



# THE STAR

NEWSLETTER OF TEMPLE BETH TORAH ■ SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2017 ■ ELUL 5777-TISHREI 5778 ■ VOL. 21 NO. 1

## Message from Rabbi Seth on Yamim Nora'im / The Days of Awe

The two Torah stories retold on Rosh Hashanah depict our ancestor Abraham as a person who allows himself and his own good judgment to be overruled by *Someone Else*, that is, God. In the first story (Genesis 21), Abraham, unhappy about his wife Sarah's intention to banish a servant woman and her son, nonetheless lets himself be guided by God's instruction to let Sarah have her way, so the victims suffer eviction and destitution until God sends an angel to rescue them. In the second story (Genesis 22), God tells Abraham to kill and sacrifice his son Isaac, and Abraham is in the act of complying when God sends an angel to stop the ghastly ritual from being carried out. In both cases Abraham does what he's told even though refusing to do what he's told would be understandable, to say the least. And in both cases God first tells Abraham to do, and then stops him from doing, something wrong.

Abraham in these cases does not show that he has the strength of conviction to resist a wrongful command. God, by contrast, is able to change from doing something wrong to making it right. As we approach the New Year, we think about how we ourselves can follow God's example: turn away from doing what's wrong to follow in accordance with what's right. We have in our personal lives and social experience the ability to refuse to engage in or go along with conduct we know is bad. Also, if we are on a destructive path, we can stop ourselves and get off it and onto a better one.

We have the moral prerogative to challenge other people—such as family, friends, teachers, employers and leaders—we see behaving in bad ways. Do we have guts for this? Even those we admire greatly—

Abraham, for example—gets it wrong, sometimes, by caving to unjust authority instead of challenging it. All the more so do far more imperfect individuals who nevertheless have tremendous power over life and death and whose irresponsible behavior can lead to devastating consequences for large numbers of innocent people.

The teshuvah/repentance process is not just about what we as private citizens think and do but also applies to how each of us approaches his/her public responsibilities. In making lives better and the world a better place, personal introspection is certainly important, but so is social awareness. Abraham doesn't stand up and challenge God in the two cases I've mentioned. His failure to do so could be a reminder for us to not be passive in the face of intentions and actions by others that are an affront to human dignity and decency.

In these two stories God is only pretending to encourage wickedness and means, in fact, to teach a lesson about the need to question our assumptions regarding right and wrong. The lesson, a shocking one, is that slavish obedience to God—thus, to any system of authority—is not a good idea. The point, then, is that we had better exercise our own good judgment as we listen and respond to those we've entrusted with power over our lives. We should be ready to defy such Powers That Be if they cross the line from acceptable to unacceptable conduct.

I take this opportunity to wish you and your loved ones a shanah tovah umtukah / a good and sweet New Year.

## Message from your Executive Committee

Welcome back to autumn in Old Wethersfield. We are in the midst of celebrating the High Holiday season at Temple Beth Torah.

Each of us is drawn back to TBT for our own reasons - it may be to connect to our spirituality and tradition, pursue lifelong Jewish learning, find a warm family of friends, or find a nurturing school for our children.

A special welcome to our new members Micki and Dennis Bellamy, Lynn Kaplan Goldberg and Janet and Joe Rosenblatt!

To build a responsive kehillat kedosha, sacred community - we depend on each other's help.

Donating even one hour of your time a year to improve our building and/or our offerings is precious. You can be the face of Tikkun Olam, making our world a bit better.

We are still gathering financial donations to the Klein Building Fund to restore our building. Thank you to everyone who has given so far!



Looking forward to seeing you at our popular upcoming events:

- \* Sukkot Pot Luck set for Friday, October 6th at 6:30 PM.
- \* Simchat Torah celebration Friday, October 13th at 7:00 PM - with enough children's and adults hands on deck - we will "unspool" the Torah around the entire sanctuary.
- \* Our free-wheeling Torah Study discussions never fail to spark a cascade of ideas. Catch the next one on Saturday, October 14th at 9:30AM.

