

# *The Voice of Beth El*

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Web site: [angelfire.com/ct/bethel](http://angelfire.com/ct/bethel)  
Dec-2007-Jan-Feb 2008/  
Kislev-Tevet-Shevat-Adar I 5768  
Rabbi Richard Eisenberg  
Rabbi's Office 626-0181

*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 RABBI'S DESK***

The Maccabees lived in a very turbulent environment. The forces of assimilation were vying with the forces of tradition. Many members of the Jewish community were influenced by Hellenism, a culture dominated by Greek rationalism, science, philosophy and paganism. At the same time, the Maccabees and their like were trying to preserve Jewish faith and traditions in a hostile world. Their victory over Antiochus and the Syrian Greeks symbolized the victory of monotheistic faith over paganism and "modern" thinking. To quote the great Biblical scholar Yehezkel Kaufman, "...there was something in Judaism that overbore the great appeal of Hellenism. The heart of man was captivated by the message of the one supreme God, sovereign and unfettered by blind fate, a God whose sacred moral will governs all, and is the source of man's moral obligation." The "nes gadol," the great miracle, was not only the victory of the few over the many but the light of faith and belief embodied in the Hanukkiyah.

Last December, I led a synagogue trip to Israel. We were there during Chanuka. One evening, we took a walking tour of some of the older sections of Jerusalem to see the Hanukkiyot displayed on the terraces of peoples' homes. These were not the Hanukkiyot we are used to, with the wax candles that only burn for about ½ hour. They were the oil-burning Hanukkiyot, placed inside glass cases outside the homes, in order to fulfill the mitzvah of "pirsumei nisa", or displaying the miracle for all the public to see. I recall how deeply inspired we all felt and our sense of privilege in celebrating Chanukah in our Jewish homeland. But even in among Israeli citizens, the forces of assimilation and tradition continue to do battle as the secular and religious Jews live together in a state of tension.

Here in northwest Connecticut, we have our own Jewish struggles. We are a small minority. Our children are sometimes the only Jewish children in their public school classes. Our friends and co-workers are gentile. Yet we strive our best to preserve our Jewish heritage. Now that I have been here for about 4 months, I have seen how beautifully our Religious School trains our young people to be knowledgeable and proud of their heritage. I have been delighted with the quality of their participation in the Shabbat Morning Class family services and with the students'

demeanor in the classroom. I was happy to celebrate Sukkot and Simchat Torah with them. Our synagogue should be very proud of what we are accomplishing with our young people.

At the same time, I have the opportunity of teaching a group of adults every Monday evening. I have been overwhelmed at the number of you who come out to study with me. I never would have expected such a response in a small congregation like Beth El. Thanks to Stanley Mand and the Adult Education Committee, a culture of Jewish learning has been built at Beth El. This, too, is something to be proud of.

So, deep in the heart of the Litchfield Hills, a vibrant Jewish culture thrives in the midst of assimilation and a predominantly gentile environment. By taking our Judaism seriously, we continue the legacy of the Macabbees. Through Jewish learning, worship, and social action, we keep the light of our Jewish faith burning ever so brightly. As we gather to celebrate Chanuka this year with our families and in our synagogue, let us rededicate ourselves to the perpetuation of Jewish life and culture.

OFFICERS AND TRUSTEES OF BETH EL SYNAGOGUE  
2007-2008

|   |                            |                       |
|---|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| TRI-PRESIDENTS                                  | Mike Madow                 | 283-2124              |
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| TREASURER                                       | Patricia Anderson          | 567-9171              |
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|   | Sherry Ginsburg            | 489-3204              |
| Mitchell Soss                                   |                            | 484-4326              |
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| Walter Wiener                                   | Membership Chair           | 496-7111              |
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| Lynn Malkoff                                    |                            | 567-3400              |
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| Joe Ginsburg<br>(open)<br>(open)                |                            | 489-3204              |
| Rabbi Richard Eisenberg                         | non-voting member          | 626-0181              |



