



Congregation
B'nai Torah

THE MEGILLA

CONGREGATION B'NAI TORAH'S NEWSLETTER



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

"The achievements of an organization are the results of the combined effort of each individual" - Vince Lombardi

Over the years, I have served the synagogue in many capacities; volunteer, board member and even employee. The question I have often heard from those involved in B'nai Torah is, "why is it always the same people?" I have learned through the years that even though everyone believes in the continuation of the Jewish people, not everyone agrees on the best course of action to make this happen. People are energized when talking about change or collaboration on programming and events, but when the work needs to be done, many look towards someone else to handle it.

WHAT'S NEW?

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RABBI COLIN; HONORARY DOCTOR OF DIVINITY



Rabbi Colin recently received an honorary Doctor of Divinity (DD) degree from the Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS) at a Convocation ceremony. The degrees were given to rabbis who have served the Conservative movement and the Jewish people with distinction for over twenty-five years; celebrating their many years of outstanding achievements and broad, deep impact.

The event was held at JTS in New York City and the participants were able to celebrate together in a transformed building with a new atrium and library. Chancellor Shuly Rubin Schwartz bestowed the degrees on behalf of the Board of Trustees in recognition of the rabbis' service and sacred work. She described her own life as the daughter, wife and mother of rabbis, reflecting on the rabbinical evolution process and rabbis' abilities to transform lives. Presenters thoughtfully conveyed the meaning of being a rabbi.

Tikkun olam - repairing the world holds a special place in Rabbi Colin's life and he is particularly dedicated to helping serve the hungry and homeless. He serves both the Jewish and greater community with purpose and leadership and we congratulate him on this impressive milestone and momentous occasion. **YASHER KOACH!**



PRESIDENT CONTINUED

Continued from page 1

“Fear has two meanings - Forget Everything and Run or Face Everything and Rise. The choice is yours” - Sayings

Our congregation is a dynamic organization that must change and grow along with our community's wants and needs, but it is up to you to contribute to directing its course. We may not all agree on specific policies or how to achieve particular goals, but we need to unite on one specific purpose; the continuation and growth of the Conservative Jewish Movement in Upper Fairfield County.

“The secret of change is to focus all of your energy not on fighting the old, but on building the new” -Socrates

The achievements and success of any organization depend on all its members and what each can do individually. I am not asking but begging that you attempt to get more active in our upcoming new community.

Each member carries part of the collective voice and input that will help the ‘New Shul’ for the next generation. If you do not see what you are looking for, it is time to get involved and help make your vision a reality. NOW is the time to get involved, to be a voice in your future. It’s your chance to make a difference.

I truly understand how difficult this change will be. I grew up at B’nai Torah; I know no other synagogue life. Yes, my heart breaks a little every time I think about leaving 5700 Main Street, the only House of G-d that I have studied and worshiped at. But, as I told my fellow presidents a few months back, it is similar to when my parents sold my childhood home. I knew I could no longer go back to the physical building. However, I still had all the beautiful memories made in that location, and some tokens that meant a lot to me even made their way to my current home. However, most significantly, the fantastic people who helped create those beautiful memories would still be around and

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PRESIDENT CONTINUED

Continued from 2

continue to help me create new ones.

“We will fail when we fail to try” – Rosa Parks

Thank you for allowing me to continue to serve you, Congregation B’nai Torah, to assist in bringing you to a new home; a place of warmth and community, where we will all make new friends and new memories.

The people I have met and engaged with to get us to the “finish line” have worked tirelessly to make the

Consolidation a positive experience for both communities. I am proud of what Congregation B’nai Torah has accomplished, but I look forward to what we can and will do as a new community to improve our Jewish Life moving into the future.

Shalom,
Beth Schwartz
Co-President 2013/14, 2014/15, 2015/16, 2022/23



SILVER SCREEN SCHMOOZE

Submitted by Linda Shames, co-President

On Wednesday, November 30, B’nai Torah and Beth El co-sponsored an event entitled “Silver Screen Schmooze” - an appetizing, enlightening and entertaining evening, held at Beth El Fairfield. We were pleased to see members of B’nai Torah and Beth El participating in this event.

This was the kick off event for an ongoing series where films will be watched independently. We will then gather for film discussions, based on different themes. Special thanks to Linda Schulman, Deb Berkowitz and Paul Lipof (BE) for coordinating this event with Ofek Moscovich. More details to follow.

