



# Congregation Beth David

Narragansett, Rhode Island

## *CBD NEWS ... Winter 2020-2021*

**May Love and Light Fill Your Home and Heart**



*Eve Sosnowski*



*Maddie Neri*



*Aviva Fishman*



*Wren and Poppy Anderson*



*Anthe and Izzy Varinis*



*Abby and Maya Kaufman*

From Rabbi Adler

## Judaism's Flame ...



Some time ago, I was involved with an organization that outreached to Jewish residents in nursing homes and assisted living facilities. We visited them throughout the year, and especially during Jewish holidays. A particular interaction surrounding Chanukah will be forever etched into my mind.

I had visited Mrs. M for a few months, and sadly noted her decline from month to month. One day, when I showed up at the facility, I checked in with the activity director who mentioned that Mrs. M has declined rapidly and has been 'out of it' for a few days – she was quiet, staring blankly and rarely responding to any attempts to connect with her. Her family was desponded about the situation.

When I walked into her room, she was lying in bed, motionless and just gazing at the ceiling. I introduced myself and pulled a chair closer to her bed. I mentioned that this was Chanukah and that I came by so we could light the Chanukah menorah together. Of course, because of the facility policy, the menorah I brought was lit by a battery – using lit candles was forbidden.

I turned on the menorah and began to sing the prayers associated with the lighting. I totally expected to sing solo, which I had done too many times. As I began to sing, I looked at her and noticed, to my disbelief, that she was mouthing the Hebrew words of the blessing. I bent over to bring my ears closer to her lips and hear a few faint words coming from her mouth. I then began to sing the second blessing and once again, her lips moved in rhythm to the song and once again I bent over to hear whatever words she could muster.

When I was done, I turned off the menorah and mentioned to her how happy I was that she was able to join me with the lighting prayers. She remained silent, motionless, as if what I just witnessed was just my imagination; but it did certainly occur. Hearing the words and melodies triggered memories too deeply hidden, and for those few special moments, we had connected over words and melodies, and an event that occurred nearly 2000 years earlier.

I left her room emotionally spent, having come to an incredible realization. Just because she has not been able to express her thoughts for a few days, the flame of Judaism was still burning within her. And that is the clear message of Chanukah – finding a way to bring the spark of Chanukah to everyone!

# Upcoming Events ....

## CBD Speaker Series

***Rabbi Laura Geller, Author***

Sunday, January 10, 2021 at 4:00 pm via Zoom

Rabbi Laura Geller is author of *Getting Good at Getting Older*, which provides a tour for all those of "a certain age" through the resources and skills needed to navigate the years between maturity (building careers/raising families) and frail old age. It brings humor, warmth, and more than 4,000 years of Jewish experience to the question of how to shape this new stage of life.

***Dr. Michael Fine***

Sunday, January 24, 2021 at 10:00 am via Zoom

Dr. Michael Fine, Author, former Director of the RI Dept. of Health, and board member of the Lown Institute, a nonpartisan think tank advocating bold ideas for a just and caring system for health.

Dr. Fine will speak about the COVID-19 vaccine and its rollout.

*RSVP for these programs to CBD to request the zoom links.*

## CBD Movie Series

***The Keeper***

Watch anytime between January 15 - 17

Virtual Discussion led by Dr. Jeffrey Martin, Roger Williams College Theater professor, on Sunday, January 17 at 4:00 pm

Award winning film that tells the incredible true story of Bert Trautmann, a German soldier and prisoner of war who, against a backdrop of British post-war protest and prejudice, secures the position of Goalkeeper at Manchester City, and in doing so becomes a footballing icon. The screening is being made available specifically for the CBD community from January 15 - 17.

*RSVP to CBD, and to obtain the zoom link for the movie.*

There is no charge for viewing the movie.

## Tu B'Shvat Seder

Thursday, January 28 at 5:00 pm - via Zoom

Enjoy the fruits of Israel, as CBD hosts a virtual community seder. We will deliver a box to your door containing assorted fruits and nuts for you to enjoy during the seder. Rabbi Adler will discuss the customs surrounding the holiday. RSVP and request your box of fruits by emailing CBDRI, no later than January 20.

Please specify the number of boxes you require (maximum number of two boxes per household), and any allergies to fruits or nuts. There is no charge for the box of fruits.

Since Tu B'Shvat celebrates the "new year" for trees, please consider donating a tree for planting in Israel to recognize a life event or in honor, or memory, of a loved one.

## Upcoming in February

### CBD Speaker Series

Rachel Fish, Founding Executive Director, Foundation to Combat anti-Semitism

Robert Kraft, owner of the New England Patriots, established the foundation to catalyze dynamic new solutions to stop the age-old hatred advanced by those who seek the elimination of Judaism and the Jewish people and the modern movement to destroy the world's only Jewish State. The foundation focuses on positively impacting attitudes of young people around the world, leveraging social media to deliver educational campaigns and spur action by people of all backgrounds.

