

Beth El Bulletin

March-April 2022
Adar I/Adar II/Nisan 5782

March-April Bulletin Highlights

A busy time for
Brotherhood and WRJ!

WRJ Spring Social
More information on page 8

WRJ Annual Raffle
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WRJ Book Club Comes Back to Life
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Witness to History Forum
Eric Kisch: WW II Jews of Shanghai, a
Robert Siegel interview
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Purim Carnival
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Beth El Hebrew Congregation



ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA



Worship Services

Friday, March 4 Erev Shabbat Services 7:00 pm	Friday, April 1 Erev Shabbat Services 7:00 pm
Saturday, March 5 Shabbat Morning Services and Bat Mitzvah of Cecelia Goodman 10:30 am	Saturday, April 2 Shabbat Morning Services 10:30 am
Friday, March 11 Seventh Grade Student-Led Erev Shabbat Services 7:00 pm	Friday, April 8 Erev Shabbat Services 7:00 pm
Saturday, March 12 Shabbat Morning Services 10:30 am Purim Tot Shabbat 11:00 am	Saturday, April 9 Shabbat Morning Services 10:30 am Dayenu! Tot Shabbat 11:00 am
Friday, March 18 Erev Shabbat Services 7:00 pm	Friday, April 15 Erev Shabbat Services 7:00 pm
Saturday, March 19 Shabbat Morning Services 10:30 am	Saturday, April 16 Passover Festival and Shabbat Morning Services 10:30 am
Friday, March 25 Erev Shabbat Services 7:00 pm	Friday, April 22 Passover Yizkor Services 10:30 am Erev Shabbat Services 7:00 pm
Saturday, March 26 Shabbat Morning Services and Bat Mitzvah of Samantha Weiner 10:30 am Tot Shabbat 11:00 am	Saturday, April 23 Shabbat Morning Services 10:30 am Tot Shabbat 11:00 am
	Friday, April 29 Fifth Grade Student-Led Erev Shabbat Services 7:00 pm
	Saturday, April 30 Shabbat Morning Services 10:30 am



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Rabbi's Remarks



DEAR FRIENDS, I am writing to you on a frigid February morning. Thankfully, I am warmed by the anticipatory excitement I feel for our April 16 congregational Passover Seder. While we have not been able to gather in person for the past two *S'darim* due to the pandemic, as long as numbers continue to trend in a positive direction, we are cautiously and optimistically planning for what I expect to be a marvelous evening.

Please keep an eye out for upcoming communications detailing our Passover plans. For now, I leave you with a favorite Passover story: "The Magician." As you read it, do so in the context of thinking about our congregational Seder. Ask yourself, "How might I be a bit like the stranger in the story, giving of myself for the greater good of the Jewish people?" Not every one of us is called to be the Messiah, but every single one of us is called to do what we can to be harbingers of the Messianic Age.

Zelig and Zelda were a very old couple who lived in a very old house on the very edge of a very old village. Zelig and Zelda were very poor but also very happy, for they had learned to be content with all that God had given them.

As Passover approached, Zelda said to Zelig, "Sweetheart, go into the village. Buy wine and matzah and everything we need for the Seder."

Zelig replied, "But my love, we have no money for wine or for matzah. And no way to buy the things we need for a Seder."

"That's okay," Zelda said. "We have each other and we have our love. We have a life of memories. These will be enough for the holiday."

On the night of the Seder, as Jews all over the world gathered around beautifully set tables with wine and matzah and all of the special Passover foods, Zelig and Zelda sat together in their very old house on the very edge of the very old village. Their table was bare. They held hands. Slowly, and with a bit of sadness, they sang the songs of the Seder.

Dai-dai-yeinu,

Dai-dai-yeinu,

Dai-dai-yeinu,

Dai-dai-yeinu, daiyeinu.

Suddenly, they heard a knock at the door. "Who could that be?" asked Zelda.

Zelig opened the door. There stood a tall stranger who wore a tall hat and a long overcoat. His eyes shined brightly. His beard came to a perfect point at the top of his chest.

"*Gut Pesach. Chag sameach,*" said the stranger. I am a traveler from far away. I have nowhere to go for the Passover Seder."

Zelig spoke up. "We would be honored to have you as our guest," he said, opening the door wide. "But I hope you will understand. We are of modest means. We have little to make Passover holy."

"That is fine," the stranger said. "I would be privileged to join you." He entered the tiny home and sat

down at the bare table. "Please, continue your Seder."

Zelig took Zelda's hand. They both smiled at their guest and sang the songs of Passover with just a little more joy:

Dai-dai-yeinu,

Dai-dai-yeinu,

Dai-dai-yeinu,

Dai-dai-yeinu, daiyeinu.

"Wait!" exclaimed the stranger. "The tablecloth! Where is the tablecloth for the Seder?"

"We have no tablecloth," sighed Zelda.

"But I have a tablecloth! Where did I leave it?" said the stranger as he fished through his pockets. Out of a pocket he produced a magnificent, white lace tablecloth. He whipped it in the air. It floated perfectly on the table.

Astonished, Zelig exclaimed, "How did you do that?"

Amazed, Zelda exclaimed, "How did he do that?"

"No matter," said the stranger. "Where are the candles and the candlesticks to sanctify this holy night?"

"We have no candles or candlesticks," Zelda answered sadly.

"But I have candles," said the stranger. "Where did I leave them?" He again searched the pockets of his coat. "Aha!" he exclaimed as he pulled out two silver candlesticks holding two, long white candles that were already lit. "Here they are!"

As he placed the candlesticks on the white tablecloth, the house glowed with beautiful golden light.

"How did you do that?" asked an astonished Zelig.

"How did he do that?" exclaimed an amazed Zelda.

"No matter," said the stranger. "Let us continue the Seder."

Zelig took Zelda's hand and they sang the songs of the Seder a little louder and a little stronger.

"Wait!" interrupted the stranger. "Where is the wine? Can there be a Seder without wine?"

"We had no money for wine this year," Zelig answered sadly.

"But I have wine! Now, let me see where I put it..." The stranger searched again through his pockets and produced three golden cups, already filled with sweet wine.

"How did you do that?" asked an astonished Zelig.

"How did he do that?" exclaimed an amazed Zelda.

"No matter," responded the stranger. "Matzah, where could the matzah be?" He reached behind him and produced an elegant china plate stacked high with matzah. "Here it is!" he said. "Let us continue with the Seder."

The astonished Zelig again took the hand of the amazed Zelda. Now, they sang the songs of the Seder louder and stronger:

Continued on page 4

Cantor's Corner

FOR THREE ELECTION CYCLES, we at Beth El Hebrew Congregation have been on the forefront of creating an effective, nonpartisan, faith-based civic engagement campaign. We have written postcards, phone-banked, and engaged with thousands upon thousands of prospective voters in our effort to combat voter suppression. We have been inspired by the Jewish value of “*tikkun olam*” (repair of the world) and our commitment to work to make our world more just and equitable. I’m so proud of all the great work that we have done together. Our congregation’s commitment to civic engagement deeply inspires me and has inspired others outside of our synagogue. Our work has even served as a model to other communities, not just in Alexandria, but throughout the country in other URJ congregations.

We have not — and will never — advocate for a particular candidate or party. We simply believe in the American ideal, that every eligible voter have easy access to a polling location and then have their vote counted. We sadly know that this is not our nation’s present reality, however. Marginalized communities, and in particular, communities of color, face increasingly undemo-

cratic obstacles that hinder their ability to have their voices heard and have their votes counted.

Partnering with organizations such as the NAACP and the Center for Common Ground, over the last four years we have helped to support those who are on the front lines of fighting systemic voting disenfranchisement. We must continue to follow their lead and support this crucial work.

We are in the very early stages of creating our next civic engagement campaign and I’d love your help. As always, there will be a role for everyone in this year’s campaign. Whether you want to make calls, write postcards, or do another task, I invite every Beth El member to be a part of this sacred work.

If you are interested in joining this work when we begin later this spring, please send me an email at JKaufman@bethelhebrew.org.

