

The Voice of Beth El

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Web site: angelfire.com/ct/bethel
Sept-Oct-Nov 2007

Elul- 5767Tishrei-Chesvan-Kislev-5768

Services are held the second Friday of the month at 7:00, and every Saturday morning at 9:30. Everyone counts, so please try to attend.



From the Pulpit Rabbi Richard Eisenberg

It is a pleasure to write my first column as the new rabbi of Beth El Synagogue. At Rosh Hashanah it is fitting to reflect upon new beginnings, and this is a new beginning both for myself and for the congregation. I have received an exceptionally warm welcome from the membership; I already feel accepted and appreciated here. This is due, in no small measure, to Beth El's atmosphere of "heimishkeit."

To quote the great 20th century sage Yogi Berra, I am going through "déjà vu all over again." I started my rabbinic career in a small 150 family congregation in Columbus, Georgia. That position was full-time, as were my subsequent two posts. But now that I am working part-time in order to pursue a second career in drug and alcohol recovery counseling, I am back in a small synagogue environment and I am already enjoying it a great deal. I hope to have the chance to get to know as many of you as possible. Please don't be strangers. Participate in our services, join us for study groups and other programs. I'd like us to get to know each other.

Like the Rosh Hashanah symbol of apples and honey, life is filled with the bitter and the sweet. A rabbi must face both types of experiences with his congregants, the simchas and the sadder moments alike. Through it all, we grow stronger together, and we see the positive force of Judaism affecting our lives. I will be honored to witness these experiences with you whenever necessary and appropriate. I pray that we will know only joy together, but if not, let us be strengthened through one another.

So my new year's wish for you and yours is: May you enjoy the blessings of good health and happiness during the year ahead. May you find joy amongst your family and friends. May you find meaning and beauty in our sacred Jewish heritage. May God's goodness and wisdom guide you through all your days.

L'Shanah Tovah,

High Holidays Schedule Inside

**Officers and Trustees of Beth El Synagogue
2007-2008**

Co-Presidents	Mike Madoy 283-2124 Alan Cohn 618-3903 Joyce Peck 482-0717 Linda Podo 482-9909
1st Vice President (Board Chair)	
2nd Vice President (Finance)	Wendy Casb 618-5120
3rd Vice President (Education)	Debra Brandt 567-8927
Secretary	Lenore Mand 496-0636
Treasurer	Patricia Anderson 567-9171

Trustees -3 Year Term

Marvin Peyser	Ritual Chair	489-5676
Sherry Ginsburg		489-3204
Mitchell Soss		484-4326
Harriet Peyser		489-5676
Walter Wiener	Membership Chair	496-7111

Trustees -2 Year Term

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Rosa Shields		482-9197
Jennifer Overton (open)		485-2762
Lynn Malkoff		567-3400

Trustees -1 Year Term

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Stanley Mand	Board. Rep. to Exec. Board	496-0636
Joe Ginsburg		489-3204
Jackie Smith		618-3476
Richard Lotstein	House Chair	675-3402
Rabbi Richard Eisenberg	Non-voting Member	626-0181

**High Holiday Schedule
*Rosh Hashanah***

Sept 22 Friday Evening	7:00 PM
Sept 23 Saturday Morning	9:00 AM
Sept 23 Saturday Evening.	7:00 PM
Sept 24 Sunday Morning	9:00 AM

Yom Kippur

Oct 1 Sun. Eve.	Kol Nidre	6:15 PM
Oct. 2 Mon AM	Including Yiskor	9:00 AM
Oct. 2 Mon Eve		5:00 PM



Hadassah Trees and Certificates

Litchfield County Chapter of Hadassah is continuing fundraising efforts in support of JNF and Israel through the sale of tree certificates at the cost of \$12 each.