Ofek Moscovich, Federation Israeli Emissary, prepared his own hummus recipe and was on hand to provide insights into “real” hummus preparation, along with a lovely Israeli-style hummus tasting table ... all created by him.

Here’s Ofek, wearing his cleverly enhanced HUMass sweatshirt.

We then watched a film entitled *Hummus the Movie*. This documentary, produced in 2015, shows how people from a wide variety of backgrounds have been brought together by, of all things, hummus!





B'NAI TORAH AND BETH EL BOOK CLUB



“Enjoying A Good Read – While Having Coffee With Friends”

Sunday, October 21 the B'nai Torah social hall was buzzing with conversation as BT hosted the combined B'nai Torah and Beth El Book Club. The book discussed was *My Father's Paradise, A Son's Search for His Family's Past* by Ariel Sabar. We spent some time discussing the book, but were so much more engrossed in the family saga presented by Aviva Sharbin. Aviva's family's story was unlike that of Ariel Sabar, but just, if not more, fascinating. Thanks Aviva for making this a special session!

The collaborative book group enjoyed a spirited discussion about the next selection *Woman*

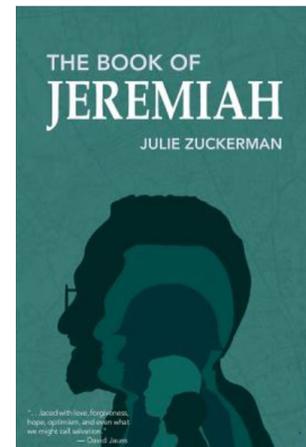


on *Fire* by Lisa Barr on Sunday, December 11.

CBE member Deborah Zuckerman's daughter Julie's book *The Book of Jeremiah* will be discussed in a zoom meeting on Sunday, January 29. Julie, the author, who lives in Israel will be present (on zoom) for this meeting. The novel spans eight decades and is interwoven with the Jewish experience of the 20th century.

In March, *The Last Rose of Shanghai* by Weina Dai Randel will be discussed.

For information on these books or questions on the book group, please contact Linda Schulman at: lbts.schulman@gmail.com



VALLEY REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT PROJECT

B'nai Torah is working with Valley Refugee Resettlement Project (VRRP) to resettle refugees, hopefully very soon. While enormous progress has been made towards our goals in money raising and volunteer recruitment, there is, as always, much still to

do! We hope to see you join us in whatever way you can. Contact - Mara Brosler (mbrosler15@gmail.com) or Laurie Raccuia (laurie.raccuia@gmail.com) - for more information

Valley Refugee Resettlement Project (VRRP) is partnering with IRIS (Integrated Refugee and Immigrant Services) of New Haven to resettle a refugee family in the Valley area. We need your help!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

To help:

- Teach the family about American Culture
- Drive family members to appointments
- Set up and furnishing the apartment
- Find employment
- Create and maintain calendars
- Schedule volunteers, appointments and transportation
- Arrange medical care appointments
- Connect with educational programs



The Huntington Congregational Church

VALLEY REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT PROJECT (VRRP)

Sign up or donate today at www.huntingtonucc.org

For more information: Richard Knoll 203-888-1101



Submitted by Eli Hayden



Gottlieb has had an amazing year. We have had So many fun programs, events, and friends made. Our most recent event was with Adirah BBG, it was our very fun Hanukkah meeting. We had all sorts of activities like shark tank, Jewish

scategorys, and most importantly LATKES!! Along with those we had a toy drive where we donated lots of new toys to the Yale Toy Closet where they are given to kids in the hospital. We cannot wait to see everyone after spring break at our first event of the year, GAME NIGHT! It will be on January 11 from 6:30-8:30 more information will come soon.