**Birthdays  
and  
Anniversaries**

|                       |             |
|-----------------------|-------------|
| <b>Birthdays</b>      |             |
| Jacqueline Denenholtz | December 1  |
| Lynn Malkoff          | December 2  |
| Aaron Freund          | December 3  |
| Richard Bergad        | December 6  |
| Ruth Paletsky         | December 7  |
| Harriet Peyser        | December 12 |
| Olivia Kenny          | December 14 |
| Dean DiVirgilio       | December 15 |
| Jeremy Broverman      | December 15 |
| Jeremy Ross           | December 16 |
| Dr. Dennis Gottfried  | December 19 |
| Dr Debra randt        | December 22 |
| Jennifer Overton      | December 24 |
| Marilyn Wiener        | December 26 |
| Sarah Soss            | December 26 |
| Marshall Cohen        | December 26 |
| Francine Broverman    | December 26 |
| Ben Krasow            | December 27 |
| Debra Freund          | December 27 |
| Jocelyn Regenbogen    | December 28 |
| Steven Levy           | December 31 |

|                                |         |      |
|--------------------------------|---------|------|
| <b>Anniversaries</b>           |         |      |
| Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Wolk      | Dec. 5  | 54rd |
| Mr. and Mrs. Richard Bergad    | Dec. 10 | 40th |
| Mr. and Mrs. Mal Guralnick     | Dec. 12 | 64rd |
| Mr. and Mrs. Barry Boonshaft   | Dec. 19 | 33nd |
| Mr. and Mrs. Michael Broverman | Dec. 24 | 35th |
| Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Margulies  | Dec. 25 | 52nd |
| Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Casbolt     | Dec. 26 | 37th |

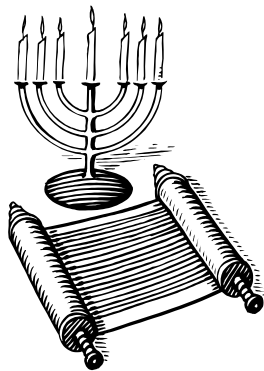
**Deadline for next Voice  
February 4, 2008**

Birthdays and Anniversaries for Jan. and Feb. will appear in the monthly  
*From the Presidents' Desk.*

## DVAR TORAH

### ***Succhoth – A Deeper Meaning***

*Marvin Peyser,  
Ritual Chair*



If you have ever heard a rabbi's sermon at Succhoth, you are undoubtedly aware that "Succhoth" means "booths," commemorating our ancestors living in booths while in the desert. You've also undoubtedly been informed that Succhoth is known as *zman simchateinu*, the season of joy, due to the bountiful harvest which we've just enjoyed, and that it is one of the three pilgrimage festivals which everyone was required to celebrate in Jerusalem.

Rabbis delight in telling us that the four species we wave during the holiday, the lulav, esrog, myrtle and willow, represent four different kinds of Jews, those with or without Torah knowledge, and those with or without performance of good deeds, and that we hold them close together while waving to indicate that every Jew is an integral and important part of the Jewish people, and it takes all kinds of Jews to make one unified nation.

But Succhoth has a deeper meaning that you will rarely hear. The number of sacrifices brought to the Temple on Succhoth far exceeds the number throughout the year. On Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur only one bull was sacrificed, and only two on Passover and Shavuous, but on Succhoth the Torah commands 13 bulls the first day, 12 the second, and one less each day for the remaining five days. Why so many? Looking for an explanation the rabbis noted that the total number of sacrifices, 70, equaled the 70 nations of the world descended from Noah, and decided that the Succhoth sacrifices were a fervent prayer on behalf of these gentile nations rather than the Jews! Jew and gentile lived on the same planet,

and thus the Temple became the venue for an elaborate ritual for the welfare of the world.

After the Romans destroyed the Temple the general feeling of the rabbis was that this was a calamity for both Jew and gentile alike, and the latter had no idea of the protection they had lost. As the Middle Ages progressed and persecution of the Jews increased, the attitude became one of bitterness. Instead of loving us for the prayers we had offered on their behalf, they had responded with hatred. Finally our great sage Rashi (died 1105) living in the shadow of the persecution and fanaticism of the First Crusade, changed the interpretation. He agreed that the 70 sacrifices referred to the 70 nations, but pointed out the strangely diminishing number of the sacrifices, which he read as an indication of the ultimate diminishment of the gentile nations, as in the messianic era.