**\*Keep an eye out for those whimsical scarecrows soon to materialize on Main Street.\***



# TBT OFFICERS 2017-2018

Rabbi Seth Riemer

Executive Committee:

Sallyanne Scott

Kathi Mag

Carol Gershenson

Treasurer: Barry Goldberg

Recording Secretary: Carol Gershenson

Corresponding Secretary: Kathi Mag

Financial Secretary: Sallyanne Scott

Publicity and Friday night announcements: Deb Ehrlich

Membership Chair: Eliot Mag

Board of Education: Barbara Checknoff

Head Instructor: Rabbi Seth Riemer

Religious Studies Instructor: Michele Cyr

Adult Education: Cecile Bronfin

Memorial Park: Barry Goldberg

Building Chair: Gary Evans

Building Committee: Dave Forrest and Kathi Mag

Gardening: Kathi Mag

The Star: Ellen Sue Moses and Phil Lohman

Deb Hammer: Torah Study, Building Rental, Webmaster

Ways and Means Chair: Judy Gold

Ways and Means Committee: Rhoda London and Helene Rosenblatt

Receiving phone calls: Rhoda London

Kol Nidre Appeal: Barry Bronfin

Kathi Mag: conduct board meetings

Trustee: Susan James

High Holiday Committee:

Rabbi Seth Riemer

Barbara Checknoff

Cecile Bronfin

Carol Gershenson

Judy Gold

Kathi and Eliot Mag

Fred London

Susan Reuben

Sallyanne and Barry Scott

Nominating Chair: Cecile Bronfin

Miscellaneous: Phil Lohman and Ralph Horowitz





MAY YOUR NEW YEAR  
BE HAPPY, HEALTHY  
AND SWEET!

L'SHANA TOVAH  
FROM THE  
TEMPLE BETH  
TORAH FAMILY



Thanks to Phil for making our annual L'shana Tovah card at the entrance to the sanctuary thus defraying the expense of printing and postage and also to Marc Chagall for the unauthorized use of his magnificent painting.

RABBI SETH RIEMER  
AND BARBARA CHECKNOFF  
AND FAMILY

CECILE AND BARRY BRONFIN  
AND FAMILY

ALICE BURSTEIN  
AND FAMILY

MARA DRESNER

CAROL ANN GERSHENSON

JUDY AND MARTY GOLD,  
MONICA LEE, JACK AND ADAM, DEBBIE,  
AARON, RYAN AND ZACHARY

LYNN S. KAPLAN-GOLDBERG AND BARRY  
GOLDBERG, MICHELLE, BILL, EMMA, BRETT,  
ELIZABETH, EVAN, LEE AND STACY

JOE AND DEBRA HAMMER, SAM AND LILY

RALPH, MAUREEN AND HANNAH HOROWITZ

GERALDEEN AND PHIL LOHMAN

RHODA AND FRED LONDON AND FAMILY

INA LONDON

KATHI AND ELIOT MAG, LESLIE AND CHRIS,  
JACK, BEN POLAND, BEKAH GOLDMAN MAG  
AND SAUL MAG AND BELA

RITA AND HAROLD NEVINS

SUSAN, JONATHAN AND KAYLA REUBEN

MIRA AND BARRY SCHLEIN  
AND FAMILY

SALLYANNE AND BARRY SCOTT  
AND FAMILY

KAREN AND GERRY WALTMAN  
AND FAMILY

# NEWS AND NOTES FROM TBT

Gift cards will be available from Big Y, Stew Leonards, and Stop and Shop.... I need your check for this purchase. The Temple makes a percentage on each purchase. It's a great fundraiser if many participate..... Please send to TBT c/o Judy Gold, 88 Balfour Dr, West Hartford CT 06117. The cards will be available after November 10.

Memorial Plaques for our very special display in the rear of the Sanctuary are available. They are \$300. Judy Gold is the point person for this project...Memorial Plaques are available to everyone who wants to have their loved one remembered on their Yahrzeit. Please contact Judy to purchase a plaque.

***Honey From The Heart:*** A great way to wish special people in your lives a very Happy, Healthy New Year. A bottle of honey is sent with a wish for the New Year and the sender's name is attached. We just completed our fundraiser. Thanks to all who participated: **Kathi Mag, Debra Hammer, Deborah Jainchill, Cheryl Hinze, Mara Dresner and Judy Gold** .... And a special thank you to Deb Hammer who sets up the web site for TBT.



The Bob and Karen Klein Building Fund is still accepting donations. It would be a wonderful way to mark the New Year by making a contribution to the Building Fund.

TBT has a Facebook page, take a look and "friend" us.

[https://www.facebook.com/groups/208685562969917/?ref=br\\_rs](https://www.facebook.com/groups/208685562969917/?ref=br_rs)

Board meetings have been changed to the first Monday of the month at 7:00 in the Social Hall. All are welcome to attend.