CARDS SENT BY RABBI COLIN AND THE CONGREGATION

- Judith Rudnick on the passing of husband Elliott Rudnick
- Robin (Barry) Magilnick on the passing of mother Janet Berman
- Nancy (Mel) Mazer on the passing of sister Linda Spevack
- Bruno Goldschmidt on the passing of wife Eileen Goldschmidt
- Martin (Kathleen) Goldschmidt on the passing of mother Eileen
- Elaine Bader on the passing of husband Ed Bader
- Beth (Ya'acov) Tepper on the passing of father Ed Bader
- Larry Hillman on passing of mother Lorraine Hillman



THE CENTER FOR FAMILY JUSTICE



A huge thank you to all those who donated so generously to our gift card collection for The Center for Family Justice in Bridgeport. This organization provides free, confidential, bilingual crisis services for people impacted by domestic violence, sexual violence and child abuse to restore and rebuild their lives. Our efforts are most appreciated. For additional information, please contact: www.centerforfamilyjustice.org



MENORAH LIGHTING

Menorah Lighting with Trumbull Interfaith Council at Congregation B'nai Torah

On Wednesday, December 21, we had an outdoor gathering at B'nai Torah for the lighting of our 4th Hanukkah candle. We were honored to welcome members of the Trumbull Interfaith Council, along with members of Congregation B'nai Torah and Congregation Beth El Fairfield. Joining us from the TIC was Carole Fanslow (TIC chairperson), Reverend Kate McKey-Dumar (Priest of the Trinity Episcopal Church) and Peggy Meehai (representing St. John the Baptiste Byzantine Catholic Church).



Rabbi Colin provided a warm and welcoming introduction, after which we said the prayers, lit the candles, and sang traditional Hanukkah songs.

Despite the frigid temperature that evening, a good time was had by all!

Submitted by Linda Shames





B'NAI MITZVAH

Mazel Tov
מזל טוב



Sabrina is the daughter of Sharon and Ariel Shimonov of Trumbull. She is the older sister to Evan and the granddaughter to Elena Eisdorfer and Zulai Shimonov, and the great-granddaughter to Dora Weinberger.

Sabrina began her education at Chabad of Northeast Queens

Nursery School. As a seventh-grade student at Hillcrest Middle School in Trumbull, Sabrina works incredibly hard and has achieved High Honors. She plays the violin in the school orchestra.

She takes dance lessons, loves music, cooking, and baking.

Sabrina Shiminov
March 3-4



Tevi is currently a seventh grader at Madison Middle School, where he has earned his place on the honor roll, with distinction, throughout his whole middle school journey, thus far.

Both artistic and athletic, Tevi is a person of many talents. Tevi has been a cross-country

champion at Madison, placing in the top 100 runners at the State championship races, and in the top three

runners on his team. He has recently set his sights on basketball, but has been a force in karate, and loves to do anything active, including snowboarding, paddle boarding, soccer, and Frisbee-related sports. In terms of the arts, Tevi also has had his writing showcased, and is an amazing musician, currently learning both the trumpet and the drums.

Tevi is charity-minded and has served at a food pantry, LaChat farm, does the Crop walk and the Walk to end Homelessness, and even helped his father create "WALs" (Want Less/Give More) which collected and distributed personal care items to hundreds of homes in need this year. He is also very concerned about the environment and recently began serving on the Sustainable Trumbull youth group in order to tackle sustainable practices in his school.

Tevi Lederfeind
March 10-11



NEWS FROM THE NURSERY SCHOOL

Submitted by Joan Watnick, Director

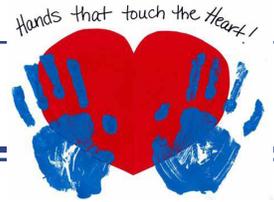
Hanukkah was great fun at B'nai Torah Nursery School. Rabbi Colin was our Hanukkah party special guest. The children enjoyed how many versions of the dreidel song Rabbi Colin could come up with when challenged. We ate latkes, applesauce, our homemade Hanukkah cookies, and chocolate gelt. The many games we played included pin the flame on the menorah, digging for dreidels in the sand table, Hanukkah bingo, and a Hanukkah obstacle course. Thank you to all who contributed to our Hanukkah toy drive!



Like our Facebook page to see all the fun things we are doing! facebook.com/BTNSTrumbull



A NOTE FROM JOAN WATNICK



It has been my pleasure to work at B'nai Torah Nursery School in some capacity for 33 years and as the director of the school for 21 of those years. It has been a privilege to get to know so many children and their families and participate in the critical growth and development that occurs in the preschool years as well as the emotional trials and vulnerabilities of young families.

