



Beth El Bulletin

Beth El Hebrew Congregation

May 2018
Iyyar/Sivan 5778

Worship Services

Friday, May 4

WRJ Shabbat Service
7:30 pm

Saturday, May 5

Shabbat Morning Service
and Bar Mitzvah of David
Rubenstein, son of
XXX Rubenstein and
Virginia Ruiz
10:30 am
Tot Shabbat
11 am

Friday, May 11

Family Service, 6 pm
Soul Shabbat Service
7:30 pm

Saturday, May 12

Shabbat Morning Service
10:30 am

Friday, May 18

Erev Shabbat Service
7:30 pm

Saturday, May 19

Shabbat Morning Service
10:30 am
Shavuot Tot Shabbat
11 am

Sunday, May 20

Shavuot Yizkor Service
10:30 am

Friday, May 25

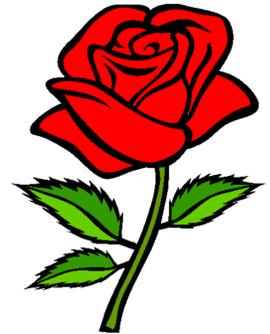
Erev Shabbat Service
7:30 pm

Saturday, May 5

Shabbat Morning Service
and Bat Mitzvah of Molly
Backer, daughter of XXX
and Dina Backer
10:30 am

Annual Brotherhood Mother's Day Brunch

Brotherhood's annual Mother's Day Brunch is on Sunday, May 13 at 10 am in the Social Hall. All women, and not just mothers, will be the guests of Brotherhood. Come enjoy a delicious Brotherhood-catered brunch and (back by popular demand) be entertained by Beth El's own Rock Hard Bagels. As is our tradition, ladies will receive a rose of appreciation, compliments of Brotherhood.



For payments received by May 6, the cost to gentlemen is \$8 per Brotherhood member and \$10 per non-Brotherhood member. The cost is \$12 for gentlemen who pay at the door. The brunch is complimentary for ladies.

To guarantee guests a seat—and to help us determine the number of brunches to be prepared—advanced reservations are required for all men and women attending. So please RSVP by May 6 to **Ron Sturman** (rgsturman@msn.com).

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...and lots of tantalizing tidbits scattered throughout, so don't skip a page!





Rabbi's Remarks

LOOKING BACK over nearly 20 years of bulletin articles there are still a few that retain their relevance. This, I think, is one.

We are now in the midst of the Counting of the Omer, the period of seven weeks starting on the second day of Pesach. The

counting of the Omer culminates in the Biblically-ordained festival of Shavuot. This harvest/pilgrimage festival was celebrated by the bringing and offering of the first fruits of the wheat harvest, the *bikkurim*, to the Temple in Jerusalem. Later, in the Rabbinic period, Shavuot came to celebrate the "Giving of the Torah" at Mount Sinai. More recently, in the 19th century, when the Reform Movement instituted Confirmation, Shavuot was chosen as the propitious time for celebrating this affirmation of Judaism by the graduates of our religious schools.

Confirmation probably had its origin in Westphalia in the early 1800s amongst the early Reformers. It was seen to be a replacement for Bar Mitzvah (Bat Mitzvah did not exist at the time) which, in their view, had become a meaningless formality. As Reform theology began more earnestly to question the concept of direct revelation at Sinai, so it had to answer the concomitant question "What does it mean to become Bar/Bat Mitzvah, declaring oneself to be subject to the Toraitic Commandments?"

For classical Reform Judaism, Confirmation provided the answer, allowing the candidates to affirm their allegiance to Judaism without necessarily dictating the formal creed of one specific theology.

So what do we, at Beth El, hope to achieve by Confirmation?

As we launch our children out into the vast sea of Judaism we hope we have provided them with a sturdy vessel, a map, a compass, an unending supply of nourishing resources, and above all the ability and desire to question.

During the years of religious school we have tried to inculcate a sense of Jewish identity. We have endeavored to teach all the rudiments of what this identity entails, its history, its language and the elements of its dis-

course with the wider world. It is our aim that, no matter where in the world our children find themselves, they will find something familiar within the Jewish community there.

We cannot teach everything in the few precious hours we have of religious school, and so we give our children a map of where things can be found, an inkling where to look when they are in doubt, access to the vast store of knowledge that makes up the collective wisdom of a people with a few thousand years of life experience. We give them a moral compass which reflects the values that we as a people have come to hold dear, an appreciation of the worth of every human being and of our duty toward *tikkun olam*, the fixing of our world.

We want our children to know that Beth El will always be their home, that the resources of this community and the Jewish Community as a whole are theirs for the asking. As their Rabbi, Cantor, teachers, and extended family, we want them to know that we are always concerned about them and will do our best to support and nourish their journey through life.

The greatest gift, however, that we hope to instill is the desire to question. Blind obedience is anathema to Reform Judaism and, I believe, Judaism in general. Year after year, every Pesach, we are instructed to inquire and learn. We read each year of Abraham and Moses and the prophets questioning God and we hear the Psalmist cry out for explanation. And if we can question God, then how much more so do we need question human thoughts and actions?

This is amongst Judaism's greatest gifts to the world and one which we fully endorse.

By not being afraid to ask difficult questions, by looking to the accumulated knowledge of the Jewish people and by developing discernment, wisdom and integrity through this process, our children confirm their place in the four thousand year chain of Jewish tradition and ensure that Judaism will continue to enjoy a healthy and flourishing future.

