

High Holiday Issue

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TEMPLE BETH TORAH, 130 MAIN STREET

WETHERSFIELD, CONNECTICUT



Bima Bouquet gift from Carol Gershenson and Leslie Levine



Bima Bouquet gift from Sallyanne and Barry Scott and Marty and Judy Gold

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Message from Rabbi Alan

Jews love to play Jewish Geography. We have always looked with pride at famous people who have any connection whatsoever to Judaism.

This was particularly true in the past century. When many of us were growing up, the Jews of America were restricted to certain neighborhoods and certain jobs and faced discrimination in many areas. A Jew, who was famous in the outside world, was especially famous in the Jewish world. It did not really matter whether they saw themselves as Jewish; they were icons for the other Jews in America.

For the baseball enthusiasts among the most famous were Hank Greenberg and Sandy Koufax. In a time when Jews were seen to be athletically inferior, both Hank Greenberg and Sandy Koufax symbolized that Jews could be athletes. Jews could succeed at sports. The fact that Hank and Sandy were only nominally Jewish and were pressured into going to the synagogue on Yom Kippur did not matter.

They were Jewish baseball stars, which was all that mattered to the Jewish community.

The same was true about the big movie and radio stars. It did not matter that Jack Benny broadcast an annual Christmas show; he was a Jew that had succeeded. Whether it was Moe Berg, or George Burns or the Warner brothers, Jews took pride in the success of their compatriots, even if those people maintained little or no ties to their Judaism.

Hearing the great Cantor Yossele Rosenblatt singing a Yiddish art song and Al Jolson singing Kol Nidre during the first talking picture: The Jazz Singer in 1927 was a distinct moment of pride for many Jews.

Another one of those Jewish stars was Kirk Douglas. The son of poor immigrant Jews from Russia grew up in Amsterdam, NY, Kirk found his fortune on the stage and screen. He did celebrate his becoming a Bar Mitzvah. He never married a Jewish woman. He never raised his children as Jews. He was a major star in the 50's and 60's. His children are successes in the movie business. Yet, as he got older, Kirk Douglas discovered something was missing in his life. He had success. He had fame. He had financial security. Yet he was missing something.

The something Kirk Douglas discovered he had missed was his Judaism. He realized that in his search for success, he had left behind a part of himself – the Jewish part. At the age of 80, already a great-grandfather, Kirk Douglas began his Jewish studies. He celebrated becoming Bar Mitzvah in his 80's.

In 2003 he produced and starred in a semi-autobiographical movie titled, "It Runs in the Family", which included family struggles at the Passover Seder table. And, following that, Kirk Douglas authored an op ed piece in Newsweek, in which he described one of the most important Jewish lessons of all, "you can't know how to live, until you know how to give."

In this piece, Kirk Douglas lists various charitable programs in which he and his wife have been involved. He and his wife funded 400 safe playgrounds in Los Angeles. They opened a Center for Homeless Women. They fund the Kirk Douglas High School which brings dropouts back to school. They established a theater for young talent. Douglas then explains why he listed these achievements in this op-ed piece.

He says, "I don't list my projects to declare what a good guy I am. In fact, I am a very selfish guy, because helping others has its rewards. It makes you feel good."

Kirk Douglas is a living example of the message of Yom Kippur. That message is – it is never too late to return to God and Judaism.

At its core, Yom Kippur is not about the fasting and the prayers. Yom Kippur is not about the standing and the chest pounding.

Yom Kippur is about teshuvah. We translate it as repentance, but its root meaning is to return. Yom Kippur is about returning to the morality, the rituals, the spirituality, and the honorable deeds of Judaism. The fasting, prayers and chest pounding are not the goals of the day; they are the tools that help us return.

Kirk Douglas shows that you are never too old to rediscover your Judaism. You are never too old to study again. You are never too old to start participating again. You are never too old to start giving of yourself and your prosperity to help others.

There is always time to put Judaism back into your life.

In a moment, we will turn to our Yizkor prayers. We will remember our loved ones – mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers, spouses and, sometimes even children. As we remember them, their lives can serve as additional tools to help us return.

