

**So many opportunities to be active in our community this spring!**

## **Eat a Little Something**

**Go out to dinner**  
*See page 13 and page 26*

**Go in to dinner**  
*See page 32*

**Enjoy a festive dinner**  
*See page 33*

## **Have Fun**

**Go to a Museum**  
*See page 9*

**Play at the Purim Carnival**  
*See page 17*

**Play in the gardens**  
*See page 18*

## **Do a Good Deed**

*See pages 4, 5, 9, 12, 14, 24, 29, and 32*

**Tikkun Olam in many forms**

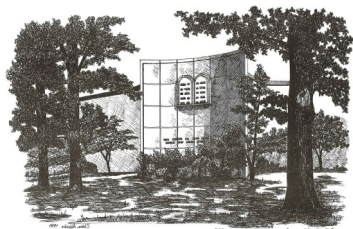
## **Socialize**

*See pages 5, 6, 7, 9, 13, 16, 17, 32, and 33*

*New Friends around every corner*

## Worship Services

<b>Friday, March 1</b> Erev Shabbat Service 7:00 pm	<b>Friday, April 5</b> Fifth Grade Student-Led Erev Shabbat Service 7:00 pm
<b>Saturday, March 2</b> Shabbat Morning Service 10:30 am Tot Shabbat 11:00	<b>Saturday, April 6</b> Shabbat Service for Reproductive Rights 6:00 am Shabbat Morning Service and Bar Mitzvah of Dylan Hanig 10:30 am Tot Shabbat 11:00 am
<b>Friday, March 8</b> Seventh Grade Student-Led Erev Shabbat Service 7:00 pm	<b>Friday, April 12</b> Fifth Grade Student-Led Erev Shabbat Service 7:00 pm
<b>Saturday, March 9</b> Shabbat Service for Reproductive Rights 6:00 am Shabbat Morning Service and Bar Mitzvah of Noah Warschaw 10:30 am	<b>Saturday, April 13</b> Shabbat Morning Service and Bat Mitzvah of Mayim Harding 10:30 am
<b>Friday, March 15</b> Erev Shabbat Service 7:00 pm	<b>Friday, April 19</b> Erev Shabbat Service 7:00 pm
<b>Saturday, March 16</b> Shabbat Morning Service and Bat Mitzvah of Alix Ares 10:30 am	<b>Saturday, April 20</b> Shabbat Morning Service Mayim Harding 10:30 am Tot Shabbat 11:00 am
<b>Friday, March 22</b> Erev Shabbat Service 7:00 pm	<b>Friday, April 26</b> Erev Shabbat Service 7:00 pm
<b>Saturday, March 23</b> Shabbat Morning Service and Bat Mitzvah of Addison Cohn 10:30 am Tot Shabbat 11:00	<b>Saturday, April 27</b> Shabbat Morning Service 10:30 am
<b>Friday, March 29</b> Erev Shabbat Service 7:00 pm	
<b>Saturday, March 30</b> Shabbat Morning Service 10:30 am	



## Table of Contents

Rabbi's Remarks: Life is Still Good.....	3
Cantor's Corner: Civic Engagement.....	4
Caring Community Committee .....	4
President's Point of View: Our Beth El .....	5
Readers of Beth El .....	5
WRJ Social Action .....	5
Executive Director's Entry .....	6
Beth El Babies .....	6
Religious School Report: If You Build It, They Will Come .....	7
ECLC Update .....	8
ALIVE! .....	9
Culture Club Spring Adventures .....	9
B' Mitzvah.....	10-11
Torah Portions for March and April 2024 .....	10
Member News .....	11
Community Wish List.....	12
Beth El Card Collecting Club .....	13
Parents' Night Out.....	13
Brotherhood News .....	14
Please Donate Hotel Points .....	14
WRJ News .....	15
Let's Dress Up for Purim Tot Shabbat! .....	16
Beth El Library News.....	16
Beth El WRJ Judaica Shop News .....	16
Purim Carnival Fast Approaching! .....	17
Help Us Maintain Our Beautiful Gardens.....	18
Special Event: Demystifying Disability: How to Be an Ally.....	19
Donations .....	20, 28
Special Event: What Do I Do Now? .....	22
Disability Inclusion Committee .....	21
Guest Essay: Becoming a Leader at Beth El .....	23
Help Our Ambulance Fundraising Campaign! .....	24
Chapel in the Woods .....	25
Membership Moments.....	26
Rhoda Goldman Annual Book Sale Wrap-Up .....	27
Mashliach Manot.....	29
Mogen David Adom Ambulance Donations .....	30
Israel Committee Insights .....	31
"Evening" with Friends Call for Hosts.....	32
Passover Second Night Community Seder .....	33
ECLC Preschool Registration for 2024-2025.....	34

## Rabbi's Remarks

### *Life Is Still Good*



**O**N THE SHABBAT evening of Oct. 6, I sat with Gal and the kids in our sukkah and celebrated my birthday. Life was good. Only a few days earlier, in the same sukkah, Gal and I had hosted the participants for our upcoming Adult Israel Experience. We were set to depart for Israel on October 15. Congregationally, we had just concluded a spiritually uplifting High Holy Days that left me feeling so proud of our community. Following my “Why Pray?” erev Rosh Hashanah sermon and the moving responses from those who accepted my invitation to complete “Why Pray?” reflection postcards, we were moving toward forming our Tefillah Task Force. Together, we aimed to examine every aspect of worship at Beth El with the goal of better aligning our services with our congregational mission to be a “...sacred Jewish community for all who seek connection, meaning, and healing.”

Back on Oct. 6, our new Director of Education, **Dan Swartz**, and his family were settling in and becoming a part of the Beth El family. In the office, **Harriet Cohen** had recently joined us, adding smarts and wit to our team. As 5784 stretched before us, the year felt full of potential. Like I said, life was good.

And then, Oct. 7.

After the deadliest violence against the Jewish people since the Holocaust and the ensuing war in Gaza to rescue the hostages and eliminate Hamas, for the past four-plus months, it has felt next-to-impossible to focus on anything other than this. Simply, this is the biggest event in the history of the Jewish people since the 1973 Yom Kippur War. Months later, the war continues in Gaza. Tensions and conflict continue to escalate in the North. Too many Jewish souls remain in captivity beneath Gaza. In the West, antisemitism — not only from the far right but also from the left and from groups with whom we have historically stood as allies — continues to threaten the safety and well-being of Jewish communities in Europe and North America.

But resilience is the Jewish way. We reach for life, no matter what. As hard as it has been to feel the space to take even a deep breath, over these past months, I’ve seen our congregation inspiringly come together in ways that surpass even the ways we navigated what felt like the interminable, darkest days of Covid. Being Jewish has felt more central to our frequently multi-hyphenated modern identities. Shabbat services have been a renewed focal point of our lives, a weekly coming together of sanctuary and comfort. In November, 100-plus members of Beth El rallied together to be a part of the almost 300,000 Jews and allies who joined a solidarity-with-Israel gathering on the National Mall. Together we have raised almost \$80,000 to supply Magen David Adom in Israel with much needed support through the purchase of a new ambulance. B’nei Mitzvah and baby namings and vibrant Religious School

Sunday mornings and the Brotherhood and the WRJ and all the aspects of Jewish communal life that make it so special continue.

Yes, we’ve been weighed down by a heavy burden. But life goes on. We go on. And, dare I say, life is still good. Our reflective worship work is resuming. And, looking ahead to the spring, Beth El offers abundant opportunities to engage in the ongoing work creating connected, meaningful, Jewish community. Here are but three of them:

#### **Growing Jewish Parents**

Starting on Sunday, March 3, I will be teaching a six-session parenting course based on the classic Jewish parenting book *The Blessing of a Skinned Knee*, by Dr. Wendy Mogul. *The Blessing of a Skinned Knee* points the way to raising self-reliant, exuberant, and compassionate children.

Together, we will look to the wisdom of the Torah and teachings of the Talmud as well as contemporary psychological insights into nine “blessings” that address these key parenting issues: teaching respect for adults, chores, keeping expectations in line with your child’s temperament, meal-time battles, coping with frustration, avoiding overscheduling and overindulgence, and helping your child develop independence and self-control.

The session will be held on Sunday mornings from 10:30 am – noon at Beth El on the following dates: March 3, March 10, March 17, April 7, April 14, and April 21. Please visit the website to register and purchase the book in advance. Prior to the first session you will receive an email regarding reading and preparation.

#### **Celebrating Freedom as a Community**

Second, our family-friendly, congregationally-inclusive Second Night Passover Seder returns by popular demand. Our lively Seder is affordable and appropriate for all ages. In order for the congregational Seder to remain a success, our professional team looks to you to help carry the load by volunteering as a Seder table captain and we plan to again blend a potluck-style meal with an entrée and dessert provided by Beth El. Keep an eye on upcoming communications and plan to again register via our website.

#### **Remembering Our Shared History**

Last, one of the hard lessons of the aftermath of Oct. 7 has been the impact of not only the “flattening” of the Holocaust, but the appalling lack of Holocaust education among millennials, and generations Z and Alpha. No longer is the Holocaust respected and understood as a singular horror in human history. All too often, the Holocaust is used to analogize a contemporary situation. Nothing does

*Continued on page 11*





## Cantor's Corner

**I**T IS WITH GREAT excitement that I announce the start of our 2024 Civic Engagement Campaign entitled "Every Voice, Every Vote."

Starting in 2018, our Beth El community has participated in significant voter outreach efforts working in collaboration with our partners at the Religious Action Center as well as other social justice organizations and faith communities in our region.

I am incredibly proud that the fight for voting rights has become one of the defining social justice issues at Beth El. Over the years we have written thousands upon thousands of postcards and made countless phone calls in our efforts to protect our democracy in sacred "Get out the Vote" work. Folks from every age demographic have participated in our campaign at every level possible. The fight to protect our democracy affects us all and therefore involves us all. We have had youth postcard writing events and Voter Shabbats where our building was full of people making election phone calls, and everything in between.

Our work is 100 percent non-partisan. As a campaign, we do not support specific parties or politicians. Rather, we support and advocate for all eligible voters having their voices heard and their votes counted.

The right to vote has become increasingly more restricted as lawmakers across our nation have placed more and more obstacles between a potential voter and the

ballot box. These obstacles disproportionately affect people of color, particularly since 2013, when key provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 were struck down.

We already have many exciting things planned in this work, including educational opportunities, phone banks, postcard writing parties, and a Voter Shabbat service in October. We need the most important thing, though — your involvement.

If you would like to join us in this very important work, please email me at [JKaufman@bethelhebrew.org](mailto:JKaufman@bethelhebrew.org) to let me know your interest. There will be opportunities, as well, to donate funds to these efforts to help offset the costs of postage.

Additionally, please join me and the Religious Action Center for the launch of the national civic engagement campaign on March 20 at 5:00 pm. Registration information will be shared on our Facebook page in advance of the launch.

At the launch we will further explore the Jewish values that guide all of this work, as well as hear from key leaders in our movement and partner organizations. It will be a wonderful campaign launch that you don't want to miss.

I look forward to working with you all.

— Cantor Kaufman



## Caring Community Committee

### *Beth El is a Kehilat Chesed (loving community)*

**T**HE CARING COMMUNITY Committee (CCC) provides a helping hand during times of illness, loneliness or bereavement of its members. The committee works in partnership with the clergy and keeps them informed of its activities. It operates on a confidential, privacy-respecting basis in the following areas of action and more:

- Provides meals as needed, and assistance with funerals at Beth El;
- Keeps in touch with congregants with long-term needs;
- Offers members information about area services and resources and helps obtain them;
- Establishes caregiver support and bereavement support groups as needed, and plans programs to meet their needs.

The next CCC program, *What Do I Do Now?* is coming up on Sunday, April 14, from 1:00 – 4:00 pm at Beth El. This workshop will give participants the tools and resources to handle some of life's most difficult challenges. Experts and roundtable discussions will focus on how to get your affairs in order, caregiving issues, and what to do when a death occurs. Resource materials will be available. See page 22 for more information.

To access any of the above or to offer ideas, suggestions or help, please contact the Beth El office at 703-370-9400, or CCC Chair **Ruth Perlstein** at 703-978-9341 or [rperl8607@gmail.com](mailto:rperl8607@gmail.com).





## President's Point of View

### Our Beth El



**W**HEN YOU WANT TO redecorate your living room or go on vacation or get a new outfit, when your washing machine breaks or your roof leaks... you don't look to someone else to take care of things for you. Your home is what you make it and you know there's no one else to look to.