## Library Corner

Joel and Lynn  
Malkoff



The Library Committee hopes that you have noticed our progress with regard to the newly inputted and color coded books. We still have some work to do and need your help. Please let us know if you are willing to volunteer some time to input books in our Judaic catalog system. We would also like your recommendations as to titles of books, DVDs, literary materials, events and activities you feel would benefit our synagogue. Please email your suggestions to Joel at [moresales2@aol.com](mailto:moresales2@aol.com) or call him at 860-567-3400.



***Chanuka: Dec. 4-Dec. 11***

## **Hey! Hey!**

*It's time to make a change! Don't send that e-mail, text message, instant message or fax . Rather, show someone how much you really care. Purchase that special card and handwrite your very own personal note. On the back of each Hadassah card there is a message stating how the purchase of the card actually represents a contribution to Hadassah. So not only are you ensuring that letter writing will not become a lost art form, but also you are helping Hadassah carry on its outstanding-life giving work. We offer a wide selection of cards, right for any occasion. You certainly can't beat the price, \$2.00 per card or \$3.00 per card if you choose to have the card mailed. For more information on the purchasing of cards call 860-379-4312 and leave a message or e-mail [marwalk@sbcglobal.net](mailto:marwalk@sbcglobal.net).*

## **Tadah**

### **Donations to Building Fund:**

Tim & Debra Brandt, in memory of Ronald Brandt  
George & Shirley Davidson, in memory of Anne Cohen  
George & Shirley Davidson, Mazel Tov to Steve, Gayle and Joann Temkin on the birth of Lily Maia Emanuel Phillips

### **General Donations:**

Roland & Donna Perreault, in honor of college students  
Roland & Donna Perreault, in memory of Doris Wineman  
Dan & Marcia Lowe, in honor of the wedding of Sandra Lowe & Dave Friedrichsen  
Steven & Gayle Temkin, in honor of the birth of Lily Maia Temkin  
Arnold & Audrey Heimler, in memory of Walter Heimler  
Paul & Miriam Stone, in memory of Saul Herts

Mal & Bea Guralnick, Abby & Bonnie Wiener, in honor of Lily Temkin's birth  
Joel & Linda Malkoff, in memory of Louis Rabinowitz  
Arnold & Audrey Heimler, in memory of Adeline Gerson  
Helen Ratner, in memory of Irving Silverstein  
Irene Haupt, Jonathan Chanis & Gail Hauss, Jeffrey & Barbara Schwab, Judith Wechsler,

### **Donations to Rabbi's Discretionary Fund:**

Sidney & Roberta Axelrod, in memory of Ted Richman  
Michael & Heidi Madow, Barbara Hodes, Tim & Debra Brandt

### **Donations to Religious School:**

Michael & Heidi Madow, Kathleen & Lawrence Madow, Neal & Janice Madow

### **Donations to Library Fund:**

Sidney & Roberta Axelrod, in memory of Ted Richman  
Robert & Marvis Gersten, in honor of Cantor Perry's book

### **Donations to Kiddush Fund:**

Rhonda Ginsburg

### **Group Dinner Donations:**

Jerry & Wendy Casbolt, Joel & Linda Malkoff, Alan & Eve Matisoff, Benjamin & Debra Freund

### **Yiskor Donations:**

Patricia & Andy Anderson, Michael & Francine Broverman, Marilyn Check, Robin & Wells Cunningham, George & Shirley Davidson, Howard & Alice Dember, Janet Dember, Barbara Douglas, Craig & Robin Faust, Scott Fein & Patricia Martinnelli, Joseph & Sherry Ginsburg, Don Glickman & Sondra Reiff, Leslie & Lynn Goldman, Debbie Goring, Dennis & Nancy Gottfried, Mal & Bea Guralnick, Irene Haupt, Arnold & Audrey Heimler, Cynthia Herpich, Gayle Carr Jenkins, Jerome & Leah Kaplan, Saul & Honora Karasyk, Sheila Kasten, Peggy Knox, Renee & William Kogan, Steven & Sina Levy, Philip & Rita Levy, Michael & Heidi Madow, Joel & Linda Malkoff, Stanley & Lenore Mand, Daniel & Wilma Morse, Robert & Stephanie Oakan, David Paletsky, Ruth Paletsky, Joyce Peck, Marvin & Helene Peretz, Marvin & Harriet Peyser, Brandon & Linda Podos, Jeannette Radom, Helen Ratner, Rosa Shields, Adena Siegel, Steven & Gayle Temkin, Walter & Marilyn Wiener, Stanley & Estelle Wolk