Each of us has our own memories and lessons. My father when he was boarding a train to leave New York for his new job and the unknown in Albany, NY, (yenemsvelt), anything outside of the Jewish world of New York city was considered by my grandmother as

Yenemsvelt-another outside world. of Albany, his mother told him, "Well, that going to be it for you and Judaism, if you go to Albany, you'll forget about being Jewish."

Not only was my grandmother wrong, but he met and married my mother, he taught swimming at the JCC and for 35+ years taught at religious school, and we always belonged to a synagogue because he believed it a Jew's responsibility as a member of the Jewish community. We would say Kiddush and light candles on Friday night. Being Jewish was a value that was given to his 4 children.

My father was never a donor who got his name on walls, yet he would teach those youngsters, many who were mentally and physically handicapped, how to swim or how to read Hebrew; He would say, "Give me the students that nobody else wanted to teach!" Yizkor reminds me of those lessons and more.

As our parents were dedicated to their synagogues, their memory reminds us that it is never too late to support our synagogue. As our parents were dedicated to learning and striving, their memory reminds us that it is never too late to study and grow. As our parents were dedicated to helping others, caring for family, lighting Shabbat candles and so much more, their memory reminds us that it is never too late to restore those traditions to our lives.

Today, we live in a more open, more accepting American society. Twenty-one years ago, a Jewish American was the Democratic nominee for Vice President. And most recently we have had Jewish members of families connected with the leadership of our country. Today, we do not look askance as those who are not white seek to become nominees for President.

Unlike the Jewish stars of the past, we do not have to hide our Judaism. We can walk proudly as practicing Jews, and still be accepted successes in America.

As he turned into his 80's, Kirk Douglas realized he was missing his relationship to his People, his Judaism and his God. And so, he returned.

We do not have to hide. And we do not have to wait. Although we may think it is too late, it is never too late. Let our prayers and efforts together, inspire each of us and all of us, to turn back and return, to the faith and rituals that can give new and stronger meaning and spirituality to our lives and to our children and to our families.

Let us say, "Amen!"

Message from the Co-Presidents

We hope all of our Temple Beth Torah family enjoyed a happy and healthy new year.

This is the first issue of The Star that we, as co-presidents, will have the opportunity to communicate with the congregation. It's an honor for both of us to be able to take the next step with TBT. We will need your support and the support of the Board of Trustees after the wonderful years of wisdom and dedication that Sallyanne Scott and Kathi Mag have championed. It is your voice that we want to hear in all matters TBT. So, let's start this new chapter.

We would be remiss if we didn't recognize those who have passed over this last year, and have left a legacy of commitment and joy to TBT – Ralph Horowitz and Barry Schlein. It was their genuine acceptance and friendship that meant so much to us, and will hopefully spill over to one of you or the new shul goer who walks through those enormous – and heavy – front doors.

As was expressed during our holiday remarks, there are many small tasks that require volunteers to take them on. These include: trimming the weeds that overgrow each year, checking on bathroom facilities and supplies and restocking, helping to build/decorate the Sukkah, setting up the outdoor Hannukah menorah, chairing an event or being a member of a subcommittee, etc. These are just a sampling of the tasks that our 'aging' contributors have been doing. It won't take much - just a helping hand.

And certainly, there are always the financial needs. Please find a way to offer assistance by any means possible. Just let either one of us know your interests.

It was inspiring to hear Rabbi Alan's High Holiday melodies and to take in his Torah interpretations. We also fondly recall the many years of stimulating and passionate religious leadership of Rabbi Seth.

We will continue to do our very best to offer experiences that are meaningful, safe, enjoyable, and that feel inclusive to all.

In the spirit of the season and these crazy times, we wish you health, happiness and good fortune.

Debra Hammer and David Forrest

L'SHANA TOVAH

FROM THE TEMPLE BETH TORAH FAMILY



MAY THE SWEET SPIRIT OF THE SEASON FILL YOUR HEART AND HOME AS YOU CELEBRATE THE HIGH HOLY DAYS.

