'd think the man ate twenty meals a day, always with a side of French fries, of course.

One B'nai Israel congregant reflected about Rabbi Sher, "Arnie was my rabbi here as I grew up. He was a friend of my family, a big influence on me, and a wonderful man! He will be dearly missed." Another wrote, "He married me and my husband. We would meet with him in Grand Central prior to the wedding when he worked in the city

Continued on page 3

GIVE THE GIFT OF LIGHT FOR CHANUKAH!



Please share the warmth of Chanukah this year with your fellow congregants by participating in this year's Gift of Light fundraiser! Gift your family and friends at B'nai Israel with beautiful Chanukah candles! By participating, you will make someone's day, spread some happiness, and continue to make our temple community the warm and welcoming place we all know it to be.

The holiday begins Wednesday, December 25th, but now is the time to order beautiful Chanukah candles for your family and friends at B'nai Israel.

Our online system makes placing an order fun and easy! Just click on the personalized link you receive via email. Each of your candle recipients will receive a single box of candles with personalized greetings from every sender. Each box is hand-packaged by a special team of Chanukah helpers. This year, your recipients will be able to pick-up their candles at the temple between December 15th and December 20th.

Plans for wrapping candles are still underway! We hope you will join in the fun! Stay tuned for more information in Hashavua. For more information, please contact Chris Rocha at chris@cbibpt.org or call the Temple office at (203) 336-1858. With your help, we can make this year's Gift of Light more successful than ever!

WELCOME! WELCOME!

A warm welcome to our newest members. We look forward to their participation in our many programs and hope their affiliation will not only enrich their lives, but that of our congregation.

Ellen Ajila Fairfield, CT

John and Nancy Jacobson Fairfield, CT

Leslie Jennings-Lax and Stephanie Sudikoff and Caitlin, Parker & Cole Trumbull, CT **Jamie Sklar and Yunfeng Lin** Fairfield, CT

Michael and Sara Sperling and Ezra & Maya

Fairfield, CT

SHARING OUR JOY

In Celebration of:

Linda and Michael Epstein, on the marriage of their daughter Jill to Brian Rosenfeld

Sylvia & Alan Neigher, on the engagement of son, Jeremy Neigher, to Anne Moriarty

SINCERE SYMPATHY

We extend our sympathy to the bereaved families of:

Beatrice Fried, mother of Steven Fried Fairfield, CT

Ken Marion, father of Seth (Rabbi Sarah) Marion

Robert Schacher, father of Stephanie Schacher

Philip Lublin, father of Lauren Tropp, grandfather of Sarah Tropp-Pacelli, Gabby, and Rachel Tropp

NOVEMBER MITZVAH MORNING

Pie Baking on November 17, 2024 10:00 am and 11:30 am



For our November Mitzvah Morning project, we will be partnering with nOURish BRIDGEPORT to bake pies for their upcoming Thanksgiving Feast in a Box event.

nOURish BRIDGEPORT, a regular B'nai Israel partner, will be supplying Thanksgiving meals to those in need within the Bridgeport community, and B'nai Israel volunteers have the opportunity to help complete those meals.

We will be meeting at the nOURish BRIDGEPORT main headquarters, located at 2200 North Avenue in Bridgeport on November 17 for two shifts — one starting at 10:00 a.m. and the second starting at 11:30 a.m. Once there, we will get a brief tour of the kitchen and set ourselves up to start baking large quantities of holiday pies.

A sign up genius will be published in the weekly Hashavuah newsletters and on the CBI website.

BULLETIN BOARD

Volunteers are encouraged to bring some of the necessary ingredients, which include flour, butter, sugar, salt, apples, pumpkin, and sweet potato. B'nai Israel will provide spices like nutmeg and cinnamon. We will also distribute pie recipes in advance to all who sign up.

This will be a rewarding and fulfilling event as we do our part to feed hungry families in our own backyard. And it will also be fun, giving congregants a chance to work together and bond over an apple pie!



About nOURish BRIDGEPORT:

nOURish BRIDGEPORT (capitalization intentional) is a food-centered, volunteerpowered, community-anchored 501(c) (3) bringing hope to Bridgeport through direct service programs. Bridgeport is defined as a Food Desert, with 1 in 4 residents facing daily food insecurity and inaccessibility to nutritious produce. nOURish provides thousands neighbors weekly with Groceries from its Food Pantry, Formula and Diapers from the Baby Center, Hot Meals from the Soup Kitchen, Education from English Classes and Hope from their Hearts. Learn more at www.nourishbpt.org.



Please contact Ted Portnay (ted.portnay@gmail.com) or Judy Blumenthal (judygblumenthal@gmail.com) for more information. We look forward to seeing you there.

AMERICAN RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE Wednesday, November 13, 1:00-6:00 p.m.

Schedule your appointment by calling the Red Cross at 1-800-448-3543 or visiting www.redcrossblood.org.