L'shalom,
Brett

From the Religious Action Center: This year, International Transgender Day of Visibility coincided with the first day of Passover, a particularly meaningful coincidence. On International Transgender Day of Visibility, we celebrate transgender people and the courage it takes to live openly, while recognizing the discrimination and violence that trans people continue to face. On Passover, we celebrate the Israelites' exodus from slavery in Egypt, while recognizing the many forms of oppression that continue to plague our society. Under the leadership of the Religious Action Center's Urgency of Now Transgender Rights campaign, 15 Reform Congregations from across the country came together to raise the issue of transgender rights and visibility in their local school districts. Read more at <https://rac.org/blog/2018/04/10/reform-congregations-take-action-transgender-rights>.

Religious Action Center
of Reform Judaism



Cantor's Corner



WITH BITTERSWEETNESS we are getting ready to congratulate our beloved Rabbi Isserow on his retirement. In these next couple of weeks and months I hope that you will find the opportunity to reach out to Rabbi and let him know and feel all of our gratitude, respect, and love towards him.

June will be an exciting month at Beth El in which we honor him in numerous ways.

On June 15 there will be a special Shabbat service in his honor. Rabbi and I would love the service to be a musical filled celebration.

I'm therefore excited to invite our congregational choir to participate as well as new members who may be interested in joining us. This is sure to be a very meaningful evening and something that will always be very important to the history of our sacred community. I hope to see you all there.

To sing in the service there are only two rehearsals to attend.

Rehearsals will be on Tuesdays June 5 and 12t from 7-8:30. Please join us at these two rehearsals so that we can honor our Rabbi with joyous song.

Please confirm your attendance as soon as possible with Maryam Sayed at MSayed@bethelhebrew.org.

— Cantor Kaufman

Cantor Kaufman and pianist Eric Schnobrick are also doing a special concert celebrating community on May 9, sponsored by the J as one of the Wednesdays-at-Beth El programs. See page 17 for more information.

Annual Meeting of the Beth El Permanent Endowment Fund

**Sunday, June 10, 2018, 10 am to noon
Seminar Room**

THE TRUSTEES of the Permanent Endowment Fund – **Evan Allen, Stuart Feldstein, Dana Arnold, Janet Garber, and Ernie Levy** -- welcome you to the annual meeting. Trustee terms are ending for **Dana Arnold** and **Stuart Feldstein**. The Nominating Committee proposes **Dana Arnold** (for a second term) and **Jeremy Flachs** to fill the expiring positions.

Any voting member may petition for an alternate slate of nominees directly to the Secretary, **Dana Arnold**, darnold.57@gmail.com, at least 20 days prior to the meeting and notice shall be provided to the membership by the Secretary at least 10 days prior to the meeting

The Trustees look forward to meeting with you to discuss the Endowment Fund's progress and to elect the new trustees. We have a lot of exciting things to discuss with you.

Birthright Israel is celebrating its chai birthday this year, its 18th birthday. Currently it sends more than 48,000 young, Jewish adults from 67 to Israel annually! Fun Fact: To date they estimate the participants have eaten more than 2.7 million falafel balls!! Support this program at:

<https://birthrightisrael.foundation/>





President's Point of View

*"Every time we say goodbye, I cry a little,
Every time we say goodbye, I die a little"*

I may have been born in the 60s, but I love music from the 30s and 40s, in particular, I love the wittiness of Cole Porter. The music is great but his lyrics really show a deep understanding of human emotion. I hate saying goodbye. The truth is I get really attached to people. Amy and Darci's friends only needed to have dinner with us once and they became part of my extended family. I have learned to live with personnel changes at work, but only because I've had to. And although I'm not on Facebook every day, I do love that it's made it possible for me to keep people in my life with so little effort. So I wanted to talk about my approach to saying goodbye to my partner and friend, Rabbi Isserow.

I think that there is a reason why the English language has so many words and phrases to represent the taking of leave. "Goodbye." "Farewell." "So long." Before Glenn and I were married, it took us many minutes to get off the phone—neither of us wanted to break the connection by hanging up first. When I hang up the phone from my now, family, I don't say "good bye", I say, "See you later" or "talk to you later." Thinking about it now it occurs to me that it is my way of saying that the break in our contact is only temporary. Even the

real goodbyes in my life, the passing of my mother, for example, was alleviated by the fact that I knew that as long as I hold her in my memory, she's never really that far away.

So how do I plan to say goodbye to Rabbi Isserow? My first reaction is not to. But being president of the congregation won't allow me to slack off—even if I wanted to! I have decided that instead of saying goodbye, I am going to say, "See you later" and really mean it. In fact, I've already provided my soon-to-be-retired friend with a list of opera broadcasts that we can attend together next year (no more Saturday work!).

How will you say goodbye? Our Transition Committee has worked hard on events to help you do that. I hope you will join us at one of the retirement festivities—Shabbat, the family picnic, or the Gala. But I also hope that you will take a private moment to let Rabbi Isserow know what his presence at Beth El meant to you and your family. Meet him for coffee or send him a holiday greeting. And know that at some point next year, we will be saying "hello" to his new emeritus status. Like so many goodbyes, this one is not permanent—Rabbi Isserow will forever be a part of our Beth El family.