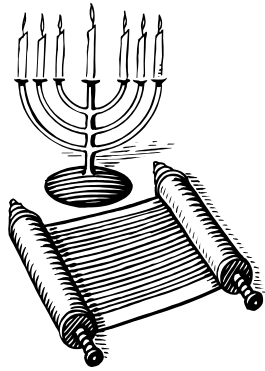
Our chapter is also selling a variety of certificates to support the extraordinary efforts of Hadassah, which include Hadassah Medical Organization and its cancer and heart research efforts, Youth Aliyah, and others.

What better way to recognize and honor a birthday, or any special occasion than by a donation for research. Certificates from \$5 to \$18 are available. Please contact Stephanie Oakan at 489-3044 for certificates and for more information.

***From the Education Committee
Lynn Malkoff***

School is off to a great start. We have 28 students and fund raising continues to be a priority. One of our fund-raising efforts is collecting old cell phones and used computer printer cartridges for recycling, so please bring yours in to the synagogue.

December 15 we will host a Shabbat/Hanukah dinner at 6 PM, prior to services. Latkes and soup will be served. Please join us. Call the office to buy tickets: \$10 for adults, \$5 each children, with a maximum charge of \$35 for a family.



DVAR TORAH

The Shabbat Candles

Marvin Peyser, Ritual Chair

When a cousin of mine was a little girl growing up in a Brooklyn tenement, her mother told her to take a cup of tea to an elderly lady who lived in the building. She took the tea, turned around without looking, and bumped into the Lubavitcher Rebbe. The elderly lady was his mother, Mrs. (Rebbetzin) Schneerson. The Rebbe afterwards took an interest in her and when she grew up her brother became a rabbi in the Lubavitch movement. Every time the Rebbe met her brother he would always ask just one question, "Does your sister Miriam still light the Shabbas candles?" He did this all his life until his final illness, and my cousin still lights the Shabbas candles to this day, even though she now belongs to a Reform temple. Shabbas candles are important for all Jewish women, regardless of affiliation. (The Ritual Committee will be happy to assist any woman who wishes to learn how to light the candles.)

Although we moderns may think of lighting candles as an ancient ritual, it surprisingly developed rather late. There is no mention of it in the Torah, and the Talmud mentions the kind of oil and wick to use but does not prescribe a blessing, which means it wasn't a *mitzvah* at that time. Perhaps the custom of women lighting the Friday night candles started because the men were all at the synagogue.

This all changed about the year 1000 when our great sage Rashi called it a *mitzvah* and said that

by lighting the Shabbas candles, women bring the light of Torah into the world. But there was no blessing required until years later when Rashi's grandson said that one was necessary. But which blessing? The solution was to take the blessing for the Hanukkah candles, prescribed in the Talmud a millennium earlier, and substitute the word *Shabbas* for *Hanukkah*.

Although the primary obligation is for women to light the candles, a man should do it if a woman is not present in his home, as I did recently when my wife was hospitalized for a few weeks.

Adult Education

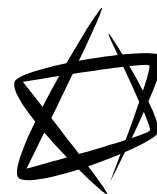
Stanley Mand, Adult Education Chair

The Adult Education Committee welcomes this opportunity to wish the Jewish Community, as well as our Non-Jewish friends, a Healthy, Happy and Prosperous New Year. Let us all figuratively put our hands together and pray for some resolution to our Middle East headache.

Even though we have been quite successful in the past, we will attempt to raise the bar even higher this year. On Monday, October 8 at 7:00 P.M. Rabbi Richard Eisenberg will start a course on the Mishnah The Mishnah is the compendium of Jewish Law and the backbone of Rabbinic Judaism. The Rabbi will discuss its origins and the effect of this work on all of us. He will begin with a discussion of "Capital Punishment in Ancient Judaism: Tractate Sanhedrin". This course will continue on succeeding Monday evenings.

On Sunday, October 28, at 10:00 A.M. we will have another "Lox & Lecture". The subject will be "Jewish Views on Love and Sex". The speaker will be Cantor Theodore Perry.

Please put the dates on your calendar.