JUDAICA BOUTIQUE

Get all your Judaica and hostess gifts at the B'nai Israel gift boutique. We are fully stocked with tallitot, Kiddush cups, and candlesticks as well



as hostess gifts. New merchandise will be arriving in time for our Chanukkah sales event in December. Stay tuned for exact date!



FROM THE RABBI'S DESK/RABBI EVAN SCHULTZ

REMEMBERING RABBI ARNOLD SHER

(CONTINUED FROM THE FRONT PAGE)

and so did we. And I was honored to have him on the bimah for part of my kids' bat and bar mitzvahs. He was an incredible person, and I feel lucky to have had those memories of him."

I read similar reflections from CCAR, or Central Conference of American Rabbis, colleagues, many of whom knew Arnie during his time as placement director for eighteen years. One colleague shared, "I am indebted to Arnie. He honored the right thing to do more than the letter of the law. He was a mensch!" Another wrote, "A true mensch and kind human being. Empathetic and understanding of colleagues' needs. A whole generation of rabbis were most appreciative of his service to us."

My fondest personal memories of Arnie were what I'd call his afternoon B'nai

Israel pop-ins, where he'd come to say hello and chat with whoever was around. I don't think Arnie came to see anyone in particular, he just loved B'nai Israel. He'd chat with the office staff or a congregant, always with a big smile on his face. I'd invite him into my office, where many of his books still line the top shelves. We'd talk about our Red Sox, the synagogue, Boston and the Berkshire Mountains, and of course, his dear and beloved family.

He'd always say to me, I just want you to know you're doing a great job. He always seemed to show up at just the moment I needed to hear him say that. In recent years when he could no longer drive, I'd come to him and Serena, as he proudly showed me pictures of his grandkids, sharing what they were up to, the afternoon sunlight reflecting peacefully

around him, always smiling. "You know you're doing a great job," he'd say as I would get up to leave and give him a big hug.

Arnie was a mensh to the nth degree. He treasured his relationships. He had a deep moral and ethical compass. There was an authenticity about him. Arnie was a problem solver. He was an amazing dad, stepdad, grandfather, and husband. Arnie was a rabbi to countless other rabbis. He impacted and revolutionized this congregation in so many ways. His compassion ran deep. He was deeply dedicated to the city of Bridgeport. Arnie was a builder. He was a voice for social justice and social action. He treated people fairly. Arnie loved life.

May his memory be for a blessing always.



Dare to Lead: Brave Conversations



Have you or your family members frozen in the face of an antisemitic or hateful comment?

With the rise of antisemitism and hate, we are increasingly confronted with difficult and challenging conversations. Please join the Congregation B'nai Israel Kulanu Committee for this special interactive program led by a trained ADL Facilitator. When you participate in **Dare to Lead: Brave Conversations**, you will leave feeling empowered to respond and lead by example.

Monday, November 18, 2024

Congregation B'nai Israel 7:00pm - 9:00pm

2710 Park Ave. Bridgeport, CT

RSVP and questions by November 10th to Andrea Ruskin at aruskin04@gmail.com



SHABBAT SERVICE SCHEDULE

In person on Fridays at 6:00 p.m. and Saturdays at 8:00 a.m. where indicated. All services at this time can also be viewed on Zoom. The link is sent out in our weekly email.

Friday, November 1

5:30 p.m. Oneg

6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service with

guest speaker Israeli Emissary Amit Swisa – in person and on Zoom

Torah Portion – Genesis 6:9-11:32

Haftarah –

Isaiah 54:1-55:5

Saturday, November 2

8:00 a.m. Shabbat Service –

in person and on Zoom 9:00 a.m. Brotherhood Breakfast

9:30 a.m. Torah Study –

in person and on Zoom 11:00 a.m. Bet Mitzvah of Zevi

Bush, son of Jonathan &

Nicole Bush

Friday, November 8

5:30 p.m. Ones

6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service (honoring

Luise Mann for her work with the URJ) –

in person and on Zoom Torah Portion – Genesis 12:1-17:27

Haftarah – Isaiah 40:27-41:16

Saturday, November 9

8:00 a.m. Shabbat Service – in person and on Zoom

9:00 a.m. Brotherhood Breakfast

9:30 a.m. Torah Study –

in person and on Zoom

11:00 a.m. Bet Mitzvah of Emma

Maya, daughter of

Howard & Bonnie Maya

Friday, November 15

5:30 p.m. Oneg

6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service –

in person and on Zoom Torah Portion – Genesis 18:1-22:24

Haftarah – II Kings 4:1-37

Saturday, November 16

8:00 a.m. Shabbat Service –

in person and on Zoom

9:00 a.m. Brotherhood Breakfast

9:30 a.m. Torah Study –

in person and on Zoom

11:00 a.m. Bet Mitzvah of Emma Braden, daughter of

Spruille & Jamie Braden

Friday, November 22

5:30 p.m. Oneg

6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service – in person and on Zoom