Over the decades it has been an honor to work with my incredible mentors Carole Rubin and Hermine Sands, my talented and devoted colleagues and volunteers, our loyal friend Rabbi Colin, and a most helpful

support staff in Deno and Robin.

To the Congregation, thank you for creating my dream school, sending your children to us, for volunteering, for making donations, and for being a warm and friendly presence in the building; always smiling and kvelling when you saw the cute little people I might bring into the kitchen or the sanctuary. It never went unnoticed and always made a difference.

A synagogue is the perfect setting for a preschool and I think that has been especially true of B'nai Torah.

I am announcing my retirement effective June 30.

With my gratitude and affection,
Joan



TRUMBULL COMMUNITY THANKSGIVING SERVICE

On Sunday, November 20, B'nai Torah participated once again in Trumbull's annual interfaith community service, sponsored by the Trumbull Interfaith Council. This year's service was held at St. John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Church. Rabbi Colin was part of a group of local clergy, leading us in prayer and reflection. The church's Friar, Gregory Lozinskyy, a native of Ukraine, offered some deeply moving words, highlighting the significance of being thankful, especially now, during these difficult times. Members of B'nai Torah joined congregants from the host and other local houses of worship, making this a warm, welcoming and meaningful gathering for all.

Submitted by Linda Shames, Co-President



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GOOD NEWS FROM ISRAEL

Submitted by Paul Antell



The following are only some of the highlights of the GOOD NEWS FROM ISRAEL.

MEDICAL ACHIEVEMENTS

Computer-designed anti-cancer antibodies. Israel's Bar-Ilan Prof. Yanay Ofra has invented antibodies to attack tumors using computers and then produced them from amino acids in a process akin to 3D printing. His startup Biologic Design created Aulos Bioscience which is conducting human trials of AU-007 in Australia.

Ultrasound and bubbles can destroy tumors. Tel Aviv University researchers have used a combination of low-frequency ultrasound and injected nanobubbles to cause tumors to explode. Lab tests focused only on the area of the tumor, which avoids damage to healthy tissues. It could be used to treat tumors deep inside the body.

Risk of heart failure detected. The HearO app from Israel's Cordio Medical achieved an 82% success rate in a study of 180 patients at 10 Israeli clinics. The app detected Congestive Heart Failure (CHF) an average of 18 days before it occurred, using algorithms and previously recorded speech.

US approval for medical radiation shielding. Israel's Radiation Medical has received US FDA clearance for its Radiation Shielding System. The system protects medical staff in labs using fluoroscopy machines - a leading source of occupational ionizing radiation exposure for healthcare providers.

Your personal clinic at home. Israel's TytoCare has launched its Home Smart Clinic. It conducts remote physical exams using AI-powered guidance and diagnostic support. The virtual clinic includes the remote handheld diagnostic device plus Tyto Insights, Tyto Engagement Labs, plus all necessary support.

Bacteria or virus – Tucson hospital will know. Arizona's Tucson ER & Hospital has adopted the bacteria vs virus test from Israel's MeMed. The test distinguishes viral from bacterial infection within 15 minutes and

avoids wasting antibiotics on a virus.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Removing CO2 together. Israel's Carbonade turns greenhouse gas carbon dioxide into plastic, building materials and even detergent. But it doesn't capture the gas. However, Israel's RepAir does. So, it's handy that RepAir's founder Yehuda Borenstein is also chairman of Carbonade!

Solar windows. Scientists at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (HUJ) are using the mineral perovskite to coat solar panels and create transparent windows that generate electricity. It has led to two HUJ startups, Trans/Sol and SOLRA.

Making bricks out of salt. Salt is a polluting waste product from industry and desalination. Now scientists at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem have converted salt into bricks that are many times stronger than cement. Also, making standard bricks generates huge amounts of CO2, whereas salt bricks produce almost none.

No-cow yogurt. Israel's Wilk has announced the successful development of the world's first yogurt developed with cell-cultured milk fat. The concept product validates Wilk's technology to produce cell-cultured products that are chemically identical, and have identical taste, to their cow-milk equivalents.

→ **Do you want to stay up to date on what's happening in Israel?** You may want to subscribe to the free weekly newsletter: verygoodnewsisrael.blogspot.com. This provides an update on the latest medical news, science and technology, as well as the economy and business.



