



The STAR (light!)

A Temple Beth Torah Newsletter
January-February 2024: Shevat-Adar 5784

Rabbi Alan's Message...

In most cultures, acceptance by the surrounding culture is desired by the individual. As Jews, we have desired to be accepted as equals in the societies where we reside. In the United States we have been very fortunate to enjoy the greatest freedom that our people have ever experienced outside of our own country.

Joseph, favored son of Jacob, was our first role model of success as a stranger in a foreign culture. He rose to the greatest heights of power in Egypt and is credited with saving the world from starvation. His success continued in the choices made by his offspring for their own lives. For many years they were isolated as the only family of Hebrews in an idolatrous nation. Joseph's personal success was the conveyance of his belief and faith to his children. Here we have Joseph's family, aristocrats in Egyptian society and firmly rooted in their devotion and faith to God despite the influences of the surrounding culture.

In the last Parsha of the book of Genesis, Vayechi, we find Jacob at the end of his life. Before he is ready to die, he wants to bless all his children individually. The blessing that is significant for us today is the one that he gave to his two grandsons, Ephraim and Menashe. These boys, in the face of great adversity, had kept the traditions of their father and grandfather alive, and Jacob saw and acknowledged that. In other respects, they made great strides and were successful in Egyptian society and were able to keep their traditions.

(cont'd)

From this we learn about living in two worlds at the same time.

Most of us live and participate in the secular world equally with others from many different cultures. Some of us continue to make significant efforts to keep our Judaism active in our lives and the lives of our children, thereby emulating the actions of Joseph's sons. To encourage us, there is a custom to bless our children each Friday night saying, "May God make you like Ephraim and Menashe" for boys, and "May God make you like Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah" for girls.

The only way that Judaism will survive is if we ensure it. Just living life and hoping our children will follow a Jewish path because we want them to will not work. It is up to all of us, all members of the community, not just the parents, to set the right examples, by applying Jewish values to our lives, and keeping the traditions and spirit of Judaism intact.

It is only with a proactive approach that we will be capable of perpetuating a Jewish way of life for the coming generations.

What is the alternative? Is there an alternative?

What are you doing to ensure Jewish continuity?

Rabbi Alan

Tu B'shevat occurred last week. This provides the perfect time to plant a tree in Israel in honor of, or in memory of a loved one.

Bob and Karen Klein Challenge Fundraiser a HUGE Success!

We have so many to thank, most notably, Bob and Karen. They pledged to match up to \$7,500 in donations, and TBT folks stepped up!

That goal was exceeded, and we have the following donors to gratefully acknowledge (in alphabetical order):

Debbie Ehrlich

Carol Gershenson

Judy & Marty Gold

Judy & Marty Gold, in memory of Michelle Cyr

Debra & Joe Hammer

Karen & Bob Klein (of course!)

Susan James

Leslie Levine

Susan Matthews

Ellen Sue Moses & Mark Gould

Megan & Bob Rader

Susan & Jonathan Reuben

Harriet Rosen

Helene Rosenblatt

Janet & Joe Rosenblatt

Sallyanne & Barry Scott

Helene Shapiro

Wayne Silver

Gerald & Karen Waltman

Gloria & Stan Zwirn



Bob and Karen Klein Challenge Fundraiser - Some Details

The TBT Executive Board will direct all monies from this fundraiser to the following:

- Enhanced Security Measures
- Facility Improvements, Beautification and Repairs

We are currently working on approvals for new doors and locks.

We are also exploring plans for a better ramp at the Social Hall entrance of the building.

We have received a sub-award for a Federal Security Grant, pending several requirements (Historic District Commission approval and an Environmental Review) that must be fulfilled prior to the actual grant award. This grant requires us to spend our own funds and then seek reimbursement. This fundraiser was critical to our future success in this endeavor!

*B. Goldberg submitted the initial application for this Grant, with input from the Executive Board. D. Forrest has since run with it and managed all plans and approvals. We are thankful to both for their efforts!