When we say, "together we are Beth El," that's part of what we mean. Beth El is our House of God. Our home. It is what we, collectively, make it. That means we get out of it only as much as we invest into it. When our roof leaks, there is only us, collectively, to fix it. When we need better lighting or more security or better accessibility features, we have to invest in those things. I am grateful to all of you who have been so supportive and understanding about our need to increase the security fee (if you haven't already – please go to our website and make your payment).

We are lucky to have a wonderful music program and to get marvelous musical guests. We get special guest speakers on the bimah. Our Disability Inclusion Committee, Brotherhood, WRJ, Caring Community, and others all bring in wonderful speakers and programs from time to time. We have a vibrant, thriving Religious School.

After Oct. 7, the word "sanctuary" took on a whole new meaning. We became a haven to gather. Our Israel Committee has created beautiful spaces for us to learn and

share as the tragedy in Israel and Gaza continues to unfold. That is part of what we mean when we say, "together we are Beth El." We each have something unique and special that we bring to the Beth El community, but also, bringing in special guests and offering enriching programming comes at a cost. Our staff works tirelessly to seek out grants and other outside funding, but just like your house is your home and your responsibility, Beth El is our house and ultimately, the responsibility falls to us to make it what we want it to be.

For me, Beth El is the place that feeds my soul (I mean, isn't that what a House of God is supposed to do?). Even now, as president, when walking into the building is likely to mean I'm confronted with the latest HVAC crisis, I know that every time I arrive, I will see a friendly face, I will feel a weight lift off my shoulders, I will leave feeling renewed. And that is priceless. It's worth investing in.

L'Shalom,

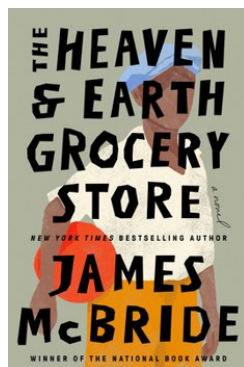
Dorrit Lowsen

## Readers of Beth El

**O**N APRIL 15 WE will be discussing *The Heaven and Earth Grocery Store* by James McBride. In 1972, when workers in Pottstown, Pennsylvania were digging the foundations for a new development, the last thing they expected to find was a skeleton at the bottom of a well. Who the skeleton was and how it got there were two of the long-held secrets kept by the residents of Chicken Hill, the dilapidated neighborhood where immigrant Jews and African Americans lived side by side and shared ambitions and sorrows. If you need a copy, please contact me, and I might be able to assist.

If you would like to join our online book discussion group, please contact me.

Jeanette Astrow  
[jlastrov@verizon.net](mailto:jlastrov@verizon.net)



## WRJ Social Action

### Clothes Closet Clean-Out

**S**PRING IS ALMOST HERE and it is time to get back to one of our favorite projects – Spring Closet Cleaning! 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! We will collect clothing donations throughout the month of April. You can leave your donations in the Social Action bins in the Beth El lobby, when the synagogue is open.

Note – PathForward also needs white socks and underwear!

Learn more about PathForward at [pfva.org](http://pfva.org).

Thank you for supporting our community!

Janet Garber  
 703-598-7904  
[garberj123@gmail.com](mailto:garberj123@gmail.com)



## Executive Director's Entry

**I**T'S THE MIDDLE of February which means it is almost March, which means it is almost spring, which means it is almost Purim, and then Passover!

For the past two years, we have had a very successful Mishloach Manot fundraiser, and we hope this year will once again be successful. Each year there is a bit of confusion on what reciprocity means so please make sure you read the information when you sign up.

This year the hamantaschen are being baked by the members of Beth El and WRJ so they are sure to taste better! Every member of our community receives a box with hamantaschen and other goodies.

### Why Mishloach Manot?

The Mishloach Manot boxes fulfill the mitzvah in the Book of Esther that says, "we must give portions to each other." This counteracts the statements made by Haman accusing the Jewish people of being a scattered and divided nation. As we are once again facing a rise in antisemitism, what better way to counteract than to come together and share with our community?

Be sure to participate in the packing of the boxes during Religious School on March 17, celebrate Purim on

March 23, stop by during normal business hours March 19-22 to pick up your Purim Mishloach Manot box. and attend the Purim Spiel and Carnival on March 24.

### Celebrate Freedom as a Community

After Purim comes Passover and we are already preparing for our Third Annual Second Night Community Potluck Seder on Tuesday, April 23. Last year we had so many people that we almost had to turn people away, so be sure you sign up early. Just remember this is not a traditional seder experience, it is a loud, community-filled gathering! If you didn't attend last year, I am sure you heard how awesome it was and you won't miss it this year.

I didn't want to write this article about the building or security (it's a little boring), but I would be remiss if I didn't mention that there are many changes and upgrades taking place to bring our building up to date in security best practices. This is my number one priority and what I currently spend most of my time working on. If you ever have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out.

### Elizabeth (Liz) Bayer

(pronouns: she/her/hers)

Executive Director

[lbayer@bethelhebrew.org](mailto:lbayer@bethelhebrew.org)

## Beth El Babies

**O**N SUNDAY, FEB. 11, the Beth El Babies group and a few WRJ volunteers gathered together at Beth El for a CPR training led by HeartsCPR, an American Red Cross training partner. This event allowed several Beth El families with young children to learn valuable skills such as what to do when a child is choking and how to give a child CPR. While the parents attended their CPR training, their babies spent time with a few WRJ volunteer babysitters. It was a true Beth El community effort!

If you are interested in learning more about the Beth El Babies group, contact **Kate Finley** at [kfinley@gmail.com](mailto:kfinley@gmail.com) or **Lauren Soltani** at [lsoltani@gmail.com](mailto:lsoltani@gmail.com).



# Religious School Report

## *If You Build It, They Will Come*



I AM A HUGE baseball fan. I bleed blue for my Chicago Cubs, I have road-tripped with friends to visit ballparks, and Feb. 14 is not Valentine's Day, but when Cubs pitchers and catchers report to spring training. Likewise, some of my favorite movies are baseball themed. If it's on the television, I am watching, regardless of where I pick it up. *Moneyball*, *Major League*, *Bull Durham*, they are all up there. But one of my all time favorites is *Field of Dreams*. While often misquoted, most of us know the famous line, "If you build it, he will come."

Similarly, we read a quote in *parshat Teruma* about this time of year as well.

וְעָשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ וְשִׁכְנָתִי בְּתוֹכָם:

And let them make Me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them.

Similar sounding phrases, both talking about purposely building something special. While Ray in *Field of Dreams* is building a baseball field in hopes of attracting the ghosts of ballplayers from yesteryear, in this verse God is asking the Israelites to build a place (or a community) in which God can dwell among them. Much like we strive for at Beth El.

In addition to baseball starting up, it is also a time to look ahead to the next school year, to build something for students that has them wanting to come to Beth El. While new to the cadence of synagogue-educator-life, in the public school setting, the calendar shifting from 2023 to 2024 signaled an opportunity to start looking ahead toward the next school year. It is not to say that the final six months of the year are unimportant; rather, it was to say that the planning was complete for the current school year, those plans were securely in motion, and it was time to dream about the year ahead.

So, now six months in, I am excited to begin building the 2024-25 school year together. To that end, conversa-

tions are already happening. During the month of February, our Religious School & Youth Committee hosted listening sessions for families in our Religious School so we could get their input. We shared our expression of the Beth El mission (below) and asked:

"Where are we hitting the mark?"

"Where are opportunities for growth?"

"What are ideas you have to improve our accessibility and engagement in the Religious School?"

These were wonderful conversations. Not only were we able to see where our programs were excelling or missing the mark, we saw the commitment that has enabled Beth El to stay relevant for more than 160 years. I could not be more proud to be part of that tradition.

Next, we will talk with our students (past and present) and our teachers. These conversations will help us craft the vision for Religious School and youth programs for the future. Thank you to everyone who has participated and will participate over the next few months.

In addition to these conversations, **Rabbi Spinrad**, **Cantor Kaufman**, and I are trying some new programs to help in planning for next year. One such program that we implemented this past month has been our Family *Tefilah* Experience on select Sundays for kindergarten through third grade. One time each in January and February families came together at the beginning of Religious School to take part in a music-filled, developmentally-appropriate weekday *tefilah*. The response thus far has been positive and the three of us look to grow this program over the next couple of months.

Our goal is to continue to build on these successes to create programs that engage students and their families.

**Dan Swartz**

Education Director

[dswartz@bethelhebrew.org](mailto:dswartz@bethelhebrew.org)

# 511 CLUB

5:00PM - 1 DRINK - 1 BIT OF JEWISH WISDOM

JOIN GENERATION X & Y IN AN ONLINE SOCIAL GATHERING WITH RABBI DAVID SPINRAD TAILORED TO WHAT IS HAPPENING IN YOUR LIFE TODAY.

CONTACT [OFFICE@BETHELHEBREW.ORG](mailto:OFFICE@BETHELHEBREW.ORG) FOR MORE INFORMATION.







## ECLC Update

**B**EING A PART OF a community is a basic need for every individual. Everyone wants to be included, to feel accepted and supported. Being part of a community helps people develop a sense of individual identity as well as a collective identity. Community, by definition, is a group of people who are united by a sense of trust, care, and support. In our ECLC, we strive to help our students learn what it means to be a part of the community by providing opportunities to model and help them learn how to act and what to do as part of the group. For many of our young friends, our program may be the first time they are in a community without their parents. There is a lot to learn!

Most houses of worship, by their very nature, are about community. There is so much power in people worshipping together — but there is more. The programming is designed to bring people together, to spend time with peers. Beth El is a sacred Jewish community open to all, always striving to bring people together.

We saw a shining example of our community in February when we gathered for the annual Tot Pajama Party. The one and only amazing **Ms. Carol** usually presides over the event and in her absence this year, **Cantor Jason**, Director of Education **Dan Swartz**, ECLC Assistant Director **Ali Kerlin**, and I had the pleasure of coming together to create a joint program. The first ‘community’ moment was the chance for us to all to work together. So much fun! (And way more fun than doing it alone!)

Even bigger than that moment was the spectacular evening itself. Over 70 people participated, coming from all different groups including: the Pozez JCC-Beth El ECLC, Beth El, Tot Shabbat regulars, and the *Growing Jewish Families* program. Kids who knew each other enjoyed spending time together; kids who didn’t know others made new friends. Parents visited with friends and met new folks as well. Parents who didn’t know each other before spent time together because their kids knew each other and gravitated towards each other. Some loved the experience so much that they are coming to the ECLC next year!

It was a loud, lively, music and story filled evening. We gathered in the front lobby under the big star for Havdalah led by Cantor Jason and Dan. The four Havdalah Helpers were teens who grew up together in this community and remember the PJ Party from their tot years — and couldn’t wait to be a part of it again (and, yes, they came in matching PJ pants intentionally!).

Our hearts were filled to the brim watching our community in action and we can’t wait to do it again!

L’shalom

**Dina**

**Dina Backer**

Director, Pozez JCC-  
Beth El ECLC

[dbacker@thej.org](mailto:dbacker@thej.org)



↑ Cantor Jason, Education Director Dan, and the Havdalah Helpers: Amanda Johnson, Ezra Backer, Molly Backer, and Casey Pick

ECLC Director Dina Back and ECLC Assistant Director Ali Kerlin ↑

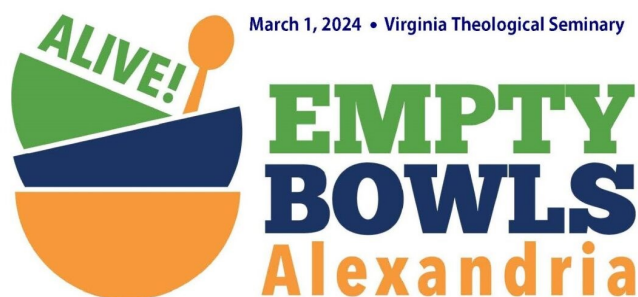
←Cantor Jason and Education Director Dan jamming

## ALIVE!

**T**HANKS TO ALL OF YOU who participated in SOUPer Bowl Sunday. While the Kansas City Chiefs won the game in a thrilling overtime, it was our neighbors in need who really won with all your generous food donations. Special thanks go to Dan Swartz who set up the food collection table in the Beth El lobby.

Just around the corner is the seventh annual Empty Bowls Alexandria to benefit ALIVE! on Friday, March 1. Join us to raise funds and awareness for people facing food insecurity in the City of Alexandria. Your ticket buys you a night of delicious food, local music, and a handcrafted bowl to take home.