L'Shana tova Tikateva, A Happy Healthy New Year

Rabbi Alan and Jody Lefkowitz

Micki and Dennis Bellamy

Cecil and Barry Bronfin and Family

Alice Burstein and Family

Barbara Checknoff

Mara Dresner

Carol Ann Gershenson

Judy and Marty Gold, Lee, Monica,

Jack and Adam Gold: Deb, Aaron, Ryan and Zac Jainchill

Lynn Kaplan-Goldberg and Barry Goldberg, Michelle and Bill Cyr, Brett, Elizabeth, Evan, Wesley and Lee Gottheimer, Jillian and Michael Lopez

Deb and Joe Hammer, Sam and Lily

Maureen Horowitz, Hannah Horowitz, Cristi and Diana Proistosescu

Steve Leon

Geraldeen and Phil Lohman

Kathi and Eliot Mag and Family

Ellen Sue Moses and Mark Gould

Rita and Harold Nevins

Susan, Jonathan and Kayla Reuben

Rabbi Seth Riemer

Helene Rosenblatt

Sallyanne and Barry Scott, Todd, Tenley and Aaron

Albert and Evelyn Soforenko and Family,

David, Cheryl, Deb, Randy and Sara

Thanks

Temple Beth Torah would like to acknowledge and offer our sincere thanks to

Sarah Michaels

for her continued and very generous donations to maintain our Memorial Park.