— **Cantor Kaufman**

Continued from page 3

*Dai-dai-yeinu,
Dai-dai-yeinu,
Dai-dai-yeinu,
Dai-dai-yeinu, daiyeinu.*

“Where is the Seder plate?” asked the stranger.
“We have no plate, nor any of the special Passover foods,” explained Zelda. Her eyes filled with tears.
“I have a Seder plate.” Again, he searched inside of his great coat. This time, he pulled out a magnificent plate with all of the special Passover foods placed upon it. “Here it is!” he announced triumphantly. “*Maror. Charoset. Z’roa. Beitzah. Karpas. Chazeret!* My friends, let us sing songs of freedom and blessing.”
“How did you do that?” asked an astonished Zelig.
“How did he do that?” exclaimed an amazed Zelda.
The stranger waved away the questions. He sang with true spirit:

*Dai-dai-yeinu,
Dai-dai-yeinu,
Dai-dai-yeinu,
Dai-dai-yeinu, dai-dai-yeinu.*

The stranger then arose and asked, “Dinner? What will we eat for our Passover feast?”
“We have no feast and no food,” Zelig responded.
“But I do!” the stranger laughed. He removed his tall hat and placed it on the table. He reached into the hat and took out bowls of matzah ball soup, plates of gefilte fish, platters of roast chicken with potatoes, and Passover cookies and fruit for dessert.

Zelig and Zelda watched in wonder.

“How did you do that?” asked an astonished Zelig.
“How did he do that?” exclaimed an amazed Zelda.
“My friends, let’s eat!” said the stranger.

It was the greatest feast that Zelig and Zelda had ever known.

At the end of the feast, it was time to finish the Seder. It was time to open the door for Elijah the Prophet, who visits every Passover Seder. But Zelig had eaten so much he couldn’t stand up to open the door.

The stranger smiled. He said, “Never mind. I’ll get the door.” He put on his hat and went to the door. Together, they sang:

*Eliyahu haNavi,
Eliyahu ha Tishbi,
Eliyahu, Eliyahu,
Eliyahu haGiladi...*

When Zelig and Zelda looked up, the stranger was gone. He had disappeared into the night.

“Where did he go?” asked an astonished Zelig.

“Who was he?” exclaimed an amazed Zelda.

“Could it be?” they wondered. “Could the stranger have been Elijah?”

“No matter,” they laughed. “Let us sing the songs of the Seder and celebrate God’s miracles.” And they sang with all their hearts:

*Dai-dai-yeinu,
Dai-dai-yeinu,
Dai-dai-yeinu,
Dai-dai-yeinu, dai-dai-yeinu.*

— **Rabbi Spinrad**

President's Point of View



HELLO FRIENDS!
A quick update from my January/February column: sadly, recent events in Texas have once again demonstrated the need to assess our building and security systems to meet the ongoing threat environment. To that end, I am happy to report that we have successfully installed stronger loading dock doors and that we are in the final stages of testing and implementing the building's new biometric and camera doorbell entrance system. Finally, we have begun our new locked door policy that protects our Beth El family, our preschool, our staff, and our clergy while in the building.

None of us like or want these changes but they are necessary. While they portend a culture change at Beth El, we hope you will agree that we are properly balancing our need to be an open and welcoming community with common sense safety measures.

The rabbi, the executive director, and I have been in touch with our local, federal, and URJ Secure Community Network (SCN) security partners as we continually review our internal security procedures. We are holding the first of several congregation-wide Zoom and/or in-person training sessions in coming months. The first one will be on March 6 at 4:00 pm. This session, led by Robert Graves from the SCN, will be the first of several activities to engage and educate our members on what to do in a security emergency. I look forward to the presentation and hope you will join us. Please be on the lookout

for more information in the weekly emails leading up to the Zoom meeting.

As we round the corner and winter turns to spring here in Alexandria and the Omicron variant fades, we would very much like to see more of you in person, at Shabbat services and any other Beth El events. As Jews we must eat so you will be happy to know that we are restarting the Shabbat Social Hour and post-services oneg, albeit in a Covid-safe fashion.

Even as your president, I too well know the ease and joy of watching services from the comfort of my own living room, but it would be so nice to see an increase in our in-person attendance much as we have seen in our online presence. We are doing our very best to mesh proper CDC guidelines with synagogue activities, but we cannot be a sacred Jewish community for all who seek connection, meaning, and healing if we don't connect in person.

L'Shalom,

Alan Cohn
President



Executive Director's Entry

We Are Open!

THERE WAS A QUESTION at the last board meeting about whether or not we are open and the answer is YES, we are open. Sometimes the office staff and clergy have meetings or are working remotely so we will always ask that you make an appointment if you need to meet with us, but we are here in the building and here for you!

At the last Covid Task Force meeting it was decided that we can get back to some business as usual. We will still be cautious about how many different programs we have in the building at once from both a security and Covid perspective, but we are beginning to plan more and more in-person events. We are looking forward to getting back to Friday evening wine & cheese, onegs, Candles with the Cantor, and more! More in-person celebrations with our B'nei Mitzvah families using the build-

ing for their parties, and even bringing bridge back in May! If you previously had a program in the building that you would like to bring back, or have something new that you would like try, please let me know.

As I write this article I realized that on March 1 it will be one year since I started as executive director here at Beth El. I want to thank everyone for being so warm and welcoming. This year has gone by so fast, I feel like I just started! I am really looking forward to meeting more of you in person as we approach spring and continue to see Covid cases go down!

Elizabeth (Liz) Bayer
(pronouns: she/her/hers)
Executive Director
lbayer@bethelhebrew.org



Religious School Report

Getting into the Purim Spirit



GROWING UP, I spent most of my time in the theatre. Slidell Little Theatre was practically my home. I was there all day during the summer and then on weeknights and weekends during the school year. I rehearsed lines and songs, built sets and ran lights, did tech, and even assistant directed. I could sing every line to *Wicked*, *Rent*, and *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown* not to mention *Peter Pan* and *Once on This Island*. In college, I minored in theatre, but until coming to Beth El, I hadn't had much of a chance to work on a show. Two years ago we ran a theatre workshop for kids where they wrote and performed their own Purim spiel. The spiel along with our Purim Carnival were the last things we did in the building before Covid-19 hit and changed our lives.

Last year, I was determined that we wouldn't go through Covid and again miss the opportunity to celebrate Purim in some way. In an amazing feat, **Evan Bolick**, **Ariel Cetrone**, and **Dina Herbert** pulled out all the stops helping to write, direct, and coordinate our Muppets Zoom Purim Spiel. We melded recordings and live performance and made Purim happen on Facebook Live!

This year, we're taking Purim to the next level! Evan, Ariel, and Dina are ready to pull off our next spiel! We're excited to be premiering our Super Hero Purim Spiel! Join our Marvel and DC comic book characters as Captain Mordamerica, King Iron-ueros, Wonder Wether, Hanos, and more of your favorite characters as we retell the story of Esther! We can't wait to share our spiel with you in person and if you can't join us, it will be streamed on Facebook Live!

To get us into the Purim spirit, we will be having Purim-themed family services at 6:00 pm on March 11. We'll then have our first seventh grade student-led service in the building later that evening at 7:00 pm.

On March 13, we will celebrate the holiday with our first showing of the Purim Spiel at 10:00 am for fourth-seventh graders and at 11:00 am for K-third grade. The Purim Carnival will open at 11:00 am for our fourth-seventh graders and then for everyone else at noon.

After our Purim celebrations, we are looking forward to Passover! We will finally get to have our model seders again for K-3 students on March 27. We'll need parent volunteers to help make charoset, set tables, and prep for the seders. Our fourth-seventh graders will get a chance to celebrate Passover with a chocolate seder on March 30.

Families are invited to join us on Saturday night, April 16 to celebrate Passover with friends. We will have family-friendly Passover activities for kids of all ages (parents included). Look out for more info in your weekly e-mails!

This Purim and Passover, may we all live into the spirit of joy and celebration, as we come back together as a community to celebrate the survival of our people and the vibrancy of Jewish life!

Rabbi Bailey Romano
bromano@bethelhebrew.org
 Think. Feel. Do. Jewish
 Click [here](#) to meet with me!

About Your Beth El Bulletin

Remember there are now three ways to get your Bulletin:

- ⇒ Read it on the Beth El website
- ⇒ Get a PDF of it in your email
- ⇒ Get a hardcopy snail-mailed to you

If you want to change the way you currently get the Bulletin, please fill in the short form at <https://www.bethelhebrew.org/form/newsletter-opt-in-or-opt-out.html>.