For more information about how you can help Beth El support ALIVE! go to [alive-inc.org](http://alive-inc.org) or contact **Jennie Geisner** at [jennie.geisner@gmail.com](mailto:jennie.geisner@gmail.com) or **Donald Cohen** at [donald.m.cohen@gmail.com](mailto:donald.m.cohen@gmail.com).



There are still spots available! Register today at [alive-inc.org/empty-bowls-2024/](http://alive-inc.org/empty-bowls-2024/)

Can't make it? You can still donate or become a sponsor!



**BETH EL HEBREW CONGREGATION**

### RECYCLE YOUR SNEAKERS

1. Recycle your sneakers
2. Contribute to a circular economy
3. Make a global impact
4. And... Beth El earns money on every sneaker recycled!

All reusable sneakers from our sneaker drive fundraiser program are recirculated to secondhand markets so people can access quality, pre-owned footwear at affordable prices. All heavily used and damaged footwear is recycled to reuse materials or to convert waste into new energy.



**Make a Positive Impact With Old Sneakers!**

**gotsneakers?**  
A Sneaker Recycling Organization

**200 MILLION**

In the United States, at least 200 million pairs of shoes and sneakers end up in landfills each year.

**30-40 YEARS**

Shoes in landfills can take 30 to 40 years to decompose.

**CO<sub>2</sub>**

Harmful chemicals are emitted into the soil and air which pollutes our surroundings.

**600+ MILLION**

More than 600 million people worldwide don't even own a pair of shoes.

## Culture Club Spring Adventures!

**T**HE WEATHER SHOULD BE warming up, so come out to see friends or make new ones! March and April selections have free admission. Lunch, of course, is pay-as-you-go.

**National American History Museum**  
**Friday, March 15 — 10:30 am**

There is so much to see in this museum! Big installations and small. Something for everyone! “Food: Transforming the American Table,” the “Dolby Entertainment Center,” “(re)Framing Conversations — Photographs by Richard Avedon 1946-65,” and many more!

After we meet up inside the Constitution Avenue entrance, feel free to wander to explore exhibits that are of interest to you.

Of course, we’ll gather for lunch in the museum to socialize and share our experiences of the day.

**Smithsonian American Art Museum**  
**Thursday, April 4 — 11:30 am**

Meet up in the indoor Kogod Courtyard for a snack or light lunch to socialize before heading to your choice of exhibits.

“The Future of Orchids: Conservation and Collaboration” includes 200 varieties of orchids and multimedia art installation. Other features include “Fighters for Freedom: William H. Johnson Picturing Justice,” “Pattern & Paradox: Quilts of Amish Women,” and “Isaac Julien: Lessons of the Hour: Frederick Douglass.”

Please let me know to expect you: [stafm@aol.com](mailto:stafm@aol.com).  
**Meryl Goldhammer**



# B' Mitzvah

**Noah Warschaw**  
**March 9, 2024**

Noah Warschaw is a seventh grade honors student at Washington Irving Middle School. He enjoys playing trumpet in the symphonic band and being part of the WIMS theater department. Outside of school, Noah umpires baseball for West Springfield Little League and participates in Boy Scouts. Important things to Noah are family, hanging out with friends, being able to express himself through the musical arts, education, and participating in new activities.

For his mitzvah project, Noah is volunteering, spending time assisting his elderly neighbor who is diagnosed with memory loss conditions. He chose this project to connect with his neighbor who is passing on and sharing traditions and stories. By doing this project he is learning how to deal with issues that typically affect people later in life.

Noah plans to continue his education by working towards being confirmed and plans to be a madrich to help others reach this milestone in their Jewish lives.

Noah sends a big thanks to his tutor, Jeannette Astrow, all of his Religious School teachers, Rabbi Spinrad, and Cantor Kaufman for helping prepare him for this special day. Noah also thanks his parents and his sister for all their love and support.

## Torah Portions for March and April 2024

Date	Portion
March 2	<b>KI TISA</b> Exodus 30:11–34:35 I Kings 18:1–39
March 9	<b>VAYAK'HEIL</b> Exodus 35:1–38:20 II Kings 12:5–18
March 16	<b>P'KUDEI</b> Exodus 38:21–40:38 I Kings 7:51–8:21
March 23	<b>VAYIKRA</b> Leviticus 1:1–5:26 Esther 7:1–10; 8:15–17
March 30	<b>TZAV</b> Leviticus 6:1–8:36 Ezekiel 36:22–36
April 6	<b>SH'MINI</b> Leviticus 9:1–11:47 Ezekiel 45:16–25
April 13	<b>TAZRIA</b> Leviticus 12:1–13:59 Malachi 3:4–24
April 27	<b>CHOL HAMO-EID PESACH</b> Exodus 33:12–34:26 Ezekiel 37:1–14

**Alix Ayres**  
**March 16, 2024**

Alix is a seventh grade student at Browne Academy. She enjoys playing basketball and taking viola lessons. She is an avid reader and loves to draw.

For her mitzvah project, she made sandwiches for the Be the Good Project. The sandwiches are delivered to Martha's table in DC to feed the homeless and hungry. The charity appealed to her because she felt good about how something as simple as making a sandwich can make such a huge difference in someone's life.

Alix believes that having a bat mitzvah is an important milestone in her Jewish journey. She would like to thank the following people: her Hebrew teachers throughout the years, Robin Thompson, Ezra, Cantor Kaufman, and Rabbi Spinrad for helping her prepare for her big day.

She would also like to take this opportunity to thank her parents and her brother for all their love and support.

**Dylan Hanig**  
**April 6, 2024**

Dylan Hanig is a seventh grade honors student at Carl Sandburg Middle School who has earned straight As. He loves lacrosse and plays on a competitive field and box team all year round. In addition, Dylan loves playing basketball with the local recreation team. Most days after school, Dylan can be found playing basketball, jumping on the trampoline, and hanging out with his friends. When he isn't outside playing with friends, he is inside playing video games online with friends. Dylan is a very social kid and values his friendships.

For Dylan's Bar Mitzvah, he has focused on helping with food insecurity. He chose to work with ALIVE! volunteering with food distribution in Alexandria because he cares about food insecurity in his community. Dylan believes food insecurity is a big problem and wants to do all he can to help.

In Dylan's words, a Bar Mitzvah is a tradition passed down through generations. Participating in my Bar Mitzvah means continuing the traditions of my family. He is grateful for all of my Rebrev School teachers who have helped him to this point.

Thank you to Rabbi Spinrad, Cantor Kaufman, Lisa Sheldone and Nancy Tobin for helping him prepare for his bar mitzvah. He would also like to thank his mom and dad for helping him along this journey.



## Addison Cohn March 23, 2024

Addison is a seventh grade student at Alexandria Country Day School. She enjoys playing tennis, field hockey, drama, travel, and spending time with friends and family. Building relationships and showing kindness to others is important to Addison.

For her mitzvah project, Addison is volunteering with ALIVE! in Alexandria to help serve those in need in her community. Addison chose this project because she has volunteered to help package meals in the past and enjoyed it.

Having a Bat Mitzvah means that she will formally be welcomed into the Jewish community and her faith, taking on more responsibility than she has before. She will also be welcomed into the Jewish community as a stronger, more responsible person. Addison thanks Lisa Sheldone, her tutor, all of her Religious School teachers over the years, Dan Swartz, Rabbi Spinrad, and Cantor Kaufman for helping prepare her for this very special day. Addison thanks her family and friends and her parents, Todd and Janice, for their love and support.

## Mayim Harding April 13, 2024

Mayim is a seventh grade honors student at Mark Twain Middle School. Since she was three years old, her passion has been dancing and performing. Just this past January, her skills earned her a scholarship to attend a dance convention in Los Angeles, CA. In addition, she is completing her first year as part of a select ballet conservatory. Besides learning various forms of dance, Mayim also finds time to study acting, do musical theater, play the violin, and take voice lessons.

For her mitzvah project, Mayim worked with the Carpenter's Shelter. For Halloween, she assembled and donated 50 gift bags filled with candy and pencils. And later in November, she made 50 additional bagged lunches for the shelter. She hopes to continue working with the shelter throughout 2024.

Having a Bat Mitzvah is an important milestone for Mayim; it is a coming-of-age moment. She is appreciative of her tutor, Arlene Tave, and Rabbi Spinrad, Cantor Kaufman, and all of her Beth El teachers (including her pre-school teachers who looked out for her since she was two) for helping prepare her for this special day. Mayim is excited to celebrate with her parents, her brother Nolan, and all of her family and friends who supported her along the way.

# Member News

## Welcome New Members:

Natasha Clark

Donald and Marcia Feinberg

Lemore and Kevin Fritz, and Violet and Griffin

Natalie and Joe Powers, and Ben

Holly Sandler

## Mazel Tov to:

Gregg Mervis on his retirement

Cantor Jason Kaufman on completing his 13<sup>th</sup> marathon at Disney World, and a bunch of other races there besides

Andy and Joanne Rhodes on the birth of grandson Archer Jude Rhodes

Jo Ann and Evan Allen, and David and Karen Agate, on the engagement of Daniel Agate to Lane Reynolds

Courtney and Travis Freidman on their marriage

Faren Sachs for winning a Scholastic Gold Key in photography

Franceska Klugerman, Gerrie Sturman, Wilma Marks, Elizabeth Starler, Gary Avakian, Leonard Rubenstein, Alice Schwartz, Joel Goldhammer, Joyce Gordon, Gerda Whitman, Ann Levy, and Stephen Harvith, all of whom have special birthdays in March or April, and especially to Daniel Apple who has an extra special birthday in March

Michael and Michele Cook, Steven & Joselyn Rochlis, George & Paula Lader, Jeffrey & Amy Brodie, Scott & Bonnie Hannan, and Robert & Alyce Phinney, all of whom have special anniversaries in March or April

## Condolences to:

The family and friends of **Beth El member** Annette Kilian Libby Barsky; Joseph and Gail Barsky, David Barsky and Patricia Petroccione, Kenneth and Julie Barsky, and Rachel and Daniel Copeland; and Lena Barsky, Annabelle Barsky, Maiya Barsky, Eli Barsky, Matthew Copeland, Jordan Copeland, and Jocelyn Copeland, on the passing of beloved husband, father, and grandfather Lester Barsky

*Continued from page 3*

or will ever compare to the Holocaust. And yet, with every passing year, the events of 1933-1945 grow more distant. Fewer Survivors live to tell their stories. With the need to keep this memory alive as well as invite new opportunities to engage with our history, Beth El is partnering with our neighbor, Congregation Agudas Achim, to host our first reading of the **Hitkansut Haggadah** on Yom HaShoah, Sunday, May 5, at 7:00 pm. More information and registration will be forthcoming.

In spite of all that we endure and all that lies ahead of us, I insist that life is still good.

L'shalom,  
David

# Our BEHC Community Wish List 2024

**W**E ARE EXCITED to bring you a new feature in our Bulletins, website, and member communications — Our Beth El Hebrew Congregation Community Wish List! Each list will highlight some of our Beth El groups' special funding needs. If you can, donate for the entire wish goal or a portion of it! Links for donating are below.

## *Benches for Prayer Circle for the Chapel in the Woods*

The Chapel in the Woods Committee would like to replace the current benches with new 60" Polywood Vineyard benches for use in the newly-renovated prayer circle. This new furniture will surely increase the attractiveness of the woods and, hopefully, its use by the entire congregation!

### ***Benefits:***

- The Polywood bench is made entirely of recycled plastic, meaning it is not subject to rot or rust;
- The Vineyard-style bench has straight lines without embellishment that better match the exterior of the original Beth El building;
- The Vineyard bench can rest on wood chips without rotting. It requires no maintenance;
- The "teak" finish will compliment both the natural, woodland setting and the memorial bench already present.

With each individual \$450 donation to pay for an entire bench, you can choose to dedicate the bench with an engraved plaque\*.

***\$450/Bench (You can donate any amount towards a bench; total goal is 16 Benches)***

***\*Engraved plaque details to be arranged with Chapel in the Woods Committee***



**Donate at**

**<https://www.bethelhebrew.org/wishlist>**

## *Kids Picnic Tables for the Rabbi Isserow Outdoor Play Space*

New picnic tables are wanted to replace the old ones on the playground! Perfect for a picnic lunch with friends and ideal for arts and crafts.

