

Bulletin

Congregation Beth El, Norwalk
Jan.–Feb. 2023 // Tevat–Shevat 5783



Rabbi's Table



Spotlight on YOU

Rabbi Ita Paskind

In almost 13 years of “rabbi’ing”, I’ve come to understand that communities have a really amazing resource that often lies untapped. It’s not the money, the building, the professionals—we know and use those well. It’s the members. It’s YOU.

Community building is about coming together and sharing experiences, but it’s also about really getting to know one another. It’s about learning to trust each other, to rely on each other when we need, to cherish each other. That’s how a community becomes what we say our shul is: our Beth El Family.

Starting with this newly revamped Bulletin, we’ll be shining the spotlight on Beth El members.* We hope you’ll enjoy learning about fellow congregants—some newer, some veteran—and we hope this spotlight will become a vehicle for more connection. When given permission, we’ll include the featured congregant’s email address. If you see a connection or just want to say “Welcome!” or “Hi!”, you should.

* If YOU would like to be featured in a Bulletin Spotlight, please let the office know.

Contact the office to be
featured



A MESSAGE FROM THE

President



The Bulletin: A New Look!

Keith Satter

I am delighted to introduce you to the new look for our Beth El Bulletin. This new look came about as a result of data gathered that showed a high open rate, 61%, for our online Bulletin as well as comments we heard from congregants who wanted to be able to look at the Bulletin on their phone or other electronic device.

With that in mind, we asked our members what they read each month in the Bulletin and found they were looking for personal connections and a little more in-depth information about events, past and future, as well as more than they could gather from our weekly e-blasts. Rabbi and I are not off the hooks for our columns nor would we ignore the generous contributions list. However, people also wanted to read about other congregants and see pictures of the nursery school and religious school children.

So, we formed a small committee to start the process of replacing our old Bulletin format with this new one. We called upon Lisa Weinberger and her company MGD, who designed our new logo, to help us out. Thank you to Barrett Lester, Lauren Kessler, Jody Dietch and Rabbi Paskind for joining our committee and for your ideas.

Please keep in mind that this is a work in progress which will be driven by comments from you. Like any new format, please give all of us time to get used to this look. We are very excited about the potential reach of the new Bulletin. Thanks for reading.

**Contact me with
feedback!**



Nitzan Nursery School

Spotlight On



NEW Member Lauren Shapiro

Rabbi Paskind (RP) interviews Lauren Shapiro (LS)

RP: Tell me who's in your family.

LS: *My 3 sons, Jeremy Pember (23), Blake Pember (20), and Derek Pember (16)*

RP: When did you join CBE?

LS: *End of August 2022*

RP: What made you want to join?

LS: *I had attended a few services when my son Derek (a Carmel Academy grad) was on the Bar Mitzvah circuit, and I liked the service. We moved to the area in 2020, so we didn't do much Jewishly. Now that the pandemic has resolved somewhat, I wanted the opportunity for a Jewish community.*

RP: What is the one thing you'd like congregants to know about you?

LS: *I'm an associate professor at John Jay College in the Security, Fire, Emergency Management department. I do research in a number of fields, including child*

maltreatment. My most recent book is called *Cyber Predators and Their Prey*, which offers strategies to parents to better protect themselves and their children. I've also been an advocate for parents of children with special needs.

RP: Do you have any special talents?

LS: I'm an artist. I have painted with oil pastels, and currently I'm into photography. I also love horses—I once owned a horse, and I've trained them. My sons all learned how to ride. My older son, Jeremy, is going to be a vet, specializing in (you guessed it) horses.

RP: What's your favorite tradition?

LS: I like Rosh HaShanah the best. I might be a little biased, because it often falls around my birthday. I just like when the family gets together—the challah and honey, the special treats, the 7-layer chocolate cake! It's the food and the family.

Kesher Beth El Religious School



1. Ellen Allard Concert with students
2. Students learn about Israel with Ofek, our Sheliach

3. A Hanukkah "Shpiel" performed by students (Hanukkah Wars: The Jews Strike Back)
 4. Ellen Allard Concert with students
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Spotlight On



Veteran Members Arlene & Stu Baden

Rabbi Paskind (RP) interviews veteran members Arlene (AB) and Stu Baden (SB)

RP: Who's in your family?

AB: *Our children: Louis Baden and Jordana & Michael Bales; and our granddaughters Ava (17) and Lila (14) Bales*

RP: When did you join Congregation Beth El?

SB: 1988

RP: Why did you join?

SB: *Saying Kaddish for my father. Years before he died, he looked at me, pointed a finger, and said "say Kaddish for me", and I never forgot that. After he died, I came on a daily basis into the shul.*

AB: *Beth El has become a second family to us, and that's what keeps us here.*

RP: What is your most memorable moment at CBE?

AB: *going to morning minyan. The warmth of the people, especially Ruth Bader, of blessed memory*

SB: *My friendships with Bill Grossman z"l and Marty Wolf z"l, and my renewed friendship with Bob Gordon. Here's the story: I went to college with Bob and we were friends then, and fraternity brothers—I knew Ellen as well! Bob was saying Kaddish for his father, who died a month before mine. One day he came over and introduced himself. I remembered exactly who he was, and then I jumped up and hugged him. If it wasn't for the minyan, we would never have reconnected. Same with Marty—every day, he'd say "Everyone in for breakfast!" One day I decided to go in, and I was hooked.*

RP: What is the one thing you'd like congregants to know about you?

SB: *We pride ourselves on being good, committed parents.*

AB: *I'm very family conscious, and religion means a lot to me. It was important to me to bring the children here for the High Holidays when they were little. At first, they*

didn't know anyone at Beth El, but eventually they made friends. Now, Jordana is an engaged Jew, it makes me proud.

RP: What's your favorite Jewish food?

AB: *roast chicken*

SB: *fish of any kind... the way Arlene makes it, with soy sauce, garlic, and lemon.*

RP: What is your favorite part of the *Bulletin*?

SB: *Without question, and in order of preference: 1) Rhonda & Larry Ginsberg's editorials; 2) The Rabbi's Table; 3) Keith Satter's President's article.*

Donations

Thank you to the following congregants whose generosity helps to maintain our Congregation.

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We are grateful to our High Holiday Appeal donors who helped to meet, and surpass, our budget for the Campaign this year!

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