You do not have to log in to ShulCloud to use the form. If you don't have a computer or don't use the internet, you can call the office.

Advertise with Beth El

If you have any questions about or suggestions to improve the Bulletin, or you or someone you know wants to advertise in it or on the website, please email Bulletin@bethelhebrew.org.

Here's a thought... Be a Guest Writer!

What does Beth El mean to you? Something else about Beth El on your mind? Be a guest contributor to your Bulletin! Send your piece to Bulletin@bethelhebrew.org and space permitting, maybe you will see yourself in this space!

ECLC Update

BETH EL IS BLESSED to be surrounded by a beautiful outdoors. The Chapel in the Woods and its trails give our young people so much to explore and investigate. The front lawn, so far back from the street, is great for running and racing and chasing. The gem of our outside space is the (relatively) new playground. If you have been out there even for a minute, you can tell that it is not a traditional playground... which is most fitting since we are not a traditional early childhood program. As a Reggio Emilia-inspired program, it follows that our outdoor play space should also be Reggio Emilia-inspired.

The Reggio Emilia philosophy tells us that the environment is like a third teacher. It enhances learning through opportunities to explore. The magic of a Reggio Emilia-inspired playground is the use of open-ended materials that do not have pre-determined outcomes so that the children are free to use the materials in many different ways. The integration of building frames, loose parts, and even a giant sand pit with a functioning mud kitchen is a highlight, as well as the fallen tree for some serious climbing and the music corner for some lovely outdoor

sounds. The slide down from the rock cave offers more fun.

And, all of these things are just phase 1! There is more fun in store when we start to look at phase 2.

We are grateful that Beth El invested in not only the playground, but the philosophy as well. The Beth El leadership saw the value of being extraordinary rather than just ordinary. And, the ECLC is happy to share our great space with the community at large. We are delighted that everyone has the opportunity to explore and create in our great outdoor space. Fun and meaningful learning for everyone!

As the weather warms, we look forward to seeing everyone outdoors!

L'Shalom

Dina

Dina Backer

Director, Pozez JCC-Beth El ECLC

dbacker@thej.org



Over the course of four days, Cantor Kaufman completed a 5K, 10K, half-marathon, and marathon, totaling 48.6 miles throughout Disney World. *Yasher Koach!*

Permanent Endowment Fund News

The Trustees of the Permanent Endowment Fund mourn the loss of long-time PEF member and Trustee Arlene Hewitt. May Arlene's memory be a blessing.

LAST FALL, the Permanent Endowment Fund held a membership match event. As we've been reporting in the *Bulletin*, we exceeded our goal of 15 new members and welcome the many Beth El members who joined the Permanent Endowment Fund. If you'd like information about joining the Permanent Endowment Fund and contributing to Beth El's future, please contact any of the trustees: **Michael Bluestein**, Chair; **Harmony Knutson**, Treasurer; **Jeremy Flachs**; **Janet Garber**; **Ann Levy**; **Dorrit Lowson**; and **Dan Rothschild**.

There are three levels of voting membership: Member (\$500), Sponsor (\$1,500), and Visionary (\$5,000). Membership can be accrued through donations over time to remember loved ones, express appreciation of others, celebrate life cycle simchas such as special birthdays, anniversaries, and the birth of children, and other notable events.

Dana Arnold

Secretary, Permanent Endowment Fund

darnold.57@gmail.com

WRJ News

I. JUST. DON'T. KNOW. WHAT. TO. SAY. We make plans and God laughs, as the saying goes. In the last Bulletin, I wrote that we had plans to get WRJ email addresses with the new Beth El domain name. Thanks to Executive Director **Liz Bayer** and the IT folks, the email addresses have been created, but with the omicron variant forcing another office shut down, I haven't been able to meet with Liz to get them set up. One of these days (sooner rather than later, I hope), WRJ's email will be integrated with ShulCloud. We'll keep you posted.

Save the Dates:

- Pre-Pesach Social, Tuesday, March 29, 7:00 pm. We're planning an in-person event for current and prospective members, but we'll be ready to pivot to Zoom if SARS-CoV-2 pitches us a new variant of concern. We'll keep you posted.
- Spring Raffle, Sunday, May 1. We're planning a live drawing in conjunction with an in-person event open to the Beth El community. Proceeds will benefit WRJ's activities and causes, including our Beth El youth.
- WRJ Shabbat. We REALLY want this event to be in person, so we're holding off setting a date. We'll keep you posted.

Each year, WRJ makes contributions to the Religious School and other Jewish youth programs to support the Madrichim program and provide opportunities for youth to gain their needed service hours and acquire leadership skills. WRJ also purchases gifts for Bar/Bat Mitzvah/confirmants.

The raffle will be WRJ's major fundraiser this fiscal year. Please support our activities and causes by offering tickets to your friends, neighbors, co-workers, and relatives, as well as buying some for yourself. Instructions and tickets are in this month's Bulletin and will also be emailed and available for download on the Beth El web site.

But Wait, There's More!

Social Action is always in action, thanks to Social Action Chair **Janet Garber**. See Janet's article in this Bulletin for how you can help.

The WRJ Book Club is back, with **Gerrie Sturman** taking over from the wonderful **Rita Ditrani** as the club coordinator. If you're a current WRJ member or were a member last year, you should have received Gerrie's email with the organizing details. Gerrie also has an article in this Bulletin.

Our WRJ Board members have a number of ideas for events and activities to engage the Beth El Community, which we're exploring with the Powers That Be.

WRJ expects to continue offering speaker events via Zoom, because attending via Zoom offers more flexibility than in-person attendance for both speakers and attendees. With Zoom, we're also able to avoid having to reserve space in the building and coordinate with maintenance and security staff, all of which complicate scheduling in-person events.

Meanwhile, have fun with our hamantaschen recipe at home.

I'm tired of saying it, you're tired of hearing it, but here it is anyway: We'll keep you posted!

Linda Shapiro

WRJ President

BEHC.WRJ.President@gmail.com

Beth El WRJ Hamantaschen Recipe

There are lots of hamantaschen recipes, from sweet to savory, pareve and dairy, traditional and fusion. This is the "official" WRJ recipe. Enjoy!

Ingredients

- 3 large eggs
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1/4 cup canola oil
- 4 cups flour
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1. tablespoon baking powder
- 1/3 cup orange juice
- Filling of your choice, canned or homemade
- 1 egg plus 1 tablespoon water for glaze

Instructions

1. Beat eggs and add sugar gradually [if using an electric hand mixer or a stand mixer use medium speed].
2. Add vanilla and oil and beat well.
3. In a separate bowl, whisk together the flour, salt, and baking powder.
4. Add the flour mixture alternately with the orange juice, starting and ending with the flour mixture. Mix well after each addition. [Set mixer to low speed.] Dough will be sticky; you can add flour when the cookies are rolled.
5. Refrigerate dough at least 4 hours before using. If making dough ahead, wrap in plastic wrap, place the wrapped dough in a zipper topped bag, pressing out as much air as possible. Refrigerate until ready to roll out and bake.
6. Roll out the dough to 1/4 inch thickness on a lightly floured board and cut into 2 1/2 inch circles.
7. Place 1 scant teaspoon of filling in the center of each circle. Shape into triangles by using your thumbs to push up from the bottom of the circle and your forefingers to pull down from the top sides. Pinch the top seams of the dough well to securely enclose almost all of the filling. A little should peek through the top of the opening.
8. Combine the remaining egg with the 1 tablespoon of water and brush the egg wash on the tops of the hamantaschen.
9. Bake at 350°F on parchment-lined cookie sheets for 12 minutes or until lightly golden.

Baking Tips:

- This dough is thick. A stand mixer works best.
- Baking Powder: Shake the can of baking powder before measuring. To test baking powder's effectiveness: mix 1 teaspoon baking powder with 1/2 cup hot water and the mixture should bubble immediately. Store in a cool dry place and it should be replaced every 6-12 months.
- Flour: Stir the flour in the canister lightly. Then dip measuring cup in and scoop up flour. Level with a straight utensil. Do not measure flour by pouring it into the measuring cup.
- The addition of orange juice not only adds flavor, but the acid breaks down some of the gluten in the flour. This will make your cookie tender.
- Never use whipped or diet margarine. You will add too much air and water to the dough and change its consistency, making it harder to roll out and shape.