### ***Benefits:***

- Constructed of Polywood (lumber that's recyclable and sustainably made from recycled and reusable plastic);
- Durable, all-weather lumber not prone to splinter, crack, chip, peel, or rot;
- Cleans easily with soap, water, and soft brush;
- Made in the USA;
- Requires no painting or waterproofing.

***\$280/table (You can donate any amount towards a table; total goal is 6 tables)***

## *Outdoor Event Barbeque Grill Brotherhood of Beth El Hebrew Congregation*

As our in-house BBQ organizers/facilitators, Brotherhood has been renting grills as needed. Purchasing an event grill will allow for cost savings over time and greater flexibility for more event planning!

The Pit Boss Memphis Ultimate Grill is a combination of a gas barbecue, charcoal barbecue, and a glass doored electric smoker.

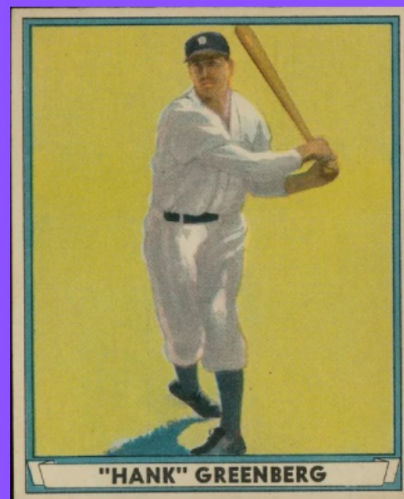
### ***Benefits:***

- Over 2100 square inches of cooking space;
- Char-grill on a 3-burner gas grill or;
- Grill with charcoal with a 6-position grade adjustment, front air intake, and rear chimney exhaust;
- Smoke simultaneously in a 3-rack analog electric smoker;
- Comes with 2 drawer storage, tool hooks, side shelf for preparation, and locking caster wheels for mobility.

***\$760 (includes cover) (You can donate any amount towards the grill)***



# Let's start a BETH EL CARD CLUB



*For the young and  
young at heart -  
all are welcome!*

INTERESTED? CONTACT RABBI SPINRAD:  
DSPINRAD@BETHELHEBREW.ORG

For kids ages 4+

Leave the kids with our babysitters while you enjoy a

**PARENTS' NIGHT OUT!**

Drop off any time between 5:30pm & 6:30pm

Pickup any time before 9:30pm

Pizza at 5:45pm, Movie beginning at 7:00pm

Snacks and Games after the movie

Quiet time - bring a blanket to cuddle up with.

Sponsored by WRJ

Babysitting is FREE, Tipping is encouraged

**Saturday, April 13**

in the Beth El Multi-Purpose Room

Space is limited, Register by April 8

<https://www.bethelhebrew.org/event/parents-night-out.html>



## Brotherhood News

**B**ROTHERHOOD CO-SPONSORED two events during February: one with the Disability Inclusion Committee and one with the Israel Committee.

The ReelAbilities Film Festival took place on Sunday, Feb. 4, with approximately 70 people attending. The film was entitled *OK (The ASD Band Film)*, a very uplifting story about four people with autism who come together to form a band and eventually record an album and go on tour. In addition to the Brotherhood and the Disability Inclusion Committee, congregation Agudas Achim and the Pozez JCC also co-sponsored this event. Brotherhood would like to thank **Jeanne Holden** and the Disability Inclusion Committee for all their hard work to make this event happen, as well as **Judy Jankowski** for purchasing the refreshments for the event, and the others that volunteered to help set up and clean up including, **Dawn and Jack Kaye, Bob Merker, Matt Mutterperl, Jeanette Astrow, John Jankowski, Jenny Holden, Bob Holden, Frank Stephens, and Gerrie Sturman.**

With the Israel Committee, Brotherhood co-sponsored a gathering to discuss the current state of Israel on Sunday, Feb. 11. Brotherhood would like to extend its thanks to **Len Rubinstein** and the entire Israel Committee for holding this special forum, as well as **Gilah Goldsmith** for moderating the discussion. Approximately 35 people attended this very personal and informative discussion.

Brotherhood will be sponsoring its annual Purim Carnival on Sunday, March 24 from 12:00 noon to 2:00 pm. This will include games for children of all ages, as well as a moon bounce, a magician, and an a capella singing group. You can purchase lunch at the carnival, as well. Please consider volunteering to help this event be a great success for our Religious School. Contact **Matt Mutterperl** for any questions or to volunteer.

Please consider using Brotherhood Catering for your catering needs. If you enjoy helping with such events, please contact **Evan Bolick** or Matt Mutterperl. Brotherhood is also looking towards a new generation of cooks/chefs for these life cycle event, so if you like cooking and preparing food, please reach out to us and let us know.

Brotherhood is heavily engaged with the younger members of Beth El. Brotherhood board members will be presenting the Kiddush cups to B'nei Mitzvah students in April and June. In addition, Brotherhood offers youth scholarships for teens looking to attend events for their personal growth and connection with their Jewish identity. Please reach out to Matt Mutterperl for more information.

Brotherhood will continue to host Bagels and Banter events during the spring, with the hope to have two in person gatherings in the Social Hall. Those that are not in person will continue to be online. Please look for more information about these events in the weekly emails.

Brotherhood has also begun the process of reaching out to Fairlington United Methodist Church to plan our annual Interfaith Dinner which has been going on for more than 60 years. The event will take place on a Tuesday evening during the spring, hosted this year by the church which is located on King Street.

Brotherhood would like to thank the Chapel in the Woods Committee for their dedication to making our backyard woods beautiful. Thanks to **Nancy and Stuart Davis** and the whole committee. And, if you have the time on a Sunday morning, please assist them in the woods with the planting of new native plants and removal of invasive species.

Last but far from least, Brotherhood relies heavily on its volunteers and donations in order to sponsor so many wonderful events during the year — building the sukkah, holding policy forums and Bagels and Banter get-togethers, catering for member mitzvahs, the Purim Carnival, the Religious School picnic, and providing youth scholarships for Jewish camps — to name just a few. Please reach out to us if you would like to volunteer. And/or please consider making a donation to Brotherhood.

Brotherhood would like to wish you all a wonderful spring and a very happy and healthy Passover. Stay well and we look forward to seeing you soon at Beth El.

Sincerely,  
**Matthew Mutterperl**  
Beth El Brotherhood President  
[matt@mutterperl.com](mailto:matt@mutterperl.com)

### Don't Use Your Hotel Points? PLEASE — Consider Donating!

Do you get hotel points or free night certificates for the Marriott hotel reward program, Marriott Bonvoy? Do they often expire without being used?

Please consider putting them to good use. Beth El currently has a need for one Marriott hotel night for the April 7 speaker event with Emily Ladau (see page 19). Please contact the Beth El front office or **Jeanne Holden** by or before Monday, March 18 ([jeanneholden@yahoo.com](mailto:jeanneholden@yahoo.com)).

In advance, thank you for your kindness!!

## WRJ News

**T**HE WRJ (SISTERHOOD) has been very busy in January and February, but won't stop there as we head into an even busier spring with Parents' Night Out returning on April 13! (Details can be found on page 13 or on the BEHC online calendar.) Our Sweet or Savory Pesach Social is scheduled for Wednesday, April 17 at 6:00 pm. All Beth El women, or those identifying as women, and their guests, are invited to attend at no charge. It is sure to be a delicious evening with friends with an opportunity to obtain new recipes. We will also be collecting diapers and wipes for the Alexandria Domestic Violence Program (ADVP).

Our spring fundraiser is right around the corner. We will be raffling off two pieces of art; a beautiful watercolor and a signed lithograph by Amram Egbi. We also have a lovely *havdalah* set by Gary Rosenthal of blessed memory. We will be displaying these pieces in our lobby beginning in April. Raffle tickets will be available for purchase by check or by Zelle.

WRJ provided babysitting for five children of the Beth El Babies group so their parents could participate in an infant CPR class. Thank you to **Eileen Greenberg, Laura Bloodgood, Jeanette Astrow, and Joanne Rhodes** for providing this vital service to our young families.

Hamantaschen baking for the mishloach manot fundraiser is off to a great start with around 2,100 of the minimum 2,400 hamantaschen baked over four baking sessions with one more to go. **THIS** is what we can accomplish together with 11 bakers and eight "doughnators" working together!! We anticipate inviting the seventh grade stu-

dents into the kitchen for our last baking session on March 3. Volunteers thus far include the following bakers: **Alix Coughlin, Patti Exstein, Katie Hamlin, Sarah Jacobson, Sue Meisner, Naomi Mercer, Dorit Radzin, Sara Rhoades, Suzie Shalewitz, Debbie Spitzer, and Jeanette Astrow** — and the following doughnators: **Patti Exstein, Sarah Jacobson, Aurora Kassalow, Sue Meisner, Naomi Mercer, Suzie Shalewitz, Susan Whitman, and Jeanette Astrow**.

We are saddened to announce the passing of past president, **Fern Koch Bekenstein**, who served as president from 1973-1976. And of course we will miss our beloved **Annette Kilian** who served our sisterhood as president from 1991-1993 and continued to serve as a mentor to us all and a volunteer in every way around Beth El. Donations can be made in their honor to WRJ through the Beth El website page "Support Us."

We are always looking for new ways to engage with our Beth El community. If you have an idea, we would love to hear it. If you are not yet a member of WRJ, we welcome you to join us. Please reach out to either Jeanette Astrow or Joanne Rhodes or fill out the form at the following link and send your payment via check or Zelle: <https://images.shulcloud.com/7767/uploads/WRJ/BEWRJ-MembershipformFY2023-24.pdf> We look forward to meeting you and welcoming you into WRJ.

L'shalom,  
**Jeanette and Joanne**  
BE-WRJ Co-Presidents





# Let's Dress Up for Purim Tot Shabbat!

I'M RETURNING TO Tot Shabbat just in time for Purim. I don't want to miss the fun of our March 23 Purim Tot Shabbat, where children dress up as super heroes, princesses, puppies, and dragons! This year, I'll come dressed as my sidekick, Beverly. We'll sing our way through my big kiddie megillah, and we'll also sing tot favorites, such as "Horrible, Horrible Haman" and "Stomp Stomp Stomp." You won't want to miss it!

But before that, **Dan Swartz** will be leading a fun musical Tot Shabbat on March 2.

I'll lead a "regular" Tot Shabbat on April 6 for the first time this year.

And we'll hold our always-popular "Dayenu!" Tot Seder on April 20, where we use a child-friendly, colorful haggadah and include lots of songs your kids will enjoy. Please remember to reserve your spot in advance because we set a place for each participating family.

- March 2 – Tot Shabbat with Dan Swartz
- March 23 – Purim Tot Shabbat with Miss Carol
- April 6 – Tot Shabbat with Miss Carol
- April 20 – "Dayenu" Tot Seder with Miss Carol and Mr. John (reservations required)

Each service starts at 11:00 am and is followed by a light lunch, except the Tot Seder lunch is followed by hunting for the afikomen and then a few concluding seder songs.

See you there!

**Miss Carol (Carol Boyd Leon)**

[cboydleon@gmail.com](mailto:cboydleon@gmail.com).



*Purim Tot Shabbat*

*Dayenu Passover Seder  
Tot Shabbat*



## Beth El Library News

I JUST STARTED the library's next big project: overhauling the children's section. The library's donations backlog had accumulated over six boxes of picture books for children. Two of these boxes were discarded as duplicates or for being in poor condition. That leaves four boxes to add to the collection. Most of these are newer PJ Library titles from the 2010s, with bright modern art and eye-popping color. It will likely take me several months to catalog all these books and discard old duplicates from the existing collection to make room for the new additions, but the result will be a fresh and updated selection for children to enjoy. So far in 2024, I have added over 94 books to the Beth El Library!

You can browse the Children's section here: <https://www.librarything.com/catalog/BethElHebrewCon/children>

**Ryan Hackel**

[ryanehackel@gmail.com](mailto:ryanehackel@gmail.com)

## Beth El WRJ Judaica Shop news

THE WRJ JUDAICA SHOP will hold this year's Pesach Boutique on Sunday morning, April 14. Come see us for Pesach toys and games, children's books, seder plates, candlesticks, matzah covers and afikomen bags, haggadahs, and everything else you need for Passover.

We are looking for volunteers for the Pesach boutique and for Friday nights before Shabbat services and Sunday mornings during Religious School. Please contact **Laura Bloodgood** at [bewrjshop@gmail.com](mailto:bewrjshop@gmail.com) if you'd like to volunteer. Shop volunteers receive a 20 percent discount on all purchases!