## NEWEST MEMBERS TO TBT!

We are so pleased to welcome our newest members to TBT, **Micki and Dennis Bellamy, Janet and Joe Rosenblatt and Lynn Kaplan Goldberg**. We look forward to seeing them at our TBT events and happenings throughout the year!



## BEAUTIFUL TORAH MEMORIAL

Judy and Marty Gold donated this beautiful Torah plate in loving memory of their dear friend Andie Goldberg who passed away in February of 2015. Neill Walsh, the creative goldsmith/jeweler whose shop is across the street from TBT on Main Street (and who knew Andie very well,) created this special piece for them. He even included an amethyst gemstone which was Andie's favorite color, purple !



# TBT Rents!

Some of you may not be aware that TBT rents out the Social Hall to help with the “plus side” of our Balance Sheet. Aside from the dollars renting brings in, we benefit by having people in the building on a regular basis to help us keep tabs on maintenance issues, and also to just let people know that TBT exists in the Wethersfield community. Over the years, we have welcomed a very interesting range of renters — most of them weekly regulars offering classes in: International Folk Dance, Zumba Fitness, Martial Arts, UConn Summer Courses, and even Tango Dancing! The dancers and fitness folks love our suspended wood floor; it’s so much more forgiving than modern construction

poured concrete based floors. Many of our renters have been so successful with start-up ventures using our space, that they’ve gone on to open their own studios!

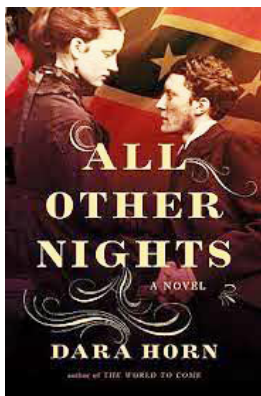


Currently, we have time blocks available for rental opportunities, particularly on weekdays and Monday-Thursday evenings.

In addition to the classes already noted, our space would be ideal for a yoga or meditation group, ballet, instrumental lessons, tutoring sessions, and so much more. Please keep this in mind if you know of someone seeking space. Our rates are VERY reasonable. We do ask renters to provide us with a Certificate of Liability Insurance. Interested renters should be in contact with Debra Hammer.



# TBT BOOK CLUB



The TBT Book Club met on Thursday, Sept. 28th in the TBT vestry to discuss Michael Chabon’s book “Moonglow”. Michael spent the last few weeks of his grandfather’s life visiting him and learning his life history. The author also became familiar with his grandmother’s story. She had an unusual life and became mentally ill. He also heard stories about his mother and other members of the family. The grandfather was involved in astronomy, rocketry and space travel. He recruited Nazi scientists, engineers, and technicians for the U.S. space effort.

We will meet again on Thursday, Nov. 2nd at 4 PM to discuss “All Other Nights” by Dara Horn. It is the tale of a Jewish soldier in the Union Army in the American Civil War.

After that, we plan to read “By Fire By Water”. The author is Mitchell James Kaplan. It is about the Spanish Inquisition.

All are welcome to join our group.



## 2017 SUKKAH

Gary Evans, Moshe, Jacob and Zoey Sondik put up the Sukkah.

Anderson Farms donated the cornstalks.

Greens came from trimming the Yew Tree on the north side of TBT.

Religious School students with Michele Cyr did the decoration.

Lawn chairs from the Lohmans.





## SEPTEMBER 24th MEMORIAL SERVICE

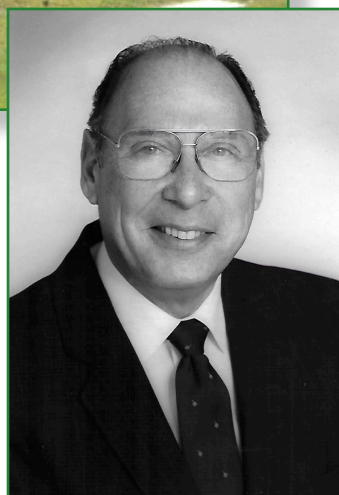
Every year, around the time of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, Temple Beth Torah holds a memorial service. Congregation members and relatives of loved ones buried in our cemetery in Wethersfield gather there in a circle and, led by our Rabbi, recite prayers and recall the names of those departed relatives and friends. When the service has concluded, the people go to the graves, reflect quietly and place stones on the grave markers. It is a brief, touching moment for pausing to remember in fellowship and love.