Shalom, dear friends,

It is hard to believe that our secular year is coming to an end! As we reach this three-month mark since we opened our doors, in moments of (relative) quiet, I can reflect on all that our team has accomplished since embarking on our “Learning Adventure!” Here are some highlights:

*Our teachers are committed, caring and positive influences on our young learners. Just going from classroom to classroom, I have the honor of seeing adults who not only teach so our kids can learn, but through their own curiosity and passion about Jewish education, continue to learn so that they can teach!

*Our approach to tefillah has opened doors to deeper understanding of prayer. Through havdallah at our opening on Sundays, special holiday observances, our Simchat Torah session, mindful listening to one another during prayer in the sanctuary and more, it is my hope that our students are not just learning the language of prayer but are making meaning out of our rich tradition that will continue throughout their lives. I would be remiss if I didn’t mention the joy that Cantor Max has brought to us all and the modern and traditional music he brings to enhance the prayer experience. He will be missed!

*Our students, after being evaluated, are placed in Hebrew classes according to their achievement level. We continually reassess their progress, adjust as needed and can provide small group enrichment, thanks to our awesome Morah Chaya (Valerie Newman) who teaches through games and activities and of course our awesome madrichim!

*Chuggim, our elective classes, have been a resounding success! Whether creating beautiful dishes for Hanukkah in art class, or practicing for a play, cooking matza ball soup and several more, our kids got to choose their class and gained a little extra Jewish culture!

*For six Sundays in November and December our students

Submitted by Jodi Harris, Director

participated in weekly mitzvot. Some baked cookies for Operation Hope, others created holiday cards for our friends at JSS. We’ve collected toiletries and books and will finish up our last Sunday by creating blankets for an animal shelter! Thank you to our parents for supporting our collections and to our kids who are learning these acts of kindness, big and small, all contribute tikkun olam, repairing our little portion of the world.

*I would like to take this moment to thank all our teachers, our madrichim, our parents, the professional staff in our synagogue offices and all of you for supporting this amazing fledgling school. Our sacred task of educating our students, of giving them deep and meaningful experiences would be impossible without this amazing team effort! A huge shoutout to our Rabbi Colin and Rabbi Josh, how lucky are we to have the breadth and depth of their knowledge! And a special thank-you to Beth Tepper, her warmth and great humor and willingness to assist at every turn makes Kulanu life lots of fun!

And now a shameless plug! Want to see more of Kulanu? Like and follow us: Kulanu JLA | Facebook

We hope you had a Happy Hanukkah and continue to share much light and warmth with family and friends!

L’Shalom,
Jodi Harris, Director of Jewish Learning



Morah Laura getting ready for the K-2nd grade level Shabbat service!



Students enjoying their arts and crafts with Rabbi Amanda



nOURish BRIDGEPORT VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Food Pantry - Monday & Wednesdays

- o Shift 1 - 10:30 to 2:00 PM - help needed organizing/preparing food and diapers for distribution
- o Shift 2 - 2:00 to 6:00 PM - help needed organizing /distributing food and diapers for distribution

Feel The Warmth Meals - To- Go - Thursdays

- o Shift 1 - 3:00 to 5:00 PM - assist with meal preparation in the kitchen
- o Shift 2 - 5:00 to 7:00 PM - meet at 2200 North Ave and car pool to the Harrison Apartments, 651 State Street (on the corner of Park Ave. and State Street in Bridgeport)



HIGH HOLIDAY THANK YOU

Yasher koach to all those who helped to make our holidays so special.

Torah & haftarah readers:

Madeleine Cahn, Beverly Fein, Emelia Hevenstone, Larry Hillman, Fred Knopf, Jeff Levi, Laura Petshaft, Olivia Petshaft, Lou Rosen, Ari Schultz, Mark Shames, Sandy Soson, Maddie Weinstein, Rick Weinstein and Jay Wendt

Shofar Blowers (Baalei Tekiah):

Steven Chetcuti , Josh Knopf and Mark Shames

Ushers/Gabbais:

Penny Volpe Chetcuti, Henry Davidson, Laura Petshaft and Linda Shames

Silver Polishing:

Irwin Peck, Judy Wenten and Jennifer Rodin

Torah Covers Changed:

Jeff Zakim and family

High Holiday Flower Thank You:

The BT Board for the flowers donated for the Rosh Hashanah Bima, created by Laura Petshaft. Yom Kippur flowers were donated by Rosalind Friedman, in memory of her husband Arthur and his parents, Frieda and Herman Friedman and her parents, Marion and Charles Davis, and by Vivian and Mitchell Arron and family, in memory of Vivian's parents, Morris and Tillie Marks.