The Judaica shop stocks all types of Judaica merchandise for Beth El members and others in the area. Proceeds from the shop help the WRJ to contribute to Beth El activities and financial needs. Please let us know if there are products you'd like to see in the shop, or you have other ideas for us.



COME CELEBRATE PURIM AT OUR ANNUAL

Beth El

# PURIM CARNIVAL

MARCH 24

12:00 - 2:00

SPONSORED BY

THE BEHC BROTHERHOOD

VISIT [WWW.BETHELHEBREW.ORG](http://WWW.BETHELHEBREW.ORG) TO

PRE-PURCHASE

**\$10 UNLIMITED GAMES**

**\$9 LUNCH**

DAY OF CARNIVAL PRICES:

\$15 UNLIMITED GAMES

\$12 LUNCH

SAVE \$8 WHEN YOU BUY IN ADVANCE!

**AND TO VOLUNTEER**

QUESTIONS? CONTACT MATT MUTTERPERL

[MATT@MUTTERPERL.COM](mailto:MATT@MUTTERPERL.COM)

703-470-4652

GAMES, COSTUME PARADE, CAKE WALK,

ARTS & CRAFTS, GAME ROOM, FOOD,

MOON BOUNCE, PRIZES, MAGIC SHOW



# Help Us Maintain Our Beautiful Gardens

**L**ET'S WELCOME SPRING at Beth El with a rainbow of flowers! Our entrance driveway will be a colorful collection of pinks, purples, orange, and yellows! This year we will be pleasantly surprised with new peonies and ranunculus! Of course, peonies may take a few years to bloom!

We will see an early burst of purple and white in the Holocaust garden — grape hyacinths and snowdrops. Then a flash of 600 sunny, yellow daffodils planted around the statue. Finally, 25 bright red hibiscus plants will present a pop of color in late spring!

Of course, let's not forget our new Havdalah garden located near the exit driveway. Since spices are more southern trees, the garden has flourished with various scented perennial herbs — apple and chocolate mints, oreganos, thymes, and rosemary. I'll be adding annual herbs such as dill, basil, coriander, and citronella when it gets warmer.

Located along the playground fence is our new perennial butterfly garden — filled with bright yellow and orange coreopsis, black-eyed susans, and purple bee balm.

Let's keep these community gardens growing in the hotter summer weather. Please send me an email at [spruce.fraser@gmail.com](mailto:spruce.fraser@gmail.com) to volunteer for a day or two of watering during these warmer months. Don't worry, get your family or a group of friends to form a watering team. I'll be showing volunteers how easy watering can be. Everyone at Beth El can appreciate your helpful contribution.

All the best  
**Spruce Fraser**



*This is Spruce. If you see her around, say hi. (This picture was not taken at Beth El, in case you were wondering where our cherry tree is.)*



*Above: Some of the beautiful flowers in our security planters*

*Below: the Holocaust Garden*



*Above left above: The Havdalah garden near the west entrance*



*Above right and right: The butterfly garden near the playground*





**The more than one billion  
disabled people who exist  
in this world are worthy of  
access and full inclusion  
today.**

**And tomorrow.  
And next week.  
And all month.  
And next year.  
Always.**

@EmilyLadau



**Beth El Hebrew Congregation**  
welcomes disability inclusion advocate

## **Emily Ladau**

Emily Ladau is a passionate disability rights activist, storyteller, speaker, and author of *Demystifying Disability: What to Know, What to Say, and How to Be an Ally*. In 2022, the Jewish Federations of North America and the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism honored her with their Disability Advocate of the Year Award.

**RESCHEDULED FOR APRIL 7**

**11:45 Bagel Brunch**

**Keynote Presentation / Q & A:**

**“Demystifying Disability: How to be an Ally”**

**Cost: Free of charge**

**RSVP: On the BEHC website or by email to**  
**[JeanneHolden@yahoo.com](mailto:JeanneHolden@yahoo.com)**



# The Congregation Gratefully Acknowledges the Following Donations

## ARNOLD FINK LIFETIME LEARNING CTR

### Donor

Stuart & Nancy Davis

### Donor

Mary Goldwag ..... Jerry Liess  
 Elisa Cheslak & Robin Thompson  
 Mark & Sandra Werfel  
 Allan & Lynne Somoroff  
 Shelli Ross  
 Linda Waller  
 Bennett Finkelstein & Lisa Miller.  
 Paul & Myrna Beck  
 Barbara Mintz  
 Gary & Maxine Columbia  
 Mitchell & Leslee Levy  
 Leatrice Marshak  
 Ann Levy  
 Nancy Fuhrman  
 Jennifer Lenhart  
 Jean Elizabeth Liess  
 Anne & Stewart Levy  
 Mark & Conne Rubinstein  
 Sandra Rosenblatt  
 Leonard Goldman  
 Norman & Elizabeth Starler  
 Julie Mathy  
 Joyce & Bernard Grand

## BETH EL GENERAL FUND

### Donor

Peter Goldman  
 Sheldon Ezring  
 Katherine Hamlin  
 Joel Bernstein & Quinn Jennings  
 Dorrit & Michael (Ben) Lowson  
 Melinda Selden  
 Katherine Largent & Peter Dickinson  
 Michael Stein & Kathryn (Kate) Finley  
 Shana & David Gibbs

### Donor

Daniel Sachs ..... Aaron Sachs

### Donor

Stuart & Ellen Kovar ..... Edward Kahn  
 Rosalie Lesser ..... Mark Fried  
 Gabrielle & Richard Sterba ..... Marshall Kaufman  
 M. Jack Wilkenfeld ..... Dorothy Yahr & Leo Halm  
 Pat Britz ..... Jerry Liess  
 Kenneth & Susan Cohn  
 Deborah Engleson  
 Vera Finberg  
 Sara Heimowitz  
 Eileen Mandell  
 James Sprung  
 Bert and Sandy Fisher  
 Judie Weiss  
 Marcia & Larry Ross  
 Peg Schwartz  
 Stephen Epstein & Dottie Zoller  
 Donald Sargent & Reva Fox  
 Jonathan & Laurie Blank ..... Howard Blank  
 Audrey Agranov ..... Israel Agranov  
 Patricia & Anthony Hawks ..... Ruth Taubman Vynier

## CANTOR'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

### Donor

Eric Reiser  
 Enid Liess

### Donor

Joel & Carole Geisner ..... Cantor Kaufman's help in preparing  
 Elinore Gordon for her Bat Mitzvah  
 Philip La Kier & Lynn Miller ..... Cantor Jason Kaufman  
 Gabrielle & Richard Sterba

### Donor

Sandra Laeser ..... Jerry Liess  
 Sandy Mitchell

## CHAPEL IN THE WOODS

### Donor

Brandee Moretta Jackson & Raymond Jackson ..... Tu B'Shevat

### Donor

Marvin Burstein & Jane Kraft Burstein ..... Jerry Liess

## INCLUSION FUND

### Donor

Richard & Joyce Gordon ..... Jeanne Holden

## FAKOURY MUSIC FUND

### Donor

Philip La Kier & Lynn Miller

### Donor

Michael & Andrea Wessel ..... Lester Barsky

## HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL FUND

### Donor

Joan Isenberg ..... Jerry Liess  
 Stephen Gross ..... Susan Louise Gross

## PERMANENT ENDOWMENT FUND

### Donor

Jay Jarvis & Audrey Liebross  
 Linda Vogel  
 Eileen Greenberg & Silvia Foster

### Donor

Michael & Juliet Bluestein ..... Rabbi Spinrad's recognition of  
 Jewish Adjacency

### Donor

Merrill Goldsmith ..... Arthur Goldsmith  
 Jay Jarvis & Audrey Liebross ..... Jerry Liess  
 Janet Garber & Kris Keydel  
 John & Judy Jankowski  
 Sandra & Bob Seitz  
 Dana Arnold ..... Annette Kilian  
 Michael & Juliet Bluestein  
 Susan Rabin  
 Shelli Ross  
 Marvin Burstein & Jane Kraft Burstein

## SHAPIRO RS SCHOLARSHIP FUND

### Donor

Julie Rosenberg & Michael Shapiro ..... Marshall Baram Shapiro

*Continued on page 28*

*Thank you for your generous donations. No donation is too small. All donations are acknowledged in The Bulletin two months following their receipt. Acknowledgements are mailed with a minimum of \$18 per person per acknowledgement.*

# Disability Inclusion Committee

## *Creating a Welcoming Community for All*

**C**ELEBRATING JEWISH Disability Awareness, Acceptance, and Inclusion Month (JDAIM) with two special events at Beth El was wonderful!

On Feb. 4, Beth El held its eighth ReelAbilities Film Festival movie and discussion, co-sponsored by the Inclusion Committee, Brotherhood, and, for the fifth time, Congregation Agudas Achim. The ReelAbilities Film Festival is the largest festival in the U.S. dedicated to promoting appreciation of the lives and stories of people with disabilities.

More than 65 people from Beth El, Agudas Achim, other congregations, and the local community enjoyed **Okay! The ASD Band Film**, an award-winning Canadian documentary about four talented young musicians who come together through their shared love of music and shatter stereotypes about people with autism spectrum disorder. As they write, record, and perform their first album, they find strength in each other and the music. After the film, special guest Melissa Heifetz, Executive Director of The Arc of Northern Virginia, skillfully led our discussion, sharing insights, answering questions, and explaining the many ways The Arc supports individuals with disabilities.

Thanks for this successful event go to Sarah Berry, who manages the Northern VA ReelAbilities Film Festival for the Pozez JCC; **Duane Lomis** for handling the technical details of showing the film; Brotherhood president **Matt Mutterperl**; **Jeanette Astrow**, **Judy Jankowski**, **Dawn Kaye**, **Bob Merker**, **Gerrie Sturman**, **Jack Kaye**, **John Jankowski**, **Bob Holden**, and the many other congregants who helped with planning, set up, or cleanup for this event.

Then, on Feb. 9, the Religious School's seventh grade class led an erev Shabbat service on the theme: "Disability Inclusion and Allyship." Guest speaker, Molly Whalen, the state director of Best Buddies International, VA & DC, emphasized the need to ensure that people with disabilities have access to opportunities similar to those of their non-disabled peers, and also the critical importance of building one-on-one friendships with people with disabilities to advance full inclusion. She stressed that each of us can make a difference on our own and by getting involved in nonprofit organizations such as Best Buddies International. Several seventh graders also shared their own remarks, and it was inspiring to hear them express ideas about accepting all people, regardless of their disabilities.

The Feb. 9 service was also a Repro Shabbat, and Kara Lewis gave an insightful D'var Torah on *Parashat Mishpatim* that focused on the biblical basis for reproductive freedom. Additionally, one of the seventh graders skillfully shared personal ideas about this issue.

Sincere thanks go to all the people who helped make the Feb. 9 JDAIM/Repro Shabbat service a memorable one — from **Rabbi Spinrad** to our guest speakers, from Religious School Director **Dan Swartz** and Special Needs Coordinator **Marissa Smolinsky** to all seventh graders and

the members of the Disability Inclusion Committee. It couldn't have come together so beautifully without everyone's efforts.

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, we build a stronger community and enrich the lives of our whole congregation.

### Jeanne Holden

Disability Inclusion Committee Chair

[jeanneholden@yahoo.com](mailto:jeanneholden@yahoo.com)



*Melissa Heifetz, the Executive Director of The Arc of Northern Virginia* ↑

*Sarah Berry, who manages the Northern VA ReelAbilities Festival for the Pozez JCC* →

*Jeanne Holden, Chair of Beth El's Disability Inclusion Committee* ↓



Life has a way of  
disrupting our best  
laid plans and leaving  
us wondering...

# WHAT DO I DO NOW?



Join us  
**SUNDAY, April 14, 2024**  
**from 1:00 - 4:00**  
**at Beth El**

A Caring Community Committee Workshop that will give you the tools  
and resources to handle some of life's most difficult challenges.

Experts and roundtable discussions will focus on  
**HOW TO GET YOUR AFFAIRS IN ORDER**  
**CAREGIVING ISSUES**  
**WHAT TO DO WHEN A DEATH OCCURS**

**Questions?**  
**Contact Ruth Perlstein at 703-978-9341**  
**or Diane Suchman at 703-451-7014**



## Guest Essay: Becoming a leader at Beth El

BETH EL'S LEADERSHIP Development Program is designed to groom future synagogue leaders, covering everything from the nuts and bolts of our governance to the art of delivering a d'var Torah to your peers. I recently had the honor of discussing *parashat Yitro*. Though it was technically the week for *Mishpatim*, I opted to delve into *Yitro* instead, drawn to its insights on leadership's challenges. That said, *Mishpatim*, ironically, begins by talking about indentured servitude, so six-of-one, half-a-dozen of the other.