— **Julienne Bramesco**



Executive Director's Entry

As we move forward into May and the celebration of Shavuot, my thoughts are still on April and some of the amazing events that we had at Beth El Hebrew Congregation. Most of the programming in our synagogue couldn't happen without

the help of volunteers. We are a volunteer-led and a volunteer-driven synagogue which probably accounts for the positive culture in our worship community.

I was given the privilege of helping plan and attending my first Beth El Community Second Seder. We had over 150 attendees to a truly special event. Chef Xavier Beverly and his staff worked hard to serve amazing brisket, matzah ball soup, etc. Without the help of volunteers like **Jo Ann Allen**, **Alan Cohn**, **Sally Schneider**, and many others, the event would never have been pos-

sible. A special thank you, as always, to **Rabbi Isserow**, **Cantor Kaufman**, and the Maintenance Team!

The tie-in of Pesach and Shavuot may not be obvious to everyone. Shavuot takes place 7 weeks after Pesach. As they are linked on the calendar, they're linked in my thoughts. On Pesach, we retell the story of our escape from Egypt and Pharaoh. Shavuot celebrates the covenant where we were given G-d's law on Mount Sinai during our time in the wilderness. Both holidays are central to who we are as a people. And you can't have one holiday without the other.

Adam Wallach
Executive Director

Religious School Report: A Few Good Ideas

NEXT YEAR the Religious School will be increasing student mitzvah (service) projects. Our B'Nei Mitzvah students select a mitzvah project as part of their B'Nei Mitzvah responsibilities. Our cantor supervises these projects. We are very proud of the effort made by our young adults.

Many of our students and their parents have asked that the Mitzvah Project Program be continued into the years following the B'nei Mitzvah. One of the recommendations of our Post B'Nei Mitzvah Working Group is to continue Mitzvah Projects during the Confirmation Program (8th thru 10th Grades).

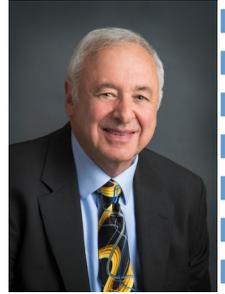
In the RS Year of 2018 to 2019, we are enhancing our Mitzvah Program - our own Mitzvah Corps. I know many of you are associated with community programs that may be able to utilize the skills and energy of our students. I have received several ideas from congregants and we will review, with Cantor Kaufman, prior Mitzvah Projects to determine if we can expand upon them.

My request to you is to send me ideas that you may have on how our students can perform Mitzvah Projects for the Beth El Community or the greater NOVA Com-

munity. Send me your ideas, a description of the program, and how you believe our students can help the organization. My email is bsmith@bethelhebrew.org. I look forward to receiving your ideas.

One more request. Supporting the Religious School by volunteering your time is greatly appreciated. Another way of supporting our Religious school is donating to the Religious School Fund. These funds allow me to enhance our programming and obtain additional resources for our teachers and students. Todah *rabah* to all who have made donations. I encourage all members, when they can, to donate to this important fund.

L'Shalom,
Barry Smith, Director of Education
bsmith@bethelhebrew.org



ECLC News

THE WEEK OF May 7 marks National Teacher Appreciation Week. While we try our best to appreciate our teachers all year long, it is nice to have some time set aside to make sure we show our gratitude properly.

Teaching is hard work – and being an Early Childhood Educator is challenging in many different ways than being a classroom teacher of older children. Early Childhood teachers are on the front lines every day all day helping our youngest friends navigate the world around them. We are teaching children the skills in our program that everyone wants and expects them to bring to elementary school and beyond. We are teaching responsibility, kindness, collaboration, manners... the list is endless. All of these things are tied hand-in-hand with the content part of our work.

Early Childhood Educators give all of themselves to their kids. They love them, care about them, worry about them and always go the extra mile to help them succeed. It is a messy business (literally) and not one that everyone can manage.

Early Childhood Educators are a special bunch and ours are truly among the best in the field. The documentation on the bulletin boards outside of the classrooms only tells half the story. The rest is really un-written but it shouldn't be. Our ECLC Teachers deserve our biggest thank yous for the work that they do... for the role they play in helping our kids be the best they can be.

So, if you see any ECLC teachers... please thank them for the work they are doing. They deserve every word of thanks we can give them! They are simply the best!

— **Dina Backer**

Brotherhood News

ON A COLD Sunday morning in April, more than 130 people attended Brotherhood's free coffee and bagels Public Policy Forum on the extremely timely subject of *Gerrymandering and the Politics of Redistricting*. Sincere thanks to Beth El member **Robert Siegel** (former NPR host of *All Things Considered*) for moderating a panel of experts, which included Beth El member **Martin Frost** (past US House Representative from Texas), State Sen. Adam Ebbin; David Wasserman of Cook Political Report; Brian Cannon of OneVirginia2021; and author, Michael Latner. The panelists' presentations were followed by a robust Q-and-A period with the audience. Special thanks to organizer **Ron Sturman**, as well as to volunteers, **Joel Augen, Mike Baker, Pat Collins, Paulette Ehrenburg, Jake Gallun, Matt Mutterperl, Linda and Steve Shapiro, Roger Smith, Norm Starler, Linda Waller and Pamela Zitron**. The Forum was broadly hailed as one of the best ever!