## CBD Movie Series

Theodore Bikel In The Shoes of Sholom Aleichem



## CBD Hebrew School

By Laurie Kaufman

Prioritizing safety during the COVID-19 pandemic, our School Committee and teachers worked through the summer revamping schedules, curriculum, and supplies, in preparation for what would become virtual classes in September, and some in person events, masked and socially distant.

Teachers Ruth Ribner and Rabbi Sol Goodman have been running video calls on Sunday mornings and Wednesday afternoons for our 11 students, grades one through six.

We continued our monthly Student-Led Shabbat services on the third weekend of each month where, thanks to the remote services, we enjoyed a 100 percent participation from our students in grades three and up. Students jumped at the chance to videotape their parts ahead of time, as we were treated to students singing along with siblings, parents, and recordings of Rabbi Adler. The December Student-Led service allowed students the opportunity to showcase their hand-made menorahs, courtesy of Amy Denhoff, Liz Karp,

and the program committee (see photos opposite page).

Throughout the fall, families gathered outdoors when possible. Parents and children turned up in droves at the Tashlich service at Sprague Park and Sukkahfest at the Narragansett Community Center. Besides weekly Hebrew School classes, families gath-

ered for our new Community Candles during the first Friday night of each month to light the candles, say the kiddush and hamotzi, sharing news and introducing new pets. We are now planning holidays and virtual gatherings for the winter, including a celebration for Tu B'shevat. Looking forward to seeing you all!

### *Sukkafest*



# CBD Annual Appeal

By Liz Karp

During these challenging times, our CBD community is more connected than ever. We have been getting together in-person outdoors for services and social events at the Narragansett Community Center pavilion, zooming services and Hebrew School classes, finding creative ways to connect with each other.

As Rabbi Adler has said, “besides social distancing, we embrace the importance of distance socializing.”

We are all certainly looking forward to being together in our synagogue, perhaps in a few weeks or months.

Annual dues and school tuition fund only 57 percent of our operating budget, while COVID has necessitated additional spending for security and building improvements.

We have been unable to hold fundraising events as we have in past years. Meanwhile, outdoor High Holiday services and social events meant increased security costs, and online expenses (Zoom). We are planning to upgrade the heating, ventilating, and air conditioning system in our building, in preparation for our return to CBD.

That’s why this year’s Annual Appeal is more important than ever. Our goal is to raise \$24,000 with 100 percent participation from our congregants. We hope you consider increasing your annual appeal gift from last year, or if you haven’t donated in the past or are new to our Congregation, please consider a first-time gift.

Whether you make your donation before or after the (secular) New Year, be assured that you will be helping to sustain our synagogue, assuring we can provide needed services from education needs of our children, religious services, and comfort and support at the most difficult times of our lives.

We greatly appreciate whatever donation you can make, regardless of the amount. Everyone’s gift, no matter how small, will enable us to enhance our services, programs, and our synagogue.

The pandemic has shown us how essential the CBD community is in our lives and how much we rely on the caring and closeness of each other. Whether on zoom or in-person, these relationships have given us peace and hope in an uncertain time. Thank you for your support and for being part of the Congregation Beth David community.

## Annual Appeal Contributors



Debra Chernick	Robert and Marilyn Moskol	Beth Dworetzky
Dr. Gail Chorney	Stephen Poulten	Harvey and Susan Smith
Joe Denhoff & Amy Abramson-Denhoff	Michael Reeder	Richard and Karen Liner
Robert and Mary Fricklas	Stephen Tankel and Rose Shapiro	Beverly Rudman
Stephen and Joan Garfinkel	Dr. Benjamin Ruekberg and Ronne Chalek	Beverly Narcisco Levitt
Marilyn Greenberg	Harry Zisson	Michal Holzman
Gerald and Ruth Kasten	Anonymous	Laurie Kaufman
Harold and Jerri Labush	Steven and Dara Liebermensch	Nancy Chorney
Marion Myers	Gerald and Ruth Tebrow	Lori Gibson
Carole Robrish	Sally and Harris Chorney	Monty Gold and Anna Kolodner
Alan and Marlene Witten	Stephen and Amy Elman	Drs. Louis and Susan Kirschen- baum
Susan Andler	Jodi Greenberg	Dr. Leonard and Glenda Labush
Dr. Stan Barnett	Linda Schwartzman	Howard Poulten
Matthew and Victoria Brier	Margalit Aharon	Frank and Beverly Prosnitz
Elliott and Beryl Chapman	Richard and Cindy Amundson	Ron Salavon
Marilyn Cohen	Esta Avedisian	Carl and Brenda Levin
Edward and Anne Grossman	Dr. David and Suzanne Diamond	Marcia Greenberg
Robert and Arlene Hicks	Dr. Neal and Arlene Rogol	Jeffrey and Ruth Jarrett
Peter Stonberg and Liz Karp	Gary and Vicki Dorfman	Dr. David and Sara Nelson
Allen and Judith Kronick	Gary Light	Amy Levin
Stewart and Pam Lander	Karen Markin	Brian and Helene Goldstein
Roberta Levin	Steven and Wendy Buckler	
Steven and Esther Levine	Shayna Cohen	
Joanne Malise		