Brotherhood News

BROTHERHOOD HOSTED A Witness to History Forum online in January. The event featured **Robert Siegel** interviewing Beth El member **Len Rubenstein** to discuss his travels and his new book *Perilous Medicine: The Struggle to Protect Health Care from the Violence of War*. The event was well attended and Brotherhood would like to extend its thanks to VP of Programs **Ron Sturman**, as well as Robert Siegel, and tech guru **Steve Shapiro** for making this event happen. Brotherhood also hosted Bagels and Banter events in January and February. The one that took place on Feb. 13 was attended by Beth El President **Alan Cohn**.

Brotherhood also co-sponsored the annual ReelAbilities Film Festival along with the Beth El Inclusion Committee. Approximately 30 people attended the event in our Social Hall and watched a movie entitled *The World is Bright*, a film about mental health and the discrimination immigrants frequently experience when moving to new countries and not receiving justice from local governments. Brotherhood would like to thank **Jeanne Holden, Dawn Kaye, Judy Jankowski**, the additional members of the Inclusion committee, as well as **Heather Glick** from the office staff for their support in making this event a success.

Brotherhood has two events upcoming during the month of March. On Sunday, March 6th, Brotherhood will be hosting another online Witness to History Forum with **Robert Siegel** interviewing **Eric Kisch**, who will recall his family's experience among 20,000 Jews of Shanghai. His memories will reflect his childhood in Shanghai, his father's release from an Austrian concentration camp, and how his family managed to immigrate and their subsequent challenges.

The Annual Purim Carnival returns in person this year on Sunday, March 13, from 11:00 am to 1:30 pm. It will be a bit more of a spread-out version than in previous years, and will include over 30 games, food, a moon bounce, and a magician. Please look for details online in the weekly emails and the Religious School weekly emails, as well as a flyer in this Bulletin on page 22. We would prefer if everyone signed up online in advance this year, which will save both time and money for those attending. If you would like to volunteer for this event, there will be a sign-up on the Beth El website. If you have any additional questions please contact **Matt Mutterperl** at: matt@mutterperl.com or 703-470-4652.

Also, Brotherhood will be sponsoring a softball team this spring, which has become an annual tradition (pandemics permitting). If you are interested in participating please contact **Jim Goldwater** at 703-862-0424 or jimauh2o@aol.com. You can also look for the short article from Jim on page 19 of this *Bulletin*.

Matthew Mutterperl
Brotherhood President
brotherhood@bethelhebrew.org

WRJ Book Club Is Back!

TO PAST AND FUTURE WRJ Book Club members!
For the past 20 or so years, the WRJ Book Club has met at Beth El at 11:00 am on the second Tuesday of every other month for stimulating discussions of both fiction and nonfiction books of Jewish interest and/or by Jewish authors. Regrettably, Covid has prevented us from continuing to meet in person for the past two years.

Special thanks go to **Rita Di Trani** who has been the long-serving mainstay of the WRJ Book Club. **Gerrie Sturman** has volunteered to coordinate email announcements in Rita's place, but we need to construct a new membership list after such a long hiatus.

Please let us know via email (or a personal call to Gerrie) with your interest in joining us by answering the following:

1. What are your suggestions for the next book to read together (with title, brief description of the book and availability at area libraries)?
2. Will you be interested in volunteering to lead future discussions for this club?
3. Are you a paid-up WRJ member? (If you haven't yet renewed your membership in WRJ, please do so now by completing the WRJ membership form that is on the Beth El website and mailing it with your check to WRJ Treasurer **Dina Katz** (you can get her snail mail address from the online Beth El directory) or pay to BEHCWRJ.Treasurer@gmail.co via Zelle.)
4. Can you meet with us on Zoom on March 8 at 11:00 am (second Tuesday) to confirm the book title and discuss plans for the book club? (Note: Zoom will be preferred until we are able to fully meet in person.)

Thank you so much for your continued interest in the WRJ Book Club. Some past selections are shown below. Please respond to Gerrie via email: Sturman.g@gmail.com or call her at 703-820-7864.

Gerrie Sturman





Second Night Congregational Seder April 16

*Why is Tonight
Different?*

We're planning a second night seder like never before. Watch for more information on this interactive, participatory, fun, musical, and meaningful event for all ages!



Member News

Welcome New Members:

Jason and Cory Taub, and Poppy

Louisa and Drew Davis, and Riley and Aaron

Colleen Haddow and Nicholas Gehrig, and Gwendolyn and Natalie

Sandra Mosetick, and Benjamin and Rachel

Mazel Tov to:

Grandparents Jake Gallun and Pamela Zitron, and parents Jesse and Season Solorio Gallun, and Sierra Francesca Gallun, on the birth of Jonah deNeiges Gallun

Marissa (BEHC RS Inclusion Coordinator and NFTY advisor) and Adam Smolinsky on the birth of their son, Matan

Stanton E. Samenow on the publication of the newly revised 2022 edition of his book *Inside the Criminal Mind*

Ben Romano, husband of Rabbi Bailey Romano, on the release of his new album *Ashrei: Songs of Joy and Happiness* (under the artist name Ben Pagliaro)

Grandmother Ruth Grover, and parents Hannah Grover and Jared Precht, on the birth of Shia Samuel Precht

Cantor Kaufman for recently completing his 11th marathon and his 4th Dopey Challenge At Walt Disney World

Grandparents Julianne Bramesco and Glenn Law and parents Amy Law and Heath Sharp, on the birth of Harper Eleanor Sharp

Janet Garber and Kris Keydel, and Debra and Samuel Kirzner who have milestone anniversaries in March

Frances Schonberger, Arlene Polinsky, Jane Dinsmore, Joyce Ross, Arnold Meyrow, and Carolyn Miller who have milestone birthdays in March

Melanie Flossman, Cathy-Jane Brodsky, and Roberta Sultzer who have milestone birthdays in April

Condolences to:

Ron and Gerrie Sturman on the death of beloved cousin Norman Sturman

The Daniels family on death of beloved brother Carey Daniels

Jo and Steven Rochlis and Gary and Julia Hewitt; and Teddy and Michael Rochlis and Andy and Ariana Hewitt on the death of beloved mother and grandmother and **Beth El member** Arlene Hewitt

The family and friends of former **Beth El member** Jim Orlick

Joel, Maureen, and Joselyn Augen; Tami and Rick Rhodes; and Ken, Kana, and Sachi Augen on the death of beloved mother and grandmother Bonni Augen

Faith Klein on the death of beloved brother Lenny Nachman

Lynda, Fred, Diane, and Liliana Freimark on the death of beloved husband, father, and grandfather Bernard Freimark

Sheila, John, Benjamin, and David Jonas on the death of beloved mother and grandmother Helen Coplan

Dorothy Buxbaum; Melissa and Larry Felmesser, and Jeff Buxbaum and Marcie Stern; and Emily and Jane Feldmesser, and Leah and Bryan Buxbaum on the death of beloved husband, father, grandfather Marvin Buxbaum

The family and friends of **Beth El member** Marjorie Abramson

Joanne Malkin, Deborah Malkin Block and Brian Block, and Jennifer Malkin-McDade and Andrew McDade; and Kaya Soul Malkin-McDade, on the death of beloved husband, father, grandfather, and former **Beth El member** Bruce Malkin

Regina Begliutti on the death of beloved mother Willie Mae Begliutti



Caring Community Committee

THE CARING COMMUNITY COMMITTEE organizes important mitzvot like visiting the sick, cooking or delivering food, staying in touch with the stressed or lonely, assisting at a funeral or shiva, and in many other ways helping congregational friends in need. Want to feel good about building up your Beth El community while working collaboratively with other members? Consider having your name added to the CCC on-call list to help on an occasional basis with any of these much-appreciated tasks.

The CCC offers support groups from time to time and beginning in the spring, both a Bereavement group and a Positive Aging group will be starting. Watch for specific details on both of them in the next couple of months. For more information about the CCC's activities or to volunteer, contact **Ruth Perlstein** at 703-978-9341 or rperl8607@gmail.com.