The second *aliyah* of *Yitro* opens with Moses' father-in-law, the *parsha's* eponymous *Yitro*, watching as Moses holds court over the people. After a while he approaches Moses and asks: "מָה־הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה עוֹשֶׂה לָעָם מִדְּנֹעַ אַתָּה" - "יֹשֵׁב לְבַדְּךָ" "What is this thing you are doing to the people? Why do you sit by yourself?"

Moses responds in a way that would make any Jewish mother proud: "Because they come to me. You want I should say, 'no'?" OK, so I'm taking some liberties with the translation, but you get my point.

In response, *Yitro* chastised Moses, saying, "לֹא־טוֹב הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה עוֹשֶׂה" "It's not good, this thing you're doing. You will surely wear yourself out both you and these people who are with you for the matter is too heavy for you; you cannot do it alone."

Class participants are looked at, and accepted as, Beth El's lay leaders. We all give of our most precious and limited resource: our time. And being in the class shows we give it willingly, and I dare say, for the sense of *nachas* we receive in return. That said, the reason ultimately doesn't matter — all that matters is when they come to us and ask, we answer, "Of course."

But being members of such a small community inside the larger Beth El community can also be draining. There's no *averah* — no sin — in admitting that. Being relied on to pick up the banner each time it's laid down can be a burdensome call to answer, and at times feeling like yours is the only phone that rings can seem unfair. But, as they say, whose fault is that?

Going back to a moment to *Yitro's* question: "מָה־הַדָּבָר" "לָעָם" "הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה עוֹשֶׂה לָעָם" The lammed prefix means "to." *Yitro* asks what is this thing you do "to" "*ha-um*" — to the people and not "בשביל העם" "For the people."

It's a far cry from the days of the burning bush when G-d told Moses to "step up" and his response was incredulity that the Jewish people would believe he had been sent to lead them. He learned to be a leader.

So how does that apply to us? When we act in our role as leaders, it is often in a "to" role: *To* help with an event, *to* sit on the bimah, *to* make calls for the Caring Community. In short, to do something in the now.

For proof, I asked my classmates to take a moment and look at the faces around them. I guarantee that if you attend any Beth El event, you'll see at least one of these faces. Granted, we are often called on to help because the bench of volunteers is narrow. But as lay leaders, I would argue our biggest responsibility is not to volunteer, but to expand that bench, to help develop the next generation of leaders, to expand our ability to do *for*, and not do *to*.

Our membership is the highest it's been in more than a decade and our new members want to help, they want to be a part of a sacred Jewish community for all who seek connection, meaning, and healing. I know, because they ask. They've asked, and now we have a chance to answer.

It's not enough to email a link to a Sign-Up Genius form. We can't just put out a call for help in the Bulletin. Would they respond? Some. But would that response help expand the bench? No. Like G-d gave Moses his staff as a powerful tool to help his transformation into a future leader, we also need to provide the tools to help do the same for our future leaders.

As leaders within our Beth El community, we are called upon not only to serve but also to inspire and empower others. Just as *Yitro* advised Moses, it is essential for us to recognize the importance of sharing our burdens and responsibilities. Moses developed the *Sanhedrin*, the system of Jewish courts, with layers of judges to handle cases. At Beth El, we already have a similar stratum of volunteers — The executive committee, the board of directors, the committees, and the volunteers who compose them all.

Our role should extend beyond merely doing for our community; it should include nurturing and encouraging new leaders to step forward.

In the spirit of *Yitro's* wisdom, we should commit ourselves to being mentors and guides. By doing so, we not only lighten our own load but also enrich our community with fresh ideas, perspectives, and energy. Our goal should be to create a sustainable cycle of leadership, where each generation learns from the previous and prepares to guide the next.

Every decision we make, every task we undertake, should be imbued with the intention of strengthening and elevating our community. Let's strive to transform our 'to do' actions into 'for you' gestures of inclusiveness and empowerment.

In the words of *Pirkei Avot*, "It is not upon you to finish the work, but neither are you free to desist from it." Together, we can grow our sacred Jewish community for all who seek connection, meaning, and healing.

— Jesse Reisman



## Help Double Your Impact to Our Ambulance Fundraising Campaign!

Join us in supporting the Beth El Hebrew Congregation Ambulance Campaign by leveraging your employer's matching gift program.<sup>1</sup> This can significantly increase your donation's impact, potentially doubling or tripling it. It's a crucial time to amplify your contribution. Most of Magen David Adom's fleet is funded by Americans, and your support is vital.

As of writing this article, we have raised over 80,000 dollars toward the purchase of a new Mobile Intensive Care Unit (MICU) for Israel. While great, it only gets us 50 percent of the way there. Talk with your employer today!

In this emergency period in Israel, every second counts. Americans sponsor the majority of Magen David Adom's fleet and, with the support of the wider Beth El community as well as our friends, families, and employers, medics can race to the scene with the most sophisticated medical response fleet available.

Two Ways to Match:

1. Coordinate with your employer for a matching gift to Beth El's Magen David Adom Ambulance Campaign ([tinyurl.com/BEHC-MDA](https://tinyurl.com/BEHC-MDA)).
2. If your employer doesn't match gifts to religious organizations, donate directly to American Friends of Magen David Adom ([afmda.org](https://afmda.org)) and mention 'Beth El Magen David Adom Ambulance Campaign' in the comments. Email Dan Swartz ([dswartz@bethelhebrew.org](mailto:dswartz@bethelhebrew.org)) with your donation details and employer's matching amount.

If you'd like assistance, please reach out to Dan Swartz ([dswartz@bethelhebrew.org](mailto:dswartz@bethelhebrew.org)) who can help with the appropriate forms, guidelines, and instructions. Remember, this fundraiser is for Magen David Adom, which is officially recognized by the ICRC as the national society for the State of Israel. They hold a 4/4 rating on Charity Navigator, the highest possible score.

May we hear *b'sorot tovo*t, good news.

— Ambulance Committee

<sup>1</sup> Some employers are providing additional matching funds for donations to Israel, so even if you've already used this year's employer match, you may want to check if special matching funds are available.





## Chapel in the Woods

### *Signs of Spring, Signs of Change*

**B**Y EARLY FEBRUARY, the Chapel in the Woods already exhibited early — but not unwelcome — blooms, with violets peeking through old leaves and daffodils threatening to freeze themselves in morning frost. These happenings join other events that demonstrate the effect of climate change on Beth El's forest. The loss of mature oaks number among them.

Recently, the US Department of Agriculture published data reflecting these changes in the first revision of its national plant Hardiness Zone Map since 2012. The map helps growers determine what plants are most likely to thrive at a location. Developed by USDA's Agricultural Research Service and Oregon State University, it is based on much more weather data than earlier versions.

The map shows 30-year averages of the lowest annual winter temperatures at specific locations. The research reports that Beth El still bears the same zone designation as in 2012, 7b, while much of Alexandria was moved to zone 8a. Nevertheless, data for both 7b and 8a zones in Alexandria show a five degree temperature change. "That shift to the next warmer half zone means those areas warmed somewhere in the range of 0-5 degrees Fahrenheit; however, some locations experienced warming in the range of 0-5 degrees Fahrenheit without moving to another half zone" according to the USDA. The block-by-block differences are partially due to a dramatic increase in the number of weather stations re-

porting data, according to the USDA.

The information helps gardeners understand what's happening on their properties and select and care for trees, shrubs, and other plants. For example, Beth El volunteers have increased the amount of watering they do in drought periods.



*Wild violets, blooming Feb. 8 in the Chapel in the Woods*

You can help volunteers care for the Chapel in the Woods by attending workdays from 10 am to noon on Sundays, March 10, April 21, and May 5. A light lunch will be served afterwards. Please wear closed-toe shoes, socks, long pants, and long-sleeve shirts and bring work gloves and trowels if you have them. Other equipment will be provided.

This spring, volunteers will be removing and composting last year's growth to allow new growth to get light and air. They will be restoring part of the wild-flower garden that was demolished last year when a tree fell on the garden.

To that end, if you have any of the following plants in your garden and you need to thin them out, donations would be welcome: blazing star, *Liatris spicata*; wild strawberries, *Fragaria virginiana*; spotted bee balm, *Monarda punctata*; coral bells, *Heuchera sanguinea*; woodland phlox, *Phlox divaricata*; and woodland sunflower, *Helianthus divaricatus*.

For more information, contact Nancy and Stuart Davis, [nmdaviswriter@aol.com](mailto:nmdaviswriter@aol.com).



## WRJ Lunch Hour Book Club

**T**HE WRJ LUNCH HOUR Book Club currently meets the second Tuesday every other month with our next Zoom meeting scheduled for April 9 at 11:00 am.

We are gathering suggestions for another great book for our April title choice.

Please join us! We are always open to new members! Reach out to **Gerrie Sturman** at [Sturman.g@gmail.com](mailto:Sturman.g@gmail.com) or call 703-820-7864 if you're interested or have suggestions for the April book. We'll vote on the book selection by Feb. 23 and will send out an email to all members. Another Zoom link reminder will be emailed out a week prior to the meeting.

We would also like to get together for in-person lunches on the alternate months to discuss other books of mutual interest. Please let Gerrie know if you'd like to join the group for a more personal get-together.



# Membership Moments

## *Epicurious Epicureans*

The Beth El Epicurious Epicureans, a group of Beth El members and friends who gather monthly to share food and friendship, visited Jerusalem Mediterranean Restaurant in the Bailey's Crossroads area of Falls Church in January. The restaurant's mission is to provide a real Middle Eastern experience by sharing its family recipes. Take-out is available but patio dining is limited and not weather protected. Entrees are mostly in the \$20-\$25 range.

The atmosphere of the restaurant was calm and it was beautifully decorated with Moroccan style lamps and arched walls. On the walls were pictures of famous Arab leaders and celebrities and quotes. The food was just delicious.

As it was a cold day; many of us ordered the Moroccan tea, which was flavored with spices, including cardamom. However, some of us ordered a strawberry/mango smoothie. There were no alcoholic beverages available.

Many of us started the meal with the harira soup, which included lentils, chickpeas, cilantro, noodles, in a flavorful tomato base. There were so many tasty *mezze* (appetizers) to choose from. Some had grape leaves, hummus, baba ghanoush, spinach pies, falafel, lentil soup, and rich harira soup. If you come and just do the *mezze*, you will not be disappointed.

Entrees included lamb shank, beef, and grilled chicken, kabobs, shawarma, and vegetarian options. They bring wonderful warm pita to the table as well as a dipping sauce. If tea is not for you, the mango smoothie was a big hit.

What would dinner be without dessert? The baklava was just perfect. The rice pudding was very delicious — flavored with cinnamon and pistachios. There were all sorts of wonderful sweets in their display case to tempt you.

The overwhelming verdict by the group was that the food was flavorful and savory. Service was prompt and we were given our bills promptly, without confusion. Everyone had a good time. If you would like to join us in future, please let Joanne Rhodes know.



## *Beth El Tea Party*

Our next tea event will be Sunday, Feb. 25 at 2:30. We will meet at Lady Camellia for a lovely afternoon tea. We'd love to have you join us.

## *Wine Tasting*

Do you like wine? Sip and Schmooze is a group of Beth El friends who meet once a month to learn about wines. We usually meet in someone's house, but we also go on field trips to wineries. If you would like to join in the fun, reach out to me.

## *Sharing Shabbat*

We are so lucky to have so many new faces around our synagogue. I would love to invite you to become a Beth El Ambassador and invite a new member to Share Shabbat with you. Some ideas for what you would do; share a meal in your home, at a restaurant, go to services and maybe out afterwards for dessert, have a playdate for your kids, or any other idea you come up with. We will match you with someone new to our temple and help you to connect. Our community thrives on creating relationships with each other. I look forward to hearing back from you if you would like to be an Ambassador or if you are a new member and would like to be matched with an experienced member of Beth El.

If you have any questions or if you have an idea to share please let Joanne Rhodes know.

We would love to have more people become involved with membership activities. This would mean working together to create programming for membership engagement and recruitment. If you would like to help out, let please let Joanne Rhodes know. We are looking forward to working with you.