Torah Portion –
Genesis 23:1-25:18
Haftarah – I Kings 1:1-31

Saturday, November 23

8:00 a.m. Shabbat Service –

in person and on Zoom

9:00 a.m. Brotherhood Breakfast

9:30 a.m. Torah Study –

in person and on Zoom

Friday, November 29

5:30 p.m. Oneg

6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service –

in person and on Zoom Torah Portion –

Genesis 25:19-28:9 Haftarah –

Malachi 1:1-2:7

Saturday, November 30

8:00 a.m. Shabbat Service –

in person and on Zoom

9:00 a.m. Brotherhood Breakfast

9:30 a.m. Torah Study –

in person and on Zoom

Our synagogue Caring Committee is able to help provide rides to and from services to congregants in need of assistance. If you are in need of a ride to temple for Shabbat or another synagogue event, please reach out to Chris Rocha at crocha@cbibpt.org, or you can call the temple office.

FREE MEDICARE ADVICE AVAILABLE

My name is Jerry Demner, and I am a Choices Volunteer Counselor. I provide free Medicare advice to seniors and their caregivers. I served as a Medicare Part D counselor in NY from 2004 until I moved to Fairfield in 2011. In CT, I have been affiliated with the Southwest Connecticut Agency for the Aging since 2012. I am certified by Connecticut and SHIP (State Health Insurance Plans) as an unpaid volunteer to do this work.

Everyone on Medicare is required to have a drug plan that is considered a credible Part D plan.

Everyone's plan should be reviewed annually, as premiums and drugs

included in the program constantly change. Insurance companies negotiate individually with each pharmaceutical company for each drug they cover. Surprises are the rule, not the exception. There is an open enrollment period from October 15th to December 7th that permits participants to change their plan and possibly save a significant amount of money.

There are also other options that are available during this enrollment period. They have to do with Part C Advantage Plans and Traditional Medicare. If you have any concerns regarding any Medicare situation, please feel free to connect with me.

Please feel free to contact me at medicarehelper@optimum.net. It takes between 45 minutes to a little over an hour for a consultation. If you are prepared with a list of your prescription medications, the process can be considerably shortened. I am working with people via Zoom, FaceTime, and Skype. I am also available to answer questions over the phone. I will be happy to arrange an appointment. As a volunteer, I do not charge for this service. I am here to help you navigate this complex process.



WHO CHOSE 'HATIKVAH?'

BY CANTOR SCOTT HARRIS

Nobody ever actually chose "Hatikvah" as Israel's national anthem. The state inherited the song, as it were, along with other treasures of the Zionist Movement. "Hatikvah" has been around for more than 110 years and has outlasted many challengers. The elite haven't always liked it, but the public has embraced it wholeheartedly.

"Hatikvah" is the fruit of the pen of Naphtali Herz Imber, a wandering Jewish poet who was born in Galicia in 1855 or 1856. Before he died in New York in 1909, he had managed to travel throughout Europe, Palestine, Britain, and the United States. Everywhere he went, he wrote poetry, recited his poems to anyone who would listen, drank lustily, and remained devoted to the nascent cause of Zionism.

In fact, Imber saw himself — not Theodore Herzel, as the spiritual father of Zionism. In one letter, he wrote: "I am the origin of the Zionist Movement. It is not generally known, but I am. Many years ago, I went to Jerusalem, saw the misery of my people, felt the spirit of the place, and determined to bring my scattered people together again. For 12 years, I struggled to put the Zionist Movement on its feet. Now that I have started it, I will let others carry it on and get the glory."

Imber's Hebrew poems did kindle a spark for many Jews. He wrote about Rishon Lezion, the Jordan River; Hoveivi Zion; and other themes and places in Palestine. But his most famous poem — "Tikvateinu," first written in Iasi, Romania.

In 1877, the 22-year-old Imber was living with Moshe Waldberg, a

former Galician Talmudist-turnedattorney in Iasi. Waldberg had two sons, and according to the biography of Imber written by his daughter Ethel Lithman (on file at the Zionist Archives in Jerusalem), the three young men got along famously. Under the influence of his dear friends, Imber penned a poem called "Tikvateinu." It was the beginning of an anthem.

In 1822, Imber traveled to Palestine with his mentor, Laurence Oliphant. During his years in Palestine, Imber visited various Jewish communities and colonies, always carting copies of his poems. When invited into people's homes, the story goes, he wasted no time before getting down to the serious business of drinking. Once adequately lubricated, he would begin to recite one of his poems. These encounters inspired the young man so that he would often scribble new stanzas on scraps of paper. This continued until "Tikvateinu" had no less than nine stanzas. For this reason, many Jews in Palestine used to argue over where Imber penned the great poem. While they argued, the poem gained popularity.