Special Carpenter's Shelter Support Opportunity

HELP US COLLECT personal care items specific to the African American residents at Carpenter's Shelter.

The personal care items that are usually donated to shelters are often products that are unsuitable for the specific hair and skin needs of Black residents. To address this deficiency, we are holding a drive to collect these specific items for Carpenter's Shelter. We have put together an Amazon registry where the Beth El community can directly order the items most needed. Orders can be placed through the following link: https://www.amazon.com/registries/custom/2YRVDZKI9IVU2/guest-view?ref=cm_sw_em_r_gr_un_tCdSS5Wr3XUUn.

Once you put the items in your Amazon shopping cart and go to Checkout to select shipping address, you will see "*Carpenter's Shelter - attn. Jamila Smith's Gift Registry*" as one of the options for the address to ship to. Select this shipping address and the items will automatically be sent directly to Carpenter's Shelter.

On this list, you will see how many of each item is needed (ranging from 25-50 of each) and how many still need to be purchased. All orders placed through the registry will be shipped directly to Carpenter's Shelter.

Let's pitch in to make everyone in the community feel included and cared for.

If you have questions, please contact Esther Belenker (estherbelenker@verizon.net) or Gal Adam Spinrad (gal.a.spinrad@gmail.com).



Help Needed: Feed Those Less Fortunate at Carpenter's Shelter

FOR OVER A DECADE, Beth El members have prepared and donated meals for residents of Bailey's Community Shelter and Carpenter's Shelter. Currently, we provide 1-2 lunches and dinners for 25-40 residents at Carpenter's Shelter every month for needy Alexandria families. Donors in 2021 included **Temi Alberts, Esther Belenker, Stuart and Nancy Davis, Bobbie Gershman, Mary Goldwag, Leah Hirsch, Missy Hyatt, Debbie Kirzner, Judy Kramer, Sheryl Leeds, Alison Levy, Julie Mueller, Ruth Perlstein, Ilene Reiter, Barbara Rosenfeld, Shelli Ross, Lisa Shel-done, Ned and Lisa Shosteck, Libby Starler, Diane Suchman, Arlene Tave, Susan Wartel, Paula Whitacre, and Susan Worden.** Residents really appreciate these meals and providing them is truly a mitzvah.

Although the list of volunteers may appear long, we are always seeking additional help to provide entrees, green vegetables, fruit, side dishes, and dessert for one or more of the 18 meals provided by Beth El members throughout the year. If you would like to help, please contact **Susan Wartel** at susanwartel@gmail.com.



Volunteer Alexandria

For more ways to volunteer in the Alexandria community, visit <https://www.volunteeralexandria.org>.

Chapel in the Woods:

Two to Three Years of Construction Ahead

AFTER YEARS OF CONTROVERSY and a contentious lawsuit, construction of Franklin Hill Homes (formerly Karig Homes) began in February.

The launch follows a Jan. 25 public meeting when the developer announced the timeline.

Infrastructure development — clearing the land, building streets, stormwater sewers, utilities, and a model home — will be the initial phase of construction of a four-house, 3.13-acre development on the west side of Beth El. The remaining three single-family homes will be built during a second phase, with expected completion in two or three years. The asking price starts at \$2.8 million each.

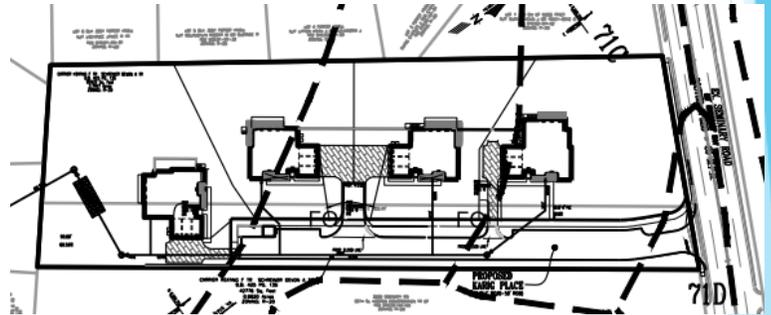
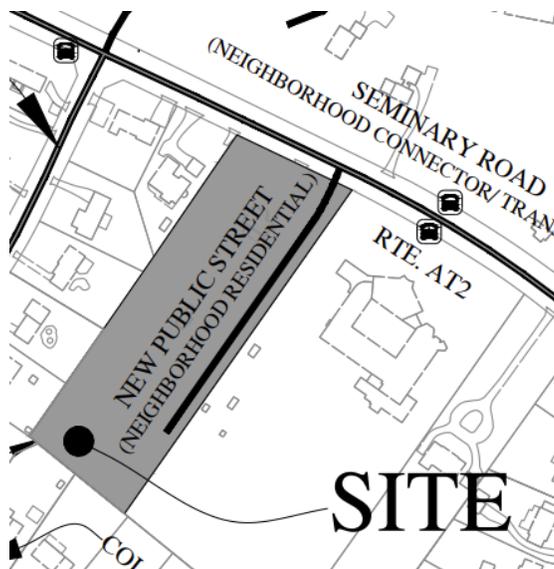
Developer Mike Ibrahim, manager of 3834 Seminary LLC, announced a Monday-through-Saturday construction schedule, but an Alexandria official reported that the city banned construction on Saturdays before 1:00 pm and on religious holidays.

According to the final planning documents on the City of Alexandria website, scores of mature trees will be demolished including some of the mature trees on or near Beth El's property line. Notable shrubs that will go include a sizable stand of native frost hawthorn. Bamboo

and other invasive species will be cleared; and a fence will surround the property.

Workers will park in a 16-car lot on the property. Trucks will enter and exit on Seminary Road. In addition to increased traffic on Seminary Road and construction noise, Beth El's Chapel in the Woods will be affected in two ways:

1. Stormwater from the construction site during installation of utilities, and possibly from the finished homes, may cause erosion and other damage on all neighboring properties. Water from disturbed spring and wetland may overcome sewers and flood Beth El's wetland.
2. Most of the sizable deer and rabbit populations now living on both properties will soon reside in Beth El's forest. The deer damage to mature trees and shrubs — as well as those that congregants have planted in the last four years — is already considerable. Deer have stripped the bark off many trees, killing them. Alexandria does not have a deer-control program, although Fairfax County does. More of other animal species — from frogs to finches and foxes — will move in, yet their presence is less likely to be a burden on the forest.



Left: the construction site shown in gray, Beth El shown to the right
Source: https://apex.alexandriava.gov/energov_prod/selfservice#/home

Above: how the four houses will be situated on the lot; the public roadway will be near the Beth El property line.

Help Protect the Forest

Come help maintain Beth El's forest during a workday on Sunday, March 27, from 10:00 am to noon. Please bring work gloves, trowels, and clippers if you have them. Other equipment will be available on-site. Pruning trees and shrubs will be the principal activity; instruction will be provided. For more information, please contact **Nancy and Stuart Davis**, 703 671 5906, nmdaviswriter@aol.com.



A staghorn sumac that has had the bark rubbed off by deer, with chicken wire to prevent additional damage

B'nei Mitzvah

Cecelia Goodman
March 5, 2022

Cecelia Liv Goodman is a seventh-grade honors student at George Washington Middle School. She enjoys playing travel soccer, making jewelry, and hanging out with her friends. She also really enjoys throwing knives and axes... at a target, of course.

For Liv's mitzvah project she will be making blankets and toys for the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria to support her love of animals.

Liv would like to thank Dina Backer, Cantor Kaufman, Rabbi Spinrad, and of course, all of her Religious School teachers for helping prepare her for this special day.

She would also like to thank her parents and her sisters, Emma and Candace, as well as her pets for all their love and support.

Samantha Weiner
March 26, 2022

Samantha is a seventh grade student at Lake Braddock Secondary School. She enjoys dancing and playing lacrosse, and hanging out with her friends.

For her mitzvah project, Samantha is organizing multiple clean-up days in her neighborhood. In addition, she is volunteering at Buffa's Dance Studio helping out in the Rhinestones class.

Samantha thanks her tutor, Mrs. Astrow, all of her Religious School teachers, Rabbi Spinrad, and Cantor Kaufman for helping prepare her for this special day. And she thanks her parents, her sister, Alexa, all her grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins for their love and support. A special thank you to Aunt Tracy for helping her fine tune her Hebrew.