Brotherhood's next free Public Policy Forums takes place on May 6, covering *America's Response to Charlottesville*. RSVP to **Ron Sturman**, rgsturman@msn.com. Also, please plan to join us on Sunday, May 13 at 10 am in the Social Hall for Brotherhood's annual **Mother's Day Brunch**. All women, and not just mothers, will be the guests of Brotherhood. (See front page of this *Bulletin* and flyer.) Come enjoy a delicious Brotherhood-catered brunch and be entertained by Beth El's **Rock Hard Bagels**. RSVP by May 6 to **Ron Sturman**, rgsturman@msn.com.

Brotherhood's annual free end-of-year **Religious School Picnic** is scheduled for June 3, the last day of Religious School classes. This year, Brotherhood is partnering with the Rabbinic Transition Committee to expand the picnic to a full Congregational event to honor retiring **Rabbi Brett Isserow**. RSVP by May 18 to Transition2018@bethelhebrew.org please.

And on Friday night, June 8, the **Brotherhood annual**

meeting will take place prior to the Brotherhood Shabbat service, during which the **2018 Brotherhood Man of the Year Award** will be presented to this year's recipient, **Ron Sturman**. Looking at the paragraphs above, is it any wonder that Ron is our honoree? (Details to follow in next month's *Bulletin*.)

Meet Brotherhood board member **Jeremy Flachs**. He is a self-employed personal injury attorney. Jeremy is married to Elizabeth Hernandez, a former economist for the Venezuelan government. They have a 10-year-old daughter, Amarantha. Jeremy has been involved in Beth El and Brotherhood activities for decades. He recalls his first venture with Brotherhood was Jay Jarvis asking him to play softball. That was followed by then manager, Jim Orlick asking him to volunteer for catering. The years have passed and Jeremy is now a Beth El board member, and he still plays softball. He is very active with the Chapel in the Woods. If you see him entering Beth El on a hot summer day, sweaty and dirty, he was pulling ivy, digging holes, planting native shrubs, or resurfacing the nature trails in our woodland Chapel. An environmental soldier at heart, he has fought to scale back the proposed development adjacent to Beth El, known as Karig Estates. Jeremy has remained a Brotherhood Board member for years, not only because he respects the organization and the many volunteer opportunities it presents, but also because he enjoys the camaraderie of his fellow board members and all those he meets at Brotherhood-sponsored events. Jeremy is a past Brotherhood Man-of-the-Year recipient, and recently 5 trees were planted in his honor as recognition by the full Beth El Board for his leadership in protecting Beth El's interests in the Karig Estates development project.

John Jankowski
Brotherhood President
brotherhood@bethelhebrew.org

Culture Club Annual Potluck Luncheon Thursday, May 24 - 12 Noon

Come join a fun afternoon of good food, lively conversation, and friendship at Meryl's for our annual potluck luncheon. All adult Beth El members are invited to participate whether you have come to all or some Culture Club adventures or just wish you had! Feel free to bring a guest. Please contact **Meryl** (stafm@aol.com) by May 18 to rsvp and coordinate the buffet offerings.

Save the date: June 22 Cezanne Portraits National Gallery of Art, West Bldg.

Meryl Goldhammer

WRJ News

AFTER A RATHER unpredictable start to spring, our flowers and trees are blooming and we head into May. Our WRJ Shabbat on May 4 begins at 6 pm with a potluck dinner, our annual raffle fundraiser, and the well deserved recognition of **Michele Milden** as our WRJ Woman of the Year. Michelle has co-chaired several major fundraisers in recent years bringing in much-needed funds to help support our Beth El community, including our youth and other *tzedakah* funds in the Northern Virginia area and beyond. Her ability to coordinate an array of volunteers for multifaceted events such as our wildly popular and thought-provoking Book and Author events and Mahj Mayhem extends beyond the scope of what many of us can achieve. Michele is constantly thinking about every detail to ensure an event's success. WRJ is grateful for all of her efforts over the years. We are honored to join **David Rubinstein** and his family at the Shabbat evening service beginning at 7:30 p.m.

The following Sunday, May 13, is Mothers' Day. Thank you to Brotherhood for once again providing a wonderful brunch and roses for all mothers in attendance and of course the rest of the family can enjoy breakfast for a nominal fee. (See details elsewhere in the newsletter.)

Our final book club discussion will be on June 12 at 11 am. We will be discussing *Household Words* by Joan Silber. We will also decide on books for our next season. Please send your suggestions to **Rita Ditrani** at ditrani.rita@gmail.com.

Thanks to all who contributed to our social action professional clothing drive, to help out economically challenged people in our neighborhoods. Once again, we had a tremendous outpouring of donations from the congregation.

Happy Mothers' Day to all,
Jeanette Astrow
WRJ President

Upcoming events

- Next WRJ Meeting – May 2
- WRJ Shabbat – May 4th
- Carpenters Shelter - Cook on May 27 & serve on May 28
- Knitting - May 13 & 27
- Mah Jongg – Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday

Brotherhood Public Policy Forum on XXX



Member News

Welcome New Memberso:

Condolences to:

Mazal Tov to:



May the memory of the dear departed always be a blessing and inspiration and loved them.

parted always to all who knew

May our synagogue comfort to those who mourn

munity bring com- them.

May the families row.

know of no more sor-

Amen.