High Holiday Security Thank You:

Thanks to all who helped Linda Shames with internal security, including door monitoring, registration and serving as sanctuary greeters: Gale Antell, Julia Bernstein, Amy Broad, Penny Chetcuti, Steven Chetcuti, Doug Fink, Susan Fink, Jeff Klein, Jeff Levi, Jessica Preman, Linda Schulman, Mindy Schultz and Jaime Smolin.



DONATIONS

Cornerstone Building Fund

In memory of Elisa Farber, from Nancy Wilkins

In memory of Eileen Goldschmidt, from Jeffrey and Charlotte Denenberg

In memory of Pearl Searle, from Josh and Wendy Searle

In memory of Roz Gottlieb, from Jeffrey and Charlotte Denenberg

In memory of Emilian Eisdorfer and Bernat Weinberger, from Sharon Shiminov

In memory of Bernard (Buddy) Hillman,
from Phil and Hilda Neuman

In Memory of Elliott Rudnick, from Manny
and Gail Cohen, Daniel & Karen Collins,
Christopher E. Crane, Jeffrey and Charlotte
Denenberg, Douglas Epstein, Michael Epstein,
Robert Epstein, Barry and Lois Fagan, Ed and
Ginger Speicher

In memory of Linda Spevack, sister of Nancy
Mazer, from Bob and Gail Ginsberg, Wallace
Zuckerman

In memory of Janet Berman, mother of
Robin Magilnick, from Jeffrey and Charlotte
Denenberg, David and Rabbi Susan Elkodsi,
Irwin and Beverly Peck, the Tischler family,
Lou and Susan Tuzman, Wendy Wernick

To our B'nai Torah family in appreciation of
the support our family received when my mom
passed, from Robin and Barry Magilnick and
family

Yahrzeit of Solomon Landau, from Irma
Wigder

Yahrzeit from Bill Berkowitz

Yahrzeit of Esther Cogan, from Manny and
Gail Cohen

Yahrzeit of Anna Weiss, from Jane Smiley

Yahrzeit of Daniel Magoon, from Joseph and
Mary Steinfeld

Yahrzeit of Frances Cohen, from Manny and
Gail Cohen

Yahrzeits of Blanche Axelrod and Isadore N.
Alxelrod, from Lou and Susan Tuzman

In honor of Rabbi Colin Brodie for receiving
an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from
The Jewish Theological Seminary, from Randy
Schulman

Nursery School Enrichment Fund

In memory of Sherry Mink Shepro on her
first yahrzeit, from Deb Berkowitz

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

In memory of Elliott Rudnick, from Eileen
Kaplin, Jeff and Judy Zakim

In memory of Janet Berman, mother of
Robin Magilnick, from Ellie Berger, Jon and
Linda Schulman

In honor of Rabbi Colin Brodie for receiving
an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from
The Jewish Theological Seminary. Mazal tov
Rabbi Brodie! from Gary and Iris Fineberg,
Arin and Dayna Hayden, Lou and Susan
Tuzman Robert and Debbie Velthuizen

Thank you to Rabbi Colin for the funeral and
Beverly Fein for the shiva of Buddy Hillman,
from Lorraine, Larry, Debbie and Richard
Hillman

Ritual Fund

In memory of Elliott Rudnick, from Henry
Davidson, Jon and Linda Schulman

The Ethel and Ed Elson Memorial Shiva Meal Fund

In memory of Elliott Rudnick, from Paul and
Gale Antell, Lisa and Michael Lichtenberg ,
The Wendt Family

In memory of Janet Berman, mother of
Robin Magilnick, from Paul and Gale Antell

In memory of Buddy Hillman, from Seema
Tepper

In memory of Eileen Goldschmidt, from
Frank and Amanda Wendt



If you would like to make a donation to one of our funds for a simcha or memorial, you
may easily do so through your Shul Cloud account or please send:

Congregation B'nai Torah
5700 Main Street
Trumbull, CT 06611
Attention: Donations

(Please include a note with the fund and reason.)