Sarah is the daughter of

Stan and Rose Revzon

both who are interred at the

TBT Memorial Park

Barry Goldberg

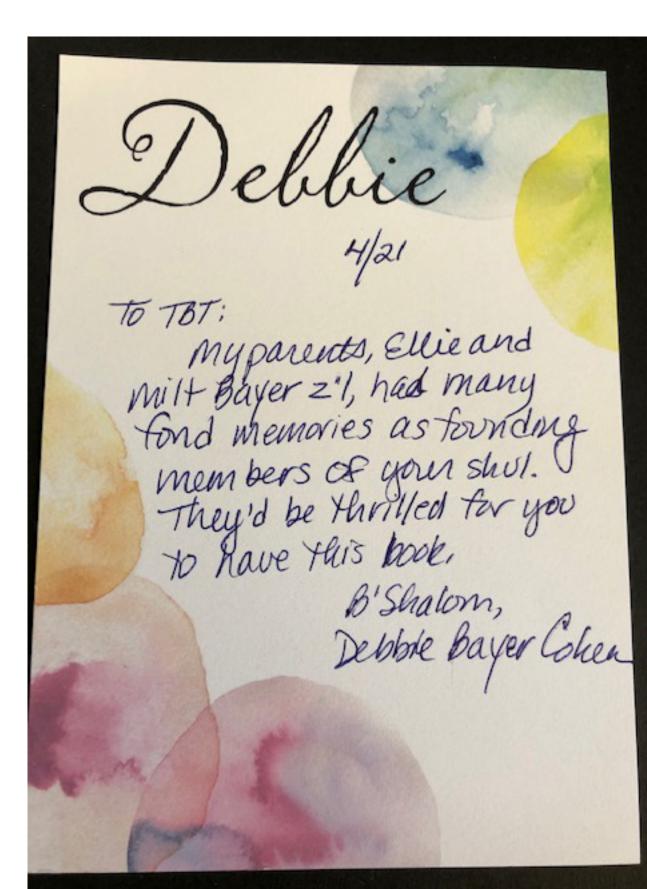
Tashlich at Wethersfield Cove

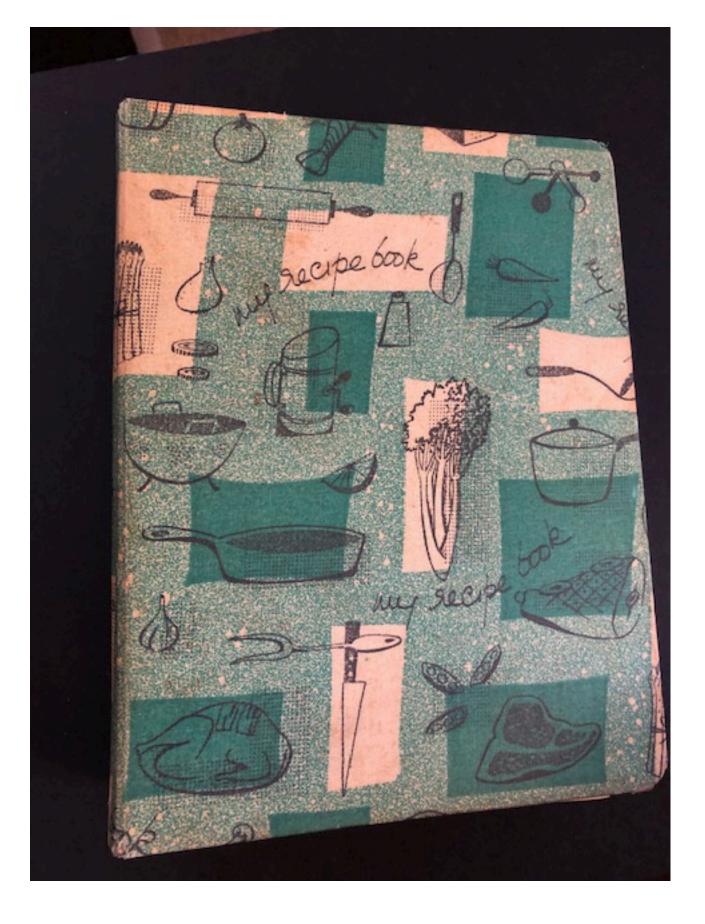


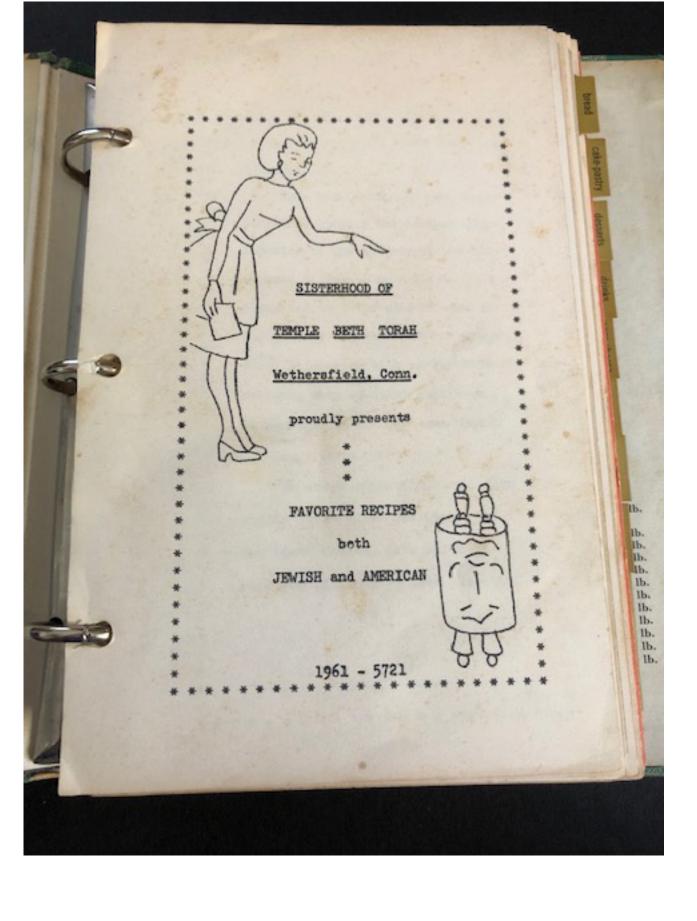




Debbie Cohen sent us a vintage TBT Sisterhood Cookbook





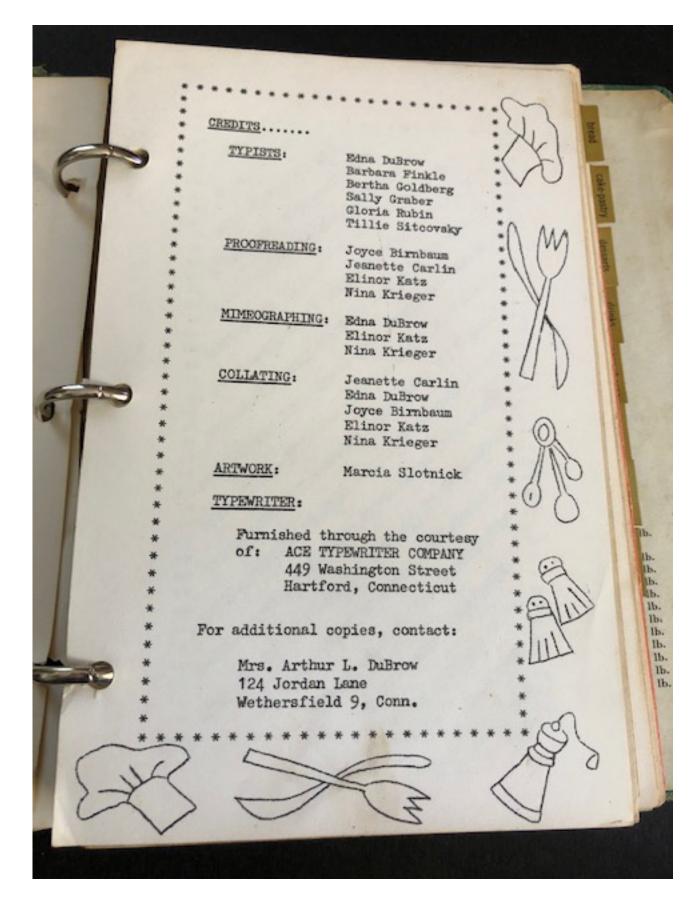


THANKS.....

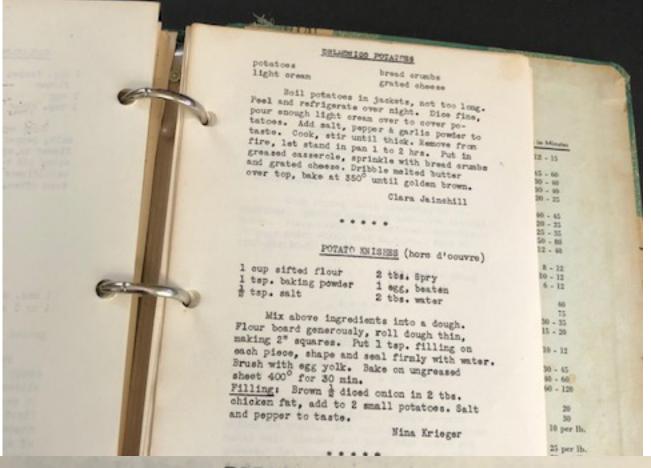
This book could not have been published without the devoted coopperation of the members of the Sisterhood of Temple Beth Torah. To them, and to their many friends go our sincere thanks for their generosity in sharing with us favorite recipes, many of which have been handed down within the same family for many years.

We are confident you will find within these pages new ideas, and new taste treats, from which we hope you will derive much pleasure.

* * * * *



Check out the names of the founding members!



POTATO KNISHES (hors d'ocuvre)

1 cup sifted flour 2 tbs. Spry
1 tsp. baking powder 1 egg, beaten
2 tsp. salt 2 tbs. water

Mix above ingredients into a dough.