***For information on or to get involved with any activity on this page, please contact Joanne Rhodes at [morah814@gmail.com](mailto:morah814@gmail.com).***



## The 2024 Rhoda Goldman Giant Annual Book Sale Was a Great Success!



We earned 30% more than last year, and had the best turn-out for our bag sale in many years. Of the leftovers, we donated children's books to both ECLC and the Religious School, as well as Books Are Food which provides children's books along with food to families in our community. We also filled two cars with leftover books of all sorts for staff at Pimmit Hills Library who will donate onwards. Of the non-books, we actually sold almost all the puzzles and games, and successfully moved some other items on BuyNothing. My garage is now full of LPs, CDs, and DVDs; if you know a place that will buy them all, please let me know.

Thank you to all our volunteers. If I omit anyone below, please know it is an oversight (my brain is still on book sale overload!) and not intentional. Beth El and I appreciate you all!

Aaron Sachs  
Anne-Marie Schmoltner  
Arline Sachs  
Barbara Beach  
Ben Mutterperl  
Brooksie Koopman  
Carla Sherry  
Christie NiDonell  
Daniel Chira  
David Stover  
Dina Katz  
Dorothy Saks  
Ellen Kovar

Elsa Hackel  
Ezra Backer  
Fred Reiner  
Gilah Goldsmith  
Hudson Keeler  
Jane Dinsmore  
Janet Cady  
Jeffrey Sachs  
Jenny Genser White  
John Wexler  
Josie Whitaker  
Judy Jankowski  
Karen Scheer

Linda Waller  
Liz Williams  
Matthew Mutterperl  
Max Nguyen  
Melanie Coughlan  
Miki Rubin  
Myrna Beck  
Renee Klish  
Sheila Wexler  
Sherry Trachtman  
Sheryl Patterson  
Simon Thomas  
Stuart Davis

All the planning and prep are worth it so volunteers can turn this



If you have suggestions or want to be on the book sorting volunteer email list, please reach out to me at the address below.

Note: We are taking a month off. We will begin accepting books again in April. The next Bulletin will list the items we will and won't accept.

Janet Hlatky

[booksale@bethelhebrew.org](mailto:booksale@bethelhebrew.org)

Continued from page 20

**RABBI'S GOOD DEED FUND****Donor**Leonard & Ann Wolf  
Enid Liess**Donor**Gail Reisman ..... Rabbi Spinrad's officiating at Reese and  
Logan's Bat/Bar Mitzvah**Donor**

Joel &amp; Carole Geisner ..... Elinore Gordon's bat mitzvah

**Donor**Gregory & Marcy Babitz ..... Jeanette Center  
Rachelle Palley ..... Jerry Liess  
Joy B. & Roy S. Cohen  
Roberto & Susan Mosse ..... Hans Heilshorn  
Amy & Mark Juhas ..... Robert Feldman  
Dennis & Enid Lehr ..... David Auerbach**MARC ROSS SCHOLARSHIP FUND****Donor**

Linda Vogel

**Donor**Harold & Harriet Damelin ..... Jerry Liess  
Judy and Charlie Kramer  
Michael & Karen Weinberger ..... Annette Kilian  
Barbara Rosenfeld  
David Apatoff & Nell Minow  
Janet Garber & Kris Keydel  
E.J. Jarvis & Audrey Liebross  
Harold & Harriet Damelin  
Stuart & Nancy Davis  
Sandra & Bob Seitz  
Francine Margolis  
Claire Fleisch  
Myra Wendel Roney  
Kenneth Love  
Jay Lucas & Maxine Cohen  
Richard & Joyce Gordon  
Frederic Reiner  
Lynne and Allan Somoroff  
Matthew & Kimberly Warschaw  
John & Judy Jankowski  
Paul & Myrna Beck  
Shelli Ross  
Judy and Av Hecht.  
Melinda Selden  
Julie Goldstein  
Dick & Marsha Leffel  
"The Kids"  
Lynne and Allan Somoroff ..... Martha Hodes**SOCIAL ACTION FUND****Donor**Jennifer May & Benjamin May  
Richard & Joyce Gordon**Donor**Tena Nauheim ..... Jerry Liess  
Rosalind Singer*Ambulance Fund donations on page 30***REFUGEE ASSISTANCE FUND****Donor**Jay Jarvis & Audrey Liebross  
Julianne Mueller  
The Banks and Reinoso families  
Gerald & Aurora Kassalow  
Enid Liess  
Charles & Judith Kramer  
Joann Gottlieb  
Janet Hlatky  
Stuart & Ellen Kovar  
Benjamin & Karen Block  
Patricia & Mark Lutkowitz  
Mark & Sherry Trachtman  
David & Donna Hayford  
William & Paula Whitacre  
Kenneth Berger  
Michael & Sharman Stephens  
Myra Wendel Roney  
Stuart & Ellen Feldstein  
Dorrit & Michael (Ben) Lowsen  
Michael & Sheryl Gropman  
Michael & Karen Weinberger  
Geoffrey Shaw  
Pamela Zitron & Jacob Gallun  
Abby Krolik & Alejandro Castro-Weiss  
Merrill Goldsmith  
Mark Harrison & Donna Kooperstein  
John & Judy Jankowski  
Philip La Kier & Lynn Miller  
Fred & Ellen Elsas  
Dennis & Enid Lehr  
Norman & Elizabeth Starler  
Jeanette & Barry Astrow  
Lisa Sheldone  
Linda Waller  
Habibollah & Anne Marie Ahdoot  
Harvey & Alice Schwartz  
Michael & Michele Cook  
Susan & Bruce Wartel  
Benjamin D'Avanzo  
Andrew Schechter & Sarah Kline  
Colin Campbell & Arlene Tave  
Jeffrey Liteman  
Benjamin & Marcie Haber  
Lisa Clark  
David Barsky & Patricia Petroccione  
Barrett & Colleen Weiser**Donor**

David &amp; Ellen Itkin ..... Rabbi Spinrad

**Donor**

Merianne de Merode ..... Paula Tarnapol and Bill Whitacre

**Donor**Michael Zumoff & Judith Anne Wink ..... Linda Waller  
Paul & Myrna Beck**Donor**Joel & Maureen Augen ..... Carmen T. Courchene  
Yonie Dow ..... Donald Mela  
David & Amber Reiter ..... Sidney Reiter  
George & Paula Lader ..... Mark Lader  
Michele Stein ..... Geoffrey Stein  
Madeline Fusfield & Owen Weislow ..... Jerry Liess  
Eileen Greenberg & Silvia Foster ..... Adeline Silberstein Greenberg  
Bloom, Rita Silberstein Gordon  
Eva Silberstein  
David & Jane Dinsmore ..... Annette Kilian  
Yonie Dow ..... Doris Mela  
David & Ellen Itkin ..... Harry Rosenfeld**In Appreciation of**

Rabbi Spinrad

**In Celebration of**

Paula Tarnapol and Bill Whitacre

**In Honor of**

Linda Waller

**In Memory of**

Carmen T. Courchene

Donald Mela

Sidney Reiter

Mark Lader

Geoffrey Stein

Jerry Liess

Adeline Silberstein Greenberg

Rita Silberstein Gordon

Eva Silberstein

Annette Kilian

Doris Mela

Harry Rosenfeld





Last year we once again had great success with our Mishloach Manot, Purim Basket Fundraiser, and we are excited to bring it back. This year they will be **EVEN BETTER** with the Hamentashen baked by WRJ. These baskets are not only a fundraiser but also a way for us to connect with each other as a community and celebrate Purim.

### How it Works

Volunteers will assemble Purim baskets for every Beth El household. The boxes will be available for pickup from March 20-24. Our homebound members will have their Mishloach Manot delivered to them by a member of our Caring Committee. You do not have to make a donation to receive your Mishloach Manot.

**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 member each member receiving a Mishloach Manot with additional money supporting our fundraising efforts.

**When participating in this fundraising campaign you will be given the following options\*:**

**(There is always confusion on what reciprocation is, so please read carefully)**

1. For \$18 your name will be included on one person's greeting. (ex. if you choose 10 people your total will be \$180).
2. Choose the people that you want to send a greeting to and send a greeting to anyone who sends **DIRECTLY** to you. This could be a maximum of \$360 if the total greetings that include your name are 20 or more.
3. Choose the people that you want to send a greeting to and send a greeting to anyone who sends to you including those who send to the entire congregation. This will be a total of \$360.
4. All potential recipients, Your name will be on every special greeting for the entire congregation \$360.

\*Please note that if you choose more than 20 names, your name will be included on all greetings to participants.

### Important Dates for Mishloach Manot

March 17 - Sign Up to help pack the Mishloach Manot boxes 10:15am- 12:00pm.

March 19-22 - Stop by during normal business hours to pick up your Purim Mishloach Manot.

March 24 - Pick up your Mishloach Manot and attend the Purim Spiel and Carnival, sponsored by the Beth El Brotherhood for our Religious School students.

# SCAN THE QR CODE TO PARTICIPATE



## AMBULANCE (MDA) FUND

### Donor

Paul & Myrna Beck  
William Schneider  
Linda Waller  
RS Bake Sale and Tzedakah  
Fred & Ellen Elsas  
Ursula Hennessy  
Robert Schaefer & Tandy Gustin  
Sandra Mosetick  
Barrett & Colleen Weiser  
Daniel & Jennifer Rothschild  
J. Kruger  
David Tucker  
Shannon Greene  
Patricia & Anthony Hawks  
Susan Greene  
A. Bruce & Denise Shauer  
Gabrielle & Richard Sterba  
Bennett Finkelstein & Lisa Miller  
Merrill Goldsmith  
Elizabeth & Matthew Van Blargan  
Stuart & Ellen Feldstein  
Ann Levy  
Lois Frieman  
Devon Cybulski  
Ruth Perlstein  
Sandy Needle  
Dan Wolf  
Naomi Mercer & Kerry Takenaka  
Sharon Samuels  
Gaynor Sorrell  
Andrew Horowitz & Cathleen Tefft  
Dorrit & Michael (Ben) Lowsen  
Stacy and Kevin Scott  
Gerald & Silvia Terlitzky  
Benedict Brown  
Sidney & Arline Sachs  
Maxwell & Allison Samis  
Marshall Brown  
Jonathan Friedman & Pamela Matthews  
Robert & Jeanne Holden  
Gay Sullivan  
David & Autumn Schiff  
Timothy O'Donnell  
Edward Moser  
Dan & Marsha Swartz  
Clair Sassin  
Lesley & Scott Dobrzynski  
Ilene Reiter  
Joel & Maureen Augen  
Judy Branting  
Janet Garber & Kris Keydel  
Larry & Esther Bowring  
Jonathan & Laurie Blank  
Benjamin Cooper & Dina Herbert  
Sherri & Ashley Schornstein  
Allyson Burke  
Donald Lutt  
Jake Novack & Alexandra Zindel  
Sheryl Patterson  
Samantha Levine-Finley & Ethan Finley  
Gregory & Sarah Jacobson  
Jeffrey & Sara Lesk

Rachel & Eric Sapperstein  
Allison Levy  
Gerald & Aurora Kassalow  
Michael & Karen Weinberger  
Susan Rabin  
Beth Badrakhan  
Cynthia Dickerson  
Craig Fifer  
Spruce Fraser  
Jennifer Uustal  
Jill & Christopher Spivey  
Ricki Gerger  
Jessica Wolf  
Erick Person  
Gregory & Marcy Babitz  
Birgit A Waidmann  
Elizabeth & Howard Kline  
Laurie & Christopher Williams  
The Hannans  
Howard Cohen & Lucy Civitello  
Dina & Stuart Backer  
Evelyn & Ryan Hackel  
Eileen Greenberg & Silvia Foster  
Sheila Fieldman  
Philip La Kier & Lynn Miller  
Amy Montie  
Patricia Collins  
Melissa Schenkman  
John & Judy Jankowski  
Shlomo Menashi  
Wendy & Manoj Dalaya  
Cecil Key & Amy Zucker  
Janet Horwitz  
Nelson & Dorothy Saks  
Stuart & Nancy Davis  
Linda Vogel  
Evan & Colleen Bolick  
Lisa Sheldone  
Regina Begliutti  
Mark Harrison & Donna Kooperstein  
Mark & Conne Rubinstein  
Rebecca Ballo & Frank Ali  
Jeffrey & Laura Marin  
Michael Adams  
James & Barbara Freund  
Merrill Goldsmith  
Rami Cohen & Kara Lewis  
Fred P Blumenthal  
Elizabeth & David Mandel  
Steve Kalin  
Joyce Tarnapol  
Jason & Cory Taub  
Harriet & Donald Cohen  
Stephen Gross  
Jay Lucas & Maxine Cohen  
Audrey Agranov  
Daniel & Shilpa Gorfine  
The Jupiter Family  
Greg Harding & Amy Garten  
Lucille Weener  
Heather Barden