The melody also has a story. Imber wrote a poem without music. Various attempts were made to set it to music. The first, apparently, was by a composer named Leon Igly. He had been brought to Zichron Ya'akov by Baron de Rothschild to learn farming. He tried to learn, but didn't like it. So, a Rothschild aide gave him a room in Rishon Lezion and handed him a copy of Imber's book of Hebrew poetry, *Barkai (Morning Star)*.

Igly immediately turned to "Tikvateinu" in its nine-verse version. In what he

certainly thought was a stroke of genius, Igly wrote a different tune for each stanza.

But teaching the public to sing the unofficial anthem was so difficult that children who succeeded in getting through all nine verses received a prize of chocolate. Igly returned to Russia, and the melody was lost.

Soon thereafter, a new melody emerged in Rishon Lezion, the melody that is sung today. Some trace it to the Bohemian Symphony by the Czech composer Smet'na; others say it is based on the Sephardic melody for Psalm 117 in the Hallel service. Still others say it bears a striking resemblance to a Romanian folk song.

"Tikvateinu" got a real boost in 1890, when Rehovot was established. Each new Jewish community in *Eretz Yisrael* chose a song or a poem, and the people building Rehovot chose "Tikvateinu." That's how it came to pass that scores of workers would set out from Rishon Lezion each morning en route to Rehovot, singing "Tikvateinu" all the way. When Herzl visited Rehovot in 1898, he was greeted by a crowd singing the song, which had attained the importance of a national anthem as well as a work song.

"Hatikvah" caught on quickly. Although not chosen as the official anthem of the Zionist Movement until the 1933 Zionist Congress, it was sung for decades before that date.

It may have taken some time to become the anthem we sing today, but the message of hope is one that continues today.



ALEXA COHEN/DIRECTOR OF THE EDUCATION CENTER

TIME TO CELEBRATE THE ANIMALS IN BONIM PRESCHOOL AND KEHILAH!



On Friday night, November 1 at 5:00 p.m., the Pavilion will be transformed into a big boat (some people call it an ark) in preparation for Noah and his animals. The evening will begin with fun animal-themed crafts and a story followed by a yummy meal and last but not least — THE MARCH OF THE STUFFED ANIMALS! What a sight it will be to see all the children and their animals marching around the synagogue!

Each child is encouraged to bring their favorite stuffed animal as their guest as we celebrate the Torah portion Noach:

Two by two, all the creatures of the world came to the ark. This classic Bible story is a family favorite for two good reasons — beautiful animals and a beautiful message of redemption.





B'NAI ISRAEL PET BLESSING AND CELEBRATION

On Sunday morning, November 3, at 11:30 a.m., the parking lot will be filled with creatures of all sizes, some furry, some not, as we bless the pets of Congregation B'nai Israel. The Kehilah kids will be busy making treats for all the pets during a special cooking session that morning. We hope that you will join us. We are hoping for sunny skies that morning.







(203) 336-1858 • www.cbibpt.org
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Rabbi
Rabbi
Rabbi Emeritus
Rabbi Emeritus
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Off: ----

Affiliates

Congregation B'nai Israel, founded in 1858, seeks to be a vibrant Reform synagogue dedicated to the perpetuation of Jewish life and values within the framework of contemporary American Judaism. We are a gateway to Judaism for all. The Congregation B'nai Israel Bulletin publishes monthly 11 times a year (except July). To submit an article, announcement or ad to the Bulletin, please contact Co-Editors, Amy Pressman at apressman@cbibpt.org or Lauren Tropp at ltropp@cbibpt.org. Submissions are due by the first day of the month preceding the publication month. We reserve the right to edit all submissions for length or style.

BANNED BOOK MEETINGS

Join us for our Banned and Challenged **Book Group Discussions this Year!**

This year, two of our Banned and Challenged Book Group discussions will be hosted and facilitated by two of our Tikkun Olam Committees, who have chosen banned and challenged books that reflect the important work of their committees. All are welcome to join these discussions; you do not need to be a member of these committees in order to participate in the book discussions. Participants are encouraged to read each book in advance of each meeting. Save the dates and happy reading!



The Perks of Being a Wallflower by Stephen Chbosky

#4 on the American Library Association's 2023 Most Banned and Challenged Book List Monday, December 2, 7:00-9:30 p.m

Facilitated by Annie Tranquilli-Bausher

A coming of age novel about Charlie, a freshman in high school who is a wallflower, shy, introspective, and very intelligent. He deals with the usual teen problems but also with the suicide of his best friend.



The Yellow Wallpaper, a short story by **Charlotte Perkins** Gilman Monday, January 13, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Facilitated by Marj Freeman, co-chair of the

Mental Health Committee

A woman is diagnosed with a "temporary nervous depression—a slight hysterical tendency" in the 1880s. She is confined to rest, alone in a nursery with peeling yellow wallpaper. She records her growing obsession with the "horrid" wallpaper in a journal, but her quest to unlock the wallpaper's mystery leads not to the truth, but into the darkest depths of madness.