Flour board generously, roll dough thin, making 2" squares. Put 1 tsp. filling on each piece, shape and seal firmly with water. Brush with egg yolk. Bake on ungreased sheet 400° for 30 min.

Filling: Brown ½ diced onion in 2 tbs. chicken fat, add to 2 small potatoes. Salt and pepper to taste.

Nina Krieger

PASSOVER BEET PRESERVES

2 lbs. beets lb lbs. sugar 3/4 c. water l tsp. ginger 1 lemon peeled, sliced thin

2 oz. blanched almonds, chopped

Use fresh beets, boil until tender. Drain, cool and peel. Cut beets into thin strips or dice. Bring sugar and water to a boil, add beets and cook 1 hour. Add lemon slices and simmer 1 hour longer until jellied and the beets become transparent and slightly brown. Add nuts and ginger. Stir well and continue cooking 15 minutes longer. Cool and store in jars or stoneware crock away from the light to prevent loss of color.

BEET BORSCHT

2 small beets Water to cover 3/4 c. sour cream sour salt to taste sugar to taste 2 egg yolks, beaten

Wash and peel beets. Cover with water and let cook until tender; add sour salt and sugar to taste; While still hot, gradually pour in two well beaten egg yolks, stirring constantly and kept over the flame until smooth. Cool, and add sour cream. Chill.