Beth El Religious School is a small nurturing school, which offers a complete well-rounded Jewish education. The family atmosphere provides the foundation on which to build your child's Jewish education, an experience that will stay with them forever. The joy of Shabbat, high holidays, Hebrew language and prayer skills, Jewish identity, customs and values, Hebrew history, American Jewish history and Israeli history are taught by devoted caring teachers.

Beth El religious school strives to bring to each child the value of Jewish living, done through participation in our congregation. Children learn through a variety of activities including Mitzvah projects and the practice of Tzedakah. Families come together to support the development of a Jewish identity for their children with participation in such celebrations as Sukkot, Hanukkah and Passover.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah training takes place under the guidance of Rabbi Richard Eisenberg, a well-known religious leader in Connecticut.

Preschool students meet once monthly the focus is fun and family. 3rd through 8th grade students meet Wednesday afternoons from 4:00pm - 5:30pm. Kindergarten through 8th grade meet Sunday from 9:30am – 12:00pm.

We may be small, but we have a big heart, let us welcome you, your child and your family into our School.

Tadah

Donations to Building Fund Matching Challenge:

Stanley & Barbara Cohen, Michael & Heidi Madow.

General Donations:

Sidney & Dorothy Nadel, Jay & Lurette Gould, Craig & Robin Faust, Richard & Rhonda Kahn, Robert & Roz Ladenheim

Lee & Jerry Laplan, in memory of mother Anna Maskowsky

Joel & Linda Malkoff, in memory of Irving Treach

Joel & Linda Malkoff, in memory of Max Glasser

Les & Lynn Goldman, in memory of Seymore Goldman

Phil & Rita Levy, in memory of Rose Newman

Joyce Peck, in memory of Ida Rubin & Irving Kirsner

Donations to Rabbi's Discretionary Fund:

Marvin & Harriet Peyser,

Robert & Sherry Blenner, in memory of Anne Cohen

Donations to Religious School:

Mary Kaplowitz, in memory of Anne Cohen

Donations to Membership Fund:

Greg & Jennifer Overton, in memory of grandfather Raymond Greene



HADASSAH EVENTS LITCHFIELD COUNTY CHAPTER FALL 2007

Thursday, Oct. 11 -Stress Management Program presented by Linda Podos. Linda will show us how to melt that stress away!

Sunday, Nov. 4-We celebrate Jewish book month with a tele-conference from Tel Aviv with Israeli author Eva Hatzioni-Haley, author of *The Garden of Ruth*

Sunday, Nov. 11 Fair Trade Bazaar

Sunday, Dec. 2 -Mitzvah Day

We love to see new faces, and we hope to see yours soon!

Don't get caught! Caught without sending your New Year's greeting cards to your friends and loved one. Hadassah is selling beautiful New Year cards. So this year, 5768, do it the right way, purchase your cards early. Call Corinne Johnson (860) 379-4312 or e-mail markwald@sbcglobal.net or view the sample cards at Beth El Synagogue. Remember each card purchased is a donation to Hadassah.



***Report from the
Tri-Presidents
Mike Madow, Alan
Cohn, Joyce Peck***

As we joyously welcome the New Year, we at Beth El are looking forward to new opportunities, renewed

spirit and enthusiasm and even a revived building.

This summer we welcomed a new, dynamic spiritual leader, Rabbi Richard L. Eisenberg, who came with superb credentials and experience along with a lovely wife, Judy, and two children, Sam and Rebecca. Rabbi Rick, as he likes to be called, will be here part-time but already is making a difference. His Friday night and Saturday morning Shabbat services are fast

paced and interesting. Those in the know come to the Saturday Shabbat service where Rabbi Rick often discusses ideas and current events. If you haven't participated yet, we hope you will attend one soon. Among his duties will be conducting one Friday night Shabbat and three Saturday morning Shabbat services each month. Watch for announcements. We have high expectations and look forward to an exceptionally good year ahead.