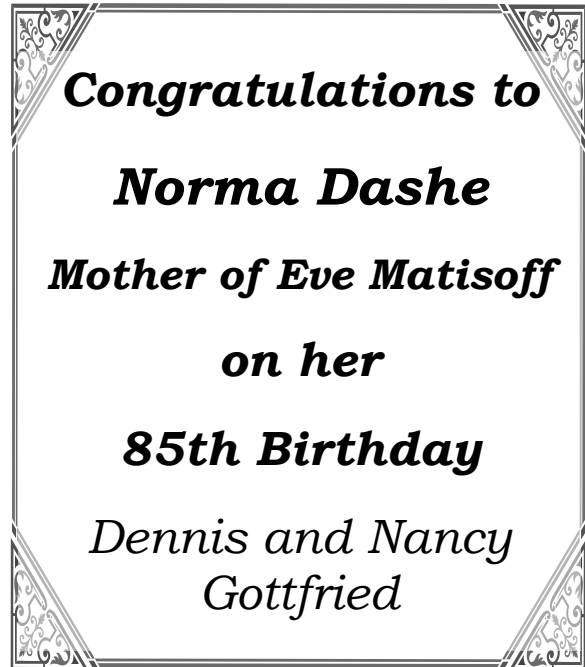
# Beth El Blooms



## Yahrzeits

Light the memorial candle the night before. \*These names have been inscribed on the memorial tablets.

|                       |            |
|-----------------------|------------|
| Diane Gottfried       | 12/1/2007  |
| Ina Pincus *          | 12/2/2007  |
| Sidonie Schlesinger * | 12/2/2007  |
| Abraham Schneider *   | 12/3/2007  |
| Isidore Paletsky      | 12/4/2007  |
| Abraham Rudolph       | 12/5/2007  |
| Sol Newman            | 12/6/2007  |
| Albert Radler*        | 12/7/2007  |
| Evelyn Sybol          | 12/7/2007  |
| Ellen Davison*        | 12/10/2007 |
| Isadore Rubens *      | 12/10/2007 |
| Robert Shanahan       | 12/10/2007 |
| Joan Selma Heimler    | 12/12/2007 |
| Emanuel Alexandre*    | 12/13/2007 |
| Minnie Kronich        | 12/13/2007 |
| Max Weilheimer        | 12/13/2007 |
| Claire Winters*       | 12/13/2007 |
| Nathan Gaull *        | 12/14/2007 |
| Joseph Pomerantz *    | 12/15/2007 |
| Yetta Handelman       | 12/16/2007 |
| Rose Esther Bender    | 12/17/2007 |
| Morris Dressler       | 12/17/2007 |
| Michael Harris        | 12/17/2007 |
| Betty Broverman       | 12/19/2007 |
| Carl Kaplan *         | 12/20/2007 |
| Mina Malkoff          | 12/20/2007 |
| Anna Rubens *         | 12/20/2007 |
| Irving Jacobskind     | 12/21/2007 |
| Joe Kasten            | 12/22/2007 |
| Harry Edelson         | 12/23/2007 |
| Joseph Pincus *       | 12/23/2007 |
| William Koren         | 12/24/2007 |
| Frieda Manowitz       | 12/24/2007 |
| Joseph Silverman *    | 12/24/2007 |
| Abram Bernstein *     | 12/28/2007 |
| Esther Franklin       | 12/28/2007 |
| Jacob Flower *        | 12/30/2007 |
| Wendy Marine*         | 12/30/2007 |
| Mildred Paletsky      | 12/31/2007 |



An \$18 donation gets a Happy Ad in the *Voice of Beth El* quarterly bulletin or in "From the Presidents' Desk" monthly newsletter. Give us the information and we'll do the work.

### Are You Interested in studying to become an adult Bar or Bat Mitzvah?



A new class is in formation; so if you are interested, please contact Patricia at the synagogue office.