Still confirming this info with office



BAKED GOODS REQUEST FOR ONEG HONORING RABBI ISSEROW, JUNE 15

Beth El's Transition Committee will coordinate with WRJ to present a SWEET farewell for **Rabbi Isserow** at the oneg on Friday, June 15. We invite all congregants to provide your favorite homemade dessert (brownies, cookies, cakes, etc) or a fruit tray. Fresh desserts can be delivered any time from Wednesday, June 13 until June 14. Freezable contributions can be delivered up to two weeks in advance. Please label your yummy contribution: JUNE 15 ONEG and sign your name. Please contact **Jo Ann Allen** at: allenjoann@icloud.com or 202-431-4634 with what you are bringing so we will have the appropriate platter available for set-up or if you have any questions. Thank you so much for your help!

Transition News

AS YOU CAN well imagine, things are beginning to ramp up towards **Rabbi Isserow's** retirement and **Rabbi Spinrad's** arrival. Our team's focus until July 1, 2018 is to honor our 5th Senior Rabbi, **Rabbi Isserow**, for his years of service and commitment.

There are many ways our team **and you** can make this happen:

- Donate to The Rabbi Brett Isserow Playground Fund that was formally established at the Board's last meeting.
- Everyone welcome: The transition team is partnering with Brotherhood to expand this year's end of the school year picnic to honor **Rabbi Isserow**, June 3, the last day of Religious School. If you are planning to attend, please RSVP to: Transition2018@bethelhebrew.org by May 18.
- Attend the June 15 Friday night services to honor **Rabbi Isserow**. **Cantor Kaufman** will be presenting a wonderful program. Come to the pre- and post-onegs and join the continued celebration.
- On June 16 we will honor the Rabbi with a lovely gala. Join us!

Please feel free to drop us an email at: Transition2018@bethelhebrew.org with any and all suggestions you have.

Pamela Zitron — Transition Chair

Rabbi Isserow's Retirement Gala and Silent Auction

BY NOW YOU have received your invitation and we hope you have returned the RSVP. If not, please do so before April 18 if you wish to take advantage of the discounted ticket price. ALL RSVPs are due by May 18.

We have received some questions, so let's cover them:

Can I sit with my friends?

List who you would like to sit with on your RSVP card. Tables of eight can be grouped by listing your request. On the other hand, if you prefer, we are happy to place you.

What's the attire?

Elegant. Shake the dust off those party clothes and get your dance shoes ready.

What kinds of things will be on the silent auction?

A wide spectrum of both products and experiences, at several price points will be exhibited for bidding during the gala reception and dinner. We have wonderful items being donated by Beth El members as well as businesses throughout the community: iPad, oriental rugs, Nats premiere package, theater tickets, restaurant gift cards, wine, gift baskets... get ready to shop, shop, shop! A catalogue with full descriptions will be provided as you arrive. In addition, a few special items will be auctioned live. At the conclusion of the evening, if you are the winning bidder, you can settle your account by check or credit card.

How else can I be supportive?

Do you have something for the silent auction (event tickets, beach house, etc. — not white elephant!), contact Sally **Schneider** at behcsilentauction@gmail.com. While dining in your favorite restaurant, shopping in your favorite boutique, or being pampered at your hair/nail salon, request a donation! Contact Sally with any questions..

Provide baked goods for the special oneg on Friday, June 15.

Sponsorships are available at several levels. All sponsorships received by May 18 will be listed in the event program. Sponsorships received after this date will be acknowledged in the Bulletin.

Most importantly, come to the gala! Let's fill the social hall to honor Rabbi Isserow as he retires while dancing and enjoying friends!

Rhoda Goldman and Meryl Goldhammer,
Gala Co-chairs

Sally Schneider
Silent Auction Chair

Calendar will go here be

fore publication



...helping homeless families, with an emphasis on victims of domestic violence,
transition to independent living with dignity through subsidized housing and individualized services...

Buy Books, Help Beth El House – June 3 – 7, 2018 - Here's a painless opportunity to help Beth El House (BEH), the non-profit transitional housing program created by Beth El Hebrew Congregation members many years ago. BEH will be sponsoring a fundraiser through Barnes & Noble bookstores June 3-7. Part of the book costs purchased in any Barnes & Noble store anywhere in the country on June 3, or on-line through the B&N website from June 3 through June 7, will be credited to Beth El House. Use any membership discounts or coupons if you have them; just pay your regular price and BEH gets a contribution.

Simply use this ID code at checkout in-store or on-line: 12335410 (or mention Beth El House when in the store). That's it. Friends and relatives throughout Northern Virginia, as well as across the country, can participate; just pass on the ID code and dates! So save up your ideas for books for new graduates, Father's Day, or summer reading and help support the important activities of Beth El House.

Residents Update – And here is how your support works to improve the lives of homeless families. All of our resident families continue to live in separate town house apartments along the Route One Corridor in Fairfax County. They are progressing in the program. While residents continue to work at their current places of employment, they are seeking higher paid positions. Families are involved in financial management programs through Britepath and working on plans to eliminate debt. One resident will be graduating shortly and is seeking permanent housing options.

And to each of our supporters, thank you for making a difference in the life of others! Your commitment is stellar.

For additional information or to learn how you can become involved in BEH please contact **Melinda Selden** (703.569.5443 or melindaselden@verizon.net) or visit our website at www.bethelhouseva.org.