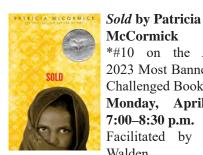
The Bluest Eve by Toni Morrison

*#6 on the American Library Association's 2023 Most Banned and Challenged Book List Monday, March 3, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Facilitated Jeff

Schwartz and Laura Stern, co-chairs of the CONECT committee

At the root of our interfaith work in CONECT is deepening our understanding of sexism and racism, along with working toward legal reforms and equality. The Bluest Eye by Toni Morrison is one of the most frequently banned books and a perfect one for us to debate. Should it be banned for its depiction of violence and incest? Or should it be read as a classic as are other novels by Toni Morrison, who later earned the Nobel Prize?



McCormick

*#10 on the ALA's 2023 Most Banned and Challenged Book List Monday, April 28, 7:00-8:30 p.m. Facilitated by Susan Walden

Thirteen-year-old Lakshmi leaves her poor mountain home in Nepal thinking that she is to work in the city as a maid only to find that she has been sold into the sex slave trade in India and that there is no hope of escape. Written in spare and evocative vignettes, this powerful novel renders a world that is as unimaginable as it is real, and a girl who not only survives, but triumphs.

UPCOMING EVENTS

B'nai Israel Pet Blessing and Celebration



Sunday, November 3 11:30 a.m.-noon B'nai Israel Parking Lot

Whether you recently adopted a new puppy or have been a proud pet parent for quite some time, we invite you, and your beloved pet(s), to join us for a celebration of all the ways that our animals bring us comfort and joy. This is an animalinclusive event - dogs, cats, lizards, and hamsters are all invited. All animals must be leashed and/or in appropriate cages at all times, and all animal attendees will

receive a special treat to commemorate In Jewish circles and communities the occasion. Kehilah parents & students — bring your pets at 11:30! Kehilah will end at 11:30 that morning. Kehilah parents and families, bring your pets at 11:30 for the blessing!

Save the Date!

Mark Your Calendars for our Fall 2024 **Rosh Chodesh Gatherings:** Tuesday, November 12 Thursday, December 12



Hebrew for "head of the month," Rosh Chodesh refers to the start of the new Hebrew month.

worldwide, Rosh Chodesh has long been considered a special holiday for women. Here at B'nai Israel, Rosh Chodesh is an opportunity for women from across the B'nai Israel community to join together learning, laughter, community building, and conversation. New and prospective members are welcome and encouraged to join. Whether you are a Rosh Chodesh "veteran" or have never attended a Rosh Chodesh gathering, we hope to see you at one of our upcoming events. All Rosh Chodesh gatherings take place at Congregation B'nai Israel, unless otherwise noted. Watch your email and Hashavua throughout the year for more information about each gathering!

Continued on page 11

NOVEMBER DONATIONS

(We greatly appreciate all donations to our special purpose funds.)

Rabbi Schultz Discretionary Fund Stewart & Dale Barcham, with thanks for the beautiful memorial service for my mother Ruth Barcham.

Brian & Linda Barlaam, in memory of Marcia Meyers, mother of Amy Moorin & Debbie Ross.

Joseph & Louise Bobrow, in appreciation for the support from our temple community during Louise's recent illness.

Joav & Lisa Burger, in memory of Arnold Portnoy, father of Sherry Portnoy.

Rhea Farbman, in memory of my son Owen and my brother Alan.

Stephen & Molli Hourihan, in honor of Rabbi Schultz's sabbatical.

Barbara Kauders, in memory of husband, Dr. James Kauders and mother, Anne Disken Cohen.

George & Alice Kelly, in loving memory of mother Ruth Zimroth.

Mark & Anne Kirsch, in memory of Nancy Rosenthal, wife of Jonathan Rosenthal.

Aleksey & Raisa Ledvich, in memory of our family members — mother Emilia Ledvich, grandmother Adel Dovolskaya & uncle Yuri Sotnik.

Michael & Amy Moorin, in

appreciation to Rabbi Schultz. **Ronald & Renee Noren**, in appreciation for Rabbi Evan's care and guidance at my mom's service.

Previn Patel, in memory of my dear and lifelong friends Dr. Robert Sheiman & brother Stuart Sheiman.

Jane Pressman, in loving memory of my husband, Jerry Pressman.

Gilbert & Barbara Saltman, in appreciation to Rabbi Schultz, his kindness is greatly appreciated.

Mark Schiff, with gratitude to Rabbi Evan Schultz.

Howard & Eileen Tolk, in loving memory of father, Samuel Tolk.

Peter & Gail Weinstein, in memory of our family members; Molly & Jack Sher, Edith & Stanley Weinstein, Susan Weinstein Shapiro & Jerome Sherman.

Rabbi Marion Discretionary Fund Alan & Karen Blau, with thanks for giving my great niece & nephew a tour of the synagogue and for being the wonderful Rabbi you are.