## GERRY BERG'S STONE UNVEILED

On the beautiful Sunday Morning of September 24, congregants, family and friends gathered at TBT Memorial Park for the unveiling ceremony of Gerry Berg's Memorial Stone. Rabbi Seth Riemer officiated. The stone was unveiled by Gerry's children Jeff Berg and Michele Lerer. Michele spoke for the family and told the story she thought that Gerry was somehow present at the recent wedding of her daughter-in-law. At the ceremony a sudden burst of wind lifted the bride's wedding veil from her face and sent it spiralling skyward. Michele felt that it was a spiritually wonderful moment.

Gerry was a founding member of TBT and along with his wife Joan worked tirelessly to create a center for Jewish life in a frontier town known as "Olde Wethersfield."





## **Mara Dresner to offer a class on crafting an effective marketing strategy for TBT!**

TBT is a hidden gem. If we effectively communicated what TBT provides, we would have the chance to draw new members and revitalize our offerings. To help craft an effective marketing strategy, we have a secret weapon: Mara Dresner. Mara teaches a class called **“How To Get More (Free) Publicity For Your Non-Profit”** and has offered to donate her time to share some thoughts on how TBT can spread the word about who we are and what we offer. Mara has worked both sides of the equation – as an award-winning journalist and editor on the local, regional and national levels, as well as working in PR/marketing.

The workshop is open to anyone who is interested in helping TBT spread the word! Please contact Carol Gershenson (860-721-9361; [ca\\_gershenson@hotmail.com](mailto:ca_gershenson@hotmail.com)) if you're interested – we'll coordinate the date to accommodate everyone's schedules the best we can.

**Please RSVP by Wednesday, October 18th!**

...And the  
Marbleous  
Judy Gold  
covered the  
front ladies  
restroom  
sink counter  
with upscale  
architectural  
contact paper! It looks really nice.





## SAM HAMMER GRADUATES

Samuel Hammer graduated cum laude (with honors) from Vassar College on May 28, 2017, with a major in Economics and a minor in Political Science. While at Vassar, Sam was co-captain of the Men's Varsity Squash Team, and was named a College Squash Association Scholar Athlete. He also served as President of the Vassar Business Club. Now, Sam is working and living in NYC, employed by Goldman Sachs as an Analyst. He is an all-around great guy, and we're so proud of him!

~ Deb, Joe and Lily



### MAUREEN HOROWITZ

ABR, GRI, SRES  
REALTOR®

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Glastonbury, CT 06033



# HOROWITZ UPDATE

Dr. Hannah Horowitz who is doing her Post Doc at the University of Washington, continues her love for music. She recently auditioned for and was successful in being selected to play the tenor sax for the all women Seattle band “**The Filthy FemCorps**”. They took part in Honk East in Somerville and Cambridge, Massachusetts, October 5th and 6th. The band is pretty popular in the Seattle area.



# FIDDLER UPDATE

It is Scarecrows-on-Main season again in Old Wethersfield and our traditional *Fiddler On The Roof* scarecrow has (in the interest of installer safety), been repositioned to our front terrace.

## HAROLD REFLECTS...

At times I sit in the sanctuary during services and reflect about times gone by. Maybe I have that privilege from being one of the “*last men standing*.”

So here goes.

I’m sure everyone has noticed the oak carvings above the ark. They are real oak. They are two Lions of Judah positioned on either side of the Star of David. I’m not a theologian, but using common sense I would say that they are there to protect the Star of David. What do you think? Could this be a topic of discussion at Torah Study. Well anyway, how did they get there ? When our new ark was being built in the 1960’s, a wall was constructed to hold the Torahs. Dr. Alvin Carlin and his wife Jeanette spoke up and commissioned a local woodcarver to design and carve those golden oak lions and Star of David.

Well I ask, “What are you reflecting about?” You can write a book about everyone that came and helped. I’m sure you have noticed a young man during the High Holy Days who sits by himself on the left side facing the Bima. Go meet David Carlin, son of Alvin and Jeanette. I’m sure he can reflect about life in “OLDE WETHERSFIELD”.

## SO PHIL ASKED DAVID TO REFLECT...

...and this is the email that Dave sent.

### The Wood Carvings of Lions above the Ark

Dr. Alvin Carlin was a full time Dentist who in the early 50’s moved his family from the New York-New Jersey area. He raised his family in Wethersfield, CT. His wife Jeanette, daughter Judy, and son David.