CCC Bereavement Support

JEWISH CUSTOM states that all of us are equal in death and mourning regardless of our social status or station in life. In ancient days, poor families suffered great embarrassment at their inability to bury their deceased family members properly. In response, the great sage Rabban Gamliel ordered that he be dressed in simple linen cloth when the time came for his own funeral. This soon became the communal norm, as did the practice of a plain simple casket. In a similar vein, charitable contributions are encouraged instead of flowers to honor the dead so that the funds might benefit those in need rather than enhance the funeral aesthetically. (MyJewishLearning.com)

Here at Beth El, our Caring Community Committee has many roles. When a congregant or one of their family members passes away, the CCC can offer assistance if needed. Every congregant who suffers a loss receives a note of condolence written by the CCC on behalf of the congregation. Once the congregant has spoken with our clergy and a need is identified, a representative of the CCC attempts to contact the family by way of a phone call or by email to assess the family's needs and offer guidance during this difficult time. If the funeral is at Beth El, ushers are provided to assist the family and other mourners. If a family chooses to provide a meal in their home or at Beth El after the funeral, we can provide set up and clean up help as well as desserts and fruit. When shiva is observed in the home, we can offer

support with setup and clean up as well as provide a light nosh for the family and those attending. The families receiving assistance are grateful for our efforts and generally feel great relief at having these details sorted out. But our assistance does not end there. Approximately 3 months after the loss of a loved one, another committee member will contact the bereaved to offer inclusion in a Life After Loss support group facilitated by trained professionals from our committee.

The members of our committee are only the organizers of a larger group of caring congregants whom we call on at a moment's notice to help provide the food contributions for the meals and *shiva minyanim*. There is always room for more. If you would like more information about volunteering to provide food or assistance, please contact **Ruth Perlstein** at 703-978-9341 or rperl8607@gmail.com.

Performing a mitzvah for someone who has passed is one of the highest forms of mitzvot as it cannot be returned. Every member of our Beth El *kehillah k'doshah* (holy community) is encouraged to become involved in supporting each other in this most important mitzvah.

B'shalom,
Jeanette Astrow
Bereavement coordinator

Lifelong Learning Presents:

Moment Magazine Presents Tasting Memories from Bagels to Borekas, May 2

Presented by Susan Borocas, Founding Director, Jewish Food Experience; food writer; chef; teacher

(This is a joint program with Thursday at the J and the Beth El Life Long Learning Program)

Can you close your eyes and still smell your mother's chicken soup or the Shabbat challah baking? Were *kreplach* and *knishes* some of your favorite foods growing up? What are your earliest memories of Jewish food? What Jewish foods from your childhood and family did you make for your family?

Join Susan for a journey through our memories of Jewish food and the role it played in our lives growing up and still today. We'll enjoy a talk about some of the history of Jewish food in the US followed by a lively discussion sharing our tastiest memories.

Susan served as guest chef at the 2014, 2015 and 2016 White House Seders hosted by the Obamas. Her stories and recipes have appeared in the *Washington Post*, *Lilith*, *Moment Magazine*, *Washington Jewish Week* and *Tablet* among other places.

Bagels and whitefish will be served after the program where you will have time to schmooze with other members! See page 17 for registration information.

Arlington Cemetery through a Jewish Perspective, May 20

Have you ever wondered about the role Jews have played in the development of our country? On a visit to Arlington National Cemetery every once in a while a Star of David is visible. Whose grave is it and what is the story behind the stone? Many of these belong to Jews who had starring roles in our nation's history. This tour will highlight these people from the past and their stories with a stress on the Civil War era.

Be prepared for two hours of walking, so comfortable shoes are a must. We will be meeting at the Visitor Center of Arlington on Sunday, May 20, shortly before 10:00 am for a two-hour tour. Hopefully it won't be too hot, but you might want to bring a hat and sunglasses. Sign up now as space is limited to 20 people. \$10 for BEHC members, \$15 for nonmembers.



Debbie Spitzer

Debbie.E.Spitzer@gmail.com

B'nei Mitzvah

Harrison Hannan
April 14, 2018

The Bulletin is very sorry for misspelling Harrison's last name in the April *Bulletin*. The correct spelling is Hannan.

Molly Backer
May 26, 2018

Molly is a 7th grade student at the Gesher Jewish Day School and in the Beth El Religious School. She is also a graduate of our own JCCNV-BETH EL ECLC. She enjoys being a Hebrew tutor for the 4th graders. She likes reading, watching movies, playing basketball, being a part of Beth El's Club 67 and hanging out with friends. She loves visiting out-of-town family and spending part of her summer at Capital Camps.

Molly and her family thank **Cantor Kaufman** for tutoring her and both **Rabbi Isserov** and **Cantor Kaufman** for all their guidance and support through the years.

David Rubenstein
May 5, 2018

David Rubenstein is a 7th grader at Carl Sandburg Middle School. He plays bassoon, piano, and trumpet and whistles better (and more frequently) than anyone else in his family.

He likes artichokes, science fiction novels, anything with an LCD screen that beeps, tennis, most (but not all) Marvel superhero movies, cats, mangos and "Weird Al" Yankovic.

David has traveled to seven countries and has eaten cheese pizza (no toppings) in all of them. A man of few words, David hopes one day to win an argument with his sister, Sofie.

Chapel in the Woods: How to Find Virginia Native Plants

Virginia native plants benefit the environment because they require less watering than non-native species and serve as food or shelter for insects, birds, and animals that live here. But Virginia native plants are hard to find. Commercial growers and retailers have just begun to grow, stock and sell a few of them. Fortunately, these plants thrive in our climate—and area gardeners who do grow them soon find they have a surplus.

Whereas some of the plants now growing in the Chapel in the Woods come from native plant nurseries such as Nature by Design or Earth Sangha; many others come from home gardens or public gardens maintained by volunteers.