Joseph & Louise Bobrow, in appreciation for the support from our temple community during Louise's recent illness.

Joav & Lisa Burger, in memory of Emily Eastwood, mother of Carson (Robert) Berkowitz.

Stephen & Molli Hourihan, with gratitude for Rabbi Marion's commitment to train in mental health counseling.

Beth Lazar, in memory of Reuben Weisbein, husband of Lucille Weisbein. **Arlene Murphy,** with many thanks to Rabbi Sarah Marion.

Mark Schiff, in appreciation to Rabbi Sarah Marion.

Howard & Eileen Tolk, in loving memory of sister, Helen Cramer.

Cantor Scott Harris Discretionary Fund Stewart & Dale Barcham, with thanks for the beautiful memorial service for my mother, Ruth Barcham.

Robert & Carson Berkowitz, in appreciation for Cantor Harris leading the shiva service for Connie Simon.

Joav & Lisa Burger, in memory of Nancy Rosenthal, wife of Jonathan Rosenthal.

Randy Dorfman & Richard Post, in memory of my dear friend Marcia Tubin's sister, Karen Cramer.

Barbara Kauders, mazel tov to Michael & Linda Epstein on the marriage of their daughter Jill to Brian Rosenfeld.

Larry Levine & Alison Bonds, with appreciation for officiating at Carla Perlman Haba's Funeral.

Mark Schiff, with thanks to Cantor Scott Harris.

Rabbi James Prosnit Legacy Fund Michael & Andrea Rudolph, in memory of Marcia Meyers, mother of Amy Moorin, with condolences to Amy, Mike & family. Rabbi James Prosnit Discretionary Fund

Sheila Kaminsky, wishes for a happy birthday to Rabbi Prosnit.

Music Fund

Robert & Carson Berkowitz, in memory of Connie Simon, long time choir member.

William & Caren Schwartz, in memory of Marcia Tubin's sister, Karen Cramer.

Ellen Sheiman, in memory of Emily Eastwood, mother of Carson Berkowitz. **Laura Sydney,** in memory of Ruth Barcham, mother of Stew Barcham.

Enhancement Fund

Colette Carasso, in memory of beloved husband David S. Carasso & daughter Nicole F. Carasso.

Jerry & Dale Demner, in memory of Sidney Slive, uncle of Dale Demner, Anne Weinstein, aunt of Dale Demner.

Steven & Barbara Gersen, in memory of Carson Berkowitz's mother Emily Eastwood, beloved mother & grandmother.

Israel & Paula Hersh, in honor of Debbie Goodman's happy birthday!
Neil & Joanne Lippman, in memory of Marcia Meyers, mother of Debbie Ross & Amy Moorin. Our deepest sympathies to you and your families; in memory of Alice Siegel, mother of Jeff Siegel.
Luise Mann, in memory of Alice Siegel, mother of Jeff Siegel.
Steven & Julie Pressman, in memory

of Alice Siegel, mother of Jeff Siegel.

Howard & Eileen Tolk, in memory of mother, Justine Tolk.

Endowment Fund

Steven & Julie Pressman, in memory of Frances (Fran) Fried, mother of Lisa (Scott) Verchin.

Bonim Preschool Enrichment Fund Joel & Linda Bernstein, in memory of my father, Bernard Baron.

Sam & Cheryl Green, in memory of Emily Eastwood, mother of Carson Berkowitz.

NOVEMBER DONATIONS

(CONTINUED)

Mark & Anne Kirsch, in memory of Arnold Portnoy, father of Sherry Portnoy; in memory of Marcia Meyers, mother of Amy Moorin & Debbie Ross. Zach & Chloe Weinberg, in loving memory of Alice Siegel, mother of Jeff Siegel.

Religious School Scholarship Fund Arnold & Erica Cohen, in memory of Emily Eastwood, mother of Carson Berkowitz; Arnold Portnoy, father of Sherry Portnoy; in honor of the engagement of Robert & Carson Berkowitz's son Ted.

David & Alexa Cohen, in memory of Arnold Portnoy, father of Sherry Portnoy.

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Bill Derry & John Swing, in appreciation to Rabbi Schultz &

Rabbi Marion and the social action committee for the movie series we've enjoyed.

Steven & Jill Elbaum, in memory of Nancy Rosenthal, Alice Siegel, Marcia Meyers & Ruth Barcham.

Sherry Fogel, in memory of Marcia Meyers, mother of Debbie Ross; in memory of Debbie Goodman's beloved brother-in-law.

Mark & Anne Kirsch, in memory of Arnold Portnoy, father of Sherry Portnoy.

Ivan Maisel & Meg Murray, in memory of Nancy Rosenthal, wife of Jonathan. Rosenthal; Marcia Meyers, mother of Amy Moorin & Emily Eastwood, mother of Carson Berkowitz.