Dr. Carlin developed his practice in Hartford, CT. As his practice was going great, he turned to his second love beside his family and Dentistry, Judaism. He joined a bunch of Jewish pioneers to help found Temple Beth Torah in Wethersfield. Original services were at the Masonic Temple, until they were able to afford and procure the current Temple. Originally, they could not afford a Rabbi or a Cantor, only a student from Rabbinical School in New York City coming for the holidays only. Dr. Carlin soon absorbed himself in Judaism traditions and served on Fridays nights as Cantor and Rabbi for awhile. He amassed many books about Judaism and served to answer many questions from the congregants on a constant basis about what to do and Judaism in general, while continuing to practice Dentistry. He was deeply admired by all for his knowledge, kindness, and honesty. On his day off in his dental practice, he went around and fixed the teeth of older people in retirement homes for free. Giving back (Sudakah) he



called it. He served as one of the first Presidents of the Temple from 1964-1965, meanwhile Jeanette Carlin started a newsletter, The Star for all the congregants with help from other ladies. Daughter Judy Carlin was the very first wedding in the Temple, with an assist from Cy Levine and others.

David was Bar Mitzved at the Temple. In 1970 Dr. Carlin passed away at the age of 57 due to Cancer. His funeral was very large and very moving. Many people turned out. Rabbis, Cantors, Dentists, Government, friends, family, all people who’s lives he had touched.

It was later that Jeanette Carlin sat and pondered how can I honor him and so did the Temple for all his devotion to it. So, she interviewed many wood carvers and finally settled on a gentlemen. After much deliberation, The Lions of Judah were picked and carved and coated and put up above the Ark. The saying in Hebrew above the Ark was one of my Father’s. In English, it translates to “Know before whom you Stand”.

To this day, every time I see those oak lions, a tear comes to my eyes, not only remembering my family, but all the fine people then, (Harold Nevins for one) who helped build it and now fighting to keep Judaism and Temple Beth Torah alive and well. The Temple is a very special place and so are it’s people.