We mourn the loss of Michelle Goldberg-Cyr...

Michelle was a beloved wife, daughter, sister, aunt and friend to many.

She grew up at TBT, and continued to be a devoted lifetime member.

In recent years, she served alongside Rabbi Seth as a Sunday School teacher for some of our youngest members.

Full of love and life, Michelle will be deeply missed by all. Our heartfelt condolences to Bill, Barry and Lynn, and all of her extended family. Michelle was predeceased by her mother, Andie.

The full obituary is [here](#).



Donations to TBT, in memory of Michelle Goldberg-Cyr

Judy and Marty Gold

Debra and Joe Hammer

Karen and Bob Klein

Harriet Rosen

Sallyanne and Barry Scott

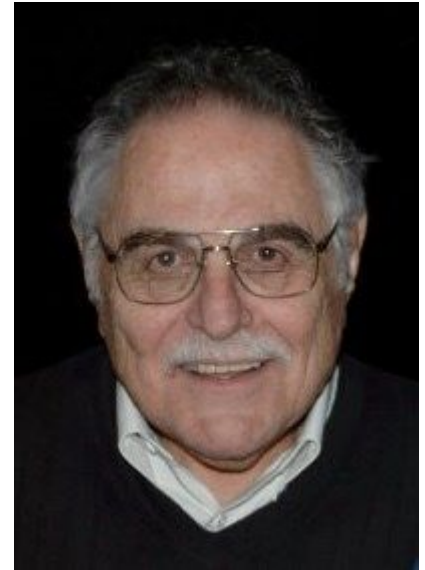
A message from Bill:

*Thank you to everyone at TBT for the
outpouring of love shown and provided
to Michelle.*



In Memory: Dr. Albert Zelig (AZ) Soforenko

AZ Soforenko was an early member of the Temple Beth Torah Congregation. After moving out of Connecticut and living in other states for many years, he stayed in touch, particularly with Phil and Sallyanne, and sent several substantial donations when the temple was in need of restoration work. He held fond memories of his time spent celebrating family milestones at TBT, and was incredibly generous with his continued support. The full obituary can be found by [clicking here](#).





Some pics from our first Shabbat of the New Year, on January 5, 2024 (which also happened to be Rabbi Alan's birthday!). Thanks to photographer Helene Shapiro! See next...





...to our newest members:

Megan and Bob Rader

Lydia Sizer and Nathaniel Rosenblatt

PHIL to receive Inaugural Key to Wethersfield on Feb. 5th!!!

We are so proud of, and pleased for Phil, who will be recognized at the next Town Council meeting at the Wethersfield Town Hall on Monday, Feb. 5 at 7:00 p.m. (weather permitting). This honor was originally to be presented at the Jan 16th Council meeting, which was cancelled due to ice and snow. Phil will watch the presentation on livestream, as we accept this citizen recognition award on his behalf.

Congratulations, Phil!



Other Donations to TBT, gratefully received

In MEMORY of MIRA (MYRNA) SCHLEIN

Judy and Marty Gold

Debra and Joe Hammer

In MEMORY of ABE SACKLER, father of Susan Sackler Reuben

Judy and Marty Gold

Debra and Joe Hammer

Ellen Sue Moses & Mark Gould ~ For Yahrzeit of JANET MOSES

THANKS to our SHOPPING CARD Fundraiser Participants

Mara Dresner, David Forrest, Marty Gold,

Janice Goldschmidt, Deborah Jainchill,

Sharon Reisner, Joe Rosenblatt, and

Wayne Silver



Back in December, we enjoyed a Hanukkah Latke Fest!



It began with one candle, sharing its light to ignite all of the other menorah candles around the room. Each of us brought a menorah from home.

Many candles can be kindled from one candle without diminishing it. (Talmud)







Thanks to Joe Rosenblatt for taking these photos. You forgot to take a selfie!



TBT wished
Old Wethersfield
a
Happy
Hanukkah