Jerry Saunders & Elaine Appelloff, in remembrance of the yahrzeits of Beth Shapiro Steele & Harris Shapiro. Arnold & Serena Sher, in memory of Marcia Meyers, beloved wife, mother and grandmother; in memory of Ellen Rost, beloved wife, mother and grandmother.

Laura Sydney, in honor of Stew & Dale Barcham's special birthdays.

Kesher Project Robert & Carson Berkowitz, in memory of Arnold Portnoy, father of Sherry Portnoy. The George Markley Chesed Fund Jeffry Ackerman & Andrea Goodman, in memory of Arnold Portnoy, father of Sherry Portnoy.

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David & Judith Pressler, in memory of Arnold Portnoy, father of Sherry Portnoy; in loving memory of Judith Pressler's family; Martha Salmon, sister; Dr. Esther Unger Farber, mother & Abraham Unger, grandfather.

Naomi Schaffer & Roger Jackson, in memory of Emily Eastwood, mother of Carson Berkowitz.

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At B'nai Israel we...

- ...TREAT each person in our community as created b'tzelem Elohim, in the image of the divine,
- ...DEVELOP, foster and nurture vibrant and meaningful Jewish lives in accordance with the values of our Torah and sacred texts,
- ...BUILD and deepen sacred relationships both within the synagogue community and the broader Greater Bridgeport community,
- ...ACT justly with a sacred obligation to tikkun olam (repair the world),
- ...FOSTER and deepen a love, commitment and connection to the land and people of Israel.

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For the friends, colleagues of Arnie's, staff and clergy of Congregation B'nai Israel,

The kindness and compassion you showed to Arnie throughout his long illness and to us following his death have been deeply touching. We truly appreciate the countless ways in which people have expressed their sympathy. Your cards, letters with personal memories, calls, sweet treats, meals, flowers, visits, and generous donations — we are grateful for each and every one. We thank you all for your thoughtfulness.

With warmth and appreciation, Serena and family

KESHER CORNER

It has been one year since the Lee and Lester Kesher Drama Club was created and one year since the Hamas attack on Israel. And it's challenging to write about joy in the midst of terror and violence. I listened to Rabbi Marion's recent sermon and read her writing in the last newsletter about "When a Wedding and a Funeral Cross the Road". It helped me understand how important it is for us to move on, to take the next step as we share the feelings we have for both the joy and the violence. And I thank you so much Rabbi Marion because you have helped me work intently with our drama

club and focus on bringing joy to our audiences as they sing along with us and increase their joy.

On October 10 our drama club presented the show, "Our Beautiful World" written by Sherry Portnoy. It was a spectacular performance at Mozaic Senior Life. The room was filled with many residents as well as friends that came to support us. We knew our roles so well and sang out loud leading the audience in favorites like "Over the Rainbow", "Under the Sea", "Consider Yourself". Our final song "Can You Feel the Love Tonight?"

brought us all together as one as we joyously felt the love in the room. The joy was palpable.

Please spread the word about The Kesher Project and like us on Facebook. Remember we're inclusive and honor diversity. We're a very SPECIAL group.

Please contact me with any questions or if you would like to volunteer.

rheasmusic@icloud.com kesherdramaclub@gmail.com

Here are some photos from the October 10 performance.













"It's a Wonderful Life" Film Stewart and Donna Reed? **Screening**

Special B'nai Israel Holiday Time Film Program Asks: "So, What's Jewish About It's a Wonderful Life?"



Sunday, November 24 2:00 – 5:00 p.m. Congregation B'nai Israel

times How many have you seen the 78year-old Hollywood classic, It's a Wonderful

Life? Have you ever considered what's Jewish about this memorable film, popular at Christmastime, starring Jimmy

The answer — more than you might first think. For starters, Philip Van Doren Stern, author of the short story the screenplay was based on, was a Jewish writer who grew up in New Jersey.

The influence of Judaic values and teachings in this iconic piece of American cinema are the focus of a special film screening and panel discussion set for Sunday, Nov. 24 at 2:00 p.m. at Congregation B'nai Israel. B'nai Israel member Jon Sonneborn, a film historian and frequent film lecturer, and Rabbi Sarah Marion, who grew up watching it with her family on TV every year, will share their views following the screening.

It's a Wonderful Life is listed by The American Film Institute as one of the best 100 films ever made. See it again now, through a different lens. Please RSVP to

Chris Rocha at crocha@cbibpt.org so we have enough seating for everyone.

Jewish Understandings of Gratitude

Monday, November 25 7:00 – 8:15 p.m. Congregation B'nai Israel

Prepare for Thanksgiving with Rabbi Schultz as we explore Jewish understandings of gratitude.