Our building, in much need of repairs, is on everyone's mind these days. We have raised enough money to obtain the matching funds promised by an anonymous donor and expect the work to have begun by the time this bulletin arrives in the mail. The facade of the building will be repaired and the front stairs replaced with a safer arrangement. The roof, which only recently was found to be faulty, also will be replaced. Of course, donations are always needed to further the project along with volunteers and helping hands. Keep in mind this project is major, the biggest renovation undertaken since the original Brooks mansion, now the library-office portion of the building, was torn down and a new facility constructed in 1959.

This year there are three of us serving as presidents and sharing the responsibilities of the office. That's to encompass all the work involved without overburdening anyone person. We hope board members and other members of the congregation will do the same, taking on small jobs so that no one is particularly overburdened. There's no question we need funds but we just as much need helping hands.

We need people to serve on a membership committee and to organize fund raising efforts. We need people to provide Oneg Shabbats on Friday evenings through the year and to help with holiday celebrations and observances. If gardening is your thing, we can always use extra hands to pull weeds in the front flowerbeds. If you like to paint, I'm sure the house chairman can find something for you to do. We need help putting out the bulletin. There are lots of little

jobs around the synagogue waiting for someone. Give us a call to learn more.

Please join us for the High Holidays. Remember to make reservations for our bigger and better Barbara Breindel Brake the Fast. We wish each and everyone a healthy, prosperous and Happy New Year. L'Shana Tova.

Rabbi Richard Eisenberg will conduct Friday night Shabbat services at 7 p.m. on the following dates: September - none; Oct. 19; Nov. 9 (Oneg Shabbat hosted by Moskowitz family in honor of Eric's Bar Mitzvah on Nov. 10); Dec. 7, Family Shabbat Service and Hanukah Dinner; Jan. 11; Feb. 8; March 14; April 11; May 2; June 13.

Simchas to Share Good News to All

Joyce Peck

Thank you and many good wishes to **Jennifer Lotstein**, who served as principal of our religious school in recent years. Jennifer resigned the post at the end of the 2006-2007 school year.

Kudos and thanks to **Linda Podos**, who also has resigned as teacher in the religious school after many years of service. We appreciate Jennifer's and Linda's efforts and wish them well in the future.

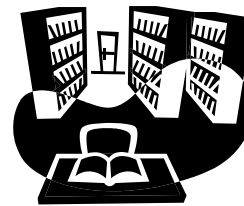
Thank you to all who helped prepare the Oneg Shabbat on July 6 to welcome **Rabbi Richard and Judith Eisenberg** to our congregation. They included **Joyce Peck, Robin Cunningham, Heidi Madow Joan Libby, Bea Guralnick, Kathy Carullo, and Linda Podos.** **Corinne Johnson** provided the floral arrangements.

Congratulations and good wishes to the Litchfield County Chapter of Hadassah. The dynamic chapter, based at Beth El, was restarted last year after a number of years of inactivity,

mainly through the efforts of **Lynn Malkoff**. This spring the chapter was honored by the regional organization for its enthusiasm, fund-raising efforts, and new programs. The chapter was named Outstanding Chapter of the Year and received the Outstanding Fundraiser Award, Outstanding Member Award, Outstanding Association Award and two awards for its exceptional programs.

More kudos and thanks to the Hadassah members: The chapter voted to contribute a much-needed facility-use fee to the synagogue, for which we are all grateful.

Congratulations and good wishes to **Bea Guralnick**, who was given Hadassah Life Membership for her exceptional achievement and commitment to Hadassah and Israel. Bea, who coordinated the Litchfield County Chapter's annual dinner in June, received the honor during the event.



Library Corner

The Library Committee thanks everyone who has graciously donated books to the library. Your donations are a most welcome addition. Please remember that we have an ongoing book sale. With, all books for sale located in the hall alcove and marked with an orange sticker. We're sure there is something to interest everyone. Suggested donations are \$2 for hardcover books, \$1 for soft cover books. Your generous contributions can help purchase new books, DVDs or CDs. The members of the committee continue to put books into a Judaic cataloging system and color-code books by topic for ease of use. You will see these results in the fall. If you have any comments or questions, please call Joel Malkoff at 860-567-3400.