Tot Shabbat Zoom Purim, Passover, and More!

THIS IS AN EXCITING TIME of year for Tot Shabbat!

On March 12, the children and I will wear our Purim costumes and celebrate the holiday together. Children can dress up as their favorite person or animal, and I'll ask them to tell us about their costume. I'll share my kiddie Megillah up close. Having fun will be the name of the game!

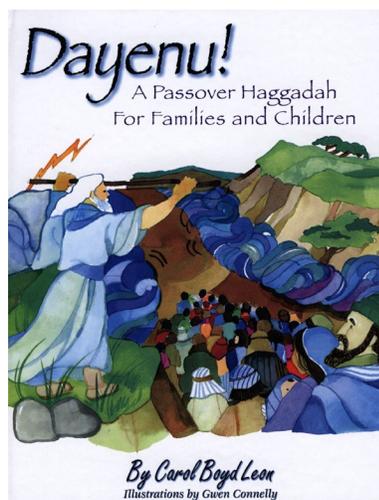
On March 26, it'll be back to a "regular" Tot Shabbat filled with our favorite songs and prayers and puppets.

On April 9, we'll celebrate Passover together with our annual "Dayenu!" tot seder. You and your children can watch some of the sights and sounds of the "Dayenu!" seder at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UHgiF5J04ew>. "Dayenu!" is a half-hour music-filled Haggadah that I wrote for young families. If possible, bring your own cup of grape juice; parsley and salt water; charoset or chopped apples; romaine lettuce leaf; and matzah. If you don't have them, join in anyway!

And we'll get together again on April 23 for a "regular," fun-filled Tot Shabbat.

I'm looking forward to the warm weather so we can hold some in-person, outdoor Tot Shabbats. But whether we're online or in person, let's stay connected!

Miss Carol (Carol Boyd Leon)
cboydleon@gmail.com





ALIVE!

THE MARCH/APRIL food collection for ALIVE! will be plastic jars of peanut butter and jelly. Please leave regular-sized plastic jars of PB&J in the bin located in the entrance to Beth El. We are also still collecting reusable grocery bags.

Looking to do some volunteering this spring? You can be part of the ALIVE! Grocery Delivery Team! This is a non-contact activity where you deliver food to low income, quarantined families. You can work just one day a week for two to three hours — or more if you like. For more information go to <http://www.VolunteerAlexandria.org> key word: ALIVE. You'll find this and other volunteer activities associated with ALIVE!

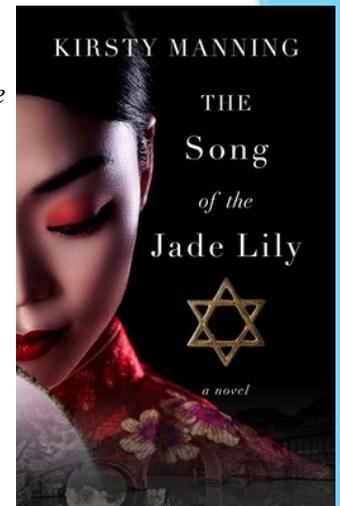
Through all its food programs, ALIVE! is distributing 100,000 lbs. of food to 3,000 households each month. Thank you for continuing to support this important program.

For more information about ALIVE! go to www.alive-inc.org or contact **Deborah Schaffer** at schaffer4@gmail.com.

Readers of Beth El

THE READERS OF Beth El's next book will be *The Song of the Jade Lily* by Kirsty Manning. The author weaves together threads of a 1939 friendship between a Jewish Austrian refugee to Shanghai and a Shanghai native, secrets, mystery, and a granddaughter's search in 2016 for her grandparents' past life. We will meet on Zoom on March 14 at 7:00 pm.

Lynne Orens
lorens750@aol.com



Alexandria Days of Remembrance

Thursday, April 28, Noon

THE 33rd ANNUAL Alexandria Days of Remembrance of the Holocaust observance will take place on Thursday, April 28, at noon in Market Square in Old Town Alexandria. This year's keynote speaker will be Michael Rugel of the National Museum of American Jewish Military History. He will be speaking on the American Jewish liberators of the concentration camps. **Rabbi Spinrad, Cantor Kaufman, and Rabbi Romano** will be participating along with the clergy from Agudas Achim. The event is planned by the City of Alexandria in conjunction with congregants from Beth El and Agudas Achim. Beth El members on this year's committee are **Joyce Gordon, Ron Sturman, Yonie Dow, and Cheryl Anne Colton**.

We hope that many Beth El members will be able to attend this city commemoration and remember those who suffered during the Holocaust.



Torah Portions for March and April 2022

Date	Portion	
March 5, 2022	PEKUDEI	Exodus 38:21–40:38
March 12, 2022	VAYIKRA	Leviticus 1:1–5:26
March 19, 2022	TZAV	Leviticus 6:1–8:36
March 26, 2022	SH'MINI	Leviticus 9:1–11:47
April 2, 2022	TAZRIA	Leviticus 12:1–13:59
April 9, 2022	METZORA	Leviticus 14:1–15:33
April 16, 2022	PESACH	Exodus 12:21–51
April 23, 2022	SHEMINI SHEL PESACH	Deuteronomy 14:22–16:17
April 30, 2022	ACHAREIMOT	Leviticus 16:1–18:30



Inclusion News

HOW WONDERFUL TO be able to celebrate Jewish Disability Awareness, Acceptance, and Inclusion Month (JDAIM) with two special events at Beth El!

Sincere thanks to all the people who helped make the special Feb. 10 erev Shabbat service an inspiring one. From those who helped with planning to those who participated, in person or online, it couldn't have come together so beautifully without everyone's efforts.

The Inclusion Committee collaborated with **Rabbi Spinrad**, **Rabbi Romano**, and many congregants to create a service centered on the theme: "Social and Emotional Well-Being: The Toll of the Pandemic." The Religious School's sixth graders skillfully led the service.

Cantor Kaufman was joined by pianist **David Weinraub** to fill the sanctuary with beautiful music. Then, there were the stories! Interspersed in the service, four congregants described the social and emotional challenges that they faced during the pandemic, and how Beth El's rabbis, virtual services, and activities provided a crucial connection to the community.

Dawn Kaye, a retired clinical social worker, talked about the breadth of the pandemic, and how the anxiety and isolation caused by social distancing can be particularly hard on the elderly — and on the adult children who try to keep them safe.

Jeanette Astrow spoke about being a healthcare worker on the front lines — how the first person she X-rayed for Covid-19 became the first in the region to die of the disease, and how her job helping patients, by exposing her to Covid-19, made family and social interactions more stressful.

Eighth grader **Michael Folb** pointed out that remote learning is a very beneficial option for students who have issues with social interactions. Michael said he chose to continue remote learning throughout the 2021-2022 school year, and that he worries that it may be eliminated in the future.

Elliot Merker, a high school history teacher, discussed the problems of teaching during the pandemic. He explained, for example, that it is impossible to teach auto repair — a subject he once taught — remotely. Now teaching history, Elliot suggested that learning should be seen as a journey, and that the destination is what you will be able to do later as part of a connected community. Elliot told the students that if they learned only one thing during the pandemic it should be that it is okay to ask for help. He said that he knew the rabbis, teachers, parents, and others would all be glad to provide assistance.

Some of the sixth graders had also written their own remarks, and it was inspiring to hear them talk poignantly about the pandemic, inclusion, and acceptance.

Then, on Sunday, Feb. 13, about 30 Beth El members and others from the local community gathered at Beth El to watch the ReelAbilities Festival Film, *The World Is Bright*. This award-winning documentary asks: What

would you do if your only child died mysteriously in another country and was buried in your absence? The film chronicles the epic journey of an elderly Chinese couple searching for the truth behind their son's death in Canada. What starts out looking like a murder mystery becomes something else entirely — a rare revelation about mental health, suicide, and the illogical bureaucracy at the heart of global migration. Co-sponsored by the Inclusion Committee, Brotherhood and, for the third time, Congregation Agudas Achim, the ReelAbilities Film Festival is largest festival in the nation dedicated to promoting awareness and appreciation of the lives and stories of people with disabilities.