CABBAGE BORSCHT

2 lbs. soup meat 1 head cabbage 2 quarts water l large can tomatoes l onion, cut fine Sour salt and sugar to taste

Cook meat together with water and onion for about 1½ hours. Add can of tomatoes, and cabbage which has been shredded; season with sour salt and sugar and cook for 1 more hour.

HAMANTASCHEN COOKIE DOUGH

(Purim)

2 c. sifted all-purpose 1 c. sugar
flour 1 egg
2 tsp. baking powder 2 tbsp. milk
1 tsp. salt 1 tsp. vanilla
2 c. butter (or 1 c. oil,
1 c. shortening)

Mix and sift flour, baking powder and salt. Cream butter and sugar. Add egg. Add dry ingredients alternately with milk. Add vanilla. Roll out to 4" thickness. Cut into 2" rounds. Fill with any of fillings. Draw up sides to form triangle. Bake in 375 oven until lightly browned, about 45 minutes.

FILLINGS:

POPPY SEED:

2 c. poppy seed ½ c. honey
1 c. water 1/8 tsp. salt
2 c. sugar 1 egg, well beaten

Pour boiling water over poppy seed. Let stand until seeds settle, then drain. Put through grinder using finest blade. Combine with water, sugar, honey and salt. Cook over low flame until thick, stirring frequently. Allow to cool. Add egg. Mix well.

PRUNE FILLING:

1 lb. prunes Grated rind of 1 lemon 2 tsp. lemon juice Chopped nuts

Soak prunes. Cook until soft. Drain and remove pits. Chop fine. Add lemon juice and lemon rind.

GOOD FOR ANY HOLIDAY!!

GEFILTE FISH

6 lbs. fish - karp, white fish and pike

3 medium onions 2 tsp. salt

pepper to taste 4 unbeaten eggs 2 c. cold water 2 tbsp. matzoh meal or 1 large slice of challah (see BREAD) soaked in water and pressed to almost dry

1 tsp. sugar (optional)

3 large carrots 3 large onions

Chop onions fine in wooden bowl. Put fish. skinned and boned, through food chopper. Add to onions; add water, eggs, matzoh meal and seasoning to mixture. Chop well. In a large, heavy pot place the bones, skin, 3 large carrots and 3 large onions, sliced. Shape fish mixture into balls, wetting the hands with cold water for ease in shaping. Carefully place the balls on top of the fish skins and vegetables. Add water to cover the contents and bring to a boil. Boil vigorously for 10 minutes, reduce heat, cover and cook gently for 3 hours. Shake the pot occasionally to prevent burning. When finished, lift the fish balls gently from the kettle with slotted spoon. Place on a large platter and cook the fish liquid in the pot for another 1/2 hour. Strain into a bowl and chill to firm jelly.

CHICKEN SOUP

1 fowl chicken, 4 or 5 lbs. 1 large onion
2 or 3 carrots, cut up
Salt to taste

1 large onion
4 or 5 stalks celery
Parsley

In a large pot place washed, cut up chicken and cover with cold water. Add salt, cut up onion and celery which has been tied with string. (It and celery when soup is done) Cook gently for can be removed when soup is done) Cook gently for can be removed when soup is done. At the end of two hours, add cut up carrots. The following strings of the control of two hours and cut up carrots. Garnish with parsley or parsley flakes when done.

Donations

IN MEMORY OF BARRY SCHLEIN

- Marty & Judy Gold
- Bradley & Kathy Hoffman
- Eliot & Kathi Mag
- Harold & Rita Nevins
- Anna M. Rich
- Mira Schlein
- Barry and Sallyanne Scott

IN MEMORY OF MENDAL SZLAMOWICZ, BROTHER IN LAW OF RABBI ALAN

- Eliot & Kathi Mag

IN MEMORY OF STUART BECKERMAN

- Eliot & Kathi Mag

IN MEMORY OF PATRICIA MAG

- Eliot & Kathi Mag

CEMETERY FUND

IN MEMORY OF HER PARENTS

(ROSE MICHAELS REVZON, STANTON REVZON, RONALD MICHAELS)

- Sarah Louis Michaels
- Ira & Sally Henowitz
- Martin Keibel & Joan W. Feldman
- Sarah Michaels

Wethersfield Life wrote about Rabbi Alan



New spiritual leader arrives

Rabbi Alan Lefkowitz leads Temple Beth Torah

by Mark Jahne
Editor

rom the time he was a little boy, Alan Lefkowitz knew that he wanted to pursue his Jewish faith and culture. That led him to become an ordained rabbi and

the latest stop in his journey is Temple Beth Torah in Old Wethersfield.