# 2017 TBT Yizkor Memorial List

Gary Eliot Aaronson	Florence Finkelstein	Cy Levine	Ruby Riemer
Isadaore Aaronson	Clara Mittam Finkel	Isador Levine	Neal Riemer
Eileen Zwirn Abrams	Jack Finkel	Lottie Levine	Mollie Rimer
Michael Abrams	Ludwig Friedman	Samuel Levine	Samuel C. Rimer
Amy Alsofrom	Karen Rome Gagne	David Levy	Steven L. Rimer
Edward Aronowitz	Robert Galinsky	Carrie Melicovsky Levy	Merrill A. Rome
Harry Azia	Allan M. Garber	Anna H. Lieberman	Jacob Rosenberg
Rita Bailey	Arthur Gediman	Benjamin H. Lieberman	Kitty Rosenberg
Jacob Barenbaum	Sadye Gediman	Ida B. Lipkind	Stanley Rosenblatt
Maxine Spector Bazan	Alvin Gediman	Irving Lipkind	Janice Rosenblatt
Faye Beckerman	Sylvia Mittman Gershenson	Max Lipkind	Lionel Rothberg
Louis Beckerman	Benjamin Gershenson	William Lipkind	Martha Rome
Rose G. Beldner	Paul L. Gipstein	Harriet B. Leon	George Rome
William Beldner	Leonore D. Godin	Daniel L. Leon	Shaynie Rome
Caroline Kramer Bellow	William Godin	Morris Leib	Albert Rome
Bertha Berg	Lillian Gold	Beatrice Leib	Celia Rome
Jane Berg	Louis Gold	Beatrice Lidman	Dr. Leonard Rome
Julius Berg	Israel Gold	Philip Lidman	Lewis B. Rome
Max Berg	Sophie Gold	Frank London	Eileen Rome
Joan Fields Berg	Abraham Gold	Henry London	Gloria M. Rubin
Gerald Berg	Ina Gold	Hilda London	Harry Rubin
Clare Brown Bernstein	Harold Gold	Alex London	Meyer W. Rubin
Molly Birnbaum	Andrea "Andie" Goldberg	Sara London	Mollie Rubin
Isaac Birnbaum	Ann Nadler Goldberg	Ida Beck London	Samuel Rudnick
Eleanor Blonder	William Goldberg	Samuel Mag	Sophie Garber Rudnick
Lester Blonder	Fannie Goldberg	Alter Gerhen Magid	Sally Sackler
Shirley Bloomenthal	Isaac Goldberg	Dora G. Magid	Don Safran
Meyer Blumenthal	Marvin J. Goldberg	David Matts	Gedialiah Scheck
Sarah S. Blumenthal	Abraham Goldberg	Louis Meister	Rywka Weingarten Scheck
Dr. John Blumenthal	Esther Goldberg	Inge Meltzer	Jacob Schneps
Private Robert Roy Blumenthal	Julius Goldberg	George Meltzer	Reva Schneps
Hyman Bronfin	David H. Goldberg	Louis Mestel	Esther Schonbrun
Celia Bronfin	Fannie Matts Goralnek	Ronald A. Michaels	Marcus H. Schonbrun
Rebecca Brown	Louis L. Greb	Rose K. Michels	Benjamin Schwartz
Mary Brown	I. Mildred Grossman	William Michels	Jonas M. Schwartz
William Brown	Burton Gross	Janet Baer Moses	Susan Schwartz
Robert Burstein	Esther Gross	Allan I. Moses	Gloria Scott
Alvin H. Carlin	Ruth Ann Gould	Lillian Moskowitz	Harold Scott
Jeanette Carlin	Allison Charles Gould	Fannie Moskowitz	Steven Scott
Carl Checknoff	Miriam Gubbay	Samuel J. Moskowitz	Louis Searle
Ruth Checknoff	Ezra Joseph Gubbay	Ruth Miller	Pearl Searle
Theodore Decker	Joseph George Henowitz	Milton Miller	Freida Shein
Oscar Decker	Irving Horowitz	Herman H. Myer	Benjamin Sher
Johanna Decker	Tillie Horowitz	Wilma Decker Myer	Felicia B. Shpall
Helen Gold Dillion	Dotty Horowitz	Julia Galinsky Naviasky	Harry Sitcovsky
Baruch Dobkin	Harry Hammer	Lois Neumann	Louis Sitcovsky
Celia Dobkin	Naomi Hammer	Etta Nevins	Tillie Sitkovsky
Julia Dobkin	Kathe (Kata) Hopfer	Maurice Nevins	Muriel Sitcovsky
Samuel D. Dobkin	Anna Isaacson	Nathan Nevins	Ruth Sobel
Samuel Dolgoruck	Bridget Jacoby	Claire Nordheimer	Isadore Sockol
Sadie Dolgoruck	Mildred M. Jarcho	Haney Nordheimer	Lottie Sockol
Arthur L. DuBrow	Milton Kamins	Hans Nordheimer	Esther Sockolof
Leon DuBrow	Sally Kamins	Louis Nordheimer	Florence Spector
Madeline S. DuBrow	Herman Katz	Millie Goldberg Orent	Boosoo Straus
Louis Ehrlich	Joseph J. Katz	Evelyn S. Ovrutsky	Sidney Sukiluski
Rose Ehrlich	Eric Kaufman	Max Ovrut	Sadie Sussman
Shirley Ehrlich	Helena Kavalier	Edward Packtor	Isaac Tamaren
Stanley Ehrlich	Maurice Kavalier	Margret Palmer	Sarah Tamaren
Rebecca Ellenberg	Ethel Klugerman	Clara Podolsky	Abraham Tauber
Allan Ellenberg	Judy Carlin Kessler	Samuel Podolsky	Edith K. Toubman
Morris Ellenberg	Joan Mag Karff	Sally Gold Poritz	Joseph W. Toubman
Max English	David Lappen	Herman Poritz	William B. Toubman
Lillian English	Anne Later	Sharon Poritz	Bella Waltman
Hyman Farber	Charles W. Later	Francis Raim	Jean Waltman
Fannie Mag Fassler	Chester Later	Margret PalmerAnnette Farber	Erwin Waltman
Victor Fassler	Fred Later	Rechtschafer	Ida F. Wax
P. Edward Feld	Florence M. Leinwand	Percy Reuben	Harry Weber
Sadye Feld	Isadore E. Leinwand	Pearl Kimmel Reuben	Ida Weber
Morris F. Fields	Sam Lerer	Grace Reuben	Sima Roisa Whiteman-Mittman
Esther M. Fields	Mary Levin	Stanton I. Revzon	Robert Morris Zwirn
Celila Fichman	Benjamin Levine	Joseph J. Richman	
Alfred Fichman	Lynn Raim Levine	Rita F. Richman	