Thanks for this successful event go to Sarah Berry, who manages ReelAbilities Film Festival for the Pozez JCC; **Arne Meyrow**, **Aleck Johnson**, and **Stew Levy** for handling the technical details of showing the film; Brotherhood President **Matt Mutterperl**; **Dawn Kaye**, **Judy Janowski**, and the many other congregants who helped with planning or who volunteered to help on the day of the event.

The Inclusion Committee strives to make Beth El a place where everyone, regardless of ability or disability, feels welcome and can participate to the full extent that they desire. When we ensure that everyone is treated with respect, when we create an accessible community where all members can participate meaningfully, we build a stronger community and enrich the lives of our whole congregation.

Jeanne Holden
Inclusion Committee Chair
jeanneholden@yahoo.com

Mental Health and Disabilities Resource List

Individuals and families sometimes face difficult mental health or disability situations. Therefore, the Inclusion Committee has created a Mental Health and Disabilities Resource List (phone numbers and links) for services available in Northern VA, often round-the-clock, to help manage serious situations and perhaps even avert a crisis.

To access this list, scan this QR code with the camera of your mobile phone.



CANDLES with the cantor



Coming soon—watch the weekly email for information



Big Judaica Shop News!

IN ADDITION TO our selection of wonderful Judaica in the WRJ Gift Shop, we have expanded into the online shopping realm through an affiliation with Modern Tribe, a web site featuring Judaica from all over the world with a modern design aesthetic. Spread the word to family and friends that when they shop using this unique link or QR code, a small portion of the sale is returned directly to our WRJ Judaica Shop. Watch for a Passover sale coming in April! As always, please contact us for any special requests. To shop through our affiliation with Modern Tribe, please use ONLY this link:

<https://moderntribe.com/pages/bethelwrj>

or scan this QR code with the camera of your mobile phone.



Lynne Orens
Bewrjshop@gmail.com



Israel Committee News

Addressing Antisemitism Abroad and a Message for Us at Home

DEAR FELLOW CONGREGANTS,
On Tuesday morning Feb. 8, 2022, Deborah Lipstadt appeared at a hearing of the United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. She had waited over half a year for a hearing after President Biden nominated her to be the Special Envoy to Combat and Monitor Antisemitism. The resistance to her nomination loosened up after the terrifying hostage taking at Beth Israel Synagogue in Colleyville, Texas.

Deborah Lipstadt is a renowned historian and Holocaust scholar who has written multiple books and countless articles on the Holocaust and antisemitism. She is also a professor of Modern Jewish History and Holocaust Studies at Emory University. She is possibly most known for her challenge of a lawsuit brought against her by British Holocaust denier David Irving. Lipstadt wrote about it in her book, *Denial*, later a movie of the same name. Her victory over the lawsuit was a landmark case in combatting and challenging Holocaust denial and antisemitism.

While her appearance before the Foreign Relations Committee did not go unchallenged, those who are familiar with Lipstadt recognize her as a scholar with almost unmatched credentials fighting and studying antisemitism wherever and whenever she sees it, not because it is convenient for her. And that is a key lesson for us as we see the rise of antisemitism in this country and

abroad. As she stated at the hearing, “Jew hatred can be found across the [political] spectrum.”

Lipstadt’s job will be to call out antisemitism abroad, whether it is from white nationalists in Hungary, or academics in England who use criticisms of Israel to express their hatred of Jews. The office will express and promote the American value of calling out bigotry and antisemitism wherever we see it. It will also help set the tone for combatting antisemitism at home.

Antisemitism is rising worldwide and it is vital to combat it wherever we see it around the world and across the American political spectrum. It could not be more necessary than at times like these.

On another matter, the Israel Committee decided at its Feb. 8 meeting to schedule “discussion meetings” that will be open to all Beth El members. Discussion topics identified by the committee will be built around articles, books, the arts, religion — just about anything that would result in a civil, moderated exchange of views about Israel and our relationship with Israel. References to informational materials will be included in this Israel Committee initiative. The committee co-chairs will moderate or appoint members of the committee to moderate. Stay tuned.

L’shalom,
Alex Buttgenbach

The Israel Committee values diversity of opinion. We provide opportunities for committee members to express different perspectives that form our decisions about Israel. These articles represent the opinions of the writer.

Questions about the Israel Committee may be addressed to the Co-Chairs.

Alex Buttgenbach
buttgenbach@gmail.com

Ron Sturman
rgsturman@msn.com



HABERMAN INSTITUTE
for Jewish Studies

Gods of the Upper Air

Wednesday, March 30
7:30 pm-9:00 pm

Streaming & In Person at
Agudas Achim Congregation
2908 Valley Drive
Alexandria, VA, 22302

A CENTURY AGO, everyone knew that people were fated by their race, sex, and nationality to be more or less intelligent, nurturing, or warlike. But Columbia University professor Franz Boas, a Jewish immigrant from Germany, looked at the data and decided everyone was wrong. Racial categories, he insisted, were biological fictions. Cultures did not come in neat packages labeled “primitive” or “advanced.” What counted as a family, a good meal, or even common sense was a product of history and circumstance, not of nature.

In *Gods of the Upper Air*, a masterful narrative history of radical ideas and passionate lives, Charles King shows how these intuitions led to a fundamental reimagining of human diversity and — through Boas’s students such as Margaret Mead, Ruth Benedict, and Zora Neale Hurston — inspired the fluid conceptions of identity we know today.

Presented by Charles King
Professor of International Affairs and Government, Georgetown University

More information at www.habermaninstitute.org

WRJ Social Action *Clothes Closet Cleaning*

SPRING IS ALMOST HERE, and it is time to get back to one of our favorite projects – Spring Closet Cleaning! Yes, in April we will once again collect men’s and women’s professional clothing for the clothes closet at PathForward Virginia (formerly known as A-Span). PathForward aims to empower people from streets to stability with a continuum of care. This includes a clothing room where clients can “shop” for free. Please ensure that your adult clothing donations are new or gently used, free of rips, stains, or excessive wear. It’s not too early to start going through your closets now for our collection in April!

Because of the continuing impact of COVID on our community, the detailed logistics for this collection will not be available until late March or early April. As I write this announcement, PathForward is not accepting clothing at its warehouse — only at remote drop-off boxes throughout the community. While this can work, it is not the best situation for us, because those drop off boxes are not as gentle with our donations as a direct drop-off at its warehouse. We are cautiously optimistic that the warehouse will reopen before April! Please watch the Thursday emails from Beth El, as well as direct emails from WRJ for updates on the logistics for this important collection.

Note: PathForward has also mentioned that it is always in need of white socks and underwear! :-)

Thank you for supporting our community!

Janet Garber
703-598-7904
garberj123@gmail.com

PathForward
Empowering people from streets to stability



Congregational Kudos

THANK YOU TO ALL the members of the Covid Task Force for all their hard work over the past two years-plus of responding to changing pandemic precaution conditions:

Evan Allen, Dana Arnold, Jeanette Astrow, Dina Backer, Liz Bayer, Alan Cohn, Jeremy Flachs, Jacob Gallun, Marsha Hertzberg, Bonnie James, Cantor Jason Kaufman, Jesse K. Reisman, Joanne Rhodes, Rabbi Bailey Romano, Rabbi David Spinrad, David Weinraub

Whatever version of normal/new normal we are able to attain is due to their hard work.



WANTED: Softball Players

SPRING APPROACHES, and with it will be the start of another softball season. The Beth El softball team is looking for some more ballplayers to add to its roster as it prepares for the 2022 spring season in the Fairfax Adult Softball league. Last spring, the team won the regular season championship as well as the post-season tournament.



Practices will be scheduled in April, with the season expected to open late that month or in early May. The regular season will consist of 16 games, with a double-elimination tournament to follow. Doubleheaders will be played once a week.

Everyone who shows up plays. All players must pay Beth El Brotherhood dues (\$36).

Anyone (male or female) interested in playing should contact **Jim Goldwater** at 703-862-0424 (cell) or jimauh2o@aol.com.

April 24

3:00 - 6:00 pm

Screening followed by discussion with executive director, Robert Krakow and survivor Eva Wiener

... DOCUMENTARY FILM ...

COMPLICIT

State Department Apologizes to Jewish Refugees

KEEP OUT

GIVE ME YOUR TIRED, YOUR POOR ... SEND THOSE, THE HOMELESS, TEMPEST-TOSSED TO ME ...