Lefkowitz, 69, was hired earlier this year to replace Rabbi Seth Reimer, who resigned and moved to Israel. The synagogue does not hold services during the summer so the new spiritual leader is busy preparing for its reopening in the fall and the High Holy Days that occur earlier than usual this year; the first day of Rosh Hashanah is Sept. 7.

He was the rabbi at Congregation Beth Ahm in Windsor before it closed its house of worship and merged with Congregation Beth Hillel of South Windsor.

Beth Torah has around 50 members and it is his hope to make
Wethersfield's only synagogue a more prominent civic partner and grow the congregation. He said many people don't even know it's there at 130 Main St.

Lefkowitz was born in Albany, N.Y., the capital city of New York state, where his father had moved from Brooklyn for a job in state government.

"My dad had three jobs. I'm the

oldest of four kids," he said. "I was always very turned on to Judaism. Being in synagogue life is something I always wanted."

He attended the Jewish Theological Cantorial School in New York City and completed his



Rabbi Alan Lefkowitz leads Temple Beth Torah. Photo by Mark Jahne

education at Hebrew Union College, also in that city. He taught school and also worked as a lifeguard.

He also has a passion for music and sang as a cantorial student in the New York City area. Lefkowitz is a big fan of the late Al Jolson, a Jewish-American singer, comedian, actor and vaudevillian who billed himself as "The World's Greatest Entertainer."

Lefkowitz moved to Akron, Ohio and California, where he took acting classes and workshops. He also spent a year in Israel as a volunteer English language swimming teacher. But the pull of the Northeast eventually brought him back and he landed in Buffalo, N.Y.

"I'm an East Coast guy," he said. In 1985 his journey brought him to Torrington to lead Beth El Synagogue, now closed. Then he served as the cantor principal at Beth Jacob Synagogue in Norwich for 10 years. He is married to Jody, his wife of 33 years.

"She is the director of adult education in Norwich," Lefkowitz said.

He also found time to acquire a master's degree in pastoral counseling from St. Joseph College in West Hartford, now the University of St. Joseph. It was during his time in Norwich that he enrolled in Tiferet Israel in New York with the goal of being ordained a rabbi.

The next stop was cantor principal at a Bloomfield synagogue and then Beth Ahm became his first opportunity to serve as spiritual leader of a congregation.

Debra Hammer is co-president of the Wethersfield synagogue. She spoke about the selection of its new spiritual leader.

"We had a little bit of prior exposure to him" because he is friends with Reimer and had visited Beth Torah. "We did put out a pretty broad net to see what kind of interest there might be in leading our congregation," she said.

It also helped that Lefkowitz had deep roots in Greater Hartford. His application was enhanced by his cantorial background.



Rabbi Alan Lefkowitz gathers with members of Temple Beth Torah's Rituals Committee. Seated from left are Debra Hammer, Sallyanne Scott, Carol Gershenson and David Forrest. Photo by Lisa Brisson

"We liked his approach to Judaism" and the fact that he is comfortable coming to a congregation that has people from various Jewish backgrounds and movements.

"Alan is confortable kind of mesh-

ing those things. He has a genuine interest in people," she said. **WL**

Tickets are still available for High Holy Day services and the synagogue welcomes new members. To learn more visit templebethtorahwethersfield.org. Jeffrey Berg forwarded a note to TBT written by Steven Beckerman, advising that Steven's dad,

Stuart Beckerman,
passed on Wednesday morning.

Stu was a former President at TBT, and will most certainly be remembered fondly by our members that were part of the TBT family at that time.