During March and April, these gardeners have been thinning their beds and potting up the harvest to share with others. You can find these plants at area plant sales held during May to benefit nonprofit organizations.

Here is a brief list of easy-to-grow Virginia natives you might look for as you browse the offerings. And, if you particularly like what you see you can purchase them for your own garden—or if you have extra plants—consider donating some to the Chapel in the Woods. For more information about native species, visit www.plantnovanatives.com.

Please help plant these species by attending the workday in the Chapel in the Woods from 10 to noon on May 13. A light Mother's Day lunch will follow. Bring work gloves and trowels if you have them; other equipment will be provided. For more information, contact **Nancy** or **Stuart Davis**, 703 671 5906

Chapel in the Woods Wish List

Cardinal flower, *Lobelia cardinalis*
Common milkweed, *Asclepias syriaca*
Foamflower, *Tiarella cordifolia*
Threadleaf coreopsis, *Coreopsis verticillata*
Virginia sweetspire, *itea virginica*
Yellow wild indigo, *Baptisia tinctoria*

Northern Virginia Native Plant Sales

May 5

Long Branch Nature Center Native Plant Sale

1 to 4 pm

625 S. Carlin Springs Road, Arlington

Friends of Runnymede Park

10 am to 2 pm

196 Herndon Parkway, Herndon

Reston Spring Festival

1 pm-5 pm



Foamflower, *Tiarella cordifolia*

2018-19 ECLC REGISTRATION IS OPEN

Our Early Childhood Learning Center offers a 12-month program with part-time and full-time options for children who will be 2, 3, or 4 by September 30.

Our full-time toddler program accepts students from 16 -23months.

The ECLC is licensed by the State of Virginia and is open to all members of the community.

Contact Director **Dina Backer** for registration, information and a tour!

703-537-3084 or dina.backer@jccnv.org

Give your preschooler the gift of great learning experiences, new friends and lots of fun!

Beth El/JCCNV Events

Moment Magazine presents Tasting Memories from Bagels to Borekas

Wednesday, May 2, 10:30 am-12:30 pm

Presented by Susan Borocas, Founding Director, Jewish Food Experience; food writer; chef; teacher

(This is a joint program with Thursday at the J and the Beth El Life Long Learning Program)

Can you close your eyes and still smell your mother's chicken soup or the Shabbat challah baking? Were *kreplach* and *knishes* some of your favorite foods growing up? What are your earliest memories of Jewish food? What Jewish foods from your childhood and family did you make for your family?

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Susan served as guest chef at the 2014, 2015 and 2016 White House Seders hosted by the Obamas. Her stories and recipes have appeared in the *Washington Post*, *Lilith*, *Moment Magazine*, *Washington Jewish Week* and *Tablet* among other places.

Bagels and whitefish will be served after the program where you will have time to schmooze with other members!

Fee: \$5 all participants

Code: 9081

RSVP: Submit payment and registration form to the JCCNV, Attn; Shelly Rosenstein, 8900 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax, VA 22031



Jewish Community Center
of Northern Virginia

A Special Concert Celebrating Community!

Wednesday, May 9, 10:30 am-noon
Presented by Cantor Jason Kaufman
with Pianist Eric Schnobrick

After they performed to a sold-out crowd recently, we are very excited to have Cantor **Jason Kaufman** and pianist Erik Schnobrick join us to present a concert of Jewish and spiritually-oriented music. They will present musical treasures from Jewish liturgy as well as modern pieces of music that express our Jewish commitment to community and social justice. This will be an inspirational and moving program for all to enjoy! Stay after and enjoy some light snacks with other members

The Israeli Intelligence Community

Wednesday, May 16, 10:30 am-noon
Presented by Liat Lisha, J Community Shlichah

The Israeli intelligence community, consisting of Mossad and other security and military intelligence services, has gained respect and recognition all over the world. Join Liat for a discussion on how these services were established, their roles within the intelligence community, their leaders, and their defining events in history. You will also learn about some of the conspiracies that were linked to Mossad, in addition to hearing about Liat's experience in the IDF intelligence unit.

You Can't Have Broadway If You Don't Have Any Jews!

Wednesday, May 23, 10:30am-noon
Presented by Steve Friedman,
Broadway Historian

(This is a joint program with Thursday at the J members.)

The Broadway musical was one of the first American art forms, and it was created by a Jewish connection to music and the arts. From the early days of Jerome Kern and the Gershwins, then on to Leonard Bernstein, Jerome Robbins, Stephen Sondheim, Jule Styne, Frank Loesser, and even Marvin Hamlisch, these men influenced and created the productions we still love today.

Steve is back by popular demand to talk about this unique connection and serenade us with some of his favorite Broadway songs. Steve is a classically-trained tenor, and has presented his programs at local learning institutes, on cruise ships, and at many other venues in the area. He is also the author of *The Ultimate Broadway Musical List Book* which he will have on sale after the program. You'll want to attend this fun and entertaining program!

Fee: \$5 all registrants

Contact: Shelly.Rosenstein@jccnv.org

Code: 9184

RSVP: Submit payment and registration form to the JCCNV, attn.: Shelly Rosenstein, 8900 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax VA 2201

All Beth El/JCCNV events are \$5 for all participants unless noted otherwise. Coffee, tea, and dessert will be provided.

To RSVP or get more information for all Beth El/JCCNV events, please contact Shelly.Rosenstein@jccnv.org, 703-537-3062



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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 acknowledgment.