JEWISH REFUGEE SHIP

The untold story of why the Roosevelt Administration denied safe haven to Jewish Refugees

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR **Robert Krakow**

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR **Ruth Kalish**

OFFICIAL SELECTION
Australian Jewish Film Festival

OFFICIAL SELECTION
Georgetown Law School Equal Justice Film Festival

SS ST. LOUIS LEGACY PROJECT FOUNDATION
Non profit 501C3 dedicated to education through drama on issues of human rights, anti-Semitism, immigration and the fight against genocide.
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This year Beth El is celebrating Purim by putting together Mishloach Manot, Purim Baskets. These baskets are both a way for us to connect with each other and a fundraiser for our congregation. So many of us are missing connecting with our community and this is a wonderful Covid-safe way to participate.

In addition to Purim treats, these gifts will include a special greeting. Through your donation (\$18-\$360), your name will be included in the Purim greeting. Donations help cover the cost of each member receiving a Mishloach Manot and additional money supporting our fundraising efforts.

- If you would like your name included on the individual members you choose your donation will be \$18 for each membership/household. (example: If you chose 10 members to send to it will be \$180.00)
- If you would like to send to the entire congregation your donation will be \$360.00.

To participate go to

<https://www.bethelhebrew.org/campaign/2022-purim-mishloach-manot.html>.

You can also send a check to the office with the donation amount based on your level of participation and the names you would like to include.

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Questions? Contact Nori Plunkett, Youth Advisor
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Sign up at <https://www.bethelhebrew.org/event/6th--8th-grade-magyk.html>.



BETH EL HEBREW CONGREGATION
A Witness to History Online Forum
Sponsored by Beth El Brotherhood

Eric Kisch, Witness to History
“WW II Jews of Shanghai”

A Robert Siegel Interview

Sunday, March 6, 2022
10:15 am - Noon



Robert Siegel will interview Eric Kisch as he recalls his family’s experience among the 20,000 Jews of Shanghai during World War II. He will recount memories of his boyhood in Shanghai, his father’s release from two Nazi concentration camps, how his family managed to immigrate, to thrive as a business owner, and then to survive Japanese occupation and life in a Shanghai ghetto. The forum will include a brief introductory video and relevant photos and documents in PowerPoint slides.



Robert Siegel reported news for three stations prior to being hired by NPR for an award-winning 41-year career, 31 of them hosting *All Things Considered*. In retirement, he is a literary contributor to *Moment Magazine*, conducts their *Moment Live! Seminars*, and moderates public affairs webinars for the American Friends of the Rabin Medical Center in Israel where he interviews experts on society, politics, medicine, and the economy as they address the complexities of these turbulent times.

RSVP to Ron Sturman: rgsturman@msn.com

Welcome the Naziri Family!

THE BETH EL Refugee Committee was formed in 2017 when a large wave of Afghan refugees arrived in the DC metropolitan area. At that time, the congregation connected with the family of Jawid Noori, who we supported through various means until they were able to find sound employment, learn English, enroll in school, and find a good home. Jawid and his family are now in the process of becoming American citizens.

With the current influx of refugees, we have connected with another family, the Naziris, who are also in need of temporary assistance while they adjust to their new lives. With the aid of Beth El, they have recently settled into a garden apartment complex at Van Dorn and Duke Streets. The complex has many Afghan families who provide social support for the family. We thank the many Beth El families who donated gift cards, funds towards rent, and furnishings for their apartment. The Naziris would still be sharing a small studio apartment were it not for Beth El's generosity.

The Naziris fled Kabul with less than 24-hour's notice, bringing with them only a few documents and whatever a backpack could carry. They were among the thousands evacuated in the first days of the exodus, were taken first to Qatar and Germany before eventually finding themselves at Fort Dix where they stayed for two months, obtaining the necessary papers to allow them to begin their lives in the U.S. They left behind family, their home, and their settled lives.

The Naziri family is composed of Nic, the father, whose passions in retirement were gardening and furniture building; Karima, the mother, who has been filling her days here making clothing since she received a donated machine; Manzoor, the 23-year-old son, who is the English speaker and who will be supporting the family; and Sanam, the 17-year-old daughter, who is enrolled at Alexandria City High School in ninth grade due to lack of English skills. In addition to this family and another brother who serves in the US military, the Naziri extended family includes 19 others (adult children and their

families) whose lives have been upended and who have been or are awaiting resettlement in Canada and Maryland.

This month's article focuses on Manzoor. He has been working hard to help his family. This has included looking for doctors to help with the family's myriad health issues, applying for Social Security numbers for each member, tracking down benefits, translating daily, taking his family shopping, and helping with daily chores, all while applying for jobs for himself and figuring out how to complete his interrupted college education. He has applied to George Mason University and has been told he qualifies as a senior. He hopes to enroll by this summer. Manzoor has applied for jobs both in his field (accounting, finance, human resources), and wherever he sees job openings. He was recently interviewed for a position at the new Wegman's in Alexandria, as well as for a professional position at Interstate. NOVA RAFT (Resettling Afghan Families Together), a non-profit with which Beth El has been helping the family, recently awarded Manzoor a scholarship to driving school so he will have his US license soon. This personable, optimistic young man has had to grow up very quickly. The pressures on him are tremendous, and he has stepped up to the plate in admirable fashion.

If you are interested in volunteering or donating to RAFT, please visit www.novaraft.org. A detailed article on RAFT's efforts was recently published in the Alexandria Gazette. <https://alextimes.com/2022/01/raft-volunteers-work-around-the-clock-to-support-afghan-refugees/>

To contribute to the Beth El Refugee Assistance Fund, send a check to BEHC made out to the Beth El Refugee Assistance Fund or click on Support Us/Make a Donation to donate online at www.bethelhebrew.org and scroll down to Afghan Refugee Assistance Fund under Payment Details Type.

Linda Waller

Good News: We are accepting book donations again!

Please bring your donations of books, puzzles, and DVDs to Beth El during normal business hours, M-Th 9-5 and Fridays 9-3. Since we did not have a 2022 sale, 2023 promises to be a mega-sale!

If you have any questions, please contact **Janet Hlatky** at JEHlatky@outlook.com or 703-447-0456. Or email booksale@bethelhebrew.org, our new easy-to-remember email address.



The Congregation Gratefully Acknowledges the Following Donations

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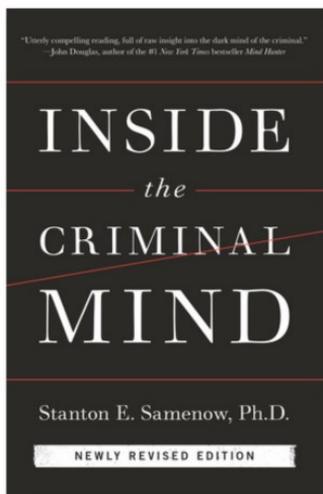
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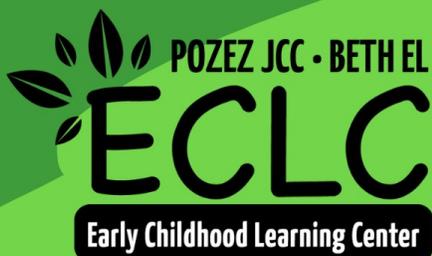
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Beth El Women of Reform Judaism's *Annual Raffle*

Winners will be randomly drawn for 3 Prizes:

- ❖ *\$100 Gift Certificate to Giant Foods*
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Drawing: May 1, 2022

Winners will be notified by phone if not present at the drawing.

**\$20.00 for a sheet of 14 tickets
or \$3.00 per ticket**

Remember -- this is not just *your* annual raffle. *We urge you to offer tickets to your friends, neighbors, co-workers, and relatives. Let everyone in on the fun!*

You may photocopy or print the ticket page from the March/April edition of the Beth El Bulletin for additional tickets, or print as many copies as you need from the email sent to WRJ members.



Instructions:

- ❖ Complete ONE of the tickets (you do not need to complete all of them or cut them apart)
- ❖ Make your check payable to BE-WRJ
- ❖ Mail your check and the tickets to:
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For any questions, please call:

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Many thanks for your support!

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2, lots of special events on
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