### Donor

Brandee Moretta Jackson & ..... all of those in need  
Raymond Jackson

### Donor

Joshua & Kristen Silberberg ..... Dolores Silberberg

### Donor

Delilah, Rebecca, Adina, & Jon Kulok ..... Debbie Spitzer  
The Turner Family ..... Susan Farber  
The Cramer Family ..... the Rabbi and Cantor  
Paul & Myrna Beck ..... Rachel and Jonathan Beck

### Donor

William Schneider ..... Hanukah for my girls,  
Caroline and Kate

Elisa Cheslak & Robin Thompson ..... Bat Mitzvah of Penelope Ali  
Robert Schaefer & Tandy Gustin ..... Ellen Schaefer and Nathan White  
Marty Wolf ..... Dana Evans' 75<sup>th</sup> Birthday  
Aimee Cramer ..... my Bat Mitzvah

### Donor

Robert Schaefer & Tandy Gustin ..... Marvin Yunc  
Danielle Spitzer ..... Deborah Spitzer  
Lynne Dubin ..... Debbie Spitzer  
Michele Ross ..... My children and grandchildren  
Janet Barnett ..... Cantor Kaufman  
Jeanette & Barry Astrow ..... the B'nei Mitzvah of Logan  
and Reese Reisman and their family

Steven & Madeline D'Alessio ..... Elsie D'Alessio

### Donor

Robert Schaefer & Tandy Gustin ..... Konnie Schaefer  
Jenny Genser-White & Alonzo White ..... lives lost on October 7  
Gabrielle & Richard Sterba  
Lloyd & Susan Whitman

Sherri & Ashley Schornstein ..... Stuart Schornstein  
Colin Campbell & Arlene Tave ..... Beatrice Tave  
Gerald & Silvia Terlitzky ..... Jerry Liess

Michael & Bonnie Miller  
Phillip Greenspon

The Cramer Family ..... Norman Cramer and  
Sidney Cramer

Dave & Shirley Church ..... Annette Kilian

Steven & Joselyn Rochlis ..... Arlene Hewitt





## Israel Committee Insights

IT TOOK ME A WHILE to write this article, and I deleted my entire first draft and started over. It is hard to truly grasp the rise of antisemitism lately. Even setting a time is hard. Since Oct. 7? Since the increase in support of the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions Movement (BDS) in May 2021? Since the Tree of Life shooting in 2018 or the Charlottesville march of 2017 or before? What about less publicized events like the kosher grocery store shooting in 2019 or the rise of hateful rhetoric on social media in 2015? And who is to blame? The far right with their Neo-Nazi groups, hate-filled rhetoric, and synagogue attacks in 2018 and 2019? Or the far left with the rise of BDS and tolerance of Hamas supporters?

The BDS movement, which believes not only in isolating Israel, but also ending its existence, has been particularly insidious. It can get especially complicated when many insist that not only are they not antisemitic, but “their best friend is Jewish” and also in BDS, and thus it is bad faith to even call it out. That is called tokenism. Tokenism, or the use of small numbers of Jews representing a minority opinion in the Jewish community has also been rampant. This is even the case on the left where tokenism is usually strongly condemned. Which leads to two of the most bizarre philosophical aspects of this contemporary antisemitism.

First is the everyday acceptance and appearance antisemitism has taken on, especially in places where Jews have long expected ally-ship, exemplified by college campus antisemitism. To make the matter worse, Jews are painted as the problem if they do not conform to pro-BDS pressure. Antisemitic myths like pink-washing further alienate Jews. The pink-washing myth claims that Israel has an elaborate propaganda campaign promoting their decent treatment of the LGBTQIA+ community, and it is used to distract from its various problems, some real and others imagined. It is a bizarre accusation, except in the light of far-left BDS supporters trying to justify their support, or at least tolerance for Hamas, and even the Palestinian Authority, considering the horrible treatment of the LGBTQIA+ community under those regimes. I remember when a BDS supporter first ranted the theory at me, and I felt like it suggested a true lack of good faith, as if anything Jews did had some negative ulterior motive.

The second is the way that non-Jews use the complicated nature of antisemitism and its various forms against us. The clearest example of this is false ally-ship. Marjorie Taylor Greene and Ilhan Omar have called each other out on antisemitism, while holding strong resistance to admitting to and apologizing for the antisemitism of their own comments. On the far right, there have been examples of individuals who seem to be pro-Israel but not as pro-Jewish ally-ship. One shockingly popular version of Christian Zionism, for example, promotes the idea that all Jews should return to Israel so the Christian rapture and end of days can take place... something that ends badly for many of the Jews according to tradition.

I have provided just a few examples and have not even discussed the worrying trends of near violent harassment of Jewish students like the one at Cooper Union College, where students were forced to hide in the school library from BDS protestors. Nor have I discussed the assaults against Orthodox Jews which have taken place over the last several years in New York. Recently one took place in Washington, DC by a Lyft driver who assaulted the Chabad Rabbi for Georgetown University, after telling his passenger that “he didn’t like his energy.” I focused my article on the philosophical trends because it could show the thinking that we need to stand up against to prevent a situation where more violent assaults become tolerated or worse justified.

I do not mean to be all doom and gloom. Many of us have seen every day allies reach out and check in on us following Oct. 7 and the most recent rise of antisemitism. The above-mentioned politicians are usually outliers and we have seen consistent condemnation from political leaders on the left and right. It is our duty to continue promoting Jewish pride and support within our own community and remain strong in these hard times. The rise in antisemitism has pulled the mask off of many of the “I am not an antisemite; I am an anti-Zionist type.” In the past I have often insisted on giving the benefit of the doubt to such people, partially to prove to myself the good faith I demand from others. It is clear now that we must be firmer and more confident than ever in calling out antisemitism in all its forms.

*This article was written by **Alex Buttgenbach**, a member of the Israel Committee.*

*The Israel Committee values diversity of opinion. We provide opportunities for committee members to express different perspectives that form our decisions about Israel. The articles represent the opinions of the author, not the committee as a whole.*

*Questions about the Israel Committee, and expressions of interest in joining may be addressed to **Len Rubenstein**, [len.rubenstein@gmail.com](mailto:len.rubenstein@gmail.com).*





# *Hosts Needed*

For

## An “Evening” with Friends

“Evening” with Friends is a series of early summer events hosted by members of our Beth El community in support of Beth El Hebrew Congregation!

Our Fundraising Committee is looking for individuals/families/groups to host such an event during the months of May or June.

Here are some examples: High Tea, Mexican dinner, Mediterranean dinner/lunch, Fondue Party and games, Hors D’oeuvres and Wine, children friendly BBQ with Bubbles, and more! Plan to host with your Mah Jong friends, Beth El Babies, a Havurah, Book Club, Preschool Moms/Dads or host on your own!

As the host, you choose the cost to attend (donation to BEHC), how many people you can host, the type of event it will be, and the date/time. You donate the location, meal, and accoutrements; we will advertise it for you and handle signups. Suggested size is 6-20 people and prices might range from \$25 -\$100/adults and \$10-\$15 children.

Any questions, email: [ellenkovar11@gmail.com](mailto:ellenkovar11@gmail.com) or [jill.jacobson@live.com](mailto:jill.jacobson@live.com)

Please sign up by March 15 if you can host an event!






Join us for our third annual community second night seder – a high-energy evening that focuses on the joy of being together as a community.

Registration information available in the Thursday weekly email in mid-March.





Early  
Childhood  
Learning  
Center

 Pozez JCC-  
Beth El



# PRESCHOOL REGISTRATION

Now open for  
**2024-2025!**

**LOCATED IN ALEXANDRIA, VA**

- ✓ Reggio Emilia inspired
- ✓ Year-round program
- ✓ 8am-5:30pm
- ✓ Ages 16 months-  
preschool



**SCHEDULE A TOUR**

[Dina.Backer@theJ.org](mailto:Dina.Backer@theJ.org)

703.537.3084



## COFFEE & CLERGY

TUESDAY'S 12PM ONLINE

*The only time you can meet with the Rabbi in your PJ's!*





Whether buying or selling your first home, a transition home or your forever home, I can help you find your place or reimagine your existing space.

When you use me to buy or sell your home, I will donate 10% of my commission to Beth El Hebrew Congregation or a 501(c)(3) organization of your choice.



Change your address. Support your community. Imagine the possibilities.



Shoshanna Tanner, J.D., LL.M.

Realtor® VA/DC  
Accredited Staging Professional  
202.957.9399  
shoshanna@compass.com

COMPASS

Compass is a licensed real estate brokerage that abides by Equal Housing Opportunity laws. Information is compiled from sources deemed reliable but is not guaranteed. All measurements and square footages are approximate. This is not intended to solicit property already listed. Compass is licensed as Compass Real Estate in DC and as Compass in Virginia and Maryland. 3100 Clarendon Blvd. Ste 200, Arlington, VA 22201 | 703.266.7277

## HAVE YOU SUFFERED BODILY INJURY?



CALL JEREMY FLACHS  
FOR A FREE CONSULTATION

Jeremy Flachs is a member of Beth El Hebrew Congregation. He is an attorney licensed in both Virginia and the District of Columbia. His law firm of 2 attorneys focuses only on serious personal injury claims.

- Serious Injury From Car and Truck Accidents
- Wrongful Death
- Slip & Fall
- Medical Malpractice



NO ATTORNEY FEE IF NO RECOVERY.

SPANISH SPEAKING STAFF.

SERVICING CLIENTS IN VIRGINIA AND WASHINGTON, DC.

WE BELIEVE IN THE EXISTING LEGAL SYSTEM WHICH COMPENSATES FOR INJURY CAUSED BY ANOTHER'S CARELESSNESS.

6601 Little River Turnpike  
Suite 315  
Alexandria, VA 22312  
Phone: 703.879.1998

jeremy.flachs@flachslaw.com  
http://www.flachslaw.com

WRJ



Judaica shop in the lobby  
Sponsored onegs, flowers on the bimah,  
other special event support  
Sisterhood through all the milestones of  
your life

wrjhospitality@gmail.com

## Brotherhood Catering

Bar/Bat Mitzvahs  
Receptions  
Fundraisers  
Parties



Catering@BethElHebrew.org

## Maria Professional Cleaning Services

- Houses • Townhouses • Apartments
- Weekly • Bi-weekly • Monthly
- Special Occasion
- Flexible Scheduling
- Condos • Offices

GOOD PRICE  
EXPERIENCE  
WORK



CALL MARIA FOR A FREE ESTIMATE

703-640-4361

mariahernandez061719@gmail.com

Gloria: 571-412-6795 MD • DC • VA

## Jenifer Morris photography

### Customized Mitzvah Photography Coverage

Standard 6 hours of coverage includes both:  
Rehearsal session on Bema and family photos  
Celebration coverage in Social Hall or other location

18 years of experience—looking forward to capturing  
the accomplishment and joy.

703-405-3846 jenifer@jenifermorrisphotography.com  
web: jenifermorrisphotography.com

# The Bulletin

**Beth El Hebrew  
Congregation  
3830 Seminary Road  
Alexandria, VA 22304**



**UNION *for*  
REFORM  
JUDAISM**

A Proud Member of the URJ

**Member: Union for  
Reform Judaism  
Founded in 1859  
Office 703-370-9400**

**March-April 2024  
Volume 79 – No. 4**

**School: 703-370-6644**

**[www.bethelhebrew.org](http://www.bethelhebrew.org)**

**[office@bethelhebrew.org](mailto:office@bethelhebrew.org)  
[bulletin@bethelhebrew.org](mailto:bulletin@bethelhebrew.org)**

**Senior Rabbi  
Rabbi Emeritus  
Cantor  
Executive Director  
Director of Education  
Preschool Site Director**

**David Spinrad  
Brett Isserow  
Jason R. Kaufman  
Elizabeth Bayer  
Dan Swartz  
Dina Backer**

**President  
Executive Vice President  
Vice Presidents**

**Dorrit Lowson  
Naomi Mercer  
Jake Gallun  
Adam Zissman  
Carly Rubenstein  
Jill Spivey  
Matt Mutterperl  
Joanne Rhodes  
Jeanette Astrow  
Janet Hlatky**

**Treasurer  
Secretary  
Brotherhood President  
WRJ Co-Presidents**

**Bulletin Editor**

**Purim and Passover are fast approaching-  
Eat, drink, and be merry!**