Readers of Beth El

This has been an exciting book year for our group, with a variety of fiction selections. Our final meeting of the year will be the Netflix film *One of Us* on June 4. In the wake of trauma and abuse, three Hasidic Jews face ostracism, anxiety, and danger as they attempt to leave their ultra-Orthodox community. The theme of this 2017 highly acclaimed movie is similar to *All Who Go Do Not Return* by Shulem Deen, a book we read last year.

We will be picking some books for summer reading and for next year at our June 4 meeting. If you have read something you think our group might be interested in, please feel free to share it with me!

Lynne Orens, lorens750@aol.com



ALIVE!

FOR THE NEXT two months our Bin of Bounty (AKA Can for Cans and Canucopia) will be dedicated to the ALIVE! Backpack Food Program for Alexandria's school children. Hunger knows no season, and we want to be sure everyone's needs are met. Here's what is most needed:

- Milk boxes
- Instant oatmeal
- Fruit and pudding cups
- Raisins
- Individual servings of mac and cheese
- Pasta (Spaghettios, etc.)
- Cans of tuna or chicken

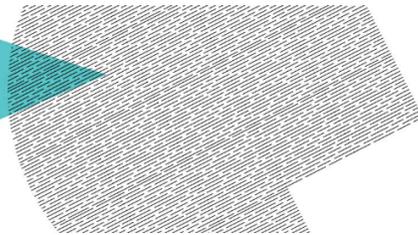
Thank you so much for your continued support of ALIVE!'s food programs.

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

28th Annual

WASHINGTON JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL

May 2-13



May 2 7pm

Opening Night at the Edlavitch JCC in DC

Sammy Davis, Jr.: I've Gotta Be Me

Sammy Davis, Jr. strove to achieve the American dream in a time of prejudice and political change. He was the most public black figure to embrace Judaism, thereby yoking his identity to another persecuted minority.

May 13 7pm

Closing Night at the Edlavitch JCC in DC

The Invisibles

In June 1943, Germany infamously declared Berlin "judenfrie" - "free of Jews." But at that moment there were still 7,000 Jews living there in hiding, Only 1,700 lived to liberation.

May 3-13 Multiple movies each day at venues in DC, Bethesda, and Silver spring; some movies have multiple showings in different venues

Special Events

May 6: *GI Jews* Meet and Greet/Tour of the National Museum of American Jewish Military

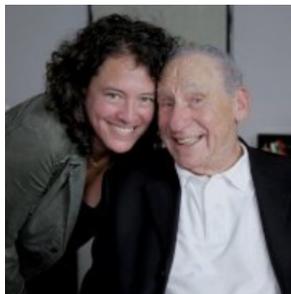
Special Event May 8: *The Cakemaker* Dessert Reception Sponsored by the Embassy of Germany

Get more information and register for films and special events at: <https://www/wjff.org>



Film: *The Last Laugh*
Wednesday, June 6, 2018 7:30 pm

The Last Laugh pairs clips from films, performances, and interviews with top comedians and prominent Jewish leaders, including Mel Brooks, Sarah Silverman, Joan Rivers, Louis C.K., Chris Rock, Abraham Foxman, and Shalom Auslander, to ask the ultimate taboo question:



Can the Holocaust be funny?

Information and registration at :
<https://benderjccgw.org/arts-culture-jewish-life/film>

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H Street NE Walking Tour
Sunday, May 13, 2018 10-11:30 am

More than 75 Jewish-owned businesses once lined H Street NE. Learn about the immigrant roots and Jewish history of this rapidly changing neighborhood.



Open to participants of all ages. Please note that some of the sidewalks are quite narrow.

More information and registration at:
<https://www.jhsgw.org/h-street-ne-walking-tour>

Jewish-American Heritage Month Lecture
at National Archives
Thursday, May 17, 2018 7 pm

This panel will feature former Glen Echo protesters and Emmy award-winning filmmaker Ilana Trachtman, who will speak about her work-in-progress film, *Ain't No Back to a Merry-Go-Round*. The 10-week protest at Glen Echo in 1960 was spearheaded by black students from Howard University, white neighbors (many of them Jewish) from Maryland's Bannockburn community, and civil rights leaders.

Free and open to the public. Advance registration requested. More information and registration at:

<https://www.jhsgw.org/jewish-american-heritage-lecture-at-national-archives>

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HOLD THE DATE

Trayf at Theater J, May 30-June 24

Zemer Chai Annual Concert, June 10

Presentation of Marc Ross Scholarship, June 1

Friends of the IDF MidAtlantic Gala, June 10

Confirmation, June 3

Permanent Endowment Fund Meeting June 10

Last Day of Religious School, June 3

Jewish Community Relations Council Gala, June 11

Israel@70 Community Concert, June 3

Jewish Council for the Aging 25th Annual Sylvia
Blajwas Productive Aging Award, June 3

Special Shabbat in Honor of Rabbi Isserow, June 15

Buy Books at Barnes & Noble, Help Beth El House:
June 3-7

Rabbi Isserow's Retirement Gala and Silent Auction,
June 16

Jewish Community Relations Council 80th Anniversary
Gala, June 4

Beth El Annual Meeting, June 19

Brotherhood Shabbat, June 8

Culture Club visit to Cezanne Portraits National Gallery
of Art, West Bldg., June 22

Northern Virginia Jewish Film Festival, Oct. 18-28