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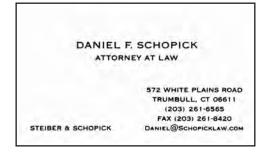


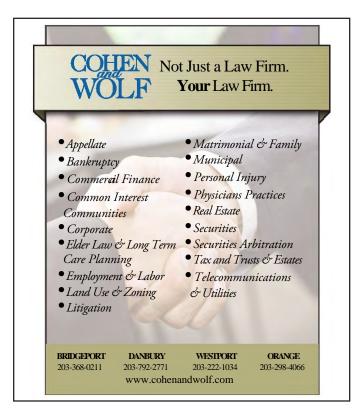


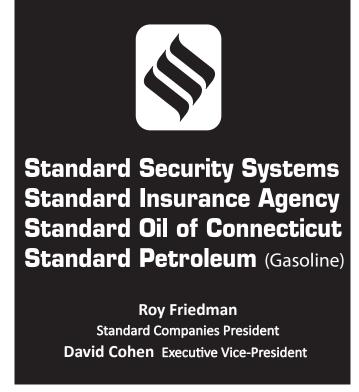












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FUN YOGA & JEWISH MEDITATION & WELLNESS - PUTTING THE OM IN SHALOM

By AL Dressler, Yoga Instructor, & Member of Mental Health Awareness Team

"Dripping water hollows out stone, not through force but through persistence." — Ovid

Why make yoga and meditation an integral part of your daily habits? It is essential today for your physical, mental, and spiritual health. Yoga and meditation, practiced daily, along with healthy eating and drinking and positive content consumption (what you read and watch on screens), will develop a peaceful mind and create balance and improved wellness in your personal life and relationships.

Yoga's beginnings date back more than 5,000 years. The goal of yoga is to bring people to the highest state of advancement physically, mentally, and spiritually. It is an ancient time-tested saying or chanting the words *Om* or *Shalom* is a form of meditation.

In Kabbalah, the "third eye" refers to a connection between the physical and spiritual worlds. The tefillin is said to channel the third eye, which is why the Torah instructs wearing it between the eyes. In Kundalini Yoga, the "third eye," or *Ajna chakra*, is a focus point and is associated with clarity, wisdom, and intuition and is also between the eyes.

In our class, we integrate multiple forms of yoga including laughing yoga because "laughter is the best medicine," energy work, Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) tapping, visualizations, self-acupressure points, massage, guided meditations and mantras. Most of the mantras we use in class are attributed

mind, and spirit. Guided meditation is always at the end of class and creates a lasting relaxation effect.

Meditation and yoga can be learned at any age. My father had Parkinson's in his late 70s, and he learned meditation that helped him with the challenges to his health. Also, a woman in her early 20s in my class at the University of Bridgeport had anxiety from her schoolwork. It was her first yoga class and at the end of our class, she said was able to feel like herself again after releasing all her stress. Now she practices daily.

My yoga journey started in the spring of 1994 after a traumatic car accident with a near death experience. Now I teach classes at University of Bridgeport and on Zoom for the Congregation B'nai

"The practice of yoga increases strength, flexibility, endurance, balance, and coordination."

science. The practice of yoga increases strength, flexibility, endurance, balance, and coordination. It releases stress and muscle tension and enhances one's ability to concentrate. It brings suppleness to the spine and joints, stimulates the glands, relaxes the nervous centers, and improves the digestive and eliminative powers of the body. It is never fatiguing, but always fresh and exhilarating. Those who practice yoga regularly will improve in health and vitality.

There are many similarities between yoga and Jewish meditation. The word *Shalom* includes an identical "Om" sound that is central to meditation. In Sanskrit, the meaning of *Om* is "that which sustains everything," and the meaning of *Shalom* is "Peace and Wholeness." Internally

to BK Sister Shivani and Master Co. epeating a mantra can help you focus, achieve a positive mood, and reduce stress and anxiety.

We also use "breath of fire" and gratitude techniques. Breathing exercises energize and calm the body. Gratitude exercises will remind you of times you felt grateful and radiate those feelings of love to your heart. Gratitude will always balance low energy emotions like fear and anger.

During Kabbalah guided meditations we focus on symbols such as the Kabbalah "Tree of Life," "Hamsa," "18," and the "Star of David" and visualize a bright starburst light flowing throughout the body, eliminating tension and pain and enlightening the body,

Israel. My first teacher was Addy Osuch at the JCC; she made her class fun in order to make it a daily practice. Addy would always say,

A happy heart doeth like good medicine but a brittle spirit drieth the bones. — Proverbs 17.22

If you are interested in taking our Zoom class on Wednesdays from 10:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m., you do not need to show yourself on video or audio in class to enjoy a session in the privacy of your own home. The zoom link is listed in our weekly Hashavua emails and here...

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/95179671304 ?pwd=T1VIVUtZeWdZSDcweHJPMT FpRnN2dz09.

Om & Shalom



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Join us to support the innocent civilians and families being held in Gaza. We meet each week at the Fairfield Theater Company, (FTC), located on the northbound side of the Fairfield Train Station at 70 Sanford Street. Kids and dogs welcome.

If you have signs, feel free to bring them too!