## **CBD continues to be the little shul with the big heart!**

With all the lockdowns and closings around the state, Congregation Beth David continues to actively reach out to our community. This year, the Tikun Olam Committee faced many challenges related to how to safely serve the community. In the past congregants worked together at CBD preparing items for those in need of collecting food and clothing. Safety and logistics prevented us from doing things as usual.

### **Gift Card Donations**

CBD held a drop-off gift card collection on Dec. 6 for Welcome House in Peace Dale. We were able to raise \$1,300 in gift cards for local grocery, pharmacy, and department stores. The donations will help the residents purchase much needed necessities.

### **Gift Bags**

We delivered 16 Chanukah gift bags during Chanukah to Jewish residents of Elderwood of Scallop Shell at Wakefield, and Brightview Commons /Senior Independent Living in South Kingstown. The bags contained a beautiful new pair of Chanukah socks, two dreidels, and two bags of Chocolate gelt. Each bag had a tag attached that read "Happy Chanukah, from your friends at Congregation Beth David."

Hopefully, this gift will let residents feel connected to the local Jewish community during this difficult time when they are not able to visit with friends and family.

### **The Tote Bag Mitzvah Project for Foster Kids- RI**

In past years, members of CBD have gathered for a fun -filled evening at the Temple to cut, sew and make cloth bags for Foster Care of Rhode Island. The bags are used by children who must leave their home. Their personal clothing and possessions are put in the bags as they travel to their foster home. The bags are sewn with bright, colorful fabric as well as sport teams and Disney character themed fabric.

Members have brought their sewing machines, ironing boards, scissors, irons, and talents to the Temple. While one person would cut fabric, another would sew the bags, another would insert the elastic, and another would iron. It was a collaborative effort with each person contributing their skill and talent. In these unprecedented times, it was realized that these bags are still needed, yet we could not gather to make the bags.

This year, bags are being cut, sewn, and completed in their own homes. Our goal is to sew and deliver 30 bags to Foster Care. To participate in the Tote Bag project contact Liz Karp at [Lizkarp1@gmail.com](mailto:Lizkarp1@gmail.com).



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## **Report from Membership**

Membership has been working hard this year throughout the Corona-Virus pandemic. We have strived to maintain the numbers of households that make up Congregation Beth David.

After much discussion, it was decided to hold our New Member Shabbat virtually this past November. More than 40 people were in attendance, comprising 33 households. Most of our new members participated enjoying the service led by Rabbi Adler and partaking of a delicious meal prepared by Chef Freda of Ahava Catering.

We want to welcome the following new members: Debby and Mark Abrahams, Jeffrey Weisman, Amy Levin, Michal Holzman, Eric Cohen and Karen Baytch, Dr. David and Suzanne Diamond. Also, Dr. Jacqueline Webb, Roz and Angelo Rossi and Beth and Oswald Schwartz return to us after being away. - Deb Chorney and Beryl Chapman, Membersip co-chairs.

### **New Member Spotlight: AMY LEVIN**

Amy Levin is a vibrant addition to Congregation Beth David. The mother of two sons: Jeffrey, 29, of Maine and Michael, 26, of Massachusetts, Amy lived in Longmeadow, MA for 30 years. She moved to Westwood, MA and finished her Master's degree in Expressive Arts at Lesley College. Her work is with patients in memory care and dementia.

When her boys were younger, Amy ran the Maccabee games at her local JCC and was on the fundraising committee of the Jewish Home for the Elderly in Longmeadow.

Amy has always loved the shore; she began to make daily trips to beach communities here in Rhode Island. "Everyone was always so open and friendly in the state, wherever I went," she said.

Looking for a Jewish community, Amy saw how easy it was to connect on-line to CBD. She found the perfect little house and made the permanent move to Narragansett in May and joined us. Amy goes for long early walks (loves to watch the sunrise as she's near the ocean) and practices yoga on the beach.

When the COVID scare has passed, Amy hopes to do some consulting in her field with the elderly who have memory issues.