Our condolences to the extended Beckerman family.

May your many memories of Stu be a blessing for you.

Hartford Courant obituary

Stuart Beckerman, of Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida passed away on September 22, 2021, one day before his 87th birthday. He is survived by his wife of 65 years, Estelle; sons Steven (Nancy) Beckerman of Oldsmar, Florida, David Beckerman of Cheshire, Connecticut, and Douglas (Maureen) Beckerman of Franklin, Massachusetts; Grandchildren Adam Beckerman, Kari Beckerman Faber (Yonathan), Ashley Beckerman, Brian Beckerman (Moriah), and Jamie Beckerman and Great Grandson Noah Faber.

Born and raised in Brooklyn, New York, he relocated with his young family to Glastonbury, Connecticut where he practiced Civil Engineering for more than 40 years before retiring to Ponte Vedra Beach in 2000. Stuart was an active tennis player and former president of both Beth El Synagogue in Ponte Vedra Beach and Temple Beth Torah in Wethersfield, Connecticut. He was a lifelong New York Giants fan. Family was most important and he cherished celebrating every milestone with them. Funeral Services were held September 24th at Beth El Synagogue, 288 North Roscoe Blvd, Ponte Vedra Beach. In lieu of flowers the family asked that donations be made in his name to Beth El Synagogue. Arrangements by Hardage-Giddens Oaklawn Chapel, 4801 San Jose Blvd., Jacksonville.

An Insight To A Past President

It is with great sadness that we learned of the passing of Stuart "Stu" Beckerma of Ponte Verde, Florida.

Stu was past president of TBT and was a civil engineer.

Among his many other duties as a leader of our small congregation he was instrumental in the renovation of the social hall, classrooms and rest rooms.

TBT is fortunate over the years to have had good leadership by its members.

He lived in Glastonbury with wife Estelle and four sons who were all Bar Mitzvahed and trained in our religious school.

The school had an enrollment of some forty students and four teachers.

Often Stu would lead congregation services.

And you could catch him nailing, sawing and painting around the building.

Steve Beckerman's son conducted high holy day services several times.

Your work is finished here, go in peace and refreshment.

We'll talk later.

Harold



Photograph by Phil Lohman

Remembering 2008 Yard Crew

Elliot Mag
Barry Schlein
Bruce Kaplan
Ralph Horowitz
Ernie Ferrebee

US

Rabbi: Alan Lefkowitz

Co-Presidents:

Deb Hammer, Dave Forrest and Vice president Barry Goldberg

Financial Secretary, Sallyanne Scott

Corresponding Secretary for Donations,

and Gardening: Kathi Mag

Recording Secretary: Carol Gershenson

Membership and Publicity Chairperson: Karen Klein

Treasurer and Memorial Park Director: Barry Goldberg

High Holidays Committee: Rabbi Alan Lefkowitz,

David Forrest, Harold Nevins, Fred London, Carol Gershenson, Sallyanne Scott, Kathi Mag, Yoelit Hiebert, Ellen Sue Moses and Deb Hammer

Friday Night Announcements: Deb Ehrlich

Adult Education and Book Club: Ellen Sue Moses

The Star Newsletter: Phil Lohman, Micki Bellamy, Deb Hammer

Ways and Means: Judy Gold and Helene Rosenblatt

Building Consultants: Dave Forrest, Phil Lohman,

Kathi Mag and Gary Evans

Torah Study, Building Rentals, and Webmaster: Deb Hammer

Rabbi Emeritus: Seth Riemer

Gary Evans: Master Sukkah Builder!



The Sukkah commemorates the Israelites time spent in the wilderness, after being freed from slavery in Egypt. Come sit a while!

MAUREEN HOROWITZ

ABR, GRI, SRES, REALTOR
Licensed in Connecticut since 2002

It isn't easy to find a real estate agent with Maureen's combination of skills, strengths and experience.



You will want to call her whenever you or someone you know is considering buying or selling a home. Maureen is a full-time, hard-working

professional real estate agent.

Maureen says, "The highest compliment you can give me is recommending me to a friend or family member. Your satisfaction is my top priority."

> 860.205.9678 MaureenHorowitz.Agnelli@gmail.com



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